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THE SRIMAD-BHAGABATAM

BOOK X (Part)

THE
SRIMAD-BHAGABATAM
OF
KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA VYASA

Translated into English Prose from the original Sanskrit text.

BY

J. M. Sanyal

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BOOK X

CHAPTER I.

DESTRUCTION OF DEVAKI'S SIX SONS BY KANSA.

Maharaja Parikshit addressed the auspicious Sukadeva as follows :—

O thou foremost of the sages ! thou hast related unto us a detailed account of the Solar (*Surya-Vansa*) and lunar (*Chandra-Vansa*) dynasties as also of the wonderful exploits of the kings born in these two races. Thou hast also spoken in details about the descendants of the virtuous Jadu. Do thou now be pleased to describe unto us, the deeds of Lord Sri Hari, who incarnated Himself in the dynasty of Jadu. Rehearse unto us in detail, the various acts performed by the Almighty Lord, the protector of all creatures and the very soul of the universe, when He took His birth in the race of Jadu. Save and except a slaughterer or a suicide, there is none who ever desists from listening to a recital of the glory of the Lord of auspicious fame——recital or an attentive hearing of which mitigates against the evils of this world, is pleasing to the ears and the mind and is extolled by those people who are freed from the influence of desire. Using Him as a raft, my grand-fathers, without the least effort, crossed the ocean—that was very hard to tide over——of the Kaurava host rendered terrible in consequence of its abounding in monstrous whales consisting of great warriors like Devavrata (*Bhishma*) and others capable of conquering even the gods in battle. When this body of mine——that is now instrumental in procreating progeny of the *Kurus* and the *Pandavas*——had been smarting with pain while in my mother's womb, from the terrible *Brahmastra* of the son of Drona (Aswathaman), that discus-handed (*Chakradhara*) Divinity entering the womb of my mother protected the foetus and also the life of my mother who had sought protection in Him.

"O learned sage ! recount to us the wonderful deeds of that One who assumed human form through His illusive energy and who in the form of the Great Purusha and Destroyer is

ever meting out mortality or immortality to corporeal beings according to their worldly propensities or spiritual insight.

"Thou hast observed that *Sankarsana-deva* is the son of Rohini. How was he then born previously in the womb of Devaki without undergoing death? What for did the Great One, the bestower of emancipation, travel all the way from the residence of his father to *Braja*. Where did that Lord of devotees settle down with his kinsmen? What did Kesava do when he was living in Braja, as also when he was living in Madhupuri? Why did he himself slay *Kansa*, the brother of his mother, who did not deserve death by his auspicious hands? Assuming a human form, how many years did he live in the city of the Jadus, in company with the *Brishnis*? What was the number of the wives of that Great One?

"O sage! O thou omniscient one! it behoveth thee to relate in detail to my attentive self, the above and all other deeds of Sri Krishna. Though I have given up even drinking water, yet the insufferable hunger cannot at all oppress me, beacuse of my drinking the nectareous narrations of Lord Sri Hari and His glorious acts emerging from thy lotus-like mouth." (1 13).

The auspicious Suta said :—O son of Bhrigu! On hearing these very proper questions, Sukadeva the foremost of the devotees of the Lord Sri Hari, the illustrious son of Vyasa, praised the king Parikshit as being the favoured one of Vishnu,—and then he began to relate the biography of Krishna, the hearing of which is capable of destroying the sin that prevails during the *Kali Juga*.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O thou foremost of godly monarchs! thy understanding hath attained to a singleness of purpose; therefore a definite predilection for hearing the accounts regarding Vasudeda, hath naturally arisen in thy mind. Questions regarding the accounts of Vasudeva surely purify these three classes of people—namely, who put them questions, who answer them, and who hear them,—like unto the waters of the Ganges flowing on from His feet.

When innumerable 'Asuras were born on this earth under the guise of arrogant kings, this Earth being hard pressed under the unbearable burden of their warlike hosts (armies)

sought redress from Brahma. Assuming the form of a cow, with tears rolling down her cheeks, depressed and piteously bewailing, the Earth approached the Creator (Brahma) and represented to him her distress.

Thereupon Brahma, being informed of her calamity, accompanied by the three-eyed deity Sankara, and with the celestials and the Earth,—went to the bank of the Ocean of milk. There with perfect concentration of mind, Brahma began to worship the Prime Purusha, the Lord of the Universe, the god of gods, the bestower of all objects of desire, uttering the hymn called the *Purushasukta* (the ninetieth hymn of the tenth Mandala of the Rig Veda, regarded as a very sacred hymn).

Then the Creator, during meditation, heard a voice resounding in the heavens, and thus spoke unto the celestials present :—

"O ye immortals ! listen to the words of the Great Purusha which have been heard by me ; and without the least delay, do ye act according to them. Even before this appeal of ours, the Almighty Lord hath come to know of the affliction that the goddess of Earth is suffering from. Do ye all dwell, incarnating yourselves in thy portions among the race of the Jadus, until the Lord of lords traverseth the Earth after freeing her of all burdens, by His irresistible Energy of Time (*Kala*). Ere long the Supreme Purusha Himself, the Almighty One, shall be born in the family of Vasudeva. So, let the celestial damsels take birth on earth to minister to His pleasures and pastimes. The divine Ananta, a portion of the illustrious Vasudeva, his constant companion, and the thousand-faced serpent Ananta shall be born in the first instance to perform the favourite acts of the Lord Sri Hari. The Almighty Goddess, Bhagavati, the illusive energy of Vishnu, capable of stupefying the earth by enchantment, will also incarnate herself in portion, as commanded by the Lord, to fulfil His missions on the Earth." (14—25).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—Thus speaking unto the immortals, and consoling the goddess of Earth by his speech, the Creator and Lord of the Prajapatis repaired to his own splendid regions.

In the days of yore, there lived in the city of Mathura a ruler of the Jadus by the name of Surasena. This king Surasena

ruled over Mathura, Surasena and many other countries. That time forward, this city became the metropolis of all the monarchs of the Jadu dynasty. In this city ever dwelleth the Almighty Lord Hari.

Once upon a time, Vasudeva, a descendant of the royal line of Surasena, married the princess of Mathura. On the day following the marriage, the said Vasudeva with his newly married wife Devaki by name, ascended his chariot to return to his own city (Surasena). Being desirous of pleasing his sister, *Kansa*, the son of *Ugrasena* (the King of the city), took the reins of the horses of that chariot and surrounded by hundreds of golden chariots, drove along. At the time of their departure, King Devaka, greatly affectionate towards his daughter (Devaki), gave her as a wedding present, four hundred elephants caparisoned with golden chains, fifteen thousand horses, eighteen hundred chariots, and two hundred youthful maid-servants adorned with various ornaments. O King! at the time of the departure of the bride-groom and bride, for their welfare, conches were blown and *Turyyas*, *Mridangas* and Kettle-drums were simultaneously sounded.

When Kansa had been driving on the road holding the reins, an incorporeal voice addressing him said :—"O ignorant one! the eighth issue of this lady (Devaki) whom thou art even now driving, shall be thy slayer."

Having been so spoken to, the naturally crooked and sinful Kansa, the disgrace of his race, thought of slaying his own sister and grasping his sword seized her by the hair. Then the illustrious Vasudeva, trying to appease that one (Kansa) of disgraceful deeds, of cruel nature and devoid of shame, said:—

"Thou art glory to the race of the *Bhojas*; and the *Suras* are proud of thy accomplishments. It behoveth thee not to kill thy helpless sister, even during the celebration of her marriage-festivities.

"O hero! death is inherent in the bodies of those who have taken birth. This day or at the end of a hundred years hence-forward, death is sure to come to living beings. When this body is on the verge of being dissolved into its five constituent ingredients, the soul enshrined in it, in consequence of its deeds is to assume another corporeal form by living behind the old one. Just as a man walks by putting the whole

weight of his body on one leg and then advances on pacing forward, just as a leech catching hold of a new blade of grass lets go its former support, in the same manner the soul travelling in the path of actions transemigrates from one body to another. A man whose heart has been engrossed by an eager desire for wealth, seems to enjoy it in his dream with a body like unto his real one; as one intently brooding in his mind over the things heard and seen, he seems to realise them in his dream. But surely when awake, all his experiences during a dream are forgotten.

Whatsoever structure, made by the energy of illusion the mind—the product of Evolution—goaded by pristine deeds, may erect out of the five elements, the soul, considering itself identical with mind, is born with the latter. The soul, located inside the structures created by its own energy of illusion, is befooled by following the passions, even as the moon and other planets reflected on water and other fluids seem to vibrate, in consequence of the air disturbing them (the fluids). Therefore a person, desirous of securing his own welfare, should not oppress anybody. An oppressor has reason to be afraid of others, of the god of Death, and of the relations of the oppressed person. This damsel is thy younger sister and deserves pity and ought to be cherished as thy own daughter. Thou art affectionate to the miserable. It behoveth thee not to slay this blessed lady." (26—45).

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O thou foremost of the descendents of Kuru! inspite of his being advised in conciliatory as well as frightening language, the heartless *Kansa*, following the examples of the cannibals did not desist from attempting to kill his sister (Devaki). On finding him so obstinately bent on committing the despicable deed, Vasudeva become thoughtful. Then, after a short while, Vasudeva fixed upon the following fresh means of preventing *Kansa* and again addressed him as follows :—

"An intelligent being ought to prevent a murder as long as power and reason are left to him. But even then, if murder cannot be averted, no blame ought to attach unto him. So, promising to give over to this murderous wretch all my sons, I shall now liberate this afflicted damsel. When sons will be born to me, then let the inevitable take its course; or this one

may die before I am blessed with any issue ; if she does not die, is it not possible for destiny to change the inevitable course ? But I shall avert the present calamity. If it returns even after having been averted, I am not to blame. Just as there is no other cause except pure chance for fuel catching fire or escaping it, so except inconceivable fate there is no other cause for persons being connected with bodies or separated from them !"

Thus weighing these considerations to the full extent of his intellectual capacity, Vasudeva most respectfully worshipped that most sinful being. Then assuming a countenance resembling a new-blown lotus and yet with an aching heart, he again smilingly said unto that crooked and shameless one :—

"O most gracious one ! thou hast naught to fear from what the incorporeal voice hath spoken to thee. I shall hand over to thee all the sons of this lady, who are the cause of thy fear." (46—53).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—Perceiving the weight of Vasudeva's words, *Kansa* desisted from slaying his sister (Devaki). Immensely delighted Vasudeva also entered his own abode, after having eulogised him (*Kansa*).

In due course of time, Devaki, who was permeated with all the deities, in nine successive years, gave birth to eight sons and one daughter. Overcome with the fear of proving false to his promise, Vasudeva with great anguish, gave over his renowned first-born son to *Kansa*. What is there that the pious cannot bear up against ? What is there the learned are is need of ? What act is there the wicked cannot perpetrate ? What is there the self-subdued cannot renounce ?

O king ! seeing Vasudeva's equanimity and true observance of his promise, *Kansa* was very much delighted and smiling thus spoke unto him :—

"Let this baby return to thy protection. I have naught to fear of him. Surely my death has been ordained to come from thy eighth-born son." (54—60).

Then complying with his commands, and taking his son, Vasudeva went away ; but he did not wholly believe in the words of that wicked uncontrolled self. O descendant of Bharata ! the cow-herds *Nanda* and others who resided in *Braja* and the wives of these people, the *Brishnis* headed by

Vasudeva and the wives of the *Jadus* headed by Devaki, the relatives, friends and allies of these two races, and also the followers of *Kansa*, were all god-like persons. At that time sage Narada appriased *Kansa* of these facts, as also of the preparation of the celestials for the extirpation of the Daityas creating the burden on the Earth.

When the divine sage Narada had gone away, *Kansa* considering all the issues of Devaki to be Vishnu, the cause of his death in future, confined Devaki and Vasudeva in prison after having bound them in chains. He killed their sons whenever one was born to them, fearing every one of their sons to be the unborn Divinity Vishnu himself. Generally on this earth, covetous monarchs, bent on satiating the thirst of their heart, slay their mothers, fathers, brothers and all well-wishers and friends. Considering himself to be the self-same potent Asura Kalanemi who had been previously killed by Vishnu, Kansa commenced hostilities against the Jadus. Sorely oppressing his own father Ugrasena, and the lords of the Jadus, the Bhojas, and the Andhakas, that wonderfully powerful being (*Kansa*) began to rule over the Surasenas. (61 – 69).

CHAPTER II.

GOD APPEARS IN DEVAKI'S WOMB.

The auspicious Sukdeva went on saying:—O king! the proud and powerful Kansa, in co-operation with the *Magadhas* and in company with Pralamba, Vaka, Chanura, Trinavarta, Agha, Mushtika, Dwivida, Putana, Keshi, Dhenuka, Vana, Bhauma, and such other Asura-kings, began to spread havoc among the Jadus. Having been terribly oppressed by Kansa, the Jadavas fled to the kingdoms of the *Kurus*, the *Panchalas*, the *Kaikeys*, the *Sallwas*, the *Vidarbhas*, the *Nishadhas*, the *Videhas*, and the *Koshalas*. Some of the kinsmen of Kansa began to serve him in this mission by executing his commands.

When six sons of Devaki had been killed by the son of Ugrasena (Kansa), a portion of the Almighty Vishnu, known by the name of Ananta was born as the seventh foetus in the womb of Devaki, enhancing her joy and grief at the same time.

The Almighty Lord, the soul of the Universe, knowing his own refugees (the Jadus) to be terribly afraid of Kansa, thus commanded Yoga-maya, the presiding goddess over the illusive energy begot of Yoga :—"O goddess ! O gentle lady ! Braja is inhabited by the cowherds and beautified by the kine ; Rohini and other wives of Vasudeva are hiding themselves there in great fear from terrible Kansa in the mountain-cave in the regions ruled over by the cow-herd Nanda.

"Devaki beareth in her womb a portion of myself by name Sesha. Taking it out, do thou introduce it in the womb of Rohini. O blessed lady ! then I will be born with fullness of parts, as a son of Devaki ; and later thou shalt be born in the womb of Jasoda, the wife of Nanda. For this act men shall adore thee, as the cherished goddess of those desirous of progeny and prosperity, and the bestower of all desires and boons with various offerings, articles and sacrifical beasts.

"Men on Earth shall erect temples for thee, and shall give thee those names :—Durga, Bhadrakali, Vijaya, Vaishnabi, Kumuda, Chandika, Krishna, Madhabi, Kanyaka, Maya, Narayani, Ishani, Sarada and Ambika. The foetus shall be called Sankarsana, on account of its being removed in embryo from one womb to another. It shall also be called *Rama* for affording delight to people, and also *Balabhadra* for its immensity of prowess." (1—13).

Having been thus commanded by the Almighty Lord, the said goddess Vishnumaya, of the illusive energy, respectfully accepted His behests and assented to all of them. Then circumbulating Him, she repaired to the terrestrial regions, and performed what she had been told to do. When the embryo in Devaki had been removed to the womb of Rohini by *Joganidra* (the goddess of the illusive energy), the citizens of Mathura cried aloud saying "Oh ! Devaki has miscarried."

Then in course of time Almighty Lord, the soul of the Universe, and the giver of assurances of safty to His devotees, revealed Himself in his fulness in the heart of Vesudeva.

Bearing inside himself the manifested image of the Lord, Vasudeva shone forth like unto the Sun, and looked quite unassailable and hard of being approached by any being. Then like unto the eastern quarter bearing the delightful moon, the pure-hearted Devaki bore in her mind,—having duly received it from the son of Sura (Vasudeva),—the incarnation of the Eternal the source of all welfare of the worlds, and the essence of all things, and Who was present in herself in the form of her soul. Devaki, becoming the abode of the Lord, the container of the worlds, did appear to be superbly beautiful. She was then confined in prison by Kansa like unto the flame of a lamp confined inside an earthen pot; as also like unto wisdom gained by one jealous of imparting knowledge to others. Seeing that lady of pure smiles bearing inside her womb the unconquerable divinity and illuminating the room with her effulgence, Kansa muttered gnashing his teeth :—"Surely desirous of robbing me of my life, Hari has entered and been staying in Devaki's womb; for before this occasion she never looked so haloed in brilliance. What at present ought to be done by me regarding this matter? Even a selfish one does not display his prowess to slay a woman to serve his ends. On the other hand; if I slay this helpless woman, I shall thereby be slaying a woman, a sister and one that is big with child, and at the same time I shall be destroying for all time to come my prosperity, my fame, and duration of life. He is more dead than alive who lives by perpetrating heartless deeds. Men pronounce curse upon him as long as he lives; and verily such a sinful person goes after the dissolution of the physical body to hell pervaded with darkness."

Thus refraining from following his darkest designs, that mighty Kansa, keeping alive his inveterate enemity, began to await the birth of Hari. Thinking constantly of Hari while sitting, lying, standing, eating, drinking, or walking, Kansa saw the universe pervaded by Hari. (14—24).

At that time Brahma and Siva accompanied by the divine sage Narada, and other wise men and celestials attended by their followers arrived at that place and began to intone hymns in praise of the Lord of the Universe, the bestower of all boons.

"Oh God! we seek shelter in thyself. Thou art of truthful vows; whatever is uttered by thee is Truth. Thou art the Reality in the three Kalas, (*ie.* before creation,

during preservation and after destruction of the Universe) ; Truth meets the highest fulfilment in thee ; thou art the cause of Truth, existeth in Truth and is verily the Truth of the Truth ; thou art the first introducer of truthful speech and true behaviour ; thou art all truth. This visible universe is like unto a large tree, having only one stay (that is on Prakriti), two fruits (happiness and misery), three roots (that is the three qualities of *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*), four kinds of secretions (religion, wealth, desire and emancipation), five channels of perception (the five senses), six characteristic features (grief, fondness, decrepitude, death, thirst and hunger), seven kinds of barks (skin, blood, flesh, albumen, bone, marrow and semen), eight branches (the five elementary ingredients and the mind, the understanding and egoism), nine holes (which are the nine outlets of the body), ten leaves (the ten vital breaths) and two birds sitting on its branches (the birds being the individual or jiva soul and the Supreme Soul). Thou art the producer of this universe of actions ; thou art the cause of its destruction ; thou art its only preserver. Those persons, whose intellects are veiled over by thy illusive energy, behold thee in many ways. But a man with godly vision does not see in that way. Thy semblance is all knowledge. For the welfare of the mobile and immobile universe, thou dost assume forms, which composed of the principle of goodness (Sattwa) brings happiness for the pious and destruction for the wicked.

"O thou lotus-eyed one ! the learned ones with their hearts completely engrossed in contemplation on thyself,—the receptacle of all goodness,—cross this ocean of life holding thy feet as a raft and consider it (ocean) as insignificant as a pool of water contained in the foot-print of a calf's feet.

"O thou resplendent one ! people entertaining friendly feelings towards all beings, have crossed this dreay ocean of life—hard to cross over—without the help of anything. When they have tided over this ocean, they leave on this side of it, the vessel consisting of thy lotus feet. (25—30).

"Thou art merciful to the pious. O thou of eyes like lotus petals ! those persons who boast of their emancipation as obtained without thine interference, are surely wanting in devotion to thyself, and in consequence of this their understanding ever remains impure. Attaining with great difficulty to the

highest state, they again fall to the depths of degradation, for not having served thy feet.

"O Madhava ! thy chosen ones (devotees) bearing unshaken devotion towards thee, are never reduced to this condition. They never deviate from the right path. O Lord ! protected by thyself, they undauntedly tread upon the heads of those who throw impediments in their way. During the period of preservation, thou assumest a semblance, all goodness and pure, and breedest welfare of corporeal beings. In consequence of thy assuming forms, people adore thee with the Vedic hymns, sacrifices, Yogic practices, austerities, and deep meditation.

"O thou creator of the universe ! if this form composed of the essence of goodness be not thine own, then the supreme knowledge that purges the sense of distinction begot of ignorance, cannot also be thine own. Thou art betokened by a continuous manifestation of thy qualities, as He whose qualities are manifested. Thy denomination and thy semblance cannot be realised by intelligence ; for thy ways, actions or divine births can not be understood by the mind and described in speech, as thou art the witness of these both. Still, O Lord, thou art capable of being realised by those people who worship thee with devotion. (31—36).

"Whosoever during the performance of actions, hearing, recounting, contemplating on and making others to remember thy names and incarnations, hath his heart absorbed on thy two lotus-feet, is never born again.

"O Hari ! fortunately by the incarnation of thy Supreme Self, the heavy burden of this Earth will be removed. Fortunately we shall see the earth impressed with thy highly auspicious foot-prints, as also, the heavenly regions over-flooded with thy mercy.

"O Lord ! verily we cannot conceive any other cause of thy birth, except in thy sportive humour ; for thou art not attached to this Earth. O thou who art ever free from fear ! indeed the birth, the preservation and the destruction of the individual soul, are brought about by the delusive energy contained in thyself. Thou dost protect us and the three worlds by incarnating thyself as a fish, a horse, a tortoise, a boar, as Nrisingha, as a swan, as one among the ruling order, as a Vipra, and as a deity

"O Lord ! at present in the same way, dost thou remove the burden of the Earth. O thou foremost of the Jadus, we salute thee."

Then addressing Devaki, the gods said :—"O mother ! fortunately the foremost Supreme Being, the Almighty Lord Himself, hath entered into thy womb, for our well-being. Thou hast no reason to be afraid of the Lord of the *Bhojas* (Kansa), whose death is imminent. Thy son shall be the protector of the Jadus."

Thus eulogising, without the least exaggeration, the Lord whose semblance is the visible universe, the celestials placing Brahma and Ishana (Siva) at their head, returned to their respective regions in Heaven. (37—41).

CHAPTER III.

BIRTH OF SRIKRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! on the advent of a highly delightful season fraught with all blessings, when the star *Rohini* rode ascendant and *Aswini* and other constellations of stars shed forth holy light ; when the cardinal quarters were all propitious and the sky shone forth illumined with bright stars ; when the earth with its towns, countries, pastures and mines, was filled with all benedictions ; when rivers over-flowed with pure water and lakes were beautified with lotuses ; when forests rang with the songs of birds and humming of black bees and abounded in floral wealth ; when a pure and plesant breeze blew bearing a sweet odour ; when the extinguished fires of the regenerate ones again flashed forth ; when the hearts of the pious and of others except Kansa, were enraptured ; when anticipating the time of the birth of that birthless Divinity, kettle-drums were sounded by Kinnaras and hymns sang by Gandharvas, Siddhas and Charanas ; and Vidyadharas together with the Apsaras danced out of joy ; and celestials and sages greatly delighted showered heaps of flowers ; on a gloomy night,

when the rain-clouds gave forth a low rumbling sound re-echoed by the sea, Vishnu, the knower of all hearts, got out of the womb of the divine Devaki, like unto the full moon rising on the eastern quarter of the Heaven.

Vasudeva saw that wonderful boy (the new born baby) having eyes like lotus-petals, having four arms, bearing a conch, armed with a mace and other weapons, having the sign of *Sribatsa* on his breast, and with neck adorned with the *Kaustabha* gem. He saw the boy clad in a blue garment, with a complexion beautiful like that of dense rain-cloud, and with his flowing locks shining with the rays of the invaluable lapises embossed in his crown and of the gems constituting his pendants. Vasudeva saw him (the boy) adorned with bracelets, armlets, and other ornaments. (1—10).

Then beholding Hari born as his son, the eyes of Vasudeva bloomed forth in wonder. On the joyous occasion of the incarnation of Krishna, Vasudeva was struck with reverence, and overcome with delight mentally gave away ten thousand kine to the twice-born ones.

O descendant of Bharata ! thereafter ascertaining the babe to be the Supreme Purusha, Vasudeva with his body bent forward, his palms folded, his intellect composed and liberated from all terror, and conversant with the prowess of the Lord, began to pray unto him who lay illuminating the lying-in-room with his effulgence.

The auspicious Vasudeva said :—"O Lord ! I have come to recognise thee. Thou art the Supreme Lord of *Prakriti*, thy only semblance is feeling and ecstacy. Thou art the witness of all intellects. Verily thy semblance is beyond any description or rather it is indescribable, creating through thy illusive energy, this universe unified with the three priuciples (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas). Thou dost appear as entering it, though in reality thou art away and above from it. Mahat and other Tattwas in combination with the sixteen Vikaras (changes), produce this universe, for separately they cannot produce any definite action. They appear to be inside the created universe but actually this is not possible, for such things existed even from before the creation of worlds ; in the same manner, though thou art connected with the objects of perception and with the senses,

the nature of which is known by their acts, thou art not perceived along with these. (11—16).

"Being ever undiscerned, thou hast neither inside nor outside. Thou art everything ; thou art the essence and origin of all things and thou art the real entity. Whoever considers the objects of enjoyment which he never comes by to be the best of all other things, is surely the most ignorant. Undisputedly it is not proper to make a sage out of such a person. Beacuse, that person is verily eager for accepting things which are renounced by others as hateful.

"O Lord ! the creation, preservation and destruction of this universe is said to proceed from thyself. Thou transcendest the Principles, performing no acts and art free from all changes. Then art verily the Brahma and the Lord ; there is no contradiction between the two in you. Though the above-mentioned acts are performed by the Principles, they are ascribed to thine agency, as thou art the repository of the Principles. Thou assumest through thy illusive energy, a white complexion, the result of the Principle of goodness (Sattwa), for the preservation of the worlds. For the creation of the worlds thou assumest a red complexion, the result of the Principle of Energy (*Tejas*), and lastly for their destruction, thou assumest a dark complexion resulting from the Principle of Dullness (*Tamas*).

"O Lord of all the regions ! O thou Almighty one ! being desirous of protecting this universe, thou hast incarnated thyself in our house. Thou shalt annihilate the mighty army that is being paraded by the innumerable Asura chiefs, none other than the sovereigns of the earth.

"O Lord of the celestials ! this crooked-minded Kansa, hearing that thou shalt be born in our house, has slain thy elders. Just as soon as he will be informed by his menials of thy incarnation, he will be coming here with uplifted weapons." (17—22).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—Thereupon Devaki being struck with wonder and afraid of Kansa, seeing her son possessed of the signs of the Reverend One, began to hymn the Lord thus :—

"Oh God, thou art verily the Lord Vishnu, who art described in the Vedas as the primordial cause and hence inscrutable,

omnific, omniscient, pure existence, attributeless, immutable, undifferentiated and assertionless. Thou art the lamp, so to say, of spirituality which illumines the intellect and the *indriyas* (senses). At the expiration of the period of time measuring two *parardhwas* when the dissolution the mobile and immobile universe takes place, and the five elements melt into subtle undifferentiated root elements of matter and unmanifested Prakriti, thou art the only substance that remains. At that time you are cognisant of the fact that the Pradhana lies merged in thee and thou hast to reveal it again. The great Kala beginning with *Nimesha* and ending in *Diparardha*, which produces changes in the universe, Oh the Director of Prakriti, may be called to be thy Sportive Humour. Being of such a nature, thou art the abode of security and I to-day seek thy protection. The mortals apprehensive of the venomous serpent of death approached others for shelter but they found none of them free from fear of death. To-day through an indescribable stroke of luck they have attained thy lotus-like feet and are reposing there with a happy heart; death has run away from them. Of such nature, do thou save us, who are greatly frightened from the cruel son of Ugrasena (Kansa); for thou dost always dispel the terror of thy devotees. Let not thy Divine form, that is worthy of being meditated upon, be visible to human eyes.

"O thou slayer of Madhu! Let not the sinful Kansa know of thy birth out of my womb. I am verily afraid of Kansa for thy sake. My mind is deeply agitated. O thou Soul of the universe! Conceal this thy super-human form, furnished with four arms holding the conch, the discus (*Chakra*), the mace and the lotus. Thou, the Supreme Being, thou dost hold inside thy own body the whole universe *in extenso*, at the end of dissolution period of the Universe. Thou art now born out of my womb. Surely, this is a mockery for the worlds. (23—31).

The auspicious Almighty One said:—"O, chaste lady (Devaki)! In the past cycle of Sayambhuva, thou wert *Prisni* in your previous birth. At that time this sinless Vasudeva, was a Prajapati by the name of *Sutaka*. Having been commanded by Brahma to create progeny, you both observed rigid austerities subduing all your senses. You suffered from the rains, the storms, the rays of the Sun, and from colds and other inclemencies of the seasons. The dirts of your minds were cleansed

off as a result of controllig your breaths (pranayama). You then lived upon dry leaves of trees and air. Desirous of securing from me your cherished objects, you performed my worship with a tranquil mind. O gentle lady ! Thus, while performing the rigid and austere penance with your minds unflinchingly fixed on me, thousand celestial years rolled away.

"O Sinless One ! Then always being cherished by both of you in your hearts with great reverence and asceticism, I was propitious unto you ; and being desirous of granting you the desired boon, I, the foremost of those capable of granting boons, did reveal myself to you in this my present form. And then on my saying "Ask of me whatever boon you like," you begged the boon of having a son like unto myself. But, both of you, husband and wife, had not enjoyed the conjugal pleasures and were childless. Having been influenced by my energy of illusion, you did not ask emancipation of me. (32—39).

"When I had gone away, and while attaining the fruition of your desires and obtaining the boon of getting a son like myself, you were occupied with worldly enjoyment, I was born as your son. Finding none, on the face of the earth equal to me, in consequence of my possessing a good character, generosity and other attributes, people called me Prisniputra, the son of *Prisni*. Again remember that in my second birth I was born as your son, begotten by Kasyapa upon Aditi. I was called *Upendra* being the younger brother of Indra and *Bamana* in consequence of my dwarfish stature.

"O chaste lady ! In my present incarnation, I am again born in the same manner with the same appearance as your son. Know my words to be true. I have shown this semblance of mine to you, to help you to remember my previous births. Otherwise you could not have recognised me by seeing my human form. You both shall attain the highest stage of life by always contemplating on me, out of affection, as your son, or by meditating on me as the Supreme Brahman." (40—45).

After having spoken thus, the Almighty Hari paused. Then by means of his own illusive energy, he took the form of an ordinary new born babe, before the very eyes of his parents. When Vasudeva, at the command at the Almighty Lord, was on the point of going out of the lying-in-room with his son, *Yoga Maya*, though without birth, was born out of the womb of the

wife of Nanda. Then through the agency of this Maya, the senses of the gate-keepers were deprived of the power of discharging their respective functions and the citizens lay unconscious in sleep. When Vasudeva, bearing Krishna, came up to the doors of the prison secured with iron chains and bolts. lo, the doors flew open out of their own accord like unto darkness flying before the rising sun ; the rain-cloud *Parjannya* poured down showers accompanied by low thunder ; and the serpent *Sesha* (Ananta) followed him protecting Vasudeva from the rains by spreading on him his hood. On account of Indra pouring down continuous showers, a strong current was generated in the river Jamuna, the daughter of *Jama* (the god of death). The current in Jamuna brought about dashing waves which made the river full of froth, and the river became terrible in consequence of numerous frightening whirl-pools Yet Jamuna afforded passage to Vasudeva, like unto the ocean affording passage to Sri Ramachandra. (46—50).

On reaching the kingdom of Nanda, Vasudeva saw the cowherds there profoundly asleep through the influence of *Yoga-Maya*. Thereupon, placing his son (Sri Krishna) on the bed of Jashoda (wife of the cow-herd king Nanda and taking with him her (Jashoda's) new-born daughter, Vasudeva returned to his prison-room. Thereafter Vasudeva laying the female child on the bed of Devaki and having his own feet under fetters as before, remained imprisoned. Jashoda, the wife of Nanda, felt that she was delivered of a child ; but fatigued and with her memory clouded under delusion, she could not discern the sex of the baby, that is, whether she was delivered of a son or daughter. (51—53).

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONSULTATION OF THE ASURAS.

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O King ! The inner as well as the outer doors of the prison-house remained closed, of themselves, as before after return of Vasudeva. Thereafter, on hearing the cries of the new born babe, the warders of the said prison-house awoke. The warders then went in all haste to the king of the *Bhojas* (Kansa), and informed him of Devaki's delivery of a child, which event Kansa was anxiously looking forward to. On hearing that news, hurriedly arising from his bed, bewildered and thinking that his death-day has come, Kansa speedily came to the prison-house and entered the lying-in-room of Devaki with faltering steps and with his hairs dishevelled. Thereupon, Devaki, the divine and chaste-lady, then very miserable, most piteously addressed her brother (Kansa) saying:—"O thou blessed one ! This my baby is thy niece (sister's daughter). Thou ought not to kill this female child. O brother ! Like unto a fire-brand, thou (Kansa) hast slain already all of my children, destined as it were to do so by cruel *Kala* (Destiny). Be thou pleased to leave this daughter to me. O King ! I am verily miserable and am thy younger sister. I have been bereft of all my children by thee. O brother ! it behoveth thee to leave to my ill-fated self, this last of my issues." (1—6).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :— O king ! Thus piteously bewailing and ardently clasping her daughter to her heart, she, like one poorest of the poor, implored the safety of her child. But the wicked Kansa reprimanding her (Devaki) snatched away the child from her breast. Having his affection superseded by self-interest, Kansa seized by the feet the new-born daughter of his sister and with vehemence dashed her against the surface of a stone. But, flying off his grasp, Devaki's daughter rose upwards and assuming the form of a goddess stationed herself in the heavens. People then recognised in her, the goddess, the younger sister of Vishnu, decorated with beautiful garlands, ornaments and jewels, clad in fine garments, smeared with unguents, and bearing eight mighty arms all furnished with

weapons. She held in her hands, a bow, a trident, arrows, a shield, a sword, a conch, a discus, and a mace. Hymned by the Siddhas, Charanas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Kinnaras, and Serpents, and adored with various offerings by them, she thus spoke unto Kansa :—

"O wicked one! What availeth thee to slay myself? Thy adversary hath been born as thy death somewhere else. Do thou not slay other innocent children in vain." (7—12).

Having thus spoken unto him, the potent goddess Maya, established herself on earth in shrines of various names, and was differently styled. On hearing her utterances, Kansa was struck with wonder; then liberating Devaki and Vasudeva, he said unto them with humility as follows :—

"O sister! O brother-in-law! Alas! Like unto a cannibal devouring his children, a sinful wretch that I am, I have slain the issues of my kinsmen. Of such a nature, I am bereft of mercy; I am jealous of others; I am renounced by all my friends and relations. Know I not what region I shall be taken to, after I breathe my last, like unto a slayer of Brahmanas. Not only mortals speak lies; but even the celestials equivocate. A sinful wretch that I am, I believed in the assertions of these latter, and have slain the innocent babes of my sister. Ye both are high-souled; do not lament for your children, who have departed in consequence of their pristine deeds. All created beings are under the control of Destiny, and so cannot always live together and in the same place. (13—18).

"Like unto pots made of earth, bodies of beings are created and destroyed. But, unlike these, the soul, enshrined inside them, undergoeth no change, even as the earth of the pots remains unaltered. Those who are not cognisant of this truth are encompassed by a perversity prompting them to consider their body as their own; consequent upon this, a sense of egoism takes hold of them. In consequence of this latter again, they become connected with and separated from their children. Out of this connection and separation, happiness or misery is reaped by them; and so long as ignorance continues to hold away over them, their worldly connection does not cease.

"Therefore, O gentle lady: do thou not lament for thy children, whom I have slain. Every body, being powerless, reaps the fruits of his own deeds. So long as a person non-

conversant with the real nature of his self (soul), considers himself as a slayer or as one slain,—he in consequence of his ascribing his body's destruction to his soul, is deluded by empty notions of obligation ! Ye both are pious and kind towards your relatives. Pardon me, for my misdeeds."

Thus speaking, with a tearful countenance he (Kansa) fell down at the feet of his sister and brother-in-law (Devaki and Vasudeva). Believing in the words of the daughter of Devaki, Kansa then set Devaki and Vasudeva free from their fetters and showed his love for them by sweet and pleasing speeches. (19—24).

Then, forgiving her penitent brother, Devaki gave up all anger against Kansa ; and Vasudeva also having given up anger spoke unto him (Kansa) smilingly as follows :—

"O great king ! it is even so as thou sayest. The egoistic consciousness of corporeal beings, springs out of their ignorance. This, in its turn, begets a sense of distinction indexed by such terms as 'mine', 'others', etc. Persons suffering from such sense of distinction consider the body as the essence of existence and being enslaved by grief, joy, fear, malice, covetousness, ignorance and pride, attempt to destroy the body of others. They do not think even once that the Supreme Lord is witnessing all their actions.

Thus greatly delighted, they addressed Kansa in a way as to create confidence in his heart regarding their words. Then, with the permission of Devaki and Vesudeva, Kansa went back to his own residence. But scarcely had that night passed away than Kansa summoned his ministers and spoke unto them everything that had been said by *Yoga Maya* (the daughter of Devaki). The conceited Daityas, the adversaries of the celestials and bearing a life-long enmity against them having heard the said narration of their king (Kansa) said as follows :—

"O thou foremost of kings ! Even if it be as thou sayest, we will this day, slay all children above ten days or below, in every city, village or pasture, or in any other place. What can the celestials do with all their endeavours, cowards as they are in battle, and living as they do, in perpetual terror generated by the twanging of thy bow-string ? (25—32).

When thou wert bent upon slaying the celestials piercing them with thy arrows, they took to their heels leaving the

field of battle behind for fear of life. Some of them laying aside their weapons out of terror, stood before you with their hands folded. Others with their garments falling off and tassels untied, wailed aloud saying 'O! we are frightened! Thou didst not slay them, because out of fear they forgot all their weapons and arrows, were despoiled of their chariots, had their bows were broken, and had no inclination for fight. What do we care for the celestials, who only display their bravery in peaceful regions, and who vaunt of their prowess and might at places where there is no possibility of war! What harm can Hari, who always hides himself in secret places, do unto us? What also can Sambhu (Siva), who dwells in the forest, do unto us? What is there to be afraid of Indra of insignificant prowess or of Brahma, busy about performing severe austerities? Still, the celestials are our adversaries and we think we ought not to neglect them. Therefore, employ us, thy own followers, for their complete extermination. Just as a malady, attacking the bodies of men, if neglected at the first stage, cannot be cured after its roots are spread deeply in their systems; and just as the passions, if not checked from the beginning, cannot be brought under control afterwards; similarly a great adversary if not thwarted at the first opportunity cannot be overcome when he has gathered strength. (33—38).

Vishnu dwells where piety is eternally existent; and Vishnu is the chief of all the celestials. With Vishnu, therefore, eternal righteousness abides. The origin of religion again consists in the Vedas, the kine, the Brahmanas, religious austerities and sacrifices accompanied by profuse *Dakshinas*. Therefore, O king (Kansa), by all means, we will slay the Brahmanas, the reciters of the Vedas, the anchorites performing austerities, those continually celebrating sacrifices and cows yielding milk. The Vipras, the kine, the Vedas, religious mortification, truth, quietitude, self-control, reverence, benevolence, forgiveness and sacrifices—these constitute the form of Vishnu. He is the presiding deity of all the celestials; He is the knower of all hearts and the enemy of the Asuras. The celestials with Siva and the four-headed divinity Brahma, have got him for their main stay. So by the persecution of the pious is the only means of killing Vishnu.

Thus the evil-minded Kansa, holding consultation with his

wicked councillors considered the persecution of the Brahmanas as the best course open to him. Then delegating the Danavas, who were naturally fond of oppression and who could assume various forms at their will, for the persecution of the pious people, he entered into his own apartment. The turbulent Asuras, whose minds were clouded by *Tamas* and whose death was imminent commenced hostilities against the pious. O king Parikshit ! by the persecution of the great, a person loses his span of life, his prosperity, his fame, his righteousness, his chance of attaining to blessed regions after death, his happiness and lastly all his welfare. (39—46).

CHAPTER V.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN NANDA AND VASUDEVA.

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O king ! being exceedingly delighted at the birth of a son, the high-minded Nanda called in the Brahmanas versed in the Vedas, and at once purifying himself with a bath he made them duly perform the rites to be gone through at the birth of a child, as also the adoration of the ancestral manes and the deities. He gave unto the Brahmanas two million of cows adorned with ornaments and seven mountain-like heaps of sesamum seeds covered with gems, gold dusts and red cloths. Objects are purified in various ways ; some in the course of time ; some by being washed with water ; some by being cleansed ; some by the performance of purificatory rites ; and some by the observance of austerities, some by the celebration of sacrifices ; some are purified by being given unto others, and some again, by contentment. Even in the same manner.

However, on that date of rejoicing in Braja the *Sutas*, the *Mayadhas*, the *Vandins* and the singers began to pronounce benedictory verses and to sing ; kettle drums and tabors began to be sounded unceasingly. The whole city of Braja then shone forth with its doors, court-yards and interiors of houses cleansed

and sprinkled with water. It was adorned with varicgated pennons and flags, with garlands, pieces of silk raiments, twigs and artificial arches. (1—6)

All the oxen, the heifers and the calves were smeared with oil ond turmeric paste. They were also decked with ornaments of valuable metals, peacock's feathers, garlands, garments and golden strings. O king! the cow-herds also, wearing valuable garments and ornaments and beautified with *Kanchukas* and furnished with turbans, began to come to the palace of king Nanda, carrying various presents in their hands. The wives of the cow-herds having heard that a son had been born unto Jashoda, were greatly delighted and began to decorate their persons with garments, ornaments and collyrium. The lotus-like faces of these wives of cowherds with round hips and three marks of demarcation in their abdominal region were beautified with filaments of lotuses and with fresh saffron. Carrying presents, they speedily wended their way to their king's palace, their full blown breast heaving heavily due to high speed. When, on their way to the palace of king Nanda, these damsels appeared highly beautiful, wearing bright diamond pendants, having their necks set off with neckless, clad in wonderfully wrought garments, with chaplets of flowers falling off from the tuft of their hair, with hands decorated with golden bracelets, and having flowing locks, heaving breasts and charming garlands on them. They pronounced hearty benedictions on the baby (Sri Krishna) saying "May it live long." Then smearing it with turmeric powder and oil and washing it with water, they sang in chorus sweet songs. (7—12).

When Krishna, the Lord of the Universe, was born, there was great rejoicing in the kingdom of Nanda and different kinds of musical instruments were played upon. The cow-herds were greatly delighted; sprinkling curd, milk, clarified butter and water on one another and smearing one another with butter they tried to throw one another down on the slippery pavement. For the adoration of Vishnu and for the well-being of his son, the high-minded and liberal king Nanda, gave unto the cow-herds costly cloths, ornaments and kine, and unto the *Sutas*, *Magadhas* and *Vandins* and such others who lived by learning, their cherished objects, and honoured them as proper. The high-souled Rohini, greeted by the the cow-herd Nanda, dressed in

fine garments and adorned with ornaments and garlands, moved about for welcoming the guests of the palace. (13—17).

Thenceforward Braja, the capital of king Nanda, was filled with all prosperity. O king! Lakshmi the goddess of prosperity, out of her free will, made it her pleasure garden in consequence of its becoming the abode of Hari.

O foremost of the Kurus! then engaging the cow-herds in the protection of the kine, Nanda went to Mathura, to pay unto Kansa his annual tribute. On hearing that his brother Nanda had come and knowing that he had paid his tribute to the king (Kansa), Vasudeva repaired to Nanda's lodging. Like unto the body rising up at the return of life, Nanda seeing his dearest friend come, rose up greatly delighted and overcome with affection, embraced him with his arms. O King! then duly adored and greeted, and questioned about his welfare by Nanda, and comfortably seated, Vasudeva having his heart engrossed on his two sons, thus spoke :—

"O brother! it is indeed fortunate that thou, who wert childless till this advanced age, and whose hope of getting progeny was also lost, shouldst be blessed with such a darling son. Thou appearest to be newly born through good fortune, for thou hast now obtained as rare object of love, though all the while thou wert rolling on the wheel of existence. (18—24).

"O dear one! the living together of friends of diverse occupations, is not possible. Is everything faring well regarding the large pasture where thou art at present dwelling surrounded by thy friends? Is it free from the rage of any plague? Are the cattle there doing well? Does it abound in grass, twining creepers and translucent water?

"O brother! does my son together with his mother, reared by thee and thy wife, fare well in thy kingdom of Braja? Does he regard thee as his father? *Trivarga* which tends towards the benefit of the relatives has been countenanced by the *Shastras* as proper for people; but if their relatives continue to suffer distress, the *Trivarga* is of no avail."

Then the cow-herd king Nanda replied saying :—"Alas! all thy sons begotten upon Devaki i. e. been killed by Kansa. Even thy only surviving beautiful daughter have gone away to heaven. Surely, Destiny is the end of this universe; Destiny is the best of treasures. Whoever considers Destiny to be the ever-

constant cause of his happiness or misery, is never infatuated."

Then Vasudeva again said :—"Thou hast paid thy annual tribute unto the Monarch (Kansa) and hast also seen us. Thou ought not to tarry here for many days, for thy kingdom of *Gokula* will be visited with many calamities."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Thus having been spoken unto by Vasudeva, and with his permission, the cow-herds headed by Nanda mounting on carts yoked with (drawn by) bullocks, returned to Gokula. (25—32).

CHAPTER VI.

THE DESTRUCTION OF PUTANA.

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O king ! on his way back to Braja, Nanda thought that the words of Vasudeva could never be false. So being afraid of the advent of a calamity, he sought shelter in Hari.

The infant-destroyer, the terrible Putana, having been delegated by Kansa, wandered through cities, villages and pastures killing infants. Wherever men do not listen to the recital of the name of the Lord of devotees (Sri Hari)—a recital capable of exterminating the race of Rakshasas—there and there only can the monsters carry on their work of destruction.

One night, Putana,—who was capable of moving without restraint and sailing through the skies,—came flying through the skies to Gokula and entered the city. While entering the city Putana disguised herself by her own illusive energy under the form of a beautiful damsel. On seeing her, with her fillet of hair adorned with Jasmine, with round hips and heaving breasts and slender waist, clad in fine garments, with her face beautified with the lustre of ear-rings and shining pendants, with charming smiles and sidelong glances stealing the hearts of the inhabitants of Braja ; the wives of the cow-herds considered her to be the goddess of prosperity incarnate, bearing a lotus in her hand and coming to see her own lord, (1—6).

O king! there roving at will in quest of infants, the infant-killer Putana, saw in the palace of Nanda the boy Sri Krishna lying on his bed, with his beaming lustre veiled over like unto fire covered with ashes. The essence of the mobile and immobile universe, Sri Krishna, knowing her to be a Rakshashi, the killer of infants, remained lying down on the bed with his eyes shut. Then Putana, to carry out her object, took the Supreme Divinity on her lap.

Thereupon seeing her (Putana) whose heart was sharp like unto a sword incased in a scabbard, behaved like an affectionate mother and accomplished lady. Finding her suddenly come in their midst, the mothers of Krishna were stupefied with her effulgence, and stood gazing at her and could not prevent her.

Then that Putana Rakshashi, placing the child on her lap put into its mouth the nipple of her breast annointed over with most virulent poison, Whereupon, vehemently squeezing her breast with both his hands and waxing irascible, the Almighty Lord (Sri Krishna) sucked it with such a force so as to suck out her very life. (7—10).

Having been so squeezed in all her vital parts, she (Putana) bawled forth saying "Leave me, leave me." While so exclaiming in agony, with the pupils of her eyes dilated and her body wet with the flood of perspiration that she had, she began to wail aloud throwing out at the same time her legs and arms. In consequence of her deep and rapid roar, the earth with its mountains and the heavens with the planets seemed to have been shaken off from their respective places. The nether regions and the cardinal quarters were filled with its echo; and people fell down on the ground, fearing that a thunder-bolt had overtaken them.

O Monarch! the demoness Putana having been extremely pained at her breasts and having in consequence lost her consciousness, and gaping and stretching forth her legs and arms and loosening her hair, had then assumed her real form; and then she fell down on the ground resembling in hugeness the foremost of the Asuras Vritra struck with the thunder-bolt.

O thou foremost of kings! Even in her (Putana's) fall her body crushed by its tremendous weight all trees standing within twelve miles of Braja, surely this was a great marvel. The cowherds and their wives, whose hearts, ears and heads were

hitherto rent asunder by the terrible roar of the Rakshashi, were greatly frightened on seeing her huge form furnished with a mouth ranged with the terrible set of teeth long as the poles of ploughs, her nasal pits deep like the caverns of a mountain, with bobbies resembling hillocks, with red and dishevelled hair, with eyes deep as dark caves, with beach-like buttocks rendering it all the more repulsive, with arms, legs and thighs resembling artificial dams, and with an abdominal region resembling a waterless lake.

Seeing the boy (Sri Krishna) playing fearlessly on her (Putana's) breast, the wise of the cowherds were seized with terror and coming in all haste took him (Sri Krishna) away. Thereafter in co-operation with Jashoda and Rohini, those wives of the cowherds waved cow's tail on the head of the boy for his future safety and adopted such other measures. (11—18).

Then bathing the boy in cow's urine and sprinkling the dust of the cow's hoof on his body, they wrote with cow-dung the twelve names of Vishnu on the twelve different parts of his body and thus protected him from evil agencies. Then the wives of the cow-herds, first having purified themselves by uttering the name of Vishnu separately assigned their bodies and their hands to their respective deities, and then performed *Bijanyasha* in the same manner on the body of the boy saying :—

"May Aja (the Divinity without birth) protect thy feet ; may *Animat* guard thy knees ; may *Yajna* guard thy thighs ; may Achhaiya (the Deity that never lapseth) protect thy waist ; may the Lord *Hayagriva* guard thy stomach ; may *Keshava* watch over thy heart ; may *Isha* guard thy abdomen ; may Sun save thy throat ; may Vishnu guard thy arms, *Urukrama* thy face and *Iswara* thy head ; may the discus-handed Deity (Chakradhara) walk in front of thee ; may the mace-armed (Gadadhara) Hari walk behind thee ; and may the bow-bearing (Dhanukdhari) slayer of *Madhu* and the sword-handed Aja stay by thy sides. May *Urugaya* blowing the conch-shell walk near the angles of thy body ; may *Upendra* stay over thy head and *Tarkhya* beneath thy body ; and may the plough-bearing Purusha remain on all sides of thee to protect thee. May thy senses be guarded by *Hrishikesha*, and thy vital breaths by *Narayana*. May the ruler of *Svetadwipa* guard thy heart and may the Lord of al

Yoga save thy mind. May the son of *Prisni* guard over thy understanding and may the Supreme Almighty Lord save thy soul. May *Govinda* protect thee when playing and may *Madhava* watch over thee when asleep. May the Lord of *Vaikuntha* look after thee when walking ; and may the consort of the goodess of prosperity (Lakshmi) protect thee when seated. May the terror of all evil spirits, the cater of sacrifical oblations, protect thee when eating. The *Dakinis* (females of evil spirits of that name), the *Jatudharis*, the *Kushmandas*, the *infanticides*, the goblins, the *Matris*, the *Pisachas*, the *Yakshas*, the *Rakshas*, the *Vindyakas*, *Kotari*, *Revati*, *Jaistha*, *Putana*, and other such as mind, the body and the senses ; and other evil omens and calamities dreamt of and the slayers of the old and the young,— may these and all other evil spirits be destroyed, being terrified at the recital of the name of Vishnu. (19—29).

O king ! thus, when the ceremony for the protection of the boy was completed by the *Gopees* of unshaken attachment, the mother of the boy Krishna, making him suck her breast, laid him down on his bed. At that time, Nanda and the other cowherds returned from Mathura to Braja. On beholding the body of Putana Rakshashi, they were struck with amazement. 'Surely, Vasudeva has of late become a prophet, or he has become the Lord of *Yoga* or a powerful seer for he perceived the advent of this calamity, and spoke of it unto us.'

The dwellers of Braja, then severing with axes her (Putana's) limbs and body, threw them at a distance ; and then surrounding them with logs of wood, they burned them. From the body and limbs of Putana that were being burned, arose a smoke bearing a fragrant odour like unto that of *Agura* sandal wood, because all her sins had been destroyed in consequence of her being sucked by Krishna. The blood-sucker Rakshashi Putana, the slayer of men and infants, having out of enmity 'given suck' to Hari, and attained after death to the state of sages. Not to speak of those who like unto affectionate mother dedicate with reverence and devotion their dearest objects to the Supreme Soul Krishna, of becoming attached to him. (30—36).

Although a Rakshashi, Putana attained to Heaven and to the posthumous position of the mothers of Krishna, as she covered her body with his two feet which are worshipped by

those worthy of the world's adorations and which remain in the hearts of His devotees and the Almighty Lord sucked her breast. It is no wonder then that the kine and the mothers of Krishna, having their milk sucked by Him, should attain to the same mode of existence as that of Putana. For the almighty son of Devaki, the giver of emancipation and all other objects of existence, drank their milk oozing out due to exuberance of maternal affection. It is also not possible, O king! that they who always looked upon Krishna as their son, should again suffer a birth in this world, which ordinarly results out of ignorance. The inhabitants of Braja (who had gone to distant places) having smelt the odour of the smoke arising out of the funeral pyre of Putana, returned to their home saying :—"What is this due to? Whence dose it come?" Hearing from the cow-herds a description of the arrival, acts and death of Putana, and the safety of the boy, they were struck with wonder. O descendant of the Kurus! the generous-hearted Nanda returning from his sojourn to Mathura, took up his son on his lap, and smelling the crown of his head obtained great delight.

Whatsoever person regardfully listens to this wonderful account of the liberation of Putana and the early achievements of Krishna becomes attached to Govinda. (37—44).

CHAPTER VII.

BREAKING OF CART AND DESTRUCTION OF THE DEMON TRINAVARTA BY SRI KRISHNA.

The auspicious king Parikshit, the Protege of Vishnu said :—"O potent sage! whatsoever acts the Almighty Lord Hari had performed in his different incarnations, a description of them is surely pleasing to our ears and capable of charming our hearts. A hearing of the description of these acts cures the maladies of a person's heart, and also extinguishes the diverse desires

which are the causes of these maladies. In a short time it (the hearing) purifies the real self of the hearer and then generates in him a devotion towards Lord Sri Hari, and also a friendly feeling for the servants of the Lord. May it then please thee (Sukadeva) to describe unto us, the excellent character of Hari. Dost thou describe unto us the marvellous achievements of his early days, when born in this terrestrial region He imitated the actions of human beings."

Then the auspicious Sukadeva said :—One day, when the asterisk that had presided at the birth of the boy Krishna, was found to ride ascendant, festivities were held in Braja to celebrate the *Uthanika* ceremony (Birth-day ceremony) of the boy. Then among the large number of the females of the cow-herds who assembled there in the palace of Nanda,—the chaste-hearted Jashoda performed the rite of bathing her son Krishna with the water of the sacred places and rivers. Then musical instruments were struck up, songs were sung and *Mantras* and benedictions were pronounced by the Brahmanas. Thus, when the annointing of her son had been performed and benedictions were pronounced on him by the Brahmanas who were duly worshipped with the presentation of eatables, garments and garlands,—Jashoda, seeing her son's eyes closing in sleep, carefully laid him down underneath a cart.

This highly intelligent lady was at that time busy on account of the festivity of the *Uthanika* ceremony, and she was engaged in welcoming her guests, the inhabitants of Braja ; and therefore she did not hear the cries of her son. The baby, desirous of a suck from his mother's breast, cried aloud and yet did not get at it. So in his anger he was throwing his legs in the air at times. Being struck with the little feet of the baby, delicate like unto the coral, that was lying under it, the cart was thrown off at a distance with its up-side down. Due to the fall it had crushed the pots containing various kinds of delicious liquids ; and the wheels, pole and yoke of the cart were all shattered. (1—7).

Jashoda and other women of Braja, who had then assembled there to enjoy the festivity of the *Uthanika* ceremony, and also Nanda and others were immensely astonished on seeing the wonderful feat of the boy Krishna. They verily wondered as to how the cart became thrown off, upturned and shattered, as though of itself. The boys present who saw the up-turning of

the cart, said to the cow-herds and their wives, whose intellects were bewildered :—"There is no doubt that this cart has been thrown up by the feet of this crying baby."

The cow-herds did not believe the words of the boys. Because, verily they were ignorant of the immeasurable prowess of that boy Krishna.

Then, Jashoda being afraid of evil spirits, took up her crying son on her lap, and suckled him. She made the Brahmanas perform *Sastayanas* (auspicious rites) and got the *Suktas* read by them, for the well-being of her child. Then the cart with its appendages was replaced into its former position by some of the strong cow-herds. The Brahmanas then performed adoration having offered oblations of curd, fried grain, the sacred grass and water. The benedictions of the truthful Brahmanas, who are free from jealousy, pride, a fault-finding tendency, harmfulness, falsehood and haughtiness, never go for nothing.

With this conviction in his mind, Nanda had the boy bathed in waters purified by the Brahmanas with mantras of the *Rik*, *Yajur* and *Sama* Vedas and mixed with *Oshadhis*. Then Nanda having made them pronounce benediction on the boy and offer of oblations to the Sacrificial fire, gave unto them palatable and sweet flavoured rice. For the welfare of his son Nanda presented to the twice-born ones many cows possessing all good qualities and adorned with cloths, garlands, and golden chains. The Brahmanas in their turn uttered unfailing benedictions on the boy. Whatever benedictions the devout Brahmanas, versed in the Vedas, had said were all fruitful. For verily these benedictions can never go for nothing. (8—17).

O king ! One day when the chaste Jashoda, placing her son on her lap, was caressing him, she felt suddenly that her child had grown heavy like unto a mountain peak ; and in consequence thereof she was unable to bear him any longer on her lap. Thereupon, Jashoda was struck with immense astonishment, and groaning under the burden of her son she then placed him down on the ground. Having done this she began to pray unto the Supreme Lord of the Universe and hastened to call the Brahmanas. At this moment, a Daitya Trinavarta by name, a servant of Kansa and having been deputed by him, came up there in the form of whirl-wind and stole away the child. Having agitated the whole of Gokula by whirl-wind, the Daitya

blinded the eyes of the inhabitants thereof with particles of dust. He uttered forth a terrific shout which pierced through the cardinal quarters. In a moment the whole of Braja was covered with dust and darkness ; and Jashoda did not find her son there.

Having been bewildered, no body could see himself or others in that dust and darkness ; for they were sorely oppressed with the gravels thrown at them by the Asura Trinavarta. Thus, when showers of dusts were being poured down by the whirl-wind of vehement velocity, the helpless mother, being unable to trace the path her son had been carried by, began to roam about hither and thither, and not finding him, began to bewail falling on the ground, like unto the cow bereft of her calf. When the whirl-wind had subsided and the shower of dust had ceased, —the *Gopees* (the females of the cow-herds) hearing the lamentations of Jashoda hastened there and not finding the son of Nanda there they began to cry aloud with hearts sorely afflicted with grief and faces over-flooded with tears. (18—25).

In the mean time, the Asura Trinavarta in the form of the whirl-wind, having stolen away the boy Krishna, had reached the sky with great velocity ; but in consequence of having been compelled to bear the heavy burden of Krishna, his velocity diminished and he could not go beyond. On account of the boy's extraordinary weight the Asura mistook him to be a mountain. The Asura was then desirous of leaving the child ; but he could not leave that wonderful child who had remained firm in embracing him by the neck.

On the otherhand, having been tightly clasped by the neck, the Asura Trinavarta then became powerless and his eyes came out of their sockets. Then giving forth an indistinct groan and being deprived of his vital breath,—the Asura fell down on Braja with the boy (Krishna) dangling by his neck. In consequence of his so falling down from the skies on a stone, the body and the limbs of that terrible Daitya were shattered. The bewailing women of Braja gathering there, saw him lying, like unto the Asura Pura cloven by the arrows of Rudra. (26—29).

On seeing Sri Krishna hanging on the Asura's breast, they were struck with amazement and then they restored him to his mother, Jashoda. Surely the cow-herds and their wives headed by Nanda were greatly delighted, having regained their beloved who had been carried away in the skies by that monster Asura

and the child wherefore was deemed to have had an escape from the very jaws of death. Surely this is a matter of wonder, that this boy placed within the reach of death by the Daitya should escape it and return unhurt. This cruel and crooked one has in consequence of his own sins met with his destruction.

