

BHŪṢAṆABHAṬṬA , BAṆA? ,
RIDGING CAROLINE MARY

THE
KĀDAMBARĪ
OF BĀṆA

Caroline Ridding
Bāṇa
Bhūṣaṇabhaṭṭa
The Kādambarī of Bāṇa

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The Kādambarī of Bāṇa:

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Bana Bhushanabhatta
The Kādambarī of Bāṇa

To

MRS. COWELL,

WHO FIRST TOLD ME

THE STORY OF KĀDAMBARĪ,

THIS TRANSLATION

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

**‘Anenākāraṇāvishkṛitavātsalyena caritena
kasya na bandhutvam adhyāropayasi.’**

INTRODUCTION.¹

The story of Kādambarī is interesting for several reasons. It is a standard example of classical prose; it has enjoyed a long popularity as a romance; and it is one of the comparatively few Sanskrit works which can be assigned to a certain date, and so it can serve as a landmark in the history of Indian literature and Indian thought.

¹ It is needless to give here more than the few facts essential for the understanding of 'Kādambarī,' for the life and times of Bāṇa will probably be treated of in the translation of the 'Harsha-Carita' by Professor Cowell and Mr. Thomas in this series; and Professor Peterson's Introduction to his edition of 'Kādambarī' (Bombay Sanskrit Series, 1889) deals fully with Bāṇa's place in literature. The facts here given are, for the most part, taken from the latter work.

The Author

Bāṇabhaṭṭa, its author, lived in the reign of Harshavardhana of Thāṇeṇar, the great king mentioned in many inscriptions,² who extended his rule over the whole of Northern India, and from whose reign (A.D. 606) dates the Harsha era, used in Nepal. Bāṇa, as he tells us, both in the 'Harsha-Carita' and in the introductory verses of 'Kādambarī,' was a Vātsyāyana Brahman. His mother died while he was yet young, and his father's tender care of him, recorded in the 'Harsha-Carita,'³ was doubtless in his memory as he recorded the unselfish love of Vaiṣampāyana's father in 'Kādambarī' (p. 22). In his youth he travelled much, and for a time 'came into reproach,' by reason of his unsettled life; but the experience gained in foreign lands turned his thoughts homewards, and he returned to his kin, and lived a life of quiet study in their midst. From this he was summoned to the court of King Harsha, who at first received him coldly, but afterwards attached him to his service; and Bāṇa in the 'Harsha-Carita' relates his own life as a prelude to that of his master.

The other works attributed to him are the 'Caṇḍikāçataka,'⁴

² E.g., the Madhuban grant of Saṃ 25, E. I. i., 67 ff. For this and other chronological references I am indebted to Miss C. M. Duff, who has let me use the MS. of her 'Chronology of India.'

³ For Bāṇa's early life, V. 'Harsha-Carita,' chs. i., ii. I have to thank Mr. F. W. Thomas for allowing me to see the proof-sheets of his translation.

⁴ Peterson, 'Kādambarī,' pp. 96-98; and 'The Subhāshitāvalī,' edited by Peterson

or verses in honour of Caṇḍikā; a drama, 'The Pārvatīpariṇaya'; and another, called 'Mukūṭatāḍitaka,' the existence of which is inferred from Guṇavinayagaṇi's commentary on the 'Nalacampū.' Professor Peterson also mentions that a verse of Bāṇa's ('Subhāshitāvali,' 1087) is quoted by Kshemendra in his 'Aucityavicāracarcā,' with a statement that it is part of a description of Kādambarī's sorrow in the absence of Candrāpīḍa, whence, he adds, 'it would seem that Bāṇa wrote the story of Kādambarī in verse as well as in prose,' and he gives some verses which may have come from such a work.

Bāṇa himself died, leaving 'Kādambarī' unfinished, and his son Bhūshaṇabhaṭṭa took it up in the midst of a speech in which Kādambarī's sorrows are told, and continued the speech without a break, save for a few introductory verses in honour of his father, and in apology for his having undertaken the task, 'as its unfinished state was a grief to the good.' He continued the story on the same plan, and with careful, and, indeed, exaggerated, imitation of his father's style.

The Plot of Kādambarī

The story of 'Kādambarī' is a very complex one, dealing as it does with the lives of two heroes, each of whom is reborn twice on earth.

(1–47) A learned parrot, named Vaiçampāyana, was brought by a Caṇḍāla maiden to King Çūdraka, and told him how it was carried from its birthplace in the Vindhyā Forest to the hermitage of the sage Jābālī, from whom it learnt the story of its former life.

(47–95) Jābālī's story was as follows: Tārāpīḍa, King of Ujjayinī, won by penance a son, Candrāpīḍa, who was brought up with Vaiçampāyana, son of his minister, Çukanāsa. In due time Candrāpīḍa was anointed as Crown Prince, and started on an expedition of world-conquest. At the end of it he reached Kailāsa, and, while resting there, was led one day in a vain chase of a pair of kinnaras to the shores of the Acchoda Lake. (95–141) There he beheld a young ascetic maiden, Mahāçvetā, who told him how she, being a Gandharva princess, had seen and loved a young Brahman Puṇḍarīka; how he, returning her feeling, had died from the torments of a love at variance with his vow; how a divine being had carried his body to the sky, and bidden her not to die, for she should be reunited with him; and how she awaited that time in a life of penance. (141–188) But her friend Kādambarī, another Gandharva princess, had vowed not to marry while Mahāçvetā was in sorrow, and Mahāçvetā invited

the prince to come to help her in dissuading Kādambarī from the rash vow. Love sprang up between the prince and Kādambarī at first sight; but a sudden summons from his father took him to Ujjayinī without farewell, while Kādambarī, thinking herself deserted, almost died of grief.

(188–195) Meanwhile news came that his friend Vaiçampāyana, whom he had left in command of the army, had been strangely affected by the sight of the Acchoda Lake, and refused to leave it. The prince set out to find him, but in vain; and proceeding to the hermitage of Mahāçvetā, he found her in despair, because, in invoking on a young Brahman, who had rashly approached her, a curse to the effect that he should become a parrot, she learnt that she had slain Vaiçampāyana. At her words the prince fell dead from grief, and at that moment Kādambarī came to the hermitage.

(195–202) Her resolve to follow him in death was broken by the promise of a voice from the sky that she and Mahāçvetā should both be reunited with their lovers, and she stayed to tend the prince's body, from which a divine radiance proceeded; while King Tārāpīḍa gave up his kingdom, and lived as a hermit near his son.

(202 to end) Such was Jābālī's tale; and the parrot went on to say how, hearing it, the memory of its former love for Mahāçvetā was reawakened, and, though bidden to stay in the hermitage, it flew away, only to be caught and taken to the Caṇḍāla princess. It was now brought by her to King Çūdraka, but knew no more.

The Caṇḍāla maiden thereupon declared to Çūdraka that she was the goddess Lakshmī, mother of Puṇḍarīka or Vaiçampāyana, and announced that the curse for him and Çūdraka was now over. Then Çūdraka suddenly remembered his love for Kādambarī, and wasted away in longing for her, while a sudden touch of Kādambarī restored to life the Moon concealed in the body of Candrāpīḍa, the form that he still kept, because in it he had won her love. Now the Moon, as Candrāpīḍa and Çūdraka, and Puṇḍarīka, in the human and parrot shape of Vaiçampāyana, having both fulfilled the curse of an unsuccessful love in two births on earth, were at last set free, and, receiving respectively the hands of Kādambarī and Mahāçvetā, lived happily ever afterwards.

The plot is involved, and consists of stories within each other after the fashion long familiar to Europeans in the 'Arabian Nights'; but the author's skill in construction is shown by the fact that each of the minor stories is essential to the development of the plot, and it is not till quite the end that we see that Çūdraka himself, the hearer of the story, is really the hero, and that his hearing the story is necessary to reawaken his love for Kādambarī, and so at the same time fulfil the terms of the curse that he should love in vain during two lives, and bring the second life to an end by his longing for reunion. It may help to make the plot clear if the threads of it are disentangled. The author in person tells all that happens to Çūdraka (pp. 3–16 and pp. 205 to end). The parrot's tale (pp. 16–205) includes that of Jābāli

(pp. 47–202) concerning Candrāpīḍa, and Vaiṣampāyana the Brahman, with the story told by Mahāçvetā (pp. 101–136) of her love for Puṇḍarīka.

The Story as told in the Kathā-Sarit-Sāgara

The story as told in the Kathā-Sarit-Sāgara of Somadeva⁵ differs in some respects from this. There a Nishāda princess brought to King Sumanas a learned parrot, which told its life in the forest, ended by a hunt in which its father was killed, and the story of its past life narrated by the hermit Agastya. In this story a prince, Somaprabha, after an early life resembling that of Candrāpīḍa, was led in his pursuit of kinnaras to an ascetic maiden, Manorathaprabhā, whose story is that of Mahāçvetā, and she took him, at his own request, to see the maiden Makarandikā, who had vowed not to marry while her friend was unwed. He was borne through the air by a Vidyādhara, and beheld Makarandikā. They loved each other, and a marriage was arranged between them. The prince, however, was suddenly recalled by his father, and Makarandikā's wild grief brought on her from her parents a curse that she should be born as a Nishāda. Too late they repented, and died of grief; and her father became a parrot, keeping from a former birth as a sage his memory of the Çāstras, while her mother became a sow. Pulastya added that the curse would be over when the story was told in a king's court.

⁵ Translated by Mr. C. Tawney (Calcutta, 1884), vol. ii., pp. 17–26. Somadeva's date is about A.D. 1063.

The parrot's tale reminded King Sumanas of his former birth, and on the arrival of the ascetic maiden, sent by Çiva, 'who is merciful to all his worshippers,' he again became the young hermit she had loved. Somaprabha, too, at Çiva's bidding, went to the king's court, and at the sight of him the Nishāda regained the shape of Makarandikā, and became his wife; while the parrot 'left the body of a bird, and went to the home earned by his asceticism.' 'Thus,' the story ends, 'the appointed union of human beings certainly takes place in this world, though vast spaces intervene.'

The main difference between the stories is in the persons affected by the curse; and here the artistic superiority of Bāṇa is shown in his not attaching the degrading forms of birth to Kādambarī or her parents. The horse is given as a present to the hero by Indra, who sends him a message, saying: 'You are a Vidyādhara, and I give you the horse in memory of our former friendship. When you mount it you will be invincible.' The hero's marriage is arranged before his sudden departure, so that the grief of the heroine is due only to their separation, and not to the doubts on which Bāṇa dwells so long. It appears possible that both this story and 'Kādambarī' are taken from a common original now lost, which may be the Bṛihatkathā of Guṇāḍhya.⁶ In that case the greater refinement of Bāṇa's tale would be the result of genius giving grace to a story already familiar in a humbler guise.

⁶ V. Peterson, 'Kādambarī,' pp. 82-96.

References to Kādambarī in the Sāhitya-Darpaṇa and elsewhere

The author of the Sāhitya-Darpaṇa⁷ speaks of the Kathā as follows: ‘In the Kathā (tale), *which is one of the species of poetical composition in prose*, a poetical matter is represented in verse, and sometimes the Āryā, and sometimes the Vaktra and Apavaktraka are the metres employed in it. It begins with stanzas in salutation to some divinity, as also descriptive of the behaviour of bad men and others.’ To this the commentary adds: ‘The “Kādambarī” of Bāṇabhaṭṭa is an example.’ Professor Peterson corrects the translation of the words ‘Kathāyām sarasaṃ vastu padyair eva vinirmitam,’ giving as their sense, ‘A narration in prose, with here and there a stray verse or two, *of matter already existing in a metrical form*.’⁸ According to his rendering, the Kathā is in its essence a story claiming to be based on previous works in verse, whether in this case the original were Bāṇa’s own metrical version of ‘Kādambarī,’⁹ or the work which was also the original of the Kathā-Sarit-Sāgara story.

The story of Puṇḍarīka and Mahāçvetā receives mention,

⁷ Translated by Ballantyne and Pramadā-Dāsa-Mitra (Calcutta, 1875), § 567. The italics represent words supplied by the translators.

⁸ Kādambarī, p. 69.

⁹ Professor Peterson does not, however, make this deduction in favour of Bāṇa’s own version.

firstly, for the introduction of death, contrary to the canon; secondly, for the determination of the nature of their sorrow, and its poetic quality, and consequent appeal to the feelings of the reader. Firstly: (§ 215) ‘Death, *which is a condition to which one may be brought by love, is not described in poetry and the drama, where the other conditions, such as anxiety, etc., are constantly described, because it, instead of enhancing, causes the destruction of “Flavour.”*¹⁰ But it may be spoken of (1) as having nearly taken place, or (2) as being mentally wished for; and it is *with propriety* described (3) if there is to be, at no distant date, a restoration to life.’ The commentary takes the story of Puṇḍarīka as an example of the third condition, and describes it as a ‘case of pathetic separation.’ Secondly: (§ 224) ‘Either of two young lovers being dead, and being yet to be regained *through some supernatural interposition*, when the one *left behind* is sorrowful, then let it be called the separation of tender sadness’ (*karuṇavipralamhha*). The commentary gives Mahāçvetā as the instance, and continues: ‘But if *the lost one* be not regainable, or regainable *only after transmigration* in another body, the flavour is called the “Pathetic” simply, *there being in this case no room for any admixture of the “Erotic”*; but in the case just mentioned – of Puṇḍarīka and Mahāçvetā – immediately on Sarasvatī’s declaration from the sky *that the lovers should be reunited*, there is the “Erotic in its form of tender sadness,” for desire arises on the expectation of reunion, but PREVIOUSLY to

¹⁰ *I.e., rasa, poetic charm.*

Sarasvatī's promise there was the “Pathetic”; such is the opinion of the competent authorities. And as for what some say in regard to the case of *Puṇḍarīka and Mahāçvetā*, that “moreover AFTER the expectation of reunion, *excited by Sarasvatī's promise to that effect*, there is merely your honour's variety of “love in absence,” (§ 222) the one which you call “being abroad” (§ 221) – others hold it to be distinct, because of the presence of that distinction, DEATH, *which is something else than merely being abroad.*’ These are the passages in which direct mention is made of ‘Kādambarī,’ and in § 735, which defines special mention (*parisamkhyā*) as taking place ‘when something is affirmed for the denial, expressed or understood, of something else similar to it,’ the commentary adds: ‘When founded upon a Paronomasia, it is peculiarly striking, *e. g.*, “When that king, the conqueror of the world, was protecting the earth, the mixture of colours (or castes) was in painting, etc.,” – a passage from the description of Çūdraka in “Kādambarī” (P. 5).’

References to Bāṇa in other works are given by Professor Peterson, so that three only need be mentioned here. The first I owe to the kindness of Professor C. Bendall. In a collection of manuscripts at the British Museum (Or., 445–447) ‘consisting chiefly of law-books transcribed (perhaps for some European) on European paper in the Telugu-Canarese character,’ one, Or., 446 c., the Kāmandakīya-Nīti-Çāstra, contains on folios 128–131 a passage from ‘Kādambarī’ (pp. 76–84, *infra*)¹¹ on the

¹¹ ‘Kādambarī,’ Nirṇaya Sāgara Press, Bombay, pp. 205–221. ‘Evaṃ samatikrāmatsu

consecration of a crown-prince, and the duties and dangers of a king. It forms part of an introduction to the Kāmandakīya-Nīti-Çāstra and occurs without any hint of its being a quotation from another work. The author of the Nalacampū not only writes a verse in honour of Bāṇa,¹² but models his whole style upon him. A curious instance of the long popularity of ‘Kādambarī’ is that in the ‘Durgeçanandinī’ by Chattaji, an historical novel, published in 1871, and treating of the time of Akbar, the heroine is represented as reading in her boudoir the romance of ‘Kādambarī.’¹³

– ājagāma.’

