



suspected in the least that Swaha had anything to do with it. When the reports of the marvellous child reached her ears, she went to where he was and said to Skanda (for, so was he called, having been *dropped upon* the mount) "I am your mother." The Seven Rishis, when they came to know that a son was born unto them without their knowledge, grew wroth and put away their wives, all except Vasishtha. They were not to blame, seeing that they had the direct evidence of the dwellers of that forest to support them. It was in vain that Swaha went to them again and again and protested. "I am the mother of this child and your wives had nothing to do with it."

Now, Rishi Visvamithra was present during the sacrifice performed by the Seven Rishis. Unseen, he followed Agni when he disappeared into the forest, consumed by the pangs of unrequited affection. He knew all that happened. He was the first to seek the protection of Skanda. He composed a grand hymn in praise of Mahasena. It was he that performed the thirteen auspicious rites of childhood for the boy. It was he that taught the world the glories of Skanda. It was he that instituted the cult and the worship of Skanda, of his cock, of his weapon Sakti and of his attendants. It was for the well-being of the world that he did so, and he became dear to the heart of Skanda in consequence. He acquainted the Six Sages with the facts of the case and emphatically declared that their wives were all innocent; but, their obstinacy was unshaken.

The gods approached Indra and said "This child gets to be intolerable. Vanquish him before he becomes too strong for you and drives you out of the three worlds". "But" replied Indra "what chance have I against this phenomenal child, who can, if he likes, destroy even the creator of this universe." "You are a paragon of valour and heroism" cried they in fine scorn "Let the Mothers of the worlds go to this



overgrown boy and kill him ; for, they can put up any amount of energy if they like." "Be it so" replied Indra, and set the Mothers on his dreaded foe. But, they observed his matchless might and their courage and brag oozed out at their heels. They sought his protection and humbly said "Our hearts go out to you in affection and love. Lo ! our breasts stream forth milk at the sight of your charming face. Be thou our son." Mahasena entertained them with due respect and complied with their request. Then he saw coming towards him Agni, his father. The boy duly honored his sire and was pleased to observe that Agni and the Mothers remained with him to attend upon him. The planets large and small, the Rishis, the Mothers, and numerous angelic hosts of terrible energy ever waited on the wonderful boy.

Then Indra and his celestial host appeared on the mount to do mortal battle with Skanda. But the flames of fire issuing from his mouth reduced to ashes the army of Indra, who threw themselves at the feet of the conqueror. Indra, finding himself deserted by his friends and troops, hurled his Vajra at Karthikeya. It pierced the right side of Guha and from it arose a golden hued youth with a mace in his hand. Visakha was he named, and at the sight of him Indra lost heart and sought the protection of the Son of Fire. He refused the Indra-ship offered to him by the Rishis and by the late holder of the office and was content to accept the place of the Leader of the Celestial hosts under Indra. Indra remembered the lady Devasena whom he had rescued from the Asura Kesi. He brought her unto Skanda and said "The great Brahma had ordained even before your birth that this lady should be your wife ;" and Devasena became the wedded wife of Skanda. The wives of the six Rishis sought his protection and were allowed to live with him as his



mothers. He brought about a happy union between Agni, his father and Swaha, his mother. Later on, he was commissioned by Mahadeva to destroy the brood of the impious Asuras and did his work thoroughly, sparing not.—*M. B. Vanaparva*. 225 to 234.

The Devas prayed to Paramasiva to retain his energy in his body. But Parvathi was wroth with them at having interfered and prevented her from begetting a son. "You shall never know what it is to be blessed with a son" cried she with a wounded heart. Now, a portion of the energy of Siva dropped by chance on the earth and grew into a big blazing fire. The Devas meanwhile, suffered grievously at the hands of Tharaka and sought the protection of Brahma who said to them "The curse launched against you affects not the God of fire who was not present on that fateful occasion. It is given to him to bring forth a son who will destroy Tharaka. The Will-aspect of the Lord is eternal and unfailing. A portion of it has fallen into the essence of the Fire-god. If he places it in the body of the Ganga, he will beget a son who will bring destruction upon the Asuras."

The Devas and the Rishis went after Agni, but could not come upon him. A frog pitied them in their difficulty and said "The God of fire whom you are after, lies concealed in the nether worlds among the waters. His flames blasted us and we were glad to escape here from them." Agni came to know that the frog had betrayed him and shot a curse at the whole class—"Your tongues shall lose all taste from this moment." He then hid himself in another more secure retreat. The Devas were touched with pity and contrition at the fate of the frogs that paid so dearly for having assisted them. "Well, it may be that your tongues lose all taste; but you will be able to produce a large variety of sounds. Hunger may reduce you to a shadow and prostrate you unconscious, but you will draw of the essence



of the earth and live within it. The utter darkness of the night, that fills other creatures with dread, shall be no hindrance to you."

They sought Agni far and wide, when a lordly elephant said to them "He whom you are after is in yon Aswattha tree." Agni grew wroth at it and exclaimed—"Your tongues shall henceforth curve backwards"; and again concealed himself in a Sami tree. The Devas pitied the miserable fate of the elephants that so unselfishly assisted them and said "You will be able to eat every article of food. Your tongues will be capable of emitting certain indistinct sounds."

They looked for Agni here and there, high and low, until a parrot revealed to them, out of pity, the hiding place of the God of fire. Agni came to know of it and cursed the parrot kind.—"You lose your power of speech from now;" and he made their tongues curve upwards. But the Devas consoled them and said "You shall be able to utter the sound *Ka*, Your words shall be as sweet as the prattle of dear children." At last they came upon the God of fire in the Sami tree, which, along with the Aswattha, they declared to be the dwelling places of Agni and dedicated to religious purposes. The waters in the nether worlds, wherein abode Agni, are boiling even unto this day. (The Geysers or the boiling springs of Iceland).—*Ib. Anusasana-parva*, 131.

120. 12. *Arishtanemi*:—One of the names of Kas-yapa.

121. 4. *A lump of flesh*.—Gandhari, the wife of Dhritarashtra, was pregnant for long years; but, as she gave birth to no child, she hit herself on her stomach, with the result that a lump of flesh as hard as a ball of iron came out of her womb. Rishi Vyasa ordered cold water to be poured over it, when it separated itself into a hundred fragments. Trained nurses were appointed to watch over them in jars of clarified butter. After some time the vessels burst to pieces and strong



healthy children came forth from them.—*M. B. Adi-parva*
129.

12. *Wicked son* :—He was a great Yogi in his former birth ; his nature and karmic affinities drew him on towards a life of calm meditation in the deep forests, untouched by the cares of state. He wanted to force his father and his people to drive him out of the town and hit upon the novel expedient of throwing the children of the citizens into the Sarayu. When Sagara sent him away from the capital, he brought back the children whom he had hidden from men's eyes by his yogic power.

122. 1. *Vindhya* :—The celebraetd temple of Vindhya-vasini or Goddess of Vindhya, stands near Mirzapur on the Ganga. It is clear therefore that the name was applied, as at present, to the whole range from the valley of the Narmada to the basin of the Ganga.—*Geography of Ancient India*.

Holiest spot :—The country to the north of the sea and to the south of the Himalaya is the Bharatha-varsha.—*V. P. II. 3*. The following divisions of India are noticed in Hemachandra Kosa, IV. 14, mostly founded on the second chapter of Manu :—

1. Northern India, called Aryavārtha or Janma-bhoomi or Jina-chakri (Circle of Buddhas) or Punya-bhoo (holy land) or Achara-vedi (the land of rites and customs), between the Himalayas and the Vindhya.

2. Central India or Madhya-desa, between Prayaga (Allahabad) on the east and Vinasana on the west (where the Sarasvathi loses itself in the deserts of Bhatner)—*M. B. Vana-parva* 82.

3. Gangetic Doab, called Anthar-vedi (inner land) or Samasthali (plains), between the Ganges and the Yamuna—*Bala Ramayana* X ; (Trikanḍasheṣha reads Kusasthali.)

4. Brahmavārtha or divine land, between the Sarasvathi and the Drishadvathi (Caggar).



8. Kurukshethra or battle-field of the Kurus, called also Brahma Vedi (Brahma's altar) and Dharmakshetra (holy field), between the five tanks of Parasu Rama, extending for twelve yojanas or 60 miles.

[A yojana is also 8 miles which will give 96 miles, the modern limit of the circle (Cunningham p. 332). It will be seen from the above that Kurukshetra and Brahmavartha are not identical as General Cunningham supposes.]

6. Eastern provinces or south-eastern India.

7. Northern provinces or north-western India up to the Saravathi (Choya river).

8. Mlechha-desa or Mandala (barbaric land) or countries bordering on India. Southern India or the Dakshinapatha is not included in this list, as it originally formed part of Mlechha-desa.—*Geography of Ancient India*.

21. So :—It must be some one of the Devas who have done this—*Thilaka*. Sagara wanted to become Indra and performed a hundred Aswamedhas to get the place. Indra made away with the horse during the hundredth sacrifice.

124. 9. *Rasathala* :—Underneath the earth are the seven Pathalas—Athala, Vithala, Suthala, Thalathala, Mahathala, Rasathala and Pathala. They are 10,000 Yojanas apart from one another. Daithyas, Danavas and Nagas dwell in these nether Swargas. Their enjoyments, powers and luxuries are even greater than those of the Devas in Swarga. Their houses, halls, gardens and playgrounds are very gorgeous. They are ever joyous and are much attached to their wives, sons, friends and attendants. By the grace of the Lord they have their desires always gratified. Maya, the architect of the Danavas, has built for them wonderful houses, palaces and gardens of dazzling splendour and rare beauty. There are no divisions of time and no disturbances from such divisions, as the sun's rays do not enter those regions. All darkness is removed by the light



of the precious stones on the crowns of the Serpent-kings. The people of the Pathala use divine herbs and medicines and consequently they have no infirmities, diseases, old age, bad odour, perspiration or loss of brilliance etc. They have no death except by the Chakra of the Lord (the Wheel of Time).

Athala :—Bala, the son of Maya, resides here. He has created 96 forms of illusion, to some of which only modern magicians have still recourse to. When he yawns, three classes of women spring into existence. 1. Svairini, (self-willed loose women) 2. Kamini (passionate women) and 3. Pumschali (unchaste women). If any one enters Athala, they completely allure him by their golden charms and when the man is under their power, he exclaims "I am Easwara ; I am a Siddha." (These women symbolise so many inferior and undesirable psychic powers).

Vithala :—is below Athala. Bhava (Siva), the lord of gold (Hatakesvara), reigns there in company with Bhavani, (Parvati) attended by the Bhoothas (elementals). He is engaged in warding off the evils of humanity. His contact and connexion with Bhavani gives rise to a river called Hataki (golden). The God of fire kindled by Vayu, the lord of air, absorbs that river and gives it out as Hataka, the gold used by the Asuras who dwell there.

Suthala :—Bali, the son of Virochana, has his abode here. Vamana, the incarnation of Vishnu, took away the Triloki from him and placed him here, keeping watch and ward at his gate. His enjoyments and powers are greater than those of Indra. He is free of all sin and is ever centred in the observance of his own dharma and the service of the Lord.

Thalathala :—Maya, the Danava king, rules here. His three puras or abodes were destroyed by Siva, who is hence called Tripurar. But, Siva admitted him into his favour



and placed him here. He is the master of all magicians, and being under the special protection of Siva, has no fear from the chakra of Vishnu. (Bali and Maya, Triloki and Tripura, the seizure of the one and the destruction of the other, the restoration of Bali to Suthala and of Maya to Thalathala, the favour shown to them in those regions, and the correspondences of Suthala and Thalathala are worth careful consideration. In the case of one, Vishnu or the preservative aspect of the Second Purusha is the actor, and in the other, Siva, the destructive aspect.)

Mahathala :—Many headed serpents, fierce and huge, the progeny of Kadru and Kasyapa, dwell here. The chief amongst them are Kuhaka, Thakshaka, Kaleeya, Sushena, and others. They are always afraid of Garuda, the carrier of Vishnu and seldom venture outside on pleasure excursions.

Rasathala :—Daithyas, Danavas, Panis named Nivatha-kavachas and Kalakeyas, the dwellers of Hiranyapura, reside here. They are the enemies of gods and of immense natural might. They tremble at the sound of the mantras uttered by Sarama, the bitch-messenger of Indra. The energy of the Lord quells their strength and pride and they dwell there like snakes in their holes.

Pathala :—Vasuki and other serpent-kings dwell there along with Sankha, Gulika, Maha-sankha, Swetha, Dhritha-rashtra, Sankha-chooda, Kambala, Aswathara, Devadatta, and other great Nagas. Some have five heads, some six, some seven, some ten, some hundred and some a thousand. The brilliance of the gems on their hoods dispel all darkness.—*Bh. V. 24.*

10. *Viroopaksha* :—Eight huge elephants support the earth in each quarter—Airavatha, Pundareeka, Vamana, Kumuda, Anjana, Pushpadanta, Sarvabhauma and Supratheeka. Their wives are known as Abhramu, Kapila,

Gangala, Anupama, Thamraparni, Subhradanthi, Angana, Anjanavathi—*Amarakosa, Dikvarga*. Airavatha, Vamana, Anjana and Sarvabhauma correspond to Viroopaksha, Mahapadma, Saumanasa, and Bhadra in the text.

32. *Kapila* :—1. The Devas complained to the Lord Kapila, who promised to slay at no distant time the sons of Sagara.

