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4. The fire is produced from the Arani. All eatables provided for the sacrifice are divided into two groups—one to be used in the rite itself and the other for the use of the Brahmanas that come to witness it.

5. After the performance of the Deekshaneeya Ishti (a minor sacrifice preliminary to the consecratory vow) the sacrificer takes upon himself the Deeskha (the vow of Initiation).

6. He is shaved, takes his bath and cleans the teeth with a twig of the fig tree.

7. He bathes again and along with his wife, clothes himself in new garments to the recitation of the prescribed manthras (except in case of the wife).

8. The couple partake of very dainty food to the full.

9. The body is smeared all over with butter; the eyes are painted with collyrium; a girdle of munja grass, a turban and an upper cloth are given him. The skin of the black antelope hangs on his back, while his hand grasps a staff of the fig tree.

10. The prepared milk known as Vrata is given in separate vessels to the sacrificer and his wife to drink.

11. They keep awake the whole night listening to holy themes.

### *Prayaneeyahas.*

1. It begins with an expiatory rite towards any unconscious lapses in the rites of the previous day.

2. Next follows the Prayaneeya Ishti.

3. The soma creeper is bought of a Brahmana in exchange for ten articles, placed in a cart and brought with great pomp near the Ahavaneeya fire-place.

4. An Ishti of hospitality is performed in honor of king Soma.





The priests dip their hands in clarified butter and swear to preserve the utmost cordiality among themselves to the end of the sacrifice.

6. Thereafter, the Pravargyasambharana (preparing the materials for the Pravargya) takes place, which is followed by the Pravargya itself, when goat's milk, cow's milk and curds are mixed and offered into the fire, the Hotha reciting meanwhile 150 Riks and the Adhwaryu making libations in the Ahavaneeya fire.

7. Next comes the upasad, an Ishti in which clarified butter is offered into the fire.

8. And lastly, the Nama-subrahmanya-ahvana when the priest known as Subrahmanya calls upon Indra to come down—days from then to receive his portion of the offerings in the—sacrifice performed by—.

9. The evening closes with a Pravargya and an Upsad as before.

### *Pravargyahas.*

1. Two Pravargyas and two Upasads.
2. In the interval between these, the Agnivedi (Fire-altar) is constructed.
3. The Subrahmanya-invocation.

### *Agneeshomeeyahas.*

1. Two Pravargyas and two Upasads in succession.
2. The vessels and the materials used in the Pravargya are placed first on the Uththaravedi, then on the Samrat Asandi and carried away after having been placed thrice on the ground meanwhile. The Prasthotha sings Samans the while.

3. The fire is conveyed from the Ahavaneeya altar (Darsapoornamasa) to the Uttharavedi, the Hotha reciting Riks the while.





4. The Havirdhana carts are placed north and south of the Havirdhana ground, the Hotha reciting the manthras all the time.

5. The Darbha (sacred grass) to be used in the sacrifice is prepared with manthras.

6. The Dhishnis (seats) are constructed for the Maithravaruna, Hotha, Brahmanachhamsi, Potha, Neshta, Achhavaka and Agneedhra respectively.

7. The Agneeshoma-pranayana, during which king Soma is taken to the Havirdhana ground and the fire from the Ahavaneeya altar to the Agneedhra-mantapa.

8. The Avanthara-deeksha-visarjana (relief from certain incidental vows); the fingers of the sacrificer, closed with appropriate manthras after the vow of initiation is taken, are opened two on the same day and the rest on this day.

9. The sacrificer and his wife drink of the milk *vratha* after which they take nothing to the end of the sacrifice.

10. The Agneeshomeeya-pasu-prayoga. The Hotha recites manthras, when the sacrificial stake is planted; the animal is dedicated to the Devas. Certain offerings are made into the fire to ensure high regions for the animal.

11. The fire is churned from the Arani and united with the Ahavaneeya-fire. The animal is tied to the stake and the Agneedhra goes round it with the fire in his hands while, the Maithravaruna recites hymns from the Rig Veda. The animal is taken to the Samithra (slaughtering-place) the Hotha and the sacrificer reciting manthras the while. It is put to death with its head to the west, and the legs to the north, without the least noise. Expiatory offerings are made into the fire if it gets afraid or lies down or voids excretions. They sprinkle water on its eleven limbs and the Adhvaryu propitiates its pranas. The rope with which it was tied should be thrown into the Chatvala. Manthras are





chanted while its omentum (vapa) is taken out, spread upon thorns and taken to the Ahavaneeya fire-altar, where the Vapa-homa (offering into the fire the omentum) takes place.

12. As usual, the invocation to Subrahmanya comes next.

13. They bring the Vasatheevari water.

14. The offering of cooked rice (Purodasa) to the deities of the animal is made ; while, the Anga-yaja (offering into the fire pieces from the limbs of the animal) closes the day.

### *Suthyahas.*

1. The Upagraha-sadana (the preparation of the secondary *Grahas*. The vessels in which the Soma juice is kept are called *Grahas* as also the Devas to whom they are offered).

2. The Hotha recites the Prathar-anuvaka, while the Prathiprasthatha gets ready the Purodasa for the morning Savana.

3. The Soma-juice is extracted and kept in the prescribed vessels.

4. The Hotha recites the Bahishpavamana-sthuthra which is followed by the taking of the Aswinee-graha and the Agneya-pasu-prayoga (similar to that of the previous day).

5. The morning Savana :—

#### *Udgatha.*

#### *Hotha.*

a. Bahishpavamana-sthuthra.	a. Ajya-sasthra.	...	I		
b. Ajya-sthuthra.	...	I	b. Prauga-sasthra.	...	
c. Do.	...	II	c. Ajya-sasthra.	...	II
d. Do.	...	III	d. Do.	...	III
e. Do.	...	IV	e. Do.	...	IV

6. Midday-savana is conducted like the morning savana.

*Udgatha.*

- a. Madhyandina-pavamana  
sthuthra.  
b. Prishtha-sthothra .. I  
c. Do. ... II  
d. Do. ... III  
e. Do. ... IV

*Hotha.*

- a. Maruthvathee-sasthra.  
b. Nishkevalya-sasthra.  
c. Do. II (Maithra  
varuna).  
d. Do. III Brahmanach-  
hamsi).  
e. Do. IV. (Acchavaka).

6 *Evening savana.**Udgatha.*

- a. Arbhava-pavamana  
sthuthra.  
b. Yagna-yagneeya-sthothra.

*Hotha.*

- a. Vaisvadeva-sasthra.  
b. Agnimarutha-sasthra.

*The Avabhritha day.*

(a) The Avabhritha Ishti is performed, during which all the offerings are made into the water and not into the fire. The sacrificer and his wife get into the water, rub each other's backs, bathe and come back to the sacrificial hall.

(b) The Udayaneeya Ishti and the Maithravaruna—ameeksha.

(c) The Garhapathya fire is absorbed into the Arani.

(d) The sacrificer and his wife go to their abodes in great pomp surrounded by the priests.

Thus the Agnishtoma is the Prakrithi or type of the seven Soma-yagas; the rest are but modifications of this. I give below only those points wherein it differs from the Aswamedha.

1. None but the king is qualified to perform the Aswamedha—"The king who is a Sarvabhauma should perform a horse-sacrifice—*Sruthi*. "He who performs a horse-sacrifice destroys all his sins; destroys the sin of a Brahminicide"—*Sruthi*.

2. "It has three Savana (pressing) days. The sacrificial hall should be in holy spots like the Pushkara-vana, the





Gauthama-yana, the Varanasi, the Kurukshethra and the Naimisaranya.

3. "It should begin on the eighth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Phalguna; or on the ninth.—*Kalhyaya-na-srautha-soothra*, XX, 2.

4. He must make a declaration (Sankalpa)—"I mean to perform the Aswamedha-yaga on the morning of the full-moon day in the month of Chithra."

5. The Somapravaka chooses the priests in their own dwellings. The Sangrahini Ishti is performed, to which are brought upon chariots, elephants or horses the Adhwaryu, the Brahma, the Hotha, and the Agneedhra, attended by the king's officials. On the full-moon day of the month of Vaisakha, a bull is offered to the Prajapathi; to be present at which the Maithra-varuna and the Prathi-prasthatha are similarly brought. On the next new moon day the Udgatha is invited with like ceremony. When the next spring comes about, the Deekshaneeya Ishti is performed, when the Prasthatha is brought with honour to sing the Saman. Within three days from the commencement of the Deeksha (consecration), the other eight are brought in—Brahmanachamsi, Achhavaka, Neshta, Prathihartha, Gravasthuth, Potha, Unnetha and Subrahmanya.

6. Water from the skies, from wells, from tanks, and from rivers are brought from the four quarters to be used in cooking the food on the Brahmaudana day. It is partaken by the Adhwaryu, the Brahma, the Hotha and the Udgatha, each receiving one thousand gold coins as a fee. What remains of the clarified butter mixed with the food is used to soak a cord made of munja grass about 15 yards long. The sacrificial horse is tied with it.

7. The animal should be white in the fore parts of its body and black in its hind parts—*Ib.* 34. It must not be allowed to approach the mare.





8. The Sangrahani Ishti is performed on the full-moon day of the month of Chithra ; the Thraidhathavi Ishti comes on the full-moon day of the month of Vaisakha in the next year ; the Deekshaneeya Ishti is begun thereafter, and is completed in seven days ; the Deeksha ceremonies require 3 days over it. The next day is the Prayaneeyahas, on which the invocation to Subrahmanya begins. Till then the priests may be brought in. The Brahmaudana is performed on the next day after the Sangrahani. The horse is tied with a cord of munja grass and taken to the bathing place along with a dog adorned with two natural whirls of white hair above the eyes. The aunt's son of the sacrificer on his father's side goes before it, the son of his younger aunt goes behind it, followed by a harlot's son with a black pestle in his hand. When the dog and the horse are in the water at a depth where the dog's feet do not touch the bottom, the Adhwaryu orders the harlot's son to strike to it dead with the pestle. It is placed at the feet of the horse and then thrown away to the right. The horse is then bathed and taken to the bank. Hundred sons of crowned monarchs assist the Adhwaryu in sprinkling the horse with consecrated water, their faces turned to the west ; hundred sons of kings who are not eligible for the crown stand with the Brahma and sprinkle it facing the north ; hundred charioteers and heads of villages assist the Hotha to sprinkle it, facing the east ; while hundred Kshattas (born of vaisyas and soodras) and hundred heads of the royal treasury help the Udgatha to sprinkle it facing the south ; thereafter, the Adhwaryu sprinkles it on all sides.

9. Offerings are made into the fire to the recitation of the horse's names, deeds and form ; after which it is let loose.

10. Hundred armed princes, heir-apparents to royal crowns, follow it on splendid chariots ; hundred uncrown-





ed princes, hundred vaisyas (merchant classes) and hundred soodras. As it would naturally travel far that night when the mood is upon it, and as there would be no one who could efficiently take care of it, it is taken on the first evening to a charioteer's house, where Dhrithi-homas are performed in its hoof-marks: this is intended to bring back the animal to the tethering spot at night wherever it may wander during the day; and it would stay there till morning. If it is any how lost, another animal of the same age, form and colour should be procured.

11. Every morning to the end of the year the sacrificer should offer to the God Savitha, food cooked in eight pot-sherds (ashtakapala). At mid-day, another offering is made of food cooked in ten pot-sherds to Savitha and Prasavitha. During the afternoon, an offering is again made to Savitha in twelve pot-sherds. In the twelfth month the horse comes back and is stabled in a pen built of fig wood.

12. From the Brahmaudana day to the end of the Aswamedha, the sacrificer makes over all his powers to the Adhwaryu, who sees to the preparation of the sacrificial materials, to the invitation of quests, to the appointment of officials and servants and to every detail of the rite. The preparation of the fire named Ukha on the last new-moon-day of the previous year and the other rites as the Thraidhathavi and the Deekshaneeya Ishti should be performed in the sacrificial ground itself.

13. On the new-moon day of the next month of Phalgun, the sacrificer enters the sacrificial hall with the priests to the music of the conch, the drum, the tabor, and the flute, while holy Brahmanas bless him in Vedic hymns.

14. Twelve Pravargyas and twelve Upasads are to be performed on the three days.

15. At night-fall on the first day after the completion of the Pathnee-samyajana, the 36 Adhwaryus seat them-





selves on high lofts made of fig tree and offer into the Ahavaneeya-fire all night without intermission food, clarified butter, and eight other prescribed articles in ebony ladles with long handles.

16. On the Aupavasathya day are the sacrificial posts planted. Near the Agnivedi (fire-altar) is planted a post by name Agnishtha, 21 breasts long and made of Sleshmathaka wood.