¹² Bombay edition, p. 6.

¹³ Professor Cowells review of ‘A Bengali Historical Novel.’ Macmillan, April, 1872.

The Interest of 'Kādambarī.'

It may be asked What is the value of 'Kādambarī' for European readers? and to different persons the answer will doubtless be different. Historical interest, so far as that depends on the narration of historical facts, appears to be entirely lacking, though it may be that at some future time our knowledge from other sources may be so increased that we may recognise portraits and allusions in what seems now purely a work of romance. But in the wider sense in which history claims to deal with the social ideas that belong to any epoch, 'Kādambarī' will always have value as representing the ways of thinking and feeling which were either customary or welcome at its own time, and which have continued to charm Indian readers. It is indeed true that it probably in many ways does not give a picture of contemporary manners, just as a mediæval illuminated manuscript often represents the dress and surroundings prior to the time of the illuminator, so as to gain the grace of remoteness bestowed by reverence for the past. In India, where change works but slowly, the description of the court and city life, where all the subjects show by outward tokens their sympathy with the joys and sorrows of their ruler, as in a Greek chorus, is vivid in its fidelity.¹⁴ The quiet yet busy life of the hermits in the forest, where the day is spent in worship and in peaceful toils, where at

¹⁴ V. Peterson, 'Kādambarī,' p. 42.

eve the sunbeams 'linger like birds on the crest of hill and tree,' and where night 'darkens all save the hearts of the hermits,' is full of charm.¹⁵

The coronation of the crown prince, the penances performed by the queen to win a son, the reverence paid to Mahākāla, also belong to our picture of the time. The description of Ujjayinī, surrounded by the Sīprā, is too general in its terms to give a vivid notion of what it then was. The site of the temple of Mahākāla is still shown outside the ruins of the old town. A point of special interest is the argument against the custom of suicide on the death of a friend. Candrāpīḍa consoles Mahāçvetā that she has not followed her lover in death by saying that one who kills himself at his friend's death makes that friend a sharer in the guilt, and can do no more for him in another world, whereas by living he can give help by sacrifices and offerings. Those, too, who die may not be reunited for thousands of births. In the

¹⁵ Indeed, this description is so like in spirit to that of Clairvaux, that I cannot forbear quoting a few lines of the latter. The writer describes the workshops where the brethren labour, and the orchard used for rest and quiet thought, and goes on to say how the Aube is raised by the toils of the brethren to the level of the Abbey; it throws half its water into the Abbey, 'as if to salute the brethren, and seems to excuse itself for not coming in its whole force.' Then 'it returns with rapid current to the stream, and renders to it, in the name of Clairvaux, thanks for all the services which it has performed.' The writer then goes on to tell of the fountain which, protected by a grassy pavilion, rises from the mountain, and is quickly engulfed in the valley, 'offering itself to charm the sight and supply the wants of the brethren, as if it were not willing to have communion with any others than saints.' This last is surely a touch worthy of Bāṇa. V. Dr. Eale's translation of 'St. Bernard's Works.' London, 1889, vol. ii., pp. 462-467.

'Kathā-Koṣa'¹⁶ a prince is dissuaded from following his wife to death because 'Even the idea of union with your beloved will be impossible when you are dead'; but the occurrence of the idea in a romance is more noteworthy than in a work which illustrates Jain doctrines. The question of food as affected by caste is touched on also (p. 205), when the Caṇḍāla maiden tells the parrot that a Brahman may, in case of need, receive food of any kind, and that water poured on the ground, and fruit, are pure even when brought by the lowest. Another point to be remarked is the mention of followers of many sects as being present at court. Śiva, especially under the name of Mahākāla at Ujjayinī, receives special worship, and Agni and the Mātrikās (p. 14) also receive reverence. The zenanas include aged ascetic women (p. 217); followers of the Arhat, Kṛishṇa, Viçravaśa, Avalokiteṣvara, and Viriṅca (p. 162); and the courtyard of Çukanāśa has Çaivas and followers of Çākyamuni (p. 217), also Kshapaṇakas (explained by the Commentary as Digambaras). The king,¹⁷ however, is described as having an *ūrṇā* (the hair meeting between the brows), which is one of Buddha's marks; but the Commentary describes the *ūrṇā* as *cakravartiprabhṛitīnām eva nānyasya*, so probably it only belongs to Buddha as *cakravarti*, or universal ruler. This shows that the reign of Harsha was one of religious tolerance. Hiouen Thsang, indeed, claims him as a Buddhist

¹⁶ Translated by Mr. C. Tawney. Oriental Translation Fund Series, p. 113.

¹⁷ V. 'Kādambarī,' Nirṇaya Sāgara, p. 19, l. 2.

at heart, and mentions his building Buddhist stūpas,¹⁸ but he describes himself as a Ṣaiva in the Madhuban grant,¹⁹ and the preeminence yielded in 'Kādambarī' to Ṣiva certainly shows that his was then the popular worship.

Another source of interest in 'Kādambarī' lies in its contribution to folklore. It may perhaps contain nothing not found elsewhere, but the fact of its having a date gives it a value. The love of snakes for the breeze and for sandal-trees, the truth of dreams at the end of night, the magic circles, bathing in snake-ponds to gain a son, the mustard-seed and ghī put in a baby's mouth, may all be familiar ideas, but we have a date at which they were known and not despised. Does the appeal to the truth of her heart by Mahāṣvetā in invoking the curse (p. 193) rest on the idea that fidelity to a husband confers supernatural power,²⁰ or is it like the 'act of truth' by which Buddha often performs miracles in the 'Jātaka'?

¹⁸ 'Hiouen Thsang,' translated by St. Julien, 'Mémoires sur les Contrées Occidentales,' I., pp. 247-265. Cf. also 'Harsha-Carita,' ch. viii. (p. 236 of the translation), where he pays great honour to a Buddhist sage.

¹⁹ E. I. i. 67.

²⁰ V. 'Kathā-Sarit-Sāgara,' i. 505.

The Style of 'Kādambarī.'

The unsettled chronology of Indian literature makes it impossible to work out at present Bāṇa's relations with other Sanskrit writers. Professor Peterson,²¹ indeed, makes some interesting conjectures as to his connection with other authors of his own country, and also suggests, from similarity of phrase, that he may have fallen indirectly under the influence of Alexandrian literature. Be that as it may, he has been for many centuries a model of style, and it is therefore worth while to consider briefly the characteristics of his style compared with European standards. The first thing that strikes the reader is that the sense of proportion, the very foundation of style as we know it, is entirely absent. No topic is let go till the author can squeeze no more from it. In descriptions every possible minor detail is given in all its fulness; then follows a series of similes, and then a firework of puns. In speeches, be they lamentations or exhortations, grief is not assuaged, nor advice ended, till the same thing has been uttered with every existing variety of synonym. This defect, though it springs from the author's richness of resource and readiness of wit, makes the task of rendering in English the merit of the Sanskrit style an impossible one. It gives also a false impression; for to us a long description, if good, gives the effect of 'sweetness long drawn out,' and,

²¹ V. 'Kādambarī,' pp. 97-104.

if bad, brings drowsiness; whereas in Sanskrit the unending compounds suggest the impetuous rush of a torrent, and the similes and puns are like the play of light and shade on its waters. Bāṇa, according to Professor Weber,²² ‘passes for the special representative of the Pāñcālī style,’²³ which Bhoja, quoted in the commentary of the ‘Sāhitya-Darpaṇa,’ defines as ‘a sweet and soft style characterized by force (*ojas*) and elegance (*kānti*), containing compounds of five or six words.’ But style, which is to poetic charm as the body to the soul, varies with the sense to be expressed, and Bāṇa in many of his speeches is perfectly simple and direct. Owing to the peacefulness of ‘Kādambarī,’ there is little opportunity for observing the rule that in the ‘Kathā’ letters ‘ought not to be too rough, even when the flavour is furious.’²⁴ Of the alliteration of initial consonants, the only long passage is in the description of Çukanāsa (p. 50), but in its subtler forms it constantly occurs. Of shorter passages there are several examples —*e. g.*, Candra Caṇḍāla (*infra*, p. 127); Candrāpīḍa Caṇḍālo (Sanskrit text, p. 416); Utkañṭhām sotkañṭham kañṭhe jagrāha (*Ibid.*, p. 367); Kāmaṃ sakāmaṃ kuryām (*Ibid.*, p. 350); Candrāpīḍa pīḍanayā (*Ibid.*, p. 370). The ornament of *çlesha*, or paronomasia, which seems to arise from the untrained philological instinct of mankind seeking the fundamental identity of like sounds with apparently unlike meaning, and which lends

²² V. ‘History of Indian Literature,’ translation, London, 1878, p. 232.

²³ V. ‘Sāhitya-Darpaṇa,’ § 626–628.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, § 630.

dramatic intensity when, as sometimes in Shakespeare,²⁵ a flash of passionate feeling reveals to the speaker an original sameness of meaning in words seemingly far apart, is by Bāṇa used purely as an adornment. He speaks of pleasant stories interwoven with puns ‘as jasmine garlands with campak buds,’ and they abound in his descriptions. The *rasanopamā*,²⁶ or girdle of similes, is exemplified (p. 115), ‘As youth to beauty, love to youth, spring to love’ so was Kapiñjala to Puṇḍarīka. *Vishamaṃ* (incongruity) is the figure used in ‘the brightness of his glory, free from heat, consumed his foes; constant, ever roamed’ (p. 48). It can scarcely be separated from *virodha* (contradiction) – often used, as in ‘I will allay on the funeral pyre the fever which the moon, sandal, and all cool things have increased’ (p. 195) – or from *vicitram*²⁷ (strangeness), where an act is contrary to its apparent purpose: ‘There lives not the man whom the virtues of the most courteous lady Kādambarī do not discourteously enslave’ (p. 159). *Arthāpatti*²⁸ (*a fortiori* conclusion) is exemplified in ‘Even the senseless trees, robed in bark, seem like fellow-ascetics of this holy man. How much more, then, living beings endowed with sense!’ (p. 43). Time and space would alike fail for analysis of

²⁵ ‘Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew, Thou makest thy knife keen.’ ‘Merchant of Venice,’ IV. 1, 123 (Globe edition). ‘Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough, When there is in it but one only man.’ ‘Julius Cæsar,’ I. 2, 156.

²⁶ V. ‘Sāhitya-Darpaṇa,’ § 664.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, § 718–722.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, § 738.

Bāṇa's similes according to the rules of the 'Sāhitya-Darpaṇa.'²⁹ The author of the 'Rāghavapāṇḍavīya' considers Subandhu and Bāṇa as his only equals in *vakrokti*, or crooked speech, and the fault of a 'meaning to be guessed out' ('Sāhitya-Darpaṇa,' § 574) is not rare. The 'Kāvya-Prakāṣa,' in addition to the references given by Professor Peterson, quotes a stanza describing a horse in the 'Harsha-Carita' (chap. iii.) as an example of *svabhāvokti*.

The hero belongs to the division described as the high-spirited, but temperate and firm ('Sāhitya-Darpaṇa,' § 64), *i. e.*, he who is 'not given to boasting, placable, very profound, with great self-command, resolute, whose self-esteem is concealed, and faithful to his engagements,' and who has the 'eight manly qualities' of 'brilliancy, vivacity, sweetness of temper, depth of character, steadfastness, keen sense of honour, gallantry, and magnanimity' (*Ibid.*, § 89). Kādambarī is the type of the youthful heroine who feels love for the first time, is shy, and gentle even in indignation (*Ibid.*, § 98). The companions of each are also those declared in the books of rhetoric to be appropriate.

²⁹ V. Peterson, 'Kādambarī,' p. 36.

Literary Parallels

The work which most invites comparison with ‘Kādambarī’ is one far removed from it in place and time – Spenser’s ‘Faerie Queene.’ Both have in great measure the same faults and the same virtues. The lack of proportion, – due partly to too large a plan, partly to an imagination wandering at will – the absence of visualization – which in Spenser produces sometimes a line like

‘A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside
Upon a lowly Asse more white then snow,
Yet she much whiter,’

and in Bāṇa many a description like that of Mahāçvetā’s fairness (pp. 95–97) – the indiscriminating praise bestowed on those whom they would fain honour, the shadowy nature of many of their personages, and the intricacies in which the story loses itself, are faults common to both. Both, too, by a strange coincidence, died with their work unfinished. But if they have the same faults, they have also many of the same virtues. The love of what is beautiful and pure both in character and the world around, tenderness of heart, a gentle spirit troubled by the disquiet of life,³⁰ grace and sweetness of style, and idyllic simplicity, are common to both. Though, however, Candrāpīḍa

³⁰ Cf. Spenser’s stanzas on Mutability.

may have the chivalry and reverence of the Red Cross Knight, and Una share with Kādambarī or Rohiṇī ‘nobility, tenderness, loftiness of soul, devotion and charm,’³¹ the English hero and heroine are more real and more strenuous. We are, indeed, told in one hurried sentence of the heroic deeds of Candrāpīḍa in his world-conquest, and his self-control and firmness are often insisted on; but as he appears throughout the book, his self-control is constantly broken down by affection or grief, and his firmness destroyed by a timid balancing of conflicting duties, while his real virtue is his unfailing gentleness and courtesy. Nor could Kādambarī, like Una, bid him, in any conflict, ‘Add faith unto your force, and be not faint.’ She is, perhaps, in youth and entire self-surrender, more like Shakespeare’s Juliet, but she lacks her courage and resolve.

³¹ *V. infra*, p. 208.

The Purpose of 'Kādambarī.'

The likeness of spirit between these two leads to the question, Had Bāṇa, like Spenser, any purpose, ethical or political, underlying his story? On the surface it is pure romance, and it is hard to believe that he had any motive but the simple delight of self-expression and love for the children of his own imagination. He only claims to tell a story 'tender with the charm of gracious speech, that comes of itself, like a bride, to the possession of its lord';³² but it may be that he gladly gathered up in old age the fruits of his life's experience, and that his own memory of his father's tenderness to his childhood, of the temptations of youth, and of the dangers of prosperity and flattery that assail the heart of kings, was not used only to adorn a tale, but to be a guide to others on the perilous path of life. Be that as it may, the interest of 'Kādambarī,' like that of the 'Faerie Queene,' does not depend for us now on any underlying purpose, but on the picture it presents in itself of the life and thought of a world removed in time, but not in sympathy, from our own; on the fresh understanding it gives of those who are in the widest sense our fellow-countrymen; and on the charm, to quote the beautiful words of Professor Peterson, 'of a story of human sorrow and divine consolation, of death and the passionate longing for a union after death, that goes straight from the heart of one who

³² *V. infra*, p. 2.

had himself felt the pang, and nursed the hope, to us who are of like frame with him ... the story which from the beginning of time mortal ears have yearned to hear, but which mortal lips have never spoken.'