2. Some one made away with the sacrificial horse through a chasm in the earth. The sons of Sagara followed the trail and came to it, from which they dug down to the Pathala, each to the distance of a yojana.

3. The Lord Kapila said to Amsuman "Child ! Take his horse to your grand-father ; ask of me what boon you may desire. Your grand-son will have the honor of bringing down to earth the celestial Ganga." Then Amsuman clasped his hands and said "Lord ! My uncles, who out of ignorance and temerity offended you, are now a heap of ashes. May they rise to the abodes of the blessed." "Be it so" replied Kapila "they will be purified by the contact with the waters of the Ganga when it should come to the earth"—*V. P. III. 4.*

Kardama, the son of Brahma was commissioned by his father to increase and multiply. For long years he sat in meditation at the holy spot Bindusaras on the banks of the Sarasvathi. The Lord Vishnu appeared to him and said "I know the wish of thy heart. The Manu Swayambhuva will offer you in marriage his daughter Devahoothi. Nine daughters and a son will be your progeny in the world. I will take birth of you as your son and teach the eternal wisdom to humanity." Accordingly his girls Kala, Anasooya, Sraddha, Havirbhoo, Gathi, Kriya, Khyathi, Arundhathi and Santhi married the patriarchs Mareechi, Athri, Angiras, Pulasthya, Pulaha, Krathu, Bhrigu, Vasishtha and Atharva. He revered his son Kapila as the incarnation of the



Lord Vishnu and with his permission, retired to the forest. One day Devahoothi approached Kapila and said, "Instruct me, out of thy infinite wisdom, in the mysteries of life and being." And Kapila expounded to her the Sankhya and the Yoga schools of philosophy with special reference to the Path of Devotion. Devahoothi profited by the teachings of her son and passed into eternal peace. Kapila took leave of his mother and proceeded north-east to the shores of the ocean who reverently afforded him an abode, where he remains for all time in profound meditation for the welfare of the worlds.—*Bh.* III. 21 to 33.

1. But it is said that Kapila remained for long ages in deep meditation at Haridwar, where Ganga issues from the Himalayas. It may be that the sea might have extended up to that spot in those times. Even now, sea-shells are found in some parts of the mountain.

2. Kapila taught the Sankhyasastra to Devahoothi. He is the reputed author of the Sankhya-soothras, which are now almost lost. Some hold that there were many Rishis of that name and that the first taught the science, while the last crystallised it into soothras. The *Bh.* expresses the following opinion about Kapila's consuming the sons of Sagara. "It is not right to hold this view. The Lord Kapila, an embodiment of Satva (harmony) that purifies and protects the universe, could not be conceived as possessing the Tamasic element of anger in his nature. The clear sky cannot be soiled with dust. The Lord of Compassion, who gave humanity the Sankhya yoga with which to cross the ocean of births and deaths, has nothing in common with the vulgar attributes of passion and anger." But, such incidents in the puranas, that speak of the anger of the Lord and the curses of the Rishis, ought not to be understood in the same light as similar events occurring in the lives of ordinary mortals, whose feet are



step in the mire of ignorance and illusion. The great souls whose every thought and word and deed tend towards the supreme welfare of the worlds, reach that sublime height through the golden steps of purification, the first of which is the utter absence of love and hate. Anger approaches them not who have stood face to face with the Supreme Mystery and have become one with It. They are but the Lords of Karma who adjust the results without regard to time, place and circumstances. They but pronounce the decrees of the great Law. The judge who is the mouth-piece of the law of his country, has no joy or sorrow in connexion with the judgments he pronounces on those that are brought before him.

3. Kapila is one of the 24 Leelavataras of Mahavishnu. —*Bh. II. 7.*

Hardwar is situated on the right bank of the Ganges at the southern base of the Siwalik mountains. This is the Gangadwara of Sanskrit writers. The Ganges here rushes into the plains through a gorge of the Siwalik range and this agrees with the description of Gangadwara in the Kathasarithsagara (III). Gangadwara is always associated with Kanakhala, a village near Hardwar. It was probably also the name of the surrounding mountains. Near Kanakhala was Kapila-theertha, which is still pointed out as Kapila-sthana (*M. B. Vanaparva. 84.*)—*Geography of Ancient India.*

1. Siddheswar is a village at the foot of the Sarasapur Range, which forms the boundary between the districts of Kachar, Sylhet, and Assam on the south or the left bank of the river Barak. There is a celebrated Hindu temple here, and in the month of March an annual fair is held, attended by about three thousand persons. At the same time a religious gathering for bathing takes place on the opposite bank of the river. The place is traditionally stated to have been the abode of the famous Rishi Kapila Muni, a fellow-worker of



Patanjali, the founder of one of the six systems of Hindu philosophy. The nearest railway station is Badarpur, on the Assam-Bengal Railway, 252 miles from Chittagong.

2. Hardwar is a sacred town of great antiquity and has borne many names. The name of Haridwara (Vishnu-gate) seems to be of comparatively modern origin. Its earlier name Mayapura is connected with Sivite worship rather than with any form of Vishnu. Abul Fazl, in the time of Akbar, speaks of Maya or Haridwara on the Ganges being sacred ground for 36 miles in length. In the next reign, Tom Coryat visited the place and described it as Haradwara, the capital of Siva. A dispute exists to this day between the followers of Siva and Vishnu as to which of them gave birth to the Ganges. Both quote the *V. P.* which ascribes the Ganges to Vishnu and the Alakananda, its eastern branch, to Siva. The Sivites name it Haradwara and the Vaishnavites Haridwara. It was however a scene of sacred rites long before Sivism or Vaishnavism developed their present forms. As the spot where the Ganges issues forth on its fertilising career, Hardwara obtained the veneration of each of the religions of India and preserves the memorials alike of Buddhism, Sivism and Vishnuvism and of rites perhaps earlier than any of them.

It was also known as Kapila or Gupila, from the sage Kapila, who passed his life in religious austerities at the spot still pointed out as *Kapilasthan*. Hieun Thsang, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, in the seventh century visited a city which he calls "Mo-yu-lo" and the remains of which still exist at "Mayapur," a little to the south of the modern town. The temples generally visited by pilgrims are—

- (a) Chandi-pahar on the left bank of the Ganges.
- (b) The temple of Mayadevi.
- (c) The modern temple of Saravanath.



The great object of attraction at the present day is the "Hari-ke-charan" or "Har-ki-pari" Ghat. This is the principal bathing ghat with the adjoining temple of "Gangadwara." The "Charan" or foot-mark of Vishnu is imprinted on a stone let into the upper wall of the ghat and forms an object of special reverence. The great assemblage of pilgrims takes place on the first day of the month of Baisakh, the commencement of the Hindu solar year (March-April) and the anniversary of the day upon which the Ganges first appeared upon the earth. Every 12th year, the planet Jupiter being then in Aquarius, a feast of peculiar sanctity occurs, known as *Kumbha Mela*, which is attended by an enormous concourse of people. Holy Dakhanti, Dasehra Jeth, and Katki Puno fairs are held about a mile from Hardwar in March, April and June and November. Attendance 6,000, 10,000, 8000 and 5,000.

Harwar is 931 miles from Calcutta and 49 miles from Saharanpore.

126. 30. *No good* :—These were inordinately proud of their might and committed sins for which no adequate penances are laid down in the scriptures. "Those that meet their death through outcasts, water, serpents, lightning, Brahmanas, wild beasts, elephants and horses benefit nothing by libations of water and offerings of balls of food." Sins beyond the reach of the penances instituted by Manu and the other sacred law-givers are purged by the touch of the holy Ganga.

127. 1. *Take* :—Kapila gave back the sacrificial horse to him and instructed him as the future steps he ought to take.—*Kamba Ramayana*.

4. *Acquainted* :—He learnt it through fleet messengers—*Kamba Ramayana*. Barhi-kethu (Asamanjas, Su-kethu, Dharma-ratha and Pancha-vana were the sole survivors of Sagara's sons.—*Vayu-purana* 88.



128. 8 *Dileepa* :—One day he was coming back in a great hurry to his palace, as he had to fulfil a sacred duty by his wife who had bathed after her courses and was pure. His thoughts were far away and he did not espy Kama-dhenu, the Cow of Plenty, lying on the road; nor did he pay it the reverence due. The result was a curse of barrenness. Later on, he came to know of it through his guru Vasishtha and begged piteously for some means that would avert the miserable fate. He was enjoined to tend all carefully the calf of the Kama-dhenu that abode in his guru's asrama. Accordingly Dileepa and his queen Sudeshna waited upon the holy calf and never quitted it for a moment. One day, a lion sprang upon it all in a sudden and do what he might, Dileepa and his weapons failed to make any impression on the marvellous beast. He hung his head down in utter dejection, when the animal laughed loud and said "Ransom this precious calf of thine with another life equally precious." Dileepa joyfully offered himself as the likeliest substitute, when the lion vanished from sight and there stood before him one of the glorious attendants on Mahadava. "Kumbhodara am I named" said he graciously "I am entrusted with the task of looking after the elephants hereabouts so dear to my royal mistress. I but gauged thy spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice to your charge. And splendidly have you stood the test." Then Sudeshna drank of the milk of the calf Nandini, directed thereto by Vasishtha, and gave birth to the royal Raghu. Dileepa performed 99 Aswamedhas and was busy with the hundredth; when Indra, apprehending danger to his place, made away with the sacrificial horse. Raghu followed him and fought with him tirelessly until the Deva-raj, mightily pleased with his valour and prowess, conferred upon Dileepa the merits of the sacrifice—*Raghuvamsa*.

Dileepa, the son of Raghu referred to above, seems to be quite a different person. *Thilaka*,



12. *Resolved*:—Vasishtha gave him the necessary directions to bring Ganga down to the earth. He left the government in the hands of his minister Sumanthra and retired to the forests—*Kamba Ramayana*.

13. *Gokarna*:—A holy spot at the foot of the Himalayas.

“But it appears to me that the holy island of Rameswara is the same as the celebrated Gokarna of the ancient writers. Both are in the southern ocean (Raghuvamsa VI); both are sacred to Siva (*M. B. Vanaparva* 85); both have holy lakes (Ib. 88); [“Near the town of Rameswaram is a fresh water lake about 3 miles in circumference”—*Thornton*]. While Gokarna occurs so frequently among old writers, no notice is found of Rameswara. It occurs in some of the puranas such as Matsya, but is not found in the Ramayana or the Maha Bharata”—*Geography of Ancient India*.

15. *Austerities*:—He clad himself in deer-skin and he barks of trees and fed upon dry leaves. During the first month, he ate once in three days; during the second, once in six; during the third, once in a for night; during the fourth, the air was his only sustenance, while he stood upon his toes, with his arms lifted high over his head.—*M. B. Vana-parva*. 38.

130. 15. *Seven streams*:—There is a river named Vishnu-padi in the upper regions of the world of gods. When the Lord Vishnu incarnated as Vamana and measured the world in three strides, his right toe nail broke through the upper covering of the world-egg; and the waters that flowed into it in consequence were known as Vishnu-padi. Its contact with the Lord's feet endowed it with the property of cleansing all sins. Dhruva reverently bears it on his head during the twilights. The Seven Rishis proudly display it on their matted coils of hair as the *summum bonum* of all their efforts. It passes through the world of the celestial



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flows to the regions of the Moon. From there it falls on the abode of Brahma, where it adorns the mount Meru. There it divides itself into four streams Seetha, Alakananda, Chakshus and Bhadra, and flows on all sides to the ocean. The Seetha descends upon the mountains adjoining the Meru, passes by the peaks Kumuda and Kukura, reaches down to Mount Gandhamadana and falls into the salt ocean in the east through the Bhadrasva-varsha. The Chakshus falls from the peaks of the Malyavan, and flows into the salt ocean on the west through the Kethumala-varsha. The Bhadra flows north from the Meru on to the peaks of Mount Sringavan and falls into the salt ocean on the north through the Uttharakuru-varsha. The Alakananda flows south from the world of Brahma on to the mountains Hemakoota and Himakoota and flows into the salt ocean on the south through the Bharaatha-varsha—*Bh. V. 17.*

Ganga, which is explained in the Niruktha to mean *flowing*, is so called after the confluence of the Bhageerathi with the eastern feeder Alakananda at Deva-prayag. The last is formed by the junction at Vishnu-prayaga of the Dauli (Dayali) flowing from the north-east and the Bishan-ganga (Vishnu-ganga) flowing from the north-west. On the right bank of the last, a few miles below its source, is situated the celebrated Badrinath (Badarinatha), the reputed abode of Nara and Naravana. The place takes its name from an old Badari (jujube tree) and is now famous for its temple. (*M. B. Vanaparva* 145). Near it is a thermal spring called Thaptha-kunda, which might probably be the Bindusaras mentioned in it. The mounts Mainaka and Hiranya-sikhara mentioned in the reference are probably the lofty ranges which guard Badarinatha on the east and west. In the Ramayana (VI. 56) the Rishabha is called the golden mountain and Hiranya-sikhara is probably one of its descriptive names.



Alakananda is joined at Rudra-prayaga on the right side by the Mandakini, which rises in the south-west faces of the Kedara-natha mountain. *Amarakosa* calls it the celestial river. In the *Vanaparva*, 142, one of the feeders, probably the Vishnu-ganga, is called by that name Akasa-ganga; but in the *Prasthanaparva* it seems to be rightly applied to the Mandakini. The temple of Kedara-natha is still frequented by thousands of Hindu pilgrims; and near it is a deep precipice called Bhairava-jhampa from which people are still said to precipitate themselves.