Verily, the pious ones on account of their evenness of attitude towards all, are liberated from fear. What rigid penances have we undergone, what adoration have we offered unto Lord *Adhokshaja* (Vishnu), what charitable deeds in the form of *Purta* and *Ishta* have we performed, and what this boy who was nothing less than been overtaken by death,—has been restored to us to enhance the joy of his Kinsmen ?

Having seen these numerous marvels taking place in his own residence of *Vrihatvana*, the cow-herd King Nanda again and again remembered the words of Vasudeva, and was struck with wonder.

One day the graceful Jashoda placing her son on her lap and being overwhelmed with affection, was suckling him with the milk that was oozing out from her breast. O King ! when the boy was about to finish sucking and when his mother was caressing his face beaming with beautiful smiles, the boy yawned. Thereupon, to her utter amazement, Jashoda saw inside the boy's mouth, the sky, the upper and the nether regions, the zodiac, the heavenly quarters, the sun, the moon, the fire, atmosphere, the oceans, islands, mountains, and their daughter rivers, forests, the mobile and the immobile creation.

O King ! Jashoda, of eyes resembling those of a gazelle, suddenly seeing the universe inside his mouth, was seized with a tremour ; and being struck with wonder, she shut her two eyes. (30—37).

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DESCRIPTION OF KRISHNA'S CHILDHOOD.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O King ! having been deputed by Vasudeva, *Garga* of rigid austerities, the priest of the Jadus, came one day to Braja, the kingdom of the cow-herd King Nanda. On seeing the illustrious Rishi, Nanda was

greatly delighted and rose from his seat with folded hands as a mark of respect to him. Then, bowing down unto the Rishi, Nanda worshipped him considering him to be identical with *Adhokshaja*. When the Rishi was comfortably seated, King Nanda offered him hospitality with due greetings ; and he addressed the Rishi saying :—

"O Brahman ! what can we do for thee who hast attained the fruition of all desires. O potent sage ! the coming of illustrious people to the houses of the worldly minded householders, is for the welfare of the latter. It cannot be otherwise. Thou hast founded the science of astronomy, dealing with objects beyond the perception of the senses, and by the help of which, a person can remember the deeds he had performed in his previous existences and also those which he has done in the present one. Thou art the foremost of those conversant with the knowledge of *Brahman*. Thou ought to conduct the performance of the purificatory rites for this boy of mine. For verily, a Brahmana is by birth the preceptor of the people." (1—6).

Then the illustrious Rishi *Garga* said :—"O thou noble King of the *Gopas* ! it is known everywhere that I am the family priest of the *Jadus*. So, if I perform the purificatory ceremony of the boy, then it will be believed that this boy is the son of Devaki. Kansa is wicked-minded. There exists also friendship between thee and Vasudeva. And it was exclaimed by Mahamaya (the daughter of Devaki) that the eighth issue of Devaki cannot be a female child. Weighing these considerations and having remembered day and night the words of the daughter of Devaki, Kansa is likely to suspect this son of thine (as the eighth issue of Devaki). Then, if he will kill him (thy son), and a great calamity will come to pass."

The auspicious Nanda replied saying :—"O Brahman ! in this kingdom of Braja, unseen even by mine own people, and in a secret place, do thou perform the purificatory rites prescribed for the regenerate ones, after having pronounced benedictory verses." (7—10).

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—Having been thus requested by Nanda, the illustrious Rishi Garga performed in secret the ceremony of attributing names unto the boys. He

was, since a long time, desirous of conducting this rite; and the Rishi spoke as follows :—

"This son of Rohini should be styled Rama for he charms his Kinsmen by his good qualities; and he should be called with a prefix *Bala* (Balarama) because of his possessing excessive prowess. He should also be known as *Sankarsana*, as he would draw together and re-unite the Jadus when separated by dissensions. This other son of thine had assumed three forms of white, red and yellow in colour in three previous Yugas. Now he has assumed a black complexion. He should for this reason be called *Krishna*.

"In days gone by, this thy son was born a son of Vasudeva. So, people knowing this fact should also call him the prosperous *Vasudeva*. This thy son also has assumed many forms and names, as suitable to his various qualities and deeds, which neither myself nor any other people fully know of. This child, being born as the delighter of the cow-herds and the kingdom of Gokula, shall be the source of thy prosperity. By his, agency, thou shalt speedily overcome all difficulties.

"O thou ruler of Braja! in the days of yore, when anarchy reigned on earth, the pious ones were persecuted by the powerful robbers. At that time, protected and surcharged with the energy of this thy child, the pious people ultimately conquered the robbers. Those persons who cherish affection towards this one of eminent qualities, are never overcome by their foes, even as the partisans of Vishnu are never overcome by the Asuras. Therefore, O Nanda, these sons of thine is equal to Narayana in His qualities, prosperity, fame and prowess. Do thou always carefully protect them." (11—19).

Enjoining Nanda in the above manner, the illustrious Rishi Garga repaired to his own abode. Nanda was thereupon greatly enraptured and considered himself blessed with all well-being.

O my child (King Parikshit)! in course of time, *Rama* and *Krishna* began to crawl in Gokula placing the weight of their body on their hands and their knees. When they crawled speedily on the muddy pastures of Braja dragging their little feet, their *Nupuras* and *Bangles* made a pleasing tinkling sound. Delighted by hearing these sounds, they would sometimes follow men for a little distance. Then, as if terrified and bewildered, they would hastily come back to their mothers. Milk would

spontaneously ooze out from the breasts of their mothers out of affection and they would then embrace their sons—looking beautiful in being besmeared with mud—with their arms, and enjoy felicity by giving them suck and gazing at their countenances beautified with little teeth and charming smiles.

When the time came for their childish sports, they used to catch hold of the tails of calves that dragged them hither and thither on pasture. The damsels of Braja stood at them thus dragged on, forgetting their household duties and they laughed and were delighted. At that the mothers of the two boys found it difficult to save their playful sons from horned animal, from fire, from animals having sharp teeth and tusks, from serpents, from water, from birds and from thorns etc, as well as to look after their household duties, and they experienced a great distraction of mind on that account. (20—25).

O foremost of Kings (Parikshit)! within a comparatively short time, Krishna and Balarama, giving up crawling on their knees, began to walk swiftly on their feet in Braja. Then the almighty Krishna accompanied by Balarama, began to sport with other boys of Braja of the same age with him, thus enhancing the joys of the women of Braja. The wives of the cow-herds seeing the beautiful boyish pranks of Krishna would go to his mother and say to her, Krishna untethers the calves untimely. And if some one out of anger says anything unto him, he laughs out. Inventing novel means of pilfering, Krishna steals away and drinks tasteful curd and milk. He distributes his drinks among the monkeys; and if they do not eat, he breaks the pot cantaining curd and milk.

When he does not find anything, being angry on the household he goes away after having made the infants cry aloud. When these things such as milk, curd etc., are placed beyond the reach of his hands, he creates expedients by piling wooden seats and mortars, etc. Again, knowing these to be concealed in pots hanging in swings, he will strike holes into the pots. At times when the wives of the cow-herds will be occupied in the performance of household duties, he will finish his works of theft in dark rooms, making the jewels of his person to serve the purpose of lamps. He perpetrates these and similar other harmful acts. He even passes urine and leaves excretions in cleansed houses. In this way he committed vile deeds by

thievish tricks, but when near thyself he lives like a very gentle boy.' (26—31).

Thus having been apprised of the misdeeds of Krishna, by the wives of the cow-herds, who had been looking at his terrified eyes and his beautiful face,—Jashoda only laughed and was not willing to chastise him.

One day when Balarama and other sons of the cow-herds were playing together, coming to mother Jashoda they said unto her :—"Krishna hath eaten earth."

Thereupon, Jashoda being desirous of his welfare holding Krishna by the hand, reprimanded him. At this his eyes indicated fear, and Jashoda thus spoke unto him :—"O you naughty boy, why have you eaten earth in secret ? These boys, your companions and your elder brother are speaking to that effect."

"Oh no mother, I have not eaten it ; they are all liers. If you think they are truthful, you may examine my mouth." (32—35).

Jashoda said :—"Very well, then open your mouth." After having been thus spoken to, the Almighty Hari (in the present form of Krishna) of unimpeded prosperity, who had in his sport assumed the form of a human child, opened his mouth. Jashoda then saw inside the mouth of Krishna, the whole universe, the mobile and immobile creation, the ethereal dome, the heavenly quarters, the grand divisions of the earth with the mountains, the oceans and the mundane sphere, the atmosphere, the fire and lightning, the Zodiac with the moon and the stars, water, light, the sky, the deities presiding over the senses, the sense organs, the mind, the objects of perception and the three Principles.

She saw in the person of her son inside his gaping mouth the vast and grand universe in its entirety filled with different structures created by soul, the time, nature, actions and desires ; as also the kingdom of Braja with her own self. With such a visual experience, Jashoda was seized with terror.

Then Jashoda thought within her mind as follows :—"Is this a dream, or is it the illusion of some diety ? Or is it the result of the bewilderment of my own intellect ? Or it may be some natural manifestation of my son ? I bow down unto the feet of the Supreme Deity, the nature of which is beyond

the comprehension and cannot be ascertained by the mind, the heart, the actions and speech; the lotus feet of whom are the refuge of this universe; and through the instrumentality of which and from out of which emanates this universe. May that almighty Lord become my sole protector through whose illusive energy the perversity of my understanding (egoistic) indexed by such things as "I," "This is my husband," "This is my son," "I am the wife of the King of Braja," "I enjoy his wealth, these cow-herds, their wives, the kine, and all else are mine." These and other expressions like these, have been generated in me." (36—42).

Thereupon that Lord of immense prosperity, spread the *Vaishnavi Maya* (the illusive energy of Vishnu in the shape of maternal affection, on that *Gopika* (Jashoda) who hath come to know His real nature. Instantly the Gopee lost her knowledge of the self and under the influence of Maya took her son on her lap. Then her heart overflowed with increasing affection; and she became as infatuated as before. Her mind turned and she again considered Hari—whose glory is extolled in the three *Upanishads* and the *Sankhya-yoga* and by the votaries—as her own son.

The King Parikshit, the protege of Vishnu, said:—"O Brahman! what greatly meritorious act did Nanda perform? And what also did the illustrious Jashoda do that Hari sucked her breast? Even the parents of Krishna did not know his great freaks of childhood, which are even now extolled by the sages and are capable of purifying all the sins of the worlds." (43—47).

The auspicious Vadarayani (Sukadeva said):—When Drona the foremost of the Vasus, in company with his wife Dhara were executing the commands of Brahma—he said unto that Divinity:—"May we entertain great reverence for Lord Sri Hari, the god of gods and the Lord of the Universe, when we shall be born; for by means of such reverence persons overcome misery."

On Brahma's granting his prayer, the illustrious Drona was born as Nanda in Braja, and his wife Dhara was born as Jashoda.

O descendant of Bharata! for this reason, the (Drona and Dhara) as well as other cow-herds and their wives entertained

so much reverence towards *Janardana*, when he was born as Drona's son. Also, to prove the truth of Brahma's words, Krishna incarnated Himself in the kingdom of Braja. Living there with Balarama and sporting with him, he (Krishna) greatly enhanced the delight of the inhabitants of Braja. (48—52).

CHAPTER IX.

SRI KRISHNA WAS TIED BY HIS MOTHER.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Once on a time the female servants of the house having been engaged in another work, Nanda's wife Jashoda herself began to churn the curd. While churning the curd she began to sing remembering the various songs composed on Krishna's childish pranks. On her spacious waist a silken raiment was tied by *Kanchi* (an ornament of that name). At that time milk was trickling down from her breast out of affection for her son ; and the arms being tired due to continued churning the bangles were loosened, the ear-rings were shaken and the flowers dropped down from her locks. Her countenance was marked with drops of perspiration out of toil. Just then Krishna came up to his mother for sucking. By this he delighted his mother and by holding the churning rod prevented her.

On beholding his smiling countenance, Jashoda suckled him seated on her lap, with milk pouring from her breast. At that time seeing the milk upheaving from the pot placed upon a hearth, Jashoda hurriedly went out to save it leaving Krishna who was not till then satisfied by the sucking. At this, worked up with anger and biting his tender lips with his teeth, he broke down the pot of curd with a piece of stone and began to eat butter in one corner of the room. (1—6).

Now after putting down the pot of warm milk, while Jashoda re-entered the room of churning, she found the pot broken, and taking it to be the action of her son smiled. On a search for him, she found him (Krishna) seated on a wooden mortar (*Udukhala*) and distributing butter unto the monkeys that gathered outside a window before him. Being angry for such

theft and high-handedness, she went behind his back. On seeing his mother near at hand with a rod. Krishna got down from the mortar and fled away in great fear. She too running after him could not at once catch him, whom even the mind of Yogins urged on with devout penances could not approach.

While running after her son, the youthful mother was having her speed thwarted by the weight of the heavy waist and the flowers dropping down in consequence of her braid being loosened. But ultimately she caught hold of him. Then, holding him by the hand and looking him in the face who had committed an offence and was therefore weeping, and was scattering the collyrium by rubbing with his own hands his eyes and who was looking vacant with fear, Jashoda remonstrated with him striking terror into his mind. (7—11).

Finding the son terrified and leaving off the rod and being fond of the son and unacquainted with the prowess of the Lord Jashoda wished to bind him hand and foot with a rope. Without knowing her son as the unmanifest Adhokshaja assuming a human form, who has neither the inner nor the exterior, the beginning or the end, who is himself the before and after, the inner and the exterior and who is identical with the universe, the *Gopika* (Jashoda) tried to bind her son to the mortar like ordinary infant. However, for binding her own son who had committed an offence, she found the rope short by two fingers Then she added to it another. But she found it too still short and added another ; but this time too when binding she found the string short by two fingers. Then Jashoda added all the ropes in her house and those of other millk-men. But still finding them short as before, Jashada and all the *Gopees* (females of the cow-herds) were struck with great surprise. (12—17).

On seeing his mother perspiring in her attempts at binding him, and the flowers dropping down from her locks of hair,—out of mercy unto her, Krishna allowed himself to be bound. Such subjection to his votary is shown by Hari, who is independent and to whom is subject this universe with the lords of its quarters. The delight which the *Gopika* (Jashoda) obtained from the Deity, conferring liberation, cannot be attained by one having Brahma or Shiva as son, or Lakshmi as His spouse. The Divine son of the *Gopi* is not so easily obtainable by the ascetics proud of their body, or sages proud of the discontinuance

of worldly acts as he is by the devotees. His mother being busy with household works, the Lord Krishna espied two trees named Jamala and Arjuna. These two trees were in their previous lives the two sons of Kuvera, and they were named Nalakuver and Manigriva. Both of them were highly graceful; but being imprecated with a curse by the divine sage Narada, on account of their arrogance, they became those two trees named Jamala and Arjuna. (18—23).

CHAPTER X.

THE BREAKING OF THE TREES: JAMALA AND ARJUNA.

The king Parikshit said:—"O Brahman! please relate to me the cause of the imprecation of curse unto the trees, Jamala and Arjuna by name; and also what did they do as to offend Narada, the best of the celestial saints."

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—Becoming the followers of Rudra and growing verily proud, those two sons of Kuvera, the king of riches, drinking wine and having their eyes rolling in intoxication, accompanied by some singing damsels, sported in the charming garden of Kailasha mountain. On entering into the Ganges abounding in lotuses, they began to sport with the youthful damsels as elephants do with the she elephants.

O Kaurava! going there at his will, the Divine-sage Narada saw the two sons of Kuvera there in company with the females of Gandharvas and considered both of them inebriate. On seeing the divine-sage there, the females of Gandharvas were ashamed of their nudity and, being afraid of the curse from him, they quickly put on their clothes. But the said sons of Kuvera, although they were also naked, did not so put on their clothes. (1—6).

Thereupon, finding the said sons of Kuvera in intoxication of wine and blind with the pride of wealth and prosperity, the divine-sage Narada imprecated with the following curse:—

Pride of high pedigree or any action under the influence of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, can not cloud so much the understanding of a man as the pride of wealth; for, in it are present wine, women and gambling. Beasts are ruthlessly slain by such persons of uncontrolled minds, who consider the mortal frame

(body) as immortal and shorn of death and decrepitude. How does he know his own interest who slays creatures leading to hell for this body, which, although designated as king, is turned after death into insect, excretion and ash. Does this body belong to the giver of food, or to father, mother, grand-father, purchaser, the strong, fire or dog? This is the conviction of the ordinary people that this body orginates from something unknown and also ends in something unknown. What wise man, considering the body as his own, shall slay creatures for such an unreal thing. (7—12).

Poverty only is the best remedy for such wicked men blinded with the pride of wealth. A poor man considers others in comparison with his own self and take them to be placed higher than himself; one having his person pricked with a thorn, and considering other creatures like himself by their gestures, do not like them to be pricked with a thorn. A poor man is freed from egoism and all forms of arrogance. Whoever suffers out of his free-will meets with the best of penances; the body of a poor man praying for food daily grows emaciated out of hunger and thirst; so all his senses are dried up and he desists from injuring others. The pious ones seeing all creatures in the same even light keep company with the poor. So their thirst of the poor is easily satisfied in getting the company of the pious and they soon acquire piety.

On the other hand, the impious persons, who are proud of their wealth, are always neglected by the impartial pious men who only seek the feet of Mukunda. I shall, O sons of Kuvera, destroy your ignorance begotten of pride, who are both inebriate, blinded with the pride of wealth, henpecked and of uncontrolled minds. Since both of them, being the sons of a Lokapala, possessed by ignorance and growing intolerably arrogant, do not feel themselves ashamed of their being naked,—they deserve to be converted into immobile—and let them be so. Even in that immobile state, by my favour they shall not lose recollection of the past. After one hundred celestial years, they will gain the company of Vasudeva, and shall again attain to the condition of the celestials and acquire devotion unto Him. (13—22).

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—Having said as above, the divine-sage Narada repaired to the region of Narayana (Vaikuntha). And since then the said two sons of Kuvera, *viz.*, Nala-

kuvera and Manigriva, became the two trees by the name of Jamala and Arjuna. To make good the words of the divine-sage, who was greatly devoted unto the Lord,—Sri Krishna slowly went where the two trees Jamala and Arjuna were. Since the divine-sage Narada is most beloved unto me, I shall make these two sons of Kuvera what was prophesied by that high-souled Narada. Saying this Krishna went between the two trees (Jamala and Arjuna), and the *Udukhala*, (wooden mortar) which having been tied with his waist was dragged on and upturned. It was dragged with great force after him by Krishna with the rope which was tied round his waist, and by it were uprooted with great velocity the two trees with their trunks and branches trembling and making a great crashing sound. (23—27).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—O Maharaj ! there appeared from out of the said two uprooted trees two persons of immense piety in effulgence like fire ; illumining all the quarters with their wonderful beauty. Then, bowing with their heads down unto Krishna, the Lord of the Universe they divorced from pride and with folded palms began to pray.

The auspicious Jamala-Arjuna (Nalakuvera and Manigriva) said :—O Krishna ! O Krishna ! O thou of great Yoga ! Thou art the Great Prime Purusha. Persons cognisant with Brahman, consider this Universe, manifest and unmanifest as thine form. Thou art the body and soul of all creatures, and the Lord of their senses. Thou art Kala, the Divine One gifted with spiritual wealth, the Eternal Vishnu and Iswara. Thou art Mahat, the Prakriti endued with the qualities of Sattwa, Raja and Tamas. Thou art the Prime Purusha and the lord of all forms of creatures. Thou art above the touch of the qualities. Who endued with qualities can know thee who existeth before the creation of all creatures ?

"Salutation unto thee ! Thou art the Divine Vasudeva, the Supreme Brahman, whose greatness is enshrouded by qualities manifest of themselves. Although having no body and not existing in creatures, his incarnations are perceived in bodies. through his incomparable and great energy, Thou hast incarnated thyself in full for the origin and liberation of all creatures. Thou art the lord of blessings.

"Salutation unto the great auspiciousness, the auspiciousness of the Universe, Vasudeva, the quiescent and the master of Jadus. (28—36).

"O great one ! Know us as the followers of thine servants.

By the mercy of the Divine-sage Narada, we have been able to see thee who art the great Divinity. May our speech be dedicated to the chanting of thy glories ; our ears to the listening of thy holy actions ; our hands to the performance of thine works ; and our mind to thy lotus-feet ; and our head to the salutation of the world as thine abode : and our sight to the seeing of the sages identical with thine form.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having been thus eulogised by them (Nalakuvera and Manigriva), the Divine King of Gokula (Sri Krishna) although tied with the *Udukhala*, (the wooden Mortar) addressed the following to the sons of Kuvera :—

The auspicious Krishna spoke :—I was already informed of the favour extended unto you both by the kind-hearted Narada by a curse of losing all prosperity—you, who were then blinded with the pride of wealth. As an eye is not bound by the sight of the sun. so by my sight, the pious and impartial who have dedicated their souls unto one, are not fettered. Do you, therefore, now proceed to your habitation. O Nalakuvera and Manigriva,—a great devotion for me, as you desire, has been created in you.

Then the auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having been thus addressed, they circumbulating, repeatedly bowing down unto Him and welcoming Him who was tied to the wooden mortar, went towards the North. (37—43).

CHAPTER XI.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DEMONS BATSASURA AND VAKASURA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O foremost of the Kurus ! On hearing the sound caused by the uprooting of the said trees, Nanda and other milkmen, afraid of the falling of a thunderbolt, came there hastily. They saw there the trees, Jamala and Arjuna fallen on the ground and not knowing the cause of the falling though present were bewildered. Not marking his own son tied with rope dragging the wooden mortar and thinking whence might arise this wonderful calamity they were greatly distressed.

The boys present then said :—"We have seen him (Krishna)

dragging the mortar, going between the two trees, and two persons rising thereform."

The milkmen however did not pay any heed to those words of the boys and they thought "The boy cannot uproot these trees"; but some of them became of doubtful minds. (1—5).

On finding his own son bound with a rope and dragging the mortar behind him, Nanda, with a smiling countenance, released him. Thus in his boyish sports the Divine One, like a child, would sometimes dance being encouraged by the damsels, and sometimes being beside himself, used to sing like an instrument. Sometimes being commanded he used to bring articles to them, and again creating the delight of his kinsmen he used to move his arms as if displaying before the men of the world his attachment to his servants. The Lord, with his childish pranks created the delight of Braja.

Once on hearing a person crying "Do you want fruits?" Krishna (Achyuta), the conferer of all fruits, speedily went there with rice in hands to take the fruits. Rice was falling from his hands. On seeing Krishna, the fruit-seller-woman filled his palms with fruits, and instantly thereupon her basket became full of various precious gems and jewels. (6—11).

Krishna one day gone to the bank of the river after the breaking of the trees. Rohini sent for him. Not finding his sons, engaged in sports, coming although repeatedly called, fond of her children as she was, see sent Jashoda for searching the boys. On seeing her own son playing with his elder brother, and other boys of Braja, Jashoda having her breast filled with milk in affection, called him from a distance :—

"O Krishna! O Krishna! O thou having lotus eyes, come suck my breast. No more with sport, thou art now worn out with hunger. It now behoves thee to take thy meals. O Balaram! thou art joy of thy race. Do thou soon come with thy younger brother. Thou didst take thy meals in the morning. Thou shouldst be tired with playing. O my son! the King of Braja is waiting for thee while taking his meals. Do thou please us."

She (Jashada) then said to the other boys present :—"O ye boys, do ye go to your own houses. O my sons, thy bodies have been covered with dust. Go and take bath. (To his son again). To-day is thy birth-day. Having taken thy bath, and being

cleansed, thou shouldst confer kine upon Brahmanas. Behold thy play-mates. How they have been dressed and decorated by by their mothers. Do thou also take bath, take meals, and then again come to play being dressed and decorated like the other boys."

O King ! having her understanding bound by affection, Jashoda, considering the Lord of the Universe as her son, held Krishna (Achyuta) along with Balarama by their hands, took them to the house and performed auspicious ceremonies. (12—20).

Oh Maharaj ! Once perceiving great omens in the huge forest the elderly Gopas headed by Nanda assembled to arrive at a concerted measure for the welfare of Braja. Amongst them there was one Gopa named Upananda, who was elderly in age and wisdom, and conversant with the essence of place, time and object, wishing good unto Balarama and Krishna said :—

"This place should be abandoned by us all wishing the good of Gokula, for here have befallen many calamities leading to the destruction of children. This boy (Krishna) has been fortunately saved from the hands of the she-demon. Putana, slayer of children ; and by the favour of Lord Sri Hari the cart did not fall on him, and he escaped unhurt. He was carried by the Daitya assuming the form of the whirlwind to his sporting place the sky and falling on the rock he was saved by the King of the celestials. That this boy and another getting between the two trees were not killed, was owing to the protection of Achyuta. So long as any other omen does beset Braja, let us with children and younger brothers repair elsewhere. There is one great forest called Brindabana with vast expanse well-suited for animals worthy of being happily resorted to by milkmen, their women and abounding in holy mountains, trees and creepers Let us all go there to-day. Do ye prepare your chariots ; and if you like, do ye send beforehand your precious kine." (21—29).

On hearing his words all the milk-men said :—"Well ! well !" and getting their conveyances ready placing their dresses thereon they all went away.

O king ! having put on there carriages old men, boys, females, and all articles, the milk-men, taking up bows and arrows, placing the kine before them, blowing their bugles and filling all quarters with the sound, all went accompained by priests.

Having got upon the carriages, the Gopikas having their breasts pasted with new *Kumkumas* and necks adorned with *Niskas* and clad in beautiful raiments, sang verses relative to Krishna's pranks; being seated in one car Jashoda and Rohini anxiously listened to the stories of Balarama and Krishna.

Having entered Brindavana, pleasant in all seasons they settled their habitations which appeared like a crescent being encircled by cars; and beholding Brindavana, Gobardhana and the bank of Jamuna,—O king, Rama and Madhava attained to excellent delight. (30—36).

Thus by their sweet-words and childish pranks, they created the delight of the inhabitants of Braja and in time became cow-herd boys. With various articles of play and accompanied by boys of cow-herds, near Braja, they began to tend the kine. Sometimes they used to play on flutes, sometimes play foot-balls, sometimes strike the ground wit[illegible] ir feet adorned with Kinkini and sometimes they wou[illegible] on all forms and imitating sounds of cows and [illegible] sed to fight with one another.

And again sometimes imitating [illegible] creatures they used to rove about like ordinary boys. Once on a time while on the banks of Jamuna, Krishna and Balarama were tending cattle along with their own-mates a demon came there to kill them. Beholding the demon in the guise of a calf in the midst of the other calves, Hari pointed him out to Balarama, and as if not knowing anything they gradually approached the said demon. Then holding its two hind legs along with the tail, Achyuta whirled it for some time and then threw it up at the top of a Kapithwa tree. Then that huge-bodied demon along with the fallen Kapithwa tree fell down with a great crash. (37—43).

Thereupon beholding the said demon to have been so killed, the crow-herd boys were immensely surprised and exclaimed, "well done! well done!" The celestials too, being delighted thereat, showered flowers upon them. They, the prime protectors of all the worlds, becoming cow-herds, taking their morning meals with them, used to rove about tending kine and calves.

Once on a time being desirous of giving water to their own calves, all the boys went to the tank and having made them drink, they themselves also drank the water. All those boys

saw there seated a highly strong bird like unto the summit of a mountain sundered by thunder-bolt and slipped off the mountain. It was a great Asura named Vaka, assuming the form of a bird *Vaka* (crane). That one of fierce beaks and great strength coming up very quickly devoured Krishna. On beholding Krishna to have been possessed by that huge Vakasura, Balarama and other boys became confounded like the senses devoid of life. But it soon vomitted out Krishna the father of the world, who like fire was burning up his throat. Seeing him unhurt Vakasura in great anger soon approached him with the purpose of killing him with its beaks.

Holding Bakasura, the friend of Kansa, who was coming, by the beaks, He, the refuge of the pious, easily tore it into pieces like a twig before the very presence of the boys to the delight of the celestials. Then the inhabitants of the celestial region showered Nan[illegible]na and Mallika flowers upon that slayer of Vakasura, and wi[illegible] sound of conch and Dundubhi chanted his glories. Seeing [illegible] the cow-herd boys were greatly astonished. (44—52).

On finding Krishn[illegible]d from Vaksura and coming to his own place, Balara[illegible]a and other boys regaining their consciousness like unto senses with the return of life, embraced him and then collecting their calves went to Braja and described it to all. On hearing about this miraculous incident, the *Gopas* and *Gopees* were greatly astonished, and drawn by love they curiously looked towards Krishna with eager eyes as if he was coming from the land of dead. They then said, "Oh! various chances of death befell upon this boy, but all those who were dreaded before have met with their end through him (Krishna). The dreadful Danavas have not been able to overpower him—but approaching him with a desire to kill him have themselves been consumed like flies by fire. Oh! never do the words of those conversant with *Brahman* become false; what did the illustrious Garga said has been amply verified."

Thus delightfully recounting the interesting stories of Balarama and Krishna,—Nanda and other milk-men passed their days happily without experiencing the troubles of the world. (53—59).

CHAPTER XII.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF AGHASURA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! once on a time being desirous of taking his early meal in the forest and arousing his playmates with the charming music of his flute, Krishna issued out with the calves going before him. With him thousands of boys filled with love came out in great delight taking more than a thousand calves before them. They had in their hands, strings, horns and rods ; and making their own flock join the numberless flock of Krishna and tending them, they began to sport at various places.

Although they were adorned by their own mothers with crystals, pearls, jems and gold ornaments, still they bedecked themselves anew with flowers, fruits, leaves, peacock-feathers and various other articles. Then pilfering the strings belonging to each other and whatever else they could come to know of, they threw them at a distance and again brought them back in the sportive humour. (1—5).

Whenever Krishna used to go at a distance to see the beauty of the forest they used to sport around him saying "I shall go first ! I shall go first." Some played on flutes, some blew the horns, some sang in accompaniment with the music of black-bees and some emitted mellifluous notes with the cuckoos. Some ran after the shadows of birds, some followed the swans, some sat with cranes and some danced with peacocks. Some pulled the tails of young ones of the monkeys hanging in the tree, some climbed up the trees with them, some made faces with them or jumped from one branch to the other of the trees ; some boys tripped over the streams along with toads, and some laughed at the shadows and cursed the echoes.

Thus, the boys who had accumulated virtues, sported with Krishna, who is the eternal bliss unto the pious, the Deity Self-effulgent unto His devotees and who is again a boy unto those who are under the influence of His own illusive energy. What shall I say of the good luck of the inhabitants of Braja, unto whose perception he has himself come, the dust of whose

feet cannot be attained by ascetics of controlled minds even with austere penances extending over many births. (6—12).

One day while the boys were sporting in the forest one mighty Asura named Agha being unable to bear seeing their delightful sports, came there His weak points were being daily watched over even by the immortals, drinking nectar, being afraid of their lives. Beholding the boys headed by Krishna, that Asura, the younger brother of Putana and Bakasura, despatched by Kansa, thought within his mind—"This must be the slayer of my brother and sister ; I shall slay him to-day together with his calves. Since they have treated my kinsmen, as sesamum and water the inhabitants of Braja are already destroyed ; with the life gone there is no thought for the body ; the children are the lives of those having lives."

Having thus resolved upon and assuming the form of a wonderfully huge *Ajagara* (Snake ; Reptile) extending over a *Yojana*, that wily demon (Agha) lay down on the way with a view to devouring them with an expanded mouth like unto the cave of a mountain. The lower lip extended to the earth and the like upper one touched the clouds and the ends were expanded mountain caves. The teeth of the Ajagara were like the summits of a mountain : the interior of its mouth was like darkness and the tongue was the road thereof ; its breath was the dreadful wind and its eyes looked as hot as the forest fire. (13—17).

On seeing him the boys mistook him to be the presiding deity of Brindaban. They sportively began to discuss about the semblance of the mouth of that *Ajagara*. They said :—"O ye friends ! say, is this one, placed before us, the outcome of the quality of goodness ? Or is he, to devour us, conducting himself like a huge serpent ? This is the truth perhaps. The clouds reddened with the rays of the sun are like its upper lip, and the earth covered with the reflection of the clouds is like its lower lip. The ends of the two lips are competing with the mountain caves and its teeth are like unto the summits of the mountain ; the spacious and extensive highway is like its tongue —and the darkness inside the summits is like the cavity of its mouth. The fierce wind heated by forest fire is like its breath and a bad smell smacking of fish is coming out like that consequent upon animals being burnt by forest fire. Shall it

devour us all who are not to be slain ? Krishna shall soon kill him like Bakasura."

Then looking at the beautiful face of Krishna and clapping their hands smilingly they entered the mouth of the said *Ajagara* (Aghasura). (18—24).

On hearing those words of those boys who were ignorant of the knowledge regarding him, and thinking that the Rakshasa, assuming the form of a serpent, is appearing to his kinsmen, as without existence the Divine Hari, stationed in the minds of the entire Universe, made up his mind to prevent them. In the interval the boys along witn their calves had entered in the belly of the Asura. The boys and the calves were not at once devoured ; because that Rakshasa was then expecting Krishna to enter, remembering the ends of his brother Baka and sister Putana in his hands.

On finding those unfortunate boys having no other way out and going out of his grasp, so as to be converted into twigs for the fire of hunger of Death,—Krishna declaring safety unto all was surprised and stricken with agony considering it as the work of Destiny. Then thinking how the life of this wicked one may be taken and those of the boys saved and arriving at an expedient the All-seeing Hari himself at last entered into the mouth of that Ajagara.

Thereupon, the celestials, behind the clouds stricken with fear bewailed saying "Alas ! Alas !!" But delight at the Asuras such as Kansa and others, the kinsmen of Agha knew no bounds (25—29).

At this the Eternal and Divine Krishna being desirous of destroying it, speedily increased his own form in the throat of that Asura (Ajagara) which contained those boys and the calves. Thereupon the throat of that huge bodied demon was obstructed and his eyes burst out of their sockets. Then he began to run about hither and thither. The wind inside his body was obstructed and was choked to its full ; and in some time it issued out riving the head of the Ajagara. All the vital breaths coming out with the wind, the Divine Mukunda saw all his friends and their calves shorn of their vitality. Then reviving and raising them by his looks, he issued out of the Ajagara's mouth with them.

Illumining the ten quarters with its own effulgence, the quality of purity in the body of that serpent, was waiting in the welkin for the Divine Lord to come out and immediately entered into His form as soon as Krishna came out before the very eyes of all the celestials.

Thereupon the celestials were greatly delighted, and they worshipped Hari who accomplished their objects, with showering of flowers ; the Apsaras with graceful dancing, the songsters with songs, the musicians with music, the Brahmanas with the chanting of His glories and His own followers Garura and others with exclamations of success. Hearing the wonderful chanting of the glories, songs, music, exclamations of joy and other auspicious sounds bespeaking a festivity, Brahma (the creator) immediately came there and was greatly surprised on seeing wonderful feat of the Lord. (30—35).

O King ! the wonderful skin of the Ajagara having been dried up remained for a considerable time as a playful hole to the inhabitants of Braja. This work of releasing himself and the boys with their calves from the hands of death, and the Ajagara from the bonds of the world was accomplished by Krishna when he was a boy of five years of age. But the boys who had witnessed the incident reported the fact in Braja when Krishna was in the sixth year saying "We have seen him to do this to-day.

That Asura named Agha having his sins washed by the touch of Krishna, attained to His own self which cannot be obtained by the impious, is no wonderful action for the Great Lord of mobile and immobile, assuming the form of a boy by His illusive energy. What wonder it is, O my son, since He, Eternal and Great, throwing away Maya by the perception of the joy of His own self, conferred the condition of the Divinity upon Prahlada and other votaries on account of their placing in the mind an image of his auspicious form. (36—39).

The auspicious Suta said :—O ye twice born ones ! On hearing this wonderful story of his saviour, Parikshit who was much moved by it again asked Sukadeva regarding that sacred theme.

The King Parikshit said :—"O Brahman ! how could he (Krishna) think of a past action as immediate ? How could the boys in their sixth year, inform what Hari did in his fifth year ? Forsooth it is Hari's Maya and nothing else ; speak this unto me. O thou preceptor of the great Yogins ! I have great curio-

sity about this. Although we Kshatriyas are greatly blessed on this earth, since we have been dinking repeatedly the ambrosia-like theme about Krishna from thee, our own preceptor.

The auspicious Suta again said :—O King ! the foremost of the votaries of the Lord, having been thus accosted and having all his senses stolen by the remembrance of Ananta, Vadarayani (Sukadeva) regaining with difficulty his external vision, slowly replied. (40—44).

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INFATUATION OF BRAHMA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O thou high-souled one ! O thou foremost of the votaries of the Reverend One ! a very good question has been asked by thee, since by listening again and again to these themes thou art making them new. This constitutes the subject of speech, hearing and thought of the pious appreciating the truth ; like unto a topic of women to males, this sacred theme about Achyuta always appears to them as new.

O King ! hear attentively. I shall relate unto thee the secret, for the preceptors disclose secrets unto their beloved disciples. Having so saved the cow-herd boys from the mouth of *Aghasura*, resembling the death and brought them to the banks of the lake, the Lord (Krishna) said :—

"Ye friends, highly charming is this bank. Here exist all the requisites of our sport. The sands on the bank are very tender and clear, the full blown lotuses here have drawn many birds and black-bees, and all the trees on the bank have been rendered resonant with the echoes of their sound. We should take our meals here, because the day is well-nigh gone and we are stricken with hunger. Drinking water is at no distant place, let the calves slowly graze here and roam about." (1—6).

Saying 'so be it,' making the calves drink and setting them to graze in the green fields, the boys leaving off the strings, began to eat with the Lord (Krishna) in great delight. Arranged rows like a lotus around Krishna, all the boys of Braja sat in that forest with their faces towards him (Krishna) and they all looked like lotus petals. Some boys having converted flowers

unto plates, some leaves, some tender roots, some barks, some strings, and some stones began to partake of their meals.

Having manifested separately the taste of their respective foods, they cutting jokes began to take meals in company with Krishna. He (Krishna) kept the flute between the belly and the cloth thereon, the horn and rod on the left side, a morsel of food mixed with curd in his left hand and Bilva fruits in his fingers ; and being seated in the midst of his friends, he (Krishna) made all laugh with jokes ; the inhabitants of heaven and earth were eagerly looking at that merry-making and eating. While all the cow-herd boys, having their minds fixed on Achyuta, were taking their meals, the calves encouraged in their grazing had wandered away far off into the deep forest overgrown with new grass and leaves. (7—12).

On finding the claves having so wandered away, the cow-herd boys were all afraid in great apprehension, beholding them all stricken with fright, Krishna, who is fear to fear itself, said unto the cow-herd boys :—"O ye friends ! do not desist from thy meals. Take thy food without any anxiety, I shall bring for you all your calves."

Saying this and with the morsel of food in his hands he (Krishna) stayed away in quest of the calves, on mountains, in caves, holes covered with creepers and other places of danger even.

O thou foremost of the Kurus ! the lotus-sprung deity (Brahma) who stationed before in the sky, had seen him (Krishna) release the Asura Agha, with great surprise, and with a view to seeing another achievement of Krishna, in the guise of a boy, pilfered away his calf and all the cow-herd boys from that place, and having kept them elsewhere hid himself.

Thereupon, not finding the calves there and the cow-herd boys who were on the bank of the river, Krishna searched them both on all sides of the forest. Not seeing them anywhere in that forest, neither the claves nor the boys, Krishna knowing the Universe, immediately thought that this must be the work of Brahma.

Then, to satisfy the mothers of the cow-herd boys and also Brahma, Krishna, the Lord and Maker of the Universe, converted himself into the calves and the cow-herd boys. Having exactly changed himself into the small forms of the calves and

the cow-herd boys, their small hands and legs, their horns, rods and strings, their clothes, ornaments, their character, accomplishment, qualities, age and their manner of sporting, the Lord (Krishna) identical with all shone there ; and this evidently proves the saying that Vishnu is identical with the universe.

Having made the cow-herd boys identical with his own self, and the calves equally at one with him, and sporting with his own self, that Great One, the soul of all, entered Braja. Having taken away the the calves separately and placed them in their respective pastures, Krishna made them all enter the folds. Rising up with the sound of his flute, their mothers taking up and embracing with their arms the Great *Brahman* suckled him with their milk which was naturally coming out from their breast in affection and was sweet as the ambrosia and intoxicating like A*sava* wine. With these sports when the evening set in, Krishna with his good conduct, pleased the mothers. The mothers too in their turn, by shampooing, bathing, pasting, adorning, protecting, patting and feeding him, brought him up in every way. The kine also, speedily coming to the pasture lands, looked repeatedly at their calves, and fed with their self-flowing milk their respective calves which had been called and assembled there. (13—24).

The cows and the milk women previously cherished motherly affection towards Krishna now this affection seemed rather more ardent. Hari also previously loved them as his children but now his attachment seemed to be more intense. Thus the affection of the inhabitants of Braja towards their own children exceeded what they had before towards Krishna. It grew up within a year to such an extent that it overcame all limits. Thus having protected himself through his own self under the guise of calves and cow-herd boys, Krishna, the soul of his own soul, sported in the forest and pasture lands for one year. Five or six days before completion of one year,—Krishna with Balarama while tending the calves entered into the forest. Some cows while grazing on the summit of mount *Govardhana* at a distance from the forest, espied their calves grazing near Braja.

Beholding them there all the cows, possessed by affection and forgetting themselves, ran speedily towards Braja with bellowing. Evading the guards they ran across difficult ways

and appeared as having two legs ;—their necks were folded with humps, faces were upwards and milk was falling from their udder. (25—30).

Those cows which were again big with young ones, united with their calves at the foot of the mountain and licking their limbs as if devouring them, gave milk to the calves in great affection. Being ashamed and enraged in consequence of their attempts to obstruct them proving futile, and traversing the difficult thoroughfares, the milkmen ran after them and saw their sons with their calves, with growing attachment and having their minds drenched in affection in seeing them, they embracing those boys with their arms, smelled their heads and attained to great delight.

Thereupon being enveloped with affection the elderly milkmen although desisting from embracing them, began to shed tears while remembering it. (31—34).

Beholding the increasing affection of the inhabitants of Braja, towards the children who were then not in need of suckling, and not knowing the cause thereof, Balaram began to think as follows :—

"What wonder it is ? Why this affection of mine as well as that of the inhabitants of Braja is increasing towards them which was formerly for Vasudeva, the soul of the Universe ? Whose *Maya* (infatuation) is this ? Whence is it come ? Does it belong, to the Gods, men or Asura ? Forsooth this is my Lord's *Maya* (illusion), and of none else, since I have been possessed by it."

Thus thinking, Balarama, with his eyes of knowledge, saw all the calves with his playmates in Vaikuntha. So he observed :—I previously believed that these cow-herd boys are celestials and these calves are Rishis—but now I find thou art manifest in them, O Lord (Krishna) Do thou tell me everything in detail." Thereupon being spoken to in brief by Krishna,—Balarama became informed of all. (35—39).

O King ! then, after the expiration of one year which is but an apology of the limited time in comparison with that of his, the self-sprung (Brahma) saw Hari (Krishna) sporting there with his play-mates as before. Thereupon Brahma thought :—

"All the boys of Gokula along with the calves are lying on

the bed of illusion created by me. Even now they have not risen up. Whence have they all come separated from those who have been possessed by my illusion ? They have been all playing here with Krishna for one year."

Thinking thus, the self-sprung (Brahma) could not by any means distinguish who amongst them were the real boys and who otherwise. So, attempting to spread his illusion over Vishnu (Krishna) enchanting the Universe, although he himself was freed from illusion, the unborn was possessed by his own illusory energy. Like unto darkness begotten of dews in a dark night, the light of a glow-worm in day the inferior Maya of one, who has his Maya fixed on the Great, destroys his energy. (49—45).

Oh Maharaj ! all the boys appeared before the unborn Brahma as of dark colour, wearing yellow silken raiments, having four arms with conch, discus (*Chakra*), mace and lotuses in their hands, and adorned with diadem, kundalas, necklace and garlands of wild flowers. They all shone having arms adorned with *Angadas* (bangles) accompanied with the lustre of *Srivatsa*, hands adorned with jewelled *Kankanas* (bracelets) set in three lines like conch, and *Nupuras*, *Kalakas*, waist ornaments and Rings. They had their feet and hands engarlanded with new Tulasi garlands by votaries whose pieties had been accumulated in various births. With moon-like serene smiles and with sunny sidelong looks they shone, in their qualities of *Sattwa* and *Ragas* as the creators and preservors of the desires of their votaries. All the deities, Brahma and others, the mobile and immobile including even the pillars were worshipping them separately with dancing and singing. They were all endued with *Anima* etc. (eight kinds of spiritual wealth), the energy of ignorance and surrounded by twenty-four *Tatvas* such as *Mahat* and others. They were also adored by those incarnate whose individuality is sunk in the energy of the Lord which is the associate of time, nature, impression, desire, action, quality and other things. They had as their form *Brahman*, who is eternal and at one with knowledge and of unceasing felicity ; and so their greatness was above the touch of persons having divine vision and cognisant of their own selves. Thus the unborn Brahma saw them all as identical with the Great Brahman by whose effulgence, the entire Universe, mobile and immobile, as

manifest. Then having turned his looks in wonder, and having his senses rendered inert by their energy,—he remained silent and appeared as a toy of a golden image of four faces for these boys before the goddess of that village. (46—56).

In this way, the lord of the goddess of learning, above the range of discussion, identical with knowledge by which everything is manifest, above *Prakriti*, devoid of births, and of incomparable energy, being amazed, and unable to see, said :— "What is this ?"

The Lord identical with great energy, knowing this removed the curtain of Maya. Thereupon, regaining his vision outside, Brahma rose up a little like a dead person ; and then opening his eyes with great difficulty saw the universe along with himself. Casting his looks on all sides, all on a sudden he saw Brindaban before him, which was created with divine trees and creepers forming the abode of men and abounding on all sides, with various lovely objects. Human beings, lions, and other creatures that have natural enmity towards each other were living there amicably, from which, on account of its (Brindaban's) habitation of Vishnu, anger, averice and others have fled away. (57—60).

There Brahma saw the Great Brahman assume the guise of a cow-herd boy. Paramesthi saw the one, endless, measureless Lord, roving about with a morsel of food in his hands in quest of his comrades and calves. Beholding him, speedily getting down from his carrier, throwing his body on earth like a golden rod and bowing unto him touching his feet with the tops of his four diadems, he sprinkled him with the auspicious tears of joy. And repeatedly recollecting the glorious deed of the Lord, which he (Brahma) had witnessed erelong, rising again and again, laid himself down at his lotus-feet for a long time. Then gradually rising up, and rubbing his eyes, with his head down, he looked towards the Lord, and then with humility, folded hands and a controlled mind, trembling chanted his glories. (61—64).

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EULOGY OF KRISHNA BY BRAHMA.

The auspicious Brahma said :—O thou praise-worthy One ! I do bow down unto thee, who art possessed of a body like unto the clouds ; whose garment is like unto the lightning ; and who again has the facial appearance enhanced by the wearing of an ear-ring in the ears, and a turban on the head with the feathers of a peacock at its top ; and who hast the garlands of forest-creeper and flowers on thy neck ; and who hast the splendour of thy beauty, made conspicuous by the handling of a cane, a horn, and a flute, and also by the eating of a mouthful of butter.

O Lord ! the touch of thy feet has been mild and thou art the son of the best of the cow-herds. O Sire ! who is able to understand even by the inner-heart, the magnanimity of this thy emanation, from which follows the kindness towards me, and which again is shaped according to the pleasure of those attached to thee ? This thy personality, unlike others of thine, is not inconceivable, although this thy reality is hardly conceivable. Then, O Lord, none in fact can comprehend the greatness of that thy reality, which is imaginable only as the pleasures of the senses themselves. The person who do not make the slightest offorts in the direction of knowing thee, simply have their existence in the listening of thy self-uttered praises ; and remaining where they are, yield to those utterances of thy prayers, while they enter their ears, by bending their bodies and submitting their thought or speech.

They only, O Lord, gain victory over thee in these three worlds, though thou art ungained by others, who perform various observances on thy account. Those unfortunate creatures who neglect the superior paths of virtue, and only endeavour very hard in the acquisition of knowledge regarding thee, have a very painful end. These persons are like unto those who only try with the rough husks and neglect the seeds of rice etc.

O thou Infinite one ! in this world, several individuals, although they were *Yogins*, resigned all their endeavours unto thee, yet they could not realise the mystery of thy knowledge ; but at length , O thou Eternal One, after they had obtained the

knowledge of their own selves by means of their devotedness unto thee, which was the result of the resignation of all their services unto thee and also of their listening to thy prayers incessantly, these Yogins most easily gained that excellent state of their existence that is the condition of their perfect realisation of thy real nature. Therefore it follows that realisation of knowledge can be attained through devotion. (1—5).

O thou Eternal One! although it is too difficult to comprehend thyself, either create or uncreate, yet there is some possibility of realising the greatness of such thy uncreate self, as transcends all the perceiving faculties, by the power of the inner soul, when it is entirely freed from all imperfections. The reason being that, although thou dost not possess any particular form, yet thou art perceptible to the heart only, when it is the same as the soul in character; and that thou art self-manifest, though thou art above all forms. This capability of comprehending thee is possible only as thou art the self-manifesting energy; otherwise nothing can be realised regarding thee.

O Lord! who is able to count thy innumerable virtues, as thou art the father of all good qualities, and as thou hast revealed thyself simply for the benefit of the universe? Even the most skilful persons cannot measure thy qualities during their several existences or within a very long time, if they are likely to number the dusts on the earth, or the snow flakes in the air, or the stars of the heaven.

O Lord! that person only, who always except to receive thy kindness, whilst he is suffering the results of his misdeeds committed by him during his past existence, and who also salutes thee with his body, mind and speech directed towards thee, is worthy of salvation.

O God! O Eternal One! O thou that art the beginning! observe my evil habits in this, that I have scattered my own illusion over thee, who art the supreme soul and himself the mover of all illusions with the desire of viewing my own energy and effulgence; thereby I have really deceived myself; for I have fruitlessly played with thee, even as the flame performs no part of the fire itself.

Hence, O everlasting One, do thou grant me forviveness; for I was born with the predominance of tamas in me; that is, because I am really ignorant. In consequence of this darkness

in me, my eyes which are susceptible to true knowledge are blinded by the vain estimation of my own self, which I suppose to be unborn. This ignorance has also encouraged me to think of a separate God apart from thee. However, be thou kind unto me and excuse, for, O God, thou art my Lord. (6—10).

Measuring seven long spans by myself, my body forms this ellipsoid universe (*Brahmanda*), which is composed of the passive energy, the active or intellectual principle, consciousness, the sky, the atmosphere, heat, water and the earth. Hence, though I pervade the whole universe, yet, O Lord, what I am in comparison with thy magnanimity? Because innumerable universes, like what I describe pass through the orifices of thy body, even as the molecules of dust go through the windows.

Hence, O Lord, be thou kind unto me. O thou who never lapseth! is there any fault in the child, when its feet strike the mother whilst living in her womb? All things of the universe under all appellations are within thy endless womb. In fact nothing rests without thee. Therefore, I too am within thee. Do thou, therefore, graciously tolerate my fault, like a mother excusing the fault of her child. At the time of the destruction of the three worlds, that is, when there was the common deluge of the different oceans, Brahma had sprung from the umbilical cord of the navel of Narayana's abdomen whilst he was lying in the bed of water.' Is this saying untrue? O God! it is not. I have really taken my rise from thee. O God! art thou not Narayana? For thou art the life and soul of all embodied creatures; and also thou art all seeing.

All things, that are derived from thy all pervading self, are the source of water or *Nara*, wherefrom is derived thy appellation of *Narayana*. As thou dost lie on it; so thou art taken to be identical with it. This is real; and it cannot be thy delusion. As a matter of fact, when thy body, which is the same as the universe, did lie on the bed of water (at the time of the Great Flood; the universal deluge), then O All-mighty Lord, I could not have a perfect sight of thee. Or if it so come to pass that the outward look of thee brings forth a thorough knowledge of thy inner self, then why at that time, that is at the end of my efforts, I could not at once realise thy reality? (11—15).

O thou who dost drive away all delusions! during thy present incarnation thou dost allow within thy womb a perfect

manifestation of this entire universe, as it is seen externally. By showing such a manifestation to thy mother (Jashodha) thou dost indeed give forth thy own illusion. With thyself this whole universe is manifest within thy womb, as it is out-wardly seen without thee. As regards thyself, the fact cannot really happen. In truth, the whole cannot be other than thy illusory energy. Keeping thyself back, thou dost show, not only to thy mother but also to me just to-day the superior nature of thy illusion. For, thou art at first single ; and thereafter dost thou turn thyself to the dearest friends and even the calves of Braja. I see them too possessing four arms. But whilst I worship them, I find each of them presiding over so many universes. Now dost thou remain as the immeasurable and unparalleled *Brahman*. Thou art, O God, the most unaffected spirit. Moreover thou dost reveal thyself, casting a peculiar sort of illusion over those who do not know thy reality, even as I do in the beginning of the creation. In this way thou dost manifest thyself during the preservation of the universe ; similarly *Trilochan* (Siva) reveals himself at the time of the destruction of it. O God ! O Lord ! O Destiny ! although thou art unborn, yet thy incarnation as a Divinity, as saintly existences, as human beings, as also in the lower order of animals,—is for the repression of the impious ones and also for granting thy grace unto those devoted to piety. (16—20).

O thou Eternal One ! O almighty Lord ! O Supreme Soul ! O master of the powers of yoga ! Who in the three worlds can penetrate into thy inscrutable mystery ? And how or when or what amount of it he can realise ? For thou dost sport about, spreading the whole of thy delusive energy over all. In consequence of this, the whole universe, which is an embodiment of illusion and is like unto the dream itself, which has the appearance of gloominess, and is full of troubles and vexations, shines most happily and seems to be indestructible ; for it has sprung from thee, who art eternal and ever delightful, and who also art the very personification of knowledge itself. O Lord ! thou art single, and identical with truth, because thou art the very essence.

Again thou art the beginning, because thou art the first ; that is, because thou art present even from before the creation. Also thou art eternal, perfect, imperishable and immortal. Thou

art endless and unparalleled. Thou art the very light itself. Thou art faultless, as also thou art emancipated from all appellations. Those who realise that thou art their common and supreme soul, easily cross over the great ocean of worldly troubles by means of the eyes of knowledge acquired by study from the great teacher, *viz.* the sun.

The whole universe manifests itself on account of the absence of proper knowledge of thyself as one's own soul or personality. On the country, the visible universe disappears of itself respecting that individual, when he indentifies himself with thee in spirit. In fact, this consciousness or unconsciousness of the universe is like unto the erroneous attribution of the nature of a rope to the body of a serpent, according as one is knowing or unknowing of the reality of things. (21—25).

The attachment to the world and the emancipation of the soul are the two sorts of consciousness derived from ignorance ; but they are not other than the truth and consciousness itself. For the individual who identifies himself with the Supreme Spirit, and is delivered from the accompaniment of the gross body, there is no ignorance ; and hence he has no binding with the present existence. That is, where there is no consciousness of the Supreme Soul, there is, in fact, no emancipation of the self, even as there is no day or night in the sun itself.

What a great wonder that one ascribes a gross body unto thee, who art the Supreme Soul, as also he indentifies the Spirit with the gross body ; even as he searches for the lost soul not in the inside of the body itself, but outside of it. This dullness of the ignorant should be marked.

O thou Eternal One! those who are pious have sought after thee within their own gross body, by suppressing what is misgiving in themselves. For without this foregoing there can be no consciousness of reality, even as the recognition of the rope is impossible, if there be no true consciousness of the thing itself. Although salvation is gained only by the unscrupulous conception of thyself, yet, O Lord, that person who is graced by the touch of thy lotus-like feet themselves, only knows the mystery of the magnánimity of thyself, who art possessed of immense energy. In fact, none else has the power of realising thy greatness, even if he continues for ever to meditate upon thyself. O Lord! be it my good fortune that either in my

present existence or during my existences in the lower orders of animals, I may turn out as one of thy persons, and thus I may have the opportunity to worship thy feet that are like unto the tender twigs themselves. (26—30).

Oh! most fortunate are the cows as well as the wives of the cow-herds of Braja; for, O most enlightened one, thou dost drink to thy satiety the ambrosia of milk from the udders of the cows and breast of the milk-maids, even as thou art the offspring of the cows and the child of the milk-maids. But no sort of offerings could satiate thee in that way.

Oh! how good is the luck of the cow-herd Nanda, as well as of the inhabitants of Braja! That embodiment of happiness, that perfect and undecayable *Brahman* has become their dear friend. O thou that never lapseth! Who is able to describe the immensity of their good fortune?

Oh! we too, the eleven gods as well as other celestials headed by Sarva (the presiding diety of *Ahankara*), are in the same way most lucky; for we suck, all at a time, through the vessels of our senses, the sweetest liquor-like honey of thy feet, that are like unto the lotuses themselves. It is equally our good fortune, either to have our being in the present existence, or to take birth in the woods of Gokula; for, in that case, there is some possibility of our being sprinkled with dusts of the feet of some one of those whose life is a continuous devotion unto thee. (31—34).

O thou that art possessed of immense energy! the dusts of thy feet are ever being sought for by the *Srutis*, even up to the present day. O God! brooding over this matter that now thou art going to grant unto these cow-herds a superior kind of prosperity, even superior to thyself, who art an embodiment of all classes of success, our mind gets awfully excited.

When, O Lord, the most vicious Putana Bakasuer Aghasura etc had own thee with all thy relatives, simply by pretending thy devotees; why then will they not prevail upon thee, who have resigned everything unto thyself, *viz.* their homes and riches, friends and relatives, and even their souls, sons and lives, as also their aspirations?

O Krishna! the senses play as thieves; and the homes are no better than prisons; as also the spiritual ignorance is but shackles about the legs, so long as thy men do not surrender

themselves wholly unto thee. O thou all-pervading One! although thou art above all delusions, yet thy act of spreading illusions over the world is but for celebrating the cheers of them all, who have gained upon thee.

O Lord! it behoves me not to talk much on the matter. Let him realise thy nature, who really knows thee. But it is beyond the power of my mind, or of my body or also of my speech, to comprehend the immensity of thy grandeur.

O Krishna! do thou allow me to depart. Thou dost know all; for thou art omniscient. Also thou art the lord of the world. Hence do I surrender unto thee the whole Universe as well as my own body.

O Krishna! O thou that art like unto the sun the promoter of the happiness of the Vrishni race. O thou that dost like unto the Moon influence the expansion of the Earth: the multiplicity of the celestials, the twice-born ones and the beasts, and also the swelling of the oceans: O thou that dost drive away cruelty, which is like unto the nocturnal darkness! O thou that dost slay the Rakshashas on Earth! O thou that dost eclipse the sun himself! O thou that art worthy of a nobler kind of worship! O thou that art the most adorable! do I bow down unto thee till the time of the dissolution of the world. (35—40).

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! thus having chanted his praises, and also having bowed down unto that adorable and Eternal Supreme Soul or *Brahman*, the presrver of the Universe, departed to his own residence after he had thrice gone round him. Thereupon Lord Krishna with the permission of Brahma brought his young companions to bank of the Yamuna. All his friends once more assembled there as before. Although hithertofore his young mates supposed a moment to be a pretty long year, when they were without Krishna, who was their presiding god and their dearest friend, yet now, O king, they, being acted upon by illusion, have considered the whole period of time to be but one-half of a moment. What can they not forget, who almost every moment forget their self under illusion?

The friends of Krishna addressed him saying:—"Do thou come happily! thou dost speedily arrive here. We have not

swallowed up a single mouthful of rice without thee. So do thou come ; and O pious One, do thou eat with us."