The Plan of the Translation

The translation of Bāṇa presents much difficulty from the elaboration of his style, and it has been a specially hard task, and sometimes an impossible one, to give any rendering of the constant play on words in which he delights. I have sometimes endeavoured to give what might be an English equivalent, and in such cases I have added in a note the literal meaning of both alternatives; perhaps too much freedom may have been used, and sometimes also the best alternative may not have been chosen to place in the text; but those who have most experience will know how hard it is to do otherwise than fail. Some long descriptions have been omitted, such, *e. g.*, as a passage of several pages describing how the dust rose under the feet of Candrāpīḍa's army, and others where there seemed no special interest or variety to redeem their tediousness. A list of these omissions³³ is given at the end, together with an appendix, in which a few passages, chiefly interesting as mentioning religious sects, are added. I have acted on Professor Cowell's advice as to the principle on which omissions are made, as also in giving only a full abstract, and not a translation, of the continuation of 'Kādambarī' by Bhūshaṇa. It is so entirely an imitation of his father's work in style, with all his faults, and without

³³ The list looks long, but the pages in the 'Nirṇaya-Sāgara' edition contain frequently but few lines, and many of the omissions are a line or two of oft-repeated similes.

the originality that redeems them, that it would not reward translation. In my abstract I have kept the direct narration as more simple, but even when passages are given rather fully, it does not profess in any case to be more than a very free rendering; sometimes only the sense of a whole passage is summed up. I regret that the system of transliteration approved by the Royal Asiatic Society came too late for adoption here.

The edition of 'Kādambarī' to which the references in the text are given is that of the Nirṇaya-Sāgara Press (Bombay, 1890), which the full commentary makes indispensable, but I have also throughout made use of Professor Peterson's edition (Bombay Sanskrit Series, No. xxiv.). For the last half of the Second Part³⁴ I have referred to an anonymous literal translation, published by the New Britannia Press Depository, 78, Amherst Street, Calcutta.

I have now to offer my grateful thanks to the Secretary of State for India, without whose kind help the volume could not have been published. I have also to thank Miss C. M. Duff for allowing me to use the MS. of her 'Indian Chronology'; Miss E. Dale, of Girton College, for botanical notes, which I regret that want of space prevented my printing in full; Mr. C. Tawney, librarian of the Indian Office, for information as to the sources of Indian fiction; Mr. F. F. Arbuthnot and Professor Rhys-Davids, for valuable advice; Professor C. Bendall, for his description of the Kāmandakīya-Nīti-Çāstra, and his constant kindness about

³⁴ Beginning at p. 566 of the 'Nirṇaya-Sāgara' edition.

my work; Mr. F. W. Thomas, of Trinity College, for letting me see the proof-sheets of the translation of the ‘Harsha Carita’; and others for suggested renderings of difficult phrases, and for help of various kinds.

But especially my thanks are due to Professor Cowell³⁵ for a generosity and unwearied helpfulness which all his pupils know, and which perhaps few but they could imagine. I read through with him the whole of the First Part before translating it myself, so that mistakes in the translation, many as they may be, can arise only from misunderstanding on my part, from too great freedom of rendering, or from failing to have recourse to the knowledge he so freely gives.

‘Vṛihatsahāyaḥ kāryāntaṃ kshodīyānapi gacchati;
Sambhūyāmbodhim abhyeti mahānadyā nagāpagā.’

³⁵ I here take the opportunity to acknowledge what by an oversight was omitted in its proper place, my indebtedness to Professor Cowell for the rendering into English verse of two couplets given on pp. 11 and 113.

KĀDAMBARĪ

(1) Hail to the Birthless, the cause of creation, continuance, and destruction, triple³⁶ in form and quality, who shows activity in the birth of things, goodness in their continuance, and darkness in their destruction.

(2) Glory to the dust of Tryambaka's feet, caressed by the diadem of the demon Bāṇa³⁷; even that dust that kisses the circle of Rāvaṇa's ten crest-gems, that rests on the crests of the lords of gods and demons, and that destroys our transitory life.

(3) Glory to Viṣṇu, who, resolving to strike from afar, with but a moment's glance from his wrath-inflamed eye stained the breast of his enemy, as if it had burst of itself in terror.

I salute the lotus feet of Bhatsu,³⁸ honoured by crowned Maukharis: the feet which have their tawny toes rubbed on a footstool made by the united crowns of neighbouring kings.

Who is there that fears not the wicked, pitiless in causeless enmity; in whose mouth calumny hard to bear is always ready as the poison of a serpent?

The wicked, like fetters, echo harshly, wound deeply, and leave a scar; while the good, like jewelled anklets, ever charm the mind with sweet sounds.

³⁶ As the three Vedas, or the triad.

³⁷ Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. v., ch. 33.

³⁸ His guru.

(4) In a bad man gentle words sink no deeper than the throat, like nectar swallowed by Rāhu. The good man bears them constantly on his heart, as Hari his pure gem.

A story tender with the charm of gracious speech, creates in the heart joy full of fresh interest³⁹; and it comes of itself, with native feeling, to its lord's possession, like a fresh bride.⁴⁰

Who is not carried captive by tales fashioned in freshness of speech, all alight with similes, and the lamps of glowing words⁴¹: pleasant tales interwoven with many a contrast of words,⁴² as jasmine garlands with campak buds?

There was once a Brahman, Kuvera by name, sprung from the race of Vātsyāyana, sung throughout the world for his virtue, a leader of the good: his lotus feet were worshipped by many a Gupta, and he seemed a very portion of Brahma.

(5) On his mouth Sarasvatī ever dwelt: for in it all evil was stilled by the Veda; it had lips purified by sacrificial cake, and a palate bitter with soma, and it was pleasant with smṛiti and ṣāstra.

In his house frightened boys, as they repeated verses of the Yajur and Sāma Veda, were chidden at every word by caged parrots and mainas, who were thoroughly versed in everything belonging to words.

From him was born Arthapati, a lord of the twice-born, as

³⁹ *Rasa* = (a) the eight *rasas*; (b) love.

⁴⁰ *Ṣayyā* = (a) composition; (b) couch.

⁴¹ (a) Which sparkle with emphatic words and similes; (b) like flashing lamps.

⁴² (a) Pun; (b) proximity.

Hiraṇyagarbha from the world-egg, the moon from the Milky Ocean, or Garuḍa from Vinatā.

As he unfolded his spreading discourse day by day at dawn, new troops of pupils, intent on listening,⁴³ gave him a new glory, like fresh sandal-shoots fixed on the ear.

(6) With countless sacrifices adorned with gifts duly offered,⁴⁴ having glowing Mahāvīra fires in their midst,⁴⁵ and raising the sacrificial posts as their hands,⁴⁶ he won easily, as if with a troop of elephants, the abode of the gods.

He in due course obtained a son, Citrabhānu, who amongst his other noble and glorious sons, all versed in ṛuti and ṣāstra, shone as crystal, like Kailāsa among mountains.

The virtues of that noble man, reaching far and gleaming bright as a digit of the moon, yet without its spot, pierced deep even into the hearts of his foes, like the budding claws of Nṛsiṃha (Vishṇu).

The dark smoke of many a sacrifice rose like curls on the brow of the goddesses of the sky; or like shoots of tamāla on the ear of the bride, the Threefold Veda, and only made his own glory shine more bright.

From him was born a son, Bāṇa, when the drops that rose from the fatigue of the soma sacrifice were wiped from his brow by

⁴³ Hanging on his ear (as an ornament).

⁴⁴ In the case of elephants, 'having their ichor regulated by a proper regimen.'

⁴⁵ With renowned warriors on their backs.

⁴⁶ Having trunks as thick as sacrificial posts.

the folded lotus hands of Sarasvatī, and when the seven worlds had been illuminated by the rays of his glory.

(7) By that Brahman, albeit with a mind keeping even in his unspoken words its original dullness blinded by the darkness of its own utter folly, and simple from having never gained the charm of ready wit, this tale, surpassing the other two,⁴⁷ was fashioned, even Kādambarī.

There was once upon a time a king named Çūdraka. Like a second Indra, he had his commands honoured by the bent heads of all kings; he was lord of the earth girt in by the four oceans; he had an army of neighbouring chiefs bowed down in loyalty to his majesty; he had the signs of a universal emperor; (8) like Vishṇu, his lotus-hand bore the sign of the conch and the quoit; like Çiva, he had overcome Love; like Kārtikeya, he was unconquerable in might⁴⁸; like Brahma, he had the circle of great kings humbled⁴⁹; like the ocean, he was the source of Lakshmī; like the stream of Ganges, he followed in the course of the pious king Bhagīratha; like the sun, he rose daily in fresh splendour; like Meru, the brightness of his foot was honoured by all the world; like the elephant of the quarters,⁵⁰ he constantly poured forth a stream of generosity. He was a worker of wonders, an offerer of sacrifices,

⁴⁷ *I.e.*, Vāsavadattā and the Bṛihatkathā; or, r., *advitīyā*, unrivalled.

⁴⁸ (a) Unconquerable in might; (b) having unconquerable shafts.

⁴⁹ In the case of Brahma, 'he made his chariot of flamingoes.'

⁵⁰ (a) His hand was wet with a stream of constant giving; (b) the trunk was wet with ichor.

a mirror of moral law, a source of the arts, a native home of virtue; a spring of the ambrosial sweetness of poetry, a mountain of sunrise to all his friends,⁵¹ and a direful comet to all his foes. (9) He was, moreover, a founder of literary societies, a refuge for men of taste, a rejecter of haughty bowholders, a leader among the bold, a chief among the wise. He was a cause of gladness to the humble, as Vainateya⁵² was to Vinatā. He rooted up with the point of his bow the boundary-mountains of his foes as Prithurāja did the noble mountains. He mocked Kṛishṇa, also, for while the latter made his boast of his man-lion form, he himself smote down the hearts of his foes by his very name, and while Kṛishṇa wearied the universe with his three steps, he subdued the whole world by one heroic effort. Glory long dwelt on the watered edge of his sword, as if to wash off the stain of contact with a thousand base chieftains, which had clung to her too long.

By the indwelling of Dharma in his mind, Yama in his wrath, Kuvera in his kindness, Agni in his splendour, Earth in his arm, Lakshmī in his glance, Sarasvatī in his eloquence, (10) the Moon in his face, the Wind in his might, Bṛihaspati in his knowledge, Love in his beauty, the Sun in his glory, he resembled holy Nārāyaṇa, whose nature manifests every form, and who is the very essence of deity. Royal glory came to him once for all, like a woman coming to meet her lover, on the nights of battle stormy with the showers of ichor from the elephants' temples, and stood

⁵¹ Or, to the sun's orb.

⁵² Vinatā = (a) mother of Garuḍa; (b) humble.

by him in the midst of the darkness of thousands of coats of mail, loosened from the doors of the breasts of warriors. She seemed to be drawn irresistibly by his sword, which was uneven in its edge, by reason of the drops of water forced out by the pressure of his strong hand, and which was decked with large pearls clinging to it when he clove the frontal bones of wild elephants. The flame of his majesty burnt day and night, as if it were a fire within his foes' fair wives, albeit reft of their lords, as if he would destroy the husbands now only enshrined in their hearts.

(11) While he, having subdued the earth, was guardian of the world, the only mixing of colour⁵³ was in painting; the only pulling of hair in caresses; the only strict fetters in the laws of poetry; the only care was concerning moral law; the only deception was in dreams; the only golden rods⁵⁴ were in umbrellas. Banners alone trembled; songs alone showed variations⁵⁵; elephants alone were rampant;⁵⁶ bows alone had severed cords;⁵⁷ lattice windows alone had ensnaring network; lovers' disputes alone caused sending of messengers; dice and chessmen alone left empty squares; and his subjects had no deserted homes. Under him, too, there was only fear of the next world, only twisting in the curls of the zenana women, only

⁵³ Or, caste.

⁵⁴ Or, fines of gold.

⁵⁵ Or, fickle affections.

⁵⁶ Had, *mada* = (a) pride; (b) ichor.

⁵⁷ Or, breaking away from virtue.

loquacity in anklets, only taking the hand⁵⁸ in marriage, only shedding of tears from the smoke of ceaseless sacrificial fires; the only sound of the lash was for horses, while the only twang of the bow was Love's.

(15) When the thousand-rayed sun, bursting open the young lotus-buds, had not long risen, though it had lost somewhat of the pinkness of dawn, a portress approached the king in his hall of audience, and humbly addressed him. Her form was lovely, yet awe-inspiring, and with the scimitar (a weapon rarely worn by women) hanging at her left side, was like a sandal-tree girt by a snake. Her bosom glistened with rich sandal ointment like the heavenly Ganges when the frontal-bone of Airāvata rises from its waters. (16) The chiefs bent before her seemed, by her reflection on their crests, to bear her on their foreheads as a royal command in human form. Like autumn,⁵⁹ she was robed in the whiteness of haṃsas; like the blade of Paraçurāma she held the circle of kings in submission; like the forest land of the Vindhya, she bore her wand,⁶⁰ and she seemed the very guardian-goddess of the realm. Placing on the ground her lotus hand and knee, she thus spake: 'Sire, there stands at the gate a Caṇḍāla maiden from the South, a royal glory of the race of that Triçamku⁶¹ who climbed the sky, but fell from it at the murmur of wrathful Indra. She bears a

⁵⁸ Or, tribute.

⁵⁹ In autumn, the *haṃsas*, or wild geese, return.

⁶⁰ Or, bamboos.

⁶¹ Rām. I. 60.

parrot in a cage, and bids me thus hail your majesty: "Sire, thou, like the ocean, art alone worthy to receive the treasures of the whole earth. In the thought that this bird is a marvel, and the treasure of the whole earth, I bring it to lay at thy feet, and desire to behold thee." (17) Thou, O king, hast heard her message, and must decide!' So saying, she ended her speech. The king, whose curiosity was aroused, looked at the chiefs around him, and with the words 'Why not? Bid her enter?' gave his permission.

Then the portress, immediately on the king's order, ushered in the Caṇḍāla maiden. And she entered and beheld the king in the midst of a thousand chiefs, like golden-peaked Meru in the midst of the noble mountains crouching together in fear of Indra's thunderbolt; or, in that the brightness of the jewels scattered on his dress almost concealed his form, like a day of storm, whereon the eight quarters of the globe are covered by Indra's thousand bows. He was sitting on a couch studded with moon-stones, beneath a small silken canopy, white as the foam of the rivers of heaven, with its four jewel-encrusted pillars joined by golden chains, and enwreathed with a rope of large pearls. Many cowries with golden handles waved around him; (18) his left foot rested on a footstool of crystal that was like the moon bent in humiliation before the flashing beauty of his countenance, and was adorned by the brightness of his feet, which yet were tinged with blue from the light rays of the sapphire pavement, as though darkened by the sighs of his conquered foes. His breast, crimsoned by the rubies which shone

on his throne, recalled Kṛiṣṇa, red with blood from the fresh slaughter of Madhukaiṭabha; his two silken garments, white as the foam of ambrosia, with pairs of haṃsas painted in yellow on their hem, waved in the wind raised by the cowries; the fragrant sandal unguent with which his chest was whitened, besprinkled with saffron ointment, was like snowy Kailāsa with the early sunshine upon it; his face was encircled by pearls like stars mistaking it for the moon; the sapphire bracelets that clasped his arms were as a threat of chains to bind fickle fortune, or as snakes attracted by the smell of sandal-wood; (19) the lotus in his ear hung down slightly; his nose was aquiline, his eyes were like lotuses in full blossom, the hair grew in a circle between his brows, and was purified by the waters that inaugurated his possession of universal rule; his forehead was like a piece of the eighth-day moon made into a block of pure gold, garlanded with sweet jasmine, like the Western Mountain in the dawn with the stars growing pale on its brow. He was like the God of Love when struck by Çiva's fire, for his body was tawny from the colour of his ornaments. His hand-maidens surrounded him, as if they were the goddesses of the quarters of the globe come to worship him; the earth bore him, as on her heart, through loyalty, in the reflection of his image in her clear mosaic pavement; fortune seemed his alone, though by him she was given to all to enjoy. (20) He was without a second, though his followers were without number; he trusted only to his own sword, though he had countless elephants and horses in his retinue; he filled

the whole earth, though he stood in a small space of ground; he rested only on his bow, and yet was seated on his throne; he shone with the flame of majesty, though all the fuel of his enemies was uprooted; he had large eyes, and yet saw the smallest things; he was the home of all virtues, and yet was overreaching;⁶² he was beloved of his wives, and yet was a despotic lord; he was free from intoxication, though he had an unfailing stream of bounty; he was fair in nature, yet in conduct a Kṛishṇa;⁶³ he laid no heavy hand⁶⁴ on his subjects, and yet the whole world rested in his grasp.