17. On the second day during the Ukthya rite with 21 sthomas, the priests take the horse with them while they recite the Bahishpavamana-manthra. They instal it in the place of the Udgatha. A mare is placed before it. The neighing of the horse is taken to stand for the chant for the Sama Veda, while the reply of the mare is taken to represent the chant by the Udgatha and his assistants. Then, the Adhwaryu says "This horse is verily fitted to participate in this sacrifice, for, it can perform the functions of the Udgatha." Then they take hold of its tail and walk round the fire.

18. It is tied to the post known as Agnishta ; and as the other sacrificial animals are considered to be its members they too are tied to the same. It should be visualized mentally (a thought form must be made) that a sheep with a black neck is tied to the horse's forehead ; an animal dedicated to Poosha is tied behind it ; another animal dedicated to Indra and Poosha is tied above the horse ; two sheep with black throats dedicated to Agni are tied to the fore-legs of the horse ; two animals dedicated to Thwashita and with thickly coated thighs are tied to the thighs of the horse ; two animals with white backs are dedicated to Brihaspathi and tied to the hind-legs ; an animal with white-spotted stomach is dedicated to Dhatha and tied to the knees ; while a white sheep is dedicated to Soorya and tied to the tail.





19. Hundred tame animals are tied to the twenty stakes ; and the rest to the Agnishtha. Wild animals should be taken round the fire and set free ; while the tame ones should be put to death and offered unto the fire. Then the sacrificial horse is tied by the priests to the right side of the yoke of a chariot, with a horse on each side of it. The royal flag is hoisted and the sacrificer taking his place in it, fully armed and panoplied, drives north to the water's edge. Before the horse is yoked to the chariot, the queen adorns it with gold ornaments on the front ; the Vavatha with silver ornaments on its eastern flanks ; the Parivriti with ocean products on the west, while the princesses with conch-shells and the like deck its tail. Then the Mahishi spreads clarified butter over it with Guggulu twigs, the Vavatha with reeds and the Parivirithi with munja grass. When it had been given a bath and adorned as above, it is brought to the sacrificial hall and made to partake of the food set apart to Prajapathi.

20. The ladle named Thejani should be used to receive the horse's blood ; it is not so in the case of the other animals. The flesh of the sacrificial horse is placed upon a platter plaited with the twigs of aquatic plants, while platters made of Plaksha twigs are used in the case of other animals. Tame animals should be tied to the sacrificial posts ; the wild ones should be placed in the intervals between the posts securely bound with cords ; turtles, serpents and the like should be kept in cages.

21. The *Brahmodya*—The Brahma takes his place south of the Agnishtha post and the Hotha north of it. The following dialogue is carried on between them :—

*Brahma*.—What animate thing existed at first ?

*Hotha*.—The Akasa, for from it come the rains.

*B*.—What is the most beautiful of things ?



H.—The moon-light night adorned with stars.

B.—What is Pilippila (the noise made by a large crowd of people talking at the same time)?

H.—Sree or material prosperity (a wealthy man's house is thronged with countless persons who depend upon him, and there alone can you hear such a sound).

B.—Who travels (sun) alone?

H.—Soorya.

B.—Who is born again?

H.—Chandra (Moon)

B.—What is the best remedy against cold and snow?

H.—Agni.

B.—What is the ground in which the seed is sown?

H.—The earth.

B.—What is the most excellent spot of it?

H.—The Yaga-vedi (sacrificial altar).

B.—Which is the navel of the earth?

H.—Yagna.

B.—What is the essence of the strong horse?

H.—Soma.

B.—What is the limit of speech?

H.—Brahman.

22. The Prathi-prasthatha conducts the king's wives to the sacrificial hall. Thrice from right to left, thrice from left to right and thrice again from right to left they go round the horse. Then the Adhwaryu makes the queen lie by the side of the horse, covers them both with white silk and recites the manthras beginning with *Ambe! Ambaly Ambike!* The Deva who is invoked to take possession of the horse would bless her with offspring.

23. Then, the queen draws three lines upon the horse's stomach with golden needles, the Vavatha with silver ones and the Parivrithi with those made of iron. *Ib.* 152, 153, 154, 160.





24. The sacrificial horse is to be cut with golden knives, while iron ones should be used in the case of the other animals.

25. A blanket smeared with clarified butter is covered with a rug of fur; a bed adorned with gold is spread upon it; a golden plank is placed on the top; and the sacrificial horse is made to lie down upon it before he is put to death.

26. It has no vapa (omentum), but a lump of flesh by name Chandra takes its place; and is offered in the fire—*Ib.* 186, 190.

27. At the close of the Aswamedha the sacrificer goes back to his abode and performs twelve Brahmaudanas.

28. The Mahishi (queen) is she who is crowned and anointed along with the king. Vavatha is the woman whom he has taken into his bed out of love; she who occupied that place before her is known as Parivrithi; while the daughter of a messenger is titled Palakali. *Ibid.* XII.

Rig-veda I. 162, 163 deal with the sacrificial horse in the Aswamedha. Its thirty-four ribs symbolise the twenty-seven stars and the seven planets.

Brihad-aranyako-panishad gives the following symbolical interpretation of the sacrificial horse.

“Oh! The dawn in truth is the head of the sacrificial horse. The sun is the eye; the wind the breath; the fire under the name Vaiswanara, the open mouth; the year the body of the sacrificial horse. The heaven is the back; the atmosphere the belly; the earth the footstool (hoof); the quarters the sides; the intermediate quarters the bones of the sides; the seasons the members; the months, and the half-months, are the joints; day and night the feet; the constellations the bones; the sky the muscles; the half-digested food the sand; the rivers the arteries and veins; the liver and spleen the mountains; the herbs and trees the various kinds of hair.





The sun as long as he rises, is the fore part of his body ; the sun as long as he descends, is the hind part of the body. The lightning is like yawning ; the shaking of the members is like the roaring of the thunder ; the passing of urine is like the rain of the clouds ; its voice is like speech.

2. The day is the Mahima placed before the horse ; its birth-place is the eastern sea ; the night is the other Mahima which is placed behind the horse ; its birth place is the western sea ; these Mahimas are placed around the horse. The horse under the name of Haya carried the Gods ; under the name of Vajee, the Gandharvas ; under the name of Arwa, the Asuras ; under the name of Aswa, the men. The sea is its companion, the sea its birth-place. [On this Sankara comments as follows :—]

### *Introduction.*

The knowledge of the ceremonies regarding the sacrifice of the horse is required by those who are not fit to perform it, that they may obtain by this knowledge the same reward. The Aswamedha, with a description of which this Upanishad opens, does not properly belong to it. Kings alone are entitled to perform it ; but the Brahmanas and others may obtain by knowledge the reward of the sacrifice.

Q.—The Vedic texts “ By knowledge or by holy actions the mentioned reward may be obtained ” and “ He who overcomes even this world ” teach us that knowledge is but a kind of work.

A.—No. Such passages as “ Who offers the sacrificial horse ” and “ Who knows him thus ” (who knows the sacrifice of the horse to be an emblem of Prajapathi) leave it optional to perform that sacrifice either by knowledge or in reality. Again, this knowledge is also mentioned in the second part of the Sruthi which treats upon knowledge.





Further, a similar representation is made by other ceremonies also. Hence, it follows that from knowledge alone is derived the reward of the horse-sacrifice. The chief of all ceremonies however is the Aswamedha, because its reward includes the universal and the special state of the Prajapathi. (The universal state is Hiranyagarbha as the Soul of the Universe or the Iswara who rules all; the special state is Hiranyagarbha as present in every individual. Here the special state means the state of a special divinity).....

The sacrifice is represented under the emblem of a horse on account of the eminence of the horse, which again is derived from the sacrifice bearing its name and from its being the representation of Prajapathi.

*Commentary on the text.*

The *dawn* means here the hour of Brahma.

*Is the head*, from its being the principal time; for the head is the principal part of the body. To purify the animal representing in its members the various parts of the ceremonies, time and the other conditions of the sacrifice are typified by the head and the other parts. It is represented as Prajapathi by giving it the emblems of Prajapathi; for, the representation of the animal by time, the worlds and the divinities are their representation as Prajapathi; for, this is the nature of Prajapathi, as Vishnu and other deities are represented under the form of an image.

*The sun is the eye*, as nearest to the head and as being the tutelary deity of the eye, (as the eye is nearest to the head, so the sun is nearest to the dawn. This is the point of their assemblance—*Anandagiri*).

*The wind is the breath*, from its identity with it. *The mouth is fire*, under the name of *Vaiswanara*; Vaiswanara





is the special name of Agni, meaning "he whose mouth is wide open". Agni is also the deity of the mouth.

*The year is the body*, the year which contains twelve or thirteen months. The year is the body of the members of time, for, the body is in the midst of the members as the Sruthi says.

*The heaven is the back*, both being placed alike above.

*The atmosphere the belly*, both being hollow. The quarters, although four, are the two sides by the similarity of both. This comparison is not improper for the reason that the number of both is different; for, as the two sides of the horse are turned to all quarters, there is no fault in it.

The seasons are the members, from the similarity of the parts of the year with the members of the body.

*Days and nights the feet*. The plural is here used to denote the difference of days, as days of Prajapathi, of the Devas, of the Pithris and of men. *Feet*, because the body of time proceeds with the days and the nights.

The constellations resemble the bones in being white.

The sky meaning here the clouds of the sky, are the muscles; because water or blood oozes out from them.

*The half-digested food is the sand*, because the separate parts are similar.

*The rivers are the arteries and veins*, because both ooze out.

*The liver and the spleen are the mountains*—Two pieces of flesh to the right and to the left of the heart, so called from their hardness and height. The herbs and the small plants are the hair on the body; the trees are the hair on the head, owing to their likeness.

The sun rising until noon is the forepart of the horse above the navel; the sun descending from the midst of his





course is the other half. The hips and loins form their respective similarity.

*The lighting is like the yawning.* The mouth when it suddenly opens is like the rending of a cloud.

The shaking of the members produces a sound like the rolling of thunder.

The passing of the urine is like the rain of the clouds, since both sprinkle.

The voice is like the neighing of the horse. Here the likeness is natural.

*The day etc.* This is said in illustration of the gold and the silver cups called Mahima which are placed before and behind the horse. The day is the golden cup, from the similar splendour of both. It is placed before the horse, by being an emblem of Prajapathi; for Prajapathi, who is represented by the sun etc, is denoted also by the day. In naming the horse, Prajapathi is meant, as the lightning is manifest by manifesting a tree. The birth-place of the golden cup means here the place where it is kept. Thus, the night represents the silver cup, from the likeness of the colour or of the hind part of the horse. Behind the horse the cup by name Mahima is placed. Its birth place is the western sea. Mahima means greatness, for it shows the opulence of the horse, that the golden and silver cups are placed on either side. These cups under the name of Mahima are placed around the horse. The repetition is for the sake of praise—the Mahimas which have those distinctions and the horse gifted with greatness. The same praise is intended by the words *the horse under the name of Haya*. Haya is derived from the root *Hinothi* the action of going, going in an eminent manner, unless it means a peculiar race. When it is said to carry the Gods, it is said to have been the condition of a God by its being the representation of Prajapathi. The office of carrying is no blame to it, be-





cause it is its nature ; it thereby acquires an eminence as being connected with Gods and other superior beings. In the same manner the words Vaji, Arwa, etc. denote different races. The sea, which stands for the universal soul, is its companion, for, there is its dwelling place. The sea is its birth-place as the cause of its production. " In the waters is the birth place of the horse " says the Sruthi.

N.B.—" The Aswamedha and the Purushamedha (man-sacrifice), celebrated in the manner directed by this Veda (Suklayajur-veda) are not really sacrifices of horses and men. In the first, 609 animals of various prescribed kinds, domestic and wild, including birds, fish and reptiles are made fast; the tame ones to 21 posts and the wild ones in the intervals between the pillars ; and after certain prayers have been recited, the victims are let loose without injury. This mode of performing the Aswamedha and Purushamedha as emblematic ceremonies and not as real sacrifices, is taught in this Veda and the interpretation is confirmed by the rituals and by the commentators on the Samhitha and the Brahmana. The horse, which is the subject of the religious ceremony called Aswamedha, is also avowedly an emblem of Viraj or the primeval and universal manifested being"—*Colebrooke's Miscellaneous Essays*. Vol. I, 61, 62. [For fuller details consult Kathyayana-srautha soothra, the Satha-patha-brahmana, the Thaithireeya-brahmana, etc.]