Thereupon Hrishikesha smilingly began to eat with his young mates. Thereafter he showed them the skin of a gigantic serpent ; and came back from the woods to Braja. Whilst he entered Gostha, Krishna's body was adorned with flowers and the feathers of a peacock ; as also it was variegated with various colours obtainable in the forest At that time he himself became puffed up with joy, consequent upon the animating sound of his own flute and horn. Then having called his young companions to follow him, who, as they went, sung the sacred songs of his glory, he was beheld by the milk-maids, whose eyes reflected great animation on account of that happy sight.

The son of Jashoda, who was the object of her great joy, slew this day a gigantic serpent, from which also we were saved by him. Thus saying, the boys went away to Braja. (41—48).

The king Parikshit said :—O Brahman ! you said before that the inhabitants of Braja entertained a great love for Krishna, and that their love was rather superior to what they cherished for their own children. So do thou relate unto me how this love for others' son grew in their hearts.

The auspicious Sukadeva replied saying :—O Monarch ! to all living beings the soul is very dear. But as the children, wealth and other things are loved by the soul, these become dear to itself. O foremost of kings ! in consequence of this, the amount of love which the corporeal beings entertain for their own selves is not the same as that they hold for their children, wealth, or homes, although they entirely depend upon their favour.

O best of kings ! the body is dearest unto those persons who assert that the soul and the body are one. But to them not so dear are the things that follow from the body. Although the body is the object of great love, yet it cannot be so dear as the soul itself ; because love for existence becomes very strong, even if the body gets impaired. For this reason simply, the soul should be dearest to all corporeal beings ; and the whole of the mobile and immobile universe is for the soul.

O King ! you know Krishna to be the soul of the entire corporeal existence ; and you should also know that he has revealed

himself here in the shape of man by his own delusive energy for the benefit of the universe. (49—55).

To those persons who know Krishna to be the cause of the mobile and immobile universe, all things seem to be identical with that Omnipotent one. Really they know of no other things in earth but Krishna. The real essence of thing rests with the cause. The Almighty Krishna, again, is the cause of that cause.

Hence, O King; do thou ascertain what there exists that can go beyond Krishna. Those who take shelter under the delicate feet of the enemy of Mura (Asura of that name) of sacred fame, which feet are ever the refuge of great men, obtain the highest state of existence. To them the great ocean of present life seems to be as insignificant as the small volume of water contained in the foot prints of a calf's feet; and in respect to them the troubles also disappear.

Now, O Monarch, I have related unto you what you had asked of me, that is, the whole history of the deeds performed in the sixth year of Hari's boyhood. The person who listens to or studies the doings of the enemy of Mura (Krishna) with his friends, the story of his slaying the Asura named Agha, the manner of his taking food on the green pasture, the fact of understanding his true reality as different from the visible universe, and also the happy recitations of his praises by Brahma,—obtains the highest bliss.

Thus, O King, both Balarama and Krishna passed their childhood in the kingdom of Braja, joining each other in such boyish pranks and pastimes as 'hide and seek,' the construction of artificial dams, and the jumping with the boys. (56—61).

CHAPTER XV.

THE DESTRUCTION OF DHENUKA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! Krishna and Balarama, having attained to their sixth year, were then engaged in Braja in tending cattle. Grazing the kine in company with their mates, they (Krishna and Balarama) greatly sanctified Brindabana with their auspicious tread. Being desirous of

enjoyment, Madhava (Krishna) playing on his flute in company with Balarama, surrounded by the cow-herds singing his glory, having the cattle grazing in front of him, entered into a forest abounding in floral beauty and beneficial to the cattle.

On seeing that forest, echoing with the pleasing notes, sounds, and hums of birds, beasts and bees in which the forest abounded, as also seeing it delightful with the constant sweep of balmy breeze—soothing on account of having come in contact with lake-water translucent like unto the minds of the illustrious ones, and fragrant with the odour of lotuses—the Almighty Lord made up his mind to rove in that forest. There he saw trees decked with the beauty of fresh sprouts and having the tops of their branches kissing the ground of his feet under the heavy load of fruits and flowers. He was struck with wonder and then the Prime Purusha overcome with delight addressed his elder brother (Balarama) said :—

"O foremost of the deities ! yonder trees are bowing down to thy lotus-like feet,—worshipped even by the immortals—with their branches, having approached thee with presents of flowers and fruits. In so doing, methinks, their prayer is that their sins, in consequence of which they are born as trees, may melt away.

"O Prime Purusha ! these bees singing thy praise capable of sanctifying all the worlds, are following thy footsteps. O sinless one ! it appears to me, that the great sages, thy followers cannot leave thee who art their cherished divinity, even when thou art hidden in this forest.

"O praiseworthy One ! yonder dance the peacocks at thy arrival at their home. The female deers, being overwhelmed with joy, are joyfully looking at thee, like unto the wives of the cow-herds ; and the cuckoos the worthy dwellers of the forest, are doing thy pleasure, who hast become their guest.

Surely this is the nature of the good. To-day the ground, underneath thy feet, the grass, the *Virudhas* touched with thy feet, and the trees and the creepers scratched by thy nails, have been crowned with all blessings. The rivers, the mountains, the beasts and the rangers of the sky are blessed being kindly looked at by thee. The wives of the cow-herds are also blessed this day, having come within thy two arms,—a condition coveted even by the gods of prosperity herself." (1—8).

Thus ever joyful and delighted at heart, Krishna with his followers roamed about in the prosperous Brindabana, grazing the cattle on the banks of streams near the mountain. Sometimes on the way in company with *Sankarsana* (Balarama), Krishna would sing imitating the hum of intoxicated bees, while his own achievements would be recited by his followers. Sometimes he would imitate the parrot chattering in pleasing and indistinct notes ; sometimes he would warble in imitation of the cuckoo in charming notes. Sometimes he would imitate the quaking of the sweet-toned swans. Sometimes making his playmates laugh, he would dance in imitation of the dancing peacocks. Sometimes out of delight he would call aloud the name of the cattle grazing in distant pastures, in a voice sonorous like the rumbling of clouds, and pleasing to the kine and cow-herds ; sometimes he would counterfeit the notes of the *Chakora* or the *Krauncha, Chakravaka* or the *Bharadwaja* or the peacock.

Sometimes he would give forth sounds resembling those of beasts frightened by lions and tigers. Sometimes he would afford comfort to his elder brother fatigued with the toil of play, by chafing his feet, after having made his brother lie down on the lap of other young cow-herds. Sometimes holding each other by the hand and laughing, dancing and singing and leaping and jumping, the two brothers would praise the other cow-herds engaged in feats of wrestling. Sometimes being tired with wrestling, they would lie down on the leafy beds under shades of trees, placing their heads on the laps of other cow-herds. Some among the sinless boys would then chafe the feet of that high-souled One (Krishna) ; others having their sins destroyed, would fan him with fans. O Monarch ! others again, with their hearts swelling with affection, would then slowly sing songs suitable to the taste and pleasing to the mind of Krishna. (9—18).

Thus by dint of his illusive powers hiding the identity of his own self, and by deeds vindicating his being a son to the cow-herd, that divinity of godly doings whose lotus-like feet is adored by the goddess of prosperity herself, sported in Braja like a country boy with his country companinons.

One day a cow-herd named Sridama, one of the companions of Balarama and Krishna, and Subala and other cow-herd boys said to the brothers out of their great affection for them :—"O

Rama ! O Rama of wonderful prowess ! O Krishna, the repressor of the wicked ! not far from this place is a great forest abounding in rows of palm trees. Numerous palm-fruits are always falling there and are lying fallen. But these fruits are all monopolised by the evil-souled Asura named *Dhenuka*. O Rama, O Krishna, that Asura of mighty prowess bears a terrible look and surrounded by his kinsmen equal in strength with his own self. O Slayer of thy enemies ! being afraid of that man-eater, people are deprived of pleasure of tasting those fragrant fruits which have never been eaten before. Now, the sweet odour of those fruits has filled the air in all directions. (19 – 25).

"O Krishna ! give some of these fruits unto us, whose appetite have been excited by their fragrance. O Rama ! we have been cherishing a desire to taste those fruits since long. If you approve of our proposal then let us fetch some of the fruits for us."

Hearing the words of their friends and being desirous of fulfilling their cherished desire, Krishna and Balarama surrounded by the cow-herds and with smiling countenance entered the forest of palm trees. After having entered the palm-forest he shook the palm trees with his arms and forcibly caused thereby to drop some palm-fruits, just as an elephant maddened with ichor-shedding fells them by shaking the trees.

On hearing the sound of the falling of palm-fruits, the Asura in the form of an ass came running, while the earth with its mountains trembled underneath his feet. Approaching with great speed, that powerful Asura kicked with his two hind legs on the breast of Balarama. Then that crooked-hearted Asura gave forth the repulsive bray and began to run hither and thither !

O Monarch ! again coming near him (Balarama) and possessed with wrath, the Ass stood with his face turned away from Balarama and out of extreme anger he kicked his hind hoofs on Balarama with all intent to kill him. But this time Balarama caught hold of him by the legs, and then whirling him again and again with one of his hands, he threw the Asura (in the form of that ass) against a palm-tree, thinking that his (the Asura's) life has left him, in consequence of the whirl in the air. Being struck with the corpse of that Asura, that

mighty palm-tree of great height shook and shaking the one standing near it, it fell down broken. The latter shaking fel, down, destroying another and this one again in the same way, broke down. Being struck with the heavy body of that Asural which had been thrown by Balarama with perfect ease, all the trees of the forest shook, as if stirred by a violent tempest. O king! this feat is not marvellous with regard to the endless almighty Lord of the Universe; for in Him is woven so to say this Universe, like unto the warp and weft of a cloth. (26—35).

Thereafter the relations of *Dhenuka* being enraged at the death of their relative, assuming the forms of asses, attacked Krishna and Balarama. O king then Krishna and Balarama with perfect ease caught hold of these assaulting asses by their hind legs, and struck them against the palm-trees. Then the ground of the forest was covered over with palm-fruits, palm-twigs and the dead bodies of the Daityas (Dhenuka and his relations) and resembled the beautiful firmament covered over with clouds.

Having heard of this marvellous achievement of the brothers the sages and others showered flowers on them, sounded musical instrments and began to eulogise them. Then at the death of *Dhenuka*, people were freed from their fear from him, and thereafter enjoyed the palm-fruits and the cattle grazed on the pastures of that forest.

Thereafter Krishna having eyes resembling lotus petals, the recital and audition of whose glory confers religious merits, reentered Braja in company with his elder brother and was praised by his followers, the cow-herds. Seeing Krishna with his locks soiled with dust from the hoofs of cows and decorated with wild flowers and tails of peacocks, and with beautiful glances and charming smiles, and seeing him playing on his flute, and hearing his glories extolled by his followers the wives of the cowherds came in a body, with eyes beaming forth in eagerness. (36—42).

The damsels of Braja drinking with their eyes which may be favourably compared to bees, the honey from the lotus-like countenance of Mukunda, gave up their grief of separation from him during the day. He entered the kingdom of Braja, being welcomed by their homages in the form of bashful smiles, sidelong glances and respectful behaviour,

Then Jashoda and Rohini greatly affectionate towards their sons, pronounced upon them great benedictions suitable to the season, to their hearts' content. Then getting over their fatigue of journeying, by baths and shampoos, the brothers wore beautiful raiments and were decorated with charming garlands, and sprinkled with perfumeries. Then eating the tasteful eatables brought by their mothers, and being belled by them, they lying down on good beds slept in happiness in Braja.

O King ! one day the almighty Krishna in his rambles in the kingdom of Braja surrounded by his other companions except Balarama went near the river Kalindi. Thereupon the cows and the cow-herds oppressed with the heat of the sun and burning with thirst, drank the poisonous and polluted water of that river.

O foremost of the Kurus ! in consequence of their reasons being distracted by Destiny, they touching that poisonous water, fell down lifeless near the banks of that river. On seeing them in that condition the Almighty Krishna, the Lord of all Yoga-prowess, revived his followers by looking at them with his eyes shedding nectar. Being so revived by Krishna, they arose from the banks of the river ; and regaining their memory they were struck with amazement, and looked at one another. O Monarch ! then they considered their regeneration after they had drank poison to be the result of a favourable glance from Govinda. (43—52).

CHAPTER XVI.

DESTRUCTION OF SERPENT KALIYA BY KRISHNA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O King ! the almighty Krishna knowing the waters of the river *Kalindi* to have been poisoned by the great serpent *Kaliya*, and being desirous of purifying it, sent away that serpent from that river.

Thereupon the king Parikshit said :—O Brahman ! relate to us, how did the almighty Lord chastise the serpent in the deep waters of that river as also how did that serpent manage to live in that river for so many Yugas ? O Brahman ! the almighty Lord is all-pervading, and presents himself everywhere at his

unrestrained pleasure. What person is ever satiated by drinking the ambrosia of his great achievements, performed at the time of his tending the kine ?

The auspicious Sukadeva replied saying :—On the bed of the river *Kalindi* there was another lake in which dwelt the serpent *Kaliya*. The water of this river, boiled with the fire of the poison of *Kaliya*, and oppressed by its heated fumes the rangers of the sky (birds etc.) fell down on it, when trying to cross the river. Also, mobile and immobile objects and other creatures, travelling by its shores, were instantaneously killed being touched by the wind rendered poisonous in consequence of having come into contact with its poisonous waves, and moist with particles of its water.

Then Krishna, who had incarnated himself for subduing the wicked-minded ones, seeing that serpent of virulent venom and knowing the waters of the river to have been polluted by his poison, climbed on a *Kadamba* tree. There having girded up his loins tightly, and striking his palms against his muscles, he jumped down from the highest top of the tree on the surface of that poisonous expanse of the water.

Thereupon the waters of that river wherein dwelt that serpent, swelled in consequence of the venom discharged by other serpents who were also in that river and who were terrified at the sudden vehemence of the plunge made by that Great Being (Krishna). O most intelligent monarch ! the water of the river completely flooded a distance of one hundred *Dhanus*. Then its waves were all blackened with venom and presented a terrible spectacle. But all these were mere trifles to that Being (Krishna) of infinite prowess.

O my child ! like unto a mighty elephant, Krishna then swam and played in the water of that river striking it with his club-like arms and thereby producing whirlpools in it. On hearing that noise thus created by Krishna seeing the destruction of his own abode, the serpent *Kaliya*, impatient of bearing such troublesome state of things and being highly enraged encircled Krishna within its mighty coils round his body. (1—9).

The serpent *Kaliya* stinging him in his (Krishna's) vital parts, twisted in his coils that Lord whose personal grace attracts every eye, who was effulgent like unto the clouds, who bore the emblem of *Srivatsa* on his breast, and was clad in a

yellow garment, whose face was beautified in consequence of a smile playing on it, whose two feet were red like unto the filaments of a lotus, and who had been fearlessly sporting in the waters of that river.

On seeing him (Krishna) thus caught in the coils of that terrible serpent and bereft of all efforts, his friends and companions, the cattle-tenders, were greatly distressed; and these people who had resigned their selves, their friends, their wealth, family and desires to Krishna, having intellect bewildered with grief, affliction and fear, began to fall down senseless on the earth. The kine, the oxen and the calves being sorely distressed with grief, began to low aloud. And being terrified and casting their eyes on Krishna they stood motionless shedding incessant tears.

At that time the three kinds of portents and most terrible calamities invaded the kingdom of Braja. Earthquakes became frequent, and meteors shot through the skies, and the limbs of men's bodies trembled, indicating by all these signs the advent of a catastrophe. Then every body spoke of danger as imminent. Seeing these evil-omens, the cow-herds were verily agitated with fear and they resorted to the place of their king Nanda. There they came to know that leaving Balarama behind, Krishna had gone out to graze the cattle. These people, unconscious of the power of Krishna, inferred by seeing these evil omens that Krishna had met with his destruction. (10—14).

They were heart and soul devoted to him; so they were overpowered with grief, affliction and terror. Cherishing immense affection for Krishna, the old, the young, and the females of Braja went out of Gokula, with eager desire of having a sight of Krishna. The potent Balarama seeing the people of Braja so distressed only laughed, but said nothing unto them; for he was conscious of the prowess of his younger brother (Krishna). Then searching for their beloved Krishna, the dwellers of Braja, all arrived at the banks of the river Kalindi by following the route that was indicated to them by the signs of the Lord's tread.

O king! even as the peaceful ascetics follow the path of *Srutis* (Vedas), rejecting entities other than the real one, and only seek the latter, so the cow-herds discriminating

among the prints of the cow's hoof, the impression of the foot of the Lord of the cow-herds by their impression being marked with lotuses, *Java*, *Ankusa*, *Ashani*, and *Dhwaja*,—persued in all haste the route taken by him (Lord of the cow-herds).

Then, from a distance beholding Krishna merged in the water of the river and caught fast in the coils of the snake and effortless, and finding the cow-herd boys standing on all sides with bewildered intellect as also the cattle lowing aloud, the inhabitants of Braja greatly distressed, were deprived of all consciousness. The hearts of the *Gopees* were greatly attached to the endless Almighty Being, and their memory was alive in cherishing his friendship, his charming smiles and glances and pleasing words. So, when their best beloved Krishna was entrapped by the serpent, they burnt with great affliction. And in the absence of their beloved one, the three worlds appeared to them to be totally empty.

Thereafter these damsels, repairing to the mother of Krishna oppressed with grief for her son, sympathised with her and shed torrents of tears of grief. Then recounting the tales of the achievements of Krishna which all the inhabitants of Braja loved to hear, they stood fixing their eyes on the countenance of Krishna and they appeared to be more dead than alive. Then the mighty Balarama, conscious of the prowess of Krishna, seeing Nanda and others—whose life was Krishna—ready to drown themselves in the river Kalindi, prevented them from doing so.

Thus finding his own kingdom of Gokula—that had no other protector save himself—with its women and boys reduced to such a plight, and knowing them (boys and women) verily distressed with grief on his account, and imitating the nature of human beings and waiting for a while, Krishna rose (set himself free) from the coils of the serpent. The body of the serpent suffered extreme pain in consequence of the increasing bulk of Krishna's body. Then leaving him (Krishna) and highly enraged, the serpent Kaliya remained still with his hoods lifted and breathing hot, and gazing fixedly on Krishna. At this stage, venom trickled down the serpent's nasal pits and his eyes were winkless and burning like a heated frying pan; and his mouth was blazing like unto a fire-brand. (15—24).

Like unto the foremost of birds, Garura,—Krishna moved in sport round this serpent, who was licking the two ends of his mouth with his divided fangs, and whose eyes were very terrible and emitting fiery venom. The serpent also moved, watching for an opportunity to bite him. Thus when the strength of the serpent failed in consequence of those movements Krishna (the Prime Purusha) bending the serpent's raised neck ascended on his broad hood.

Then, Krishna, the master of all kinds of dancing, began to dance on the hood of that serpent, having his lotus-like feet rendered reddish by the lustre of the many jewels on the serpent's head. Thereupon, seeing him ready to dance, the wives of the Gandharvas, Siddhas, Sages, Charanas and Celestials, suddenly approached him playing out of delight on *Mridangas*, *Panavas*, *Anakas* and other musical instruments, and singing and praising him with presents of flowers etc. The chastiser of the wicked, Krishna, trampled underneath the tread of his feet, the erect hoods of the hundred-headed serpent, that was moving inspite of his decay of gradual failing of strength.

Then profusely vomitting blood from his mouth and nose, the serpent Kaliya lost all consciousness. Again and again the serpent, breathing audibly out of wrath and shedding venom from his eyes, lifted his hoods, but again and again, dancing and striking by his feet. Krishna pressed them (the erected hoods of the serpent) down. Thereupon he was worshipped with flowers like unto the ancient Male Being (Parama Purusha).

O king! thus when due to the wild dance of Krishna his thousand hoods were rendered powerless, and when he vomitted blood profusely and when his body was smashed, then the serpent in his mind meditating on the preceptor of the mobile and immobile Universe, the Parama Purusha *Narayana*, sought refuge in Him.

Beholding that terrible serpent sinking under the heavy weight of Krishna bearing the Universe inside his womb, and seeing the serpent's umbrella—like hoods ailing with the tread of his (Krishna's) feet, the serpent's wives greatly distressed with their garments and ornaments falling off, and with their hair-knot loosened, sought protection in the Primary Purusha, (Krishna).

Thereafter these chaste wives of the serpent, having their hearts smitten by anxiety and with folded palms, saluted the Lord Krishna by prostrating themselves on the earth and being desirous of saving their sinful husband, and leading their infant children before them, — they sought shelter in him (Krishna) who giveth shelter unto all. (25—32).

The wives of the serpent said :—"O Lord ! the punishment that thou hast inflicted on this sinful husband of ours is deserving of him. Thou dost incarnate thyself for repressing the wicked. Thou seest with an equal eye thy adversaries as well as thine own sons. And after considering the fruits of actions thou dost mete out retributions. Thou hast indeed shown grace unto us. For the punishment, thou inflictest on the wicked, goes to destroy their sins. Thy apparent wrath we take in the light of mercy : for the former will release this creature (our husband) from his state of being a serpent. Indeed in days long goneby, this one devoid of self respect, but showing respect to others, must have undergone some awful asceticism or must have performed some righteous act by way of showing kindness unto all creatures, in consequence of which, thou, the regenerator of beings, art now propitious unto him. Being desirous of a sprinkling of the dust from thy holy feet, the goddess of prosperity (Lakshmi), the most exalted of women, relinquishing all desires, observes great vows and undergoes rigid austerities.

"But, O Lord, we do not know of any meritorious act preformed by our husband which may entitle him to a sprinkling of the dust from thy feet. Those people who attain to the dust of thy feet, do not desire to reach Heaven, or to secure monarchy over the universe, or the state of *Parameśthi*, or the sovereignty over the nether regions, or success in yoga or freedom from repeated births, that is emancipation.

"O Lord ! this chief among the serpents, though sprung out of Tamas (the Principle of Dullness) and though possessed with anger, hath attained to that bliss of being favoured with the sprinkling of the dust from thy feet which is difficult for others to obtain. From such a sprinkling, corporeal beings cherishing desires and whirled on the wheel of life come by all sorts of coveted prosperity.

"Salutations unto the almighty being of supreme soul !

salutations unto thee who art the container and stay of all thing and identical with them ; unto thee who art the sole cause and who dost transcend all causes. Salutations unto thee, the receptacle of mediate and immediate knowledge ; unto thee, the *Brahman*, and of infinite potency. Salutations unto thee who dost transcend the principles, and art above the influence of evolution ; unto thee, who art the regulator of *Prakriti*. Salutations unto thee who art Time, the repository of the energy of time, and the overlooker of the dimensions of Time ; unto thee who art the universe, its superintendent, its modeller and its origin ; salutations unto thee who art unified with the created beings, their senses, their lives, their minds, their understandings, their hearts and their souls. (33—41).

"Salutations unto thee by whom the realisation of the knowledge of the souls and their portion, hath been shrouded with self-consciousness permeated with the three, cardinal principles. Salutations unto thee, the endless and subtle Being, that dost dwell in the elementary ingredients ; unto thee, who art Omnipresent. Salutations unto thee, who art the object of different speculations and debates ; unto thee, who dost constitute the thing predicated and art also the agent that predicates. Salutations unto thee who art the root of the channels of perception, and who art impartial and the source of the Shastras. Salutations unto thee that art simultaneously the *Prabritta*, the *Nibritta* and the *Nigama*. Salutations unto *Krishna*, unto *Rama*, and unto the son of Vasudeva. Salutations unto *Pradyumna*, *Aniruddha* and unto the protector of the devotees. Salutations unto thee who bringest into light (reveals) the inner senses, and unto thee who dost hide thyself underneath these senses ; unto thee who art the superintendent of the Three Principles, and who art known only to thy own self.

"Salutations unto thee whose greatness is beyond the range of debate, and who art the cause and manifestation of actions. O Hrishikesha, Lord of the senses ! salutations unto thee who art a sage and of taciturn nature. Salutations unto thee, who art conversant with the status of the superior and the inferior creations, who art the Superintendent of all things and beings ; unto thee who art permeated and not permeated in this universe, who art its spectator and its cause.

"O Lord ! though inactive, still containing within thyself the energy of Time, thou dost create, preserve and annihilate this universe, through the instrumentality of the principles. Therefore displaying these thy nature of peacefulness, heartlessness etc. in consequence of *Samaskara* (natural propensities) thou art successfully sporting in this world.

"O God ! in these three worlds, the peaceful, the conscienscious and the foolish, all equally constitute thy body, that is they are the means of thy sport. But at the present, the peaceful are thy favourite, for thou art now striving after protecting the religion of the pious, and art looking after their welfare, one single fault committed by his own people, ought to be overlooked by a master.

"O thou of peaceful nature ! it behoveth thee to pardon the fault of this one who committed it being ignorant of thyself. O almighty Lord ! be thou propitious unto our husband. This serpent is about to give up his life. Spare the life of our husband, as we are helpless women ; and as by our sorrow we shall create sorrow in the minds of the pious. Ordain what we, thy maids, shall do ? We shall abide by thy commands. Executing thy commands with respect, a person is liberated from fear from every source." (42—51).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having been so eulogised by the wives of the serpent, the Almighty Lord left the swooning serpent (Kaliya), whose head was smashed with the kick of his feet. Regaining his senses and life, the miserable *Kaliya* breathing with great difficulty and with his hands folded, mildly said unto Krishna as follows :—

"O Lord ! we are evil-minded from our birth and our anger lasts long as it springs from the principle of Dullness. O Lord ! it is difficult for created beings to relinquish their nature ; for like an evil spirit it does possess them. O Creator ! this universe, the outcome and manifestation of three principles, is created by thee, and it is replete with various natures, prowess, energy, sources,seeds, desires and forms. O Lord ! in this universe, we who are ourselves bewildered by thy illusive power, renounce it which it is difficult to renounce. O Lord ! thou art the cause of the renouncement of the energy of illusion ; thou art omniscient and the Lord of the universe. Ordain grace or chastisement unto us, whichever of the two, thou mayst think meet." (52—59).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :— O king ! having heard those words of the serpent (Kaliya), the Almighty Lord who had assumed the human form for the performance of this act, then commanded the serpent thus :—

"O serpent ! you should not stay here. Repair in all haste to the ocean, with thy kinsmen, sons, wives and friends. This river (Kalindi) shall be for the use of the kine and human beings. Whatsoever mortal being, remembering this my injunction on thee, shall recite it during the periods of both the twilights, shall have nothing to fear from thy race. Whoever performing ablutions in the waters of this river in which I have played, shall offer oblations with its water to the celestials and their ancestral manes, and whatsoever person, after having observed a fast and meditating on me, shall adore me, shall be released from all their sins. Leaving this river, take shelter in the island of *Ramanaka*. That *Garura* in terror of whom thou didst hide thyself in this river shall not devour thee now as thou bearest the mark of my feet.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O monarch ! being released by the Almighty Krishna of wonderful achievements, the serpent *Kaliya* and his wives were greatly delighted, and they adored him (Krishna) with great pomp. Then worshipping the Lord of the Universe with fine raiments, garlands, jewels, various ornaments, incense and unguents, and valuable coral-necklaces, they propitiated the Divinity having Garura for his carrier. Thereafter enraptured and with his permission and circumbulating and greeting him (Krishna),—the Serpent *Kaliya* with his wives, friends and sons, repaired to the island of Ramanaka in the midst of the ocean.

From that time forward the water of the river Jamuna became free from poison, and it turned as tasteful as nectar through the grace of the Almighty Lord (Krishna) who out of sport assumed human form. (60—67).

CHAPTER XVII.

SWALLOWING UP OF FOREST FIRE BY KRISHNA.

The king Parikshit enquired saying,—"O Brahman ! why did the Serpent Kaliya left their place of habitation for the island Ramanaka, and what offence did he commit to Garura ?"

The auspicious Sukadeva replied saying :—O thou mighty armed king ! in every dark and light fortnight of a month, the Nagas (serpents) used to give unto the high-souled Garura, their respective portions of the food which, as agreed, was offered of their subjects at the root of the tree every month to avoid their agression. Possessed by pride originating from venom and energy, Kadru's son (the Serpent Kaliya) disregarded Garura and himself partook of the food offered by others unto him, far less to speak of his offering the food and respect himself unto Garura.

Having heard of this, O king, the divine Garura, beloved of Lord Sri Hari, became angry and bent upon killing him, speedily approached the Serpent Kaliya. Thereupon Kaliya having a venomous weapon with a numberless uplifted hoods faced Garura quickly, and having tooth for the poisoned weapon, dreadful tongue, long breath and hard eyes,—Kaliya tried to bite Garura with his venomous tongue. Having stopped the serpent from his attempt, Garura gifted with great velocity and the carrier of the slayer of Madhu, hurt the son of Kadru (Kaliya) with a stroke of his left wing resplendent like gold. Being struck by the wing of Garura and greatly overwhelmed with fear, Kaliya entered into the waters of Kalindi which cannot be reached and entered into by Garura. (1—8).

O king ! Once on a time while Garura was pursuing a fish with intent to devour it, he was prevented in doing so by a sage named Sauvari. But being under the pangs of hunger Garura did not stop and he ate the fish. The husband of the fishes being so devoured by Garura, the females of the fish were stricken with great sorrow. On finding the fishes so greatly overwhelmed with sorrow, and out of great compassion for them, the sage Sauvari wishing their well-being said—"If Garura ever enters here and eats fishes, he shall die immediately ; this I say for certain."

Only the serpent Kaliya knew this and none else. Being

afraid of Garura, the serpent Kaliya lived there from a long time until he was at the end exiled from that lake by Krishna. Beholding Krishna wearing celestial raiment, garland and perfumes, adorned with gold and excellent pearls and gems, issuing out of the lake Kalindi,—the milk-men like unto senses returning with the return of vital breath, stood up and delightedly embraced Krishna.

O Kaurava ! Obtaining Krishna, Jashoda, Rohini, Nanda and other milk-men and women again became active like unto the dry trees regaining signs of life. Balarama, apprised of Krishna's prowess, smiled and accorded warm embrace unto him (Achyuta) and placing him on his lap looked upon him again and again out of deep love. On seeing Krishna, the kine, the bulls and the calves also attained to a great delight.

Then the preceptors and the other Brahmanas with their wives approached Nanda and said—"O king ! by thy good fortune, thy son, possessed by Kaliya, has been released. In his welfare you should give away wealth, women and kine etc. unto the Brahmanas." And on this the King Nanda was overwhelmed with joy and gave away in numbers kine, bull, clothes, ornaments and wealth unto the Brahmanas. (9—18).

The chaste and noble Jashoda having regained her lost son, embracing and placing him on her lap, continually shed tears of joy on his head. O king ! although worn out with hunger and thirst, the inhabitants of Braja and also the kine spent that night on the banks of Kalindi.

Thereupon at the dead of night a forest-fire, originating from Sactu forest and encircling them on all sides, was about to burn down the inhabitants of Braja who were asleep. Touched by fire and waking up suddenly with great anxiety, the inhabitants of Braja thus sought the refuge of Krishna, assuming a human form by dint of his illusory will (Maya).

The inhabitants of Braja (the Gopas and Gopees) said—"O Krishna ! O great One ! O Rama ! O thou of immeasurable prowess, this dreadful forest-fire is about to devour us who are thy dependents. O Lord ! dost thou save us who are thy friends and kinsmen from this dreadful fire of dissolution, so to say. We do not fear to give up our bodies, but we do not like to be separated from the Lord's feet."

Beholding such affliction and hearing the words of resignation as above of his kinsmen,—Lord Krishna of endless energies drank that forest-fire up. (19—25).

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ASURA NAMED PRALAMBA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! thus Krishna having been surrounded by his relatives who had been singing his glory, with delight entered the kingdom of Braja beautified by the king. When Krishna and Balarama were thus sporting in that kingdom under the guise of cow-herd boys through their energy of illusion, the summer season, which is very much disliked by corporeal beings, set in. But by the virtue of Brindabana where the Almighty Lord (Krishna) with Balarama had been sporting, it (the summer season) appeared there as spring time. For even then, on the advent of summer, the kingdom of Braja echoed with the sounds of the cascades that even drowned the jingling of the crickets. It was decorated with trees sprinkled with the particles of water of the cascades. The dwellers of that pasture overgrown with green grass, did not at all feel any burning sensation from the scorching rays of the sun, or summer heat ; for a pleasant breeze, moistened with the sprays of cascades, rivers and lakes, and fragrant with pollens of white lilies, blue lotuses, and other aquatic flowers, was constantly blowing there. The burning rays of the sun, fierce like some virulent poison, were not capable of robbing the moisture and greenness of the soil ; for the soil was always covered with silt, produced by the crumbling of banks against which dashed the waves of deep watered lakes.

There, being desirous of sport, the almighty Krishna in company with Balarama and being surrounded by cow-herd boys and cows, playing on his flute, entered the beautiul forest decked with floral beauty, and resounding with notes and roars of diverse kinds of birds and beasts ; and where bees and peacocks were singing, and cuckoos and *Sarasas* were warbling. (1—8).

After having entered the forest, they decorated their persons with foliage, peacock-tails, nose-gays, garlands, and red

ointment ; and then they with other cow-herd boys began to dance, sing, and wrestle. When Krishna would dance, some of the boys would sing and the others would play on musical instruments ; some else would again cheer him up with claps, and play on flutes and blow horns.

O king ! the celestials, disguised as cow-herds, worshipped Krishna and Balarama, who had also assumed forms of cow-herd boys, like unto the minor actors praising the principal ones. With their heads as glossy black as the feathers of crows (*Kakapaksha*), Krishna and Balarama, would sport by running, jumping, leaping, striking their arms with their hands, and tugging one another and wrestling amongst themselves.

O Monarch ! at times when others would dance, Krishna and Balarama, both would perform the part of singers and players on musical instruments. They would then encourage them saying "well-done", "well-done", etc. Sometimes they would play with *bel*-fruit, and sometimes with *Kumbah* fruit, sometimes they would play the "Blind man's buff" and would engage themselves in other kinds of pastimes. Sometimes they would play with handfuls of *Amalaki* fruit. At other times again they would play imitating birds and beasts. Sometimes they would play leaping like frogs, and sometimes, by exchanging jokes and repartees. Sometimes, they would sport rocking and swinging ; and sometimes they would play imitating the duties and functions of kings. Thus engaging themselves in these well-known pastimes, they sported in the rivers and lakes of the Brindabana, on its mountains and in their caverns, in groves and gardens and in lakes. (9—16).

One day when in company of other cow-herd boys, Krishna and Balarama had been tending the cattle,—an Asura named Pralamba came there under the guise of a cow-herd, being desirous of capturing the brothers, Krishna, the all-seeing and Almighty Lord, knowing the intentions of the Asura and deciding to kill him, accepted his friendly advances. Then Krishna who was expert in all kinds of games, addressing the cow-herd boys, said as follows :

"What ho cow-herds ! let us play in parties of two each, formed according to age and strength." Then the cow-herds made Balarama and Krishna their leaders. Some sided with

Krishna and the others with Balarama. They then indulged in various sorts of pastimes, in which the winners rode on the shoulders of the members of the defeated party. The principal feature of these pastimes was that one should carry another on his back.

In this way, carried by and carrying one another and tending the cattle, they with Krishna at their head approached the banian tree named *Bandiraka*. O king! the partisans of Balarama *Sridama*, *Brishaba*, and others became victorious, and the partisans of Krishna bore them on their back. The Almighty Krishna, being defeated in the game, bore *Sridama* on his back and *Bhadrasena* bore *Brishaba* and the Asura *Pralamba* (in the guise of a cow-herd boy) bore the son of *Rohini* (Balarama). Pralamba, the foremost of the Asuras, finding the sight of Krishna to be unbearable, speedily went to a distant place, bearing Balarama on his back. But the speed of the mighty Asura soon slackened owing to his bearing Balarama who was heavy like a mountain.

The Asura then assumed his real form and was decorated with gold ornaments. Then he shone forth like a cloud lustrous with the flashes of lightning, and bearing the radiant moon on it. Seeing the body of the Asura of portentious dimensions, with burning eye balls, and frowning countenance and terrible teeth, and with hair resembling the tongues of blazing flames of fire and beautified with the rays of the gems of his *Kirita* (diadem) and *Kundala* (ear-ring), *Haladhara* (Balarama) was a little frightened. The next moment, regaining his natural composure, fearless and courageous, Balarama struck a heavy blow on the head of his enemy who had been carrying him away from his friends, even as the king of the celestials (Indra) had struck the flying mountains with his thunder bolt. The moment the blow fell, the head of the Asura was shattered to pieces; and vomitting blood, the Asura soon lost his senses. Then giving forth a terrific roar, and deprived of his life, the Asura fell down, like unto a mountain smitten with the weapon of Indra.

On finding the Asura Pralamba slain by the powerful Balarama, all the cow-herds were astonished and they exclaimed 'well-done', 'well-done'. They praised him, after having pronounced benedictions on him who was worthy of them. Then

embracing him, whom they considered as returned from the region of Death, they were overwhelmed with affection. The celestials were highly pleased at the death of the sinful Asura, and they showered garlands of flowers on Balarama and they also praised him exclaiming 'well-done', 'well-done'. (17—32).

CHAPTER XIX

THE RELEASE OF THE CATTLE AND THE BOYS FROM FOREST-FIRE BY KRISHNA.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! when the cow-herd boys were deeply engaged in play, the cattle grazed in distant pastures. Freely roving about here and there, the herd of cows then entered into a cavern of a mountain, being tempted by fresh grass growing inside it. The goats, the cows, the buffaloes, wandered from forest to forest. But suddenly oppressed with the heat of the forest conflagration and becoming thirsty, these herds entered into a pasture overgrown with grass. Thereupon the cow-herd boys with Balarama and Krishna at their head, not finding the cattle became very much anxious ; for even after a careful search, they were not able to find any trace of the herd.

Then the cow-herds were bewildered at the loss of their charge. They followed the track of the cattle as marked by the grass torn by their teeth and hoofs and impressions of foot marks on the ground. They found their own herd gone astray and lowing in a thicket of reeds. Though they were all fatigued and thirsty, they did not come back from that place. The cattle, called by the almighty lord in a voice deep like the rumbling of clouds, and hearing the sound of their names, became very much delighted and answered the call by lowing.

At that time a terrible conflagration, destructive of the dwellers of the forest, raged there without any feasible cause. That great conflagration, helped by a strong wind, seemed to be desirous of licking with its dreadful tongues (flames) the mobile and immobile objects of the forest. On seeing that terrible conflagration raging on all sides of them, the cow-herds and the cattle were greatly frightened ; and they said unto Balarama and Krishna, seeking protection from them, even as people oppressed with the fear of death seek shelter in Lord Srī Hari.

O Krishna, O Krishna, O Rama of infallible prowess! Ye ought to protect us who are burning in this conflagration and have sought shelter in Ye. O Krishna! we are thy friends, and therefore at least, do not deserve destruction. O thou versed in all duty! we possess none, except thy self, as our Master! thou art our sole protector." (1—10).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having heard these piteous words of his friends, the almighty Lord Krishna said :—Be not afraid, but shut your eyes."

Then saying "Yes" to his commands, they closed their eyes. Thereupon almighty Sri Krishna, the Lord of all *Yoga*, drank up that fire by his mouth and thus saved his followers from that great danger.

Thereafter the cow-herd boys opening their eyes, saw that they were staying in the *Vandira* forest. And finding themselves and the cattle freed from all danger, they were greatly amazed. Beholding Krishna's mastery of the *Yoga* which had been given to him by the goddess *Yogamaya* and seeing themselves saved from the forest conflagration, they considered Krishna to be an immortal.

In the evening, driving the cattle homewards and playing on the flute, Krishna with Balarama came back to Braja while the other cow-herd boys sang in his praise. Having seen Krishna the wives of the cow-herds were overcome with delight; for moments appeared to them to be ages when they were separated from Krishna. (11—16)

CHAPTER XX.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RAINY AND THE AUTUMN SEASON

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O King! the marvellous achievements of Krishna and Balarama, the liberation of their own selves by the brothers from the forest conflagration and the destruction of Pralamba,—these the cow-herds re-hearsed to their wives. Having listened to the accounts, the elderly cow-herds and cow-herd-women were struck with wonder. Thence forward they looked upon Krishna and Balarama as two foremostamong the celestials, born in the kingdom of Braja,

Then set in the rainy season, the regenerator of all things, during which the cardinal quarters become clear and washed, and the sky is interspersed with clouds. The concave sphere, overspread with deep blue rain-clouds emitting thunder and flashes of lightning, became hazy, and with its splendour veiled over, it shown like unto *Brahman* existing behind the principles of goodness, energy and dullness. The wealth of moisture of the earth, which the sun had sucked by his rays during the other eight months of the year, is now, in proper time, poured down by the rain-cloud *Parjanya*.

Then mighty and large clouds charged with lightning and agitated by violent gusts of winds, poured down their life-giving and soothing contents, as if struck with pity at the parched condition of the earth. Just as the body of one under-going austere asceticism, increases in bulk when success is attained by him, so the earth parched with the heat of summer, now swelled up owing to its being drenched with rain-water. As during the age of Kali, sinful wretches and not learned Brahmanas, hold sway,—so during the rainy season at the approach of sable night, the glow-worms and not the stars, shine forth. On hearing the rumbling of the rain-cloud *Parjanya*, the frogs that had so long remained silent, now began to croak forth aloud like unto the disciples of Brahmanas reading aloud at the end of their daily duties. (1—9.)

The streamlets that had been dried up, now overflowed their banks, and flowed in a wrong channel even as the bodies and wealth of persons enslaved by their passions are employed in a wrong direction. At some places the earth seemed to be green being covered with verdant grass; at other places it appeared to be red, being infested by the insect known as *Indra-goha*. At some places the earth being covered with umbrella-like-growths, it seemed to have imitated the prosperity of kings.

The fields by yielding plenty of corn afforded delight to the cultivators. But these peasants who do not know that the growth of corn entirely depends on destiny, would greatly repent when the corn wither in consequence of a draught.

All beings, dwelling in water and on land, assumed beautiful appearance being drenched with the fresh rain water, even as persons worshipping Hari appear to be very beautiful. Like

unto the heart of an inexperienced *Yogin* agitated with the influence of passions and attachment for worldly objects, the oceans became agitated owing to the river flowing in them and the wind producing waves in them. Struck with continuous showers of rain, the mountains did not suffer, even as persons having their hearts engrossed in Lord Adhokshaja do not suffer when visited with the greatest of calamities. The paths and thoroughfares for want of repairs and being overgrown with grass became sources of apprehensions, like unto the *Srutis* (the Vedas) not perused by the Brahmanas being neglected in course of time.

Just as harlots cannot ensnare pious people, so the moving flashes of lightning were not able to establish themselves steadily in the clouds, the friends of people. The rainbow though having no string on it, shone forth as having one, the heavens resounding with the sound of thunder, even as the Prime Purusha transcending the Principles, that is manifesting himself in this visible universe resulting out of the principles, Just as the soul overcome by egoism generated by individual consciousness, does not shine forth and is not emancipated, so the moon did not shine forth being veiled over by clouds silvery with its own beams. (10—19).

Like unto the house-holders vexed and disgusted with their stereotyped mode of existence, who are delighted when devotees of *Achyuta* (Sri Hari) become their guests, the peacocks uttered joyous notes at the joyful occasion of the rising of the clouds. The tress, drinking juice from the soil by their roots, assumed many new forms, that has become covered with fresh foliage and branches, even as persons lean and emaciated with asceticism become bulky and stout on attaining the fruition of their desires.

Just as persons illiterate and of perverse hearts dwell in homes beset with diverse duties, so the cranes dwelt even in lakes having roused their beaks covered with mud and thorny plants. When the celestial king Indra continued to pour down showers on the earth, the dams and bridges were destroyed and broken through by strong currents of water, even as in the age of *Kali* the sophistical arguments of the wicked break through the paths of righteousness as chalked out in the Vedas. Just as the lords of people accept, in proper season, the advice offered by the regenerate ones, so the clouds driven by the wind,

showered down in proper time, their nectareous contents on people.

One day during this season, being desirous of holding sport, Krishna in company with Balarama and surrounded by the kine and the cow-herds entered in a forest luxuriant and furnished with ripe dates *Jambu* fruits (Black-berries). The milch cows were winding slowly owing to the heaviness of their udders ; but being called by almighty Krishna, they were moving with speed, their udders then oozing out milk out of affection. The dwellers of the forest were greatly delighted and the trees therein secreted honey. Cascades were falling down from the mountains. The Almighty Lord (Krishna) saw all these. The caverns of the mountains there were echoing with the sounds of the cataracts.

When the forest showers would overtake him (Krishna), he used to take shelter underneath a large tree, or would enter in a mountain cave. He wandered in the forest eating fruits and radishes and such other esculent roots. When curds and rice were brought before him, he used to eat them sitting on pieces of rocks near the water in company with *Sankarshanadeva* (Balarama) and other cow-herds. The Lord (Krishna) saw the oxen, the calves and the milch-cows fatigued with the weight of their udders, lie down on the green pastures and ruminate with their eyes half-closed. He saw them contented in every respect.

Then beholding the beauty of the rainy season, he welcomed it that had been enhanced by his own powers. Thus when Balarama and Krishna had been dwelling in the kingdom of Braja, passing their days in great delight of sport, the autumn season set in. At the advent of the autumn season chasing away the clouds from the sky, the water of lakes etc. appeared translucent and the atmosphere was purged of all dusts or other impurities. (20—32).

Owing to the autumnal blooming of lotuses, the water of lakes and rivers etc. regained their real natural beauty even as the hearts of morally fallen persons regain their real nature (free from dross etc.) by the performance of *Yoga*. Just as devotion towards Krishna, discards the misery of the different orders of persons, so the autumn season drove away the clouds from the skies, prevented the crowding together of beings, dried up the mud of the earth, and cleansed the dirt of the water.

The clouds, renouncing everything else, shone forth with a white lustre, like unto peaceful sages renouncing all desires and freed from all sins. Just as the wise people sometimes impart the nectar-like knowledge they have secured and sometimes do not do so, similarly the mountains at some places supplied pure water and at other places they gave nothing.

The animals that lived in shallow pools did not perceive its water diminish even as men occupied in maintaining their relatives, do not perceive in their zeal that their duration of life was diminishing day by day. Just as poor and niggardly persons of unsubdued passions occupied in supporting their relatives do not perceive the misery they are suffering therefor, so the animals that lived in shallow water, were not oppressed with the heat of the autumnal sun.

Gradually the soil gave up moisture and the *Virudhas* their unripe condition, even as wise people discard the sense of distinction indexed by such terms as "I," "mine" etc. regarding the body which is really unreal. On the appearance of the autumn, the water of the ocean became calm and it became tranquil, even as a sage becomes silent when his soul ceases to perform acts. (33—40).

Just as the *Yogins* obtaining knowledge through the instrumentality of the senses, assimilate it by subduing the senses, so the farmers drawing water from the swamps retained it in their farms by strong dykes. As self-knowledge does away with the misery consequent upon the pride in the body, and as Mukunda dispells the grief of the damsels of Braja by his presence, so the moon relieved the pain of the creatures, caused by the rays of the autumnal sun. The sky, from which clouds had been chased away, shone forth with bright autumnal stars, like unto one connected with the principle of goodness and capable of comprehending the nature of *Savda Brahman*.

In the heavens, the moon in a perfect circle-like shape shone forth, being surrounded by stars, even as Krishna the Lord of the Jadus ruled on earth, being surrounded by the circle of Jadus. As the Gopees whose hearts had been stolen by the Krishna, renounced all grief by embracing him in their minds ; so people enjoying a breeze coming from flower gardens, and equally hot and cold, gave up all fatigue.

Just as action performed for the adoration of God, being

impregnated by the merits accruing from them, bring about our objects of desire, so the heifer and other female birds and animals, bore on the advent of autumn, offsprings being forcibly impregnated by their respective males.

O king ! like unto other people, except the thieves, becoming fearless on the installation of a king, other aquatic flowers except the Kumuda, bloomed forth when the sun rose in the skies. Owing to the celebration of *Agrayana* and other customary festivities, the grounds were covered with the beauty of ripe corn ; but the earth was all the more beautiful, for on it were born Krishna and Balarama, who are incarnations of Lord Sri Hari. As persons successful in the performance of *Yoga* are prevented by their ordained duration of life from attaining to such bodies as their success deserved ; but as they attain to them in proper time, so the merchants, the sages, the kings, and the *Snatakas*, who had been shut up in their houses owing to the heavy pouring of rains, now went abroad to attend to their respective duties. (41—49).

CHAPTER XXI

SINGING OF KRISHNA'S PRAISES BY THE MILK-WOMEN.

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—Being thus surrounded by the kine and the cow-herd boys, Krishna entered into Brindavana where the lake-waters were rendered translucent on the advent of the autumn and where a breeze, laden with the fragrance of lotuses, was continually blowing. The trees therein were decorated with floral wealth, and the lakes, rivers and mountains rang with the humming and chirping of enraptured bees and birds. Wandering deeper and deeper into that forest, *Madhupati* (Krishna) grazed the cattle in company with Balarama and other cow-herds, playing charmingly on his flute. On hearing the music of his flute, the damsels of Braja came there under the spell of *Cupid* (the god of love). Some among them in the absence of Krishna, began to rehearse unto their confidents the achievements of Krishna. But attempting to describe his deeds, they failed to do so remembering the dalliances he held with them.

O king! their hearts were distracted by the rankness of their passions. They thought :—'Wearing a head-gear made of peacock's tail, and bearing a very graceful and charming person, having his ears decorated with *Karnikar* flower, clad in raiments, yellow-like molten gold, wearing a garland of heavenly flowers, filling the holes of his flute with the nectar dropping from his lips and surrounded by the cow-herds and being eulogised by them, Krishna is entering Brindabana rendered all the more charming by the impressions of his feet!' O king! in this way, the damsels of Braja, hearing the music of his (Krishna's) flute capable of stealing the hearts of creatures, and describing his deeds, embraced him in their minds. (1—6).

The Gopees (milk-women) said :—O friends! we cannot conceive of any greater felicity possible for the eyes of those having eyes, than to have a look at the most charming thing; and whoever have looked at the faces,—from which lustful side-long glances are thrown and which are always playing on the flute—of the twin sons of the king of Braja, when they enter it, surrounded by their play-mates of equal age and behind the cattle have realised this felicity. Wearing garments interwined with garlands made of *Chutas* (fresh lives of mangoe), corals, peacock's feathers, blossoms, lilies and lotuses, and thus appearing to be beautifully decked and singing, they shone in the midst of the cattle and the cow-herds, like unto two actors on the stage.

O Gopees! what act of great merit hath this flute performed, in consequence of which, it is drinking the nectar from the lips of Damodara, without leaving the smallest particle for the Gopees, the rightful enjoyers of it? Seeing its prosperity, the rivers from which the bamboo of the flute had drawn its sap are displaying delight by the blossoming of lotuses in them, and the bamboo trees out of which the flute is made are shedding tears of joy in the form of juice, even as the elderly people of a family are delighted and shed tears of joy when a child devoted to *Narayana* is born in their family.

O friends! the glory of the earth is now enhanced by Brindabana, which has obtained all prosperity from the lotus-like feet of the son of Devaki and where on the summits of mountains the animals have ceased to move and exert, beholding the dances of the delighted peacocks to the music of Krishna's

flute. Blessed are these hinds (the females of the stags) inspite of their being born in the animal species; for listening to the notes of his flutes, they with their males, the *Krishnasaras*, are approaching the son of Nanda vested in variegated garments, and are drawing adoration from him for casting lustful glances towards him. Beholding Krishna of handsome appearance and graceful manners capable of enhancing the joys of the ladies, and listening to the music of his flute and to his melodious and faultless song, even celestial damsels,—that range through the heavens—when seated on the laps of the deities lose all patience and become senseless coming under the spell of Cupid and chaplets of flowers fall off from their braided hair, and the *nibi* (loin-cloth) on their persons drop down. The cows drinking with their raised ears the melodious music of the flute sounded by the breath of Krishna, and the calves holding in their mouths the milk sucked from the udders of their mothers, stood motionless as if they were paralysed; tears rolled down their cheeks for perceiving Krishna by their eyes, and they embraced him in their minds. (7—13).

O dear friends! surely what birds there are in the forest, they ought to be reckoned as sages, for exerting themselves in manner so as to obtain a sight of Krishna and perched on the branches of trees covered with fresh foliage; with their eyes shut and setting up warbling, they are listening to the melodious music of the flute sounded by Krishna. Even the rivers having listened to the songs of Krishna, are displaying their passion for him by their meandering courses; their currents have also diminished in strength on account of desire being excited in them. Carrying lotuses as presents for him, they are embracing those two feet of the adversary of the Asura named Mura by arms consisting of their tarrying waves.

On seeing Krishna playing on the flute, and tending the cattle in company with Balarama and other cow-herds, in the scorching rays of the sun, the rain-clouds rose in the skies out of affection for their friend Krishna; and by their shadow they served the purpose of his umbrella, and they then cooled him by pouring down their flower like drops. Blessed are the wives of the foresters; for though afflicted with desire excited by the sight of the saffron sprinkled on grass, they hold their

passion at bay by smearing their faces and breasts with the self-same saffron, which had hued the breasts of the beloved ones of Krishna.

Verily this, mountain is the foremost among the servants of Krishna. Because, being enraptured in consequence of being touched by the feet of Krishna and Balarama accompanied by the kine and the cow-herds, it is offering homage unto them, approaching them with its translucent drinks, its green grasses, its numerous caverns and its esculent roots.

O friends ! driving the cattle from one forest to another in company with the cow-herds and recognised by their carrying the *Niryoga* and the *Pasha*, Balarama and Krishna are appearing to be superbly beautiful. It is wonderful to behold how by the melodious notes of their charming flutes, they rob the mobility of the mobile among the corporeal beings, as also how they produce delight in the immobile trees".

Thus in secret describing unto one another these and such other sports of the almighty Lord Krishna, when he traversed the forest of Brindabana, the wives of the cow-herds became absorbed in him. (14—20).

CHAPTER XXII

KRISHNA TAKES AWAY THE CLOTHES OF GOPEES

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! on the first month of the Hemanta season, the damsels of Braja, the kingdom of Nanda, engaged themselves in the performance of a vow for the adoration of *Katayayani* by living on rice cooked in clarified butter.

O king ! performing ablutions in the waters of the *Kalindi* at the time of sun-rise, and creating a sandy image of the goddess *Katyayani*, they worshipped her on the bank of that river, with fragrant flowers, garlands, offerings incense and lamps, as also with various other articles such as fresh leaves, fruits and rice. After having worshipped the goddess in this manner they prayed unto her as follows :

"O goddess *Katyayani* ! O thou of potent illusions ! O most excellent *Yogini* ! O empress of the worlds ! do thou so ordain,

that the son of the cow-herd Nanda may become my husband. I bow down unto thee."

Re-iterating the above prayer, the maidens of Braja performed the adoration of the goddess *Katyayani*. Thus the maidens of Braja having concentrated their hearts on Krishna observed the above vow for a month. During this period they worshipped *Bhadrakali* (a goddess of that name) with a view to obtaining the following boon, viz, that the son of the cow-herd Nanda may become their husband. At the break of every day, rising and calling out one another by the hands, they went to bathe in the Jamuna. On the way to the river, they sang aloud the glories of Krishna associating their respective names with it.

One day, having approached the bank of the river Jamuna, and having left their clothes as usual on the bank and singing the glories of Krishna, the maidens of Braja merrily sported in the waters of Jamuna. The almighty Lord Krishna, the lord of all yoga, coming to know of their acts, and being desirous of meting out a condign punishment upon those damsels,—came there on the bank of the river Jamuna in company with his mates of the same age with him. Then taking away the clothes of the damsels, hastily climbed a *Kadamba* tree; and laughing with his laughing companions, he pointed out this joke to the maidens in the following words :—

Krishna said :—"O damsels ! coming here, do you all take your clothes. I am in earnest, and am not jesting; for indeed you are worn out with the severities of your vow. I have never before told a lie, nor am I telling it now. These cow-herd boys are my witness. O you of delicate loins ! come one by one or all together, and retake these your garments from me." (1—11).

O king ! appreciating Krishna's joke and seeing his mischievous trick, the Gopees were overwhelmed with tender feelings. They looked at one another bashfully, and smiled; but they did not come out of the water. Having been so spoken to by Krishna, and their hearts smarting with his jokes, they dived into the cold biting waters of the river up to their necks; and then shivering with cold replied to him.

The Gopees said :—"O darling ! you ought not to have perpetrated such a shameful deed. We know you as the son of the

cow-herd Nanda, and you are our beloved. All Braja is proud of you. Do you give us our clothes. We are shivering with biting cold. O you most charmingly blue-complexioned one! we are your slaves, so to say, and will do you your behests. O virtuous one! do you return to us our clothes; otherwise we shall report your conduct to the king Nanda."

Thereupon, the auspicious Almighty One (Krishna) said :— "O ye damsels! if you are my slaves and are willing to carry out my commands, then, O ye of pure smiles, approaching here, take ye your respective clothes from me. If you do not come, I will not return your clothes. What would the old king (Nanda) do to me, even if he is angry with me ?"

Then these damsels, who had been all emaciated through the severities of their vows, came out of the waters, shivering with cold, and covering their private parts with the palms of their hands. (12—17).

On seeing them extremely suffering from the biting cold water and being pleased with their unsoiled chastity, the almighty lord Krishna was propitious unto them. Then placing their clothes on his own shoulders, he smilingly addressed them as follows :—

The auspicious lord Krishna spoke :—"You all are engaged in the observance of a vow : so by bathing in waters with your persons naked, you have disregarded the divinities. For this reason sin hangs on your heads and then bend your heads down. After you have done so, you shall get back your clothes."

O king! having been thus spoken to by Krishna, the Great Deity that never lapeth, the maidens of Braja then considered their bath with their persons naked, to be a flaw in the observance of their vows. Being, therefore, desirous of atoning for their fault, they bowed down unto him (Krishna) who is identified with the merit of all auspicious deeds; for, verily he is the purifier of all sins. Beholding the damsels standing in that bent down posture, as required by him (Krishna), the almighty son of Devaki was affected with pity and felling propitiated unto them, he returned their respective clothes to them. (18—21).

O king! though they were greatly deceived and were compelled to banish their bashfulness, were mocked at, were handled as toys, and were robbed of their clothes, yet those maidens of Braja did not look upon Krishna angrily; because they were

greatly delighted by enjoying the company of their beloved one. They then covered their naked bodies by their respective clothes, and they were inspired with love for their beloved one in consequence of having so enjoyed his company. Their hearts were stolen by him, and gazing steadfastly at him with their bashful eyes, they were unable to stir away from him.

Thereupon, coming to know of the earnest longing of these damsels, who had already engaged themselves in the observance of a vow with a view to attaining to his (Krishna's) feet, the almighty lord *Damodara* (Krishna) addressed them thus :—

The auspicious Lord said :—"O chaste ladies ! I know that your hearts' desire is to please and adore me. I approve of it. It ought to be fulfilled. The desires of persons having their hearts engrossed in me, do never again incline towards the enjoyment of gross worldly objects. For, seed corn when fried and decocted can no longer generate shoots. O damsels ! you have been successful. Now return ye to Braja, you shall enjoy with me the following night. Surely, O beautiful girls, cherishing this desire in your hearts, you underwent the severities of the vow and performed the adoration of the goddess *Katyayani*."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! being commanded in the above manner by the Almighty Lord, and having their desires fulfilled, and contemplating in their minds on the lotus-like feet of the Lord, those maidens re-entered the kingdom of Braja, after having with difficulty left the company of Krishna.

Thereafter the almighty son of Devaki, being surrounded by other cow-herds and in the company of his elder brother, tending the cattle, unconsciously went far away from Brindavana. In the scorching rays of the summer sun, the trees of the forest with their umbrellas. On seeing these trees, Krishna said as follows to the cow-herd boys of Braja.