Such was this king. And she yet afar beholding him, with a hand soft as the petal of a red lotus, and surrounded by a tinkling bracelet, and clasping the bamboo with its end jagged, (21) struck once on the mosaic floor to arouse the king; and at the sound, in a moment the whole assemblage of chiefs turned their eyes from the king to her, like a herd of wild elephants at the falling of the cocoanut. Then the king, with the words, 'Look yonder,' to his suite, gazed steadily upon the Caṇḍāla maiden, as she was pointed out by the portress. Before her went a man, whose hair was hoary with age, whose eyes were the colour of the red lotus, whose joints, despite the loss of youth, were firm from incessant labour, whose form, though that of a Mātanga, was not to be despised, and who wore the white raiment meet for a court. Behind her went a Caṇḍāla boy, with locks falling

⁶² He had (a) great faults; (b) a long arm.

⁶³ Dark.

⁶⁴ *I.e.*, imposed no heavy tribute.

on either shoulder, bearing a cage, the bars of which, though of gold, shone like emerald from the reflection of the parrot's plumage. (22) She herself seemed by the darkness of her hue to imitate Kṛishṇa when he guilefully assumed a woman's attire to take away the amṛita seized by the demons. She was, as it were, a doll of sapphire walking alone; and over the blue garment, which reached to her ankle, there fell a veil of red silk, like evening sunshine falling on blue lotuses. The circle of her cheek was whitened by the earring that hung from one ear, like the face of night inlaid with the rays of the rising moon; she had a tawny tilaka of gorocanā, as if it were a third eye, like Parvatī in mountaineer's attire, after the fashion of the garb of Çiva.

She was like Çrī, darkened by the sapphire glory of Nārāyaṇa reflected on the robe on her breast; or like Rati, stained by smoke which rose as Madana was burnt by the fire of wrathful Çiva; or like Yamunā, fleeing in fear of being drawn along by the ploughshare of wild Balarāma; or, from the rich lac that turned her lotus feet into budding shoots, like Durgā, with her feet crimsoned by the blood of the Asura Mahisha she had just trampled upon.

(23) Her nails were rosy from the pink glow of her fingers; the mosaic pavement seemed too hard for her touch, and she came forward, placing her feet like tender twigs upon the ground.

The rays of her anklets, rising in flame-colour, seemed to encircle her as with the arms of Agni, as though, by his love for her beauty, he would purify the stain of her birth, and so set the

Creator at naught.

Her girdle was like the stars wreathed on the brow of the elephant of Love; and her necklace was a rope of large bright pearls, like the stream of Gangā just tinged by Yamunā.

Like autumn, she opened her lotus eyes; like the rainy season, she had cloudy tresses; like the circle of the Malaya Hills, she was wreathed with sandal; (24) like the zodiac, she was decked with starry gems;⁶⁵ like Çrī, she had the fairness of a lotus in her hand; like a swoon, she entranced the heart; like a forest, she was endowed with living⁶⁶ beauty; like the child of a goddess, she was claimed by no tribe;⁶⁷ like sleep, she charmed the eyes; as a lotus-pool in a wood is troubled by elephants, so was she dimmed by her Mātanga⁶⁸ birth; like a spirit, she might not be touched; like a letter, she gladdened the eyes alone; like the blossoms of spring, she lacked the jāti flower;⁶⁹ her slender waist, like the line of Love's bow, could be spanned by the hands; with her curly hair, she was like the Lakshmī of the Yaksha king in Alaka.⁷⁰ She had but reached the flower of her youth, and was beautiful exceedingly. And the king was amazed; and the thought arose in his mind, (25) 'Ill-placed was the labour of the Creator in

⁶⁵ Or, 'with *citrā* and *çravaṇa*,' lunar mansions.

⁶⁶ Or, living creatures.

⁶⁷ (a) Of lowly birth; (b) not dwelling on earth.

⁶⁸ (a) Caṇḍāla; (b) elephant.

⁶⁹ Or, *ajāti*, without caste.

⁷⁰ *Alaka* = (a) curls; (b) a city.

producing this beauty! For if she has been created as though in mockery of her Caṇḍāla form, such that all the world's wealth of loveliness is laughed to scorn by her own, why was she born in a race with which none can mate? Surely by thought alone did Prajāpati create her, fearing the penalties of contact with the Mātanga race, else whence this unsullied radiance, a grace that belongs not to limbs sullied by touch? Moreover, though fair in form, by the baseness of her birth, whereby she, like a Lakshmī of the lower world, is a perpetual reproach to the gods,⁷¹ she, lovely as she is, causes fear in Brahma, the maker of so strange a union.' While the king was thus thinking the maiden, garlanded with flowers, that fell over her ears, bowed herself before him with a confidence beyond her years. And when she had made her reverence and stepped on to the mosaic floor, her attendant, taking the parrot, which had just entered the cage, advanced a few steps, and, showing it to the king, said: 'Sire, this parrot, by name Vaiçampāyana, knows the meaning of all the çāstras, is expert in the practice of royal policy, (26) skilled in tales, history, and Purāṇas, and acquainted with songs and with musical intervals. He recites, and himself composes graceful and incomparable modern romances, love-stories, plays, and poems, and the like; he is versed in witticisms, and is an unrivalled disciple of the vīnā, flute, and drum. He is skilled in displaying the different movements of dancing, dextrous in painting, very bold in play, ready in resources to calm a maiden angered in a

⁷¹ Or, whose love would be a reproach.

lover's quarrel, and familiar with the characteristics of elephants, horses, men, and women. He is the gem of the whole earth; and in the thought that treasures belong to thee, as pearls to the ocean, the daughter of my lord has brought him hither to thy feet, O king! Let him be accepted as thine.'

Having thus said, he laid the cage before the king and retired. (27) And when he was gone, the king of birds, standing before the king, and raising his right foot, having uttered the words, 'All hail!' recited to the king, in a song perfect in the enunciation of each syllable and accent, a verse⁷² to this effect:

'The bosoms of your foemen's queens now mourn,
Keeping a fast of widowed solitude,
Bathed in salt tears, of pearl-wreaths all forlorn,
Scorched by their sad hearts' too close neighbourhood.'

And the king, having heard it, was amazed, and joyfully addressed his minister Kumārapālita, who sat close to him on a costly golden throne, like Bṛihaspati in his mastery of political philosophy, aged, of noble birth, first in the circle of wise councillors: 'Thou hast heard the bird's clear enunciation of consonants, and the sweetness of his intonation. This, in the first place, is a great marvel, that he should raise a song in which the syllables are clearly separated; and there is a combination of correctness with clearness in the vowels and *anunāsikas*. (28)

⁷² A verse in the *āryā* measure.

Then, again, we had something more than that: for in him, though a lower creation, are found the accomplishments, as it were, of a man, in a pleasurable art, and the course of his song is inspired by knowledge. For it was he who, with the cry, "All hail!" straightened his right foot and sang this song concerning me, whereas, generally, birds and beasts are only skilled in the science of fearing, eating, pairing, and sleeping. This is most wonderful.' And when the king had said this, Kumārapālita, with a slight smile, replied: 'Where is the wonder? For all kinds of birds, beginning with the parrot and the maina, repeat a sound once heard, as thou, O king, knowest; so it is no wonder that exceeding skill is produced either by the efforts of men, or in consequence of perfection gained in a former birth. Moreover, they formerly possessed a voice like that of men, with clear utterance. The indistinct speech of parrots, as well as the change in elephants' tongues, arose from a curse of Agni.'

Hardly had he thus spoken when there arose the blast of the mid-day conch, following the roar of the drum distinctly struck at the completion of the hour, and announcing that the sun had reached the zenith. (29) And, hearing this, the king dismissed his band of chiefs, as the hour for bathing was at hand, and arose from his hall of audience.

Then, as he started, the great chiefs thronged together as they rose, tearing their silk raiment with the leaf-work of their bracelets, as it fell from its place in the hurried movement. Their necklaces were swinging with the shock; the quarters of

space were made tawny by showers of fragrant sandal-powder and saffron scattered from their limbs in their restlessness; the bees arose in swarms from their garlands of mālatī flowers, all quivering; their cheeks were caressed by the lotuses in their ears, half hanging down; their strings of pearls were trembling on their bosoms – each longed in his self-consciousness to pay his respects to the king as he departed.

The hall of audience was astir on all sides with the sound of the anklets of the cowie bearers as they disappeared in all directions, bearing the cowries on their shoulders, their gems tinkling at every step, broken by the cry of the kalahaṃsas, eager to drink the lotus honey; (30) with the pleasant music of the jewelled girdles and wreaths of the dancing-girls coming to pay their respects as they struck their breast and sides; with the cries of the kalahaṃsas of the palace lake, which, charmed by the sound of the anklets, whitened the broad steps of the hall of audience; with the voices of the tame cranes, eager for the sound of the girdles, screaming more and more with a prolonged outcry, like the scratching of bell-metal; with the heavy tramp on the floor of the hall of audience struck by the feet of a hundred neighbouring chiefs suddenly departing, which seemed to shake the earth like a hurricane; with the cry of ‘Look!’ from the wand-bearing ushers, who were driving the people in confusion before them, and shouting loudly, yet good-naturedly, ‘Behold!’ long and shrill, resounding far by its echo in the bowers of the palace; (31) with the ringing of the pavement as it was scratched by the

points of diadems with their projecting aigrettes, as the kings swiftly bent till their trembling crest-gems touched the ground; with the tinkling of the earrings as they rang on the hard mosaic in their owners' obeisance; with the space-pervading din of the bards reciting auspicious verses, and coming forward with the pleasant continuous cry, 'Long life and victory to our king!'; with the hum of the bees as they rose up leaving the flowers, by reason of the turmoil of the hundreds of departing feet; with the clash of the jewelled pillars on which the gems were set jangling from being struck by the points of the bracelets as the chieftains fell hastily prostrate in their confusion. The king then dismissed the assembled chiefs, saying, 'Rest awhile'; and after saying to the Caṇḍāla maiden, 'Let Vaiçampāyana be taken into the inner apartments,' and giving the order to his betel-nut bearer, he went, accompanied by a few favourite princes, to his private apartments. There, laying aside his adornments, like the sun divested of his rays, or the sky bare of moon and stars, he entered the hall of exercise, where all was duly prepared. Having taken pleasant exercise therein with the princes of his own age, (32) he then entered the bathing-place, which was covered with a white canopy, surrounded by the verses of many a bard. It had a gold bath, filled with scented water in its midst, with a crystal bathing-seat placed by it, and was adorned with pitchers placed on one side, full of most fragrant waters, having their mouths darkened by bees attracted by the odour, as if they were covered with blue cloths, from fear of the heat. (33) Then the hand-

maidens, some darkened by the reflection of their emerald jars, like embodied lotuses with their leafy cups, some holding silver pitchers, like night with a stream of light shed by the full moon, duly besprinkled the king. (34) Straightway there arose a blare of the trumpets sounded for bathing, penetrating all the hollows of the universe, accompanied by the din of song, lute, flute, drum, cymbal, and tabor, resounding shrilly in diverse tones, mingled with the uproar of a multitude of bards, and cleaving the path of hearing. Then, in due order, the king put upon him two white garments, light as a shed snake-skin, and wearing a turban, with an edge of fine silk, pure as a fleck of white cloud, like Himālaya with the stream of the heavenly river falling upon it, he made his libation to the Pitṛis with a handful of water, consecrated by a hymn, and then, prostrating himself before the sun, proceeded to the temple. When he had worshipped Çiva, and made an offering to Agni, (35) his limbs were anointed in the perfuming-room with sandal-wood, sweetened with the fragrance of saffron, camphor, and musk, the scent of which was followed by murmuring bees; he put on a chaplet of scented mālatī flowers, changed his garb, and, with no adornment save his jewelled earrings, he, together with the kings, for whom a fitting meal was prepared, broke his fast, with the pleasure that arises from the enjoyment of viands of sweet savour. Then, having drunk of a fragrant drug, rinsed his mouth, and taken his betel, he arose from his daīs, with its bright mosaic pavement. The portress, who was close by, hastened to him, and leaning

on her arm, he went to the hall of audience, followed by the attendants worthy to enter the inner apartments, whose palms were like boughs, very hard from their firm grasp of their wands.

The hall showed as though walled with crystal by reason of the white silk that draped its ends; the jewelled floor was watered to coolness with sandal-water, to which was added very fragrant musk; the pure mosaic was ceaselessly strewn with masses of blossoms, as the sky with its bevy of stars; (36) many a golden pillar shone forth, purified with scented water, and decked with countless images, as though with the household gods in their niches; aloe spread its fragrance richly; the whole was dominated by an alcove, which held a couch white as a cloud after storm, with a flower-scented covering, a pillow of fine linen at the head, castors encrusted with gems, and a jewelled footstool by its side, like the peak of Himālaya to behold.

Reclining on this couch, while a maiden, seated on the ground, having placed in her bosom the dagger she was wont to bear, gently rubbed his feet with a palm soft as the leaves of fresh lotuses, the king rested for a short time, and held converse on many a theme with the kings, ministers, and friends whose presence was meet for that hour.

He then bade the portress, who was at hand, to fetch Vaiçampāyana from the women's apartments, for he had become curious to learn his story. And she, bending hand and knee to the ground, with the words 'Thy will shall be done!' taking the command on her head, fulfilled his bidding. (37) Soon

Vaiçampāyana approached the king, having his cage borne by the portress, under the escort of a herald, leaning on a gold staff, slightly bent, white robed, wearing a top-knot silvered with age, slow in gait, and tremulous in speech, like an aged flamingo in his love for the race of birds, who, placing his palm on the ground, thus delivered his message: ‘Sire, the queens send thee word that by thy command this Vaiçampāyana has been bathed and fed, and is now brought by the portress to thy feet.’ Thus speaking, he retired, and the king asked Vaiçampāyana: ‘Hast thou in the interval eaten food sufficient and to thy taste?’ ‘Sire,’ replied he, ‘what have I not eaten? I have drunk my fill of the juice of the jambū fruit, aromatically sweet, pink and blue as a cuckoo’s eye in the gladness of spring; I have cracked the pomegranate seeds, bright as pearls wet with blood, which lions’ claws have torn from the frontal bones of elephants. I have torn at my will old myrobalans, green as lotus leaves, and sweet as grapes. (38) But what need of further words? For everything brought by the queens with their own hands turns to ambrosia.’ And the king, rebuking his talk, said: ‘Let all this cease for a while, and do thou remove our curiosity. Tell us from the very beginning the whole history of thy birth – in what country, and how wert thou born, and by whom was thy name given? Who were thy father and mother? How came thine attainment of the Vedas, and thine acquaintance with the Çāstras, and thy skill in the fine arts? What caused thy remembrance of a former birth? Was it a special boon given thee? Or dost thou dwell in disguise, wearing the form

only of a bird, and where didst thou formerly dwell? How old art thou, and how came this bondage of a cage, and the falling into the hands of a Caṇḍāla maiden, and thy coming hither?’ Thus respectfully questioned by the king, whose curiosity was kindled, Vaiṣampāyana thought a moment, and reverently replied, ‘Sire, the tale is long; but if it is thy pleasure, let it be heard.’