51. *Kasi* :—The descendants of Kshathra-vrida, who came of the line of Ayus, the eldest son of Purooravas, held sway over the kingdom. From Saunaka, one of them, came into existence the four castes. Dhanvanthri, the son of Deerghathamas, arose from the ocean when it was churned for Amritha. Every one of his births found him omniscient and free from the ills and griefs that beset man. Through a boon conferred upon him by the Lord Narayana





in a previous birth, he was born in the line of the kings of Kasi. He revived among men the knowledge of the Science of Healing and composed many a work on it. In common with the Devas, he is entitled to a share in the sacrificial offerings. Prathardana was a king of this race—even he who learnt the Science of Brahman from Indra (Kausheethakee Upanishad III. I; Brahma-soothras I. 29.) Alarka, another of its kings, lived for 66,000 years through the grace of Lopamudra, the wife of Agasthya. It is he who immortalised himself by giving his eyes to a blind Brahmana; (this is to be understood in a symbolical sense, that the Brahmana was taught divine wisdom by the king and had his eye of spirit opened.) *V. P. IV. 8*

*Kekaya.* “There cannot be any doubt that Girivraja—the capital of the Kekayas—lay beyond the Jhelum on this side of the Indus. The word means ‘collection of hills’ and the town must be looked for somewhere in the Salt Range, which runs from the Jhelum to the Indus and beyond it. If a line were drawn, say from Jalalpur at the base of this range to Ayodhya on the Sarayu, it will be seen that Valmeeki’s description is exceedingly accurate and the old towns of Hasthinapura and Ahisthala will pretty nearly lie on it. Near this place (Jalalpur), there is an old fort called Girjhak, which has the same meaning as Girivraja, said to have been founded by Raja Bharata, who is so much associated with Girivraja, and showing unmistakable antiquity by yielding coins reaching back to the times of Alexander’s successors. I have therefore no hesitation in identifying it with our Girivraja.

“The question remains ‘who were the Kekayas?’ The Greeks do not mention any such name, but speak of a people called Kathaei, whom they place to the east of the Chenaub and describe in terms analogous to the Sauviras. I have already shown that the Greek ac-



count of the present of a tiger-like dog by Sophietes harmonizes with our poet's description of the ferocious dogs of the king of the Kekayas. Strabo says they were a handsome race and we know from the Ramayana that the king of Ayodhya was exceedingly partial to his Kekaya wife. The modern Kattis of Kathywar are tall and robust with fair complexion and are said to have emigrated to their present abode from the banks of the Indus. I am therefore strongly inclined to believe that they are the Kekayas of Sanskrit Literature. In the Mahabharatha, if I remember right, the Kekayas are never mentioned with the Saindhavas. In the Vishnupurana (IV. 14. 10), one of Krishna's aunts is said to have married a Kekaya king and in the Udyogaparva, the Kekayas are said to have fought with the Vrishnis on the side of Yudhishtira (15. 32). Can it not be that Krishna's migration to Dwarka in Kattywar from Mathura, on the Jumna was owing to a grant from the Kekya ruler of Kathywar?"—*Geography of Ancient India*.

33. *Sindhu-desa*.—"I have already stated that Sindhu desa meant the country of the upper Indus. This is clear from the writings of Kalidasa. We read in the Raghuvamsa that Rama made over this country to his brother Bharatha according to the instructions of his uncle Yudhajit and Bharatha conquered the Gandharvas and placed his sons Thaksha and Pushkala in charge of towns named after them—Takshasila and Pushkalavathi (*Raghuvamsa* XV. 87. 88). Both of these places are famous in Indian history—Pushkalavathi or Pushkaravathi in the form Peukelaotis or Peucolaitis and its shortened form Pushkala or Pushkara in the form Peukelas were known to Greek writers. It was the capital of Gandhara in the days of Alexander and Arrian in his *Indica* places it not far from the river Indus. It was visited by the celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tshang in Nov. 630, who came to Pu-se-kia-lo-fa-ti after crossing a great





river and travelling 100 *li.* to the north-east of Pu-lu-sha pulo (or Peshawar). General Cunningham in his *Ancient Geography of India*, page 50, comes to the conclusion on grounds described in his work, that it must have stood at Hastinagar on the Suat river. I would however place it to the north-east of Hastnagar about Bashkala given in some of the maps not only because it agrees in name, but also because Hindu writers place it on the Himalaya. The 37th Tharanga of the *Katha sarithasagara* describes the journey of a merchant of Ujjaini or Ojeen to this town, who travels northward and passes several rivers and forests; then comes to the country inhabited chiefly by Mlechhas specified as Tajiks and Turkomen; then crosses the river Vitasta (Behut) and goes into a hilly forest (evidently about the Salt Range); then arrives at Pushkaravati, which is thrice said to be on a summit of the Himalaya Range. The special mention of Tajiks shows that the writer was fully acquainted with this part of India and makes me reluctant to reject his testimony.

“The 27th Tharanga of the same describes the position of Takshasila and its former grandeur. It says ‘there was a town named Takshasila on the banks of the Vitasta in whose waters were reflected the images of its edifices. It had a devoted Buddhist King named Kalingadatta and an entirely Buddhist population rich by the blessings of Tara. The town shone with his uninterrupted rich *stupas* as if with summits of vanity, that there was no place like it.’ The Greek and Chinese accounts, however, make a more inland town at considerable distance from the Vitasta and I am, therefore, inclined to think that Vitasta is a misprint for Sudama or Suan river. General Cunningham (p. 119) identifies it with Shah-dheri and probably he is not far from truth.





"The description of Kalidasa is, in fact based on an older work—the Uttharakanda, which is interesting not only because giving full particulars, but also because distinctly laying down the country of the Gandharvas on both sides of the Indus and identifying western Gandharvas with the Gandharas of later literature—the Gandarae of Ptolemy, traces of which name may probably be still found in the Gundar-bar of the Punjab and the Gandgarh mountain to the north of it. I reproduce the material passages below, as they also give some description of the towns Takshasila and Pushkalavata. A slight allusion to this conquest of Gandharvas is also found in the *V. P. IV. 66*.

"The identity of Gandharva and Sindhu desa may be also seen from other considerations. It has been always famous for an excellent breed of horses. Among the presents to Bharata by the king of Kekayas, was a thousand of fire-footed horses of his country. (*V. R. II, 72, 33*). Among the valuable presents to Yudhishtira in the great Rajasooya festival, were several horses of Gandhara. (*M. B. Sabhaparva, 51, 10*). Hence in the *Amarakosa*, (*II, 8, 44*) we find both Saindhava and Gandharva as synonyms of horses.

"The Saindhava salt mentioned in the same book evidently refers to the rock-salt found in the Salt Range of mountains ; for it does not refer to sea-salt, as it is separately mentioned as *Samudra* Salt ; Manimantha is given as another synonym for *Saindhava* salt ; and the commentator Maheswara explains that it means 'produced in the mountain Manimantha' (which can only refer to the Salt Range). But the most convincing proof is a passage of the *Raghuvamsa* (*V. 73*) and that Saindhava is still understood by all salt-sellers of India as rock-salt. I have, therefore, no hesitation in identifying Manimantha with the Salt Range and in asserting that it stands within the old Sindhu desa. The Greeks call this range Oromenus, which is certainly not





connected with Raumaka as General Cunningham seems to think (p. 158). All Hindu authorities agree that Raumaka is the Sambar salt and Ruma is the salt mine (lake) of Sambher. *Hemachandra*, IV. 7.

"In the *M.B.*, I. 88. Gandhara is separately mentioned with its chief Subala, whose daughter Gandhari was married to Dhritharashtra, and Jayadratha figures as the head of Sindhu Sauveeras. There can therefore be no doubt that Sindhu in later literature, meant what Arrian understood by it—the country to the East of the Upper Indus or the province of Takshasila. There are other considerations corroborative of this inference. Jayadratha is said to belong to the same family of Ikshwakus to which Bharatha belonged (*M. B. Vanaparva* 265) and the train of princes that followed him to Salvastia belonged to the land of Sauveeras (*Ib.* 265, 266)—Sivis—Pulindas and Trigartas, who, as will be shown hereafter, were all bordering tribes."—*Geography of Ancient India*.

*Sauveera*—"From a passage of the *Adiparva* (137) they were a branch of the Gandharvas. Their land has given name to several things. First of all, Sauveera is the name of a drink which Amara in his II. 9, 39, identifies with *Kanji*, but which Bhavamisra describes separately (Part II, *Sandhana Varga*). Then, it is the name of a sulphide of antimony or lead used as a collyrium. (II. 9. 100). Lastly, it is a name of the Jujube fruit (II. 4. 36-37). In the *M. B.* Saindhavas and Sauveeras are promiscuously mentioned and as its Saindhavas meant the people to the east of the Indus and north of the Salt Range, the Sauveeras must have peopled the tract south of the Salt Range between the Indus and the Jhelum. I believe Sophistes of Alexander's historians was by common custom so called from the name of the Sauveeras he governed. At all events, the locality is the same and the story of the presentation of lion-fighting





dog receives confirmation in the Ramayana, according to which many tiger-like dogs were presented to Bharatha by the king of the Kekayas (II. 72). Hemachandra calls Sauveeras Kumalakas (IV. 26). Has the river Gomai which flows by Dera Ismail Khan any connection with this name? In illustrating *Panini's Sootra* IV. 2, 16, Vamana mentions of a town called Dattamitri in Sauveera. But, my knowledge is too limited to enable me to identify it with any modern place."—*Geography of Ancient India*.

**Saurashtra.**—"The peninsula of Kattywar was known as Anarta or Surashtra. (Harivamsa 5168). Hence Dwaraka is called in the *M. B. Udyoga-para* VII). Anartanagari or capital of Anarta.

It was also called Vrishnipura from the family of Vrishnis, to which Krishna belonged (*Vana-parva*. 183). Purushottama gives as its synonym Dvaravathi, Vanamalini and Abdhinagari or sea-town Trikanda-sesha). It must not be confounded with modern Dwaraka. The old Dwaraka was swept away by the sea. (*Vishnu Purana* V. 38). According to local tradition, it stood near Madhupura, 95 miles S. E. of Dwaraka. According to Sanskrit writers, Dwaraka stood near mount Raivathaka called also Ujjayantha (*Hemachandra* IV. 97). This Ujjayantha, from inscriptions and tradition, appears to be the Girinar hill near Junagarh. The local tradition about Dwaraka is therefore correct, as Madhupura is near the Girinar hill. This Madhupura appears to be the Madhupura mentioned in the *Harivamsa*—the old capital of Anarta and probably derives its name from the Madhus, who appear to have been a tribe that inhabited the peninsula (*Bhagavatha* I. 11).

"Balabhi appears to have been the next capital of the province (*Dasa-kumaracharitra*, VI). It seems to derive its name from Krishna's brother Balabhadra, as Baladeva Pattana occurs in the *Varahi Samhita* XIV. 16. Col. Tod





discovered its ruins at Balbi, 10 miles N. W. of Bhowanagar. In some of the inscriptions, kings of Balabhi are styled Lateswara, from which I gather that Lata was a dependency of Surashtra. This may be also gathered from the passage quoted from the Kumara-charita, as I identify Khetakapura with modern Kaira.

"Among other places, I must not omit Prabhasa, the celebrated place of pilgrimage. From *M. B. Vanaparva*, 88, it is clear that it was in Surashtra and stood on the sea-coast. In the *Gada-Parva*, a legend is given explaining the name that Soma (the moon) got rid of his consumption by bathing at Prabhasa. I quote this legend to show its possible connection with Somanatha-pattana, which is also a sea-side town in the S. W. of Surashtra and a great place of pilgrimage. Here the Yadavas are said to have killed one another in a drinking carousal.—*Geography of Ancient India*.

53. 34. *Culinary art*.—Treats of the origin of eatable objects, their qualities, properties, defects, taste, etc., and about the various methods of preparing them. Nala, the ruler of Ayodhya and Bheema, one of the Pandavas were the highest exponents of the art.

54. 13. *Discussions* :—*Kausika-srautha-soothra XXXVIII*. 17 (Darila's commentary), tells us that the following manthra (*Atharva Veda* I. 34) was intended to win victories in polemical discussions during the Aswamedha rite. The intending winner should approach the assembly from the N. W. chewing the leaf or the flower or the berry or the fruit or the root of the Madhooka tree ; while he should recite mentally the following verses :—

1. "This Oshadi (medicinal herb of occult properties was born along with madhu (honey). We dig you up with madhu. You arise from madhu. Make us obtain the madhu-

2. "May madhu spring from the root and the tip of my tongue. You shall act up to my orders entirely.





3. "May my entering the assembly be sweet (madhura). May my going out of the assembly be sweet. May every word that I speak fall sweetly on the ears of the listeners. May I appear sweet to those that look upon me. I am sweeter than madhu. I am sweeter than the tree from which the madhu springs. You shall be charmed by me even as your heart is drawn towards the branch dropping honey."

17. *Uma*. The consort of Mahadeva.

21. *Chandrayana*. A religious observance or expiatory penance regulated by the moon's age. (It consists in diminishing the daily consumption of food every day by one mouthful for the dark half of the month beginning with 15 at the full moon, until the quantity is reduced to zero at the new moon, and then increasing it in like manner during the fortnight of the moon's increase; if this penance begins with the full moon, it is called Pipeelika-madhyā, *i. e.* having the middle thin like an ant; if with the new moon beginning with zero and increasing to 15, it is called Yava-madhyā or Yava-madhyama *i. e.* having the middle thick like a barley-corn).

