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BHASA

(Indian Men of Letters Series)

BY

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(I'elloiv of the Royal Variety of Literature of the United Kingdom)

THE MADRAS LAW JOURNAL OFFICE
MYLAPORE, MADRAS
1942

TO BHASA.

] bow to thee, oh Bhasa,
Master of ev'ry *rasa*!
Gods, demons, men, animals
And things come in your annals.
Vows, Visions and Embassies,
Stern Duty, Love's Ecstasies,
Eerie deeds of babe and youth,
Glorious acts of Gift and Faith,
All, all, are found in your Plays
Which shine with a thousand rays !
Nature's beauties you know full well,
The human heart you've plumbed aright.
Your vivid descriptions ring true,
Your figures of speech are so new!
Of life in its full flow you tell,
And of Right's triumph over Mlgru.
Great poet, greater dramatist,
Who can forget your words and scenes?
Things sweet and sad, supreme artist,
Grip us, aged or in our teens.

A. S. P. AYYAR.

PREFACE

Encouraged by the warm reception given to my book "Two Plays of Bhasa" by renowned scholars, like Drs. Sukthankar, Pusalker, Dandekar, and others, as well as by the general public and critics, I have taken in hand this book, the first in the Indian Men of Letters series. I crave the indulgence of readers and critics for this new venture. My one idea has been to make Bhasa, one of the greatest of India's dramatists, familiar to ihe English-speaking world, and, by translations of this book into various modern Indian languages (already taken in hand by enthusiastic friends), to Indians unacquainted with Sanskrit. Those who want to read Bhasa's plays in detail in English are referred to the excellent translation in two volumes by Woolner and Sarup. (Thirteen Trivandrum Plays Attributed to Bhasa. Oxford University Press). Pusalker's Bhas*a A Study."* (Mchcr Chand Laehhman Das—Lahore) is a learned book well worth a perusal. For a good English translation of *Svapnavasavadatta,* in many respects the best of the Plays, readers are recommended Dr. Sukthankar's line translation into prose, and, if I may do so, my own translation, in prose and verse, the *Two Plays of Bhasa.*

If this book will create a living interest in Bhasa and India in the English-speaking world, and will make Indians themselves acquainted with this great dramatist and his Plays, 1 shall consider myself amply compensated for this labour of love.

A, S. P. AYYAR.

CONTENTS.

PACK.

Preface v

PART I.

P>HASA RE-DISCOVERED 1

CHAP.

1. Who is Bhasa? 3
II. The Re-discovery of his Plays 7
III. Are the 13 Trivandrum Plays Bhasa's? 11
IV. The chronology of the Plays so far discovered . 15

PART 11.

BHASA'S PLAYS 17

I. Dutavakya 19
IP Karnabhara 24
III. Madyamavyayoga 28
IV. Balacharita 34
V. Abhisheka Nataka 41
VI. Pancharatra . ' 51
VII. Dutaghatotkacha 62
VIII. Urubhanga 66
IX. Avimaraka 71
X. Pratima Nataka 87
XI. Pratijna Yaugandharayana . 112
' XII. Svapnavasavadatta . 126
XIII. Charudatta . 147

PART IIP

THE GREATNESS OF BHASA . 167

General . 169

I. Vast Range of Plays . 169
II. The Infinite Variety of Characters . 177
1. Gods and Goddesses . 178
2. Demons and Demonesses . 185
3. Kings and Princes . 188

ChAp PACK.

4. Queens and Princesses 109
5. Ministers 207
6. 1 leroe.s and I leroines 215
7. Villains and Villainesses 2V)
8. Jesters 220
9 Chamberlains 225
10. Minor Characters 227
1 1. Animals and Birds 232
12. Inanimate Things 232

111. The *Xuivrasus* in Lhasa 233
1\. \i\id descriptions of Natural Phenomena 252
V. Profound Psychological Insight 255
VI. Striking !• inures of Speech 261
VII. Xi^nelles from Life 266
VIII. 0ther (Greal Oualilies 274
IX. Some Defects 278

PART IV.

Ln\s\ TIM- M\\- Ilis Ini-\s AND 1 DIALS 281

I. Lhasa 'Idle Man 283
II. 1 lis Ideas and Ideals 281
111. Comparison with kalidasa 292
IV. Bhasa Message for Modern india 291

PART I

BHASA RE-DISCOVERED.

CHAPTER I

WHO IS BHASA?

Kalidasa's Reference.—Bhasa was an old and famous dramatist even by the days of Kalidasa who lived at Ujjaini, most probably in the fourth century A.D., in the court of Chandragupta Vikramaditya. In his *Malavikagnimitra,* which shows clear traces of copying of the plot of *Svapnavasavadatta,* Kalidasa refers to Bhasa, Saumila and Kaviputra (Ramila, the brother of Saumila) as glorious poets of old, and, in his *Sakuntala,* refers to his own work as new. This Saumila and his brother Ramila (or Kaviputra) are reputed to have lived in the 1st century A.D., and to have written *"Sudrakakatha"* and *"Manipmbha",* both not extant now. As Bhasa is put before Saumila, he must have been a dramatist, who lived long before the 1st century A.D. Of course, 'Bhasa' is only the name of a gotra (a branch of the Agastyagotra) like Tatanjali', 'Yaugandharayana', etc.

Contest with Vyasa.—In a commentary on the *Prithvi-rajavijaya* of Jayanaka, Bhasa and the great sage Veda Vyasa, of *Mahabltarata* fame, are said to have disputed as to who was the better writer. Each threw one chosen work into the fire, and Bhasa's *Vishnu Dharma* is said to have come out of it unscathed, while Vyasa's book was burnt. Unfortunately, men have not been able to preserve what the elements spared, and Bhasa's *Vishnu Dharma* is not discovered yet, though, I am sure, it will be one day, like the *Arthasastra,* and, indeed, all the thirteen plays so far discovered. The very tradition of Bhasa's contest with Vyasa shows his hoary antiquity.

Asvaghosha's Borrowing.—Asvaghosha, the famous poet id dramatist at Kanishka's court, has, in his *Buddha Charita,* iearly imitated Verse 18[1] in Act I of *Yaugandharayana's Vows.* o, Bhasa was far earlier than Asvaghosha who almost certainly 'ed not later than the first century, A.D.

Sudraka's Taking Over.—This is also clear from the fact lat Sudraka, who too lived in the first century A.D., has based his famous play *Mrichchhakatika* on Bhasa's *Charudatta.*

iFire is got ev'n from wood by constant churning.
Water is got from earth by patient digging:
Nothing's impossible for men of daring
Who go the proper way, ever succeeding!

Kautalya's Quotation.—Kautalya, who almost certainly wrote his *Arthasastra* in the fourth century B.C., quotes in it Verse 2[1] of Act IV of *Yaugandharayana's Vows.* So, Bhasa was evidently a senior contemporary of Kautalya, something like Tagore being a senior contemporary of Gandhi, and belonged to the fourth century B.C., and lived in the days of Chandragupta Maurya.

Clearly of the Maurya Age.—This is also clear from the frequent references to the Moon (Chandra) saved from Rahu (Rakshasa, Nanda's premier), to Rajasimha, or lion among kings, a title suggested for Chandragupta in the *Mudrarakshasa,* and probably adopted by the Mauryas in general, as is likely from the spirited lions of Sanehi Tope. It is further probabilized from the description of Rajasimha as ruling all the country between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, and from sea to sea, an accurate account of Chandragupta's dominions in the early years of his rule. Yaugandharayana is evidently intended to represent covertly Bhasa's own contemporary, Chanakya, and his famous vow, his fighting the Nandas, being helped by a *sramanaka,* Jeevasiddhi, really his own man in disguise, making Chandragupta capture Pataliputra, filling that city with spies, and his making him marry Durdhara for political reasons, just as Padmavati is married for similar reasons. The description of Yaugandharayana as a cloud, with the moon showing through, applies aptly to Chanakya, the dark southerner, and to Chandragupta. Mahasena may covertly allude to Poros, and his Nalagiri, to Poros's famous elephant.[2] The constant prayers to keep the foreign invaders out obviously refer to the invasions of Alexander the Great and Seleukos. The prayer for the protection of the cows also shows the hold that the *Vrishala* civilisation of the Mauryas had on Bhasa. Ravana, in the *Pratima,* suggests the sacrifice of a cow or the golden deer.at Dasaratha's *shraddha,* and Rama prefers the latter.

Bana's Tribute.—Bana refers to Bhasa in his *Harshacharita* as follows: "Bhasa gained as much fame, by his plays, beginning with benedictory verses spoken by the stage-directors, and containing numerous and varying characters and stirring episodes, as he would have done by the erection of *temples* con. structed by famous architects with several stories and banners." This shows that Bhasa wrote many plays with several acfe (stories) and banners (interludes and preludes), that these plays

[1] He who eats his master's food and will not fight
For him, let that wretch ne'r get holy water
With its coat of sacred *darbha* grass, or sight
Of Heaven, but go straight to Hell, the rotter.

[2] Please see my *Three Men of Destiny* for further parallels.

began with verses spoken by Stage-Directors, and were full of a holy and religious atmosphere (like the *Abhisheka, Pratima, Balacharita, Dutavakya,* etc., as the comparison is to *temples,* and not to *palaces* or *dance-halls),* that they were famous even in Bana's days, and that they had numerous characters. This will effectively dispose of the opinions of some critics that no Sanskrit dramatist was allowed to write more than three plays, a rule which evidently came into force only far later than Bhasa's days.

Another early Tribute.—In *Avanti Sundari Katha,* of the 7th or 8th century A.D., there is the following passage:—"Bhasa is living through his dramas which constitute, as it were, his body, which has assumed so many different forms in his plays." This clearly shows that Bhasa wrote a number of plays, and the reference will fit in with the thirteen plays discovered so far. Tn fact, there may be an allusion in that passage to the fine scene in *Dutavakya,* where the body of Vasudeva assumed various forms, and Vasudeva lived in all those different forms, thereby showing that *Dutavakya* was known to be a play of Bhasa.

Critics Test by Fire.—Kajasekhara, from Maharashtra, says, in his *Suktimuktavali,* "When critics subjected Bhasa's *cycle of plays* to the test of lire, the fire did not burn the *Svapnq."* This also shows that Bhasa wrote a number of plays, and that *Svapnavasavadatta* was considered to be the best among them. *Svapnavasavadatta* is certainly the best among the thirteen plays discovered so far.

Further References.—Abhinavagupta, from Kashmir, refers to the *"krida"* (most probably the ball game which we find in Act II) in *"Svapnavasavadatta"* So too, Saradatanaya, in his discussion of the entire plot of a *Szmpna Nataka* in his *Bhavaprakasa,* seems to refer only to this play. Bhoja Deva, in his *Sringaraprakasa,* has mentioned some incidents from a *Svapna Nataka* which must refer only to the scene in the Ocean Pavilion in Act V of our *Svapnavasavadatta.* Sarvananda also refers to *Svapnavasavadatta,* though, by some textual error, it is described as a drama of the *Kama Sringara* type (love marriage) instead of a drama of the *Arthasringara* type (political marriage). Even if there is no textual error, it may be that the reference to *Kama Sringara* is to Vasavadatta's marriage with Udayana, about which there are copious references in this play, which marriage, of course, was of the *Kama Sringara* type. Ramachandra and Gunachandra have, in their *Natyadarpana,* mentioned *Svapnavasavadatta,* specifically, as a play by Bhasa, and have referred to the *scphalika* flowers and the stone bench found in Act IV, Sagaranandin appears to iraVe,

summarised the Prelude to Act I of this Play, **though in** his **own** words. Vamana has quoted verse 3 in Act IV of *Svapnavasava-datta* in his *Kavyalankarasutrazritta.*

Bhamaha's reference to Pratijna Yaugandharayana.—Bhamaha attacks, as contrary to commonsense, Udayana's mistaking the artificial elephant for a real one, and Mahasena's troops, many of whom Udayana had killed, leaving Udayana unkilled, despite some of the slain being their brothers, sons, fathers, uncles, etc. Of course, Bhamaha's criticism, though it refers to *"Yangandharayanas Vows",* is pointless. A clumsy wooden elephant, with a covering of leather, will not deceive any one, but a cleverly made elephant, something like a model in Madame Tassaud's, can easily deceive even experts, especially when masked by a herd of real elephants. So, too, when Mahasena wanted Udayana to be captured alive, to bow to him, there is nothing unnatural in his minister Salankayana's intervening and preventing his troops from killing him. In those days, the king's commands prevailed over the subjects' likes and dislikes. Bhamnha appears to have been a pedantic critic, asking too .much from human nature, and believing implicitly, in the supposed logical workings of the human mind. He would have rejected the story of the Wooden Horse of Troy, and would have been surprised at Xapoleon's not being killed by the British when he sought refuge in the *Bcllcrophonc* after killing so many relatives of the Knglish soldiers.

References to several other plays.—*Sakuntavyakhya,* a work of the 14th century, quotes from *Charudatta, Lhttaghatot-kacha, • Paucharatra, BalacJiarlta, Svapnavasavadatla* and *Avimaraka.* The very words from the Prelude to Act I of *S'Vapavasavadatta* are quoted therein.

Anthologies.—Ancient Anthologies quote fifteen verses from Bhasa's plays, without mentioning the plays from which they are extracted.

Thus, we have references to Bhasa and his works from writers coming from Kashmir, Nepal, Malwa, Magadha, Bengal, (iujarat, Kathiawar, Mahrashtra and Madras. All are agreed in describing him as an immortal poet and dramatist,

How Many Plays Did He Write?—One tradition has.it that Bhasa wrote 23 plays, and another that he wrote 30 plays. There is nothing very surprising in this, seeing thajt Shakespeare wrote 37 plays. Of course, the large number was, as in the ease. of Shakespeare, due to some portions **of the plays being written by others, either colleagues or disciples.**

CHAPTER II

THE DISCOVERY .OF THIRTEEN OF HIS PLAYS

Mysterious Disappearance.—Most mysteriously, the great plays of Bhasa were completely lost to the world for several centuries past, like Kautalya's Arthasastra and other great works.

Probable Reason.—The reason was perhaps the pre-occupation with foreign invasions and internal anarchy which left little time for the Hindus to read any but their most favourite books, namely, the Vedas, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Dharmasastras, and Kalidasa's plays. Bhasa's ideas had already become strange, the gods and devils in his plays representing ancient and superseded ones, and his simple theological faith and optimism not appealing so much to the Puranic Hindus with their complicated faith founded on various systems of philosophy, and tinged with pessimism.

Ganapati Sastri's great find.—In 1909, Mahamaho-padhyaya Ganapati Sastri found the manuscripts of *Svapna-vasavadatta, Pratijnayaugandharayana, Pancharatra, Charudatta, DutagJiatotkacha, Avimaraka, Balacharita, Madhyamavyayoga, Karnabhara,* and *Urubhanga,* besides a fragment of *Dutavakya,* in a palm leaf manuscript in the Manalikkara Matham near Padmanabhapuram, some 20 miles from Cape Comorin, the Land's End of India. There were 105 leaves, with ten lines in each page, written in old Malayalam characters. The manuscript appeared to be some 300 years old.

Further finds.—It was a red letter day for Sanskritists. The great Ganapati Sastri discovered the excellence and ancient nature of the dramas. He undertook another tour, and recovered, from one Govinda Pisharoti, an astrologer of Kailasapuram, near Kaduthurutti, manuscripts of *Abhisheka Nataka* and *Pratima Nataka,* finding similar copies, to his surprise, in the Trivandrum Palace library itself. These two plays too were found in palm leaf manuscripts, and in old Malayalam characters. Pandit Anantacharya of Mysore supplied Pandit Ganapati Sastri with two complete copies of *Svapna* and *Pratijna* which he had got from Kerala. Further manuscripts were got from Krishna Tantri of Thazhaman Matham in Chengannur. A manuscript of *Avimaraka* and *Dutavakya* was got by Mr. Sastri from Mr. Subrahmanyan Muttatu of Puttiyal. Despite the best efforts of Pandit Ganapati Sastri, he could not get any manuscript completing *Charudatta,* which ends abruptly in the middle, and is obviously incomplete, or continuing *KarnabJiara* which too ends abruptly, though it might have been intentionally **left** so. So, **he** had to take it that the dramatist left them like -Aat.

YAJNAPHALA

An unsustainable claim.—In 1941, Pandit Kalidas Sastri brought out a play called *"Yajnaphala"* from Gondal in Kathiawar, claiming it to be a genuine play of Bhasa, and basing its text on . two manuscripts in Devanagari, one copied by Swami Suddhananda Tirtha in 1727 V.E. (1670 A.D.) and another by Devaprasada Sarma at Hastinapura in 1859 V,E. (1802 A.D.). It is based on the *Balakanda* of *Ramayana.* It glorifies Vedic sacrifices and penances. Sons are born to Dasaratha owing to his *Yajna* (sacrifice) ; Viswamitra becomes a *Brahmarishi* owing to his *Yajna;* and Rama marries Sita owing to Janaka's *Yajna.* Rural, urban and forest life in the *asramas* are all depicted well. But, in spite of this play-s showing many of the characteristics of the 13 plays discovered by Ganapati Sastri, like the paranomasiac invocatory verse after Nandi, the linguistic peculiarities, wrong sandhis, weak endings, special meanings, exhibition on the stage of things forbidden by Bharata, broad humour like the jester's jokes about *modakas,* prayers for the success of cows, Brahmans and *Varnasramadharma,* and reference to Rajasimha ruling the land between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, it does not appear to me to be a genuine Bhasa play, as the language is very much inferior, the slokas are far too many, and of a depressingly average type, the *Anushtubh* form is far more common, there is much obvious borrowing from Kalidasa's *Sakuntala,* etc., the clandestine love-making of Rama and Sita are more reminiscent .of *Dasakumaracharita* than of Bhasa, and the plot does not fit in with the details of the known plays, *Abhishcka* and *Pratima.* I consider this play to be centuries later, than the thirteen Trivandrum Plays, and probably written in the 11th or 12th century A.D. For the sake of curious readers, I annex the .following brief summary of its plot.

Its summary.—It has seven Acts. The first Act shows a festival in progress for celebrating the birthday of the four sons of Dasaratha. Sumantra distributes lavish gifts. An order is passed to release all prisoners from the jails. But, Dasaratha finds no one in bonds, except himself in bonds of love towards his sons! He realises the responsibility of training his sons properly. He also feels uneasy about his promise to Kaikeyi, at the time of her marriage, to make her son king.

' . The second Act shows Dasaratha consulting Sumantra and the' Queens, secretly in the palace gardens, as to who should be crowned. The chamberlain is asked to keep all others out. The f/iaifjs, coming .to gather flowers, are kept out by the chamberlain, Da'saratha wantS to make Rama crown prince. All the queens agree when told, about the promise to make her son king, Kaikeyi 'says! that Rama alone deserves to *be* crowned because of

his extraordinary virtues, and ability to rule the kingdom. The queens then go away to their palaces, promising to tell their sons in the evening.

The third Act shows Ravana entering Ayodhya to do some mischief to Rama about whose prowess he has heard. Kubera, under orders from Indra, sends his *gandharvas* to take care of Rama. Viswamitra also comes there to search for a student, Athibala, and finds that Rama would make an even better pupil to teach the famous *Jhrumbhakastra.* Ravana, who makes himself invisible by magic, finds Viswamitra entering. He and Viswamitra both remain invisible. Vasishta comes with the four princes. Viswamitra and Ravana watch the four princes discharging their arrows, each thinking that he is. invisible to the other! They catch Rama's arrows. In fury at this repeated obstruction, Rama threatens to discharge the *Agneya Astra.* Ravana runs away at its very mention. Rama is persuaded by his brothers not to discharge it, as there are some women at some distance. Manthara and other maids come, then, and gather flowers in the vicinity. Finding the arrow-marks on trees, and the trace of chariots, they run away. Seeing the girls run away in fright, the four princes go to reassure them. Then, Vasishta tells them about the arrival of Ravana and Viswamitra. He asks Rama to treat Viswamitra with respect, and tells him that Viswamitra will request Dasaratha to send him with him the next day to aid him against the demons.

The fourth Act shows the palace bards quarrelling about their skill as musicians. They also discuss about the qualities of Viswamitra as a Kshatriya and as a Brahman. Viswamitra enters the palace and is received with honour by Dasaratha and Sumantra. He enquires of Vasishta about the learning, skill and accomplishments of the princes, and tests Rama himself, and is pleased with his modest and intelligent replies. He emphasises the need for a deeper practical course in archery, and asks Dasaratha to send Rama and Lakshmana with him, to protect his sacrifice from the molestations of demons, and promises to teach *Jhrumbhakastra* to Rama. Dasaratha agrees, on Vasishta's supporting the request.

The Interlude to the fifth Act shows a discussion among Viswamitra's disciples as to why his sacrifices are obstructed. It is said that Viswamitra, being a Non-Brahman promoted as a Brahman, the Brahmans have stirred up the Rakshasas, headed by Ravana, to obstruct his sacrifices, and make him waste his acquired Brahmanical powers in curses. Viswamitra is said to have guessed this and got Rama, a Kshatriya, to fight the Rakshasas, after teaching him the use of all the rare *astras* he knows. Rama is taught the rare *astras* by Viswamitra, i hen

he defeats the demons, Maricha, Subahu and others. Viswamitra praises his valour and courage. He also casually tells him of his approaching fight with Ravana to protect *Dharma.* He praises the virtues of forest and country life, with their contentment, and condemns town life with its manifold vices. Then he takes the two princes to Mithila to attend Janaka's sacrifice there, promising some extraordinary benefit, as *Yajnaphala,* or fruit of sacrifice, meaning the acquisition of Sita for Rama.

The sixth Act shows the servants, deputed by Janaka to attend on Viswamitra, discussing the meeting of Rama and Sita in a garden, and their falling in love with each other at first sight. Rama and Sita try to meet each other again, and Janaka and Viswamitra encourage this. Rama meets Sita again, and learns from her maid about Janaka's vow to give Sita in marriage to the person who bends Siva's bow. Janaka comes there suddenly, and Rama runs away! Sita salutes Janaka who fixes up a day for the bending of the bow, believing Viswamitra's word that Rama will bend it.

The seventh Act shows the marriage of Rama and Sita in the presence of Janaka, Dasaratha, etc. Parasuraina comes there suddenly, on hearing the thundering noise of the bow breaking, and is very angry with Rama for it. Janaka, Vasishta, Viswamitra and others pacify him. He finally recognises Rama as Maha Vishnu, gives him his bow, gives the fruits of his penance to those assembled there, and goes away to the forests to earn immortal bliss.

The meeting of the lovers, Rama and Sita in secret, the Brahman-Non-Brahman controversy, the comparison of town and country life, Parasurama's advent at the marriage itself, and several other factors show the play to be, like *Unmada-vasavadatta,* one written in the 11th or 12th century A.D., the time of the romantic *Kathasaritsagara, Vikramankacharita,* etc. One joke, so perfectly modelled on Bhasa as to be mistaken as genuine, is worth reproducing: —

The Jester asks Sumantra for a gift. "What gift would you like?" asks Sumantra.

"Modakas"[1] is the reply.

"How many can you manage?" asks the minister.

"What is a *MaharathaV* asks the jester.

"He who can, single-handed, deal with ten thousand men" replies Sumantra.

"I am a *maharatha* as regards *modakas"* replies the jester

i Sweets made of rice, jaggery and cocoanut.

"What! Can you eat ten thousand *modakas?"* asks Sumantra.

"Does a *maharatha* kill ten thousand men?" asks the jester.

"Oh, no. He kills some, drives away some, and captures some and keeps them with him" says Sumantra.

"So too, I eat some, throw away some, and take some and keep them with me" says the jester.

Readers will, of course, remember the *modaka* episode in Act ITI of *Pratijna,* from which the author of this Play seems to have got the idea for this joke.

CHAPTER III.

ARE THE 13 TRIVANDRUM PLAYS BHASA'S?

Fierce **controversy.**—Ever since the discovery of the Trivandrum plays, there has been a fierce controversy as to whether they are the genuine plays of Bhasa, a few, like Dr. Pusalker,[1] giving their votes in favour of their genuineness, many, like Messrs. Pisharoti, Raja, Devadhar, and even Winternitz, casting their votes against their genuineness, and some, like Dr. Sukthanker, holding a few plays, like *Pratijna* and *Svapna* alone, to be genuine, and deferring judgment regarding the rest.

Not creations of **Chakkiyars.**—Some critics regard the plays as the creations of *Chakkiyars,* the actors on the Kerala stage. I cannot agree with them at all, I am satisfied that none of these thirteen plays could have been creations or compilations of the *Chakkiyars.*

Countries, Towns', Rivers and **Rulers, all** of **North India.**—These plays deal with countries like Anga, Avanti, Uttarakuru, Kambhoja, Kasi, Kuntibhoja, Kuru, Kurujangala, Kosala, Gandhara, Magadha, Matsya, Madra, Mithila, Vanga, Vatsa and Videha, and cities like Ayodhya, Kampilya, Kausambi, Rajagriha, Ujjain and Vairantya, and do not mention at all the Chola, Chera, Kerala, Pandya, Pallava, Ganga, Karnataka or other southern kingdoms, or Kanchi, Tanjai, Vanji or Madura or other famous southern towns, and, so, could not have been written by the *Chakkiyars,* who could not have also known about Darsaka or Pradyota. Only the rivers Ganges, Jumna and Narmada are mentioned in the plays, and not the Godavari, Krishna or Kaveri, another argument against the theory of the *Chakkiyar* origin.

Society Patriarchal.—The plays too show the usual patriarchal society with women leaving their parents' homes on marriage, women wearing veils, etc., all alien to Kerala.

i See his excellent book "Bhasa: A Study."

Plays of calibre beyond that of Chakkiyars.—Nor were the *Chakkiyars* men of such calibre as could have produced any of the thirteen plays. The claim that the *Chakkiyars* have written or compiled several such plays has not been substantiated by ihe production of any similar series, or, indeed, of a single play of merit comparable to any of these. All credit to the *Chakkiyars* who preserved these masterpieces of Bhasa in Malayalam alphabet so carefully and lovingly, and with so little omission or addition, and enabled the Mahamahopadhyaya to discover them and earn the eternal gratitude of all lovers of Sanskrit and good literature! Let it not be taken away by the contention of over-zealous critics that these care-takers constructed the temples!

All the 13 are Genuine Plays of Bhasa.—I am satisfied that all these thirteen plays are genuine plays of Bhasa, though there is reason to suppose that Bhasa himself wrote only *Svapnavasavadatta* and *Pratijna Yaugandharayana completely,* judging by the uniform excellence exhibited therein, and that his disciples and coadjutors wrote portions of the other plays, which show the hand of the master only in parts, just as *Pericles, Timon of Athens, Antony and Cleopatra, Henry IV, Henry VIII* and other plays show Shakespeare's hand only in parts, the remaining parts being written by his disciples. Of course, in olden days, great masters, whether in drama or in painting, were not very particular, like the moderns, in keeping their works distinct, and allowed disciples to join with them, just as they freely re-wrote or re-touched their disciples' works. Thus, Shakespeare allowed Kyd, Fletcher, Marlowe and Massinger to write portions of some of the plays attributed to him.

Common characteristics.—I shall briefly touch on the main common characteristics found in these plays, referring the readers who want detailed information to Dr. Pusalker's excellent book "Bhasa—A study."

Beginning with Verse after Nandi.—All these plays, except Charudatta, begin after the *Nandi* (opening), with a benedictory verse uttered by the *Sutradhara* or Stage-Director.

Preludes and Interludes.—The preludes and interludes are brief, and are cleverly used to tell the audience what has occurred between the Acts.

Epilogues.—The *Bharatavakyam* (epilogue) in all the plays, where it exists, has the same common sentiments, namely, the desire that the king, usually styled Rajasimha, and said to be ruling from the Himalayas to the Vindhyas, and from sea to sea, should conquer the whole world (meaning India) and repel all foreign invasions, that the *dharma* of each caste and man should be protected, and that QQWS and good men should be rendered Hippy,

Bharata's Rules not observed.—The rules laid down by Bharata regarding dramas are broken in several respects. Deaths, duels, and battles are shown on the stage; water is brought on the stage for ablutions, or worship, or making vows, or even to wash a tear-stained face, as in *Svapnavasavadatta.* . .

Words with peculiar meanings.—Some words like "Arya-putra", are given, in many of the plays, meanings quite different from those given in Bharata's *Natyasastra.*

"Go and Return" Device.—Rapid progress in action is secured by making some characters 'go and return* without any intervening progress in the play.

Akasabhashita.—Frequent recourse is had to *akasabha-shita,* that is, a kind of monologue in which a person on the stage speaks or replies to persons not on the stage, or hears super-natural voices, as in *Avimaraka.*

Descriptions of Events.—Clever use is made of narrations of captures, battles, duels, etc., by angels or Brahmans or fairies or soldiers, so graphically indeed, that an illusion is created in the minds of the audience, that characters who have never appeared on the stage, like Udayana and Vasavadatta in the *Pratijna,* have been there all the time.

Unintentional Dramatic replies.—A common but effec-tive dramatic device in many of these plays is to give the reply to a moot question by an unintentional and unexpected answer supplied by a new arrival. Thus, when Mahasena and Angara-vati discuss which of the kings who have applied for Vasava-datta's hand is to be chosen, the chamberlain comes and says "Vatsaraja", thereby unconsciously stating that Vatsaraja is the person to be chosen as bridegroom, though he has come to say "Vatsaraja has been captured." So too, in *Abhisheka Nataka,* when Rama and Lakshmana have been reported to Sita, by Ravana, as killed by Indrajit, and Ravana asks Sita in triumph "By whom will you be now set free?", a Rakshasa, who enters just then, says "By Rama", though he has come to say "By Rama, Indrajit has been killed."

Names of some characters the same.—The names of the minor characters in some of the plays are the same. Thus, Badarayana is the name of the chamberlain of Mahasena in *Pratijna,* as well as of Duryodhana in *Dutavakya;* and Vijaya is the name of the female door-keeper in *Svapna, Pratijna, Abhisheka* and *Pratirna.* Vrishabhadatta and Kumbhadatta are the names of herdsmen in *Pancharatra* and *Balacharita.*

Similar Dramatic Situations.—There are some similar dramatic situations in these plays. In *Abhisheka* and *Pr::Hma,*

Sita rejects Havana's overtures, with a curse; so too, Vasantasena **rejects** Sakara's overtures, with a curse, in *Charudatta.* When **asked** to salute their king, the heroes, in both *Balacharita* and *Pancharatra,* indignantly ask *"Whose* king is he?". In *Pratijna,* Mahasena refuses to believe the news of the capture of Vatsaraja **till** Badarayana asks him whether he has ever told him a lie before. So, too, in *Balacharita,* Kamsa refuses to believe in the birth of **a** daughter to Devaki till the chamberlain asks him a similar question. In *Avimaraka,* there is a discussion between the king and queen about a suitable bridegroom for their daughter, just as there is in *Pratijna.*

Common Words and Images.—Favourite images are repeated, like the arrival of a distinguished personage being compared to the rising of the moon in the midst of the stars. Duryodhana, Valin and Dasaratha all see the sacred rivers and aerial chariot arrive for them at death. Several words are used with the same peculiar meaning, like *Nandi* and *Sthapana.*

Same Expressions.—The same expressions "Make way, sirs, make way" are used when exalted personages arrive. There are some lines of verse and prose found in identical form in two or three of the plays, the epilogue being a leading instance, and the description of the uselessness of the keenest eyesight on a dark night, in *Avimaraka* and *Balacharita.* Certain things are described vividly in several plays more or less in the same style, like sunset, nightfall, a city at night, battles, combats, and battlefields.

Similarity in Metrical Devices.—Though the metres are varied, the plays show similarity in their use.

Paronomasia.—The opening stanzas in many of the plays indicate the leading characters by a clever use of paronomasia.

Split-up verses.—Split-up verses, by the same speaker or by more than one, are found.

Author's Name not found.—In no play is the name of the author given.

Play's Name At End.—The name of the play is given only at the end.

Grammatical solecisms and archaisrfis.—Grammatical solecisms and *prakrit* archaisms are found in all the plays.

Common Ideas and Ideals.—The ideals, too, are the same in all **the** plays, namely, the desire for the independence of each country, **the** passion to keep foreign invaders out, the scoffing at **begging** for independence at others' hands, and the duty of kings to protect cows and to preserve the ancient *Varnasrama dharma* **of the land, to** honour hermits, to uphold justice, and to make

good men happy. The idea that virtuous kings, though dead in body, live through their works and sacrifices, recurs again **and** again.

Missing Stanzas.—That some stanzas ascribed to Bhasa by the anthologists are not to be found in these thirteen plays will not show that these plays are riot Bhasa's. Perhaps only ten of the verses found in the anthologies are really Bhasa's, as pointed Out by Dr. Pusalker. It is notorious that anthologists have wrongly ascribed verses of one author to another, nothing to be wondered at when printing was not known, manuscripts were rare, and knowledge was largely transmitted by oral means, and retained by memory which plays .so many tricks. There is also no doubt that copyists often omitted many verses and passages just as even now copyists omit passages when preparing copies of records. Some of the copyists might have omitted, in addition, some of the stanzas which were objected to by critics, or passages not agreeing with their views, and also added, or altered some verses, in a vain attempt to improve on them or to put the current niceties into them.

Reason Explained.—The thing is not peculiar to India. Even in England, a much smaller country, with only one main centre, London, Shakespeare's plays, written eighteen hundred years later, have suffered omissions and additions at the hands of scribes, pirates and others. We can imagine how much greater would have been the case in a country like India, 16 times the size of England, and with at least 56 kings, who had their own courts and exclusive dramatic performances.

CHAPTERIV

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PLAYS SO FAR DISCOVERED

Mr. Pusalker has made an attempt to arrange the thirteen plays in the order in which Bhasa might have written them. He has put them in the following order:—

Dutavakya, Karnabhara, Dutaghatotkaclta, Urubhanga, Madhyamavyayoga, Pancharatra, Abhishekanataka, Balacharita, Avimaraka, Pratima, Pratijna, Svapnavasavadatta, and *Charudatta,* which last, is, of course, incomplete, and was perhaps left like that owing to Bhasa's death. The points taken into consideration by him in arranging the plays, in this order, are the matter and manner of the plays, the extent of their maturity, and considerations of the dialogues, verses, poetic licenses and weak endings.

I have to differ from his order a little. It is clear to me that *Dutaghatotkacha*, referring to events far later than *Madhyamavyayoga* and *Pancharatra*, must have been written after those two plays; that *Urubhanga*, a powerful tragedy, must-have been written far later than the place assigned to it; that *Balacharita* must have been written earlier than the more mature plays *Abhisheka* and *Pancharatra*, let alone *Urubhanga* and *Dutaghatotkacha;* and that *Pancharatra* is a maturer play than *Abhisheka.*

After a careful consideration of the subject, I am disposed to fix the chronology as follows:—

Dutavakya; Karnabhara; Madhyamavyayoga; Balacharita; Abhishekanataka; Pancharatra; Dutaghatotkacha; Urubhanga; Avimaraka; Pratima Nataka; Pratijna Yaugandharayana; Svapnavasavadatta; and *Charudatta.* Arranged in this order, they undoubtedly show a progressive growth in dramatic technique and skill, and in originality. The earlier themes are, generally, taken from the epics, and the latest themes are from folklore and popular legends, or are creations of the poet's own imagination. The progression is something like that of Shakespeare from plays like *Titus Andronicus* and *Julius Caesar* to plays like the *Tempest, Much Ado About Nothing, Winter's Tale,* etc., through tragedies like *Hamlet.*

PART II.

BHASA'S PLAYS.

CHAPTER I.

DUTAVAKYA.

The Ambassador's Message.—This is a one-act play. It opens, at the Hastinapura palace, with an announcement by the chamberlain that King Duryodhana would take counsel that day with all the assembled vassal kings. Duryodhana comes along presently, a brown youth in a white silk robe, with a royal umbrella and chowrie, decked in glittering jewellery. He exclaims that he is glad at the opportunity of at last meeting the Pandavas in battle and of smashing the tusks of their elephants. As he proceeds to the assembly hall, he says to two of his nobles, "My lords, Vaikarna, and Varshadeva, I have a vast host consisting of eleven armies. Who is to be the supreme commander-in-chief? Tell me. You say that it is an important matter about which opinion ought to be given only after discussion and due deliberation? All right, let us enter the Council Hall."

Then all enter the council hall. Duryodhana says, "Preceptor,[1] take the tortoise-seat. Grandfather,[2] here is your lion-seat. Uncle,[3] here is your leather-seat. Vaikarna, Varshadeva and all the rest, please sit down. What is that? That the king is still standing? Ah, gentlemen, how loyal all of you are! Well, well, I'll take my seat. Karna, my friend, come and sit down. Now, my Lords, Vaikarna and Varshadeva, tell me who is fit to be the supreme commander-in-chief of all our eleven armies. What do you say? That the king of Gandhara[4] should speak first? What say you, uncle? 'Who else is to be thought of when Ganga's son[5] is here?' Well said, uncle! That's my wish too, grandfather. Let the drums beat, and the conches roar like the angry waves lashed by the storm, when the consecrated water is poured on Bhishma's head, as supreme commander-in-chief, amidst the deafening cheers of our myriads of soldiers, and may the hearts of the enemy chieftains sink within them on hearing them!"

[1] Drona.
[2] Bhishma.
[3] Sakuni.
[4] Sakuni, his uncle.
[5] Bhishma.

The chamberlain enters and says, "Victory to the King! Narayana, the best of men, has come as an ambassador of the Pandavas."

Duryodhana gets into a rage and says, "Badarayana, don't **speak** nonsense. Is Damodara, the cow-herd, Kamsa's servant, your best of men? Driven by Jarasandha and robbed of all his lands, wealth and reputation, is he your best of men? What conduct is this for a servant of mine! What insolent words, man! To Hell with you!"

The chamberlain falls at his feet, and humbly begs his forgiveness, saying, "In my confusion, I forgot the proper etiquette."

"Ah! that's better. Air men are liable to confusion. Rise up. Now, who is this envoy?" Asks Duryodhana.

"One Kesava," replies the chamberlain.

"Kesava! that's the way to announce the fellow." says Duryodhana, "Princes, now, what shall we do with this Kesava? 'Receive him with honour?' That's not my view. Prison is the proper place for the man. If Krishna is imprisoned, the Pandavas will be like blind men, having lost their eye, and can be easily conquered. Now,.one thing. If any one stands up to receive Kesava, I'll fine him twelve gold pieces. Don't forget that." Then he says to himself: "But how am I to avoid getting up myself? Ah! I see a way." He asks Badarayana to take to him the painting of Draupadi in the act of being dragged by her hair and clothes, and says to himself, "I can be absorbed by looking at this, and need not rise for Kesava." He looks at the picture and exclaims, "What a splendid picture! Here is Duhsasana. He has seized Draupadi by her locks. Here is Draupadi staring wildly, looking like the digit of the moon in the jaws of the demon, Rahu. Here are Bhima and Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, full of wrath, and ready to fight, but curbed by Yudhisthira who feels resistance to be wrong. Here is the master-gambler, Sakuni, gloating over the weeping Draupadi and breaking out into loud laughter. Here are Bhishma and Drona hiding their faces with the ends of their robes, ashamed to see her in this plight. What wonderful expression! What rich colours! Oh! I'm pleased." Then he tells Badarayana, "Bring in that envoy who is puffed up simply because he rides a bird."

He calls Kama and tells him, "Kama, my comrade, Krishna, whose heart is as black towards us as his skin, has come as an envoy from the Pandavas. Be prepared to hear Yudhisthira's words, gentle as a woman's." Krishna is brought in by the chamberlain and mutters to himself, "Soon, the forest of the

kurus' family tree will be blasted and burnt in battle by Arjuna and Bhima, angered at the outrage on Draupadi. These splendid camps and tents, these shining armours, these horses neighing impatiently in their stalls, these elephants trumpeting for battle to begin, all, all, will come to nought, because of this evil-speaking, virtue-hating Duryodhana who will not do the right thing by his kinsmen."

On seeing him enter, all the assembled councillors rise up in confusion. "Don't disturb yourselves; please sit at ease", says he to them. Duryodhana calls out to them, "What is this! Why are you disturbed at seeing Kesava,? Remember the fine already proclaimed. I'm master here."

Krishna says to him, "Hullo, Duryodhana, how are you?", and Duryodhana falls off his seat in confusion, and exclaims to himself, "Boldly I made up my mind, and firmly I clung to my seat. But alas, I have fallen by the, magic power of this tricky ambassador." Then he says aloud, "Here is a seat for you, ambassador! Please sit down."

Vasudeva[1] asks Bhishma and Drona and the princes to sit down, and then sits down. He looks at the picture held by Duryodhana and says, "What a splendid picture!" Then, having a closer look at it, he exclaims, "What! A painting of Draupadi being dragged by her hair and clothes! Duryodhana, in your childishness, you think that the shaming of your kin is a deed of valour. Who in this world is so lost to shame and decency as to expose his own crime in a public assembly? Let that picture be removed!"

Duryodhana asks the chamberlain to remove the picture, and Badarayana takes'it away. Duryodhana then enquires after the health of the Pandavas, and Vasudeva replies, "They are all right and enquire of your health." He then delivers Yudhisthira's message:—"We have undergone infinite sufferings. The stipulated time has passed. So, give us our due share in the inheritance." Duryodhana says "What inheritance? How can they have a share? Pandu left all desire for conjugal relations with his wives owing to the sage's curse. How can these fellows, who are the sons of others, claim a share in the patrimony?"

Vasudeva replies, "You seem to be well-versed in family lore, my friend. Kindly tell me, how your father, Dhritarashtra, begotten by Vyasa on Ambika, owing to Vichitraveerya's profligacy and consequent impotence, succeeded to the kingdom. So, leave these crooked arguments. By the waxing of mutual enmity, Oh king, the Kuru race will soon be but a name. Give the Pandavas what they demand, freely, and without more ado."

[1] **Another name of Krishna.**

Duryodhana says, "Ambassador, you know nothing of politics. Kingship can be got only by brave princes who defeat **their** foes. It is never got by begging. Nor is sovereignty given in charity, like alms, to the poor. If they want a kingdom, let **them fight** and get it. Or, let them go to a hermitage and seek peace."

Vasudeva says, "Duryodhana, you should take pity on your kinsmen. Cheating kinsmen and friends will make all your undertakings fail, and sap your royal glory."

"What pity had you for your uncle Kamsa?" asks Duryodhana.

"That was not my fault. He imprisoned my parents and killed their babies. He kept in jail his own father. So, he was slain by death himself," replies Vasudeva.

"By death, say you? Rather say, by trickery. When Jarasandha, angered at the death of his son-in-law, Kamsa, came to attack you, you fled, sick with fear. Where was your bravery then?" asks Duryodhana.

"Duryodhana, the bravery of the wise is suited to the time, place and circumstances. Enough of our own pleasantry. Come now to my errand," says Vasudeva. "Treat your kinsmen with affection. It is good both for this world and the next."

"No use your trying to grind what is already ground," retorts Duryodhana, "How can there be kinship between them, the sons of gods, and me, a mortal's son? Enough of it!"

Vasudeva says to himself. "Soft words only increase his arrogance. I must use harsh and bitter words".

"Duryodhana, don't you know the might and prowess of Arjuna?" he asks.

"I don't know. Tell me." replies Duryodhana.

"He gave Siva his fill of fighting. He held off a deluge of rain in the Khandwa forest by his arrows. He put Bhishma and the rest to flight, single-handed. He set you free when Chitrasena was carrying you away. Oh, son of Dhritharashtra, give the Pandavas half the entire kingdom they demand; else, they will seize the earth from sea to sea," says Vasudeva.

"Not a blade of grass will I give, even if the wind-god himself comes in Bhima's form, even if Indra comes in Arjuna's shape. My father held this realm with his sword. I'll guard it with mine," declares Duryodhana.

"Disgrace of the Kuru race, seeker of shame, are we talking of gjass now?" says Vasudeva, angrily.

"Why,cow-herd, grass is the stuff for you. Having slain a woman, a horse, and even a sacred bull, and professional Wrestlers too, you are unfit to be talked to by a king," returns Duryodhana.

"I see that there is no use my staying here any more. I shall go away," says Vasudeva.

"Do. Go to your cow-shed, and get somewhat white, by the dust on the hooves of your cattle falling on your black skin. You simply waste your time here," mocks Duryodhana.

"Before I go, T shall deliver Yudhisthira's message," says Vasudeva.

"Rah! You are not fit to speak to me. Over my head is the royal white umbrella. My head has been sprinkled with holy water from the hands of the highest priests. I don't speak with men like you, menials of my vassal kings." says Duryodhana haughtily.

"You cheat, you rascal, you crow, you yellow-eyed serpent! The Kuru race will soon come to destruction on account of thee." says Vasudeva. Then, turning to the rest, he says, "Princes, I am leaving" and prepares to go.

Duryodhana cries out, "How now! He would be off! He has abused the ambassador's privilege. Bind him, Duhsasana, Durmarshana, Durmukha, Durbuddhi, and Dushteshwara! Devoid of strength and valour, he has abused us. What, are you all weaklings, afraid of this cow-herd? Uncle, you bind this man, Kesava. You too find it difficult and fall down? Why, then, I shall bind him with a noose." He advances with an uplifted noose. Vasudeva says to himself, "Ah, Duryodhana wants to fetter me. Very well, T shall test his strength." He assumes his universal form. Duryodhana tries to put the noose on him. Vasudeva becomes bigger and bigger. When Duryodhana makes the noose bigger, Vasudeva becomes smaller and smaller. When Duryodhana is bewildered at all this, his confusion becomes worse confounded, by seeing Kesavas all around. He asks each prince to bind one Kesava, and is surprised to find that, when they try to do this, all of them get bound in their own bonds and fall down. Then he takes his bow and arrows to shoot and kill all the Kesavas, saying "The Pandavas will weep their eyes out when they see you return to them covered with wounds."

Vasudeva calls his divine discus, Sudarsana, remarking that he will do the work of the Pandavas himself. Sudarsana comes rushing, and asks, "Oh Blessed one, what is thy command? Shall I overturn the mountains? Shall I empty the oceans? Shall I hurl down the stars from the heavens?" Vasudeva asks him to

kill Duryodhana. Sudarsana says, "Pardon me, Oh, Narayana? Ydu descended on earth, Oh, God, to ease its burdens by ridding it of wicked men. If this man were to be killed by me thus, all the wicked fellows will escape, being bereft of their leader and rendered too panicky to fight, and your mission will not be fulfilled." Vasudeva then says, "Sudarsana, you are right. In my anger, I forgot that. Return to your abode."

Sudarsana sees Saranga, the Lord's bow, Kaumodaki, the Lord's club, Nandaka, the Lord's sword, and Panchajanya, the Lord's conch, arriving. He tells them, "Our master's wrath has passed away. Return to your abodes."

Then he exclaims, "What a violent gale! How hot is the sun! The mountains are rocking, the seas are agitated, the trees are uprooted, the clouds are scurrying away, and the serpents are hiding. What does it mean?" He sees Garuda coming, and understands the reason for the gale. He tells him also, "Our master's wrath has passed away. Return to your abode." Garuda returns. Sudarsana then goes back to his abode in Mount Menu

Vasudeva says, "I too must leave for the Pandavas' camp." A voice behind the scene says, "No, no, he must not go in anger thus." Vasudeva identifies it as the old king's voice, and says* "I am still here, Oh king!" Dhritarashtra comes out, exclaiming, "Where is the blessed Narayana, where is the benefactor of the Pandavas, the friend of Brahmans, the joy of Devaki?" and falls at Vasudeva's feet, to atone for his son's offence. Vasudeva makes him rise up. Dhritarashtra gives him water, as to an honoured guest, for washing his feet. Vasudeva accepts it, and asks. "What further favour can I bestow?" Dhritarashtra replies, "If the blessed one is pleased, what more can I desire?"

Vasudeva then bids farewell of Dhritarashtra, and, there the play ends.

CHAPTERII.
KARNABHARA.

Kama's Burden.—This is also a one-act play, and derives its title from the fact that the great skill acquired by Kama in fighting has become a burden to him, instead of an asset, because of three reasons, the first being the curse of his teacher, Parasu-rama, "Useless be thy weapons in thy time of need", the second being the promise he gave his mother, Kunti, not to kill any of her sons except Arjuna, and the third being his parting with his invulnerable body armour *mi* auspicious ear-rings in favour of Indra, come disguised as a Brahmin. An atmosphere of tragedy, therefore, broods over this play, though it is not a tragedy in the technical sense of the term.

The play opens, on the battle-field of Kurukshetra, with Kama coming accoutred for battle, in his chariot driven by Salya, King of the Madras. A soldier has come from Duryodhana to Kama with the message, 'The battle is growing more tumultuous." The soldier seeks Kama with Salya, and describes him as a sun obscured by the clouds, but shining with its innate splendour, and as one going sadly to the fray. He delivers his message, and is off, wondering what the reason could be for the unwonted anxiety on the face of one of prowess and valour delighting in the joys of battle, like Kama.

Kama asks Salya to drive the car to where Arjuna is, remarking that if he meets Arjuna he would bring joy to the Kurus, as no, one whom he has met in fray has returned alive. But he remarks sadly, "My prowess is a match for any kind of cruel death, but, yet, in this hour of battle, in the mighty fights to come, with warriors, elephants and chariots, there falls on my heart black misery. Though known as the son of a charioteer, I was born, in days of yore, to Kunti, and Yudhisthira and the other Pandavas are really my younger brothers. Alas! at this glorious hour which has come today, on this day of days, my mother's word holds me back, and my skill in war must also come to nought. Oh king of the Madras, do you know how I learnt the art of war?"

Salya tells him that he is very curious to hear it. Kama says, "I went to Parasurama. That excellent sage, that scion of the Bhrigu race, that destroyer of the warrior class, sat there with a mass of matted locks shining like streaks of lightning, and wielding his famous axe. Humbly I went and saluted him, and stood on one side. He blessed me, and asked me who I was, and why I had come. I said to him, 'Reverend sir, I wish to learn the use of every kind of weapon/ He told me that he would teach only Brahmins, and none of the warrior class. I told him that I did not belong to the warrior class. Then he began to instruct me in the use of weapons. One day, I went with him to fetch some fruits and roots, grass, flowers and fuel. Wandering in the wood, he became tired, and took a nap, with his head on my lap. As ill-luck would have it, an insect called 'steely-teeth' bored through my thighs. Afraid of disturbing his slumber, I did not stir, but bore the pain with fortitude. The warm blood, gushing from my thighs, woke him up. He guessed, by my endurance, that I was a Kshatriya. He blazed into a fury, and uttered the curse, 'Useless be thy weapons in thy time of need!' "

Salya says, "Oh, that was a dreadful thing for the sage to say!" "See," says Kama, "all these weapons seem to lack power. These horses stumble along helplessly, driven by

destiny. Blinded by misery, these elephants are trembling like **the** aspen **leaf.** These conches and kettle-drums emit a dull funereal sound." "Oh, this is frightful", cries out Salya. "Be not dismayed, Oh Salya", says Kama, "slain, one goes to heaven; victorious, one gains glory. The world thinks much of either, and, so, I must gain something in this battle. These steeds, swift as *Garuda,* of noble Kambhoja stock, will protect me, though I am past protection, and though they too will never return home from this war. May cows and Brahmans prosper always! Good luck to faithful wives, good luck to warriors who do not turn their backs in battle, good luck to me whose time has come! I shall enter the Pandava ranks and capture Yudhishthira, far-famed for his virtue, and overthrow Arjuna, and enable our army to enter the Pandava positions freely, as into a wood where the lions have been slain. Drive me to where Arjuna is."

As they drive along, they hear a Brahman's voice, "Oh, Kama, I beg for a mighty boon." Even the galloping horses stop suddenly at the deep, sweet, voice, and prick their ears, and arch their necks. Kama remarks that it must be a good and holy Brahman, and calls the Brahman to him.

Indra, disguised as a Brahman, comes, and says, "Oh, Kama, I beg for a mighty boon."

Kama replies, "I am very glad to hear that, Oh holy man. Today, my life has borne fruit. Kama, whose lotus feet are illumined by the diadems of mighty monarchs, but whose head is purified by the dust from the feet of a great sage, salutes you."

Indra says to himself, "Now, what shall I say to him? If T say 'Long life to you', he will live long, and my object in coming will be frustrated. If I say nothing, he will despise me as a fool. Well, I have it," and says aloud, "Oh Kama, eternal as the sun, the moon, the Himalayas and the ocean, be your fame!"

Kama is astonished at this form of benediction, and says, "Should you not say, sir, 'Long life to you!'? However, that is an auspicious wish, and it is for you to say it or not. A man should pursue virtue, for a king's fortune flickers like a serpent's tongue. But, if he fixes his thoughts on protecting his people, his good qualities will endure, though his body is slain. What would you have, holy man?"

Indra replies, "I beg for a mighty boon."

Kama says, "A mighty boon will I bestow on you. Hear what I have, and choose. Take a thousand cows which will give you streams of excellent milk, like nectar, after satisfying all their calves."

"A thousand cows! I drink but little milk. I don't want them, Kama," says Indra.

"Take then thousands of chargers of the Kambhoja stock, horses swift as the wind, equal to the horses of the sun" says Kama.

"Horses! I ride but little. No, I don't want them" says Indra.

"Take then a countless herd of elephants, resembling a range of lofty hills, and roaring like thunder-bolts" says Kama.

"Elephants! I ride but little. I don't want them" says Indra.

Then I'll give you countless gold" says Kama.

" I will take that, and go" says Indra, but adds, soon after, [4]'No, I don't want it, Kama."

"Then I will conquer the whole earth and give it to you" says Kama.

"What shall 1 do with the earth?"

"Then I will give you the fruits of a burnt sacrifice" says Kama.

"What is the good of that to me?" asks Indra.

"Then take my head!" says Kama, in despair.

"Ugh! Ugh!" cries out Indra.

"Don't be alarmed" says Kama, "Forgive me, holy man. Listen again. My body armour was born with me. Xeither god nor devil can pierce it with their weapons. I shall gladly give it to you, along with my jear-rings, if it pleases you."

"Yes, give me those things" says Indra, joyously.

Kama says to himself: "So, that's what he wants. Can this be a trick of Krishna? If it be so, let it be. Fie, what a shame to think of such things!". He says aloud, "Take them."

Salya says to him. "Oh, king of the Angas, don't part with them."

Kama replies, "Salya, don't prevent me. Learning comes to nought by mere lapse of time. Firmly-rooted trees are thrown down in a storm. The deepest reservoirs dry up in drought. But gifts and sacrifices last for ever" and cuts off and gives the armour and ear-rings to Indra, who goes away, saying, "I have done what the gods decreed as necessary for Arjuna's victory. Now I shall mount my elephant, Airavata, and witness the mighty fight between Arjuna and Kama."

After he has gone, Salya tells Kama that he has been cheated by Indra.

Kama replies, "Not at all. It is I who have cheated Indra. Thousands of twice-born people .propitiate him with innumerable sacrifices, and beg favours of him; but Indra, who possesses Arjuna, Indra, the destroyer of *Paka*[1] and hosts of demons, Indra has begged a favour of me to-day, Oh Salya."

Then, an angel comes, disguised as a Brahman, and tells Kama, "Kama, Indra is grateful to you, and regrets his taking your armour and ear-rings. So, he sends a spear, named Vimala, an unfailing weapon to slay one of the Pandavas. Please accept it."

"Fie, I never take a return for my gifts" says Kama.

"Take it at a Brahman's bidding" says the angel.

"At a Brahman's bidding! That have I never disregarded. When shall I get this spear?" asks Karna.

"When you bring it to mind" says the angel, and goes away.

Karna and Salya proceed in the chariot, and Kama hears Arjuna's conch and remarks, "Enraged by Yudhishthira's defeat, Arjuna will fight to-day with all his strength. Salya, drive my car to where Arjuna is."

Salya says, "Very well." and drives the chariot on.

There, the play ends.

CHAPTER III.

MADHYAMAVYAYOGA.

The Middle One.—This is a one-Act Play, and is evidently Bhasa's own creation. The Play opens with Kesavadasa, an aged Brahman, going along a jungle path with his wife and three sons, and suddenly terrified at the sight of Ghatotkacha, the son of Bhima, the middle one among the three sons of Kunti, and a demoness called Hidimba. Kesavadasa is frightened like a bull pursued by a tiger when peacefully grazing with its cow and calves. He exclaims, "Who is this, with flying hair, blazing yellow eyes,, looking like the Destroyer coming at the end of the world?" His first son cries out, "Father, who is this, with eyes huge and revolving like planets, a muscular chest, black colour, and protruding teeth, looking like a veritable storm-cloud darkening the Moon in a clear sky?"

The second son crieS out, "Who is this, with teeth like elephant's tusks, curved nose as long as a plough, arms like elephants' trunks, colour black as collyrium, and fierce as Siva when he destroyed the three aerial cities of the demons?"

[1]A demon.

The third son exclaims, "Oh, father, who, pray, is this that troubles us? He looks like a thunder-bolt on mountains, a falcon among birds, a lion on deer, Death in human form."

The wife asks, "Who is this that afflicts us, my lord?"

Ghatotkacha cries out, "Ho, Brahman, stop! Why do you flee on seeing me, unable to protect your wife and children, like a snake fleeing from an eagle? Cease your flight."

Kesavadasa says to his wife and children, "Don't be afraid, my dears. His speech is kindly/'

Ghatotkacha says to himself, "Ah me! This family is worthy of my honour. It is a foul errand I am on, and a terrible deed I must do. But it is my mother's command. So, I shall do it unhesitatingly/'

Kesavadasa whispers to his wife, "You remember, my dear, what the revered Jalaklinna told us This forest is haunted by demons. So, you must proceed here with caution' The very danger he warned us about has befallen us."

"What are you going to do about it?" asks his wife.

"What can I do, helpless and unfortunate that 1 am?" replies the old man.

"Let us shout for help " says his wife.

"Mother, this wood is desolate, and the trees will drown all sound. Only hermits and birds and beasts will wish to dwell here. Who will respond to our shout?" says the first son.

"Ah, your mention of hermits has cheered me up. Close by is the hermitage of the Pandavas, renowned in war, and ever ready to rush to the help of the oppressed and to punish wicked fellow? " says Kesavadasa.

The first son tells him that the Pandavas have gone to the sage Dhaumya to assist him at a great sacrifice, leaving Bhima to guard the hermitage.

"That is all right. Bhima is equal to all of them " says the old man, but he is informed by his first son that Bhima too has gone out for some exercise. So, he gives up hopes of succour from Bhima, and says, "I shall entreat this demon/'

"It is no use " says his first son.

"What harm is there? It is a counsel of despair." says the old man. He asks Ghatotkacha to let them go their way in peace. The demon agrees to do so on condition that one of the three sons is surrendered to him for taking him to his mother for her breakfast, as she has ordered him to take a human being for her meal that day.

Kesavadasa says, "Out on you, vile demon! Am I not a Brahman? How can I, a venerable Brahman learned in the scriptures, attain salvation if I give a virtuous son of mine as food for a cannibal?"

"Well, if **you** don't give up one son, **all** the five of you wilt **be** destroyed **by** me in a trice. How will that further your principle?" asks Ghatotkacha.

The old man tells his wife, "My dear, this body of mine, decrepit with age, has practically finished its journey of life. 1 shall offer it to save my sons."

"No, no." says the lady, "A true wife exists for the sake of her lord only. This body has served its purpose. T shall offer it to save my husband and sons."

"My mother does not want a woman or an old man " cries out Ghatotkacha.

The first son offers himself. The second son says, "No, no, that must not be. The eldest is the best in the home and the world, and is best loved by his parents. So, T shall go with this demon."

The third son says, "No, no, that must not be. You are my elder brother, and like a sire unto me, according to the sages. So, T am the one to go with this demon and save the rest."

The first son says that the eldest son is the one who has to assist his parents, and that he will go.

Kesavadasa says, "No, no, I cannot give you up, the eldest. You must remain with me."

"As my lord clings to the eldest son, so do I to the youngest" says his wife.

"My parents don't want me. Who wants me?" asks the second son.

"You will do. Come along quickly with me " says Ghatotkacha.

The second son exclaims, "Blessed am I that I am enabled to protect the lives of my kinsfolk with my life. It is amazing how love of kin removes fear of death." He salutes his father, mother and brothers. Then he gets Ghatotkacha's permission to slake his thirst in a forest pool close by, and goes to that pool. He does not return for a long time. Ghatotkacha gets impatient as it is time for his mother's meal. He asks Kesavadasa for the boy's name. The old man refuses to tell. The demon questions the first son and is told that he is called the 'middle one'. So, Ghatotkacha calls out, *"Madhyama, Madhyama!* (Oh, Middle One! Middle One!) Come here at once!" The shout reverberates all over the forest.

Bhima, who is also called *Madhyama,* hears the cry, and wonders whose it is. He looks round and sees Ghatotkacha. "Ah!" he exclaims, "Here is a handsome youth. Lion-faced and lion-jawed, with eyes sparkling like wine, his voice is soft, though deep. His eye-brows are brown, he has got a falcon nose, and an elephant's jaws, and long, flowing hair. Broad-chested, lean-bellied, he stalks along like a lordly tusker. With long arms and stout shoulders, gifted with enormous strength, he appears to be the son of a famous hero by a demon dame/'

Ghatotkacha shouts on, *"Madhyama,* come at once!"

Bhima goes up to him and says, "Here I am."

Ghatotkacha looks at him, and remarks to himself that this grand, lion-like figure, with long arms and thin waist-line and lotus-like eyes, shining like Vishnu, attracts him like a kinsman, but that he is not the Brahman lad he wants. He again shouts out, *"Madhyama,* 1 am waiting for \ou."

"But 1 am here " says Bhima.

"Oh, are you also called *Madhyama?"* asks Ghatotkacha.

"Yes," says Bhima, "I too am the middle one among my brothers."

"He must be the middle Pandava, come to save us " says Kesavadasa in a whisper to his wife and sons.

The second son of the Brahman comes along, exclaiming to himself, "Sipping the bright drops falling from the lotus leaves, which 1 may not get in the next world, I have offered libation to myself."

He says to Ghatotkacha, "Here I am."

The demon says to him, "You have come at last. This way, then " and proceeds to go with him.

The old Brahman implores Bhima to rescue him and help his family, telling him that he is Kesavadasa, a Brahman resident of Yupa village in Kurujangala, once ruled by Yudhisthira, and belongs to the Mathara gotra and is a priest of the Kalpa school, and has an uncle called Yajnabandhu belonging to the Kausika gotra, and living in Udyamaka village, and that he was going with his wife and children to Yajnabandhu's son's *upanayanam* ceremony when the demon set upon them and wanted to slay them, fearing nobody in the world, and right in the sight of men like Bhima. Bhima exclaims that he will restrain the demon who had barred a Brahman's path, and calls out to Ghatotkacha to stop.

The demon stops. Bhima asks him, "Why do you, like the demon Rahu, molest this Brahman who is like the moon, bright with the beauty of his wife, and attended by his sons resembling stars?"

"You may call me Rahu. What do I care?" asks the demon.

"Release that Brahman boy 1" says Bhima.

"No. I shall not let him go " says Ghatotkacha.

"Who is this youth reminding me strongly of my brother's son, Abhimanyu?" ponders Bhima. Then he says, "Come, set that boy free!"

"I shall not *set* him free even if my own father commanded me to do so" says Ghatotkacha, "for I have seized him by fhe orders ot my mother."

"The orders of his mother! That is good! A mother is verily the deity of deities. It is by obeying our mother's command that we have come to this condition" remarks Bhima to himself. Then he asks aloud, "What is your mother's name?"

"Hidimba" replies Ghatotkacha. "Her lord is the great Pandava, Bhima. She is like the sky, and he like the full moon."

"Ah" says Bhima to himself, "That explains it. He has his father's form, strength and courage, but not his heart, full of pity for poor folk." He says aloud, "Come, now, set him free."

"No, I will not " says Ghatotkacha.

Bhima says *to* Kesavadasa, "Brahman, take thy son. I will go with this fellow myself."

The second son of Kesavadasa says, "No, no. You must not. I have already resolved to sacrifice myself for the sake of my people. You are young, handsome and virtuous, and must remain in this world."

"Noble youth, don't say so. I am a Kshatriya and bound to protect a Brahman, who is worthy of all honour " says Bhima.

Ghatotkacha remarks to himself, "So, he is a Kshatriya. That is why he is so haughty." He says aloud, " I shall kill this Brahman boy and take him away. Who will prevent me?"

" I will " says Bhima.

"You will. Will you? Alright then, come along, yourself." says Ghatotkacha. " I will not follow you willingly, unless your force fails you. Take me by force if you can " says Bhima. "Don't you know who I am?" asks the demon.

"I know. You are my son " says Bhima.

Ghatotkacha gets terribly angry, and says, *"Your* son?"

"How angry he is!" exclaims Bhima to himself. Then he says aloud, "Forgive me, I pray. Warriors call spirited youths, like you, their sons, meaning no offence."

"You use the weapon of a coward, by asking my forgiveness in panic fear, for your gratuitous insult" says Ghatotkacha.

"I swear that I know not what fear is, I would fain learn it from you. What is it like? Tell me. When I have understood it, I shall decide what to do." says Bhima.

"I shall teach you what fear is." says the demon, "Take a weapon."

"Here it is," says Bhima, showing his right arm.

"Where? What do you mean?" asks the demon.

"This right arm of mine, delighting in the capture ui iocs, is my weapon." says Bhima.

"I say, you pose to be like my father, Bhima." says the demon.

"Who is this Bhima?" asks Bhima, "Does he resemble Siva or Krishna or Indra or Yama?"

"All of them put together." says the demon.

"That is a lie." says Bhima.

"He insults my father!" exlaims Ghatotkacha, and plucks a huge tree by the roots and hurls it at Bhima who coolly parries it and makes it harmlessly fall by his side. Enraged, Ghatotkacha plucks a mountain top and hurls it at Bhima who parries it also, and says, "Even an enraged elephant should not assail a tiger in the forest, hoping to win."

Ghatotkacha challenges Bhima to wrestle with him. They wrestle furiously, and the demon is worsted.

Then Ghatotkacha thinks of binding Bhima by the magic noose his mother has taught him. He sips some water, got by prayer from a mountain, and invokes the magic noose, and binds Bhima with it. Bhima gets some water through Kesavadasa, invokes Siva, and gets free by this counter-charm.

Ghatotkacha is foiled, and says to Bhima "Remember your former promise to come along with me when my force fails."

"All right. Go in front." says Bhima. They walk along. Kesavadasa remarks that Bhima, after having shaken off the terrible demon of dreadful form, fiendish courage and diabolical strength, is following him playfully like a bull "tossing off the raindrops from its skin after braving the downpour till its finish.

Ghatotkacha asks Bhima to wait till he announces him to his mother. Going to her, he says, "Mother, I have brought you a man for your meal."

What sort of a man is he?" asks Hidimba; coming out.

He is a man by his speech, lady, not by his valour " says Ghatotkacha.

*A BraHttiwi? asks Hidimba.

°N6"i1^ieafcer,son.

"Then, an old man?"

"No" says Ghatotkaeha.

"A boy?" asks she.

"No" says her son,

"Let me have a look at him" says she, and goes round and sees Bhima. "He is not a man, my son, but a god," says she to Ghatotkacha.

"Whose god?" ask* he.

"Yours and mine. Salute your father, my boy," says she.

"What is all this, Hidimba?" asks Bhima.

She tells him that she longed to see him again, and knew that if a man was caught hold of by Ghatotkacha, in that forest, for her food, he would go to his rescue and follow Ghatotkacha to . her, and she could see him again.

"Oh, you are only a demoness by birth, and not by behaviour." exclaims Bhima in joy. Ghatotkacha salutes Bhima and begs his forgiveness for his rashness. He promises to be the fire of the forest of the Kauravas. Bhima embraces him, and says, "Your rashness delighted my heart. Salute this old Brahman, my boy." Ghatotkacha salutes him. Kesavadasa then thanks Bhima for saving his son. Bhima asks him to rest awhile. Kesavadasa says that enough hospitality has been shown to them by saving their lives, and takes leave of Bhima and goes away with his wife and sons. Bhima, Hidimba and Ghatotkacha go into Hidimba's house. There, the Play ends.

CHAPTERIV.

BALACHARITA.

The Adventures of the Marvellous Boy[1].—This is a five-act play regarding the life of Krishna. The prelude begins with the fall of a shower of blossoms and the sound of celestial instruments at the birth of Krishna in Kamsa's prison in Mathura. The first Act begins with Narada coming and proclaiming that he finds no enjoyment in Heaven which is without any quarrels, the last fight between the gods and demons having, ended long ago. He says that he has, therefore, come to the world to see Narayana, the Lord of the. Universe, born as a child, by his own inherent power of magic, to kill Kamsa, Hie comes and circumambulates

i Krishna called also VSsndeya, fiamodatt, Madfrusudatra, Vishnu, etc.

(the new-bora babe as it lies by the side of its mother Devaki Devaki hears the sky reel, earth tremble, winds'roar, Hghtniny flash, blossoms shower, and celestial instruments play, when the child i* born at midnight, when everybody in Mathura is asleep,. but dares not hope for the great future indicated by the signs, owing to the known nature of KamSa.

Her husband, Vasudeva, comes and sees the babe, with eyes full of joy and wonder. He offers to take it to some place of safety at once. Devaki says, "I want to have a long, long look at him." He tells her, "While you have your long, long look, Kamsa will be the death of him." Then she asks her husband to take the baby away quickly. He lifts it and finds it to be far heavier than any baby he has seen. He takes it and goes away with it, the prison doors opening of themselves and the sentries remaining fast asleep.

Past the gates of Mathura, the darkness is terrible. Vasudeva exclaims, "How thick the darkness is! Darkness anoints my limbs. The sky is raining lamp-black. My sight is useless like service rendered to a rascal. The quarters are invisible. The trees form one solid mass. The familiar world is utterly transformed. Oh, I can go no farther, as I cannot see my way." Suddenly, he sees a powerful light flash and show up the road. He mistakes it to be a light of Kamsa come in pursuit of him, and draws his sword, and looks back, and finds that the light has come from the baby! He marvels at this, and proceeds with the baby along the route shown by the light.

Soon, he arrives at the Yamuna, swollen with the fains. "Alas, all my efforts are in vain", he cries at first, but says to himself. "Timidity is Useless. I must swim across this river, though tumultuous with waves and beset with snakes and crocodiles.". As soon as he enters the swollen river, the river makes way for him by the parting of the waters. He crosses the river and goes under a banyan tree, and prays that Nandagopa, his old friend, may come there to take charge of this baby destined to kill Kamsa.

Nandagopa comes there, with one leg in chains and carrying the dead body of a baby girl. He says to himself, "This midnight, my wife, Yasoda, had a daughter; but the poor child died as soon as she was born. To-morrow, our station is to hold a festival in honour of Indra. So, lest the herdsmen should be downcast by this trouble, I have taken this little girl in my arms and come out alone to throw it away. Poor Yasoda fainted away, not even knowing, whether the baby was a boy or a girl and whether it lived or died."

Vasudeva calls Nandagopa. Nandagopa is at first afraid that it is a soirit. and cries out "Such a frightful night, and the

girl is in my arms? Whatam I to do?" Vasudeva reassures h*im* and calls him. Nandagopa says to himself, "Whatam I ta •do with hint? He listened to the words of Kamsa,, and had me 1thrashed;aiidpiit these fetters on my leg as a sign of degradation, I will not go near him." Then, on second thoughts, **he** says to hi**mself,** "Out on this hard heart **of** mine! He has done me a thousand, kindnesses. It is only at the king's orders that he •chained and flogged me."

He goes to Vasudeva and tells him about the little girl, and Vasudeva asks him to take the baby, Krishna, and save it from the cruel death which has befallen his six sons at Kamsa's hands. Nandagopa at first fears to take it, saying, "I am scared, my master! If Kamsa hears of it, my head will be off," but finally agrees. He wants to purify himself from the pollution of •carrying the dead girl by rubbing his body with earth, as there is no water close by, but is astonished to see a stream of water come out of the earth, and purifies himself with it.

When he takes the baby, he is surprised to see how heavy it.is, and exclaims to Vasudeva, " I can lift out a goods wagon Stuck -in mire. [r] I can catch a mad bull by one horn and turn it back. Rut, carrying this baby is. far more strenuous work than both." ^ Garuda and the discus, bow, club, conch and sword of Vishnu come to serve the lord born as the baby. Nandagopa prays to the baby, which has become too heavy for him to carry, to become light It does so, and Nandagopa carries it away easily. When he walks a step or two with the babe, he is astonished to see that his chains have fallen away from his leg. Vasiideva asks him to bring up the baby lovingly. Nandagopa replies, "He will be the lord of our station. He will go to one hut and drink milk. He will go to another and drink curds. He will go to a third and swallow fresh butter. He will go to a fourth and drink butter-milk. He will go to a fifth and eat rice pudding" and goes away.

Vasudeva turns back to return to Mathura. He hears the cry of a child, and is afraid that Nandagopa has returned with the babe from **fear** of Kamsa. To his astonishment, he sees that it is the dead girl come back to life again. He takes it in order to put it in Devaki's arms and deceive the wicked Kamsa. He returns to Devaki and puts the girl by her side. There ends Actl.

Act II opens in the palace of Kamsa. Kamsa is having a bad dream. He sees the palace pinnacles fallen, and the earth rocking like a Terry-boat in the midst of heavy billows, and some fearsome outcaste maidens, black as collyrium; requesting consortium with. him. He cries out, **"I** am **death** to the god of **death. 1 strike** feiar **into the heart** of feari But, oh, this lust

it is pursuing and harassing me!" He shouts out, "Despicable creatures, go away", and they disappear for the moment. Theft enters Curse. Kamsa exclaims, "Who is this entering, black as collyrium, fire-brand in hand, deadful to look at, with projecting teeth, and with eyes as yellow as a snake's?"