The auspicious Krishna said :—"O Stoka-Krishna ! O Asura ! O Sreedaman ! O Subala ! O Arjuna ! O Vishala ! O Vrishaba ! O Ojasvin ! O Devaprastha ! O Varuthapa ! behold ye these immensely fortunate trees : they seem to be living for the single object of doing good to others. Themselves suffering from winds, rains, heat and frost, they are soothing our pain caused by inclemency of weather such as wind, etc. Verily the birth of these trees in this world is most blessed ; because they are the sources of sustenance unto all creatures and no one ever goes

away from them disappointed, just as no beggar goes away disappointed from a generous hearted person. With leaves, blossoms, fruits, shades, roots, barks, branches, odour, exudations, ashes, bones, and sprouts, shoots, and seeds,—they fulfil the desires of others. The doing of good to other corporeal creatures, with wealth, intellect, speech and life, is what makes the life of corporeal creatures a successful one.'

After having thus spoken, Krishna approached the river Jamuna walking through the avenue of those trees having branches groaning under the burden of sprouts, foliage, fruits, blossoms, and flower petals. There they made the cattle drink the translucent, cold and nourishing water of the river; and then the cow-herds themselves, O king, quenched their thirst with its tasteful water. O Monarch! to their satisfaction, these cow-herds grazed the cattle in the forest on the banks of that river. Then being oppressed with hunger they repaired to Krishna and Balarama and spoke to them in the following manner (as in the next chapter XXIII). (29—38).

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ADORATION OF THE BRAHMANAS AND THE SACRIFICES.

The auspicious cow-herds (Gopas) said :—"O most delightful Balarama! O thou mighty armed one! O Krishna! O thou repressor of the wicked! hunger is sorely oppressing us. It behoves thee to satisfy our hunger."

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O king! having been thus spoken to by the cow-herds, the almighty Lord Krishna, the son of Devaki, being desirous of showing a favour to the devout wives of the Brahmanas, spoke to the Gopas as follows :—

The almighty Krishna said :—"Go ye to the place of adoration, where the Brahmanas, the reciters of the Vedas, are performing the sacrifice called *Agirasa*, with a view to securing the attainment of Heaven (after death). Arriving at that place of sacrifice, O cow-herds, ask for rice in my name and also in the name of my elder brother (Balarama) being asked to do so by ourselves."

Having been commanded in the above manner by the Almighty

Lord Krishna, they (the Gopas) went to the aforesaid place of *Angirasa* sacrifice and arriving there, in accordance with the direction of Krishna, they begged of the Brahmanas for rice, folding their palms in submission and prostrating themselves on the ground. And they said :—

"O ye divinities on earth ! do ye hear us, who are the executors of Krishna's commands. Know us, who are come to ye, for cow-herds sent hither by Balarama and Krishna. Balarama and Krishna are tending cattle not very far from this place. Being oppressed with hunger, they are desirous of having rice from thee. O ye regenerate ones ! O ye versed in all righteousness ! if ye bear any reverence for them, who are begging rice of you then give what they want. O foremost of the pious ones ! after initiation it is sinful to take rice before the sacrifice is offered,—at other times, the rice of the Soutramanees and persons initiated in other orders may be taken without contracting sin." (1—8).

Thus having heard the request of Krishna and Balarama, those Brahmanas paid no heed to it. For their expectations were vile ; and they performed acts attended with great toils ; and they were ignorant and were vain-glorious of their wisdom. These Brahmanas of perverted understanding did not respect the request of the almighty Adhokshaja, the Supreme Brahman (Krishna) who constituteth, time, space, the various articles for sacrifice, *Mantras*, *Tantras*, *Rittija*, the Fires, the deities, sacrifices, righteousness and *Jajamana*,—having seen him in the light of a human being.

O repressor of thy foes ! they (the Brahmanas) did not say 'yes' or 'nay' to the words of the cow-herd boys ; and therefore the latter came back disappointed. On returning therefrom they (the cow-herds) related everything to Balarama and Krishna. Having heard their words the almighty Lord of the Universe smiled, and explaining to the cow-herds the way of the world, thus addressed them :—

"O ye cow-herds ! inform ye the wives of those Brahmanas, that I (Krishna) with my elder *Sankarshana-deva* (Balarama) have come here. On being so informed, surely they will give you food. They are greatly attached to me, they always live for me with their hearts engrossed in me."

On being so spoken to by Krishna, the cow-herds went to the

abodes of the wives of those Brahmanas. Seeing them the chaste wives of the regenerate ones, decked with ornaments and seated comfortably, they (the cow-herds) saluted them with their heads, and thus spoke to them with submissiveness.

'Salutations unto ye, the wives of Bipras. Hear ye our words. May good betide ye all. We have been sent here by Krishna, who is wandering not far from this place. Grazing the cattle with the cow-herds in company with Balarama, Krishna has wandered to this distance from Braja. Give food to him and to his followers, for they are oppressed with hunger."

Having heard from the cow-herds that Achyuta (Krishna) had come, the chaste wives of the Brahmanas, who were always anxious of having a look at him (Krishna), and whose hearts were concentrated on him, became embarrassed. (9—18).

Then taking in brass plates and pots, the four kinds of delicious and palatable food and potions, the chaste wives of the Brahmanas went to meet their beloved one (Krishna), like unto streams flowing towards the seas. They (the wives of the Brahmanas) were prevented by their husbands, fathers, brothers and friends, but they paid no need to their words. For, having heard of the almighty lord of illustrious renown for a long time, they had their hearts completely engrossed in him. These women saw then Lord(Krishna) surrounded by the cow-herds and in company of his elder brother (Balarama) wandering in the groves, decked with the green foliage and twigs of the Asoka tree, on the bank of the river Jamuna.

The wives of the Brahmanas saw him (Krishna) having a dark blue complexion, clad in garments beautiful like molten gold, decked like an actor with garlands of wild flower, peacock's tail, precious metals and leaves. He rested one hand on the shoulder of one of his followers, and with another hand he was turning a lotus; having his ears decorated with lotuses and brows beautified with curled locks of hair, and a lotus-like face beaming with charming smiles.

O foremost of kings! the hearts of these women were enslaved to Krishna by their eyes and by their ears blessed in consequence of many an addition of the glories of their beloved one. Unifying themselves with Krishna, through the agency of these organs, they embraced him and in that way put away

all their afflictions, even as self-knowing sages put away all their affection by embracing the ever-conscious soul (Brahman). Krishna, the witness of all hearts (*Antaryamin*), knowing that renouncing everything else, the wives of the Brahmanas had come there to have a look at his own self, then addressed them as following, with a smiling countenance.

The auspicious almighty Lord Krishna said :—"O Ye illustrious ladies ! may your approach be attended with all prosperity ! Welcome ! what could we for you ? That you have come here desirous of seeing me is indeed worthy of you. Persons knowing their interests well, and possessed of prudence, cherish unshaken reverence towards me, with no ulterior object in view, and they deem myself as their very soul and best-beloved. The soul is the most beloved of all things. Life, reason, the mind, kinsmen, the body, wife, sons and daughters and wealth and other thing—all are loved by us as they are related to the soul. What then is there dearer than the soul ? Therefore do you all return to the place of sacrifice and adoration, for your husbands of the regenerate order, who are householders, shall bring their sacrifices to happy termination with your help."

The wives of the Brahmanas then replied :—"O thou the Lord that pervadest the inner and the outer worlds ! it does not befit thee to utter those heartless words. Make good thy promise. We have approached thee, disregarding all our friends, with a desire of bearing on our hair the petals of the sacred *Tlasee* neglectfully thrown by thy feet. Now, even our husbands, parents, sons, brothers, or friends and relations will not own us back, not to speak of others. Therefore, O Subduer of thy foes ! may you be pleased to order that we, who have fallen at thy feet, may not come by any other condition, save that of being thy slaves." (19—30).

The auspicious almighty Krishna said :—"Neither your husbands, nor your parents, brothers, sons and others, shall lay any blame on you. Being commanded by me, other people also shall not do so. Behold ye, even the celestials countenance your laudable conduct. In this world, bodily contact is not always sufficient to enhance affection and attachment between persons. Do ye concentrate your minds on me, and thereby you will very soon attain to me."

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—Having been thus

spoken to by the almighty Lord Krishna, those auspicious wives of the regenerate ones returned to the place of sacrifice of the Brahmanas. Their husbands (the Brahmanas) were not jealous of them, and with their wives, they brought their sacrifices to a peaceful termination. One lady was confined by her husband. She renounced this mortal tenement resulting out of a chain of actions, by embracing in her mind the almighty Lord in the form in which she had heard him described.

The almighty Gobinda (Krishna) then fed the cow-herd boys with those four kinds of food and potions offered by those wives of the Brahmanas. Thereafter the Lord himself ate the food. Thus the almighty Lord, having assumed human body in sport (*Leela*), imitated the actions of men ; and he sported, charming the cows, the cow-herds and the cow-herd-women, with his handsome person, sweet words, marvellous deeds.

Thinking within their mind that "we have disregarded the entreaty of the lords of the Universe disguised in human form and have thus committed a heinous sin," and remembering their disgraceful behaviour, those Brahmanas then greatly repented. Having seen the extraordinary devotion of their wives towards the almighty Krishna, and finding themselves devoid of such devotion, those Brahmanas were then verily afflicted with repentance and thus reviled their own selves :—

The Brahmanas said :—"Fie on our three distinct kinds of births (from *semen*, at the time of *investitre* with sacred-thread, and at the time of initiation (*Diksha*) with spiritual text). Fie on our *Brahmacharyya*, fie on our diversity of knowledge, fie on our family, fie on our ceremonial observances, and fie on our integrity ; for we are disinclined towards the adoration of *Adhokshaja*. Verily, the illusion of the almighty Lord is capable of infatuating even the *Yogins*. For, we, regenerate ones, the spiritual preceptors of people have been blinded by our interests. Alas ! behold the single-minded devotion of the females towards Lord Krishna, the preceptor of the universe,—devotion, which is capable of snapping the noose of death in the shape of family ? (31—41).

"These women have not been purified with such rites as initiation with sacred thread, etc. as are suitable for the regenerate ones ; they have not lived in the family of their spiritual preceptors ; they have not undergone asceticism ; they possess

no spiritual knowledge of the soul ; they have no idea of purification and auspicious observances. Still they cherish unshaken reverence for Krishna of illustrious fame, the Lord of the yoga and the universe. But we, though performing all those above-mentioned rites, etc., have no reverence for him (Krishna).

"Verily, maddened with a desire for enjoying our homes, we have been blinded by our worldly interests. Oh, the words of the Cow-herds have made us remember the status of the pious ; otherwise of what avail will our powerless selves be to the Lord of all benedictions, who is emancipation and hath attained the fruition of all desires ? Surely this is a mockery displayed by Lord Krishna. Surely the supplication of the Lord—whom the goddess of prosperity, desirous of touching his feet, renouncing others and giving up her characteristic defects, always worships —is capable of enchanting the people, place, time, articles of sacrifice, *Mantras*, *Tantras*, *Rittijas*, the fires, the celestials, *Yajamanas*, sacrifice, and righteousness as unified with him.

"He (Krishna) is the almighty Vishnu himself, the Lord of the *Yoga* and the universe. We had heard that he has been born in the race of the *Jadas*. Yet, we, foolish ones, could not recognise him.

"Salutations unto the almighty Krishna of keenest intellect ; having our reasons infatuated by whose illusion, we are roving in the path of action. That Prime Purusha ought to pardon us for our fault,—we, who are ignorant of his prowess and whose minds are bewildered by his own illusory will."

Thus the Brahmanas, who had disregardfully behaved towards Krishna, remembering their sin, were desirous of seeing Braja ; but being afraid of Kansa they dared not go there. (42—52).

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SACRIFICE OF INDRA IS STOPPED BY KRISHNA'S ADVICE

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! living in Braja in company with Balarama, the Almighty Lord Krishna saw the cow-herds prepare for the sacrifice to be held in adoration of Indra. The almighty Lord, the soul of all and the seer of all things, though aware of the necessity of the sacrifice,

still in an humble attitude, asked the elderly people headed by Nanda :—

"O father ! tell me what are all these your preparations for ? What will the result be ? For the adoration of what Deity is this sacrifice going to be held ? By what means will it be performed ? I am greatly anxious to know all about this sacrifice.

"O father ! answer me, who am desirous of hearing replies to all my queries: There is nothing to be kept secret about the acts of the pious, who identify their selves with others ; who do not observe any difference between their own things and those of others, and who have got no friends or enemies, or no one indifferent to their interests. Any body indifferent to the interest of others, ought to be shunned like unto an enemy ; and a friend is said to be the same with one's own self. Well-informed and inadequately informed people perform acts in vain in this world. The actions of the well-informed are attended with success, whilst those of men of scanty information are not so successful. Is this action, you are going to perform, sanctioned and countenanced by the Shastras, or has it come down to you through the rules of custom ? Answer me, who am questioning you, with your reasons." (1—10).

The auspicious Nanda said :—"My child ! the rain-cloud Parjanya is the Almighty Indra himself. The clouds are his favourite foams. These pour down their life-giving and soothing contents in the shape of rains on the beings of this earth.

"O son ! we as well as other men worship the ruler of the clouds with sacrifices performed with articles boiled in the water showered down by him. Men eat the things left, after the sacrifice is over ; and so, when they live, they are able to attain to *Trivarga*. The rain-cloud *Parjanya* is the agent that crowns the exertion of people with success. Whatsoever person avoids this religious observance coming down successively from the ancestors, out of fear, lust envy or temptation, he never attains to prosperity."

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O king ! having heard the words of Nanda and of the other inhabitants of Braja,

Kesava (Krishna) replied unto his father in the following words calculated to excite the anger of Indra.

The auspicious Almighty Krishna said :—"O father ! animals are born in consequence of their actions, and are also destroyed in consequence of them. Through the instrumentality of the actions, animals meet with happiness or misery or fear or blessings. If there is any Divinity that assigns result to the actions of a man performing them, then that Divinity serves the performer of actions and is not the master of the performer. (11—15).

"Of what service can Indra then be to corporeal beings that are bound to accept the results of their own actions ? Of what avail will the adoration of Indra be, when he cannot unto the actions which men perform in conformity with their individual nature inherted from a previous state of existence ? Men are slaves to their natures, and they follow their natural proclivities. This universe with the celestials, the Asuras and the mortals, exist in nature, that is, they follow nature. Animals renounce and come by, superior or inferior structures in consequence of their actions. By their actions, persons create friends or adversaries ; by actions they make others indifferent to their interests. Therefore, actions should be considered as our preceptors and as the Supreme Lord. Therefore, one following the dictates of his nature, and performing his own duties, should worship his own actions.

"That thing, by which a person lives, ought to be considered by him as his only adorable Deity. He who adores things other than those by which he lives, never attains to prosperity, even as an unchaste woman, gratifying her paramour, never attains to prosperity. A Brahmana should live by reciting the Vedas, a Kshatriya by protecting the earth, a Vaisya by following his ancestral calling, and lastly a Sudra should live by serving the regenerate ones. (16—20).

"Four different occupations are said to be open to the Vaisyas, *viz.*, first, cultivation ; second trade ; third the tending of cattle; and fourth lending money on interest. So we ought to engage ourselves day and night in tending the kine. The principles of Satta, Rajas and Tamas are the causes of the creation, preservation and destruction of the worlds. By the principle of Rajas hath this universe been created. Then, from the coupling of

beings, the diverse objects and beings of the universe have sprung. Delegated by the principle of Rajas, the clouds pour down their contents everywhere. People live in consequence of these showers from the clouds. What can Mohendra (Indra) do? We have got no cities, no countries, no villages, no houses to dwell in.

"O father! we are the dwellers of the forest, we always live in forest, and on mountains. Therefore let us celebrate a sacrifice for the benefit of the kine, the Brahmanas, and the mountains. By the articles that have been gathered for this sacrifice, the celebration of the other one shall be done. Cook various kinds of dishes, soups, and *Payashas* and other kinds of delicious eatables. Prepare foods from wheat, as also cakes and *Saskulis*. Gather all the different kinds of preparations of milk from the dwellers of Braja. Let Brahmanas used to chant the Vedas, duly perform the ceremony of offering oblations on the sacrificial fires. Give away unto these Brahmanas palatable and delicious eatables, or give unto them cows as *Dakshina*. Bestow proper gifts on the dogs, the *chandalas* (lowest order of sect in Hindus), and also unto morally fallen people and such others that deserve pity. Furnishing the kine with fodder, offer homages to the mountain. Then neatly decked with ornaments, eating your fill, smeared with unguents and vested in fine garments, do you circumbulate the kine, the Brahmanas, the sacrificial fires, and the mountain.

"O father! this is my opinion. If it listeth thee, thou mayest act according to it. A sacrifice of this kind is dear unto me, the kine, the Brahmanas and the mountain." (21—30).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying:—The Almighty Lord Krishna, whose semblance is Time (*Kala*), spoke those above mentioned words, being desirous of crushing the pride of *Sakra* (Indra). Having heard those words, the milk-men headed by Nanda entirely accepted them. They then managed everything as the slayer of Madhu (Krishna) had said. Making the Brahmanas utter benedictory verses, the Milk-men (Gopas) approached the Brahmanas and the mountain, with those articles collected for the sacrifice in propitiating Indra, as presents, and thus honoured them. They foddered the kine. Then driving the cattle ahead of them, they circumbulated the mountain. Being gracefully decorated with various ornaments, they rode on

chariots (carts) yoked with lusty bullocks. The cow-herds sang the glories of Krishna, and the twice-born ones pronounced benedictions on them.

At that time, Krishna also assumed another different form, in order to create belief in the hearts of the cow-herds. And saying 'I am the mountain' he ate the articles for adoration. Then his form increased awfully. Thereupon, with the inhabitants of Braja, he (Krishna) himself made salutations unto himself (in the form of the mountain), and he said :—

"Behold Oh ! this mountain hath assumed form for showing his grace unto us. This mountain that can assume form, when it pleases him, slays the mortal dwellers of his forest who behave disrespectully towards him. We bow down unto him for the welfare of the kine and of ourselves."

Having been thus induced by Vasudeva (Krishna), the cow-herds celebrated the sacrifice for honouring the mountain, the kine, and the Brahmanas. Then they returned to the kingdom of Braja in company with Krishna. (31—38).

CPAPTER XXV

KRISHNA UPHOLDS THE MOUNTAIN GOVARDHANA

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O King ! On coming to know that his adoration in Braja by celebration of a sacrifice had been stopped by Krishna, Indra became wrathful on the milk-men headed by Nanda, who had accepted Krishna as their leader. Waxing rage, Indra sent for the clan of clouds known as *Sambartaka*, that brings about the destruction of the universe. Priding himself as the sole Lord of the worlds, he said unto those clouds as follows :

The auspicious Indra said :—'Ah ! Behold the influence of the arrogance begotten of prosperity of the milk-men dwelling in Braja. Seeking protection from Krishna who is nothing more than a mortal, these people have dared neglect me, even as persons neglecting the study of Metaphysics, desire to cross the ocean of life by the help of a frail diminutive bark identical with their sacrificial performances consisting of actions. By asking protection from Krishna with tall talks, a merest tyro, an idiot, most impertinent, a pedant considering himself to be

a great *Pandit*, and lastly who is a mortal,—the cow-herds have perpetrated an act of great offence unto me. Hie yourselves to Braja, and avenge the arrogance of these people, elated with prosperity and rendered sleek-bodied by Krishna, as also do you destroy all their cattle. I also riding on the greatest of elephants *Airavata*, and attended by the Marutas of vehement velocity, will visit the pastoral kingdom of Nanda with the object of devastating it." (1—7).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—Having been thus commanded by Indra, the clouds being set free from their binding chains, flew over Nanda's kingdom of Gokula and oppressed it with heavy and continuous showers. Charged with the flashes of lightning, and thundering with the roar of the thunderbolts, and driven by strong gales, those clouds poured down showers of sleet and rain. The clouds incessantly poured down torrents of rain that falling together seemed bulky like huge pillars. The elevations and depressions of the land were lost to sight, owing to their being inundated with a vast quantity of rain water.

Thereupon the cattle being deluged in torrents of rain and being oppressed with strong winds, began to shilver with cold. The cow-herds and their wives were afflicted with severe cold ; and they all sought shelter in *Govinda* (Krishna). Sorely suffering from the heavy showers, shivering with cold, and covering their calves and heads with their bodies, the kine approached the feet of the Almighty Lord Krishna.

The cow-herds addressed Krishna saying :—"O Krishna ! O Krishna of illustrious prowess ! O Lord ! The kingdom of Gokula hath no other master than thy own self. O Thou affectionate towards thy devotees ! It behoveth Thee to save us from the enraged divinities."

Then the Almighty Lord Krishna, seeing the cow-herds and the kine tormented with showers of hail and with storms and senseless, took all these to be the act of the enraged Indra. And Krishna thought within himself as follows :

"The rainy season has passed over. Still, the clouds are pouring incessant and heavy showers, accompanied by storms and hail. Surely Indra is pouring these showers for our destruction, owing to our having stopped the celebration of the sacrifice that used to be held hitherto in his honour. I will try to remedy

this evil to the best of my abilities, and it is proper that I should check his arrogance begotten of consciousness of prosperity ; out of foolishness he considers himself as the lord of people. It is not good for the celestials, in whom the principle of goodness predominates, to be puffed up with an empty notion of their being lords of men. The humiliation of the proud and the wicked tends towards the establishment of peace. Therefore, I will protect, even with my own life, this pastoral kingdom that hath taken shelter in me, which contains my relatives and of which I am the sole master. This is my resolute determination." (8—18).

Having decided in his mind as above, and uprooting the *Govardhana* (a mountain of that name) mountain with one of his hands, Krishna held it up in the air with perfect ease, just like a person holding an umbrella over his head.

Thereafter the Almighty Lord Krishna, addressing the cow-herds and their womenfolk said :—"O mónarchs ! O fathers ! O ye dwellers of Braja ! Take shelter at your comfort underneath this mountain, with your cattle. Do not labour under any apprehension that this mountain will fall down from my hand. You need no longer be afraid of the storms and the heavy showers. I have devised this expodient to save you from these storms and showers."

Thus having been reassured in their hearts by Krishna, the cow-herds and their wives went underneath that uplifted mountain (*Govardhana*) with all their wealth, carts and attendants. Disregarding the pangs of hunger and thirst, and renouncing all his personal comforts, and being gazed at by the inhabitants of Braja, Krishna held that mountain in his hand for seven days continually, and he did not move even one step from the place where he had stationed himself at first.

Having seen the yogic prowess of Krishna, Indra was struck with amazement. He was shorn of pride, and his resolution was thwarted. He stopped his own clouds from pouring showers any longer. Seeing the sky clear of clouds, and the sun shining in it, and also seeing the subsidence of the heavy showers and the severe storms, Krishna, the holder of the mountain *Govardhana*, said unto the cow-herds as follows :

"O Cow-herds ! Dismiss all fear, and now come out from underneath the mountain with your wives, wealth and children.

The wind and rain have both subsided, the water of the rivers also is being diminished." (19—26).

Thereupon the cow-herds old and young, and their wives speedily came out with their cattle and brought with them all their articles and furniture in carts. The Almighty Lord Krishna also replaced the mountain in its former site with perfect ease, before the very eyes of the wondering lookers-on.

Then being overwhelmed with the depth of their affection, the dwellers of Braja approached Krishna, and warmly embraced him to their hearts. The milk-women adored him out of affection, and being greatly delighted at their hearts, they pronounced the best blessings on him throwing at the same time curd and fried grain upon him.

Jasoda, Rohini, Nanda and Balaram, the foremost of the race of cow-herds, then embraced Krishna ; and being overwhelmed with affection, they blessed him highly.

O ruler of the earth (Parikshit) ! In the heavens, the celestials, the *Siddhas*, the *Sadhyas*, the *Gandharvas* and the *Charanas* began to sing his (Krishna's) praise ; and being enraptured they poured showers of celestial flowers on him. At the command of the celestials, conch-shells were blown, and kettle-drums were sounded in the heavens.

O monarch (Parikshit) ! The lords of the *Gandharvas* headed by *Tamburu* (the foremost of the *Gandharvas*) and others began to sing his (Krishna's) praise.

O king ! Thereafter surrounded by the cow-herds devoted to him and in the Company of Balarama, Krishna repaired to the station where his cows used to be kept. The milk-maids also, singing about these marvellous deeds of Krishna, who had enchanted their hearts, and highly delighted, went back to their respective abodes. (27—33).

CHAPTER XXVI

A DISCUSSION BETWEEN NANDA AND COW-HERDS

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! The cow-herds were unaware of Krishna's prowess. Therefore having seen all these marvellous achievements of Krishna, they were struck with

wonder, and coming to Nanda, they (the cow-herds) thus spoke unto him :—

The cow-herds said :—"These deeds of thy son are indeed wonderful. Why has he (Krishna) then taken birth in our low and vile race ? Surely, such an existence is not worthy of him. How did this boy of seven years of age hold with one of his hands the foremost of mountains (*Govardhana*), as easily as a powerful elephant holds a lotus by its trunk ? How did this boy with his eyes partially shut, suck the breast of the most powerful Putana (a *Rakshashi* of that name) of her life-blood, like *Kala* (Time here used as Death) sucking the lives out of men ? When he was a baby of only three months old, he was kept underneath a cart, and then he threw his legs in the air ; and having cried aloud, he struck the cart with his feet, and the cart was shattered to pieces. When he was only one year old, he was stolen, when sitting, by a *Daitya* named Trinavarata and was carried through the skies. How did he then kill that *Daitya* who was sorely oppressed by being embraced by the neck ? Once, owing to his having stolen butter, he was tied by his mother to a wodden-mortar (*udookhala*). At this, passing between the two *Arjuna* trees (Jamala-Arjuna) how was he able to uproot them by his arms ? Another day, when surrounded by the cow-herd boys and in the company of Balaram, Krishna was grazing the calves, he tore open with his two hands the mouth of his enemy *Bakasura*, who had come there being desirous of killing him (Krishna). When the *Asura* Batsa by name, being desirous of slaying the calves was grazing in their company under the disguise of calf, Krishna slew him (that *Asura* Batsa), and with the carcass of that *Asura*, he brought down the *Kapithwa* fruits with perfect ease. In the company of Balarama, having slain the *Daitya* Rashabha by name with his relatives, how did he make the palm tree groves abound in ripe palm fruits, and full of blessings ? Making the powerful Balarama slay the fierce Asura *Pralamba* by name, Krishna saved the cattle of Braja and also the cow-herds from the terrible forest-conflagration. Subduing the most venomous serpent and taking his pride out of him Krishna drove him away from the lake ; and in this way, he made the waters of Jamuna river free from all poison. The love of us, the dwellers of Braja, towards thy son, is of such a nature as can be hardly given up ; and how is it that he also cherishes

a natural affection for us ? Where is the boy who is only seven years of age, and where is the act of uplifting and holding the mighty mountain ! (That is to say, such an act is impossible for a boy of seven.) Therefore, O lord of Braja, our suspicion has been excited regarding this thy son." (1—14).

The auspicious Nanda replied saying as follows : "O cow-herds ! Dismiss all suspicions regarding this boy. Hear my words which had been said to me by the illustrious sage Garga regarding this boy :

"(The sage Garga said) :—"Assuming a form in every *yoga*, this boy (Krishna) had three different complexions *viz.* white, red and yellow. At present he has assumed a dark complexion. In the time gone by, this son of yours was born as a son of Vasudeva. Therefore, the wise cognisant of this fact, call him the Prosperous Vasudeva. There are different forms and different denominations of your son, suitable to his qualities and his deeds, which neither I nor other people know of. This delighter of the kine and cow-herds shall bring about your prosperity. With his help you will overcome all difficulties speedily. (15—19).

O lord of Braja ! When anarchy reigned on earth, the pious were persecuted by the robbers. Then, being protected by him (Krishna), and surcharged with his energy, the pious defeated the robbers. Whatsoever person shall entertain an attachment for this illustrious one, shall not be defeated by his adversaries, even as the partisans of Vishnu are never defeated by the *Asuras*.

'Therefore, O Nanda, this son of yours is equal to Narayana regarding his qualities, his prosperity, his prowess and lastly his glory. There is nothing to be wondered at in his deeds.'

"After the sage Garga had gone away to his own abode having spoken to me in the above manner, I consider Krishna, who is instrumental in removing all our troubles, as a portion of Narayana."

Having listened to those words of Nanda, which had been said to him by sage Garga, the dwellers of Braja were greatly delighted and being freed from all amazement, worshipped Nanda and Krishna.

May that Lord of the kine be propitious unto us, who (Krishna) had humiliated the pride of Mahendra (Indra), and

who being affected with pity by seeing the cattle-tenders, the cattle and the women worried with sleet, thunder and fierce storms at the time when the deity Indra enraged at the stopping of the sacrifice, that used to be held in his honour poured down heavy showers, had smilingly uprooted with one of his hands the mountain, and had held it in the air for protecting the kingdom of Gokula, even as a delicate infant holds in sport a mushroom in his hands. (20—25).

CHAPTER XXVII

THE ADORATION OF KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said : When Krishna had held in his hands the mountain *Govardhana*, and thereby protected the kingdom of Braja from the heavy showers, *Surabhi* and *Sakra* (Indra) came to him from *Golaka* (Heaven). Being ashamed for so disregardfully behaved towards Krishna, and approaching him (Krishna) in secret, Indra touched both the feet of the Reverend One with head whereon shone the diadem as resplendent as the sun. Having seen the prowess of Krishna of immeasurable might, to be such as had been heard to be, Indra, the lord of the three worlds with pride humiliated, said unto Krishna with his hands folded.

Indra said : "Thou art placid and possessed of immense knowledge as thou art free from the qualities of darkness and energy. Thou art all pure goodness. There is no semblance of Maya in thee. Thou art immense from an attachment for the earthly existence which is the result of ignorance.

"O Lord ! What then, in respect to thee, will covetousness and other passions be, which follow earthly existence, and are the causes of a future birth, and are significant of the ignorance of the folls ?

"O Almighty One ! Still thou dost visit people with punishment for the preservation of righteousness, and for the suppression of the wicked. Therefore thou hast exposed my pride with a view to punish me. (1—5).

"Thou art the father of the universe, its spiritual preceptor, and its supreme sovereign. Thou art identified with the infinite

Kala. Holding the sceptre of sway, and humiliating the pride of those who consider themselves as the lords of the universe, thou dost sport by incarnating thyself at thy will, for the welfare of the worlds. Those people were ignorant like myself, and used to consider themselves as the lords of the worlds. But seeing thee undaunted in times of danger, renouncing their empty pride, they have betaken to the path of devotion. Their arrogance has been thrashed out of them. Verily thy slightest effort is capable of inflicting punishment on the crooked-minded.

"O Lord! Of such a nature, thou ought to pardon me, who had been elated with the arrogance begotten of prosperity, and who being ignorant of thy prowess, had offended thee. O Lord! I also pray unto thee, so that such a perverse inclination for neglecting thee may not again take hold of me of foolish intellect, in future.

"O Adhokshaja! This thine incarnation is for the destruction of the leaders of hosts who themselves are burdens of the earth, and from whom many other burdens are daily born.

"O divine One! It is also for the welfare of those who follow in thy path. Salutations unto thee high-souled and Almighty Purusha! Salutations unto Vasudeva, unto Krishna, the Lord, cherished God of the devotee. Salutation unto thee who hast assumed form at the will of thy devotees; and unto thee whose semblance is pure knowledge, and unto thee who art everything, and who art the cause of all things. Salutations unto thee who art the soul of all created beings.

"O Almighty Lord! When animal sacrifice held in my honour had been prohibited by thee, possessed with fierce wrath and pride, I endeavoured to destroy the kingdom of Braja by means of heavy showers and storms. Being baffled in my endeavours and having my pride put down, O Lord, I have been favoured by thee. I seek protection in thee, who art *Iswara*, the Preceptor of the universe and the Supreme Soul." (6—13).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—O King (Parikshit)! Having been eulogised in the above manner by Indra, the Almighty Krishna smilingly replied unto him (Indra) in a voice deep like the rumbling of clouds.

The auspicious Almighty Lord Krishna said :—O Indra! you had been verily intoxicated with the influence of prosperity and pride, owing to your sovereignty over the celestials. Being

desirous of showing favour unto you, I had interrupted the celebration of the sacrifice held in your honour, so that you may always remember me. Blinded with arrogance begotten of prosperity persons cannot see me weilding the sceptre of sway. Whomsoever I desire to show my favour to, I despoil him of his prosperity.

"O Sakra! Now return to your kingdom of heaven. May good betide you. Execute my commandments. Renouncing all pride and with propriety of manners, do you again establish yourself in your former sway."

Thereafter Surabhi of magnanimous heart, approaching in the Company of her offsprings, Krishna, the Lord in the form of a cow-herd, saluted him and thus spoke to him (Krishna).

The auspicious Surabhi said :—"O Krishna! O Krishna! O most potent among the yogis! O thou soul of the universe! O thou origin of the universe! In thee who art the Lord of the worlds, we are said to possess a protector and a master. Thou art our Supreme Deity. O Lord of the Universe! For the welfare of the kine, the *Bipras* and the celestials and the pious do thou assume the function of Indra. We shall install thee as Indra. We have been delegated by Brahma. O Soul of the universe! For relieving the earth of its burden, thou hast incarnated thyself." (14—20).

The auspicious Sukadeva again began saying : Thus speaking unto Krishna, Surabhi with her milk, and Indra induced by the celestial mothers in the Company of the gods and the sages, with the water of the heavenly Ganges drawn by the trunk of the *Airavata*, soaked *Dasarha* (Krishna), and thus performed his coronation. They also attributed the name of *Govinda* unto him (Krishna). Then coming there Tambura, Narada and others including the *Gandharvas*, *Vidyadharas*, *Siddhas* and *Charanas* began to sing the glory of Hari, that is capable of cleansing people of their sins. Then being greatly delighted, the celestial damsels began to dance. Those who appeared to be like streamers foremost among the host of the celestials, began to hymn the Lord, and covered him with a wonderful shower of flowers. The three worlds attained perfect tranquility. And then the cows soaked the earth with milk distilling from their udders. The river became filled with various kinds of delicious fluids. Exudations trickled down trees. The *Oshadhis* ripened

without the help of cultivation. The mountains decked their outward parts with the jewels that are ordinarily hidden in the mines inside them.

O descendant of the Kurus! O son! When Krishna had been inaugurated, those animals that are crooked by nature, giving up their enmity against one another became free from enemy.

Thus inaugurating Govinda, the Lord of the kine and of the kingdom of Gokula, and with his permission, Indra went back to heaven surrounded by the celestials and others. (22—28).

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE IMPRISONMENT OF NANDA BY VARUNA AND HIS RELEASE BY KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said: O King (Parikshit)! Having observed the fast on the eleventh day of the fortnight in the lunar month and having worshipped Janardana on the day following (twelvth day), Nanda entered the water of Kalindi for performing ablutions. Disregarding the Asuri *Bela* (Time), he (Nanda) had entered the waters when even the earth was covered with the darkness of night. For that fault of his (Nanda's), a servant of Varuna seizing hold of Nanda brought him to Varuna.

Then missing Nanda, the cow-herds began to wail aloud saying, "O Krishna! O Balarama!" O King! Having heard that his father (Nanda) had been imprisoned by Varuna, the Almighty Lord (Krishna) giving assurances of safety to his chosen people, went to Varuna. That guardian of the people, seeing Hrishikesha approach, worshipped him with respectful homage. Highly enraptured at having seen the Lord, Varuna said:

The auspicious Varuna said:—"To-day my possessing a body has been blessed. O Lord! To-day I have come by the best of treasures. O Almighty Lord! Those who serve thy feet attain to the end of worldly existence (emancipation). Salutations unto thee, the Lord of all prosperity; unto thee who art perfect, and thee, ruler of all beings, unto thee whom the energy of

illusion that brings about the creation of the worlds, cannot attach itself. Thy father has been brought here by one foolish and ignorant servant of mine, who cannot discriminate between good and bad acts. It behoveth thee, O Lord, to pardon me. O Govinda! Take thy father with thee, for thou art so affectionate towards him." (1—8).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued :—Having been thus propitiated, the almighty Krishna, the Lord of the universe, taking his father with him, went away. Thus he enhanced the delight of his friends. Nanda having seen the unseen prosperity of the guardian of the world, Varuna, and also his saluting Krishna, was astounded, and related everything to his relatives. O monarch! the cow-herds, considering Krishna to be *Iswara*, anxiously thought :—"Surely the prosperous Lord will assign to us his subtle existence." That Almighty Lord, the spectator of the universe, coming to know of the intention of his chosen people, and being desirous of fulfilling their heart's desire, began to meditate, out of kindness for them, as follows :—

In this world, the souls of people migrate and transmigrate among higher and lower orders of creation in consequence of their egoistic notions, desire and actions. For this reason these people do not or cannot realise self-knowledge."

Having thus thought, the very kind-hearted Almighty Lord revealed unto the sight of the cow-herds his own real semblance that transcends *Prakriti*, as also his own regions, that are situated beyond the kingdom of darkness. He (Krishna) showed unto them, the effulgence of *Brahman* that is eternal, unrestrained, infinite and all consciousness, and which is seen by the single-minded sages, at the cessation of their acts. The cow-herds were led to the Jamuna and drowned into it by Krishna. There in days gone by Akrura had seen the *Brahma* :—they saw the effulgent appearance of *Brahman*, they were then taken out of the waters by Krishna. Then Nanda and others beholding (Krishna), obtained ecstatic joy; and struck with wonder, they hymned Krishna with verses from the Vedas. (9—17).

CHAPTER XXIX

KRISHNA BEGINS THE PASTIME OF RASHA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king! The Reverend One (Krishna) promised to the *Gopees* (the cow-herd women) that they shall enjoy his (Krishna's) company in the coming night. That night, beautified by the autumnal moon, set in. The almighty Lord (Krishna) having seen the night rendered delightful with the blooming of autumnal jasmines, made up his mind to hold sport, as promised, with the *Gopees*, with the help of the illusion of *Yoga*. Then there arose on the sky the delightful moon, soothing the distress of the people, produced by the scorching heat of the day, and luminating the face of the Eastern quarter with his silvery and blamy beams. Just like a husband who had been long away returning sprinkles the face of his beloved wife with red saffron and discards all her misery. Beholding the friend of the lilies (moon) rise in his full splendour on the sky, and shine like the countenance of Rama (Lakshmi), red like fresh saffron, and also seeing the groves flooded and variegated with the soft lustre of the moon, Krishna melodiously sang with his flute in a manner so as to captivate the hearts of women with beautiful eyes.

Having heard that music capable of exciting desire, the damsels of Braja had their heart enslaved by Krishna. Without apprising one another of their respective intentions, they (the *Gopees*) hastened to the place where their darling was having their locks flowing on account of their haste. Some damsels who had been milking their cows, went away greatly anxious, leaving the milking half-done. Some went away leaving the milk they had been boiling over fire, without waiting for its boiling. Others again flew to him (Krishna), without even taking down, from the hearth, the preparation of wheat they had been baking. Some had been distributing eatables among her family members, some had been suckling their babies, some had been serving their husbands, some had been taking their meals, some had been toileting with cosmetics, some had been cleansing their persons and some had been painting their eyes with collyrium. All these *Gopees*, leaving their respective business and duties

unfinished flew to Krishna their garments and ornaments having fallen off from their persons in consequence of their great hurry.

Although they (the *Gopees*) were prevented in so doing by their husbands, fathers, brothers and relatives, they did not hold back, for their hearts had been robbed by Govinda (Krishna) and they had been charmed by him. Some *Gopees* who had been confined in their houses and could not manage their egress, now began meditating on him (Krishna) with their eyes shut. The sins of these women melted away in consequence of their suffering from the great anguish of separation from their darling Lord! Their merits also wore away, as realising the Deity that never lapseth by concentrated meditation, they embraced him, and thereby attained to ecstatic pleasure. Attaining the supreme soul, even by mediating on him as their beloved they instantly renounced this corporeal frame composed of the five elements (earth, water etc.) for their bonds of actions had been broken. (1—11).

The king Parikshit enquired :—'O sage! the damsels of Braja knew Krishna to be their darling and they could not recognise in him the Supreme Brahman. How did then the cessation of the flow of births and rebirths of these women was brought about who had their hearts captivated by the earthly qualities of Krishna ?"

The auspicious Sukadeva replied :—O king! I have answered this question of thine once before. Remember how the sovereign of the *Chedis*, keeping alive an inveterate enmity against *Hrishikesha* (Krishna) attained emancipation, far less to speak of the favourites of *Adhoksaja* (Krishna).

O king! The incarnation of the almighty Lord who is undestroyable, infinite, devoid of all qualities and at the same time the essence of all qualities, is for the prosperity of the people. Whoever always meditates on Hari through desire, anger, fear, affection, friendship and reverence, surely attains homogeneity of nature with him, that is, becomes united with him. It behoveth thee not to wonder at the deeds of the almighty and uncreate Krishna, who is well-versed in the *Yogas* and who is *Iswara* himself. Through his agency even the immobile creation may be emancipated!

The almighty Lord Krishna saw the damsels of Braja approaching him. Then that eloquent speaker spoke to them in

the following manner charming them with the fluency of his eloquence.

The auspicious Krishna said :—"Hail thee, O illustrious damsels ! What favourite act of yours can I do for you ? Is everything faring well in Braja ? Unfold to me the cause of thine hasty arrival here ? (12—18).

'The night is hideous. This forest is infested by fearful beasts. Return ye therefore to Braja. O ye of delicate waists ! This is not a fit place for the fair sex to live in. Your fathers, mothers, brothers, sons and husbands not finding you in your respective homes must have been searching for you. Therefore it does not befit you to harbour fear in their minds."

On hearing these words of Krishna, the *Gopees* in their discontentment did not approve of the propriety of his speech and therefore they turned aside their looks but did not stir away.

On seeing this demeanour of the *Gopees*, the Lord Krishna again began saying :—"Oh ! I see ! You have come here to see this forest. But now you have seen it decked with floral beauty, and flooded with the silvery beams of the Lord of Raka (moon). You have also seen it beautified with twigs of trees trembling with the gentle breeze that is blowing from the Jamuna. Therefore, O chaste damsels, repair in all haste to Braja. Go ye and serve your husbands. The calves and your children are waiting in your absence. Go ye and suckle them, and milk the cows. Or it may be, that you have come here out of affection you cherish for me, and owing to your hearts being captivated by me. This is indeed, natural, for all beings are pleased with me. The supreme duties of women are to serve their husbands with a sincere heart, to look after the well being of the friends of their husbands and to rear and support their children. Women desirous of attaining the region where their husbands go after death, should not desert their husbands, even if they be of bad character, unfortunate, old, imbecile, invalid and poor, but not morally fallen. The prostitution carried on by private women is hateful all the more, and is attended with more danger. It breeds misery and infamy and is a hindrance to the attainment of heaven. So it ought to be totally and emphatically condemned. The mind may be easily turned towards me by listening to my deeds, by a sight of me,

by meditation on me, and by the recital of my name. But the mind again cannot be so easily turned to me by living near me. Therefore do you repair to your respective homes." (19—27).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O King ! Having heard those unkind words of Govinda, the *Gopees* became very much depressed in their hearts. Thus being sick at heart owing to the frustration of their hope, the *Gopees* then were prayed upon by keen anxiety. So sighing heavily out of grief, casting down their countenances having lips cherry as the *Bimba* fruit parched up, and absent-mindedly drawing various figures on the ground with their toes, they remained silent. Then the collyrium of their eyes was washed off by the continuous flow of tears, as also the saffron-paste of their breast was washed off ; and they smarted under the heavy burden of their sorrow. Those damsels who were attached to Krishna, and who had banished all other desires for him, hearing their darling Lord speak like one unkind, rubbed their eyes blinded with fast-falling tears ; and with a voice choked up with anger they thus addressed him.

The women of the cow-herds said : "O Lord ! It behoveth thee not to speak unto us such cruel words. For renouncing everything else we have attached ourselves to the roots of thy feet. O thou most unkind one ! Do not so renounce us. Rather entertain us, like the Deity, the Prime *Purusha* entertaining those who are desirous of obtaining absolute emancipation. O dear one ! It is even so, as thou versed in all righteousness, hast said, that the duties of women are to do the pleasures of their husbands, sons and friends. So following thee, who art our spiritual adviser and Lord, we do the will of our husbands and others. For surely, thou art very dear unto the corporeal beings, and thou art their soul and friend. Persons well-versed in the *Shastras*, cultivate attachment for thee who are the soul, and our beloved one. What is the use of husbands, children and others, who are the sources of affliction ? Therefore, O foremost of those that bestow boons ! Be thou propitious unto us. O thou of eyes like lotus-petal ; Do not frustrate our long-cherished hopes regarding thee. Our hearts that were long joyfully engaged in our houses and our hands that were occupied with household works, are now charmed by thee and are now robbed of their powers. Our legs will not

stir one step away from the root of thy feet. How then can we go back to Braja ? And what shall we do there ?

O thou dearest one ! With the nectareous flow from thy lips, do thou extinguish the fire of desire kindled by the melodious music of thy flute and by thy sidelong glances accompanied by bewitching smiles. Otherwise, our bodies being burnt by this fire, as well as of separation from thee we shall, O dear one, attain the proximity of thy meditating on thy foot by meditating on thee. O thou of eyes resembling lotus-petals ! The forest people are most beloved of thee. So, in the forest we did once touch the sole of thy lotus-feet that affords delight even unto the heart of the goddess of prosperity (*Lakshmi*), O beloved one ! Thus favoured by thee, that time forward we do not care even to stand before others. (28—36).

"Even the goddess of prosperity (*Kamala, Lakshmi*) a favourable glance from whom the celestials solicit undergoing austere asceticism, and who hath secured an undisputed seat on thy breast, is envious with *Tulashi* for obtaining the dust from thy lotus-like feet. Like unto her, we seek shelter in the dust from thy feet.

"Therefore, O thou soother of all afflictions ! Be thou propitious on us. Being encouraged by thy hope of adoring thee, we have approached the root of thy feet of male beings ! Allow ourselves, who are burning with keen desire, excited by thy charming smiles and glances, to serve thee. Seeing thy countenance covered with curling locks, furnished with cheeks set forth with the beauty of the *Kundalas*, with lips dropping nectar, and pierced with thy glances accompanied by charming smiles, and looking at thy two bludges on like arms that give assurances of safety, as also at thy breast capable of kindling love in the heart of the goddess of prosperity, we are determined to become thy slaves.

"O most beloved One ! What women is there in the three worlds that will not deviate from her own chastity of nature, having been charmed with the melodious and modulatory music of thy flute ? Add to it thy handsome personal graces which are glory to the three worlds and looking at which even the cows, the female deer and the birds and the trees are filled with delight. It is evident that like the Divine Primary *Purusha* taking birth for protecting the celestial region, thou hast taken birth for

driving away fear and affliction out of the kingdom of Braja. Therefore, O friend of the distressed! Place thy lotus-like hands on the throbbing breasts and aching heads of thy slaves." (37—41).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued :—O King! Having heard these piteous words of the *Gopees*, Krishna, the foremost of those, versed in the *Yoga*, smiled and was pleased with them. Though always delighting in his own self, he still joined in dalliances with them. Freely mingling in the company of these damsels having their countenances blooming on account of being looked at by their dear one, and charmingly smiling, and with teeth resembling the *Kunda* flower in lustre, *Achyuta* of wonderful achievements looked like the moon surrounded by the stars. Sometimes he (Krishna) himself sang, and at other times, his glory was sung by the damsels. Then wearing on his neck a heavenly garland, surrounded like a leader of an elephant-herd by the hundred damsels, he (Krishna) wandered in the forest beautifying it by his hallowed presence. In the company of these milk-women, he went to the cool and sandy bank of the river Jamuna where blew a mild breeze bearing the fragrance of the *Kumudas* and cool in consequence of having come into contact with the flowing current of the river. Putting forth his arms embracing the damsels, touching their hands, curling locks, thighs, breasts, scratching them with his finger nails, indulging in laughs, jokes and with repartees, piercing them with his glance, and with other amorous tricks, he (Krishna) delighted the *Gopees* bringing them under the spell of Cupid (the god of love).

Thus receiving honour from the almighty and high-souled Krishna, every one of those damsels considered herself the best of all earthly women, and was thus elated with pride. Beholding their arrogance produced by their good fortune and also their great pride and being desirous of humiliating them and showing favour unto them, Keshava (Krishna) instantly disappeared from that place. (42—48).

CHAPTER XXX

THE GOPEES SUFFER PANGS OF SEPARATION AND SEARCHES FOR KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—O King ! After the almighty Krishna had suddenly disappeared, the damsels of Braja (*Brajanganas*) not finding him, were greatly distressed like the she-elephants feeling in the absence of the leader of their herd. The hearts of these women had been captivated by the graceful movements, by the lustful glances attended with charming smiles reflecting love, by the pleasing discourses and by other amorous dalliances of Lord Krishna ; thus being completely absorbed in meditation of him, the *Gopees* imitated those lovely acts of Krishna. Even the frames of these loving women were possessed by the movements, smiles, glances, and pleasing words of their darling Lord, and they were maddened by remembering the amorous dalliance of Krishna. So thus completely identifying themselves with Krishna, they said, "I am Krishna himself." Singing aloud his praise in a body, they wandered in their madness from one forest to another in quest of him. And they enquired of the trees, the whereabouts of the best of the *Purushas* (Male Being), who like ether is present inside the hearts of corporeal being and also in the outside world. They said :—*O Asvatha*, O *Punnaga*, *Nyagradha* have you seen the son of Nanda, who has just disappeared captivating our hearts with his lovely smiles and glances ? O *Kuruvaka*, O *Asoka*, O *Naga*, O *Punnaga*, O *Champaka* ! Has Balarama's younger brother whose very smile is capable of chasing away the anger of offended damsels, passed by this way ? O blessed *Tulashi*, O thou art so fond of the feet of Govinda ! Hast thou seen, thy most beloved *Achyuta*, who always bears thee with the beads, on his person ? O *Malati*, O *Mallika*, O *Jutiika* ! Have you seen *Madhava* ? Hath he gone by this path enhancing your joy by touching you with his delicate hands ?

O Mango Tree, O *Piyala*, O *Panasha*, *Asana*, O *Jamba*, O *Arka*, O *Vilva*, O *Bakula*, O *Kadamba*, *Neepa*, and O you other trees ! You live for the sake of others, and dwell near the banks of the

sacred *Jamuna*; point out to us, whose minds are vacant, the way that Krishna has followed.

O Earth! what austere asceticism hast thou undergone, by virtue of which thou now appearest to be superbly beautiful having the hair of thy body erect and enjoyest the ecstacy of being touched by the feet of Keshava? Is thy delight caused by the touch of the Lord's feet at present, or was it caused by the tread of *Uruvikrama*, or was it caused by the embrace of the Lord when he had assumed the form of a boar? (1—10).

"O dear friend, O wives of the antelopes! Hath Lord Achyuta with his dearest lady approached you affording great delight to your sight by his graceful person? For, here blows the fragrance of the garland composed of the *Kunda* flower of Krishna, the garland that has been smeared with the saffron on the breast of his beloved lady when he had embraced her.

"O trees! Hath the younger brother of Balarama wandered here, being followed by the intoxicated beads of the *Tulasi* and placing his hand, bearing a lotus, on the shoulder of his dearest damsel and looking lovingly at her? Hath he accepted your salutation? Let us question these creepers twining round the branches of the trees? Surely they have been scratched by the nails of Krishna, for behold they bear the signs."

O king! Thus roving like one insane, the damsels of Braja were fatigued in their search for Krishna. Then completely identifying themselves with him, they imitated the various sports of the Lord (Krishna). Some one of those milk-women following Krishna, imitated sucking the breast of another who considered herself acted as *Putana* (the *Rakshashi* of that name). Another considering herself to be an infant, began to cry aloud, and threw down by striking with her legs another milk-woman who thought herself to be a cart. Another damsel imitating the acts of the Daitya Trinavarata, stole away another lady who had been going through the role of the infant Krishna. Another one thinking that she heard the foot-steps of the cow-herds began to crawl scratching her knees on the rough ground. Two women among these behaved like the cow-herd boys. One of them tried to kill another who had been imitating Bakasura; and another endeavoured to slay a third who had been acting the part of Bakasura.

One woman calling aloud like Keshava the cattle grazing on

a distant pasture, and playing on the flute began to sport in imitation of him, while others said "well done, well done." Another, having her mind absorbed in Krishna, placing her arm on the shoulder of another lady, began to walk and said to the others present' "I am Krishna; behold my graceful gait. Do not be afraid of the storm and the rains. I have found out the means for protecting you from them." (11—20).

Thus speaking, one damsel climbing on the shoulder of another and placing her feet on the others head :—"O wicked serpent! Fly hence; do you not know that I have been born as a chastiser of the wicked and crooked?" One of them said, "O Cow-herds! Behold this terribly raging forest conflagration; shut your eyes soon, I shall speedily bring about your welfare." One damsel said :—"Here I bind the thief that has stolen the butter after having broken the pot." Thus saying, she bound another delicate lady with garlands to a third who stood for the wooden mortar. This damsel of beautiful eyes, who had been fastened to the mortar, covering her face with her hands, feigned fear.

Having thus questioned the trees and creepers of Brindabana about the whereabouts of Krishna, they roved in the forest, where they saw the foot-prints of the supreme Lord (Krishna). Then they said : Evidently these are the foot-prints of the high-souled son of Nanda and these may be identified by their bearing the marks of a flag (*Dhwaja*), a lotus (*Padma*), a mace (*Gada*), a *Vajra* and a barley corn. Those damsels then began to trace his path, by following those foot-prints. But seeing the impressions of his feet intermixed with those of his mistress, they were sorely distressed and thus spoke :

The Gopees said :—"Whose foot-prints are these? What woman on whose shoulder the son of Nanda hath laid his arms, hath so accompanied him, like a she-elephant following a male one? Surely that woman hath fervently adored the almighty Lord Krishna. For being pleased with her Govinda, forsaking us, hath led her to a lovely place. O friend! The dusts from the lotus-like feet of Govinda are greatly auspicious, for to destroy their sins, Brahma, Mahesa and the goddess Lakshmi hold this dusts on their heads. These foot-prints of that damsel who has gone with Krishna are creating great misery in us. For, she alone, stealing the treasure of the milk-women, is drinking in secret the nectar dropping from the lips of Achyuta. (21—30).

"Here we do not find the impressions of her feet. It seems that the soles of her delicate feet being pricked with grasses and thorns, the loving lord hath carried his dear mistress. O wives of the cow-herds! Behold, here the impressions of the feet of lustful Krishna, made deep in consequence of his bearing the weigh of his mistress. Here the high-souled Lord hath put down his lady-love to gather flowers for his lady. In consequence of his standing on his toes, the foot-prints are not entire and distinct. Surely on this spot the lustful Krishna hath performed the decoration of the hair of the lady. Surely, he sat here for the purpose of putting these flowers on the braids of her hair.'!

Sukadeva continued saying :—O king! Self-possessed and delighting in his own self and unattracted by the amours of those damsels of Braja and displaying the meanness and faithlessness of the females, Krishna sported in the above manner. Thus having lost all consciousness, the females of the cow-herds wandered in that forest showing unto one another the foot-prints of Krishna. That wife of a cow-herd, whom Krishna had led into the forest forsaking others, then considered herself to be the foremost of all women. Because she thought, "Leaving all other women of the cow-herds who hath come here to satiate their desire, this dearly beloved lord is enjoying my company." (31—36).

Thereafter entering into the heart of the forest being much elated with pride, she thus addressed Keshava :—"I am unable to work any longer; carry me, therefore, wherever it pleaseth thee."

Having been thus spoken to by her, Krishna replied to his mistress saying :—"Climb on my shoulders." Then, he suddenly disappeared thence, and thereupon his mistress thus lamented.

"O lord, O darling, O beloved one, O mighty armed one, where are thou gone? O friend! Lead thy miserable slave to thy proximity."

The auspicious Sukadeva again began :—O king! Those milk-women who had been following the foot-steps of the Almighty Lord, then saw at a distance their distressed friend, swooning in consequence of being separated from her dear one. Having heard her words regarding her honour and humiliation by Madhava, and then considering the latter's tyrany, they were greatly astounded. Thereafter they again searched for him

in the forest so long as the moon beams lighted it. Upon darkness setting in these women gave up the search. They imitated his movements. They were completely united with him. Extolling his very many qualities, they did not recollect their abodes. Returning to the banks of the river Kalindi, with their thoughts wrapped up in Krishna, and anxiously awaiting his arrival, they in a chorus began to sing in praise of Krishna. (37—44).

CHAPTER XXXI

THE GOPEES PRAY FOR KRISHNA'S RETURN.

The auspicious wives of the cow-herds sang :—O thou most beloved one ! By thy birth in it, the kindom of Braja has been highly blessed. The goddess of prosperity (Lakshmi) has betaken herself eternally to Braja. We are thy slaves and are roving in quest of thee. Show thyself unto us who are living only for thy sake. O thou bestower of boons ! O thou skilled in amours ! We are thy slaves, desiring no remuneration for the services rendered by us. Thou art piercing us with thy eyes that rob the beauty contained inside the full-grown and full-blown autumnal lotuses. Is not this act of thine equal to slaughtering ? O mighty one ! Thou hast saved us repeatedly from the destruction caused by the poisonous water of the Kalindi river, from the monster who had assumed the form of a huge serpent, from heavy showers and vehement storms, from the fire of lightning, from the Rakshasha named *Brisha*. from the son of *Maya*, and from all other terrible things.

O dear one ! Surely thou art not only the son of the milk-woman Jashoda but the witness of the inmost hearts of all corporeal beings. Prayed to this effect by *Brahmanas* thou didst incarnate thyself in the family of thy votaries for the protection of this universe.

O dear-loved one ! O thou foremost of the *Brishnis* ! Place on our heads thy lotus-like palm that bestoweth all boons, with which thou holdest the goddess of prosperity by the hand, and with which thou givest assurances of safety to those who being afraid of worldly existence betake to thy feet.

O thou that soothest the distress of the people of Braja ! O mighty hero ! O thou of smiles capable of humiliating the pride of thy own people ! O dear one ! Give shelter unto us who are thy slaves. We are mere women, show us thy charming lotus-like countenance ; place on our hearts thy lotus-like feet that remove the sin of those who prostrate themselves at thy feet, that are merciful even unto the beasts that are the resort of the Goddess of prosperity, and that had been placed on the hood of the serpent *Kaliya*. In this way do thou satiate our desires.

O thou of eyes like lotus petals ! We, thy servitors, are infatuated hearing thy sweet wonds that are capable of pleasing the hearts even of the wise ones. O most gracious hero ! Revive us by permitting us to drink the nectar of thy lips. Indeed, on this earth those persons are greatly munificent who make others drink thy nectareous accounts that give new life unto the distressed, that are extolled by those conversant with the knowledge of Brahman, that destroy all sins, that bestow all blessings the moment they are heard and that afford solace unto the soul of the hearers. (1—9).

"O darling ! O hypocrite ! Thy smiles, thy amorous glances, thy dalliance even a thought of which brings about prosperity, thy discourses teeming with cutting repartees carried on in secret—these are agitating our minds.

"O lord ! When thou dost wander out of Braja, driving the cattle before thee, O dear one, our minds become anxious by thinking of thy delicate lotus-like feet being pricked with ears of corn, grass and thorns.

"O hero ! At the close of the day, bearing a lotus-like countenance, with face covered with blue locks of hair and sprinkled with the dust raised by the hoof of the cows, and showing it to us, thou dost repeatedly bring our minds within the spell of Cupid.