38. *The Great Bear*:—Mareechi, Vasishtha, Angiras Athri, Pulasthya, Pulaha and Krathu are the Rishis that preside over it. They appear in the sky thus:—

6	5		x
x	x		1
x	x	x	x
7	4	3	2

(*Bh. XII. 2*).

56. 5. The Prajapathi gave out the Aswamedha to the world.—*Sruthi*.

57. 1. Dasaratha performed the horse-sacrifice that burnt away all sins that might stand between him and progeny; Brahma and the other Devas who form as it were the members of the Kosmic Person were pleased thereby.





He next remembered that Sumanthra had advised him to conduct a rite to ensure him a son and thereby worship the Lord, the Giver of all. Hence, his prayer to Rishyasringa.

58. 1. The Lord incarnated as man to protect the righteous ; and Dasaratha's prayers formed but the visible cause thereto. The devas took advantage of the occasion to appeal to his mercy and protection against the fierce and pitiless Rakshasas.

8. *Atharvana manthras* :—Food is cooked in eight pot-sherds made of eight different earths ; and it is offered to father Agni with the manthra—*Yasyaithwam sukrithe jathavedo lokam agne krinavasyonam. Asinam saputhrinam veeravantham gomantham rayim nachethi's wasthi. Dattaka-meemamsa* quotes the *Thaitthireeya Samhitha*, Kanda II, Prapathaka ii, Anuvaka 4, where the Puthreshti is described thus :

He who desires an offspring should offer a Purodasa to Agni in eight pot-sherds and to Indra in eleven. Agni gives offspring to the sacrificer ; Indra increases them.

*Kausika Kalpa-soothra* XXXV. 3. directs that the following manthra (*Atharvaveda* II. 23) should be used to secure the birth of a son :—

1. "We remove the causes from you that have made you childless. We have placed them far from you.

2. " May a son enter your womb even as the arrow comes back into the quiver. May a warrior be born of you ten months hence.

3. " Bring forth a son. May another be born after him. May they beget offspring.

4. " May you give birth to a son even as bulls bring forth calves of cows. May you be the mother of many, even as a cow who is the mother of many calves.





5. "I perform this Ishti to Prajapathi for your benefit. May a son find his way to your womb. Be blessed with a son. All good be thine. You shall be the source of good even unto him who is born of you.

6. "May those Oshadhis (occult herbs) bless you with a son, even they whose father is the Akasa, whose mother is the earth and whose birth place is the ocean.

*Kausika Kalpasoothra* XXXV 8 informs us that the following Manthra (*Atharva-veda* VI 2) is to be used to secure the birth of a male offspring. An Arani should be made of the Aswattha and the Sami wood; and the woman who desires a son to be born to her should be purified variously with the fire generated therefrom.

1. "The Aswatha is upon the Sami. A son is about to be generated. We mean to secure to this woman the bliss of begetting a son.

2. The vital energy that springs in the man finds its way into the woman. It is even what is known as the begetting of a son. Prajapathi says that it is so.

3. Prajapathi, Anumathi and Sineevali brought into existence the foetus. May they put away barrenness from this woman and place a son in her womb."

*Kausika Kalpasoothra* XXXV. 17 directs that the following manthra (*Atharva-veda* VII. 19) should be recited, when the offering is made into the lap of the woman during the Puthreshthi.

"Prajapathi creates these creatures. Dhatha gave them unanimity and oneness of thought. May the Devatha that confers all good give unto me what is good."

14. *Approached* :—The *Adhyatma Ramayana* II and *Raghuvamsa* X. 6 narrate how the goddess of earth was unable to bear the iniquities of Ravana and his Rakshasas; and sought the protection of Brahma in the shape of a cow,





He took her and the Devas to where Mahavishnu reclined in his yogic sleep on Adishesha in the Ocean of milk and poured forth into him their tale of woe and suffering.

15. *Ravana* :—For a detailed account of his birth, antecedents, boons, conquests etc., *vide V. R.* III. 32, 47, 48, 49 ; VII 2-35.

59. 17. *The Conch* :—The Kausthubha gem that shines upon his breast is but the Knowledge of Self purified of all taint of Prakrithi and its three gunas. The mole Sreevathsa that graces his broad breast is Pradhana, otherwise known as Prakrithi. The principle of Buddhi is his man ; the five elements are the conch ; the senses are his bow, Saranga so called ; the mind is his chakra, by name Sudarsana. The rudiments of the five elements (Thanmanthras) are the gems that shine resplendent in Vijayanthi, the garland around his neck. The knowledge of Brahman hidden at times within the scabbard of Agnana (nescience) is Nandaka, his sword. So Purusha, Prakrithi, Buddhi, Ahankara, the five elements, the senses, the Manas, knowledge, ignorance and the rest manifest themselves in his form as weapons and graces and watch over the welfare of the universe.—*V. P. I.* 22.

28. *Hree*.—Sree and Keerthi were the three daughters of Daksha, the Patriarch.

“The Goddesses Hree and Lakshmi are your consorts”  
—*Purusha-sooktha*.

38. *Only stay* :—“Why do you prefer your appeal to me when there is Brahma and Rudra who would do as well ?”

“Nay, Lord, but Ravana has tied their hands by having made them grant many mighty boons, securing to him length of years past count, and immeasurable might.”





60. 2. *Ravana*.—was killed by Rama, Indrajith by Lakshmana, the wicked Gandharvas by Bharatha and Lavana by Sathrugna.

13. *Promised* :—The Lord of the Angels, though the fountain of wisdom and the soul of compassion, desires that his children, the individual selves, should call upon him to protect them. That was why he waited for the Devas to take refuge in him before he pledged himself to their deliverance.

23. *The Rudras* :—The Lord of Kailasa accompanied Brahma and the Devas on their momentous errand.

61. 5. *Most effective method* :—"You wanted me to take birth of Dasaratha. Well ; is it in my divine capacity of Upendra or as a man among men ?" asks the Lord, to honour those that sought his help.

31. *Presence* :—The Lord himself came out of the sacrificial fire, with the Payasa permeated by his divine thejas. For, who else was there to bear it?—*Thilaka*. But, *Adh R. III* and *A. R. I. i* tell us that the Lord of Fire brought the Payasa to Dasaratha.

63. 5. *Equally* :—Kausalya and Kaikeyee spared a portion of their share to Sumithra, their hand-maiden—*Bhattikavya* ; *Adh. R. III*.

Once upon a time, the Apsaras Suvarchala was dancing before Brahma, when she chanced to make a slip out of sheer carelessness. Brahma took it upon himself to pronounce the karma that was waiting for her to take up and cursed her to be born a vulture. She fell at his feet and sobbed out an appeal for mercy. "Nay, nay, there is no recalling my words. But, rejoice to know that the curse will sit upon you only until the time when the Lord shall go down to the dark earth as Sree Rama to protect his children. King Dasaratha, his father, will distribute the divine Payasa to his wives. You will snatch Kaikeyee's portion from her



hands ere she tastes it and fling it down on mount Anjana. Your curse will fall away from you and you will take your place among us once more."

Everything fell out as he predicted; and Kausalya and Sumithra kindly spared some of their portion of the Payasa to Kaikeyee. Meanwhile, that which was flung on Mount Anjana by the vulture fell into the hollowed palms of Anjana, a she monkey, who was performing dread thapas there, all to be blessed with a fair son. She partook of it and Hanuman was born in consequence. Bharatha and Sathrughna were born respectively from the portion taken from those of Kausalya and Sumithra.—A. R. I I.

9. *Period of pregnancy* :—Vasishtha enjoined Dasaratha to satisfy the desires of their hearts. "For," said he "they will pine away if denied what their hearts are fixed upon; and that naturally reacts upon the babe within. But, if the period passes in calm content, with no desire unfulfilled, they will give birth to sons gifted with length of years." That very night, Dasaratha sought the apartments of Kaikeyee, the idol of his heart, and said "My heart will know no peace until I have satisfied your most cherished yearning." And to him, the slave of passion, spoke Kaikeyee, "Lord of Ayodhya ! I crave nothing more than to see the son born of my loins on the throne of Kosala, and Kausalya's brat exiled far far away in the dark forests." The king next repaired to the palace of Sumithra and put to her the same question. "Lord of my life" was her reply "nothing would content me but to see my son wait upon the prince to whom the happy Kausalya will give birth; and be it his privilege to carry out the behests of the future ruler of men. My reverence and love to Kausalya shall broaden out even as the mighty Ganga. And, last but not the least, may I continue to find favour in your eyes even to the very end."





Dasaratha next took himself to the presence of Kausalya and offered her the same choice. But, she checked him with mild caution. "Lord! All my thoughts are bound up in the desire that the child in my womb should come out of it safe and reign over his subjects for unnumbered years. Have you forgotten how we escaped from the very jaws of death even on the day of our marriage, when the dread Ravana sought our destruction?" No sooner was the name of Ravana uttered by Kausalya, than the babe in the womb cried out in fury, "Lakshmana! Bring me my bow and shafts this very instant. I will rid the earth of that monster and place Vibheeshana on the throne. Look to it that a bridge is thrown across the sea where the Rakshasa lives. My friends the monkeys are bound to be there in no time." Kausalya fainted away with sheer fright. Dasaratha sent for Vasishtha in hot haste to lay the evil spirit that, as he believed, afflicted her sore. But, the wise one heard him with patience, laid his head on the ground in lowly obeisance to the Lord of the Universe that abode in the womb of the thrice-blessed Kausalya.

64. 1. The birth and exploits of the famous monkey chiefs mentioned in this chapter find a more detailed treatment in Kandas IV, V, VI and VII.

65. 31. *Rikshawan* :—The modern Satpuras, between the rivers Narmada and Tapti— *M. B. Vanaparva*, 61-21.

*V. P.* II. iii, 11 tells us that the rivers Payoshini, Thapi, and Nirvindhya take their rise in it. Thapi or Thapani or Thapanathmaja, was called in later times Tapti. Payoshini is now known as Poorna and falls into the Tapti.

*M. B. Vanaparva* 40 ; 120. 31; 121. 16; locates the Vidharbha-desa south of the Narmada. This river is considered to have a peculiar sanctity (*Ib.* 88. 9). Nirvindhya is the river referred to in *Kalidasa's Meghadoota* I. 29.



Mailinatha, the commentator, describes it as rising in the Vindhyas and taking a northerly course east of Ujjain. It might be that it is the modern Parvathi that we find there. Some Puranas describe it as having its source in the Vindhyas ; so, it might be by a slip that it is described as having its origin in the Rikshawan mountains.

15. The curse of Parvathi (V. R. I. 36) prevented the Devas from begetting offspring upon their legitimate wives. Hence, the origin of the monkey hosts from Gandharvas, Vidhyadharas and Apsaraas. Besides, the curse of Nandikeswara (V. R. 5) made the Devas take monkey forms.

Q :—But then, how could it be said that Vali came down upon earth to render help to Sree Rama in his great work ?

A :—His son Angada served Rama long and well. Nay, but for Vali's quarrel with Sugreeva, Rama would not have come into contact with the latter. Vali was the foe of Sugreeva ; and Rama had to help him and in return receive help from his monkey hosts. If Rama had sought the friendship of Vali, he would have restored Seetha to him in no time, for Ravana was in mortal terror of Vali. But, that was not what Sree Rama came down for. Ravana and his hosts would not have been wiped off the face of the earth. All the Devas created sons out of their essence, all except Mahadeva, who, as Ravana's Ishta-devatha (tutelary deity) would have no hand in his downfall.

D :—The Devas came to Dasaratha's hall of sacrifice after Rishyasringa began his Puthreshti. The Lord's appearance among them and the coming down of the Gods on earth are described as subsequent events. But, we are told that Vali and Sugreeva were mighty kings when Ravana was on his tour of conquest ; Mainda and Dwivida were present at the churning of the ocean. Krodhana fought for the





Devas against the Asuras. Then, how are the above facts to be reconciled with the statement of their having been born only a short time before the Lord came down as Sree Rama?

A :—The commands of Brahma—"Bring forth mighty sons out of your essence"—was of a general nature. But, the poem narrates the birth of Vali and Sugreeva even as it describes the origin of Jambavan in the far past, even at the very beginning of this kalpa. It is not to be understood that all the monkey-chiefs mentioned in the chapter were begotten simultaneously. Only such of the Gods carried out the behests of Brahma as had not done it before.