"I am the sage Madhuka's curse, come from the cremation ground, ugly and fierce, to enter your heart and finish you oft; oh, Kamsa." replies Curse.

Kamsa says "You can no mOre ruin me than a mountain can be shaken by the wind caused by the flapping of a crow's wings, or than an ocean can be drunk up with hollowed hands."

"In good time you will know" says Curse, and orders Good Fortune to leave the house, as her turn is over. The astonished king calls the portress and asks her whether she saw the outcaste maidens come in. She replies, "Oh no, even women of noble families find it difficult to find an entry into the palace. How, then, can outcaste maidens come here?" He asks her to call his chamberlain, Balaki. The chamberlain comes, and is asked by Kamsa to find out, from the household priest and astrologer, the meaning of that night's storm, earth-quake, wind and meteors. He comes and says that the priest and astrologer declare that the Eternal One, who dwells above the sky, has descended to the mortal world with some mysterious purpose in view. Kamsa: asks him to go and find out as whose son the Lord has been born- Balaki returns and says that Devaki has given birth to a daughter,. Kamsa, who has expected a son, according to the prophesy, is astonished to hear that it is a daughter, and asks Balaki, "Is this true?" Balaki replies,! have never told your majesty a *lie* She was seen in the nurse's arms by all your servants." A Brahman's word I hold as true, though it be false" says Kamsa, "go and summon Vasudeva. He is virtuous and truthful. He will not tell me a lie. We shall hear the truth from him" Vasudeva is brought.

Kamsa tells him, "Son of Yadavi, sit down."

Vasudeva sits down and says, "Son of Sauraseni, why have you summoned me?"

Kamsa says, "Devaki, I understand, has been delivered of a child".

"Why, yes, she has."

"A boy or a girl?"

Vasudeva (Aside) "Shall even I have to utter a falsehood? Aye, to save the prince, I regard the utterance of a falsehood as equal to truth"* He says aloud, "She was delivered of. daughter,"

"Girl or boy, I must kill it and cozen fate by this human effort" **says** Kamsa.

The portress brings in news of the birth of the girl, to Kamsa, adding that Devaki has begged of him to spare it, as it is only a girl. Vasudeva also joins in this prayer. Kamsa reminds him of his compact to deliver up all the babes to be slain. Vasudeva says to himself, "Shall I bring another's child to death? Shall I not rather go and fetch my own son to meet his fate? But, nay, this maid was dead before, and came to life again. She will surely escape from slaughter."

Kamsa asks the portress to bring the babe. She brings it. Kamsa looks at it, and says, "Ah, the child has a royal look. Must I put even a girl to death?" The nurse says, "Forbear, my lord, forbear." But Kamsa dashes the girl against the Kamsa rock. One part of her rises up into the sky, with hands agleam with weapons, as the Goddess Kartyayani, and proclaims, "Beware, Kamsa! Tyrant, your days are numbered." Her attendants, Kundodara and others resolve to go to Gokulam, and see the marvellous exploits of the boy Krishna. Kamsa goes into his palace to do expiatory rites, in order to ward off the evil things he sees coming to him. There ends Act II.

The interlude to Act III begins with the cowherds remarking about the luxuriant grass, the plentiful roots and fruits and milk, and the freedom from disease, ever since the birth of Damodara in Nandagopa's house. The old herdsman speaks of the baby's killing the demoness, Putana, by sucking her breast ferociously, when she wanted to murder it by giving suck to it when only ten days old, and to the baby's kicking the demon, Sakatasura, to death, when it was only one month old, and to its being tied by Yasoda to a mortar between two trees, to prevent it from stealing milk and butter from the neighbouring houses, and to its rolling the mortar against the two trees, which were really disguised *devas*, and felling them down. He also narrates about the killing of a demon called Pralamba by Sankarshana or Balarama, Krishna's brother, by a well-delivered fist blow on his head, "knocking out his eyes, and to Damodara's killing Dhenuka, disguised as a donkey, by seizing it by its left foot and hurling it on the ground, and to his killing Kesi, Who came in the form of a horse, by holding it firmly and putting camphor in its mouth, causing it to split into two.

The Act itself begins with a dance of Damodara and Sankarshana with the cowherds and girls. The old herdsman adjures all to worship the kine, the mothers of the world, ever full of nectar, at break of dawn. Damodara praises the natural charm and Ueauty of Ghoshasimdari, Vknaniala, Chandfalekha and Mrigakshi, with faces like full-blown lilies, eyes like lotuses, garment! *of*

varied hues, with beautiful treses adorned witb woodland blossoms, and with voices sweetly prattling and singjng. They all danCe.

In the midst of the dance, Arishtavrishabha, the dreadnought bull, comes along causing tremendous destruction and panic. Damodara asks the lads and lasses to go to the hill top and watch. The bull comes charging along, saying to itself, "At the sound of my bellow, women miscarry. The earth trembles at the blows of my hoofs. Now, where is Nandagopa's son?"

"Here I am, oh wretched bull" cries out Damodara.

The bull looks at him, and says, "There must be mettle in this boy. He is not amazed or afraid on seeing me or on hearing my roar."

"How should I fear, oh bull?" asks Damodara, "I am born on earth to rid the world of fear."

"Pooh! You are only a boy. That is why you know no fear" says the bull, "What do you mean to do, my boy?"

"To destroy you."

"You think you can do it?"

"No doubt of it."

"Then take the weapon you want."

"I need no weapon. My arms are enough. What is more, oh bull! I will stand on one leg. Knock me over if you can." replies Damodara.

"Oh, that's easy" says the bull, and butts at him, but falls down senseless. It rises up, and says to itself, "This is, indeed, the Lord of the three worlds, born as Madhusudana for the destruction of demons. If I am slain by Vishnu, for this is He, I shall go to heaven. So, I shall fight" and fights. Damodara hurls it down, and it falls down, eyes, mouth and nose streaming with blood, and its feet and ears twitching, and it expires. A herdsman then comes and announces that Sankarshana has gone and tackled the great serpent, Kaliya, in a pool in the Yamuna. Damodara says, "I'll break his pride. He battens on the people, cows and Brahmans. From to-day, he will lose his power and live in peace." There ends Act III.

Act IV shows the maidens trying to dissuade Damodara from entering the pool of the serpent. But, Damodara resolves to rid the world of this dragon. He says to himself, "How frightened and confused and incoherent these maidens have become in their terror of the snake! How lovely they are! Charming, with quivering lips, they let the wreaths fall from their locks, and the Upper robes, slip down, in their excitement, exposing their well-

shaped breasts.' He enters the pool, despite the old herdsman's crying out, "Don't be rash. Tigers and elephants and wild boars have entered there, and have never come back." Kaliya is afraid on seeing Krishna, and gets into the pool. Diamodara steps on the hood of Kaliya, and seizes the snake.

Kaliya tells him, "I will burn you up with my fumes."

Damodara replies, "Burn this single arm of mine, if you cart."

"I can burn the entire earth, with its seven mountains and seas. Is it difficult for me to Burn that one arm?" says the snake, and emits its poisonous fumes, but in vain. It then begs for protection, saying, "What strength have I, oh Lord of all the worlds, to burn that heroic arm on which all the worlds depend?" Damodara allows it to depart in peace with its household, telling it that it would be free from the fear of Garuda by getting his foot-print on its head that day.

Damodara then goes back to the girls with flowers gathered from the pool. The maidens are delighted to see him, but are afraid to take the flowers, as they have never seen such flowers before. Damodara says, "They are afraid of what they do not know" and reassures them, and makes them accept the flowers. Then a servant comes and tells Damodara that Kamsa has ordered him to go with his brother and people to attend a great festival called 'the Consecration of the Bow' that is to take place at Mathura. Damodara is delighted to accept the invitation, and fulfil his mission by killing Kamsa. There ends Act IV.

Act V begins with Kamsa saying to himself how he will get Damodara and his brother killed by his wrestlers after getting them there on the pretext of the festival. He calls Dhruvasena and asks him whether Damodara and his brother have arrived. Dhruvasena replies that they have arrived, and have robbed the royal washermen of their robes, and that the prime.minister sent the elephant, Kuvalayapeetam, to trample Damodara down, but that Damodara plucked its tusks out and beat it to death with them. Kamsa asks him to go and get further news. He comes back and says that Damodara has snatched the scented unguents from the hump-backed girl, Madanika, and has anointed his own limbs with them, and has made Madanika straight by rubbing her with his hand, and has snatched the flowers from the garland-maker and put them on, and gone to the archery, and killed Simhala, the superintendent, who tried to prevent him, and has broken the royal bow in two, and is now coming to. the audience hall. Kamsa sends for his wrestlers, Chanura and Mushtika, and takes his scat to see the.wrestling miatch. Chanura boasts that he will smash Damodara, and Mushtika says that he wilt throw down Balardma. Kamsa asks Dhruvasena to bring the

boys into the ring. They come. KamsaV servant tells them, "The great king is here. Approach and salute him."

They ask, "The great king of what? Of the nothingness which will be his lot after to-day?"

Kamsa has a look at Krishna and says, "So, this is Damodara! Dark in hue, with strong arms and shoulders, broad and muscular chest, he stalks along like a tusker in rut. No wonder, he has done these deeds I have heard of. He is fit to overturn the universe." Then he says aloud, "Let the fight begin."

Both pairs start wrestling. Damodara throws down Chanura, crying out, "This one is dead, with broken ribs." Sankarshana says, "This one too." Then Damodara exclaims, "Now I will send that demon, Kamsa, down to hell."

He mounts the balcony, seizes Kamsa by the head, and throws him down. Looking at him, he exclaims, "There lies the wicked Kamsa, his visage thick with gore, with goggling eyes, broken neck, and shattered thighs, shoulders, loins and legs, fractured hand and knees, and broken necklace and bracelets, and with his sacred thread dangling loose."

The army of Kamsa comes to attack the two youths. Vasudeva asks them to do no violence as the youths are his sons, by Rohini and Devaki. Damodara and Balarama salute Vasudeva who orders the corpses of Kamsa, Chanura and Mushtika to be thrown out. Vasudeva then orders Ugrasena, Kamsa's father, to be released from prison and brought, for being consecrated anew. The gods rain flowers on Damodara in honour of his victory over Kamsa. Ugrasena comes and thanks Krishna for ending his misery and consecrating him anew. Narada comes,, as the representative of the gods, and worships Krishna as Vishnu,, and goes away.

There ends the play.

CHAPTER V.

ABHISHEKA NATAKA.

The Coronation.—The play opens in the outskirts of the Kishkindha country.[1] Sugriva and Hanuman go with Rama and Lakshmana to see whether Rama is really so powerful as to be of help in overthrowing Valin and restoring to Sugriva his lost kingdom and wife. Sugriva and Hanuman see Rama's arrow pass through seven *sal* trees, and come back convinced that Rama is a worthy ally who can be relied on to tackle and kill Valin, as

[1] Modern Bellary,

promised by *him.* The four return to Ktahkindha town. Sugriva asks the other three to wait while he goes forward and roars out a challenge to his brother, Valin,

Valin hears the roar, and is about to go but to meet the challenge when his wife, Tara, clings to his robe and asks him not to go and meet Sugriva, and, at any rate, not to do so without consulting the ministers, as Sugriva, who had run away before, is not likely to have come back without having good reasons for expecting victory, Valin replies, "I shall strike down Sugriva and cause blood to pour out of every limb of his. Have no fear. Long ago, at the time of the churning of the milky sea for nectar, I went and laughed at the legions of gods and demons, and astonished them all by dragging the lord of serpents. Sugriva may resort to Indra, or Siva, or even Vishnu, but it will be all in vain. So, be a darling, and go inside." She goes away, exclaiming "I am going, unhappy that I am." He goes out and meets Sugriva.

With eyes red as fire, and biting his lips, and roaring dreadfully, Valin attacks Sugriva, who too puts up a terrific fight. Finally, Valin knocks Sugriva down with a blow from his fist. Hanuman cries out to Rama, 'This is a bad business for my master. Please remember your pledge." Rama then lets fly an arrow which strikes Valin who falls down unconscious, mortally wounded On recovering consciousness, Valin picks up the arrow, reads Rama's name on it, and says to Rama "Oh Rama, is it a conduct worthy of you, a hero born to uphold righteousness among kings, and to remove treachery from the world, to kilt me so unfairly in battle? Oh Raghava,[1] you wear bark garments, but your heart is not that of a holy ascetic. By treacherously slaying me, you have done an infamous and unholy deed." Rama replies, 'The deed is not treacherous or infamous or unholy. One may lawfully slaughter beasts by snares and guiles. You are a guilty beast, and are, therefore, punished."

"What is my guilt?" asks Valin.

"Adultery", says Rama.

"Adultery! But that is our custom", says Valin. Rama replies that Valin can distinguish between right and wrong, and, so, his merely being an ape, in form, will not Save him from punishment. Valin asks Rama why Sugriva, who has committed adultery with his wife, is not punished, and why he alone is punished for his adultery with Surgriva's wife. Rama replies that it is because, under the laws of the Aryas, an elder hrother should never touch a younger brother's wife. Valin then says, "Alas, I have no answer to that. Being punished by you, *1*

[1] Rama has several alternative names, like RahaVa, etc,

suppose I shall be freed from all my sins?" Rama says "Yes", and Valtn's death approaches. Sugriva is terribly grieved at the sight of his dying brother. Valin asks the women-folk to be kept out so that they may not see him in this miserable state. He then asks Sugriva and Rama to forgive his son Angada, and treat him affectionately, and gives Sugriva the golden necklace, the family heir-loom. Then he takes some water from Hanuman, and dies, seeing the Ganges and the other rivers, and Urvasi and the other heavenly nymphs, arriving for him, and the aerial car, drawn by a thousand swans, sent for him by Death. There ends Act I.

The interlude to Act II mentions about the search for Sita by Sugriva's monkey captains, headed by Angada, and about Hanuman's leap across the ocean to Lanka. The Act itself opens with a scene in Lanka, showing Sita surrounded by several demonesses. Sita exclaims, "Alas, I am far too patient, wretch that I am! Torn from my noble lord, brought to the palace of this demon, forced to listen to his disgusting and wicked words, I still go on living. But I feel confident that my husband's arrows will rescue me. How is it that, today, I feel some special joy, as at the sprinkling of water at a sacrifice? Is my lord pleased with me?" Hanuman enters the garden then, with a ring in hand, exclaiming to himself, "I have wandered all over Lanka. What a fine city, almost like a city in heaven, with rich gateways, splendid squares, and white palaces! And how Ravana is going to destroy it by persisting in his wrong path! I have passed through the ladies' quarters, bathing tanks, pavilions, terraces, temples, dungeons, halls and gardens, but cannot see any trace of Sita yet. I have passed througbpfectensive grounds with fountains, ponds, orchards, and flower-ttees, but, still, not a sign of her!"

Then he sights Sita, and says, "Ah! There is a lady sitting in the midst of these hideous she-devils, looking like a streak of lightning amidst dark-blue clouds. Her heart is evidently set on her beloved, her body is thin with fasting, her face is bathed in tears. She looks like a garland of white lotuses withering in the pitiless noon-day heat Can it be Sita?" Then he sees the glare of torches, and sees Ravana coming, stalking with a lively grace, like an elephant in rut, and adorned with a diadem set with gems. So, he climbs up an Asoka tree, and hides there, in order to make •certain whether the lady guarded by the demonesses is Sita.

- Ravana exlaims, "Ah, here is Sita at the foot of this tree, Still thiiikinjg of Rama! Her face is thin from fasting. She seems to smSnkinto herself and sits crouching, with her bosom **and** waist concealed, surrounded by this grcnap of demonesses, likfi a *vdlgte ftfntim* moop hidden by the eclipsje.. She scorns

delights, and all my mighty fortune, concentrated in love for her mortal husband, and is beyond my power." Hanuman is thus made sure regarding his guess that the lady is Sita, and says to himself "She is troubled like a gazelle at the sight of a lion''

Ravana approaches Sita and says, "Sita, renounce this terrible ascetic vow. Accept me, oh beautiful lady, with all thy heart. Abandon that mortal, who is powerless to save you, and has no red-hot love for you like me." Hanuman exclaims to himself, angrily, "He calls Rama powerless. I cannot restrain my anger. The divine age of silver has gone, and that of copper has come, by Sita's abduction and separation from her lord, and this demon's lust for her. If I seize the fellow, I shall not be satisfied till I have cut his body into a thousand pieces. I shall carry out the great Rama's task and kill this demon. If he overwhelms me, a great attempt will but miscarry." Ravana cries out to Sita, "Take me to thy bosom, oh lady of lovely eyes and exquisite form.'' Sita says, "This demon does not understand a curse's mystic power. Right will be wrong if this wretched demon lives" and says to Ravana, "Accursed be thou!" Ravana feels a burning sensation, and wonders at the power of a chaste woman's curse, far stronger than the blows dealt by gods or demons. He is then called away for his bath.

Hanuman comes down from the tree and tells Sita that he is an emissary sent to her by Rama whose heart is sad from anxiety for her, his beloved. Sita at first suspects that it. might be some wicked demon pretending to come from her lord, and trying to deceive her by disguising himself as a monkey, and, so, thinks of keeping silent. But, Hanuman tells her "Don't you believe me? Cast your suspicions aside. I am the monkey Hanuman sent to search for you by the Monkey King, Sugriva, who is in alliance with Rama, the. beacon-light of the Ikshvakus." Sita then says to herself "Be he who he may, he has mentioned my husband's name. So I'll speak with him." Hanuman then shows her the ring of Rama, and tells her that Rama's face is pale and thin by fasting, his eyes full of tears, his fortitude gone, and his charm and grace faded, through worrying about her and through his intense grief owing to separation from her.

Sita says to herself "Hearing of my husband's grief and pain, on separation from me, my heart is swinging between joy and sorrow." Then Hanuman tells her of the killing of Valin and the coronation of Sugriva by Rama, and of the great search for her. He assures her, "Grasping his great bow, and surrounded by hosts of monkeys, his new allies, Rama will assail Lanka and overwhelm Ravana." Sita asks him, "Am I dream ing? Is it true, sir? I am not sure." He reassures *her.* Theis Sita asks him to describe her plight to Ramarin fttdirityay thai

he may not be overwhelmed with grief. Hanuman then leaves her, telling her that he would announce his arrival to Ravana by destroying that park, with its lotus beds and beautiful trees, and thereby wounding his pride. There ends Act II.

Act III begins with a report to Ravana by Sankukarna, a demon attendant, of the destruction of the Asoka park by a monkey. 'That park of Indrajit, from which even our great queen Mandodari will not remove a flower or sprig, has been totally destroyed" says he. Ravana asks, in fury, "What man, destined for death, has done this deed?" Sankukarna says, "It is not a man, but a monkey." Ravana says contemptuously, "A monkey, say you? Go at once and catch him, and bring him here." Sankukarna returns and says, "Your Majesty, that monkey is very powerful. He has uprooted the *sal* trees like lotus stalks, and pulverised the ornamental mound with his fists. He has destroyed all the creeper bowers with his hand. He has made the guards unconscious, simply with his roar. Please depute a sufficient force to capture him." Ravana orders him to take a thousand slaves to capture the ape. Sankukarna goes and returns, and says that Hanuman has slain all the slaves by uprooting trees in the park and hitting them with them. Then Ravana asks him to bid Prince Aksha to catch the ape. Sankukarna goes and comes back and reports that five generals had, even without waiting for orders, joined Prince Aksha, and chased the ape which fled to the gate-house, but had there killed all the five generals with the golden cross-bar of the gate, and had caught the prince by the throat and killed him with a blow of his fist, grinning all the while.

Ravana expresses. his intention of tackling Hanuman himself, and is told by Sankukarna that Prince Indrajit has gone and attacked the ape. Sankukarna is asked to go and get more news. He goes and returns and brings news that, after a strenuous fight, Indrajit has bound the ape with snares. Ravana bids him bring Vibhishana and Hanuman, and exclaims to himself, "This monkey has dared to do what gods and demons never dared. Once I shook Mount Kailasa, and got a boon from Siva. Parvati and Nandi cursed me because I ignored them. Can this monkey be that curse come in this guise?"

Vibishana comes muttering to himself that Ravana has not had the sense to.listen to good counsel and restore Sita to Rama. Ravana asks him why he is looking so gloomy. He replies "The servants of an overweening master have to be so." Ravana says "Enough of it! Go and bring Hanuman." Hanuman is brought into Ravana's presence, and exclaims, "I was not caught ;by the devil, as he thinks. I allowed myself to be caught in order to see the demon-king." Ravana asks, him who he is. He says

'1 am Hanuman, son of the wind-god by Aajanadevi. I have been sent here by Rama. Hear Rama's orders !" "What I Rama's orders! Put this monkey to death!" says Ravana. Vibhishana objects to this, as Hanuman is an envoy, and says that **he** may be asked to deliver Rama's message. Ravana asks Hanuman to do so. Hanuman says, "Here is the message. 'Seek the best protection you can get. Go to Siva, **or** hide **in** the nethermost hell. I shall send you to the abode of death, with every limb cleft with my goodly arrows.'" Ravana says "With celestial weapons I defeated the gods. All the demons bow to me. Kubera I brought to nought, and robbed his aerial car. How can a mere mortal, like Rama, pit himself against me?". Hanuman retorts "If you are as wonderful as all that, why did you not fight Rama and take his wife, instead of stealing her after luring him away by magic?" Vibhishana exclaims, "Well said, Hanuman!" Ravana asks him, "Are you taking the side of my enemies?" Vibhishana replies, "Oh no. But send back Sita, the wife of Rama. I would fain not see this house destroyed through thee." Ravana replies, "No need for alarm, Vibhishana. A long-maned lion is never slain by the deer; a mighty elephant is not struck down by a jackal." Hanuman says, "Speak not so, oh Ravana, you worthless outcaste goblin whose fate is sealed. Is it right for you to breathe such words about Rama, the great hero, the lord of all the worlds?" Ravana asks his attendants at first to put Hanuman to death, for calling him by name, and, then, modifies the order into one for setting Hanuman's tail on fire and throwing him out of Lanka. He gives Hanuman this message for Rama:—"Rama, I have humiliated you by abducting pour wife. If you have any skill in archery, give me battle." Hanuman replies, "You will soon see your Lanka demolished with its ramparts, gateways and towers, your gardens destroyed, ind your own self vanquished." He is then taken away. Vibhishana asks Ravana to restore Sita, as keeping her means a breach of the law and a danger for the Rakshasas. Ravana Danishes him as disregarding fraternal love and siding with the foe. Vibhishana is glad to resort to Rama and thus save the lemon race from total destruction. He goes away, saying, "May you abandon wrath and lust, and do the proper thing!" Ravana prepares for measures to protect Lanka. There ends Act III.

The interlude to Act IV shows Sugriva's chamberlain telling he general about Hanuman's discovering Sita, and asking him :o get the army ready to march. The Act itself opens with Rama and Lakshmana, Sugriva and Hanuman on the shores of he sea. Rama exclaims that he has crossed mountains **and** rivers, woods and forests, and at last reached the sea-shore. Lakshmana says, **"Here** is **the** ocean sleeping, **like Vishnu, on a lapphire-blue bed, canopied over with opal clouds, Wearing**

beautiful gariands of billows breaking into foam, and possessed of a. thousand arms in the shape of rivers." Rama says> "My arrow is strung to my bow and the foe would have perished ere now but for the intervening stretch of **sea."**

Vibhishana then comes flying from Lanka. Hanuman does not recognise him at first and asks the monkeys to be ready to attack with rocks and trees, fists and claws, saying, "He rushes on, like a moth into a fire." Vibhishana's heart is full of misgivings. He says to himself. "I have sent Rama no word, and am the younger brother of his arch-enemy. But he is the essence of goodness, and my heart is free from guile. So why these doubts?" Hanuman sees him and hails him. Vibhishana too rejoices at this, and sends Hanuman to Rama. Hanuman tells Rama, "Here is the righteous Vibhishana seeking your protection, oh king, being banished by his brother on account of you." Rama sends Lakshmana to bring him in with all honour. Sugriva warns Rama that demons are very artful, and that he should think twice before befriending Vibhishana. Hanuman assures Rama that Vibhishana is as loyal to him as themselves, and that he has seen him opposing Ravana in Lanka itself. Rama then sends Lakshmana to bring him in. Lakshmana brings him in. Vibhishana greets Rama and seeks his protection. He adds, "I am purified today by your sight." Rama tells him, "From today, be thou the lord of Lanka under my command."

He consults Vibhishana as to how to cross the ocean. Vibhishana says, "Let fly your divine shaft upon the sea if he does not give you passage." Rama agrees, stands up angrily, and threatens to let fly his divine shaft upon the sea, and to dry up the waters and the slime, the mud and the brine, and still the roar of the waves, and make the fish die by waterless parching. Then the god of the ocean comes and seeks his protection. His body is blue as a water lily, his eyes are red as copper, his diadem is set with gems. He bows to Rama in confusion, crying out, "I have offended Narayana who has come here in human form to fulfil his purpose. Himself the cause of all, he has come to fulfil some purpose. Salutations to the blessed Narayana, the cause of the three worlds! What should I do?" Rama says "Pray grant a passage that we may go to Lanka." The Ocean grants him a passage by divided waters. The sea seems to be cut in twain, and Rama crosses over with his troops, and gazes on Lanka, and pitches his camp on the Suvela mountain. He exclaims, "This great city will **perish** now, **through** Ravana's fault **like a** ship **that is lost** by the pilot's fault."

Neela comes **in with two monkeys caught spying.** He says, **"When taking the roll-ea!!, we found these two who** had come **from somewhere unnoticed." Vibhishana identifies them as**

Suka and Sarana, two trusted demon ministers of-Havana.' They protest that they have come to Rania, seeking his protection as the demon race is doomed to destruction. Vibhishana says that they will never desert Ravana, arid recorhmends their punishment. Rama treats them with, contempt, and orders them to be set free, remarking, "By punishing these, victory is not gained, or Ravana destroyed." Lakshmana then says, "If you free them like that, let them see the entire camp before they are set free." Rama says, "A very good suggestion", and asks Neela to show them round the whole camp, and sets them free, and asks them to take this message to Ravana: "By abducting Sita, you have brought war on your own head. I have come to war with you, but see you not." Rama then reviews his troops, as the sun sets. He says, "See the setting sun, shining like the gold disc on the forehead of an elephant covered over with red velvet." There ends Act IV.

The interlude to Act V shows Ravana's chamberlain despondent at the death of all the great demon warriors, ending with Kumbhakarna and Indrajit, and the reluctance of Ravana to give up Sita. "The prosperity of the demon house is setting. The king's life itself is in danger. Yet, he will not make peace by giving up Sita. Rama has crossed the perilous seas and come. He has killed every warrior of note in our army except the king. Driven by his lust, but, fancying himself a great hero, the king disregards his ministers' advice and wants to fight on till death," says he. He asks Vidyujjihva to bring lifelike faked models of the heads of Rama and Lakshmana for Ravana.

The Act begins with a scene showing Sita surrounded by demonesses. Sita says to herself, "My heart rejoiced at my lord's coming to these shores. But, to-day, somehow, my heart is troubled. May the gods grant that all is well!" Ravana enters. He finds "Good Fortune" departing, and implores her to stay. When she will not stay, he threatens to bring her back after defeating Rama. He then goes to Sita to persuade her to love him. He says to himself, on beholding Sita's face: "My eyes have forgotten all sleep; thirsting for her embrace, my form grows pale and wasted. Alas, poor Ravana, your armies subdued the triple world once. Now, you are yourself subdued." Then he approaches Sita, and says, "Sita, with eyes like lotus leaves, mistress of my heart, give up thinking of that mortal man. I shall slay Rama and Lakshmana today." Sita exclaims, "What a fool you are, wanting to balance Mt. Mandara in your hand!"

Vidyujjihva then comes and gives Ravana the two faked heads, saying, "Here are the heads of those two mortals slam by our prince in battle, and brought here for your pleasure." Ravana shows them to Sita who faints on seeing them. When she

redovers, Rayana asks her to abandon her love for Rama, who' is dead, and to transfer her affections to him. Sita gazes at Rama's head, as in a trance, and says, "Alas, my lord! I am too: cold-hearted, wretched me, gazing stupidly on your lotus face with eyes so changed. Alas, dear lord, where .have you gone, casting me in this sea of troubles? But, I have not yet died, though your own half. Can it be that your reported death- is, false?" Then, turning to Ravana, she says, "With the very sword with which you killed my lord, put me to death, I pray you/' Ravana says, "Indrajit has killed your wretched husband, along with Lakshmana. Who will now set you free?" A demon rushes in crying out, "Rama, Rama ". Ravana angrily asks him "What has that wretched mortal done now?" The demon tells Ravana that Rama has slain Indrajit. Ravana falls down in a swoon, crying out, "Is Indrajit, who conquered Indra and his hosts, slain by a mere man?" On recovering from it, he cries out, "Alas, my child, so skilled in arms, a terror to the whole world, the conqueror of Indra, the apple of your parents' eyes, the undaunted hero in battle, why have you gone and left me here?" and again faints.

Recovering consciousness once more, he cries out, "What good now is Sita, the cause of all this misfortune? What good conquering the universe after this blow of Fate? And Ravana still lives, oh misery!" Then he sends a messenger and gets news that Rama is advancing with his army on Lanka, to set it ablaze. He gets enraged, draws his sword and cries out, "Where is he? Where is he?". Then he wants to kill Sita, crying out, "On account of her, so "many of my brothers, sons, and friends- have been killed. So, I shall cut out her heart, the home of enmity, and pull out her entrails and tie them round my neck." The demon attendant says, "The present is no time for futile- threats, and it is certainly no good killing a woman." So, Ravana mounts his chariot and goes out to fight Rama, telling Sita that Rama would be shot through his heart with his arrow soon. Sita prays to the gods to grant her lord victory. There ends Act V..

The interlude to Act VI shows three fairies describing the battle between Rama's monkeys and Ravana's demons, and the duel between Rama and Ravana. Monkeys rush with tails and ears erect, hurling rocks and trees and dealing terrific fist blows, battering the heads of demons. Demons rush with their swords on the monkeys, with fierce faces, bitten lips, and goggling eyes, gaping open their mouths with the speed, and exhibiting their long curved teeth. Ravana lets fly his spear resembling death;, Rama smiles and splits it in two. Ravana lets fly his arrows, against Rama, but they fall harmlessly on Rama, like drops of rain water on a bull. Ravana mounts a car and rushes against

Rama who is on foot. Indra sends his own car, driven by Matali, to Rama who mounts it. Both the cars wheel round in military movements, like two suns wandering in the sky. At last, Rama discharges the *Brahmastra* which kills Ravana and returns to Rama.

The Act proper begins by Rama's proclaiming his victory and successful accomplishment of his vow, and the proclamation of Vibhishana as lord of Lanka. Lakshmana, goes and tells' Rama that Sita is coming to meet him. Rama tells him that memories of her misfortune and stay in the enemy's palace will make his anger well out. Vibhishana comes and tells Rama that Sita is coming to meet him. Rama asks him to make her wait, as she has been sullied by her stay in Ravana's palace and has become a stain on Ikshwaku's house. He says, "I must control my senses, and my desire to see her, for the sake of my family and prestige." Vibhishana says, "But, pardon me," Rama asks him to close the subject, and not to vex him further. Lakshmana then tells Rama that Sita wants his permission to mount the funeral pyre. Rama agrees. Lakshmana is agitated between his duty of obeying his elder brother's orders and getting the funeral pyre ready, and his affection for Sita about whose chastity he has not the least doubt. He goes and tells Hanuman, "If you are capable of doing it, do it. Such is my brother's order." Hanuman asks Lakshmana, "What do you think about it?" Lakshmana replies, "What I or you think is of no consequence. We have but to carry out my brother's orders."

Hanuman goes to make the pyre. Lakshmana tells Rama, "All your labours have been in vain, oh brother. Sita, whom you rescued, is entering the fire, as coolly and naturally as a swan entering a field of lilies." Rama asks him to prevent her. It is too late. Hanuman and Sugriva watch Sita entering the fire unscathed. "Like a golden necklace, she has come out of the flames with added lustre." exclaims Hanuman, when he sees Agni lead Sita out of the fire. Surgriva wonders who it is who comes leading Sita.

Agni salutes Rama as Narayana, and hands Sita over to him, saying, "She is sinless, pure, unscathed and honoured of all the world. Know that this child of Janaka is the blessed Lakshmi, come to thee in human form." Everyone$_f$ is surprised at the miracle, except Rama who says, "Well I knew Vaidehi's purity. I acted thus to bring conviction to the thousand-tongued world."

The celestial musicians come and sing in praise of Rama:—"Salutations to Narayana, the cause of the three worlds! Brahma is your heart, Rudra your wrath, the sun and the moon your eyes, Bharati, the goddess of speech, your tongue. All the three worlds, with Brahma and Indra and the hosts of gods, were

created' by you alone, oh lord. Sita is Lakshmi; and you'Vishnu. So, receive her. When this earth had sunk in the briny deep, you raised it, taking the form of the Boar; with three strides you encompassed the three worlds. Slaying Ravana in battle, you have made the gods feel secure as they never did Kef ore;"' '•.

Agni then crowns Rama as king, and there are criefc of "Victory to the king!" "Victory to our lord!" "Victory to the Blessed One!" "Victory to His Majesty' and "Victory to the destroyer of Ravana!" Vibhishana, Lakshmana and others see Rama and Sita crowned together and come out after the ceremony. Rama says to Lakshmana, "Dear Lakshmana, when the king had placed me on the throne, and the auspicious cord was put on my arm, he had to break off the coronation, in order to please my mother. It is clear that, though he has gone the way of all men, my father it is that has crowned me once again today, with a happy and contented heart." Agni informs Rama that his subjects are arriving to meet him, led by Bharata and Satrughna, on Indra's orders. Rama rejoices at this news. Agni then conveys to Rama the congratulations of Indra and the gods, and Rama thanks the gods. There the play ends.

CHAPTER VI.

PANCHARATRA.

The Five Nights.—This is a three-Act Play. The Prelude to Act I shows Duryodhana, the king of the Kurus, performing a grand sacrifice attended by all his vassal kings, and three Brahmans describing the splendour and magnificence of the ceremony. They proclaim how sumptuous the feeding of the priests has been, how generous the gifts, how great the devotion of the king to the Brahmans, and how spiritual the atmosphere has become, so that tigers are as tame as deer, and lions are docile, and birds and kine are happy, and the world. rendered fit to be an abode of the gods. These Brahmans are also deploring the carelessness of the young Brahman disciples who do, not take sufficient care to keep the holy fire of the sacrifice from contact with the common fire, till the royal lustration is over, adding thai the holy fire will shrink from such contact as much as a twice-born man will from contact with a churl, or as a man in caste will from contact with a person outcasted. One of the Brahmans says, about a barrow full of butter blazing away in spite of being constantly sprinkled with water, that it is just like a young mothei who has lost her babe, burning with grief inside, though drenchec in tears. Another exclaims, "See those five snakes issuing from that hole, frightened by the approaching fire, like the five senses issuing out of one who has just died." A third says, "This fire

15 dying down for lack of fuel like a good man's munificfence stopping for lack of funds." "Here comes Duryodhana attended by Bhishma, Drona and a crowd of kings. The citizens come and say to Duryodhana, 'Feed the deserving at sacrifices, and win the earth with valour. Leave wrath aside, and be merciful to your own people/" says the first Brahman. There, the Prelude ends. r,{

The Act proper shows Drona and Bhishma engaged in conversation. Drona tells Bhishma that a pupil's fault comes home to the teacher, leaving aside kinsmen and friends, and that Duryodhana seems at last to be upholding the ancient *Dharma.* Bhishma says, "Here is Duryodhana who has reached eminence, but has incurred untold infamy through his love of strife. Now, this very man shines in a new guise, performing this sacrifice according to the sacred law."

Duryodhana, Sakuni and Karna enter. Duryodhana says, "I feel now that my preceptor is fully satisfied. My virtue is established, and my infamy gone for ever. The world is reassured. Only the dead, they say, can gain heaven. But that is false. Heaven is not invisible. It bears its manifold fruits here, in this world of ours."

Karna says, "The wealth of warriors depends on their arms. Those who hoard for their sons are deceived. Giving away all his wealth to priests and Brahmans, a king should leave his sons but a bow as patrimony."

"Karna speaks the truth" says Sakuni, "Ikshvaku, Sayyati, Yayati, Rama, Mandhata, Nabhaga, Nriga and Ambarisha possessed great treasures and mighty kingdoms. Their bodies have perished. But they live by their sacrifices."

All those assembled offer their congratulations to Duryodhana on the successful completion of his sacrifice. Duryodhana salutes Drona who says that Bhishma should be saluted first. Bhishma replies that Drona should be saluted first, as he is a Brahman, as he is born without a mother, and as he is a teacher, and depends for his livelihood on the denial of arms, unlike himself who gets his livelihood by the use of arms. Then, Drona accepts the first salutation, and blesses Duryodhana, hoping that his capacity for sacrifice will grow. Duryodhana next salutes Bhishma who wishes him an ever-tranquil mind. He then salutes Sakuni who wishes him success like Jarasandha's. Then Karna embraces Duryodhana who greets him as a friend. Drona introduces King Bhishmaka to Duryodhana who salutes him. Bhishma introduces King Bhurisravas, describing him as the "iron bolt of the Deccan's gateway." Then Abhimanyu is introduced by Drona. But Sakuni introduces Sahadeva, Son of

Jarasandha, at the same time, and Duryodhana devotes his attention to him first.

Duryodhana then asks why Virata has not come. Sakuni says, "I have sent a messenger. He is, I think, on his way."

Duryodhana requests Drona to name his teacher's fee. Drona says that he has something to petition for. "What can I give? Name it, and it is thine. Don't hesitate." says Duryodhana. Drona says, "I shall tell you, but my tears impede me", and he sheds tears. All are surprised and astounded. Duryodhana has water brought, pours it. on Drona's hand, and says, "If you think of my former duplicity, and doubt me, here is the guarantee for my keeping my word."

Drona then says, "Now my heart is confident. My son, share your inheritance with the homeless Pandavas who have found no refuge for these twelve years. This is the reward I beg of you." Sakuni characterises his act as a religious fraud. "Having initiated this sacrifice, is it worthy of you thus to dupe your pupil who trusted you?" he asks. Drona replies, "Don't speak with the arrogance of Gandhara. Dishonourable yourself, you think every one else is the same. Is it fraud to advise him to restore to his cousins their sire's kingdom? Is it better to give them freely what is asked by me now, or for them to take it by force?". All exclaim, "By force?". Bhishma asks Duryodhana to concentrate only on the purificatory bath, after granting Drona's reward, and not to listen to Sakuni whose conceit is responsible for the feud in the family and the woes of the Pandavas.

Duryodhana asks Drona why the Pandavas, if they were really so strong, restrained their wrath when going to the forest after being defeated in gambling and stripped of their realm and pride. Drona replies that it was because Yudhisthira, who was unaware of the foul play in the gambling, restrained Bhima who was measuring the pillars already, and who would have made it impossible for Sakuni to utter his words about fraud had he been allowed free play that day. Bhishma asks Drona not to quarrel, but to get his objective peacefully. "No cringing. Let us rather have the quarrel." says Drona. Bhishma appeals to Duryodhana to have pity on the powerless, miserable and destitute condition of the Pandavas, and to take them back, and not to make them remain with beasts any more. Sakuni says, "Let them remain so." Karna asks Drona to tackle Duryodhana gently. Drona then says to Duryodhana, "My son, am I your teacher?" Bhishma says to himself, "Now, he has started on the right track. Conciliation is the only remedy for the ill-

DuryGdhana wants to take counsel with Sakuni. Drbna considers his task to be hopeless. He resorts to conciliation. He emfcraces Sakuni, saying, "Old age is prone to anger, my child. Forgive my outburst." Bhishma remarks to himself, "Through affection for Duryodhana, and anxious for his welfare, Drona fs beseeching Sakuni who, though besought, will not cast off his crookedness." Sakuni says to himself, "Ha, ha, the teacher is a rogue. He is coaxing me in order to get his own way."

Duryodhana takes Sakuni and Karna aside and consults them. Sakuni says that nothing should be given, angrily remarking, "If the realm is to be given, why do you ask our advice? Go, give it all away." Kama says, "Pardon or no pardon, that is for you to decide. We assist you in times of battle." Duryodhana tells Sakuni, "Uncle, think of some wretched country, hard to live in, and beset by a powerful foe, where the Pandavas might dwell." Sakuni replies, "My answer is the empty air. What foe can be more powerful than Arjuna? And, mind you, the most wretched country is of no use. Corn will grow even on salty soil if Yudhisthira is king." Duryodhana replies that he is only anxious to avoid blame for breaking his word. Then, Sakuni tells him of a device to keep his word in letter, though not in spirit.

. Duryodhana goes, and tells Drona that, if tidings of the ; Pandavas are brought within five days, he will give them half the •kingdom. Drona complains that this is virtually denying him his boon, as he cannot, in five days, get tidings of the Pandavas who have not been heard of for twelve years. Bhishma too condemns "this trick in duty", adding, "the Kurus ever, keep their word." Duryodhana is firm, and sticks to his condition. .Drona regrets, within himself, that he is not like Hanuman who leapt across the ocean and brought tidings of Sita. He racks his brain as to.how to get tidings of the Pandavas.

At this juncture, a messenger comes and announces that the Virata King could not come as the hundred Kichakas, his kinsmen, had been killed by an unknown man without weapons, and the "king Was in mourning. Bhishma at once guesses that the man who killed them with his bare hands can be no other than Bhima, and asks Drona to agree to Duryodhana's terms, as it is easy to IoGate the Pandavas now. Drona tells Duryodhana accordingly, and, proclaims, in the assembly, that Duryodhana and Sakuni have agreed to give the Pandavas half the kingdom if tidings *pi* thern are brought in five nights. These "Five Nights" give their i*a*n#tothet>{ay.

Bhishma thien" suggests a cattle raid tin Virata'; as he; has a secret feud with its king whose real reason for absence is that

feud. Drona tells Bhishma that the k
of his, and asks him why he sugg
replies, "Oh, honest-hearted Brahn
Pandavas, who are possessed of grat
places, for aiding the Virata king, and thus get tidings of them in five nights/' The expedition is soon got ready. Drona tells Duryodhana that he and Bhishma are anxious to see his valour in battle. He also asks Sakuni to go in the leading chariot. Sakuni cheerfully agrees. There ends Act I.

The Interlude to Act II shows an old cowherd in the Virata country telling another cowherd, Gomitraka, that the cows have been assembled, and that all the cowherds and lasses are in festive dress, as the Virata King is going to give away cows in large numbers, as gifts, at his birthday festival. The cowherds and lasses sing and dance. As the sun sets, they see the Kuru chariots arrive, and are frightened by the shower of arrows. They go at once to report the matter to the Virata king.

The Act opens with a soldier, Jayasena, telling the chamberlain that the Kurus are lifting their cattle, and that the herd is in a pitiable state of agitation, with frightened cows, terrified bulls, and scampering calves, and the whole place reverberating with bovine bellows of distress. The chamberlain says, "The king is in the thick of the birthday festivities. I cannot give him this news now. I shall tell him at the end of the day." But the soldier is insistent that the matter is very urgent, and that the king must be told at once.

The chamberlain goes, and tells the king. Virata comes out exclaiming, "My cows are being stolen, and my calves are running about in panic while I am feasting shamelessly on dainties, adorned with bracelets and sandal-paste. Fie!". He calls Jayasena. Jayasena greets him as "Great King!" "Oh, drop that absurd epithet 'Great King'! My kinghood is in the mud. Tell me about the battle " says Virata. Jayasena says, "There is little more to tell than what I have told already."

The king asks his chariot to be got ready, and his bow to be brought. The soldier goes to fetch them. Meanwhile, the king wonders why Duryodhana has organised this raid even though he had really not attended the sacrifice owing to the death of his kinsmen. He sends for Bhagavan, who is really Yudhisthira disguised as a Brahman, to consult him about the enemy's Weaknesses, as he had lived long in Hastinapura. Bhagavan comes in -and asks, "Why all this warlike activity? Is it to subdue the«arrogant, or to rescue the oppressed?" Virata tells him about the insult to him by the Kurus who are lifting his cattUu ..Bhagavan says to himself, "Alas, in this worldj community of descent matters much. When my quarrelsome *kin* 3o

wrong, I feel as if I am doing wrong myself." The Virata king says that he will humble the Kurus, as he is not a Yudhisthira to forgive them. Bhagavan is pleased at this tribute **to** his forgiving nature.

A messenger comes and says that Bhishma, Drona, Jayadratha, Kama, Kripa, Salya and others have come with Duryodhana. Virata is anxious to fight Bhishma, and asks the charioteer to get his chariot at once. The charioteer replies that Prince Uttara has gone in it. Bhagavan is afraid for the safety of the prince, and asks King Virata to recall him. King Virata says that he will go to his aid in another chariot. He, however, asks the charioteer why he did not drive the prince's chariot himself. The charioteer replies that the prince took Brihannala, (who is really Arjuna disguised as a hermaphrodite) to drive the chariot. Bhagavan is reassured by this, and tells.the king that he need not be anxious about Uttara, as Brihannala will see him through.

Just then, a soldier comes, and says that the prince's car has been smashed near the burning ground. Bhagavan says to himself, "That is where Arjuna has hidden his bow." and says aloud, "Soon, the Kurus will find their graveyard there." "Bhagavan, your cool talk out of season makes me angry" says the Virata king. "Everything will be all right, oh king. Have I told you a single thing which proved untrue?" asks Bhagavan, and the king admits that it is so, and sends the soldier back to get more news.

The soldier returns and speaks of the prince's sending showers of arrows which cover the whole atmosphere, of Drona, Bhishma, and Kama retreating precipitately in wonder arid dismay, and of Abhimanyu alone continuing to resist. Bhagavan -fears that Arjuna may hesitate to fight and overpower his son. Virata asks the soldier why Abhimanyu was a problem when Bhishma, whom Parasurama was unable to. conquer, Drona, with his magic darts, and Kama and Jayadratha had all been overpowered by Uttara, and attributes it to his son's love to prolong a fight with a heroic youth like himself. He asks the soldier to go and get more news.

The soldier returns and announces the flight of the raiders and the end of the raid. Virata asks where Uttara is, and is told, "He is preparing a report of the gallant deeds of warriors whose heroism. he witnessed." Virata exclaims, "Ah, he is engaged.in a praiseworthy task. For, when a warrior is wounded in an honourable action, praise and honours, coming close on **the** went, remove his pain," He asks the soldier where Brihan-$a& **is;;aSfl_is**'"**toM* that*he** is in **the** ladtes' quarters relating the [5]jbyM rtews."[r:]^yata sends for him,

Brihannala comes along, exclaiming how, in that woman's garb, and decked in the fineries the princess gave him, he is ashamed to meet the king. He says to himself how want of practice, and an easy life, had made him awkward and unsteady at first in handling the bow and arrows though soon he got over this and showered arrows galore. He is sorry that he could not capture Duryodhana and take him to the Virata king.

He goes to the place where Bhagavan and the king are. He exclaims that the glory of Yudhisthira is increased by his Brahman's garb and triple stick exemplifying absolute control of thought, word and deed. He salutes him and then salutes the king.

Virata says to himself, "One's form, family and status do not matter. High and low shine by their deeds. This very effeminate creature, whom I despised till now, is now greatly respected by me."

He asks Brihannala to describe the fighting. When Brihannala is doing this, a soldier comes and announces that the king's scullion (Bhima, in disguise) has captured Abhimanyu by just going up to his car fearlessly and lifting him out with his two arms.

The king wants Abhimanyu to be admitted to his presence at once. Bhagavan says that such respect to one related to the Yadus and Pandavas might be construed as arising from fear. The king replies, "He is the son of Yudhisthira, and is of the same age as Uttara. He may one day even become my son-in-law, for I have, as you, know, a daughter of marriageable age. I am also related to Drupada for generations. Besides, I admire the Pandavas. So, let him be brought at once." Bhagavan suggests that he be brought by Brihannala. He does so in order to give Arjuna a chance to meet and embrace his son, saying to himself, "In my presence, he will be shy about his son."

King Virata is very proud of his son's heroism. Bhima enters remarking to himself that he had to exert himself as much to carry away Abhimanyu as he had to when carrying away all his brothers and mother from the blazing lac house. Abhimanyu comes with Brihannala, and wonders who it is who carried him away boldly with so much ease, and who this other person in lady's trappings is. He says to himself that Brihannala looks like Siva masquerading as Parvati.

Brihannala tells Bhima aside that he has misused his brute force in bringing Abhimanyu as captive in his first flight, adding that Krishna will be angered at the reverse, and Subhadra grieved at the enforced parting from her son. Bhima replies that he brought him away, partly to cheer up Draupadi who .was

pining to see her children, and partly because he could not bear the idea of Abhimanyu's remaining with his foes.

Brihannala tells Bhima aside that he longs to hear Abhimanyu speak, and asks him to make him speak. Bhima cries but "Abhimanyu!" "Abhimanyu indeed!" bursts out Abhimanyu angrily, on being accosted by his name. Brihannala also calls out "Abhimanyu!". "Aye! Am I 'Abhimanyu* to all of you? Do churls call nobles by their names here? Is this the etiquette of the place? Or do you fellows do so to insult me on my capture?" asks Abhimanyu. Brihannala asks him, "Abhimanyu, is your mother well ?"

"What! You ask about my mother too! Are you Yudhisthira or Bhima or Arjuna to talk to me so familiarly about the ladies of my house?" asks Abhimanyu in anger. "And, Abhimanyu, is Kesava, the son of Devaki, well?" continues Brihannala coolly.

'Aye, you call even him by name. Yes, of course, he must be all right, if he is associated with people like you" replies Abhimanyu.

Bhima and Brihannala wink at each other. "I say, are you two mocking me?" asks Abhimanyu.

"No, not at all. Only, I was wondering how a son of .Arjuna, and a nephew of Janardana, happened to be worsted in battle like this" says Brihannala.

"I don't want to sing my own praises. But, go and see the heaps of slain left by me before I was captured. Few of the dead will have arrows other than mine in them" says Abhimanyu.

-Brihannala tells Bhima aside that this is true, adding that he himself would have been hit had he not turned his car aside. But, he says loudly, "Why this bragging? You were taken prisoner by a mere infantryman."

"He came unarmed. So, remembering that I was Arjuna's son, I did not like to strike at him, and he captured and carried .me away then " says Abhimanyu.

Come hither at once, Abhimanyu" cries out Virata.

"This way, prince. There is the king. Go up to him" says Brihannala, taking the young man along.

"Whose king ?" asks Abhimanyu.

"No, no. Don't show any disrespect. He is sitting with a Brahman " says Brihannala.

"With a Brahman!" "exclaims Abhimanyu, and approaches, **arid saWtes Bhagavah, who blesses him,**

King Virata asks him, "Why will you not greet me?". He exclaims, "Ah, the pride of this youth! I shall humble it. Who captured him ?".

"Great king, I did " says Bhima.

"You should add 'unarmed'" says Virata.

"God forbid! I had these two stout arms of mine. These are my weapons. Only weaklings need other weapons" says Bhima.

"This boast, fellow, will suit only my middle uncle" says Abhimanyu.

"Who is this middle uncle of yours, my boy?" asks. Bhagavan.

"I shall not boast to a Brahman" says Abhimanyu, "Let somebody else ask me, and he will get the reply."

"Then, tell *me"* says the king.

"My middle uncle is he who made a halter for Jarasandha with his arm round his neck, and robbed Krishna of that honous* [v] says Abhimanyu.

"Your haughty words will not anger me" says Virata, " I am glad to see such spirit in a youth. Now, shall I ask you 'How are you?' or tell you 'You are free, and may go where you like?' ".

"If you want to favour me, treat me as a prisoner, with fetters on my legs " says Abhimanyu, "As I was captured and brought here, only Bhima's arms shall take me away from here."

Uttara enters, sick of the praise showered on him undeservingly, and resolved to reveal the truth. He salutes the king and Bhagavan. Virata asks him, "Have you honoured the brave?"

He replies, "Yes. But here is the bravest, Dhananjaya*' and points to Brihannala. "He defeated Bhishma and the rest with his arrows, and protected me."

Virata asks Brihannala, "Is this true?"

"Oh, no. Having done it all himself, he gives the credit to me in his youthful enthusiasm and generosity" says Brihannala.

"See the discoloured mark of the Gandiva bow and string on his forearm " says Uttara.

"That is a scar caused when removing my bracelets" says Brihannala.

"Let me see " says the king.

Then Brihannala says. "If I am Ariuna. this is Bhima. and **"this* is Yudhisthira;*'**

^Yudhisthira! Bhima! Arjuna!" cries out Virata, "Could you not trust me?". He then says that his house has been honoured by the residence of the Pandavas.

Abhimanyu rejoices and salutes his uncles and father, and begs for forgiveness for his rude words. Arjuna embraces him, and says, "What joy, after thirteen years!". He then makes Abhimanyu salute Virata who wishes him to have the magnanimity of Yudhisthira, the might of Bhima, the skill of Arjuna, the charm of Naknla, the foresight of Sahadeva, and the wisdom and glory of Krishna, the Beloved of the world.

Virata is inwardly troubled at the freedom of Brihann'ala, when in the hermaphrodite disguise, with his daughter, Uttara, and offers Arjuna her hand as a reward for his aid in repelling the cattle raid. Arjuna and Yudhisthira hang down their heads in shame, at the implied suggestion of undue familiarity. Arjuna says, "I have treated all the ladies of the palace, Oh king, as my mothers, sisters and daughters. I accept Uttara for my son."

Virata is overjoyed to hear this, and exclaims, "The stars; are auspicious. We shall celebrate the marriage today itself."

Yudhisthira suggests the sending of Uttara to Bhishma with tidings of the approaching wedding. Virata goes insicte the palace with Yudhisthira, Bhima and Arjuna to celebrate the joyous occasion. There ends Act I I .

Act I I I shows Abhimanyu's charioteer telling the Kuru warriors that Abhimanyu has been captured, despite the fear of Krishna and the Pandavas, and the presence of the Kuru bowmen, shame on them! Bhishma and Drona come. Drona asks him who it was who carried away Abhimanyu, and who it was who had fought him back with arrows so skilfully. Bhishma too asks.him who could be the person who captured Abhimanyu who fought on bravely, unused to the dangers in a retreat of broken men. Duryodhana, Karna and Sakuni also come. Duryodhana exclaims that he himself will set Abhimanyu free, adding, "Though there is a feud in the family, the children are not to blame. I regard him first as my son, and then alone as the son of the Pandavas."

Kama tells him, "Your words are most gracious and appropriate. We must remember that he met with this disaster in fighting for us. We failed to guard him. Let us either rescue him, or throw up our arms and become monks."

Sakuni says, "He has many protectors. Don't fear, he will be rescued soon. Even Virata may release him, today itsdf, on learning that he is the son of Arjuna, or on hearing that he is the liephew of the unconquered Damodara, and of thfc,terrible Bala-

rama. Or, Bhima may bring him back bodily here, after slaughtering the foes."

Drona asks the charioteer, "How was he taken? Did hi& chariot overturn? Or did the horses get out of control? Or did his chariot sink in the ground, owing to its loose nature? Or did the axle break? Or did his quiver run short of arrows? Or did his bow-string snap? Or did you fail him? Or was he overpowered by arrows? But, then, he is so skilful with the bow himself."

"Of course," says the charioteer, "he kept on showering a continuous volley of arrows. But, a foot-soldier came and captured him, and carried him bodily away."

All exclaim, "A foot-soldier!"

"Yes" says the charioteer. "He came at a terrific speed, stopped the chariot, snatched the warrior prince, and went away."

"Then, it must be Bhimasena" exclaims Bhishma, "for, once, he defeated Jarasandha thus, when he was trying to carry away Draupadi."

Drona says, "Bhishma is right. It must be Bhima. Once, he let fly an arrow, and then ran and caught it ere it reached its mark."

"What nonsense!" says Sakuni, "You two old men always*" attribute every great feat to your favourites, as if the Pandavas are pervading the whole earth. Are there no other strong men in the world?"

"There may be," says Bhishma, "but all of us fight with swords and bows, in chariots. Only Bhima and Balarama fight bare-armed, on foot."

"You will say next that the man who defeated us was not Uttara but Arjuna " says Sakuni.

Drona and Bhishma reply that it must be Arjuna who bent his bow with such a loud twang and sent such showers of arrows as could hide even the sun.

The charioteer re-enters with an arrow and says, "Here is an arrow I picked up. It has some name on it." Bhishma asks for it, takes it, examines it, and says to Sakuni, "My child, my eyes are dim with age. Read the word on the arrow for me." Sakuni takes the arrow and reads, "Arjuna's" and throws the arrow away. It falls at Drona's feet. Drona takes it up and says, "My son, Arjuna shot it to salute Bhishma. Now it has saluted me also, his teacher."

Sakuni says, "Any warrior here may be named Arjuna. The evidence of this arrow is not enough."

" I won't give half the realm I have promised, till I have *seen;* Yudhisthira " <says Duryodhana, "for I suspect that fraud is abroad."

A messenger announces Prince Uttara who is ushered iii. Drona asks him, "What is the message from the Virata king?" "I have not come from him " says Uttara.

"Then, who has sent you?" asks Drona.

"His Majesty Yudhisthira " says Uttara.

"What says the king of Righteousness ?" asks Drona.

" 'Uttara is to be given in marriage to my son. I invite this assembly of kings to attend the marriage. Shall the marriage take place here or there?' is his message" says Uttara.

"Let the marriage take place there" says Sakuni.

"The five days have not ended yet. The gift promised by you solemnly may be given now " says Drona to Duryodhana.

"I grant the Pandavas the realm they had before" says Duryodhana, "For, if troth be dead, all men are done. As troth stands firm, so do they."

"Oh joy! Now we are all happy in the reunion of the mighty houses. May. our lion-like king rule over,the whole earth!" says Drona. There, the play ends.

CHAPTERVII.

DUTAGHATOTKACHA.

Ghatotkacha's Embassy.—This is also a one-act play. It opens with the announcement, by a soldier of the Kurus, that Abhimanyu, Arjuna's heroic son, spread panic in the Kuru army and was at last killed by a hundred princes rushing at him at the same time. Dhritarashtra, Gandhari, and Duhsala, come and hear this announcement and Dhritarashtra exclaims, "Oh! Who utters this hateful news, offending my ears, thinking that it will please me? Who is it who dares to proclaim this news, and, with it, the ruin of our house, stained by the crime of killing a child?" Gandhari says, "There, there, your majesty! It is absolutely clear that this horrible fratricidal' war will only end in the destruction of all our children."

Dhritarashtra replies r "Arjuna, furious at his son's death, will wield his bow of death from his chariot, while angry Krishna holds the reins and whip. There will be peace now only when all the world is dead."

Gandhari bewails the fate of Abhimanyu, exclaiming, "Abhimanyu, my darling grandson, where have you gone, throwing away your childhood in such a fratricidal war!"

Duhsala says that the man who inflicted widowhood on Uttara had ordained widowhood for his own wife, and learns from the soldier, to her dismay, that it is her husband, Jayadratha, who did the deed.

Dhritarashtra exclaims, "Alas, Jayadratha is as good as slain" Duhsala weeps, and offers to go and join Uttara, donning widow's weeds like her, Dhritarashtra learns from the soldier that Arjuna and Krishna were taken away to a different place by a band of Kaurava warriors, and that Abhimanyu then joined in the fray and was killed, and that the other Pandavas have not burnt the corpse but are keeping it for Arjuna to see and take revenge.

Dhritarashtra says to his queen, "Come along, Gandhari. We will go to the banks of the Ganges."

"To bathe there, your majesty?"

"No, to make oblations for thy sons who are as good as slain."

At this stage, Duryodhana, Duhsasana, and Sakuni enter, gloating over the death of Abhimanyu. Duhsasana, suggests that they should go and salute Dhritarashtra. Sakuni does not like the idea, and tells Duryodhana that the war is not to the old king's liking, and that he might reproach them for the boy's death and their rejoicing oven it. Duryodhana insists on their going in and saluting the old, blind king. All the three go and salute him, but he does not bless them. They ask him, "What, not a word of blessing?" He replies, "What is the use of blessing those whose lives are past hope? My sons, in this house, blessed with many sons, there is only one daughter, dearer to me than all my hundred sons. Thanks to you, she will gain an inglorious widowhood soon." Duryodhana says, "But Jayadratha still lives."

"So do the rest who will soon die", replies the old man. "When so many rushed and fell on that child, why were not their arms paralysed?"

"Why were not the arms of those who attacked old Bhishma, with their tricks, paralysed?" asks Duryodhana.

"There is no comparison between the fall of Bhishma and the slaughter of young Abhimanyu. Bhishma chose his death, and was content to die; not so this child," replies the old king.

"He was not a child, father!" says Duryodhana.[1: V]'H(grasped a bow as hot as Indra's thunder-bolt, and wounded all

the kings with his arrows, like the stin discharging a net-work of rays."

"If Arjuna's son worked such havoc, what will Arjuna do, in his wrath, at his son's death?" says Dhritarashtra.

"What will he do, father?" asks Duryodhana.

"Those of you who will survive will see what he will do." replies the old king.

Duryodhana again asks what Arjuna can do. Dhritarashtra asks him to go and question Siva whom Arjuna fought, Agni, who was surfeited with arrows in the Khandwa wood, and Chitrangada, who had defeated Duryodhana.

Duryodhana replies that there is Kama in his army who is fully a match for Arjuna.

Dhritarashtra exclaims, "Poor Karna is ridiculous. Careless and foolish, he gave away his armour, born with him, to Indra. His skill in weapon he got by fraud, and got, from his teacher, the curse, 'Useless be thy weapons in thy time of need'."

Sakuni butts in, and says, "You have the right to belittle us."

Dhritarashtra replies, "Oh, gambler, by your work you have set our house on fire, and even tender saplings must perish."

A terrible noise is heard, and the soldier informs Dhritarashtra that Arjuna has taken a dreadful oath as follows:—"The man that slew my son, and those that rejoice at his death, them will I slay tomorrow, ere the sun goes down."

Duryodhana exclaims that he will thwart ArjUna's oath by covering Jayadratha with his entire army, and that all the Pandavas will be forced to enter the flames owing to the non-fulfilment of their vow.

Dhritarashtra says, "Though he burrows the earth and hides therein, though he climbs up the firmament to ensconce himself there, everywhere Arjuna's arrow will follow and overtake him."

The soldier exclaims, "Had any other person spoken these words to our ruthless king, he would not be living for a second after that."

Ghatotkacha enters with a message from Krishna to be delivered to Dhritarashtra.

Duryodhana tells him, "Come, come. Enter your enemy's camp. My curiosity has been roused. Let me hear Krishna's audacious words."

Ghatotkacha sees Dhritarashtra and says, "What a fine appearance! How gentle and brave! Though old, he has no wrinkles. His fortitude is. wonderful. I think that he was created blind because the gods feared for the three worlds if he

were endowed with the gift of sight also." Then he salutes JL>hntarashtra, who tells him, "Ah, my heart too is wrung by thy brothers fate. I am rendered miserable by the misdeeds of my sons."

"Your majesty is a noble soul. The blessed one, the wielder of the discus,[1] sends this message. . . . . ."

Dhritarashtra rises up hastily from his seat, and asks, "What are the commands of the blessed wielder of the discus?"

Ghatotkacha asks him to sit down and hear the message of Janardana[1] which he delivers as follows:—"Arjuna cries out desolately 'Ah, my child, Abhimanyu, the hope of the Kuru clan, the scion of the Yadu race, you have left your uncle, Janardana, .and even me, and gone to heaven to see your grandfather; Arjuna is forlorn at the loss of his son. If his grief for one son is so great, oh grandfather, what will be yours when you lose all your hundred sons!"

Duryodhana exclaims, "What a ridiculous speech!"

Ghatotkacha wants to give him Krishna's message. Duhsasana tells him that he will not hear the message of a cow-herd.

Ghatotkacha replies, "Is Krishna then no king for you? He who set free the kings imprisoned by Jarasandha from his capital city, he who was accorded the first offering from Bhishma's hand, to the envy of all princes, he who has Lakshmi herself to serve him, is this wonderful king of kings no king for you, you fool?"

Duryodhana asks Duhsasana to desist from further discussion, and asks Ghatotkacha to deliver the message of his master.

Ghatotkacha replies, "Here is the message of Narayana, the master of the universe, and my master. 'Known that the destruction of thy troops is settled. May the earth be lighter for the piled-up corpses of a hundred kings! Nothing is impossible for Arjuna and his terrible bolts.' "

Sakuni exclaims, "Could it be done by words alone, the world were won! Were it by words, and nothing but words, the killing of the warriors were done."

Ghatotkacha says, "Ah, Sakuni too is having his say. Hullo, Sakuni! Abandon your dice, and be you a chequer-board and a ready mark for arrows. Here are no women to steal, no throne to usurp, Oh Sakuni! Here the stake is life, and the result death by dreadful arrows."

Duhsasana exclaims, "Your words are harsh, perhaps because your arms are long. You have inherited a dreadful form, from your demon-mother, but be not too proud and confident. We too are grim with natures fierce as demons."

[1] Krishna.

Ghatotkacha retorts, "God forbid! You are much worse than demons. Demons do not burn their brothers when asleep in a house of lac. Demons do not touch their brothers' wives' hair and robes that way. Demons do not celebrate the slaughter of a child in the battle-field. Their forms are strange, their manners fierce, but their hearts are not devoid of pity, like yours."

Duryodhana exclaims, "Take your message and go. We are not those who will slay an envoy. Happy for you that you have come as an envoy, and not to fight."

Ghatotkacha replies, "What! You throw it in my teeth that I am an envoy! Here, I renounce my character as envoy. Fall on me all together, you fellows, t am not Abhimanyu depending on a bow-string which snaps at the critical moment. I depend on these solid fists of mine. Come, all of you who wish to go to the abode of death! This fight has been my wish from boyhood."

Dhritarashtra tells him, "Ghatotkacha, my grandson, pardon, pardon! Respect my words, and restrain yourself."

Ghatotkacha says, "At my grandfather's words, I am quenching my unquenchable anger. What am I to announce to the august Narayana?"

Duryodhana replies, "From whom? Tell him from me, 'Why so many useless words? Words will not vanquish us. They are useless when a fight is inevitable. I am surrounded by the umbrellas of hundred kings. Wait there with your Pandavas. I shall give you a fitting answer to your message with my arrows/ "

Then Ghatotkacha takes his leave, telling Duryodhana and the assembled kings, "Death will come upon you with the rays of to-morrow's sun."

CHAPTER VIII.

URUBHANGA.

The Broken Thighs.—This is also a one-act play, and is the only pure tragedy so far discovered among Sanskrit plays. It begins with a description of the great battle-field of Kurukshetra after the main battle is over, and when the duel between Bhima and Duryodhana is about to begin. The plain of Kurukshetra (Samantapanchaka) is shown as strewn with the corpses of kings, soldiers, horses and elephants slain in battle. Three soldiers describe the scene. Kurukshetra is called the hermitage of battle, the home of hostility, the touchstone of valour, the abode

of pride and glory, a burnt sacrifice of human lives, the princes' bridge to Heaven- The ground is shown as rugged, with heaps of carcasses of elephants lying about like huge boulders. On every side are vultures' nests; chariots empty of their occupants are strewn all over the place; birds with blood-stained beaks are pecking at the corpses of kings; jackals **are** dragging **down** the **dead warriors from** chariots. The **ground** is soaked with blood; a confused mass of torn skins, umbrellas, chowries, javelins, arrows, spears, swords, clubs, and armour is mixed up with headless trunks and scattered skulls. Rivers of blood **are** crossed by means of bridges made by elephants' bodies. Some warriors are seen rushing on by force of momentum, even after their heads have been chopped off.

The three soldiers then begin to describe the duel between Bhima, enraged at the outrage on Draupadi, and Duryodhana enraged at the death of his hundred brothers. They remark that Bhima is stronger, but Duryodhana the better trained. Bhima and Duryodhana exchange dreadful blows. At last, Duryodhana makes Bhima fall down with a terrific blow of the mace. Yudhishthira is dismayed, Vidura is blinded with tears, and Vyasa stands amazed, his face supported on a single finger. Duryodhana mocks at Bhima, saying, "Fear not Bhima. No hero smites a foe who is fallen prostrate in battle." Krishna strikes his own thigh, and gazes at the sky. That is a secret sign to Bhima, indicating that the thighs are the weak spots of Duryodhana.

Getting up and clutching his mace, Chitrangada, Bhima hurls it at Duryodhana's thighs with terrific force, forsaking all the laws of war, but * following Krishna's hint. Duryodhana falls down, his thighs broken. Balarama's face quivers with anger, and Bhima is led away by the Pandavas and Krishna to avert danger from him. Balarama cries out that there has been foul play, and threatens that he will finish off Bhima and his house. Duryodhana crawls on the ground, like an infant, and begs of Balarama to appease his wrath, saying, "Victory to the funeral clouds of the Kuru race! An end has come to our hostility and to myself." Balarama asks him to live a while, and see him kill the Pandavas with his ploughshare. He tells him that Bhima has won by a trick. Duryodhana says, "In that case, I have not been really defeated." But he adds **that** the trick, if any, is that of Krishna, the darling of the world, wha has entered into Bhima's mace.

Dhritarashtra and Gandhari, Duryodhana's parents, Malavi and Pauravi, his queens, and Durjaya, his infant son, come searching **for** Duryodhana. Dhritarashtra exclaims,' "Today, when I heard of my son's being struck down in battle by a trick,

my blind face was made still blinder by the tears streaming in my eyes. Accursed am I, that I can't see my **son even at this moment! Proud of begetting a hundred sons, wise and brave, courageous** and **enterprising, does not Dhritarashtra deserve** to **have a funeral** oblation scattered on the ground by one of his sons at least?"

Gandhari, whose eyes are bandaged, to show her identification with her blind husband, cries out, "Duryodhana, my son, answer me and your unhappy father."

Balarama exclaims, "Ah, queen Gandhari! She wears the bandage on her eyes as a symbol of devotion to her lord, but it is now ceaselessly wetted with her tears. Her eyes never yearned to see the faces of her sons and grandsons, but, now, her fortitude is exhausted by grief for Duryodhana."

Duryodhana, pained at the grief of his parents and wives, answers, "I hardly felt the pain of the mace's blow at that time, but, now, I feel it when my wives come here with their hair in disarray and their faces exposed to view."

Dhritarashtra cries out, "Duryodhana, my son, the sovereign commander of eighteen armies, where are you?"

Duryodhana remarks to himself, "A fine sovereign am I now !"

Dhritarashtra calls out, "Eldest of five score brothers, answer me! Come, my son, come and greet me."

Duryodhana shouts out, "Here I am coming", and tries to rise, but falls again, and says to himself, "Alas, this is the second blow. When Bhima hurled his mace at me, he did not rob me of my thighs alone, he robbed me also of the power to go and prostrate at my father's feet."

Gandhari asks Malavi and Pauravi to seek Duryodhana out. Dhritarashtra asks Durjaya to do the same.

Durjaya replies that he is tired.

Dhritarashtra says to him, "Run along. You can rest on your daddy's knees."

Durjaya runs along, crying out, "Daddy, where are you?"

Duryodhana says to himself, "Oh, he too has come. My love for my boy is great, and burns me now. Unaccustomed to **•sorrow,** eager to sit on my lap, what will Durjaya say when he sees me vanquished and broken ?"

Durjaya sees him sitting on the ground and goes to him.

Duryodhana asks him "Why have you come, my son?"

Durjaya says, "Because you were away so long. Come, I will sit on your lap" and tries to do so. Duryodhana prevents him, and breaks down in grief.

Durjaya asks him, "Why can't I sit on your lap, daddy?"

Duryodhana says, "Your customary seat has gone, Durjaya. I too am going."

"Where are you going, daddy?"

"To my hundred brothers."

"Take me with you."

"Go, my son, and talk to Bhima."

"Come father. They are looking for you," says Durjaya.

"Who are?"

"Grandma and grandpa, and my mothers."

"Go, my son, I can't come," replies Duryodhana.

"I will take you there."

"You are too young to do so, my son."

Durjaya shouts out, "Ladies, the king is here." Dhritarashtra, and the three queens come there, and see Duryodhana sitting on the ground.

Dhritarashtra passes his hand over his son and exclaims, "Alas, is this the king, the sole overlord of all the kings of the world, the golden pillar supporting the universe? He now lies on the ground like the -broken bolt of a door."

Gandhari too comes to the spot and softly weeps.

"Who is that?" cries out Dhritarashtra.

"She that gave fearless sons to you" says Gandhari.

Duryodhana tells his father, "Father, I feel today as if born anew. There is now no need for anxiety."

"Why should I be anxious now, son?" asks Dhritarashtra, "Your hundred brothers, full of strength and courage, are already dead. With your death, all is dead", and falls down.

Duryodhana asks Dhritarashtra to be brave and to console Gandhari and the queens.

"Gandhari and the queens!" Dhritarashtra exclaims, "I am an old man, blind from birth, with no desire for life. Bitter grief for my sons curbs my will, overpowers my soul, and overwhelms me."

Kalarama says "Alas, he has lost all hope for Duryodhana.

His eyes are closed. I have no heart to announce myself to him now."

Duryodhana says to Gandhari, "I would ask a favour from your ladyship."

"Speak out my son'' replies Gandhari.

"With folded hands, I ask, Oh mother; if I have earned any merit, be thou my mother in another birth,"

"It is my own wish you have expressed" replies Gandhari.

Duryodhana asks Malavi not to weep, adding, "Your husband has fallen in battle. Why do you weep, my warrior-queen?"

