

Ralph T. H. Griffith Ramayan of Valmiki Ramayan of Valmiki  
Sacred Texts Hinduism  
RĀMĀYAN OF VĀLMĪKI  
RALPH T. H. GRIFFITH, M. A.,  
[1870-1874]

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This is the first complete public domain translation of the Ramayana to be placed online. The Ramayana is one of the two epic Hindu poems, the other being the Mahabharata. The Ramayana describes a love story between Rama, an ancient King, and Sita, who is captured by Ravan, the King of Ceylon. Rama lays siege to Ceylon and wins back Sita. The parallels to the

Iliad are obvious, but the details are very different.

This verse translation by Griffith, whose translations of the Rig Veda and

the Sama Veda are also available at sacred-texts, was scanned in 2000 from an original copy, which had very poor typesetting. Due to the difficulty of converting this 600 page text to etext, the project was put on hold for several years until OCR technology matured. Finally in 2003, the text was OCR-ed and proofed at Distributed Proofing. However, despite best efforts, there are several places in this text where the proofing was difficult or impossible. These are indicated by asterisks or (illegible). We are in the process of cleaning up these issues and hope to have a definitive version of this text at some point. In the meantime we hope you enjoy this epic, which is one of the most popular tales of Indian mythology.

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##### Appendices

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#### THE

#### RÁMÁYAN OF VÁLMÍKI

Translated into English Verse

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PRINCIPAL OF THE BENARES COLLEGE

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p. 1

INVOCATION. 1

Praise to Válmíki, 2 bird of charming song, 3  
Who mounts on Poesy's sublimest spray,  
And sweetly sings with accent clear and strong Ráma, aye Ráma, in his  
deathless lay.

Where breathes the man can listen to the strain  
That flows in music from Válmíki's tongue, Nor feel his feet the path  
of bliss attain When Ráma's glory by the saint is sung!

The stream Rámáyan leaves its sacred fount  
The whole wide world from sin and stain to free.

1b  
The Prince of Hermits is the parent mount, The lordly Ráma is the  
darling sea.

Glory to him whose fame is ever bright!

Glory to him, Prachetas'

2b holy son!  
Whose pure lips quaff with ever new delight The nectar-sea of deeds by  
Ráma done. Hail, arch-ascetic, pious, good, and kind!

Hail, Saint Válmíki, lord of every lore! Hail, holy Hermit, calm and  
pure of mind! Hail, First of Bards, Válmíki, hail once more!

Footnotes

1:1 The MSS. vary very considerably in these stanzas of  
invocation: many lines are generally prefixed in which  
not only the poet, but those who play the chief parts in the poem are  
panegyricized. It is self-apparent that they are not by the author of the  
Rámáyan himself.

1:2 'Válmíki was the son of Varuna, the regent of the  
waters, one of whose names is Prachetas. According to  
the Adhyátmá Rámáyana, the sage, although a Bráhmaṇ by birth, associated  
with foresters and robbers. Attacking on one occasion the seven Rishis,  
they expostulated with him successfully, and taught him the mantra of  
Ráma reversed, or Mará, Mará, in the inaudible repetition of which he  
remained immovable for thousands of years, so that when the sages  
returned to the same spot they found him still there, converted into a  
valmik or ant-hill, by the nests of the termites, whence his name of  
Válmíki.' WILSON. Specimens of the Hindu Theatre, Vol. I. p.  
313.

'Válmíki is said to have lived a solitary life in the  
woods: he is called both a muni and a rishi. The former word properly  
signifies an anchorite or hermit; the latter has reference chiefly to  
wisdom. The two words are frequently used promiscuously, and may both be  
rendered by the Latin cates in its earliest meaning of seer: Válmíki was  
both poet and seer, as he is said to have sung the exploits of Ráma by  
the aid of divining insight rather than of knowledge naturally acquired.'  
SCHLEGEL.

1:3 Literally, Kokila, the Koil, or Indian Cuckoo.

Schlegel translates 'lusciniū.'

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BOOK I. 3b

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CANTO I: NÁRAD. 4b

\*\*\*\*\*

OM. 5b

To sainted Nárad, prince of those  
Whose lore in words of wisdom flows. Whose constant care and chief  
delight Were Scripture and ascetic rite, The good Válmíki, first and best  
p. 2

Of hermit saints, these words addressed: 1

'In all this world, I pray thee, who Is virtuous, heroic, true? Firm in his  
vows, of grateful mind, To every creature good and kind? Bounteous, and  
holy, just, and wise, Alone most fair to all men's eyes? Devoid of envy,

firm, and sage, Whose tranquil soul ne'er yields to rage? Whom, when his warrior wrath is high, Do Gods embattled fear and fly? Whose noble might and gentle skill

The triple world can guard from ill? Who is the best of princes, he Who loves his people's good to see? The store of bliss, the living mine Where brightest joys and virtues shine? Queen Fortune's

2 best and dearest friend,

Whose steps her choicest gifts attend? Who may with Sun and Moon

compare, With Indra,

3 Vishnu, 4 Fire, and Air?

Grant, Saint divine, 5 the boon I ask,

For thee, I ween, an easy task, To whom the power is given to know If such a man breathe here below.'

Then Nárad, clear before whose eye

The present, past, and future lie,

1b

Made ready answer: 'Hermit, where Are graces found so high and rare? Yet listen, and my tongue shall tell In whom alone these virtues dwell. From old Ikshváku's

2b line he came,

Known to the world by Ráma's name: With soul subdued, a chief of might, In Scripture versed, in glory bright, His steps in virtue's paths are bent, Obedient, pure, and eloquent. In each emprise he wins success, And dying foes his power confess. Tall and broad-shouldered, strong of limb, Fortune has set her mark on him. Graced with a conch-shell's triple line, His threat displays the auspicious sign.

3b

p. 3

High destiny is clear impressed On massive jaw and ample chest, His mighty shafts he truly aims, And foemen in the battle tames. Deep in the muscle, scarcely shown, Embedded lies his collar-bone. His lordly steps are firm and free, His strong arms reach below his knee;

1

All fairest graces join to deck His head, his brow, his stately neck, And limbs in fair proportion set: The manliest form e'er fashioned yet. Graced with each high imperial mark, His skin is soft and lustrous dark. Large are his eyes that sweetly shine With majesty almost divine. His plighted word he ne'er forgets; On erring sense a watch he sets. By nature wise, his teacher's skill Has trained him to subdue his will. Good, resolute and pure, and strong, He guards mankind from scathe and wrong, And lends his aid, and ne'er in vain,

The cause of justice to maintain. Well has he studied o'er and o'er The Vedas

2 and their kindred lore.

Well skilled is he the bow to draw, 1b

Well trained in arts and versed in law; High-souled and meet for happy fate, Most tender and compassionate; The noblest of all lordly givers, Whom good men follow, as the rivers Follow the King of Floods, the sea: So liberal, so just is he. The joy of Queen Kaus'alyá's

2b heart,

In every virtue he has part: Firm as Himálaya's

3b snowy steep,

Unfathomed like the mighty deep: The peer of Vishnu's power and might, And lovely as the Lord of Night;

4b

Patient as Earth, but, roused to ire, Fierce as the world-destroying fire; In bounty like the Lord of Gold,

5b

And Justice self ia human mould.

With him, his best and eldest son,

By all his princely virtues won King Das'aratha  
6b willed to share  
His kingdom as the Regent Heir. But when Kaikeyí, youngest queen,  
With eyes of envious hate had seen The solemn pomp and regal state Prepared  
the prince to consecrate, She bade the hapless king bestow Two gifts he  
promised long ago, That Ráma to the woods should flee, And that her child  
the heir should be.  
By chains of duty firmly tied,  
Thw wretched king perforce complied.

p. 4

Ráma, to please Kaikeyí went Obedient forth to banishment. Then Lakshman's  
truth was nobly shown, Then were his love and courage known, When for his  
brother's sake he dared All perils, and his exile shared. And Sítá, Ráma's  
darling wife, Loved even as he loved his life, Whom happy marks combined to  
bless, A miracle of loveliness, Of Janak's royal lineage sprung, Most  
excellent of women, clung To her dear lord, like Rohiní Rejoicing with the  
Moon to be.

1

The King and people, sad of mood, The hero's car awhile pursued.  
But when Prince Ráma lighted down At S'riugavera's pleasant town, Where  
Gangá's holy waters flow, He bade his driver turn and go. Guha, Nishádas'  
king, he met, And on the farther bank was set. Then on from wood to wood  
they strayed, O'er many a stream, through constant shade, As Bharadvája  
bade them, till They came to Chitrakúta's hill. And Ráma there, with  
Lakshman's aid, A pleasant little cottage made, And spent his days with  
Sítá, dressed  
In coat of bark and deerskin vest.

1b

And Chitrakuta grew to be  
As bright with those illustrious three An Meru's  
2b sacred peaks that shine  
With glory, when the Gods recline Beneath them: Siva's  
3b self between

The Lord of Gold and Beauty's Queen.  
The aged king for Rama pined,  
And for the skies the earth resigned, Bharat, his son, refused to  
reign, Though urged by all the twice-born  
4b train.

Forth to the woods he fared to meet His brother, fell before his feet, And  
cried, 'Thy claim all men allow:  
O come, our lord and king be thou.'  
But Rama nobly chose to be Observant of his sire's decree. He placed his  
sandals

5b in his hand

A pledge that he would rule the land: And bade his brother turn again. Then  
Bharat. finding prayer was vain, The sandals took and went away; Nor in  
Ayodhyá would he stay. But turned to Nandigráma, where He ruled the realm  
with watchful care, Still longing eagerly to learn Tidings of Ráma's safe  
return.

Then lest the people should repeat

Their visit to his calm retreat, Away from Chitrakúta's hill Fared Ráma  
ever onward till

p. 5

Beneath the shady trees he stood Of Dandaká's primeval wood, Virádha, giant  
fiend, he slew, And then Agastya's friendship knew. Counsell'd by him he  
gained the sword And bow of Indra, heavenly lord: A pair of quivers too,  
that bore Of arrows an exhaustless store.

While there he dwelt in greenwood shade The trembling hermits sought his  
aid, And bade him with his sword and bow Destroy the fiends who worked them  
woe: To come like Indra strong and brave, A guardian God to help and

save. And Ráma's falchion left its trace  
Deep cut on Súrpanakhá's face: A  
hideous giantess who came  
Burning for him with lawless flame. Their  
sister's cries the giants heard. And vengeance in each bosom stirred: The  
monster of the triple head. And Dúshan to the contest sped. But they and  
myriad fiends beside  
Beneath the might of Ráma died.

When Rávan, dreaded warrior, knew

The slaughter of his giant crew: Rávan, the king, whose name of fear  
Earth, hell, and heaven all shook to hear: He bade the fiend Márícha aid  
The vengeful plot his fury laid. In vain the wise Márícha tried  
To turn him from his course aside: Not Rávan's self, he said, might hope  
With Ráma and his strength to cope. Impelled by fate and blind with rage  
He came to Ráma's hermitage.

There, by Márícha's magic art, He wiled the princely youths apart, The  
vulture

1 slew, and bore away

The wife of Ráma as his prey. The son of Raghu

2 came and found

Jatáyu slain upon the ground. He rushed within his leafy cot; He sought his  
wife, but found her not. Then, then the hero's senses failed; In mad  
despair he wept and wailed, Upon the pile that bird he laid, And still in  
quest of Sitá strayed. A hideous giant then he saw, Kabandha named, a shape  
of awe.

The monstrous fiend he smote and slew,

And in the flame the body threw; When straight from out the funeral  
flame In lovely form Kabandha came, And bade him seek in his distress A wise  
and holy hermitess. By counsel of this saintly dame To Pampá's pleasant  
flood he came, And there the steadfast friendship won Of Hanumán the Wind-  
God's son. Counselling by him he told his grief To great Sugriva, Vánar  
chief, Who, knowing all the tale, before The sacred flame alliance swore.  
Sugriva to his new-found friend Told his own story to the end: His hate of  
Báli for the wrong And insult he had borne so long. And Ráma lent a willing  
ear And promised to allay his fear. Sugriva warned him of the might Of Báli,  
matchless in the fight, And, credence for his tale to gain, Showed the huge  
fiend

1b by Báli slain.

The prostrate corpse of mountain size Seemed nothing in the hero's eyes; He  
lightly kicked it, as it lay, And cast it twenty leagues

2b away.

To prove his might his arrows through Seven palms in line, uninjured,  
flew. He cleft a mighty hill apart, And down to hell he hurled his  
dart, Then high Sugriva's spirit rose, Assured of conquest o'er his  
foes. With his new champion by his side To vast Kishkindhá's cave he  
hied. Then, summoned by his awful shout, King Báli came in fury out, First  
comforted his trembling wife, Then sought Sugriva in the strife. One shaft  
from Ráma's deadly bow The monarch in the dust laid low. Then Ráma bade  
Sugriva reign

In place of royal Báli slain. Then speedy envoys hurried forth Eastward and  
westward, south and north, Commanded by the grateful king Tidings of Ráma's  
spouse to bring.

Then by Sampáti's counsel led,

Brave Hanumán, who mocked at dread, Sprang at one wild tremendous leap Two  
hundred leagues across the deep. To Lanká's

3b town he urged his way,

Where Rávan held his royal sway.

p. 6

There pensive 'neath As'oka 1 boughs

He found poor Sitá, Ráma's spouse. He gave the hapless girl a ring, A token  
from her lord and king. A pledge from her fair hand he bore; Then battered  
down the garden door. Five captains of the host he slew, Seven sons of  
councillors o'erthrew; Crushed youthful Aksha on the field, Then to his

captors chose to yield. Soon from their bonds his limbs were free, But  
honouring the high decree Which Brahmá had pronounced of yore,  
2 He calmly all their insults bore.

The town he burnt with hostile flame, And spoke again with Ráma's  
dame, Then swiftly back to Ráma flew With tidings of the interview. Then  
with Sugríva for his guide, Came Ráma to the ocean side. He smote the sea  
with shafts as bright As sunbeams in their summer height, And quick  
appeared the Rivers' King

3

Obedient to the summoning. A bridge was thrown by Nala o'er The narrow sea  
from shore to shore.

4

They crossed to Lanká's golden town, Where Ráma's hand smote Rávan  
down. Vibhishan there was left to reign Over his brother's wide domain. To  
meet her husband Sitá came; But Ráma, stung with ire and shame, With bitter  
words his wife addressed Before the crowd that round her pressed. But Sitá,  
touched with noble ire, Gave her fair body to the fire. Then straight the  
God of Wind appeared, And words from heaven her honour cleared. And Ráma  
clasped his wife again, Uninjured, pure from spot and stain, Obedient to  
the Lord of Fire And the high mandate of his sire. Led by the Lord who  
rules the sky,

The Gods and heavenly saints drew nigh, And honoured him with worthy  
meed, Rejoicing in each glorious deed. His task achieved, his foe removed,  
He triumphed, by the Gods approved,

By grace of Heaven he raised to life The chieftains slain in mortal  
strife; Then in the magic chariot through The clouds to Nandigráma flew. Met  
by his faithful brothers there, He loosed his votive coil of hair: Thence  
fair Ayodhyá's town he gained, And o'er his father's kingdom  
reigned. Disease or famine ne'er oppressed His happy people, richly  
blest With all the joys of ample wealth, Of sweet content and perfect  
health. No widow mourned her well-loved mate, No sire his son's untimely  
fate. They feared not storm or robber's hand; No fire or flood laid waste  
the land: The Golden Age

1b had come again

To bless the days of Ráma's reign. From him, the great and glorious  
king, Shall many a princely scion spring. And he shall rule, beloved by  
men, Ten thousand years and hundreds ten,

2b And when his life on earth is past

To Brahmá's world shall go at last.' Whoe'er this noble poem reads That  
tells the tale of Ráma's deeds, Good as the Scriptures, he shall be From  
every sin and blemish free. Whoever reads the saving strain, With all his  
kin the heavens shall gain. Bráhmans who read shall gather hence The  
highest praise for eloquence. The warrior, o'er the laud shall reign, The  
merchant, luck in trade obtain; And S'údras listening

3b ne'er shall fail

To reap advantage from the tale. 4b

p. 7

Footnotes

1:1b Comparison with the Ganges is implied, that river  
being called the purifier of the world.

1:2b 'This name may have been given to the father of Válmíki  
allegorically. If we look at the derivation of the  
word (pra, before, and chetas, mind) it is as if the poet were called the  
son of Prometheus, the Forethinker.' SCHLEGEL.

1:3b Called in Sanskrit also Bála-Kánda, and in Hindi  
Bál-Kánd, i. e. the Book describing Ráma's childhood,  
bála meaning a boy up to his sixteenth year.

1:4b A divine saint, son of Brahmá. He is the eloquent  
messenger of the Gods, a musician of exquisite skill,

and the inventor of the viná or Indian lute. He bears a strong resemblance to Hermes or Mercury.

1:5b This mystic syllable, said to typify the supreme Deity, the Gods collectively, the Vedas, the three spheres of the world, the three holy fires, the three steps of Vishnu etc., prefaces the prayers and most venerated writings of the Hindus.

2:1 This colloquy is supposed to have taken place about sixteen years after Ráma's return from his wanderings and occupation of his ancestral throne.

2:2 Called also S'ri and Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, the Queen of Beauty as well as the Dea Fortuna. Her birth 'from the full-flushed wave' is described in Canto XLV of this Book.

2:3 One of the most prominent objects of worship in the Rig-veda, Indra was superseded in later times by the more popular deities Vishnu and S'iva. He is the God of the firmament, and answers in many respects to the Jupiter Pluvius of the Romans. See Additional Notes.

2:4 The second God of the Trimúrti or Indian Trinity. Derived from the root vis' to penetrate, the meaning of the name appears to be he who penetrates or pervades all things. An embodiment of the preserving power of nature, he is worshipped as a Saviour who has nine times been incarnate for the good of the world and will descend on earth once more. See Additional Notes and Muir's Sanskrit Texts passim.

2:5 In Sanskrit devarshi. Rishi is the general appellation of sages, and another word is frequently prefixed to distinguish the degrees. A Brahmarshi is a theologian or Bráhmancial sage; a Rájarshi is a royal sage or sainted king; a Devarshi is a divine or deified sage or saint.

2:1b Trikála'j'na. Literally knower of the three times.

Both Schlegel and Gorresio quote Homer's.

Os aedae ta t eonta, ta t essomena, pro t eonta. 'That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view, The past, the present, and the future knew.'

The Bombay edition reads trilokajna, who knows the three worlds (earth, air and heaven.) 'It is by topas

(austere fervour) that rishis of subdued souls, subsisting on roots, fruits and air, obtain a vision of the three worlds with all things moving and stationary.' MANU, XI. 236.

2:2b Son of Manu, the first king of Kos'ala and founder of the solar dynasty or family of the Children of the Sun, the God of that luminary being the father of Manu.

2:3b The Indians paid great attention to the art of physiognomy and believed that character and fortune could be foretold not from the face only, but from marks upon the neck and hands. Three lines under the chin like those at the mouth of a conch (S'an'kha) were regarded as a peculiarly auspicious sign indicating, as did also the mark of Vishnu's discus on the hand, one born to be a chakravartin or universal emperor. In the palmistry of Europe the line of fortune, as well as the line of life, is in the hand. Cardan says that marks on the nails and teeth also show what is to happen to us: 'Sunt etiam in nobis vestigia quædam futurorum eyentuum in unguibus atque etiam in dentibus.' Though the palmy days of Indian chiromancy have passed away, the art is still to some extent studied and believed in.

3:1 Long arms were regarded as a sign of heroic strength.

3:2 'Veda means originally knowing or knowledge, and this name is given by the Bráhmans not to one work, but to the whole body of their most ancient sacred literature. Veda is the same word which appears in the

Greek ο•δᾱ, I know, and in the English wise, wisdom, to wit. The name of Veda is commonly given to four collections of hymns, which are respectively known by the names of Rig-veda, Yajur-veda, Sáma-veda, and Atharva-veda.'

'As the language of the Veda, the Sanskrit, is the most ancient type of the English of the present day, (Sanskrit and English are but varieties of one and the same language,) so its thoughts and feelings contain in reality the first roots and germs of that intellectual growth which by an unbroken chain connects our own generation with the ancestors of the Aryan race,--with those very people who at the rising and setting of the sun listened with trembling hearts to the songs of the Veda, that told them of bright powers above, and of a life to come after the sun of their own lives had set in the clouds of the evening. These men were the true ancestors of our race, and the Veda is the oldest book we have in which to study the first beginnings of our language, and of all that is embodied in language. We are by nature Aryan, Indo-European, not Semitic: our spiritual kith and kin are to be found in India, Persia, Greece, Italy, Germany: not in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Palestine.' Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. I. pp.

8. 4.

3:1b As with the ancient Persians and Scythians, Indian princes were carefully instructed in archery which stands for military science in general, of which, among Hindu heroes, it was the most important branch.

3:2b Chief of the three queens of Das'aratha and mother of Ráma.

3:3b From hima snow, (Greek χεῖμ•ν Latin hiems) and álaya abode, the Mansion of snow.

3:4b The moon (Soma, Indu, Chandra etc.) is masculine with the Indians as with the Germans.

3:5b Kuvera, the Indian Plutus, or God of Wealth.

3:6b The events here briefly mentioned will be related fully in the course of the poem. The first four cantos are introductory, and are evidently the work of a later hand than Valmiki's.

4:1 'Chandra, or the Moon, is fabled to have been married to the twenty-seven daughters of the patriarch Daksha, or Asviní and the rest, who are in fact personifications of the Lunar Asterisms. His favourite amongst them was Rohiní to whom he so wholly devoted himself as to neglect the rest. They complained to their father, and Daksha repeatedly interposed, till, finding his remonstrances vain, he denounced a curse upon his son-in-law, in consequence of which he remained childless and became affected by consumption. The wives of Chandra having interceded in his behalf with their father, Daksha modified an imprecation which he could not recall, and pronounced that the decay should be periodical only, not permanent, and that it should alternate with periods of recovery. Hence the successive wane and increase of the Moon. Padma, Purána, Swarga-Khanda, Sec. II. Rohini in Astronomy is the fourth lunar mansion, containing live stars, the principal of which is Aldebaran.' WILSON, Specimens of the Hindu Theatre. Vol. I. p. 234.

The Bengal recension has a different reading:

'Shone with her husband like the light Attendant on the Lord of Night.'

4:1b The garb prescribed for ascetics by Manu.

4:2b Mount Meru, situated like Kailása in the lofty regions to the north of the Himálayas, is celebrated in the traditions and myths of India. Meru and Kailása are the two Indian Olympi. Perhaps they were held in such veneration because the Sanskrit-speaking Indians remembered the ancient home where they dwelt with the other primitive peoples of their family



before they descended to occupy the vast plains which extend between the Indus and the Ganges.' GOBRESIO.

4:3b The third God of the Indian Triad, the God of destruction and reproduction. See Additional Notes.

4:4b The epithet dmija, or twice-born, is usually appropriate to Bráhmans, but is applicable to the three higher castes. Investiture with the sacred thread and initiation of the neophyte into certain religious mysteries are regarded as his regeneration or second birth.

4:5b His shoes to be a memorial of the absent heir and to maintain his right. Kálidása (Raghuvans'a, XII. 17.) says that they were to be ahidevate or guardian deities of the kingdom.

5:1 Jatáyu, a semi-divine bird, the friend of Ráma, who fought in defence of Sitá.

5:2 Raghu was one of the most celebrated ancestors of Ráma whose commonest appellation is, therefore, Rághava or descendant of Raghu. Kálidása in the Raghuvans'a makes him the son of Dilipa and great-grandfather of Ráma. See Idylls from the Sanskrit, 'Aja' and 'Dilipa'.

5:1b Dundhubi

5:2b Literally ten yojanas. The yojana is a measure of uncertain length variously reckoned as equal to nine miles, five, and a little less.

5:3b Ceylon

6:1 The Jonesia As'oka is a most beautiful tree bearing a profusion of red blossoms.

6:2 Brahmá, the Creator, is usually regarded as the first God of the Indian Trinity, although, as Kálidása says:

'Of Brahma, Vishnu, S'iva, each may be First, second, third, amid the blessed Three.'

Brahmá had guaranteed Rávan's life against all enemies except man.

6:3 Ocean personified.

6:4 The rocks lying between Ceylon and the mainland are still called Ráma's Bridge by the Hindus.

6:1b The Bráhmans, with a system rather cosmogonical than chronological, divide the present mundane period into four ages or yugas as they call them: the Krita, the Tretá, the Dwápara, and the Kali. The Krita, called also the Deva-yuga or that of the Gods, is the age of truth, the perfect age, the Tretá is the age of the three sacred fires, domestic and sacrificial; the Dwápara is the age of doubt; the Kali, the present age, is the age of evil.' GORRESIO.

6:2b The ancient kings of India enjoyed lives of more than patriarchal length as will appear in the course of the poem.

6:3b S'údras, men of the fourth and lowest pure caste, were not allowed to read the poem, but might hear it recited.

6:4b The three s'lokas or distichs which these twelve lines represent are evidently a still later and very awkward addition to the introduction.

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CANTO II: BRAHMÁ'S VISIT

Válmiki, graceful speaker, heard,

To highest admiration stirred. To him whose fame the tale rehearsed  
He paid his mental worship first; Then with his pupil humbly bent  
Before the saint most eloquent. Thus honoured and dismissed the seer  
Departed to his heavenly sphere. Then from his cot Válmiki hied  
To Tamasá's 1 sequestered side,

Not far remote from Gangáa's tide. He stood and saw the ripples  
roll pellucid o'er a pebbly shoal. To Bharadvāja  
2 by his side

He turned in ecstasy, and cried: 'See, pupil dear, this lovely sight, The  
smooth-floored shallow, pure and bright, With not a speck or shade to  
mar, And clear as good men's bosoms are. Here on the brink thy pitcher  
lay, And bring my zone of bark, I pray. Here will I bathe: the rill has  
not, To lave the limbs a fairer spot. Do quickly as I bid, nor waste  
The precious time; away, and haste.' Obedient to his master's best Quick  
from the cot he brought the vest; The hermit took it from his hand, And  
tightened round his waist the band; Then duly dipped and bathed him  
there, And muttered low his secret prayer. To spirits and to Gods he  
made Libation of the stream, and strayed Viewing the forest deep and  
wide That spread its shade on every side. Close by the bank he saw a pair Of  
curlews sporting fearless there. But suddenly with evil mind An outcast  
fowler stole behind, And, with an aim too sure and true, The male bird near  
the hermit slew.

The wretched hen in wild despair

With fluttering pinions beat the air, And shrieked a long and bitter  
cry When low on earth she saw him lie, Her loved companion, quivering,  
dead, His dear wings with his lifeblood red; And for her golden crested  
mate She mourned, and was disconsolate. The hermit saw the slaughtered  
bird, And all his heart with ruth was stirred. The fowler's impious deed  
distressed

His gentle sympathetic breast, And while the curlew's sad cries rang Within  
his ears, the hermit sang: 'No fame be thine for endless time, Because,  
base outcast, of thy crime, Whose cruel hand was fain to slay One of this  
gentle pair at play! 'E'en as he spoke his bosom wrought And laboured with  
the wondering thought What was the speech his ready tongue Had uttered when  
his heart was wrung. He pondered long upon the speech, Recalled the words  
and measured each, And thus exclaimed the saintly guide To Bharadvāja by  
his side: 'With equal lines of even feet, With rhythm and time and tone  
complete, The measured form of words I spoke In shock of grief be termed a  
s'loke.'

1b

And Bharadvāja, nothing slow His faithful love and zeal to show, Answered  
those words of wisdom, 'Be The name, my lord, as pleases thee.' As rules  
prescribe the hermit took Some lustral water from the brook. But still on  
this his constant thought Kept brooding, as his home he sought; While  
Bharadvāja paced behind, A pupil sage of lowly mind,  
And in his hand a pitcher bore With pure fresh water brimming o'er. Soon as  
they reached their calm retreat The holy hermit took his seat; His mind  
from worldly cares recalled, And mused in deepest thought enthralled.

Then glorious Brahmá,

2b Lord Most High.

Creator of the earth and sky,

p. 8

The four-faced God, to meet the sage Came to Válmíki's hermitage. Soon as  
the mighty God he saw, Up sprang the saint in wondering awe. Mute, with  
clasped hands, his head he bent, And stood before him reverent. His  
honoured guest he greeted well, Who bade him of his welfare tell; Gave  
water for his blessed feet, Brought offerings,

1 and prepared a seat,

In honoured place the God Most High Sate down, and bade the saint sit  
nigh. There sate before Válmíki's eyes The Father of the earth and  
skies; But still the hermit's thoughts were bent On one thing only, all  
intent On that poor curlew's mournful fate Lamenting for her slaughtered  
mate;

And still his lips, in absent mood, The verse that told his grief,  
renewed: 'Woe to the fowler's impious hand That did the deed that folly

planned; That could to needless death devote  
 The curlew of the tuneful throat!' The heavenly Father smiled in glee,  
 And said, 'O best of hermits', see, A verse, unconscious thou hast made;  
 No longer be the task delayed. Seek not to trace, with labour vain,  
 The unpremeditated strain. The tuneful lines thy lips rehearsed  
 Spontaneous from thy bosom burst, Then come, O best of seers,  
 relate The life of Ráma good and great, The tale that saintly Nárada told,  
 In all its glorious length unfold. Of all the deeds his arm has done  
 Upon this earth, omit not one, And thus the noble life record  
 Of that wise, brave, and virtuous lord. His every act to day displayed,  
 His secret life to none betrayed: How Lakshman, how the giants fought;  
 With high emprise and hidden thought: And all that Janak's child  
 1b befell Where all could see, where none could tell,  
 The whole of this shall truly be Made known, O best of saints, to thee.  
 In all thy poem, through my grace, No word of falsehood shall have place.  
 Begin the story, and rehearse The tale divine in charming verse. As long as in this firm-set land  
 The streams shall flow, the mountains stand, So long throughout the world,  
 be sure, The great Rámáyan shall endure.

2b

While the Rámáyan's ancient strain Shall glorious in the earth remain,  
 To higher spheres shalt thou arise And dwell with me above the skies! He spoke,  
 and vanished into air, And left Válmiki wondering there. The pupils of the holy man,  
 Moved by their love of him, began To chant that verse, and ever more  
 They marvelled as they sang it o'er: 'Behold, the four-lined balanced rime,  
 Repeated over many a time, In words that from the hermit broke  
 In shock of grief, becomes a s'loke.' This measure now Válmiki chose  
 Wherein his story to compose. In hundreds of such verses, sweet  
 With equal lines and even feet, The saintly poet, lofty-souled,  
 The glorious deeds of Ráma told.

Footnotes

7:1 There are several rivers in India of this name, now corrupted into Tarse. The river here spoken of is that which falls into the Ganges a little below Allahabad.

7:2 In Book II, Canto LIV, we meet with a saint of this name presiding over a convent of disciples in his hermitage at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna. Thence the later author of these introductory cantos has borrowed the name and person, inconsistently indeed, but with the intention of enhancing the dignity of the poet by ascribing to him so celebrated a disciple. SCHLEGEL

7:1b The poet plays upon the similarity in sound of the two words: s'oka, means grief, s'loka, the heroic measure in which the poem is composed. It need scarcely be said that the derivation is fanciful.

7:2b Brahmá, the Creator, is usually regarded as the first person of the divine triad of India. The four heads with which he is represented are supposed to have allusion to the four corners of the earth which he is sometimes considered to personify. As an object of adoration Brahmá has been entirely superseded by S'iva and Vishnu. In the whole of India there is, I believe, but one temple dedicated to his worship. In this point the first of the Indian triad curiously resembles the last of the divine fraternity of Greece, Aides the brother of Zeus and Poseidon. 'In all Greece, says Pausanias, there is no single temple of Aides except at a single spot in Ehs. See Gladstone's *Juventus Mundi*, p. 253.

8:1 The argha or arghya was a libation or offering to a deity, a Bráhman, or other venerable personage. According to one authority it consisted of water, milk, the points of Kúsa-grass, curds, clarified butter, rice, barley, and white mustard,

according to another, of saffron, bel, unbroken grain, flowers, curds, dúrbá-grass, kúsa-grass, and sesamum.

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CANTO III.: THE ARGUMENT.

The hermit thus with watchful heed

Received the poem's pregnant seed, And looked with eager thought around  
If fuller knowledge might be found.

p. 9

His lips with water first bedewed, 1

He sate, in reverent attitude On holy grass,

2 the points all bent

Together toward the orient; 3

And thus in meditation he Entered the path of poesy. Then clearly, through  
his virtue's might, All lay discovered to his sight, Whate'er befell,  
through all their life, Ráma, his brother, and his wife: And Das'aratha and  
each queen At every time, in every scene: His people too, of every sort; The  
nobles of his princely court: Whate'er was said, whate'er decreed, Each  
time they sate each plan and deed:

For holy thought and fervent rite Had so refined his keener sight That by  
his sanctity his view The present, past, and future knew, And he with  
mental eye could grasp, Like fruit within his fingers clasp, The life of  
Ráma, great and good, Roaming with Sitá in the wood. He told, with secret  
piercing eyes, The tale of Ráma's high emprise. Each listening ear that  
shall entice, A sea of pearls of highest price. Thus good Válmiiki, sage  
divine, Rehearsed the tale of Raghu's line, As Nárad, heavenly saint,  
before Had traced the story's outline o'er. He sang of Ráma's princely  
birth, His kindness and heroic worth; His love for all, his patient  
youth, His gentleness and constant truth, And many a tale and legend old By  
holy Vis'vámitra told. How Janak's child he wooed and won, And broke the  
bow that bent to none. How he with every virtue fraught His namesake Ráma  
4 met and fought.

The choice of Ráma for the throne; The malice by Kalseyí shown, Whose evil  
counsel marred the plan

And drove him forth a banisht man. How the king grieved and groaned, and  
cried,

And swooned away and pining died.

The subjects' woe when thus bereft; And how the following crowds he  
left: With Guha talked, and firmly stern Ordered his driver to return. How  
Gangá's farther shore he gained; By Bharadvája entertained, By whose advice  
be journeyed still And came to Chitrakúta's hill. How there he dwelt and  
built a cot; How Bharat journeyed to the spot; His earnest supplication  
made; Drink-offerings to their father paid; The sandals given by Ráma's  
hand, As emblems of his right to stand: How from his presence Bharat  
went And years in Nandigráma spent. How Ráma entered Dandak wood And in  
Sutíkhna's presence stood. The favour Anasúyá showed, The wondrous balsam  
she bestowed. How Sárabhangá's dwelling place They sought; saw Indra face  
to face; The meeting with Agastya gained; The heavenly bow from him  
obtained. How Ráma with Virádha met;

Their home in Panchavata set. How S'úrpanakhá underwent The mockery and  
disfigurement. Of Trígirá's and Khara's fall, Of Rávan roused at vengeance  
call, Máricha doomed, without escape; The fair Videhan

1b lady's rape.

How Ráma wept and raved in vain, And how the Vulture-king was slain. How  
Ráma fierce Kabandha slew; Then to the side of Pampá drew. Met Hanumán, and  
her whose vows Were kept beneath the greenwood boughs. How Raghu's son the  
lofty-souled, On Pampá's bank wept uncontrolled, Then journeyed, Rishyamúk  
to reach, And of Sugríva then had speech. The friendship made, which both  
had sought: How Báli and Sugríva fought. How Báli in the strife was  
slain, And how Sugríva came to reign. The treaty, Tára's wild lament; The

rainy nights in watching spent. The wrath of Raghu's lion son; The  
gathering of the hosts in one. The sending of the spies about, And all the  
regions pointed out. The ring by Ráma's hand bestowed; The cave wherein the  
bear abode.

The fast proposed, their lives to end; Sampati gained to be their friend.

p. 10

The scaling of the hill, the leap Of Hanumán across the deep. Ocean's  
command that bade them seek Maináka of the lofty peak. The death of  
Sinhiká, the sight Of Lanká with her palace bright. How Hanuman stole in at  
eve; His plan the giants to deceive. How through the square he made his  
way To chambers where the women lay, Within the As'oka garden came And there  
found Ráma's captive dame, His colloquy with her he sought, And giving of  
the ring he brought. How Sítá gave a gem o'erjoyed; How Hanumán the grove  
destroyed, How giantesses trembling fled, And servant fiends were smitten  
dead. How Hanumán was seized; their ire When Lanká blazed with hostile  
fire. His leap across the sea once more; The eating of the honey store, How  
Ráma he consoled, and how He showed the gem from Sítá's brow,  
With Ocean, Ráma's interview; The bridge that Nala o'er it threw. The  
crossing, and the sitting down At night round Lanká's royal town. The  
treaty with Vibhíshan made: The plan for Rávan's slaughter laid. How  
Kumbhakarna in his pride And Meghanáda fought and died. How Rávan in the  
fight was slain, And captive Sítá brought again. Vibhíshan set upon the  
throne; The flying chariot Pushpak shown. How Brahmá and the Gods  
appeared, And Sítá's doubted honour cleared. How In the flying car they  
rode To Bháradvája's cabin abode, The Wind-God's son sent on afar; How  
Bharat met the flying car. How Ráma then was king ordained; The legions  
their discharge obtained. How Ráma cast his queen away; How grew the  
people's love each day. Thus did the saint Válmíki tell Whate'er in Ráma's  
life befell, And in the closing verse all That yet to come will once  
befall Footnotes

8:1b Sítá, daughter of Janak king of Mithilá.

8:2b 'I congratulate myself,' says Schlegel in the preface  
to his, alas, unfinished edition of the Rámáyan, 'that, by  
the favour of the Supreme Deity, I have been allowed to begin so great a  
work; I glory and make my boast that I too after so many ages have helped  
to confirm that ancient oracle declared to Válmíki by the Father of Gods  
and men:

Dum stabunt montes, campis dum flumina current,  
Usque tuum toto carmen, celebrabitur orbe.'

9:1 'The sipping of water is a requisite introduction of  
all rites: without it, says the Sámha Purana, all acts of  
religion are vain.' COLEBROOKE.

9:2 The darhha or kus'a (Pea cynosuroides), a kind of  
grass used in sacrifice by the Hindus as cerbena was by  
the Romans.

9:3 The direction in which the grass should be placed  
upon the ground as a seat for the Gods, on occasion of  
offerings made to them. 9:4 Parasúráma or Ráma with the Axe. See Canto  
LXXIV.

9:1b Sítá. Videha was the country of which Mithilá was the capital.

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Next

CANTO IV.: THE RHAPSODISTS.

When to the end the tale was brought,  
Rose in the sage's mind the thought; Now who throughout this earth will  
go, And tell it forth that all may know?'

As thus he mused with anxious breast,  
Behold, in hermit's raiment dressed, Kus'a and Lava  
1 came to greet

Their master and embrace his feet. The twins he saw, that princely pair  
Sweet-voiced, who dwelt beside him there None for the task could be  
more fit, For skilled were they in Holy Writ; And so the great Rámáyan,  
fraught With lore divine, to them he taught: The lay whose verses sweet and  
clear Take with delight the listening ear, That tell of Sítá's noble  
life And Rávan's fall in battle strife. Great joy to all who hear they  
bring, Sweet to recite and sweet to sing. For music's sevenfold notes are  
there, And triple measure,

2 wrought with care With melody and tone and time,  
And flavours 3 that enhance the rime:

Heroic might has ample place, And loathing of the false and base, With  
anger, mirth, and terror, blent With tenderness, surprise, content. When,  
half the hermit's grace to gain, And half because they loved the  
strain, The youth within their hearts had stored The poem that his lips  
outpoured, Válmíki kissed them on the head, As at his feet they bowed, and  
said 'Recite ye this heroic song In tranquil shades where sages  
throng Recite it where the good resort, In lowly home and royal court, 'The  
hermit ceased. The tuneful pair Like heavenly minstrels sweet and fair In  
music's art divinely skilled, Their saintly master's word fulfilled. Like  
Ráma's self, from whom they came, They shared their size in face and  
frame,

p. 11

As though from some fair sculptured stone Two selfsame images had  
grown. Sometimes the pair rose up to sing, Surrounded by a holy ring, Where  
seated on the grass bad met

Full many a musing anchoret. Then tears bedimmed those gentle eyes, As  
transport took them and surprise, And as they listened every one Cried in  
delight, Well done! Well done! Those sages versed in holy lore Praised the  
sweet minstrels more and more: And wondered at the singers' skill, And the  
bard's verses sweeter still, Which laid so clear before the eye The  
glorious deeds of days gone by. Thus by the virtuous hermits  
praised, Inspired their voice they raised. Pleased with the song this  
holy man Would give the youths a water-can; One gave a fair ascetic  
dress, Or sweet fruit from the wilderness. One saint a black-deer's hide  
would bring, And one a sacrificial string: One, a clay pitcher from his  
hoard, And one, a twisted munja cord.

1

One in his joy an axe would find, One, braid, their plaited locks to  
bind. One gave a sacrificial cup, One rope to tie their fagots up; While  
fuel at their feet was laid, Or hermit's stool of fig-tree made. All gave,  
or if they gave not, none Forgot at least a benison.

Some saints, delighted with their lays, Would promise health and length of  
days; Others with surest words would add Some boon to make their spirit  
glad. In such degree of honour then That song was held by holy men: That  
living song which life can give, By which shall many a minstrel live. In  
seat of kings, in crowded hall, They sang the poem, praised of all. And  
Ráma chanced to hear their lay, While he the votive steed

2 would slay,

And sent fit messengers to bring The minstrel pair before the king. They  
came, and found the monarch high Enthroned in gold, his brothers  
nigh; While many a minister below, And noble, sate in lengthened row.  
The youthful pair awhile he viewed

Graceful in modest attitude, And then in words like these addressed His  
brother Lakshman and the rest: 'Come, listen to the wondrous strain Recited  
by these godlike twain. Sweet singers of a story fraught With melody and  
lofty thought.' The pair, with voices sweet and strong, Rolled the full  
tide of noble song,

With tone and accent deftly blent To suit the changing argument. Mid that  
assembly loud and clear Rang forth that lay so sweet to hear, That  
universal rapture stole Through each man's frame and heart and soul. 'These

minstrels, blest with every sign That marks a high and princely line, In  
holy shades who dwell, Enshrined in Saint Válmiki's lay, A monument to live  
for aye, My deeds in song shall tell. Thus Ráma spoke: their breasts  
were fired, And the great tale, as if inspired, The youths began to  
sing, While every heart with transport swelled, And mute and rapt attention  
held The concourse and the king,

Footnotes

10:1 The twin sons of Ráma and Sítá, born after Ráma  
had repatriated Sítá, and brought up in the hermitage of  
Válmiki. As they were the first rhapsodists the combined name Kus'alava  
signifies a reciter of paeans or an improvisatore even to the present  
day. 10:2 Perhaps the base, tenor, and treble, or quick, slow  
and middle times. We know but little of the ancient  
music of the Hindus.

10:3 Eight flavours or sentiments are usually  
enumerated, love, mirth, tenderness, anger, heroism,  
terror, disgust, and surprise; tranquillity or content, or paternal  
tenderness, is sometimes considered the ninth. WILSON. See the Sáhitya  
Darpana or Mirror of Composition translated by Dr. Ballantyne and Bába  
Pramadádása Mitra in the Bibliotheca Indica.

11:1 Saccharum Munja is a plant from whose fibres is  
twisted the sacred string which a Bráhmaṇ wears over  
one shoulder after he has been initiated by a rite which in some respects  
answers to confirmation.

11:2 A description of an As'vamedha or horse sacrifice  
is given in Canto XIII. of this Book.

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CANTO V.: AYODHYÁ

'Ikshváku's sons from days of old  
Were ever brave and mighty-souled. The land their arms had made their  
own Was bounded by the sea alone. Their holy works have won them  
praise, Through countless years, from Manu's days. Their ancient sire was  
Sagar, he Whose high command dug out the sea:

1b

With sixty thousand sons to throng Around him as he marched along. From  
them this glorious tale proceeds; The great Rámáyan tells their deeds. This  
noble song whose lines contain, Lessons of duty, love, and gain, We two  
will now at length recite, While good men listen with delight. On  
Sarjú's

2b bank, of ample size,  
The happy realm of Kos'al lies,

p. 12

With fertile length of fair champaign And flocks and herds and wealth of  
grain. There, famous in her old renown,  
Ayodhyá 1 stands, the royal town,  
In bygone ages built and planned By sainted Manu's  
2 princely hand.

Imperial seat! her walls extend Twelve measured leagues from end to  
end, And three in width from side to side, With square and palace  
beautified. Her gates at even distance stand; Her ample roads are wisely  
planned. Right glorious is her royal street Where streams allay the dust  
and heat. On level ground in even row Her houses rise in goodly  
show: Terrace and palace, arch and gate The queenly city decorate. High are  
her ramparts, strong and vast, By ways at even distance passed, With  
circling moat, both deep and wide, And store of weapons fortified.

King Das'aratha, lofty-souled,  
That city guarded and controlled, With towering Sál trees belted round,

3

And many a grove and pleasure ground, As royal Indra, throned on  
high, Rules his fair city in the sky.

4

She seems a painted city, fairWith chess-board line and even square.

5And cool boughs shade the lovely lake

Where weary men their thirst may slake.

There gilded chariots gleam and shine,And stately piles the Gods

enshrine. There gay sleek people ever throngTo festival and dance and

song. A mine is she of gems and sheen, The darling home of Fortune's

Queen. With noblest sort of drink and meat, The fairest rice and golden

wheat, And fragrant with the chaplet's scentWith holy oil and incense

blent. With many an elephant and steed, And wains for draught and cars for

speed. With envoys sent by distant kings, And merchants with their precious

things, With banners o'er her roofs that play, And weapons that a hundred

slay;

1b

All warlike engines framed by man, And every class of artisan. A city rich

beyond compareWith bards and minstrels gathered there, And men and damsels

who entranceThe soul with play and song and dance. In every street is

heard the lute, The drum, the tabret, and the flute, The Veda chanted soft

and low, The ringing of the archer's bow; With bands of godlike heroes

skilled

In every warlike weapon, filled, And kept by warriors from the foe, As

Nágas guard their home below.

2b

There wisest Bráhmans evermore The flame of worship feed, And versed in

all the Vedas' lore, Their lives of virtue lead. Truthful and pure, they

freely give; They keep each sense controlled, And in their holy fervour

live Like the great saints of old.

Footnotes

11:1b This exploit is related in Canto XI.

11:2b The Sarjú or Ghaghra, anciently called Sarayú, rises in the Himalayas, and after flowing through the province of Oudb, falls into the Gauges.

12:1 The ruins of the ancient capital of Rama and the Children of the Sun may still be traced in the present

Ajudhyá near Fyzabad. Ajudhyá is the Jerusalem or Mecca of the

Hindus. 12:2 A legislator and saint, the son of Brahmá or a

personification of Brahmá himself, the creator of the

world, and progenitor of mankind. Derived from the root man to think, the word means originally man, the thinker, and is found in this sense in the Rig-veda.

Manu as a legislator is identified with the Cretan Minos,

as progenitor of mankind with the German Mannus: 'Celebrant carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriae et annalium genus est, Tuisconem deum terra editum, et filium Mannum, originem gentis conditoresque.'

TACITUS, Germania, Cap. II.

12:3 The Sál (Shorea Robusta) is a valuable timber tree of considerable height.

12:4 The city of Indra is called Amarávati or Home of the Immortals.

12:5 Schlegel thinks that this refers to the marble of different colours with which the houses were adorned. It seems more natural to understand it as implying the regularity of the streets and houses.

Next: Canto VI.: The King. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO VI.: THE KING.

There reigned a king of name revered,

To country and to town endeared, Great Das'aratha, good and sage. Well read in Scripture's holy page:

p. 13

Upon his kingdom's weal intent, Mighty and brave and provident; The pride of old Ikshváku's seed For lofty thought and righteous deed. Peer of the



saints, for virtues famed, For foes subdued and passions tamed: A rival in his wealth untold Of Indra and the Lord of Gold. Like Manu first of kings, he reigned. And worthily his state maintained, For firm and just and ever true Love, duty, gain he kept in view, And ruled his city rich and free, Like Indra's Amarávatí. And worthy of so fair a place There dwelt a just and happy race With troops of children blest. Each man contented sought no more,

Nor longed with envy for the store By richer friends possessed. For poverty was there unknown, And each man counted as his own Kine, steeds, and gold, and grain. All dressed in raiment bright and clean, And every townsman might be seen With earrings, wreath, or chain. None deigned to feed on broken fare, And none was false or stingy there. A piece of gold, the smallest pay, Was earned by labour for a day. On every arm were bracelets worn, And none was faithless or forsworn, A braggart or unkind. None lived upon another's wealth, None pined with dread or broken health, Or dark disease of mind. High-souled were all. The slanderous word, The boastful lie, were never heard. Each man was constant to his vows, And lived devoted to his spouse. No other love his fancy knew, And she was tender, kind, and true. Her dames were fair of form and face, With charm of wit and gentle grace, With modest raiment simply neat, And winning manners soft and sweet. The twice-born sages, whose delight Was Scripture's page and holy rite, Their calm and settled course pursued, Nor sought the menial multitude. In many a Scripture each was versed, And each the flame of worship nursed, And gave with lavish hand. Each paid to Heaven the offerings due, And none was godless or untrue In all that holy band. To Bráhmans, as the laws ordain, The Warrior caste were ever fain The reverence due to pay; And these the Vais'yas' peaceful crowd, Who trade and toil for gain, were proud

To honour and obey;  
And all were by the S'údras  
1 served,

Who never from their duty swerved, Their proper worship all addressed To Bráhmaṇ, spirits, God, and guest. Pure and unmixed their rites remained, Their race's honour ne'er was stained.

2

Cheered by his grandsons, sons, and wife, Each passed a long and happy life. Thus was that famous city held By one who all his race excelled, Blest in his gentle reign, As the whole land aforetime swayed By Manu, prince of men, obeyed

Her king from main to main. And heroes kept her, strong and brave, As lions guard their mountain cave: Fierce as devouring flame they burned, And fought till death, but never turned. Horses had she of noblest breed, Like Indra's for their form and speed, From Váhlí's

3 hills and Sindhu's 4 sand,  
Vanáyu 5 and Kámboja's land. 6

p. 14

Her noble elephants had strayed Through Vindhyan and Himálayan shade, Gigantic in their bulk and height, Yet gentle in their matchless might. They rivalled well the world-spread fame Of the great stock from which they came, Of Váman, vast of size, Of Mahápadma's glorious line, Thine, Aujan, and, Airávat, thine.

1

Upholders of the skies. With those, enrolled in fourfold class, Who all their mighty kin surpass, Whom men Matangas name, And Mrigas spotted black and white, And Bhadras of unwearied might, And Mandras hard to tame.

2 Thus, worthy of the name she bore, 3  
Ayodhyá for a league or more

Cast a bright glory round, Where Das'aratha wise and great Governed his fair ancestral state, With every virtue crowned. Like Indra in the skies he reigned In that, good town whose wall contained High domes and

turrets proud,With gates and arcs of triumph decked,And sturdy barriers  
to protect Her gay and countless crowd.

Footnotes

12:1b The Sataghní, i. e. centicide, or slayer of a hundred, is generally supposed to be a sort of fire-arms, or the ancient Indian rocket; but it is also described as a stone set round with iron spikes.

12:2b The Nágas (serpents) are demigods with a human face and serpent body. They inhabit Pátála or the regions under the earth. Bhogavatí is the name of their capital city. Serpents are still worshipped in India. See Fergusson's Tree and Serpent Worship.13:1 The fourth and lowest pure caste whose duty was to serve the three first classes.

13:2 By forbidden marriages between persons of different castes.

13:3 Váhlí or Váhlika is Bactriana; its name is preserved in the modern Balkh.

13:4 The Sanskrit word Sindhu is in the singular the name of the river Indus, in the plural of the people and territories on its banks. The name appears as Hidhu in the cuneiform inscription of Darius son of Hystaspes, in which the nations tributary to that king are enumerated.

The Hebrew form is Hodda (Esther, 1. I.) In Zend it appears as Hendu in a somewhat wider sense. With the Persians later the signification of Hind seems to have co-extended with their increasing acquaintance with the country. The weak Ionic dialect omitted the Persian h, and we find in Hecataeus and Herodotus Indos and hae Indikae. In this form the Romans received the names and transmitted them to us. The Arabian geographers in their ignorance that Hind and Sind are two forms of the same word have made of them two brothers and traced their descent from Noah. See Lassen's Indische Alterthumskunde Vol. I. pp. 2, 3.13:5 The situation of Vanáyu is not exactly determined: it seems to have lain to the north-west of India.

13:6 Kámboja was probably still further to the north-west. Lassen thinks that the

p. 14 name is etymologically connected with Cambyses which in the cuneiform inscription of Behistun is written Ka(m)bujia.

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CANTO VII.: THE MINISTERS.

Two sages, holy saints, had he,  
His ministers and priests to be:Vasishtha, faithful to advise.And  
Vámadeva, Scripture-wise.

Eight other lords around him stood,  
All skilled to counsel, wise and good;Jayanta, Vijay, Dhrishti boldIn  
fight, affairs of war controlled:Siddhárth and Arthasádhak trueWatched  
o'er expense and revenue,And Dharmapál and wise AæokOf right and law and  
justice spoke.With these the sage Sumantra, skilledTo urge the car, high  
station filled. All these in knowledge duly trainedEach passion and  
each sense restrained:With modest manners, nobly bredEach plan and nod  
and look they read,Upon their neighbours' good intent,Most active and  
benevolent:As sit the Vasus

1b round their king.

They sate around him counselling.They ne'er in virtue's loftier pride  
Another's lowly gifts decried.In fair and seemly garb arrayed,No weak  
uncertain plans they made.Well skilled in business, fair and just,They  
gained the people's love and trust,And thus without oppression storedThe  
swelling treasury of their lord,Bound in sweet friendship each to  
each,They spoke kind thoughts in gentle speech.They looked alike with  
equal eyeOn every caste, on low and high.Devoted to their king, they

sought, Ere his tongue spoke, to learn his thought. And knew, as each occasion rose, To bide their counsel or disclose. In foreign land--or in their own Whatever passed, to them was known. By secret spies they timely knew What men were doing or would do. Skilled in the grounds of war and peace They saw the monarch's state increase, Watching his weal with conquering eye That never let occasion by, While nature lent her aid to bless Their labours with unbought success. Never for anger, lust, or gain, Would they their lips with falsehood stain. Inclined to mercy they could scan The weakness and the strength of man. They fairly judged both high and low, And ne'er would wrong a guiltless foe; Yet if a fault were proved, each one Would punish e'en his own dear son. But there and in the kingdom's bound No thief or man impure was found: None of loose life or evil fame, No temper of another's dame. Contented with their lot each caste

p. 15

Calm days in blissful quiet passed; And, all in fitting tasks employed, Country and town deep rest enjoyed, With these wise lords around his throne The monarch justly reigned, And making every heart his own The love of all men gained. With trusty agents, as beseems, Each distant realm he scanned, As the sun visits with his beams Each corner of the land. Ne'er would he on a mightier foe With hostile troops advance, Nor at an equal strike a blow In war's delusive chance. These lords in council bore their part With ready brain and faithful heart, With skill and knowledge, sense and tact, Good to advise and bold to act. And high and endless fame he won With these to guide his schemes, As, risen in his might, the sun Wins glory with his beams.

Footnotes

14:1 The elephants of Indra and other deities who preside over the four points of the compass.

14:2 There are four kinds of elephants. 1 Bhaddar. It is well proportioned, has an erect head, a broad chest, large ears, a long tail, and is bold and can bear fatigue. 2 Mand. It is black, has yellow eyes, a uniformly sized body, and is wild and ungovernable. 3 Mirg. It has a whitish skin, with black spots. 4 Mir. It has a small head, and obeys readily. It gets frightened when it thunders.' Ain-i-Ahbarí \* . Translated by H. Blochmann, Ain 41, The Imperial Elephant Stables.

14:3 Ayodhyá means not to be fought against.

14:1b Attendants of Indra, eight Gods whose names signify fire, light and its phenomena.

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CANTO VIII.: SUMANTRA'S SPEECH.

But splendid, just, and great of mind,  
The childless king for offspring pined. No son had he his name to grace, Transmitter of his royal race. Long had his anxious bosom wrought, And as he pondered rose the thought: 'A votive steed 'twere good to slay, So might a son the gift repay.' Before his lords his plan he laid, And bade them with their wisdom aid: Then with these words Sumantra, best Of royal counsellors, addressed: 'Hither, Vas'ishtha at their head, Let all my priestly guides be led.' To him Sumantra made reply: 'Hear, Sire, a tale of days gone by. To many a sage in time of old, Sanatkumár, the saint, foretold How from thine ancient line, O King, A son, when years came round, should spring. 'Here dwells,' 'twas thus the seer began, 'Of Kas'yap's

1 race, a holy man,

Vibhándak named: to him shall spring A son, the famous Rishyas'ring. Bred with the deer that round him roam,  
The wood shall be that hermit's home.  
To him no mortal shall be known

Except his holy sire alone. Still by those laws shall he abide Which lives  
of youthful Bráhmans guide, Obedient to the strictest rule That forms the  
young ascetic's school: And all the wondering world shall hear Of his stern  
life and penance drear; His care to nurse the holy fire And do the bidding  
of his sire. Then, seated on the Angas'

1b throne,

Shall Lomapád to fame be known. But folly wrought by that great king A  
plague upon the land shall bring; No rain for many a year shall fall And  
grievous drought shall ruin all. The troubled king with many a prayer Shall  
bid the priests some cure declare: 'The lore of Heaven 'tis yours to  
know, Nor are ye blind to things below: Declare, O holy men, the way This  
plague to expiate and stay.' Those best of Bráhmans shall reply: 'By every  
art, O Monarch, try Hither to bring Vibhándak's child, Persuaded, captured,  
or beguiled. And when the boy is hither led

To him thy daughter duly wed.'

But how to bring that wondrous boy

His troubled thoughts will long employ, And hopeless to achieve the task He  
counsel of his lords will ask, And bid his priests and servants bring With  
honour saintly Rishyas' ring. But when they hear the monarch's speech, All  
these their master will beseech, With trembling hearts and looks of woe, To  
spare them, for they fear to go. And many a plan will they declare And  
crafty plots will frame, And promise fair to show him there, Unforced,  
with none to blame. On every word his lords shall say, The king will  
meditate, And on the third returning day Recall them to debate. Then this  
shall be the plan agreed, That damsels shall be sent Attired in holy  
hermits' weed, And skilled in blandishment, That they the hermit may  
beguile With every art and amorous wile

p. 16 Whose use they know so well,

And by their witcheries seduce The unsuspecting young recluse To leave  
his father's cell. Then when the boy with willing feet Shall wander from  
his calm retreat And in that city stand, The troubles of the king shall  
end, And streams of blessed rain descend Upon the thirsty land. Thus  
shall the holy Rishyas' ring To Lomapád, the mighty king, By wedlock be  
allied; For S'ántá, fairest of the fair, In mind and grace beyond compare,  
Shall be his royal bride. He, at the Offering of the Steed, The flames with  
holy oil shall feed, And for King Das'aratha gain Sons whom his prayers  
have begged in vain. 'I have repeated, Sire, thus far, The words of old  
Sanatkumár, In order as he spoke them then Amid the crowd of holy men.' Then  
Das'aratha cried with joy, 'Say how they brought the hermit boy.' Footnotes

15:1 Kas'yap was a grandson of the God Brahmá. He is

supposed to have given his name to Kashmír =

Kas'yapa-míra, Kas'yap's Lake.

15:1b The people of Anga. 'Anga is said in the lexicons

to be Bengal; but here certainly another region is

intended situated at the confluence of the Sarjú with the Ganges, and not  
far distant from Das'aratha's dominions.' GORRESIO. It comprised part of  
Behar and Bhagulpur.

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CANTO IX.: RISHYAS'RING.

The wise Sumantra, thus addressed,

Unfolded at the king's behest The plan the lords in council laid To draw  
the hermit from the shade: 'The priest, amid the lordly crowd, To Lomapád  
thus spoke aloud: 'Hear, King, the plot our thoughts have framed, A  
harmless trick by all unblamed. Far from the world that hermit's  
child Lives lonely in the distant wild: A stranger to the joys of sense, His  
bliss is pain and abstinence; And all unknown are women yet To him, a holy  
anchoret. The gentle passions we will wake That with resistless influence  
shake The hearts of men; and he Drawn by enchantment strong and  
sweet Shall follow from his lone retreat, And come and visit thee. Let

ships be formed with utmost care That artificial trees may bear, And  
sweet fruit deftly made; Let goodly raiment, rich and rare, And flowers,  
and many a bird be there

Beneath the leafy shade. Upon the ships thus decked a band Of young and  
lovely girls shall stand, Rich in each charm that wakes desire, And eyes  
that burn with amorous fire; Well skilled to sing, and play, and dance And  
ply their trade with smile and glance Let these, attired in hermits'  
dress, Betake them to the wilderness, And bring the boy of life austere A  
voluntary captive here.'

He ended; and the king agreed,

By the priest's counsel won. And all the ministers took heed To see  
his bidding done. In ships with wondrous art prepared Away the lovely women  
fared, And soon beneath the shade they stood Of the wild, lonely, dreary  
wood. And there the leafy cot they found Where dwelt the devotee, And  
looked with eager eyes around The hermit's son to see. Still, of  
Vibhândak sore afraid, They hid behind the creepers' shade. But when by  
careful watch they knew The elder saint was far from view, With bolder  
steps they ventured nigh

To catch the youthful hermit's eye. Then all the damsels, blithe and  
gay, At various games began to play. They tossed the flying ball about With  
dance and song and merry shout, And moved, their scented tresses bound With  
wreaths, in mazy motion round. Some girls as if by love possessed, Sank to  
the earth in feigned unrest, Up starting quickly to pursue Their  
intermitted game anew. It was a lovely sight to see Those fair ones, as  
they played, While fragrant robes were floating free, And bracelets  
clashing in their glee A pleasant tinkling made. The anklet's chime, the  
Koîl's

l cry

With music filled the place As 'twere some city in the sky Which  
heavenly minstrels grace. With each voluptuous art they strove To win the  
tenant of the grove, And with their graceful forms inspire His modest soul  
with soft desire. With arch of brow, with beck and smile, With every  
passion-waking wile

p. 17 Of glance and lotus hand,

With all enticements that excite The longing for unknown delight Which  
boys in vain withstand. Forth came the hermit's son to view The wondrous  
sight to him so new, And gazed in rapt surprise, For from his natal hour  
till then On woman or the sons of men He ne'er had cast his eyes. He saw  
them with their waists so slim, With fairest shape and faultless limb, In  
variegated robes arrayed, And sweetly singing as they played. Near and more  
near the hermit drew, And watched them at their game, And stronger still  
the impulse grew To question whence they came. They marked the young  
ascetic gaze With curious eye and wild amaze, And sweet the long-eyed  
damsels sang, And shrill their merry laughter rang, Then came they nearer  
to his side, And languishing with passion cried: 'Whose son, O youth, and  
who art thou, Come suddenly to join us now? And why dost thou all lonely  
dwell In the wild wood? We pray thee, tell, We wish to know thee, gentle  
youth;

Come, tell us, if thou wilt, the truth.'

He gazed upon that sight he ne'er

Had seen before, of girls so fair, And out of love a longing rose His sire  
and lineage to disclose: 'My father,' thus he made reply, 'Is Kas'yap's  
son, a saint most high, Vibhândak styled; from him I came, And Rishyaæring  
he calls my name, Our hermit cot is near this place: Come thither, O ye  
fair of face; There be it mine, with honour due, Ye gentle youths, to  
welcome you.'

They heard his speech, and gave consent,

And gladly to his cottage went. Vibhândak's son received them well Beneath  
the shelter of his cell With guest-gift, water for their feet, And woodland  
fruit and roots to eat, They smiled, and spoke sweet words like

these, Delighted with his courtesies: 'We too have goodly fruit in store, Grown on the trees that shade our door; Come, if thou wilt, kind Hermit, haste The produce of our grove to taste; And let, O good Ascetic, first This holy water quench thy thirst.'

They spoke, and gave him comfits sweet Prepared ripe fruits to counterfeit; And many a dainty cake beside And luscious mead their stores supplied. The seeming fruits, in taste and look, The unsuspecting hermit took, For, strange to him, their form beguiled The dweller in the lonely wild. Then round his neck fair arms were flung, And there the laughing damsels clung, And pressing nearer and more near With sweet lips whispered at his ear; While rounded limb and swelling breast The youthful hermit softly pressed. The pleasing charm of that strange bowl, The touch of a tender limb, Over his yielding spirit stole And sweetly vanquished him. But vows, they said, must now be paid; They bade the boy farewell, And, of the aged saint afraid, Prepared to leave the dell. With ready guile they told him where Their hermit dwelling lay: Then, lest the sire should find them there, Sped by wild paths away. They fled and left him there alone By longing love possessed; And with a heart no more his own

He roamed about distressed. The aged saint came home, to find The hermit boy distraught, Revolving in his troubled mind One solitary thought. 'Why dost thou not, my son,' he cried, 'Thy due obeisance pay? Why do I see thee in the tide Of whelming thought to-day? A devotee should never wear A mien so sad and strange. Come, quickly, dearest child, declare The reason of the change.' And Rishyas'ring, when questioned thus, Made answer in this wise: 'O sire, there came to visit us Some men with lovely eyes. About my neck soft arms they wound And kept me tightly held To tender breasts so soft and round, That strangely heaved and swelled. They sing more sweetly as they dance Than e'er I heard till now, And play with many a sidelong glance And arching of the brow.' 'My son,' said he, 'thus giants roam Where holy hermits are, And wander round their peaceful home Their rites austere to mar. I charge thee, thou must never lay Thy trust in them, dear boy: They seek thee only to betray, And woo but to destroy.' Thus having warned him of his foes That night at home he spent. And when the morrow's sun arose

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Forth to the forest went. But Rishyas'ring with eager pace Sped forth and hurried to the place Where he those visitants had seen Of daintily waisted and charming mien. When from afar they saw the son Of Saint Vibhândak toward them run, To meet the hermit boy they hied, And hailed him with a smile, and cried: 'O come, we pray, dear lord, behold Our lovely home of which we told Due honour there to thee we'll pay, And speed thee on thy homeward way.' Pleased with the gracious words they said He followed where the damsels led. As with his guides his steps he bent, That Brâhman high of worth, A flood of rain from heaven was sent

That gladdened all the earth. Vibhândak took his homeward road, And wearied by the heavy load Of roots and woodland fruit he bore Entered at last his cottage door. Fain for his son he looked around, But desolate the cell he found. He stayed not then to bathe his feet, Though fainting with the toil and heat, But hurried forth and roamed about Calling the boy with cry and shout, He searched the wood, but all in vain; Nor tidings of his son could gain.

One day beyond the forest's bound The wandering saint a village found, And asked the swains and neatherds there Who owned the land so rich and fair, With all the hamlets of the plain, And herds of kine and fields of grain. They listened to the hermit's words, And all the guardians of the herds, With suppliant hands together

pressed, This answer to the saint addressed: The Angas' lord who bears the  
name Of Lomapád, renowned by fame, Bestowed these hamlets with their  
kine And all their riches, as a sign

Of grace, on Rishyas' ring: and he Vibhándak's son is said to be. 'The  
hermit with exulting breast The mighty will of fate confessed, By  
meditation's eye discerned; And cheerful to his home returned.

A stately ship, at early morn,

The hermit's son away had borne. Loud roared the clouds, as on he sped, The  
sky grew blacker overhead; Till, as he reached the royal town, A mighty  
flood of rain came down. By the great rain the monarch's mind The coming of  
his guest divined. To meet the honoured youth he went, And low to earth his  
head he bent. With his own priest to lead the train, He gave the gift high  
guests obtain. And sought, with all who dwelt within The city walls, his  
grace to win. He fed him with the daintiest fare, He served him with  
unceasing care, And ministered with anxious eyes Lest anger in his breast  
should rise; And gave to be the Bráhma's bride His own fair daughter,  
lotus-eyed. Thus loved and honoured by the king,  
The glorious Bráhma Rishyas' ring Passed in that royal town his life With  
S'ántá his beloved wife.'

Footnotes

16:1 The Koil or kokila (Cuculus Indicus) as the  
harbinger of spring and love is a universal favourite  
with Indian poets. His voice when first heard in a glorious spring  
morning is not unpleasant, but becomes in the hot season intolerably  
wearisome to European ears.

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CANTO X.: RISHYAS' RING INVITED.

'Again, O best of kings, give ear:

My saving words attentive hear, And listen to the tale of old By that  
illustrious Bráhma told, 'Of famed Ikshváku's line shall spring ('Twas  
thus he spoke) a pious king, Named Das'aratha, good and great, True to his  
word and fortunate. He with the Angas' mighty lord Shall ever live in sweet  
accord, And his a daughter fair shall be, S'ántá of happy destiny. But  
Lomapád, the Angas' chief, Still pining in his childless grief, To  
Das'aratha thus shall say: 'Give me thy daughter, friend, I pray, Thy  
S'ántá of the tranquil mind, The noblest one of womankind.'

The father, swift to feel for woe,

Shall on his friend his child bestow; And he shall take her and depart To  
his own town with joyous heart. The maiden home in triumph led, To  
Rishyas' ring the king shall wed.

And he with loving joy and pride Shall take her for his honoured bride. And  
Das'aratha to a rite That best of Bráhmans shall invite With supplicating  
prayer, To celebrate the sacrifice To win him sons and Paradise,

1

That he will fain prepare.

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From him the lord of men at length The boon he seeks shall gain, And see  
four sons of boundless strength His royal line maintain. 'Thus did the  
godlike saint of old The will of fate declare, And all that should  
befall unfold Amid the sages there. O Prince supreme of men, go thou,  
Consult thy holy guide, And win, to aid thee in thy vow, This Bráhma to  
thy side. 'Sumantra's counsel, wise and good, King Das'aratha heard, Then  
by Vas'ishtha's side he stood And thus with him conferred: 'Sumantra  
counsels thus: do thou My priestly guide, the plan allow.'

Vas'ishtha gave his glad consent, And forth the happy monarch went With  
lords and servants on the road That led to Rishyas' ring's abode. Forests  
and rivers duly past, He reached the distant town at last Of Lomapád the  
Angas' king, And entered it with welcoming. On through the crowded streets  
he came, And, radiant as the kindled flame, He saw within the monarch's

houseThe hermit's son most glorious. There Lomapád, with joyful breast,  
To him all honour paid, For friendship for his royal guest His faithful  
bosom swayed. Thus entertained with utmost care Seven days, or eight, he  
tarried there, And then that best men thus broke His purpose to the king,  
and spoke: 'O King of men, mine ancient friend, (Thus Das'aratha  
prayed) Thy S'antá with her husband send My sacrifice to aid. Said he who  
ruled the Angas, Yea, And his consent was won: And then at once he  
turned away To warn the hermit's son. He told him of their ties beyond  
Their old affection's faithful bond: 'This king,' he said, 'from days of  
old A well beloved friend I hold. To me this pearl of dames he gave From  
childless woe mine age to save, The daughter whom he loved so much, Moved  
by compassion's gentle touch. In him thy S'antá's father see: As I am even  
so is he. For sons the childless monarch yearns: To thee alone for help he  
turns. Go thou, the sacred rite ordain To win the sons he prays to gain: Go,  
with thy wife thy succour lend, And give his vows a blissful end.' The  
hermit's son with quick accord Obeyed the Angas' mighty lord, And with fair  
S'antá at his side To Das'aratha's city hied. Each king, with suppliant  
hands upheld, Gazed on the other's face: And then by mutual love  
impelled Met in a close embrace. Then Das'aratha's thoughtful care,  
Before he parted thence, Bade trusty servants homeward bear The glad  
intelligence: 'Let all the town be bright and gay With burning incense  
sweet;

Let banners wave, and water lay The dust in every street, 'Glad were the  
citizens to learn The tidings of their lord's return, And through the city  
every man Obediently his task began. And fair and bright Ayodhyá showed, As  
following his guest he rode Through the full streets where shell and  
drum Proclaimed aloud the king was come. And all the people with delight  
Kept gazing on their king, Attended by that youth so bright, The  
glorious Rishyas'ring. When to his home the king had brought The  
hermit's saintly son, He deemed that all his task was wrought, And all  
he prayed for won. And lords who saw that stranger dame So beautiful to  
view, Rejoiced within their hearts, and came And paid her honour  
too. There Rishyasring passed blissful days, Graced like the king with love  
and praise And shone in glorious light with her, Sweet S'antá, for his  
minister, As Brahmá's son Vas'ishtha, he Who wedded Saint Arundhati.

1Footnotes

18:1 'Sons and Paradise are intimately connected in  
Indian belief. A man desires above every thing to have a  
son to perpetuate his race, and to assist with sacrifices and funeral  
rites to make him worthy to obtain a lofty seat in heaven or to preserve  
that which he has already obtained.' GORRESIO.

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CANTO XI: THE SACRIFICE DECREED.

The Dewy Season 2 came and went;

The spring returned again:

Then would the king, with mind intent, His sacrifice ordain.

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He came to Rishyas'ring, and bowed To him of look divine, And bade him  
aid his offering vowed For heirs, to save his line. Nor would the youth  
his aid deny: He spake the monarch fair, And prayed him for that rite so  
high All requisites prepare. The king to wise Sumantra cried Who stood  
aye ready near; 'Go summon quick each holy guide, To counsel and to  
hear. 'Obedient to his lord's behest Away Sumantra sped, And brought  
Vas'ishtha and the rest, In Scripture deeply read. Suyajna, Vámadeva came,  
Jávali, Kas'yap's son,  
And old Vas'ishtha, dear to fame, Obedient every one. King Das'aratha  
met them there And duly honoured each, And spoke in pleasant words his  
fair And salutary speech: 'In childless longing doomed to pine, No  
happiness, O lords, is mine. So have I for this cause decreed To slay the



sacrificial steed. Fain would I pay that offering high  
Wherein the horse is doomed to die,  
With Rishyas'ring his aid to lend,  
And with your glory to befriend.'

With loud applause each holy man

Received his speech, approved the plan,  
And, by the wise Vas'ishtha led,  
Gave praises to the king, and said:  
'The sons thou cravest shalt thou see,  
Of fairest glory, born to thee,  
Whose holy feelings bid thee take  
This righteous course for offspring's sake.'  
Cheered by the ready praise of those  
Whose aid he sought, his spirits rose,  
And thus the king his speech renewed  
With looks of joy and gratitude:  
'Let what the coming rites require  
Be ready as the priests desire,  
And let the horse, ordained to bleed,  
With fitting guard and priest, be freed,

1

Yonder on Sarjú's northern side  
The sacrificial ground provide;  
And let the saving rites, that naught  
Ill-omened may occur, be wrought.  
The offering I announce to-day  
Each lord of earth may claim to pay,  
Provided that his care can guard

the holy rite by flaws unmarred.

For wandering fiends, whose watchful spite  
Waits eagerly to spoil each rite,  
Hunting with keenest eye detect  
The slightest slip, the least neglect;  
And when the sacred work is crossed  
The workman is that moment lost.  
Let preparation due be made: Your powers  
The charge can meet: That so the noble rite be paid  
In every point complete.' And all the Bráhmans  
answered, Yea, His mandate honouring,  
And gladly promised to obey The order of the king.  
They cried with voices raised aloud: 'Success attend  
thine aim!' Then bade farewell, and lowly bowed,  
And hastened whence they came.

King Das'aratha went within, His well loved wives to see:  
And said: 'Your lustral rites begin, For these shall prosper me.  
A glorious offering I prepare That precious fruit of sons may bear.'  
Their lily faces brightened fast Those pleasant words to hear,  
As lilies, when the winter's past, In lovelier hues appear.

Footnotes

19:1 One of the Pleiades and generally regarded as the model of wifely excellence.

19:2 The Hindu year is divided into six seasons of two months each, spring, summer, rains, autumn, winter, and dews.

20:1 It was essential that the horse should wander free for a year before immolation as a sign that his masters paramount sovereignty was acknowledged by all neighbouring princes.  
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CANTO XII.: THE SACRIFICE BEGUN.

Again the spring with genial heat

Returning made the year complete. To win him sons, without delay  
His vow the king resolved to pay: And to Vas'ishtha, saintly man,  
In modest words this speech began: 'Prepare the rite with all things fit  
As is ordained in Holy Writ, And keep with utmost care afar  
Whate'er its sacred forms might mar. Thou art, my lord, my trustiest guide,  
Kind-hearted, and my friend beside; So is it meet thou undertake  
This heavy task for duty's sake.'

Then he, of twice-born men the best,

His glad assent at once expressed: 'Fain will I do whate'er may be desired,  
O honoured King, by thee.' To ancient priests he spoke, who, trained  
In holy rites, deep skill had gained: 'Here guards be stationed, good and sage  
Religious men of trusted age. And various workmen send and call,  
Who frame the door and build the wall:

With men of every art and trade, Who read the stars and ply the spade,

And mimes and minstrels hither bring, And damsels trained to dance and sing.'

Then to the learned men he said,

In many a page of Scripture read: 'Be yours each rite performed to see According to the king's decree. And stranger Bráhmans quickly call To this great rite that welcomes all. Pavilions for the princes, decked With art and ornament, erect, And handsome booths by thousands made The Bráhma visitors to shade, Arranged in order side by side, With meat and drink and all supplied. And ample stables we shall need For many an elephant and steed: And chambers where the men may lie, And vast apartments, broad and high, Fit to receive the countless bands Of warriors come from distant lands. For our own people too provide Sufficient tents, extended wide, And stores of meat and drink prepare, And all that can be needed there. And food in plenty must be found For guests from all the country round. Of various viands presents make, For honour, not for pity's sake, That fit regard and worship be Paid to each caste in due degree. And let not wish or wrath excite Your hearts the meanest guest to slight; But still observe with special grace Those who obtain the foremost place, Whether for happier skill in art Or bearing in the rite their part. Do you, I pray, with friendly mind Perform the task to you assigned, And work the rite, as bids the law, Without omission, slip, or flaw'

They answered: 'As thou seest fit

So will we do and naught omit.' The sage Vas'ishtha then addressed Sumantra called at his behest: 'The princes of the earth invite, And famous lords who guard the rite, Priest, Warrior, Merchant, lowly thrall, In countless thousands summon all. Where'er their home be, far or near, Gather the good with honour here, And Janak, whose imperial sway

The men of Mithilá 1 obey.

The firm of vow, the dread of foes, Who all the lore of Scripture knows, Invite him here with honour high,

King Das'aratha's old ally. And Kás'i's

1b lord of gentle speech,

Who finds a pleasant word for each, In length of days our monarch's peer, Illustrious king, invite him here. The father of our ruler's bride, Known for his virtues far and wide, The king whom Kekaya's

2b realms obey,

Him with his son invite, I pray. And Lomapád the Angas' king, True to his vows and godlike, bring. For be thine invitations sent To west and south and orient. Call those who rule Suráshtra's

3b land,

Suvíra's 4b realm and Sindhu's strand,

And all the kings of earth beside In friendship's bonds with us allied: Invite them all to hasten in With retinue and kith and kin.'

Vas'ishtha's speech without delay

Sumantra bent him to obey. And sent his trusty envoys forth Eastward and westward, south and north.

Obedient to the saint's request Himself he hurried forth, and pressed Each nobler chief and lord and king To hasten to the gathering. Before the saint Vas'ishtha stood All those who wrought with stone and wood, And showed the work which every one In furtherance of the rite had done, Rejoiced their ready zeal to see, Thus to the craftsmen all said he: 'I charge ye, masters, see to this, That there be nothing done amiss, And this, I pray, in mind be borne, That not one gift ye give in scorn: Whenever scorn a gift attends Great sin is his who thus offends.'

And now some days and nights had past,

And kings began to gather fast, And precious gems in liberal store As gifts to Das'aratha bore. Then joy thrilled through Vas'ishtha's breast As thus the monarch he addressed: 'Obedient to thy high decree The kings, my lord, are come to thee.'

p. 22 And it has been my care to greet  
And honour all with reverence meet. Thy servants' task is ended quite, And  
all is ready for the rite. Come forth then to the sacred ground Where all  
in order will be found. 'Then Rishyas' ring confirmed the tale: Nor did  
their words to move him fail. The stars propitious influence lent When  
forth the world's great ruler went.  
Then by the sage Vas'ishtha led

The priest begun to speed Those glorious rites wherein is shed The  
lifeblood of the steed.

Footnotes

21:1 Called also Vidcha, later Tirabhukti, corrupted into  
the modern Tirhut, a province bounded on the west and  
east by the Gaudakí and Kaus'ikí rivers, on the south by the Ganges, and  
on the north by the skirts of the Himálayas.

21:1b The celebrated city of Benares. See Dr. Hall's  
learned and exhaustive Monograph in the Sacred City of the Hindus, by the  
Rev. M. A. Sherring.

21:2b Kekaya is supposed to have been in the Panjáb.  
The name of the king was As'vapati (Lord of Horses),  
father of Das'aratha's wife Kaikeyi.

21:3b Surat.

21:4b Apparently in the west of India not far from the  
Indus.

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CANTO XIII.: THE SACRIFICE FINISHED.

The circling year had filled its course,  
And back was brought the wandering horse: Then upon Sarjú's northern  
strand Began the rite the king had planned. With Rishyas' ring the forms to  
guide, The Bráhmans to their task applied, At that great offering of the  
steed Their lofty-minded king decreed. The priests, who all the Scripture  
knew, Performed their part in order due, And circled round in solemn  
train As precepts of the law ordain. Pravargya rites

1 were duly sped:

For Upasads 2 the flames were fed.

Then from the plant 3 the juice was squeezed,

And those high saints with minds well pleased Performed the mystic rites  
begun With bathing ere the rise of sun. They gave the portion Indra's  
claim,

And hymned the King whom none can blame.

The mid-day bathing followed next, Observed as bids the holy text. Then the  
good priests with utmost care,

In form that Scripture's rules declare, For the third time pure water  
shed On high souled Das'aratha's head. Then Rishyas' ring and all the rest To  
Indra and the Gods addressed Their sweet-toned hymn of praise and  
prayer, And called them in the rite to share. With sweetest song and hymn  
intoned They give the Gods in heaven enthroned, As duty bids, the gifts  
they claim, The holy oil that feeds the flame. And many an offering there  
was paid, And not one slip in all was made, For with most careful heed they  
saw That all was done by Veda law. None, all those days, was seen  
oppressed By hunger or by toil distressed. Why speak of human kind? No  
beast Was there that lacked an ample feast. For there was store for all who  
came, For orphan child and lonely dame; The old and young were well  
supplied, The poor and hungry satisfied. Throughout the day ascetics  
fed, And those who roam to beg their bread: While all around the cry was  
still, 'Give forth, give forth,' and 'Eat your fill.' 'Give forth with  
liberal hand the meal, And various robes in largess deal.'

Urged by these cries on every side Unweariedly their task they plied: And  
heaps of food like hills in size In boundless plenty met the eyes: And  
lakes of sauce, each day renewed, Refreshed the weary multitude. And

strangers there from distant lands, And women folk in crowded bands  
The best of food and drink obtained At the great rite the king ordained. Apart  
from all, the Bráhmans there, Thousands on thousands, took their share  
Of various dainties sweet to taste, On plates of gold and silver placed, All  
ready set, as, when they willed, The twice-born men their places  
filled. And servants in fair garments dressed Waited upon each Bráhma-  
n guest. Of cheerful mind and mien were they, With gold and jewelled earrings  
gay. The best of Bráhmans praised the fare Of countless sorts, of flavour  
rare: And thus to Raghu's son they cried: 'We bless thee, and are  
satisfied.' Between the rites some Bráhmans spent The time in learned  
argument,

p. 23 With ready flow of speech, sedate,  
And keen to vanquish in debate. 1

There day by day the holy train Performed all rites as rules ordain. No  
priest in all that host was found But kept the vows that held him  
bound: None, but the holy Vedas knew, And all their six-fold science  
2 too.

No Bráhma-  
n there was found unfit To speak with eloquence and wit.  
And now the appointed time came near  
The sacrificial posts to rear. They brought them, and prepared to fix  
Of  
Bel

3 and Khádir 4 six and six;  
Six, made of the Palás'a 5 tree,  
Of Fig-wood one, apart to be: Of Sleshmát  
6 and of Devadár 7

One column each, the mightiest far: So thick the two, the arms of man  
Their ample girth would fail to span. All these with utmost care were wrought  
By hand of priests in Scripture taught, And all with gold were gilded  
bright To add new splendour to the rite:

Twenty-and-one those stakes in all, Each one-and-twenty cubits tall:  
And one-and-twenty ribbons there Hung on the pillars, bright and fair. Firm  
in the earth they stood at last, Where cunning craftsmen fixed them  
fast; And there unshaken each remained, Octagonal and smoothly planed. Then  
ribbons over all were hung, And flowers and scent around them flung. Thus  
decked they cast a glory forth Like the great saints who star the north.  
1b

The sacrificial altar then Was raised by skilful twice-born men, In shape  
and figure to behold An eagle with his wings of gold, With twice nine pits  
and formed three-fold Each for some special God, beside The pillars were  
the victims tied; The birds that roam the wood, the air, The water, and the  
land were there, And snakes and things of reptile birth, And healing herbs  
that spring from earth; As texts prescribe, in Scripture found, Three  
hundred victims there were bound. The steed devoted to the host Of Gods,  
the gem they honour most, Was duly sprinkled. Then the Queen Kaus'alyá,  
with delighted mien, With reverent steps around him paced. And with sweet  
wreaths the victim graced;

Then with three swords in order due She smote the steed with joy, and  
slew. That night the queen, a son to gain, With calm and steady heart was  
fain By the dead charger's side to stay From evening till the break of  
day. Then came three priests, their care to lead The other queens to touch  
the steed, Upon Kaus'alyá to attend, Their company and aid to lend. As by  
the horse she still reclined, With happy mien and cheerful mind, With  
Rishyas'ring the twice-born came And praised and blessed the royal  
dame. The priest who well his duty knew, And every sense could well  
subdue, From out the bony chambers freed And boiled the marrow of the  
steed. Above the steam the monarch bent, And, as he smelt the fragrant  
scent, In time and order drove afar All error that his hopes could mar. Then  
sixteen priests together came And cast into the sacred flame The severed  
members of the horse, Made ready all in ordered course. On piles of holy  
Fig-tree raised p. 24

The meaner victims' bodies blazed:

The steed, of all the creatures slain, Alone required a pile of cane. Three days, as is by law decreed, Lasted that Offering of the Steed. The Chatushtom began the rite, And when the sun renewed his light, The Ukthya followed: after came The Atirátra's holy flame. These were the rites, and many more Arranged by light of holy lore, The Aptoryám of mighty power, And, each performed in proper hour, The Abhijit and Vis'vajit With every form and service fit; And with the sacrifice at night The Jyotishtom and Áyus rite.

1

The task was done, as laws prescribe: The monarch, glory of his tribe, Bestowed the land in liberal grants Upon the sacred ministrants. He gave the region of the east, His conquest, to the Hotri priest. The west, the celebrant obtained: The south, the priest presiding gained: The northern region was the share Of him who chanted forth the prayer, 1b Thus did each priest obtain his meed At the great Slaughter of the Steed, Ordained, the best of all to be, By self-existent deity. Ikshváku's son with joyful mind This noble fee to each assigned, But all the priests with one accord Addressed that unpolluted lord: 'Tis thine alone to keep the whole Of this broad earth in firm control.

p. 25

No gift of lands from thee we seek: To guard these realms our hands were weak. On sacred lore our days are spent: Let other gifts our wants content. 'The chief of old Ikshváku's line Gave them ten hundred thousand kine, A hundred millions of fine gold, The same in silver four times told. But every priest in presence there With one accord resigned his share. To Saint Vas'ishtha, high of soul, And Rishyas'ring they gave the whole. That largess pleased those Brahmans well, Who bade the prince his wishes tell. Then Das'aratha, mighty king. Made answer thus to Rishyas'ring:

'O holy Hermit, of thy grace, Vouchsafe the increase of my race.' He spoke; nor was his prayer denied: The best of Bráhmans thus replied: 'Four sons, O Monarch, shall be thine, Upholders of thy royal line.'

Footnotes

22:1 'The Pravargya ceremony lasts for three days, and is always performed twice a day, in the forenoon and afternoon. It precedes the animal and Soma sacrifices. For without having undergone it no one is allowed to take part in the solemn Soma feast prepared for the gods.' HAUG's Aitareya Bráhmaṇam. Ved. II. p. 41. note, . q. v.

22:2 Upasads. 'The Gods said, Let us perform the burnt offerings called Upasads (i. e. besieging). For by means of an Upasad, i. e. besieging, they conquer a large (fortified) town.' -- Ibid. p. 32.

22:3 The Soma plant, or Asclepias Acida. Its fermented juice was drunk in sacrifice by the priests and offered to the Gods who enjoyed the intoxicating draught. 23:1 'Dum\* in caerimoniarum intervallis Brachmanae

facundi, sollertes, crebros sermones de rerum causis instituebant, alter alterum vincendi cupidi. This public disputation in the assembly of Bráhmans on the nature of things, and the almost fraternal connexion between theology and philosophy deserves some notice; whereas the priests of some religions are generally but little inclined to show favour to philosophers, nay, sometimes persecute them with the most rancorous hatred, as we are taught both by history and experience.... This s'loka is found in the MSS. of different recensions of the Rámáyan, and we have, therefore, the most trustworthy testimony to the antiquity of philosophy among the Indians.' SCHLEGEL.

23:2 The Angas or appendices of the Vedas,

pronunciation, prosody, grammar, ritual, astronomy, and explanation of obscurities.

23:3 In Sanskrit vilva, the Aegle Marmelos. 'He who desires food and wishes to grow fat, ought to make his Yúpa (sacrificial Post) of Bilva wood.' HAUG'S Aítareya Bráhmaṇam. Vol. II. p. 73.

23:4 The Mimosa Catechu. 'He who desires heaven ought to make his Yúpa of Khádíra wood.' --Ibid. 23:5 The Butea Frondosa. 'He who desires beauty and sacred knowledge ought to make his Yúpa of Palás'a wood.' --Ibid.

23:6 The Cardia Latifolia.

23:7 A kind of pine. The word means literally the tree of the Gods; Compare the ... .. 'trees of the Lord.'

23:1b The Hindus call the constellation of Ursa Major the Seven Rishis or Saints.

24:1 A minute account of these ancient ceremonies would be out of place here. 'Ágnishtoma is the name of a sacrifice, or rather a series of offerings to fire for five days. It is the first and principal part of the Jyotishtoma, one of the great sacrifices in which especially the juice of the Soma plant is offered for the purpose of obtaining Swarga or heaven.' GOLDSTÜCKER'S DICTIONARY. 'The Ágnishtoma is Agni. It is called so because they (the gods) praised him with this Stoma. They called it so to hide the proper meaning of the word: for the gods like to hide the proper meaning of words.'

'On account of four classes of gods having praised Agni with four Stomas, the whole was called Chatushtoma (containing four Stomas).' 'It (the Ágnishtoma) is called Jyotishtoma, for they praised Agni when he had risen up (to the sky) in the shape of a light (jyotis).'

'This (Ágnishtoma) is a sacrificial performance which has no beginning and no end.' HAUG'S Aítareya Bráhmaṇam. The Atiráttra, literally lasting through the night, is a division of the service of the Jyotishtoma. The Abhijit, the everywhere victorious, is the name of a sub-division of the great sacrifice of the Gavámanaya. The Vis'vajit, or the all-conquering, is a similar sub-division.

Áyus is the name of a service forming a division of the Abhiplava sacrifice.

'The Aptoryám, is the seventh or last part of the Jyotishtoma, for the performance of which it is not essentially necessary, but a voluntary sacrifice instituted for the attainment of a specific desire. The literal meaning of the word would be in conformity with the Praudhamanoramá, a sacrifice which procures the attainment of the desired object. GOLDSTÜCKER'S DICTIONARY.

'The Ukthya is a slight modification of the Agnishtoma sacrifice. The noun to be supplied to it is kratu. It is a Soma sacrifice also, and one of the seven Sansthas or component parts of the Jyotishtoma. Its name indicates its nature. For Ukthya means "what refers to the Uktha," which is an older name for Shástra, i.e. recitation of one of the Hotri priests at the time of the Soma libations. Thus this sacrifice is only a kind of supplement to the Agnishtoma.' HAUG.

24:1b 'Four classes of priests were required in India at the most solemn sacrifices. 1. The officiating priests, manual labourers, and acolytes, who had chiefly to prepare the sacrificial ground, to dress the altar, slay the victims, and pour out the libations. 2. The choristers, who chant the sacred hymns. 3. The reciters or readers, who repeat certain hymns. 4. The overseers or bishops, who watch and superintend the proceedings of the other priests,

and ought to be familiar with all the Vedas. The formulas and verses to be muttered by the first class are contained in the Yajur-veda-sanhitá. The hymns to be sung by the second class are in the Sama-veda-sanhitá. The Atharva-veda is said to be intended for the Brahman or overseer, who is to watch the proceedings of the sacrifice, and to remedy any mistake that may occur. The hymns to be recited by the third class are contained in the Rigveds,' Chips from a German Workshop.

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CANTO XIV.: RÁVAN DOOMED.

The saint, well read in holy lore,  
Pondered awhile his answer o'er. And thus again addressed the king, His  
wandering thoughts regathering: 'Another rite will I begin Which shall the  
sons thou cravest win, Where all things shall be duly sped And first  
Atharva texts be read.'

Then by Vibhándak's gentle son

Was that high sacrifice begun, The king's advantage seeking still And  
zealous to perform his will. Now all the Gods had gathered there, Each one  
for his allotted share: Brahmá, the ruler of the sky, Sthanu, Náráyan, Lord  
most high And holy Indra men might view With Maruts

1 for his retinue;

The heavenly chorister, and saint, And spirit pure from earthly taint, With  
one accord had sought the place The high-souled monarch's rite to  
grace. Then to the Gods who came to take

Their proper share the hermit spake: 'For you has Das'aratha slain The  
votive steed, a son to gain; Stern penance-rites the king has tried, And in  
firm faith on you relied,

And now with undiminished care

A second rite would fain prepare. But, O ye Gods, consent to grant The  
longing of your supplicant. For him beseeching hands I lift, And pray you  
all to grant the gift, That four fair sons of high renown The offerings of  
the king may crown.' They to the hermit's son replied: 'His longing shall  
be gratified. For, Bráhma, in most high degree We love the king and honour  
thee.'

These words the Gods in answer said,

And vanished thence by Indra led. Thus to the Lord, the worlds who  
made, The Immortals all assembled prayed: 'O Brahmá, mighty by thy  
grace, Rávan, who rules the giant race, Torments us in his senseless  
pride, And penance-loving saints beside. For thou well pleased in days of  
old Gavest the boon that makes him bold,

That God nor demon e'er should kill His charmed life, for so thy will. We,  
honouring that high behest, Bear all his rage though sore distressed. That  
lord of giants fierce and fell Scourges the earth and heaven and hell. Mad  
with thy boon, his impious rage Smites saint and bard and God and sage. The  
sun himself withholds his glow. The wind in fear forbears to blow; The fire  
restrains his wonted heat Where stand the dreaded Rávan's feet, And,  
necklaced with the wandering ware, The sea before him fears to  
rave. Kuvera's self in sad defeat Is driven from his blissful seat. We see,  
we feel the giant's might. And woe comes o'er us and affright. To thee, O  
Lord, thy suppliants pray To find some cure this plague to stay.'

Thus by the gathered Gods addressed

He pondered in his secret breast, And said: 'One only way I find To slay  
this fiend of evil mind. He prayed me once his life to guard From demon,  
God, and heavenly bard, And spirits of the earth and air, And I consenting  
heard his prayer.

But the proud giant in Inn scorn Recked not of man or woman born. None else  
may take his life away, But only man the fiend may slay.' The Gods, with  
Indra at their head, Rejoiced to hear the words he said. Then crowned with  
glory like a flame, Lord Vishnu to the council came; His hands shell, mace,  
and discus bore, And saffron were the robes he wore.

p. 26

Riding his eagle through the crowd, As the sun rides upon a cloud, With  
bracelets of fine gold, he came Loud welcomed by the Gods' acclaim. His  
praise they sang with one consent, And cried, in lowly reverence bent: 'O  
Lord whose hand fierce Madhu

1 slew,

Be thou our refuge, firm and true; Friend of the suffering worlds art  
thou, We pray thee help thy suppliants now. 'Then Vishnu spake: 'Ye Gods,  
declare, What may I do to grant your prayer?'

'King Das'aratha,' thus cried they,

'Fervent in penance many a day, The sacrificial steed has slain,  
Longing for sons, but all in vain. Now, at the cry of us forlorn, Incarnate  
as his seed be born. Three queens has he: each lovely dame Like Beauty,  
Modesty, or Fame. Divide thyself in four, and be His offspring by these  
noble three. Man's nature take, and slay in fight Rávan who laughs at  
heavenly might: This common scourge, this rankling thorn Whom the three  
worlds too long have borne. For Rávan in the senseless pride Of might  
unequalled has defied The host of heaven, and plagues with woe Angel and  
bard and saint below, Crushing each spirit and each maid Who plays in  
Nandan's

2 heavenly shade.

O conquering Lord, to thee we bow; Our surest hope and trust art  
thou. Regard the world of men below, And slay the Gods' tremendous foe.'  
When thus the suppliant Gods had prayed,  
His wise reply Nárayan

3 made:

'What task demands my presence there, And whence this dread, ye Gods  
declare.'

The Gods replied: 'We fear, O Lord, Fierce Rávan, ravener abhorred.  
Be thine the glorious task, we pray, In human form this fiend to slay. By  
thee of all the Blest alone This sinner may be overthrown. He gained by  
penance long and dire The favour of the mighty Sire. Then He who every gift  
bestows

Guarded the fiend from heavenly foes,  
And gave a pledge his life that kept From all things living, man except. On  
him thus armed no other foe Than man may deal the deadly blow. Assume, O  
King, a mortal birth, And strike the demon to the earth.'

Then Vishnu, God of Gods, the Lord

Supreme by all the worlds adored, To Brahmá and the suppliants  
spake: 'Dismiss your fear: for your dear sake In battle will I smite him  
dead, The cruel fiend, the Immortal's dread, And lords and ministers and  
all His kith and kin with him shall fall. Then, in the world of mortal  
men, Ten thousand years and hundreds ten I as a human king will reign, And  
guard the earth as my domain. 'God, saint, and nymph, and minstrel throng  
With heavenly voices raised their song In hymns of triumph to the God Whose  
conquering feet on Madhu trod: 'Champion of Gods, as man appear,  
This cruel Rávan slay, The thorn that saints and hermits fear, The  
plague that none can stay. In savage fury uncontrolled His pride  
for ever grows: He dares the Lord of Gods to hold Among his deadly  
foes.'

Footnotes

25:1 The Maruts are the winds, deified in our religion of  
the Veda like other mighty Powers and phenomena of  
nature.

26:1 A Titan or fiend whose destruction has given  
Vishnu one of his well-known titles, Mádhava.

26:2 The garden of Indra.

26:3 One of the most ancient and popular of the numerous names of Vishnu.  
The word has been derived



in several ways, and may mean he who moved on the (primordial) waters, or he who pervades or influences men or their thoughts.

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CANTO XV.: THE NECTAR.

When wisest Vishnu thus had given

His promise to the Gods of heaven,He pondered in his secret mindA suited place of birth to find,Then he decreed, the lotus-eyed,In four his being to divide,And Das'aratha, gracious king.He chose as sire from whom to spring.That childless prince of high renown,Who smote in war his foemen down,At that same time with utmost carePrepared the rite that wins an heir.

1b

Then Vishnu, fain on earth to dwell,Bade the Almighty Sire farewell,And vanished while a reverent crowdOf Gods and saints in worship bowed.

The monarch watched the sacred rite,

When a vast form of awful might,Of matchless splendour, strength, and sizeWas manifest before his eyes.

p. 27From forth the sacrificial flame,

Dark, robed in red, the being came.His voice was drumlike, loud and low,His face suffused with rosy glow.Like a huge lion's mane appearedThe long locks of his hair and beard.He shone with many a lucky sign,And many an ornament divine;A towering mountain in his height,A tiger in his gait and might.No precious mine more rich could be,No burning flame more bright than he.His arms embraced in loving hold,Like a dear wife, a vase of goldWhose silver lining held a draughtOf nectar as in heaven is quaffed:A vase so vast, so bright to view,They scarce could count the vision true.Upon the king his eyes he bent,And said: 'The Lord of life has sentHis servant down, O Prince, to beA messenger from heaven to thee.'The king with all his nobles byRaised reverent hands and made reply:'Welcome, O glorious being! SayHow can my care thy grace repay.'Envoy of Him whom all adoreThus to the king he spake once more:'The Gods accept thy worship: theyGive thee the blessed fruit to-day.

Approach and take, O glorious King,This heavenly nectar which I bring,For it shall give thee sons and wealth,And bless thee with a store of health.Give it to those fair queens of thine,And bid them quaff the drink divine:And they the princely suns shall bearLong sought by sacrifice and prayer.'

' Yea. O my lord,' the monarch said,

And took the vase upon his head,The gift of Gods, of fine gold wrought,With store of heavenly liquor fraught.He honoured, filled with transport new,That wondrous being, fair to view,As round the envoy of the GodWith reverential steps he trod.

1

His errand done, that form of lightArose and vanished from the sight.High rapture filled the monarch's soul,Possessed of that celestial bowl,As when a man by want distressedWith unexpected wealth is blest.And rays of transport seemed to fallIlluminating bower and hall,As when the autumn moon rides high,And floods with lovely light the sky.Quick to the ladies' bower he sped,

And thus to Queen Kaus'alyá said:'This genial nectar take and quaff,'He spoke, and gave the lady half.Part of the nectar that remainedSumitrá from his hand obtained.He gave, to make her fruitful too,Kaikeyí half the residue.A portion yet remaining there, He paused awhile to think.Then gave Sumitrá, with her share. The remnant of the drink.Thus on each queen of those fair three A part the king bestowed,And with sweet hope a child to see Their yearning bosoms glowed.The heavenly bowl the king supplied Their longing souls relieved,And soon, with rapture and with pride, Each royal dame conceived.He gazed upon each lady's face, And

triumphed as he gazed, As Indra in his royal place By Gods and spirits  
praised.

Footnotes 26:1b The Horse-Sacrifice, just described.

27:1 To walk round an object keeping the right side  
towards it is a mark of great respect. The Sanskrit word  
for the observance is pradakshinā, from pra pro, and  
daksha right, Greek δεξιός, Latin dexter, Gaelic \*deas-  
il. A similar ceremony is observed by the Gaels.

'In the meantime she traced around him, with wavering  
steps, the propitiation, which some have thought has been derived from  
the Druidical mythology. It consists, as is well known, in the person who  
wakes the deasil walking three times round the person who is the object  
of the ceremony, taking care to move according to the course of the sun.'  
SCOTT. The Two Drovers.

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CANTO XVI.: THE VÁNARS.

When Vishnu thus had gone on earth.

From the great king to take his birth. The self-existent Lord of  
all Addressed the Gods who heard his call: 'For Vishnu's sake, the strong  
and true. Who seeks the good of all of you, Make helps, in war to lend him  
aid, In forms that change at will, arrayed, Of wizard skill and hero  
might, Outstrippers of the wind in flight, Skilled in the arts of counsel,  
wise, And Vishnu's peers in bold enterprise; With heavenly arts and prudence  
fraught, By no devices to be caught; Skilled in all weapon's lore and use As  
they who drink the immortal juice.

1b

p. 28

And let the nymphs supreme in grace, And maidens of the minstrel  
race, Monkeys and snakes, and those who rove Free spirits of the hill and  
grove, And wandering Daughters of the Air, In monkey form brave children  
bear.

So erst the lord of bears I shaped, Born from my mouth as wide I gaped.'  
Thus by the mighty Sire addressed

They all obeyed his high behest, And thus begot in countless swarms Brave  
sons disguised in sylvan forms. Each God, each sage became a sire, Each  
minstrel of the heavenly quire,

1

Each faun, 2 of children strong and good

Whose feet should roam the hill and wood. Snakes, bards,

3 and spirits, 4 serpents bold

Had sons too numerous to be told. Báli, the woodland hosts who led, High as  
Mahendra's

5 lofty head,

Was Indra's child. That noblest fire, The Sun, was great Sugríva's  
sire, Tára, the mighty monkey, he Was offspring of Vrihaspati:

6

Tára the matchless chieftain, boast For wisdom of the Vánar host. Of  
Gandhamádan brave and bold The father was the Lord of Gold. Nala the  
mighty, dear to fame, Of skilful Vis'vakarmá

7 came.

From Agni, 8 Nila bright as flame,

Who in his splendour, might, and worth, Surpassed the sire who gave him  
birth.

The heavenly As'vins, 1b swift and fair,

Were fathers of a noble pair,

Who, Dwivida and Mainda named, For beauty like their sires were  
famed, Varun

2b was father of Sushen,

Of Sarabh, he who sends the rain, 3b

Hanúmán, best of monkey kind,Was son of him who breathes the wind:Like  
thunderbolt in frame was he,And swift as Garud's  
4b self could flee.

These thousands did the Gods createEndowed with might that none could  
mate,In monkey forms that changed at will;So strong their wish the fiend  
to kill.In mountain size, like lions thewed,Up sprang the wondrous  
multitude,Auxiliar hosts in every shape,Monkey and bear and highland  
ape.In each the strength, the might, the mienOf his own parent God were  
seen.Some chiefs of Vánar mothers came,Some of she-bear and minstrel  
dame,Skilled in all arms in battle's shock;The brandished tree, the  
loosened rock;And prompt, should other weapons fail,To fight and slay  
with tooth and nail.Their strength could shake the hills amain,And rend  
the rooted trees in twain,  
Disturb with their impetuous sweepThe Rivers' Lord, the Ocean deep,Rend  
with their feet the seated ground,And pass wide floods with airy bound,Or  
forcing through the sky their wayThe very clouds by force could stay.Mad  
elephants that wander throughThe forest wilds, could they subdue,And with  
their furious shout could scareDead upon earth the birds of air.So were  
the sylvan chieftains formed;Thousands on thousands still they  
swarmed.These were the leaders honoured most,The captains of the Vánar  
host,And to each lord and chief and guideWas monkey offspring born  
beside.Then by the bears' great monarch stoodThe other roamers of the  
wood,

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And turned, their pathless homes to seek,To forest and to mountain  
peak.The leaders of the monkey bandBy the two brothers took their  
stand,Sugriva, offspring of the Sun.And Báli, Indra's mighty one.They  
both endowed with Garud's might,And skilled in all the arts of fight,  
Wandered in arms the forest through,And lions, snakes, and tigers,  
slew.But every monkey, ape, and bearEver was Báli's special care;With his  
vast strength and mighty armHe kept them from all scathe and harm.And so  
the earth with hill, wood, seas,Was filled with mighty ones like these,Of  
various shape and race and kind,With proper homes to each assigned,With  
Ráma's champions fierce and strong The earth was overspread,High as the  
hills and clouds, a throng With bodies vast and dread.

1

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

27:1b The Amrit, the nectar of the Indian Gods.

28:1 Gandharvas (Southey's Glendoveers) are celestial  
musicians inhabiting Indra's heaven and forming the  
orchestra at all the banquets of the principal deities.28:2 Yakshas,  
demigods attendant especially on Kuvera,  
and employed by him in the care of his garden and  
treasures.

28:3 Kimpurushas, demigods attached also to the  
service of Kuvera, celestial musicians, represented like  
centaurs reversed with human figures and horses' heads.

28:4 Siddhas, demigods or spirits of undefined  
attributes, occupying with the Vidyádhara the middle  
air or region between the earth and the sun.

Schlegel translates: 'Divi, Sapientes, Fidicines,  
Praepetes, illustres Genii, Praeconesque procreant natos, masculos,  
silvicolas; angues porro, Hippocephali Beati, Aligeri, Serpentesque  
frequentes alacriter generare prolem innumerabilem.'

28:5 A mountain in the south of India.

28:6 The preceptor of the Gods and regent of the planet  
Jupiter.

28:7 The celestial architect, the Indian Hephaestus, Mulciber, or Vulcan.

28:8 The God of Fire.28:1b Twin children of the Sun, the physicians of

Swarga or Indra's heaven.

28:2b The deity of the waters.

28:3b Parjanya, sometimes confounded with Indra.

28:4b The bird and vehicle of Visnu. He is generally represented as a being something between a man and a

bird and considered as the sovereign of the feathered race. He may be compared with the Simurgh of the Persians, the 'Anká of the Arabs, the Griffin of chivalry, the Phoenix of Egypt, and the bird that sits upon the ash Yggdrasil of the Edda.

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CANTO XVII.: RISHYAS'RING'S RETURN.

Now when the high-souled monarch's rite,

The As'vamedh, was finished quite,Their sacrificial dues obtained,The Gods their heavenly homes regained.The lofty-minded saints withdrew,Each to his place, with honour due,And kings and chieftains, one and all,Who came to grace the festival.And Das'aratha, ere they went,Addressed them thus benevolent:'Now may you, each with joyful heart,To your own realms, O Kings, depart.Peace and good luck attend you there,And blessing, is my friendly prayer;Let cares of state each mind engageTo guard his royal heritage.A monarch from his throne expelledNo better than the dead is held.

So he who cares for power and might

Must guard his realm and royal right.Such care a meed in heaven will bringBetter than rites and offering.Such care a king his country owesAs man upon himself bestows,

When for his body he providesRaiment and every need besides.For future days should kings foresee,And keep the present error-free.

Thus did the king the kings exhort:

They heard, and turned them from the courtAnd, each to each in friendship bound,Went forth to all the realms around.The rites were o'er, the guests were sped:The train the best of Bráhmans led,In which the king with joyful soul,With his dear wives, and with the wholeOf his imperial host and trainOf cars and servants turned again,And, as a monarch dear to fame,Within his royal city came.

Next, Rishyas'ring, well-honoured sage,

And S'ántá, sought their hermitage.The king himself, of prudent mind,Attended him, with troops behind.And all her men the town outpouredWith Saint Vas'ishtha and their lord.High mounted on a car of state,O'ercanopied fair S'ántá sate,Drawn by white oxen, while a bandOf servants marched on either hand.Great gifts of countless price she bore,With sheep and goats and gems in shore.Like Beauty's self the lady shoneWith all the jewels she had on,As, happy in her sweet content.Peerless amid the fair she went.Not Queen Paulomí's  
1b self could be

More loving to her lord than she.She who had lived in happy ease,Honoured with all her heart could please,While dames and kinsfolk ever viedTo see her wishes gratified,Soon as she knew her husband's willAgain to seek the forest, stillWas ready for the hermit's cot,Nor murmured at her altered lot.The king attended to the wildThat hermit and his own dear child,And in the centre of a throngOf noble courtiers rode along.The sage's son had let prepareA lodge within the wood, and thereWhile they lingered blithe and gay.Then, duly honoured, went their way.The glorious hermit Rishyas'ringDrew near and thus besought the king:

p. 30'Return, my honoured lord, I pray,

Return, upon thy homeward way.'The monarch, with the waiting crowd,Lifted his voice and wept aloud,And with eyes dripping still to eachOf his good queens he spake this speech:

'Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá dear,

And thou, my sweet Kaikeyí, hear. All upon S'ántá feast your gaze, The last time for a length of days. 'To S'ántá's arms the ladies leapt, And hung about her neck and wept, And cried, 'O, happy be the life Of this great Bráhmaṇ and his wife. The Wind, the Fire, the Moon on high. The Earth, the Streams, the circling sky, Preserve thee in the wood, true spouse, Devoted to thy husband's vows. And O dear S'ántá, ne'er neglect To pay the dues of meek respect To the great saint, thy husband's sire, With all observance and with fire. And, sweet one, pure of spot and blame, Forget not thou thy husband's claim; In every change, in good and ill, Let thy sweet words delight him still, And let thy worship constant be: Her lord is woman's deity. To learn thy welfare, dearest friend, The king will many a Bráhmaṇ send. Let happy thoughts thy spirit cheer. And be not troubled, daughter dear.'

These soothing words the ladies said.

And pressed their lips upon her head. Each gave with sighs her last adieu, Then at the king's command withdrew. The king around the hermit went With circling footsteps reverent, And placed at Rishyas'ring's command Some soldiers of his royal band. The Bráhmaṇ bowed in turn and cried, 'May fortune never leave thy side. O mighty King, with justice reign, And still thy people's love retain.' He spoke, and turned away his face, And, as the hermit went, The monarch, rooted to the place, Pursued with eyes intent. But when the sage had past from view King Das'aratha turned him too, Still fixing on his friend each thought. With such deep love his breast was fraught. Amid his people's loud acclaim Home to his royal seat he came, And lived delighted there, Expecting when each queenly dame, Upholder of his ancient fame,

Her promised son should bear. The glorious sage his way pursued Till close before his eyes he viewed Sweet Champá, Lomapád's fair town, Wreathed with her Champacs'

1 leafy crown.

Soon as the saint's approach he knew, The king, to yield him honour due, Went forth to meet him with a band Of priests and nobles of the land: 'Hail, Sage,' he cried, 'O joy to me! What bliss it is, my lord, to see Thee with thy wife and all thy train Returning to my town again. Thy father, honoured Sage, is well, Who hither from his woodland cell Has sent full many a messenger For tidings both of thee and her.' Then joyfully, for due respect, The monarch bade the town be decked. The king and Rishyas'ring elate Entered the royal city's gate: In front the chaplain rode. Then, loved and honoured with all care By monarch and by courtier, there The glorious saint abode. Footnotes

29:1 This Canto will appear ridiculous to the European reader. But it should be remembered that the monkeys of an Indian forest, the 'bough-deer' as the poets call them, are very different animals from the 'turpissima bestia' that accompanies the itinerant organ-grinder or grins in the Zoological Gardens of London. Milton has made his hero, Satan, assume the forms of a cormorant, a toad, and a serpent, and I cannot see that this creation of semi-divine Vánars, or monkeys, is more ridiculous or undignified.

29:1b The consort of Ladra, called also S'achí and Indráni.

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CANTO XVIII.: RISHYAS'RING'S  
DEPARTURE.

The monarch called a Bráhmaṇ near

And said, 'Now speed away To Kas'yap's son,  
2 the mighty seer,

And with all reverence say The holy child he holds so dear, The hermit of the noble mind. Whose equal it were hard to find, Returned, is dwelling here. Go, and instead of me do thou Before that best of hermits

bow, That still he may, for his dear son, Show me the favour I have won.  
'Soon as the king these words had said, To Kas'yap's son the Bráhmaṇ  
sped. Before the hermit low he bent And did obeisance, reverent; Then with  
meek words his grace to crave The message of his lord he gave: 'The high-  
souled father of his bride Had called thy son his rites to guide: Those  
rites are o'er, the steed is slain; Thy noble child is come again.' Soon as  
the saint that speech had heard  
His spirit with desire was stirred To seek the city of the king And to his  
cot his son to bring.

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With young disciples at his side Forth on his way the hermit hied, While  
peasants from their hamlets ran To reverence the holy man, Each with his  
little gift of food, Forth came the village multitude, And, as they humbly  
bowed the head, 'What may we do for thee?' they said. Then he, of Bráhmaṇs  
first and best, The gathered people thus addressed: 'Now tell me for I fain  
would know, Why is it I am honoured so?' They to the high-souled saint  
replied: 'Our ruler is with thee allied. Our master's order we fulfil; O  
Bráhmaṇ, let thy mind be still.'

With joy the saintly hermit heard

Each pleasant and delightful word, And poured a benediction down On king  
and ministers and town. Glad at the words of that high saint Some servants  
hastened to acquaint

Their king, rejoicing to impart The tidings that would cheer his  
heart. Soon as the joyful tale he knew To meet the saint the monarch  
flew, The guest-gift in his hand he brought, And bowed before him and  
besought: 'This day by seeing thee I gain Not to have lived my life in  
vain. Now be not wroth with me, I pray, Because I wiled thy son away.'

1

The best of Bráhmaṇs answer made: 'Be not, great lord of kings, afraid. Thy  
virtues have not failed to win My favour, O thou pure of sin.' Then in the  
front the saint was placed, The king came next in joyous haste, And with  
him entered his abode, Mid glad acclaim as on they rode. To greet the sage  
the reverent crowd Raised suppliant hands and humbly bowed. Then from the  
palace many a dame Following well-dressed S'ántá came, Stood by the mighty  
saint and cried: 'See, honour's source, thy son's dear bride.' The saint,  
who every virtue knew, His arms around his daughter threw, And with a  
father's rapture pressed The lady to his wondering breast.

Arising from the saint's embrace She bowed her low before his face, And  
then, with palm to palm applied, Stood by her hermit father's side. He for  
his son, as laws ordain, Performed the rite that frees from stain,

2

And, honoured by the wise and good, With him departed to the wood.

Footnotes

30:1 The *Michelia champaca*. It bears a scented yellow  
blossom:

'The maid of India blest again to hold

In her full lap the Champac's leaves of gold.'

Lallah Rookh.

30:2 Vibhándak, the father of Rishyás'ring.

31:1 A hemis'loka is wanting in Schlegel's text, which

he thus fills up in his Latin translation. 31:2 Rishyas'ring, a Bráhmaṇ,  
had married Sántá who

was of the Kshatriya or Warrior caste and an expiatory  
ceremony was necessary on account of this violation of the law.

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CANTO XIX.: THE BIRTH OF THE  
PRINCES.

The seasons six in rapid flight

Had circled since that glorious rite. Eleven months had passed away: 'Twas Chaitra's ninth returning day.

1b

The moon within that mansion shone Which Aditi looks kindly on. Raised to their apex in the sky Five brilliant planets beamed on high. Shone with the moon, in Cancer's sign. Vrihaspati

2b with light divine.

Kaus'alyá bore an infant blest With heavenly marks of grace impressed; Ráma, the universe's lord, A prince by all the worlds adored. New glory Queen Kaus'alyá won Reflected from her splendid son. So Aditi shone more and more, The Mother of the Gods, when she The King of the Immortals

3b bore,

The thunder-wielding deity.

p. 32 The lotus-eyed, the beauteous boy,

He came fierce Rávan to destroy; From half of Vishnu's vigour born, He came to help the worlds forlorn. And Queen Kaikeyí bore a child Of truest valour, Bharat styled, With every princely virtue blest, One fourth of Vishnu manifest. Sumitrá too a noble pair, Called Lakshman and S'atrughna, bare, Of high emprise, devoted, true, Sharers in Vishnu's essence too. 'Neath Pushya's

1 mansion, Mína's 2 sign,

Was Bharat born, of soul benign. The sun had reached the Crab at morn When Queen Sumitrá's babes were born, What time the moon had gone to make His nightly dwelling with the Snake. The high-souled monarch's consorts bore At different times those glorious four, Like to himself and virtuous, bright As Proshthapadá's

3 four-fold light.

Then danced the nymphs' celestial throng, The minstrels raised their strain; The drums of heaven pealed loud and long, And dowers came down in rain. Within Ayodhyá, blithe and gay, All kept the joyous holiday. The spacious square, the ample road With mimes and dancers overflowed, And with the voice of music rang Where minstrels played and singers sang, And shone, a wonder to behold, With dazzling show of gems and gold, Nor did the king his largess spare, For minstrel, driver, bard, to share; Much wealth the Bráhmans bore away, And many thousand dine that day. Soon as each babe was twelve days old

'Twas time the naming rite to hold. When Saint Vas'ishtha, rapt with joy, Assigned a name to every boy. Ráma, to him the high-souled heir, Bharat, to him Kaikeyí bare: Of Queen Sumitrá one fair son Was Lakshman, and S'atrughna

4 one.

Ráma, his sire's supreme delight, Like some proud banner cheered his sight, And to all creatures seemed to be The self-existent deity. All heroes, versed in holy lore, To all mankind great love they bore. Fair stores of wisdom all possessed, With princely graces all were blest. But mid those youths of high descent, With lordly light preeminent. Like the full moon unclouded, shone

Ráma, the world's dear paragon. He best the elephant could guide.

1b

Urge the fleet car, the charger ride; A master he of bowman's skill, Joying to do his father's will. The world's delight and darling, he Loved Lakshman best from infancy; And Lakshman, lord of lofty fate, Upon his elder joyed to wait, Striving his second self to please With friendship's sweet observances. His limbs the hero ne'er would rest Unless the couch his brother pressed; Except beloved Ráma shared He could not taste the meal prepared. When Ráma, pride of Raghu's race, Sprang on his steed to urge the chase, Behind him Lakshman loved to go And guard him with his trusty bow. As Ráma was to Lakshman dear More than his life and ever near, So fond S'atrughna prized above His very life his Bharat's love. Illustrious heroes, nobly kind In mutual love they all combined, And gave their royal

sire delightWith modest grace and warrior might:Supported by the glorious  
fourShone Das'aratha more and more,  
As though, with every guardian,\*GodWho keeps the land and skies,The  
Father of all creatures trodThe earth before men's eyes.

Footnotes

31:1b 'The poet no doubt intended to indicate the vernal  
equinox as the birthday of Ráma. For the month Chaitra  
is the first of the two months assigned to the spring; it corresponds  
with the latter half of March and the former half of April in our  
division of the year. Aditi, the mother of the Gods, is lady of the  
seventh lunar mansion which is called Punarvasu. The five planets and  
their positions in the Zodiac are thus enumerated by both commentators:  
the Sun in Aries, Mars in Capricorn, Saturn in Libra, Jupiter in Cancer,  
Venus in Pisces.... I leave to astronomers to examine whether the parts  
of the description agree with one another, and, if this be the case,  
thence to deduce the date. The Indians place the nativity of Ráma in the  
confines of the second age (tretá) and the third (dwápara): but it seems  
that this should be taken in an allegorical sense.... We may consider  
that the poet had an eye to the time in which, immediately before his own  
age, the aspects of the heavenly bodies were such as he has described.'

SCHLEGEL.

31:2b The regent of the planet Jupiter.

31:3b Indra=Jupiter Tonans.

32:1 'Pushya is the name of a month; but here it means  
the eighth mansion. The ninth is called Aslesh, or the  
snake. It is evident from this that Bharat, though his birth is mentioned  
before that of the twins, was the youngest of the four brothers and  
Rama's junior by eleven months' SCHLEGEL.

32:2 A fish, the Zodiacal sign Pisces.

32:3 One of the constellations, containing stars in the  
wing of Pegasus.

32:4 Ráma means the Delight (of the World); Bharat, the Supporter:  
Lakshman, the Auspicious; S'atrughna,  
Slayer of' Foes.

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CANTO XX.: VIS'VÁMITRA'S VISIT.

Now Das'aratha's pious mind

Meet wedlock for his sons designed;

p. 33

With priests and friends the king beganTo counsel and prepare his  
plan.Such thoughts engaged his bosom, when,To see Ayodhyá's lord of men,A  
mighty saint of glorious fame,The hermit Vis'vámitra  
1 came.

For evil fiends that roam by nightDisturbed him in each holy rite.And in  
their strength and frantic rageAssailed with witcheries the sage.He came  
to seek the monarch's aidTo guard the rites the demons stayed,Unable to a  
close to bringOne unpolluted offering Seeking the king in this dire  
straitHe said to those who kept the gate:'Haste, warders, to your master  
run,And say that here stands Gádhi's son.'Soon as they heard the holy  
man,

To the king's chamber swift they ranWith minds disordered all, and  
spurredTo wildest zeal by what they heard.On to the royal hall they  
sped,There stood and lowly bowed the head,And made the lord of men  
awareThat the great saint was waiting there.   The king with priest and  
peer arose   And ran the sage to meet,   As Indra from his palace goes  
Lord Brahmá's self to greet.When glowing with celestial lightThe pious  
hermit was in sight,The king, whose mien his transport showed,The  
honoured gift for guests bestowed.Nor did the saint that gift



despise, Offered as holy texts advise; He kindly asked the earth's great  
king How all with him was prospering. The son of Kus'ik

2 bade him tell

If all in town and field were well, All well with friends, and kith and  
kin, And royal treasure stored within: 'Do all thy neighbours own thy  
sway? Thy foes confess thee yet? Dost thou continue still to pay

To Gods and men each debt?' Then he of hermits first and best, Vas'ishtha  
with a smile 3 addressed,

And asked him of his welfare too,

Showing him honour as was due. Then with the sainted hermit all Went joyous  
to the monarch's hall, And sate them down by due degree, Each one, of rank  
and dignity. Joy filled the noble prince's breast Who thus bespoke the  
honoured guest: 'As amrit

1b by a mortal found,

As rain upon the thirsty ground, As to an heirless man a son Born to him of  
his precious one, As gain of what we sorely miss, As sudden dawn of mighty  
bliss, So is thy coming here to me: All welcome, mighty Saint, to thee. What  
wish within thy heart hast thou? If I can please thee, tell me how. Hail,  
Saint, from whom all honours flow, Worthy of all I can bestow. Blest is my  
birth with fruit to-day, Nor has my life been thrown away. I see the best  
of Bráhmaṇ race And night to glorious morn gives place. Thou, holy Sage, in  
days of old Among the royal saints enrolled, Didst, penance glorified,  
within The Bráhmaṇ caste high station win.

'Tis meet and right in many a way That I to thee should honour pay. This  
seems a marvel to mine eyes: All sin thy visit purifies; And I by seeing  
thee, O Sage, Have reaped the fruit of pilgrimage. Then say what thou  
wouldst have me do, That thou hast sought this interview. Favoured by thee,  
my wish is still, O Hermit, to perform thy will. Nor needest thou at length  
explain The object that thy heart would gain. Without reserve I grant it  
now: My deity, O Lord, art thou.'

The glorious hermit, far renowned,

With highest fame and virtue crowned, Rejoiced these modest words to  
hear Delightful to the mind and ear.

Footnotes

32:1b Schlegel. in the Indische Bibliothek, remarks that  
the proficiency of the Indians in this art early attracted  
the attention of Alexander's successors, and natives of India were so  
long exclusively employed in this service  
that the name Indian was applied to any elephant-driver, to whatever  
country he might belong.

33:1 The story of this famous saint is given at sufficient  
length in Cantos LI-LV.

This saint has given his name to the district and city to  
the east of Benares. The original name, preserved in a land- grant on  
copper now in the Museum of the Benares College, has been Moslemized into  
Ghazeepore (the City of the Soldier- martyr).

33:2 The son of Kus'ik is Vis'vámitra.

33:3 At the recollection of their former enmity, to be  
described hereafter.

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CANTO XXI.: VIS'VÁMITRA'S SPEECH.

The hermit heard with high content

That speech so wondrous eloquent, And while each hair with joy arose,  
2b

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He thus made answer at the close: 'Good is thy speech O noble King, And  
like thyself in everything. So should their lips be wisdom-fraught Whom  
kings begot, Vas'ishtha taught. The favour which I came to seek Thou  
grantest ere my tongue can speak. But let my tale attention claim, And hear

the need for which I came, O King, as Scripture texts allow, A holy rite employs me now. Two fiends who change their forms at will impede that rite with cursed skill.

1

Oft when the task is nigh complete, These worst of fiends my toil defeat, Throw bits of bleeding flesh, and o'er the altar shed a stream of gore. When thus the rite is mocked and stayed, And all my pious hopes delayed, Cast down in heart the spot I leave, And spent with fruitless labour grieve. Nor can I, checked by prudence, dare let loose my fury on them there: The muttered curse, the threatening word, In such a rite must ne'er be heard. Thy grace the rite from check can free. And yield the fruit I long to see. Thy duty bids thee, King, defend the suffering guest, the suppliant friend. Give me thy son, thine eldest born, Whom locks like raven's wings adorn, That hero youth, the truly brave, Of thee, O glorious King, I crave, For he can lay those demons low Who mar my rites and work me woe: My power shall shield the youth from harm, And heavenly might shall nerve his arm. And on my champion will I shower Unnumbered gifts of varied power, Such gifts as shall ensure his fame And spread through all the worlds his name. Be sure those fiends can never stand Before the might of Ráma's hand, And mid the best and bravest none Can slay that pair but Raghu's son. Entangled in the toils of Fate Those sinners, proud and obstinate, Are, in their fury overbold, No match for Ráma mighty-souled. Nor let a father's breast give way Too far to fond affection's sway. Count thou the fiends already slain: My word is pledged, nor pledged in vain. I know the hero Ráma well

In whom high thoughts and valour dwell;  
So does Vas'ishtha, so do these Engaged in long austerities. If thou would do the righteous deed, And win high fame, thy virtue's meed, Fame that on earth shall last and live, To me, great King, thy Ráma give. If to the words that I have said, With Saint Vas'ishtha at their head Thy holy men, O King, agree, Then let thy Ráma go with me. Ten nights my sacrifice will last, And ere the stated time be past Those wicked fiends, those impious twain, Must fall by wondrous Ráma slain. Let not the hours, I warn thee, fly, Fixt for the rite, unheeded by; Good luck have thou, O royal Chief, Nor give thy heart to needless grief. "Thus in fair words with virtue fraught The pious glorious saint besought. But the good speech with poignant sting Pierced ear and bosom of the king, Who, stabbed with pangs too sharp to bear, Fell prostrate and lay fainting there.

Footnotes

33:1b The Indian nectar or drink of the Gods.

33:2b Great joy, according to the Hindu belief, has this effect, not causing each particular hair to stand on end, but gently raising all the down upon the body.

34:1 The Rákshasas, giants, or fiends who are represented as disturbing the sacrifice, signify here, as often elsewhere, merely the savage tribes which placed themselves in hostile opposition to Bráhmanical institutions.

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CANTO XXII.: DAS'ARATHA'S SPEECH.

His tortured senses all astray,  
Awhile the hapless monarch lay, Then slowly gathering thought and strength To Visvámitra spoke at length: 'My son is but a child, I ween; This year he will be just sixteen. How is he fit for such emprise, My darling with the lotus eyes? A mighty army will I bring That calls me master, lord, and king, And with its countless squadrons fight Against these rovers of the night. My faithful heroes skilled to wield The arms of war will take the field; Their skill the demons' might may break: Ráma, my child, thou must not take. I, even I, my bow in hand, Will in the van of battle

stand, And, while my soul is left alive, With the night-roaming demons  
strive. Thy guarded sacrifice shall be completed, from all hindrance  
free. Thither will I my journey make: Ráma, my child, thou must not take. A  
boy unskilled, he knows not yet  
The bounds to strength and weakness set, No match is he for demon foes Who  
magic arts to arms oppose.

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O chief of saints, I have no power, Of Ráma reft, to live one hour: Mine  
aged heart at once would break: Ráma, my child, thou must not take. Nine  
thousand circling years have fled With all their seasons o'er my head, And  
as a hard-won boon, O sage, These sons have come to cheer mine age. My  
dearest love amid the four Is he whom first his mother bore, Still dearer  
for his virtues' sake: Ráma, my child, thou must not take. But if, unmoved  
by all I say, Thou needs must bear my son away, Let me lead with him, I  
entreat, A four-fold army

1 all complete.

What is the demons' might, O Sage? Who are they? What their parentage? What  
is their size? What beings lend Their power to guard them and befriend? How  
can my son their arts withstand? Or I or all my armed band? Tell me the  
whole that I may know

To meet in war each evil foe Whom conscious might inspires with pride.'

And Vis'vámitra thus replied:

'Sprung from Pulastya's race there came A giant known by Rávan's name. Once  
favoured by the Eternal Sire He plagues the worlds in ceaseless ire, For  
peerless power and might renowned, By giant bands encompassed  
round. Vis'ravas for his sire they hold, His brother is the Lord of  
Gold. King of the giant hosts is he, And worst of all in cruelty. This  
Rávan's dread commands impel Two demons who in might excel, Maricha and  
Suváhu hight, To trouble and impede the rite.'

Then thus the king addressed the sage:

'No power have I, my lord, to wage War with this evil-minded foe; Now pity  
on my darling show, And upon me of hapless fate, For thee as God I  
venerate. Gods, spirits, bards of heavenly birth,

2

The birds of air, the snakes of earth Before the might of Rávan quail, Much  
less, can mortal man avail.

He draws, I hear, from out the breast

The valour of the mightiest.

No, ne'er can I with him contend, Or with the forces he may send. How can I  
then my darling lend, Godlike, unskilled in battle? No, I will not let my  
young child go. Foes of thy rite, those mighty ones, Sunda and Upasunda's  
sons, Are fierce as Fate to overthrow: I will not let my young child  
go. Maricha and Suváhu fell Are valiant and instructed well. One of the  
twain I might attack. With all my friends their lord to back.'

Footnotes

35:1 Consisting of horse, foot, chariots, and elephants.

35:2 'The Gandharvas, or heavenly bards, had originally  
a warlike character but were afterwards reduced to the  
office of celestial musicians cheering the banquets of the Gods. Dr. Kuhn  
has shown their identity with the Centaurs in name, origin and  
attributes.' GORRESIO.

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CANTO XXIII.: VAS'ISHTHA'S SPEECH.

While thus the hapless monarch spoke,

Paternal love his utterance broke. Then words like these the saint  
returned. And fury in his bosom burned: 'Didst thou, O King, a promise  
make, And wishest now thy word to break? A son of Raghu's line should  
scorn To fail in faith, a man forsworn. But if thy soul can bear the shame I

will return e'en as I came.Live with thy sons, and joy be thine,False  
scion of Kakutstha's line.'

As Vis'vámitra, mighty sage,

Was moved with this tempestuous rage,Earth rocked and reeled throughout  
her frame,And fear upon the Immortals came.But Saint Vas'ishtha, wisest  
seer,Observant of his vows austere,Saw the whole world convulsed with  
dread,And thus unto the monarch said:'Thou, born of old Ikshváku's  
seed,Art Justice' self in mortal weed.Constant and pious, blest by  
fate,The right thou must not violate.

Thou, Raghu's son, so famous throughThe triple world as just and  
true,Perform thy bounden duty still,Nor stain thy race by deed of illIf  
thou have sworn and now refuseThou must thy store of merit lose.Then,  
Monarch, let thy Ráma go,Nor fear for him the demon foe.The fiends shall  
have no power to hurtHim trained to war or inexperienced,Nor vanquish him in  
battle field,For Kus'ik's son the youth will shield.He is incarnate  
Justice, heThe best of men for bravery.Embodied love of penance  
drear,Among the wise without a peer.

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Full well he knows, great Kus'ik's son,The arms celestial, every one,Arms  
from the Gods themselves concealed,Far less to other men revealed.These  
arms to him, when earth he swayed,Mighty Kris'ás'va, pleased,  
conveyed.Kris'ás'va's sons they are indeed,Brought forth by Daksha's  
lovely seed,

1

Heralds of conquest, strong and bold,Brilliant, of semblance manifold.  
Jayá and Vijayá, most fair,And hundred splendid weapons bare.Of Jayá,  
glorious as the morn,First fifty noble sons were born.Boundless in size  
yet viewless too,They came the demons to subdue.And fifty children also  
cameOf Vijayá the beauteous dame,Samháras named, of mighty force,Hard to  
assail or check in course.Of these the hermit knows the use,And weapons  
new can he produce.All these the mighty saint will yieldTo Ráma's hand,  
to own and wield;And armed with these, beyond a doubtShall Ráma put those  
fiends to rout.For Ráma and the people's sake,For thine own good my  
counsel take,Nor seek, O King, with fond delay,The parting of thy son to  
stay,'

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CANTO XXIV.: THE SPELLS.

Vas'ishtha thus was speaking still:

The monarch, of his own free will.Bade with quick seal and joyful  
cheerRáma and Lakshman hasten near.Mother and sire in loving careSped  
their dear son with rite and prayer:Vas'ishtha blessed him ere he  
went;O'er his loved head the father bent,And then to Kus'ik's son  
resignedRáma with Lakshman close behind.Standing by Vis'vámitra's  
side,The youthful hero, lotus-eyed,The Wind-God saw, and sent a  
breezeWhose sweet pure touch just waved the trees.There fell from heaven  
a flowery rain,And with the song and dance the strainOf shell and tambour  
sweetly blentAs forth the son of Raghu went.

The hermit led: behind him came

The bow-armed Ráma, dear to fame,Whose locks were like the raven's wing;  
1b

Then Lakshman, closely following.The Gods and Indra, filled with joy,  
Looked down upon the royal boy,And much they longed the death to seeOf  
their ten-headed enemy.

2b

Ráma and Lakshman paced behindThat hermit of the lofty mind.As the young  
As'vins,

3b heavenly pair,

Follow Lord Indra through the air. On arm and hand the guard they wore,  
Quiver and bow and sword they bore; Two fire-born Gods of War seemed they.

4b

He, S'iva's self who led the way.

Upon fair Sarjú's southern shore

They now had walked a league and more, When thus the sage in accents mild  
To Ráma said: 'Beloved child, This lustral water duly touch; My counsel will avail thee much.  
Forget not all the words I say, Nor let the occasion slip away. Lo, with two spells I thee invest,  
The mighty and the mightiest. O'er thee fatigue shall ne'er prevail, Nor age or change thy limbs assail.  
Thee powers of darkness ne'er shall smite in tranquil sleep or wild delight. No one is there in all the land  
Thine equal for the vigorous hand. p. 37

Thou, when thy lips pronounce the spell,

Shalt have no peer in heaven or hell, None in the world with thee shall vie,  
O sinless one, in apt reply, In fortune, knowledge, wit, and tact, Wisdom to plan and skill to act.  
This double science take, and gain Glory that shall for aye remain. Wisdom and judgment spring from each  
Of these fair spells whose use I teach. Hunger and thirst unknown to thee, High in the worlds thy rank shall be.  
For these two spells with might endued, Are the Great Father's heavenly brood, And thee, O Chief, may fitly grace,  
Thou glory of Kakutstha's race. Virtues which none can match are thine, Lord, from thy birth, of gifts divine,  
And now these spells of might shall cast Fresh radiance o'er the gifts thou hast. 'Then Ráma duly touched the wave,  
Raised suppliant hands, bowed low his head, And took the spells the hermit gave. Whose soul on contemplation fed.  
From him whose might these gifts enhanced, A brighter beam of glory glanced: So shines in all his autumn blaze

The Day-God of the thousand rays. The hermit's wants those youths supplied,  
As pupils use to holy guide. And then the night in sweet content On Sarjú's pleasant bank they spent.

Footnotes

36:1 These mysterious animated weapons are enumerated in Cantos XXIX and XXX. Daksha was the son of Brahmá and one of the Prajápatis, Demiurgi, or secondary authors of creation.

36:1b Youths of the Kshatriya class used to leave unshorn the side locks of their hair. These were called Káka-paksha, or raven's wings.

36:2b The Rákshas or giant Rávan, king of Lanká.

36:3b The meaning of As'vins (from as'va a horse, Persian asp, Greek ἵππος, Latin equus, Welsh \*eck, is Horsemen. They were twin deities of whom frequent mention is made in the Vedas and the Indian myths. The As'vins have much in common with the Dioscuri of Greece, and their mythical genealogy seems to indicate that their origin was astronomical. They were, perhaps, at first the morning star and evening star. They are said to be the children of the sun and the nymph As'viní, who is one of the lunar asterisms personified. In the popular mythology they are regarded as the physicians of the Gods. GORRESIO.

36:4b The word Kumára, (a young prince, h Childe, is also a proper name of Skanda or Kártikeya God of War, the son of S'iva and Umá. The babe was matured in the fire. See Appendix, Kártikeii Generatio.

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CANTO XXV.: THE HERMITAGE OF LOVE.

Soon as appeared the morning light

Up rose the mighty anchorite, And thus to youthful Ráma said, Who lay upon his leafy bed: 'High fate is hers who calls thee son: Arise, 'tis break of day; Rise, Chief, and let those rites be done Due at the morning's ray.'

1

At that great sage's high behest Up sprang the princely pair, To bathing rites themselves addressed, And breathed the holiest prayer. Their morning task completed, they To Vis'vámित्रa came That store of holy works, to pay

The worship saints may claim. Then to the hallowed spot they went Along fair Sarjú's side Where mix her waters confluent With three-pathed Gangá's tide.

1b

There was a sacred hermitage Where saints devout of mind Their lives through many a lengthened age To penance had resigned. That pure abode the princes eyed With unrestrained delight, And thus unto the saint they cried. Rejoicing at the sight: 'Whose is that hermitage we see? Who makes his dwelling there? Full of desire to hear are we: O Saint, the truth declare.' The hermit smiling made reply To the two boys' request: 'Hear, Rama, who in days gone by This calm retreat possessed. Kandarpa in apparent form, Called Káma

2b by the wise,

Dared Umá's 3b new-wed lord to storm

And make the God his prize. 'Gainst Sthánu's

4b self, on rites austere

And vows intent, 5b they say,

His bold rash hand be dared to rear, Though Sthánu cried, Away! But the God's eye with scornful glare Fell terrible on him. Dissolved the shape that was so fair

p. 38 And burnt up every limb.

Since the great God's terrific rage Destroyed his form and frame, Káma in each succeeding age Has borne Ananga's

1 name.

So, where his lovely form decayed, This land is Anga styled: Sacred to him of old this shade, And hermits undefiled. Here Scripture-talking elders sway Each sense with firm control, And penance-rites have washed away All sin from every soul. One night, fair boy, we here will spend, A pure stream on each hand, And with to-morrow's light will bend Our steps to yonder strand. Here let us bathe, and free from stain To that pure grove repair, Sacred to Káma, and remain One night in comfort there. 'With penance' far-discerning eye The saintly men beheld Their coming, and with transport high Each holy bosom swelled. To Kus'ik's son the gift they gave That honoured guest should greet, Water they brought his feet to lave, And showed him honor meet. Ráma, and Lakshman next obtained

In due degree their share. Then with sweet talk the guests remained, And charmed each listener there. The evening prayers were duly said With voices calm and low: Then on the ground each laid his head And slept till morning's glow.

Footnotes

37:1 'At the rising of the sun as well as at noon certain observances, invocations, and prayers were prescribed which might under no circumstances be omitted. One of these observances was the recitation of the Sávitrī, a Vedic hymn to the Sun of wonderful beauty.' GORBESIO.

37:1b Tripathaga, Three-path-go, flowing in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. See Canto XLV

37:2b Tennyson's 'Indian Cama,' the God of Love, known also by many other names.

37:3b Uma, or Parvati, was daughter of Himálaya, Monarch of mountains, and wife of S'iva. See Kálidása's Kumára Sambhava, or Birth of the War-God.

37:4b Sthánu, The Unmoving one, a name of S'iva.

37:5b The practice of austerities, voluntary tortures, and mortifications was anciently universal in India, and was held by the Indians to be of immense efficacy. Hence they mortified themselves to expiate sins, to acquire merits, and to obtain superhuman gifts and powers; the Gods themselves sometimes exercised themselves in such austerities, either to raise themselves to greater power and grandeur, or to counteract the austerities of man which threatened to prevail over them and to deprive them of heaven.... Such austerities were called in India tapas (burning ardour, fervent devotion) and he who practised them tapasvin.'GORRESIO.

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CANTO XXVI.: THE FOREST OF TÁDAKÁ.

When the fair light of morning rose

The princely turners of their foesFollowed, his morning worship o'er,The hermit to the river's shore.The high-souled men with thoughtful careA pretty barge had stationed there.All cried. 'O lord, this barge ascend,And with thy princely followers bendTo yonder side thy prosperous wayWith naught to check thee or delay.'

Nor did the saint their rede reject:

He bade farewell with due respect,And crossed, attended by the twain,That river rushing to the main.When now the bark was half way o'er,Ráma and Lakshman heard the roar,

That louder grew and louder yet,

Of waves by dashing waters met.Then Ráma asked the mighty seer:'What is the tumult that I hearOf waters cleft in mid career?'Soon as the speech of Ráma, stirred

By deep desire to know, he heard,The pious saint began to tellWhat paused the waters' roar and swell:'On high Kailása's distant hill   There lies a noble lakeWhose waters, born from Brahmá's will,   The name of Mánas 1b take.

Thence, hallowing where'er they flow,   The streams of Sarjú fall,And wandering through the plains below   Embrace Ayodhyá's wall.Still, still preserved in Sarjú's name   Sarovar's 2b fame we trace.

The flood of Brahma whence she came   To run her holy race.To meet great Gangá here she hies   With tributary wave:Hence the loud roar ye hear arise,   Of floods that swell and rave.Here, pride of Raghu's line, do thouIn humble adoration bow.'

He spoke. The princes both obeyed,

And reverence to each river paid.

3b

They reached the southern shore at last,And gaily on their journey passed.A little space beyond there stoodA gloomy awe-inspiring wood.The monarch's noble son began

To question thus the holy man:'Whose gloomy forest meets mine eyeLike some vast cloud that fills the sky?Pathless and dark it seems to be,Where birds in thousands wander free;Where shrill cicadas' cries resound,

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And fowl of dismal note abound,Lion, rhinoceros, and bear,Boar, tiger, elephant, are there,   There shrubs and thorns run wild:Dháó, Sál, Bignonia, Bel,

1 are found,

And every tree that grows on ground.   How is the forest styled?'The glorious saint this answer made:   'Dear child of Raghu, hearWho dwells within the horrid shade   That looks so dark and drear.Where now is wood,

long ere this day Two broad and fertile lands, Malaja and Karúsha lay.  
Adorned by heavenly hands. Here, mourning friendship's broken ties, Lord  
Indra of the thousand eyes Hungered and sorrowed many a day, His brightness  
soiled with mud and clay, When in a storm of passion he  
Had slain his dear friend Namuchi. Then came the Gods and saints who  
bore Their golden pitchers brimming o'er With holy streams that banish  
stain, And bathed Lord Indra pure again. When in this land the God was  
freed From spot and stain of impious deed For that his own dear friend he  
slew, High transport thrilled his bosom through. Then in his joy the lands  
he blessed, And gave a boon they long possessed: 'Because these fertile  
lands retain The washings of the blot and stain,' 'Twas thus Lord Indra  
sware, 'Malaja and Karúsha's name Shall celebrate with deathless fame My  
malady and care.'

2

'So be it', all the Immortals cried, When Indra's speech they heard, And  
with acclaim they ratified The names his lips conferred. Long time, O  
victor of thy foes, These happy lands had sweet repose, And higher still in  
fortune rose. At length a spirit, loving ill, Tádaká, wearing shapes at  
will,  
Whose mighty strength, exceeding vast A thousand elephants, surpassed,  
Was to fierce Sunda, lord and head Of all the demon armies, wed. From her,  
Lord Indra's peer in might Giant Máricha sprang to light: And she, a  
constant plague and pest, These two fair realms has long distressed. Now  
dwelling in her dark abode A league away she bars the road: And we, O Ráma,  
hence must go Where lies the forest of the foe. Now on thine own right arm  
rely, And my command obey: Smite the foul monster that she die. And  
take the plague away. To reach this country none may dare Fallen from  
its old estate, Which she, whose fury naught can bear, Has left so  
desolate. And now my truthful tale is told How with accursed sway The  
spirit plagued this wood of old, And ceases not to-day.'

Footnotes

38:1 The Bodiless one. 38:1b 'A celebrated lake regarded in India as  
sacred. It

lies in the lofty region between the northern highlands  
of the Himalayas and mount Kailása, the region of the sacred lakes. The  
poem, following the popular Indian belief, makes the river Sarayú (now  
Sarjú) flow from the Mánasa lake; the sources of the river are a little  
to the south about a day's journey from the lake. See Lassen, *Indische  
Alterthumsbunde*, page 34.' GORBESIO. Manas means mind; mánasa, mental,  
mind-born.

38:2b Sarovar means best of lakes. This is another of  
the poet's fanciful etymologies.

38:3b The confluence of two or more rivers is often a venerated and holy  
place. The most famous is Prayág or  
Allahabad, where the Sarasvatí by an underground course is believed to  
join the Jumna and the Ganges.

39:1 The botanical names of the trees mentioned in the  
text are *Grislea Tormentosa*, *Shorea Robusta*, *Echites*  
*Antidysenterica*, *Bignonia Suaveolens*, *Aegle Marmelos*, and *Diospyrus*  
*Glutinosa*. I have omitted the *Kutaja* (*Echites*) and the *Tinduka*  
(*Diospyrus*).

39:2 Here we meet with a fresh myth to account for the  
name of these regions. Malaja is probably a non-Aryan word signifying a  
hilly country: taken as a Sanskrit  
compound it means sprung from defilement. The word Karúsha appears to  
have a somewhat similar meaning.

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CANTO XXVII.: THE BIRTH OF TÁDAKÁ.

When thus the sage without a peer



Had closed that story strange to hear. Ráma again the saint addressed  
 To set one lingering doubt at rest: 'O holy man, 'tis said by all  
 That spirits' strength is weak and small: How can she match, of power so  
 slight, A thousand elephants in might? 'And Vis'vámित्रा thus replied  
 To Raghu's son the glorified: 'Listen, and I will tell thee how  
 She gained the strength that arms her now. A mighty spirit lived of yore;  
 Suketu was the name he bore. Childless was he, and free from crime  
 In rites austere he passed his time. The mighty Sire was pleased to show  
 His favour, and a child bestow. Tádaká named, most fair to see.  
 A pearl among the maids was she. And matched, for such was Brahmá's dower,  
 A thousand elephants in power. Nor would the Eternal Sire, although  
 The spirit longed, a son bestow. That maid in beauty's youthful pride  
 Was given to Sunda for a bride. Her son, Mārīcha was his name,  
 A giant, through a curse, became. She, widowed, dared with him molest

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Agastya, 1 of all saints the best.

Inflamed with hunger's wildest rage, Roaring she rushed upon the sage.  
 When the great hermit saw her near, On speeding in her fierce career,  
 He thus pronounced Mārīcha's doom: 'A giant's form and shape assume.  
 'And then, by mighty anger swayed, On Tádaká this curse he laid:  
 'Thy present form and semblance quit, And wear a shape thy mood to fit;  
 Changed form and feature by my ban. A fearful thing that feeds on man.'

She, by his awful curse possessed,

And mad with rage that fills her breast, Has on this land her fury

dealt Where once the saint Agastya dwelt. Go, Ráma, smite this monster

dead, The wicked plague, of power so dread, And further by this deed of

thine, The good of Bráhmans and of kine,

Thy hand alone can overthrow, In all the worlds, this impious foe. Nor let

compassion lead thy mind To shrink from blood of womankind; A monarch's son

must ever count The people's welfare paramount. And whether pain or joy he

deal Dare all things for his subjects' weal; Yea, if the deed bring praise

or guilt, If life be saved or blood be spilt: Such, through all time,

should be the care Of those a kingdom's weight who bear. Slay, Ráma, slay

this impious fiend, For by no law her life is screened. So Manthará, as

bards have told, Virochan's child, was slain of old By Indra, when in

furious hate She longed the earth to devastate. So Kávya's mother, Bhrigu's

wife, Who loved her husband as her life, When Indra's throne she sought to

gain, By Vishnu's hand of yore was slain. By these and high-souled kings

beside, Struck down, have lawless women died.'