67. 23. *Chose to take human form* :—Ambareesha, king of Ayodhya, had a lovely daughter by name Sreemathi. Narada, the Devarshi and Parvatha his nephew, one day chanced to pay a visit to him. Narada noticed Sreemathi, who stood by her father's side and said, "Ambareesha! Who is this child? There is very little of this universe that I have not visited time and oft, but, believe me when I say that this spot holds the loveliest form that Brahma ever fashioned." To which Ambareesha replied with a joyful heart and reverently clasped hands, "Holy one! She calls me her father; and the world knows her as Sreemathi. She is about to take upon herself the duties of a wife, if she could get a husband after her own heart." Meanwhile Parvatha, the younger of the two, was no less smitten with the beauty of the princess; but he offered silent homage at the shrine of love. The same thought flashed across the minds of both—to ask Sreemathi of her father in marriage. Just before they took leave of the king, Narada took him apart and said to him earnestly, "I request a mighty favour from you—even the hand of your charming daughter in marriage." But, Ambareesha replied, "You cannot honour me more than by deigning





to bless my daughter thus. But, I have no heart to fetter her choice, and she will, as I sincerely hope and pray, give you her heart and her hand. Parvatha waited till Narada had taken his leave of Ambareesha and started on his journey, to make to him the same proposals as his uncle did. Ambareesha gave him a similar reply and added, "But, your uncle too would have me give her in marriage to him. Equally dear to me are both of you and worthy of reverence. And it were best that I left the solution of this enigma to the dictates of my girl's heart." Parvatha promised to come back the next day and his uncle with him.

Strange indeed was it to see Narada and Parvatha caught in the toils of earthly love, albeit they were high on the path of perfection and were dear to the Lord. But, stranger still are the ways of Karma and more mysterious. Narada went to Vaikuntha, saluted the Dweller thereof and related to Him his visit to Ambareesha, his unaccountable passion for the princess and prayed, "Lord! I would crave of you a favour. Parvatha would be here to-morrow. I pray that you give him a hideous baboon-face. But, Sreemathi alone should see him so, and flee from him in horror and loathing. Then, I will have the field clear and fear no rivals." "Be it so," replied Govinda with a smile and Narada hied back to Ayodhya on the wings of joy. Later on, Parvatha sought the persence of the Lord and confided to him the secret of his heart and prayed "Lord! I seek no greater favour at your hands than to make the face of Narada as repulsive as that of a gorilla. Sreemathi would go into fits at the sight of him, and prefer me as her husband." "May your heart's desire be fulfilled" replied the Lord. "Narada is even now on his way to Ayodhya. Manage to be there in time. Let not Narada know of your visit to me."

King Ambareesha was duly informed of the visit of the





holy sages ; he caused his capital to the gaily attired, and received Narada and Parvatha with divine honors. Then, Sreemathi was sent for ; she came to the hall of audience, breaking upon their vision like some sweet dream of beauty. Ambareesha called her to his side and said "Darling of my heart ! Here are Narada, the divine sage and Parvatha, his nephew, to seek your hand in holy wedlock. I leave it to you to choose one of them and throw the garland in your hands around the shoulders of the fortunate one. Sreemathi approached the sages, looked long and earnestly at them and stood as it purified. "Why, my child ! Art struck dumb with their radiant lustre engendered of unparalleled thapas?" "Nay, father !" replied Sreemathi, as if roused from a horrible dream, "Narada and Parvatha, the holy ones—where are they ? I see them not ; but there stand before me two men one with the face of a baboon and the other with the features of a gorilla. My heart is turned into water at the frightful sight. But, the resplendent Form between them attracts unto itself my life, my soul, my very being. He looks no older than a youth of sixteen, fair as the rain-charged clouds lighted by the fires of heaven, adorned with every grace of nature and device of art, his massive arms well-shaped reaching down to his knees, his broad eyes of rosy hue even as the petals of the full-blown lotus, he beckons to me with his right hand to come and take my place by his side." *Narada*. (with a shade of suspicion) "Just tell me how many hands he has." *Sreemathi*, "Two." *Parvatha*, "Do you notice any thing peculiar on his breast ? Has he any thing in his hands ?" S. "A resplendent garland adorns his broad breast ; and a mighty bow and arrows are his only weapons." Then, the sages were at a loss to make out who the unwelcome rival was. "Whose witchery is this ? None but Janardana, the master of illusion,





There came between us and the object of our desire. It is he and no other. Else, why should our features appear to the lovely princess hideous beyond description? They were lost in dejected thought, when Ambareesha turned to them and said. "This deep reverie betokens not the eagerness and anxiety of a lover. If you have a mind to make my daughter your wife, why not go about it, the right way and the straight?" They flared up at this accusation of unfair dealing and cried out, "Crookedness of ways and double-dealing is yours to command; we have neither art nor part in it. We are quite willing that your daughter should choose one of us for her husband, and small blame to us if she doesn't see her way to it." Ambareesha was non-plussed; he ordered Sreemathi, a trifle too severely than was necessary, to choose one of the two as her husband. Poor girl! She bowed herself in thought to the deity of her heart and in mortal dread of the terrible curse of the Rishis, took up the garland and raised her eyes with fear and trembling to the faces of her unwelcome suitors. She found them more repulsive than ever; and impelled to it by some unaccountable force within herself, she threw the garland around the shoulders of the glorious Presence that sat between them. Right away she disappeared from the ken of men; and the vast concourse of people raised a shout of wonder and apprehension at it. Births out of count had she passed through in earnest prayer and thapas to be blessed with Lord Vishnu as her husband. She was born as Sreemathi and had her desires accomplished.

Meanwhile, Parvatha and Narada took their way to Vaikuntha in deep dejection of heart, dashed with a shade of suspicion in it. The Lord saw them approach and directed Sreemathi, who was by his side, to take herself away for a time from their sight. Narada saluted Vishnu





and cried out, "Lord ! Surely it becomes you not. What have we done unto you, that you should put us to such disgrace and blacken our faces so in the hall of audience at Ayodhya ? Full well do we know that you and you alone have spirited away Sreemathi from our midst ; no other dare do it." Govinda closed his ears with his hands and exclaimed in horrified tones "Narada ! What sacrilege is this ? You call yourself a Devarshi and rave like some moon struck lover !" Narada came near and whispered, "But, how did I happen to come by the hideous baboon face." To which Narayana replied as softly, "Narada ! May be, you know not that Parvatha preferred to me a similar request. Now, what would you have me do ? You are equally dear to me and could I refuse either ? I made no difference between you, but gave what you asked without stint. Verily, you do not blame me for fulfilling the wishes and prayers of those that seek refuge of me." But, Narada interrupted him with, "Let be. There was a stranger between us, a glorious Presence with two arms and bows and arrows to grace them, who made away with Sreemathi, our intended bride. Just tell us who he might be." And Vasudeva spake back calmly, "The world holds many such as answer to your description, mighty magicians, masters of the arts of illusion. May be some one of them has abducted Sreemathi. Four-armed I am, with conch and discus gracing them ; you ever know me as such. Do you not ?" The sages were convinced. "Surely, we did wrong to suspect you of any complicity in this affair. We ought to have remembered that you are the same to all beings, high and low, friend and foe. That Ambareesha is at the bottom of this. He is not minded to give his daughter to such poor hermits as we, and has taken refuge in this disreputable trick to cheat us. Well, we will show him that we are poor in the world's





goods, but make up for it in spiritual might and super-human powers." They took respectful leave of Madhava and went back to where Ambareesha was at Ayodhya.

With flaming eyes and wounded hearts, they shot out a dreadful curse upon the innocent king. "You passed your word to give your daughter in marriage to one of us. You got us down to your place. You raised fond hopes in us which you were all the while planning to shatter. You gave your daughter to another and by your arts of illusion you took her from our sight. Even so, the utter darkness of ignorance shall wrap you in its impenetrable folds; and you shall not recognise yourself". And all at once the darkness of midnight wrapped him in its dread coils. But, Narada and his nephew had counted without their host, for, lo! the flaming discus of the Lord appeared on the scene. It had orders to watch with sleepless care over the safety of Ambareesha and make short work of any that dare harm him. The dark horror that was choking Ambareesha was choked in its turn by the arrows of light short from the flaming discus. It had to let go Ambareesha and turned upon its senders. They took to flight, their curse at their heels in hot chase and the discus behind the darkness consuming it ever. Thus, they fled north and south, west and east, above and below, right up to the Lokaloka mountain, even to the utter-most limits of the world-egg. But, the circle of fire was behind them, calm, consuming, remorseless. Then, the sages, miserable past expression, cried out, "Woe unto us! What have we of pure vows and serene thoughts to do with the love of woman? We degraded ourselves from the calm levels of spiritual life and have got but what we deserve." They flew back to Vaikuntha into the presence of the Lord, clasped His feet with streaming eyes and cried out, "Lord of all! Fountain of mercy! protect us. Great Father! save





us. Vasudeva looked down upon them with a pitying heart and an inscrutable smile. He motioned the darkness and the discus away and raising the poor suppliants, said in gentle tones that sank deep into their hearts, "Narada ! Parvatha ! Dear unto me are both of you ; but, Ambareesha is not less so. I could not stand by and see any one of you come to grief. My chakra caused you all this trouble and discomfort in the discharge of its duty to Ambareesha. I crave pardon at your hands." Narada and Parvatha reflected long and deeply over the whole affair and awoke to the conclusion that it was but the outcome of the Lord's illusion. And, in a fit of uncontrollable anger, they shook their hands at Him and cried "Janardana ! *You took to yourself by cunning, all unmeet, her upon whom we had set our hearts. You made our faces hideous to behold before her whom we wanted to win by our graces of body and mind. It was you that trapped us into cursing poor Ambareesha. It was you that set at us the darkness and the flaming discus. Now, your acts shall reach upon your own head. You shall be born as son to Dasaratha in the line of the very Ambareesha who was cursed through you. You shall take the very form with which you managed to cloud the senses of Sreemathi. The girl will be born as the daughter of the goddess of earth ; but, king Janaka of Videha will find her out and bring her up as his own. You used your powers of illusion to abduct our intended bride even like an unprincipled Rakshasa. So, a Rakshasa shall carry away by force the wife of your heart. You wrung our hearts by depriving us of the woman who was to us more than life itself. So, you shall suffer the pangs of separation from your wife and the forests shall ring with your cries.*" But, the Lord of Peace said to them with a smile of ineffable sweetness, "Holy ones! Upon my head and eyes be it





to fulfil your commands. When were the words of such as you known to fail? Dasaratha will surely come in the line of king Ambareesha, and I will not fail to go down upon earth as Sree Rama, the eldest son of Dasaratha. Bharatha shall be my right arm and Sathrughna the left, while this Sesa on whom I recline, shall go with me as Lakshmana. And thou discuss! Let these go unscathed. And thou darkness! come to me when I take birth as man. Go away from Ambareesha." Narada and Parvatha, now that their fit of insane fury passed away, were filled with unspeakable grief and remorse. "Fie upon us!" cried they "we swear by everything we hold sacred and holy, never to harbour the thought of woman, nay, the dimmest suspicion of it in our hearts"; and they sought the wildest recesses of the Himalayas to expiate the results of their folly in long and stern thapas—*Adb. R. IV.*

Once upon a time, in the Thretha-yuga, there lived a Brahmana, Kausika by name, who was a master-musician; he devoted his time, his talents and his resources to glorify the Lord and his works to the sweet strains of music. Padmaksha, another Brahmana who lived in the same part of the country, was an ardent admirer of Kausika; he lavished his great wealth upon the musician and saw that he wanted for nothing. Soon, the fame of Kausika spread far and wide; and disciples came to sit at his feet and learn.

One day, the ruler of Kalinga paid him a visit and was mightily pleased with him. "Sing of me" commanded he "you and your pupils. For my name will be crystallised in immortality by being set in your wonderful strains."

"Nay, your Majesty" mildly replied Kauseka "I sing but of the Giver of good." Vasishtha, Gauthama, Aruni, Sarasvathee, Vesya, Chitramala and Sisu assured the king





that theirs noble master would not use his divine gift to any other pupose. "Is it even so?" cried he "Well, my poets are not so fastidious. You shall hear them sing my glories." But, Kausika and his disciples said to one another, "Our ears, that have till now been used to listen to the recital of the ineffable glory of the Lord, shall not be polluted with ungodly sounds. Our tongues shall henceforth utter no word lest we may be tempted or forced to sing of puny mortals"; forthwith they closed their ears with pieces of wood and cut off the tips of their tongues. The king was enraged at this open defiance of his authority and drove them out of the country, while their wordly goods went to enrich his coffers.