Malavi replies, "I am but a girl, and, so, I weep."

Duryodhana tells Pauravi, "Think of my glory with pride. Wives of such men should not weep."

Pauravi replies, "I have made up my mind to follow you, by performing *Sati.* So, I weep no more."

Duryodhana asks Durjaya to obey the Pandavas like himself, and to honour Draupadi and Kunti like his own mother, and to join with the Pandavas in giving him the last oblation.

Balarama remarks, "Ah! Hostility has melted to remorse."

Just then, Aswathama comes twanging his how and declaiming against the trick played on Duryodhana. He sees Duryodhana, and exclaims, "Here he sits on the stony seat of his last home, and sinks like the westering sun plunging into the twilight." He asks Duryodhana, "What is this?"

Duryodhana replies, "The result of insatiable ambition." Aswathama expresses his intention to kill Krishna and the Pandavas, and wipe them all out from the surface of the earth, like a bad picture from a good canvas.

Duryodhana replies, "Say not so. All the kings are dead. Kama has gone to Heaven. Bhishma has fallen. My five score brothers are slain, and I am in this plight. Why any more fight? Unstring thy bow."

Aswathama tells him that he is broken-hearted by the throw of the mace.

Duryodhana replies, "It is not the mace, but the recollection of the dragging of Draupadi, the flaying of Abhknanyu, and the making of the Pandavas wander in the forest with wild beasts that have unnerved me."

Aswathama swears by his soul to make a raid by night and destroy the Pandavas.

Balarama cries out, "Uttered by the preceptor's son, that should come to pass."

Dhritarashtra says, "Alas, there was a witness to the crooked words of Aswathama."

Aswathama calls Durjaya to him and proclaims him king.

Duryodhana exclaims at this: "Ah, my heart's desire is now fulfilled. My life is slipping away. Here are my revered ancestors, Santhanu and others. There are my hundred brothers with Karna at their head. Here is Abhimanyu, seated on Indra's elephant, scolding me. Urvasi and" the other nymphs have come for me. Here are the oceans come for me. Here are the great rivers, Ganges and the rest. Death has sent for me the aerial car drawn by a thousand swans. Here, I come " and expires.

They cover the corpse with a cloth. Dhritarashtra says, " I will now depart for the penance groves, so rich with pious folk. Out on a realm made worthless by the loss of my sons!" Aswathama too departs, in order to attack and kill the sleeping Pandavas. There, the play ends.

CHAPTER IX.

AVIMARAKA.

The Sheep-Killer.—This is a six-act play from folk-lore, and is one of the best plays of Bhasa. The plot is briefly this. There are two princesses, sisters of Kuntibhoja, king of Vairantya, called Sudarsana and Suchetana. The elder marries the king of Benares, but her first baby is really born to Agni, the god of Fire, whom she invokes to give her a resplendent son. Afraid of her husband, Sudarsana gives this child to her sister, Suchetana, queen of the Sauviras, who has lost her baby at child-birth, unknown to her husband, and brings this baby up as her own off-spring, under the name of Vishnusena.

The child grows up powerful and fearless, and, as a boy, kills a demon disguised in the form of a sheep, which is working havoc among children. The affectionate Sauviras give him the title "Avimaraka", or Sheep-killer, in consequence.

One day, when the king of the Sauviras is out hunting, he meets a sage called Chandabhargava whose pupil, Kasyapa, is attacked and mauled by a tiger. The irascible sage blames the king, for not protecting hermitages from tigers and wild beasts, and abuses him without limit, getting into a blazing rage. The king too gets enraged, and replies, "You abuse me without cause. You are only in form a sage, and are really a dog-eating outcaste." The sage gets furious at this, and curses the king, his queen and

son to become outcastes. The king gets terrified at this curse, and begs for forgiveness. The sage then modifies the curse, by limiting it to one year, and goes away with his pupil, Kasyapa, who has, by this time, sufficiently recovered from the attack.

In consequence of this curse, the king of the Sauviras leaves his kingdom in charge of his ministers, and goes with his wife and son, now aged eighteen, and lives in Vairantya, disguised as outcastes. Kuntibhoja has a beautiful daughter, Kurangi, who has attained marriageable age. The queen asks him about Kurangi's marriage, and about his decision regarding the various offers received so far. Kuntibhoja replies that he has not decided anything yet. He adds that if a girl is given in marriage to an unworthy man, whom she dislikes, her passion will destroy her father's and her husband's houses, like a river in flood destroying both the banks. Just then, they hear a terrible uproar. Both of them are anxious for Kurangi who has gone to the royal park accompanied only by the minister, Kaunjayana in whose practical wisdom they have little faith. The Queen at once sends Bhutika,. the minister in charge of the princess's palace, to go and see to Kurangi's safety.

As the royal pair wait anxiously, Kaunjayana comes along, cursing the fate of ministers. "If things go well, people attribute it to the king. If things go ill, they put it to the minister " says he to himself. He is ushered into the royal presence, and reports, in his long-winded fashion, that when Kurangi was returning from the park, after playing to her heart's content, the elephant, Anjanagiri, came rushing along, after throwing down its mahout and killing him. He goes on to describe the details, how the elephant was covered with dust, despite its bath, how this fact rendered its form indistinct, how the speed of the elephant compared with that of the wind, and how its reckless audacity either proved its own courage or the timidity of the ministers trying to prevent it, etc., etc., when the king cuts him short, and asks him whether Kurangi is safe, and he replies that she is. Then he goes on with his long-winded tale. 'The common people took to their heels. Women screamed. Brave men were knocked down. I and Neetigupta were watching the exits of the park, when the elephant made a sudden rush at the princess's carriage. Then, a handsome youth, young and modest, brave and courteous, delicate and strong, boldly went up and slapped the elephant playfully with his hand, and the enraged brute turned on him in order to kill him. I and Bhutika took this opportunity to put the princess, who had jumped out of her carriage in fright, into the carriage again, and have brought her back safely to her rooms."

"Of what family is this noble youth?" asks the king.

'That is a puzzle to me" replies Kaunjayana. "He says that he is low-born."

"How can a low-born man be so brave and chivalrous?" asks the queen.

Bhutika comes in then, perplexed, and saying to himself, "What jewels are hidden in the earth! His heroism disproves our conventional ideas regarding valour. But, why does he hide his identity? Perhaps it is for a private cause, or, it may be, he does so to obey the orders of his elders. But, in trying to save others, his resolution to stick to his disguise has failed, and a glimpse of his true identity is given." He goes to the Audience Hall where the king and queen are. The king sends the queen away to meet and comfort Kurangi. Then he asks Bhutika, "What news of that hero who risked his life for the sake of others?"

Bhutika replies.—"For a while, he played with that elephant as if it were a pet, turning it this way and that, in zigzags. It became quite bewildered. Then, as if embarrassed by the praise of the mob, he went slowly to his house, with his head bent down, as if blushing deeply. Some female elephants were by that time brought. Anjanagiri was caught and put back in his stables. Afterwards I went to find out something about the brave youth and his family. There is no doubt that he is of noble birth, and not an outcaste, and that he is concealing his real identity for some reason or other. His striking figures, his flawless speech, his warrior build, and his innate strength and tenderness all prove his noble birth."

"Is he married?" asks the king.
"I didn't enquire about that" replies Bhutika.
"Did you see his father?" asks Kuntibhoja.

"Yes. He is a worthy father of such a noble son. His shoulders are broad, and his wrist bears the marks of bowstrings. Though he too pretends to be an outcaste, his appearance shows his noble birth. He is like the sun hidden behind the clouds, but revealed by its radiance " replies Bhutika.

Then the king consults his two ministers about the marriage of his daughter, and as to what reply should be given to the ambassador from Benares. Bhutika says "Hundreds of such ambassadors will come. Princes will compete for the hand of a handsome and accomplished princess, like ours, as wrestlers do for the flag trophy. Let us select the best, avoiding haste and procrastination alike." Kaunjayana says that the sons of the kings of Sauvira and Benares are the fittest, their mothers being Kuntibhoja's sisters. He adds, "The king of the Sauviras sent

in

a messenger before. Your Majesty sent him back, sayingThe princess is too young'.' Now the king of Benares has sent a messenger. Your Majesty may choose between these two." On being pressed, Bhutika says that he prefers the prince of the Sauviras, as his father is a brother of the queen, in addition to his mother's being a sister of the king. Kuntibhoja asks him why the king of the Sauviras has not sent another ambassador. Bhutika says that the king of the Sauviras has disappeared mysteriously with his queen and prince, leaving the government in the hands of the ministers. He adds, "Nobody knows the reason. None is admitted into the palace."

Kuntibhoja asks "What can be the reason for this? Is the king smitten by passion? Or, have his ministers seized him treacherously and confined him in a secret place? Or, has he been caught by some loathsome disease? Or, is he putting the loyalty of his people to the test? Or, is he doing penance to work out some enraged priest's curse? You must find out at once." Then he asks Kaunjayana what he should do with the envoy from Benares. That minister replies, "Treat him with all honour, and keep him waiting. . Marriages are best arranged with many doorways open." The king remarks, "Aha, a minister always looks to business, casting sentiment aside."

Then he is asked by Bhutika to go to his bath, console the princess, congratulate the queen, and show himself to his subjects who have assembled in numbers to see him after the lucky escape of the princess. As he goes away, he remarks to himself, "Ah! What a heavy burden is that of a king! He has to observe the law. He has to conceal his love and rage, show himself gentle or stern, as the occasion requires, know what the people, are doing and thinking, keep spies to report about the doings of the neighbouring kings, probe into the minds of his ministers, take pains to guard his life, and yet disregard it in the van of battle." There ends Act I.

The second Act begins with an interlude wherein the jester, Santhushta, who is a Brahmin but is secretly in touch with his old friend Avimaraka, is going along the street and bewailing the recklessness of Avimaraka who is head over ears in love with Kurangi, forgetting his outcaste state and the hopelessness of his marrying the princess. He says to himself, "I must avoid the censure of the Brahmans. I will visit some of their houses and then go quietly to Avimaraka's house, while thus on a round of visits, without rousing their suspicions."

Chandrika, a maid, enters then, and dupes the jester into believing that he is going to be invited to a dinner, and runs away with his ring which she borrows from him on the pretext of reading

the monogram on it. The jester runs after her in. vain, and threatens to report the matter to Avimaraka.

The Act itself opens with Avimaraka sitting in his house plunged in thought about Kurangi. He says to himself, "I see *her* even now, shaking with fear, her eyes quivering, her limbs •chilled by the spray of water from the rogue elephant's trunk. From that day on, I am constantly dreaming of her. When I wake up from my dreams, I begin to think of her in reality. My eyes desire to see no other form, my heart delights only in thought of her, my face grows pale, and my body thin. I pass my days in sorrow, and my nights in delusion. But all this makes my love wax greater. T must not think of her any more! How perfect was her beauty! Either the Creator wanted to make an image of Beauty's self, or the lord of the stars has taken on a woman's form, or Lakshmi herself has come down as Kurangi. T say, I am again thinking of her. However much T try not to think of her, my mind gallops along its accustomed track like an oft-repeated sacred text rotating in our head even without our wishing it. My will is no match for my mind. That being so, T shall think about her. Ah, how all the charms of womankind have been collected in this one person!"

The princess's nurse, and Nalinika, the princess's maid, come to his house. The nurse says, "It is a dangerous business. If I invite him to meet Kurangi clandestinely, T bring disgrace on the royal house. Tf I do not do it, the princess will perish. Ever since the day she met him, she has lost her former love of flowers, food, and gossip. She sighs deeply, talks disconnectedly, does not know what is being said, laughs to herself, and weeps in solitude. She is also growing thinner and thinner. But it is strange that, in all these varied moods, she speaks not a word to a single soul about it, be it from bashfulness, or timidity, or family pride, or childishness." Nalinika replies, "Not a word to any one? Why, she tells me all about it."

"I know what you mean. She tells you 'Find out what he is, and bring him to me' " says the nurse.

"How could such a man be low-born?" asks Nalinika.

"I heard the minister, Bhutika, tell the queen 'He must really be of noble birth. He is not what he makes himself out to be' " replies the nurse. Then they hear a voice say "His wealth and beauty, knowledge and valour indicate his noble birth. You shall hear about his lineage when the time comes. Cast away all doubts regarding his nobility of birth, and bring this matter to a happy end." They are surprised and pleased at hearing this voice from the sky. The nurse tells Nalinika, "Now, I can broach the proposal to him freely. But, will he listen? Of

course, he will! For, even the god of love will be tormented with love for her if he sees her beauty."

They enter the house and are struck by the beautiful carved door, and by the oblations of flowers and fried rice. They go-to where he is, after ascertaining it from a maid. They hear Avimaraka mutter to himself, "Ah, how beautiful she is, with languid bosom, pouting breasts, slender form, well-shaped hips,, face so lovely to look at, and lips like the *Bimba* pith!" The nurse and Nalinika remark to themselves that he is as much in love with her as Kurangi is with him. They ask him whether he is well, and what he is thinking about. He says that he is thinking about the science of union. They tell him that they are also fellow research-workers in that science, and that they hope to aid him in its practical application. They say, "There is some one in the palace, in a lonely spot, thinking even more of union. If you two confer together, you will succeed." They ask him to get into the princess's palace that night, telling him that Bhutika, who is in charge of it, has gone to spend the night with the ambassador of the king of Benares, and that all the doors would be kept open, with nothing bolted. They explain the plan of the palace to him, and tell him all the details about the way to Kurangi's rooms. He asks them to expect him at mid-night, adding "Which sick man will refuse a sure remedy for his disease?" They then go away.

The jester comes along watching the sunlight, lying like-treacle on the market terrace and promenades. He has heard in the market terrace about the visit of the nurse and Nalinika to Avimaraka. He comes to Avimaraka's house and talks with Avimaraka who tells him of his plan to enter the princess's palace that night. The jester replies laughing, "How are you going to get in? Do you want to be taken prisoners? Kuntibhoja's ministers are frightful fellows."

Avimaraka says, "Remember, that, with these arms, I have fought many a battle and won. Why, with them, I slew the lord of demons who came in the form of a sheep."

"Oh, yes, I know all about your superhuman deeds, but, all the same, getting into another man's house at night is pretty risky business " replies the jester.

"I must, at all costs, get into the inner apartments" insists Avimaraka.

"I too shall come with you" says the jester, "Even in abuse, another comes in handy. I will never allow you to go alone to* such a place."

"Oh no, I must go alone. One should go alone to another's house to keep such an engagement, <?Qn&plt another, and take the

field with many. Don't worry. Kuntibhoja's troops are not very brave. Money works wonders in a palace. Besides, I am a skilled wrestler."replies Avimaraka.

"All right, then, come and wait in a friend's house in the town till the time comes for your adventure" says the jester.

"Yes, I shall go in now, have a bath, say my prayer, salute my father, go into my room as if to go to bed, and slip out and come with you. It is sunset now. See how beautiful it is. The east is fast becoming black, while the west glows with red. The sky between is divided into two, and looks like Siva in his *Ardhanariswara* form, half god, half goddess. What a marvellous thing the world is! It is now removing the mantle of the sun, and is putting on the blue saree bespangled with stars. It is casting out the heat, and taking on the soft delicious breeze. The world of traders and workers has given place to the world of interlaced lovers and prowling robbers. It seems altogether a new world." There ends Act, I I .

Act I I I opens with Kurangi attended by two maids, Magadhika and Vilasini, and getting restless. In her distraction, she asks Magadhika "What did he say?"

"Who, the minister?" asks the maid. Kurangi pretends that she meant the palace attendant whom she had asked to make a parrot's cage for her, and who had not made it yet. Magadhika says that he has made it already. Then Kurangi says that she means a second cage. Magadhika ascertains from Vilasini that the seats are ready on the terrace for the princess to go and watch the sunset. So, the princess and the two maids go up. The princess sits on a stone bench. Magadhika asks her, "Princess, shall I tell you a story?"

Kurangi replies, "Oh, no, I know all your absurd rigmaroles."

"But, princess, this is quite a new story " says Magadhika.

"I know, I know, I had rather sleep." replies Kurangi.

Vilasini asks Magadhika to tell her the story. Magadhika tells her that it concerns the princess. Kurangi is afraid that her secret love for Avimaraka has been found out, but is relieved to hear Magadhika tell Vilasini that the story is about the betrothal of the princess to Jayavarman, the prince of Benares, that Vasumitra, the queen's attendant, has told her about it, and that the wedding paint has been accepted, and that Bhutika has set out for fetching the bridegroom to Vairantya, as the queen could not bear a separation from Kurangi.

Kurangi says to herself, "That marriage will never happen. I can dispose of myself." Then she remarks, about her love-

sickness, "This is a disease I never had before. The more I think of it, the more silly I become. I care nothing for flowers or food or lovely talk now. . It is dreadful—and yet, delightful/"

The night comes on. Avimaraka comes disguisfed as a burglar and carrying a rope in one hand and a sword in the other. He says to himself, "Ah! Youth is a curious thing. It is full of passion and is reckless. It takes no heed of difficulties, and is rash. It overwhelms the intellect, and cares nothing for law, but is, all the same, delightful. How fearsome is this midnight! All are immersed in their slumber, like babes in the womb. The vast palaces seem sunk in meditation. Trees can only be detected by touch. The gloom has swallowed up everything. The streets look like streams flowing across a country of darkness. The houses look like shoals. The directions are all indistinguishable in this vast gloom. North, South, East and West have lost their meaning. One can swim across this darkness. Ah, that sounds like strains of music. I wonder who is that man enjoying the music with his beloved at this hour. The lute must be played by him, for, such clear sounds, heard outside bolted doors, are beyond the power of a woman's finger-tips. But the singing must be the woman's, for, the tone is soft and clear, and the clapping of hands, to denote the timing, reveals the jingling of bracelets." He looks round, and sees a couple in love, in another house. The woman is asking the man, with a stammering voice and a sob in her throat, "What am I to you?" and is telling him the most contrary things, though she really wants to say the most pleasing things. Just then, an owl screeches, and the woman springs into her lover's arms. Avimaraka exclaims, "What a dreadful sound! But the lady is frightened at it, and the poor man gets his embrace. But why should I be a witness to other people's affairs? Let me *go* about my business." He proceeds and sees a lover lingering outside a door-step, and afraid to knock. "Poor fellow, he has made an appointment, but hesitates to keep it" he remarks. He then notices a thief running, with one eye on the street lamps, and trembling at the sound of foot-steps. He stands aside, sees him go past, and exclaims, "The rascal has gone. Now, let me go on." Then he comes across the town guards, and says to himself, "What shall I do now? I know. They go along the highroad with lanterns. I shall go into the rogues' hall at the crossways." He does so, and.remarks to himself, "My sword mocks me for running away from the watchmen. But, I am going to meet my lady, and not to commit a crime. Those who roam at night, whether from love or greed or passion, rely on their own courage, and not on the aid of others. This wandering about on dark nights, with the many interesting sights, is full of danger, but is delightful."

After the guards have gone, he proceeds to the palace, and throws his rope on **the** coping of the wall, crying out, "Effort alone matters. We are not to blame if it fails. Praise be to God! Honour to **all** the spirits of magic! My Siva, Sambara and Bali smile on me! Darker be the night, and deeper be the sleep! May fortune favour me! May all obstructions disappear! Death to those who hamper me! Victory to the queen of magic!" The rope catches the coping at the very first throw. He is overjoyed. "Heroes show their mettle by their efforts. Success depends on fate. I'll climb up by this rope " says he. He climbs up, accordingly, following the directions given by the nurse and Nalinika, and throws the-rope into the elephants' stable. He goes along by the water-course, passes the audience hall, reaches the princess's palace, and climbs up, remarking: "It is easy. Rut, even if it were difficult, I would have gladly undertaken it. Will a man dying of thirst and seeing a lotus pool hesitate to go into it simply because there are thorns on the stalks?" He reaches the latticed door, throws off his disguise, and enters.

Nalinika remarks just then, to the nurse, that when the princess was told that her sweetheart would come that night, she had actually fallen asleep, she who had never known sleep for many a night.

Avimaraka announces himself to Nalinika who welcomes him. He gazes at Kurangi, and says, "My eyes are never tired of watching her every limb. My heart is thumping with such a sound as is enough to wake her from her slumber. Love drives me on to crush her in my arms. My soul is tranquil, but faints with -joy." He sits down on a couch. Nalinika asks him whether she should wake up the princess, but he tells her not to do so, as he wants to take in her sleeping form for a little more time. Kurangi half wakes up, and asks Nalinika, who is massaging her legs, "My dear, what did the cruel fellow say?", and adds, "My wits are wandering." She asks Nalinika "the time, and, on being told that it is midnight, drowsily asks her to embrace her. Nalinika asks Avimaraka to embrace the princess in her place.

He embraces Kurangi who gets up in confusion and exclaims "Alas! My reputation is ruined." Avimaraka replies, "You are not a stranger, love, to me, because our hearts have met and married. Oh, do not tremble like a creeper in a storm!" Nalinika and the nurse ask the princess and Avimaraka to move into the inner chamber where a couch has been prepared for them. Avimaraka takes the princess, who is shedding tears of joy and whose bosom is heaving wildly, in hand, makes her walk seven steps, which she does totteringly because of her bash-

fulness, and exclaims, "Here is our *Saptapati,*[1] the sacred seven steps. So, our union is complete. Could this night endure a hundred years, how fortunate would I be!" There ends Act III.

The interlude to Act IV relates to a period one year later. It begins with Magadhika coming with flower-paste for Kurangi. Vilasini, who has a fan in hand, stops her, saying, "What does she want this for? Beauty is its own adornment." Magadhika replies, "Beauty adorned shines even better." Nalinika comes in tears, and exclaims that it is true that joys are interrupted by sorrows, and that, after a year, the princess, who was enjoying unbroken happiness, has had her joy cut short by her amour being discovered, and by Avimaraka having had to depart in consequence. She adds, "The palace is now dismal, like a lamp with the light blown out. The only consolation is that the prince has managed to escape. Now the princess's rooms are guarded all round." She weeps, and tells Magadhika and Vilasini, "The festival is over. The prince has gone—for ever."

The Act itself opens with Avimaraka saying, T have managed to escape from the princess's palace by the skin of my teeth; that is, my *body* has managed to escape; my *heap* is still with her. But, in what a plight have I left her! Put to shame by the servant's chatter, closely guarded by the king, blinded by tears at my absence! Still, she took no thought of herself, and was only anxious for my safety. What a wretch am I that I continue to live, though separated from her, whose artless love grew greater with familiarity! Ah, now, the sun has, with its manifold rays, begun to corrode pitilessly the body of a man whose heart is already burnt by love! How dreadful is the heat! The earth is blazing hot, as if in high fever, all its moisture being sucked dry by the rays of the sun. The trees, as if harbouring forest fires, have been deprived of their shade, and seem to be afflicted with consumption. The mountains, with their empty caverns, gape and cry helplessly for water. The whole earth, rendered "unconscious by the burning rays of the sun, falls into a swoon. Hot winds cover everything with burning sand. The trees are spitting out discoloured leaves, like consumptives. Baked by the heat of the sun, the earth is everywhere cracking. My beloved, respond to my heart-cry". He swoons, and revives, and exclaims, "The sun's heat is nothing compared to the heat in my burning heart. What is the use of this living death? 1 shall cast off this worthless life by drowning myself in yonder forest pool. Oh no, suicide by drowning is an ignoble death. I shall plunge into that forest fire and perish."

He goes and leaps into that fire, but finds it as cool as sandal paste. He exclaims, "Why, this fire embraces me like a

[1]The chief ceremony of a Hindu marriage.

father hugging his son with joy!" He then resolves to jump down from a precipice and die, after bathing in a mountain pool and offering his prayers. But, when he. is about to jump down, a *Vidyadhara* comes flying in the air along with his lady-love, Saudamini, on his way to the sandal forests of Malabar, after a bath in the Manasarowar lake. As both fly along, he tells her, "Saudamini, look. How charming is the earth below! Huge mountains look like little elephants, and the vast seas like small swimming pools. Trees resemble mosses and lichens. The hills and gorges have vanished. Streams look like boundary lines, and huge palaces appear like glistening dew drops."

Saudamini wants to rest awhile. So, they alight on the very mountain top from which Avimaraka is about to hurl himself. As they make a swift descent, the Vidyadhara tells his lady-love, "The clouds seem to flee from us, and the earth, with its seas and mountains, to fly towards us to greet us."

The Vidyadhara and Saudamini beguile their time by picking flowers. Then the Vidyadhara sees Avimaraka and takes him to be a Vidyadhara who has lost his magic, as none else can be so beautiful, according to him. Avimaraka sees the Vidyadhara too, just as he is about to hurl himself down. But, at first, he says to himself, "It must be a fancy, an idle dream. A man sees many things at the time of his death." But the vision persists, and he says to himself, "No. It can't be a dream. 1 am not so stupid as all that" and asks the Vidyadhara who he is. The latter replies that his name is Meghdnada, and that he and his wife, Saudamini, are going to the Malaya mountain to attend a festival organized by- the Vidyadharas in honour of the sage Agastya. The Vidyadhara learns from Avimaraka that he is the son of the king of Sauvira, but does not believe it owing to the transcendent beauty of the youth and the marks of semi-divinity on him. By his magic power, he finds out that Avimaraka is the son of Agni, though he himself is unaware of it, and that he is suffering from the pangs of separation from Kurangi, and is about to throw himself down from the precipice. He resolves to help him. He asks Avimaraka "Now, if you had the power of going back to your beloved, unknown to others, what will you do?"

"What do you think? Go back to her at once, of course" replies Avimaraka.

The Vidyadhara shows Avimaraka a ring and tells him that, if it is worn on a finger of the right hand, one can fly in the air invisible, and that if it is worn on a finger of the left hand, one becomes visible again. Avimaraka exclaims, "Is this possible?" Meghanada demonstrates it by putting it on, first on a finger of his left hand, and then on a finger of his right.

Avimaraka exclaims "How happy are these folk who can wander in the air at will and know everything by **magic power!" The Vidyadhara gives the ring** to Avimaraka who says, **"I am much obliged to you." Meghanada replies, "No,** no, **it is I who am obliged.** The pleasure that a good man has by the acquisition **of a treasure** is much less **than** the pleasure he feels when giving it to one who stands in real need of it." Avimaraka begs to try the ring on himself, and does it, and gets the same results. He is also shown the power of a magic sword belonging to the Vidyadhara, **brilliant** as the sun, and fierce as a forest fire. Then the Vidyadhara takes back his sword. He assures Avimaraka that the ring will make him, and any one who touches him and a third touched by him, invisible. Avimaraka asks him what he should do in return for this gift. The Vidyadhara replies, "Go to your beloved, enjoy with her to your heart's content, and mention me and my lady to her. Good-bye, we shall meet again." and flies away with Saudamini.

Avimaraka gets down from the hill, after watching the Vidyadhara and his wife fly across the sky and disappear in the clouds. He wants to seek out the jester, who is his other half, and finds him asleep under a tree, wearied with a search for him. He rejoices greatly. The jester too wakes up just then and is overjoyed to meet him. He embraces him. Then he asks him "Where have you been all this time?"

"Like this" says Avimaraka, putting the ring on a finger of his right hand and becoming invisible.

The jester is astonished. "Where is Your Highness?" he shouts out. "My wish to see the prince has perhaps made me fancy, that I saw him, and even embraced him." he says to himself, "Anyway, I shall make the matter clear." He threatens to curse Avimaraka if he is really present and hides himself. So, Avimaraka puts the ring on a finger of his left hand, and reveals himself. "I say, the simple Avimaraka has become magic Avimaraka now." exclaims the jester, "Well, Mr. Magician, seeing that you have got this trick, why don't you go, unseen, to the princess's rooms?"

Avimaraka replies, "I got it only now," and demonstrates its magic powers to the jester. Seeing his friend and himself become invisible, the jester says to himself, "Does my body exist or not?" and spits on his hand to see whether it is still there, and is consoled to find it still there. Avimaraka is eager to go back to Kurangi. The jester asks him, "Why are you in such a hurry, like **a** student going home for the vacation?" Avimaraka hurtles **him** along with him and flies to the palace, both being rendered invisible by **the** ring. As they reach it, Avimaraka says to the **jester, "First I entered the** palace by my daring at night. Now

I enter it by magic during daytime, like a rogue entering a **group of worthy men. Kurangi must have** bathed and gone **to her rooms." "Hurry up. It** is getting on to dinner time " says **the jester.** "Come **on, let** us go into the inner rooms" says Avi- **maraka. There** ends Act IV.

Act V opens with Kurangi pining away for Avimaraka, and resolved to put an end to her existence by suicide. She says to herself that the most fragrant flowers please her no more, but simply drive her mad, that the peacocks by the royal lake are much too occupied on their own bowing and scraping to understand her moods, that the parrots and *minas* are continuing their ceaseless chatter, which no longer interests her, and that her retinue is persisting in its gossip, not being able to read her heart aright. She and Nalinika go up the terrace to watch the clouds, and see a black cloud lit up by lightning. Nalinika asks her to gaze at the cloud and relieve her pain. Harinika, another maid, comes from the Queen to inquire of Kurangi how her headache is, and brings her a medicine sent by the Queen. Kurangi takes it, embraces Nalinika, and sends her to fetch Magadhika and the bathing things, saying to herself, "This is the last time that I shall clasp her in my arms." She sends Harinika also away, with a message to the queen that the pain has left her, thanks to the medicine sent by her. Then she proceeds to hang herself with her robe.

Meanwhile, Avimaraka and Santhushta come along flying. They see Kurangi on the terrace, and Santhushta tells Avimaraka, "You used to consider yourself the most handsome being in the world. Now, you are easily surpassed by this lady's naturally charming beauty. Pining for you has made her thin. Even so, she delights the eye like a digit of the moon."

Avimaraka says "This is too bookish for words, my friend."

The jester replies, "Ah, you know me, and, so, you mock me. People who have not known me before will praise me highly for this."

Avimaraka wants to go and talk with Kurangi on the terrace. The jester asks him to go alone. Avimaraka reminds him that he will become visible if he is let go, and, so, the jester too agrees to follow. Kurangi is about to hang herself with her robe when she hears a clap of thunder and cries out, "Oh, save me, save me!"

Avimaraka alights on the terrace, puts the ring on his left hand, becomes visible, lifts up Kurangi, and says to her, "Beloved, have no fear," Kurangi cries out joyfully, "Can it be true? Oh, I am so confused." Avimaraka says, "Put all fear away" and

embraces her. Kurangi exclaims, "Wonderful! All my pain has gone in a moment" They both embrace and weep.

The jester says, **"What! Are you beginning to cry? I shall** cry too, **but not** a single **tear** comes out of my eye. When my **father** died, I tried mighty hard to weep; but, not a tear. So, what chance now, for somebody else's troubles?" Avimaraka says, "Stop your mockery. True love has no guile, and, so, we cry. A wise man and a fool are much the same in times of crises, so far as the body is concerned, though not in mind."

Nalinika comes back, and finds the door bolted, and cries out, "Harinika, Harinika, why is the door bolted? I fear that she has done this in order to free herself from the pain. Harinika, Harinika! Oh dear, T fear that is what has happened." Avimaraka asks the jester to unbolt the door. The jester does so.

Nalinika is astonished at seeing the men there, and, pointing to the jester, says, "Who is this man?" The jester exclaims, "How discerning! Nobody else took me for a man. They thought I was an old woman!" Avimaraka tells Nalinika that the jester is the Brahman Santushta he has told her about. She says, "Oh yes. T have seen this Brahman on the city terrace once or twice." The jester tells her "With my sacred thread, T am a Brahman. Without it, and in rags, 1 am a hermit. Tf I take my clothes off, I become a Jain monk." Then he asks her what she has in her hand. Nalinika tells him that she has brought the things for the princess's bath. He says "Who wants things for the bath now? She is dying with hunger. Go at once and fetch something to eat. I will take the head of the table." Nalinika says to him, "Wretched Brahman, always thinking of something to eat! Let me first find out how the prince came in here, eluding the crowds along the route." Avimaraka tells her that Santushta will tell her the whole story. Nalinika then drags Santushta away, saying, "Very well, T will take him to the hall and hear the story in the presence of all my friends and gossips."

The jester shouts out, "Help, help, an outrage on a Brahman!" Kurangi says, "What a ridiculous old Brahman he is!" Avimaraka adds, "Do you hear that, old fellow? You *are* ridiculous." The jester says, "Not so ridiculous as her ladyship who wanted to commit suicide, but, on hearing a clap of thunder, forgot her purpose, fell in a heap, and cried out for help." Nalinika asks the jester to go along with her. He says, "Promise me food, and I will come. Food given to a new arrival secures Heaven." Nalinika tells him, "1 shall give you all my jewels." The jester replies, "The word 'butter' does not drive away bile. If you mean business, act accordingly." Nalinika then gives him all **her** jewels. He offers to **tell her the tale** then and there, but she wants him to go to the hall and tell it in

the midst of all the other girls. He wants to go and take leave of the princess first, but she drags him along to the hall.

Avimaraka is delighted at being reunited with Kurangi Pointing out the clouds to her, he says, "Look at those dark blue clouds, so welcome at the beginning of the rains, and so exquisitely beautiful. They dance about like dancers acting many parts to the drumming of thunder. They are the cows of Indra, the god of rain; the curtains for the hosts of stars; the ant-hill homes of those she-snakes, the lightning flashes; the dark bushes along the celestial highway; the water-jars to bathe the mountains; the alms-gatherers from the sea; the bars to hold the sun and the moon; the cisterns of heaven's shower-bath; the hones for love's arrows." "Yes, they are beautiful now. They were not so before." says Kurangi. The rains begin to come down, and Avimaraka tells her, "Hear the rains fall with a sound like that of the waves. See the showers drop down as if growing out of the clouds. See the lightning flashes like the sparkling eyes of demon dames whose faces are darkened with anger. Let us go in and embrace now." Roth of them go in. Act V ends there.

The interlude to Act VI begins with the nurse and Vasumitra, one of the Queen's maids, worrying about the happenings at the palace. The nurse exclaims, "What a fickle thing is fate? Our princess was originally intended to be married to Vishnusena, the prince of the Sauviras. Now she is united, of her own accord, to a man of remarkable appearance and qualities, but of unknown descent. To add to the confusion, Bhutika has come with Jayavarman, the prince of Benares, and his mother, Sudarsana, to settle the marriage. Whatever will happen now?"" Vasumitra says, "Curse those crooked astrologers! The fellows spin out some tale or other by looking at one star, forgetting the rest of the heavens, let alone the earth. The fools have fixed up the princess's marriage with Jayavarman for to-day, though the prince himself has arrived only just now, and the queen does not want to marry the princess to Jayavarman till she gets news of Vishnusena, and the king too is worried about his whereabouts." She asks a maid, Jayada, who is looking worried and cross, to go-to the Queen at once as she wants her.

Nalinika comes there with the latest news. She tells the nurse and Vasumitra that the king has received a letter from the ministers of Sauvira that their king is living in that very town, Vairantya, in disguise, and that, on receiving this letter, Kuntibhoja and Bhutika have gone in search of the King of the Sauviras.

The Act itself opens with Kuntibhoja meeting the king of the Sauviras who has been brought by Bhutika and is oppressed by trouble. As he embraces him, he asks him, "Why is your

speech faltering, your voice choked with tears? Why are your eyes wet, and your face sad?" Sauvira replies that his boy, **Avimaraka,** has not been heard of for a year. He then tells Kuntibhoja and Bhutika about the curse of Chandabhargava, and about the disappearance of Avimaraka, when living in disguise in Vairantya with his parents.

Bhutika says that his efforts to trace the prince have been in vain. At that time Narada, the divine sage, comes saying to himself, "With my Vedic chants I please Brahma, with my charming songs I please Vishnu. Every day I produce new melodies on my lute, and new quarrels in the world. Now, my old friend's son, Kuntibhoja, and his relative, Sauvira, are in great sorrow because of Avimaraka. I shall reveal to them where he is." He is received with respect by the two kings. Narada asks Bhutika to bring Sudarsana also there. This is done.

Kuntibhoja asks Narada, "Sir, is the Sauvira prince alive?"

Narada replies, "Yes."

"Why is he then not to be seen anywhere?" asks Sauvira.

"Because of his preoccupation with his marriage" says Narada.

"What! Ts he married?" asks Sauvira.

"And where?" asks Kuntibhoja.

"In the city of Vairantya" says Narada.

"Is there another Vairantya? Well, whose son-in-law is he?" asks Kuntibhoja.

"Kuntibhoja's" says Narada.

''Who is this Kuntibhoja?" asks Kuntibhoja.

"Kurangi's father, Lord of Vairantya, Duryodhana's son, yourself, Oh Kuntibhoja!" replies Narada.

"You say that the prince has married my daughter, Kurangi?" asks Kuntibhoja, astounded.

"Of course." replies the sage.

"Shame overcomes me, oh sage. Who gave her in marriage, and how did he manage to enter the princess's palace?" asks the king.

"Destiny gave her in marriage. He saw her first in the confusion attendant on the elephant's attack on her carriage. He entered her palace first by daring, afterwards by magic." replies Narada.

"What has happened has happened. I must regularize it. The astrologers say that to-day is an auspicious day for marriage. I shall have them married at once." says Kuntibhoja.

"The marriage has already taken place—a love marriage, by mutual consent." replies the sage.

"But, I want the formal ceremony, with fire as witness" says Kuntibhoja.

"It has had fire, the fire of true love, as eternal witness." says the sage. "Still, for your satisfaction bring the couple, and have the ceremony performed by the priest, in accordance with your family tradition."

Kuntibhoja prepares to go and fetch the couple, but he is detained by Narada who sends Bhutika to fetch them. Kuntibhoja then explains to Narada his embarrassment, owing to his having promised to give Kurangi to Sudarsana's son. He wants to know how to get out of this promise. Narada promises to set the matter right. He takes Sudarsana aside, reminds her that Avimaraka is her son by Agni, and makes her tell her husband that Kurangi is too old for Jayavarman, and to ask for her younger sister, Sumitra, for that prince. She does so.

Avimaraka and Kurangi come in wedding robes, along with Bhutika. Avimaraka feels embarrassed and ashamed. He says to himself, "Those who praised me that day for my gallant deed with the elephant, won't they blame me today for this secret deed?" Then he sees Narada, and reassures himself by thinking "Here is the lord of chant and song, the sage who makes the closest friends quarrel, and sets right the most hopeless things." He and Kurangi go and salute the sage who blesses them. Avimaraka then salutes,his father-in-law, Kuntibhoja, who tells him, "Win the affection of Brahmans by kindness, and of your retainers by compassion. Conquer kings with courage. Conquer yourself with the knowledge of truth." Then he salutes his father who says to him, "Honour your elders always. May you gaze, one day, on a son with joy, as I do on you now!" He salutes Sudarsana next, who blesses him and his wife and exclaims that she feels for him once more, in full, the love due to a son surge in her bosom. Avimaraka and his wife then go in, to salute Suchetana.

Then Narada departs, after asking Sauvira to go back to his country, and directing Sumitra to be given to Jayavarman, and adjuring Kuntibhoja to be ever by his side. There ends the play.

CHAPTER X.

PRATIMA NATAKA.

The Statues.—This is a seven-Act Play, and one of the best written by Bhasa. Act I opens with Vijaya, the female

door-keeper of Dasaratha's palace, in Ayodhya, telling the chamberlain, Arya Balaki, that the great king Dasaratha, famous for his deeds of valour in the wars between the gods and the demons, desires him to get ready at once all the things necessary for the coronation of Rama. The chamberlain replies that he has already carried out the orders. "The umbrella and the fan, the joy drums, and the ceremonial chair are all ready. The gold vessels filled with holy water are in place with flowers and *darbha* grass. The *Pushya* car stands ready yoked. The citizens and ministers are all assembled. Holy Vasishta, the embodiment of auspiciousness, stands ready at the altar," says he, "When the great king consecrates Rama, his subjects will have all that they desire."

Vijaya sends Sambhavaka, an attendant, to the high priest to hurry him up, and Sarasika, a maid-servant, to tell the actresses in the court theatre to be ready with a dramatic performance suitable to the occasion. She herself then goes to tell the king that everything is ready for the ceremony.

Avadatika, one of Sita's maids of honour, comes with a bark garment, and says to herself "Oh, if \ tremble like this, when coming away with a bark garment in joke, what must a real thief, taking it for his own gain, feel? I want to laugh at this frolic, but cannot." Sita comes along with her retinue. On seeing Avadatika, she says to her maid "My dear, Avadatika looks scared. What can be the reason?". The maid replies "Servants are always after some mischief or other. She mas: have done something." "I don't think so. She rather looks as if she wants to laugh but cannot" says Sita. Avadatika comes to her, and says "Greetings, princess! No, princess, I have done nothing wrong." "Who asked you if you did?" asks Sita, "But, what is that in your left hand?". "It is a garment made of birch bark" replies Avadatika.

"Where did you get it from?" asks Sita.

"The lady Reva, the mistress of the green-room, had finished her work on the stage. We begged her for one sprig of the *Asoka* tree. She wouldn't give it. So, to spite her, I took away this dress." replies Avadatika. Sita asks her to take it back, adding that defects of character increase by such thoughtless acts in joke.

But, when Avadatika is about to take it back, Sita asks her how that dress would suit her. The maid replies "Beauty looks well in anything. Try it on, princess." Sita puts it on, and Avadatika and the other maid assure her that she looks enchanting in it. She asks the maid to bring a mirror. It is broueht. Sita takes it. but. on seeingr the maid's face, says "You

chamberlain, Ralaki, keep on saying, The coronation, the coronation!'" says the maid. "Evidently, somebody is going to become the lord of the realm " remarks Sita.

Another maid enters, and tells Sita that Rama is to be crowned. "Why? Is his father not well?" asks Sita. "Oh yes, his majesty himself will crown the prince" says the maid. "Ah, then, the news is welcome" says Sita, and takes off her ornaments, and distributes them to the maids.

All of them hear the joy-drums heralding the approaching coronation. Suddenly, the drums "stop, and the second maid remarks about it. "Perhaps, the coronation has been postponed. Many things happen in courts," says Sita. "They say, princess, that, after the king has crowned the prince, he will retire to a forest" says the maid. "If so, the consecrated water will become mere face-water to wash away our tears" says Sita.

Rama enters, saying to his friends, whom he leaves at the entrance. "The drums were beaten, the elders were ready, I was seated on the coronation chair, and the vessel containing the consecrated water was about to be poured over my bent head and face. Then, the king called me, and sent me away from the place, saying, 'You can rest awhile, my son'. The people were amazed at my taking it so coolly. Rut, is it really wonderful that a son should obey his father's words? As for myself, I breathed a sigh of relief, as if a weight were removed from my head. Happily, I am still Rama, and the king is still king. Now I will go and see Sita".

Avadatika tells Sita, "Princess, here is the prince, and you have not yet removed the bark garment" Rama comes and asks Sita, who goes to meet him, "Lady of Mithila, how are you?" and asks her to be seated. Avadatika whispers to Sita that Rama is in his ordinary dress, and, so, the chamberlain's talk could not have been true. Sita replies, likewise in a whisper, that a man like the chamberlain would not utter a falsehood, but that many things may happen in courts. Then she mentions to Rama that the girl is talking about the coronation. Rama replies, "Oh yes, there was a coronation on foot. I was summoned by the king, in the presence of the preceptor, ministers and citizens. The king placed me on his lap, as he used to do when [was a child. Then he said to me, 'Oh joy of Kausalya, oh Rama, my son, do thou accept the kingdom.'" "What did you say then, my lord?" asks Sita. "What do you think, oh lady of Mithila?" asks Rama. "I think you fell at the king's feet, without a word, sighing deeply " says Sita. "You have guessed aright " replies Rama, "Rarely are couples born with natures so alike. I fell at his feet, his tears rained on my head, from above, and my tears fell on his

feet. When I was deaf to his entreaties, he exhorted me to accept the kingdom, taking an oath on his own life. Then Lakshmana and Satrughna held the sacred vessels, and, the king, still weeping, held the umbrella. Manthara came suddenly, and whispered something to the king, and, lo, I am not king." "I am glad " says Sita, "His majesty is still king, and you are still exclusively my own lord, without being, in addition, the lord of all **the** subjects."

Rama asks Sita why she has taken off her ornaments. Sita smiles, **and** says, "I have not put them on yet." Rama remarks, "Oh no, you have just taken them off. The edges of your ears **are** still bent after the ear-rings have been taken off. The hands show the traces of bangles just slipped off. The little hollows, created by **the** other ornaments, too, have not disappeared yet."

"Your words make even me believe like that" says Sita.

"Come on. Put on your jewels. I will hold the mirror " says Rama. He then looks at her closer, and says, "Why have you put on this bark garment? Is it in fun, or from a desire to do penance?"

Avadatika tells him that Sita has put it on from curiosity, to see how it suits her. Rama says "Oh, now, lady of Mithila, you are wearing the dress of the Ikshvaku elders when they retire to the forest. I like that dress. Bring it here. Let me put it on."

"Oh, no, it is unlucky, especially, just now, when the coronation has been postponed " says Sita.

"Don't make me angry " says Rama, "Don't forget that half my body was already in it when you put it on."

Sita sends a maid to Lady Reva to get another bark garment.

They hear a wailing sound, "Alas, alas, the king!" The chamberlain comes in, and says that the king needs Rama's protection.

"From whom?" asks Rama.

"From his own kin" says the chamberlain.

"That is serious. The foeman but strikes the body, **while the kinsman** strikes the heart" says Rama. "Who is this shameless **relation?".**

"The queen Kaikeyi" replies the chamberlain.

"What, my mother! Then, it must **be one** of fate's decrees" says **Rama, "Why should she, who has a husband valiant like Indra, and a son in me, do an unworthy act?"**

"Don't judge others by your own standards, prince" says the chamberlain, "There is no limit to the extent to which the infatuated minds of women will go. It is at her request that your coronation has been postponed."

"There are advantages in that, sir," says Rama.

"What advantages ?" asks the chamberlain.

"Why, the king has been prevented from retiring to the forest. The people are not troubled with a new and untried ruler. My brothers are still my equals, and I am still subject to the king " says Rama.

"She came uninvited and asked His Majesty to crown Bharata king. What greed!" exclaims the chamberlain.

"From your partiality for me, sir, you overlook the obvious truth. Don't forget that it was stipulated, at the time of her marriage, that her son should become king. So, how can she be •dubbed greedy? I, who agreed to be crowned king, may, with greater justification, be called greedy."

"But, prince————" begins the chamberlain.

"I wish to hear nothing more against my mother. Tell me what has happened to the king" says Rama.

"He has fallen into a swoon" says the chamberlain, "after dismissing me with his hand on hearing Kaikeyi's request."

At that stage, Lakshmana enters, with bow and arrows in his hand, crying out, "The king has lost his senses. So, take your bow, and show no compassion. They who are gentle and mild with the king are pushed aside, and suffer injustice. If you like it not, leave it to me. I shall soon rid the world of young women like Kaikeyi. We have been cheated."

Sita says, "Sumitra's son has seized his bow when he should weep. Such violence as he contemplates is unheard of."

Rama asks Lakshmana, "What does all this mean?"

"You ask me what it means! You have been robbed of the realm, which is your inheritance. The old king and ruler is rolling on the ground in sorrow. Is this the time for mercy or cowardice?" asks Lakshmana.

Rama replies, "It is all the same if Bharata be king or I. If you take any pride in your bow, use it to protect the.lpng, and not against the king. What foolish excitement has been caused to you by my loss of the kingdom!"

Lakshmana walks away in anger. Rama asks him to wait a moment, and tells him, "Shall I bend my bow on my sire if he Tceeps not his word with me? Shall I shoot an arrow at my

mother if she takes my wealth? Shall I slay my younger brother, Bharata, who has no part in all this? Of these three crimes,, which will satisfy your wrath?"

Lakshmana bursts into tears, and says, "Alas, you reproach me before you have understood the cause for my anger. I care nothing for the realm, but I do mind your being sent into an unjust exile, in the forests, for fourteen years."

"Ah!" says Rama, "Now I understand why His Majesty fainted. But, that shows weakness in a king. Sita, give me that bark garment. I shall practise virtue unattained by other kings, and not even attempted."

Sita expresses her determination to go with him to the forest.

"Oh, no, I shall be all alone there, Sita" says Rama.

"Well, that is why I am determined to go with you" replies Sita.

"No. It will mean dwelling in the forest" says Rama.

"What of that? Where my lord lives is my palace" replies-Sita.

"Don't forget that you have to attend on my parents" says Rama.

"The gods will forgive me for neglect of these minor duties "" says Sita, "My place is with my lord."

Rama asks Lakshmana to dissuade Sita.

Lakshmana replies "I shall not dissuade her. The star Tara follows the moon even in an eclipse. The creeper falls down to the ground with the forest tree, round which it entwines, when it crashes in a storm. The lordly tusker is not deserted by its mate when it gets engulfed in a quagmire. So, let this wedded wife do her pilgrimage, practising virtue, and following her lord, who is to her a god!"

The maid enters with a bark garment, and with a message from the lady Reva, mistress of the green-room, that Avadatika has broken into the concert hall and carried off a bark garment,, and that another unworn bark garment has been sent. Rama takes the garment from the maid and puts it on. Lakshmana says to Rama, "Brother, you always give me half of whatever jewels, garlands or decorations you get. Why are you so selfish regarding this bark garment? Give me half of it." Rama asks Sita to dissuade Lakshmana. Sita says, "Let me persuade you, Lakshmana." But he tells her, "You would fain wait on Rama's footsteps all alone, but, lady, I too want to serve him. Yours

shall be his right foot, and mine the left foot." Sita is touched by this, and tells Rama, "Give him half the bark garment, my lord. He is so distressed." Rama gives it and says, "Lakshmana, listen. This is the armour for the battle of penance. It is the goad for the elephant of self-control. It is the curb for the prancing senses which have to be controlled by the charioteer of virtue." Lakshmana thanks Rama, and puts on the bark garment given to him.

Rama tells Lakshmana 'The king's, highway is crowded with citizens who have heard the news. Please send them away." Lakshmana goes in front, followed by Rama and Sita, and cries out, "Please make way". Rama asks Sita to take off her veil, and she takes it off. He tells the citizens, "You may gaze freely on my wife while your faces run with tears, for women may be looked at without offence at a sacrifice or a wedding, or when in calamity, or in the forest." The chamberlain comes and tells Rama "Prince, you must not go. The king has heard of .your going to the forest with Lakshmana and Sita. He has got up from the ground, his limbs smeared with dust, and is coming here, like an old tusker from his dust-bath." Lakshmana tells Rama, "Brother, those who are to dwell in forests, clad in bark garments, need not see anybody." Rama says, "That is so. The king shall see our palaces, without us". Then he and Sita and Lakshmana go into exile. There ends Act 1.

The interlude to Act 11 shows the chamberlain describing Dasaratha's grief on separation from Rama whom he was unable to dissuade from going to the forest. "His limbs and wits are upset by his woe. He 16oks like the sinking sun seen only by the disc, like an ocean of unfathomable depth drying up, like a mighty mountain shaken by the storm which comes at the end of the world. Lamenting mightily like a mad man, he is lying in the ocean chamber" says Balaki to the female door-keeper. Then he continues "Alas, since the day when Rama went, Ayodhya appears to be deserted. Lordly elephants stand sorrowing, without eating anything; splendid chargers stand, without a neigh, tears in their eyes; men, women and children, young and old, have lost all taste for food or gossip; they cry aloud, and gaze at the road taken by Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. Now, I must attend on the king. Ah, here he is, attended by Kausalya and Sumitra who have mastered their overwhelming grief arising from their separation from their sons. Oh, it is a painful situation. The king gets up and falls down, gets up again, lamenting loudly, and gazes at the way that Rama went."

The Act itself opens with the king in agony, attended by Kausalya and Sumitra. The king cries out, "Alas, my child Rama, joy of all the world, Oh Lakshmana, so devoted to your

brother, Oh Lady of Mithila, so devoted to your lord! All the three have gone to the forest. Woe unto me! How strange is it that I shmdd yearn to see Lakshmana who has lost all love for his father in his love for his brother! Rama, Lakshmana, Vaidehi, answer me, my children! Alas, all is silent! None will answer me! Where is he, that Rama, who delights the eyes and hearts of all the world, who is so true to his word, so obedient to his elders, and so kindly to those in distress, and who treats sovereignty as a worthless bauble? Rama, if you desert your old father, what is thfe use of your practice of senseless virtue? Alas, Rama has gone away like the sun, Lakshmana has followed him as the day, Sita has disappeared like a shadow when the sun and the day are gone! Oh wretched fate, why did you not decree that I should have no children, or make Rama the son of another monarch, or make Kaikeyi a tigress in the jungle?" Kausalya weeps, and asks him not to torment himself, telling him that he is bound to see all the three when the period of exile is over.

He asks her, "Who are you?"

She replies "She that bore for you that son unloved."

"What, you are Kausalya, mother of Rama, the darling of all the world! You are indeed great, for you bore the great Rama in your womb, while I cannot bear this grief which burns me like a flame. Who is this other?"

Kausalya says "Lakshmana——————"

The king springs up from the ground and asks "Where is he? Where is Lakshmana?"

The queens hold the king, and Kausalya says, "I was about to say 'Lakshmana's mother, Sumitra' ".

The king tells her, "Sumitra, your son is a good son; for, night and day he follows Rama, in the forest, like a shadow."

The chamberlain enters and reports the arrival of Sumantra. The king springs up in delight, and asks, "He has come with Rama?" The chamberlain replies "No, only with the chariot." The king falls in a swoon. The queens ask him to take heart. They massage his limbs. The chamberlain remarks "Alas, fate is relentless. Even great ones undergo such calamities and sufferings." The king recovers somewhat, and asks Balaki whether Sumantra has come back all alone, and receives a reply in the affirmative. The king exclaims, "If the chariot has come back empty, my heart is broken, for it is as if Death has sent his chariot to fetch Dasaratha. Blessed indeed are the winds of the

forest, for they can touch Rama whenever they like, unlike wretched me."

Sumantra enters, looks round the room sorrowfully, and says, 'These servants leave their duties, blinded by tears for Rama; they blame the king even as he screams out his lamentations/' He greets the king. The king asks him "Where is Rama, my first-born, he who was to you too a son? Where is that daughter of Janaka so absolutely devoted to her husband? Where is Sumitra's son so uniquely attached.to his elder brother? What do they say of me, their father, who is at the point of death? What do they say of me who has brought sorrow on all my subjects? Is not the lady of Videha distressed by wandering through the forests?" Sumitra asks Sumantra "Did she send any message for us and the king? Child though she is in age, she is no child in her conduct, sharing the pilgrimage of her lord, dressed in bark." Sumantra tells the king "All of them. . . . . ." The king says "No, no. Let me hear the names of each; it is nectar for my ears, medicine for my heart-trouble."

Sumantra says "As the king commands. Rama, long life to him!"

"Rama! Yes, here is Rama. The very utterance of his name brings him close to me. Go on".

"Lakshmana, long life to him!" says Sumantra.

"Here is Lakshmana. Go on."

"Janaka's daughter, Rama's wife, Sita, long life to her!" says Sumantra.

"So here are Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. No, that is not the proper order " says the king.

"Then, what is the proper order?" asks Sumantra.

"Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, of course" says the king. "Let the maid of Mithila stand between the two, so that she may be well protected in the forests which are full of danger. Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, embrace me, my children! Ah! If I can but touch Rama once, I shall live again, like a dead man coming back to life by being given nectar."

Sumantra says "At Sringaberapura, they got out of the chariot and stood looking towards Ayodhya, bowing low. Methinks they were thinking of sending your majesty some message. Long they pondered, oh king, as if they would say something, and their lips trembled with the words, but their throats were paralysed with tears, and they went away into the forest without a word."

"Went away into the forest without a word!" exclaims the king, and goes into a swoon. Sumantra asks Balaki to tell the ministers that the king's condition is grave. Balaki goes out. The two queens ask Dasaratha to take heart. The king recovers slightly, and says "Kausalya, touch my arm. I cannot see you with my eyes. My wits have gone after Rama, and have not yet returned. Oh Rama, 1 had hoped to crown you, and bless my people with a noble king, and then retire to the forest, after adjuring you to bestow an equal fortune on your brothers, but alas, Kaikeyi has changed all that in a single second/' Then, turning to Sumantra, he says, "Sumantra, take this message to Kaikeyi. Rama has gone. Be thou content. I, too, am on the point of death. Send for our son, Bharata, quickly. Let the error bear its fruit.' " Then he sees the shades of his ancestors, asks for some water, sips it, and says "Here is Dilipa, friend of lndra; here is the great Raghu; here is my father, Aja. It is time for me to dwell with them. Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, I am going away from here to the spirits of my ancestors. Great spirits, here 1 come!" He swoons and expires. The chamberlain puts a cloth over him, and all mourn the death of the great king. There ends Act IT.

The interlude to Act III shows the palace cleaner cleaning up the statue-house and having a nap after tidying up the place for the queen's visit, as directed by Sambhavaka, the emissary from the court. An orderly from court, sent out to see whether the tidying up is over, goes and strikes the cleaner, crying out "Ah, you rascal, why are you not working?" The cleaner wakes up, and says "Beat me. That serves me right." The orderly beats him again and asks "If I beat you, what will you do?" The cleaner replies "Alas, I have not got a thousand arms like Kartaveerya Arjuna."

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"What will you do if you had a thousand arms?" asks the orderly.

"1 will kill you" says the cleaner.

"Oh, will you, you rascal? I will thrash you to death" says the orderly, and strikes him over and over again.

The cleaner weeps and asks "May 1 know, master, what is my fault?"

"Fault indeed!" replies the orderly. "Did I not tell you that the queens are coming here to-day to see the statue of king Dasaratha who went to heaven with a broken heart, because Rama lost the succession and had to go into exile? Now, what have you done about it?"

"Look here, master I" says the cleaner, "I have cleaned up the pigeons' nests and bats' nests from the inner room. I have decorated the doors by hanging up wreaths of flowers, I have strewn fresh sand on the floor. What is it that I have not done, sir?"

"If you have done ail this, rest in peace. I will go and tell the minister that everything is ready for the queens to come." says the orderly.

The Act itself begins with Bharata coming in a chariot. Bharata says to his charioteer, "I have lived so long with my uncle that I am quite out of touch with the news here. I hear that the king is very ill. Tell me, what disease afflicts my sire?"

"A great affliction of the heart" is the reply.

"What do the physicians say?"

"The doctors are helpless" says the charioteer.

"Does he take his food as usual, and sleep well?" asks Bharata.

"No, he eats nothing, and lies on the earth" replies the charioteer.

/'Is there any hope?" asks Bharata.

"That depends on fate." is the reply.

"My heart is thumping. Drive the car faster" says Bharata.

The car is driven very fast. Bharata remarks "How swiftly the chariot moves! Those trees appear to race towards us, so quickly is their distance reduced by the speed of the chariot. The ground runs down into the space between the wheels like an agitated stream. The spokes cannot be seen owing to the speed, and appear like solid circles. The dust raised by the steeds is all left behind, not one jot being in front."

The charioteer tells him that Ayodhya is approaching. Then, Bharata says to himself, "How eager am I to see my kinsmen! Methinks, I already bow at my father's feet. He raises me up lovingly. My brethren hasten to me. The tears of my mothers wet me. 'How well he looks! How tall and strong he has grown!' say the servants, complimenting me. 1 hear already Laksh-mana's jokes and quips and cranks about my dress and outlandish speech." The charioteer remarks to himself "Alas! How sad that the prince should enter Ayodhya, ignorant of the king's "death, and nursing "fond hopes! But, who can delate to him the triple bane, his father's death, his mother's lust for power, and the exile of his elder brother?"

A sowner-messenger comes, and Bharata asks **him whether Satfughna is coming to meet him. The soldier** says **that he is coming to meet him, but that the preceptor has sent word that Bharata should enter Ayodhya only after the advent of the star Rohini, and that half an hour of** Krithigai has still **to** elapse. **Bharata** remarks **that** he has never disobeyed the preceptor's words, and considers where he should spend **the** time.

He sees **the** statue-house through the trees, mistakes it for a temple, and resolves to rest there, and serve the double purpose **of** worship and repose. He gets down from the chariot, asks **the** charioteer to keep the chariot in a quiet spot, and goes to the statue-house. He has a look round, and says to himself, "Oblations are indicated by the fried rice and flowers strewn here. The walls are marked with imprints of hands dipped in sandal. The doors are decorated with garlands. There is fresh sand on the ground. Is there a special Krithigai festival on? Or, is it only the usual daily worship? To what deity can this place belong? I see no external sign, neither weapon nor banner, nor *vahana.* **Well,** I will go in and find out."

He enters and sees four statues, and exclaims, "How life-like, how exquisitely carved! But they look like men, not like deities. Whatever that be, they delight my heart. If they be gods, it is only right to bow my head and utter a hymn of praise, for, none but a churl will refuse the gods their dues." He begins to worship them, when the keeper of the Statue-House rushes in, on seeing somebody enter, and says to himself "Methinks that man who went in resembles those statues. Let me go in and find out." He goes in, sees Bharata begin his worship, and says "No, no, don't worship them."

Bharata asks, "Sir, is it a tyranny of rules? Ts there a prohibition for people to worship them without the aid of a priest?"

"No!" says the keeper. "They are not gods, and a Brahmin should not worship them, thinking that they are gods. They are simply statues of Kshatriya rulers of the house of Ikshvaku."

Bharata is thrilled, and says to himself, "Oh, these are then my ancestors, **the** rulers of Ayodhya, the great kings who aided **the** gods in the wars against **the** demons, who conquered **the world** with **the** might **of their** arms, whom **death** was **loathe to remove from the earth, who went** to **Indra's realm along with their subjects because of their good deedS! What a great privilege chance has given me!" Then he** says **to the keeper, "Tell me, sir, who is this noble king?"**

"That is Dilipa who kindled the lamp of the sacred law, and instituted the *Rajasuyu* sacrifice, with untold gifts to one and all"

"Salutations to that great devotee of Dharma! Who is this great king?"

"This is Raghu at whose rising and sleeping thousands of Brahmins chanted sacred hymns."

"Ah! Death is powerful indeed to surmount that protection f Salutation to him who enriched the Brahmans with the fruit of his sovereignty. And who is this, sir?"

"This is Aja who abdicated his kingdom, from grief at separation from his beloved, and soothed his sorrow by performing many auspicious rites."

"Salutations to him of such praiseworthy penance" says Bharata. He then looks at Dasaratha's statue, and becomes troubled, but is not willing to ask a direct question about it.

He says to the keeper "My mind is confused. I have not yet grasped the thing clearly. Tell me, who is this?"

"King Dilipa."

"The great grandfather of the king. And this?" says Bharata.

"King Raghu."

"The grandfather of the king. Well, and this?" asks Bharata.

"King Aja."

Bharata says to himself "The father of my dear father", and says loudly, "Sir, 'repeat for my benefit once more their names."

"This is Dilipa, this is Raghu, this is Aja" says the keeper, pointing to those statues.

"Sir, do they put up statues of living kings also?" asks Bharata.

"Oh no, only of the dead ones' " is the reply.

"Good-bye,, sir!" says Bharata, hastily, and starts to go.

"Stay!" says the keeper, "Why don't you question me about this other statue, that of Dasaratha who gave up his life and kingdom as bridal fee?"

"Ah, my father!" cries Bharata, and falls down in a swoon, and then recovers, and says to himself, "Oh heart! Be calm, now that your suspicions have been confirmed. If that base insinuation regarding the bridal fee refers to me, then I must cleanse this body with fire."

The keeper asks him, "Are you Bharata, Kaikeyi's son?"

"Yes, I am Bharata, the son of Dasaratha—hot of Kaikeyi."

"Then excuse me, sir, I shall take leave of you" says the keeper,

"Stay. Tell me the rest" says Bharata.

"No escape. Then listen. King Dasaratha is no more. Rama has gone to the forest with Sita and Lakshmana," says the keeper.

"What! My noble brother gone to the forest!" says Bharata, and goes into a deeper swoon.

"Prince, take heart. Be brave," says the keeper.

Bharata recovers somewhat, and says, "I find Ayodhya is now a wilderness abandoned by my father and brother. I am like a man tormented by thirst and going to a stream to quench it and finding it all dried up. Noble sir, I shall brace up my mind to hear it. Tell me everything, concealing nothing."

The keeper says, "Listen then. The king was about to consecrate Rama when your mother said————"

"Hold," says Bharata, "1 can guess it. My mother said, 'Remember the clause in our marriage negotiations, and make my son king.' Encouraged by seeing his helplessness, she said to my elder brother, 'Go thou to the forest, my son'. When the king saw Rama dressed in bark, going to the forest, his mighty heart broke, and he expired. Now, the people are justly blaming me." He faints again.

A voice is heard, "Make way sirs, make way, sirs." The keeper looks round, and says to himself, "Here come the queens, just in time when the prince has gone into a swoon. The touch of a mother's hand is like a handful of water to the parched." Sumantra enters with the queens and says "Here is the statue-house of our kings. Travellers may rest freely here, without obeisance, and without being guided by the custodians." He enters the house, and sees Bharata lying on the floor, and cries out, "Oh ladies, don't enter. Here lies one resembling our king in his youthful days." The keeper says "Lift him up. He is Bharata." The queens approach him. Bharata - recovers, and exclaims "Noble sir, how are my mothers now?". Sumantra remarks that the voice seems to come from Dasaratha's own statue. • The queens remove their veils and shed tears. Sumantra asks them to restrain their emotion.

Bharata remarks, looking at Sumantra, "Your freedom with the* queens tells me that you are Sumantra. Am I right, old man?"

"Yes, prince. I am Sumantra, now the driver of an empty chariot. Pursued by the evils of old age, ashamed of my ingratitude, I still live on, though the king has passed away'"

"Poor old man!" says Bharata, "Tell me, sir, which lady I should first address."

"Certainly," says Sumantra, "This is prince Rama's mother, Kausalya."

"Mother, I, who am wholly innocent, salute you" says Bharata.

"My child, I wish you freedom from distress" says Kausalya.

Bharata says to himself, "That implies a reproach, because I ought to be distressed at Rama's being deprived of his kingdom and driven to exile." He says aloud, "I thank you, mother."

Sumantra says, "This is prince Lakshmana's mother, queen Sumitra."

"Mother, I, over whom Lakshmana stole a march, salute you," says Bharata.

"Child, I wish you all glory" says Sumitra.

"Mother, I shall strive for it" replies Bharata.

"This is your own mother" says Sumantra, pointing to Kaikeyi.

Bharata rises up angrily, and says, "Oh wicked woman, you shine not between this mother of mine and that one. You are like a foul stream which has impudently crept in between the holy Ganges and Jumna."

"My child, what have I done?" asks Kaikeyi.

"What have you done! You have covered me with infamy, and my eldei brother with a bark garment. You have done Dassratha to death in his own house, and thrown Ayodhya into mourning. You have sent Lakshmana to dwell with beasts. You have put on Sita the toils of travel, and got on yourself well-merited words of reproach."

Kausalya tells him, "My child, you are well-versed in the rules of etiquette. Why don't you salute your mother?"

Bharata replies "She is not my mother. You are my mother, and you I have saluted."

"No, no, *she* is your mother" says Kausalya.

"She used to be my mother, but is not so now" says Bharata, "Sons cease to be sons when they cease to love their parents. I will establish a new law in the world that a mother be no mother for perfidy to her lord."

Kaikeyi tells him that she did what she did, to make the king keep his word.

Bharata replies "Your marriage negotiations merely say **that your son should be made king. Was not Rama a son unto you? Was he not your husband's eldest son? Was he not to succeed his father under the laws of the Aryas? Did he not adore** his **brothers?** Did **the people disapprove of him?"**

Kaikeyi says, "Shall a woman be questioned for claiming what is stipulated at the time of her marriage?"

Bharata asks "Why did you send Rama on foot, and in bark garment, to the forest with his wife, and bid him **dwell in** the **forest with** beasts? Was that too agreed to at the time of your **marriage?"**

"I will explain it at the proper time and place," says Kaikeyi with dignity.

"Madam, you wanted to satisfy your greed. Why did you bring in my name? What profit from kingship did you desire? Was there anything that the king would not have given you for the mere asking? Did you crave the title of 'king's mother?' But was not Rama your son too? Madam, your deed was evil. In your lust for power, you had no thought for the king or his life. You sent away his eldest son to wander in the forests. Alas, the Creator has made your heart as hard as granite. That is why it was not broken at the sight of Sita dressed in bark,"

Sumantra says, "Prince, here are Vasishta and Vamadeva and the people come for your coronation. They say that a people that has no king perishes, like cattle without a herdsman, **and** want to crown you."

"Crown her ladyship!" says Bharata, pointing to Kaikeyi, "I am going away."

"Whereto" asks Sumantra.

"To where Rama lives," says Bharata, "Without Rama, Ayodhya is not Ayodhya. Ayodhya is where Rama lives." There ends Act III.

The Interlude to Act IV shows two maids, Vijaya and Nandinika, talking about the scene **at the statue-house, and of the departure of Bharata** for **the** penance grove of Rama **without accepting the crown tendered to him.**

The Act itself shows Bharata and Sumantra in a **chariot approaching Chitrakuta, the then abode of Rama. Bharata asks Sumantra, "Where is Rama, the ideal king, the shining example**

of the virtuous, the vessel of glory, the votary of truth, the dutiful son? He is my greatest deity now."

Sumantra says, "Prince/here is the hermitage where dwell Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, the embodiments of truth, virtue and devotion." Bharata has the chariot stopped, and asks Sumantra to announce him as 'Bharata, son of greedy Kaikeyi. Sumantra asks him not to reproach his elders. Bharata remarks that it is good not to mention the faults of others, and asks Sumantra to announce him as 'Bharata, the disgrace of the Ikshvakus.'

Sumantra says that he cannot announce him like that, and will simply say, "Bharata has arrived". Bharata says, "No, no. Merely to announce me like that will show that I have not expiated. But, are the murderers of Brahmans announced by others? My position too is akin to that. I will announce myself", and he cries out, "There.has arrived here a cruel and ungrateful man, barbarous and violent, but full of devotion. Ts he to go or stay?"

Rama listens to this with wonder and delight, and tells Lakshmana and Sita "Whose is this voice like my sire's, sweet as rain, though deep as a thunder-cloud? Surely this is that of a kinsman." Lakshmana says that the voice is clear, steady, soft, mellow and powerful, like that of an amorous bull, and that it is ringing out fearlessly, as if that of a man born to rid the world of fear. Rama sends Lakshmana to find out who it is. Lakshmana goes and sees Bharata, and is surprised that his figure is like that of Rama. He sees Sumantra who hails him as prince Lakshmana. Bharata then salutes him as his brother, and Sumantra tells Lakshmana that it is Bharata. Lakshmana welcomes Bharata, and goes in and tells Rama that it is Bharata who has arrived.

Rama asks Sita to open her eyes wide to look at Bharata. Lakshmana asks Rama whether he could bring the prince in. Rama asks him whether he wants his order even for this, and directs him to bring in Bharata at once, but, on later thoughts, he says, "Stay. Let the princess herself go, to show him honour like a mother whose heart is melting, her eyes shedding a shower of joyful tears like a lotus wet with dew." Sita goes out, and sees Bharata, and is struck by the remarkable resemblance between him and her husband. Sumantra tells Bharata that it is Sita. Bharata exclaims, "So this is Her Highness, king Janaka's daughter, that glory in woman's form got by Janaka from a field when ploughing, as a reward for his austerities. Lady, Bharata salutes you." Sita remarks to herself "Similarity in voice too!" and says to Bharata, "Come in, dear, and delight your brother's **heart.**'

Bharata goes in, and greets Rama who tells him "Spread out your breast, as wide as the panel of a door, and embrace me with your two stalwart arms. Lift up your face, lovely as the auftumn moon, and bring delight to my parched heart." Bharata thanks him, and embraces him. Sumantra then approaches Rama, and says, "Long live the prince!". Rama says to him, "Alas, old friend, there was a king who used to help the gods against the demons, and many used to point to him, saying, 'there goes the hero*. Now he has gone to dwell in heaven with the shades of his ancestors, but what comfort can he find there, deprived of you, so devoted and so beloved?" Sumantra says, "Living through these times of terrible woe, the king's decease, your own exile, Bharata's distress, and the helpless state of the royal house, my old age seems guilty of a string of crimes." He weeps. Rama too weeps. Sita says, "My lord, no sooner had your tears dried up than this old man has made you weep again/' Rama replies, "I shall control myself" and asks Lakshmana to bring water. Bharata says "it is my turn to serve our brother", snatches the pitcher from Lakshmana, and goes and fetches water. Rama remarks jokingly to Sita, "Lady of Mithila, Lakshmana's occupation is gone." Sita says to him, "My lord, he also should attend on you/' Rama replies, "Lakshmana shall serve me here, and Bharata in Ayodhya." Bharata begs to be allowed to stay there and serve him, and says that the very name of Rama will protect the realm. Rama replies, "My dear Bharata, I came to the forest at my sire's behest, and not from pride or fear or confusion. So, do you keep our sire's words also, and look after the kingdom."

"Who is to be crowned?" asks Bharata.

"He whom my mother has nominated already," says Rama.

Bharata then tells him, "Brother, don't strike me on the raw. My lineage is the same as yours. Your father was my father too. A man cannot be blamed for his mother's fault. See how heart-broken and distressed 1 am at your words."

Sita says, "My lord, his words are piteous, What are you thinking about?" Rama says, "Sita, I am thinking of the king who went to heaven before seeing these splendid qualities of his son. Fie on fate, if it can overcome the best of men after getting such a son, a veritable treasure-house of virtue!" Then, turning, to Bharata, he says, "You are free from all fault, and I would have agreed to be crowned but for keeping the king's word. A son like you should carry out his promise, and not make people dttb him a liar."