The Bhageerathi rises in the mountains of Ghurwal and after a course of about 8 miles, emerges at Gangotri (Gangadri) from under a great thick snow-bed lying between lofty mountains. "From the brow of this curious wall of snow" observes an able writer "and immediately above the outlet of the stream, large and hoary icicles depend." These are considered by Hindus as the matted hair of Siva through which, according to the *Ramayana*, it flowed into the earth. Seven miles below, it is joined at Bhairava-sangama by the Jahnvi, which rises in the southern base of the culminating range of the Himalayas. This is considered one of the grandest awe-inspiring places in the world. "The appearance that the ruins of a Gothic cathedral," says the explorer Hodgson, "might have to a spectator within them, supposing that thunderbolts and earthquakes have rifted its lofty and massive towers, spires and buttresses, the parts left standing then might, in miniature, give an idea of the rocks of Bhairavagathi."

About 50 miles below Deva-prayaga, at Haridwara, the Ganga finally enters the plains of Hindustan. In the plains of Bengal, some miles above Moorshadabad, the Ganges divides into two channels, the bigger left branch being called Padma or Padmavathi (*Madhava-champu*, 3) and the right or the west branch Bhageerathi, which,



the lowest portion, is now eclipsed by the English name of Hugli.—*Geography of Ancient India.*

A great fair is held at Sagar in the Magha Sankranti (February). Sagar is reached from Calcutta by steamer.

Bhairoghati:—A temple and pass in Garhwal state, United Provinces, at the confluence of the Bhageerathi and Janhavi, in a deep gorge confined within perpendicular walls of granite; it is considered a place of great sanctity and is visited by Hindu pilgrims from all parts of India. This place is reached from Hardwar station on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway.

Gangothri:—A mountain temple in Garhwal state, United Provinces; it stands on the right bank of the Bhageerathi or Ganges. The mouth of the Ganges at Gangasagar and its source at Gangothri are considered peculiarly sacred. There is a temple 8 miles from the source of the river, which contains the images of Ganga, Bhageeratha and others. The pilgrims regard it as the limit of their journey and as there are no houses in the neighbourhood, they soon leave, taking a flask of water from the river.—*Traveller's Companion.*

Soron:—A town in Kasganj Tahsil, Etah District, United Provinces, situated on the Burh Ganga or the ancient bed of the river Ganga. It is 27 miles from Etah town north-east; on the Bareilly-Hathras road. About 2 miles from Soron, on the bank of a small stream, is the place where Rishi Bhageeratha performed thapas for thousands of years. Soron, on the Rohilkhand-Kumayoon Railway, is 55 miles from Bareilly, 162 miles from Cawnpur and 102 miles from Agra Fort.

M.B. gives the names of the seven streams as Vasvaukasara, Nalini, Pavani, Ganga, Seetha, and Jamboonadi; *V.P.* II.



8 relates that Mahadeva bore but the Alakananda on his head and that the sons of Sagara were purified thereby.

132. 3. *Through his ears* :—They are considered purer than the other parts of a man's body—Go.

4. *Janhu* :—An ancestor of the Kusikas. His sons were the favourites of the Aswini-devathas.—*Rig Veda*. I. 116 ; III. 58.

The Brahmapurana and the Harivamsa make him the husband of Kaveri, the daughter of king Yuvanasha of the solar race. He cursed her to become a river for some act of carelessness.

8. *Difficulties* :—He prayed to Brahma for 6,000 years and directed by him, spent another 6,000 years in seeking to propitiate Mahadeva. Ganga appeared to him only after 5,000 years of earnest prayer and said "Make sure that Mahadeva is willing to bear my current." So he had to pray another 2,500 years to Sankara. Later on, when Ganga disappeared among the matted hair of Siva, he had to pray to him another 2,000 years before he could get her out of it.—*Kamba Ramayana*. But, Thilaka is of opinion that Ganga was under the power of the Lord's illusion and fancied herself on the surface of his matted hair when she was really in the centre of it and *vice versa*. So, the Puranas and the Ithihasas relate that Ganga was but a manifestation of the illusion of the Lord. It could never have any feeling of pride, nor could Mahadeva entertain any desire to put down the egotism of Ganga ; nor could she be under an illusion. Hence, the wise teachers tell us that he who regards the Lord Siva and the Ganga on his head as different stands no chance of Liberation. But, this too might be another play acted for our benefit, akin to the mutual relations of Vishnu and Siva, who are said to fight with and pray to each other.

133. 30. *Episode* :—1. The Lord Siva appeared to



King Sagara and said "You prayed to me at a peculiar moment and in consequence, one of your queens will be the mother of 60,000 sons. Of wonderful strength and might, they will become tall with pride and meet with death all together when they least expect it. But, another of your queens will give birth to a son who will perpetuate your line on earth." Accordingly, the princess of Vidarbha was delivered of a big gourd, while the princess of the line of Sibi was the mother of a beautiful boy. Sagara was about to throw away the gourd, when a voice from heaven said to him, "Stop, you do ill to throw away your children. Take the seeds from this gourd and preserve them with care in vessels filled with clarified butter. It is the will of Mahadeva that your sons be born this way. Oppose it not." The boys were of matchless strength and ranged the worlds, causing great havoc to the dwellers thereof.

2. The sacrificial horse was going its rounds, the sons of Sagara keeping watch over it ; but, it disappeared all on a sudden when it reached the sea-shore. They searched far and wide and came upon a deep chasm in the earth and went down it, excavating deeper and deeper.

3. Narada informed Sagara of their being reduced to ashes by the anger of Kapila.

4. Amsuman saluted Kapila and found favour in his eyes. "Ask of me what you will" said the sage. "May my lord be pleased" prayed he "to give me the sacrificial horse to take back, that my grand-father's Yagna be completed. May my uncles attain happy worlds hereafter".

5. His sons dug the ocean that formed the abode of Varuna, and in consequence, was adopted by him as his son
—*M. B. Vanaparva* 104 to 109.

Many tribes and nations were conquered by Sagara. The Yavanas were ordered to shave their heads completely ; the Sakas grow the hair on the back of their heads, but



shave the front ; the Paradas allow their hair and beard to grow, and the Pahlavas grow but their beard. They were debarred from sacrifices to the fire, from the study of the holy books, and from other duties laid down for the castes and the orders of life. They were outcasted by the Brahmanas, and became the various mlechha nations scattered all over the globe. The Yavanas, of whom the Greeks are a branch, shave their heads in front. The Sakas, the Chinese and the inhabitants of Tartary do likewise and plait their hair in long pig-tails ; they allow it to hang loose or roll it up in coils at the back of their head. Those that live on the Himalayas and the countries adjoining it, allow but a small tuft of hair to stand on their heads. The men of Syria, Germany and other countries grow their hair long. The Persians shave their heads and grow their beards.—*V.P. IV.*

Ganga found it impossible to bear the weight of the Brahmanas who assembled to partake of the bounties of king Sagara at his sacrifices and cried to him to save her. She threw herself on his lap and was consoled only after he promised to make her his daughter.—*M.B. Dronaparva*, 60.

134. 21. *Cross* :—The party were about to enter the boat that was to convey them to the other bank, when the boatman respectfully stopped Rama and said “Holy sir ! Be pleased to wash your feet clean of any speck of dust.” Viswamithra looked surprised and said “How is this ? What have you against Rama that you should worry him so ?” “Nay, reverend sir !” replied the boatman “I hear that Ahalya, who lay in the hermitage of Gautama for untold ages as a shapeless stone cursed thereunto by her husband in his wrath, was transformed into the loveliest of women. And the dust of this prince’s feet fell on her. Now, I have a wife and a large family to feed, and but this frail boat to do it with. It needs no ghost to tell me that the dust which metamorphosed a slab into a woman, would not fail to do

it sooner when it has a piece of wood to operate upon. Just imagine to yourselves what would become of me with two wives and a correspondingly large family to feed and with not even this boat to help me do it." Viswamithra could not admire sufficiently the deep devotion of the man towards Rama that was so thinly veiled by his quaint humour.

They crossed over to the other bank, when Rama took a costly ring from his finger and offered it to the boatman as his hire. He drew back with a well-feigned air of surprise and pain and cried "Well, what is this? Very nice, truly. And so, things have come to such a pass when those in the same profession take fees from one another for services rendered." Viswamithra was mystified or appeared to be so. "Which of us is the professional boatman? I do not remember ever having rowed a boat in my life. Perhaps, this fellow might have come upon the royal youths when they were amusing themselves on the waters of the Ganga on some pleasure excursion." Lakshmana said to himself "Ho, ho! It seems that my brother manages to amuse himself with boating all unknown to myself, though I am never away from him. And this man is perhaps his trainer or instructor. Else how could he have known this most curious trait about my brother." But Viswamithra put an end to their suspense by asking the boatman "Pray, enlighten us as to which of us is the professional." And to them replied the boatman "Holy sir! This Rama, whom you see here, is the head of our profession. I am but a novice in the art and occupy but the very lowest ranks. I take the travellers that come here in my boat and enable them to cross this broad river and reach the other bank. But, this Master-boatman takes the countless souls in the universe into the capacious boat of his Sacred Feet and rows them over the perilous waters of the Ocean of



births and deaths on to the happy shores of Liberation. "I ferry him over now and take no hire for it, he will place it to my account and ferry me over in his boat freely and without charge. It is but the etiquette of our profession to give or take no hire for services rendered among us." The hearers were mightily pleased with the man's curious conceits and unparalleled devotion—A. R. III. (This would place the crossing of the Ganga after Rama's visit to the hermitage of Gauthama.)

25. *Visala* :—To the north of Magadha lay the republic of Vaisali, the modern Basara. It was a celebrated town in the time of Buddha (Lalitha-visthara); and is said to have been founded by King Visala, with whose name is connected its old ruined fort Raja-Bisalka-gar. The position of this place may be inferred from Rama's journey, as he passed a night here after crossing the Ganges before he arrived at his destination. General Cunningham arrives at the same conclusion from the description of Hieun Thsang's journey. We are therefore sure that the popular tradition identifying Besara with Vaisali is perfectly correct.

This is probably the land of Vrijis, who are mentioned by *Panini* (IV. 2. 131). This fact is expressly mentioned in a Buddhist legend quoted from Burnouf by General Cunningham (p. 444) and also in the passage on p. 28, *Beal's Life of Buddha*. In the *Sabha-parva* (30), Bheema is said to have met the Sarmakas and Varmakas before he went to Videha. They are evidently some of the tribes who inhabited this country. It probably extended from Bagmati or Boghavati river on the east to beyond the Gandaki river on the west; in other words, it comprises the modern districts of Mozafarpur and Sarun,—*Geography of Ancient India*.

135. 3. *Dithi* :—The wife of Kasyapa, daughter of the Patriarch Daksha and mother of Hiranya-kasipu, Hiranyaksha, and other Daithyas.



Resolved :—Once upon a time, Rishi Durvasas, the son of Athri, was ranging through the worlds, when a Vidyadhara lady came along with a garland in her hand of the flowers of heavenly fragrance. He requested it of her and the nymph was overjoyed to be allowed to offer it to the great Rishi. Durvasas wore it on his head and was passing through Swarga, when, as Fate would have it, he met Indra and his Devas coming towards him. Out of the love and friendliness that filled his heart towards the wielder of Vajra, he removed the garland from off his head and gave it to the Devaraja. But, Indra was blinded by his pride and conceit and threw it lightly round the head of his elephant Airavatha. A natural desire and curiosity to understand and analyse, as well as he could, the slight thing that rested on his massive head and caused him a slight irritation, prompted it to reach up its trunk for the garland ; it tore it to pieces and trampled it under his feet. Durvasas blazed with wrath at this wanton insult to him and cried "Wretched fool ! You call yourself the Ruler of the Devas ? Your high dignity has made your heart big with pride and has blinded your eyes to right and wrong. Are you fool enough to think that you are given a free hand to do as you like ? I gave this garland to you in all love and friendliness, knowing it to be a sure passport to the favour of the goddess Lakshmi. And you thought it beneath your high dignity to accept this trifle at the hands of a poor Brahmana like myself ? You did right throwing it to your elephant. Well, you showed me not due reverence ; you received not this garland with due humility and thanked me in return ; you placed it not on your head with a deep feeling of veneration and joy. You have no place in the world of gods. Your wealth and power and glory go away from you." Indra shook like an aspen before the terrible storm of wrath. He laid his head at the feet of the irate



sage and cried out in the agony of his terror and grief "Lord ! Holy One ! I humbly entreat you to forgive me my heinous crime." But Durvasas turned away from him as from a thing loathsome, and exclaimed "My heart knows no mercy towards you. Forgiveness is foreign to my nature where you are concerned. Gauthama has dealt but lightly with you and has thereby unwittingly encouraged you in the Path of Unrighteousness. Your heart has been bloated with pride at the praises so lavishly bestowed upon you by Vasishtha and the other Rishis. They have indirectly contributed not a little to set you up to insult such as I. I have had enough of you. Avaunt !"