Footnotes 40:1 'This is one of those indefinable mythic personages

who are found in the ancient traditions of many nations,

and in whom cosmogonical or astronomical notions are generally figured.

Thus it is related of Agastya that the Vindhyan mountains prostrated

themselves before him; and yet the same Agastya is believed to be regent

of the star Canopus,' --GORRESIO.

He will appear as the friend and helper of Ráma farther

on in the poem.

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CANTO XXVIII.: THE DEATH OF TÁDAKÁ

Thus spoke the saint. Each vigorous word

The noble monarch's offspring heard, And, reverent hands together laid, His

answer to the hermit made: 'My sire and mother bade me aye Thy word, O

mighty Saint, obey So will I, O most glorious, kill This Tádaká who joys in

ill, For such my sire's, and such thy will. To aid with mine avenging

hand The Bráhmans, kine, and all the land, Obedient, heart and soul, I

stand.'

Thus spoke the tamer of the foe,

And by the middle grasped his bow. Strongly he drew the sounding

string That made the distant welkin ring. Scared by the mighty clang the

deerThat roamed the forest shook with fear.And Tádaká the echo heard,And  
rose in haste from slumber stirred.In wild amaze, her soul aflameWith  
fury toward the spot she came.When that foul shape of evil mienAnd  
stature vast as e'er was seen

The wrathful son of Raghu eyed,He thus unto his brother cried:'Her  
dreadful shape, O Lakshman, see,A form to shudder at and flee.The hideous  
monster's very viewWould cleave a timid heart in two.Behold the demon  
hard to smite,Defended by her magic might.My hand shall stay her course  
to-day,And shear her nose and ears away.No heart have I her life to  
take:I spare it for her sex's sake.My will is but, with 'minished  
force,To check her in her evil course.'While thus he spoke, by rage  
impelled Roaring as she came nigh,The fiend her course at Ráma held  
With huge arms tossed on high.Her, rushing on, the seer assailed With a  
loud cry of hate;And thus the sons of Raghu hailed: 'Fight, and be  
fortunate.'Then from the earth a horrid cloud Of dust the demon  
raised,And for awhile in darkling shroud Wrapt Raghu's sons amazed.Then  
calling on her magic power The fearful fight to wage,She smote him with  
a stony shower,

Till Ráma burned with rage.Then pouring forth his arrowy rain That  
stony flood to stay,

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With winged darts, as she charged amain, He shore her hands away.As  
Tádaká still thundered near Thus maimed by Ráma's blows,Lakshman in  
fury severed sheer The monster's ears and nose.Assuming by her magic  
skill, A fresh and fresh disguise,She tried a thousand shapes at will,  
Then vanished from their eyes.When Gádhi's son of high renownStill saw  
the stony rain pour downUpon each princely warrior's head,With words of  
wisdom thus he said:'Enough of mercy, Ráma, lestThis sinful evil-working  
pest,Disturber of each holy rite,Repair by magic arts her might.Without  
delay the fiend should die,For, see, the twilight hour is nigh.And at the  
joints of night and daySuch giant foes are hard to slay.'Then Ráma,  
skilful to direct

His arrow to the sound,With shafts the mighty demon checked Who  
rained her stones around.She sore impeded and besetBy Ráma and his arrowy  
net,Though skilled in guile and magic lore,Rushed on the brothers with a  
roar.Deformed, terrific, murderous, dread,Swift as the levin on she  
sped,Like cloudy pile in autumn's sky,Lifting her two vast arms on  
high,When Ráma smote her with a dart,Shaped like a crescent, to the  
heart.Sore wounded by the shaft that cameWith lightning speed and surest  
aim,Blood spouting from her mouth and side.She fell upon the earth and  
died.Soon as the Lord who rules the skySaw the dread monster lifeless  
lie,He called aloud, Well done! well done!And the Gods honoured Raghu's  
son.Standing in heaven the Thousand-eyed,With all the Immortals, joying  
cried:'Lift up thine eyes, O Saint, and seeThe Gods and Indra nigh to  
thee.This deed of Ráma's boundless mightHas filled our bosoms with  
delight,Now, for our will would have it so,To Raghu's son some favour  
show.

Invest him with the power which naughtBut penance gains and holy  
thought,Those heavenly arms on him bestowTo thee entrusted long agoBy  
great Krisás'va best of kings,Son of the Lord of living things,More fit  
recipient none can beThan he who joys it following theeAnd for our sakes  
the monarch's seedHas yet to do a mighty deed.'

He spoke; and all the heavenly train

Rejoicing sought their homes again,While honour to the saint they  
paid.Then came the evening's twilight shade,The best of hermits  
overjoyedTo know the monstrous fiend destroyed,His lips on Ráma's  
forehead pressed,And thus the conquering chief addressed:'O Ráma gracious  
to the sight.Here will we pass the present night,And with the morrow's  
earliest rayBend to my hermitage our way.'The son of Das'aratha  
heard,Delighted, Vis'vámitra's word,And as he bade, that night he spentIn

Tádaká's wild wood, content. And the grove shone that happy day, Freed from the curse that on it lay,

Like Chaitraratha 1 fair and gay.

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CANTO XXIX. 2: THE CELESTIAL ARMS.

That night they slept and took their rest;

And then the mighty saint addressed, With pleasant smile and accents mild  
These words to Raghu's princely child: 'Well pleased am I. High fate be thine,  
Thou scion of a royal line. Now will I, for I love thee so, All heavenly arms on thee bestow.  
Victor with these, whoe'er oppose, Thy hand shall conquer all thy foes,  
Though Gods and spirits of the air, Serpents and fiends, the conflict dare.  
I'll give thee as a pledge of lore The mystic arms they use above,  
For worthy thou to have revealed The weapons I have learnt to wield.

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First, son of Raghu, shall be thine The arm of Vengeance, strong, divine:  
The arm of Fate, the arm of Right, And Vishnu's arm of awful might:  
That, before which no foe can stand, The thunderbolt of Indra's hand;

And S'iva's trident, sharp and dread, And that dire weapon Brahmá's Head,  
And two fair clubs, O royal child, One Charmer and one Pointed styled  
With flame of lambent fire aglow, On thee, O Chieftain, I bestow. And Fate's dread net and Justice' noose  
That none may conquer, for thy use: And the great cord, renowned of old,  
Which Varun ever loves to hold. Take these two thunderbolts, which I have got for thee,  
the Moist and Dry, Here S'iva's dart to thee I yield, And that which Vishnu wont to wield.  
I give to thee the arm of Fire, Desired by all and named the Spire. To thee I grant the Wind-God's dart,  
Named Crusher, O thou pure of heart. This arm, the Horse's Head, accept, And this, the Curlew's Bill  
yclept, And these two spears, the best e'er flew, Named the Invincible and True. And arms of fiends I make thine own,  
Skull-wreath and mace that smashes bone. And Joyous, which the spirits bear, Great weapon of the sons of air.  
Brave offspring of the best of lords, I give thee now the Gem of swords, And offer next, thine hand to arm,

The heavenly bards' beloved charm. Now with two arms I thee invest Of never-ending Sleep and Rest,  
With weapons of the Sun and Rain, And those that dry and burn amain; And strong Desire with conquering touch,  
The dart that Káma prizes much. I give the arm of shadowy powers That bleeding flesh of men devours.  
I give the arms the God of Gold And giant fiends exult to hold. This smites the foe in battle-strife,  
And takes his fortune, strength, and life. I give the arms called False and True, And great Illusion give I too;  
The hero's arm called Strong and Bright That spoils the foeman's strength in fight. I give thee as a priceless boon  
The Dew, the weapon of the Moon, And add the weapon, deftly planned, That strengthens Vis'vakarmá's hand.  
The Mortal dart whose point is chill, And Slaughter, ever sure to kill; All these and other arms, for thou  
Art very dear, I give thee now. Receive these weapons from my hand, Son of the noblest in the land.  
'Facing the east, the glorious saint Pure from all spot of earthly taint, To Ráma, with delighted mind,  
That noble host of spells consigned. He taught the arms, whose lore is won Hardly by Gods, to Raghu's son.  
He muttered low the spell whose call Summons those arms and rules them all And, each in visible form and frame,  
Before the monarch's son they came. They stood and spoke in reverent guise To Ráma with exulting cries: 'O noblest child of Raghu, see, Thy ministers and thralls are we.'  
With joyful heart and eager hand Ráma received the wondrous band, And thus with words of welcome cried: 'Aye present to my will abide.'  
Then hasted to the saint to pay Due reverence, and pursued his way.

Footnotes

41:1 The famous pleasure-garden of Kuvera the God of Wealth.41:2 'The whole of this Canto together with the following one, regards the belief, formerly prevalent in India, that by virtue of certain spells, to be learnt and muttered, secret knowledge and superhuman powers might be acquired. To this the poet has already alluded in Canto xxiii. These incorporeal weapons are partly represented according to the fashion of those ascribed to the Gods and the different orders of demi-gods, partly are the mere creations of fancy; and it would not be easy to say what idea the poet had of them in his own mind, or what powers he meant to assign to each.' SCHLEGEL.  
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CANTO XXX.: THE MYSTERIOUS  
POWERS. 1

Pure, with glad cheer and joyful breast,  
Of those mysterious arms possessed,Ráma, now passing on his way,Thus to  
the saint began to say:'Lord of these mighty weapons, ICan scarce be  
harmed by Gods on high;Now, best of saints, I long to gainThe powers that  
can these arms restrain.'Thus spoke the prince. The sage austere,True to  
his vows, from evil clear,Called forth the names of those great  
charmsWhose powers restrain the deadly arms,Receive thou True and Truly  
famed,And Bold and Fleet: the weapons named

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Warder and Progress, swift of pace,Averted-head and Drooping-face;The  
Seen, and that which Secret flies;The weapon of the thousand eyes;Ten-  
headed, and the Hundred-faced,Star-gazer and the Layer-waste:  
The Omen-bird, the Pure-from-spot,The pair that wake and slumber not:The  
Fiendish, that which shakes amain,The Strong-of-Hand, the Rich-in-  
Gain:The Guardian, and the Close-allied,The Gaper, Love, and Golden-  
side;O Raghu's son receive all these,Bright ones that wear what forms  
they please;Kris'ásva's mystic sons are they,And worthy thou their might  
to sway.'With joy the pride of Raghu's raceReceived the hermit's  
proffered grace,Mysterious arms, to check and stay,Or smite the foeman in  
the fray.Then, all with heavenly forms endued,Nigh came the wondrous  
multitude.Celestial in their bright attireSome shone like coals of  
burning fire;Some were like clouds of dusky smoke;And suppliant thus they  
sweetly spoke:'Thy thralls, O Ráma, here we stand:Command, we pray, thy  
faithful band''Depart,' he cried, 'where each may list,But when I call  
you to assist,Be present to my mind with speed,And aid me in the hour of  
need.'

To Ráma then they lowly bent,And round him in due reverence went.  
To his command, they answered, Yea,And as they came so went away.When  
thus the arms had homeward flown,With pleasant words and modest tone,E'en  
as he walked, the prince beganTo question thus the holy man:'What  
cloudlike wood is that which nearThe mountain's side I see appear?O tell  
me, for I long to know;Its pleasant aspect charms me so.Its glades are  
full of deer at play,And sweet birds sing on every spray,Past is the  
hideous wild; I feelSo sweet a tremor o'er me steal,And hail with  
transport fresh and newA land that is so fair to view.Then tell me all,  
thou holy Sage,And whose this pleasant hermitageIn which those wicked  
ones delightTo mar and kill each holy rite.And with foul heart and evil  
deedThy sacrifice, great Saint, impede.To whom, O Sage, belongs this  
landIn which thine altars ready stand!'Tis mine to guard them, and to  
slayThe giants who the rites would stay.All this, O best of saints, I  
burnFrom thine own lips, my lord, to learn.'

Footnotes

42:1 In Sanskrit Sankára, a word which has various  
significations but the primary meaning of which is the  
act of seizing. A magical power seems to be implied of employing the  
weapons when and where required. The remarks I have made on the preceding  
Canto apply with still greater force to this. The MSS. greatly vary in

the enumeration of these Sankáras, and it is not surprising that copyists have incorrectly written the names which they did not well understand. The commentators throw no light upon the subject.' SCHLEGEL. I have taken the liberty of omitting four of these which Schlegel translates 'Sclerom\* balum, Euomphalum, Cantiventrem, and Chrysomphalum.'

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CANTO XXXI: THE PERFECT

HERMITAGE.

Thus spoke the prince of boundless might,  
And thus replied the anchorite:'Chief of the mighty arm, of yoreLord  
Vishnu whom the Gods adore,For holy thought and rites austereOf penance  
made his dwelling here.This ancient wood was called of oldGrave of the  
Dwarf, the mighty-souled,And when perfection he attainedThe grove the  
name of Perfect gained.Bali of yore, Virochan's son,Dominion over Indra  
won,And when with power his proud heart swelled,O'er the three worlds his  
empire held.When Bali then began a rite,The Gods and Indra in  
affrightSought Vishnu in this place of rest,And thus with prayers the God  
addressed:'Bali, Virochan's mighty son,His sacrifice has now begun:Of  
boundless wealth, that demon kingIs bounteous to each living thing.Though  
suppliants flock from every side

The suit of none is e'er denied.Whate'er, where'er, howe'er the call,He  
hears the suit and gives to all.Now with thine own illusive artPerform, O  
Lord, the helper's part:Assume a dwarfish form, and thusFrom fear and  
danger rescue us.'

1

Thus in their dread the Immortals sued:The God a dwarflike shape indued:

2

Before Virochan's son he came,Three steps of land his only claim.The boon  
obtained, in wondrous wiseLord Vishnu's form increased in size;Through  
all the worlds, tremendous, vast,God of the Triple Step, he passed.

3

The whole broad earth from side to sideHe measured with one mighty  
stride,Spanned with the next the firmament,And with the third through  
heaven he went.

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Thus was the king of demons hurledBy Vishnu to the nether world,And thus  
the universe restoredTo Indra's rule, its ancient lord.And now because  
the immortal GodThis spot in dwarflike semblance trod,  
The grove has aye been loved by meFor reverence of the devotee.But demons  
haunt it, prompt to stayEach holy offering I would pay.Be thine, O lion-  
lord, to killThese giants that delight in ill.This day, beloved child,  
our feetShall rest within the calm retreat:And know, thou chief of  
Raghu's line,My hermitage is also thine.'   He spoke; and soon the  
anchorite,With joyous looks that beamed delight,With Ráma and his brother  
stoodWithin the consecrated wood.Soon as they saw the holy man,With one  
accord together ranThe dwellers in the sacred shade,And to the saint  
their reverence paid,And offered water for his feet,The gift of honour  
and a seat;And next with hospitable careThey entertained the princely  
pair.The royal tamers of their foesRested awhile in sweet repose:Then to  
the chief of hermits suedStanding in suppliant attitude:'Begin, O best of  
saints, we pray,Initiatory rites to-day.This Perfect Grove shall be anew  
Made perfect, and thy words be true.'   Then, thus addressed, the holy  
man,The very glorious sage, beganThe high preliminary rite.Restricting  
sense and appetite.Calmly the youths that night reposed,And rose when  
morn her light disclosed,Their morning worship paid, and tookOf lustral  
water from the brook.Thus purified they breathed the prayer,Then greeted  
Vis'vamitra whereAs celebrant he sate besideThe flame with sacred oil  
supplied.

Footnotes

43:1 I omit, after this line, eight s'lokas which, as  
Schlegel allows, are quite out of place.

43:2 This is the fifth of the avatárs, descents or incarnations of  
Vishnu.

43:3 This is a solar allegory. Vishnu is the sun, the three steps being  
his rising, culmination, and setting. Next: Canto XXXII.: Vis'vámित्रा's  
Sacrifice. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO XXXII.: VIS'VÁMITRA'S

SACRIFICE.

That conquering pair, of royal race,  
Skilled to observe due time and place, To Kús'ik's hermit son addressed, In  
timely words, their meet request: 'When must we, lord, we pray thee  
tell, Those Rovers of the Night repel?

Speak, lest we let the moment fly,

And pass the due occasion by. 'Thus longing for the strife, they  
prayed, And thus the hermits answer made: 'Till the fifth day be come and  
past, O Raghu's sons, your watch must last, The saint his Dikshá

1 has begun,

And all that time will speak to none. 'Soon as the steadfast devotees Had  
made reply in words like these, The youths began, disdaining sleep, Six  
days and nights their watch to keep. The warrior pair who tamed the  
foe, Unrivalled benders of the bow, Kept watch and ward unwearied still To  
guard the saint from scathe and ill.

'Twas now the sixth returning day, The hour foretold had past away. Then  
Ráma cried: 'O Lakshman, now Firm, watchful, resolute be thou. The fiends  
as yet have kept afar From the pure grove in which we are; Yet waits us,  
ere the day shall close, Dire battle with the demon foes.' While thus  
spoke Ráma borne away By longing for the deadly fray, See! bursting from  
the altar came The sudden glory of the flame. Round priest and deacon, and  
upon Grass, ladles, flowers, the splendour shone, And the high rite, in  
order due, With sacred texts began anew. But then a loud and fearful roar  
Re-echoed through the sky; And like vast clouds that shadow o'er The  
heavens in dark July, Involved in gloom of magic might Two fiends rushed  
on amain, Márícha, Rover of the Night, Suváhu, and their train. As on  
they came in wild career Thick blood in rain they shed; And Ráma saw  
those things of fear Impending overhead. Then soon as those accursed two

Who showered down blood be spied, Thus to his brother brave and true  
Spoke Ráma lotus-eyed: 'Now, Lakshman, thou these fiends shalt see, Man-  
eaters, foul of mind, Before my mortal weapon flee Like clouds before  
the wind.' He spoke. An arrow, swift as thought, Upon his bow he  
pressed, And smote, to utmost fury wrought, Márícha on the breast. Deep  
in his flesh the weapon lay Winged by the mystic spell,

p. 45

And, hurled a hundred leagues away, In ocean's flood he fell. Then Ráma,  
when he saw the foe Convulsed and mad with pain 'Neath the chill-pointed  
weapon's blow, To Lakshman spoke again: 'See, Lakshman, see! this mortal  
dart That strikes a numbing chill, Hath struck him senseless with the  
smart, But left him breathing still. But these who love the evil way,  
And drink the blood they spill, Rejoicing holy rites to stay,

Fierce plagues, my hand shall kill.' He seized another shaft, the best,  
Aglow with living flame; It struck Suváhu on the chest, And dead to  
earth he came. Again a dart, the Wind-God's own, Upon his string he  
laid, And all the demons were o'erthrown, The saints no more afraid. When  
thus the fiends were slain in fight, Disturbers of each holy rite, Due  
honour by the saints was paid To Ráma for his wondrous aid: So Indra is  
adored when he Has won some glorious victory. Success at last the rite had  
crowned, And Visvámित्रा gazed around, And seeing every side at rest, The son  
of Raghu thus addressed: 'My joy, O Prince, is now complete: Thou hast  
obeyed my will: Perfect before, this calm retreat Is now more perfect  
still.'

Footnotes44:1 Certain ceremonies preliminary to sacrifice.

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CANTO XXXIII.: THE SONE.

Their task achieved, the princes spent

That night with joy and full content.Ere yet the dawn was well  
displayedTheir morning rites they duly paid,And sought, while yet the  
light was faint,The hermits and the mighty saint.They greeted first that  
holy sireResplendent like the burning fire,And then with noble words  
beganTheir sweet speech to the sainted man:'Here stand, O Lord, thy  
servants true:Command what thou wouldst have us do.'The saints, by  
Vis'vámitra led,To Ráma thus in answer said:'Janak the king who rules the  
landOf fertile Mithilá has plannedA noble sacrifice, and weWill thither  
go the rite to see.Thou, Prince of men, with us shalt go,And there behold  
the wondrous bow,Terrific, vast, of matchless might,Which, splendid at  
the famous rite,The Gods assembled gave the king.No giant, fiend, or God  
can stringThat gem of bows, no heavenly bard:

Then, sure, for man the task were hard.When lords of earth have longed to  
knowThe virtue of that wondrous bow,The strongest sons of kings in  
vainHave tried the mighty cord to strain.This famous bow thou there shalt  
view,And wondrous rites shalt witness too.The high-souled king who lords  
it o'erThe realm of Mithilá of yoreGained from the Gods this bow, the  
priceOf his imperial sacrifice.Won by the rite the glorious prizeStill in  
the royal palace lies,Laid up in oil of precious scentWith aloe-wood and  
incense blent.'

Then Ráma answering, Be it so,

Made ready with the rest to go.The saint himself was now prepared,But ere  
beyond the grove he fared,He turned him and in words like theseAddressed  
the sylvan deities:'Farewell! each holy rite complete,I leave the  
hermits' perfect seat:To Gangá's northern shore I goBeneath Himálaya's  
peaks of snow.'With reverent steps he paced aroundThe limits of the holy  
ground,And then the mighty saint set forth

And took his journey to the north.His pupils, deep in Scripture's  
page,Followed behind the holy sage,And servants from the sacred groveA  
hundred wains for convoy drove.The very birds that winged that air,The  
very deer that harboured there,Forsook the glade and leafy brakeAnd  
followed for the hermit's sake.They travelled far, till in the westThe  
sun was speeding to his rest,And made, their portioned journey o'er,Their  
halt on S'ona's

1 distant shore.

The hermits bathed when sank the sun,And every rite was duly  
done,Oblations paid to Fire, and thenSate round their chief the holy  
men.Ráma and Lakshman lowly bowedIn reverence to the hermit crowd,And  
Ráma, having sate him downBefore the saint of pure renown,

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With humble palms together laidHis eager supplication made:'What country,  
O my lord, is this,Fair-smiling in her wealth and bliss?Deign fully. O  
thou mighty Seer,

To tell me, for I long to hear.'Moved by the prayer of Ráma, heTold forth  
the country's history.

Footnotes

45:1 A river which rises in Budelcund and falls into the  
Ganges near Patna. It is called also Hiranyabáhu,  
Golden-armed, and Hiranyaváha, Auriferous.

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CANTO XXXIV.: BRAHMADATTA.

'A king of Brahmá's seed who bore

The name of Kus'a reigned of yore. Just, faithful to his vows, and true, He held the good in honour due. His bride, a queen of noble name. Of old Vidarbha's

1 monarchs came.

Like their own father, children four, All valiant boys, the lady bore. In glorious deeds each nerve they strained, And well their Warrior part sustained. To them most just, and true, and brave, Their father thus his counsel gave: "Beloved children, ne'er forget Protection is a prince's debt: The noble work at once begin, High virtue and her fruits to win." The youths to all the people dear, Received his speech with willing ear; And each went forth his several way, Foundations of a town to lay. Kus'an, a prince of high renown, Was builder of Kaus'ambi's town, And Kus'anabha, just and wise, Bade high Mahodaya's towers arise. Amúrtarajas chose to dwell

In Dharmaranya's citadel, And Vasu bade his city fair The name of Girivraja bear.

2

This fertile spot whereon we stand Was once the high-souled Vasu's land. Behold! as round we turn our eyes, Five lofty mountain peaks arise.

See! bursting from her parent hill, Sumágadhi, a lovely rill, Bright gleaming as she flows between The mountains, like a wreath is seen, And then through Magadh's plains and groves With many a fair meander roves. And this was Vasu's old domain, The fertile Magadh's broad champaign, Which smiling fields of tilth adorn And diadem with golden corn.

The queen Ghrítáchi, nymph most fair, Married to Kus'anabha, bare

A hundred daughters, lovely-faced, With every charm and beauty graced.

It chanced the maidens, bright and gay As lightning-flashes on a day Of rain time, to the garden went

With song and play and merriment,

And there in gay attire they strayed, And danced, and laughed, and sang, and played.

The God of Wind who roves at will All places, as he lists, to fill, Saw the young maidens dancing there, Of faultless shape and mien most fair, 'I love you all, sweet girls,' he cried, And each shall be my darling bride. Forsake, forsake your mortal lot, And gain a life that withers not. A fickle thing is youth's brief span, And more than all in mortal man. Receive unending youth, and be Immortal, O my loves, with me.'

The hundred girls, to wonder stirred,

The wooing of the Wind-God heard, Laughed, as a jest, his suit aside, And with one voice they thus replied. 'O mighty Wind, free spirit who All life pervadest, through and through, Thy wondrous power we maidens know; Then wherefore wilt thou mock us so? Our sire is Kus'anabha, King; And we, forsooth, have charms to bring A God to woo us from the skies; But honour first we maidens prize. Far may the hour, we pray, be hence, When we, O thou of little sense, Our truthful father's choice refuse, And for ourselves our husbands choose.

Our honoured sire our lord we deem, He is to us a God supreme, And they to whom his high decree May give us shall our husbands be.'

He heard the answer they returned,

And mighty rage within him burned. On each fair maid a blast he sent: Each stately form be bowed and bent. Bent double by the Wind-God's ire They sought the palace of their sire,

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There fell upon the ground with sighs, While tears and shame were in their eyes. The king himself, with troubled brow, Saw his dear girls so fair but now, A mournful sight all bent and bowed, And grieving thus he cried aloud: 'What fate is this, and what the cause! What wretch has scorned all



heavenly laws?Who thus your forms could curve and break?You struggle, but no answer make.'

They heard the speech of that wise king  
Of their misfortune questioning.Again the hundred maidens sighed,Touched  
with their heads his feet, and cried;

'The God of Wind, pervading space,Would bring on us a foul disgrace,And  
choosing folly's evil wayFrom virtue's path in scorn would stray.But we  
in words like these reprovedThe God of Wind whom passion moved:'Farewell,  
O Lord! A sire have we,No women uncontrolled and free.Go, and our sire's  
consent obtainIf thou our maiden hands wouldst gain.No self-dependent  
life we live:If we offend, our fault forgive.'But led by folly as a  
slave,He would not hear the rede we gave,And even as we gently spokeWe  
felt the Wind-God's crushing stroke.'

The pious king, with grief distressed,

The noble hundred thus addressed:'With patience, daughters, bear your  
fate,Yours was a deed supremely greatWhen with one mind you kept from  
shameThe honour of your father's name.Patience, when men their anger  
vent,Is woman's praise and ornament;Yet when the Gods inflict the  
blowHard is it to support the woe.Patience, my girls, exceeds all  
price:'Tis alms, and truth, and sacrifice.

Patience is virtue, patience fame:Patience upholds this earthly frame.And  
now, I think, is come the timeTo wed you in jour maiden prime.Now,  
daughters, go where'er you will:Thoughts for your good my mind shall  
fill.'

The maidens went, consoled, away:

The best of kings, that very day,Summoned his ministers of stateAbout  
their marriage to debate.Since then, because the Wind-God bentThe  
damsels' forms for punishment,That royal town is known to fameBy  
Kanyákubja's

1 borrowed name.

There lived a sage called Chúli then,Devoutest of the sons of men;His  
days in penance rites he spent,A glorious saint, most continent.To him  
absorbed in tasks austereThe child of Urmilá drew near,Sweet Somadá, the  
heavenly maid,And lent the saint her pious aid.Long time near him the  
maiden spent,And served him meek and reverent,Till the great hermit,  
pleased with her,Thus spoke unto his minister:'Grateful am I for all thy  
care:

Blest maiden, speak, thy wish declare.'The sweet-voiced nymph rejoiced to  
seeThe favour of the devotee,And to that eloquent old man,Most eloquent  
she thus began:'Thou hast, by heavenly grace sustained,Close union with  
the Godhead gained.I long, O Saint, to see a sonBy force of holy penance  
won.Unwed, a maiden life I live:A son to me, thy suppliant, give.'The  
saint with favour heard her prayer,And gave a son exceeding fair.Him,  
Chúli's spiritual child,His mother Brahmadatta

1b styled.

King Brahmadatta, rich and great,In Kámpilí maintained his state,Ruling,  
like Indra in his bliss,His fortunate metropolis.King Kus'anábha planned  
that heHis hundred daughters' lord should be.To him, obedient to his  
call,The happy monarch gave them all.Like Indra then he took the handOf  
every maiden of the band.Soon as the hand of each young maidIn  
Brahmadatta's palm was laid,Deformity and cares away,She shone in beauty  
bright and gay.

Their freedom from the Wind-God's mightSaw Kus'anábha with delight.Each  
glance that on their forms he threwFilled him with raptures ever new.Then  
when the rites were all complete,Witli highest marks of honour meetThe  
bridegroom with his brides he sentTo his great seat of government.

The nymph received with pleasant speech

Her daughters; and, embracing each,Upon their forms she fondly gazed,And  
royal Kus'anábha praised.

## Footnotes

46:1 The modern Berar.

46:2 According to the Bengal recension the first

(Kus'ámba) is called Kus'ás'va, and his city Kaus'ás'ví.

This name does not occur elsewhere. The reading of the northern recension is confirmed by \*Foê \*Kouê Ki; p. 385, where the citv Kiaoshangmi is mentioned. It lay 500 lis to the south-west of Prayága, on the south bank of the Jumna. Mahodaya is another name of Kanyakubja: Dharmáranya, the wood to which the God of Justice is said to have fled through fear of Soma the Moon-God, was in Magadh. Girivraja was in the same neighbourhood, See Lassen's I. A. Vol. I, p. 604.

47:1 That is, the City of the Bent Virgins, the modern Kanauj or Canouge.

47:1b Literally, Given by Brahma or devout contemplation.

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CANTO XXXV: VISVÁMITRA'S LINEAGE.

'The rites were o'er, the maids were wed,

The bridegroom to his home was sped. The sonless monarch bade prepare  
A sacrifice to gain an heir. Then Kus'a, Brahmá's son, appeared, And thus  
King Kus'anábha cheered: 'Thou shalt, my child, obtain a son Like thine own  
self, O holy one. Through him for ever, Gádhi named, Shalt thou in all the  
worlds be famed.' He spoke, and vanished from the sight To Brahmá's world  
of endless light. Time fled, and, as the saint foretold, Gádhi was born,  
the holy-souled. My sire was he; through him I trace My line from royal  
Kus'a's race. My sister--elder-born was she--The pure and good Satyavatí,  
1

Was to the great Richika wed. Still faithful to her husband dead, She  
followed him, most noble dame, And, raised to heaven in human frame, A pure  
celestial stream became. Down from Himálaya's snowy height, In floods for  
ever fair and bright,

My sister's holy waves are hurled To purify and glad the world. Now on  
Himálaya's side I dwell Because I love my sister well. She, for her faith  
and truth renowned, Most loving to her husband found, High-fated, firm in  
each pure vow, Is queen of all the rivers now. Bound by a vow I left her  
side And to the Perfect convent hied. There, by the aid 'twas thine to  
lend, Made perfect, all my labours end. Thus, mighty Prince, I now have  
told My race and lineage, high and old, And local tales of long ago Which  
thou, O Ráma, fain wouldst know. As I have sate rehearsing thus The  
midnight hour is come on us. Now, Ráma, sleep, that nothing may Our journey  
of to-morrow stay. No leaf on any tree is stirred: Hushed in repose are  
beast and bird:

Where'er you turn, on every side,

Dense shades of night the landscape hide, The light of eve is fled: the  
skies, Thick-studded with their host of eyes, Seem a star-forest  
overhead, Where signs and constellations spread.

Now rises, with his pure cold ray, The moon that drives the shades  
away, And with his gentle influence brings Joy to the hearts of living  
things. Now, stealing from their lairs, appear The beasts to whom the night  
is dear. Now spirits walk, and every power That revels in the midnight  
hour.'

The mighty hermit's tale was o'er,

He closed his lips and spoke no more. The holy men on every side, 'Well  
done! well done,' with reverence cried; 'The mighty men of Kus'a's  
seed Were ever famed for righteous deed. Like Brahmá's self in glory  
shine The high-souled lords of Kus'a's line, And thy great name is sounded  
most, O Saint, amid the noble host. And thy dear sister--fairest she Of  
streams, the high-born Kaus'ikí--Diffusing virtue where she flows, New  
splendour on thy lineage throws.' Thus by the chief of saints addressed The  
son of Gádhi turned to rest; So, when his daily course is done, Sinks to

his rest the beaming sun.Ráma with Lakshman, somewhat stirredTo marvel by  
the tales they heard,  
Turned also to his couch, to closeHis eyelids in desired repose.

Footnotes

48:1 Now called Kos'í (Cosy) corrupted from Kaus'ikí,  
daughter of Kus'a.

'This is one of those personifications of rivers so  
frequent in the Grecian mythology, but in the similar myths is seen the  
impress of the genius of each people, austere and profoundly religious in  
India, graceful and devoted to the worship of external beauty in Greece.'

GORRESIO.

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CANTO XXXVI.: THE BIRTH OF GANGÁ.

The hours of night now waning fast

On S'ona's pleasant shore they passed.Then, when the dawn began to  
break,To Ráma thus the hermit spake:'The light of dawn is breaking  
clear,The hour of morning rites is near,Rise, Ráma, rise, dear son, I  
pray,And make thee ready for the way.'

Then Ráma rose, and finished all

His duties at the hermit's call,Prepared with joy the road to take,And  
thus again in question spake:'Here fair and deep the S'ona flows,And many  
an isle its bosom shows:What way, O Saint, will lead us o'erAnd land us  
on the farther shore?The saint replied: 'The way I chooseIs that which  
pious hermits use.'

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For many a league they journeyed onTill, when the sun of mid-day shone,  
The hermit-haunted flood was seenOf Jáhnnaví,  
1 the Rivers' Queen.

Soon as the holy stream they viewed,Thronged with a white-winged  
multitudeOf sarases

2 and swans, 3 delight

Possessed them at the lovely sight:And then prepared the hermit bandTo  
halt upon that holy strand.They bathed as Scripture bids, and  
paidOblations due to God and shade.To Fire they burnt the offerings  
meet,And sipped the oil, like Amrit sweet.Then pure and pleased they sate  
aroundSaint Vis'vámitra on the ground.The holy men of lesser note,In due  
degree, sate more remote,While Raghu's sons took nearer placeBy virtue of  
their rank and race.Then Ráma said: 'O Saint, I yearnThe three-pathed  
Gangá's tale to learn.'

Thus urged, the sage recounted both

The birth of Gangá and her growth:'The mighty hill with metals  
stored,Himálaya, is the mountains' lord,The father of a lovely pairOf  
daughters fairest of the fair:Their mother, offspring of the willof Meru,  
everlasting hill,

Mená, Himálaya's darling, gracedWith beauty of her dainty waist.Gangá was  
elder-born: then cameThe fair one known by Umá's name.Then all the Gods  
of heaven, in needOf Gangá's help their vows to speed,To great Himálaya  
came and prayedThe mountain King to yield the maid.He, not regardless of  
the wealOf the three worlds, with holy zealHis daughter to the Immortals  
gave,Gangá whose waters cleanse and save,Who roams at pleasure, fair and  
free,Purging all sinners, to the sea.The three-pathed Gangá thus  
obtained,The Gods their heavenly homes regained.Long time the sister Umá  
passedIn vows austere and rigid fast,And the king gave the  
devoteeImmortal Rudra's

4 bride to be,

Matching with that unequalled LordHis Umá through the worlds adored.So  
now a glorious station fills

Each daughter of the King of Hills:

One honoured as the noblest stream, One mid the Goddesses supreme. Thus  
Gangá, King Himálaya's child, The heavenly river, undefiled,  
Rose bearing with her to the sky Her waves that bless and purify.'

Footnotes

49:1 One of the names of the Ganges considered as the  
daughter of Jahnu. See Canto XLIV.

49:2 The Indian Crane.

49:3 Or, rather, geese.

49:4 A name of the God S'iva.

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CANTO XXXIX.: THE SONS OF SAGAR.

The saint in accents sweet and clear

Thus told his tale for Ráma's ear, And thus anew the holy man A legend to  
the prince began: 'There reigned a pious monarch o'er Ayodhyá in the days  
of yore: Sagar his name: no child bad he, And children much he longed to  
see. His honoured consort, fair of face, Sprang from Vidarbha's royal  
race, Kes'ini, famed from early youth For piety and love of  
truth. Arishtanemi's daughter fair, With whom no maiden might compare In  
beauty, though the earth is wide, Sumati, was his second bride. With his  
two queens afar he went, And weary days in penance spent, Fervent, upon  
Himálaya's hill Where springs the stream called Bhrigu' rill. Nor did he  
fail that saint to please With his devout austerities, And, when a hundred  
years had fled, Thus the most truthful Bhrigu said: 'From thee, O Sagar,  
blameless King,

A mighty host of sons shall spring, And thou shalt win a glorious  
name Which none, O Chief, but thou shall claim. One of thy queens a son  
shall bear, Maintainer of thy race and heir; And of the other there shall  
be Sons sixty thousand born to thee.'

Thus as he spake, with one accord,

To win the grace of that high lord, The queens, with palms together  
laid, In humble supplication prayed: 'Which queen, O Bráhmaṇ, of the  
pair, The many, or the one shall bear? Most eager, Lord, are we to know, And  
as thou sayest be it so.'

1b

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With his sweet speech the saint replied:

'Yourselves, O Queens, the choice decide. Your own discretion freely  
use Which shall the one or many choose: One shall the race and name  
uphold, The host be famous, strong, and bold. Which will have which?' Then  
Kes'ini The mother of one heir would be.

Sumati, sister of the king 1

Of all the birds that ply the wing, To that illustrious Bráhmaṇ sued That  
she might bear the multitude Whose fame throughout the world should  
sound For mighty enterprise renowned. Around the saint the monarch  
went, Bowing his head, most reverent. Then with his wives, with willing  
feet, Besought his own imperial seat. Time passed. The elder consort bare A  
son called Asamanj, the heir. Then Sumati, the younger, gave Birth to a  
gourd,

2 O hero brave,

Whose rind, when burst and cleft in two, Gave sixty thousand babes to  
view. All these with care the nurses laid In jars of oil; and there they  
stayed, Till, youthful age and strength complete, Forth speeding from each  
dark retreat, All peers in valour, years, and might, The sixty thousand  
came to light. Prince Asamanj, brought up with care, Scourge of his foes,  
was made the heir. But liegemen's boys he used to cast To Sarjû's waves  
that hurried past, Laughing the while in cruel glee Their dying agonies to  
see. This wicked prince who aye withstood

The counsel of the wise and good,Who plagued the people in his hate,His father banished from the state.His son, kind-spoken, brave, and tall,Was Ans'uman, beloved of all. Long years flew by. The king decreedTo slay a sacrificial steed.Consulting with his priestly bandHe vowed the rite his soul had planned,And, Veda skilled, by their adviceMade ready for the sacrifice.

Footnotes

49:1b I am compelled to omit Cantos XXXVII and

XXXVIII, THE GLORY OF UMÀ, and THE BIRTH

OF KĀRTIKEYA, as both in subject and language offensive to modern taste.

They will be found in Schlegel's Latin translation.

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CANTO XL.: THE CLEAVING OF THE

EARTH.

The hermit ceased: the tale was done:

Then in a transport Raghu's son

Again addressed the ancient sire

Resplendent as a burning fire:'O holy man, I fain would hearThe tale repeated full and clearHow he from whom my sires descendBrought the great rite to happy end.'The hermit answered with a smile:'Then listen, son of Raghu, whileMy legendary tale proceedsTo tell of high-souled Sagar's deeds.Within the spacious plain that liesFrom where Himālaya's heights ariseTo where proud Vindhya's rival chainLooks down upon the subject plain--A land the best for rites declared--

1b

His sacrifice the king prepared.And Ans'umán the prince--for soSagar advised--with ready bowWas borne upon a mighty carTo watch the steed who roamed afar.

But Indra, monarch of the skies,Veiling his form in demon guise,Came down upon the appointed dayAnd drove the victim horde away.Reft of the steed the priests, distressed,The master of the rite addressed;'Upon the sacred day by forceA robber takes the victim horse.Haste, King! now let the thief be slain;Bring thou the charger back again:The sacred rite prevented thusBrings scathe and woe to all of us.Rise, monarch, and provide with speed.That naught its happy course impede.' King Sagar in his crowded courtGave ear unto the priests' report.He summoned straightway to his sideHis sixty thousand sons, and cried:'Brave sons of mine, I knew not howThese demons are so mighty now:The priests began the rite so wellAll sanctified with prayer and spell.If in the depths of earth he hide,Or lurk beneath the ocean's tide,

p. 51

Pursue, dear sons, the robber's track;Slay him and bring the charger back.

The whole of this broad earth explore,Sea-garlanded, from shore to shore:Yea, dig her up with might and mainUntil you see the horse again.Deep let your searching labour reach,A league in depth dug out by each.The robber of our horse pursue,And please your sire who orders you.My grandson, I, this priestly train,Till the steed comes, will here remain.' Their eager hearts with transport burnedAs to their task the heroes turned.Obedient to their father, theyThrough earth's recesses forced their way.With iron arms' unflinching toilEach dug a league beneath the soil.Earth, cleft asunder, groaned in pain,As emulous they plied amainSharp-pointed coulters, pick, and bar,Hard as the bolts of Indra are.Then loud the horrid clamour roseOf monsters dying 'neath their blows,Giant and demon, fiend and snake,That in earth's core their dwelling make.They dug, in ire that naught could stay,Through sixty thousand leagues their way,Cleaving the earth with matchless strengthTill hell itself they reached at length.Thus digging searched they Jambudvip

With all its hills and mountains steep.  
Then a great fear began to shakeThe heart of God, bard, fiend, and  
snake,And all distressed in spirit wentBefore the Sire Omnipotent.With  
signs of woe in every faceThey sought the mighty Father's grace,And  
trembling still and ill at easeAddressed their Lord in words like  
these:'The sons of Sagar, Sire benign,Pierce the whole earth with mine on  
mine,And as their ruthless work they plyInnumerable creatures die,'This  
is the thief,' the princes say,'Who stole our victim steed away.This  
marred the rite, and caused us ill.And so their guiltless blood they  
spill.'

Footnotes

50:1 Garuda.

50:2 Ikshváku, the name of a king of Ayodhyá who is  
regarded as the founder of the Solar race, means also a  
gourd. Hence, perhaps, the myth.50:1b The region here spoken of is called  
in the Laws of

Manu Madhyades'a or the middle region. 'The region  
situated between the Himálaya and the Vindhya Mountains ... is called  
Madhyades'a, or the middle region; the space comprised between these two  
mountains from the eastern to the western sea is called by sages  
Áryāvartta, the seat of honourable men.' (MANU, II, 21, 22.) The Sanskrit  
Indians called themselves Áryans, which means honourable, noble, to  
distinguish themselves from the surrounding nations of different origin.'

GORRESIO.

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CANTO XLI.: KAPIL.

The father lent a gracious ear  
And listened to their tale of fear,  
And kindly to the Gods replied  
Whom woe and death had terrified;'The wisest Vasudeva,  
1b who  
The Immortals' foe, fierce Madhu, slew,Regards broad Earth with love and  
prideAnd guards, in Kapil's form, his bride.

2b  
His kindled wrath will quickly fallOn the king's sons and burn them  
all.This cleaving of the earth his eyeForesaw in ages long gone by:He  
knew with prescient soul the fateThat Sagar's children should await.'  
The Three-and-thirty,

3b freed from fear.  
Sought their bright homes with hopeful cheer.Still rose the great  
tempestuous soundAs Sagar's children pierced the ground.When thus the  
whole broad earth was cleft,And not a spot unsearched was left,Back to  
their home the princes sped,And thus unto their father said:'We searched  
the earth from side to side,  
While countless hosts of creatures died.Our conquering feet in triumph  
trodOn snake and demon, fiend and God;But yet we failed, with all our  
toil,To find the robber and the spoil.What can we more? If more we  
can,Devise, O King, and tell thy plan.'   His children's speech King Sagar  
heard,And answered thus, to anger stirred:'Dig on, and ne'er your labour  
stayTill through earth's depths you force your way.Then smite the robber  
dead, and bringThe charger back with triumphing.'

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The sixty thousand chiefs obeyed:Deep through the earth their way they  
made.Deep as they dug and deeper yetThe immortal elephant they met,Famed  
Virúpáksha

1 vast of size,  
Upon whose head the broad earth lies:The mighty beast who earth  
sustainsWith shaggy hills and wooded plains.When, with the changing moon,  
distressed,And longing for a moment's rest,His mighty head the monster

shakes,Earth to the bottom reels and quakes.Around that warder strong and vast

With reverential steps they passed.Nor, when the honour due was paid,Their downward search through earth delayed.But turning from the east asideSouthward again their task they plied.There Mahápadma held his place,The best of all his mighty race,Like some huge hill, of monstrous girth,Upholding on his head the earth.When the vast beast the princes saw,They marvelled and were tilled with awe.The sons of high-souled Sagar roundThat elephant in reverence wound.Then in the western region theyWith might unwearied cleft their way.There saw they with astonisht eyesSaumanas, beast of mountain size.Round him with circling steps they wentWith greetings kind and reverent. On, on--no thought of rest or stay--They reached the seat of Soma's sway.There saw they Bhadra, white as snow,With lucky marks that fortune show,Bearing the earth upon his head.Round him they paced with solemn tread,And honoured him with greetings kind,Then downward yet their way they mined.They gained the tract 'twixt east and north

Whose fame is ever blazoned forth, 1b

And by a storm of rage impelled,Digging through earth their course they held. Then all the princes, lofty-souled,Of wondrous vigour, strong and bold,Saw Vásudeva

2b standing there

In Kapil's form he loved to wear,And near the everlasting GodThe victim charger cropped the sod.They saw with joy and eager eyesThe fancied robber and the prize,And on him rushed the furious bandCrying aloud,Stand, villain! stand!'Avaunt! avaunt!' great Kapil cried,His bosom flusht with passion's tide;Then by his might that proud arrayAll scorcht to heaps of ashes lay.

3b

Footnotes

51:1 Said to be so called from the Jambu, or Rose Apple, abounding in it, and signifying according to the Purána, the central division of the world, the known world.51:1b Here used as a name of Vishnu.

51:2b Kings are called the husbands of their kingdoms or of the earth; 'She and his kingdom were his only brides.' Raghuvas'a.

'Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate A double marriage, 'twixt my crown and me, And then between me and my married wife.'

King Richard II. Act V. Sc. I.

51:3b The thirty-three Gods are said in the Aitareya.

Bráhmaṇa.Book 1. ch. II. 10. to be the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Ādityas, Prajāpati, either Brahmá or Daksha, and Vashatkára or deitied oblation. This must have been the actual number at the beginning of the Vedic religion gradually increased by successive mythical and religious creations till the Indian Pantheon was crowded with abstractions of every kind. Through the reverence with which the words of the Veda were regarded, the immense host of multiplied divinities, in later times, still bore the name of the Thirty-three Gods.

52:1 'One of the elephants which, according to an ancient belief popular in India, supported the earth with their enormous backs; when one of these elephants shook his wearied head the earth trembled with its woods and hills. An idea, or rather a mythical fancy,

similar to this, but reduced to proportions less grand, is found in Virgil when he speaks of Enceladus buried under Ætna:

'Fama est Enceladi semiustum fulmine corpus Urgeri molo haec, ingentemque insuper Ætnam Impositam, ruptis flammam expirare caminis;

Et fessum quoties mutat latus, intremere omnem Murmure Trinacriam, et  
coelum subtexere fumo.'

Aeneid. Lib, III. GORRESIO.

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CANTO XLII.: SAGAR'S SACRIFICE.

Then to the prince his grandson, bright  
With his own fame's unborrowed light,King Sagar thus began to  
say,Marvelling at his sons' delay:'Thou art a warrior skilled and  
bold,Match for the mighty men of old.Now follow on thine uncles'  
courseAnd track the robber of the horse.

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To guard thee take thy sword and bow,for huge and strong are beasts  
below.There to the reverend reverence pay,And kill the foes who check thy  
way;Then turn successful home and seeMy sacrifice complete through thee.'  
Obedient to the high-souled lord

Grasped Ans'umán his bow and sword,Aud hurried forth the way to traceWith  
youth and valour's eager pace.On sped he by the path he foundDug by his  
uncles underground,

The warder elephant he sawWhose size and strength pass Nature's law,Who  
bears the world's tremendous weight,Whom God, fiend, giant venerate,Bird,  
serpent, and each flitting shade.To him the honour meet he paidWith  
circling steps and greeting due,And further prayed him, if he knew,To  
tell him of his uncles' weal,And who had dared the horse to steal.To him  
in war and council triedThe warder elephant replied:'Thou, son of  
Asamanj, shalt leadIn triumph back the rescued steed.'

As to each warder beast he came

And questioned all, his words the same,The honoured youth with gentle  
speechDrew eloquent reply from each,That fortune should his steps  
attend.And with the horse he home should wend.Cheered with the grateful  
answer, hePassed on with step more light and free,And reached with  
careless heart the placeWhere lay in ashes Sagar's race.Then sank the  
spirit of the chiefBeneath that shock of sudden grief,And with a bitter  
cry of woeHe mourned his kinsmen fallen so.

He saw, weighed down by woe and care,The victim charger roaming there.Yet  
would the pious chieftain fainOblations offer to the slain:But, needing  
water for the rite,He looked and there was none in sight.His quick eye  
searching all aroundThe uncle of his kinsmen found,King Garud, best  
beyond compareOf birds who wing the fields of air.Then thus unto the  
weeping manThe son of Vinatá

1 began:

Grieve not, O hero, for their fallWho died a death approved of all.Of  
mighty strength, they met their fateBy Kapil's hand whom none can  
mate.Pour forth for them no earthly wave,  
A holier flood their spirits crave.

If, daughter of the Lord of Snow,Gangá would turn her stream below,Her  
waves that cleanse all mortal stainWould wash their ashes pure again.Yea,  
when her flood whom all revereRolls o'er the dust that moulders here,The  
sixty thousand, freed from sin,A home in Indra's heaven shall win.Go, and  
with ceaseless labour tryTo draw the Goddess from the sky.  
Return, and with thee take the steed;So shall thy grandsire's rite  
succeed.'

Prince Ans'umán the strong and brave  
Followed the rede Suparna

1b gave.

The glorious hero took the horse,And homeward quickly bent his  
course.Straight to the anxious king he hied,Whom lustral rites had  
purified,The mournful story to unfoldAnd all the king of birds had  
told.The tale of woe the monarch heard,Nor longer was the rite  
deterred:With care and just observance heAccomplished all, as texts



decree. The rites performed, with brighter fame, Mighty in counsel, home he came. He longed to bring the river down, But found no plan his wish to crown. He pondered long with anxious thought But saw no way to what he sought. Thus thirty thousand years he spent, And then to heaven the monarch went.

Footnotes52:1b 'The Devas and Asuras (Gods and Titans) fought in the east, the south, the west, and the north, and the Devas were defeated by the Asuras in all these directions. They then fought in the north-eastern direction; there the Devas did not sustain defeat. This direction is aparájitá, i. e. unconquerable. Thence one should do work in this direction, and have it done there; for such a one (alone) is able to clear off his debts.' HAUG'S Aitareyaya Bráhmaṇam, Vol. II, p. 33.

The debts here spoken of are a man's religious obligations to the Gods, the Pitaraś or Manes, and men.

52:2b Vishnu.

52:3b 'It appears to me that this mythical story has reference to the volcanic phenomena of nature. Kapil may very possibly be that hidden fiery force which suddenly unprisons itself and bursts forth in volcanic effects. Kapil is, moreover, one of the names of Agni the God of Fire.' GORRESIO.

53:1 Garud was the son of Kaś'yapa and Vinatá.

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CANTO XLIII.: BHAGIRATH.

When Sagar thus had bowed to fate,  
The lords and commons of the state Approved with ready heart and will  
Prince Anś'umān his throne to fill. He ruled, a mighty king,  
unblamed, Sire of Dilípa justly famed. To him, his child and worthy heir,  
The king resigned his kingdom's care, And on Himálaya's pleasant side  
His task austere of penance plied. Bright as a God in clear renown  
He planned to bring pure Gangá down. There on his fruitless hope intent  
Twice sixteen thousand years he spent, And in the grove of hermits stayed  
Till bliss in heaven his rites repaid. Dilípa then, the good and great,  
Soon as he learnt his kinsmen's fate, Bowed down by woe, with troubled mind,  
p. 54

Pondering long no cure could find. 'How can I bring,' the mourner sighed,  
'To cleanse their dust, the heavenly tide? How can I give them rest, and save  
Their spirits with the offered wave?' Long with this thought his bosom skilled  
In holy discipline was filled. A son was born, Bhagirath named,  
Above all men for virtue famed. Dilípa many a rite ordained,  
And thirty thousand seasons reigned. But when no hope the king could see  
His kinsmen from their woe to free, The lord of men, by sickness tried,  
Obeyed the law of fate, and died; He left the kingdom to his son,  
And gained the heaven his deeds had won. The good Bhagirath, royal sage,  
Had no fair son to cheer his age. He, great in glory, pure in will,  
Longing for sons was childless still. Then on one wish, one thought intent,  
Planning the heavenly stream's descent, Leaving his ministers the care  
And burden of his state to bear, Dwelling in far Gokarna

1 he

Engaged in long austerity. With senses checked, with arms upraised, Five  
fires

2 around and o'er him blazed.

Each weary month the hermit passed Breaking but once his awful fast. In  
winter's chill the brook his bed,  
In rain, the clouds to screen his head. Thousands of years he thus  
endured Till Brahmá's favour was assured, And the high Lord of living  
things Looked kindly on his sufferings. With trooping Gods the Sire came  
near The king who plied his task austere: 'Blest Monarch, of a glorious

race,Thy fervent rites have won my grace.Well hast thou wrought thine  
 awful task:Some boon in turn, O Hermit, ask.'  
 Bhagirath, rich in glory's light,  
 The hero with the arm of might,Thus to the Lord of earth and skyRaised  
 suppliant hands and made reply:'If the great God his favour deigns,And my  
 long toil its fruit obtains,Let Sagar's sons receive from meLibations  
 that they long to see.Let Gangá with her holy waveThe ashes of the heroes  
 lave,That so my kinsmen may ascendTo heavenly bliss that ne'er shall  
 end.And give, I pray, O God, a son,Nor let my house be all undone.  
 Sire of the worlds! be this the graceBestowed upon Ikshváku's race.'  
 The Sire, when thus the king had prayed,  
 In sweet kind words his answer made.'High, high thy thought and wishes  
 are,Bhagirath of the mighty car!Ikshváku's line is blest in thee,And as  
 thou prayest it shall be.Gangá, whose waves in Swarga

1b flow,

Is daughter of the Lord of Snow.Win S'iva that his aid be lentTo hold her  
 in her mid descent,For earth alone will never bearThose torrents hurled  
 from upper air;And none may hold her weight but He,The Trident wielding  
 deity.'Thus having said, the Lord supremeAddressed him to the heavenly  
 stream;And then with Gods and Maruts

2b went

To heaven above the firmament.

Footnotes

53:1b Garud.

54:1 A famous and venerated region near the Malabar coast.

54:2 That is four fires and the sun.

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CANTO XLIV.: THE DESCENT OF

GANGÀ.

The Lord of life the skies regained:

The fervent king a year remainedWith arms upraised, refusing restWhile  
 with one toe the earth he pressed,Still as a post, with sleepless eye,The  
 air his food, his roof the sky.Tho year had past. Then Umá's lord,

3b

King of creation, world adored,Thus spoke to great Bhagirath: 'IWell  
 pleased thy wish will gratify,And on my head her waves shall flingThe  
 daughter of the Mountains' King!He stood upon the lofty crest That  
 crowns the Lord of Snow,And bade the river of the Blest Descend on  
 earth below.Himálaya's child, adored of all, The haughty mandate  
 heard,And her proud bosom, at the call, With furious wrath was  
 stirred.Down from her channel in the skies With awful might she  
 spedWith a giant's rush, in a giant's size.

On S'iva's holy head.'He calls me,' in her wrath she cried, 'And all  
 my flood shall sweepAnd whirl him in its whelming tide To hell's  
 profoundest deep.He held the river on his head, And kept her wandering,  
 where,Dense as Himalaya's woods, were spread The tangles of his hair.

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No way to earth she found, ashamed, Though long and sore she  
 strove,Condemned, until her pride were tamed, Amid his locks to  
 rove.There, many lengthening seasons through, The wildered river  
 ran:Bhagirath saw it, and anew His penance dire began.Then S'iva, for  
 the hermit's sake, Bade her long wanderings end,And sinking into  
 Vindu's lake Her weary waves descend.From Gangá, by the God set free,  
 Seven noble rivers came;Hládiní, Pávaní, and she Called Naliní by  
 name:These rolled their lucid waves along

And sought the eastern side.Suchakshu, Sítá fair and strong, And  
 Sindhu's mighty tide--

These to the region of the west With joyful waters sped:The seventh,  
the brightest and the best, Flowed where Bhagíráth led.On S'iva's head  
descending first A rest the torrents found:Then down in all their might  
they burst And roared along the ground.On countless glittering scales  
the beam Of rosy morning flashed,Where flsh and dolphins through the  
stream Fallen and falling dashed.Then bards who chant celestial lays  
And nymphs of heavenly birthFlocked round upon that flow to gaze That  
streamed from sky and earth.The Gods themselves from every sphere,  
Incomparably bright,Borne in their golden cars drew near To see the  
wondrous sight.The cloudless sky was all aflame With the light of a  
hundred sunsWhere'er the shining chariots came That bore those holy  
ones.So flashed the air with crested snakes And fish of every hue  
As when the lightning's glory breaks Through fields of summer blue.And  
white foam-clouds and silver spray Were wildly tossed on high,Like  
swans that urge their homeward way Across the autumn sky.Now ran the  
river calm and clear With current strong and deep:  
Now slowly broadened to a mere,

Or scarcely seemed to creep.Now o'er a length of sandy plain Her  
tranquil course she held:Now rose her waves and sank again, By refluent  
waves repelled.So falling first on S'iva's head,Thence rushing to their  
earthly bed,In ceaseless fall the waters streamed,And pure with holy  
lustre gleamed.Then every spirit, sage, and bard,Condemned to earth by  
sentence hard,Pressed eagerly around the tideThat S'iva's touch had  
sanctified.Then they whom heavenly doom had hurled,Accursed, to this  
lower world,Touched the pure wave, and freed from sinResought the skies  
and entered inAnd all the world was glad, whereonThe glorious water  
flowed and shone,

For sin and stain were banished thenceBy the sweet river's  
influence.First, in a car of heavenly frame,The royal saint of deathless  
name,Bhagíráth, very glorious rode,And after him fair Gangá flowed.God,  
sage, and bard, the chief in placeOf spirits and the Nága race,Nymph,  
giant, fiend, in long arraySped where Bhagíráth led the way;And all the  
hosts the flood that swimFollowed the stream that followed him.Where'er  
the great Bhagíráth led,There ever glorious Gangá fled,The best of  
floods, the rivers' queen,Whose waters wash the wicked clean. It  
chanced that Jahnu, great and good,Engaged with holy offering stood;The  
river spread her waves aroundFlooding his sacrificial ground.The saint in  
anger marked her pride,And at one draught her stream he dried.Then God,  
and sage, and bard, afraid,To noble high-souled Jahnu prayed,And begged  
that he would kindly deemHis own dear child that holy stream.Moved by  
their suit, he soothed their fearsAnd loosed her waters from his  
ears.Hence Gangá through the world is styled

Both Jáhnnavi and Jahnu's child.Then onward still she followed fast,And  
reached the great sea bank at last.Thence deep below her way she madeTo  
end those rites so long delayed.The monarch reached the Ocean's side,And  
still behind him Gangá hied.He sought the depths which open layWhere  
Sagar's sons had dug their way.So leading through earth's nether cavesThe  
river's purifying waves.

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Over his kinsmen's dust the lordHis funeral libation poured.Soon as the  
flood their dust bedewed,Their spirits gained beatitude,And all in  
heavenly bodies dressedRose to the skies' eternal rest.

Then thus to King Bhagíráth said

Brahmá, when, coming at the headOf all his bright celestial train,He saw  
those spirits freed from stain:'Well done! great Prince of men, well  
done!Thy kinsmen bliss and heaven have won.The sons of Sagar mighty-  
souled,Are with the Blest, as Gods, enrolled,

Long as the Ocean's flood shall standUpon the border of the land,So long  
shall Sagar's sons remain,And, godlike, rank in heaven retain.Gangá thine  
eldest child shall be.Called from thy name Bhágíráthí;Named also--for her

waters fellFrom heaven and flow through earth and hell--Tripathagá,  
stream of the skies.Because three paths she glorifies,And, mighty King,  
'tis given thee nowTo free thee and perform thy vow.No longer, happy  
Prince, delayDrink-offerings to thy kin to pay,For this the holiest Sagar  
sighed,But mourned the boon he sought denied.Then Ans'umán, dear Prince!  
althoughNo brighter name the world could show,Strove long the heavenly  
flood to gainTo visit earth, but strove in vain.Nor was she by the sages'  
peer,Blest with all virtues, most austere,Thy sire Dilipa, hither  
brought,Though with fierce prayers the boon he sought.But thou, O King,  
earned success,And won high fame which God will bless.Through thee, O  
victor of thy foes,On earth this heavenly Gangá flows,And thou hast  
gained the meed divine

That waits on virtue such as thine.Now in her ever holy waveThyself, O  
best of heroes, lave:So shalt thou, pure from every sin,The blessed fruit  
of merit win.Now for thy kin who died of yoreThe meet libations duly  
pour.Above the heavens I now ascend:Depart, and bliss thy steps attend.'  
Thus to the mighty king who broke

Hie foemens' might, Lord Brahmá spoke,And with his Gods around him roseTo  
his own heaven of blest repose.The royal sage no more delayed,  
But, the libation duly paid,

Home to his regal city hiedWith water cleansed and purified.There ruled  
he his ancestral state,Best of all men, most fortunate.And all the people  
joyed againIn good Bhagíraṭh's gentle reign.Rich, prosperous, and blest  
were they,And grief and sickness fled away.Thus, Ráma, I at length have  
toldHow Gangá came from heaven of old.Now, for the evening passes swift,I  
wish thee each auspicious gift.

This story of the flood's descentWill give--for' tis most excellent--  
Wealth, purity, fame, length of days,And to the skies its hearers raise.'

Footnotes

54:1b Heaven.

54:2b Wind-Gods.

54:3b S'iva.

55:1 The lake Vindu does not exist. Of the seven rivers  
here mentioned two only, the Ganges and the Sindhu or  
Indus, are known to geographers. Hládiṇí means the Gladdener, Pávaní the  
Purifier, Naliní the Lotus-Clad, and Suchakshu the Fair-eyed.

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CANTO XLV.: THE QUEST OF THE  
AMRIT.

High and more high their wonder rose

As the strange story reached its close,And thus, with Lakshman, Ráma,  
bestOf Raghu's sons, the saint addressed:'Most wondrous is the tale which  
thouHast told of heavenly Gangá, howFrom realms above descending  
sheFlowed through the land and filled the sea.In thinking o'er what thou  
hast saidThe night has like a moment fled,Whose hours in musing have been  
spentUpon thy words most excellent:So much, O holy Sage, thy loreHas  
charmed us with this tale of yore.'

Day dawned. The morning rites were done

And the victorious Raghu's sonAddressed the sage in words like these,Rich  
in his long austerities:'The night is past: the morn is clear;Told is the  
tale so good to hear:Now o'er that river let us go,Three-pathed, the best  
of all that flow.

This boat stands ready on the shoreTo bear the holy hermits o'er,Who of  
thy coming warned, in haste,The barge upon the bank have placed.'

And Kas'ik's son approved his speech,

And moving to the sandy beach,Placed in the boat the hermit band,And  
reached the river's further strand.On the north bank their feet they  
set,And greeted all the (illegible) they met.On Gangá's shore they

lighted down, And saw Vis'ada's lovely town. Thither, the princes by his side,  
The best of holy hermits hied. It was a town exceeding fair

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That might with heaven itself compare. Then, suppliant palm to palm applied,  
Famed Ráma asked his holy guide: 'O best of hermits, say what race  
Of monarchs rules this lovely place. Dear master, let my prayer prevail,  
For much I long to hear the tale.' Moved by his words, the saintly man  
Vis'álá's ancient tale began: 'List, Rama, list, with closest heed  
The tale of Indra's wondrous deed, And mark me as I truly tell  
What here in ancient days befell. Ere Krita's famous Age  
1 had fled.

Strong were the sons of Diti 2 bred;

And Aditi's brave children too Were very mighty, good, and true. The rival  
brothers fierce and bold Were sons of Kas'yap lofty-souled. Of sister  
mothers born, they vied, Brood against brood, in jealous pride. Once, as  
they say, band met with band, And, joined in awful council, planned  
To live, unharmed by age and time, Immortal in their youthful prime. Then this  
was, after due debate, The counsel of the wise and great, To churn with  
might the milky sea

3

The life-bestowing drink to free. This planned, they seized the Serpent  
King, Vásuki, for their churning-string, And Mandar's mountain for their  
pole, And churned with all their heart and soul. As thus, a thousand  
seasons through, This way and that the snake they drew, Biting the rocks,  
each tortured head, A very deadly venom shed. Thence, bursting like a  
mighty flame, A pestilential poison came,

Consuming, as it onward ran, The home of God, and fiend, and man. Then all  
the suppliant Gods in fear To S'ankar

4, mighty lord, drew near.

To Rudra, King of Herds, dismayed, 'Save us, O save us, Lord!' they  
prayed. Then Vishnu, bearing shell, and mace, And discus, showed his  
radiant face, And thus addressed in smiling glee The Trident wielding  
deity: What treasure first the Gods upturn From troubled Ocean, as they  
churn, Should--for thou art the eldest--be Conferred, O best of Gods, on  
thee.

Then come, and for thy birthright's sake,

This venom as thy firstfruits take. 'He spoke, and vanished from their  
sight. When Siva saw their wild affright, And heard his speech by whom is  
borne The mighty bow of bending horn,

1b

The poisoned flood at once he quaffed As 'twere the Amrit's heavenly  
draught. Then from the Gods departing went S'iva, the Lord pre-eminent. The  
host of Gods and Asurs still Kept churning with one heart and will. But  
Mandar's mountain, whirling round. Pierced to the depths below the ground.  
Then Gods and bards in terror flew To him who mighty Madhu slew. 'Help of  
all beings! more than all, The Gods on thee for aid may call. Ward off, O  
mighty-armed! our fate, And bear up Mandar's threatening weight.' Then  
Vishnu, as their need was sore, The semblance of a tortoise wore, And in  
the bed of Ocean lay The mountain on his back to stay. Then he, the soul  
pervading all, Whose locks in radiant tresses fall, One mighty arm extended  
still, And grasped the summit of the hill. So ranged among the Immortals,  
he Joined in the churning of the sea.

A thousand years had reached their close,

When calmly from the ocean rose The gentle sage

2b with staff and can,

Lord of the art of healing man. Then as the waters foamed and boiled. As  
churning still the Immortals toiled, Of winning face and lovely  
frame, Forth sixty million fair ones came. Born of the foam and water,  
these Were aptly named Apsarases.

3bp. 58

Each had her maids. The tongue would fail--  
So vast the throng--to count the tale, But when no God or Titan wooed  
A wife from all that multitude, Refused by all, they gave their love  
In common to the Gods above. Then from the sea still vexed and wild  
Rose Surá,  
1 Varun's maiden child.

A fitting match she sought to find: But Diti's sons her love  
declined. Their kinsmen of the rival brood To the pure maid in honour  
sued. Hence those who loved that nymph so fair The hallowed name of Suras  
bear. And Asurs are the Titan crowd Her gentle claims who disallowed. Then  
from the foamy sea was freed Uchchaih's ravas,

2 the generous steed,

And Kaustubha, of gems the gem, 3

And Soma, Moon God, after them.

At length when many a year had fled,

Up floated, on her lotus bed, A maiden fair and tender-eyed, In the young  
flush of beauty's pride. She shone with pearl and golden sheen, And seals  
of glory stamped her queen. On each round arm glowed many a gem,  
On her smooth brows, a diadem, Rolling in waves beneath her crown The glory  
of her hair flowed down. Pearls on her neck of price untold, The lady shone  
like burnished gold. Queen of the Gods, she leapt to land, A lotus in her  
perfect hand,

And fondly, of the lotus-sprung,

To lotus-bearing Vishnu clung. Her Gods above and men below As Beauty's  
Queen and Fortune know.

1b

Gods, Titans, and the minstrel train Still churned and wrought the  
troubled main. At length the prize so madly sought, The Amrit, to their  
sight was brought. For the rich spoil, 'twixt these and those A fratricidal  
war arose, And, host 'gainst host in battle, set, Aditi's sons and Diti's  
met. United, with the giants' aid, Their fierce attack the Titans made, And  
wildly raged for many a day That universe-astounding fray. When wearied  
arms were faint to strike, And ruin threatened all alike, Vishnu, with  
art's illusive aid, The Amrit from their sight conveyed. That Best of  
Beings smote his foes

Who dared his deathless arm oppose: Yea, Vishnu, all-pervading God, Beneath  
his feet the Titans trod Aditi's race, the sons of light, slew Diti's brood  
in cruel fight. Then town-destroying

2b Indra gained

His empire, and in glory reigned O'er the three worlds with bard and  
sage Rejoicing in his heritage.

Footnotes

57:1 The first or Golden Age.

57:2 Diti and Aditi were wives of Kas'yap, and mothers  
respectively of Titans and Gods.

57:3 One of the seven seas surrounding as many worlds in concentric  
rings.

57:4 S'ankar and Rudra are names of S'iva.

57:1b S'árigín, literally carrying a bow of horn, is a constantly  
recurring name of Vishnu. The Indians also, therefore, knew the art of  
making bows out of the horns  
of antelopes or wild goats, which Homer ascribes to the Trojans of the  
heroic age.' SCHLEGEL.

57:2b Dhanvantari, the physician of the Gods.

57:3b The poet plays upon the word and fancifully

derives it from apsu, the locative case plural of ap,  
water, and rasa, taste.... The word is probably derived from ap, water,  
and sri, to go, and seems to signify inhabitants of the water, nymphs of  
the stream; or, as Goldstücker thinks (Dict. s.v.) these divinities were  
originally personifications of the vapours which are attracted by the sun  
and form into mist or clouds.

58:1 'Surá, the feminine comprehends all sorts of  
intoxicating liquors, many kinds of which the Indians  
from the earliest times distilled and prepared from rice, sugar-cane, the  
palm tree, and various flowers and plants. Nothing is considered more  
disgraceful among orthodox Hindus than drunkenness, and the use of wine  
is forbidden not only to Bráhmans but the two other orders as well.... So  
it clearly appears derogatory to the dignity of the Gods to have received  
a nymph so pernicious, who ought rather to have been made over to the  
Titans. However the etymological fancy has prevailed. The word Sura, a  
God, is derived from the indeclinable Svar heaven.' SCHLEGEL.58:2  
Literally, high-eared, the horse of Indra. Compare  
the production of the horse from the sea by Neptune.  
58:3

'And Kaustubha the best

Of gems that burns with living light Upon Lord Vishnu's breast.'  
Churning of the Ocean.

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CANTO XLVI.: DITI'S HOPE.

But Diti, when her sons were slain,  
Wild with a childless mother's pain.To Kas'yap spake, Marícha's son,Her  
husband: 'O thou glorious one!

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Dead are the children, mine no more,The mighty sons to thee I bore.Long  
fervour's meed, I crave a boyWhose arm may Indra's life destroy.The toil  
and pain my care shall be:To bless my hope depends on thee.Give me a  
mighty son to slayFierce Indra, gracious lord, I pray.'

Then glorious Kas'yap thus replied

To Diti, as she wept and sighed:'Thy prayer is heard, dear saint!

RemainPure from all spot, and thou shalt gainA son whose arm shall take  
the lifeOf Indra in the battle strife.For full a thousand years  
endureFree from all stain, supremely pure;

Then shall thy son and mine appear,Whom the three worlds shall serve with  
fear.'These words the glorious Kas'yap said,Then gently stroked his  
consort's head,Blessed her, and bade a kind adieu,And turned him to his  
rites anew.Soon as her lord had left her side,Her bosom swelled with joy  
and pride.She sought the shade of holy boughs,And there began her awful  
vows.While yet she wrought her rites austere,Indra, unbidden, hastened  
near,With sweet observance tending her,A reverential minister.Wood,  
water, fire, and grass he brought,Sweet roots and woodland fruit he  
sought,And all her wants, the Thousand-eyed,With never-failing care,  
supplied,With tender love and soft caressRemoving pain and weariness.

When, of the thousand years ordained,

Ten only unfulfilled remained,Thus to her son, the Thousand-eyed,The  
Goddess in her triumph cried:'Best of the mighty! there remainBut ten  
short years of toil and pain;These years of penance soon will flee,And a  
new brother thou shalt see.

Him for thy sake I'll nobly breed,And lust of war his soul shall  
feed;Then free from care and sorrow thouShalt see the worlds before him  
bow.'

1

Footnotes

58:1b 'That this story of the birth of Lakshmi is of  
considerable antiquity is evident from one of her names

\*Kshirábdhi-tanayá, daughter of the Milky Sea, which is found in  
Amarasinha the most ancient of Indian lexicographers. The similarity to  
the Greek myth of Venus being born from the foam of the sea is  
remarkable.'

'In this description of Lakshmi one thing only offends

me, that she is said to have four arms. Each of Vishnu's arms, single, as far as the elbow, there branches into two; but Lakshmi in all the brass seals that I possess or remember to have seen has two arms only. Nor does this deformity of redundant limbs suit the pattern of perfect beauty.' SCHLEGEL. I have omitted the offensive epithet.

58:2b Purandhar, a common title of Indra.Next: Canto XLVII.:

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CANTO XLVII.: SUMATÍ.

Thus to Lord Indra, Thousand-eyed,

Softly beseeching Diti sighed.

When but a blighted bud was left,

Which Indra's hand in seven had cleft: 1b

'No fault, O Lord of Gods, is thine;The blame herein is only mine.But for one grace I fain would pray,As thou hast reft this hope away.This bud, O Indra, which a blightHas withered ere it saw the light--From this may seven fair spirits riseTo rule the regions of the skies.Be theirs through heaven's unbounded spaceOn shoulders of the winds to race,My children, drest in heavenly forms,Far-famed as Maruts, Gods of storms.One God to Brahmá's sphere assign,Let one, O Indra, watch o'er thine;And ranging through the lower air,The third the name of Vayu

2b bear.

Gods let the four remaining be,And roam through space, obeying thee.'The Town-destroyer, Thousand-eyed,

Who smote fierce Bali till he died,Joined suppliant hands, and thus replied:'Thy children heavenly forms shall wear;The names devised by thee shall bear,And, Maruts called by my decree,Shall Amrit drink and wait on me.From fear and age and sickness freed.Through the three worlds their wings shall speed.'Thus in the hermits' holy shadeMother and son their compact made,And then, as fame relates, content,Home to the happy skies they went.This is the spot--so men have told--Where Lord Mahendra

3b dwelt of old,

This is the blessed region whereHis votaress mother claimed his care.Here gentle Alambúshá bareTo old Ikshváku, king and sage,Vis'álá, glory of his age,By whom, a monarch void of guilt,Was this fair town Vis'álá built.

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His son was Hemachandra, stillRenowned for might and warlike skill.From him the great Suchandra came;His son, Dhúmrás'va, dear to fame.Next followed royal Srinjay; then

Famed Sahadeva, lord of men.Next came Kus'ás'va, good and mild,Whose son was Somadatta styled,And Sumati, his heir, the peerOf Gods above, now governs here.And ever through Ikshváku's grace,Vis'álá's kings, his noble race,Are lofty-souled, and blest with lengthOf days, with virtue, and with strength.This night, O prince, we here will sleep;And when the day begins to peep,Our onward way will take with thee,The king of Mithilá to see.'

Then Sumati, the king, aware

Of Vis'vámitra's advent thereCame quickly forth with (illegible) meetThe lofty-minded sage to greet.Girt with his priest and lords the kingDid low obeisance, worshipping.With suppliant hands, with head inclined,Thus spoke he after question kind;'Since thou hast deigned to bless my sight,And grace awhile thy servant's seat,High fate is mine, great Anchorite,And none may with my bliss compete.'Footnotes

59:1 A few verses are here left untranslated on account of the subject and language being offensive to modern taste.

59:1b 'In this myth of Indra destroying the unborn fruit of Diti with his thunderbolt, from which afterwards

came the Maruts or Gods of Wind and Storm, geological phenomena are, it seems, represented under mythical images. In the great Mother of the Gods is, perhaps, figured the dry earth: Indra the God of thunder rends it



open, and there issue from its rent bosom the Maruts or exhalations of the earth. But such ancient myths are difficult to interpret with absolute certainty.' GORRESIO.

59:2b Wind.

59:3b Indra, with mahá, great, prefixed.

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CANTO XLVIII.: INDRA AND AHALYÁ

When mutual courtesies had past,

Vis'álá's ruler spoke at last: 'These princely youths, O Sage, who vie  
In might with children of the sky, Heroic, born for happy fate, With  
elephants' or lions' gait, Bold as the tiger or the bull, With lotus eyes  
so large and full, Armed with the quiver, sword, and bow, Whose figures  
like the As'vins

1 show,

Like children of the deathless Powers, Come freely to these shades of  
ours,

2--

How have they reached on foot this place? What do they seek, and what  
their race? As sun and moon adorn the sky, This spot the heroes  
glorify. Alike in stature, port, and mien, The same fair form in each is  
seen, '

He spoke; and at the monarch's call

The best of hermits told him all,

How in the grove with him they dwelt, And slaughter to the demons dealt.

Then wonder filled the monarch's breast, Who tended well each royal

guest. Thus entertained, the princely pair Remained that night and rested

there, And with the morn's returning ray To Mithilá pursued their way.

When Janak's lovely city first

Upon their sight, yet distant, burst, The hermits all with joyful

cries Hailed the fair town that met their eyes. Then Ráma saw a holy

wood, Close, in the city's neighbourhood, O'ergrown, deserted, marked by

age, And thus addressed the mighty sage: 'O reverend lord. I long to

know What hermit dwelt here long ago.' Then to the prince his holy

guide, Most eloquent of men, replied: 'O Ráma, listen while I tell Whose was

this grove, and what befell When in the fury of his rage The high saint

cursed the hermitage. This was the grove--most lovely then--Of Gautam, O

thou best of men, Like heaven itself, most honoured by The Gods who dwell

above the sky. Here with Ahalyá at his side His fervid task the ascetic

plied.

Years fled in thousands. On a day It chanced the saint had gone away, When

Town-destroying Indra came, And saw the beauty of the dame. The sage's form

the God endued, And thus the fair Ahalyá wooed: 'Love, sweet! should brook

no dull delay But snatch the moments when he may.' She knew him in the

saint's disguise, Lord Indra of the Thousand Eyes, But touched by love's

unholy fire, She yielded to the God's desire.

'Now, Lord of Gods!' she whispered, 'flee,

From Gautam save thyself and me.' Trembling with doubt and wild with

dread Lord Indra from the cottage fled; But fleeing in the grove he met The

home-returning anchoret, Whose wrath the Gods and fiends would shun, Such

power his fervent rites had won. Fresh from the lustral flood he came, In

splendour like the burning flame, With fuel for his sacred rites, And

grass, the best of eremites. The Lord of Gods was sad of cheer To see the

mighty saint so near, And when the holy hermit spied In hermit's garb the

Thousand-eyed,

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He knew the whole, his fury broke

Forth on the sinner as he spoke:

Because my form thou hast assumed,

And wrought this folly, thou art doomed, For this my curse to thee shall  
 cling, Henceforth a sad and sexless thing'  
 No empty threat that sentence came,  
 It chilled his soul and marred his frame,  
 His might and godlike vigour fled, And every nerve was cold and dead.  
 Then on his wife his fury burst.  
 And thus the guilty dame he cursed: 'For countless years, disloyal  
 spouse, Devoted to severest vows, Thy bed the ashes, air thy food, Here  
 shalt thou live in solitude. This lonely grove thy home shall be, And not  
 an eye thy form shall see. When Ráma, Das'aratha's child, Shall seek these  
 shades then drear and wild, His coming shall remove thy stain, And make the  
 sinner pure again. Due honour paid to him, thy guest,  
 Shall cleanse thy fond and erring breast, Thee to my side in bliss  
 restore, And give thy proper shape once more.'

1

Thus to his guiltv wife he said, Then far the holy Gautam fled. And on  
 Himálaya's lovely heights Spent the long years in sternest rites.'

\* \* \* \* \*

Footnotes

60:1 The Heavenly Twins.

60:2 Not banished from heaven as the inferior Gods and  
 demigods sometimes were.

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CANTO XLIX.: AHALYÁ FREED.

Then Ráma, following still his guide,  
 Within the grove, with Lakshman, hied. Her vows a wondrous light had  
 lent To that illustrious penitent. He saw the glorious lady, screened From  
 eye of man, and God, and fiend, Like some bright portent which the care Of  
 Brahmá launches through the air, Designed by his illusive art To flash a  
 moment and depart: Or like the flame that leaps on high To sink involved in  
 smoke and die:

Or like the full moon shining through

The wintry mist, then lost to view: Or like the sun's reflection, cast Upon  
 the flood, too bright to last: So was the glorious dame till then Removed  
 from Gods' and mortals' ken, Till--such was Gautam's high decree--Prince  
 Ráma came to set her free.

Then, with great joy that dame to meet, The sons of Raghu clapped her  
 feet;

And she, remembering Gautam's oath, With gentle grace received them  
 both; Then water for their feet she gave, Guest-gift, and all that  
 strangers crave.

The prince, of courteous rule aware,  
 Received, as meet, the lady's care. Then flowers came down in copious  
 rain, And moving to the heavenly strain Of music in the skies that rang. The  
 nymphs and minstrels danced and sang: And all the Gods with one glad  
 voice Praised the great dame, and cried, 'Rejoice! Through fervid rites no  
 more defiled, But with thy husband reconciled.' Gautam, the holy hermit  
 knew--For naught escaped his godlike view--That Ráma lodged beneath that  
 shade, And hasting there his homage paid. He took Ahalyá to his side. From  
 sin and folly purified, And let his new-found consort bear In his  
 austerities a share.

Then Ráma, pride of Raghu's race,  
 Welcomed by Gautam, face to face, Who every highest honour showed, To  
 Mithilá pursued his road. Footnotes

61:1 Kumarila says: 'In the same manner, if it is said  
 that Indra was the seducer of Ahalyá this does not imply  
 that the God Indra committed such a crime, but Indra means the sun, and  
 Ahalyá (from ahan and lí) the night; and as the night is seduced and

ruined by the sun of the morning, therefore is Indra called the paramour of Ahalyá.' MAX MULLER, History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature, p.530  
Next: Canto L.: Janak.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO L.: JANAK.

The sons of Raghu journeyed forth,  
Bending their steps 'twixt east and north.Soon, guided by the sage, they  
found,Enclosed, a sacrificial ground.Then to the best of saints, his  
guide,In admiration Râma cried:  
The high-souled king no toil has spared,  
But nobly for his rite prepared.How many thousand Bráhmans here,From  
every region, far and near,Well read in holy lore, appear!How many tents,  
that sages screen,With wains in hundreds, here are seen!Great Bráhman,  
let us find a placeWhere we may stay and rest a space.'The hermit did as  
Râma prayed,And in a spot his lodging made,

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Far from the crowd, sequestered, clear,With copious water flowing  
near.Then Janak, best of kings, aware  
Of Vis'vâmitra lodging there,With S'atânanda for his guide--The priest on  
whom he most relied.His chaplain void of guile and stain--And others of  
his priestly train,Bearing the gift that greets the guest,To meet him  
with all honour pressed.The saint received with gladsome mindEach honour  
and observance kind:Then of his health he asked the king,And how his  
rites were prospering,Janak, with chaplain and with priest,Addressed the  
hermits, chief and least,Accosting all, in due degree,With proper words  
of courtesy.Then, with his palms together laid,The king his supplication  
made:'Deign, reverend lord, to sit thee downWith these good saints of  
high renown.'Then sate the chief of hermits there,Obedient to the  
monarch's prayer.Chaplain and priest, and king and peer,Sate in their  
order, far or near.Then thus the king began to say:'The Gods have blest  
my rite to-day,And with the sight of thee repaidThe preparations I have  
made.Grateful am I, so highly blest,That thou, of saints the holiest,  
Hast come, O Bráhman, here with allThese hermits to the festival.Twelve  
days, O Bráhman Sage, remain--For so the learned priests ordain--And  
then, O heir of Kus'ik's name,The Gods will come their dues to claim.'  
With looks that testified delight  
Thus spake he to the anchorite,Then with his suppliant hands upraised,He  
asked, as earnestly he gazed:'These princely youths, O Sage, who vieIn  
might with children of the sky,Heroic, born for happy fate,With  
elephants' or lions' gait,Bold as the tiger and the bull,With lotus eyes  
so large and full,Armed with the quiver, sword and bow,Whose figures like  
the As'vins show,Like children of the heavenly Powers,Come freely to  
these shades of ours,--How have they reached on foot this place?What do  
they seek, and what their race?As sun and moon adorn the sky,This spot  
the heroes glorify:Alike in stature, port, and mien,The same fair form in  
each is seen.'

1Thus spoke the monarch, lofty-souled.

The saint, of heart unfathomed, toldHow, sons of Das'aratha,  
theyAccompanied his homeward way,How in the hermitage they dwelt,And  
slaughter to the demons dealt:Their journey till the spot they  
nearedWhence fair Vis'álá's towers appeared:Ahalyá seen and freed from  
taint;Their meeting with her lord the saint;And how they thither came, to  
knowThe virtue of the famous bow.

Thus Vis'vâmitra spoke the whole

To royal Janak, great of soul.And when this wondrous tale was o'er,The  
glorious hermit said no more.

Footnotes

62:1 The preceding sixteen lines have occurred before in  
Canto XLVIII. This Homeric custom of repeating a  
passage of several lines is strange to our poet. This is the only  
instance I remember. The repetition of single lines is common enough.'

CANTO LI.: VIS'VÁMITRA.

Wise Vis'vámitra's tale was done:

Then sainted Gautam's eldest son,Great S'atánanda, far-renowned,Whom long  
austerities had crownedWith glory--as the news he heardThe down upon his  
body stirred,--Filled full of wonder at the sightOf Ráma, felt supreme  
delight.When S'atánanda saw the pairOf youthful princes seated there,He  
turned him to the holy manWho sate at ease, and thus began:'And didst  
thou, mighty Sage, in truthShow clearly to this royal youthMy mother,  
glorious far and wide,Whom penance-rites have sanctified?And did my  
glorious mother--she,Heiress of noble destiny--Serve her great guest with  
woodland store,Whom all should honour evermore?Didst thou the tale to  
Ráma tellOf what in ancient days befell,The sin, the misery, and the  
shameOf guilty God and faithless dame?And, O thou best of hermits, say,  
Did Ráma's healing presence stayHer trial? was the wife restoredAgain to  
him, my sire and lord?Say, Hermit, did that sire of mineReceive her with  
a soul benign,When long austerities in timeHad cleansed her from the  
taint of crime?

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And, son of Kus'ik, let me know,Did my great-minded father showHonour to  
Ráma, and regard,Before he journeyed hitherward?'The hermit with  
attentive earMarked all the questions of the seer:To him for eloquence  
far-famed,His eloquent reply he framed:'Yea, 'twas my care no task to  
shun,And all I had to do was done;As Renuká and Bhrigu's child,The saint  
and dame were reconciled.' When the great sage had thus replied,To Ráma  
S'atánanda cried:'A welcome visit, Prince, is thine,Thou scion of King  
Raghu's line.With him to guide thy way aright,This sage invincible in  
might,This Bráhma sage, most glorious-bright,  
By long austerities has wroughtA wondrous deed, exceeding thought:Thou  
knowest well, O strong of arm,This sure defence from scathe and  
harm.None, Ráma, none is living nowIn all the earth more blest than  
thou,That thou hast won a saint so triedIn fervid rites thy life to  
guide.Now listen, Prince, while I relateHis lofty deeds and wondrous  
fate.He was a monarch pious-souled.His foemen in the dust he rolled;Most  
learned, prompt at duty's claim,His people's good his joy and aim. Of  
old the Lord of Life gave birthTo mighty Kus'a, king of earth.His son was  
Kus'anábha, strong,Friend of the right, the foe of wrong.Gádhi, whose  
fame no time shall dim,Heir of his throne was born to him,And  
Vis'vámitra, Gádhi's heir,Governed the land with kingly care.While years  
unnumbered rolled awayThe monarch reigned with equal sway.At length,  
assembling many a band,He led his warriors round the land--Complete in  
tale, a mighty force,Cars, elephants, and foot, and horse.Through cities,  
groves, and floods he passed,  
O'er lofty hills, through regions vast.He reached Vas'ishtha's pure  
abode,Where trees, and flowers, and creepers glowed,Where troops of  
sylvan creatures fed;Which saints and angels visited.Gods, fauns, and  
bards of heavenly race,And spirits, glorified the place;The deer their  
timid ways forgot,And holy Bráhmans thronged the spot.Bright in their  
souls, like fire, were these,Made pure by long austerities,Bound by the  
rule of vows severe,And each in glory Brahmá's peer.Some fed on water,  
some on air,Some on the leaves that withered there.Roots and wild fruit  
were others' food;All rage was checked, each sense subdued,There  
Bálakhilyas

1 went and came,

Now breathed the prayer, now fed the flame:These, and ascetic bands  
beside,The sweet retirement beautified.Such was Vas'ishtha's blest  
retreat,Like Brahmá's own celestial seat,Which gladdened Vis'vámitra's  
eyes,Peerless for warlike enterprise.

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CANTO LII.: VAS'ISHTHA'S FEAST.

Right glad was Vis'vámitra when

He saw the prince of saintly men.Low at his feet the hero bent,And did obeisance, reverent.   The king was welcomed in, and shownA seat beside the hermit's own,Who offered him, when resting there,Fruit in due course, and woodland fare.And Vis'vámitra, noblest king,Received Vas'ishtha's welcoming,Turned to his host, and prayed him tellThat he and all with him were well.Vas'ishtha to the king repliedThat all was well on every side,That fire, and vows, and pupils throve,And all the trees within the grove.And then the son of Brahmá, bestOf all who pray with voice suppressed,Questioned with pleasant words like theseThe mighty king who sate at ease:'And is it well with thee? I pray;And dost thou win by virtuous swayThy people's love, discharging allThe duties on a king that fall?Are all thy servants fostered well?

Do all obey, and none rebel?Hast thou, destroyer of the foe,No enemies to overthrow?Does fortune, conqueror! still attendThy treasure, host, and every friend!Is it all well? Does happy fateOn sons and children's children wait!'

He spoke. The modest king replied  
That all was prosperous far and wide.

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Thus for awhile the two conversed,As each to each his tale rehearsed,And as the happy moments flew,Their joy and friendship stronger grew.When such discourse had reached an end,Thus spoke the saint most reverendTo royal Vis'vámitra, whileHis features brightened with a smile:'O mighty lord of men. I fainWould banquet thee and all thy trainIn mode that suits thy station high:And do not thou my prayer deny.Let my good lord with favour takeThe offering that I fain would make,And let me honour, ere we part.My royal guest with loving heart.'

Him Vis'vámitra thus addressed:

'Why make, O Saint, this new request?Thy welcome and each gracious wordSufficient honour have conferred.Thou gavest roots and fruit to eat,The treasures of this pure retreat,And water for my mouth and feet;And--boon I prize above the rest--Thy presence has mine eyesight blest.Honoured by thee in every way,To whom all honour all should pay,I now will go. My lord, Good-bye!Regard me with a friendly eye.'

Him speaking thus Vas'ishtha stayed,

And still to share his banquet prayed.The will of Gádhi's son he bent,And won the monarch to consent,Who spoke in answer. 'Let it be,Great Hermit, as it pleases thee.'When, best of those who breathe the prayer,He heard the king his will declare,He called the cow of spotted skin,All spot without, all pure within.'Come, Dapple-skin,' he cried, 'with speed;Hear thou my words and help at need.My heart is set to entertainThis monarch and his mighty train

With sumptuous meal and worthy fare;Be thine the banquet to prepare.Each dainty cute, each goodly dish,Of six-fold taste

1 as each may wish--

All these, O cow of heavenly power,Rain down for me in copious shower:Viands and drink for tooth and lip,To eat, to quaff, to sip--Of these sufficient, and to spare,O plenty-giving cow, prepare.'

Footnotes

63:1 Divine personages of minute size produced from the hair of Brahmá, and probably the origin of

'That small infantry

Warred on by cranes.'

64:1 Sweet, salt, pungent, bitter, acid, and astringent.

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CANTO LIIII.: VIS'VÀMITRA'S REQUEST.

Thus charged, O slayer of thy foes,  
The cow from whom all plenty flows, Obedient to her saintly lord, Viands to  
suit each taste, outpoured. Honey she gave, and roasted grain, Mead sweet  
with flowers, and sugar-cane. Each beverage of flavour rare, And food of  
every sort, were there: Hills of hot rice, and sweetened cakes, And curdled  
milk and soup in lakes. Vast beakers foaming to the brim With sugared drink  
prepared for him, And dainty sweetmeats, deftly made, Before the hermit's  
guests were laid. So well regaled, so nobly fed, The mighty army  
banqueted, And all the train, from chief to least, Delighted in  
Vas'ishtha's feast. Then Vis'vàmitra, royal sage, Surrounded by his  
vassalage, Prince, peer, and counsellor, and all From highest lord to  
lowest thrall, Thus feasted, to Vas'ishtha cried With joy, supremely  
gratified: 'Richh honour I, thus entertained,  
Most honourable lord, have gained: Now hear, before I journey hence, My  
words, O skilled in eloquence. Bought for a hundred thousand kine, Let  
Dapple-skin. O Saint, be mine. A wondrous jewel is thy cow, And gems are  
for the monarch's brow.

1b

To me her rightful lord resign This Dapple-skin thou callest thine.'  
The great Vas'ishtha, thus addressed,  
Arch-hermit of the holy breast, To Vis'vàmitra answer made, The king whom  
all the land obeyed: Not for a hundred thousand, --nay, Not if ten million  
thou wouldst pay, With silver heaps the price to swell, --Will I my cow, O  
Monarch, sell. Unmeet for her is such a fate. That I my friend should  
alienate. As glory with the virtuous, she For ever makes her home with  
me. On her mine offerings which ascend To Gods and spirits all depend: My  
very life is due to her, My guardian, friend, and minister.

p. 65 The feeding of the sacred flame, 1

The dole which living creatures claim. 2

The mighty sacrifice by fire,

Each formula the rites require, 3

And various saving lore beside, Are by her aid, in sooth, supplied. The  
banquet which thy host has shared, Believe it, was by her prepared. In her  
mine only treasures lie, She cheers mine heart and charms mine eye. And  
reasons more could I assign Why Dapple-skin can ne'er be thine.'

The royal sage, his suit denied,

With eloquence more earnest cried: 'Tusked elephants, a goodly train, Each  
with a golden girth and chain. Whose goads with gold well fashioned shine--  
Of these be twice seven thousand thine. And four-horse cars with gold  
made bright, With steeds most beautifully white, Whose bells make music as  
they go, Eight hundred, Saint, will I bestow. Eleven thousand mettled  
steeds From famous lands, of noble breeds--These will I gladly give, O  
thou Devoted to each holy vow. Ten million heifers, fair to view, Whose  
sides are marked with every hue--

These in exchange will I assign; But let thy Dapple-skin be mine. Ask what  
thou wilt, and piles untold Of priceless gems and gleaming gold, O best of  
Bráhmans, shall be thine; But let thy Dapple-skin be mine.'

The great Vas'ishtha, thus addressed.

Made answer to the king's request: 'Ne'er will I give my cow away, My gem,  
my wealth, my life and stay. My worship at the moon's first show, And at  
the full, to her I owe; And sacrifices small and great, Which largess due  
and gifts await. From her alone, their root, O King,  
My rites and holy service spring.

What boots it further words to say? I will not give my cow away Who yields  
me what I ask each day.'

Footnotes

64:1b 'Of old hoards and minerals in the earth, the king is entitled to  
half by reason of his general protection,  
and because he is the lord paramount of the soil.'

65:1 Ghí or clarified butter, 'holy oil,' being one of the essentials of sacrifice.

65:2 A Brahman had five principal duties to discharge every day: study and teaching the Veda, oblations to the manes or spirits of the departed, sacrifice to the Gods, hospitable offerings to men, and a gift of food to all creatures. The last consisted of rice or other grain which the Bráhmaṇ was to offer every day outside his house in the open air. MANU, Book III. 70.' GORRESIO.

65:3 These were certain sacred words of invocation such a sváhá, vashat, etc., pronounced at the time of sacrifice.

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CANTO LIV.: THE BATTLE.

As Saint Vas'ishtha answered so,  
Nor let the cow of plenty go,The monarch, as a last resource,Began to  
drag her off by force.While the king's servants tore awayTheir moaning,  
miserable prey,Sad, sick at heart, and sore distressed,She pondered thus  
within her breast:'Why am I thus forsaken? whyBetrayed by him of soul  
most high.Vas'ishtha, ravished by the handsOf soldiers of the monarch's  
bands?Ah me! what evil have I doneAgainst the lofty-minded one,That he,  
so pious, can exposeThe innocent whose love he knows?'In her sad breast  
as thus she thought,And heaved deep sighs with anguish fraught,With  
wondrous speed away she fled,And back to Saint Vas'ishtha sped.She hurled  
by hundreds to the groundThe menial crew that hemmed her round,And flying  
swifter than the blastBefore the saint herself she cast.There Dapple-skin  
before the saint

Stood moaning forth her sad complaint,And wept and lowed: such tones as  
comeFrom wandering cloud or distant drum.'O son of Brahmá,' thus cried  
she,'Why hast thou thus forsaken me,That the king's men, before thy  
face,Bear off thy servant from her place?'

Then thus the Bráhmaṇ saint replied

To her whose heart with woe was tried,And grieving for his favourite's  
sake.As to a suffering sister spake:'I leave thee not: dismiss the  
thought;Nor, duteous, hast thou failed in aught.This king, o'erweening in  
the prideOf power, has reft thee from my side.Little, I ween, my strength  
could do'Gainst him, a mighty warrior too,Strong, as a soldier born and  
bred,--Great, as a king whom regions dread.See! what a host the conqueror  
leads,With elephants, and cars, and steeds.O'er countless bands his  
pennons fly;So is he mightier far than I,'

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He spoke. Then she, in lowly mood,To that high saint her speech renewed:  
'So judge not they who wisest are:The Brahman's might is mightier far.For  
Brahmans strength from Heaven derive,And warriors bow when Bráhmans  
strive.A boundless power 'tis thine to wield:To such a king thou shouldst  
not yield,Who, very mighty though he be,--So fierce thy strength,--must  
bow to thee.Command me, Saint. Thy power divineHas brought me here and  
made me thine;And I, howe'er the tyrant boast,Will tame his pride and  
slay his host.'Then cried the glorious sage: 'CreateA mighty force the  
foe to mate,'

She lowed, and quickened into life,

Pahlavas,

1 burning for the strife,

King Vis'vámitra's army slewBefore the very leader's view.The monarch in  
excessive ire,His eyes with fury darting fire,Rained every missile on the  
foeTill all the Pahlavas were low.She, seeing all her champions  
slain,Lying by thousands on the plain.Created, by her mere desire,Yavans  
and S'akas, fierce and dire.And all the ground was overspreadWith Yavans  
and with S'akas dread:

A host of warriors bright and strong, And numberless in closest throng: The threads within the lotus stem, So densely packed, might equal them. In gold-hued mail 'gainst war's attacks, Each bore a sword and battle-axe. The royal host, where'er these came, Fell as if burnt with ravening flame. The monarch, famous through the world Again his fearful weapons hurled, That made Kámbojas, 1b Barbars, 2b all, With Yavans, troubled, flee and fall.

Footnotes

66:1 It is well known that the Persians were called Pahlavas by the Indians. The S'akas are nomad tribes inhabiting Central Asia, the Scythes of the Greeks, whom the Persians also, as Herodotus tells us, called S'akas just as the Indians did. Lib. VII 64 ο• γ•ρ Π•ρσαι π•ντας το•ς Σκ•θα•ς, καλ•ουσι Σ•κας. The name Yavana seems to be used rather indefinitely for nations situated beyond Persia to the west.... After the time of Alexander the Great the Indians as well as the Persians called the Greeks also Yavans.' SCHLEGEL. Lassen thinks that the Pahlavas were the same people as the Π•κτιν•ς of Herodotus, and that this non-Indian people, dwelt on the north-west confines of India.

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CANTO LV.: THE HERMITAGE BURNT.

So o'er the field that host lay strewn,  
By Vis'vámitra's darts o'erthrown. Then thus Vas'ishtha charged the  
cow: 'Create with all thy vigour now.'  
Forth sprang Kámbojas, as she lowed;  
Bright as the sun their faces glowed, Forth from her udder Barbars  
poured, -- Soldiers who brandished spear and sword, -- And Yavans with their  
shafts and darts, And S'akas from her hinder parts. And every pore upon her  
fell, And every hair-producing cell, With Mlechchhas  
3b and Kirátas 4b teemed,  
And forth with them Hárítas streamed. And Vis'vámitra's mighty force, Car,  
elephant, and foot, and horse, Fell in a moment's time, subdued By that  
tremendous multitude. The monarch's hundred sons, whose eyes Beheld the  
rout in wild surprise, Armed with all weapons, mad with rage, Rushed  
fiercely on the holy sage. One cry he raised, one glance he shot,  
And all fell scorched upon the spot: Burnt by the sage to ashes, they With  
horse, and foot, and chariot, lay. The monarch mourned, with shame and  
pain, His army lost, his children slain, Like Ocean when his roar is  
hushed, Or some great snake whose fangs are crushed:  
appear that it is the object of this legend to represent  
this miraculous creation as the origin of these tribes, and that nothing  
more may have been intended than that the cow called into existence large  
armies, of the same stock with particular tribes previously existing.}

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Or as in swift eclipse the Sun Dark with the doom he cannot shun: Or a poor  
bird with mangled wing -- So, reft of sons and host, the king. No longer, by  
ambition fired, The pride of war his breast inspired. He gave his empire to  
his son -- Of all he had, the only one: And bade him rule as kings are  
taught. Then straight a hermit-grove he sought. Far to Himálaya's side he  
fled, Which bards and Nágas visited, And, Mahádeva's 1 grace to earn,  
He gave his life to penance stern.

A lengthened season thus passed by, When S'iva's self, the Lord most  
High, Whose banner shows the pictured bull,

2

Appeared, the God most bountiful:



'Why fervent thus in toil and pain?

What brings thee here? what boon to gain? Thy heart's desire, O Monarch,  
speak: I grant the boons which mortals seek. The king, his adoration  
paid, To Mahádeva answer made: 'If thou hast deemed me fit to win Thy  
favour, O thou void of sin, On me, O mighty God, bestow The wondrous  
science of the bow, All mine, complete in every part, With secret spell and  
mystic art. To me be all the arms revealed That Gods, and saints, and  
Titans wield, And every dart that arms the hands Of spirits, fiends and  
minstrel bands. Be mine, O Lord supreme in place, This token of thy  
boundless grace.'

The Lord of Gods then gave consent,  
And to his heavenly mansion went. Triumphant in the arms he held, The  
monarch's breast with glory swelled.

So swells the ocean, when upon His breast the full moon's beams have  
shone. Already in his mind he viewed Vas'ishtha at his feet subdued. He  
sought that hermit's grove, and there launched his dire weapons through  
the air, Till scorched by might that none could stay The hermitage in ashes  
lay. Where'er the inmates saw, aghast, The dart that Vis'vámitra cast, To  
every side they turned and fled In hundreds forth disquieted. Vas'ishtha's  
pupils caught the fear, And every bird and every deer, And fled in wild  
confusion forth

Eastward and westward, south and north,  
And so Vas'ishtha's holy shade A solitary wild was made, Silent awhile, for  
not a sound Disturbed the hush that was around.

Vas'ishtha then, with eager cry,  
Called, 'Fear not, friends, nor seek to fly. This son of Gádhi dies to-  
day, Like hoar-frost in the morning's ray.' Thus having said, the glorious  
sage Spoke to the king in words of rage: 'Because thou hast destroyed this  
grove

Which long in holy quiet throve, By folly urged to senseless crime, Now  
shalt thou die before thy time.'

Footnotes

66:1b See page 13, note 6.

66:2b Barbarians, non-Sanskrit-speaking tribes.

66:3b A comprehensive term for foreign or outcast  
races of different faith and language from the Hindus.

66:4b The Kirátas and Hárítas are savage aborigines of India who occupy  
hills and jungles and are altogether  
different in race and character from the Hindus. Dr. Muir remarks in his  
Sanskrit Texts, Vol. I. p. 488 (second edition

67:1 The Great God, S'iva.

67:2 Nandi, the snow-white bull, the attendant and  
favourite vehicle of Siva. Next: Canto LVI.: Vis'vámitra's Vow. Sacred  
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CANTO LVI.: VIS'VÁMITRA'S VOW.

But Vis'vámitra, at the threat

Of that illustrious anchoret, Cried, as he launched with ready hand A fiery  
weapon, 'Stand, O Stand! 'Vas'ishtha, wild with rage and hate, Raising, as  
'twere the Rod of Fate, His mighty Bráhma wand on high, To Vis'vámitra  
made reply: 'Nay, stand. O Warrior thou, and show What soldier can, 'gainst  
Bráhma foe. O Gádhi's son, thy days are told; Thy pride is tamed, thy dart  
is cold. How shall a warrior's puissance dare With Bráhma's awful strength  
compare? To-day, base Warrior, shall thou feel That God-sent might is more  
than steel.' He raised his Bráhma staff, nor missed The fiery dart that  
near him hissed: And quenched the fearful weapon fell, As flame beneath the  
billow's swell.

Then Gádhi's son in fury threw

Lord Varun's arm and Rudra's too: Indra's fierce bolt that all  
destroys; That which the Lord of Herds employs:

The Human, that which minstrels Keep, The deadly Lure, the endless Sleep: The Yawner, and the dart which charms; Lament and Torture, fearful arms: The Terrible, the dart which dries, The Thunderbolt which quenchless flies, And Fate's dread net, and Brahmá's noose, And that which waits for Varun's use: The dart he loves who wields the bow Pináka, and twin bolts that glow With fury as they flash and fly, The quenchless Liquid and the Dry: The dart of Vengeance, swift to kill: The Goblins' dart, the Curlew's Bill:

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The discus both of Fate and Right, And Vishnu's, of unerring flight: The Wind-God's dart, the Troubler dread, The weapon named the Horse's Head. From his fierce hand two spears were thrown, And the great mace that smashes bone; The dart of spirits of the air, And that which Fate exults to bear; The Trident dart which slaughters foes, And that which hanging skulls compose:

1

These fearful darts in fiery rain He hurled upon the saint again, An awful miracle to view. But as the ceaseless tempest flew, The sage with wand of God-sent power Still swallowed up that fiery shower. Then Gádhi's son, when these had failed, With Brahmá's dart his foe assailed. The Gods, with Indra at their head, And Nágas, quailed disquieted, And saints and minstrels, when they saw The king that awful weapon draw; And the three worlds were filled with dread, And trembled as the missile sped. The saint, with Bráhma wand, empowered By lore divine that dart devoured. Nor could the triple world withdraw Rapt gazes from that sight of awe; For as he swallowed down the dart Of Brahmá, sparks from every part, From finest pore and hair-cell, broke Enveloped in a veil of smoke. The staff he waved was all aglow Like Yáma's sceptre, King below, Or like the lurid fire of Fate Whose rage the worlds will desolate. The hermits, whom that sight had awed, Extolled the saint, with hymn and laud:

'Thy power, O Sage, is ne'er in vain: Now with thy might thy might restrain. Be gracious, Master, and allow The worlds to rest from trouble now; For Vis'vámitra, strong and dread, By thee has been discomfited.'

Then, thus addressed, the saint, well pleased. The fury of his wrath appeased. The king, o'erpowered and ashamed, With many a deep-drawn sigh exclaimed: 'Ah! Warriors' strength is poor and slight; A Bráhma's power is truly might. This Bráhma staff the hermit held The fury of my darts has quelled. This truth within my heart impressed, With senses ruled and tranquil breast My task austere will I begin, And Bráhma hood will strive to win.'

Footnotes

68:1 'The names of many of these weapons which are mythical and partly allegorical have occurred in Canto XXIX. The general signification of the story is clear enough. It is a contest for supremacy between the regal or military order and Bráhma's authority, like one of those struggles which our own Europe saw in the middle ages when without employing warlike weapons the priesthood frequently gained the victory.' SCHLEGEL. For a full account of the early contests between the Bráhmans and the Kshattriyas, see Muir's Original Sanskrit Texts (Second edition) Vol. I. Ch. IV.

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CANTO LVII.: TRIS'ANKU.

Then with his heart consumed with woe, Still brooding on his overthrow By the great saint he had defied, At every breath the monarch sighed. Forth from his home his queen he led, And to a

land far southward fled. There, fruit and roots his only food, He practised  
penance, sense-subdued, And in that solitary spot Four virtuous sons the  
king begot: Havishyand, from the offering named, And Madhushyand, for  
sweetness famed, Maháráth, chariot-borne in fight, And Dridhanetra strong  
of sight.

A thousand years had passed away,  
When Brahmá, Sire whom all obey, Addressed in pleasant words like these Him  
rich in long austerities: 'Thou by the penance, Kus'ik's son, A place 'mid  
royal saints hast won. Pleased with thy constant penance, we This lofty  
rank assign to thee.' Thus spoke the glorious Lord most High  
Father of earth and air and sky, And with the Gods around him spread Home  
to his changeless sphere he sped. But Vis'vámitra scorned the grace, And  
bent in shame his angry face. Burning with rage, o'erwhelmed with  
grief, Thus in his heart exclaimed the chief: 'No fruit, I ween, have I  
secured By strictest penance long endured, If Gods and all the saints  
decree To make but royal saint of me.' Thus pondering, he with sense  
subdued, With sternest zeal his vows renewed.

p. 69

Then reigned a monarch, true of soul, Who kept each sense in firm  
control; Of old Ikshváku's line he came, That glories in Tris'anku's  
1 name.

Within his breast, O Raghu's child, Arose a longing, strong and wild, Great  
offerings to the Gods to pay, And win, alive, to heaven his way. His priest  
Vas'ishtha's aid he sought, And told him of his secret thought. But wise  
Vas'ishtha showed the hope Was far beyond the monarch's scope. Tris'anku  
then, his suit denied,

Far to the southern region hied, To beg Vas'ishtha's sons to aid The mighty  
plan his soul had made. There King Tris'anku, far renowned, Vas'ishtha's  
hundred children found, Each on his fervent vows intent, For mind and fame  
preëminent. To these the famous king applied, Wise children of his holy  
guide. Saluting each in order due. His eyes, for shame, he downward  
threw, And reverent hands together pressed, The glorious company  
addressed: 'I as a humble suppliant seek Succour of you who aid the weak. A  
mighty offering I would pay, But sage Vas'ishtna answered, Nay. Be yours  
permission to accord, And to my rites your help afford. Sons of my guide,  
to each of you With lowly reverence here I sue; To each, intent on penance-  
vow, O Bráhmans, low my head I bow, And pray you each with ready heart In my  
great rite to bear a part, That in the body I may rise And dwell with Gods  
within the skies. Sons of my guide, none else I see Can give what he  
refuses me.

Ikshváku's children still depend Upon their guide most reverend; And you,  
as nearest in degree To him, my deities shall be!'

Footnotes

69:1 'Tris'anku, king of Ayodhyá, was seventh in  
descent from Ikshváku. and Das'aratha holds the thirty-  
fourth place in the same genealogv. See Canto LXX. We are thrown back,  
therefore, to very ancient times, and it occasions some surprise to find  
Vas'ishtha and Vis'vámitra, actors in these occurrences, still alive in  
Ráma's time.'

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CANTO LVIII.: TRIS'ANKU CURSED.

Tris'anku's speech the hundred heard,  
And thus replied, to anger stirred: 'Why foolish King, by him denied, Whose  
truthful lips have never lied, Dost thou transgress his prudent rule, And  
seek, for aid, another school?

1b

Ikshváku's sons have aye relied Most surely on their holy guide: Then how  
dost thou, fond Monarch, dare Transgress the rule his lips declare? 'Thy  
wish is vain,' the saint replied, And bade thee cast the plan aside. Then

how can we, his sons, pretend  
In such a rite our aid to lend?  
O Monarch, of the childish heart,  
Home to thy royal town depart.  
That mighty saint, thy priest and guide,  
At noblest rites may well preside:  
The worlds for sacrifice combined  
A worthier priest could never find.'

Such speech of theirs the monarch heard,

Though rage distorted every word,  
And to the hermits made reply:

'You, like your sire, my suit deny.  
For other aid I turn from you:  
So, rich in penance, Saints, adieu!'

Vas'ishtha's children heard, and guessed

His evil purpose scarce expressed,  
And cried, while rage their bosoms  
burned, 'Be to a vile Chandála

2b turned!'

p. 70

This said, with lofty thoughts inspired,  
Each to his own retreat retired.  
That night Tris'anku underwent

Sad change in shape and lineament.  
Next morn, an outcast swart of hue,  
His dusky cloth he round him drew.  
His hair had fallen from his head,  
And roughness o'er his skin was spread.  
Such wreaths adorned him as are  
found  
To flourish on the funeral ground.  
Each armlet was an iron ring:  
Such was the figure of the king,  
That every counsellor and peer,  
And following townsman, fled in fear.

Alone, unyielding to dismay,  
Though burnt by anguish night and day,  
Great Vis'vámित्रा's side he sought,  
Whose treasures were by penance  
bought.

The hermit with his tender eyes

Looked on Tris'anku's altered guise,  
And grieving at his ruined  
state  
Addressed him thus, compassionate:  
'Great King,' the pious hermit  
said, 'What cause thy steps has hither led,  
Ayodhyá's mighty Sovereign,  
whom  
A curse has plagued with outcast's doom?'  
In vile Chandála's

1 shape, the king

Heard Vis'vámित्रा's questioning,  
And, suppliant palm to palm applied,  
With answering eloquence he cried:  
'My priest and all his sons refused  
To aid the plan on which I mused.  
Failing to win the boon I sought,  
To this condition I was brought.  
I, in the body, Saint, would fain  
A mansion in the skies obtain.  
I planned a hundred rites for this,  
But still was doomed the fruit to miss.  
Pure are my lips from falsehood's stain,  
And pure they ever shall remain,  
--Yea, by a Warrior's faith I swear,  
--Though I be tried with grief and care.  
Unnumbered rites to Heaven I paid,  
With righteous care the sceptre swayed;

And holy priest and high-souled guide  
My modest conduct gratified.  
But, O thou best of hermits, they  
Oppose my wish these rites to pay;  
They one and all refuse consent,  
Nor aid me in my high intent.  
Fate is, I ween, the power supreme,  
Plan's effort but an idle dream,  
Fate whirls our plans, our all away;

Fate is our only hope and stay;

Now deign, O blessed Saint, to aid  
Me, even me by Fate betrayed,  
Who come, a suppliant, sore distressed,  
One grace, O Hermit, to request.  
No other hope or way I see:  
No other refuge waits for me.  
Oh, aid me in my fallen state,  
And human will shall conquer Fate.'

Footnotes

69:1b "It does not appear how Tris'anku, in asking the aid of Vas'ishtha's sons after applying in vain to their father, could be charged with resorting to another s'ákhá (School) in the ordinary sense of that word; as it is not conceivable that the sons should have been of another S'ákhá from the father, whose cause they espouse with so much warmth. The commentator in the Bombay edition explains the word S'ákhántaram as Yájanádiná rakshántaram, 'one who by sacrificing for thee, etc., will be another protector.' Gorresio's Gauda\*? text, which may often be used as a commentary on the older one, has the following paraphrase of the words in

question, ch. 60, 3. Múlam utsrijya\*? kasmát tvam s'ákásv ichhasi lambitum\*?. 'Why, forsaking the root, dost thou desire to hang upon the branches?'" MUIR, Sanskrit Texts, Vol. I., p. 401.

69:2b A Chandála was a man born of the illegal and impure union of a S'údra with a woman of one of the three higher castes.

70:1 The Chandála was regarded as the vilest and most abject of the men sprung from wedlock forbidden by the law (Mānavadharmas'āstra, Lib. X. 12.); a kind of social malediction weighed upon his head and rejected him from human society.' GORRESIO. Next: Canto LIX.: The Sons of Vas'ishtha.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LIX.: THE SONS OF VAS'ISHTHA.

Then Kus'ik's son, by pity warmed,  
Spoke sweetly to the king transformed:'Hail! glory of Ikshváku's line:I know how bright thy virtues shine.Dismiss thy fear, O noblest Chief,For I myself will bring relief.The holiest saints will I inviteTo celebrate thy purposed rite:So shall thy vow, O King, succeed,And from thy cares shalt thou be freed.Thou in the form which now thou hast,Transfigured by the curse they cast,--Yea, in the body, King, shalt flee,Transported, where thou fain wouldst be.O Lord of men, I ween that thouHast heaven within thy hand e'en now,For very wisely hast thou done,And refuge sought with Kus'ik's son.'

Thus having said, the sage addressed  
His sons, of men the holiest,And bade the prudent saints whate'erWas needed for the rite prepare.The pupils he was wont to teachHe summoned next, and spoke this speech:  
'Go bid Vas'ishtha'a sons appear,And all the saints be gathered here.And what they one and all replyWhen summoned by this mandate high,To me with faithful care report,Omit no word and none distort.'

The pupils heard, and prompt obeyed,  
To every side their way they made.Then swift from every quarter spedThe sages in the Vedas read.Back to that saint the envoys came,Whose glory shone like burning flame,And told him in their faithful speechThe answer that they bore from each:'Submissive to thy word, O Seer,The holy men are gathering here.By all was meet obedience shown:Mahodaya  
1b refused alone.

p. 71

And now, O Chief of hermits, hearWhat answer, chilling us with fear,Vas'ishtha's hundred sons returned,Thick-speaking as with rage they burned:'How will the Gods and saints partakeThe offerings that the prince would make,And he a vile and outcast thing,  
His ministrant one born a king?Can we, great Bráhmans, eat his food,And think to win beatitude,By Vis'vámित्रa purified?'Thus sire and sons in scorn replied,And as these bitter words they said,Wild fury made their eyeballs red.

Their answer when the arch-hermit heard,  
His tranquil eyes with rage were blurred;Great fury in his bosom woke,And thus unto the youths he spoke:'Me, blameless me they dare to blame,And disallow the righteous claimMy fierce austerities have earned:To ashes be the sinners turned.Caught in the noose of Fate shall theyTo Yama's kingdom sink to-day.Seven hundred times shall they be bornTo wear the clothes the dead have worn.Dregs of the dregs, too vile to hate.The flesh of dogs their maws shall sate.In hideous form, in loathsome weed,A sad existence each shall lead.Mahodaya too, the fool who fainMy stainless life would try to stain,Stained in the world with long disgraceShall sink into a fowler's place.Rejoicing guiltless blood to spill,  
No pity through his breast shall thrill.Cursed by my wrath for many a day,His wretched life for sin shall pay.'

Thus, girt with hermit, saint, and priest,

Great Vis'vámitra spoke--and ceased.

Footnotes

70:1b This appellation, occurring nowhere else in the poem except as the name of a city, appears twice in this Canto as a name of Vas'ishtha.

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CANTO LX.: TRIS'ANKU'S ASCENSION.

So with ascetic might, in ire,  
He smote the children and the sire. Then Vis'vámitra, far-  
renowned, addressed the saints who gathered round: 'See by my side  
Tris'anku stand, Ikshváku's son, of liberal hand. Most virtuous and gentle,  
he seeks refuge in his woe with me. Now, holy men, with me unite, and order  
so his purposed rite that in the body he may rise and win a mansion in the  
skies.'

They heard his speech with ready ear  
And, every bosom filled with fear of Vis'vámitra, wise and great. Spoke  
each to each in brief debate: 'The breast of Kus'ik's son, we know, with  
furious wrath is quick to glow. Whatever the words he wills to say, we  
must, be very sure, obey. Fierce is our lord as fire, and straight may  
curse us all infuriate. So let us in these rites engage, as ordered by the  
holy sage.

And with our best endeavour strive that King Ikshváku's son, alive, in body  
to the skies may go by his great might who wills it so.'

Then was the rite begun with care:

All requisites and means were there: and glorious Vis'vámitra lent his  
willing aid as president. And all the sacred rites were done by rule and  
use, omitting none, by chaplain-priest, the hymns who knew, in decent form  
and order due. Some time in sacrifice had past, and Vis'vámitra made, at  
last, the solemn offering with the prayer that all the Gods might come and  
share. But the Immortals, one and all, refused to hear the hermit's call.  
Then red with rage his eyeballs blazed:

The sacred ladle high he raised, and cried to King Ikshváku's son: 'Behold  
my power, by penance won: now by the might my merits lend, Ikshváku's  
child, to heaven ascend. In living frame the skies attain, which mortals  
thus can scarcely gain. My vows austere, so long endured,  
have, as I ween, some fruit assured. Upon its virtue, King, rely, and in  
thy body reach the sky.'

His speech had scarcely reached its close

When, as he stood, the sovereign rose, and mounted swiftly to the  
skies before the wondering hermits' eyes'

But Indra, when he saw the king

His blissful regions entering, with all the army of the Blest thus cried  
unto the unbidden guest: 'With thy best speed, Tris'anku, flee: here is no  
home prepared for thee. By thy great master's curse brought low, go,  
falling headlong, earthward go.'

Thus by the Lord of Gods addressed,

Tris'anku fell from fancied rest, and screaming in his swift descent, 'O,  
save me, Hermit?' down he went. And Vis'vámitra heard his cry, and marked  
him falling from the sky, and giving all his passion sway, cried out in  
fury, 'Stay, O stay!'

p. 72 By penance-power and holy lore,

Like him who framed the worlds of yore, seven other saints he fixed on  
high to star with light the southern sky. Girt with his sages forth he  
went, and southward in the firmament new wreathed stars prepared to set in  
many a sparkling coronet. He threatened, blind with rage and hate, another  
Indra to create, or, from his throne the ruler hurled, all Indraless to  
leave the world. Yea, borne away by passion's storm, the sage began new  
Gods to form. But then each Titan, God, and saint, confused with terror,  
sick and faint, to high souled Vis'vámitra hied, and with soft words to

soothe him tried: 'Lord of high destiny, this king, To whom his master's  
curses cling, No heavenly home deserves to gain, Unpurified from curse and  
stain.'

The son of Kus'ik, undeterred,  
The pleading of the Immortals heard, And thus in haughty words  
expressed The changeless purpose of his breast: 'Content ye, Gods: I  
soothly swear Tris'anku to the skies to bear  
Clothed in his body, nor can I My promise cancel or deny. Embodied let the  
king ascend To life in heaven that ne'er shall end. And let these new-made  
stars of mine Firm and secure for ever shine. Let these, my work, remain  
secure Long as the earth and heaven endure. This, all ye Gods, I crave: do  
you Allow the boon for which I sue.' Then all the Gods their answer  
made: 'So be it, Saint, as thou hast prayed. Beyond the sun's diurnal  
way Thy countless stars in heaven shall stay: And 'mid them hung, as one  
divine, Head downward shall Tris'anku shine; And all thy stars shall ever  
fling Their rays attendant on the king.'

1

The mighty saint, with glory crowned, With all the sages compassed  
round, Praised by the Gods, gave full assent, And Gods and sages homeward  
went.

Footnotes 72:1 'The seven ancient rishis or saints, as has been said  
before, were the seven stars of Ursa Major. The seven  
other new saints which are here said to have been created by Vis'vámitra,  
should be seven new southern stars, a sort of new Ursa. Von Schlegel  
thinks that this mythical fiction of new stars created by Vis'vámitra may  
signify that these southern stars, unknown to the Indians as long as they  
remained in the neighbourhood of the Ganges, became known to them at a  
later date when they colonized the southern regions of Indra.' GORRESIO.  
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CANTO LXI: S'UNAHS'EPHA.

Then Vis'vámitra, when the Blest  
Had sought their homes of heavenly rest, Thus, mighty Prince, his counsel  
laid Before the dwellers of the shade: 'The southern land where now we  
are Offers this check our rites to bar:

1b

To other regions let us speed, And ply our tasks from trouble freed. Now  
turn we to the distant west. To Pushkar's

2b wood where hermits rest,

And there to rites austere apply, For not a grove with that can vie.'

The saint, in glory's light arrayed,

In Pushkar's wood his dwelling made, And living there on roots and

fruit Did penance stern and resolute.

The king who filled Ayodhyá's throne,

By Ambarísha's name far known, At that same time, it chanced, began A

sacrificial rite to plan. But Indra took by force away The charger that the  
king would slay.

The victim lost, the Bráhmaṇ sped To Ambarísha's side, and said: 'Gone is  
the steed, O King, and this Is due to thee, in care remiss.

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Such heedless faults will kings destroy Who fail to guard what they  
enjoy. The flaw is desperate: we need The charger, or a man to bleed. Quick!  
bring a man if not the horse, That so the rite may have its course.'

The glory of Ikshváku's line

Made offer of a thousand kine, And sought to buy at lordly price A victim  
for the sacrifice. To many a distant land he drove, To many a people, town,  
and grove, And holy shades where hermits rest, Pursuing still his eager  
quest. At length on Bhṛigu's sacred height The saint Richika met his  
sight Sitting beneath the holy boughs. His children near him, and his  
spouse.

The mighty lord drew near, assayed  
 To win his grace, and reverence paid;  
 And then the sainted king addressed  
 The Bráhmaṇ saint with this  
 request: 'Bought with a hundred thousand kine,  
 Give me, O Sage, a son of  
 thine To be a victim in the rite,  
 And thanks the favour shall requite.  
 For I have roamed all countries round,  
 Nor sacrificial victim found.  
 Then, gentle Hermit, deign to spare  
 One child amid the number there.'

Then to the monarch's speech replied

The hermit, penance-glorified: 'For countless kine, for hills of gold,  
 Mine eldest son shall ne'er be sold.' But, when she heard the saint's reply,  
 The children's mother, standing nigh,  
 Words such as these in answer said  
 To Ambarisha, monarch dread: 'My lord, the saint, has spoken well:  
 His eldest child he will not sell.  
 And know, great Monarch, that above  
 Tht rest my youngest born I love.  
 'Tis ever thus: the father's joy  
 Is centred in his eldest boy.  
 The mother loves her darling best  
 Whom last she reeked upon her breast:  
 My youngest I will ne'er forsake.'  
 As thus the sire and mother spake,

Young S'unahs'epha, of the three  
 The midmost, cried unurged and free: 'My  
 sire withholds his eldest son,  
 My mother keeps her youngest one:  
 Then take me with thee, King: I ween  
 The son is sold who comes between.'  
 The king with joy his home resought,  
 And took the prize his kine had bought.  
 He bade the youth his car ascend,  
 And hastened back the rites to end.

1

Footnotes

72:1b 'This cannot refer to the events just related: for

Vis'vámitra was successful in the sacrifice performed

for Tris'anku. And yet no other impediment is mentioned. Still his  
 restless mind would not allow him to remain longer in the same spot. So  
 the character of Vis'vámitra is ingeniously and skilfully shadowed forth:  
 as he had been formerly a most warlike king, loving battle and glory,  
 bold, active, sometimes unjust, and more frequently magnanimous, such  
 also he always shows himself in his character of anchorite and ascetic.'

SCHLEGEL. 72:2b Near the modern city of Ajmere. The place is  
 sacred still, and the name is preserved in the Hindí.

Lassen, however, says that this Pushkala or Pushkara,

called by the Grecian writers Πευκελ••τις, the earliest

place of pilgrimage mentioned by name, is not to be confounded with the  
 modern Pushkara in Ajmere.

73:1 Ambarisha is the twenty-ninth in descent from

Ikshváku, and is therefore separated by an immense

space of time from Tris'anku in whose story Vis'vámitra had played so  
 important a part. Yet Richíka, who is represented as having young sons  
 while Ambarisha was yet reigning, being himself the son of Bhrigu and to  
 be numbered with the most ancient sages, is said to have married the  
 younger sister of Vis'vámitra. But I need not again remark that there is  
 a perpetual anachronism in Indian mythology.' SCHLEGEL.

'In the mythical story related in this and the following

Canto we may discover, I think, some indication of the epoch at which the  
 immolation of lower animals was substituted for human sacrifice....

So when Iphigenia was about to be sacrificed at Aulis,  
 one legend tells us that a hind was substituted for the virgin.'

GORRESIO.

So the ram caught in the thicket took the place of Isaac, or, as the  
 Musalmáns say, of Ishmael.

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CANTO LXII.: AMBARESHA'S

SACRIFICE.

As thus the king that youth conveyed,

His weary steeds at length he stayed  
 At height of noon their rest to  
 take Upon the bank of Pushkar's lake.  
 There while the king enjoyed



reposeThe captive S'unahs'epha rose,And hasting to the water's sideHis  
uncle Visvámitra spied,With many a hermit 'neath the treesEngaged in  
stern austerities.

Distracted with the toil and thirst,  
With woeful mien, away he burst,Swift to the hermit's breast he flew,And  
weeping thus began to sue:'No sire have I, no mother dear,No kith or kin  
my heart to cheer:As justice bids, O Hermit, deignTo save me from the  
threatened pain.O thou to whom the wretched flee,And find a saviour,  
Saint, in thee,Now let the king obtain his will,And me my length of days  
fulfil,

That rites austere I too may share,May rise to heaven and rest me  
there.With tender soul and gentle browBe guardian of the orphan thou,And  
as a father pities, soPreserve me from my fear and woe.'

When Vís vámitra, glorious saint,  
Had heard the boy's heart-rending plaint.He soothed his grief, his tears  
he dried,

p. 74

Then called his sons to him, and cried:'The time is come for you to  
showThe duty and the aid bestowFor which, regarding future life,A man  
gives children to his wife.This hermit's son, whom here you seeA  
suppliant, refuge seeks with me.O sons, the friendless youth  
befriend,And, pleasing me, his life defend.For holy works you all have  
wrought,True to the virtuous life I taught.Go, and as victims doomed to  
bleed,Die, and Lord Agni's hunger feed,So shall the rite completed  
end,This orphan gain a saving friend,Due offerings to the Gods be paid,  
And your own father's voice obeyed.'

Then Madhushyand and all the rest  
Answered their sire with scorn and jest:'What! aid to others' sons  
afford,And leave thine own to die, my lord!To us it seems a horrid  
deed,As 'twere on one's own flesh to feed.'

The hermit heard his sons' reply,  
And burning rage inflamed his eye.Then forth his words of fury  
burst:'Audacious speech, by virtue cursed!It lifts on end each shuddering  
hair--My charge to scorn! my wrath to dare!You, like Vas'ishtha's evil  
brood,Shall make the flesh of dogs your foodA thousand years in many a  
birth,And punished thus shall dwell on earth.'

Thus on his sons his curse he laid.

Then calmed again that youth dismayed,And blessed him with his saving  
aid;'When in the sacred fetters bound,And with a purple garland  
crowned,At Vishnu's post thou standest tied,With lauds be Agni  
glorified.And these two hymns of holy praiseForget not, Hermit's son, to  
raise

In the king's rite, and thou shalt beLord of thy wish, preserved, and  
free.'

He learnt the hymns with mind intent,

And from the hermit's presence went.To Ambarísha thus he spake:'Let us  
our onward journey take.Haste to thy home, O King, nor stayThe lustral  
rites with slow delay.'

The boy's address the monarch cheered,

And soon the sacred ground he neared.The convocation's high  
decreeDeclared the youth from blemish free;Clothed in red raiment he was  
tiedA victim at the pillar's side.There bound, the Fire-God's hymn he  
raised,And Indra and Upendra praised.Thousand-eyed Vishnu, pleased to  
hearThe mystic laud, inclined his ear,And won by worship, swift to  
save,Long life to S'unahs'epha gave.The King in bounteous measure  
gainedThe fruit of sacrifice ordained,By grace of Him who rules the  
skies,Lord Indra of the thousand eyes.

And Vis'vámitra evermore.Pursued his task on Pushkar's shore  
Until a thousand years had pastIn fierce austerity and fast.

Next: Canto LXIII.: Menaká.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LXIII.: MENAKÁ.

A thousand years had thus flown by  
When all the Gods within the sky, Eager that he the fruit might gain  
Of fervent rite and holy pain, Approached the great ascetic, now Bathed  
After toil and ended vow. Then Brahmá speaking for the rest With sweetest words  
The sage addressed: 'Hail, Saint! This high and holy name Thy rites have  
won, thy merits claim.'  
Thus spoke the Lord whom Gods revere.  
And sought again his heavenly sphere. But Vis'vámitra, more intent, His  
mind to sterner penance bent.  
So many a season rolled away,  
When Menaká, fair nymph, one day Came down from Paradise to lave  
Her perfect limbs in Pushkar's wave, The glorious son of Kus'ik saw  
That peerless shape without a flaw Flash through the flood's translucent  
shroud Like lightning gleaming through a cloud.  
He saw her in that lone retreat, Most beautiful from head to feet, And by  
Kandarpas  
I might subdued  
He thus addressed her as he viewed: 'Welcome, sweet nymph! O deign, I  
pray, In these calm shades awhile to stay. To me some gracious favour  
show, For love has set my breast aglow.'  
He spoke. The fairest of the fair  
Made for awhile her dwelling there, While day by day the wild  
delight Stayed vow austere and fervent rite There as the winsome charmer  
wove Her spells around him in the grove, And bound him in a golden  
chain, Five sweet years fled, and five again. Then Vis'vámitra woke to  
shame, And, fraught with anguish, memory came For quick he knew, with anger  
fired, That all the Immortals had conspired  
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To lap his careless soul in ease, And mar his long austerities. 'Ten years  
have past, each day and night Unheeded in delusive flight. So long my  
fervent rites were stayed,  
While thus I lay by love betrayed. 'As thus long sighs the hermit  
heaved, And, touched with deep repentance, grieved, He saw the fair one  
standing nigh With suppliant hands and trembling eye. With gentle words he  
bade her go, Then sought the northern hills of snow. With firm resolve he  
vowed to beat The might of love beneath his feet. Still northward to the  
distant side Of Kaus'ikí,  
I the hermit hide,  
And gave his life to penance there With rites austere most hard to bear. A  
thousand years went by, and still He laboured on the northern hill With  
pains so terrible and drear That all the Gods were chilled with fear, And  
Gods and saints, for swift advice, Met in the halls of Paradise. 'Let  
Kus'ik's son,' they counselled, be A Mighty saint by just decree. 'His ear  
to hear their counsel lent The Sire of worlds, omnipotent. To him enriched  
by rites severe He spoke in accents sweet to hear: 'Hail, Mighty Saint!  
dear son, all hail! Thy fervour wins, thy toils prevail. Won by thy vows  
and zeal intense I give this high preëminence.'  
He to the General Sire replied,  
Not sad, nor wholly satisfied:  
'When thou, O Brahmá, shalt declare The title, great beyond compare, Of  
Bráhma saint my worthy meed, Hard earned by many a holy deed, Then may I  
deem in sooth I hold Each sense of body well controlled.' Then Brahmá  
cried, 'Not yet, not yet: Toil on awhile O Anchoret!'  
Thus having said to heaven he went,  
The saint, upon his task intent, Began his labours to renew, Which sterner  
yet and fiercer grew. His arms upraised, without a rest, With but one foot  
the earth he pressed; The air his food, the hermit stood Still as a pillar  
hewn from wood. Around him in the summer days Five mighty fires combined to  
blaze. In floods of rain no veil was spread Save clouds, to canopy his

head. In the dank dews both night and day  
Couched in the stream the hermit lay.  
Thus, till a thousand years had fled,  
He plied his task of penance dread.  
Then Vishnu and the Gods with awe  
The labours of the hermit saw,  
And S'akra, in his troubled breast,  
Lord of the skies, his fear confessed.  
And brooded on a plan to spoil  
The merits of the hermit's toil.  
Encompassed by his Gods of Storm  
He summoned Rambhá,  
fair of form, and spoke a speech for woe and weal,  
The saint to mar, the God to heal.

#### Footnotes

74:1 The Indian Cupid.

75:1 'The same as she whose praises Vis'vámित्रा has already sung in Canto XXXV, and whom the poet brings yet alive upon the scene in Canto LXI. Her proper name was Satyavatí (Truthful); the patronymic, Kaus'ikí was preserved by the river into which she is said to have been changed, and is still recognized in the corrupted forms Kus'a and Kus'i. The river flows from the heights of the Himálaya towards the Ganges, bounding on the east the country of Videha (Behar). The name is no doubt half hidden in the Cosoagus of Pliny and the Kossounos of Arrian. But each author has fallen into the same error in his enumeration of these rivers (Condochatem, Erannoboam, Cosoagum, Sonum). The Erannoboas, (Hiranyaváha) and the Sone are not different streams, but well-known names of the same river. Moreover the order is disturbed, in which on the right and left they fall into the Ganges. To be consistent with geography it should be written: Erannoboam sive Sonum, Condochatem (Gandakí), Cosoagum.' SCHLEGEL.

Next: Canto LXIV.: Rambhá. Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous   Next  
CANTO LXIV.: RAMBHÁ.

'A great emprise, O lovely maid,  
To save the Gods, awaits thine aid:  
To bind the son of Kus'ik sure, And  
take his soul with love's sweet lure.'  
Thus orderd by the Thousand-eyed  
The suppliant nymph in fear replied:  
'O Lord of Gods, this mighty sage  
Is very fierce and swift to rage.  
I doubt not, he so dread and stern  
On me his scorching wrath will turn.  
Of this, my lord, am I afraid:  
Have mercy on a timid maid.'  
Her suppliant hands began to shake,  
When thus again Lord Indra spake:  
'O Rambhá, drive thy fears away,  
And as I bid do thou obey.  
In Koíl's form, who takes the heart  
When trees in spring to blossom start,  
I, with Kandarpa for my friend,  
Close to thy side mine aid will lend.

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Do thou thy beauteous splendour arm  
With every grace and winsome charm,  
And from his awful rites seduce  
This Kus'ik's son, the stern recluse.'  
Lord Indra ceased. The nymph obeyed;  
In all her loveliest charms arrayed,  
With winning ways and witching smile  
She sought the hermit to beguile.  
The sweet note of that tuneful bird  
The saint with ravished bosom heard,  
And on his heart a rapture passed  
As on the nymph a look he cast.  
But when he heard the bird prolong  
His sweet incomparable song,  
And saw the nymph with winning smile,  
The hermit's heart perceiv'd the wile.  
And straight he knew the Thousand-eyed  
A plot against his peace had tried.  
Then Kus'ik's son indignant laid  
His curse upon the heavenly maid:  
'Because thou wouldst my soul engage  
Who fight to conquer love and rage,  
Stand, till ten thousand years have flown,  
Ill-fated maid, transformed to stone.  
A Bráhma then, in glory strong,  
Mighty through penance stern and long,  
Shall free thee from thine altered shape;  
Thou from my curse shalt then escape.'  
But when the saint had cursed her so,  
His breast was burnt with fires of woe,  
Grieved that long effort to restrain  
His mighty wrath was all in vain.  
Cursed by the angry sage's power,  
She stood in stone that selfsame hour.  
Kandarpa heard the words he said,  
And quickly from his presence fled.  
His fall beneath his passion's sway  
Had reft the hermit's meed away.  
Unconquered yet his secret foes,  
The humbled saint refused repose: 'No

more shall rage my bosom till, Sealed be my lips, my tongue be still. My  
very breath henceforth I hold Until a thousand years are told: Victorious  
o'er each erring sense, I'll dry my frame with abstinence, Until by penance  
duly done A Bráhmaṇ's rank be bought and won. For countless years, as still  
as death. I taste no food, I draw no breath, And as I toil my frame shall  
stand Unharm'd by time's destroying hand.'

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#### CANTO LXV.: VIS'VÁMITRA'S TRIUMPH

Then from Himálaya's heights of snow,  
The glorious saint prepared to go, And dwelling in the distant east His  
penance and his toil increased. A thousand years his lips he held Closed by  
a vow unparalleled, And other marvels passing thought, Unrivalled in the  
world, he wrought. In all the thousand years his frame Dry as a log of wood  
became. By many a cross and check beset, Rage had not stormed his bosom  
yet. With iron will that naught could bend He plied his labour till the  
end. So when the weary years were o'er, Freed from his vow so stern and  
sore, The hermit, all his penance sped, Sate down to eat his meal of  
bread. Then Indra, clad in Bráhmaṇ guise, Asked him for food with hungry  
eyes. The mighty saint, with steadfast soul, To the false Bráhmaṇ gave the  
whole, And when no scrap for him remained, Fasting and faint, from speech  
refrained. His silent vow he would not break:

No breath he heaved, no word he spake Then as he checked his breath,  
behold! Around his brow thick smoke-clouds rolled And the three worlds, as  
if o'erspread With rav'ning flames, were filled with dread. Then God and  
saint and bard, convened. And Nága lord, and snake, and fiend, Thus to the  
General Father cried, Distracted, sad, and terrified: 'Against the hermit,  
sore assailed, Lure, scathe, and scorn have naught availed, Proof against  
rage and treacherous art He keeps his vow with constant heart. Now if his  
toils assist him naught To gain the boon his soul has sought, He through  
the worlds will ruin send That fixt and moving things shall end, The  
regions now are dark with doom, No friendly ray relieves the gloom. Each  
ocean foams with maddened tide The shrinking hills in fear  
subside. Trembles the earth with feverous throe The wind in fitful tempest  
blows. No cure we see with troubled eyes: And atheist brood on earth may  
rise. The triple world is wild with care, Or spiritless in dull  
despair. Before that saint the sun is dim, His blessed light eclipsed by  
him.

Now ere the saint resolve to bring Destruction on each living thing, Let us  
appease, while yet we may, Him bright as fire, like fire to slay. Yea, as  
the fiery flood of Fate Lays all creation desolate. He o'er the conquered  
Gods may reign: O, grant him what he longs to gain.'

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Then all the Blest, by Brahmá led, Approached the saint and sweetly  
said: 'Hail, Bráhmaṇ Saint! for such thy place: Thy vows austere have won  
our grace. A Bráhmaṇ's rank thy penance stern And ceaseless labour richly  
earn. I with the Gods of Storm decree Long life, O Bráhmaṇ Saint, to  
thee. May peace and joy thy soul possess; Go where thou wilt in happiness.'

Thus by the General Sire addressed,  
Joy and high triumph filled his breast. His head in adoration bowed, Thus  
spoke he to the Immortal crowd: 'If I, ye Gods, have gained at last Both  
length of days and Bráhmaṇ caste, Grant that the high mysterious name, And  
holy Vedas, own my claim,

And that the formula to bless The sacrifice, its lord confess. And let  
Vas'ishtha, who excels In Warriors' art and mystic spells, In love of God  
without a peer. Confirm the boon you promise here.'

With Brahmá's son Vas'ishtha, best

Of those who pray with voice repressed, The Gods by earnest prayer  
prevailed, And thus his new-made friend he hailed: 'Thy title now is sure  
and good To rights of saintly Bráhmaṇhood.' Thus spake the sage. The Gods,

content,Back to their heavenly mansions went.And Vis'vamisra, pious-souled,Among the Bráhmaṇa saints enrolled,On reverend Vas'ishtha pressedThe honours due to holy guest.Successful in his high pursuit,The sage, in penance resolute,Walked in his pilgrim wanderings o'erThe whole broad land from shore to shore.'Twas thus the saint, O Raghu's son,His rank among the Bráhmaṇas won.Best of all hermits, Prince, is he;In him incarnate Penance see.Friend of the right, who shrinks from ill,Heroic powers attend him still.'

The Bráhmaṇa, versed in ancient lore,

Thus closed his tale, and said no more,To S'atánanda Kus'ika's sonCried in delight, Well done! well done!Then Janak, at the tale amazed,Spoke thus with suppliant hands upraised:'High fate is mine, O Sage, I deem,And thanks I owe for bliss supreme,That thou and Raghu's children tooHave come my sacrifice to view.To look on thee with blessed eyesExalts my soul and purifies.Yea, thus to see thee face to faceEnriches me with store of grace.Thy holy labours wrought of old,And mighty penance, fully told,Ráma and I with great delightHave heard, O glorious Anchorite.Unrivalled thine ascetic deeds:Thy might, O Saint, all might exceeds.No thought may scan, no limit boundThe virtues that in thee are found.The story of thy wondrous fateMy thirsty ears can never sate.The hour of evening rites is near:The sun declines in swift career.At early dawn, O Hermit, deignTo let me see thy face again.

Best of ascetics, part in bliss:Do thou thy servant now dismiss.'

The saint approved, and glad and kind

Dismissed the king with joyful mindAround the sage King Janak wentWith priests and kinsmen reverent.Then Vis'vamisra, honoured so,By those high-minded, rose to go,And with the princes took his wayTo seek the lodging where they lay.

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CANTO LXVI.: JANAK'S SPEECH.

With cloudless lustre rose the sun;

The king, his morning worship done,Ordered his heralds to inviteThe princes and the anchorite.With honour, as the laws decree,The monarch entertained the three.Then to the youths and saintly manVidura's lord this speech began:'O blameless Saint, most welcome thou!If I may please thee tell me how.Speak, mighty lord, whom all revere,'Tis thine to order, mine to hear.'

Thus he on mighty thoughts intent;

Then thus the sage most eloquent:'King Dasaratha's sons, this pairOf warriors famous everywhere,Are come that best of bows to seeThat lies a treasure stored by thee.This, mighty Janak, deign to show,That they may look upon the bow,And then, contented, homeward go.'Then royal Janak spoke in turn:'O best of Saints, the story learnWhy this famed bow, a noble prize,

A treasure in my palace lies.A monarch, Devarát by name,Who sixth from ancient Nimi came,Held it as ruler of the land,A pledge in his successive hand.This bow the mighty Rudra bore

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At Dakṣa's 1 sacrifice of yore,

When carnage of the Immortals stainedThe rite that Dakṣa had ordained.Then as the Gods sore wounded fled,Victorious Rudra, mocking, said:'Because, O Gods, ye gave me naughtWhen I my rightful portion sought,Your dearest parts I will not spare,But with my bow your frames will tear.'

The Sons of Heaven, in wild alarm,

Soft flatteries tried his rage to charm.Then Bhava, Lord whom Gods adore,Grew kind and friendly as before,And every torn and mangled limbWas safe and sound restored by him.Thenceforth this bow, the gem of bows,That

freed the God of Gods from foes, Stored by our great forefathers lay  
treasure and a pride for aye.  
Once, as it chanced, I ploughed the ground, When sudden, 'neath the share  
was found An infant springing from the earth, Named Sitá from her secret  
birth.

2

In strength and grace the maiden grew, My cherished daughter, fair to  
view. I vowed her, of no mortal birth, Meet prize for noblest hero's  
worth. In strength and grace the maiden grew, And many a monarch came to  
woo. To all the princely suitors I gave, mighty Saint, the same reply: 'I  
give not thus my daughter, she Prize of heroic worth shall be.

3

To Mithilá the suitors pressed Their power and might to manifest. To all  
who came with hearts aglow I offered S'iva's wondrous bow.  
Not one of all the royal band  
Could raise or take the bow in hand. The suitors' puny might I spurned, And  
back the feeble princes turned. Enraged thereat, the warriors met, With  
force combined my town beset. Stung to the heart with scorn and shame, With  
war and threats they madly came, Besieged my peaceful walls, and long To  
Mithilá did grievous wrong.

There, wasting all, a year they lay, And brought my treasures to  
decay, Filling my soul, O Hermit chief, With bitter woe and hopeless  
grief. At last by long-wrought penance I Won favour with the Gods on  
high, Who with my labours well content A four-fold host to aid me sent. Then  
swift the baffled heroes fled To all the winds discomfited--Wrong-doers,  
with their lords and host, And all their valour's idle boast. This heavenly  
bow, exceeding bright, These youths shall see, O Anchorite. Then if young  
Ráma's hand can string The bow that baffled lord and king, To him I give,  
as I have sworn, My Sitá, not of woman born.'

Footnotes

78:1 'Daksha was one of the ancient Progenitors or  
Prajápatis created by Brahmá. The sacrifice which is  
here spoken of and in which S'ankar or S'iva (called also here Rudra and  
Bhava) smote the Gods because he had not been invited to share the sacred  
oblations with them, seems to refer to the origin of the worship of  
S'iva, to its increase and to the struggle it maintained with other older  
forms of worship.' GORRESIO.

78:2 Sitá means a furrow.

'Great Erectheus swayed, That owed his nurture to the blue-  
eyed maid, But from the teeming furrow took his birth, The mighty  
offspring of the foodful earth.'

Iliad, Book II.

78:3 'The whole story of Sitá, as will be seen in the  
course of the poem has a great analogy with the ancient  
myth of Proserpine.' GORRESIO.

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CANTO LXVII.: THE BREAKING OF THE  
BOW.

Then spoke again the great recluse:

'This mighty bow, O King, produce.' King Janak, at the saint's  
request, This order to his train addressed: 'Let the great bow be hither  
borne, Which flowery wreaths and scents adorn.' Soon as the monarch's words  
were said, His servants to the city sped, Five thousand youths in number,  
all Of manly strength and stature tall, The ponderous eight-wheeled chest  
that held The heavenly bow, with toil propelled. At length they brought  
that iron chest, And thus the godlike king addressed: 'This best of bows, O  
lord, we bring, Respected by each chief and king, And place it for these  
youths to see, If, Sovereign, such thy pleasure be.'

With suppliant palm to palm applied

King Janak to the strangers cried: 'This gem of bows, O Bráhmaṇ Sage, Our race has prized from age to age.

Too strong for those who yet have reigned, Though great in might each nerve they strained.

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Titan and fiend its strength defies, God, spirit, minstrel of the skies. And bard above and snake below Are baffled by this glorious bow. Then how may human prowess hope With such a bow as this to cope? What man with valour's choicest gift This bow can draw, or string, or lift? Yet let the princes, holy Seer, Behold it: it is present here.'