Bharata replies, "I will abide by your side until your vow has been fulfilled."

Rama says, "I must keep my vow by myself. My curse is on you if you will not protect the **realm!**"

Bharata says, "Alas, I have no answer to this. On one condition I agree to protect the realm whose crown I have refused and relinquished."

"What is the condition?" asks Rama.

"I want you to resume your kingdom, given in trust to me, at the end of the fourteen years." Rama agrees to this, and Bharata makes Lakshmana, Sita and Sumantra witnesses to this agreement. He then requests Rama to give him his two sandals, stating that he will be their vassal till Rama comes back to the kingdom, and that he will pour the consecrated water over those sandals. Rama agrees, and remarks to himself, "What little glory I have gained with great trouble, and in course of time, Bharata has acquired in no time at all!" Bharata remarks to himself, "Now my kin will trust me. Now the people will love me. Now T can hold up my head in the world. Now, I am the virtuous son of the deceased king. T am honoured by my brothers. I can be talked of by good men. I can become an object of affection to those who seek salvation."

Rama tells him "Bharata, a kingdom should not be neglected even for a moment. So you should return this very day."

Sita asks Rama "Must Bharata go this very day?"

Rama replies, "Yes, our affection must be restrained. He must go this very day."

Bharata says, "Noble brother, 1 shall depart this very day. The citizens will be waiting in the city, hoping to see you. I shall satisfy them by showing them your favour, these sandals." Rama bids Sumantra to look after Bharata as he looked after Dasaratha. Then Bharata mounts the chariot in Rama's presence, and Rama, Lakshmana and Sita see him to the gate of the hermitage. There ends Act IV.

The interlude to Act V shows Sita sweeping the blossoms scattered through the hermitage in Janasthana, worshipping the gods with flowers, and watering the young trees. Rama comes in search of Sita, and sees the trees newly watered. He exclaims that she could not have gone far. He says to himself, "The water is swirling with its bubbles. The thirsty birds which have alighted to drink it have not yet begun to do so, asi it is still muddy. The insects whose holes are flooded by the water, are crawling out to the dry ground. The trees appear to have new girdles with wet rings where the water sinks at their roots. Ah, here is Vaidehi. She who used to be wearied by carrying a mirror in her hand before, now feels no fatigue in carrying a water-pot. The forest

makes even delicate ladies as hard as creepers." He asks Sita **to sit and discuss with him. They both sit down.**

Rama tells Sita, "Tomorrow is the anniversary'of my **father's death, and I have to make the** offerings prescribed by the **.scriptures. I** am **sorry to think** that I cannot do so. As they **know** my present state, they will be content with anything, anS yet **I** wish **that I could perform the** rites in a manner worthy of Rama and his sire." Sita replies, "My lord, Bharata will perform the rites in royal style. You will perform them with water and with fruits. Father will like this all the more." Rama replies, **"When father** sees the fruits placed on the sacrificial grass with our own hands, it will remind him of our exile in the forest, and he will weep, even in the other world."

The Act proper begins with Ravana entering the hermitage dressed as an ascetic. He says to himself, "I have adopted this disguise in order to cheat Rama whom I hate for killing Khara. I have come here, resolved to carry away Sita. I shall pretend to be a guest." He goes and knocks at the entrance to Rama's hermitage, crying out "Hullo! Who is there? Here is a guest." Rama comes out, salutes him, and asks him to be seated, and directs Sita to bring water for washing the feet of the holy man. Sita brings the water, and Rama asks her to pour it on Ravana's feet. Ravana is afraid that, if Sita does this, his emotion will betray his disguise, and, so, he says, "That is all right. She need not attend on me." Rama says, "I shall wait on you then. Give the water to me, Sita." Ravana exclaims to himself, "If he does SQ, I shall escape the shadow, and be caught by the thing itself." So, he says aloud, "I am honoured by your words. Pray be seated." Rama sits down. Ravana says to himself, "I must now behave like a Brahman", and says aloud, "I belong to the Kasyapa *gotra.* I have studied the Vedas and Vedangas, the Dharma Sastra of *Manu,* the Yogasastra of Maheswara, the Neetisastra of Brihaspati, the *Tarkasastra* of Medhatithi, and the scripture on funeral rites written by Prachetas." Rama wants to know what **can** satisfy the shades of the ancestors at *sraddhas.* Ravana replies, "Everything given with, love and attention *(sraddha)* is welcome at a *smddha"* Rama wants some particulars of things which are specially meritorious for offering at *sraddhas.*

Ravana replies, *"Darbha* grass among grasses, sesamum among seeds, black gram among pulses, carp among fish, the crane among the birds, and, among the beasts, the cow or the rhinoceros **or——" and stops there.**

"What is **that** alternative beast?" asks Rama.

"Oh, it is **no use telling you. It lives in the Himalayas, and is called the golden deer. It** is as swift as **the** wind, and drinks

the water of the Ganges falling from Siva's hair. **The** greai seers, **like Vaikhanasa, Valakhilya and** Naimisiya, brought it by **the power of thought, and** sacrificed **it** at **the** *sraddhas* to their ancestors. Given this animal as offering, the ancestors mount straight **to** heaven, and travel about in airships." Rama then asks Sita to **get** ready to start for **the** Himalayas. Ravana tells him that it is no use his going to the Himalayas, as the deer will not be visible to him Rama declares that either the Himalayas will show the deer to him, or he will split the Himalayas as Skanda did the Krauncha mountain.

Ravana remarks to himself, "Ah, his pride is intolerable," and then exclaims aloud, "See there, a golden deer is coming." Rama requests Sita to ask Lakshmaha to catch and bring it. She reminds him that Lakshmana has been sent by him to meet the chief of the hermitage returning from a pilgrimage. So, Rama goes to catch the deer himself, and asks Sita to attend on the ascetic.

Ravana remarks, "There is the great Rama running to obtain a proper offering for his ancestors. How brave! No wonder the world is pervaded by that one little word, Rama. Rut the deer has spurted beyond the range of his arrows, and entered a thicket in the forest." Sita says to herself, "After my lord has left me, I feel afraid." Ravana remarks to himself, "I have sent him away by this trick. T shall carry away Sita now." Sita says to Ravana "I shall go into the hut" and starts to go in. Ravana assumes his true form, as a demon, and says, "Sita, stay." Sita is terrified, and exclaims; "Oh! Who is this?". Ravana proclaims his identity, and tells her that he is the demon who conquered Indra in battle, and that he has come to carry her off now in revenge for his sister's mutilation and the killing of his brothers. Sita tries to go away. Ravana tells her "Whither can you go? Once in Ravana's view, nothing can escape," Sita cries out to Rama and Lakshmana to help her. Ravana tells her, "It is no use. I smashed Indra, and dragged Soma in the dust, and thrashed the child of the sun. I made Kubera tremble. Rama and Lakshmana are no match for me, even if all the gods aid them. Why lament? Count me as your lord, and come with me." Sita says to him, "Be thou accursed!" Ravana exclaims in wonder, "The sun's rays could not burn me, but this chaste woman's curse is burning me." He seizes Sita, and carries her off, shouting out, "Oh hermits of Janasthana, Ravana is carrying Sita, **Let** Rama show his prowess if he can."

Sita cries out/ "Save me, my lord, save me!" Hearing her cries, a **great bird, Jatayu,** comes and attacks Ravana, crying out, "**Whither are you going,** while I remain alive, Oh Ravana?"

Ravana threatens to cut his wings and bleed him to death. There ends Act V.

The interlude to Act VI shows two old men describing the fight between Ravana and Jatayu, ending with the cutting off of the wings of Jatayu and his being wounded to death. The two old men go to report the event to Rama.

The Act itself begins with the chamberlain telling Vijaya, the female door-keeper in the Ayodhya palace, that Sumantra has returned. Bharata comes along, clad in a bark garment, and with all his locks matted, but stalking along like a magnificent young elephant. Sumantra enters through the golden gate, and remarks to himself "First I have seen the king die. Then I saw his son's exile. Now I hear of the princess's abduction. Calamities come in a string on my old age." He greets Bharata who asks him "Have you seen Rama, that incarnation of filial affection? Have you met Sita, the rival of Arundhati in virtue? Have you seen Lakshmana, that model brother in exile?" Sumantra remains plunged in thought, and silent. Vijaya tells him, "Sir, the prince is speaking to you." Sumantra mumbles, 'To me, madam?" Bharata remarks to himself, "His fatigue must be great. His mind is wandering." Then he asks him,. "Have you returned without completing your journey?"

"Will I do that, prince?" asks Sumantra. -

"Why did you not see them, then? Are they in hiding, from anger or shame?" asks Bharata.

" Prince, how can anger exist in the self-controlled, or shame in people of pure hearts? And, yet, l found the hermitage-empty and bereft of them."

"Did you not hear where have they gone?" asks Bharata.

"I hear that they have gone to Kishkinda, and are dwelling among the monkeys there."

"Alas, monkeys know no distinctions. They must be living in great difficulty there," says Bharata.

"Animals also recognise their obligations. . Prince Sugriva, the monkey king, was thrust out of his kingdom by his elder brother, Vali, and dwelt on a mountain, robbed of his wife. He-is grateful to Rama for relieving him of trouble similar to his," says Sumantra.

"Trouble similar to his! What do vou mean hv that?" asks. Bharata.

Sumantra remarks to himself, "Alas, I have given myself away." He says aloud, "Nothing, prince, I meant that both had lost their kingdoms."

Bharata says, "Why are you hiding something? By Dasaratha, I implore you to speak the truth. I will curse you if you don't."

Sumantra replies, "There is no way out. Listen. In guarding the sages, Rama made an enemy of a demon called Ravana. Resorting to a ruse, Ravana abducted Sita."

"Abducted Sita!" cries Bharata, and goes into a swoon. Recovering from it, he says to himself, "Alas, robbed of father and kingdom, suffering terribly in the forest, my brother is now deprived of his wife also, by this demon, as the moon is robbed of its light by a black cloud." He then goes to Kaikeyi, after sending word to her that he wants to see her with Sumantra who has come back from Rama. Kaikeyi says to herself, "With what wounding words will Bharata reproach me now?". She meets Bharata and says "My child, Vijaya tells me that Sumantra has come back from Rama."

Bharata replies, "Yes, T have pleasant news for your majesty."

"Then let us send for Kausalya and Sumitra also," says Kaikeyi.

"It is not for them to hear" says Bharata.

"What can it be?" wonders Kaikeyi, and says aloud, "Tell me, my son."

Bharata says to her, "Listen. At your behest, Rama gave up his throne, and went into the forest in exile. Now his wife, chaste Sita, has been abducted. Are you satisfied?

Kaikeyi exclaims, "What!"

Bharata goes on, "Since this house of brave warriors had the good fortune of securing you as a daughter-in-law, it has had the further good fortune of having another daughter-in-law abducted."

Kaikeyi says to herself, "It is time to tell him." She says aloud "My son, have you not heard of the curse on the king, your father?"

"No. What was the curse on him?" asks Bharata.

"Tell him, Sumantra," says Kaikeyi.

Sumantra says to Bharata, "Once, the king, your father, went out hunting. The only son of a blind sage was filling his

water-pot at the pond to take it home for his parents who doted on him and whom he worshipped as gods. The king mistook the sound of the filling of the pot for the gurgling noise created by a wild elephant filling its **trunk** with water, and shot an arrow in that direction, and slew him."

Bharata exclaims in horror, "Slew him! May the gods forgive him!"

"And then," Sumantra continues, "Dasaratha told the sage the sad news. After an outburst of weeping, the sage, with his dying breath, declared 'Like me shall you perish with grief for your son/ "

'This is terrible" says Bharata.

"You see now, my son?" says Kaikeyi, "It is not through lust of power that I asked for Rama's exile. I wife impelled to ask for it by the sage's curse which was inexorable and could only be fulfilled by the exile of the son."

"Then, why did you not ask for *my* exile?" asks Bharata.

"Bharata, my son, you were already in exile in your uncle's house" says Kaikeyi.

"But, why fourteen years, mother?" asks Bharata.

"I wanted to ask.for fourteen days, but, there was a slip, and I said 'fourteen years/ "

Bharata asks Sumantra, "Is the story given out by her known to the preceptors ?"

"Oh yes!" says Sumantra, "Vasishta, Vamadeva and others know everything."

"Then, mother, you have done no wrong. I spoke harsh words to you in anger, from affection for my brother. Please forgive me for all that. Mother, I salute you" says Bharata.

"Ah child! Which mother will not forgive a son's fault? Rise up. You are not to blame," says Kaikeyi.

Bharata rises up and says that he must mobilise his entire army and go to the help of Rama against Ravana. Vijaya enters, and tells Bharata that, on hearing the news **of** Sita's abduction, Kausalya has fainted away. Kaikeyi tells Bharata, "Come, my son. Let us comfort the noble lady", and both go. There ends Act V I.

The interlude to Act V I I shows an ascetic **telling Nandilaka, a servant in the hermitage at Janasthana, to make everything ready to the best of their resources for receiving Rama, who has slain Ravana, and Sita, the paragon of chastity, whom he has**

rescued, and Vibhishana whom Rama has put on the throne of Lanka, Nandilaka says, "Everything is ready, sir, but——" "But what?" asks the ascetic. "Sir, Vibhishana and his followers are demons who eat men as food. What to do for their food, sir?" "Vibhishana will control the demons. Don't you fear" says the ascetic. Then Rama and the rest get down from the airship, and are welcomed by the people of the hermitage.

The Act itself begins with Rama, saying to himself, "I have slain Ravana and regained Sita, the soul of purity, the abode of all virtues. I have come once more to this lovely hermitage. Sita has gone to greet her old friends. Ah, there she is with the sages' wives who are calling her 'Sita', 'Darling', 'Janaki', 'Daughter', according to their age." Sita and a female ascetic come towards Rama, and the female ascetic tells Sita, "There is your husband. Go up to him. I cannot bear to see you alone." Sita exclaims, "Even to-day, it all seems too good to be true."

Rama says to her. "Lady of Mithila, do you remember these trees you planted when we were here before?"

Sita replies, "Oh yes. But, then, I could see every leaf from where I stood. Now, I have to look up to see them."

"Maithali!" says Rama, "That is the way of the world, and represents the ups and downs brought about by time. Do you recollect the herd of deer startled on seeing Bharata, and the great tortoise that witnessed our austerities? Do you remember our sitting here, and talking about our offerings to my beloved father's shades, when we saw the golden deer?"

Sita trembles from head to foot, and says, "Pray, don't speak about it."

"Calm your fears. That time is passed," says Rama. Then he hears the blare of conches and the din of kettle-drums and says, "What is all this, making this forest as noisy as a city?" Lakshmana enters and says that Bharata has come with the queens and a large army. Rama asks Sita to open her eyes wide and gaze at Bharata and the queens. Sita says, "Bharata has come at a happy time." Bharata enters and exclaims, "I am happy now, to see you released from calamities, like the moon released from the dark clouds." Rama, Lakshmana and Sita salute the queens. Bharata embraces Rama and Lakshmana, and salutes Sita.

Then he tells Rama, "Brother, now accept the kingdom."

"Why, my dear boy?" asks Rama.

Kaikeyi says, "My son, I have long cherished this desire." Then Sathrughna comes and salutes Rama, Lakshmana and Sita,

and announces that Vasishta and Vadmadeva have come, with the citizens, *ready* to *crown* RaMa king He adds, Holy water from many a riVer and stream have the sages brought A crowd of sages have assembled to see you crowned, oh Rama''

Kaikeyi tells Rama, "Go, my son. Receive the consecrated water, and be crowned king."

Rama says, "As my mother bids,"

He is crowned amidst deafening cries of "Victory to our king!", "Victory to the best of men!", "Victory to the destroyer of Ravana!", and Kaikeyi and Sumitra rejoice greatly. Rama returns after the coronation. Looking up at the sky, he exclaims, "Dear father, even in the other world you must be aware of this, and must have regained contentment, casting off your grief. The thing you desired for me the other day has come to pass now. I am now king and bearer of a noble burden, and nave sworn to protect the people in accordance with the law."

Bharata exclaims that Rama looks like the crescent moon, and that he is never tired of gazing at him adorned with a diadem and with the umbrella of state over him. Satrughna says that, by this coronation of Rama, the royal house of Ikshvaku has cast out its stain and that the world is as bright now as when the moon has risen and dispelled the darkness. Lakshmana offers bis felicitations, and Vibhishana, Sugriva, Neela, Mainda, Jambavan, Hanuman and others send their congratulations, adding, "You have attained victory by your valour, oh Rama."

Rama says, "Oh, no, say rather with the help of my friends and comrades."

Kaikeyi says, "Blessed indeed am I now! I wish l could see this happiness in Ayodhya." •

Rama tells her, "You shall see it soon there." The sky becomes radiant, the airship, Pushpaka, arrives, by Rama's merely thinking of it. Rama asks everyone to get into this, and goes to Ayodhya in it with them.

I-akshmana says to Rama, "To-day, the citizens will see you shining like the moon amidst the stars." There ends the play.

CHAPTER XL

PRATIJNA YAUGANDHARAYANAAND SVAPNAVASAVADATTA.

("Yaugandharayana's Vows" and "The Vision of Vasavadatta'Oc-rThese two practically form one play, "The Vision of Va&y^datta" being only a continuation of "Yaiagandharavana's Vows."

Yaugandharayana's Vows.—The plot begins with a scene in Vatsa Raja's palace at ICausambi between Yaugandharayana, the prime minister of the Vatsa King, and his trusted messenger, Salaka.

The king has gone on an elephant hunt, his favourite pastime, in the Vindhyan forests. Yaugandharayana has received intimation, through his spies, that an artificial blue elephant of a remarkable size, has been put up, by Pradyota Mahasena of Avanti, in *Nagavana,* the elephant forest in the Vindhyas, in order to trap Udayana, and take him captive by a surprise attack by his crack troops hidden within that elephant, and that real elephants have been kept in the vicinity, to add to the deception. So, he asks Salaka to go, as fast as he can, and warn the king of the trick, adding that the king will be leaving the Bamboo forest the next day for going to the elephant forest, through three other dense forests, and urging the imperative necessity of meeting him before he starts. He goes on, "Pradyota has a huge army, but it lacks unity of aim. There are brave men in that army, but they have no devotion, and, so, are no better than wives, without attachment, and are as useless in battle, like these wives in life's daily strife. So, he has to resort to this trick, instead of giving battle to us." He tells Salaka that he has a very long way to go. Salaka replies that his love for him is so great that he can cover a much longer way. He asks the minister to give him at once a letter for the king.

The minister asks Vijaya, the female door-keeper, to get the letter from the Queen-mother, and to get also an auspicious cord, an amulet to protect Udayana from harm by demons, enemies, and wild beasts. Vijaya goes and conies back and replies that the cord is going the round of all the married ladies in the palace, for being blessed by them in turn. The impatient minister replies that he must have the cord at once, whether blessed by all the ladies or only by one. Vijaya goes back to get the cord.

At that time, Nirmundaka, the major-domo, comes and tells Yaugandharayana that Hamsaka, Udayana's aide-de-camp, has returned from camp. So, instructing Salaka to stand by, either to go at triple speed, or not to go at all, the minister calls Hamsaka, and asks him where Udayana is, and hopes that the king has not yet gone to the elephant forest, and learns from him, to his dismay, that he has already reached it the previous day. He exclaims, "Ah, we have been taken in. It is useless to send any messenger now. Is there any hope? Or, should I put an end to my life this very day?" Hamsaka tells him that the king is at least alive, and, so, there is some scope for hope. He says that the king has been taken prisoner, and narrates the story of the capture thus:—

"Just before dawn, a pleasant time for riding, the king crossed the Narmada river by the sandy ford. He left the court ladies in his camp in the Bamboo forest, and set out for. the elephant forest by **a** foot-path, fit only for wild beasts, accompanied **only** by his umbrella-carrier and a small body of men just sufficient to tackle elephants. When the sun was just **an** arrow-shot above the horizon, and we had gone many miles, and were only some two miles away from the Madagandhira mountain, we saw a herd of elephants standing in a half-dry pond, and throwing up mud over their own bodies, and looking like a half-finished and uneven stone wall.

"While our troops were reconnoitring, and the herd of elephants had huddled together, getting suspicious about our movements, an infantry-man, the author of all. this trouble, went up to our master. He told him, 'Two miles from here, I have seen an elephant that is blue all over, except jtor the nails and tusks, and with its body hidden by jasmine creepers and *sal* trees. Then, our master gave that wicked fellow a hundred gold pieces, and said to us, 'It must be an emperor elephant, called *Nilakuvalayatanu,* or Blue Lotus, described in a book on elephants which I have read. Please watch this herd carefully while I go with my lute, and capture and bring in that elephant.' Our minister, Rumanvan, tried to dissuade the king. He begged him hard not to go alone. He said to him: Tt is quite possible for you to catch even the elephants which guard the eight quarters of the earth, Airavana and the rest. But the frontier districts are always troublesome and lawless, being difficult to supervise and govern. People living on the frontiers are shameless and low-born. So, let us leave the infantry-men to deal with this herd,, and let all the rest of us go together. Your majesty should not go alone' Then the king swore by his own life that he would go alone, and thus effectively silenced the minister.

"He got down from his elephant, *Neelavalahaka,'* and mounted his horse, *Sundarapatala,*[2] and rode away with only twenty of us, before the sun had reached the meridian. After we had gone double the two miles mentioned by that infantry-man, we saw that counterfeit of a divine elephant, at a distance of a hundred bows, its blue colour lost in the shadows of *sal* trees of the same hue, and only the tusks gleaming in the sunlight, **and** sticking out as if they had no body attached to them.

"The king got down from his horse, saluted the gods, took his **lute** in his hand, and approached that false elephant. Just **then, we heard from behind us a mighty uproar. When we turned round to find out the cause of the uproar, that artificial elephant, manned by regular soldiers in full armour, instead of by mahouts,**

i **"Dark Cloud."**
[2] **"Pitik Beauty".**

advanced towards us. Then the king cheered up the young men of good family who were with him, calling them by their names and family names, and telling them, This is one of Pradyota's tricks. Come with me. With my prowess I shall nullify the foe-man's ruse, despite all his unfair advantage/ With these words, he entered the serried ranks of the enemy.

"Playing as it were with his horse, *Sundarapatala,* who obeyed his slightest moves, he went about among the enemy, and struck at the foe with even greater fury than he had intended, exerting himself to the utmost because the enemy was so vastly superior in numbers. Then, when all his followers were dead or wounded, and I alone was left to protect him—no, no, to be protected by him—he fainted, at that unlucky hour of sun-set, wearied with fighting the live-long-day, and fell from his horse, covered with innumerable injuries.

'Then they insulted him as they liked, binding his person, like a common man's, with rough creepers plucked haphazardly from the nearest thicket. When those wicked fellows had done with their insults, the king recovered his consciousness.

"When the wretches saw that the king had recovered his consciousness, they fled in all directions, paying an unconscious tribute to the valour of our king, by crying out, 'He has killed my brother! He has killed my father! He has killed my son! He has killed my friend!', and so on and so forth. After egging one another on, to tackle him, one of them sought to do the horrible deed. He dragged the king brutally by his hair, which had become dishevelled during the fight, and made him face south.[1] Then, taking a sword in his hand, he took a run, to deliver a forcible blow, with great momentum. The wretch, rushing at great speed thus, stumbled where the ground was slippery with pools of blood, and fell down helpless, baulked of his fell design.

"Just then, one of Pradyota's ministers, Salankayana, who had been hit by our master with his spear, and rendered unconscious, in the previous fight, recovered consciousness, and rushed to the spot, and ordered his men not to commit any more violence on our master. Then, he saluted the king, and released him from his bonds. The king was too badly wounded to ride. So, Salankayana put him in a litter, and, with many small attentions and courteous expressions of sympathy for his injuries, had him taken to Ujjaini."

Yaugandharayana exclaims that the land which Udayana had protected from the foreign foe and from unrighteousness had protected him in his time of need. But he laments over the king's

[1]The region of Yama, lord of the dead.

captivity, and wonders how this proud king, accustomed to be respected, and used to polite words, will put up with cowardly taunts, and how he will restrain his wrath, adding that a prisoner's lot is humiliation, be he well treated or ill-treated. Vijaya comes with the auspicious cord. He asks her to throw it away, since it has come too late, and is as useless now as the waving of lights over a war-horse, for sending it to a battle, after the battle is over. She asks him what she is to tell the Queen-Mother. He tells her, "Vijaya, it is thus", being unable to say more. When pressed by her, he tells her the doleful news, and asks her to steel her heart. She exclaims, "Ah, wretched me". He asks her then to gently break the news to the Queen-Mother, by first telling her of war and all its chances and then, when she fears that he is dead, to reveal the news of the capture, so that her mother's heart may not break.

When she has gone, he asks Hamsaka why he did not follow the king to Ujjaini, and is told that Salankayana has sent him there, telling him, "Go to Kausambi and report the news." Being questioned by Yaugandharayana whether the king said nothing, he tells him that, when he took leave of the king, he appeared to be anxious to say many things, and that, at last, half-blinded with bunded tears, he said to him, "Go and see Yaugandharayana". Yaugandharayana, thereupon, remarks that the king must have meant, by his words, that he had not taken enough precautions, and had not done anything in return for the food he had eaten at his hands, or for the honour and dignity he had bestowed upon him. He promises to do better thereafter, and to earn his king's praise by meeting him in the forest or in bondage, and outwitting Mahasena, or dying in the attempt. They hear women wailing for the king's fate. Yaugandharayana says, "The women are wailing in order to give expression to their grief. They are, by their helpless weeping, openly proclaiming to the people the incapacity of the ministers."

Vijaya comes with the following message from the Queen-Mother: "The brave king of Vatsa, surrounded by many friends, has come to this terrible fate. What shall we do to counter it? Let us honour his friends, and set the thing right. You are a very wise man. You will not become despondent in adversity, or lose heart and remain inactive in difficulties, or give up hope when tricked, or commit suicide when you fail. 1 want to say only this to you. 'You were at first a friend of Vatsaraja. Then alone you became his minister. You are like a son unto me. Son, bring my son to me'." Yattgandharayana remarks that the Queen has uttered brave words worthy of that royal house, asks Vijaya to take some water to him, sips the water ceremonially, and asks Viiava. "What did the Queen-Mother say?" She replies, " 'Son,

bring my son to me'." He asks Hamsaka, "What did the king say?" He replies, "'Go and see Yaugandharayana"' Then, Yaugandharayana takes a vow to rescue Vatsaraja, adding that his name is not Yaugandharayana if he does not rescue the king, seized by his enemies, like the Moon seized by Rahu. This is the first of the two vows which give the name to the play.

After he has taken this vow, Vijaya goes away. Nirmundaka enters, and tells the minister, "Sir, a wonderful thing has happened. A number of Brahmans were being feasted for the sake of our king's welfare. A Brahman, dressed like a mad man, saw them eating, and laughed aloud, and said to them, 'Eat in peace, sirs, and eat to your heart's content. This royal family will recover from adversity, and prosper.' Immediately after he said this, he vanished."

Yaugandharayana asks in astonishment whether this is true. Then, one of the Brahmans comes and tells him, "Here are the queer clothes that reverend Brahman wore, and left behind for some purpose or other of his own. Sir, it was the blessed Dwaipayana[1] himself, that came here disguised in this mad man's clothes." Yaugandharayana puts on those clothes, finds himself transformed beyond recognition, and exclaims, that those clothes have been left behind by Dwaipayana for enabling him to go to Udayana in Ujjain, without rousing any suspicions, to get his king released. Vijaya comes and tells him that the Queen-Mother wants to see him. He asks the Brahman to wait in the chapel for him and asks Hamsaka to rest, and goes with Vijaya, exclaiming :—

"Fire is got from wood by constant churning,
Water is got from earth by digging:
Nothing's impossible for men of daring
Who go the proper way, ever succeeding/'

There ends Act I.

The scene of Act II is laid in Mahasena's palace at Ujjaini. The interlude informs us, through the soliloquy of Badarayana, Mahasena's chamberlain, about the arrival of many messengers at Court asking for the hand of princess Vasavadatta in marriage, and of the king's indecision in the matter. The latest arrival is the honourable Jaivanti, the preceptor of the Raja of Benares. Badarayana asks Abhiraka to arrange for the Honourable Jaivanti's stay suitably, and not to treat him like a common guest. Then, he wonders about Mahasena's indecision and attributes it to Fate which alone settles marriages.

Mahasena enters, saying to himself that, though countless kings are implicitly obeying him, he will never be satisfied till Vatsa

[1] **The Island-Born, Vyasa, a great sage.**

Raja submits to him. He asks the chamberlain whether the honourable Jaivanti- has been properly lodged, and receives an affirmative reply. He then tells Badarayana, in reply to his question, that the cause of his indecision regarding the choice of a bride-groom is that he is so fond of Vasavadatta, and so anxious that the bride-groom should have all the best qualities that he cannot make up his mind. He says that a bride-groom should be of noble birth, and must have a tender and sympathetic heart, and must be strong enough to control and protect his bride, and must also be handsome, just to please the womenfolk. He remarks that a mother always grieves when her daughter is given **away** in marriage, and, therefore, asks Badarayana to request the Queen to join him.

When Badarayana has gone on this errand, the king wonders why there is no news from Salankayana, and has his own doubts whether the stratagem of the false elephant hasasucceeded.

Angaravati, the queen, enters. He asks her where Vasavadatta is, and is told that she has gone to Uttara, a lady musician, to play on the Narada Veena, having seen her friend Kanchanamala play on that instrument, and become thereby desirous of learning to play herself. Mahasena remarks, 'That is just like a girl." The king and queen then discuss about the marriage of Vasavadatta. The queen tells him that she is anxious to see Vasavadatta married, since she has attained the marriageable age, but that she is pained at the thought of the consequent separation from her. The king remarks that, caught between the twin fires of love and duty, a mother's heart is baked, and quivers with anxiety. He sounds her about the alliance proposed by the honourable Jaivanti. She says not a word, and is agitated, and her eyes are full of tears. Anyway, Mahasena wants to get her definite opinion about the bride-groom, and wants to name to her the various kings who are seeking her hand. She impatiently says: "Why all these details? Give her to such a one that we shall never have cause ta rue the day." He replies "Oh! yes, it is quite easy for you to say that now, leaving me to listen to your reproaches later on. So make your own choice, my queen" and tells her that the monarchs of Magadha,[1] Kasi,[2] Vanga,[3] Surashtra,[4] Mithila[5] and Surasena[6] have all sent messengers, and asks her "Who is the most worthy person to wed her?"

Just then, Badarayana rushes in, exclaiming: "The king of the Vatsas. . . . ." He begs the king's pardon for departing

[1b]ehar.
[2] Benares.
[8] Bengal.
[4]Gujerat.
[5]Tirhut.
[6] Modern Muttra.

from the usual etiquette of crying out "Victory to Mahasena!" before giving any news, and gives as his excuse the joyful news which has made him forget the etiquette. The king asks him what the good news is, and is told "The king of the Vatsas has been captured by Salankayana/' Mahasena is astonished at the news, which is according to him too good to be true, and again and again asks Badarayana varying questions for confirming the good news. Finally, he is told that Salankayana has brought Vatsa Raja as a captive to Ujjain, and is waiting at the Auspicious Gate. Mahasena is overjoyed, and exclaims "What joy! From to-day, my army can rest. Kings can visit me in peace of mind, without fear of Udayana. I have become in reality Mahasena only to-day."

He asks Badarayana to go and tell Bharatarohaka, his prime minister, to receive Salankayana with the honours due to a prince, and to bring him in with the Vatsa king carried in triumph in front of him. He directs that none of the citizens be prevented from seeing Vatsa Raja, whose deeds are known to them before, and whom they should see as a captive now. The queen remarks to him that she has never seen him so pleased, though she has been present on several occasions of rejoicing. He tells her that he has never had such good news before. The queen then casually remarks that, while many royal houses have sent messengers seeking an alliance which them, Vatsa Raja alone has not sent a single messenger so far. Mahasena replies: "Birth in the Bharata line of kings, with its long roll of royal sages, and its tradition of Vedic learning, has made him proud. His unrivalled knowledge of music has increased his pride. His youthful beauty has turned his head. His subjects' remarkable attachment to him makes him over-confident." The queen exclaims : "Dear, dear, the very qualities one would desire in a son-in-law!", Mahasena chides her for admiring an enemy who was treating with contempt his orders which were going unchallenged everywhere, like a forest fire.

The chamberlain enters and announces that Salankayana has been accorded an honourable reception, and has sent Ghoshavati, the famous lute of Vatsa Raja, and an instrument which can captivate wild elephants with its music, as if by magic, for Mahasena's acceptance. Mahasena accepts it joyously, as an auspicious trophy of victory, but is perplexed as to whom to give it. He remarks that his eldest son, Gopalaka, is an adept in politics but is innocent of poetics, and that the younger one, Palaka, is a lover of athletics, but with no spark of music in him. Finally, he asks his queen to give it to Vasavadatta. She remarks that if she were given it, she would be madder after the lute than ever. He exclaims, with a pleasing tenderness, "Let her play on, play on! It will not be so easy to play in her father-in-law's house."

Then he ask$ Badarayana where Vatsa Raja is, and is told that he has become tractable owing to his many wounds, and has been carried to the middle palace on a litter. The king exclaims: "I am sorry to hear that he has received so many wounds. This is the penalty he pays for his undaunted valour. In this state, it will be cruel to neglect him. Badarayana, go and ask Bharata-rohaka to attend to the treatment of his wounds. Every gesture of his should receive attention. His wishes should be inferred from his expression. There should be no reference to war or defeat, and a blessing should be uttered whenever he sneezes. The compliments should be tactful, and suited to the occasions."

The chamberlain goes and returns, and informs the king that Vatsa Raja's wounds have been dressed on the way, and that it is too soon to do a second dressing. He remarks that the mid-day sun is at its height. The king asks him where Vatsa Raja is kept, and is told that he is near the Peacock's perches. He ex-claims, "Fie! That is no place to shelter in. Bid them take him into the mosaic room, so that he may be shielded from the sun." The chamberlain goes and sees to that, and comes and tells the king that Bharatarohaka desires an interview. The king remarks,. "Evidently, he does not like this kind treatment of the Vatsa king. It goes against his policy. I must bring him round to my views"

The queen then leaves him, telling him that there is no need for hurrying up the marriage, as Vasavadatta is still quite a child. The king replies, "As you please/' The king too leaves, the place, plunged in thought, and muttering to himself: "First, his pride made me his foe. When he was captured and brought here, I was barely neutral. Now that I hear about his exhaus-tion in fighting, his sorry plight, and the danger to his life, l am moved by anxiety for him." Here ends Act ll.

The third Act opens with a conspiracy between Udayana's jester and friend, Vasantaka, disguised as a beggar, searching for a bowl of sweets in an out-of-the-way temple of Kartyayani in Ujjaini; his minister, Yaugandharayana, disguised as a mad man, coming there with battered sweets in hand; and his minister. Rumanvan, disguised as a Buddhist monk, arriving there and act-ing as an intermediary. After some rollickingly funny conver-sation, in keeping with their outward appearance, and intended to delude outsiders into believing that they are what they appear to be, the three move into the fire-shrine. Then, Vasantaka tells the other two that the king has recovered from his wounds and taken his bath. Yaugandharayana tells the others: "How we have been striving to effect his escape, and how we still live on hope!

The day is past, and we look forward to the night,
The bright dawn comes, and we look forward to the day:
As time passes thus. we've, in our troubles, to sight
Advantages yet to come, as best as we may."

He then asks Vasantaka to give the following message to the king:—

"The plan discussed by us for our departure from this place must be carried out to-morrow. The elephant, Nalagiri, will be infuriated, in the good old way, with charms and herbs. We have found opportunities to put the herbs close to where he is tied up, and where he takes his bath, has his feed, and lies down. We have arranged to start the fire, and set the fumes going, when the wind is blowing in the right direction. To increase his rage, we have caused the elephants opposite to him to be in ruts. A house near the stables, with no articles in it, will be set on fire; for, elephants, as you know, are so terribly afraid of fire. Conches and drums have been placed in the temple, and will be made to raise a great noise, increasing the terror of the elephant. With all that din, to he caused by our devices to-morrow, Pradyota is sure to seek your aid. So, with the concurrence of our foe, you can come out of the prison, taking the lute, which shares your captivity and sorrow, and subdue Nalagiri. Then, firmly seated on his back, drive him fast, clear the forest, and reach Kausambi before the pursuers can overtake you."

Vasantaka remains plunged in thought. Rumanvan asks him, "What are you thinking about, Vasantaka?" Vasantaka replies, "All your efforts are in vain." The ministers tell him, "We do not follow you at all." He replies, "No wonder, sirs, for I understand my thoughts first, and you next." Then he tells them why Vatsa Raja would not agree to follow the plan suggested by Yaugandharayana. He says, "When the 8th day of the last dark fortnight was over, the princess Vasavadatta went to worship at the temple of the Yakshini,[1] opposite the prison gate, accompanied by her nurse. She was in an open palanquin, being an unmarried woman who could be seen by all freely. They had to skirt a high-road from a choked-up drain. That very day, the king happened to be outside the prison gates, with the permission of the jail superintendent, Sivaka. The palanquin was halted near the prison gate for the men to change shoulders, and the king saw the princess as plainly as he liked. From that moment, the prison became for him paradise itself, and he began to make love to her."

Yaugandharayana is indignant and astonished at this, and asks the jester whether it is true. The jester replies that it is true and remarks, "Troubles come in shoals." Yaugandharayana then tells Rumanvan, "Steel your heart, friend. We shall have to grow old in these disguises' The jester tells Yaugandharayana, "Our master said to me: "Tell Yaugandharayana, T don't like your present plan. I am thinking of a particularly telling insult to Pradyota at the very moment of my departure. Don't think that

[1] Sylph.

I am blinded by passion. I am only seteking a fitting return for **my humiliation'/' Yaugandharayana is not deceived by the message, and is distressed at this inopportune love affair of his king when chains are jingling on his feet and he is lying on bare earth, on a bed of straw prepared with** his own hands.

The jester says, "We have shown our devotion towards him, sir. We have done our best. Let us now leave him to his fate **and** go home." Yaugandharayana exclaims, "Is it Vasantaka who talks thus? Oh! Vasantaka, you should not talk like that. How can we abandon him who depends on us, his friends, and whose eyes love and sorrow dim?" The jester says, "All right, then. We shall go on spending our days here, like this, till old age." Yaugandharayana replies, "That will be most praiseworthy." The jester rejoins, "It may be if people know why we are doing so." Yaugandharayana indignantly says, "We do nothing to please the world. We do things only for our master's sake." The jester remarks, "Even he does not realise our sacrifices." Yaugandharayana replies, "In course of time, he will." The jester asks, "When will that time come?" Yaugandharayana replies, "When our plans succeed." The jester says "Then you must be able to take the king out of the prison, and the princess out of the inner apartments of the palace."

Rumanvan exclaims "You have put it neatly," and tells Yaugandharayana, "You must see to these two things." Yaugandharayana then takes his second vow, and swears that his name is not Yaugandharayana if he does not rescue the king and enable him to carry away Vasavadatta even as Arjuna of yore carried away Subhadra.

The sound of people moving about the streets is heard, and the three conspirators disperse in different directions, in their assumed characters, Yaugandharayana raving like a veritable mad man. The third Act ends there.

Before the fourth Act begins, some events happen. These are indicated in the conversation between Yaugandharayana and Bharatarohaka. Nalagiri is made to run amok by the machinations of Yaugandharayana and his men. The infuriated tusker runs along the streets of Ujjaini causing panic everywhere. Mahasena then releases Vatsaraja, who is famous for his power to subdue any elephant, and gives him his weapon, the lute Ghoshavati. Vatsaraja subdues the elephant by his magic notes on the **lute, and leads** it **back, like** a **lamb, to its** stables. Mahasena, **in gratitude, allows him** to **live** in **the palace, instead** of **sending him** back **to prison, and makes him teach Vasavadatta to play** on **the lute. The princess and Vatsaraja fall in love with each other.**

The Venue of the fourth Act also is Ujjaini. It opens with a soldier of Mahasena, attached to Vasavadatta's palace, going in

search of Gatrasevaka, the mahout of Vasavadatta's elephant, Bhadravati, in order that he may take the elephant to Vasavadatta who wants to go out bathing. He goes to a tavern, whither Gatrasevaka is ascertained to have gone to have a drink. He calls out, "Gatrasevaka! Gatrasevaka!" Gatrasevaka, who is really a spy of Yaugandharayana in disguise, comes out of the tavern full of liquor, laughing loudly, and with eyes red as China roses, and asks, "Who is this calling me 'Gatrasevaka!', 'Gatrasevaka!*, from the high-road ?" and goes on to utter the typical nonsensical rigmarole of a drunkard in the jocose, bellicose and lachrymose stages. He gives utterance also to an Ode to Drink. The soldier tells Gatrasevaka, who is only pretending to be a drunkard, "How long have I been looking for you! The princess Vasavadatta wants to go bathing and her elephant, Bhadravati, is not to be seen. You are drunk and loafing about here."

Then conies the following delightful passage:—

Gatrasevaka: That is right. She is drunk, her man is drunk, I am drunk, you are drunk, everything in the world is drunk.

Soldier: Never mind about everything being drunk. Why are you loafing about here, and why have you not brought Bhadravati ?

Gatrasevaka: Here I loaf about, here I drink, with this I drink.

Soldier: Stop this nonsensical talk! Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come ! Alas, I have pledged her goad!

Soldier: What do you want a goad for? The gentle Bhadravati does not need it. Go and bring her at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, 1 have pawned her half-moon necklet.

Soldier: It doesn't matter. We can put a flower garland on her. Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pledged her bell.

Soldier: The elephant is going to enter the water. The bell is unnecessary. Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pledged her whip.

Soldier: A whip is unnecessary for' Bhadravati. Bring her at once, man.

Gatrasevaka: Yes, I will, Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas!

Soldier: Aye, what now?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I have . . .

Soldier: What have you done?

Soldier: What about Bhadravati ?

Gatrasevaka: I've pawned Bhadravati, too!

Soldier: It's not your fault. It is the fault of this liquor-shop-keeper who has dared to take a pledge of the king's elephant for liquor!

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I told him; "don't lose the capital for the interest."

Soldier: I say! did you hear that noise?

Gatrasevaka: I know what it is. Bhadravati is breaking out of the liquor-shop-keeper's house and running away!

Soldier: What do you say ?

(Voice in the air)

That the king of the Vatsas has escaped, taking the princess, Vasavadatta, with him ?

Gatrasevaka: (Aside) (Joyfully) May my master meet with no obstacles!

Soldier: Now, you may drink and loaf about as tipsy as you like!

Gatrasevaka: Hey, who is drunk? And with what, joy or liquer? Who is intoxicated, my man? Know that we are all spies, each stationed in his place by Yaugandharayana. Here, I am giving a signal to my friends. See, there they are, running about like king cobras that have cast off their sloughs. He who eats his master's food and will not fight and die for him will die an ignominious death and go to hell."

Then the soldier sees Yaugandharayana, who has abandoned his mad man's guise, and has plunged into the thick of the fight, armed with a sharp sword, and golden shield. Yaugandharayana makes Mahasena's army stand at bay for a time, and slays many elephants and drivers, and numerous heroes on foot and on horse, and keeps the foe from pursuing Vatsa Raja who has escaped with Vasavadatta. After a strenuous fight, an elephant, Vijaya-sundara, breaks Yaugandharayana's sword by striking it with the tip of its tusk. Then Yaugandharayana, deprived of his weapon, is captured, and two soldiers carry him on an ambulance made of planks. He proudly exclaims that he has rescued his master and ensured his fame and name and is calm and serene. He asks his guards to allow all the people of Ujjain, who have seen him only as a mad man running along the streets with a contemptible figure, to have a close view of him after his valiant deeds, and to realise what sacrifices a man aspiring to be a minister should *be* prepared to make.

A soldier goes and tells him that Vatsa Raja has been taken prisoner. He exclaims, "That is impossible, because Bhadravati would have entered the forest and gained league on league, and could not have been overtaken." The soldier says that it had been pursued on Nalagiri. But Yaugandharayana replies that Nalagiri could not have been used for pursuit as it could be ridden only by Vatsa Raja, and by no other.

Another soldier comes and tells the other two soldiers that Yaugandharayana is to be kept in the arsenal which is well guarded by Mahasena's men. Yaugandharayana exclaims that the order is a ridiculous one, like the guarding of an empty casket after the jewel has been stolen.

At this stage, yet another soldier comes and asks Yaugandharayana's guards to remove his chains as Bharatarohaka wants to interview him. The chains are accordingly removed. Yaugandharayana thinks within himself of the depression of Bharatarohaka who has been defeated by means of his keen intelligence, and whose face is hanging down with burning shame like that of a wrestler knocked down throughout the lines. Bharatarohaka says to himself that it is painful to look at Yaugandharayana in this pitiful condition, and impossible to upbraid him when he has done all this owing to his devotion to his master, and says that Yaugandharayana's plans were all well-laid, and that he carried on vigorously, and kept on raising his head, like an angry snake, though over-powered and put in basket.

He goes and greets Yaugandharayana. Yaugandharayana says in return, "Bho!" The soldier remarks, "What a resounding voice! The whole place is filled with that one word." When Yaugandharayana sees Bharatarohaka, he tells him that his limbs are smeared with blood, like a soldier's, and that he is calm like Ashwathama after he had revenged his father's death. Bharatarohaka asks him whether self-praise too is necessary after a success achieved by a trick. Yaugandharayana retorts by referring to the trick played on Vatsa Raja with the false elephant. Bharatarohaka then asks Yaugandharayana whether it is worthy of Vatsa Raja to take away Vasavadatta with him without marrying her. Yaugandharayana replies that his master has already married her in *gandharva*[1] form. Bharatarohaka then asks him whether, when planning these hostile acts against Mahasena, he is not afraid for the eventual safety of Vatsa Raja and Kausambi. Yaugandharayana replies, "What a ridiculous question! My king escaped from under your very nose. Why should I worry about him or Kausambi? When the trunk has been cut, why worry about the branches?"

[1]Love marriage, without any formalities whatever.

At this stage, the chamberlain, Badarayana, comes and tells Bharatarohaka about a message which Mahasena has sent to Yaugandharayana. At Bharatarohaka's bidding, Badarayana gives it to Yaugandharayana. It runs: "You have done me no real wrong. I like your qualities. So, forget the past, and accept this golden chalice as a present from me to an honoured guest." Yaugandharayana is touched at receiving this message, and exclaims "Ah, me! The houses I set fire to are still burning. This honour shown to one who deserves death is unendurable."

Just then, lamentations are heard from the top storey of the palace. Bharatarohaka asks the chamberlain to go and find out what that sudden cry of sorrow, like that of the partridge struck by the cruel falcon, is. The chamberlain goes and comes back, and says, "Queen Angara vat i, overcome with grief and shame at the elopement, wanted to commit suicide by falling down from the top storey of the palace. But Mahasena said to her, 'Your daughter's marriage has been performed in the *Gandharva* way, according to the laws of the Kshatriyas. Why do you grieve at this time of joy? Let us celebrate the marriage ceremony of Vasavadatta and Vatsa Raja, in effigy, with their paintings.' So, the women are now performing the marriage rites in delight and disorder, and are wetting, with their tears of joy, the marriage articles." On hearing this, Yaugandharayana says to Badarayana, "So, Mahasena too has accepted it as an alliance by marriage. Give me the chalice now", and the chamberlain gives it. Bharatarohaka asks Yaugandharayana, "What more should Mahasena do for you, Sir?" Yaugandharayana replies, "I desire nothing more than that Mahasena should always be pleased with me." There the play ends.

CHAPTER XII.

SVAPNAVASAVADATTA.

This is a six-act play and is a continuation of *Pratijna Yaugandharayana.* After the marriage of Udayana and Vasavadatta in the former play, there has been an interval of happy married life and care-free existence, filled with hunting and love-making, during the course of which a foul usurper, Aruni, has usurped most of the Vatsa kingdom, including the capital, Kausambi. In order to recover the kingdom, Udayana's ministers, Yaugandharayana, Rumanvan and Vasantaka, can think of no other plan than getting Udayana married to Padmavati, sister of king Darsaka of Magadha, and securing the powerful help of that king to overthrow the usurper. But Darsaka has flatly refused to give Padmavati in marriage to Udayana so long as Vasavadatta, the idol of Udayana's hejart, is alive. So, the ministers plan to stage the death of Vasavadatta

in a fire accident in the camp in Lavanaka, when Udayana is out hunting. They get Vasavadatta's consent to this mock-burning of herself and the second marriage of her husband by appealing to her love for him, and dwelling on the imperative need of these things for his welfare.

They set fire to the camp, when Udayana is away hunting, **and Rumanvan and Vasantaka pretend that Vasavadatta has perished in the flames and that Yaugandharayana, who went in** to **save her,** perished with her. Some dresses and ornaments of Vasavadatta are carefully left half-charred. Yaugandharayana puts on the disguise of a wandering Brahman religious hermit, and takes Vasavadatta along with him, disguised as a Brahman woman called Avantika. They set out for Rajagriha, the capital of the Magadha king. Yaugandharayana 's intention is to entrust Vasavadatta to Padmavati as her companion, and, thereafter, to bring about the marriage of Udayana and Padmavati, and, then, after Udayana has recovered the Vatsa kingdom with the aid of Darsaka, to reveal that Vasavadatta is alive, and to get her re-united to Udayana, relying on the testimony of Padmavati regarding her chaste and pure conduct during the period of her sepation from her husband.

The prelude shows two zealous soldiers of the king of Magadha, escorting Padmavati to a hermitage outside Rajagriha, turning away from the forest path those frequenting it, crying out, "Make way, sirs, make way. " The first Act shows Yaugandharayana, disguised as a hermit, and Vasavadatta, disguised as Avantika, going along the forest road near the hermitage, and hearing one of the guards cry out, "Make way, sirs, make way." Yaugandharayana exclaims, "What! Even here people are driven aside! Clad in barks, and eating forest fruits, reverend sages come here and dwell, in order to escape such bustlings incidental to towns. Who is this fellow, made insolent by chance fortune who disturbs the peace of the hermits by his shrill orders, and molests the peaceful folk here by imposing on them the laymen's yoke?" Vasavadatta asks him, "Who is it, sir, who is turning away people thus?" He replies, "One who, **by doing** so, turns himself away from the path of righteousness." She asks him whether she too can be ordered **to** make **way. He replies, "Lady, even** gods, when not recognised, **are insulted thus." She tells him that the fatigue of the journey has not caused her as much pain as this humiliation. He asks her not to bother about these petty things, adding "you have had your heart's fill of these pomps and shows. You will have them once more when your husband is victorious again, The wheel of fortune turns with time, like the spokes of a cart wheel running along a lane."**

The guards cry out again, "Make way, sirs, make way." The chamberlain tells one of the guards, "Sambhashaka, you should not ask people here to make way. Don't bring to shame the name of our lord, the king, by harsh usage of people in this hermitage. If*is*to be free from all such! **city hustling that great** souls come **to** these forests." The two guards reply "All **right,** sir," **and** return.

Yaugandharayana tells Vasavadatta that the chamberlain has got good discernment, and approaches him, and asks him, "Sir, why are people being turned away?". The chamberlain says "Ah, good hermit—". Yaugandharayana says to himself "The term 'hermit' is, doubtless, an honourable one, but it does not appeal to me much, as I am not used to it." The chamberlain goes on "This lady here is the sister of our great king, named Darsaka by the elders. She has been on a visit to her mother who has made a hermitage her home. She is now on her way back to Rajagriha, and proposes to halt in this hermitage for a day. But, all of you may go freely into the forest and bring holy water, faggots, flower and grasses, not minding the presence of the princess here. Nothing pleases her more than seeing the pious activities of hermits. She obeys the law, like all her royal race." Yaugandharayana says to himself, "So, this is Padmavati, the princess of Magadha, about whom the astrologers, Pushpaka, Bhadraka, and others have predicted that she will wed Udayana, a prophecy on which I have based all my plans. See the wonder of it! I, who felt antagonistic to these persons on hearing the cries, 'Make way, sirs, make way,' have shed that feeling of antagonism now. We esteem or hate as our desires dictate. I already feel for her a great devotion, as I see her wed our king and save the state". Vasavadatta too says to herself, on hearing that she is a princess, "I feel for her a sisterly affection."

Padmavati comes along with her retinue and a maid. A woman hermit is found seated at the entrance to the hermitage. She welcomes the princess who salutes her. The woman hermit, says, "Long life to thee! Come in, come in. A hermitage is like one's own home to wayfarers." "So it is, your reverence; **I feel quite at** home, and am grateful for these words of **affectionate welcome**" says **Padmavati.** Vasavadatta, who has **already been struck by Padmavati's royal appearance, is struck now also by her sweet words. The woman hermit asks Padmavati's maid whether no king has yet applied for the princess's hand. The maid replies that Mahasena has sent ambassadors to ask for her hand for his son. Vasavadatta is overjoyed at the prospect of Padmavati's becoming her sister-in-law**

Padmavati asks the chamberlain to assemble the hermits find find out whether any of them warits anything. The Chamberlain assembles the hermits, **and** tells them, **"Ascetics inhabiting** this **sacred** grove, listen to my words. **Her** Highness, **the** princess **of** Magadha, invites you all to come and accept gifts from her so **that** she may discharge her pious duty, and gain merit. Is there one who wants a pitcher? Come here those who want a garment! Freely ask for teacher's presents, those of you who have mo**d** the investiture. You have only to speak out what you want; and the princess will issue to me her commands. What can she give now to please you, and to whom? She will deem it a special favour, if you will kindly come forward and make your requests."

Yaugandharayana says to himself, "I see my opportunity" and steps forward, and says, "Sir, I want a favour." Padmavati says, "I am happy that my visit to this hermitage has borne fruit.'' The hermit woman remarks to herself, "Everyone here is contented, and wants nothing. This must be some stranger. " The chamberlain asks Yaugandharayana, "What can we do for you, sir?" Yaugandharayana points to Vasavadatta and says, "This is my sister. Her husband has gone abroad. It will be a great favour to me if Her Highness will take care of her till I come back and call for her. My request may seem a bit strange. But, I seek not riches, raiments or pleasure. I did not turn a hermit for a living. This princess is wise and virtuous, and can safely guard the virtue of my sister. "

The chamberlain says to Padmavati, "Lady, his request is quite unreasonable. How can we consent to it? It is quite easy to part with treasure, or hard-earned penance, or life itself; but, watching a ward with vigilance is the most difficult of things". Padmavati says, "Having first proclaimed that we will grant any request, it is improper now to hesitate. " The chamberlain, the maid, and the woman hermit all praise Padmavati 's sentiments. Yaugandharayana hands over Vasavadatta to Padmavati who says, "She has become ours now.'' The woman hermit remarks that, judging by her looks, Vasavadatta too appears to her to be a princess, and the maid concurs in that opinion. Yaugandharayana says to himself that everything has come off so far according to plan, and that his task is half-finished, and will doubtless, be completed, in due course, according to the prophecy of the astrologers.

A student of theology comes along towards the hermitage at this stage. He says to himself, " It is midday, **and** I am dead **tired. Where shall** I rest? **Ah**! this appears **to be a** hermitage. **The deer are grazing here peacefully with no trace of fear. The trees have been watered with love and care, and their branches**

groan with flowers and fruits. Here are herds of tawny kine, and no trace of the plough till the sky-line. Smokes are rising from all over the grove, evidently from sacrificial fires. I will enter." He stops on seeing the chamberlain, who does not fit in with a hermitage, but proceeds, on seeing some hermits also. Then he sees Padmavati and Vasavadatta, and stops suddenly, crying out, "Oh! There are women here!" The chamberlain calls out to him: "Come in freely, sir. A hermitage is common to one and all" Vasavadatta shrinks at "this, and Padmavati is convinced that it will be easy to look after her, as she is so shy and modest

The chamberlain offers the student some water which he gratefully accepts. Then, Yaugandharayana asks the student, "Where are you coming from? Whither are you going? Which is your native place?" The student replies, "I am a native of Rajahgriha. I was living in Lavanaka for specialising in Vedic studies." Yaugandharayana asks him, "Have you finished your course of studies?" and he replies, "Not yet. "

"Then, why have you returned?" asks Yaugandharayana.

"A terrible calamity occurred there. " is the reply.

Yaugandharayana asks him to tell them all about it, and Vasavadatta remarks to herself that the very name Lavanaka revives her old agony. The student gives out the following story:—

"There was a king there named Udayana. He loved his queen, the daughter of Avanti's king, passionately One day when he was away hunting, the village caught fire, and she perished in the flames. A minister named Yaugandharayana jumped into the fire to rescue her, and he also perished. The king, on his return, heard the news of the death of both of these, and was so grieved, at parting from them both, that he sought to jump into the same fire and to commit suicide, and it was a job for his ministers to keep him back. The king hugged to his bosom the charred remains of the ornaments which had adorned her body and fell down unconscious. "

Vasavadatta's eyes are filled with tears, and the maid remarks to Padmavati " She must have a tender heart". Yaugandharayana replies, "Quite so, quite so. My sister is tender-hearted by nature." Then he asks the student to proceed. The student goes on:—"By degrees, the king regained his consciousness" Padmavati remarks to herself, "Thank God, he lives. There was a void in my heart when I heard that he fell in a swoon", thereby revealing the love for Udayana which was springing up in her **heart.**

Yaugandharayana asks the student to continue his story. The student says:—"Then the king suddenly got up, with his body rolling on the ground with grief, and burst into lamentation after lamentation, calling out in agony, 'Oh Vasavadatta, Oh daughter of Avanti's king, Oh my .heart's beloved, Oh darling pupil!'. In short, neither *Chakmvaka*[1] bird nor fairy lover has. grieved so much on the death of a mate. Blessed is that woman loved by her husband with so sincere an affection. She lives in her lord's love for ever, though burnt and departed. "

Yaugandharayana asks the student, "But tell me sir, did not some minister seek to console him?" "Yes, there is a minister, Rumanvan, by name, who tries his utmost to console the king. Like the king, he too takes no food. Tears have made both his cheeks hollow. Serving the king in every mood, night and day, he is full of sorrow. He does not care for his clothes or looks. Should the king, by any chance, die, he too will follow without a sigh. '"

Vasavadatta remarks to herself that the king is in good hands. Yaugandharayana says to himself, "Oh! What a burden is. Rumanvan carrying! My burden allows me some rest. He is always oppressed by his burden, for everything depends on himo has the king: to look

He then asks the student whether the king has been consoled. The student replies, "I don't know[T] that, sir. The ministers left the place, taking the king with them/ with very great difficulty. He was raving in grief, 'Here I laughed with her; here I chatted with her; here I sat with her; here we had a love quarrel; here F passed the night with her; here I lay by her side, and so on and so forth. With the departure of the king, the village became desolate, like the sky when the moon and the stars have set, and] too came away."

The woman hermit says, "Verily, he must be a noble and virtuous king since even this stranger praises him so. " Padmavati's maid wonders whether Udayana will marry another, and Padmavati remarks to herself, "That is just what my own heart is querying. " The student takes his leave, and goes away. Yaugandharayana too takes his leave of the princess, and departs.

The chamberlain tells Padmavati that it is time to return. She takes leave of the hermit woman, who tells her, "My child,, may you soon get a husband worthy of you!" Vasavadatta too salutes the **hermit** woman, who tells her, "May you be united with your **husband** soon!" **The chamberlain and Padmavati then go-back to their halting place. The chamberlain remarks, as they**

[1]A legendary bird famous for its conjugal love. It dies at once on losing its mate.

go along, "The birds have all retired to their nests. The hermits are bathing in the ponds. Fires have been lighted, and are blazing away. The smoke ascends to the sky from all parts of the grove. The sun has descended on the western mountain, alighting from his car and drawing in his rays." There ends Act 1.

The interlude to Act II shows a maid searching for Padmavati, and ascertaining from another maid, called Kunjarika, that the princess is playing a ball game near the jasmine bower. She sees the princess at the game, her ear-pendants swaying in the wind, and her face, rendered doubly beautiful by the exertion, strewn with beads of pespiration caused by the exercise. The Act itself shows Padmavati playing with a ball, and followed by her retinue and Vasavadatta. Vasavadatta picks up the ball and gives it to Padmavati who replies, "I have had enough for the present." Vasavadatta remarks, "You have played too long with the ball, my dear. Your hands are so red that they look as if they are reddened with henna juice, like a bride's." The maid says to Padmavati, "Play on, princess. Make the most of this charming period of maidenhood."

Padmavati asks Vasavadatta why she is looking at her so curiously, and whether there is anything ridiculous about her. Vasavadatta replies that she is more beautiful than ever, and that she is looking at her handsome face from every side. Padmavati says, "Go to! Don't make fun of me". Vasavadatta replies, "I shall be mute, oh daughter-in-law-elect of Mahasena!" "Who may this Mahasena be?" asks Padmavati. Vasavadatta replies that he is Pradyota, king of Ujjaini, who is called Mahasena owing to the vast size of his army. The maid tells Vasavadatta that Padmavati does not desire any alliance with Mahasena. "Then, with whom does she desire an alliance?" asks Vasavadatta. "There is a king of Vatsa called Udayana. The princess is enamoured of his virtues" says the maid. Vasavadatta exclaims to herself, "She desires to wed my husband!" and asks the maid why the princess is enamoured of his virtues, and gets the reply, "Because he is so understanding and tender-hearted."

The maid asks Padmavati what she would do, should Udayana prove to be ugly. Vasavadatta says that Udayana is very handsome, and Padmavati asks her how she knows this. Vaiavadatta repents of her indiscretion, but gets over it by saying, "That is what everybody says in Ujjaini" and Padmavati replies, "I see. It will not be difficult for the people of Ujjaini to see him, and beauty captivates the hearts of all, and is commented on by everybody."

Padmavati's nurse comes and tells her that she is betrothed, to Udayana who too has accepted her hand. Vasavadatta exclaims, "What an improper thing!" Padmavati asks her,. "Wherein lies the impropriety?", and Vasavadatta replies, "I was thinking of his grieving for his queen in that manner, then,, and his indifference to her, now. " The nurse replies, "Madam, great minds, like his, are ruled by the sacred scriptures, and are consoled easily."

Vasavadatta ascertains from the nurse that Udayana himself did not seek Padmavati's hand, and that, when he went to Rajagriha on some other business, Darsaka offered him her hand,. seeing in him a combination of noble birth, learning, youth and beauty, and remarks to herself, "Ah! Then, my noble lord is not to blame."

Another maid enters and tells Padmavati "Princess, make haste, make haste. The queen says, 'To-day, the conjunction of the stars is auspicious, and we must have the bridal knot tied this very day'." Vasavadatta says to herself, "The more they hasten, the thicker becomes the darkness in my heart." The princess, nurse and others go into the palace There ends Act IT.

The interlude to Act III shows Vasavadatta, seated on a stone bench under a creeper, plungeg in thought".~ SHE says to herself, 'I have left raamavatt in the lady's court with its festive crowd of women, and have managed to come alone to this pleasure garden in Older to get pld of the sorrow which fate has brought on me".—Oh! What an outrage! Even my husband has become another womanBlessed is thefemale *thakravaka* bird separated trom her mate.. she doesnott-i-ryef But. 1 have hot died' wretch that 1 ain I"go on hsrrnjpn the hope of being reunited to my lord one day. " A maid comes with a basket of flowers and leaves, looking for her, and says to herself, "Where could lady Avantika have gone? Ah, there she is, seated on the stone bench under the *Priyatigu* creeper, dressed in that plain but graceful garment She sits plunged in deep meditation, looking like the crescent moon obscured by the mist. I will go to her. '" She approaches Vasavadatta and says, "Lady Avantika, I have been looking for you for a long time." "Whatever for?" asks Vasavadatta. "The queen says, 'The lady comes from a noble family She is skilled, and loving. Let her make the auspicious wedding garland for our princess' Vasavadatta says to herself, "Ah, this too has fallen to my lot! Verily the gods arepitiless.' ' The maid urges her to make the garland quickly, as the bride-groom is already having his bath in the mosaic room. Vasavadatta asks the maid whether she has seen the bride-groom, and, if so, what he is like. "He is the god of love himself with-

out the bow and arrows", says the maid. "Thanks, that will do." says Vasavadatta. "Why do you stop me?" asks the maid. "It is improper to listen to the praises of another woman's husband" says Vasavadatta. Then she takes the leaves and flowers from the maid, and asks about a leaf, "What is this?" "It is widowhood-preventer" says the maid. "I shall use this in plenty, both for my own sake as well as Padmavati's" says Vasavadatta to herself. She asks the maid about another leaf. ""It is called rival-exterminator" says the maid. "This must not be used." says Vasavadatta. "Why?" asks the maid." His wife is dead, and there is no rival to exterminate. So, it is useless" replies the resourceful Vasavadatta.

Another maid enters and cries out, "Make haste, lady, make haste. The bridegroom is being conducted to the ladies' court by the married women." "The garland is ready. Take it" says Vasavadatta, and both the maids go away with it. Vasavadatta says to hersel f " Oh! What an outrage! Even my husband now belongs to another woman! I will go to bed; sleep will allay my pain—if I get it." There ends Act III.

The interlude to Act IV is also in the palace of Rajagriha, and shows the jester rejoicing over the return of good fortune. He cries out in glee, "Ah, how delighted 1 am to be present on this joyous occasion of the marriage of my master, the king of Vatsa! Who could have dreamt that, after having been submerged in a whirpool of misfortune, we should come to the surface again like this? Now we live once more in palaces, bathe in the tanks of the inner court, and eat dainty and delicious •dishes.]t is almost as if I am living in paradise, except that there are no celestial nymphs here, to keep me company. There is just one great drawback. I cannot digest my food at all. I get no sleep even on the downiest beds. T feel gout hovering all over my body. Oh! There is no happiness in life without good health and fine food." A maid enters, and asks him whether the king has finished his bath, so that she may take the flowers and unguents to him. He replies, "His Majesty has bathed. You may bring anything except food-stuffs." She asks, "Why do you except food-stuffs?" He replies, "Because, unlucky that I am, my belly is rolling like a cuckoo's eyes." She replies, "May you be ever like that!", and he tells her, "Off with you! I will join his majesty."

The Act begins with Padmavati and her retinue and Vasavadatta in the palace gardens. Padmavati tells the maid that she *his* come to see whether the *sepHalika* flowers are in bloom. The mkid tells her that they are in full bloom and look like pendants of pearl interspersed with corah Padmavati and Vasavadatta sit on a stone bench while the maid gathers some of the *sepha-*

lika flowers and takes them to Padmavati who admires their brilliant colours and asks her not to pick any more flowers, so that, when Udayana comes there, he may see them and be pleased. Vasavadatta asks her, "Do you love him very much, my dear?", and Padmavati replies, "I don't know, lady; but when he is not by my side, I feel ever so lonely." Padmavati wonders whether Udayana meant as much to Vasavadatta as to her. Vasavadatta immediately replies, "Aye, even more." Padmavati asks her how she knows this, and Vasavadatta gets over the indiscretion by saying, "Had her love for him been less, she would not have forsaken her own people and eloped with him." The maid tells Padmavati that she should gently suggest to Udayana that she too would like to play on the lute. Padmavati replies that she has already made this suggestion, and that the king simply heaved a deep sigh and remained silent. Vasavadatta asks her, "What do you gather from that?" Padmavati replies, "I gather that he remembered the noble Vasavadatta and her virtues. Only out of courtesy for me, did he restrain his tears in my presence." Vasavadatta exclaims to herself, "Blessed am 1 if that is true."

The king and Vasantaka enter the garden. Vasantaka remarks, "How lovely the garden looks!" The king tells Vasantaka that when he saw Vasavadatta at Ujjaini outside the prison, the god of love shot at him all his five arrows, and that he felt love, sweet and fierce, gnaw at his heart, and ring in his ears, and wonders wherefrom this sixth arrow has been got by the god of love to add to his sorrows. The king' and jester are looking for Padmavati. The jester says, "Where has lady Padmavati gone? Has she gone to the arbour of creepers, or to the stone bench called 'the crest of the hill', looking like a tiger skin owing to its being covered with *Asana* blossoms, or has she entered the wood of the seven-leaved trees with their powerful and pungent scent, or has she gone to the wooden pavilion adorned with paintings of birds and beasts on its walls?" He then gazes upwards, and sees a line of cranes flying with great speed across the spotless autumn sky, and draws the attention of the king to it. The king exclaims that it is wonderful, and adds, "Now the line is straight; now it is broken; now the flight is upward; now it is low. This line of birds divides the sky in two. The sky is spotless, like the belly of a serpent which has cast off its slough. When the birds turn and whirl round, we see them twisted like the Great Rear itself.

Padmavati 's maid also draws the attention of the princess to this flock of cranes advancing steadily in line, white and lovely, like a garland of water-lilies. Then she remarks that the king has come. Padmavati says to Vasavadatta that, for her sake,

she will avoid meeting the king and enter the jasmine bower. The three leave the stone bench and' go to the jasmine bower. The king and jester come to the spot soon after. The jester remarks that Padmavati must have been there, and must have gone away only just then. The king asks him how he knows it, and he says that he has guessed this from seeing the *sephalika* flowers picked just then. The king feels the stone bench, and says, "You are right. This bench still retains the warmth of people sitting. The Mowers below also show signs of treading. So, some one must have sat here now, and hurried away on seeing us. Oh! Vasantaka, what brilliant colours these flowers have!" He suggests that they should sit on the stone bench and wait for Padmavati. They do so.

The jester, however, exclaims that the bench is hot owing to the autumn sun, and that they should move to the jasmine bower Padmavati is worried at this, as Vasavadatta would be embarrassed if the king went to the jasmine bower. Her maid suggests the shaking of the hanging creeper and making the bees thereon attack Vasantaka and make him drop his plan. She does so, after getting Padmavati's permission. The bees rush towards the jester in swarms. The jester cries out, "Help, help? 1 am attacked by these bastard bees?. The king tells him "Don't abuse them. One should never frighten the bees. Let not our foot-steps tread or harass the melodiously-humming bees. Drunk with honey, they fondly caress their love-stricken mates. Don't part them from their tender sweethearts. They too are pained when torn asunder. Come, let us go back and sit on the stone bench alone." They do accordingly.

Vasavadatta has a look at her husband, and says to herself, " 1 am glad to see my noble lord in such good health. " Her eyes are filled with tears. The maid tells Padmavati, "Princess! look, this lady's eyes are filled with tears." Vasavadatta replies that the pollen of the *kasa* flowers, set flying by the wanton bees, has fallen into her eyes and has made them water.

The jester tells the king, "The pleasure garden is deserted now. I want to ask your majesty something. May 1?"

"Yes, if you like" says the king.

"Whom do you love more, (Queen Vasavadatta of yore, or Queen Padmavati of to-day?" asks the jesten.

"Why do you want to put me in a most awkward predicament?" asks the king.

"Where is the awkwardness? One is dead, another is nowhere near. So, tell me without reserve" says the jester.

" No, my friend, no. I shall not tell you You are a chatter-box." says the king.

"I swear to you that I shall never tell a soul " says the jester, "See! I bite my tongue[1]"

"No, my friend. I dare not speak " says the king.

"How stupidly importunate he is! Even after that, he cannot read his heart!" remarks Padmavati, who, with her maid and Vasavadatta, has been listening to the entire conversation from inside the jasmine bower.

"What! You won't tell me? Well, if you don't you shall not stir a step from the stone bench. I shall hold your majesty, prisoner" says the jester.

"What! By force?"

"Yes, by force. "

"Well, then, we shall see" says the king.

"Forgive me for my impudence. I conjure you to tell me the truth in the name of our friendship " says the jester.

" What to do now? 1 am helpless " says the king. " Listen. Her beauty, virtue and sweetness make me hold Padmavati in high regard, but Vasavadatta holds the key of my heart. She grieved when 1 grieved, rejoiced when I rejoiced; when I had keen anguish of heart, though unvoiced, lo, I found her grieving for the pang unnamed; when 1 was angry, she spoke sweet words to soothe me; she knew to do the things exactly suiting the times. Oh Vasantaka, she was to me a wife, a friend, a servant and a minister, great and all-observant. "

Vasavadatta says to herself, on hearing this, " I am now amply recompensed for all my suffering. Even this disguise has. many merits. "

The maid tells Padmavati, "Princess, my lord lacks all courtesy "

Padmavati replies, "Don't say so, my dear. He has shown great courtesy in remembering even now the merits of the noble Vasavadatta. "

Vasavadatta tells Padmavati, "Your words are worthy of your exalted birth, Oh princess."

The king says to Vasantaka, "Well, I have told you my opinion. Now it is your turn to tell me whom you like better, Vasavadatta of yore, or Padmavati of to-day?".

Padmavati remarks to Vasavadatta and the maid "The king is acting like his buffoon now. "

The jester tells the king, "What is the use of my worthless opinion? I hold both the queens in very high esteem."

[1] An advance punishment, to curb it.

The king replies, "Idiot! You compelled me to speak, and, now, you refuse to give out your opinion."

"What! Will you force me too?"

"Yes! Of course."

"All right, then. You will never hear it" says the jester.

"Forgive me, Oh mighty Brahman! Speak of your own free will " says the king.

"Then, listen," says the jester, "Queen Padmavati is young and beautiful, gentle, free from conceit and anger, and very courteous. Vasavadatta too had ail these virtues. But there is one great virtue surpassing all these, and that Vasavadatta had in greater measure. She "used to come with delicious dishes, crying out, Now, where can the noble Vasantaka have gone?' "

"Very well, Vasantaka. I shall tell queen Vasavadatta all this" says the king.

"Alas! Vasavadatta! Where is Vasavadatta? She died long ago" exclaims the jester.

"So, it is! Vasavadatta is no more! That conversation of yours made my mind wander to days of yore when she was alive, and my lips uttered her name by force of old[1] habit" says the king.