From that moment, the three worlds and their ruler Indra lost their vigour and energy and lustre. Trees, plants, creepers and medicinal herbs withered miserably. Yagas and Yagnas were a thing of the past. The forests afforded no welcome retreat for the Rishis of stern thapas and holy vows. Charity, sympathy, benevolence and holy studies were abandoned. All beings moved about listlessly and with ever-waning life. For, vitality and righteousness, virtue and prosperity, vigour and devotion go hand in hand. The Mother of Mercy turned her face away from the three worlds ; the Daithyas and the Danavas took advantage of this and fell upon the Devas and drove them out from the Swarga. Utterly broken in spirit, they sought refuge with Brahma. He noticed that the worlds were enveloped in the black pall of unrighteousness ; the Regents were shorn of their lustre and were drained of their vigour ; the Asuras shone with unwonted refulgence and energy. He meditated for a while upon the Lord of all and said to the Devas "The Almighty utilises the three gunas of Sathwa, Rajas and Thamas to evolve, to preserve and to withdraw the universe. The present is an extremely favourable occasion for the work of preservation. He is now dominated by the quality



Sathwa and is intent upon the good of the worlds. Let us seek his feet in devout adoration. He will do what is good for us."

Accordingly they repaired unto the shores of the milky ocean and with humble hearts and reverent, prayed to the Fountain of Mercy. He manifested himself unto them and said, "Shining Ones! The Asuras are now in power, having secured the help and guidance of Sukra. It is well for you to be on good terms with them until your days of darkness and misery pass away. The Waters of Immortality bring back even the dead to life. So, ally yourselves with the Asuras, the Daithyas and the Danavas; churn the Ocean of Milk; throw into it all the medicinal plants in the world; let Mount Mandara be your churning stick and the Naga Vasuki, your rope; toil on unceasingly until you come upon Amritha. Promise your colleagues to give them half of it and thus secure their help and active co-operation. Allure them by enchanting descriptions of the virtues of it. 'Death flees from him who has tasted of the marvellous Waters; his strength and his might, his courage and his valor know no bounds.' Many a rare and precious thing may come out of the ocean while you are churning it; but you should keep your hearts away from them. May be a dread poison Halahala will come out of it, consuming all. Fear not; I will be with you and see that you come to no harm at the hands of your enemies; it shall be my care that they get nothing for their pains."

Accordingly the gods approached King Bali, and Indra unfolded to him his scheme for churning the ocean and getting the Amritha. They were convinced and allured by his eloquent words; and the Asuras agreed to the terms. Gods and demons uprooted the great golden mount Mandara and bore it to the Ocean of Milk. But, they sank exhausted at a very early part of their journey; countless gods



and Asuras were crushed and mangled as the huge mass fell. Then the Lord Vishnu came there and infused into them fresh life and energy ; he took up the vast mount on his Garuda and reached the shores of the ocean along with the Devas and the Asuras. All the medicinal herbs in the world, all roots and leaves and drugs of wonderful properties were carefully gathered and thrown into the waters. Vasuki the Naga, coiled himself round the mount, on being promised a share in the Amritha. The Lord Vishnu and the Devas took hold of its head, whereupon the Asuras flared up and exclaimed, " Who are we that we should put up with such an insult as this ? We have mastered the Vedas ; we have explored the depths of sastraic lore ; and as to character and observances, we stand unrivalled. We will not be shamed by taking hold of the tail of the serpent." The Lord smiled with extreme affiability and replied " Please yourselves. We are content to give way to you and stand at the tail-end."

Then the Devas and the Asuras set themselves in right earnest to churn the Ocean of Milk ; but, the mount Mandara was too heavy and sank to the bottom, as it had nothing to keep it in its place. Their hearts too sank at this unexpected calamity and they raised their voices in piteous appeal to the Lord Vishnu. They found favour in His eyes ; He rose from the depths of the ocean as a huge tortoise with the sunk mountain on His back. His hands clasped it firm, while He assumed another form and churned along with the Devas and the Asuras. In yet another form was He seen on the top of the mountain, inciting all to unremitting efforts. A stream of His energy coursed through Vasuki, increasing a million-fold his strength and endurance. Another stream kept the Devas to the highest point of efficiency and work. Then, Vasuki the Naga, could bear it no more; deadly poison, smoke and



flames issued from his countless mouths. The Asuras, who foolishly contended for a place near his head, were scorched and shrivelled thereby ; it drained them of their life ; and many swooned right away. The clouds were chased by his mighty breaths on to where the Devas stood and rained cool refreshing showers upon their wearied frames. Long did they toil and earnestly, when Halahala, the dread poison, appeared, consuming the worlds and everything in them animate and inanimate. The Patriarchs, the gods and the Asuras turned terror-stricken looks to mount Kailasa, where abode Mahadeva, the Lord of Supreme Compassion. Him they took refuge in and praised high and earnestly. Sankara turned an eye of pity on the suffering worlds ; Durga, the Mother of Mercy, joined her prayers to them ; and the Lord of Good quaffed the terrible poison as if it were the sweetest ambrosia. It made His throat black and gave Him another of His names—Neelakantha. They churned again, friends and foes, until Surabhi, the Cow of Plenty, rose to view ; and the Vedic Rishis took it to themselves to enable them to perform yagas and yagnas. Uchhaisravas, the marvellous horse, came next. King Bali wanted it for himself. Indra bore in mind the warning of Vishnu, and desired it not. Next came up Airavatha and the other elephants that support the earth in the eight quarters. Next floated up the gem Kausthubha, and the Lord Vishnu placed it on His lovely breast. Next came up the tree Parijatha and the lovely Apsarasas. (After them came up the moon, whom Sankara wore on His head.—V. P. I. 9).

Next rose a resplendent lotus, bearing on it Maha-lakshmi, the Great Mother, who irradiated the worlds with her effulgence. All bowed themselves in reverence unto her. But, cast her eyes wherever she would, she could not find one who might take his place by her side. One was a



great ascetic, but his anger mastered him. One was a profound philosopher, but the pleasures of the earth were too strong for him to renounce. One was a mighty intellect, but was the slave of women. Verily, he who is not master of himself cannot claim to be master of all ; and who but the Lord of all could take his place by Lakshmi ? One was mightily wedded to his ideal of duty ; but, in the right discharge of it, gentle mercy was a stranger to his heart. One was known far and wide for his countless rites and sacrifices, but egotism and selfishness led him all the way. The possession of power and place was rarely found united with length of years. One was a master of himself and of love and hate ; but his heart was not inclined to take a life mate. One was blessed with phenomenal length of life, but lacked a clean record and spotless character. And even when there was found one who combined in himself all desirable qualities, he suited not Lakshmi in his Karmicaffinities. Even if there was one with whom she was thoroughly satisfied, he desired her not. Hence, she took into consideration the above and chose the Lord Vishnu as her consort ; and He gave her a place on His broad breast. Her benign looks fell upon the Devas ; and wealth, prosperity and every conceivable blessing went along with them. The Asuras came not within the range of her mercy and they became strangers to modesty, valour, might, and other estimable qualities, while greed reigned supreme among them.

Next, Varuni, a damsel of exquisite loveliness, rose from the troubled waters ; and her did the Suras take unto themselves joyfully and with pleased hearts.

And at last rose up Dhanvanthari, in whom was manifested one of the centres of the Lord's energy ; and in his hand he held the vessel containing the much-longed-for Waters of Immortality. The Asuras caught sight of it and spurred thereto by their insatiable greed, they wrenched it



from his hands. But, harmony and union was remarkably absent even among themselves. So, they were at each other's throats in no time. Each claimed to be first and denied the right of others to be before him. The weaker among them found that they had no chance with their stronger brethren and cried out "The Devastoo have toiled along with us side by side and verily they are entitled to half of the precious waters". In the midst of this bustle and inconceivable uproar, the Lord Vishnu appeared among them as the most marvellously beautiful woman that ever blessed the sight of mortal men or immortal gods. The Asuras forgot their dissensions, the world, and their selves and gazed with staring eyes and gaping mouths at that dream of loveliness. Very soon they were at her feet before they knew it, all crying out "Be our queen and reign over us; distribute among us this hard-earned Elixir of Life. We are content to abide by your decision". But, she clapped her hands in pleased surprise and exclaimed "A nice trick this is to entrap an unwary young girl like myself. But you cannot think me so foolish as to believe that you will entrust this precious ambrosia to a young stip of a girl like myself to distribute as she thinks best among such mighty men as I find before me. But, since it will be an insult to your dignity and honour to suspect your sincerity and truthfulness, I will make as fair a division among you as a simple girl can. But I insist that you must accept my methods and decisions as just and valid, though you might think otherwise. Not a murmur, not the slightest suspicion of complaint or dissatisfaction. Are you agreed?" But the infatuated Asuras heeded not what she said, but kept up a never-ceasing cry unto her. "We care not what you do with us; reign over us and give this Amritha to whom you like;" and as if to confirm their sincerity, they placed the



precious vessel in her hands. She made the Asuras and the Devas take their seats in two long lines and began distributing the Amritha to the Devas. By the time she left them there was nothing of the precious Elixir for the Asuras to claim. Rahu, an Asura, was cunning enough to foresee the result and placed himself among the Devas. The Sun and the Moon pointed him out to the Fair Illusion, who instantly sliced off his head with the handle of her spoon. But, he had already partook of the Amritha and his head could not die. So Brahma transformed it into a Chaya-graha (node). From that day he ever chases the sun and the moon and swallows them during the eclipses. Then the Lord Vishnu withdrew his illusory form and left the place on his Garuda. The Asuras were wild with fury at being thus deceived by that chit of a girl and fell upon the Devas, routing them in dire confusion. The Lord Vishnu was back among them quicker than thought ; he extended his protection to the Devas and put the Asuras to flight.

This took place in the sixth or Chakshusha Mananv-thara of this Kalpa. The Lord was born as Ajitha, the son of Vairaja and Deva-sambhoothi ; and this was his Koorma-vathara.—*Bh.* VIII. 5—12.

Alakshmi, the goddess of adversity and misfortune, arose first. Of coal-black features, fiery eyes, and hair of blazing red, she appeared among them with decrepit limbs. "Gods! What would you of me?" cried she in harsh croaking tones. "Be pleased" requested they "to make your abode in those that speak harsh, in mischief makers and in those who sit down to their meals with unwashed feet ; in those who clean their teeth with sand, charcoal or salt, in those that reverence not the gods, the elders and the guests and in those that are mindless of the social and religious duties of charity, self-sacrifice and the study of the Holy Books ; in



samplers, adulterers, swindlers and in those that rob the Brahmana, the woman, the infant, the old man and the ascetic ; in refuse heaps where lie skulls, hair, ashes, bones, charcoal, husks and other rubbish. Sin and poverty shall grow in power wherever you are." The Lord Vishnu gave her in charge to Rishi Uddalaka—*Padmapurana, Brahma-khanda* IX 10.

Some puranas omit many of the above incidents. The Siva, Linga and Koorma-puranas make but a brief mention of it. The Matsyapurana, the Harivamsa, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharatha omit the curse of Durvasa. The Harivamsa has it that the Daithyas hit upon this expedient to free themselves from death. Sukra, their guru, brought back to life such of his followers as were killed by the Devas, through the efficacy of the magical herb Sanjeevini. The Devas came to know of it and desired to obtain the Amritha. The commentator on the Harivamsa interprets the churning of the ocean to symbolise thapas and the Amritha itself as Liberation.

Fourteen are the objects said to have sprung up at that time. The Ramayana mentions nine, the Bharatha nine, the Padmapurana nine, the Bhagavatha ten, the Vayupurana twelve, and the Mathsyas fourteen. The poison Kalakoota, the horse, the girl Varuni, the gem, the moon, the Cow of Plenty, the Parijatha, the elephant, the Apsarasas, Dhanyanthari and Lakshmi are mentioned in all ; but the Matsya adds the umbrella of Varuna, the ear-rings of Adithi and the white horse of the sun ; the bow of Maha Vishnu and his conch are also mentioned. The Vayupurana adds the holy Thulasi plant. The Padmapurana, Uttharakanda, mentions the poison, Alakshmi, the girl Varuni, the goddess of sleep, the Apsarasas, the Airavatha, Lakshmi and the Thulasi. The Bharatha (Adiparva 17—19) says that Anantha, the Naga, took Mount Mandara to the Ocean of Milk. On being

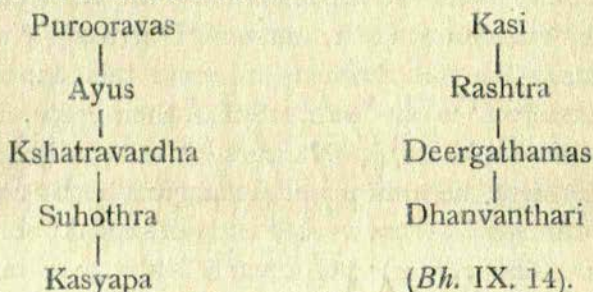


promised a share of the Amritha, the ocean consented to be churned. The gods next went to the king of tortoises and made him bear the mount on his back. Then Indra hoisted up the huge mass on its broad back with mighty engines and fixed it thereon.

But, the Anusanika-parva (141) relates that Indra aspired to the place of Paramasiva and hurled his Vajra at Him, the flames from which blackened His throat.

135. 11 *Vasuki*:—The son of Kasyapa and Kadru.