"O dearly loved one ! O thou who soothest all our anguish ! Place on our hearts they lotus-like feet which fulfil the desires of those that prostrate themselves at thy feet, which are adored by the lotus-sprung deity (Brahma), which enhance the beauty of the ground on which they are placed,

which ought to be meditated upon in times of danger and which afford peace to the hearts of those who serve them.

"O hero ! Permit us to drink nectar from thy lips that excite desire in our hearts, that destroy all grief, that are always kissing thy sounding flute, and that are capable of obliterating from the minds of men other low passions. (10—14).

"When during the day, thou dost wander in Brindabana moments seem to be ages to people who do not see thee. At the close of the day, when thou dost return, then people drinking the nectar of thy beautiful face covered with locks of hair blame Brahma as very wicked for having created their eye-lashes that deprive them even for a moment from seeing thee.

"O Achyuta ! Setting at naught the commands of our husbands, sons, relatives, brothers and friends, we have come to thee. We have been charmed by the melodious music of thy flute.

"O deceiver ! Except thee, what person ever deserts women at night ? O beloved one ! Having remembered thy hints imparted in secret, thy smiling countenance capable of exciting desire, thy affectionate glances and the beauty of thy broad breast that is the abode of *Sri Lakhmi*, we are burning with desire, and minds are becoming infatuated.

"O darling ! Thy incarnation is for removing misery of the dwellers of Braja, and also for the well-being of the universe. Give us a little of the remedy that can minister to the diseased minds of thy chosen, whose souls are longing to see thee. O best beloved one ! With those delicate lotus-like feet which we hold in our hearts, being afraid of injuring them, thou art now wandering in the forest. Are thy feet not now pained with gravels ? Oh ! It pains us most in our minds even as this to think of such a thing, for thou art our very life. (15—21).

CHAPTER XXXII

SRIKRIṢHNA GIVES CONSOLATION TO MILK-WOMEN

The auspicious Sukadeva said ;—O king ! Thus lamenting at length and extolling the glories of Krishna, and longing to see him, the wives of the cow-herds began to wail in a melancholy voice. Thereupon, before their very eyes there appeared almighty Krishna wearing yellow garments and garlands of wild flowers, with a smiling lotus-like countenance capable of fascinating the heart of even the god of love (Cupid). Thus beholding their beloved one so returning, the eyes of those damsels (*Brajanganas*) beamed forth in great delight, and they then simultaneously rose up, even as the limbs revive and act their functions at the return of life. Then some one of those damsels with her folded palms caught hold of the lotus-like hand of Lord Krishna out of great delight. Some of the damsels bore Krishna's arms anointed with sandal-paste on their shoulders. One of the damsels of delicate limbs received in her folded hands the betel chewed by Krishna. Another one drank with her winkless eyes the nectar of the lotus-like face of Sri Krishna. But looking at his face to her heart's content, she was not satisfied, even as pious people are not satisfied with serving his feet. Some of the milk-women introducing him into their hearts through their pupils of the eye and closing their eyes embraced him (Krishna) in their minds. The hairs of their bodies stood erect and they were overcome with delight like a *yogin* meditating on Krishna. All these damsels were enraptured, and they renounced all grief that had been caused by their separation from him, even as people desirous of attaining salvation overcome all earthly affection by realising the Supreme Being. The Almighty *Achyuta* was surrounded by these milk-women, whose cause of grief had then been thus removed. And, O sire, in that state Krishna appeared highly beautiful like the Prime *Purusha* environed by the qualities such as *Sattwa*. (1—10).

In their company Krishna repaired to the sandy banks of the *Kalindi*. The place swarmed with bees, drawn there by

the fragrance of full-blown *kunda* flowers that filled the air. The sableness of the night being made clear by the silvery beams of the autumnal moon, the place becam e highly delightful. The banks of the *Kalindi* were covered wilh delicate shining sands that seemed to be sprinkled by the watery hands of the river Jamuna. Having the malady of their hearts cured by the ecstacy produced by a sight of Krishna, the damsels arrived at the end of their desires, even as the *Karma Kanda* of the Vedas reach their end and objective on the attainment of the *Brahman*. Then spreading their veils prinkled with the saffron of their bodies, they created seats for the friend of their soul (Krishna). Thereafter the Almighty Lord whose seat is asserted to be inside the hearts of people, skilled in *Yoga*, sat upon those veils. He appeared highly beautiful inasmuch as he sat amidst the assembly of the milk-maids. He was worshipped by them. Then he bore a form that seemed to combine in it all the beauty of the three worlds. Then greeting Krishna, who had excited hankering in their hearts, with smiling looks and arching eye-brows, and shampooing his feet and hands, which they had placed on their laps, and praising him, they addressed him as follows with feigned anger.

The milk-women said :—"Some people are attached to those who are devoted to them. Others again become attached to people who are not devoted to them, nor to those who are devoted to them. O Krishna ! Clearly explain unto us the reason of this extraordinary conduct of people." (11—16).

The auspicious Almighty Krishna answered :

"O friends ! Where the parties are mutually attached they know that they are only prompted to do so an account of their respective interests. Forsooth. these people are not attached to one another, but are attached to themselves, that is, their interest. In this kind of attachment, there is neither friendship nor virtue. O ye of delicate waists ! Persons attached to others not devoted to them may be divided into two classes, namely, those who are kind, and those who are affectionate ; of those, the former by their attachment

secure unstained religious merit, while the latter secure unshaken friendship.

"There are four classes of people, namely, those who find solace in their own souls; those who have attained the fruition of their desires; those who are ungrateful; and, those who oppress their well-wishers. It is no wonder then that these people will not attach themselves to persons not devoted to them.

"O friends! I do not belong to any of these classes. But I do not attach myself to those who are devoted to me in order to make their devotion unto me all the more intense, so that with their hearts absorbed in me, they will not perceive anything else, even as a spendthrift having his heart engrossed by the thought of his squandered riches, does not feel the pangs of hunger and thirst.

"O damsels! Thus, in order to intensify your affection for me I disappeared, forsaking you who have for my sake renounced your sense of worldly right and wrong, your relatives and your duty. Though I did hide myself from your sight, yet my heart was attached to you all.

"O dearly loved ladies! Therefore it behoveth thee not to blame me who am much loved by you. Even though I be granted the duration of life enjoyed by the celestials, I shall never be able to return the excellent services done to me by you all, union with whom can never be blamed, and who have resorted to me after having broken the strong fetters that had bound you to your homes. Your services can only find a return in other good services of yours." (17—22).

CHAPTER XXXIII

RASHLILA OF SRIKRISHA

The auspicious Sukdeva said:—O King! Having heard those fascinating words of the almighty Lord Krishna the *Gopees* gave up all grief that had been caused by their separation from Krishna; and their prosperity increased in consequence of their having touched the body of the Lord.

Thereupon Govinda (Krishna) began his sportive dance known as *Rasha*, in the company of those best of damsels who

attended on him, and they were greatly delighted, and they stood holding one another by the hand. Then having stationed himself between every two of these damsels, Krishna, the Lord of all *yoga*, commenced in that circle of milk-women, the festive dance known as *Rasha Leela*. Each of those damsels then thought that Krishna was standing near herself, and embraced her by the neck. The firmament was then thronged with hundreds of chariots of the celestials accompanied by their wives, whose curiosity had been greatly excited. Thereafter, kettle drums were sounded, and showers of blossoms began to be poured down in torrents.

The foremost of the Gandharvas together with their wives began to sing Krishna's holy glory. Then that ring of dances was filled with the sounds of the bracelets, bangles and *kinkinis* of the damsels enjoying the company of their beloved one. In the midst of these damsels the almighty son of Vasudeva appeared to be superbly beautiful even as a large emerald shines in the midst of other gems of golden hue. With their measured steps, with the movements of their hands, with their smile, with the graceful and amorous contraction of their eye-brows, with their dancing bodies, their moving locks of hair covering their foreheads, with drops of perspiration tricking down their face and with the knots of their hair loosened, these damsels fallen in love with Krishna began to sing.

Then those damsels appeared beautiful like flashes of lightning illuminating a dense mass of clouds. With desire raging in their hearts, these women having throats smeared with various anointments, began to dance and sing. The music of their song filled the universe; and they were greatly delighted being touched by Krishna. Some one of the damsels sang all the notes of the gamut in conjuction with Mukunda (Krishna), but her voice did not harmonise with that of Krishna who worshipped her and was delighted with her performance and said "well done, well done." This damsel thus having been encouraged raised her voice to *dhruva tala* (a note of music of that name), and Krishna again humoured her. One of the Gopees being fatigued with the dance, stood by the side of the club-armed deity.

Then with her arms, she embraced Krishna by the neck, when her bracelets and the jasmine of her hair fell off. Some one having smelt Krishna's arm resting on her shoulder smeared with sandal paste and bearing the fragrance of lotuses, kissed it while the hair of her body stood erect out of delight. (1—11).

One of the damsels placed her cheek on Krishna's which was beautified by the lustre of his ear-rings that were oscillating in consequence of the movements of his body in dancing. Then Krishna gave unto her mouth the betel which he had been chewing. Some of the milk-women sang and danced producing a jingling sound with the *nupuras* and *mekhalas* on their legs. Being tired they drew the auspicious hands of Krishna on their breasts and their fatigue was removed.

Thus the wives of the milk-men obtaining Achyuta (Krishna), the beloved husband of the goddess of prosperity (Lakshmi), and being embraced by his arms, enjoyed his company, and sang in his praise. With the beauty of their countenance made conspicuous by the lotuses of their ears, by their foreheads decorated with flowing locks, by the drops of perspiration as also by the garlands of flowers falling off from their hair, those milk-maids danced in the company of the almighty Lord producing a tinkling sound by their bracelets, bangles and *kinkinis*. In this circular dance known as *Rasha*, the black-bees performed the role of singers. Thus by embracing, by the pressing their hands, looking affectionately towards them, by unrestrained dalliances and by laughing loudly, the lord of the goddess of prosperity sported in the company of the beautiful damsels of Braja, just as a child sports with his image reflected on a mirror.

O foremost of the Kurus! The females of Braja having touched the body of Krishna, were out of themselves in joy. Their sense-organs were paralysed. They were not able to keep their hair and their vests in their proper places. The garlands of flowers on their persons and their ornaments began to fall off. Having seen these amorous sports of Krishna, the wives of the sky-rangers were also infatuated, and were brought under the spell of Cupid. The moon

also with his attendents, the stars, was struck with amazement. (12—18).

Though the Almighty Lord was self-satisfied, yet in sport he enjoyed the company of these cow-herd women having multiplied himself into as many Krishnas as there were Gopees. O king! after having sported for a long while, when they were greatly fatigued, that merciful Lord quite compassionately rubbed their (the Gopees') perspiring faces with his auspicious hands. The milk-women then honouring Krishna with their nectar-shedding smiles and glances and with the beauty of their temples shining with the lustre of their locks and resplendent ear-rings, rehearsed his meritorious achievements. They were then enrapured by being touched by the fingers of his holy hands. Then in the company of these ladies and being desirous of getting over the fatigue Krishna entered into the waters of the Jamuna even as a leader of an elephant-herd accompanied by the she-elephants plunges in the waters, after having broken through the dams. Then he wore the garland that had been soiled by being pressed against the bodies of the milk-maids, and that had been smeared with the saffron of their persons. The bees, like the rulers among the Gandharvas, also followed him in the waters.

O Sir! Thereafter he (Krishna) was sprinkled with water by those youthful damsels who were laughing and shooting amorous glances at him. Being satisfied in his own self he sported like an elephant, when the celestials worshipped him with showers of blossoms. Having been surrounded by the black-bees and the damsels, he sported in the groves on the banks of the Jamuna, where blew a pleasant breeze bearing the fragrance of the aquatic flowers, as also that of those growing on land. (19—25).

The auspicious king Parikshit asked :—"O Brahman! the Almighty Lord of the universe did incarnate himself by a portion only for the propagation of the true religion and for the suppression of the vile ones. He is the Creator, Expounder, as well as the Upholder of the dignity of piety. O Brahman! How did he then act in direct contravention to all systems of religion, by having intimate love-play with the wives of

others ? The Lord of the Jadus had attained the fruition of all his desires ; with what end in view he then perpetrated this shameful act ? O thou of excellent vows ! Dispel all our doubts regarding this point."

The auspicious Sukadeva replied :—O king ! Even the lords of people (such as Brahma, Indra, etc.) deviate from the path of virtue and became guily of improper acts. But these acts do not bring any sin on the powerful and dispassionate ones (who perpetrate them), even as fire is not be blamed for burning all things. But those who are not masters of their passions should not commit such an act even in their minds. If they do these acts out of foolishness, they are sure to meet with destruction, even as persons, except Rudra, meet with destruction having drunk poison. The words of the guardians of people are true. But their actions are scarcely true.

Therefore, an intelligent person should act up to those words of them that are proper and not self-contradictory. O monarch ! No religious merit accrues to those people, who are free from egoism, when they perform an act of piety ; neither doth any sin hang on them, when they commit an improper act. What wonder then, that the lord of all created beings, of the celestials, the mortals, and other lower animals, as also of all things regulated by natural laws, will have nothing to do with pious and impious acts ; that is, there is no piety or impiety with respect to the Almighty Supreme Lord (Krishna). (26—33).

Even those sages who are satisfied by being sprinkled with the pollens from the lotuses of His feet, and who have broken all bonds of actions by means of their devotion to Him, can wander at will and are no longer fettered by their actions. What to speak of His bondage then who assumes forms at His own pleasure ? He is present in the hearts of the milk-women and their husbands, and in the hearts of all other corporeal beings. He is the governor of all things. He assumed a body only out of his sportive humour. Having assumed a human form, He joined in these kinds of sports merely to show grace to His devotees. An audition of the account of these sports, creates devotion towards Him.

The male dwellers of Braja were not jealous of Krishna, for they, being infatuated by the energy of His illusion, considered that their wives were always present by their sides. When the night waned to a close and the period known as *Brahma-muhurta* approached, the beloved mistresses of the almighty Lord, the wives of the cow-herds, unwillingly at heart, went back to their respective abodes, having been permitted to do so by the son of Vasudeva.

Whoever respectfully listens to and rehearses the account of the amorous sport of Krishna with the damsels of Braja, conceives great devotion for the Almighty Lord ; and subduing his own self, he speedily destroys his desires that are the maladies of mind. (34—39).

CHAPTER XXXIV

RELEASE OF SUDARSANA AND DESTRUCTION OF SANKHACHURA

The auspicious Sukadeva said ;—"O king ! Once during the celebration of a solemnity held in honour of a certain celestial (Siva), the cow-herds were highly hilarious and mounting on cars yoked with bullocks, proceeded towards the forest known as *Ambica*.

O lord of people ! performing ablutions there in the water of the *Saraswati* river, those cow-herds most reverentially worshipped the God *Pasupati* (Siva) and the goddess *Ambica* (wife of Siva), with various offerings of the articles of worship, and they prayed saying :—"May the gods be propitious unto us." With that prayer on their lips they (the cow-herds) gave away to Brahmanas, cows, riches, garments, honey, and rice prepared with honey. In the observance of their vow, the high-minded Nanda, Sunanda and others had to pass that night on the banks of the river Saraswati, living solely on its water.

During the night, a huge and hungry serpent came to that forest unseen by any one ; and that serpent caught Nanda who was lying there asleep. While being swallowed up by the serpent, Nanda cried aloud saying :—"O Krishna ! O Krishna ! a huge serpent has been devouring me. O son ! save me who am fallen in this predicament."

Hearing the wailings of Nanda, the cow-herds were awakened from their sleep in great flurry. Then seeing Nanda being swallowed up by the serpent, the cow-herds were highly terrified. They began to strike the serpent with burning pieces of woods. Though struck in the above manner yet the reptile did not leave Nanda.

Thereupon the Almighty One (Krishna), the master of his devotees, came there and kicked the reptile with his feet. Having been kicked by the prosperous feet of the almighty lord, the reptile was purged of all his sins ; and then renouncing his serpent-body, he assumed a resplendent form worthy of being worshipped by the Vidyadharas, and he began to roll down at the lord's feet: (1—9).

Thereafter, Hrishikesha (Krishna) who was lord of the senses, asked that noble being (previously the serpent) who had been standing before him in an attitude of humility and submissiveness, with a body greatly effulgent and adorned with golden garlands, then Lord Krishna asked, "Who art thou of such beautiful appearance, and of great splendour ? How didst thou come by the hateful existence of serpent ?"

The auspicious Serpent said :—"O my lord, I am a Gandharva well-known under the name of Sudarsana. One day I was driving in a chariot through the cardinal quarters, attended with my prosperity, riches and beauty of persons. Proud of my personal beauty I then mocked at the *rishis*, Virupa and Angirasa. Owing to my iniquity, I was compelled to take to the present existence by those two sages who had been so mocked by me. But now I see that those kind-hearted sages had imprecated curse on me with a view to showing mercy towards me. For verily in consequence of their curse, I have been touched by the feet of the preceptor of the worlds and have been purified of my sins.

"O thou destroyer of all misery ! being released from my curse by being touched with thy feet, I beg permission to return to heaven from thee who dost dismiss the fear of those who being terrified by their worldly existence seek shelter in thee.

O thou most potent *Yogin* ! O almighty *purusha* ; O thou protector of the pious ! I seek thy protection. O Krishna !

O lord of the world's guardians ! Permit me to go to heaven, O thou that dost never lapse ! I have been relieved from the punishment inflicted on me by the Brahmanas, by a sight of thee. Even by a recital of thy name a person purifies everything, the hearers and his own self ; what to speak of him who is touched by thy feet ?" (10—17).

Thus having obtained the permission of *Dasarha* (Krishna) and worshipping him, Sudarsana repaired to heaven; Nanda was also saved from a great danger.

Having heard of the uncommon power of Krishna, the dwellers of Braja were struck with amazement. Then having completed the observance of their vows, O king, the cowherds went back to Braja. delightfully dwelling on Krishna's achievements.

Once on a time, during the night Govinda and Balarama of wonderful prowess wandered in the forest in the company of damsels of Braja. The beautiful ladies who were greatly attched to them, were melodiously singing their praise. Their persons were decorated with ornaments and were anointed with unguents. They wore on their necks garlands and were clothed in fine raiments. They welcomed the advent of night rendered delightful by the rising of the moon and the stars, by the bees intoxicated with the fragrance of the jasmine and by the blowing of breeze charged with the fragrance of the lotuses, and of Krishna Balarama going together through the whole scale of musical notes and modulating their voice, they sang in a manner so as to please the minds and the ears of the created beings.

O king ! having heard the melodious song of Krishna, the wives of the cow-herds became senseless and they did not perceive their ornaments and garlands falling off from their persons and their braided knots were loosened. (18—24).

When Balarama and Krishna were thus sporting willfully with delight, there came a follower of the god of wealth known under the name of Sankychura. O king ! Nothing daunted, the Daitya drove those damsels whose lords were Balarama and Krishna, towards the northern quarter, even before their (Balarama's and Krishna's) very eyes ; and the ladies then wept aloud.

On beholding those damsels dependent on themselves crying aloud saying, "O Rama ! O Krishna !" the brothers ran after them who then resembled cows devoured by tigers. They pursued them with great speed, saying "O damsels ! Be not afraid." Having said this, they took up *large sala* trees (teak tree) in their hands. Then those two powerful beings soon overtook that vilest of the Guhyakas. Then that Guhyaka seeing them approach like the death-dealing *Kala*, was struck with terror, and leaving behind the females that foolish one took to his heels, being desirous of saving his life. Govinda then ran after him wherever he went, because he (Govinda) was desirous of taking by force the jewel from his head. Balarama then remained there for protecting the damsels.

O Sire ! Within a short distance, overtaking that wicked-minded one, the almighty Lord severed his head with its jewel by means of a blow of his fist.

Thus having slain Sankhyachura, and having obtained the gem from his head. Krishna gave it (the gem) to his elder brother out of devotion, before the very eyes of the damsels of Braja. (25—32).

CHAPTER XXXV

THE LAMENTATION OF THE MILK-WOMEN FOR THE ABSENCE OF KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—O king ! in enjoying the company of Krishna during the nights, the *Brajanganas* (the milk-women) passed the time delightfully. But, when during the day, Krishna used to go out to tend the cattle in the forest,—the milk-women having their hearts devoted to him, used to pass the time in great misery ; their hearts would run after him, and they would be rehearsing in their mind the various achievements of Krishna.

The auspicious cow-herd women used to say :—"O ye dear friends ! When resting his cheek on the root of his left arm and gracefully contracting his brows, Mukunda plays on the flute touching his lips and having the holes of the flute shut with his delicate fingers, then having heard

that melodious music the wives of the rangers of the sky, accompanied by their husbands (the *Siddhas*) become struck with wonder. Their hearts then coming under the spell of Cupid, they became bashful and lost all control over themselves.

'O damsels ! Listen to this marvel. When Nanda's son (Krishna), of smiles beaming like a garland of sparkling pearls, the delighter of the distressed and on whose breast rests the goddess of prosperity like a stationary flash of lightning, plays on his flute, the bullocks, the deer, and the heifers of Braja are charmed by the sounds of the flute ; they stand at the distance with their ears erect, holding a mouthful of grass by their teeth, like things painted or asleep.

"O friends ! When clothed in garments in imitation of a wrestler, and decorated with peacocks' feathers, fresh twigs, and metallic ores, Mukunda in the company of Balarama and the cow-herds, calls the cows by their respective pet names, then the flow of the rivers appears to tarry, as if desirous of obtaining the dust blown away by the breeze, from his lotus-like feet ; but their (rivers') religious merit is as scanty as our own ; (so not obtaining the dust from his feet) their wavy hands seem to tremble out of overwhelming affection ; and their currents come to a standstill. (1—7).

"When he, whose prosperity is ever-constant like that of the primal *Purusha*, and whose glory is extolled by his followers, wanders at the roots of mountains like a ranger of the forest, and calls the cows by sounding his flute, then the forest-creepers and the trees, rich in floral beauty and in the wealth of fruits, having their branches touch the ground under the heavy load of fruits, and with their fames thrilling with affection, exudates honey, as if to indicate the presence of Vishnu inside their hearts. When Mukunda bearing beautiful *Tilakas*, and cheerfully accepting the pleasing hum of bees intoxicated with the honey of the fragrant *Tulashi* contained in his garland of wild flowers—blows his flute, then the crane, the swans, and other birds of the lake, with their hearts completely charmed by the music, approach him : and with their eyes closed and mind concentrated and speech restrained, they adore the almighty Hari.

"O women of Braja ! When in the company of Balarama decorated with floral ear-rings, and greatly delighted and standing on the ridges of the mountains, he fills the universe with the music of his flute in order to instil delight into the hearts of people, then the clouds, being afraid of showing disrespect to the Great One, roar cordantly in tune with the sound of his flute. The clouds also pour down showers of flowers on their friend and with their shadows, they appear to hold an umbrella over him.

O most chaste Jashoda ! When placing the flute underneath his cherry lips thy son, skilled in all the pastimes of the cow-herds and who has learned the diverse ways of sounding the flute by his own exertion, plays out all the notes of the the gamut, then the lords of the celestials headed by *Sakra, Sarva* and *Parameśthi*. hearing those harmonious cadences lose all consciousness, inspite of their being greatly intelligent. They bend their necks and concentrate their hearts, to catch the music all the better ; and the cause of their becoming unconscious is that they cannot penetrate into the mystery of that harmony. When by means of his lotus-like feet bearing the beautiful signs of the lotus, the *Dhwaja*, the *Askain* and the *Ankusha*, soothing the pain of the ground of Braja, caused by the hoofs of the kine, and when sounding his flute, he wanders with the gait of an elephant whom he resembles in his bulk, then by his amorous glances our hearts tremble with the thrill of love ; we then obtain the status of the trees. (8—17).

"When counting the cows with the bead of gems, and wearing the garland of the fragrant and favourite *Tulashi*, and placing his arms on the shoulder of his beloved follower he begins to play on his flute, then the black female deer with their hearts enchanted by the music of the sounding flute, approach Krishna, the repository of all good qualities ; and they do not relinquish his company, having given up like the Gopees, all love for their homes.

"O sinless Jashoda ! When thy beloved son begotten on thee by Nanda when that delighter of his lovers, beautifully decorating his person with *kunda* flowers and surrounded by the cow-herds and the kine, sports in the

waters of the Jamuna, then in order to do honour to him by touching him, a mild breeze fragrant and cool like *Malayaja* (Sandal), begins to blow; then the inferior deities, performing the functions of *Vandins* (bards and ministrels) worship him with songs, with the sounds of various musical instruments and with various articles for adoration. He is affectionate towards the kine and the inhabitants of Braja, for in order to protect them, he held the mountain Govardhana in his hands. On his way back to Braja, his feet are worshipped by the Ancients (Brahma and others). At the close of the day collecting the herd, playing on his flute, having his glory extolled by his followers, wearing a garland soiled with the dust from the cows' hoofs and enhancing the delight of our eyes even with his fatigued body, here cometh the 'moon-like Krishna born out of the womb of Devaki, in order to fulfil the desires of his friends. At the close of the day, here cometh the lord of the Jadus, to soothe the terrible affliction from which we, the women of Braja, have suffered during the day: his countenance is delightful like the lord of night (moon), his gait resembles that of the foremost among the elephants, his eyes roll in consequence of slight intoxication; he is the bestower of honour on his friends; he wears a garland of wild flowers; his face resembles a slightly ripe Badari fruit; and his smooth temples are beautified with the lustre of golden ear-rings and *kundalas*."

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O monarch! Thus dwelling on the glory of Krishna, the women of Braja passed their days in joy. Having their hearts absorbed in him, and their minds engrossed in him, they were always cheerful. (18—26).

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE MACHINATIONS OF KANSA

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king (Parikshit)! One day, there came in that pastoral kingdom of Braja the Asura Aristha by name, having the form of a bull with a huge body and hump, pawing and shaking the earth under-

neath his hoofs, giving forth a terrific roar breaking the ground underneath his legs, with his tail erect, lifting the mounds of earth with the ends of his horns, discharging dung and urine in small quantities, and with his eyes fixed and staring.

O king! In consequence of his dreadful roar, those big with offspring, among cows and women, out of sheer fear, unseaonably miscarried and underwent abortion. The clouds stationed themselves on his humps, mistaking it for a mountain.

O monarch! Seeing him approching with sharp horns the cow-herds were seized wito terror, their wives and the cattle greatly frightened fled leaving the kingdom of Gokula behind. Saying 'O Krishna, O Krishna' they all sought protection from Govinda. Thereupon the Almighty Lord (Krishna) seeing his kingdom of Gokula overwhelmed with fear, comforted all by saying 'Be not afraid.' He (Krishna) then thus addressed the Asura in the form of a bull:

"O foremost of the wicked! O foolish one! What is the good of terrifying these herds and their tenders when I, the chastiser of the wicked, am present here to repress evil-minded wretches like thyself?"

Having thus spoken to Aristha, Achyuta struck his arm with palm; and thus having enraged the *Asura* with the sound, and resting his serpent-like arms on the shoulder of his friend, he (Krishna) stood there.

Thus being enraged, the *Asura* Aristha also breaking the ground underneath his hoofs, raising his tail that reached the skies and chased the clouds away from it, and waxing wrath, assaulted Krishna. Putting forward the ends of his horns, with his eyes fixed and coppery, and looking at Achyuta through the corners of his eyes, he coursed swiftly towards him, like the thunderbolt hurled by Indra. (1—10).

Thereupon the Almighty Lord (Krishna), having caught hold the *Asura* by the horns, drove him back to a distance measuring eighteen foot-steps, like an elephant pushing back its adversary. Thus having been pushed backwards that *Asura* rose again, and assaulted Krishna with great speed, with

his body wet with perspiration, and breathing hot and fainting with anger. On beholding the *Asura* approaching him, Krishna took him by the horns, and then attacking him with his feet, he felled the *Asura* down on the ground ; and then he twisted the *Asura* and wrung him, even as one wrings and twists a wet cloth. Thereafter pulling his horns, Krishna wounded him (the *Asura*) with those horns. Then that *Asura* dropped down senseless on the earth. At this stage, vomitting blood profusely and simultaneously passing urine and discharging dung and throwing his legs and with his eyes rolling, the *Asura* struggled very much and was then carried to the domain of death. Thereupon the celestials showering blossoms on Hari, began to eulogise him.

Thus having slain the hump-backed *Asura*, and being eulogised by his own race, Krishna in the company of Balarama re-entered the kingdom of Gokula, enhancing the joy of the eyes of the cow-herd women. When the *Asura* Aristha had been slain in the kingdom of Gokula by Krishna of wonderful achievements, the potent Narada of godly appearance, appeared before king Kansa and thus spoke to him :

"O king ! The female child that had been known as the eighth issue of Devaki, was the daughter of *Jashoda*. Krishna, who is known as the son of Jashoda, is in fact the son of Devaki. Balarama also, who is reckoned as the son of Rohini, is the seventh issue of Devaki. Being afraid of thyself, Vasudeva conveyed them to Braja and placed them under the care of his friend, king Nanda. By these two boys (Krishna and Balarama), thy men are slain."

Having heard these words of the divine sage Narada, the lord of the *Bhojas* (Kansa) had his mind agitated with rage, and grasped a sharp sword in order to kill Vasudeva. Being prevented by Narada from perpetrating the vile deed and knowing that his dealh was in hands of the sons of Vasudeva, Kansa again bound Vasudeva and his wife with chains made of iron.

When the divine sage Narada had gone away, Kansa summoning the *Asura* named Keshi sent him to Braja commanding unto him saying :—"Slay thou Balarama and Keshava, the sons of Vasudeva." (11—23).

Thereafter the sovereign of the kingdom of Braja (Kansa) summoned his councillors headed by *Musthika*, *Chanura*, *Sala* and *Tosalaka* as also the keeper of his elephants. He then addressed them in the following manner :

"O mighty *Chanura*, O *Musthika*, listen to these my words. Balarama and Krishna, the two sons of *Anakadundhuvi* (Vasudeva), are dwelling in Braja, the kingdom of Nanda. It has been ordained that my death will come from them. Do you therefore kill them both by wrestling with them, after having brought them over here. Do you erect very many platforms and scaffolds in the arena for the wrestlers. Do you issue a proclamation, so that the citizens and the country people may come to see this wonderful wrestling."

Kansa then turned towards the keeper of his elephants and said :—"O keeper of my elephants ! O gentle one ! Do you station the elephant named *Kubalayapira* at the entrance to the wrestling arena, and slay my said enemies by the elephant."

He (Kansa) then continued saying in general as follows :— "Let the celebration of the *Dhanu* sacrifice commence duly from the day previous to that on which the full moon rises and let sacrificial beasts be victimised for propitiating Siva, the Lord of worldly beings, the bestower of all boons."

Having thus commanded his servants, the *Asura* king Kansa, knowing his interests well, summoned Akrura, the foremost of the Jadus ; and taking his palm in his own hands he said unto him as follows :—

"O thou foremost of the charitable people (Akrura) ! Do me an act of friendship. Among the *Vrishni* and the *Bhojas*, there is none more affectionate unto me and there is none who wishes my welfare more than thyself.

"O peaceful one ! For the above reasons, I seek protection in thee who will help me to fulfil my very difficult task, even as the mighty Indra seeks protection in Vishnu who helps him in the aggrandisement of his interest. Do thou, therefore, go to Nanda's kingdom of Braja where the sons of *Anakadundhuvi* (Vasudeva) are dwelling at present. Bring them here without delay in this chariot." (24—30).

He (Kansa) again continued saying :—"These two boys have been created as my Death by the celestials, whose sole

refuge is Vishnu. Bring them over here with Nanda and the other cow-herds bearing presents of milk and curd, etc. for me. When they would be thus brought down here, I would have them slain by the elephant resembling the god of death himself. But if they escape death from that elephant, then I will have them slain by these wrestlers who are equal to the thunderbolt in their prowess.

"Thus when the two boys would be no more in this world of living, then I will slay their afflicted friends, the *Vrishnis*, the *Bhojas* and the descendants of Dasarha headed by Vasudeva himself. I will also slay my old father who is ambitious of securing sovereignty, as also his brother Devaka and all other enemies of mine.

"O friend! Then this earth will be cleared of its weeds and thorns. The king Jarasandha is my preceptor and guide. Divida is my intimate friend, and Samvara, Naraka and Vana are all attached to me through friendship. With their help, having slain the kings who are the partisans of the celestials, I shall enjoy the sovereignty of the earth. Now thou hast known all these facts. Do thou go and speedily bring here the boys, Balarama and Krishna, under cover of showing them the prosperity of the city of the Jadus, or the celebration of the *Dhanu*-sacrifice."

Then the auspicious Akrura replied :—"O monarch! Thou hast well meditated upon the plans of averting thy death. One ought to prepare himself equally for success and failure. For, Destiny is the only agency that is capable of rendering our endeavours fruitful or futile. Persons try to fulfil their desires even though they may be thwarted by Destiny. And in this way they come by joy or grief. However, I shall do thy behest."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having commanded Akrura in the above manner, and also having left his councillors, king Kansa entered his own appartments. Akrura also returned to his own abode. (31—40).

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ASURAS NAMED KESHI AND BYOMA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having been deputed by the *Asura*-king Kansa—the *Asura* Keshi, assuming the form of a mighty horse, having a speed as the glance of the mind, and oppressing the ground with the pawing of his hoofs, and filling the firmament with the clouds and celestial chariots thrown off by his manes, approached Gokula and terrified the worlds with his neighs. Having seen his kingdom of Gokula frightened with the neighings, and the clouds whirled by the hair of his (Keshi's) tail ; as also having come to know that the *Asuras* were searching him to fight with him, the Almighty Lord (Krishna) came forward and challenged him.

Thereupon the *Asura* uttered a terrible roar like a mighty lion. Thereafter being greatly enraged, the *Asura* beholding Krishna making towards himself assaulted him with his mouth gaping, as if desirous of devouring up the firmament. Then that one of indomitable might, of unconquerable prowess and of vehement speed, struck with his legs the lord of eyes resembling lotus petals. Having eluded the blow, *Adhokshaja* waxing wrath, caught hold of the *Asura* by the legs, and whirling him in the air scornfully threw him at a distance of one hundred *chanus* even as the son Tarkhya throws away a serpent. Thereafter he quietly stood there. After a while having regained his sense, Keshi stood up and in violent anger opening his mouth wide, he again attacked Krishna fiercely.

Thereupon Krishna smilingly thrust his left arm into the mouth of the *Asura*, and his arm resembled a serpent entering into its hole. The teeth of the *Asura* Keshi were broken by being touched by the Almighty One, even as our teeth when touched by a heated iron rod. Being thrust inside the body of the *Asura*, the arm of the high-souled one increased in bulk, even as a malady increases if neglected at the first stage. By the swelling arm of the mighty Krishna, the breath of the *Asura* was chocked ; and throwing his legs in the air,

with his body covered over with perspiration, and with dilated eye-balls, and discharging excretions, the *Asura* fell lifeless on the ground. Then the mighty-armed One (Krishna) drew out the *Asura's* arm from his lifeless trunk that resembled a ripe and burst-out *Karkatika* fruit. He was not proud of his achievement, he killed his enemy without the least effort. He (Krishna) was then hymned by the celestials who poured showers of blossoms on his (Krishna's) head.

Thereafter the divine-sage Narada, the foremost of the devotees of the Lord (Vishnu), having approached Krishna who used to perform acts with the least efforts, thus spoke to him in secret ;

The auspicious divine sage Narada said :—"O Krishna ! O Krishna ! O thou of infinite presence ! O thou of inconceivable prowess ! O ruler of the universe ! O thou that art present in everything ! O thou refuge of all the regions ! O foremost of the Satvatas (Jadavas) ! O Almighy One ! Thou art the single soul that is present in all creatures, even as the same fire remains latent in all fire-woods. Thou art unrevealed and thou art the stay of the intellect ; and thou art the witness of all things. Thou art the mighty Purusha and also the Iswara. Thou art the self-dependent. In times past, with help of thy own illusive energy, thou didst create the Principles of Goodness, Energy and Dullness. With the help of these latter again, thou dost carry out the acts of creation, preservation and annihilation of the universe. Thou art ever unerring in thy acts. Therefore thou art the *Iswara*. Of such a nature thou hast incarnated thyself for the preservation of the pious and also for the destruction of the Daityas, Pramathas and the Rakshasas.

Fortunately, thou hast slain with perfect ease this Daitya who had assumed the form of a horse, and being terrified by whose neighings, the winkless celestials, had deserted the heavenly regions. O Lord ! Shortly I shall see Chanura, Musthika and other wrestlers, and the elephant, and Kansa himself, slain by thee. Then I shall see the destructiyn of *Sankhya*, *Yavana*, *Mura* and *Naraka* ; the carrying off of Parijata from heaven, and the marriage of the

daughters of the heroes, the marriage in which the sole consideration is the prowess of the bridegroom.

Thereafter. O Lord of the universe, I shall see in Dwarka the release from the bonds of sin of king Nriga; the acceptance of the gem *samantaka* with thy wife Jambhubati, the restoration of his son to a Brahmana from the abode of Death, the destruction of Poundraka, the burning of Kasipuri the death of Dantavakra, and the slaying of Chaidya during the celebration of the great Rajashuya sacrifice. I shall also see the other acts of heroism which thou shalt perform inhabiting the kingdom of Dwaraka. These achievements of thine, shall be rehearsed on earth by poets.

Thereafter, I shall see the destruction of complete armies by thee, whose semblance is the *Kala*, and who art the destroyer of earth's burden, when thou shalt become the charioteer of Arjuna. Thy semblance is all knowledge. In consequence of the proper arrangement of thy semblance thou hast got all thy aims and objects satisfied. Thy desires are ever fruitful. Owing to thy great prowess, the fetters of action forged by the Principles cannot reach thee. Therefore I seek thy protection. I bow down unto thee, who hast created by thy own energy of illusion this universe replete with diverse things and beings, who hast assumed human form out of a mere desire for sport and lastly who art the foremost of the Jadus, the Vrishnis and the Satvatas." (9.—23).

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! Thus having saluted Krishna, the lord of the Jadus, the divine sage Narada, the foremost among the votaries of the Almighty One, went back with his permission, greatly delighted at having seen the Lord. The mighty Govinda also, having slain in battle the Asura Keshi, tended the cattle in the company of the enraptured cattle-tenders and thus enhanced the felicity of the dwellers of Braja.

One day these cattle-tenders when grazing the cattle, commenced the pastime, known as *nilayana*, in which some acted as thieves, and others played the part of protectors and keepers. In that sport, some became thieves, others

became keepers and others acted as lambs. And thus being free from all anxieties they began to play. The son of the Asura Maya, named Byoma, of potent illusive energy, being disguised under the form of a cow-herd, and behaving like those who were playing the part of thieves, decoyed many of the cow-herds that acted the part of lambs. The mighty Asura having led those cow-herd boys aside, threw them into a mountain cave, the mouth of which he then shut with a large piece of stone. Thus at last there remained only four or five of the cow-herd boys.

On coming to know of this vile act of that Asura named Byoma, Krishna, who is the bestower of protection to the pious, powerfully seized him when he was decoying the cattle-tenders, like a lion seizing a jackal. That powerful Asura being desirous of releasing himself, then assumed his real form that resembled a mighty mountain. But he was not able to set himself free, and was rather sorely oppressed on acconnt of the mighty hold of Krishna. Having clasped the Asura within his two arms, Achyuta felled him down on the surface of the earth. Then, before the eyes of the celestials, who were stationed in the heavens, he slew the Asura, in the manner in which a sacrificial beast is killed, i. e. by choking his breath.

Thereafter, having removed the stone that covered the mouth of the cavern, Krishna brought out the cow-herds from their uncomfortable situation. Then, being eulogised by his followers and the celestials themselves, Krishna returned to his own kingdom of Gokula. (24—34).

CHAPTER XXXVIII

AKRURA GOES TO GOKULA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Having resided that night at Madhupuri, the high-souled Akrura, mounting on a car went towards Gokula, the kingdom of Nanda. On his way, the high-minded one, was filled with great devotion for the lord of eyes like lotus-petals, and he thus, began to think within his mind :—

"What act of great merit have I performed, or what

rigid austerity have I undergone or what gift have I bestowed on worthy recipients, in consequence of which I shall to-day see the almighty Keshava? I consider it impossible for me, whose mind is occupied by the objects of the senses, to have a look at the Lord of illustrious renown, just one who is a Sudra by birth can hardly correctly pronounce the mantras of the Vedas. Or, I should not entertain any such misgiving; vile as I am, I may still have a look at Achyuta; for, sometimes even some among those people who are carried away by the current of time, cross it, that is, they obtain emancipation. To-day all my sins shall melt away; to-day my birth shall be blessed; for to-day I shall bow down to the Almighty Lord's lotus-like feet that are meditated upon by those versed in Yoga. It is indeed marvellous that Kansa has done a favour to me to-day; for, being sent by him, I shall to-day see the lotus-like feet of Krishna who has incarnated himself as a human being. I shall behold the lotus-feet of the Lord, the feet by means of the lustre of whose nails in times past, people have crossed this earthly existence that is difficult of crossing; the feet which are worshipped by Brahma, Bhava, and other celestials headed by these, by the goddess of prosperity, by the sages accompanied by their devoted disciples, by the cattle-tenders at the time of tending the cattle when Krishna roams about in the forest.

Surely this day I shall see the countenance of Mukunda beautified by a graceful forehead and nose, and smiling glances and eyes resembling crimson lotuses, as also covered over with curling locks of hair; because I see the deer going round me, which is an auspicious sign. Will not my vision be blessed to-day by a sight of Vishnu of effulgent appearance, who hath assumed a human figure at his own unrestrained pleasure for removing the heavy burden of the earth? (1—10).

He is the operator of cause and consequences, still he is free from egoism being a spectator. With the help of his own conscious energy, he has driven away from him darkness, the sense of distinction, and other delusive and erroneous notions. He is betokened by the beings possessing life,

intellect and the senses, whose hearts constitute his residence and who have been created by his own energy of illusion under his direct supervision.

Narrations filled with the description of his qualities, achievements and birth, that are capable of destroying the sin of the worlds and bringing about all the blessings, resuscitate, sanctify and enrich the universe. Accounts that do not contain those descriptions are said to resemble dead bodies decked with ornaments and garments. Being desirous of bringing about the happiness of the foremost among the celestials that are the stay of the bridge of virtue, he has incarnated himself in the race of his votaries: spreading his renown in all directions, the Lord is now living in Braja. The celestials also always sing his glories that are the source of all prosperity. Surely I shall to-day see that the Reverend One who is the protector of the pious, and who is their spiritual preceptor, who is favourite of the three worlds, who is the delight to the eyes of those possessing them, who has assumed a form and who is the beloved abode of the goddess of prosperity.

At the dawn of day I have seen many auspicious signs. The moment I shall see the lords, the prime Purusha, Balarama and Krishna, hurriedly descending from my chariot, I shall bow down to their feet, which the *yogins* meditate in their heart for the purpose of assimilating their selves to the Supreme Soul. I shall also bow down to their friends, the inhabitants of Brindabana. It may be that then the Lord shall place on the head of mine, fallen at the root of his feet, his lotus-like hands, that give assurance of safety to those men who, agitated with the fear of the serpent of Death, seek shelter in him,—hands in which Kousika (Indra) having placed articles of adoration and Vali having poured down water, both obtained the sovereignty over the three worlds; hands, that are fragrant like perfumes, and which discard the toil of the damsels of Braja when they engage in sport with him. Though I have been sent by Kansa and as such I am his emissary, yet Achyuta will not take me in the light of an adversary; for he is all-seeing, and that knower of hearts is viewing with his unerring eyes what is

passing inside as well as outside my heart. He shall then look upon me, fallen at the root of his feet, having my hands folded, with smiling eyes flooded with kindness. Then having all my sins destroyed, I shall feel the highest felicity, and shall be freed from all fear. (11—19).

Thereafter with his mighty arms, he (Lord Krishna) shall be embracing me who am the best of his friends, his kinsman, and who hath not got any other deity to protect him. Then my soul shall be greatly sanctified, and my fetters of action shall fall off. When having come in contact with his person, I shall bow down unto him with folded palms, he of illustrious renown shall address me saying,—'O Akrura, O sire, etc.' Then my birth on this earth will indeed be blessed. Fie on the births of those who are not honoured by the Great One! The Almighty Lord hath got none who is his dearest and nearest friend, and also he hath got none who is his inveterate enemy. There is none meriting his indifference; still he is attached to his votaries and bestows the gifts desired by them, just as the celestial tree (Kalpa-Vriksha) bestows the desired for gifts to those who seek shelter in it. It may be, that the first born and foremost among the Jadus, smilingly embracing and holding me by my folded hands, shall lead me inside a chamber, and there he will question me, standing in humble attitude, regarding the behaviour of Kansa towards his friends. Surely I shall receive a hospitable treatment." (20—23).

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying:—O king! Thus thinking on the way being beguiled by a meditation on Krishna, the son of Sufalka (Akrura) arrived in his chariot at the kingdom of Gokula, just when the sun reached the western horizon. Akrura then saw from his car those feet of the Lord the sacred dusts from which the guardians of worlds bear on head-gears, and which are the ornaments of the earth and which are beautified by the marks of a lotus, *vajra, ankusha* and other things. Having seen those feet, Akrura became overwhelmed with delight. The hairs of his body stood erect out of reverential awe and his eyes were overflooded with tears. Then leaping from his car,

Akrura rolled down at those feet exclaiming, "Oh! These are the dusts from the Lord's feet."

After having given up pride, fear and grief, whatever merit Akrura secured for himself by carrying the message of Kansa to Krishna, and by seeing and hearing the latter, constitutes the best objects of existence regarding corporeal beings.

In the kingdom of Braja Akrura saw Krishna and Balarama present in the place where cows are milked, respectively clad in yellow and blue garments, with eyes resembling beautiful autumnal lotuses, both very young and of complexions green and white, the receptacle of all beauty, of long arms, having faultless countenances, of handsome persons, and both powerful like young elephants. Akrura saw those high-souled youths sanctifying the ground of Braja with the impression of their feet marked by the signs of a flag, a lotus, *ankusha* and *vajra*; he (Akrura) saw them (Balarama and Krishna). having eyes graceful with a smile of generosity, engaged in delightful and noble pastimes; being decorated with garlands of gems and wild flowers, with bodies smeared with holy and fragrant unguents, bathed and clad in clean clothes, he saw the Prime and Supreme Purushas (in Balarama and Krishna), the cause of the universe and its lords, who had partially incarnated themselves as Balarama and Krishna for the welfare of the universe.

O king! Chasing away the darkness from the cardinal quarters with their effulgence, Krishna and Balarama shone forth like two mountains of emerald and silver covered over with molten gold. Being overcome with tenderness, Akrura hastily descending from his chariot prostrated himself at the feet of Krishna and Balarama like an iron rod. (24—34).

O king! The eyes of Akrura were blinded with tears of joy produced in consequence of his having seen the almighty Lord. His body greatly perspired and out of embarassment, he was not able even to introduce himself. The almighty Lord being affectionate to those who bow down unto him, having come to know of Akrura's intention, raised him (Akrura) up from the ground by his hand in which was painted a car-wheel (*Ratha-chakra*), and in

great delight drawing Akrura towards him he embraced him.

The high-minded Sankarasana-deva (Balarama) also embraced Akrura who saluted him and then taking him by his folded palms, he brought him attended by his own younger brother Krishna to his own room. Thereafter having asked him the usual questions about his welfare, Sankarsana offered him a comfortable seat; then having duly washed the feet of the guest, he made him a present of *madhuparka* (comprising of milk, honey, and other things). Thereafter having dedicated a cow to the guest, he respectfully fanned him (the guest) who was fatigued due to the toils of the long journey. Then Krishna with great respect brought delicious and holy rice with different kinds of curry and sauce. When Akrura had finished taking his meal, Balarama, who was versed in proprieties, respectfully offered him fragrant garlands and chewing perfumes to scent his mouth. Thereupon the cow-herd king Nanda questioned Akrura in the following manner, after having duly observed the customary hospitality.

"O Dasarha! How do you manage to live in Madhupuri when the ruthless Kansa is alive, like lambs reared by the butcher? That heartless one had killed the issues of his lamenting sister, and he is always bent on satisfying his own self, what to speak of the welfare of you, who are his subjects!"

Having been greeted in the above manner with sweet words by Nanda, Akrura recovered from the fatigue of his journey by these friendly questions of Nanda. (35—53).

CHAPTER XXXIX

AKRURA RETURNS TO MADHUPURI

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! Having been comfortably seated on the bed being held in high esteem by Balarama and Krishna, the illustrious Akrura considered himself to have attained the fruition of those desires that were revolving in his mind on his way to Gokula. What is unattainable to beings when the almighty lord, the repository

of all prosperity, becomes propitious unto them ? Still, O king, persons devoted to the Lord desire for nothing. After having eaten his evening meal, the Great One, the son of Devaki, questioned Akrura regarding the behaviour of Kansa towards his kinsmen and also what Kansa wanted to do unto others.

The auspicious almighty Lord (Krishna) asked :—O sire ! O gentle one ! Hast thou arrived here safely? May good betide thee ! Are thy relatives, kinsmen and friends enjoying health and happiness ? Or, what is the good of enquiring about the welfare of our kinsmen and Kansa's subjects, when Kansa, the disgrace of our race, and who is only our uncle in name, is growing in power ? Alas ! For us, our innocent father and mother have been compelled to undergo various miseries. I am the cause of the death of their sons, I am the cause of their imprisonment. O mild one ! Fortunately I have this day met thyself who art my kinsman. I have been expecting a visit and I have received it. O sire ! Unfold the cause of thy coming here." (1—7).

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—Having been questioned in the above manner by the almighty Lord (Krishna), the descendant of Madhava (Akrura) related everything unto him, the invetaracy of Kansa's enmity to the race of the Jadus, his (Kansa's) attempt at slaying Vasudeva, the object of his own mission, the reason why he had been sent as an emissary, also what had been told unto Kansa by Narada regarding the birth of Krishna from *Anakadundubhi* (Vasudeva).

Having heard these words of Akrura, Balarama and Krishna, the slayer of heroes hostile unto them, smiled and informed their father Nanda about the commands of king Kansa.

Thereupon the cow-herd king Nanda commanded the cow-herds saying :—"Take various preparations of milk with you, as also other presents. Yoke all your carts. Tomorrow we shall proceed towards Madhupuri and on arriving there we shall offer all these delicious preparations of milk and also other articles of presents to king Kansa. There we shall then see and enjoy the celebration of a grand festival. People from all parts of the country are hastening there." The cow-herd

king Nanda caused the above proclamation to be made in his kingdom of Gokula by his town-guards.

Then the wives of the cow-herds having heard that Akrura had come to Braja to take Balarma and Krishna to Madhupuri were pained in the extreme. The beautiful countenances of some of the Gopees turned pale and they sighed heavily and hot in consequence of the heart-burn produced by this news. The garments and bracelets of others began to fall off, and their hair knots were loosened.

The other Gopees had the operations of their sense-organs stopped by a concentrated meditation on Krishna ; and being transported to the region of the soul, they did not perceive the objects of this earth. Others again fainted away, recollecting the heart-affecting speech of Souri, containing many choicest phrases and uttered with loving smiles. Remembering his graceful carriage and performances, his side-long glances accompanied by charming smiles, his witty repartees capable of destroying grief, and his candid behaviour, and being frightened and afflicted at the thought of separation from Mukunda, others assembled and in a body thus spoke with their countenances flooded with tear and their hearts engrossed in Krishna. (8—18).

The auspicious wives of the cow-herds said :—"Alas ! O Creator ! Thou hast not even semblance of kindness left in thee. Thou hast gifted corporeal beings with affection and an inclination for forming friendship ; but before those beings have enjoyed to their hearts' content the objects of their affection and friendship, thou dost bring about separation between them totally. Indeed thy actions are as whimsical as those of a mere child. Having once held in our view the countenance of Mukunda, furnished with a handsome forehead and an acquiline nose covered over with green ringlets of hair, and charming with a smile capable of destroying all grief, thou art now taking it away from our sight. This act of thine is very culpable. Truly thou art very crooked, because to day disguising thyself under the denomination of Akrura, thou art, robbing us of our eyes that thou didst give us,—eyes with which we used to see all thy skill of creation manifest in

some part of body of the enemy of Madhu. The friendship of the son of Nanda also is very unsteady.

"Alas! We are enslaved by his charming smiles, still he will not look upon us. Forsaking our homes, relations, sons and husbands, we have become his slaves. But he always delights in new company. The benediction, which the damsels of that city have invoked this morning, saying, 'may this day dawn in all prosperity for us' shall be realised by them. For to-day they shall be drinking the nectarious countenance of the Lord of Braja, when he shall enter their city—countenance beautified by side-long glances and smiles which are as intoxicating as any strong liquor.

"The heart of Mukunda also shall be captivated by the mild and agreeable talk of these damsels; and being fascinated by their bashful smiles and amorous dalliances, he though very intelligent and obedient to his father and kinsmen, will not come back to us, simple country-maids that we are. To-day the eyes of the Dasarhas, the Bhojas, the Andhakas, the Vrishnis and the votaries, and of those that shall see the son of Devaki on the way, shall be greatly blessed. For to-day they shall view the Lord and dearly beloved husband of the goddess of prosperity and the receptacle of all good qualities. The name Akrura, meaning literally not crooked, of such an unkind one, is indeed a misnomer; this one (Akrura) is very heartless; because, instead of consoling us, greatly afflicted damsels, he is carrying away our dearest darling to a distant country.

"Behold! The hard-hearted Krishna hath ascended the chariot. See, the undaunted cow-herds follow him in haste in their carts. The old do not prevent him from going.

"Alas! Even Destiny is hostile to us to-day. Approaching Madhava we will prevent him from going. What can the oldest people of our race and our kinsmen do unto us? Being deprived of Mukunda's company, which we are not able to bear even for half a *Nimisha* (the twinkle of an eye), and being distracted at heart, we do not care to live.

"O Gopees! How can we hope to overcome the keenest anguish of separation without the help of him with whom we passed the night as a moment, in circular dance in Rash Lila

enlivened by his lovely and charming smiles, his amorous intrigues, his loving looks and his affectionate embraces? How can we live without him who at the close of the day, in the company of Ananta, and being surrounded by the cattle-tenders and having his curling locks and garlands soiled with the dusts raised by the hoofs of the cattle, and sounding his flute, enters Braja and inflames desire in our hearts with his charming smiles and side-long glances?" (19—30).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having been spoken to in the above manner, and being afflicted with the thought of separation, the damsels of Braja, having their hearts attached to Krishna, and giving up bashfulness, began to lament melodiously, saying, O Govinda, O Damodara, O Madhaba, etc." Then, disregarding the women who had been bewailing, when the sun rose, Akrura, having finished his morning prayers and other acts of adoration, drove away in his chariot. The cow-herds headed by Nanda followed him in their carts, taking with them numberless earthen pots containing preparations of milk, as presents for the king. The wives of cow-herds also followed their darling and were not a little delighted by being kindly looked at by Krishna ; and expecting his orders, they stood there. The foremost of the *Jadus*, seeing them so much afflicted at his departure from Braja, consoled them by sending to them this affectionate message, "I shall soon return."

So long as the flag of Krishna's chariot was visible and so long as the dust raised by it were seen, the cow-herd women followed him with their eyes, and they appeared like painted pictures. Being hopeless of the return of Govinda, they came back broken-hearted. Having been greatly aggrieved, they passed their days in singing the achievements of their darling lord.

O monarch! Meanwhile the almighty Lord, in the company of Balarama and Akrura, riding a chariot having the velocity of the wind, arrived at the banks of the river *Kalindi* that washes off all sins. There performing ablutions, he drank the water of the river translucent like a cleansed jewel. Thereafter he once more addressed the trees, and ascended the car in the company of Balarama. Akrura seated them

inside the chariot : and then with their permission approaching the river *Kalindi*, he duly performed ablutions in its waters. Having dived into it and re-iterating the name of the eternal *Brahman*, Akrura saw there before his eyes Krishna and Balarama sitting together. (31—41).

Then Akrura thought within himself : "The two sons of *Anakadundubhi* are in the car ; why then I see them here ? Are they not in the chariot then ?" Thus thinking, Akrura came out of the water, and saw them (Krishna and Balarama) seated in the car as before. Again he dived into the waters thinking, "Is it then that my sight of them in the waters is fanciful ?"

There again he saw Ananta Deva (Balarama) eulogised by the Siddhas, and the foremost of the reptiles and the asuras, all standing with their necks bent. He saw the god having a thousand hoods, and all of those hoods decorated with diadems ; the diety was clad in blue garments. and was white like the fibres of a lotus, and he shone like mountain *Kailasha* with its peaks. On the lap of this divinity, Akrura saw another male being of a deep blue complexion, vested in yellow silk-garments, having four arms, of an amiable appearance, with red eyes resembling lotus-petals, having a charming and delightful countenahce, and charming smiles and glances, furnished with graceful eye-brows and a nose, a beautiful pair of ears, broad forehead and cherry lips, having long and sinewy arms, and muscular shoulders and a broad breast.

Akrura also saw this deity having a neck resembling a conch-shell, a deep navel, an abdomen furnished with threefolds of skin and resembling fresh twigs, broad and spacious waist and buttocks. He saw the god furnished with thighs resembling the trunk of an elephant with graceful knees and shanks with raised ankles, having lotus-like feet rendered effulgent with the lustre of his red toe-nails and toes. He saw the deity decorated with a diadem, bracelets and armlets inlaid with valuable gems, with zones, the sacred-thread, bangles, necklaces and ear-rings. He saw the god bearing a lotus in his hand, carrying a conch-shell, a mace and the discus (*Sudarsana-chakra*), with the gems *Srivatsa* and the resplen-

dent *Kaustubha* hanging on his breast, and with garlands of wild flowers.

Then Akrura saw the god hymned in different languages and with different objects by Nanda, Sunanda and other followers of Krishna, by Sunaka and other celestials sages, by Brahma, Rudra and other lords of celestials, by the foremost of the twice-born ones headed by Marichi, and by Prahlada, Narada, Vasu and others, foremost amongst the votaries of the Lord. He saw the Lord served by the goddesses presiding over prosperity, plenty, speech, beauty, glory, contentment, the earth and strength, as also by those presiding over knowledge, energy and illusion.

Having seen this, Akrura was greatly delighted, and his heart was overflooded with reverence. The hairs of his body stood erect, and out of emotion his body became wet with perspiration, and tears flowed down his cheeks.

And, O Bharata ! Then betaking himself to the Principle of Goodness, and saluting the Lord with his head, and folding his palms and having his mind concentrated, Akrura began to praise the Lord in accents indistinct and mild. (42—57).

CHAPTER XL

AKRURA SINGS LORD'S PRAISES

The auspicious Akrura said :—"O Lord ! I bow down unto thee. Because, indeed, thou art the prime cause of all causes, Thou art Narayana. Thou art first born One ; and eternal Brahma hath appeared from the filaments of the lotus springing up from thy navel. From Brahma, again hath originated this universe. Earth, water, fire, air, sky, and the intellectual or the living principle, the illusory energy, and the mind, the different senses and their objects, all the deities and the manifold causes of the universe, all have risen from thy body. In fact, the illusory energy and other material causes, that are unlike the soul in nature, can hardly know thy reality ; because thou art identical with the soul. Even Brahma himself cannot realise thy true self, that transcends all the properties of creation ; because he is perfectly encompassed by delusion.

"Under these circumstances, how is it possible for the illusion or the material cause itself to understand thee? Thus, though thou art unknowable, yet, to know thee, the honest devotees worship thee incessantly; because, O Lord, thou art the Supreme self and the God Himself. As also thou art the individual soul, and the active principle in creator, and the essence of all material things.