Then spoke the hermit pious-souled:

'Ráma, dear son, the bow behold.' Then Ráma at his word unclosed The chest wherein its might reposed, Thus crying, as he viewed it: 'Lo! I lay mine hand upon the bow: May happy luck my hope attend Its heavenly strength to lift or bend.' 'Good luck be thine,' the hermit cried: 'Assay the task!' the king replied. Then Raghu's son, as if in sport, Before the thousands of the court, The weapon by the middle raised

That all the crowd in wonder gazed. With steady arm the string he drew Till burst the mighty bow in two. As snapped the bow, an awful clang, Loud as the shriek of tempests, rang. The earth, affrighted, shook again As when a hill is rent in twain. Then, senseless at the fearful sound, The people fell upon the ground: None save the king, the princely pair, And the great saint, the shock could bear,

When woke to sense the stricken train,

And Janak's soul was calm again, With suppliant hands and reverent head, These words, most eloquent, he said: 'O Saint, Prince Ráma stands alone: His peerless might he well has shown. A marvel has the hero wrought Beyond belief, surpassing thought. My child, to royal Ráma wed, New glory on our line will shed: And true my promise will remain That hero's worth the bride should gain. Dearer to me than light and life, My Sitá shall be Ráma's wife. If thou, O Bráhmaṇ, leave concede, My counsellors, with eager speed, Borne in their flying cars, to fair

Ayodhyá's town the news shall bear, With courteous message to entreat The king to grace my royal seat. This to the monarch shall they tell, The bride is his who won her well: And his two sons are resting here Protected by the holy seer. So, at his pleasure, let them lead The sovereign to my town with speed.'

The hermit to his prayer inclined

And Janak, lord of virtuous mind, With charges, to Ayodhyá sent His ministers: and forth they went.

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CANTO LXVIII.: THE ENVOYS' SPEECH.

Three nights upon the road they passed

To rest the steeds that bore them fast, And reached Ayodhyá's town at last. Then straight at Das'aratha's call They stood within the royal hall, Where, like a God, inspiring awe, The venerable king they saw. With suppliant palm to palm applied, And all their terror laid aside, They spoke to him upon the throne With modest words, in gentle tone: 'Janak, Videha's king, O Sire, Has sent us hither to inquire The health of thee his friend most dear, Of all thy priests and every peer. Next Kus'ik's son consenting, thus King Janak speaks, dread liege, by us: 'I made a promise and decree That valour's prize my child should be. Kings, worthless found in worth's assay, With mien dejected turned away. Thy sons, by Vis'vámitra led, Unurged, my city visited, And peerless in their might have gained My daughter, as my vow ordained.

Full in a vast assembly's view Thy hero Ráma broke in two The gem of bows, of monstrous size, That came a treasure from the skies. Ordained the prize of hero's might, Sitá my child is his by right. Fain would I keep my promise made, If thou, O King, approve and aid. Come to my town thy son to

see: Bring holy guide and priest with thee. O lord of kings, my suit  
allow, And let me keep my promised vow. So joying for thy children's  
sake Their triumph too shalt thou partake, With Vis'vámitra's high  
consent. 'Such words with friendship eloquent Spoke Janak, fair Videha's  
king, By S'atánanda's counselling.'

The envoys thus the king addressed,  
And mighty joy his heart possessed. To Vámadeva quick he cried, Vas'ishtha,  
and his lords beside: 'Lakshman, and he, my princely hoy Who fills  
Kaus'alyá's soul with joy, By Vis'vámitra guarded well Among the good  
Videhans dwell. p. 80

Their ruler Janak, prompt to own  
The peerless might my child has shown, To him would knit in holy ties His  
daughter, valour's lovely prize. If Janak's plan seem good to you, Come,  
speed we to his city too, Nor let occasion idly by.'

He ceased. There came a glad reply  
From priest and mighty saint and all The councillors who thronged the  
hall. Then cried the king with joyous heart: 'To-morrow let us all depart.'  
That night the envoys entertained  
With honour and all care remained.

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CANTO LXIX.: DAS'ARATHA'S VISIT.

Soon as the shades of night had fled,  
Thus to the wise Sumantra said The happy king, while priest and peer, Each  
in his place, were standing near: 'Let all my treasurers to-day, Set  
foremost in the long array, With gold and precious gems supplied In  
bounteous store, together ride. And send you out a mighty force, Foot,  
chariot, elephant, and horse. Besides, let many a car of state, And noblest  
steeds, my will await. Vas'ishtha, Vámadeva sage, And Márkandeya's reverend  
age, Jáváli, Kas'yap's godlike seed, And wise Kátyáyana, shall lead. Thy  
care, Sumantra, let it be To yoke a chariot now for me, That so we part  
without delay: These envoys hasten me away.'

So fared he forth. That host, with speed,  
Quadruple, as the king decreed, With priests to head the bright  
array, Followed the monarch on his way.

Four days they travelled on the road, And eve Videha's kingdom  
showed. Janak had left his royal seat The venerable king to greet, And,  
noblest, with these words addressed That noblest lord, his happy  
guest: 'Hail, best of kings: a blessed fate Has led thee, Monarch, to my  
state. Thy sons, supreme in high emprise, Will gladden now their father's  
eyes. And high my fate, that hither leads Vas'ishtha, bright with holy  
deeds, Girt with these sages far-renowned, Like Indra with the Gods  
around. Joy! joy! for vanquished are my foes: Joy! for my house in glory  
grows, With Raghu's noblest sons allied, Supreme in strength and valour's  
pride. To-morrow with its early light Will shine on my completed rite. Then,  
sanctioned by the saints and thee, The marriage of thy Ráma see.'

Then Das'aratha, best of those

Whose speech in graceful order flows, With gathered saints on every  
side, Thus to the lord of earth replied: 'A truth is this I long have  
known, A favour is the giver's own.

What thou shalt bid, O good and true, We, as our power permits, will do.'  
That answer of the truthful lord,

With virtuous worth and honour stored, Janak, Videha's noble king, Heard  
gladly, greatly marvelling. With bosoms filled with pleasure met Long-  
parted saint and anchorite, And linked in friendship's tie they spent The  
peaceful night in great content.

Ráma and Lakshman thither sped,

By sainted Vis'vámitra led, And bent in filial love to greet Their father,  
and embraced his feet. The aged king, rejoiced to hear And see again his  
children dear, Honoured by Janak's thoughtful care, With great enjoyment



rested there. King Janak, with attentive heed, Consulted first his daughters' need, And ordered all to speed the rite; Then rested also for the night.

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CANTO LXX.: THE MAIDENS SOUGHT.

Then with the morn's returning sun.

King Janak, when his rites were done, Skilled all the charms of speech to know, Spoke to wise S'atánanda so: 'My brother, lord of glorious fame, My younger, Kus'adhvaj by name, Whose virtuous life has won renown, Has settled in a lovely town, Sánkásyá, decked with grace divine, Whose glories bright as Pushpak's shine, While Ikshumatí rolls her wave Her lofty rampart's foot to lave. Him, holy priest, I long to see: The guardian of my rite is he: That my dear brother may not miss A share of mine expected bliss.'

Thus in the presence of the priest

The royal Janak spoke, and ceased. Then came his henchmen, prompt and brave,

p. 81 To whom his charge the monarch gave.

Soon as they heard his will, in haste With fleetest steeds away they raced, To lead with them that lord of kings, As Indra's call Lord Vishnu brings. Sánkás'yá's walls they duly gained, And audience of the king obtained. To him they told the news they brought Of marvels past and Janak's thought. Soon as the king the story knew From those good envoys swift and true, To Janak's wish he gave assent, And swift to Mithilá he went. He paid to Janak reverence due, And holy S'atánanda too, Then sate him on a glorious seat For kings or Gods celestial meet. Soon as the brothers, noble pair Peerless in might, were seated there, They gave the wise Sudáman, best Of councillors, their high behest: 'Go, noble councillor,' they cried, 'And hither to our presence guide Ikshváku's son, Ayodhyá's lord, Invincible by foeman's sword, With both his sons, each holy seer, And every minister and peer.' Sudáman to the palace flew, And saw the mighty king who threw Splendour on Raghu's splendid race, Then bowed his head with seemly grace: 'O King, whose hand Ayodhyá sways, My lord, whom Mithilá obeys, Yearns with desire, if thou agree, Thee with thy guide and priest to see.' Soon as the councillor had ceased, The king, with saint and peer and priest, Sought, speeding through the palace gate, The hall where Janak held his state. There, with his nobles round him spread, Thus to Videha's lord he said: 'Thou knowest, King, whose aid divine Protects Ikshváku's royal line. In every need, whate'er befall, The saint Vas'ishtha speaks for all. If Vis'vámitra so allow, And all the saints around me now, The sage will speak, at my desire, As order and the truth require.' Soon as the king his lips had stilled. Up rose Vas'ishtha, speaker skilled. And to Videha's lord began In flowing words that holy man: 'From viewless Nature Brahmá rose, No change, no end, no waste he knows. A son had he Maríchi styled, And Kas'yap was Maríchi's child. From him Vivasvat sprang: from him Manu whose fame shall ne'er be dim.

Manu, who life to mortals gave, Begot Ikshváku good and brave. First of Ayodhyá's kings was he, Pride of her famous dynasty. From him the glorious Kukshi sprang, Whose fame through all the regions rang. Rival of Kukshi's ancient fame, His heir, the great Vikukshi, came, His son was Vána, lord of might; His Anaranya, strong to fight. His son was Prithu, glorious name; From him the good Tris'anku came. He left a son renowned afar, Known by the name of Dhundhumár. His son, who drove the mighty car, Was Yuvanás'va, feared in war. He passed away. Him followed then His son Mándhátá, king of men. His son was blest in high emprise, Susandhi, fortunate and wise. Two noble sons had he, to wit Dhruvasandhi and Prasenajit. Bharat was Dhruvasandhi's son, And glorious fame that monarch won. The warrior Asit he begot. Asit had warfare, fierce and hot, With rival

kings in many a spot, Haihayas, Tálajanghas styled, And S'as'ivindus, strong and wild.

Long time he strove, but forced to yield  
Fled from his kingdom and the field.  
With his two wives away he fled  
Where high Himálaya lifts his head,  
And, all his wealth and glory past,  
He paid the dues of Fate at last.  
The wives he left had both conceived--  
So is the ancient tale believed--  
One, of her rival's hopes afraid  
Fell poison in her viands laid.  
It chanced that Chyavan, Bhrigu's child,  
Had wandered to that pathless wild,  
And there Himálaya's lovely height  
Detained him with a strange delight.  
There came the other widowed queen,  
With lotus eyes and beauteous mien,  
Longing a noble son to bear,  
And wooed the saint with earnest prayer.  
When thus Kálindi,

1 fairest dame,

With reverent supplication came,  
To her the holy sage replied: 'Born with  
the poison from thy side, O happy Queen,  
shall spring ere long An infant fortunate and strong.  
Then weep no more, and check thy sighs,  
Sweet lady of the lotus eyes.'  
The queen, who loved her perished lord,  
For meet reply, the saint adored,  
And, of her husband long bereaved,  
She bore a son by him conceived.  
Because her rival mixed the bane

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To render her conception vain, And fruit unripened to destroy,  
Sagar 1 she called her darling boy.

To Sagar Asamanj was heir: Bright Ans'umán his consort bare.  
Ans'umán's son, Dilipa famed, Begot a son Bhagíráth named.  
From him the great Kakutstha rose: From him came Raghu, feared by foes,  
Of him sprang Purushádak bold, Fierce hero of gigantic mould:  
Kalmáshapáda's name he bore, Because his feet were spotted o'er.

2

From him came S'ankan, and from him Sudars'an, fair in face and limb.  
From beautiful Sudars'an came Prince Agnivarna, bright as flame.  
His son was S'ighraga, for speed Unmatched; and Maru was his seed.  
Pras'uæs'ruka was Maru's child; His son was Ambarísha styled.  
Nahush was Ambarísha's heir, The mighty lord of regions fair:  
Nahush begot Yayáti: he, Nábhág of happy destiny.  
Son of Nábhág was Aja: his, The glorious Das'aratha is,  
Whose noble children boast to be Ráma and Lakshman, whom we see.  
Thus do those kings of purest race Their lineage from Ikshváku trace;  
Their hero lives the right maintained, Their lips with falsehood ne'er were stained.  
In Ráma's and in Lakshman's name Thy daughters as their wives I claim,  
So shall in equal bands be tied Each peerless youth with peerless bride.'

Footnotes

81:1 A different lady from the Goddess of the Jumna who bears the same name.

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CANTO LXXI.: JANAK'S PEDIGREE.

Then to the saint supremely wise

King Janak spoke in suppliant guise: 'Deign, Hermit, with attentive ear,  
My race's origin to hear. When kings a daughter's hand bestow, 'Tis right  
their line and fame to show. There was a king whose deeds and worth  
Spread wide his name through heaven and earth,

Nimi, most virtuous e'en from youth,

The best of all who love the truth, His son and heir was Mithi, and His  
Janak, first who ruled this land. He left a son Udávasu, Blest with all  
virtues, good and true. His son was Nandivardhan, dear For pious heart and  
worth sincere. His son Suketu, hero brave, To Devarát, existence gave.  
King Devarát, a royal sage, For virtue, glory of the age, Begot Vrihadratha;  
and he Begot, his worthy heir to be, The splendid hero Mahábir Who long in glory  
governed here.

His son was Sudhriti, a youth Firm in his purpose, brave in sooth, His son was Dhristaketu, blest With pious will and holy breast. The fame of royal saint he won: Haryas'va was his princely son. Haryas'va's son was Maru, who Begot Pratindhak, wise and true. Next Kirtiratha held the throne, His son, for gentle virtues known. Then followed Devamidha, then Vibudh, Mahándhrak, kings of men. Mahándhrak's son, of boundless might, Was Kirtirát, who loved the right. He passed away, a sainted king, And Maháromá following To Swarnaromá left the state. Then Hras'varomá, good and great, Succeeded, and to him a pair Of sons his royal consort bare, Elder of these I boast to be: Brave Kus'adhwa-j is next to me.

1b

Me then, the elder of the twain, My sire anointed here to reign. He bade me tend my brother well, Then to the forest went to dwell. He sought the heavens, and I sustained The burden as by law ordained, And noble

Kus'adhwa-j, the peer

Of Gods, I ever held most dear. Then came Sánkás'yá's mighty lord, Sudhanvá, threatening siege and sword, And bade me swift on him bestow S'iva's incomparable bow,

p. 83

And Sítá of the lotus eyes: But I refused each peerless prize. Then, host to host, we met the foes, And fierce the din of battle rose, Sudhanvá, foremost of his band, Fell smitten by my single hand. When thus Sánkás'yá's lord was slain, I sanctified, as laws ordain, My brother in his stead to reign, Thus are we brothers, Saint most high The younger he, the elder I. Now, mighty Sage, my spirit joys To give these maidens to the boys. Let Sítá be to Ráma tied. And Urmilá be Lakshman's bride. First give, O King, the gift of cows, As dowry of each royal spouse, Due offerings to the spirits pay, And solemnize the wedding-day. The moon tonight, O royal Sage, In Maghá's 1 House takes harbourage;

On the third night his rays benign

In second Phálguni 2 will shine:

Be that the day, with prosperous fate, The nuptial rites to celebrate.'

#### Footnotes

82:1 This is another fanciful derivation, Sa--with, and gara--poison.

82:2 Purushá-dak means a cannibal. First called Kalmáshapáda on account of his spotted feet he is said

to have been turned into a cannibal for killing the son of Vas'ishtha.

82:1b 'In the setting forth of these royal genealogies the

Bengal recension varies but slightly from the Northern.

The first six names of the genealogy of the Kings of Ayodhyá are partly theogonical and partly cosmogonical; the other names are no doubt in accordance with tradition and deserve the same amount of credence as the ancient traditional genealogies of other nations.' GORRESIO. Next: Canto LXXII.: The Gift of Kine. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next CANTO LXXII.: THE GIFT OF KINE.

When royal Janak's words were done,

Joined with Vas'ishtha Kus'ik's son, The mighty sage began his speech: 'No mind may soar, no thought can reach The glories of Ikshváku's line, Or, great Videha's King, of thine: None in the whole wide world may vie With them in fame and honours high. Well matched, I ween, in holy bands, These peerless pairs will join their hands. But hear me as I speak once more; Thy brother, skilled in duty's lore, Has at his home a royal pair Of daughters most divinely fair. I for the hands of these sweet two For Bharat and S'atrughna sue, Both princes of heroic mould, Wise, fair of form, and lofty-souled. All Das'aratha's sons, I ween, Own each young grace of form and mien: Brave as the Gods are they, nor yield To the great Lords the worlds who shield.

By these, good Prince of merits high, Ikshváku's house with thine ally.'

The suit the holy sage preferred,  
With willing ear the monarch heard:Vas'ishtha's lips the counsel  
praised:Then spake the king with hands upraised:'Now blest indeed my race  
I deem,Which your high will, O Saints supreme,With Das'aratha's house  
unitesIn bonds of love and marriage rites.So be it done. My nieces  
twainLet Bharat and S'atrughna gain,And the four youths the selfsame  
dayFour maiden hands in theirs shall lay.No day so lucky may compare,For  
marriage--so the wise declare--With the last day of PhálguniRuled by the  
genial deity.'Then with raised hands in reverence dueTo those arch-saints  
he spoke anew:'I am your pupil, ever true:To me high favour have ye  
shown;Come, sit ye on my royal throne,For Das'aratha rules these  
towersE'en as Ayodhyá now is ours.Do with your own whate'er ye  
choose:Your lordship here will none refuse.'

He spoke, and to Videha's kingThus Das'aratha, answering:

'Boundless your virtues, lords, whose swayThe realms of Mithilá obey.With  
honouring care you entertain.Both holy sage and royal train.Now to my  
house my steps I bend--May blessings still on you at end--Due offerings  
to the shades to pay.'Thus spoke the king, and turned away:To Janak first  
he bade adieu,Then followed fast those holy two.The monarch reached his  
palace whereThe rites were paid with solemn care.When the next sun began  
to shineHe rose and made his gift of kine.A bundled thousand cows  
preparedFor each young prince the Bráhmans shared.Each had her horns  
adorned with gold;And duly was the number told,Four hundred thousand  
perfect tale:Each brought a calf, each filled a pail.And when that  
glorious task was o'er,The monarch with his children four,Showed like the  
Lord of Life divineWhen the worlds' guardians round him shine.

p. 84Footnotes

83:1 The tenth of the lunar asterisms, composed of five  
stars.

83:2 'There are two lunar asterisms of this name, one following the other  
immediately, forming the eleventh  
and twelfth of the lunar mansions.

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CANTO LXXIII.: THE NUPTIALS.

On that same day that saw the king

His gift of kine distributing,The lord of Kekaya's son, by nameYudhájit,  
Bharat's uncle, came,Asked of the monarch's health, and thenAddressed the  
reverend king of men:'The lord of Kekaya's realm by meSends greeting,  
noble King, to thee:Asks if the friends thy prayers would  
blessUninterrupted health possess.Right anxious, mighty King, is heMy  
sister's princely boy to see.For this I sought Ayodhyá fairThe message of  
my sire to bear.There learning, O my liege, that thouWith sons and noble  
kinsmen nowWast resting here, I sought the placeLonging to see my  
nephew's face.'The king with kind observance cheeredHis friend by tender  
ties endeared,And every choicest honour pressedUpon his honourable guest.  
That night with all his children spent,At morn King Das'aratha went,  
Behind Vas'ishtha and the rest,To the fair ground for rites  
addressed.Then when the lucky hour was nighCalled Victory, of omen  
high,Came Ráma, after vow and prayerFor nuptial bliss and fortune  
fair,With the three youths in bright attire,And stood beside his royal  
sire.To Janak then Vas'ishtha sped,And to Videha's monarch said:'O King,  
Ayodhyá's ruler nowHas breathed the prayer and vowed the vow,And with his  
sons expecting standsThe giver of the maidens' hands.The giver and the  
taker bothMust ratify a mutual oath.Perform the part for which we  
wait,And rites of marriage celebrate.'

Skilled in the laws which Scriptures teach,

He answered thus Vas'ishtha's speech:'O Saint, what warder bars the  
gate?Whose bidding can the king await?In one's own house what doubt is  
shown?This kingdom, Sage, is all thine own.E'en now the maidens may he

foundWithin the sacrificial ground:Each vow is vowed and prayed each  
 prayer,And they, like fire, are shining there.  
 Here by the shrine my place I tookExpecting thee with eager look.No bar  
 the nuptial rites should stay:What cause have we for more delay?'When  
 Janak's speech the monarch heardTo sons and saints he gave the word,And  
 set them in the holy ring.Then to Vas'ishtha spoke the kingOf Mithilá: 'O  
 mighty Sage,Now let this task thy care engage,And lend thine aid and  
 counsel wiseThe nuptial rites to solemnize.'  
 The saint Vas'ishtha gave assent,  
 And quickly to the task he went.With Vis'vámitra, nothing both,And  
 S'atánanda aiding both.Then, as the rules prescribe, they madeAn altar in  
 the midst, and laidFresh wreaths of fragrant flowers thereon.The golden  
 ladles round it shone;And many a vase, which branches hidFixed in the  
 perforated lid,And sprays, and cups, and censers thereStood filled with  
 incense rich and rare;Shell-bowls,and spoons, and salvers dressedWith  
 gifts that greet the honoured guest;Piles of parched rice some dishes  
 bore,Others with corn prepared ran o'er;  
 And holy grass was duly spreadIn equal lengths, while prayers were  
 said.Next chief of saints, Vas'ishtha cameAnd laid the offering in the  
 flame.Then by the hand King Janak drewHis Sítá, beautiful to view,And  
 placed her, bright in rich attire,Ráma to face, before the fire,Thus  
 speaking to the royal boyWho filled Kaus'alyá's heart with joy:'Here Sítá  
 stands, my daughter fair,The duties of thy lifeto share.Take from her  
 father, take thy bride,Join hand to hand, and bliss betide!A faithful  
 wife, most blest is she,And as thy shade will follow thee.'  
 Thus as he spoke the monarch threw  
 O'er her young limbs the holy dew,While Gods and saints were heard to  
 swellThe joyous cry, 'Tis well! 'Tis well!His daughter Sítá thus  
 bestowed,O'er whom the sacred drops had flowed.King Janak's heart with  
 rapture glowed.Then to Prince Lakshman thus he cried'. 'Take Urmilá thine  
 offered bride,And clasp her hand within thine ownEre yet the lucky hour  
 be flown.'Then to Prince Bharat thus cried he;  
 'Come, take the hand of Mándavi.'Then to S'atrughna: 'In thy graspThe  
 hand of S'rutakirti clasp.Now, Raghu's sons, may all of youBe gentle to  
 your wives and true;

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Keep well the vows you make to-day,Nor let occasion slip away.'  
 King Janak's word the youths obeyed;  
 The maidens' hands in theirs they laid.Then with their brides the princes  
 wentWith ordered steps and reverentBound both the tire and Janak,  
 roundThe sages and the sacred ground.  
 A flowery flood of lucid dyes  
 In rain descended from the skies,While with celestial voices blent  
 Sweet strains from many an instrument,  
 And the nymphs danced in joyous throng  
 Responsive to the minstrel's song.Such signs of exultation theySaw on the  
 princes' wedding day.  
 Still rang the heavenly music's sound  
 When Raghu's sons thrice circled roundThe fire, each one with reverent  
 head,  
 And homeward then their brides they led.They to the sumptuous palace  
 hiedThat Janak's care had seen supplied.The monarch girt with saint and  
 peerStill fondly gazing followed near.

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CANTO LXXIV.: RÁMA WITH THE AXE. 1

Soon as the night had reached its close  
 The hermit Vis'vámitra rose;To both the kings he bade adieuAnd to the  
 northern hill withdrew.Ayodhyá's lord of high renownReceived farewell,  
 and sought his town.Then as each daughter left her bowerKing Janak gave a

splendid dower, Bugs, precious silks, a warrior force, Cars, elephants, and foot, and horse, Divine to see and well arrayed; And many a skilful tiring-maid, And many a young and trusty slave The father of the ladies gave. Silver and coral, gold and pearls He gave to his beloved girls. These precious gifts the king bestowed And sped his guest upon his road. The lord of Mithilá's sweet town Rode to his court and lighted down.

Ayodhyá's monarch, glad and gay,

Led by the seers pursued his way With his dear sons of lofty mind:

The royal army marched behind. As on he fared the voice he heard Around of many a dismal bird, And every beast in wild affright Began to hurry to the right. The monarch to Vas'ishtha cried: 'What strange misfortune will betide? Why do the beasts in terror fly, And birds of evil omen cry? What is it shakes my heart with dread? Why is my soul disquieted?'

Soon as he heard, the mighty saint

Thus answered Das'aratha's plaint In sweetest tone: 'Now, Monarch, mark, And learn from me the meaning dark. The voices of the birds of air Great peril to the host declare: The moving beasts the dread allay, So drive thy whelming fear away,'

As he and Das'aratha spoke

A tempest from the welkin broke, That shook the spacious earth amain And hurled high trees upon the plain. The sun grew dark with murky cloud, And o'er the skies was cast a shroud, While o'er the army, faint with dread, A veil of dust and ashes spread.

King, princes, saints their sense retained, Fear-stupefied the rest remained. At length, their wits returning, all Beneath the gloom and ashy pall Saw Jamadagni's son with dread, His long hair twisted round his head, Who, sprung from Bhrigu, loved to beat The proudest kings beneath his feet. Firm as Kailása's hill he showed, Fierce as the fire of doom he glowed. His axe upon his shoulder lay, His bow was ready for the fray, With thirsty arrows wont to fly Like Lightnings from the angry sky. A long keen arrow forth he drew, Invincible like those which flew From S'iva's ever-conquering bow And Tripurá in death laid low.

When his wild form, that struck with awe,

Fearful as ravening flame, they saw, Vas'ishtha and the saints whose care Was sacrifice and muttered prayer, Drew close together, each to each, And questioned thus with bated speech: 'Indignant at his father's fate Will he on warriors vent his hate, The slayers of his father slay, And sweep the loathed race away?

But when of old his fury raged Seas of their blood his wrath assuaged:

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So doubtless now he has not planned To slay all warriors in the land.'

Then with a gift the saints drew near

To Bhrigu's son whose look was fear, And Ráma! Ráma! soft they cried. The gift he took, no word replied. Then Bhrigu's son his silence broke And thus to Ráma Ráma spoke:

Footnotes

85:1 This is another Ráma, son of Jamadagni, called

Paras'uráma, or Ráma with the axe, from the weapon

which he carried. He was while he lived the terror of the Warrior caste, and his name recalls long and fierce struggles between the sacerdotal and military order in which the latter suffered severely at the hands of their implacable enemy. Next: Canto LXXV.: The Parle. Sacred Texts

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CANTO LXXV.: THE PARLE.

'Heroic Ráma, men proclaim

The marvels of thy matchless fame, And I from loud-voiced rumour know the exploit of the broken bow, Yea, bent and broken, mighty Chief, A feat most wondrous, past belief. Stirred by thy fame thy face I sought: A peerless bow I too have brought. This mighty weapon, strong and dire, Great Jamadagni owned, my sire. Draw with its shaft my father's bow, And thus thy

might, O Ráma, show. This proof of prowess let me see--The weapon bent and drawn by thee; Then single fight our strength shall try, And this shall raise thy glory high.'

King Das'aratha heard with dread

The boastful speech, and thus he said, Raising his hands in suppliant guise, With pallid cheek and timid eyes: 'Forgetful of the bloody feud Ascetic toils hast thou pursued; Then, Bráhmaṇ, let thy children be Untroubled and from danger free.

Sprung of the race of Bhrigu, who Read holy lore, to vows most true, Thou swearest to the Thousand-eyed And thy fierce axe was cast aside. Thou turnedst to thy rites away Leaving the earth to Ka'yapa's sway, And wentest far a grove to seek Beneath Mahendra's mountain peak.

1

Now, mighty Hermit, art thou here To slay us all with doom severe? For if alone my Ráma fall, We share his fate and perish all.'

As thus the aged sire complained

The mighty chief no answer deigned. To Ráma only thus he cried: 'Two bows, the Heavenly Artist's pride, Celestial, peerless, vast, and strong, By all the worlds were honoured long. One to the Three-eyed God

1b was given,

By glory to the conflict driven, Thus armed fierce Tripura he slew: And then by thee 'twas burst in two. The second bow, which few may brave, The highest Gods to Vishnu gave. This bow I hold; before it fall The foeman's fenced tower and wall. Then prayed the Gods the Sire Most High

By some unerring proof to try Were praise for might Lord Vishnu's due, Or his whose Neck is stained with Blue.

2b

The mighty Sire their wishes knew, And he whose lips are ever true Caused the two Gods to meet as foes. Then fierce the rage of battle rose: Bristled in dread each starting hair As S'iva strove with Vishnu there. But Vishnu raised his voice again. And S'iva's bowstring twanged in vain; Its master of the Three bright Eyes Stood fixt in fury and surprise. Then all the dwellers in the sky, Minstrel, and saint, and God drew nigh, And prayed them that the strife might cease, And the great rivals met in peace. 'Twas seen how S'iva's bow has failed Unnerved, when Vishnu's might assailed, And Gods and heavenly sages thence To Vishnu gave preeminence. Then glorious S'iva in his rage Gave it to Devarát the sage Who ruled Videha's fertile land, To pass it down from hand to hand. But this my bow, whose shafts smite down The foeman's fenced tower and town, To great Richika Vishnu lent To be a pledge and ornament,

Then Jamadagni, Bráhmaṇ dread, My sire, the bow inherited. But Arjun stooped to treachery vile And slew my noble sire by guile, Whose penance awful strength had gained, Whose hand the God-given bow retained.

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I heard indignant how he fell By mournful fate, too sad to tell. My vengeful fury since that time Scourges all Warriors for the crime. As generations spring to life I war them down in endless strife. All earth I brought beneath my sway, And gave it for his meed and pay To holy Ka'yapa, when of yore The rites performed by him were o'er. Then to Mahendra's hill I turned Strong in the strength that penance earned, And toiled upon his lofty head By Gods immortal visited. The breaking of the bow I knew From startled Gods conversing, through The airy regions, of thy deed, And hither came with swiftest speed. Now, for thy Warrior's honour sake, This best of bows, O Ráma, take:

This, owned by Vishnu's self of old, My sire and grandsire loved to hold. Drawn to its head upon the string, One town-destroying arrow bring; If this thou can, O hero, I In single fight thy strength will try.'

Footnotes

86:1 'The author of the Raghuvams' a places the mountain Mahendra in the territory of the king of the

Kalingans, whose palace commanded a view of the ocean. It is well known that the country along the coast to the south of the mouths of the Ganges was the seat of this people. Hence it may be suspected that this Mahendra is what Pliny calls "promontorium Calington". The modern name, Cape Palmyras, from the palmyras Borassus flabelliformis, which abound there agrees remarkably with the description of the poet who speaks of the groves of these trees. Raghuvansa, VI. 51.' SCHLEGEL.

86:1b S'iva

86:2b S'iva. God of the Azure Neck.Next: Canto LXXVI.: Debarred From Heaven.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LXXVI.: DEBARRED FROM

HEAVEN.

The haughty challenge, undeterred

The son of Das'aratha heard,And cried, while reverence for his sire  
Checked the full torrent of his ire:'Before this day have I been  
toldThe deed that stained thy hands of old.But pity bids my soul  
forget:Thy father, murdered, claimed the debt.My strength, O Chief, thou  
deemest slight,Too feeble for a Warrior's might.Now will I show thy  
wondering eyesThe prowess which they dare despise.'

He hastened then with graceful ease

Tbat mighty bow and shaft to seize.His hand the weapon strung and  
swayed:The arrow on the string was laid.Then Jamadagni's son he eyed,And  
thus in words of fury cried:'Thou art a Bráhmaṇ, still to beMost highly  
honoured, Chief, by me.For Visvámitra's sake besideShall reverence due be  
ne'er denied.

Though mine the power, I would not sendA dart at thee thy life to end.But  
thy great power to wander free,Which penance-rites have won for thee,Or  
glorious worlds from thee to wrest,Is the firm purpose of my breast,And  
Vishnu's dart which now I strainCan ne'er be shot to fall in vain:It  
strikes the mighty, and it stunsThe madness of the haughty ones.

Then Gods, and saints and heavenly choir

Preceded by the General Sire,Met in the air and gazed belowOn Ráma with  
that wondrous bow.Nymph, minstrel, angel, all were there,Snake-God, and  
spirit of the air,Giant, and bard, and gryphon, met,Their eyes upon the  
marvel set.In senseless hush the world was chainedWhile Ráma's hand the  
bow retained,And Jamadagni's son amazedAnd powerless on the hero  
gazed.Then when his swelling heart had shrunk,And his proud strength in  
torpor sunk,Scarce his voice ventured, low and weak,To Ráma lotus-eyed,  
to speak:'When long ago I gave awayThe whole broad land to Kas'yap's sway  
He charged me never to remainWithin the limits of his reign.Obedient to  
my guide's behestOn earth by night I never rest.My choice is made. I will  
not dimMine honour and be false to him.So, son of Raghu, leave me  
stillThe power to wander where I will,And swifter than the thought my  
flightShall place me on Mahendra's height.My mansions of eternal joy.By  
penance won, thou mayst destroy.My path to these thy shaft may stay.Now  
to the work! No more delay!I know thee Lord of Gods; I knowThy changeless  
might laid Madhu low.All other hands would surely failTo bend this bow.  
All hail! all hail!See! all the Gods have left the skiesTo bend on thee  
their eager eyes,With whose achievements none compete.Whose arm in war no  
God can meet.No shame is mine. I ween, for thou,Lord of the Worlds, hast  
dimmed my brow.Now, pious Ráma, 'tis thy partTo shoot afar that glorious  
dart:I, when the fatal shaft is shot,Will seek that hill and tarry  
not.'He ceased. The wondrous arrow flew,

And Jamadagni's offspring knewThose glorious worlds to him were  
barred,Once gained by penance long and hard.Then straight the airy  
quarters cleared,And the mid regions bright appeared,While Gods and  
saints unnumbered praisedRáma, the mighty bow who raised.And Jamadagni's  
son, o'erawed.Extolled his name with highest laud,



With reverent steps around him strode, Then hastened on his airy road. Far from the sight of all he fled, And rested on Mahendra's head.

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CANTO LXXVII.: BHARAT'S DEPARTURE.

Then Ráma with a cheerful mind

The bow to Varun's hand resigned. Due reverence to the saints he paid, And thus addressed his sire dismayed: 'As Bhrigu's son is far from view, Now let the host its march pursue, And to Ayodhyá's town proceed In four-fold bands, with thee to lead.'

King Das'aratha thus addressed

His lips to Ráma's forehead pressed, And held him to his aged breast. Rejoiced in sooth was he to know That Bhrigu's son had parted so, And hailed a second life begun For him and his victorious son. He urged the host to speed renewed, And soon Ayodhyá's gates he viewed. High o'er the roofs gay pennons played; Tabour and drum loud music made; Fresh water cooled the royal road, And flowers in bright profusion glowed. Glad crowds with garlands thronged the ways Rejoicing on their king to gaze And all the town was bright and gay

Exalting in the festive day. People and Bráhmans flocked to meet Their monarch ere he gained the street. The glorious king amid the throng Rode with his glorious sons along, And passed within his dear abode That like Himálaya's mountain showed. And there Kausalyá, noble queen, Sumitrá with her lovely mien, Kaikeyí of the dainty waist, And other dames his bowers who graced, Stood in the palace side by side And welcomed home each youthful bride: Fair Sítá, lofty-fated dame, Urmilá of the glorious fame, And Kus'adhwaaja's children fair, With joyous greeting and with prayer, As all in linen robes arrayed With offerings at the altars prayed, Due reverence paid to God above. Each princess gave her soul to love, And hidden in her inmost bower Passed with her lord each blissful hour. The royal youths, of spirit high, With whom in valor none shall vie, Lived each within his palace bounds Bright as Kuvera's pleasure-grounds, With riches, troops of faithful friends, And bliss that wedded life attends:

Brave princes trained in warlike skill, And duteous to their father's will. At length the monarch called one morn Prince Bharat, of Kaikeyí born, And cried: 'My son, within our gates Lord Yudhájit thine uncle waits. The son of Kekaya's king is he, And came, my child, to summon thee.' Then Bharat for the road prepared, And with S'atrughna forth he fared. First to his sire he bade adieu, Brave Ráma, and his mothers too. Lord Yudhájit with joyful pride Went forth, the brothers by his side, And reached the city where he dwelt: And mighty joy his father felt.

Ráma and Lakshman honoured still

Their godlike sire with duteous will. Two constant guides for Ráma stood, His father's wish, the people's good. Attentive to the general weal He thought and wrought to please and heal, His mothers too he strove to please With love and sonly courtesies. At every time, in every spot, His holy guides he ne'er forgot. So for his virtues kind and true Dearer and dearer Ráma grew To Das'aratha, Bráhmans, all In town and country, great and small. And Ráma by his darling's side Saw many a blissful season glide, Lodged in her soul, each thought on her, Lover, and friend, and worshipper. He loved her for his father's voice Had given her and approved the choice: He loved her for each charm she wore And her sweet virtues more and more. So he her lord and second life Dwelt in the bosom of his wife, In double form, that, e'en apart, Each heart could commune free with heart.

Still grew that child of Janak's race,

More goddess-fair in form and face, The loveliest wife that e'er was seen, In mortal mould sweet Beauty's Queen. Then shone the son Kaus'alyá

bore, With this bright dame allied, Like Vishnu whom the Gods adore,  
With Lakshmi by his side.

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BOOK II.

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CANTO I.: THE HEIR APPARENT.

So Bharat to his grandsire went

Obedient to the message sent, And for his fond companion chose S'atrughna  
slayer of his foes.

1

There Bharat for a time remained With love and honour entertained, King  
As 'vapati's constant care, Belovèd as a son and heir. Yet ever, as they  
lived at ease, While all around combined to please The agèd sire they left  
behind Was present to each hero's mind. Nor could the king's fond memory  
stray From his brave children far away, Dear Bharat and S'atrughna  
dear, Each Varun's match or Indra's peer. To all the princes, young and  
brave, His soul with fond affection clave; Around his loving heart they  
clung Like arms from his own body sprung.

2

But best and noblest of the four, Good as the God whom all adore, Lord of  
all virtues, undefiled, His darling was his eldest child.  
For he was beautiful and strong, From envy free, the foe of wrong, With all  
his father's virtues blest, And peerless in the world confessed. With  
placid soul he softly spoke: No harsh reply could taunts provoke. He ever  
loved the good and sage Revered for virtue and for age, And when his  
martial tasks were o'er Sate listening to their peaceful lore. Wise,  
modest, pure, he honoured eld, His lips from lying tales withheld; Due  
reference to the Bráhmans gave, And ruled each passion like a slave. Most  
tender, prompt at duty's call, Loved by all men he loved them all. Proud of  
the duties of his race, With spirit meet for Warrior's place, He strove to  
win by glorious deed, Throned with the Gods, a priceless meed.

With him in speech and quick reply

Vrihaspati might hardly vie, But never would his accents flow For evil or  
for empty show. In art and science duly trained, His student vow he well  
maintained; He learnt the lore for princes fit, The Vedas and their Holy  
Writ,

And with his well-drawn bow at last His mighty father's fame surpassed. Of  
birth exalted, truthful, just, With vigorous hand, with noble trust, Well  
taught by aged twice-born men Who gain and right could clearly ken, Full  
well the claims and bounds he knew Of duty, gain, and pleasure too: Of  
memory keen, of ready tact, In civil business prompt to act. Reserved, his  
features ne'er disclosed What counsel in his heart reposed. All idle rage  
and mirth controlled, He knew the times to give and hold, Firm in his  
faith, of steadfast will, He sought no wrong, he spoke no ill: Not rashly  
swift, not idly slow, His faults and others' keen to know. Each merit, by  
his subtle sense, He matched with proper recompense. He knew the means that  
wealth provide, And with keen eye expense could guide. Wild elephants could  
he reclaim, And mettled steeds could mount and tame. No arm like his the  
bow could wield, Or drive the chariot to the field. Skilled to attack, to  
deal the blow, Or lead a host against the foe: Yea, e'en infuriate Gods  
would fear

To meet his arm in full career. As the great sun in noontide blaze Is  
glorious with his world of rays. So Ráma with these virtues shone Which all  
men loved to gaze upon.

The agèd monarch fain would rest,

And said within his weary breast, 'Oh that I might, while living yet, My  
Ráma o'er the kingdom set. And see, before my course be run, The hallowed  
drops anoint my son; See all this spacious land obey, From side to side, my

first-born's sway, And then, my life and joy complete, Obtain in heaven a blissful seat! 'In him the monarch saw combined The fairest form, the noblest mind, And counselled how his son might share, The throne with him as Regent Heir. For fearful signs in earth and sky, And weakness warned him death was nigh: But Ráma to the world endeared By every grace his bosom cheered,

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The moon of every eye, whose ray Drove all his grief and fear away. So duty urged that hour to seize, Himself, his realm, to bless and please. From town and country, far and near, He summoned people, prince, and peer. To each he gave a meet abode, And honoured all and gifts bestowed. Then, splendid in his king's attire, He viewed them, as the general Sire, In glory of a God arrayed, Looks on the creatures he has made. But Kekaya's king he called not then For haste, nor Janak, lord of men; For after to each royal friend The joyful tidings he would send. Mid crowds from distant countries met The king upon his throne was set; Then honoured by the people, all The rulers thronged into the hall. On thrones assigned, each king in place Looked silent on the monarch's face. Then girt by lords of high renown And throngs from hamlet and from town He showed in regal pride, As, honoured by the radiant band Of blessed Gods that round him stand, Lord Indra, Thousand-eyed. Footnotes

89:1 S'atrughna means slayer of foes, and the word is repeated as an intensive epithet.

89:2 Alluding to the images of Vishnu, which have four arms, the four princes being portions of the substance of that God.

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CANTO II.: THE PEOPLE'S SPEECH.

Then to the full assembly bowed

The monarch, and addressed the crowd With gracious speech, in accents loud As heavenly drum or thunder-cloud:

'Needs not to you who know declare

How ever with paternal care My fathers of Ikshváku's line Have ruled the realm which now is mine. I too have taught my feet to tread The pathway of the mighty dead, And with fond care that never slept Have, as I could, my people kept. So toiling still, and ne'er remiss For all my people's weal and bliss, Beneath the white umbrella's 1 shade.

Old age is come and strength decayed. Thousands of years have o'er me flown, And generations round me grown And passed away. I crave at length Repose and ease for broken strength. Feeble and worn I scarce can bear The ruler's toil, the judge's care, With royal dignity, a weight That tries the young and temperate.

I long to rest, my labour done,

And in my place to set my son, If to the twice-born gathered here My counsel wise and good appear. For greater gifts than mine adorn Ráma my son, my eldest-born. Like Indra brave, before him fall The foeman's cities, tower and wall. Him prince of men for power and might, The best maintainer of the right, Fair as the moon when nothing bars His glory close to Pushya's stars, Him with to-morrow's light I fain Would throne the consort of my reign, A worthy lord for you, I ween, Marked as her own by Fortune's Queen. The triple world itself would be Well ruled by such a king as he. To such high bliss and happy fate Will I the country dedicate, And my sad heart will cease to grieve If he the precious charge receive. Thus is my careful plan matured, Thus for myself is rest secured; Lieges, approve the words I say, Or point ye out some wiser way. Devise your prudent plan. My mind

Is fondly to this thought inclined, But men by keen debating move  
 Some middle course which all approve.'  
 The monarch ceased. In answer came  
 The joyous princes' glad acclaim. So peacocks in the rain rejoice  
 And hail the cloud with lifted voice. Murmurs of joy from thousands round  
 Shook the high palace with the sound. Then when the gathered throng had learned  
 His will who right and gain discerned, Peasant and townsman, priest and  
 chief, All met in consultation brief, And soon agreed with one accord  
 Gave answer to their sovereign lord: 'King of the land, we know thee  
 old: Thousands of years have o'er thee rolled, Ráma thy son, we pray,  
 anoint. And at thy side his place appoint Our gallant prince, so brave and  
 strong, Riding in royal state along, Our eyes with joyful pride will  
 see Screened by the shade that shelters thee.' Then spake the king again,  
 as though Their hearts' true wish he sought to know: 'These prayers for  
 Ráma's rule suggest One question to my doubting breast. This thing, I pray,  
 with truth explain:  
 Why would ye, while I justly reign, That he, mine eldest son, should  
 bear His part with me as ruling heir?' Then all the people made  
 reply, Peasant and townsman, low and high: 'Each noblest gift of form and  
 mind,

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O Monarch, in thy son we find. Do thou the godlike virtues hear  
 Which Ráma to our hearts endear. So richly blest with graces, none  
 In all the earth excels thy son: Nay, who to match with him may claim  
 In truth, in justice, and in fame? True to his promise, gentle, kind,  
 Unenvious, of grateful mind, Versed in the law and firm of soul,  
 He keeps each sense with strict control. With duteous care he loves to sit  
 By Bráhmans skilled in Holy Writ. Hence brightest glory, ne'er to end,  
 And matchless fame his youth attend. Skilled in the use of spear and shield,  
 And arms which heavenly warriors wield, Supreme in war, unconquered yet  
 Bv man, fiend, God in battle met, Whene'er in pomp of war he goes  
 'Gainst town or city of the foes, He ever comes with Lakshman  
 back Victorious from the fierce attack. Returning homeward from afar  
 Borne on his elephant or car, He ever to the townsmen bends  
 And greets them as beloved friends, Asks how each son, each servant thrives,  
 How fare our pupils, offerings, wives; And like a father bids us tell,  
 Each for himself, that all is well. If pain or grief the city tries  
 His heart is swift to sympathize. When festive scenes our thoughts employ  
 He like a father shares the joy. High is the fate, O King, that gave  
 Thy Ráma born to bless and save, With filial virtues fair and mild  
 Like Kas'yap old Maríchi's child. Hence to the kingdom's distant ends  
 One general prayer for him ascends. Each man in town and country prays  
 For Ráma's strength, health, length of days. With hearts sincere, their wish the same,  
 The tender girl, the aged dame, Subject and stranger, peasant, hind,  
 One thought impressed on every mind, At evening and at dawning day  
 To all the Gods for Ráma pray. Do thou, O King, of grace comply,  
 And hear the people's longing cry, And let us on the throne by thee  
 The lotus-tinted Ráma see. O thou who givest boons, attend;  
 A gracious ear, O Monarch, lend And for our weal install,  
 Consenting to our earnest prayer, Thy godlike Ráma Regent  
 Heir, Who seeks the good of all.'

\* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

90:1 Chief of the insignia of imperial dignity.

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CANTO III.: DAS'ARATHA'S PRECEPTS.

The monarch with the prayer complied

Of suppliant hands, on every side Uplifted like a lotus-bed: And then these  
 gracious words he said: 'Great joy and mighty fame are mine Because your  
 loving hearts incline, In full assembly clearly shown To place my Ráma on

the throne.'Then to Vas'ishtha, standing near,And Vámadeva loud and clear  
The monarch spoke that all might hear:''Tis pure and lovely Chaitra  
nowWhen flowers are sweet on every bough;All needful things with haste  
prepareThat Ráma be appointed heir.'

Then burst the people's rapture out

In loud acclaim and joyful shout;And when the tumult slowly ceasedThe  
king addressed the holy priest:'Give order, Saint, with watchful heedFor  
what the coming rite will need.This day let all things ready waitMine  
eldest son to consecrate.'Best of all men of second birth

Vas'ishtha heard the lord of earth,And gave commandment to the bandsOf  
servitors with lifted handsWho waited on their master's eye:'Now by to-  
morrow's dawn supplyRich gold and herbs and gems of priceAnd offerings  
for the sacrifice,Wreaths of white flowers and roasted rice.And oil and  
honey, separate;New garments and a car of state,An elephant with lucky  
signs,A fourfold host in ordered lines,The white umbrella, and a pairOf  
chowries,

1 and a banner fair;

A hundred vases, row on row,To shine like fire in splendid glow,A tiger's  
mighty skin, a bullWith gilded horns most beautiful.All these, at dawn of  
coming day,Around the royal shrine array,Where burns the fire's undying  
ray.Each palace door, each city gateWith wreaths of sandal decorate.And  
with the garlands' fragrant scentLet clouds of incense-smoke be blent.Let  
food of noble kind and tasteBe for a hundred thousand placed;Fresh curds  
with streams of milk bedewedTo feed the Bráhmaṇ multitude.

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With care be all their wants supplied.

And mid the twice-born chiefs divideRich largess, with the early morn,And  
oil and curds and roasted corn.Soon as the sun has shown his  
lightPronounce the prayer to bless the rite,And then be all the Bráhmaṇs  
calledAnd in their ordered seats installed.Let all musicians skilled to  
play,And dancing-girls in bright arrayStand ready in the second  
ringWithin the palace of the king.Each honoured tree, each holy  
shrineWith leaves and flowery wreaths entwine,And here and there beneath  
the shadeBe food prepared and presents laid.Then brightly clad, in  
warlike guise,With long swords girt upon their thighs,Let soldiers of the  
nobler sortMarch to the monarch's splendid court.'

Thus gave command the twice-born pair

To active servants stationed there.Then hastened to the king and saidThat  
all their task was duly sped,The king to wise Sumantra spake:

'Now quick, my lord, thy chariot take,And hither with thy swiftest  
speedMy son, my noble Ráma lead.'

Sumantra, ere the word was given,

His chariot from the court had driven,And Ráma, best of all who rideIn  
cars, came sitting by his side.The lords of men had hastened forthFrom  
east and west and south and north,Áryan and stranger, those who dwellIn  
the wild wood and on the fell,And as the Gods to Indra, theyShowed honour  
to the king that day.

Like Vāsav, when his glorious form

Is circled by the Gods of storm,Girt in his hall by kings he sawHis car-  
borne Ráma near him draw,Like him who rules the minstrel bandOf heaven;  
1 whose valour tilled the land,

Of mighty arm and stately prideLike a wild elephant in stride,As fair in  
face as that fair stoneDear to the moon, of moonbeams grown,

2

With noble gifts and grace that tookThe hearts of all, and chained each  
look,World-cheering as the Lord of RainWhen floods relieve the parching  
plain.

The father, as the son came nigh,Gazed with an ever-thirstier  
eye.Sumantra helped the prince alight

From the good chariot passing bright,

And as to meet his sire he went Followed behind him reverent. Then Ráma  
clomb, the king to seek That terrace like Kailása's peak, And reached the  
presence of the king, Sumantra closely following. Before his father's face  
he came, Raised suppliant hands and named his name,

1b

And bowing lowly as is meet Paid reverence to the monarch's feet. But soon  
as Das'aratha viewed The prince in humble attitude, He raised him by the  
hand in haste And his beloved son embraced, Then signed him to a glorious  
throne, Gem-decked and golden, near his own. Then Ráma, best of Raghu's  
line, Made the fair seat with lustre shine As when the orient sun  
upsprings And his pure beam on Meru flings. The glory flashed on roof and  
wall, And with strange sheen suffused the hall, As when the moon's pure  
rays are sent Through autumn's star-lit firmament.

Then swelled his breast with joy and pride As his dear son the father  
eyed, E'en as himself more fair arrayed In some clear mirror's face  
displayed. The aged monarch gazed awhile, Then thus addressed him with a  
smile, As Kas'yapa, whom the worlds revere, Speaks for the Lord of Gods to  
hear: 'O thou of all my sons most dear, In virtue best, thy father's  
peer, Child of my consort first in place, Mine equal in her pride of  
race, Because the people's hearts are bound To thee by graces in thee  
found, Be thou in Pushya's favouring hour Made partner of my royal power. I  
know that thou by nature's bent Both modest art and excellent, But though  
thy gifts no counsel need My love suggests the friendly rede. Mine own dear  
son, be modest still, And rule each sense with earnest will. Keep thou the  
evils far away That spring from love and anger's sway. Thy noble course  
alike pursue In secret as in open view, And every nerve, the love to gain Of  
ministers and subjects, strain. The happy prince who sees with pride  
His thriving people satisfied; Whose arsenals with arms are stored, And  
treasury with golden hoard, --

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His friends rejoice as joyed the Blest When Amrita crowned their eager  
quest. So well, my child, thy course maintain, And from all ill thy soul  
refrain.'

The friends of Ráma, gathered nigh,  
Longing their lord to gratify, Ran to Kaus'alyá's bower to tell The tidings  
that would please her well. She, host of dames, with many a gem, And gold,  
and kine rewarded them.

Then Ráma paid the reverence due,  
Mounted the chariot, and withdrew, And to his splendid dwelling drove While  
crowds to show him honour strove. The people, when the monarch's speech  
Their willing ears had heard, Were wild with joy as though on each  
Great gifts had been conferred. With meek and low salute each man  
Turned to his home away, And there with happy heart began

To all the Gods to pray.

Footnotes

91:1 Whisks, usually made of the long tails of the Yak.

92:1 Chitraratha, King of the Gandharvas.

92:2 The Chandrakánta or Moonstone, a sort of crystal  
supposed to be composed of congealed moonbeams.

92:1b A customary mark of respect to a superior.

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CANTO IV.: RÁMA SUMMONED.

The crowd dismissed, to high debate

The monarch called his peers of state, And, counsel from their lips  
obtained, Firm in his will his will explained: 'To-morrow with auspicious  
ray The moon in Pushya's sign will stay; Be that the time with happy  
fate Mine eldest son to consecrate, And let my Ráma, lotus-eyed, As Regent  
o'er the state preside.'

He sought, within, his charioteer,

And cried 'Again bring Ráma here.' To Ráma's home Sumantra hied  
Again to be the prince's guide. His coming, told to Ráma's ear,  
Suggested anxious doubt and fear. He bade the messenger be led  
That instant in, and thus he said: 'Tell me the cause, omitting naught.  
Why thou again my house hast sought.'

The envoy answered: 'Prince, thy sire has sent thy presence to require.  
My sender known, 'tis thine to say if thou wilt go or answer nay.' Then  
Ráma, when he heard his speech, made haste the royal court to reach. Soon  
as the monarch was aware his dearest son was waiting there, eager the  
parley to begin. He bade them lead the prince within, soon as he passed the  
chamber door. The hero bent him to the floor, and at a distance from his  
seat raised his joined hands his sire to greet. The monarch raised him from  
the ground, and loving arms about him wound, then pointed to a seat that  
shone with gold for him to rest upon. 'Aged am I,' he said, 'and worn; in  
life's best joys my share have borne; rites to the Gods, in hundreds,  
paid, with gifts of corn and largess made. I yearned for sons: my life is  
blest with them and thee of sons the best. No debt to saints or Bráhmans,  
no, nor spirits, Gods, or self I owe. One duty now remains alone, to set  
thee on thy father's throne. Now therefore, Ráma, hear my rede, and mark my  
words with duteous heed: This day the peoples' general voice,  
elects thee king of love and choice, and I, consenting to the prayer, will  
make thee, darling, Regent Heir. Dread visions, each returning night, with  
evil omens scare my sight. Red meteors with a fearful sound shoot wildly  
downward to the ground, while tempests lash the troubled air; and they who  
read the stars declare that, leagued against my natal sign, Ráhu  
1 the Sun, 2 and Mars combine.

When portents dire as these appear, a monarch's death or woe is near. Then  
while my senses yet are spared, and thought and will are unimpaired, be  
thou, my son, anointed king: Men's fancy is a fickle thing. To-day the  
moon, in order due, entered the sign Punarvasu;

3

To-morrow, as the wise foretell, in Pushya's favouring stars will  
dwell: Then on the throne shalt thou be placed. My soul, prophetic,  
counsels haste: Thee, O my son, to-morrow I as Regent Heir will sanctify. So  
till the coming night he passed do thou and Sítá strictly fast: From  
worldly thoughts thy soul refrain, and couched on holy grass remain.

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And let thy trusted lords attend

In careful watch upon their friend, for, unexpected, check and bar our  
weightiest counsels often mar. While Bharat too is far away making with  
royal kin his stay, I deem the fittest time of all thee, chosen Regent, to  
install. It may be Bharat still has stood true to the counsels of the  
good, faithful to thee with tender trust, with governed senses, pure and  
just. But human minds, too well I know, will sudden changes undergo, and by  
their constant deeds alone the virtue of the good is shown. Now, Ráma, go.  
My son, good night! Fixt is to-morrow for the rite.'

Then Ráma paid the reverence due,

And quickly to his home withdrew. He passed within, nor lingered there, but  
sought his mother's mansion, where the dame in linen robes arrayed devoutly  
in the chapel prayed to Fortune's Queen, with utterance checked,  
that she her Ráma would protect. There was Sumitrá too, and there was  
Lakshman led by loving care: And when the royal choice they knew Sítá in  
haste was summoned too. Absorbed, with half-shut eyes, the queen attended  
by the three was seen. She knew that Pushya's lucky hour would raise her  
son to royal power, so fixed with bated breath each thought on God supreme,  
by all men sought. To her, as thus she knelt and prayed, Ráma drew near,  
due reverence paid, and then to swell his mother's joy, thus spoke her own  
beloved boy; 'O mother dear, my sire's decree entrusts the people's weal to  
me. To-morrow I, for so his will. Anointed king, the throne shall fill. The  
few last hours till night shall end. Sítá with me must fasting spend, for so

my father has decreed, And holy priests with him agreed. What vows soever  
thou mayst deem My consecration's eve beseem, Do thou, sweet mother, for my  
sake And for beloved Sítá's make. 'When the glad news Kaus'alyá heard,  
So long desired, so long deferred, While tears of joy her utterance  
broke, In answer to her son she spoke: 'Long be thy life, my darling:  
now Thy prostrate foes before thee bow. Live long and with thy bright  
success My friends and dear Sumitrá's bless. Surely the stars were wondrous  
fair When thee, sweet son, thy mother bare, That thy good gifts such love  
inspire And win the favour of thy sire. With thee I travailed not in  
vain; Those lotus eyes reward my pain, And all the glory of the line Of old  
Ikshváku will be thine.'

He smiled, and on his brother gazed

Who sate with reverent hands upraised, And said: 'My brother, thou must  
be Joint-ruler of this land with me. My second self thou, Lakshman, art, And  
in my fortune bearest part. Be thine, Sumitrá's son, to know The joys from  
regal power that flow. My life itself, the monarch's seat, For thy dear  
sake to me are sweet.

1

Thus Ráma to his brother said, To both his mothers' bowed his head,  
And then with Sítá by his side To his own house the hero hied.

Footnotes

93:1 Ráhu, the ascending node, is in mythology a  
demon with the tail of a dragon whose head was severed  
from his body by Vishnu, but being immortal, the head and tail retained  
their separate existence and being transferred to the stellar sphere  
became the authors of eclipses; the first especially by endeavouring to  
swallow the sun and moon.

93:2 In eclipse.

93:3 The seventh of the lunar asterisms.

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CANTO V.: RÁMA'S FAST.

Then Saint Vas'ishtha to the king

Came ready at his summoning. 'Now go,' exclaimed the monarch,  
'thou Enriched by fervent rite and vow, For Ráma and his wife ordain The  
fast, that joy may bless his reign.'

The best of those who Scripture know

Said to the king, 'My lord, I go.' To Ráma's house Vas'ishtha hied, The  
hero's fast by rule to guide, And skilled in sacred texts to tell Each step  
to him instructed well. Straight to Prince Ráma's high abode, That like a  
cloud pale-tinted showed, Borne in his priestly car he rode. Two courts he  
passed, and in the third He stayed his car. Then Ráma heard The holy sage  
was come, and flew To honour him with honour due. He hastened to the car  
and lent His hand to aid the priest's descent. Then spoke Vas'ishtha words  
like these, Pleased with his reverent courtesies, With pleasant things his  
heart to cheer

Who best deserved glad news to hear: 'Prince, thou hast won thy father's  
grace, And thine will be the Regent's place: Now with thy Sítá, as is  
right, In strictest fasting spend the night,

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For when the morrow's dawn is fair The king will consecrate his heir: So  
Nahush,

1 as the wise relate,

Yayáti joyed to consecrate.'

Thus having said, Vas'ishtha next

Ordained the fast by rule and text, For Ráma faithful to his vows And the  
Videhan dame his spouse. Then from the prince's house he hied With  
courteous honours gratified. Round Ráma gathered every friend In pleasant  
talk a while to spend. He bade good night to all at last, And to his inner  
chamber passed. Then Ráma's house shone bright and gay With men and maids  
in glad array, As in the morning some fair lake When all her lotuses



awake, And every bird that loves the flood  
Flits joyous round each opening  
bud.

Forth from the house Vas'ishtha drove,  
That with the king's in splendour strove, And all the royal street he  
viewed Filled with a mighty multitude The eager concourse blocked each  
square, Each road and lane and thoroughfare, And joyous shouts on every  
side Rose like the roar of Ocean's tide, As streams of men together  
came With loud huzza and glad acclaim. The ways were watered, swept and  
clean, And decked with flowers and garlands green And all Ayodhyá shone  
arrayed With banners on the roofs that played. Men, women, boys with eager  
eyes, Expecting when the sun should rise, Stood longing for the herald  
ray Of Ráma's consecration day, To see, a source of joy to all, The people-  
\*honoured festival.

The priest advancing slowly through  
The mighty crowd he cleft in two, Near to the monarch's palace drew. He  
sought the terrace, by the stair, Like a white cloud peak high in air, The  
reverend king of men to meet Who sate upon his splendid seat:  
Thus will Vrihaspati arise To meet the monarch of the skies. But when the  
king his coming knew, He left his throne and near him drew Questioned by  
him Vas'ishtha said That all his task was duly sped. Then all who sate  
there, honouring Vas'ishtha, rose as rose the king, Vas'ishtha bade his  
lord adieu, And all the peers, dismissed, withdrew.

Then as a royal lion seeks  
His cave beneath the rocky peaks, So to the chambers where abode His  
consorts Das'aratha strode. Full-thronged were those delightful bowers  
With women richly dressed, And splendid as the radiant towers Where  
Indra loves to rest. Then brighter flashed a thousand eyes With the  
light his presence lent, As, when the moon begins to rise The star  
thronged firmament.

Footnotes 94:1 Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá.

95:1 A king of the Lunar race, and father of Yayáti.

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CANTO VI.: THE CITY DECORATED.

Then Ráma bathed in order due,  
His mind from worldly thoughts withdrew, And with big large-eyed wife  
besought Náráyan, as a votary ought. Upon his head the brimming cup Of holy  
oil he lifted up, Then placed within the kindled fire The offering to that  
heavenly Sire, And as he sipped the remnant prayed To Him for blessing and  
for aid. Then with still lips and tranquil mind With his Videhan he  
reclined, In Vishnu's chapel, on a bed Where holy grass was duly  
spread, While still the prince's every thought Tbe God supreme, Náráyan,  
sought. One watch remained the night to close When Ráma from his couch  
arose, And bade the men and maids adorn His palace for the solemn morn. He  
heard the bards and heralds raise Auspicious strains of joy and praise; And  
breathed devout, with voice restrained, The hymn for morning rites  
ordained; Then, with his head in reverence bowed,  
Praised Madhu's conquering foe aloud. And, in pure linen robes arrayed, The  
priests to raise their voices prayed. Obedient to the summons  
they Proclaimed to all the festal day. The Bráhmans' voices, deep and  
sweet, Resounded through the crowded street, And echoed through Ayodhyá  
went By many a loud-toned instrument. Then all the people joyed to hear That  
Ráma with his consort dear Had fasted till the morning light In preparation  
for the rite. Swiftly the joyful tidings through Ayodhyá's crowded city  
flew, And soon as dawn appeared, each man To decorate the town began.

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In all the temples bright and fair As white clouds towering in the air, In  
streets, and where the cross-ways met, Where holy fig-trees had been  
set, In open square, in sacred shade, Where merchants' shops their wealth

displayed, On all the mansions of the great, And householders of wealth and state, Where'er the people loved to meet, Where'er a tree adorned the street, Gay banners floated to the wind, And ribands round the staves were twined. Then clear the singers' voices rang, As, charming mind and ear, they sang. Here players shone in bright attire, There dancing women swelled the quire. Each with his friend had much to say Of Ráma's consecration-day: Yea, even children, as they played At cottage doors beneath the shade. The royal street with flowers was strown Which loving hands in heaps had thrown, And here and there rich incense lent Its fragrance to the garland's scent; And all was fresh and fair and bright In honour of the coming rite. With careful foresight to illumine With borrowed blaze the midnight gloom, The crowds erected here and there Trees in each street gay lamps to bear. The city thus from side to side In festal guise was beautified. The people of the town who longed To view the rite together thronged, And filling every court and square Praised the good king in converse there: 'Our high-souled king! He throws a grace On old Ikshváku's royal race.

He feels his years' increasing weight, And makes his son associate. Great joy to us the choice will bring Of Ráma for our lord and king. The good and bad to him are known, And long will he protect his own. No pride his prudent breast may swell, Most just, he loves his brothers well, And to us all that love extends, Cherished as brothers and as friends. Long may our lord in life remain, Good Das'aratha, free from stain, By whose most gracious favour we Ráma anointed king shall see.'

Such were the words the townsmen spoke

Heard by the gathering countryfolk, Who from the south, north, east, and west, Stirred by the joyful tidings, pressed. For by their eager longing led To Ráma's consecration sped The villagers from every side, And filled Ayodhyá's city wide. This way and that way strayed the crowd, While rose a murmur long and loud, As when the full moon floods the skies And Ocean's waves with thunder rise. That town, like Indra's city fair, While peasants thronged her ways.

Tumultuous roared like Ocean, where Each flood-born monster plays. Next: Canto VII.: Manthará's Lament. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO VII.: MANTHARÁ'S LAMENT.

It chanced a slave-born handmaid, bred

With Queen Kaikeyí, fancy-fed, Mounted the stair and stood upon The terrace like the moon that shone. Thence Manthará at ease surveyed Ayodhyá to her eyes displayed, Where water cooled the royal street, Where heaps of flowers were fresh and sweet, And costly flags and pennons hung On roof and tower their shadow flung; With covered ways prepared in haste, And many an awning newly placed; With sandal-scented streams bedewed, Thronged by a new bathed multitude: Whose streets were full of Bráhma bands With wreaths and sweetmeats in their hands. Loud instruments their music raised, And through the town, where'er she gazed, The doors of temples glittered white, And the maid marvelled at the sight.

Of Ráma's nurse who, standing by,

Gazed with a joy-expanded eye, In robes of purest white attired, The wondering damsel thus inquired:

'Does Ráma's mother give away

Rich largess to the crowds to-day, On some dear object fondly bent, Or blest with measureless content? What mean these signs of rare delight On every side that meet my sight? Say, will the king with joy elate Some happy triumph celebrate?'

The nurse, with transport uncontrolled,

Her glad tale to the hump-back told: 'Our lord the king to-morrow morn Will consecrate his eldest-born, And raise, in Pushya's favouring hour, Prince Ráma to the royal power.' As thus the nurse her tidings spoke, Rage in the hump-back's breast awoke. Down from the terrace, like the head Of high

Kailása's hill, she sped. Sin in her thoughts, her soul aflame, Where Queen Kaikeyí slept, she came:

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'Why sleepest thou?' she cried, 'arise, Peril is near, unclosethine eyes. Ah, heedless Queen, too blind to know What floods of sin above thee flow!

Thy boasts of love and grace are o'er: Thine is the show and nothing more. His favour is an empty cheat, A torrent dried by summer's heat.' Thus by the artful maid addressed

In cruel words from raging breast, The queen, sore troubled, spoke in turn; 'What evil news have I to learn? That mournful eye, that altered cheek Of sudden woe or danger speak.'

Such were the words Kaikeyí said:

Then Manthará, her eyeballs red With fury, skilled with treacherous art To grieve yet more her lady's heart, From Ráma, in her wicked hate, Kaikeyí's love to alienate, Upon her evil purpose bent Began again most eloquent: 'Peril awaits thee swift and sure, And utter woe defying cure; King Das'aratha will create Prince Ráma Heir Associate. Plunged in the depths of wild despair, My soul a prey to pain and care, As though the flames consumed me, zeal Has brought me for my lady's weal, Thy grief, my Queen, is grief to me:

Thy gain my greatest gain would be. Proud daughter of a princely line, The rights of consort queen are thine. How art thou, born of royal race, Blind to the crimes that kings debase! Thy lord is gracious, to deceive, And flatters, but thy soul to grieve, While thy pure heart that thinks no sin Knows not the snares that hem thee in. Thy husband's lips on thee bestow Soft soothing word, an empty show: The wealth, the substance, and the power This day will be Kaus'alyá's dower. With crafty soul thy child he sends To dwell among thy distant friends, And, every rival far from sight, To Ráma gives the power and might. Ah me! for thou, unhappy dame, Deluded by a husband's name, With more than mother's love hast pressed A serpent to thy heedless breast, And cherished him who works thee woe, No husband but a deadly foe. For like a snake, unconscious Queen, Or enemy who stabs unseen, King Das'aratha all untrue Has dealt with thee and Bharat too. Ah, simple lady, long beguiled By his soft words who falsely smiled!

Poor victim of the guileless breast, A happier fate thou meritest. For thee and thine destruction waits When he Prince Ráma consecrates. Up, lady, while there yet is time; Preserve thyself, prevent the crime. Up, from thy careless ease, and free Thyself, O Queen, thy son, and me!'

Delighted at the words she said,

Kaikeyí lifted from the bed, Like autumn's moon, her radiant head, And joyous at the tidings gave A jewel to the hump-back slave; And as she gave the precious toy She cried in her exceeding joy: 'Take this, dear maiden, for thy news Most grateful to mine ear, and choose What grace beside most fitly may The welcome messenger repay. I joy that Ráma gains the throne: Kaus'alyá's son is as mine own.'

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CANTO VIII: MANTHARÁ'S SPEECH.

The damsel's breast with fury burned:

She answered, as the gift she spurned: 'What time, O simple Queen, is this For idle dreams of fancied bliss? Hast thou not sense thy state to know, Engulfed in seas of whelming woe; Sick as I am with grief and pain My lips can scarce a laugh restrain To see thee hail with ill-timed joy A peril mighty to destroy. I mourn for one so fondly blind: What woman of a prudent mind Would welcome, e'en as thou hast done, The lordship of a rival's son, Rejoiced to find her secret foe Empowered, like death, to launch the blow; I see that Ráma still must fear Thy Bharat, to his throne too near. Hence is my heart disquieted, For those who fear are those we

dread. Lakshman, the mighty bow who draws, With all his soul serves Ráma's cause; And chains as strong to Bharat binds S'atrughna, with his heart and mind, Now next to Ráma, lady fair, Thy Bharat is the lawful heir: And far remote, I ween, the chance That might the younger two advance. Yes, Queen, 'tis Ráma that I dread, Wise, prompt, in warlike science bred; And oh, I tremble when I think Of thy dear child on ruin's brink.

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Blest with a lofty fate is she, Kaus'alyá; for her son will be placed, when the moon and Pushya meet, By Bráhmans on the royal seat, Thou as a slave in suppliant guise must wait upon Kaus'alyá's eyes, With all her wealth and bliss secured And glorious from her foes assured. Her slave with us who serve thee, thou wilt see thy son to Ráma bow, And Sítá's friends exult o'er all, While Bharat's wife shares Bharat's fall.'

As thus the maid in wrath complained, Kaikeyí saw her heart was pained, And answered eager in defence Of Ramá's worth and excellence: 'Nay, Ráma, born the monarch's heir, By holy fathers trained with care, Virtuous, grateful, pure, and true, Claims royal sway as rightly due. He, like a sire, will long defend Each brother, minister, and friend. Then why, O hump-back, art thou pained To hear that he the throne has gained? Be sure when Ráma's empire ends, The kingdom to my son descends, Who, when a hundred years are flown, Shall sit upon his fathers' throne. Why is thine heart thus sad to see The joy that is and long shall be, This fortune by possession sure And hopes which we may count secure? Dear as the darling son I bore Is Ráma, yea, or even more. Most duteous to Kaus'alyá, he is yet more dutiful to me. What though he rule, we need not fear: His brethren to his soul are dear. And if the throne Prince Ráma fill Bharat will share the empire still.'

She ceased. The troubled damsel sighed Sighs long and hot, and thus replied: 'What madness has possessed thy mind, To warnings deaf, to dangers blind? Canst thou not see the floods of woe That threaten o'er thine head to flow: First Ráma will the throne acquire, Then Ráma's son succeed his sire, While Bharat will neglected pine Excluded from the royal line. Not all his sons, O lady fair, The kingdom of a monarch share: All ruling when a sovereign dies Wild tumult in the state would rise. The eldest, be he good or ill, Is ruler by the father's will. Know, tender mother, that thy son Without a friend and all undone. Far from the joyous ease of home An alien from his race will roam. I sped to thee for whom I feel, But thy fond heart mistakes my zeal, Thy hand a present would bestow Because thy rival triumphs so. When Ráma once begins his sway Without a foe his will to stay, Thy darling Bharat he will drive To distant lands if left alive. By thee the child was sent away Beneath his grandsire's roof to stay. Even in stocks and stones perforce Will friendship spring from intercourse. The young S'atrughna too would go With Bharat, for he loved him so. As Lakshman still to Ráma cleaves,

He his dear Bharat never leaves. There is an ancient tale they tell: A tree the foresters would fell Was saved by reeds that round it stood, For love that sprang of neighbourhood. So Lakshman Ráma will defend, And each on each for aid depend. Such fame on earth their friendship wins As that which binds the Heavenly Twins. And Ráma ne'er will purpose wrong To Lakshman, for their love is strong. But Bharat, Oh, of this be sure, Must evil at his hands endure. Come, Ráma from his home expel An exile in the woods to dwell. The plan, O Queen, which I advise Secures thy weal if thou be wise, So we and all thy kith and kin Advantage from thy gain shall win. Shall Bharat, meet for happier fate, Born to endure his rival's hate, With all his fortune ruined cower And dread his brother's mightier power! Up, Queen, to save thy son, arise; Prostrate at Ráma's feet he lies. So the proud elephant who leads His trooping consorts through the

reeds Falls in the forest shade beneath The lion's spring and murderous teeth.

Scorned by thee in thy bliss and pride Kaus'alyá was of old defied, And will she now forbear to show The vengeful rancour of a foe? O Queen, thy darling is undone When Ráma's hand has once begun Ayodhyá's realm to sway, Come, win the kingdom for thy child And drive the alien to the wild In banishment to-day.'

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CANTO IX.: THE PLOT.

As fury lit Kaikeyí's eyes

She spoke with long and burning sighs:

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'This day my son enthroned shall see, And Ráma to the woods shall flee. But tell me, damsel, if thou can, A certain way, a skilful plan That Bharat may the empire gain, And Ráma's hopes be nursed in vain.'

The lady ceased. The wicked maid

The mandate of her queen obeyed, And darkly plotting Ráma's fall Responded to Kaikeyí's call.

'I will declare, do thou attend,

How Bharat may his throne ascend. Dost thou forget what things befell? Or dost thou feign, remembering well? Or wouldst thou hear my tongue repeat A story for thy need so meet? Gay lady, if thy will be so,

Now hear the tale of long ago, And when my tongue has done its part Ponder the story in thine heart. When Gods and demons fought of old, Thy lord, with royal saints enrolled, Sued to the war with thee to bring His might to aid the Immortals' King. Far to the southern land he sped Where Dandak's mighty wilds are spread, To Vaijayanta's city swayed By S'ambara, whose flag displayd The hugest monster of the sea. Lord of a hundred wiles was he; With might which Gods could never blame Against the King of Heaven he came. Then raged the battle wild and dread, And mortal warriors fought and bled; The fiends by night with strength renewed Charged, slew the sleeping multitude. Thy lord, King Das'aratha, long stood fighting with the demon throng, But long of arm, unmatched in strength, Fell wounded by their darts at length. Thy husband, senseless, by thine aid Was from the battle field conveyed. And wounded nigh to death thy lord Was by thy care to health restored. Well pleased the grateful monarch sware To grant thy first and second prayer.

Thou for no favour then wouldst sue, The gifts reserved for season due; And he, thy high-souled lord, agreed To give the boons when thou shouldst need. Myself I knew not what befell, But oft the tale have heard thee tell, And close to thee in friendship knit Deep in my heart have treasured it. Remind thy husband of his oath, Recall the boons and claim them both, That Bharat on the throne be placed With rites of consecration graced, And Ráma to the woods be sent For twice seven years of banishment. Go, Queen, the mourner's chamber I seek,

With angry eye and burning cheek; And with disordered robes and hair On the cold earth lie prostrate there. When the king comes still mournful lie, Speak not a word nor meet his eye, But let thy tears in torrent flow, And lie enamoured of thy woe. Well do I know thou long hast been, And ever art, his darling queen. For thy dear sake, O well-loved dame, The mighty king would brave the flame, But ne'er would anger thee, or brook To meet his favourite's wrathful look. Thy loving lord would even die Thy fancy, Queen, to gratify, And never could he arm his breast To answer nay to thy request. Listen and learn, O dull of sense, Thine all-resistless influence. Gems he will offer, pearls and gold: Refuse his gifts, be stern and cold. Those proffered boons at length recall, And claim them till he grants thee all. And O my lady, high in bliss, With heedful thought forget not this. When from the ground his queen he lifts And grants again the promised gifts, Bind him with oaths he cannot break And thy demands

unflinching, make. That Ráma travel to the wild Five years and nine from home exiled, And Bharat, best of all who reign. The empire of the land obtain. For when this term of years has fled Over the banished Ráma's head, Thy royal son to vigour grown And rooted firm will stand alone. The king, I know, is well inclined, And this the hour to move his mind. Be bold: the threatened rite prevent, And force the king from his intent.' She ceased. So counselled to her bane

Disguised beneath a show of gain, Kaikeyi in her joy and pride To Manthará again replied: 'Thy sense I envy, prudent maid; With sagest lore thy lids persuade. No hump-back maid in all the earth, For wise resolve, can match thy worth. Thou art alone with constant zeal Devoted to thy lady's weal. Dear girl, without thy faithful aid I had not marked the plot he laid.

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Full of all guile and sin and spite Misshapen hump-backs shock the sight: But thou art fair and formed to please, Bent like a lily by the breeze. I look thee o'er with watchful eye, And in thy frame no fault can spy; The chest so deep, the waist so trim, So round the lines of breast and limb.

1

Thy cheeks with moonlike beauty shine, And the warm wealth of youth is thine. Thy legs, my girl, are long and neat, And somewhat long thy dainty feet, While stepping out before my face Thou seemest like a crane to pace. The thousand wiles are in thy breast Which Sambara the fiend possessed, And countless others all thine own, O damsel sage, to thee are known. Thy very hump becomes thee too, O thou whose face is fair to view, For there reside in endless store Plots, wissard wiles, and warrior lore. A golden chain I'll round it fling When Ráma's flight makes Bharat king: Yea, polished links of finest gold, When once the wished for prize I hold With naught to fear and none to hate, Thy hump, dear maid, shall decorate. A golden frontlet wrought with care, And precious jewels shalt thou wear: Two lovely robes around thee fold, And walk a Goddess to behold, Bidding the moon himself compare His beauty with a face so fair. With scent of precious sandal sweet Down to the nails upon thy feet, First of the household thou shalt go And pay with scorn each battled foe.' Kaikeyi's praise the damsel heard, And thus again her lady stirred, Who lay upon her beauteous bed Like fire upon the altar fed: 'Dear Queen, they build the bridge in vain When swollen streams are dry again. Arise, thy glorious task complete, And draw the king to thy retreat.' The large-eyed lady left her bower Exulting in her pride of power, And with the hump-back sought the gloom And silence of the mourner's room. The string of priceless pearls that hung Around her neck to earth she flung, With all the wealth and lustre lent By precious gem and ornament. Then, listening to her slave's advice, Lay, like a nymph from Paradise.

As on the ground her limbs she laid

Once more she cried unto the maid: 'Soon must thou to the monarch say Kaikeyi's soul has past away, Or, Ráma banished as we planned, My son made king shall rule the land. No more for gold and gems I care, For brave attire or dainty fare. If Ráma should the throne ascend, That very hour my life will end.'

The royal lady wounded through

The bosom with the darts that flew Launched from the hump-back's tongue Pressed both her hands upon her side, And o'er and o'er again she cried

With wildering fury stung: 'Yes, it shall be thy task to tell That I have hurried hence to dwell In Yama's realms of woe, Or happy Bharat shall be king, And doomed to years of wandering Kaus'alyá's son shall go. I heed not dainty viands now Fair wreaths of flowers to twine my brow, Soft balm or precious scent: My very life I count as naught, Nothing on

earth can claim my thought But Ráma's banishment.' She spoke these words of cruel ire;Then stripping off her gay attire, The cold bare floor she pressed.So, falling from her home on high,Some lovely daughter of the sky Upon the ground might rest.With darkened brow and furious mien,Stripped of her gems and wreath, the queen In spotless beauty lay,Like heaven obscured with gathering cloud,When shades of midnight darkness shroud Each star's expiring ray.

Footnotes  
99:1 Literally the chamber of wrath, a 'growlery,' a small, dark, unfurnished room to which it seems, the wives and ladies of the king betook themselves when offended and sulky.  
100:1 In these four lines I do not translate faithfully, and I do not venture to follow Kaikeyi farther in her eulogy of the hump- back's charms.

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#### CANTO X.: DAS'ARATHA'S SPEECH.

As Queen Kaikeví thus obeyed

The sinful counsel of her maidShe sank upon the chamber floor,As sinks in anguish, wounded sore,An elephant beneath the smartOf the wild hunter's venomed dart.The lovely lady in her mindResolved the plot her maid designed,And prompt the gain and risk to scanShe step by step approved the plan.Misguided by the hump back's guileShe pondered her resolve awhile,As the fair path that bliss securedThe miserable lady lured,  
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Devoted to her queen, and swayedBy hopes of gain and bliss, the maidRejoiced her lady's purpose known,And deemed the prize she sought her own.Then bent upon her purpose dire,Kaikeyí with her soul on fire,Upon the floor lay, languid, down,Her brows contracted in a frown.The bright-hued wreath that bound her hair,Chains, necklets, jewels rich and rare,Stripped off by her own fingers laySpread on the ground in disarray,And to the floor a lustre lentAs stars light up the firmament.Thus prostrate in the mourner's cell,In garb of woe the lady fell,Her long hair in a single braid,Like some fair nymph of heaven dismayed.

1

The monarch, Ráma to install,With thoughtful care had ordered all,And now within his home withdrew,Dismissing first his retinue.Now all the town has heard, thought he,What joyful rite the morn will see.So turned he to her bower to cheerWith the glad news his darling's ear.Majestic, as the Lord of Night,When threatened by the Dragon's might,Bursts radiant on the evening skyPale with the clouds that wander by,So Das'aratha, great in fame,To Queen Kaikeyí's palace came.There parrots flew from tree to tree,And gorgeous peacocks wandered free,While ever and anon was heardThe note of some glad water-bird.Here loitered dwarf and hump-backed maid,There lute and here sweet music played.Here, rich in blossom, creepers twinedO'er grotts with wondrous art designed,There Champac and As'oka flowersHung glorious o'er the summer bowers,And mid the waving verdure roseGold, silver, ivory porticoes.Through all the months in ceaseless storeThe trees both fruit and blossom bore.With many a lake the grounds were graced;Seats gold and silver, here were placed;Here every viand wooed the taste,It was a garden meet to vieE'en with the home of Gods on high.

Within the mansion rich and vast

The mighty Das'aratha passed:Not there was his beloved queenOn her fair couch reclining seen.With love his eager pulses beatFor the dear wife he came to meet,And in his blissful hopes deceived,He sought his absent love and grieved.For never had she missed the hourOf meeting in her sumptuous bower,And never had the king of menEntered the empty room till then.Still urged by love and anxious thoughtNews of his favourite queen he sought,

For never had his loving eyes Found her or selfish or unwise. Then spoke at length the warder maid, With hands upraised and sore afraid: 'My Lord and King, the queen has sought The mourner's cell with rage distraught.' The words the warder maiden said He heard with soul disquieted, And thus as fiercer grief assailed, His troubled senses well nigh failed. Consumed by torturing fires of grief The king, the world's imperial chief, His lady lying on the ground In most unqueenly posture, found. The aged king, all pure within, Saw the young queen resolved on sin, Low on the ground, his own sweet wife, To him far dearer than his life, Like some fair creeping plant upturn, Or like a maid of heaven forlorn, A nymph of air or Goddess sent From Swarga down in banishment. As some wild elephant who tries To soothe his consort as she lies Struck by the hunter's venom'd dart, So the great king disturbed in heart. Strove with soft hand and fond caress To soothe his darling queen's distress, And in his love addressed with sighs The lady of the lotus eyes: 'I know not, Queen, why thou shouldst be Thus angered to the heart with me. Say, who has alighted thee, or whence Has come the cause of such offence That in the dust thou liest low, And rendest my fond heart with woe, As if some goblin of the night Had struck thee with a deadly blight, And cast foul influence on her Whose spells my loving bosom stir? I have Physicians famed for skill, Each trained to cure some special ill: My sweetest lady, tell thy pain, And they shall make thee well again. Whom, darling, wouldst thou punished see? Or whom enriched with lordly fee?

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"Weep not, my lovely Queen, and stay This grief that wears thy frame away Speak, and the guilty shall be freed, The guiltless be condemned to bleed. The poor enriched, the rich abased. The low set high, the proud disgraced. My lords and I thy will obey, All slaves who own thy sovereign sway; And I can ne'er my heart incline To check in aught one wish of thine. Now by my life I pray thee tell The thoughts that in thy bosom dwell, The power and might thou knowest wel. Should from thy breast all doubt expel, I swear by all my merit won, Speak, and thy pleasure shall be done. Far as the world's wide bounds extend My glorious empire knows no end. Mine are the tribes in eastern lands, And those who dwell on Sindhu's sands: Mine is Suráshtra, far away, Suvíra's realm admits my sway. My best the southern nations fear, The Angas and the Vaugas hear. And as lord paramount I reign O'er Magadh and the Matsyas' plain, Kos'al, and Kási's wide domain:

1

All rich in treasures of the mine. In golden corn, sheep, goats, and kine. Choose what thou wilt. Kaikeyi, thence: But tell me, O my darling, whence Arose thy grief, and it shall fly Like hoar-frost when the sun is high.'

She, by his loving words consoled, Longed her dire purpose to unfold, And sought with sharper pangs to wring The bosom of her lord the king.

Footnotes

101:1 These verses are evidently an interpolation. They contain nothing that has not been already related: the words only are altered. As the whole poem could not be recited at once, the rhapsodists at the beginning of a fresh recitation would naturally remind their hearers of the events immediately preceding.

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CANTO XI.: THE QUEEN'S DEMAND.

To him enthralled by love, and blind,

Pierced by his darts who shake the mind, 2

Kaikeyi with remorseless breast Her grand purpose thus expressed:



"O King, no insult or neglect  
 Have I endured, or disrespect.  
 One wish I have, and faith would soe  
 That longing granted, laid, by thee.  
 Now pledge thy word if thou incline  
 To listen to this prayer of mine,  
 Then I with confidence will speak,  
 And thou shalt hear the boon I seek.'  
 Ere she had ceased, the monarch fell,  
 A victim to the lady's spell,  
 And to the deadly snare she set  
 Sprang, like a roebuck to the net.  
 Her lover raised her drooping head,  
 Smiled, playing with her hair,  
 and said: 'Hast thou not learnt, wild dame,  
 till now that there is none so dear as thou'  
 To me thy loving husband, save  
 My Rama bravest of the brave!  
 By him my race's high-souled heir,  
 By him whom none can match, I swear,  
 Now speak the wish that on thee weighs:  
 By him whose right is length of days,  
 Whom if my fond paternal eye  
 Saw not one hour I needs must die,  
 --I swear by Rama my dear son,  
 Speak, and thy bidding shall be done.  
 Speak, darling; if thou choose,  
 request to have the heart from out my breast;  
 Regard my words, sweet love, and name  
 The wish thy mind thinks fit to frame.  
 Nor let shy soul give way to doubt:  
 My power should drive suspicion out.  
 Yea, by my merits won I swear,  
 Speak, darling, I will grant thy prayer,'  
 The queen, ambitious, overjoyed  
 To see him by her plot decoyed.  
 More eager still her aims to reach,  
 Spoke her abominable speech: 'A boon thou grantest,  
 nothing loth, And swearest with repeated oath.  
 Now let the thirty Gods and three  
 My witnesses, with Indra, be.  
 Let sun and moon and planets hear,  
 Heaven, quarters, day and night, give ear.  
 The mighty world, the earth outspread,  
 With birds of heaven and demons regard;  
 The ghosts that walk in midnight shade,  
 And household Gods, our present aid,  
 A every being great and small  
 To hear and mark the oath I call.'

When this the archer king was bound,  
 With treacherous arts and oaths unwound,  
 She to her beauteous lord subdued,  
 By blinding love, her speech renewed: 'Remember,  
 King, that long-past day  
 Of Gods' and demons' battle fray.  
 And how thy foe in doubtful strife  
 Had nigh bereft thee of thy life.  
 Remember, it was only I  
 Preserved thee when about to die,  
 And thou for watchful love and care  
 Wouldst grant my first and second prayer.  
 Those offered boons, pledged with thee then,  
 I now demand, O King of men,

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Of thee, O Monarch, good and just,  
 Whose righteous soul observes each trust.  
 If thou refuse thy promise sworn,  
 I die, despised, before the morn.  
 These rites in Râma's name begun  
 Transfer them, and enthrone my son.  
 The time is come to claim at last  
 The double boon of days long-past,  
 When Gods and demons met in fight.  
 And thou wouldst fain my care requite.  
 Now forth to Dandak's forest drive  
 Thy Râma for nine years and five,  
 And let him dwell a hermit there  
 With deerskin coat and matted hair.  
 Without a rival let my boy  
 The empire of the land enjoy,  
 And let mine eyes ere morning see  
 Thy Râma to the forest flee.'

Footnotes

102:1 The Sloka or distich which I have been forced to expand into these nine lines is evidently spurious, but is found in all the commented MSS. which Schlegel consulted.

102:2 Maumatha, Mind-disturber, a name of Kama or

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CANTO XII.: DASARATHA'S LAMENT.

The monarch, as Kaikeyi pressed  
 With cruel words her dire request,  
 Stood for a time absorbed in thought  
 While anguish in his bosom wrought.  
 Does some wild dream my heart assail!  
 Or do my troubled senses fail!  
 Does some dire portent scare my view?  
 Or frenzy's stroke my soul subdue?'  
 Thus as he thought, his troubled

mindIn doubt and dread no rest could find,Distressed and trembling like a deerWho sees the dreaded tigress near.On the bare ground his limbs he  
thres,And many a long sigh he drew,Like a wild snake, with fury blind,By  
charms within a ring confined.Once as the monarch's fury woke,'Shame on  
thee!' from his bosom broke,And then in sense-bewildering painHe fainted  
on the ground again.At length, when slowly strength returned,He answered  
as his eyeballs burnedWith the wild fury of his ireConsuming her, as  
'twere, with fire:'Fell traitress, thou whose thought design  
The utter ruin of my line,What wrong have I or Ráma done?Speak murderess,  
speak thou wicked one,Seeks he not evermore to pleaseThee with all  
sonlike courtesies?By what persuasion art thou ledTo bring this ruin on  
his head?Ah me, that fondly unawareI brought thee home my life to  
snare,Called daughter of a king, in truthA serpent with a venomed  
tooth!What fault can I pretend to findIn Ráma praised by all mankind,That  
I my darling should forsake?No, take my life, my glory take:Let either  
queen be from me torn,But not my well-loved eldest-born,Him but to see is  
highest bliss,And death itself his face to miss.The world may sunless  
stand, the grainMay thrive without the genial rain,But if my Ráma be no  
nighMy spirit from its frame will fly.Enough, thine impious plan forgo,O  
thou who plottest sin and woe.My head before my feet, I kneel,And pray  
thee some compassion feel,O wicked dame, what can have ledThy heart to  
dare a plot so dread?

Perchance thy purpose is to soundThe grace thy son with me has  
found;Perchance the words that, all these days,Thou hast said in Ráma's  
praise,Were only feigned; designed to cheerWith flatteries a father's  
ear.Soon as thy grief, my Queen, I knew,My bosom felt the anguish too.In  
empty halls art thou possessed,And subject to anothers' hest?Now on  
Ikshváku's ancient raceFalls foul disorder and disgrace,If thou, O Queen,  
whose heart so longHas loved the good should choose the wrongNot once, O  
large-eyed dame, hast thouBeen guilty of offence till now,Nor said a word  
to make me grieve,Nor will I now thy sin believe.With thee my Ráma used  
to holdLike place with Bharat lofty-souled.As thou so ofthe, when the  
pairWere children yet, wouldst fain declare.And can thy righteous soul  
endureThat Ráma glorious, pious, pure,Should to the distant wilds be  
sentFor fourteen years of banishment?Yea, Ráma Bharat's self exceedsIn  
love to thee and sonlike deeds,And, for deserving love of thee,  
As Bharat, even so is he.Who better than that chieftain mayObedience,  
love, and honour pay,They dignity with care protect,Thy slightest word  
and wish respect?Of all his countless followers noneCan breathe a word  
against my son;Of many thousands not a dameCan hint reproach or whisper  
blame.All creatures feel the sweet controlOf Ráma's pure and gentle  
soul.The pride of Manu's race he bindsTo him the people's grateful  
minds.He wins the subjects with his truth,

p. 104

The poor with gifts and gentle ruth,His teachers with his docile will,The  
foemen with his archer skill.Truth, purity, religious zeal,The hand to  
give, the heart to feel.The love that ne'er betrays a friend,The  
rectitude that naught can bend,Knowledge, and meek obedience graceMy Ráma  
pride of Raghu's race.Canst thou thine impious plot design'Gainst him in  
whom these virtues shine,Whose glory with the sages vies,  
Peer of the Gods who rule the skies!From him no harsh or bitter wordTo  
pain one creature have I heard,And how can I my sin address,For thee,  
with words of bitterness?Have mercy, Queen: some pity showTo see my tears  
of anguish now,And listen to my mournful cry,A poor old man who soon must  
die.Whate'er this sea-girt land can boastOf rich and rare from coast to  
coast,To thee, my Queen, I give it all:But O, thy deadly words recall:O  
see, my suppliant hands entreat,Again my lips are on thy feet:Save Ráma,  
save my darling child,Nor kill me with this sin defiled.'He grovelled on  
the ground, and layTo burning grief a senseless prey,And ever and anon,

assailedBy floods of woe he wept and wailed,Striving with eager speed to  
gainThe margent of his sea of pain.

With fiercer words she fiercer yet

The hapless father's pleading met:'O Monarch, if thy soul repentThe  
promise and thy free consent,How wilt thou in the world maintain  
Thy fame for truth unsmirched with stain?When gathered kings with thee  
converse,And bid thee all the tale rehearse.What wilt thou say, O  
truthful King,In answer to their questioning?'She to whose love my life I  
owe,Who saved me smitten by the foe,Kaikeyí, for her tender care,Was  
cheated of the oath I swore.

1

Thus wilt thou answer, and forswornWilt draw on thee the princes'  
scorn.Learn from that tale, the 'Hawk and Dove,'How strong for truth was  
Saivya's love.Pledged by his word the monarch gaveHis flesh the suppliant  
bird to save.So King Alarka gave his eyes,And gained a mansion in the  
skies.

The Sea himself his promise keeps,  
And ne'er beyond his limit sweeps.My deeds of old again recall,Nor let  
thy bond dishonoured fall.The rights of truth thou wouldst forgetThy Ráma  
on the throne to set,And let thy days in pleasure glide,Fond King,  
Kaus'alyá by thy side.Now call it by what name thou wilt,Justice,  
injustice, virtue, guilt,Thy word and oath remain the same,  
And thou must yield what thus I claim.If Ráma be anointed, IThis very day  
will surely die,Before thy face will poison drink,And lifeless at thy  
feet will sink.Yea, better far to die than stayAlive to see one single  
dayThe crowds before Kaus'alyá standAnd hail her queen with reverent  
hand.Now by my son, myself, I swear,No gift, no promise whatsoeverMy  
steadfast soul shall now content,But only Ráma's banishment.'

So far she spake by rage impelled,

And then the queen deep silence held.He heard her speech full fraught  
with ill,But spoke no word bewildered still,Gazed on his love once held  
so dearWho spoke unlovely rede to hear;Then as he slowly pondered o'erThe  
queen's resolve and oath she swore.Once sighing forth, Ah Ráma! heFell  
prone as falls a smitten tree.His senses lost like one insane,Faint as a  
sick man weak with pain,Or like a wounded snake dismayed,So lay the king  
whom earth obeyed.Long burning sighs he slowly heaved,  
As, conquered by his woe, he grieved,And thus with tears and sobs  
betweenHis sad faint words addressed the queen:

'By whom, Kaikeyí, wast thou taught

This flattering hope with ruin fraught?Have goblins seized thy soul, O  
dame,Who thus canst speak and feel no shame?Thy mind with sin is sicklied  
o'er,From thy first youth ne'er seen before.A good and loving wife wast  
thou,But all, alas! is altered now.What terror can have seized thy  
breastTo make thee frame this dire request,That Bharat o'er the land may  
reign,And Ráma in the woods remain?Turn from thine evil ways, O turn,And  
thy perfidious counsel spurn,If thou would fain a favour doTo people,  
lord, and Bharat too.O wicked traitress, fierce and vile,Who lovest deeds  
of sin and guile,

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What crime or grievance dost thou see,What fault in Ráma or in me?Thy son  
will ne'er the throne acceptIf Ráma from his rights be kept,  
For Bharat's heart more firmly yetThan Ráma's is on justice set.How shall  
I say, Go forth, and brookUpon my Ráma's face to look,See his pale cheek  
and ashy lipsDimmed like the moon in sad eclipse?How see the plan so well  
preparedWhen prudent friends my counsels shared,All ruined, like a host  
laid lowBeneath some foeman's murderous blow?What will these gathered  
princes say,From regions near and far away?'O'erlong endures the  
monarch's reign,For now he is a child again.'When many a good and holy  
sageIn Scripture versed, revered for age,Shall ask for Ráma, what shall  
IUnhappy, what shall I reply?'By Queen Kaikeyí long distressedI drove him

forth and dispossessed.'Although herein the truth I speak,They all will hold me false and weak.What will Kaus'alyá say when sheDemands her son exiled by me?Alas! what answer shall I frame,Or how console the injured dame?She like a slave on me attends,And with a sister's care she blendsA mother's love, a wife's, a friend's.

In spite of all her tender care,Her noble son, her face most fair,Another queen I could preferAnd for thy sake neglected her,But now, O Queen, my heart is grievedFor love and care by thee received,E'en as the sickening wretch repentsHis dainty meal and condiments.And how will Queen Sumitrá trustThe husband whom she finds unjust,Seeing my Ráma driven henceDishonoured, and for no offence?Ah! the, Videhan bride will hearA double woe, a double fear,Two whelming sorrows at one breath,Her lord's disgrace, his father's death.Mine aged bosom she will wringAnd kill me with her sorrowing,Sad as a fair nymph left to weepDeserted on Himálaya's steep.For short will be my days, I ween,When I with mournful eyes have seenMy Ráma wandering forth aloneAnd heard dear Sítá sob and moan.Ah me! my fond belief I rue.Vile traitress, loved as good and true,As one who in his thirst has quaffed,Deceived by looks, a deadly draught.Ah! thou hast slain me, murderess, while

Soothing my soul with words of guile,As the wild hunter kills the deerLured from the brake his song to hear.Soon every honest tongue will flingReproach on the dishonest king;The people's scorn in every streetThe seller of his child will meet,And such dishonourwill be mineAs whelms a Bráhmaṇ drunk with wine.Ah me, for my unhappy fate,Compelled thy words to tolerate!Such woe is sent to scourge a crimeCommitted in some distant time.For many a day with sinful careI cherished thee, thou sin and snare,Kept thee, unwitting, like a cordDestined to bind its hapless lord.Mine hours of ease I spent with thee,Nor deemed my love my death would be,While like a heedless child I played,On a black snake my hand I laid.A cry from every mouth will burstAnd all the world will hold me curst,Because I saw my high-souled sonUnkinged, unfathered, and undone;'The king by power of love beguiledIs weaker than a foolish child,His own beloved son to makeAn exile for a woman's sake.

By chaste and holy vows restrained,By reverend teachers duly trained.When he his virtue's fruit should tasteHe falls by sin and woe disgraced.'Two words will all his answer beWhen I pronounce the stern decree,'Hence, Ráma, to the woods away,'All he will say is, I obey.O, if he would my will withstandWhen banished from his home and land.This were a comfort in my woe;But he will ne'er do this, I know.My Ráma to the forest fled,And curses thick upon my head,Grim Death will bear me hence away,His world-abominated prey.When I am gone and Ráma too.How wilt thou those I love pursue?What vengeful sin will be designedAgainst the queens I leave behind?When thou hast slain her son and meKaus'alyá soon will follow: sheWill sink beneath her sorrows' weight,And die like me disconsolate,Exist, Kaikeyí, in thy pride,And let thy heart be gratified,When thou my queens and me hast hurled,And children, to the under world.Soon wilt thou rule as empress o'er

My noble house unvext before.But then to wild confusion left,  
p. 106

Of Ráma and of me bereft.If Bharat to thy plan consentAnd long for Ráma's banishment,Ne'er let his hands presume to payThe funeral honours to my clayVile foe, thou cause of all mine ill,Obtain at last thy cursed will.A widow soon shalt thou enjoyThe sweets of empire with thy boy.O Princess, sure some evil fateFirst brought thee here to devastate,In whom the night of ruin liesVeiled in a consort's fair disguise.The scorn of all and deepest shameWill long pursue my hated name,And dire disgrace on me will press,Misled by thee to wickedness.How shall my Ráma, whom, before,His elephant or chariot bore,Now with his feet, a wanderer, treadThe forest wilds around him spread?How shall my son, to please whose taste,The deftest cooks, with earrings graced,With rivalry and jealous care

The dainty meal and cates prepare--How shall he now his life sustain  
 With acid fruit and woodland grain?He spends his time unvext by cares,  
 And robes of precious texture wears:How shall he, with one garment round  
 His limbs recline upon the ground?Whose was this plan, this cruel  
 thoughtUnheard till now, with ruin fraught,To make thy son Ayodhyá's  
 king,And send my Ráma wandering?Shame, shame on women! Vile, untrue,  
 Their selfish ends they still pursue.Not all of womankind I mean.  
 But more than all this wicked queen. O worthless, cruel, selfish dame,  
 I brought thee home, my plague and woe. What fault in me hast thou to blame,  
 Or in my son who loves thee so? Fond wives may from their husbands  
 flee, And fathers may their sons desert, But all the world would  
 rave to see My Ráma touched with deadly hurt. I joy his very step  
 to hear, As though his godlike form I viewed; And when I see my  
 Ráma near I feel my youth again renewed. There might be life  
 without the sun, Yea, e'en if Indra sent no rain,

But, were my Ráma banished, none Would, so I think, alive remain.  
 A foe that longs my life to take, I brought thee here my death to be,  
 Caressed thee long, a venomed snake, And through my folly die, Ah me!  
 Ráma and me and Lakshman slay, And then with Bharat rule the state;  
 So bring the kingdom to decay, And fawn on those thy lord who hate,  
 Plotter of woe, for evil bred, For such a speech why do not all Thy  
 teeth from out thy wicked head Split in a thousand pieces fall? My  
 Ráma's words are ever kind, He knows not how to speak in ire: Then  
 how canst thou presume to find A fault in him whom all admire?  
 Yield to despair, go mad, or die, Or sink within the rifted earth;  
 Thy fell request will I deny, Thou shamer of thy royal birth. Thy  
 longer life I scarce can bear, Thou ruin of my home and race, Who  
 wouldst my heart and heartstrings tear, Keen as a razor, false and  
 base. My life is gone, why speak of joy? For what, without my son,  
 were sweet? Spare, lady, him thou canst destroy;

I pray thee as I touch thy feet.' He fell and wept with wild  
 complaint. Heart-struck by her presumptuous speech, But could not  
 touch, so weak and faint, The cruel feet he strove to reach.

Footnotes

104:1 This story is told in the Mahábhárat. A free  
 version of it may be found in Scenes from the Rámáyan,  
 etc.

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CANTO XIII.: DAS'ARATHA'S DISTRESS.

Unworthy of his mournful fate,  
 The mighty king, unfortunate,Lay prostrate in unseemly guise,As, banished  
 from the blissful skies,Yayáti, in his evil day.His merit all exhausted,  
 lay.

1

The queen, triumphant in the powerWon by her beauty's fatal dower,Still  
 terrible and unsubdued,Her dire demand again renewed:'Great Monarch,'twas  
 thy boast till nowTo love the truth and keep the vow;Then wherefore would  
 thy lips refuseThe promised boon 'tis mine to choose?' King Das'aratha,  
 thus addressed,With anger raging in his breast,Sank for a while beneath  
 the pain,Then to Kaikeyí spoke again:

p. 107

'Childless so long, at length I won,With mighty toil, from Heaven a  
 son,Ráma, the mighty-armed; and howShall I desert my darling now?  
 A scholar wise, a hero bold,Of patient mood, with wrath controlled,How  
 can I bid my Ráma fly,My darling of the lotus eye?In heaven itself I  
 scarce could bear,When asking of my Ráma there,To hear the Gods his  
 griefs declare,And O, that death would take me henceBefore I wrong his  
 innocence!'

As thus the monarch wept and wailed,

And maddening grief his heart assailed, The sun had sought his resting-place, And night was closing round apace. But yet the moon-crowned night could bring no comfort to the wretched king. As still he mourned with burning sighs and fixed his gaze upon the skies: 'O Night whom starry fires adorn, I long not for the coming morn. Be kind and show some mercy: see, my suppliant hands are raised to thee. Nay, rather fly with swifter pace; no longer would I see the face of Queen Kaikeyí, cruel, dread, who brings this woe upon mine head.' Again with suppliant hands he tried to move the queen, and wept and sighed: 'To me, unhappy me, inclined to good, sweet dame, thou shouldst be kind; whose life is well-nigh fled, who cling to thee for succour, me thy king. This, only this, is all my claim: Have mercy, O my lovely dame. None else have I to take my part. Have mercy: thou art good at heart. Hear, lady of the soft black eye. And win a name that ne'er shall die: Let Ráma rule this glorious land, the gift of thine imperial hand. O lady of the dainty waist, with eyes and lips of beauty graced, please Ráma, me, each saintly priest, Bharat, and all from chief to least.'

She heard his wild and mournful cry,

She saw the tears his speech that broke, Saw her good husband's reddened eye, But, cruel still, no word she spoke. His eyes upon her face he bent, And sought for mercy, but in vain: She claimed his darling's banishment, He swooned upon the ground again.

Footnotes 106:1 Only the highest merit obtains a home in heaven for ever. Minor degrees of merit procure only leases of heavenly mansions terminable after periods proportioned to the fund which buys them. King Yayáti went to heaven and when his term expired was unceremoniously ejected, and thrown down to earth.

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CANTO XIV.: RÁMA SUMMONED.

The wicked queen her speech renewed, When rolling on the earth she viewed Ikshváku's son, Ayodhyá's king, For his dear Ráma sorrowing: 'Why, by a simple promise bound, liest thou prostrate on the ground, as though a grievous sin dismayed thy spirit! Why so sore afraid? Keep still thy word. The righteous deem that truth, mid duties, is supreme: And now in truth and honour's name I bid thee own the binding claim. S'aivya, a king whom earth obeyed, once to a hawk a promise made, gave to the bird his flesh and bone, and by his truth made heaven his own.'

1

Alarka, when a Bráhmaṇ famed for Scripture lore his promise claimed, tore from his head his bleeding eyes and unreluctant gave the prize. His narrow bounds prescribed restrain the Rivers' Lord, the mighty main, who, though his waters boil and rave, keeps faithful to the word he gave. Truth all religion comprehends, Through all the world its might extends: In truth alone is justice placed, on truth the words of God are based; a life in truth unchanging past will bring the highest bliss at last. If thou the right would still pursue, be constant to thy word and true: Let me thy promise fruitful see, for boons, O King, proceed from thee. Now to preserve thy righteous fame, and yielding to my earnest claim--Thrice I repeat it--send thy child, Thy Ráma, to the forest wild. But if the boon thou still deny, before thy face, forlorn, I die.'

Thus was the helpless monarch stung

By Queen Kaikeyí's fearless tongue, As Bali strove in vain to loose his limbs from Indra's fatal noose. Dismayed in soul and pale with fear, the monarch, like a trembling steer between the chariot's wheel and yoke, again to Queen Kaikeyí spoke, with sad eyes fixt in vacant stare, gathering courage from despair: 'That hand I took, thou sinful dame, with texts, before the sacred flame, thee and thy son, I scorn and hate,

And all at once repudiate.

p. 108

The night is fled: the dawn is near: Soon will the holy priests be here To bid me for the rite prepare That with my son the throne will share, The preparation made to grace My Ráma in his royal place-- With this, e'en this, my darling for My death the funeral flood shall pour. Thou and thy son at least forbear In offerings to my shade to share, For by the plot thy guile has laid His consecration will be stayed. This very day how shall I brook To meet each subject's altered look? To mark each gloomy joyless brow That was so bright and glad but now?'

While thus the high-souled monarch spoke

To the stern queen, the Morning broke, And holy night had slowly fled, With moon and stars engarlanded. Yet once again the cruel queen Spoke words in answer fierce and keen, Still on her evil purpose bent, Wild with her rage and eloquent:

'What speech is this? Such words as these Seem sprung from poison-sown disease. Quick to thy noble Ráma send And bid him on his sire attend. When to my son the rule is given; When Ráma to the woods is driven; When not a rival copes with me, From chains of duty thou art free.'

Thus goaded, like a generous steed

Urged by sharp spurs to double speed, 'My senses are astray,' he cried, 'And duty's bonds my hands have tied. I long to see mine eldest son, My virtuous, my beloved one.'

And now the night had past away;

Out shone the Maker of the Day, Bringing the planetary hour And moment of auspicious power. Vas'ishtha, virtuous, far renowned, Whose young disciples girt him round, With sacred things without delay Through the fair city took his way. He traversed, where the people thronged. And all for Ráma's coming longed, The town as fair in festive show As his who lays proud cities low.

He reached the palace where he heard

The mingled notes of many a bird, Where crowded thick high-honoured bands Of guards with truncheons in their hands. Begirt by many a sage, elate, Vas'ishtha reached the royal gate,

And standing by the door he found

Sumantra, for his form renowned, The king's illustrious charioteer And noble counsellor and peer. To him well skilled in every part Of his hereditary art Vas'ishtha said: 'O charioteer, Inform the king that I am here, Here ready by my side behold These sacred vessels made of gold, Which water for the rite contain From Gangá and each distant main. Here for installing I have brought The seat prescribed of fig-wood wrought, All kinds of seed and precious scent And many a gem and ornament; Grain, sacred grass, the garden's spoil, Honey and curds and milk and oil; Eight radiant maids, the best of all War elephants that feed in stall; A four-horse car, a bow and sword. A litter, men to bear their lord; A white umbrella bright and fair

That with the moon may well compare; Two chouries of the whitest hair; A golden beaker rich and rare; A bull high-humped and fair to view, Girt with gold bands and white of hue; A four-toothed steed with flowing mane, A throne which lions carved sustain; A tiger's skin, the sacred fire, Fresh kindled, which the rites require; The best musicians skilled to play, And dancing-girls in raiment gay; Kine, Bráhmans, teachers fill the court, And bird and beast of purest sort. From town and village, far and near, The noblest men are gathered here; Here merchants with their followers crowd, And men in joyful converse loud, And kings from many a distant land To view the consecration stand. The dawn is come, the lucky day; Go bid the monarch haste away, That now Prince Ráma may obtain The empire, and begin his reign.'

Soon as he heard the high behest

The driver of the chariot pressed Within the chambers of the king, His lord with praises honouring. And none of all the warders checked

His entrance for their great respect  
Of him well known, in place so  
high, Still fain their king to gratify.  
He stood beside the royal  
chief, Unwitting of his deadly grief,  
And with sweet words began to sing  
The praises of his lord and king: 'As, when the sun begins to rise, The  
sparkling sea delights our eyes, Wake, calm with gentle soul, and thus  
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Give rapture, mighty King, to us. As Mátali  
1 this selfsame hour

Sang lauds of old to Indra's power, When he the Titan hosts o'erthrew, So  
hymn I thee with praises due. The Vedas, with their kindred lore, Brahma  
their soul-born Lord adore, With all the doctrines of the wise, And bid  
him, as I bid thee, rise. As, with the moon, the Lord of Day Wakes with the  
splendour of his ray Prolific Earth, who neath him lies, So, mighty King, I  
bid thee rise. With blissful words, O Lord of men, Rise, radiant in thy  
form, as when The sun ascending darts his light  
From Meru's everlasting height. May Ēiva, Agni, Sun, and Moon Bestow on  
thee each choicest boon, Kuvera, Varun, Indra bless Kakutstha's son with  
all success. Awake, the holy night is fled, The happy light abroad is  
spread; Awake, O best of kings, and share The glorious task that claims thy  
care. The holy sage Vāishtha waits, With all his Bráhmans, at the gate Give  
thy decree, without delay, To consecrate thy son today. As armies, by no  
captain led, As flocks that feed unshepherded, Such is the fortune of a  
state Without a king and desolate.' Such were the words the bard  
addressed, With weight of sage advice impressed; And, as he heard, the  
hapless king Felt deeper yet his sorrow's sting. At length, all joy and  
comfort fled, He raised his eyes with weeping red, And, mournful for his  
Ráma's sake. The good and glorious monarch spake: 'Why seek with idle  
praise to greet The wretch for whom no praise is meet! Thy words mine  
aching bosom tear, And plunge me deeper in despair.'

Sumantra heard the sad reply, And saw his master's tearful eye. With  
reverent palm to palm applied He drew a little space aside. Then, as the  
king, with misery weak, With vain endeavour strove to speak, Kaikeyí,  
skilled in plot and plan, To sage Sumantra thus began: 'The king, absorbed  
in joyful thought For his dear son, no rest has sought: Sleepless to him  
the night has past, And now o'erwatched he sinks at last Then go, Sumantra,  
and with speed

The glorious Ráma hither lead:

Go, as I pray, nor longer wait; No time is this to hesitate.' 'How can I  
go, O Ladv fair, Unless my lord his will declare?' 'Fain would I see  
him,' cried the king, 'Quick, quick, my beauteous Ráma bring.' Then rose  
the happy thought to cheer The bosom of the charioteer, 'The king, I ween,  
of pious mind. The consecration has designed.' Sumantra for his wisdom  
famed, Delighted with the thought he framed, From the calm chamber, like a  
bay Of crowded ocean, took his way.

He turned his face to neither side, But forth he hurried  
straight; Only a little while he eyed The guards who kept the gate. He saw  
in front a gathered crowd Of men of every class, Who, parting as he came,  
allowed The charioteer to pass.

Footnotes

107:1 See Additional Notes, THE SUPPLIANT DOVE.

108:1 Indra, called also Purandara, Town destroyer.

109:1 Indra's charioteer.

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CANTO XV.: THE PREPARATIONS.

There slept the Bráhmans, deeply read  
In Scripture, till the night had fled; Then, with the royal chaplains,  
they Took each his place in long array. There gathered fast the chiefs of  
trade, Nor peer nor captain long delayed, Assembling all in order due The  
consecrating rite to view. The morning dawned with cloudless ray On



Pushya's high auspicious day, And Cancer with benignant power  
Looked down on Ráma's natal hour. The twice-born chiefs, with zealous heed,  
Made ready what the rite would need. The well-wrought throne of holy wood  
And golden urns in order stood. There was the royal chair whereon  
A tiger's skin resplendent shone; There water, brought for sprinkling thence  
When, in their sacred confluence, Blend. Jumná's waves with Gangá's tide,  
From many a holy flood beside, From brook and fountain far and near,  
From pool and river, sea and mere. And there were honey, curd, and oil,  
Parched rice and grass, the garden's spoil, Fresh milk, eight girls in  
bright attire, An elephant with eyes of tire; And urns of gold and silver  
made, With milky branches overlaid, All brimming from each sacred flood,  
And decked with many a lotus bud

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And dancing-women fair and free, Gay with their gems, were there to  
see, Who stood in bright apparel by With lovely brow and witching eye. White  
flashed the jewelled chouri there, And shone like moonbeams through the  
air; The white umbrella overhead A pale and moonlike lustre shed,  
Wont in pure splendour to precede, And in such rites the pomp to lead.  
There stood the charger by the side Of the great bull of snow-white hide;  
There was all music soft and loud, And bards and minstrels swelled the crowd.  
For now the monarch bade combine Each custom of his ancient line  
With every rite Ayodhyá's state Observed, her kings to consecrate.  
Then, summoned by the king's behest,

The multitudes together pressed, And, missing still the royal sire, Began,  
impatient, to inquire: 'Who to our lord will tidings bear That all his  
people throng the square? Where is the king? the sun is bright, And all is  
ready for the rite.'

As thus they spoke, Sumantra, tried

In counsel, to the chiefs replied, Gathered from lands on every side: 'To  
Ráma's house I swiftly drave, For so the king his mandate gave. Our aged  
lord and Ráma too In honour high hold all of you: I in your words (be long  
your days!) Will ask him why he thus delays.'

Thus spoke the peer in Scripture read,

And to the ladies' bower he sped. Quick through the gates Sumantra  
hied, Which access ne'er to him denied. Behind the curtained screen he  
drew, Which veiled the chamber from the view. In benediction loud he  
raised His voice, and thus the monarch praised: 'Sun, Moon, Kuvera, S'iva  
bless Kakutstha's son with high success!

The Lords of air, flood, fire decree The victory, my King, to thee! The  
holy night has past away, Auspicious shines the morning's ray. Rise, Lord  
of men, thy part to take In the great rite. Awake! awake! Bráhmans and  
captains, chiefs of trade, All wait in festive garb arrayed; For thee they  
look with eager eyes: O Raghu's son, awake! arise.'

To him in holy Scripture read,

Who hailed him thus, the monarch said, Upraising from his sleep his  
head: 'Go. Ráma hither lead as thou wilt (illegible) but now. Come, tell me why  
my mandate laid Upon thee thus is disobeyed. Away! and Ráma hither bring; I  
sleep not: make no tarrying.'

Thus gave the king command anew:

Sumantra from his lord withdrew; With head in lowly reverence bent, And  
filled with thoughts of joy, he went, The royal street he traversed,  
where Waved flag and pennon to the air, And, as with joy the car he  
drove, He let his eyes delighted rove.

On every side, where'er he came, He heard glad words, their theme the  
same, As in their joy the gathered folk Of Ráma and the throning spoke. Then  
saw he Ráma's palace bright And vast as Mount Kailása's height, That  
glorious in its beauty showed As Indra's own supreme abode: With folding  
doors both high and wide; With hundred porches beautified: Where golden  
statues towering rose O'er gemmed and coralled porticoes Bright like a cave  
in Meru's side, Or clouds through Autumn's sky that ride: Festooned with

length of bloomy twine, Flashing with pearls and jewels' shine, While  
sandal-wood and aloe lent The mingled riches of their scent; With all the  
odorous sweets that fill The breezy heights of Dardar's hill. There by the  
gate the Sáras screamed, And shrill-toned peacocks' plumage gleamed. Its  
floors with deftest art inlaid, Its sculptured wolves in gold arrayed, With  
its bright sheen the palace took The mind of man and chained the look, For  
like the sun and moon it glowed, And mocked Kuvera's loved abode. Circling  
the walls a crowd he viewed

Who stood in reverent attitude, With throngs of countrymen who  
sought Acceptance of the gifts they brought. The elephant was stationed  
there, Appointed Ráma's self to bear; Adorned with pearls, his brow and  
cheek Were sandal-dyed in many a streak, While he, in stature, bulk, and  
pride, With Indra's own Airávat

l vied.

Sumantra, borne by coursers fleet, Flashing a radiance o'er the street,  
To Ráma's palace flew, And all who lined the royal road, Or thronged the  
prince's rich abode, Rejoiced as near he drew. And with delight his  
bosom swelled As onward still his course he held

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Through many a sumptuous court Like Indra's palace nobly made, Where  
peacocks revelled in the shade, And beasts of silvan sort. Through many  
a hall and chamber wide, That with Kailása's splendour vied. Or mansions  
of the Blest, While Ráma's friends, beloved and tried, Before his coming  
stepped aside,

Still on Sumantra pressed. He reached the chamber door, where  
stood Around his followers young and good, Bard, minstrel, charioteer, Well  
skilled the tuneful chords to sweep, With soothing strain to lull to  
sleep, Or laud their master dear. Then, like a dolphin darting  
through Unfathomed depths of ocean's blue With store of jewels  
decked, Through crowded halls that rock-like rose, Or as proud hills where  
clouds repose, Sumantra sped unchecked--Halls like the glittering domes  
on high Reared for the dwellers of the sky By heavenly architect.

Footnotes

110:1 The elephant of Indra.

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CANTO XVI.: RÁMA SUMMONED.

So through the crowded inner door

Sumantra, skilled in ancient lore, On to the private chambers pressed Which  
stood apart from all the rest. There youthful warriors, true and  
bold, Whose ears were ringed with polished gold, All armed with trusty bows  
and darts, Watched with devoted eyes and hearts. And hoary men, a faithful  
train, Whose aged hands held staves of cane, The ladies' guard, apparelled  
fair In red attire, were stationed there. Soon as they saw Sumantra  
nigh, Each longed his lord to gratify, And from his seat beside the door Up  
sprang each ancient servitor. Then to the warders quickly cried The skilled  
Sumantra, void of pride: 'Tell Ráma that the charioteer Sumantra waits for  
audience here.' The ancient men with one accord Seeking the pleasure of  
their lord, Passing with speed the chamber door To Ráma's ear the message  
bore. Forthwith the prince with duteous heed

Called in the messenger with speed, For 'twas his sire's command, he  
knew, That sent him for the interview. Like Lord Kuvera, well arrayed, He  
pressed a couch of gold, Wherefrom a covering of brocade Hung down in  
many a fold. Oil and the sandal's fragrant dust Had tinged his body  
o'er Dark as the stream the spearman's thrust Drains from the wounded  
boar. Him Sítá watched with tender care, A chouri in her hand, As Chitrá,  
l ever fond in fair,

Beside the Moon will stand. Him glorious with unborrowed light, A  
liberal lord, of sunlike might, Sumantra hailed in words like these, Well  
skilled in gentle courtesies, As, with joined hands in reverence

raised, Upon the beauteous prince he gazed: 'Happy Kaus'alyá! Blest is she, The Mother of a son like thee. Now rise, O Ráma, speed away. Go to thy sire without delay: For he and Queen Kaikeyí seek An interview with thee to speak.' The lion-lord of men, the best Of splendid heroes, thus addressed, To Sítá spake with joyful cheer: 'The king and queen, my lady dear, Touching the throning, for my sake Some salutary counsel take. The lady of the full black eye Would fain her husband gratify, And, all his purpose understood, Counsels the monarch to my good. A happy fate is mine, I ween, When he, consulting with his queen, Sumantra on this charge, intent Upon my gain and good, has sent. An envoy of so noble sort Well suits the splendour of the court. The consecration rite this day Will join me in imperial sway. To meet the lord of earth, for so His order bids me, I will go. Thou, lady, here in comfort stay, And with thy maidens rest or play.'

Thus Ráma spake. For meet reply

The lady of the large black eye Attended to the door her lord, And blessings on his head implored: 'The majesty and royal state Which holy Bráhmans venerate, The consecration and the rite Which sanctifies the ruler's might, And all imperial powers should be Thine by thy father's high decree, As He, the worlds who formed and planned, The kingship gave to Indra's hand.

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Then shall mine eyes my king adore When lustral rites and fast are o'er, And black deer's skin and roebuck's horn Thy lordly limbs and hand adorn. May He whose hands the thunder wield Be in the east thy guard and shield; May Yama's care the south befriend, And Varun's arm the west defend; And let Kuvera, Lord of Gold, The north with firm protection hold.'

Then Ráma spoke a kind farewell, And hailed the blessings as they fell From Sítá's gentle lips; and then, As a young lion from his den Descends the mountain's stony side, So from the hall the hero hied. First Lakshman at the door he viewed Who stood in reverent attitude, Then to the central court he pressed Where watched the friends who loved him best.

To all his dear companions there He gave kind looks and greeting fair. On to the lofty car that glowed Like fire the royal tiger strode. Bright as himself its silver shone: A tiger's skin was laid thereon. With cloudlike thunder, as it rolled, It flashed with gems and burnished gold, And, like the sun's meridian blaze, Blinded the eye that none could gaze. Like youthful elephants, tall and strong, Fleet coursers whirled the car along: In such a car the Thousand-eyed Borne by swift horses loves to ride. So like Parjanya,

1 when he flies

Thundering through the autumn skies, The hero from the palace sped, As leaves the moon some cloud o'erhead. Still close to Ráma Lakshman kept, Behind him to the car he leapt, And, watching with fraternal care, Waved the long chouri's silver hair, As from the palace gate he came Up rose the tumult of acclaim. While loud huzza and jubilant shout Pealed from the gathered myriads out. Then elephants, like mountains vast, And steeds who all their kind surpassed, Followed their lord by hundreds, nay

By thousands, led in long array. First marched a band of warriors trained, With sandal dust and aloe stained; Well armed was each with sword and bow, And every breast with hope aglow, And ever, as they onward went, Shouts from the warrior train, And every sweet-toned instrument Prolonged the minstrel strain.

On passed the tamer of his foes,

While well clad dames, in crowded rows, Each chamber lattice thronged to view, And chaplets on the hero threw. Then all, of peerless face and limb, Sang Ráma's praise for love of him, And blent their voices, soft and sweet. From palace high and crowded street: 'Now, sure, Kaus'alyá's heart

must swellTo see the son she loves so well,Thee Ráma, thee, her joy and  
pride,Triumphant o'er the realm preside.'Then--for they knew his bride  
most fairOf all who part the soft dark hair,His love, his life, possessed  
the wholeOf her young hero's heart and soul:--'Be sure the lady's fate  
repaysSome mighty vow of ancient days,

1bFor blest with Ráma's love is she

As, with the Moon's, sweet Rohiní.' 2b

Such were the witching words that cameFrom lips of many a peerless  
dameCrowding the palace roofs to greetThe hero as he gained the street.

Footnotes

111:1 A star in the spike of Virgo: hence the name of  
the month Chaitra at Chait.

112:1 The Rain-God.

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CANTO XVII.: RÁMA'S APPROACH.

As Ráma, rendering blithe and gay

His loving friends, pursued his way,He saw on either hand a pressOf  
mingled people numberless.The royal street he traversed, whereIncense of  
aloe filled the air,Where rose high palaces, that viedWith paly clouds,  
on either side;With flowers of myriad colours graced.And food for every  
varied taste,Bright as the glowing path o'erheadWhich feet of Gods  
celestial tread,Loud benedictions, sweet to hear,From countless voices  
soothed his ear.While he to each gave due saluteHis place and dignity to  
suit:'Be thou,' the joyful people cried,'Be thou our guardian, lord and  
guide.Throned and anointed king to-day,Thy feet set forth upon the  
wayWherein, each honoured as a God,Thy fathers and forefathers trod.Thy  
sire and his have graced the throne,And loving care to us have shown:Thus  
blest shall we and ours remain,  
Yea still more blest in Ráma's reign.

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No more of dainty fare we need,And but one cherished object heed,That we  
may see our prince todayInvested with imperial sway.

Such were the words and pleasant speech

That Ráma heard, unmoved, from eachOf the dear friends around him  
spread,As onward through the street he sped,For none could turn his eye  
or thoughtFrom the dear form his glances sought,With fruitless ardour  
forward castEven when Raghu's son had past.And he who saw not Ráma  
nigh,Nor caught a look from Ráma's eye,A mark for scorn and general  
blame,Reproached himself in bitter shame,For to each class his equal  
mindWith sympathy and love inclinedMost fully of the princely four;So  
greatest love to him they bore.

His circling course the hero bent

Round shrine and altar, reverent,Round homes of Gods, where cross-roads  
met,

Where many a sacred tree was set.Near to his father's house he drewLike  
Indra's beautiful to view,And with the light his glory gaveWithin the  
royal palace drive.Through three broad courts, where bowmen keptTheir  
watch and ward, his coursers swept,Then through the two remaining wentOn  
foot the prince pre?inent.Through all the courts the hero passed,And  
gained the ladies' bower at last;Then through the door alone withdrew,And  
left without his retinue.When thus the monarch's noble boy Had gone his  
sire to meet,The multitude, elate with joy, Stood watching in the  
street,And his return with eager eyes Expected at the gates,As for his  
darling moon to rise The King of Rivers

1 waits.

Footnotes

112:1b In a former life.112:2b One of the lunar asterisms, represented as  
the

favourite wife of the Moon. See p. 4, note.

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CANTO XVIII.: THE SENTENCE.

With hopeless eye and pallid mien

There sat the monarch with the queen.His father's feet with reverence  
dueHe clasped, and touched Kaikey's too.The king, with eyes still  
brimming o'er,Cried 'Rāma!' and could do no more.

His voice was choked, his eye was dim,

He could not speak or look on him.Then sudden fear made Rāma shakeAs  
though his foot had roused a snake,Soon as his eyes had seen the changeSo  
mournful, terrible, and strange.For there his reason well-nigh  
fled,Sighing, with soul disquieted,    To torturing pangs a prey,Dismayed,  
despairing, and distraught,In a fierce whirl of wildering thought    The  
hapless monarch lay,Like Ocean wave-engarlandedStorm-driven from his  
tranquil bed,    The Sun-God in eclipse,Or like a holy seer, heart-  
stirredWith anguish, when a lying word    Has passed his heedless lips.  
The sight of his dear father, painedWith woe and misery unexplained  
Filled Rāma with unrest,As Ocean's pulses rise and swellWhen the great  
moon he loves so well    Shines full upon his breast.So grieving for his  
father's sake,To his own heart the hero spake:'Why will the king my sire  
to-dayNo kindly word of greeting say?At other times, though wroth he  
be,His eyes grow calm that look on me.Then why does anguish wring his  
browTo see his well-beloved now?'Sick and perplexed, distraught with  
woe,To Queen Kaikeyi bowing low,While pallor o'er his bright cheek  
spread,With humble reverence he said:'What have I done, unknown, amissTo  
make my father wroth like this?Declare it, O dear Queen, and winHis  
pardon for my heedless sin.Why is the sire I ever findFilled with all  
love to-day unkind?With eyes cast down and pallid cheekThis day alone he  
will not speak.Or lies he prostrate 'neath the blowOf fierce disease or  
sudden woe?For all our bliss is dashed with pain,  
And joy unmixt is hard to gain.Does stroke of evil fortune smiteDear  
Bharat, charming to the sight,Or on the brave S'atrughna fall,Or  
consorts, for he loves them all?Against his words when I rebel,Or fail to  
please the monarch well,When deeds of mine his soul offend,That hour I  
pray my life may end.How should a man to him who gaveHis being and his  
life behave?The sire to whom he owes his birthShould be his deity on  
earth.Hast thou, by pride and folly moved,

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With bitter taunt the king reproved?Has scorn of thine or cruel jestTo  
passion stirred his gentle breast?Speak truly, Queen, that I may knowWhat  
cause has changed the monarch so.'

Thus by the high-souled prince addressed,

Of Raghu's sons the chief and best,She cast all ruth and shame aside,And  
bold with greedy words replied:'Not wrath, O Rāma, stirs the king,Nor  
misery stabs with sudden sting;

One thought that fills his soul has he,But dares not speak for fear of  
thee.Thou art so dear, his lips refrainFrom words that might his darling  
pain.But thou, as duty bids, must stillThe promise of thy sire fulfil.He  
who to me in days gone byVouchsafed a boon with honours high,Dares now, a  
king, his word regret,And caitiff-like disowns the debt.The lord of men  
his promise gaveTo grant the boon that I might crave,And now a bridge  
would idly throwWhen the dried stream has ceased to flow.His faith the  
monarch must not breakIn wrath, or e'en for thy dear sake.From faith, as  
well the righteous know,Our virtue and our merits flow.Now, be they good  
or be they ill,Do thou thy father's words fulfil:Swear that his promise  
shall not fail,And I will tell thee all the tale.Yes, Rāma, when I hear  
that thouHast bound thee by thy father's vow,Then, not till then, my lips  
shall speak,Nor will he tell what boon I seek.'

He heard, and with a troubled breastThis answer to the queen addressed:

'Ah me, dear lady, canst thou deem  
That words like these thy lips  
beseem? I, at the bidding of my sire,  
Would cast my body to the fire,  
A deadly draught of poison drink,  
Or in the waves of ocean sink:  
If he command, it shall be done,  
--My father and my king in one.  
Then speak and let me know the thing  
So longed for by my lord the king.  
It shall be done: let this suffice;  
Ráma ne'er makes a promise twice.'

He ended. To the princely youth

Who loved the right and spoke the truth,  
Cruel, abominable came the answer  
of the ruthless dame: 'When Gods and Titans fought of yore,  
Transfixed with darts and bathed in gore  
Two boons to me thy father gave  
For the dear life 'twas mine to save.  
Of him I claim the ancient debt,  
That Bharat on the throne be set,  
And thou, O Ráma, go this day  
To Dandak forest far away.  
Now, Ráma, if thou wilt maintain  
Thy father's faith without a stain,  
And thine own truth and honour clear,  
Then, best of men, my bidding hear.

Do thou thy father's word obey,  
Nor from the pledge he gave me stray.  
Thy life in Dandak forest spend  
Till nine long years and five shall end.  
Upon my Bharat's princely head  
Let consecrating drops be shed,  
With all the royal pomp for thee  
Made ready by the king's decree.  
Seek Dandak forest and resign  
Rites that would make the empire thine,  
For twice seven years of exile wear  
The coat of bark and matted hair.  
Then in thy stead let Bharat reign  
Lord of his royal sire's domain,  
Rich in the fairest gems that shine,  
Cars, elephants, and steeds, and kine.  
The monarch mourns thy altered fate  
And veils his brow compassionate:  
Bowed down by bitter grief he lies  
And dares not lift to thine his eyes.  
Obey his word: be firm and brave,  
And with great truth the monarch save.'

While thus with cruel words she spoke,  
No grief the noble youth betrayed;  
But forth the father's anguish broke,  
At his dear Ráma's lot dismayed.

Footnotes 113:1 The Sea.

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#### CANTO XIX.: RÁMA'S PROMISE.

Calm and unmoved by threatened woe

The noble conqueror of the foe  
Answered the cruel words she spoke,  
Nor quailed beneath the murderous stroke:

Yea, for my father's promise sake

I to the wood my way will take,  
And dwell a lonely exile there  
In hermit dress with matted hair.  
One thing alone I fain would learn,  
Why is the king this day so stern?  
Why is the scourge of foes so cold,  
Nor gives me greeting as of old?  
Now let not anger flush thy cheek:  
Before thy face the truth I speak,  
In hermit's coat with matted hair  
To the wild wood will I repair.  
How can I fail his will to do,  
Friend, master, grateful sovereign too?  
One only pang consumes my breast.  
That his own lips have not expressed  
His will, nor made his longing known  
That Bharat should ascend the throne.

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To Bharat I would yield my wife,  
My realm and wealth, mine own dear life,  
Unasked I fain would yield them all:  
More gladly at my father's call,  
More gladly when the gift may free  
His honour and bring joy to thee.  
Thus, lady, his sad heart release  
From the sore shame, and give him peace.  
But tell me, O, I pray thee, why  
The lord of men, with downcast eye,  
Lies prostrate thus, and one by one  
Down his pale cheek the tear-drops run.  
Let couriers to thy father speed  
On horses of the swiftest breed,  
And, by the mandate of the king,  
Thy Bharat to his presence bring.  
My father's words I will not stay  
To question, but this very day  
To Dandak's pathless wild will fare,  
For twice seven years an exile there.'

When Ráma thus had made reply

Kaikeyi's heart with joy beat high.  
She, trusting to the pledge she held,  
The youth's departure thus impelled:  
'Tis well. Be messengers despatched  
On coursers ne'er for fleetness matched,  
To seek my father's home and lead

My Bharat back with all their speed. And, Ráma, as I ween that thou wilt scarce endure to linger now, So surely it were wise and good This hour to journey to the wood. And if, with shame cast down and weak, No word to thee the king can speak, Forgive, and from thy mind dismiss A trifle in an hour like this. But till thy feet in rapid haste Have left the city for the waste, And to the distant forest fled, He will not bathe nor call for bread.'

'Woe! woe!' from the sad monarch burst,  
In surging floods of grief immersed; Then swooning, with his wits astray, Upon the gold-wrought couch he lay, And Ráma raised the aged king: But the stern queen, unpitying, Checked not her needless words, nor spared The hero for all speed prepared, But urged him with her bitter tongue, Like a good horse with lashes stung. She spoke her shameful speech. Serene He heard the fury of the queen, And to her words so vile and dread Gently, unmoved in mind, he said: 'I would not in this world remain A grovelling thrall to paltry gain, But duty's path would fain pursue, True as the saints themselves are true. From death itself I would not fly My father's wish to gratify. What deed so'er his loving son May do to please him, think it done. Amid all duties, Queen, I count This duty first and paramount, That sons, obedient, aye fulfil Their honoured fathers' word and will. Without his word, if thou decree, Forth to the forest will I flee, And there shall fourteen years be spent Mid lonely wilds in banishment. Methinks thou couldst not hope to find One spark of virtue in my mind, If thou, whose wish is still my lord, Hast for this grace the king implored. This day I go, but, ere we part, Must cheer my Sítá's tender heart. To my dear mother bid farewell; Then to the woods, a while to dwell. With thee, O Queen, the care must rest That Bharat hear his sire's behest, And guard the land with righteous sway, For such the law that lives for aye.' In speechless woe the father heard, Wept with loud cries, but spoke no word. Then Ráma touched his senseless feet, And hers, for honour most unmeet; Round both his circling steps he bent, Then from the bower the hero went. Soon as he reached the gate he found His dear companions gathered round. Behind him came Sumitrás child With weeping eyes so sad and wild. Then saw he all that rich array Of vases for the glorious day. Round them with reverent stops he paced, Nor veiled his eye, nor moved in haste. The loss of empire could not dim The glory that encompassed him. So will the Lord of Cooling Rays

1

On whom the world delights to gaze, Through the great love of all retain Sweet splendour in the time of wane. Now to the exile's lot resigned He left the rule of earth behind: As though all worldly cares he spurned No trouble was in him discerned. The chouries that for kings are used, And white umbrella, he refused, Dismissed his chariot and his men, And every friend and citizen. He ruled his senses, nor betrayed The grief that on his bosom weighed, And thus his mother's mansion sought To tell the mournful news he brought. Nor could the gay-clad people there Who flocked round Ráma true and fair, One sign of altered fortune trace Upon the splendid hero's face. Nor had the chieftain, mighty-armed. Lost the bright look all hearts that charmed,

p. 116

As e'en from autumn moons is thrown A splendour which is all their own. With his sweet voice the hero spoke Saluting all the gathered folk, Then righteous-souled and great in fame Close to his mother's house he came. Lakshman the brave, his brother's peer In princely virtues, followed near, Sore troubled, but resolved to show No token of his secret woe. Thus to the palace Ráma went Where all were gay with hope and joy; But well he knew the dire event That hope would mar, that bliss destroy. So to his grief he would not yield Lest the sad change their

hearts might rend, And, the dread tiding unrevealed,      Spared from the  
blow each faithful friend.

Footnotes

115:1 The Moon.

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CANTO XX.: KAUS'ALYÁ'S LAMENT.

But in the monarch's palace, when

Sped from the bower that lord of men, Up from the weeping women went  
A mighty wail and wild lament: 'Ah, he who ever freely did His duty ere his  
sire could bid, Our refuge and our sure defence, This day will go an exile  
hence, He on Kaus'alyá loves to wait Most tender and affectionate, And as he  
treats his mother, thus From childhood has he treated us. On themes that  
sting he will not speak, And when reviled is calm and meek. He soothes the  
angry, heals offence: He goes to-day an exile hence. Our lord the king is  
most unwise, And looks on life with dotting eyes, Who in his folly casts  
away The world's protection, hope, and stay.'

Thus in their woe, like kine bereaved

Of their young calves,

1 the ladies grieved, And ever as they wept and wailed

With keen reproach the king assailed. Their lamentation, mixed with  
tears, Smote with new grief the monarch's ears, Who, burnt with woe too  
great to bear, Fell on his couch and fainted there.

Then Ráma, smitten with the pain

His heaving heart could scarce restrain, Groaned like an elephant and  
strode With Lakshman to the queen's abode. A warder there, whose hoary  
eld In honour high by all was held, Guarding the mansion, sat before The  
portal, girt with many more. Swift to their feet the warders sprang, And  
loud the acclamation rang, Hail, Ráma! as to him they bent, Of victor  
chiefs preëminent. One court he passed, and in the next Saw, masters of  
each Veda text, A crowd of Bráhmans, good and sage, Dear to the king for  
lore and age. To these he bowed his reverent head, Thence to the court  
beyond he sped. Old dames and tender girls, their care To keep the doors,  
were stationed there. And all, when Ráma came in view, Delighted to the  
chamber flew, To bear to Queen Kaus'alyás ear

The tidings that she loved to hear. The queen, on rites and prayer

intent, In careful watch the night had spent, And at the dawn, her son to  
aid, To Vishnu holy offerings made. Firm in her vows, serenely glad. In  
robes of spotless linen clad, As texts prescribe, with grace implored, Her  
offerings in the fire she poured. Within her splendid bower he came, And  
saw her feed the sacred flame There oil, and grain, and vases stood, With  
wreaths, and curds, and cates, and wood, And milk, and sesamum, and  
rice, The elements of sacrifice. She, worn and pale with many a fast And  
midnight hours in vigil past, In robes of purest white arrayed, To Lakshmi  
Queen drink-offerings paid. So long away, she flew to meet      The darling  
of her soul: So runs a mare with eager feet      To welcome back her foal. He  
with his firm support upheld      The queen, as near she drew, And, by  
maternal love impelled,      Her arms around him threw. Her hero son, her  
matchless boy      She kissed upon the head:

She blessed him in her pride and joy      With tender words, and said:

p. 117

"Be like thy royal sires of old, The nobly good, the lofty-souled! Their  
lengthened days and fame be thine, And virtue, as beseems thy line! The  
pious king, thy father, see True to his promise made to thee: That truth  
thy sire this day will show, And regent's power on thee bestow."

She spoke. He took the proffered seat,

And as she pressed her son to eat, Raised reverent bands, and, touched  
with shame, Made answer to the royal dame:

"Dear lady, thou hast yet to know



That danger threatens, and heavy woe: A grief that will with sore distress  
On Sítá, thee, and Lakshman press. What need of seats have such as I? This day  
to Dandak wood I fly. The hour is come, a time, unmeet for silken couch and  
gilded seat. I must to lonely wilds repair, Abstain from flesh, and living  
there

On roots, fruit, honey, hermit's food, Pass twice seven years in  
solitude. To Bharat's hand the king will yield The regent power I thought  
to wield, And me, a hermit, will he send My days in Dandak wood to spend."

As when the woodman's axe has lopped

A S'al branch in the grove, she dropped: So from the skies a Goddess  
falls Ejected from her radiant halls.

When Ráma saw her lying low,

Prostrate by too severe a blow, Around her form his arms he wound And  
raised her fainting from the ground. His hand upheld her like a mare Who  
feels her load too sore to bear, And sinks upon the way o'ertired, And all  
her limbs with dust are soiled. He soothed her in her wild distress With  
loving touch and soft caress. She, meet for highest fortune, eyed The hero  
watching by her side, And thus, while Lakshman bent to hear, Addressed her  
son with many a tear: "If, Ráma, thou had ne'er been born My child to make  
thy mother mourn, Though reft of joy, a childless queen,

Such woe as this I ne'er had seen. Though to the childless wife there  
clings One sorrow armed with keenest stings, 'No child have I: no child  
have I, 'No second misery prompts the sigh. When long I sought, alas, in  
vain, My husband's love and bliss to gain, In Ráma all my hopes I set And  
dreamed I might be happy yet. I, of the consorts first and best, Must bear  
my rivals' taunt and jest, And brook, though better far than they, The soul  
distressing words they say. What woman can be doomed to pine In misery more  
sore than mine, Whose hopeless days must still be spent In grief that ends  
not and lament? They scorned me when my son was nigh; When he is banished I  
must die. Me, whom my husband never prized, Kaikeyí's retinue despised With  
boundless insolence, though she Tops not in rank nor equals me. And they  
who do me service yet, Nor old allegiance quite forget, Whene'er they see  
Kaikeyí's son, With silent lips my glances shun. How, O my darling, shall I  
brook Each menace of Kaikeyí's look,

And listen, in my low estate, To taunts of one so passionate? For seventeen  
years since thou wast born I sat and watched, ah me, forlorn! Hoping some  
blessed day to see Deliverance from my woes by thee. Now comes this endless  
grief and wrong, So dire I cannot bear it long, Sinking, with age and  
sorrow worn. Beneath my rivals' taunts and scorn. How shall I pass in dark  
distress My long lone days of wretchedness Without my Ráma's face, as  
bright As the full moon to cheer my sight? Alas, my cares thy steps to  
train, And fasts, and vows, and prayers are vain. Hard, hard, I ween, must  
be this heart To hear this blow nor burst apart, As some great river bank,  
when first The floods of Rain-time on it burst. No, Fate that speeds not  
will not slay, Nor Yama's halls vouchsafe me room, Or, like a  
lion's weeping prey, Death now had borne me to my doom. Hard is my  
heart and wrought of steel That breaks not with the crushing blow,  
Or in the pangs this day I feel My lifeless frame had sunk below.  
Death waits his hour, nor takes me now:

But this sad thought augments my pain, That prayer and largess,  
fast and vow, And Heavenward service are in vain. Ah me, ah me!  
with fruitless toil Of rites austere a child I sought: Thus seed  
cast forth on barren soil Still lifeless lies and comes to naught.  
If ever wretch by anguish grieved Before his hour to death had fled,  
I mourning, like a cow bereaved, Had been this day among the dead."

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Footnotes

116:1 The comparison may to a European reader seem a  
homely one. But Spenser likens an infuriate woman to a

cow 'That is berobbed of her youngling dere.' Shakspeare also makes King Henry VI. compare himself to the calf's mother that 'Runs lowing up and down, Looking the way her harmless young one went.' 'Cows,' says De Quincey, 'are amongst the gentlest of breathing creatures; none show more passionate tenderness to their young, when deprived of them, and, in short, I am not ashamed to profess a deep love for these gentle creatures.'

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CANTO XXI.: KAUS'ALYÁ CALMED.

While thus Kaus'alyá wept and sighed.

With timely words sad Lakshman cried:'O honoured Queen I like it illThat, subject to a woman's will,Ráma his royal state should quitAnd to an exile's doom submit.The aged king, fond, changed, and weak,Will as the queen compels him speak.But why should Ráma thus be sentTo the wild woods in banishment?No least offence I find in him,I see no fault his fame to dim.Not one in all the world I know,Not outcast wretch, not secret foe,Whose whispering lips would dare assailHis spotless life with slanderous tale.Godlike and bounteous, just, sincere,E'en to his very foemen dear:Who would without a cause neglectThe right, and such a son reject?And if a king such order gave,In second childhood, passion's slave,What son within his heart would layThe senseless order, and obey?Come, Ráma, ere this plot be known

Stand by me and secure the throne.Stand like the King who rules below,Stand aided by thy brother's bow:How can the might of meaner menResist thy royal purpose then!My shafts, if rebels court their fate,Shall lay Ayodhyá desolate.Then shall her streets with blood be dyedOf those who stand on Bharat's side:None shall my slaughtering hand exempt,For gentle patience earns contempt.If, by Kaikeyis counsel changed,Our father's heart be thus estranged,No mercy must our arm restrain,But let the foe be slain, be slain.For should the guide, respected long,No more discerning right and wrorg,Turn in forbidden paths to stray,'Tis meet that force his steps should stay.What power sufficient can he see,What motive for the wish has he,That to Kaikeyí would resignThe empire which is justly thine?Can he, O conqueror of thy foes,Thy strength and mine in war oppose?Can he entrust, in our despite,To Bharat's hand thy royal right!I love this brother with the wholeAffection of my faithful soul.

Yea Queen, by bow and truth I swear,By sacrifice, and gift, and prayer,If Ráma to the forest goes,Or where the burning furnace glows,First shall my feet the forest tread,The flames shall first surround my head.My might shall chase thy grief and tears,As darkness flies when morn appears.Do thou, dear Queen, and Ráma tooBehold what power like mine can do.My aged father I will kill,The vassal of Kaikeyí's will,Old, yet a child, the woman's thrall,Infirm, and base, the scorn of all.' Thus Lakshman cried,the mighty-souled:Down her sad cheeks the torrents rolled,As to her son Kaus'aly?spake: 'Now thou hast heard thy brother, takeHis counsel if thou hold it wise,And do the thing his words advise.Do not, my son, with tears I pray,My rival's wicked word obey,Leave me not here consumed with woe,Nor to the wood, an exile, go.If thou, to virtue ever true,Thy duty's path would still pursue,The highest duty bids thee stayAnd thus thy mother's voice obey.Thus Kas'yap's great ascetic son

A seat among the Immortals won:In his own home, subdued, he stayed,And honour to his mother paid.If reverence to thy sire be due,Thy mother claims like honour too,And thus I charge thee, O my child,Thou must not seek the forest wild.Ah, what to me were life and bliss,Condemned my darling son to miss?But with my Ráma near, to eatThe very grass itself were sweet.But if thou still wilt go and leave.Thy hapless mother here to grieve,I from that hour will food abjure,Nor life without my son endure.Then it will be thy fate to dwellIn depth of world-detested

hell.As Ocean in the olden timeWas guilty of an impious crimeThat marked  
the lord of each fair floodAs one who spills a Br?maa'a blood.'

1

Thus spake the queen, and wept, and sighed:Then righteous Ráma thus  
replied:'I have no power to slight or breakCommandments which my father  
spake.I bend my head, dear lady, low,Forgive me, for I needs must go.Once  
Kaudu, mighty saint, who madeHis dwelling in the forest shade,

p. 119

A cow--and duty's claims he knew--

Obedient to his father, slew.And in the line from which we spring,When  
ordered by their sire the king,Through earth the sons of Sagar cleft,And  
countless things of life bereft.

1

So Jamadagní's son 2 obeyed

His sire, when in the wood he laidHia hand upon his axe, and smoteThrough  
Renuká his mother's throat.The deeds of these and more beside.Peers of  
the Gods, my steps shall guide,And resolute will I fulfilMy father's  
word, my father's will,Nor I, O Queen, unsanctioned treadThis righteous  
path, by duty led:The road my footsteps journey o'erWas traversed by the  
great of yore.This high command which all acceptShall faithfully by me be  
kept,For duty ne'er will him forsakeWho fears his sire's command to  
break.'