‘There is a forest, by name Vindhya, that embraces the shores of the eastern and western ocean, and decks the central region as though it were the earth’s zone. (39) It is beauteous with trees watered with the ichor of wild elephants, and bearing on their crests masses of white blossom that rise to the sky and vie with the stars; in it the pepper-trees, bitten by ospreys in their spring gladness, spread their boughs; tamāla branches trampled by young elephants fill it with fragrance; shoots in hue like the wine-flushed cheeks of Malabārīs, as though roseate with lac from the feet of wandering wood-nymphs, overshadow it. Bowers there are, too, wet with drippings from parrot-pierced pomegranates; bowers in which the ground is covered with torn fruit and leaves shaken down by restless monkeys from the kakkola trees, or sprinkled with pollen from ever-falling blossoms, or strewn with couches of clove-branches by travellers, or hemmed in by fine cocoanuts, ketakīs, karīras, and bakulas; bowers so fair that with their areca trees girt about with betel vines, they make a fitting home for a woodland Lakshmī. Thickly growing ēlās make the wood dark and fragrant, as with the ichor of wild elephants; (40) hundreds of lions, who meet their death from barbaric leaders

eager to seize the pearls of the elephants' frontal-bones still clinging to their mouth and claws, roam therein; it is fearful as the haunt of death, like the citadel of Yama, and filled with the buffaloes dear to him; like an army ready for battle, it has bees resting on its arrow-trees, as the points on arrows, and the roar of the lion is clear as the lion-cry of onset; it has rhinoceros tusks dreadful as the dagger of Durgā, and like her is adorned with red sandal-wood; like the story of Karṇīsuta, it has its Vipula, Acala and Çaçā in the wide mountains haunted by hares,⁷³ that lie near it; as the twilight of the last eve of an aeon has the frantic dance of blue-necked Çiva, so has it the dances of blue-necked peacocks, and bursts into crimson; as the time of churning the ocean had the glory of Çrī and the tree which grants all desires, and was surrounded by sweet draughts of Vāruṇa,⁷⁴ so is it adorned by Çrī trees and Varuṇa³⁹ trees. It is densely dark, as the rainy season with clouds, and decked with pools in countless hundreds;⁷⁵ like the moon, it is always the haunt of the bears, and is the home of the deer.⁷⁶ (41) Like a king's palace, it is adorned by the tails of cowrie deer,⁷⁷ and protected by troops of fierce elephants.

⁷³ Vipula, Acala, and Çaçā, characters in the Bṛihatkāthā. Or, broad mountains and hares.

⁷⁴ *Varuṇa*, tree; *vāruṇa*, wine.

⁷⁵ Or, with lightning.

⁷⁶ Constellations. The moon was supposed to have a deer dwelling in it.

⁷⁷ (a) The cowries held by the suite; (b) different kinds of deer.

Like Durgā, it is strong of nature,⁷⁸ and haunted by the lion. Like Sītā, it has its Kuṣa, and is held by the wanderer of night.⁷⁹ Like a maiden in love, it wears the scent of sandal and musk, and is adorned with a *tilaka* of bright aloes;⁸⁰ like a lady in her lover's absence, it is fanned with the wind of many a bough, and possessed of Madana;⁸¹ like a child's neck, it is bright with rows of tiger's-claws,⁸² and adorned with a rhinoceros;⁸³ like a hall of revelry with its honeyed draughts, it has hundreds of beehives⁸⁴ visible, and is strewn with flowers. In parts it has a circle of earth torn up by the tusks of large boars, like the end of the world when the circle of the earth was lifted up by the tusks of Mahāvarāha; here, like the city of Rāvaṇa, it is filled with lofty *ṣālas*⁸⁵ inhabited by restless monkeys; (42) here it is, like the scene of a recent wedding, bright with fresh kuṣa grass, fuel, flowers, acacia, and palāṣa; here, it seems to bristle in terror at the lions' roar; here, it is vocal with cuckoos wild for joy; here it is, as if in excitement, resonant with the sound of palms⁸⁶ in the strong wind; here, it drops its palm-leaves like a widow giving up

⁷⁸ (a) Rocky; (b) having *Ṣiva*.

⁷⁹ *Kuṣa*: (a) Sītā's son; (b) grass. *Niṣācara*: (a) Rāvaṇa; (b) owls.

⁸⁰ (a) Mark of aloes on the brow; (b) *tilaka* trees and aloe trees all bright.

⁸¹ (a) Love; (b) *madana* trees.

⁸² As an amulet.

⁸³ Name of an ornament.

⁸⁴ Wine-cups.

⁸⁵ (a) Halls; (b) *ṣāl* trees.

⁸⁶ (a) Clapping of hands; (b) palm-trees.

her earrings; here, like a field of battle, it is filled with arrowy reeds;⁸⁷ here, like Indra's body, it has a thousand *netras*;⁸⁸ here, like Vishṇu's form, it has the darkness of *tamālas*;⁸⁹ here, like the banner of Arjuna's chariot, it is blazoned with monkeys; here, like the court of an earthly king, it is hard of access, through the bamboos; here, like the city of King Virāṭa, it is guarded by a Kīcaka;⁹⁰ here, like the Lakshmī of the sky, it has the tremulous eyes of its deer pursued by the hunter;⁹¹ here, like an ascetic, it has bark, bushes, and ragged strips and grass.⁹² (43) Though adorned with Saptaparṇa,⁹³ it yet possesses leaves innumerable; though honoured by ascetics, it is yet very savage;⁹⁴ though in its season of blossom, it is yet most pure.

‘In that forest there is a hermitage, famed throughout the world – a very birthplace of Dharma. It is adorned with trees tended by Lopāmudrā as her own children, fed with water sprinkled by her own hands, and trenched round by herself. She was the wife of the great ascetic Agastya; he it was who at the prayer of

⁸⁷ (a) Arrows; (b) reeds.

⁸⁸ (a) Trees; (b) eyes.

⁸⁹ (a) As *tamāla* trees (very dark); (b) with *tamāla* trees.

⁹⁰ Virāṭa, a king who befriended the Pāṇḍavas. The chief of his army was named Kīcaka. F. Mbh., Bk. iv., 815. *Kīcaka* also means ‘bamboo.’

⁹¹ Or, the twinkling stars of the Deer constellation, pursued by the Hunter (a constellation).

⁹² Bark garments, matted locks, and rags of grass.

⁹³ (a) Seven leaves; (b) a tree.

⁹⁴ (a) Of fierce disposition; (b) full of wild beasts.

Indra drank up the waters of ocean, and who, when the Vindhya mountains, by a thousand wide peaks stretching to the sky in rivalry of Meru, were striving to stop the course of the sun's chariot, and were despising the prayers of all the gods, yet had his commands obeyed by them; who digested the demon Vātāpi by his inward fire; who had the dust of his feet kissed by the tips of the gold ornaments on the crests of gods and demons; who adorned the brow of the Southern Region; and who manifested his majesty by casting Nahusha down from heaven by the mere force of his murmur.

(44) 'The hermitage is also hallowed by Lopāmudrā's son Dṛiḍhadasyu, an ascetic, bearing his staff of palāṣa,⁹⁵ wearing a sectarial mark made of purifying ashes, clothed in strips of kuṣa grass, girt with muñja, holding a cup of green leaves in his roaming from hut to hut to ask alms. From the large supply of fuel he brought, he was surnamed by his father Fuelbearer.

'The place is also darkened in many a spot by green parrots and by plantain groves, and is girt by the river Godāverī, which, like a dutiful wife, followed the path of the ocean when drunk by Agastya.

'There, too, Rāma, when he gave up his kingdom to keep his father's promise, dwelt happily for some time at Pañcavaṭī with Sītā, following the great ascetic Agastya, living in a pleasant hut made by Lakshmaṇa, even Rāma, the vexer of the triumphs of

⁹⁵ The sign of a vow.

Rāvaṇa's glory.⁹⁶

‘There, even now, the trees, though the hermitage has long been empty, show, as it were, in the lines of white doves softly nestling in the boughs, the hermits’ pure lines of sacrificial smoke clinging to them; and there a glow bursts forth on the shoots of creepers, as if it had passed to them from Sītā’s hand as she offered flowers of oblation; (45) there the water of ocean drunk and sent forth by the ascetic seems to have been wholly distributed among the great lakes round the hermitage; there the wood, with its fresh foliage, shines as if its roots had been watered with the blood of countless hosts of demons struck down by Rāma’s many keen shafts, and as if now its palaāças were stained with their crimson hue; there, even yet, the old deer nurtured by Sītā, when they hear the deep roar of fresh clouds in the rainy season, think on the twang of Rāma’s bow penetrating all the hollows of the universe, and refuse their mouthfuls of fresh grass, while their eyes are dimmed by ceaseless tears, as they see a deserted world, and their own horns crumbling from age; there, too, the golden deer, as if it had been incited by the rest of the forest deer slain in the ceaseless chase, deceived Sītā, and led the son of Raghu far astray; there, too, in their grief for the bitter loss of Sītā, Rāma and Lakshmaṇa seized by Kabandha, like an eclipse of sun and moon heralding the death of Rāvaṇa, filled the universe with a mighty dread; (46) there, too, the arm

⁹⁶ Or perhaps, ‘not caring for the fascination of the *beauty* of Rāvaṇa,’ *i. e.* his sister. He was loved by Rāvaṇa’s sister.

of Yojanabāhu, struck off by Rāma's arrow, caused fear in the saints as it lay on the ground, lest it should be the serpent form of Nahusha, brought back by Agastya's curse; there, even now, foresters behold Sītā painted inside the hut by her husband to solace his bereavement, as if she were again rising from the ground in her longing to see her husband's home.

Not far from that hermitage of Agastya, of which the ancient history is yet clearly to be seen, is a lotus lake called Pampā. It stands near that hermitage, as if it were a second ocean made by the Creator in rivalry with Agastya, at the prompting of Varuṇa, wrathful at the drinking of ocean; it is like the sky fallen on earth to bind together the fragments of the eight quarters when severed in the day of doom.⁹⁷ (48) It is, indeed, a peerless home of waters, and its depth and extent none can tell. There, even now, the wanderer may see pairs of cakravākas, with their wings turned to blue by the gleam of the blossoming lotuses, as if they were swallowed up by the impersonate curse of Rāma.

On the left bank of that lake, and near a clump of palms broken by Rāma's arrows, was a large old *çālmālī* tree.⁹⁸ It shows as though it were enclosed in a large trench, because its roots are always encircled by an old snake, like the trunk of the elephants of the quarters; (49) it seems to be mantled with the slough of serpents, which hangs on its lofty trunk and waves in the wind; it strives to compass the measurement of the circle of space

⁹⁷ Does this refer to the reflection of the sky in its clear water?

⁹⁸ *Çālmālī* = silk cotton-tree.

by its many boughs spreading through the firmament, and so to imitate Çiva, whose thousand arms are outstretched in his wild dance at the day of doom, and who wears the moon on his crest. Through its weight of years, it clings for support even to the shoulder of the wind; it is girt with creepers that cover its whole trunk, and stand out like the thick veins of old age. Thorns have gathered on its surface like the moles of old age; not even the thick clouds by which its foliage is bedewed can behold its top, when, after drinking the waters of ocean, they return from all sides to the sky, and pause for a moment, weary with their load of water, like birds amongst its boughs. From its great height, it seems to be on tiptoe to look⁹⁹ at the glory of the Nandana¹⁰⁰ Wood; its topmost branches are whitened by cotton, which men might mistake for foam dropped from the corners of their mouths by the sun's steeds as, beset with weariness of their path through the sky, they come near it in their course overhead; (50) it has a root that will last for an aeon, for, with the garland of drunken bees sticking to the ichor which clings to it where the cheeks of woodland elephants are rubbed against it, it seems to be held motionless by iron chains; it seems alive with swarms of bees, flashing in and out of its hollow trunk. It beholds the alighting of the wings of birds, as Duryodhana receives proofs of Çakuni's¹⁰¹ partizanship; like Kṛishṇa, it is encircled by a

⁹⁹ Lit., 'striving upwards to see.'

¹⁰⁰ Indra's wood.

¹⁰¹ Çakuni = (a) bird; (b) name of Duryodhana's supporter.

woodland chaplet;¹⁰² like a mass of fresh clouds its rising is seen in the sky. It is a temple whence woodland goddesses can look out upon the whole world. It is the king of the Daṇḍaka Wood, the leader of the lordly trees, the friend of the Vindhya Mountains, and it seems to embrace with the arms of its boughs the whole Vindhya Forest. There, on the edge of the boughs, in the centre of the crevices, amongst the twigs, in the joints of the trunks, in the holes of the rotten bark, flocks of parrots have taken their abode. From its spaciousness, they have confidently built in it their thousand nests; from its steepness, they have come to it fearlessly from every quarter. Though its leaves are thin with age, this lord of the forest still looks green with dense foliage, as they rest upon it day and night. (51) In it they spend the nights in their own nests, and daily, as they rise, they form lines in the sky; they show in heaven like Yamunā with her wide streams scattered by the tossing of Bala's ploughshare in his passion; they suggest a lotus-bed of the heavenly Ganges flowing away, uprooted by the elephant of heaven; they show forth a sky streaked, as it were, with the brightness of the steeds of the sun's chariot; they wear the semblance of a moving floor of emerald; they stretch out in the lake of heaven like long twines of Vallisneria; they fan the faces of the quarters wearied with the mass of the sun's keen rays, with their wings spread against the sky like plantain leaves; they form a grassy path stretching through the heaven, and as they roam they grace the firmament with a rainbow. After their

¹⁰² Or, 'by *Vanamālā*,' Kṛiṣṇa's chaplet.

meal they return to the young birds which stay in the nest, and give them, from beaks pink as tiger's claws reddened with the blood of slain deer, the juice of fruits and many a dainty morsel of rice-clusters, for by their deep love to their children all their other likings are subdued; (52) then they spend the night in this same tree with their young under their wings.

‘Now my father, who by reason of his great age barely dragged on his life, dwelt with my mother in a certain old hollow, and to him I was, by the decree of Fate, born as his only son. My mother, overcome by the pains of child-birth when I was born, went to another world, and, in spite of his grief for the death of his loved wife, my father, from love to his child, checked the keen onrush of his sorrow, and devoted himself in his loneliness wholly to my nurture. From his great age, the wide wings he raised had lost their power of flight, and hung loose from his shoulders, so that when he shook them he seemed to be trying to shake off the painful old age that clung to his body, while his few remaining tail feathers were broken like a tatter of kuṣa grass; and yet, though he was unable to wander far, he gathered up bits of fruit torn down by parrots and fallen at the foot of the tree, and picked up grains of rice from rice-stalks that had fallen from other nests, with a beak the point of which was broken and the edge worn away and rubbed by breaking rice-clusters, and pink as the stalk of the sephālikā flower when still hard, and he daily made his own meal on what I left.