"O Lord! Some persons worship thee with their knowledge in the Vedas. The regenerate Rishis, again, who have transcended the region of actions, do serve thee by the performance of various sacrifices, uttering therein the names of all the gods bearing innumerable appearance. Even the wise men, who have far advanced from the region of actions and results and who have thereby attained the highest bliss and endurance, devoutly meditate upon thee and worship such of thy personality as is identical with consciousness. And others, again, who have made themselves by initiations, just in accordance with the sacred precepts prescribed by thee, worship one of the various forms that thou dost bear, viz. Narayana; and they consider, during their worship, that their soul is made up of what constitutes thy personality. So also other persons worship thee, O thou Holy One, as one identical with Lord Siva. They then adopt a path pointed out by Siva himself, which again is manifold owing to diverse opinion.

"O Lord! All beings, should they be devoted to the service of other gods than thyself, or in case they hold diverse opinions, even then thereby they do really worship thee, as thou art the Supreme God, constituted as thou art by the essences of all the subordinate deities.

"O God! The ways that men individually select for worshipping their chosen deities, all at last turn towards thy service, even as the rivers themselves, which, having the long course they run, are at last directed towards the great ocean and fall into it. The quality of goodness, energy and darkness (*Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas*) are the attributes of Thy Prakriti. Into them, indeed, do all the creatures, from the subtlest down to the immobile existence, enter. (1–11).

"O Lord! I bow down unto thee, for thou dost ever blaze

in intelligence ; and thou dost form the essence of all things ; as also thou dost stand as witness in all intelligent beings. O God ! the current of attributes caused to flow by thy illusory energy passes through those deities, who boast of the possession of the divine spirits, or spirits belonging to men and lower order of animals. O Thou Holy One ! The fire forms thy mouth. The earth forms thy feet. The sun constitutes thy vision. The sky itself is thy navel. The different points of the horizon are thy ears. The lords of the celestials are like thy arms. The oceans form the cavity of thy abdomen. The air is considered to be thy life and spirit. Then again, the trees and the deciduous plants form the downs on thy body. The clouds constitute thy hair. The mountains stand apart as thy bones and nails. The whole day and night are a moment in respect to thee. Prajapati (the creator) makes thy organ of generation. The rains also are supposed to constitute thy essence and power.

"O Eternal-souled One ! Being accompanied by their respective guardians, all the worlds, replete with innumerable creatures, are found to permeate through thy body, that is inconceivable, made up of consciousness alone just as the creatures of the water are noticed to swim in the water, or as the gnats are seen to travel round the interior of the fruits of the fig tree. (12—15).

"Indeed whatever form dost thou assume in thy sportive humour, even by remembering them, the men, that are honest and wise, are able to keep aside their own sorrows, and becoming highly gratified they chant thy praises.

"O Lord ! I bow down unto thee, who didst rove about in the great ocean at the time of the universal deluge, as the Supreme Cause, incarnating thyself as the fish. Again I bow down unto thee, who didst assume the form of Hayagriva after thou hadst slain Madhu and Kaitava. Also I bow down unto thee, who having incarnated thyself as a gigantic tortoise, hadst lifted up the mountain called *Mandara*.

"O Lord ! Salutations be unto thee, who hadst incarnated thyself in the form of a boar, in order to walk for amusement over the whole world, after having saved it from destruction. O thou who dost drive away all terrors of the honest and

wise ! I bow down unto thee, who hadst incarnated thyself as the extra-ordinary Man-lion (*Narasingha*). Salutations be unto thee, who having assumed the form of Dwarf, attacked the three worlds. O thou who art the lord of the Bhrigu race ! I bow down unto thee, who hadst severed the unbending heads of the Kshatriyas, like trees of a dense forest.

"O Lord ! I bow down unto thee, who hadst slain *Ravana*, incarnating thyself as Rama, the foremost of the race of Raghu. Salutations be unto thee, O Vasudeva ! Salutations be unto Sankarsana-deva ! Salutations be unto Pradyumna, and also unto Aniruddha ! Salutations be unto thee, O lord of Sathythas (the people inhabiting one of the countries of midland India, near the vicinity of Parijata mountain) ! O thou ! Salutations be unto thee, who hadst incarnated thyself as holy Buddha with the object of gratifying the Daityas and the Danavas ! Salutations be unto thee, who assumeth the form of *Kali*, and destroyeth the whole race of the Kshatriyas who are like the *Mlechhas*. (16—22).

"O thou Holy One ! This entire world is full of thy delusive energy. The men, also, traverse the whole region of actions, always cherishing a very high opinion of, and showing real earnestness for the self and self-possession. Lord ! What need is to mention their instances ; for I myself too, deluded as I am, ever move in the sphere of thy illusion, attaching reality to these my possessions, viz., my own body, my home, my son, my relations and wealth, which in fact are constituted of nothing but dreams. Moreover I hold very opposite opinions regarding the results of actions, which are but ephemeral ; and also in respect to the body, which has nothing to do with the spirit, or as to the home, which is nothing but misery itself. Again, I am highly gratified with both pleasure and pain ; and being thoroughly pervaded by the illusory energy, I do not know that thou art really dear to my soul.

O Lord ! I shun thee, and I remain quite aloof from thyself. Possessing little intelligence that I do, I am incapable of restraining my mind, which is taken possession of by both my aims and desires for actions ; as also it has been manywise attracted by my agitated senses. Thus being delud-

ed as I am, at last I have found shelter under thy feet, that are inapproachable by the dishonest.

"O God ! I consider, this is owing to thy kindness towards me. O Lotus-navelled One ! Whenever creatures are found to be delivered from the duties of the world, it is then only that their thoughts are wholly directed towards thyself, and also to the service of the honest and wise.

"O thou that art the embodied form of all consciousness : Thou art the Supreme cause of all causes and consciousness. Thou art the regulator of the chief attributes, that constitute personality. Also thou art perfect, and thou art possessed of everlasting energy. Endowed with such qualities as thou art, I bow down to thee, who art the son of Vasudeva ; and who art the common shelter of all creatures. O Hrishikesha ! I bow down unto thee. Do thou protect me, who am thy refugee." (23—30).

CHAPTER XLI

SRIKRISHNA ARRIVES AT MATHURA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—The almighty Lord Krishna having shown unto Akrura, who had been praising him, his form inside the waters of the river Kalindi, withdrew again, just as an actor gives up the disguise in which he played his role. Akrura also having seen the body disappear speedily came out of the waters. Then he performed the necessary acts. He was struck with wonder. He then came back to his chariot.

Hrishikesha, the lord of the senses, then asked Akrura saying :—"Hast thou seen some great marvel on earth in the skies, or in the waters ? Thy very appearance indicates that thou hast seen something wonderful."

The auspicious Akrura replied saying :—"O lord ! in this universe whatsoever wonderful things there are on the ground, in the skies, or in the waters, they are present in thee. Because thou dost pervade the universe. Therefore what marvel remains to be seen by me when I have seen thy marvellous self ? O Brahman ! what more wonderous thing is possible for me to see if I do not see here thee in whom

shine forth all wonders of the earth, the skies and the waters ?" (1—5).

Oh Maharaj ! having thus spoken, the son of Gandhini (Akrura) let go the chariot and at the close of day, Akrura conveyed Balarama and Krishna to the city of Mathura. O Monarch ! the people from the whole country crowded in the streets of the town. Seeing the two sons of Vasudeva the people were greatly delighted and they were not able to take away their eyes from them. Meanwhile, the dwellers of Braja, the cow-herds headed by Nanda, having reached the pleasure gardens of the city, waited there for the arrival of Krishna and Balarama. Joining their company, the almighty lord of the universe, holding Akrura by the hand mildly and smilingly said unto him as follows :—

The auspicious Reverend One said :—"With the chariot do thou (Akrura) at first enter into the town and then repair to thy home. O sire ! we shall get down from our cars here and getting over the fatigue of our journey we shall visit the capital later on. (6—10).

The auspicious Akrura said :—O lord ! I will not enter Mathura leaving you behind. O thou affectionate towards thy devotee ! it behoveth thee not to forsake me, O lord, who am thy votary. O Adhokshaja ! come, let us go together, O best of my friends ! do thou come to our abode with thy elder brother, cow-herds and friends and bless our house. We are householders, sanctify our abode ; with the dust of thy feet. The ancestral manes, the fires and the celestials are all satisfied when the water, with which thou dost wash thy feet, is kept in the house. The mighty Asura Vali secured holy renown by washing the pair of thy lotus-feet. He attained to incomparable prosperity and to the mode of existence of thy single-minded devotees. The hollowed water, that has taken its rise from thy feet, is sanctifying the three worlds ; it is held by Sarva (Siva) on his head ; and by its holy contact, the son of king Sagara attained to paradise. O god of the gods ! O lord of the universe, O thou the recital and hearing of whose glory are sanctifying ! O foremost among the Jadus, O thou of holy renown ! O Narayana ! I bow down unto thee." (11—16).

The auspicious Almighty lord said :—"O Akrura ! I shall go to thine abode, in the company of my elder brother, and by slaying the oppressor of the race of Jadus, I shall afford delight to my kinsmen and friends."

Thus having been spoken to by the almighty Lord, Akrura entered the town as if absent-minded. Then informing Kansa of his mission he went back to his own house.

Thereafter being desirous of beholding the city, the almighty Lord Krishna, in the company of Sankarasana-deva (Balarama) and being surrounded by the cow-herds, entered the city of Mathura in the afternoon. He saw that city furnished with high crystal gate-ways, with large golden doors and portals and treasure-house and stables made of brass and copper ; he saw the city encircled by a deep ditch in consequence of which it was difficult of being approached by enemies, and appearing beautiful with charming pleasure-gardens and groves. He saw the town furnished with golden crossways and residences and pleasure groves ; decorated with the stalls of the different classes of artisans and with other buildings ; having swings and Vedis (raised platforms) and windows and Kuttine inlaid with lapises, adamants, crystals, sapphires, corals, pearls and emeralds, perched on which pigeons and peacocks were uttering joyous notes ; having high-ways and other roads and rows of shops and court-yards, well-sprinkled with water ; decorated with festoons of flowers and covered over with wheat corns, fried paddy and rice. He saw the doors of city houses decorated with full water-pots smeared with curds and sandal paste, surrounded with flowers and lamps, furnished with fresh twigs, ornamented with plantain fruits, betel-nuts and flags. And having their necks tied with pieces of cloths, O foremost among men ! the two sons of Vasudeva surrounded by their companions of the same age with them, entered the city of Mathura by the high way. The ladies of the town hastened to see them.

Then, O king, out of their eagerness to see them they ascended the roofs of the houses. Out of great hurry, some left their ornaments behind, some forgot to put on one among a pair of bracelets which they brought out to wear ;

others again decorated only one of their ears and legs with gold leaves and bangles. Some smeared only one of their eyes with collyrium and the other remained unsmeared. Others flew, so to say, in great delight to see them (Krishna and Balarama) leaving their meal unfinished. Some who were being smeared with unguents, went away hurriedly without even finishing their bath. Others were sleeping on their beds, but hearing the noise they rose and hastened to see them ; mothers, who were sucking their babes, went away leaving their children. (17—26).

The Almighty One, of eyes like lotus-petals and having the gait of an elephant, stole the heart of these ladies with his graceful movements, charming smiles and sidelong glances, and with his beautiful appearance that delights even the goddess of prosperity. The eyes of the ladies also enjoyed great felicity.

O repressor of thy foes ! Those women whose hearts had been absorbed in Krishna on hearing of the accounts of his achievements they saw him, and they considered themselves highly honoured owing to their being soaked with the nectar of his smiles and looks. Having, by means of their eyes, realised within their hearts, him whose semblance is all ecstacy, they embraced him in their minds and the hair of their bodies stood erect ; and they got over their severe anguish caused by their separation from Krishna.

Standing on the tops of the palaces, having their lotus-like countenances blooming with delight, those damsels poured down showers of blossoms on Balarama and Krishna. At places the enraptured regenerate ones worshiped them with curd, fried paddy, pots full of water, garlands of flowers, incenses and other articles of worship. Then those damsels of the city said as follows :—

"Certainly the cow-herds had undergone some austere asceticism by virtue of which they always look at those two delighters of the human race."

Thereafter, Krishna, whose elder is Balarama, noticing a washerman and cloth-dyer passing, asked of him the finest washed garments, saying :—

"O gentle one! Give us garments as befit us. Surely if you give us garments you shall attain to great prosperity."

Having been thus requested by the almighty Lord who pervades all things that perverse servitor of king Kansa, became possessed of wrath and reprimanding Krishna said :—

"O thou ill-mannered wretch! You live in forests and on mountains; forsooth do you always dress yourselves in garments of such fine stuff? So how do you dare ask for such things which are meant for the monarch! O thou foolish one! Fly speedily. Do not again ask of me like that, if you at all value your life. The officers of the king find, slay and despoil those who are arrogant." (27—36).

Having thus been reprimanded by the washerman, the son of Devaki waxed irrascible and with his hands he severed the head of the washerman from his trunk. Thereupon all the followers of the washerman, throwing down their bundle of cloths, fled in all directions.

Then Krishna took those garments. Having put on the garments of their liking, Krishna and Balarama gave away the remainingones to the cow-herds, and left some scattered on the ground.

Thereafter a weaver out of devotion unto Krishna and Balarama, dressed them in variegated and becoming garments and also with valuable ornaments. Thus having been adorned with various garments and ornaments, Krishna and Balarama appeared beautiful like two white and black young elephants finely caparisoned in view of some festival. Being pleased with the weaver, the almighty Lord gave unto him great prosperity, prowess, wealth, memory and keenness of the senses. He also revealed unto him his real self.

After this they went to the house of the florist known as Sudaman. On seeing them come, the latter rose and bowed down with his head touching the ground. Then having offered seats to them, Sudaman adored them and their followers with water for washing their feet, *arghya* and other usual articles of adoration and also garlands of flowers and betels and unguents. Having worshipped them thus, Sudaman addressed the Lord as follows :—

"O Lord ! Blessed is my birth and my race is sanctified. The ancestral manes, the celestials and the sages, all have become propitious unto me owing to your approach. Verily you both are the prime causes of the universe. For the welfare and the regulation of the worlds you have partially incarnated yourselves. Though you attach yourselves only to those who are devoted unto you, yet you two have no sense of distinction in your consideration. Your attitude towards all beings is impartial, for you are the friends of the universe and you are its essence. Do you both command me, your servant, what to do. What service can I render unto you ? To be employed by you, is the highest grace that a person can hope for." (37—47).

O foremost of the kings ! Having spoken in the above manner, and being highly delighted at heart, Sudaman made a present to them (Krishna and Balarama) of garlands, made of finest and most fragrant flowers. Being decorated with these garlands, and highly pleased at heart, Balarama and Krishna, the foremost of the bestowers of boons, with their followers gave various boons to Sudaman who remained bowing unto them, and who sought protection in them. Sudaman asked for the boon of having unshaken reverence in Krishna, the soul of the universe, also the boon of cherishing friendship for his (Krishna's) devotees and kindness for all being. Then having conferred those boons as also the boon of ever-growing prosperity on him and his race and having given unto him prowess, a long span of life, fame and beauty of person, Krishna and his elder brother went away from that place. (48—53).

CHAPTER XLII

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ARENA OF THE TOURNAMENT

The auspicious Sukadeva went on saying :—King ! Thereafter sauntering on the high road Madhava saw there a youthful damsel of charming countenance, albeit deformed in consequence of a hump on her back, passing with the

burden of a vessel of unguents. Thereupon, with a smile, that giver of delight accosted her as follows :—

"O lady of shapely thighs, who art thou ? Whom dost thou carry these unguents for ? O damsel, speak the truth before us. Give a portion of these beautiful unguents unto us. By this act of thine, thou shalt very soon meet with prosperity."

Then that female attendant of Kansa replied saying :—

"O handsome one ! I am a female servant of Kansa, and am employed to smear unguents on his person and am for this reason held in high estimation by him. My name is Tribakra (deformed in three parts of the body). These unguents prepared by me are very much liked by the lord of the Bhojas. Except both of you who else is worthy of being anointed with this unguent ?"

Her heart being completely captivated by their gracefulness and delicacy of person, by humorous sayings, their smiles, speeches and glances, she smeared them thick with the unguent. Then having the upper parts of their body smeared with that unguent, the colour of which was other than those of their bodies, Balarama and Krishna appeared very beautiful. Then being very much pleased with that hump-backed and deformed lady of beautiful face, almighty Krishna made up his mind to make her body perfectly straight, as the outcome of having a sight of him. Then, placing his two feet on the two toes of the lady, and holding her chin with two fingers of his raised hand, Madhava made her body perfectly straight. The instant she was touched by Mukunda (Krishna) she looked like a most beautiful woman with a straight and erect body, and graceful features.

Thereupon being gifted with a beautiful person and qualities and generosity of heart, she proudly caught hold of a corner of the upper garment of Keshava, and said unto him. "Come, O hero, let us go to my house. I can not go away leaving thee here now. O foremost of all male beings ! Be propitious unto me whose heart is agitated by thee." (1—10).

Having been thus entreated by the lady, Krishna looked

in at the face of Balarama and his followers who were also gazing at him, and then smiling said to the lady :—

"O thou of graceful eye-brows! Having secured the objects of my visit, I shall go to thy abode that is capable of curing the heart-fever (desire) of men. Indeed, thou art the only refuge of us, poor bachelors, exiled in a foreign and unknown country."

Thus having taken leave of her with those agreeable words, he proceeded on the high road. Then he with his elder brother was worshipped by the merchants of the city with various presents, betel-nuts, garlands and perfumes. Having a sight of him the women came under the spell of Cupid and were as if out of themselves. They did not perceive bracelets falling off and knots of their hair loosening. They appeared like figures on the canvas.

Thereafter having asked the citizens about the place where the celebration of the *Dhanu*-sacrifice was going to be held, Krishna entered the place and there he saw a large and mighty bow like that of Indra's rain-bow, guarded by many men, greatly decorated and attended with all beauty and prosperity. Inspite of his being prevented from doing so by the people, Krishna, out of sheer force, caught hold of the bow. Then lifting it with perfect ease by his left hand and attaching the bow-string and bending it, in a moment *Urukrama* (Krishna) snapped it into two, before the very eyes of the the lookers-on, just as a maddened elephant crushes a sugar-cane stick.

Then that din of the breaking of the bow filled the sky, the cardinal points and the celestial region and the earth. On hearing that sound, Kansa was seized with terror. The guards of the bow were then greatly enraged, and they attempted to assault Krishna and his followers. Being desirous of capturing Krishna and his followers, those guards of the bow cried, saying, "Catch, kill" etc.

Thereupon, knowing the wicked intention of those *Danavas*, Balarama and Krishna waxed wrath, and grasping the two broken portions of the bow, they killed them (the *Asuras*) with these. Having slain also the army sent by Kansa, they came out of the sacrificial arena. Then being greatly delighted

they roamed about in the city viewing its prosperity and beauty.

Having seen their marvellous prowess, energy and manliness and also their personal beauty, the citizens thought them (Krishna and Balarama) to be the two foremost among the celestials. When they were roving at will the sun reached the western mountain. Then Balarama and Krishna, being surrounded by the cow-herds, came back to the place where they had unyoked their carts.

When Krishna was about to leave the kingdom of Braja, the wives of the cow-herds, afflicted with the pains of separation, made some predictions about the blessings to be enjoyed by the ladies of Madhupuri. All their predictions came out to be true. For, the last mentioned ladies had the good fortune of enjoying a sight of the beautiful body of that Great *Purusa* ; the body, which the goddess of prosperity (Lakshmi) had accepted as her shelter, disregarding the other minor gods who had assiduously paid their attentions to her. (11—24).

Then having washed their feet, and having taken rice mixed with boiled milk, Balarama and Krishna passed the night in great happiness. They knew the intentions of Kansa. Having heard of the breaking of his bow and of the destruction of his guards and soldiers, he thought that the acts were merely sports of Krishna and Balarama. During his prolonged wakefulness and during the disturbed intervals of slumber the wicked Kansa, in great terror of mind, saw various evil portents appearing to him as messengers of death itself. He saw his image reflected on a mirror or water, but it had no head on the trunk. Though he did not hold his fingers before his eyes, yet every planet appeared to be duplicated. He seemed to see his image perforated ; and he did not perceive the whizzing sound that is ordinarily heard when the ears are shut. Trees appeared to be golden in colour and foot-prints made by him on mud and dust were not visible to him. During his dream he seemed to be clasped in the embrace of the goblins ; sometimes he felt as if riding on asses, sometimes he appeared to be eating fibres of lotuses ; sometimes it appeared to him that a naked person wearing a garland of china-rose and anointed with unguents, passed by him. Thus seeing

these and other evil omens during his waking moments and in his sleep, and being afraid of his imminent death, he out of great anxiety was not able to have sleep. (25—31).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O descendant of Kaurava (Parikshit) ! When the night had passed away and when the sun had risen out of the waters, Kansa then gave orders for the commencement of the celebration of the tournament. The officers decorated the arena, and drums and tabors were sounded. The platforms and diases were decked with festoons of garlands, flags and torn pieces of cloth and with ornamental arches. On these platforms and diases citizens and country people headed by the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and others, seated themselves in comfort. The kings who had assembled on the occasion also took up their respective seats. Being surrounded by his councillors, king Kansa ascended the royal dias and took his seat in the very midst of the circle of kings. But his heart was much tossed with anxiety. Then the tabors were sounded, the sound of which rose above the roars of the combatants. Thereupon, being finely vested and with becoming haughtiness, the combatants with their trainers, entered the arena.

Thereafter Chanura, Mustika, Kuta, Sala and Toshala being delighted with the exciting beat of the drums, took their respective positions in the arena, and prepared themselves for the contest. The cow-herds headed by Nanda and others, being summoned by the monarch of the Bhojas (Kansa), offered the presents they had brought for him. And then they seated themselves on a platform. (32—38).

CHAPTER XLIII

THE TOURNAMENT BEGINS

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O repressor of thy adversaries ! Then having heard the din of the kettle-drums and the roar of the combatants, Krishna and Balarama, whose purificatory ceremonies had been performed meanwhile, came to see tournament. On approaching the portals of the arena, Krishna saw the elephant *Kubalayapeera* stationed near it, and goaded on by its keeper. Thereupon girding up his loins,

and tying up his flowing curly locks, Krishna addressed the keeper of the elephant in a voice deep like that of the rumbling of clouds, saying :—"Hear, ho ! O thou keeper of the elephant ! Give way hastily, take thy cursed self away hence at once ; otherwise I will send thee with the elephant to the regions of Death."

Having thus been reprimanded by Krishna, the keeper of the elephant waxing wroth goaded the infuriated elephant that resembled the god of death himself towards Krishna. That foremost of the elephants vehemently assaulting Krishna, caught hold of him with its trunk. But Krishna slipped off from its trunk, and then wounding it in the leg, he disappeared. Thereupon the elephant got more infuriated, but did not find Krishna. Then perceiving him by its trunk, the angry elephant held Krishna with his trunk, but this time also, Krishna forcibly released himself from its hold. (1—7).

This time having caught hold of the tail of the elephant, Krishna dragged it through a distance measuring the length of twenty-five bows with perfect ease, just as *Suparna* (Garuda) drags out a serpent with perfect ease. Then Achyuta moved right and left, following the turns of the elephant as a boy moves around a turning and wheeling calf. Then facing the elephant, he struck it with his hand ; and then running hither and thither he felled it down by striking it with his feet. Having fallen down, while running, Krishna rose up again. Then thinking that Krishna also had fallen down, the elephant angrily struck the earth with its two tusks. Then on finding that its prowess was not able to do any harm to Krishna, the foremost of the elephant was maddened with fury and being goaded on by its keeper, it again furiously assaulted Krishna. The almighty slayer of Madhu seeing the elephant rushing up towards him, caught hold of it by its trunk and felled it down on the ground. Then like a lion, he easily crushed it with his feet and rooting out its tusks, Krishna killed it first and then its keeper with the tusks. Then having left behind the carcass of the elephant, he entered the arena, bearing the tusks in his hands. Then he appeared highly beautiful, bearing the tusks overhead, his shoulders tainted with blood and ichor of the elephant, and

having his lotus-like countenance decked with pearly drops of perspiration. Thereafter, O king! surrounded by several of the cow-herds, and armed with the tusks of the most powerful elephant, Balarama and Krishna entered the arena. He, who is as the thunderbolt to the combatants, the foremost among the mortals, the god of love incarnate to the women, the relative to the cow-herds, the chastiser of the wicked rulers of the earth, the affectionate child to his parents, the death to the ruler of the Bhojas, the inconceivable to deluded people, the supreme deity of the *Yogins*, the highest divinity of the Vrishnis, then entered the arena accompanied by his elder brother. (8—17).

O king! on finding that *Kubalayapeera* (the elephant of that name) had been slain, and seeing these two undaunted boys, even the very heroic Kansa was for a moment siezed with terror. The two boys shone in the midst of the arena, with their mighty arms and vested in variegated garments and ornaments and wearing garlands of flowers, like actors dressed in fine garments. The minds of those who gazed at them were distracted with the effulgence of their bodies.

O king! On finding those two foremost of the male beings, the town and country people seated on the platforms were overcome with delight and their eyes became dilated and their mouths gaped. With their eyes, they gazed at the countenance of Krishna and Balarama. But they were not satiated. It appeared that they stared at them with their eyes, licked them with their tongues, smelled them with their nostrils and embraced them with their arms. They said unto one another as follows. (18—32).

"All that we have heard and seen regarding these two boys are only possible for them ; their appearance, their attainments, their amiableness, even their haughtiness, remind us of their deeds. Surely these boys are incarnations of the Almighty Narayana himself, born in the abode of Vasudeva. Surely this one (Krishna) was begotten upon Devaki, and when born was carried to Gokula. There he lived secretly all the while in the residence of Nanda, and was brought up by him. By this one Putana had been killed, as also the Danava Ghurnabarta that had assumed the semblance of a

whirl-wind. He had slain Arjuna, Dhenuka, Keshi, Guhyakas and others of the same nature with them. The cows and the cow-herds were saved by him from the raging forest-conflagration. The serpent named *Kaliya* was subdued by this one and Indra was humiliated by him. By this one, the foremost of the mountains (named *Govardhana*) had been held in one of his hands for seven days continually, and thus the kingdom of Gokula had been saved from showers, storms and thunder-bolts On seeing every day the delightful countenance of this one beaming with smiles and glances and indicating fatigue, the wives of the cow-herds renounced various kinds of affection. People say that the race of the Jadus being protected by these one, shall be renowned all over the world and shall attain to prosperity, fame and greatness. The other one is his elder brother, who is called the prosperous Balarama of eyes resembling lotus-petals. By him had been slain Pralamba, Batsa and Baka and others all of whom were powerful Asuras. (23—30).

When the people had been speaking in the above manner, the tabors were sounded announcing the commencement of the tournament. Chanura addressing Krishna and Balarama said :—

"O son of Nanda ! O Balarama ! you both are greatly powerful, and are versed in all the tactics of combat. Having heard of this, Kansa, the king, desirous of seeing your display has summoned you here. By doing the favourite acts of the king by their movements, minds and speech the subjects attain to prosperity. Those who act otherwise meet with reverses. It is also well-known that the cow-herds and the cattle-tenders take the cattle in the forest for grazing and there wrestle with one another in sport. Therefore, do you perform the favourite acts of the king. We shall also do the same. Then all the creatures will be pleased with us, in as much as a king is unified with all created beings."

Considering combat to be his favourite pastime, and greeting Chanura after having heard his words, Krishna answered him in the following language suitable to the time and place :—

"We, rangers of the forest, are also subjects of the lord of the Bhojas (Kansa). We will do the favourite act of the king. That is a great favour to ourselves. We are boys, however, and shall wrestle with those equally powerful with us. Then the contest would be a fair one ; and no sin will hang on those organising and conducting the tournament.

Chanura replied :—Thou art neither a boy nor a youth Thou (Krishna) and Balarama are the two foremost among the powerful beings. For you have with perfect ease slain the elephant that was as powerful as a host of thousand elephants. Therefore, you both should combat with powerful adversaries. Then there will be no foul play in this, O descendant of the Vrishnis ! Come, fight with me and let Balarama wrestle with Mustika. (31—40).

CHAPTER XLIV

DESTRUCTION OF KANSA

The auspicious Sukadeva continued saying :—O king ! Having resolved so the almighty slayer of Madhu (Krishna) caught hold of Chanura, and the son of Rohini (Balarama) seized Mushtika. Clasping one another by the hands and turning one another with their legs. they began to contest with one another, desirous of securing victory. They struck one another with their *Aratris* (the part of the arm from the elbow to the tip of the little finger), their knees, their heads, and their breasts. They fought with one another by moving in a circle, by striking one another, by grasping one another's arms, by throwing one another down on the ground, by retreating from one another and by facing one another. Being desirous of securing victory, they wounded one another's body by raising one another from the ground by carrying one another, by pressing one another's joints and by contracting one another's limbs.

O monarch ! The assembled ladies on the platforms, seeing that fight between the powerful and the weak, were moved with pity and thus spoke to one another :—

"Alas ! The courtiers and the king are perpetrating a very impious deed, because the king is encouraging that

unfair combat between the weak and the powerful that is going on before his very eyes. These (Chanura and Mustika) are two wrestlers resembling two foremost of mountains, and their limbs and bodies are as hard as adamant, while their opponents (Krishna and Balarama) are two boys who have not yet attained their full youth, with bodies as delicate as flowers. To allow these to combat with one another is very unfair. Surely this assembly is transgressing the bounds of propriety. It is not proper to stay there, where injustice holds sway. Those people who keep silent in an assembly, those who speak against their conscience and those who attribute their slience to feigned ignorance, get a share of the impeity. So knowing the perversity of the members of an assembly, a prudent person should not hastily join it. (1—10).

"Behold the lotus-like countenance of Krishna who is running towards his enemy, covered over with drops of perspiration! See, his countenance resembles the filaments of lotuses as sprinkled with particles of water. Do you not see the countenance of Balarama who possesses coppery eyes? His eyes are reflecting wrath on Mustika; and he is rendered charming by his sweet smiles and angry looks.

"Oh! Hallowed is the kingdom of Braja, where this Prime *Purusha*,—whose feet are adored by the goddess of prosperity (Lakshmi), and *Girisha* (Siva) himself,—now disguised as human being, held sports, being decorated with beautiful garlands of wild flowers, grazing the cattle in the company of Balarama and playing melodiously on his flute. What austere asceticism had the wives of the cow-herds undergone, in consequence of which they always drink with their eyes the gross body of Krishna, that is composed of the essence of all effulgence, that has nothing equal to it or better than it, that is not rendered beautiful with the help of other objects, that is always fresh and charming, that is scarcely obtained by others and that is the only abode of renown, riches and even that of the goddess of prosperity.

"Blessed indeed are those damsels of Braja, whose hearts are devoted to and absorbed in Urukarma (Krishna), who with tearful eyes sing his praise at the time of milking their cows, of husking the corn, of churning the milk, of

plastering and cleaning their houses, of rocking the cradles of their babes, of sprinkling water on the floors of houses, of watering the plants and at the time of lulling their crying babies to sleep. In the morning when Krishna used to go out of Braja and when in the evening he used to come back with the cattle, then having heard the music of his flute those highly pious women coming out of their abodes, used to drink his lotus-like countenance conspicuous with a smile and a kind look." (11—16).

O thou foremost of the Bharata-race ! When the women had been thus speaking, the almighty Lord Sri Hari, the lord of all *yoga* prowess, made up his mind to slay his adversary. Having heard those words of the ladies, the parents of Krishna (Vasudeva and Devaki), were overwhelmed with grief out of their affection for their sons ; and unaware of the prowess of their sons, they erofusely lamented

Chanura and Kesava fought with one another according to the various modes of duel combat. So also did Balarama and Mustika. The limbs of Chanura were crushed with the stroke of the limbs of Krishna, the strokes that were as severe as that of thunder-bolt itself, and in consequence of those strokes the mighty Chanura repeatedly fainted away. Then, coursing like a hawk and clinching his fists, and waxing irrascible, Chanura struck the son of Vasudeva on the breast. But even when so hard struck, Krishna did not recede even one step, just as an elephant does not move even on being struck with a garland of flowers.

Then catching hold of Chanura by the arms, and whirling him several times in the air, Krishna vehemently dashed him on the ground, so long even very little of vitality remained in his adversary (Chanura). Thereafter with his hair dishevelled and his garlands, torn, Chanura fell down like the thunder-bolt of Indra.

Mustika also struck Balarama with his fist. But like Chanura, he also was severely wounded by the powerful Balarama. Then trembling and vomitting blood by the mouth, and having been sorely crushed, Mustika dropped

down dead on the ground like a mighty tree uprooted by the storm.

O monarch! Mustika having breathed his last, the *Danava Kuta* by name came to contest Balarama, the foremost of the strikers. Balarama slew Kuta with perfect ease, and neglectfully, with a blow of his left hand. At that time, the *Asura* Sala being struck on the head by the feet of Krishna and the *Danava* Toshalaka being cut in twain fell down on the ground. (17—27).

O king! When Chanura, Mustika, Sala, Kuta and Toshalaka had been all slain, other wrestlers fled in all directions being desirous of saving their lives. Then drawing near them, the cow-herds of the same age with them and embracing them, Krishna and Balarama began to dance making a trinkling sound with their golden bangle while the tabors and the drums were being sounded.

Then all the people present, except Kansa, were greatly delighted with these acts of Balarama and Krishna. And the pious people in the assembly headed by the foremost of the Brahmanas, exclaimed "well-done." When the foremost of the wrestlers were thus slain and when the others fled, then the sovereign of the Bhojas (Kansa) stopped the sounding of his own tabors and said the following words :—

Kansa said :—"Drive these two wicked sons of Vasudeva out of my city. Rob the cow-herds of their riches and bind this wicked-minded Nanda. Also slay this evil-hearted Vasudeva who is the vilest of all creatures and slay also my father Ugrasena and his attendants who have sided with the party hostile to me." (28—33).

When Kansa had been howling in the above manner, Krishna, the indestructible lord of the universe, waxed wroth, and in a moment he lightly jumped upon the high dias where Kansa was seated. On seeing Krishna so approaching him like Death, the heroic Kansa hurriedly rose up from his royal seat and grasped his sword and buckler. Beholding Kansa armed with a sword, moving right and left like a hawk in the sky, Krishna, the almighty lord of great prowess, caught hold of him, just as Garuda suddenly catches hold of a serpent. So grasping Kansa, whose diadem had

fallen off from his head, Krishna dragged him down from the dais, and drew him down on the wrestling ground. Then on him jumped down the lotus-navelled Krishna himself, who is the refuge of the universe, and who is subject only to his own will.

Thereafter like a lion dragging a dead elephant, the almighty Krishna began to drag Kansa on the ground. Then, O foremost among kings, the cries of "Alas", "Oh" were uttered by those present. The *Asura* king Kansa being agitated in mind, always used to see the discus-armed Lord Vishnu before him even while drinking, eating, walking or breathing. Therefore after death at Lord's hand Kansa attained the self-same appearance with the Lord which is difficult of being attained. (34—39).

O king! Then being desirous of avenging the death of their brother, the eight younger brothers of Kansa, who were named Kanka, Nyagradha and others, waxing wrath attempted at assaulting Krishna. On beholding their mad career and their angry efforts, the son of Rohini struck them with a bludgeon, just as a lion kills other animals.

Thereupon, kettle-drums were sounded in the sky, and Brahma, Isha and other divinities showering blossoms on them, began to sing hymns; and the celestial damsels began to dance. O best of monarchs! Then there came the wives of *Asuras*, afflicted with grief at the death of their relatives, with tears trickling down their cheeks and striking their heads. Embracing their husbands lying dead on the field of the combat, these women began to lament highly, shedding tears in torrents.

They bewailed saying:—"O lord! O beloved one! O thou versed in all righteousness! O kind-hearted one! O thou affectionate towards the helpless! At thy death we along with our homes and children are destroyed. O foremost of male beings! Deserted by thee who art its lord, this city does no more appear beautiful. All festivities and auspiciousness of the city have gone for ever. Thou didst greatly oppress the poor and innocent beings. Alas! For that reason thou hast to-day been reduced to this condition. Alas! What oppressor of beings ever attains prosperity?

This Krishna is the creator, preserver and destroyer of all created beings. Whoever reviles him can never expect to live in peace and happiness." (40—48).

The auspicious Sukadeva continued :—The protector of people, the almighty Lord, having consoled the consorts of the king and his relations, then performed the obsequial rites of the dead. Thereafter releasing their father and mother from their state of bondage, Balarama and Krishna saluted them by touching their feet with their own heads. Vasudeva and Devaki also recognising the lords of the. Universe in their sons, did not out of reverence embrace them, who had saluted them, but they stood before them with their hands folded. (49—51).

CHAPTER XLV

THE EDUCATION OF BALARAMA AND KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Knowing that his parents consider them as God even before experiencing worldly happiness of having worthy sons, the excellent *Purusha* determined that "this should not be." He then extended his own *Maya* capable of infatuating mankind. Approaching his parents with his elder brother, the foremost of Satawats, with humility and delight, he addressed welcome words saying :—

"O father ! O mother ! You have both lived in perpetual anxiety for us. Because of our being your sons, you have never enjoyed happiness in our infancy, boyhood and youth. Unfortunate as we are, we have never been able to live near you, and therefore we have been deprived of the joy that boys, brought up in their fathers' house, enjoy. A man having a life of one hundred years even cannot satisfy the debts of his parents, from whom the body which is the root of all objects, has orginated and by whom it has been nourished. In the next world the emissaries of Death make him feat his own flesh, who, though capable, does not maintain his parents with his body and wealth. He is a dead man albeit living, who does not maintain, despite his ability, his parents, elderly members of the family, chaste wife, infant children, preceptor, Brahmanas, and those seeking his shelter. Having our

minds agitated by anxiety proceeding from Kansa and by our incapability in not being able to serve you, all these days of ours have been spent in vain. It behoveth yoy,O father, O mother, to forgive us who are dependants, and have not been able to serve you, being greatly afflicted by that wicked one." (1—9).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Having thus been beside themselves with the words of Krishna, the soul of the universe, assuming the form of a man by his illusive energy, they took him upon their lap and embraced him in great delight. Then bathing him with tears, and being bound by the noose of affection, with choked up voice and being overwhelmed, they could not speak anything.

O king! Thus having consoled his parents, the divine son of Devaki (Krishna) met his maternal grand-father Ugrasena, the king of the Jadus, and addressed him thus :—

"O great king, it behoveth thee to command us who are thy subjects ; for the imprecation of a curse by Jajati, the Jadus should never ascend the royal throne. Myself sitting by thee as a servitor, the celestials even lowering their heads, shall bring thee tributes, what then to speak of other kings."

Thereupon bringing all his kinsmen and relations from various quarters whither they had fled in fear of Kansa, the Jadus, the Vrishnis, the Andhakas, the Madhus, the Dasharhas, and the Kukuras, who had been all much pulled down in consequence of their living in foreign countries, and then honouring them and conferring upon them again their properties, the creator of the universe settled them in their respective habitations. Being protected by the arms of Krishna and Balarama and obtaining from them their desired-for objects and having been freed from their mental sufferings by Krishna and Balarama, those Siddhas lived happily in their respective houses. They also beheld day and night the charming and lotus-like countenance of Mukunda, ever delightful and beautified by side-long looks bespeaking mercy and accompanied by smiles. (10—18).

Amongst them even the old, always drinking the nectar of the lotus-countenance of Mukunda, became like youths endued with exceeding strength and energy.

O emperor ! Thereupon Krishna, the divine son of Devaki and Balarama approaching the cow-herd-king Nanda and embracing him said thus :—

"Oh father ! You have with great affection nourished and reared us both. The parents love their sons more than their own bodies. He is the father and she is the mother, who rear up as their own sons those children who are cast off by friends incapable of rearing them. Do ye now repair to Braja.

"O father, we too, giving happiness unto friends, shall go to see you all our kinsmen stricken with affection for us."

Having thus consoled Nanda and the other inhabitants of Braja, the divine Krishna adored them respectfully with clothes, ornaments and brass utensils. Then having embraced Krishna and Balarama, Nanda being overwhelmed with affection, with his eyes full of tears, left for the kingdom of Braja along with his followers—the milkmen. (19—25).

Thereupon, O king, the son of Soora had the *Upanayana* ceremony of his sons duly performed by Garga, the family priest and Brahmanas. Having worshipped the Brahmanas he conferred upon them a present of kine with calves adorned with golden garlands and silken clothes and decked with ornaments. The high-minded Vasudeva then brought one by one all those kine from the royal stable which were conferred by him mentally for the birth-day of Balarama and Krishna and had been wrongfully stolen away by Kansa, remembering them one by one. Thereupon having received initiation from Garga the family priest of the Jadus and attained to the status of the twice-born, they (Krishna and Balarama) of good vow, practised the penance of *Brahmacharies*.

Then those two omniscient lords of the universe, themselves the source of all blessings, hiding by their human actions their pure self-acquired knowledge, being desirous of living in the house of their preceptor, went to an ascetic named Sandipani, born in Kasi and living at Abantipura. Thereupon having properly behaved towards their preceptor, they (Krishna and Balarama) both of controlled senses were engaged with great care and devotion in serving him (the preceptor) like a deity and imparted instructions regarding this subject to others.

Having been delighted with the pure service of those two disciples, that preceptor Sandipani, the foremost of the twice-born ones, then instructed them in *Siksha*, *Kalpa*, *Vedangas* and all the *Vedas*; and also he instructed them in the science of archery with its secret, the laws, *Mimangsa*, logic and the six expedients of politics.

O king! Those two foremost of the immortals were the propounders of all forms of learning and therefore they could master them even with a single lesson. Thus within sixty-four days and nights they were made experts in sixty-four branches of learning. (26—34).

Then, O king, they tempted their preceptor to accept from them some *dakshina* (a present made to the Brahmana on completion of a solemn function). Thereupon, O king, beholding their wonderful power and extra-ordinary intellect, the twice-born one (their preceptor) in consultation with his wife, asked for the restoration of life to his infant child who was destroyed in the ocean near the shrine of Pravasa.

After this saying "be it so" these two mighty car-warriors of dreadful prowess ascending the car, arrived at Pravasa and getting at the bank of the ocean, sat there for some time. Knowing this, the ocean brought before them various articles of worship. Then the Lord (Sri Krishna) said to him :—

"Do thou speedily bring to us the son of my preceptor, the boy whom thou didst devour with thy huge billow some time ago."

Thereupon the ocean replied :—"O God! I have not devoured him. There is a mighty Daitya named Panchajana. That Asura, O Krishna, is living in my water assuming the form of a conch. Most probably the son of your preceptor has been stolen by him."

On hearing the ocean so saying, Sri Krishna speedily entering into the water of the ocean, killed that Asura, but the boy could not be found in the belly of that Asura. So taking the conch born of the limb of that Asura, Sri Krishna came back to his chariot. Thereafter repairing to the favourite city of *Yama* (the god of death) named *Sanjamani* along with his elder brother Balarama, Srikrishna blew his conch. On hearing that sound of the conch, Yama, the destroyer of creatures,

offered them (Krishna and Balarama) a great adoration accompanied with devotion. He (Yama) then humbly said to Krishna, living in the hearts of all creatures, as follows :—

"Ye are both incarnations of Vishnu and ye have sportively assumed human forms. How can I serve you ? Please command me." (35—44).

Thereupon the Lord Srikrishna said :—"O God ! bound by his own actions, the son of my preceptor has been brought hither. Following my command, do thou bring him here, O great king."

Then saying "So be it" Yama brought there the preceptor's son. Thereupon conferring the boy upon their preceptor, those two great ones again submitted to their preceptor saying :—"Do thou now ask for any other boon." The preceptor then said, "O my children ! Ye have duly procured the *dakshina* for the preceptor. What desire of a preceptor who has you for disciples can remain unfulfilled ? O ye heroes, do ye repair to your own habitations and may your fame be purifying."

Being thus commanded by their preceptor, they then came back to their own city on a chariot gifted with the motion of the wind and the sound of the clouds. Beholding Balarama and Sri Krishna whom they had not seen for a long time, the subjects were verily delighted as on regaining their lost wealth. (45—50).

CHAPTER XLVI

UDDHAVA COMES TO BRAJA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O King Parikshit ! Uddhava, the beloved friend of Sri Krishna, the disciple of Brihaspati himself, and the foremost of the intelligent ones, was the revered minister of the descendants of the Brishnis. Once upon a time holding Uddhava by the hand, the divine Keshava, the remover of the misery of the miserable, confided to that beloved votary saying :—

"O thou gentle Uddhava ! do thou at once go to Braja and encompass the pleasure of my parents by conveying my news to them ; and do thou also communicate the news con-

cerning myself to the *Gopees* (the milk-maids) and thereby remove their misery consequent upon separation from me. The *Gopees* have their minds unflichingly attached to me. I am as though their life. For my sake they even renounced their relations. I am their cherished favourite and constitute their soul. They have obtained me in their mind. I bring about their happiness, who renounce their happiness for me either in this world or in the next. Myself, the foremost of their favourite objects, having been shifted at a distant place, the damsels of Gokula, O my dear friend, are verily stricken with great anxiety in consequence of my separation, and they are overwhelmed with grief on recollecting me in their mind. Their soul is wholly engrossed in meditation upon me and with pleasing anticipation of my return amidst them, my favourites, of whom I am the soul, are with great difficulty and somehow keeping up their lives. Had their soul been left to their selves only, it would have ere long been destroyed by the fire of separation from me." (1—6).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O King! having been desired as aforesaid by Srikrishna, Uddhava was verily pleased ; and carrying the mandate of his master and ascending the chariot he proceeded towards Nanda's Gokula. When Uddhava reached Nanda's Braja, the sun was going down and his car was covered with the dust raised by the hoof of the cattle while they were entering into the city. The city of Braja was filled with the roars of the maddened bulls who were fighting with each other for the cows in seasons ; and there the cows too striken with the weight of milk were running about for their calves. On all sides the city was filled with white calves jumping hither and thither as well as with the sound of milking of the calves accompanied with the music of flutes ; the city was also gracefully decorated with milkmen and women bedecked with various ornaments and chanting the sacred glories of Rama and Krishna. The city grew charming with the habitations of milkmen adorned with incense, lamps and garlands on account of the worship of the fire, the sun, guest, cow, Brahmanas, Pitris and the deities. On all sides it abounded in woods crested with flowers and

resonant with the music of the birds and filled with lotuses and covered over with the swans and Karandavas. (7—13).

On seeing that Uddhava, the beloved follower of Krishna, had come, Nanda was exceedingly glad and in his delight he embraced Uddhava so warmly as he would have done to Sri Krishna. After Uddhava had been so warmly welcomed and treated to relishing dishes he was seated on a comfortable seat and a servant was engaged in massaging his feet to relieve him of his toils of the journey. Then Nanda asked Uddhaba saying :—

"O great one ! Is my great friend the son of Soora well ? Is he released and encircled by friends, faring well with his children ? Fortunately the vile Kansa who was always inimical to the pious Jadus hath been slain along with his younger brothers, for his own sins. Does Krishna remember us, his mother, friends, female associates, the milkmen of Braja of which he is the lord, the kine, Brindavana and the mount Govardhana ? Will Srikrishna come once to see his own kith and kin ? When shall we behold his countenance having a beautiful nose and smiling eyes ? (14—19).

By that greatly high-minded Krishna we had been protected from forest fire, wind, rains, bulls, snakes and other instruments of death, which it is so hard to overcome. When we remember the prowess of Krishna, his side-long sportive looks, his smiles and speeches, all our actions become slackened. When we observe the streams, mountains, forests and lands bedecked with the foot-prints of Mukunda as well as his sporting places, our minds become engrossed in him. Methinks, as has been rightly predicted by illustrious Garga, those two foremost of celestials, Rama and Krishna, have come here for accomplishing some great object of the deities. Like a lion slaying deer, they easily killed Kansa who was endowed with the strength of an *ajuta* number of elephants. Like a chief of elephants breaking down a sugar-cane stock, Srikrishna snapped a highly strong bow measuring twenty-seven *Vitasti*. With one hand he had held the mountain *Govardhana* for seven consecutive days ; and by him were easily slain the powerful *daityas* named Pralamba, Dhenuka,

Aristha, Trinavarta, Vaka and others who formerly defeated the celestials and Asuras." (20—26).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Remembering all these again and again Nanda, whose understanding was unflinchingly devoted to Srikrishna, with tears trickling down his cheek and beside himself with great affection for Rama and Krishna, remained silent for some time. And Jashoda listenning to the stories of his son that were then being described by Nanda and Uddhava also began to shed tears. Observing thus the great attachment of Nanda and Jashoda, for the divine Sri Krishna, Uddhava was exceedingly delighted and said to Nanda as follows :—

"O thou conferor of honours ! Both of you are the most worthy of approbation amongst the bodied beings, since ye cherish such a devotion for Narayana, the preceptor of the entire universe. This Rama and the foremost of Purusha, Mukunda, are the cause of this universe ! And these two ancient Purushas pervading all elements, generate the various distinctions and creatures. By a momentary thinking on him with a pure mind at the time of death, a creature, snapping the fetters of actions and endowed with true knowledge and purity of heart, attains to an excellent state. O thou high-minded one ! you cherish great devotion for Narayana, the soul and the cause of the Universe, in the form of a mortal being ; so what portion of your action has been left undone ? (27—33).

"Achyuta shall soon come back to Braja, and that Divine king of Satvatas shall accomplish the pleasure of his father. Krishna shall make good what he did say unto you coming here after slaying Kansa, the enemy of all Satvatas, as easily as in sport. O great ones ! do not grieve, you shall soon see Krishna near you. He resides in the hearts of all creatures like fire in wood. He is the same unto all. There is none to him greatly loved or extremely disliked. There is nothing which is good, bad or indifferent to him. He has neither mother, father, wife, nor children. He has neither body nor birth. He has no action ; but being desirous of sporting and also with a view to affording protection to the pious people,

he incarnates himself as beings, partaking of the nature of the qualities of goodness, darkness or ignorance.

"Thus, although he is divested of all qualities, sometimes he resorts to the qualities of goodness or darkness or ignorance or all at a time. He is the unborn. Although he is above sport, still He creates, preserves and destroys the universe sportively with these qualities. As when a potter's wheel revolves, one holds the impression that his own body is also revolving and likewise thinks the earth to be revolving, similarly the mind being the doer of an action, and placing Atman in intellect through the consciousness of self, one imagines Atman to be the doer. The divine Hari is not only the son of you both, but He is the son, soul, father and mother of all and he is the Iswara. Past, future, and present, mobile, great or small, whatever is seen or heard of, nothing of them besides Achyuta is worthy of being mentioned as an object. Only He is all, and He only is the Great Soul." (34—43).

O king ! in this conversation between Nanda and Krishna follower, the night was spent. Rising up from beds, lighting up lamps and cleansing the place before the doors, the milk-women began to churn for curd. They were seen there shining resplendent with gems rendered brilliant by the lights ; and they were drawing the churning rope with their hands decked with bracelets. Their cheeks were beautified with ear-rings, and their countenance was coloured with *kumkuma*. Those women of Braja were singing songs composed on Sri Krishna. The sound of their song being united with the sound of churning reached the welkin, a sound which destroys the inauspiciousness of the quarters. When the divine Sun rose. beholding a golden car at the gate of Braja, the inhabitants thereof spoke amongst themselves as follows :—

"Whose car is this ? Has Akrura come here who accomplished the object of Sri Krishna, and by whom the lotus-eyed Sri Krishna was taken to the city of Mathura ? Shall he offer our bodies, this time for the release of the spirit of his master ?

Performing then his adoration Uddhava came there when the women were thus speaking. (44—49).

CHAPTER XLVII

UDDHAVA RETURNS TO MATHURA

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! the arms of Uddhava, the follower of Sri Krishna, were as long as upto his knees, his eyes resembled the fresh bloomed lotuses, he was clad in yellow raiment, he wore garland of forest-flowers, his countenance had the gracefulness of a fully blossomed lotus, and he was shining with the pair of resplendent ear-rings. The women of Braja were astonished to see such a beautiful person as Uddhava; and to satisfy their curiosity they asked each other speaking to themselves as follows:—"Who is this beautiful man? Where is he coming from? Whose errand is he carrying? His dress and demeanour appears like Achyuta."

So saying amongst themselves, those women of Braja gathered round Uddhava the best of devotees meditating upon the lotus-feet of Uttamasloka (Sri Krishna), and then their eyes were expressive of their curiosity. Knowing him to be the emissary of Rama's lord, they bent low before Uddhava in token of their humility and smiling and looking bashful at him, they welcomed him duly. After Uddhava had been comfortably seated, they asked him about his all round welfare.

Thereafter they spoke to him as if in great confidence saying:—"We know thee to be the follower of the king of Jadus. Having been despatched by thy master, who is desirous of doing some good to his parents, thou hast come hither. We do not perceive anything else in the present Braja of cows which he can remember. But the affection towards kith and kin is very hard of being entirely snapped even by anchorites. Friendship with others is but the cause of actions which lasts so long as actions exist, such as the attachment of men to women, and that of the black-bees unto flowers. As a result of this, bad women leave off the poor, the subjects leave the king incapable of ruling, the learned their preceptor, and the priests leave their disciples who had already given away everything as gift. The birds renounce trees whose fruits

have been fully exhausted, the guests leave the house of their hosts after taking meals, the deers foresake the burnt forest, and the men, after having fulfilled their desire, leave their concubines even before their passions are satiated."

The auspicious Suta said :—O king ! when Krishna's emissary Uddhava came, the *Gopees* (the women of Braja) having their speech, body and mind withdrawn by Govinda, renouncing all human usage and remembering again and again the incidents of his infancy and boyhood and devoid of bashfulness, wept and sang the glorious actions of their beloved Lord Krishna. In the meantime, beholding a bee, thinking of the union with her lord and imagining him to be the emissary sent by her beloved master, one of Gopees said as follows :—

"O bee ! O friend of the wicked ! do not touch our feet, Do thou please those vain women. Thou art indeed such an emissary that he shall be for thee an object of ridicule in the assembly of the Jadus. Having made us drink the intoxicating nectar he has renounced us, such as thou dost enjoy the fragrance and then leave the flowers. Why does Padma (Lakshmi) serve his lotus-feet ? May be her heart has been stolen away by the false words of the illustrious Deity. (9—12).

"Why dost thou, sing before us the songs on the glories of the king of Jadus, who is now stale to us and who has been known to us many times ? Do thou now sing his stories before those who are his wives now—the pangs of whose hearts has been removed by his warm embrace, and who being pleased shall confer upon thee thy desired-for objects. What woman is there in the celestial region, on earth, and in the region underneath, whom it is difficult for him to obtain ? Who are we all to Lakshmi who sucks the dust of his lotus-feet, whose eye-brows are graced with charming but false smiles ? Tell him, however, the word *Uttamasloka* (whose glories are sung in excellent verses) is applicable to him who has compassion for the poor. Do thou take away thy head from our feet. We know that thou art expert in the work of a messenger and in begging with sweet words. Have you learnt this from Mukunda ? He renounced us all, who had forsaken, on his account, husbands, children, this world and the next. Is there any

necessity of enquiring about him ? He is so very wily that in his incarnation as Rama, he had killed the king of monkeys (Vali) like a hunter. Also, being brought under the control of his wife he cut off the nose of a woman Shurpanakha by name, who had come to him being stricken with amorous desire.

"Then again, in his incarnation as Vamana he bound down the Daitya king Vali, after having eaten away like a crow, all the articles of worship. Although we think that we should not make friendship with that one of black hue, still we cannot forget him. Many persons, shorn of anger and malice by once listening to his deeds which are like nectar to the ears, like the impious ones renouncing their poorly house and relation, are merely carrying on their existences like birds, divorced from enjoyments. As foolish birds, taking the insincere songs of the hunter to be sincere, are pierced by their arrows and put to agonies, similarly, O emissary, considering the false words of Krishna as true, we have been repeatedly going through severe affliction engendered by desire in consequence of his charming touch. Do thou, therefore, take up any other topic.

"O emissary ! Thou art the friend of our beloved. Hast thou come back here being desired so by our dear one ? O dear ! Thou art worshipful to us. Do thou accept from us the boon that thou desirest for. Thine Krishna can never live without a woman by him. Why shall he take us to his side ? This is because, O gentle one, Shree (Lakshmi) is now living constantly by his side. Is the son of our worshipful sire living now in the city of Madhu ? O gentle one ! does he remember the house of his father and his cow-herd friends ? We were his female servants. Does he speak of us ? When shall he come back and place his hand, fragrant like *Aguru* (a scented paste like sandal paste), upon our heads ?" (13—21).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king Parikshit ! thereupon, on hearing the above speech of the Gopees, and consoling them with the news of their dear one, the milk-women who were greatly anxious to see Sri Krishna again, Uddhava addressed them as follows :—

"Alas! blessed are ye Gopees, and ye are worshipful to Vasudeva. Ye have entirely consigned your minds unto the Divine Vasudeva. It is devotion to Krishna only that is acquired though gift, vow, austerity, recitation, Homa (offer of sacrificial oblation into fire), the study of Vedas, the control of senses and various other means calculated to bring about our well being. By your good luck, you have acquired the most excellent devotion in the Divine *Uttama-soloka* which it is hard even for the ascetics to acquire. By your good fortune, renouncing your husband, children, body, houses and all other kinsmen, you have chosen the Great Purusha known as Sri Krishna. You have all cherished a single-minded devotion to Adhokshaja, O great ones! The pangs of separation from him are the direct cause of the great favour that you show to me, and I have been fortunate enough to behold so many divine-minded ladies like ye. (22—27).

"Listen ye to the pleasant tidings of your dear one carrying which, o ye auspicious damsels I have come here. I have been confided with his secret. Ye shall be gratified to hear what I have to say—Listen to me what the Divine one has said unto ye all:—

"Ye have never really met with separation from me who am the soul of all. As in the entire creation mobile and immobile, ether, air, fire, water and earth pervade every where similarly I am the stay of mind, vital breath, intellect and the senses. By dint of my *Maya* (illusory will) I create, preserve and destroy myself in the universe of the matter, senses and attributes. The soul (Atman) is all knowledged, pure, identical, separate, from qualities and devoid of them, and is only perceivable as Vaiswanara, Taijash and Pragna Purusha corresponding to three states of sleepiness, dreams and wakefulness. A man should studiously control his mind which leads to thoughts of the unreal objects of senses like so many unreal objects of dream after he gets up from sleep and by which he attains to sense. Like the rivers terminating in the ocean, this control of mind is the consummation of the Vedas, the eight kinds of yoga, the Sankhya system of philosophy, the renunciation of the world, one's own duties,

the observance of truth. In spite of being beloved, I am at a distance from your view for the only purpose that you will be nearer to my mind by your meditating upon me. The mind of women is not so much drawn even to their dear ones when he is at hand, as it is attracted when he is at a distance. Therefore, by withdrawing your mind from endless objects of sense, do ye consign them wholly unto me, Krishna, and remember me. By so doing ye shall soon attain to me. While I was engaged in sport in the night with the Gopees, women who could not then approach me due to restraint from their superiors in the family, also obtained me by thinking then in their mind of my prowess." (28—33).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! On hearing in this wise the command of their dear one, and obtaining the recollection of his presence by his tidings, the *Gopees* (the females of Braja) said to Uddhava as follows with great delight :—

"O gentle one ! By good luck, Kansa, the enemy of the Jadus, along with his followers has been slain, and Achyuta is now faring well with his kinsmen, who by their good fortune have obtained all objects. Does Sri Krishna now show towards the females of that city the same affection which he formerly used to display towards us ? Is he now being worshipped by the graceful looks of those damsels accompanied by calm and bashful smiles ? Why should he not, expert in sport and beloved of the females of the city, be worshipped by their charming smiles and gestures and then bound thereby ? O thou pious one ! While talking in the assembly of those females of the city, does Govinda remember us, the women of this village ? Does he remember his amorous sport with us on the night of the Rasha-sport in Vrindabana, beautified with Kumuda, Kunda and moon-shine when the *Nupuras* were sounded and we sang songs pleasant unto him ? (34—43).