Vasavadatta says to herself "Ah! How sweet it is to hear these words unobserved!"

The jester says, "Courage, my king, courage! Who can go against fate? It has happened so, and that is all that can be said about it."

"Friend, can one forget a love which shook the heart? Fond memory brings it back with a start. Our sad and mortgaged minds get free only by paying in full the debt of tears" says the king, and weeps.

The jester goes to fetch some water for the king to wash his face Padmavati tells Vasavadatta, "Madam, my noble lord's face is hidden in a veil of tears. Let us slip away now." At first, Vasavadatta agrees, but says, later on, "No, you stay here. It will not be right on your part to go away, leaving your husband in such a sad mood. I shall go back to the palace alone" and does so.

At the suggestion of the maid, Padmavati goes towards the king. On the way, she meets Vasantaka who is taking water in a lotus leaf. He exclaims, on seeing her, "Here is lady Padmavati." She asks him, "What is this?" He replies in confusion, "This is that. That is this." She asks him to speak up. He tells her that the pollen of the *kasa* flowers, wafted' by the wind, has got into the king's eyes, and bathed his face in tears,

and asks her to take the water to him for washing his face. Padmavati says to herself, "Ah! The chivalrous master has got a chivalrous servant", and takes the water from him and gives it to Udayana, saying, "Victory to my noble lord! Here is water for washing your face".

The king is astonished at seeing her, consults aside with Vasantaka, and asks Padmavati to be seated, and tells her that the pollen of the *kasa* flowers has been blown into his eyes by the wind and has bathed his face in tears. He remarks to himself, '[The heart of woman is full of fear of losing of what it holds dear This young girl, though brave, is newly wed. 1f she learns the truth about my tears, her]heart will break." The jester comes to the rescue of the king in this embarrassing situation, and says, "His majesty the king of Magadha is giving a reception, this afternoon, to all friends in your honour. Courtesy, reciprocating courtesy, engenders affection. It is time for your majesty to make a move." The king agrees, and rises up, saying, "It is easy enough in this world to find men endowed with noble virtues and courtesy, but it is not so easy to find men who value those qualities properly." There ends Act IV.

The Interlude to Act V shows Padminika, a maid of the Magadhan palace, telling Madhukarika, another maid, that Padmavati is suffering from a severe headache, and that she should go and call Avantika to the Ocean Pavilion, where the princess is, in order to relieve her pain by telling her some amusing stories. Padminika herself goes to call Vasantaka and ask him to inform Udayana about the headache. She meets Vasantaka, and tells him, and goes to get some ointment for Padmavati. The jester goes in search of the king.

The Act itself begins with Udayana's saying to himself, "Embarking once more on the sea of married life, my thoughts go back to darling Vasavadatta, daughter of Avanti's king, my beloved wife, who was consumed by fierce flames at Lavanaka, even as a flower is nipped in the bud by cruel frost whose ever-liungry tongue is death-tipped." The jester comes and tell d him about the severe h **to the Ocean Pavilion. Udavana exclaims "Alas! ThislTSW** wedding, with the beautiful and dutiful Padmavati, has somewhat toned down my great sorrow; but, Jiaving quaffed the cup of misery once, I feel apprehensive for Padmavati also.''

He and the jester go to the Ocean Pavilion. The jester goes in front and suddenly cries out, '' Heip, help! "Back your majesty, stand back!" and says that a cobra is wriggling on the'floor. The king rushes forward, examines the object indicated,! finds it to be a flower wreath fallen down from the triumphal arch above,

and wafted by the wind, and tells the jester, "Idiot! You have taken this for a cobra!" The jester examines the object closely, and agrees that it is not a cobra but only a flower wreath.

Vasantaka says that Padmavati must have come there and gone away. The king remarks that she could not have come there, because the bed is unruffled, and just as it was when spread, the quilt also is undisturbed, the pillow is not crushed or stained' with any headache ointment, there is no ornament to divert the patient's eyes, and no sick person would rise from bed and hurry away so soon. The jester tells him that they had better sit down on the bed for a while and wait for the queen. The king agrees and sits down on the bed. and says, "Friend. I feel awfully sleepy. Please tell me a story. " The jester says, rThergls a city called Ujjaini. In that city there are some charming bathing pools." The king says, "Ujjaini, did you say?"

" I f you don't like the story, I shall tell you another," says the jester.

"Oh, no, it is not that i do not like this story. Only, Ujjaini brings to mind the daughter of Avanti's king who thought of all her people, when we were starting, and wept, and shed on my breast red-hot tears of love, which welled from her eyes, while she trembled like a dove. Friend, oft in the middle of lessons, she would fix her eyes on me, and gaze at me as if to read my inmost thoughts. Her hand, with plectrum dropped, would then swing in such wise as if playing on my life strings or my heart-

The jester says, "Well, I will tell you another storyl There was a city called Brahmadatta. In it, there ruled a Icing called Kampilya. "

"Idiot! You should say, king Brahmadatta, and Kampilya city," says Udayana.

rWhat! The king isJBrahrnadatta, and the city Kampilya?"" asks the -jeser —^

"Of course," replies the king

"Then, wait a •moment wtffleI commit it to memory" says the jester, and goes on repeating, King Brahmadatta, Kampilya city; king Brahmadatta, Kampilya city", several times, in order to fix them in his mind, and then says "Now, I will go *on* but finds Udayana fast asleep,(and says to himself, "Hullo, the king is fast asleep. It is very chilly at this hour. I'll go and(J|Jetch »»* shawl and goes out.

After he has gone, Vasavadatta is led there Dy iviaanuKariKa who shows her the room, and goes away to fetch the ointment for the princess. Vasavadatta takes the king, sleeping on the bed, to be Padmavati, and says to herself, "Verily, the gods have no pity

on me. Even Padmavati, who was a source of comfort to my noble lord in his agony, has now fallen ill. Oh, the carelessness of these servants! She is ill, and yet all of them have left her with_just„ajamp_as her companion! She is asleep. *V)[* sit dOwN If I sit at a distance from her, it will look as if I don't love her enough. So, I'll seat myself on the bed itself." She sits down on the edge of the bed, and excjaims, "I..Say, why is it that, as I sit here, my heart is throbbing with pleasure and excitement? Happily, her breathing is easy, unobstructed and regular. So, her headache must have left her. Occupying only a small portion of the bed, she seems to invite me to clasp her in my arms. I'll He down by her side."

She proceeds to lie down on the bed. Udayana cries out in his sleep "Oh Vasavadatta! Vasavadatta!" Vasavadatta abruptly rises from the bed, and says, "Humph! It is my noble lord, and not Padmavati. Has he seen me? If so, the great vow of Yaugandharayana would have been made in vain, as my lord will at once take me to him, and Darsaka may, in consequence, refuse to render aid to win back Vatsa from the usurper''. The king cries out in his sleep, "Oh, daughter of Avanti's king!" Vasavadatta says to herself, "Luckily, my noble lord is only dreaming. There is no one about. So, I'll stay here awhile, and gladden my eyes and my heart." Jdavana cries out. "Oh darling! Oh beloved pupil! Respond to my call". Vasavadatta says, "1 am responding, my lord, \ am responding." Udayana asks her, "Are you angry?". Vasavadatta replies, "Oh no, only sad and unhappy.'' Udayana asks [4]* If you are not angry with me, why have you laid aside your ornaments?" Vasavadatta says to herself, "What could be better than this?" Udayana asks her drowsily, "Are you thinking of my affair with Virachita?". Vasavadatta says, "Shame! Even here Virachita! " The king says **then,]"]** implore your pardon for Virachita," and stretches out his hands. Vasavadatta says to herself, "I have stayed here long enough. 1 may be seen by others at any moment. I shall go away now, but I'll first replace the arm of my noble lord that is hanging down from the bed." She does so, and goes away hastily. The king rises abruptly from his bed, crying out, "Stay, Vasavadatta, stay!" and rushes after her in haste, and knocks his head against the lintel, and is left wondering whether he has seen her in reality or only in dream.

The jester returns just then, and says, "Ah! Your Majesty is awake!" The king tells him, "Friend, I have good news to tell you. Vasavadatta is alive! I saw her just now. She was armed only with beauty, but she stormed the fortress of my **heart, and** entered by the gate the eye, and has stopped there ever since." The jester says, "Alas,! Vasavadatta! Where is Vasava-

datta? Vasavadatta died long ago." The king says, "Say not so, my friend. She came and woke me up just now, as I lay asleep on this very couch, and then fled. 'She perished in the flames' said Rumanvan, and took me in, but here is the truth at last Even when I saw on Padmavati's forehead the unfading ti*ak* mark I learnt from the snake, my heart said to me 'The lady of Avanti still lives "

-" [11]Alas! such a thing is impossible" says the jester, "May be you saw her in a dream, since I mentioned the bathing pools of Ujjaini, and set you thinking about her ladyship. "

The king says, " I f dream it was, I should like to go on dreaming. If it is but an illusion, may it last for ever! From such a dream, there should never be a waking; nor should I recover from such an illusion."

The jester says, "Friend, a sylph called The Belle of Avanti is haunting this place. May be it is she whom you saw. "

"No, no" says the king, "I assure you, my friend, it was not a delirium. 1 saw her with her heir unbraided, and those dear eyes of hers without collyrium, just as we should expect a virtuous wife separated from her husband to be. Besides, see my arm which was clasped by her in sleep. The hair is all standing on end still. " ,

"Don't imagine any more absurdities now. Let us go back to the ladies' court" says the jester.

The chamberlain comes then and says to Udayana, "Victory to my noble lord ! Our great king, Darsaka, sends you this message r 'Your Majesty's minister, Rumanvan, has arrived in the vicinity with a large force to attack the usurper, Aruni. My army too, consisting of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry, is fully mobilised. So, be ready to march. Your enemy is divided[1]. Among your subjects confidence reigns. Your rear will be protected by our troops. I have done everything to see that the foe is sure to be vanquished. Our forces have crossed the Ganges. You shall soon be again the lord of Vatsa.'"

Udayana rises up and says, "Excellent. In battle, when the elephants roar like ocean waves, and the war-horses neigh, when the arrows pour in great torrents, I shall meet foul Aruni,. and kill him " There ends Act V.

The interlude to Act VI takes place in Vatsa Raja's Suyamuna palace in Kausambi, and shows Badarayana, Mahasena's chamberlain, arriving along with Vasundhara, Vasavadatta 's nurse, with a message for Udayana from Mahasena and Angaravati. The chamberlain calls Vijaya, the 'female door-keeper of

Udayana, and tells her, "Good woman, take this message to Udayana whose fame has been enhanced by the reconquest of the Vatsa country. 'The chamberlain belonging to the Raibhya clan, sent by Mahasena, has arrived here, along with queen Vasavadatta's nurse, the noble Vasundhara, sent by Queen Angaravati. They are both waiting at your gate.'

Vijaya replies, "This is not the proper time to carry such a message. "

Badarayana wants to know why. Vijaya tells him, 'Sir, to-day, some one in the Suyamuna palace was playing on a lute. On hearing it, His Majesty said, 'I seem to hear the notes of Ghoshavati.' Then somebody went and asked the man ''Where-from did you get this lute?' He replied, 'I saw it lying in a thicket of reeds on the banks of the Narmada. If His Majesty has any use for it, you may take it to him.' So, they took it to the king who pressed it to his side and fell in a swoon. On recovering consciousness, he said, with his face suffused with tears, 'I see you, Oh Ghoshavati, but her 1 see not'. "

The chamberlain tells her, "Good, woman, announce us. Our mission too has something to do with it." "All right. In that case, I shall announce you at once sir. His Majesty is coming down from the Suyamuna palace" says Vijaya.

The Act itself opens with the king holding the lute in hand and saying to it, "Oh, lute of sweetest tone, you once reposed on the breasts and lap of the loveliest queen. How did you reconcile yourself to parting from her, and lying in that jungle, where the birds dropped their dirt on you? You are an unfeeling thing, Ghoshavati. How else could you forget that unfortunate queen? You did not feel her hug, oh Ghoshavati, as she carried you on her lovely hips. How could you forget the sweet rhapsody of lying between her breasts when she was weary? Or her words and smiles during the/interval between lessons, or her plaintive cries for me when parted?[M] Vasantaka tells him, "Enough of this excessive sorrow, your majesty!" The king replies, "Don't say so, my friend. My grief, which had lain dormant, has been reawakened by this lute. This lute I see, but I see not her who loved it and its notes. Take it to some skilful artist, and have it restrung, and bring it back to me speedily. " Vasantaka goes out with the lute.

Vijaya enters, and tells Udayana that Badarayana and Vasundhara are waiting at the door with messages from Mahasena and Angaravati. Udayana asks her to bring in Padmavati. He asks Padmavati to sit by his side when receiving the emissaries from Ujjaini, She fears that, if she does so, it may look cal-

lous, as she is now in the place of queen Vasavadatta, the princess of Uj jaini. Udayana tells her that it will be a gross breach of etiquette to prevent those persons, who are entitled to see her, from doing so, and insists on her sitting with him. So, she sits with him, but expresses her uneasiness regarding the contents of the message of Mahasena and Angaravati. Udayanj tells her, "My heart too is full of forebodings, my darling. I dread the most harsh words Mahasena may have to say. 1 rled with his daughter, without telling him, and allowed her to[1] perish by tire. My merits are all exhausted, my dear. Fortune has deserted me. 1 feel afraid like a son who has roused his father's ire by foolish acts of consequences dire."

Radarayana and the nurse are ushered in. As he comes in. Badarayana says to himself that his heart rejoices on coming to the realms of an ally, but that grief overwhelms him as he remembers Vasavadatta's fate. He adds "You could have robbed him, Oh unkind fate, of his realm, but spared him his mate." He approaches Udayana who rises up and asks about Mahasena, "Is he well that king of kings who makes and unmakes kings?" and wants to know what his orders are. The chamberlain bids him sit down, and then delivers Mahasena's message, which is as follows:—"Congratulations on your regaining your kingdom which had been seized by enemies 1 rejoice at this proof of your mettle. For, never can the faint-hearted and the weak have great energy or activity. Nor can any one dream of royal glory who is not prepared for exertion and sacrifice " Udayana says, "Sir, it is all due to Mahasena's blessings. Defeated I stood before him, shame-faced, but he embraced me like a son. His daughter 1 took away by stealth, and failed even to ensure her safety. But, even after hearing about her dire end, his love for me has not declined a bit, and he has sent me this honoured embassy." "This lady will now deliver the message of the queen" says the chamberlain, Udayana inquires of Vasundhara about Angaravati, "Is she well, that queen of queens, the first among sixteen queens, the guardian deity of Ujjaini?'' The nurse replies, "The queen is well, and enquires about the health of your highness and your people." "My people?" says the king, "You know what kind of health 'my people' had."

"Enough of this excessive sorrow, my lord" says the nurse.

"Courage, my noble lord. Grieved for thus, Mahasena's daughter, though dead, is not really dead," says the chamberlain. [4]'Surely, death cannot be stayed when the hour has struck, and the pitcher must fall down when the rope breaks. The same law is at work with men and trees. They grow, and are cut down, in the wake of time.

The king replies, "How can I forget Mahasena's daughter, my pupil, my dear queen, even in births to come? Death may come on me, earth may turn to water, but never will they benumb her dear memory. "

The nurse says, "The queen sends this message: 'Vasavadatta is no more. You are to me and to Mahasena as dear as our own Gopalaka and Palaka, and had been, from the very first, pitched upon by us for our son-in-law. It is for that purpose that we had you taken to the palace, on the pretext of teaching her the lute. We placed her in your hands even prior to marrying you to her before the god of Fire. In your impetuosity, you eloped with her, without waiting for the formal nuptial celebrations. Then, we had the paintings of yourself and Vasavadatta done, and celebrated the marriage of you two in effigy. We send you these paintings. May the sight of them give you some satisfaction !"'

Udayana thanks the queen for her message, and says that it is more precious to him than a hundred thrones. Padmavati takes and peruses the painting of Vasavadatta, out of curiosity, and is surprised to find it to be an exact resemblance of Avantika, She asks Udayana whether it is a good likeness of Vasavadatta. "It is not her likeness; it is her very self, I imagine" replies the king, and laments over the cruel destruction of such a delicate complexion by fire. Padmavati takes and peruses the painting of Udayana also, saying to herself, that, if it is exactly like him, the other, too, must be exactly like Vasavadatta. She finds Udayana's painting to be life-like, and, so, concludes that Avantika is Vasavadatta, and is pleased and perplexed.

The king asks her why she is perplexed. She tells him, "There is a lady living here who is exactly like Vasavadatta", and informs him that a P>rahman has left her with her, as his married sister, to be guarded[1] by her till he calls for her again . The king asks Avantika to be brought at once. At that time, Vijaya announces the arrival of a P>rahman from Ujjaini for taking back his sister.

Padmavati goes and brings Avantika. Yaugandharayana is brought in, by Vijaya, and is anxious as to what the king **will think** about his conspiracy, though he has done it all only with the sole idea of his benefit. He approaches the king, and says, [4i]Victory to your majesty!" The king says to himself that he seems to have heard that voice before, but is unable to identify him at once. He asks Yaugandharayana whether he has come for his sister, and **receives a reply in the affirmative.**

Padmavati comes with Avantika. **The** king asks her to give back Avantika to **the** Brahman in the presence of Badarayana,

and Vasundhara, and thus make a legal and formal restitution. Padmavati hands over Avantika to Yaugandharayana. The nurse looks at Avantika, and exclaims, "This is Vasavadatta!" The king says, "What! Mahasena's daughter!", and asks Vasavadatta to be taken into the inner apartments. Yaugandharayana tells him, "You are a proud scion of Bharata's race. Purity, learning and virtue shine in you. **Don 't take her by force. That is unkingly. "**

The king says, "Very well, let us decide the **matter calmly** Let **her** remove **her** veil, **and** let us see if she is Vasavadatta or not."

Vasavadatta removes her veil, and cries out "Victory to my noble **lord!"**

Udayana says, "My god! This is Vasavadatta, Mahasena's daughter, and this is Yaugandharayana, my own minister. Am I dreaming again, or is it reality now?" He looks closely at Vasavadatta, and says, "There is no doubt at all. This is my own darling wife. She whom I deemed dead, and wanted to join in death, she has been got back by me even in this birth!"

Yaugandharayana falls at his feet, crying out, "Sire, by concealing the queen, T am guilty of a great offence. 1 beg of you to forgive me "

The king raises him up, and says, "What is there to forgive? Hy feigned madness, by cleverly-planned designs, you have pulled me up from the ruin which had overtaken me. "

"What have \ done? \ have simply followed the fortunes of my lord" says Yaugandharayana.

Padmavati falls at the feet of Vasavadatta, and cries out, "Lady, in treating you as a humble companion, i have unconsciously been guilty of gross impropriety. [bow my head to you, and beg your forgiveness."

Vasavadatta raises her, and says, "Rise up, oh gracious woman! If there is any offence, it is your prostrating to me unnecessarily, for nothing at all. "

The king asks Yaugandharayana what his main idea was in concealing the queen.

Yaugandharayana replies, "My one idea was to save Kausambi.'*

The king asks, **"Why** did you leave her as a ward **in the** hands of Padmavati?"

Yaugandharayana replies, "The soothsayers, Pushpaka and Bhadraka, had predicted that Padmavati would become the consort of **your majesty. So, I left Vasavadatta with her. "**

Udayana asks, "Did Rumanvan also know about this trick?"

Yaugandharayana replies, "My lord, they all knew."

The king exclaims, jocularly, "What a rogue Rumanvan **is!"**

Yaugandharayana says, "My lord, let the worthy Raibhya and this good lady return this very day, to Ujjaini, to announce there that queen Vasavadatta is safe. "

The king replies, "No, we will all go together, along with queen Padmavati "

There, the play ends.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHARUDATTA.

This is an incomplete play containing four Acts. Possibly, it was left unfinished owing to the death of Bhasa. The famous play, *Mrichhakatika*, of Sudraka, is a development of this play. It completes the story up to the reprieve of Charudatta who had been condemned to death on a trumped-up charge of the murder of Vasantasena.

Act l shows the jester, Maitreya, standing outside Charudatta's house in Ujjaini and telling the person who invites him to dinner, "You must invite somebody else, sir. [am not free, I tell you. What do you say? 'That there is a sumptuous meal? Oh yes, I know. But, one does not eat the stone of even the sweetest mango. Why do you keep on trying to persuade me? I tell you I am engaged. What do you say—that there will be a gift in gold coins also! I decline it, at least in words, though it may cling to my mind. Oh misery! 1, too, am looking forward to invitations of this kind. I used once to pass my days in Charudatta's house, chewing the cud of sweets and savouries, happily, like a bull at the cross-roads, filled up to the gullet. I used to sit surrounded by countless dishes of various kinds, like a painter amidst his numerous dishes of paint, all the twenty-four hours. And, what dishes, seasoned with every spice! In between, there were drinks also which appeared at the lift of an eye-brow. Now that same I, owing to Charudatta's poverty, live-like the pigeon, running elsewhere for my food before I come to. roost in this house. But, it is really wonderful how my belly understands the change in Charudatta's affairs. It is now satisfied with quite a little. It will take a good weight of rice if offered; but, when it is not offered, it does not demand or expect it. Of course, it is not that I am not content with my present position. When Charudatta can put up with poverty, why can't

I? The noble Charudatta is offering to-day *Shashti*[1] prayers. So, I have brought him a garland, and a garment thin as air. Let me go to him. Ah, here he is, handsome and **graceful but pitiful like the** moon at dawn. He **is** coming **here, worshipping the** household deities according to his means."

Charudatta enters offering oblations to the gods and accompanied by the maid with a wood-sorrel in **her** hands. Charudatta says to himself, sighing deeply, "Oh, poverty is a living **death to** a high-minded man! See! On this threshold of my house, where swans and cranes enjoyed my offerings in flocks, **there** lie now only my handful of grain, besides the sprouts of grain thrown in more prosperous days."

The jester tells him, "Don't torment yourself too much. Wealth is subject to vicissitudes and circumstances. The loss of your wealth, by charity all over the land, lends a charm to your poverty as to the moon's loss of light by parting with it to light up the darkness of the dark fortnight."

"Friend, I don't grieve for the fortune lost, but over the other consequences of poverty. He who becomes poor, after having been prosperous, lives in his body, but, is as good as dead. The recovery of prosperity after a period of poverty is glorious, and is like the gift of a lamp to one lost in the darkness," says Charudatta.

"Where has it all gone—such heaps and heaps of money, the gain from the markets and the seas?" asks Maitreya.

"They went the way of my luck" says Charudatta. "T used my wealth all up for the needs of my friends. I don't remember having refused any one who appealed for my help. Now, my spirit is crushed by this poverty. But, T will do the same if 1 recover my wealth", and he sighs deeply.

"Are you grieving for the loss of your wealth and prosperity?" asks the jester.

"Oh no. Riches will come again with a turn of the wheel of fortune. I grieve for the loss of friends who have become indifferent to me, owing to the loss of my wealth, as they do not care to mix with a man who is merely good. If a man is poor, his relations don't care for his words. His magnanimity becomes ridiculous. Without any enmity, his friends are estranged. Calamities descend on him like the shower in a storm. The evil deeds of others are put on his head," replies Charudatta.

"Oh, don't be depressed" says Maitreya, "Your riches, which have disappeared now, like the reeds in summer drought, will reappear again in profusion, like the reeds in spring. Business

[1] The sixth day of the lunar fortnight.

transactions, which have run away from this house, like herd-boys scared by gnats, will return once more."

"Why should I be depressed, comrade?" asks Charudatta, "I am not really poor when I have a wife who will follow my fortune, and a good friend who will share my joys and sorrows."

Vasantasena, the courtesan, is seen going along the street in a hurry, pursued by Sakara and his friend, a rake. Sakara cries out to her, "Stop, Vasantasena, stop! Why are you running away, racing along in spite of your stumbling at places? 1 won't slay you. What I want is you. My body is scorched with love for you, like a bit of old leather fallen on red-hot embers." "Vasantasena, why do you flee in terror like a deer frightened by a tiger's pursuit? Why hustle your feet, so skilled in graceful dance? Why dart, from your lovely eyes, glances of fear, instead of love?" cries the rake.

"Ah, dear Vasantasena is off, closely chased by us two, like a jackal by a couple of hounds. She runs away causing her anklet and girdle to jingle. 1 tell you she has stolen my heart along with the pericardium," says Sakara.

"Vasantasena, I can run like the wind. Do you think 1 cannot catch you?" asks the rake.

Vasantasena calls out, "Pallavaka, Pallavaka! Parabhrithika, Parabhrithika! Madhukarika! Sarika! Alas! Where are my servants? Since none of them respond, 1 must take care of myself."

"Shout away! Shout for the sprout, the cuckoo, the bee and the starling, aye, for all the birds of spring! Who, in the world, can protect you? Like Vishnu am \, the lord of the Corpse Bazaar, or Janamejaya, Kunti's son. I shall catch you by the hair and carry you away as Duhsasana did Sita" says Sakara.

"Vasantasena, 1 am wholly free from fear. Though I don't like to say this to a young woman like you, go and ask the police-men in the market-place who have escaped being murdered by me. The pitch darkness of this night is no hindrance to me. My character is blacker than this night, which is lighter by comparison, and 1 can go through any side-lane in spite of this indescribable darkness" says the rake.

"Lady, comply with our request. When a civil request is refused, anger arises, and, when 1 am angry, what can T not do, especially with my long arm made longer by the sword? Save yourself from murder, and save me from a maiden's murder," says Sakara.

Vasantasena remarks to herself, "Even his wooing is most alarming."

"Look you, my wench, my sword is sharp. I will cut off your head, and then kill you. When one is dead, one lives no more," continues Sakara.

"Good, sir, I am but a courtesan who lives by the favours conferred on her by the nobility" says Vasantasena.

"That is why we are after you" says the rake.

"Sir, do you want my person or my jewellery?" asks Vasantasena.

"Who would strip a creeper of its flowers?" asks Sakara.

"Come now with your jewellery!" says the rake.

"Oh, then, there is no need for worry" says Vasantasena.

"Vasantasena, you must love me. I want only your love, and not your jewels. I am a prince" says Sakara.

"What you want is a long, long rest, and a peace that knows no ending" says Vasantasena.

"Listen to that, doctor!" says Sakara, "She thinks I need a rest, though I am quite strong, and don't need it."

"The fool does not see that she is cursing him. She wishes him death, and he thinks that she means a rest-cure. Gesticulating with all his limbs, he utters rubbish devoid of the least sense. His movements are uncouth. His speech is debased. He is an incarnation of the beast in human form" says the rake to himself about Sakara. Then he says aloud, to Vasantasena, "What is this you are saying to my face? This is contrary to the rules prescribed for courtesans. The dwelling of a courtesan is open to all the youth. You are like a flowering tree by the roadside, for anybody to pluck the flowers. Your body is a chattel to be bought for a price. So, serve impartially the man you love and the man you hate."

"Doctor, here is a lane full of the deepest gloom. Don't let her slip away down this lane. Ever since the love god's festival, she has been sweet on a youth called Charudatta, a poverty-stricken merchant, adorable only in her eyes. We are close to the side-door of his house," says Sakara.

Vasantasena is delighted at hearing this, and says to herself, "Fortunately I have been brought near my beloved by the persecution of my enemies. Good! I will slip into this house" and goes groping about for the entrance.

"Doctor, she is lost. The baggage is lost" cries Sakara.

"Lost! Search for her!" says the rake. The two search for her, and the rake cries out, "She will soon be betrayed by the jingling of her anklets and the perfume of her garland."

Vasantasena throws away her garland and anklets. The rake exclaims, 'This darkness anoints my limbs. The sky, it seems, is raining lampblack. My sight is useless like service rendered to a rascal. Darkness is a ready shelter, and a source of danger, like a deep forest. The terrified and the terror-causing are both protected by the dark. Though my eyes are open, and are staring wide, owing to the dense darkness, they are as useless as if closed."

Meanwhile, Charudatta asks Maitreya to go and make the oblation to the goddesses in the square. The jester replies that he has no faith, and that somebody having faith had better go. He adds that his intellect is like the reflection in a mirror, taking right for left, and left for right. Charudatta tells him that mere devotion will satisfy the deities. The jester then wants somebody to accompany him. Charudatta deputes the maid, Radanika, to accompany him. Maitreya takes a lamp, and opens the side-door. Vasantasena, who is groping about there, puts out the lamp with the end of her robe. The jester thinks that it is the wind that has put it out, and goes inside the house to take another lamp. Vasantasena says to herself, "The door is open. So I can enter. This is no time to think about the proprieties," and enters the house.

The rake sees Radanika who is waiting for the jester and says to himself, "Here is a woman who has come out of the house. T will palm her off on the swine." He cries aloud, "Here is a smell that reeks of the perfume of a scented bath."

Sakara cries out, "Aye, doctor, I can hear the smell with my own ears. But l cannot see properly, as my nostrils are full of the fog." The rake catches the maid who falls down in fright. He drags her by the hair, crying out, "In the pride of her youth she spurned the prayers of nobles like us. Drag her by the hair, by the tresses that should be dressed with flowers."

Sakara tells her, " I will cut her bloody head off, and then I will kill her." He catches hold of her and says, " I have caught her by the head, the hair, the locks and the tresses. Now you may call or squeak or scream to god, to the lord, or to the almighty, as you like." He drags the maid violently along.

She cries out, "Gentlemen, what are you going to do with me ?"

"I say, doctor, I can tell from her voice that it is not Vasantasena" says Sakara.

"Don't be silly. She is Vasantasena all right," says the rake, "Remember, she has been on the stage, and is trained in the arts. She is clever at changing her voice."

The jester enters with a lamp, and says, "I have got the lamp all right. But, it is difficult to keep it going. There is a breeze about which shakes up the oil into waves, as I carry it."

Radanika kicks Sakara, and screams, "Oh Maitreya, is this a real outrage, or is this simply horse play?"

The jester cries out, "None of that now! None of that now!" and goes towards Sakara and the rake, but hesitates on seeing their swords. The rake tells him that they were in pursuit of a certain lady, mistress of her youth, called Vasantasena, and that she had eluded them, and that they had mistaken Radanika for Vasantasena, and had not acted towards her knowingly or insolently.

He tells Sakara, "This gentleman is Maitreya, the noble Charudatta's comrade."

Sakara exclaims, "Damn it! So, this is a maid-servant of that poverty-stricken merchant, Charudatta, and not Vasantasena. Bravo Vasantasena! You have cheated this doctor, and given him the slip in the darkness, and l have been deceived by this screaming, slippery, maid/' "T say this is not right" says the jester.

"Noble Brahman, 1 fold my hands to you in humble entreaty for forgiveness" says the rake.

"1 say, doctor, you seem to be mightily afraid of that poverty-stricken Charudatta, that miserable merchant who is nothing but a dried-up tank now," says Sakara.

"Yes, I am afraid of him," says the rake, "because he is beggared by the suits of men like me. There is no man, indeed, who has not been relieved by his riches. No doubt, he is a dried-up tank now. But don't forget that the tank got dried up in quenching men's thirsts." Then he implores the jester not to tell Charudatta about this business, and quietly slips away without telling Sakara.

Sakara says, "Marisha, my lad, take from me this message to that fellow Charudatta, that miserable merchant's son. The king's brother-in-law, Samsthana, salutes you with his head adorned with a jewelled turban, and says 'An actress named Vasantasena, daughter of a courtesan of the first class, being solicited by us two, has entered your house with a lot of gold ornaments. She must be handed over to us by to-morrow. Otherwise, you son of a slave, I will crack your skull as a garlic root is cracked by the beak of a turtle-dove. I will chew your head and mash it to pulp like a ripe melon caught between two strong doors/ "

"Oh you will! Will you?" says the jester, and scares him by swinging the lamp before his face. Sakara looks round for the rake, finds him gone, and slips away. The jester tells the maid that he will go in and report to Charudatta that they had made the offerings to the deities. He asks her not to mention a word about the attack on her. She promises to keep her mouth shut.

Meanwhile, Charudatta mistakes Vasantasena, who has entered the house, for Radanika, and asks her if the offerings have been made to the deities, and gives her his mantle to be taken inside. Vasantasena takes the mantle joyfully, and remarks to herself, "It has got a scent of perfume. That shows that he is not quite indifferent to the vanities of youth." Charudatta asks her to go to the inner apartment. She hesitates to do so. He asks her, "Why are you loitering here, Radanika?" She is in a fix as to what to do. At that juncture, Radanika and the jester enter. On seeing Radanika, Charudatta says to himself, "Whp, then, is this lady shining like the moon hidden by autumn clouds? In my ignorance I gave her my mantle." Vasantasena says to herself, "There he is, his beauty lit by the lamp. l live hereafter only in the hope of being united to him."

The jester delivers to Charudatta Sakara's message. Vasantasena seeks the protection of Charudatta who readily gives it and exclaims, "Is this Vasantasena?". "Yes, it is Vasantasena" says the jester. Then he says to Charudatta aside, "This is the lady whom you feasted your eyes on at the Love God's festival and have been praising ever since. So, look at her to your heart's content, now, and relieve your love-sick heart." "I see her ail right, friend" says Charudatta to him in a whisper, "Rut. love has come to me when my wealth has left me. So, I must subside it in my own breast as a coward does his wrath."

"Sir, T beg your pardon for having entered your house uninvited," says Vasantasena to Charudatta.

"1 beg your pardon for treating you as my servant," says. Charudatta to her.

"Oh, these two are worrying each other by these useless apologies, like two ill-trained bullocks pulling a cart in opposite directions!" says the jester to himself, and says aloud, "T beseech your pardon, Radanika."

Charudatta tells Vasantasena, "I am no longer wealthy and independent, my lady. What place is there now for affection?"

Vasantasena says to herself, "It would be sweet indeed if I could stay with him here to-night. But that will not be proper, especially as I have come here myself, without his inviting me. I shall do this to further my ends," and says aloud, "If you wilf

pardon **me, sir, I should like** to **leave** my ornaments witn you. Wicked **men follow me** because **of** them. I should like to return **to** my **house under your protection."** Charudatta asks Maitreya **to** take **the** jewels.. At first he refuses, but, finally, does so, on the insistence of Charudatta. The jester asks Radanika to keep **them** on the *shashtt* and *saptami*[1] days and to hand them over to him on *Ashtatni*[2] day. Radanika agrees. Charudatta calls for a lantern. Maitreya says, "There is no more oil in this lantern than there is affection in a courtesan."

"There is no need for a lantern. The moon has arisen, the free lamp of all the world. Look at the rising moon, pale yellow like ripe dates, the light of the highway, the escort of young ladies, the lamp of love. The white beams fall amid the dense darkness like streams of milk on dried-up mire" says Charudatta.

He escorts Vasantasena till the highway, and then sends the jester along with her. There ends Act I.

Act II shows Vasantasena and her maid, Madanika, engaged in conversation in Vasantasena's house. The maid tells her mistress that she thinks that, contrary to the rules and needs of the profession, Vasantasena has fallen in love with some one. ""Your perception is unerring. But how did you guess it?" asks Vasantasena.

"You have dressed without putting on your jewels. The lord of love causes such forgetfulness. He must be really interesting to make you forget like this," says Madanika, "Is he some prince, as charming as he is grand?"

"I wish to love, not to serve," says Vasantasena.

"Ah, is it some great Brahman deeply versed in the scriptures ?" asks the maid.

"Do such men ever relax their self-control? Besides, T shall have to *reverence* such a man, and cannot *love* him," replies Vasantasena.

"Is he some rich merchant's son?" asks Madanika.

"Lunatic, what woman in love will fix her hopes on riches which may disappear?" replies Vasantasena;

"Can't I be told who has possessed your heart?" asks the maid.

"Didn't you go with me to the love god's festival?" asks Vasantasena;

"Yes."

"Then, can't you guess?"

[1] The seventh day of the lunar fortnight.
[2] The eighth day of the lunar fortnight.

"**No. Tell** me who **it** is," implores the maid.

"**Charudatta," replies Vasantasena.**

"**He who protected** you that night?" asks Madanika.

"The very same."

"But, unfortunately, he is poor," says the maid.

"That is why I am in love with him. Nobody will reproach a courtesan for being in love with a poor man," replies Vasantasena.

"But, my dear mistress, do the bees settle on a mango when the flowers have fallen?" asks Madanika.

"That calculation of theirs is punished by the robbery of their hard-earned honey," says Vasantasena.

"But, Charudatta may not come here, as only rich men frequent a courtesan's house," says the maid.

[a]But, don't you see that it is T who am in love with him?" asks Vasantasena.

"If you think so much of him, why don't you go to him?" asks the maid.

"I don't say I won't. i am putting it off because, if i went to him all on a sudden, he may not be able to give me a present, and I may not be, therefore, free to visit him again," says Vasantasena.

"Ah, I see. That is why you left your jewellery in his house," says the maid.

A shampooer enters the house in great haste, and asks Vasantasena to protect him. She promises it readily despite Madanika's objections. The shampooer begs to be forgiven for his forgetting his manners, in his terror. Vasantasena tells him, "Don't bother about it. i am only a courtesan."

"By birth, not by character," says he. She is pleased at this, and asks him the cause of his terror. He tells her that he is being dunned for a debt. She asks him to be seated, and to state his case at leisure. He sits down and says, "I was born in Pataliputra. By birth, i am a trader, but, owing to the vicissitudes of fortune, I have now become a shampooer."

"A very delicate art," says Vasantasena.

"I learnt it as an *art.* Now it is my *job,"* says he.

"You must have had some bitter experience to say that," says she.

"Yes. I came to Ujjaini to meet distinguished people, as travellers gave a glorious account of this city. I did meet with

luck at first. A **young** merchant enjgaged me. Hte was a fine figure of a man, dignified but not arrogant, charming but not conscious of his charm, clever but kind, able but polite, respected by all, calm and collected but easy to please, generous without boasting of it, remembering even petty obligations, and forgetting grievous wrongs. One cannot describe even a tithe of his glories and virtues on the longest summer's day. He used to treat his body as if it were a public trust/' says the shampooer. Vasantasena guesses that it must be Charudatta and asks him "Isn't he poor?"

"Yes. How could you tell that, lady?" asks the shampooer in surprise.

"Wealth and such merits rarely go together/' says Vasantasena, "What is this gentleman's name?".

"Charudatta."

"I thought so. Go on," says she.

"Owing to growing poverty, he dismissed all his attendants, and continued to live in his house with nothing left but his character. Being unwilling to sully this hand, by shampooing common men after having shampooed his exquisite body, I left off shampooing, and took to gambling, to keep this beastly body going. Then I lost ten gold pieces to a man from whom I had won for several days. To-day, I saw him rushing at me, and took refuge here," says the shampooer.

"How birds are scattered on the destruction of the sheltering tree!" says Vasantasena, and asks Madanika to pay off and send the creditor away. She tells the shampooer, "Don't worry, sir, about the money. Regard it as a gift from the noble Charudatta." The maid returns and says that she has paid off the creditor and sent him away. Vasantasena tells the shampooer that he may go. He offers to serve her. But she declines this offer to return her debt. He then takes his leave and departs.

Vasantasena's page comes in and tells her that he is sorry that she did not witness his heroic deed, adding that she would have been amazed.

"What is it? Feather-headed people are easily amazed," says Vasantasena.

"The sacred elephant, Bhadrakapota, was returning at great speed from his bath. He rushed at an ascetic, seeing his ochre robes. He caught him by the feet, lifted him up, and knocked him about with his trunk. There he lay helpless between his tusks. People cried out 'Alas, alas, he will be torn to pieces and killed/ I drove the elephant away with blows from my fist. Everyone cried out 'Bravo, boy, well-done!' but no one wanted

to make any **gift** to me. **Then a** young noble man searched in **vain for some ring or other ornament** to reward me with, and, **finding nothing, cursed his fate, and** gave me this mantle." Vasantasena recognizes the mantle to be that given to her by Charudatta, and suspects that it must be Charudatta, and asks **the page whether** he knows his benefactor's name.

He says, "No, but here he comes."

Vasantasena looks in that direction from the parapet, and **exclaims,** "Ah, it is Charudatta. He has only his sacred thread for an upper cloth. Let me gaze at him to my heart's content." There ends Act II.

Act III shows Charudatta and Maitreya entering Charudatta's house from the street late at night after attending a music performance.

Charudatta says, "What a jewel is a lute! Tt is a delightful companion, in tune with a lover's heart, and capable of expressing the deepest passions in a pleasing way."

The jester says, "What is the time now? The street is deserted, as if a curfew order is in force. Even the dogs have gone to sleep. But we don't get sleep at all. Let me tell you, I didn't enjoy the cursed lute. T wish all its strings had snapped."

"But, the singing to-day was extremely sweet. Didn't you enjoy it also?" asks Charudatta.

"No. Too much sweet stuff is indigestible to me," says the jester.

"His voice was beautifully clear, melodious and sweet, free from flourishes. Why waste words? Were he behind a wall, I should have thought it was a woman," says Charudatta.

"You may praise him as you like. As for me, I don't care for a man's singing or a woman's preaching. A man singing cuts a sorry figure, like a priest garlanded with red flowers. And a woman's preaching is as ghastly as the bellowing of a cow with a slit nose," says the jester.

"Friend, it is midnight. The traffic has stopped, and Ujjaini has fallen fast asleep. The eighth-day moon has dipped below the horizon, like the end of the curved tusk of an elephant, taking its bath, submerging in water," says Charudatta.

"You are right," says Maitreya, "Darkness gets a chance when the moon sets. It seems to steal down from the roof."

"Here is our house," says Charudatta. Then he calls out, "Vardhamanavaka." The servant comes and brings water and washes Charudatta's feet. The jester asks him to wash his feet too. The servant washes his feet and pours the rest of the water over his face, to the disgust of the jester.

Charudatta exclaims, "Sleep is creeping over me, unseen and elusive, like old age whose strength becomes more and more as the victim's becomes less and less. Let us sleep, Maitreya." The servant goes away.

The maid comes with Vasantasena's casket of jewels and asks the jester to take over its custody, as **she** has kept it on the *slvashti* and *saptami* days, as promised, and he has to take it back to-day, it being *ashtami.* Charudatta asks Maitreya to take it. The jester asks him, "Why don't you send **it to the inner** apartments?" Charudatta replies, "Idiot! My wife must not see this jewellery." The jester then receives the jewels saying, "All right. I will take it. But, it is sure to be stolen by thieves." The maid gives the casket, and goes away.

"Why did you give away your mantle to the courtesan's page?" asks Maitreya.

"From affection/' replies Charudatta.

"What! Affection for even that miserable creature!"

"Oh, don't say that," says Charudatta.

"Why not? T have to roll on the ground like a pack donkey," says the jester.

"i am sleepy. Be quiet," says Charudatta.

"Sleep well, and wake up refreshed. i shall also sleep," says the jester. Both sleep.

Sajjalaka, a burglar, who is in love with Madanika, enters the house. He says to himself, "Here I am. I have made a path for myself through the garden-wall by cutting a hole with my own strength and skill. It is quite ample for the body to slip through. Tn that hole I glide like a snake that sloughs its worn-out skin by rubbing its sides as it creeps along the ground. Now T must enter the house proper, and get into the inner rooms. 1 don't care for wise men's sayings about this business of burglary. Merchants cheat, in day-time, people who trust them. Burglars, from love of daring, not from cruelty, choose night-time for their operations. Aswathama raided the Pandava camp at night, and slew the infant princes, and yet nobody condemns him or scorns his deed. Independence, though accompanied by ill-fame,. is far better than the folded hands of servility. I have no pity at all for merchants. Greedy and rich, despising **honest folk,** ruthless is their business. What does not **the love god drive** us to? Now I must get to work. **Here** is a spot **where the** bricks have been loosened by **running water, and can be bored through without making a sound. I shall make a hole here. I** must be **careful to see that the yawning cavity leads to the interior of the house, and that I avoid waking up the womenfolk.**

Now, **what kind of breach shall I make?—The** lion's stride, or **the full-orbed moon, or the jaws of** a **pike, or the tiger's** maw, **or the semi-circular hole, or the triangular** one? Shall it be like a stool, or like an elephant's mouth? I think I will carve the lion's stride model."

In the meanwhile, the jester says to Charudatta drowsily, "You are awake. Aren't you ?".

"What is it?" asks Charudatta, equally drowsily.

"I can't sleep any more than a monk who has made an assignation with a servant-girl My left eye is throbbing. I believe I can hear a thief boring a hole into the wall, in my anxiety to guard these jewels safely. If this is what one feels when having wealth in his hands, I vote for hereditary poverty," says the jester.

"Tut! Tut! Go to sleep," says Charudatta, "What a fool you are, hankering after poverty!" and both drop off to sleep again.

Sajjalaka says to himself, "Now, what shall I use to measure this breach?" He reflects awhile, and uses his sacred thread, remarking to himself, "This is a sacred thread by day, a measuring line by night." Then he slowly sounds the burglar's drone, a low-toned instrument, to test whether all inside are asleep. He finds nobody disturbed by the drone, and mutters, "Praise be to the lord of thieves!" and enters inside the house, through the breach. He exclaims, "I say, a lamp is burning. 1 must be off." On later thoughts, he says, "No, am I not Sajjalaka—a cat to leap, a wolf to slink away, a snake to glide, a hawk to pounce, illusion itself in disguise, expert in all the lingoes, a light by night, darkness in danger, wind on land, boat on water, sleep on slumberer's eyes? Why should I run away? Let me look round." He looks round, and says to himself, "As a stranger to burglary, I knew nothing of this man's financial position. I came in, relying simply on the appearance of this mansion which is nobly planned. But, I see no costly furniture, or any other thing worth grabbing. Is he a poor man, after all? Or, does he keep his valuables hidden away under lock and key? Has he really squandered his wealth on pleasure, and is sticking on to the house, though short of funds, merely from natural reluctance to sell the house where he was born? If he is really as poor as he seems, he is not better off than myself, and should not be troubled. Well, I will go."

Just then, the jester, in his sleep, drowsily mutters to Charudatta, with his eyes closed, "Oh, take this golden casket and rid me of this bother." Sajjalaka is surprised, and says to himself, "Golden casket, says he! Has he seen me, or is he talking

in his sleep? I will have a look," He looks at the jester, and says, "He is really asleep. His breathifig is regular, and conies at even intervals. His body is relaxed and stretched out. His eyes are closed firmly, and are not rolling beneath the lids. If he were feigning sleep, he will not be **facing the lamp. But, where is this golden** casket? He has got his hands over it. Ah, I **know what to** do." He lets loose, at the jester, some moths **he** is carrying in a small box, **and** at the same time puts out **the** lamp. **The** jester wants to take his hands away from the casket, **in order to drive** away the moths. He cries out, **"Damn it! The lamp** has gone out. I shall be robbed. Charudatta, take this golden casket, as I can't sleep with fright like a trader who has got off the right road. I will curse you if you don't take it." Sajjalaka takes the casket from the jester's hands, and the jester thinks that it is Charudatta who takes it, and says to himself, "Now, I shall sleep soundly, like a trader who has sold all his wares."

Sajjalaka hears the city-drum announcing the break of dawn, and packs off with the casket, saying to himself, "Should I take what this Brahman gave me in confidence? A curse on poverty! Young men in love have no remorse in taking to dubious means in order to gain their beloved."

Soon after Sajjalaka has gone, Radanika enters the room, crying out, "Maitreya, a thief has cut a hole in the orchard door and entered the house." The jester raises up in a hurry, sees the burgling hole, and exclaims, "Damn it! The rascally dog got in all right. I shall break the pleasant news to Charudatta."

Both return to where Charudatta is sleeping. The jester tells him, "Charudatta, I have got some pleasant news for you." Charudatta wakes up and asks, "Pleasant news for me, you say? Has Vasantasena come?"

"No, not a lady, but a gentleman," replies the jester.

"What does he mean, Radanika?" asks Charudatta.

The maid replies that a thief has cut a hole in the orchard door and got into the house.

"A burglar got in!" says Charudatta, amazed.

"Now, my friend, you always say, 'Maitreya is a fool', 'Maitreya is an idiot', but don't you think that I did well to entrust that golden casket into your hands last night?" asks the jester.

"You gave it to me!" asks Charudatta surprised.

"Why, of course!" replies the jester.

"When?"

"At dead of night."

"At dead of night you say! Really you gave it **to** me?" asks **Charudatta.**

"Of course, I did," **replies the** jester.

Charudatta says to himself, "Alas, the golden casket has been stolen!".

The jester tells him, "Now, you had better give it back to me."

Charudatta says to himself, "I shall be suspected. Who will know the truth, and who will believe it? A poor man, entrusted with jewels, will always be suspected, when he says that they have all been stolen."

Charudatta's wife calls Radanika and asks her anxiously whether the burglar has hurt Charudatta or Maitreya. Radanika tells her that neither of them has been hurt, but that Vasantasena's jewels, entrusted by her to Charudatta, have been stolen.

Charudatta's wife says, "How to compensate her?" She puts her hands to her ears, but finds only palm leaf there. "Alas, old habit is mocking me," she says to herself, "I know what to do. 1 shall give the pearl necklace worth a lakh that I got from my family."

The jester tells Charudatta, "I entreat your pardon for giving back the casket to you so unceremoniously in the dark. Now give it back to me."

"Why do you press me? You know me for years, and yet you believe that 1 have the casket with me. How much stronger will be such a belief in Vasantasena who lives by her wits, and is an adept in deceit?" says Charudatta, and he remains plunged in grief.

"i believe, wretch that I am, that 1 handed it over to the burglar," exclaims Maitreya.

Charudatta's wife calls Maitreya, through Radanika, and makes him a gift of her pearl-necklace.

"This costly present is not in keeping with our present state. Why do you make it?" asks Maitreya.

"I observe a *shashti* fast, and want a Brahman's blessings by giving him the most valuable of my jewels," says she.

"To-day is not *shashti,* but *ashtami"* says Maitreya.

"Forgive my thoughtlessness," replies the lady, "I ended my fast only to-day."

Maitreya is bewildered **till** Radanika tells him that **her mistress** is **giving** it to **him** for **handing** it over **to Charudatta for compensating Vasantasena** for **the loss *of* her jewels.**

Maitreya takes the necklace from the lady, and exclaims, "But, there are tears in your eyes."

"**The temple** smoke has made my eyes water," she replies.

"**She** has gone without betraying her grief. But her tears **make** it plain enough," says the jester to himself.

He *goes* and gives the necklace to Charudatta.

"What is it?" asks Charudatta.

'The result of marrying a noble wife," replies the jester.

"What! My wife takes pity on me! To-day 1 am crushed indeed. I behave like **a** woman, and she behaves like a man. I, who am to maintain her, have to be maintained by her," says Charudatta in grief.

"She entreats you to accept it. Please accept it," says the jester.

"Very well" says Charudatta, and takes the pearl-necklace. He then tells Maitreya, "Friend, take this to Vasantasena. Family pride is to be swallowed when a man is a pauper."

"Alas!" says the jester, 'Think of giving a necklace worth a lakh for that trumpery golden casket!"

"Friend, don't say so. She placed great confidence in us, and deserves this compensation for this deposit." There ends Act III.

Act IV shows Vasantasena in love, and her maid, Madanika, with a portrait-panel holding a paint-box and brushes in her hand. Vasantasena asks the maid, "Is it like him?"

'That is just how he looked when we saw him from the parapet-wall," says Madanika.

"None so sly as those that serve a courtesan," says Vasantasena, "You prove the truth of this proverb by uttering this fib."

The maid protests that her remark is not mere flattery, and that the portrait of Charudatta, done by Vasantasena, does him honour. Vasantasena tells her that she does not allow her friends to mock her.

A second maid comes with jewels sent by Vasantasena's mother and a message from her as follows:—"The blue-lotus carriage is waiting at our door. Put on your finery quickly, and come with veil on."

"What! Has the noble Charudatta sent these jewels?" asks Vasantasena.

"No, no. The man who sent them is Samsthana,[1] the king's **brother-in-law," replies the maid.**

[1] **The same as Sakara.**

"**Away with you, you wretch**!" says Vasantasena. **The maid begs her pardon, and says that** she **is only delivering a message. Vasantasena tells her that** she is **not** displeased with **her, but only with her** message, and asks her to **tell** her **mother that** she **will put** on her finery next only to meet Charudatta.

Sajjalaka enters the house, saying to himself, "Last night, I overcame sleep and fear, and committed a daring crime, **but,** with sun-rise, my courage has faded out, even like the light of the moon **at** sun-rise. I am frightened. I have committed this crime just to get the wherewithal to repay Vasantasena the price of Madanika, and purchase that girl's freedom. Blast it! Madanika is in the inner rooms. These women of fortune always are, in day-time!" He calls her. She comes out and notices **that** he is nervous, and questions him about it. He says that he is not afraid at all.

Vasantasena says, "My good girl, put this picture on my bed", and looks round, and sees Madanika gone. "Now, where has the silly girl gone?" says she, and looks round, and sees Madanika talking to some man, and fairly drinking him up with **her** loving glances! "I think that must be the man who wants to pay me and let her go with him," says she to herself.

Sajjalaka says to Madanika, "T will tell you a secret."

Vasantasena says to herself, "It is wrong to listen to other people's secrets. I will go,", but, hears Sajjalaka begin, "Will Vasantasena————" and, so, decides to hear the story, as it concerns her.

Sajjalaka asks Madanika, "Will she set you free for a compensation ?"

"She was the first to suggest setting me free" says Madanika.

Sajjalaka tells her, "Then, offer her these jewels, and tell her These ornaments are fashioned as if to fit you. Wear them out of love for me, but don't exhibit them much!' "

"**Let me** see them," says Madanika, and takes them, and remarks, "I seem to have seen them before. Now, where is it?"

Vasantasena too says to herself, "Those jewels look like mine."

Madanika asks Sajjalaka, "Where did you get them from?"

He says, "From love for you, I did a violent deed."

Roth Madanika and Vasantasena are astonished at this.

Madanika says **to** herself, "Now, I remember. It is my mistress's jewels", and says aloud, "Alas, for my sake, you have **imperilled your life** and character."

"Nonsense!" says Sajjalaka, "Fortune favours the brave."

"Ridiculous!" says Madanika, "You are an ignoramus. Who but a fool will sell his liberty for riches? In whose house did you commit this crime?"

He says, "In the house of a man called Charudatta, living in Bankers' Square."

Madanika and Vasantasena are both horrified' at'' hearing this.

Sajjalaka tells Madanika, "Your eyes show terror. Your limbs are drooping in distress. You are trembling, like a wounded deer, and quivering with compassion/'

"Tell me quickly, did you kill a young man there, or wound him?" asks Madanika.

Vasantasena exclaims that that is also what she wants to know.

Sajjalaka says, "Was not one crime enough? I did not kill or wound anybody."

"Is that true?" asks Madanika.

"Quite true" replies Sajjalaka.

"My heart rejoices to hear that," says Madanika.

"Your heart rejoices!" says Sajjalaka, "See the irony of it! Born of ancestors known for innocence and purity, I have committed this crime out of love for you, and your heart is pining after another!"

"No, no. It is not like that" says Madanika, "These jewels belong to Vasantasena", and tells him the whole story.

Sajjalaka exclaims, "Alas, J am like the man who, tormented by the summer heat and seeking shade, went to the very tree all whose leaves he had stripped in his folly." .

"I think he is repenting of his crime," says Vasantasena to herself.

Sajjalaka asks Madanika what he should do. She advises him to return the jewels to Charudatta.

Sajjalaka replies, "What if he should hand me over to the police, as a thief?"

"No, he will not do that. He is a gentleman, and will take pity on you, on hearing your story," says Madanika.

Vasantasena remarks to herself, "Well said, my dear, that speech does you honour."

Sajjalaka flatly refuses to take the risk of going back to Charudatta with the jewels, and asks Madanika to suggest some other way out.

She asks him whether Vasantasena or Charudatta can recognise him.

He replies, "No."

Then she suggests that he should take the jewels to Vasantasena, stating that Charudatta had sent them back to her. Vasantasena goes into her room, and awaits Sajjalaka's advent with the jewels. Madanika asks Sajjalaka to wait in the love god's temple till she tells Vasantasena and sends word to him. He goes out.

Another maid announces to Vasantasena that a Brahman has come from a merchant to see her. Vasantasena asks him to be shown in at once. Maitreya enters the house and has a look round. "Oho, she has got a magnificent palace, this courtesan. Visitors from various towns are waiting in her lobbies, reading books. Various delicacies are being prepared. Goldsmiths are working at all kinds of jewellery. Musicians are playing on lutes," says he to himself. Then, the maid comes, and he is taken to Vasantasena.

He asks her, ''What is the value of those ornaments you left with us the other day?"

She asks him, in turn, "Why do you want to know that, sir?"

He replies, "Lady, you deposited that jewellery with Charudatta, relying on his virtues, and he has lost it in gambling."

"T see!" says Vasantasena, "Well?"

"He has sent this pearl-necklace in return for the golden jewellery. Please accept it," says the jester.

"Alas, what it is to be a courtesan! He thinks that I am greedy. If T don't take it, Charudatta will be angry, and will not see me again," says Vasantasena to herself. She says aloud, "Give it to me, sir."

The jester says to himself, "Not even a word of polite refusal!" and hands it over, and goes away, disgusted.

After he has gone, Madanika, who is unaware of his visit, tells Vasantasena that a man has come from Charudatta and wants to see her.

"Who is he? Have I seen him before?" asks Vasantasena.

"No, lady, you have not seen him. I think he is a dependent of Charudatta."

"Bring him in," says Vasantasena. Madanika goes out to fetch Sajjalaka, and Vasantasena exclaims to herself, "Oh, what a delightful day!"

Madanika and Sajjalaka enter. Sajjalaka says to Madanika, "I tell you it is no joke for an honest man to commit a crime. If a man walks briskly, I fear him. If he looks up at

me, I am afraid. If he runs towards me, my heart misses abeat, If he stands still in front of me, I almost collapse, for a man's own guilt makes him fear the whole world and to conjure up all sorts of imaginary fears''

Vasantasena asks Madanika to usher in Sajjalaka. She **does** so. Sajjalaka goes **up to** Vasantasena who **asks him** to **be** seated.

He sits doWN and tells her, "The noble Charudatta has sent back **your** jewellery, because his house is old and unsafe to keep them, and his wife too is away."

Vasantasena tells him, "Go and give the jewels back to Charudatta asking him, from me, to keep them for a few more days."

"Lady, I cannot do that," he replies.

"I know why," says Vasantasena, "You stole them from his house", He stands dazed, and bewildered as to how she found out the truth.

Vasantasena has a carriage brought, loads Madanika with the jewels, and bundles her and Sajjalaka into the carriage, telling her "By warning him of the consequences of crimes, you have proved your fitness to be his wedded wife," and telling him, "Take her, sir, as your wife."

Sajjalaka says, "What can I do to requite all this kindness? But, what a fool am I! Anybody who does a good thing looking for a return only asks for trouble. May destruction overtake those who seek to harm either the noble Charudatta or the nobler Vasantasena!" Sajjalaka and Madanika are driven away in the carriage.

Vasantasena calls another maid, Chaturika, and tells her, "Look here, girl, I was wide awake, but, had a dream like this. Come, let us take this pearl-necklace back to Charudatta."

"As you like, my lady; but, a storm is coming, the escort of ladies keeping their tryst."

"Wretch, don't delay me" says Vasantasena.

"Come, dear mistress, come along," says Chaturika. There the play ends, abruptly.

PART III.

GREATNESS OF BHASA.

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General.—Bhasa was certainly one of the great immortals, like Shakespeare or Kalidasa. He plumbed the human heart in its depths as well as in its shallows, in its great virtues as well as in its gross depravities, in moments of supreme anger as well as of love and pity. There is no emotion which he has not depicted beautifully. The tense dramatic situations; the profound psychological insight; the great ideals; the felicity of language; the flights of fancy; the wonderful depicting of emotions, like love, anger, pity, loyalty, surprise, sarcasm, heroism, terror and serenity; the exquisite pen-portraits of natural phenomena, like the midday sun, sunset, moonrise, nightfall, clouds, the ocean, stars in the sky, the flights of birds, and of flowers in bloom ; vignettes showing men and things in many striking and natural situations, comic and tragic, taken from life in the flow; the graphic narration of the activities of persons who never appear on the stage, but seem to the audience to be always there; the exquisite delineation of innumerable characters from gods and kings to servants and animals; the uncompromising stand made for righteousness, human dignity, self-rule, freedom from foreign rule, and protection of animals and men; the kindly treatment of subordinates and servants; the actability of the plays; all proclaim Bhasa to be a master not inferior to Shakespeare or Kalidasa or Goethe. 1 shall deal with these qualities in detail below.

CHAPTER 1.

VAST RANGE OF PLAYS.

The first thing which must strike anybody is the number and wide range of his plays, especially when we consider that other Sanskrit dramatists, like Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, wrote only three plays each, in deference to an absurd and wooden-headed rule of the Sanskrit dramatic pandits. But, Bhasa wrote at least these 13 plays which belong to seven different types of drama. *Abhisheka, Balacharita, Avimaraka, Svdpnavasavadatta,* and *Pratimft*$_{fi}$ are *Natakas,* or full-fledged dramas, with five Acts and oyer; *Charudatta* is a *prakarana; Pandxaratra* is a *Samavakara; Pratijna Y augandharayana* is an *IJiamriga; Karnabhara, Dataghutotkacha* and *Urubhanga* are *Utsrishtikangas; Duta-*

vakya is a *Veethi,* and *Madhyamavyayoga* is a *Vyayogc.* All these, of course, deal with different types of subjects and characters, and differ in the number of Acts, etc. But, as Bhasa lived before the dramatic rules were fixed, several of his Dramas do not conform exactly to the later definition of the types under which they have been arranged by me. Thus, *Pratijna* has been classified as a *Prakarana* by some; and *Dutaghatotkacha, Urubhanga* and *Dutavakya* have been classified as *Vyayogas* by some.

Even English readers, unfamiliar with Sanskrit classifications, will see immense differences between these dramas in Acts* plots, types of characters, verses, sentiments, etc. For instance, *Avimaraka* is a pure comedy, and *Urubhanga* is a pure tragedy, the only tragedy in Sanskrit dramatic literature. *Pratima* is a serious comedy of morals, but Act II of it, depicting Dasaratha's agony and death, at his separation from Rama, is pure tragedy. *Abhisheka* is also a serious comedy, but in Act I, the shooting and killing of Valin is a little tragedy by itself. *Karnabhara* is a play with tragedy brooding over it, but never actually bursting; so is *Dutaghatotkacha. Charudatta* is an uncompleted play which might have ended in a comedy or tragedy, according as the dramatist chose. It ends now with Vasantasena starting in a storm, despite her maid's advice, to meet Charudatta for returning his wife's pearl necklace.

There are political plays like *Pratijna, Dutavakya* and *Dutaghatotkacha;* social plays like *Avimaraka* and *Svapna;* religious plays like *Abhisheka, Pratima* and *Balacharita;* sociological plays like *Madhyamavyayoga* and *Charudatta;* and ethical plays like *Karnabhara, Pancharatra* and *Urubhanga.*

The subjects are, of course, very varied. These 13 plays can be classified into four groups, according to their subject-matter. *Abhisheka* and *Pratima* derive their main plot from the *Ramayana; Dutavakya, Karnabhara* and *Urubhanga* from the *Mahabharata;* in *Madhyamavyayoga, Pancharatra* and *Dutaghatotkacha,* the plots are inventions of the poet, though the characters who appear in them are found in the *Mahabharata; Balacharita* is based on the religious legends which were later on embodied in the *Bhagavata Purana; Pratijna, Svapna* and *Avimaraka* derive their plots from popular folk-lore; *Charudatta* is probably a creation of the dramatist himself.

But, even when Bhasa takes over the plots, he makes vast changes in order to increase the dramatic effect, or take out elements which might detract from^such effect. I shall show below the main changes made by Bbisa in *Pratijna* and *Svapna,* and they will be fairly representative of the changes made by him in other plots he took over.

The main changes made in *Pratijna* are the following. In the folk-lore version, Udayana is very anxious to marry Vasavadatta long before he sees her, and she is also represented as having fallen in love with him, an imitation of the story of Nala and Damayanti, Bhasa has, with true artistic instinct, changed this into a love at first sight, generated in Udayana at his seeing Vasavadatta without a veil, when the palanquin-bearers are changing shoulders. The exchanges of pompous and taunting messages between Mahasena and Udayana, regarding Vasavadatta's tuition in the lute by Udayana, is omitted, and the engagement of Udayana as tutor is only hinted at in *Svapna,* in Angaravati's message, and by some beautiful verses about the love-making during the tuition itself.

In the drama, Udayana sees Vasavadatta for the first time by accident, as stated above, and not when already appointed her music teacher, with the clumsy words plainly hinting about his intended marriage with her. So, the element of romance is enhanced.

A series of changes has been made about the elephant episode. Instead of his own scouts informing Udayana about the false elephant, as in the folk-lore, a single foot-soldier (evidently, a spy of Mahasena) informs him about it. A herd of real elephants is introduced to give verisimilitude to the artificial elephant. Udayana fights Mahasena's troops on his horse, Sundarapatala, and armed with a spear, instead of on foot and armed with a hunting knife. Twenty nobles of his also accompany him, and fight and fall down dead. The king is then bound with creepers, and is not caught from behind when fighting his enemies in front, as in the folk-lore. The interesting accounts of the soldiers who bewail the loss of their relatives, and of the single soldier who catches Udayana by his hair and seeks to chop off his head, but slips in the pools of blood and dies, and of Salankayana who had been wounded earlier, but recovers consciousness at the critical moment and prevents further violence on Udayana, are not found in the folk-lore version, and are Bhasa's own creation.

No personal message is sent to Yaugandharayana in the folk-lore by Udayana, through Hamsaka, as here, and no vows to release Udayana are taken by Yaugandharayana. Yaugandharayana, in the folk-lore, describes Mahasena's army as powerful, and not as contemptible, as in Act I, verse 4. The interesting passages abotit the auspicious cord, and the Queen-Mother's message to Yaugandharayana, are not to be found in the folk-lore. The undramatic passage in the folk-lore, that, just before Udayana started for the elephant forest, astrologers predicted that the position of the heavens indicated the acquisition of a

bride along with imprisonment, is omitted in the Play, as detrimental to the feeling of surprise which ought to be there. So, too, in the play, Mahasena does not receive the prisoner Udayana and take him to the city with princely honours.

Yaugandharayana is, in the folk-lore, a great magic-worker possessing a charm by virtue of which he changes his own shape as well as Vasantaka's, becomes invisible, etc. In the play, he changes his form by putting on clothes left behind by Dwaipayana, and not by any charm of his own. He is not said to have changed the form of Vasantaka also. Rumanvan too goes to Ujjaini in the play, and is not left behind at Kausambi, as in the folk-lore. Vasavadatta does not invite Yaugandharayana to the palace, as in the folk-lore, and Yaugandharayana does not have a long talk with Udayana, and tell him about all his schemes and designs, and teach Udayana charms by which to break chains, win Vasavadatta's love, etc. Nor does Yaugandharayana visit Udayana again and become invisible to all, except him and Vasantaka, and suggest the taking away of Vasavadatta to bring disgrace on Mahasena. Far more naturally, the three ministers conspire secretly in an out-of-the-way temple, when people do not move about in the vicinity, in various disguises, and go away by different doors when people begin to move about. Vasantaka alone meets the king and acts as intermediary between the king and his ministers, Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan. And it is Udayana who suggests the taking away of Vasavadatta to bring disgrace on Mahasena, a plea not accepted by Yaugandharayana who is put out at it. Tn the folk-lore, the escape of Udayana is accomplished without a tight by Yaugandharayana, as in the play. The folk-lore version makes Mahasena and his Queen *wnd* Gopalaka to Kausambi to convey to Udayana their good wishes, and makes Udayana celebrate the marriage there. The passage-at-arms between Yaugandharayana and P>haratarohak_a, the attempted suicide of Angaravati, the touching episode a^out the gift of a golden chalice to Yaugandharayana, and the marriage of the paintings of Vasavadatta and Udayana, are all 1'hasa's own creation.

In *Svapna,* too, Hhasa has made equally great changes from the folk-lore story. Thus, in the folk-lore story, Yaugandharayana intends to make Udayana the Emperor of the world, despite himself, and it is for this purpose that he suggests the mythical destruction of Vasavadatta by fire, and brings about the marriage of Udayana with Padmavati. Though it was an Aryan ideal for ministers to make their monarchs conquer the whole world, and perform the *Rajasnya* sacrifice, still, it is obvious that most of the audience would not approve of such acts by Yaugandharayana for such a purpose. Bhasa, with his profound knowledge of human nature, gives a twist to that story, and

makes Yaugandharayana do these horrible acts, causing infinite suffering and sorrow to Udayana and Vasavadatta, not for the sake of making Udayana the Emperor of the World, but, as that minister says, simply for saving Kausambi and the Vatsa country from the foul usurper, Aruni. It is obvious that most men wilt condemn Yaugandharayana much less for his doing these acts from such a motive than from the motive given in the folk-lore.

Again, the folk-lore story makes Gopalaka, the brother of Vasavadatta, also a participator in these acts with the object of making Udayana the Emperor of the World. This involves a double absurdity; firstly, it makes him a party to the supersession of his own sister by another woman; and, secondly, it makes him, described as an adept in politics by his father, agree to Udayana's becoming the Emperor of the World, conquering his own father and kingdom. This absurdity has been obviated by the dramatist by omitting Gopalaka's name altogether from this plot.

Jn the folk-lore story, it is Vasantaka who is said to have been burnt along with Vasavadatta, and Yaugandharayana merely goes to Rajagriha with Vasantaka and Vasavadatta, and returns •o Lavanaka, even before Udayana returns from the hunt, after entrusting Vasavadatta to Padmavati. This involves an absurdity. It is impossible that the king would return from his hunt only after Yaugandharayana returns from his expedition to Magadha. So, Bhasa has made Yaugandharayana the man who is said to have been burnt along with Vasavadatta, and has made Yaugandharayana rejoin the king only at the very end, when he claims Avantika back.

In the folk-lore story, the king suspects, from the behaviour of Yaugandharayana and Gopalaka, and also from remembering certain predictions of astrologers, that Queen Vasavadatta is really not dead, and lives in the hope of being re-united with her. This takes away much of the romantic force of the story, and Bhasa has omitted it, and put, in its stead, a half-formed suspicion of the king, that Vasavadatta is still alive, from seeing on Padmavati's face the unfading *tilak* mark. The folk-lore story would make Udayana's laments about Vasavadatta mere maudlin sentiment, and his marriage with Padmavati an act of the usual polygamist. The keen anguish and strong love, seen in Udayana's lament for Vasavadatta, would not have their effect, if the king is known to have really believed, all the time, that she is alive, and that he will be re-united with her. The fascinating dream scene in the Ocean Pavilion will also lose more than half its charm and force. The "Vision of Vasavadatta" will become merely the "Sight of Vasavadatta."

The dream scene, the best thing in the Vision of Vasavadatta, and the thing which has given the name to the play, is not in the folk-lore. Indeed, in the folk-lore, Yaugandharayana makes Vatsa Raja leave Rajagriha, as soon as the marriage is over, from fear that the king might discover Vasavadatta in the palace, and that the whole plot would be frustrated.

Many delicate touches in the play, like Vasavadatta's making the bridal garland for Padmavati, her indignant exclamation "Oh, what an outrage! Even my husband now belongs to another woman" are not found in the folk-lore story.

The folk-lore story, by making Padmavati fall in love with Vasavadatta at first sight, when she is taken to the palace grounds along with Vasantaka by Yaugandharayana, takes away the charming scene in the hermitage with its vivid description, and the beautiful episode of Padmavati's piety and desire to make gifts to the holy men, and her accepting Vasavadatta merely as a deposit at the request of a holy man. So, too, it takes away Padmavati's graciousness and genial hospitality, and kindly treatment of all around her, by stating that she suspected Vasavadatta to be an exalted personage, and gave her all the luxuries ;.he wanted. Again, the folk-lore story makes Vasantaka also live in the Magadhan palace, instead of Vasavadatta living alone there and moving freely with the maids and Padmavati.

In the folk-lore, Yaugandharayana makes the king of Maga-<lha swear by the god of fire, at the time of Padmavati's marriage, never to injure Udayana, a most awkward and undramatic thing to do. Incidentally, that will take away also the spontaneity of the Magadhan King's help to Udayana, and will make bis message, and verse 12 of Act V, lose much of their friendliness and grace.

In the drama, Vasavadatta follows Padmavati to her husband's home in Kausambi, and the events there lead naturally and convincingly to the revelation of Vasavadatta's true identity. In the folk-lore story, Vasavadatta separates from Pad-.navati, and goes, in the rear of the army, to Gopalaka's house in Lavanaka, and embraces Gopalaka and weeps, and Padmaviti gets an inkling of this, and indignantly asks Vasavadatta,. her deposit, to return to her, and. then, Vatsaraja sees the unfading *tilak* mark on Padmavati's forehead, suspects Avantika to be Vasavadatta, and rushes to Gopalaka's house, where he meets Vasavadatta and identifies her. There is much weeping, and the usual conventional offers of Vasavadatta and Padmavati to jump into the fire, and the conventional appeal of Yaugandharayana to the heavens to declare Vasavadatta to be pure and rhaste, and the consequent declaration by the heavenly voice. Allthis third-rate imi

Bhasa found to be highly undramatic encumbrances. So, he threw them overboard. It is obvious that, if he had followed the folk-lore story, Padmavati would have committed a breach of her promise to Yaugandharayana to keep Vasavadatta as a deposit always with her; Vasavadatta would have behaved in a manner unworthy of her essential nature; the object of Yaugandharayana in entrusting Vasavadatta to Padmavati, and making the latter bear witness to her virtue, becomes a worthless addition, as offers to jump into the lire and a heavenly voice are required to convince Vatsaraja of Vasavadatta's chastity.