Thus to his mother wild with grief:

Then thus to Lakshman spake the chiefOf those by whom the bow is bent,  
Mid all who speak, most eloquent:'I know what love for me thou hast,What  
firm devotion unsurpassed:Thy valour and thy worth I know,And glory that  
appals the foe.Blest youth, my mother's woe is great.It bends her 'neath  
its matchless weight:No claims will she, with blinded eyes,Of truth and  
patience recognize,For duty is supreme in place,And truth is duty's  
noblest base.Obedient to my sire's behestI serve the cause of duty  
best.For man should truly do whate'erTo mother, Bráhma, sire, he  
sware:He must in duty's path remain,Nor let his word be pledged in  
vain.And, O my brother, how can IObedience to this charge deny?Kaikeyí's  
tongue my purpose spurred,But 'twas my sire who gave the word.Cast these  
unholy thoughts asideWhich smack of war and Warriors' pride;To duty's  
call, not wrath attend,And tread the path which I commend,'

Ráma by fond affection moved

His brother Lakshman thus reproved;Then with joined hands and reverent  
head

Again to Queen Kausályá said:

'I needs must go--do thou consent--

To the wild wood in banishment.O give me, by my life I pray,Thy blessing  
ere I go away.

I, when the promised years are o'er,

Shall see Ayodhyá's town once more.Then, mother dear, thy tears  
restrain,Nor let thy heart be wrung by pain:In time, my father's will  
obeyed,Shall I return from greenwood shade.My dear Videhan, thou, and  
I,Lakshman, Sumitrá, feel this tie,And must my father's word obey,As duty  
bids that rules for aye.Thy preparations now forgo,And lock within thy  
breast thy woe,Nor be my pious wish withstoodTo go an exile to the  
wood."Calm and unmoved the prince explained His duty's claim and  
purpose high.The mother life and sense regained, Looked on her son and  
made reply:'If reverence be thy father's due, The same by right and  
love is mine:Go not, my charge I thus renew, Nor leave me here in woe  
to pine,

What were such lonely life to me, Rites to the shades, or deathless  
lot?More dear, my son, one hour with thee Than all the world where thou  
art not.As bursts to view, when brands blaze high, Some elephant  
concealed by night,So, when he heard his mother's cry, Burnt Ráma's  
grief with fiercer might.Thus to the queen, half senseless still, And

Lakshman, burnt with heart-felt pain, True to the right, with steadfast will, His duteous speech he spoke again: 'Brother, I know thy loving mind, Thy valour and thy truth I know, But now to claims of duty blind Thou and my mother swell my woe. The fruits of deeds in human life Make love, gain, duty, manifest, Dear when they meet as some fond wife With her sweet babes upon her breast. But man to duty first should turn Whene'er the three are not combined: For those who heed but gain we spurn, And those to pleasure all resigned. Shall then the virtuous disobey Hosts of an aged king and sire, Though feverous joy that father sway, Or senseless love or causeless ire? I have no power, commanded thus,

To slight his promise and decree: The honoured sire of both of us, My mother's lord and life is he. Shall she, while yet the holy king Is living, on the right intent, -- Shall she, like some poor widowed thing, Go forth with me to banishment? Now, mother, speed thy parting son, And let thy blessing soothe my pain,

p. 120

That I may turn, mine exile done, Like King Yayāti, home again. Fair glory and the fruit she gives, For lust of sway I ne'er will slight: What, for the span a mortal lives. Were rule of earth without the right? He soothed her thus, firm to the last His counsel to his brother told: Then round the queen in reverence passed, And held her in his loving hold.

Footnotes 118:1 The commentators say that, in a former creation, Ocean grieved his mother and suffered in consequence the pains of hell.

119:1 As described in Book I, Canto XL.

119:2 Parasúrama.

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CANTO XXII.: LAKSHMAN CALMED.

So Rāma kept unshaken still

His noble heart with iron will. To his dear brother next he turned, Whose glaring eyes with fury burned, Indignant, panting like a snake, And thus again his counsel spake: 'Thine anger and thy grief restrain, And firm in duty's path remain. Dear brother, lay thy scorn aside, And be the right thy joy and pride. Thy ready zeal and thoughtful care To aid what rites should grace the heir, -- These 'tis another's now to ask; Come, gird thee for thy noble task, That Bharat's throning rites may be Graced with the things prepared for me. And with thy gentle care provide That her fond heart, now sorely tried With fear and longing for my sake, With doubt and dread may never ache. To know that thoughts of coming ill One hour that tender bosom fill With agony and dark despair Is grief too great for me to bear. I cannot, brother, call to mind

One wilful fault or undesigned, When I have pained in anything My mothers or my sire the king. The right my father keeps in view, In promise, word, and action true; Let him then all his fear dismiss, Nor dread the loss of future bliss. He fears his truth herein will fail: Hence bitter thoughts his heart assail. He trembles lest the rites proceed, And at his pangs my heart should bleed. So now this earnest wish is mine, The consecration to resign, And from this city turn away To the wild wood with no delay. My banishment to-day will free Kaikeyī from her cares, that she, At last contented and elate, May Bharat's throning celebrate.

Then will the lady's trouble cease,

Then will her heart have joy and peace, When wandering in the wood I wear Deerskin, and bark, and matted hair. Nor shall by me his heart be grieved Whose choice approved, whose mind conceived This counsel which I follow. No, Forth to the forest will I go. 'Tis Fate, Sumitrās son, confess,

That sends me to the wilderness. 'Tis Fate alone that gives away To other hands the royal sway How could Kaikeyī's purpose bring On me this pain and

suffering, Were not her change of heart decreed By Fate whose will commands  
the deed? I know my filial love has been The same throughout for every  
queen, And with the same affection she Has treated both her son and me. Her  
shameful words of cruel spite To stay the consecrating rite, And drive me  
banished from the throne, -- These I ascribe to Fate alone, How could she,  
born of royal race, Whom nature decks with fairest grace, Speak like a dame  
of low degree Before the king to torture me? But Fate, which none may  
comprehend, To which all life must bow and bend, In her and me its power  
has shown, And all my hopes are overthrown. What man, Sumitrá's darling,  
may Contend with Fate's resistless sway, Whose all-commanding power we  
find Our former deeds alone can bind? Our life and death, our joy and  
pain, Anger and fear, and loss and gain,  
Each thing that is, in every state, All is the work of none but Fate. E'en  
saints, inspired with rigid zeal. When once the stroke of Fate they  
feel, In sternest vows no more engage, And fall enslaved by love and  
rage. So now the sudden stroke whose weight Descends unlooked for, comes of  
Fate, And with unpitying might destroys The promise of commencing  
joys. Weigh this true counsel in thy soul: With thy firm heart thy heart  
control; Then, brother, thou wilt cease to grieve For hindered rites which  
now I leave. So cast thy needless grief away, And strictly my commands  
obey. Those preparations check with speed, Nor let my throning rites  
proceed. Those urns that stand prepared to shed King-making drops upon my  
head, Shall, with their pure lustrations now Inaugurate my hermit's vow.

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Yet what have I to do with things That touch the state and pomp of  
kings? These hands of mine shall water take To sanctify the vow I make.  
Now Lakshman, let thy heart no more My fortune changed and lost deplore. A  
forest life more joys may bring Than those that wait upon a king, Now  
though her arts successful mar My consecrating rite, Let not the  
youngest queen too far Thy jealous fear excite. Nor let one thought  
suggesting ill Upon our father fall, But let thy heart remember  
still That Fate is lord of all.'

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CANTO XXIII.: LAKSHMAN'S ANGER.

Thus Rama to his brother said;

And Lakshman bent his drooping head. In turns by grief and pride  
impelled, A middle course of thought he held, Then in a frown of anger,  
bent His brows that chief most excellent, And like a serpent in his  
hole, Breathed fierce and fast in wrath of soul. His threatening brows so  
darkly frowned, His eyes so fiercely glanced around, They made his glare,  
which none might brook, Like some infuriate lion's look. Like some wild  
elephant, full oft He raised and shook his hand  
aloft.

Now turned his neck to left and right Now bent, now raised its stately  
height. Now in his rage that sword he felt Which mangling wounds to foemen  
dealt, With sidelong glance his brother eyed, And thus in burning words  
replied: 'Thy rash resolve, thy eager haste, Thy mighty fear, are all  
misplaced: No room is here for duty's claim, No cause to dread the people's  
blame. Can one as brave as thou consent

To use a coward's argument? The glory of the Warrior race With craven  
speech his lips debase? Can one like thee so falsely speak, Exalting Fate,  
confessed so weak? Canst thou, undoubting still restrain? Suspicions of  
those sinful twain?

Canst thou, most duteous, fail to know

Their hearts are set on duty's show? They with deceit have set their  
trains, And now the fruit rewards their pains, Had they not long ago  
agreed, O Rama, on this treacherous deed, That promised boon, so long  
retained, He erst had given and she had gained. I cannot, O my brother,  
bear To see another throned as heir With rites which all our people

hate:Then, O, this passion tolerate.This vaunted duty which can guideThy  
steps from wisdom's path aside,And change the counsel of thy breast,O  
lofty-hearted, I detest.Wilt thou, when power and might are thine,Submit  
to this abhorred design?Thy father's impious hest fulfil,That vassal of  
Kaikeyi's will?But if thou still wilt shut thine eyes,  
Nor see the guile herein that lies.My soul is sad, I deeply mourn.And  
duty seems a thing to scorn.Canst thou one moment think to pleaseThis  
pair who live for love and ease,And 'gainst thy peace, as foes,  
allied,With tenderest names their hatred hideNow if thy judgment still  
refersTo Fate this plot of his and hers,My mind herein can ne'er  
agree:And O, in this be ruled by me.Weak, void of manly pride are theyWho  
bend to Fate's imputed sway:The choicest souls, the nobly greatDisdain to  
bow their heads to Fate.And he who dares his Fate controlWith vigorous  
act and manly soul,Though threatening Fate his hopes assail.Unmoved  
through all need never quail.This day mankind shall learn arightThe power  
of Fate and human might,So shall the gulf that lies betweenA man and Fate  
be clearly seen.The might of Fate subdued by meThis hour the citizens  
shall see,Who saw its intervention stayThy consecrating rites to-dayMy  
power shall turn this Fate aside,That threatens, as, with furious stride,  
An elephant who scorns to feel,In rage unchecked, the driver's steel.Not  
the great Lords whose sleepless mightProtects the worlds, shall stay the  
riteThough earth, hell, heaven combine their powers:And shall we fear  
this sire of ours?Then if their minds are idly bentTo doom thee, King, to  
banishment,Through twice seven years of exile they

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Shall In the lonely forest stay.I will consume the hopes that fireThe  
queen Kaikeyi and our sire,That to her son this check will  
bringAdvantage, making Bharat king.The power of Fate will ne'er  
withstandThe might that arms my vigorous hand;If danger and distress  
assail,My fearless strength will still prevail.A thousand circling years  
shall flee:The forest then thy home shall be,And thy good sons,  
succeeding, holdThe empire which their sire controlled.The royal saints,  
of old who reigned,For aged kings this rest ordained:These to their sons  
their realm commitThat they, like sires, may cherish it.  
O pious soul, if thou declineThe empire which is justly thine,Lest, while  
the king distracted lies,Disorder in the state should rise,I,--or no  
mansion may I findIn worlds to hero souls assigned,--The guardian of thy  
realm will be,As the sea-bank protects the sea.Then cast thine idle fears  
aside:With prosperous rites be sanctified.The lords of earth may strive  
in vain:My power shall all their force restrain.My pair of arms, my  
warrior's bowAre not for pride of empty show:For no support these shafts  
were made;And binding up ill suits my blade:To pierce the foe with deadly  
breach--This is the work of all and each.But small, methinks the love I  
showFor him I count my mortal foe.Soon as my trenchant steel is  
bare,Flashing its lightning through the air,I heed no foe, nor stand  
aghastThough Indra's self the levin cast.Then shall the ways be hard to  
pass,Where chariots lie in ruinous mass;When elephant and man and  
steedCrushed in the murderous onslaught bleed,And legs and heads tall,  
heap on heap,  
Beneath my sword's tremendous sweep.Struck by my keen brand's trenchant  
blade,Thine enemies shall fall dismayed,Like towering mountains rent in  
twain,Or lightning clouds that burst in rain.When armed with brace and  
glove I stand,And take my trusty bow in hand,Who then shall vaunt his  
might? who dareCount him a man to meet me there?Then will I loose my  
shafts, and strikeMan, elephant, and steed alike:At one shall many an  
arrow fly,And many a foe with one shall die.This day the world my power  
shall see,That none in arms can rival me:My strength the monarch shall  
abase,And set thee, lord, in lordliest place.These arms which breathe the  
sandal's scent,Which golden bracelets ornament,These hands which  
precious gifts bestow,Which guard the friend and smite the foe,A nobler

service shall assay, And fight in Ráma's cause to-day, The robbers of thy rights to stay. Speak, brother, tell thy foeman's name Whom I, in conquering strife, May strip of followers and fame, Of fortune, or of life.

Say, how may all this sea-girt land Be brought to own thy sway: Thy faithful servant here I stand To listen and obey.' Then strove the bride of Raghu's race Sad Lakshman's heart to cheer, While slowly down the hero's face, Unchecked, there rolled a tear. 'The orders of my sire,' he cried, 'My will shall ne'er oppose: I follow still, whate'er betide, The path which duty shows.'

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

121:1 The Sanskrit word hasta signifies both hand, and the trunk of the beast that bears between his eyes a serpent for a hand.'

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CANTO XXIV.: KAUS'ALYÁ CALMED.

But when Kaus'alyá saw that he Resolved to keep his sire's decree, While tears and sobs her utterance broke, Her very righteous speech she spoke: 'Can he, a stranger yet to pain, Whose pleasant words all hearts enchain, Son of the king and me the queen, Live on the grain his hands may glean; Can he, whose slaves and menials eat The finest cakes of sifted wheat--Can Ráma in the forest live On roots and fruit which woodlands give Who will believe, who will not fear When the sad story smites his ear, That one so dear, so noble held, Is by the king his sire expelled? Now surely none may Fate resist, Which orders all as it may list, If, Ráma, in thy strength and grace, The woods become thy dwelling-place. A childless mother long I grieved, And many a sigh for offspring heaved, With wistful longing weak and worn Till thou at last, my son, wast born. Fanned by the storm of that desire Deep in my soul I felt the fire, Whose offerings flowed from weeping eyes, With fuel fed of groans and sighs,

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While round the flame the smoke grew hot Of tears because thou earnest not. Now reft of thee, too fiery fierce The flame of woe my heart will pierce, As, when the days of spring return, The sun's hot beams the forest burn. The mother cow still follows near The wanderings of her youngling dear. So close to thine my feet shall be, Where'er thou goest following thee.'

Ráma, the noblest lord of men, Heard his fond mother's speech, and then In soothing words like these replied To the sad queen who wept and sighed: 'Nay, by Kaikeyí's art beguiled, When I am banished to the wild, If thou, my mother, also fly, The aged king will surely die. When wedded dames their lords forsake, Long for the crime their souls shall ache. Thou must not e'en in thought within Thy bosom frame so dire a sin.

Long as Kakutstha's son, who reigns Lord of the earth, in life remains, Thou must with love his will obey: This duty claims, supreme for aye. Yes, mother, thou and I must be Submissive to my sire's decree, King, husband, sire is he confessed, The lord of all, the worthiest. I in the wilds my days will spend Till twice seven years have reached an end, Then with great joy will come again, And faithful to thy hests remain.'

Kaus'alyá by her son addressed,

With love and passion sore distressed, Afflicted, with her eyes bedewed, To Ráma thus her speech renewed:

'Nay, Ráma, but my heart will break

If with these queens my home I make. Lead me too with thee; let me go And wander like a woodland roe.'

Then, while no tear the hero shed.

Thus to the weeping queen he said: 'Mother, while lives the husband, he is woman's lord and deity. O dearest lady, thou and I our lord and king must ne'er deny;

The lord of earth himself have we our guardian wise and friend to be. And Bharat, true to duty's call, whose sweet words take the hearts of all, will serve thee well, and ne'er forget the virtuous path before him set. Be this, I pray, thine earnest care, that the old king my father ne'er, when I have parted hence, may know, grieved for his son, a pang of woe. Let not this grief his soul distress, to kill him with the bitterness. With duteous care, in every thing, love, comfort, cheer the aged king. Though, best of womankind, a spouse keeps firmly all her fasts and vows, nor yet her husband's will obeys, 'She treads in sin's forbidden ways. She to her husband's will who bends, goes to high bliss that never ends, yea, though the Gods have found in her no reverential worshipper. Bent on his weal, a woman still must seek to do her husband's will: for Scripture, custom, law uphold this duty Heaven revealed of old. Honour true Bráhmans for my sake, and constant offerings duly make, with fire-oblations and with flowers,

To all the host of heavenly powers. Look to the coming time, and yearn for the glad hour of my return. And still thy duteous course pursue, abstemious, humble, kind, and true. The highest bliss shall thou obtain when I from exile come again, if, best of those who keep the right, the king my sire still see the light.'

The queen, by Ráma thus addressed,

Still with a mother's grief oppressed, while her long eyes with tears were dim, began once more and answered him: 'Not by my pleading maybe stayed the firm resolve thy soul has made. My hero, thou wilt go; and none the stern commands of Fate may shun. Go forth, dear child whom naught can bend and may all bliss thy steps attend. Thou wilt return, and that dear day will chase mine every grief away. Thou wilt return, thy duty done, thy vows discharged, high glory won; from filial debt wilt thou be free, and sweetest joy will come on me. My son, the will of mighty Fate at every time must dominate, if now it drives thee hence to stray

Heedless of me who bid thee stay. Go, strong of arm, go forth, my boy, go forth, again to come with joy, and thine expectant mother cheer with those sweet tones she loves to hear. O that the blessed hour were nigh when thou shalt glad this anxious eye, with matted hair and hermit dress returning from the wilderness.' Kaus'alyá's conscious soul approved, as her proud glance she bent on Ráma constant and unmoved, resolved on banishment. Such words, with happy omens fraught to her dear son she said, invoking with each eager thought a blessing on his head.

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CANTO XXV.: KAUS'ALYA'S BLESSING.

Her grief and woe she cast aside,

Her lips with water purified, and thus her benison began that mother of the noblest man: 'If thou wilt hear no words of mine, go forth, thou pride of Raghu's line. Go, darling, and return with speed, walking where noble spirits lead. May virtue on thy steps attend. And be her faithful lover's friend. May those to whom thy vows are paid in temple and in holy shade, with all the mighty saints combine to keep that precious life of thine. The arms wise Vis'v?itra

1 gave

Thy virtuous soul from danger save. Long be thy life: thy sure defence shall be thy truthful innocence, and that obedience, naught can tire, to me thy mother and thy sire. May fanes where holy fires are fed, altars with grass and fuel spread, each sacrificial ground, each tree, rock, lake, and mountain, prosper thee. Let old Vir?, 2 and Him who made



The universe, combine to aid;

Let Indra and each guardian LordWho keeps the worlds, their help  
afford,And be thy constant friend the Sun,Lord P?h? Bhaga, Aryaman.

3

Fortnights and seasons, nights and days,Years, months, and hours, protect  
thy ways,Vrihaspati shall still be nigh,The War-God, and the Moon on  
high,And N?ad

4 and the sainted seven 5

Shall watch thee from their starry heaven.The mountains, and the seas  
which ringThe world, and Varuna the King,Sky, ether, and the wind,  
whate'erMoves not or moves, for thee shall care.Each lunar mansion be  
benign,With happier light the planets shine;All gods, each light in  
heaven that glows,Potect my child where'er he goes.The twilight hours,  
the day and night,Keep in the wood thy steps aright.Watch, minute,  
instant, as they flee,Shall all bring happiness to thee.

Celestials and the Titan brood

Protect thee in thy solitude,And haunt the mighty wood to blessThe  
wanderer in his hermit dress.Fear not, by mightier guardians screened,  
The giant or night-roving fiend;Nor let the cruel race who tearMan's  
flesh for food thy bosom scare.Far be the ape, the scorpion's sting,Fly,  
gnat, and worm, and creeping thing.Thee shall the hungry lion spare,The  
tiger, elephant, and bear:Safe, from their furious might repose,Safe from  
the horned buffaloes.Each savage thing the forests breed,That love on  
human flesh to feed,Shall for my child its rage abate,When thus its wrath  
I deprecate.Blest be thy ways: may sweet successThe valour of my darling  
bless.To all that Fortune can bestow,Go forth, my child, my R?ma, go.Go  
forth, O happy in the loveOf all the Gods below, above;And in those  
guardian powers confideThv paths who keep, thy steps who guide.May  
S'ukra,

1b Yama, Sun, and Moon,

And He who gives each golden boon, 2b

Won by mine earnest prayers, be goodTo thee, my son, in Dandak wood.Fire,  
wind, and smoke, each text and spellFrom mouths of holy seers that  
fell,Guard R?ma when his limbs he dips,Or with the stream makes pure his  
lips!

May the great saints and He, the LordWho made the worlds, by worlds  
adored,And every God in heaven besideMy banished R?ma keep and guide.

Thus with due praise the long-eyed dame,

Ennobled by her spotless fame,With wreaths of flowers and precious  
scentWorshipped the Gods, most reverent.A high-souled Br?man lit the  
fire,And offered, at the queen's desire,The holy oil ordained to burnFor  
R?ma's weal and safe return.Kaus'aly? best of dames, with careSet oil,  
wreaths, fuel, mustard, there.Then when the rites of fire had ceased,For  
R?ma's bliss and health, the priest,Standing without gave what remainedIn  
general offering,

3b as ordained.

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Dealing among the twice-horn trainHoney, and curds, and oil, and grain,He  
bade each heart and voice uniteTo bless. the youthful anchorite.Then  
R?ma's mother, glorious dameBestowed, to meet the Br?hman's claim,A  
lordly fee for duty done:

And thus again addressed her son:

'Such blessings as the Gods o'erjoyed

Poured forth, when Vritra 1 was destroyed,

On Indra of the thousand eyes,Attend, my child, thine enterprise!Yea,  
such as Vinat? once gaveTo King Suparna

2 swift and brave,

Who sought the drink that cheers the skies,Attend, my child, thine  
enterprise!Yea, such as, when the Amrit rose,

3

And Indra slew his Daitya foes, The royal Aditi bestowed  
On Him whose hand with slaughter glowed  
Of that dire brood of monstrous size, Attend, my  
child, thine enterprise! E'en such as peerless Vishnu graced,  
When with his triple step he paced, Outbursting from the dwarf's disguise,

4

Attend, my child, thine enterprise! Floods, isles, and seasons as they  
fly, Worlds, Vedas, quarters of the sky, Combine, O mighty-armed, to  
bless Thee destined heir of happiness!'

The long-eyed lady ceased: she shed

Pure scent and grain upon his head. And that prized herb whose sovereign  
power Preserves from dark misfortune's hour,

Upon the hero's arm she set, To be his faithful amulet. While holy tunes  
she murmured low, Aud spoke glad words though crushed by woe, Concealing  
with obedient tongue The pangs with which her heart was wrung. She bent, she  
kissed his brow, she pressed Her darling to her troubled breast: 'Firm in  
thy purpose, go,' she cried, 'Go Ráma, and my bliss betide. Attain  
returning safe and well, Triumphant in Ayodhyá, dwell. Then shall my happy  
eyes behold The empire by thy will controlled. Then grief and care shall  
leave no trace, Joy shall light up thy mother's face, And I shall see my  
darling reign, In moonlike glory come again. These eyes shall fondly gaze  
on thee So faithful to thy sire's decree,

When thou the forest wild shalt quit

On thine ancestral throne to sit. Yea, thou shalt turn from exile back, Nor  
choicest blessings ever lack, Then fill with rapture ever new My bosom and  
thy consort's too. To S'iva and the heavenly host My worship has  
been paid,

To mighty saint, to godlike ghost, To every wandering shade.  
Forth to the forest thou wilt hie, Therein to dwell so long: Let  
all the quarters of the sky Protect my child from wrong.' Her  
blessings thus the queen bestowed; Then round him fondly paced, And  
often, while her eyes o'erflowed, Her dearest son embraced.  
Kaus'alyá's honoured feet he pressed, As round her steps she bent,  
And radiant with her prayers that blessed, To Sitá's home he went.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

124:1 See p. 41.

124:2 The first progeny of Brahm? or Brahm? himself.

124:3 These are three names of the Sun. 124:4 See p. 1.

124:5 The saints who form the constellation of Ursa  
Major.

124:1b The regent of the planet Venus.

124:2b Kuvera.

124:3b Bali, or the presentation of food to all created beings, is one of  
the five great sacraments of the Hindu  
religion: it consists in throwing a small parcel of the offering, Ghee,  
or rice, or the like, into the open air at the back of the house.

125:1 In mythology, a demon slain by Indra.

125:2 Called also Garud, the King of the birds,  
offspring of Vinatá. See p. 53.

125:3 See p. 56.

125:4 See p. 43.

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CANTO XXVI.: ALONE WITH SITÁ

So Ráma, to his purpose true,

To Queen Kaus'alyá bade adieu, Received the benison she gave, And to the  
path of duty clave. As through the crowded street he passed, A radiance on  
the way he cast, And each fair grace, by all approved, The bosoms of the  
people moved.

Now of the woeful change no word

The fair Videhan bride had heard;The thought of that imperial riteStill filled her bosom with delight.With grateful heart and joyful thoughtThe Gods in worship she had sought,And, well in royal duties learned,Sat longing till her lord returned,Not all unmarked by grief and shameWithin his sumptuous home he came,And hurried through the happy crowdWith eye dejected, gloomy-browed.Up Sitá sprang, and every limbTrembled with fear at sight of him.She marked that cheek where anguish fed,Those senses care-disquieted.

For, when he looked on her, no moreCould his heart hide the load it bore,Nor could the pious chief controlThe paleness o'er his cheek that stole.His altered cheer, his brow bedewedWith clammy drops, his grief she viewed,And cried, consumed with fires of woe.'What, O my lord, has changed thee so?

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Vrihaspati looks down benign,And the moon rests in Pushya's sign,As Bráhmans sage this day declare:Then whence, my lord, this grief and care?Why does no canopy, like foamFor its white beauty, shade thee home,Its hundred ribs spread wide to throwSplendour on thy fair head below?Where are the royal fans, to graceThe lotus beauty of thy face,Fair as the moon or wild-swan's wing,And waving round the new-made king?Why do no sweet-toned bards rejoiceTo hail thee with triumphant voice?No tuneful heralds love to raiseLoud music in their monarch's praise?Why do no Bráhmans, Scripture-read,Pour curds and honey on thy head,Anointed, as the laws ordain,With holy rites, supreme to reign?Where are the chiefs of every guild?Where are the myriads should have filledThe streets, and followed home their kingWith merry noise and triumphing?Why does no gold-wrought chariot leadWith four brave horses, best for speed?No elephant precede the crowdLike a huge hill or thunder cloud,Marked from his birth for happy fate,Whom signs auspicious decorate?Why does no henchman, young and fair,Precede thee, and delight to bearEntrusted to his reverent holdThe burthen of thy throne of gold?Why, if the consecrating riteBe ready, why this mournful plight?Why do I see this sudden change,This altered mien so sad and strange?

To her, as thus she weeping cried,

Raghu's illustrious son replied:

'Sitá, my honoured sire's decree

Commands me to the woods to flee.O high-born lady, nobly bredIn the good paths thy footsteps tread,Hear, Janak's daughter, while I tell The story as it all befell.Of old my father true and braveTwo boons to Queen Kaikeyí gave.Through these the preparations madeFor me today by her are stayed,For he is bound to disallowThis promise by that earlier vow.In Dandak forest wild and vastMust fourteen years by me be passed.My father's will makes Bharat heir,The kingdom and the throne to share.Now, ere the lonely wild I seek,I come once more with thee to speak.In Bharat's presence, O my dame,Ne'er speak with pride of Ráma's name:Another's eulogy to hearIs hateful to a monarch's ear.Thou must with love his rule obeyTo whom my father yields the sway.With love and sweet observance learnHis grace, and more the king's, to earn.Now, that my father may not breakThe words of promise that he spake,To the drear wood my steps are bent:Be firm, good Sitá, and content.Through all that time, my blameless spouse,Keep well thy fasts and holy vows,Rise from thy bed at break of day,And to the Gods due worship pay.

With meek and lowly love revereThe lord of men, my father dear,And reverence to Kaus'alyá show,My mother, worn with eld and woe:By duty's law, O best of dames,High worship from thy love she claims,Nor to the other queens refuseObservance, rendering each her dues:By love and fond attention shownThey are my mothers like mine own.Let Bharat and S'atrughna bearIn thy sweet love a special share:Dear as my life, O let them beLike brother and like son to thee.In every word and deed refrainFrom aught that Bharat's soul may pain:He is Ayodhyá's king and

mine, The head and lord of all our line. For those who serve and love them  
much With weariless endeavour, touch And win the gracious hearts of  
kings. While wrath from disobedience springs. Great monarchs from their  
presence send Their lawful sons who still offend, And welcome to the vacant  
place Good children of an alien race. Then, best of women, rest thou  
here, And Bharat's will with love revere. Obedient to thy king remain,  
And still thy vows of truth maintain. To the wide wood my steps I bend:  
Make thou thy dwelling here; See that thy conduct ne'er offend,  
And keep my words, my dear.'

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CANTO XXVII.: SÍTÁ'S SPEECH.

His sweetly-speaking bride, who best  
Deserved her lord, he thus addressed. Then tender love bade passion  
wake, And thus the fair Videhan spake: 'What words are these that thou hast  
said? Contempt of me the thought has bred. O best of heroes, I dismiss  
With bitter scorn a speech like this:

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Unworthy of a warrior's fame It taints a monarch's son with shame, Ne'er to  
be heard from those who know The science of the sword and bow. My lord, the  
mother, sire, and son, Receive their lots by merit won; The brother and the  
daughter find The portions to their deeds aligned. The wife alone, whate'er  
await, Must share on earth her husband's fate. So now the king's command  
which sends Thee to the wild, to me extends. The wife can find no refuge,  
none, In father, mother, self, or son:

Both here, and when they vanish hence, Her husband is her sole defence. If,  
Raghu's son, thy steps are led Where Dandak's pathless wilds are spread, My  
foot before thine own shall pass Through tangled thorn and matted  
grass. Dismiss thine anger and thy doubt: Like refuse water cast them  
out, And lead me, O my hero, hence--I know not sin--with  
confidence. Whate'er his lot, 'tis far more sweet To follow still a  
husband's feet Than in rich palaces to lie, Or roam at pleasure through the  
sky. My mother and my sire have taught What duty bids, and trained each  
thought, Nor have I now mine ear to turn The duties of a wife to learn, I'll  
seek with thee the woodland dell And pathless wild where no men  
dwell, Where tribes of silvan creatures roam, And many a tiger makes his  
home. My life shall pass as pleasant there As in my father's palace  
fair. The worlds shall wake no care in me; My only care be truth to  
thee. There while thy wish I still obey, True to my vows with thee I'll  
stray, And there shall blissful hours be spent

In woods with honey redolent. In forest shades thy mighty arm Would keep a  
stranger's life from harm, And how shall Sítá think of fear When thou, O  
glorious lord, art near? Heir of high bliss, my choice is made, Nor can I  
from my will be stayed. Doubt not; the earth will yield me roots, These  
will I eat, and woodland fruits; And as with thee I wander there I will not  
bring thee grief or care. I long, when thou, wise lord, art nigh, All  
fearless, with delighted eye To gaze upon the rocky hill, The lake, the  
fountain, and the hill; To sport with thee, my limbs to cool, In some pure  
lily-covered pool, While the white swan's and mallard's wings  
Are plashing in the water-springs.

So would a thousand seasons flee Like one sweet day, if spent with  
thee. Without my lord I would not prize A home with Gods above the  
skies: Without my lord, my life to bless, Where could be heaven or  
happiness? Forbid me not: with thee I go The tangled wood to tread.  
There will I live with thee, as though

This roof were o'er my head. My will for thine shall be resigned;  
Thy feet my steps shall guide. Thou, only thou, art in my mind: I  
heed not all beside. Thy heart shall ne'er by me be grieved; Do not  
my prayer deny: Take me, dear lord; of thee bereaved Thy Sítá  
swears to die.' These words the duteous lady spake, Nor would he

yet consent      His faithful wife with him to take      To share his  
banishment.      He soothed her with his gentle speech;      To change her  
will he strove:      And much he said the woes to teach      Of those in  
wilds who rove.

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CANTO XXVIII.: THE DANGERS OF THE  
WOOD.

Thus Sitá spake, and he who knew  
His duty, to its orders true,Was still reluctant as the woesOf forest  
life before him rose.He sought to soothe her grief, to dryThe torrent  
from each brimming eye,And then, her firm resolve to shake,These words to  
pious hero spake:    'O daughter of a noble line,Whose steps from virtue  
ne'er decline,Remain, thy duties here pursue,As my fond heart would have  
thee do.Now hear me, Sitá, fair and weak,And do the words that I shall  
speak.Attend and hear while I explainEach danger in the wood, each  
pain.Thy lips have spoken: I condemnThe foolish words that fell from  
them.This senseless plan, this wish of thineTo live a forest life,  
resign.The names of trouble and distressSuit well the tangled  
wilderness.In the wild wood no joy I know,  
A forest life is nought but woe.The lion in his moutain caveAnswers the  
torrents as they rave,And forth his voice of terror throws:The wood, my  
love, is full of woes.

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There mighty monsters fearless play,And in their maddened onset slayThe  
hapless wretch who near them goes:The wood, my love, is full of woes.'Tis  
hard to ford each treacherous flood,So thick with crocodiles and  
mud,Where the wild elephants repose:The wood, my love, is full of woes.Or  
far from streams the wanderer straysThrough thorns and creeper-tangled  
ways,While round him many a wild-cock crows:The wood, my love, is full of  
woes.On 'the cold ground upon a heapOn gathered leaves condemned to  
sleep,Toil-wearied, will his eyelids close:The wood, my love, is full of  
woes.Long days and nights must he contentHis soul with scanty  
aliment,What fruit the wind from branches blows:The wood, my love, is  
full of woes.O Sitá, while his strength may last,  
The ascetic in the wood must fast,Coil on his head his matted hair,And  
bark must be his only wear.To Gods and spirits day by dayThe ordered  
worship he must pay,And honour with respectful careEach wandering guest  
who meets him there.The bathing rites he ne'er must shunAt dawn, at noon,  
at set of sun,Obedient to the law he knows:The wood, my love, is full of  
woes.To grace the altar must be broughtThe gift of flowers his hands have  
sought--The debt each pious hermit owes:The wood, my love, is full of  
woes.The devotee must be contentTo live, severely abstinent,On what the  
chance of fortune shows:The wood, my love, is full of woes.Hunger  
afflicts him evermore:The nights are black, the wild winds roar;And there  
are dangers worse than those:The wood, my love, is full of woes.There  
creeping things in every formInfest the earth, the serpents swarm,And  
each proud eye with fury glows:The wood, my love, is full of woes.The  
snakes that by the river hideIn sinuous course like rivers glide,  
And line the path with deadly foes:The wood, my love, is full of  
woes.Scorpions, and grasshoppers, and fliesDisturb the wanderer as he  
lies,And wake him from his troubled doze:The wood, my love, is full of  
woes.Trees, thorny bushes, intertwined,Their branched ends together  
bind,And dense with grass the thicket grows:The wood, my dear, is full of  
woes,With many ills the flesh is tried,When these and countless fears  
besideVex those who in the wood remain:The wilds are naught but grief and  
pain.Hope, anger must be cast aside,To penance every thought applied:No  
fear must be of things to fear:Hence is the wood for ever drear.Enough,  
my love: thy purpose quit:For forest life thou art not fit.As thus I  
think on all, I seeThe wild wood is no place for thee.'

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#### CANTO XXIX.: SÍTÁ'S APPEAL.

Thus Ráma spake. Her lord's address

The lady heard with deep distress. And, as the tear bedimmed her eye, In  
soft low accents made reply: 'The perils of the wood, and all the woes thou  
countest to appal, led by my love I deem not pain; Each woe a charm, each  
loss a gain, Tiger, and elephant, and deer, Bull, lion, buffalo, in  
fear, Soon as thy matchless form they see, With every silvan beast will  
flee. With thee, O Ráma, I must go: My sire's command ordains it so. Bereft  
of thee, my lonely heart must break, and life and I must part. While thou,  
O mighty lord, art nigh, Not even He who rules the sky, Though He is  
strongest of the strong, With all his might can do me wrong. Nor can a  
lonely woman left By her dear husband live bereft. In my great love, my  
lord, I ween, The truth of this thou mayst have seen. In my sire's palace  
long ago

I heard the chief of those who know, The truth-declaring Bráhmans, tell My  
fortune, in the wood to dwell. I heard their promise who divine The future  
by each mark and sign, And from that hour have longed to lead The forest  
life their lips decreed. Now, mighty Ráma, I must share Thy father's doom  
which sends thee there; In this I will not be denied, But follow, love,  
where thou shalt guide. O husband, I will go with thee, Obedient to that  
high decree, Now let the Bráhmans' words be true, For this the time they  
had in view. I know full well the wood has woes; But they disturb the lives  
of those Who in the forest dwell, nor hold Their rebel senses well  
controlled.

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In my sire's halls, ere I was wed, I heard a dame who begged her  
bread Before my mother's face relate What griefs a forest life await. And  
many a time in sport I prayed To seek with thee the greenwood shade, For O,  
my heart on this is set,

To follow thee, dear anchoret. May blessings on thy life attend: I long  
with thee my steps to bend, For with such hero as thou art This pilgrimage  
enchants my heart. Still close, my lord, to thy dear side My spirit will be  
purified: Love from all sin my soul will free: My husband is a God to  
me. So, love, with thee shall I have bliss And share the life that follows  
this. I heard a Brahman, dear to fame, This ancient Scripture text  
proclaim: 'The woman whom on earth below Her parents on a man bestow, And  
lawfully their hands unite With water and each holy rite, She in this world  
shall be his wife, His also in the after life.' Then tell me, O beloved,  
why Thou wilt this earnest prayer deny, Nor take me with thee to the  
wood, Thine own dear wife so true and good. But if thou wilt not take me  
there Thus grieving in my wild despair, To fire or water I will fly, Or to  
the poisoned draught, and die.' So thus to share his exile, she Besought  
him with each earnest plea,

Nor could she yet her lord persuade To take her to the lonely shade. The  
answer of the strong-armed chief Smote the Videhan's soul with grief, And  
from her eyes the torrents came bathing the bosom of the dame.

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#### CANTO XXX.: THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

The daughter of Videha's king,

While Ráma strove to soothe the sting Of her deep anguish, thus began Once  
more in furtherance of her plan: And with her spirit sorely tried By fear  
and anger, love and pride, With keenly taunting words addressed Her hero of  
the stately breast: 'Why did the king my sire, who reigns O'er fair  
Videha's wide domains, Hail Ráma son with joy unwise, A woman in a man's  
disguise? Now falsely would the people say, By idle fancies led astray, That  
Ráma's own are power and might, As glorious as the Lord of Light. Why  
sinkest thou in such dismay? What fears upon thy spirit weigh, That thou, O

Ráma, fain wouldst fleeFrom her who thinks of naught but thee?To thy dear will am I resignedIn heart and body, soul and mind,As Sávitri gave all to one,Satyaván, Dyumatsena's son.

1Not e'en in fancy can I brook

To any guard save thee to look:Let meaner wives their houses shame,To go with thee is all my claim.Like some low actor, deemst thou fitThy wife to others to commit--Thine own, espoused in maiden youth,Thy wife so long, unblamed for truth?Do thou, my lord, his will obeyFor whom thou lovest royal sway,To whom thou wouldst thy wife confide--Not me, but thee, his wish may guide.Thou must not here thy wife forsake,And to the wood thy journey make,Whether stern penance, grief, and care,Or rule or heaven await thee there.Nor shall fatigue my limbs distressWhen wandering in the wilderness:Each path which near to thee I treadShall seem a soft luxurious bed.The reeds, the bushes where I pass,The thorny trees, the tangled grassShall feel, if only thou be near,Soft to my touch as skins of deer.When the rude wind in fury blows,And scattered dust upon me throws,That dust, beloved lord, to meShall as the precious sandal be.And what shall be more blest than I,When gazing on the wood I lie

In some green glade upon a bedWith sacred grass beneath us spread?The root, the leaf, the fruit which thouShalt give me from the earth or bough,Scanty or plentiful, to eat,Shall taste to me as Amrit sweet.As there I live on flowers and rootsAnd every season's kindly fruits,I will not for my mother grieve,My sire, my home, or all I leave.My presence, love, shall never addOne pain to make the heart more sad;

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I will not cause thee grief or care,Nor be a burden hard to bear.With thee is heaven, where'er the spot;Each place is hell where thou art not.Then go with me, O Ráma; thisIs all my hope and all my bliss.If thou wilt leave thy wife who stillEntreats thee with undaunted will,This very day shall poison closeThe life that spurns the rule of foes.How, after, can my soul sustainThe bitter life of endless pain,When thy dear face, my lord, I miss!No, death is better far than this.

Not for an hour could I endureThe deadly grief that knows not cure,Far less a woe I could not shunFor ten long years, and three, and one.'

While fires of woe consumed her, such

Her sad appeal, lamenting much;Then with a wild cry, anguish-wrung,About her husband's neck she clung.Like some she-elephant who bleedsStruck by the hunter's venomed reeds,So in her quivering heart she feltThe many wounds his speeches dealt.Then, as the spark from wood is gained,

1

Down rolled the tear so long restrained:The crystal moisture, sprung from woe,From her sweet eyes began to flow,As runs the water from a pairOf lotuses divinely fair.And Sítá's face with long dark eyes,Pure as the moon of autumn skies,Faded with weeping, as the budsOf lotuses when sink the floods.Around his wife his arms he strained,Who senseless from her woe remained,And with sweet words, that bade her wakeTo life again, the hero spake:'I would not with thy woe, my Queen,Buy heaven and all its blissful sheen.

Void of all fear am I as He,The self-existent God, can be.I knew not all thy heart till now,Dear lady of the lovely browSo wished not thee in woods to dwell;Yet there mine arm can guard thee well.Now surely thou, dear love, wast madeTo dwell with me in green wood shade.And, as a high saint's tender mindClings to its love for all mankind,So I to thee will ever cling,Sweet daughter of Videha's king.The good, of old, O soft of frame,Honoured this duty's sovereign claim,And I its guidance will not shun,True as light's Queen is to the Sun.

I cannot, pride of Janak's line,

This journey to the wood decline:My sire's behest, the oath he sware,The claims of truth, all lead me there.One duty, dear the same for aye,Is sire and mother to obey:Should I their orders once transgressMy very life

were weariness. If glad obedience be denied  
To father, mother, holy  
guide, What rites, what service can be done  
That stern Fate's favour may be  
won?

These three the triple world comprise,  
O darling of the lovely eyes. Earth  
has no holy thing like these Whom with all love men seek to please. Not  
truth, or gift, or bended knee, Not honour, worship, lordly fee, Storms  
heaven and wins a blessing thence Like sonly love and reverence. Heaven,  
riches, grain, and varied lore, With sons and many a blessing more, All  
these are made their own with ease By those their elders' souls who  
please. The mighty-souled, who ne'er forget, Devoted sons, their filial  
debt, Win worlds where Gods and minstrels are, And Brahmá's sphere more  
glorious far. Now as the orders of my sire, Who keeps the way of truth,  
require, So will I do, for such the way Of duty that endures for aye: To  
take thee, love, to Dandak's wild My heart at length is reconciled, For  
thee such earnest thoughts impel To follow, and with me to dwell. O  
faultless form from feet to brows, Come with me, as my will allows, And  
duty there with me pursue, Trembler, whose bright eyes thrill me  
through. In all thy days, come good come ill,  
Preserve unchanged such noble will, And thou, dear love, wilt ever be The  
glory of thy house and me. Now, beauteous-armed, begin the tasks The  
woodland life of hermits asks. For me the joys of heaven above Have charms  
no more without thee, love. And now, dear Sítá, be not slow: Food on good  
mendicants bestow, And for the holy Bráhmans bring Thy treasures and each  
precious thing. Thy best attire and gems collect, The jewels which thy  
beauty decked, And every ornament and toy Prepared for hours of sport and  
joy: The beds, the cars wherein I ride, Among our followers, next, divide.'  
She conscious that her lord approved  
Her going, with great rapture moved,

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Hastened within, without delay, Prepared to give their wealth  
away. Footnotes

129:1 The story of Savitri, told in the Mahábhárat, has  
been admirably translated by Rückert, and elegantly  
epitomized by Mrs. Manning in India, Ancient and Mediaeval. There is a  
free rendering of the story in Idylls from the Sanskrit.

130:1 Fire for sacrificial purposes is produced by the  
attrition of two pieces of wood.

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CANTO XXXI.: LAKSHMAN'S PRAYER.

When Lakshman, who had joined them there,  
Had heard the converse of the pair, His mien was changed, his eyes  
o'erflowed, His breast no more could bear its load. The son of Raghu, sore  
distressed, His brother's feet with fervour pressed, While thus to Sita he  
complained. And him by lofty vows enchained: 'If thou wilt make the woods  
thy home, Where elephant and roebuck roam, I too this day will take my  
bow And in the path before thee go. Our way will lie through forest  
ground Where countless birds and beasts are found, I heed not homes of Gods  
on high, I heed not life that cannot die, Nor would I wish, with thee  
away, O'er the three worlds to stretch my sway.'

Thus Lakshman spake, with earnest prayer

His brother's woodland life to share. As Rama still his prayer denied With  
soothing words, again he cried: 'When leave at first thou didst accord, Why  
dost thou stay me now, my lord?

Thou art my refuge: O, be kind, Leave me not, dear my lord, behind. Thou  
canst not, brother, if thou choose That I still live, my wish refuse.'

The glorious chief his speech renewed

To faithful Lakshman as he sued, And on the eyes of Ráma gazed Longing to  
load, with hands upraised: 'Thou art a hero just and dear, Whose steps to  
virtue's path adhere, Loved as my life till life shall end. My faithful



brother and my friend.If to the woods thou take thy way  
With Sítá and with me to-day,  
Who for Kaus'alyá will provide,  
And guard the good Sumitra's side?  
The lord of earth, of mighty power,  
Who sends good things in plenteous shower,  
As Indra pours the grateful rain,  
A captive lies in passion's chain.  
The power imperial for her son  
Has As'vapati's daughter I won,

And she, proud queen, will little heed  
Her miserable rivals' need.

So Bharat, ruler of the land,

By Queen Kaikeyí's side will stand,  
Nor of those two will ever think.

While grieving in despair they sink.  
Now, Lakshman, as thy love decrees,  
Or else the monarch's heart to please,  
Follow this counsel and protect  
My honoured mother from neglect.  
So thou, while not to me alone  
Thy great affection will be shown,  
To highest duty wilt adhere  
By serving those thou shouldst revere.  
Now, son of Raghu, for my sake  
Obey this one request I make,  
Or, of her darling son bereft,  
Kausaly'á has no comfort left.'

The faithful Lakshman, thus addressed

In gentle words which love expressed,  
To him in lore of language learned,  
His answer, eloquent, returned:  
'Nay, through thy might each queen will share  
Attentive Bharat's love and care.  
Should Bharat, raised as king to sway  
This noblest realm, his trust betray,  
Nor for their safety well provide,  
Seduced by ill-suggesting pride,  
Doubt not my vengeful hand shall kill  
The cruel wretch who counsels ill--  
Kill him and all who lend him aid,  
And the three worlds in league arrayed.  
And good Kausaly'á well can fee

A thousand champions like to me.  
A thousand hamlets rich in grain  
The station of that queen maintain.  
She may, and my dear mother too,  
Live on the ample revenue.  
Then let me follow thee: herein  
Is naught that may resemble sin.  
So shall I in my wish succeed,  
And aid, perhaps, my brother's need.  
My bow and quiver well supplied  
With arrows hanging at my side,  
My hands shall spade and basket bear,  
And for thy feet the way prepare.  
I'll bring thee roots and berries sweet.  
And woodland fare which hermits eat.  
Thou shalt with thy Videhan spouse  
Recline upon the mountain's brows:  
Be mine the toil, be mine to keep  
Watch o'er thee waking or asleep.'  
Filled by his speech with joy and pride

Ráma to Lakshman thus replied:  
'Go then, my brother, bid adieu  
To all thy friends and retinue.  
And those two bows of fearful might,  
Celestial, which, at that famed rite,  
Lord Varun gave to Janak, king  
Of fair Videha with thee bring,  
With heavenly coats of sword-proof mail,  
Quivers, whose arrows never fail,

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And golden-hilted swords so keen,  
The rivals of the sun in sheen.  
Tended with care these arms are all  
Preserved in my preceptor's hall.  
With speed, O Lakshman, go, produce,  
And bring them hither for our use.  
'So on a woodland life intent,  
To see his faithful friends he went,  
And brought the heavenly arms which lay  
By Ráma's teacher stored away,  
And Raghu's son to Ráma showed  
Those wondrous arms which gleamed and glowed,  
Well kept, adorned with many a wreath  
Of flowers on case, and hilt, and sheath.  
The prudent Ráma at the sight  
Addressed his brother with delight:  
'Well art thou come, my brother dear.  
For much I longed to see thee here.  
For with thine aid, before I go,  
I would my gold and wealth bestow  
Upon the Bráhmans sage, who school  
Their lives by stern devotion's rule.  
And for all those who ever dwell  
Within my house and serve me well,  
Devoted servants, true and good,

Will I provide a livelihood. Quick, go and summon to this place  
The good Vas'ishtha's son, Suyajna, of the Bráhma race The first and holiest one.  
To all the Bráhmans wise and good Will I due reverence pay,  
Then to the solitary wood With thee will take my way.'

Footnotes

131:1 Kaikeyi.

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CANTO XXXII.: THE GIFT OF THE  
TREASURES.

That speech so noble which conveyed  
His friendly wish, the chief obeyed.With steps made swift by anxious  
thoughtThe wise Suyajna's home he sought,Him in the hall of Fire  
1 he found.

And bent before him to the ground:'O friend, to Rama's house return,Who  
now performs a task most stern.'He, when his noonday rites were done.Went  
forth with fair Sumitra's son,And came to Ráma's bright abodeRich in the  
love which Lakshmi showed.The son of Raghu with his dame.With joined  
hands met him as he came,Showing to him who Scripture knewThe worship  
that is Agni's due.

With armlets, bracelets, collars, rings,  
With costly pearls on golden strings,With many a gem for neck and limbThe  
son of Raghu honoured him.Then Ráma, at his wife's request,The wise  
Suyajna thus addressed;

'Accept a necklace too to deckWith golden strings thy spouse's neck.And  
Sítá here, my friend, were gladA girdle to her gift to add.And many a  
bracelet wrought with care,And many an armlet rich and rare,My wife to  
thine is fain to give,Departing in the wood to live.A bed by skilful  
workmen made,With gold and various gems inlaid--This too, before she  
goes, would shePresent, O saintly friend, to thee.Thine be my elephant,  
so famed,My uncle's present. Victor named;And let a thousand coins of  
gold,Great Brahman, with the gift be told.'Thus Ráma spoke: nor he  
declinedThe noble gitts for him designed.On Ráma, Lakshman, Sítá  
heInvoked all high felicity.

In pleasant words then Ráma gave

His hest to Lakshman prompt and brave,As Brahmá speaks for Him to hearWho  
rules the Gods' celestial sphere:'To the two best of Bráhmans run;Agastya  
bring, and Kus'ik's son,And precious gifts upon them rain,Like fostering  
floods upon the grain.

O long-armed Prince of Raghu's line,Delight them with a thousand kine,And  
many a fair and costly gem,With gold and silver, give to them.To him, so  
deep in Scripture, who,To Queen Kaus'alyá, ever true,Serves her with  
blessing and respect,Chief of the Taittiriya sect

1b--

To him. with women-slaves, presentA chariot rich with ornament,And costly  
robes of silk beside,Until the sage be satisfied.On Chitraratha. true aud  
dear,My tuneful bard and charioteer,Gems, robes, and plenteous wealth  
confer--Mine ancient friend and minister.And these who go with staff in  
hand,Grammarians trained, a numerous band.Who their deep study only  
prize,Nor think of other exercise,Who toil not, loving dainty fare,Whose  
praises e'en the good declare--On these be eighty cars bestowed,And each  
with precious treasures load.

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A thousand bulls for them suffice,Two hundred elephants of price,  
And let a thousand kine besideThe dainties of each meal provide.The  
throng who sacred girdles wear,And on Káusalyá wait with care--A thousand  
golden coins shall please,Son of Sumitrá, each of these.Let all, dear  
Lakshman, of the trainThese special gifts of honour gain;My mother will  
rejoice to knowHer Bráhmans have been cherished so.'

Then Raghu's son addressed the crowd

Who round him stood and wept aloud,When he to all who thronged the  
courtHad dealt his wealth for their support:'In Lakshman's house and mine  
remain,And guard them till I come again,'To all his people sad with  
grief.In loving ords thus spoke their chief,Then bade his treasure-keeper  
bringGold, silver, and each precious thing.Then straight the servants  
went and boreBack to their chief the wealth in store,Before the people's

eyes it shone, A glorious pile to look upon. The prince of men with  
Lakshman's aid Parted the treasures there displayed, Gave to the poor, the  
young, the old, And twice-born men, the gems and gold.

A Bráhmaṇ, long in evil case. Named Trijat, born of Garga's race, Earned  
ever toiling in a wood With spade and plough his livelihood. The youthful  
wife, his babes who bore, Their indigence felt more and more. Thus to the  
aged man she spake: 'Hear this my word: my counsel take. Come, throw thy  
spade and plough away; To virtuous Ráma go to-day. And somewhat of his  
kindness pray.' He heard the word she spoke: around His limbs his ragged  
cloth he wound. And took his journey by the road That led to Ráma's fair  
abode. To the fifth court he made his way; Nor met the Bráhmaṇ check or  
stay. Brighu, Angiras

I could not be

Brighter with saintly light than I, To Ráma's presence on he pressed. And  
thus the noble chief addressed: 'O Ráma, poor and weak am I, And many  
children round me cry. Scant living in the woods I earn: On me thine eye of  
pity turn.' And Ráma, bent on sport and jest, The suppliant Bráhmaṇ thus  
addressed: 'O aged man, one thousand kine,  
Yet undistributed, are mine. The cows on thee will I bestow As far as thou  
thy staff canst throw. The Bráhmaṇ heard. In eager haste He bound his  
cloth around his waist. Then round his head his staff he whirled, And forth  
with mightiest effort hurled. Cast from his hand it flew, and sank To earth  
on Sarjú's farther bank, Where herds of kine in thousands fed Near to the  
well-stocked bullock shed. And all the cows that wandered o'er The meadow,  
far as Sarjú's shore. At Ráma's word the herdsmen drove To Trijat's cottage  
in the grove. He drew the Bráhmaṇ to his breast, And thus with calming  
words addressed: 'Now be not angry, Sire. I pray: This jest of mine was  
meant in play. These thousand kine, but not alone. Their herdsmen too, are  
all thine own. And wealth beside I give thee: speak. Thine shall be all thy  
heart can seek.' Thus Ráma spake. And Trijat prayed For means his  
sacrifice to aid. And Rama gave much wealth, required To speed his offering  
as desired. Footnotes

132:1 The chapel where the sacred fire used in worship  
is kept.

132:1b The students and teachers of the Taittiríya portion of the Yajur  
Veda.

133:1 Two of the divine personages called prejápatís and \*Brahmadikas\*  
who were first created by Brahmá.

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CANTO XXXIII.: THE PEOPLE'S LAMENT.

Thus Sitá and the princes brave

Much wealth to all the Bráhmaṇs gave Then to the monarch's house the  
three Went forth the aged king to see. The princes from two servants  
took Those heavenly arms of glorious look, Adorned with garland and with  
band By Sitá's beautifying hand. On each high house a mournful throng Had  
gathered ere they passed along, Who gazed in pure unselfish woe From turret,  
root, and portico. So dense the crowd that blocked the ways, The rest,  
unable there to gaze, Were fain each terrace to ascend. And thence their  
eyes on Ráma bend. Then as the gathered multitude On foot their well-loved  
Ráma viewed. No royal shade to screen his head. Such words, disturbed in  
grief they said: 'O look, our hero, went to ride Leading a host in perfect  
pride--Now Lakshman, sole of all his friends, With Sitá on his steps  
attends. Though he has known the sweets of power,  
And poured his gifts in liberal shower, From duty's path he will not  
swerve,

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But, still his father's truth preserve. And she whose form so soft and  
fair Was veiled from spirits of the air, Now walks unsheltered from the  
day, Seen by the crowds who throng the way. Ah, for that gently-nurtured

form!How will it fade with sun and storm!How will the rain, the cold, the heat  
Mar fragrant breast and tinted feet!Surely some demon has  
possessedHis sire, and speaks within his breast,Or how could one that is  
a kingThus send his dear son wandering?It were a deed unkindly doneTo  
banish e'en a worthless son:But what, when his pure life has gainedThe  
hearts of all, by love enchained?Six sovereign virtues join to graceRáma  
the foremost of his race:Tender and kind and pure is he,Docile,  
religious, passion-free.Hence misery strikes not him alone:In bitterest  
grief the people moan,Like creatures of the stream, when dry  
In the great heat the channels lie.The world is mournful with the  
griefThat falls on its beloved chief,As, when the root is hewn away,Tree,  
fruit, and flower, and bud decay.The soul of duty, bright to see,He is  
the root of you and me;And all of us, who share his grief,His branches,  
blossom, fruit, and leaf.Now like the faithful Lakshman, weWill follow  
and be true as he;Our wives and kinsmen call with speed,And hasten where  
our lord shall lead.Yes, we will leave each well-loved spot,The field,  
the garden, and the cot,And, sharers of his weal and woe,Behind the pious  
Ráma go.Our houses, empty of their stores,With ruined courts and broken  
doors,With all their treasures borne away.And gear that made them bright  
and gay:O'errun by rats, with dust o'erspread,Shrines, whence the deities  
have fled,Where not a hand the water pours,Or sweeps the long-neglected  
floors,No incense loads the evening air,No Bráhmans chant the text and  
prayer,No fire of sacrifice is bright,No gift is known, no sacred rite;  
With floors which broken vessels strew,As if our woes had crushed them  
too--Of these be stern Kaikeyí queen,And rule o'er homes where we have  
been.The wood where Ráma's feet may roamShall be our city and our  
home,And this fair city we forsake,Our flight a wilderness shall  
make.Each serpent from his hole shall hie,The birds and beasts from  
mountain fly,Lions and elephants in fearShall quit the woods when we come  
near,Yield the broad wilds for us to range,And take our city in  
exchange.With Ráma will we hence, contentIf, where he is, our days be  
spent.'

Such were the varied words the crowd

Of all conditions spoke aloud.And Ráma heard their speeches, yetChanged  
not his purpose firmly set.His father's palace soon he neared,That like  
Kailása's hill appeared.Like a wild elephant he strodeRight onward to the  
bright abode.Within the palace court he stepped,Where ordered bands their  
station kept,And saw Sumantra standing nearWith down-cast eye and gloomy  
cheer.

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CANTO XXXIV.: RÁMA IN THE PALACE.

The dark incomparable chief

Whose eye was like a lotus leaf,Cried to the mournful charioteer,'Go tell  
my sire that I am here.'

Sumantra, sad and all dismayed,

The chieftain's order swift obeyed.Within the palace doors he hiedAnd saw  
the king, who wept and sighed.Like the great sun when wrapped in  
shadeLike fire by ashes overlaid,Or like a pool with waters dried,So lay  
the world's great lord and pride,A while the wise Sumantra gazedOn him  
whose senses woe has dazed,Grieving for Ráma. Near he drewWith hands  
upraised in reverence due.With blessing first his king he hailed;Then  
with a voice that well-nigh failed,In trembling accents soft and  
lowAddressed the monarch in his woe:'The prince of men, thy Ráma,  
waitsBefore thee at the palace gates.His wealth to Bráhmans he has  
dealt,And all whom in his home have dwelt.

Admit thy son. His friends have heardHis kind farewell and parting  
word,He longs to see thee first, and thenWill seek the wilds, O King of  
men.He, with each princely virtue's blaze,Shines as the sun engirt by  
rays.'

The truthful King who loved to keep  
The law profound as Ocean's deep, And stainless as the dark blue sky, Thus  
to Sumantra made reply:

p. 135

'Go then, Sumantra, go and call My wives and ladies one and all. Drawn  
round me shall they fill the place When I behold my Ráma's face.'

Quick to the inner rooms he sped,  
And thus to all the women said, 'Come, at the summons of the king: Come  
all, and make no tarrying.'

Their husband's word, by him conveyed,  
Soon as they heard, the dames obeyed, And following his guidance all Came  
thronging to the regal hall. In number half seven hundred, they,  
All lovely dames, in long array, With their bright eyes for weeping red, To  
stand round Queen Kaus'alyá, sped. They gathered, and the monarch  
viewed One moment all the multitude, Then to Sumantra spoke and said: 'Now  
let my son be hither led.'

Sumantra went. Then Ráma came,  
And Lakshman, and the Maithil dame, And, as he led them on, their  
guide Straight to the monarch's presence hied. When yet far off the father  
saw His son with raised palms toward him draw, Girt by his ladies, sick  
with woes, Swift from his royal seat he rose. With all his strength the  
aged man To meet his darling Ráma ran, But trembling, wild with dark  
despair, Fell on the ground and fainted there. And Lakshman, wont in cars  
to ride, And Ráma, threw them by the side Of the poor miserable king, Half  
lifeless with his sorrow's sting. Throughout the spacious hall up went A  
thousand women's wild lament: 'Ah Ráma!' thus they wailed and wept, And  
anklets tinkled as they stepped. Around his body, weeping, threw  
Their loving arms the brothers two, And then, with Sítá's gentle aid, The  
king upon a couch was laid. At length to earth's imperial lord, When life  
and knowledge were restored, Though seas of woe went o'er his head, With  
suppliant hand, thus Ráma said: 'Lord of us all, great King, thou art: Bid  
me farewell before we part, To Dandak wood this day I go: One blessing and  
one look bestow. Let Lakshman my companion be, And Sítá also follow me. With  
truthful pleas I sought to bend Their purpose; but no ear they lend. Now  
cast this sorrow from thy heart, And let us all, great King, depart. As  
Brahmá sends his children, so Let Lakshman, me, and Sítá go.'

He stood unmoved, and watched intent

Until the king should grant consent. Upon his son his eyes he cast, And  
thus the monarch spake at last: 'O Ráma, by her arts enslaved, I gave the  
boons Kaikeyí craved, Unfit to reign, by her misled: Be ruler in thy  
father's stead.' Thus by the lord of men addressed,  
Ráma, of virtue's friends the best, In lore of language duly learned, His  
answer, reverent, thus returned: 'A thousand years, O King, remain O'er  
this our city still to reign. I in the woods my life will lead: The lust of  
rule no more I heed. Nine years and five I there will spend, And when the  
portioned days shall end, Will come, my vows and exile o'er, And clasp thy  
feet, my King, once more.'

A captive in the snare of truth,

Weeping, distressed with woe and ruth, Thus spake the monarch, while the  
queen Kaikeyí urged him on unseen: 'Go then, O Ráma, and begin Thy course  
unvexed by fear and sin: Go, my beloved son, and earn Success, and joy, and  
safe return. So fast the bonds of duty bind. O Raghu's son, thy truthful  
mind, That naught can turn thee back, or guide Thy will so strongly  
fortified. But O, a little longer stay. Nor turn thy steps this night  
away, That I one little day--alas! One only--with my son may pass.

Me and thy mother do not slight, But stay, my son, with me to-night; With  
every dainty please thy taste, And seek to-morrow morn the waste Hard is  
thy task, O Raghu's son, Dire is the toil thou wilt not shun, Far to the  
lonely wood to flee, And leave thy friends for love of me. I swear it by my  
truth, believe, For thee, my son, I deeply grieve, Misguided by the

traitress dameWith hidden guile like smouldering flame.Now, by her wicked  
counsel stirred,Thou fain wouldst keep my plighted word.No marvel that my  
eldest bornWould hold me true when I have sworn.'

Then Ráma having calmly heard

His wretched father speak each word,With Lakshman standing br his  
sideThus, humbly, to the King replied:'If dainties now my taste  
regale,To-morrow must those dainties fail.This day departure I preferTo  
all that wealth can minister.O'er this fair land, no longer mine,Which I,  
with all her realms, resign,p. 136

Her multitudes of men, her grain,

Her stores of wealth, let Bharat reign.And let the promised boon which  
thouWast pleased to grant the queen ere now,Be hers in full. Be true, O  
King,Kind giver of each precious thing.Thy spoken word I still will  
heed,Obeying all thy lips decreed:And fourteen years in woods will  
dwellWith those who live in glade and dell.No hopes of power my heart can  
touch,No selfish joys attract so muchAs son of Raghu, to fulfilWith heart  
and soul my father's will.Dismiss, dismiss thy needless woe,Nor let those  
drowning torrents flow:The Lord of Rivers in his prideKeeps to the banks  
that bar his tide.Here in thy presence I declare;By thy good deeds, thy  
truth, I swear;Nor lordship, joy, nor lands I prize;Life, heaven, all  
blessings I despise.I wish to see thee still remainMost true, O King, and  
free from stain.It must not, Sire, it must not be:I cannot rest one hour  
with thee.Then bring this sorrow to an end,For naught my settled will can  
bend.

I gave a pledge that binds me too,And to that pledge I still am  
true.Kaikeyí bade me speed away:She prayed me, and I answered yea.Pine  
not for me, and weep no more;The wood for us has joy in store,Filled with  
the wild deer's peaceful herdsAnd voices of a thousand birds.A father is  
the God of each,Yea, e'en of Gods, so Scriptures teach:And I will keep my  
sire's decree,For as a God I honour thee.O best of men, the time is  
nigh,The fourteen years will soon pass byAnd to thine eyes thy son  
restore:Be comforted, and weep no more.Thou with thy firmness shouldst  
supportThese weeping crowds who throng the court;Then why, O chief of  
high renown,So troubled, and thy soul cast down?'

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CANTO XXXV.: KAIKEYÍ REPROACHED.

Wild with the rage he could not calm,  
Sumantra, grinding palm on palm,His head in quick impatience shook,And  
sighed with woe he could not brook.He gnashed his teeth, his eyes were  
red,From his changed face the colour fled.In rage and grief that knew no  
law,The temper of the king he saw.With his word-arrows swift and keenHe  
shook the bosom of the queen.With scorn, as though its lightning  
strokeWould blast her body, thus he spoke:'Thou, who, of no dread sin  
afraid,Hast Das'aratha's self betrayed,Lord of the world, whose might  
sustainsEach thing that moves or fixed remains,What direr crime is left  
thee now?Death to thy lord and house art thou,Whose cruel deeds the king  
distress,Mahendra's peer in mightiness,Firm as the mountain's rooted  
steep,Enduring as the Ocean's deep.Despise not Das'aratha, heIs a kind  
lord and friend to thee.A loving wife in worth outruns

The mother of ten million sons.Kings, when their sires have passed  
away,Succeed by birthright to the sway.Ikshváku's son still rules the  
state,Yet thou this rule wouldst violate.Yea, let thy son, Kaikeyí,  
reign,Let Bharat rule his sire's domain.Thy will, O Queen, shall none  
oppose:We all will go where Ráma goes.No Bráhmaṇ, scorning thee, will  
restWithin the realm thou governest,But all will fly indignant hence:So  
great thy trespass and offence.I marvel, when thy crime I see.Earth yawns  
not quick to swallow thee;And that the Bráhmaṇ saints prepareNo burning  
scourge thy soul to scare,With cries of shame to smite thee, bentUpon our  
Ráma's banishment.The Mango tree with axes fell,And tend instead the Neem

tree well, Still watered with all care the tree Will never sweet and  
pleasant be. Thy mother's faults to thee descend, And with thy borrowed  
nature blend. True is the ancient saw: the Neem Can ne'er distil a honeyed  
stream. Taught by the tale of long ago Thy mother's hateful sin we know.  
A bounteous saint, as all have heard, A boon upon thy sire conferred, And  
all the eloquence revealed That fills the wood, the flood, the field. No  
creature walked, or swam, or flew, But he its varied language knew. One  
morn upon his couch he heard The chattering of a gorgeous bird. And as he  
marked its close intent He laughed aloud in merriment. Thy mother furious  
with her lord, And fain to perish by the cord, Said to her husband: 'I  
would know, O Monarch, why thou laughest so.'

p. 137

The king in answer spake again: 'If I this laughter should explain, This  
very hour would be my last, For death, be sure would follow fast.' Again  
thy mother, flushed with ire, To Kekaya spake, thy royal sire: 'Tell me the  
cause; then live or die: I will not brook thy laugh, not I.' Thus by his  
darling wife addressed, The king whose might all earth confessed To that  
kind saint his story told Who gave the wondrous gift of old.

He listened to the king's complaint, And thus in answer spoke the  
saint: 'King, let her quit thy home or die, But never with her prayer  
comply.' The saint's reply his trouble stilled, And all his heart with  
pleasure filled. Thy mother from his home he sent, And days like Lord  
Kuvera's spent. So thou wouldst force the king, misled By thee, in evil  
paths to tread, And bent on evil wouldst begin, Through folly, this career  
of sin. Most true, methinks, in thee is shown The ancient saw so widely  
known: The foils their fathers' worth declare And girls their mothers'  
nature share. So be not thou. For pity's sake Accept the word the monarch  
spake. Thy husband's will, O Queen, obey, And be the people's hope and  
stay. O, do not, urged by folly, draw The king to tread on duty's law, The  
lord who all the world sustains, Bright as the God o'er Gods who  
reigns. Our glorious king, by sin unstained, Will never grant what fraud  
obtained; No shade of fault in him is seen: Let Ráma be anointed,  
Queen. Remember, Queen, undying shame

Will through the world pursue thy name, If Ráma leave the king his  
sire, And, banished, to the wood retire. Come, from thy breast this fever  
fling: Of his own realm be Ráma king. None in this city e'er can dwell To  
tend and love thee half so well. When Ráma sits in royal place, True to the  
custom of his race Our monarch of the mighty bow A hermit to the woods will  
go.'

1

Sumantra thus, palm joined to palm, Poured forth his words of bane and  
balm, With keen reproach, with pleading kind, Striving to move Kaikeyí's  
mind. In vain he prayed, in vain reproved, She heard unsoftened and  
unmoved. Nor could the eyes that watched her view One yielding look, one  
change of hue.

Footnotes

137:1 It was the custom of the kings of the solar  
dynasty to resign in their extreme old age the kingdom to the heir, and  
spend the remainder of their days in  
holy meditation in the forest:

'For such through ages in their life's decline Is the good custom  
of Ikshváku's line.'

Raghuvans'a.

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CANTO XXXVI.: SIDDHÁRTH'S SPEECH.

Ikshváku's son with anguish torn

For the great oath his lips had sworn, With tears and sighs of sharpest  
pain Thus to Sumantra spake again: 'Prepare thou quick a perfect  
force, Cars, elephants, and foot, and horse, To follow Raghu's scion

henceEquipped with all magnificence.Let traders with the wealth they  
sell,And those who charming stories tell,And dancing-women fair of  
face,The prince's ample chariots grace.On all the train who throng his  
courts,And those who share his manly sports.Great gifts of precious  
wealth bestow,And bid them with their master go.Let noble arms, and many  
a wain,And townsmen swell the prince's train;And hunters best for  
woodland skillTheir places in the concourse fill.While elephants and deer  
he slays,Drinking wood honey as he strays,And looks on streams each  
fairer yet,His kingdom he may chance forget.Let all my gold and wealth of  
corn

With Rama to the wilds be born;For it will soothe the exile's lotTo  
sacrifice in each pure spot,Deal ample largess forth, and meetEach hermit  
in his calm retreat.The wealth shall Ráma with him bear.Ayodhyá shall be  
Bharat's share.'

As thus Kakutstha's offspring spoke,  
Fear in Katiketí's breast awoke.The freshness of her face was dried,Her  
trembling tongue was terror-tied.Alarmed and sad, with bloodless  
cheek,She turned to him and scarce could speak:'Nay, Sire, but Bharat  
shall not gainAn empty realm where none remain.My Bharat shall not rule a  
wasteReft of all sweets to charm the taste--The wine-cup's dregs, all  
dull and dead,Whence the light foam and life are fled.' Thus in her  
rage the long-eyed dameSpoke her dire speech untouched by shame.

p. 138

Then, answering, Das'aratha spoke:'Why. having bowed me to the yoke.Dost  
thou, must cruel, spur and goadMe who am struggling with the load?  
Why didst thou not oppose at firstThis hope, vile Queen, so fondly  
nursed?'

Scarce could the monarch's angry speech

The ears of the fair lady reach,When thus, with double wrath  
inflamed,Kaikeyí to the king exclaimed:

'Sagar, from whom thy line is traced,

Drove forth his eldest son disgraced,Called Asamanj, whose fate we  
know:Thus should thy son to exile go.'

'Fie on thee, dame!' the monarch said;

Each of her people bent his head,And stood in shame and sorrow mute:She  
marked not, bold and resolute.Then great Siddhárth, inflamed with  
rage,The good old councillor and sageOn whose wise rede the king  
relied,To Queen Kaikeyí thus replied:'But Asamanj the cruel laidHis hands  
on infants as they played,Cast them to Sarjú's flood, and smiledFor  
pleasure when he drowned a child.'

1

The people saw, and, furious, spedStraight the the king his sire and  
said:'Choose us, O glory of the throne,Choose us. or Asamanj alone.'

'Whence comes this dread?' the monarch cried;And all the people thus

replied:'In folly, King, he loves to layFierce hands upon our babes at

play,Casts them to Sarjú's flood. and joysTo murder our bewildered

boys.'With heedful ear the king of menHeard each complaining citizen.To

please their troubled minds he strove,And from the state his son he

drove.With wife and gear upon a carHe placed him quick, and sent him far.

And thus he gave commandment, 'He

Shall all his days an exile be.'With basket and with plough he

strayedO'er mountain heights, through pathless shade,Roaming all lands a

weary time,An outcast wretch defiled with crime.Sagar, the righteous path

who held,His wicked offspring thus expelled.But what has Ráma done to

blame?Why should his sentence be the same?No sin his stainless name can

dim;We see no fault at all in him.Pure as the moon, no darkening blotOn

his sweet life has left a spot.If thou canst see one fault, e'en one,To

dim the fame of Raghu's son,

That fault this hour, O lady, show.And Ráma to the wood shall go.To drive

the guiltless to the wild,Truth's constant lover, undefiled.Would, by



defiance of the right, The glory e'en of Indra blight. Then cease, O lady,  
and dismiss Thy hope to ruin Ráma's bliss, Or all thy gain, O fair of  
face, Will be men's hatred, and disgrace.'

Footnotes

138:1 See Book I, Canto XXXIX. An Indian prince in  
more modern times appears to have diverted himself in  
a similar way.

It is still reported in Belgium that Appay Deasy was  
wont to amuse himself "by making several young and beautiful women stand  
side by side on a narrow balcony, without a parapet, overhanging the deep  
reservoir at the new palace in Nipani. He used then to pass along the  
line of trembling creatures, and suddenly thrusting one of them headlong  
into the water below, he used to watch her drowning, and derive pleasure  
from her dying agonies."--History of the Belgium District. By

H. J. Stokes, M. S. C.

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CANTO XXXVIII.: THE COATS OF BARK.

Thus spake the virtuous sage: and then

Ráma addressed the king of men. In laws of meek behaviour bred, Thus to his  
sire he meekly said:

'King, I renounce all earthly care,

And live in woods on woodland fare. What, dead to joys, have I to do With  
lordly train and retinue! Who gives his elephant and yet Upon the girths  
his heart will set? How can a cord attract his eyes Who gives away the  
nobler prize? Best of the good, with me he led No host, my King with  
banners spread. All wealth, all lordship I resign: The hermit's dress alone  
be mine. Before I go, have here conveyed A little basket and a spade. With  
these alone I go, content, For fourteen years of banishment.'

With her own hands Kaikeyí took The hermit coats of bark, and, 'Look,'  
She cried with bold unblushing brow Before the concourse, 'Dress thee  
now.' That lion leader of the brave Took from her hand the dress she  
gave, Cast his fine raiment on the ground,

p. 139

And round his waist the vesture bound. Then quick the hero Lakshman too His  
garment from his shoulders threw, And, in the presence of his sire, Indued  
the ascetic's rough attire. But Sítá, in her silks arrayed, Threw glances,  
trembling and afraid, On the bark coat she had to wear, Like a shy doe that  
eyes the snare. Ashamed and weeping for distress From the queen's hand she  
took the dress. The fair one, by her husband's side Who matched heaven's  
minstrel monarch,

1 cried:

'How bind they on their woodland dress, Those hermits of the wilderness?'

There stood the pride of Janak's race

Perplexed, with sad appealing face. One coat the lady's fingers

grasped, One round her neck she feebly clasped, But failed again, again,  
confused

By the wild garb she ne'er had used. Then quickly hastening Ráma, pride Of  
all who cherish virtue, tied The rough bark mantle on her, o'er The silken  
raiment that she wore.

Then the sad women when they saw

Ráma the choice bark round her draw, Rained water from each tender eye, And  
cried aloud with bitter cry: 'O, not on her, beloved, not On Sítá falls thy  
mournful lot. If, faithful to thy father's will, Thou must go forth, leave  
Sítá still. Let Sítá still remaining here Our hearts with her loved  
presence cheer. With Lakshman by thy side to aid Seek thou, dear son, the  
lonely shade. Unmeet, one good and fair as she Should dwell in woods a  
devotee. Let not our prayers be prayed in vain: Let beauteous Sítá yet  
remain; For by thy love of duty tied Thou wilt not here thyself abide.'

Then the king's venerable guide

Vas'ishtha, when he saw each coatEnclose the lady's waist and throat,Her  
zeal with gentle words repressed,  
And Queen Kaikeyí thus addressed:'O evil-hearted sinner, shameOf royal  
Kekaya's race and name;Who matchless in thy sin couldst cheatThy lord the  
king with vile deceit;Lost to all sense of duty, knowSítá to exile shall  
not go.Sítá shall guard, as 'twere her own,The precious trust of Ráma's  
throne.

Those joined by wedlock's sweet control  
Have but one self and common soul.Thus Sítá shall our empress be,For  
Ráma's self and soul is she.Or if she still to Ráma cleaveAnd for the  
woods the kingdom leave:If naught her loving heart deter,We and this town  
will follow her.The warders of the queen shall takeTheir wives and go for  
Ráma's sake,The nation with its stores of grain,The city's wealth shall  
swell his train.Bharat, S'atrughna both will wearBark mantles, and his  
lodging share,Still with their elder brother dwellIn the wild wood, and  
serve him well.Rest here alone, and rule thy stateUnpeopled, barren,  
desolate;Be empress of the land and trees,  
Thou sinner whom our sorrows please.The land which Ráma reigns not  
o'erShall bear the kingdom's name no more:The woods which Ráma wanders  
throughShall be our home and kingdom too.Bharat, be sure, will never  
deignO'er realms his father yields, to reign.Nay, if the king's true son  
he be,He will not, sonlike, dwell with thee.Nay, shouldst thou from the  
earth arise,And send thy message from the skies,To his forefathers'  
custom trueNo erring course would he pursue.So hast thou, by thy grievous  
fault,Offended him thou wouldst exalt.In all the world none draws his  
breathWho loves not Ráma, true to death.This day, O Queen, shalt thou  
beholdBirds, deer, and beasts from lea and foldTurn to the woods in  
Ráma's train.And naught save longing trees remain.'

Footnotes

139:1 Chitraratha, King of the celestial choristers.Next: Canto XXXVIII.:  
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CANTO XXXVIII.: CARE FOR KAUS'ALYÁ

Then when the people wroth and sad

Saw Sítá in bark vesture clad,Though wedded, like some widowed thing,They  
cried out, 'Shame upon thee, King!'Grieved by their cry and angry lookThe  
lord of earth at once forsookAll hope in life that still remained,In  
duty, self, and fame unstained.Ikshváku's son with burning sighsOn Queen  
Kaikeyí bent his eyes,And said: 'But Sítá must not fleeIn garments of a  
devotee.My holy guide has spoken truth:Unfit is she in tender youth,  
p. 140

So gently nurtured, soft and fair,The hardships of the wood to share.

How has she sinned, devout and true, The noblest monarch's child,

That she should garb of bark indue And journey to the wild? That

she should spend her youthful days Amid a hermit band,

Like some poor mendicant who strays Sore troubled, through the  
land? Ah, let the child of Janak throw Her dress of bark aside,

And let the royal lady go With royal wealth supplied. Not such the

pledge I gave before, Unfit to linger here: The oath, which I the

sinner swore Is kept, and leaves her clear. Won from her childlike

love this too My instant death would be, As blossoms on the old

bamboo Destroy the parent tree.

1

If aught amiss by Ráma doneOffend thee, O thou wicked one,What least  
transgression canst thou findIn her, thou worst of womankind?What shade  
of fault in her appears,Whose full soft eye is like the deer's?What canst  
thou blame in Janak's child,So gentle, modest, true, and mild?Is not one  
crime complete, that sentMy Ráma forth to banishment!And wilt thou other  
sins commit.Thou wicked one, to double it?This is the pledge and oath I  
swore,What thou besoughtest, and no more,Of Ráma--for I heard thee, dame-

-

When he for consecration came. Now with this limit not content, In hell  
should be thy punishment, Who fain the Maithil bride wouldst press To  
clothe her limbs with hermit dress.'

Thus spake the father in his woe;

And Rāma, still prepared to go, To him who sat with drooping head Spake in  
return these words and said:

'Just King, here stands my mother dear,  
Kaus'alyā, one whom all revere. Submissive, gentle, old is she, And keeps  
her lips from blame of thee, For her, kind lord, of me bereft A sea of  
whelming woe is left. O, show her in her new distress Still fonder love and  
tenderness. Well honoured by thine honoured hand Her grief for me let her  
withstand, Who wrapt in constant thought of me In me would live a devotee.

Peer of Mahendra, O, to her be kind,

And treat I pray, my gentle mother so, That, when I dwell afar,  
her life resigned, She may not, pass, to Yama's realm for  
woe.' Footnotes

140:1 It is said that the bamboo dies after flowering.

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CANTO XXXIX.: COUNSEL TO SÍTĀ.

Scarce had the sire, with each dear queen,  
Heard Rāma's pleading voice, and seen His darling in his hermit dress Ere  
failed his senses for distress. Convulsed with woe, his soul that shook, On  
Raghu's son he could not look; Or if he looked with failing eye He could  
not to the chief reply. By pangs of bitter grief assailed, The long-armed  
monarch wept and wailed, Half dead a while and sore distraught, While Rāma  
filled his every thought. 'This hand of mine in days ere now Has reft her  
young from many a cow. Or living things has idly slain: Hence comes, I  
ween, this hour of pain. Not till the hour is come to die Can from its  
shell the spirit fly. Death comes not, and Kaikeyí still Torments the  
wretch she cannot kill, Who sees his son before him quit The fine soft  
robes his rank that fit, And, glorious as the burning fire, In hermit garb  
his limbs attire. Now all the people grieve and groan  
Through Queen Kaikeyí's deed alone, Who, having dared this deed of  
sin, Strives for herself the gain to win.'

He spoke. With tears his eyes grew dim,

His senses all deserted him. He cried, O Rāma, once, then weak And fainting  
could no further speak. Unconscious there he lay: at length Regathering his  
sense and strength, While his full eyes their torrents shed, To wise  
Sumantra thus he said: 'Yoke the light car, and hither lead Fleet coursers  
of the noblest breed, And drive this heir of lofty fate Beyond the limit of  
the state. This seems the fruit that virtues bear, The meed of worth which  
texts declare--The sending of the brave and good By sire and mother to the  
wood.'

He heard the monarch, and obeyed,

With ready feet that ne'er delayed, And brought before the palace gate The  
horses and the car of state. Then to the monarch's son he sped, And raising  
hands of reverence said p. 141

That the light car which gold made fair,

With best of steeds, was standing there. King Das'aratha called in  
haste The lord o'er all his treasures placed. And spoke, well skilled in  
place and time, His will to him devoid of crime: 'Count all the years she  
has to live Afar in forest wilds, and give To Sītā robes and gems of  
price As for the time may well suffice. Quick to the treasure-room he  
went, Charged by that king most excellent, Brought the rich stores, and  
gave them all To Sītā in the monarch's hall. The Maithil dame of high  
descent Received each robe and ornament, And tricked those limbs, whose  
lines foretold High destiny, with gems and gold. So well adorned, so fair  
to view, A glory through the hall she threw: So, when the Lord of Light  
upsprings, His radiance o'er the sky he flings. Then Queen Kaus'alyā spake

at last,With loving arms about her cast,Pressed lingering kisses on her head,And to the high-souled lady said:'Ah, in this faithless world belowWhen dark misfortune comes and woe,  
Wives, loved and cherished every day,Neglect their lords and disobey.Yes, woman's nature still is this:--After long days of calm and blissWhen some light grief her spirit tries,She changes all her love, or flies.Young wives are thankless, false in soul,With roving hearts that spurn control.Brooding on sin and quickly changed,In one short hour their love estranged.Not glorious deed or lineage fair,Not knowledge, gift, or tender careIn chains of lasting love can bindA woman's light inconstant mind.But those good dames who still maintainWhat right, truth, Scripture, rule ordain--No holy thing in their pure eyesWith one beloved husband vies.Nor let thy lord my son, condemnedTo exile, be by thee contemned,For be he poor or wealthy, heIs as a God, dear child, to thee.'

When Sítá heard Kaus'alyá's speech

Her duty and her gain to teach,She joined her palms with reverent graceAnd gave her answer face to face:'All will I do, forgetting naught,Which thou,O honoured Queen, hast taught.

I know, have heard, and deep have storedThe rules of duty to my lord.Not me, good Queen, shouldst thou includeAmong the faithless multitude.Its own sweet light the moon shall leaveEre I to duty cease to cleave.The stringless lute gives forth no strain,The wheelless car is urged in vain;No joy a lordless dame, althoughBlest with a hundred sons, can know.From father, brother, and from sonA measured share of joy is won:Who would not honour, love, and blessHer lord, whose gifts are measureless?Thus trained to think, I hold in aweScripture's command and duty's law.Him can I hold in slight esteem?Her lord is woman's God, I deem.'Kaus'alyá heard the lady's speech,Nor failed those words her heart to reach.Then, pure in mind, she gave to flowThe tear that sprang of joy and woe.Then duteous Ráma forward cameAnd stood before the honoured dame,And joining reverent hands addressedThe queen in rank above the rest:'O mother, from these tears refrain;Look on my sire and still thy pain.To thee my days afar shall fly

As if sweet slumber closed thine eye,And fourteen years of exile seemTo thee, dear mother, like a dream.On me returning safe and well,Girt by my friends, thine eyes shall dwell.'

Thus for their deep affection's sake

The hero to his mother spake,Then to the half seven hundred too.Wives of his sire, paid reverence due.Thus Das'aratha's son addressedThat crowd of matrons sore distressed:'If from these lips, while here I dwelt,One heedless taunt you e'er have felt,Forgive me, pray. And now adieu,I bid good-bye to all of you.'Then straight, like curlews' cries, upwentThe voices of their wild lament,While, as he bade farewell, the crowdOf royal women wept aloud,And through the ample hall's extent.Where erst the sound of tabour, blentWith drum and shrill-toned instrument, In joyous concert rose,Now rang the sound of wailing high,The lamentation and the cry,The shriek, the choking sob, the sigh That told the ladies' woes.Next: Canto XL.: Ráma's Departure.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO XL.: RÁMA'S DEPARTURE.

Then Ráma, Sítá, Lakshman bent

At the king's feet, and sadly went

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Round him with slow steps reverent.When Ráma of the duteous heartHad gained his sire's consent to part,With Sítá by his side he paidDue reverence to the queen dismayed.And Lakshman, with affection meet,Bowed down and clasped his mother's feet.Sumitrá viewed him as he pressedHer feet, and thus her son addressed:'Neglect not Ráma wandering there,But tend him with thy faithful care.In hours of wealth, in time of woe,Him, sinless son, thy refuge know.From this good law the just ne'er

swerve, That younger sons the eldest serve, And to this righteous rule  
incline All children of thine ancient line--Freely to give, reward each  
rite, Nor spare their bodies in the fight. Let Ráma Das'aratha be,  
Look upon Sítá as on me, And let the cot wherein you dwell Be thine  
Ayodhyá. Fare thee well." Her blessing thus Sumitrá gave To him whose soul  
to Ráma clave, Exclaiming, when her speech was done, 'Go forth, O  
Lakshman, go, my son. Go forth, my son to win success, High victory and  
happiness. Go forth thy foemen to destroy, And turn again at last with  
joy.' As Mátali his charioteer Speaks for the Lord of Gods to  
hear, Sumantra, palm to palm applied, In reverence trained, to Ráma  
cried: 'O famous Prince, my car ascend,--May blessings on thy course  
attend,--And swiftly shall my horses flee And place thee where thou  
biddest me. The fourteen years thou hast to stay Far in the wilds, begin  
to-day; For Queen Kaikeyí cries, Away." Then Sítá, best of  
womankind, Ascended, with a tranquil mind, Soon as her toilet task was  
done, That chariot brilliant as the sun. Ráma and Lakshman true and  
bold Sprang on the car adorned with gold. The king those years had counted  
o'er,

And given Sítá robes and store Of precious ornaments to wear When following  
her husband there. The brothers in the car found place For nets and weapons  
of the chase, There warlike arms and mail they laid, A leathern basket and  
a spade. Soon as Sumantra saw the three Were seated in the chariot, he Urged  
on each horse of noble breed, Who matched the rushing wind in speed. As  
thus the son of Raghu went

Forth for his dreary banishment,

Chill numbing grief the town assailed, All strength grew weak, all spirit  
failed, Ayodhá through her wide extent Was filled with tumult and  
lament: Steeds neighed and shook the bells they bore, Each elephant  
returned a roar. Then all the city, young and old, Wild with their sorrow  
uncontrolled, Rushed to the car, as, from the sun The panting herds to  
water run. Before the car, behind, they clung, And there as eagerly they  
hung, With torrents streaming from their eyes, Called loudly with repeated  
cries: 'Listen, Sumantra: draw thy rein;

Drive gently, and thy steeds restrain. Once more on Ráma will we gaze, Now  
to be lost for many days. The queen his mother has, be sure, A heart of  
iron, to endure To see her godlike Ráma go, Nor feel it shattered by the  
blow. Sítá, well done! Videha's pride, Still like his shadow by his  
side; Rejoicing in thy duty still As sunlight cleaves to Meru's hill. Thou,  
Lakshman, too, hast well deserved, Who from thy duty hast not  
swerved, Tending the peer of Gods above, Whose lips speak naught but words  
of love. Thy firm resolve is nobly great, And high success on thee shall  
wait. Yea, thou shalt win a priceless meed--Thy path with him to heaven  
shall lead, 'As thus they spake, they could not hold The tears that down  
their faces rolled, While still they followed for a space Their darling of  
Ikshváku's race. There stood surrounded by a ring Of mournful wives the  
mournful king; For, 'I will see once more,' he cried, 'Mine own dear son,'  
and forth he hied. As he came near, there rose the sound Of weeping, as the  
dames stood round.

So the she-elephants complain When their great lord and guide is  
slain. Kakutstha's son, the king of men, The glorious sire, looked troubled  
then, As the full moon is when dismayed By dark eclipse's threatening  
shade. Then Das'aratha's son, designed For highest fate of lofty mind. Urged  
to more speed the charioteer, 'Away, away! why linger here? Urge on thy  
horses,' Rama cried, And 'Stay, O stay,' the people sighed. Sumantra, urged  
to speed away, The townsmen's call must disobey, Forth as the long-armed  
hero went,

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The dust his chariot wheels up sent Was laid by streams that ever  
flowed From their sad eyes who filled the road. Then, sprung of woe, from  
eyes of all The women drops began to fall, As from each lotus on the

lakeThe darting fish the water shake.When he, the king of high renown,Saw  
that one thought held all the town,Like some tall tree he fell and  
lay,Whose root the axe has hewn away.

Then straight a mighty cry from thoseWho followed Ráma's car arose,Who  
saw their monarch fainting thereBeneath that grief too great to bear.Then  
'Ráma, Ráma!' with the cryOf 'Ah, his mother!' sounded high,As all the  
people wept aloudAround the ladies' sorrowing crowd.When Ráma backward  
turned his eye,And saw the king his father lieWith troubled sense and  
failing limb,And the sad queen, who followed him,Like some young creature  
in the net,That will not, in its misery, letIts wild eyes on its mother  
rest,So, by the bonds of duty pressed,His mother's look he could not  
meet.He saw them with their weary feet,Who, used to bliss, in cars should  
ride,Who ne'er by sorrow should be tried,And, as one mournful look he  
cast,'Drive on,' he cried, 'Sumantra, fast.'As when the driver's  
torturing hookGoads on an elephant, the lookOf sire and mother in  
despairWas more than Ráma's heart could bear.As mother kine to stalls  
returnWhich hold the calves for whom they yearn,So to the car she tried  
to run

As a cow seeks her little one.Once and again the hero's eyesLooked on his  
mother, as with criesOf woe she called and gestures wild,'O Sítá,  
Lakshman, O my child!''Stay,' cried the king, 'thy chariot stay:'''On,  
on,' cried Ráma, 'speed away.'As one between two hosts, inclinedTo  
neither was Sumantra's mind.But Ráma spake these words again:'A  
lengthened woe is bitterest pain.On, on; and if his wrath grow hot,Thine  
answer be, 'I heard thee not.'Sumantra, at the chief's behest,Dismissed  
the crowd that toward him pressed,And, as he bade, to swiftest speedUrged  
on his way each willing steed.The king's attendants parted thence,And  
paid him heart-felt reverence:In mind, and with the tears he wept,Each  
still his place near Ráma kept.As swift away the horses sped,His lords to  
Das'aratha said:'To follow him whom thou againWouldst see returning home  
is vain.' With failing limb and drooping mien He heard their  
counsel wise: Still on their son the king and queen Kept fast their  
lingering eyes. 1

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CANTO XLI.: THE CITIZENS' LAMENT.

The lion chief with hands upraised

Was born from eyes that fondly gazed.But then the ladies' bower was  
rentWith cries of weeping and lament:'Where goes he now, our lord, the  
sureProtector of the friendless poor,In whom the wretched and the  
weakDefence and aid were wont to seek?All words of wrath he turned  
aside,And ne'er, when cursed, in ire replied.He shared his people's woe,  
and stilledThe troubled breast which rage had filled.Our chief, on lofty  
thoughts intent,In glorious fame preeminent:As on his own dear mother,  
thusHe ever looked on each of us.Where goes he now? His sire's behest,By  
Queen Kaikeyí's guile distressed,Has banished to the forest henceHim who  
was all the world's defence.Ah, senseless King, to drive awayThe hope of  
men, their guard and stay,To banish to the distant woodRáma the duteous,  
true, and good!'The royal dames, like cows bereaved

Of their young calves, thus sadly grieved.The monarch heard them as they  
wailed,And by the fire of grief assailedFor his dear son, he bowed his  
head,And all his sense and memory fled. Then were no fires of worship  
fed,Thick darkness o'er the sun was spread.The cows their thirsty calves  
denied,And elephants flung their food aside.

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Tris'anku, 1 Jupiter looked dread,

And Mercury and Mars the red,In direful opposition met,The glory of the  
moon beset.The lunar stars withheld their light,The planets were no  
longer bright,But meteors with their horrid glare,And dire Vis'ákhás  
2 lit the air.

As troubled Ocean heaves and raves  
When Doom's wild tempest sweeps the waves,  
Thus all Ayodhyá reeled and bent  
When Ráma to the forest went.  
And chilling grief and dark despair  
Fell suddenly on all men there.  
Their wonted pastime all forgot,  
Nor thought of food, or touched it not.  
Crowds in the royal street were seen

With weeping eye and troubled mien:  
No more a people gay and glad,  
Each head and heart was sick and sad.  
No more the cool wind softly blew,  
The moon no more was fair to view,  
No more the sun with genial glow  
Cherished the world now plunged in woe.  
Sons, brothers, husbands, wedded wives  
Forgot the ties that joined their lives;  
No thought for kith and kin was spared,  
But all for only Ráma cared.  
And Ráma's friends who loved him best,  
Their minds disordered and distressed.  
By the great burthen of their woes  
Turned not to slumber or repose.  
Like Earth with all her hills bereft  
Of Indra's guiding care.  
Ayodhyá in her sorrow left  
By him, the high souled heir.  
Was bowed by fear and sorrow's force,  
And shook with many a throe,  
While warrior, elephant, and horse  
Sent up the cry of woe.

Footnotes143:1 'Thirty centuries have passed since he began this memorable journey. Every step of it is known and is annually traversed by thousands: hero worship is not extinct. What can Faith do! How strong are the ties of religion when entwined with the legends of a country! How many a cart creeps creaking and weary along the road from Ayodhyá to Chitrakút. It is this that gives the Rámáyan a strange interest, the story still lives.' Calcutta Review: Vol. XXIII.  
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CANTO XLII.: DAS'ARATHA'S LAMENT.

While yet the dust was seen afar

That marked the course of Ráma's car,  
The glory of Ikshváku's race  
Turned not away his eager face.  
While yet his duteous son he saw  
He could not once his gaze withdraw,  
But rooted to the spot remained  
With eyes that after Ráma strained.  
But when that dust no more he viewed,  
Fainting he fell by grief subdued.

To his right hand Kaus'alyá went,  
And ready aid the lady lent,  
While Bharat's loving mother tried  
To raise him on the other side.  
The king, within whose ordered soul  
Justice and virtue held control,  
To Queen Kaikeyí turned and said,  
With every sense disquieted:  
'Touch me not, thou whose soul can plot  
All sin. Kaikeyí, touch me not.  
No loving wife, no friend to me,  
I ne'er again would look on thee;  
Ne'er from this day have aught to do  
With thee and all thy retinue;  
Thee whom no virtuous thoughts restrain,  
Whose selfish heart seeks only gain.  
The hand I laid in mine, O dame,  
The steps we took around the flame,  
1b

And all that links thy life to mine  
Here and hereafter I resign.  
If Bharat too, thy darling son,  
Joy in the rule thy art has won,  
Ne'er may the funeral offerings paid  
By his false hand approach my shade.'  
Then while the dust upon him hung,  
The monarch to Kaus'alyá clung,  
And she with mournful steps and slow  
Turned to the palace, worn with woe.  
As one whose hand has touched the fire,  
Or slain a Bráhma in his ire,  
He felt his heart with sorrow torn  
Still thinking of his son forlorn.  
Each step was torture, as the road  
The traces of the chariot showed,  
And as the shadowed sun grows dim  
So cure and anguish darkened him.  
He raised a cry, by woe distraught,  
As of his son again he thought.  
And judging that the car had sped  
Beyond the city, thus he said:  
'I still behold the foot-prints made  
By the good horses that conveyed  
My son afar: these marks I see,

But high-souled Ráma, where is he?  
Ah me, my son! my first and best,  
On pleasant conches wont to rest,  
With limbs perfumed with sandal, fanned  
By many a beauty's tender hand:  
Where will he lie with log or stone  
Beneath him for a pillow thrown,  
To leave at morn his earthy bed,  
Neglected, and with dust o'erspread,  
As from the flood with sigh and pant  
Comes forth the

husband elephant?The men who make the woods their homeShall see the long-  
armed hero roamRoused from his bed, though lord of all,In semblance of a  
friendless thrall.Janak's dear child who ne'er has met

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With aught save joy and comfort yet,Will reach to-day the forest, wornAnd  
wearied with the brakes of thorn.Ah, gentle girl, of woods unskilled,How  
will her heart with dread be filledAt the wild beasts' deep roaring  
there,Whose voices lift the shuddering hair!Kaikeyí, glory in thy  
gain,And, widow queen, begin to reign:No will, no power to live have I  
When my brave son no more is nigh.' Thus pouring forth laments, the  
king,Girt by the people's crowded ring,Entered the noble bower like  
oneNew-bathed when funeral rites are done.Where'er he looked naught met  
his gazeBut empty houses, courts, and ways.Closed were the temples:  
countless feetNo longer trod the royal street,And thinking of his son he  
viewedMen weak and worn and woe-subdued.As sinks the sun into a cloud,So  
passed he on, and wept aloud,Within that house no more to beThe dwelling  
of the banished three,Brave Ráma, his Videhan bride,And Lakshman by his  
brother's side:Like broad still waters, when the kingOf all the birds  
that ply the wingHas swooped from heaven and borne awayThe glittering  
snakes that made them gay.With choking sobs and voice half spentThe king  
renewed his sad lament:With broken utterance faint and lowScarce could he  
speak these words of woe:'My steps to Ráma's mother guide,And place me by  
Kaus'alyá's side:There, only there my heart may knowSome little respite  
from my woe.'

The warders of the palace ledThe monarch, when his words were said,To  
Queen Kaus'alyá's bower, and thereLaid him with reverential care.But  
while he rested on the bedStill was his soul disquieted.In grief he  
tossed his arms on highLamenting with a piteous cry:'O Ráma, Ráma,' thus  
said he,'My son, thou hast forsaken me.High bliss awaits those favoured  
menLeft living in Ayodhyá then,Whose eyes shall see my son once  
moreReturning when the time is o'er.'Then came the night, whose hated  
gloomFell on him like the night of doom.At midnight Das'aratha criedTo  
Queen Kaus'alyá by his side:I see thee not, Kaus'alyá; layThy gentle hand  
in mine, I pray.When Ráma left his home my sightWent with him, nor  
returns to-night.'

Footnotes

144:1 See p. 72.144:2 Four stars of the sixteenth lunar asterism.

144:1b In the marriage service.

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CANTO XLIII.: KAUS'ALYÁ'S LAMENT.

Kaus'alyá saw the monarch lie

With drooping frame and failing eye,And for her banished son  
distressedWith these sad words her lord addressed:'Kaikeyí, cruel, false,  
and vileHas cast the venom of her guileOn Ráma lord of men, and sheWill  
ravage like a snake set free;And more and more my soul alarm,Like a dire  
serpent bent on harm.For triumph crowns each dark intent,And Ráma to the  
wild is sent.Ah, were he doomed but here to strayBegging his food from  
day to day,Or do, enslaved, Kaikeyí's will,This were a boon, a comfort  
still.But she, as chose her cruel hate,Has hurled him from his high  
estate,As Bráhmans when the moon is newCast to the ground the demons'  
due.

1

The long-armed hero, like the lordOf Nágas, with his bow and swordBegins,  
I ween, his forest lifeWith Lakshman and his faithful wife.Ah, how will  
fare the exiles now,

Whom, moved by Queen Kaikeyí, thouHast sent in forests to abide,Bred in  
delights, by woe untried?Far banished when their lives are young,With the  
fair fruit before them hung,Deprived of all their rank that suits,How  
will they live on grain and roots?O, that my years of woe were passed,And



the glad hour were come at last When I shall see my children dear, Ráma,  
his wife, and Lakshman here! When shall Ayodhyá, wild with glee, Again  
those mighty heroes see, And decked with wreaths her banners wave To  
welcome home the true and brave? When will the beautiful city view With  
happy eyes the lordly two? Returning, joyful as the main When the dear moon  
is full again? When, like some mighty bull who leads The cow exulting  
through the meads, Will Ráma through the city ride, Strong-armed, with Sítá  
at his side? When will ten thousand thousand meet And crowd Ayodhyá's royal  
street, And grain in joyous welcome throw Upon my sons who tame the  
foe? When with delight shall youthful bands Of Bráhmaṇ maidens in their  
hands

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Bear fruit and flowers in goodly show,  
And circling round Ayodhyá go? With ripened judgment of a sage, And godlike  
in his blooming age, When shall my virtuous son appear, Like kindly rain,  
our hearts to cheer? Ah, in a former life, I ween, This hand of mine, most  
base and mean, Has dried the udders of the kine And left the thirsty calves  
to pine. Hence, as the lion robs the cow, Kaikeyí makes me childless  
now, Exulting from her feeble foe To rend the son she cherished so. I had  
but him, in Scripture skilled, With every grace his soul was filled. Now  
not a joy has life to give, And robbed of him I would not live: Yea, all my  
days are dark and drear If he, my darling, be not near, And Lakshman brave,  
my heart to cheer. As for my son I mourn and yearn, The quenchless flames  
of anguish burn And kill me with the pain, As in the summer's noontide  
blaze The glorious Day-God with his rays

Consumes the parching plain.'

Footnotes

145:1 The husks and chaff of the rice offered to the  
Gods.

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CANTO XLIV.: SUMITRA'S SPEECH.

Kaus'alyá ceased her sad lament,

Of beauteous dames most excellent. Sumitrá who to duty clave, In righteous  
words this answer gave: 'Dear Queen, all noble virtues grace Thy son, of  
men the first in place. Why dost thou shed these tears of woe With bitter  
grief lamenting so? If Ráma, leaving royal sway Has hastened to the woods  
away, 'Tis for his high-souled father's sake That he his promise may not  
break. He to the path of duty clings Which lordly fruit hereafter brings--  
The path to which the righteous cleave-- For him, dear Queen, thou  
shouldst not grieve. And Lakshman too. the blameless-souled, The same high  
course with him will hold, And mighty bliss on him shall wait, So tenderly  
compassionate. And Sítá, bred with tender care, Well knows what toils await  
her there, But in her love she will not part From Ráma of the virtuous  
heart. Now has thy son through all the world

The banner of his fame unfurled: True, modest, careful of his vow, What has  
he left to aim at now? The sun will mark his mighty soul, His wisdom,  
sweetness, self-control, Will spare from pain his face and limb, And with  
soft radiance shine for him. For him through forest glades shall spring A  
soft auspicious breeze, and bring Its tempered heat and cold to play Around  
him ever night and day. The pure cold moonbeams shall delight The hero as  
he sleeps at night, And soothe him with the soft caress Of a fond parent's  
tenderness. To him, the bravest of the brave, His heavenly arms the Bráhmaṇ  
gave, When fierce Suváhu dyed the plain With his life-blood by Ráma  
slain. Still trusting to his own right arm Thy hero son will fear no  
harm: As in his father's palace, he In the wild woods will dauntless  
be. When'er he lets his arrows fly His stricken foemen fall and die: And is  
that prince of peerless worth Too weak to keep and sway the earth? His  
sweet pure soul, his beauty's charm, His hero heart, his warlike arm,

Will soon redeem his rightful reign  
When from the woods he comes again.  
The Bráhmans on the prince's head  
King-making drops shall quickly shed,  
And Sitá, Earth, and Fortune share  
The glories which await the heir.  
For him, when forth his chariot swept,  
The crowd that thronged Ayodhyá wept,  
With agonizing woe distressed.  
With him in hermit's mantle dressed  
In guise of Sitá Lakshmí went,  
And none his glory may prevent.  
Yea, naught to him is high or hard,  
Before whose steps, to be his guard,  
Lakshman, the best who draws the bow,  
With spear, shaft, sword rejoiced to go.  
His wanderings in the forest o'er,  
Thine eyes shall see thy son once more.  
Quit thy faint heart, thy grief dispel,  
For this, O Queen, is truth I tell.  
Thy son returning, moonlike, thence,  
Shall at thy feet do reverence,  
And, blest and blameless lady, thou  
Shalt see his head to touch them bow,  
Yea, thou shalt see thy son made king  
When he returns with triumphing,  
And how thy happy eyes will brim  
With tears of joy to look on him!  
Thou, blameless lady, shouldst the whole

Of the sad people here console:  
Why in thy tender heart allow  
This bitter grief to harbour now?  
As the long banks of cloud distil  
Their water when they see the hill,

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So shall the drops of rapture run  
From thy glad eyes to see thy son  
Returning, as he lowly bends  
To greet thee, girt by all his friends.'  
Thus soothing, kindly eloquent,  
With every hopeful argument  
Kaus'alyá's heart by sorrow rent,  
Fair Queen Sumitrá ceased.  
Kaus'alyá heard each pleasant plea,  
And grief began to leave her free,  
As the light clouds of autumn flee,  
Their watery stores decreased.

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CANTO XLV.: THE TAMASÁ.

Their tender love the people drew

To follow Ráma brave and true,  
The high-souled hero, as he went  
Forth from his home to banishment.  
The king himself his friends obeyed,  
And turned him homeward as they prayed.  
But yet the people turned not back,  
Still close on Ráma's chariot track.  
For they who in Ayodhyá dwelt  
For him such fond affection felt,  
Decked with all grace and glories high,  
The dear full moon of every eye.  
Though much his people prayed and wept,  
Kakutstha's son his purpose kept,  
And still his journey would pursue  
To keep the king his father true.  
Deep in the hero's bosom sank  
Their love, whose signs his glad eye drank.  
He spoke to cheer them, as his own  
Dear children, in a loving tone:  
'If ye would grant my fond desire,  
Give Bharat now that love entire  
And reverence shown to me by all  
Who dwell within Ayodhyá's wall.  
For he, Kaikeyí's darling son,

His virtuous career will run,  
And ever bound by duty's chain  
Consult your weal and bliss and gain.  
In judgment old, in years a child,  
With hero virtues meek and mild,  
A fitting lord is he to cheer  
His people and remove their fear.  
In him all kingly gifts abound,  
Wore noble than in me are found:  
Imperial prince, well proved and tried--  
Obey him as your lord and guide.  
And grant, I pray, the boon I ask:  
To please the king be still your task,  
That his fond heart, while I remain  
Far in the wood, may feel no pain.'  
The more he showed his will to tread  
The path where filial duty led,  
The more the people, round him thronged,  
For their dear Ráma's empire longed.  
Still more attached his followers grew,  
As Ráma, with his brother, drew  
The people with his virtues' ties,  
Lamenting all with tear-dimmed eyes.  
The saintly twice-born, triply old  
In glory, knowledge, seasons told,  
With hoary heads that shook and bowed,  
Their voices raised and spake aloud:  
'O steeds, who best and noblest are,  
Who whirl so swiftly Ráma's car,

Go not, return: we call on you:  
Be to your master kind and true.  
For speechless things are swift to hear,  
And naught can match a horse's ear.  
O generous steeds, return, when thus  
You hear the cry of all of us.  
Each vow he keeps most firm and sure,  
And duty makes his spirit pure.  
Back with our

chief! not wood-ward hence; Back to his royal residence!' Soon as he saw the aged band. Exclaiming in their misery, stand, And their sad cries around him rang, Swift from his chariot Ráma sprang. Then, still upon his journey bent, With Sítá and with Lakshman went The hero by the old men's side. Suiting to theirs his shortened stride. He could not pass the twice-born throng As weariedly they walked along: With pitying heart, with tender eye, He could not in his chariot fly. When the steps of Ráma viewed That still his onward course pursued. Woe shook the troubled heart of each, And burnt with grief they spoke this speech-- 'With thee, O Ráma, to the wood All Bráhmans go and Bráhmanhood: Borne on our aged shoulders, see, Our fires of worship go with thee. Bright canopies that lend their shade In Vajapeya

1 rites displayed,

In plenteous store are borne behind Like cloudlets in the autumn wind. No shelter from the sun hast thou, And, lest his fury burn thy brow, These sacrificial shades we bear Shall aid thee in the noontide glare. Our hearts, who ever loved to pore On sacred text and Vedic lore, Now all to thee, beloved, turn, And for a life in forests yearn. Deep in our aged bosoms lies The Vedas' lore, the wealth we prize, There still, like wives at home, shall dwell, Whose love and truth protect them well.

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To follow thee our hearts are bent; We need not plan or argument. All else in duty's law we slight, For following thee is following right. O noble Prince, retrace thy way: O, hear us, Ráma, as we lay, With many tears and many prayers, Our aged heads and swan-white hairs Low in the dust before thy feet;

O, hear us, Ráma, we entreat. Full many of these who with thee run, Their sacred rites had just begun. Unfinished yet those rites remain; But finished if thou turn again. All rooted life and things that move To thee their deep affection prove. To them, when warmed by love, they glow And sue to thee, some favour show Each lowly bush, each towering tree Would follow too for love of thee. Bound by its root it must remain; But--all it can-- its boughs complain, As when the wild wind rushes by It tells its woe in groan and sigh. No more through air the gay birds flit, But, foodless, melancholy sit Together on the branch and call To thee whose kind heart feels for all.'

As wailed the aged Bráhmans, bent

To turn him back, with wild lament, Seemed Tamasá herself to aid, Checking his progress, as they prayed. Sumantra from the chariot freed With ready hand each weary steed; He groomed them with the utmost heed, Their limbs he bathed and dried,

Then led them forth to drink and feed At pleasure in the grassy mead That fringed the river side.

Footnotes

147:1 An important sacrifice at which seventeen victims were immolated.

Next: Canto XLVI.: The Halt. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next CANTO XLVI.: THE HALT.

When Ráma. chief of Raghu's race,

Arrived at that delightful place, He looked on Sítá first, and then To Lakshman spake the lord of men: 'Now first the shades of night descend Since to the wilds our steps we bend. Joy to thee, brother! do not grieve For our dear home and all we leave. The woods unpeopled seem to weep Around us, as their tenants creep Or fly to lair and den and nest, Both bird and beast, to seek their rest. Methinks Ayodhyá's royal town Where dwells my sire of high renown, With all her men and dames to-night Will mourn us vanished from their sight. For, by his virtues won, they cling In fond affection to their king, And thee and me, O brave and true, And Bharat and S'atrughna too. I for my sire and mother feel Deep sorrow o'er my bosom

steal, Lest mourning us, oppressed with fears, They blind their eyes with  
endless tears. Yet Bharat's duteous love will show  
Sweet comfort in their hours of woe, And with kind words their hearts  
sustain, Suggesting duty, bliss, and gain. I mourn my parents now no more: I  
count dear Bharat's virtues o'er, And his kind love and care dispel the  
doubts I had, and all is well. And thou thy duty wouldst not shun, And,  
following me, hast nobly done; Else, bravest, I should need a band  
Around my wife as guard to stand. On this first night, my thirst to slake, Some  
water only will I take: Thus, brother, thus my will decides, Though varied  
store the wood provides.'

Thus having said to Lakshman, he

Addressed in turn Sumantra: 'Be most diligent to-night, my friend, And with  
due care thy horses tend.' The sun had set: Sumantra tied his noble horses  
side by side, Gave store of grass with liberal hand, And rested near them  
on the strand. Each paid the holy evening rite, And when around them fell  
the night, The charioteer, with Lakshman's aid, A lowly bed for Rāma  
laid. To Lakshman Rāma bade adieu,

And then by, Sītā's side he threw his limbs upon the leafy bed. Their care  
upon the bank had spread. When Lakshman saw the couple slept, Still on the  
strand his watch he kept, Still with Sumantra there conversed, And Rāma's  
varied gifts rehearsed. All night he watched, nor sought repose, Till on  
the earth the sun arose: With him Sumantra stayed awake, And still of  
Rāma's virtues spake. Thus, near the river's grassy shore Which herds  
unnumbered wandered o'er, Repose, untroubled, Rāma found, And all the  
people lay around. The glorious hero left his bed, Looked on the sleeping  
crowd, and said to Lakshman, whom each lucky line marked out for bliss with  
surest sign: 'O brother Lakshman, look on these reclining at the roots of  
trees; All care of house and home resigned, Caring for us with heart and  
mind, These people of the city yearn

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To see us to our home return: To quit their lives will they consent,  
But never leave their firm intent. Come, while they all unconscious  
sleep, Let us upon the chariot leap, And swiftly on our journey speed. Where  
naught our progress may impede, That these fond citizens who roam far from  
Ikshvāku's ancient home, No more may sleep 'neath bush and tree, Following  
still for love of me. A prince with tender care should heal the self-  
brought woes his people feel, And never let his subjects share the burthen  
he is forced to bear.' Then Lakshman to the chief replied, Who stood  
like Justice by his side: 'Thy rede, O sage, I well commend: Without delay  
the car ascend.' Then Rāma to Sumantra spoke: 'Thy rapid steeds, I pray  
thee, yoke. Hence to the forest will I go: Away, my lord, and be not slow.'  
Sumantra, urged to utmost speed, Yoked to the car each generous steed, And  
then, with hand to hand applied, He came before the chief and cried: 'Hail,  
Prince, whom mighty arms adorn, Hail, bravest of the chariot-borne! With  
Sītā and thy brother thou mayst mount: the car is ready now.'

The hero clomb the car with haste: His bow and gear within were  
placed, And quick the eddying flood he passed. Of Tamasā whose waves run  
fast. Soon as he touched the farther side. That strong-armed hero,  
glorified, He found a road both wide and clear, Where e'en the timid naught  
could fear. Then, that the crowd might be misled, Thus Rāma to Sumantra  
said: 'Speed north a while, then hasten back, Returning in thy former  
track, That so the people may not learn the course I follow: drive and  
turn.' Sumantra, at the chief's behest. Quick to the task himself  
addressed; Then near to Rāma came, and showed the chariot ready for the  
road. With Sītā, then, the princely two, Who o'er the line of Raghu threw a  
glory ever bright and new, Upon the chariot stood. Sumantra fast and  
faster drove his horses, who in fleetness strove still onward to the  
distant grove, The hermit-haunted wood. Next: Canto XLVII.: The  
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CANTO XLVII.: THE CITIZENS' RETURN.

The people, when the morn shone fair,  
 Arose to find no Ráma there. Then fear and numbing grief subdued  
 The senses of the multitude. The woe-born tears were running fast  
 As all around their eyes they cast, And sadly looked, but found no trace  
 Of Ráma, searching every place. Bereft of Ráma good and wise.  
 With drooping cheer and weeping eyes, Each woe-distracted sage gave vent  
 To sorrow in his wild lament: 'Woe worth the sleep that stole our sense  
 With its beguiling influence, That now we look in vain for him  
 Of the broad chest and stalwart limb! How could the strong-armed hero,  
 thus Deceiving all, abandon us? His people so devoted see,  
 Yet to the woods, a hermit, flee? How can he, wont our hearts to cheer,  
 As a fond sire his children dear, -- How can the pride of Raghu's race  
 Fly from us to some desert place! Here let us all for death prepare,  
 Or on the last great journey fare. 1

Of Ráma our dear lord bereft, What profit in our lives is left? Huge trunks  
 of trees around us lie, With roots and branches sere and dry. Come let us  
 set these logs on fire And throw our bodies on the pyre. What shall we  
 speak? How can we say We followed Ráma on his way. The mighty chief whose  
 arm is strong, Who sweetly speaks, who thinks no wrong? Ayodhyá's town with  
 sorrow dumb, Without our lord will see us come, And hopeless misery will  
 strike Elder, and child, and dame alike. Forth with that peerless chief we  
 came, Whose mighty heart is aye the same: How, reft of him we love, shall  
 we Return dare that town to see?' Complaining thus with varied cry They  
 tossed their aged arms on high. And their sad hearts with grief were  
 wrung. Like cows who sorrow for their young. A while they followed on the  
 road Which traces of his chariot showed, But when at length those traces  
 failed, A deep despair their hearts assailed. p. 150

The chariot marks no more discerned,  
 The hopeless sages backward turned: 'Ah, what is this? What can we  
 more? Fate stops the way, and all is o'er.' With wearied hearts, in grief  
 and shame They took the road by which they came, And reached Ayodhyá's  
 city, where From side to side was naught but care. With troubled spirits  
 quite cast down They looked upon the royal town, And from their eyes,  
 oppressed with woe, Their tears again began to flow. Of Ráma reft, the city  
 wore No look of beauty as before, Like a dull river or a lake By Garud  
 robbed of every snake. Dark, dismal as the moonless sky, Or as a sea whose  
 bed is dry, So sad, to every pleasure dead, They saw the town,  
 disquieted. On to their houses, high and vast, Where stores of precious  
 wealth were massed, The melancholy Bráhmans passed, Their hearts with  
 anguish cleft: Aloof from all, they came not near To stranger or to kinsman  
 dear, Showing in faces blank and drear That not one joy was left.

Footnotes

149:1 The great pilgrimage to the Himalayas, in order  
 to die there.

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CANTO XLVIII.: THE WOMEN'S LAMENT.

When those who forth with Ráma went

Back to the town their steps had bent, It seemed that death had touched  
 and chilled Those hearts which piercing sorrow filled. Each to his several  
 mansion came, And girt by children and his dame, From his sad eyes the  
 water shed That o'er his cheek in torrents spread. All joy was fled:  
 oppressed with cares No bustling trader showed his wares. Each shop had  
 lost its brilliant look, Each householder forbore to cook. No hand with joy  
 its earnings told, None cared to win a wealth of gold, And scarce the  
 youthful mother smiled To see her first, her new-born child. In every house  
 a woman wailed, And her returning lord assailed With keen taunt piercing  
 like the steel That bids the tusked monster kneel; 'What now to them is  
 wedded dame, What house and home and dearest aim, Or son, or bliss, or  
 gathered store, Whose eyes on Ráma look no more! There is but one in all  
 the earth,

One man alone of real worth, Lakshman, who follows, true and good, Ráma,  
with Sítá, through the wood, Made holy for all time we deem Each pool and  
fountain, lake and stream, If great Kakutstha's son shall choose Their  
water for his bath to use. Each forest, dark with lovely trees, Shall yearn  
Kakutstha's son to please; Each mountain peak and woody hill, Each mighty  
flood and mazy rill, Each rocky height, each shady grove Where the blest  
feet of Ráma rove, Shall gladly welcome with the best Of all they have  
their honoured guest. The trees that clustering blossoms bear, And bright-  
hued buds to gem their hair, The heart of Ráma shall delight, And cheer him  
on the breezy height. For him the upland slopes will show The fairest roots  
and fruit that grow, And all their wealth before him fling Ere the due hour  
of ripening. For him each earth-upholding hill Its crystal water shall  
distil, And all its floods shall be displayed In many a thousand-hued  
cascade. Where Ráma stands is naught to fear, No danger comes if he be  
near;

For all who live on him depend, The world's support, and lord, and  
friend. Ere in too distant wilds he stray, Let us to Ráma speed away, For  
rich reward on those will wait Who serve a prince of soul so great. We will  
attend on Sítá there; Be Raghu's son your special care. 'The city dames,  
with grief distressed, Thus once again their lords addressed: 'Ráma shall  
be your guard and guide, And Sítá will for us provide. For who would care  
to linger here, Where all is sad and dark and drear? Who, mid the mourners,  
hope for bliss In a poor soulless town like this? If Queen Kaikeyí's  
treacherous sin, Our lord expelled, the kingdom win, We heed not sons or  
golden store, Our life itself we prize no more. If she, seduced by lust of  
sway, Her lord and son could cast away, Whom would she leave unharmed, the  
base Defiler of her royal race? We swear it by our children dear, We will  
not dwell as servants here; If Queen Kaikeyí live to reign, We will not in  
her realm remain. Bowed down by her oppressive hand, The helpless, lordless,  
godless land, Cursed for Kaikeyí's guilt will fall, And swift destruction seize it all.

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For, Ráma forced from home to fly, The king his sire will surely die, And  
when the king has breathed his last Ruin will doubtless follow fast. Sad,  
robbed of merits, drug the cup And drink the poisoned mixture up, Or share  
the exiled Ráma's lot, Or seek some land that knows her not. No reason, but  
a false pretence Drove Ráma, Sítá, Lakshman hence, And we to Bharat have  
been given Like cattle to the shambles driven.

While in each house the women, pained

At loss of Ráma, still complained, Sank to his rest the Lord of Day, And  
night through all the sky held sway The tires of worship all were cold, No  
text was hummed, no tale was told, And shades of midnight gloom came  
down Enveloping the mournful town. Still, sick at heart, the women shed, As  
for a son or husband fled,

For Ráma tears, disquieted:

No child was loved as he.

And all Ayodhyá, where the feast, Music, and song, and dance had ceased,  
And merriment and glee, Where every merchant's store was closed That erst  
its glittering wares exposed, Was like a dried up sea.

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CANTO XLIX.: THE CROSSING OF THE  
RIVERS.

Now Ráma, ere the night was fled,

O'er many a league of road had sped, Till, as his course he onward  
held, The morn the shades of night dispelled. The rites of holy dawn he  
paid, And all the country round surveyed. He saw, as still he hurried  
through Wth steeds which swift as arrows flew, Hamlets and groves with  
blossoms fair, And fields which showed the tillers' care, While from the  
clusteied dwellings near The words of peasants reached his ear: 'Fie on our

lord the king, whose soul is yielded up to love's control! Fie on the vile Kaikevi! Shame on that malicious sinful dame, Who, keenly bent on cruel deeds, No hounds of right and virtue heeds, But with her wicked art has sent So good a prince to banishment, Wi-o, tender-hearted, ruling well His senses in the woods to dwell. Ah cruel king! his heart of steel For his own son no love could feel, Who with the sinless Rāma parts, The darling of the people's hearts.'

These words he heard the peasants say, Who dwelt in hamlets by the way, And, lord of all the realm by right, Through Kosala pursued his flight. Through the auspicious flood, at last, Of Vesaśruti's stream he passed, And onward to the place he sped By Saint Agastya tenanted. Still on for many an hour he hied, And crossed the stream whose fooling tide Rolls onward till she meets the sea, The herd-frequented Gomati. Borne by his rapid horses o'er, He reached that river's further shore. And Syandikā's, whose swan-loved stream, Resounded with the peacock's scream. Then as he journeyed on his road To hvs Videhan bride he showed The populous land which Manu old To King Ikshvaku gave to hold. The glorious prince, the lord of men Looked on the charioteer, and then Voiced like a wild swan, loud and clear. He spake these words and bade him hear: 'When shall I, with returning feet My father and my mother meet? When shall I lead the hunt once more In bloomy woods on Sarju's shore? Most eagerly I long to ride Urging the chase on Sarju's side. For royal saints have seen no blame In this, the monarch's matchless game.'

Thus speeding on, --no reft or stay, --  
Ikshvaku's son pursued his way. Oft his sweet voice the silence broke, And thus on varied themes he spoke.

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CANTO L.: THE HALT UNDER THE  
INGUDÍ. 1

So through the wide and fair extent  
Of Kosala the hero went. Then toward Ayodmā back he gazed, And cried, with supple hands upraised:

'Farewell, dear city, in this place,  
Protected by Kakutātma's race

2

And Gods, who in thy temples dwell, And keep thine ancient citadel! I from his debt my sire will free, Thy well-loved towers again will see, And, coming from my wild retreat, My mother and my father meet.'

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Then burning grief inflamed his eye, As his right arm he raised on high, And, while hot tears his cheek bedewed, Addressed the mournful multitude: 'By love and tender pity moved, Your love for me you well have proved;

Now turn again with joy, and win Success in all your hands begin' Before the high souled chief they bent,

With circling steps around him went, And then with bitter wailing, they Departed each his several way. Like the great sun engulfed by night, The hero sped beyond their sight, While still the people mourned his fate And wept aloud disconsolate.

The car-borne chieftain passed the bound

Of Kos'ala's delightful ground. Where grain and riches bless the land, And people give with liberal hand: A lovely realm unvexed by fear, Where countless shrines and stakes

1 appear:

Where mango-groves and gardens grow, And streams of pleasant water flow: Where dwells content a well-fed race, And countless kine the meadows grace: Filled with the voice of praise and prayer: Each hamlet worth a

monarch's care. Before him three-pathed Gangá rolled  
Her heavenly waters bright and cold; O'er her pure breast no weeds were spread,  
Her banks were hermit-visited. The car-borne hero saw the tide  
That ran with eddies multiplied, And thus the charioteer addressed: 'Here  
on the bank to-day we rest. Not distant from the river, see! There grows a  
lofty Ingudí With blossoms thick on every spray: There rest we, charioteer,  
to-day. I on the queen of floods will gaze, Whose holy stream has highest  
praise, Where deer, and bird, and glittering snake, God, Daitya, bard their  
pastime take."

Sumantra, Lakshman gave assent,  
And with the steeds they thither went. When Ráma reached the lovely  
tree, With Sítá and with Lakshman, he alighted from the car: with  
speed Sumantra loosed each weary steed, And hand to hand in reverence  
laid, Stood near to Ráma in the shade. Ráma's dear friend, renowned by  
fame, Who of Nisháda lineage came, Guha, the mighty chief, adored  
Through all the land as sovereign lord, Soon as he heard that prince renowned  
Was resting on Nisháda ground,  
Begirt by counsellor and peer And many an honoured friend drew near.  
Soon as the monarch came in view, Ráma and Lakshman toward him flew. Then  
Guha, at the sight distressed, His arms around the hero pressed, Laid both  
his hands upon his head Bowed to those lotus feet, and said: 'O Ráma, make  
thy wishes known, And be this kingdom as thine own. Who, mighty-armed, will  
ever see A guest so dear as thou to me?'

He placed before him dainty fare  
Of every flavour, rich and rare, Brought forth the gift for honoured  
guest, And thus again the chief addressed 'Welcome, dear Prince, whose arms  
are strong; These lands and all to thee belong. Thy servants we, our lord  
art thou; Begin, good king, thine empire now. See, various food before thee  
placed, And cups to drink and sweets to taste For thee soft beds are hither  
borne, And for thy horses grass and corn.'

To Guha as he pressed and prayed,  
Thus Raghu's son his answer made: 'Twas aye thy care my heart to  
please With honour, love, and courtesies, And friendship brings thee now to  
greet

Thy guest thus humbly on thy feet.'

Again the hero spake, as round

The king his shapely arms he wound: 'Guha, I see that all is well With thee  
and those who with thee dwell; That health and bliss and wealth attend Thy  
realm, thyself, and every friend. But all these friendly gifts of  
thine, Bound to refuse, I must decline. Grass, bark, and hide my only  
wear, And woodland roots and fruit my fare, On duty all my heart is set; I  
seek the woods, an anchoret. A little grass and corn to feed The horses--  
this is all I need. So by this favour, King, alone Shall honour due to me  
be shown. For these good steeds who brought me here Are to my sire  
supremely dear; And kind attention paid to these Will honour me and highly  
please, 'Then Guha quickly bade his train Give water to the steeds, and  
grain, And Ráma, ere the night grew dark, Paid evening rites in dress of  
bark, And tasted water, on the strand, Drawn from the stream by Lakshman's  
hand. And Lakshman with observance meet

Bathed his beloved brother's feet,

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Who rested with his Maithil spouse: Then sat him down 'neath distant  
boughs. And Guha with his bow sat near To Lakshman and the charioteer, And  
with the prince conversing kept His faithful watch while Rama slept. As  
Das'aratha's glorious heir, Of lofty soul and wisdom rare, Reclining with  
his Sítá there Beside the river lay--He who no troubles e'er had  
seen, Whose life a life of bliss had been--That night beneath the branches  
green Passed pleasantly away.

Footnotes

151:1 Known to Europeans as the Goemtee.



151:2 A tree, commonly called Ingua.152:1 Sacrificial posts to which the victims were tied.

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CANTO LI.: LAKSHMAN'S LAMENT.

As Lakshman still his vigil held

By unaffected love impelled,Guha, whose heart the sight distressed,With words like these the prince addressed:'Beloved youth, this pleasant bedWas brought for thee, for thee is spread;On this, my Prince, thine eyelids close,And heal fatigue with sweet repose.My men are all to labour trained,But hardship thou hast ne'er sustained.All we this night our watch will keepAnd guard Kakutstha's son asleep,In all the world there breathes not oneMore dear to me than Raghu's son.The words I speak, heroic youth.Are true: I swear it by my truth.Through his dear grace supreme renownWill, so I trust, my wishes crown.So shall my life rich store obtainOf merit, blest with joy and gain.While Raghu's son and Sítá lieEntranced in happy slumber, IWill, with my trusty bow in hand,Guard my dear friend with all my band.To me, who oft these forests range,Is naught therein or new or strange.We could with equal might opposeA four-fold army led by foes.'

Then royal Lakshman made reply:

'With thee to stand as guardian nigh,Whose faithful soul regards the right,Fearless we well might rest to-night.But how, when Ráma lays his headWith Sítá on his lowly bed,--How can I sleep? how can I careFor life, or aught that's bright and fair?Behold the conquering chief, whose mightIs match for Gods and fiends in fight;With Sítá now he rests his beadAsleep on grass beneath him spread.Won by devotion, text, and prayer.And many a rite performed with care.Chief of our father's sons he shinesWell marked, like him, with favouring signs.Brief, brief the monarch's life will beNow his dear son is forced to flee;And quickly will the widowed stateMourn for her lord disconsolate.Each mourner there has wept her fill;The cries of anguish now are still:In the king's hall each dame, o'ercomeWith weariness of woe is dumb.This first sad night of grief, I ween,

Will do to death each sorrowing queen:Scarce is Kaus'alyá left alive;My mother, too, can scarce survive.If when her heart is fain to break,She lingers for S'atrughna's sake,Kaus'alyá mother of the chief,Must sink beneath the chilling grief,That town which countless thousands fill,Whose hearts with love of Ráma thrill,--The world's delight, so rich and fair,--Grieved for the king, his death will share.The hopes he fondly cherished, crossed.Ayodhyá's throne to Rama lost,--With mournful cries.Too late, too late!The king my sire will meet his fate.And when my sire has passed away,Most happy in their lot are they,Allowed, with every pious care,Part in his funeral rites to bear.And O, may we with joy at last,--These years of forest exile past,--Turn to Ayodhyá's town to dwellWith him who keeps his promise well.'

While thus the hero mighty-souled,

In wild lament his sorrow told,Faint with the load that on him lay,The hours of darkness passed away.As thus the prince, impelled by zeal For his loved brother, prompt to feelStrong yearnings for the people's weal, His words of truth outspoke,King Guha grieved to see his woe.Heart-stricken, gave his tears to flow,Tormented by the common blow, Sad, as a wounded snake.

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CANTO LII.: THE CROSSING OF GANGÁ.

Soon as the shades of night had fled,

Uprising from his lowly bed,Ráma the famous, broad of chest,His brother Lakshman thus addressed:'Now swift upsprings the Lord of Light,And fled, is venerable night,

That dark-winged bird the Koil now  
Is calling from the topmost bough, And  
sounding from the thicket nigh  
Is heard the peacock's early cry, Come,  
cross the flood that seeks the sea, The swiftly flowing Jáhnaví.'

1

King Guha heard his speech, agreed, And called his minister with  
speed: 'A boat,' he cried, 'swift, strong, and fair, With rudder, oars, and  
men, prepare, And place it ready by the shore To bear the pilgrims quickly  
o'er.' Thus Guha spake: his followers all Bestirred them at their master's  
call;

Then told the king that ready manned A gay boat waited near the  
strand. Then Guha, hand to hand applied. With reverence thus to Ráma  
cried: 'The boat is ready by the shore: How, tell me, can I aid thee more? O  
lord of men, it waits for thee To cross the flood that seeks the sea, O  
godlike keeper of thy vow, Embark: the boat is ready now.'

Then Ráma, lord of glory high,  
Thus to King Guha. made reply: 'Thanks for thy gracious care, my lord: Now  
let the gear be placed on board. Each bow-armed chief, in mail  
encased, Bound sword and quiver to his waist, And then with Sítá near them  
hied Down the broad river's shelving side. Then with raised palms the  
charioteer, In lowly reverence drawing near, Cried thus to Ráma good and  
true: 'Now what remains for me to do?' With his right hand, while  
answering The hero touched his friend: 'Go back,' he said, 'and on  
the king With watchful care attend. Thus far, Sumantra, thou wast  
guide; Now to Ayodhyá turn,' he cried:  
'Hence seek we leaving steeds and car, On foot the wood that stretches  
far.'

Sumantra, when, with grieving heart,  
He heard the hero bid him part, Thus to the bravest of the  
brave, Ikshváku's son, his answer gave: 'In all the world men tell of  
naught, To match thy deed, by heroes wrought-- Thus with thy brother and  
thy wife Thrall-like to lead a forest life. No meet reward of fruit  
repays Thy holy lore, thy saintlike days, Thy tender soul, thy love of  
truth, If woe like this afflicts thy youth. Thou, roaming under forest  
boughs

With thy dear brother and thy spouse  
Shalt richer meed of glory gain Than if three worlds confessed thy  
reign. Sad is our fate, O Ráma: we, Abandoned and repelled by thee, Must  
serve as thralls Kaikeyí's will, Imperious, wicked, born to ill.'  
Thus cried the faithful charioteer,  
As Raghu's son, in rede his peer, Was fast departing on his road, -- And  
long his tears of anguish flowed.

But Ráma, when those tears were dried His lips with water purified, And in  
soft accents, sweet and clear, Again addressed the charioteer: 'I find no  
heart, my friend, like thine, So faithful to Ikshváku's line. Still first  
in view this object keep, That ne'er for me my sire may weep. For he, the  
world's far-ruling king, Is old, and wild with sorrow's sting; With love's  
great burthen worn and weak: Deem this the cause that thus I speak Whate'er  
the high-souled king decrees His loved Kaikeyí's heart to please, Yea, be  
his order what it may, Without demur thou must obey, For this alone great  
monarchs reign, That ne'er a wish be formed in vain. Then, O Sumantra, well  
provide That by no check the king be tried: Nor let his heart in sorrow  
pine: This care, my faithful friend, be thine The honoured king my father  
greet, And thus for me my words repeat To him whose senses are  
controlled, Untired till now by grief, and old;

I, Sítá, Lakshman sorrow not, O Monarch, for our altered lot:  
The same to us, if here we roam, Or if Ayodhyá be our home, The fourteen  
years will quickly fly, The happy hour will soon be nigh When thou, my  
lord, again shalt see Lakshman, the Maithlí dame, and me. Thus having  
soothed, O charioteer, My father and my mother dear, Let all the queens my

message learn. But to Kaikeyí chiefly turn, With loving blessings from the three, From Lakshman, Sitá, and from me, My mother, Queen Kausalyá, greet With reverence to her sacred feet. And add this prayer of mine: 'O King; Send quickly forth and Bharat bring, And set him on the royal throne Which thy decree has made his own. When he upon the throne is placed, When thy fond arms are round him laced. Thine aged heart will cease to ache With bitter pangs for Ráma's sake.'

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And say to Bharat: 'See thou treat The queens with all observance meet: What care the king receives, the same Show thou alike to every dame. Obedience to thy father's will Who chooses thee the throne to fill, Will earn for thee a store of bliss Both in the world to come and this.'

Thus Ráma bade Sumantra go

With thoughtful care instructed so. Sumantra all his message heard, And spake again, by passion stirred: 'O, should deep feeling mar in aught The speech by fond devotion taught, Forgive what'er I wildly speak: My love is strong, my tongue is weak. How shall I, if deprived of thee, Return that mournful town to see: Where sick at heart the people are Because their Ráma roams afar. Woe will be theirs too deep to brook When on the empty car they look, As when from hosts, whose chiefs are slain, One charioteer comes home again. This very day, I ween, is food Forsworn by all the multitude, Thinking that thou, with hosts to aid, Art dwelling in the wild wood's shade. The great despair, the shriek of woe They uttered when they saw thee go. Will, when I come with none beside, A hundred-fold be multiplied.

How to Kaus'alyá can I say: 'O Queen, I took thy son away, And with thy brother left him well: Weep not for him; thy woe dispel?' So false a tale I cannot frame, Yet how speak truth and grieve the dame? How shall these horses, fleet and bold, Whom not a hand but mine can hold, Bear others, wont to whirl the car Wherein Ikshváku's children are! Without thee, Prince, I cannot, no, I cannot to Ayodhyá go. Then deign, O Ráma, to relent, And let me share thy banishment. But if no prayers can move thy heart, If thou wilt quit me and depart, The flames shall end my car and me, Deserted thus and reft of thee. In the wild wood when foes are near, When dangers check thy vows austere, Borne in my car will I attend. All danger and all care to end. For thy dear sake I love the skill That guides the steed and curbs his will: And soon a forest life will be As pleasant, for my love of thee. And if these horses near thee dwell, And serve thee in the forest well, They, for their service, will not miss

The due reward of highest bliss. Thine orders, as with thee I stray. Will I with heart and head obey, Prepared, for thee, without a sigh, To lose Ayodhyá or the sky. As one denied with hideous sin, I never more can pass within Ayodhyá, city of our king, Unless beside me thee I bring. One wish is mine, I ask no more, That, when thy banishment is o'er I in my car may bear my lord, Triumphant, to his home restored. The fourteen years, if spent with thee. Will swift as light-winged moments flee; But the same years, without thee told, Were magnified a hundred-fold. Do not, kind lord, thy servant leave, Who to his master's son would cleave, And the same path with him pursue, Devoted, tender, just and true.'

Again, again Sumantra made

His varied plaint, and wept and prayed. Him Raghu's son, whose tender breast Felt for his servants, thus addressed: O faithful servant, well my heart Knows how attached and true thou art. Hear thou the words I speak, and know

Why to the town I bid thee go. Soon as Kaikeyí, youngest queen, Thy coming to the town has seen, No doubt will then her mind oppress That Ráma roams the wilderness. And so the dame, her heart content With proof of Ráma's banishment. Will doubt the virtuous king no more As faithless to the oath he swore. Chief of my cares is this, that she, Youngest amid the queens,

may see Bharat her son securely reign  
O'er rich Ayodhyá's wide domain.  
For mine and for the monarch's sake  
Do thou thy journey homeward take,  
And, as I bade, repeat each word  
That from my lips thou here hast heard.'  
Thus spake the prince, and strove to cheer  
The sad heart of the charioteer,  
And then to royal Guha said  
These words most wise and spirited:  
'Guha, dear friend, it is not meet  
That people throng my calm retreat:  
For I must live a strict recluse,  
And mould my life by hermits' use.  
I now the ancient rule accept  
By good ascetics gladly kept.  
I go: bring fig-tree juice that I  
In matted coils my hair may tie.'  
Quick Guha hastened to produce,  
For the king's son, that sacred juice.  
Then Ráma of his long locks made,  
And Lakshman's too, the hermit braid.

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And the two royal brothers there  
With coats of bark and matted hair,  
Transformed in lovely likeness stood  
To hermit saints who love the wood.  
So Ráma, with his brother bold,  
A pious anchorite enrolled,  
Obeyed the vow which hermits take,  
And to his friend, King Guha, spake:  
'May people, treasure, army share,  
And fenced forts, thy constant care:  
Attend to all: supremely hard  
The sovereign's task, to watch and guard.'  
Ikshváku's son, the good and brave,  
This last farewell to Guha gave,  
And then, with Lakshman and his bride,  
Determined, on his way he hied.  
Soon as he viewed, upon the shore,  
The bark prepared to waft them o'er  
Impetuous Gangá's rolling tide,  
To Lakshman thus the chieftain cried:  
'Brother, embark; thy hand extend,  
Thy gentle aid to Sítá lend:  
With care her trembling footsteps guide,  
And place the lady by thy side.'  
When Lakshman heard, prepared to aid  
His brother's words he swift obeyed.  
Within the bark he placed the dame,  
Then to her side the hero came.  
Next Lakshman's elder brother, lord  
Of brightest glory, when on board,  
Breathing a prayer for blessings, met  
For priest or warrior to repeat,  
Then he and car-borne Lakshman bent,  
Well-pleased, their heads, most reverent,  
Their hands, with Sítá, having dipped,  
As Scripture bids, and water sipped,  
Farewell to wise Sumantra said,  
And Guha, with the train he led.  
So Ráma took, on board, his stand,  
And urged the vessel from the land.  
Then swift by vigorous arms impelled  
Her onward course the vessel held,  
And guided by the helmsman through  
The dashing waves of Gangá flew.  
Half way across the flood they came,  
When Sítá, free from spot and blame,  
Her reverent hands together pressed,  
The Goddess of the stream addressed:  
'May the great chieftain here who springs  
From Das'aratha, best of kings,  
Protected by thy care, fulfil  
His prudent father's royal will.  
When in the forest he has spent  
His fourteen years of banishment,  
With his dear brother and with me  
His home again my lord shall see,  
Returning on that blissful day.  
I will to thee mine offerings pay,  
Dear Queen, whose waters gently flow,  
Who canst all blessed gifts bestow.  
For, three-pathed Queen, though wandering here,  
Thy waves descend from Brahmá's sphere,  
Spouse of the God o'er floods supreme,  
Though rolling here thy glorious stream.  
To thee, fair Queen, my head shall bend,  
To thee shall hymns of praise ascend,  
When my brave lord shall turn again,  
And, joyful, o'er his kingdom reign.  
To win thy grace, O Queen divine,  
A hundred thousand fairest kine,  
And precious robes and finest meal  
Among the Bráhmans will I deal.  
A hundred jars of wine shall flow,  
When to my home, O Queen, I go;  
With these, and flesh, and corn, and rice,  
Will I, delighted, sacrifice.  
Each hallowed spot, each holy shrine  
That stands on these fair shores of thine,  
Each fane and altar on thy banks  
Shall share my offerings and thanks.  
With me and Lakshman, free from harm,  
May he the blameless, strong of arm,  
Reseek Ayodhyá from the wild,  
O blameless Lady undefiled!'  
As, praying for her husband's sake,

The faultless dame to Gangá spake, To the right bank the vessel flew  
With her whose heart was right and true. Soon as the bark had crossed the  
wave, The lion leader of the brave, Leaving the vessel on the strand, With  
wife and brother leapt to land. Then Ráma thus the prince addressed Who  
filled with joy Sumitrá's breast: 'Be thine alike to guard and aid In  
peopled spot, in lonely shade. Do thou, Sumitrá's son, precede: Let Sítá  
walk where thou shalt lead. Behind you both my place shall be, To guard the  
Maithil dame and thee. For she, to woe a stranger yet, No toil or grief  
till now has met; The fair Videhan will assay The pains of forest life to-  
day. To-day her tender feet must tread  
Rough rocky wilds around her spread: No tilth is there, no gardens grow, No  
crowding people come and go.'

The hero ceased: and Lakshman led

Obedient to the words he said: And Sítá followed him, and then Came Raghu's  
pride, the lord of men. With Sítá walking o'er the sand They sought the  
forest, bow in hand, But still their lingering glances threw Where yet  
Sumantra stood in view. Sumantra, when his watchful eye The royal youths no  
more could spy, Turned from the spot whereon he stood Homeward with Guha  
from the wood.

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Still on the brothers forced their way Where sweet birds sang on every  
spray, Though scarce the eye a path could find Mid flowering trees where  
creepers twined Far on the princely brothers pressed, And stayed their feet  
at length to rest Beneath a fig tree's mighty shade With countless pendent  
shoots displayed. Reclining there a while at ease, They saw, not far,  
beneath fair trees

A lake with many a lotus bright That bore the name of Lovely Sight. Ráma  
his wife's attention drew, And Lakshman's, to the charming view: 'Look,  
brother, look how fair the flood Glows with the lotus, flower and bud.'  
They drank the water fresh and clear,  
And with their shafts they slew a deer. A fire of boughs they made in  
haste, And in the flame the meat they placed. So Raghu's sons with Sítá  
shared The hunter's meal their hands prepared, Then counselled that the  
spreading tree Their shelter and their home should be.

Footnotes

154:1 Daughter of Jahnu, a name of the Ganges, See p.

55.

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CANTO LIII.: RÁMA'S LAMENT.

When evening rites were duly paid,  
Reclined beneath the leafy shade, To Lakshman thus spake Ráma, best Of  
those who glad a people's breast: 'Now the first night has closed the  
day That saw us from our country stray, And parted from the charioteer; Yet  
grieve not thou, my brother dear. Henceforth by night, when others  
sleep, Must we our careful vigil keep, Watching for Sítá's welfare thus, For  
her dear life depends on us. Bring me the leaves that lie around, And  
spread them here upon the ground, That we on lowly beds may lie, And let in  
talk the night go by.'

So on the ground with leaves o'erspread,

He who should press a royal bed, Ráma with Lakshman thus conversed, And  
many a pleasant tale rehearsed: 'This night the king,' he cried, 'alas! In  
broken sleep will sadly pass. Kaikeyí now content should be, For mistress  
of her wish is she.'

So fiercely she for empire yearns, That when her Bharat home returns, She  
in her greed, may even bring Destruction on our lord the king. What can he  
do, in feeble eld, Reft of all aid and me expelled, His soul enslaved by  
love, a thrall Obedient to Kaikeyí's call? As thus I muse upon his woe And  
all his wisdoms overthrow, Love is, methinks, of greater might To stir the  
heart than gain and right. For who, in wisdom's lore untaught. Could by a

beauty's prayer be boughtTo quit his own obedient son,Who loves him, as  
my sire has done!Bharat, Kaikeyí's child, aloneWill, with his wife, enjoy  
the throne,And blissfully his rule maintainO'er happy Kos'ala's domain.To  
Bharat's single lot will fallThe kingdom and the power and all,When fails  
the king from length of days,And Ráma in the forest strays.Who'e'r,  
neglecting right and gain,Lets conquering love his soul enchain,To him,  
like Das'aratha's lot,Comes woe with feet that tarry not.Methinks at last  
the royal dame,

Dear Lakshman, has secured her aim,To see at once her husband dead,Her  
son enthroned, and Ráma fled.Ah me! I fear, lest borne awayBy frenzy of  
success, she slayKaus'alyá, through her wicked hateOf me, bereft,  
disconsolate;Or her who aye for me has strivenSumitrá, to devotion  
given.Hence, Lakshman, to Avodhyá speed,Returning in the hour of  
need.With Sítá I my steps will bendWhere Dandak's mighty woods extend.No  
guardian has Kaus'alyá now:O, be her friend and guardian thou.Strong hate  
may vile Kaikeyí leadTo many a base unrighteous deed,Treading my mother  
'neath her feetWhen Bharat holds the royal seat.Sure in some antenatal  
timeWere children, by Kausalyá's crime.Torn from their mothers' arms  
away,And hence she mourns this evil day.She for her child no toil would  
spareTending me long with pain and care;Now in the hour of fruitage  
sheHas lost that son, ah, woe is me.O Lakshman, may no matron e'erA son  
so doomed to sorrow bear

As I, my mother's heart who rendWith anguish that can never end.The  
Sáriká,

I methinks, possessed

More love than glows in Ráma's breast.Who, as the tale is told to  
us.Addressed the stricken parrot thus:

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'Parrot, the capturer's talons tear,While yet alone thou flutterest  
there.Before his mouth has closed on me:'So cried the bird, herself to  
free.Reft of her son, in childless woe,My mother's tears for ever  
flow:Ill-fated, doomed with grief to strive.What aid can she from me  
derive?Pressed down by care, she cannot riseFrom sorrow's flood wherein  
she lies.In righteous wrath my single armCould, with my bow, protect from  
harmAyodhyá's town and all the earth:But what is hero prowess worth?Lest  
breaking duty's law I sin,And lose the heaven I strive to win,The forest  
life today I choose,And kingly state and power refuse.'Thus mourning in  
that lonely spot

The troubled chief bewailed his lot,And filled with tears, his eyes ran  
o'er;Then silent sat, and spake no more.To him, when ceased his loud  
lament,Like fire whose brilliant might is spent.Or the great sea when  
sleeps the wave,Thus Lakshman consolation gave:'Chief of the brave who  
bear the bow,E'en now Ayodhyá, sunk in woe,By thy departure reft of  
lightIs gloomy as the moonless night.Unfit it seems that thou, O  
chief.Shouldst so afflict thy soul with grief,So with thou Sítá's heart  
consignTo deep despair as well as mine.Not I, O Raghu's son, nor sheCould  
live one hour deprived of thee:We were, without thine arm to save,Like  
fish deserted by the wave.Although my mother dear to meet,S'atrughna and  
the king, were sweet,On them, or heaven, to feed mine eyeWere nothing, if  
thou wert not by.'