When the time came for them to shuffle off this mortal coil, Brahma commanded the Devas and the Regents of the worlds to welcome them with divine honors and escort them to his Sathyaloka. From there they were conducted in high pomp to Vaikuntha. The Lord welcomed them with every mark of joy and honour and related to those around his throne the high deeds of Kausika and his disciples that won for them the worlds of light. "Kausika" said he "your unbounded devotion to me and your recital of my glories, not to speak of the countless souls you have led unto my feet, have earned for you the proud distinction of being one of the leaders of my angelic hosts. Dikbala shall be your name and you will ever stay by my side. And you, Padmaksha! shall succeed to the office of Kubera, the lord of wealth, in that you have placed at the disposal of my elect your untold riches freely and without stint." There was high festival held in Vaikuntha to do honor to Kausika and his disciples. Thumburu, the Gandharva, was commanded to sing before the Lord, and he excelled himself on the occasion. Meanwhile, the Great Mother entered the presence to hear the music of Thumburu





and to have a sight of Kausika and the others so dear to her mother's heart. Her attendants cleared the way for her ; and Brahma, Rudra and Mahendra had to stand aside until she passed by. But, Narada paid no heed to the command and was haled out by the waiting-women who spared him not. Envy and jealousy of Thumburu, the fortunate singer, dug their brazen talons deep into his heart. The honors and rewards so profusely lavished upon the Gandharva were so many streams of molten lead poured into his eyes. Smarting under the blows and insults of the hand-maidens, he turned upon Lakshmi and shook his fist at her. And when she was coming back from the presence, he planted himself square across her way and cried, " The favoured consort of the Lord, you, above all, should avoid the least disrespect to a Brahmana. Like a brutal Rakshasa you set your minions at me, a Brahmana and a Rishi ; and it is but just that you should be born of the Rakshasas. You caused *me* to be put out of this hall ; likewise a Rakshasi will put *you* out of the city."

The worlds trembled in affright at this dread curse launched against the Mother of Mercy ; the countless hosts of the Shining Ones cried out " Alas !" Narada came to his senses ; the fit of insane fury that had possessed him passed away and left him sad, weak, and supremely repentant. " Woe is me ! I am lost. I laid myself open to anger and have uttered a curse on the Mother of all. Thumburu stands immeasurably above me in that he has found favour in the eyes of the Lord and is chosen to sing in His presence. I did not recognise that I was all unfit to remain in that audience where the Mother of Mercy presided ; I was rightly driven out." He was raving like a maniac, bemoaning his fate ; when the Lord came to where he was, attracted by the news of the unprecedented curse pronounced against His consort. Then, Lakshmi bowed in





reverence to Narada and said in accents of gentle pity "Holy One ! It is my care to see that your words are fulfilled even to the letter. But, I pray you grant me a favour. A Rakshasi shall drink of a vessel in which has been stored the blood of the holy Rishis drop by drop ; and I shall be born of her womb." And, Narada feebly replied " Be it so."

One day Ravana, the Rakshasa king, came to the forests of Dandaka and chanced to pass by the hermitages of the holy Rishis shining in the splendour of their thapas. "Of a truth, I cannot, in conscience, call myself the conqueror of the three worlds if these acknowledge me not as their lord and master. But, there is neither fame nor profit in the useless massacre of these poor devils." So, he went to them and said "I am Ravana, the Rakshasa king of Lanka. The three worlds acknowledge my sway; and you have not yet made a formal recognition of it. You shall pay me yearly tribute of the things you hold most precious." "We are not rich" replied they "in the world's goods; and they are generally held as most acceptable to kings. Our life-blood is the only precious thing we have about us and that we are prepared to offer up to you." The idea tickled Ravana's fancy; it was the strangest of all tributes he had received till then; and its very strangeness made it all the more valuable in his eyes. "Ah ! *That* I shall have and it is a right royal tribute to me, the Terror of the worlds. I give you credit for the supreme originality of the conception." Forthwith, he drew a drop of blood with the point of his arrow from the wasted frame of every one of the Rishis of Dandaka and departed in high glee with the precious vessel holding the strangest tribute ever paid by a subject to his king. He gave strict orders to his servants to have it carefully preserved, for, said he in warning "It contains the deadliest of poisons ever known to man or God,





Asura or Rakshasa." Now, one of the Rishis of Dandaka, Grishamada by name had a hundred sons and no daughter. His wife made his life weary with her ceaseless complaints at this cruel stoke of Destiny. So, he set himself to pray to Mahalaksmi that she should deign to be born as his daughter and at the close of each day's prayer poured a drop of very powerfully magnetised milk into a pitcher. As it chanced, he was not in his hermitage when Ravana paid them a visit. The Rakshasa used that very pitcher to hold the blood tribute paid to him by the Rishis, for he found no Rishi in the cottage and decided to attach as a tribute the most valuable object there—the pitcher.

Mandodari, the queen of Ravana, had long observed with an ever-growing grief of heart that her husband was growing more and more estranged from herself ; his heart was not with her ; he was ever wandering about the worlds ; and every time he failed not to bring back a choice collection of the fairest and the most lovely women he could find anywhere. Life grew a torture to her ; and in a fit of despondency she rushed into the room where the deadly poison was so carefully preserved and quaffed it to the last drop. But, she was struck dumb with surprise to see that instead of the instant death that she bargained for, she gave birth to a girl of dazzling lustre. "I am lost" cried she in dismay, "It is a long time since my lord has been away ; and if it should come to his ears that I conceived in his absence and gave birth to a girl, he will most naturally conclude that I have gone after strange men and will put me to a horrible death." So, she set out in her aerial car as if on a pilgrimage to Kurukshethra, where she buried the girl deep beneath the earth ; and purifying herself by a bath in the holy Sarasvathi, returned to Lanka. (Parvathi had conferred a boon upon the Rakshasa women that they





should conceive and forthwith give birth to a child which would grow at once to the age and size of the mother).

Long after, Janaka, ruler of Videha came there and began a sacrifice in the Jangala country. During the preliminary rites, he was ploughing the sacrificial ground and throwing out the herbs and weeds that grew upon it, when he came upon a lovely girl. He stood aghast at the strange find, but a voice from above dispelled his doubts. "Janaka! Take this girl unto your heart and home; your daughter is she from this moment. She is to be the centre and visible channel of mighty world-activities and will bring down joy, peace and prosperity to the worlds. Seetha shall be her name, as she sprang up from the furrow (seetha).—*Ib.* V.VI.VIII. [Thus Seetha is more truly the daughter of Ravana than of Janaka.]

Once upon a time Mahadeva fought with the Asura Jalandhara long and fiercely; but, all his energy, strength and tactics were wasted upon his foe, who grew all the more strong and fierce. Then, Parvathi, the wife of Siva, said to Vishnu, her brother "You know that Jalandhara owes his invincibility to the utter and flawless chastity of his wife Brinda." Vishnu caught her meaning and forthwith repaired to where Brinda abode. That night the lady dreamt that her husband was riding south on an ox his naked body smeared with oil; and later on, he was seen as a headless corpse sinking into a horrible darkness. She awoke with a shuddering heart and roamed about the town, but could find no relief. She sought the lovely gardens in the suburbs and with two hand-maidens to accompany her, was passing through the dimly lit groves and arbors, when two Rakshasas of frightful mien burst upon her sight; affrighted beyond measure, she ran hither and thither to escape the horror and came upon a





sage lost in meditation, with countless disciples respectfully waiting upon him. She sought refuge with him, clung to his neck and cried "Soul of mercy ! Save me. O ! Save me." The Holy One came out of his Samadhi and glancing an eye of pity at the trembling suppliant, calmed her wild fears and drove away the approaching Rakshasas with a terrible Hum. Brinda, beside herself with gratitude, joy and wonder, fell at his feet and exclaimed "Lord ! I entreat you to put an end to this frightful suspense. Jalandharasura, my husband, is even now carrying on a terrible fight with Mahadeva. Your opened eye will give me the surest and the speediest news of his welfare." The Rishi glanced upwards and two monkeys came down from the sky and touched his feet with their heads. He made them a sign, whereupon they vanished from sight and returned in a moment with the severed head and arms of the redoubtable Jalandhara. Brinda swooned away at the sight. The Rishi sprinkled her with the water in his pitcher, when she came back to consciousness and cried with a breaking heart, "Master of compassion ! you alone have power to restore my husband to life and to me." To which the sage replied "Noble lady ! It is not given to every one to bring back to life the object of the wrath of Mahadeva. But, my heart melts at your intolerable grief ; have your wish ;" and forthwith he and his disciple disappeared from view. Jalandhara stood before her as one awakened from deep slumber ; they returned to their capital in inexpressible joy and spent a long time of happiness.

One day she awoke from sleep by the side of her husband only to find Mahavishnu in his full glory occupying the place of Jalandhara. A storm of fury shook her whole frame when she realised that she was made the unconscious dupe and tool of the Lord of Vaikuntha. "Vishnu, you soul of perfidy ! You have perpetrated this iniquity through your unparal-





feled powers of illusion. Well, there is no crime that you are not up to ; your hellish ingenuity has compassed the ruin of my spotless chastity ; my lord Jalandhara was done to death in consequence. Ah ! my eyes are opened and I see you in at your true colours. You are the sanctimonious hypocrite, that villain of a Rishi whom I met in the gardens. Your disciples are Garuda and his brethren. The two monkeys who came down at your call are but Punyaseela and Suseela, the angels of your presence. The Rakshasas who drove me mad with affright are no other than Jaya and Vijaya, your door-keepers. But, you shall not escape the just wrath of one whose feet have never strayed from the path of virtue. These Jaya and Vijaya shall go down upon earth as Rakshasas and shall carry away with violence and outrage the wife of your heart. Misery, more than that which falls to the lot of man, shall crush you with iron grip and the forests will resound with your lamentations. Your omnipotence shall avail you nothing ; and you shall be driven to seek help of the beasts of the forests, even the monkeys. And this Punyaseela and Suseela shall retain for long years the shape they took to effect my ruin." And right away she threw herself into a blazing fire and joined her husband in the mansions of the blessed.—A. R. I. 4.

There lived in the town of Karaveera, near the Sahyadri mountains, a Brahmana named Dharmadatta. He was a devotee of Vishnu, whose grace he won by the recitation of the twelve-lettered manthra ; he observed the numerous fasts, penances and vows that go to make up the hard life of a Brahmana and kept open house for the way-farer and the needy. Once, on the eleventh day of the month of Kritthika, he observed a total fast, kept awake the whole night reciting the names and deeds of glory of the Lord and started before dawn to go to the temple and proffer his worship there. On his way, a Rakshasi barred his





path. He threw at her the materials of worship he carried with him, and sprinkled her with the water consecrated by the Thulasi leaves, mentally calling upon the Lord Vishnu meanwhile to help him. The dark cloak of sins fell away from the Rakshasi ; the memory of her past births came back to her; she fell at the feet of the Brahmana and cried :—

“Holy Sir ! There lived in the Saurashtra country a Brahmana by name Bikshu and I was his wedded wife. Kalaha (quarrel) was my name. I contradicted him at every step ; he had not a moment of peace. I used to prepare the daintiest meals every day and partake of them to my heart's content ; I left him to feed himself with what remained of them. One day he hit upon a very ingenious expedient to relieve himself of the life of misery he was leading. Said he to me “My dear ! I am resolved to invite none, not even a dog, to our house; I have a friend who is the very incarnation of wickedness ; and he shall cross our doors only at the peril of his life.” At which I flared up in anger and cried “You are a nice Brahmana. I know and I do not care to thrust it into your face that your friend is the most gentle-minded creature that ever trod the earth. You should consider yourself supremely blessed in being allowed to claim his friendship. I have set my heart upon getting him down to dine with us this day as our honored guest ; and no power in heaven or earth or hell shall stand in my way.” Forthwith I proceeded to his house, threw myself at his feet and humbly entreating him to pardon my husband's countless faults of commission and omission, invited him to my house. I treated him to the most unbounded hospitality and placed before him the very best of everything I had or could procure. From that day, my husband made me do whatever he wanted to by ordering me just to the contrary. Thus we had a happy time of it and things went on swimmingly.