It is also added, somewhat naively, in the folk-lore story that Vatsaraja, who has never conquered any portion of the earth except his own realm, felt as if he had conquered the whole world. *Bhasa,* who lived in the days of the Emperor Chandragupta, ruling over a kingdom a hundred times the size of the Vatsa country, threw this naive illusion of world monarchy overboard. When he threw that motive for Yaugandharayana's act overboard, he had naturally to invent Aruni and the foul usurpation of the Vatsa country by him. Bhasa is also responsible for the beautiful scene in the palace gardens; the equally beautiful episode about the recovery of Ghoshavati, and Vatsaraja's getting it mended and mourning over it; and the arrival of the chamberlain and nurse from Ujjaini at the critical moment.

I shall now deal briefly with some vital changes made in the other plays. Contrary to the Ramayana story, Bhasa has made Rama and Ravana meet in *Pratima,* Again, he has made Rama pursue the golden deer, not to please a whim of Sita, but to make a valued offering to the manes of his deceased father. So, too, he has ennobled the characters of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. Rama does not make the extremely painful and harrowing remarks to Sita, asking her to go and live in the house of Lakshmana, Bharata, Sugriva, Vibhishana, or others, as he does not want her to live with him as wife any more, after her having lived in a stranger's house. Sita does not make the undignified, though characteristically womanish, remarks to Lakshmana that he is not going to the succour of Rama, when he has gone after the golden deer, in order that he may wed her after his brother's death. Lakshmana does not, as in the Ramayana, make a suggestion to Rama, at Chitrakuta, that Bharata had better be killed at once, as he fears that he has come to kill him, as a possible rival. The delightful scene in the Statue House, which gives the name to the Play, is Bhasa's own creation.

Duryodhana is made a much better character than in the Mahabharata, where he is only one step from wickedness personified. In *Pancharatra,* he is shown as a generous donor; and in *Urubhanga,* he is depicted as a great and just warrior, affec-

tionate towards his father, mother, wives and son. Indeed, he is shown as regretting the fracture of his thighs, not for his own sake, but because it prevents him from prostrating to his parents, and from taking his infant son on his lap.

Kama, in *Karnabhara,* is shown in a much better light than in the *Mahabharata,* all his carping jealousy of Arjuna, and unscrupulous abetment of Duryodhana being dropped.

The story of Sunahsephas has been caught and lifted on to a higher plane, in *Madhyamavyayoga,* by making all the members of the Brahman family equally self-sacrificing, instead of showing each member obsessed with a desire to save his own skin, and the father filled with a monstrous greed which prompts him to traffic in his own son.

Bhasa's plays were so popular that many whole plays were written in imitation of them, and scenes in several of these plays were freely reproduced in other plays. The *Vccna Vasavadatta* and the *Unmadavasavadatta* are imitations of *Pratijna Yaugandharayana,* and *Priyadarsika, Ratnavali,* and even *Malm'ikagnimitra.* are imitations of *Svapnavasavadatta.* In *Ratnavali,* the secret loves of Udayana and Sagarika, an attendant on queen Vasavadatta, are described. There is a conflagration, and, finally, Udayana marries Sagarika also. It is obvious that Sagarika represents Avantika in the Ocean Pavilion. In *Priyadarsika,* too, Udayana makes love to Aranyaka, a maid-servant of his queen, and his intrigues are discovered. Finally, the Queen herself presents Aranyaka, who is discovered to be the daughter of the king of Anga, to Udayana as a second wife. Xeedless to say, Aranyaka represents Avantika of the forest hermitage, and is a combination of Virachita and Avantika. In *Malavikagnimitra,* Agnimitra makes secret love to an attendant of his queen, called Malavika, who is kept jealously out of the king's .sight on account of her great beauty. Finally, he marries Malavika, who turns out to be a Princess. The resemblance of Malavika to Avantika need not be emphasized. The very word Malava means also Avanti, the Avanti of Bhasa's days having become the Malava of Kalidasa's.

The famous play *Mricchhakatika* of Sudraka is a development and enlargement of Bhasa's *Charudatta* which gives it most of its dramatic force, as remarked by Woolner and Sarup.

Kalidasa's *Sakantala* contains many scenes clearly based on similar scenes in Bhasa's plays. Thus, the scene in *Avimaraka* between Kurangi, Nalinika and Magadhika is imitated and improved on in the scene between Sakuntala, Anasuya and Priyamvada. The hermitage scene in *Svapna* is reproduced in the hermitage scene in *Sakuntala.* Kalidasa has accepted Bhasa's order of geneology for Dasaratha, given in *Pratima,* in his *Raghuvamsa.*

Bhavabhuti has, in his *Malati Madhava,* imitated Bhasa's *Avimaraka* in several respects. The tiger scene corresponds to the elephant scene. The rescue of Madhava through the Yogini's advice is similar to the rescue of Avimaraka through the Vidyadhara's advice. In his *Uttararamacharita,* Bhasa's painting scene in *Svapna* has been cleverly imitated by Bhavabhuti.

Harsha's *Nagananda* also shows profuse copying. Visakhadatta's *Mudrarakshasa* shows clearly many imitations of *Pratijna.*

Many southern plays, like those of Saktibhadra, Mahendravikramavarman, Kulasekharavarman, etc., imitate Bhasa's Plays in technique and ideas.

So, all Sanskrit dramatists, from North and South alike, imitated the great master's plays, and borrowed freely from them, considering them to be the common property of all, even like Benares and Rameswaram. One of the reasons for this was, undoubtedly, the vast range of Bhasa's Plays.

CHAPTER IJ.

THE INFINITE VARIETY OF CHARACTERS.

Another striking thing in Bhasa is the infinite variety of his characters, already remarked on by Bana. Among his characters figure gods like Rama, Krishna, Balarama, Indra and Agni ; semi-gods like the Vidyadharas; demons like Ravana, Kamsa, Ghatotkacha and Vibhishana; goddesses like Kartyayani; demonesses like Hidimba; angels and divine sages like Narada; kings like Dhritarashtra, Dasaratha, Duryodhana, Sakuni, Salya, Kuntibhoja, Ugrasena, Mahasena, Udayana, Virata and Yudhishtira; queens like Gandhari, Kausalya, Sumitra, Kaikeyi, Malavi, Pauravi, Angaravati, Vasavadatta, Padmavati, and Kunti; princes like Duhsasana and Durjaya; princesses like Sita, Duhsala, Kurangi and Devaki; ministers like Yaugandharayana, Rumanvan, Bharatarohaka, Kaunjayana, Sumantra, Bhutika and Salankayana; heroes like Kama, Asvathama, Avimaraka, Chartidatta, Bhishma, Drona, Bhima, Arjuna, Abhimanyu, Lakshmana, Bharata, Satrughna and Uttara; jesters like Vasantaka, Maitreya and Santhushta; monkey notabilities like Valin, Hanuman, Sugriva, Tara, Angada, Kakubha and Bilamukha; chamberlains like Badarayana and Balaki; aides-de-camp like Hamsaka; major-domos like Nirmundaka; messengers like Salaka; nurses like Vasundhara; female door-keepers like Vijaya; students like the student of theology appearing in the *'Svapna';* sacrificial priests, as in *Pancharatra*; a Brahman family, as in *Madyamavyayoga;* pugilists like Chanura and Mushtika; fussy attendants,

white-washers, shampooers, soldiers and guards; burglars like Sajjalaka; villains like Sakara, the Indian Falstaff, and Vita; courtesans like Vasantasena; maids of honour, ordinary maids, country maids and attendants. Each one of them is given an individual character, however high or **low the station.**

Not content with having such a variety of characters from among human beings, and above or slightly below them, Bhasa has included, among his characters, a serpent, Kaliya, a bull, Arishtavrishaba, and an eagle, Garuda; and even Krishna's discus, conch, bow, club and sword, and the "Curse" and "Good Fortune" of Kamsa, and, what is more, has made these also acquire individuality and life by vivid descriptions of them and memorable words uttered by them. It will be obvious that Bhasa has dealt with men, women, gods and demons, from the highest to the lowest, dealing with the vertical as well as the horizontal sections. 1 shall now deal in some detail with the characters in these plays.

1. GODS AND GODDESSES.

GODS.

Indra.—Three old Vedic gods appear in these plays, but occupy a much less portion on the stage than the two great Avatars, Rama and Krishna. The great Indra, who is so prominent in the Vedas, appears directly in *Karnahhara,* disguised as a Brahman, in order to beg for Kama's body-armour and earrings, so that his son. Arjuna, might win the duel with Kama who would have been invincible by god, man or demon, if he had his body-armour, gifted by his father, the sun, on. Indra speaks Prakrit, in his assumed character of a Brahman begging for a boon. In his real character as Indra, he speaks Sanskrit to himself. It is amusing to see this lord of the gods not speaking the language of the gods when disguised as a Brahman. That is because he is begging, instead of giving as a god should do. He is very clever as a beggar. He manoeuvres Kama skilfully from; offer to offer till he finally offers the body-armour and the earrings for which he has come. He feels somewhat ashamed at taking advantage of Kama's generosity, and exclaims that he has only done what the gods decreed as necessary for Arjuna's victory. Indeed, he even sends a spear, named Vimala, as a return gift to Kama guaranteeing that it will slay one of the Pandavas. Of course, even there he plays a trick. His spear kills Ghatotkacha, **who** is **the son** of **a Pandava** by **a** demoness, **Hidimba and therefore, only technically a Pandava, instead of one of** the **five Pandava brothers, as Kama must have understood when accepting the gift.**

Indra appears in better light when he is feasted and propitiated by Mahasena, and gives him, as a gift, a peerless daughter, Vasavadatta, "the gift of Indra."

Agni.—Agni, another famous Vedic god, appears in *Abhisheka Nataka,* leading Sita back from the fire into which she had jumped, after her rescue from Lanka on the refusal of Rama to take her back forthwith. He takes Sita to Rama, and greets **him** as "the blessed Narayana," and tells him that Sita is sinless, pure, unscathed and honoured of all the world, and is Lakshmi herself come to Rama in human form He is told by Rama, "1 knew full well Vaidehi's purity, Oh god of the smoky banner. I acted thus simply to convince the thousand-tongued world."[r] Then, Agni introduces to Rama the hosts of gods, sages, saints, fairies, celestial nymphs and musicians who have come to congratulate him on his victory over Ravana, and invites him for the consecration. He crowns Rama as king, amidst deafening cheers. Then he conveys to Rama the congratulations of Indra and other gods. He also apprises Rama of the arrival of his subjects led by Bharata and Satrughna.

Agni is also referred to in *Avimaraka* as the father of Avimaraka by Sudarsana He makes the fire, into which Avimaraka jumps in order to commit suicide, on sorrow generated from separation from Kurangi, as cool as sandal-paste, and the fire embraces Avimaraka with joy, as a father does his son.

Varuna.—Varuna, another great Vedic god, also appears as a minor deity in *Abhishcka.* Vibhishana, when told by Rama that he has found no means of crossing the sea, tells him that if the sea does not give a passage to him, he should let fly his divine shaft at him Rama stands up angrily, and tells Varuna that, unless he gives him a passage at once, he will shoot an arrow into the sea and still the roaring of the waves, and dry up the mud and brine and cause the fish to die Varuna gets afraid, and goes and salutes Rama as Narayana, and seeks his protection, and offers a passage, by divided waters. He is described by Lakshmana as majestic like an elephant, with a body blue as fresh water-lilies, and with beautiful great eyes red like copper, and a diadem set with gems. When Varuna sees Rama, he says, "Ah, he is the blessed one, wielder of the discus, bow and mace; he has taken on a human form. Himself the cause of all, he has come to fulfil some purpose. Salutations to the blessed Narayana, the cause of the triple world!"

Jt is significant that, even in Bhasa's days, the great Vedic gods had become subordinate to the great *Avatars,* Rama and Krishna.

Rama.—Rama and Krishna, the great Avatars of Vishnu, had already established their position firmly in the days of Bhasa. Rama figures in *Abhisheka* and *Pmtima,* and it is significant that the opening benedictory verses in both the dramas is addressed to Rama himself. In *Pratima,* it is addressed to Rama as the lord of Sita, the goddess of prosperity, and in *Abhisheka* as he who slew the obstructors of Visvamitra's sacrifice, and Virata, Kabhanda, Khara, Dushana, Valin and Ravana.

Rama is a mighty warrior, as a single arrow of his went through seven *sal* trees, and convinced Sugriva and Hanuman of his ability to fight and conquer Valin. Still another arrow was enough to finish Valin. The threat of an arrow was sufficient to make Varuna yield a passage to him across the ocean. He killed the mighty Ravana with an arrow of Brahma which smote down the demon-chief and went back to Rama.

But, he is not only mighty, he is absolutely fearless. When the two demon-spies, Suka and Sarana, spy out his camp in the guise of monkeys, and are caught hold of and taken before him, and Vibhishana recommends condign punishment, Rama contemptuously asks them to be set free, stating that, by chastising him, he will not gain victory or destroy Ravana. Then, Lakshmana ironically suggests that, if they are to be set free, they may as well be allowed to see the entire camp. Rama says that that is a good suggestion, and orders Nila to show them round the whole camp. His fight with Ravana, too, shows an absolute fearlessness of demon or weapon or death.

But, he hates conquest for conquest's sake. He engages only in a *Dharma Yuddha,* and desires only a *Dharma Vijaya,* the triumph of truth. Unlike imperial conquerors of the mean, base and useless type, he has no hankering for other people's territories; nor does he like to rule over subject nations. The moment Vibhishana seeks asylum with him, expressing his desire to get Sita rescued and to vindicate justice and' truth, Rama makes him king of Lanka. He crowns him as Lord of Lanka as soon as Ravana is killed.

He has a great family pride, and refuses to take back Sita, who has lived in a stranger's house, albeit against her will, as she has become a stain on Ikshvaku's house, till she proves her purity before the whole world by falling into the fire and by being brought back by Agni himself.

He is a faithful ally, and stands by Sugriva against Valin. and by Vibhishana against Ravana. He is an affectionate husband, and his conversation with Sita in the *Pratima* is full of intense love and delicacy. He tells her that, when she got into the bark dress, half of himself had already got into it. He

exclaims that "rarely are couples born with natures so alike" as himself and Sita. He takes her in at a glance, and notes that she has just taken her ornaments off. He holds the mirror for her to put on her ornaments. He does not at first allow her to follow him into the forest as it will be a great hardship for her. He watches the trees watered by her in Janasthana, and reminds her of many a familiar old scene. He discusses with her the problems facing him about the offerings to be made on his father's death-anniversary day. When Sita gets frightened at the mention of the golden deer, even after the destruction of Ravana, he reassures her. The moment his intended coronation by his father is stopped, he rushes to see his beloved. Finally, he is consecrated along with Sita. Bhasa has faithfully followed Valmiki in depicting this great love. One of the greatest praises showered on Rama by Valmiki is *ekapatnisthithe vrata,* "firmly attached to his one and only wife/' This is a very refreshing thing in the midst of the many polygamous kings who crowd the pages of the Sanskrit poets, including Kalidasa and Rhasa.

He is not ambitious. He is reluctant to be crowned king by Dasaratha, and agrees to it only when Dasaratha swears by his life that he will have the coronation done. He is very glad when the coronation is interrupted, and gets angry with the chamberlain for blaming Kaikeyi. He gets angry with Lakshmana for his threatening to do violence to Kaikeyi. He refuses to accept the kingdom back from Rharata, and accepts it, after the fourteen years are over, only on Bharata's refusing to look after it on any other condition.

He is devoted to his father, and considerate towards his mother and step-mothers, including Kaikeyi. His affection for Dasaratha readily makes him agree to abdicate his rights to the kingdom, and to go into exile in the dense forests of the unknown south. Not a word of blame escapes his lips against Dasaratha or Kaikeyi or even Manthara.

He is very affectionate towards his brothers. Lakshmana, he treats as his *alter ego.* Bharata is loved by him warmly. He asks Sita to go and meet him, and that is the highest honour a man can wish. He has a tender affection also for Satrughna.

He is considerate to his friends and servants. Vibhishana, Sugriva, Nila, Hanuman, and hosts of others are treated by him with love and understanding.

He has got a mysterious depth in him, characteristic of an *Avatar.* He tells Agni that he knew of Sita's purity very well, and allowed her to jump into the fire only in order to prove her purity to all the world. When Lakshmana is being given a bark garment by him, he tells him, "It is an armour for waging

the battle of penance. It is a goad to guide the elephant of self-control. It is a curb for the prancing senses." He asks Lakshmana, "Shall I send my arrow at my father, if he does not keep his word with me? Shall I bend my bow on my mother if she takes my wealth? Shall I kill my younger brother, Bharata, who has no part in these troubles? Of these three crimes, which will satisfy your wrath?". When Bharata offers him the crown, and begs for his sandals to crown them, he exclaims that Bharata has gained, in one day, the merit which he has gained so laboriously, in all his life-time, and is sorry that Dasaratha is not alive to witness the unique nobility of his son.

He is not without a sense of humour. When Bharata snatches the water-pot from Lakshmana to bring water for him, he tells Sita, "Vaidehi, Lakshmana's occupation is gone", and, when Sita pleads for Lakshmana, says, "Lakshmana shall serve me in the forest, and Bharata in the city." He tells Sita, in reply to her remark that the plants she raised in the hermitage and had to bend down to water, have become trees which she must look up to see, "Such is the world, with its ups and downs."

He has a very high sense of a sovereign's duty towards his subjects. He does not send word to Bharata for sending the army of Ayodhya to right against Ravana, even to rescue Sita. He considers this rescue to be his own duty, not to be thrown on Ayodhya, as many a lesser men might have done. He is also so solicitous for the welfare of his subjects that, despite Sita's entreaty, he asks Bharata to return to Ayodhya that very day, stating, A kingdom should not be neglected even for a second." Bhasa has thus brought out one of the secrets for the success and prosperity of *Ramrajya,* "Rama's rule", a vision which has haunted and inspired Tndia ever since Rama's days.

Krishna.—Sri Krishna, the other Avatar, has been treated at length in *Balacharita* which relates mostly to the adventures of the marvellous boy from his birth to early youth. The birth of the babe is marked by the trembling of the earth, the alternate advancing and receding of the sky, and by thunder, lightning and rain. The lord was born in a prison just as Christ was born in a stable, and Mohammad in a humble home. Even at birth, his power is shown by the prison doors opening, the body projecting a light to show Vasudeva the path to the Yamuna, the Yamuna's giving a passage by divided waters, the body's causing a spout of water to spring up to cleanse Nandagopa, and its being as weighty as a mountain, and reducing its weight to enable Nandagopa to carry it. As the babe grows, its marvellous power is seen in the never-fading grass, the freedom of cattle from sickness, the increase of milk, the abundance of roots and fruits. The child itself kills Putana when ten days old, and

Sakatasura when a month old, and uproots the two trees by dragging the mortar over them when less than two months old. The boy kills Dhenuka disguised as a donkey and Kesi, concealed as a horse. Then he meets the dreadnought bull, Arishtavrishabha, without fear, asking it in characteristic fashion, "How can I entertain fear, 1 who am born to rid the world of fear?" He offers to fight it with his two arms alone, and, in delightful childish fashion, stands on one leg, and asks the bull, "Knock me down if you can!" The bull butts at him, receives a tremendous shock, and falls down and dies, recognising him to be Vishnu, and consoling itself that it will go to Heaven as it is slain by him. Then Krishna attacks the dragon, Kaliya, in its own home, in the fathomless depths of the Yamuna pool. When the dragon threatens to burn him, he asks it to burn a single arm of his if it can. The dragon emits its venomous poison, and, finally, hails him as Narayana, and begs for safety from Garuda, and departs from the river. Krishna finally goes to Mathura with his brother, Halarama, takes the clothes and the garlands and the unguents from the royal washerman and Madanika, kills the royal elephant, Kuvalayapeetam, sent to kill him, kills Simhala, guardian of the archery, breaks the bow there, kills Chanura, the boxer, and hurls Kamsa from the balcony into the street, where he falls down, broken and dead. Another trait of Krishna is, as in Rama, an absolute lack of desire for crown or kingdom, either of his country or of others. He too wants only the triumph of righteousness and truth, without any desire for selfish gain or profit. Thus, after killing Kamsa, he crowns Ugrasena, Kamsa's own father, king, without trying to take that kingdom for himself. He has a tender love for his parents. The first thing he does after killing Kamsa is to set free his father and mother. He has also a chivalrous love for the milkmaids with whom he dances and for whom he gathers the rare Mowers from the Yamuna pool. He has a keen eye for beauty and a deep appreciation of it. His remarks about the trembling maidens standing breathless by the side of Kaliya's pool, before his fight, are exquisite.

Dutavakya shows him in his capacity as an ambassador. His personality is so commanding that, despite Duryodhana's orders not to rise up as he enters, on pain of a fine of twelve gold pieces, all his courtiers rise up when he enters, and even Duryodhana himself falls off his seat when accosted, despite an artificial pre-occupation with a painting of Draupadi's outrage. Duryodhana asks the painting to be removed when Vasudeva orders it. In his argument with Vasudeva, Duryodhana is worsted at every stage. As words fail him, he resorts to force, like all brutes, and gets worsted there too. The scene where the lord is sought to

be noosed is exquisite in its combination of marvel, magic, psychology and humour.

In *Dutaghatotkcclva,* Vasudeva sends a message which is quite befitting his position. "Do what is right and proper by your kinsmen. Else, death will come upon you, in the guise of the Pandavas, with the rays of to-morrow's sun."

Bhasa has also shown a touch of anger in Vasudeva. When Duryodhana insults him, he calls for his discus, Sudarsana, and asks him to kill Duryodhana. But, on receiving a reply that that would nullify his divine mission on earth, he cancels that order; but, even in the middle of his anger, he keeps his discrimination unaffected. When Dhritarashtra asks him to stay, he stays to receive his adoration, and makes him rise up, and is very gracious to him, though he is the father of Duryodhana who has insulted him. It is significant that many of the benedictory verses in Bhasa's plays, including the one in *BalacJiarita,* are addressed to Krishna in one or other of his forms, this deity being as popular in Bhasa's days as now.

Balarama.—Balarama, Krishna's elder brother, and the son of Vasudeva and Rohini, figures in *Vruhhanga.* He watches the duel between his pupil, Duryodhana and Bhima. He is described as always brandishing his dreadful plough. When Bhima hits Duryodhana on the thigh, against the rules of war, Balarama closes his eyes, red with rage, and threatens to kill Bhima with his plough. Bhima is hurried away by Krishna and the Pandavas, at Vyasa's bidding. Balarama is present when Aswathama vows to raid the Pandava camp at night and destroy the Pandavas, and bears witness to it. The benedictory verse in *Svapnavasavadatta* is in praise of Balarama. Balarama also figures in *Balacharita* and kills Dhenuka and Mushtika.

GODDESSES.

Kartyayani.—The Goddess Kartyayani, or Kali, is shown in *Balacharita* as emerging out of the female babe of Devaki when dashed on Kamsa rock by the demon-king, Kanisa. One part of the babe falls on the ground, the other rises to the sky as Kartyayani, agleam with weapons of destruction. Kartyayani is attended by Kundodara, Soola, Neela and Manojava, just as Krishna is attended by Garuda, Sudarsana, Kaumodaki, Panchajanya, Nandaka and Saranga. By showing Kartyayani as one part of the female babe of Yasoda, and Krishna as the male babe of Devaki, Bhasa wants to show the twin nature of Siva and Vishnu, and the *Ardhanariswara* character of Siva, only one half of the female babe getting up as Kartyayani, the other half being evidently reserved for Siva himself. The temple of this goddess is depicted in *"Yattgandharayand*s Vows."*

2. DEMONS AND DEMONESSES.

DEMONS.

The two prominent demons shown by Bhasa are Ravana and Kamsa, minor demons figuring in his plays being Ghatotkacha, Vibhishana, and Indrajit.

Ravana.—Ravana is shown not merely with demoniacal qualities, though he has a good many of them. In *Pratima,* he comes disguised as a Brahman in order to kidnap Sita. He meets Rama. He avoids being attended on by Sita or Rama lest a close scrutiny should reveal him to them as a demon, and not as a Brahman. He poses to be learned in several *sastras,* and stimulates the interest of Rama in the *sastra* relating to offerings for the manes. After asking the golden deer to come there, and making Rama go after it, his accession of lust makes Sita sense danger, with the sixth instinct so developed in women. She wants to go inside, fearing harm from Ravana, when he takes his frightful form and reveals his identity. He tries to win her over by proclaiming his greatness, but it only excites her scorn. He also feels her curse burning into him, and then forcibly carries her off. He continues his overtures to Sita, now by entreaty and now by threat. Once he wants to dupe her into believing that Rama and Lakshmana are dead, and to induce her to enter into a widow remarriage with him. But she only prays him to kill her with the same sword with which Rama has been killed. Finally, on the death of his favourite child, Tudrajit, he wants to kill Sita in revenge for her bringing about the death of his sons, generals and armies, characterising her as the home of enmity, and threatening to cut her heart and pull out her entrails, and tie them round his neck, and then go out and kill Rama and Lakshmana and all their monkey troops. But the demon-attendant tells him calmly that the time is not suited for futile threats, and that it is certainly no good killing a woman.

He is shown, however, as the bravest of the brave, and as a real *Yuddhavira,* especially in his last light with Rama which rages with terrific fury and is undecided for a long time. He is also shown as an affectionate father doting on his son, Indrajit. Nor is he a cruel brother. He does not kill Vibhishana despite his frank and bold speech against his retaining Sita, but simply exiles him. He evidently rules his own country of Lanka well, as Hanuman sees great prosperity there. The palaces are extensive, and the gateways are beautiful. There are vast ramparts, towers and pleasure-gardens, and squares with quantities of white mansions. Lanka is said to equal the city of Indra. The gardens, halls, bathing tanks, pavilions, terraces, temples, and even the dungeons, are on a highly civilized scale. There are ponds full of water-fowl, orchards crowded with trees, laden with flowers and fruits, beautiful waterfalls, nice roads, and an

abundance of the comforts of life, let alone luxuries like gems and gold. It is by the single folly of abducting Sita that Ravana merits destruction. In other respects, he is not shown as evil or wicked.

Indeed, he abducts Sita in order to revenge himself on Rama for the killing of his brother, Khara. His love for Indrajit is touching. He hears about his death. He faints, and, on recovering, exclaims, "Alas, my child, so skilled in arms, such a terror to all the worlds, so loving to his parents, so heroic in battle, why have you gone and left me here?" Even his infatuation for Sita has something of pathos in it, reminding us of the eternal triangle so popular with western writers. Thus, he exclaims, on beholding Sita's face, "My eyes get no sleep all night long. Awaiting the joy of her embrace, my body grows thin every day. The love god has shot an arrow at me fixing the target on that embodiment of beauty. Alas, Ravana, who once subdued the three worlds, is now subdued himself!"

He is little good at argument. When he boasts to Hanuman that he has conquered gods and demons, and that Rama will be no problem for him, the monkey asks him why he cheated Rama into going after the golden deer, and stole Sita in his absence, if he is really so powerful. He is also worsted in his argument with Vibhishana, who is anxious to see that the demon race is not destroyed through Ravana's foolish action in detaining Sita.

He is a poor psychologist. He does not realise the elementary fact that a woman like Sita cannot be seduced by him or by his recital of his power, glory or riches. He is astonished at a bird, Jatayu, fighting him to death for preventing the outrage on Sita. He is surprised to see Vibhishana's opposition. He is flabbergasted at Hanuman's defeating prince Aksha and the armies commanded by the *fiwt* generals, and destroying the *Asoka* park. He is foolish enough to think that Sita is the kind of woman to enter into a widow remarriage with him on his exhibiting the supposed severed head of her husband. Indeed, even at the outset, his psychology was at fault. He should not have abducted Sita in revenge for the death of Khara.

Kamsa,—Kamsa is another demon-king. He figures in *Balacharita* as a cruel and lustful tyrant who imprisons his own father, Ugrasena, and makes himself king. Unlike Ravana, he is not shown as possessing any good qualities. All that Bhasa has done for him is to excite some pity for him in his distracted state when the ring of destiny is closing round the doomed man. Kamsa is the Herod of India. Bhasa has made this cruel baby-killer still more horrible by making him keep a Kamsa-rock to dash the babies to death. Like that of most cruel men, his cruelty is born of fear. The curse of the sage, Madhuka, haunts

him, and, to save himself from the predicted death, he does things which bring it on with mathematical precision. To all outward appearance, he is brave. He boasts that he is death to the Lord of Death, and inspires terror in the heart of fear. Rut, really, he is a coward, as he is finally hurled to death from the balcony by the boy Krishna, even without his showing the least bit of a fight. He is highly lustful as, even in his sleep, he is dreaming of outcaste maidens inviting him for an embrace. He sees his prosperity disappear owing to his wickedness, and the curse which has brought it on. The low monster that he is, he resorts to baby-killing, and to the sending of assassins like Putana, Sakata, Dhenuka, Kesi, Arishtavrishabha, Kuvalayapeetam, Chanura and others to kill his foes, Damodara, without having the courage to face and tackle him himself. That this cowardly monster could imprison his father, and rule his country for a long time by force, swagger and bluster, indulging in fiendish acts of cruelty, lust and wickedness, is a sad commentary on human apathy and helplessness, and has been proved to be true to life, by many an episode in the annals of the world's history. That perhaps is the lesson which Rhasa wants to drive in by his pen-portrait of this monster.

Indrajit.—Tndrajit is only casually referred to. He is shown as brave and lovable, though placing his valour at the disposal of his father, Ravana, from filial affection, instead of espousing the cause of righteousness represented by Rama. Rut, that is a weakness displayed also by Rhishma and Drona and, so, can hardly be termed wickedness.

Vibhishana.—Vibhishana is a better kind of demon. He stands up for the restoration of Sita, firstly because that is the right thing to do, and, secondly because he foresees that her detention would mean the destruction of the demon race. He is fearless of death in his advocacy of the right, and braves Ravana in open durbar. He is not to be condemned for his going to Rama, as he does so openly for the sake of right, and after having been exiled by Ravana, and from his desire to save the demon race from total destruction. There is nothing ignoble about it. He is a good psychologist and knows that Rama will welcome him unhesitatingly, without suspecting his good faith. Rut, he has not got the supreme courage of Rama, and, so, wants Suka and Sarana to be punished. He is a reformer among demons. To a question put by the lady in the hermitage as what to do for the meals of the demon-guests accustomed to eating men, the ascetic replies that Vibhishana has weaned them off from cannibalism. Possibly Ceylon was, ages ago, an abode of cannibalism, and king Vibhishana put a stop to the horrible practice.

Ghatotkacha.—Ghatotkacha can hardly be termed a demon, as he is the son of a Pandava, and technically a Pandava. He is depicted as strong, good, brave and fearless, and as asking for a Brahman boy for his mother to eat, only acting on the principle, 'Treat thy mother as a god." No one is better pleased than he at finding that his mother is using this only as a ruse to see her husband, Bhima, again. His embassy to Duryodhana shows his heroism and fearlessness of death. He is highly impulsive and offers to give up his character as ambassador and fight the Kauravas. He is also not without the capacity for effective retort, as is shown by his reply to Duhsasana's statement that the Kauravas too are gifted with natures like demons. He is jealous of his father's name and fame, and hurls a tree, and then a mountain top, on his own father for questioning the description given by him of his greatness. He is, on the whole, a lovable demon, and, perhaps because of this, Bhasa has not shown his death by the spear gifted by Tndra to Kama.

DEMONESSES.

Hidimba.—The only demoness of importance shown in these plays is Hidimba, the mother of Ghatotkacha and the wife of Bhima. She too is shown as a good demon. She loves her husband dearly, and is anxious to see him again. It is only to bring this reunion about that she asks Ghatotkacha to go and fetch, for her breakfast, a youth from the forest where the Pandava hermitage is situated, sure that Bhima will take the place of the vouth caught hold of bv Ghatotkacha, and come to her.

3. KTNGS AND PRTNCKS.

KINGS.

Udayana Vatsaraja.— In Udayana, Bhasa has created a delightful character, combining in himself the roles of King Arthur, Don Juan and Prince Charming. No doubt, this character has been taken over from the folk-lore which, however, emphasizes more the Don Juan aspect of the king, making him not only the darling of all women and an adept in the fine arts, but also a philanderer who forgets one fair woman the moment he sees another. The folk-lore had, even before Bhasa, made Udayana call Vasavadatta 'Virachita', a secret flame of his, in a fit of absent-mindedness, and come to trouble, a theme which has been worn threadbare by many a Western novelist. Bhasa has emphasized the king's chivalrous and generous instincts more than his frivolous tendencies. In short, he has concentrated on the King Arthur and Prince Charming aspects,

and toned down the **Don** Juan element, though, of course, the Virachita episode is too delicious to be dropped, and, so, he hints at it in the "Vision of Vasavadatta."

The picture presented by the king in these two plays is wholly delightful. He is not consciously polygamous, marrying another woman in cold blood when he has already one mate. Indeed, the poet emphasizes that Vasavadatta has to be burnt to death before Udayana will consent to marry even the beautiful Padmavati, the daughter of the leading monarch of the age. In dealing with this subject, we have to remember the failings of those times. Sanskrit dramatists have always called kings "many-wived", and even Dushyanta, the hero of the *Sakuntala,* has many wives when he makes love to, and marries, Sakuntala. Indeed, Sage Kanva asks Sakuntala to be on good terms with her co-wives, a sentiment jarring on modern ears, and marring the beauty of the play. I may add that, in other countries, even worse conditions prevailed in those days. Solomon "the wise" had hundreds of wives, let alone the concubines, though he ruled a country less in extent than Vatsa, and there is not a word in the Bible (Old Testament or New Testament) condemning his polygamous and other tendencies. Without any theoretical objection to polygamy, Bhasa, profound psychologist that he is, feels that something will be lacking in the romantic attachment of Udayana for Vasavadatta, if he marries Padmavati while knowing Vasavadatta to be alive.

{ Udayana, in Bhasa, is primarily the romantic lover of Vasavadatta, though he is also the chivalrous and obliging husband of Padmavati; His poignant sorrow, on the supposed death of Vasavadatta, so vividly described by the student in Act I of the "Vision of Vasavadatta", shows this Verily, as the student says,

"Blessed is the woman loved with affection so sincere,
She lives in her lord's love for e'r, though burnt and departed."

The description of Udayana as rolling on the ground in grief, rising up suddenly and calling out in agony "Oh Vasavadatta, oh daughter of Avanti's King, oh my heart's beloved, oh dearest pupil" will haunt us long after we have finished the play, and we too will say, with Udayana,

"Can one forget a love which shook the heart?
Fond memory brings it back with a start,
Our sad and mortgaged minds get free, one fears,
Only by paying in full the debt of tears."

Such is his love for Vasavadatta that, on her* supposed death, he neglects even his lute, Ghoshavati, which he abandons on the Narmada banks.

Udayana's famous comparison between Vasavadatta and Padmavati is true for all time. There are some who hold the heart, for no obvious reason, and some who merely extort an intellectual appreciation. But, there is a peculiar chivalry and delicacy in Udayana with regard to Padmavati which do him honour. His white lie, that the pollen of the *Kasa* flowers is responsible for his tears, has its origin in consideration for Padmavati's feelings.

But, Udayana is not merely a ladies' man. He can fight, and fight like a Kshatriya warrior, the bravest of the brave. When caught in the trap of the artificial elephant, he does not try to back out, but rushes into the serried ranks of the enemy, and fights on till he falls down exhausted. Even when fallen, such is the dread of his innumerable foes for this one man, that they scatter away the moment he recovers consciousness. His going to catch the tusker attended only by a few infantrymen is also proof of his bravery. When the jester asks him not to go into the Ocean Pavilion because a cobra is there, the king, with a quiet smile, rushes to the spot, examines the object, finds it to be a wreath waving in the wind, and chaffs the jester about it. Xone but a brave man will rush so unhesitatingly towards what might be an Indian cobra, between which and death there is only a razor's edge.

Another great quality is his passion for sportsmanship and hunting, and adventure in general. Tt is his delight to go alone and capture wild tuskers of noted strength and prowess. It is not drugged tigers or tamed elephants, posing as wild, that he hunts and captures. He plunges into the densest forests of the Vindhyas to meet the wildest of elephants and lions, and insists on going alone. This, of course, requires a brave, strong, skilled man, with infinite resource and endurance.

He is very loving and considerate towards all, including his subordinates and servants, and generous in his praise of them. Thus, the magnificent words he utters regarding Yaugandharayana must have compensated that individual for all his trouble. His compelling Padmavati to sit by his side when receiving the messengers from Ujjaini, despite her reluctance, also shows this. His love for Vasavadatta need not be emphasized, as we have said enough about it. His love for King Mahasena and Queen Angaravati also shows this. |When he hears of Rumanvan's knowing about the olot. he oasses it off with a ioke "What a

rogue Rumanvan is!". The twenty men taken by him to tackle the false elephant perish to a man except Hamsaka. It is significant that Udayana appeals to them not as an unimaginative captain does to his men, but as man to man, calling them by their names, family names, etc.

He has a great regard for the laws of the Aryas, and never breaks them, Thus, he never looks at Avantika till she is proved to be Vasavadatta, despite his strong grounds for suspecting her to be so.

He is, like all Aryan kings, a patron of the Vedas, the glorious heritage of India. He makes Lavanaka a centre of Vedk learning, to which even students of other countries flock, owing to the excellence of the training there. The reputation of a small state, Pudukottah, to-day for Sanskrit contests must prevent incredulity in this claim for Vatsa.

He is also a lover of the fine arts. Like Emperor Samudragupta, who loves to depict himself, on his coins, as playing on the Veena, Vatsaraja is an expert at playing on the Veena. Like Tansen, who could move wild animals with his songs, not to speak of Krishna moving the cows when he played on his flute, Vatsaraja can tame wild elephants with his lute. It will be rash to disbelieve such possibilities, and to believe only that death rays can kill, poison gas exterminate, and bombs smash. His fondness for his lute is only slightly less than his fondness for Vasavadatta. The moment he sees the strings broken, he haj the lute sent to a master craftsman for repair. His lute mean* as much to Vatsaraja, in his grief, as the piano meant to Beethoven in his deafness. Great artists love their instruments as much as great philosophers love their thoughts, and great soldiers love their victories.

Vatsaraja is a human being, and not a doll or puppet, like so many princes. His talk with the jester is natural, that of one human being to another, and has none of that studio atmosphere, so common in the talks of princes. It is obvious that he is speaking his own words, and not another's put into his mouth. He has stories told him by his jester, and has often to correct the story-teller's version about cities and kings.

He is a lover of flowers and natural beauty. He has a tenderness, like a true lover, for everything living. An extraordinarily tender verse, bubbling with feeling for lovers even among the bees, shows this. His description of the flight of cranes is also moving. He sheds *real* tears when he thinks of Vasavadatta, not *stage* tears.

He is also well up in psychology.) He analyses the nature of VasavadattaNand Padmavati welt. He threatens the jester

with force in order to make him say which of the two he prefers, but soon realises that that method will not do, and begs of him to speak from mere friendship. His words, about its being easy to find men of great virtue and courtesy in the world but difficult to find those **who** appreciate such men, ring true for all time. His deduction, that Padmavati has only just left the stone seat in the *sephalika* bower, by the warmth on the seat, and his inference that Padmavati has never been to the Ocean Pavilion, owing to the bed being unruffled, and the pillow not crushed, the quilt being undisturbed, the headache medicines not having left their stains, and nothing being placed to divert the patient's eye, and the improbability of a sick person's leaving the bed so soon, shows his capacity for rapid and correct inferences.

; He is a man who not only loves, but is loved in turn. His mother is anxious to get him back. Yaugandharayana, Rumanvan and the jester do acts of unthinkable heroism in order to rescue him from captivity.;, Vasavadatta, from love for him and his welfare, makes the supreme sacrifice that woman can make, and allows her lord to become another woman's husband Padmavati, too, loves him, and freely forgives him his sentiments of preference for Vasavadatta. Even a casual person in the palace offers him the lute he has got. (Mahasena, who is at first fiercely inimical to him, soon has his enmity extinguished on hearing about bis bravery and other qualities. The very jailer, Sivaka, allows him to go outside the jail, a liberty not allowed by the rules, but exercised by jailers from those days till now.

"'The whole world loves a lover", runs a Western proverb, and Udayana is an apt illustration of it- Despite his neglect of governmental duties, excessive love of sport, and disregard of sound counsel, Udayana has remained a favourite with the Indians, and, will, I am sure, be a favourite with all. Such is the magic of his name that many plays have been written about him, besides these two, some instances being *Ratnavali, Priyadarsika, Vatsa Raja Charita* and *Unmada Vasavadatta.* In distant Kerala, the most popular indigenous hero, the hero of a hundred ballads, is named Udayana after this King of Vatsa. Thacholi Thenan, with his warlike feats and amorous conquests, is only the Kerala edition of Udayana of Vatsa, with, of course, considerable modifications to suit the local conditions. None but a great character will be complimented like that.

Pradyota (Mahasena).—Pradyota Mahasena is a king of a very different type from Udayana Vatsaraja. He is desirous of **pomp** and servility, and glories in the neighbouring kings putting the **dust** of his horses' hoofs on their coronets and heads, and **in** his **orders being carried out like a forest fire burning everywhere, unlike the genial Udayana. While** Udayana is never

controlled even by the masterly Yaugandharayana, and has to be tricked into believing in the death of Vasavadatta before he will consent to marry Padmavati, Mahasena is afraid of his prime minister, Bharatarohaka, and probably married all his sixteen queens from political motives, at the dictation of his ministers. In Act IT of "Yaugandharayana's Vows," he expresses his opinion that Bharatarohaka does not like the kindly treatment of Udayana, and that he must win him over to his view; but, as often happens in such cases, Bharatarohaka wins over the king, and, in Act III, we find Udayana once more in chains, a clear proof of Bharatarohaka's point of view prevailing over his master's. This can also be seen in his not going to the help of Udayana against Aruni who must have had the secret backing, or at least the sympathies, of Bharatarohaka.

Mahasena is at heart a good and kindly man, judged by the usual standards. He loves his wife; he adores his daughter; he wants to be fair to his enemies; he rushes to Angaravati and prevents her attempt at suicide, by telling her that there is nothing to be ashamed of, as Vasavadatta has already been married to Udayana by the Kshatriya system of *Gancfharva* marriage. Even the burning of large portions of his city by Yaugandharayana does not stand in his way of performing the marriage of Vasavadatta and Udayana in effigy, and accepting the *fait accompli,* lie has got a high sense of honour. There is no doubt that between Act III and Act IV of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", when Nalagiri is made, by the machinations of Yaugandharayana, to run amok, he releases Udayana from his bondage in order to bring that elephant under control with his lute, Ghoshavati, and, thereafter, allows him to be free, and makes him also Yasavadatta's tutor in music, as is clear from Queen Angaravati's message sent through the chamberlain and nurse at the end of "The Vision of Vasavadatta." He does not send Udayana once more to prison after this act of service, as many a lesser man might have done. His anxiety to get Udayana treated for his wounds and to restore him to health does him credit. He is fair to his foes. Tn describing the line of Bharata kings, his foes, he does not deduct even a tittle from their glorious reputation. His sentiments regarding the selection of a suitable bridegroom are excellent. His further reflection that, even after such careful selection, the fate of each marriage depends largely on Kate is also profoundly true.

He is a man of considerable shrewdness. He does not allow Angaravati to get away by merely stating that the girl should be given where there would be no reason to rue about the choice later on. His remark that Hindu mothers feel small when their grown-up daughters are not given away in marriage,

and yet grieve greatly when their marriages, and the inevitable separation, come, also shows this.

He is the type of the usual run of Indian monarchs, unlike Udayana who represents the ones far above the average. For him, significantly enough, the lute, Ghoshavati, presents no problems of re-stringing or playing, or represent any emotional association, but presents simply a problem of gifting it away to a suitable person. He has his own share of psychological intuition. He labels his first son as an adept in politics, and as not interested in music; his second son as an expert in athletics, but as a foe of aesthetics; he gives the lute to his daughter, Vasavadatta, and, in reply to her mother's statement, that the girl would simply get mad over it and play for hours together, says, like many an Indian father, "Let her play on, play on! It will not be so easy in her father-in-law's house." In Udayana, we see only a lover, and not a father; in Mahasena, we see the father emphasized. His relations, even towards Angaravati, were not those of a lover, but of a husband and the head of the family, she being second in command.

Dhritarashtra.—He appears in *Dutavakya, Dutaghatotkacha* and *Urubhanga.* He is a grand old figure rendered tragic not only by the march of events, and the death of all his sons in the battle, but also by his physical blindness. Intellectually, he perceives the truth clearly, and sees the righteousness of the cause of the Pandavas, but, emotionally, he is, of course, attached to his own sons. He has got no love for faction, or feud in the family, and this is made clear by Sakuni when he tells Duryodhana that the old king dislikes war in the clan, and will reproach them for killing Abhimanyu. Even Ghatotkacha remarks that this king was created blind so that the gods may not be deprived of the three worlds by his prowess. He will not allow Krishna to depart angrily after his embassy, but prostrates to him and begs his pardon. He rises up to hear Janardana's message. He is very shrewd, and can see the consequences of wicked acts like the killing of Abhimanyu. He tells his sons that they have brought their only sister, Duhsala, the gift of widowhood. He exclaims that there will be peace—when all the world is dead. He wants to go to the Ganges and offer oblations to his sons who are as good as dead. When his son Duryodhana lies wounded to death, his grief is pathetic. He grieves that, in spite of his having a hundred sons, there will be no one to scatter a funeral oblation for him. Even at that moment of agonising grief for the death of his sons, he regrets that there should have been a witness, namely, Balarama, to hear the crooked words of Aswathama expressing his intention to raid the Pandava camp

that night and kill the young Pandavas. After the death of Duryodhana, he becomes disgusted with life, exclaiming, "I shall go now to the penance groves full of pious folk. Out on a realm made worthless by the loss of my sons!"

Dasaratha.—Dasaratha as shown in *Pratima* is a noble king who has become a prey to his own promises, and dies of sorrow for separation from Rama, as a kind of atonement for his killing the sage's only son, mistaking him for an elephant. The description of his arranging for the coronation of Rama, his seating the prince on his lap, compelling him to accede to the coronation, and shedding profuse tears on his bent head, and suddenly asking him to rest awhile, and going to Kaikeyi, on receiving a message from her maid, Manthara, is full of pathetic interest. His lamentations, described in Act II of *Pratima*, are touching. He has got the gift of vivid description. He compares Rama to the sun, Lakshmana to the day, and Sita to the shadow. He wishes that he had no children, or that Rama was the son of another monarch, or that Kaikeyi was a tigress in the jungle. Rama loves him as dearly as he loves Rama, but there is his great love for Sita to keep him balanced. Dasaratha dies broken-hearted, unable to bear the separation from Rama. It will be a mistake to regard Dasaratha as a doting old man in the clutches of a pretty young woman, Kaikeyi. It is the fact of his twin promise to Kaikeyi which makes him yield to her, and not mere fascination for her beauty.

Yudhisthira.—He is represented as an ideal of a righteous monarch. Duryodhana says that he will believe only Yudhisthira. Sakuni tells Duryodhana that if Yudhisthira is king, corn will grow even in salty soil. Virata tells Yudhisthira, when disguised as Rhagavan, that he is not Yudhisthira to put up with harm done to him patiently. Yudhisthira keeps Rhima in check when he is measuring the pillars of the hall, where Draupadi is being insulted, in order to pull the hall down on his tormenters. Even the defiant Abhimanyu is impressed by Yudhisthira's dignity, when disguised as Rhagavan, and salutes him.

Duryodhana.—Duryodhana is shown as a strong and powerful king fond of pomp and show, but conceited and crooked, and not by any means as strong as he pretends. He threatens to impose a fine of twelve gold pieces on all those who stand up when Krishna enters, but is puzzled as to how to prevent himself from rising up. He falls down when accosted by Krishna. He orders the painting of Draupadi's outrage to be removed when Krishna finds fault with it. He is also no match for Krishna in argument. Rut, he is not without some generous impulses. He says that children are not to be blamed though there are feuds in the family, and exclaims that Abhimanyu is first *his* son, and

then alone the son of **the** Pandavas. He has got an **intellectual appreciation of the supreme importance of truth, and exclaims, "If troth be dead, all men** are done. As troth stands firm, so do they/' But he tells Sakuni that he is only anxious to keep to the letter of his promise, and requests him to think of some wretched country, hard to live in, and beset by some powerful foe, for giving to the Pandavas for their dwelling. He is very brave, and fights Bhirma, and almost defeats him in single battle, after the Mahabharatha War is over. He loves his parents, wives, and children dearly. The compliment he pays his mother, by wishing that if he has accrued any merit, he may be born as her son in another birth, is classic. He can be generous when the occasion requires it, as at the great sacrifice he performed, and in his making Kama king of Anga. He is one of those strong, bad men who are plentifully represented in history in every age.

Kama.—Kama, the king of Anga, is the soul of generosity, and is faithful to his friends and allies. He is doomed by destiny, and tragedy broods over him in *Karnabhara.* Cast away by his mother, cursed by his teacher, robbed of his body-armour and ear-rings, no wonder he exclaims, "Good luck to me whose last days have come!" *Karnabhara* may almost be called 'Kama driving to his death.' Arjuna is his pet aversion, and he perishes in a hopeless attempt to defeat and kill Arjuna who is protected by Krishna, the beloved of the world, and aided by Tndra who begs and receives from Kama the body-armour and ear-rings which might have protected him against Arjuna. But Kama is a veritable hero, and faces death open-eyed, and without the least flinching. His magnificent words, "Learning comes to nought by mere lapse of time. Firmly-rooted trees are hurled down in a storm. Even deep reservoirs dry up in drought. Only gifts and sacrifices last for ever", will inspire mankind till the end of time.

Sakuni.—Sakuni is the soul of intrigue. He is the kind of man who grieves at the prosperity of even those unconnected with him, and delights in bringing feud and sorrow where harmony and joy prevail. He is an adept at cheating, gambling, wriggling out of promises by quibbling, and insulting noble souls meanly. Of course, he is little good at war, as his leading the Kaurava army in its retreat in the Virata country will show.

Salya.—Salya, in the Mahabharata, is ever nagging Kama, and is a royal example of a cantankerous man. In Bhasa, however, he is a much better figure. He listens to Kama's story of Parasurama's curse with sympathy, and tries to prevent Kama from giving aw[r]ay his body-armour and ear-rings to Indra. He takes Kama's chariot wherever he wants, and is a willing, and

almost enthusiastic, charioteer, unlike the eternal grumbler he is in the epic.

Kuntibhoja.—Kuntibhoja is a homely king, discussing with his wife about his daughter's marriage, reflecting deeply on the heavy responsibilities of kings, honouring and consulting sages, and insisting on having the proper ritual of a marriage before the god of fire, despite the love marriage already performed between Kurangi and Avimaraka.

The King of the Sauviras.—He is another minor figure among Bhasa's kings. He gets irritated at Chandbhargava's unmerited reproaches, and gives that sage a round scolding, and,, when he gets a curse in return, gets frightened, begs for forgiveness, and gets the curse modified. Even when he has to live the life of an outcaste, he keeps his royal dignity somewhat, by having an ornamental door, and offering oblations of flowers and fried rice every day.

Virata.—Virata is another delightful minor figure. He is fond of making gifts on his birthday. Like all shepherd kings, he has no great fondness for pompous titles. When addressed as "Oh great king!" by the soldier, he replies impatiently, "Oh, drop your 'great king'. My kingship is in the mud." As befits a shephard king, he has more cattle than chariots. When he calls for his chariot, he is told that his son, Uttara, has taken it. He asks another chariot to be brought, but it is not brought, possibly because a second one is not so readily available.

Valin.—Valin is shown as a mighty king of Kishkindha, the modern Bellary district, with a golden necklace as his family heirloom. He is very brave and fearless, and engages in a fight with Sugriva, despite the entreaty of Tara. He has also some capacity for argument, as when he asks Rama why he alone is punished for committing adultery, when Sugriva, who committed the same crime, is left unpunished. Rama's reply is no more convincing than the justification given by the framers of the Tndian Penal Code for punishing only the adulterer, and not also the woman without whose co-operation the crime cannot be committed. When dying, Valin becomes calm, wants the womenfolk not to witness his ghastly condition, and dies after taking Ganges water from Hanuman, the lieutenant of his opponent, Sugriva.

Sugriva.—Sugriva is a faithful ally of Rama. He is also shrewd, and tests Rama's capacity in archery before entering into an alliance with him for fighting against Valin. He warns Rama against admitting Vibhishana to his presence, as the demons are very artful, and fight by fraud.

PRINCES.

Avimaraka.—The prince who looms large in Bhasa's pages is Avimaraka. He is born to Agni, and is passed on to his aunt by his mother. He makes his childhood conspicuous by killing a demon in the form of a sheep. He is a valiant soldier, and has fought many a battle before he begins his romance with Kurangi. Even when disguised as an outcaste, his noble nature never forsakes him. He tackles the rogue elephant in the park, while Kaunjayana, Bhutika and the crowd gape in helplessness, and saves Kurangi. After accomplishing the task, he does not linger there to receive the applause of the crowd, but goes back home with eyes bent on the ground. Even when forced to live as an outcaste, his Brahman friend, Santhushta, does not leave him, but visits him regularly, though clandestinely. Avimaraka loves Kurangi with the strength and purity of a first love, and pines for her like Romeo for Juliet, and gets into her rooms and spends the night with her even as Romeo does. Like Romeo, he too attempts to commit suicide, though by falling into the fire and by trying to jump down from a height. As in *Romeo and Juliet* Kurangi is intended to be married to another, namely, the prince of Benares, and resolves to commit suicide in despair, but the play ends happily, unlike *Romeo and Juliet.* There are other similarities too between these two plays. The mission of the nurse to Avimaraka reminds us of the mission of the nurse to Romeo in Shakespeare's play. Avimaraka has a keen sense of nature's beauty, as can be seen by his description of the evening, night, and midday sun. His reactions to nature correspond to his moods. When he is happy, he finds nature fascinating and beautiful. When he is sick of life, he finds nature consumptive, and spitting out dry leaves, as a consumptive does phlegm. He is a romantic lover, and Bhasa invests his romance with a halo by not having any other sweetheart, either before or after he meets Kurangi. He had no Rosaline like Romeo. So he is a pure experimenter at the science of union so dear to his heart.

Uttara.—He is another delightful prince. Though not a great hero or warrior, he endears himself to us, and earns our respect, by his refusal to take the praise due to another, and his open confession to his father that Brihannala is responsible for all the acts of heroism attributed to him. Like all Hindus, he is proud of getting a good bridegroom for his sister, and goes gladly to the Kaurava camp to announce the news of the approaching marriage.

Lakshmana.—Lakshmana is shown as a noble prince intensely attached to Rama and following him as day light follows the sun, preferring Rama to his own mother or wife. He is even prepared to fight Dasaratha and kill Kaikeyi in order that

Rama may be crowned. He pleads with Rama for allowing Sita to follow him into the forest. He is the personification of brotherly love.

Bharata.—Bharata is a strict votary of *dharma* and is indignant at his being preferred, for the throne, to his elder brother, Rama. He loves his father dearly, has a great sense of family pride, and has no trace of ambition or avarice in him. He is angry with his mother for having driven Rama into exile and caused Dasaratha to die of grief. He tells her several home truths, and makes her writhe in agony, and, indeed, dread meeting him lest he should say something more stinging. He refuses to accept the kingdom, and makes Rama promise to take it, after fourteen years, in the presence of witnesses. When he realises that he has done an injustice to his mother (as destiny, not she, was responsible for her requests) he begs her forgiveness which she readily gives with the memorable words, "Which mother will not forgive her son's faults?". Rharata's famous words, "Without Rama, Ayodhya is not Ayodhya. Ayodhya is where Rama lives", have become a proverb.

Satrughna.—Satrughna appears only very cursorily, as a minor figure attendant on Rharata. He is shown as a lovable prince who is loved by his other brothers. He tells Rama, in *Pratima,* about the arrival of Vasishta and Vamadeva, with the consecrated water, to crown him. After the coronation, he says, "By this coronation of Rama, the royal house of Ikshvaku has cast out its stain. The world is as bright now as when the moon has risen and dispelled the darkness."

Angada.—Angada is the son of Valin and Tara, and is entrusted by Valin, at the time of his death, to the care of Kama and Sugriva. He is the leader of the captains searching for Sita in all directions. He fights for Rama valiantly against Ravana, despite Rama's killing his own father.

4. QUEENS AND PRINCESSES.

QUEENS.

Vasavadatta.—Vasavadatta is a memorable character. Her supreme trait is her complete identification with her husband, and readiness to sacrifice her all for him. It will be somewhat difficult for Westerners to understand this aspect of her charac-, tet. Often, what passes for strength in one civilisation is taken fbr weakness in another. An advocate of non-violence will be honoured in India, but despised in Germany. A man fond of wine in moderation will be called a 'good mixer' in Western countries, but, will be roundly labelled a 'drunkard' in this

country. A woman refusing to allow her husband to marry another, for saving a country or even the world, may be considered heroic in Western countries, whereas a woman making this supreme sacrifice may be considered heroic in India. Bwr largchggmi to theL GReal War of 1914 1918, and the present l Great *War;*—t-he world is becoming more and imore one unit l, and dare say there will-be many now in every country who will-under-.'find and appreciate both l the above appaienlly contradictor **objects of fame and sec heroisrn in both the l. . women, it has been** the pride of the Hindu race that just a's oxygen and hydrogen, two gases, when mixed, become life giving water, and do not separate thereafter, except by the machinations of men, so, too, a girl who has been in her father's family till the age of 14 or 15, is married to a stranger, on whom she has not set her eyes before, and identifies her lot with his to such an extent that father, mother, brother and sister become but mere names of an ancient and almost forgotten past, and her husband becomes her god, her all. it is only those who have lived under this system and derived its full benefit that can appreciate this marvellous thing. As a Hindu husband who has shared in the benefits of the system, i, for one, would certainly say that, whatever the defects of the system abstractly, the complete identification of the wife with the husband is a sublime thing, a debt which the husband can never hope to repay, like the pure benefits of nature, like air or water. So, i am sure that among India's millions, Yasavadatta will be loved as an ideal Hindu wife, even as U d a y a n a pays her the eloquent tribute in verse of Vasava-d a f t a.

Put, Vasavadatta is not an automaton, and exhibits her human feelings, as when she exclaims, "Oh, what an outrage! Even my husband has become another woman's", and carefully avoids putting the leaf "rival-crusher" in the wedding garland, while liberally using the "widowhood-preventer." She is agitated when she hears that Udayana is betrothed to Padmavati, and is calmed only when she learns, from Padmavati's nurse that he has not come to Rajagriha for this purpose, but has only been made to agree to it when he has arrived there on another errand. Even then, she feels sad at times, though the sacrifice is one agreed to by her. Thus, when, in the famous dream scene, the king asks her whether she is angry, she replies, "No, no. Only, sad and unhappy." She cannot be blamed for this. Even Christ, who agreed with God to sacrifice himself for mankind, cried out, when actually crucified, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me in this exigent?" Even God born as a man will have such a substratum of unhappiness. What then of Vasavadatta in the prime of her womanhood, separated from her darling husband, though with her own consent? Her scornful

expression "Shame, even here Virachita!", when Udayana asks her whether she is thinking of Virachita, shows her essentially feminine nature. She is indignant at being asked in the hermitage to move out of the way even she may be ordered make way.. _ She is very intelligent, as when she gives ings tions to cover up her remarks which have almost given herself away. Thus, in Act II of "The Vision of Vasavadatta", she says inadvertently that Udayana is very handsome, and, wheni Padmavati asks her how she knows this, she gives the clever] reply that the people of Ujjaini were remarking so, and Padmavati is satisfied, as she considers it natural for the people of Ujjaini to have seen him, and to have remarked thus about one of his outstanding traits. Again, when she hears about the betrothal of Udayana to Padmavati, she exclaims involuntarily "What an improper thing I". Asked what she means, she says that she was thinking of how deeply the king was said to have grieved for Vasavadatta, and how soon he had forgotten all that. So, too, she inadvertently says, in the *scphalika* bower, that Vasavadatta loved Udayana even more than Padmavati did, and, when asked by Padmavati how she knows that, says that had her love been less, she would not have forsaken her people to elope with an enemy of her father.

She is very considerate to others. When Padmavati offers, for her sake, to go away from the *scphalika* garden, even though her husband is in tears, a few yards away from her, she offers to go back alone herself, and sends Padmavati to console her husband. So, too, she is very anxious not to upset the plan of Yaugandharayana, though she is the person made to suffer by it. She does not allow Padmavati to take any blame on herself for treating her as an attendant on her, and says to her "Rise up, rise up, oh gracious woman! If anything offends, it is your prostrating to me unnecessarily, for nothing at all." She moves with the maids with the easy familiarity of a high-born lady who does not fear in the least, like upstarts, that such a thing will bring her down in their esteem.

She has got another trait which will endear her to many people. She is fond of making sweets, and of giving them in plenty to those who want them. That is why Vasantaka prefers her to Padmavati. [Tt is obvious that one of the main activities of women is in the kitchen, and Vasavadatta excels in this quality also, though born a princess, and still every inch one.

Padmavati.—Padmavati is quite different from Vasavadatta, though equally lovable. She loves her husband, but is not above seeing his failings. Thus, she remarks "Now, my noble lord is playing Vasantaka's part", in other words, that he is playing

the fool. She is a gracious woman, fond of vigorous exercise, like the ball game, whereas Vasavadatta is fonder of the lute than of the ball. Padmavati is much simpler and less subtle, as Vasavadatta's explanations of her three inadvertent expressions easily satisfy her. Hers is an unsuspecting, generous mind, spacious in its scope, limpid in its flow, and pure from top to bottom. She bears malice to none. She wants none to suffer for her sake. Seefag all the fuss made about her headache, she does not even go to the room arranged for her, probably from the same feeling of contempt for fussing that an English sportswoman, say a Mrs. Mollison, would have experienced. Her treatment of the maids and Avantika is exemplary, tender, kind, considerate and free. She allows such liberty to those under her that her maid can say, in her presence, that Udayana lacks all courtesy, by preferring his dead wife, Vasavadatta, to Padmavati. But, she corrects her, all the same, and says that Udayana, far from lacking courtesy, has shown great courtesy, by remembering the merits of Vasavadatta even after her death. This extorts from Vasavadatta the compliment "My dear, your words are worthy of your exalted birth."

She has a good stock of humour, like all healthy persons. Thus, instead of getting angry with the jester for his giving out the same silly excuse about the pollen of the *kasa* flowers falling into the eyes, which Vasavadatta had given out at first, and the king was going to give later on, she remarks indulgently "The chivalrous master has a chivalrous servant." She does not tell the king anything, even after hearing this stale excuse trotted out by him. This graciousness of mind is something which all 'humanity will appreciate.

So, too, her delicacy at sitting with Udayana, in the place of Vasavadatta, when the messengers from Ujjaini want to see him, does her honour and credit.

She is equally intelligent, though less subtle than Vasavadatta. The way in which she decides whether lady Avantika is Vasavadatta, by calling for Udayana's portrait and comparing him with the likeness, will show this. So, too, she is not taken in by the silly excuse about the pollen of the *kasa* flowers being the cause of Udayana's tears. Nor is she surprised at Udayana's preferring Vasavadatta to her, as she must have guessed that even before.

She is pious, and lavish in her gifts. That exquisite scene in the hermitage when the chamberlain, at her behest, asks the hermits what gifts they Want; her desire to see the portraits of her husband and Vasavadatta and do honour to them; her spending a day at the hermitage, all show this. She is, by no means,

a lover of authority or superiority. At her instance, the chamberlain asks the hermits to go and fetch their water, faggots, flowers, grass, etc., freely, as if she were not there, as she is an upholder of the law. When we contrast this magnanimous behaviour with the many restrictions put by even petty officials, when camping in a place, her greatness will become evident.

Angaravati.—We get only glimpses of Queen Angaravati, but they are delightful. She Is fond of Vasavadatta, and very anxious, like all Indian mothers, to get her married suitably, and, yet, grieves at the very thought of separation consequent on such marriage. She wants the best bridegroom for her daughter, and, the moment she hears about the qualifications of Udayana, makes up her mind that he shall be her son-in-law, and makes her opinion prevail in the end, however unlikely its chances appear at the outset. She backs out rapidly from the discussion the moment Vatsaraja's arrival is announced, and tells Mahasena that her daughter is too small to worry about her marriage just then. Mahasena gets an inkling, but only an inkling, of her ideas, and he asks her to remember that Yatsaraja is their foe.

She has a keen sense of honour. On hearing that Udayana has eloped with Vasavadatta, and not knowing that he has married her, she wants to commit suicide, and has to be saved from it by Mahasena, who assures her about Udayana's having married Vasavadatta, having known it himself from some messenger telling him about Yaugandharayana's reply to Bharatarohaka, that no Rharata King will look at a maiden's face or teach her without first marrying her, or by guessing it himself from his knowledge of the ways of the Bharatas.

Angaravati's message to Udayana, sent through the chamberlain and nurse, is touching, affectionate, and graceful. It may be noted, in this connection, that the wife's mother is as popular in India as she is unpopular in England, just as a husband's mother is as unpopular in Tndia as she is popular in England. So, Angaravati, Udayana's wife's mother, is shown as a kindly, affable and lovable thing. She must have been pretty able, to have become the head of sixteen Queens, and, virtually, the presiding deity over Ujjaini.

Gandhari.—Queen Gandhari is, in her own way, a most impressive figure. She is such a good mother that even the wicked Duryodhana begs of her a favour, that he be born as her son in another birth. She is so exemplary a wife that she bandages her eyes so that she may be as blind as her husband, Dhritarashtra. Such an amazing expression of sympathy is almost unique in the annals of matrimony. No wonder, Balarama exclaims, in *Urubhanga,* "She wears the bandage on her eyes as

a symbol of her unique devotion to her lord. Her eyes never yearned to see the faces of her sons and grandsons, in times of prosperity, but, now, her fortitude is exhausted by grief at Duryodhana's downfall. The bandage on her eyes is ceaselessly wetted with her tears." She has plenty of commonsense. She says, "It is absolutely clear that this fratricidal war can only end in the destruction of our children/' She has a great love for Abhimanyu. On hearing about his death, she cries out, "Alas, Abhimanyu, my grandson, where have you gone now, throwing away your life in this fratricidal war that is destroying our house?" When her husband asks her, "Who is that?", she replies with pardonable pride, "It is I, great king, that gave you fearless sons." A great and tragic figure, this queen hailing from the North-West Frontier of India.

Kausalya.—Kausalya is shown as a faithful wife loving her husband and son with equal warmth, but by no means as devoted to Dasaratha as Gandhari is to Dhritarashtra. Thus, when Dasaratha asks her who she is, in *Pratima,* she tells him "She that bore *an unloved son",* thus raking up his great sorrow, and making him retort, "What, you are the mother of *Rama,* the *beloved of the ivorldt"* She swoons on hearing the news of the abduction of Sita brought by Sumantra. She does not go with Kaikeyi, Rharata, Sumitra and the army, and witness the coronation of Rama, after the defeat of Ravana, in Janasthana. She is represented as one of those good people who are not strong enough to bear great calamities, but are crushed by them, and fade out.

Sumitra.—Sumitra is shown as a loving wife, but is always given a back-seat. Her husband respects Kausalya, and dotes on and fears Kaikeyi; Sumitra he takes for granted. Her son, Lakshmana, follows Rama to the forest, instead of remaining by her side. Her son, Satrughna, follows Rharata. She is a dutiful wife and a lovable woman, but has not the qualities of leadership.

Kaikeyi.—Kaikeyi is a young and beautiful woman conscious of her beauty. Like most young wives, she has a stranglehold on her old husband, and is quite willing to use it. She is one of those who does not accept the advice "Have the power of a lion, but do not use it like a lion." Hers is an emotional nature. She at first wants Rama, whom she loves even better than Rharata, to be crowned; but, when her fears of Kausalya's dominating over her, if Rama becomes king, are roused by Manthara, she forces Dasaratha to promise to crown Rharata king, and to send Rama into exile for fourteen years. Rut, Rhasa makes Kaikeyi attribute all this to destiny, so that the curse of the sage on Dasaratha might be fulfilled. In the end, she repents

of her conduct, and begs Rama to get himself crowned, both in the forest and again in the city. The most terrible punishment that overtakes her is the anger and contempt which her own son, Bharata, exhibits towards her, whereas the person she wrongs, Rama, does not utter one word against her, and will not allow others also to utter a syllable against her in his presence.

Malavi and Pauravi.—Malavi and Pauravi are the young queens of Duryodhana. They love him dearly, and are present at his tragic death. Both weep at his fate. Pauravi stops weeping at his request, as she is determined to commit *sati* and follow her lord. Malavi continues weeping, and, when Duryodhana asks her not to weep, remembering that she is the wffe of a warrior who has fallen in battle facing the foe, she replies, "I am but a girl, and, so, I weep/' words pregnant with truth.

Tara.—Tara is the monkey queen of Valin. She implores Valin not to go and fight Sugriva, shrewdly observing that Sugriva, who had run away, would not have returned unless he was relying on something for his victory. Valin shakes her off, and goes to meet Sugriva, and his death. He does not want Tara to see him in his dying condition, and asks Sugriva to keep her and the women-folk away.

PRINCESSES.

Sita.—Of the princesses figuring in Bhasa's plays, Sita easily takes the first place. Even though she is crowned at last, along with Rama, it is as a princess, that Bhasa treats of her, both in *Abhisheka* and in *Pratima.* The one outstanding quality in her is an unparalleled devotion to her husband, and a unique identification with him. No wonder, that Rama tells her that she is his half, and that rarely are couples born with natures so alike. When he wants to dissuade her from going to the forest, Lakshmana aptly replies that it is easier to prevent the star Tara from following the moon during the eclipse, or a creeper from falling along with its tree, or a female elephant from falling into a quagmire with its tusker, than to prevent Sita from following Rama into the forest. No wonder, Sita has become the ideal of a Hindu wife, from that day to this, and that all Hindu women derive, from her memory, great strength, in joy and in sorrow, in prosperity and in adversity, for she drank to the full the dregs of sorrow. Abducted by a cruel demon, kept in confinement in a far-off country, guarded by demonesses, subjected to filthy proposals by Ravana, despairing of rescue, and, finally, when rescued, told by her husband that he did not want her, and forced to jump into the fire to prove her purity, Mother Sita is the very embodiment of Hindu womanhood in her trials and sorrows, pains and sufferings, ordeals and triumphs.

She is an example of supreme courage. She defies Ravana, and holds him in contempt. She exclaims "Right will become wrong if this wretched demon lives." She proves to Ravana that a chaste woman's curse is far more powerful than the arrows of gods. When she thinks that Rama is killed, she asks him tc kill her with the same sword with which Rama is killed. She has very little desire for the things of the world. She is positively glad that her husband's coronation is broken off, and tells him that he is still her exclusive lord, instead of being the lord also of numerous subjects. She moves on terms of easy familiarity with the ascetics and women hermits, devoid of all wealth, and endears herself so very much to them that they call her, 'daughter', 'Sita', 'Janaki', 'my dear', etc., according to their different ages. She waters the plants herself. Few princesses will be capable of such graceful simplicity. She is, however, not devoid of worldly wisdom. On being told by the maid that the coronation drums have stopped suddenly, she remarks, "Perhaps the coronation is postponed. Many things happen in courts." She feels a sense of danger from Ravana the moment Rama goes after the golden deer. She tells the maid that acts of dishonesty, begun in joke, end in tragedy.

She is shown more as a human being than as a goddess. Thus, she is frightened at the mention of the golden deer by Rama, even after the destruction of Ravana. She pleads with Rama to allow Lakshmana also to serve him. She asks Hanuman to so describe her condition to Rama that he may not break down in sorrow. She wants to know how she will look in bark garments, and is pleased when she is told that she looks handsome in it.

Kurangi.—She is a delightful character, young and beautiful. She falls in love with Avimaraka at the moment of his heroic rescue of her from the infuriated elephant. Thereafter, she pines for him, and, finally, gets him into her chamber in truly romantic fashion. When the secret intimacy is suspected, and Avimaraka is forced to flee, she pines for him even more, as her love for him is not a passing passion but is as deep as life itself. Her mother sends her ointments and medicines, not knowing the real nature of her malady. Her father fixes up her engagement with the prince of Benares, but, on hearing this, she exclaims "I can dispose of myself" a sentiment which is reminiscent of Henley's famous lines,

"I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul,"

and is a beacon-light to all maidens who are sought to be married against their will to persons chosen by parents or others

She tries to commit suicide by hanging, at despair of being re-united to Avimarka; but, such is her delicate feminine nature and such is also her hold on life that, when she hears a clap of thunder, she cries out, "Oh save me, save me!" She is intolerant of bores, like all healthy people, and tells Magadhika that she does not want to hear her story, but would rather go to sleep.

Duhsala.—Duhsala is a tragic figure, and is a fitting daughter of Gandhari. When she hears that Abhimanyu has been killed, she exclaims, in her righteous indignation, that the man who has made Uttara a widow has ordained widowhood for his own wife, little dreaming that she is ordaining her own widow-hood. When she learns, to her horror, that it is her husband. Jayadratha, who has killed Abhimanyu, she becomes so dejected, and so conscious of her own husband's doom, that she offers to go to Uttara at once, and tell her that she will be a companion with her. wearing widow's weeds, like her.