Sitting at ease, their glances fell

Upon the beds, constructed well.And there the sons of virtue laidTheir  
limps beneath the fig tree's shade.Footnotes

157:1 The Mainá or Gracula religiosa, a favourite cage-  
bird, easily taught to talk.

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CANTO LIV.: BHARADVÁJA'S  
HERMITAGE.

So there that night the heroes spent

Under the boughs that o'er them bent, And when the sun his glory  
spread, Upstarting, from the place they sped. On to that spot they made  
their way, Through the dense wood that round them lay, Where Yamuná's  
1 swift waters glide

To blend with Gangá's holy tide. Charmed with the prospect ever new The  
glorious heroes wandered through Full many a spot of pleasant  
ground, Rejoicing as they gazed around, With eager eye and heart at ease, On  
countless sorts of flowery trees. And now the day was half-way sped When  
thus to Lakshman Ráma said: 'There, there, dear brother, turn thine  
eyes; See near Prayág

1b that smoke arise:

The banner of our Lord of Flames The dwelling of some saint proclaims. Near  
to the place our steps we bend Where Yamuná and Gangá blend.

I hear and mark the deafening roar When chafing floods together pour. See,  
near us on the ground are left Dry logs, by labouring woodmen cleft, And  
the tall trees, that blossom near Saint Bharadvája's home, appear.'

The bow-armed princes onward passed,

And as the sun was sinking fast They reached the hermit's dwelling,  
set Near where the rushing waters met. The presence of the warrior  
scared The deer and birds as on he fared, And struck them with unwonted  
awe: Then Bharadvája's cot they saw. The high-souled hermit soon they  
found Girt by his dear disciples round: Calm saint, whose vows had well  
been wrought, Whose fervent rites keen sight had bought. Duly had flames of  
worship blazed When Ráma on the hermit gazed: His suppliant hands the hero  
raised, Drew nearer to the holy man With his companions, and  
began, Declaring both his name and race And why they sought that distant  
place; 'Saint, Das'aratha's children we, Ráma and Lakshman, come to  
thee. This my good wife from Janak springs.

The best of fair Videha's kings; Through lonely wilds, a faultless dame, To  
this pure grove with me she came. My younger brother follows still Me  
banished by my father's will: Sumitrá's son, bound by a vow, -- He roams the  
wood beside me now. Sent by my father forth to rove, We seek, O Saint, some  
holy grove, Where lives of hermits we may lead, And upon fruits and berries  
feed.'

When Bharadvája, prudent-souled,

Had heard the prince his tale unfold, Water he bade them bring, a bull, And  
honour-gifts in dishes full,

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And drink and food of varied taste, Berries and roots, before him  
placed, And then the great ascetic showed A cottage for the guests'  
abode. The saint these honours gladly paid To Ráma who had thither  
strayed, Then compassed sat by birds and deer And many a hermit resting  
near. The prince received the service kind, And sat him down rejoiced in  
mind.

Then Bharadvája silence broke, And thus the words of duty  
spoke: 'Kakutstha's royal son, that thou Hadst sought this grove I knew ere  
now. Mine ears have heard thy story, sent Without a sin to  
banishment. Behold, O Prince, this ample space Near where the mingling  
floods embrace, Holy, and beautiful, and clear: Dwell with us, and be happy  
here.'

By Bharadvája thus addressed,

Ráma whose kind and tender breast All living things would bless and  
save, In gracious words his answer gave:

'My honoured lord, this tranquil spot,

Fair home of hermits, suits me not: For all the neighbouring people  
here Will seek us when they know me near: With eager wish to look on me, And  
the Videhan dame to see, A crowd of rustics will intrude Upon the holy  
solitude. Provide, O gracious lord, I pray, Some quiet home that lies  
away, Where my Videhan spouse may dwell Tasting the bliss deserved so  
well.' The hermit heard the prayer he made:

A while in earnest thought he stayed. And then in words like these  
expressed His answer to the chief's request: 'Ten leagues away there stands  
a hill Where thou mayst live, if such thy will: A holy mount, exceeding  
fair; Great saints have made their dwelling there: There great Langúrs  
1 in thousands play,  
And bears amid the thickets stray; Wide-known by Chitrakúta's name, It  
rivals Gandhamádan's  
2 fame.

Long as the man that hill who seeks Gazes upon its sacred peaks, To holy  
things his soul he gives And pure from thought of evil lives. There, while  
a hundred autumns fled, Has many a saint with hoary head Spent his pure  
life, and won the prize, By deep devotion, in the skies:

Best home, I ween, if such retreat,  
Far from the ways of men, be sweet: Or let thy yewre of exile flee Here in  
this hermitage with me.'

Thus Bharadvája spake, and trained  
In lore of duty, entertained The princes and the dame, and pressed  
Hie friendly gifts on every guest.

Thus to Prayág the hero went,  
Thus saw the saint preeminent, And varied speeches heard and said: Then  
holy night o'er heaven was spread. And Ráma took, by toil oppressed, With  
Sitá and his brother, rest; And so the night, with sweet content, In  
Bharadvája's grove was spent. But when the dawn dispelled the night, Ráma  
approached the anchorite, And thus addressed the holy sire Whose glory  
shone like kindled fire: 'Well have we spent, O truthful Sage, The night  
within thy hermitage: Now let my lord his guests permit For their new home  
his grove to quit.'

Then, as he saw the morning break,  
In answer Bharadvája spake: 'Go forth to Chitrakúta's hill, Where berries  
grow, and sweets distil: Full well, I deem, that home will suit Thee, Ráma,  
strong and resolute. Go forth, and Chitrakúta seek, Famed mountain of the  
Varied Peak. In the wild woods that gird him round All creatures of the  
chase are found:

Thou in the glades shalt see appear Vast herds of elephants and deer. With  
Si'ta there shalt thou delight To gaze upon the woody height; There with  
expanding heart to look On river, table-land, and brook, And see the  
foaming torrent rave Impetuous from the mountain cave. Auspicious hill!  
where all day long The lapwing's cry, the Koil's song Make all who listen  
gay: Where all is fresh and fair to see, Where elephants and deer roam  
free, There, as a hermit, stay.'

Footnotes

158:1 The Jumna.

158:1b The Hindu name of Allahabad.

159:1 The Langúr is a large monkey.

159:2 A mountain said to lie to the east of Meru. Next: Canto LV.: The  
Passage of Yamuná. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO LV.: THE PASSAGE OF YAMUNÁ.

The princely tamers of their foes

Thus passed the night in calm repose, Then to the hermit having bent With  
reverence, on their way they went. High favour Rharadvája showed. And  
blessed them ready for the road.

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With such fond looks as fathers throw On their own sons, before they  
go. Then spake the saint with glory bright To Ráma peerless in his  
might: 'First, lords of men, direct your feet Where Yamuna' and Gangá  
meet; Then to the swift Kalindi

1 go,

Whose westward waves to Gangá flow. When thou shalt see her lovely  
shore Worn by their feet who hasten o'er, Then, Raghu's son, a raft  
prepare. And cross the Sun born river there. Upon her farther bank a



tree, Near to the landing wilt thou see. The blessed source of varied gifts, There her green boughs that Eig tree lifts:  
A tree where countless birds abide, Bv Syáma's name known far and wide. Sitá, revere that holy shade: There be thy prayers for blessing prayed. Thence for a league your way pursue, And a dark wood shall meet your view, Where tall bamboos their foliage show, The Gum tree and the Jujube grow. To Chitrakúta have I oft Trodden that path so smooth and soft, Where burning woods no traveller scare, But all is pleasant, green, and fair.'

When thus the guests their road had learned,  
Back to his cot the hermit turned, And Ráma, Lakshman, Sitá paid Their reverent thanks for courteous aid. Thus Ráma spake to Lakshman, when The saint had left the lords of men: 'Great store of bliss in sooth is ours On whom his love the hermit showers.' As each to other wisely talked, The lion lords together walked On to Kálindi's woody shore; And gentle Sita went before. They reached that flood, whose waters flee With rapid current to the sea; Their minds a while to thought they gave And counselled how to cross the wave.

At length, with logs together laid, A mighty raft the brothers made. Then dry bamboos across were tied, And grass was spread from side to side. And the great hero Lakshman brought Cane and Rose Apple boughs and wrought, Trimming the branches smooth and neat, For Sitá's use a pleasant seat. And Ráma placed thereon his dame Touched with a momentary shame, Resembling in her glorious mien All thought surpassing Fortune's Queen Then Ráma hastened to dispose.

Each in its place, the skins and bows,  
And by the fair Videhan laid The coats, the ornaments, and spade. When Sitá thus was set on board, And all their gear was duly stored, The heroes each with vigorous hand, Pushed off the raft and left the land. When half its way the raft had made, Thus Sitá to Kálindi prayed: 'Goddess, whose flood I traverse now, Grant that my lord may keep his vow. For thee shall bleed a thousand kine, A hundred jars shall pour their wine, When Ráma sees that town again Where old Ikshváku's children reign.'

Thus to Kálindi's stream she sued  
And prayed in suppliant attitude. Then to the river's bank the dame, Fervent in supplication, came. They left the raft that brought them o'er, And the thick wood that clothed the shore, And to the Fig-tree Syama made Their way, so cool with verdant shade. Then Sitá viewed that best of trees, And reverent spake in words like these: 'Hail, hail, O mighty tree! Allow My husband to complete his vow; Let us returning, I entreat, Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá meet.' Then with her hands together placed Around the tree she duly paced. When Ráma saw his blameless spouse A suppliant under holy boughs, The gentle darling of his heart, He thus to Lakshman spake apart: 'Brother, by thee our way be led; Let Sitá close behind thee tread: I, best of men, will grasp my bow, And hindmost of the three will go. What fruits soe'er her fancy take, Or flowers half hidden in the brake, For Janak's child forget not thou To gather from the brake or bough.'

Thus on they fared. The tender dame  
Asked Ráma, as they walked, the name Of every shrub that blossoms bore, Creeper, and tree unseen before: And Lakshman fetched, at Sitá's prayer, Boughs of each tree with clusters fair. Then Janak's daughter joyed to see The sand-discoloured river flee, Where the glad cry of many a bird, The sa'ras and the swan, was heard. A league the brothers travelled through The forest noble game they slew: Beneath the trees their meal they dressed And sat them down to eat and rest. A while in that delightful shade Where elephants unnumbered strayed. Where peacocks screamed and monkeys played.

They wandered with delight. Then by the river's side they found  
A pleaaant spot of level ground, Where all was smooth and fair around,  
Their lodging for the night. Footnotes  
160:1 Another name of the Jumna, daughter of the Sun.  
Next: Canto LVI.: Chitrakuta. Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous  
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CANTO LVI.: CHITRAKUTA.

Then Ráma, when the morning rose,  
Called Lakshman gently from repose: 'Awake, the pleasant voices hear  
Of forest birds that warble near. Scourge of thy foes, no longer stay;  
The hour is come to speed away.' The slumbering prince unclosed his  
eyes When thus his brother bade him rise, Compelling, at the timely  
cry, Fatigue, and sleep, and rest to fly. The brothers rose and Sítá  
too; Pure water from the stream they drew, Paid morning rites, then  
followed still The road to Chitrakúta's hill. Then Ráma as he took the  
road With Lakshman, while the morning, glowed, To the Videhan lady  
cried, Sítá the fair, the lotus-eyed: 'Look round thee, dear; each flowery  
tree Touched with the fire of morning see: The Kins'uk, now the Frosts are  
fled, -- How glorious with his wreaths of red! The Bel-trees see, so loved  
of men, Hanging their boughs in every glen. O'erburthened with their fruit  
and flowers:

A plenteous store of food is ours. See, Lakshman, in the leafy trees,  
Where'er they make their home. Down hangs, the work of labouring bees  
The ponderous honeycomb. In the fair wood before us spread The  
startled wild-cock cries: Hark, where the flowers are soft to tread,  
The peacock's voice replies. Where elephants are roaming free, And  
sweet birds' songs are loud, The glorious Chitrakúta see: His peaks  
are in the cloud. On fair smooth ground he stands displayed, Begirt  
by many a tree: O brother, in that holy shade How happy shall we  
be!'

1

Then Ráma, Lakshman, Sítá, each Spoke raising suppliant hands this  
speech To him, in woodland dwelling met, Válmiki, ancient anchorite: 'O  
Saint, this mountain takes the mind, With creepers, trees of every  
kind, With fruit and roots abounding thus, A pleasant life it offers  
us: Here for a while we fain would stay, And pass a season blithe and gay.'  
Then the great saint, in duty trained,  
With honour gladly entertained: He gave his guests a welcome fair, And bade  
them sit and rest there, Ráma of mighty arm and chest His faithful  
Lakshman then addressed: 'Brother, bring hither from the wood Selected  
timber strong and good, And build therewith a little cot; My heart rejoices  
in the spot That lies beneath the mountain's side, Remote, with water well  
supplied. Sumitrá's son his words obeyed, Brought many a tree, and deftly  
made, With branches in the forest cut, As Ráma bade, a leafy hut. Then Ráma,  
when the cottage stood Fair, firmly built, and walled with wood, To  
Lakshman spake, whose eager mind To do his brother's will inclined: 'Now,  
Lakshman as our cot is made, Must sacrifice be duly paid By us, for  
lengthened life who hope, With venison of the antelope. Away, O bright-eyed  
Lakshman, speed: Struck by thy bow a deer must bleed: As Scripture bids, we  
must not slight The duty that commands the rite.' Lakshman, the chief  
whose arrows laid His foemen low, his word obeyed;  
And Ráma thus again addressed The swift performer of his hest: 'Prepare the  
venison thou hast shot, To sacrifice for this our cot. Haste, brother dear,  
for this the hour, And this the day of certain power.' Then glorious  
Lakshman took the buck His arrow in the wood had struck; Bearing his mighty  
load he came, And laid it in the kindled flame.

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Soon as he saw the meat was done, And that the juices ceased to run  
From the broiled carcass, Lakshman then Spoke thus to Ráma best of men: 'The

carcass of the buck, entire, Is ready dressed upon the fire. Now be the  
sacred rites begun To please the God, thou godlike one.'

Ráma the good, in ritual trained,  
Pure from the bath, with thoughts restrained, Hasted those verses to  
repeat Which make the sacrifice complete. The hosts celestial came in  
view, And Ráma to the cot withdrew, While a sweet sense of rapture stole  
Through the unequalled hero's soul. He paid the Vis'vedevas  
1 due.

And Rudra's right, and Vishnu's too, Nor wanted blessings, to protect Their  
new-built home, did he neglect. With voice repressed he breathed the  
prayer, Bathed duly in the river fair, And gave good offerings that  
remove The stain of sin, as texts approve. And many an altar there he  
made, And shrines, to suit the holy shade, All decked with woodland  
chaplets sweet, And fruit and roots and roasted meat, With muttered prayer,  
as texts require, Water, and grass and wood and fire. So Ráma, Lakshman,  
Sítá paid Their offerings to each God and shade, And entered then their  
pleasant cot That bore fair signs of happy lot. They entered, the  
illustrious three, The well-set cottage, fair to see, Roofed with the  
leaves of many a tree, And fenced from wind and rain; So, at their  
Father Brahmá's call, The Gods of heaven, assembling all, To their own  
glorious council hall Advance in shining train. So, resting on that  
lovely hill, Near the fair lily-covered rill,

The happy prince forgot, Surrounded by the birds and deer, The woe, the  
longing, and the fear That gloom the exile's lot.

Footnotes

161:1 'We have often looked on that green hill: it is the  
holiest spot of that sect of the Hindu faith who devote  
themselves to this incarnation, of Vishnu. The whole neighbourhood is  
Ráma's country. Every headland has some legend, every cavern is connected  
with his name; some of the wild fruits are still called Stáphal, being  
the reputed food of the exile. Thousands and thousands annually visit the  
spot, and round the hill is a raised foot-path, on which the devotee,  
with naked feet, treads full of pious awe.' Calcutta Review, Vol. XXIII.  
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CANTO LVII.: SUMANTRA'S RETURN.

When Ráma reached the southern bank,  
King Guha's heart with sorrow sank:  
He with Sumantra talked, and spent

With his deep sorrow, homeward went. Sumantra, as the king decreed, Yoked  
to the car each noble steed, And to Ayodhyá's city sped With his sad heart  
disquieted. On lake and brook and scented grove His glances fell, as on he  
drove: City and village came in view As o'er the road his coursers flew. On  
the third day the charioteer, When now the hour of night was near, Came to  
Ayodhyá's gate, and found The city all in sorrow drowned. To him, in spirit  
quite cast down, Forsaken seemed the silent town, And by the rush of grief  
oppressed He pondered in his mournful breast: 'Is all Ayodhyá burnt with  
grief, Steed, elephant, and man, and chief? Does her loved Ráma's exile  
so Afflict her with the fires of woe?'

Thus as he mused, his steeds flew fast, And swiftly through the gate he  
passed. On drove the charioteer, and then In hundreds, yea in thousands,  
men Ran to the car from every side, And, 'Ráma, where is Ráma?'  
cried. Sumantra said: 'My chariot bore The duteous prince to Gangá's  
shore; I left him there at his behest, And homeward to Ayodhyá  
pressed. 'Soon as the anxious people knew That he was o'er the flood they  
drew Deep sighs, and crying, Ráma! all Wailed, and big tears began to  
fall. He heard the mournful words prolonged, As here and there the people  
thronged: 'Woe, woe for us, forlorn, undone, No more to look on Raghu's  
son! His like again we ne'er shall see, Of heart so true, of hand so  
free, In gifts, in gatherings for debate, When marriage pomps we

celebrate,What should we do? What earthly thingCan rest, or hope, or  
pleasure bring?'

Thus the sad town, which Ráma kept

As a kind father, wailed and wept.Each mansion, as the car went by,Sent  
forth a loud and bitter cry,

As to the window every dame,Mourning for banished Ráma, came.As his sad  
eyes with tears o'erflowed,He sped along the royal roadTo Das'aratha's  
high abode.There leaping down his car he stayed;Within the gates his way  
he made;Through seven broad courts he onward hiedWhere people thronged on  
every side.From each high terrace, wild with woeThe royal Indies flocked  
below:

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He heard them talk in gentle tone,As each for Ráma made her moan:'What  
will the charioteer replyTo Queen Kaus'alyá's eager cry?With Ráma from  
the gates he went;Homeward alone, his steps are bent.Hard is a life with  
woe distressed!But difficult to win is rest,If, when her son is banished,  
stillShe lives beneath her load of ill.'

Such was the speech Sumantra heard

From them whom grief unfeigned had stirred.As fires of anguish burnt him  
through,Swift to the monarch's hall he drew,

Past the eighth court; there met his sight,The sovereign in his palace  
bright,Still weeping for his son, forlorn,Pale, faint, and all with  
sorrow worn.As there he sat, Sumantra bentAnd did obeisance reverent,And  
to the king repeated o'erThe message he from Ráma bore.The monarch heard,  
and well-nigh brakeHis heart, but yet no word he spake:Fainting to earth  
he fell, and dumb,By grief for Ráma overcome,Rang through the hall a  
startling cry,And women's arms were tossed on high,When, with his senses  
all astray,Upon the ground the monarch lay.Kaus'alyá with Sumitrás  
aid,Raised from the ground her lord dismayed:'Sire, of high fate, she  
cried, O, whyDost thou no single word replyTo Ráma's messenger who  
bringsNews of his painful wanderings?The great injustice done, art  
thouShame-stricken for thy conduct now?Rise up, and do thy part:  
bestowComfort and help in this our woe.Speak freely, King; dismiss thy  
fear,For Queen Kaikeyí stands not near,Afraid of whom thou wouldst not  
seek

Tidings of Ráma: freely speak.'

When the sad queen had ended so,

She sank, insatiate in her woe,And prostrate lay upon the ground,While  
her faint voice by sobs was drowned.When all the ladies in despairSaw  
Queen Kaus'alyá wailing there,And the poor king oppressed with pain,They  
flocked around and wept again.

Footnotes

162:1 Deities of a particular class in which five or ten  
are enumerated. They are worshipped particularly at the  
funeral obsequies in honour of deceased progenitors.

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CANTO LVIII.: RÁMA'S MESSAGE.

The king a while had senseless lain,

When care brought memory back again.Then straight he called, the news to  
hearOf Ráma, for the charioteer,With reverent hand to hand appliedHe  
waited by the old man's side,Whose mind with anguish was distraughtLike a  
great elephant newly caught.The king with bitter pain distressedThe  
faithful charioteer addressed,Who, sad of mien, with flooded eye,And dust  
upon his limbs, stood by:'Where will be Ráma's dwelling now,At some  
tree's foot, beneath the bough;Ah, what will be the exile's food.Bred up  
with kind solicitude?Can he, long lapped in pleasant rest,Unmeet for  
pain, by pain oppressed,Son of earth's king, his sad night spendEarth-  
couched, as one that has no friend?Behind him, when abroad he sped,Cars,

elephant, and foot were led:Then how shall Ráma dwell afarIn the wild  
woods where no men are?How, tell me, did the princes there,  
With Sítá good and soft and fair,Alighting from the chariot, treadThe  
forest wilds around them spread?A happy lot is thine, I ween,Whose eyes  
my two dear sons have seenSeeking on foot the forest shade,Like the  
bright Twins to view displayed,The heavenly As'vins, when they seekThe  
woods that hang 'neath Mandar's peak,What words, Sumantra, quickly  
tell,From Ráma, Lakshman. Sítá fell?How in the wood did Ráma eat?What was  
his bed, and what his seat?Full answer to my questions give,For I on thy  
replies shall live,As with the saints Yayáti heldSweet converse, from the  
skies expelled.'

Urged by the lord of men to speak,  
Whose sobbing voice came faint and weak,Thus he, while tears his  
utterance broke,In answer to the monarch spoke;'Hear then the words that  
Ráma said,Resolved in duty's path to tread.Joining his hands, his head he  
bent,And gave this message, reverent:'Sumantra, to my father go,Whose  
lofty mind all people know:Bow down before him, as is meet,  
And in my stead salute his feet.Then to the queen my mother bend,And give  
the greeting that I send:Ne'er may her steps from duty err,And may it  
still be well with her.And add this word: 'O Queen, pursueThy vows with  
faithful heart and true;And ever at due season turnWhere holy fires of  
worship burn.And, lady, on our lord bestow

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Such honour as to Gods we owe.Be kind to every queen: let prideAnd  
thought of self be cast aside.In the king's fond opinion raiseKaikeyí, by  
respect and praise.Let the young Bharat ever beLoved, honoured as the  
king by thee:Thy king-ward duty ne'er forget:High over all are monarchs  
set.'

And Bharat, too, for me address:

Pray that all health his life may bless.Let every royal lady share,As  
justice bids, his love and care.Say to the strong-armed chief who  
bringsJoy to Ikshvákú's line of kings:

'As ruling prince thy care be shownOf him, our sire, who holds the  
throne.Stricken in years he feels their weight;But leave him in his royal  
state.As regent heir content thee still,Submissive to thy father's  
will.'Ráma again his charge renewed,As the hot flood his cheek  
bedewed:'Hold as thine own my mother dearWho drops for me the longing  
tear.'Then Lakshman, with his soul on fire,Spake breathing fast these  
words of ire:'Say, for what sin, for what offenceWas royal Ráma banished  
thence?He is the cause, the king: poor slaveTo the light charge Kaikeyí  
gave.Let right or wrong the motive be,The author of our woe is he.Whether  
the exile were decreedThrough foolish faith or guilty greed,For promises  
or empire, stillThe king has wrought a grievous ill.Grant that the Lord  
of all saw fitTo prompt the deed and sanction it,In Ráma's life no cause  
I seeFor which the king should bid him flee.His blinded eye refused to  
scanThe guilt and folly of the plan,And from the weakness of the king  
Here and hereafter woe shall spring.No more my sire: the ties that usedTo  
bind me to the king are loosed.My brother Ráma, Raghu's son.To me is  
lord, friend, sire in one.The love of men how can he win,Deserting, by  
the cruel sin,Their joy, whose heart is swift to feelA pleasure in the  
people's weal?Shall he whose mandate could expelThe virtuous Ráma, loved  
so well,To whom his subjects' fond hearts cling--Shall he in spite of  
them be king?'

But Janak's child, my lord, stood by,

And oft the votaress heaved a sigh.She seemed with dull and wandering  
sense,Beneath a spirit's influence.The noble princess, pained with  
woeWhich till that hour she ne'er could know,Tears in her heavy trouble  
shed,But not a word to me she said.She raised her face which grief had  
driedAnd tenderly her husband eyed,Gazed on him as he turned to goWhile

tear chased tear in rapid flow.'Next: Canto LIX: Das'aratha's  
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CANTO LIX: DAS'ARATHA'S LAMENT.

As thus Sumantra, best of peers,  
Told his sad tale with many tears,The monarch cried, 'I pray thee, tellAt  
length again what there befell.'Sumantra, at the king's behest,Striving  
with sobs he scarce repressed,His trembling voice at last controlled,And  
thus his further tidings told:'Their locks in votive coils they  
wound,Their coats of bark upon them bound,To Gangá's farther shore they  
went,Thence to Prayág their steps were bent.I saw that Lakshman walked  
aheadTo guard the path the two should tread.So far I saw, no more could  
learn,Forced by the hero to return.Retraging slow my homeward  
course,Scarce could I move each stubborn horse:Shedding hot tears of  
grief he stoodWhen Ráma turned him to the wood.

1

As the two princes parted thenceI raised my hands in reverence,Mounted my  
ready car, and boreThe grief that stung me to the core.With Guha all that  
day I stayed,  
Still by the earnest hope delayedThat Ráma, ere the time should end,Some  
message from the wood might send.Thy realms, great Monarch, mourn the  
blow,And sympathize with Ráma's woe.

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Each withering tree hangs low his head,And shoot, and bud, and flower are  
dead.Dried are the floods that wont to fillThe lake, the river, and the  
rill.Drear is each grove and garden now,Dry every blossom on the  
bough.Each beast is still, no serpents crawl:A lethargy of woe on all.The  
very wood is silent: crushedWith grief for Ráma, all is hushed.Fair  
blossoms from the water born,Gay garlands that the earth adorn,And every  
fruit that gleams like gold,Have lost the scent that charmed of old.Empty  
is every grove I see,Or birds sit pensive on the tree.Where'er I look,  
its beauty o'er,The pleasance charms not as before.I drove through fair  
Ayodhyá's street:None flew with joy the car to meet.They saw that Ráma  
was not there,

And turned them sighing in despair.The people in the royal wayWept tears  
of bitter grief, when theyBeheld me coming, from afar,No Ráma with me in  
the car.From palace roof and turret highEach woman bent her eager eye;She  
looked for Ráma, but in vain;Gazed on the car and shrieked for pain.Their  
long clear eyes with sorrow drownedThey, when this common grief was  
found,Looked each on other, friend and foe,In sympathy of levelling  
woe:No shade of difference betweenFoe, friend, or neutral, there was  
seen.Without a joy, her bosom rentWith grief for Ráma's  
banishment,Ayodhyá like the queen appearsWho mourns her son with many  
tears.' He ended: and the king, distressed.With sobbing voice that lord  
addressed:'Ah me, by false Kaikeyí led,Of evil race, to evil bred,I took  
no counsel of the sage,Nor sought advice from skill and age,I asked no  
lord his aid to lend,I called no citizen or friend.Rash was my deed,  
bereft of senseSlave to a woman's influence.

Surely, my lord, a woe so greatPalls on us by the will of Fate;It lays  
the house of Raghu low,For Destiny will have it so.I pray thee, if I e'er  
have doneAn act to please thee, yea, but one,Fly, fly, and Ráma homeward  
lead:My life, departing, counsels speed.Fly, ere the power to bid I  
lack,Fly to the wood: bring Ráma back.I cannot live for even oneShort  
hour bereaved of my son.But ah, the prince, whose arms are strong,Has  
journeyed far: the way is long:Me, me upon the chariot place,And let me  
look on Ráma's face.Ah me, my son, mine eldest-born,Where roams he in the  
wood forlorn,The wielder of the mighty bow,Whose shoulders like the  
lion's show?O, ere the light of life be dim,Take me to Sítá and to him.O  
Ráma, Lakshman, and O thouDear Sítá, constant to thy vow,Beloved ones,  
you cannot knowThat I am dying of my woe.' The king to bitter grief a

prey, That drove each wandering sense away, Sunk in affliction's sea. too wide

To traverse, in his anguish cried: 'Hard, hard to pass, my Queen, this sea Of sorrow raging over me: No Ráma near to soothe mine eye, Plunged in its lowest deeps I lie. Sorrow for Ráma swells the tide, And Sítá's absence makes it wide: My tears its foamy flood distain, Made billowy by my sighs of pain: My cries its roar, the arms I throw About me are the fish below, Kaikeyí is the fire that feeds Beneath: my hair the tangled weeds: Its source the tears for Ráma shed: The hump-back's words its monsters dread: The boon I gave the wretch its shore, Till Ráma's banishment be o'er.

1

Ah me, that I should long to set My eager eyes to-day On Raghu's son, and he be yet With Lakshman far away! Thus he of lofty glory wailed, And sank upon the bed. Beneath the woe his spirit failed, And all his senses fled. Footnotes

164:1 'So in Homer the horses of Achilles lamented with many bitter tears the death of Patroclus slain by

Hector:

"•πποι δ• Α•ακ•δαο, μ•χης •π•νευθεν ••ντες,  
Κλ•ιον, •πειδ• πρ•τα πυθ•σθην •νι•χοιο•ν κον••σι πεσ•ντος •φ• •κτορος  
•νδροφ•βοιο."

ILIAD. XVII. 426.

Ancient poesy frequently associated nature with the joys and sorrows of man.' GORRESIO.

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CANTO LX.: KAUS'ALYÁ CONSOLED.

As Queen Kaus'alyá, trembling much,  
As blighted by a goblin's touch, Still lying prostrate, half awoke To consciousness, 'twas thus she spoke: 'Bear me away, Sumantra, far, Where Ráma, Sítá, Lakshman are. Bereft of them I have no power To linger on a single hour.

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Again, I pray, thy steps retrace, And me in Dandak forest place, For after them I needs must go, Or sink to Yama's realms below His utterance choked by tears that rolled Down from their fountains uncontrolled, With suppliant hands the charioteer Thus spake, the lady's heart to cheer: 'Dismiss thy grief, despair, and dread That fills thy soul, of sorrow bred, For pain and anguish thrown aside. Will Rama in the wood abide. And Lakshman, with unfailing care Will guard the feet of Rama there, Earning, with governed sense, the prize That waits on duty in the skies. And Sita in the wild as well As in her own dear home will dwell; To Rama all her heart she gives, And free from doubt and terror lives. No faintest sign of care or woe The features of the lady show: Rethinks Videha's pride was made For exile in the forest shade. E'en as of old she used to rove Delighted in the city's grove, Thus, even thus she joys to tread The woodlands uninhabited. Like a young child, her face as fair As the young moon, she wanders there. What though in lonely woods she stray Still Rama is her joy and stay: All his the heart no sorrow bends, Her very life on him depends. For, if her lord she might not see, Ayodhy'a like the wood would be. She bids him, as she roams, declare The names of towns and hamlets there, Marks various trees that meet her eye, And many a brook that hurries by, And Janak's daughter seems home When Rama or his brother spans And gives the answer that she seeks.

This, Lady, I remember well, Nor angry words have to tell: Reproaches at Kaikey'i shot, Such, queen, my mind remembers not. The speech when Sita's wrath was high, Sumantra passed in silence by, That so his pleasant words might With sweet report Kaulay'a's ear. Her moonlike beauty suffers not Though winds be rude and suns be hot: The way, the danger, and the

toilHer gentle lustre may not soil.Like the red liiy's leafy crownOr as  
 the fair full moon looks down,So the Videhan lady's faceStill shines with  
 undimmished grace.What if the borrowed colours throw  
 O'er her fine feet no row glow,  
 Still with their natural tints they spreadA lotus glory where they  
 tread.In sportive grace she walks the groundAnd sweet her chiming anklets  
 sound.No jewels clasp the faultless limb:She leaves them all for love of  
 him.If in the woods her gentle eyeA lion sees, or tiger nigh,Or elephant,  
 she fears no illFor Rama's arm supports her still,  
 No longer be their fate deplored,Nor thine, nor that of Kosal's lord,For  
 conduct such as theirs shall buyWide glory that can never die.For casting  
 grief and care away,Delighting in the forest, theyWith joyful spirits,  
 blithe and gay,Set forward on the ancient way Where mighty saints have  
 led:Their highest aim, their dearest careTo keep their father's honour  
 fair,Observing still the oath he sware, They roam, on wild fruit  
 fed.'Thus with persuasive art he triedTo turn her from her grief aside,  
 By soothing fancies won.But still she gave her sorrow vent:'Ah Rama,' was  
 her shrill lament,'My love, my son, my son!'

Footnotes

165:1 The lines containing this heap of forced  
 metaphors are marked as spurious by Schlegel.Next: Canto LXI.: Kauslaya's  
 Lament.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
 CANTO LXI.: KAUSLAYA'S LAMENT.

When, best of all who give delight,  
 her rama wandered for from sight,Kausaaly'a weeping, sore distressed,The  
 king her husband thus addressed;'Thy name, O Monarch, far and wid?Through  
 the three worlds is glorified:Yet Rama has the praying mind. \*His speed  
 is true, his heart is kind.How will thy sons, good lord, sustainWith  
 Sita, all their care and pain?How in the wild endure distress,Nursed in  
 the lap of tenderness?How will the dear Videhan bearThe heat and cold  
 when wandering thereBred in the bliss of princely state,So young and fair  
 find delicate?The large-eyed lady, wont to eatThe best of finely seasoned  
 meat--How will she now her life sustainWith woodland fare of self-sown  
 grain?Will she, with joys encompassed long,Who loved the music and the  
 song,In the wild wood endure to hearThe ravening lion's voice of  
 fear?Where sleeps my strong-armed hero, where  
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Like Lord Mahendra's standard, fair?  
 Where is, by Lakshman's side, his bed,His club-like arm beneath his  
 head?When shall I see his flower-like eyes,And face that with the lotus  
 vies,Feel his sweet lily breath, and viewHis glorious hair and lotus  
 hue?The heart within my breast, I feel,Is adamant or hardest steel,Or, in  
 a thousand fragments split,The loss of him had shattered it,When those I  
 love, who should be blest,Are wandering in the wood distressed,Condemned  
 their wretched lives to leadIn exile, by thy ruthless deed.If, when the  
 fourteen years are past,Ráma reseeks his home at last,I think not Bharat  
 will consentTo yield the wealth and government.At funeral feasts some  
 mourners dealTo kith and kin the solemn meal,And having duly fed them  
 allSome Bráhmans to the banquet call.The best of Bráhmans, good and  
 wise,The tardy summoning despise,And, equal to the Gods, disdain  
 Cups, e'en of Amrit, thus to drain,Nay e'en when Brámans first have  
 fed,They loathe the meal for others spread,And from the leavings turn  
 with scorn,As bulls avoid a fractured horn.So Ráma, sovereign lord of  
 men,Will spurn the sullied kingship then:He born the eldest and the  
 best,His younger's leavings will detest,Turning from tasted food away,As  
 tigers scorn another's prey.The sacred post is used not twice,Nor  
 elements, in sacrifice.But once the sacred grass is spread,But once with  
 oil the flame is fed:So Ráma's pride will ne'er receiveThe royal power  
 which others leave,Like wine when tasteless dregs are leftOr rites of  
 Soma juice bereft,Be sure the pride of Raghu's raceWill never stoop to



such disgrace:Ths lordly lion will not bearThat man should beard him in  
his lair.Were all the worlds against him rangedHis dauntless soul were  
still unchanged:He, dutiful, in duty strong,Would purge the impious world  
from wrong.Could not the hero, brave and bold,The archer, with his shafts  
of gold,

Burn up the very seas, as doomWill in the end all life consume!Of lion's  
might, eyed like a bull,A prince so brave and beautiful,Thou hast with  
wicked hate pursued,Like sea-born tribes who eat their brood.If thou, O  
Monarch, hadst but knownThe duty all the Twice-born own,If the good laws  
had touched thy mind,Which sages in the Scriptures find,Thou ne'er hadst  
driven forth to pineThis brave, this duteous son of thine.First on her  
lord the wife depends,Next on her son and last on friends:These three  
supports in life has she,And not a fourth for her may be.Thy heart, O  
King, I have not won;In wild woods roams my banished son;Far are my  
friends: ah, hapless me,Quite ruined and destroyed by thee.'

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CANTO LXII.: DAS'ARATHA CONSOLED.

The queen's stern speech the monarch heard,  
As rage and grief her bosom stirred,And by his anguish sore  
oppressedReflected in his secret breast.Fainting and sad, with woe  
distraught.He wandered in a maze of thought;At length the queller of the  
foeGrew conscious, rallying from his woe.When consciousness returned  
anewLong burning sighs the monarch drew.Again immersed in thought he  
eyedKaus'alyá standing by his side.Back to his pondering soul was  
broughtThe direful deed his hand had wrought,When, guiltless of the wrong  
intent,His arrow at a sound was sent.Distracted by his memory's sting,And  
mourning for his son, the kingTo two consuming griefs a prey,A miserable  
victim lay.The double woe devoured him fast,As on the ground his eyes he  
cast,Joined suppliant hands, her heart to touch.And spake in the answer,  
trembling much:'Kaus'alyá, for thy grace I sue,  
Joining these hands as suppliants do.Thou e'en to foes hast ever beenA  
gentle, good, and loving queen.Her lord, with noble virtues graced,Her  
lord, by lack of all debased,Is still a God in woman's eyes,If duty's law  
she hold and prize.Thou, who the right hast aye pursued,Life's changes  
and its chances viewed,Shouldst never launch, though sorrow-stirred,At me  
distressed, one bitter word.'   She listened, as with sorrow faintHe  
murmured forth his sad complaint:Her brimming eyes with tears ran o'er,As  
spouts the new fallen water pour;

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His suppliant hands, with fear dismayedShe gently clasped in hers, and  
laid,Like a fair lotus, on her head,And faltering in her trouble  
said:'Forgive me; at thy feet I lie,With low bent head to thee I cry.By  
thee besought, thy guilty damePardon from thee can scarcely claim.She  
merits not the name of wifeWho cherishes perpetual strifeWith her own  
husband good and wise,  
Her lord both here and in the skies.I know the claims of duty well,I know  
thy lips the truth must tell.All the wild words I rashly spoke,Forth from  
my heart, through anguish, broke;For sorrow bends the stoutest soul,And  
cancels Scripture's high control.Yea, sorrow's might all else  
o'erthrowsThe strongest and the worst of foes.'Tis thus with all: we  
keenly feel,Yet bear the blows our foemen deal,But when a slender woe  
assailsThe manifest spirit bends and quails.The fifth long night has now  
begunSince the wild woods have lodged my son:To me whose joy is drowned  
in tears,Each day a dreary year appears.While all my thoughts on him are  
setGrief at my heart swells wilder yet:With doubled might thus Ocean  
ravesWhen rushing floods increase his waves.'   As from Kaus'alyá  
reasoning wellThe gentle words of wisdom fell,The sun went down with  
dying flame,And darkness o'er the landscape came.His lady's soothing

words in part Relieved the monarch's aching heart, Who, wearied out by all his woes, Yielded to sleep and took repose.

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CANTO LXIII.: THE HERMIT'S SON.

But soon by rankling grief oppressed

The king awoke from troubled rest, And his sad heart was tried again With anxious thought where all was pain. Râma and Lakshman's mournful fate On Das'aratha, good and great As Indra, pressed with crushing weight, As when the demon's might assails The Sun-God, and his glory pales. Ere yet the sixth long night was spent. Since Rama to the woods was sent, The king at midnight sadly thought Of the old crime his hand had wrought, And thus to Queen Kausalyâ cried Who still for Râma moaned and sighed: 'If thou art waking, give, I pray, Attention to the words I say. Whate'er the conduct men pursue, Be good or ill the acts they do, Be sure, dear Queen, they find the meed Of wicked or of virtuous deed. A heedless child we call the man Whose feeble judgment fails to scan The weight of what his hands may do, Its lightness, fault, and merit too.

One lays the Mango garden low, And bids the gay Palâs'as grow: Longing for fruit their bloom he sees, But grieves when fruit should bend the trees. Cut by my hand, my fruit-trees fell, Palâs'a trees I watered well. My hopes this foolish heart deceive, And for my banished son I grieve. Kaus'alyâ, in my youthful prime Armed with my bow I wrought the crime, Proud of my skill, my name renowned, An archer prince who shoots by sound. The deed this hand unwitting wrought This misery on my soul has brought, As children seize the deadly cup And blindly drink the poison up. As the unreasoning man may be Charmed with the gay Palâs'a tree, I unaware have reaped the fruit Of joying at a sound to shoot. As regent prince I shared the throne. Thou wast a maid to me unknown. The early Rain-time duly came, And strengthened love's delicious flame. The sun had drained the earth that lay All glowing 'neath the summer day, And to the gloomy clime had fled Where dwell the spirits of the dead.

1 The fervent heat that moment ceased.

The darkening clouds each hour increased And frogs and deer and peacocks all Rejoiced to see the torrents fall. Their bright wings heavy from the shower, The birds, new-bathed, had scarce the power To reach the branches of the trees Whose high tops swayed beneath the breeze. The fallen rain, and falling still, Hung like a sheet on every hill, Till, with glad deer, each flooded steep Showed glorious as the mighty deep. The torrents down its wooded side Poured, some unstained, while others dyed

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Gold, ashy, silver, ochre, bore The tints of every mountain ore. In that sweet time, when all are pleased, My arrows and my bow I seized; Keen for the chase, in field or grove, Down Sarjû's bank my car I drove. I longed with all my lawless will Some elephant by night to kill, Some buffalo that came to drink, Or tiger, at the river's brink. When all around was dark and still, I heard a pitcher slowly fill, And thought, obscured in deepest shade,

An elephant the sound had made. I drew a shaft that glittered bright, Fell as a serpent's venomous bite; I longed to lay the monster dead, And to the mark my arrow sped. Then in the calm of morning, clear A hermit's wailing smote my ear: 'Ah me, ah me,' he cried, and sank, Pierced by my arrow, on the bank. E'en as the weapon smote his side, I heard a human voice that cried: 'Why lights this shaft on one like me, A poor and harmless devotee? I came by night to fill my jar From this lone stream where no men are. Ah, who this deadly shaft has shot Whom have I wronged, and knew it not? Why should a boy so harmless feel The vengeance of the winged steel? Or who should slay the guiltless son Of hermit sire who injures none, Who dwells retired in woods, and there Supports his life on woodland fare? Ah me, ah me, why am I slain, What booty will the murderer gain? In hermit coils I

bind my hair, Coats made of skin and bark I wear. Ah, who the cruel deed  
can praise Whose idle toil no fruit repays,  
As impious as the wretch's crime Who dares his master's bed to climb? Nor  
does my parting spirit grieve But for the life which thus I leave: Alas, my  
mother and my sire, -- I mourn for them when I expire. Ah me, that aged,  
helpless pair, Long cherished by my watchful care, How will it be with them  
this day When to the Five

1 I pass away?

Pierced by the self-same dust we die, Mine aged mother, sire, and I. Whose  
mighty hand, whose lawless mind Has all the three to death consigned!'

When I, by love of duty stirred,

That touching lamentation heard,

Pierced to the heart by sudden woe,

I threw to earth my shafts and bow. My heart was full of grief and dread As  
swiftly to the place I sped, Where, by my arrow wounded sore, A hermit lay  
on Sarjú's shore. His matted hair was all unbound. His pitcher empty on the  
ground, And by the fatal arrow pained, He lay with dust and gore  
distained. I stood confounded and amazed:

His dying eyes to mine he raised, And spoke this speech in accents  
stern, As though his light my soul would burn: 'How have I wronged thee,  
King, that I Struck by thy mortal arrow die? The wood my home, this jar I  
brought, And water for my parents sought. This one keen shaft that strikes  
me through Slays sire and aged mother too. Feeble and blind, in helpless  
pain, They wait for me and thirst in vain. They with parched lips their  
pangs must bear, And hope will end in blank despair. Ah me, there seems no  
fruit in store For holy zeal or Scripture lore, Or else ere now my sire  
would know That his dear son is lying low. Yet, if my mournful fate he  
knew, What could his arm so feeble do? The tree, firm-rooted, ne'er may  
be The guardian of a stricken tree. Haste to my father, and relate While  
time allows, my sudden fate, Lest he consume thee as the fire Burns up the  
forest, in his ire. This little path, O King, pursue: My father's cot thou  
soon wilt view. There sue for pardon to the sage. Lest he should curse thee  
in his rage.

First from the wound extract the dart That kills me with its deadly  
smart, E'en as the flushed impetuous tide Eats through the river's yielding  
side.'

I feared to draw the arrow out,

And pondered thus in painful doubt: 'Now tortured by the shaft he lies, But  
if I draw it forth he dies.' Helpless I stood, faint, sorely grieved: The  
hermit's son my thought perceived; As one o'ercome by direst pain He scarce  
had strength to speak again. With writhing limb and struggling  
breath, Nearer and ever nearer death My senses undisturbed remain, And  
fortitude has conquered pain: Now from one tear thy soul be freed. Thy hand  
has made a Bráhmaṇ bleed. Let not this pang thy bosom wring: No twice-born  
youth am I, O King,

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For of a Vais'ya sire I came, Who wedded with a S'udrá dame.

These words the boy could scarcely say, As tortured by the shaft he lay.

Twisting his helpless body round, Then trembling senseless on the  
ground. Then from his bleeding side I drew The rankling shaft that pierced  
him through. With death's last fear my face he eyed, And, rich in store of  
penance, died.'

Footnotes

168:1 The southern region is the abode of Yama the  
Indian Pluto, and of departed spirits.

169:1 The five elements of which the body consists, and to which it  
returns.

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CANTO LXIV.: DAS'ARATHA'S DEATH.

The son of Raghu to his queen

Thus far described the unequalled scene, And, as the hermit's death he rued, The mournful story thus renewed: 'The deed my heedless hand had wrought Perplexed me with remorseful thought, And all alone I pondered still How kindly deed might salve the ill. The pitcher from the ground I took, And filled it from that fairest brook, Then, by the path the hermit showed, I reached his sainted sire's abode. I came, I saw: the aged pair, Feeble and blind, were sitting there, Like birds with clipped wings, side by side, With none their helpless steps to guide. Their idle hours the twain beguiled With talk of their returning child, And still the cheering hope enjoyed, The hope, alas, by me destroyed. Then spoke the sage, as drawing near The sound of footsteps reached his ear: 'Dear son, the water quickly bring; Why hast thou made this tarrying? Thy mother thirsts, and thou hast played,

And bathing in the brook delayed. She weeps because thou camest not; Haste, O my son, within the cot. If she or I have ever done A thing to pain thee, dearest son, Dismiss the memory from thy mind: A hermit thou, be good and kind. On thee our lives, our all, depend: Thou art thy friendless parents' friend. The eyeless couple's eye art thou: Then why so cold and silent now?'

With sobbing voice and bosom wrung

I scarce could move my faltering tongue, And with my spirit filled with dread I looked upon the sage, and said, While mind, and sense, and nerve I strung To fortify my trembling tongue, And let the aged hermit know His son's sad fate, my fear and woe: 'High-minded Saint, not I thy child, A warrior, Das'aratha styled. I bear a grievous sorrow's weight Born of a deed which good men hate. My lord, I came to Sarj's shore, And in my hand my bow I bore For elephant or beast of chase That seeks by night his drinking place, There from the stream a sound I heard, As if a jar the water stirred, An elephant, I thought, was nigh: I aimed, and let an arrow fly. Swift to the place I made my way, And there a wounded hermit lay Gasping for breath: the deadly dart stood quivering in his youthful heart. I hastened near with pain oppressed; He faltered out his last behest. And quickly, as he bade me do, From his pierced side the shaft I drew. I drew the arrow from the rent, And up to heaven the hermit went, Lamenting, as from earth he passed, His aged parents to the last. Thus, unaware, the deed was done: My hand, unwitting killed thy son. For what remains, O, let me win Thy pardon for my heedless sin.'

As the sad tale of sin I told

The hermit's grief was uncontrolled. With flooded eyes, and sorrow-faint, Thus spake the venerable saint: I stood with hand to hand applied, And listened as he spoke and sighed: 'If thou, O King, hadst left unsaid By thine own tongue this tale of dread, Thy head for hideous guilt accursed

Had in a thousand pieces burst. A hermit's blood by warrior spilt, In such a case, with purposed guilt, Down from his high estate would bring Even the thunder's mighty King And he a dart who (illegible) sends Against the devotee who spends His pure life by the law of heaven-- That sinner's head will split in seven. Thou livest, for thy heedless hand Has wrought a deed thou hast not planned, Else thou and all of Raghu's line Had perished by this act of thine. Now guide us,' thus the hermit said, 'Forth to the spot where he lies dead. Guide us, this day, O Monarch, we For the last time our son would see: The hermit dress of skin he wore Rent from his limbs distained with gore; His senseless body lying slain, His soul in Yama's dark domain.'

Alone the mourning pair I led,

Their souls with woe disquieted, And let the dame and hermit lay

p. 171 Their hands upon the breathless clay.

The father touched his son, and pressed The body to his aged breast; Then falling by the dead boy's side, He lifted up his voice, and cried:

'Hast thou no word, my child, to say?

No greeting for thy sire to-day? Why art thou angry, darling? why wilt thou upon the cold earth lie? If thou, my son, art wroth with me, here, duteous child, thy mother see. What! no embrace for me, my son? No word of tender love--not one? Whose gentle voice, so soft and clear, soothing my spirit, shall I hear when evening comes, with accents sweet Scripture or ancient lore repeat? Who, having fed the sacred fire, and duly bathed, as texts require, will cheer, when evening rites are done, the father mourning for his son? Who will the daily meal provide for the poor wretch who lacks a guide, feeding the helpless with the best berries and roots, like some dear guest? How can these hands subsistence find for thy poor mother, old and blind? The wretched votaress how sustain, who mourns her child in ceaseless pain?

Stay yet a while, my darling, stay, nor fly to Yama's realm to-day. To-morrow I thy sire and she who bare thee, child, will go with, thee.

1

Then when I look on Yama, I to great Vivasvat's son will cry: 'Hear, King of justice, and restore our child to feed us, I implore. Lord of the world, of mighty fame, faithful and just, admit my claim, and grant this single boon to free my soul from fear, to one like me.' Because, my son, untouched by stain, by sinful hands thou fallest slain, win, through thy truth, the sphere where those who die by hostile darts repose. Seek the blest home prepared for all the valiant who in battle fall, who face the foe and scorn to yield, in glory dying on the field. Rise to the heaven where Dhundhumar and Nahush, mighty heroes, are, where Janamejay and the blest Dilīpa, Sagar, S'alvya, rest:

Home of all virtuous spirits, earned

By fervent rites and Scripture learned: By those whose sacred fires have glowed. Whose liberal hands have fields bestowed:

By givers of a thousand cows, by lovers of one faithful spouse: By those who serve their masters well. And cast away this earthly shell. None of my race can ever know the bitter pain of lasting woe. But doomed to that dire fate is he whose guilty hand has slaughtered thee.

Thus with wild tears the aged saint

Made many a time his piteous plaint, then with his wife began to shed the funeral water for the dead. But in a shape celestial clad, won by the merits of the lad. The spirit from the body brake and to the mourning parents spake: 'A glorious home in realms above rewards my care and filial love. You, honoured parents, soon shall be partakers of that home with me.' He spake, and swiftly mounting high,

With Indra near him, to the sky on a bright car, with flame that glowed, sublime the duteous hermit rode.

The father, with his consort's aid. The funeral rites with water paid, and thus his speech to me renewed who stood in suppliant attitude: 'Slay me this day, O, slay me, King, for death no longer has a sting. Childless am I: thy dart has done to death my dear, my only son. Because the boy I loved so well slain by thy heedless arrow fell, my curse upon thy soul shall press with bitter woe and heaviness. I mourn a slaughtered child, and thou shalt feel the pangs that kill me now. Bereft and suffering even as I, so shalt thou mourn thy son, and die. Thy hand unwitting dealt the blow that laid a holy hermit low, and distant, therefore, is the time when thou shalt suffer for the crime. The hour shall come when, crushed by woes like these I feel, thy life shall close: A debt to pay in after days like his the priestly fee who pays.'

This curse on me the hermit laid,

Nor yet his tears and groans were stayed. Then on the pire their bodies cast the pair; and straight to heaven they passed. As in sad thought I pondered long back to my memory came the wrong

Done in wild youth, O lady dear. When 'twas my boast to shoot by ear.

The deed has borne the fruit, which now Hangs ripe upon the bending bough: Thus dainty meats the palate please, And lure the weak to swift disease. Now on my soul return with dread The words that noble hermit said, That I for a dear son should grieve, And of the woe my life should leave.'

Thus spake the king with many a tear;

Then to his wife he cried in fear: 'I cannot see thee, love; but lay Thy gentle hand in mine, I pray. Ah me, if Râma touched me thus, If once, returning home to us, He bade me wealth and lordship give, Then, so I think, my soul would live. Unlike myself, unjust and mean Have been my ways with him, my Queen, But like himself is all that he, My noble son, has done to me. His son, though far from right he stray, What prudent sire would cast away? What banished son would check his ire, Nor speak reproaches of his sire? I see thee not: these eyes grow blind, And memory quits my troubled mind. Angels of Death are round me: they Summon my soul with speed away. What woe more grievous can there be, That, when from light and life I flee, I may not, ere I part, behold My virtuous Râma, true and bold? Grief for my son, the brave and true, Whose joy it was my will to do, Dries up my breath, as summer dries The last drop in the pool that lies. Not men, but blessed Gods, are they Whose eyes shall see his face that day; See him, when fourteen years are past, With earrings decked return at last. My fainting mind forgets to think: Low and more low my spirits sink. Each from its seat, my senses steal: I cannot hear, or taste, or feel. This lethargy of soul o'ercomes Each organ, and its function numbs: So when the oil begins to fail, The torch's rays grow faint and pale. This flood of woe caused by this hand Destroys me helpless and unmanned, Resistless as the floods that bore A passage through the river shore.

Ah Raghu's son, ah mighty-armed, By whom my cares were soothed and charmed, My son in whom I took delight, Now vanished from thy father's sight! Kaus'alyâ, ah, I cannot see; Sumitrâ, gentle devotee! Alas, Kaikeyî, cruel dame, My bitter foe, thy father's shame!'

Kaus'alyâ and Sumitrâ kept

Their watch beside him as he wept. And Das'aratha moaned and sighed, And grieving for his darling died.

Footnotes

171:1 So dying York cries over the body of Suffolk:

'Tarry, dear cousin Suffolk! My soul shall thine keep company to heaven. Tarry, sweet soul, for mine, then fly abreast.'

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CANTO LXV.: THE WOMEN'S LAMENT.

And now the night had past away,

And brightly dawned another day; The minstrels, trained to play and sing, Flocked to the chamber of the king: Bards, who their gayest raiment wore, And heralds famed for ancient lore: And singers, with their songs of praise, Made music in their several ways. There as they poured their blessings choice. And hailed their king with hand and voice, Their praises with a swelling roar Echoed through court and corridor. Then as the bards his glory sang, From beaten palms loud answer rang, As glad applauders clapped their hands, And told his deeds in distant lands. The swelling concert woke a throng Of sleeping birds to life and song: Some in the branches of the trees, Some caged in halls and galleries. Nor was the soft string music mute; The gentle whisper of the lute, And blessings sung by singers skilled The palace of the monarch filled. Eunuchs and dames of life unstained,

Each in the arts of waiting trained, Drew near attentive as before, And crowded to the chamber door: These skilful when and how to shed The lustral stream o'er limb and head, Others with golden ewers stood Of water stained with sandal wood. And many a maid, pure, young, and fair, Her load of early

offerings bare, Cups of the flood which all revere, And sacred things, and  
toilet gear. Each several thing was duly brought As rule of old observance  
taught, And lucky signs on each impressed Stamped it the fairest and the  
best. There anxious, in their long array, All waited till the shine of  
day: But when the king nor rose nor spoke, Doubt and alarm within them  
woke. Forthwith the dames, by duty led, Attendants on the monarch's  
bed, Within the royal chamber pressed To wake their master from his  
rest. Skilled in the lore of dreaming, they First touched the bed on which  
he lay. But none replied; no sound was heard.

p. 173 Nor hand, nor head, nor body stirred.

They trembled, and their dread increased, Fearing his breath of life had  
ceased, And bending low their heads, they shook Like the tall reeds that  
fringe the brook, In doubt and terror down they knelt, Looked on his face,  
his cold hand felt, And then the gloomy truth appeared Of all their hearts  
had darkly feared. Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá, worn With weeping for their sons,  
forlorn, Woke not, but lay in slumber deep And still as death's unending  
sleep. Bowed down by grief, her colour fled, Her wonted lustre dull and  
dead, Kaus'alyá shone not, like a star Obscured behind a cloudy bar. Beside  
the king's her couch was spread, And next was Queen Sumitrá's bed, Who  
shone no more with beauty's glow, Her face bedewed with tears of woe. There  
lapped in sleep each wearied queen, There as in sleep, the king was  
seen; And swift the troubling thought came o'er Their spirits that he  
breathed no more. At once with wailing loud and high The matrons shrieked a  
bitter cry, As widowed elephants bewail Their dead lord in the woody  
vale. At the loud shriek that round them rang,  
Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá sprang Awakened from their beds, with eyes Wide open  
in their first surprise. Quick to the monarch's side they came, And saw and  
touched his lifeless frame; One cry, O husband! forth they sent, And  
prostrate to the ground they went. The king of Kosal's daughter

1 there

Writhed, with the dust on limb and hair Lustreless, as a star might  
lie Hurlled downward from the glorious sky. When the king's voice in death  
was stilled, The women who the chamber filled Saw, like a widow elephant  
slain, Kaus'alyá prostrate in her pain. Then all the monarch's ladies led By  
Queen Kaikeyí at their head, Poured forth their tears, and weeping so, Sank  
on the ground, consumed by woe. The cry of grief so long and loud Went up  
from all the royal crowd, That, doubled by the matron train, It made the  
palace ring again. Filled with dark fear and eager eyes, Anxiety and wild  
surmise; Echoing with the cries of grief Of sorrowing friends who mourned  
their chief, Dejected, pale with deep distress, Hurlled from their height of  
happiness:

Such was the look the palace wore Where lay the king who breathed no more.

Footnotes

173:1 Kausalya, daughter of the king of another Kos'al.

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CANTO LXVI.: THE EMBALMING.

Kaus'alyá's eyes with tears o'erflowed.

Weighed down by varied sorrows's load; On her dead lord her gaze she  
bent, Who lay like fire whose might is spent, Like the great deep with  
waters dry, Or like the clouded sun on high. Then on her lap she laid his  
head. And on Kaikeyí looked and said: 'Triumphant now enjoy thy  
reign Without a thorn thy side to pain. Thou hast pursued thy single  
aim, And lulled the king, O wicked dame. Far from my sight my Ráma flies, My  
perished lord has sought the skies. No friend, no hope my life to cheer, I  
cannot tread the dark path here. Who would forsake her husband, who That  
God to whom her love is due, And wish to live one hour, but she Whose heart  
no duty owns, like thee? The ravenous sees no fault: his greed Will e'en on  
poison blindly feed. Kaikeyí, through a hump-back maid, This royal house in  
death has laid. King Janak, with his queen, will hear

Heart rent like me the tidings drear  
Of Ráma banished by the king,  
Urged by her impious counselling.  
No son has he, his age is great,  
And sinking with the double weight,  
He for his darling child will pine,  
And pierced with woe his life resign.  
Sprung from Videha's monarch, she  
A sad and lovely devotee,  
Roaming the wood, unmeet for woe,  
Will toil and trouble undergo.  
She in the gloomy night with fear  
The cries of beast and bird will hear,  
And trembling in her wild alarm  
Will cling to Ráma's sheltering arm.  
Ah, little knows my duteous son  
That I am widowed and undone--  
My Ráma of the lotus eye,  
Gone hence, gone hence, alas, to die.  
Now, as a living wife and true,  
I, e'en this day, will perish too:  
Around his form these arms will throw.  
And to the fire with him will go.'

Clasping her husband's lifeless clay

A while the weeping votaress lay,  
Till chamberlains removed her thence.

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O'ercome by sorrow's violence.

Then in a cask of oil they laid  
Him who in life the world had swayed,  
And finished, as the lords desired,  
All rites for parted souls required.  
The lords, all-wise, refused to burn  
The monarch ere his son's return;  
So for a while the corpse they set  
Embalmed in oil, and waited yet.  
The women heard: no doubt remained,  
And wildly for the king they plained.  
With gushing tears that drowned each eye  
Wildly they waved their arms on high,  
And each her mangling nails impressed  
Deep in her head and knee and breast:  
'Of Ráma reft,--who ever spake  
The sweetest words the heart to take,  
Who firmly to the truth would cling,  
--Why dost thou leave us, mighty King?  
How can the consorts thou hast left  
Widowed, of Raghu's son bereft,  
Live with our foe Kaikeyí near,  
The wicked queen we hate and fear?  
She threw away the king, her spite  
Drove Ráma forth and Lakshman's might,  
And gentle Sítá: how will she  
Spare any, whosoe'er it be?'  
Oppressed with sorrow, tear-distained,  
The royal women thus complained.  
Like night when not a star appears,  
Like a sad widow drowned in tears,  
Ayodhyá's city, dark and dim,  
Reft of her lord was sad for him.  
When thus for woe the king to heaven had fled,  
And still on earth his lovely wives remained.  
With dying light the sun to rest had sped,  
And night triumphant o'er the landscape reigned.

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CANTO LXVII.: THE PRAISE OF KINGS.

That night of sorrow passed away,

And rose again the God of Day.  
Then all the twice-born peers of state  
Together met for high debate.  
Jáválí, lord of mighty fame.  
And Gautam, and Kátyáyan came,  
And Márkandeya's reverend age,  
And Vámadeva, glorious sage:  
Sprung from Mudgalya's seed the one,  
The other ancient Kas'yap's son.  
With lesser lords these Bráhmans each  
Spoke in his turn his several speech,  
And turning to Vas'ishtha, best  
Of household priests him thus addressed:  
The night of bitter woe has past,  
Which seemed a hundred years to last,  
Our king, in sorrow for his son,  
Reunion with the Five has won.  
His soul is where the blessed are,  
While Ráma roams in woods afar,  
And Lakshman, bright in glorious deeds,  
Goes where his well-loved brother leads.  
And Bharat and S'atrughna, they  
Who smite their foes in battle fray,  
Far in the realm of Kekaya stay,  
Where their maternal grandsire's care  
Keeps Rájagriha's city fair.  
Let one of old Ikshváku's race  
Obtain this day the sovereign's place,  
Or havoc and destruction straight  
Our kingless land will devastate.  
In kingless lands no thunder's voice,  
No lightning wreaths the heart rejoice,  
Nor does Parjanya's heavenly rain  
Descend upon the burning plain.  
Where none is king, the sower's hand  
Casts not the seed upon the land;  
The son against the father strives.  
And husbands fail to rule their wives.  
In kingless realms no princes call  
Their friends to meet in crowded hall;  
No joyful citizens resort  
To garden trim or sacred court.  
In kingless realms no Twice-born care  
To sacrifice with text and prayer,  
Nor Bráhmans, who their vows maintain,  
The great solemnities ordain.  
The joys of happier days have



ceased:No gathering, festival, or feastTogether calls the merry  
 throngDelighted with the play and song.In kingless lands it ne'er is  
 wellWith sons of trade who buy and sell:No men who pleasant tales repeat  
 Delight the crowd with stories sweet.In kingless realms we ne'er  
 beholdYoung maidens decked with gems and gold,Flock to the gardens blithe  
 and gayTo spend their evening hours in play.No lover in the flying  
 carRides with his love to woods afar.In kingless lands no wealthy  
 swainWho keeps the herd and reaps the grain,Lies sleeping, blest with  
 ample store,Securely near his open door.Upon the royal roads we seeNo  
 tusked elephant roaming free,Of three-score years, whose head and  
 neckSweet tinkling bells of silver deck.We hear no more the glad  
 applauseWhen his strong bow each rival draws,No clap of hands, no eager  
 criesThat cheer each martial exercise.In kingless realms no merchant  
 bandsWho travel forth to distant lands,With precious wares their wagons  
 load.

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And fear no danger on the road,No sage secure in self-control,Brooding on  
 God with mind and soul,In lonely wanderings finds his home  
 Where'er at eve his feet may roam.In kingless realms no man is sureHe  
 holds his life and wealth secure.In kingless lands no warriors smiteThe  
 foeman's host in glorious fight.In kingless lands the wise no more.Well  
 trained in Scripture's holy lore.In shady groves and gardens meetTo argue  
 in their calm retreat.No longer, in religious fear,Do they who pious vows  
 revere,Bring dainty cates and wreaths of flowersAs offerings to the  
 heavenly powers.No longer, bright as trees in spring,Shine forth the  
 children of the kingResplendent in the people's eyesWith aloe wood and  
 sandal dyes.A brook where water once has been,A grove where grass no more  
 is green,Kine with no herdsman's guiding hand--So wretched is a kingless  
 land.The car its waving banner rears,Banner of fire the smoke appears:Our  
 king, the banner of our pride,A God with Gods is glorified.In kingless  
 lands no law is known,And none may call his wealth his own,Each preys on  
 each from hour to hour,As fish the weaker fish devour.

Then fearless, atheists overleapThe bounds of right the godly keep,And  
 when no royal powers restrain,Pre?inence and lordship gain.As in the  
 frame of man the eyeKeeps watch and ward, a careful spy,The monarch in  
 his wide domainsProtects the truth, the right maintains.He is the right,  
 the truth is he,Their hopes in him the well-born see.On him his people's  
 lives depend,Mother is he, and sire, nnd friend.The world were veiled in  
 blinding night,And none could see or know aright,Ruled there no king in  
 any stateThe good and ill to separate.We will obey thy word and willAs if  
 our king were living still:As keeps his bounds the faithful sea,So we  
 observe thy high decree.O best of Bráman's, first in place, Our kingless  
 land lies desolate:Some scion of Ikshváku's race Do thou as monarch  
 consecrate.'

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CANTO LXVIII.: THE ENVOYS.

Vas'ishtha heard their speech and prayer,

And thus addressed the concourse there.Friends, Bráman's, counsellors, and  
 allAssembled in the palace hall:'Ye know that Bharat, free from  
 care,Still lives in Rámagriha

1 where

The father of his mother reigns:S'atrughna by his side remains.Let active  
 envoys, good at need,Thither on fleetest horses speed,To bring the hero  
 youths away:Why waste the time in dull delay?' Quick came from all the  
 glad reply:'Vas'ishtha, let the envoys fly'He heard their speech, and  
 thus renewedHis charge before the multitude:'Nandan, As'ok, Siddhárth,  
 attend,Your ears, Jayanta, Vijay, lend:Be yours, what need requires, to  
 do:I speak these words to all of you.With coursers of the fleetest

breedTo Rájagriha's city speed.Then rid your bosoms of distress,And  
Bharat thus from me address:'The household priest and peers by us  
Send health to thee and greet thee thus:Come to thy father's home with  
haste:Thine absent time no longer waste.'But speak no word of Ráma  
fled,Tell not the prince his sire is dead,Nor to the royal youth the  
fateThat ruins Raghu's race relate.Go quickly hence, and with you  
bearFine silken vestures rich and rare.And gems and many a precious  
thingAs gifts to Bharat and the king.'

With ample stores of food supplied,  
Bach to his home the envoys hied,Prepared, with steeds of swiftest  
race,lo Kekaya's land  
2 their way to trace.

They made all due provision there,And every need arranged with care,Then  
ordered by Vas'ishtha. theyWent forth with speed upon their way.Then  
northward of Pralamba, westOf Apartála, on they pressed,Crossing the  
M'alini that flowedWith gentle stream athwart the road.They traversed  
Gangás holy waves

p. 176Where she Hastinapura 1 lives,  
Thence to Panchala 2 westward fast  
Through Kurujangal's land 3 they passed.  
On, on their course the envoys held

By urgency of task impelled.Quick glancing at each lucid floodAnd sweet  
lake gay with flower and bud.Beyond, they passed unwearied o'er,Where  
glad birds fill the flood and shoreOf Saradanda racing fleetWith heavenly  
water clear and sweet.Thereby a tree celestial growsWhich every boon on  
prayer bestows:To its blest shade they humbly bent,Then to Kulinga's town  
they went.Then, having passed the Warrior's Wood,In Abhikala next they  
stood,O'er sacred Ikshumati

4 came,  
Their ancient kings' ancestral claim.They saw the learned Brahmans  
stand,Each drinking from his hollowed hand,And through Bahika  
5 journeying still

They reached at length Sudaman's hill:There Vishnu's footstep turned to  
see,Vipasa

6 viewed, and Salmali,  
And many a lake and river met,Tank, pool, and pond, and rivulet.And lions  
saw, and tigers near,And elephants and herds of deer,And still, by prompt  
obedience led,

Along the ample road they sped.Then when their course so swift and  
long,Had worn their steeds though fleet and strong,To Girivraja's  
splendid townThey came by night, and lighted down.  
To please their master, and to guard

The royal race, the lineal right, The envoys, spent with riding  
hard,To that fair city came by night.

1b

Footnotes

175:1 Rámagriha, or Girivraja was the capital of  
As'vapati, Bharat's maternal grand father.

175:2 The Kekayas or Kaikayas in the Punjab appear amongst the chief  
nations in the war of the  
Mahábhárata; their king being a kinsman of Krishna.

176:1 Hástinapura was the capital of the kingdom of  
Kuru, near the modern Delhi.

176:2 "The Panchálas occupied the upper part of the Doab.176:3

'Kurujángala and its inhabitants are frequently  
mentioned in the Mahábhárata, as in the Ádi-parv.

3789, 4337, et al.' WILSON'S Vishnu Purána. Vol. II. p. 176. DR. HALL'S  
Note.

176:4 'The •ξ•μ•α•τ•ι•ς of Arrian. See As. Res. Vol XV. p.  
420, 421, also Indische Alterthumskunde, Vol. I. p. 602,

first footnote.' WILSON'S Vishnu Purána, Vol. I, p 421. DR. HALL'S Edition. The Ikshumatí was a river in Kurukshetra.

176:5 'The Bahíkas are described in the Mahábhárata, Kama Parvan, with some detail, and comprehend the different nations of the Punjab from the Sutlej to the Indus.' WILSON S Vishnu Purana. Vol.1, p. 167.

176:6 The Beas, Hyphsis, or Bibasis.

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CANTO LXIX.: BHARAT'S DREAM.

The night those messengers of state

Had past within the city's gate,In dreams the slumbering Bharat sawA sight that chilled his soul with awe.The dream that dire events foretoldLeft Bharat's heart with horror cold,

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And with consuming woes distraught,Upon his aged sire he thought.His dear companions, swift to traceThe signs of anguish on his face,Drew near, his sorrow to expel,And pleasant tales began to tell.Some woke sweet music's cheering sound,And others danced in lively round.With joke and jest they strove to raiseHis spirits, quoting ancient plays;But Bharat still, the lofty-souled,Deaf to sweet tales his fellows told,Unmoved by music, dance, and jest,Sat silent, by his woe oppressed,To him, begirt by comrades near,Thus spoke the friend he held most dear:

'Why ringed around by friends, art thouSo silent and so mournful now?''Hear thou,' thus Bharat made reply,'What chills my heart and dims mine eye,I dreamt I saw the king my sireSink headlong in a lake of mireDown from a mountain high in air,His body soiled, and loose his hair.Upon the miry lake he seemedTo lie and welter, as I dreamed;With hollowed hands full many a draughtOf oil he took, and loudly laughed.With head cast down I saw him makeA meal on sesamum and cake;The oil from every member dripped,And in its clammy flood he dipped.The ocean's bed was bare and dry,The moon had fallen from the sky,And all the world lay still and dead,With whelming darkness overspread.The earth was rent and opened wide,The leafy trees were scorched, and died;I saw the seated mountains split.And wreaths of rising smoke emit.The stately beast the monarch rodeHis long tusks rent and splintered showed;And flames that quenched and cold hadlainBlazed forth with kindled light again.I looked, and many a handsome dame, Arrayed in brown and sable cameAnd bore about the monarch, dressed,On iron stool, in sable vest.And then the king, of virtuous mind,A blood-red wreath around him twined,Forth on an ass-drawn chariot sped,As southward still he bent his head.Then, crimson-clad, a dame appearedWho at the monarch laughed and jeered;And a she-monster, dire to view,Her hand upon his body threw.Such is the dream I dreamt by night,Which chills me yet with wild affright:Either the king or Ráma, IOr Lakshman now must surely die.For when an ass-drawn chariot seemsTo bear away a man in dreams,Be sure above his funeral pyreThe smoke soon rears its cloudy spire.This makes my spirit low and weak.My tongue is slow and both to speak:My lips and throat are dry for dread,And all my soul disquieted.My lips, relaxed, can hardly speak,And chilling dread has changed my cheekI blame myself in aimless fears,And still no cause of blame appears,I dwell upon this dream of ill        Whose changing scenes I viewed,

And on the startling horror still        My troubled thoughts will brood.  
Still to my soul these terrors cling,        Reluctant to depart,        And the  
strange vision of the king        Still weighs upon my heart.'

Footnotes

176:1b It would be lost labour to attempt to verify all the towns and streams mentioned in Cantos LXVIII and

LXXII. Professor Wilson observes (Vishnu Purána, p. 139. Dr. Hall's Edition) 'States, and tribes, and cities have disappeared, even from

recollection; and some of the natural features of the country, especially the rivers, have undergone a total alteration. Notwithstanding these impediments, however, we should be able to identify at least mountains and rivers, to a much greater extent than is now practicable, if our maps were not so miserably defective in their nomenclature. None of our surveyors or geographers have been oriental scholars. It may be doubted if any of them have been conversant with the spoken language of the country. They have, consequently, put down names at random, according to their own inaccurate appreciation of sounds carelessly, vulgarly, and corruptly uttered; and their maps of India are crowded with appellations which bear no similitude whatever either to past or present denominations. "We need not wonder that we cannot discover Sanskrit names in English maps, when, in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta, Barnagore represents Barahanagar, Dakshineswar is metamorphosed into Duckinsore, Ulubaria into Willoughbury.....There is scarcely a name in our Indian maps that does not afford proof of extreme indifference to accuracy in nomenclature, and of an incorrectness in estimating sounds, which is, in some degree, perhaps, a national defect."

For further information regarding the road from

Ayodhya to Rajagriha, see Additional Notes.

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CANTO LXX.: BHARAT'S DEPARTURE.

While thus he spoke, the envoys borne

On horses faint and travel-wornHad gained the city fenced aroundWith a deep moat's protecting bound.An audience of the king they gained,And honours from the prince obtained;The monarch's feet they humbly pressed,To Bharat next these words addressed:'The household priest and peers by usSend health to thee and greet thee thus: Come to thy father's house with haste:Thine absent time no longer waste.Receive these vestures rich and rare,These costly gems and jewels fair,And to thy uncle here presentEach precious robe and ornament.These for the king and him suffice--Two hundred millions is their price--These, worth a hundred millions, beReserved, O large-eyed Prince, for thee.' Loving his frieuds with heart and soul,The joyful prince received thie whole,Due honour to the envoys paid,And thus in turn his answer made:'Of Das'aratha tidings tell:

Is the old king my father well?Is Ráma, and is Lakshman, heOf the high-soul, from sickness free?And she who walks where duty leads,Kaus'alyá known for gracious deeds,Mother of Ráma, loving spouse,Bound to her lord by well kept vows?And Lakshman's mother too, the dameSumitrá skilled in duty's claim,Who brave S'atrughna also bore,Second in age,--her health declare.

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And she, in self-conceit most sage,With selfish heart most prone to rage,My mother, fares she well? has sheSent message or command to me?' Thus Bharat spake, the mighty-souled,And they in brief their tidings told:'All they of whom thou askest dwell,O lion lord, secure and well:Thine all the smiles of fortune are:Make ready; let them yoke the car.' Thus by the royal envoys pressed,Bharat again the band addressed:'I go with you: no long delay,A single hour I bid you stay.'Thus Bharat, son of him who swayed

Ayodhyás realm, his answer made,And then bespoke, his heart to please,His mother's sire in words like these:'I go to see my father, King,Urged by the envoys' summoning;And when thy soul desires to seeThy grandson, will return to thee.' The king his grandsire kissed his head,And in reply to Bharat said:'Go forth, dear child: how blest is she,The mother of a son like thee!Greet well thy sire, thy mother greet,O thou whose arms the foe defeat;The household priest, and all the restAmid the Twice-born chief

and best; And Ráma and brave Lakschman, who shoot the long shaft with aim so true.' To him the king high honour showed, And store of wealth and gifts bestowed, The choicest elephants to ride, And skins and blankets deftly dyed, A thousand strings of golden beads, And sixteen hundred mettled steeds: And boundless wealth before him piled Gave Kekaya to Kaikeyás child. And men of counsel, good and tried, On whose firm truth he aye relied, King As'vapati gave with speed Prince Bharat on his way to lead.

And noble elephants, strong and young, From sires of Indras'ira sprung, And others tall and fair to view Of great Airávat's lineage true: And well yoked asses fleet of limb The prince his uncle gave to him. And dogs within the palace bred, Of body vast and massive head, With mighty fangs for battle, brave, The tiger's match in strength, he gave. Yet Bharat's bosom hardly glowed To see the wealth the king bestowed; For he would speed that hour away, Such care upon his bosom lay: Those eager envoys urged him thence, And that sad vision's influence. He left his court-yard, crowded then With elephants and steeds and men, And, peerless in immortal fame, To the great royal street he came. He saw, as farther still he went, The inner rooms most excellent, And passed the doors, to him unclosed, Where check nor bar his way opposed. There Bharat stayed to bid adieu To grandsire and to uncle too, Then, with S'atrughna by his side, Mounting his car, away he hied. The strong-wheeled cars were yoked, and

they More than a hundred, rolled away: Servants, with horses, asses, kine, Followed their lord in endless line. So, guarded by his own right hand, Forth high-souled Bharat hied, Surrounded by a lordly band On whom the king relied. Beside him sat S'atrughna dear, The scourge of trembling foes: Thus from the light of Indra's sphere A saint made perfect goes.

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CANTO LXXI.: BHARAT'S RETURN.

Then Bharat's face was eastward bent

As from the royal town he went. He reached Sudámá's farther side, And glorious, gazed upon the tide; Passed Hládiní, and saw her toss Her westering billows hard to cross. Then old Ikshváku's famous son O'er S'atadrú

1 his passage won,

Near Ailadhána on the strand, And came to Aparparyat's land. O'er S'ilás flood he hurried fast, Akurvati's fair stream he passed, Crossed o'er A'gneya's rapid rill, And S'alyakartan onward still. S'ilávahá's swift stream he eyed, True to his vows and purified. Then crossed the lofty hills, and stood In Chaitraratha's mighty wood. He reached the confluence where meet Sarasvatí

2 and Gangá fleet,

And through Bhárunda forest, spread Northward of Víramatsya, sped. He sought Kalinda's child, who fill sp. 179

The soul with joy, begirt by hills,

Reached Yamuná and passing o'er, Rested his army on the shore: He gave his horses food and rest, Bathed reeking limb and drooping crest. They drank their fill and bathed them there, And water for their journey bare. Thence through a mighty wood he sped All wild and uninhabited, As in fair chariot through the skies, Most fair in shape a Storm-God flies. At Ans'udhána Gangá, hard To cross, his onward journey barred, So turning quickly thence he came To Prágvat's city dear to fame. There having gained the farther side To Kutikoshtiká he hied: The stream he crossed, and onward then To Dharmavardhan brought his men. Thence, leaving Toran on the north. To Jambuprastha journeyed forth. Then onward to a pleasant grove By fair Varúha's town he drove, And when a while he there had stayed, Went eastward from the friendly shade. Eastward of Ujjiháná where The Priyak trees are tall and fair, He passed, and rested there each steed

Kxhausted with the journey's speed. There orders to his men addressed, With  
 quickened pace he onward pressed, A while at Sarvatirtha spent, Then o'er  
 Uttániká he went. O'er many a stream beside he sped With coursers on the  
 mountains bred, And passing Hastiprishthak, took The road o'er Kutikás fair  
 brook. Then, at Lohitya's village, he Crossed o'er the swift Kapívatí, Then  
 passed, where Ekas'ála stands, The Sthánumatís flood and sands, And Gomatí  
 of fair renown By Vinata's delightful town. When to Kalinga near he drew, A  
 wood of Sal trees charmed the view; That passed, the sun began to rise, And  
 Bharat saw with happy eyes, Ayodhá's city, built and planned By ancient  
 Manu's royal hand, Seven nights upon the road had passed, And when he saw  
 the town at last Before him in her beauty spread, Thus Bharat to the driver  
 said: 'This glorious city from afar, Wherein pure groves and gardens  
 are, Seems to my eager eyes to-day A lifeless pile of yellow clay.  
 Through all her streets where erst a throng Of men and women streamed  
 along, Uprose the multitudinous roar: To-day I hear that sound no more. No  
 longer do mine eyes behold The leading people, as of old, On elephants,  
 cars, horses, go Abroad and homeward, to and fro. The brilliant gardens,  
 where we heard The wild note of each rapturous bird. Where men and women  
 loved to meet, In pleasant shades, for pastime sweet, -- These to my eyes  
 this day appear Joyless, and desolate, and drear; Each tree that graced the  
 garden grieves, And every path is spread with leaves. The merry cry of bird  
 and beast, That spake aloud their joy has ceased: Still is the long  
 melodious note That charmed us from each warbling throat, Why blows the  
 blessed air no more, The incense-breathing air that bore Its sweet  
 incomparable scent Of sandal and of aloe blent? Why are the drum and tabour  
 mute? Why is the music of the lute That woke responsive to the quill, Loved  
 by the happy, hushed and still? My boding spirit gathers hence  
 Dire sins of awful consequence, And omens, crowding on my sight, Weigh down  
 my soul with wild affright Scarce shall I find my friends who dwell Here in  
 Ayodhyá safe and well: For surely not without a cause This crushing dread  
 my soul o'erawes. Heart sick, dejected, every sense Confused by terror's  
 influence, On to the town he quickly swept Which King Ikshváku's children  
 kept. He passed through Vaijayanta's gate, With weary steeds,  
 disconsolate. And all who near their station held, His escort. crying  
 Victory, swelled, With heart distracted still he bowed Farewell to all the  
 following crowd, Turned to the driver and began To question thus the weary  
 man: 'Why was I brought, O free from blame, So fast, unknown for what I  
 came? Yet fear of ill my heart appals, And all my wonted courage falls. For  
 I have heard in days gone by The changes seen when monarchs die; And all  
 those signs. O charioteer, I see today surround me here: Each kinsman's  
 house looks dark and grim, No hand delights to keep it trim:  
 The beauty vanished. and the pride, The doors, unkept, stand open wide. No  
 morning rites are offered there, No grateful incense loads the air, And all  
 therein, with brows o'ercast, Sit joyless on the ground and fast. Their  
 lovely chaplets dry and dead,  
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Their courts unswept, with dust o'erspread, The temples of the Gods to-  
 day No more look beautiful and gay. Neglected stands each holy shrine, Each  
 image of a Lord divine. No shop where flowery wreaths are sold Is bright  
 and busy as of old. The women and the men I mark Absorbed in fancies dull  
 and dark, Their gloomy eyes with tears bedewed, A poor afflicted  
 multitude.'

His mind oppressed with woe and dread,  
 Thus Bharat to his driver said, Viewed the dire signs Ayodhyá showed, And  
 onward to the palace rode. Footnotes

178:1 'The S'atadrú, 'the hundred-channeled' --the  
 Zaradrus of Ptolemy, Hesydrus of Pliny--is the Sutlej.'  
 WILSON'S Vishnu Purána, Vol. II. p. 130.

178:2 The Sarasvatí or Sursooty is a tributary of the  
 Caggar or Guggur in Sirhind.

CANTO LXXII.: BHARAT'S INQUIRY.

He entered in, he looked around,  
Nor in the house his father found;Then to his mother's dwelling, bentTo  
see her face, he quickly went.She saw her son, so long away,Returning  
after many a day,And from her golden seat in joySprung forward to her  
darling boy.Within the bower, no longer bright,Came Bharat lover of the  
right,And bending with observance sweetClasped his dear mother's lovely  
feet.Long kisses on his brow she pressed,And held her hero to her  
breast,Then fondly drew him to her knees,And questioned him in words like  
these:'How many nights have fled, since thouLefttest thy grandsire's home,  
till now?By flying steeds so swiftly borne,Art thou not weak and travel-  
worn?How fares the king my father, tell:Is Yudhájit thine uncle well?And  
now, my son, at length declareThe pleasure of the visit there.'Thus to  
the offspring of the king

She spake with tender questioning,And to his mother made replyYoung  
Bharat of the lotus eye:'The seventh night has come and fledSince from my  
grandsire's home I sped:My mother's sire is well, and he,Yudhájit, from  
all trouble free.The gold and every precious thingPresented by the  
conqueror king,The slower guards behind convey:I left them weary on the  
way.Urged by the men my father sent,My hasty course I hither bent:Now, I  
implore, an answer deign,And all I wish to know, explain.

Unoccupied I now behold

This couch of thine adorned with gold,And each of King Ikshváku's  
raceAppears with dark and gloomy face.The king is aye, my mother  
dear,Most constant in his visits here.To meet my sire I sought this  
spot:How is it that I find him not?I long to clasp my father's feet:Say  
where he lingers, I entreat.Perchance the monarch may be seenWhere dwells  
Kaus'alyá, eldest queen.'

His father's fate, from him concealed.

Kaikeyí to her son revealed:Told as glad news the story sad,For lust of  
sway had made her mad:'Thy father, O my darling, know,Has gone the way  
all life must go:Devout and famed, of lofty thought,In whom the good  
their refuge sought.'

When Bharat pious, pure, and true,

Heard the sad words which pierced him through,Grieved for the sire he  
loved so wellProstrate upon the ground he fell:Down fell the strong-armed  
hero, highTossing his arms, and a sad cry,'Ah, woe is me, unhappy,  
slain!'Burst from his lips again, again,Afflicted for his father's fateBy  
grief's intolerable weight,With every sense amazed and cowedThe splendid  
hero wailed aloud:'Ah me, my royal father's bedOf old a gentle radiance  
shed,Like the pure sky when clouds are past,And the moon's light is o'er  
it cast:Ah, of its wisest lord bereft,It shows to-day faint radiance  
left,As when the moon has left the sky.

Or mighty Ocean's depths are dry.'

With choking sobs, with many a tear.

Pierced to the heart with grief sincere,The best of conquerors poured his  
sighs,And with his robe veiled face and eyes.Kaikeyí saw him fallen  
there,Godlike, afflicted, in despair,Used every art to move him  
thence,And tried him thus with eloquence:'Arise, arise, my dearest;  
whyWilt thou, famed Prince, so lowly lie?Not by such grief as this are  
movedGood men like thee, by all approved.The earth thy father nobly  
swayed,And rites to Heaven he duly paid.At length his race of life was  
run:Thou shouldst not mourn for him, my son.'

Long on the ground he wept, and rolled

From side to side, still unconsolated,And then, with bitter grief  
oppressed,His mother with those words addressed:

'This joyful hope my bosom fed  
When from my grandsire's halls I sped--'The  
king will throne his eldest son,  
And sacrifice, as should be done.'But all is changed, my hope was  
vain,And this sad heart is rent in twain,For my dear father's face I  
miss,Who ever sought his loved ones' bliss.But in my absence, mother,  
say,What sickness took my sire away?Ah, happy Ráma, happy theyAllowed his  
funeral rites to pay!The glorious monarch has not learnedThat I his  
darling have returned,Or quickly had he hither sped,And pressed his  
kisses on my head.Where is that hand whose gentle touch,Most soft and  
kind I loved so much,The hand that loved to brush awayThe dust that on  
his darling lay?Quick, bear the news to Ráma's ear;Tell the great chief  
that I am here:Brother, and sire, and friend, and allIs he, and I his  
trusty thrall,For noble hearts, to virtue true,Their sires in elder  
brothers view.To clasp his feet I fain would bow:He is my hope and refuge  
now.What said my glorious sire, who knewVirtue and vice, so brave and  
true?Firm in his vows, dear lady, say,What said he ere he passed away?  
What was his rede to me? I craveTo hear the last advice he gave.'  
Thus closely questioned by the youth,  
Kaikeyi spoke the mournful truth:'The high-souled monarch wept and  
sighed,For Ráma, Sítá, Lakshman, cried,Then, best of all who go to  
bliss,Passed to the world which follows this.'Ah, blessed are the people  
whoShall Ráma and his Sítá view, And Lakshman of the mighty arm,Returning  
free from scathe and harm.'Such were the words, the last of all,Thy  
father, ere he died, let fall,By Fate and Death's dread coils enwound,As  
some great elephant is bound.'  
He heard, yet deeper in despair,  
Her lips this double woe declare,And with sad brow that showed his  
painQuestioned his mother thus again:'But where is he, of virtue  
tried,Who fills Kaus'alyá's heart with pride,Where is the noble Ráma?  
whereIs Lakshman brave, and Sítá fair?'

Thus pressed, the queen began to tellThe story as each thing befell,  
And gave her son in words like these,The mournful news she meant to  
please:'The prince is gone in hermit dressTo Dandak's mighty  
wilderness,And Lakshman brave and Sítá shareThe wanderings of the exile  
there.'

Then Bharat's soul with fear was stirred  
Lest Ráma from the right had erred,And jealous for ancestral fame,He put  
this question to the dame:'Has Ráma grasped with lawless holdA Bráhma's  
house, or land, or gold?Has Ráma harmed with ill intentSome poor or  
wealthy innocent?Was Ráma, faithless to his vows,Enamoured of anothers  
spouse?Why was he sent to Dandak's wild,Like one who kills an unborn  
child?'

He questioned thus: and she began  
To tell her deeds and crafty plan.Deceitful-hearted, fond, and blindAs is  
the way of womankind:'No Bráhma's wealth has Ráma seized,No dame his  
wandering fancy pleased;His very eyes he ne'er allowsTo gaze upon a  
neighbour's spouse,But when I heard the monarch planned  
To give the realm to Ráma's hand,I prayed that Ráma hence might flee,And  
claimed the throne, my son, for thee.The king maintained the name he  
bare,And did according to my prayer.And Ráma, with his brother, sent,And  
Sítá, forth to banishment.When his dear son was seen no more,The lord of  
earth was troubled sore:Too feeble with his grief to strive,He joined the  
elemental Five.Up then, most dutiful! maintainThe royal state, arise, and  
reign.For thee, my darling son, for theeAll this was planned and wrought  
by me.Come, cast thy grief and pain aside,With manly courage  
fortified.This town and realm are all thine own,And fear and grief are  
here unknown.Come, with Vas'ishtha's guiding aid, And priests in ritual  
skilledLet the king's funeral dues be paid, And every claim  
fulfilled.Perform his obsequies with all That suits his rank and  
worth,Then give the mandate to install Thyself as lord of earth.'Next:



Canto LXXIII.: Kaikeyí Reproached. Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous  
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CANTO LXXIII.: KAIKEYÍ REPROACHED.

But when he heard the queen relate

His brothers' doom, his father's fate, Thus Bharat to his mother said  
With burning grief disquieted:

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'Alas, what boots it now to reign, Struck down by grief and well-nigh  
slain? Ah, both are gone, my sire, and he Who was a second sire to me. Grief  
upon grief thy hand has made, And salt upon gashes laid: For my dear sire  
has died through thee, And Ráma roams a devotee. Thou camest like the night  
of Fate This royal house to devastate. Unwitting ill, my hapless sire Placed  
in his bosom coals of fire, And through thy crimes his death he met, O thou  
whose heart on sin is set. Shame of thy house! thy senseless deed Has reft  
all joy from Raghu's seed. The truthful monarch, dear to fame, Received  
thee as his wedded dame,

And by thy act to misery doomed Has died by flames of grief  
consumed. Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá too The coming of my mother rue. And if they  
live oppressed by woe, For their dear sons their sad tears flow. Was he not  
ever good and kind, -- That hero of the duteous mind? Skilled in all filial  
duties, he As a dear mother treated thee. Kaus'alyá too, the eldest  
queen, Who far foresees with insight keen, Did she not ever show thee all A  
sister's love at duty's call? And hast thou from the kingdom chased Her  
son, with bark around his waist, To the wild wood, to dwell therein, And  
dost not sorrow for thy sin? The love bare to Raghu's son Thou knewest not,  
ambitious one, If thou hast wrought this impious deed For royal sway, in  
lawless greed. With him and Lakshman far away, What power have I the realm  
to sway? What hope will fire my bosom when I see no more these lords of  
men? The holy king who loved the right Relied on Ráma's power and might, His  
guardian and his glory, so

(illegible) Meru in his woods below. How can I bear, a steer untrained, The  
load his mightier strength sustained? What power have I to brook alone This  
weight on feeble shoulders thrown? For if the needful power were bought By  
strength of mind and brooding thought, No triumph shall attend the dame Who  
dooms her son to lasting shame. Now should no doubt that son prevent From  
quitting thee on evil bent. But Ráma's love o'erpowers my will, Who holds  
thee as his mother still. Whence did the thought, O thou whose eyes Are  
turned to sinful deeds, arise -- A plan our ancient sires would hate, O  
fallen from thy virtuous state? For in the line from which we spring The  
eldest is anointed king: No monarchs from the rule decline, And, least of  
all. Ikshváku's line. Our holy sires, to virtue true, Upon our race a  
lustre threw, But with subversive frenzy thou Hast marred our lineal honour  
now, Of lofty birth, a noble line Of previous kings is also thine: Then  
whence this hated folly? whence This sudden change that steals thy sense?  
Thou shalt not gain thine impious will, O thou whose thoughts are bent on  
ill, Thou from whose guilty hand descend These sinful blows my life to  
end. Now to the forest will I go, Thy cherished plans to overthrow, And  
bring my brother, free from stain, His people's darling, home again, And  
Ráma, when again he turns, Whose glory like a beacon burns, In me a  
faithful slave shall find To serve him with contented mind.'

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CANTO LXXIV.: BHARAT'S LAMEST.

When Bharat's anger-sharpened tongue

Reproaches on the queen had flung, Again, with mighty rage possessed, The  
guilty dame he thus addressed: 'Flee, cruel, wicked sinner, flee, Let not  
this kingdom harbour thee. Thou who hast thrown all right aside, Ween thou  
for me when I have died. Canst thou one charge against the king, Or the  
most duteous Ráma bring? The one thy sin to death has sent, The other  
chased to banishment. Our line's destroyer, sin defiled Like one who kills

an unborn child, Ne'er with thy lord in heaven to dwell, Thy portion shall  
be down in hell Because thy hand, that stayed for naught, This awful  
wickedness has wrought, And ruined him whom all held dear, My bosom too is  
stirred with fear. My father by thy sin is dead, And Ráma to the wood is  
fled; And of thy deed I bear the stain, And fameless in the world  
remain. Ambitious, evil-souled. in show  
My mother, yet my direst foe. My throning ne'er thine eyes shall bless, Thy  
husband's wicked murderess.

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Thou art not As'vapati's child, That righteous king most sage and mild, But  
thou wast born a fiend, a foe My father's house to overthrow. Thou who hast  
made Kaus'alyá, pure, Gentle, affectionate, endure The loss of him who was  
her bliss--What worlds await thee, Queen, for this? Was it not patent to  
thy sense That Ráma was his friends' defence, Kaus'alyá's own true child  
most dear, The eldest and his father's peer? Men in the son not only  
trace The father's figure, form, and face, But in his heart they also  
find The offspring of the father's mind; And hence, though dear their  
kinsmen are, To mothers sons are dearer far. There goes an ancient legend  
how Good Surabhi, the God-loved cow, Saw two of her dear children  
strain, Drawing a plough and faint with pain. She saw them on the earth  
outworn,

Toiling till noon from early morn, And as she viewed her children's woe, A  
flood of tears began to flow. As through the air beneath her swept The Lord  
of Gods, the drops she wept, Fine, laden with delicious smell, Upon his  
heavenly body fell, And Indra lifted up his eyes And saw her standing in  
the skies, Afflicted with her sorrow's weight, Sad, weeping, all  
disconsolate. The Lord of Gods in anxious mood Thus spoke in suppliant  
attitude: 'No fear disturbs our rest, and how Comes this great dread upon  
thee now? Whence can this woe upon thee fall, Say, gentle one who lovest  
all?'

Thus spake the God who rules the skies,  
Indra, the Lord supremely wise; And gentle Surabhi, well learned In  
eloquence, this speech returned: 'Not thine the fault, great God, not  
thine And guiltless are the Lords divine: I mourn two children faint with  
toil, Labouring hard in stubborn soil, Wasted and sad I see them now, While  
the sun beats on neck and brow, Still goaded by the cruel hind,--  
No pity in his savage mind. O Indra, from this body sprang These children,  
worn with many a pang. For this sad sight I mourn, for none Is to the  
mother like her son.'

He saw her weep whose offspring feed  
In thousands over hill and mead, And knew that in a mother's eye Naught  
with a son, for love, can vie. He deemed her, when the tears that came From  
her sad eyes bedewed his frame, Laden with their celestial scent, Of living  
things most excellent, If she these tears of sorrow shed Who many a  
thousand children bred, Think what a life of woe is left Kaus'alyá, of her  
Ráma reft. An only son was hers and she Is rendered childless now by  
thee. Here and hereafter, for thy crime, Woe is thy lot through endless  
time. And now, O Queen, without delay, With all due honour will I pay Both  
to my brother and my sire The rites their several fates require. Back to  
Ayodhyá will I bring The long-armed chief, her lord and king, And to the  
wood myself betake

Where hermit saints their dwelling make. For, sinner both in deed and  
thought! This hideous crime which thou hast wrought I cannot bear, or live  
to see The people's sad eyes bent on me. Begone, to Dandak wood retire, Or  
cast thy body to the fire, Or bind around thy neck the rope: No other  
refuge mayst thou hope. When Ráma, lord of valour true, Has gained the  
earth, his right and due, Then, free from duty's binding debt, My vanished  
sin shall I forget.'

Thus like an elephant forced to brook

The goading of the driver's hook, Quick panting like a serpent maimed, He  
fell to earth with rage inflamed.

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CANTO LXXV.: THE ABJURATION.

A while he lay: he rose at length,  
And slowly gathering sense and strength, With angry eyes which tears  
bedewed, The miserable queen he viewed, And spake with keen reproach to  
her Before each lord and minister: 'No lust have I for kingly sway, My  
mother I no more obey: Naught of this consecration knew Which Das'aratha  
kept in view, I with S'atrughna all the time Was dwelling in a distant  
clime: I knew of Ráma's exile naught, That hero of the noble thought: I knew  
not how fair Sítá went, And Lakshman, forth to banishment.'  
Thus high-souled Bharat, mid the crowd,  
Lifted his voice and cried aloud.

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Kaus'alyá heard, she raised her head. And quickly to Sumitrá said:  
'Bharat, Kaikeyí's son, is here, -- Hers whose fell deeds I loathe and  
fear: That youth of foresight keen I fain Would meet and see his face  
again.' Thus to Sumitrá spake the dame, And straight to Bharat's presence  
came With altered mien, neglected dress, Trembling and faint with sore  
distress. Bharat, S'atrughna by his side, To meet her, toward her palace  
hied. And when the royal dame they viewed Distressed with dire  
solicitude, Sad, fallen senseless on the ground, About her neck their arms  
they wound. The noble matron prostrate there, Embraced, with tears, the  
weeping pair, And with her load of grief oppressed, To Bharat then these  
words addressed: 'Now all is thine, without a foe, This realm for which  
thou longest so. Ah, soon Kaikeyí's ruthless hand Has won the empire of the  
land, And made my guiltless Ráma flee Dressed like some lonely  
devotee. Herein what profit has the queen, Whose eye delights in havoc,  
seen? Me also, me 'twere surely good To banish to the distant wood, To dwell  
amid the shades that hold

My famous son with limbs like gold. Nay, with the sacred fire to  
guide, Will I, Sumitrá by my side, Myself to the drear wood repair And seek  
the son of Raghu there. This land which rice and golden corn And wealth of  
every kind adorn, Car, elephant, and steed, and gem, -- She makes thee lord  
of it and them.'

With taunts like these her bitter tongue

The heart of blameless Bharat wrung And direr pangs his bosom tore Than  
when the lancet probes a sore. With troubled senses all astray Prone at her  
feet he fell and lay. With loud lament a while he plained, And slowly  
strength and sense regained. With suppliant hand to hand applied He turned  
to her who wept and sighed, And thus bespake the queen, whose breast With  
sundry woes was sore distressed: 'Why these reproaches, noble dame? I,  
knowing naught, am free from blame. Thou knowest well what love was  
mine For Ráma, chief of Raghu's line. O, never be his darkened mind To  
Scripture's guiding lore inclined, By whose consent the prince who led  
The good, the truthful hero, fled. May he obey the vilest lord, Offend the  
sun with act abhorred,

1

And strike a sleeping cow, who lent His voice to Ráma's banishment. May the  
good king who all befriends, And, like his sons, the people tends, Be  
wronged by him who gave consent To noble Ráma's banishment. On him that  
king's injustice fall, Who takes, as lord, a sixth of all, Nor guards,  
neglectful of his trust, His people, as a ruler must. The crime of those  
who swear to fee, At holy rites, some devotee, And then the promised gift  
deny, Be his who willed the prince should fly, When weapons clash and  
heroes bleed, With elephant and harnessed steed, Ne'er, like the good, be  
his to fight Whose heart allowed the prince's flight. Though taught with  
care by one expert May he the Veda's text pervert, With impious mind on

evil bent, Whose voice approved the banishment. May he with traitor lips  
reveal what'er he promised to conceal, And bruit abroad his friend's  
offence, Betrayed by generous confidence.

No wife of equal lineage born The wretch's joyless home adorn: Ne'er may he  
do one virtuous deed, And dying see no child succeed. When in the battle's  
awful day Fierce warriors stand in dread array, Let the base coward turn  
and fly, And smitten by the foeman, die. Long may he wander, rags his  
wear, Doomed in his hand a skull to bear, And like an idiot beg his  
bread, Who gave consent when Rama fled. His sin who holy rites  
forgets, Asleep when shows the sun and sets, A load upon his soul shall  
lie Whose will allowed the prince to fly. His sin who loves his Master's  
dame, His, kindler of destructive flame. His who betrays his trusting  
friend Shall, mingled all, on him descend. By him no reverence due be  
paid To blessed God or parted shade: May sire and mother's sacred name In  
vain from him obedience claim. Ne'er may he go where dwell the good, Nor  
win their fame and neighbourhood, But lose all hopes of bliss to day, Who  
willed the prince should flee away. May he deceive the poor and weak  
Who look to him and comfort seek,

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Betray the suppliants who complain, And make the hopeful hope in vain. Long  
may his wife his kiss expect, And pine away in cold neglect. May he his  
lawful love despise, And turn on other dames his eyes, Fool, on forbidden  
joys intent, Whose will allowed the banishment. His sin who deadly poison  
throws To spoil the water as it flows, Lay on the wretch its burden  
dread Who gave consent when Rama fled.'

1

Thus with his words he undeceived Kaus'alyá's troubled heart, who  
grieved For son and husband reft away; Then prostrate on the ground he  
lay. Him as he lay half-senseless there, Freed by the mighty oaths he  
swore, Kaus'alyá, by her woe distressed, With melancholy words  
addressed: 'Anew, my son, this sorrow springs To rend my heart with keener  
stings: These awful oaths which thou hast sworn My breast with double grief  
have torn.

Thy soul, and faithful Lakshman's too, Are still, thank Heaven! to virtue  
true. True to thy promise, thou shalt gain The mansions which the good  
obtain.'

Then to her breast that youth she drew,

Whose sweet fraternal love she knew, And there in strict embraces held The  
hero, as her tears outwelled. And Bharat's heart grew sick and faint With  
grief and oft-renewed complaint, And all his senses were distraught By the  
great woe that in him wrought. Thus he lay and still bewailed With sighs  
and loud lament Till all his strength and reason failed, The hours of  
night were spent.

Footnotes

184:1 S'úryamcha pratimehata, adversus solem mingat.

An offence expressly forbidden by the Laws of Manu.

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CANTO LXXVI.: THE FUNERAL

The saint Vas'ishtha, best of all

Whose words with moving wisdom fall, Bharat, Kaikeyí's son, addressed, Whom  
burning \*?fires of grief distressed: 'O Prince, whose fame is widely  
spread, Enough of grief: be comforted. The time is come: arise, and lay Upon  
the pyre the monarch's clay.'

He heard the words Vas'ishtha spoke,

And slumbering resolution woke. Then skilled in all the laws declare, He  
bade his friends the rites prepare They raised, the body from the oil, And  
placed it, dripping, on the soil; Then laid it on a bed, whereon Wrought  
gold and precious jewels shone. There, pallor o'er his features spread, The  
monarch, as in sleep, lay dead. Then Bharat sought his father's side, And

lifted up his voice and cried: 'O King, and has thy heart designed  
To part and leave thy son behind? Make Ráma flee, who loves the right,  
And Lakshman of the arm of might?

Whither, great Monarch, wilt thou go And leave this people in their  
woe. Mourning their hero, wild with grief, Of Ráma reft, their lion  
chief? Ah, who will guard the people well Who in Ayodhyá's city dwell,  
When thou, my sire, hast sought the sky, And Ráma has been forced to fly?  
In widowed woe, bereft of thee, The land no more is fair to \*see\*  
The city, to my aching sight, Is gloomy as a moonless night.'

Thus, with o'erwhelming sorrow pained,  
Sad Bharat by the bed complained: And thus Vas'ishtha, holy sage,  
Spoke his deep anguish to assuage: 'O Lord of men, no longer stay;  
The last remaining duties pay: Haste, mighty-armed, as I advise,  
The funeral rites to solemnize.'

And Bharat heard Vas'ishtha's rede  
With due attention and agreed. He summoned straight from every  
side Chaplain, and priest, and holy guide. The sacred fires he bade them  
bring forth from the ohapel of the king, Wherein the priests in order due,  
And ministers, the offerings threw, Distraught in mind, with sob and  
tear, They laid the body on a bier, And servants, while their eyes brimmed  
o'er The monarch from the palace bore, Another band of mourners led  
The long procession of the dead: Rich garments in the way they cast,  
And gold and silver, as they passed, Then other hands the corse bedewed  
With fragrant juices that exude From sandal, cedar, aloe, pine,  
And every perfume rare and fine. Then priestly hands the mighty dead  
Upon the pyre deposited. The sacred fires they tended next,  
And muttered low each funeral text; And priestly singers who rehearse

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The S'aman 1 sang their holy verse.

Forth from the town in litters came, Or chariots, many a royal dame,  
And honoured so the funeral ground, With aged followers ringed around.  
With steps in inverse order bent,

2

The priests in sad procession went Around the monarch's burning pyre  
Who well had nursed each sacred fire: With Queen Kaus'alyá and the  
rest, Their tender hearts with woe distressed, The voice of women, shrill  
and clear As screaming curlews, smote the ear, As from a thousand voices  
rose The shriek that tells of woman's woes. Then weeping, faint, with loud  
lament, Down Sarjú's shelving bank they went. There standing on the  
river side With Bharat, priest, and peer, Their lips the women  
purified With water fresh and clear. Returning to the royal town,  
Their eyes with tear-drops filled, Ten days on earth they laid them  
down, And wept till grief was stilled.

Footnotes

185:1 Bharat does not intend these curses for any  
particular person: he merely wishes to prove his own  
innocence by invoking them on his own head if he had any share in  
banishing Ráma. Next: Canto LXXVII.: The Gathering of The Ashes. Sacred  
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CANTO LXXVII.: THE GATHERING OF

THE ASHES.

The tenth day passed: the prince again  
Was free from every legal stain. Ha bade them on the twelfth the  
great Remaining honour celebrate. Much gold he gave, and gems, and food,  
To all the Bráhma multitude, And goats whose hair was white and fine,  
And many a thousand head of kine: Slaves, men and damsels, he bestowed,  
And many a car and fair abode: Such gifts he gave the Bráhma race  
His father's obsequies to grace. Then when the morning's earliest ray  
Appeared upon the thirteenth day, Again the hero wept and sighed  
Distraught and sorrow-stupefied; Drew, sobbing in his anguish, near,  
The last remaining debt to

clear, And at the bottom of the pyre, He thus bespake his royal sire: 'O father, hast thou left me so, Deserted in my friendless woe, When he to whom the charge was given  
To keep me, to the wood is driven? Her only son is forced away Who was his helpless mother's stay:  
Ah, whither, father, art thou fled;  
Leaving the queen un comforted?'  
He looked upon the pile where lay  
The bones half-burnt and ashes grey, And uttering a piteous moan, Gave way, by anguish overthrown. Then as his tears began to well, Prostrate to earth the hero fell; So from its seat the staff they drag, And cast to earth some glorious flag. The ministers approached again The prince whom rites had freed from stain: So when Yayāti fell, each seer, In pity for his fate, drew near. S'atrughna saw him lying low O'erwhelmed beneath the crush of woe, And as upon the king he thought, He fell upon the earth distraught. When to his loving memory came Those noble gifts, that kingly frame, He sorrowed, by his woe distressed, As one by frenzied rage possessed: 'Ah me, this surging sea of woe Has drowned us with its overflow:  
The source is Manthará, dire and dark, Kaikeyí is the ravening shark: And the great boons the monarch gave Lend conquering might to every wave. Ah, whither wilt thou go, and leave Thy Bharat in his woe to grieve, Whom ever 'twas thy greatest joy To fondle as a tender boy? Didst thou not give with thoughtful care Our food, our drink, our robes to wear? Whose love will now for us provide, When thou, our king and sire, hast died? At such a time bereft, forlorn, Why is not earth in sunder torn, Missing her monarch's firm control, His love of right, his lofty soul? Ah me, for Ráma roams afar, My sire is where the Blessed are; How can I live deserted? I Will pass into the fire and die. Abandoned thus, I will not brook Upon Ayodhyá's town to look, Once guarded by Ikshváku's race: The wood shall be my dwelling place.'  
Then when the princes' mournful train  
Heard the sad brothers thus complain, And saw their misery, at the view Their grief burst wilder out anew.  
Faint with lamenting, sad and worn, Each like a bull with broken horn, The brothers in their wild despair Lay rolling, mad with misery, there. Then old Vas'ishtha good and true, Their father's priest, all lore who knew, Raised weeping Bharat on his feet, And thus bespake with counsel meet: 'Twelve days, my lord, have past away

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Since flames consumed thy father's clay: Delay no more: as rules ordain, Gather what bones may yet remain. Three constant pairs are ever found To hem all mortal creatures round:

1

Then mourn not thus, O Prince, for none Their close companionship may shun.' Sumantra bade S'atrughna rise, And soothed his soul with counsel wise, And skilled in truth, his hearer taught How all things are and come to naught, When rose each hero from the ground, A lion lord of men, renowned, He showed like Indra's flag,

2 whereon

Fierce rains have dashed and suns have shone. They wiped their red and weeping eyes, And gently made their sad replies:

Then, urged to haste, the royal pair Performed the rites that claimed their care.

Footnotes

186:1 The Sáma-veda, the hymns of which are chanted aloud.

186:2 Walking from right to left.

Next: Canto LXXVIII.: Manthará Punished. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index  
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CANTO LXXVIII.: MANTHARÁ PUNISHED.

Satrughna thus to Bharat spake

Who longed the forest road to take: 'He who in woe was wont to  
give strength to himself and all that live--Dear Ráma, true and pure in  
heart, is banished by a woman's art. Yet here was Lakshman, brave and  
strong, could not his might prevent the wrong? Could not his arm the king  
restrain, or make the banished free again? One loving right and fearing  
crime had checked the monarch's sin in time, when, vassal of a woman's  
will, his feet approached the path of ill.' While Lakshman's younger  
brother, dread S'atrughna, thus to Bharat said, came to the fronting door,  
arrayed in glittering robes, the hump-back maid. There she, with sandal-oil  
besmeared, in garments meet for queens appeared: and lustre to her form was  
lent by many a gem and ornament. She girdled with her brodered zone, and  
many a chain about her thrown, showed like a female monkey round  
whose body many a string is bound. When on that cause of evil fell the  
quick eye of the sentinel,

He grasped her in his ruthless hold,

And hastening in, S'atrughna told: 'Here is the wicked pest,' he  
cried, 'through whom the king thy father died, and Ráma wanders in the  
wood: do with her as thou deemest good.' The warder spoke: and every  
word S'atrughna's breast to fury stirred: he called the servants all and  
each. And spake in wrath his hasty speech: 'This is the wretch my sire who  
slew, and misery on my brothers drew: let her this day obtain the meed, vile  
sinner, of her cruel deed.' He spake; and moved by fury laid his mighty  
hand upon the maid, who as her fellows ringed her round. Made with her  
cries the hall resound, soon as the gathered women viewed S'atrughna in his  
angry mood, their hearts disturbed by sudden dread, they turned and from  
his presence fled. 'His rage,' they cried, 'on us will fall, and ruthless,  
he will slay us all. Come, to Kaus'alyá let us flee:

Our hope, our sure defence is she, approved by all, of virtuous  
mind, compassionate, and good, and kind.' His eyes with burning wrath  
aglow, S'atrughna, shatterer of the foe, dragged on the ground the hump-  
back maid who shrieked aloud and screamed for aid. This way and that with  
no remorse he dragged her with resistless force, and chains and glittering  
trinkets burst lay here and there with gems dispersed, till like the sky of  
Autumn shone the palace floor they sparkled on. The lord of men, supremely  
strong, haled in his rage the wretch along: where Queen Kaikeyí dwelt he  
came, and sternly then addressed the dame. Deep in her heart Kaikeyí  
felt the stabs his keen reproaches dealt, and of S'atrughna's ire afraid, to  
Bharat flew and cried for aid. He looked and saw the prince inflamed with  
burning rage, and thus exclaimed: 'Forgive! thine angry arm restrain: a  
woman never may be slain, my hand Kaikeyí's blood would spill, the sinner  
ever bent on ill, but Ráma, long in duty tried, would hate the impious  
matricide:

And if he knew thy vengeful blade had slaughtered e'en this hump-back  
maid, never again, be sure, would he speak friendly word to thee or me." When Bharat's speech S'atrughna heard he calmed the rage his breast that  
stirred,

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Releasing from her dire constraint the trembling wretch with terror  
faint. Then to Kaikeyí's feet she crept, and prostrate in her misery  
wept. Kaikeyí on the hump-back gazed, and saw her weep and gasp. Still  
quivering, with her senses dazed, from fierce S'atrughna's grasp. With  
gentle words of pity she assuaged her wild despair. Even as a tender hand  
might free a curlew from the snare.

Footnotes

187:1 Birth and death, pleasure and pain, loss and gain. 187:2 Erected  
upon a tree or high staff in honour of  
Indra.

Next: Canto LXXIX.: Bharat's Commands.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index  
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CANTO LXXIX.: BHARAT'S COMMANDS.

Now when the sun's returning ray  
Had ushered in the fourteenth day,The gathered peers of state addressedTo  
Bharat's ear their new request:'Our lord to heaven has parted hence,Long  
served with deepest reverence;Ráma, the eldest, far from home,And  
Lakshman, in the forest roam.O Prince, of mighty fame, be thouOur  
guardian and our monarch now,Lest secret plot or foeman's hateAssail our  
unprotected stateWith longing eyes, O Lord of men,To thee look friend and  
citizen,And ready is each sacred thingTo consecrate our chosen king.Come,  
Bharat, and accept thine ownAncient hereditary throne.Thee let the  
priests this day installAs monarch to preserve us all.' Around the  
sacred gear he bentHis circling footsteps reverent,And, firm to vows he  
would not break,Thus to the gathered people spake:'The eldest son is ever  
king:

So rules the house from which we spring:Nor should ye, Lords, like men  
unwise,With words like these to wrong advise.Ráma is eldest born, and  
heThe ruler of the land shall be.Now to the woods will I repair,Five  
years and nine to lodge me there.Assemble straight a mighty force,Cars,  
elephants, and foot and horse,For I will follow on his trackAnd bring my  
eldest brother back.Whate'er the rites of throning needPlaced on a car  
the way shall lead:The sacred vessels I will takeTo the wild wood for  
Ráma's sake,I o'er the lion prince's headThe sanctifying balm will  
shed,And bring him, as the fire they bringForth from the shrine, with  
triumphing.Nor will I let my mother's greedIn this her cherished aim  
succeed:In pathless wilds will I remain,And Ráma here as king shall  
reign.To make the rough ways smooth and clearSend workman out and  
pioneer:Let skilful men attend besideOur way through pathless spots to  
guide.'As thus the royal Bharat spake,Ordaining all for Ráma's sake,  
The audience gave with one accordAuspicious answer to their lord:'Be  
royal Fortune aye benignTo thee for this good speech of thine,Who wishest  
still thine elder's handTo rule with kingly sway the land.' Their  
glorious speech, their favouring cries      Made his proud bosom swell:  
And from the prince's noble eyes      The tears of rapture fell.

1

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CANTO LXXX.: THE WAY PREPARED.

All they who knew the joiner's art,  
Or distant ground in every part;Each busied in his several trade,To work  
machines or ply the spade;Deft workmen skilled to frame the wheel,Or with  
the ponderous engine deal;Guides of the way, and craftsmen skilled,To  
sink the well, make bricks, and build;And those whose hands the tree  
could hew,And work with slips of cut bamboo,Went forward, and to guide  
them, theyWhose eyes before had seen the way.Then onward in triumphant  
moodWent all the mighty multitude.Like the great sea whose waves leap  
highWhen the full moon is in the sky.Then, in his proper duty  
skilled,Each joined him to his several guild,And onward in advance they  
wentWith every tool and implement.Where bush and tangled creeper layWith  
trenchant steel they made the way;They felled each stump, removed each  
stone,And many a tree was overthrown.In other spots, on desert lands,  
Tall trees were reared by busy hands.Where'er the line of road they  
took,They plied the hatchet, axe, and hook.

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Others, with all their strength applied,Cast vigorous plants and shrubs  
aside,In shelving valleys rooted deep,And levelled every dale and  
steep.Each pit and hole that stopped the wayThey filled with stones, and  
mud, and clay.And all the ground that rose and fellWith busy care was  
levelled well.They bridged ravines with ceaseless toil,And pounded fine



the flinty soil. Now here, now there, to right and left, A passage through the ground they cleft, And soon the rushing flood was led Abundant through the new-cut bed, Which by the running stream supplied With ocean's boundless waters vied. In dry and thirsty spots they sank Full many a well and ample tank, And altars round about them placed To deck the station in the waste. With well-wrought plaster smoothly spread, With bloomy trees that rose o'erhead, With banners waving in the air, And wild birds singing here and there, With fragrant sandal-water wet, With many a flower beside it set, Like the Gods' heavenly pathway showed That mighty host's imperial road. Deft workmen, chosen for their skill To do the high-souled Bharat's will, In every pleasant spot where grew Trees of sweet fruit and fair to view, As he commanded, toiled to grace With all delights his camping-place. And they who read the stars, and well Each lucky sign and hour could tell, Raised carefully the tented shade Wherein high-minded Bharat stayed. With ample space of level ground, With broad deep moat encompassed round; Like Mandar in his towering pride, With streets that ran from side to side; Enwreathed with many a palace tall Surrounded by its noble wall; With roads by skilful workmen made. Where many a glorious banner played; With stately mansions, where the dove Sat nestling in her cote above. Rising aloft supremely fair Like heavenly cars that float in air, Each camp in beauty and in bliss Matched Indra's own metropolis.

As shines the heaven on some fair night, With moon and constellations filled. The prince's royal road was bright, Adorned by art of workmen skilled.

Footnotes

188:1 I follow in this stanza the Bombay edition in preference to Schlegel's which gives the tears of joy to the courtiers.

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CANTO LXXXI.: THE ASSEMBLY.

Ere yet the dawn had ushered in

The day should see the march begin, Herald and bard who rightly knew Each nice degree of honour due, Their loud auspicious voices raised. And royal Bharat blessed and praised. With sticks of gold the drum they smote, Which thundered out its deafening note, Blew loud the sounding shell, and blent Each high and low-toned instrument. The mingled sound of drum and horn Through all the air was quickly borne, And as in Bharat's ear it rang, Gave the sad prince another pang. Then Bharat starting from repose, Stilled the glad sounds that round him rose, 'I am not king--no more mistake: 'Then to S'atrughna thus he spake: 'O see what general wrongs succeed Sprung from Kaikeyi's evil deed! The king my sire has died and thrown Fresh miseries on me alone. The royal bliss, on duty based. Which our just high-souled father graced, Wanders in doubt and sore distress Like a tossed vessel rudderless. And he who was our lordly stay Roams in the forest far away, Expelled by this my mother, who To duty's law is most untrue.' As royal Bharat thus gave vent To bitter grief in wild lament, Gazing upon his face the crowd Of pitying women wept aloud. His lamentation scarce was o'er, When Saint Vas'ishtha, skilled in lore Of royal duty, dear to fame, To join the great assembly came. Girt by disciples ever true Still nearer to that hall he drew, Resplendent, heavenly to behold, Adorned with wealth of gems and gold: E'en so a man in duty tried Draws near to meet his virtuous bride. He reached his golden seat o'erlaid With coverlet of rich brocade. There sat, in all the Vedas read, And called the messengers, and said: 'Go forth, let Bráhma, Warrior, peer, And every captain gather here: Let all attentive hither throng: Go, hasten: we delay too long. S'atrughna, glorious Bharat bring, The noble children of the king, 1

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Yudhájit 1 and Sumantra, all

The truthful and the virtuous call,'

He ended: soon a mighty soundOf thickening tumult rose around,As to the hall they bent their courseWith car, and elephant, and horse,The people all with glad acclaimWelcomed Prince Bharat as he came:E'en as they loved their king to greet,Or as the Gods Lord Indra  
2 meet.

The vast assembly shone as fair With Bharat's kingly face As Das'aratha's self were there To glorify the place. It gleamed like some unruffled lake Where monsters huge of mould With many a snake their pastime take O'er shells, sand, gems, and gold.

Footnotes

189:1 The commentator says 'S'atrughna accompanied by the other sons of the king.'

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CANTO LXXXII.: THE DEPARTURE.

The prudent prince the assembly viewed

Thronged with its noble multitude,Resplendent as a cloudless nightWhen the full moon is in his height;While robes of every varied hueA glory o'er the synod threw.The priest in lore of duty skilledLooked on the crowd the hall that filled,And then in accents soft and graveTo Bharat thus his counsel gave:'The king, dear son, so good and wise,Has gone from earth and gained the skies,Leaving to thee, her rightful lord,This rich wide land with foison stored.And still has faithful Ráma stoodFirm to the duty of the good,And kept his father's host aright,As the moon keeps its own dear light.Thus sire and brother yield to theeThis realm from all annoyance free:Bejice thy lords: enjoy thine own:Anointed king, ascend the throne.Let vassal Princes hasten forthFrom distant lands, west, south, and north,From Kerala, 3 from every sea, And bring ten million gems to thee.'

As thus the sage Vas'ishtha spoke,A storm of grief o'er Bharat broke.And longing to be just and true,

His thoughts to duteous Ráma flew.

With sobs and sighs and broken tones,E'en as a wounded mallard moans,He mourned with deepest sorrow moved,And thus the holy priest reproved:'O, how can such as Bharat dareThe power and sway from him to tear,Wise, and devout, and true, and chaste,With Scripture lore and virtue graced?Can one of Das'aratha's seedBe guilty of so vile a deed?The realm and I are Ráma's: thou,Shouldst speak the words of justice now.For he, to claims of virtue true,Is eldest born and noblest too:Nahush, Dilípa could not beMore famous in their lives than he.As Das'aratha ruled of right,So Ráma's is the power and right.If I should do this sinful deedAnd forfeit hope of heavenly need,My guilty act would dim the shineOf old Ikshváku's glorious line.Nay, as the sin my mother wrought

Is grievous to my inmost thought,I here, my hands together laid,Will greet him in the pathless shade,To Ráma shall my steps be bent,My King, of men most excellent,Raghu's illustrious son, whose swayMight, hell, and earth, and heaven obey.' That righteous speech, whose every wordBore virtue's, stamp, the audience heard;On Ráma every thought was set,And with glad tears each eye was wet.'Then, if the power I still should lackTo bring my noble brother back,I in the wood will dwell, and shareHis banishment with Lakshman there.By every art persuasive ITo bring him from the wood will try,And show him to your loving eyes.O Brahmans noble, good, and wise.E'en now, the road to make and clear,Each labourer pressed, and pioneerHave I sent forward to precedeThe army I resolve to lead.' Thus, by fraternal love possessed,His firm resolve the prince expressed.Then to Sumantra, deeply readIn holy texts, he turned and said:'Sumantra, rise without delay,And as I bid my words obey.

Give orders for the march with speed,And all the army hither lead.' The wise Sumantra, thus addressed,Obeyed the high-souled chief's behest.He

hurried forth with joy inspiredAnd gave the orders he desired.Delight  
each soldier's bosom filled,Aud through each chief and captain thrilled,  
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To hear that march proclaimed, to bringDear Ráma back from wandering.From  
house to house the tidings flew:Each soldier's wife the order knew,And as  
she listened blithe and gayHer husband urged to speed away.Captain and  
soldier soon declaredThe host equipped and all preparedWith chariots  
matching thought for speed,And wagons drawn by ox and steed.When Bharat  
by Vās'ishtha's side,His ready host of warriors eyed,Thus in Sumantra's  
ear he spoke.: 'My car and horses quickly yoke.'Sumantra hastened to  
fulfilWith ready joy his master's will,And quickly with the chariot  
spedDrawn by fleet horses nobly bred.

Then glorious Bharat, true, devout,Whose genuine valour none could  
doubt,Gave in fit words his order out;For he would seek the shadeOf the  
great distant wood, and thereWin his dear brother with his  
prayer:'Sumantra, haste! my will declare The host be all arrayed.I to  
the wood my way will take,To Ráma supplication make,And for the world's  
advantage sake, Will lead him home again.'Then, ordered thus, the  
charioteerWho listened with delighted ear,Went forth and gave his orders  
clear To captains of the train.He gave the popular chiefs the word,And  
with the news his friends he stirred,And not a single man deferred  
Preparing for the road.Then Bráhmaṇ, Warrior, Merchant, thrall,Obedient  
to Sumantra's call,Each in his house arose, and allYoked elephant or  
camel tall,Or ass or noble steed in stall, And full appointed  
showed.Footnotes

190:1 Not Bharat's uncle, but some councillor.

190:2 S'atakratu, Lord of a hundred sacrifices, the  
performance of a hundred As'vamedhas or sacrifices of  
a horse entitling the sacrificer to this exalted dignity.

190:3 The modern Malabar.

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CANTO LXXXIII.: THE JOURNEY BEGUN.

Then Bharat rose at early morn,  
And in his noble chariot borneDrove forward at a rapid paceEager to look  
on Ráma's face.The priests and lords, a fair array,In sun-bright chariots  
led the way.Behind, a well appointed throng,Nine thousand elephants  
streamed along.Then sixty thousand cars, and then,With various arms, came  
fighting men.A hundred thousand archers showed  
In lengthened line the steeds they rode--

A mighty host, the march to graceOf Bharat, pride of Raghu's race.Kaikeyi  
and Sumitrá came,And good Kaus'alyá, dear to fame:By hopes of Ráma's  
coming cheeredThey in a radiant car appeared.On fared the noble host to  
seeRáma and Lakshman, wild with glee,And still each other's ear to  
please,Of Ráma spoke in words like these:'When shall our happy eyes  
beholdOur hero true, and pure, and bold,

So lustrous dark, so strong of arm,Who keeps the world from woe and  
harm?The tears that now our eyeballs dimWill vanish at the sight of  
him,As the whole world's black shadows flyWhen the bright sun ascends the  
sky.' Conversing thus their way pursuedThe city's joyous multitude,And  
each in mutual rapture pressedA friend or neighbour to his breast.Thus  
every man of high renown,And every merchant of the town,And leading  
subjects, joyous wentToward Ráma in his banishment.And those who worked  
the potter's wheel,And artists skilled in gems to deal;And masters of the  
weaver's art,And those who shaped the sword and dart;And they who golden  
trinkets made,And those who plied the fuller's trade;And servants trained  
the bath to heat,And they who dealt in incense sweet;Physicians in their  
business skilled.And those who wine and mead distilled;And workmen deft  
in glass who wrought,And those whose snares the peacock caught;With them

who bored the ear for rings, Or sawed, or fashioned ivory things: And those  
who knew to mix cement,  
Or lived by sale of precious scent; And men who washed, and men who  
sewed, And thralls who mid the herds abode; And fishers of the flood, and  
they Who played and sang, and women gay; And virtuous Bráhmans, Scripture-  
wise, Of life approved in all men's eyes; These swelled the prince's  
lengthened train, Borne each in car or bullock wain. Fair were the robes  
they wore upon Their limbs where red-hued unguents shone. These all in  
various modes conveyed Their journey after Bharat made; The soldiers'  
hearts with rapture glowed, Following Bharat on his road, Their chief whose  
tender love would fain Bring his dear brother home again. With elephant,  
and horse, and car, The vast procession travelled far,  
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And came where Gangá's waves below The town of Sringavera  
1 flow.

There, with his friends and kinsmen nigh, Dwelt Guha, Ráma's dear  
ally, Heroic guardian of the land With dauntless heart and ready hand. There  
for a while the mighty force

That followed Bharat stayed its course, Gazing on Gangá's bosom stirred By  
many a graceful water-bird. When Bharat viewed his followers there, And  
Gangá's water, blest and fair, The prince, who lore of words possessed, His  
councillors and lords addressed: 'The captains of the army call: Proclaim  
this day a halt for all, That so to-morrow, rested, we May cross this flood  
that seeks the sea. Meanwhile, descending to the shore, The funeral stream  
I fain would pour From Gangá's fair auspicious tide To him, my father  
glorified.' Thus Bharat spoke: each peer and lord Approved his words  
with one accord, And bade the weary troops repose In separate spots  
where'er they chose. There by the mighty stream that day, Most glorious in  
its vast array The prince's wearied army lay In various groups  
reclined. There Bharat's hours of night were spent, While every eager  
thought he bent On bringing home from banishment His brother, great of  
mind. Next: Canto LXXXIV.: Guha's Anger. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index  
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CANTO LXXXIV.: GUHA'S ANGER.

King Guha saw the host spread o'er

The wide expanse of Gangá's shore, With waving flag and pennon graced, And  
to his followers spoke in haste: 'A mighty army meets my eyes, That rivals  
Ocean's self in size: Where'er I look my very mind No limit to the host can  
find. Sure Bharat with some evil thought His army to our land has  
brought. See, huge of form, his flag he rears, That like an Ebony-tree  
appears. He comes with bonds to take and chain, Or triumph o'er our people  
slain: And after, Ráma will be slay, -- Him whom his father drove away: The  
power complete he longs to gain. And -- task too hard -- usurp the reign.

So Bharat comes with wicked will

His brother Rama's blood to spill. But Ráma's slave and friend am I; He is  
my lord and dear ally. Keep here your watch in arms arrayed Near Gangá's  
flood to lend him aid,

And let my gathered servants stand And line with troops the river  
strand. Here let the river keepers meet. Who flesh and roots and berries  
eat; A hundred fishers man each boat Of the five hundred here afloat, And  
let the youthful and the strong Assemble in defensive throng. But yet, if,  
free from guilty thought 'Gainst Ráma, he this land have sought, The  
prince's happy host to day Across the flood shall make its way.' He  
spoke: then bearing in a dish A gift of honey, meat, and fish, The king of  
the Nishadas drew Toward Bharat for an interview. When Bharat's noble  
charioteer Observed the monarch hastening near, He duly, skilled in  
courteous lore, The tidings to his master bore: 'This aged prince who  
hither bends His footsteps with a thousand friends, Knows, firm ally of  
Ráma, all That may in Danduk wood befall: Therefore, Kakutstha's son,  
admit The monarch, as is right and fit: For doubtless he can clearly

tellWhere Ráma now and Lakshman dwell.' When Bharat heard Sumantra's rede,  
To his fair words the prince agreed:'Go quickly forth,' he cried, 'and bringBefore my face the aged king.'King Guha, with his kinsmen near,Rejoiced the summoning to hear:He nearer drew, bowed low his head,And thus to royal Bharat said:'No mansions can our country boast,And unexpected comes thy host:But what we have I give thee all:Rest in the lodging of thy thrall.See, the Nishadas here have broughtThe fruit and roots their hands have sought:And we have woodland fare beside.And store of meat both fresh and dried.To rest their weary limbs, I prayThis night at least thy host may stay:Then cheered with all we can bestowTo-morrow thou with it mayst go.'

Footnotes

192:1 Now Sungroor, in the Allahabad district.Next: Canto LXXXV.: Guha And Bharat.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LXXXV.: GUHA AND BHARAT.

Thus tho Nishadas' king besought:

The prince with spirit wisdom-fraught

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Replied in seemly words that blentDeep matter with the argument:'Thou, friend of him whom I revere,With honours high hast met me here,For thou alone wouldst entertainAud feed to-day so vast a train."In such fair words the prince replied,Then, pointing to the path he cried:'Which way aright will lead my feetTo Bharadvája's calm retreat;For all this land near Gangá's streamsPathless and hard to traverse seems?' Thus spoke the prince: King Guha heardDelighted every prudent word,And gazing on that forest wide,Raised suppliant hands, and thus replied:'My servants, all the ground who know,O glorious Prince, with thee shall goWith constant care thy way to guide,And I will journey by thy side. But this thy host so wide disspreadWakes in my heart one doubt and dread,Lest, threatening Ráma good and great,IlI thoughts thy journey stimulate." But wheu King Guha, ill at ease,Declared his fear in words like these,As pure as is the cloudless skyWith soft voice Bharat made reply:'Suspect me not: ne'er come the timeFor me to plot so foul a crime!He is my eldest brother, heIs like a father dear to me.I go to lead my brother thenceWho makes the wood his residence.No thought but this thy heart should frame:This simple truth my lips proclaim.' Then with glad cheer King Guha cried,With Bharat's answer gratified:'Blessed art thou: on earth I seeNone who may vie, O Prince, with thee,Who canst of thy free will resignThe kingdom which unsought is thine.For this, a name that ne'er shall die,Thy glory through the worlds shall fly,Who fain wouldst balm thy brother's painAnd lead the exile home again.' As Guha thus, and Bharat, eachTo other spoke in friendly speech,The Day God sank with glory dead,

And night o'er all the sky was spread.Soon as King Guha's thoughtful careHad quartered all the armv there,Well honoured, Bharat laid his headBeside S'atrughna on a bed.But grief for Ráma yet oppressedHigh-minded Bharat's faithful breast--Such torment little was deservedBy him who ne'er from duty swerved.The fever raged through every veinAnd burnt him with its inward pain:So when in woods the flames leap free The fire within consumes the tree.

From heat of burning anguish sprungThe sweat upon his body hung,As when the sun with fervid glowOn high Himalaya melts the snow.As, banished from the herd, a bullWanders alone and sorrowful. Thus sighing and distressed,In misery and bitter grief,With fevered heart that mocked relief,Distracted in his mind, the chief Still mourned and found no rest.

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CANTO LXXXVI.: GUHA'S SPEECH.

Guha the king, acquainted well

With all that in the wood befell, To Bharat the unequalled told  
The tale of Lakshman mighty-souled: 'With many an earnest word I spake  
To Lakshman as he stayed awake, And with his bow and shaft in hand  
To guard his brother kept his stand: 'Now sleep a little, Lakshman, see  
This pleasant bed is strewn for thee: Hereon thy weary body lay,  
And strengthen thee with rest, I pray, Inured to toil are men like these,  
But thou hast aye been nursed in ease. Rest, duteous-minded! I will keep  
My watch while Rāma lies asleep: For in the whole wide world is none  
Dearer to me than Raghu's son. Harbour no doubt or jealous fear:  
I speak the truth with heart sincere: For from the grace which he has shown  
Will glory on my name be thrown: Great store of merit shall I gain,  
And duteous, form no wish in vain. Let me enforced by many a row

Of followers, armed with shaft and bow For well-loved Rāma's weal  
provide Who lies asleep by Sitā's side. For through this wood I often  
go, And all its shades conceal I know: And we with conquering arms can  
meet A four-fold host arrayed complete. 'With words like these I spoke,  
designed To move the high-souled Bharat's mind, But he upon his duty  
bent, Plied his persuasive argument: 'O, how can slumber close mine  
eyes When lowly couched with Sitā lies The royal Rāma? can I give My heart  
to joy, or even live? He whom no mighty demon, no, Nor heavenly God can  
overthrow, See, Guha, how he lies, alas,

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With Sitā couched on gathered grass. By varied labours, long, severe, By  
many a prayer and rite austere, He, Das'aratha's cherished son, By Fortune  
stamped, from Heaven was won. Now as his son is forced to fly, The king ere  
long will surely die: Reft of his guardian hand, forlorn

In widowed grief this land will mourn, E'en now perhaps, with toil  
o'erspent, The women cease their loud lament, And cries of woe no longer  
ring Throughout the palace of the king. But ah for sad Kaus'alyā! how Fare  
she and mine own mother now? How fares the king? this night, I think, Some  
of the three in death will sink. With hopes upon S'atrughna set My mother  
may survive as yet, But the sad queen will die who bore The hero, for her  
grief is sore. His cherished wish that would have made Dear Rāma king, so  
long delayed, 'Too late! too late!' the king will cry, And conquered by his  
misery die. When Fate has brought the mournful day Which sees my father  
pass away, How happy in their lives are they Allowed his funeral rites to  
pay. Our exile o'er, with him who ne'er Turns from the oath his lips may  
swear, May we returning safe and well Again in fair Ayodhyā dwell. 'Thus  
Bharat stood with many a sigh Lamenting, and the night went by. Soon as the  
morning light shone fair In votive coils both bound their hair.

And then I sent them safely o'er And left them on the farther shore. With  
Sitā then they onward passed, Their coats of bark about them cast, Their  
locks like hermits' bound, The mighty tamers of the foe, Each with his  
arrows and his bow, Went over the rugged ground, Proud in their strength  
and undeterred Like elephants that lead the herd, And gazing oft around.

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CANTO LXXXVII.: GUHA'S STORY.

That speech of Guha Bharat heard

With grief and tender pity stirred, And as his ears the story drank, Deep  
in his thoughtful heart it sank. His large full eyes in anguish rolled, His  
trembling limbs grew stiff and cold; Then fell he, like a tree upturn, In  
woe too grievous to be borne. When Guha saw the long-armed chief Whose eye  
was like a lotus leaf, With lion shoulders strong and fair, High-mettled,  
prostrate in despair, -- Pale, bitterly afflicted, he Reeled as in  
earthquake reels a tree. But when S'atrughna standing nigh Saw his dear  
brother helpless lie, Distraught with woe his head he bowed, Embraced him  
oft and wept aloud. Then Bharat's mothers came, forlorn Of their dear king,  
with fasting worn, And stood with weeping eyes around The hero prostrate on

the ground.Kaus'alyá, by her woe oppressed,The senseless Bharat's limbs  
caressedAs a fond cow in love and fear  
Caresses oft her youngling dear:Then yielding to her woe she said,Weeping  
and sore disquieted:'What torments, O my son, are theseOf sudden pain or  
swift disease?The lives of us and all the lineDepend, dear child, on only  
thine.Ráma and Lakshman forced to flee,I live by naught but seeing  
thee:For as the king has past awayThou art my only help to-day.Hast thou,  
perchance, heard evil newsOf Lakshman, which thy soul subdues,Or Ráma  
dwelling with his spouse--My all is he--neath forest boughs?' Then  
slowly gathering sense and strengthThe weeping hero rose at length,And  
words like these to Guha spake,That bade Kaus'alyá comfort take:'Where  
lodged the prince that night? and whereLakshman the brave, and Sítá  
fair?Show me the couch whereon he lay,Tell me the food he ate, I pray.'  
Then Guha the Nishádas' kingReplied to Bharat's questioning:'Of all I had  
I brought the bestTo serve my good and honoured guestFood of each varied  
kind I chose,And every fairest fruit that grows.  
Ráma the hero truly braveDeclined the gift I humbly gave:His Warrior part  
he ne'er forgot,And what I brought accepted not:'No gifts, my friend, may  
we accept:Our law is, Give, and must be kept.'"The high-souled chief, O  
Monarch, thusWith gracious words persuaded us.Then calm and still,  
absorbed in thought,He drank the water Lakshman brought,And then,  
obedient to his vows,He fasted with his gentle spouse.So Lakshman too  
from food abstained,

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And sipped the water that remained:Then with ruled lips, devoutly  
staid,The three

1 their evening worship paid.

Then Lakshman with unwearied careBrought heaps of sacred grass, and  
thereWith his own hands he quickly spread,For Ráma's rest, a pleasant  
bed,And faithful Sítá's too, where theyReclining each by other lay.Then  
Lakshman bathed their feet, and drewA little distance from the two.Here  
stands the tree which lent them shade,Here is the grass beneath it laid,  
Where Ráma and his consort spentThe night together ere they  
went.Lakshman, whose arms the foeman quell,Watched all the night as  
sentinel, And kept his great bow strung:His hand was gloved, his arm  
waa braced,Two well-filled quivers at his waist, With deadly arrows,  
hung.I took my shafts and trusty bow,And with that tamer of the foe  
Stood ever wakeful near,And with my followers, bow in hand,Behind me  
ranged, a ready band, Kept watch o'er Indra's peer.'

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CANTO LXXXVIII.: THE INGUDÍ TREE.

When Bharat with each friend and peer

Had heard that tale so full and clear,They went together to the treeThe  
bed which Ráma pressed to see.Then Bharat to his mothers said:'Behold the  
high-souled hero's bed:These tumbled heaps of grass betrayWhere he that  
night with Sítá lay:Unmeet, the heir of fortune highThus on the cold bare  
earth should lie,The monarch's son, in counsel sage,Of old imperial  
lineage.That lion-lord whose noble bedWith finest skins of deer was  
spread,--How can he now endure to pressThe bare earth, cold and  
comfortless!This sudden fall from bliss to griefAppears untrue, beyond  
belief:My senses are distraught: I seemTo view the fancies of a  
dream.There is no deity so great,No power in heaven can master Fate,If  
Ráma, Das'aratha's heir,Lay on the ground and slumbered there;And lovely  
Sítá, she who springs

From fair Videha's ancient kings,

Ráma's dear wife, by all adored,

Lay on the earth beside her lord.Here was his couch, upon this heapHe  
tossed and turned in restless sleep:On the hard soil each manly limbHas  
stamped the grass with signs of him,That night, it seems, fair Sítá

spent Arrayed in every ornament, For here and there my eyes behold Small  
 particles of glistering gold. She laid her outer garment here, For still  
 some silken threads appear, How dear in her devoted eyes Must be the bed  
 where Ráma lies, Where she so tender could repose And by his side forget  
 her woes. Alas, unhappy, guilty me! For whom the prince was forced to  
 flee, And chief of Raghu's sons and best, A bed like this with Sitá  
 pressed. Son of a royal sire whose hand Ruled paramount o'er every  
 land, Could he who every joy bestows, Whose body like the lotus shows, The  
 friend of all, who charms the sight, Whose flashing eyes are darkly  
 bright. Leave the dear kingdom, his by right,  
 Unmeet for woe, the heir of bliss, And lie upon a bed like this? Great joy  
 and happy fate are thine, O Lakshman, marked with each fair sign, Whose  
 faithful footsteps follow still Thy brother in his hour of ill. And blest  
 is Sitá, nobly good, Who dwells with Ráma in the wood. Ours is, alas, a  
 doubtful fate Of Ráma reft and desolate. My royal sire has gained the  
 skies, In woods the high-souled hero lies; The state is wrecked and  
 tempest-tossed, A vessel with her rudder lost. Yet none in secret thought  
 has planned With hostile might to seize the land: Though forced in distant  
 wilds to dwell, The hero's arm protects it well. Unguarded, with deserted  
 wall, No elephant or steed in stall, My father's royal city shows Her  
 portals open to her foes, Of bold protectors reft and bare, Defenceless in  
 her dark despair: But still her foes she wish restrain, As men from  
 poisoned cates refrain. I from this hour my nights will pass Couched on the  
 earth or gathered grass, Eat only fruit and roots, and wear  
 A coat of bark, and matted hair. I in the woods will pass, content, For him  
 the term of banishment; So shall I still unbroken save The promise which  
 the hero gave.

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While I remain for Ráma there, S'atrughna will my exile share, And Ráma in  
 his home again, With Lakshman, o'er Ayodhyá reign, for him, to rule and  
 guard the state, The twice-born men shall consecrate. O, may the Gods I  
 serve incline To grant this earnest wish of mine! If when I bow before his  
 feet And with all moving arts entreat, He still deny my prayer, Then with  
 my brother will I live: He must, he must permission give, Roaming in  
 forests there.

Footnotes 195:1 Ráma, Lakshman, and Sumantra.

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CANTO LXXXIX.: THE PASSAGE OF  
 GANGÁ.

That night the son of Raghu lay  
 On Gangá's bank till break of day: Then with the earliest light he woke And  
 thus to brave S'atrughna spoke. 'Rise up, S'atrughna, from thy bed: Why  
 sleepest thou the night is fled. See how the sun who chases night Wakes  
 every lotus with his light. Arise, arise, and first of all The lord of  
 S'ringavera call, For he his friendly aid will lend Our army o'er the flood  
 to send.' Thus urged, S'atrughna answered: 'I, Remembering Ráma,  
 sleepless lie. As thus the brothers, each to each, The lion-mettled, ended  
 speech, Came Guha, the Nishádas' king, And spoke with kindly  
 questioning: 'Hast thou in comfort passed,' he cried, 'The night upon the  
 river side? With thee how fares it? and are these, Thy soldiers, health and  
 at ease?' Thus the Nishádas' lord inquired  
 In gentle words which love inspired, And Bharat, Ráma's faithful  
 slave, Thus to the king his answer gave: 'The night has sweetly passed, and  
 we Are highly honoured, King, by thee. Now let thy servants boats  
 prepare, Our army o'er the stream to bear.' The speech of Bharat Guha  
 heard, And swift to do his bidding stirred. Within the town the monarch  
 sped And to his ready kinsmen said: 'Awake, each kinsman, rise, each  
 friend! May every joy your lives attend. Gather each boat upon the shore And  
 ferry all the army o'er.' Thus Guha spoke: nor they delayed, But, rising



quick, their lord obeyed,And soon, from every side secured,Five hundred  
boats were ready moored.Some reared aloft the mystic sign,

1

And mighty bells were hung in line:Of firmest build, gay flags they  
bore,And sailors for the helm and oar.One such King Guha chose,  
whereon,Of fair white cloth, an awning shone,And sweet musicians charmed  
the ear,--And bade his servants urge it near.Then Bharat swiftly sprang  
on board,And then S'atrughna, famous lord,  
To whom, with many a royal dame,Kaus'alyá and Sumitrá came.The household  
priest went first in place,The elders, and the Brahman race,And after  
them the monarch's trainOf women borne in many a wain,Then high to heaven  
the shouts of thoseWho fired the army's huts,

2 arose,

With theirs who bathed along the shore,Or to the boats the baggage  
bore.Full freighted with that mighty forceThe boats sped swiftly on their  
coarse,By royal Guha's servants manned,And gentle gales the banners  
fanned.Some boats a crowd of dames conveyed,In others noble coursers  
neighed;Some chariots and their cattle bore,Some precious wealth and  
golden store.Across the stream each boat was rowed,There duly disembarked  
its load,And then returning on its way,Sped here and there in merry  
play.Then swimming elephants appearedWith flying pennons high  
upreared.And as the drivers urged them o'er,The look of winged mountains  
wore.Some men in barges reached the strand,Others on rafts came safe to  
land:Some buoyed with pitchers crossed the tide,  
And others on their arms relied.Thus with the help the monarch gaveThe  
army crossed pure Gangá's wave:Then in auspicious hour it stoodWithin  
Prayuga's famous wood.The prince with cheering words addressedHis weary  
men, and bade them rest Where'er they chose and he,With priest and  
deacon by his side,To Bharadvaja's dwelling hied That best of saints to  
see.

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Footnotes

196:1 The svastika, a little cross with a transverse line  
at each extremity.

196:2 When an army marched it was customary to burn the huts in which it  
had spent the night.

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CANTO XC.: THE HERMITAGE.