136. 24 *Dhanvanthari*:—



The Lord said to him "You are my son. In your second birth you will be endowed with marvellous yogic powers ; your fame will spread through the worlds ; the Brahmanas will offer worship to you during sacrifices ; and in that body you will attain devahood." In the second Dwaparayuga, Saunahothra desired offspring and prayed to Dhanvanthari, who was then known as Aja. He appeared before his devotee and said "What do you want of me ?"

"I would that yourself deign to take birth as my son" replied he. Accordingly Dhanvanthari was born in the line of Raja Kasi and gave out to the world the science of health.—*Vayupurana*. 92.

He is not to be confounded with Dhanvanthari, one of the nine gems of the Court of Vikramadithya and the author of Dhanvanthari-nighantu.

25. *Apsarasas*:—The progeny of Kasyapa and Muni. Menaka, Sahajanya, Ghrithachi, Pramlocha, Viswachi, Poor-



Vachitthi and four others are classed as divine (Daivika); these are usually sent by Indra to disturb the thapas of the Rishis. Rambha, Thilotthama, Misrakesi, and 31 others are classed as worldly (Laukika). Urvashi belongs to neither, but was brought into existence by the Rishi Narayana. They are also divided into fourteen classes named Ahootha, Sobhayanthi, Vegavathi, etc.

137. 4. *Asuras*:—Varuni or Sura is the name of an intoxicating drink which is prohibited for the Brahmanas; but it applies not to the gods.—*Thilaka*.

The Soma Juice and Varuni, so often mentioned in the Hindu books, do but symbolise a peculiar yogic practice which enables the Yogi to raise his consciousness to the world of the Gods and consciously function therein.—*Tr*.

(N. B.) Govindaraja is of opinion that this Chapter should have only 32 stanzas instead of 45; and that the episodes of the poison Halahala and of the Koormavathara were later additions by interested parties.—*Tr*.

29. This chapter points the moral that it is perfectly useless to try to harm any those that may take refuge in the Lord Vishnu.

138. 4. *Enable*. The wife cannot perform thapas without the permission of her husband.

15. *Kusaplavana*. The former name of Visala—*Thilaka*.

139. 8. *Impure*:—To sleep in the day time begets foul emanations from the body. Dithi was not used to do so; hence she was overcome by sleep even where she was sitting and gradually her head sank down until it touched her feet. It was tantamount to a Brahmana defiling himself with the touch of a Soodra; the above parts of the body gave birth to the castes respectively. Or it may be that she fell asleep with her head placed where her feet ought to be. Or she might have slept



with her feet to the east or the south, which is against the injunctions of the Smrithis. Anyhow, she fell from the level of purity required by her vow,—*Thilaka*.

14. *Hacked* :—Other puranas assert that the seven pieces were again cut each into seven ; hence the 49 classes of Maruths,

140. 8. *Informing deities* :—The Vishnupurana names them Avaha, Pravaha, Samvaha, Udvaha, Vivaha, Paravaha and Parivaha. Avaha rules over the clouds, meteors, rain and lightning. The others rule over the spheres of the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, the seven Rishis and celestial Ganga and the Dhruvaloka respectively.—*Theertha*. But, the Vayupurana, 67, gives it thus. Avaha rules from the earth to the clouds ; Pravaha from the clouds to the sun ; Udvaha from the sun to the moon ; Suvaha from the moon to the stars ; Vivaha from the stars to the planets ; Paravaha from the planets to the regions of the seven sages ; and Parivaha from that to the world of Dhruva.

The Mahabharatha (*Satyaparva* 39) relates that the Rishi Mankanaka was one day bathing in the Sarasvathi, when his heart was disturbed with the beauty of a lovely woman who chanced to pass by. His energy passed into the waters, which he preserved in his water-pot. It divided itself into seven parts, from which sprang the Rishis Vayu-vega, Vayu-bala, Vayuha, Vayu-mandala, Vayujwala Vayu-rethas, and Vayu-chakra ; and from them were born, the 49 Maruths. But, the *Santhiparva* 336, gives a different version. The Vayus range between the earth and the middle world. The gods known as the Sadhyas gave birth to a mighty son named Samana. Udana, was his son and Vyana was the son of Udana. Apana was the son of Vyana and Prana was the son of Apana ; but Prana had no son. Avaha, the first Vayu, ranges in the first world and drives before it the clouds born of heat and smoke (it is the same as Prana).



Pravaha, the second Vayu, ranges in the second world, causing chain-lightning to flash from the clouds. Udvaha, the third Vayu, causes the sun and the moon to rise and set (the same as Udana). It absorbs the waters from the four oceans and causes the rainbows in the sky. It fills the clouds with rain and places them under the charge of Parjanya. Samvaha, the fourth Vayu, bears the clouds along when they obey a to rain, scatters them, groups them again, causes thunder and lightning and wafts the vimanas (vehicles) of the devas along the sky ; it occasionally shatters the mountains to pieces. Vivaha, the fifth Vayu, is extremely rapid in its movements, dry and painful ; it absorbs the rains from the clouds ; thunder, meteors and ærolites are caused by it. Parivaha, the sixth Vayu, supports Ganga and the other celestial rivers ; it blows upon the sun and makes the thousand-rayed god appear on earth with only one of them ; it is the source of the Waters of Immortality ; the moon-god waxes every bright fortnight through its influence. Paravaha, the seventh Vayu, withdraws the life-breaths from all beings at the proper time ; the god of Death and Yama, the Dispenser of Justice follow its tracks ; it leads them to liberation who control their senses and mind and meditate on the Supreme Self. It enabled the 10,000 sons of Daksha, the Patriarch, to reach the ends of the quarters of the earth ; it helps the Jeevas to escape from the Wheel of birth and death and cross the ocean of material existence. Such are the offspring of Dithi, ever in motion, never ceasing.

140. 26. The Padmapurana, Bhoomi-khanda, 23, 24, 25, describes the birth of the Maruths differently. Bala, the Daithya, was a son of Dithi ; he met his death at the hands of Indra. The bereaved mother complained of it to her husband Kasyapa, who tore out one of his matted coils of hair and offered it into the sacrificial fire. Vrithra, the Asura, sprang from it and asked "Lord ! What is thy



will?" "Slay Indra" cried Kasyapa "and bring peace to the heart of Dithi". He mastered the vedas and sastras; he shone with the lustre of unparalleled thapas; his strength, energy and splendour were something indescribable. Indra watched it carefully and grew mightily afraid. He sent for the Seven Rishis and said, "Throw a bridge of peace between me and this Vrithra." But they found it very difficult to convince the asura of the sincerity of the Devaraja. "I am sure that your Indra will somehow find a way to win my confidence and bring me to my death. I do not lend my ear to any proposal of yours unless Indra swears it solemnly." "What is your reply?" asked the Rishis of Indra. "I swear" spoke Indra "to observe the utmost sincerity in my dealings with Vrithra. May I be beset with the heinous sins of Brahminicide, etc., if I ever prove untrue to him." Vrithra believed him and resided in the capital of Indra for a very long time. But all along, the crafty Indra was keenly watching for an opportunity to slay his foe. One day, he called unto him Rambha and said "See if you cannot any how entrap Vrithra. It is so easy for me to make away with him when he is once fallen from his high estate." Rambha acceded to the proposal and disported herself with many other girls in the lovely groves of Nandana. Vrithra chanced to come there with his Danava friends; and as misfortune would have it, looked at Rambha full primed for conquest and—was lost. She made him drunk and robbed him of his wisdom and lustre. Indra was ready hard by and struck him dead with his Vajra. And the sin of slaying a Brahmana caught him in its terrible grip.

Dithi, oft bereaved, appealed again to Kasyapa, who taught her a rare vow, observing which, she could bring forth a son who would be the death of Indra. But Indra, the cunning, went to her as a holy Brahmana and was permitted to wait upon her. One day she fell asleep without



having washed her feet and with her head to the west. Indra took advantage of her consequent impurity to enter into her womb and cut to pieces his future enemy.

The Maruths are twenty one in number (Rig-Veda I. 311). Their mother was Prisni (*Ib.* IV. 23).

32. *Sumathi* :—

Ikshwaku = *Alambusa*.

Visala
|
Hemachandra
|
Suchandra
|
Dhoomraswa
|
Srinjaya

Sahadeva
|
Krisaswa
|
Somadattha
|
Kakuthstha
|
Sumathi
(*V. R. I.* 47.)

— ... —

Ikshwaku
|
Dishta
|
Nabhaga
|
Bhalandana
|
Vathsapreethi
|
Pramsu
|
Pramathi
|
anithra
|
Chakshusha
|
Vivimsathi

Rambha
|
Khaninethra
|
Karandhama
|
Aveekshith
|
Maruttha
|
Dama
|
Rajavardhana
|
Sudhrithi
|
Nara
|
Kevala

Vegavan
|
Budha
|
Thrinabindu
=
Alambusa
|
Visala
|
Hemachandra
|
Dhoomraksha
|
Samyama
|
Krisaswa
|
Somadattha
|
Sumathi
(*Bh.* IX. 2.)



141. 15. This chapter contains the truth that Rama was endowed with power to purify all the worlds.

20. *Gait* :—The elephant and the tiger may be likened to Rama, while the lion and the bull resemble Lakshmana in their gait.

142. 26 *Gauthama* :—He is the author of Rig Veda I, 75—94 ; XI, 31—36 ; and Samaveda, Part I, Prapathaka ii, Dasathi 1, Rik 1 ; I, ii, 9, 5 ; I, iii, 6, 5 ; I, iv, 5, 10 ; I, iv, 6, 6. His father was Raghoogana (Rig Veda I. 75). His son Nodhas was the author of Rig Veda I, 58—63, while Vamadeva, another of his sons, was the seer of Rig Veda IX. 4.

143. 7 *Season* :—Sixteen days after they had bathed from their courses.

16. *Pleased* :—But *V. R. VII. 30* has it that Ahalya believed that it was her husband Gauthama who approached her. She never had the slightest suspicion that it was any other.

144. 23 *Shall see* :—Gauthama but shaped into a curse the stern penance prescribed for a guilty woman. Nowhere is mention made of her being transformed into a stone. *V. R. VII. 30* simply condemns her to lose her form and beauty. But other puranas emphasise that she was cursed to become a stone and the dust of Rama's feet freed her from it. It may be that it happened in different kalpas.

28. *Shake off* :—Adoration of the holy feet of Rama confers greater merit than many thousands of years spent in severe penances.

145. 2 *Take up* :—He gave way to his anger and his curse robbed him of a portion of the merit laid up by him during long years of thapas ; he had to make it up.

9. *Spoil* :—Gauthama wanted to become the Lord of



the devas. And Indra was sent by them to frustrate the attempt of the sage.

146-7. *Ahalya* :—

Brahma
|
Angiras
|
Brihaspathi = *Mamatha*
|
Bharadwaja
|
Manyu
|
Brihathkshathra
|
Hasthi
|
Ajameedha
|
Neela

Santhi
|
Susanthi
|
Puruja
|
Arka
|
Bharmyaswa
|
Mudgala
|
Ahalya = Gauthama
|
Sathananda
(*Bh.* IX. 18, 19).

Once upon a time Brahma concentrated all his energies and set about to gather all that was best and loveliest in creation. He fashioned out of it a woman of marvellous beauty and named her Ahalya, the *faultless*. In time the Regents of the worlds came to know of it and pestered Brahma with petitions for her hand. He was unspeakably bored by the never-ceasing train of suitors and exclaimed "I give Ahalya to him who goes round this Brahmanda thrice and comes to me first." No sooner were the words out of his mouth than they were off like a shot—Indra on his Airavatha, Yama on his ox, Varuna on his crocodile, and Kubera on his human bearer.

Meanwhile Narada, the son of Brahma, was commissioned by his father to seek the Rishi Gauthama in his hermitage. Being suitably entertained by his host, Narada casually mentioned that the charming abode wanted but one thing—an equally charming mistress to serve ever



faithfully its holy master. But, Gauthama laughed a bitter laugh and said "A very fine conceit, doubtless; my snow-white locks, my shrivelled skin, my over grown hair and beard, I a mere bag of bones rattling together, I am the last person to run any risk of being hunted to death by match-making mammas." Narada cut him off with "What is it to you? You have but to come with me and the loveliest girl in all the worlds shall be your wife as the reward of unquestioning obedience." Gauthama could not refuse the offer and naturally. They were passing through Indra's capital, when Narada espied the Cow of Plenty lying under the shade of the Wishing Tree (Kalpaka). "Go round the sacred cow thrice" said Narada. "May I know why?" began Gauthama hesitatingly enough; but Narada cut him short and cried "Enough of your curiosity and questions. Obey me implicitly, blindly and without question or cavil; and you are sure of the most charming wife one could desire." Gauthama went round the cow thrice and all reverently.