5. MINISTERS.

Yaugandharayana.—Yaugandharayana's character, as de-picted in these two plays, is a grand one. An outstanding trait is his sacrificing everything for the sake of political ends, in this case, however, the independence and liberty of his king and country, and not the ignoble desire to bring other countries under his master's yoke, as in the folk-lore. Thus, for the sake of saving Vatsa from the usurper, he mercilessly sacrifices the happiness, for a time, of Udayana and Vasavadatta. But, it must be remembered that he does not spare himself also. If he is quite content to make Udayana a polygamist, he is himself willing to become a madman. His pride in his country is as great as that of Bismarck in Germany, or Chatham in England.

He is not an unlearned demagogue, or a chance favourite who gets into high power. He is a hereditary minister's son, and has read all the books on politics available in his time. He scoffs at Bharatarohaka for the failure of his half-baked tricks with elephants, etc., and takes a legitimate pride in his own suc-cessful counter-trick. He openly boasts about the victory won by his intellect and long training. The ingenuity with which he devises the plan for the release of his king, the swiftness with which he revises that plan, and converts it into a plan for releasing the king from the prison and Vasavadatta from the inner apartments of the palace, the masterly way in which he fills Ujjaini with his spies, and makes that town another Kau-sambi, except for the walls and the flags, his ingenious devices for making elephants run amok, his capacity to win over Maha-sena's men to his side, his keeping himself well informed of cur-

rent events through his spies, all these show his mastery of the politics of those days.

But, he is not a mere politician. Like all the greatest politicians of the world, he is also a soldier. His is not the kind *of* decadent politics dependent on mere intrigue. He can fight, and fight well too. Single-handed, he fights the troops of Mahasena, and keeps them at bay till his master has time to escape with Vasavadatta. Even though his sword is broken in twain by an elephant's tusk, he continues to fight. He is brave, and does not at all supplicate for mercy when caught. Fearlessly, he tells Bharatarohaka, when asked what political science advises about the treatment to be meted out to a foe vanquished in battle, "death."

He has a high sense of duty for himself and for others. When he is caught napping, and his king is taken prisoner, he describes the king's message to him as an expression of his opinion that he has done nothing in return for the food, honour and dignity he has received. He says that the women, by their wailing for Vatsaraja's fate, are making the incompetence and worthlessness of the ministers patent. He takes dreadful oaths to release the king, and, with single-pointed energy, concentrates on the task and achieves it. When he has achieved it, he says that he is victorious, happy and calm, and that he has finished with enmity, fear and dishonour, and feels as happy as Aswathama felt when he slew the slayer of his father. He compares his joy to that of the sages who go to the forest, to those who die after accomplishing their tasks, and to those who die without a single thing to repent for. He asks the Ujjain soldiers to allow the people who want to see him to do so, so that they may see how ministers should suffer for their king and country, and either resolve to do so, or drop all idea of becoming ministers. So, the desire for personal power and wealth is, according to him, the most reprehensible thing in a minister, and, we, in these days of democracy, had better emphasise that.

This sense of duty makes him as hard a critic of others as of himself. He wants to know what Rumanvan was doing when the king offered to go alone to tackle the artificial elephant. He asks Hamsaka why he left the king, instead of following him. He does not spare even the king when he deviates from this high standard. In withering words of irony, he asks his fellow-ministers whether the king sees no shame in making love when chains are clanking.

But, he would not, for that reason, leave the king to his fate, as suggested by Vasantaka. He asks him how a man, who depends on them, his friends, and does not know good times from bad, whose eyes, love and worry have dimmed, can be abandoned.

With all his bravery and sense of duty, he has also his inner misgivings as to how his king, for whom he is sacrificing himself, will view it all.

He has a great pride in the Bharata race, the premier royal family of India. No Indian can help being touched by the remarkable beauty of these simple sentiments, and, be it noted, the principal thing attributed to those ideal monarchs is the utter freedom from lust for other people's women, a thing shown by Kalidasa also to be a dominant trait of Dushyanta. The description of Udayana's ancestors, the Bharata kings, by Mahasena, as those who loved and were loved by the Vedas, and who were the beloved of their subjects, shows that Yaugandharayana is not making any false claim on behalf of his kings.

Like all leaders of men, Yaugandharayana is considerate to his men, and can command great devotion from them. Thus, Salaka, a mere messenger, tells him that though the way is long, his love for him will make him go farther. Rumanvan and Vasantaka put on the disguises of a monk and beggar for his sake. Vasavadatta is so convinced that he is working for Udayana's welfare that she consents to his horrible plan willingly. All this shows the magnetic influence he has over his subordinates and servants. But, just as genius is 99 per cent, perspiration, and one per cent, inspiration, magnetic influence, too, is 99 per cent, consideration, and one per cent, inexplicable attraction. Yaugandharayana asks Salaka to rest awhile, requests Hamsaka to sit down, finds an excuse for Hamsaka's naming him against ceremonial etiquette, is very considerate to the Queen-Mother and her feelings as a mother, and gives Vijaya excellent instructions for gently breaking the news.

He has a high sense of friendship. The Queen-Mother too, in her message to him, says that he was a friend before he became a minister, and, so, is another son to her, and should restore her son to her. These things emphasise the beliefs of those times, that friendship is a bond stronger than that of relationship, and that sons' friends are like sons.

For all his being the prime minister of the king, and a stickler for his king's honour, prestige and authority, he has a righteous indignation against unnecessary exercise of authority, as is shown by his condemnation of the Magadha king's servants, when they ask people in the hermitage to move aside. In telling language, he says that those who are asking people to move from the path are themselves moving away from the path of righteousness.

He is entirely without any selfish desire for advancement or aggrandisement or prosperity. He is, of course, capable of sudden anger, like all strong men. Bharatarohaka describes him

as an angry snake insulted and put in basket, His anger at Mahasena's trick in capturing Udayana is shown by his setting fire to several houses in Ujjaini.

He has many noble impulses. He is very sensitiyp reflating kindness, He expresses that death will be better than the offer of a golden chalice to him who has set fire to many houses belonging to those who offer it to him, and when the fires are still burning. This is reminiscent of the famous play *A woman killed by kindness.* He is also generous, as is seen from his warm tribute to Rumanvan on hearing about his frank words of advice to Udayana in the Elephant Forest, and his wishing that he can be as frank as Rutruanvan. This is also seen from his generous praise of Rumanvan in *"The Vision of Vasavadatta"*, and this, in spite of the fact that Rumanvan is still at Court, as minister, whereas he himself is wandering about in a hermit's disguise.

He is essentially an optimist, and a believer in human effort, though, like all wise men, he recognizes that, sometimes, Fate will prevail over the best efforts and nullify them. Indeed, Yaugandharayana seems to have read the two stories in the Panchatantra,[1] one (The Weaver Who Fought Against, Fate) showing human effort prevailing over Fate, and the other (The Votary of Fate) showing Fate's power. He has no great belief in things superstitious, though he does not avoid any prevalent custom simply on the ground that it might also be somewhat superstitious. Thus, he is quite willing to have the auspicious cord made and blessed by the married ladies for sending it to Vatsaraja to ensure his safety from enemies, demons, wild beasts, etc., but, like a modern, requests the Queen-Mother to send it at once, even if it were to be made and blessed by only one married woman, and alludes to its uselessness when it arrives after the news of the capture of the king.

In the matter of astrology, he seems to have been more credulous. He made all his plans about Vatsaraja's marriage with Padmavati basing them on the prediction of Pushpaka, Bhadraka, and other eminent astrologers, that Padmavati was sure to become the consort of Vatsaraja. Of course, in defence of this, we can say that that particular prediction comes out right; and, so, Yaugandharayana is not proved to be wrong, as he believes only in it, and does not believe in any prediction which goes wrong. Shakespeare, in his *Julius Caesar*, seems to blame Caesar for not acting on the astrologer's prediction about the Ides of March.

He is an adept at disguises. The great prime minister of Vatsa can run about the streets of Ujjaini as a contemptible

[1]See my "Panchatantra and Hitopatesa Stories", stories Nos. 22 and 21.

madman, carrying sweets with him, and bawling out 'sweets, **sweets He can disguise himself effectively as a hermit, and even Udayana cannot recognize him at first. He has not become fossilized, like lesser men,** by **his job, but can be different things to different men,** a sign of intellectual dynamism.

His intelligence is sharp as a razor, though also heavy as a hammer. His quick and ready retorts to Rharatarohaka, repelling every attack; his witty and sarcastic remarks about Mahasena's army and the carelessness of Mahasena's ministers who take such good care of the casket after the jewel has gone, and consider the problem of lopping the branches after the trunk has been cut, all show this. Peshwa Raji Rao , the great prime minister of Sahu Chatrapati, when he said "Cut the trunk! The branches will fall off by themselves," was only echoing Yaugandharayana's words. When Yaugandharayana is told that Vatsaraja has been recaptured, he is not taken in, and replies, with convincing arguments, as to why the report cannot be true. So, too, he is not taken in by Udayana's specious excuse that, in desiring to take away Vasavadatta, he is only anxious to be more fully revenged on Mahasena for the trick played on him.

He has a commanding appearance, an iron will and a booming and distinctive voice. Few people dare to oppose him. The jester, the boldest of the lot, suggests to him the abandoning of Vatsaraja to his fate, but gets a crushing answer, and keeps quiet. Rumanvan does not dare even to suggest any such thing. There are certain strong personalities in the world who can crush opposition like a steam-roller, whether they call themselves mahatmas, monarchs, aristocrats, democrats or even communists, and Yaugandharayana is, undoubtedly, one of them.

He has an inborn capacity to organise, as is shown by his organising Vatsaraja's release from Ujjaini, the fire at Lavanaka, the entrustment of Vasavadatta to Padmavati, etc. Of course, he has the necessary psychological insight. Thus, he knows that Vasavadatta will be treated well by Padmavati; that Padmavati will not go back upon her word, once given; and that the king of Magadha will offer Padmavati to Vatsaraja, the moment he becomes a widower, and will offer his help for regaining his kingdom. This psychological insight is also seen by his advice to Vijaya how to break the sad news to the Queen-Mother, and his correct analysis of the weakness of Mahasena's army. His remarks that even deities, when unrecognized, are insulted by the world, show his profound insight into human nature and conduct. So also, his words:—"The wheel of fortune **turns with** time, **like the** spokes of a cart wheel running through **a** lane."

He is an impetuous man, like all men of deep emotion **and** heroic actions. When he hears from Hamsaka about Vatsa-raja's calamity, he thinks of putting an end to his own life. His taking the two oaths also shows his impetuous nature. He is fully conscious of his defects, as is shown by his self-condemnation to Hamsaka.

He has his own share of the very human desire for praise and popularity. He asks the soldiers of Ujjaini to allow him to be seen by the citizens after his heroic deeds, so that they may not remember him merely as the contemptible madman who has been wandering about the streets. He is very highly pleased by the Queen-Mother's referring to him as a son, and by Udayana's sending *him* a special message, instead of to the Council of Ministers. The very fact that, before taking his first vow, he asks Vijaya as to what the Queen-Mother said, and Hamsaka as to what Udayana said, shows this.

His love for Udayana is shown by the pathetic words of grief he utters on hearing about his capture, and by his initial inability to tell Vijaya about the capture, and the characteristic monosyllables which convey no meaning to her, but are uttered by him owing to excess of emotion. But, he is no courtier or flatterer or toady. His sentiments about the king's inopportune love affairs while in jail, expressed to Rumanvan and the jester, are enough proof of it. No wonder, Rumanvan is the person who attends on the king constantly, and not this explosive and frank premier.

in Yaugandharayana, Bhasa has portrayed a great minister and a great man, indeed, one comparable to Chanakya, Chandragupta's minister whom the dramatist seems to have had in mind.

Rumanvan.—Rumanvan is a very devoted minister, and is efficient in his own way. He has none of the commanding personality or intelligence of Yaugandharayana, but, is, by no means, devoid[1] of talents, as his telling Yaugandharayana that night is worse for unsuccessful people than day, though, abstractly, day and night, are the same, shows, as also his suggesting to Yaugandharayana to revise his plan and convert it into one for rescuing the king from the prison, and Vasavadatta from the inner apartments, instead of wasting his time in criticising the king's inopportune love-making. His devotion to the king is beautifully brought out by the student of theology, as well as by Yaugandharayana himself. He is the person chosen to attend on the king in his days of anguish after learning about Vasavadatta's death by fire. No one else could have filled that place so well, neither Yaugandharayana nor the jester. Needless to say, Rumanvan is a very deep fellow, as he manages to attend on the king assiduous-

ly without even giving him a hint that he knows that Vasavadatta 's death is a myth. Even in the folk-lore story, it is significant that it is by looking at Yaugandharayana and Gopalaka that Udayana suspects Vasavadatta to be alive, and not by looking at Rumanvan. It is a fact that often second-rate men, like Rumanvan, have got the tremendous capacity to retain secrets, considered to be an outstanding quality of the Civil Service in England and other advanced countries.

But, in spite of such secrecy and apparent duping, his devotion and unselfishness are so taken for granted that Udayana, on learning from Yaugandharayana that Rumanvan also knew about the plot, simply exclaims, good-humouredly, "What a rogue Rumanvan is!"

Bharatarohaka.—Bharatarohaka is depicted as a minister priding in his knowledge of politics, but found wanting when weighed in the scales. He has got great influence over Mahasena, and is responsible for the trick which captures Udayana. But, as Yaugandharayana remarks justly, the elephant trick did more injury than good to Ujjaini, as Vatsaraja went away taking Vasavadatta, and burning half the houses *in* Ujjaini, by reversing the elephant trick on the head of the surprised Bharatarohaka. Like third-rate people, Bharatarohaka sees only the consequences *he* intends, and not all the natural consequences of his acts. Even in his verbal duel with Yaugandharayana, he is uniformly defeated. Of course, he has sense enough to recognise his inferiority to that great minister. In fact, he meets him half-hesitatingly, and[1] expecting all that he gets He has also the saving commonsense of knowing when he is beaten. He orders Yaugandharayana *s chains to be taken off, and reverses his policy of hostility to Vatsaraja, and, in the end, agrees to Mahasena's policy, and must have taken part in the marriage, in effigy, of Vatsaraja and Vasavadatta, though with mental reservations. He must have rejoiced at Arum's usurpation, and made Mahasena withhold help from Udayana, a characteristic of all third-rate minds filled with spite at their defeat by master minds.

Kaunjayana.—He is long-winded, dilatory and self-pitying. When telling the king and queen about the attack on Kurangi's carriage by the rogue elephant, he waxes eloquent about the condition of the elephant, the panic of the mob, and the guarding of the exits from the park, forgetting to mention whether the princess is safe, and is sharply pulled up by the king with the question, "The details may wait;; tell me, is Kurangi all right?" He replies that she is safe, and is allowed to go on with his long-winded rigmarole. Like all such gas-bags, he has a feeling that he does not get the credit due to him, and complains that if things turn out well the people attribute this to the king, and'

that if things turn out ill they attribute it to the ministers. But, he is not altogether a fatuous and futile individual. He too has his sparks of sense now and then. Thus, he tells the king that marriages are best arranged with many doorways open, and that, therefore, it is better to keep the messenger from Benares waiting. It is obvious that he could not have continued to be a minister if he were devoid of the least particle of commonsense.

Bhutika.—Bhutika is gifted better with sense and commonsense than Kaunjayana. He recommends the marriage of Kurangi to Vishnusena (Avimaraka) as he is related both to the king and to the queen He is the man deputed by the queen to go and look after Kurangi's safety when she hears that the elephant has run amok. The queen evidently sends him as she has not much confidence in the speedy tackling of the situation by Kaunjayana. Bhutika easily guesses that Avimaraka must be of noble birth despite his outcaste disguise. He also gets news about the Sauvira prince's disappearance. He is an able minister without portfolio, not great by any means, but useful and serviceable.

Sumantra.—Sumantra is an example of an old and faithful minister who moves on terms of easy familiarity with the king, queens, and princes, and is respected by them, owing to his attachment and devotion to the family as well[1] as his proved wisdom and probity. He says to Bharata "Yes, prince, I am Sumantra, now the driver of an empty chariot. Pursued by the evils of old age, ashamed of my ingratitude, I still live on, though the king has passed away. " He asks Bharata not to describe himself as "the son of the greedy Kaikeyi", as it implies disrespect for his elders. He refuses to announce Bharata as "a stain on the house of Ikshvaku". He says that he will meet Rama only after Bharata has seen him, as this is the first occasion on which he meets him after his father's death. He remarks to himself that his going on living, after witnessing Rama's exile, Dasaratha's death, Bharata's grief and Sita's abduction, makes him feel guilty as if he himself has committed a string of crimes. He is a fine charioteer in addition to being a minister. He has also the great gift of powerful and touching description, as when he tells Dasaratha about Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, "Long they pondered, oh king, as if they would say something, and their lips trembled with the words, but their throats were paralysed with tears, and they went off to the forest without a word."

Salankayana.—He is a minister and general of ability, and is one of those comparatively young men who earn the favour of kings and governments by doing the jobs entrusted to them neatly. He traps Udayana by means of the elephant trick. Though he himself receives blows from Udayana, and falls down unconscious, he forgets his grievance, orl recovering from his fit of tin-

consciousness, and prevents the killing of Udayana by his enraged men, and takes him to Ujjaini in a litter, after getting his wounds dressed, as ordered by Mahasena. Needless to say, he is given a well-deserved triumphal entry into Ujjaini.

6. HEROES AND HEROINES.

HEROES.

There are innumerable heroes in Bhasa's plays. Bhishma and Drona are shown as great warriors, and as grand old men with a firm love of truth, modified only by a keen sense of loyalty to their king.

Bhishma.—Bhishma's lion-like valour in battle is exemplified by Duryodhana's offering him a lion-seat. In spite of his valour, Bhishma thinks that a man who lives by waging war is inferior to one who lives by non-violence, and tells Drona, "I am inferior to you. My livelihood depends on arms, and yours on their denial." He is at heart full of sympathy for the Pandavas, and hates Sakuni who has stirred up feud in the family. He has a keen sense of humour, as is shown by his handing over Arjuna's arrow to Sakuni, who disputes the presence of the Pandavas there, to read the name on it, on the pretext that his eyes are weak, due to old age. He has sound common sense. He asks Drona not to get angry, and tells him that conciliation is the only remedy for the ill-behaved. He asks him to concentrate on his objective, and not to fly at a tangent, by pursuing a quarrel with Sakuni. The moment he hears about the slaughter of Keechaka and his people by an unknown man with his bare arms, he guesses that it must be Bhima who did this deed, and[1] when Drona asks him how he knows it, replies, "Will old bulls fail to recognise the marks of their calves, frisking along the river banks?" He is fearless of death, and, indeed, chooses the manner of his death. That is why Dhritarashtra tells Duryodhana, in *Diitaghatotkacha*, [44]hishma\s death depended on his own will. He was cut down in accordance with his own advice, well content."

Drona.—Drona is an anomaly. He is a Brahman and a teacher, and ought to have pursued non-violence, and not violence. Though he was one of the greatest warriors, that was only a mere accident, and, indeed, the superficial part of him; really, and in essence, he was a votary of non-violence, being only a teacher, as is shown by Bhishma's telling him, "My livelihood depends on arms, yours on their denial. You are the preceptor, and we are your pupils' pupils." He cares little for wealth, and his greatest desire is to bring about amity between the Kauravas and the Pandavas and thus repay his debt to their house for the hospitality shown to him. That is why he begs of Duryodhana, as his

preceptor's fee, that the Pandavas be given their half share in the kingdom. It is because of this trait of unselfishness in his character that Duryodhana offers him a tortoise-seat to exemplify the fact that he can draw in his senses even as a tortoise can draw in its limbs. He is intolerant of meanness, chicanery and low intrigue. That is why he gets angry with Sakuni, and, when Bhishma asks him not to quarrel, retorts, "No cringing. Let us rather have the quarrel."

Aswathama.—He is the son of Drona, but is much less lovable. The only thing he is shown as doing in Bhasa's plays is coming in a raging fury, after witnessing Bhima's foul play in his wrestling with Duryodhana, and taking a vow to raid the Pandava camp at night and destroy the Pandavas. The epic mentions that he murdered the five sons of Draupadi in the Pandava camp, and was punished, for this senseless and insane act, by the plucking out of the jewel from his head, making him always feel the burning pain in his head as a just punishment for his misdeed. In *Yaug and har ay ana's* Vows, Yaugandharayana tells Bharatarohaka that he is as calm as Aswathama after he had slain the murderer of his father, referring to Aswathama's killing of Sikhandin, the woman-man who kills Drona.

Bhima.—Bhima is shown as a mighty hero terrible in battle, but really affectionate at heart, and ready to die for the weak and the oppressed, as when he offers himself in the place of the Brahman boy in *Madhyamavyayoga*. He is shown as lifting up Abhimanyu bodily from his chariot in the midst of his heroic acts of valour. He shows his sense of humour by teasing Abhimanyu who does not recognise him. When told by the Virata king that he captured Abhimanyu unarmed, he replies, "No, I had these two arms of mine, and only weaklings require other arms." At the instance of Krishna, he resorts to foul play in the fight with Duryodhana. When Balarama shouts out that he will kill him for it, he has to be ltd away by the Pandavas and Krishna, as he is not the kind of man to run away himself. At the time of the outrage on Draupadi, he measures the pillars of the hall with a view to pull it down on Duryodhana, Duhsasana and his ministers, and is deterred from doing so only by Yudhisthira. He is also shown as an affectionate father taking pride in Ghatotkacha, and as an affectionate uncle proud of Abhimanyu.

Arjuna.—He is shown as a mighty warrior who, disguised as Brihannala, defeats, single-handed, the whole Kaurava army in the Virata country[7]. He is very fond of Abhimanyu, and embraces him with warmth after the long separation. He teases Abhimanyu by a number of apparently rude questions. On the death of Abhimanyu, he vows to kill all the hundred princes, who

took part in his death, before sun-set the next day. He is a great favourite of Vasudeva, who even acts as his charioteer.

Abhimanyu.—He is a brave and reckless prince of undaunted courage. He is the greatest fighter in the Kaurava raid on the Virata country, in *Pmicharatra,* and he meets his death in a fight with a host of renowned warriors when attempting to storm the labyrinthine fortifications of the Kauravas, throwing away his youth in that audacious action against countless odds, as described in *Dutaghatotkacha.* His pride of family and aristocratic bearing are fully brought out in *Pancharatra.* He scorns to be set free by any but Bhima, and, when King Virata offers to set him free, begs to be kept like an ordinary prisoner, with fetters on his legs, till Bhima conies and rescues him.

Charudatta.—He is shown as a noble- merchant who has sacrificed all his riches in the service of humanity, in general, and of friends in particular. Mot one request for help made to him is made in vain. He treats his body as if it were a public trust. He is compared to a tank which quenches men's thirsts and gets dried up in the process. He regrets the loss of riches only because it has made it impossible for him to continue his charity any more, and has lost him his friends. He is positive that, if he gets rich again, he will spend the money exactly as before. He makes the poignant remark that a man without riches is like a living corpse, no man heeding his words, and even his magnanimity becoming ridiculous He says also truly that the restoration of riches to one who has fallen into poverty is like the gift of a lamp to one lost in darkness. But he remarks, with justice, that no one can be said to be poor who has a devoted wife and a loving friend, like him He is a fine figure of a man, dignified but not arrogant, charming but not conscious of his charm, clever but kind, able but polite, respected by all, calm' and collected, but easy to please, generous but not boasting of it, remembering even petty obligations, and forgetting grievous wrongs.

While he can be wholly admired for his generosity and piety, the same thing cannot be said about his family life. With a devoted wife who adores him, he falls in love with a courtesan, however admirable her nature, with not even a passing regret for this unfaithful conduct. Indeed, his only regret seems to be that her love for him has come when it is impossible for him to indulge in it owing to the loss of his wealth, and that he must, therefore, subside that love in his own breast, as a coward does his wrath. Even the noble sacrifice of her only remaining jewel, her pearl-necklace, by his wife, for being given as compensation for the jewels entrusted to him by the courtesan, excites no repentance in him, or love for the partner of his life. But it must be sadly confessed that men like him live in millions all over the world,

honoured in men's eyes, **and** not censured by any. He is fond of music, and, perhaps, that is the reason why he easily falls a victim to his love for the courtesan. First, love of art, then of the artist, and then neglect of wife and home—this is the familiar "rake's progress." But, of course, Charudatta is not a rake in the strict sense of the term. He is an example of "the eternal triangle" with this difference that, owing to the age-old tradition of the Hindus, and the assured devotion of his Hindu wife, he and the courtesan form a straight line, ignoring the wedded wife.

The love of magnanimous acts is an instinct with Charudatta. He wants to give something to Vasantasena's page for his brave act in tackling the elephant, and, finding no jewel or money, gives him his only upper cloth.

Hanuman.—Hanuman is a great hero. A tireless scout and renowned leaper, he jumps across the seas to Lanka, finds out Sita, delivers to her a message, destroys the *Asoka* park, goes back to Rama, tells him about Sita's whereabouts, and goes with Rama's army and takes part in the conquest of Lanka and the rescue of Sita. He is highly indignant at Ravana's insulting references to Rama and wants to fight him and tear him to a thousand pieces, saying, "If he overwhelms me, a great attempt will but miscarry." He is puzzled about Rama's refusing to receive back Sita and his granting her request to jump into the fire. He asks Lakshmana what he thinks about it, and Lakshmana replies, bitterly, "What T think is of no consequence. We have to carry out my brother's orders." He carries them out. A better example of a noble and faithful follower cannot be found than in this great monkey hero who is deservedly worshipped all over India.

HEROINES.

Vasantasena.—Vasantasena is one of Bhasa's heroines. Her house in Ujjaini is a palatial mansion, with several carpenters, goldsmiths, musicians, cooks and jewel-setters at work, and shows the great patronage she enjoys at the hands of the upper classes. Though a courtesan, she is depicted as generous, loving and unselfish. She is shown as being in love with Charudatta with her whole heart. She declares that she will go only to Charudatta, and scorns the attentions of Sakara though reinforced with the sending of a carriage and the present of jewels, and the consequent recommendation of her mother. She adores Charudatta, and remarks that nobody can find fault with a courtesan who loves a poor man. When Madanika tells her that loving **a** poor man is against the rules of the caste, and is as strange as bees sitting on a mango when the flowers have fallen, she retorts that she wishes to love, and not to serve, and that

bees are punished for their callousness by their hard-earned honey being robbed. She does a painting of Charudatta, and dotes on him.

She is not without shrewdness. She eludes the rake and Sakara. She guesses that Charudatta is still liable to the charms of the fair sex by the scent on his upper cloth. She tells the page, "Feather-headed people are easily amazed" on his telling her that if she had seen his deed, she would have been amazed.

She is also very courageous. She is not afraid of Sakara -and the rake despite their swords. She does not also yield to her mother's orders to favour Sakara.

Her generosity to the shampooer, and to Saj jalaka and Madanika must excite our admiration. After having gifted away her jewels to Madanika, and pushed her off along with her lover, Sajjalaka, she goes in the storm to Charudatta's house to return the pearl-necklace which she has accepted from the jester only for the sake of returning it herself. The last glimpse of her in the play is thus highly befitting her.

7. VILLAINS AND VILLATNESSKS.

VILLAINS.

Sakara.—Bhasa has comparatively few villains in his plays. One of them is Sakara, the Tndian Falstaff. This man is the l)rother-in-law of the king of Ujjaini, and a powerful noble, but, as is not unusual in some such cases, is a worthless debauchee using his rank and status as aids and attractions for his immoral purposes. He has attached to him a parasite in the form of the rake who accompanies him merely for the sake of the belly, and has a great contempt for him in his heart of hearts. Terrific in his threats, he is really a coward at heart, and runs away panic-stricken the moment the light is brought and he finds his friend, the rake, gone. He tries all kinds of means to secure his evil ends, threats, bribes, cajolery and entreaty. His statements *"I* can hear the smell with my own ears. Hut, I cannot see properly, as my nostrils are full of fog," are amusing. So too his malapropisms.

The Rake.—This is a learned man who has fallen on evil days, and has taken to wickedness for a living. He has attached himself to Sakara simply for the sake of his belly. He has a great contempt for his paymaster, as can be seen by his palming off Radanika on him, as Vasantasena, with a side remark, "I will palm her off on the swine", and by his remarks about Sakara ^'Gesticulating with all his limbs, he utters sheer rubbish devoid of sense. His movements are uncouth. He is an incarnation of

the beast in human form." He is also fond of terrific threats, as when he asks Vasantasena to go and ascertain from the police-men in the market-place how many people had escaped being murdered by him, and implores her to save him from the horror of adding a maiden's murder to his other murders. He has a touch of humour, as all such rakes have, as when he says that, though the night is black, his character is much blacker, and, so, is light in comparison, and he can pursue prostitutes along any lane on the darkest night.

Sajjalaka.—Sajjalaka is shown as a better kind of villain. He takes to burglary only in order to pay Vasantasena the price of Madanika, whom he loves and wants to free and marry. He proclaims the doctrine that a burglar commits no crime by robbing a merchant, as the latter is always living by cheating and by sucking the blood of the poor. "Merchants cheat, in day-time, people who trust them" says he. He prefers the indepen-dence of the burglar to eking out his livelihood by folding his hands, to a master, in servility. He hates to rob the poor. He has a mastery of vigorous metaphors and similes, and also a sense of humour, as when he calls his sacred thread "a sacred thread by day, a measuring line by night."

Of course, Bhasa has got two other villains painted on a larger scale, namely, Kamsa and Havana.

VILLAIN KSS.

There is only one villainess, Putana, casually referred to, in *Balacharita,* as going to kill the baby Krishna by suckling him from her poisoned dugs, but having her life itself sucked out bv the marvellous babe.

8. JESTERS.

Vasantaka.—Vasantaka, is one of those glorious jesters whom Indian literature abounds in. He is quite different from Santhushta in *Avimaraku* and Maitreya in *Charudatta.* He is, like all Bhasa's jesters, not a mere buffoon or fool, but 'a jolly good fellow'. Like all jesters, he loves the good things of life, and has no sympathy with sackcloth and ashes, or rolling on the ground in agony for things which cannot be remedied. He is very glad when his grieving and wandering and god-forsaken master is once more in velvet, at the Magadhan Court, with mosaic rooms to bathe in, delicious dishes to eat, etc. His preference for Vasavadatta over Padmavati is solely based on that lady's giving him endless sweetmeats to eat, be it remembered, not at all a bad test to judge people by, seeing that the whole world revolves on the belly, not only with the jester, but with all the rest of us.

But, Vasantaka is no mere glutton, with no other qualifications. He can put on effective disguises, as when he disguises himself as a beggar in Act III of "Yaugandharayana's Vows", and utters delicious nonsense about sweets, and about Siva's being a thief. His remarks, incidentally, show his knowiedge regarding mythology, and colours and paintings.

He has an insatiable curiosity, as when he wants Udayana, who is newly wedded to Padmavati, to tell him whether he loved Vasavadatta or Padmavati more, and keeps on pressing him to answer, despite his obvious reluctance, not taking mere hints showing which way his inclination lies, but wanting plain answers, to the disgust of Padmavati. He is also quite a good intermediary and liaison officer, never allowing the chain of communication between Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan on the one hand and Udayana on the other to break. He has the usual Brahman's feeling (from those times to these) that the days of the Brahmans are over. Of course, he is a Brahman, as all jesters have to be in Sanskrit dramas, for the simple reason that none but a man belonging to the superior castes, and thoroughly non-violent, and, so, not at all dangerous as a possible competitor, could be allowed to be so familiar with the king.

He is not a toady or mere flatterer, and is fully capable of moving on equal terms with the king, a rare quality in any age. He is not a poltroon. In his dealing with the king, he defies him to use force on him if he can, and makes the king abandon that mode of approach, and take to entreaty. He knows to move freely with servants and make them honour, respect and love him, another rare quality. The way in which the maidservants speak to him is evidence of this. He has fits of disgust and anger, too, as, when he asks Yaugandharayana to leave Vatsaraja to his fate.

He has a delicious sense of humour. When Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan tell him that they do not understand what he says, he replies, in unforgettable words, -7 understand my thoughts first." So, too, when Yaugandharayana says that it will be praiseworthy to go on spending the rest of their days in Ujjaini, even though Vatsaraja would not be rescued, he replies, humorously, that it will be praiseworthy if the world understood why they were doing so. When he is further told by the indignant Yaugandharayana that the servants of the King of Vatsa are not doing anything to please the world, but only to please their master, pat comes the reply that the master too will not realise their sacrifices. Vasantaka, in short, is a person, who need not fear comparison with the jester in King Lear, or any other jester in the dramas of the world.

Maitreya.—The jester in Charudatta is another jolly figure, but is different from Vasantaka. He too loves good food in plenty. His description of his eating and drinking in gargantuan fashion is **delightful.** "Once, **I used** to spend my days in Charudatta's house chewing the cud of sweets and savouries, **like** a **bull** at the cross-roads stuffed **up** to **the gullet.** I **used** to **sit** like a painter with his numerous pots of paints and water, surrounded by innumerable dishes of various kinds, ready throughout the twenty-four hours, seasoned with asafoetida and other spices. Tn between these, there were delicious drinks produced at the **lift** of an eye-brow/' But he can control his belly. When Charudatta's affairs became straitened, he remarks, "Now that the noble Charudatta has become poor, T live like a pigeon, running elsewhere for my food before I come to this house/' Indeed, he philosophizes about it, and says, "My belly understands the change in my affairs. Tt is now satisfied with quite a little. Tt will take a good load of rice if it is offered, but, when it is not offered, it does not expect or demand it."

He is very grateful for Charudatta's past favours, and is not like the tribe of guests entertained by Timon of Athens. Even though Charudatta has become unable to feed him, he goes and attends on him, after taking his meals elsewhere, and, indeed, takes for him a garland and a garment for his worship. He loves Charudatta with his whole heart, and his admiration for him never ceases. He consoles him in his poverty, and condoles with him in his grief.

Rut, he is not one of those yessers and nodders described so vividly by Wodehouse. He disapproves of Charudatta's infatuation for Vasantasena and of the implied injustice to his own wife. When Charudatta asks him to bring the lamp to follow Vasantasena, he replies, "There is no more oil in the lamp than there is love in a courtesan." When Charudatta wants to give his wife's priceless pearl-necklace to Vasantasena, in return for her jewels lost in the burglary, he exclaims "Alas, a necklace worth a hundred thousand to replace a trumpery casket of jewels!"

He has, like all poor but honest men, a great dread of being in custody of valuable jewels, for fear of losing them. So, he gets no sleep when he is having them, and, in his anxiety to get rid of them as early as possible, hands them over to the burglar, Sajjalaka, mistaking him for Charudatta.

He has no great stock of courage, and hesitates to go to the rescue of Radanika on seeing the swords of Sakara and **the** rake, but he can recognise a coward, and, so, when **the** rake has gone, leaving Sakara alone, he brandishes the lantern in front of Sakara, and scares him away. He takes no **delight** in **sensation-monger-**

ing, and, indeed, asks Radanika not to tell Charudatta about her being dragged by Sakara and the rake. He is, like most jesters, too wise to believe in offerings to wayside deities. He tells Charudatta that he has no faith, and that he had better depute somebody to do that worship. Finally, he asks Radanika to tell Charudatta that the oblations had been offered to the deities, though all that occurred was the incident with Sakara and the rake.

He has got a good sense of humour. He says that nobody will eat even the stone of the very sweetest mango. He telfs Charudatta that his intellect is like the reflection in a mirror, taking right for left and left for right. When the rake begs his pardon for the rude handling of Radanika, he tells him that he is not to blame, seeing that the public are tolerating such conduct. He remarks, when he is in custody of the jewels, that he does not get sleep any more than a monk who has made an assignation with a servant girl. He tells Charudatta that a man singing cuts a sorry figure like a priest garlanded with red flowers and that a woman preaching is as ghastly as a cow with a slit nose bellowing. He tells Charudatta, when the latter praises the lute, "I don't enjoy the cursed lute. I wish all its strings had snapped".

He has got more than his share of shrewdness. When CharudattaV wife offers him the pearl-necklace on the pretext that it is a gift to him at the end of her fast, he soon trips her up, and makes her maid reveal her real intention. He has a high sense of honour. He tells Charudatta's wife that if her tears had not been caused by the smoke from the altar, as she pretended, Charudatta would curse her. He tells Charudatta, when questioned by him, what the gift of the pearl-necklace meant, "Tt is the result of your marrying a woman of your own rank." He is highly indignant when Vasantasena accepts the pearl-necklace from him without even a word of polite refusal. His reply to Charudatta "No, not a lady, but a gentleman" referring to the burglar, is classic.

Santhushta.—Santhushta, the jester figuring in Avimaraka, is an equally delightful figure. He is as devoted to his master, Avimaraka, as Vasantaka is to Udayana, and Maitreya is to Charudatta. Indeed, Avimaraka's being an outcaste, it is dangerous for a Brahman to visit him. Still Santhushta visits him under the camouflage of visits to various Brahmans. He sticks to Avimaraka through thick and thin, and loves him, and is loved by him.

He also loves good food. Indeed, his love for a good dinner makes it easv for the maid, Chandrika, to rob him of his ring by dangling a sumptuous dinner before his eyes. He even gives

up the right to the cash gift in his love for the dinner. When Avimaraka finally rejoins Kurangi, and Nalinika brings things for Kurangi's bath, **he** exclaims, "**What** does she want bathing things for, when she is dying of hunger? Go at once, and fetch something to eat. I will take the head of the table."

He is witty like all jesters. Thus, when he cannot run fast in pursuit of Chandrika, he says, "My feet stick to the same spot like those of a man pursued by an elephant in a dream." He tells Avimaraka that he knows well all his super-human deeds in the past, but that, all the same, getting into another man's house at night is a risky business, and that Kuntibhoja's ministers are frightful fellows.

He retorts to Kurangi that he is *no* more ridiculous than she is, seeing that she wanted to commit suicide, but heard a clap of thunder and cried out, "Oh save me, save me!". He lells Nalinika, when she asks "Who is this man*'" "How clever you are! Nobody else took me for a man! They thought that I was an old woman!" He does some ludicrous things, as all jesters do. Thus, when he becomes invisible on being touched by Avimaraka, he is afraid that his body has disappeared, and, to reassure himself, spits on his hand, and satisfies himself, by the cooling libation falling on the hand, that his body is still there. When Nalinika drags him along lovingly, he cries out, "Help, help, an outrage on a Brahman!" When she tells him that she will give him all her jewels, he tells her, "Uttering the word 'butter' will not remove bile. Give those jewels into my hands" and takes them. So, too, he tells Chandrika that Brahmans who can both read and understand are rare, and that he is one of these rare Brahmans, and has mastered five verses of a treatise on drama called the Ramayana, in less than a year. Chandrika replies that he is hereditarily learned, and asks him to read the monogram on her ring. He finds himself unable to read it and **replies** "that word is not in my book, my lady." He tells Nalinika "With my sacred thread, I am a Brahman. Without it, and in rags, I am a hermit. If I take all my clothes off, I become a Jain monk." When accused of being too bookish in describing Kurangi's beauty, he tells Avimaraka, "You know me and so you mock me. People who have not known me before will praise me highly." Again, he tells Avimaraka "When my father died, T tried mighty hard to weep, but not a tear. So, what chance, now, for somebody else's troubles?"

But he is capable of evoking deep attachment even from men of solid merit like Avimaraka, who, after getting the invisible ring, remarks, "I wonder in what **plight** Santhushta is! **If** he has **heard of** my escape **it will be all** right. Otherwise, the poor old Brahman **will die of grief* Without him, all** my **plans will**

be in vain, for he is droll to converse with. He is a comforter in sorrow and is brave in facing the foe. He is a great delight to my heart. Indeed, he is my other half."

The object of having these jesters is to keep the kings human, instead of making them degenerate into pompous and conceited fools, by supplying a kind of licensed criticism from these boon-companions. Bhasa's jesters do this work admirably.

9. THE CHAMBERLAINS.

The chamberlains, shown in these plays, are a lovable, dignified and learned lot. *Of* course, custom required that they should be aged Brahmins of learning, loyalty, character, commonsense, calmness, truth and knowledge of hospitality and etiquette. Badarayana, Mahasena's chamberlain, is shown as having a great pride in his master and kingdom, and taking a vivid interest in his master's affairs, like the princess's marriage. He knows how to entertain guests, according to their gradations, inevitable with kings. He is a stickler for etiquette, and prostrates to Mahasena when, in his excitement at the capture of Vatsaraja, he did not communicate the news with the usual prefix "Victory to Mahasena." We may be certain that nothing that even Mahasena could do could have prevented Badarayana from prostrating at this gross breach of etiquette. With solemn pride, he offers to Mahasena the Veena, Ghoshavati. He describes Vatsaraja's condition with skill, and runs errands, despite his old age, efficiently and promptly. He announces his arrival at Kausambi with pardonable vanity and pomp. He asks Udayana to sit down and hear Mahasena's message, though he, undoubtedly, rejoices at Udayana's standing up initially to hear that message, and praises him for doing so, as an act worthy of the son of Vaidehi. He has got a lot of worldly wisdom in him, as, when he remarks about Mahasena's not accepting or rejecting any of the suitors, probably because the man destined to wed Vasavadatta had not sent his message, and when, he asks, with the mellowed wisdom of old age, "Who can arrest death, when the victim's hour has come? Who can save the pitcher when the ropes break asunder? Who can prevent the perishing and springing of trees and men in their due seasons?" His description of the women celebrating the marriage of Vasavadatta and Udayana in effigy, shedding tears of joy, brings to mind Shelley's famous line "Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught."

The chamberlain of Magadha belongs to the same general category, though there are some individual differences. Like Badarayana, he has also a pride in his king and princess, and proclaims that they would never break the law. He asks the

sages to go and follow their avocations, and fetch grass, firewood and water, as the stay of Padmavati in their midst would not make the slightest difference. But, unlike Badarayana, he exhibits an intolerance of the exercise of harsh authority, the result of his serving a less pompous and authoritarian king. He asks the guards not to push people out of the way in the hermitage and bring their king to shame. He invites the hesitant student of theology to walk freely into the hermitage, as a hermitage is common to all. He wants the student to accept his hospitality, as he has gone there before. It is difficult to imagine Badarayana inviting a student to share his hospitality, though he is in his proper place in entertaining the Hon'ble Jaivanti. To Badarayana, nature exists only to glorify Mahasena, whereas the chamberlain of Magadha shows an instinctive love of nature, as when he describes the sunset scene. The chamberlain of Magadha has his stock of wisdom no whit inferior to Badarayana's. Thus, he remarks that it is easier to part with wealth or life or hoarded merit, but very difficult to guard over a young woman deserted by her husband, night and day. He has got a picturesque and effective way of putting things, as is clear from his call to the hermits to ask for any thing they want. He expresses a desire that he may meet Yaugandharayana, disguised as a wandering hermit, again, a thing which Badarayana would not have done, unless, of course, he knew the hermit to be Yaugandharayana, in which case he could utter graceful sentiments. His delivery of the Magadhan king's message to Udayana is dignified.

The chamberlain in *Pratima*, Arya Balaki, is another dignified and learned individual. He takes pride in making all the arrangements for Rama's coronation even before the female door-keeper conveys to him the king's orders to do so. He remarks that when Rama is crowned, the subjects will have all that they desire. He is indignant at the helpless state of Dasaratha brought about by Kaikeyi's demands, and goes to Rama, crying-out, "Protection, prince, protection!" When Rama tells him that Kaikeyi is not to blame, he asks him not to attribute his own sincerity to the infatuated minds of women. He is not satisfied with Rama's explanation that he, and not Kaikeyi, can successfully be charged with greed, and is asked by Rama to keep quiet, as he will not allow any further charge against his mother. During the period of poignant grief experienced by Dasaratha after Rama has left, the chamberlain attends on him assiduously, and makes many striking comments on the king's pathetic condition and the state of the town and its denizens. He exclaims, on seeing the anguish of the king, that fate is inexorable, when even such great ones, like Dasaratha, undergo such calamity. He is deputed by Sumantra to go and tell the ministers that the king's

condition is hopeless. Finally, he gives his king his last drink **of water. He announces the arrival of** Sumantra to Bharata, **and** gives **a** striking description of Bharata as he comes. Finally, he announces to Rama the sending of congratulations by Sugriva, Nila, Mainda, Jambavat, Hanuman and others.

Ravana's chamberlain, in *Abhisheka*, is a far-seeing and sagacious man. He remarks about Ravana, "The prosperity of the demon house is setting. The king's life itself is in danger. Yet, he will not make peace by giving up Sita. Rama has crossed the perilous seas and come. He has killed every warrior of note in our army except the king. Driven by his lust, but fancying himself a great hero, the king disregards his ministers' advice and wants to fight on till death."

The chamberlain in *Balacharita* is also called Balaki, but is a far less impressive figure than the four others described above, probably because his master, Kamsa, is a wholly wicked and cruel man, not so accustomed to the civilized attendance of chamberlains. He is asked by Kamsa to go and question the household priest and the astrologer what the storm, earthquake and meteors of that night mean. He comes back and tells Kamsa that the priest and the astrologer declare that the eternal one who dwells in the sky has descended to the world of men for some mysterious purpose, and that these portents have occurred at his birth. When he tells the king that a girl has been born to Devaki, he does not believe it, and asks him if it is true. The chamberlain replies that the girl was seen in the nurse's arms by a number of the royal servants, and that he has never told the king a lie, and Kamsa is forced to admit that that is so. Indeed, he goes on to say that a Brahman's word he will take to be true, though it is false.

The chamberlain in *Dutavakya* is more shadowy and timid than the five others described above. When Duryodhana gets wild at his describing Krishna as "the best of men", he ascribes it to confusion, and purchases peace with his master, by describing the envoy as "one Kesava", to the delight of Duryodhana.

10. MINOR CHARACTERS.

Even the minor characters in these plays have got an individuality and charm. I shall deal with some of these below:—

SAGES AND PRIESTS.

A number of sages and priests figure in Bhasa's plays.

SAGES.

Narada.—The great sage, Narada, appears prominently in *Balacharita* and *Avinwraka.* He is sick of the monotonous peace

of Heaven, and wants to have some excitement by stirring up feuds in the world in order to enjoy the fun, and, in the result, to uphold righteousness and put down wickedness. He rejoices greatly at the birth of Krishna for destroying the wicked demon, Kamsa. He salutes the newly-born babe, just as the wise men **of** the East go and salute the now-born Christ. In *Avimaraka,* he comes to the aid of his friend, Kuntibhoja, who is distracted with grief, in order to reveal the whereabouts of Avimaraka and bring about the marriage of Kurangi and Avimaraka by removing all kinds of formal and sentimental objections, like her being promised in marriage to the son of Sudarsana, by giving an explanation fitting in with that promise. He is an intriguing and delightful figure.

Vyasa.—Vyasa comes to the Brahmans' feasting in Udayana's palace. He behaves like a madman, laughs aloud, and tells them, "Plat in peace, sirs, and eat to your heart's content. This royal family will prosper" and disappears at once, leaving his madman's clothes. Yaugandharayana puts on these clothes, finds himself completely transformed, and uses these clothes for going to Ujjaini in disguise as a madman and rescuing Udayana.

Parasurama.—The sage Parasurama, referred to in *Kamabhara,* is much more terrible. He will teach archery only to Brahmans, and utters a terrible curse on Kama who, disguised as a Brahman, learns archery from him. In spite of this, we get a delightful glimpse of the loving relations between teacher and pupil when we see Parasurama sleeping on Kama's lap.

Chandabhargava.—The sage Chandabhargava in *Avimaraka* is an irascible man who curses the king of the Sauviras to become an outcaste, along with his wife and child in anger at the king's abuse. But, at heart, he is not unkind, and mitigates the curse at the king's entreaty.

Blind Sage.—A blind sage, whose son Dasaratha kills, mistaking him for a wild elephant, curses the king, uttering the terrible curse, "Like me, sire, will you perish through grief for your son."

PRIESTS.

Vasishta and Vamadeva.—Priests are all treated with great respect in these plays. Vasishta and Vamadeva figure in the *Pratima.* Arya Balaki refers to Vasishta as the "embodiment of auspiciousness". Of course, Vasishta and Vamadeva are also great sages in addition to being the family *purohitas.* They are never disobeyed in the least detail, and are essential for all ceremonies, and are taken to the Statue House and to Janasthana. When Bharata is told that he should not enter the city till the auspicious star Rohini is in the ascendant, he obeys without a demur.

The Student of Theology.—He figures in *Svapna,* and flits in and flits out, like a sparrow, entering through one door and going out by another. But, Bhasa makes him narrate vividly the love of Udayana for Vasavadatta, the rolling of the king on the ground with the charred ornaments of the Queen, and the devoted attendance of Rumanvan on the king. Not content with that, he makes the student describe the hermitage in loving and feeling words. The celibate's shyness and avoidance of women are shown by the expressive words, "Oh, but the women folk!". The student, like all ancient students of India, has no desire to linger longer than necessary even for the sake of the company of such a dignitary like the chamberlain of Magada, and, of course, does not think of looking at the two most beautiful women of the age, Vasavadatta and Padmavati, except to remark that these women presented a hindrance to his entering the hermitage. The way in which Udayana's episode affected him was also, characteristically, his having to break off his *vcdic* studies. His expressive sentiment that the dead Queen was living in Udayana's love, and his description of Lavanaka as a wilderness after the departure of Vatsaraja, show him to be quite a keen observer of human nature.

Gatrasevaka.—Even Gatrasevaka has got an individuality.. His amusing story of his pledging Rhadravati's goad, necklet, bell and whip in succession, culminating with the confession that he had pledged the elephant itself, his nonsensical gibberish, and effective drunken pose, reinforced with a powerful drunkard's song, and his sudden change of attitude when he hears of the escape of Vatsaraja with Vasavadatta, and retorts to the loyal guard of Mahasena, that he is not a drunkard but a spy of Yaugandharayana, and that he will call his friends who will, like king cobras, come to the place, and his spirited war songs, all show him to be a consummate spy and soldier, a combination which has become famous after the late World War and this World War.

Hamsaka.—Hamsaka, too, has got his own individuality. He is a devoted servant of Vatsaraja, and has so vividly narrated the story in the Elephant Forest that we feel as if we are witnessing the events with him. He is not subservient or servile, and bluntly tells Yaugandharayana, in reply to his self-condemnation, that the message must have been sent to him owing to his not having sufficiently deserved the food, kindness and dignity received from his master, "Very likely". He asks Yaugandharayana, when he guesses about the infantryman's information to Vatsaraja, whether he had fallen into the trap open-eyed. It is the loss of such freedom in subordinates that is largely responsible for the downfall of India.

Female Door-Keeper.—Even the conventional female door-keeper, Vijaya, has been given some individuality. When she **learns** the sorrowful news of Vatsaraja's capture, and is asked to tell **the** Queen-mother about it, she says, "I shall go and tell her, unhappy me!", thus putting in a human touch, instead of behaving like an automaton. So, too, when Yaugandharayana, in the depth of his sorrow, is unable to speak out, and says "It is thus", she tells him "Tell me, sir, tell me". This shows that she, too, was moving freely with the great minister, and was not simply a mechanical portress. So too, the door-keeper of Kamsa puts in a word to save the female child from being dashed on the Kamsa rock.

Maids.—The maids too have their individuality. They are lively, good-humoured, and fond of poetic figures. Thus, a maid compares Vasavadatta to the crescent moon obscured by the mist, and describes Udayana as the God of Love incarnate, but without the bow and arrow.

The maids in *Charudatta* are full of vivacity. Madanika is the favourite maid of Vasantasena and discusses with her freely about the advisability of loving a poor man against the code of the profession. Radanika, the maid of Charudatta, is one of those faithful maids who discharge their duties well but are below average in intelligence. Thus, when the rake catches hold of her and passes her on to Sakara who drags her, she asks the jester, Maitreya, "Is this an insult or simply horse-play?"

In *Prathna,* Avadatika and the other maids have their own individuality and move with a delightful freedom with Sita, and discuss all things frankly among themselves. So too, in *Avimaraka,* Nalinika, Magadhika, Vilasini, Harinika and Jayada.

The *gopis,* Ghoshasundari, Vanamala, Chandralekha and Mrigakshi, in *Balacharita,* stand vividly before our eyes, as charming dancers and singers, with languid eyes and enchanting forms.

The nurse of Padmavati tells Vasavadatta, in reply to her wonder at Udayana's grieving so much for Vasavadatta and yet celebrating his betrothal to another so soon, "Madam, the holy truths taught in our scriptures get imbedded in the hearts of great men, and, so, they easily get consoled in the midst of great calamities." She is also shrewd enough to find out events as they happen, and soon after they happen, and consoles Vasavadatta by telling her that Udayana went to Rajagriha for some other purpose, and that the king, finding in him a combination of wealth, beauty and nobility, himself offered Padmavati's hand to him.

The nurse of Vasavadatta is no whit behind the nurse of Padmavati. Just like the chamberlains of Avanti and Magadha,

the two nurses belong to the same category. Vasavadatta's nurse chides Udayana for exhibiting excessive sorrow, and carries about the painting of Vasavadatta with pardonable pride and self-importance, and shows it to Padmavati, and delivers Angaravati's message to Udayana with the consummate ability of a messenger of modern days. So too, Kurangi's nurse acts as a successful emissary to Avimaraka, like Juliet's nurse. There is no doubt that Rhasa loved these maids and nurses as much as he did his major characters. In the scheme of his dramas, the little ones had their parts to play as much as the great ones.

Hermit Women.—The hermit woman shown in Act I of "The Vision of Vasavadatta" is a delightful figure, though we get only just a glimpse of her. India's pride is that the highest in the land are not soldiers or king's, but saints and hermits. Rhasa, an upholder of the Indian system, brings the truth vividly out by making this obscure hermit woman receive the Princess Padmavati *sitting.* She talks to Padmavati naturally, as woman to woman, with none of that awareness of difference between a princess and a commoner, which is so painfully jarring and destructive of essential human nature. She tells Padmavati that a hermitage is the home of all wayfarers, and, so, she is welcome. She does not say, as many ladies would do now, that the hermitage belongs to the king, and that the princess should *honour* it by walking into it, but welcomes Padmavati as a *zvayfarer.* Those who think that ancient India lacked human dignity and self-respect and the democratic instinct had better ponder over this. She is also a kindly woman interested in the welfare of all people. She makes loving enquiries about Padmavati's marriage, and ends by wishing Padmavati a good husband soon, and by wishing Vasavadatta a speedy reunion with her husband. She is also shrewd. On looking at Vasavadatta, she remarks that she must also be a princess, thus piercing through her disguise as "humble Avanfika.

The hermit women in Janasthana move on terms of absolute equality with Sita, calling her "Sita", "Janaki "Darling", and "Daughter".

A Cleaner.—The cleaner in *Pratima,* is beaten for nothing at all by the bully of a palace sergeant, but tells him that he wishes he were Kartavirya Arjuna with a thousand arms; asked what he would do if he were that Arjuna, he replies that he would kill the sergeant. This shows the repressed wrath of many a humiliated Indian menial who has to suppress his feeling in his own bosom, for lack of strength to give vent to it. In this case too, the "cleaner gets more blows for the bold expression of his opinion, and simply weeps, and begs for mercy.

A Soldier.—The soldier in *Dutaghatotkacha* remarks that if any but Dhritarashtra had said to Duryodhana that Jayadrata will not escape death even if he burrows into the earth or climbs into the sky, he would not be living for a moment thereafter.

11. ANIMALS AND BIRDS.

Animals.—Many animals and birds also figure as characters with their own individuality in Bhasa's plays. Valin, Sugriva, Hanurnan, Angada, Tara and others have been already referred to. Further examples of monkeys figuring as characters are Bilamukha, Neela, etc.

Elephants figure prominently and have their own individual characters. Nalagiri, the stately elephant unequalled for its size, speed and strength; Bhadravati, the elephant of Vasavadatta, next only to Nalagiri in speed; Anjanagiri, which runs amok in the park; Bhadrakapota, which rushes at the ascetic with his ochre robes; Vijayasundara, which breaks Yaugandharayana's sword with its tusk, all have their own individuality, like human figures in a drama.

Bears also figure, like Jambavan, whose message of congratulation, be it remembered, was delivered to Rama along with those of Vibhishana, Sugriva and others. Thus, the bear chieftain was treated as one of the best friends of Rama instead of being given a dependant, subordinate or feudatory position.

The snake, Kaliya, the bull, Arishtavrishabha, and even the ass, Dhenuka, have got their own individuality.

Birds.—The arrival of Garuda, the bird, is described in *Dutavakya* as heralded by a violent wind, the rocking of mountains, the uprooting of trees, the scurrying away of clouds, and the hiding of serpents. The bird, Jatayu, is described as fighting for righteousness against the demon, Ravana, in a hopeless heroic attempt to rescue Sita, showing that a righteous person will rather die, to prevent injustice, than see it committed in his presence, and allow the wrong-doer to get away without opposition .

12. INANIMATE THINGS.

Even inanimate things are given an individuality by Bhasa. Thus, the Veena, Ghoshavati, the discus, Sudarsana, and even Madhuka's *curse,* have got a strange and unmistakable individuality. The hermitage near Rajagriha has got its own individuality. It is different from the hermitage at Janasthana. Indeed, it will.be hard to imagine anybody's assembling the hermits of Janasthana for giving gifts, as Padma-

vati assembles the inmates of the hermitage of Rajagriha. Such is the magic wand of Bhasa. No wonder that Bana remarks about the many interesting and delightful characters in his plays.

CHAPTER III.

The Navarasa in Bhasa.—Bhasa is a past master at depicting the *navarasas* or the various emotions. Each play has, of course, one or more *rasas* in it. The main *rasas* in these thirteen plays are shown below:—

I.	*Dutavakya:*	*Vira and Adbhuta.*
2	*Karnabhara*:	*Karuna* and *Vira.*
3.	*Madhyamavyayoga:*	*Vira, Karuna, Adbhuta, Bhayanaka, Raudra, Hasya, Sringara proper,*. and *Vatsala.*
4.	*Balacharita:*	*Vira, Adbhuta, Vatsala, Karuna, Bhayanaka, Hasya, Santa,* and *Bhakti.*
5.	*Abihishcka:*	*Vira, Karuna, AdbJiuta, Bhayanaka,* and *Vatsala.*
6	*Pancliaratra:*	*Vira, Hasya* and *Vatsala.*
7.	*Dutagliatotkacha:*	*Karuna* and *Vira.*
8.	*Urubhanga:*	*Karuna, Vira, Raudra,* and *Santa.*
9.	*Avimaraka:*	*Sringara, Hasya, Karuna, Adbhuta, and Bhayanaka.*
10.	*Pratima:*	*Vira, Karuna, Sringara* and *Hasya.*
I I .	*Pratijna :*	*Vira, Adbhuta, Hasya* and *Sringara.*
12.	*Svapna:*	*Sringara* and *Karuna.*
13.	*Charudatta:*	*Karuna, Hasya*and *Sringara.*

Now, I shall deal with some of the striking examples of the above *rasas,* found in these plays.

1. HASYA (HUMOUR AND SARCASM).

Jayadeva wrote in his *Prasanna Raghava "* Bhasa is a Prince among humourists (Bhaso hasyakavikula guru). The examples of the various varieties of his humour in these plays are, indeed, innumerable. 1 shall quote a few instances.

Plain and simple humour.—Plain and simple humour is illustrated by the following instances. When, in Act III of *Yawgandharayana's Vows,* Yaugandharayana and Rumanvan tell Vasantaka that they do not understand why he thinks that their plan is bound to fail, he replies "Sirs, I understand my thoughts first, and you next".

The jester tells the maid, in *Svapnavasavadatta,* that his belly is rolling like a cuckoo's eyes.

When the stage-director's wife, in *Charudatta,* tells her husband that she intends to prepare things with ghee, milk, sugar and fine rice, his mouth waters, and he asks her where these things are, and she replies, "In the market, at present." He exclaims that he is like a blade of grass taken high up in a storm and let down to its own proper level when the storm has subsided. Asked why she observes a fast, the wife replies "To get a handsome husband." The Stage-Director remarks "In your next birth, I presume?" She replies "Yes ", and he says "That is all right then." Maitreya says, iri the same play, "One does not eat the stone of even the sweetest mango." Sakara tells the rake about Vasantasena "She has stolen my heart *along zvith the pericardium.*" Maitreya, who is asked to watch Vasantasena's jewels for the night, remarks to himself that he cannot get sleep any more than a monk having an assignation with a servant girl. When asked by Charudatta why the lamp is dim, he says "There is no more oil in the lamp than there is love in a courtesan " When Charudatta learns that Vasantasena, the courtesan, is in love with him, he exclaims "Love has come to me when all my wealth is exhausted. So, it must be subsided in my own breast, like a coward's wrath."

The rake, who accompanies Sakara from mere pot love, says that he will palm off Radanika, Charudatta's maid, "on the swine", as Vasantasena, and adds that Sakara utters rubbish devoid of sense, and that he is an incarnation of a beast in human form. He says to Sakara, about Radanika, "She reeks of the smell of perfume from her scented bath". Sakara replies "Ay, doctor, I can hear the smell with my own ears, but I can't see properly, as my nostrils are full of fog." When Radanika screams, Sakara says "I can tell from her voice that it is not Vasantasena", but the rake reassures him by saying "Of course, it is Vasantasena. She has been on the stage and is clever at changing her voice."

Sajjalaka, a Brahman burglar, remarks about his sacred thread "This is a sacred thread by day, a measuring line by night!", as he measures the burgling hole with it. He reflects seriously as to what kind of burgling hole will be the most aitistic, the lion's stride, or the half-moon crescent, or the full-orbed moo?:, or the elephant's mouth, or the pike's jaws.

in *Pratima,* Nandilika, the maid, is asked by the ascetic at Janasthana to make everything ready for the reception of Rama, Sita and Vibhishana as guests. She asks him "But Vibhishana is a demon eating man as food. How am I to arrange for his meals?"

Bharata goes to Chitrakuta and, there, snatches the water pot from Lakshmana, stating that it is his turn to serve Rama.

Rama says to Sita jokingly "Oh, Lady of Mithila, Lakshmana's occupation's gone!"

In Madhyamavyayoga, when Kesavadasa tells Ghatotkacha that he is a Brahman and does not believe in cannibalism, and will endanger his salvation by giving up one of his sons for being eaten, Ghatotkacha says "If you refuse, all the five of you will be eaten. How will your views against cannibalism be furthered by five being eaten, instead of one?"

In *Balaoharita,* Narada exclaims "Heaven is too calm for real enjoyment. There is no strife here. 1 must go to the earth, and stir up strife, and make my existence interesting. From my study of the scriptures, I must strike the strings of my eternal lute, and create discord.

In *Avitnaraka,* Magadhika asks Kurangi "Shall I tell you a story?" Kurangi replies "Oh, no. I know all your absurd rigmaroles." "But this is a new story, princess" says the maid. "I know, I know, [had rather sleep" says Kurangi.

So, too, when Avimaraka dubs the jester's description of Kurangi's beauty as bookish, the jester says "Ah, you are used to me, and, so, you mock me. People who have not moved with me before, and know nothing of my intelligence, praise me highly."

When Avimaraka is given the invisible ring by the *Vidyadhara,* and is told that, if he puts it on any finger of the right hand, it will make him invisible, and, that if he changes it to a finger of the left hand, he will become again visible, and the *Vidyadhara* demonstrates this, Avimaraka tells him "Excuse me. Let me see whether the trick will succeed when l put the ring on *my* fingers " and tries it, with the predicted result. All people whom he touches also become invisible. His bosom friend, the jester Santhushta, becomes invisible on being touched by him, but gets very anxious as to whether his body has disappeared. So, he spits on his right hand to see whether the hand is still there, and is relieved to find it there! When Avimaraka and the jester enter Kurangi's room as invisibles, Avimaraka puts the ring on to a finger of the left hand, and both become visible. Kurangi' s maid enters the room, and sees both of them. Out of deference for her mistress, she does not make any remark about Avimaraka, but asks about the jester "Who is this man?" The jester replies "How discerning! Nobody else knew that 1 was a man but you. Everybody mistook me for an old woman!" She drags him away lovingly, and he' exclaims "What an outrage!" Kurangi, thereupon, remarks to Avimaraka "What a ridiculous old Brahman he is, crying out when a fascinating young woman is taking him away lovingly!", and the jester retorts that

he is no more ridiculous than Kurangi who wanted to commit suicide, but cried out for help on hearing a clap of thunder.

Sarcastic Humour.—In *Dutaghatotkacha,* when Ghatotkacha is told by Duhsasana "We too are grim, with natures fierce as demons' he replies "God forbid! You are much worse. Demons do not burn their brothers, who are asleep, **in** a **house** of lac; they do not outrage the modesty of their brothers' wives; they do not celebrate the death of their child nephews *I"*

Dhritarashtra tells Duryodhana and Duhsasana that they and their 98 other brothers had brought to their only sister, Duhsala, the gift of widowhood, by killing Abhimanyu and bringing the wrath of Arjuna and Krishna, on their heads.

On hearing about the death of Abhimanyu, he exclaims "There will be peace—when all the world is dead!" He asks his wife, Gandhari, to go with him to the Ganges. When she asks him whether it is to bathe in the sacred waters, he replies "No, to offer oblations to our sons who are as good as dead, by doing this act of unrighteousness in slaying the glorious Abhimanyu, the nephew of Vasudeva."

When Ghatotkacha delivers Krishna's message, intimating Arjuna's resolve to kill the hundred kings who took part in Abhimanyu's slaughter, before the next day is out, Sakuni retorts, "Could it be done by words alone, the world were won! Were it by words alone, and nothing but words, the killing of the warriors were done!"

In *Abhisfieka,* Ravana asks Hanuman how a mere man, Rama, can fight him who has fought and defeated legions of gods, and Hanuman retorts by asking him why, if he was so confident of his strength, he did not fight Rama and take Sita, instead of stealing her, like a thief, after sending Rama away, by a trick, to hunt the golden deer.

In *" Yaugandharayana's Vows"* Yaugandharayana ridicules the care taken over his safe keeping, after Udayana's escape, thus:—

"When keeping the fire, our king, in custody,
Your ministers slept, and were not once awake;
When the jewel has been stolen already,
Over the empty casket, what pains do they take!"

When Bharatarohaka asks him whether he does not fear the wrath of Mahasena against Udayana and Kausambi, Yaugandharayana says:—

"He has escaped from under your very nose
Why should I worry about things hereafter?
When the tree has been cut at its root and source,
The branches cannot be any great matter."

Unconscious humour.—This kind of humour also is found in abundance. Thus, the jester, in *Svapnavasavadatta,* in narrating the story of King BFahmadatta of Kampilya city, names the king as Kampilya, and the city as Brahmadatta, as many a story-teller will do, when drowsy or confused. Where corrected, he repeats the correct names again and again ludicrously.

In *Charudatta.* Sakara says that his body is scorched with love for Vasantasena like a piece of old leather fallen on red-hot embers an apt simile, though he is unconscious of the humour of it. So, too, his remark, "When a man is dead, he lives no more!", and his threat to Vasantasena that he will first cut off her head and then kill her. So, also, his delightful malapropisms. Thus, he tells Vasantasena "I am like Vasudeva[1], the Lord of the Corpse Bazaar, or Janamejaya, Kunti's son.[2] i shall catch thy hair with my hand, and carry thee off as Duhsasana did Sita. . . ."[3]

A more serious type of this humour is found as dramatic irony in many places in the plays. In *Dutaghatotkacha,* Duhsala, in her indignation at the unjust killing of Abhimanyu, cries out, "The man who made Uttara a widow has brought widowhood on his own wife!", though the man who slew Abhimanyu was her own husband, Jayadratha, and the widowhood would, therefore, descend on herself.

In *Abhiskeka,* Ravana, after showing Sita the false heads of Rama and Lakshmana, asks her gloatingly "Who will now set you free?", and a demon arrives and says 'Rama', he having intended to say "Rama has slain Tndrajit."

In *"Yaugandharayana's Vozus,"* Mahasena asks Angaravati who is according to her the worthiest person for the hand of Vasavadatta, and Badarayana comes and says "The King of Vatsa . . ." intending to say "The King of Vatsa has been captured."

Humorous Situations.—Humorous situations are found in innumerable places. Thus, in the "The Vision of Vasavadatta", the jester, Udayana and Vasavadatta give Padmavati, within a period of five minutes, the silly excuse that the tears are caused by the pollen of Kasa flowers dropping into the eyes.

In *Charudatta,* Sajjalaka wants to pay money to Vasantasena for buying the freedom of her maid, Madanika, and marry -

[1] The epithet applies to Yama, and the man has confused Vishnu, who is called Yama's Yama, for Yama.

[2] The correct word is Dhananjaya, for Arjuna, Janamejaya being the son of Parikshit, Arjuna's grandson and Ktinti's great-grandson.

[3] Here, there is a double confusion. Either Duhsasana ought to be changed for Ravana, or Sita ought to be changed for Draupadi. Sakara has, like many mycologists dealing with foreign matter, jumbled things.

ing her. But, by a combination of circumstances, he steals Vasantasena's jewels from Charudatta's house and takes them to the horrified Madanika. These jewels are given to him by the jester Maitreya in his semi-drowsiness, mistaking him for Charudatta to whom he had to give the jewels the next day. Maitreya is sent to Vasantasena with Charudatta's wife's pearl necklace, and with a story that Charudatta had gambled away Vasantasena's jewels entrusted to him. Before he reaches her, Vasantasena has overheard Sajjalaka confessing to Madanika about his thieving of the jewels from Charudatta's house. After Maitreya tells Vasantasena his story, and gives the pearl necklace, Sajjalaka goes and tells the story invented by Madanika, that Charudatta has sent the jewels to be given back to Vasantasena, as his house is old and dilapidated, and unsafe to keep the jewels. No wonder, Vasantasena exclaims "What a delightful day!"

In *Aznmaraka,* Kurangi, pining at the separation from her lover, Avimaraka, is about to hang herself by making a noose of her cloth round her neck, when she hears a clap of thunder,, and cries out "Oh, save me, save me!" and falls down.

In *Madhyamavyayoga,* Bhima, after learning from Ghatotkacha that his father is Bhima, asks him whether Bhima can be compared to Krishna or Siva or Indra or Yama, and gets the reply that he is like all of them, only greater, and says 'That's a lie!", and, at once, Ghatotkacha uproots a huge tree, and hurls it at him, following it up with the hurling of a mountain top. Bhima tells Ghatotkacha that he may take him by violence, if he can, or by non-violence, if he cannot, and Ghatotkacha tries violence first, and fails, and coolly falls back on non-violence, and takes him away to Hidimba.

In Charudatta, Sakara, the Indian FalstafI, enraged at Vasantasena's taking refuge in Charudatta's house, sends a message to Charudatta, through Marisha, asking him to send Vasantasena back by the next morning, and adding "Otherwise, you son of a slave, I will crack your skull as the turtle-dove does the garlic root. I will, chew your head to pulp, like a ripe melon caught between two jamming doors." Just after he has delivered this ferocious message, the jester, Maitreya, flashes a lamp at him in the darkness, and he gets frightened and flees precipitately, on seeing his friend, the rake, gone.

In *Dutavakya,* when Drona, the preceptor, Bhishma, the grandsire, and Sakuni, the maternal uncle, arrive together, Duryodhana offers them a tortoise shell seat, a lion seat, and a leather seat respectively, thus showing that Drona could draw in his senses like a tortoise, Bhishma assert his prowess like a lion, and Sakuni do great mischief by inside intrigue, like the pinch-

ing of leather shoes. **When** Krishna is announced, Duryodhana **calls him a 'Servant** of Kamsa', **and** asks every one in the durbar not to stand up, **and** do him honour, when he arrives, threatening to impose a fine of 12 gold coins on any one who stands up. **But,** after this threat, there is **a** delightful aside, wherein he asks himself "But, how to avoid getting up myself?". To screw up his courage, he keeps on looking at a painting of Draupadi's dragging by the hair, but, when the whole assembly stands up on the arrival of Krishna, and Krishna comes to him and greets him, he falls down from his seat in confusion.

When Krishna calls his discus, Sudarsana, he asks Krishna "What does the Lord want of me? Shall I pull down the mountains, empty the oceans, hurl down the stars?" On being told that he should kill Duryodhana, he is very disappointed, at the smallness of the task entrusted to him, and exclaims "If this miserable man should fall like this, all your trouble in coming down to the earth below, to rid it of all the wicked men, will be in vain, as there will be no leader for the wicked fellows to follow, and they will not fight, and will be left undestroyed." Thereupon, Krishna asks Sudarsana and the divine weapons to go back, and they do accordingly.

In *Balacharita*, the bull, Arishtavrishabha, causing terror everywhere, finds the boy, Krishna, unmoved, and, so, says to him "Have you no fear for me, boy?" Krishna replies "1 have come to the world to rid the human mind of fear. What fear can possess me, you silly beast?" "Then take up your arms and fight me!", says the bull. "No arms are necessary. These arms will do. What is more, oh beast, i shall stand on one leg. Butt at me, and throw me down, if you can." The bull butts at him, but, its power is quite inadequate, and it receives such a ricochetting shock that it falls down and expires.

When Krishna is told that Kamsa, the great king, is there, and is asked to salute him, he replies "Great king of what? Of the nothingness which is destined for him?"

We get one of the most delightful examples of humorous situations in *Karnabhara.* Indra, disguised as a Brahman, requests Karna for a mighty gift. Karna prostrates to him. Instead of giving the customary blessing "Long life to thee, my son!", as such a blessing from a god would come true, and frustrate the very object of the mission, Indra says, "Oh Karna, eternal as the sun, the moon, the Himalayas and the ocean will be your fame!" Then, Kama offers him a thousand cows. The Brahman replies "I drink but little milk. So, I don't want the cows." Kama offers several thousands of the finest chargers. The Brahman replies "**I** ride but **little.** Why do **I** want the chargers?" Kama then offers a herd of the best elephants. The Brahman

says "I never go on elephants. What use are they to me?" Karna offers as much gold as he Wants. The Brahman pretends to agree, but says, later on, "No. I don't want the gold." Kama then offers to conquer the whole world for him and give it to him. The Brahman replies "What use is the rulership of the earth to a Brahman?" Kama offers him the fruits of his burnt-offerings and sacrifices. The Brahman replies "I don't want them, as I have enough of my own." The puzzled Kama finally says "I offer you my head; take it." The Brahman replies by a shriek of horror "Ugh!" Then, Kama begs his pardon, and offers him the most precious thing he has, his body armour and the ear-rings, to which offer the Brahman replies "Give them".