The prince of men a league away

Saw where the hermit's dwelling lay,Then with his lords his path  
pursued,And left his warrior multitude.On foot, as duty taught his  
mind,He left his warlike gear behind:Two robes of linen cloth he wore,And  
bade Vas'ishtha walk before.Then Bharat from his lords withdrewWhen  
Bharadvája came in view,And toward the holy hermit wentBehind Vas'ishtha,  
reverent.When Bharadvája, saint austere,Saw good Vis'ishtha drawing  
near,He cried, upspringing from his seat,'The grace-gift bring, my friend  
to greet.'When Saint Vas'ishtha near him drew,And Bharat paid the  
reverence due,The glorious hermit was awareThat Das'aratha's son was  
there.The grace-gift, water for their feetHe gave, and offered fruit to  
eat;Then, duty-skilled, with friendly speechIn seemly order questioned  
each:'How fares it in Ayodhvá now

With treasury and army? howWith kith and kin and friends most dear,With  
councillor, and prince, and peer?'But, for he knew the king was dead,Of  
Das'aratha naught he said.Vas'ishtha and the prince in turnWould of the  
hermits welfare learn:Of holy fires they fain would hear,Of pupils,  
trees, and birds, and deer.The glorious saint his answer madeThat all was  
well in holy shade:Then love of Ráma moved his breast,And thus he  
questioned of his guest:Why art thou here, O Prince, whose bandWith  
kingly sway protects the land;Declare the cause, explain the whole.For

yet some doubt disturbs my soul. He whom Kaus'alyá bare, whose might  
The foemen slays, his line's delight, He who with wife and brother sent  
Afar now roam in banishment. Famed prince, to whom his father spake  
This order for a woman's sake: 'Away! and in the forest spend  
Thy life till fourteen years shall end'--Has thou the wish to harm him, bent  
On sin against the innocent? Wouldst thou thine elder's realm enjoy  
Without a thorn that can annoy?'

With sobbing voice and tearful eye Thus Bharat sadly made reply: 'Ah  
lost am I, if thou, O Saint, Canst thus in thought my heart attain:  
No warning charge from thee I need; Ne'er could such crime from me  
proceed. The words my guilty mother spake When fondly jealous for my sake--  
Think not that I, to triumph moved, Those words approve or e'er approved.  
O Hermit, I have sought this place To win the lordly hero's grace, To throw  
me at my brother's feet And lead him to his royal seat. To this, my  
journey's aim and end, Thou shouldst, O Saint, thy favour lend: Where is  
the lord of earth? do thou, Most holy, say, where roams he now? Then, by  
the saint Vas'ishtha pressed, And all the gathered priests beside,  
To Bharat's dutiful request The hermit graciously replied: 'Worthy of  
thee, O Prince, this deed, True son of Raghu's ancient seed. I know thee  
reverent, well-controlled, The glory of the good of old. I grant thy  
prayer: in this pursuit I know thy heart is resolute.  
'Tis for thy sake those words I said That wider still thy fame may  
spread. I know where Ráma, duty-tried, His brother, and his wife  
abide. Where Chitrakúta's heights arise Thy brother Ráma's dwelling lies. Go  
thither with the morning's light, And stay with all thy lords tonight: For  
I would show thee honour high, And do not thou my wish deny.'

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CANTO XCI.: BHARADVÁJA'S FEAST.

Soon as he saw the prince's mind To rest that day was well inclined, He sought Kaikeyí's son to please  
With hospitable courtesies. Then Bharat to the saint replied: 'Our wants are  
more than satisfied. The gifts which honoured strangers greet, And water  
for our weary feet Hast thou bestowed with friendly care, And every choice  
of woodland fare.' Then Bharadvája spoke, a smile Playing upon his lips  
the while: 'I know, dear Prince, thy friendly mind Will any fare sufficient  
find, But gladly would I entertain And banquet all thine armed train: Such  
is my earnest wish: do thou This longing of my heart allow, Why host thou  
hither bent thy way, And made thy troops-behind thee stay?

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Why unattended? couldst thou not With friends and army seek this spot?'

Bharat, with reverent hands raised high, To that great hermit made  
reply: 'My troops, for awe of thee, O Sage, I brought not to thy  
hermitage: Troops of a king or monarch's son A hermit's home should ever  
shun. Behind me comes a mighty train Wide spreading o'er the ample  
plain, Where every chief and captain leads Men, elephants, and mettled  
steeds I feared, O reverend Sage, lest these Might harm the holy ground and  
trees, Springs might be marred and cots o'er-thrown, So with the priests I  
came alone.' 'Bring all thy host,' the hermit cried, And Bharat, to his  
joy, complied. Then to the chapel went the sire, Where ever burnt the  
sacred fire, And first, in order due, with sips Of water purified his  
lips: To Visvakarmá, then he prayed, His hospitable feast to aid: 'Let  
Vis'vakarmá hear my call, The God who forms and fashions all: A mighty  
banquet I provide, Be all my wants this day supplied. Lord Indra at their  
head, the three

1

Who guard the worlds I call to me: A mighty host this day I feed,  
Be now supplied my every need. Let all the streams that eastward go, And  
those whose waters westering flow, Both on the earth and in the sky, Flow

hither and my wants supply. Be some with ardent liquor filled, And some  
with wine from flowers distilled, While some their fresh cool streams  
retain Sweet as the juice of sugar-cane, I call the Gods I call the band  
Of minstrels that around them stand: I call the Háhá and Huhú, I call the  
sweet Vis'vása I call the heavenly wives of these With all the bright  
Apsarases, Alambushe of beauty rare, The charmer of the tangled  
hair, Ghritáchí And Vis'váchi fair, Hemá and Bhímá sweet to view, And lovely  
Nágadantá too, And all the sweetest nymphs who stand By Indra or by  
Brahmá's hand--I summon these with all their train And Tumburu to lead the  
strain. Here let Kuvera's garden rise Which far in Northern Kuru  
2 lies:

For leaves let cloth and gems entwine, And let its fruit be nymphs divine.  
Let Soma 1b give the noblest food  
To feed the mighty multitude, Of every kind, for tooth and lip, To chew, to  
lick, to suck, and sip. Let wreaths, where fairest flowers abound, Spring  
from the trees that bloom around. Each sort of wine to woo the taste, And  
meats of every kind be placed.' Thus spake the hermit sulf-  
restrained, With proper tone by rules ordained, On deepest meditation  
bent, In holy might predominant. Then as with hands in reverence  
raised Absorbed in thought he eastward gazed, The deities be thus  
addreased Came each in semblance manifest. Delicious gales that cooled the  
frame From Malaya and Dardar came, That kissed those scented hills and  
threw Auspicious fragrance where they blew. Then falling fast in sweetest  
showers Came from the sky immortal flowers, And all the airy region  
round With heavenly drums was made to sound. Then breathed a soft celestial  
breeze, Then danced the bright Apsarases, The minstrels and the Gods  
advanced, And warbling lutes the soul entranced. The earth and sky that  
music filled,  
And through each ear it softly thrilled, As from the heavenly quills it  
fell With time and tune attempered well. Soon as the minstrels ceased to  
play And airs celestial died away. The troops of Bharat saw amazed What  
Vis'vakarmá's art had raised. On every side, five leagues around, All  
smooth and level lay the ground, With fresh green grass that charmed the  
sight Like sapphires blent with lazulite. There the Wood-apple hung the  
head, The Mango and the Citron glowed The Bel and scented Jak were  
there, And Amlá with fruitage fair. There, brought from Northern Kuru,  
stood Rich in delights, the glorious wood, And many a stream was seen to  
glide

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With flowering trees along its side. There mansions rose with four wide  
halls, And elephants and chargers' stalls, And many a house of royal  
state, Triumphant are and bannered gate. With noble doorways, sought the  
sky, Like a pale cloud, a palace high, Which far and wide rare fragrance  
shed,  
With wreaths of white engarlanded. Square was its shape, its halls were  
wide, With many a seat and couch supplied, Drink of all kinds, and every  
meat Such as celestial Gods might eat. Then at the bidding of the  
seer Kaikeyi's strong-armed son drew near. And passed within that fair  
abode Which with the noblest jewels glowed. Then, as Vas'ishtha led the  
way, The councillors, in due array. Followed delighted and amazed And on the  
glorious structure gazed. Then Bharat, Raghu's son, drew near The kingly  
throne, with prince and peer, Whereby the chouri in the shade Of the white  
canopy was laid. Before the throne he humbly bent And honoured Ráma,  
reverent, Then in his hand the chouri bore, And sat where sits a  
councillor, His ministers and household priest Sat by degrees from chief to  
least, Then sat the captain of the host And all the men he honoured  
most. Then when the saint his order gave, Each river with enchanted  
wave Rolled milk and curds divinely sweet Before the princely Bharat's  
feet;

And dwellings fair on either side, With gay white plaster beautified. Their heavenly roofs were seen to lift, The Bra'hman Bharady'aja's gift, Then straight by Lord Kuvera sent, Gay with celestial ornament Of bright attire and jewels' shine. Came twenty thousand nymphs divine: The man on whom those beauties glanced That moment felt his soul entranced. With them from Nandan's blissful shades Came twenty thousand heavenly maids. Tumburu, Na'rad, Gopa came, And Sutanu, like radiant flame. The kings of the Gandharva throng, And ravished Bharat with their song. Then spoke the saint, and swift obeyed Alambusb'a, the fairest maid, And Mis'rakes'i bright to view, Ramana, Pundarik'a too, And danced to him with graceful ease The dances of Apsarases. All deplete that by Gods are worn, Or Chaitraratha's graves adorn, Bloomed by the saint's command arrayed On branches in Praya'ga's shade. When at the saint's command the breeze Made music with the Vilva trees, To wave in rhythmic beat began The boughs of each Myrobolan, And holy fig-trees wore the look Of dancers, as their leaflets shook. The fair Tama'la, palm, and pine, With trees that tower and plants that twine, The sweetly varying forms displayed Of stately dame or bending maid. Here men the foaming winecup quaffed, Here drank of milk full many a draught, And tasted meats of every kind, Well dressed, whatever pleased their mind. Then beauteous women, seven or eight, Stood ready by each man to wait: Beside the stream his limbs they stripped And in the cooling water dipped. And then the fair ones, sparkling eyed, With soft hands rubbed his limbs and dried. And sitting on the lovely bank Held up the winecup as he drank. Nor did the grooms forget to feed Camel and mule and ox and steed, For there were stores of roasted grain, Of honey and of sugar-cane. So fast the wild excitement spread Among the warriors Bharat led, That all the mighty army through The groom no more his charger knew, And he who drove might seek in vain To tell his elephant again. With every joy and rapture fired, Entranced with all the heart desired, The myriads of the host that night Revelled delirious with delight. Urged by the damsels at their side In wild delight the warriors cried: 'Ne'er will we seek Ayodhya', no, Nor yet to Dandak forest go: Here will we stay: may happy fate On Bharat and on Rāma wait' Thus cried the army gay and free Exulting in their lawless glee, Both infantry and those who rode On elephants, or steeds bestrode, Ten thousand voices shouting, 'This Is heaven indeed for perfect bliss.' With garlands decked they idly strayed, And danced and laughed and sang and played. At length as every soldier eyed, With food like Amrit satisfied. Each dainty cate and tempting meat, No longer had he care to eat. Thus soldier, servant, dame, and slave Received whate'er the wish might crave. As each in new-wrought clothes arrayed Enjoyed the feast before him laid. p. 200 Each man was seen in white attire Unstained by spot or speck of mire: None was athirst or hungry there, And none had dust upon his hair. On every side in woody dells Was milky food in bubbling wells, And there were all-supplying cows And honey dropping from the boughs. Nor wanted lakes of flower-made drink With piles of meat upon the brink, boiled, stewed, and roasted, varied cheer, Peachick and jungle-fowl and deer, There was the flesh of kid and boar, And dainty sauce in endless store, With juice of flowers concocted well, And soup that charmed the taste and smell, And pounded fruits of bitter taste, And many a bath was ready placed Down by each river's shelving side There stood great basins well supplied, And laid therein, of dazzling sheen, White brushes for the teeth were seen, And many a covered box wherein Was sandal powdered for the skin. And mirrors bright with constant care, And piles of new attire were there, And store of sandals and of shoes, Thousands of pairs, for all to choose: Eye-unguents, combs for hair and beard, Umbrellas fair and bows appeared. Lakes gleamed, that lent digestive aid,

And some for pleasant bathing made, With waters fair, and smooth  
 incline For camels, horses, mules, and kine. There saw they barley heaped  
 on high The coutless cattle to supply: The golden grain shone fair and  
 bright As sapphires or the lazulite. To all the gathered host it seemed As  
 if that magic scene they dreamed, And wonder, as they gazed, increased At  
 Bharadvāja's glorious feast. Thus in the hermit's grove they spent That  
 night in joy and merriment, Blest as the Gods who take their ease Under the  
 shade of Nandan's trees. Each minstrel bade the saint adieu, And to his  
 blissful mansion flew, Aiid every stream and heavenly dame Ktturned as  
 swiftly as she came.

Footnotes 198:1 Yama, Varuna and Kuvera.

198:2 A happy land in the remote north where the  
 inhabitants enjoy a natural pefection attended with  
 complete happiness obtained without exertion. There is there no  
 vicissitude, nor decrepitude, nor death, nor fear: no distinction of  
 virtue and vice, none of the inequalities denoted by the words best,  
 worst, and intermediate, nor any change resulting from the succssion of  
 the four Yugas.' Sea MUIR'S. Sanskrit Texts, Vol I, p. 402.

198:1b The Moon.

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CANTO XCII.: BHARAT'S FAREWELL.

So Bharat with his army spent  
 The watches of the night content,  
 And gladly, with the morning's light

Drew near his host the anchorite. When Bharadvāja saw him stand With hand  
 in reverence joined to hand, When fires of worship had been fed, He looked  
 upon the prince and said: 'O blameless son, I pray thee tell, Did the past  
 night content thee well? Say if the feast my care supplied Thy host of  
 followers gratified.' His hands he joined, his head he bent And spoke in  
 answer reverent To the most high and radiant sage Who issued from his  
 hermitage: 'Well have I passed the night: thy feast Gave joy to every man  
 and beast; And I, great lord, and every peer Were satisfied with sumptuous  
 cheer, Thy banquet has delighted all From highest chief to meanest  
 thrall, And rich attire and drink and meat Banished the thought of toil and  
 heat,

And now, O Hermit good and great, A boon of thee I supplicate. To Rāma's  
 side my steps I bend: Do thou with friendly eye commend. O tell me how to  
 guide my feet To virtuous Rāma's lone retreat: Great Hermit, I entreat  
 thee, say How far from here and which the way.' Thus by fraternal love  
 inspired The chieftain of the saint inquired: Then thus replied the  
 glorious seer Of matchless might, of vows austere: 'Ere the fourth league  
 from here be passed, Amid a forest wild and vast, Stands Chitrakūta's  
 mountain tall, Lovely with wood and waterfall. North of the mountain thou  
 wilt see The beauteous stream Mandākinī, Where swarm the waterfowl  
 below. And gay trees on the margin grow. Then will a leafy cot between The  
 river and the hill be seen: 'Tis Rāma's, and the princely pair Of brothers  
 live for certain there. Hence to the south thine army lead, And then more  
 southward still proceed. So shall thou find his lone retreat, And there the  
 son of Raghu meet.' Soon as the ordered march they knew,

The widows of the monarch flew, Leaving their cars, most meet to ride, And  
 flocked to Bharadvāja's side. There with the good Sumitrā Queen Kaus'alyā,  
 sad and worn, was seen, Caressing, still with sorrow faint, The feet of  
 that illustrious saint, Kaikeyī too, her longings crossed, Reproached of  
 all, her object lost, Before the famous hermit came,

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And clasped his feet, overwhelmed with shame. With circling steps she  
 humbly went Around the saint preëminent, And stood not far from Bharat's  
 side With heart oppressed, and heavy-eyed. Then the great seer, who never

broke One holy vow, to Bharat spoke: 'Speak, Raghu's son: I fain would  
learn The story of each queen in turn.'  
Obedient to the high request  
By Bharadvāja thus addressed, His reverent hands together laid, He, skilled  
in speech, his answer made: 'She whom, O Saint, thou seest here A Goddess  
in her form appear,  
Was the chief consort of the king, Now worn with fast and sorrowing. As  
Aditi in days of yore The all-preserving Vishnu bore, Kaus'alyā bore with  
happy fate Lord Rāma of the lion's gait. She who, transfixed with torturing  
pangs, On her left arm so fondly hangs, As when her withering leaves  
decay Droops by the wood the Cassia spray, Sumitrā, pained with woe, is  
she, The consort second of the three: Two princely sons the lady bare, Fair  
as the Gods in heaven are fair. And she, the wicked dame through whom My  
brothers' lives are wrapped in gloom, And mourning for his offspring  
dear, The king has sought his heavenly sphere, -- Proud, foolish-hearted,  
swift to ire, Self-fancied darling of my sire, Kaikeyī, most ambitious  
queen, Unlovely with her lovely mien, My mother she, whose impious will Is  
ever bent on deeds of ill, In whom the root and spring I see Of all this  
woe which crushes me.'  
Quick breathing like a furious snake, With tears and sobs the hero spake,  
With reddened eyes aglow with rage. And Bharadvāja, mighty sage, Supreme in  
wisdom, calm and grave, In words like these good counsel gave: 'O Bharat,  
hear the words I say; On her the fault thou must not lay: For many a  
blessing yet will spring From banished Rāma's wandering.' And Bharat, with  
that promise cheered, Went circling round that saint revered. He humbly  
bade farewell, and then Gave orders to collect his men. Prompt at the  
summons thousands flew To cars which noble coursers drew, Bright-gleaming,  
glorious to behold, Adorned with wealth of burnished gold. Then female  
elephants and male, Gold-girthed, with flags that wooed the gale, Marched  
with their bright bells' tinkling chime Like clouds when ends the summer  
time: Some cars were huge and some were light, For heavy draught or rapid  
flight, Of costly price, of every kind, With clouds of infantry behind. The  
dames, Kaus'alyā at their head, Were in the noblest chariots led, And every  
gentle bosom beat With hope the banished prince to meet. The royal Bharat,  
glory-crowned,  
With all his retinue around, Borne in a beauteous litter rode, Like the  
young moon and sun that glowed. The army as it streamed along, Cars,  
elephants, in endless throng, Showed, marching on its southward way, Like  
autumn clouds in long array.

Footnotes

200:1 The poet does not tell us what these lakes  
contained.

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CANTO XCIII.: CHITRAKÚTA IN SIGHT.

As through the woods its way pursued  
That mighty bannered multitude, Wild elephants in terror fled With all the  
startled herds they led, And bears and deer were seen on hill, In forest  
glade, by every rill. Wide as the sea from coast to coast, The high-souled  
Bharat's mighty host Covered the earth as cloudy trains Obscure the sky  
when fall the rains. The stately elephants he led, And countless steeds the  
land o'erspread, So closely crowded that between Their serried ranks no  
ground was seen. Then when the host had travelled far, And steeds were worn  
who drew the car, The glorious Bharat thus addressed Vas'ishtha, of his  
lords the best: 'The spot, methinks, we now behold Of which the holy hermit  
told, For, as his words described, I trace Each several feature of the  
place: Before us Chitrakúta shows, Mandākiní beside us flows: A far  
umbrageous woods arise

Like darksome clouds that veil the skies. Now tread these mountain-beasts  
of mine On Chitrakúta's fair incline. The trees their rain of blossoms

shedOn table-lands beneath them spread,As from black clouds the floods  
descendWhen the hot days of summer end.S'atrughna, look, the mountain  
seeWhere heavenly minstrels wander free,

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And horses browse beneath the steep.Countless as monsters in the  
deep.Scared by my host the mountain deerStarting with tempest speed  
appearLike the long lines of cloud that flyIn autumn through the windy  
sky.See, every warrior shows his headWith fragrant blooms engarlanded;All  
look like southern soldiers whoLift up their shields of azure hue.This  
lonely wood beneath the hill.That was so dark and drear and still,Covered  
with men in endless streamsNow like Ayodhyá's city seems.The dust which  
countless hoofs exciteObscures the sky and veils the light;But see, swift  
winds those clouds dispel

As if they strove to please me well.See, guided in their swift careerBy  
many a skilful charioteer,Those cars by fleetest coursers drawnRace  
onward over glade and lawn.Look, startled as the host comes nearThe  
lovely peacocks fly in fear,Gorgeous as if the fairest bloomsOf earth had  
glorified their plumes.Look where the sheltering covert showsThe trooping  
deer, both bucks and does,That occupy in countless herdsThis mountain  
populous with birds.Most lovely to my mind appearsThis place which every  
charm endears:Fair as the road where tread the Blest;Here holy hermits  
take their rest,Then let the army onward pressAnd duly search each green  
recessFor the two lion-lords, till weRáma once more and Lakshman see.'  
Thus Bharat spoke: and hero bands

Of men with weapons in their handsEntered the tangled forest: thenA spire  
of smoke appeared in ken.Soon as they saw the rising smokeTo Bharat they  
returned and spoke:'No fire where men are not: 'tis clear  
That Raghu's sons are dwelling here.Or if not here those heros dwellWhose  
mighty arms their foeman quell,Still other hermits here must beLike Ráma,  
true and good as he.'

His ears attentive Bharat lent

To their resistless argument,Then to his troops the chief who brokeHis  
foe's embattled armies spoke:'Here let the troops in silence stay;One  
step beyond they must not stray.Come Dhrishti and Sumantra, youWith me  
alone the path pursue.'Their leader's speech the warriors heard,And from  
his place no soldier stirred,And Bharat beat his eager eyesWhere curling  
smoke was seen to rise.

The host his order well obeyed,

And halting there in silence stayedWatching where from the thicket's  
shade They saw the smoke appear.And joy through all the army ran,'Soon  
shall we meet,' thought every man, 'The prince we hold so dear.'Next:  
Canto XCIV.: Chitrakúta.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XCIV.: CHITRAKÚTA.

There long the son of Raghu dwelt

And love for hill and wood he felt.Then his Videhan spouse to pleaseAnd  
his own heart of woe to ease,Like some Immortal--Indra soMight Swarga's  
charms to S'achi show--Drew her sweet eyes to each delightOf Chitrakúta's  
lovely height:'Though reft of power and kingly sway,Though friends and  
home are far away,I cannot mourn my altered lot,Enamoured of this  
charming spot.Look, darling, on this noble hillWhich sweet birds with  
their music fill.Bright with a thousand metal dyesHis lofty summits  
cleave the skies.See, there a silvery sheen is spread,And there like  
blood the rocks are red.There shows a streak of emerald green,And pink  
and yellow glow between.There where the higher peaks ascend,Crystal and  
flowers and topaz blend.And others flash their light afarLike mercury or  
some fair star:With such a store of metals dyed

The king of hills is glorified.There through the wild birds' populous  
homeThe harmless bear and tiger roam:Hyaenas range the woody slopesWith  
herds of deer and antelopes.See, love, the trees that clothe his sideAll  
lovely in their summer pride,In richest wealth of leaves arrayed,With

flower and fruit and light and shade, Look where the young Rose-apple  
glows; What loaded boughs the Mango shows; See, waving in the western  
wind The light leaves of the Tamarind, And mark that giant Peepul  
through The feathery clump of tall bamboo.

1

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Look, on the level lands above, Delighting in successful love In sweet  
enjoyment many a pair Of heavenly minstrels revels there, While overhanging  
boughs support Their swords and mantles as they sport: Then see that  
pleasant shelter where Play the bright Daughters of the Air.

1

The mountain seems with bright cascade And sweet rill bursting from the  
shade, Like some majestic elephant o'er  
Whose burning head the torrents pour. Where breathes the man who would not  
feel Delicious languor o'er him steal, As the young morning breeze that  
springs From the cool cave with balmy wings, Breathes round him laden with  
the scent Of bud and blossom dew-besprent? If many autumns here I spent With  
thee, my darling innocent; And Lakshman, I should never know The torture of  
the fires of woe, This varied scene so charms my sight, This mount so fills  
me with delight, Where flowers in wild profusion spring, And ripe fruits  
glow and sweet birds sing. My beauteous one, a double good Springs from my  
dwelling in the wood: Loosed is the bond my sire that tied And Bharat too  
is gratified. My darling, dost thou feel with me Delight from every charm  
we see, Of which the mind and every sense Feel the enchanting influence? My  
fathers who have passed away, The royal saints, were wont to say  
That life in woodland shades like this

Secures a king immortal bliss. See, round the hill at random thrown.  
Huge masses lie of rugged stone Of every shape and many a hue, Yellow and  
white and red and blue. But all is fairer still by night: Each rock  
reflects a softer light, When the whole mount from foot to crest In robes  
of lambent flame is dressed; When from a million herbs a blaze Of their own  
luminous glory plays, And clothed in fire each deep ravine, Each pinnacle  
and crag is seen. Some parts the look of mansions wear, And others are as  
gardens fair, While others seem a massive block Of solid undivided  
rock. Behold those pleasant beds o'erlaid With lotus leaves, for lovers  
made, Where mountain birch and \*costus throw Cool shadows on the pair  
below. See where the lovers in their play Have cast their flowery wreaths  
away, And fruit and lotus buds that crowned Their brows lie trodden on the  
ground. North Kuru's realm is fair to see, Vasvaukasára,

1b Naliní, 2b

But rich in fruit and blossom still More fair is Chitrakúta's hill. Here  
shall the years appointed glide With thee, my beauty, by my side,

And Lakshman ever near; Here shall I live in all delight, Make my  
ancestral fame more bright, Tread in their path who walk aright, And to  
my oath adhere.'

Footnotes

202:1 These ten lines are a substitution for, and not a  
translation of the text which Carey and Marshman thus  
render: 'This mountain adorned with mango, (1) jumboo, (2) usuna, (3)  
lodhra, (4) piala, (5) punusa, (6) dhava, (7)

p. 203 unkotha, (8) bhuvya, (9) tinisha, (10) vilwa, (11)  
tindooka, (12) bamboo, (13) kashmaree, (14) urista, (15) vuruna, (16)  
madhooka, (17) tilaka, (18) vuduree, (19) amluka, (20) nipa, (21) vetra, (22)  
dhunwuna, (23) veejaka, (24) and other trees affording flowers, and fruits,  
and the most delightful shade, how charming does it appear!'

1 Mangifera Indica. 2 Eugenia Jambolifera, 3  
Terminalialata tomentosa. 4 This tree is not ascertained. 5 Chironjia  
Sapida. 6 Artocarpus integrifolia. 7 Grislea tomentosa. 8 Allangium  
hexapetalum. 9 Averrhoa carimbola. 10 Dalbergia Oujeinensis. 11 Ægle  
marmelos. 12 Diospyrus melanoxylon. 13 Well known.



14 Gmelina Arborea. 15 Sapindus Saponaria. 16 Cratoeva tapia. 17 Bassia la tifolia. 18 Not yet ascertained. 19 Zizyphus jujuba. 20 Phyllanthus emblica. 21 Nauclea Orientalis. 22 Calamusrotang. 23 Echites antidysenterica. 34 The citron tree.'

203:1 Vidyadharis, Spirits of Air, sylphs.

Next: Canto XCV.: Mandákiní.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XCV.: MANDÁKINÍ.

Then Ráma, like the lotus eyed,  
Descended from the mountain side,And to the Maithil lady showedThe lovely stream that softly flowed.And thus Ayodhyá's lord addressedHis bride, of dames the loveliest,Child of Videha's king, her faceBright with the fair moon's tender grace:'How sweetly glides, O darling, look,Mandákiní's delightful brook,Adorned with islets, blossoms gay,And s'arases and swans at play!

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The trees with which her banks are linedShow flowers and fruit of every kind:The match in radiant sheen is sheOf King Kuvera's Nalini.

1

My heart exults with pleasure newThe shelving hand and ford to view,Where gathering herds of thirsty deerDisturb the wave that ran so clear.Now look, those holy hermits markIn skins of deer and coats of bark;With twisted coils of matted hair,The reverend men are bathing there,And as they lift their arms on highThe Lord of Day they glorify:These best of saints, my large-eyed spouse,Are constant to their sacred vows.The mountain dances while the treesBend their proud summits to the breeze,And scatter many a flower and budFrom branches that o'erhang the flood.There flows the stream like lucid pearl,Round islets here the currents whirl,And perfect saints from middle airAre flocking to the waters there.See, there lie flowers in many a heapFrom boughs the whistling breezes sweep,And others wafted by the galeDown the swift current dance and sail.Now see that pair of wild-fowl rise,Exulting with their joyful cries:Hark, darling, wafted from afarHow soft their pleasant voices are.To gaze on Churakuta's hill,To look upon this lovely rill,To bend mine eyes on thee, dear wife,Is sweeter than my city life.Come, bathe we in the pleasant rillWhose dancing waves are never still,Stirred by those beings pure from sin,The sanctities who bathe therein:Come, dearest, to the stream descend,Approach her as a darling friend,And dip thee in the silver floodWhich lotuses and lilies stud.Let this fair hill Ayodhya seem,Its silvan things her people deem,And let these waters as they flowOur own beloved Sarju show.How blest, mine own dear love, am I;Thou, fond and true, art ever nigh,And duteous, faithful Lakshman staysBeside me, and my word obeys.Here every day I bathe me thrice,Fruit, honey, roots for food suffice,And ne'er my thoughts with longing strayTo distant home or royal sway.For who this charming brook can seeWhere herds of roedeer wander free,

And on the flowery-wooded brink

Apes, elephants, and lions drink, Nor feel all sorrow fly?'Thus eloquently spoke the prideOf Raghu's children to his bride,And wandered happy by her sideWhere Chitrakuta azure-dyed Uprears his peaks on high.

Footnotes

203:1b A lake attached either to Amaravati the residence of Indra, or Alaká that of Kuvera.

203:2b The Ganges of heaven.

204:1 Nalini, as here, may be the name of any lake covered with lotuses.

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CANTO XCVI. 1b: THE MAGIC SHAFT.

Thus Rama showed to Janak's child

The varied beauties of the wild, The hill, the brook and each fair spot, Then turned to seek their leafy cot. North of the mountain Rama found A cavern in the sloping ground, Charming to view, its floor was strown With many a mass of ore and stone, In secret shadow far retired Where gay birds sang with joy inspired, And trees their graceful branches swayed With loads of blossom downward weighed. Soon as he saw the cave which took Each living heart and chained the look, Thus Rama spoke to Sita, who Gazed wondering on the silvan view: 'Does this fair cave beneath the height, Videhan lady, charm thy sight? Then let us resting here a while The languor of the way beguile. That block of stone so smooth and square Was set for thee to rest on there, And like a thriving Kes'ar tree This flowery shrub o'ershadows thee.' Thus Rama spoke, and Janak's child, By nature ever soft and mild, In tender words which love betrayed Her answer to the hero made: 'O pride of Raghu's children, still My pleasure is to do thy will. Enough for me thy wish to know: Far hast thou wandered to and fro.' Thus Sita spake in gentle tone, And went obedient to the stone, Of perfect face and faultless limb Prepared to rest a while with him. And Rama, as she thus replied, Turned to his spouse again and cried: 'Thou seest, love, this flowery shade For silvan creatures' pleasure made, How the gum streams from trees and plants Torn by the tusks of elephants!

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Through all the forest clear and high Resounds the shrill cicala's cry. Hark how the kite above us moans, And calls her young in piteous tones; So may my hapless mother be Still mourning in her home for me. There mounted on that lofty Sál The loud Bhringráj 1 repeats his call: How sweetly now he tunes his throat Responsive to the Koíl's note. Or else the bird that now has sung May be himself the Koíl's young, Linked with such winning sweetness are The notes he pours irregular. See, round the blooming Mango clings That creeper with her tender rings, So in thy love, when none is near, Thine arms are thrown round me, my dear.' Thus in his joy he cried; and she, Sweet speaker, on her lover's knee, Of faultless limb and perfect face, Grew closer to her lord's embrace. Reclining in her husband's arms, A goddess in her wealth of charms, She filled his loving breast anew With mighty joy that thrilled him through. His finger on the rock he laid, Which veins of sanguine ore displayed, And painted o'er his darling's eyes The holy sign in mineral dyes. Bright on her brow the metal lay Like the young sun's first gleaming ray, And showed her in her beauty fair As the soft light of morning's air. Then from the Kes'ar's laden tree He picked fair blossoms in his glee, And as he decked each lovely tress, His heart o'erflowed with happiness.

So resting on that rocky seat A while they spent in pastime sweet, Then onward neath the shady boughs Went Ráma with his Maithil spouse. She roaming in the forest shade Where every kind of creature strayed Observed a monkey wandering near, And clung to Ráma's arm in fear. The hero Ráma fondly laced His mighty arms around her waist, Consoled his beauty in her dread, And scared the Monkey till he fled. That holy mark of sanguine ore That gleamed on Sítá's brow before, Shone by that close embrace impressed Upon the hero's ample chest. Then Sítá, when the beast who led The monkey troop, afar had fled, Laughed loudly in light-hearted glee That mark on Ráma's chest to see.

A clump of bright As'okas fired

The forest in their bloom attired: The restless blossoms as they gleamed A host of threatening monkeys seemed. Then Sítá thus to Ráma cried, As longingly the flowers she eyed: 'Pride of thy race, now let us go Where those As'oka blossoms grow.'

He on his darling's pleasure bent With his fair goddess thither went And roamed delighted through the wood Where blossoming As'okas stood, As S'iva with Queen Umá roves Through Himaván's majestic groves. Bright with

purpureal glow the pair  
Of happy lovers sported there,  
And each upon the other set  
A flower-inwoven coronet.  
There many a crown and chain they  
wove  
Of blooms from that As'oka grove,  
And in their graceful sport the  
two  
Fresh beauty o'er the mountain threw.  
The lover let his love survey  
Each pleasant spot that round them lay,  
Then turned they to their green  
retreat  
Where all was garnished, gay, and neat.  
By brotherly affection led,  
Sumitrá's son to meet them sped,  
And showed the labours of the day  
Done while his brother was away.  
There lay ten black-deer duly slain  
With arrows pure of poison stain,  
Piled in a mighty heap to dry,  
With many another carcass nigh.  
And Lakshman's brother saw, o'erjoyed,  
The work that had his hands employed,  
Then to his consort thus he cried:

'Now be the general gifts supplied.'  
Then Sítá, fairest beauty, placed  
The food for living things to taste,  
And set before the brothers meat  
And honey that the pair might eat.  
They ate the meal her hands supplied,  
Their lips with water purified:  
Then Janak's daughter sat at last  
And duly made her own repast.  
The other venison, to be dried,  
Piled up in heaps was set aside,  
And Ráma told his wife to stay  
And drive the flocking crows away.  
Her husband saw her much distressed  
By one more bold than all the rest,  
Whose wings where'er he chose could fly,  
Now pierce the earth, now roam the sky.  
Then Ráma laughed to see her stirred  
To anger by the plaguing bird:  
Proud of his love the beauteous dame  
With burning rage was all aflame.  
Now here, now there, again, again  
She chased the crow, but all in vain,  
Enraging her, so quick to strike

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With beak and wing find claw alike:  
Then how the proud lip quivered, how  
The dark frown marked her angry brow!  
When Ráma saw her cheek aglow  
With passion, he rebuked the crow.  
But bold in impudence the bird,  
With no respect for Ráma's word,  
Fearless again at Sítá flew:  
Then Ráma's wrath to fury grew.  
The hero of the mighty arm  
Spoke o'er a shaft the mystic charm,  
Laid the dire weapon on his bow  
And launched it at the shameless crow.  
The bird, empowered by Gods to spring  
Through earth itself on rapid wing,  
Through the three worlds in terror fled  
Still followed by that arrow dread.  
Where'er he flew, now here now there,  
A cloud of weapons filled the air.  
Back to the high-souled prince he fled  
And bent at Ráma's feet his head,  
And then, as Sítá looked, began  
His speech in accents of a man:  
'O pardon, and for pity's sake  
Spare, Ráma, spare my life to take!  
Where'er I turn, where'er I flee,  
No shelter from this shaft I see.'

The chieftain heard the crow entreat

Helpless and prostrate at his feet,  
And while soft pity moved his breast,  
With wisest speech the bird addressed:  
'I took the troubled Sítá's part,  
And furious anger filled my heart.  
Then on the string my arrow lay  
Charmed with a spell thy life to slay.  
Thou seekest now my feet, to crave  
Forgiveness and thy life to save.  
So shall thy prayer have due respect:  
The suppliant I must still protect.  
But ne'er in vain this dart may flee;  
Yield for thy life a part of thee,  
What portion of thy body, say,  
Shall this mine arrow rend away?  
Thus far, O bird, thus far alone  
On thee my pity may be shown.  
Forfeit a part thy life to buy:  
'Tis better so to live than die.'  
Thus Ráma spoke: the bird of air  
Pondered his speech with anxious care,  
And wisely deemed it good to give  
One of his eyes that he might live.  
To Raghu's son he made reply:  
'O Ráma, I will yield an eye.  
So let me in thy grace confide  
And live hereafter single-eyed.'  
Then Ráma charged the shaft, and lo,  
Full in the eye it smote the crow.  
And the Videhan lady gazed  
Upon the ruined eye amazed.

The crow to Ráma humbly bent,  
Then where his fancy led he went.  
Ráma with Lakshman by his side  
With needful work was occupied.

Footnotes

204:1b This canto is allowed, by Indian commentators, to be an interpolation. It cannot be the work of Valmiki.

205:1 A fine bird with a strong, sweet note, and great imitative powers.

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CANTO XCVII.: LAKSHMAN'S ANGER.

Thus Ráma showed his love the rill

Whose waters ran beneath the hill,Then resting on his mountain  
seatRefreshed her with the choicest meat.So there reposed the happy  
two:Then Bharat's army nearer drew:Rose to the skies a dusty cloud,The  
sound of trampling feet was loud.The swelling roar of marching menDrove  
the roused tiger from his den,And scared amain the serpent raceFlying to  
hole and hiding-place.The herds of deer in terror fled,The air was filled  
with birds o'erhead,The bear began to leave his tree,The monkey to the  
cave to flee.Wild elephants were all amazedAs though the wood around them  
blazed.The lion oped his ponderous jaw,The buffalo looked round in  
awe.The prince, who heard the deafening sound.And saw the silvan  
creatures roundFly wildly startled from their rest,The glorious Lakshman  
thus addressed:'Sumitrá's noble son most dear,  
Hark, Lakshman, what a roar I hear,The tumult of a coming  
crowd.Appalling, deafening, deep, and loud!The din that yet more fearful  
growsScares elephants and buffaloes,Or frightened by the lions, deerAre  
flying through the wood in fear.I fain would know who seeks this  
place:Comes prince or monarch for the chase?Or does some mighty beast of  
preyFrighten the silvan herds away?Tis hard to reach this mountain  
height,Yea, e'en for birds in airy flight.Then fain, O Lakshman, would I  
knowWhat cause disturbs the forest so.'

Lakshman in haste, the wood to view.

Climbed a high Sál that near him grew,The forest all around he eyed,First  
gazing on the eastern side.Then northward when his eyes he bentHe saw a  
mighty armamentOf elephants, and cars, and horse,And men on foot, a  
mingled force,And banners waving in the breeze,And spoke to Ráma words  
like these:'Quick, quick, my lord, put out the fire,Let Sítá to the cave  
retire.p. 207

Thy coat of mail around thee throw,

Prepare thine arrows and thy bow.'

In eager haste thus Lakshman cried,

And Ráma, lion lord, replied:'Still closer be the army scanned,And say  
who leads the warlike band.'Lakshman his answer thus returned,As furious  
rage within him burned,Exciting him like kindled fireTo scorch the army  
in his ire:'Tis Bharat: he has made the throneBy consecrating rites his  
own:To gain the whole dominion thusHe comes in arms to slaughter us.I  
mark tree-high upon his carHis flagstaff of the Kovídár,

1

I see his glittering banner glance,I see his chivalry advance:I see his  
eager warriors shineOn elephants in lengthened line.Now grasp we each the  
shafts and bow,And higher up the mountain go.Or in this place, O hero,  
standWith weapons in each ready hand.Perhaps beneath our might may  
fallThis leader of the standard tall,  
And Bharat I this day may seeWho brought this mighty woe on thee,Sítá,  
and me, who drove awayMy brother from the royal sway.Bharat our foe at  
length is nigh,And by this hand shall surely die:Brother, I see no sin at  
allIf Bharat by my weapon fall.No fault is his who slays the foeWhose  
hand was first to strike the blow:With Bharat now the crime beginsWho  
against thee and duty sins.The queen athirst for royal swayWill see her  
darling son to-dayFall by this hand, like some fair treeStruck by an  
elephant, slain by me.Kaikeyí's self shall perish tooWith kith and kin  
and retinue,And earth by my avenging deedShall from this mass of sin be  
freed.This day my wrath, too long restrained,Shall fall upon the foe,  
unchained,Mad as the kindled flame that speedsDestroying through the  
grass and reeds.This day mine arrows keen and fierceThe bodies of the foe  
shall pierce;The woods on Chitrakúta's sideShall run with torrents  
crimson-dyed.The wandering beasts of prey shall feed

On heart-cleft elephant and steed, And drag to mountain caves away  
The bodies that my arrows slay. Doubt not that Bharat and his train  
Shall in this mighty wood be slain:

So shall I pay the debt my bow And these my deadly arrows owe.

Footnotes

207:1 Bauhinea variegata, a species of ebony.

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CANTO XCVIII: LAKSHMAN CALMED.

Then Rāma nobly calm allayed

The wrath that Lakshman's bosom swayed: 'What need have we the sword to  
wield, To bend the bow or lift the shield, If Bharat brave, and wise, and  
good, Himself has sought this sheltering wood? I swear my father's will to  
do, And if I now my brother slew What gain in kingship should I  
find, Despised and scorned by all mankind? Believe me, e'en as I would  
shrink From poisoned meat or deadly drink, No power or treasure would I  
win By fall of friend or kith or kin. Brother, believe the words I  
speak: For your dear sakes alone I seek Duty and pleasure, wealth and  
gain: A holy life, a happy reign. If royal sway my heart desires, My  
brothers' weal the wish inspires: Their bliss and safety is my care, By  
this uplifted bow I swear. 'Twere not so hard for me to gain This broad  
land girdled by the main, But even Indra's royal might

Should ne'er be mine in duty's spite, If any bliss my soul can see Deprived  
of dear S'atrughna, thee, And Bharat, may the flame destroy With ashy gloom  
the selfish joy. Far dearer than this life of mine, Knowing the custom of  
our line, His heart with fond affection fraught, Bharat Ayodhyá's town  
resought, And hearing when he came that I, With thee and Sítá, forced to  
fly With matted hair and hermit dress Am wandering in the wilderness. While  
grief his troubled senses storms, And tender love his bosom warms, From  
every thought of evil clear, Is come to meet his brother here. Some  
grievous words perchance he spoke Kaikeyí's anger to provoke, Then won the  
king, and comes to lay Before my feet the royal sway. Hither, methinks, in  
season due Comes Bharat for an interview, Nor in his secret heart has he One  
evil thought 'gainst thee or me. What has he done ere now, reflect! How  
failed in love or due respectp. 208

To make thee doubt his faith and lay

This evil to his charge to-day? Thou shouldst not join with Bharat's  
name So harsh a speech and idle blame. The blows thy tongue at Bharat  
deals, My sympathizing bosom feels. How, urged by stress of any ill, Should  
sons their father's life-blood spill, Or brother slay in impious strife A  
brother dearer than his life? If thou these cruel words hast said By strong  
desire of empire led, My brother Bharat will I pray To give to thee the  
kingly sway. 'Give him the realm', my speech shall be, And Bharat will,  
methinks, agree.' Thus spoke the prince whose chief delight Was duty,  
and to aid the right: And Lakshman keenly felt the blame, And shrank within  
himself for shame: And then his answer thus returned, With downcast eye and  
cheek that burned: 'Brother, I weep, to see thy face Our sire himself has  
sought this place.' Thus Lakshman spoke and stood ashamed, And Rama saw and  
thus exclaimed: 'It is the strong-armed monarch: he Is come, methinks, his  
sons to see,

To bid us both the forest quit For joys for which he deems us fit: He  
thinks on all our care and pain, And now would lead us home again. My  
glorious father hence will bear Sita who claims all tender care. I see two  
coursers fleet as storms, Of noble breed and lovely forms. I see the beast  
of mountain size Who bears the king our father wise, The aged Victor, march  
this way In front of all the armed array. But doubt and fear within me  
rise, For when I look with eager eyes I see no white umbrella spread, World-  
famous, o'er the royal head. Now, Lakshman, from the tree descend, And to  
my words attention lend. Thus spoke the pious prince: and he Descended  
from the lofty tree, And reverent hand to hand applied, Stood humbly by his

brother's side. The host, compelled by Bharat's care,The wood from  
trampling feet to spare,Dense crowding half a league each wayEncamped  
around the mountain lay.Below the tall hill's shelving sideGleamed the  
bright army far and wide Spread o'er the ample space,  
By Bharat led who firmly trueIn duty from his bosom threwAll pride, and  
near his brother drewTo win the hero's grace.

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#### CANTO XCIX.: BHARAT'S APPROACH.

Soon as the warriors took their rest  
Obeying Bharat's high behest,Thus Bharat to Satrughna spake:'A band of  
soldiers with thee take,And with these hunters o'er and o'erThe thickets  
of the wood explore.With bow, sword, arrows in their handsLet Guba with  
his kindred bandsWithin this grove remaining traceThe children of  
Kakutstha's race.And I meanwhile on foot will throughThis neighbouring  
wood my way pursue,With elders and the twice-born men,And every lord and  
citizen.There is, I feel, no rest for meTill Rama's face again I  
see,Lakshman, in arms and glory great,And Sita born to happy fate:No  
rest, until his cheek as brightAs the fair moon rejoice my sight,No rest  
until I see the eyeWith which the lotus petals vie;Till on my head those  
dear feet restWith signs of royal rank impressed;None, till my kingly  
brother gain

His old hereditary reign,Till o'er his limbs and noble headThe  
consecrating drops be shed.How blest is Janak's daughter, trueTo every  
wifely duty, whoCleaves faithful to her husband's sideWhose realm is girt  
by Ocean's tide!This mountain too above the restE'en as the King of Hills  
is blest,--Whose shades Kakutstha's scion holdAs Nandan charms the Lord  
of Gold.Yea, happy is this tangled groveWhere savage beasts unnumbered  
rove,Where, glory of the Warrior race,King Rama finds a dwelling-place.'  
Thus Bharat, strong-armed hero spake,And walked within the pathless  
brake.O'er plains where gay trees bloomed he went,Through boughs in  
tangled net-work bent,And then from Rama's cot appearedThe banner which  
the flame upreared.And Bharat joyed with every friendTo mark those smokv  
wreaths ascend:'Here Rama dwells,' he thought; 'at lastThe ocean of our  
toil is passed.' Then sure that Rama's hermit cot Was on the  
mountain's side He stayed his army on the spot, And on with Guha  
hied.

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CANTO C.: THE MEETING.

'Then Bharat to Satrughna showed  
The spot, and eager onward strode,First bidding Saint Vasishtha bringThe  
widowed consorts of the king,As by fraternal love impelledHis onward  
course the hero held,Sumantra followed close behindSatrughra with an  
anxious mind:Not Bharat's self more fain could beTo look on Rama's face  
than he.As, speeding on, the spot he neared,Amid the hermits' homes  
appearedHis brother's cot with leaves o'erspread,And by its side a lowly  
shed.Before the shed great heaps were leftOf gathered flowers and billets  
cleft,And on the trees hung grass and barkRama and Lakshman's path to  
mark:And heaps of fuel to provideAgainst the cold stood ready dried.The  
long-armed chief, as on he wentIn glory's light preeminent,With joyous  
words like these addressedThe brave Satrughna and the rest:'This is the  
place, I little doubt,  
Which Bharadvāja pointed out,Not far from where we stand must beThe  
woodland stream, Mandākinī.Here on the mountain's woody sideRoam  
elephants in tusked pride,And ever with a roar and cryEach other, as they  
meet, defy.And see those smoke-wreaths thick and dark:The presence of the  
flame they mark,Which hermits in the forest striveBy every art to keep  
alive.O happy me! my task is done,And I shall look on Raghu's son,Like  
some great saint, who loves to treatHis elders with all reverence

meet.'Thus Bharat reached that forest rill,Thus roamed on Chitrakuta's hill;Then pity in his breast awoke,And to his friends the hero spoke:'Woe, woe upon my life and birth!The prince of men, the lord of earthHas sought the lonely wood to dwellSequestered in a hermit's cell.Through me, through me these sorrows fallOn him the splendid lord of all:Through me resigning earthly blissHe hides him in a home like this.Now will I, by the world abhorred,Fall at the dear feet of my lord,And at fair Sitft's too, to winHis pardon for my heinous sin.'

As thus he sadly mourned and sighed,  
The son of Dasaratha spiedA bower of leafy branches made,Sacred and lovely in the shade,Of fair proportions large and tall,Well roofed with boughs of palm, and Sál,Arranged in order due o'erheadLike grass upon an altar spread.Two glorious bows were gleaming there,Like Indra's  
1 in the rainy air,

Terror of foemen. backed with gold,Meet for the mightiest hand to hold:And quivered arrows cast a blazeBright gleaming like the Day-God's rays:Thus serpents with their eyes aglowAdorn their capital below.

2

Great swords adorned the cottage, laidEach in a case of gold brocade;There hung the trusty shields, whereon.With purest gold the bosses shone.The brace to bind the Bowman's arm,The glove to shield his hand from harm,A lustre to the cottage lentFrom many a golden ornament:Safe was the cot from fear of menAs from wild beasts the lion's den.

The fire upon the altar burned,That to the north and east was turned.Bharat his eager glances bentAnd gazed within the cot intent;In deerskin dress, with matted hair,Rama his chief was sitting there:With liou-shl ulders broad and strong,With lotus eyes, arms thick and long.The righteous sovereign, who should beLord paramount from sea to sea,High-minded, born to lofty fate,Like Brahma's self supremely great;With Lakshman by his side, and her,Fair Sita, for his minister.And Bharat gazing, overcomeBy sorrow for a while was dumb,Then, yielding to his woe, he ranTo Kama and with sobs began:'He who a royal seat should fillWith subjects round to do his will,My elder brother,--see him here,With silvan creatures waiting near.The high-souled hero, wont to wearThe costliest robes exceeding fair,Now banished, in a deerskin dress,Here keeps the path of righteousness.How brooks the son of Eaghu nowThe matted locks which load his brow,Around whose princely head were twined Sweet blossoms of the rarest kind?The prince whose merits grew, acquired  
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By rites performed as he desired,Would now a store of merit gainBought by his body's toil and pain.Those limbs to which pure sandal lentThe freshness of its fragrant scent,Exposed to sun. and dust, and rain,Are now defiled with many a stain.And I the wretched cause why thisFalls on the prince whose right is bliss!Ah me, that ever I was bornTo be the people's hate and scorn!' Thus Bharat cried: of anguish sprung,Great drops upon his forehead hung.He fell o'erpowered-his grief was such-Ere he is brother's feet could touch.As on the glorious prince he gazedIn vain his broken voice he raised:'Dear lord'--through tears and sobbing came,The only words his lips could frame.And brave Satrughna wept aloud,As low at Ráma's feet he bowed.Then Ráma, while his tears ran fast,His arms around his brothers cast.Guha, Sumantra came to meet The princes in their wild retreat. Vrihaspati and Sukra bright Their greeting thus rejoice to pay To the dear Lord who brings the night, And the great God who rules the day. Then wept the dwellers of the shade, Whose eyes the princes, meet to ride On mighty elephants, surveyed; And cast all thought of joy aside.

Footnotes

209:1 The rainbow is called the bow of Indra.

209:2 Bhogavatí, the abode of the Nagas or Serpent race.

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CANTO CI.: BHARAT QUESTIONED.

Then Rama gazed, and scarcely knew

Bharat so worn and changed in hue.He raised him, kissed him on the  
head,Embraced him, and thus kindly said;'Where was thy father, brother  
dear,That thou art come to seek me here?Unmeet, if he be living yet,Thy  
feet within the wood to set.I pray thee now the cause declareWhy thou  
hast left the kingdom there,With matted locks and deerskin dressTo roam  
the distant wilderness.'

Thus questioned by the prince, at length

Kaikeyi's son regained his strength,And hand to hand in reverence laid,To  
Rama thus his answer made:'The great-armed monarch, O my lard,Has dared  
to do a thing abhorred,Left us, and grieving for his son,A home among the  
Gods has won.

My mother Queen Kaikeyf gaveThe order to the king her slave,

And at the bidding of the dameHe wrought the sin which mars his  
fame.Athirst for sway, her hopes are crossed,She mourns her son, her  
husband lost,And through her impious crime will goFor punishment to hell  
below.Now O my lord, forgive me all;Be gracious to thy lowly  
thrall:Anointed king, accept to-dayLike Iudra's self, the royal sway.Be  
gracious, Prince, to lord and peer,And widowed queens who seek thee  
hereAccept the kingdom thine by right.And so thy faithful friends  
delight.Let the broad land no longer beAll widowed and forlorn of  
thee:Let the full moon of autumn reignTriumphant o'er the night  
again.These lords and I before thee bend:O Rama, to Our prayer attend.O  
do not thou this grace deny:Thy brother, pupil, slave am I.Look on this  
venerable ring,Advisers of our sire the king.From age to age so honoured:  
thouShouldst grant their supplication now?   As weeping thus the hero  
prayed,His head at Rama's feet he laid.Like a mad elephant he sighed:  
And Rama, gazed and thus replied:'How, brother, Can a man of worth,True  
to his vows, of noble birth-A man like me, commit a sinThe lordship of  
the land to win?No slightest shade of fault I see,O tamer of thy foes, in  
thee.But ne'er shouldst thou in childish thoughtThe queen thy mother  
blame in aught,O brother wise and sinless, knowThe sacred laws would have  
it so,That from good wife and son requireObedience to their lord and  
sire.And we are all the king's, for thusThe virtuous ever reckon us:Yea  
brother, be it known to thee,His wives, and sons, and pupils we.His is  
the right, if he deem fit,To bid me, throned as monarch, sit,Or in a coat  
of bark expel,And deerskin, in the wood to dwell.And O remember, best of  
allWho act as claims of duty call,As to a virtuous sire is due,Such  
honour claims a mother too.So they whose lives have ever beenBy duty led,  
the king and queen,Said,'Rama, seek the forest shade:'And I (what could I  
else?) obeyed.

Thou must the royal power retain,

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And o'er the famed Ayodhyá reign:I dressed in bark my days will  
spentWhere Dandak'a forest wilds extend.So Das'aratha spoke, our king,His  
share to each apportioningBefore his honoured servants, eyes:Then, heir  
of bliss, he sought the skies.The righteous monarch's honoured will,Whom  
all revered, must guide thee still,And thou must still enjoy the  
shareAssigned thee by our father's care.So I till twice seven years are  
spentWill roam this wood in banishment,Contented with the lot which he,My  
high-souled sire, has given me.The charge the monarch gave, endearedTo  
all mankind, by all revered,   Peer of the Lord Supreme,Far better,  
richer far in gainOf every blessing than to reign   O'er all the worlds I  
deem.'

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CANTO CII.: BHARAT'S TIDINGS.



He spoke: and Bharat thus replied;

'If, false to every claim beside, I ne'er in kingly duties fail, What will my royal life avail? Still should the custom be observed, From which our line has never swerved, Which to the younger son ne'er gives The kingdom while the elder lives. Now to Ayodhya rich and fair With me, O Raghu's son, repair, And to protect and gladden all Our house, thyself as king install, A king the world's opinion deems A man: to me a God he seems, Whose life in virtuous thoughts and deeds The lives of other men exceeds. When I in distant Kekaya stayed, And thou hadst sought the forest shade, Our father died, the saints' delight, So constant in each holy rite. Scarce with thy wife and Lakshman thou Hadst journeyed forth to keep the vow, When mourning for his son, forspent, To heavenly rest the monarch went, Then up, O lord of men, away!

His funeral rites of water pay: I and S'atrughna, ere we came, Neglected not the sacred claim. But in the spirit-world, they say, That gift alone is fresh for aye Which best beloved hands have poured; And thou his dearest art, my lord. For thee he longed, for thee he grieved, His every thought on thee was bent, And crushed by woe, of thee bereaved, He thought of thee as hence he went.'

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CANTO CIII.: THE FUNERAL LIBATION.

When Rama heard from Bharat each

Dark sorrow of his mournful speech, And tidings of his father dead, His spirits fell, his senses fled. For the sad words his brother spoke Struck on him like a thunder stroke. Fierce as the bolt which Indra throws, The victor of his Daitya foes. Raising his arms in anguish, he, As when the woodman hews a tree With its fair flowery branches crowned, Fainted and fell upon the ground. Lord of the earth to earth he sank. Helpless, as when a towering bank With sudden ruin buries deep An elephant who lay asleep. Then swift his wife and brothers flew, And water, weeping, o'er him threw. As slowly sense and strength he gained, Fast from his eyes the tears he rained, And then in accents sad and weak Kakutstha's son began to speak, And mourning for the monarch dead, With righteous words to Bharat said: 'What calls me home, when he, alas, Has gone the way which all must pass? Of him, the best of kings bereft What guardian has Ayodhya left? How may I please his spirit? how Delight the high-souled monarch now, Who wept for me and went above By me ungraced with mourning love! Ah, happy brothers! you have paid Due offerings to his parting shade. E'en when my banishment is o'er, Back to my home I go no more, To look upon the widowed state Reft of her king, disconsolate. E'en then, O tamer of the foe, If to Ayodhya's town I go. Who will direct me as of old, Now other worlds our father hold? From whom, my brother, shall I hear Those words which ever charmed mine ear And filled my bosom with delight? Whene'er he saw me act aright?' Thus Rama spoke: then nearer came And looking on his moonbright dame, 'Sit'a, the king is gone,' he said: 'And Lakshman, know thy sire is dead,

p. 212 And with the Gods on high enrolled:

This mournful news has Bharat told. 'He spoke: the noble youths with sighs Rained down the torrents from their eyes. And then the brothers of the chief With words of comfort soothed his grief: 'Now to the king our sire who swayed The earth be due libations paid.' Soon as the monarch's fate she knew, Sharp pangs of grief smote Sita through: Nor could she look upon her lord With eyes from which the torrents poured. And Rama strove with tender care To soothe the weeping dame's despair, And then, with piercing woe distressed, The mournful Lakshman thus addressed: 'Brother, I pray thee bring for me The pressed fruit of the Ingudi, And a bark mantle fresh and new, That I may pay this offering due. First of the three shall Sita go, Next thou, and I the last: for so Moves the funereal pomp of woe.'

Sumantra of the noble mind, Gentle and modest, meek and kind, Who,  
 follower of each princely youth, To Rama clung with constant truth, Now  
 with the royal brothers' aid The grief of Rama soothed and stayed, And lent  
 his arm his lord to guide  
 Down to the river's holy side. That lovely stream the heroes found, With  
 woods that ever blossomed crowned, And there in bitter sorrow bent Their  
 footsteps down the fair descent. Then where the stream that swiftly  
 flowed A pure pellucid shallow showed, The funeral drops they duly shed, And  
 'Father, this be thine,' they said. But he, the lord who ruled the  
 land, Filled from the stream his hollowed hand, And turning to the southern  
 side Stretched out his arm and weeping cried: 'This sacred water clear and  
 pure, An offering which shall aye endure To thee, O lord of kings, I  
 give: Accept it where the spirits live!' Then, when the solemn rite was  
 o'er, Came Rama to the river shore, And offered, with his brothers'  
 aid, Fresh tribute to his father's shade.  
 With jujube fruit he mixed the seed  
 Of Ingudis from moisture freed, And placed it on a spot o'erspread With  
 sacred grass, and weeping said: 'Enjoy, great King, the cake which we Thy  
 children eat and offer thee! For ne'er do blessed Gods refuse  
 To share the food which mortals use.' Then Rama turned him to  
 retrace The path that brought him to the place, And up the mountain's  
 pleasant side Where lovely lawns lay fair, he hied. Soon as his cottage  
 door he gained. His brothers to his breast he strained. From them and Sit'a  
 in their woes So loud the cry of weeping rose, That like the roar of lions  
 round The mountain rolled the echoing sound. And Bharat's army shook with  
 fear The weeping of the chiefs to hear. 'Bharat,' the soldiers cried, 'tis  
 plain, His brother Rama meets again, And with these cries that round us  
 ring They sorrow for their sire the king. Then leaving car and wain  
 behind, One eager thought in every mind, Swift toward the weeping, every  
 man, As each could find a passage, ran. Some thither bent their eager  
 course With car, and elephant, and horse, And youthful captains on their  
 feet With longing sped their lord to meet, As though the new-come prince  
 had been An exile for long years unseen. Earth beaten in their frantic  
 zeal By clattering hoof and rumbling wheel,  
 Sent forth a deafening noise as loud As heaven when black with many a  
 cloud, Then, with their consorts gathered near, Wild elephants in sudden  
 fear Rushed to a distant wood, and shed An odour round them as they  
 fled. And every silvan thing that dwelt Within those shades the terror  
 felt, Deer, lion, tiger, boar and roe, Bison, wild-cow, and buffalo. And  
 when the tumult wild they heard. With trembling pinions flew each  
 bird, From tree, from thicket, and from lake, Swan, koil, curlew, crane,  
 and drake. With men the ground was overspread, With startled birds the sky  
 o'erhead. Then on his sacrificial ground The sinless, glorious chief was  
 found. Loading with curses deep and loud The hump-back and the queen, the  
 crowd. Whose checks were wet, whose eyes were dim, In fond affection ran to  
 him. While the big tears their eyes bedewed, He looked upon the multitude,  
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And then as sire and mother do, His arms about his loved ones threw.

Some to his feet with reverence pressed, Some in his arms he  
 strained: Each friend, with kindly words addressed, Due share of  
 honour gained. Then, by their mighty woe o'ercome, The weeping  
 heroes' cry Filled, like the roar of many a drum, Hill, cavern,  
 earth, and sky.

Footnotes

212:1 'The order of the procession on these occasions is  
 that the children precede according to age, then the  
 women and after that the men according to age, the youngest first and the  
 eldest last: when they descend into the water this is reversed and  
 resumed when they come out of it.'

CAREY AND MAKSHMAN.

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CANTO CIV.: THE MEETING WITH THE  
QUEENS.

Vas'ishtha with his soul athirst

To look again on Rama, firstIn line the royal widows placed,And then the  
way behind them traced.The ladies moving, faint and slow,Saw the fair  
stream before them flow,And by the bank their steps were ledWhich the two  
brothers visited.Kausalya with her faded cheekArid weeping eyes began to  
speak,And thus in mournful tones addressedThe queen Sumitra and the  
rest:'See in the wood the bank's descent,Which the two orphan youths  
frequent,Whose noble spirits never fall,Though woes surround them, reft  
of all.Thy son with love that never tiresDraws water hence which mine  
requires,This day, for lowly toil unfit.His pious task thy son should  
quit.' As on the long-eyed lady strayed,On holy grass, whose points  
were laidDirected to the southern sky,

When Rama's humble gift she spiedThus to the queens Kausalya cried:'The  
gift of Rama's hand behold,His tribute to the king high-souled,Offered to  
him, as texts require,Lord of Ikshhvaku's line, his sire!Not such I deem  
the funeral foodOf kings with godlike might endued.Can he who knew all  
pleasuies, heWho ruled the earth from sea to sea,The mighty lord of  
monarchs, feedOn Ingudi's extracted seed?In all the world there cannot  
beA woe, I ween, more sad to see,Than that my glorious son should makeHis  
funeral gilt of such a cake.The ancient text I oft have heardThis day is  
true in every word:'Ne'er do the blessed Gods refuseTo eat the food their  
children use.' The ladies soothed the weeping dame:

To Rama's hermitage they came,

And there the hero met their eyesLike a God fallen from the skies.Him  
joyless, reft of all, they viewed,And tears their mournful eyes  
bedewed.The truthful hero left his seat,And clasped the ladies' lotus  
feet,

And they with soft hands brushed awayThe dust that on his shoulders  
lay.Then Lakshman, when he saw each queenWith weeping eyes and troubled  
mien,Near to the royal ladies drewAnd paid them gentle reverence too.He,  
Das'aratha's offspring, signedThe heir of bliss by Fortune kind,Received  
from every dame no lessEach mark of love and tenderness.And Sita came and  
bent beforeThe widows, while her eyes ran o'er,And pressed their feet  
with many a tear.They when they saw the lady dearPale, worn with dwelling  
in the wild.Embraced her as a darling child:Daughter of royal Janak,  
brideOf Das'aratha's son, they cried,'How couldst thou, offering of a  
king,Endure this woe and sufferingIn the wild forest? When I traceEach  
sign of trouble on thy face-That lotus which the sun has dried,That lily  
by the tempest tried,That gold whereon the dust is spread,That moon  
whence all the light is fled--Sorrow assails my heart, alas!As fire  
consumes the wood and grass.' Then Rama, as she spoke distressed,  
The feet of Saint Vas'ishtha pressed, Touched them with reverential  
love, Then near him took his seat: Thus Indra clasps in realms  
above The Heavenly Teacher's  
1 feet.

Then with each counsellor and peer, Bharat of duteous mind, With  
citizens and captains near, Sat humbly down behind. When with his  
hands to him upraised, In devotee's attire. Bharat upon his brother  
gazed Whose glory shone like fire, As when the pure Maheridra bends  
To the great Lord of Life, Among his noble crowd of friends This  
anxious thought was rife: 'What words to Raghu's son to-day Will  
royal Bharat speak, Whose heart has been so prompt to pay Obeisance  
fond and meek?' Then steadfast Rama, Lakshman wise, Bharat for  
truth renowned,

Shone like three fires that heavenward rise      With holy priests  
around.

Footnotes  
213:1 Vrihaspati, the preceptor of the Gods.

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CANTO CV.: RAMA'S SPEECH.

A while they sat, each lip compressed,  
Then Bharat thus his chief addressed: 'My mother here was made content; To  
me was given the government. This now, my lord, I yield to thee: Enjoy it,  
from all trouble free. Like a great bridge the floods have rent, Impetuous  
in their wild descent, All other hands but thine in vain Would strive the  
burthen to maintain. In vain the ass with steeds would vie, With Tárkshya,  
1 birds that wing the sky;

So, lord of men, my power is slight To rival thine imperial might. Great  
joys his happy days attend On whom the hopes of men depend, But wretched is  
the life he leads Who still the aid of others needs. And if the seed a man  
has sown, With care and kindly nurture grown, Rear its huge trunk and  
spring in time Too bulky for a dwarf to climb, Yet, with perpetual blossom  
gay, No fruit upon its boughs display, Ne'er can that tree, thus nursed in  
vain,

Approval of the virtuous gain. The simile is meant to be Applied, O mighty-  
armed, to thee, Because, our lord and leader, thou Protectest not thy  
people now. O, be the longing wish fulfilled Of every chief of house and  
guild, To see again their sun-bright lord Victorious to his realm  
restored! As thou returnest through the crowd Let roars of elephants be  
loud. And each fair woman lift her voice And in her new-found king  
rejoice.' The people all with longing moved, The words that Bharat spoke  
approved, And crowding near to Ráma pressed The hero with the same  
request. The steadfast Ráma, when he viewed His glorious brother's mournful  
mood, With each ambitious thought controlled, Thus the lamenting prince  
consoled: 'I cannot do the things I will, For Ráma is but mortal still. Fate  
with supreme, resistless law This way and that its slave will draw, All  
gathered heaps must waste away, All lofty lore and powers decay. Death is  
the end of life, and all,

Now firmly joined, apart must fall. One fear the ripened fruit must  
know, To fall upon the earth below; So every man who draws his breath Must  
fear inevitable death. The pillared mansion, high, compact, Must fall by  
Time's strong hand attacked; So mortal men, the gradual prey Of old and  
ruthless death, decay. The night that flies no more returns: Yamuná for the  
Ocean yearns: Swift her impetuous waters flee, But roll not backward from  
the sea. The days and nights pass swiftly by And steal our moments as they  
fly. E'en as the sun's un pitying rays Drink up the floods in summer  
blaze. Then for thyself lament and leave For death of other men to  
grieve, For if thou go or if thou stay. Thy life is shorter day by  
day. Death travels with us; death attends Our steps until our journey  
ends. Death, when the traveller wins the goal, Returns with the returning  
soul. The flowing hair grown\* white and thin, And wrinkles mark the altered  
skin. The ills of age man's strength assail: Ah, what can mortal power  
avail?

Men joy to see the sun arise, They watch him set with joyful eyes: But  
ne'er reflect, too blind to see, How fast their own brief moments  
flee. With lovely change for ever new The seasons' sweet return they  
view, Nor think with heedless hearts the while That lives decay as seasons  
smile. As haply on the boundless main Meet drifting logs and part again. So  
wives and children, friends and gold, Ours for a little time we hold: Soon  
by resistless laws of fate To meet no more we separate. In all this  
changing world not one The common lot of all can shun: Then why with  
useless tears deplore The dead whom tears can bring no more? As one might  
stand upon the way And to a troop of travellers say: 'If ye allow it, sirs,  
I too Will travel on the road with you: 'So why should mortal man

lamentWhen on that path his feet are bentWhich all men living needs must  
tread,Where sire and ancestors have led?Life flies as torrents downward  
fallSpeeding away without recall,So virtue should our thoughts engage,  
For bliss 1b is mortals' heritage,  
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By ceaseless care and earnest zealFor servants and for people's weal,By  
gifts, by duty nobly done,Our glorious sire the skies has won.Our lord  
the king, o'er earth who reigned,A blissful home in heaven has gainedBy  
wealth in ample largess spent,And many a rite magnificent:With constant  
joy from first to lastA long and noble life he passed,Praised by the  
good, no tears should dimOur eyes, O brother dear, for him.His human  
body, worn and triedBy length of days, he cast aside,And gained the  
godlike bliss to strayIn Brahma's heavenly home for aye."For such the  
wise as we are, deepIn Veda lore, should never weep.Those who are firm  
and ever wiseSpurn vain lament and idle sighs.Be self-possessed: thy  
grief restrain:Go, in that city dwell again.Return, O best of men, and  
beObedient to our sire's decree,While I with every care fulfil  
Our holy father's righteous will,Observing in the lonely woodHis charge  
approved by all the good,'

Thus Rāma of the lofty mind

To Bharat spoke his righteous speech, By every argument designed  
Obedience to his sire to teach,

Footnotes

214:1 Garud, the king of birds.

214:1b To be won by virtue.

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CANTO CVI.: BHARAT'S SPEECH.

Good Bharat, by the river side,

To virtuous Rāma's speech replied,And thus with varied lore addressedThe  
prince, while nobles round him pressed:'In all this world whom e'er can  
weFind equal, scourge of foes, to thee?No ill upon thy bosom weighs.No  
thoughts of joy thy spirit raise.Approved art thou of sages old,To whom  
thy doubts are ever told.Alike in death and life, to theeThe same to be  
and not to be.The man who such a soul can gainCan ne'er be crushed by woe  
or pain.Pure as the Gods, high-minded, wise,Concealed from thee no secret  
lies.Such glorious gifts are all thine own,And birth and death to thee  
are known,That ill can ne'er thy soul depressWith all-subduing  
bitterness.O let my prayer, dear brother, winThy pardon for my mother's  
sin.Wrought for my sake who willed it notWhen absent in a distant  
spot.Duty alone with binding chains

The vengeance due to crime restrains,Or on the sinner I should liftMy  
hand in retribution swift.Can I who know the right, and springFrom  
Das'aratha, purest king--Can I commit a heinous crime,Abhorred by all  
through endless time?The aged king I dare not blame,Who died so rich in  
holy fame,My honoured sire, my parted lord,E'en as a present God  
adored.Yet who in lore of duty skilledSo foul a crime has ever willed,And  
dared defy both gain and rightTo gratify a woman's spite?When death draws  
near, so people say,The sense of creatures dies away;And he has proved  
the ancient sawBy acting thus in spite of law.But O my honoured lord, be  
kind.Dismiss the trespass from thy mind,The sin the king committed, ledBy  
haste, his consort's wrath, and dread.For he who veils his sire's  
offenceWith tender care and reverence--His sons approved by all shall  
live:Not so their fate who ne'er forgive.Be thou, my lord, the noble son,  
And the vile deed my sire has done,Abhorred by all the virtuous,  
ne'erResent, lest thou the guilt too share.Preserve us, for on thee we  
call.Our sire, Kaikeyi, me and allThy citizens, thy kith and kin;Preserve  
us and reverse the sin.To live in woods a devoteeCan scarce with royal  
tasks agree,Nor can the hermit's matted hairSuit fitly with a ruler's  
care.Do not, my brother, do not stillPursue this life that suits thee

ill. Mid duties, of a king we count His consecration paramount, That he with ready heart and hand May keep his people and his land. What Warrior born to royal sway From certain good would turn away, A doubtful duty to pursue, That mocks him with the distant view? Thou wouldst to duty cleave, and gain The meed that follows toil and pain. In thy great task no labour spare: Rule the four castes with justest care. Mid all the four, the wise prefer The order of the householder:

1p. 216

Canst thou, whose thoughts to duty cleave,  
The best of all the orders leave? My better thou in lore divine, My birth, my sense must yield to thine: While thou, my lord, art here to reign, How shall my hands the rule maintain? O faithful lover of the right, Take with thy friends the royal might, Let thy sires' realm, from trouble free, Obey her rightful king in thee. Here let the priests and lords of state Our monarch duly consecrate, With prayer and holy verses blessed By saint Vas'ishtha and the rest. Anointed king by us, again Seek fair Ayodhvá there to reign, And like imperial Indra girt By Gods of Storm, thy might assert. From the three debts

1 acquittance earn,

And with thy wrath the wicked burn, O'er all of us thy rule extend, And cheer with boons each faithful friend. Let thine enthronement, lord, this day Make all thy lovers glad and gay, And let all those who hate thee flee To the ten winds for fear of thee. Dear lord, my mother's words of hate With thy sweet virtues expiate,  
And from the stain of folly clear The father whom we both revere. Brother, to me compassion show, I pray thee with my head bent low, And to these friends who on thee call, -- As the Great Father pities all. But if my tears and prayers be vain, And thou in woods wilt still remain, I will with thee my path pursue And make my home in forests too.' Thus Bharat strove to bend his will With suppliant head, but he, Earth's lord, inexorable still Would keep his sire's decree. The firmness of the noble chief The wondering people moved, And rapture mingling with their grief, All wept and all approved. 'How firm his steadfast will,' they cried, 'Who Keeps his promise thus! Ah, to Ayodhyá's town,' they sighed, 'He comes not back with us' The holy priest, the swains who tilled The earth, the sons of trade, And e'en the mournful queens were filled With joy as Bharat prayed, And bent their heads, then weeping stilled A while, his prayer to aid. Footnotes

215:1 The four religious orders, referable to different times of life are, that of the student, that of the householder, that of the anchourite, and that of the mendicant.

216:1 To Gods, Men, and Manes.

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CANTO CVII.: RÁMA'S SPEECH.

Thus, by his friends encompassed round,  
He spoke, and Ráma, far renowned, To his dear brother thus replied, Whom holy rites had purified: 'O thou whom Queen Kaikeyi bare The best of kings, thy words are fair. Our royal father, when of yore He wed her, to her father swore The best of kingdoms to confer, A noble dowry meet for her; Then, grateful, on the deadly day Of heavenly Gods' and demons' fray, A future boon on her bestowed To whose sweet care his life he owed. She to his mind that promise brought, And then the best of kings besought To bid me to the forest flee, And give the rule, O Prince, to thee. Thus bound by oath, the king our lord Gave her those boons of free accord. And bade me, O thou chief of men, Live in the woods four years and ten. I to this lonely wood have hied With faithful Lakshman by my side, And Si\*tá by no tears deterred,

Resolved to keep my father's word. And thou, my noble brother, too Shouldst keep our father's promise true: Anointed ruler of the state Maintain his

word inviolate. From his great debt, dear brother, free our lord the king  
for love of me, Thy mother's breast with joy inspire, And from all woe  
preserve thy sire. 'Tis said, near Gayá's holy town

1b

Gayá, great \*saint of high renown, This text recited when he paid Due rites  
to each ancestral shade:

'A son is born his sire to free

From Put's infernal pains: Hence, saviour of his father, he The  
name of Puttra gains.'

2b

Thus numerous sons are sought by prayer, In Scripture trained with graces  
fair,

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That of the number one some day May funeral rites at Gayá pay. The mighty  
saints who lived of old This holy doctrine ever hold. Then, best of men,  
our sire release

From pains of hell, and give him peace. Now Bharat, to Ayodhya\* speed, The  
brave S'atrughna with thee lead. Take with thee all the twice-born men, And  
please each lord and citizen. I now, O King, without delay To Dandak\* wood  
will bend my way, And Lakshman and the Maithil dame Will follow still, our  
path the same. Now, Bharat, lord of men be thou, And o'er Ayodhyá  
reign: The silvan world to me shall bow, King of the wild domain.  
Yea, let thy joyful steps be bent To that fair town to-day, And I  
as happy and content, To Dandak wood will stray. The white umbrella  
o'er thy brow Its cooling shade shall throw: I to the shadow of the  
bough And leafy trees will go. S'atrughna, for wise plans renowned,  
Shall still on thee attend; And Lakshman, ever faithful found, Be  
my familiar friend. Let us his sons, O brother dear, The path of  
right pursue, And keep the king we all revere Still to his promise  
true.'

Footnotes

216:1b Gayá is a very holy city in Behar. Every good  
Hindu ought once in his life to make funeral offerings  
in Gayá in honour of his ancestors.

216:2b Put is the name of that region of hell to which  
men are doomed who leave no son to perform the  
funeral rites which are necessary to ensure the happiness of the  
departed. Putra, the common word for a son is said by the highest  
authority to be derived from Put and tra deliverer.

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CANTO CVIII.: JÁVÁLI'S SPEECH.

Thus Ráma soothed his brother's grief:

Then virtuous Jáváli, chief Of twice-born sages, thus replied In words that  
virtue's law defied: 'Hail, Raghu's princely son, dismiss A thought so weak  
and vain as this. Canst thou, with lofty heart endowed, Think with the dull  
ignoble crowd? For what are ties of kindred? can One profit by a brother  
man? Alone the babe first opes his eyes, And all alone at last he dies. The  
man, I ween, has little sense Who looks with foolish reverence On father's  
or on mother's name: In others, none a right may claim. E'en as a man may  
leave his home And to a distant village roam, Then from his lodging turn  
away And journey on the following day, Such brief possession mortals hold In  
sire and mother, house and gold, And never will the good and wise The brief  
uncertain lodging prize. Nor, best of men, shouldst thou disown  
Thy sire's hereditary throne, And tread the rough and stony ground Where  
hardship, danger, woes abound. Come, let Ayodhyá rich and bright See thee  
enthroned with every rite: Her tresses bound in single braid

1

She waits thy coming long delayed. O come, thou royal Prince, and share The  
kingly joys that wait thee there, And live in bliss transcending price As

Indra lives in Paradise. The parted king is naught to thee, Nor right in living man has he: The king is one; thou, Prince of men, Another art: be counselled then. Thy royal sire, O chief, has sped On the long path we all must tread. The common lot of all is this, And thou in vain art robbed of bliss. For those--and only those--I weep Who to the path of duty keep; For here they suffer ceaseless woe, And dying to destruction go. With pious care, each solemn day, Will men their funeral offerings pay: See, how the useful food they waste: He who is dead no more can taste. If one is fed, his strength renewed When e'er his biother takes his food, Then offerings to the parted pay; Scarce will they serve him on his way. By crafty knaves these rites were framed, And to enforce men's gifts proclaimed; 'Give, worship, lead a life austere, Keep lustral rites, quit pleasures here.' There is no future life: be wise, And do, O Prince, as I advise. Enjoy, my lord, thy present bliss, And things unseen from thought dismiss. Let this advice thy bosom move, The counsel sage which all approve; To Bharat's earnest prayer incline, And take the rule so justly thine.'

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CANTO CIX.: THE PRAISES OF TRUTH.

By sage Jáváli thus addressed,  
Ráma of truthful hearts the best,  
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With perfect skill and wisdom high Thus to his speech made fit reply: 'Thy words that tempt to bliss are fair. But virtue's garb they falsely wear. For he from duty's path who strays To wander in forbidden ways, Allured by doctrine false and vain, Praise from the good can never gain. Their lives the true and boaster show, Pure and impure, and high and low. Else were no mark to judge between Stainless and stained and high and mean; They to whose lot fair signs may fall Were but as they who lack them all, And those to virtuous thoughts inclined Were but as men of evil mind. If in the sacred name of right I do this wrong in duty's spite; The path of virtue meanly quit, And this polluting sin commit, What man who marks the bounds between Virtue and vice with insight keen, Would rank me high in after time. Stained with this soul destroying crime? Whither could I, the sinner, turn, How hope a seat in heaven to earn, If I my plighted promise break, And thus the righteous path forsake? This world of ours is ever led To walk the ways which others tread, And as their princes they behold, The subjects too their lives will mould. That truth and mercy still must be Beloved of kings, is Heaven's decree. Upheld by truth the monarch reigns, And truth the very world sustains. Truth evermore has been the love Of holy saints and Gods above, And he whose lips are truthful here Wins after death the highest sphere. As from a serpent's deadly tooth, We shrink from him who scorns the truth. For holy truth is root and spring Of justice and each holy thing, A might that every power transcends, Linked to high bliss that never ends. Truth is all virtue's surest base, Supreme in worth and first in place. Oblations, gifts men offer here, Vows, sacrifice, and rites austere, And Holy Writ, on truth depend: So men must still that truth defend. Truth, only truth protects the land, By truth unharmed our houses stand; Neglect of truth makes men distressed, And truth in highest heaven is blessed. Then how can I, rebellious, break Commandments which my father spake--I ever\* true and faithful found, And by my word of honour bound? My father's bridge of truth shall stand Unharmed by my destructive hand: Not folly, ignorance, or greed My darkened soul shall thus mislead. Have we not heard that God and shade Turn from the hated offerings paid By him whose false and fickle mind No pledge can hold, no promise bind? Truth is all duty: as the soul, It quickens and supports the whole. The good respect this duty: hence Its sacred claims I reverence. The Warrior's duty I despise That seeks the wrong in virtue's



guise:Those claims I shrink from, which the base,Cruel, and covetous  
 embrace.The heart conceives the guilty thought,Then by the hand the sin  
 is wrought,  
 And with the pair is leagued a third,The tongue that speaks the lying  
 word.Fortune and land and name and fameTo man's best care have right and  
 claim;The good will aye to truth adhere,And its high laws must men  
 revere.Base were the deed thy lips would teach,Approved as best by subtle  
 speech.Shall I my plighted promise break,That I these woods my home would  
 make?\*Shall I, as Bharat's words advise,My father's solemn charge  
 despise?Firm stands the oath which then beforeMy father's face I soothly  
 swore,Which Queen Kaikeyi's anxious earBejoiced with highest joy to  
 hear.Still in the wood will I remain,With food prescribed my life  
 sustain,And please with fruit and roots and flowersAncestral shades and  
 heavenly powers.Here every sense contented, stillHeeding the bounds of  
 good and ill,My settled course will I pursue,Firm in my faith and ever  
 true.Here in this wild and far retreatWill I my noble task complete;And  
 Fire and Wind and \*Moon shall bePartakers of its fruit with me.A hundred  
 offerings duly wrought  
 His rank o'er Gods for Indra bought,And mighty saints their heaven  
 securedBy torturing years on earth endured.' That scoffing plea the  
 hero spurned, And thus he spake once more, Chiding, the while his  
 bosom burned, Jáváli's impious lore: 'Justice, and courage ne'er  
 dismayed, Pity for all distressed, Truth, loving honour duly paid  
 To Brahman, God, and guest-- In these, the true and virtuous say,  
 Should lives of men be passed: They form the right and happy way  
 That leads to heaven at last.

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My father's thoughtless act I chide That gave thee honoured place,Whose  
 soul, from virtue turned aside, Is faithless, dark, and base.We rank  
 the Buddhist with the thief,

1

And all the impious crewWho share his sinful disbelief, And hate the  
 right and true.Hence never should wise kings who seek To rule their  
 people well,Admit, before their face to speak,

The cursed infidel.But twice-born men in days gone by, Of other sort  
 than thou,Have wrought good deeds, whose glories high Are fresh among  
 us now:This world they conquered, nor in vain They strove to win the  
 skies:The twice-born hence pure lives maintain, And fires of worship  
 rise.Those who in virtue's path delight, And with the virtuous live,--  
 Whose flames of holy zeal are bright, Whose hands are swift to give,Who  
 injure none, and good and mild In every grace excel,Whose lives by sin  
 are undefiled, We love and honour well.'Thus Rama spoke in righteous  
 rage \*J'av'ali's speech to chide,When thus again the virtuous sage In  
 truthful words replied:'The atheist's lore I use no more, Not mine his  
 impious creed:His words and doctrine I abhor, Assumed at time of  
 need.E'en as I rose to speak with thee, The fit occasion cameThat bade  
 me use the atheist's plea To turn thee from thine aim.  
 The atheist creed I disavow, Unsay the words of sin,And use the  
 faithful's language now Thy favour, Prince, to win.

Footnotes

217:1 It was the custom of Indian women when  
 mourning for their absent husbands to bind their hair in  
 a long single braid.

Carey and Marshman translate, 'the one-tailed city,'

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CANTO CX.: THE SONS OF IKSHVA'KU. 2

Then spake Vasishtha who perceived  
 That Ráma's soul was wroth and grieved:

' Well knows the sage J'av'ali all

The changes that the world befall; And but to lead thee to revoke Thy purpose were the words he spoke. Lord of the world, now hear from me How first this world began to be. First water was, and naught beside; There earth was formed that stretches wide. Then with the Gods from out the same The Self-existent Brahm'a came. Then Brahm'a

1b in a boar's disguise

Bade from the deep this earth arise; Then, with his sons of tranquil soul, He made the world and framed the whole, From subtlest ether Brahm'a rose: No end, no loss, no change he knows. A son had he, Mar'ichi styled, And Ka'syap was Mar'ichi's child. From him Vivasvat sprang: from him Manu, whose fame shall ne'er be dim. Manu, who life to mortals gave, Begot Ikshv'aku good and brave: First of Ayodhya's kings was he, Pride of her famous dynasty. From him the glorious Kukshi sprang, Whose fame through all the regions rang, Rival of Kukshi's ancient fame. His heir the great Vikukshi came. His son was V'ana, lord of might, His Anaranya, strong in fight. No famine marred his blissful reign, No drought destroyed the kindly grain; Amid the sons of virtue chief, His happy realm ne'er held a thief, His son was Prithn, glorious name, From him the wise Tri'sanku came: Embodied to the skies he went For love of truth preeminent. He left a son renowned afar, Known by the name of Dhundhum'ar, His son succeeding bore the name Of Yuvan'as'va dear to fame. He passed away. Him followed then His son M'andh'at'a, king of men. His son was blest in high emprise, Susandhi, fortunate and wise. Two noble sons had he, to wit Dhruvasandhi and Prasenajit, Bharat was Dhruvasandhi's son: His glorious arm the conquest won, Against his son King Asit, rose In fierce array his royal foes, Haihayas, T'alajanghas styled, And S'as'ivindhus fierce and wild.

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Long time he strove, but forced to yield Fled from his kingdom and the field. The wives he left had both conceived--So is the ancient tale believed:--One, of her rival's hopes afraid, Fell poison in the viands laid. It chanced that Chyavan, Bhrigu's child, Had wandered to the pathless wild Where proud Hima'laya's lovely height Detained him with a strange delight. Then came the other widowed queen With lotus eyes and beauteous mien, Longing a noble son to bear, And wooed the saint with earnest prayer. When thus Kal'indi', fairest dame With reverent supplication came, To her the holy sage replied: 'O royal lady, from thy side A glorious son shall spring ere long, Righteous and true and brave and strong; He, scourge of foes and lofty-souled, His ancient race shall still uphold.'

Then round the sage the lady went, And bade farewell, most reverent. Back to her home she turned once more, And there her promised son she bore. Because her rival mixed the bane To render her conception vain, And her unripened fruit destroy, Sagar she called her rescued boy.

1

He, when he paid that solemn rite, 2

Filled living creatures with affright: Obedient to his high decree His countless sons dug out the sea. Prince Asamanj was Sagar's child: But him with cruel sin defiled And loaded with the people's hate His father banished from the state. To Asamanj his consort bare Bright Ans'uma'n his valiant heir. Ans'uma'n's son, Dili'pa famed, Begot a son Bhagi'rath named. From him renowned Kakutstha came: Thou bearest still the lineal name, Kakutstha's son was Raghu: thou Art styled the son of Raghu now, From him came Purusha'dak bold, Fierce hero of gigantic mould: Kalma'shapa'da's name he bore, Because his feet were spotted o'er. Sankhan his son, to manhood grown,

Died sadly with his host o'erthrown, But ere he perished sprang from him Sudars'an fair in face and limb. From beautiful Sudarsa'n came Prince Agnivarna, bright as flame. His son was S'ighragn, for speed Unmatched; and Maru was his seed.

Prasusruka was Maru's child:

His son was Ambari'sha styled.Nahush was Ambari'sha's heir  
 With hand to strike and heart to dare.His son was good Na'bha'g, from youth  
 Renowned for piety and truth.From great Na'bha'g sprang children twoAja and Suvrat  
 pure and true.From Aja Das'aratha came,Whose virtuous life was free from  
 blameHis eldest son art thou: his throne,O famous Kama, is thine  
 own.Accept the sway so justly thine.And view the world with eyes  
 benign.For ever in Iksava'ku's raceThe eldest takes his father's  
 place,And while he lives no son besideAs lord and king is sanctified.  
 The rule by Raghu's children kept        Thou must not spurn to-day.    This  
 realm of peerless wealth accept,  
       And like thy father sway.'

Footnotes

219:1 The verses in a different metre with which some  
 cantos end are all to be regarded with suspicion.

Schlegel regrets that he did not exclude them all from his edition. These  
 lines are manifestly spurious. See Additional Notes.

219:2 This genealogy is a repetition with slight  
 variation of that given in Book I. Canto LXX.

219:1b In Gorresio's recension identified with Vishnu. See Muir's  
 Sanskrit Texts, Vol.IV pp 29, 30.

220:1 From sa with, and aara poison.

220:2 See Book I. Canto XL.

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CANTO CXI.: COUNSEL TO BHARAT.

Thus said Vas'ishtha, and again.

To Ráma spake in duteous strain:' All men the light of life who see  
 With high respect should look on three:High honour ne'er must be denied  
 To father, mother, holy guide.First to their sires their birth they  
 owe,Nursed with maternal love they grow:Their holy guides fair knowledge  
 teach:So men should love and honour each.Thy sire and thou have learned  
 of me,The sacred guide of him and thee,And if my word thou wilt obey  
 Thou still\* wilt keep the virtuous way.See, with the chiefs of every guild  
 And all thy friends, this place is filled:All these, as duty bids, protect;  
 So still the righteous path respect.O, for thine aged mother feel,  
 Nor spurn the virtuous dame's appeal:Obey, O Prince, thy mother dear,  
 And still to virtue's path adhere.Yield thou to Bharat's fond request,  
 With earnest supplication pressed,So wilt thou to thyself be true,  
 And faith and duty still pursue.'    Thus by his saintly guide  
 addressedWith pleas in sweetest tones expressed.The lord of men in turn  
 repliedTo wise Vas'ishtha by his side:'The fondest son's observance  
 ne'erRepays the sire and mother's care:

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The constant love that food provides.And dress, and every need  
 besides:Their pleasant words still soft and mild,Their nurture of the  
 helpless child:The words which Das'aratha spake,My king and sire, I ne'er  
 will break.'

Then Bharat of the ample chest

The wise Sumantra thus addressed;'Bring sacred grass, O charioteer,  
 And strew it on the level here.For I will sit and watch his face  
 Until I win my brother's grace.Like a robbed Bráhmaṇ will I lie,

1

Nor taste of food nor turn my eye,In front of Ráma's leafy cot,  
 And till he yield will leave him not.'When Bharat saw Sumantra's eye  
 Looked up to Ráma for reply,The Prince himself in eager haste  
 The sacred grass in order placed.Him great and mighty Ráma, best  
 Of royal saints, in turn addressed:'What, Bharat, have I done, that thou  
 Besiegest me,

2 a suppliant now?

Thus stretched, to force redress for wrongsTo men of Bráhmaṇ birth  
 belongs,Not those upon whose kingly headThe consecrating drops are

shed.Up, lord of men! arise, and quitThis fearful vow for thee unfit.Go,  
brother, seek Ayodhyá's town,Fair city ot supreme renown.'

But Bharat, as his seat he took.

Cast all around an eager look:'O people, join your prayers with mine,And  
so his stubborn heart incline.'

And all the people answered thus:

'Full well is Ráma known to us.Right is the word he speaks and heIs  
faithful to his sire's decree:Nor can we rushly venture nowTo turn him  
from his purposed vow.'Then Ráma spoke: 'O Bharat, heed  
Thy virtuous friends, and mark their rede.Mark well what I and these  
advise,And duty view with clearer eyes.Thy hand on mine, O hero,  
place,Touch water, and thy sin efface.'

Then Bharat rose: his hand he dipped,

And purifying water sipped:'Each citizen,' he cried, 'give ear,Attend,  
each counsellor and peer.My mother planned, by me untaught,To win the  
sway I never sought:

Ne'er Raghu's son could I despise,

In duty's lore supremely wise.Now if obedience to our sireThis dwelling  
in the woods require,I, till the destined years he spent,Will dwell alone  
in banishment.'

The virtuous Ráma, wonder-stirred.

The faithful speech of Bharat heard,And thus the hero's feelings foundDue  
utterance, as he gazed around:

'Still to my father's word I hold,

Whate'er he bought, or pledged, or sold:Ne'er shall his living promise  
beAnnulled by Bharat or by me.

Not thus my task will I evade,My exile on another laid:Most wise was  
Queen Kaikeyí's rede,And just and good my father's deed.Dear Bharat's  
patient soul I know,How reverence due he loves to show;In him, high-  
souled and faithful found,Must each auspicious grace abound.When from the  
woods I turn againI with his aid shall nobly reign,With one so good, of  
peerless worth,A glorious lord of happy earth.Her boon Kaikeyí sought and  
won.I, as my father swore, have done:And O, do thou, my brother dear,The  
monarch's name from falsehood clear.

Footnotes

221:1 A practice which has frequently been described,  
under the name of dherna, by European travellers in  
India.

221:2 Compare Milton's 'beseeching or beseiging.'Next: Canto CXII.: The  
Sandals.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO CXII.: THE SANDALS.

High wonder mingled with delight

Took the great sages at the sight.Thrilling their breasts who came to  
viewThe meeting of the peerless two.The saints and sages' holy  
trainDeparted to their home again.And high each holy voice was raised,And  
thus the glorious brothers praised.

'High fate is his, the sire of two

Most virtuous sous, so brave and true:With wonder and with joy intenseOur  
ears have heard their conference.Then the great sages, longing allTo see  
the ten-necked tyrant

1b fall,

To Bharat, bravest of the brave,Their salutary counsel gave:

'O thou of lofty lineage born,

Whom wisdom, conduct, fame adorn,Thou for thy honoured father's  
sakeShouldst Ráma's righteous counsel take.p. 222

All debts to Queen Kaikeyí paid,

Thy sire his home in heaven has made,So virtuous Ráma we would seeFrom  
filial obligation free.'Thus gave each royal sage advice,High saint, and  
bard of Paradise;Then quickly vanishing from viewEach to his proper home  
withdrew.Then Ráma's face his rapture showed,And his full heart with joy

o'erflowed, While, as the sages parted thence, He paid his humble  
reverence.

Then Bharat shook in every limb

As suppliant thus he spake to him: 'The duty of a king respect, Held by our  
race in high respect: And O, thy gracious ear incline To heed my mother's  
prayer and mine. The mighty realm to rule and guard For me alone is task  
too hard. No power have I the love to gain Of noble, citizen, and swain. All  
those who know thee, warrior, friend, On thee their eager glances bend, As  
labouring hinds who till the plain Look fondly for the Lord of Rain. O  
wisest Prince, thy realm secure,

And make its firm foundations sure. Kakutstha's son, thy mighty arm Can  
keep the nation free from harm.' He spoke, and fell in sorrow drowned At  
Ráma's feet upon the ground, And there the hero sued and sighed, And 'Hear  
me, Raghu's son,' he cried.

Then Ráma raised him up, and pressed

His brother to his loving breast, And sweetly as a wild swan cried To  
Bharat dark and lotus-eyed:

'So just and true thy generous soul,

Thy hand may well this earth control: But many a sage his aid will  
lend. With counsellor, and peer, and friend: With these advise: their  
counsel ask, And so perform thy arduous task. The moon his beauty may  
forgo, The cold forsake the Hills of Snow, And Ocean o'er his banks may  
sweep, But I my father's word will keep. Now whether love of thee or  
greed Thy mother led to plan the deed, Forth from thy breast the memory  
throw, And filial love and reverence show.' Thus spake Kaus'alyá's son:  
again Bharat replied in humble strain

To him who matched the sun in might And lovely as the young moon's  
light: 'Put, noble brother, I entreat, These sandals on thy blessed  
feet: These, lord of men, with gold bedecked, The realm and people will  
protect.'

Then Ráma, as his brother prayed

Beneath his feet the sandals laid, And these with fond affection gave To  
Bharat's hand, the good and brave. Then Bharat bowed his reverent head And  
thus again to Ráma said: 'Through fourteen seasons will I wear The hermit's  
dress and matted hair: With fruit and roots my life sustain, And still  
beyond the realm remain, Longing for thee to come again. The rule and all  
affairs of state I to these shoes will delegate. And if, O tamer of thy  
foes, When fourteen years have reached their close, I see thee not that day  
return, The kindled fire my frame shall burn.

Then Ráma to his bosom drew

Dear Bharat and S'atrughna too: 'Be never wroth,' he cried, 'with  
her, Kaikeyí's guardian minister:

This, glory of Ikshváku's line, Is Sítá's earnest prayer and mine.' He  
spoke, and as the big tears fell, To his dear brother bade farewell. Round  
Ráma, Bharat strong and bold In humble reverence paced, When the  
bright sandals wrought with gold Above his brows were placed. The  
royal elephant who led The glorious pomp he found, And on the  
monster's mighty head Those sandals duly bound. Then noble Rama,  
born to swell The glories of his race, To all in order bade  
farewell With love and tender grace-- To brothers, counsellors, and  
peers,-- Still firm, in duty proved, Firm, as the Lord of Snow  
uprears His mountains unremoved. No queen, for choking sobs and  
sighs, Could say her last adieu. Then Ráma bowed, with flooded  
eyes, And to his cot withdrew.

Footnotes 221:1b Ten-headed, ten-necked, ten faced, are common  
epithets of Rávan the great king of Lanká.

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CANTO CXIII.: BHARAT'S RETURN.

Bearing the sandals on his head

Away triumphant Bharat sped, And clomb, S'atrughna by his side, The car wherein he went to ride. Before the mighty army went The lords for counsel eminent, Vas'ishtha, Vámadeva next, Jáváli, pure with prayer and text.

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Then from that lovely river they Turned eastward on their homeward way: With reverent steps from left to right They circled Chitrakúta's height, And viewed his peaks on every side With stains of thousand metals dyed. Then Bharat saw, not far away, Where Bharadwája's dwelling lay, And when the chieftain bold and sage Had reached that holy hermitage, Down from the car he sprang to greet The saint, and bowed before his feet. High rapture filled the hermit's breast, Who thus the royal prince addressed: 'Say, Bharat, is thy duty done? Hast thou with Ráma met, my son?'

The chief whose soul to virtue clave

This answer to the hermit gave: 'I prayed him with our holy guide: But Raghu's son our prayer denied, And long besought by both of us He answered Saint Vas'ishtha thus: 'True to my vow, I still will be Observant of my sire's decree: Till fourteen years complete their course That promise shall remain in force.' The saint in highest wisdom caught, These solemn words with wisdom fraught, To him in lore of language learned Most eloquent himself returned: 'Obey my rede: let Bharat hold This pair of sandals decked with gold: They in Ayodhyá shall ensure Our welfare, and our bliss secure.' When Ráma heard the royal priest He rose, and looking to the east Consigned the sandals to my hand That they for him might guard the land. Then from the high-souled chief's abode I turned upon my homeward road, Dismissed by him, and now this pair Of sandals to Ayodhyá bear.'

To him the hermit thus replied,

Bv Bharat's tidings gratified: 'No marvel thoughts so just and true, Thou best of all who right pursue, Should dwell in thee, O Prince of men, As waters gather in the glen. He is not dead, we mourn in vain: Thy blessed father lives again, Whose noble son we thus behold Like Virtue's self in human mould.' He ceased: before him Bharat fell To clasp his feet, and said farewell: His reverent steps around him bent, And onward to Ayodhyá went. His host of followers stretching far With many an elephant and car, Waggon and steed, and mighty train, Traversed their homeward way again. O'er holy Yamuná they sped, Fair stream, with waves engarlanded, And then once more the rivers' queen, The blessed Gangá's self was seen. Then making o'er that flood his way, Where crocodiles and monsters lay, The king to S'ringavera drew His host and royal retinue. His onward way he thence pursued, And soon renowned Ayodhyá viewed.

Then burnt by woe and sad of cheer Bharat addressed the charioteer: 'Ah, see, Ayodhyá dark and sad, Her glory gone, once bright and glad: Of joy and beauty reft, forlorn, In silent grief she seems to mourn.'

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CANTO CXIV.: BHARAT'S DEPARTURE.

Deep, pleasant was the chariot's sound

As royal Bharat, far renowned, Whirled by his mettled coursers fast Within Ayodhyá's city passed. There dark and drear was every home Where cats and owls had space to roam, As when the shades of midnight fall With blackest gloom, and cover all: As Rohiní, dear spouse of him Whom Rahu

1 hates, grows faint and dim,

When, as she shines on high alone The demon's shade is o'er her thrown: As burnt by summer's heat a rill Scarce trickling from her parent hill, With dying fish in pools half dried, And fainting birds upon her side: As sacrificial flames arise When holy oil their food supplies, But when no more the fire is fed Sink lustreless and cold and dead: Like some brave host that filled the plain, With harness rent and captains slain, When warrior, elephant, and steed Mingled in wild confusion bleed: As when, all spent her store of worth,

Rocks from her base the loosened earth: Like a sad fallen star no more  
Wearing the lovely light it wore: So mournful in her lost estate was  
that sad town disconsolate. Then car-borne Bharat, good and brave, thus  
spoke to him the steeds who drove: 'Why are Ayodhyá's streets so  
mute! Where is the voice of lyre and lute? Why sounds not, as of old, to-  
day the music of the minstrel's lay?

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Where are the wreaths they used to twine? Where are the blossoms and the  
wine? Where is the cool refreshing scent of sandal dust with aloe blent? The  
elephant's impatient roar, the din of cars, I hear no more: No more the  
horse's pleasant neigh rings out to meet me on my way. Ayodhyá's youths,  
since Ráma's flight, have lost their relish for delight: Her men roam forth  
no more, nor care bright garlands round their necks to wear. All grieve for  
banished Ráma: feast, and revelry and song have ceased: Like a black night  
when floods pour down,

So dark and gloomy is the town. When will he come to make them gay like  
some auspicious holiday? When will my brother, like a cloud at summer's  
close, make glad the crowd?' Then through the streets the hero rode, and  
passed within his sire's abode, like some deserted lion's den, forsaken by  
the lord of men. Then to the inner bowers he came, once happy home of many  
a dame, Now gloomy, sad, and drear, dark as of old that sunless day when  
wept the Gods in wild dismay;

1

There poured he many a tear.

Footnotes

223:1 The spouse of Rohini is the Moon: Rahu is the demon who causes eclipses.

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CANTO CXV.: NANDIGRÁM. 2

Then when the pious chief had seen

Lodged in her home each widowed queen, still with his burning grief  
oppressed his holy guides he thus addressed: 'I go to Nandigrám: adieu, this  
day, my lords to all of you: I go, my load of grief to bear, reft of the  
son of Raghu, there. The king my sire, alas, is dead. And Ráma to the  
forest fled; there will I wait till he, restored, shall rule the realm, its  
lightful lord.' They heard the high-souled prince's speech, and thus  
with ready answer each of those great lords their chief addressed.  
With saint Vas'ishtha and the rest:

'Good are the words which thou hast said, by brotherly affection led, like  
thine own self, a faithful friend, true to thy brother to the end: A heart  
like thine must all approve, which naught from virtue's path can  
move, 'soon as the words he loved to hear

Fell upon Bharat's joyful ear, thus to the charioteer he spoke: 'My car  
with speed, Sumantra, yoke. 'Then Bharat with delighted mien obeisance paid  
to every queen, and with S'atrughna by his side mounting the car away he  
hied. With lords, and priests in long array the brothers hastened on their  
way. And the great pomp the Bráhmans led with Saint Vas'ishtha at their  
head. Then every face was eastward bent as on to Nundigrám they went. Behind  
the army followed, all unsummoned by their leader's call, and steeds and  
elephants and men streamed forth with every citizen. As Bharat in his  
chariot rode his heart with love fraternal glowed, and with the sandals on  
his head to Nundigrám he quickly sped. Within the town he swiftly  
pressed, alighted, and his guides addressed: 'To me in trust my brother's  
hand consigned the lordship of the land, when he these gold-wrought sandals  
gave as emblems to protect and save.' Then Bharat bowed, and from his  
head the sacred pledge deposited,

And thus to all the people cried who ringed him round on every  
side: 'Haste, for these sandals quickly bring the canopy that shades the  
king. Pay ye to them all reverence meet as to my elder brother's feet, for

they will right and law maintain Until King Ráma come again. My brother  
with a loving mind These sandals to my charge consigned: I till he come  
will guard with care The sacred trust for Raghu's heir. My watchful task  
will soon be done, The pledge restored to Raghu's son; Then shall I see,  
his wanderings o'er, These sandals on his feet once more. My brother I  
shall meet at last, The burthen from my shoulders cast, To Ráma's hand the  
realm restore And serve my elder as before. When Rama takes again this  
pair Of sandals kept with pious care, And here his glorious reign begins, I  
shall be cleansed from all my sins,

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When the glad people's voices ring With welcome to the new-made king,  
Joy will be mine four-fold as great As if supreme I ruled the state.'  
Thus humbly spoke in sad lament

The chief in fame preëminent: Thus, by his reverent lords obeyed, At  
Nandigrám the kingdom swayed. With hermit's dress and matted hair He dwelt  
with all his army there. The sandals of his brother's feet Installed upon  
the royal seat, He, all his powers to them referred, Affairs of state  
administered. In every care, in every task, When golden store was  
brought, He first, as though their rede to ask, Those royal sandals  
sought.

Footnotes

224:1 'Once,' says the Commentator Tirtha, 'in the battle  
between the Gods and demons the Gods were  
vanquished, and the sun was overthrown by Ráhu. At the request of the  
Gods Atri undertook the management of the sun for a week.' 224:2 Now  
Nundgaon, in Oudh.

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CANTO CXVI.: THE HERMIT'S SPEECH.

When Bharat took his homeward road

Still Ráma in the wood abode: But soon he marked the fear and care That  
darkened all the hermits there. For all who dwelt before the hill Were sad  
with dread of coming ill: Each holy brow was lined by thought, And Ráma's  
side they often sought. With gathering frowns the prince they eyed, And  
then withdrew and talked aside.

Then Raghu's son with anxious breast

The leader of the saints addressed: 'Can aught that I have done  
displease, O reverend Sage, the devotees? Why are their loving looks, O  
say, Thus sadly changed or turned away? Has Lakshman through his want of  
heed Offended with unseemly deed! Or is the gentle Sítá, she Who loved to  
honour you and me--Is she the cause of this offence, Failing in lowly  
reverence?' One sage, o'er whom, exceeding old,  
Had many a year of penance rolled, Trembling in every aged limb Thus for  
the rest replied to him: 'How could we, O beloved, blame Thy lofty-souled  
Videhan dame, Who in the good of all delights, And more than all of  
anchorites? But yet through thee a numbing dread Of fiends among our band  
has spread; Obstructed by the demons' art The trembling hermits talk  
apart. For Rávan's brother, overbold, Named Khara, of gigantic mould, Vexes  
with fury fierce and fell All those in Janasthán  
1 who dwell.

Resistless in his cruel deeds, On flesh of men the monster feeds: Sinful  
and arrogant is he, And looks with special hate on thee. Since thou,  
beloved son, hast made Thy home within this holy shade, The fiends have  
vexed with wilder rage The dwellers of the hermitage. In many a wild and  
dreadful form Around the trembling saints they swarm, With hideous shape  
and foul disguise They terrify our holy eyes. They make our loathing souls  
endure Insult and scorn and sights impure,  
And flocking round the altars stay The holy rites we love to pay. In every  
spot throughout the grove With evil thoughts the monsters rove, Assailing  
with their secret might Each unsuspecting anchorite. Ladle and dish away



they fling, Our fires with floods extinguishing, And when the sacred flame  
should burn They trample on each water-urn. Now when they see their sacred  
wood Plagued by this impious brotherhood, The troubled saints away would  
roam And seek in other shades a home: Hence will we fly, O Ráma, ere The  
cruel fiends our bodies tear. Not far away a forest lies Rich in the roots  
and fruit we prize, To this will I and all repair And join the holy hermits  
there; Be wise, and with us thither flee Before this Khara injure  
thee. Mighty art thou, O Ráma, yet Each day with peril is beset. If with thy  
consort by thy side Thou in this wood wilt still abide.'

He ceased: the words the hero spake The hermit's purpose failed to break:  
To Raghu's son farewell he said, And blessed the chief and comforted; Then  
with the rest the holy sage Departed from the hermitage.

So from the wood the saints withdrew,

And Ráma bidding all adieu In lowly reverence bent: Instructed by their  
friendly speech, Blest with the gracious love of each, To his pure home  
he went. Nor would the son of Raghu stray A moment from that grove away  
From which the saints had fled. And many a hermit thither came Attracted by  
his saintly fame And the pure life he led.

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Footnotes

225:1 A part of the great Dandak forest. Next: Canto CXVII.:

Anasúyá. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO CXVII.: ANASÚYÁ.

But dwelling in that lonely spot

Left by the hermits pleased him not. 'I met the faithful Bharat here, The  
townsmen, and my mother dear: The painful memory lingers yet, And stings me  
with a vain regret. And here the host of Bharat camped, And many a courser  
here has stamped, And elephants with ponderous feet Have trampled through  
the calm retreat. 'So forth to seek a home he hied, His spouse and Lakshman  
by his side. He came to Atri's pure retreat. Paid reverence to his holy  
feet, And from the saint such welcome won As a fond father gives his  
son. The noble prince with joy unfeigned As a dear guest he entertained, And  
cheered the glorious Lakshman too And Sítá with observance due. Then  
Anasúyá at the call Of him who sought the good of all, His blameless  
venerable spouse, Delighting in her holy vows, Came from her chamber to his  
side:

To her the virtuous hermit cried: 'Receive, I pray, with friendly  
grace This dame of Maithil monarchs' race: To Ráma next made known his  
wife, The devotee of saintliest life: 'Ten thousand years this votaress  
bent On sternest rites of penance spent; She when the clouds withheld their  
rain, And drought ten years consumed the plain, Caused grateful roots and  
fruit to grow And ordered Gangá here to flow: So from their cares the  
saints she freed, Nor let these checks their rites impede, She wrought in  
Heaven's behalf, and made Ten nights of one, the Gods to aid:

1

Let holy Anasúyá be An honoured mother, Prince, to thee. Let thy Videhan  
spouse draw near To her whom all that live revere, Stricken in years, whose  
loving mind Is slow to wrath and ever kind.'

He ceased: and Ráma gave assent,

And said, with eyes on Sítá bent: 'O Princess, thou hast heard with me This  
counsel of the devotee: Now that her touch thy soul may bless, Approach the  
saintly votaress: Come to the venerable dame,  
Far known by Anasúyá's name: The mighty things that she has done High glory  
in the world have won.'

Thus spoke the son of Raghu: she

Approached the saintly devotee, Who with her white locks, old and  
frail, Shook like a plantain in the gale. To that true spouse she bowed her  
head, And 'Lady, I am Sítá,' said: Raised suppliant hands and prayed her  
tell That all was prosperous and well.

The aged matron, when she saw

Fair Sítá true to duty's law, Addressed her thus: ' High fate is  
 thine Whose thoughts to virtue still incline.  
 Thou, lady of the noble mind,  
 Hast kin and state and wealth resigned  
 To follow Ráma forced to tread Where solitary woods are spread. Those women  
 gain high spheres above  
 Who still unchanged their husbands love,  
 Whether they dwell in town or wood,  
 Whether their hearts be ill or good. Though wicked, poor, or led away In  
 love's forbidden paths to stray, The noble matron still will deem  
 Her lord a deity supreme. Regarding kin and friendship, I Can see no  
 better, holier tie, And every penance-rite is dim Beside the joy of serving  
 him. But dark is this to her whose mind Promptings of idle fancy blind, Who  
 led by evil thoughts away Makes him who should command obey. Such women, O  
 dear Maithil dame, Their virtue lose and honest fame, Enslaved by sin and  
 folly, led In these unholy paths to tread. But they who good and true like  
 thee The present and the future see, Like men by holy deeds will rise To  
 mansions in the blissful skies. So keep thee pure from taint of sin,  
 Still to thy lord be true, And fame and merit shalt thou win, To  
 thy devotion due.'

Footnotes

226:1 When the saint Mándavya had doomed some  
 saint's wife, who was Anasúyá's friend, to become a widow on the morrow.  
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CANTO CXVIII.: ANASÚYÁ'S GIFTS.

Thus by the holy dame addressed  
 Who banished envy from her breast, Her lowly reverence Sítá paid, And  
 softly thus her answer made: 'No marvel, best of dames, thy speech The  
 duties of a wife should teach;

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Yet I, O lady, also know Due reverence to my lord to show. Were he the  
 meanest of the base, Unhonoured with a single grace, My husband still I  
 ne'er would leave, But firm through all to him would cleave: Still rather  
 to a lord like mine Whose virtues high-exalted shine, Compassionate, of  
 lofty soul, Vith every sense in due control, True in his love, of righteous  
 mind, Like a dear sire and mother kind. E'en as he ever loves to  
 treat Kaus'alyá with observance meet, Has his behaviour ever been To every  
 other honoured queen.

Nay, more, a sonlike reverence shows The noble Ráma e'en to those On whom  
 the king his father set His eyes one moment, to forget. Deep in my heart  
 the words are stored, Said by the mother of my lord, When from my home I  
 turned away In the lone fearful woods to stray. The counsel of my mother  
 deep Impressed upon my soul I keep, When by the fire I took my stand, And  
 Ráma clasped in his my hand. And in my bosom cherished yet, My friends'  
 advice I ne'er forget: Woman her holiest offering pays When she her  
 husband's will obeys. Good Sávitrí her lord obeyed, And a high saint in  
 heaven was made, And for the self-same virtue thou Hast heaven in thy  
 possession now. And she with whom no dame could vie, Now a bright Goddess  
 in the sky, Sweet Rohini the Moon's dear Queen, Without her lord is never  
 seen: And many a faithful wife beside For her pure love is glorified.'  
 Thus Sítá spake: soft rapture stole Through Anasúyá's saintly soul: Kisses  
 on Sítá's head she pressed,

And thus the Maithil dame addressed: 'I by long rites and toils  
 endured Rich store of merit have secured: From this my wealth will I  
 bestow A blessing ere I let thee go. So right and wise and true each  
 word That from thy lips mine ears have heard, I love thee: be my pleasing  
 task To grant the boon that thou shalt ask.' Then Sítá marvelled much,  
 and while Played o'er her lips a gentle smile, 'All has been done, O Saint,  
 she cried, And naught remains to wish beside. She spake; the lady's meek

reply Swelled Anasúyá's rapture high. 'Sítá,' she said, ' my gift to-day Thy sweet contentment shall repay. Accept this precious robe to wear, Of heavenly fabric, rich and rare, These gems thy limbs to ornament, This precious balsam sweet of scent. O Maithil dame, this gift of mine Shall make thy limbs with beauty shine, And breathing o'er thy frame dispense Its pure and lasting influence. This balsam on thy fair limbs spread New radiance on thy lord shall shed, As Lakshmí's beauty lends a grace To Vishnu's own celestial face.'

Then Sítá took the gift the dame Bestowed on her in friendship's name, The balsam, gems, and robe divine, And garlands wreathed of bloomy twine; Then sat her down, with reverence meet, At saintly Anasúyá's feet. The matron rich in rites and vows Turned her to Ráma's Maithil spouse, And questioned thus in turn to hear A pleasant tale to charm her ear: 'Sítá, 'tis said that Raghu's son Thy hand, mid gathered suitors, won. I fain would hear thee, lady, tell The story as it all befell: Do thou repeat each thing that passed, Reviewing all from first to last.' Thus spake the dame to Sítá: she Replying to the devotee, 'Then, lady, thy attention lend, 'Rehearsed the story to the end: King Janak, just and brave and strong. Who loves the right and hates the wrong. Well skilled in what the law ordains For Warriors, o'er Videha reigns. Guiding one morn the plough, his hand Marked out, for rites the sacred land, When, as the ploughshare cleft the earth, Child of the king I leapt to birth. Then as the ground he smoothed and cleared, He saw me all with dust besmeared, And on the new-found babe, amazed The ruler of Videha gazed. In childless love the monarch pressed The welcome infant to his breast: 'My daughter,' thus he cried, 'is she: 'And as his child he cared for me. Forth from the sky was heard o'erhead As 'twere a human voice that said: 'Yea, even so: great King, this child Henceforth thine own be justly styled. 'Videha's monarch, virtuous souled, Rejoiced o'er me with joy untold, Delighting in his new-won prize, The darling of his heart and eyes. To his chief queen of saintly mind The precious treasure he consigned, And by her side she saw me grow, Nursed with the love which mothers know.'

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Then as he saw the seasons fly, And knew my marriage-time was nigh, My sire was vexed with care, as sad As one who mourns the wealth he had: 'Scorn on the maiden's sire must wait From men of high and low estate: The virgin's father all despise, Though Indra's peer, who rules the skies. 'More near he saw, and still more near, The scorn that filled his soul with fear, On trouble's billowy ocean tossed, Like one whose shattered bark is lost. My father knowing how I came, No daughter of a mortal dame. In all the regions failed to see A bridegroom meet to match with me. Each way with anxious thought he scanned, And thus at length the monarch planned: 'The Bride's Election will I hold, With every rite prescribed of old. 'It pleased King Varun to bestow Quiver and shafts and heavenly bow Upon my father's sire who reigned, When Daksha his great rite ordained. Where was the man might bend or lift With utmost toil that wondrous gift? Not e'en in dreams could mortal king Strain the great bow or draw the string. Of this tremendous bow possessed, My truthful father thus addressed The lords of many a region, all Assembled at the monarch's call: 'Whoe'er this bow can manage, he The husband of my child shall be. 'The suitors viewed with hopeless eyes That wondrous bow of mountain size, Then to my sire they bade adieu, And all with humbled hearts withdrew. At length with Vis'vámitra came This son of Raghu, dear to fame, The royal sacrifice to view. Near to my father's home he drew, His brother Lakshman by his side, Ráma, in deeds heroic tried. My sire with honour entertained The saint in lore of duty trained, Who thus in turn addressed the king: 'Ráma and Lakshman here who spring From royal Das'aratha, long To see thy bow so passing strong.'

Before the prince's eyes was laid  
That marvel, as the Bráhmaṇ prayed. One moment on the bow he gazed, Quick  
to the notch the string he raised, Then, in the wandering people's  
view, The cord with mighty force he drew. Then with an awful crash as  
loud As thunderbolts that cleave the cloud, The bow beneath the matchless  
strain Of arms heroic snapped in twain. Thus, giving purest water, he, My  
sire, to Ráma offered me. The prince the offered gift declined Till he  
should learn his father's mind;  
So horsemen swift Ayodhyá sought And back her aged monarch brought. Me then  
my sire to Ráma gave, Self-ruled, the bravest of the brave. And Urmilá, the  
next to me, Graced with all gifts, most fair to see, My sire with Raghu's  
house allied. And gave her to be Lakshman's bride. Thus from the princes of  
the land Lord Ráma won my maiden hand, And him exalted high above Heroic  
chiefs I truly love.

\* \* \* \* \*

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CANTO CXIX.: THE FOREST.

When Anasúyá, virtuous-souled,  
Had heard the tale by Sítá told, She kissed the lady's brow and laced Her  
loving arms around her waist. 'With sweet-toned words distinct and  
clear Thy pleasant tale has charmed mine ear, How the great king thy father  
held That Maiden's Choice unparalleled. But now the sun has sunk from  
sight, And left the world to holy Night. Hark! how the leafy thickets  
sound With gathering birds that twitter round: They sought their food by  
day, and all Flock homeward when the shadows fall. See, hither comes the  
hermit band, Each with his pitcher in his hand: Fresh from the bath, their  
locks are wet, Their coats of bark are dripping yet. Here saints their  
fires of worship tend, And curling wreaths of smoke ascend: Borne on the  
flames they mount above, Dark as the brown wings of the dove. The distant  
trees, though well-nigh bare, Gloom thicken'd by the evening air, And in  
the faint uncertain light  
Shut the horizon from our sight. The beasts that prowl in darkness rove On  
every side about the grove, And the tame deer, at ease reclined Their  
shelter near the altars find. The night o'er all the sky is spread, With  
lunar stars engarlanded, And risen in his robes of light The moon is  
beautifully bright, Now to thy lord I bid thee go: Thy pleasant tale has  
charmed me so: One thing alone I needs must pray, Before me first thyself  
array: Here in thy heavenly raiment shine, And glad, dear love, these eyes  
of mine.'

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Then like a heavenly Goddess shone Fair Sítá with that raiment on. She  
bowed her to the matron's feet, Then turned away her lord to meet. The hero  
prince with joy surveyed His Sítá, in her robes arrayed, As glorious to his  
arms she came With love-gifts of the saintly dame. She told him how the  
saint to show Her fond affection would bestow That garland of celestial  
twine,

Those ornaments and robes divine. Then Ráma's heart, nor Lakshman's  
less, Was filled with pride and happiness, For honours high had Sítá  
gained, Which mortal dames have scarce obtained. There honoured by each  
pious sage Who dwelt within the hermitage, Beside his darling well  
content That sacred night the hero spent.

The princes, when the night had fled,  
Farewell to all the hermits said, Who gazed upon the distant shade, Their  
lustral rites and offerings paid. The saints who made their dwelling  
there In words like these addressed the pair: 'O Princes, monsters fierce  
and fell Around that distant forest dwell: On blood from human veins they  
feed, And various forms assume at need, With savage beasts of fearful  
power That human flesh and blood devour. Our holy saints they rend and  
tear When met alone or unaware, And eat them in their cruel joy: These

chase, O Ráma, or destroy. By this one path our hermits go  
To fetch the fruits that yonder grow: By this, O Prince, thy feet should stray  
Through pathless forests far away.'

Thus by the reverent saints addressed,

And by their prayers auspicious blessed, He left the holy crowd: His  
wife and brother by his side, Within the mighty wood he hied. So sinks the  
Day-God in his pride Beneath a bank of cloud.

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BOOK III.

Next: Canto I.: The Hermitage. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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CANTO I.: THE HERMITAGE.

When Ráma, valiant hero, stood

In the vast shade of Dandak wood, His eyes on every side he bent  
And saw a hermit settlement, Where coats of bark were hung around,  
And holy grass bestrewed the ground. Bright with Bráhmánic lustre glowed  
That circle where the saints abode: Like the hot sun in heaven it shone,  
Too dazzling to be looked upon. Wild creatures found a refuge where  
The court, well-swept, was bright and fair: And countless birds and roe-deer made  
Their dwelling in the friendly shade. Beneath the boughs of well-loved trees  
Oft danced the gay Apsarases.

1

Around was many an ample shed Wherein the holy fire was fed; With sacred  
grass and skins of deer, Ladles and sacrificial gear, And roots and fruit,  
and wood to burn, And many a brimming water-urn. Tall trees their hallowed  
branches spread, Laden with pleasant fruit, o'erhead; And gifts which holy  
laws require, 2

And solemn offerings burnt with fire, 3

And Veda chants on every side

That home of hermits sanctified. There many a flower its odour shed, And  
lotus blooms the lake o'erspread. There, clad in coats of bark and hide, --  
Their food by roots and fruit supplied, -- Dwelt many an old and reverend  
sire Bright as the sun or Lord of Fire, All with each worldly sense  
subdued, A pure and saintly multitude. The Veda chants, the saints who  
trode the sacred ground and mused on God, Made that delightful grove  
appear Like Brahmá's own most glorious sphere. As Raghu's splendid son  
surveyed That hermit home and tranquil shade, He loosed his mighty bow-  
string, then Drew nearer to the holy men.

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With keen celestial sight endued Those mighty saints the chieftain  
viewed, With joy to meet the prince they came, And gentle Sítá dear to  
fame. They looked on virtuous Ráma, fair As Soma

1 in the evening air, And Lakshman by his brother's side,

And Sítá long in duty tried, And with glad blessings every sage Received  
them in the hermitage. Then Ráma's form and stature tall Entranced the  
wondering eyes of all, -- His youthful grace, his strength of limb, And garb  
that nobly sat on him. To Lakshman too their looks they raised, And upon  
Sítá's beauty gazed With eyes that closed not lest their sight Should miss  
the vision of delight. Then the pure hermits of the wood, Rejoicing in all  
creatures' good, Their guest, the glorious Ráma, led Within a cot with  
leaves o'erhead. With highest honour all the best Of radiant saints  
received their guest, With kind observance, as is meet, And gave him water  
for his feet. To highest pitch of rapture wrought Their stores of roots and  
fruit they brought. They poured their blessings on his head, And 'All we  
have is thine,' they said. Then, reverent hand to hand applied,

2

Each duty-loving hermit cried: 'The king is our protector, bright In fame,  
maintainer of the right. He bears the awful sword, and hence Deserves an  
elder's reverence.'

One fourth of Indra's essence, hePreserves his realm from danger  
free,Hence honoured by the world of rightThe king enjoys each choice  
delight.Thou shouldst to us protection give,For in thy realm, dear lord,  
we live:Whether in town or wood thou be,Thou art our king, thy people  
we,Our wordly aims are laid aside,Our hearts are tamed and purified.To  
thee our guardian, we who earnOur only wealth by penance turn.'  
Then the pure dwellers in the shade  
To Raghu's son due honour paid,And Lakshman, bringing store of roots,And  
many a flower, and woodland fruits.  
And others strove the prince to please  
With all attentive courtesies.

Footnotes

229:1 Heavenly nymphs.229:2 The (illegible) present food to all created  
beings.

229:3 The clarified butter &c. cast into the sacred fire.

230:1 The Moon-God: 'he is,' says the commentator,  
'the special deity of bráhmans.'

230:2 Because he was an incarnation of the deity,' says the commentator,  
'otherwise such honour paid by men

of the sacerdotal caste to one of the military would be improper.'

Next: Canto II.: Virádha.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO II.: VIRÁDHA.

Thus entertained he passed the night,  
Then, with the morning's early light,To all the hermits bade adieuAnd  
sought his onward way anew.He pierced the mighty forest whereRoamed many  
a deer and pard and bear:Its ruined pools he scarce could see.For creeper  
rent and prostrate tree,Where shrill cicada's cries were heard,And  
plaintive notes of many a bird.Deep in the thickets of the woodWith  
Lakshman and his spouse he stood,There in the horrid shade he sawA giant  
passing nature's law:Vast as some mountain-peak in size,With mighty voice  
and sunken eyes,Huge, hideous, tall, with monstrous face,Most ghastly of  
his giant race.A tiger's hide the Rákshas woreStill reeking with the fat  
and gore:Huge-faced, like Him who rules the dead,All living things he  
struck with dread.Three lions, tigers four, ten deerHe carried on his  
iron spear,Two wolves, an elephant's head beside  
With mighty tusks which blood-drops dyed.When on the three his fierce eye  
fell,He charged them with a roar and yellAs furious as the grisly  
KingWhen stricken worlds are perishing.Then with a mighty roar that  
shookThe earth beneath their feet, he tookThe trembling Sítá to his  
side.Withdrew a little space, and cried:'Ha, short lived wretches, ye who  
dare,In hermit dress with matted hair,Armed each with arrows, sword, and  
bow,Through Dandak's pathless wood to go:How with one dame, I bid you  
tell,Can you among ascetics dwell?Who are ye, sinners, who despiseThe  
right, in holy men's disguise?The great Virádha, day by dayThrough this  
deep-tangled wood I stray,And ever, armed with trusty steel,I seize a  
saint to make my meal.This woman young and fair of frameShall be the  
conquering giant's dame:Your blood, ye things of evil life,My lips shall  
quaff in battle strife.'

He spoke: and Janak's hapless child,

Scared by his speech so fierce and wild,p. 231

Trembled for terror, as a frail

Young plantain shivers in the gale.When Ráma saw Virádha claspFair Sítá  
in his mighty grasp,Thus with pale lips that terror driedThe hero to his  
brother cried:'O see Virádha's arm enfoldMy darling in its cursed hold,--  
The child of Janak best of kings,My spouse whose soul to virtue  
clings,Sweet princess, with pure glory bright,Nursed in the lap of soft  
delight.Now falls the blow Kaikeyí meant,Successful in her dark  
intent:This day her cruel soul will beTriumphant over thee and me.Though  
Bharat on the throne is set,Her greedy eyes look farther yet:Me from my  
home she dared expel,Me whom all creatures loved so well.This fatal day

at length, I ween, Brings triumph to the younger queen. I see with  
bitterest grief and shame Another touch the Maithil dame. Not loss of sire  
and royal power So grieves me as this mournful hour. 'Thus in his anguish  
cried the chief:

Then drowned in tears, o'erwhelmed by grief, Thus Lakshman in his anger  
spake, Quick panting like a spell-bound snake:  
'Canst thou, my brother, Indra's peer,  
When I thy minister am near. Thus grieve like some forsaken thing, Thou,  
every creature's lord and king? My vengeful shaft the fiend shall slay, And  
earth shall drink his blood to-day. The fury which my soul at first Upon  
usurping Bharat nursed, On this Virádha will I wreak As Indra splits the  
mountain peak. Winged by this arm's impetuous might My shaft with deadly  
force The monster in the chest shall smite, And fell his shattered  
corse.'

\* \* \* \* \*

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CANTO III.: VIRÁDHA ATTACKED.

Virádha with a fearful shout

That echoed through the wood, cried out:

'What men are ye, I bid you say,  
And whither would ye bend your way?'

To him whose mouth shot fiery flame

The hero told his race and name: 'Two Warriors, nobly bred, are we, And  
through this wood we wander free. But who art thou, how born and  
styled, Who roamest here in Dandak's wild?'

To Ráma, bravest of the brave,

His answer thus Virádha gave: 'Hear, Raghu's son, and mark me well, And I  
my name and race will tell. Of S'atahradá born, I spring From Java as my  
sire, O King: Me, of this lofty lineage, all Giants on earth Virádha  
call. The rites austere I long maintained From Brahmá's grace the boon have  
gained To bear a charmed frame which ne'er

Weapon or shaft may pierce or tear. Go as ye came, untouched by fear, And  
leave with me this woman here; Go, swiftly from my presence fly, Or by this  
hand ye both shall die.'

Then Ráma with his fierce eyes red

With fury to the giant said: 'Woe to thee, sinner, fond and weak, Who madly  
thus thy death wilt seek! Stand, for it waits thee in the fray: With life  
thou ne'er shalt flee away.'

He spoke, and raised the cord whereon

A pointed arrow flashed and shone, Then, wild with anger, from his bow, He  
launched the weapon on the foe. Seven times the fatal cord he drew, And  
forth seven rapid arrows flew, Shafts winged with gold that left the  
wind And e'en Suparna's

1 self behind.

Full on the giant's breast they smote, And purpled like the peacock's  
throat, Passed through his mighty bulk and came To earth again like flakes  
of flame. The fiend the Maithil dame unclasped; In his fierce hand his  
spear he grasped, And wild with rage, pierced through and through, At Ráma  
and his brother flew.

So loud the roar which chilled with fear, So massy was the monster's  
spear, He seemed, like Indra's flagstaff, dread As the dark God who rules  
the dead. On huge Virádha fierce as He

2

Who smites, and worlds have ceased to be, The princely brothers poured  
again Their fiery flood of arrowy rain. Unmoved he stood, and opening  
wide His dire mouth laughed unterrified, And ever as the monster gaped Those  
arrows from his jaws escaped. Preserving still his life unharmed, By  
Brahmá's saving promise charmed, His mighty spear aloft in air He raised,

and rushed upon the pair.From Ráma's bow two arrows flewAnd cleft that massive spear in two,

p. 232

Dire as the flaming levin sentFrom out the cloudy firmament.Cut by the shafts he guided wellTo earth the giant's weapon fell:As when from Meru's summit, rivenBy fiery bolts, a rock is driven.Then swift his sword each warrior drew,Like a dread serpent black of hue,And gathering fury for the blowRushed fiercely on the giant foe.Around each prince an arm he cast,And held the dauntless heroes fast:Then, though his gashes gaped and bled,Bearing the twain he turned and fled. Then Ráma saw the giant's plan,And to his brother thus began:'O Lakshman, let Virádha stillHurry us onward as he will,For look, Sumitra's son, he goesAlong the path we freely chose.'

He spoke: the rover of the night

Upraised them with terrific might,Till, to his lofty shoulders swung,Like children to his neck they clung.Then sending far his fearful roar,The princes through the wood he bore,--A wood like some vast cloud to view,Where birds of every plumage flew,And mighty trees o'erarching threw Dark shadows on the ground;Where snakes and silvan creates madeTheir dwelling, and the jackal strayed Through tangled brakes around.

Footnotes

231:1 The King of birds.

231:2 Kálántakayamopamam, resembling Yama the destroyer.

Next: Canto IV.: Virádha's Death.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO IV.: VIRÁDHA'S DEATH.

But Sítá viewed with wild affright

The heroes hurried from her sight.She tossed her shapely arms on high,And shrieked aloud her bitter cry:'Ah, the dread giant bears awayThe princely Ráma as his prey,Truthful and pure, and good and great,And Lakshman shares his brother's fate.The brindled tiger and the bearMy mangled limbs for food will tear.Take me, O best of giants, me,And leave the sons of Raghu free.'

Then, by avenging fury spurred,

Her mournful cry the heroes heard,And hastened, for the lady's sake,The wicked monster's life to take.Then Lakshman with resistless strokeThe foe's left arm that held him broke,And Rama too, as swift to smite,Smashed with his heavy hand the right.With broken arms and tortured frameTo earth the fainting giant came,Like a huge cloud, or mighty rockBent, sundered by the levin's shock.

Then rushed they on, and crushed and bentTheir foe with arms and fists and feet,And nerved each mighty limb to poundAnd bray him on the level ground.Keen arrows and each biting bladeWide rents in breast and side had made;But crushed and torn and mangled, stillThe monster lived they could not kill.When Ráma saw no arms might slayThe fiend who like a mountain lay,The glorious hero, swift to saveIn danger, thus his counsel gave:' O Prince of men, his charmed lifeNo arms may take in battle strife:Now dig we in this grove a pitHis elephantine bulk to fit,And let the hollowed earth enfoldThe monster of gigantic mould.'

This said, the son of Raghu pressed

His foot upon the giant's breast.With joy the prostrate monster heardVictorious Ráma's welcome word,And straight Kakutstha's son, the bestOf men, in words like these addressed:'I yield, O chieftain, overthrownBy might that vies with Indra's own.Till now my folly-blinded eyesThee, hero, failed to recognize.

Happy Kaus'alyá! blest to beThe mother of a son like thee!I know thee well, O chieftain, now:Ráma, the prince of men, art thou.There stands the



high-born Maithil dame, There Lakshman, lord of mighty fame. My name was  
Tumburu

1, for song

Renowned among the minstrel throng: Cursed by Kuvera's stern decree I wear  
the hideous shape you see. But when I sued, his grace to crave, The  
glorious God this answer gave: 'When Rāma, Das'aratha's son, Destroys thee  
and the light is won, Thy proper shape once more assume, And heaven again  
shall give thee room.' When thus the angry God replied, No prayers could  
turn his wrath aside, And thus on me his fury fell For loving Rambhā's  
2 charms too well.

Now through thy favour am I freed From the stern fate the God decreed, And  
saved, O tamer of the foe,

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By thee, to heaven again shall go. A league, O Prince, beyond this  
spot Stands holy S'arabhanga's cot:

The very sun is not more bright Than that most glorious anchorite: To him,  
O Rāma, quickly turn, And blessings from the hermit earn. First under earth  
my body throw, Then on thy way rejoicing go. Such is the law ordained of  
old For giants when their days are told: Their bodies laid in earth, they  
rise To homes eternal in the skies.' Thus, by the rankling dart  
oppressed, Kakutstha's offspring he addressed: In earth his mighty body  
lay, His spirit fled to heaven away. Thus spake Virādha ere he died; And  
Rāma to his brother cried: 'Now dig we in this grove a pit His elephantine  
bulk to fit. And let the hollowed earth enfold This mighty giant fierce and  
bold.' This said, the valiant hero put Upon the giant's neck his  
foot. His spade obedient Lakshman plied, And dug a pit both deep and wide By  
lofty souled Virādha's side. Then Raghu's son his foot withdrew, And down  
the mighty form they threw; One awful shout of joy he gave And sank into  
the open grave.

The heroes, to their purpose true, In fight the cruel demon slew, And  
radiant with delight Deep in the hollowed earth they cast The monster  
roaring to the last, In their resistless might. Thus when they saw the  
warrior's steel No life-destroying blow might deal, The pair, for lore  
renowned, Deep in the pit their hands had made The unresisting giant laid,  
And killed him neath the ground. Upon himself the monster brought From  
Rāma's hand the death he sought With strong desire to gain: And thus the  
rover of the night Told Rāma, as they strove in fight, That swords might  
rend and arrows smite Upon his breast in vain. Thus Rāma, when his  
speech he heard, The giant's mighty form interred, Which mortal arms  
defied. With thundering crash the giant fell, And rock and cave and forest  
dell With echoing roar replied. The princes, when their task was done And  
freedom from the peril won, Rejoiced to see him die. Then in the  
boundless wood they strayed,

Like the great sun and moon displayed

Triumphant in the sky. 1

\* \* \* \* \*

Footnotes

232:1 Somewhat inconsistently with this part of the  
story Tumburu is mentioned in Book II, Canto XII as  
one of the Gandharvas or heavenly minstrels summoned to perform at  
Bharadvāja's feast.

232:2 Rambhā appears in Book I, Canto LXIV as the  
temptress of Visvāmītra.

Next: Canto V.: S'arabhanga. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO V.: S'ARABHANGA.

Then Rāma, having slain in fight

Virādha of terrific might, With gentle words his spouse consoled, And  
clasped her in his loving hold. Then to his brother nobly brave The valiant  
prince his counsel gave: 'Wild are these woods around us spread; And hard  
and rough the ground to tread: We, O my brother, ne'er have viewed So dark

and drear a solitude: To S'arabhanga let us haste, Whom wealth of holy works has graced.' Thus Ráma spoke, and took the road To S'arabhanga's pure abode. But near that saint whose lustre vied With Gods, by penance purified, With startled eyes the prince beheld A wondrous sight unparalleled. In splendour like the fire and sun He saw a great and glorious one. Upon a noble car he rode, And many a God behind him glowed: And earth beneath his feet unpressed

2

The monarch of the skies confessed. Ablaze with gems, no dust might dim The bright attire that covered him. Arrayed like him, on every side High saints their master glorified. Near, borne in air, appeared in view His car which tawny coursers drew, Like silver cloud, the moon, or sun Ere yet the day is well begun. Wreathed with gay garlands, o'er his head A pure white canopy was spread, And lovely nymphs stood nigh to hold Fair chouris with their sticks of gold, Which, waving in each gentle hand, The forehead of their monarch fanned. God, saint, and bard, a radiant ring, Sang glory to their heavenly King: Forth into joyful lauds they burst As Indra with the sage conversed. Then Ráma, when his wondering eyes Beheld the monarch of the skies,

p. 234

To Lakshman quickly called, and showed The car wherein Lord Indra rode: 'See, brother, see that air-borne car, Whose wondrous glory shines afar: Wherefrom so bright a lustre streams That like a falling sun it seems These are the steeds whose fame we know, Of heavenly race through heaven they go: These are the steeds who bear the yoke Of S'akra,

1 Him whom all invoke.

Behold these youths, a glorious band, Toward every wind a hundred stand: A sword in each right hand is borne, And rings of gold their arms adorn. What might in every broad deep chest And club-like arm is manifest! Clothed in attire of crimson hue They show like tigers fierce to view. Great chains of gold each warder deck, Gleaming like fire beneath his neck. The age of each fair youth appears Some score and five of human years: The ever-blooming prime which they Who live in heaven retain for aye: Such mien these lordly beings wear, Heroic youths, most bright and fair. Now, brother, in this spot, I pray, With the Videhan lady stay, Till I have certain knowledge who This being is, so bright to view.' He spoke, and turning from the spot Sought S'arabhanga's hermit cot. But when the lord of S'achí

2 saw

The son of Raghu near him draw, He hastened of the sage to take His leave, and to his followers spake:

'See, Ráma bends his steps this way, But ere he yet a word can say, Come, fly to our celestial sphere; It is not meet he see me here. Soon victor and triumphant he In fitter time shall look on me. Before him still a great emprise, A task too hard for others, lies.' Then with all marks of honour high The Thunderer bade the saint good-bye, And in his car which coursers drew Away to heaven the conqueror flew. Then Ráma, Lakshman, and the dame, To S'arabhanga nearer came, Who sat beside the holy flame. Before the ancient sage they bent, And clasped his feet most reverent; Then at his invitation found A seat beside him on the ground. Then Ráma prayed the sage would deign Lord Indra's visit to explain;

And thus at length the holy man

In answer to his prayer began: 'This Lord of boons has sought me here To waft me hence to Brahmá's sphere, Won by my penance long and stern, -- A home the lawless ne'er can earn. But when I knew that thou wast nigh, To Brahmá's world I could not fly Until these longing eyes were blest With seeing thee, mine honoured guest. Since thou, O Prince, hast cheered my sight, Great-hearted lover of the right, To heavenly spheres will I repair And bliss supreme that waits me there. For I have won, dear Prince, my way To those fair worlds which ne'er decay, Celestial seat of Brahmá's

reign:Be thine, with me, those worlds to gain.' Then master, of all  
sacred lore,Spake Ráma to the saint once more: 'I, even I, illustrious  
sage,Will make those worlds mine heritage:But now, I pray, some home  
assignWithin this holy grove of thine.' Thus Ráma, Indra's peer in  
might,Addressed the aged anchorite:And he, with wisdom well endued,To  
Raghu's son his speech renewed: 'Sutíkshna's woodland home is near,A  
glorious saint of life austere,True to the path of duty; heWith highest  
bliss will prosper thee.Against the stream thy course must beOf this fair  
brook Mandákiní,Whereon light rafts like blossoms glide;Then to his  
cottage turn aside.

There lies thy path: but ere thou go,Look on me, dear one, till I  
throwAside this mould that girds me in,As casts the snake his withered  
skin.' He spoke, the fire in order laidWith holy oil due offerings  
made,And S'arábhanga, glorious sire,Laid down his body in the fire.Then  
rose the flame above his head,On skin, blood, flesh, and bones it  
fed,Till forth, transformed, with radiant hueOf tender youth, he rose  
anew,Far-shining in his bright attireCame S'arábhanga from the pyre:Above  
the home of saints, and thoseWho feed the quenchless flame,  
1b he rose:

Beyond the seat of Gods he passed,And Brahmá's sphere was gained at last.  
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The noblest of the twice-born race,For holy works supreme in place,The  
Mighty Father there beheldGirt round by hosts unparalleled;And Brahmá  
joying at the sightWelcomed the glorious anchorite. \* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

233:1 The conclusion of this Canto is all a vain  
repetition: it is manifestly spurious and a very feeble  
imitation of Válmíki's style. See Additional Notes.

233:2 'Even when he had alighted,' says the  
commentator: The feet of Gods do not touch the ground.

234:1 A name of Indra

234:2 S'achí is the consort of Indra.

234:1b The spheres or mansions gained by those who have duly performed  
the sacrifices required of them.

Different situations are assigned to these spheres, some placing them  
near the sun, others near the moon.

Next: Canto VI.: Ráma's Promise.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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#### CANTO VI.: RÁMA'S PROMISE.

When he his heavenly home had found,  
The holy men who dwelt aroundTo Ráma flocked, whose martial fameShone  
glorious as the kindled flame:Vaikhánasas  
1 who love the wild.

Pure hermits Bálakhilyas 2 styled,  
Good Samprakshálas, 3 saints who live

On rays which moon and daystar give:Those who with leaves their lives  
sustainAnd those who pound with stones their grain:And they who lie in  
pools, and thoseWhose corn, save teeth, no winnow knows:Those who for  
beds the cold earth use,And those who every couch refuse:And those  
condemned to ceaseless pains,Whose single foot their weight sustains:And  
those who sleep neath open skies,Whose food the wave or air supplies,And  
hermits pure who spend their nightsOn ground prepared for sacred  
rites;Those who on hills their vigil hold,Or dripping clothes around them  
fold:The devotees who live for prayer,Or the five fires 4 unflinching  
bear.

On contemplation all intent,  
With light that heavenly knowledge lent,They came to Ráma, saint and  
sage,In S'arabhaga's hermitage.The hermit crowd around him pressed,And  
thus the virtuous chief addressed:'The lordship of the earth is thine,O  
Prince of old Ikshváku's line.

Lord of the Gods is Indra, so  
Thou art our lord and guide below. Thy name, the glory of thy  
might, Throughout the triple world are bright: Thy filial love so nobly  
shown. Thy truth and virtue well are known. To thee, O lord, for help we  
fly, And on thy love of right rely: With kindly patience hear us speak, And  
grant the boon we humbly seek. That lord of earth were most unjust, Foul  
traitor to his solemn trust, Who should a sixth of all

1b require,

Nor guard his people like a sire. But he who ever watchful strives To guard  
his subjects' wealth and lives, Dear as himself or, dearer still, His sons,  
with earnest heart and will, -- That king, O Raghu's son, secures High fame  
that endless years endures,

And he to Brahmá's world shall rise, Made glorious in the eternal  
skies, Whate'er, by duty won, the meed Of saints whom roots and berries  
feed, One fourth thereof, for tender care Of subjects, is the monarch's  
share. These, mostly of the Bráhma race, Who make the wood their dwelling-  
place, Although a friend in thee they view, Fall friendless neath the giant  
crew. Come, Ráma, come, and see hard by The holy hermits' corpses lie, Where  
many a tangled pathway shows The murderous work of cruel foes. These wicked  
fiends the hermits kill -- Who live on Chitrakúta's hill, And blood of  
slaughtered saints has dyed Mandákiní and Pampá's side. No longer can we  
bear to see The death of saint and devotee Whom through the forest day by  
day These Rákshases unpitying slay. To thee, O Prince, we flee, and  
crave Thy guardian help our lives to save. From these fierce rovers of the  
night Defend each stricken anchorite. Throughout the world 'twere vain to  
seek An arm like thine to aid the weak. O Prince, we pray thee hear our  
call,

And from these fiends preserve us all.' The son of Raghu heard the  
plaint Of penance-loving sage and saint, And the good prince his speech  
renewed To all the hermit multitude: 'To me, O saints, ye need not sue: I  
wait the hests of all of you. I by mine own occasion led This mighty forest  
needs must tread,

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And while I keep my sire's decree Your lives from threatening foes will  
free. I hither came of free accord To lend the aid by you implored, And  
richest meed my toil shall pay, While here in forest shades I stay. I long  
in battle strife to close. And slay these fiends, the hermits' foes, That  
saint and sage may learn aright My prowess and my brother's might.' Thus  
to 'the saints his promise gave That prince who still to virtue clave  
With never-wandering thought: And then with Lakshman by his side, With  
penance-wealthy men to guide, Sutíkshna's home he sought. Footnotes  
235:1 Hermits who live upon roots which they dig out  
of the earth: literally diggers, derived from the prefix vi  
and khan to dig.

235:2 Generally, divine personages of the height of a  
man's thumb, produced from Brahmá's hair: here,  
according to the commentator followed by Gorresio, hermits who when they  
have obtained fresh food throw away what they had laid up before.

235:3 Sprung from the washings of Vishnu's feet.

235:4 Four fires burning round them, and the sun above.

235:1b The tax allowed to the king by the Laws of  
Manu.

Next: Canto VII.: Sutíkshna. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO VII.: SUTÍKSHNA.

So Raghu's son, his foemen's dread,  
With Sítá and his brother sped, Girt round by many a twice-born sage, To  
good Sutíkshna's hermitage.

1

Through woods for many a league he passed, O'er rushing rivers full and  
fast, Until a mountain fair and bright As lofty Meru rose in sight. Within

its belt of varied woodIkshváku'a sons and Sítá stood,Where trees of every foliage boreBlossom and fruit in endless store.There coats of bark, like garlands strung,Before a lonely cottage hung,And there a hermit, dust-besmeared,A lotus on his breast, appeared.Then Ráma with obeisance dueAddressed the sage, as near he drew:'My name is Ráma, lord; I seekThy presence, saint, with thee to speak.O sage, whose merits ne'er decay,Some word unto thy servant say.' The sage his eyes on Ráma bent,Of virtue's friends preëminent;Then words like these he spoke, and pressed The son of Raghu to his breast:'Welcome to thee, illustrious youth,Best champion of the rights of truth!By thine approach this holy groundA worthy lord this day has found.I could not quit this mortal frameTill thou shouldst, come, O dear to fame:To heavenly spheres I would not rise,Expecting thee with eager eyes.

I knew that thou, unkinged, hadst made Thy home in Chitrakúta's shade.E'en now, O Ráma, Indra, lordSupreme by all the Gods adored,King of the Hundred Offerings, 1b said,

When he my dwelling visited,That the good works that I have doneMy choice of all the worlds have won.Accept this meed of holy vows,And with thy brother and thy spouse,Roam, through my favour, in the skyWhich saints celestial glorify.' To that bright sage, of penance stern,The high-souled Ráma spake in turn,As Vāsava

2b who rules the skies

To Brahmá's gracious speech replies:I of myself those worlds will win,O mighty hermit pure from sin:But now, O saint, I pray thee tell Where I within this wood may dwell:For I by S'arabhanga old,The son of Gautama, was toldThat thou in every lore art wise,And seest all with loving eyes.' Thus to the saint, whose glories highFilled all the world, he made reply:And thus again the holy manHis pleasant speech with joy began:'This calm retreat, O Prince, is blestWith many a charm: here take thy rest.Here roots and kindly fruits abound,And hermits love the holy ground.Fair silvan beasts and gentle deerIn herds unnumbered wander here:And as they roam, secure from harm,Our eyes with grace and beauty charm:Except the beasts in thickets bred,This grove of ours has naught to dread." The hermit's speech when Ráma heard,--The hero ne'er by terror stirred,--On his great bow his hand he laid,And thus in turn his answer made:'O saint, my darts of keenest steel,Armed with their murderous barbs, would dealDestruction mid the silvan raceThat flocks around thy dwelling-place.Most wretched then my fate would beFor such dishonour shown to thee:

And only for the briefest stayWould I within this grove delay.' He spoke and ceased. With pious careHe turned him to his evening prayer,Performed each customary rite,And sought his lodging for the night,With Sítá and his brother laid

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Beneath the grove's delightful shade,First good Sútíkshnu, when he sawThe shades of night around them draw, With hospitable careThe princely chieftains entertainedWith store of choicest food ordained For holy hermit's fare.