They reached the abode of Brahma and Narada introduced Gauthama to him and said, "Lord! They tell me that you have with you a marvel of a girl lately created." *Brahma* "Yes! She was born to plague my life. Day or night, morning or evening, some one is ever at my doors with the eternal petition 'Give me Ahalya.' Indra and Chandra, Kubera and Yama, they are all clean mad about her. I hit upon a nice plan to get rid of their importunities for a time by promising to give the girl to him who comes to me first after circling this Brahmanda thrice. They are now chasing one another in hot speed and know no hunger nor sleep nor fatigue. A little more patience and I will be well rid of this nuisance." *Narada* "Your wishes are to be realised, I believe, sooner than you think. For, here is my friend Gauthama



come to claim the prize as the first in the race instituted. I hope you will not detain him unnecessarily." *Brahma* (to *Gauthama*) "Have you gone round this Brahmanda thrice and have you come out first?" *Gauthama* "You talk strange things. I know nothing of your gods, your races, your prizes. I but followed my friend *Narada*." *Brahma* (with well feigned anger) "How is it, *Narada*? Will you never have done with your practical jokes?" *Narada* "*Gauthama*! I wonder at your obtuseness. Tell *Brahma* what happened to us while we were passing through *Swarga*." *Gauthama* "Ah! you mean that. Well, we saw the cow *Kamadhenu* lying placidly under the *Kalpaka* tree. You asked me to go round it thrice. You told me that it was essential to my getting married. I did so; for, I was to ask no questions. More than this I know not." *Brahma* "*Narada*! What possible connexion can there be between *Kamadhenu* and *Ahalya*?" *Narada* "Lord! You have given it out as an article of faith that in the limbs of the cow are located the fourteen worlds that make up the Brahmanda. *Gauthama* has gone reverently thrice round *Kamadhenu*, the most holy and mighty of cows. That is equal in merit to circling the Brahmanda thrice, is it not? I will suggest that he be given *Ahalya* at once and be treated with all the honors due to a victor in the contest." *Brahma* saw with his eye of wisdom into the far-past and found that *Gauthama* and *Ahalya* had produced much common Karma that had to be worked out in that life. He was much delighted at the diligence of his son *Narada*, who, as one of the Lords of Karma, had to attend to the proper adjustment of it. He bestowed *Ahalya* upon *Gauthama* as his wife. Well pleased beyond all expectations, the sage left for his hermitage on earth and his wife with him, having first taken reverent leave of *Brahma* and *Narada*.

Some time after, *Indra* raced up to the abode of *Brahma* on his fleet *Airavatha* and was rushing in, when



Narada who was coming out, stopped him and exclaimed "Is it Indra? What a dreadful hurry you are in! Your body streaming with perspiration, your hair blown all over your face, your dress all soiled and dusty, your ornaments hanging about you in wild confusion, I cannot make you out as my old friend, the Lord of the Devas. Why, you are worn out to a shadow from hunger and your eyes are red with want of sleep." But Indra brushed him aside impatiently and exclaimed "Narada! Bother me not, now of all times, with your quips and cranks and conceits and compliments. I *am* in a mighty hurry. I go to Brahma on the most important business. Stand not in my way like a bird of ill omen." Narada caught him firmly and barring his way, said "Let be. You will lose very little by telling me what you are after." Then Indra blurted out "I have come out first of those who have been sent to go thrice round the Brahmanda. I should see Brahma before the others come and must take away Ahalya to my capital. Tell you further later on" and was passing in. But Narada cried after him, "Indra! What is it you are saying? Let me hear it again. You go to Brahma to get from him Ahalya to be your wife? Do you really feel sure that he will give you Ahalya?" His persistence disconcerted Indra and led him to dimly suspect that there was something unpleasant awaiting him. So, he stopped short and replied "Do you doubt it? I see here none of those that started with me in the race". *Narada (looking at him with the extreme concern)* You are the prince of credulous creatures. You are the most innocent and guileless and gullible god that ever breathed in heaven. You are just the sort of fool who will place implicit faith in the words of Brahma and tear around the universe with sleepless eyes and a hungry stomach. Oh, you innocent! He has fooled every one of you nicely and has bestowed Ahalya upon another. *Indra (beside himself with surprise)*



and anger) What? What is it you say? Ahalya married!! To whom! When! How! *Narada with the coolest air imaginable*) You consecrated idiot! Ahalya is married and has by this time most likely a lusty brace of twins. If any one is insane enough to be aimlessly prancing round Brahmandas, how could he hope to be in touch with current affairs? *Indra (with a dazed air)* "And to whom did Brahma dare give Ahalya, having thus deceived me most infamously? *Narada* Gauthama, a Rishi old and pious, is the happy bridegroom. *Indra* Well, how did he in his distant hermitage come to know anything of Ahalya or Brahma or the race? *Narada* I took the trouble of going all the way and told him of it. *Indra* You went there? It was you that told him of it? Let be. But he must have come out first of those that went thrice round the Brahmanda? Now, neither I nor the other candidates ever set our eyes upon any one answering in the least to your description. *Narada* No, certainly not. How could it be possible if you were all running round the Brahmanda like born fools and so wasting precious time? Gauthama at least has the merit of a keener brain. Verily, a Brahmana stands head and shoulders in point of intellect above a blustering sword-blade of a Kshathriya with but an empty skull-pan. Look here. The fourteen worlds are located in the body of the cow; Gauthama went round the sacred Kamadhenu thrice and made short work of it. He fooled you nicely and won Ahalya. As your friend and well-wisher, I will suggest to you that you will do well to go back to Swarga quickly before your friends come here and laugh you to scorn. *Indra* But, who was it that put up Gauthama to this trick and made him win Ahalya? *Narada* "Who but I? You do not seem to realise that I am the party most interested. Shame and sorrow drove poor Indra almost mad and he cried "Narada! As sure as I am the king of the



Devas, I will never rest until I have possessed myself of that Ahalya upon whom I have set my heart. There is nothing I would not dare to accomplish my purpose." And he swore it by a dreadful oath.

2. Gauthama cursed Ahalya to become a river in Janasthana. Rama came that way and happened to cross it, when the curse fell off from her. But this might have happened in some other kalpa—*A. R. III. 18-22; Brahma Purana 87.*

3. Indra cawed like a crow near the asrama of Gauthama. The Rishi guessed it was about daybreak and started to go to the Ganga to have his morning bath. But, when he reached it, he saw the goddess sleeping all peacefully. It flashed upon him that somebody had played him a trick; and he hurried back only to see Indra coming out of his cottage as a cat. Forthwith the offender was cursed to be honeycombed all over with eyes and his partner in guilt to become a shapeless stone—*Kamba Ramayana.*

4. Indra lost his heart to Ahalya; he began to frequent the asrama of Gauthama, under the pretence of studying the Vedas with him. The Rishi was one day in deep meditation on the banks of the lake Pushkara, when he became aware of the misconduct of Indra and hurried back to his cottage. The adulterer was even then coming out of it. Forth flashed the curse from the righteous sage. "You shall be covered all over with that which was the cause of your heinous sin." He turned upon Ahalya next "You shall stand here, a mere bag of bones, devoid of flesh, hair or nails. Long ages hence, the Lord will come down on earth as Sree Rama, in the line of Ikshwaku. He will deign to turn his steps here, accompanied by his brother Lakshmana and his wife Seetha. He will come even to where you stand and will appear to be surprised at your strange figure. He will



turn to Vasishtha and exclaim "Holy Sir! What is this?"

Then the Rishi will relate unto him the story of your past. Rama will pronounce you innocent and throw the blame on Indra. Then you will regain your natural form and beauty ; and I will take you back unto me, pure and stainless." Indra was ashamed to show himself among his subjects ; so, he hid himself in the waters for long years and prayed to the Devatha Indrakshi to free him from the curse. She appeared to him and said "It is useless to hope that I or any other could interfere with the curse pronounced by the great sage. The best that I can do for you is to throw my illusion over you so that all will see countless eyes over your body in the place of your present deformity."—*Padmapurana, Srishthi-khanda. 57.*

5. Ahalya fell in love with Indra and sacrificed her honour to him. Gauthama knew it through his yogic powers and was there in a moment. Indra was mortally afraid and turned himself into a cat. Gauthama looked at Ahalaya and said "What is that?" She replied as readily "*Majjara*." Gauthama laughed loud and scornfully. "Just so. You spoke the veriest truth, but when you least wanted to do it. He is of a surety *tvajjara*. Remain for countless ages a senseless block of stone ; the glance of Sree Rama will restore you to your former shape. Your friend Indra will have in abundance all over his body that which he craved for in you. Later on, he will come across the Apsaras Thilotthama, the creation of Visvakarma and they will be changed into as many eyes." (Ahalya wanted to tell her husband that it was but a cat. Now *Marjara* (मार्जार) is the Sanskrit for a cat and in the Prakrith dialect used by women, it is pronounced *Majjara*. (मजार). But Gauthama understood it as a Sanskrit word meaning *My lover* (मत् + जार = मजार). So he but repeated "He is verily your lover (स्वत् जार एव)."—*Kathasarilhsagara, Lambaka 3.*



6. The *Adh. R., Balakanda*, repeats the story of Ahalya being turned into stone and Indra being blessed with what he was after. Ahalya's eyes were opened to the divine nature of Rama and she sang his glory in eloquent phrases.

7. Brahma ordered Visvakarma to fashion Thilotthama the Apsaras, to destroy the asuras Sunda and Upasunda. She reverently went round those that were assembled in the hall of Brahma. Indra was charmed with her beauty and turned whichever way she went and countless eyes sprang over his body in consequence—*M. B. Adiparva* 231.

8. Chirakari, the younger son of the Rishi Medhathithi, of the line of Gauthama, was always slow in his words and acts ; for he thought long and deeply over every step he took. One day Gauthama suspected his wife of infidelity and in his anger ordered Chirakari to slay her. The youth meditated long and deeply over the words of his father who left for the woods. "My father is a god unto me and his word is my law ; but, my mother is no wit the less worth my reverence. It is deadly sin to disobey my father ; but it is equally sinful if I slew my mother. She gave her body to that villain of an Indra, who deceived her by taking the form of my father. Long ago, when the sin of Brahminicide clung to him, he gave a fourth of it to women and also the doubtful boon of sexual desire in all seasons. Hence, my mother is entirely guiltless and Indra is the criminal. The father is declared by the holy books to be the embodiment of all the deities ; but, they declare as emphatically that the mother represents in herself all the deities and all beings. If I reverence my father, I please the gods ; if I reverence my mother, I secure happiness here and hereafter. Verily, it is a nice dilemma I am in." Day after day he thought over it, trying to find a way out of the difficulty. Gauthama came back from



the forest. But his heart knew no peace. "Alas ! I have laid myself open to a terrible crime. The king of the gods came to my humble cottage as a Brahmana. I extended unto him the due rights of hospitality. I prayed him to extend his protection over me. I believed that he would be my best friend and well wisher. But, he betrayed me, in spite of my implicit trust in him. Ahalya is not to blame ; nor Indra who happened to see her while he was coursing along the sky and was seduced by her marvellous beauty. Though a god, yet he is not perfect ; and I should have made ample allowance for a moral weakness, that was, after all, natural in him. A sage of pure heart and restrained passions like myself has no business to sit in judgment over others and give way to anger. But, my guilt is all the more flagrant in that he was my guest. If he failed in his duty, it is no affair of mine. It is between himself and the Lords of Karma. I did wrong in seeking to harm him. Neither Indra nor my wife is to blame. I could have avoided all this mischief, all this unpleasantness, by my yogic powers. It is all due to my carelessness and want of foresight. In mad fury I ordered my wife to be done to death and have burdened myself with the unspeakable sin of slaying a woman. Would that my son Chirakari, who ponders deeply over every step that he takes and never does things in a hurry, transgressed my orders ! He would have saved Ahalya's life ; he would have saved me from a horrible crime ; he would have saved me from wasting my hard-earned thapas in an unworthy curse. All is well if he but justifies his name Chirakari (he who acts with due deliberation.") So praying, he entered his hermitage with a sinking heart and was surprised and no less pleased to find Chirakari and his wife coming forward to pay him reverence. He clasped his son and saviour to his heart and cried "You have, by your calm wisdom, saved me,



my dharma and your mother from ruin. You are the best of sons, the worthiest. How shall I pay you back this deep debt of gratitude? May you ever continue to deserve your name. May you continue to deliberate long and deeply before each step you take." Thereafter he was never away from his wife and noble son.—*Ib, Santhi-parva*, 272.

9. Gauthama's curse turned the beard of Indra yellow.
—*Ib*, 352.

10. Uthanka, the disciple of Gauthama, finished his studies and requested leave to be allowed to go home to his people. "What would my master have me give him as fees (dakshina)?" asked Uthanka in all humility. "You have already paid it," replied Gauthama "The most ample fees do but please the heart of the teacher. And you have done that in no small measure. If you were a boy of sixteen, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to give you my daughter unto wife; for, full well I know that there is no other that could serve you so well and faithfully." No sooner were the words out of his master's mouth than Uthanka transformed himself by his yogic powers into a charming youth of sixteen; and was rewarded with the hand of his master's fair daughter. Next, he waited upon Ahalya, his teacher's wife and said "I will consider myself as most blessed if you will only order me to do anything for you, be it to get for you *anything* that this wide universe may contain. I can assure you that it is quite possible to me, who have laid up no inconsiderable store of yogic might, thanks to my revered teacher." Ahalya declared herself amply pleased with his devotion and service to them during his stay there and gave him permission to go; but Uthanka would not rest until he had worried her into asking something of him. "Then" said Ahalya "bring me the marvellous ear-rings worn by the wife of Saudasa, the king." And Uthanka set forth upon his quest.

Gauthama missed him that day and asked Ahalya what had become of him. She informed him of his importunate request and the object of his journey. "Alas!" exclaimed Gauthama, "the noble king is now under the dreadful curse of Vasishtha and feeds upon human flesh; our poor Uthanka will not escape with his life." "Nay," said Ahalya "may your grace and might keep away from him every thing harmful or unpleasant."