"Will Sri Krishna come here once and revive us all who are assailed with great grief in consequence of his separation by touching us with his balmy hands just as Indra reviving with showers the forest burnt down by the scorching rays of the sun ?"

At this stage another Gopika, interrupting the former said :—"Oh no my dear friend ! Why should Krishna, now obtaining a vast kingdom after the destruction of his enemies, happy by marrying the daughters of the king and always encircled by friends, come here ? What can the Lord of Shree (Lakshmi), greatly quiescent, accomplishing the objects of his own self, and identical with fullness of desire, obtain from us who are in the forest or from any other princess even ? We know it has been said by the self-willed Pingala that the renunciatian of hope constitutes the greatest happiness. Still we entertain a hope in Krishna which it is so hard to realise. Who can attempt to give up the conversation relating to the mystery of the illustrious Lord, from whose limbs, although not willing, Sree does not fall off. All these rivers, mountains, forest lands, where Srikrishna had sported with Sankarashana, as well as these houses marked with his foot-prints again and again remind us of him. How can we forget him by whose charming movements, beautiful smiles, sportive looks and sweet words our understandings have been destroyed. O Lord of Braja ! O Krishna, O Lord of Rama, O Govinda, O destroyer of misfortune, do thou relieve this Gokula, which lies sunken, as it were, in an ocean of grief due to your separation, by once coming here personally to witness them." (44—52).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! thereupon having their grief of separation removed by the news of Sri Krishna, and knowing Adhokshaja as their soul, they befittingly adored Uddhava. Having removed the sorrow of the milk-women, Uddhava lived there for some months, and chanting the sports of Sri Krishna Uddhava, so to say, enlivened Gokula. In short, as long as Uddhava lived in Braja, the kingdom of the cow-herd king Nanda, all the days of the inhabitants there were spent like moments charmed as it were with the sacred discourses on Sri Krishna. Beholding thus the bewilderment of the milk-women consequent upon the recollection of Sri Krishna, Uddhava was greatly delighted and bowing unto them he sang as follows :—

"Oh ! highly blessed is the birth of these milk-women on earth who cherish an unflinching devotion unto Govinda the

soul of the universe—a devotion which even the ascetics, afraid of the world, seek just we ourselves do. Of what avail is the Brahma birth unto him who becomes beside himself when listening to the endless themes of Lord Sri Krishna. Where are these unchaste women who wander in the forest and where is the attachment for Krishna the Great Soul? *Isvara* immediately accomplishes his well-being to one who devotedly worships Him, even if he be ignorant of His real state. What to speak of other women,—even he did not show that favour unto Kamala, who is heart and soul devoted unto Him not even to those beautiful and lotus-smelling celestial damsels. The Braja Gopees attained fully to their desires when they were clasped on the neck by him by his arms during mirthful nights of the Rasha-festival. I shall serve the dust of their lotus-feet and shall become one of the groves, creepers and *Oshadhis* of Vrindabana; since they renouncing their kith and kin whom it is so hard to forsake and also the codes of moral conduct, served the lotus-feet of Lord Mukunda which are sought for by the *Srutis* (Vedas). They forgot all their respective miseries by touching the lotus-feet of the lord which are adored by Sree and great ascetics in their souls who have attained fully to all desired-for objects. So I do adore the dust of the feet of the women of Nanda's Braja, whose hymning of Sri Krishna's themes has purified the three worlds." (53—63).

The auspicious Sukadeva again began saying:—O king! thereupon obtaining the permission of the milk-women and taking leave of Yashada, Nanda and other milk-men, Uddhava, the descendants of the Jadus, being desirous of departing from Gokula, ascended his car. While he was thus going away with various presents with him, Nanda and others with their eyes full of tears addressed him thus with voice choked with affection and grief:—

"May all our mental faculties resort to the lotus-feet of Sri Krishna. May our speech be entirely engaged in hymning his sacred names, and may our bodies bend down on the ground in saluting him. In whatever species of creation may our soul be transported in subsequent births in consequence of our actions and through the graces of *Isvara*, may our auspicious

ceremonies and gifts conduce to the satisfaction of Lord Sri Krishna.

O king ! being presented with such an honourable address by the milk-men out of their sincere devotion unto Sri Krishna, Uddhava returned to the city of Mathura ruled over by Sri Krishna. Having bowed down unto Lord Krishna, he then communicated to him, the single-minded devotion of the inhabitants of Braja and gave away the numerous presents respectively unto Vasudeva, Balarama and the king Ugrasena. (64—69).

CHAPTER XLVIII

AKRURA ASKED TO GO TO HASTINAPUR

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! thereupon knowing all and wishing to accomplish the satisfaction of Sairindhri striken with passion, the all-seeing omnipresent Lord repaired to her abode. Her room was furnished with costly furniture and paintings exciting desire. She herself was decked with pearl necklaces, pennons, awning, beds, seats, sweet-scented incense, lamps and garlands. On seeing Lord Sri Krishna come there, Sairindhri immediately rose up from her seat with great respect and approaching him in company with her friends, she received Achyuta and offered him excellent seat and other things. After Uddhava who was also received with great respect had taken his seat on the ground, Krishna, whose vow ever existed in following human practices sat speedily on a highly rich bed. Then with bathing, pasting, dress, ornament, garlands, scents, petals and others, as well with bashful looks accompanied by smiles, Sairindhri enjoyed the pleasure of Madhava's company for some time. (1—7).

Getting by her side the Lord of emancipation whom it is so hard to obtain, that unfortunate woman, Sairindhri, did pray only for the satisfaction of her passionate desire. She then lovingly said as follows :—

"O dear ! Do thou so live here in my company for some days and sport with me. I do not wish to part with thee. O thou having eyes like lotus petals do thou live with me to satisfy my desire."

Then having endeared her and conferring upon her a boon the lord of all creatures repaired with Uddhava to his own rich palace. That person is indeed very foolish who having obtained Vishnu, the Lord of all deities, whom it is very difficult to adore, begs of Him insignificant worldly pleasure.

After this incident, with a view to satisfying Akrura Lord Sri Krishna first of all went to the abode of Akrura in company with Balarama and Uddhava. (8—12).

On seeing from a distance his own friends, those foremost of men coming towards his abode, Akrura delightedly rose up and welcoming and embracing them, he bowed down reverentially unto Balarama and Sri Krishna. Then having been honoured by them in return, Akrura duly worshipped them after they were comfortably seated.

O king, carrying on his head, the water to wash their feet Akrura adored them with excellent clothes, ornaments, scents and garlands. Then having bowed unto Sri Krishna again with his head, Akrura took his lotus feet upon his own lap and began to massage them. Thereafter bending low with himility Akrura addressed Sri Krishna as follows :—

"O Lord ! Fortunately the vile Daitya king Kansa hath been slain with his followers. By thee your race (the Jadus) has been protocted from a great disaster and has been established in the status that it deserves. (13—17).

"You two are the *Pradhana Purusha*, and for this you pervade the entire Universe. Save thee there exists no further cause or action. Although not entering into this universe created by thee, O Brahman (Sri Krishna), by thine own energies, thou dost manifest thyself as many which come within the range of hearing and seeing. As the earth and other elements, so thou being self-create and self-dependent art manifest as many. Having created this universe with thine own energies of goodness, darkness and ignorance, thou dost protect and destroy it, but thou art not bound by those qualities or the consequent actions thereof. Thou art identical with knowledge, how can, therefore, the bond of fetters touch thee ? Even the cause of bondage viz., ignorance, can not ever be associated with thyself. The body and other forms, being not of a permanent nature, the birth of the soul and

other distinctions consequent thereon can have no real existence in thee. Thyself being entirely shorn of desire, there can nither exist fetters nor freedom for thee. The false conception of bondage or freedom for the Great Soul, with which thou art identified, is but due to the influence of ignorance in the minds of the people. (18—22).

"Whenever the ancient knowledge of the Vedas, first of all ushered into existence by thee for the welfare of the Universe, becomes obstructed by the impious and wicked one then and at all such times thou dost assume incarnation with full play of the quality and might out of goodness (Sattwa). To remove the over-burden of the Earth by slaying *Akshouhinis* of soldiers of the Asura kings and spreading the glory of the race of Jadus, thou hast with a portion of thy own self, Balarama, incarnated thyself in the line of Vasudeva. Perhaps this day, O Lord, all these habitations of ours have been rendered sufficiently blessed, because thou, O Adhokshaja, the proceptor of the Universe, whose forms are all the deities *Pitris*, elements and kings, and the water of washing whose, feet is purifying the three worlds, has entered this my abode to-day.

"What wise man shall resort to any one else save thee who art loving unto thy votaries, truthful, friendly and grateful.

Thou dost, O Lord, confer all desired-for objects, and also confer even thy own self upon thy most sincere votaries who selflessly worship thee, and thou hast neither increase nor decrease.

"By our good fortune, O Janarddana, we have been able to see thee here who art above the attainment of all lords of asceticisim and even of the king of celestials. Do thou now, O Lord, snap the invincible influence of *Maya*, (illusion) upon us, the illusion relating to children, wife, death and kinsmen, etc." (23—27).

O king! Having been thus addressed and eulogised by Akrura, the foremost of the votaries of the Divine Hari, he smilingly addressed the following words to Akrura, as a result of which the latter seemed to be enchanted under a spell :—

The auspicious Lord Sri Krishna said :—"O Akrura! Thou art our preceptor, uncle and at the same time our praise-

worthy friend. We are thy children and are therefore worthy of being protected, nourished and pitied by thee always. The worshipful great sages like thyself should always be adored by men seeking their welfare. The celestial deities are always willing to accomplish their own objects and not that of the saints. Do not think that watery places are not sacred shrines and earthen and stone-images are not deities. They purify men as a result of long standing adoration, but the saints can do so by a mere sight. Thou art the foremost of our friends. Therefore, for encompassing the well-being and for enquiring about the affairs relating to the Pandavas do thou now repair to Hastinapur.

"On the demise of their sire the young Pandavas along with their mother, were greatly stricken with grief. I have heard of their being brought up by the King Dhritarashtra in his own capital city Hastinapur. They are living there. Methinks, the foolish blind king, the son of Ambika, is subject to the will of his wicked son ; and as such he does not treat his brother's sons impartially as his own sons.

"Do thou now, therefore, go to Hastinapur and learn whether the conduct of the king Dhritarashtra towards his brother's sons is now good or bad. After knowing about it fully and definitely, I shall do what conduces to the well-being of my friends, the Pandavas."

"Having thus commanded Akrura, the Lord Sri Krishna along with Sankarshanadeva and Uddhava, repaired to his own excellent abode. (28—36).

CHAPTER XLIX

AKRURA GOES TO HASTINAPUR

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Having gone to Hastinapur remarkable for the glorious deeds of the leading Pauravas, Akrura met with Ambika's son Dhritarashtra, Bhishma, Vidura, Kunti, Somadatta, Valhika, the preceptor Drona, Duryodhana, Ashvathama, the Pandavas and their friends. When Akrura, the son of Gandini, had met with them, they enquired of the good news of their friends. He too in his turn enquired of their well-being. He lived there

for some months with a view to learning the conduct of the king, who was weak-minded, whose sons were wicked and who were under the guidance of the wicked association such as Karna and others.

Kunti and Vidura described fully unto him about the skill in weapons of the Pandavas, their srrength energy, humility and other accomplishments as well as the attachment of subjects to them and of the unfair treatment including the giving of poisonous food by Dhritarastra's sons towards the Pandavas, being unable to bear their prowess. Having got by Akrura, her brother, Kunti with tears in her eyes consequent upon the recollection of her birth-place and parents spoke as follows : (1—6).

"O gentle one ! Do my father, mother, brothers, sisters, nephews, other females and friends remember me ? Does the Divine Krishna, my brother's son, the protector of his votaries and loving unto them, remember my sons ? Does the lotus-eyed Balarama remember them ? Will he console the fatherless boys and me with words who am lamenting in the midst of the enemies like a deer in the midst of wolves ? O Krishna ! O thou of great yoga ! O omniscient ! O Protector of the Universe, O Lord ! I am suffering greatly with the boys—I do seek thy shelter. O Govinda ! Do thou protect me. Save thine lotus feet conferring emancipation, I do not find any other refuge unto thee. Again salutation unto Sri Krishna, the Pure Brahma, the Great Soul, the Lord of Yoga." (7—13).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :— Your great grand mother having thus remembered her own kinsmen and Krishna, the Lord of the universe, became striken with grief and wept bitterly. The highly illustrious Vidura and the sympathetic Akrura then consoled Kunti referring to her sons' divine origin. Then being desirous of going away and approaching the king who was blindly fond of his sons, Akrura describe in an assembly of the king's kinsmen and friends as to what he had been commissioned to do by Rama and Krishna, their kinsmen and friends.

Akrura addressed the king as follows :—"O thou son of the illustrious Bichitravirjya ! Thou art the enhancer of the

glory of the Kuru race, inasmuch as after the demise of thy brother Pandu, thou art now installed on his throne. If thou dost piously govern thy subjects and satisfy them with good conduct and treat thy kinsmen equally, then thou shall attain to fame and fortune. If, however, thou dost act otherwise, thou shalt be hated and constrained to meet with hell in this world. Therefore, do thou treat equally thy own sons as well as those of Pandu. (14—19).

"O king ! No one in this world lives perpetually with another, not even with his own body. How can he, on the face of such facts, expect to live eternally with his wife and children. A creature is born alone and meets with destruction alone. Similarly, he alone enioys his good works and suffers for misdeeds. Others prefer the ill-begotten wealth of the ignorant people under the pretext that they should be protected by them like water covering the aquatic animals. Life, wealth, children and others renounce that foolish person who rears them in the light of his own even in his life-time before he enjoys them, not being cognisant of the true objects and having been forsaken by them. In consequence of his own sinful acts, he visits hell and has not his desires fulfilled for desisting from his own duties. Therefore, O king Dhritarashtra, considering this world either as a dream or a desire, controlling thyself, thou shouldst be quiescent and impartial." (20—25).

Then king Dhritarashtra said :—"O thou lord of the bountiful Ones ! I am not satisfied with thy well-meaning words, as none can be satisfied by tasting ambrosia once. Still, O Akrura, O thou gentle one, this my fickle mind has grown dreadful in consequence of paternal affection wherein these thy beautiful words do not find room like lightning. What person can withstand the illusory will of that *Isvara*, who has incarnated himself in the race of Jadus for relieving the earth of her burden ?

"Salutation unto that Great *Isvara* who having created this universe by his incomprehensible *Maya* hath entered into it and has been judiciously distributing functions and duties and from whom this wheel of the worlds is moving."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—On being informed, O

king, of the object of Dhritrashtra by those words from him, and at the command of his friends that descendant of Jadus returned to their own city and related to Balarama and Krishna the treatment of the Kuru King towards the Pandavas, for which he had been sent there. (26—36).

CHAPTER L

SRIKRISHNA A FORT

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O thou best of the race of Bharata ! The Daitya king Kansa had two wives and they were named Asti and Prapti. After the death of their husband Kansa, the said two queens, being stricken with grief of separation from their lord, went to their father's house. They then related unto their father, Jarasandha, king of Magadha, the history of their widow-hood. On hearing from his daughters the unpleasant account of the death of his son-in-law, king Jarasandha was filled with bitter sorrow and anger. With the motive of making the earth free from Jadavas, by the way of revenge, king Jarasandha set forth a mighty endeavour. In a short time Jarasandha collected twenty-three *Akshouhinis* of soldiers, and with such a huge army he besiezed Mathura, the capital city of the Jadavas, from all sides. Beholding Jarasandha's army like an ocean overflooding its banks and besiezing his capital city and seeing that his kinsmen and followers have been strengthened thereby, the Divine Hari, then assuming the human form of Sri Krishna, fell to thinking about the object of his own incarnation and his duty befitting that occasion.

Divine Hari then thought within himself as follows:—"I shall first slay the huge army collected by the king of Magadha from all his dependent chiefs, the army consisting of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry numbering several *Akshouhinis*. This army alone forms a huge burden for the earth. The king of Magadha should not be slain just now, because, in that case he will not be able to set forth another attempt. The object of my assuming incarnation is for relieving the earth of her burden and at the same time to render protection unto the pious and to destroy the impious ones. I do also assume other forms also according to necessity but the

object remains mainly the same viz, for the protection of the pious and destruction of the impious people."

While Govinda (Sri Krishna) was thus meditating within him, there descended before him from the sky two chariots shining in effulgence like the sun driven by charioteers, and provided with flags, pennons, etc. These chariots were also equipped fully with celestial, ancient and wonderful weapons of all description. On seeing these chariots Hrishikesha then said to Sankarshandeva (Balarama) as follows :—"See thou, O my elder brother, the calamity that hath overtaken the Jadavas of whom thou art the head. This is thy car and in it are thy favourite weapons. Do thou ascend this chariot and destroy the enemy army for relieving thy kinsmen from this calamity. For accomplishing this object, O lord, we have assumed this birth. Thou standest always for accomplishing the well-being of the pious. These twenty-three *Akshouhinis* of the army have formed a great burden for the earth. Do thou, therefore, destroy the army and relieve the earth of her burden."

Sri Krishna spoke as aforesaid and then those two foremost of the Jadavas having been armed and armoured with those weapons and accompanied by a few soldiers, issued out on their car from the city. Coming out of the city, Sri Krishna having Daruka as his charioteer, blew his conch. The sound of Sri Krishna's conch struck terror into the hearts of the enemies and they trembled out of fear. At that time, on seeing Sri Krishna and Balarama coming towards him, Jarasandha, the king of Magadha, said :—

"O Krishna ! O thou vilest of men ! Out of shame I do not wish to fight with a mere boy like you. O vile ! O slayer of friends ! thou dost always hide thyself. I do not like to fight with thee. If thou dost like it, O Balarama, do thou fight with me. Stand thou before my prowess patiently either be thou pierced by my sharp shafts and proceed to heaven for peace of thy departed soul, or do thou slay me if you can do so." (11—18).

Lord Sri Krishna then said in reply :—

"Real heroes do never glorify themselves. Rather they

display their manliness. O King ! I do not regard thy words, as thou art in great difficulty and art on the verge of death."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—Thereupon having approached those two (Sri Krishna and Balarama) King Jarasandha with his mighty and powerful army, encircled them including their army, chariots, pennons, horses and charioteer as the clouds cover the sun or ashes cover the fire. Beholding in the battle-field the cars of Sri Krishna and Balarama having emblems on them of Gadura and Palmyra tree, the women fled into houses inside the fort, buildings, cowsheds and were repeatedly overwhelmed with grief. Beholding his own army assailed by the shafts discharged by the hostile army resembling clouds, Sri Krishna outstretched his most excellent bow going by the name of Sharnga which is adored by the Asura and celestials. Then taking repeatedly arrows from his unending quiver he set them on strings and then discharged them. The volleys of arrows so discharged by Sri Krishna destroyed the chariots, elephants, horses and infantry ; and his bow was then whirling like unto a burning wood. The elephants of the hostile army were torn off. The heads of the horses were cut off. The horses of cars, flags, charioteers and soldiers were destroyed and the infantry having their heads and arms torn off lay down in the battle-field. (19—24).

Hundreds of rivers of blood issued out from the limbs of men, elephants and horses that were cut off. In those rivers of blood, the cut off hands of men were like serpents, the corpse of men floated like tortoises, the dead-bodies of elephants appeared like islands ; while those of horses appeared to be crocodiles. The arms and thighs of men were floating in those rivers of blood like fishes, the hairs of men were like the moss, the bows like waves, the daggers appeared to be wharfs, the skin was the dreadful whirlpool, the numerous excellent and precious gems were stones and the ornments were the dust so to say.

In that battle-field those dreadful streams of blood met each other, striking terror even in the heart, of the wise people. Having slain with his mace the numberless irrepressible enemies, Sankarshanadeva of incomparable prowess in no

time destroyed that huge and dreadful army, impregnable in prowess and kept by the king of Magadha.

This was but an excellent sport of the two sons of Vasudeva, who were really the lords of the Universe. Though this destruction of the enemies was by no means any wonderful action for the Divine One, whose qualities knew no bounds, and who out of sport creates, preserves and destroys the three worlds, still, he having incarnated himself in human form and having imitated the actions of human beings, I am glad to describe his sport unto you. (25—29).

However, like a lion getting hold of another by its prowess, the immensely powerful Balarama grasped Jarasandha forcibly and throwing him off his car he had only his life remaining, soldiers were all killed. To accomplish some works relating to his sport, Sri Krishna released him (Jarasandha) who, although he had slain enemies was bound by Balarama with human and Varuni nooses. That heroic king Jarasandha having been so released by the two lords of rhe world, became exceedingly ashamed and he then made up his mind to carry on austere penances thence forword. But while he was proceeding on his way, he was prevented from that resolution by other kings who was friendly with Jarasandha. With words as suited to human code of morality, and as supported by religious instructions, those kings spoke unto Jarasandha, as follows :—

"O thou mighty king of Magadha, thy defeat by the Jadavas is consequent upon the fetters of thy own actions."

The entire army of Jarasandha having thus been slain in battle. he was purposely left unnoticed by Lord Sri Krishna. Therefore the king Jarasandha with a sorrowful mind departed towards his own kingdom of Magadha. (30—34).

Having successfully crossed the ocean of the hostile army, and having been blest and being eulogised by the celestials, Sri Krishna with unscathed prowess went to his own city. Then the inhabitants of Mathura, then freed from the anxiety of the battle were greatly delighted, and the panegyrists, songsters and eulogists then chanted his glorious victory. While Lord Sri Krishna was entering into the city, conches, bugles, Dundubhis, Turies, Vinas, Flutes and Mridangass were soun-

ded. All the roads of the city were watered, the citizens were immensely delighted, the city was adorned with flags and arches were erected for the festive occasion of commomerating the victory ; and the whole city was filled with the sounds of the Vedic recitations, The women scattered garlands, sprinkled curd, threw fried paddy and *Durba* grass and with their eyes expanded in love and reverence they set their eyes upon the victorious Lord Sri Krishna, who then communicated unto the king of the Jadus the details of the battle and presented him with wealth collected from the field of battle and scattered thereon in the shape of valuable ornaments and precious gems of kings who were slain in that battle. (35—40).

Although so utterly defeated, the king of Magadha, with many *akoshuhinis* of soldiers fought as much as seventeen times with the Jadus who were protected by Sri Krishna. The Jadavas, however, endowed with the prowess of their Lord Sri Krishna, every time destroyed all the army of king Jarasandha. When his soldiers had been so destroyed, the king of Magadha being forsaken by his enemies went away. Then when the eighteenth encounter was about to take place, the heroic Kala Javana, having been despatched by Devarshi Narada, all on a sudden appeared as a belligerant. Having none on earth as his rival and hearing that only the Vrishnis were his equals, the Kala Javana besiezed the city of Mathura with three crores of Mlechhas, i.e., lowest order of human race. On hearing the approach of that powerful Kala Javana, Sri Krishna had consultation with his elder brother Sankarshanadeva and thought within himself as follows :—

"Alas ! Mighty calamities are about to overtake the Jadavas, on account of Javana and Jarasandha. The highly powerful Kala Javana has besiezed us to-day. And inevitably to-day, tomorrow or day after tomorrow the king of Magadha shall also make an attack when both of us shall be engaged in the encounter with Kala Javana. Then if the Jara's sons (Jarasandha) comes he will either slay our kinsmen or carry them away to his own city. Therefore let us construct today a stronghold into which no two-legged (bi-ped) being is

able to enter. Keeping our kinsmen so secured in that fort, we shall first of all enter into hostility with Kala Javana and shall slay him with his whole army consisting of numerous soldiers." (41—48).

Having consulted with Balarama as stated above, Lord Sri Krishna had a fort built in the ocean. The fort extended over twelve *yojanas*. Within that fort he built a highly wonderful city. In this architectural work, the knowledge and ingenuity of the celestial architect were profusely manifest. Highways and courtyards were laid out, leaving therein space for houses. The fort was adorned with celestial trees, creepers, various beautiful gardens, woods, crystal palaces with golden summits and cowsheds. The stables for horses, grain stores and other rooms were severally made of silver, brass, and iron and these were filled with gold jars. The houses therein were made of gold, the summits of which were lotus-coloured and the floors of the rooms were made of emerald. Wooden buildings with canopy were built for tutelary deities which were filled with people of four orders and there were countless palaces.

For Sri Krishna, the king of gods (Indra) sent there his Assembly Hall by the name of Sudharma and the celestial Parijata tree, and inhabitants of that fort were freed from all human characteristics. Varuna sent for Sri Hari there white-eared and dark-blue steeds gifted with speed like the course of mind. Kuvera presented the Lord with eight kinds of invaluable gems. The Lokapalas presented him with their own celebrated effulgence.

O king! when Sri Krishna came down on earth the Siddhas surrendered in his favour suppremacy they had acquired for accomplishing their ascetism. Having by his own Yoga power taken his own kinsmen there and coming to Mathura Lord Sri Krishna consulted with Balarama. Thereafter having a garland of lotuses and without any weapons, Sri Krishna issued out by the city gate. (49—57).

CHAPTER LI

MUCHUKUNDA EULOGISES LORD'S GLORIES

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! then Lord Sri Hari the most beautiful of the beautiful and of dark blue complexion issued out of the city like the rising moon. He was clad in yellow silken raiment, wearing the mark of *Srivatsa* on his breast and *Kaustubha* on his neck. His shoulders were high and arms were long His large eyes were like newly blossomed lotuses, and his countenance was ever smiling, beautified with charming cheeks and smiles and adorned with *makara*-shaped *Kundalas*. Beholding him the Yavana concluded by the marks described by Narada, as follows :—

"This man must be Vasudeva ; he has in him the marks of *Srivatsa* four arms, eyes like lotus petals and he is wearing beautiful garlands of wild flowers. Therefore, he can be none else than Lord Sri Hari." Then he thought again as follows :—"He is going on foot without any weapon. I am also unarmed. So I shall fight with him." (1—5).

Then the said Yavana, with a view to killing Sri Hari persued him, who was running with his back towards him, and whom the Yogins cannot even with difficulty obtain. Appearing within a distance of a cubit at every step, that king of Yavana was taken by Hari to a distant mountain cave. Thus following Sri Hari, the Yavana king vilified him saying. "Thou art born in the race of Jadus and it does not behove thee to fly away in this manner." Even then the Yavana could not get at him as his actions were not yet exhausted.

Although he was thus vilified, Lord Sri Hari entered the mountain cave. The Yavana too entered that cave and there he saw another man lying asleep. Then thinking that Hari, having so led him upto that place, was then lying down like a good man, that foolish Yavana struck the sleeping man with his foot, presuming that person to be Hari and none else.

Thereupon rising up, and opening his eyes, the person, who was sleeping there ever long, looked on all sides about him, and saw the Yavana standing at a corner of that cave. At this the person who was sleeping felt enraged, and the fire

issuing out of his person, instantly reduced the Yavana to ashes.

At this stage of the narration, the auspicious king Parikshit enquired of Sukadeva saying :—"O Balarama ! What was the name of that person ? From what race he originated ? Whose son was he ? What influence did he command ? And why was he lying asleep in that cave ?" (6—12).

Then the auspicious Sukadeva replied saying as follows :— O king ! That person was born in the race of Ikshaku. He was the great son of the illustrious Mandhata. He was well-known by the name of Muchukunda. This Muchukunda was very truthful and he was devoted to Brahmanas. Help was prayed for by the celestials headed by Indra from him when they got very much afraid of the Asuras. On being so prayed for by the celestials Muchukunda helped the celestials for ever thereafter.

Thereafter, obtaining Kartikeya as the Commander-in-chief of the celestials, the latter addressed Muchukunda.

"O king Muchukunda ! do thou now desist from the arduous task of protecting us. O king, having renounced the world of men and thy kingdom without a rival thou art protecting us so long successfully and selflessly. So thou hast really forsaken all desires. We think thy children, queens, kinsmen, ministers and subjects, all being subject to the influence of Kala, are no more alive. Kala (time) is the mightiest of the mighty ones. Kala is the undecaying eternal Iswara. As though in sport Kala collects all creatures of the world as the king of beasts does the beasts. May good betide thee. Do thou now beg of us any boon save and except emancipation. Because the only one unchangeable Vishnu is capable of granting the boon of emancipation." (13—20).

Having been thus accosted by the celestials and after offering salutation to them, greatly illustrious Muchukunda was lying in that cave being possessed by sleep given to him by the deities. That Yavana being so reduced to ashes, the lord, who is the foremost of the Satwatas, showed His own self unto the patient Muchukunda. On beholding him of dark-blue hue, clad in yellow silken raiment, wearing the mystic mark of *Srivasta* on his breast and *Kaustubha* on

hss neck having four arms and shining with the garland of Vaijayanti gem, having a beautifully smiling countenance and adorned with the Makara-shaped *Kundala* worthy of being seen by men, having lovely and smiling looks, youthful age and the prowess of a lion, the highly intelligent king was overwhelmed by his prowess, and being greatly frightened first thought within himself :—"Is he irrepressible by prowess ?" and then said :—

Muchukunda said :—"Who art thou ? Who walking with thy feet resembling the lotus-petals, hast arrived at the inaccessible mountain cave in the forest ? Art thou the effulgence of the effulgent One ? Or art thou the Divine fire (Agni), or the Sun, Moon, Mohendra, Lokapala or any other deity ? I consider thee to be the foremost Purusha of the Trinity (Brahma, Vishhu and Maheswara), because like the lustre of a lamp thou hast with thy effulgence destroyed the darkness of this cave.

"O thou foremost of men, if it pleases thee, do thou tell of thy birth, action and family unto us who are anxious to know thy true self. (21—30).

"O lord ! I am known as Muchukunda. I am born in the race of Ikshakus, the foremost of the Kshatriyas. I am the grandson of Yubanaswa. Being worn out with keeping up for a long time, I was lying down insenuate in this lonely place (cave of the Himalaya mountain), having all my senses pilfered by sleep. Who has awakened me now ? Surely that poor fellow has been reduced to ashes for doing so ? I do now behold thy effulgent self, which art the destroyer of enemies. O Great one ! by thy irrepressible effulgence, my energy has been destroyed, and so I am unable to ask thee more. Thou art worthy of being adored by all creatures." (31—40).

Having been so enquired of by that king Muchukunda, the divine protector of creatures, smilingly replied with a voice deep as the roaring of clouds.

The auspicious Lord said :—"O my child, my birth, actions and names are in thousands. They are endless. Therefore I am unable to recount them. A man may be able to count the

particles of dust of the earth but he shall never be able even in many births to count my births and actions.

"O king ! The great ascetics have made an attempt to recount my births and actions engendered in three periods (present, past and future) but even they have not been able to complete their task. Still, O my child, do thou hear them. I am narrating them to you. In the days of yore I was asked by Virinchi to protect the virtuous and to destroy the impious Asuras forming the burden of the earth. I have incarnated myself in the race of the Jadus and in the house of Anakadundubhi (Vasudeva). Therefore the people call me Vasudeva (son of Vasudeva). By me have already been slain Kalanemi, Kansa, Pralamba, and others who were the enemies of the pious. This Yavana too hath been burnt down, O king Muchukunda, by me really, but evidently through the instrumentality of thy fiery eyes. For granting favours unto thee I have come to this cave. Being fond of my devotees, and having been sufficiently prayed for by thee in thy former birth, I have been pleased to extend my favours unto thee. Do thou, therefore pray for any desired-for boon. O thou royal saint, I shall grant thee all thy desires. People who are devoted unto me never meet with grief in this earth."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! On being thus accosted and knowing him to be the Supreme Deity Narayana, in pursuance of Garga Muni's predictions, king Muchukunda delightfully bowed down unto him and said.

The auspicious king Muchukunda said :—"O Lord ! being possessed by thy Maya, they do not adore thee. Being imposed on by each other both men and women for happiness, become addicted to the worldly pleasures which are veritable source of great miseries on the contrary.

"O thou sinless one ! A person who obtaining in this earth a human body of proportionate limbs which it is so difficult to acquire, does not adore thy lotus feet, falls into the dark well of worldliness like a brute.

"O thou who art unconquerable, I am a king inflated with the pride of a prosperous kingdom. I always consider this my body as my own and am attached to children, wife,

wealth, earth and other things. All my time hitherto has in vain been spent with anxious thoughts.

"O Lord ! Having in this body which is lifeless like a pot, the pride that I am king and being inflated with pride thereby, I have always traversed the earth being encircled by elephants, horses, chariots, soldiers, and commanders, and have not ever cared for thee. As a serpent licking the corner of its mouth in anger slays a mouse, so dost thou as vigilant as death, overpower him who would foolishly thinking this should be done' is attached to his body. When, however, his desire becomes any how frustrated, he would again seek for other objects. Similarly when he would get his desired-for objects once, he would thereby feel encouraged to have other objects to satisfy his unending desires. The body which under the appellation of a king formerly drove in golden cars or rode on the back of elephants being possessed by dreadful Time, comes afterwards to be known as an insect, ash or excreta. (41—50).

"O Lord ! The person who having conquered all the quarters and being freed from all dissensions, sits on an excellent throne and is adored by the princes of the same rank, is led hither and thither like a toy deer in the house of the women.

"O Lord ! He who has got insatiable thirst for enjoyment does not get even time for enjoyment. Because, to be desisting from the present object, with a view to becoming Indra (king of the celestials) he engages himself in actions being intent to perform vigorous austerities.

"O Achyuta ! When through thy grace a man roaming in the world gets at the end of worldliness, he comes across with pious men. Then by virtue of keeping company with the pious, he acquires devotion unto thee who art the best of all those who confer boons and who art the excellent refuge of the pious ones.

"O Lord ! I consider this as thy favour unto me, that I have been divorced, out of my own will, from kingdom and other worldly objects beforehand. The wise paramount rulers being desirous of entering into the forest for carrying out devout austerities, pray for this.

"O Lord ! I do not desire for anything else. Save serving thy feet which are solicited by thy devotees disregarding even emancipation, O Sri Hari ! After worshipping thee who art the giver of final liberation, what sane man shall pray for any such boon that would fetter his own self ?

"O Lord ! Having forsaken all that are the outcome of the qualities of goodness (Sattwa), darkness (Rajas) and ignorance (Tamas), I do seek thy shelter, who art without a second, above the influence of qualities, identical with knowledge, *Iswara* and the undecaying *Purusha*. I am for ever afflicted with the fruits of actions, and am burning with desire and my six passions have not been subdued. Still by chance I have attained to beautitude and to thy lotus feet which is above grief and fear and is eternal. O Atman ! O Lord ! O thou the giver of shelter ! Do thou save me who am just beset with calamities." (51—57).

The auspicious Lord said :—"O thou Paramount King ! O Emperor ! Thy intellect is pure and keen ; since thy understanding, although tempted with the promise of boons has not been possessed by desire. Know thee that my act of tempting thee with boons was not for thy misfortune ; for the minds of my earnest devotees are never attached to objects of hopes. It is seen, O king, that persons who are not devoted, although they control their minds with *Pranayama* and such other processes, have sometimes been drawn by worldly objects. Having thy mind permeated by me, do thou at pleasure traverse the earth. Let thy undecaying faith remain eternally in me. Beholding to the Kshatriya order, thou hast in hunting and in course thereof taken the lives of many deer. Do thou now resorting unto me and performing austerities with a controlled mind, wash away the sin. O king, in another birth, thou shalt become an excellent twice-born one and the best friend of all creatures. Thou shalt then only obtain me." (58—63).

CHAPTER LII

RUKMINI SENDS EMISSARY TO SRI KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! having been thus favoured by the Divine Sri Krishna, Muchukunda, the descendant of Ikshaku race, after circumbulating and bowing down unto the Lord, came out of that cave. After coming out of the cave Muchukunda observed the beasts, creepers and trees etc. to have assumed smaller size. Concluding therefrom that *Kali Yuga* had set in, he proceeded towards the north. Then being reverentially engaged in devout penances quiescent, disassociated and freed from doubts, and having concentrated his mind unto Krishna, Muchukunda entered the Gandhamadana mountain. There having reached the hermitage of Vadarika, the abode of Nara-Narayana and being acclimatised with the inclemencies of weather and in quiescent mind, he began to meditate upon Sri Hari with rigorous austerities.

O king ! The auspicious Lord on the other hand, returning to Mathura after the destruction of Javana slew all the Mlechchas and carried off their wealth to Dwaraka. When the booty was being carried by the kine and men despatched by Achyuta, Jarasandha, the master of an army consisting of thirteen battalions, came there. Then beholding the on-rush of the hostile army, O king, the two brothers, Krishna and Balarama, imitating human actions, began to flee away quickly, leaving off profuse wealth behind. Though they were never afraid,—still pretending to be frightened,—they walked over many *Yojanas* with their feet resembling lotus-petals. (1—8).

Beholding them taking to their heels, the powerful king of Magadha smiling and not knowing the full prowess of those two deities, pursued them with chariots and his army. Running far and being exhausted they ascended a high mountain Pravarshana where Indra daily pours down profuse showers. Thus finding them disappearing into the mountain, and not finding out their whereabouts, the king burnt down the mountain by kindling fire on all sides thereof. Then jumping from

the burning cliff of the mountain, both of them (Krishna and Balarama) with great speed fell down on earth from a height of eleven *yojanas*. Then being unperceived by their enemy and his followers, those two foremost of the Jadus came back, O king, to their own city encirled by the ocean.

Then wrongly thinking that Balarama and Krishna have been burnt down, the king of Magadha too went back to his city taking his huge army back with him. As has been narrated before, being despatched by Brahma the effulgent Raivata, the king of Avartta, gave away his daughter Revati in marriage unto Balarama.

O thou foremost of the Kuru race, the Divine Govinda too espoused in *Swayamvara* (assembly of princes in which a princess selects herself her own bridegroom from among the princes) (Rukmini) Vaidarbhi the daughter of Bhishmaka, the king of Vidarbha. The said Vaidarbhi was an emanation of Lakshmi.

Having smashed before all men the prowess of the kings such as Salvya and others belonging to the party of that king namely Shishupala and others, Sri Krishna obtained Rukmini (Vaidarbhi) as did Garura (Tarksha's son) pilfered the ambrosia by force before all the gods. (9—17).

Then king Parikshit said :—O sir, it is heard that the Lord Sri Krishna married the beautiful daughter of Bhismaka according to Rakshasha mode of marriage. I wish to hear more about Sri Krishna of incomparable prowess. How he carried away the girl having vanquished Magadha and Sailva king. O Brahmana, although listening every day, who is there who understanding the essence of what is heard is satiated with ever-new themes about Krishna, pleasant unto the ears and capable of removing the sins of mankind.

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king! there was a mighty king of Vidarbha, who was named Bhishmaka. That king had five sons, the eldest was named Rukmi, and the next four were named Rukmaratha, Rukmavahu, Rukmakesha and Rukmamali. Their chaste sister was named Rukmini.

On hearing about the beauty, prowess and accomplishment of Mukunda, as hymed by the guests, Rukmini considered Sri Krishna as her befitting husband. Sri Krishna too on hearing

about her intelligence, auspicious marks, large-mindedness, beauty, accomplishments and good character, and also thinking her to be fit for his wife made up his mind to espouse her. (18—24).

O king ! Rukmi, the eldest son of the king of Vidarbha was ever inimical to Sri Krishna. Therefore he opposed those friends who were willing to confer Rukmini upon Sri Krishna ; on the contrary, Shishupala, the king of Chedi was selected for Rukmini's hasband. Having been informed about this their resolution, Rukmini possessing dark-blue eyes, became very sorry at heart, and after great deliberation in her mind she secretly sent speedily a trustworthy Brahmana to Sri Krishna with her submission to him.

O king ! having reached Dwarka, the capital of Sri Krishna, and having been taken inside the city by the gatekeepers, that Brahmana, the emissary of Rukmini, espied the Prime Purusha, Sri Krishna, as seated on a golden throne. Beholding that Brahmana at a distance, Sri Krishna got down from his throne, and had him seated thereon. That Brahmana having comfortably seated himself on that throne. the Brahmanyadeva (Sri Krishna) adored him as earnestly as the celestials worship him. Then going near him after he had been well fed and relieved of fatigue and massaging the Brahmana's feet with his own hands, Sri Krishna, the refuge of the pious, patiently enquired of him saying as follows :—

"O thou foremost of the twice-born ones ! are thy best religious observances, approved by the old, being carried on without any disturbance ? Are you always happy ? Following his own duty, a Brahmana should always somehow remain satisfied. For, the satisafction of doing one's own duties confers on one all desired-for objects. A discontented Brahmana, if he be the lord of the celestials, does not attain to any excellent region, whereas a contented man, even if he be poor, sleeps happily, having all his limbs freed from ailments. I bow down unto those Brahmanas who are contented with the aquisition of their own selves, are observant of their duties, are the friends of all animals and devoid of pride and quiet. Is it all well with thee ?

"O Brahmana ! that king is my favourite in whose king-

dom the subjects protected by him live happily. If it is not secret, do thou inform me what I can do for thee ; for what and from where thou hast come hither crossing the heart of the ocean." Being thus questioned by *Parameshi* assuming a human form for sports, the Brahmana described unto him everything after reading first the letter of Rukmini to Sri Krishna (25—35).

That Brahmana then handed over to Sri Krishna the letter from Rukmini which ran as follows :—

"O Achyuta ! O thou beauty of the world ! thy glorious deeds on entering through the ears remove the ailment of the limbs. On hearing of them and of thy beauty which serves as the consummate object of vision, my mind has been shamelessly attached unto thee.

"O Mukunda ! O thou best of men ! What accomplished intelligent and respectable woman does not like to have thee as her husband, who bears no comparison in high pedigree, character, beauty, bearing, age, wealth, property and prowess ?

"O my lord ! I have selected thee as my husband and given away my mind unto thee. Do thou, O lord, come here and accept me as thy wife.

"O thou lotus-eyed one ! do thou so arrange who art a hero, so arrange that the king of Chedi (Shishupala) may not touch me, who am thy betrothed just as a jackal cannot touch the food of a lion. If at all I have ever always worshipped the Divine Great Lord with the gifts of tanks for supplying water to the thirsty, and with the performance of *Agnihotra* and other sacrifices, with the observance of vows and with the adoration of deities, Brahmanas, and preceptors, then let my lord Sri Krishna come and marry me. But neither Damoghosa's son (Shishupala, the king of Chedi) nor anybody else than Sri Krishna shall marry me.

"O thou unconquerable one ! tomorrow my wedding takes place. Do thou, therefore, first come secretly to Vidarbha and then being surrounded by thy commanders smash the army of the kings of Chedi, Magadha and others of their party and then all on a sudden marry me according to the *Rakshasa*

mode of marriage, giving thy prowess only as the dowery. If thou dost say that as I live in the inner apartments, how can thou marry me without slaying also my kinsmen, I shall tell thee the means. On the day before the marriage, a great procession of our tutelary deity (Ambika) is started in which the bride in question has to go out with that procession to the temple of goddess Ambika, our tutelary deity. If I do not acquire thy grace, O lotus-eyed one, in the dust of whose lotus-feet the lord of Uma even and other great deities wish to bathe in for the destruction of their ignorance, I shall renounce this my life rendering myself weak by fasts. Acquire thy favour I must even by undergoing hundreds of births."

Then the Brahmana added saying :—"O thou chief of the Jadus, I have fully explained the situation. Consider thee of this, and then do what should be done." (35—45).

CHAPTER LIII

CARRYING AWAY OF RUKMINI BY SRI KRISHNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Having thus heard the tidings of Rukmini, the daughter of the king of Vidarbha, Krishna, the foremost in the descendents of Jadu race, holding the Brahmana by the hand smilingly said as follows :—

The auspicious Lord Sri Krishna said :—"O Brahmana ! in the same way my mind being attached unto Rukmini, I had no sleep in the night. I know also that Rukmi, her eldest brother, out of his inmical feelings towards me, prevented her marriage with me. Inflicting crushing defeat unto the vile kings in battle, I shall bring that beautiful-featured Rukmini who is so devotedly attached towards me, as the flames of fire are frictioned out of pieces of wood. Then being informed of the wedding day of Rukmini, the slayer of Madhu (Sri Krishna) sent for his charioteer, Daruka, and ordered him saying :—"O Daruka ! Do thou at once yoke the best of steeds to the chariot."

Thereupon, bringing the chariot drawn by four of the best horses namely Saivya, Sugriva, Meghapushpa and Balahaka, Daruka stood submissively before Sri Krishna with folded hands. (1—5).

O king! Thereupon ascending the chariot and taking up also that Brahmana with him, Sri Krishna being carried by quick-coursing steeds, only in one night journeyed from the city of Avaratta to Kundina (Vidarbha). Out of affection for his son, Bhishmaka, the king of Kundina (Vidarbha) busily made all preparations for the bestowal of his own daughter, the beautiful Rukmini upon Shishupala, the king of Chedi. On that festive occassion, the city of Vidarbha, with its highways, courtyards, and all crossings of four-streets, were cleansed and watered and they were decorated with variegated pennons, flags and arches. Aguru wood was being burnt in prosperous-looking houses, abounding in garlands and sandal, and all inhabitants, males and females, were seen everywhere wearing clean raiments. Having worshipped duly the ancestral manes, deities and the Brahmanas and having fed others as well, the king made the benedictory verses to be recited by the best of Brahmanas required by religious texts. (6—10).

The king Bhishmaka well adorned his daughter with valuable new clothes and excellent ornaments. Rukmini was washed and bathed and was rendered auspicious with the marriage-thread. Then the leading Brahmanas present arranged for the protection of the girl with *Jajur Vedas*; and the priests, well-versed in the *Atharava* performed the *Homa* ceremony for the propitiation of the planets. King Bhishmaka the foremost of those conversant with rules of conduct gave unto the Brahmanas, gold, silver, raiments, sessamum mixed with molasses, and kine.

Similarly, Damoghosha, the king of Chedi, too made Brahmana conversant with *Mantras*, perform ceremonies for the advancement of his son. Being encircled by elephants with temporal juice tricking down, chariots decked with garland of gold, infantry and cavalry, the king of Chedi arrived at the city of Kundina. (11—15).

Approaching in advance for reception and then saluting him, Bhishmaka, the king of Vidarbha, made the party of the king of Chedi, enter the house which was specially made for them. Then there came Salya, Jarasandha, Dantavakra, Viduratha and Paundraka and thousand other kings belong-

ing to the party of the king of Chedi. Apprehending lest Krishna accompanied by Jadus headed by Balarama might take away the girl at the time of her being given away to the king of Chedi, all the kings inimical to Balarama and Krishna were determined upon fighting for Sishupala, and came there with their entire army. On hearing of Sri Krishna's going there, for carrying away the bride, the divine Balarama, anticipating an encounter and out of affection for his brother, arrived at the city of Kundina accompanied by a huge army consisting of elephants, horses, cars and infantry.

On the other hand Rukmini, the most excellent daughter of king Bhishmaka, anticipating the coming of Sri Krishna and not finding the return of the Brahmana before the setting of the sun, began to think within herself as follows :—

"Alas ! With the termination of this night, the wedding of this unfortunate one shall take place. The lotus-eyed Sri Krishna has not come, I cannot find out the cause ; nor had that emissary Brahmana come back. That beautiful-featured Krishna would have come but will not come to marry me thinking of my blameable forwardness. The lord Maheswara is not favourably disposed towards me who am unfortunate ; at the same time the goddess Gauri, the chaste daughter of Himalaya and the wife of Rudra is not propitious unto me."

The girl whose mind was pilfered by Govinda, meditating thus that the time had not come, opened her eyes filled with tears. O king ! while the girl was thus expecting, her left thigh, left arm, and left eye trembled, which be-spoke her well-being. Just then that foremost of the twice-born ones (Brahmana) saw that princess living in the inner apartment at the behest of Sri Krishna. (22—28).

Then beholding him with a quiet countenance and free from anxieties in his bodily movements that chaste girl Rukmini understanding the significance of the signs smiled. Being informed of Sri Krishna's arrival in the city, Vaidarbhi (Rukmini) with delighted mind, not finding any dear object to confer upon the Brahmana, just bowed down unto him with great reverence.

On hearing that being anxious to witness the wedding of Rukmini, his own daughter, Balarama and Sri Krishna had

come there, the king of Vidarbha came to welcome them with the sound of conch and then honoured them with *Madhuparka*, spotless garments and diverse other presents. Then having set apart a beautiful city for them, the king of Vidarbha duly treated Balarama and Krishna with their army and followers as guests. Then he honoured all the assembled kings by supplying their desired-for objects, according to their respective prowess, age, strength and riches.

Coming to know of the arrival of Sri Krishna the inhabitants of the city of Vidarbha came there and said "Rukmini is his befitting spouse and none else, and this faultless-featured one is her worthy husband. May Achyuta, the creator of the three worlds, favour us being pleased with what little piety we have and marry the daughter of the king of Vidarbha (Rukmini). (29—38).

The citizens were speaking thus amongst themselves with tears of love in their eyes. Then the princess Rukmini too being guarded by her followers and soldiers proceeded towards the temple of goddess Ambika. Meditating entirely upon the lotus-feet of Mukunda and with her speech controlled, Rukmini in the company of her mothers and friends, and encircled closely by strong guards with uplifted weapons, went out on foot to behold the lotus feet of the goddess Ambika. Just as the same time Mridangas, kettle-drums, Panava, Turi, and bugles, and such other musical intruments were sounded simultaneously. Thousands of beautiful women with various articles of presents and provisions ; the wives of the Brahmanas adorned with garlands, sandal, cloth, and ornaments ; charioteers singing ; panegyrists eulogising, the musicians playing on instruments, and other eulogising, all went in accompaniment with the princess Rukmini. Arriving at the temple, washing their feet. rinsing their mouth, being pure in body and mind, and with concentrated mind, the princess proceeded on towards the Goddess of Ambika. The wives of the Brahmanas, conversant with rites made the princess Rukmini to chant the following hymn in eulogy of the Divine Bhava (Siva) with Bhavani :—

"Salutation unto thee, O goddess Ambika, with the

children. Do thou be pleased to so permit that the Divine Krishna may become my husband."

Chanting the above hymn, Rukmini then worshipped that Goddess with water, sandal, rice, cloth, flowers, garlands, ornaments, various other presents, lamps, salty cakes, betel-leaves, sacrificial thread, fruits and sugar-cane. The chaste wives of the Brahmanas too worshipped the goddess separately with the aforesaid articles. These women then offered Rukmini the remnants of the offerings unto the goddess and showered their hearty blessings upon her. Rukmini too bowing down unto the goddess Ambika and unto the wives of the Brahmanas, accepted their blessings. Then terminating her vow of silence and holding the hands of her friends with her own which were adorned with jewelled-rings, Rukmini came out of the temple of Ambika. (39—50).

Beholding that charming princess Rukmini gifted with a beautiful waist, a countenance adorned with *kundalas*, not attaining the age of puberty, with a golden *mekhala* beautifying her waist, with rising signs of womanhood, with moving eyes as if in fear, beautiful smiles, lips resembling *Bimba* (a red fruit of that name) fruits, rows of teeth white like *kunda* flowers, having the gait of a swan, and her feet adorned with ringing *Nupuras*,—even the self-controlled persons would be possessed by desire. Having their minds pilfered by her bashful looks, those kings seated respectively on horses, in chariots and on elephants, leaving off their weapons were then looking at her, and were beside themselves with passion. As they saw Rukmini while in the pretext of going by that way giving herself away unto Krishna by her looks, they fell down instantly on the earth.

Advancing slowly with her lotus-feet and in expectation of arrival of her lord (Krishna) Rukmini too moving her clustering locks of hair with the fingers of her left hand, was espying Krishna with her bashful looks and she was also looking unto the numerous kings who had assembled there at that time.

Then having vanquished the ring of powerful kings, and having taken Rukmini on his own car, while she was passing by his car having the emblem of Garura, this Madhava

stole away Rukmini. Thereupon like a lion taking away his share from amongst the surrounding jackals, Sri Krishna with Balarama before him, proceeded slowly towards their own capital Dwaraka. For this the jealous Jarasandha and others could not bear their own defeat and loss of prestige. They, therefore, burst forth saying in wrath ;—"Alas ! fie on us all who carry bows, since our fame has been snatched away by the cow-herd (Krishna) like the inferior beasts taking away the food of a lion. (51—57).

CHAPTER LIV

CELEBRATION OF RUKMINI'S MARRIAGE

The auspicious Sukadeva said : - O king ! All those kings having been angry, and being with armour on, and accompanied by their respective army and ascending their chariots equipped with various weapons, pursued Sri Krishna and his party. Beholding the enemy army advancing towards them, the generals of the Jadava army stringing their respective bows stood valiantly bafore them. Persons skilful in the use of arms, stationed on horse-backs, elephants and chariots, began to discharge various weapons like a cloud pouring down its contents on the mountain. On finding the army of her husband thus assailed with powerful shafts, the youthful Rukmini with her eyes overwhelmed with fear and bashfulness pitiously looked on him in the face.

Thereupon, Lord Sri Krishna smilingly said unto Rukmini as follows :—

"O thou of beautiful eyes ! Do not be afraid. The army of your enemies shall soon be destroyed by our men."

Instantly threafter, not being able to bear any further insolence of the enemy army, the Jadava-chiefs such as Gada, Sankarshana and other heroes with their sharp arrows sundered into pieces the horses, elephants and chariots of the enemies. Then the heads of millions of soldiers seated on cars, horses, and elephants fell down on earth, with their earrings, coronets and head-gears. Then hands carrying swords and arrows, and fore-arms, thighs, legs, and the heads of the

horses, mules, camels, asses, and foot-soldiers fell down in heaps and in quick succession. (1—8).

The host of the enemies having thus been slain by the army of the Jadavas, who were keen after victory, Jarasandha and other kings fled away from the field of battle.

Then those defeated kings (Jarasandha and others) approached Shishupala, the king of Chedi, who was then like a widower, stricken with sorrow like one whose wife has been stolen away, was shorn of his usual effulgence and energy and had a dried mouth. They addressed Shishupala saying :—

"O foremost of men ! do thou, renounce thy grief. O king ! in men there is no fixity of what is desirable or not. As a wooden doll dances under the will of a magician, similarly happiness and misery on this earth move about, subject to the will of Providence. Being defeated by Sri Krishna seventeen times in battle and losing therein twenty three *Anikinis* of soldiers, I gained only one victory in the end. Still I do display neither sorrow nor happiness. O king ! being influenced by destiny, this universe in time shall meet with a deluge. Despite being our commanders of heroic detachments, we have been defeated by such a small number of Jadava army commanded by Sri Krishna. The time is now going in their favour. So the enemy army is achieving victory. When the time would turn in our favour, we shall achieve success."

O king ! having been thus consoled by his friends, king Shishupala with his followers returned to his city. The other kings too, whose army was destroyed but who themselves were not killed, returned to their respective cities.

But, being unable to tolerate the Rakshasha form of marriage of his sister Rukmini, her brother Rukmi, ever inimical towards Sri Krishna, too pursued him with an *Akshouhini* of soldiers, placing an arrow on his bow.

The mighty-armed Rukmi, who was very arrogant and also full of anger and clad in armour, then made a severe promise within the hearing of all kings. He promised saying, "I shall not come back to the kingdom Kundina without slaying Krishna or releasing Rukmini." (9—20).

After expresing the promise as above, Rukmi mounted his chariot and ordered the charioteer saying :—O charioteer ! do thou speedily drive the steeds and go at once to the place where Krishna is. I shall fight with him. To-day with my sharpened arrow I shall humiliate the pride of that vicious-minded cow-herd who being proud of his strength hath suddenly carried away my sister Rukmini."

O king ! Saying this the vicious-minded Rukmi who was unaware of the divinity of Krishna, addressed Govinda from his chariot, crying 'Stay, stay."

Then stretching his firm bow, Rukmi discharged three sharp shafts at Krishna, and at the same time exclaimed saying :—O thou the vile wretch of a Jadu ! do thou stay before me for a moment. Where wilt thou go stealing my sister, like a crow stealing sacrificial butter ? O vile wretch ! O the vilest of soldiers ! spreading illusion so long thou dost lie down wounded with my shafts. I shall humiliate thy pride ; so thou shouldst be prepared to give up my sister."

Thereat Krishna smilingly pierced Rukmi with six arrows, the charioteer with two arrows, and the flag-staff with three arrows. Thereupon taking up another bow Rukmi pierced Krishna with five arrows. Being wounded thereby, Krishna again sundered Rukmi's bow by discharging a batch of sharp arrows. Rukmi again took up another bow, and Krishna instantly cut it off too. Thus, whatever weapons Rukmi took up, such us *Parigha*, *Pattike*, mace, swing, sword, *Sakti*, *Jamara* and others, Krishna at once sundered them all.

Thereupon getting down from his chariot and taking up a sword in his hand, Rukmi in his height of anger rushed towards Krishna, with a view to slaying him. Rukmi then so ran wrathfully towards Krishna, as a fly would toward the flame. Then Krishna cut off Rukmi's sword too into numerous pieces, and he took up in his hand another terrible arrow to destroy Rukmi. Then beholding such preparations for the destruction of her brother Rukmi, the chaste Rukmini being overwhelmed with fear fell at the feet of her husband Sri Krishna and said :—

"O thou lord of *yoga* ! O thou the Supreme Soul ! O thou God of gods ! O thou lord of the universe ! O thou auspi-

ciousness incarnate ! O thou of mighty arms ! Do thou not slay my brother." (21—33).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! When Rukmini, with her whole frame trembling with fear, mouth dried up in grief, and with her voice choked and her golden necklace displaced out of affection towards her brother held the lotus-feet of Lord Sri Krishna, the latter then out of mercy spared his life. But the Lord bound Rukmi, the perpetrator of impious acts with a piece of cloth. Lord Sri Krishna then cut off the half portion of the hairs of Rukmi's head and beard with sharp sword and made Rukmi disfigured.

At that time, like elephants trampling down the stalks of lilies, the Jadava army assailed the vast army of the enemy. Then approaching Krishna, the lord Sankarsana saw the miserable condition of Rukmi. On seeing Rukmi then almost dead in that sad plight, out of pity he loosened the fetters that bound Rukmi. He then addressed Sri Krishna saying :—

"O Krishna ! Thou hast perpetrated a wrong and blameworthy act by cutting off Rukmini's hair and beard ; for the disfigurement of a friend is tantamount to his destruction."

Thereafter lord Sankarsana-deva also addressed Rukmini saying :—"O thou chaste lady ! Thinking of thy brother's disfigurement and consequent disgrace, do thou not blame us. There is none who gives happiness or misery. A person just reaps the fruit of his own actions."

Again Sankarsanadeva said to Krishna. "A friend, even when he does something to justify his destruction, does not deserve being killed. He should be let off. What is the use of slaying him again who stands then already destroyed by his own sinful acts ?"

Then he again addressed Rukmini saying :—"O thou daughter of the king Bhishmaka ! Such duty of the Kshatriyas has been laid down by Brahma, that while satisfying a duty, a brother may kill another. This is indeed a dreadful duty, and we are not to be blamed for this. (34—40).

"It is true, a vain man being blinded with the intoxicating influence of prosperity has his mind agitated for kingdom, wealth, land, prosperity, honour or any other object. But

we should not be so. That like an ignorant woman thou art wishing well of thy brother who commits evil by all, speaks of thine unripe understanding and of inaspiciousness for thy friends. By the illusive energy of the Deity, this bewilderment is engendered in men, considering their body as their own, that some appear as friends, some as enemies, and some as being dissociated from the world. Although the perfectly pure *Paramatman* is one only in all beings, the ignorant consider Him as many, as the sun or moon is seen as many in water and in ether in various pots. This body having beginning and end, identical with spiritual, elemental and physical ills attributed to *Atman* by ignorance, leads all beings to worldliness.