(53) ‘But one day I heard a sound of the tumult of the chase.

The moon, reddened by the glow of dawn, was descending to the shore of the Western Ocean, from the island of the heavenly Ganges, like an old haṃsa with its wings reddened by the honey of the heavenly lotus-bed; the circle of space was widening, and was white as the hair of a ranku deer; the throng of stars, like flowers strewn on the pavement of heaven, were being cast away by the sun's long rays, as if they were brooms of rubies, for they were red as a lion's mane dyed in elephant's blood, or pink as sticks of burning lac; the cluster of the Seven Sages was, as it were, descending the bank of the Mānasa Lake, and rested on the northern quarter to worship the dawn; the Western Ocean was lifting a mass of pearls, scattered from open shells on its shore, as though the stars, melted by the sun's rays, had fallen on it, whitening the surface of its alluvial islands. The wood was dropping dew; its peacocks were awake; its lions were yawning; (54) its wild elephants were wakened by herds of she-elephants, and it, with its boughs raised like reverential hands, sent up towards the sun, as he rested on the peak of the Eastern Mountain, a mass of flowers, the filaments of which were heavy with the night dews. The lines of sacrificial smoke from the hermitages, gray as the hair of an ass, were gleaming like banners of holiness, and rested like doves on the tree-tops whereon the wood-nymphs dwelt. The morning breeze was blowing, and roamed softly, for it was weary at the end of night; it gladdened swarms of bees by the flowers' perfume; it rained showers of honey dew from the opened lotuses; it was eager to

teach the dancing creepers with their waving boughs; it carried drops of foam from the rumination of woodland buffaloes; it removed the perspiration of the weary mountaineers; it shook the lotuses, and bore with it the dewdrops. The bees, who ought to be the drums on the elephant's frontal-bones to recite auspicious songs for the wakening of the day lotus-groves, now sent up their hum from the hearts of the night-lotuses, as their wings were clogged in the closing petals; (55) the deer of the wood had the markings on their breast, gray with resting on the salt ground, and slowly opened eyes, the pupils of which were still squinting with the remains of sleep, and were caught by the cool morning breeze as if their eyelashes were held together by heated lac; foresters were hastening hither and thither; the din of the kalahaṃsas on the Pampā Lake, sweet to the ear, was now beginning; the pleasant flapping of the wild elephant's ears breaking forth caused the peacocks to dance; in time the sun himself slowly arose, and wandered among the tree-tops round the Pampā Lake, and haunted the mountain peaks, with rays of madder, like a mass of cowries bending downwards from the sun's elephant as he plunges into the sky; the fresh light sprung from the sun banished the stars, falling on the wood like the monkey king who had again lost Tārā;¹⁰³ the morning twilight became visible quickly, occupying the eighth part of the day, and the sun's light became clear.

‘The troops of parrots had all started to the places they desired;

¹⁰³ *Tārā* = (a) wife of Sugrīva, the monkey king; (b) star.

that tree seemed empty by reason of the great stillness, though it had all the young parrots resting quietly in their nests. (56) My father was still in his own nest, and I, as from my youth my wings were hardly fledged and had no strength, was close to him in the hollow, when I suddenly heard in that forest the sound of the tumult of the chase. It terrified every woodland creature; it was drawn out by a sound of birds' wings flying hastily up; it was mingled with cries from the frightened young elephants; it was increased by the hum of drunken bees, disturbed on the shaken creepers; it was loud with the noise of wild boars roaming with raised snouts; it was swollen by the roar of lions wakened from their sleep in mountain caves; it seemed to shake the trees, and was great as the noise of the torrents of Ganges, when brought down by Bhagīratha; and the woodland nymphs listened to it in terror.

‘When I heard this strange sound I began to tremble in my childishness; the cavity of my ear was almost broken; I shook for fear, and thinking that my father, who was close by, could help me, I crept within his wings, loosened as they were by age.

‘Straightway I heard an outcry of “Hence comes the scent of the lotus beds the leaders of the elephants have trampled! Hence the perfume of rushes the boars have chewed! Hence the keen fragrance of gum-olibanum the young elephants have divided! Hence the rustling of dry leaves shaken down! (57) Hence the dust of antheaps that the horns of wild buffaloes have cleft like thunderbolts! Hence came a herd of deer! Hence a troop of wild

elephants! Hence a band of wild boars! Hence a multitude of wild buffaloes! Hence the shriek of a circle of peacocks! Hence the murmur of partridges! Hence the cry of ospreys! Hence the groan of elephants with their frontal bones torn by lion's claws! This is a boar's path stained with fresh mud! This a mass of foam from the rumination of deer, darkened by the juice of mouthfuls of grass just eaten! This the hum of bees garrulous as they cling to the scent left by the rubbing of elephants' foreheads with ichor flowing! That the path of the ruru deer pink with withered leaves bedewed with blood that has been shed. That is a mass of shoots on the trees crushed by the feet of elephants! Those are the gambols of rhinoceroses; that is the lion's track jagged with pieces of the elephant's pearls, pink with blood, and engraved with a monstrous device by their claws; that is the earth crimsoned with the blood of the newly born offspring of the does; that is the path, like a widow's braid, darkened with the ichor of the lord of the herd wandering at his will! Follow this row of yaks straight before us! Quickly occupy this part of the wood where the dung of the deer is dried! (58) Climb the tree-top! Look out in this direction! Listen to this sound! Take the bow! Stand in your places! Let slip the hounds!" The wood trembled at the tumult of the hosts of men intent on the chase shouting to each other and concealed in the hollows of the trees.

'Then that wood was soon shaken on all sides by the roar of lions struck by the Çabaras' arrows, deepened by its echo rebounding from the hollows of the mountains, and strong as the

sound of a drum newly oiled; by the roar from the throats of the elephants that led the herd, like the growl of thunder, and mixed with the ceaseless lashing of their trunks, as they came on alone, separated from the frightened herd; by the piteous cry of the deer, with their tremulous, terrified eyes, when the hounds suddenly tore their limbs; by the yell of she-elephants lengthening in grief for the death of their lord and leader, as they wandered every way with ears raised, ever pausing to listen to the din, bereft of their slain leaders and followed by their young; (59) by the bellowing of she-rhinoceroses seeking with outstretched necks their young, only born a few days before, and now lost in the panic; by the outcry of birds flying from the tree-tops, and wandering in confusion; by the tramp of herds of deer with all the haste of limbs made for speed, seeming to make the earth quake as it was struck simultaneously by their hurrying feet; by the twang of bows drawn to the ear, mingled, as they rained their arrows, with the cry from the throats of the loving she-ospreys; by the clash of swords with their blades whizzing against the wind and falling on the strong shoulders of buffaloes; and by the baying of the hounds which, as it was suddenly sent forth, penetrated all the recesses of the wood.

‘When soon afterwards the noise of the chase was stilled and the wood had become quiet, like the ocean when its water was stilled by the ceasing of the churning, or like a mass of clouds silent after the rainy season, I felt less of fear and became curious, and so, moving a little from my father’s embrace, (60) I stood

in the hollow, stretched out my neck, and with eyes that, from my childishness, were yet tremulous with fear, in my eagerness to see what this thing was, I cast my glance in that direction.

‘Before me I saw the Çabara¹⁰⁴ army come out from the wood like the stream of Narmadā tossed by Arjuna’s¹⁰⁵ thousand arms, like a wood of tamālas stirred by the wind; like all the nights of the dark fortnight rolled into one; like a solid pillar of antimony shaken by an earthquake; like a grove of darkness disturbed by sunbeams; like the followers of death roaming; like the demon world that had burst open hell and risen up; like a crowd of evil deeds come together; like a caravan of curses of the many hermits dwelling in the Daṇḍaka Forest; like all the hosts of Dūshaṇa¹⁰⁶ and Khara struck by Rāma as he rained his ceaseless shafts, and they turned into demons for their hatred to him; like the whole confraternity of the Iron Age come together; like a band of buffaloes prepared for a plunge into the water; like a mass of black clouds broken by a blow from a lion’s paw as he stands on the mountain peak;¹⁰⁷ like a throng of meteors risen for the destruction of all form; it darkened the wood; it numbered many thousands; it inspired great dread; it was like a multitude of demons portending disasters.

¹⁰⁴ Mountaineer.

¹⁰⁵ Arjuna, or Kārttavīrya, was captured by Rāvaṇa when sporting in the Nerbuddha, and was killed by Paraçurāma. *V. Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Bk. iv., ch. 11.

¹⁰⁶ Dūshaṇa was one of Rāvaṇa’s generals; Khara was Rāvaṇa’s brother, and was slain by Rāma.

¹⁰⁷ *Cf. Uttarakāmarita*, Act V.

(61) ‘And in the midst of that great host of Çabaras I beheld the Çabara leader, Mātanga by name. He was yet in early youth; from his great hardness he seemed made of iron; he was like Ekalavya¹⁰⁸ in another birth; from his growing beard, he was like a young royal elephant with its temples encircled by its first line of ichor; he filled the wood with beauty that streamed from him sombre as dark lotuses, like the waters of Yamunā; he had thick locks curled at the ends and hanging on his shoulders, like a lion with its mane stained by elephant’s ichor; his brow was broad; his nose was stern and aquiline; his left side shone reddened by the faint pink rays of a jewelled snake’s hood that was made the ornament for one of his ears, like the glow of shoots that had clung to him from his resting on a leafy couch; he was perfumed with fragrant ichor, bearing the scent of saptacchada blossoms torn from the cheeks of an elephant freshly slain, like a stain of black aloes; (62) he had the heat warded off by a swarm of bees, like a peacock-feather parasol, flying about blinded by the scent, as if they were a branch of tamāla; he was marked with lines of perspiration on his cheek rubbed by his hand, as if Vindhya Forest, being conquered by his strong arm, were timidly offering homage under the guise of its slender waving twigs, and he seemed to tinge space by his eye somewhat pink, as if it were bloodshot, and shedding a twilight of the night of doom for the deer; he had mighty arms reaching to his knees, as if the measure of an elephant’s trunk had been taken in making them, and his

¹⁰⁸ Ekalavya, king of the Nishādas, killed by Kṛishṇa. Mbh., I., 132.

shoulders were rough with scars from keen weapons often used to make an offering of blood to Kālī; the space round his eyes was bright and broad as the Vindhya Mountain, and with the drops of dried deer's blood clinging on it, and the marking of drops of perspiration, as if they were adorned by large pearls from an elephant's frontal bone mixed with guñja fruit; his chest was scarred by constant and ceaseless fatigue; he was clad in a silk dress red with cochineal, and with his strong legs he mocked a pair of elephants' posts stained with elephants' ichor; he seemed from his causeless fierceness to have been marked on his dread brow by a frown that formed three banners, as if Durgā, propitiated by his great devotion, had marked him with a trident to denote that he was her servant. (63) He was accompanied by hounds of every colour, which were his familiar friends; they showed their weariness by tongues that, dry as they were, seemed by their natural pinkness to drip deer's blood, and which hung down far from tiredness; as their mouths were open they raised the corners of their lips and showed their flashing teeth clearly, like a lion's mane caught between the teeth; their throats were covered with strings of cowries, and they were hacked by blows from the large boars' tusks; though but small, from their great strength they were like lions' cubs with their manes ungrown; they were skilled in initiating the does in widowhood; with them came their wives, very large, like lionesses coming to beg an amnesty for the lions. He was surrounded by troops of Çabaras of all kinds: some had seized elephants' tusks and the long hair of

yaks; some had vessels for honey made of leaves closely bound; some, like lions, had hands filled with many a pearl from the frontal bones of elephants; some, like demons, had pieces of raw flesh; some, like goblins, were carrying the skins of lions; some, like Jain ascetics, held peacocks' tails; some, like children, wore crows' feathers;¹⁰⁹ some represented Kṛishṇa's¹¹⁰ exploits by bearing the elephants' tusks they had torn out; (64) some, like the days of the rainy season, had garments dark as clouds.¹¹¹ He had his sword-sheath, as a wood its rhinoceroses;¹¹² like a fresh cloud, he held a bow¹¹³ bright as peacocks' tails; like the demon Vaka,¹¹⁴ he possessed a peerless army; like Garuḍa, he had torn out the teeth of many large nāgas;¹¹⁵ he was hostile to peacocks, as Bhīshma to Çikhaṇḍī,¹¹⁶ like a summer day, he always showed a thirst for deer;¹¹⁷ like a heavenly genius, he was impetuous in pride;¹¹⁸ as Vyāsa followed Yojanagandhā,¹¹⁹ so did

¹⁰⁹ Or, curls.

¹¹⁰ V. Harivaṃṣa, 83.

¹¹¹ Or, with clouds.

¹¹² She-rhinoceros.

¹¹³ Or, rainbows.

¹¹⁴ *Ekacakra* = (a) a city possessed by Vaka; (b) one army, or one quoit.

¹¹⁵ *Nāga* = (a) elephant; (b) snake.

¹¹⁶ Or, Çikhaṇḍī, a son of Drupada, a friend of the Pāṇḍavas.

¹¹⁷ Or, mirage.

¹¹⁸ Or, eager for the Mānasa lake. The Vidyādhara was a good or evil genius attending the gods. V. Kullūka on Manu, xii., 47.

¹¹⁹ Yojanagandhā, mother of Vyāsa.

he follow the musk deer; like Ghaṭotkaca, he was dreadful in form;¹²⁰ as the locks of Umā were decked with Çiva's moon, so was he adorned with the eyes in the peacocks' tails;¹²¹ as the demon Hiraṇyakaçipu¹²² by Mahāvarāha, so he had his breast torn by the teeth of a great boar; (65) like an ambitious man,¹²³ he had a train of captives around him; like a demon, he loved¹²⁴ the hunters; like the gamut of song, he was closed in by Nishādas;¹²⁵ like the trident of Durga, he was wet with the blood of buffaloes; though quite young, he had seen many lives pass;¹²⁶ though he had many hounds,¹²⁷ he lived on roots and fruits; though of Kṛishṇa's hue,¹²⁸ he was not good to look on; though he wandered at will, his mountain fort¹²⁹ was his only refuge; though he always lived at the foot of a lord of earth,¹³⁰ he was unskilled in the service of a king.

‘He was as the child of the Vindhya Mountains, the partial avatar of death; the born brother of wickedness, the essence of

¹²⁰ Or, ‘bearing the form of Bhīma.’ He was Bhīma's son. V. Mbh., I., 155.

¹²¹ (a) Crescent moon of Çiva; (b) eyes of peacocks' tails.

¹²² Hiraṇyakaçipu. V. Harivaṃça, 225.

¹²³ Or, an ambitious man surrounded by bards (to sing his praises).

¹²⁴ Or, loving blood.

¹²⁵ *Nishādas* = (a) mountaineers; (b) the highest note of the scale.

¹²⁶ (a) Had passed many ages; (b) had killed many birds.

¹²⁷ Or, great wealth.

¹²⁸ Black.

¹²⁹ Or, Durgā.