Uthanka went to Saudasa and requested of him the ear-rings of his wife. The king sent the young man to his palace with a password to his wife. That model of chastity gave them to him at once and said "Do not place these on the ground; the Nagas will make away with it. Allow no one to wear this who is impure having dined; the Yakshas will spirit it away. Day and night these will give untold wealth to the wearer. The moon and the stars will lose lustre at nights by contrast; hunger nor thirst, fire nor poison, steel nor beasts can do him any harm who wears these." Uthanka brought them back with all care, but on the way the Nagas caught hold of a tiny slip on his part and robbed him of the precious ear-rings. But, his yogic might compelled the sympathy and assistance of Agni, Indra and the other gods, and he recovered them from the world of the Nagas and kept his word to the wife for his teacher.—*Ib. Aswamedha-parva* 56, 57, 58.

11. The Rishi Devasarma had for wife a woman named Ruchi, who was the most beautiful being in the three worlds. Indra was ever on the lookout for a chance to win her to his arms. But Devasarma, who was not ignorant of the ways of woman, protected her from harm through his yogic powers. Once he resolved to celebrate a sacrifice and had to be away from home in consequence. He thought long and deeply over how to keep her from harm when he was not by. He called



to him Vipula, his favourite disciple and said "May be the wily and unprincipled Indra will come here when I am away and assume the most inconceivable forms to deceive you. But, I am sure you will easily detect him and use your no small yogic powers to keep away danger and dishonour from your master's door."

When he was away, Vipula thought deeply over it and leaving his physical body carefully concealed, he pervaded the frame of Ruchi in his subtle body. Indra did not keep him long waiting. He was gadding about in the most entrancing form he could assume. Ruchi caught sight of him and her heart leapt forward to welcome him as warmly as she could. But Vipula effectively controlled her will and limbs and made her motionless. Then Indra addressed her in his choicest terms of praise and compliment. "Fairest of the fair! Know me as the Lord of the Devas. Your beauty has drawn me down from the world of the gods and has made its bright joys and delights dull and dark to me. Save me from the fiery shafts of Cupid, who respects neither age nor state, nor strength nor weakness." Ruchi was all afire to answer him in phrases equally redolent with the love that was surging in her heart. But Vipula was aware of it and controlled her speech. Ruchi and Indra were equally mystified. The Devaraja had not bargained to find a cold passionless woman, who froze him with her chaste airs and spoke to him not. His heart was weighed with shame; but he would not give up the struggle without a last attempt. "My love!" said he in his most bewitching manner "We are wasting the precious minutes that ought to have been used to better purpose. Let us take our fill of love and its delirious delights before your ill-mated husband comes back." Ruchi made superhuman efforts to break the spell that bound her and to speak to her heavenly visitor words winged



with burning love ; but, from her lips there came out strange words in stranger tones. "Who are you, bold and bad man ! What have you in common with such as dwell in these calm solitudes ? How dare you come here when the master of this house is away ? I would demean myself by speaking to you in his absence ; more so when I see you raving mad with unholy and obscene words on your lips. Get away from here, lest worse should befall you." The words were clear-cut, perfect in intonation, and grammar and in the purest Sanskrit ; Ruchi ought to have spoken Prakritha at best. She was bewildered. "Strange are my acts and stranger still my words—the very opposite of what I would have them to be." Indra puzzled over it for a long time, until he chanced to look at it with his inner vision. Lo ! there was Vipula pervading the body of Ruchi and dazzling in his spiritual lustre. "I am lost !" cried he "the Rishi's curse once more !!"

Meanwhile Vipula entered his own body and said to the awe-struck Indra in withering scorn "Unworthy king of gods ! Sinful wretch ! Slave of your lust ! Gods and men will count you no better than a feather, a blade of grass. You have been in too much hurry to forget the dreadful curse that Gauthama launched at you. Was it not enough that your body was most repulsive and loathsome to look at, covered as it was with the breeders of everything impure and unholy. The Rishi's kind pity was, I see, wasted upon you when he threw an illusion over your foul body that made it appear as if covered with countless eyes. You are a sink of iniquity ; you are a hopeless idiot ; your heart is as unsteady as the breath of fame. I am here to guard this woman from every danger. I wonder very much what has made me so forbearing and merciful to-day, especially when I have the very best of reasons to reduce you to atoms. Hasten to put worlds



between you and this place, for, you cannot come across my master and live. Repose not in fancied security ; pride not upon your kingship over gods or upon the Waters of Immortality that you have quaffed. The righteous wrath of a Brahmana is something before which the very Easwaras tremble in dismay. May you be the wiser for what you went through to-day." Indra waited not for further advice but vanished into the depths of space, joyfully exclaiming " My ancestors of happy memory ought to have been peculiarly holy and good ; nothing else would have saved me to-day from utter annihilation."—*M. B. Anusasanika-parva* 75-76.

Ahiyapuri.—A village in Darbhanga District, Bengal, 15 miles from Darbhanga and one mile from Kamtowl Railway station on the Bengal and North-Western Railway. Religious gatherings are held on the days of Rama Navami. It is called Ahalyasthana, after a daughter of a Raja who married Gautama Muni and died at Ahiyari. About 10,000 persons attend this fair. The village contains five temples with images of Rama and Seetha.

Damraon.—It is about 10 miles from the Buxar station on the East Indian Railway. The temple is said to contain the images of Ram Chandra and Ahalya Bai, a wise and learned woman, who was turned into stone by the curse of her husband Gautama Muni. When Ram Chandra visited the place, she again returned to life and was translated to heaven. Buxar is 411 miles from Calcutta by East Indian Railway.

Kovvoor.—In the Krishna District, Madras Presidency, is a place of pilgrimage on the Madras Railway. Gautama Rishi, when performing penance here, accidentally killed a cow and brought upon himself one of the greatest sins. He prayed to Siva, and at last succeeded in bringing down the river Godavery, which flowed over the spot where the



cow was killed and relieved Gautama of his sin. This place is much frequented by pilgrims in the belief that bathing in the Godaveri at this place cleanses them from all sins. It is 356 miles from Madras—*Travellers' Companion*, 147-14.

Mithila.—On the north-east of Vaisali lay the kingdom of Videha with its capital Mithila. Janakpur in Nepal, north of Madhuvani, is still identified as Mithila, the capital of Janaka, with all its ancient associations. Sitamari ("where Sita was furrowed out") claims the honor of giving birth to Sita, daughter of Janaka (*Ramayana*-III, 4). Sitakunda, 12 miles east of Matihari, is still revered as the tank where Sita bathed on her way to her marriage. Videha, therefore, must have comprised, besides a portion of Nepal, all these places or in other words, the northern part of the old district of Tirhut and the north-western portion of the district of Champaran. The country is still known as Mithila in learned quarters. Its Brahmins are broadly distinguished from those of Bengal and it is still governed by the Mithila School of law, most admirably represented by the Viramirodaya of Mitra Misra. The people of Videha must have formerly traded a good deal as *Vaidehaka* or resident of Videha, is given by Amara as a synonym of merchant (II. 9. 78).

Tirabhutki, from which Tirhut is derived, literally means "possessing on or along banks" and probably included the country along the Gandak river. At one time, its kings were supreme in this part of India and I understand an era is still extant commemorative of this rise. According to *Trikanda Sesha*, Tirabhukti is a synonym of Videha, (*Bhoomi-varga*). I do not think this is correct, as I have not found in any old work a similar usage and am told by Mithila Brahmins that the southern portions of Tirhut do not come within Videha. It was therefore, probably, within the dominions of the Rajas of



Tirabhukti, which might have led Purushottama to group these together. Nichchavi is rarer than Tirabhukti, but General Cunningham says the kings of Thibet and Ladak trace their descent from the Nichchavis (p. 451). The Newar kings of Nepal also belonged to this tribe. The Nichchavis, therefore, appear to be the Newars, who are still found in Nepal. They must have dwelt further north, probably about Lauria, near which there are extensive ruins.

Sankasya. The late Prof. H. H. Wilson changed it into Kasi in his Vishnu Purana, but we have on this point not only the unanimity of two such diverging books as the Bombay and the Italian editions of the Ramayana, but also of dramas founded upon it (*Mahaveera Charitra* I). In the seventh century Hiouen Thsang visited a place which he calls Seng-kia-she before going to Kanyakubja. This has been identified with the modern Sankesa on the Kali river to the south of Kampilya and north-west of Kanyakubja. This is probably the old Sankasya, as no other place of that name is known. The only objection is its distance from Mithila, but relations between distant places are often found in the Ramayana—the marriage of the king of Ayodhya with the daughter of the king of Kekaya and the derivation of the river Kausiki in eastern India from the son of the king of Kanyakubja. In the *Mahabharata*, so far as I can remember, there is no mention of the place Sankasya. (A king of that name is mentioned in the *Sabha-parva*, 8. 10). According to the tradition, it has been deserted for hundreds of years. During the war of Kurukshetra, it probably formed a part of the kingdom of South Panchala. If my inference is correct, the Kali is the Ikshumati river. That an Ikshumati river was west of Ahichchatra is clear from the *Katha-sartisagara*, 28, 120. Cunningham calls it Kalindi, probably on



misinformation, as it is a synonym of the Yamuna, not of any other river. The name Kali, occurs, however, in the Matsya Purana, 22, 20—*Geography of Ancient India*.

Sitamarhi.—Town, municipality and head-quarters of Sitamarhi sub-division, Muzaffarpur District, Bengal, situated on the west bank of the Lakhandai. A large fair is held here in the month of Chitra, on the Ramanavami day. It lasts a fortnight and draws large crowds from distant places. Tradition has it that Sita here sprang to life out of an earthen pot into which Raja Janaka had driven his plough share. There are nine temples, of which five are in the same enclosure as that of Sita, Hanuman, Siva and Dahi.

It is 42 miles from Darbhanga, on the Bairagnia branch of the Bengal and North-Western Railway.—*Travellers' Companion*.

Visvamitra journeyed with Rama and Lakshmana south-east along the banks of the Gogra (Sarayu) and rested there for the night. He instructed the youths in the *vidyas* Bala and Athibala.

They travelled far on the *second* day and reached the confluence of the Ganga and the Sarayu. The Rishis of the Kamasrama entertained them there that night.

They crossed the Ganga on the *third* day and followed a south-western course along its southern bank until they came to Thataka's lair. Rama slew her and the party spent the night there.

On the morning of the *fourth* day, the Rishi imparted unto the princes the mysteries of the divine weapons and their withdrawals. They then journeyed south and reached Siddhasrama where Visvamitra was conducting his Yagna. The Rishi took the initiatory vow that day. The princes protected the Yaga for *six* days. Rama slew Subahu and his companions on the *tenth* day and routed Mareecha.



On the *eleventh* day the sage proposed to the princes the trip to Mithila. They travelled north-east and stayed for the night on the banks of Sona.

On the *twelfth* day they crossed the river and proceeded north-east till they came to the Ganga. They spent that night on its banks.

On the *thirteenth* day they crossed the broad river, and came to Visala, where king Sumathi entertained them.

On the *fourteenth* day they left the town and crossed the great Gandaki, the small and the Bhogamathi and proceeded north-east until they reached Mithila. On the way Rama tarried at the asrama of Gautama and freed Ahalya from her curse. The journey might have extended over 450 miles.

150. 2. *All beings*—He hints that Rama is the Supreme Person.

151. 2. *Empire*.—Mahodaya was his capital.

16. *Valakhilyas*.—The Patriarch was wrapt in meditation. Then he shook himself. The Rishis known as Arunake-thus, and Vatharasanas came into being from his flesh, the Vaikhanasas from his nails and the Valakhilyas from his hairs—*Taittireeya Aranyaka* I.23.

Brahma

|
Krathu—*Kriya*

|
60,000 Valakhilyas (*Bh. VI. 1*).

They reside in the orb of the sun and feed upon the grains of corn scattered in the fields. They clad themselves in barks and deer skins and are ever engaged in stern thapas. They range the worlds to carry out the decrees of the gods (*M. B. Anusasana-parva* 141.)

This charming description of the asrama of Vasishtha is but to enhance the greatness of Visvamithra, who was entertained even by that mightiest of Rishis.



153. 31. *Maireya*—A kind of intoxicating liquor extracted from the blossoms of the *Lythrum Fruticosum* with sugar.

156. 31. *Monarch*—"Kings are a higher order of beings in that they secure their subjects in the undisturbed possession of life, property, dharma and prosperity. None should harm them; none should vent his anger at them; none should browbeat them; none should wound them by harsh and unpleasant words; the gods walk upon earth in the guise of kings" *V.R.* IV. 18. He rules over us and helps all men to discharge aright the duties of their caste and order of life; besides, he has come with vast troops, it is hopeless to defeat him; it is a heinous sin to slay him with my yogic powers; further, he is my guest and his life is all the more sacred. I know no penance for the crime of slaying a Kshathriya and king.

157. 18. *Speak*. As the Cow of Plenty, she should first be prayed to; else she cannot take upon herself the initiative of accomplishing our desires. "Think of me as endowed with the might of Brahman (Wisdom of Brahman) and I will realise your wishes for you."