"O thou chaste lady ! No union or separation of *Atman* with such a body is possible. *Atman* is the cause of this body, as the eye and form proceed from the sun. Births, deaths and others are the changes of the body and not of the soul, as the phases belong only to the rays of the moon and not to the moon. Just as a person in his sleep realises at the same time the state of an enjoyer, the things enjoyed and the act of enjoyment, though the object does not really exist, so an ignorant person attains to worldliness. O thou of beautiful smiles ! Do thou conquer with thy knowledge this sorrow begotten of ignorance which dries up the soul and covers it with forgetfulness, and be thou consoled." (41—49).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Having been thus consoled by the divine Balarama, the youthful Rukmini cast off her sorrowfulness and resorted to understanding Thereupon Rukmi shorn of his strength and effulgence, with life only remaining, being let off by his enemies, remembering his own disfigurement and creating a false desire, made a huge city by name Bhojakata for his habitation.

Rukmi said :—"I shall not return to Kundina without slaying the wicked Krishna and releasing my sister."

From that time Rukmi with an angry mind began to live in Bhojakata, O foremost of Kurus ! Having thus defeated the kings and brought Bhismaka's daughter (Rukmini) to his own city, the divine Krishna had to perform the nuptials. Then people having their mind and soul devoted to Krishna,

the king of Jadus, performed grand festivities in every house of the city of the Jadus.

Then men and women delighted and adorned with brilliant jewelled ear-rings, brought presents for the bride clad in wonderfully valuable raiment. The capital city of the Brishnis shone with hoisted flags, with golden gateways adorned with variegated garlands, with fried paddy, flowers ; corals, and auspicious articles placed before every doorway, with jars full of water, *Aguru*, incense and lamps. The highways were spinkled with the temporal juice of the elephants belonging to the invited friendly kings ; and the gates were adorned with tall plantain and betel-nut trees. Amongst the kings running there out of curiosity, the Kauravas, the Srinjanyas, the Kaikeyas, the Bidarbhas, the Jadavas and the Kututis were exceedingly delighted. Then hearing of the abduction of Rukmini having been sung on all sides of the country, all kings and princesses were greatly astonished.

O king ! On seeing the union of lord Sri Krishna, the lord of Sree (Lakshmi), with Rukmini, who was Lakshmi herself in the city of Dwaraka, the inhabitants of the kingdom were exceedingly delighted. (50—60).

CHAPTER LV

THE STORY OF PRADYUMNA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! On being burnt down by the fire of Rudra's anger, Kamadeva (the god of love) who was a portion of Vasudeva, again resorted to Vasudeva for regaining his form. Having been begotten on Vaidarbhi (Rukmini) by Sri Krishna, he was known by the name of Pradyumna and he was in no way less esteemed than his father (Sri Krishna). Knowing this Pradyumna for certain to be his deadly enemy, a *Daitya* named Samvara who was capable of assuming any form at will, stole him (Pradyumna) away while he was a mere boy of ten days. After stealing away the boy (the baby Pradyumna) that *Daitya* Samvara threw him into the ocean, and the boy Pradyumna was devoured by a huge fish. Sometime thereafter this fish along with other fishes was caught in a net and was carried away by the fishermen. These

fishermen then made a present of this fish unto the *Daitya* Samvara. The fish was then taken in the kitchen room of the *Daitya*, where the cooks while cutting the fish into pieces found out the wonderful boy in the fish, and gave the boy to Mayavati.

Thereupon Narada related unto Mayavati all about the boy. On hearing the narration from *Devarshi* (Divine Sage) Narada, Mayavati's mind was stricken with terror regarding the boy, his origin, and his entering into the belly of the fish.

This Mayavati was Kamadeva's (the god of love) wife, by name the illustrious Rati, and she was awaiting for the resusciation of the burnt body of her husband. Mayavati was appointed by *Daitya* Samvara as a cook. Considering this boy as Kamdeva (her husband) she began to cherish affection for the boy.

Then having attained youth within a short time, that descendant of Krishna caused bewilderment of all the women who saw him. Mayavati then began to find in him the semblance of her husband, having eyes like lotus-petals, and his arms extended down upto his knee-joints. He possessed lustful gestures, with bashful, affectionate and smiling eyebrows. Thereupon the divine son of Krishna said to her (Mayavati) :— "O mother ! I behold thine mind altered. Renouncing the affection as that of a mother for her son, thou appearest now-a-days to bestow on me the attitude as form other women." (1—11).

Rati replied saying :—"Thou art Narayana's son. Thou hast been taken away from thy house by the *Daitya* named Samvara. I am thy devoted wife Rati, as thou art none else than *Kama*, O lord, the god of love. When thou wert a baby of only ten days old, the Samvara *Asura* took thee away from thy house, and threw thee into the ocean. Then a large fish devoured thee ; and O lord, we obtained thee from the belly of that fish. By thine illusive energy do thou now discomfit that irrepressible and invincible foe (Samvara *Asura*) acquainted with hundreds of illusions. Thy poor grief-stricken mother, being affected by maternal affection on account of thy separation, must have been bewailing like the

Kuravi, or like a bird at the death of its offspring, or a cow on the death of its young calf."

Having said this, Mayavati (Rati) conferred upon the high-minded Pradyumna the power of supreme illusion (*Mahamaya vidya*), the learning of which whould enable one to destroy all forms of illusion. Being conversant with the application of that learning (*Mahamaya vidya*—destruction of all forms of illusion), Pradyumna of immeasurable prowess approached that wily *Asura* Samvara by name. Having approached that *Asura*, Pradyumna remonstrated with him with unbearable words, and thereby enraged the *Asura*. Being greatly wrathful, that *Asura* then engaged himself in a duel fight with Pradyumna. Thereupon, being inflated with great anger, like a venomous serpent trampled under feet, the eyes of that foremost of *Asuras* were rendered coppery. That *Asura* (Samvara) then issued out with a terrible mace in his hand. Samvara then brandished his mace dreadfully, and threw it on with a great velocity, which produced a tremendous sound, resembling that of a thunderbolt. The terrible mace so hurled by the Asura Sambara, was adancing towards Pradyumna with great velocity. Thereupon Pradyumna took up his own mace in his front to protect himself from that mace of the *Asura*. Thus baffling the enemy's mace, Pradyumna hurled his own mace towards the *Asura*. Then the *Asura* saved himself from Pradyumna's mace by rising to the sky, and so remaining in the sky, the *Asura* showered stones upon Pradyumna as rains would fall upon the rock of a mountain. (12—21).

Thereupon being assailed by a profuse downpour of stones, that mighty car-warrior Pradyumna, the son of Rukmini, brought into effect his great *Maya*, identical with the quality of goodness and destructive of all forms of illusions. On the other hand that Samvara *Asura* stationed in the sky resorted to the demonaic illusion shown by the celebrated *Asura* named *Maya*, and discharged at Pradyumna, the son of Krishna, showers of stones. Thereupon he brought into use various, forms of illusions adopted by the *Daityas*, *Guhyakas*, *Gandharvas*, *Pishachas*, *Uragas* and *Rakshashas*, but this time also Pradyumna destroyed them all. Then taking up a sharpened

sword in his hand, Pradyumna forcibly separated the head of Samvara from his body. The head of Samvara was then adorned with a coronet, ear-rings, and his eyes were coppery.

Thereafter, having been eulogised by the celestials, who showered flowers and garlands upon him, Pradyumna with his spouse (Rati) coursed through the sky and arrived at his own city of Dwarka.

O king! Like lightning with Valahuka (a cloud of that name), Pradyumna with his own wife entered the inner apartment. On beholding Pradyumna of watery dark-blue hue, clad in yellow silken raiment, with long arms, dark-red eyes, beautiful countenance accompanied by graceful smiles, lotus-face adorned with dark curling locks, and considering him as Krishna, the women hid themselves in different directions in bashfulness. Then they determined by means of some slight difference that the new-comer was not Krishna. At this revelation the women of the inner apartment were greatly delighted, but even then they were surprised on beholding another jewel among women meaning Rati in the new comer's company. (22—29).

At the sight of the new comer the sweet-speeched and black-eyed Vaidarbhi (Rukmini), with tears trickling down her cheeks in affection, was reminded of her own son who was lost (missing) long ago. Rukmini then thought within herself, "Who may that foremost of men be and who is this lotus-eyed new-comer? Who is that fortunate lady who has borne him in her womb? And who is this lady who accompanies the youth. My son was also lost, and he was stolen away from the lying-in room. If he were alive now somewhere, he must have come of the same age with this stranger. How on earth has he acquired similarity with Krishna in form, figure, gait, tone, smile, look and many other things? He must be that boy whom I bore in my womb. Because out of my increasing affection for him, my left arm is dancing (in token of good news confirmed)."

While Vaidarbhi (Rukmini) was thus thinking within herself, the illustrious Lord Sri Krishna followed by his mother Devaki and father Vasudeva appeared there. Although Sri Krishna knew everything from before, he remain-

ed silent. But Narada suddenly came there and related all about the stealing of Pradyumna by the *Asura* Samvara and the other incidents which followed it. (30—36).

On hearing that wonderful narration from the divine sage Narada, the women of Sri Krishna's seraglio welcomed Pradyumna, who was lost for so many years, as though a man long dead has been brought back to life. Then embracing that youthful pair (Pradyumna and his wife), Vasudeva, Devaki, Krishna, Balarama, Rukmini and other men and women of Dwaraka, were exceedingly glad. On hearing of the return of Pradyumna, who was long lost, the inhabitants of Dwaraka were simply awe-stricken, and they said :—

"Alas ! This boy, although lost and was treated as dead, has come back."

While it was no wonder that his own mothers seeing Kama (the god of love) whose very recollection even agitates the mind with desire, and who was like the shadow of Krishna, and considering him as their own lord in consequence of his resemblance with Krishna, used to see him again and again, being attached to him, what to speak of the other women.

CHAPTER LVI

CARRYING AWAY OF SHYAMANTAKA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! The king Satrajit, who committed an offence, out of his own accord, conferred his own daughter Satyabhama by name along with the jewel Shyamantaka, upon Krishna.

Thereupon the king Parikshit said :—O Brahman ! What offence did the king Satrajit commit unto Krishna ? Whence did he secure the jewel Shyamantaka ? And why did he give away also his daughter unto Sri Krishna.

The auspicious Sukadeva replied :—O king ! the divine sun was the great friend of his votary, the king Satrajit. Being pleased with his friend Satrajit, the sun presented him with a jewel celebrated as Shyamantaka, Once wearing that jewel on his neck, and shining like the sun-god himself, being unperceived through its dazzling effulgence, he entered the

city of Dwaraka. O king! On seeing him from a distance and having their vision blurred in the effulgence, the inhabitants of Dwaraka, being afraid of the sun, communicated the matter to their Lord (Sri Krishna) who was then playing at dice. They addressed the Lord saying :—

"O Salutation unto thee, O Narayana, Oh thou the holder of conch, discus and mace, O Damodara, O thou lotus-eyed Deity, O Govinda, O thou descendant of Jadu, O Lord of the Universe! With intent to behold thee, the sun-god is coming, through whose dazzling effulgence the eye-sight of men is being destroyed. The foremost of the celestials are searching you in the three worlds, and perhaps foreseeing thee secretly amongst the Jadavas, the sun is coming here today. (1—8).

The auspicious Sukadeva again began saying :—O king! On hearing the words of those ignorant men, and smiling, the lotus-eyed Deity said :—"He is not the sun but king Satrajit, looking resplendant with the lustre of his jewel. Having entered his own abode and made the Brahmanas perform benedictory ceremonies, the graceful Satrajit placed that jewel was kept with adoration, was freed from famine, premature death, inauspiciouness, serpents, calamities and diseases.

Once on a time Krishna begged of Satrajit this jewel for presentation to the king of Jadus. Being avaricious, Satrajit did not give that jewel Shyamantaka to the Lord It did not then strike him that he was thereby neglecting a prayer. One day wearing that highly lustrous jewel on his neck, Prasenjit, the brother of Satrajit, mounting his horse, went out into the wood for hunting. In that forest a lion slaying Prasenjit with the horse, and snatching away that jewel from Prasenjit entered into a mountain cave. After so securing that invaluable jewel by slaying Prasenjit, that lion named entered his den. Now Jambhana desirous of possessing that jewel killed that lion and then taking the jewel with him to his cave and gave it to his children as a plaything. Then beholding his brother not returning to the city, Satrajit patiently said as follows :—

"Most likely my brother going to the forest with the jewel

on his neck has been slain by Krishna." On hearing this, people began whispering amongst themselves meaning dark reflection on the spotless character of the Lord.

Having learnt about this fact of the people casting reflection on him, and desiring to wash away the censure touching on him, the Lord with all the citizens went out in search of Prasenjit. On entering the forest they found out the dead-body of Prasenjit with his horse slain by a lion, and thereafter they also found that the lion was slain by a bear on the mountain.

Thereupon, keeping his subjects outside, the Lord Sri Krishna alone entered the mountain cave of that king of bears. The cave was full of horrible darkness. Then beholding that best of jewels converted into a toy for the baby of the bear, Krishna desirous of stealing the jewel stood by the side of the baby. On seeing that wonderful human being there, the nurse of the baby-bear (a bear too) cried out in fear. On hearing the alarm of the nurse, the king of bears, who was named Jambhavana, and who was foremost of the mighty, became highly enraged and appeared there instantly. Being so enraged from before, Jambhavana was not able to perceive the lord Sri Krishna and taking him to be an ordinary man, he fought with his own lord the Divine Krishna. Thus there arose a terrible encounter between them accompanied by weapons, stones, and hands like one between two vultures fighting for a piece of flesh. Thus that dreadful fight continued, accompanied by fists discharged at one another like the noise of thunder. The encounter continued unabated, day and night, for eighteen days. (9—24).

Then having his muscles loosened by the stroke of the fist of Krishna and being weakened and perspiring thereby, Jambhavana began to say, as follows, with a mind stricken with reverential awe :—

O lord ! I know, thou art the life, strength, heart and body of all creatures. Thou art the Ancient *Purusha* Vishnu, the almighty Lord of the Universe. Thou art the Creature of all the creatures of the universe ; thou art the only Eternal thing in the midst of all created things. Thou art Kala among all moving things. Thou art the *Iswara* and the Supreme soul

of all the individual souls. Formerly, having been looked upon by thy angry looks, the ocean, being agitated and abounding in crocodiles, whales, allowed thee to construct a bridge over its extensive watery surface. Thus bridging over the ocean and alighting at Lanka, the capital of the Rakshasha king Ravana, with thy glory, thou didst fell down on earth the heads of that Ravana with thy arrow."

O *Maharaj* ! Having touched with his two hands, his own votary, Jambhavana, the king of bears, who had then achieved discriminative knowledge, the Divine lotus-eyed *Achyuta*, the son of Devaki, O king, out of compassion towards the votary the king of bears, named Jambhavana, addressed him in words deep as the muttering of clouds.

The lord Sri Krishna said as follows :—"O thou king of bears ! For this jewel many of us had come to the gate of this den. Under the pretext of the jewel, to release thee from the imprecation of the curse from Brahmana, I have entered this den of thy abode."

Being thus accosted by Lord Sri Krishna, and with a desire of worshipping him, Jambhavana delightfully made a present of the jewel along with his own daughter named Jambhabati to Sri Krishna. On the other hand, not beholding Shouri (Krishna) come out of that mountain-cave, and waiting there for twelve days, those followers of Krishna with sorrowful hearts returned to their own city Dwaraka.

On hearing that Sri Krishna did not come back out of that dreadful mountain cave, Devaki, Rukmini, Vasudeva and other relations and kinsmen were all overwhelmed with grief. Then imprecating curse on king Satrajit, the inhabitants of Dwaraka began to worship the goddess Durga named there as Chandrabhaga, with a view to propitiating the goddess for the safe return of their Lord Krishna. (25—35).

Just as by the goddess Durga (Chandrabhaga) as a result of their worship and prayers bestowed her blessings on them Krishna having fulfilled his work and creating delight in the hearts of all, came back to Dwaraka with his spouse Jambhavati. Thus obtaining Hrishikesha wearing the jewel Shyamantaka on his neck and accompanied by his wife Jambhavati, the friends and relations of Sri Krishna with the

inhabitants of Dwaraka were overjoyed as much as on the return of a man given up long as dead and they began to hold great festivities.

Thereafter, inviting Satrajit in the assembly of kings, Lord Sri Krishna described to them, how he had obtained the jewel and then he conferred the jewel Shyamantaka on Satraiit. Then lowering his head in great shame, Satrajit took that jewel and burning with the repentence for his sin for blaming Sri Krishna for nothing he returned to his own capital. Thereupon being anxious to avoid the unpleasantness created between him and Krishna over the jewel and deliberating about his wrongful actions Satrajit thought within himself as follows :—

"How this sin of mine shall be atoned for, and how Krishna may be propitiated unto me ? By doing what action may I secure well-being, and the people shall cease to remonstrate with me, such as 'I am unthoughtful, mean-minded, foolish, and avaricious ?' I shall confer upon Krishna this my daughter (Satyabhama), a jewel amongst women, and along with that I shall present this Shyamantaka jewel also to him. This is perhaps the proper remedy ; or else there shall be no peace of mind for me."

Having thus resolved upon in his mind, Satrajit out of his own accord, made a present of his auspicious daughter and the jewel Shyamantaka unto Krishna. Lord Sri Krishna also with a delightful heart married Satyabhama, who was gifted with good character, beauty, high-mindedness, and accomplishments, and who was longed for by many great kings.

But at that time Lord Sri Krishna addressed Satrajit saying :—

"O king ! I do not wish to accept this Shyamantaka jewel. Thou art indeed a votary of the sun-god who bestowed the jewel unto thee, and we were merely thy inheritors however. Therefore let the jewel Shyamantaka remain with thee, and we shall derive its benefits. (36—42).

CHAPTER LVII

THE STORY OF THE JEWEL SHYAMANTAKA

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Although acquainted with truth, still however on hearing that the Pandavas and Kunti had been burnt down (in the *Jatugriha*), Govinda along with Balarama went to the Kauravas to see to the performance of the necessary funeral rites befitting their race. Approaching Bhishma, Kripa, Bidura, Gandhari and Drona and showing condolence, Sri Krishna said :—"Oh ! What a pity !"

Thereupon, O king, obtaining a respite (in the absence of Sri Krishna who was then at Hastinapura), Akrura and Kritavarma said to Satadhanu :—"Why don't you take the jewel (Shyamantaka) ? Satrajit, having once promised to give it to us before, afterwards conferred his jewel of a daughter (Satyabhama) upon Krishna. Why does not Satrajit therefore follow his brother (who is already deceased) ?" Thus Satadhanu's understanding being perverted by such arguments, the vile, vicious-minded and short-lived Satadhanu slew Satrajit when he was asleep.

Like a hunter going away after slaying the beasts, Satadhanu taking the jewel (Shyamantaka), went away, while all the women there were bewailing like those having no lord. Beholding her father thus slain, Satyabhama became stricken with grief ; she bewailed saying :—"O father, O father I am undone." Then throwing the dead body of her father into a jar of oil for preserving it, Satyabhama proceeded to Hastinapura. Arriving at Hastinapura, she there bewailing lamentably communicated unto Krishna (who being omniscient knew all about it already) the news of the death of her father.

On hearing that sorrowful news, and following the practice of the people in such a case, O king, both Balarama and Krishna bewailed exclaiming, "Alas ! A great calamity has overtaken us !" (1—9).

Thereafter, arriving at his own city along with his wife Satyabhama, and elder brother Balarama; Lord Sri Krishna resolved upon slaying Satadhanu and obtaining the jewel from

him by force. Satadhanu too, on hearing of Krishna's preparations against him, became terrified, and for saving his life, he begged for protection from Kritavarma. But the latter replied saying :—"I shall not be able to go against the two Deities Balarama and Krishna. Who can expect to live in peace having committed any offence to them ? By showing enmity towards Krishna, even Kansa, with his younger brother was shorn of all prosperity and was ultimately killed in battle. By Krishna even Jarasandha was thrown down from his chariot seventeen times."

Having been thus refused by Kritavarma, the unfortunate Satadhanu went to Akrura and begged him for protecting him from Krishna. Likewise Akrura then replied saying :— "Who on earth knowingly shall oppose the power of the two gods, Krishna and Balarama ? Salutation unto the Divine Krishna of wonderful deeds ! Salutation unto the Endless, Prime Great Soul, who with ease has been creating, preserving and destroying this universe, possessed by whose illusive energy the patriarchs even cannot perceive His actions ; who, while he was only seven years old, easily uprooted the mountain named Gobardhan, and held it up with one hand like a toy !"

Having been thus refused by Akrura too, Satadhanu giving away the great jewel to him ascended a horse capable of going upto hundred *yojanas* and fled away. (10—19).

Having ascended the car with Garura as its emblem, and drawn by four swift coursing steeds, Balarama and Janardana, O king, pursued the slayer of Satrajit, who was their worshipful relation. Satadhanu's horse however fell down in the forest of Mithila, and he being terrified, got of his car and went on foot. Krishna too in anger pursued him on foot. Krishna going on foot with his sharp discus, sundered the head of Satadhanu, who was running on foot : and after slaying him, Krishna searched for the jewel. Not obtaining the jewel there and approaching his elder brother, he said :—In vain have I slain Satadhanu, who has no jewel with him."

Thereupon Balarama said : Perhaps Satadhanu had deposited that jewel with some body. Do thou, therefore, return

to Dwaraka and try to find out that person. I wish now to see my dearest friend, the king of Videha."

After saying this, O king, that descendant of Jadu (Balarama) entered Mithila. On seeing Balarama, the king of Mithila, with a delighted mind, respectfully rose up from his throne, and with befitting presents, the king duly worshipped him who was worthy of adoration. Balarama lived for some years in the city of Mithila. At that time Sujodhana, the son of Dhritarashtra being honoured by the high-souled and delighted king of Mithila, the illustrious Janaka, was learning the use of mace from Balarama. Having come to Dwaraka, Lord Sri Krishna encompassing the pleasure of his beloved wife (Satyabhama) informed her of the destruction of Satadhanu, and of disappointment in not finding the jewel with him. Thereafter Sri Krishna, along with the friends, had all the obsequal ceremonies performed for their deceased kinsman. On hearing of the destruction of Satadhanu, his friends Akrura, Kritavarma, who encouraged him in the matter of refusing the jewel (Shyamantaka) being struck with fear for Sri Krishna's displeasure, fled away from Dwaraka. (20—29).

After the departure of Akrura from the city of Dwaraka, many super-natural, elemental, mental and physical evils repeatedly assailed the inhabitants of Dwaraka. Thereupon, O my child, (Sukadeva so addressed king Parikshit) the people of Dwaraka taking the departure of Akrura to be the cause of such disturbances, seemed to have forgotten at that time about the glories of Lord Krishna, who was the stay of piety and refuge unto the ascetics.

Once on a time when the celestial king Indra did not pour down seasonal showers in his kingdom, the king of Kasi conferred his own daughter named Gandini upon Swafalka who had come there. Immediately thereafter they had profuse showers. By virtue of his powers wherever his (Swafalka's) son Akrura goes, the rain-god pours down showers and that place becomes freed from draught and epidemic.

On hearing the words of the elderly men and knowing that the departure of Akrura could not be the real cause of the disturbances, rather the absence of the jewel Shyaman-

taka must have been the real cause, Janarddana invited Akrura to Dwaraka, and according him due welcome, adoration and address with sweet words, Lord Sri Krishna acquainted with the minds of all, smilingly said unto him (Akrura) :—

"O thou the king of the emancipated ones ! I am already informed that the most effulgent jewel Shyamantaka has been deposited with thee by Satadhanu. The sons of Satrajit's daughter will offer him oblation of water in consequence of his having no male issue ; and so they only will relieve their ancestor from debts and will inherit the remaining portion of Satrajit's property. Still as this jewel can with difficulty be kept by others, so let that remain with thee. But in that case my elder brother shall not trust me fully with regard to his jewel. O thou great one (Akrura) ! Therefore, once showing this jewel, do thou maintain the peace of friends. Thou art incessantly celebrating sacrifiees on golden altars, and therefore thy possessing that gold producing merit of the jewel confirms thy possessing the Shyamantaka jewel."

Having thus been chastised by quiet words, the son of Swafalka (Akrura), taking out from under his cloth (wearing apparel) that jewel which is effulgent like the sun, conferred it upon Sri Krishna.

Whoever shall henceforward listen to this mighty theme of Vishnu removing sin, increasing auspiciousness, or whoever shall read or recollect, shall attain great peace, beings freed from iniquities and blame. (30—42).

CHAPTER LVIII

SRI KRISHNA MARRIES OTHER WIVES

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Once on a time, being encircled by Yujudhana and others, the graceful foremost *Purusha* went to Indraprashtha, the capital city of the Pandavas to see them who were considered as lost. On seeing Mukunda, the Lord of the Universe arrive there, Partha (Arjuna) and other Pandavas rose up at once like senses with the return of five vital breaths. The Pandavas having embraced *Achyuta*, their sins washed off by the touch of his

limbs, and beholding his lovely and smiling countenance, they were exceedingly delighted.

Saluting the feet of Yudhisthira and Bhima, and embracing Phalguna (Arjuna), Sri Krishna was adored by the twins. The beautiful Draupadi, newly married and bashful, approching slowly, saluted Sri Krishna. who was then seated on an excellent seat. Thereupon being welcomed with due honour and saluting all those superiors present there, Satyaki took his seat.

Thereafter going to his father's sister Kunti (Pritha) Sri Krishna saluted her and being espied by her with eyes full of mercy and tears, Krishna asked her well-being as well as that of her daughter-in-law and communicated unto her that of her friends and relatives. Remembering the many afflictions suffered by her, Kunti with tearful eyes and voice suppressed with love and grief said unto Sri Krishna as follows :—

Kunti said :—"O Krishna ! Thy soothing sight is for the removal of sorrows from the minds of the afflicted ones. We shall now meet with well-being, because thou hast made us all as having our master. O Krishna ! Remembering us as kinsmen, thou didst send my brother Akrura to enquire about us. Indeed it is true that thou art the friend of the universe and hast not any one as thy own, or otherwise, still thou dost remove the mental agony of his who always meditates upon thee." (1—10).

Then Yudhisthira said :—"O thou Lord of the Universe ! O Lord, what auspicious action have we ever performed that thou who art beyond the approach of even the foremost of ascetics, hast come within our view, who are evil-minded.'

Having been thus welcomed, Lord Sri Krishna lived there for one year and some months to the great delight of the inhabitants of Indraprastha.

Once on a time, ascending his chariot having the emblem of a monkey (*Kapidwaja*) and taking his celebrated bow named *Gandiva*, with two unexhausting quivers, Arjuna, the slayer of hostile heroes, in company with Sri Krishna, entered a huge forest filled with many beasts for hunting. There Sri Krishna and Arjuna pierced with sharp shafts, tigers, bears,

buffaloes, *Rurus*, *Sharvas*, *Gavayas*, *Khargis*, deer and *Salakas*. The servants gave to the king Yudhisthira such beasts of prey by which sacrifices might be performed.

On the other hand, Sri Krishna and Arjuna, tired and stricken with thirst, went to the river Jamuna on the *Parva* day. There they washed their hands and faces with the water of the sacred river and drank water to satisfy their thirst. When they were thus relieved of their fatigue, they saw a beautiful damsel wandering about the place. Thereupon, being urged on by his friend, and approaching that beautiful damsel having fine pearl-white set of teeth and charming countenance, Arjuna asked her saying :—

Arjuna said :—"O thou having a beautiful waist ! Who art thou ? To whom dost thou belong ? From where and for what hast thou come here ? O beautiful lady ! Methinks, thou dost seek thy worthy husband. Do you please tell me the truth." (11—19).

Thereupon, the damsel who was named Kalindi, said :—

I am the daughter of the sun-god. I am desirous of having Lord Vishnu, the conferror of boons, as my husband. As means to that end in view I am performing austere penance. Save Vishnu, who is the abode of Sree, I shall not seek any one else as my husband. May the Divine Mukunda, the refuge of the helpless, be propitious to me. My name is Kalindi. My father has built a city within the river Jamuna. I shall live there so long as I shall not see Achyuta."

On hearing the speech of Kalindi as above, Gurakesha (Arjuna) reported her intentions faithfully unto Sri Krishna Vasudeva, as though he knew it from before, took Kalindi upon the chariot and went to Yudhisthira (*Dharmaraja*). Then as commanded, Krishna had a wonderful city built for the sons of Pritha (Pandavas) by the celestial architect Maya. Then living there for encompassing the well-being of his kinsmen, Lord Sri Krishna, with a view to offering the *Khandava* forest of Indra unto Agni, the god of fire, became the charioteer of Arjuna.

Thereupon being pleased, O king, the god of fire conferred on Arjuna, a bow, a chariot driven by white steed, flag-staff, two quivers with inexhaustible arrows and an armour

impenetrable by weapons. *Maya*, who was released from the forest fire made a present to his friend in the shape of an assembly hall in which Duryodhana had his vision distorted with reference to water or land.

Thereupon, being permitted by other friends and encircled by Satyaki and others Krishna and Arjuna again came back to the city of Dwaraka, Having arrived at Dwaraka, in an auspicious star, Krishna espoused Kalindi, and extended delight unto his own men. The kings of Avanti, Binda and Aniruddha who owed allegiance to Durjodhana, desisted their own sisterby name Mitrabinda who was attached to Krishna from offering garland to Krishna in the *Swayamvara*. Krishna forcibly snatched away Mitravinda, the daughter of his father's sister Rajadhidevi, before the very eyes of the assembled kings. (20—31).

O king ! There was a highly pious king in Ajodhya, who was named Nagnajit. That king had a daughter named Satya who was also called Nagnajiti, after the name of her father. As a result of a promise of that king Nagnajit, no king was entitled to marry his daughter without first slaying seven sharp-horned, irrepressibly powerful, fierce and wicked bulls.

On hearing about the king's daughter who could be obtained by one capable of slaying the said bulls, Sri Krishna, the Lord of the Satvatas, being encircled by a huge army went to the city of Kosala. Thereupon the king of Kosala delightfully rose up from his seat as a mark of respect to Krishna and welcomed him by worshipping him with valuable seats and other articles of adoration. On seeing his daughter's long cherished for bridegroom, who is Lord of Rama arriving there, the king's daughter thought within herself. "If I have ever observed a vow, may the god of fire so bless me that Krishna might be my husband !"

Worshipping Sri Krishna again, the king of Kosala said :— "O Narayana ! O Lord of the Universe ! Thou art filled with the delight of *Atman*. Poor as I am, what can I do for thee ? How that Lord may be pleased with me, the dust of whose lotus-feet is carried on head by Lakshmi, Brahma, Maheswara and the *Lokapalas*, and who for protecting the

bridge of the world created by himself in due time, sportively assumes different forms necessary."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O thou descendant of the Kuru race ! Having taken his seat, Lord Sri Krishna smilingly said to king Nagnajit with words deep as the muttering of clouds.

Then Lord Sri Krishna said :—' O king ! Begging by the Kshatriyas against the duties of their own order, has been designated blamable by the wise. Still, being desirous of attaining thy friendship, I beg of thee thy daughter ; but we won't offer any dowry." (32—40).

Thereupon the king Nagnajit said in reply to Krishna :—"What better and desired for husband can there be for this girl, save thee, O lord, who art the refuge of all accomplishments and on whose limbs the blameless Sree perpetually resides. O foremost of Satvatas ! We have made a solemn promise for selecting a wished-for bridegroom for my daughter and for testing the prowess of men.

"O hero ! These seven bulls are very fierce and uncontrollable. Many princes have been torn and vanquished by them. O thou descendant of Jadu ! O lord of Sree ! If these bulls are vanquished by thee, thou shalt of course be then the desired-for bridegroom of my daugher (Nagnajiti)."

O king Parikshit ! Having heard this resolution of the king of Kosala, and having divided his own self into seven, Lord Sri Krishna held those seven bulls easily ; and then binding them with ropes, he crushed their pride of strength. Krishna then drew those bulls as easily as boys sportively draw the wooden-bulls by strings,

Thereupon, being delighted and stricken with wonder, king Nagnajit conferred his daughter named Nagnajiti upon Krishna, who too accepted that becoming bride with great delight. The queens too, beholding their daughter having Krishna as her husband, were exceedingly delighted and began to perform festivities that seemed to have no end of them. (41—48).

Thereupon conches, bugles, and *anakas* were sounded and the women bedecked with costly clothes, garland and decora-

tions began to sing delightedly and showered their blessings on the couple.

The king of Kosala conferred upon Sri Krishna ten thousand kine, three thousand maid servants adorned with golden necklaces and beautiful raiments, nine thousand elephants, nine lakhs chariots, nine crores of horses, nine *padmas* of servants. Then encircling them with a huge army and placing the bride and bride-groom on the car, the king of Kosala, with a heart assailed with affection, bade them farewell.

On hearing of the girl being taken away by Krishna, the kings who were humiliated by the Jadus and bulls, became highly enraged and they came in a body obstructing Sri Krishna's way to Dwaraka. Then, coming there like a lion slaying poor deer, with desire for encompassing the well-being of his friends, Arjuna holding the *Gandiva* bow snapped the shower of shafts discharged by the enemy kings and ultimately defeated and killed them.

Then taking the dowry and arriving at Dwarka with his newly married wife Satya, the Divine son of Devaki, the foremost of Jadus, spent his time there in happiness.

Sri Krishna then espoused Srutakirti, the princess of Kaikeyas, the daughter of his father's sister. This Srutakirti was conferred upon him (Krishna) by her brothers (who were his cousins) Santardana and others.

Sri Krishna also, like Garura stealing away nectar, stole away in *Swayamvara* the daughter of the Madra king named Brihatsena. This princess was gifted with all auspicious marks. There were thousands of such other wives of Krishna. Slaying the king Naraka, the son of Bhumi (earth), Sri Krishna brought from his inner apartment many beautiful women. (49—58).

CHAPTER LIX

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROWESS OF SRI KRISHNA

The king Parikshit asked :—Brahman ! do thou now describe unto me the prowess of Sri Krishna in defeating and killing king Bhauma (the king was named Naraka, but being the son of Bhumi (earth) he was called Bhauma), and also

why that king made captives of many women and how he became hostile to Sri Krishna.

Thereupon the auspicious Sukadeva said :—Indra's umbrella and the ear-rings of his mother Aditi were stolen away by the king Naraka. Besides, Indra was displaced from the throne of celestial kingdom by that powerful king. Having learnt these facts from the report of Indra, destitute of his kingdom, Sri Krishna ascended on Garura with his spouse Satyabhama and arrived at the city of Pragjotisha.

That city of Pragjotisha was impregnable with fortresses of mountain, weapons, water, fire and wind, and it was encircled by the various hard and dreadful nooses of the demon Mura on the mountains. Hari, the holder of the celebrated discus *Sudarsana-chakra*, shattered down the mountains with the stroke of his mace, the weapons with his shafts, and fire, water, wind and the nooses of Mura with his discus. The controlled minds of the thinkers he won with the sound of his conch, and the walls with his mighty mace.

On hearing the sound of Hari's conch named Panchajanya, the sound that resembled the roar of thunder at the time of the dissolution, the five-headed demon Mura, who was lying asleep, arose from sleep from the depth of waters. Uplifting the three-headed shaft, which it was so hard even to look at, the demon Mura, blazing like the sun or of fire of dissolution, as if devouring the three worlds with his five mouths, rushed toward Sri Krishna, as a serpent rushes towards Garura. Then the demon took up his mace and discharging it at Garura emitted a tremendous cry from his five mouths. That dreadful sound of the demon filled up the heaven, earth, all the quarters and covered the whole universe. (1—7).

With two powerful shafts Hari snapped into three that three-headed shaft which was discharged at Garura by that powerful demon. Thereafter Sri Krishna drove a flock of powerful arrows into the mouths of that demon, who also discharged a terrible mace at Sri Krishna. The elder brother of Gada sundered with his mace the mace of the demon which was about to fall upon him in the encounter. Then extending his arms the demon Mura rushed towards Sri Krishna and

the latter with his celebrated *Sudarsana-chakra* easily cut off the head of the *Danava* so approaching towards him.

As mountain summits were sundered by the fall of Indra's thunder-bolt, so the demon Mura with his head cut off and life gone out, fell down into the water. Thereupon, being struck with grief and anger consequent upon the death of their father, the seven sons of the demon Mura, arrayed themselves for fighting with Sri Krishna. Those seven sons of Mura were named Tamra, Antariksha, Saravana, Bibhavasu, Basu, Navashman and Varu. These seven sons of Mura were also urged on by king Naraka to fight with Sri Krishna. So holding their weapons and placing before them one named Pitha as their commander of the *Asura* army they went out to fight with Sri Krishna. Being filled with anger, the sons of Mura discharged at Krishna shafts, swords, maces, *shaktis, rishtis* and clubs. But lord Krishna of unfailing prowess instantly sundered those weapons with his own into various small pieces, small as sesamum.

Thereupon, having their weapons, heads, arms, legs and aamours shattered by the shafts of Achyuta, the commander Pitha and the other leaders of the *Asura* army being thus despatched to the region of the god of death, became impatient and mounting upon his sea-born elephant, the king Naraka appeared in the field of battle to attack Sri Krishna. (8—14).

On seeing Sri Krishna with his spouse Satyabhama seated on Garura like clouds accompanied by lightning above the sun, king Naraka discharged at Krishna *Sakti* and *Sataghnis* and simultaneously pierced all the heroes. With sharpened shafts bearing variegated feathers the Divine elder brother of Gada sundered the arms, thighs, trunks and body of Bhouma's army and also the elephants and horses.

O thou descendant of Kuru race, descending from Garura which with its two wings slays elephants, the lord Sri Krishna first slew all the soldiers, and then with three sharpened arrows, shattered one by one all those weapons which were discharged by them. Having been assailed by the beaks, wings and nails of Garura, the elephants fled away from the field of battle. Only king Naraka still then continued fight-

ing. Beholding his elephants so assailed upon by Garura and fiying away, king Naraka struck Garura with that *sakti* by which even the thunder-bolt was baffled. Having been struck by that *sakti*, Garura did not even tremble like an elephant wounded by a garland of flowers. Then king Bhouma took up a mace to slay Achyuta; but his endeavour was baffled this time too, far before its discharge, Hari with his discus, sharp as a razor, sundered the head of king Naraka, who was seated on an elephant. That head of king Naraka adorned with coronet and ear-rings fell down on the earth and cast its splendour all around.

Thereupon the Rishis exclaimed with great delight saying,—"Ah! well done." The celestials showered down from heaven flowers upon the head of lord Sri Krishna and he was eulogised for his glorious deeds.

Thus approaching Sri Krishna, Bhumi (Earth) conferred upon him the two excellant ear-tings of Aditi brilliant like the flames of fire, Jambunada, the garland of Baijayanti the umbrella of Baruna and the mighty precious jewel. Then, O king, bowing unto him with folded hands, Earth (personified) hymned the lord of the universe worshipped by all the deities. (15—25).

The auspicious Earth said :—"Salutation unto thee, O the holder of the *Panchajanya* conch, discus and mace, O thou the Great soul, O thou that assumest forms at the desire of thy votaries.

"Salutations unto thee who possessest a lotus-navel, a lotus-garland, lotus-eyes and lotus-feet.

"Salutation unto thee who art the Divine Vasudeva, the Great Purusha, the Prime Cause of the universe, and the perfect knowledge.

"Salutation unto thee who art unborn, the procreator of all, the Brahman of endless energy, who art the soul of the mobile and immobile, O thou Great soul. O lord, for the purpose of creation, thou being obstructed hast created darkness, and for removing darkness thou hast created the sun. O lord of the universe, thou art Kala, Pradhana and the great Purusha. Thou art without a second. The earth, the water, the fire, air, earth, mind, the five *Tanmantras*, the celestials,

the senses, *Ahankara*, *Mahat* and other *Tattwas*, make up mobile and immobile world leading to misconceptions in human beings but they are in thee, O lord, who art but really one.

"O thou the redresser of sorrows of your refugees, this son of king Naraka (now dead at thy hand) is greatly afraid, and hath placed himself low at thy lotus-feet who art the remover of miseries. So do thou be pleased to protect him and place upon his head thy blissful hands removing all his sins." (25—31).

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king! having been thus eulogised by the humble Earth (Bhumi, the mother of king Naraka), and declaring safety unto them, lord Sri Krishna then entered into the prosperous capital city of Naraka (Bhouma). In that city Sri Krishna found sixteen thousand and one hundred daughters of the celestials, *Siddhas*, *Asuras* and kings, brought by force from them by king Naraka. Beholding Sri Krishna, the foremost of men. so entering the city, those captive ladies were charmed by his personal grace and in their mind thy elected him to be their desired-for husband, coming there as if by chance. Thereupon they addressed him saying :—

"May he be our husband, and may God approve of it." Thus, all those women separately consigned their minds unto Krishna.

Then lord Sri Krishna sent to Dwaraka in vehicles carried by men, all those beautiful women clad in pure raiments. He sent to Dwaraka also the treasury, chariots, steeds, vaulable properties and the six thousand mighty *Airavata* elephants having four tusks. He also sent other four thousand white elephants as presents to the Pandavas. (31—38).

Thereafter arriving at the region of Indra, the celestial king, Sri Krishna conferred upon his (Indra's) mother Aditi her ear-rings that were stolen away by king Naraka.

Then being ordered by the king and queen of the celestials, at the instigation of his wife Satyabhama, Sri Krishna unrooted the celestial flower plant, the celebrated *Parijata*. At this Indra and the other celestials protested, but Sri Krishna defeated Indra and the other celestials and carried away the *Parijata*

tree to Dwaraka on Garura's back. He planted that celestial flower-tree in the garden attached to Satyabhama's abode and thereby enhanced its beauty. Being attracted by the unique fragrance of the *Parijata* the black bees came there from the celestial region.

Thereupon in a moment assuming forms equal in number to that of the women who were released from Naraka's prison andbrought to Dwaraka and entering at the same time in their respective houses, the lord simultaneously espoused them all. Then being filled with his own delight and living at the same time in the houses of all women Sri Krishna sported with them like an ordinary householder. Having thus obtained as their husband the lord of Rama, whose course of action and will even Brahma and other deities cannot comprehend, those women with delightful hearts, attachments, smiles, looks and conversation, served him incessantly. Although there were hundreds of female servants, still as soon as Sri Krishna used to come, they rose up and reverentially offered him seat, water to wash his lotus-feet and betels, shampooed his feet, fanned him, gave him scents, garlands, dressed his hair, bathed him and thus served lord Sri Krishna with various other presents. (39—45).

CHAPTER LX

CONVERSATION BETWEEN SRI KRISHNA AND RUKMINI

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—One day Rukmini, in company of her mates, was fanning her lord, the preceptor of the universe (Sri Krishna) when he was lying comfortably on her bed. The unborn lord, who creates, preserves and destroys the universe merely at his sportive will, incarnated himself in the illustrious race of the Jadus to maintain the dignity of his glories.

O king! The abode of Rukmini was a unique one in its artistic excellence. The inner apartment of her abode was shining with the windows adorned with rows of pearls and jewelled lamps. The black-bees were humming on the full blown *Mullika* flowers. It was charming with the balmy beams of the moon and fragrant with the aroma of *Parijata* flowers

that entered through the barred net-works of the windows; and the apartment was further scented with the *Aguru* and incense issuing out of the room. Rukmini was then serving the preceptor of the world who was lying comfortably on an excellent milk-wite bed in the inner apartment. Taking from the hand of her maid-servants the *chowries* with jewelled red rods, Rukmini herself began to fan and serve her lord, who was the lord of the universe. At that time she was looking charming by the side of Achyuta. While she was engaged in fanning her lord, a rhythmic sound was produced by the jingling sound of her rings, bracelets and jewelled *Napuras*.

Beholding that beautiful damsel who sportively assumed a form befitting him, gifted with a countenance beautified with locks of hair and necklace, nectarine smiles and graceful gait, Sri Krishna delightfully and smilingly said as follows :—(1—9).

The auspicious lord said :—O princess ! Thou wert desired by graceful and high-minded kings gifted with beauty, nobleness and strength like the *Lokapalas*. Being offered by thy brother and father to one of those kings of Chedi or of other countries, who assembled there to obtain thee and were desirous of a mate, why didst thou renouncing even them elect me, who am not their equal ?

"O thou possessing beautiful eye-brows ! Being afraid of king Jarasandha, we have sought refuge near the ocean. Still those powerful kings are inimical towards us, and we have well-nigh forsaken the throne.

"O thou of fair eyes ! Resorting to a person who is not under the government of women, and whose conduct is beyond comprehension, women are generally disgusted. We are poor, and so we are always favourite unto the poor. The rich people generally do not seek us. Marriage or friendship between them who are in the same financial position, whose birth, prosperity, appearance, income and expenditure are the same, is the most desirable thing. Alliance between the rich and the poor is not at all good.

"O Baidarbhi ! Knowing this, thou, for want of foresight, hast elected me who am shorn of all qualities, and sought by poor people only. So, even now do thou seek one leading Kshatriya befitting thee, by which thou shalt attain happiness both in this world and in the next.

"O thou having high hips ! Chaidya, Jarasandha, Dantavakra, and such other kings and thy brother Rukmi are still my enemies. For humiliating them who are blinded with the pride of prowess and are puffed up, the energy of the impious ones has been brought down by me.

"O thou auspicious damsel ! We are all ascetics and we do not care for wife, children and wealth, and we are careless

about our own body. We are perfect like light for gaining our *Atman* (self)." (10—20).

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! Having said this to his beloved one and then finding her angry, Lord Sri Krishna, for humiliating her pride, became silent.

On hearing those unheard of and unpleasant words of her beloved lord Sri Krishna, who is the Lord of the lords of the three worlds, Rukmini became greatly alarmed and she wept. At that time her heart was trembling, as she was verily sticken with anxiety. Then striking the earth with her beautiful feet adorned with the beauty of her sun-like nails and bathing her breast, besmeared with *kumkuma*, with tears mixed with collyrium, Rukmini with her voice suppressed with grief, sat there with her looks cast down.

Her understanding having been sullied with sorrow, fear and grief, the bracelets of Rukmini's hands were loosened, and the fan fell down from her hands. Then she herself being overwhelmed, fell down with her hair dishevelled like a plantain tree assailed by wind. Beholding this pitiable condition of Rukmini, Lord Sri Krishna, with a compassionate heart felt pity for his sweet-heart who was unacquainted with the jokes of love. Then immediately getting down from the bedstead and taking her up, the four-armed deity arranged her hair and rubbed her countenance with his lotus hands.

O king! Lord Sri Krishna then embraced the chaste damsel, rubbing her eyes that were full of tears. Then the lord, the refuge of the pious and conversant with the art of consoling, compassionately consoled his wife Rukmini who was worthy of commiseration, whose mind was so violently agitated by jokes and who was unduly ridiculed. (21—28).

Thereupon the auspicious Lord said :—"O thou fair lady! Do not be offended with me. I know thee to be devoted unto me. Wishing to hear this from thy mouth I made this joke as also to see thy countenance with thy lips trembling in anger, with the sunny corners of thy eyes accompanied with glances and with charming eye-brows.

"O thou timid damsel! It is a great acquisition of the householders that they can spend their days in sports with their sweet-hearts."

The auspicious Sukadeva said:—O king! Being thus accosted by the Lord and then knowing his words to be jokes, Baidarbhi renounced her fear of being separated from her dear one. (29—32).

O Bharata! Looking at the face of her lord, with her bashful, smiling and charming eyes, she (Rukmini) addressed her lord, the foremost of men, saying as follows :

The auspicious Rukmini said :—"O thou having lotus-eyes! O lord! What thou hast said as there being no equal to thee is verily true; for while thou art, O lord, immersed in thy glories and the lord of the Trinity, I am worshipped by attribute-full Prakriti and by the ignorant.

"O thou of great prowess! Thou art the *Atman*, void of qualities and identical with all pervading consciousness. True it is that being afraid of the kings, thou art lying in the ocean of thy inner mind, Thou art always fighting with those who are worldly minded. Thy votaries renounce the royal thrones' in the shape of the quality of darkness.

"O lord! The inscrutable way of the ascetics serving the ambrosia of thy lotus-feet, is above the conception of beasts in human form.

"O thou Great One! While the actions of those who serve thee are super-human, what wonder that thy own actions shall be wonderful. Thou art not poor, because those persons who receive articles of food from others, bring them for thee. Persons blinded with the pride of wealth cannot recognise thee as the destroyer, and even those who eat offerings cannot know thee who art the foremost of them. Thou art that very fulfilment and *Paramatman* desiring whom the pious renounce everything.

"O Lord! Thy relationship with Brahma and others becomes thee only and not with man and woman who are attached to worldly happiness and miseries. Thy prowess has been recounted by ascetics who have left off their staffs.

Thou art the soul of the universe and the giver of soul as well. Even renouncing the lotus-born Deity (Brahma) and the king of heaven (Indra) having their auspiciousness sullied by the influence of Time (*Kala*) excited by thy prowess, I have elected thee, what to speak then of others. (33—38).

"O thou younger brother of Gada! Thou art like a lion taking his own food having driven away all other kings with the tremendous twang of thy *Saranga* bow. So thy words that thou hast, out of fear, taken refuge in the ocean are not proper.

"O thou possessing lotus-eyes! Anga, the jewel of kings, Prithu, Bharata, Jajati, Gaya and other kings, who desiring to have thee as their lord, entered the forest to have recourse unto thy feet, were not destroyed.

"O lord! Smelling the fragrance of thy lotus-feet capable of conferring emancipation and the refuge of Lakshmi, and disregarding them, what mortal woman out of her greed for wealth, can resort to another greatly coward man?

"O Lord of the universe! So I have got thee as my true match, identical with *Atman* and the fulfiller of desires both

in this world and in the next. Wandering in various species of creation I have taken refuge unto thy lotus-feet. (39—43).

"O Achyuta ! That woman into whose ears has not entered thy auspicious themes sung in the assembly of *Hara* (Siva) and Birinchi (Brahma) may select those kings who though being counselled by thee, behave in houses with their wives like asses, cows, dogs, cats and slaves. That foolish woman who has not smelt the ambrosia of thy lotus-feet considers this living carcass as her husband which is externally covered with skin, beards, nails and hair, and internally filled with flesh, bones, blood, worms, excreta, air and phlegm.

' O thou lotus-eyed ! Thou art delighted in thyself and thou art not unduly attached unto me. May my devotion grow unto thy lotus-feet, and when for multiplying the creation thou shalt, resorting to the quality of darkness, look at me, I shall consider it as a great favour.

"O thou slayer of Madhu ! I do not consider thy words as false. Of the daughters of the king of Kashi, Amba had attachment towards king Salya. The unchaste women even when they are married, would seek for new men. So the wise do not espouse them ; for if they do so they become thereby degraded both in this world and in the next.' (44—48).

The auspicious Lord Sri Krishna said :—"O thou chaste lady ! O princess ! To hear these words from thee, I cut jokes with thee ; what I said, thou hast repeated again. They are all true.

"O thou fair lady ! O thou auspicious damsel ! For satisfying thy desire, whatever desired-for objects thou shalt beg of me, thou shalt always obtain, because of thy devotedness unto me.

"O thou sinless one ! I now perceive thy love for and devotion unto thy husband. Because although agitated by my words, thy attachment to me was in no way shaken. Whoever shall, for nuptial happiness, either through asceticism or penances, adore me, who am the lord of emancipation, shall be possessed by my *Maya* (illusory will).

"O thou sensitive lady ! Obtaining me identical with emancipation, and prosperity, whoever renounces me, is worthy of mean birth on account of his worldly-mindedness. Alas ! he is very unfortunate.

"O thou greatly auspicious lady ! Thou being devoid of all desires, hast always served me. It is very hard for the wily and so also for the wicked-minded and deceitful women who are greatly fond of their own lives. (49—54).

"O thou honoured lady ! I have never seen a more loving damsel than thyself in any household, because at the time of thy marriage, disregarding all other numerous kings who assembled there, and hearing only of my accomplishments

thou didst send a Brahmana to me. We have been vanquished by thee, since remembering the disfigurement of thy brother at the time of the marriage, and also his destruction on another occasion in a party of gambling thou hast suffered the consequent grief in fear of my separation. Holding counsel in secret thou didst send an emmis-ary unto me for obtaining me, and seeing the world as vacant, thou didst make up thy mind to give up thy life. Let thy glorious qualities remain in thee as ever. We have been greatly pleased with thee."

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king! Being thus engaged in the happy conversation, and bewildering the world of men, the divine son of Devaki (Sri Krishna) began to sport with Rama and he lived in her abode performing there household duties like an ordinary householder in the houses of the women. (55—59).

CHAPTER LXI

THE DESTRUCTION OF RUKMI

The auspicious Sukadeva said :—O king ! Each of those wives of Sri Krishna gave birth to ten sons, all of whom bore exact resemblance to their father. Beholding Achyuta always present in their respective houses, each of those princesses the wives of Sri Krishna, considered herself the most favourite. Being charmed by the beautiful countenance, resembling lotus petals, long arms, long drawn eyes, sweet looks accompanied by lovely smiles, and charming words of the supreme Lord (Sri Krishna), his wives could not, however, conquer his mind by their gaits. With sidelong looks accompanied by secret smiles with their charming eye-brows bespeaking their desire, by the shafts of Cupid, and various other gestures, those sixteen thousand wives of Sri Krishna could not agitate his mind. Having obtained that husband of *Rama* (Lakshmi) whose course even Brahma and others could not comprehend, as their lord, those damsels began to see him with delighted hearts and attachment and adored him with various gestures bespeaking of their anxiety for having amorous sports with the lord. They began to serve their lord with welcome, comfortable seat, due respect, washing his feet, offering betels, fanning him, giving him scents, and garlands, dressing his hair, arranging his bed, bathing him, and with various other presents. They personally did these things for their lord even though each of them had one hundred maids at their command. (1—6).

O king ! Of those wives of Krishna who gave birth to ten sons each, and of whom I spoke before, eight were the queens of Krishna. I shall now recount the progeny of the Lord,

such as Pradyumna and others. The powerful Hari begat on Rukmini nine other sons besides Pradyumna. Those nine sons were named Charudeshna, Sudeshna, Charudeha, Sucharu, Charugupta, Bhadrahari, Charuchandra, Bicharu and Charu.

Similarly Lord Sri Krishna begat on Satyabhama ten sons. These ten sons were named Bhanu, Subhanu, Sharbhanu, Prabhanu, Bhanuman, Chandrabhanu, Brihadbhanu, Atibhanu, Bibhanu and Pratibhanu.

The Lord also begat on his wife Jamvaubati ten sons who all resembled their sire in all respects, and these ten sons of the Lord were named Samba, Sumitr Purujit, Satajit, Sahasrajit, Bijaya, Chitraketu, Basuman, Dravina and Kratu.

On his wife Nagnajiti, Sri Krishna begat ten sons who were named as Bira, Chandra, Asvasena, Chitragu, Vegaban, Brisha, Ama, Sanku, Basu and Kunti. These ten sons of Nagnajiti were exceedingly graceful.

Lord Sri Krishna also begot on *Kalinda* ten mighty sons who were named Suka, Kavi, Brisha, Subahu, Bhadra, Ekala, Santi, Darsha, Purnamasha and Somaka.

On his wife named Madri, Lord Sri Krishna begat ten sons namely, Praghosha, Gatravan, Sinha, Vala, Pravala, Urdhaga, Mahasakti, Saha, Oja and Aparajita.

On Mitrabinda, Sri Krishna begat ten sons. These ten sons of the Lord were named, Brika, Harsha, Amla, Gridha, Bababanna, Annada, Mahangsha, Pavana, Balini and Kshudi.

Sri Krishna also begat on Bhadra ten sons by the name of Sangramjit, Brihatsena, Sura, Praharana, Arijit, Joya, Subhadra, Bama, Ayu and Satyaka.

Besides the above the Lord Sri Krishna begat on Rohini many sons headed by Diptiman and Tamratapta.

O king Parikshit! Pradyumna, the son of Sri Krishna, begat on Rukmavati the highly powerful Aniruddha. This Rukmavati was the daughter of Rukmi, the king of Bhojakata, who is the brother of Rukmini. O king! Unto this Pradyumna, Aniruddha, and other sons and grandsons of Sri Krishna were born crores of sons and grandsons. The mothers of the sons of Sri Krishna were sixteen thousand. (7—19).

Thereupon the auspicious king Parikshit said:—O Brahmana! Although defeated by Krishna, Rukmi was waiting for an opportunity to kill him. Why then did Rukmi confer his own daughter, Rukmavati, upon his enemy's son! Do thou relate unto me truly how a marriage of this sort was contracted between the two contending parties! The

Yogins can see the past, future and present, the objects beyond the perception of senses, and those near and distant.

The auspicious Sukadeva said in reply :—O king! Although insulted by Sri Krishna, and even remembering the enmity, to satisfy his sister, Rukmi had conferred his own daughter named Rukmavati upon his sister's son (nephew) Pradyumna. The very formless *Kama* (the god of love) assuming the body of the mighty car-warrior Pradyumna, and being selected by Rukmavati in *Swyamvara* slew all the assembled kings and stole her away.

O king! Vali, the son of Kritavarma, had espoused Rukmini's daughter Charumati, who was possessed of spacious eyes. Although having enmity with Lord Sri Hari, to satisfy his sister, Rukmi conferred his own grand-daughter Rochana by name upon her grandson Aniruddha. Even though he knew such marriage alliances to be sinful, he had them performed being tied by the noose of affection. On this occasion of the wedding, Rukmini, Balarama, Krishna, Samba, Pradyumna and others went to the city of Bhojakata. The wedding ceremony having been over, all the kings headed by that of Kalinga were elated with pride and prowess and advised Rukmi saying :—

"Do thou now defeat Balarama in a game of dice. He is not expert at dice Therefore, O king, mighty defeat certainly shall overtake him." (20—27).

O king! Having been thus accosted, that king Rukmi invited Balarama and began to play at dice with him. Balarama made bet for hundred thousands and *ajutas* and Rukmi always defeated him after some time. At this the king of of Kalinga laughed aloud displaying his teeth which Halayudha could not bear.

Thereafter Rukmi made a bet for a lakh of rupees, but at this time Balarama became victorious, but Rukmi resorting to deceit cried saying ;—"I am victorious." Then being agitated by anger like the swelling of ocean in tides having his eyes reddened with rage and displaying his prowess, the mighty Balarama made a bet for a crore and continued the play. This time too Balarama defeated Rukmi really. But the latter again resorting to deceit said ;—"I am victorious, let all these people who are around us declare." Thereupon a voice from the sky was heard, announcing :—"In truth Rukmi has been defeated by Balarama. What Rukmi has said is false."

Then disregarding the voice from heavens, under the instigation of wicked kings and his own destiny, Rukmi ridiculing Sankarshana (Balarama) said ;—' Ye are cow-herds ranging in forests. Ye do not know game at dice. The kings only play with arrows and dice. What do ye know of this ?"

Having been thus remonstrated by Rukmi and also being ridiculed by other wicked kings, Balarama could no longer control himself. Being greatly enraged and uplifting Parigha, Balarama killed that king Rukmi in the midst of the auspicious assembly. Then proceeding ten footsteps and holding the king of Kalinga with great force he extracted his teeth out of his mouth, displaying which he had ridiculed Balarama.

After that other kings also being assailed by Balarama with the Parigha and having their arms, thighs and heads sundered, and besmeared with blood, fled away in great fear.

O king ! His own brother-in-law Rukmi having been thus slain, Krishna, lest his love might be shattered, said nothing good or bad, either to Balarama or to Rukmini. Thereupon Balarama and other dependants of the slayer of Madhu, having all their desires accomplished and achieved made Aniruddha with his newly married wife sit on an excellent car, and repaired happily from Bhojakata to Kushasthali. (28—40).