One day, there came about the anniversary of my father-in-law's death. My husband took me aside and with angry looks cried out "My dear! That cursed father of mine is bothering me even after he is dead and gone. This day I am expected to observe the anniversary of his confounded death. But, I will be cut into pieces before I stir a little finger to show him the least attention." Thereupon I slapped my thighs in fury and thrusting a fist under his nose, cried "Have you clean taken leave of your senses? It is a pity that your parents ever gave birth to such a monster of ingratitude and wickedness. I know not what dark and loathesome hell is reserved for a son who harbours the thought of ever omitting to observe, in the very best manner he could, the anniversary of his parent's death". And away I went and invited a large number of Sadhus. "Then" said my husband "I forbid you to prepare any thing in the shape of a meal. One Brahmana as a guest is enough to plague our lives. I will see the celebration of the anniversary rites shall not take more than a few minutes." But, I respectfully invited eighteen Brahmanas instead of the usual three; took my bath, prepared every conceivable delicacy, saw with a careful eye that no detail of the funeral rites was omitted, even the slightest and it was near sunset when the Sraddha was over. Meanwhile my husband, fuming and raging, burst upon me with "I am almost dying of hunger and fatigue. Let us sit down to our meals with no more delay and throw the rest to the loafers and the vagrants in the streets." Whereat, I rebuked him harsh and said "The holy books enjoin that we should perform the funeral ceremonies of our forefathers on the anniversary of their death, and feed sumptuously the other Brahmanas that might have congregated there; it is only when they utter the words 'We are content; you may go and have your meals', that we





should think of our creature comforts. You are the strangest man that I have ever seen—the most ungrateful, the most irresponsible, fearing neither man nor God nor devil.” And, I fed the assembled Brahmanas to their heart’s content; gave them money, clothes, rings, ear rings, umbrellas, sandals, seats without stint; and only when they pressed me again and again to go and have my meals, did I seek my husband to invite him to have his meals. But, he was exceedingly wroth and cried “I will see that you dine first and rest your wearied limbs before I will think of food or drink”. I clapped my hands in high glee and cried “What an atrocious specimen of humanity you are! The wise ones say that we should not fast after performing the anniversary ceremonies of our ancestors; else, you will have to perform the Sraddha again. Moreover, the wife that sits down to her dinner before her husband, is doomed to a frightful hell; and you are not very anxious that I should tenant it, are you?” And I haled him off to dinner, fed him to the full with the very best, and partook of the remains. Later on, my husband, in a moment of forgetfulness and entirely off his guard, said to me “My dear! See that you throw these balls of food offered to the manes into the holy waters.” No sooner said than done; they were lying upon the dung heap and I was assiduously seeing to it that dogs and asses fed upon them freely. Seeing which, he was filled with inexpressible grief; but, recollecting himself, he said to me with a smile “Well done! let them stay where they are.” But I lifted my hands in horrified indignation and cried “What sacrilege is this! The balls of food offered to our ancestors to be lying on that unholy spot! And would I stand by and see them polluted?”. And I drove away the asses and the dogs and reverently taking the balls of food, throw them into holy waters.





Long years passed over our heads until my husband, unable to go through this miserable cat-and-dog life with me, resolved to take unto himself another wife; whereat I was seized with a fit of jealousy and put an end to my tumultuous existence by poison. I stood before the judgment seat of King Yama, who called unto him Chithraguptha, the Keeper of the Book of Karma and said "Read out to me the good and evil deeds of this defunct." And to him replied the Recorder "Lord ! There is not one good act to the credit of this soul. Every day she used to dine to heart's content before her husband; she will take birth as the animal vulgoo and feed upon her own excrement. She ate in secret from the vessel in which her food was cooked ; she will be born as a cat and feed upon her kittens. She took poison to end her life ; for countless years she will roam the earth as a shade (Pretha) ; then, she will be confined to a howling desert ; she will pass a very long time in that horrible spot and will go through three more births, growing more and more wicked each time." Accordingly I abode for fifteen years in that waste of sand, after which I entered the body of a Vaisya girl that chanced to die there and lived at the confluence of the rivers Krishna and Veni. But, some holy men that came there to bathe drove me out of that body. Thereafter, I have been wandering over the desolate places of the earth until I came here this morning ; and thanks to your unheard of generosity and compassion, was freed from all my sins. Now, how shall I put away this Pretha body of mine ? How shall I escape the three dreadful lives of iniquity ? "

The Brahmana heard her out with a heart well nigh breaking with supreme compassion and when she had ended, lifted his hands and exclaimed "I freely and with a full heart make over to you one half of the merit that accrues to me from the strict observance of this vow during the month of Kritthika." He recited in her hearing the all-





potent twelve-lettered manthra and sprinkled her with the water impregnated with the holy thulasi leaves. The pretha body dropped away from her and a glorious body of light took its place. A radiant car descended from the regions on high and the messengers of Vishnu took her with high honors to the abode of their Lord.

Dharmadatta continued to live as before, the whole-souled devotee of Vishnu ; when the time came for him to lay aside his garment of flesh, he was taken and his two wives with him, to where the Lord Vishnu awaited him in fond expectation. Eight thousand years did he remain in the presence of the Lord, rendering sweet service to Him; at the end of which he took birth among men as King Dasaratha of the solar race. His two wives accompanied him as Kausalya and Sumithra, while Kalaha, whom his noble generosity freed from a life of horror and shame, came back to him as Kaikeyi. The Lord could not keep himself away from his beloved devotee and took birth of him as his sons Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Sathrugna.—1b. 5

There lived of old a king named Padmaksha. He practised stern thapas to be blessed with a daughter who should be none other than Maha Lakshmi. The Mother of Mercy acceded to his prayers, appeared before him and said " Padmaksha! seek permission of my Lord to have your wishes fulfilled." Again the king had recourse to prayers, penances, vows, and fasts ; the Lord was pleased with his purity of heart and earnestness of purpose and gave him a pomegranate. One half of it was filled with juicy seeds and in the other half Padmaksha found a girl of dazzling lustre, whom he at once named Padma. She was the joy of his heart and the centre of his life ; and, when the time came for her to take a husband, Padmaksha instituted a Swayamvara and invited to it the kings of the earth. Rishis and Gods, Rakshasas and Asuras, the ruling





denies of animals, birds, fish, rivers, mountains, trees and metals came to his hall of audience in their native forms. When all were assembled before him, Padmaksha rose and made the following announcement, "I give Padma in marriage to him who clothes himself in the blue of the vaults of heaven right above our heads." The assembled myriads knew not what to think of it. Some set him down as a raving lunatic ; some proclaimed him as a very deep one, who put forward an ever impossible test to marry his daughter to some one whom he had already fixed upon. So, they banded themselves against him and resolved to kill him and take away Padma as the prize of war. But, they counted without their host ; for, Padmaksha met them with his keen shafts, which put to flight in a moment the craven multitudes of men and Devas. Alas ! every one of us can do his level best and no more ; and poor Padmaksha was overwhelmed, after a splendid fight, by the terrible Asuras and Rakshasas ; his capital was laid waste and the victors seemed in a fair way to be rewarded for all their pains and troubles, when Padma, the unconscious root of the strife and destruction, slipped through their fingers and threw herself into the fire.

She was but an embodiment of the potency that for ever lies concealed in the bosom of the Lord, and as such knew no death or destruction. For long years she dwelt in that fire-altar, free from the molestation of her unwelcome suitors. One day, Ravana, the Rakshasa king, chanced to come that way in his aerial car and his generals with him. He was on his tour, of conquest ; Sarana, one of his nobles, suddenly drew his attention to some object far far down upon the earth and exclaimed "If my eyes do not deceive me, there is Padma reclining gracefully near that fire-altar. Your Majesty remembers, I am sure, how we had been once to her Swayamwara. That infatuated





fool of her father we put to death and searched far and wide for this marvel of a girl, but, failed to come upon her. It was but a wild-goose-chase for us all and our friends the Asuras. Well, better late than never. This time she shall not slip so easily through our fingers." Ravana directed his Pushpaka-vimana to where she was and sprang forward to catch her, when she flashed like a streak of flame into the altar and vanished from view. But, Ravana was an obstinate customer to deal with. He trod out the blazing fire and threw up the hot ashes, when lo ! five gems of unparalleled lustre met his view. He grabbed at them greedily, took them to Lanka and deposited them with all care in a casket. That night he recounted that marvellous adventure to his queen Mandodari and said "They deserve to shine for ever around your fair neck. Go bring them to me now." But, after a while, she returned with a discomfited look and exclaimed "It is too heavy for me to handle". Ravana thereupon proceeded to where it was, but for all his gigantic strength and marvellous boons, his twenty hands could barely move it from where it was—a toy casket to all appearance. He gave up the task as hopeless and opened it, when lo ! Padma, the mysterious maiden, came out of it smiling all sweetly. By that time the palace was filled with an eager crowd of Rakshasas, men and women, whom the news of that wonderful casket and its occupant had attracted thither. And to them did Ravana narrate in great detail the antecedents of Padma, when Mandodari turned upon him with a black frown upon her fair features and exclaimed "Krithya, the daughter of Pippalada the sage, brought destruction upon the members of the clan in which she was born. This Padma is but such another one. See you not that she was born but to destroy her father, and mother, [kith and kin, capital and kingdom ? Who knows what awful ruin she is





commissioned to work out in this fair world? What evil genius prompted you to bring her here? I feel intuitively that she bodes you no good. She will, I am sure, prove your Fate. Lose not a moment in conveying her as far away from here as you can. But, wait. She is a terrible basilisk whose very looks carry death in them; so, bury her deep, deep under the earth. It will not be long before a Son of Wisdom will come upon her by accident and bring her up as his daughter." But, Padma smiled all the more mysteriously and said in gentle accents "Well; please yourselves. No one has yet scored a point against Fate. This Lanka, your fair capital, has not seen the last of me. Soon, sooner than you think, do I come here to call to account this Ravana and every one that calls himself his friend or follower. A third time do I visit this island home, to bring death to Paundraka, the son of yonder Nikumbha and to the hundred-headed Ravana, his noble ally. And for the fourth and the last time do I visit this doomed town, to work merited destruction upon the Asura Moolaka and Soora, the son of yon Kumbhakarna." Intolerable fear seized the hearts of the assembled Rakshasas in its mightly grip. But Ravana gnashed his teeth in rage and whipped out his sword exclaiming, "You shall not live to carry out your nefarious prophecies and evil croakings." But, Mandodari caught his wrist and said with a far away look in her lovely eyes, "Nay, nay, my Lord! I see but too clearly that she comes to no harm through you or any one here. But, she is your Fate and there is no putting it away. Why anticipate, all foolishly, what is to come upon you years hence?" Ravana gave way to her and had the casket with the maiden of evil in it conveyed far far from Lanka and buried fathoms deep beneath the earth.

Long long after, the Videhas ruled over the country. Janaka, a brilliant representative of that line of monarchs,





gave in gift to a holy Brahmana the plot of ground in which was buried the mysterious casket. The Brahmana spent many years before he could fix upon an auspicious moment to plough the ground ; and his Sudra tenant was ordered to bring it under cultivation. His plough-share struck against the casket. The farmer dug it up from where it lay buried for countless years and taking it to his master, said " Holy Sir ! I cannot sufficiently admire your wisdom in choosing this auspicious moment to plough your field. Here have I come across this casket, which, I am sure, contains treasures of priceless value, it is so heavy. It is yours to dispose of as you like." But, the high-souled Brahmana exclaimed " Neither I nor any other have any claim to it, but our king, who gave me this piece of land as a gift." Forthwith he took it to Janaka and said, " I have the pleasure to inform your Majesty that this casket was found by accident buried deep in the plot of land given to me as a gift. I request you to accept it of me, for, you are the rightful owner of it." But, Janaka lifted his hands in surprise and exclaimed, " I see not the justice of your argument. My gift to you of the piece of land included everything above it or beneath. It is yours by every law of gift. Save me, I pray you, from the sin of taking back what I gave as a free gift." Thus they argued and wrangled until Sathananda, the royal priest, interfered with an amused smile. " A nice pair of men you are, wasting your breath over a casket the contents of which you know not. Open it, pray and settle your claims to it after." Janaka acted upon this wise suggestion and opened the casket, when there flashed forth upon their wondering eyes a girl of marvellous beauty and dazzling radiance. The Brahmana reverently offered her to Janaka, who felt his heart go out to the precious find. He adopted her as his daughter and lived in her and for her.

Many are the names by which she is known among





*Mathulangi*, since she came out from a pomegranate. *Agni-garbha*, from her long abode in the fire-altar, *Rathnavathi*, from her transformation into five rare gems in the hands of Ravana, *Bhoo-puthri*, seeing that she came out of the womb of the earth, *Janaki*, after her adopted father Janaka, *Padma*, as the daughter of Padmaksha, her first mortal parent, *Seetha*, from her being dug up by the point of the plough-share, *Vaidehi*, as the daughter of the king of the Videhas and *Maithili*, after her father the ruler of Mithila. Sree Rama, whose body shone with the radiance of the dark-blue sky, took her to wife; and thus, after countless years, was the vow of Padmaksha fulfilled".—A. R. III.

Jaya and Vijaya, the gate-keepers of Maha Vishnu, came down on earth as Ravana and Kumbhakarna—Vide *ante*, note on *Sanathkumara*.

Once upon a time Narada felt an illimitable glow of devotion to the Lord, whereupon the curse launched against him by Daksha, the patriarch, dropped away. Indra was greatly troubled at this and apprehending a desire on the part of Narada to usurp his office, sought to destroy his purity of heart and concentration of mind by sending against him his lovely Apsarasas and Kama, the God of Love, but all in vain. Narada was inordinately puffed up at this, and boasted of his invulnerability to Mahadeva. "Poor fellow!" said Sankara to himself "he is on the high-road to ruin. It will go hard with him if Vishnu should get scent of this, for, there is no saying what His mighty illusion can make of poor Narada." And he strongly impressed upon the sage the necessity of holding his tongue on this subject before the Lord of Vaikuntha.