Ib. 26. *Paplavas*—The *Sakas* are evidently the *Sacae* (Cr. Sakai) a Scythian tribe, to whom the modern Cossacks are traced. In the *Vishnupurana* (IV. 3.) they are said to have half-shaven heads. In the *Bharata Udyoga Parva* 50, they are said to have come with the Kambhoja prince to fight on the side of the Kurus. In the *Drona Parva* (93. 42), they are called crow-colored, depraved, addicted to women and quarrelsome. The *Hunas* are evidently the nomadic tribe of the Huns, who dwelt for some centuries in the plains of Tartary and were a great scourge to the Chinese and Roman possessions. From the *Raghuvamsa* (IV. 15) they appear to have once occupied the banks of the Upper Indus. (also *Katha-sarit-sagara*, 19, 6111).



The bearded Paplavas were probably the Parthians and the Paradas with long hair, some of the Parapomisadae, who dwelt in the south slopes of the Hindu Kush. They all followed the train of the celebrated Kala (dark) Yavana, evidently a Scythian ruler, when he marched against Mathura just before it was evacuated by Krishna (*Harivamsa*, 6641).

The history of the dark Yavana is a sufficient refutation of the opinion that the Yavanas were Ionians or Greeks, as its latest advocate puts (Kern's *Brihat-samhita*, Preface). In the *Maha Bharata* we have not only western Yavanas who went with the Kambhoja prince to fight on the side of Suyodhana, but also eastern Yavanas who came to the Rajasooya festival with the chief of Kamarupa (*Sabha-Parva* 31) and southern Yavanas who were subjugated by Saha-deva (*Ib.* 51). Kalidasa applies the term unmistakeably to the ancient Persians (*Raghuvamsa* IV. 60) and Dandi, a few centuries later, very probably to the Arabian navigators (*Dasa-kumara-charitra* VI). Bhava Misra applies the term to the Turkomans. There is no doubt whatever that the term Yavana was never restricted to the Greeks—an opinion, which, so far as I can see, rests on mere surmises and no evidence whatever. In the *Unadi-Sootras* II. 74) the word is derived from *yu* meaning (says Ujjvaladatta) "to mix," in which case it would mean "mixed races." I have already explained that *Mlechcha* was the generic name for all bordering barbarians or aboriginal tribes. The Kiratas, the Pulindas, and the Sabaras were all Mlechchas (*Amara* II. 10). *Yavana* seems to be the generic names for all Mlechchas who were advanced in civilisation and from whom our ancestors had no scruples to learn—*Geography of Ancient India*.

158. 31. *Ashes*—Though Kshathriyas, they were ruling kings; and they sought to take his life. An expiation would cleanse him from the sin.



163-13. The following chapters show how difficult, nay impossible, it is to raise oneself to the status of a Brahmana.

16. *Enmity*.—It made short work of all his thapas. "Any injury done to a highly developed person reacts terribly upon the doer. We should indeed be careful about our attitude towards any Great One who may come, for He, being far in advance of us, is likely to be misunderstood—to be different from what we have expected and therefore not to be appreciated. One reason why the Great Ones do not more often come amongst men is that the karma of misjudging and ill-using them is dreadful and the fools among mankind are sure to incur it. Truly, it may be said of them in the words attributed to the Christ, that "before he had offended one of these little ones it had been better for him that a millstone had been hanged around his neck, and he had been drowned in the depths of the sea"—*From an unknown Teacher*.

Wife.—This makes it plain that he was a householder and as such, qualified to act as priest to Thrisanku in his sacrifice.

29. *Brahma*.—The presiding deity of the Wisdom of Brahman, that opens the gate to the rank of a Brahmarshi.

164. 27. *Desist*.—Besides, he was stained with three heinous sins that gave him his name *Tri-sanku*.

166. 32. *Chandala*.—Merit decides for the Brahmana, the Kshathriya and the Vaisya the caste he is entitled to. Failure to discharge the duties pertaining thereto, brings on degradation. Now, Thrisanku swerved from his dharma and sank to the level of a Chandala, in form, mind and spirit.

168. 12. *Sacrifices*.—"I am entitled to go to heaven in this body of mine, at least as a reward for having performed a hundred sacrifices. But, a single untruth destroys for ever all the accumulated merit thereof. I know it and I know that my lips have never been stained with a lie.



28. *Fate*.—Many hold that the Lord controls and directs the acts of his creatures, and that we have no power to take an independent course of action ; they quote in support the vedic text "Not a leaf falls to the ground, not a blade of grass moves except in obedience to His will". Others maintain that the Lord, while controlling in the main our thoughts, words and deeds, gives us a qualified independence in the minor concerns of life. But, it is mischievous in the extreme to hold that the Lord impels a man to do good and guides his hand in doing evil. If he were to busy himself with each one of us and say " Learn this ; turn your hand to such a trade ; marry this woman ; live with her thus ; follow this course of diet ; sleep and wake at these hours ; give this away in charity ; practise this line of purification ; make this tour of pilgrimage ; break into that house ; wring that man's neck ; perjure yourself thus etc.," we can not conceive of a more unhappy creature than the so called Lord of All. For, each moment of eternity will find him busy in apportioning to each being what he should do and how.

Again, the results of such activities, would justly fall upon Him, as the impeller thereof ; sin and virtue, joy and sorrow, reward or punishment, would have no place in the lives of any one of us whatever. Then the Holy Scriptures, the Laws, the Codes and the Puranas serve no purpose. You cannot say that they are given to us to guide our feet on the Path of Right and keep them away from the Path of Evil ; for, we are not called upon to choose any way. And it is supremely absurd to say that they were given out by the Omniscient Lord as guides for Himself and that the Rishis were deputed to serve as models for Him to follow. It will be but a hollow mockery when the Books lay down rewards for virtues and dire punishments for vices.

Nor is it safe to assert that, he reserves us indepedence



in the minor concerns of life ; for, the Laws and the Codes have not thought it important enough to lay down where we are given a free hand and where He shuts us out. Verily, it is hard to pick one's road through that labyrinth, without the Ariadne's thread of what to do and what not.

Further, it would be a nice Lord who impels a man to do evil and punish him later on for obeying Him. That would infinitely disgrace the lowest savage on earth. Nor, could we, in any way, account for the infinite varieties of birth, intellect, position, morality, happiness, sorrow and surroundings we see around us, unless we posit the Lord of Perfection as a capricious, whimsical creature, playing ducks and drakes with worlds and egos.

Hence, it is but sane, at least, to hold that man is not creature of necessity and slave of predestination, but has the divine privilege of free-will. He has implanted in his heart the instincts that enable him to choose between right and wrong ; he has the Laws, the Codes and the Scriptures to assist him ; he has the lives and examples of great men to encourage him in moments of doubt and distress. If he cares not to avail himself of these aids, or knowing them, deliberately chooses the path of evil, he is bound to take the consequences and cannot escape them.

The Lord has no concern with it in the least. He neither acts nor impels ; he is but the impartial witness, entirely unaffected by the activities of the egos. It is utterly absurd to say that Fate favours us or frowns upon us. All do but reap what they sowed in former lives ; the Lord interferes with them in no way. The books teach us that each one of us is the architect of our fortune. The following passages go to support the above view :—

1. *Mahabharatha*—(*Anusasasanika Parva* 9).

Rishi Vasishtha asked his father Brahma "Which is



“Stronger, Free-will or Fate ?” And to him answered Brahma, “Seed, sprout, leaf, twig, branch, flower, fruit and seed come forth from one another in regular succession. Again the seed goes round the circle of transformation. Nothing is possible of manifestation without the seed ; but for the seed there is no fruit ; the future seed is latent in the present one. The husbandman selects a plot of land and sows the seeds ; and as he sows so he reaps. Even so, man reaps the harvest of the seeds of good and evil sown in the past. A good seed goes to waste if sown on a barren ground ; so, Destiny (past karma) is powerless unless supported by individual efforts (present karma). Seed and soil unite to bring forth the plant. No one can escape or be cheated out of what is due to him in the past. All our acts done or to do are possible of direct observation in life. Good deeds bring about peace and happiness ; evil deeds are productive of misery and distress. The man of action is favoured by fortune and is blessed with never-varying success. “Heaven helps those who help themselves.” The man of inaction is hurled from his position and is consumed with grief and sorrow even as if his wounds were washed with the salt water of the seas. Beauty of form and riches are easily obtained by religious austerities. There is nothing that resolute efforts cannot compass. Fortune frowns upon the idler and the laggard. Wealth, love, nay, abode in the high heavens, are but the fruit of our persevering efforts down here. The Shining Ones, the great Dragons of Wisdom, the Yakshas, the sun and the moon, the god of air and the Rulers of the bright constellations were all men in some far past who had raised themselves to godhood solely by their increasing efforts. Affluence, friends, high birth, spiritual effulgence and worldly power turn away from him whose heart is not set upon action.

The Brahmana prospers by his utter purity, the



Kṣhatriya by his courage and prowess, the Vaisya by his perseverance and the Sudra by ungrudging service to all. The miser, the coward, the idler, the faint-hearted and the slave of his passions come to no good either here or hereafter. The Lord Vishnu, from whom the worlds came into being, is ever engaged in profound meditation in the depths of the ocean for the welfare of the universe. If our acts were to be barren of fruit, the world would ever depend on Destiny (past karma) and cease from any effort; and that is the sure precursor of universal ruin. He who sits idle with his hands folded and waits for Destiny (past karma) to do everything for him, lives in vain, even as a woman wedded to an impotent man. Good and evil are slower to bear fruit in the world of men than in the regions of the gods. Our efforts at present do but follow in the line of Destiny (past karma); for, nothing comes to him from Destiny (past karma) unless his efforts meet it half-way. The very gods hold their high seats on uncertain tenure. To him who controls his Destiny (past karma) and makes it subservient to his present endeavours, it cannot but give him what he aspires after. The gods never do anything to assist any one in the world of men; but they ever place terrible obstacles in their way, afraid of being deprived of their bright abodes by daring aspirants from the world of the mortals. Thus gods and sages are ever at war. Who can deny Destiny (past karma) when we find it to be at the root of most that befalls us? But, how does it bring about its results? Happiness in this world and in the next is the unfailing reward of untiring efforts. We are our guru but friends; we are our most relentless enemies; we are the watchful witness of our omissions and commissions. If obstacles thwart our efforts, it but follows that more energetic endeavours are necessary. Good and evil, virtue and vice have no part in the life of the man of inaction.



The mansions of the blessed are attained by righteousness ; there is nothing that meritorious acts cannot compass. Destiny (past karma) is powerless to do anything for him who has laid by no store of merit. King Yayathi of old fell from his bright seat in the heavens ; but, his grandsons recovered it for him through their godly lives. Purooravas, otherwise called Aila, was raised to the worlds of the gods by the might of the Brahmanas. Saudasa, king of the Kosalas, who had performed countless horse-sacrifices, was condemned to lead the dark life of a Rakshasa through the curse of Vasishtha. Asvatthaman and Parasurama, sons of mighty Rishis and unequalled bowmen, never reached the abodes of the gods through their meritorious acts. Vasu, who rivalled Indra in merits and splendour, celebrated numerous sacrifices, but was hurled headlong to the nether worlds and all for a single untruth he had uttered. Bali, the son of Virochana, was bound fast in the toils of promise and righteousness and gladly obeyed the commands of Vishnu to go down to Pathala. On the other hand, Destiny (past karma) was powerless to prevent Janamejaya, who was seated in the bright chariot of Indra, from slaying the Brahmana women. We can hold no other person responsible for our acts, good or bad, but ourselves ; it is unfair and atrocious to throw it upon Destiny (past karma). Why could it not, if all powerful, prevent the Rishi Vaisampayana from being caught in the grip of infanticide and Brahmanicide, though all unwitting ? Nriga, the Rajarshi, was turned into a huge lizard, and all because he happened to make a ^{same} mistake in giving away kine to the Brahmanas during the sacrifice. Dundhumara, the Rajarshi, grew old with the incessant performance of sacrifices ; the gods loved him very much in consequence and conferred upon him excellent boons ; but, he was indolent and listless ; and his boons



were of no account with him. The Pandavas recovered their kingdom from the hands of the mighty sons of Dhritharashtra, all by sheer valor and perseverance. Rishis of stern vows and unshaken austerities launch dreadful curses at the guilty ; Destiny has no hand in it ; it is purely out of the terrible power acquired by them through ages of unflinching effort. All the good things of this world and the next may lie within the grasp of the idler and the ignorant ; but, he never gets at them ; nor does vaunted Fate assist him therein. A slight spark blazes out into a big fire, fanned by the steady wind ; even so, Destiny allied to effort, proves omnipotent. The flame of the lamp grows dim as the oil sinks low ; even so, Destiny is powerless if effort is slack. The man of no efforts may come across vast treasures, beautiful women and every desirable comfort ; but, he is powerless to enjoy them. It is but the persevering leaders of men who wrest their coveted treasures from the grasp even of the mighty gods. He, whom no obstacles dismay, is courted by the Goddess of wealth, though he gives away her gifts with both hands to the poor and the needy. The abode of the gods is not more excellent than the world of men. We see the abodes of mortals overflowing with wealth and prosperity ; on the other hand, the supine Devas live in gloomy mansions that resemble more the burning grounds down here in emptiness. In short, this vast creation contains none who was ever blessed with success and happiness except by his own determined efforts. Fate does not interfere when one walks in the path of evil ; for, it is in no way independent. It but follows in the wake of a man's meritorious acts, even as a devoted disciple follows in the footsteps of his guru. Unflagging, steady effort rules this universe. In truth, effort is alone and always fruitful ; effort sets aside Destiny ; but, effort and Fate combined can raise us to the highest worlds.