¹³⁰ Or, mountain.

the Iron Age; horrible as he was, he yet inspired awe by reason of his natural greatness,¹³¹ and his form could not be surpassed.¹³² His name I afterwards learnt. In my mind was this thought: “Ah, the life of these men is full of folly, and their career is blamed by the good. (66) For their one religion is offering human flesh to Durgā; their meat, mead, and so forth, is a meal loathed by the good; their exercise is the chase; their *çastra*¹³³ is the cry of the jackal; their teachers of good and evil are owls;¹³⁴ their knowledge is skill in birds;¹³⁵ their bosom friends are dogs; their kingdom is in deserted woods; their feast is a drinking bout; their friends are the bows that work their cruel deeds, and arrows, with their heads smeared, like snakes, with poison, are their helpers; their song is what draws on bewildered deer; their wives are the wives of others taken captive; their dwelling is with savage tigers; their worship of the gods is with the blood of beasts, their sacrifice with flesh, their livelihood by theft; the snakes’ hood is their ornament; their cosmetic, elephants’ ichor; and the very wood wherein they may dwell is utterly destroyed root and branch.”

‘As I was thus thinking, the Çabara leader, desiring to rest after his wandering through the forest, approached, and, laying

¹³¹ (a) Magnanimity; (b) great strength.

¹³² *Anabhibhavanīyā*°.

¹³³ (a) Awakening cry; (b) moral law.

¹³⁴ Owls are supposed to be descendants of the sage Viçvāmitra.

¹³⁵ As omens.

his bow in the shade beneath that very cotton-tree, sat down on a seat of twigs gathered hastily by his suite. (67) Another youthful Çabara, coming down hastily, brought to him from the lake, when he had stirred its waters with his hand, some water aromatic with lotus-pollen, and freshly-plucked bright lotus-fibres with their mud washed off; the water was like liquid lapis lazuli, or showed as if it were painted with a piece of sky fallen from the heat of the sun's rays in the day of doom, or had dropped from the moon's orb, or were a mass of melted pearl, or as if in its great purity it was frozen into ice, and could only be distinguished from it by touch. After drinking it, the Çabara in turn devoured the lotus-fibres, as Rāhu does the moon's digits; when he was rested he rose, and, followed by all his host, who had satisfied their thirst, he went slowly to his desired goal. But one old Çabara from that barbarous troop had got no deer's flesh, and, with a demoniac¹³⁶ expression coming into his face in his desire for meat, he lingered a short time by that tree. (68) As soon as the Çabara leader had vanished, that old Çabara, with eyes pink as drops of blood and terrible with their overhanging tawny brows, drank in, as it were, our lives; he seemed to reckon up the number in the parrots' nests like a falcon eager to taste bird's flesh, and looked up the tree from its foot, wishing to climb it. The parrots seemed to have drawn their last breath at that very moment in their terror at the sight of him. For what is hard for the pitiless? So he climbed the tree easily and without effort, as if by ladders,

¹³⁶ *Piçitāçna*, a demon, or, according to the commentary here, a tiger.

though it was as high as many palms, and the tops of its boughs swept the clouds, and plucked the young parrots from among its boughs one by one, as if they were its fruit, for some were not yet strong for flight; some were only a few days old, and were pink with the down of their birth, so that they might almost be taken for cotton-flowers;¹³⁷ some, with their wings just sprouting, were like fresh lotus-leaves; some were like the Asclepias fruit; some, with their beaks growing red, had the grace of lotus-buds with their heads rising pink from slowly unfolding leaves; while some, under the guise of the ceaseless motion of their heads, seemed to try to forbid him, though they could not stop him, for he slew them and cast them on the ground.

(69) 'But my father, seeing on a sudden this great, destructive, remediless, overwhelming calamity that had come on us, trembled doubly, and, with pupils quivering and wandering from fear of death, cast all round a glance that grief had made vacant and tears had dimmed; his palate was dry, and he could not help himself, but he covered me with his wing, though its joints were relaxed by fear, and bethought himself of what help could avail at such a moment. Swayed wholly by love, bewildered how to save me, and puzzled what to do, he stood, holding me to his breast. That miscreant, however, wandering among the boughs, came to the entrance of the hollow, and stretched out his left arm, dreadful as the body of an old black snake, with its hand redolent of the raw fat of many boars, and its forearm marked

¹³⁷ Lit., 'creating a doubt of.'

with weals from ceaseless drawing of the bowstrings, like the wand of death; and though my father gave many a blow with his beak, and moaned piteously, that murderous wretch dragged him down and slew him. (70) Me, however, he somehow did not notice, though I was within the wings, from my being small and curled into a ball from fear, and from my not having lived my fated life, but he wrung my father's neck and threw him dead upon the ground. Meanwhile I, with my neck between my father's feet, clinging quietly to his breast, fell with him, and, from my having some fated life yet to live, I found that I had fallen on a large mass of dry leaves, heaped together by the wind, so that my limbs were not broken. While the Çabara was getting down from the tree-top, I left my father, like a heartless wretch, though I should have died with him; but, from my extreme youth, I knew not the love that belongs to a later age, and was wholly swayed by the fear that dwells in us from birth; I could hardly be seen from the likeness of my colour to the fallen leaves; I tottered along with the help of my wings, which were just beginning to grow, thinking that I had escaped from the jaws of death, and came to the foot of a very large tamāla tree close by. Its shoots were fitted to be the earrings of Çabara women, as if it mocked the beauty of Vishṇu's body by the colour of Balarāma's dark-blue robe, (71) or as if it were clad in pure strips of the water of Yamunā; its twigs were watered by the ichor of wild elephants; it bore the beauty of the tresses of the Vindhya Forest; the space

between its boughs was dark even by day;¹³⁸ the ground round its root was hollow, and unpierced by the sun's rays; and I entered it as if it were the bosom of my noble father. Then the Çabara came down and gathered up the tiny parrots scattered on the ground; he bound them hastily in a basket of leaves with a coil of creepers, and going off with hasty steps by the path trodden by his leader, he made for that region. I meanwhile had begun to hope for life, but my heart was dried up with grief for my father's recent death; my body was in pain from my long fall, and I was possessed by a violent thirst, caused by fright, which tortured all my limbs. Then I thought, "The villain has now gone some way," so I lifted my head a little and gazed around with eyes tremulous with fear, thinking even when a blade of grass moved that the wretch was coming back. I watched him go step by step, and then, leaving the root of the tamāla tree, I made a great effort to creep near the water. (72) My steps were feeble, because my wings were not yet grown, and again and again I fell on my face; I supported myself on one wing; I was weak with the weariness¹³⁹ of creeping along the ground, and from my want of practice; after each step I always lifted my head and panted hard, and as I crept along I became gray with dust. "Truly even in the hardest trials," I reflected, "living creatures never become careless of life. Nothing in this world is dearer to all created beings than life, seeing that when

¹³⁸ Cf. Emerson's Essay on *Experience*: "Sleep lingers all our life-time about our eyes, as night hovers all day in the boughs of the fir-tree."

¹³⁹ Read, Çramā.

my honoured father, of well-chosen name, is dead, I still live with senses unimpaired! Shame on me that I should be so pitiless, cruel, and ungrateful! For my life goes on shamefully in that the grief of my father's death is so easily borne. I regard no kindness; truly my heart is vile! I have even forgotten how, when my mother died, my father restrained his bitter grief, and from the day of my birth, old as he was, reckoned lightly in his deep love the great toil of bringing me up with every care. And yet in a moment I have forgotten how I was watched over by him! (73) Most vile is this breath of mine which goes not straightway forth to follow my father on his path, my father, that was so good to me! Surely there is none that thirst of life does not harden, if the longing for water can make me take trouble in my present plight. Methinks this idea of drinking water is purely hardness of heart, because I think lightly of the grief of my father's death. Even now the lake is still far off. For the cry of the kalahaṃsas, like the anklets of a water-nymph, is still far away; the cranes' notes are yet dim; the scent of the lotus-bed comes rarely through the space it creeps through, because the distance is great; noontide is hard to bear, for the sun is in the midst of heaven, and scatters with his rays a blazing heat, unceasing, like fiery dust, and makes my thirst worse; the earth with its hot thick dust is hard to tread; my limbs are unable to go even a little way, for they are weary with excessive thirst; I am not master of myself; (74) my heart sinks; my eyes are darkened. O that pitiless fate would now bring that death which yet I desire not!" Thus I thought; but a great ascetic

named Jābāli dwelt in a hermitage not far from the lake, and his son Hārīta, a youthful hermit, was coming down to the lotus-lake to bathe. He, like the son of Brahmā, had a mind purified with all knowledge; he was coming by the very path where I was with many holy youths of his own age; like a second sun, his form was hard to see from its great brightness; he seemed to have dropped¹⁴⁰ from the rising sun, and to have limbs fashioned from lightning and a shape painted with molten gold; he showed the beauty of a wood on fire, or of day with its early sunlight, by reason of the clear tawny splendour of his form flashing out; he had thick matted locks hanging on his shoulders red as heated iron, and pure with sprinkling from many a sacred pool; his top-knot was bound as if he were Agni in the false guise of a young Brahman in his desire to burn the Khāṇḍava Wood;¹⁴¹ he carried a bright crystal rosary hanging from his right ear, like the anklets of the goddesses of the hermitage, and resembling the circle of Dharma's commandments, made to turn aside all earthly joys; (75) he adorned his brow with a tripuṇḍraka¹⁴² mark in ashes, as if with threefold truth;¹⁴³ he laid his left hand on a crystal pitcher with its neck held ever upwards as if to look at the path to heaven, like a crane gazing upwards to the sky; he was covered by a black antelope skin hanging from his shoulders, like thick

¹⁴⁰ Lit., 'To have been an extract from.'

¹⁴¹ Sacred to Indra, and burnt by Agni with the help of Arjuna and Kṛishṇa.

¹⁴² Three horizontal lines.

¹⁴³ Truth in thought, word, and deed.

smoke that was coming out again after being swallowed¹⁴⁴ in thirst for penance, with pale-blue¹⁴⁵ lustre; he wore on his left shoulder a sacrificial thread, which seemed from its lightness to be fashioned from very young lotus-fibres, and wavered in the wind as if counting the framework of his fleshless ribs; he held in his right hand an āshāḍha¹⁴⁶ staff, having on its top a leafy basket full of creeper-blossoms gathered for the worship of Çiva; he was followed by a deer from the hermitage, still bearing the clay of the bathing-place dug up by its horns, quite at home with the hermits, fed on mouthfuls of rice, and letting its eyes wander on all sides to the kuça grass flowers and creepers. Like a tree, he was covered with soft bark;¹⁴⁷ like a mountain, he was surrounded by a girdle;¹⁴⁸ like Rāhu, he had often tasted Soma;¹⁴⁹ like a day lotus-bed, he drank the sun's rays; (76) like a tree by the river's side, his tangled locks were pure with ceaseless washing; like a young elephant, his teeth were white as¹⁵⁰ pieces of moon-lotus petals; like Drauṇi, he had Kṛipā¹⁵¹ ever with him; like

¹⁴⁴ Read, *Nishpatatā*.

¹⁴⁵ *Nīlapāṇḍu*, mottled blue and white. The Hindu penance is to be between five fires: four on earth and the sun above. *V. Manu*, vi. 23.

¹⁴⁶ The sign of a vow.

¹⁴⁷ (a) Bark garment; (b) bark of trees.

¹⁴⁸ (a) Girdle. *V. Manu*, ii. 42; (b) mountain slope.

¹⁴⁹ Or, the moon.

¹⁵⁰ Or, with.

¹⁵¹ (a) *Kṛipā* = compassion; (b) *Kṛipā* was the teacher of Aṅvathāma, or Drauṇi.

the zodiac, he was adorned by having the hide¹⁵² of the dappled deer; like a summer day, he was free from darkness;¹⁵³ like the rainy season, he had allayed the blinding dust of passion;¹⁵⁴ like Varuṇa, he dwelt on the waters;¹⁵⁵ like Kṛishṇa, he had banished the fear of hell;¹⁵⁶ like the beginning of twilight, he had eyes tawny as the glow of dawn;¹⁵⁷ like early morn, he was gilded with fresh sunlight; like the chariot of the sun, he was controlled in his course;¹⁵⁸ like a good king, he brought to nought the secret guiles of the foe;¹⁵⁹ (77) like the ocean, his temples were cavernous with meditation;¹⁶⁰ like Bhagīratha, he had often beheld the descent of Ganges;¹⁶¹ like a bee, he had often tasted life in a water-engirt wood;¹⁶² though a woodsman, he yet entered a great home;¹⁶³

¹⁵² Or, Virgo, Cervus, the Pleiads and Draco.

¹⁵³ (a) Having twilight drunk up; (b) having many faults eradicated.

¹⁵⁴ *Rajas* = (a) dust; (b) passion.

¹⁵⁵ In performance of a vow. V. Manu, vi. 23.

¹⁵⁶ Or, 'of the demon Naraka,' slain by Kṛishṇa. Harivaṃṣa, 122.

¹⁵⁷ Or, had stars tawny at the junction of night and day.

¹⁵⁸ Lit., (a) Holding all his passions in firm restraint; (b) having the axle of its wheels firm.

¹⁵⁹ Lit., (a) He had a body wasted by secret performance of penance; (b) he brought to nought the enemies' plans of battle by secret counsel and by his army.

¹⁶⁰ Or, having caves with whirlpools and the circles of shells oblique.

¹⁶¹ Or, quays.

¹⁶² (a) Perhaps Pushkara, the place of pilgrimage in Ajmere; (b) lotus-grove.

¹⁶³ (a) Having entrance into great halls; (b) being absorbed in Brahma.

though unrestrained, he longed for release;¹⁶⁴ though intent on works of peace, he bore the rod;¹⁶⁵ though asleep, he was yet awake;¹⁶⁶ though with two well-placed eyes, he had his sinister eye abolished.¹⁶⁷ Such was he who approached the lotus-lake to bathe.

‘Now the mind of the good is ever wont to be compassionate and kind instinctively. Wherefore he, seeing my plight, was filled with pity, and said to another young ascetic standing near: (78) “This little half-fledged parrot has somehow fallen from the top of that tree, or perhaps from a hawk’s mouth. For, owing to his long fall, he has hardly any life left; his eyes are closed, and he ever falls on his face and pants violently, and opens his beak, nor can he hold up his neck. Come, then, take him before his breath deserts him. Carry him to the water.” So saying, he had me taken to the edge of the lake; and, coming there, he laid down his staff and pitcher near the water, and, taking me himself, just when I had given up all effort, he lifted up my head, and with his finger made me drink a few drops of water; and when I had been sprinkled with water and had gained fresh breath, he placed me in the cool wet shade of a fresh lotus-leaf growing on the bank, and went through the wonted rites of bathing. After that, he

¹⁶⁴ Or, salvation.

¹⁶⁵ Or, inflicted punishment; or, though intent on the Sāma veda, he was yet a *danḍi*; *i. e.*, an ascetic who despises ritual.

¹⁶⁶ Having beautiful matted locks.

¹⁶⁷ (a) Having no left eye; (b) having no crooked glances.

purified himself by often holding his breath, and murmuring the cleansing aghamarshaṇa¹⁶⁸, and then he arose and, with upraised face, made an offering to the sun with freshly-plucked red lotuses in a cup of lotus-leaves. Having taken a pure white robe, so that he was like the glow of evening sunlight accompanied by the moon's radiance, he rubbed his hair with his hands till it shone, and, (79) followed by the band of ascetic youths, with their hair yet wet from recent bathing, he took me and went slowly towards the penance grove.

‘And after going but a short way, I beheld the penance grove, hidden in thick woods rich in flowers and fruit.