Another instance is the gift of a spear to Karna guaranteed to kill one of the Pandavas. Finally, this spear kills not one of the Pandavas, as Kama and the world must have understood by the term, but Ghatotkacha, the demon son of Bhima, and technically a Pandava.

In *Pratima*, Bharata asks the charioteer "What disease is my father suffering from?". The charioteer, who is unwilling to reveal the truth, says "A great disease of the heart." "What do the physicians say?" asks the prince. "They are helpless in this case" is the reply.

in the same play, the palace cleaner and decorator, who has gone early at dawn and finished his work at the Statue House, and is having a nap, is given a shower of blows by the Sergeant who offers an empty apology for the heavy blows, on learning that the whole work is finished.

Tn Avimaraka, when the Sauvira prince is concealed in Kurangi's rooms, Kuntibhoja, father of Kurangi, the king of Sauvira, Avimaraka's father, and the sage Narada, have the following conversation: —

Kuntibhoja: Sir, is the Sauvira prince alive?

Narada: Yes.

Sauvira: Why is he not to be seen?

Narada: Because of his preoccupation with his honeymoon.

Sauvira: What, is the prince married?

Kuntibhoja: in what place?

Narada: in the city of Vairantya.

Kuntibhoja: Is there another town called Vairantya? Well, whose son-in-law is he ?

Narada: Kuntibhoja's.

Kuntibhoja: Who is he?

Narada: Kurangi's father.

Again in *Avimaraka,* we get the following delightful scene:—

Maid (Chandrika) ; Oh Kaumudika, have you found a Brahman? What do you say? 'Not yet'?

Jester: What is it, Chandrika?

Maid: Sir, I am looking for a Brahman.

Jester: What do you want a Brahman for?

Maid: What do you think? Why, of course, to invite him to dinner.

Jester: But, what am I, lady, a Buddhist monk?

Maid: Oh, but you don't know the scriptures.

Jester: How dare you say that I don't know the scriptures? Listen. There is a treatise on drama called the Ramayana. I mastered five verses of that in less than a year.

Maid: You must be hereditarily very learned, sir.

Jester: i not only learnt the verses, I know the meaning too. Besides, 1 can read as well as understand, and Brahmans who can do both are rare, you know.

Maid: Well, then, read this word for me (shows him a signet ring).

Jester: (to himself) I have no earthly idea of what it is. What am I to say? (Pondering) Yes, I have it (aloud). This word is not in my book, lady.

Maid: If you can't read it, you must dine without the gift of gold coins.

Jester: Very well.

Maid: May I have a look at your ring?

Jester : Yes, look at it. It's a beauty.

Maid: (Takes it) Oh, there's the prince coming this way.

Jester: (turning round and looking) Where's his highness? Where?

Maid: (To herself) I have hoodwinked the silly Brahman. Now, I'll mix with the crowd, give him the slip in the square, and get away (exit).

Jester: (looking all round) Chandrika, Chandrika! Where has she gone? Oh, I have been robbed. I know what she is, the pick-pocket's slut, and I let myself be duped by relying on that dinner (walking round). Now that I think of it, I believe that dinner was' a fake, (looking in front) Oh, there she is running away. Stop, stop, you wicked hussy, stop. Stop, I say! Run, will she? Well, I'll run too (runs). My feet stick to the same

spot like those of a man pursued by an elephant in a dream. Curse it, I'll report this hussy's conduct to the prince (exit).

Again, in *Avimaraka,* Kaunjayana bewails the hard lot of ministers. Soon we find Kuntibhoja bewailing the hard lot of kings. Soo too, Avimaraka tells the nurse and Nalinika that he is thinking of the science of union. They reply that they are also fellow-research-workers in that science and that they hope to aid him in its practical application. They add "There is some one in the palace thinking even more of union than you".

In *Panchamtra,* Sakuni is sceptical of the finding of the Pandavas in five days. When Arjuna's arrow, with his name inscribed on it, is given to Bhishma to discover the identity of the foe, he hands it over, with a delicate sense of humour, to Sakuni, stating "My eyes are dim with age. You read it", and the astonished Sakuni reads "Arjuna", and gets a shock!

We get the following delightful scene in Act IV of *Yaugandharayana's Vows.*

(Enter a soldier of Mahasena.)

Soldier: (to himself) The princess Vasavadatta wants to go bathing. But I have not been able yet to trace Gatrasevaka, the mahout of her elephant, Rhadravati. I say, Pushpadantaka, I cannot find Gatrasevaka. What do you say? That he has gone to the tavern and is drinking liquor? All right, you can go (walks round). Here is the tavern. [shall just call him (aloud) Gatrasevaka! Gatrasevaka! (Voice behind the scene). Now, who is calling me "Gatrasevaka, Gatrasevaka" from the high road?

Soldier: Here is Gatrasevaka coming, full of liquor, laughing loudly, dead drunk, and with eyes red as China roses. I shall not stand in his path, now (moves aside).

Gatrasevaka: Now, who is this calling me "Gatrasevaka, Gatrasevaka!" from the high road? My father-in-law saw me when I came out of the liquor-shop, and very angry was he. Rut, oh, that morsel of meat, well-seasoned with ghee, pepper and salt, was cramped into my mouth by me along with a jug of fine liquor. When my daughter-in-law is drunk, she falls in love with me, but then her mother-in-law takes up the stick to beat me.

Blessed the folk dead drunk with spirits,
Blessed they too with the liquor stink:
Blessed are those with such great merits,
That they bathe in drink and die of drink!

Wretched are those rich fools who see the misery of their daughters-in-law and yet do not turn to a cask of

liquor for relief. So, I know whether there is a hell or not in the world of Yama.

Soldier: (approaching) Ho, Gatrasevaka, how long have i been looking for you! The princess, Vavasadatta, wants to go bathing, and her elephant Bhadravati is not to be seen. You are drunk and loafing about here.

Gatrasevaka: That is right. She is drunk, her man is drunk, I am drunk, you are drunk, everything in the world is drunk.

Soldier: Never mind about everything being drunk. Why are you loafing about here, and why have you not brought Bhadravati?

Gatrasevaka: Here I loaf about, here I drink, with this I drink. Don't get angry. What is to be done?

Soldier: Stop this nonsensical talk! Bring Bhadravati at once

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, have pledged her goad!

Soldier: What do you want a goad for? The gentle Bhadravati does not need it. Go and bring her at once.

Gatrasevaka: Ler her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pawned her half-moon necklet.

Soldier: Tt doesn't matter. We can put a flower garland on her. Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pledged her bell.

Soldier: The elephant is going to enter the water. The bell is unnecessary. Bring Bhadravati at once.

Gatrasevaka: Let her come. Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas, I have pledged her whip!

Soldier: A whip is unnecessary for Bhadravati. Bring her at once, man!

Gatrasevaka: Yes, 1 will, Aye, Bhadravati, come! Alas!

Soldier: Aye, what now?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I have . . . . . .

Soldier: What have you done?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, Bhadra. . . . . .

Soldier: What about Bhadra?

Gatrasevaka : Alas, Bhadravati. . . . . .

Soldier: What about Bhadravati?

Gatrasevaka: I've pawned Bhadravati, too.

Soldier: It's not your fault. It is the fault of this liquor-shop-keeper who has dared to take a pledge of the king's elephant for his liquor!

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I told him, don't lose the capital for the sake of the interest.

Soldier: I say, did you hear that noise?

Gatrasevaka: Alas, I know what it is. Bhadravati is breaking out of the liquor-shop-keeper's house and running away!

Soldier: What do you say ?

(Voice in the air)

That the king of the Vatsas has escaped, taking the princess Vasavadatta with him ?

Gatrasevaka: (Joyfully) May my master meet with no obstacles!

Soldier: Now you may drink and loaf about as tipsy as you like!

Gatrasevaka: Hey, who is drunk? And with what, joy or liquor? Who is intoxicated, my man? Know that we are all spies, each stationed in his place by Yaugandharayana. Here, I am giving a signal to my friends. See, there they are running about like king cobras that have cast off their sloughs.

In Act III of *"Yaugandharayana's Vmvs",* Yaugandharayana, disguised as a madman, cries out as he goes into the street, after the meeting with Vasantaka and Rumanvan.

"The Demon Rahu is swallowing the moon. Leave the moon, I say! If you don't, I shall hit you on the mouth, split it, and release the moon. Look, here's a mad horse running loose. Now he has reached the cross-roads. T shall mount him and eat n:y food. Here are the little masters. Beat me, masters. No, don't beat me. What do you say? That you want me to dance a little for you? Look, little masters, look. Oh, little masters, beat me once more with your sticks. No, don't you beat me, or I too will beat you."

2. VTRA (HEROISM).

This *rasa* is divided into three sub-classes, namely, *Yuddha Vim* (Heroism in battle), *Dharma Vira* (Heroism in virtue) and *Daya Vira* (Heroism in gifts or pity). The *Yuddha Vira rasa* is found abundantly in many of the plays, as in the battle between Rama and Ravana, Duryodhana and Bhima, Abhimanyu and the Viratas, and Udayana and Mahasena's soldiers in the Elephant Forest. Two other conspicuous instances of *Yuddha Vim* are these. Jatayu, the bird, sees Ravana carry off Sita, and falls on him despite his immense superiority in strength and the absolute certainty that it would be killed by him, crying out."I cannot see this atrocious act done so long as I am alive!", and Ravana cuts off the two wings of that mighty bird, which falls down fatally wounded. Another instance is Ghatotkacha who, when told by the Kauravas that he is not killed because he is a messenger, and no mes-

senger should be killed, replies, "In that case, I divest myself of my character as a messenger. Fall on me all of you together. I am not Abhimanyu who depends on a bowstring which snaps. I depend on these fists alone. Let any one stand up to me that wishes to go to the abode of Death!"

The *Dharma Vira rasa* is found prominently in Rama's unhesitatingly abandoning his kingdom and taking to the forest, for the sake of fulfilling his Dharma to his father to enable him to keep his word to Kaikeyi. In fact, Bhasa was a devout Hindu, and wrote four plays on the four injunctions in the Vedas, namely, "Treat your mother as a god; treat your father as a god; treat your teacher as a god; treat your guest as a god." The *Pratima* is a play showing a *Dharma Vira,* Rama, treating his father as a god; *Madhyamavyayoga* is a play, showing a *Dharma Vira,* Ghatotkacha, treating his mother as a god, and obeying her command to fetch a human being for her breakfast, despite his own disapproval. The *Pancharatra* is a play showing a *Dharma Vira,* Duryodhana, treating his teacher, Drona, as a god, promising him half the kingdom if he found out the Pandavas in five days, and keeping that promise. Charudatta is a play where a *Dhanna Vira,* Charudatta, entertains a *guest,* Vasantasena, who seeks his shelter, despite, the certain wrath of Sakara, and possible ruin. A typical passage exhibiting the sentiments of a Dharma Vira is the following from *Pratima Nataka.* Rama chides Lakshmana for his offering to fight Dasaratha and Kaikeyi and prevent his exile and the coronation of Bharata, and says "Shall I bend my bow on my sire if he keeps not troth with me? Shall I let fly an arrow at my mother if she takes away my wealth? Shall I slay my younger brother, Bharata, who has no part in all these troubles? Which of these three crimes will satisfy your wrath?" Then, turning to Sita, he says "Bring me that dress of bark, T must practise virtue unattained by other kings, and not even attempted."

Daya Vira, is exemplified, in the *Pancharatra,* by Drona, who, out of pity for the Kauravas, and from a desire to save them from destruction, asks, as his gift at Duryodhana's sacrifice, half the kingdom for the Pandavas, just to avoid the Mahabharata war which eventually destroyed the Kuru race. It is also exemplified by Kama, the prince among givers, in *Karnabhara.* His gifts to the Brahman are an instance. His words "Learning comes to nought by mere lapse of time. Firmly-rooted trees are thrown down in a storm. Even deep reservoirs dry up in times of drought. Gifts and sacrifices alone endure" show beautifully the *Daya Vira* attitude.

3. ADBHUTA (WONDER OR SURPRISE).

The *Adbhuta rasa* is found in numerous places in the plays. Examples of it are the invisible ring given

to Avimaraka by the *Vidyadltara;* the astonishment caused to Duryodhana in the *Dutavakya* when he tries to bind Krishna by a noose, and Krishna enlarges his body and makes it too big for the noose, and, when it is made bigger, reduces his body to mustard size, and the noose ridiculously falls wide of the mark, and the appearance of the divine weapons; the appearance of "Curse" and "Good Fortune" in human form in Kamsa's chamber, in Kamsa's Lust personified by low class maidens soliciting him, and in his exclaiming in surprise, "T am Death to the Lord of Death. T strike fear into the heart of Fear. But, oh, the lust of these maidens, it pursues and harasses me!"; the body of Krishna breaking into light showing the way to Vasudeva; the river Yamuna giving a passage to Vasudeva by divided waters; the purifying spout of water which falls on Nanda when rubbing himself with earth before receiving the baby, Krishna; the coming to life of the dead girl of Nanda and its climbing into the sky, as the Goddess Kartyayani, with her attendants, on being dashed on the Kamsa rock; the increasing weight of the baby Krishna, proving too heavy for Nanda and Vasudeva; the killing of Pootana, Sakatasura, Arishtavrishabha and Kaliya, and the uprooting of the two trees by Krishna, in *Balacharita*; the slipping of the murderous soldier in the Elephant Forest in *"Pratijna"* ; and the granting of a passage to Rama by the Ocean, in *Abhisheka,* by the familiar device of divided waters.

it will be noticed that Bhasa has effectively used magic in all its three well-known forms. Magic in things is illustrated by the invisible ring in *Avimaraka,* and by the clothes transforming one's appearance, in *"Yaugandlwr ay ana's Vows".* The curses in *Balacharita* and *Avimaraka* illustrate the second type, namely, the power of words, as apart from things. The noose in *Dutavakya,* and the thunder and golden deer in *Pratima* illustrate the third type, namely, magic effects appearing suddenly, of themselves, and not as emanations from other things.

4. RAUDRA RASA (ANGER).

Raudra is illustrated by Bharata's telling his mother, Kaikeyi, in *Pratima,* that she does not shine.among his mothers, and that she is like a foul stream which has got in between the holy Ganges and the Jumna; by his asking Vasishta, Vamadeva and others, who request him to receive the consecrated waters, to consecrate Kaikeyi; by his telling Kaikeyi that, by acquiring her as a daughter-in-law, the proud house of Ikshvaku has got the further privilege of having another daughter-in-law, Sita, abducted by a demon; by Aswathama's terrible anger at Bhima's unfair blow at Duryodhana, and his oath to kill the Pandayas and crown Durjaya king, in *Urubhanga*; and by Salami's calling

Drona a religious fraud in' *Panclxaratm,* when he demands half the kingdom for the Pandavas as his sacrificial gift, and by Hanuman's saying, in *Abhisheka,* that Ravana deserves to be torn into a thousand pieces.

5. KARUNA RASA (PITY, SORROW, ETC.)

Karuna rasa is shown in the sorrow exhibited by Vasavadatta and Kurangi at the separation from their husbands; the sorrow of Udayana at the supposed death of Vasavadatta; the sorrow of Duryodhana on being unable to prostrate to his parents or to take Durjaya on his lap; the exclamation of Karna "In this supreme hour of battle, I find in my heart only black misery. Good luck to me whose time has come!"; the sorrow exhibited by Dasaratha on separation from Rama; and Sita's asking Hanuman to describe to Rama her state in such a way that he may not break down on hearing about it. A fine example is seen when Ravana shows Sita the false heads of Rama and Lakshmana. She faints, and, on coming to herself, exclaims "Alas, my lord, i am too cold-hearted, wretched me, gazing stupidly on your lotus face with its eyes so changed. Alas, dear lord, you have gone leaving me in this sea of troubles. Why do i still live?" and she says to Ravana "Good sir, with that very sword with which you did this dreadful deed, kill me too".

Another fine example is seen in Udayana's saying:—

> Let not our foot-steps tread on harass the melodiously-humming bees:
> Drunk with honey, they fondly caress,
> Their love-stricken mates, and their cares cease;
> Part them not from their sweet-hearts tender,
> They too are pained when torn asunder.

6. RHAYANAKA (TERROR).

I shall now give some examples of *Bhayanaka Rasa.* Ravana's suddenly disclosing his demoniacal form to Sita after Rama has left for the golden deer; Ravana's exclaiming, after he has learnt about Indra jit's death, "What good to me is Sita, the cause of all this misfortune! On account of her, so many of my brothers, sons and friends have been killed. So, T shall cut out her heart, the home of enmity, and pull out her entrails, and put them round my neck/' The 'Curse' of Kamsa enters his sleeping room, black as collyrium, fire-brand in hand, with projecting teeth, eyes yellow like a snake's, and looking like Wrath incarnate, and bundles out 'Good Fortune' unceremoniously, telling her that her time is out, and that there is no use her outstaying her welcome. So, too, Krishna, at the end of the *Balacharita,* gets up the balcony, and hurls Kamsa down by the head. Kamsa is then seen lying there with visage thick with gore, with

goggling eyes, broken neck and thighs, shattered shoulders, loins and legs, fractured knees, snapped necklace, fallen bracelets, and dangling sacred thread. In *Urubhcmga,* the battle-field of Kurukshetra is described as a field of corpses of men and carcasses of elephants and horses, and vultures are said to have built permanent nests there, evidently as there was food for months on end.

Sakara's threats to Charudatta and Vasantasena also fall under this head. The rake asks Vasantasena to go and verify from the policemen of the city how many of them had narrowly escaped murder at his hands, when they crossed his path, and asks her not to add to his murders a horrible one of a young and beautiful woman.

In *Madhyamavyayoga,* Ghatotkacha is described as "a thunder-bolt on lofty mountains, a falcon among birds, a lion on deer, Death in human form''

In *Dutavakya,* when Garuda comes, there is a violent wind, the sun burns fiercely, the mountains rock, the seas are agitated, trees are uprooted, clouds are scurrying, and serpents hide themselves.

7. SANTA RASA (SERENITY).

Santa Rasa also is found in several places. Thus, in *Dutavakya,* when Duryodhana twits Krishna with cowardice for having run away from Mathura to Dwaraka, fearing the vengeance of Jarasandha, the father-in-law of Kamsa, Krishna replies "Fools do not understand politics, or what befits the time, place and circumstances/' In *"Yaugandharayana s Vows',* the chamberlain tells Yaugandharayana that Mahasena bears him no malice, and asks him to accept the chalice, despite his setting fire to many houses which are still smouldering.

In *Karnabhara,* after Indra has got the armour and earrings of Kama and has gone away, Salya tells Kama that Indra has cheated him. Kama replies, with perfect serenity, "You are mistaken, oh Salya. It is I who have cheated him. Millions beg of Indra for gifts. Indra has begged of me for a gift."

In *Urubhanga,* Duryodhana becomes perfectly serene when death is near, and tells his son, Durjaya, in answer to his question, "Where are you going daddy?", "I am going to meet my hundred brothers!" He also asks Aswathama to unstring his bow, so that the Pandavas at least might remain to perform the annual ceremonies to the manes of the ancestors. Finally, he dies in serenity, consoled by the loyalty of Aswathama, and his promise to make Durjaya king, and after seeing his ancestors and the Ganges and the aerial car driven by one thousand swans.

In *Pratima Nataka,* when Rama is agonised at the thought that he cannot offer his departed father the many dainties of the palace, to which he is accustomed, Sita remarks, with serenity, "Bharata will make royal offerings in the palace, and you will offer fruits and water in the forest. Dasaratha will like this all the more." Again, Kaikeyi, after having been constantly rebuked and insulted by Bharata, finally tells him that she had to ask Dasaratha for the boons, so that Destiny might fulfil itself on him, and, incidentally, make good the curse of the Sage, whose only son he had killed, mistaking him for a wild elephant "Like me shall Dasaratha die grieving for his son!" Bharata, after ascertaining that Vasishta, and Vamadeva also knew this, begs her forgiveness. She readily forgives him, with the quiet remark "Child, which mother will not forgive her son's faults?".

So, too, Yaugandharayana, when asked by Bharatarohaka what punishment is prescribed in politics for enemies captured in war, replies serenely, without caring in the least about its possible application to his own case, "Death!"

In *Abhishcka Nataka,* when the whole audience is wonder-struck at Sita's emerging out of the fire unscathed, and exclaims joyously to Rama that she is proved to be pure, Rama replies, with calmness, "I knew Vaidehi's purity. I acted thus only to bring conviction to the thousand-tongued world." After questioning Rama as to why he killed him from a place of hiding,, contrary to the rules of war, and on learning from him that the rules of war do not prohibit the killing of animals by snares and guiles, and that he has been killed as a punishment for his adultery with his brother's wife, Valin becomes serene, begs of the Lord to free him from sin, and dies after entrusting the family heirloom, a golden necklace, to Sugriva, along with Angada, and after taking water from Hanuman, the lieutenant of Sugriva.

8. BHAKTT RASA (DEVOTION).

Allied to the *Santa Rasa,* but quite different from it, and altogether on a higher plane, is *Bliakti Rasa.* This has been divided into four *sub-rasas* in the ascending order of merit. The first is "Bhakti of one in distress", to get rid of his troubles. This is finely illustrated by the invocatory verse in *Urubhanga* which runs:—"May Kesava ferry us over a flood of enemies as he ferried Arjuna over the torrent of his foes, of which Bhishma and Drona formed the banks, Jayadratha the surging waters, the King of Gandhara the sucking whirlpool, Kama the waves, Aswathama the alligator, Kripa the crocodile, and Duryodhana the fierce current!"

The next is 'Bhakti of the seeker for wealth or power/ This is illustrated by Ravana's penance to Siva and Brahma, and his getting from them boons for phenomenally long life, unrivalled

prosperity and power, and invincibility against gods and demons, he, having, in his arrogance, omitted mere men, and thus enabled God to come as man, in the shape of Rama, and finish him off from the world which he had pestered so long.

The third type of Bhakti. is 'that of the seeker after knowledge', and is illustrated by the invocatory verse in *Dutaghatotkacjw,* which runs as follows: "May Narayana, the sole refuge of all the three worlds, the Stage-Director of the main plot, preludes and interludes of the ceaseless drama of the triple universe protect you!" This is an attempt, by a seeker after knowledge, to describe God as Regulator of the universe, and to show his devotion to Him, with only a general prayer for protection, at a time when he is not beset with any trouble.

So, too, in *"Balacharita,"* we get the invocatory verse:—

"For ever and ever may that God protect you—who, with a body white as milk, was named Narayana in the golden age; who, with a body yellow as gold, was named Vishnu in the silver age and measured the triple world; who, with a body blue as *durva* grass, was named Rama in the copper age and slew Ravana; who, with a body black as collyrium, was named Damodara in the iron age!"

The last type of Bhakti is 'that of the wise', that is, of those who have attained perfect knowledge. This is seen .in *Abhishcka Nataka,* where celestial musicians, who are, of course, endowed with perfect knowledge, come, and say to Rama, after Sita's ordeal by fire is over, "Salutations to Narayana, the cause of all the three worlds! Brahma is Thy heart; Rudra Thy wrath; the Sun and the Moon Thy eyes; Bharati, the Goddess of Learning, Thy tongue! Oh, Lord of the three worlds, all the worlds, with Brahma, Indra and the Maruts, were verily created by thee. Oh, Lord Supreme, Sita is Lakshmi, and Thou Vishnu. Do thou receive her! When this earth had sunk into the briny deep, beyond all retrieve, then, Oh Lord, Thou camest in the form of the Boar, and raised her up once more! With three steps, Thou compassed the three worlds, of Thine own accord. Thou and Thy Queen have assumed these forms. By slaying the demon king, Ravana, Thou hast made the gods more firmly established in men's hearts than ever before!"

Tn *Dittavakya* Sudarsana says "Where is the blessed Narayana? Source of the subtle unseen, transcending thought, the Majestic One of many forms, destroyer of enemies' power, he has risen to protect the world."

9. SRINGARA RASA (LOVE).

Sringara Rasa has got two main branches, the *Sringara* proper, and *Vatsah. Sringara* proper deals with love involving

the sexual element, and *Vatsala* with love devoid of it, like parental love, fraternal love, and the love of friend for friend, teacher for pupil, etc. It is obvious that *Vatsala* involves *Sringara proper* at an earlier stage. It is because a iather and mother had *sringara proper* that children are born, and Vatsala love comes into being between them and the parents as well as among the brothers and sisters.

9-A. SRINGARA PROPER.

Sringara proper has got five sub-rams- illustrating the union of souls, of minds, of things, of bodies and of lusts, respectively, thirst is *Dharma Sringara,* which is pure love, free from lust of all kind, a union between man and woman, simply for the sake of discharging the duties of life. There is no room in this for excessive conjugal relations or highly erotic sentiments, though one partner cannot live apart from the other without agony, and is willing to die for the other without a second thought. Such is the love of Sri Rama and Sita, in *Pratima* and *Abhislicka.* Such is also the love of Satyavan and Savitri. Be it remembered that Savitri could leap across death, because her love for Satyavan belonged to this type.

The second type is *Kama Sringara* or married love, as it is understood generally. This is illustrated by the love of Vasavadatta and Udayana, Avimaraka and Kurangi. Here, there is a very strong erotic element entering into the emotion, and the grief at the separation is largely caused by the physical separation, the spiritual element being not so very predominant, though, of course, always there in an appreciable quantity.

The third type is *Artha Sringara,* or marriage for political, economic or other worldly reasons. Here, materialism predominates. A leading illustration of this is the marriage of Udayana with Padmavati, the chief motive being the expected help of Padmavati's brother, the king of Magadha, for recovering the lost kingdom of Vatsa from the usurper, Arum.

The fourth type is *Mugdha Sringara,* wherein emphasis is on *Consortium,* pure and simple, the body counting first and last, and the mind and soul not coming into the picture appreciably, though they are present in the background. In this case also, the two partners can be quite faithful to each other, and can even pine for each other. A typical illustration is the union of Rhima and Hidimba.

The last is *Moodha Sringara,* or idiotic love. Here, lust alone counts. It is pure lust of flesh, both partners not being even equally agreed, as in *Mugdha Sringara,* and not being even faithful to one another. A leading illustration is the love of a rake for the courtesan or prostitute, and *vice versa.* Rhasa has

shown this kind of love by the sentiments of his characters, Sakara and the rake, who shout out to Vasantasena that she is a flower tree by the roadside for anybody to pick from, that she is a chattel to be bought for money, that she cannot choose between friend and foe, handsome and ugly, good and wicked, and should yield herself to any one who pays the price. Sakara has aptly illustrated its nature by crying out that he and the rake are like two hounds following a jackal, and that he is burnt with love for Vasantasena, like a piece of old leather fallen on red-hot embers.

9-B. VATSALA RASA.

Vatsala is also beautifully illustrated by Bhasa in several plays. Dasaratha's love for Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, shown in Act II of *Pratinia*, and Rama's love for Bharata, and Lakshmana's love for Rama in the same play, fall under this head. Duryodhana's love for his father, mother and child, in the *Urubhanga*, also comes under this head. Bhasa has finely illustrated the strength of this sentiment in Duryodhana's asking, on his death-bed, a favour from his mother, and when she tells him that he may ask for anything he likes, he says "With folded hands, 1 ask, oh mother, if I have earned any merit at all, may I be born as your son in another birth!" Bhima's love for. Ghatotkacha, in *Madhyamavyayoga*, and the love of Dhritarashtra and Arjuna for Abhimanyu, and Ravana's love for Indrajit will all fall under this head. So, too, the love of Drona for Arjuna, of Maitreya for Charudatta, Santhushta for Avimaraka, and Vasantaka for Udayana.

CHAPTER IV.

VIVID DESCRIPTIONS OF NATURAL PHENOMENA.

Vivid descriptions of natural phenomena are very frequent in Bhasa's plays. The burning midday sun of India is described in *Avimaraka* as follows:—"And now, the sun, with a thousand rays, begins to corrode the body of man. Ah, how dreadful is the heat! The earth is burning hot, as if in a high fever. All its moisture has been sucked up by the rays of the sun. The trees, as if harbouring forest fires, have been robbed of their shade, and spit out discoloured and withered leaves, as if suffering from consumption. The mountains, gaping with their big caverns, cry helplessly for water. Hot winds cover the place with burning sand and dust. The world, baked by the sun's rays, has fallen into a swoon."

The sunset scene in Act I, Verse 16, of "The Vision of

", given below, is exquisite.

The birds have all to their nests retired,
The hermits lave in ponds their limbs tired,
The fires are lighted and blaze away,
The smoke all through the grove makes its way.
The sun has from his height descended,
With his piercing rays, the reins, drawn in,
He has stopped his car and alighted
On the peak of the western mountain.

The sunset and the setting in of night are described beautifully in *Avimaraka* as follows:—"The sun has set. The eastern quarter is tinged with black, while the West gleams with the evening red. The sky in between is divided into two, and attains the beauty of Siva in his form of *Ardhmiarisvara,* halt god, half goddess. Ah, what a wonderful thing the world is! At dusk, it would seem to put on another guise. It wipes from its brow the *tilak* of the sun, and puts on the blue mantle bespangled with stars. It exchanges the burning heat of the day for the cool delicious breeze, and changes from the world of work and trade into a world of interlaced lovers and prowling robbers!"

Moonrise is described in Act I, verse 29 of *Charudatta,* thus:—"Here rises the moon, the night light of the sky's highway, the beacon of young women, pale yellow, like ripe dates. Its white beams fall in the darkness, like streams of milk on dried-up mire." The setting of the moon is described, in Act III, verse 3, thus:—"The crescent moon gives place to darkness, and sets, like the curved tusks of a wild elephant gradually submerging in a pool, as the animal plunges in the water."

The description of the night is one of the strongest points of Bhasa. The darkness of the midnight hour, when Krishna is born, is described, by Vasudeva, in *Balacharita,* as follows:—"Darkness anoints my limbs. The sky, it seems, is raining lamp black. My sight is useless, like service rendered to a rascal. The quarters are invisible, and the trees form one solid mass. The familiar world is utterly transformed."

In *Avimaraka,* the night is described as follows:—"Ah, how fearsome is the middle of the night! For, now, all creatures are unconscious in their slumber, like babes in the womb. The palaces, with people silent, fast asleep, seem sunk in meditation. Swallowed up by the encircling gloom, the trees can be detected only by the touch. With its outlines blurred, the whole world is invisible. The streets are streams that bear along the darkness, the lines of houses look like shoals, the ten quarters are merged in gloom. This darkness one could swim across."

The clouds are described in *Avimaraka* as follows:—"Beauteous are these dark-blue clouds, like dancers acting many

parts to the drumming of the thunder in the rains. They are the kine of Indra. They are the curtains of the hosts of stars. They are ant-hill homes of those female snakes called the lightning flashes. They are bushes growing on the celestial road. They are hones for the love god's arrows. They are the water jars, bringing alms gathered from the sea, for bathing the mountains. They are the shutters to shut out the sun and the moon. They are the cisterns of heaven's shower bath."

The ocean is described, in *Abhiskeka,* as follows:—"Here is the ocean, sleeping like Vishnu, on a sapphire-blue bed, canopied over with opal clouds, wearing beautiful garlands of billows breaking into foam, and possessed of a thousand arms, in the shape of rivers/'

A bird's eye view of the world, by a flying Vidyadhara, high up in the sky, is given in *Avimaraka:*—"Mighty mountains look like little elephants, and seas like bathing pools; big rivers are like mere boundary marks; trees resemble mosses and lichens; all the hollows on the surface of the earth have disappeared; the big white mansions look like glistening dew-drops'"

The description of a hermitage in Act I verse 12 of *The Vision of Vasavadatta,* given below, is charming.

Unperturbed and serene the fawns graze here,
Sure of their ground, and with no trace of fear:
The trees are all nurtured with love and care,
Their branches groan with fruits and flowers rare;
Here are those famous herds of tawny kine,
And no trace of the plough till the sky-line;
From here and there are rising high smokes mauve
i am sure this must be a hermits' grove.

The description of a flight of cranes, in Act IV verse 2 of the same play, is beautiful and life-like.

Now the line is straight, now it's broken;
Now the flight is upward, now it's low,
This line of birds divides the welkin
In two, like boundary marks we know.
The sky is spotless, like the belly;
Of a serpent casting off its slough ;
When the birds turn and wheel round, we see
Them twisted like the Great Bear itself.

Scphalika flowers in blossom are described as looking like pendants of pearls interspersed with coral.

The driving of a fast chariot is described in *Pratima* thus:—"Trees appear to race towards it, so swiftly is their distance reduced by its motion. The ground runs down into **the hollow**

betwixt the wheels, like an agitated stream. The spokes cannot be seen because of the speed, and appear as solid circles. The dust raised by the steeds never goes in front, and is always left behind.''

Nature is shown as affecting human beings according to their moods and feelings. Thus, Avimaraka, when going to meet Kurangi at her invitation, is in a most: joyous mood, and exclaims "Ah, what a wonderful thing the world is!", but says, when forced to leave the palace and his beloved, that the trees are consumptive, that the mountains are crying with pain, and that the whole world is in a swoon!

CHAPTER V.

PROFOUND PSYCHOLOGICAL INSIGHT.

Bhasa's profound psychological insight is seen in almost every page of his plays. I shall quote some instances belowl

Svapna.—Padmavati's question to Yaugandharayana whether she too may be asked to make way for the princess is a natural one, arising from a queen in disguise, and Yaugandharayana's reply, "Lady, even gods when not recognised are insulted thus", shows deep insight into the workings of human minds. His statement that the wheel of fortune turns with time, like the spokes of a cart wheel, is also profoundly true. When he is hailed as a hermit, he remarks, " 'Hermit' is an honourable form of address, no doubt. But, being unfamiliar to me, it does not appeal to me so much." His antagonism to the person for whose sake he and Vasavadatta are hustled off the path, disappears when he learns that that person is Padmavati, the princess he wants Udayana to be married to, for recovering Vatsa from Aruni. He remarks, then, with justice, "We esteem or hate as our desires dictate." When he wants to entrust Vasavadatta to Padmavati as her ward, the chamberlain tells Padmavati that taking charge of a beautiful young girl is more onerous than any gift. The student enters the hermitage, but shrinks back at seeing Padmavati and Vasavadatta, crying out, "Oh but the women-folk !" Vasavadatta refuses to use the herb "rival-wife-crusher" in the wedding garland of Padmavati, but uses "widow-hood-preventer" in plenty.. When Vasavadatta asks Padmavati "Do you love your husband very much, my dear?" that high-born lady, with the peculiar shyness and coyness of a newly-wedded wife replies, "I don't know, lady, but, when he is not by my side, I feel ever so lonely." When the jester tells Udayana about Vasavadatta's searching for him with sweet-meats in hand, the king tells him that he will tell Vasavadatta about this, and, when tnld that Vasavadatta is dead, remarks that the jester's remark

made his mind wander to days of yore when she was alive. Wheri the jester asks him not to grieve over the renewed memory of Vasavadatta, Udayana replies, in memorable words.

> "Can one forget a love which shook the heart?
> Fond memory brings it back with a start;
> Our sad and mortgaged minds get free, one fears;
> But by paying in full the debt of tears."

When Padmavati suddenly waylays the jester and asks him, "Vasantaka, what is this?," when he is carrying water to wash off the king's tears, he blabbers out, "This that; that is this." Udayana remarks truly,

> "The heart of women is full of fear
> Of losing what it holds very dear."

The jester says with truth, "Courtesy, reciprocating courtesy, engenders affection." The king remarks on this that it is easy enough to find men with noble virtue and courtesy but not so easy to see men who value such qualities properly. The jester's remark, "there is no happiness in life without good health and fine food", is profoundly true.

Pratijna.—Yaugandharayana tells Salaka that a difficult task should be entrusted to faithful friends with proved ability, but that, however good a plan, success or failure depends on fate. When he has learnt about Udayana's capture, he is flabbergasted, and when Vijaya asks him what she is to tell the Queen-Mother, he says to her "Vijaya, it is thus" and has to be further questioned before he can find his tongue to describe the correct state of affairs. Then, with a true insight into the human mind, he tells Vijaya, "A mother's heart is proverbially weak from affection. So, it must be protected. Don't tell her at once that the king has been taken prisoner.

> "Tell her first of war and all its evil chances,
> Let her feel apprehensive for his fate,
> When her fear and grief have taken root and branches
> Tell her all the facts and our master's present state."

Angaravati tells Mahasena that Vasavadatta saw Kanchanamala playing on a lute, and, so, wanted to learn it herself. Mahasena tells Angaravati,

> "You're ashamed at the thought that she's not yet married,
> And yet at the thought of her marriage you're worried;
> Caught betwixt the twin fires of love and of dread duty,
> A mother's heart's baked, and quivers,with anxiety."

Mahasena is so surprised at the news of Udayana's capture that he does not believe it at first.": His psychological condition is exquisitely shown in the following passage:—

Chamberlain: The king of the Vatsas has been captured by the honourable minister,[J] Salatikayana.

King: (delighted) What did you say *}*

Chamberlain: (repeats) The king of the Vatsas has been captured by the honourable minister, Salankayana.

King: Udayana ?

Chamberlain: Who else ?

King: Satanika's son ?

Chamberlain: Of course!

King: Sahasranika's grandson ?

Chamberlain: The very same.

King: The lord of Kausambi ?

Chamberlain: Yes.

King: The expert musician ?

Chamberlain: So they say.

King: Actually, the king of the Vatsas ?

Chamberlain: Yes, the king of the Vatsas, of course!

King: Is Yaugandharayana dead?

Chamberlain: Not he. He is at Kausambi.

King: Then I don't believe that the king of the Vatsas has been captured.

Chamberlain: Pardon me, Your Majesty. I am an old Brahman. T have never told Your Majesty a lie.

King: Yes, that is so; who is the welcome messenger Salankayana has sent ?

Chamberlain: He has sent no messenger. The minister has come himself, in the fastest chariot, with the Vatsa king.

King: Come himself! What joy! From to-day, let the army lay the armour aside, and rest! From now on, the other kings will have no fear and there will be no need of spies. In short, I have become Mahasena only to-day.

When the king proposes to give the lute, Ghoshavati, to Vasavadatta, the queen tells him, "If you give her this lute, she will be madder after the lute than ever." The king replies, "Let her play on, play on. It will not be so easy to play in her father-in-law's house."

Yaugandharayana, when despairing of rescuing Udayana from Ujjaini, tells Vasantaka and Rumanvan about the hope that springs eternally in the human breast, in the following verse:

"The day is gone, and we look forward to the night;
The bright dawn comes, and we look forward to the day:
As time passes thus, weVe in our troubles, to sight
Advantages yet to come as best as we may."

The jester tells Yaugandharayana, "The palanquin was halted near the gate for the men to change shoulders, and the king saw the princess as plainly as he liked."
Yaugandharayana: What then ?

Jester: What then? Why, the prison became for him paradise itself, and he began to make love to her.

Charudatta.—The character of Sakara, a coward and bully, is true to life. The inward disgust of the rake for him, though serving him for the sake of his belly, also reveals great psychological insight. So does the shampooer's leaving off shampooing lesser men and taking to gambling. Charudatta's infatuation for Vasantasena, and his regret that he has no money left to indulge in his love for her, forgetting the elementary duty of loyalty he owes to his noble wife, is also true to life. Sajjalaka remarks, truly "Anybody who does a good thing looking for a return only asks for troubles".

Pratima.—Dasaratha asks Sumantra what message Rama, Sita and Lakshmana have sent him, and Sumantra replies, "Long they pondered, Oh king, as if they would say something, but their lips trembled with words, their throats were paralysed with tears, and they went off into the forest without a word." This shows a perfect understanding of the psychological situation. So too, Bharata's unwillingness to ask about Dasaratha's statute in the statue-house and going on repeating his question about the statues of the three remoter ancestors. Sita says, "Many things happen in palaces." Bharata remarks, "If these are gods, it is but right to bow the head to them. Only a churl will refuse to do so and to utter a hymn of praise." The keeper of the statue-house says that the touch of a mother's hand is like a handful of water to the parched. Kaikeyi tells Bharata, when he finally begs to be forgiven, "Which mother will not readily forgive a son's faults?"

Pancharatra.—Bhishma says that women are valued according to their beauty, and men according to their prowess. Duryodhana exclaims that no man or people can get independence, or a country to rule, for the mere asking, or by sheer begging. Sakuni says that corn will grow even in salty marshes if Yudhisthira is king, thus showing that countries become prosperous not because of any inherent fertility but because of good rule, England and others being standing examples in modern times. Drona says that a pupil's fault comes home to the teacher. Yudhisthira exclaims that one feels that he himself has committed a crime when hearing that his kinsmen have looted Virata's cattle. Bhishma remarks that conciliation is the only remedy for the ill-behaved, anger merely making them more obstinate. Duryodhana says "Though there is a feud in the family, the children are not to

blame". He also remarks, "It is false to say that only the dead can gain Heaven. Heaven is not invisible. It is here—on this earth —for us to make good." Finally, he declares, "If troth be dead, all men are done. As troth stands firm, so do they." "When a warrior is wounded in honourable action, praise and honours coming close on the event, remove his pain", says Virata. Arjuna says, that lack of practice has made even him forget a part of his skill in handling the bow. Virata says "One's form, family and status do not matter. High and low shine by their deeds." "

Avimaraka.—Among the profound psychological truths contained in this play are the following:—

It is difficult to get into the quarters of a seraglio, but it is easy to remain there, for months, after getting in. Beauty is its own adornment. But, beauty adorned shines even better. Suicide is difficult for a young and full-blooded person, and the hold on life will assert itself on the slightest pretext, as in the case of Kurangi. Invisibility of the body will be welcomed by people only so long as the body itself doesn't disappear, as is shown by the jester's action. Men see many strange and delusive things at the time of their death, says Avimaraka truly. ''It has had fire, the fire of true love as eternal witness", says Narada, in reply to Kuntibhoja's anxiety for celebrating Kurangi's marriage with the fire as witness. About love-sickness, Kurangi remarks "This is a disease I have never had before. The more 1 think of it, the more silly T become. I care nothing for flowers, or food, or lively talk now. It is dreadful —and yet, delightful." Avimaraka tells the jester, in defence of his tears on meeting Kurangi again, "A wise man and a fool are much the same in times of crises, so far as the body is concerned, though not in mind." Vasumitra says of the astrologers:—"Curse those crooked astrologers! The fellows spin out some tale or other by looking at one star, forgetting the rest of the heavens, let alone the earth!"

Urubhanga.—Even a wicked man, like Duryodhana, full of lust, greed and anger, may shed them all off at the time of death, as he does. His grief at his thighs being broken is not due to that calamity so much as to the inability caused thereby to prostrate to his parents and to take his child, Durjaya, on his lap. Dur jaya's acts and words ring true, and shows Bhasa's knowledge of child psychology. Bhima is led away by the Pandavas and Krishna, in order to avoid the wrath of Balarama, since he will not himself run away. When asked by her husband why she continues to weep, though she is a warrior's wife, Malavi replies, "I am but a girl, and, so, I weep." Dhritarashtra exclaims, "I am an old man, blind from birth, with no desire for life. Bitter grief for my sons curbs my will, over-

powers my soul, and overwhelms me. I will depart for the penance groves so rich in' pious folk. Out on a realm made -Worthless by the loss of my sons!"

Abhisheka.—The overpowering lust of Ravana for Sita, when firmly resisted by her, turns into an equally wild desire to tear her to pieces after he loses his son, Indrajit, in the battle to retain her, and he says that he will cut out her heart, the home of enmity, pull out her entrails, and tie them round his neck.

Balacharita.—Kamsa, who says that he has conquered fear, is shown as powerless against lust. This expresses a profound truth that many a man who knows no fear is still a slave of lust. So too, Krishna says that the unknown and the unseen create mysterious fear. How true is this of death!

Dutavakya.—Duryodhana's mean anger at Krishna's being •described as "the best of men" by the chamberlain, and his petty delight at the chamberlain's describing him again as "one Kesava" ; his threat to fine all those who rise up, on Krishna's entering the hall, twelve gold coins, and his aside as to how to avoid getting up himself; his gazing at a painting of Draupadi's outrage in order to keep himself engaged, and screw up his courage, and not to rise when Krishna comes, but falling off his seat, despite all this, when Krishna accosts him, are all psychologically true to life.

Karnabhara.—Kama's worrying about his teacher Parasurama's curse and his mother Kunti's request leads to a sapping of his hold on life, and he truly drives to his death. Many a man has been robbed of his hold on life by such worries.

Dutaghatotkacha.—Duhsala's offer to join Uttara at once, putting on widow's weeds, when she is certain that her husband will be slain by Arjuna, in revenge for the killing of Abhimanyu, rings true. Dhritarashtra's desire to go at once to the Ganges and offer oblations for his sons, who are as good as dead, is also psychologically true; Ghatotkacha, the demon, though given the role of a diplomat, is ready to cast it off and fight, showing thereby how our inner natures will prevail over our outward trappings.

Madhyamavyayoga.-—The father's clinging to the eldest son and the mother's to the youngest, ring true to life. The second son, who is eager at first, to gladly sacrifice himself, like his other brothers, exclaims, after he hears the preference of his father and mother for his brothers, "Unwanted by my parents, who wants me?", and Ghatotkacha says, "You will do for me. Gome along," an illustration of an unexpectedly light reply to a tragic heart-cry, so common in life.

CHAPTER VI.

STRIKING FIGURES OF SPEECH.

All these plays are full of striking figures of speech. I shall take some instances from each play.

Charudatta.—An expert burglar is described as "a cat to leap, a wolf to slink away, a snake to glide, a hawk to pounce, illusion itself in disguise, a breeze on land, a boat on water,, light in darkness, darkness in light, and an instrument for gauging the degree of the slumber of each householder/' Sajjalaka, the burglar, seriously discusses whether the burgling hole to be made by him shall be of the shape of "a lion's stride, or a full-orbed moon, or the jaws of a pike, or a semi-circle, or of a tiger's maw, or a triangle, or a stool or an elephant's mouth"

A prostitute is said to be like "a flowering tree by the road-side fof anybody to pluck the flowers", or "a chattel to be bought at a price." Sakara tells Vasantasena that he and the rake are "like a couple of hounds following a jackal", and that his body is "scorched with love for her like a bit of leather fallen on red-hot embers." The rake asks Vasantasena why she is running away "like a gazelle frightened by a tiger's pursuit" or "like a snake running away from a kite."

Maitreya says that he was in former days "surrounded by a number of dishes and drinks, like a painter by his pots of paint and water" and was "chewing the cud of sweets and savouries stuffed up to the gullet like a bull at the cross-ways" and compares his state after Charudatta's financial crash to that of "a pigeon coming to roost in a house after taking its food elsewhere." He describes Charudatta's state as "pitiful like that of the moon which has lost all its light at dawn." Charudatta describes a poor man as "a living and moving corpse." He says that the "return of prosperity to a rich man who has come by poverty is like the gift of a lamp to one lost in darkness." When the rake is asked by Sakara why he is afraid of the pauper Charudatta, he replies "No doubt, he is now like a tank dried up in summer, but don't forget that it got dried up in quenching men's thirsts." On Vasantasena's expressing her love for him, Charudatta exclaims "Love has come to me when my wealth has left me. I must subside it in my own breast like a coward's wrath." When he asks Maitreya to bring the lantern to escort Vasantasena to the gate, the jester replies, "There is no more oil in the lamp than there is love in a courtesan." Then, the moon rises, and Charudatta exclaims, There is no need for a lamp. The moon has risen—the poor man's lamp, the lamp of all the world." He says that its white beams fall in the dense

darkness like "streams of milk on dried-up mire." Madanika asks Vasantasena why she, a courtesan, loves a poor man, seeing that "bees do not settle on a mango after the flowers have fallen." Maitreya, when he has the casket of jewels in his custody, says that he gets no sleep like a merchant who has lost his way, and, when he has given it away, says that he is as care-free as a merchant who has sold all his wares. Sajjalaka says "Alas, I am like the man who, tormented by the summer heat, and seeking shade, went to the verv tree all whose leaves he had stripped in his folly."

Pancharatra.—A wicked son is said to destroy a family like "one dried-up tree destroying a whole forest, by the forest fire seizing it." A sacred sacrificial fire is said to be "as different from a common fire as a priest is from a vulgar fellow." Butter blazing away in spite of the water sprinkled on it at sacrifices is said to resemble "a mother, drenched in her tears for her lost babe, still burning with love for her babe." Five snakes running away from an ant-hill, on the starting of a sacrificial fire, are said to resemble "the five senses rushing away from **a** man, the moment death sets in." A fire dying for lack of fuel is compared to "generosity drying up for lack of funds." Bhurisravas, the king of the Deccan, is described as ";in iron bolt of Deccan's gateway."

Pratima.—A wedded wife is said to follow her lord through thick and thin, like "moon-light following the moon despite the eclipse; a creeper falling with the forest tree in a storm; a female elephant unhesitatingly following the tusker into the quag-mire where it gets embedded", similes taken from the astronomical, botanical and zoological spheres. Dasaratha exclaims, "Rama has gone away like the sun; Lakshmana has followed him as the day follows the sun; and Sita has disappeared like the shadow when the sun and day are gone." Bharata, on hearing that his father is dead, and that Rama, Lakshmana and Sita have gone into exile, exclaims, "I am like a man, tormented by thirst, hastening to a stream to quench it and finding it all dried up." He tells Kaikeyi that she does not shine among his mothers, and is "like an upstart hill stream, joining the sacred Ganges and Yamuna." Rama tells Sita that life, with its ups and downs, is like "a plant which we look down on watering, becoming, later on, a tree which we have to look up to."

Madhyamavyayoga.—Kesavadasa and his wife, frightened on seeing the demon, Ghatotkacha, going to him and to his children, are compared to "a bull and a cow, pursued by a tiger getting frightened for themselves and their calves." The demon is described by the third son as "a thunder-bolt on mountains,

a falcon among the birds, a lion falling on a herd of deer, death itself in human form." His eyes are said to be "revolving like planets". "A mother is, for human beings, a deity of deities" exclaims Ghatotkacha, when explaining why he is carrying out his mother's cruel orders to bring, a numan being for her breakfast. Bhima is said to have braved Ghatotkacha's blows and followed him like a bull shaking off the rain-drops from its back after a storm and proceeding on its way.

Pratijna:—Yaugandharayana says that he is as anxious about Udayana's fate in the forest "as a man who has left his kinsmen in trouble and gone to a foreign land and has just returned." He describes Mahasena's army as useless for fray in the open battle-fields "like a loveless wife, to her husband, in life's daily unceasing strife." About Mahasena, he says that his orders spread far and wide like a forest fire, but is stopped at Udayana's frontiers. Gatrasevaka says that Yaugandharayana's spies have cast off their disguises, and are running about like king cobras which have cast off their sloughs. Mahasena's soldier exclaims on seeing them, "What is all this? All Kausambi seems to be here, except the wall and the ornamental gate." Yaugandharayana asks Mahasena's soldiers why their ministers slept "when the jewel was stolen" (that is, when Udayana escaped) and were taking so much pain "over the casket" (meaning himself). He says that Bharatarohaka's face is hanging down with burning shame "like a wrestler knocked down throughout the lines." Bharatarohaka describes Yaugandharayana as resembling "an angry snake caught and overpowered and put in a basket, but with its prowess unshed." Yaugandharayana tells Bharatarohaka "when the tree has been cut at its roots, there is no need to worry about lopping off the branches." Angaravati's cry of anguish, prior to attempting to throw herself down from the palace top-storey, out of shame for the supposed elopement of her daughter with Udayana without a proper marriage, is compared to the "sudden cry of a little sparrow struck by a blood-thirsty falcon."

Svapna:—The king's servant driving away sages and good folk from the path of the hermitage is described as "turning himself away from the path of righteousness." The wheel of fortune is said to turn with time like "the arrayed rows of the spokes of the cart-wheel running through a lane". Lavanaka, after the departure of Udayana and his ministers, is said to have become desolate like the sky when the moon and the stars have set. The *sephalika* blossoms are said to look like "pendants of pearls interspersed with coral" and are said to have "half-stockings of the colour of red arsenic." The belly full of undigested food is said to "roll like a cuckoo's eyes." The flock of cranes,

flying in irregular tormation and turning and wheeling round, is said to be "twisted like the Great Bear" and to resemble "a garland of water-lilies." The. supposed death of Vasavadatta in the fire at Lavanaka is compared to "a lotus-flower in bud being nipped by, cruel frost whose ever-hungry tongue is death-tipped." Vasavadatta, gazing at Udayana in love, and idly fingering the strings of her lute, is said to "play on Udayana's life strings or heart-knots."

Dutavakya:—Nakula and Sahadeva are said to attack Duhsasana like "two fawns setting on a lion." The rolling of the drums and the blare of conches are compared to the "thundering of the sea, lashed to fury by a gale." The words of Yudhishtira are said to be "gentle as a woman's." Kauravas are described as "the forest of the Kurus", and are said "to be destined to be burnt down by the flames of Bhima's wrath, fanned by the gale of Arjuna's arrows." Krishna calls Duryodhana "a crow" for his meanness, and "a squint-eyed yellow man" for his crookedness and real lack of courage to face the truth.

Dutaghatotkacha.—The meteors which fell down on the day of the death of Abhimanyu are described as "the tears of Indra" at that sad event, Abhimanyu is said to have discharged his arrows "like the sun discharging its rays." Dhritarashtra tells Sakuni that his intrigue is "a consuming fire which has enveloped the whole house of the Kauravas, not sparing even the saplings." Ghatotkacha tells Sakuni, "Abandon dice, and be thou a chequer-board and a mark for arrows. Here are no women to steal, no throne to usurp; here the stake is life, and enjoyment means arrows with their dreadful winnings."

Karnabhara.—Kama, driving to his death, is described as resembling "the sun obscured by heavy clouds, but shining with its innate splendour." The sound of Krishna's conch is compared to the "roar of the ocean at the end of the world." The milk of Kama's cows is said to resemble nectar, and the speed of the chargers is said to resemble that of the horses of the sun.

Urubhanga,—The elephants' corpses lying on the battlefield of Kurukshetra are compared to huge boulders. Warriors rushing on to the fight are said to have their heads severed swiftly, and the trunks are represented as rushing on, even after death, by the momentum. Kurukshetra is called "the hermitage of battle, the home of hostility, the touchstone of valour, the abode of pride and glory, a burnt sacrifice of human lives, the princes' bridge to Heaven." I}hritara§htra refers to Duryodhana in his glory as "the golden pillar supporting the universe," and to the same Duryodhana, lying dying, as resembling "the broken bolt

of a door." Aswathama says that he will wipe out the Panda vas from the earth like a bad picture from a good canvas.

Avimaraka.—Heroes of unknown identity are described as "jewels hidden in the earth." Kurangi is likened to "the incarnation of the moon or Lakshmi", owing to her resplendent beauty. The flying Vidyadhara, enjoying a bird's-eye-view from the sky, likens the mountains to elephants, the seas to swimming tanks, the trees to mosses and lichens, the streets to boundary lines, and big mansions to glistening dew-drops. The clouds are described as. "dancers acting many parts to the drumming of the thunder; as the cows of Indra; the curtains for the stars; the ant-hill homes of snake-like lightning flashes; the dark-blue bushes on the celestial road; the hones to the love god's arrows; the water-jars to bathe the mountains; the alms-gatherers from the sea; the bars to hold the sun and the moon; the cisterns of the sky's shower-bath." The palace, after Avimaraka's flight, is said to be "dismal, like a lamp with its light blown out." Nalinika exclaims "The festival is over. The prince has gone—for ever!". The jester asks Avimaraka, when he is eager to rush back to Kurangi "Why are you in such a hurry, like a student going home for the vacation ?"

Balacharita.—The darkness of midnight is described as so great that the keenest eye-sight is useless like service rendered to a rascal. The baby Krishna is said to be as heavy as the Vindhya and the Mandara mountains. Kamsa tells Curse that it can no more ruin him than the flapping of a crow's wings can bring a mountain down or than an ocean can be drunk up with one's hollowed hands. Kamsa says about Krishna: "He is fit to overturn the universe," and reminds one of the words of God " I shall overturn and overturn the universe till everything is set right:'

Abhisheka.—Sita, in the *Asoka* park, is described by Hanuman as resembling "a flower garland withered by the sun", as "a streak of lightning amidst dark-blue clouds", and as "a digit of the moon hidden by an eclipse." The moon is described as "a silver mirror." When Ravana comes, Sita is said to resemble a gazelle frightened by a lion. Ravana describes Sita's heart as "the home of enmity."

Agni is called "the lord of the smoky banner." Rama exclaims, on seeing Lanka, "This great city will perish now through Ravana's. fault like a ship that is lost by the pilot's fault." The setting sun is said to be shining like a gold disc on the forehead of an elephant covered over with red velvet. Ravana's arrows are said to fall on Rama "as harmlessly as drops of rain water on a bull."

CHAPTER VII.

VIGNETTES FROM LIFE.

Bhasa is a great adept at depicting life in the flow and catching it in some of its delightful, peculiar, interesting, significant or instructive moments, and giving us a glimpse of it with the rapidity and impressiveness of a lightning flash.

In *Dutavakya,* Duryodhana, puffed with arrogance and self-importance, resents his chamberlain's announcing Krishna as "Here is Narayana, the best of men" and exclaims, "What! Is Kamsa's servant, Damodara, your best of men? is that cowherd the best of men? Deprived of lands, reputation and wealth by Jarasandha, is he your best of men? What conduct is this for an attendant on the king's person! What insolent words!" Then the king's chamberlain begs his forgiveness, and attributes his phrase to confusion. The king graciously says, "Confusion, say you? Yes, all men are liable to confusion. Now, tell me who is this envoy that has come?". The chamberlain replies, "One Kesava", and Duryodhana says, "Kesava! That is the way to announce him", with the characteristic delight of petty minds. In the same play, Duryodhana asks Krishna how the Pandavas, who are really the sons of gods and not of Pandu, can claim a share in the inheritance, and Krishna replies that if the argument held good, Dhritarashtra, who was not the son of Vichitravirya, but of Vyasa, could have also no share in the inheritance.

In *Dutaghatotkacha,* Dhritarashtra exclaims to Duryodhana that, in that house, rich with many sons, there is but one daughter, dearer to him than his hundred sons, and that those sons have brought their sister the gift of widowhood, expressing thereby the blasting of a Hindu woman's life by the onset of widowhood.

In *Karnabhara,* Kama has to conceal his caste, and pass oft as a Brahman, in order to be taught archery by Parasurama, the Brahman hero, and, as often happens, the lie is revealed by an insect, Vajramukhi (steely-teeth) boring through his thighs, when Parasurama is sleeping on his lap. Afraid of waking up his teacher, Karna bears the pain with fortitude, but the warm blood gushing from his thighs wakes up Parasurama who at once guesses that Karna must be of the warrior caste, to bear such pain in silence, and utters the dreadful curse, "Useless be thy weapons in thy time of need!" Again we get a glimpse of life in its tragic aspect, when Kama, driving to his death, exclaims, "Good luck to me whose last days have come!"

In *Urubhangc,* Gandhari, the faithful wife, bandages her eyes so that she may not see things her blind husband cannot see. She is able to do so without much regret when only auspicious things take place in the family; but, when calamity comes on

calamity, and the last of her sons, Duryodhana, lies dying, the desire to see him overpowers her, and the bandage on her eyes is ceaselessly wetted with her tears. Again, we get the tender scene between a loving mother and son when Duryodhana tells her "With folded hands, Oh mother, I ask, if I have earned any merit, be you my mother in another life!" and she replies that it is her own wish that he has uttered. Vyasa stands amazed, his face supported on a single finger, on seeing Bhima about to be defeated.

In *Avimaraka*, we first get an account of the panic caused by the elephant Anjanagiri's running amok in the park. Common people take to their heels; women scream; br.ave men are knocked down; then, a bold man, Avimaraka, tackles it, and turns it this way, and that in zigzags, till it is bewildered, and female elephants are brought and Anjanagiri is caught and taken to the stables. We get a minister, Kaunjayana, complaining about the lot of ministers, and a king, Kuntibhoja, complaining about the lot of kings. We get the ambassador of the king of Benares and other ambassadors kept waiting, on the principle that marriages are best arranged with many door-ways open, and that both haste and procrastination should be avoided. We find also that it is very difficult to get into the princess's palace because of the strict seraglio arrangements; but, though it is difficult to *get in* there, it is the easiest thing to *remain* there for months, undetected. The privacy and seclusion which made it difficult for Avimaraka to get into Kurangi's rooms, made it the easiest of things for him to continue there for a year with her without his presence being detected by the king and his ministers. The anger of the sage, Chandabhargava, at his disciple, Kasyapa, being mauled by a tiger, and the anger of the king of the Sauviras at the unmerited abuse, and the curse of the sage, are all bits of life in those ancient days preserved for us intact. The populace assembling to see and congratulate Kuntibhoja, after the escape of Kurangi from the elephant, is another episode from life. The scene between the two lovers, witnessed by Avimaraka on his midnight expedition to Kurangi's palace, is exquisite. The woman asks her lover sobbingly, "What am I to you?", and her woman's nature makes her say the most contrary things, though really she wanted to say the most pleasing things. Just then, an owl hoots, and, in fright, she embraces her lover. Again, Avimaraka sees a man who has made an assignation, but hesitates to keep it, and is walking up and down opposite his sweetheart's house, afraid to knock or to whistle. Policemen go with lanterns along the highroad, and burglars evade them by going across to the rogues' halls in the dark corners near the cross-roads. The full-blooded Kurangi wants to commit suicide, not knowing how hard it will be for a woman like her, with such a hold on life and

joy. She hears a clap of thunder, and cries out, "Oh save me, save me!" Youth is described as "full of passion and recklessness. It takes no heed of difficulties. It has no respect for law. It is self-willed, and its impetuosity overrules the intelligence. It is dangerous—but deligtful." People who roam at night, be it from love or greed or passion, are said to rely on courage, and not on followers. One man is said to be required to keep a love assignation, two for counsel, and many for war.

We get in this play vivid descriptions "of love-sickness. Avimaraka, in his love-sickness for Kurangi, exclaims to himself, "I see her even now, shaking with fear, her eyes quivering, her limbs chilled by the spray of water from the rogue elephant's trunk. From that day on, I am constantly dreaming of her. When I wake up from my dreams, I begin to think of her in reality. My eyes desire to see no other form, my heart delights only in thought of her, my face grows pale, and my body thin. I pass my days in sorrow, and my nights in delusion. But, all this only makes my love wax greater. I must not think of her any more! How perfect was her beauty! Either the Creator wanted to make an image of Beauty's self, or the lord of the stars has taken on a woman's form, or Lakshmi herself has come down as Kurangi. i say, I am again thinking of her. However much I try not to think of her, my mind gallops along its accustomed track like an oft-repeated sacred text rotating in our head even without our wishing it. My will is no match for my mind. That being so, I shall think about her. Ah, how all the charms of womankind have been collected in this one person!"

Kurangi's nurse says of her, "Ever since the day she met him, she has lost her former love of flowers, food, and gossip. She sighs deeply, talks disconnectedly, does not know what is being said, laughs to herself, and weeps in solitude. She is growing thinner and thinner. But it is strange that, in all these varied moods, she speaks not a word to a single soul about it, be it from bashfulness, or timidity, or family pride, or childishness."

Kurangi, pining for Avimaraka from whom she is separated after a year of happiness, resolves to put an end to her life by suicide. She says to herself "The most fragrant flowers please me no more, but simply drive me mad; the peacocks by the royal lake are much too occupied with their own bowing and scraping to understand my moods; the parrots and *minas* are continuing their ceaseless chatter which no longer interests me; and my retinue is persisting in its gossip, not being able to read my heart aright."

In *Balacharita,* Deyaki wants; to have a long, long look at her new-born babe, before it is taken away.

Yasoda, Nandagopa's wife delivers a daughter at midnight, and faints away, without even seeing the child she has delivered, as many an Indian woman does even now. Her husband, Nandagopa, finds that the child is dead, and takes it away to bury it and hush up the affair, so that the shepherds' festival in Indra's honour, which is to take place the next day, may riot be spoilt by men learning about the sad news. The wicked Kamsa, full of lust, anger and greed, has first a vision of outcaste maidens inviting him to consort with them. Then he sees his prosperity and coveted wealth vanishing, and at last finds anger, stronger than his, come in the shape of Madhuka's curse, and is badly shaken. Vasudeva, when he sees that Kamsa is going to dash Nandagopa's girl to death on Kamsa rock, mistaking her for Devaki's child, has a moment of awful agony, when he says to himself, "Shall I bring to death another's child? Shall I not rather go and fetch my own child?" and then gets comforted by the assurance that the marvellous boy will not allow this girl to die, and that this girl, who came to life after death, will not die, and, so, keeps quiet. The initial thought and the subsequent reaction are both true to life. The description of the cowherd maidens, frightened at the sight of the serpent-king, confused and incoherent in their terror, with their delicate breasts swelling into prominence, with their lips quivering in their excitement, and their wreaths falling from their locks, and their upper robes slipping down, is life-like. So, too, the fear of these girls to accept strange flowers brought by Krishna from the Yamuna.

In *Abhisheka,* Sugriva makes Rama discharge his arrow and pierce seven *sal* trees before he believes in his ability \o aid him against Valin. The reply of Rama to Valin, that he cannot escape responsibility for crime by pleading that he is but an ape, as he can distinguish between right and wrong; his further statement that one may slaughter beasts all over the world by snares and guiles; and his quoting the laws of the Aryas for punishing one person guilty of adultery while leaving another unpunished, just as a modern judge punishes the man committing adultery but leaves the woman, without whose co-operation the crime could riot have been committed, unpunished, quotes the law, are all true to life. Valin asks Sugriva not to allow the women-folk to see his dreadful condition at death. Hanuman's destruction of the Asoka park is a life-like description of the havoc monkeys can do in orchards and parks. The discussion between Ravana and Vibhishana about Sita's detention is also true to life. The detection of two of Ravana's spies, Suka and Sarana, and their release after being allowed to see the whole camp, is another vignette from life. Still another, and one with a tragic note, is the refusal of the aristocratic Rama, with his sublime family pride, to take

Sita back to his home, without putting her to the baptism by fire, to convince the thousand-tongued multitude of her purity.

In *Pratijna*, we get the scene of the discharge of an urgent messenger to warn Udayana; the preparation of an auspicious cord blessed by married women for saving him from harm by enemies, demons, wild beasts, etc., the spectacle of a herd of wild elephants throwing up mud from a pond on their own backs, and looking like a half-finished stone wall; an enemy spy giving the sporting enthusiast, Udayana, false information in order to lead him into the snare; the life-like model of an elephant filled with troops; the minister's protest against the king's going without his whole army; the king's oath on himself that he will go alone; the sudden attack on Udayana and his scanty followers, and the desperate fight; the wailing of Salankayana's men regarding the death of their kinsmen; the fainting of Udayana; his being bound with forest creepers; the attempt to despatch him, by a desperado's taking a run to deal a deadly blow on him with momentum; and his slipping, on the ground, wet with blood, are all striking vignettes from life. So too, the talk between Mahasena and his queen about their daughter's marriage; the arrival of the ambassador of the king of Benares, and the directions regarding the gradations of guests and honours; the great surprise of Mahasena regarding Udayana's capture; the plot between the conspirators in disguise in the Kartyayani temple; the mimicry of the beggar, the mad man and the monk; the life-like imitation of the drunkard, as the mahout of Bhadravati; the change of palanquin-bearers, and the inevitable interval during which the person in the palanquin is clearly on view; the use of herbs and fire to make elephants run amok, and the marriage of the two paintings when their originals have fled.

In *Svapna*, we get the pushing of the people from the pathway when the princess comes along; the call to the ascetics to come and name the gifts they want for carrying on their holy tasks; the wandering of students in search of sacred lore, and the titbits regarding kings and events carried by them; the description of the ball-game which makes Padmavati's hands red and her face shine with beads of perspiration, the heart-cry of Vasavadatta when her husband is going to be married to Padmavati; her rejection of the herb rival-crusher for the marriage garland; her use in plenty of the herb called widowhood-preventer in that garland; her cry, " Ah, wretched me! Even my husband belongs to another woman!"; the jester's remark that his stomach is rolling like a cuckoo's eyes; Padmavati's desire to leave plenty of flowers unplucked, so that her husband may see them and rejoice; the warmth on the stone-bench leading Udayana to conclude that Padmavati must have sat there recently; the mistaking of the

fallen wreath for a cobra by the jester; the mistaking of the sleeping king for Padmavati by Vasavadatta; Udayana's attributing Vasavadatta's lack of jewels to her anger at his former love-making to Viraxhita; the jester's telling the king a story and bungling the name of the king for the city and of the city for the king. Padmavati's remark to Udayana that, if she sits by his side when the ambassadors from Ujjaini come, they may take her to be callous, as she would be sitting in the place of the former queen, Vasavadatta; and Udayana's exclaiming that mere resemblance is not conclusive proof of the identity of Vasavadatta and Avantika, since veritable doubles are fqund in real life.

In *Charudatta*, the state of Charudatta, who has fallen from great riches to abject poverty, is described by his friend, Maitreya, as pitiful like that of the glorious moon which has lost its light at dawn. Charudatta himself describes a poor man as living and moving about in a body which is as good as dead. He exclaims that the loss of riches, by itself, means nothing, if it does not mean also the loss of friends who become indifferent to a man who has become poor; he complains that, however virtuous a poor man may be, he is suspected, even by honest people, owing to his impecuniosity. But, being a votary of truth, he adds that a man can never be termed wholly poor who has a devoted wife and a faithful friend. The chasing of the courtesan, Vasantasena, by Sakara and the rake, in the dark night, is another vignette from life. The shampooer learns shampooing as an art, but has to pursue it as a job, and gets so disgusted at shampooing common men, after having had the honour of shampooing the noble Charudatta, that he leaves the job and takes to gambling! There, he makes the usual small winnings for a time, and then comes the big loss which lands him in disaster, and makes him avoid the creditor who duns him, till he is rescued from his awful clutches by the generous aid of Vasantasena. The burglar finds that Maitreya is really asleep, and is not feigning, by the regularity of the breathing, the relaxation of the body, the non-rolling of the eye-balls beneath the closed eye-lids, and by his eyes facing the lamp. The sleeplessness of Maitreya when in custody of the golden jewels; his anxiety to return them to Charudatta; his giving them to the burglar, mistaking him for Charudatta; and the burglar's taking Vasantasena's own jewels to Vasantasena, to buy back Madanika's freedom, are further examples. Maitreya exclaims about the deserted street, "The street is deserted, as if a curfew order is in force." Sajjalaka tells Madanika, "I tell you it is no joke for an honest man to commit a crime. If a man walks briskly, I fear him. If he looks up at me, I am afraid. If he runs towards me, my heart misses a beat. If he stands

still in front of me, I almost collapse. A man's own guilt makes Kfrtt fear the whole world and to conjure tip all sbfts of imaginary fears." *Pancharatra*% we get the great Drona at first exclaim m anger, "No"cringing. Much rather, a quarrel," but, later on, trying to praise and pacify Safcuni so as to get by the back-door what he has failed to get by the front door. Yudhisthira exclaims that the crimes of Jiis cousins, in carrying away the cattle of the king of Virata, make him feel as if .he has committed a crime himself. When Abhimanyu is reported captured, Drona asks his charioteer, "How was he taken? Did his chariot overturn? Or, did the horses get out of control? Or did his chariot sink in the ground, owing to its loose nature? Or, did the axle break? Or, did his quiver run short of arrows Or, did his bow-string snap? Or, did you fail him? Or, was he overpowered by the enemy's arrows?". The chaffing of Abhimanyu by Bhima and Arjuna is another delightful example. So, too, Bhishma's giving the arrow, with Arjuna's name, to Sakuni to read.

In *Madyamavyayoga*$_f$ while both the parents and the three sons profess their desire to offer themselves for sacrifice, Kesavadasa wants the eldest son, who is to perform the funeral ceremonies, not to be sacrificed, and his wife wants the youngest son not to be sacrificed. So, the middle man, like all moderates, goes to the wall. Ghatotkacha tells Kesavadasa that his mother does Hot want his old flesh, and tells the old man's wife that his mother will not eat a woman, but only a man. When violence fails him, he resorts to non-violence, and takes Bhima along, to his mother, for her breakfast.

•In *Pratima,* angered by the refusal of the sprig of the *Asoka* tree by the lady Reva, the mistress of the tiring room, Avadatika takes away a bark garment. Sita asks the bark garment to be returned, but, with the pardonable vanity of a woman, asks it to be brought back so that she may see whether she will look handsome when dressed in it. Rama, with the natural affection of a loving husband for his beautiful wife, offers to hold the mirror for her when she puts on her ornaments. Lakshmana, who loves Rama dearly, has no patience with his old father for listening to his young wife, Kaikeyi, and angrily takes his bow and arrows to finish off Kaikeyi, and even Dasaratha if necessary. Sita exclaims that such violence is unheard of, and that he is possessed, by anger when he should be possessed by grief. Rama tells the. citizens that they may'gaze on Sita freely, as young womer may be gazed at freely at sacrifices. and weddings, in calamities and in the forest, expressing tfiereby the truth that veils are, meant only for queens and' rich women, and not for holy or hum$_r$ ble folk. Dasaratha's irnef for Rama is vividlv denicted. The

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