But, the ways of the Lord are mysterious past understanding and his illusion irresistible. Narada repaired forthwith to Swetha-dweepa, where the Lord Vishnu adroitly induced him to describe in glowing terms his





...purity of heart and invulnerability to love. Supreme pity filled the heart of the Lord; his overweening pride would prove the ruin of Narada. So, Janardana created out of His illusion a kingdom and a capital, with a king Seelanidhi as the ruler thereof. He had a daughter by name Viswamohini, to whose wedding (Swayamvara) the princes and the wise men of the earth were invited. Narada was one of the visitors and lost his heart to the lovely enchantress. Back he flew to Vaikuntha where Vishnu abode and clasping his feet exclaimed "Lord! Grant me for a while to assume this resplendent form of yours. I have lost my heart to the lovely Viswamohini, the daughter of Seelanidhi. If I obtain not her hand in marriage, I die." "Well," replied Madhava "there is no saying what some will do when under the influence of love. I will not fail to do the very best for you."

Narada trod upon air on his way to the audience hall of Seelanidhi, his heart bursting with pride and joy at what he considered the all-fascinating form he had been blessed with. He took his place among the monarchs, utterly confident that Viswamohini had but to look at him to fall into his arms. But, the Lord Vishnu had changed his visage so that the beholders fled in affright at the horror. Two of the attendants of Paramasiva were in the secret and followed Narada unseen to get from him as much fun as they could. They sat behind him and whispered to one another but sufficiently loud to reach the ears of Narada "Ah! what a splendid sight! I cannot for a moment believe that this is the self-same Devarshi Narada whom we had seen time and oft. Where did he manage to transform himself so wonderfully? Thrice-blessed is he who could, even for a moment, claim possession to such marvellous beauty and grace." Narada, their unconscious dupe, was drinking in this sweet praise with never-satisfied ears and was sure beyond all doubt that he had but to see the princess to win





her heart, to make her the slave of his enchanting beauty. So, he gave himself the proudest airs he could and in the excitement of his almost fulfilled hopes, eagerly craned his neck to receive the expected garland from the hand of the princess. Well, she came into the hall none too soon and preceded by her maidens, was leisurely passing between the line of monarchs, scanning them from beneath her long lashes and taking an inventory as it were of them with a glance. But, no sooner her eyes fell upon where Narada sat in exultant expectation than she uttered a frightful shriek of horror and repulsion and fled from the hall back to where her ladies were waiting for her. Yet, on the way she stood as if spell-bound at the sight of a young man of radiant presence and all-compelling beauty advancing towards her; and carried away by an impulse she could not divine, she threw the garland over his shoulders. Narada almost swooned away from rage and mortification; when the two tormentors approached him with reverently-folded hands and said "Believe us when we say that we feel ourselves no less insulted and outraged than yourself. An idiot of a girl, who is as blind as a bat to the splendour of such soul compelling beauty as yours, is, we swear, scarce worth a moment's thought. If you will not believe us, we entreat you to get a mirror wherein you will find that we have but done ill-justice to your charms." Narada was taken by the conceit and looked at his face as it was reflected in still water; but, he started back in terror, for it was hard to believe that the monstrosity was himself. It flashed upon him like a revelation the trick played upon him by Vishnu and the horse-play of the two confounded Brahmanas. "Graceless wretches!" cried he, in a terrible voice "You wear the garb of Brahmanas, but like heartless Rakshasas, made me the butt of your practical jokes. You shall be born what you really are—Rakshasas."





Next, he went to Vaikuntha and on his way came upon the Lord Vishnu and by his side stood Visvamohini, for whom he had suffered so much. Poor Narada ! He could not see that the Lord was playing his powers of illusion upon him. "Ha ! I have caught you red-handed and you shall not escape. Your envy and double-dealing would disgrace the meanest creature that crawls the earth. If you wanted to have the girl, why not go about it like a gentleman and take your chances with the others ? I did not bargain with you for this gorilla face of mine when I requested you to render me every help in your power. But, you have counted without your host. I am more than a match for your wiles and witcheries. You assumed a charming shape to confound the heart of this girl, did you not ? Well, you shall go down upon earth *in that very form* and wear it until you are sick of it. You obliged me with the face of a chimpanzee, did you not ? Well, *you shall beg help from such monkeys* and they shall be known as your benefactors. You took away from me her whom I would otherwise have got, did you not ? Well, a Rakshasa and your mortal enemy *shall abduct the lawfully wedded wife of your heart.*" The Lord Vishnu accepted the fateful curse with a sweet smile. The irate sage completed his work of mischief by turning upon the two Brahmanas who followed him and said "You flouted me, a Brahmana and a Rishi. Fierce Rakshasas you shall become and be freed from my curse when you fall in battle by the hand of yonder Vishnu. Laugh at a Deva-Rishi if you dare."—*Ramayana of Tulasidas, Balakanda.*

The Manu Swayambhuva and his wife Satharoopa observed stern vows for thousands of years on the banks of the sacred Gomathi. The Lord Vishnu appeared unto them and said "How can I serve you?" To which they replied in all reverence "Lord ! May we have a glimpse of the real Sree Rama". "One more boon" spoke the Lord





"shall you have." "Then, may we make bold to request to be blessed with a son like yourself." "Well, I myself will have the honour." And Dasaratha, the ruler of Ayodhya, was no other than the Manu.—*Ib.*

Sathyakethu, king of Kekaya, had two sons by name Prathapabhanu and Arimarddana. The former succeeded to the throne and ruled his subjects wisely and well. One day he went a-hunting and lost himself in the dark forests chasing a boar. At sunset, he came upon a hermit of whose lavish hospitality he partook that night. He thanked the recluse in warm terms and said "Holy Sir ! may an unworthy admirer of yours crave to know the name of his charming host ? This wild forest home seems no meet place for one of your stamp and refinement."

Now, the seeming anchorite was no other than a proud king whom Prathapabhanu had defeated in battle and deprived of his kingdom. He thanked Fate that had brought within his grasp without the least effort the very man round whom his thoughts of revenge had centred for long years. So, he replied charmingly "Your majesty will gain nothing by knowing the name of an obscure person like myself. Ekathanu was I named. I saw the dawn of Creation and have been keeping on this fleshly tenement of mine all through, thanks to my poor yogic powers". Prathapabhanu was in the coils of the wily serpent ; and unbounded reverence towards the holy One filled his heart.

He fell at his feet in profound supplication and cried "Lord ! I throw myself on your mercy and crave of you long life, prosperity, victory in battle and unlimited power". The hermit pretended to be in deep thought over the momentous request ; he came out of it with a sigh and said gravely "Do nothing that would give the least offence to the Brahmanas. No one should know what has passed between





of Brihaspathi, the guru of the Devas. Engage yourselves in unremitting thapas, casting aside your weapons of offence and defence. The Devas will not harm you the while"; and he observed a stern vow for a thousand years. The Devas took advantage of his absence to engage the Asuras in battle, who sought refuge with Khyathi, the mother of Sukra and the wife of Brighu, the Patriarch. She promised to protect them and when the Devas turned against her she deprived Indra of the power of motion. The Lord Vishnu came to his assistance, but she began to consume him with the might of her fiery thapas; whereupon he cut her head off with his chakra (discus). Brighu came to know of it and pronounced a curse upon the Lord. "You shall be born on earth as man four times and three;" and forthwith brought Khyathi back to life through his yogic powers. Vishnu carried out the behests of Brighu and incarnated on earth as Dattathreya, Parasurama, Rama, Vyasa, Krishna, Upendra the son of Kasyapa and Kalki.—*Vayupurana*.

67. 33. *Shone* :—The horse-sacrifice and Puthreshti of Dasaratha do not solely account for the coming down of the Lord; but Kausalya's thapas drew Him down to her irresistably.

68. 1. *Gave birth to* :—Rama came out of the womb of Kausalya even as he was in Vaikuntha with four arms, the divine weapons, Sreevathsa the mole, the garland, Vaijayanthi, etc. Kausalya was overwhelmed with joy and sang high his countless perfections and glory. "Lord! I entreat you that this divine form be hidden from the eyes of mortals and that you take a human shape." To which He replied graciously "Be it so. I have promised to accede to the prayers of Brahma and the gods that I should go down upon earth as man and destroy Ravana and his dark brood. Dasaratha and yourself have in past birth performed dire penance that I should be born as your son;





and that is why I chose to manifest myself to you in my divine form—*Adh. R. I. 3. A. R. I. 2.*

16. *The divine four* :—1. Rama was the incarnation of Dharma; Lakshma exemplified the truth that one should render humble service to the Lord all his life; Bharatha was the perfect example for all time of the doctrine of surrender to the Lord; and Sathrugna chose to be the practical exponent of the grandest of all truths,—supreme surrender to the Lord's elect.

2. Rama had the complexion of the blue vaults of the empyrean; Lakshmana shone like molten gold; Bharatha was of a splendid sea-green and Sathrugna was white as driven snow.

3. *Q.*—As appears from Dasaratha's division of the Payasa among his wives, Lakshmana had more in him of the divine essence than Bharatha. Further, Sumithra might have partaken of the Payasa before Kaikeyee. Again, when the brothers met at Nandigram, Bharatha is said to have saluted Rama, Seetha and Lakshmana. So, it is but reasonable to infer that Lakshmana was the elder of the two.

*A* :—No. It was Kaikeyee that partook of the Payasa first, since we read that Sumithra was given a portion of it a second time. Again, Rama addresses Lakshmana more than once as *he who is born after Bharatha*. As to the incident at Nandigram, it is generally understood that Bharatha saluted Rama and Seetha and but embraced Lakshmana only. Authoritative statements that may be found in other works that do not fit in with the above, ought to be explained as applicable to other Rama incarnations in previous world-periods.

4. The queens of Dasaratha are said to have conceived after they partook of the Payasa; hence the gross and the subtle vehicles of SreeRama and his brothers were not formed of the matter that goes to build up our universe and its inhabit-





ants. The puranas affirm emphatically that the five elements nor their combinations have anything to do with the vehicles in which the Lord manifests himself during his incarnations. The six divine perfections transformed themselves into the Payasa. The bodies did not grow upon food and drink nor were in the least affected by heat or cold, fire or water, weapons or missiles. They adapted themselves to the least wish of those that tenanted them.

26. *Thirteenth day* :—Or, the twelfth from the birth of Lakshmana. The period of pollution is twelve days in the case of a Kshathriya when a child is born to him; but, the pollution due to the birth of Lakshmana occurred within the period of the former; hence, Dasaratha was purified on the thirteenth day.

*Vasishtha*. Akshathriya is not qualified to give the names and generally does it though his Purohitha.—*Kathaka*.

28. *Rama* :—So called because the Yogis, the Rishis and every object of creation *delight in* him. "The Lord was named Sree Rama as he was the consort (ramana) of Mahalakshmi, enthroned on the Lotus. He who meditates on the profound mysteries of this name acquires the merit of meditating on His thousand ineffable names"—*Padma-purana*.

*Bharatha* :—As he *bore* the responsibility of governing the kingless kingdom when Dasaratha departed to the worlds of bliss and Rama to the dark forests.

30. *Lakshmana* :—As he was blessed with the supreme *good fortune* to render all services to Rama.

*Sacraments* :—As he had in him the mighty energy that lays low the foes within and without.

34. The Vedic Religion teaches us that the highest Dharma of every jeeva lies in his performing the duties of his status in life without the least desire for the fruits thereof; purity of heart engendered thereby leads him to





the feet of the Masters of Compassion; the bonds of Karma fall away from him; unbounded wisdom and power and bliss are his reward; and he leads the other jeevas on the path of Light that he has trod so gloriously. Various sacraments (Samskaras) are ordained for him, from the moment he enters the womb of his mother to when he casts away from him his gross and subtle vehicles and joins the glorious band of the Pithris (ancestors). These rites aim at the building up of each vehicle with the purest atoms possible that they may enable the consciousness to manifest its countless varieties and acquire experience in all worlds. Of them the most important are Garbha-dhana, Pum-savana, Seemanthonnayana, Jatha-karṇa, Nama-karṇa, Anna-prasana, Chooda-karṇa, Go-dana, Upa-nayana, Sam-avarthana, Vivaha, Dahana, Sanchayana and Sapindee-karṇa.

*Garbha-dhana*—The husband lays his hands on the spot where the womb of the woman is located and says "May Vishnu make ready your womb. May Thwashta build up forms. O, Sineevali! do thou impregnate it." (Rig Veda XI. 85, 21 22.) ;and he proceeds to place his seed in her. This sacred rite should not be performed carelessly or contemptuously or with hearts filled with impure thoughts or with the sole object of satisfying one's lust. He is bringing into manifestation a form, in that he has in him a fragment of the Infinite Potency which brought this universe into existence; he is furnishing a Jeeva with vehicles that will be utilised by him to tread the Path of Perfection. He should pray that a pure Jeeva might dwell in the abodes he means to build and obtain supreme wisdom. His manas and his consciousness should be centred on his favourite deity; while the manas and the consciousness of his partner in that glorious work should be centred on himself.

*Pum-savana* :—It is performed in the third month after conception, on a day when the asterism Pushya or