Footnotes

236:1 Near the celebrated Rámagiri or Ráma's Hill, now Rám-tek, near Nagpore --the scene of the Yaksha's exile in the Messenger Cloud.

236:1b A hundred As'vamedhas or sacrifices of a horse raise the sacrificer to the dignity of Indra.

236:2b Indra.

Next: Canto VIII.: The Hermitage.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO VIII.: THE HERMITAGE.

So Ráma and Sumttrá's son,

When every honour due was done, Slept through the night. When morning broke, The heroes from their rest awoke. Betimes the son of Raghu rose, With gentle Sítá, from repose, And sipped the cool delicious wave Sweet with the scent the lotus gave, Then to the Gods and sacred flame The heroes and the lady came, And bent their heads in honour meet Within the hermit's pure retreat. When every stain was purged away, They saw the rising Lord of Day: Then to Sutíkhna's side they went, And softly spoke, most reverent: 'Well have we slept, O holy lord, Honoured of thee by all adored: Now leave to journey forth we pray: These hermits urge us on our way. We haste to visit, wandering by, The ascetics' homes that round you lie, And roaming Dandak's mighty wood To view each saintly brotherhood, For thy permission now we sue, With these high saints to duty true, By penance taught each sense to tame, -- In lustre like the smokeless flame. Ere on our brows the sun can beat With fierce intolerable heat. Like some unworthy lord who wins His power by tyranny and sins, O saint, we fain would part.' The three Bent humbly to the dovotee. He raised the princes as they pressed His feet, and strained them to his breast; And then the chief of devotees Bespoke them both in words like these. 'Go with thy brother, Ráma, go, Pursue thy path untouched by woe: Go with thy faithful Sítá, she Still like a shadow follows thee Roam Dandak wood observing well The pleasant homes where hermits dwell, -- Pure saints whose ordered souls adhere To penance rites and vows austere. There plenteous roots and berries grow, And noble trees their blossoms show, And gentle deer and birds of air In peaceful troops are gathered there. There see the full-blown lotus stud The bosom of the lucid flood, And watch the joyous mallard shake The reeds that fringe the pool and lake. See with delighted eye the rill Leap sparkling from her parent hill, And hear the woods that round thee lie Reëcho to the peacock's cry. And as I bid thy brother, so, Sumitrá's child, I bid thee go. Go forth, these varied beauties see, And then once more return to me.' Thus spake the sage Sutikshna: both The chiefs assented, nothing loth. Round him with circling steps they paced, Then for the road prepared with haste. There Sítá stood, the dame long-eyed, Fair quivers round their waists she tied, And gave each prince his trusty bow, And sword which ne'er a spot might know. Each took his quiver from her \*and. And clanging bow and gleaming brand: Then from the hermits' home the two Went forth each woodland scene to view. Eavh beauteous in the bloom of age, Dismissed by that illustrious sage, With bow and sword accoutred, hied Away, and Sítá by their side. Next: Canto IX.: Sita's Speech. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

#### CANTO IX.: SITA'S SPEECH.

Blest by the sage, when Raghu's son His onward journey had begun, Thus in her soft tone Sítá, meek With modest fear, began to speak: 'One little slip the great may lead To shame that follows lawless deed: Such shame, my lord, as still must cling To faults from low desire that spring. Three several sins defile the soul, Born of desire that spurns control: First, utterance of a lying word, Then, viler both, the next, and third: The lawless love of other's wife, The thirst of blood uncaused by strife. The first, O Ragnu's son, in thee None yet has found, none e'er shall see. Love of another's dame destroys All merit, lost for guilty joys: Ráma, such crime in thee, I ween, Has ne'er been found, shall ne'er be seen: The very thought, my princely lord, Is in thy secret soul abhorred.

p. 238 For thou hast ever been the same

Fond lover of thine own dear dame, Content with faithful heart to do Thy father's will, most just and true: Justice, and faith, and many a grace In thee have found a resting-place. Such virtues, Prince, the good may gain Who empire o'er each sense retain; And well canst thou, with loving view Regarding all, each sense subdue, But for the third, the lust that

strives, Insatiate still, for others' lives, --Fond thirst of blood where  
 hate is none, --This, O my lord, thou wilt not shun. Thou hast but now a  
 promise made, The saints of Danndak wood to aid: And to protect their lives  
 from ill The giants' blood in tight wilt spill: And from thy promise  
 lasting fame Will glorify the forest's name. Armed with thy bow and arrows  
 thou Forth with thy brother journeyest now While as I think how true thou  
 art Fears for thy bliss assail my heart, And all my spirit at the sight Is  
 troubled with a strange affright. I like it not -- it seems not good -- Thy  
 going thus to Damdak wood: And I, if thou wilt mark me well,  
 The reason of my fear will tell. Thou with thy brother, bow in  
 hand, Beneath those ancient trees wilt stand, And thy keen arrows will not  
 spare Wood-rovers who will meet thee there. For as the fuel food  
 supplies That bids the dormant flame arise, Thus when the warrior grasps  
 his bow He feels his breast with ardour glow. Deep in a holy grove, of  
 yore, Where bird and beast from strife forbore, S'achi beneath the  
 sheltering boughs, A truthful hermit kept his vows. Then Indra, S'achi's  
 heavenly lord, Armed like a warrior with a sword, Came to his tranquil home  
 to spoil The hermit of his holy toil, And left the glorious weapon  
 there Entrusted to the hermit's care, A pledge for him to keep, whose  
 mind To fervent zeal was all resigned. He took the brand: with utmost  
 heed He kept it for the warrior's need: To keep his trust he fondly  
 strove When roaming in the neighbouring grove: Whene'er for roots and fruit  
 he strayed Still by his side he bore the blade: Still on his sacred charge  
 intent, He took his treasure when he went.

As day by day that brand he wore, The hermit, rich in merit's store From  
 penance rites each thought withdrew, And fierce and wild his spirit  
 grew. With heedless soul he spurned the right, And found in cruel deeds  
 delight. So, living with the sword, he fell, A ruined hermit, down to  
 hell. This tale applies to those who deal Too closely with the warrior's  
 steel: The steel to warriors is the same As fuel to the smouldering  
 flame. Sincere affection prompts my speech: I honour where I fain would  
 teach. Mayst thou, thus armed with shaft and bow, So dire a longing never  
 know As, when no hatred prompts the fray, These giants of the wood to  
 slay: For he who kills without offence Shall win but little glory thence The  
 bow the warrior joys to bend Is lent him for a nobler end, That he may save  
 and succour those Who watch in woods when pressed by foes. What, matched  
 with woods, is bow or steel? What, warrior's arm with hermit's zeal? We  
 with such might have naught to do: The forest rule should guide us too. But  
 when Ayodhyá hails thee lord,

Be then thy warrior life restored: So shall thy sire

1 and mother joy

In bliss that naught may e'er destroy. And if, resigning empire,  
 thou Submit thee to the hermit's vow, The noblest gain from virtue  
 springs, And virtue joy unending brings. All earthly blessings virtue  
 sends: On virtue all the world depends. Those who with vow and fasting  
 tame To due restraint the mind and frame, Win by their labour, nobly  
 wise, The highest virtue for their prize. Pure in the hermit's grove  
 remain, True to thy duty, free from stain. But the three worlds are open  
 thrown To thee, by whom all things are known. Who gave me power that I  
 should dare His duty to my lord declare? 'Tis woman's fancy, light as air,  
 That moves my foolish breast. Now with thy brother counsel take, Reflect,  
 thy choice with judgment make, And do what seems the best.'

p. 239 Footnotes

238:1 Gorresio observes that Das'aratha was dead and  
 that Sitá had been informed of his death. In his  
 translation he substitutes for the words of the text 'thy relations and  
 mine.' This is quite superfluous. Das'aratha though in heaven still took  
 a loving interest in the fortunes of his son.

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CANTO X.: RÁMA'S REPLY.

The words that Sítá uttered, spurred  
By truest love, the hero heard: Then he who ne'er from virtue strayed  
To Janak's child his answer made: 'In thy wise speech, sweet love, I find  
True impress of thy gentle mind, Well skilled the warrior's path to trace,  
Thou pride of Janak's ancient race. What fitting answer shall I frame  
To thy good words, my honoured dame? Thou sayst the warrior bears the bow  
That misery's tears may cease to flow; And those pure saints who love the  
shade Of Dandak wood are sore dismayed. They sought me of their own  
accord, With suppliant prayers my aid implored: They, fed on roots and  
fruit, who spend Their lives where bosky wilds extend, My timid love, enjoy  
no rest By these malignant fiends distressed. These make the flesh of man  
their meat: The helpless saints they kill and eat. The hermits sought my  
side, the chief Of Brahman race declared their grief. I heard, and from my  
lips there fell

The words which thou rememberest well: I listened as the hermits cried, And  
to their prayers I thus replied: 'Your favour, gracious lords, I  
claim, O'erwhelmed with this enormous shame That Bráhmans, great and pure  
as you, Who should be sought, to me should sue.' And then before the  
saintly crowd, 'What can I do?' I cried aloud. Then from the trembling  
hermits broke One long sad cry, and thus they spoke: 'Fiends of the wood,  
who wear at will Each varied shape, afflict us still. To thee in our  
distress we fly: O help us, Ráma, or we die. When sacred rites of fire are  
due, When changing moons are full or new, These fiends who bleeding flesh  
devour Assail us with resistless power. They with their cruel might  
torment The hermits on their vows intent: We look around for help and  
see Our surest refuge, Prince, in thee. We, armed with powers of penance,  
might Destroy the rovers of the night: But loth were we to bring to  
naught The merit years of toil have bought. Our penance rites are grown too  
hard, By many a check and trouble barred,  
But though our saints for food are slain The withering curse we yet  
restrain.

Thus many a weary day distressed

By giants who this wood infest, We see at length deliverance, thou With  
Lakshman art our guardian now.' As thus the troubled hermits prayed, I  
promised, dame, my ready aid, And now--for truth I hold most dear--Still  
to my word must I adhere. My love, I might endure to be Deprived of  
Lakshman, life, and thee, But ne'er deny my promise, ne'er To Bráhmans  
break the oath I swear. I must, enforced by high constraint, Protect them  
all. Each suffering saint In me, unasked, his help had found; Still more in  
one by promise bound. I know thy words, mine own dear dame, From thy sweet  
heart's affection came: I thank thee for thy gentle speech, For those we  
love are those we teach. 'Tis like thyself, O fair of face, 'Tis worthy of  
thy noble race: Dearer than life, thy feet are set In righteous paths they  
ne'er forget.' Thus to the Maithil monarch's child, His own dear wife,  
in accents mild

The high-souled hero said: Then to the holy groves which lay Beyond them  
fair to see, their way The bow-armed chieftain led.

Next: Canto XI.: Agastya. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XI.: AGASTYA.

Ráma went foremost of the three,

Next Sítá, followed, fair to see, And Lakshman with his bow in hand Walked  
hindmost of the little band. As onward through the wood they went, With  
great delight their eyes were bent On rocky heights beside the way And  
lofty trees with blossoms gay; And streamlets running fair and fast The  
royal youths with Sítá passed. They watched the sáras and the drake On  
islets of the stream and lake, And gazed delighted on the floods Bright  
with gay birds and lotus buds. They saw in startled herds the roes, The  
passion-frenzied buffaloes, Wild elephants who fiercely tore The tender  
trees, and many a boar. A length of woodland way they passed, And when the



sun was low at last A lovely stream-fed lake they spied, Two leagues across  
from side to side. Tall elephants fresh beauty gave To grassy bank and  
lilied wave, p. 240

By many a swan and sáras stirred,  
Mallard, and gay-winged water-bird. From those sweet waters, loud and  
long, Though none was seen to wake the song, Swelled high the singer's  
music blent With each melodious instrument. Ráma and car-borne Lakshman  
heard The charming strain, with wonder stirred, Turned on the margent of  
the lake To Dharmabhait \*

1 the sage, and spake:

'Our longing souls, O hermit, burn This music of the lake to learn: We  
pray thee, noblest sage, explain The cause of the mysterious strain.' He,  
as the son of Raghu prayed, With swift accord his answer made, And thus the  
hermit, virtuous-souled, The story of the fair lake told: 'Through every  
age 'tis known to fame, Panchápsaras

2 its glorious name,

By holy Mándakarni wrought With power his rites austere had bought. For he,  
great votarist, intent On strictest rule his stern life spent. Ten thousand  
years the stream his bed, Ten thousand years on air he fed. Then on the  
blessed Gods who dwell

In heavenly homes great terror fell: They gathered all, by Agni led, And  
counselled thus disquieted: 'The hermit by ascetic pain The seat of one of  
us would gain.' Thus with their hearts by fear oppressed In full assembly  
spoke the Blest, And bade five loveliest nymphs, as fair As lightning in  
the evening air, Armed with their winning wiles, seduce From his stern vows  
the great recluse. Though lore of earth and heaven he knew, The hermit from  
his task they drew, And made the great ascetic slave To conquering love,  
the Gods to save. Each of the heavenly five became, Bound to the sage, his  
wedded dame; And he, for his beloved's sake, Formed a fair palace neath the  
lake. Under the flood the ladies live, To joy and ease their days they  
give, And lap in bliss the hermit wooed From penance rites to youth  
renewed. So when the sportive nymphs within Those secret bowers their play  
begin, You hear the singers' dulcet tones Blend sweetly with their tinkling  
zones.' 'How wondrous are these words of thine!' Cried the famed chiefs  
of Raghu's line,

As thus they heard the sage unfold

The marvels of the tale he told. As Ráma spake, his eyes were bent Upon  
a hermit settlement With light of heavenly lore endued, With sacred grass  
and vesture strewn. His wife and brother by his side, Within the holy  
bounds he hied, And there, with honour entertained By all the saints, a  
while remained. In time, by due succession led, Each votary's cot he  
visited, And then the lord of martial lore, Returned where he had lodged  
before. Here for the months, content, he stayed, There for a year his visit  
paid: Here for four months his home would fix, There, as it chanced, for  
five or six. Here for eight months and there for three The son of Raghu's  
stay would be: Here weeks, there fortnights, more or less, He spent in  
tranquil happiness. As there the hero dwelt at ease Among those holy  
devotees, In days untroubled o'er his head Ten circling years of pleasure  
fled. So Raghu's son in duty trained A while in every cot remained,  
Then with his dame retraced the road To good Sutíkshna's calm abode. Hailed  
by the saints with honours due Near to the hermit's home he drew, And there  
the tamer of his foes Dwelt for a time in sweet repose. One day within that  
holy wood By saint Sutíkshma Ráma stood, And thus the prince with reverence  
meek To that high sage began to speak: 'In the wide woodlands that  
extend Around us, lord most reverend, As frequent voice of rumour  
tells, Agastya, saintliest hermit, dwells. So vast the wood, I cannot  
trace The path to reach his dwelling place, Nor, searching unassisted,  
find That hermit of the thoughtful mind. I with my wife and brother  
fain Would go, his favour to obtain, Would seek him in his lone retreat And  
the great saint with reverence greet. This one desire, O Master,

long Cherished within my heart, is strong, That I may pay of free accord My  
duty to that hermit lord.' As thus the prince whose heart was bent On  
virtue told his firm intent, The good Sutikshna's joy rose high,  
And thus in turn he made reply: The very thing, O Prince, which thou Hast  
sought, I wished to urge but now, Bid thee with wife and brother see  
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Agastya, glorious devotee. I count this thing an omen fair That thou  
shouldst thus thy wish declare, And I, my Prince, will gladly teach The way  
Agastya's home to reach. Southward, dear son, direct thy feet Eight leagues  
beyond this still retreat: Agastya's hermit brother there Dwells in a home  
most bright and fair. 'Tis on a knoll of woody ground, With many a  
branching Pippal

1 crowned:

There sweet birds' voices ne'er are mute, And trees are gay with flower  
and fruit. There many a lake gleams bright and cool, And lilies deck each  
pleasant pool, While swan, and crane, and mallard's wings Are lovely in the  
water-springs. There for one night, O Ráma, stay, And with the dawn pursue  
thy way. Still farther, bending southward, by The thicket's edge the course  
must lie, And thou wilt see, two leagues from thence

Agastya's lovely residence, Set in the woodland's fairest spot, All varied  
foliage decks the cot: There Si'ta', Lakshman thou, at ease May spend sweet  
hours neath shady trees, For all of noblest growth are found Luxuriant on  
that \*bosky ground, If it be still thy firm intent To see that saint  
pree\*minent, O mighty counsellor, this day Depart upon thine onward way.'  
The hermit spake, and Ráma bent His head, with Lakshman, reverent, And then  
with him and Janak's child Set out to trace the forest wild. He saw dark  
woods that fringed the road, And distant hills like clouds that  
showed, And, as the way he followed, met With many a lake and rivulet. So  
passing on with ease where led The path Sutikshna bade him tread, The hero  
with exulting breast His brother in these words addressed: 'Here,  
surely, is the home, in sight, Of that illustrious anchorite: Here great  
Agastya's brother leads A life intent on holy deeds. Warned of each guiding  
mark and sign, I see them all herein combine:

I see the branches bending low Beneath the flowers and fruit they show. A  
soft air from the forest springs, Fresh from the odorous grass, and  
brings A spicy fragrance as it flees O'er the ripe fruit of Pippal  
trees. See, here and there around us high Piled up in heaps cleft billets  
lie,

And holy grass is gathered, bright

As strips of shining lazulite. Full in the centre of the shade The hermits'  
holy fire is laid: I see its smoke the pure heaven streak Dense as a big  
cloud's dusky peak. The twice-born men their steps retrace From each  
sequestered bathing place, And each his sacred gift has brought Of blossoms  
which his hands have sought. Of all these signs, dear brother, each Agrees  
with good Sutikshna's speech, And doubtless in this holy bound Agastya's  
brother will be found. Agastya once, the worlds who viewed With love, a  
Deathlike fiend subdued, And armed with mighty power, obtained By holy  
works, this grove ordained To be a refuge and defence From all oppressors'  
violence.

In days of yore within this place Two brothers fierce of demon  
race, Va'ta'pi\* dire and Ilval, dwelt, And slaughter mid the Bra'hmans  
dealt. A Bra'hman's form, the fiend to cloak, Fierce Ilval wore, and  
Sanskrit spoke, And twice-born sages would invite To solemnize some funeral  
rite. His brother's flesh, concealed within A ram's false shape and  
borrowed skin, -- As men are wont at funeral feasts, -- He dressed and fed  
those gathered priests. The holy men, unweeting ill, Took of the food and  
ate their fill. Then Ilval with a mighty shout Exclaimed 'Vatapi, issue  
out.' Soon as his brother's voice he heard, The fiend with ram-like  
bleating stirred: Bending in pieces every frame, Forth from the dying  
priests he came. So they who changed their forms at will Thousands of

Brahmans dared to kill,-Fierce fiends who loved each cruel deed,And joyed  
on bleeding flesh to feed.Agastya, mighty hermit, pressedTo funeral  
banquet like the rest,Obedient to the Gods' appealAte up the monster at a  
meal.'Tis done,'tis done,' fierce Ilval cried,  
And water for his hands supplied:Then lifting up his voice he  
spake:'Forth, brother, from thy prison break.'Then him who called the  
fiend, who longHad wrought the suffering Bra'hmans wrong,Thus thoughtful-  
souled Agastya, bestOf hermits, with a smile addressed:'How, Ra'kshas, is  
the fiend empoweredTo issue forth whom I devoured?Thy brother in a ram's  
disguise-Is gone where Yama's kingdom lies.'

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When from the words Agastya saidHe knew his brother fiend was dead,His  
soul on fire with vengeful rage,Rushed the night-rover at the sage.One  
lightning glance of fury, hotAs fire, the glorious hermit shot,As the  
fiend neared him in his stride,And straight, consumed to dust, he died.In  
pity for the Brahmans' plightAgastya wrought this deed of might:This  
grove which lakes and fair trees graceIn his great brother's dwelling  
place. As Ráma thus the tale rehearsed,And with Sumitrá's son  
conversed,The setting sun his last rays shed,  
And evening o'er the land was spread.A while the princely brothers  
stayedAnd even rites in order paid,Then to the holy grove they drewAnd  
hailed the saint with honour due.With courtesy was Rama metBy that  
illustrious anchorite,And for one night he rested thereRegaled with fruit  
and hermit fare.But when the night had reached its close,And the sun's  
glorious circle rose,The son of Raghu left his bedAnd to the hermit's  
brother said:'Well rested in thy hermit cell,I stand, O saint, to bid  
farewell;For with thy leave I journey henceThy brother saint to  
reverence.' 'Go, Ráma go,' the sage replied:Then from the cot the  
chieftain hied.And while the pleasant grove he viewed,The path the hermit  
showed, pursued.Of every leaf, of changing hue.Plants, trees by hundreds  
round him grew,With joyous eyes he looked on all,Then Jak,  
1 the wild rice, and Sal; 2

He saw the red Hibiscus glow,He saw the flower-tipped creeper throwThe  
glory of her clusters o'erTall trees that loads of blossom bore.  
Some, elephants had prostrate laid,In some the monkeys leapt and  
played,And through the whole wide forest rangThe charm of gay birds as  
they sang.Then Ráma of the lotus eyeTo Lakshman turned who followed  
nigh,And thus the hero youth impressedWith Fortune's favouring signs,  
addressed: 'How soft the leaves of every tree,How tame each bird and  
beast we see!Soon the fair home shall we beholdOf that great hermit  
tranquil-souled.The deed the good Agastya wrought  
High fame throughout the world has bought:

I see, I see his calm retreatThat balms the pain of weary feet.Where  
white clouds rise from flames beneath,Where bark-coats lie with many a  
wreath,Where silvan things, made gentle, throng,And every bird is loud in  
song.With ruth for suffering creatures filled,A deathlike fiend with  
might he killed,And gave this southern realm to beA refuge, from  
oppression free.There stands his home, whose dreaded mightHas put the  
giant crew to flight,Who view with envious eyes afarThe peaceful shades  
they cannot mar.

Since that most holy saint has madeHis dwelling in this lovely  
shade,Checked by his might the giant broodHave dwelt in peace with souls  
subdued.And all this southern realm, withinWhose bounds no fiend may  
entrance win,Now bears a name which naught may dim,Made glorious through  
the worlds by him.When Vindhya, best of hills, would stayThe journey of  
the Lord of Day,Obedient to the saint's behestHe bowed for aye his  
humbled crest.That hoary hermit, world-renownedFor holy deeds, within  
this groundHas set his pure and blessed home,Where gentle silvan  
creatures roam.Agastya, whom the worlds revere,Pure saint to whom the  
good are dear,To us his guests all grace will show,Enriched with

blessings ere we go. I to this aim each thought will turn, The favour of  
 the saint to earn, That here in comfort may be spent The last years of our  
 banishment. Here sanctities and high saints stand, Gods, minstrels of the  
 heavenly band; Upon Agastya's will they wait, And serve him, pure and  
 temperate. The liar's tongue, the tyrant's mind  
 Within these bounds no home may find: No cheat, no sinner here can be: So  
 holy and so good is he. Here birds and lords of serpent race, Spirits and  
 Gods who haunt the place, Content with scanty fare remain, As merit's meed  
 they strive to gain. Made perfect here, the paints supreme, On cars that  
 mock the Day-God's gleam, -- Their mortal bodies cast aside, -- Sought heaven  
 transformed and glorified, Here Gods to living things, who win Their  
 favour, pure from cruel sin, Give royal rule and many a good,  
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Immortal life and spirithood. I Now, Lakshman, we are near the place: Do  
 thou precede a little space, And tell the mighty saint that I With Sítá at  
 my side am nigh, "

Footnotes 240:1 One of the hermits who had followed Ráma.

240:2 The lake of the five nymphs.

241:1 The holy fig-tree.

242:1 The bread-fruit tree, *Artocarpus integri folia*.

242:2 A fine timber tree, *Shorea robusta*.

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CANTO XII.: THE HEAVENLY BOW.

He spoke: the younger prince obeyed:

Within the bounds his way he made, And thus addressed, whom first he met, A  
 pupil of the anchoret: 'Brave Ráma, eldest born, who springs, From  
 Das'aratha, hither brings His wife the lady Sítá: he Would fain the holy  
 hermit see. Lakshman am I -- if happy fame E'er to thine ears has brought the  
 name -- His younger brother, prompt to do His will, devoted, fond, and  
 true. We, through our royal sire's decree, To the dread woods were forced  
 to flee. Tell the great Master, I entreat, Our earnest wish our lord to  
 greet." He spoke: the hermit rich in store Of fervid zeal and sacred  
 lore, Sought the pure shrine which held the fire, To bear his message to  
 the sire. Soon as he reached the saint most bright In sanctity's surpassing  
 might, He cried, uplifting reverent hands: 'Lord Ráma near thy cottage  
 stands.' Then spoke Agastya's pupil dear

The message for his lord to hear: 'Ráma and Lakshman, chiefs who  
 spring From Das'aratha, glorious king, Thy hermitage e'en now have  
 sought, And lady Sítá with them brought. The tamers of the foe are here To  
 see thee, Master, and revere. 'Tis thine thy further will to say: Deign to  
 command, and we obey.' When from his pupil's lips he knew The presence  
 of the princely two. And Sítá born to fortune high. The glorious hermit  
 made reply: 'Great joy at last is mine this day That Ráma hither finds his  
 way, For long my soul has yearned to see The prince who comes to visit  
 me. Go forth, go forth, and hither bring The royal three with  
 welcoming: Lead Ráma in and place him near: Why stands he not already  
 here?' Thus ordered by the hermit, who, Lord of his thought, all dutv  
 knew. His reverent hands together laid. The pupil answered and obeyed. Forth  
 from the place with speed he ran,  
 To Lakshman came and thus began: 'Where is he? let not Ráma wait,  
 But speed, the sage to venerate.' Then with the pupil Lakshman  
 went Across the hermit settlement, And showed him Ráma where he stood With  
 Janak's daughter in the wood. The pupil then his message spake Which the  
 kind hermit bade him take; Then led the honoured Ráma thence And brought  
 him in with reverence. As nigh the royal Ráma came With Lakshman and the  
 Maithil dame, He viewed the herds of gentle deer Roaming the garden free  
 from fear. As through the sacred grove he trod He viewed the seat of many a  
 God, Brahmá and Agni,  
 1 Sun and Moon,

And His who sends each golden boon; 2  
 Here Vishnu's stood, there Bhaga's 3 shrine,  
 And there Mahendra's Lord divine; Here His who formed this earthly frame,  
 4  
 His there from whom all beings came. 5  
 Váyu's, 6 and His who loves to hold  
 The great noose, Varim 7 mighty-souled:  
 Here was the Vasus' 8 shrine to see,  
 Here that of sacred Gáyatrí, 9  
 The king of serpents 10 here had place,  
 And he who rules the feathered race. 11 Here Kártikeya, 12 warrior lord,  
 And there was Justice' King adored.  
 Then with disciples girt about The mighty saint himself came out: Through  
 fierce devotion bright as flame Before the rest the Master came: And then  
 to Lakshman, fortune blest, Ráma these hasty words addressed: 'Behold,  
 Agastya's self draws near, The mighty saint, whom all revere: With spirit  
 raised I meet my lord With richest wealth of penance stored.' The  
 strong-armed hero spake, and ran Forward to meet the sunbright man. Before  
 him, as he came, he bent And clasped his feet most reverent, Then rearing  
 up his stately height Stood suppliant by the anchorite, While Lakshman's  
 strength and Sítá's grace Stood by the pride of Raghu's race.

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The sage his arms round Rama threw And welcomed him with honours  
 due, Asked, was all well, with question sweet. And bade the hero to a  
 seat. With holy oil he fed the flame, He brought the gifts which strangers  
 claim, And kindly waiting on the three  
 With honours due to high degree, He gave with hospitable care A simple  
 hermit's woodland fare. Then sat the reverend father, first Of hermits,  
 deep in duty versed. And thus to suppliant Ráma, bred In all the lore of  
 virtue, said: 'Did the false hermit, Prince, neglect To hail his guest with  
 due respect, He must, -- the doom the perjured meet, -- His proper flesh  
 hereafter eat. A car-borne king a lord who sways The earth, and virtue's  
 law obeys, Worthy of highest honour, thou Hast sought, dear guest, my  
 cottage now.' He spoke: with fruit and hermit fare, With every bloom the  
 branches bare, Agastya graced his honoured guest, And thus with gentle  
 words addressed: 'Accept this mighty bow, divine. Whereon red gold and  
 diamonds shine;' 'Twas by the Heavenly Artist planned For Vishnu's own  
 almighty hand: This God-sent shaft of sunbright hue, Whose deadly flight is  
 ever true, By Lord Mahendra given of yore: This quiver with its endless  
 store. Keen arrows hurtling to their aim Like kindled fires that flash and  
 flame:

Accept, in golden sheath encased, This sword with hilt of rich gold  
 graced. Armed, whilom, with this best of bows Lord Vishnu slew his demon  
 foes, And mid the dwellers in the skies Won brilliant glory for his  
 prize. The bow, the quivers, shaft, and sword Received from me, O glorious  
 lord: These conquest to thine arm shall bring, As thunder to the thunder's  
 King.' The splendid hermit bade him take The noble weapons as he  
 spake, And as the prince accepted each In words like these renewed his  
 speech:

Footnotes

243:1 The God of fire.

243:2 Kuera, the God of riches.

243:3 The Sun.

243:4 Brahma, the creator. 243:5 Siva.

243:6 The Wind-God.

243:7 The God of the sea.

243:8 A class of demi-gods, eight in number.

243:9 The holiest text of the Vedas, deified.

243:10 Vásaki

243:11 Garnd \*

243:12 The War-God.

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CANTO XIII.: AGASTYA'S COUNSEL.

'O Ráma, great delight I feel,

Pleased, Lakshman, with thy faithful zeal,That you within these shades I  
seeVith Sitá come to honour me.But wandering through the rough rude wild  
Has wearied Janak'a gentle child:

With labours of the way oppressedThe Maithil lady longs for rest.Young,  
delicate, und soft, and fair,Such toils as these untrained to bear,Her  
wifely love the dame has ledThe forest's troubled ways to tread.Here,  
Ráma, see that naught annoyHer easy hours of tranquil joy:A glorious task  
has she assayed,To follow thee through woodland shade.Since first from  
Nature's hand she came,A woman's mood is still the same,When Fortune  
smiles, her love to show,And leave her lord in want and woe.No pity then  
her heart can feel,She arms her soul with warrior's steel,Swift as the  
storm or Feathered King,Uncertain as the lightning's wing.

Not so thy spouse: her purer mindShrinks from the faults of  
womankind;Like chaste Arundhatí

1 above,

A paragon of faithful love.Let these blest shades, dear Ráma, beA home  
for Lakshman, her, and thee.'With raised hands reverently meekHe heard  
the holy hermit speak,And humbly thus addressed the sireWhose glory shone  
like kindled fire:   'How blest am I, what thanks I oweThat our great  
Master deigns to showHis favour, that his heart can beContent with  
Lakshman, Sitá, me.Show me, I pray, some spot of groundWhere thick trees  
wave aud springs abound,That I may raise my hermit cellAnd there in  
tranquil pleasure dwell.'Then thus replied Agaatya, bestOf hermits, to  
the chief's request:When for a little he had bentHis thoughts, upon that  
prayer intent:   'Beloved son, four leagues awayIs Panchavati bright and  
gay:Thronged with its deer, most fair it looksWith berries, fruit, and  
water-brooks.There build thee with thy brother's aidA cottage in the  
quiet shade,And faithful to thy sire's behest,  
Obedient to the sentence, rest.For well, O sinless chieftain, wellI know  
thy tale, how all befell:Stern penance and the love I boreThy royal sire  
supply the lore.To me long rites and fervid zealThe wish that stirs thy  
heart reveal,And hence my guest I bade thee be,That this pure grove might  
shelter thee.

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So now, thereafter, thus I speak:The shades of Panchavatí seek;That  
tranquil spot is bright and fair,And Sítá will be happy there.Not far  
remote from here it lies,A grove to charm thy loving eyes,Godávarí's pure  
stream is nigh:There Sítá's days will sweetly fly.Pure, lovely, rich in  
many a charm,O hero of the mighty arm,'Tis gay with every plant and  
fruit,And throngs of gay buds never mute.Thou, true to virtue's path,  
hast mightTo screen each trusting anchorite,And wilt from thy new home  
defendThe hermits who on thee depend.Now yonder, Prince, direct thine  
eyes

Where dense Madhúka   1 woods arise:

Pierce their dark shade, and issuing forthTurn to a fig-tree on the  
north:Then onward up a sloping meadFlanked by a hill the way will  
lead:There Panchavatí, ever gayWith ceaseless bloom, thy steps will  
stay,'   The hermit ceased: the princely twoWith seemly honours bade  
adieu:With reverential awe each youthBowed to the saint whose word was  
truth,And then, dismissed with Sítá, theyTo Panchavatí took their  
way.Thus when each royal prince had graspedHis warrior's mighty bow, and  
clasped   His quiver to his side,With watchful eyes along the roadThe  
glorious saint Agastya showed,Dauntless in fight the brothers strode,  
And Sítá with them hied.

Footnotes

244:1 One of the Pleiades generally regarded as the  
model of wifely excellence.Next: Canto XIV.: Jatáyus.Sacred Texts  
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CANTO XIV.: JATÁYUS.

Then as the son of Raghu made  
His way to Panchavatí's shade,A mighty vulture he beheldOf size and  
strength unparalleled.The princes, when the bird they saw,Approached with  
reverence and awe,And as his giant form they eyed,'Tell who thou art,' in  
wonder cried.The bird, as though their hearts to gain,Addressed them thus  
in gentlest strain;'In me, dear sons, the friend beholdYour royal father  
loved of old.' He spoke: nor long did Ráma waitHis sire's dear friend  
to venerate:

He bade the bird declare his name  
And the high race of which he came.When Raghu's son had spoken,  
heDeclared his name and pedigree,His words prolonging to discloseHow all  
the things that be arose: 'List while I tell, O Raghu's son,The first-  
born Fathers, one by one,Great Lords of Life, whence all in earthAnd all  
in heaven derive their birth.

First Kardam heads the glorious raceWhere Vikrit holds the second  
place,With S'esha, Sans'ray next in line,And Bahuputra's might  
divine.Then Sthánu and Maríchi came,Atri, and Kratu's forceful  
frame.Pulastya followed, next to himAngiras' name shall ne'er be  
dim.Prachetas, Pulah next, and thenDaksha, Vivasvat praised of  
men:Arishtanemi next, and lastKas'yap in glory unsurpassed.From Daksha,--  
fame the tale has told--Three-score bright daughters sprang of old.Of  
these fair-waisted nymphs the greatLord Kas'yap sought and wedded  
eight,Aditi, Diti, Kálaká,Támrá, Danú, and Analá,And Krodhavasá swift to  
ire,And Manu

1b glorious as her sire.

Then when the mighty Kas'yap criedDelighted to each tender bride:'Sons  
shalt thou bear, to rule the threeGreat worlds, in might resembling me,'  
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Aditi, Diti, and DanúObeyed his will as consorts true,  
And Kálaká; but all the restRefused to hear their lord's behest.First  
Aditi conceived, and she,Mother of thirty Gods and three,The Vasus and  
A'dityas bare,Kudras, and A'svins, heavenly pair.Of Diti sprang the  
Daityas: fameDelights to laud their ancient name.In days of yore their  
empire dreadO'er earth and woods and ocean spread.Danú was mother of a  
child,O hero, As'vagríva styled,And Narak next and Kálak cameOf Kálaká,  
celestial dame.Of Támrá, too, five daughters brightIn deathless glory  
sprang to light.Ennobling fame still keeps aliveThe titles of the lovely  
five:Immortal honour still she claimsFor Kraunchí, Bhasí, S'yení's  
names.And wills not that the world forgetS'ukí or Dhritaráshtrí yet.Then  
Kraunchí bare the crane and owl,And Bhásí tribes of water fowl:Vultures  
and hawks that race through airWith storm-fleet pinions S'yení bare.All  
swans and geese on mere and brookTheir birth from Dhritaráshtrí took,And  
all the river-haunting brood

Of ducks, a countless multitude.From S'ukí Nalá sprang, who bareDame  
Vinatá surpassing fair.From fiery Krodhavas'á, tenBright daughters  
sprang, O King of men:Mrigí and Mrigamadá named,Hari and Bhadiamadá  
famed,S'árdúlí, S'vetá fair to see,Mátangi bright, and Surabhi,Surasá  
marked with each fair sign,And Kadrumá, all maids divine.Mrigí, O prince  
without a peer,Was mother of the herds of deer,The bear, the yak, the  
mountain roeTheir birth to Mrigamandá owe;And Bhadramadá joyed to  
beMother of fair Irávatí,Who bare Airávat,

1 huge of mould,

Mid warders of the earth enrolled,From Harí lordly lions trace,With  
monkeys of the wild, their race.From the great dame S'árdúlí styledSprung  
pards, Lángúrs,

2 and tigers wild.

Mátangi, Prince, gave birth to all Mátangas, elephants strong and tall,  
And S'vet'a bore the beasts who stand  
One at each wind, earth's warder band.

1b Next Surabhí the Goddess bore

Two heavenly maids, O Prince, of yore, Gandharvi--dear \*as fa??\* is she--  
And her sweet sister Rohiní. With kine this daughter filled each mead, And  
bright Gandharví bore the steed.

2b

Surasá bore the serpents: 3b all

The snakes Kadrú their mother call. Then Manu, high-souled Kas'yap's

4b wife,

To all the race of men gave life, The Bráhmans first, the Kshatriya  
caste, Then Vais'yas, and the S'údras last. Sprang from her mouth the  
Brahman race; Her chest the Kshatriyas' natal place: The Vais'yas from her  
thighs, 'tis said, The S'údras from her feet were bred. From Analá all trees  
that hang Their fair fruit-laden branches sprang. The child of beauteous  
S'ukí bore Vinatá, as I taught before: And Surasá and Kadrú were Born of one  
dame, a noble pair. Kadrú gave birth to countless snakes That roam the  
earth in woods and brakes. Arun and Garud swift of flight By V'inatá were  
given to light, And sons' of Arun red as morn Sampati first, then I was  
born, Me then, O tamer of the toe, Jutáyus, son of S'yení, know.

Thy ready helper will I be, And guard thy house, if thou agree: When thou  
and Lakshman urge the chase By Sítá's side shall be my place.' With  
courteous thanks for promised aid, The prince, to rapture stirred,  
Bent low, and due obeisance paid, Embraced the royal bird.

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He often in the days gone by Had heard his father tell How, linked with  
him in friendship's tie, He loved Jatáyus well. He hastened to his  
trusted friend His darling to confide, And through the wood his steps to  
bend By strong Jatáyus' side. On to the grove, with Lakshman near, The  
prince his way pursued To free those pleasant shades from fear And slay  
the giant brood.

Footnotes 245:1 The Madhúka, or, as it is now called, Mahuwá, is  
the Bassia latifolia, a tree from whose blossoms a spirit  
is extracted.

245:1b 'I should have doubted whether Manu could

have been the right reading here, but that it occurs again

in verse 29, where it is in like manner followed in verse 31 by Analá, so  
that it would certainly seem that the name Manu is intended to stand for  
a female, the daughter of Daksha. The Gauda recension, followed by Signor  
Gorresio (III 20, 12), adopts an entirely different reading at the end of  
the line, viz. Balám Atibalám api, "Balá and Atibilá," instead of Manu  
and Analá. I see that Professor Roth s.v. adduces the authority of the  
Amara Kosha and of the Commentator on Pánini for stating that the word  
sometimes means "the wife of Manu." In the following text of the  
Mahábhárata I. 2553. also, Manu appears to be the name of a female:  
Anaradyam, Manum, Vansám, Asurám, Márganapriyám, Anúpám, Subhagdm, Bhásim  
iti Prádhá vyajayata. "Prádhá (daughter of Daksha) bore Anavadyá, Manu,  
Vans'á, Márganaprivá, Anúpá, Subhagá. and Bhásí.'" Muir's Sanskrit Text,  
Vol. I. p. 116.

246:1 The elephant of Indra.

246:2 Golingúlas, described as a kind of monkey, of a black colour, and  
having a tail like a cow.

246:1b Eight elephants attached to the four quarters and  
intermediate points of the compass, to support and  
guard the earth.

246:2b Some scholars identify the centaurs with the  
Gandharvas.

246:3b The hooded serpents, says the commentator Tírtha, were the  
offspring of Surasá: all others of Kadrú.



246:4b The text reads Kás'yapa, "a descendant of Kas'yapa," who according to Rám. II. 10, 6, ought to be

Vivasvat. But as it is stated in the preceding part of this passage III. 14, 11 f. that Manu was one of Kasyapa's eight wives, we must here read Kasyapa. The Ganda recension reads (III, 20, 30) Manur manushyams cha tutha janayámása Raghana\*\*, instead of the corresponding line in the Bombay edition.' Muir's Sanskrit Text, Vol I, p. 117.

Next: Canto XV.: Panchavatt.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next CANTO XV.: PANCHAVATT.

Arrived at Panchavatí's shade

Where silvan life and serpents strayed,Ráma in words like these addressedLakshman of vigour unrepressed: 'Brother, our home is here: beholdThe grove of which the hermit told:The bowers of Panchavatí seeMade fair by every blooming tree.Now, brother, bend thine eyes around;With skilful glance survey the ground:Here be some spot selected, bestApproved for gentle hermits' rest,Where thou, the Maithil dame, and IMay dwell while seasons sweetly fly.Some pleasant spot be chosen wherePure waters gleam and trees are fair,Some nook where flowers and wood are foundAnd sacred grass and springs abound.' Then Lakshman, Sitá standing by,Raised reverent hands, and made reply: 'A hundred years shall flee, and stillWill I obey my brothers will:Select thyself a pleasant spot;Be mine the care to rear the cot.'The glorious chieftain, pleased to hear That loving speech that soothed his ear,Selected with observant careA spot with every charm most fair.He stood within that calm retreat,A shade for hermits' home most meet,And thus Sumitrá's son addressed,While his dear hand in his he pressed: 'See, see this smooth and lovely gladeWhich flowery trees encircling shade:Do thou, beloved Lakshman rearA pleasant cot to lodge us here.I see beyond that feathery brakeThe gleaming of a lilled lake,Where flowers in sunlike glory throwFresh odours from the wave below.Agastva's words now find we true,He told the charms which here we view:

Here are the trees that blossom o'er

Godávarí's most lovely shore.Whose pleasant flood from side to sideWith swans and geese is beautified,And fair banks crowded with the deerThat steal from every covert near.The peacock's cry is loud and shrillFrom many a tall and lovely hill,Green-belted by the trees that waveFull blossoms o'er the rock and cave.Like elephants whose huge fronts glow With painted streaks, the mountains showLong lines of gold and silver sheenWith copper's darker hues between.With every tree each hill is graced,Where creepers blossom interlaced.Look where the Sál's long branches sway,And palms their fanlike leaves display;The date-tree And the Jak are near,And their long stems Tamálas rear.See the tall Mango lift his head,As'okas all their glory spread,The Ketak her sweet buds unfold,And Champacs hang their cups of gold.

1

The spot is pure and pleasant hereAre multitudes of birds and deer.O Lakshman, with our father's friendWhat happy hours we here shall spend!' He spoke: the conquering Lakshman heard.Obedient to his brother's word.Raised by his toil a cottage stoodTo shelter Ráma in the woodOf ample size, with leaves o'erlaid,Of hardened earth the walls were made.The strong bamboos his hands had felledFor pillars fair the roof upheld,And rafter, beam, and lath suppliedWell interwrought from side to side.Then Samí

2 boughs he deftly spreadEnlaced with knotted cord o'erhead, Well thatched above from ridge to eavesWith holy grass, and reed, and leaves.The mighty chief with careful toilHad cleared the ground and smoothed the soil

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Where now, his loving labour done,Rose a fair home for Raghu's son.Then when his work was duly wrought,Godávarís sweet stream he sought,Bathed,

plucked the lilies, and a storeOf fruit and berries homeward bore.Then  
sacrifice he duly paid,And wooed the Gods their hopes to aid,And then to  
Ráma proudly showedThe cot prepared for his abode,Then Raghu's son with  
Sítá gazedUpon the home his hands had raised,And transport thrilled his  
bosom throughHis leafy hermitage to view.The glorious son of Raghu  
roundHis brother's neck his arms enwound,And thus began his sweet  
addressOf deep-felt joy and gentleness:'Well pleased am I, dear lord, to  
seeThis noble work performed by thee.For this,--sole grace I can bestow,-  
-About thy neck mine arms I throw.

So wise art thou, thy breast is filledWith grateful thoughts, in duty  
skilled,Our mighty father, free from stain,In thee, his offspring, lives  
again.' Thus spoke the prince, who lent a graceTo fortune, pride of  
Raghu's race;Then in that spot whose pleasant shadeGave store of fruit,  
content he stayed.With Lakshman and his Maithil spouseHe spent his day's  
neath sheltering boughs,As happy as a God on highLives in his mansion in  
the sky.

Footnotes

247:1 The original verses merely name the trees. I have  
been obliged to amplify slightly and to omit some quas  
versu dicere non est; e.g. the tinis'a (Dalbergia ougeiniensis), punnága  
(Rottleria tinctoria) tilaka (not named), syandana (Dalbergia  
ougeiniensis again) vandana (unknown) nipa (Nauclea Kadamba) lakucha  
(Artocarpus lacucha), dhava (Grislea tomentosa), As'vakarna (another name  
for the Sál), S'amí (Acacia Suma) khad\*ra (Mimosa\*catechu) kins'\*ka  
(Buteafrondosa) pátala (Bignonia suaveolens).247:2 Acacia Suma.

Next: Canto XVI.: Winter.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XVI.: WINTER.

While there the high-souled hero spent  
His tranquil hours in sweet content,The glowing autumn passed, and  
thenCame winter so beloved of men. One morn, to bathe, at break of  
dayTo the fair stream he took his way.Behind him, with the Maithil  
dameBearing a pitcher Lakshman came,And as he went the mighty manThus to  
his brother chief began: 'The time is come, to thee more dearThan all  
the months that mark the yearThe gracious seasons' joy and pride,By which  
the rest are glorified.A robe of hoary rime is spreadO'er earth, with  
cold engarlanded.The streams we loved no longer please,But near the fire  
we take our ease,Now pious men to God and shadeOffer young corn's fresh  
sprouted blade,And purge away their sins with fireBestowed in humble  
sacrifice.Rich stores of milk delight the swain,And hearts are cheered  
that longed for gain.Proud kings whose breasts for conquests glow  
Lead bannered troops to smite the foe.Dark is the north: the Lord of  
DayTo Yama's south

1 has turned away:

And she--sad widow--shines no more,Reft of the bridal mark  
2 she wore.

Himálaya's hill, ordained of oldThe treasure-house of frost and  
cold,Scarce conscious of the feebler glow,Is truly now the Lord of  
Snow.Warmed by the noontide's genial raysDelightful are the glorious  
days:But how we shudder at the chillOf evening shadows and the rill!How  
weak the sun, how cold the breeze!How white the rime on grass and  
trees!The leaves are sere, the woods have lostTheir blossoms killed by  
nipping frost.Neath open skies we sleep no more:December's nights with  
rime are hoar:Their triple watch

3 in length extends

With hours the shortened daylight lends.No more the moon's sun-borrowed  
raysAre bright, involved in misty haze,As when upon the mirror's sheenThe  
breath's obscuring cloud is seen.E'en at the full the faint beams failTo  
struggle through the darksome veil:Changed like her hue, they want the  
graceThat parts not yet from Sítá's face.

Cold is the western wind, but how  
Its piercing chill is heightened  
now,  
Blowing at early morning twice  
As furious with its breath of ice!  
See  
how the dewy tears they weep  
The barley, wheat, and woodland steep,  
Where,  
as the sun goes up the sky.  
The curlew and the sáras cry.  
See where the  
rice plants scarce uphold  
Their full ears tinged with paly gold,  
Bending  
their ripe heads slowly down  
Fair as the date tree's flowery crown.  
Though  
now the sun has mounted high  
Seeking the forehead of the sky,  
Such mist  
obscures his struggling beams,  
No bigger than the moon he seems.  
Though  
weak at first, his rays at length  
Grow pleasant in their noonday  
strength,  
And where a while they chance to fall  
Fling a faint splendour  
over all.

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See, o'er the woods where grass is wet  
With hoary drops that cling there  
yet,  
With soft light clothing earth and bough  
There steals a tender glory  
now.  
Yon elephant who longs to drink,  
Still standing on the river's brink,  
Plucks back his trunk in shivering haste  
From the cold wave he fain would  
taste.  
The very fowl that haunt the mere  
Stand doubtful on the bank, and  
fear  
To dip them in the wintry wave  
As cowards dread to meet the brave.  
The  
frost of night, the rime of dawn  
Bind flowerless trees and glades of  
lawn:  
Benumbed in apathetic chill  
Of icy chains they slumber still.  
You hear  
the hidden sáras cry  
From floods that wrapped in vapour lie,  
And frosty-  
shining sands reveal  
Where the unnoticed rivers steal.  
The hoary rime of  
dewy night, And suns that glow with tempered light  
Lend fresh cool flavours  
to the rill  
That sparkles from the tompost hill.  
The cold has killed the  
lily's pride:  
Leaf, filament, and flower have died:  
With chilling breath  
rude winds have blown,  
The withered stalk is left alone.  
At this gay time,  
O noblest chief, The faithful Bharat, worn by grief,  
Lives in the royal  
town where he  
Spends weary hours for love of thee.  
From titles, honour,  
kingly sway,  
From every joy he turns away:  
Couched on cold earth, his days  
are passed

With scanty fare and hermit's fast.  
This moment from his humble bed  
He  
lifts, perhaps, his weary head,  
And girt by many a follower goes  
To bathe  
where silver Sarjú flows.  
How, when the frosty morn is dim,  
Shall Sarjú be  
a bath for him?  
Nursed with all love and tender care,  
So delicate and young  
and fair.  
How bright his hue! his brilliant eye  
With the broad lotus leaf  
may vie.  
By fortune stamped for happy fate,  
His graceful form is tall and  
straight.  
In duty skilled, his words are truth:  
He proudly rules each lust  
of youth.  
Though his strong arm smites down the foe,  
In gentle speech his  
accents flow.  
Yet every joy has he resigned  
And cleaves to thee with heart  
and mind.  
Thus by the deeds that he has done  
A name in heaven has Bharat  
won,  
For in his life he follows yet  
Thy steps, O banished anchoret.  
Thus  
faithful Bharat, nobly wise,  
The proverb of the world belies:  
'No men, by  
mothers' guidance led,  
The footsteps of their fathers tread.'  
How could  
Kaikeyí, blest to be  
Spouse of the king our sire, and see

A son like virtuous Bharat, blot  
Her glory with so foul a plot!' Thus in  
fraternal love he spoke,  
And from his lips reproaches broke:  
But Ráma  
grieved to hear him chide  
The absent mother, and replied:  
'Cease, O  
beloved, cease to blame  
Our royal father's second dame.  
Still speak of  
Bharat first in place  
Of old Ikshváku's princely race.  
My heart, so firmly  
bent but now  
To dwell in woods and keep my vow,  
Half melting as I hear thee  
speak  
Of Bharat's love, grows soft and weak,  
With tender joy I bring to  
mind  
His speeches ever sweet and kind.  
That dear as Amrit took the  
sense  
With most enchanting influence.  
Ah, when shall I, no more to  
part,  
Meet Bharat of the mighty heart?  
When, O my brother, when shall we  
The  
good and brave S'atrughna see?'  
Thus as he poured his fond lament  
The son  
of Raghu onward went:  
They reached the river, and the three  
Bathed them in  
fair Godávarí.  
Libations of the stream they paid  
To every deity and  
shade,  
With hymns of praise, the Sun on high

And sinless Gods to glorify.Fresh from the purifying tide    Resplendent  
Ráma came,With Lakshman ever by his side,    And the sweet Maithil dame.So  
Rudra shines by worlds adored,    In glory undefiled,When Nandi  
1 stands beside his lord,  
And King Himálaya's child.    2

Footnotes

248:1 The south is supposed to be the residence of the  
departed.

248:2 The sun.

248:3 The night is divided into three watches of four hours each.

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CANTO XVII.: S'U'PANAKHA'

The bathing and the prayer were o'er;

He turned him from the grassy shore,And with his brother and his  
spouseSought his fair home beneath the boughs,Sitá and Lakshman by his  
side,On to his cot the hero hied,And after rites at morning dueWithin the  
leafy shade withdrew.

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Then, honoured by the devotees,As royal Ráma sat at ease,With Sitá near  
him, o'er his headA canopy of green boughs spread,He shone as shines the  
Lord of NightBy Chitrá's

1 side, his dear delight.

With Lakshman there he sat and toldSweet stories of the days of old,And  
as the pleasant time he spentWith heart upon each tale intent,A giantess,  
by fancy led,Came wandering to his leafy shed.Fierce S'úrpanakhí,--her of  
yoreThe Ten-necked tyrant's mother bore,--

Saw Ráma with his noble mienBright as the Gods in heaven are seen;Him  
from whose brow a glory gleamed,Like lotus leaves his full eyes  
beamed:Long-armed, of elephantine gait,With hair close coiled in hermit  
plait:In youthful vigour, nobly framed,By glorious marks a king  
proclaimed:Like some bright lotus lustrous-hued,With young Kandarpa's  
2 grace endued:

As there like Indra's self he shone,She loved the youth she gazed  
upon.She grim of eye and foul of faceLoved his sweet glance and  
forehead's grace:She of unlovely figure, himOf stately form and shapely  
limb:She whose dim locks disordered hung,Him whose bright hair on high  
brows clung:She whose fierce accents counselled fear,Him whose soft tones  
were sweet to hear:She whose dire form with age was dried,Him radiant in  
his youthful pride:She whose false lips maintained the wrong,Him in the  
words of virtue strong:She cruel-hearted, stained with sin,Him just in  
deed and pure within.She, hideous fiend, a thing to hate,Him formed each  
eye to captivate:Fierce passion in her bosom woke,

And thus to Raghu's son she spoke:    'With matted hair above thy  
brows,With bow and shaft and this thy spouse,How hast thou sought in  
hermit dressThe giant-haunted wilderness?What dost thou here? The cause  
explain:Why art thou come, and what to gain?'As S'úrpanakhá questioned  
so,Ráma, the terror of the foe,In answer to the monster's call,With  
fearless candour told her all.

'King Das'aratha reigned of old,

Like Gods celestial brave and bold.I am his eldest son and heir,And Ráma  
is the name I bear.This brother, Lakshman, younger born,Most faithful  
love to me has sworn.My wife, this princess, dear to fame,Is Sitá the  
Videhan dame.Obedient to my sire's behestAnd by the queen my mother  
pressed,To keep the law and merit win,I sought this wood to harbour  
in.But speak, for I of thee in turnThy name, and race, and sire would  
learn.Thou art of giant race, I ween.Changing at will thy form and  
mien.Speak truly, and the cause declare

That bids thee to these shades repair.'    Thus Ráma spoke: the demon  
heard,And thus replied by passion spurred:'Of giant race, what form

soe'erMy fancy wills, 'tis mine to wear.Named S'úrpanakhá here I  
 stray,And where I walk spread wild dismay.King Rávan is my brother:  
 fameHas taught perchance his dreaded name,Strong Kumbhakama slumbering  
 deepIn chains of never-ending sleep:Vibhishan of the duteous mind.In  
 needs unlike his giant kind:Dúshan and Khara, brave and boldWhose fame by  
 every tongue is told:Their might by mine is far surpassed;But when, O  
 best of men, I castThese fond eyes on thy form, I seeMy chosen love and  
 lord in thee.Endowed with wondrous might am I:Where'er my fancy leads I  
 fly.The poor misshapen Sitá leave,And me, thy worthier bride receive.Look  
 on my beauty, and preferA spouse more meet than one like her:I'll eat  
 that ill-formed woman there:Thy brother too her fate shall share.But  
 come, beloved, thou shalt roamWith me through all our woodland home;  
 Each varied grove with me shalt seek,And gaze upon each mountain peak.'  
 As thus she spoke, the monster gazedWith sparkling eyes where passion  
 blazed:Then he, in lore of language learned,This answer eloquent  
 returned:

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

249:1 The chief chamberlain and attendant of S'iva or Rodra.

249:2 Umá or Párvati, the consort of S'iva.

250:1 A star, one of the favourites of the Moon.

250:2 The God of love.

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CANTO XVIII.: THE MUTILATION.

On her ensnared in Ráma's net

His eyes the royal Rama set,

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And thus, her passion to beguile,Addressed her with a gentle smile: 'I  
 have a wife: behold her here,My Sítá ever true and dear:And one like thee  
 will never brookUpon a rival spouse to look.But there my brother Lakshman  
 stands:Unchained is he by nuptial bands:A youth heroic, loved of  
 all,Gracious and gallant, fair and tall.With winning looks, most nobly  
 bred,Unmatched till now, he longs to wed.Meet to enjoy thy youthful  
 charms,O take him to thy loving arms.Enamoured on his bosom lie,Fair  
 damsel of the radiant eye,As the warm sunlight loves to restUpon her  
 darling Meru's breast.' The hero spoke, the monster heard,While passion  
 still her bosom stirred.

Away from Ráma's side she broke,And thus in turn to Lakshman spoke:'Come,  
 for thy bride take me who shineIn fairest grace that suits with  
 thine.Thou by my side from grove to groveOf Dandak's wild in bliss shalt  
 rove.' Then Lakshman, skilled in soft address,Wooed by the amorous  
 giantess,With art to turn her love aside,To Súrpanakhí thus replied:  
 'And can so high a dame agreeThe slave-wife of a slave to be?I, lotus-  
 hued! in good and illAm bondsman to my brother's will.Be thou, fair  
 creature radiant-eyed,My honoured brother's younger bride:With faultless  
 tint and dainty limb,A happy wife, bring joy to him.He from his spouse  
 grown old and grey,Deformed, untrue, will turn away,Her withered charms  
 will gladly leave,And to his fair young darling cleave.For who could be  
 so fond and blind,O loveliest of all female kind,To love another dame and  
 slightThy beauties rich in all delight?' Thus Lakshman praised in  
 scornful jestThe long-toothed fiend with loathly breast,Who fondly heard  
 his speech, nor knew

His mocking words were aught but true.Again inflamed with love she fledTo  
 Ráma, in his leafy shedWhere Sítá rested by his side,And to the mighty  
 victor cried: 'What, Ráma, canst thou blindly clingTo this old false  
 misshapen thing?Wilt thou refuse the charms of youthFor withered breast  
 and grinning tooth!Canst thou this wretched creature prizeAnd look on me  
 with scornful eyes?This aged crone this very hourBefore thy face will I

devour:Then joyous, from all rivals free.Through Dandak will I stray with thee.' She spoke, and with a glance of flameRushed on the fawn-eyed Maithil dame:So would a horrid meteor marFair Rohiní's soft beaming star.But as the furious fiend drew near,Like Death's dire noose which chills with fear,The mighty chief her purpose stayed,And spoke, his brother to upbraid:'Ne'er should we jest with creatures rude.Of savage race and wrathful mood.Think, Lakshman, think how nearly slainMy dear Videhan breathes again.Let not the hideous wretch escapeWithout a mark to mar her shape.

Strike, lord of men, the monstrous fiend,Deformed, and foul, and evil-miened.' He spoke: then Lakshman's wrath rose high,And there before his brother's eye,He drew that sword which none could stay,And cleft her nose and ears away.Noseless and earless, torn and maimed,With fearful shrieks the fiend exclaimed,And frantic in her wild distressResought the distant wilderness.Deformed, terrific, huge, and dread.As on she moved, her gashes bled,And groan succeeded groan as loudAs roars, ere rain, the thunder cloud.Still on the fearful monster passed,While streams of blood kept falling fast,And with a roar, and arms outspreadWithin the boundless wood she fled.To Janasthán the monster flew; Fierce Khara there she found,With chieftains of the giant crew In thousands ranged around.Before his awful feet she bent And fell with piercing cries,As when a bolt in swift descent Comes flashing from the skies.There for a while with senses dazed Silent she lay and scared:At length her drooping head she raised,

And all the tale declared,How Ráma, Lakshman, and the dame Had reached that lonely place:Then told her injuries and shame, And showed her bleeding face.

\* \* \* \* \*

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CANTO XIX.: THE ROUSING OF KHARA.

When Khara saw his sister lie  
With blood-stained limbs and troubled eye,  
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Wild fury in his bosom woke,And thus the monstrous giant spoke; 'Arise, my sister; cast awayThis numbing terror and dismay,And straight the impious hand declareThat marred those features once so fair.For who his finger tip will layOn the black snake in childish play,And unattacked, with idle strokeHis poison-laden fang provoke?Ill-fated fool, he little knowsDeath's noose around his neck he throws,Who rashly met thee, and a draughtOf life-destroying poison quaffed.Strong, fierce as death, 'twas thine to chooseThy way at will, each shape to use;In power and might like one of us:What hand has maimed and marred thee thus?What God or fiend this deed has wrought,What bard or sage of lofty thought Was armed with power supremely greatThy form to mar and mutilate?In all the worlds not one I seeWould dare a deed to anger me:Not Indra's self, the Thousand-eyed,Beneath whose hand fierce Páka I died.

My life-destroying darts this dayHis guilty breath shall rend away,E'en as the thirsty wild swan drainsEach milk-drop that the wave retains.Whose blood in foaming streams shall burstO'er the dry ground which lies athirst,When by my shafts transfixed and slainHe falls upon the battle plain?From whose dead corpse shall birds of airThe mangled flesh and sinews tear,And in their gory feast delight,When I have slain him in the fight?Not God or bard or wandering ghost,No giant of our mighty hostShall step between us, or availTo save the wretch when I assail.Collect each scattered sense, recallThy troubled thoughts, and tell me all.What wretch attacked thee in the way,And quelled thee in victorious fray?' His breast with burning fury fired,Thus Khara of the fiend inquired:And then with many a tear and sigh

Thus S'úrpanakhá made reply: 'Tis Das'aratha's sons, a pair  
Strong, resolute, and young, and fair: In coats of dark and black  
deer's hide, And like the radiant lotus eyed: On berries roots and fruit they feed, And  
lives of saintly virtue lead: With ordered senses undefiled, Ráma and  
Lakshman are they styled.

Fair as the Minstrels' King

1b are they,

And stamped with signs of regal sway.

I know not if the heroes trace Their line from Gods or Dánav

2b race.

There by these wondering eyes between The noble youths a dame was  
seen, Fair, blooming, young, with dainty waist, And all her bright apparel  
graced. For her with ready heart and mind The royal pair their strength  
combined, And brought me to this last distress, Like some lost woman,  
comfortless. Perfidious wretch! my soul is fain Her foaming blood and  
theirs to drain. O let me head the vengeful fight, And with this hand my  
murderers smite. Come, brother, hasten to fulfil This longing of my eager  
will. On to the battle! Let me drink

Their lifeblood as to earth they sink.' Then Khara, by his sister  
pressed, Inflamed with fury, gave his hest To twice seven giants of his  
crew, Fierce as the God of death to view: 'Two men equipped with arms,  
who wear Deerskin and bark and matted hair, Leading a beauteous dame, have  
strayed To the wild gloom of Dandak's shade. These men, this cursed woman  
slay, And hasten back without delay, That this my sister's lips may be Red  
with the lifeblood of the three. Giants, my wounded sister longs To take  
this vengeance for her wrongs. With speed her dearest wish fulfil, And with  
your might these creatures kill. Soon as your matchless strength shall  
lay These brothers dead in battle fray, She in triumphant joy will  
laugh, And their hearts' blood delighted quaff.' The giants heard the  
words he said, And forth with S'úrpanakhá sped, As mighty clouds in autumn  
fly Urged by the wind along the sky.

\* \* \* \* \*Footnotes

252:1 A demon slain by Indra.

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CANTO XX.: THE GIANTS' DEATH.

Fierce S'úrpanakhá with her train

To Ráma's dwelling came again, And to the eager giants showed Where Sítá  
and the youths abode. Within the leafy cot they spied The hero by his  
consort's side, And faithful Lakshman ready still To wait upon his  
brother's will.

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Then noble Ráma raised his eye And saw the giants standing nigh, And then,  
as nearer still they pressed. His glorious brother thus addressed, 'Be  
thine a while, my brother dear, To watch o'er Sítá's safety here, And I  
will slay these creatures who The footsteps of my spouse pursue.' He  
spoke, and reverent Lakshman heard Submissive to his brother's word. The  
son of Raghu, virtuous-souled, Strung his great bow adorned with gold, And,  
with the weapon in his hand, Addressed him to the giant band:

'Ráma and Lakshman we, who spring From Das'aratha, mighty King; We dwell a  
while with Sítá here In Dandak forest wild and drear. On woodland roots and  
fruit we feed, And lives of strictest rule we lead. Say why would ye our  
lives oppress Who sojourn in the wilderness. Sent hither by the hermits'  
prayer With bow and darts unused to spare, For vengeance am I come to  
slay Your sinful band in battle fray. Rest as ye are: remain content, Nor  
try the battle's dire event. Unless your offered lives ye spurn, O rovers  
of the night, return.' They listened while the hero spoke, And fury in  
each breast awoke. The Bráhma-slayers raised on high Their mighty spears  
and made reply: They spoke with eyes aglow with ire, While Ráma's burnt  
with vengeful fire, And answered thus, in fury wild, That peerless chief

whose tones were mild: 'Nay thou hast angered, overbold, Khara our lord,  
the mighty-souled, And for thy sin, in battle strife Shalt yield to us thy  
forfeit life. No power hast thou alone to stand  
Against the numbers of our band. 'Twere vain to match thy single  
might Against us in the front of fight. When we equipped for fight  
advance With brandished pike and mace and lance, Thou, vanquished in the  
desperate field, Thy bow, thy strength, thy life shalt yield.' With  
bitter words and threatening mien Thus furious spoke the fierce  
fourteen, And raising scymitar and spear On Rāma rushed in wild  
career. Their levelled spears the giant crew Against the matchless hero  
threw. His bow the son of Raghu bent, And twice seven shafts to meet them  
sent, And every javelin sundered fell By the bright darts he aimed so well.  
The hero saw: his anger grew To fury: from his side he drew Fresh sunbright  
arrows pointed keen, In number, like his foes, fourteen. His bow he  
grasped, the string he drew, And gazing on the giant crew, As Indra casts  
the levin, so Shot forth his arrows at the foe. The hurtling arrows,  
stained with gore, Through the fiends' breasts a passage tore, And in the  
earth lay buried deep As serpents through an ant-hill creep  
Like trees upturned by stormy blast The shattered fiends to earth were  
cast, And there with mangled bodies they, Bathed in their blood and  
breathless, lay. With fainting heart and furious eye The demon saw her  
champions die. With drying wounds that scarcely bled Back to her brother's  
home she fled. Oppressed with pain, with loud lament At Khara's feet the  
monster bent. There like a plant whence slowly come The trickling drops of  
oozy gum, With her grim features pale with pain She poured her tears in  
ceaseless rain, There routed S'úrpanakhā lay, And told her brother  
all, The issue of the bloody fray, Her giant champions' fall.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

252:1b Chitraratha, King of the Gandharvas. 252:2b Titanic.

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#### CANTO XXI.: THE ROUSING OF KHARA.

Low in the dust he saw her lie,  
And Khara's wrath grew fierce and high, Aloud he cried to her who  
came Disgracefully with baffled aim: 'I sent with thee at thy request The  
bravest of my giants, best Of all who feed upon the slain: Why art thou  
weeping here again? Still to their master's interest true, My faithful,  
noble, loyal crew. Though slaughtered in the bloody fray. Would yet their  
monarch's word obey. Now I, my sister, fain would know The cause of this  
thy fear and woe, Why like a snake thou writhest there, Calling for aid in  
wild despair. Nay, lie not thus in lowly guise: Cast off thy weakness and  
arise!' With soothing words the giant chief Assuaged the fury of her  
grief. Her weeping eyes she slowly dried And to her brother thus replied: 'I  
sought thee in my shame and fear With severed nose and mangled ear: My  
gashes like a river bled,  
I sought thee and was comforted.

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Those twice seven giants, brave and strong, Thou sentest to avenge the  
wrong, To lay the savage Rāma low, And Lakshman who misused me so. But ah,  
the shafts of Rāma through The bodies of my champions flew: Though madly  
fierce their spears they plied, Beneath his conquering might they died. I  
saw them, famed for strength and speed, I saw my heroes fall and  
bleed: Great trembling seized my every limb At the great deed achieved by  
him. In trouble, horror, doubt, and dread, Again to thee for help I  
fled. While terror haunts my troubled sight, I seek thee, rover of the  
night. And canst thou not thy sister free From this wide waste of troublous  
sea Whose sharks are doubt and terror, where Each wreathing wave is dark  
despair? Low lie on earth thy giant train By ruthless Rāma's arrows



slain,And all the mighty demons, fedOn blood, who followed me are  
dead.Now if within thy breast may be  
Pity for them and love for me,If thou, O rover of the night,Have valour  
and with him can fight,Subdue the giants' cruel foeWho dwells where  
Dandak's thickets grow.But if thine arm in vain assayThis queller of his  
foes to slay,Now surely here before thine eyes,Wronged and ashamed thy  
sister dies.Too well, alas, too well I seeThat, strong in war as thou  
mayst be,Thou canst not in the battle standWhen Ráma meets thee hand to  
hand.Go forth, thou hero but in name,Assuming might thou canst not  
claim;Call friend and kin, no longer stay:Away from Janasthán, away!Shame  
of thy race! the weak aloneBeneath thine arm may sink o'erthrown:Fly Ráma  
and his brother: theyAre men too strong for thee to slay.How canst thou  
hope, O weak and base,To make this grove thy dwelling-place?With Ráma's  
might unmeet to vie,O'ermastered thou wilt quickly die.A hero strong in  
valorous deedIs Ráma, Das'aratha's seed:And scarce of weaker might than  
heHis brother chief who mangled me.'

Thus wept and wailed in deep distressThe grim misshapen  
giantess:Before her brother's feet she layO'erwhelmed with grief, and  
swooned away.

\* \* \* \* \*

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CANTO XXII: KHARA'S WRATH.

Roused by the taunting words she spoke,  
The mighty Khara's wrath awoke,And there, while giants girt him round,In  
these fierce words an utterance found:   'I cannot, peerless one,  
containMine anger at this high disdain,Galling as salt when sprinkled  
o'erThe rawness of a bleeding sore.Ráma in little count I hold,Weak man  
whose days are quickly told.The caitiff with his life to-dayFor all his  
evil deeds shall pay.Dry, sister, dry each needless tear,Stint thy lament  
and banish fear,For Ráma and his brother goThis day to Yama's realm  
below.My warrior's axe shall stretch him slain,Ere set of sun, upon the  
plain,Then shall thy sated lips be redWith his warm blood in torrents  
shed.'   As Khara's speech the demon heard,With sudden joy her heart was  
stirred:She fondly praised him as the boastAnd glory of the giant  
host.First moved to ire by taunts and stings,  
Now soothed by gentle flatterings,To Dúshan, who his armies led,The demon  
Khara spoke, and said:   'Friend, from the host of giants callFull  
fourteen thousand, best of all,Slaves of my will, of fearful might,Who  
never turn their backs in fight:Fiends who rejoice to slay and mar,Dark  
as the clouds of autumn are:Make ready quickly, O my friend,My chariot  
and the bows I bend.My swords, my shafts of brilliant sheen,My divers  
lances long and keen.On to the battle will I leadThese heroes of  
Pulastya's seed,And thus, O famed for warlike skill,Ráma my wicked foeman  
kill.'   He spoke, and ere his speech was done,His chariot glittering  
like the sun,Yoked and announced, by Dúshan's care,With dappled steeds  
was ready there.High as a peak from Meru rentIt burned with golden  
ornament:The pole of lazulite, of goldWere the bright wheels whereon it  
rolled.With gold and moonstone blazoned o'er,Fish, flowers, trees, rocks,  
the panels bore;Auspicious birds embossed thereon,And stars in costly  
emblem shone.

O'er flashing swords his banner hung,And sweet bells, ever tinkling,  
swung.

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That mighty host with sword and shieldAnd oar was ready for the field:And  
Khara saw, and Dúshan cried,'Forth to the fight, ye giants, ride."Then  
banners waved, and shield and swordFlashed as the host obeyed its  
lord.From Janasthán they sallied outWith eager speed, and din, and  
shout,Armed with the mace for close attacks,The bill, the spear, the  
battle-axe,Steel quoit and club that flashed afar,Huge bow and sword and

scymitar, The dart to pierce, the bolt to strike, The murderous bludgeon,  
lance, and pike. So forth from Janasthán, intent On Khara's will, the  
monsters went. He saw their awful march: not far Behind the host he drove  
his car. Ware of his master's will, to speed The driver urged each gold-  
decked steed. Then forth the warrior's coursers sprang, And with tumultuous  
murmur rang Each distant quarter of the sky And realms that intermediate  
lie.

High and more high within his breast His pride triumphant rose, While  
terrible as Death he pressed Onward to slay his foes, 'More swiftly yet,'  
as on they fled, He cried in thundering tones Loud as a cloud that  
overhead Hails down a flood of stones.

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#### CANTO XXIII.: THE OMENS.

As forth upon its errand went

That huge ferocious armament, An awful cloud, in dust and gloom, With  
threatening thunders from its womb Poured in sad augury a flood Of rushing  
water mixt with blood. The monarch's steeds, though strong and  
fleet, Stumbled and fell: and yet their feet Passed o'er the bed of flowers  
that lay Fresh gathered on the royal way. No gleam of sunlight struggled  
through The sombre pall of midnight hue, Edged with a line of bloody  
red, Like whirling torches overhead. A vulture, fierce, of mighty  
size. Terrific with his cruel eyes, Perched on the staff enriched with  
pold, Whence hung the flag in many a fold Each ravening bird, each beast of  
prey Where Janasthán's wild thickets lay, Rose with a long discordant  
cry And gathered as the host went by, And from the south long, wild, and  
shrill, Came spirit voices boding ill. Like elephants in frantic mood,  
Vast clouds terrific, sable-hued, Hid all the sky where'er they bore Their  
load of water mixt with gore. Above, below, around were spread Thick shades  
of darkness strange and dread, Nor could the wildered glance descry A point  
or quarter of the sky. Then came o'er heaven a sanguine hue, Though  
evening's flush not yet was due, While each ill-omened bird that  
flies Assailed the king with harshest cries. There screamed the vulture and  
the crane, And the loud jackal shrieked again. Each hideous thing that  
bodes aright Disaster in the coming fight, With gaping mouth that hissed  
and flamed, The ruin of the host proclaimed. Eclipse untimely reft away The  
brightness of the Lord of Day, And near his side was seen to glow A mace-  
like comet boding woe. Then while the sun was lost to view A mighty wind  
arose and blew, And stars like fireflies shed their light, Nor waited for  
the distant night. The lilies drooped, the brooks were dried, The fish and  
birds that swam them died, And every tree that was so fair With flower and  
fruit was stripped and bare.

The wild wind ceased, yet, raised on high, Dark clouds of dust involved  
the sky. In doleful twitter long sustained The restless Sáríkás  
1 complained,

And from the heavens with flash and flame Terrific meteors roaring  
came. Earth to her deep foundation shook With rock and tree and plain and  
brook, As Khara with triumphant shout, Borne in his chariot, sallied  
out. His left arm throbbed: he knew full well That omen, and his visage  
fell. Each awful sign the giant viewed, And sudden tears his eye  
bedewed. Care on his brow sat chill and black, Yet mad with wrath he turned  
not back. Upon each fearful sight that raised The shuddering hair the  
chieftain gazed, And laughing in his senseless pride Thus to his giant  
legions cried: 'By sense of mightiest strength upborne, These feeble signs  
I laugh to scorn. I could bring down the stars that shine In heaven with  
these keen shafts of mine. Impelled by warlike fury I Could cause e'en  
Death himself to die.

p. 256 I will not seek my home again

Until my pointed shafts have slain This Raghu's son so fierce in pride, And  
Lakshman by his brother's side. And she, my sister, she for whom These sons

of Raghu meet their doom, She with delighted lips shall drain. The  
 lifeblood of her foemen slain. Fear not for me: I ne'er have known Defeat,  
 in battle overthrown. Fear not for me, O giants; true Are the proud words I  
 speak to you. The king of Gods who rules on high, If wild Air'avat bore him  
 nigh, Should fall before me bolt in hand: And shall these two my wrath  
 withstand!' He ended and the giant host Who heard their chief's  
 triumphant boast, Rejoiced with equal pride elate, Entangled in the noose  
 of Fate. Then met on high in bright array, With eyes that longed to see  
 the fray, God and Gandharva, sage and saint, With beings pure from earthly  
 taint. Blest for good works aforetime wrought, Thus each to other spake his  
 thought: 'Now joy to Br'ahmans, joy to kine, And all whom world count half  
 divine! May Raghu's offspring slay in fight  
 Pulastya's sons who roam by night!' In words like these and more, the  
 best Of high-souled saints their hopes expressed, Bending their eager eyes  
 from where Car-borne with Gods they rode in air. Beneath them stretching  
 far, they viewed The giants' death-doomed multitude. They saw where, urged  
 with fury, far Before the host rolled Khara's car, And close beside their  
 leader came Twelve giant peers of might and fame.

1

Four other chiefs 2 before the rest  
 Behind their leader D'ushan pressed. Impetuous, cruel, dark, and dread,  
 All thirsting for the fray, The hosts of giant warriors sped Onward  
 upon their way. With eager speed they reached the spot Where dwelt  
 the princely two, -- Like planets in a league to blot The sun and  
 moon from view.

Footnotes

255:1 The Sārikā is the Maina, a bird like a starling. 256:1 Their names  
 which are rather unmanageable and

of no importance are Syenagama, Prithus'y'ama,  
 Yajnas'atru, Vihangama, Durjaya, Parav'ira'ksha, Purusha, K'alak'amuka,  
 Megham'ali, M'aham'ali\*, \*Varasya, Rudhir'as'ana.

256:2 Mah'akap'ala, Sth'ul'aksha, Pram'atha, Tris'iras.

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CANTO XXIV.: THE HOST IN SIGHT.

While Khara urged by valiant rage,  
 Drew near that little hermitage, Those wondrous signs in earth and  
 sky Smote on each prince's watching eye. When Rama saw those signs of  
 woe Fraught with destruction to the foe, With bold impatience scarce  
 repressed His brother chief he thus addressed: 'These fearful signs, my  
 brother bold, Which threaten all our foes, behold: All laden, as they  
 strike the view, With ruin to the fiendish crew. The angry clouds are  
 gathering fast, Their skirts with dusty gloom o'ercast, And harsh with  
 loud-voiced thunder, rain Thick drops of blood upon the plain. See, burning  
 for the coming light, My shafts with wreaths of smoke are white, And my  
 great bow embossed with gold Throbs eager for the master's hold. Each bird  
 that through the forest flies Sends out its melancholy cries. All signs  
 foretell the dangerous strife, The jeopardy of limb and life. Each sight,  
 each sound gives warning clear

That foemen meet and death is near. But courage, valiant brother! well The  
 throbings of mine arm foretell That ruin waits the hostile powers, And  
 triumph in the fight is ours. I hail the welcome omen: thou Art bright of  
 lance and clear of brow. For Lakshman, when the eye can trace A cloud upon  
 the warrior's face Stealing the cheerful light away, His life is doomed in  
 battle fray. List, brother, to that awful cry: With shout and roar the  
 fiends draw nigh. With thundering beat of many a drum The savage-hearted  
 giants come. The wise who value safety know To meet, prepared, the coming  
 blow: In paths of prudence trained aright They watch the stroke before it  
 smite. Take thou thine arrows and thy bow, And with the Maithil lady go For  
 shelter to the mountain cave Where thickest trees their branches wave. I

will not have thee, Lakshman, say  
One word in answer, but obey.  
By all thy honour for these feet  
Of mine, dear brother, I entreat.  
Thy warlike arm, I know could,  
smite To death these rovers of the night;  
But I this day would fight alone  
Till all the fiends be overthrown.'

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He spake: and Lakshman answered naught:  
His arrows and his bow he brought,  
And then with Sitá following hied  
For shelter to the mountain side.  
As Lakshman and the lady through  
The forest to 'the cave withdrew,' 'Tis  
well,' cried Ráma. Then he braced  
His coat of mail around his waist.  
When, bright as blazing fire, upon  
His mighty limbs that armour shone,  
The hero stood like some great light  
Uprising in the dark of night.  
His dreadful shafts were by his side;  
His trusty bow he bent and plied.  
Prepared he stood: the bowstring rang,  
Filling the welkin with the clang.

The high-souled Gods together drew

The wonder of the fight to view,  
The saints made free from spot and stain,  
And bright Gandharvas' heavenly train.  
Each glorious sage the assembly sought,  
Each saint divine of loftiest thought,  
And filled with zeal for Ráma's sake.

Thus they whose deeds were holy spake:

'Now be it well with Bráhmans, now

Well with the worlds and every cow!  
Let Ráma in the deadly fray  
The fiends who walk in darkness slay,  
As He who bears the discus

1 slew

The chieftains of the Asur crew.'

Then each with anxious glances viewed

His fellow and his speech renewed:  
'There twice seven thousand giants stand  
With impious heart and cruel hand:  
Here Ráma stands, by virtue known:  
How can the hero fight alone?'

Thus royal sage and Bráhman saint,

Spirit, and Virtue free from taint,  
And all the Gods of heaven who rode  
On golden cars, their longing showed.  
Their hearts with doubt and terror rent,  
They saw the giants' armament,  
And Ráma clothed in warrior might,  
Forth standing in the front of fight.  
Lord of the arm no toil might tire,  
He stood majestic in his ire,  
Matchless in form as Rudra

2 when

His wrath is fierce on Gods or men.  
While Gods and saints in close array  
Held converse of the coming fray,  
The army of the fiends drew near  
With sight and sound that counselled fear.  
Long, loud and deep their war-cry pealed,  
As on they rushed with flag and shield,  
Each, of his proper valour proud,  
Urging to fight the demon crowd.

His ponderous bow each warrior tried,

And swelled his bulk with martial pride.  
'Mid shout and roar and trampling feet.  
And thunder of the drums they beat,  
Loud and more loud the tumult went  
Throughout the forest's vast extent,  
And all the life that moved within  
The woodland trembled at the din.  
In eager haste all fled to find  
Some tranquil spot, nor looked behind.

With every arm of war supplied,

On-rushing wildly like the tide  
Of some deep sea, the giant host  
Approached where Ráma kept his post.  
Then he, in battle skilled and tried,  
Bent his keen eye on every side,  
And viewed the host of Khara face  
To face before his dwelling-place.  
He drew his arrows forth, and reared

And strained that bow which foemen feared,  
And yielded to the vengeful sway  
Of fierce desire that host to slay.  
Terrific as the ruinous fire  
That ends the worlds, he glowed in ire;  
And his tremendous form dismayed  
The Gods who roam the forest shade.  
For in the furious wrath that glowed  
Within his soul the hero showed  
Like S'iva when his angry might  
Stayed Daksha's sacrificial rite.

1b

Like some great cloud at dawn of day    When first the sun upsprings,  
And o'er the gloomy mass each ray    A golden radiance flings:  
Thus showed the

children of the night, Whose mail and chariots threw, With gleam of bows  
and armlets bright, Flashes of flamy hue.

Footnotes

257:1 Vishnu, who bears a chakra or discus.

257:2 S'iva. Next: Canto XXV.: The Battle. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO XXV.: THE BATTLE.

When Khara with the hosts he led

Drew near to Ráma's leafy shed, He saw that queller of the foe  
Stand ready with his ordered bow. He saw, and burning at the view  
His clanging bow he raised and drew, And bade his driver urge apace  
His car to meet him face to face. Obedient to his master's hest  
His eager steeds the driver pressed On to the spot where, none to aid,  
The strong-armed chief his weapon swayed. Soon as the children of the night  
Saw Khara rushing to the fight,

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His lords with loud unearthly cry Followed their chief and gathered  
nigh. As in his car the leader rode With all his lords around, he  
showed Like the red planet fiery Mars Surrounded by the lesser stars. Then  
with a horrid yell that rent The air, the giant chieftain sent  
A thousand darts in rapid shower On Ráma matchless in his power. The rovers  
of the night, impelled By fiery rage which naught withheld, Upon the  
unconquered prince, who strained His fearful bow, their arrows rained. With  
sword and club, with mace and pike, With spear and axe to pierce and  
strike, Those furious fiends on every side The unconquerable hero plied. The  
giant legions huge and strong, Like clouds the tempest drives along, Rushed  
upon Ráma with the speed Of whirling car, and mounted steed, And hill-like  
elephant, to slay The matchless prince in battle fray. Then upon Ráma thick  
and fast The rain of mortal steel they cast, As labouring clouds their  
torrents shed Upon the mountain-monarch's  
1 head.

As near and nearer round him drew The warriors of the giant crew, He showed  
like S'iva girt by all His spirits when night's shadows fall. As the great  
deep receives each rill And river rushing from the hill, He bore that flood  
of darts, and broke With well-aimed shaft each murderous stroke. By stress  
of arrowy storm assailed,  
And wounded sore, he never failed, Like some high mountain which defies The  
red bolts flashing from the skies. With ruddy streams each limb was  
dyed From gaping wounds in breast and side, Showing the hero like the  
sun 'Mid crimson clouds ere day is done. Then, at that sight of terror,  
faint Grew God, Gandharva, sage, and saint, Trembling to see the prince  
oppose His single might to myriad foes. But waxing wroth, with force  
unspent, He strained his bow to utmost bent, And forth his arrows keen and  
true In hundreds, yea in thousands flew, -- Shafts none could ward, and none  
endure: Death's fatal noose was scarce so sure. As 'twere in playful ease  
he shot His gilded shafts, and rested not. With swiftest flight and truest  
aim Upon the giant hosts they came.

Each smote, each stayed a foeman's breath

As fatal as the coil of Death, Each arrow through a giant tore A passage,  
and besmeared with gore, Pursued its onward way and through The air with  
flamy brilliance flew. Unnumbered were the arrows sent  
From the great bow which Ráma bent, And every shaft with iron head The  
lifeblood of a giant shed. Their pennoned bows were cleft, nor mail Nor  
shield of hide could aught avail. For Ráma's myriad arrows tore Through  
arms, and bracelets which they wore, And severed mighty warriors'  
thighs Like trunks of elephants in size, And cut resistless passage  
sheer Through gold-decked horse and charioteer, Slew elephant and rider,  
slew The horseman and the charger too, And infantry unnumbered sent To dwell  
'neath Yama's government. Then rose on high a fearful yell Of rovers of the  
night, who fell Beneath that iron torrent, sore Wounded by shafts that rent  
and tore. So mangled by the ceaseless storm Of shafts of every kind and

form, Such joy they found, as forests feel  
When scorched by flame, from  
Ráma's steel. The mightiest still the fight maintained,  
And furious upon  
Ráma rained  
Dart, arrow, spear, with wild attacks  
Of mace, and club, and  
battle-axe. But the great chief, unconquered yet,  
Their weapons with his  
arrows met,

Which severed many a giant's head,  
And all the plain with corpses  
spread. With sundered bow and shattered shield  
Headless they sank upon the  
field, As the tall trees, that felt the blast  
Of Garud's wing, to earth  
were cast. The giants left unslaughtered there  
Where filled with terror and  
despair, And to their leader Khara fled  
Faint, wounded, and  
discomfited. These fiery Dúshan strove to cheer,  
And poised his bow to calm  
their fear; Then fierce as He who rules the dead,  
When wroth, on angered  
Ráma sped. By Dúshan cheered, the demons cast  
Their dread aside and rallied  
fast. With Sál's, rocks, palm-trees in their hands  
With nooses, maces, pikes,  
and brands, Again upon the godlike man  
The mighty fiends infuriate  
ran, These casting rocks like hail, and these  
A whelming shower of leafy  
trees. Wild, wondrous fight, the eye to scare,  
And raise on end each  
shuddering hair,

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As with the fiends who loved to rove  
By night heroic Ráma strove!  
The giants in their fury plied  
Ráma with darts on every side. Then, by the  
gathering demons pressed  
From north and south and east and west, By showers  
of deadly darts assailed  
From every quarter fiercely hailed, Girt by the  
foes who swarmed around, He raised a mighty shout whose sound  
Struck  
terror. On the giant crew  
His great Gándharva  
1 arrow flew.

A thousand mortal shafts were rained  
From the orb'd bow the hero  
strained, Till east and west and south and north  
Were filled with arrows  
volleyed forth. They heard the fearful shout: they saw  
His mighty hand the  
bowstring draw, Yet could no wounded giant's eye  
See the swift storm of  
arrows fly. Still firm the warrior stood and cast  
His deadly missiles thick  
and fast. Dark grew the air with arrowy hail  
Which hid the sun as with a  
veil. Fiends wounded, falling, fallen, slain,  
All in a moment, spread the  
plain, And thousands scarce alive were left  
Mangled, and gashed, and torn,  
and cleft. Dire was the sight, the plain o'erspread  
With trophies of the  
mangled dead. There lay, by Ráma's missiles rent,  
Full many a priceless ornament, With severed limb and broken gem,  
Hauberk  
and helm and diadem. There lay the shattered car, the steed,  
The elephant  
of noblest breed, The splintered spear, the shivered mace,  
Chouris and  
screens to shade the face. The giants saw with bitterest pain  
Their  
warriors weltering on the plain, Nor dared again his might oppose  
Who  
scourged the cities of his foes.

Footnotes

257:1b See Additional Notes--DAKSHA'S SACRIFICE.

258:1 Himálaya.

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CANTO XXVI.: DÚSHAN'S DEATH.

When Dúshan saw his giant band

Slaughtered by Ráma's conquering hand, He called five thousand fiends, and  
gave His orders. Bravest of the brave, Invincible, of furious might, Ne'er  
had they turned their backs in flight. They, as their leader bade them  
seize  
Spears, swords, and clubs, and rocks, and trees.

Poured on the dauntless prince again

A ceaseless shower of deadly rain. The virtuous Ráma, undismayed. Their  
missiles with his arrows stayed, And weakened, ere it fell, the shock  
Of  
that dire hail of tree and rock, And like a bull with eyelids closed, The  
pelting of the storm opposed.

Then blazed his ire: he longed to smite

To earth the rovers of the night. The wrath that o'er his spirit  
came clothed him with splendour as of flame, While showers of mortal darts  
he poured fierce on the giants and their lord.

Dúshan, the foeman's dusky dread, By frenzied rage inspirited, On Raghu's  
son his missiles cast like Indra's bolts which rend and blast. But Ráma  
with a trenchant dart cleft Dúshan's ponderous bow apart. And then the  
gold-decked steeds who drew the chariot, with four shafts he slew. One  
crescent dart he aimed which shred clean from his neck the driver's  
head; Three more with deadly skill addressed stood quivering in the giant's  
breast. Hurling from his car, steeds, driver slain, The bow he trusted cleft  
in twain, He seized his mace, strong, heavy, dread, High as a mountain's  
towering head. With plates of gold adorned and bound, Embattled Gods it  
crushed and ground. Its iron spikes yet bore the stains of mangled foemen's  
blood and brains. Its heavy mass of jagged steel was like a thunderbolt to  
feel, It shattered, as on foes it fell, The city where the senses dwell.

1b

Fierce Dúshan seized that ponderous mace like monstrous form of serpent  
race, And all his savage soul aglow with fury, rushed upon the foe. But  
Raghu's son took steady aim,  
And as the rushing giant came, Shore with two shafts the arms whereon the  
demon's glittering bracelets shone. His arm at each huge shoulder  
lopped, The mighty body reeled and dropped. And the great mace to earth was  
thrown like Indra's staff when storms have blown, As some vast elephant who  
lies shorn of his tusks, and bleeding dies, So, when his arms were rent  
away, Low on the ground the giant lay. The spirits saw the monster die, And  
loudly rang their joyful cry, 'Honour to Ráma! nobly done! Well hast thou  
fought, Kakutstha's son!

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But the great three, the host who led, Enraged to see their chieftain  
dead, As though Death's toils were round them cast, Rushed upon Ráma fierce  
and fast, Mahákapála seized, to strike his foeman down, a ponderous  
pike: Sthúláksha charged with spear to fling, Pramáthi with his axe to  
swing. When Ráma saw, with keen darts he received the onset of the three, As  
calm as though he hailed a guest

In each, who came for shade and rest. Mahákapála's monstrous head fell with  
the trenchant dart he sped. His good right hand in battle  
skilled Sthúláksha's eyes with arrows tilled, And trusting still his ready  
bow he laid the fierce Pramathi low, Who sank as some tall tree falls  
down with bough and branch and leafy crown. Then with five thousand shafts  
he slew the rest of Dúshan's giant crew: Five thousand demons, torn and  
rent, To Yama's gloomy realm he sent. When Khara knew the fate of all the  
giant band and Dúshan's fall, He called the mighty chiefs who led his army,  
and in fury said: 'Now Dúshan and his armed train lie prostrate on the  
battle plain. Lead forth an army mightier still, Ráma this wretched man, to  
kill. Fight ye with darts of every shape, Nor let him from your wrath  
escape.' Thus spoke the fiend, by rage impelled, And straight his course  
toward Ráma held. With S'yenagámí and the rest of his twelve chiefs he  
onward pressed, And every giant as he went a storm of well-wrought arrows  
sent.

Then with his pointed shafts that came with gold and diamond bright as  
flame, Dead to the earth the hero threw the remnant of the demon crew. Those  
shafts with feathers bright as gold, Like flames which wreaths of smoke  
enfold, Smote down the fiends like tall trees rent by red bolts from the  
firmament. A hundred shafts be pointed well: By their keen barbs a hundred  
fell: A thousand, -- and a thousand more in battle's front lay drenched in  
gore. Of all defence and guard bereft, With sundered bows and harness  
cleft. Their bodies red with bloody stain fell the night-rovers on the  
plain, Which, covered with the loosened hair of bleeding giants prostrate  
there, Like some great altar showed, arrayed for holy rites with grass  
o'erlaid. The darksome wood, each glade and dell where the wild demons

fought and fellWas like an awful hell whose floorIs thick with mire and  
flesh and gore. Thus twice seven thousand fiends, a bandWith impious  
heart and bloody hand,By Raghu's son were overthrown,A man, on foot, and  
all alone.Of all who met on that fierce day,  
Khara, great chief, survived the fray,The monster of the triple head,

1

And Raghu's son, the foeman'a dread.The other demon warriors, allSkilful  
and brave and strong and tall,In front of battle, side by side,Struck  
down by Lakshman's brother died. When Khara saw the host he led  
Triumphant forth to fight Stretched on the earth, all smitten dead,  
By Ráma's nobler might, Upon his foe he fiercely glared, And drove  
against him fast, Like Indra when his arm is bared His thundering  
bolt to cast.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Footnotes

259:1 One of the mysterious weapons given to Ráma.

259:1b A periphrasis for the body.Next: Canto XXVII.: The Death of  
Tris'iras.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO XXVII.: THE DEATH OF

TRIS'IRAS.

But Tris'iras, 2 a chieftain dread,  
Marked Khara as he onward sped.

And met his car and cried, to stayThe giant from the purposed fray:'Mine  
be the charge: let me attack,And turn thee from the contest back.Let me  
go forth, and thou shalt seeThe strong-armed Ráma slain by me.True are  
the words I speak, my lord:I swear it as I touch my sword:That I this  
Ráma's blood will spill,Whom every giant's hand should kill.This Ráma  
will I slay, or heIn battle fray shall conquer me.Restrain thy spirit:  
check thy car,And view tne combat from afar.Thou, joying o'er the  
prostrate foe,To Janasthán again shalt go,Or, if I fall in battle's  
chance,Against my conqueror advance.' Thus Tris'iras for death who  
yearned:And Khara from the conflict turned,'Go forth to battle,' Khara  
cried;

And toward his foe the giant hied.Borne on a car of glittering hueWhich  
harnessed coursers fleetly drew,Like some huge hill with triple peakHe  
onward rushed the prince to seek,

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Still, like a big cloud, sending outHis arrowy rain with many a shoutLike  
the deep sullen roars that comeDiscordant from a moistened drum.But  
Raghu's son, whose watchful eyeBeheld the demon rushing nigh,From the  
great bow he raised and bentA shower of shafts to meet him sent.Wild grew  
the fight and wilder yetAs fiend and man in combat met,As when in some  
dark wood's retreatAn elephant and a lion meet. The giant bent his bow,  
and trueTo Ráma's brow three arrows flew.Then, raging as he felt the  
stroke,These words in anger Ráma spoke:'Heroic chief! is such the powerOf  
fiends who rove at midnight hour?Soft as the touch of flowers I feelThe  
gentle blows thine arrows deal.Receive in turn my shafts, and know  
What arrows fly from Ráma's bow.'Thus as he spoke his wrath grew hot.And  
twice seven deadly shafts he shot,Which, dire as serpent's deadly  
fang,Straight to the giant's bosom sprang.Four arrows more,--each shaped  
to dealA mortal wound with barbèd steel,--The glorious hero shot, and  
slewThe four good steeds the car that drew.Eight other shafts flew  
straight and fleet,And hurled the driver from his seat,And in the dust  
the banner laidThat proudly o'er the chariot played.Then as the fiend  
prepared to boundForth from his useless car to ground,The hero smote him  
to the heart,And numbed his arm with deadly smart.Again the chieftain,  
peerless-souled,Seat forth three rapid darts, and rolledWith each keen  
arrow, deftly sped,Low in the dust a monstrous head.Then yielding to each  
deadly stroke,Forth spouting streams of blood and smoke,The headless  
trunk bedrenched with goreFell to the ground and moved no more.The fiends



who yet were left with life,Routed and crushed in battle strife,To  
Khara's side, like trembling deerScared by the hunter, fled in fear.  
King Khara saw with furious eyeHis scattered giants turn and fly;Then  
rallying his broken trainAt Raghu's son he drove amain,Like Ráhu  
1 when his deadly might

Comes rushing on the Lord of Night.

Footnotes

260:1 Tris'iras.

260:2 The Three-headed.

261:1 The demon who causes eclipses.

Next: Canto XXVIII.: Khara Dismounted.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index

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CANTO XXVIII.: KHARA DISMOUNTED.

But when he turned his eye where bled

Both Tris'iras and Dúshan dead,Fear o'er the giant's spirit cameOf Ráma's  
might which naught could tame.He saw his savage legions, thoseWhose force  
no creature dared oppose,--He saw the leader of his trainBy Ráma's single  
prowess slain.With burning grief he marked the fewStill left him of his  
giant crew.As Namuchi

1b on Indra, so

Rushed the dread demon on his foe.His mighty bow the monster strained,And  
angrily on Ráma rainedHis mortal arrows in a flood,Like serpent fangs  
athirst for blood.Skilled in the bowman's warlike art,He plied the string  
and poised the dart.Here, on his car, and there, he rode,And passages of  
battle showed,While all the skyey regions grewDark with his arrows as  
they flew.Then Ráma seized his ponderous bow,And straight the heaven was  
all aglowWith shafts whose stroke no life might bear

That filled with flash and flame the air,Thick as the blinding torrents  
sentDown from Parjanya's

2b firmament.

In space itself no space remained,But all was filled with arrows  
rainedIncessantly from each great bowWielded by Ráma and his foe.As thus  
in furious combat, wroughtTo mortal hate, the warriors fought,The sun  
himself grew faint and pale,Obscured behind that arrowy veil.   As when  
beneath the driver's steelAn elephant is forced to kneel,So from the hard  
and pointed headOf many an arrow Ráma bled.High on his car the giant  
rosePrepared in deadly strife to close,

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And all the spirits saw him standLike Yama with his noose in hand.For  
Khara deemed in senseless prideThat he, beneath whose hand had diedThe  
giant legions, failed at lengthSlow sinking with exhausted strength.But  
Ráma, like a lion, whenA trembling deer comes nigh his den.Feared not the  
demon mad with hate,--

Of lion might and lion gait.Then in his lofty car that glowedWith sunlike  
brilliance Khura rodeAt Ráma: madly on he cameLike a poor moth that seeks  
the flame.His archer skill the fiend displayed,And at the place where  
Ráma laidHis hand, an arrow cleft in twoThe mighty bow the hero  
drew.Seven arrows by the giant sent,Bright as the bolts of Indra,  
rentTheir way through mail and harness joints,And pierced him with their  
iron points.On Ráma, hero unsurpassed,A thousand shafts smote thick and  
fast,While as each missile struck, rang outThe giant's awful battle-  
shout.His knotted arrows pierced and toreThe sunbright mail the hero  
wore,Till, band and buckle rent away,Glittering on the ground it lay.Then  
pierced in shoulder, breast, and side,Till every limb with blood was  
dyed,The chieftain in majestic ireShone glorious as the smokeless  
fire.Then loud and long the war-cry roseOf Ráma, terror of his foes,As,  
on the giant's death intent.A ponderous bow he strung and bent,--  
Lord Vishnu's own, of wondrous size,--Agastya gave the heavenly  
prize.Then rushing on the demon foe,He raised on high that mighty bow,And  
with his well-wrought shafts, whereonBright gold between the feathers

shone, He struck the pennon fluttering o'er The chariot, and it waved no more. That glorious flag whose every fold Was rich with blazonry and gold, Fell as the sun himself by all The Gods' decree might earthward fall. From wrathful Khara's hand, whose art Well knew each vulnerable part, Four keenly-piercing arrows flew, And blood in Ráma's bosom drew, With every limb distained with gore From deadly shafts which rent and tore, From Khara's clanging bowstring shots, The prince's wrath waxed wondrous hot. His hand upon his bow that best Of mighty archers firmly pressed, And from the well-drawn bowstring, true Each to its mark, six arrows flew. One quivered in the giant's head, With two his brawny shoulders bled; Three, with the crescent heads they bore, Deep in his breast a passage tore. Thirteen, to which the stone had lent The keenest point, were swiftly sent On the fierce giant, every one Destructive, gleaming like the sun. With four the dappled steeds he slew; One cleft the chariot yoke in two. One, in the heat of battle sped, Smote from the neck the driver's head. The poles were rent apart by three; Two broke the splintered axle-tree. Then from the hand of Ráma, while Across his lips there came a smile. The twelfth, like thunderbolt impelled, Cut the great hand and bow it held. Then, scarce by Indra's self surpassed, He pierced the giant with the last. The bow he trusted cleft in twain. His driver and his horses slain, Down sprang the giant, mace in hand, On foot against the foe to stand. The Gods and saints in bright array Close gathered in the skies, The prince's might in battle-fray Beheld with joyful eyes. Uprising from their golden seats, Their hands in honour raised, They looked on Ráma's noble feats, And blessed him as they praised. Footnotes

261:1b 'This Asura was a friend of Indra, and taking advantage of his friend's confidence, he drank up Indra's strength along with a draught of wine and Soma. Indra then told the As'vins and Sarasvatí that Namuchi had drunk up his strength. The As'vins in consequence gave Indra a thunderbolt in the form of a foam, with which he smote off the head of Namuchi.' GARRETT'S Classical Dictionary of India, See also Book I. p. 39.

261:2b Indra.

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CANTO XXIX.: KHARA'S DEFEAT.

When Ráma saw the giant nigh.

On foot, alone, with mace reared high, In mild reproof at first he spoke. Then forth his threatening anger broke: 'Thou with the host 'twas thine to lead, With elephant and car and steed, Hast wrought an act of sin and shame, An act which all who live must blame. Know that the wretch whose evil mind Through the grief of human kind, Through the three worlds confess him lord, Must perish dreaded and abhorred. Night-rover, when a villain's deeds Distress the world he little heeds, Each hand is armed his life to take, And crush him like a deadly snake. The end is near when men begin Through greed or lust a life of sin, E'en as a Bráhma's dame, unwise, Eats of the fallen hail

1 and dies.

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Thy hand has slain the pure and good, The hermit saints of Dandak wood, Of holy life, the heirs of bliss; And thou shalt reap the fruit of this. Not long shall they whose cruel breasts Joy in the sin the world detests Retain their guilty power and pride, But fade like trees whose roots are dried. Yes, as the seasons come and go. Each tree its kindly fruit must show, And sinners reap in fitting time The harvest of each earlier crime. As those must surely die who eat Unwittingly of poisoned meat, They too whose lives in sin are spent Receive ere long the punishment. And know, thou rover of the night, That I, a king, am sent to smite The wicked down, who court the hate Of men whose laws they

violate. This day my vengeful hand shall send shafts bright with gold to  
tear and rend, And pass with fury through thy breast As serpents pierce an  
emmet's nest. Thou with thy host this day shalt be Among the dead below,  
and see The saints beneath thy hand who bled, Whose flesh thy cruel maw has  
fed. They, glorious on their seats of gold, Their slayer shall in hell  
behold. Fight with all strength thou callest thine,  
Mean scion of ignoble line, Still, like the palm-tree's fruit, this day My  
shafts thy head in dust shall lay.'

Such were the words that Ráma said:

Then Khara's eyes with wrath glowed red, Who, maddened by the rage that  
burned Within him, with a smile returned:

'Thou Das'aratha's son, hast slain

The meaner giants of my train: And canst thou idly vaunt thy might And  
claim the praise not thine by right? Not thus in self-laudation rave The  
truly great, the nobly brave: No empty boasts like thine disgrace The  
foremost of the human race. The mean of soul, unknown to fame, Who taint  
their warrior race with shame, Thus speak in senseless pride as thou, O  
Raghu's son, hast boasted now, What hero, when the war-dry rings, Vaunts  
the high race from which he springs, Or seeks, when warriors meet and  
die. His own descent to glorify? Weakness and folly show confessed In every  
vaunt thou utterest, As when the flames fed high with grass Detect the  
\*simulating\* brass,

Dost thou note see me standing here Armed with the mighty mace I  
rear, \*Firm\* as an earth upholding hill Whose summit veins of metal  
fill? Lo, here I stand before thy face To slay thee with my murderous  
mace, As Death, the universal lord, Stands threatening with his fatal  
cord. Enough of this. Much more remains That should be said: but time  
constrains. Ere to his rest the sun descend, And shades of night the combat  
end, The twice seven thousand of my band Who fell beneath thy bloody  
hand Shall have their tears all wiped away And triumph in thy fall to-day.'

He spoke, and loosing from his hold

His mighty mace ringed round with gold, Like some red bolt alive with  
fire Hurling it at Ráma, mad with ire. The ponderous mace which Khara  
threw Sent fiery flashes as it flew. Trees, shrubs were scorched beneath  
the blast, As onward to its aim it passed. But Ráma, watching as it  
sped Dire as His noose who rules the dead, Cleft it with arrows as it  
came On rushing with a hiss and flame.

Its fury spent and burnt away, Harmless upon the ground it lay Like a great  
snake in furious mood By herbs of numbing power subdued.

Footnotes

262:1 Popularly supposed to cause death.

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CANTO XXX.: KHARA'S DEATH.

When Ráma, pride of Raghu's race,

Virtue's dear son, had cleft the mace, Thus with superior smile the best Of  
chiefs the furious fiend addressed:

'Thou, worst of giant blood, at length

Hast shown the utmost of thy strength, And forced by greater might to  
bow, Thy vaunting threats are idle now. My shafts have cut thy club in  
twain: Useless it lies upon the plain, And all thy pride and haughty  
trust Lie with it levelled in the dust. The words that thou hast said to-  
day, That thou wouldst wipe the tears away Of all the giants I have  
slain, My deeds shall render void and vain. Thou meanest of the giants'  
breed, Evil in thought and word and deed. My hand shall take that life of  
thine As Garud

I seized the juice divine.

p. 264 Thou, rent by shafts, this day shalt die:

Low on the ground thy corse shall lie, And bubbles from the cloven  
neck With froth and blood thy skin shall deck, With dust and mire all

rudely dyed,Thy torn arms lying by thy side,While streams of blood each limb shall steep,Thou on earth's breast shalt take thy sleepLike a fond lover when he strainsThe beauty whom at length he gains.Now when thy heavy eyelids closeFor ever in thy deep repose,Again shall Dandak forest beSafe refuge for the devotee.Thou slain, and all thy race who heldThe realm of Janasthán expelled,Again shall happy hermits rove,Fearing no danger, through the grove.Within those bounds, their brethren slain,No giant shall this day remain,But all shall fly with many a tearAnd fearing, rid the saints of fear,This bitter day shall misery bringOn all the race that calls thee king.Fierce as their lord, thy dames shall know,Bereft of joys, the taste of woe.Base, cruel wretch, of evil mind,Plaguer of Bráhmans and mankind,With trembling hands each devoteeFeeds holy tires in dread of thee.'

Thus with wild fury unrepressed

Raghu's brave son the fiend addressed;And Khara, as his wrath grew high,Thus thundered forth his fierce reply:

'By senseless pride to madness wrought,

By danger girt thou fearest naught,Nor heedest, numbered with the dead,What thou shouldst say and leave unsaid.When Fate's tremendous coils enfoldThe captive in resistless hold,He knows not right from wrong, each senseNumbed by that deadly influence.'

He spoke, and when his speech was done

Bent his fierce brows on Raghu's son.With eager eyes he looked aroundIf lethal arms might yet be found.Not far away and full in viewA Sál-tree towering upward grew.His lips in mighty strain compressed,He tore it up with root and crest,With huge arms waved it o'er his headAnd hurled it shouting, Thou art dead.But Ráma, unsurpassed in might.Stayed with his shafts its onward flight,And furious longing seized his soulThe giant in the dust to roll.

Great drops of sweat each limb bedewed,His red eyes showed his wrathful mood.A thousand arrows, swiftly sent,The giant's bosom tore and rentFrom every gash his body showedThe blood in foamy torrents flowed,As springing from their caverns leapSwift rivers down the mountain steep.When Khara felt each deadened powerYielding beneath that murderous shower,He charged, infuriate with the scentOf blood, in dire bewilderment.But Ráma watched, with ready bow,The onset of his bleeding foe,And ere the monster reached him, drewBackward in haste a yard or two.Then from his side a shaft he tookWhose mortal stroke no life might brook:Of peerless might, it bore the nameOf Brahmá's staff, and glowed with flame:Lord Indra, ruler of the skies,Himself had given the glorious prize,His bow the virtuous hero drew,And at the fiend the arrow flew.Hissing and roaring like the blastOf tempest through the air it passed,And fixed, by Ráma's vigour sped,In the foe's breast its pointed head.Then fell the fiend: the quenchless flame

Burnt furious in his wounded frame.So burnt by Rudra Andhak

1 fell

In S'vetáranya's silvery dell:So Namuchi and Vritra

2 died

By steaming bolts that tamed their pride:So Bala

3 fell by lightning sent

By Him who rules the firmament.

Then all the Gods in close array

With the bright hosts who sing and play,Filled full of rapture and amaze,Sang hymns of joy in Ráma's praise,Beat their celestial drums and shedRain of sweet flowers upon his head.For three short hours had scarcely flown,And by his pointed shafts o'erthrownThe twice seven thousand fiends, whose willCould change their shapes, in death were still,With Tris'iras and Dúshan slain,And Khara, leader of the train.'O wondrous deed,' the bards began,'The noblest deed of virtuous man!Heroic strength that stood alone,And firmness e'en as Vishnu's own!'

Thus having sung, the shining train  
Turned to their heavenly homes again.p. 265  
Then the high saints of royal race  
And loftiest station sought the place,And by the great Agastya led,With  
reverence to Ráma said:

'For this, Lord Indra, glorious sire,  
Majestic as the burning fire,Who crushes cities in his rage,Sought  
S'arabhanga's hermitage.Thou wast, this great design to aid,Led by the  
saints to seek this shade,And with thy mighty arm to killThe giants who  
delight in ill.Thou Das'aratha's noble son,The battle for our sake hast  
won,And saints in Dandak's wild who liveTheir days to holy tasks can  
give.'

Forth from the mountain cavern came  
The hero Lakshman with the dame.And rapture beaming from his  
face.Besought the hermit dwelling-place.Then when the mighty saints had  
paidDue honour for the victor's aid,The glorious Ráma honoured tooBy  
Lakshman to his cot withdrew.When Sitá looked upon her lord,His foemen  
slain, the saints restored,  
In pride and rapture uncontrolledShe clasped him in her loving hold.On  
the dead fiends her glances fell:She saw her lord alive and  
well,Victorious after toil and pain,And Janak's child was blest  
again.Once more, once more with new delightHer tender arms she threwRound  
Ráma whose victorious mightHad crushed the demon crew.Then as his  
grateful reverence paidEach saint of lofty soul,O'er her sweet face, all  
fears allayed,The flush of transport stole.

Footnotes

263:1 Garud the King of Birds, carried off the \*Amrit\*  
or drink of Paradise from Indra's custody.

264:1 A demon, son of Kas'yap and Diti, slain by Rudra or S'iva when he  
attempted to carry off the tree of  
Paradise.

264:2 Namuchi and Vritra were two demons slain by Indra. Vritra  
personifies drought, the enemy of Indra,  
who imprisons the rain in the cloud.

264:3 Another demon slain by Indra.

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CANTO XXXI.: RÁVAN

But of the host of giants one,  
Akampan, from the field had runAnd sped to Lanká  
1 to relate

In Rávan's ear the demons' fate:

'King, many a giant from the shade  
Of Janasthán in death is laid:Khara the chief is slain, and ICould  
scarcely from the battle fly.'

Fierce anger, as the monarch heard,  
Inflamed his look, his bosom stirred,And while with scorching glance he  
eyedThe messenger, he thus replied:

'What fool has dared, already dead,  
\*Strike\* Janasthán, the general dread?

Who is the wretch shall vainly try  
In earth, heaven, hell, from me to fly?Vais'ravan  
1b, Indra, Vishnu, He

Who rules the dead, must reverence me;For not the mightiest lord of  
theseCan brave my will and live at ease.

Fate finds in me a mightier fateTo burn the fires that devastate.With  
unresisted influence ICan force e'en Death himself to die,With all-  
surpassing might restrainThe fury of the hurricane,And burn in my  
tremendous ireThe glory of the sun and fire.'

As thus the fiend's hot fury blazed,

His trembling hands Akampan raised, And with a voice which fear made weak, Permission craved his tale to speak. King Rávan gave the leave he sought, And bade him tell the news he brought. His courage rose, his voice grew bold, And thus his mournful tale he told:

'A prince with mighty shoulders, sprung  
From Das'aratha, brave and young, With arms well moulded, bears the name Of Ráma with a lion's frame. Renowned, successful, dark of limb, Earth has no warrior equals him. He fought in Janasthán and slew Dúshan the fierce and Khara too.'

Rávan the giants' royal chief. Received Akampan's tale of grief.  
Then, panting like an angry snake, These words in turn the monarch spake:

'Say quick, did Ráma seek the shade  
Of Janasthán with Indra's aid, And all the dwellers in the skies To back his hardy enterprise?'

Akampan heard, and straight obeyed  
His master, and his answer made. Then thus the power and might he told Of Raghu's son the lofty-souled:

'Best is that chief of all who know  
With deftest art to draw the bow. His are strange arms of heavenly might, And none can match him in the fight. His brother Lakshman brave as he, Fair as the rounded moon to see, With eyes like night and voice that comes Deep as the roll of beaten drums, By Ráma's side stands ever near, Like wind that aids the flame's career. That glorious chief, that prince of kings, On Janasthán this ruin brings. No Gods were there, -- dismiss the thought No heavenly legions came and fought. His swift-winged arrows Ráma sent, Each bright with gold and ornament.

To serpents many-faced they turned:

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The giant hosts they ate and burned. Where'er these fled in wild dismay Ráma was there to strike and slay. By him O King of high estate, Is Janasthán left desolate.'

Akampan ceased: in angry pride

The giant monarch thus replied: 'To Janasthán myself will go And lay these daring brothers low.'

Thus spoke the king in furious mood;

Akampan then his speech renewed: 'O listen while I tell at length The terror of the hero's strength. No power can check, no might can tame Ráma, a chief of noblest fame. He with resistless shafts can stay The torrent foaming on its way. Sky, stars, and constellations, all To his fierce might would yield and fall. His power could earth itself uphold Down sinking as it sank of old.

1

Or all its plains and cities drown, Breaking the wild sea's barrier down; Crush the great deep's impetuous will, Or bid the furious wind be still. He glorious in his high estate The triple world could devastate, And there, supreme of men, could place His creatures of a new-born race. Never can mighty Ráma be Overcome in fight, my King, by thee. Thy giant host the day might win From him, if heaven were gained by sin. If Gods were joined with demons, they Could ne'er, I ween, that hero slay, But guile may kill the wondrous man; Attend while I disclose the plan. His wife, above all women graced, Is Sítá of the dainty waist, With limbs to fair proportion true, And a soft skin of lustrous hue, Round neck and arm rich gems are twined: She is the gem of womankind. With her no bright Gandharví vies, No nymph or Goddess in the skies; And none to rival her would dare 'Mid dames who part the long black hair. That hero in the wood beguile, And steal his lovely spouse the while. 'Reft of his darling wife, be sure, Brief days the mourner will endure. 'With flattering hope of triumph moved The giant king that plan approved, Pondered the counsel in his breast, And then Akampan thus addressed: 'Forth in my car I go at morn, None but the

driver with me borne, And this fair Sítá will I bring Back to my city triumphing.'

Forth in his car by asses drawn

The giant monarch sped at dawn, Bright as the sun, the chariot cast Light through the sky as on it passed. Then high in air that best of cars Traversed the path of lunar stars, Sending a fitful radiance pale As moonbeams shot through cloudy veil. Far on his airy way he flew: Near Tádakeya's

1b grove he drew,

Máricha welcomed him, and placed Before him food which giants taste, With honour led him to a seat, And brought him water for his feet; And then with timely words addressed Such question to his royal guest:

'Speak, is it well with thee whose sway

The giant multitudes obey? I know not all, and ask in fear

The cause, O King, why thou art here.'

Rávan, the giants' mighty king,

Heard wise Máricha's questioning, And told with ready answer, taught In eloquence, the cause he sought: 'My guards, the bravest of my band. Are slain by Ráma's vigorous hand, And Janasthán, that feared no hate Of foes, is rendered desolate. Come, aid me in the plan I lay To steal the conqueror's wife away.'

Máricha heard the king's request,

And thus the giant chief addressed:

'What foe in friendly guise is he

Who spoke of Sítá's name to thee? Who is the wretch whose thought would bring Destruction on the giants' king? Whose is the evil counsel, say, That bids thee bear his wife away, And careless of thy life provoke Earth's loftiest with threatening stroke? A foe is he who dared suggest This hopeless folly to thy breast, Whose ill advice would bid thee draw The venomed fang from serpent's jaw. By whose unwise suggestion led Wilt thou the path of ruin tread? Whence falls the blow that would destroy Thy gentle sleep of ease and joy? Like some wild elephant is he That rears his trunk on high, Lord of an ancient pedigree, Huge tusks, and furious eye. Rávan, no rover of the night With bravest heart can brook, Met in the front of deadly fight, On Raghu's son to look.

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The giant hosts were brave and strong, Good at the bow and spear: But Ráma slew the routed throng, A lion 'mid the deer. No lion's tooth can match his sword, Or arrows fiercely shot: He sleeps, he sleeps--the lion lord; Be wise and rouse him not. O Monarch of the giants, well Upon my counsel think, Lest thou for ever in the hell Of Ráma's vengeance sink: A hell, where deadly shafts are sent From his tremendous-bow, While his great arms all flight prevent,

Like deepest mire below: Where the wild floods of battle rave Above the foeman's head, And each with many a feathery wave Of shafts is garlanded. O, quench the flames that in thy breast With raging fury burn; And pacified and self-possessed To Lanká's town return. Rest thou in her imperial bowers With thine own wives content, And in the wood let Ráma's hours With Sítá still be spent.'

The lord of Lanká's isle obeyed

The counsel, and his purpose stayed. Borne on his car he parted thence And gained his royal residence.

Footnotes

265:1 The capital of the giant king Rávan.

265:1b Kuvera, the God of gold 266:1 In the great deluge.

266:1b The giant Máricha, son of Tádaká. Tádaká was slain by Ráma. See p. 39.

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CANTO XXXII.: RÁVAN ROUSED.

But Súrpanakhá saw the plain  
Spread with the fourteen thousand slain, Doers of cruel deeds o'erthrown  
By Ráma's mighty arm alone, Add Tris'iras and Dúshan dead, And Khara, with the  
hosts they led. Their death she saw, and mad with pain, Roared like a cloud  
that brings the rain, And fled in anger and dismay To Lanká, seat of  
Rávan's sway. There on a throne of royal state Exalted sat the  
potentate, Begirt with counsellor and peer, Like Indra with the Storm-Gods  
near. Bright as the sun's full splendour shone The glorious throne he sat  
upon, As when the blazing fire is red Upon a golden altar fed. Wide gaped  
his mouth at every breath, Tremendous as the jaws of Death. With him high  
saints of lofty thought, Gandharvas, Gods, had vainly fought. The wounds  
Were on his body yet From wars where Gods and demons met. And scars still  
marked his ample chest

By fierce Airávat's 1 tusk impressed.

A score of arms, ten necks, had he, His royal gear was brave to see. His  
massive form displayed each sign That marks the heir of kingly line. In  
stature like a mountain height, His arms were strong, his teeth were  
white, And all his frame of massive mould Seemed lazulite adorned with  
gold. A hundred seams impressed each \*limb\* Where Vishnu's arm had wounded  
him, And chest and shoulder bore the print Of sword and spear and arrow  
dint, Where every God had struck a blow In battle with the giant foe. His  
might to wildest rage could wake The sea whose faith naught else can  
shake, Hurl towering mountains to the earth, And crush e'en foes of  
heavenly birth. The bonds of law and right he spurned: To others' wives his  
fancy turned. Celestial arms he used in fight, And loved to mar each holy  
rite. He went to Bhogavatí's town,

2

Where Vásuki was beaten down, And stole, victorious in the strife, Lord  
Takshaka's beloved wife. Kailása's lofty crest he sought, And when in vain  
Kuvera fought,  
Stole Pushpak thence, the car that through The air, as willed the master,  
flew. Impelled by furious anger, he Spoiled Nandan's

3 shade and Naliní,

And Chaitraratha's heavenly grove, The haunts where Gods delight to  
rove. Tall as a hill that cleaves the sky, He raised his mighty arms on  
high To check the blessed moon, and stay The rising of the Lord of Day. Ten  
thousand years the giant spent On dire austerities intent. And of his heads  
an offering, laid Before the Self-existent, made. No God or fiend his life  
could take, Gandharva, goblin, bird, or snake: Safe from all fears of  
death, except From human arm, that life was kept. Oft when the priests  
began to raise Their consecrating hymns of praise, He spoiled the Soma's  
sacred juice Poured forth by them in solemn use.

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The sacrifice his hands o'erthrew, And cruelly the Bráhmans slew. His was a  
heart that naught could melt, Joying in woes which others felt.

She saw the ruthless monster there,

Dread of the worlds, unused to spare. In robes of heavenly texture  
dressed, Celestial wreaths adorned his breast. He sat a shape of terror,  
like Destruction ere the worlds it strike. She saw him in his pride of  
place, The joy of old Pulastya's

1 race,

Begirt by counsellor and peer, Rávan, the foeman's mortal fear, And terror  
in her features shown, The giantess approached the throne. Then  
Súrpanakhá bearing yet Each deeply printed trace Where the great-  
hearted chief had set A mark upon her face, Impelled by terror and  
desire, Still fierce, no longer bold, To Rávan of the eyes of fire  
Her tale, infuriate, told,

Footnotes

267:1 Indra's elephant. 267:2 Bhogavatí, in Pátála in the regions under  
the



earth, is the capital of the serpent race whose king is  
Vásuki.

267:3 The grove of Indra.

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CANTO XXXIII.: SÚRPANAKHÁ'S  
SPEECH.

Burning with anger, in the ring  
Of counsellors who girt their king, To Rávan, ravener of man, With bitter  
words she thus began:

'Wilt thou absorbed in pleasure, still

Pursue unchecked thy selfish will: Nor turn thy heedless eyes to see The  
coming fate which threatens thee? The king who days and hours employs In  
base pursuit of vulgar joys Must in his people's sight be vile As fire that  
smokes on funeral pile. He who when duty calls him spares No time for  
thought of royal cares, Must with his realm and people all Involved in  
fatal ruin fall. As elephants in terror shrink From the false river's miry  
brink, Thus subjects from a monarch flee Whose face their eyes may seldom  
see, Who spends the hours for toil ordained In evil courses unrestrained.  
He who neglects to guard and hold His kingdom by himself controlled, Sinks  
nameless like a hill whose head Is buried in the ocean's bed.

Thy foes are calm and strong and wise,

Fiends, Gods, and warriors of the skies, --How, heedless, wicked, weak,  
and vain, Wilt thou thy kingly state maintain? Thou, lord of giants, void  
of sense, Slave of each changing influence, Heedless of all that makes a  
king. Destruction on thy head wilt bring. O conquering chief, the prince,  
who boasts, Of treasury and rule and hosts, By others led, though lord of  
all, Is meaner than the lowest thrall. For this are monarchs said to  
be Long-sighted, having power to see Things far away by faithful eyes Of  
messengers and loyal spies. But aid from such thou wilt not seek: Thy  
counsellors are blind and weak, Or thou from these hadst surely known Thy  
legions and thy realm o'erthrown. Know, twice seven thousand, fierce in  
might, Are slain by Ráma in the fight, And they, the giant host who  
led, Khara and Dúshan, both are dead.

Know, Ráma with his conquering arm Has freed the saints from dread of  
harm, Has smitten Janasthán and made Asylum safe in Dandak's shade. Enslaved  
and dull of blinded sight, Intoxicate with vain delight, Thou closest still  
thy heedless eyes To dangers in thy realm that rise. A king besotted, mean,  
unkind, Of niggard hand and slavish mind. Will find no faithful followers  
heed Their master in his hour of need. The friend on whom he most relies, In  
danger, from a monarch flies, Imperious in his high estate, Conceited,  
proud, and passionate; Who ne'er to state affairs attends With wholesome  
fear when woe impends Most weak and worthless as the grass, Soon from his  
sway the realm will pass. For rotting wood a use is found, For clods and  
dust that strew the ground, But when a king has lost his sway, Useless he  
falls, and sinks for aye. As raiment by another worn, As faded garland  
crushed and torn, So is, unthroned, the proudest king, Though mighty once,  
a useless thing. But he who every sense subdues

And each event observant views, Rewards the good and keeps from  
wrong, Shall reign secure and flourish long. Though lulled in sleep his  
senses lie He watches with a ruler's eye, Untouched by favour, ire, and  
hate, And him the people celebrate. O weak of mind, without a trace

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Of virtues that a king should grace, Who hast not learnt from watchful  
spy That low in death the giants lie. Scorned of others, but enchained  
By every base desire,      By thee each duty is disdained      Which time and  
place require.      Soon wilt thou, if thou canst not learn,      Ere yet it  
be too late,      The good from evil to discern,      Fall from thy high  
estate.'      As thus she ceased not to upbraid      The king with cutting  
speech,      And every fault to view displayed,      Naming and marking each,

The monarch of the sons of night,        Of wealth and power possessed,  
And proud of his imperial might,  
      Long pondered in his breast.

Footnotes

268:1 Pulastya is considered as the ancestor of the  
Rakshases or giants, as he is the father of Vis'ravas, the  
father of Rávan and his brethren.

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CANTO XXXIV.: SÛRPANAKHÁ'S  
SPEECH.

Then forth the giant's fury broke  
As Sûrpanakhá harshly spoke. Girt by his lords the demon king  
Looked on her, fiercely questioning:

'Who is this Ráma, whence, and where?

His form, his might, his deeds declare. His wandering steps what purpose  
led To Dandak forest, hard to tread? What arms are his that he could  
smite In fray the rovers of the night And Tris'iras and Dúshan lay Low on  
the earth, and Khara slay? Tell all, my sister, and declare Who maimed thee  
thus, of form most fair.'

Thus by the giant king addressed,  
While burnt her fury unrepressed, The giantess declared at length The  
hero's form and deeds and strength:

'Long are his arms and large his eyes: A black deer's skin his dress  
supplies.

King Das'aratha's son is he, Fair as Kandarpa's self to see. Adorned with  
many a golden band, A bow, like Indra's, arms his hand, And shoots a flood  
of arrows fierce As venom'd snakes to burn and pierce. I looked, I looked,  
but never saw His mighty hand the bowstring draw That sent the deadly  
arrows out, While rang through air his battle-shout. I looked, I looked,  
and saw too well How with that hail the giants fell, As falls to earth the  
golden grain, Struck by the blows of Indra's rain. He fought, and twice  
seven thousand, all Terrific giants, strong and tall, Fell by the pointed  
shafts o'erthrown Which Ráma shot on foot, alone. Three little hours had  
scarcely fled, -- Khara and Dúshan both were dead, And he had freed the  
saints and made Asylum sure in Dandak's shade. Me of his grace the victor  
spared, Or I the giants' fate had shared. The high-souled Ráma would not  
deign His hand with woman's blood to stain. The glorious Lakshman, justly  
dear, In gifts and warrior might his peer, Serves his great brother with  
the whole

Devotion of his faithful soul: Impetuous victor, bold and wise, First in  
each hardy enterprise, Still ready by his side to stand, A second self or  
better hand. And Ráma has a large-eyed spouse, Pure as the moon her cheek  
and brows, Dearer than life in Ráma's sight, Whose happiness is her  
delight. With beauteous hair and nose the dame From head to foot has naught  
to blame. She shines the wood's bright Goddess, Queen Of beauty with her  
noble mien. First in the ranks of women placed Is Sítá of the dainty  
waist. In all the earth mine eyes have ne'er Seen female form so sweetly  
fair. Goddess nor nymph can vie with her, Nor bride of heavenly  
chorister. He who might call this dame his own, Her eager arms about him  
thrown, Would live more blest in Sítá's love Than Indra in the world  
above. She, peerless in her form and face And rich in every gentle grace, Is  
worthy bride, O King, for thee, As thou art meet her lord to be. I even I,  
will bring the bride In triumph to her lover's side --

This beauty fairer than the rest, With rounded limb and heaving  
breast. Each wound upon my face I owe To cruel Lakshman's savage blow. But  
thou, O brother, shalt survey Her moonlike loveliness to-day, And Ráma's  
piercing shafts shall smite Thine amorous bosom at the sight. If in thy  
breast the longing rise To make thine own the beauteous prize. Up, let thy  
better foot begin The journey and the treasure win. If, giant Lord, thy

favouring eyes  
Regard the plan which I advise.  
Up, cast all fear and doubt  
away  
And execute the words I say  
Come, giant King, this treasure seek,  
For thou art strong and they are weak.

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Let Sitá of the faultless frame  
Be borne away and be thy dame.  
Thy host in Janasthán who dwelt  
Forth to the battle hied.  
And by the shafts which Ráma dealt  
They perished in their pride.  
Dúshan and Khara breathe no more,  
Laid low upon the plain.

Arise, and ere the day be o'er  
Take vengeance for the slain.'

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CANTO XXXV.: RÁVAN'S JOURNEY.

When Rávan, by her fury spurred,  
That terrible advice had heard,  
He bade his nobles quit his side,  
And to the work his thought applied.  
He turned his anxious mind to scan  
On every side the hardy plan:  
The gain against the risk he laid,  
Each hope and fear with care surveyed,  
And in his heart at length decreed  
To try performance of the deed.  
Then steady in his dire intent  
The giant to the courtyard went.  
There to his charioteer he cried,  
'Bring forth the car whereon I ride.'  
'Aye ready at his master's word  
The charioteer the order heard.  
And yoked with active zeal the best  
Of chariots at his lord's behest.  
Asses with heads of goblins drew  
That wondrous car where'er it flew.  
Obedient to the will it rolled  
Adorned with gems and glistering gold.  
Then mounting, with a roar as loud  
As thunder from a labouring cloud,  
The mighty monarch to the tide

Of Ocean, lord of rivers, hied.  
White was the shade above him spread,  
White chouris waved around his head,  
And he with gold and jewels bright  
Shone like the glossy lazulite.  
Ten necks and twenty arms had he:  
His royal gear was good to see.  
The heavenly Gods' insatiate foe.  
Who made the blood of hermits flow,  
He like the Lord of Hills appeared  
With ten huge heads to heaven upreared.  
In the great car whereon he rode,  
Like some dark cloud the giant showed,  
When round it in their close array  
The cranes 'mid wreaths of lightning play.  
He looked, and saw, from realms of air,  
The rocky shore of ocean, where  
Unnumbered trees delightful grew  
With flower and fruit of every hue.  
He looked on many a liliated pool  
With silvery waters fresh and cool,  
And shores like spacious altars meet  
For holy hermits' lone retreat,  
The graceful palm adorned the scene,  
The plantain waved her glossy green,  
Where grew the sál and betel, there  
On bending boughs the flowers were fair.  
There hermits dwelt who tamed each sense  
By strictest rule of abstinence:

Gandharvas, Kinnars, 1 thronged the place,  
Nágas and birds of heavenly race.  
Bright minstrels of the ethereal quire,  
And saints exempt from low desire,  
With Ájas, sons of Brahmá's line,  
Maríchipas of seed divine,  
Vaikhánasas and Máshas strayed,  
And Bálakhilyas

2 in the shade.

The lovely nymphs of heaven were there,  
Celestial wreaths confined their hair,  
And to each form new grace was lent  
By wealth of heavenly ornament.  
Well skilled was each in play and dance  
And gentle arts of dalliance.  
The glorious wife of many a God  
Those beautiful recesses trod,  
There Gods and Dánavs, all who eat  
The food of heaven, rejoiced to meet.  
The swan and Sáras thronged each bay  
With curlews, ducks, and divers gay,  
Where the sea spray rose soft and white  
O'er rocks of glossy lazulite.  
As his swift way the fiend pursued  
Pale chariots of the Gods he viewed,  
Bearing each lord whose rites austere  
Had raised him to the heavenly sphere.  
Thereon celestial garlands hung,  
There music played and songs were sung.  
Then bright Gandharvas met his view,  
And heavenly nymphs, as on he flew.  
He saw the sandal woods below,  
And precious trees of odorous flow,  
That to the air around them lent  
Their riches of delightful scent;  
Nor failed his roving eye to mark  
Tall aloë

trees in grove and park. He looked on wood with cassias filled, And plants which balmy sweets distilled, Where her fair flowers the betel showed And the bright pods of pepper glowed. The pearls in many a silvery heap Lay on the margin of the deep. And grey rocks rose amid the red Of coral washed from ocean's bed.

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High soared the mountain peaks that bore Treasures of gold and silver ore, And leaping down the rocky walls Came wild and glorious waterfalls. Fair towns which grain and treasure held, And dames who every gem excelled, He saw outspread beneath him far, With steed, and elephant, and car. That ocean shore he viewed that showed Fair as the blessed Gods' abode Where cool delightful breezes played O'er levels in the freshest shade. He saw a fig-tree like a cloud With mighty branches earthward bowed. It stretched a hundred leagues and made For hermit bands a welcome shade. Thither the feathered king of yore An elephant and tortoise bore, And lighted on a bough to eat The captives of his taloned feet. The bough unable to sustain The crushing weight and sudden strain, Loaded with sprays and leaves of spring Gave way beneath the feathered king. Under the shadow of the tree Dwelt man, a saint and devotee, Ájas, the sons of Brahmá's line, Máshas Maríchipas divine. Vaikhánasas, and all the race Of Bálakhilyas loved the place. But pitying their sad estate The feathered monarch raised the weight Of the huge bough, and bore away The loosened load and captured prey. A hundred leagues away he sped, Then on his monstrous booty fed, And with the bough he smote the lands Where dwell the wild Nisháda bands. High joy was his because his deed From jeopardy the hermits freed. That pride for great deliverance wrought A double share of valour brought. His soul conceived the high emprise To snatch the Amrit from the skies. He rent the nets of iron first, Then through the jewel chamber burst, And bore the drink of heaven away That watched in Indra's palace lay.

Such was the hermit-sheltering tree Which Rávan turned his eye to see. Still marked where Garud sought to rest, The fig-tree bore the name of Blest. When Rávan stayed his chariot o'er The ocean's heart-enchancing shore, He saw a hermitage that stood Sequestered in the holy wood. He saw the fiend Marícha there With deerskin garb, and matted hair Coiled up in hermit guise, who spent His days by rule most abstinent. As guest and host are wont to meet, They met within that lone retreat. Before the king Marícha placed Food never known to human taste. He entertained his guest with meat And gave him water for his feet, And then addressed the giant king With timely words of questioning: 'Lord, is 'it well with thee, and well With those in Lanká's town who dwell? What sudden thought, what urgent need Has brought thee with impetuous speed? The fiend Marícha thus addressed Rávan the king, his mighty guest, And he, well skilled in arts that guide The eloquent, in turn replied:

Footnotes

270:1 Beings with the body of a man and the head of a horse.

270:2 Ájas, Maríchipas, Vaikhánasas, Máshas, and Bálakhilyas are classes of supernatural beings who lead the lives of hermits.

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CANTO XXXVI.: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

'Hear me, Marícha, while I speak,

And tell thee why thy home I seek. Sick and distressed am I, and see My  
surest hope and help in thee. Of Janasthán I need not tell, Where  
Súrpanakhá, Khara dwell, And Dúshan with the arm of might. And Tris'iras,  
the fierce in fight, Who feeds on human flesh and gore, And many noble  
giants more, Who roam in dark of midnight through The forest, brave and  
strong and true. By my command they live at ease And slaughter saints and  
devotees. Those twice seven thousand giants, all Obedient to their  
captain's call, Joying in war and ruthless deeds Follow where mighty Khara  
leads. Those fearless warrior bands who roam Through Janasthán their forest  
home, In all their terrible array Met Ráma in the battle fray. Girt with all  
weapons forth they sped With Khara at the army's head. The front of battle  
Ráma held:

With furious wrath his bosom swelled. Without a word his hate to show He  
launched the arrows from his bow. On the fierce hosts the missiles  
came, Each burning with destructive flame, The twice seven thousand fell  
o'erthrown By him, a man, on foot, alone. Khara the army's chief and  
pride, And Dúshan, fearless warrior, died, And Trisiras the fierce was  
slain, And Dandak wood was free again.

He, banished by his angry sire.

Roams with his wife in mean attire. This wretch, his Warrior tribe's  
disgrace Has slain the best of giant race.

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Harsh, wicked, fierce and greedy-souled, A fool, with senses  
uncontrolled, No thought of duty stirs his breast: He joys to see the world  
distressed. He sought the wood with fair pretence Of truthful life and  
innocence, But his false hand my sister left Mangled, of nose and ears  
bereft. This Ráma's wife who bears the name Of Sítá, in her face and frame  
Fair as a daughter of the skies, -- Her will I seize and bring the  
prize Triumphant from the forest shade: For this I seek thy willing aid If  
thou, O mighty one, wilt lend Thy help and stand beside thy friend, I with  
my brothers may defy All Gods embattled in the sky. Come, aid me now, for  
thine the power To succour in the doubtful hour. Thou art in war and time  
of fear, For heart and hand, without a peer. For thou art skilled in art  
and wile, A warrior brave and trained in guile. With this one hope, this  
only aim, O Rover of the Night, I came. Now let me tell what aid I ask To  
back me in my purposed task. In semblance of a golden deer Adorned with  
silver spots appear. Go, seek his dwelling: in the way Of Ráma and his  
consort stray. Doubt not the lady, when she sees The wondrous deer amid the  
trees, Will bid her lord and Lakshman take The creature for its beauty's  
sake. Then when the chiefs have parted thence, And left her lone, without  
defence, As Ráhu storms the moonlight, I

Will seize the lovely dame and fly. Her lord will waste away and weep For  
her his valour could not keep. Then boldly will I strike the blow And wreak  
my vengeance on the foe.' When wise Márícha heard the tale His heart  
grew faint, his cheek was pale, He stared with open orbs, and tried To  
moisten lips which terror dried, And grief, like death, his bosom rent As  
on the king his look he bent. The monarch's will he strove to stay,  
Distracted with alarm, For well he knew the might that lay In  
Ráma's matchless arm. With suppliant hands Marícha stood And thus  
began to tell His counsel for the tyrant's good, And for his own as  
well.

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CANTO XXXVII.: MÁRÍCHA'S SPEECH.

Márícha gave attentive ear

The ruler of the fiends to hear: Then, trained in all the rules that  
teach The eloquent, began his speech: 'Tis easy task, O King, to  
find Smooth speakers who delight the mind. But they who urge and they who  
do Distasteful things and wise, are few. Thou hast not learnt, by proof  
untaught, And borne away by eager thought, That Ráma, formed for high

emprise, With Varun or with Indra vies. Still let thy people live in peace, Nor let their name and lineage cease, For Ráma with his vengeful hand Can sweep the giants from the land. O, let not Janak's daughter bring Destruction on the giant king. Let not the lady Sítá wake A tempest, on thy head to break. Still let the dame, by care untried, Be happy by her husband's side, Lest swift avenging ruin fall On glorious Lanká, thee, and all. Men such as thou with wills unchained, Advised by sin and unrestrained, Destroy themselves, the king, the state, And leave the people desolate. Ráma, in bonds of duty held, Was never by his sire expelled. He is no wretch of greedy mind, Dishonour of his Warrior kind. Free from all touch of rancorous spite, All creatures' good is his delight. He saw his sire of truthful heart Deceived by Queen Kaikeyí's art, And said, a true and duteous son, 'What thou hast promised shall be done.' To gratify the lady's will, His father's promise to fulfil, He left his realm and all delight For Dandak wood, an anchorite. No cruel wretch, no senseless fool Is Ráma, unrestrained by rule. This groundless charge has ne'er been heard, Nor shouldst thou speak the slanderous word. Ráma in truth and goodness bold Is Virtue's self in human mould, The sovereign of the world confessed As Indra rules among the Blest. And dost thou plot from him to rend The darling whom his arms defend? Less vain the hope to steal away The glory of the Lord of Day.

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O Rávan, guard thee from the fire  
Of vengeful Ráma's kindled ire, -- Each spark a shaft with deadly aim, While bow and falchion feed the flame. Cast not away in hopeless strife Thy realm, thy bliss, thine own dear life. O Rávan of his might beware, A God of Death who will not spare. That bow he knows so well to draw Is the destroyer's flaming jaw, And with his shafts which flash and glow He slays the armies of the foe. Thou ne'er canst win -- the thought forego -- From the safe guard of shaft and bow King Janak's child, the dear delight Of Ráma unapproached in might. The spouse of Raghu's son, confessed Lion of men with lion chest, -- Dearer than life, through good and ill Devoted to her husband's will, The slender-waisted, still must be From thy polluting touches free. Far better grasp with venturous hand The flame to wildest fury fanned. What, King of giants, canst thou gain From this attempt so wild and vain?

If in the fight his eye he bend Upon thee, Lord, thy days must end. So life and bliss and royal sway, Lost beyond hope, will pass away. Summon each lord of high estate, And chief, Vibhíshan 1 to debate.

With peers in lore of counsel tried Consider, reason, and decide Scan strength and weakness, count the cost, What may be gained and what be lost. Examine and compare aright Thy proper power and Ráma's might, Then if thy weal be still thy care. Thou wilt be prudent and forbear. O giant King, the contest shun, Thy force is all too weak The lord of Kosál's mighty son In deadly fray to seek. King of the hosts that rove at night, O hear what I advise: My prudent counsel do not slight; Be patient and be wise.'

Footnotes 273:1 'The younger brother of the giant Rávan; when he and his brother had practiced austerities for a long series of years, Brahmá appeared to offer them boons: Vibhíshana asked that he might never meditate any unrighteousness.... On the death of Rávan Vibhíshana was installed as Rája of Lanká.' GARRETT'S Classical Dictionary of India.

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CANTO XXXVIII.: MÁRÍCHA'S SPEECH.

"Once in my strength and vigour's pride  
I roamed this earth from side to side, And towering like a mountain's crest, A thousand Nágas'

1b might possessed.

Like some vast sable cloud I showed: My golden armlets flashed and  
glowed. A crown I wore, an axe I swayed, And all I met were sore afraid. I  
roved where Dandak wood is spread; On flesh of slaughtered saints I  
fed. Then Vis'vámíttra, sage revered. Holy of heart, my fury feared. To  
Das'aratha's court he sped And went before the king and said:

2b

'With me, my lord, thy Ráma send On holy days his aid to lend. Mārícha  
fills my soul with dread And keeps me sore disquieted.'

The monarch heard the saint's request

And thus the glorious sage addressed: 'My boy as yet in arms untrained  
The age of twelve has scarce attained. But I myself a host will lead To  
guard thee in the hour of need. My host with fourfold troops complete, The  
rover of the night shall meet, And I, O best of saints, will kill Thy  
foeman and thy prayer fulfil.' The king vouchsafed his willing aid: The  
saint again this answer made:

'By Ráma's might, and his alone,

Can this great fiend be overthrown. I know in days of yore the Blest Thy  
saving help in fight confessed. Still of thy famous deeds they tell In  
heaven above, in earth, and hell, A mighty host obeys thy hest: Here let it  
still, I pray thee, rest. Thy glorious son, though yet a boy, Will in the  
fight that fiend destroy. Ráma alone with me shall go: Be happy, victor of  
the foe.'

He spoke: the monarch gave assent,

And Ráma to the hermit lent. So to his woodland home in joy Went  
Vis'vámíttra with the boy. With ready bow the champion stood To guard the  
rites in Dandak wood.

With glorious eyes, most bright to view, Beardless as yet and dark of  
hue; A single robe his only wear, His temples veiled with waving hair,

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Around his neck a chain of gold, He grasped the bow he loved to bold; And  
the young hero's presence made A glory in the forest shade. Thus Ráma with  
his beauteous mien, Like the young rising moon was seen, I, like a cloud  
which tempest brings, My arms adorned with golden rings, Proud of the boon  
which lent me might, Approached where dwelt the anchorite. But Ráma saw me  
venturing nigh, Raising my murderous axe on high; He saw, and fearless of  
the foe, Strung with calm hand his trusty bow By pride of conscious  
strength beguiled, I scorned him as a feeble child, And rushed with an  
impetuous bound On Vis'vámíttra's holy ground. A keen swift shaft he pointed  
well, The foeman's rage to check and quell, And hurled a hundred leagues  
away Deep in the ocean waves I lay.

He would not kill, but, nobly brave, My forfeit life he chose to save. So  
there I lay with wandering sense Dazed by that arrow's violence. Long in  
the sea I lay: at length Slowly returned my sense and strength, And rising  
from my watery bed To Lanká's town again I sped. Thus was I spared, but all  
my band Fell slain by Ráma's conquering hand, -- A boy, untrained in warrior  
skill, Of iron arm and dauntless will. If thou with Ráma still, in spite Of  
warning and of prayer, wilt fight, I see terrific woes impend, And dire  
defeat thy days will end. Thy giants all will feel the blow And share the  
fatal overthrow, Who love the taste of joy and play, The banquet and the  
festal day. Thine eyes will see destruction take Thy Lanká, lost for Sitá's  
sake, And stately pile and palace fall With terrace, dome, and jewelled  
wall. The good will die: the crime of kings Destruction on the people  
brings: The sinless die, as in the lake The fish must perish with the  
snake. The prostrate giants thou wilt see

Slain for this folly wrought by thee, Their bodies bright with precious  
scent And sheen of heavenly ornament; Or so the remnant of thy train Seek  
refuge far, when help is vain And with their wives, or widowed, fly To  
every quarter of the sky; Thy mournful eyes, where'er they turn, Will see  
thy stately city burn, When royal homes with fire are red,

And arrowy nets around are spread.

A sin that tops all sins in shameIs outrage to another's dame,A thousand  
wives thy palace fill,And countless beauties wait thy will.O rest  
contented with thine own,Nor let thy race be overthrown.If thou, O King,  
hast still delightIn rank and wealth and power and might,In noble wives,  
in troops of friends,In all that royal state attends,I warn thee, cast  
not all away,Nor challenge Ráma to the fray.If deaf to every friendly  
prayer, Thou still wilt seek the strife,And from the side of Ráma tear  
His lovely Maithil wife,Soon will thy life and empire end

Destroyed by Ráma's bow,And thou, with kith and kin and friend,To  
Yama'a realm must go.'

Footnotes

273:1b Serpent-gods.

273:2b See p. 33.

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CANTO XXXIX.: MÁRÍCHA'S SPEECH.

'I told thee of that dreadful day

When Ráma smote and spared to slay.Now hear me, Rávan, while I tellWhat  
in the after time befell.At length, restored to strength and pride,I and  
two mighty fiends besideAssumed the forms of deer and strayedThrough  
Dandak wood in lawn and glade,I reared terrific horns: beneathWere  
flaming tongue and pointed teeth.I roamed where'er my fancy led,And on  
the flesh of hermits fed,In sacred haunt, by hallowed tree,Where'er the  
ritual fires might be.A fearful shape, I wandered throughThe wood, and  
many a hermit slew.With ruthless rage the saints I killedWho in the grove  
their tasks fulfilled.When smitten to the earth they sank,Their flesh I  
ate, their blood I drank,And with my cruel deeds dismayedAll dwellers in  
the forest shade,Spoiling their rites in bitter hate,With human blood  
inebriate.Once in the wood I chanced to see  
Ráma again, a devotee,A hermit, fed on scanty fare,Who made the good of  
all his care.His noble wife was by his side,And Lakshman in the battle  
tried.In senseless pride I scorned the mightOf that illustrious  
anchorite,And heedless of a hermit foe,Recalled my earlier overthrow.