(80) ‘Its precincts were filled by munis entering on all sides, followed by pupils murmuring the Vedas, and bearing fuel, kuṣa grass, flowers, and earth. There the sound of the filling of the pitchers was eagerly heard by the peacocks; there appeared, as it were, a bridge to heaven under the guise of smoke waving to exalt to the gods the muni race while yet in the body by fires satisfied with the ceaseless offering of ghee; all round were tanks with their waves traversed by lines of sunbeams stainless as though from contact with the hermits they rested upon, plunged into by the circle of the Seven Ṛishis who had come to see their penance, and lifting by night an open moon-lotus-bed, like a cluster of constellations descending to honour the ṛishis; the hermitage received homage from woodland creepers with their tops bent by the wind, and from trees with their ever-

¹⁶⁸ R. V., x. 190.

falling blossoms, and was worshipped by trees with the añjali of interlaced boughs; parched grain was scattered in the yards round the huts, and the fruit of the myrobalan, lavalī, jujube, banana, bread-tree, mango, panasa,¹⁶⁹ and palm pressed on each other; (81) the young Brahmans were eloquent in reciting the Vedas; the parrot-race was garrulous with the prayer of oblation that they learnt by hearing it incessantly; the subrahmaṇyā¹⁷⁰ was recited by many a maina; the balls of rice offered to the deities were devoured by the cocks of the forest, and the offering of wild rice was eaten by the young kalahaṃsas of the tanks close by. The eating-places of the sages were protected from pollution by ashes cast round them. (82) The fire for the munis' homa sacrifice was fanned by the tails of their friends the peacocks; the sweet scent of the oblation prepared with nectar, the fragrance of the half-cooked sacrificial cake was spread around; the crackling of flames in the offering of a stream of unbroken libations made the place resonant; a host of guests was waited upon; the Pitris were honoured; Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Brahmā were worshipped. The performance of çrāddha rites was taught; the science of sacrifice explained; the çāstras of right conduct examined; good books of every kind recited; and the meaning of the çāstras pondered. Leafy huts were being begun; courts smeared with paste, and the inside of the huts scrubbed. Meditation was being firmly grasped, mantras duly carried out, yoga practised, and offerings

¹⁶⁹ Another kind of bread-tree.

¹⁷⁰ The Commentary explains it as 'Veda.'

made to woodland deities. Brahmanical girdles of muñja grass were being made, bark garments washed, fuel brought, deer-skins decked, grass gathered, lotus-seed dried, rosaries strung, and bamboos laid in order for future need.¹⁷¹ Wandering ascetics received hospitality, and pitchers were filled.

(84) 'There defilement is found in the smoke of the oblations, not in evil conduct; redness of face in parrots, not in angry men; sharpness in blades of grass, not in dispositions; wavering in plantain-leaves, not in minds; red eyes¹⁷² in cuckoos alone; clasping of necks with pitchers only; binding of girdles in vows, not in quarrels; *pakshapāta*¹⁷³ in cocks, not in scientific discussions; wandering in making the sunwise turn round the soma fire, but not error in the çāstras; mention of the Vasus in legends, but not longing for wealth; counting of beads for Rudra, but no account made of the body; loss of locks by the saints in the practice of sacrifice, but not loss of their children¹⁷⁴ by death; propitiation of Rāma by reciting the Rāmāyaṇa, not of women¹⁷⁵ by youth; wrinkles brought on by old age, not by pride of riches; the death of a Çakuni¹⁷⁶ in the Mahābhārata only;

¹⁷¹ The tridaṇḍaka or three staves of the mendicant Brahman who has resigned the world.

¹⁷² Or, impassioned glances.

¹⁷³ (a) Moulting; (b) partisanship.

¹⁷⁴ *Bāla* = (a) hair; (b) children.

¹⁷⁵ *Rāmā*, woman.

¹⁷⁶ *Çakuni* = (a) a bird; (b) Duryodhana's uncle.

only in the Purāṇa windy talk;¹⁷⁷ in old age only loss of teeth;¹⁷⁸ coldness only in the park sandal-trees;¹⁷⁹ (85) in fires only turning to ashes;¹⁸⁰ only deer love to hear song; only peacocks care for dancing; only snakes wear hoods;¹⁸¹ only monkeys desire fruit;¹⁸² only roots have a downward tendency.

(85–89, condensed) ‘There, beneath the shade of a red açoka-tree, beauteous with new oblations of flowers, purified with ointment of fresh gomaya, garlanded with kuça grass and strips of bark tied on by the hermitage maidens, I saw the holy Jābāli surrounded by most ascetic sages, like time by æons, the last day by suns, the sacrifice by bearers of the three fires,¹⁸³ the golden mountain by the noble hills, or the earth by the oceans.

(89) ‘And as I looked on him I thought: “Ah! how great is the power of penance! His form, calm as it is, yet pure as molten gold, overpowers, like lightning, the brightness of the eye with its brilliance. Though ever tranquil, it inspires fear at first approach by its inherent majesty. The splendour of even those ascetics who have practised but little asceticism is wont to be easily provoked, like fire swiftly falling on dry reeds, kāça grass, or flowers. (90)

¹⁷⁷ *Vāyu* = (a) wind; (b) breath.

¹⁷⁸ (a) Teeth; (b) Brahmans.

¹⁷⁹ Or, dullness.

¹⁸⁰ Or, seeking prosperity.

¹⁸¹ Or, seek enjoyment.

¹⁸² Or good fortune.

¹⁸³ The Gārhapatya, Dakṣiṇa, and Āhavanīya fires.

How much more, then, that of holy men like these, whose feet are honoured by the whole world, whose stains are worn away by penance, who look with divine insight on the whole earth as if it were a myrobalan¹⁸⁴ in the hand, and who purge away all sin. For even the mention of a great sage has its reward, much more, then, the sight of him! Happy is the hermitage where dwells this king of Brahmans! Nay, rather, happy is the whole world in being trodden by him who is the very Brahmā of earth! Truly these sages enjoy the reward of their good deeds in that they attend him day and night with no other duty, hearing holy stories and ever fixing on him their steady gaze, as if he were another Brahmā. Happy is Sarasvatī, who, encircled by his shining teeth, and ever enjoying the nearness of his lotus-mouth, dwells in his serene mind, with its unfathomable depths and its full stream of tenderness, like a haṃsa on the Mānasa lake. The four Vedas, that have long dwelt in the four lotus-mouths of Brahmā, find here their best and most fitting home. (91) All the sciences, which became turbid in the rainy season of the Iron Age, become pure when they reach him, as rivers coming to autumn. Of a surety, holy Dharma, having taken up his abode here after quelling the riot of the Iron Age, no longer cares to recall the Golden Age. Heaven, seeing earth trodden by him, no longer takes pride in being dwelt in by the Seven Ṛishis. How bold is old age, which fears not to fall on his thick matted locks, moonbeam-pale as they are, and hard to gaze on as the rays of

¹⁸⁴ Proverbial phrase for clearness.

the sun of doom.¹⁸⁵ For it falls on him as Ganges, white with flecks of foam, on Çiva, or as an offering of milk on Agni. Even the sun's rays keep far from the penance-grove, as if terrified by the greatness of the saint whose hermitage is darkened by the thick smoke of many an oblation. These fires, too, for love of him, receive oblations purified by hymns, for their flames are pressed together by the wind, like hands reverently raised. (92) The wind itself approaches him timidly, just stirring the linen and bark dresses, fragrant with the sweet creeper blossoms of the hermitage, and gentle in motion. Yet the glorious might of the elements is wont to be beyond our resistance! But this man towers above¹⁸⁶ the mightiest! The earth shines as if with two suns, being trodden by this noble man. In his support the world stands firm. He is the stream of sympathy, the bridge over the ocean of transient existence, and the home of the waters of patience; the axe for the glades of the creepers of desire, the ocean of the nectar of content, the guide in the path of perfection, the mountain behind which sets the planet of ill,¹⁸⁷ the root of the tree of endurance, the nave of the wheel of wisdom, the staff of the banner of righteousness, the holy place for the descent of all knowledge, the submarine fire of the ocean of craving, the touch-stone of the jewels of the çāstras, the consuming flame of

¹⁸⁵ Vishṇu Purāṇa, vi., ch. 3, 'The seven solar rays dilate to seven suns, and set the three worlds on fire.'

¹⁸⁶ Lit., 'is leader of.'

¹⁸⁷ Or, caprice.

the buds of passion, the charm against the snake of wrath, the sun to dispel the darkness of delusion, the binder of the bolts of hell's gates, the native home of noble deeds, the temple of propitious rites, the forbidden ground for the degradation of passion, the sign-post to the paths of good, the birthplace of holiness, the felly of the wheel of effort, the abode of strength, the foe of the Iron Age, the treasury of penance, the friend of truth, the native soil of sincerity, the source of the heaping up of merit, the closed gate for envy, the foe of calamity. (93) Truly he is one in whom disrespect can find no place; for he is averse from pride, unclaimed by meanness, unenslaved by wrath, and unattracted by pleasure. Purely by the grace of this holy man the hermitage is free from envy and calm from enmity. Great is the power of a noble soul. Here, ceasing their constant feud, the very animals are quiet, and learn the joy of a hermitage life. For here a snake, wearied by the sun, fearlessly enters, as if into fresh grass, into the peacock's tail, like an interwoven grove of open lotuses, with its hundred beauteous eyes, changing in hue as the eyes of a deer. Here a young antelope, leaving his mother, makes friends with the lion-cubs whose manes are not yet grown, and drinks at the bounteous breast of the lioness. Here a lion closes his eyes, and is pleased to have his moon-white mane pulled by the young elephants that mistake it for lotus-fibres. Here the monkey-tribe loses its capriciousness and brings fruit to the young munis after their bath. There the elephants, too, though excited, are tender-hearted, and do not drive away by their flapping the bees that

dwelling round their frontal bones, and stay motionless to drink their ichor. (94) But what need of more? There even the senseless trees, with roots and fruits, clad in bark, and adorned with outer garments of black antelope skin perpetually made for them by the upward creeping lines of sacrificial smoke, seem like fellow ascetics of this holy man. How much more, then, living beings, endowed with sense!”

‘And while I was thus thinking, Hārīta placed me somewhere in the shade of the açoka tree, and embracing his father’s feet and saluting him, sat down not far from him on a seat of kuça grass.

‘But the hermits, looking on me, asked him as he rested: “Whence was this little parrot brought?” “When I went hence to bathe,” replied he, “I found this little parrot fallen from its nest in a tree on the bank of the lotus-lake, faint with the heat, lying in hot dust, and shaken by the fall, with little life left in him. And as I could not replace him in his nest (for that tree was too hard for an ascetic to climb), I brought him hither in pity. So, while his wings are not grown, and he cannot fly into the sky, let him live in the hollow of some hermitage tree, (95) fed on the juice of fruits and on handfuls of rice brought to him by us and by the young hermits. For it is the law of our order to protect the weak. But when his wings are grown, and he can fly into the sky, he shall go where he likes. Or perhaps, when he knows us well, he will stay here.” The holy Jābāli, hearing this and other remarks about me, with some curiosity bent his head slightly, and, with a very calm glance that seemed to purify me with holy waters,

he gazed long upon me, and then, looking again and again as if he were beginning to recognise me, said: "He is reaping the fruit of his own ill-conduct." For by the potency of penance the saint with divine insight beholds the past, present, and future, and sees the whole world as though placed on the palm of his hand. He knows past births. He tells things yet to come. He declares the length of days of beings within his sight.

'At these words the whole assemblage of hermits, aware of his power, became curious to know what was my crime, and why committed, and where, and who I was in a former birth; and implored the saint, saying: (96) "Vouchsafe, sir, to tell us of what kind of misconduct he is reaping the fruits. Who was he in a former birth, and how was he born in the form of a bird? How is he named? Do thou satisfy our curiosity, for thou art the fountain-head of all marvels."

'Thus urged by the assemblage, the great saint replied: "The story of this wonder is very long, the day is almost spent, our bathing-time is near, while the hour for worshipping the gods is passing. Arise, therefore; let each perform his duties as is meet. In the afternoon, after your meal of roots and fruits, when you are resting quietly, I will tell you the whole story from beginning to end – who he is, what he did in another birth, and how he was born in this world. Meanwhile, let him be refreshed with food. He will certainly recall, as it were, the vision of a dream when I tell the whole story of his former birth." So saying, he arose, and with the hermits bathed and performed their other daily duties.

(97) ‘The day was now drawing to a close. When the hermits rose from their bathing, and were offering a sacrifice, the sun in the sky seemed to bear upwards before our eyes the offering cast on the ground, with its unguent of red sandal-wood. Then his glow faded and vanished; the effluence of his glory was drunk by the Ushmāpas¹⁸⁸ with faces raised and eyes fixed on his orb, as if they were ascetics; and he glided from the sky pink as a dove’s foot, drawing in his rays as though to avoid touching the Seven Ṛishis as they rose. His orb, with its network of crimson rays reflected on the Western Ocean, was like the lotus of Vishṇu on his couch of waters pouring forth nectar; his beams, forsaking the sky and deserting the lotus-groves, lingered at eve like birds on the crest of hill and tree; the splashes of crimson light seemed for a moment to deck the trees with the red bark garments hung up by the ascetics. And when the thousand-rayed sun had gone to rest, twilight sprang up like rosy coral from the Western Ocean. (98) Then the hermitage became the home of quiet thought, as the pleasant sound of milking the sacred cows arose in one quarter, and the fresh kuṇḍ grass was scattered on the altar of Agni, and the rice and oblations to the goddesses of space were tossed hither and thither by the hermitage maidens. And red-starred eve seemed to the hermits as the red-eyed cow of the hermitage roaming about, tawny in the fall of day. And when the sun had vanished, the lotus-bed, in the grief of bereavement, seemed to perform a vow in the hopes of rejoining the lord of

¹⁸⁸ Vishṇu Purāṇa, i., 123.

day, for she lifted the goblets of her buds, and wore the fine white vesture of her haṃsas, and was girt with the sacrificial thread of white filaments, and bore a circle of bees as her rosary. And the starry host leapt up and filled the sky, like a splash of spray when the sun fell into the Western Ocean; and for a brief space the star-bespangled sky shone as though inlaid with flowers offered by the daughters of the Siddhas¹⁸⁹ in honour of twilight; but in a moment the whole glory of the gloaming vanished as though washed away by the libations which the hermits, with faces upraised, cast towards the sky; (99) and at its departure, night, as sorrowing for its loss, wore a deeper darkness, like a black antelope's skin – a blackness which darkened all save the hearts of the hermits.

‘Learning that the sun had gone to rest, the lord of rays ambrosial, in pure severity of light, arrayed in the whiteness of clear gossamer, dwelling in the palace of his wives with Tārā,¹⁹⁰ mounted the sky which, in that it was outlined with the darkness of tamāla-trees, presided over by the circle of Seven Ṛishis, purified by the wanderings of Arundhatī,¹⁹¹ surrounded by Āshāḍha,¹⁹² showing its Mūla¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ Semi-divine beings dwelling between the earth and the sun.

¹⁹⁰ Tārā = (a) stars; (b) wife of Bṛihaspati, carried away by the moon.

¹⁹¹ (a) “Wife of the sage Vaçishṭha; (b) the morning star.

¹⁹² (a) Constellation; (b) staff borne during a vow.

¹⁹³ (a) Constellation; (b) roots for the hermits' food.

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