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I charged him in my rage and scornTo slay him with my pointed horn,In  
heedless haste, to fury wroughtAs on my former wounds I thought.Then from  
the mighty bow he drewThree foe-destroying arrows flew,Keen-pointed,  
leaping from the string:Swift as the wind or feathered king.Dire shafts,  
on flesh of foemen fed,Like rushing thunderbolts they sped.With knots  
well smoothed and barbs well bent,Shot e'en as one, the arrows went.But I  
who Ráma's might had felt,And knew the blows the hero dealt,Escaped by  
rapid flight. The twoWho lingered on the spot, he slew.I fled from mortal  
danger, freed

From the dire shaft by timely speed.Now to deep thought my days I  
give,And as a humble hermit live.In every shrub, in every treeI view that  
noblest devotee.In every knotted trunk I markHis deerskin and his coat of  
bark,And see the bow-armed Ráma standLike Yama with his noose in hand.I  
tell thee Rávan, in my frightA thousand Rámas mock my sight,This wood  
with every bush and boughSeems all one fearful Ráma now.Throughout the  
grove there is no spotSo lonely where I see him not.He haunts me in my  
dreams by night,And wakes me with the wild affright.The letter that  
begins his nameSends terror through my startled frame.The rapid cars  
whereon we ride,The rich rare jewels, once my pride,Have names

1 that strike upon mine ear

With hated sound that counsels fear.His mighty strength too well I  
know,Nor art thou match for such a foe.Too strong were Raghus's son in  
fightFor Namu\*chi or Bali's might.Then Ráma to the battle dare,Or else be  
patient and forbear;



But, wouldst thou see me live in peace, Let mention of the hero cease. The good whose holy lives were spent In deepest thought, most innocent. With all their people many a time Have perished through another's crime. So in the common ruin, I must for another's folly die, Do all thy strength and courage can. But ne'er will I approve the plan. For he, in might supremely great,

The giant world could extirpate,

Since, when impetuous Khara sought The grove of Janasthán and fought For Súrpanakhá's sake, he died By Ráma's hand in battle tried. How has he wronged thee? Soothly swear, And Ráma's fault and sin declare. I warn thee, and my words are wise, I seek thy people's weal: But if this rede thou wilt despise. Nor hear my last appeal, Thou with thy kin and all thy friends In fight this day wilt die, When his great bow the hero bends, And shafts unerring fly. Footnotes

275:1 The Sanskrit words for car and jewels begin with ra.

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CANTO XL.: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

But Rávan scorned the rede he gave

In timely words to warn and save, E'en as the wretch who hates to live Rejects the herb the leeches give. By fate to sin and ruin spurred, That sage advice the giant heard, Then in reproaches hard and stern Thus to Márícha spoke in turn: 'Is this thy counsel, weak and base, Unworthy of thy giant race? Thy speech is fruitless, vain, thy toil Like casting seed on barren soil. No words of thine shall drive me back From Ráma and the swift attack. A fool is he, inured to sin. And more, of human origin. The craven, at a woman's call To leave his sire, his mother, all The friends he loved, the power and sway. And hasten to the woods away! But now his anger will I rouse, Stealing away his darling spouse. I in thy sight will ravish her From Khara's cruel murderer. Upon this plan my soul is bent,

And naught shall move my firm intent, Not if the way through demons led And Gods with Indra at their head. 'Tis thine, when questioned, to explain The hope and fear, the loss and gain, And, when thy king thy thoughts would know, The triumph or the danger show. A prudent counsellor should wait, And speak when ordered in debate, With hands uplifted, calm and meek, If honour and reward he seek. Or, when some prudent course he sees Which, spoken, may his king displease

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He should by hints of dexterous art His counsel to his lord impart. But prudent words are said in vain When the blunt speech brings grief and pain. A high-souled king will scarcely thank The man who shames his royal rank. Five are the shapes that kings assume, Of majesty, of grace, and gloom: Like Indra now, or Agni, now Like the dear Moon, with placid brow: Like mighty Varun now they show, Now fierce as He who rules below. O giant, monarchs lofty-souled

Are kind and gentle, stern and bold, With gracious love their gifts dispense And swiftly punish each offence. Thus subjects should their rulers view With all respect and honour due. But folly leads thy heart to slight Thy monarch and neglect his right. Thou hast in lawless pride addressed With bitter words thy royal guest. I asked thee not my strength to scan, Or [\*] and profit in the plan. I only spoke to tell the deed O mighty one, by me decreed, And bid thee in the peril lend Thy succour in support thy friend. Hear me again, and I will tell How thou canst aid my venture well. In semblance of a golden deer Adorned with silver drops, appear: And near the cottage in the way Of Ráma and his consort stray. Draw nigh, and wandering through the brake With thy strange form her fancy take. The Maithil dame with wondering eyes Will took upon thy fair disguise, And quickly bid her husband go And bring the deer that charms her

so, When Raghu's son has left the place, Still pressing onward in the chase,

Cry out, 'O Lakshman! Ah, mine own!' With voice resembling Ráma's tone. When Lakshman hears his brother's cry, Impelled by Sitá he will fly, Restless with eager love, to aid The hunter in the distant shade. When both her guards have left her side, Even as Indra, thousand-eyed, Clasps Sachi, will I bear away The Maithil dame an easy prey. When thou, my friend, this aid hast lent, Go where thou wilt and live content. True servant, faithful to thy vow, With [\*half?] my realm I thee endow. Go forth, may luck thy way attend That leads thee to the happy end. [I:ii m.,ir v], will quickly be

In Dandak wood, and follow thee.

So will I cheat this Ráma's eyes And win without a blow the prize; And safe return to Lanká's town With thee, my friend, this day shall crown. But if thou wilt not aid my will, My band this day thy blood shall spill. Yea, thou must share the destined task, For force will take the help I ask. No bliss that rebel's life attends Whose stubborn will his lord offends.

Thy life, if thou the task assay, jeopardy may stand; Oppose me, and this very day Thou diest by this hand. Now ponder all that thou hast heard Within thy prudent breast: Reflect with care on every word, And do what seems the best.'

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CANTO XLI.: MÁRÍCHA'S REPLY.

Against his judgment sorely pressed

By his imperious lord's behest, Mārīcha threats of death defied And thus with bitter words replied: 'Ah, who, my King, with sinful thought This wild and wicked counsel taught, By which destruction soon will fall On thee, thy sons, thy realm and all? Who is the guilty wretch who sees With envious eye thy blissful ease, And by this plan, so falsely shown, Death's gate for thee has open thrown! With souls impelled by mean degire Thy foes against thy life conspire. They urge thee to destruction's brink, And gladly would they see thee sink. Who with base thought to work thee woe This fatal road has dared to show, And, triumph in his wicked eye, Would see thee enter io and die! To all thy counsellors, untrue, The punishment of death is due, Who see thee tempt the dangerous way, Nor strain each nerve thy foot to stay. Wise lords, whose king, by passion led, The path of sin begins to tread, Restrain him while there yet is time: But thine, -- they see nor heed the crime. These by their master's will obtain Mirit and fame and joy and gain. "Tis only by their master's grace That servaits hold their lofty place. But when tbc monarch stoops to sin They lose each joy they strive to win, And all the people people high and low Fall in the common overthrow.

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Merit and fame and honour spring, Best of the mighty, from the king. So all should strive with heart and will To keep the king from every ill. Pride, violence, and sullen hate Will ne'er maintain a monarch's state, And those who cruel deeds advise Must perish when their master dies, Like drivers with their cars o'erthrown In places rough with root and stone. The good whose holy lives were spent On duty's highest laws intent, With wives and children many a time Have perished for another's crime. Hapless are they whose sovereign lord,

Opposed to all, by all abhorred, Is cruel-hearted, harsh, severe: Thus might a jackal tend the deer. Now all the giant race await, Destroyed by thee, a speedy fate, Ruled by a king so cruel-souled, Foolish in heart and uncontrolled. Think not I fear the sudden blow That threatens now to lay me low: I mourn the ruin that I see Impending o'er thy host and thee. Me first perchance will Ráma kill, But soon his hand thy blood will spill. I die, and if by Ráma slain And not by thee, I count it gain. Soon as the hero's face I see His angry eyes will murder me, And if on her thy hands thou

layThy friends and thou are dead this day.If with my help thou still must  
dareThe lady from her lord to tear,Farewell to all our days are  
o'er,Lanká and giants are no more.In vain, in vain, an earnest friend,  
I warn thee, King, and pray. Thou wilt not to my prayers attend, Or  
heed the words I say So men when life is fleeting fast And death's  
sad hour is nigh,

Heedless and blinded to the last Reject advice and die.'

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CANTO XLII.: MÁRÍCHA TRANSFORMED.

Márícha thus in wild unrest

With bitter words the king addressed.Then to his giant lord in  
dread,'Arise, and let us go,' he said.'Ah, I have met that mighty  
lordArmed with his shafts and bow and sword,And if again that bow he  
bendOur lives that very hour will end.

For none that warrior can provoke

And think to fly his deadly stroke.Like Yama with his staff is he,And his  
dread hand will slaughter thee.What can I more? My words can findNo  
passage to thy stubborn mind.I go, great King, thy task to share,And my  
success attend thee there.' With that reply and bold consentThe giant  
king was well content.He strained Márícha to his breastAnd thus with  
joyful words addressed:'There spoke a hero dauntless still,Obedient to  
his master's will,Márícha's proper self once more:Some other took thy  
shape before.

Come, mount my jewelled car that flies.Will-governed, through the  
yielding skies,These asses, goblin-faced, shall bearUs quickly through  
the fields of air.Attract the lady with thy shape,Then through the wood,  
at will, escape.And I, when she has no defence,Will seize the dame and  
bear her thence.Again Márícha made reply,Consent and will to signify.With  
rapid speed the giants twoFrom the calm hermit dwelling flew,Borne in  
that wondrous chariot, meetFor some great God's celestial seat.They from  
their airy path looked downOn many a wood and many a town,On lake and  
river, brook and rill,City and realm and towering hill.Soon he whom giant  
hosts obeyed,Márícha by his side, surveyedThe dark expanse of Dandak  
woodWhere Ráma s hermit cottage stood.They left the flying car,  
whereonThe wealth of gold and jewels shone,And thus the giant king  
addressedMárícha as his hand he pressed: 'Márícha, look! before our  
eyesRound Ráma's home the plantains rise.His hermitage is now in view:  
Quick to the work we came to do!' Thus Rávan spoke, Márícha  
heardObedient to his master's word,Threw off his giant shape and nearThe  
cottage strayed a beauteous deer.With magic power, by rapid change.His  
borrowed form was fair and strange.A sapphire tipped each horn with  
light;His face was black relieved with white.The turkis and the ruby  
shedA glory from his ears and head.His arching neck was proudly  
raised,And lazuares\* beneath it blazed.With roseate bloom his flanks were  
dyed,And lotus tints adorned his hide.His shape was fair\*, compact\*, and  
slight;

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His hoofs--were carven lazulite.His tail with every changing  
glowDisplayed the hues of Indra's bow.With glossy skin so strangely  
flecked,With tints of every gem bedecked.A light o'er Ráma's home he  
sent,And through the wood, where'er he went.The giant clad in that  
strange dressThat took the soul with loveliness,To charm the fair  
Videhan's eyes

With mingled wealth of mineral dyes,Moved onward, cropping in his way,The  
grass and grain and tender spray,His coat with drops of silver bright,A  
form to gaze on with delight,He raised his fair neck as he wentTo browse  
on bud and filament.Now in the Cassia grove he strayed,Now by the cot in  
plantains' shade.Slowly and slowly on he cameTo catch the glances of the  
dame,And the tall deer of splendid hueShone full at length in Sítá's

view. He roamed where'er his fancy chose Where Ráma's leafy cottage  
rose. Now near, now far, in careless ease, He came and went among the  
trees. Now with light feet he turned to fly, Now, reassured, again drew  
nigh: Now gambolled close with leap and bound, Now lay upon the grassy  
ground: Now sought the door, devoid of fear, And mingled with the troop of  
deer; Led them a little way, and thence Again returned with confidence. Now  
flying far, now turning back Emboldened on his former track, Seeking to win  
the lady's glance He wandered through the green expanse.

Then thronging round, the woodland deer Gazed on his form with wondering  
fear; A while they followed where he led, Then snuffed the tainted gale and  
fled. The giant, though he longed to slay The startled quarry, spared the  
prey, And mindful of the shape he wore To veil his nature, still  
forbore. Then Sítá of the glorious eye, Returning from her task drew  
nigh; For she had sought the wood to bring Each loveliest flower of early  
spring. Now would the bright-eyed lady choose Some gorgeous bud with  
blending hues, Now plucked the mango's spray, and now The bloom from an  
As'oka bough. She with her beauteous form, unmeet For woodland life and  
lone retreat, That wondrous dappled deer beheld Gemmed with rich pearls,  
unparalleled, His silver hair the lady saw, His radiant teeth and lips and  
jaw,

And gazed with rapture as her eyes

Expanded in their glad surprise. And when the false deer's glances fell On  
her whom Ráma loved so well, He wandered here and there, and cast A  
luminous beauty as he passed;

And Janak's child with strange delight Kept gazing on the unwonted sight.

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CANTO XLIIII.: THE WONDROUS DEER.

She stooped, her hands with flowers to fill,

But gazed upon the marvel still: Gazed on its back and sparkling side Where  
silver hues with golden vied. Joyous was she of faultless mould, With  
glossy skin like polished gold. And loudly to her husband cried And bow-  
armed Lakshman by his side: Again, again she called in glee: 'O come this  
glorious creature see; Quick, quick, my lord, this deer to view. And bring  
thy brother Lakshman too.' As through the wood her clear tones rang, Swift  
to her side the brothers sprang. With eager eyes the grove they  
scanned, And saw the deer before them stand. But doubt was strong in  
Lakshman's breast, Who thus his thought and fear expressed: 'Stay, for  
the wondrous deer we see The fiend Márícha's self may be. Ere now have  
kings who sought this place To take their pastime in the chase, Met from  
his wicked art defeat, And fallen slain by like deceit. He wears, well  
trained in magio guile,

The figure of a deer a while, Bright as the very sun, or place Where dwell  
the gay Gaudharya race. No deer, O Ráma, e'er was seen Thus decked with  
gold und jewels' sheen. 'Tis magic, for the world has ne'er, Lord of the  
world, shown aught so fair.' But Sítá of the lovely smile, A captive to  
the giant's wile, Turned Lakshman's prudent speech aside And thus with  
eager words replied: Mv honoured lord, this deer I see With beauty rare  
enraptures me. Go, chief of mighty arm, and bring For my delight this  
precious thing. Fair creatures of the woodland roam Untroubled near our  
hermit home. The forest cow and stag are there, The fawn, the monkey, and  
the bear, Where spotted deer delight to play,

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And strong and beauteous Kinnars 1 stray.

But never, as they wandered by, Has such a beauty charmed mine eye As this  
with limbs so fair and slight, So gentle, beautiful and bright. O see, how  
fair it is to view

With jewels of each varied hue: Bright as the rising moon it  
glows, Lighting the wood where'er it goes. Ah me, what form and grace are  
there! Its limbs how fine, its hues how fair! Transcending all that words

express, It takes my soul with loveliness. O, if thou would, to please me,  
strive To take the beauteous thing alive, How thou wouldst gaze with  
wondering eyes Delighted on the lovely prize! And when our woodland life is  
o'er, And we enjoy our realm once more, The wondrous animal will grace The  
chambers of my dwelling-place, And a dear treasure will it be To Bharat and  
the queens and me, And all with rapture and amaze Upon its heavenly form  
will gaze. But if the beauteous deer, pursued, Thine arts to take it still  
elude, Strike it, O chieftain, and the akin Will be a treasure, laid  
within. O, how I long my time to pass Sitting upon the tender grass, With  
that soft fell beneath me spread Bright with its hair of golden  
thread! This strong desire, this eager will, Befits a gentle lady ill:  
But when I first beheld, its look My breast with fascination took. See,  
golden hair its flank adorns, And sapphires tip its branching  
horns. Resplendent as the lunar way, Or the first blush of opening day, With  
graceful form and radiant hue It charmed thy heart, O chieftain, too.'  
He heard her speech with willing ear, He looked again upon the deer. Its  
lovely shape his breast beguiled Moved by the prayer of Janak's child, And  
yielding for her pleasure's sake, To Lakshman Ráma turned and spake:  
'Mark, Lakshman, mark how Sítá's breast With eager longing is  
possessed. To-day this deer of wondrous breed Must for his passing beauty  
bleed, Brighter than e'er in Nandan strayed, Or Chaitraratha's heavenly  
shade.

How should the groves of earth possess  
Such all-surpassing loveliness! The hair lies smooth and bright and  
fine, Or waves upon each curving line, And drops of living gold bedeck The  
beauty of his side and neck. O look, his crimson tongue between His teeth  
like flaming fire is seen,  
Flashing, when e'er his lips he parts, As from a cloud the lightning  
darts. O see his sunlike forehead shine With emerald tints and  
almandine, While pearly light and roseate glow Of shells adorn his neck  
below. No eye on such a deer can rest But soft enchantment takes the  
breast: No man so fair a thing behold Ablaze with light of radiant  
gold. Celestial, bright with jewels' sheen, Nor marvel when his eyes have  
seen, A king equipped with bow and shaft Delights in gentle forest  
craft, And as in boundless woods he strays The quarry for the venison  
slays. There as he wanders with his train A store of wealth he oft may  
gain. He claims by right the precious ore. He claims the jewels' sparkling  
store. Such gains are dearer in his eyes Than wealth that in his chamber  
lies. The dearest things his spirit knows, Dear as the bliss which Sukra  
chose. But oft the rich expected gain Which heedless men pursue in vain. The  
sage, who prudent counsels know, Explain and in a moment show. This best of  
deer, this gem of all,  
To yield his precious spoils must fall, And tender Sítá by my side Shall  
sit upon the golden hide. Ne'er could I find so rich a coat On spotted deer  
or sheep or goat. No buck or antelope has such, So bright to view, so soft  
to touch. This radiant deer and one on high That moves in glory through the  
sky, Alike in heavenly beauty are, One on the earth and one a star. But,  
brother, if thy fears be true, And this bright creature that we view Be  
fierce Márícha in disguise, Then by this hand he surely dies. For that dire  
fiend who spurns control With bloody hand and cruel soul, Has roamed this  
forest and dismayed The holiest saints who haunt the shade. Great archers,  
sprung of royal race. Pursuing in the wood the chase, Have fallen by his  
wicked art, And now my shaft shall strike his heart. Vátápi, by his magic  
power

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Made heedless saints his flesh devour, Then, from within their frames he  
rent

Forth bursting from imprisonment, But once his art in senseless pride Upon  
the mightiest saint he tried, Agastya's self, and caused him taste The  
baited meal before him placed. Vátápi, when the rite\* was o'er, Would take

the giant form he wore, But Saint Agastya knew his wile And checked the  
giant with smile 'Vatápi, thou with cruel spite Hast conquered many an  
achorite The noblest of the Brahman ask\*--And now thy ruin comes at  
last 'Now if my power he thus defies, This giant, like Vatápi dies, Daring  
to scorn a man like me, A self subduing devotee. Yea, as Agastya slew the  
foe, My hand shall lay Mancha low Clad in thine arms thy bow in hand, To  
guard the Maithil lady stand, With watchful eye and thoughtful  
breast Keeping each word of my behest I go, and hunting through the  
brake This wondrous deer will bring or take. Yea surely I will bring the  
spoil Returning from my hunter's toil See, Lakshman how my contort's  
eyes Are longing for the lovely prize  
This day it falls, that I may win The treasure of so fair a skin. Do thou  
and Sítá watch with care Lest danger seize you unaware. Swift from my bow  
one shaft will fly; The stricken deer will fall and die Then quickly will I  
stop the game And bring the trophy to my dame. Jatavus, guardian good  
and wise, Our old and faithful friend, The best and strongest bird  
that flies, His willing aid will lend The Maithil lady well  
protect, For every chance provide, And in thy tender care suspect  
A foe on every side.

Footnotes

279:1 A race of beings of human shape but with the  
heads of horses, like centaurs reversed.

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CANTO XLIV: ARTCHA'S DEATH

Thus having warned his brother hold

He grasped his sword with \* gold\* And followed with the \*\*\* in went His wr\*  
\*ght and \*Then \*And \*Soon \*The \*

A while with trembling heart he fled,

The \* and showed his stately head. With sword and bow the chief  
pursued Where'or the fleeing deer he viewed Sending\* from dell\* and lone  
recess The splendid \*\* his loveliness Now full in view the creature  
stood Now vanished in the depth of wood; Now running with a languid  
flight, Now like a meteor lost to sight. With trembling limbs away he  
sped; Then like the moon with clouds o'erspread Gleamed for a moment bright  
between The trees, and was again unseen Thus in the magic deer's  
disguise Mancha lured him to the prize,

And seen a while, then lost to view, Far from his cot the hero drew. Still  
by the flying game deceived The hunter's heart was wroth and grieved, And  
wearied with the fruitless chase He stayed him in a shady place. Again the  
river of the night\*ged the chieftain\* full in sight, Slow moving in the  
coppice near, Surrounded by the woodland deer Again the hunter sought the  
game That seemed a while to court his aim: But seized again with sudden  
dread, Beyond his sight the creature fled. Again the hero left the  
shade, Again the deer before him strayed. With surer hope and stronger  
will The hunter longed his prey to kill. Then as his soul impatient grew, An  
arrow from his side he drew, Besplendent at the sunbeam's glow, The crusher  
of the smitten foe, With skillful bead the mighty lord Fixed well shaft and  
strained the cord. Upon the deer his eyes he bent, And like a fiery \*\*  
went The arrow Brahma's self had framed, Alive with sparks that hissed and  
flamed, Like Indra's flashing levin, true

To the false deer the missile flew Cleaving his flesh that wonderous  
dart Stood quivering in Mancha's heart. Scarce from the ground one foot he  
sprang, Then stricken fell with deadly pang. Ha\* \*\*, as he pressed\* the  
ground, He gave a roar of awful sound And \*e the wounded giant died He threw  
his borrowed form aside Remembering still his lord's behest He pondered in  
his heart how best Sítá's plight \*\* \*\* guard away, And Ravan seize the  
helpless prey The monster knew the time was nigh. And called aloud with  
eager cry, 'Hi\*, Sítá, Lakshman\* and the tone

He borrowed was like Ráma's own     So by that matchless arrow cleft,The  
deer's bright form Mārīcha left,Resumed his giant shape and sizeAnd  
closed in death his languid eyesWhen Ráma saw his awful foeGasp, smeared  
with blood, in deadly throe,His anxious thoughts to Sítá sped,And the  
wise words that Lakshman said,That this was false Mārīcha's art,  
Returned again upon his heart.He knew the foe he triumphed o'erThe name  
of great Mārīcha bore.'The fiend,' he pondered, 'ere has died,'Ho  
Lakshman! ho, my Sítá!' criedAh, if that cry has reached her ear,How dire  
must be my darling's fear!And Lakshman of the mighty arm,What thinks he  
in his wild alarm?As thus he thought in sad surmise,Each startled hair  
began to rise,And when he saw the giant slainAnd thought upon that cry  
again,His spirit sank and terror pressedFull sorely on the hero's  
breastAnother deer he chased and struck.He bore away the the fallen  
puck,To Janasthán then turned his faceAnd hastened to his dwelling place.  
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#### CANTO XLV.: LAKSHMAN'S

##### DEPARTURE.

But Sítá hearing as she thought,  
Her husband's cry with anguish fraught.Called to her guardian, 'Lakshman,  
runAnd in the wood seek Raghu's son.Scarce can my heart retain its  
throne,Scarce can my life be called mine own,Assail my powers and senses  
failAt that long loud and bitter wail.Haste to the wood with all thy  
speedAnd save thy brother in his needGo, save him in the distant  
gladeWhere loud he calls, for timely aid.He \* beneath some giant foe,A \*  
whom \* overthrown'     \* to her prayer,\* step he stirredObedient to his  
mother's wordT \* Janak's child, with inflamed,\* scorn \*     Sumitrá's son,  
a friend \*\* they brother's foeW\* at such \*\* and neglect \*\* Lakshman, \* of  
me

\* couldst see,\* thy \*\* thy feet so \*  
Thou hast no love for Ráma, no  
Thy joy is vice thy thoughts are lowHence thus unmoved thou yet canst  
stayWhile my dear lord is far away.If aught of ill my lord betideWho led  
thee here, thy chief and guideAh what will be my hapless fateLeft in the  
wild wood desolate!'     Thus spoke the lady sad with fear.With many a sigh  
and many a tear,Still trembling like a captured doe:And Lakshman spoke to  
calm her woe: 'Videhan Queen, be sure of this,--And at the thought thy  
fear dismiss,--Thy husband's mightier power defiesAll Gods and angels of  
the skies,Gandharvas, and the sons of light,Serpents, and rovers of the  
nightI tell thee, of the sons of earth,Of Gods who boast celestial  
birth,Of beasts and birds and giant hosts,Of demigods, Gandharvas  
ghosts,Of awful fiends, O thou most fair,There lives not one whose heart  
would dareTo meet thy Ráma in the fight,  
Like Indra's self unmatched in might.Such idle words thou must not sayThy  
Ráma lives whom none may slay.I will not, cannot leave thee hereIn the  
wild wood till he be near.The mightiest strength can ne'er withstandHis  
eager force, his vigorous hand.No, not the triple world alliedWith all  
the immortal Gods beside.Dismiss thy fear, again take heart,Let all thy  
doubt and woe depart.Thy lord, be sure, will soon be hereAnd bring thee  
back that best of deer,Not his, not his that mournful cry,Nor haply came  
it from the sky.Some giant's art was busy thereAnd framed a castle based  
on airA precious pledge art thou, consignedTo me by him of noblest  
mind,Nor can I fairest dame, forsakeThe pledge which Ráma bade me  
take.Upon our heads, O Queen, we drewThe giants' hate when Ráma slewTheir  
chieftain Khara, and the shadeOf Janasthán in ruin laid.Through all this  
mighty wood they roveWith varied cries from grove to groveOn \* bent they  
wander here.But O dismiss thy causeless fear.'

Bright flashed her eye as Lashman spokeAnd forth her words of fury  
brokeUpon her truthful guardian, flungWith bitter taunts that pierced and

stung; 'Shame on such false compassion, base\* of thy glorious race!'  
joyous sight I ween to thee

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My lord in direst strait to see. Thou knowest Ráma sore bested, Or word  
like this thou ne'er hadst said. No marvel if we find such sin In rivals  
false to kith and kin. Wretches like thee of evil kind, Concealing crime  
with crafty mind. Thou, wretch, thine aid wilt still deny, And leave my  
lord alone to die. Has love of me unnerved thy hand, Or Bharat's art this  
ruin planned? But be the treachery his or thine, In vain, in vain the base  
design. For how shall I, the chosen bride Of dark-hued Ráma, lotus-eyed, The  
queen who once called Ráma mine, To love of other men decline? Believe me,  
Lakshman, Ráma's wife Before thine eyes will quit this life,  
And not a moment will she stay If her dear lord have passed away.' The  
lady's bitter speech, that stirred Each hair upon his frame, he heard. With  
lifted hands together laid, His calm reply he gently made: 'No words  
have I to answer now: My deity, O Queen, art thou. But 'tis no marvel,  
dame, to find Such lack of sense in womankind. Throughout this world, O  
Maithil dame, Weak women's hearts are still the same. Inconstant, urged by  
envious spite, They sever friends and hate the right. I cannot brook,  
Videhan Queen, Thy words intolerably keen. Mine ears thy fierce reproaches  
pain As boiling water seethes the brain. And now to bear me witness all The  
dwellers in the wood I call, That, when with words of truth I plead, This  
harsh reply is all my meed. Ah, woe is thee! Ah, grief, that still Eager to  
do my brother's will, Mourning thy woman's nature, I Must see thee doubt my  
truth and die. I fly to Ráma's side, and Oh, May bliss attend thee while I  
go! May all attendant wood-gods screen

Thy head from harm, O large-eyed Queen And though dire omens meet my  
sight And fill my soul with wild affright, May I return in peace and see The  
son of Raghu safe with thee!' The child of Janak heard him speak, And  
the hot tear-drops down her cheek, Increasing to a torrent, ran, Aa thus  
once more the dame began: 'O Lakshman, if I widowed be Godávan's\*\* flood  
shall cover me, Or I will die by cord, or leap, Life weary, from yon rocky  
steep;

Or deadly poison will I drink,  
Or 'neath the kindled flames will sink, But never, reft of Ráma,  
can Consent to touch a meaner man.' The Maithil dame with many sighs, And  
torrents pouring from her eyes, The faithful Lakshman thus addressed, And  
smote her hands upon her breast. Sumitrá's son, o'erwhelmed by fears,  
Looked on the large-eyed queen: He saw that flood of burning tears,  
He saw that piteous mien. He yearned sweet comfort to afford, He  
strove to soothe her pain But to the brother of her lord

She spoke no word again. His reverent hands once more he raised,  
His head he slightly bent, Upon her face he sadly gazed, And then  
toward Ráma went.

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CANTO XLVI.: THE GUEST.

The angry Lakshman scarce could brook  
Her bitter words, her furious look. With dark forebodings in his breast To  
Ráma's side he quickly pressed. Then ten necked Rávan saw the  
time Propitious for his purposed crime. A mendicant in guise he came And  
stood before the Maithil dame. His garb was red, with tufted hair And  
sandalled feet a shade he bare, And from the fiend's left shoulder slung A  
staff and water-vessel hung. Near to the lovely dame he drew, While both  
the chiefs were far from view, As darkness takes the evening air When  
neither sun nor moon is there. He bent his eye upon the dame, A princess  
fair, of spotless fame: So might some baleful planet be Near Moon-forsaken  
Rohini.



As the fierce tyrant nearer drew, The trees in Janasthán that grew Waved  
not a leaf for fear and woe, And the hushed wind forbore to  
blow. Godávarí's waters as they fled,  
Saw his fierce eye-balls flashing red, And from each swiftly-gliding wave A  
melancholy murmur gave. Then Rávan, when his eager eye Beheld the longed-  
for moment nigh, In mendicant's apparel dressed Near to the Maithil lady  
pressed.

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In holy guise, a fiend abhorred, He found her mourning for her lord. Thus  
threatening draws S'anis'char

1 nigh

To Chitrá 2 in the evening sky:

Thus the deep well by grass concealed Yawns treacherous in the verdant  
field. He stood and looked upon the dame Of Ráma, queen of spotless  
fame With her bright teeth and each fair limb Like the full moon she seemed  
to him, Sitting within her leafy cot. Weeping for woe that left her  
not. Thus, while with joy his pulses beat, He saw her in her lone  
retreat, Eyed like the lotus, fair to view In bilken robes of amber  
hue. Pierced to the core by Káma's dart He murmured texts with lying  
art, And questioned with a soft address

The lady in her loneliness. The fiend essayed with gentle speech The heart  
of that fair dame to reach, Pride of the worlds, like Beauty's  
Queen Without her darling lotus seen: 'O thou whose silken robes enfold A  
form more rare than finest gold, With lotus garland on thy head, Like a  
sweet spring with bloom o'erspread, Who art thou, fair one, what thy  
name, Beauty, or Honour, Fortune, Fame, Spirit, or nymph, or Queen of  
love Descended from thy home above? Bright as the dazzling jasmine shine Thy  
small square teeth in level line. Like two black stars aglow with  
light Thine eyes are large and pure and bright. Thy charms of smile and  
teeth and hair And winning eyes, O thou most fair, Steal all my spirit, as  
the flow Of rivers mines the bank below. How bright, how fine each flowing  
trees! How firm those orbs beneath thy dress! That dainty waist with ease  
were spanned, Sweet lady, by a lover's hand. Mine eyes, O beauty, ne'er  
have seen Goddess or nymph so fair of mien, Or bright Gandharva's heavenly  
dame, Or woman of so perfect frame.

In youth's soft prime thy years are few, And earth has naught so fair to  
view. I marvel one like thee in face Should make the woods her dwelling-  
place. Leave, lady, leave this lone retreat In forest wilds for thee  
unmeet, Where giants fierce and strong assume All shapes and wander in the  
gloom. These dainty feet were formed to tread

Some palace floor with carpets spread,

Or wander in trim gardens where Each opening bud perfumes the air The  
richest robe thy form should deck, The rarest gems adorn thy neck. The  
sweetest wreath should bind thy hair, The noblest lord thy bed should  
share. Art thou akin, O fair of form, To Rudras,

1b or the Gods of storm, 2b

Or to the glorious Vasus 3b? How

Can less than these be bright as thou? But never nymph or heavenly maid Or  
Goddess haunts this gloomy shade. Here giants roam, a savage race; What led  
thee to so dire a place? Here monkeys leap from tree to tree, And bears and  
tigers wander free; Here ravening lions prowl, and fell Hyenas in the  
thickets yell,

And elephants infuriate roam, Mighty and fierce, their woodland home. Dost  
thou not dread, so soft and fair, Tiger and lion, wolf and bear? Hast thou,  
O beauteous dame, no fear In the wild wood so lone and drear? Whose and who  
art thou? whence and why Sweet lady, with no guardian nigh, Dost thou this  
awful forest tread By giant bands inhabited?' The praise the high-souled  
Rávan spoke No doubt within her bosom woke. 'His saintly look and Bráhma-  
n guise Deceived the lady's trusting eyes. With due attention on the guest Her  
hospitable rites she pressed. She bade the stranger to a seat, And gave him

water for his feet. The bowl and water-pot he bare, And garb which  
wandering Bráhmans wear Forbade a doubt to rise. Won by his holy look  
she deemed The stranger even as he seemed To her deluded eyes. Intent on  
hospitable care, She brought her best of woodland fare. And showed her  
guest a seat. She bade the saintly stranger lave His feet in water which  
she gave,

And sit and rest and eat. He kept his eager glances bent On her so  
kindly eloquent, Wife of the noblest king; And longed in heart to steal her  
thence, Preparing by the dire offence, Death on his head to bring.

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The lady watched with anxious face For Ráma coming from the chase With  
Lakshman by his side: But nothing met her wandering glance Save the wild  
forest's green expanse Extending far and wide.

Footnotes

282:1 The favourite wife of the Moon.

283:1 The planet Saturn.

283:2 Another favourite of the Moon; one of the lunar  
mansions. 283:1b The Rudras, agents in creation, are eight in  
number; they sprang from the forehead of Brahmá.

283:2b Maruts, the attendants of Indra.

283:3b Radiant demi-gods.

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CANTO XLVII: RÁVAN'S WOOING.

As, clad in mendicant's disguise,

He questioned thus his destined prize, She to the seeming saintly man The  
story of her life began. 'My guest is he,' she thought, 'and I, To 'scape  
his curse, must needs reply: 'Child of a noble sire I spring From Janak,  
fair Videha's king. May every good be thine! my name Is Sítá, Ráma's  
cherished dame. Twelve winters with my lord I spent Most happily with sweet  
content In the rich home of Raghu's line, And every earthly joy was  
mine. Twelve pleasant years flew by, and then His peers advised the king of  
men, Ráma, my lord, to consecrate Joint ruler of his ancient state. But when  
the rites were scarce begun, To consecrate Ikshváku's son, The queen  
Kaikeyí, honoured dame, Sought of her lord an ancient claim. Her plea of  
former service pressed, And made him grant her new request, To banish Ráma  
to the wild

And consecrate instead her child. This double prayer on him, the best And  
truest king, she strongly pressed 'Mine eyes in sleep I will not close, Nor  
eat, nor drink, nor take repose. This very day my death shall bring If Ráma  
be anointed king. 'As thus she spake in envious ire, The aged king, my  
husband's sire, Besought with fitting words, but she Was cold and deaf to  
every plea. As yet my days are few; eighteen The years of life that I have  
seen; And Ráma, best of all alive, Has passed of years a score and five—  
Ráma the great and gentle, through All region famed as pure and  
true, Large-eyed and mighty-armed and tall. With tender heart that cares  
for all. But Das'aratha, led astray By woman's wile and passion's sway, By  
his strong love of her impelled, The consecrating rites withheld. When,  
hopeful of the promised grace, My Ráma sought his father's face, The queen  
Kaikeyí, ill at ease, Spoke to my lord brief words like these: 'Hear, son  
of Raghu, hear from me The words thy father says to thee:

'I yield this day to Bharat's hand, Free from all foes, this ancient  
land. Fly from this home no longer thine, And dwell in woods five years and  
nine. Live in the forest and maintain Mine honour pure from falsehood's  
stain. 'Then Ráma spoke, untouched by dread; 'Yea, it shall be as thou hast  
said. 'And answered, faithful to his vows, Obeying Das'aratha's  
spouse: 'The offered realm I would not take, But still keep true the words  
he spake. 'Thus, gentle Bráhman, Ráma still Clung to his vow with firmest  
will. And valiant Lakshman, dear to fame, His brother by a younger  
dame, Bold victor in the deadly fray, Would follow Ráma on his way. On

sternest vows his heart was set, And he, a youthful anchoret, Bound up in twisted coil his hair And took the garb which hermits wear; Then with his bow to guard us, he Went forth with Ráma and with me. By Queen Kaikeyí's art bereft The kingdom and our home we left, And bound by stern religious vows We sought this shade of forest boughs. Now, best of Bráhmans, here we tread

These pathless regions dark and dread. But come, refresh thy soul, and rest Here for a while an honoured guest. For he, my lord, will soon be here With fresh supply of woodland cheer, Large store of venison of the buck, Or some great boar his hand has struck. Meanwhile, O stranger, grant my prayer: Thy name, thy race, thy birth declare, And why with no companion thou Roamest in Dandak forest now. 'Thus questioned Sítá, Ráma's dame. Then fierce the stranger's answer came: 'Lord of the giant legions, he From whom celestial armies flee, -- The dread of hell and earth and sky, Rávan the Rákshas king am I. Now when thy gold-like form I view Arrayed in silks of amber hue, My love, O thou of perfect mould, For all my dames is dead and cold. A thousand fairest women, torn From many a land my home adorn. But come, loveliest lady, be The queen of every dame and me. My city Lanká, glorious town, Looks from a mountain's forehead down. 285

Where ocean with his flash and foam

Beats madly on mine island home. With me, O Sítá, shalt thou rove Delighted through each shady grove, Nor shall thy happy breast retain Fond memory of this life of pain. In gay attire, a glittering band\*, Five thousand maids shall round thee stand, And serve thee at thy beck and sign, If thou, fair Sítá, wilt be mine. ' Then forth her noble passion broke As thus in turn the lady spoke: 'Me, me the wife of Ráma, him The lion lord with lion's limb, Strong as the sea, firm as the rock, Like Indra in the battle shook. Tue lord of each auspicious sign, The glory of his princely line, Like some fair Bodh tree strong and tall, The noblest and the best of all, Ráma, the heir of happy fate Who keeps his word inviolate, Lord of the lion gait, possessed Of mighty arm and ample chest, Rama the lion-warrior, him Whose moon bright face no fear can dim, Ráma, his bridled passions' lord, The darling whom his sire adored, --

Me, me the true and loving dame Of Ráma, prince of deathless fame -- Me wouldst, thou vainly woo and press? A jackal woo a lioness! Steal from the sun his glory! such Thy hope Lord Ráma's wife to touch. Ha! Thou hast seen the trees of gold, The sign which dying eyes behold, Thus seeking, weary of thy life, To win the love of Ráma's wife. Fool! wilt thou dare to rend away The famished lion's bleeding prey, Or from the threatening jaws to take The fang of some envenomed snake? What, wouldst thou shake with puny hand Mount Mandar,

1 towering o'er the laud,

Put poison to thy lips and think The deadly cup a harmless drink? With pointed needle touch thine eye, A razor to thy tongue apply, Who wouldst pollute with impious touch The wife whom Ráma loves so much? Be round thy neck a millstone tied, And swim the sea from side to side; Or raising both thy hands on high Pluck sun and moon from yonder sky; Or let the kindled flame be pressed, Wrapt in thy garment, to thy breast; More wild the thought that seeks to win

Ráma's dear wife who knows not sin. The fool who thinks with idle aim To gain the love of Rama's dame, With dark and desperate footing makes His way o'er points of iron stakes. As Ocean to a bubbling spring, The lion to a fox, the king Of all the birds that ply the wing To an ignoble crow As gold to lead of little price, As to the drainings of the rice The drink they quaff in Paradise, The Amrit's heavenly flow, As sandal dust with perfume sweet Is to the mire that soils our feet, A tiger to a cat, As the white swan is to the owl, The peacock to the waterfowl, An eagle to a bat, Such is my lord compared with thee; And when with bow and arrows he, Mighty as Indra's self shall see His foeman, armed to slay. Thou, death-doomed like the fly that sips The oil that on the altar drips, Shalt

cast the morsel from thy lips    And lose thy half-won prey.'Thus in high  
scorn the lady flung  
The biting arrows of her tongueIn bitter words that pierced and stung  
The rover of the night.She ceased. Her gentle cheek grew pale,Her  
loosened limbs began to fail,And like a plantain in the gale    She  
trembled with affright.He terrible as Death stood nigh,And watched with  
fierce exulting eye    The fear that shook her frame.To terrify the lady  
more,He counted all his triumphs o'er,Proclaimed the titles that he bore,  
His pedigree and name.

Footnotes

285:1 The mountain which was used by the Gods as a  
churning stick at the Churning of the Ocean.

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CANTO XLVIII: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

With knitted brow and furious eye

The stranger made his fierce reply;'In me O fairest dame, beholdThe  
brother of the King of Gold.The Lord of Ten Necks my title, namedRávan,  
for might and valour famed.Gods and Gandharva hosts I scare;Snakes,  
spirits, birds that roam the airFly from my coming, wild with  
fear,Trembling like men when Death is nearVais'ravan once, my brother,  
wroughtTo ire, encountered me and fought,

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But yielding to superior mightFled from his home in sore affright.Lord of  
the man-drawn chariot, stillHe dwells on famed Kailása's hill.I made the  
vanquished king resignThe glorious car which now is mine,--Pushpak, the  
far-renowned, that fliesWill-guided through the buxom skies.Celestial  
hosts by Indra ledFlee from my face disquieted,  
And where my dreaded feet appearThe wind is hushed or breathless is  
fear.Where'er I stand, where'er I goThe troubled waters cease to  
flow,Each spell-bound wave is mute and stillAnd the fierce sun himself is  
chill.Beyond the sea my Lanká standsFilled with fierce forms and giant  
bands,A glorious city fair to seeAs Indra's Amarávatí.A towering height  
of solid wall,Flashing afar, surrounds it all,Its golden courts enchant  
the sight,And gates aglow with lazulite.Steeds, elephants, and cars are  
there,And drums' loud music fills the air,Fair trees in lovely gardens  
growWhose boughs with varied fruitage glow.Thou, beauteous Queen, with me  
shalt dwellIn halls that suit a princess well,Thy former fellows shall  
forgetNor think of women with regret,No earthly joy thy soul shall  
miss,And take its fill of heavenly bliss.Of mortal Ráma think no  
more,Whose terms of days will soon be o'er.King Das'aratha looked in  
scornOn Ráma though the eldest born,Sent to the woods the weakling fool,  
And set his darling son to ruleWhat, O thou large-eyed dame, hast thouTo  
do with fallen Ráma now,From home and kingdom forced to fly,A wretched  
hermit soon to dieAccept thy lover, nor refuseThe giant king who fondly  
woos.O listen, nor reject in scornA heart by Káma's arrows torn.If thou  
refuse to hear my prayer,Of grief and coming woe beware;For the sad fate  
will fall on theeWhich came on hapless Urvas'í,When with her foot she  
chanced to touchPurúravas, and sorrowed much.

1

My little finger raised in fightWere more than match for Ráma's mightO  
fairest, blithe and happy be  
With him whom fortune sends to thee.'

Such were the words the giant said,And Sítá's angry eyes were red.She  
answered in that lonely placeThe monarch of the giant race:    'Art thou  
the brother of the LordOf Gold by all the world adored,And sprung of that  
illustrious seedWouldst now attempt this evil deed?I tell thee, impious  
Monarch, all

The giants by thy sin will fall,Whose reckless lord and king thou  
art,With foolish mind and lawless heart.Yea, one may hope to steal the

wifeOf Indra and escape with life.But he who Ráma's dame would tearFrom  
his loved side must needs despair,Yea, one may steal fair S'achí, dameOf  
Him who shoots the thunder flame,May live successful in his aim And  
length of day may see;But hope, O giant King, in vain,Though cups of  
Amrit thou may drain,To shun the penalty and pain Of wronging one like  
me.'

Footnotes

286:1 The story will be found in GARRETT'S Classical

Dictionary, See ADDITIONAL NOTES

Next: Canto XLIX.: The Rape of Sitá.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO XLIX.: THE RAPE OF SITÁ.

The Rákshas monarch, thus addressed,

His hands a while together pressed,And straight before her startled  
eyesStood monstrous in his giant size.Then to the lady, with the loreOf  
eloquence, he spoke once more:'Thou scarce,' he cried, 'hast heard  
arightThe glories of my power and might,I borne sublime in air can  
standAnd with these arms upheave the land,Drink the deep flood of Ocean  
dryAnd Death with conquering force defy.Pierce the great sun with furious  
dartAnd to her depths cleave earth apart.See, thou whom love and beauty  
blind,I wear each form as wills my mind." As thus he spake in burning  
ire,His glowing eyes were red with fire.His gentle garb aside was  
thrownAnd all his native shape was shown.Terrific, monstrous, wild, and  
dreadAs the dark God who rules the dead,His fiery eyes in fury rolled,His  
limbs were decked with glittering gold.Like some dark cloud the monster  
showed,

And his fierce breast with fury glowed.The ten-faced rover of the  
night,With twenty arms exposed to sight,His saintly guise aside had  
laidAnd all his giant height displayed.

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Attired in robes of crimson dyeHe stood and watched with angry eyeThe  
lady in her bright arrayResplendent as the dawn of dayWhen from the east  
the sunbeams break,And to the dark-haired lady spake:'If thou would call  
that lord thine ownWhose fame in every world is known,Look kindly on my  
love, and beBride of a consort meet for thee.With me let blissful years  
be spent,For ne'er thy choice shalt thou repent.No deed of mine shall  
e'er displeaseMy darling as she lives at ease.Thy love for mortal man  
resign,And to a worthier lord incline.Ah foolish lady, seeming wiseIn  
thine own weak and partial eyes,By what fair graces art thou heldTo Ráma  
from his realm expelled?Misfortunes all his life attend.

And his brief days are near their end.Unworthy prince, infirm of mind!A  
woman spoke and he resignedHis home and kingdom and withdrewFrom troops  
of friends and retinue.And sought this forest dark and dreadBy savage  
beasts inhabited.'Thus Rávan urged the lady meetFor love, whose words  
were soft and sweet.Near and more near the giant pressedAs love's hot  
fire inflamed his breast.The leader of the giant crewHis arm around the  
lady threw:Thus Budha

1 with ill-omened might

Steals Rohini's delicious light.One hand her glorious tresses grasped,One  
with its ruthless pressure claspedThe body of his lovely prize,The  
Maithil dame with lotus eyes.The silvan Gods in wild alarmMarked his huge  
teeth and ponderous arm,And from that Death-like presence fled,Of  
mountain size and towering head.Then seen was Rávan's magic carAglow with  
gold which blazed afar,--The mighty car which asses drewThundering as it  
onward flew.He spared not harsh rebuke to chideThe lady as she moaned and  
cried,

Then with his arm about her waistHis captive in the car he placed.In vain  
he threatened: long and shrillRang out her lamentation still,O Ráma!  
which no fear could stay:But her dear lord was far awayThen rose the  
fiend, and toward the skiesBore his poor helpless struggling prize:

Hurrying through the air above

The dame who loathed his proffered love  
So might a soaring eagle bear  
A serpent's consort through the air.  
As on he bore her through the sky  
She shrieked aloud her bitter cry.  
As when some wretch's lips complain  
In agony of maddening pain;  
'O Lakshman, thou whose joy is still  
To do thine eider brother's will,  
This fiend, who all disguises wears,  
From Ráma's side his darling tears.  
Thou who couldst leave bliss, fortune, all,  
Yea life itself at duty's call,  
Dost thou not see this outrage done  
To hapless me, O Raghu's son?  
'Tis thine, O victor of the foe,  
To bring the haughtiest spirit low,  
How canst thou such an outrage see  
And let the guilty fiend go free?

Ah, seldom in a moment's time  
Comes bitter fruit of sin and crime,  
But in the day of harvest pain  
Comes like the ripening of the grain.  
So thou whom fate and folly lead  
To ruin for this guilty deed,  
Shalt die by Ráma's arm ere long  
A dreadful death for hideous wrong.  
Ah, too successful in their ends  
Are Queen Kaikeyí and her friends,  
When virtuous Ráma, dear to fame,  
Is mourning for his ravished dame.  
Ah me, ah me! a long farewell  
To lawn and glade and forest dell  
In Janasthán's wild region, where  
The Cassia trees are bright and fair  
With all your tongues to Ráma say  
That Rávan bears his wife away.  
Farewell, a long farewell to thee,  
O pleasant stream Godávári,  
Whose rippling waves are ever stirred  
By many a glad wild water bird!  
All ye to Ráma's ear relate  
The giant's deed and Sítá's fate.  
O all ye Gods who love this ground  
Where trees of every leaf abound,  
Tell Ráma I am stolen hence,  
I pray you all with reverence.  
On all the living things beside

That these dark boughs and coverts hide,  
Ye flocks of birds ye troops of deer,  
I call on you my prayer to hear.  
All we to Ráma's ear proclaim  
That Rávan tears away his dame  
With forceful arms--his darling wife,  
Dearer to Ráma than his life.  
O, if he knew I dwelt in hell,  
My mighty lord, I know full well,  
Would bring me, conqueror, back to-day,  
Though Yama's self reclaimed his prey.  
'Thus from the air the lady sent

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With piteous voice her last lament,  
And as she wept she chanced to see  
The vulture on a lofty tree.  
As Rávan bore her swiftly by,  
On the dear bird she bent her eye,  
And with a voice which woe made faint  
Renewed to him her wild complaint:  
'O see, the king who rules the race  
Of giants, cruel, fierce and base,  
Rávan the spoiler bears me hence  
The helpless prey of violence.  
This fiend who roves in midnight shade  
By thee, dear bird, can ne'er be stayed,  
For he is armed and fierce and strong  
Triumphant in the power to wrong.  
For thee remains one only task,  
To do, kind friend, the thing I ask.  
To Ráma's ear by thee be borne  
How Sítá from her home is torn,  
And to the valiant Lakshman tell  
The giant's deed and what befell.'

Footnotes

287:1 Mercury: to be carefully distinguished from  
Buddha.

Next: Canto L.: Jatáyus. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO L.: JATÁYUS.

The vulture from his slumber woke

And heard the words which Sítá spoke.  
He raised his eye and looked on her,  
Looked on her giant ravisher.  
That noblest bird with pointed beak,  
Majestic as a mountain peak,  
High on the tree addressed the king  
Of giants, wisely counselling:  
'O Ten-necked lord, I firmly hold  
To faith and laws ordained of old,  
And thou, my brother, shouldst refrain  
From guilty deeds that shame and stain.  
The vulture king supreme in air,  
Jatayus is the name I bear.  
Thy captive, known by Sítá's name,  
Is the dear consort and the dame  
Of Ráma Das'aratha's heir,  
Who makes the good of all his care.  
Lord of the world in might he vies  
With the great Gods of seas and skies.  
The law he boasts to keep allows  
No king to touch another's spouse,  
And, more than

all, a prince's dame High honour and respect may claim. Back to the earth  
thy way incline,  
Nor think of one who is not thine. Heroic souls should hold it shame To  
stoop to deeds which others blame, And all respect by them is shown To  
dames of others as their own. Not every case of bliss and gain The  
Scripture's holy texts explain, And subjects, when that light is dim, Look  
to their prince and follow him. The king is bliss and profit, he Is store  
of treasures fair to see, And all the people's fortunes spring, Their joy  
and misery, from the king. If, lord of giant race, thy mind Be fickle,  
false, to sin inclined, How wilt thou kingly place retain? High thrones in  
heaven no sinners gain. The soul which gentle passions sway Ne'er throws  
its nobler part away, Nor ill the mansion of the base Long be the good  
man's dwelling-place. Prince Ráma, chief of high renown, Has wronged thee  
not in field or town. Ne'er has he sinned against thee: how Canst thou  
resolve to harm him now? If moved by S'úrpankhá's prayer The giant Khara  
sought him there, And fighting fell with baffled aim, His and not Ráma's is  
the blame.

Say, mighty lord of giants, say What fault on Ráma canst thou lay? What has  
the world's great master done That thou should steal his precious  
one? Quick, quick the Maithil dame release; Let Ráma's consort go in  
peace, Lest scorched by his terrific eye Beneath his wrath thou fall and  
die Like Vritra when Lord Indra threw The lightning flame that smote and  
slew. Ah fool, with blinded eyes to take Home to thy heart a venomed  
snake! Ah foolish eyes, too blind to see That Death's dire coils entangle  
thee! The prudent man his strength will spare, Nor lift a load too great to  
bear. Content is he with wholesome food Which gives him life and strength  
renewed But who would dare the guilty deed That brings no fame or glorious  
meed, Where merit there is none to win And vengeance soon o'ertakes the  
sin? My course of life, Pulastya's son, For sixty thousand years has  
run. Lord of my kind I still maintain Mine old hereditary reign. I, worn by  
years, am older far Than thou, young lord of bow and car, In coat of  
glittering mail encased

And armed with arrows at thy waist, But not unchallenged shalt thou go, Or  
steal the dame without a blow. Thou canst not, King, before mine eyes Hear  
off unchecked thy lovely prize, Safe as the truth of Scripture bent By no  
close logic's argument. Stay if thy courage let thee, stay And meet me in  
the battle fray, And thou shalt stain the earth with gore Falling as Khara  
fell before. Soon Ráma, clothed in bark shall smite.

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Thee, his proud foe, in deadly fight, -- Ráma, from whom have oft times  
fled The Daitya hosts discomfited. No power have I to kill or slay: The  
princely youths are far away, But soon shalt thou with fearful eye Struck  
down beneath their arrows lie, But while I yet have life and sense, Thou  
shalt not, tyrant, carry hence Fair Sítá, Ramá's honoured queen, With lotus  
eyes and lovely mien. Whate'er the pain, whate'er the cost, Though in the  
struggle life be lost, The will of Raghu's noblest son  
And Das'aratha must be done. Stay for a while, O Rávan, stay, One hour thy  
flying car delay, And from that glorious chariot thou Shalt fall like fruit  
from shaken bough, For I to thee, while yet I live, The welcome of a foe  
will give.'

Next: Canto LI.: The Combat. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO LI.: THE COMBAT.

Rávan's red eyes in fury rolled:

Bright with his armlets' flashing gold, In high disdain, by passion  
stirred He rushed against the sovereign bird. With clash and din and  
furious blows Of murderous battle met the foes: Thus urged by winds two  
clouds on high Meet warring in the stormy sky. Then fierce the dreadful  
combat raged As fiend and bird in war engaged, As if two winged mountains  
sped To dire encounter overhead. Keen pointed arrows think and fast, In  
never ceasing fury cast, Rained hurtling on the vulture king And smote him

on the breast and wing. But still that noblest bird sustained  
The cloud of shafts which Rávan rained, And with strong beak and talons' bent  
The body of his foeman rent. Then wild with rage the ten-necked king  
Laid ten swift arrows on his string, - Dread as the staff of Death were they,  
So terrible and keen to slay, Straight to his ear the string he drew,  
Straight to the mark the arrows flew, And pierced by every iron head  
The vulture's mangled body bled. One glance upon the car he bent  
Where Sítá wept with shrill lament, Then heedless of his wounds and pain  
Rushed at the giant king again. Then the brave vulture with the stroke  
Of his resistless talons broke The giant's shafts and bow whereon  
The fairest pearls and jewels shone. The monster paused by rage unmanned:  
A second bow soon armed his hand. Whence pointed arrows swift and true  
In hundreds, yea in thousands, flew. The monarch of the vultures,  
plied With ceaseless darts on every side. Showed like bird that turns to rest  
Close covered by the branch-built nest. He shook his pinions to repel  
The storm of arrows as it fell; Then with his talons snapped in two  
The mighty bow which Rávan drew, Next with terrific wing he smote  
So fiercely on the giant's coat, The harness, glittering with the glow  
Of fire, gave way beneath the blow. With storm of murderous strokes he beat  
The harnessed asses strong and fleet, - Each with a goblin's monstrous face  
And plates of gold his neck to grace. Then on the car he turned his ire,  
- The will-moved car that shone like fire, And broke the glorious chariot,  
broke The golden steps and pole and yoke. The chouris and the silken shade  
Like the full moon to view displayed, Together with the guards who held  
Those emblems, to the ground he felled. The royal vulture hovered o'er  
The driver's head, and pierced and tore With his strong beak and dreaded claws  
His mangled brow and cheek and jaws. With broken car and sundered bow,  
His charioteer and team laid low, One arm about the lady wound,  
Sprang the fierce giant to the ground. Spectators of the combat, all  
The spirits viewed the monster's fall: Lauding the vulture every one  
Cried with glad voice, Well done! well done! But weak with length of days,  
at last The vulture's strength was failing fast. The fiend again assayed to bear  
The lady through the fields of air. But when the vulture saw him rise  
Triumphant with his trembling prize, Bearing the sword that still was left

When other arms were lost or cleft, Once more, impatient of repose, Swift  
from the earth her champion rose, Hung in the way the fiend would take, And  
thus addressing Rávan spake: 'Thou, King of giants, rash and blind, Wilt be  
the ruin of thy kind, Stealing the wife of Ráma, him With lightning sears  
on chest and limb. A mighty host obeys his will And troops of slaves his  
palace fill;

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His lords of state are wise and true, Kinsmen has he and retinue. As  
thirsty travellers drain the cup, Thou drinkest deadly poison up. The rash  
and careless fool who heeds No coming fruit of guilty deeds, A few short  
years of life shall see, And perish doomed to death like thee. Say whither  
wilt thou fly to loose Thy neck from Death's entangling noose. Caught like  
the fish that finds too late The hook beneath the treacherous bait? Never,  
O King--of this be sure--Will Raghu's fiery sons endure, Terrific in their  
vengeful rage,

This insult to their hermitage. Thy guilty hands this day have done A deed  
which all reprove and shun, Unworthly of a noble chief, The pillage loved  
by coward thief. Stay, if thy heart allow thee, stay And meet me in the  
deadly fray. Soon shall thou stain the earth with gore, And fall as Khara  
fell before. The fruits of former deeds o'erpower The sinner in his dying  
hour: And such a fate on thee, O King, Thy tyranny and madness bring. Not  
e'en the Self-existent Lord, Who reigns by all the worlds adored, Would  
dare attempt a guilty deed Which the dire fruits of crime succeed.' Thus  
brave Jatayus, best of birds, Addressed the fiend with moving words, Then  
ready for the swift attack Swooped down upon the giant's back. Down to the  
bone the talons went With many a wound the flesh was rent: Such blows



infuriate drivers deal Their elephants with pointed steel. Fixed in his  
 back the strong beak lay, The talons stripped the flesh away. He fought  
 with claws and beak and wing. And tore the long hair of the king.  
 Still as the royal vulture beat The giant with his wings and feet, Swelled  
 the fiend's lips, his body shook With furious rage too great to  
 brook. About the Maithil dame he cast One huge left aim and held her  
 fast. In furious rage to frenzy fanned He struck the vulture with his  
 hand. Jatáyus mocked the vain assay, And rent his ten left arms away. Down  
 dropped the severed limbs: anew Ten others from his body grew: Thus bright  
 with pearly radiance glide Dread serpents from the hillock side, Again in  
 wrath the giant pressed The lady closer to his breast, And foot and fist  
 sent blow on blow In ceaseless fury at the foe. So fierce and dire the  
 battle, waged Between those mighty champions, raged; Here was the lord of  
 giants, there The noblest of the birds of air. Thus, as his love of Ráma  
 taught, The faithful vulture strove and fought. But Rávan seized his sword  
 and smote His wings and side and feet and throat. At mangled side and wing  
 he bled; He fell, and life was almost fled. The lady saw her champion lie,  
 His plumes distained with gory dye, And hastened to the vulture's  
 side Grieving as though a kinsman died. The lord of Lanká's island viewed  
 The vulture as he lay: Whose back like some dark cloud was hued,  
 His breast a paly grey, Like ashes, when by none renewed. The flame  
 has died away. The lady saw with mournful eye, Her champion press  
 the plain, -- The royal bird, her true ally Whom Rávan's might had  
 slain. Her soft arms locked in strict embrace Around his neck she  
 kept. And lovely with her moon-bright face Bent o'er her friend and  
 wept,

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#### CANTO LII.: RÁVAN'S FLIGHT.

Fair as the lord of silvery rays

Whom every star in heaven obeys, The Maithil dame her plaint renewed O'er  
 him by Rávan's might subdued: 'Dreams, omens, auguries foreshow Our coming  
 lot of weal and woe: But thou, my Ráma, couldst not see The grievous blow  
 which falls on thee. The birds and deer desert the brakes And show the path  
 my captor takes, And thus e'en now this royal bird Flew to mine aid by pity  
 stirred. Slain for my sake in death he lies, The broad-winged rover of the  
 skies. O Ráma, haste, thine aid I crave: O Lakshman, why delay to  
 save? Brave sons of old Ikshváku, hear And rescue in this hour of fear.'  
 Her flowery wreath was torn and rent, Crushed was each sparkling  
 ornament. She with weak arms and trembling knees Clung like a creeper to  
 the trees, And like some poor deserted thing With wild shrieks made the  
 forest ring. But swift the giant reached her side,

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As loud on Ráma's name she cried.

Fierce as grim Death one hand he laid Upon her tresses' lovely braid. That  
 touch, thou impious King, shall be The ruin of thy race and thee. The  
 universal world in awe That outrage on the lady saw. All nature shook  
 convulsed with dread, And darkness o'er the land was spread. The Lord of  
 Day grew dark and chill, And every breath of air was still. The Eternal  
 Father of the sky Beheld the crime with heavenly eye. And spake with solemn  
 voice, 'The deed, The deed is done, of old decreed.' Sad were the saints  
 within the grove, But triumph with their sorrow strove. They wept to see  
 the Maithil dame Endure the outrage, scorn, and shame: They joyed because  
 his life should pay The penalty incurred that day. Then Rávan raised her  
 up, and bare His captive through the fields of air, Calling with accents  
 loud and shrill On Ráma and on Lakshman still. With sparkling gems on arm  
 and breast, In silk of paly amber dressed,  
 High in the air the Maithil dame Gleamed like the lightning's flashing  
 flame. The giant, as the breezes blew Upon her robes of amber hue, And round  
 him twined that gay attire, Showed like a mountain girt with fire. The

lady, fairest of the fair, Had wreathed a garland round her hair; Its lotus petals bright and sweet Rained down about the giant's feet. Her vesture, bright as burning gold, Gave to the wind each glittering fold, Fair as a gilded cloud that gleams Touched by the Day-God's tempered beams. Yet struggling in the fiend's embrace, The lady with her sweet pure face, Far from her lord, no longer wore The light of joy that shone before. Like some sad lily by the side Of waters which the sun has dried; Like the pale moon uprising through An autumn cloud of darkest hue, So was her perfect face between The arms of giant Rávan seen: Fair with the charm of braided tress And forehead's finished loveliness; Fair with the ivory teeth that shed White lustre through the lips' fine red, Fair as the lotus when the bud

Is rising from the parent flood. With faultless lip and nose and eye. Dear as the moon that floods the sky With gentle light, of perfect mould, She seemed a thing of burnished gold, Though on her cheek the traces lay Of tears her hand had brushed away, But as the moon-beams swiftly fade Ere the great Day-God shines displayed, So in that form of perfect grace Still trembling in the fiend's embrace, From her beloved Ráma reft, No light of pride or joy was left. The lady with her golden hue O'er the swart fiend a lustre threw, As when embroidered girths enfold An elephant with gleams of gold. Fair as the lily's bending stem Her arms adorned with many a gem, A lustre to the fiend she lent Gleaming from every ornament, As when the cloud-shot flashes light The shadows of a mountain height. When e'er the breezes earthward bore The tinkling of the zone she wore, He seemed a cloud of darkness hue Sending forth murmurs as it flew. As on her way the dame was sped

From her sweet neck fair flowers were shed, The swift wind caught the flowery rain And poured it o'er the fiend again. The wind-stirred blossoms, sweet to smell, On the dark brows of Rávan fell, Like lunar constellations set On Meru for a coronet. From her small foot an anklet fair With jewels slipped, and through the air, Like a bright circlet of the flame Of thunder, to the valley came. The Maithil lady, fair to see As the young leaflet of a tree Clad in the tender hues of spring, Flashed glory on the giant king, As when a gold-embroidered zone Around an elephant is thrown. While, bearing far the lady, through The realms of sky the giant flew, She like a gleaming meteor cast A glory round her as she passed. Then from each limb in swift descent Dropped many a sparkling ornament: On earth they rested dim and pale Like fallen stars when virtues fail.

1

Around her neck a garland lay Bright as the Star-God's silvery ray: It fell and flashed like Gangá sent From heaven above the firmament. 2

The birds of every wing had flocked

To stately trees by breezes rocked:

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These bowed their wind-swept heads and said: 'My lady sweet, be comforted.' With faded blooms each brook within Whose waters moved no gleamy fin, Stole sadly through the forest dell Mourning the dame it loved so well. From every woodland region near Came lions, tigers, birds, and deer, And followed, each with furious look, The way her flying shadow took. For Sítá's loss each lofty hill Whose tears were waterfall, and rill, Lifting on high each arm-like steep, Seemed in the general woe to weep. When the great sun, the lord of day, Saw Rávan tear the dame away, His glorious light began to fail And all his disk grew cold and pale. 'If Rávan from the forest hies\*\* With Ráma's Sítá as his prize, Justice and truth have vanished hence, Honour and right and innocence.' Thus rose the cry of wild despair

From spirits as they gathered there. In trembling troops in open lawns Wept, wild with woe, the startled fawns, And a strange terror changed the eyes They lifted to the distant skies. On silvan Gods who love the

dellA sudden fear and trembling fell,As in the deepest woe they viewedThe lady by the fiend subdued.Still in loud shrieks was heard afarThat voice whose sweetness naught couldmar,While eager looks of fear and woeShe bent upon the earth below.The lady of each winning wileWith pearly teeth and lovely smile,Seized by the lord of Lanká's isle, Looked down for friends in vain.She saw no friend to aid her, none,Not Ráma nor the younger sonOf Das'aratha, and undone She swooned with fear and pain.

Footnotes

291:1 The spirits of the good dwell in heaven until their store of accumulated merit is exhausted. Then they redescend to earth in the form of falling stars.

291:2 See The Descent of Gangá, Book I Canto XLIV.

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CANTO LIII.: SITÁ'S THREATS.

Soon as the Maithil lady knew

That high through air the giant flew,Distressed with grief and sore afraidHer troubled spirit sank dismayed.Then, as anew the waters welledFrom those red eyes which sorrow swelled,Fresh in keen words her passion broke,And to the fierce-eyed fiend she spoke:

'Canst thou attempt a deed so base.

Untroubled by the deep disgrace.--To steal me from my home and fly,When friend or guardian none was nigh!Thy craven soul that longed to steal,Fearing the blows that warriors deal.Upon a magic deer reliedTo lure my husband from my side,Friend of his sire, the vulture kingLies low on earth with mangled wing,Who gave his aged life for meAnd died for her he sought to free.Ah, glorious strength indeed is thine,Thou meanest of thy giant line,Whose courage dared to tell thy nameAnd conquer in the fight a dame.

Does the vile deed that thou hast doneCause thee no shame, thou wicked one--A woman from her home to rendWhen none was near his aid to lend?Through all the worlds, O giant King,The tidings of this deed will ring,This deed in law and honour's spiteBy one who claims a hero's might.Shame on thy boasted valour, shame!Thy prowess is an empty name,Shame, giant, on this cursed deedFor which thy race is doomed to bleed!Thou fliest swifter than the gale,For what can strength like thine avail?Stay for one hour, O Rávan, stay;Thou shalt not flee with life away.Soon as the royal chieftains' sightFalls on the thief who roams by night,Thou wilt not, tyrant, live one hourThough backed by all thy legions' power,Ne'er can thy puny strength sustainThe tempest of their arrowy rain:Have e'er the trembling birds withstoodThe wild flames raging in the wood?Hear me, O Rávan, let me go,And save thy soul from coming woe.Or if thou wilt not not me free,Wroth for this insult done to me.With his brave brother's aid my lord

Against thy life will raise his sword.A guilty hope inflames thy breastHis wife from Ráma's home to wrest.Ah fool, the hope thou hast is vain;Thy dreams of bliss shall end in pain!If torn from all I love by theeMv godlike lord no more I see,Soon will I die and end my woes,Nor live the captive of my foes,.Ah fool, with blinded eyes to chooseThe evil and the good refuse!So the sick wretch with stubborn willTurns fondly to the \*\*cates that kill,And madly draws his lips awayFrom medicine that would check decay.About thy neck securely wound

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The deadly coil of Fate is bound,And thou, O Ravan, dost not fearAlthough the hour of death is near.With death-doomed sight thine eyes beholdThe gleaming of the trees of gold,--See dread Vaitarani, the floodThatt rolls a stream of foamy blood,--See the dark wood by all abhorred--Its every leaf a threatening sword.The tangled thickets thou shall tread Where thorns with iron points are spread,For never can thy days be long,Base plotter of this shame and wrongTo Ráma of ihe lofty soul:He

dies who drinks the poisoned bowl. The coils of death around thee lie: They hold thee and thou canst not fly. Ah whither, tyrant, wouldst thou run? The vengeance of my lord to shun? By his unaided arm alone Were twice seven thousand fiends o'er-thrown: Yes, in the twinkling of an eye He forced thy mightiest fiends to die. And shall that lord of lion heart, Skilled in the bow and spear and dart, Spare thee, O fiend, in battle strife, The robber of his darling wife?' These were her words, and more beside, By wrath and bitter hate supplied. Then by her woe and fear o'erthrown She wept again and made her moan. As long she wept in grief and dread, Scarce conscious of the words she said, The wicked giant onward fled And bore her through the air. As firm he held the Maithil dame, Still wildly struggling, o'er her frame With grief and bitter misery came The trembling of despair.

Next: Canto LIV.: Lanká. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO LIV.: LANKÁ.

He bore her on in rapid flight,  
And not a friend appeared in sight. But on a hill that o'er the wood Raised its high top five monkeys stood. From her fair neck her scarf she drew, And down the glittering vesture flew. With earring, necklet, chain, and gem, Descending in the midst of them: 'For these,' she thought, 'my path may show, And tell my lord the way I go.' Nor did the fiend, in wild alarm, Mark when she drew from neck and arm And foot the gems and gold, and sent To earth each gleaming ornament.

The monkeys raised their tawny eyes  
That closed not in their first surprise, And saw the dark-eyed lady, here She shrieked above them in the air. High o'er their heads the giant passed Holding the weeping lady fast. O'er Pampa's flashing flood he sped And on to Lanka's city fled. He bore awny in senseless joy The prize that should his life destroy,  
Like the rash fool who hugs beneath His robe a snake with venom'd teeth, Swift as an arrow from a bow, Speeding o'er lands that lay below, Sublime in air his course he took O'er wood and rook and lake and brook. He passed at length the sounding sea Where monstrous creatures wander free, -- Seat of Lord Varun's ancient reign, Controller of the eternal main. The angry waves were raised and tossed As Rávan with the lady crossed, And fish and snake in wild unrest Showed flashing fin and gleaming crest. Then from the blessed troops who dwell In air celestial voices fell: 'O ten-necked King,' they cried, 'attend: This guilty deed will bring thine end.' Then Rávan speeding like the storm, Bearing his death in human form, The struggling Sítá, lighted down In royal Lanka's glorious town; A city bright and rich, that showed Well-ordered street and noble road; Arranged with just division, fair With multitudes in court and square. Thus, all his journey done, he passed Within his royal home at last. There in a queenly bower he placed

The black-eyed dame with dainty waist: Thus in her chamber Maya laid The lovely Maya, demon maid. Then Rávan gave command to all The dread she-fiends who filled the halls 'This captive lady watch and guard From sight of man and woman barred. But all the fair one asks beside Be with unsparing hand supplied: As though 'twere I that asked, withhold No pearls or dress or gems or gold. And she among you that shall dare Of purpose or through want of care One word to vex her soul to say, 'Throws her unvalued life away.' Thus spake the monarch of their race To those she-fiends who thronged the place, And pondering on the course to take Went from the chamber as he spake. He saw eight giants, strong and dread, On flesh of bleeding victims fed, Proud in the boon which Brahma gave,

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And trusting in its power to save. He thus the mighty chiefs addressed Of glorious power and strength possessed: 'Arm, warriors, with the spear and bow;

With all your speed from Lanká go, For Janasthán, our own no more, Is now  
defiled with giants' gore; The seat of Khara's royal state Is left unto us  
desolate. In your brave hearts and might confide, And cast ignoble fear  
aside. Go, in that desert region dwell Where the fierce giants fought and  
fell. A glorious host that region held, For power and might unparalleled, By  
Dúshan and brave Khara led, -All, slain by Ráma's arrows, bled. Hence  
boundless wrath that spurns control Reigns paramount within my soul, And  
naught but Ráma's death can sate The fury of my vengeful hate. I will not  
close my slumbering eyes Till by this hand my foeman dies. And when mine  
arm has slain the foe Who laid those giant princes low, Long will I triumph  
in the deed, Like one enriched in utmost need. Now go; that I this end may  
gain, In Janasthán. O chiefs, remain. Watch Ráma there with keenest eye, And  
all his deeds and movements spy. Go forth, no helping art neglect, Be brave  
and prompt and circumspect,  
And be your one endeavour still To aid mine arm this foe to kill. Oft have  
I seen your warrior might Proved in the forehead of the fight, And sure of  
strength I know so well Send you in Janasthán to dwell.' The giants  
heard with prompt assent The pleasant words he said, And each  
before his master bent For meet salute, his head. Then as he bade,  
without delay, From Lanká's gate they passed, And hurried forward  
on their way Invisible and fast.

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#### CANTO LV.: SÍTÁ IN PRISON.

Thus Rávan his commandment gave

To those eight giants strong and brave, So thinking in his foolish  
pride Against all dangers to provide. Then with his wounded heart  
aflame With love he thought upon the dame, And took with hasty steps the  
way

To the fair chamber where she lay,

He saw the gentle lady there Weighed down by woe too great to bear, Amid  
the throng of fiends who kept Their watch around her as she wept: A pinnacle  
sinking neath the wave When mighty winds around her rave: A lonely herd-  
forsaken deer, When hungry dogs are pressing near, Within the bower the  
giant passed: Her mournful looks were downward cast. As there she lay with  
streaming eyes The giant bade the lady rise, And to the shrinking captive  
showed The glories of his rich abode, Where thousand women spent their  
days In palaces with gold ablaze;

Where wandered birds of every sort, And jewels flashed in hall and  
court. Where noble pillars charmed the sight With diamond and lazulite, And  
others glorious to behold With ivory, crystal, silver, gold. There swelled  
on high the tambour's sound, And burnished ore was bright around He led the  
mournful lady where Resplendent gold adorned the stair, And showed each  
lattice fair to see With silver work and ivory: Showed his bright chambers,  
line on line, Adorned with nets of golden twine. Beyond he showed the  
Maithil dame His gardens bright as lightning's flame, And many a pool and  
lake he showed Where blooms of gayest colour glowed. Through all his home  
from view to view The lady sunk in grief he drew. Then trusting in her  
heart to wake Desire of all she saw, he spake: 'Three hundred million  
giants, all Obedient to their master's call, Not counting young and weak  
and old, Serve me with spirits fierce and bold. A thousand culled from all  
of these Wait on the lord they long to please. This glorious power, this  
pomp and sway,

Dear lady, at thy feet I lay: Yea, with my life I give the whole, O dearer  
than my life and soul. A thousand beauties fill my hall: Be thou my wife  
and rule them all. O hear my supplication! why This reasonable prayer  
deny? Some pity to thy suitor show, For love's hot flames within me  
glow. This isle a hundred leagues in length, Encompassed by the ocean's  
strength, Would all the Gods and fiends defy Though led by Him who rules

the sky.No God in heaven, no sage on earth,No minstrel of celestial  
birth,  
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No spirit in the worlds I seeA match in power and might for me.What wilt  
tbou do with Ráma, himWhose days are short, whose light is dim,Expelled  
from home and royal sway,Who treads on foot his weary way?Leave the poor  
mortal to his fate.And wed thee with a worthier mate.My timid love, enjoy  
with meThe prime of youth before it flee.Do not one hour the hope retain  
To look on Ráma's face again.For whom would wildest thought beguileTo  
seek thee in the giants' isle?Say who is he has power to bindIn toils of  
net the rushing wind.Whose is the mighty hand will tameAnd hold the glory  
of the flame?In all the worlds above, below.Not one, O fair of form, I  
knowWho from this isle in fight could rendThe lady whom these arms  
defend.Fair Queen, o'er Lanka's island reign,Sole mistress of the wide  
domain.Gods, rovers of the night like me,And all the world thy slaves  
will be.O'er thy fair brows and queenly headLet conscerating balm be  
shed,And sorrow banished from thy breast,Enjoy my love and take thy  
rest.Here never more thy soul shall knowThe memory of thy former woe,And  
here shall thou enjoy the meedDeserved by every virtuous deed.Here  
garlands glow of flowery twine,With gorgeous hues and scent divine.Take  
gold and gems and rich attire:Enjoy with me thy heart's desire.There  
stand, of chariots far the best,The car my brother once possessed.  
Which, victor in the stricken field,I forced the Lord of Gold to  
yield.'Tis wide and high and nobly wrought,Bright as the sun and swift as  
thought.Therein O Sítá, shalt tbou rideDelighted by thy lover's side.But  
sorrow mars with lingering traceThe splendour of thy lotus face.A cloud  
of woe is o'er it spread,And all the light of joy is fled.' The lady,  
by her woe distressed,One corner of her raiment pressedTo her sad cheek  
like moonlight clear.And wiped away a falling tear.The rover of the night  
renewedHis eager pleading as he viewedThe lady stand like one  
distraught,Striving to fix her wandering thought:' Think not, sweet Lady,  
of the shameOf broken vows, nor fear the blame.The Saints approve with  
favouring eyes

This union knit with marriage ties.

O beauty, at thy radiant feetI lay my heads, and thus entreat.One word of  
grace, one look I crave:Have pity on thy prostrate slave.These idle words  
I speak are vain,Wrung forth by love's consuming pain,  
And ne'er of Rávan be it saidHe wooed a dame with prostrate head.'Thus to  
the Maithil lady suedThe monarch of the giant brood,And 'She is now mine  
own,' he thought,In Death's dire coils already caught.

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CANTO LVI.: SÍTÁ'S DISDAIN.

His words the Maithil lady heard

Oppressed by woe but undeterred.Fear of the fiend she cast aside,And thus  
in noble scorn replied:'His word of honour never stainedKing Das'aratha  
nobly reigned,The bridge of right, the friend of truth.His eldest son, a  
noble youth,Is Ráma, virtue's faithful friend,Whose glories through the  
worlds extend.Long arms and large full eyes has he,Mv husband, yea a God  
to me.With shoulders like the forest king's,From old Ikshváku's line he  
springs.He with his brother Lakshman's aidWill smite thee with the  
vengeful blade.Hadst thou but dared before his eyesTo lay thine hand upon  
the prize,Thou stretched before his feet hadst lainIn Janasthán like  
Khara slain.Thy boasted rovers of the nightWith hideous shapes and giant  
might,--Like serpents when the feathered kingSwoops down with his  
tremendous wing,--Will find their useless venom fail

When Ráma's mighty arms assail.The rapid arrows bright with gold.Shot  
from the bow he loves to hold.Will rend thy frame from flank to flankAs  
Gangá's waves erode the bank.Though neither God nor fiend have powerTo  
slay thee in the battle hour,Yet from his hand shall come thy fate,Struck

down before his vengeful hate. That mighty lord will strike and end  
The days of life thou hast to spend. Thy days are doomed, thy life is sped  
Like victim's to the pillar led. Yea, if the glance of Ráma bright  
With fury on thy form should light, Thou scorched this day wouldst fall and die  
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Like Káma slain by Rudra's eye. 1

He who from heaven the moon could throw, Or bid its bright rays cease to  
glow, -- He who could drain the mighty sea Will set his darling Sítá  
free. Fled is thy life, thy glory, fled Thy strength and power: each sense  
is dead. Soon Lanká widowed by thy guilt Will see the blood of giants  
spilt. This wicked deed, O cruel King,  
No triumph, no delight will bring. Thou with outrageous might and scorn  
A woman from her lord hast torn. My glorious husband far away, Making heroic  
strength his stay, Dwells with his brother, void of fear, In Dandak forest  
lone and drear. No more in force of arms confide: That haughty strength,  
that power and pride My hero with his arrowy rain From all thy bleeding  
limbs will drain. When urged by fate's dire mandate, nigh Comes the fixt  
hour for men to die. Caught in Death's toils their eyes are blind, And  
folly takes each wandering mind. So for the outrage thou hast done The fate  
is near thou canst not shun, -- The fate that on thyself and all Thy giants  
and thy town shall fall. I spurn thee: can the altar dight With vessels for  
the sacred rite, O'er which the priest his prayer has said, Be sullied by  
an outcaste's tread? So me, the consort dear and true Of him who clings to  
virtue too, Thy hated touch shall ne'er defile, Base tyrant lord of Lanká's  
isle. Can the white swan who floats in pride Through lilies by her  
consort's side,

Look for one moment, as they pass, On the poor diver in the grass? This  
senseless body waits thy will. To torture, chain, to wound or kill. I will  
not, King of giants, strive To keep this fleeting soul alive But never  
shall they join the name Of Sítá with reproach and shame. Thus as her  
breast with fury burned Her bitter speech the dame returned. Such words of  
rage and scorn, the last She uttered, at the fiend she cast Her taunting  
speech the giant heard, And every hair with anger stired, Then thus with  
fury in his eye He made in threats his fierce reply 'Hear Maithil lady,  
hear my speech\* to my words and ponder each\* thy head twelve months shall  
fly

And thou thy love wilt still deny,

My cooks shall mince thy flesh with steel And serve it for my morning  
meal.' Thus with terrific threats to her Spake Rávan, cruel ravener. Mad  
with the rage her answer woke He called the fiendish train and spoke: 'Take  
her, ye Rákshas dames, who fright With hideous form and mien the sight,  
Who make the flesh of men your food, -- And let her pride be soon  
subdued.' He spoke, and at his word the band Of fiendish monsters raised  
each hand In reverence to the giant king, And pressed round Sítá in a  
ring. Rávan once more with stern behest To those she-fiends his speech  
addressed: Shaking the earth beneath his tread, He stamped his furious foot  
and said: 'To the As'oka garden bear The dame, and guard her safely  
there Until her stubborn pride be bent By mingled threat and  
blandishment. See that ye watch her well, and tame, Like some she-elephant,  
the dame.' They led her to that garden where The sweetest flowers  
perfumed the air, Where bright trees bore each rarest fruit, And birds,  
enamoured, ne'er were mute. Bowed down with terror and distress, Watched by  
each cruel giantess, -- Like a poor solitary deer When ravening tigresses  
are near, -- The hapless lady lay distraught Like some wild thing but newly  
caught, And found no solace, no relief From agonizing fear and grief; Not  
for one moment could forget

Each terrifying word and threat, Or the fierce eyes upon her set By  
those who watched around. She thought of Ráma far away, She mourned for  
Lakshman as she lay In grief and terror and dismay Half fainting on the  
ground.

Footnotes

296:1 See Book I Caato XXV

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CANTO LVII.: SÍTÁ COMFORTED.

Soon as the fiend had set her down

Within his home in Lanká's townTriumph and joy filled Indra's breast,Whom  
thus the Eternal Sire addressed:   'This deed will free the worlds from  
woeAnd cause the giants' overthrow.The fiend has borne to Lanká's isleThe  
body of the \* smile,True consort \* to happy fateW \* and dedicate

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She looks and longs for Ráma's face,But sees a crowd of demon race,And  
guarded by the giant's trainPines for her lord and weeps in vain,But  
Lanká founded on a steepIs girdled by the mighty deep,And how will Ráma  
know his fairAnd blameless wife is prisoned there?She on her woe will  
sadly broodAnd pine away in solitude,And heedless of herself, will  
ceaseTo live, despairing of release.

Yes, pondering on her fate, I seeHer gentle life in jeopardy.Go, Indra,  
swiftly seek the place,And look upon her lovely face.Within the city make  
thy way:Let heavenly food her spirit stay.'   Thus Brahma, spake: and He  
who slewThe cruel demon Páka, flewWhere Lanká's royal city lay,And Sleep  
went with him on his way.'Sleep,' cried the heavenly Monarch, 'closeEach  
giant's eye in deep repose.'   Thus Indra spoke, and Sleep fulfilledWith  
joy his mandate, as he willed,To aid the plan the Gods proposed,The  
demons' eyes in sleep she closed.Then Sachi's lord, the Thousand-eyed,To  
the Asoka garden hied.He came and stood where Sítá lay,And gently thus  
began to say:'Lord of the Gods who hold the sky,Dame of the lovely smile,  
am I.Weep no more, lady, weep no more;Thy days of woe will soon be o'er.I  
come, O Janak's child, to beThe helper of thy lord and thee.He through my  
grace, with hosts to aid,This sea-girt land will soon invade.'Tis by my  
art that slumbers close

The eyelids of thy giant foes.Now I, with Sleep, this place have  
sought,Videhau lady, and have broughtA gift of heaven's ambrosial foodTo  
stay thee in thy solitude.Receive it from my hand, and taste,O lady of  
the dainty waist:For countless ages thou shalt beFrom pangs of thirst and  
hunger free.'   But doubt within her bosom wokeAs to the Lord of Gods she  
spoke:'How may I know for truth that thouWhose form I see before me  
nowArt verily the King adoredBy heavenly Gods, and S'achi's lord?With  
Rraghu's sons I learnt to knowThe certain signs which Godhead show.These  
marks before mine eyes displayIf o'er the Gods thou bear the sway.'   The  
heavenly lord of S'achi heard.And did according to her word,Above the  
ground his feet were raised;With eyelids motionless he gazed.No dust upon  
his raiment lay,And his bright wreath was fresh and gay.Nor was the  
lady's glad heart slowThe Monarch of the Gods to know.And while the tears  
unceasing ranFrom her sweet eyes she thus began:

'My lord has gained a friend in thee,And I this day thy presence seeShown  
clearly to mine eyes, as whenRáma and Lakshman, lords of men.Beheld it,  
and their sire the king,And Janak too from whom I spring.Now I, O Monarch  
of the Blest,Will eat this food at thy behest,Which thou hast brought me,  
of thy grace,To aid and strengthen Raghu's race.'   She spoke, and by his  
words relieved,The food from Indra's hand received,Yet ere she ate the  
balm he brought.On Lakshman and her lord she thought.'If my brave lord be  
still alive,If valiant Lakshman yet survive,May this my taste of heavenly  
foodBring health to them and bliss renewed!'   She ate, and that  
celestial food   Stayed hunger, thirst, and lassitude,   And all her  
strength restored.   Great joy her hopeful spirit stirred   At the glad  
tidings newly heard   Of Lakshman and her lord.   And Indra's heart  
was joyful too:   He bade the Maithil dame adieu,   His saving errand  
done.   With Sleep beside him parting thence   He sought his heavenly  
residence



To prosper Raghu's son.

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CANTO LVIII.: THE BROTHERS'  
MEETING.

When Rāma's deadly shaft had struck

The giant in the seeming buck. The chieftain turned him from the place His  
homeward way again to trace. Then as he hastened onward, fain To look upon  
his spouse again, Behind him from a thicket nigh Rang out a jackal's  
piercing cry. Alarmed he heard the startling shriek That raised his hair  
and dimmed his cheek, And all his heart was filled with doubt As the shrill  
jackal's cry rung out: 'Alas, some dire disaster seems Portended by the  
jackal's screams. O may the Maitil dame be screened From outrage of each  
hungry fiend!

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Alas, if Lakshman chanced to hear That bitter cry of woe and fear What time  
Mārīcha, as he died, With voice that mocked my accents cried,  
Swift to my side the prince would flee And quit the dame to succour me. Too  
well I see the demon band The slaughter of my love have planned. Me far  
from home and Sītā's view The seeming deer Mārīcha drew. He led me far  
through brake and dell Till wounded by my shaft he fell, And as he sank  
rang out his cry, 'O save me, Lakshman, or I die.' May it be well with both  
who stayed In the great wood with none to aid, For every fiend is now my  
foe For Janasthān's great overthrow, And many an omen seen to-day Has filled  
my heart with sore dismay.' Such were the thoughts and sad surmise Of  
Rāma at the jackal's cries, And all his heart within him burned As to his  
cot his steps he turned. He pondered on the deer that led His feet to  
follow where it fled, And sad with many a bitter thought His home in  
Janasthān he sought. His soul was dark with woe and fear When flocks of  
birds and troops of deer Move round him from the left, and  
raised Discordant voices as they gazed. The omens which the chieftain  
viewed

The terror of his soul renewed, When lo, to meet him Lakshman sped With  
brows whence all the light had fled. Near and more near the princes  
came, Each brother's heart and look the same; Alike on each sad visage  
lay The signs of misery and dismay, Then Rāma by his terror moved His  
brother for his fault reproved In leaving Sītā far from aid In the wild  
wood where giants strayed. Lakshman's left hand he took, and then In gentle  
tones the prince of men, Though sharp and fierce their tenour ran, Thus to  
his brother chief began: 'O Lakshman, thou art much to blame Leaving  
alone the Maithil dame, And flying hither to my side: O, may no ill my  
spouse betide! But ah. I know my wife is dead, And giants on her limbs have  
fed, So strange, so terrible are all The omens which my heart appal. O  
Lakshman, may we yet return The safety of my love to learn. To find the  
child of Janak still Alive and free from scathe and ill! Each bird with  
notes of warning screams, Though the hot sun still darts his beams.  
The moan of deer, the jackal's yell Of some o'erwhelming misery tell. O  
mighty brother, still may she. My princess, live from danger free! That  
semblance of a golden deer Allured me far away, I followed nearer  
and more near, And longed to take the prey. I followed where the  
quarry fled: My deadly arrow flew, And as the dying creature bled,  
The giant met my view. Great tear and pain oppress my heart That  
dreads the coming blow, And through my left eye keenly dart The  
threads that herald woe. Ah Lakshman, all these signs dismay, My  
soul that sinks, with dread, I know my love is torn away, Or,  
haply, she is dead.'

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CANTO LIX.: RĀMA'S RETURN.

When Rāma saw his brother stand

With none beside him, all unmanned, Eager he questioned why he came So far  
without the Maithil dame: 'Where is my wife, my darling, she Who to the  
wild wood followed me? Where hast thou left my lady, where The dame who  
chose my lot to share? Where is my love who balms my woe As through the  
forest wilds I go, Unkinged and banished and disgraced, -- My darling of the  
dainty waist? She nerves my spirit for the strife, She, only she gives zest  
to life, Dear as my breath is she who vies In charms with daughters of the  
skies. If Janak's child be mine no more, In splendour fair as virgin  
ore, The lordship of the skies and earth To me were prize of little  
worth. Ah, lives she yet, the Maithil dame, Dear as the soul within this  
frame? O, let not all my toil be vain, The banishment, the woe and pain! O,  
let not dark Kaikeyi win

The guerdon of her teacherous sin, If, Sítá lost, my days I end, And thou  
without me homeward wend! O, let not good Kaus'alyá shed Her bitter tears  
to mourn me dead, Nor her proud rival's hest obey, Strong in her son and  
queenly sway! Back to my cot will I repair If Sítá live to greet me there,  
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But if my wife have perished, I Reft of ray love will surely die, O  
Lakshman, if I seek my cot, Look for my love and find her not Sweet welcome  
with her smile to give, I tell thee, I will cease to live. O answer, -- let  
thy words be plain, -- Lives Sita yet, or is she slain? 'Didst thou thy  
sacred trust betray Till ravening giants seized the prey? Ah me, so young,  
so soft and fair, Lapped in all bliss, untried by care, Rent from her own  
dear husband, how Will she support her misery now? That voice, O Lakshman  
smote thine ear, And filled, I ween, thy heart with fear, When on thy name  
for succour cried

The treacherous giant ere he died. That voice too like mine own, I  
ween, Was heard by the Videhan queen. She bade thee seek my side to aid, And  
quickly was the hest obeyed, But ah, thy fault I needs must blame, To leave  
alone the helpless dame, And let the cruel giants sate The fury of their  
murderous hate. Those blood-devouring demons all Grieve in their souls for  
Khara's fall, And Sítá, none to guard her side. Torn by their cruel hands  
has died. I sink, O tamer of thy foes, Deep in the sea of whelming  
woes. What can I now? I must endure The mighty grief that mocks at cure.'  
Thus, all his thoughts on Síta bent, To Janasthán the chieftain  
went, Hastening on with eager stride, And Lakshman hurried by his side. With  
toil and thirst and hunger worn, His breast with doubt and anguish torn,  
He sought the well-known spot. Again, again he turned to chide With  
quivering lips which terror dried: He looked, and found her not. Within  
his leafy home he sped, Each pleasant spot he visited

Where oft his darling strayed. 'Tis as I feared', he cried, and  
there, Yielding to pangs too great to bear, He sank by grief dismayed.

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CANTO LX.: LAKSHMAN REPROVED.

But Ráma ceased not to upbraid.

His brother for untimely aid, And thus, while anguish wrung his breast, The  
chief with eager question pressed: 'Why, Lakshman, didst thou hurry  
hence And leave my wife without defence? I left her in the wood with  
thee. And deemed her safe from jeopardy. When first thy form appeared in  
view, I marked that Sítá come not too. With woe my troubled soul was  
rent, Prophetic of the dire event. Thy coming steps afar I spied, I saw no  
Sítá by thy side. And felt a sudden throbbing dart Through my left eye, and  
arm, and heart.' Lakshman, with Fortune's marks impressed, His brother  
mournfully addressed: 'Not by my heart's free impulse led, Leaving thy wife  
to thee I sped; But by her keen reproaches sent, O Ráma, to thine aid I  
went. She heard afar a mournful cry, 'O save me, Lakshman, or I die.' The  
voice that spoke in moving tone

Smote on her ear and seemed thine own. Soon as those accents reached her  
ear She yielded to her woe and fear, She wept o'ercome by grief, and

cried, 'Fly, Lakshman, fly to Ráma's side.' Though many a time she bade me speed, Her urgent prayer I would not heed. I bade her in thy strength confide, And thus with tender words replied: 'No giant roams the forest shade From whom thy lord need shrink dismayed. No human voice, believe me, spoke Those words thy causeless fear that woke. Can he whose might can save in woe The heavenly Gods e'er stoop so low, And with those piteous accents call For succour like a caitiff thrall? And why should wandering giants choose The accents of thy lord to use, In alien tones my help to crave, And cry aloud. O Lakshman, save? Now let my words thy spirit cheer. Compose thy thoughts and banish fear. In hell, in earth, or in the skies There is not, and there cannot rise A champion whose strong arm can slay Thy Ráma in the battle fray. To heavenly hosts he ne'er would yield Though Indra led them to the field.

To soothe her thus I vainly sought: Her heart with woe was still distraught. While from her eyes the waters ran Her bitter speech she thus began: 'Too well I see thy dark intent: Thy lawless thoughts on me are bent. Thou hopest, but thy hope is vain, To win my love, thy brother slain. Not love, but Bharat's dark decree To share his exile counselled thee,

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Or hearing now his bitter cry Thou surely to his aid wouldst fly. For love of me, a stealthy foe Thou choosest by his side to go, And now thou longest that my lord Should die, and wilt no help afford.' Such were the words the lady said: With angry fire my eyes were red. With pale lips quivering in my rage I hastened from the hermitage. 'He ceased; and frenzied by his pain The son of Raghu spoke again: 'O brother, for thy fault I grieve, The Maithil dame alone to leave. Thou knowest that my arm is strong To save me from the giant throng,

And yet couldst leave the cottage, spurred To folly by her angry word. For this thy deed I praise thee not, -- To leave her helpless in the cot, And thus thy sacred charge forsake For the wild words a woman spake. Yea thou art all to blame herein, And very grievous is thy sin. That anger swayed thy faithless breast And made thee false to my behest. An arrow speeding from my bow Has laid the treacherous giant low, Who lured me eager for the chase Far from my hermit dwelling-place. The string with easy hand I drew, The arrow as in pastime flew, The wounded quarry bled. The borrowed form was cast away, Before mine eye a giant lay With bright gold braceleted. My arrow smote him in the chest: The giant by the pain distressed Raised his loud voice on high. Far rang the mournful sound: mine own, It seemed, were accent, voice, and tone, They made thee leave my spouse alone And to my rescue fly, 'Next: Canto LXI.: Ráma's Lament. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LXI.: RÁMA'S LAMENT.

As Ráma sought his leafy cot

Through his left eye keen throbbings shot, His wonted strength his frame forsook, And all his body reeled and shook. Still on those dreadful signs he thought, Sad omens with disaster fraught, And from his troubled heart he cried, 'O, may no ill my spouse betide!' He hastened to his dwelling-place, Then sinking neath his misery's weight, He looked and found it desolate. Tossing his mighty arms on high He sought her with an eager cry. From spot to spot he wildly ran Each corner of his home to scan. He looked, but Sítá was not there; His cot was disolate and bare, Like streamlet in the winter frost, The glory of her lilies lost. With leafy tears the sad trees wept As a wild wind their branches swept. Mourned bird and deer, and every flower Drooped fainting round the lonely bower. The silvan deities had fled The spot where all the light was dead, Where hermit coats of skin displayed, And piles of sacred grass were laid. He saw, and maddened by his pain Cried in lament again, again: 'Where is she, dead or torn away. Lost, or some hungry giant's prey? Or did my darling chance to rove For fruit and blossoms though the grove? Or has she

sought the pool or rill, Her pitcher from the wave to fill? 'His eager eyes on fire with pain He roamed about with maddened brain. Each grove and glade he searched with care, He sought, but found no Sítá there. He wildly rushed from hill to hill; From tree to tree, from rill to rill. As bitter woe his bosom rent Still Ráma roamed with fond lament: 'O sweet Kadamba say has she Who loved thy bloom been seen by thee? If thou have seen her face most fair, Say, gentle tree, I pray thee, where. O Bel tree with thy golden fruit Round as her breast, no more be mute. Where is my radiant darling, gay In silk that mocks thy glossy spray? O Arjun, say, where is she now Who loved to touch thy scented bough? Do not thy graceful friend forget, But tell me, is she living yet? Speak, Basil, thou must surely know, For like her limbs thy branches show, -- Most lovely in thy fair array Of twining plant and tender spray. Sweet Tila, fairest of the trees, Melodious with the hum of bees, Where is my darling Sita, tell, -- The dame who loved thy flowers so well? Aëoka, act thy gentle part, -- Named Heartsease, I give me what thou art,

To these sad eyes my darling show And free me from this load of woe. O Palm, in rich ripe fruitage dressed Round as the beauties of her breast, p. 301

If thou have heart to know and feel, My peerless consort's fate reveal. Hast thou, Rose-apple, chanced to view My darling bright with golden hue? If thou have seen her quickly speak, Where is the dame I wildly seek? O glorious Cassia, thou art gay With all thy loveliest bloom to-day, Where is my dear who loved to hold In her full lap thy flowery gold? 'To many a tree and plant beside,

To Jasmin, Mango, Sál, he cried. 'Say, hast thou seen, O gentle deer, The fawn-eyed Sítá wandering here? It may be that my love has strayed To sport with fawns beneath the shade, If thou, great elephant, have seen My darling of the lovely mien, Whose rounded limbs are soft and fine As is that lissome trunk of thine, O noblest of wild creatures, show Where is the dame thou needs must know. O tiger, hast thou chanced to see My darling? very fair is she. Cast all thy fear away, declare, Where is my moon-faced darling, where? There, darling of the lotus eye, I see thee, and 'tis vain to fly. Wilt thou not speak, dear love? I see Thy form half hidden by the tree. Stay if thou love me, Sítá, stay In pity cease thy heartless play, Why mock me now? thy gentle breast Was never prone to cruel jest. 'Tis vain behind yon bush to steal: Thy shimmering silks thy path reveal. Fly not, mine eyes pursue thy way; For pity's sake, dear Sítá, stay. Ah me, ah me, my words are vain; My gentle love is lost or slain.

How could her tender bosom spurn Her husband on his home-return? Ah no, my love is surely dead, Fierce giants on her flesh have fed, Rending the soft limbs of their prey When I her lord was far away. That moon-bright face, that polished brow, Red lips, bright teeth -- what are they now? Alas, my darling's shapely neck She loved with chains of gold to deck. -- That neck that mocked the sandal scent, The ruthless fiends have grasped and rent Alas, 'twas vain those arms to raise Soft as the young tree's tender sprays Ah, dainty meal for giants' lips Were arms and quivering finger tips. Ah, she who counted many a friend Was left for fiends to seize and rend, Was left by me without defence From ravening giants' violence. O Lakshman of the arm of might, Say, is my darling love in sight;

O dearest Sítá. where art thou? Where is my darling consort now?' Thus as he cried in wild lament From grove to grove the mourner went. Here for a moment sank to rest. Then started up and onward pressed.

Thus roaming on like one distraught Still for his vanished love he sought. He searched in wood and hill and glade, By rock and brook and wild cascade. Through groves with restless step he sped And left no spot unvisited. Through lawns and woods of vast extent Still searching for his love he went With eager steps and fast. For many a weary hour he toiled, Still in his fond endeavour foiled, Yet hoping to the last.

## Footnotes

300:1 As'oka is compounded of a not and s'oka grief.

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### CANTO LXII.: RĀMA'S LAMENT.

When all the toil and search was vain

He sought, his leafy home again.'Twas empty still: all scattered layThe  
seats of grass in disarray.He raised his shapely arms on highAnd spoke  
aloud with bitter cry:'Where is the Maithil dame?' he said,'O, whither  
has my darling fled?Who can have borne away my dame,Or feasted on her  
tender frame?If, Sītā hidden by some tree,Thou joyest still to mock at  
me,Cease, cease thy cruel sport, and takeCompassion, or my heart will  
break.Bethink thee, love, the gentle fawnsWith whom thou playest on the  
lawns,Impatient for thy coming waitWith streaming eyes disconsolate.Reft  
of my love. I needs must goHence to the shades weighed down by woe.The  
king our sire will see me there,And cry, 'O perjured Rāma, where.Where is  
thy faith, that thou canst speedFrom exile ere the time decreed?   Ah  
Sītā, whither hast thou fled

And left me here disquieted,A hapless mourner, reft of home.Too feeble  
with my woe to cope?E'en thus indignant Glory fliesThe wretch who stains  
his soul with lies.If thou, my love, art lost to view,I in my woe must  
perish too.'   Thus Rama by big grief distraughtWept for the wife he  
vainly sought.And Lakshman whose fraternal breastLonged for his weal, the  
chief addressed

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Whose soul gave way beneath the painWhen all his eager search was  
vain.Like some great elephant who standsSinking upon the treacherous  
sands:'Not yet, O wisest chief, despair;Renew thy toil with utmost  
care.This noble hill where trees are greenHas many a cave and dark  
ravine.The Maithil lady day by dayDelighted in the woods to stray.Deep in  
the grove she wanders still.Or walks by blossom-covered rill,Or fish-  
loved river stealing throughTall clusters of the dark bamboo.Or else the  
dame with arch design

To prove thy mood, O Prince, and mine,Far in some sheltering thicket  
liesTo frighten ere she meet our eyes.Then come, renew thy labour,  
traceThe lady to her lurking-place,And search the wood from side to  
aideTo know where Sītā loves to bide.Collect thy thoughts, O royal  
chief,Nor yield to unavailing grief.'   Thus Lakshman, by attention  
stirred,To fresh attempts his brother spurred,And Rāma, as he ceased,  
beganWith Lakshman's aid each spot to scan.In eager search their way they  
tookThrough wood, o'er hill, by pool and brook,They roamed each mount,  
nor spared to seekOn ridge and crag and towering peak.They sought the  
dame in every spot;But all in vain; they found her not.Above, below, on  
every sideThey ranged the hill, and Rāma cried,'O Lakshman, O my brother  
stillNo trace of Sītā on'the hill!'Then Lakshman as he roamed the  
woodBeside his glorious brother stood,And while fierce grief his bosom  
burnedThis answer to the chief retained:'Thou, Rāma, after toil and  
painWilt meet the Maithil dame again,  
As Vishnu, Buli's might subdued,His empire of the earth renewed.'

1

Then Rāma cried in mournful tone,His spirit by his woe o'erthrown;'The  
wood is searched from side to side,No distant spot remains untried,No  
lilied pool, no streamlet whereThe lotus buds are fresh and fair.Our eyes  
have searched the hill with allHis caves and every waterfall,--But ah,  
not yet I find my wife,More precious than the breath of life.'   As thus  
he mourned his vanished dameA mighty trembling seized his frame,  
And by o'erpowering grief assailed,  
His troubled senses reeled and failed.Too great to bear his misery  
grew,And many a long hot sigh he drew,Then as he wept and sobbed and  
sighed,"O Sita, O my love!" he cried.Then Lakshman, joining palm to

palm,Tried every art his woe to calm.But Rāma in his anguish heardOr  
heeded not one soothing word.Still for his spouse he mourned, and  
shrillRang out his lamentation still,Footnotes

302:1 See Book I. Canto XXXI.

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CANTO LXIII.: RĀMA'S LAMENT.

Thus for his wife in vain he sought:

Then, his sad soul with pain distraught,The hero of the lotus eyesFilled  
all the air with frantic cries.O'erpowered by love's strong influence,  
heHis absent wife still seemed to see,And thus with accents weak and  
faintRenewed with tears his wild complaint:'Thou,fairer than their bloom,  
my spouse,Art hidden by As'oka boughs.Those blooms have power to banish  
care,But now they drive me to despair.Thine arms are like the plantain's  
stem:Why let the plantain cover them?Thou art not hidden, love; thy  
feetbetray thee in thy dark retreat.Thou runnest in thy girlish sportTo  
flowery trees, thy dear resort.But cease, O cease, my love, I pray,To vex  
me with thy cruel play.Such mockery in a holy spotWhere hermits dwell  
beseems thee not.Ah, now I see thy fickle mindTo scornful mood too much  
inclined,Come, large-eyed beauty. I implore;

Lone is the cot so dear before.   No, she is slain by giants; theyHave  
stolen or devoured their prey,Or surely at my mournful cryMy darling to  
her lord would fly.O Lakshman, see those troops of deer:In each sad eye  
there gleams a tear.Those looks of woe too clearly sayMy consort is the  
giants' prey.O noblest, fairest of the fair,Where art thou. best of  
women, where?This day will dark Kaikeyi findFresh triumph for her evil  
mind,When I, who with my Sītā cameReturn alone, without my dame.But ne'er  
can I return to seeThose chambers where my queen should beAnd hear the  
scornful people speak

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Of Rāma as a coward weak.For mine will be the coward's shameWho let the  
foeman steal his dame.How can I seek my home, or brookUpon Videha's king  
to look?How listen, when he bids me tell,My wanderings o'er, that all is  
well?He, when I meet his eager view,  
Will mark that Sītā comes not too,And when he hears the mournful taleHis  
wildered sense will reel and fail.'O Das'aratha.' will he cry,'Blest in  
thy mansion in the sky!'Ne'er to that town my steps shall bend,That town  
which Bharat's arms defend,For e'en the blessed homes aboveWould seem a  
waste without my love.Leave me, my brother, here, I pray;To fair Ayodhyā  
bend thy way.Without my love I cannot bearTo live one hour in blank  
despair.Round Bharat's neck thy fond arms twine,And greet him with these  
words of mine:'Dear brother, still the power retain,And o'er the land as  
monarch reign.'With salutation next inclineBefore thy mother, his, and  
mine.Still, brother, to my words attend,And with all care each dame  
befriend.To my dear mother's ear relateMy mournful tale and Sītā's fate.'  
Thus Rāma gave his sorrow vent,And from a heart which anguish  
rent,Mourned for his wife in loud lament,-   Her of the glorious  
hair,From Lakshman's cheek the colour fled,And o'er his heart came sudden  
dread,

Sick, faint, and sore disquieted   By woe too great to bear.

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CANTO LXIV.: RAMA'S LAMENT.

Reft of his love, the royal chief,

Weighed down beneath his whelming grief,Desponding made his brother  
shareHis grievous burden of despair.Over his sinking bosom rolledThe  
flood of sorrow uncontrolled.   And as he wept and sighed,In mournful  
accents faint and slowWith words congenial to his woe,   To Lakshman thus  
he cried:'Brother, I ween, beneath the sun,Of all mankind there lives not

oneSo full of sin, whose hand has done    Such cursed deeds as mine.For my  
sad heart with misery bleeds,As, guerdon of those evil deeds,  
Still greater woe to woe succeeds

In never-ending line.A life of sin I freely chose,And from my past  
transgression flowsA ceaseless flood of bitter woes    My folly to  
repay.The fruit of sin has ripened fast.Through many a sorrow have I  
passed,

And now the crowning grief at last    Falls on my head to-day.From all my  
faithful friends I fled,My sire is numbered with the dead,My royal rank  
is forfeited,    My mother far away.These woes on which I sadly thinkFill,  
till it raves above the brink,The stream of grief in which I sink,--  
The flood which naught can stay.Ne'er, brother, ne'er have I  
complained;Though long by toil and trouble pained,Without a murmur I  
sustained    The woes of woodland life.But fiercer than the flames that  
riseWhen crackling wood the food supplies,--Flashing a glow through  
evening skies,--    This sorrow for my wife.Some cruel fiend has seized  
the preyAnd torn my trembling love away,While, as he bore her through the  
skies,She shrieked aloud with frantic cries,It tones of fear which, wild  
and shrill,Retained their native sweetness still.Ah me, that breast so  
soft and sweet,For sandal's precious perfume meet,Now all detained with  
dust and gore,Shall meet my fond caress no more.That face, whose lips  
with tones so clear

Made pleasant music, sweet to hear,--With soft locks plaited o'er the  
brow,--Some giant's hand is on it now.It smiles not, us the dear light  
failsWhen Ráhu's jaw the moon assails.Ah, my true love! that shapely  
neckShe loved with fairest chains to deck,The cruel demons rend, and  
drainThe lifeblood from each mangled vein.Ah, when the savage monsters  
cameAnd dragged away the helpless dame,'The lady of the long soft  
eyeCalled like a lamb with piteous cry.Beneath this rock, O Lakshman,  
see,My peerless consort sat with me,And gently talked to thee the  
while,Her sweet lips opening with a smile.Here is that fairest stream  
which sheLoved ever, bright Godávarí.Ne'er can the dame have passed this  
way:So far alone she would not stray,Nor has my darling, lotus-  
eyed,Sought lilies by the river's side,For without me she ne'er would go

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To streamlets where the wild flowers grow,Tell me not, brother, she has  
strayed

To the dark forest's distant shadeWhere blooming boughs are gay and  
sweet,And bright birds love the cool retreat.Alone my love would never  
dare,--My timid love,--to wander there.    O Lord of Day whose eye sees  
allWe act and plan, on thee I call:For naught is hidden from thy sight,--  
Great witness thou of wrong and right.Where is she, lost or torn  
away?Dispel my torturing doubt and say.And O thou Wind who blowest  
free,The worlds have naught concealed from thee.List to my prayer, reveal  
one traceOf her, the glory of her race.Say, is she stolen hence, or  
dead,Or do her feet the forest tread?'    Thus with disordered senses,  
faintWith woe he poured his sad complaint,And then, a better way to  
teach,Wise Lakshman spoke in seemly speech:'Up, brother dear, thy grief  
subdue,With heart and soul thy search renew.When woes oppress and dangers  
threatBrave effort ne'er was fruitless yet.'He spoke, but Ráma gave no  
heedTo valiant Lakshman's prudent rede.With double force the flood of  
painRushed o'er his yielding soul again.

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CANTO LXV.: RAMA'S WRATH.

With piteous voice, by woe subdued,  
Thus Raghu's son his speech renewed:'Thy steps, my brother, quickly  
turnTo bright Godávarí and learnIf Sítá to the stream have hiedTo cull  
the lilies on its side.'    Obedient to the words he said,His brother to  
the river sped.The shelving banks he searched in vain,And then to Ráma

turned again. 'I searched, but found her not,' he cried; 'I called aloud, but none replied. Where can the Maithil lady stray, Whose sight would chase our cares away? I know not where, her steps untraced, Roams Sítá of the dainty waist.' When Ráma heard the words he spoke Again he sank beneath the stroke, And with a bosom anguish-fraught Himself the lovely river sought. There standing on the shelving side, 'O Sítá, where art thou?' he cried.

No spirit voice an answer gave, No murmur from the trembling wave Of sweet Godávarí declared The outrage which the fiend had dared 'O speak!' the pitying spirits cried, But yet the stream their prayer denied, Nor dared she, coldly mute, relate To the sad chief his darling's fate Of Rávan's awful form she thought, And the dire deed his arm had wrought, And still withheld by fear dismayed, The tale for which the mourner prayed. When hope was none, his heart to cheer, That the bright stream his cry would hear While sorrow for his darling tore His longing soul he spake once more: 'Though I have sought with tears and sighs Godárvarí no word replies, O say, what answer can I frame To Janak father of my dame? Or how before her mother stand Leading no Sítá by the hand? Where is my loyal love who went Forth with her lord to banishment? Her faith to me she nobly held Though from my realm and home expelled, -- A hermit, nursed on woodland fare, -- She followed still and soothed my care. Of all my friends am I bereft, Nor is my faithful consort left. How slowly will the long nights creep

While comfortless I wake and weep! O, if my wife may yet be found, With humble love I'll wander round This Janasthán, Pras'ravan's hill, Mandákini's delightful rill. See how the deer with gentle eyes Look on my face and sympathize. I mark their soft expression: each Would soothe me, if it could, with speech.' A while the anxious throng he eyed. And 'Where is Sítá, where?' he cried. Thus while hot tears his utterance broke The mourning son of Raghu spoke. The deer in pity for his woes Obeyed the summons and arose. Upon his right thy stood, and raised Their sad eyes up to heaven and gazed Each to that quarter bent her look Which Rávan with his captive took. Then Raghu's son again they viewed, And toward that point their way pursued. Then Lakshman watched their looks intent As moaning on their way they went, And marked each sign which struck his sense With mute expressive influence, Then as again his sorrow woke Thus to his brother chief he spoke: 'Those deer thy eager question heardp. 305

And rose at once by pity stirred:

See, in thy search their aid they lend, See, to the south their looks they bend. Arise, dear brother, let us go The way their eager glances show, If haply sign or trace descried Our footsteps in the search may guide.' The son of Raghu gave assent, And quickly to the south they went; With eager eyes the earth he scanned, And Lakshman followed close at hand. An each to other spake his thought, And round with anxious glances sought, Scattered before them in the way, Blooms of a fallen garland lay. When Ráma saw that flowery rain He spoke once more with bitterest pain: 'O Lakshman every flower that lies Here on the ground I recognize. I culled them in the grove, and there My darling twined them in her hair. The sun, the earth, the genial breeze Have spared these flowers my soul to please.' Then to that woody hill he prayed, Whence flashed afar each wild cascade: 'O best of mountains, hast thou seen A dome of perfect form and mien In some sweet spot with trees o'ergrown, -

My darling whom I left alone?' Then as a lion threatens a deer He thundered with a voice of fear: 'Reveal her, mountain, to my view With golden limbs and golden hue. Where is my darling Sítá? speak Before I rend thee peak from peak.' The mountain seemed her track to show, But told not all he sought to know. Then Das'aratha's son renewed His summons as the mount he viewed: 'Soon as my flaming arrows fly, Consumed to ashes shall thou lie Without a herb or bud or tree, And birds no more shall dwell in thee. And if this stream my prayer deny, My wrath this day her flood shall



dry, Because she lends no aid to trace My darling of the lotus face.' Thus Rāma spake as though his ire Would scorch them with his glance of fire; Then searching farther on the ground The footprint of a fiend he found, And small light traces here and there, Where Sītā in her great despair, Shrieking for Rāma's help, had fled Before the giant's mighty tread. His careful eye each trace surveyed Which Sītā and the fiend had made, --

The quivers and the broken bow And ruined chariot of the foe, -- And told, distraught by fear and grief, His tidings to his brother chief: 'O Lakshman, here,' he cried 'behold My Sītā's earrings dropped with gold. Here lie her garlands torn and rent, Here lies each glittering ornament. O look, the ground on every side With blood-like drops of gold is dyed. The fiends who wear each strange disguise Have seized, I ween, the helpless prize. My lady, by their hands o'erpowered, Is slaughtered, mangled, and devoured. Methinks two fearful giants came And waged fierce battle for the dame. Whose, Lakshman, was this mighty bow With pearls and gems in glittering row Cast to the ground the fragments lie, And still their glory charms the eye. A bow so mighty sure was planned For heavenly God or giant's hand. Whose was this coat of golden mail Which, though its lustre now is pale, Shone like the sun of morning, bright With studs of glittering lazulite? Whose, Lakshman, was this bloom-wreathed shade With all its hundred ribs displayed? This screen, most meet for royal brow, With broken staff lies useless now. And these tall asses, goblin-faced, With plates of golden harness graced, Whose hideous forms are stained with gore Who is the lord whose yoke they bore? Whose was this pierced and broken car That shoots a flame-like blaze afar? Whose these spent shafts at random spread, Each fearful with its iron head, -- With golden mountings fair to see, Long as a chariot's axle-tree? These quivers see, which, rent in twain, Their sheaves of arrows still contain. Whose was this driver? Dead and cold, His hands the whip and reins still hold. See, Lakshman, here the foot I trace Of man, nay, one of giant race. The hatred that I nursed of old Grows mightier now a hundred fold Against these giants, fierce of heart, Who change their forms by magic art. Slain, eaten by the giant press, Or stolen is the votaress, Nor could her virtue bring defence To Sītā seized and hurried hence. O, if my love be slain or lost All hope of bliss for me is crossed. The power of all the worlds were vain To bring one joy to soothe my pain.

The spirits with their blinded eyes Would look in wonder, and despise The Lord who made the worlds, the great Creator when compassionate. And so, I ween, the Immortals turn Cold eyes upon me now, and spurn

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The weakling prompt at pity's call, Devoted to the good of all. But from this day behold me changed, From every gentle grace estranged. Now be it mine all life to slay, And sweep these cursed fiends away. As the great sun leaps up the sky, And the cold moonbeams fade and die, So vengeance rises in my breast. One passion conquering all the rest. Gandharvas in their radiant place, The Yakshas, and the giant race, Kinnars and men shall look in vain For joy they ne'er shall see again. The anguish of my great despair, O Lakshman, fills the heaven and air; And I in wrath all life will slay Within the triple world to-day. Unless the Gods in heaven who dwell Restore my Sītā safe and well,

I armed with all the fires of Fate. The triple world will devastate. The troubled stars from heaven shall fall, The moon be wrapped in gloomy pall, The fire be quenched, the wind be stilled, The radiant sun grow dark and chilled; Crushed every mountain's towering pride, And every lake and river dried, Dead every creeper, plant, and tree, And lost for aye the mighty sea. Thou shalt the word this day behold In wild disorder uncontrolled, With dying life which naught defends From the fierce storm my bowstring sends. My shafts this day, for Sītā's sake, The life of every fiend shall take. The Gods this day shall see the force That wings my

arrows on their course, And mark how far that course is held, By my  
unsparing wrath impelled. No God, not one of Daitya strain, Goblin or  
Rákshas shall remain. My wrath shall end the worlds, and all Demons and  
Gods therewith shall fall. Each world which Gods, the Dánav race, And  
giants make their dwelling place, Shall fall beneath my arrows sent In fury  
when my bow is bent. The arrows loosened from my string  
Confusion on the worlds shall bring. For she is lost or breathes no  
more, Nor will the Gods my love restore. Hence all on earth with life and  
breath This day I dedicate to death. All, till my darling they reveal, The  
fury of my shafts shall feel.' Thus as he spake by rage impelled, Red  
grew his eyes, his fierce lips swelled. His bark coat round his form he  
drew And coiled his hermit braids anew. Like Rudra when he yearned to  
slay The demon Tripur

1 in the fray.

So looked the hero brave and wise, The fury flashing from his eyes. Then  
Ráma, conqueror of the foe, From Lakshman's hand received his bow, Strained  
the great string, and laid thereon A deadly dart that flashed and  
shone, And spake these words as fierce in ire As He who ends the worlds  
with fire: 'As age and time and death and fate All life with checkless  
power await, So Lakshman in my wrath to-day My vengeful might shall brook  
no stay, Unless this day I see my dame In whose sweet form is naught to  
blame, -- Yea, as before, my love behold Fair with bright teeth and perfect  
mould,

This world shall feel a deadly blow Destroyed with ruthless overthrow, And  
serpent lords and Gods of air, Gandharvas, men, the doom shall share.'

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CANTO LXVI.: LAKSHMAN'S SPEECH.

He stood incensed with eyes of flame,  
Still mourning for his ravished dame, Determined, like the fire of Fate, To  
leave the wide world desolate. His ready bow the hero eyed, And as again,  
again he sighed, The triple world would fain consume Like Hara  
2 in the day of doom.

Then Lakshman moved with sorrow viewed His brother in unwonted mood, And  
reverent palm to palm applied, Thus spoke with lips which terror dried 'Thy  
heart was ever soft and kind, To every creature's good inclined. Cast not  
thy tender mood away, Nor yield to anger's mastering sway. The moon for  
gentle grace is known, The sun has splendour all his own, The restless wind  
is free and fast, And earth in patience unsurpassed. So glory with her  
noble fruit Is thine eternal attribute. O, let not, for the sin of one, The  
triple world be all undone. I know not whose this car that lies  
In fragments here before our eyes, Nor who the chiefs who met and  
fought, Nor what the prize the foemen sought; Who marked the ground with  
hoof and wheel,

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Or whose the hand that plied the steel Which left this spot, the battle  
o'er, Thus sadly dyed with drops of gore. Searching with utmost care I  
view The signs of one and not of two. Where'er I turn mine eyes I trace No  
mighty host about the place. Then mete not out for one offence This all-  
involving recompense, For kings should use the sword they bear, Put mild in  
time should learn to spare, Thou, ever moved by misery's call, Waft the  
great hope and stay of all Throughout the world who would not blame This  
outrage on thy ravished dame? Gandharvas, Dánavs, Gods, the trees, The  
rocks, the rivers, and the seas, Can ne'er in aught thy soul offend, As one  
whom holiest rites befriend. But him who dared to steal the dame Pursue, O  
King, with ceaseless aim, With me, the hermits' holy band,  
And thy great bow to arm thy hand By every mighty flood we'll seek, Each  
wood, each hill from base to peak. To the fair homes of Gods we'll fly, And  
bright Gandharvas in the sky, Until we reach, where'er he be, The wretch  
who stole thy spouse from thee, Then if the Gods will not restore Thy Sítá

when the search is o'er, Then, royal lord of Kos'al's land, No longer hold  
thy vengeful hand. If meekness, prayer, and right be weak To bring thee  
back the dame we seek, Up, brother, with a deadly shower Of gold-bright  
shafts thy foes o'erpower, Fierce as the flashing levin sent From King  
Mahendra's firmament.

Footnotes

306:1 An Asur or demon, king of Tripura, the modern  
Tipperah.

306:2 S'iva. Next: Canto LXVII.: Rāma Appeased. Sacred Texts Hinduism  
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CANTO LXVII.: RĀMA APPEASED.

As Rāma, pierced by sorrow's sting,  
Lamented like a helpless thing, And by his mighty woe distraught Was last  
in maze of troubled thought, Sumitrā's son with loving care Consoled him in  
his wild despair, And while his feet he gently pressed With words like  
these the chief addressed; 'For sternest vow and noblest deed Was  
Das'aratha blessed with seed. Thee for his son the king obtained, Like  
Amrit by the Gods regained. Thy gentle graces won his heart, And all too  
weak to live apart The monarch died, as Bharat told, And lives on high mid  
Gods enrolled.

If thou, O Rāma, wilt not bear

This grief which fills thee with despair, How shall a weaker man e'er  
hope, Infirm and mean, with woe to cope? Take heart, I pray thee, noblest  
chief: What man who breathes is free from grief? Misfortunes come and burn  
like flame, Then fly as quickly as they came.

Yayāti son of Nahush reigned With Indra on the throne he gained. But  
falling for a light offence He mourned a while the consequence. Vasishtha,  
reverend saint and sage, Priest of our sire from youth to age, Begot a  
hundred sons, but they Were smitten in a single day.

1

And she, the queen whom all revere, The mother whom we hold so dear, The  
earth herself not seldom feels Fierce fever when she shakes and reels. And  
those twin lights, the world's great eyes, On which the universe relies, --  
Does not eclipse at times assail Their brilliance till their fires grow  
pale? The mighty Powers, the Immortal Blest Bend to a law which none  
contest. No God, no bodied life is free From conquering Fate's supreme  
decree, E'en S'akra's self must reap the meed Of virtue and of sinful  
deed. And O great lord of men, wilt thou Helpless beneath thy misery  
bow? No, if thy dame be lost or dead, O hero, still be comforted, Nor yield  
for ever to thy woe O'er-mastered like the mean and low. Thy peers, with  
keen far-reaching eyes,  
Spend not their hours in ceaseless sighs; In dire distress, in whelming  
ill Their manly looks are hopeful still. To this, great chief, thy reason  
bend, And earnestly the truth perpend. By reason's aid the wisest learn The  
good and evil to discern. With sin and goodness scarcely known Faint light  
by chequered lives is shown; Without some clear undoubted deed We mark not  
how the fruits succeed. In time of old, O thou most brave, To me thy lips  
such counsel gave. Vrihaspati

2 can scarcely find

New wisdom to instruct thy mind. For thine is wit and genius high Meet for  
the children of the sky. I rouse that heart benumbed by pain And call to  
vigorous life again. Be manly godlike vigour shown; Put forth that noblest  
strength, thine own.

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Strive, best of old Ikshváku's strain, Strive till the conquered foe be  
slain. Where is the profit or the joy If thy fierce rage the worlds  
destroy? Search till thou find the guilty foe,  
Then let thy hand no mercy show.'

Footnotes

307:1 See Book I, Canto LIX.

307:2 The Preceptor of the Gods

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CANTO LXVIII.: JATÁYUS.

Thus faithful Lakshman strove to cheer

The prince with counsel wise and clear.Who, prompt to seize the pith of  
all,Let not that wisdom idly fall.With vigorous effort he restrainedThe  
passion in his breast that reigned,And leaning on his bow for restHis  
brother Lakshman thus addressed:'How shall we labour now, reflect;Whither  
again our search direct?Brother, what plan canst thou deviseTo bring her  
to these longing eyes?' To him by toil and sorrow triedThe prudent  
Lakshman thus replied:'Come, though our labour yet be vain,And search  
through Janasthán again,-A realm where giant foes abound.And trees and  
creepers hide the ground.For there are caverns deep and dread,By deer and  
wild birds tenanted,And hills with many a dark abyss,Grotto and rock and  
precipice.There bright Gandharvas love to dwell,And Kinnars in each bosky  
dell.With me thy eager search to aid

Be every hill and cave surveyed.Great chiefs like thee, the best of  
men,Endowed with sense and piercing ken,Though tried by trouble never  
fail.Like rooted hills that mock the gale,' Then Ráma, pierced by  
anger's sting,Laid a keen arrow on his string,And by the faithful  
Lakshman's sideRoamed through the forest far and wide.Jatáyus there with  
blood-drops dyed,Lying upon the ground he spied,Huge as a mountain's  
shattered crest,Mid all the birds of air the best.In wrath the mighty  
bird he eyed,And thus the chief to Lakshman cried: 'Ah me, these signs  
the truth betray;My darling was the vulture's prey.Some demon in the  
bird's disguiseRoams through the wood that round us lies,On large eyed  
Sítá he has fed.And rest him now with wings outspreadBut my keen \* whose  
flight is true,Shall \*

An arrow on the string he laid,

And rushing near the bird surveyed,While earth to ocean's distant  
sideTrembled beneath his furious stride.With blood and froth on neck and  
beak

The dying bird essayed to speak,And with a piteous voice, distressed,Thus  
Das'aratha's son addressed: 'She whom like some sweet herb of graceThou  
seekest in this lonely place,Fair lady, is fierce Rávan's prey,Who took,  
beside, my life away.Lakshman and thou had parted henceAnd left the dame  
without defence,I saw her swiftly borne awayBy Rávan's might which none  
could stay.I hurried to the lady's aid,I crushed his car and royal  
shade,And putting forth my warlike mightHurled Rávan to the earth in  
fight.Here, Ráma, lies his broken bow,Here lie the arrows of the  
foe.There on the ground before thee areThe fragments of his battle  
car.There bleeds the driver whom my wingsBeat down with ceaseless  
buffetingsWhen toil my aged strength subdued,His sword my weary pinions  
hewed.Then lifting up the dame he bareHis captive through the fields of  
air.Thy vengeful blows from me restrain,Already by the giant slain.'  
When Ráma heard the vulture tellThe tale that proved his love so well,  
His bow upon the ground he placed,And tenderly the bird embraced:Then to  
the earth he fell o'erpowered,And burning tears both brothers  
showered,For double pain and anguish pressedUpon the patient hero's  
breast.The solitary bird be eyedWho in the lone wood gasped and  
sighed,And as again his anguish wokeThus Ráma to his brother spoke:  
'Expelled from power the woods I tread,My spouse is lost, the bird is  
dead.A fate so sad. I ween, would tameThe vigour of the glorious flame.If  
I to cool my fever triedTo cross the deep from side to side.The sea,--so  
hard my fate,--would dryHis waters as my feet came nigh.In all this world  
there lives not oneSo cursed as I beneath the sun;So strong a net of  
misery castAround me holds the captive fast,Best of all birds that play  
the wing,Loved, honoured by our sire the king,The vulture, in my fate

enwound,Lies bleeding, dying on the ground.' Then Rāma and his brother stirredp. 309

By pity mourned the royal bird,

And, as their hands his limbs caressed,Affection for a sire expressed.And Rāma to his bosom strainedThe bird with mangled wings distained, With crimson blood-drops dyed.He fell, and shedding many a tear, 'Where is my spouse than life more dear? Where is my love?' he cried.

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CANTO LXIX.: THE DEATH OF JATĀYUS.

As Rāma viewed with heart-felt yain

The vulture whom the fiend had slain,In words with tender love impressedHis brother chief he thus addressed: 'This royal bird with faithful thoughtFor my advantage strove and fought.Slain by the fiend in mortal strifeFor me he yields his noble life.See, Lakshman, how his wounds have bled;His struggling breath will soon have fled.Faint is his voice, and near to die,He scarce can lift his trembling eye.Jatāyus, if thou still can speak,Give, give the answer that I seek.The fate of ravished Sītā tell,And how thy mournful chance befell.Say why the giant stole my dame:What have I done that he could blame?What fault in me has Rāvan seenThat he should rob me of my queen?How looked the lady's moon-bright cheek?What were the words she found to speak?His strength, his might, his deeds declare:And tell the form he loves to wear.To all my questions make reply:

Where does the giant's dwelling lie?' The noble bird his glances bentOn Rāma as he made lament,And in low accents faint and weakWith anguish thus began to speak.'Fierce Rāvan, king of giant race,Stole Sītā from thy dwelling-place.He calls his magic art to aidWith wind and cloud and gloomy shade.When in the fight my power was spentMy wearied wings he cleft and rent.Then round the dame his arms he threw,And to the southern region flew.O Raghu's son. I gasp for breath,My swimming sight is dim in death.Even now before my vision passBright trees of \* with hair of grass,\*Brings on the thief a flood of woeThe giant in his haste \*

'Twas Vinda's hour,

1 or heeded not.

Those robbed at such a time obtain

Their plundered store and wealth again.He, like a fish that takes the bait,In briefest time shall meet his fate.Now be thy troubled heart controlledAnd for thy lady's loss consoled.For thou wilt slay the fiend in fight

And with thy dame have new delight.' With senses clear, though sorely tried,The royal vulture thus replied,While as he sank beneath his painForth rushed the tide of blood again.'Him,

2 brother of the Lord of Gold,

Vis'ravas' self begot of old.'Thus spoke the bird, and stained with goreResigned the breath that came no more. 'Speak, speak again!' thus Rāma cried,With reverent palm to palm applied,But from the frame the spirit fledAnd to the skiey regions sped.The breath of life had passed away.Stretched on the ground the body lay. When Rama saw the vulture lie,Hupe as a hill, with darksome eye,With many a poignant woe distressedHis brother chief he thus addressed:'Amid these haunted shades contentFull many a year this bird has spent.His life in home of giants passed,In Dandak wood he dies at last.The years in lengthened course have fledUntroubled o'er the vulture's head,And now he lies in death, for noneThe stern decrees of Fate may shun.See, Lakshman, how the vulture fellWhile for my sake he battled well.

And strove to free with onset boldMy Sītā from the giant's hold.Supreme amid the vulture kindHis ancient rule the bird resigned.And conquered in tho fruitless strifeGave for my sake his noble life.O Lakshman, many a time we seeGreat souls who keep the law's decree,With whom the weak sure

refuge find, In creatures of inferior kind. The kiss of her, my darling queen, Strikes with a pang less fiercely keen Than now this slaughtered bird to see Who nobly fought and died for me. As Das'aratha, good and great, Was glorious in his high estate, Honoured by all to all endeared, So was this royal bird revered. Bring fuel for the funeral site: These hands the solemn fire shall light

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And on the burning pyre shall lay The bird who died for me to-day. Now on the gathered wood shall lie The lord of all the birds that fly, And I will burn with honours due My champion whom the giant slew.

O royal bird of noblest heart, Graced with all funeral rites depart To bright celestial seats above, Rewarded for thy faithful love. Dwell in thy happy home with those Whose constant fires of worship rose. Live blest amid the unyielding brave, And those who land in largess gave. Sore grief upon his bosom weighed As on the pyre the bird he laid, And bade the kindled flame ascend To burn the body of his friend. Then with his brother by his side The hero to the forest hied. There many a stately deer he slew. The flesh around the bird to strew. The venison into balls he made. And on fair grass before him laid. Then that the parted soul might rise And find free passage to the skies, Each solemn word and text he said Which Brahmans utter o'er the dead. Then hastening went the princely pair To bright Godayaní, and there Libations of the stream they poured In honour of the vulture lord, With solemn ritual to the slain, As scripture's holy texts ordain. Thus offerings to the bird they gave

And bathed their bodies in the wave, The vulture monarch having wrought A hard and glorious feat, Honoured by Ráma sage in thought, Soared to his blissful seat. The brothers, when each rite was paid To him of birds supreme, Their hearts with new-found comfort stayed, And turned them from the stream. Like sovereigns of celestial race Within the wood they came, Each pondering the means to trace, The captor of the dame.

Footnotes

309:1 From the \*

309:2 Rávan

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CANTO LXX.: KABANDHA.

When every rite was duly paid

The princely brothers onward strayed, An eager in the lady's quest They turned their footsteps to the west. Through lonely woods that round them lay Ikshváku's children made their way, And armed with bow and shaft and brand

Pressed onward to the southern land. Thick trees and shrubs and creepers grew In the wild grove they hurried through. 'Twas dark and drear and hard to pass For tangled thorns and matted grass. Still onward with a southern course They made their way with vigorous force And passing through the mazes stood Beyond that vast and fearful wood. With toil and hardship yet unspent Three leagues from Janasthán they went, And speeding on their way at last Within the wood of Krauncha

1 passed:

A fearful forest wild and black As some huge pile of cloudy rack, Filled with all birds and beasts, where grew

Bright blooms of every varied hue. On Sítá bending every thought Through all the mighty wood they sought, And at the lady's loss dismayed Here for a while and there they stayed. Then turning farther eastward they Pursued three leagues their weary way, Passed Krauncha's wood and reached the grove Where elephants rejoiced to rove. The chiefs that awful wood surveyed Where deer and wild birds filled each glade, Where scarce a step the foot could take For tangled shrub and tree and brake. There in a mountain's woody side A cave the royal brothers spied, With dread abysses deep as hell, Where darkness never ceased to dwell. When, pressing on, the lords of men Stood near the entrance of the den, They saw within the dark

recessA huge misshapen giantess;A thing the timid heart that shookWith fearful shape and savage look.Terrific fiend, her voice was fierce,Long were her teeth to rend and pierce.The monster gorged her horrid feastOf flesh of many a savage beast,While her long locks, at random flung,Dishevelled o'er her shoulders hung.

Their eyes the royal brothers raised,And on the fearful monster gazed.Forth from her den she came and glancedAt Lakshman as he first advanced,Her eager arms to hold him spread,And 'Come and be my love' she said,Then as she held him to her breast,The prince in words like these addressed:'Behold thy treasure fond and fair: Ayomukhi

2 the name I bear.

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In thickets of each lofty hill,On islets of each brook and rill,With me delighted shalt thou play,And live for many a lengthened day.' Enraged he heard the monster woo;His ready sword he swiftly drew,And the sharp steel that quelled his foesCut through her breast and ear and nose.Thus mangled by his vengeful swordIn rage and pain the demon roared,And hideous with her awful faceSped to her secret dwelling place.Soon as the fiend had fled from sight,The brothers, dauntless in their might,Beached a wild forest dark and dreadWhose tangled ways were hard to tread.Then bravest Lakshman, virtuous youth,The friend of purity and truth,With reverent palm to palm appliedThus to his glorious brother cried: 'My arm presaging throbs amain,My troubled heart is sick with pain,And cheerless omens ill portendWhere'er my anxious eyes I bend.Dear brother, hear my words: advanceResolved and armed for every chance,For every sign I mark to-dayForetells a peril in the way.This bird of most ill-omened note,Loud streaming with discordant throat,Announces with a warning cryThat strife and victory are nigh.' Then as the chiefs their search pursuedThroughout the dreary solitude,They heard amazed a mighty soundThat broke the very trees around.As though a furious tempest passedCrashing the wood beneath its blast.Then Ráma raised his trusty sword,And both the hidden cause explored.There stood before their wondering eyesA fiend broad-chested, huge of size.A vast misshapen trunk they sawIn height surpassing nature's law.It stood before them dire and dread

Without a neck, without a head.Tall as some hill aloft in air,Its limbs were clothed with bristling hair,And deep below the monster's waistHis vast misshapen mouth was placed.His form was huge, his voice was loudAs some dark-tinted thunder cloud,Forth from his ample chest there cameA brilliance as of gushing flame.Beneath long lashes, dark and keenThe monster's single eye was seen.Deep in his chest, long, fiercely bright,It glittered with terrific light.He swallowed down his savage fareOf lion, bird, and slaughtered bear,Aud with huge teeth exposed to view O'er his great lips his tongue he drew.

His arms unshapely, vast and dread,A league in length, he raised and spread.He seized with monstrous hands a herdOf deer and many a bear and bird.Among them all he picked and chose,Drew forward these, rejected those.Before the princely pair he stoodBarring their passage through the wood.A league of shade the chiefs had passedWhen on the fiend their eyes they cast.A monstrous shape without a head

With mighty arms before him spread,They saw that hideous trunk appearThat struck the trembling eye with fear.Then, stretching to their full extentHis awful arms with fingers bent,Bound Raghu's princely sons he castEach grasping limb and held them fast.Though strong of arm and fierce in fight,Each armed with bow and sword to smite,The royal brothers, brave and bold,Were helpless in the giant's hold.Then Raghu's son, heroic still,Felt not a pang his bosom thrill;But young, with no protection near,His brother's heart was sad with fear,And thus with trembling tongue he saidTo Ráma, sore disquieted: 'Ah me, ah me, my days are told:O see me in the giant's hold.Fly, son of Raghu, swiftly flee,And thy dear self

from danger free.Me to the fiend an offering give;Fly at thine ease  
thyself and live.Thou, great Katkutstha's son, I ween,Wilt find ere long  
thy Maithil queen,And when thou holdest, throned again,Thine old  
hereditary reign,With servants prompt to do thy will,O think upon thy  
brother still.'

As thus the trembling Lakshman cried,The dauntless Ráma thus  
replied:'Brother, from causeless dread forbear.A chief like thee should  
scorn despair.'He spoke to soothe his wild alarm:Then fierce Kabandha  
1 long of arm,

Among the Dánavs 2 first and best,  
The sons of Raghu thus addressed:'What men are you, whose shoulders  
showBroad as a bull's, with sword and bow,Who roam this dark and horrid  
place.Brought by your fate before my face?Declare by what occasion  
ledThese solitary wilds you tread,With swords and bows and shafts to  
pierce,

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Like bulls whose horns are strong and fierce.Why have you sought this  
forest landWhere wild with hunger's pangs I stand?Now as your steps my  
path have crossedEsteem your lives already lost? The royal brothers  
heard with dreadThe words which fierce Kabandha said.And Ráma to his  
brother cried,Whose cheek by blanching fear was dried. 'Alas, we fall,  
O valiant chief,From sorrow into direr grief,  
Still mourning her I hold so dearWe see our own destruction near.Mark,  
brother, mark what power has timeO'er all that live, in every chimeNow,  
lord of men, thyself and meInvolved in fatal danger see.'Tis not, be  
sure, the might of FateThat crushes all with deadly weight.Ne'er can the  
brave and strong, who knowThe use of spear and sword and bow,The force of  
conquering time withstand,But fall like barriers built of sand. Thus in  
calm strength which naught could shakeThe son of Das'aratha spake, With  
glory yet unstainedUpon Sumitrá's son he bentHis eyes, and firm in his  
intent His dauntless heart maintained.

Footnotes

310:1 Or Curlews' Wood.

310:2 Iron-faced.311:1 Kabandha means a trunk.

311:2 A class of mythological giants. In the Epic period  
they were probably personifications of the aborigines of  
India.

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CANTO LXXI.: KABANDHA'S SPEECH.

Kabandha saw each chieftain stand

Imprisoned by his mighty hand,Which like a snare around him pressedAnd  
thus the royal pair addressed:'Why, warriors, are your glances bentOn me  
whom hungry pangs torment?Why stand with wildered senses? FateHas brought  
you now my maw to sate.' When Lakshman heard, a while appalled,His  
ancient courage he recalled,And to his brother by his sideWith seasonable  
counsel cried : 'This vilest of the giant raceWill draw us to his side  
apace.Come, rouse thee; let the vengeful swordSmite off his arms, my  
honoured lord.This awful giant, vast of size,On his huge strength of arm  
relies,And o'er the world victorious, thusWith mighty force would  
slaughter us,But in cold blood to slay, O King.Discredit on the brave  
would bring,As when some victim in the riteShuns not the hand up raised  
to smite.' The monstrous fiend, to anger stirred,  
The converse of the brothers heard.

His horrid mouth he opened wideAnd drew the princes to his side.They,  
skilled due time and place to noteUnsheathed their glittering sword and  
smote,Till from the giant's shoulders theyHad hewn the mighty arms  
away.His trenchant falchion Ráma pliedAnd smote him on the better  
side,While valiant Lakshman on the leftThe arm that held him prisoned  
cleft,Then to the earth dismembered fellThe monster with a hideous



yell, And like a cloud's his deep roar went  
 Through earth and air and  
 firmament. Then as the giant's blood flowed fast,  
 On his cleft limbs his  
 eye he cast, And called upon the princely pair  
 Their names and lineage to  
 declare. Him then the noble Lakshman, blest  
 With fortune's favouring marks,  
 addressed, And told the fiend his brother's name  
 And the high blood of  
 which he came: 'Ikshváku's heir here Ráma stands,  
 Illustrious through a  
 hundred lands. I, younger brother of the heir,  
 O fiend, the name of  
 Lakshman bear. His mother stole his realm away  
 And drove him forth in woods to stray. Thus through the mighty forest  
 he Roamed with his royal wife and me. While glorious as a God he made  
 His dwelling in the greenwood shade, Some giant stole away his dame,  
 And seeking her we hither came. But tell me who thou art, and why  
 With headless trunk that towered so high. With flaming face beneath thy chest,  
 Thou liest crushed in wild unrest.' He heard the words that Lakshman spoke,  
 And memory in his breast awoke, Recalling Indra's words to mind  
 He spoke in gentle tones and kind: 'O welcome best of men, are ye  
 Whom, blest by fate, this day I see. A blessing on each trenchant blade  
 That low on earth these arms has laid! Thou, lord of men, incline thine ear  
 The story of my woe to hear, While I the rebel pride declare  
 Which doomed me to the form I wear.'  
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#### CANTO LXXII.: KABANDHA'S TALE.

'Lord of the mighty arm, of yore  
 A shape transcending thought I wore, And through the triple world's  
 extent My fame for might and valour went.

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Scarce might the sun and moon on high, Scarce Sakra, with ray beauty  
 vie. Then for a time this form I took, And the great world with trembling  
 shook The saints in forest shades who dwelt The terror of my presence  
 felt. But once I stirred to furious rage Great Sthúlas' nas, glorious  
 sage. Culling in woods his hermit food My hideous shape with fear he  
 viewed. Then forth his words of anger burst That bade me live a thing  
 accursed: 'Thou, whose delight is others' pain, This grisly form shalt  
 still retain.' Then when I prayed him to relent And fix some term of  
 punishment, -- Prayed that the curse at length might cease, He bade me thus  
 expect release:

'Let Ráma cleave thine arms away And on the pyre thy body lay, And then  
 shalt thou, set free from doom, Thine own fair shape once more assume.' O  
 Lakshman, hear my words: in me The world-illustrious Danu see. By Indra's  
 curse, subdued in fight, I wear this form which scares the sight. By  
 sternest penance long maintained The mighty Father's grace I gained. When  
 length of days the God bestowed, With foolish pride my bosom glowed. My  
 life, of lengthened years assured, I deemed from Sakra's might secured. Led  
 by my senseless pride astray I challenged Indra to the fray. A flaming bolt  
 with many a knot With his terrific arm he shot. And straight my head and  
 thighs compressed Were buried in my bulky chest. Deaf to each prayer and  
 piteous call He sent me not to Yama's hall. 'These prayers and cries,' he  
 said 'are vain. The Father's word must true remain But how my lengthened  
 life be spent By one the bolt has \* and rent? How can I live' I cried,  
 'unfed With shattered face and thighs and head?' As thus I spoke his grace  
 to crave

Arms each a league in length he gave, And opened in my chest beneath This  
 mouth supplied with fearful teeth. So my huge arms I used to cast Round  
 woodland creatures as they passed, And fed within the forest here On lion,  
 tiger, pard, \* and deer. Then Indra spake to soothe my grief: 'When Rama and  
 his brother chief From thy huge bulk those arms shall cleave, Then shall  
 the skies thy sould recieve.' Disguised in this terrific shape  
 I let no woodland thing escape,  
 And still my longing sould was pleased Whene'er my arms a victim  
 seized, For in these arms I fondly thought Would Ráma's self at last be

caught. Thus hoping, toiling many a day I yearned to cast my life away, And here, my lord, thou standest now: Blessings be thine for none but thou could cleave my arms with trenchant stroke: True are the words the hermit spoke. Now let me, best of warriors, lend my counsel, and thy plans befriend, And aid thee with advice in turn if thou with fire my corse wilt burn.' As thus the mighty Danu prayed  
With offer of his friendly aid, While Lakshman gazed with anxious eye, The virtuous Ráma made reply: 'Lakshman and I through forest shade from Janasthán a while had strayed. When none was near her, Rávan came and bore away my glorious dame, The giant's form and size unknown, I learn as yet his name alone. Not yet the power and might we know or dwelling of the monstrous foe. With none our helpless feet to guide we wander here by sorrow tried. Let pity move thee to requite our service in the funeral rite. Our hands shall bring the boughs that, dry where elephants have rent them, lie, Then dig a pit, and light the fire to burn thee as the laws require. Do thou as meed of this declare who stole my spouse, his dwelling where, O, if thou can. I pray thee say, And let this grace our deeds repay.' Danu had lent attentive ear the words which Ráma spoke to hear, And thus, a speaker skilled and tried. To that great orator replied: 'No heavenly lore my soul endows, Naught know I of thy Maithil spouse. Yet will I, when my shape I wear. Him who will tell thee all declare. Then, Ráma, will my lips disclose his name who well that giant knows but, till the flames my corse devour this hidden knowledge mocks my power. For through that curse's withering taint my knowledge now is small and faint. Unknown the giant's very name who bore away the Maithil dame. Cursed for my evil deeds I wore a shape which all the worlds abhor. Now ere with wearied steeds the sun through western skies his course have run, Deep in a pit my body lay

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And burn it in the wonted way. When in the grave my corse is placed, With fire and funeral honours graced, Then I, great chief, his name will tell who knows the giant robber well. With him, who guides his life aright, In league of trusting love unite, And he, O valiant prince, will be a faithful friend and aid to thee. For, Ráma, to his searching eyes the triple world uncovered lies.

For some dark cause of old, I ween, Through all the spheres his ways have been.'

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CANTO LXXIII.: KABANDHA'S COUNSEL.

The monster ceased: the princely pair

Heard great Kabandha's eager prayer. Within a mountain cave they sped, Where kindled fire with care they fed. Then Lakshman in his mighty hands brought ample store of lighted brands, And to a pile of logs applied the flame that ran from side to side. The spreading glow with gentle force consumed Kabandha's mighty corse, Till the unresting flames had drunk the marrow of the monstrous trunk, As balls of butter melt away amid the fires that o'er them play. Then from the pyre, like flame that glows undimmed by cloudy smoke, he rose, In garments pure of spot or speck, A heavenly wreath about his neck. Resplendent in his bright attire he sprang exultant from the pyre. While from neck, arm, and foot was sent the flash of gold and ornament. High on a chariot, bright of hue, Which swans of fairest pinion drew, He filled each region of the air  
With splendid glow reflected there, Then in the sky he stayed his car and called to Ráma from afar: 'Hear, chieftain, while my lips explain the means to win thy spouse again. Six plans, O prince, the wise pursue to reach the aims we hold in view.

1

When evils ripening sorely press, They load the wretch with new distress. So thou and Lakshman, tried by woe, Have felt at last a fiercer

blow, And plunged in bitterest grief to-day  
 Lament thy consort torn away.  
 There is no course but this: attend;  
 Make, best of friends, that chief thy friend.  
 Unless his prospering help thou gain  
 Thy plans and hopes must all be vain.  
 O Râma, hear my words, and seek,  
 Sugrîva, for of him I speak.  
 His brother Bâli, Indra's son,  
 Expelled him when the fight was won.  
 With four great chieftains, faithful still,  
 He dwells on Rishyamûka's hill.  
 --Fair mountain, lovely with the flow  
 Of Pampâ's waves that glide below,  
 --Lord of the Vânars  
 1b just and true,  
 Strong, very glorious, bright to view,  
 Unmatched in counsel, firm and meek,  
 Bound by each word his lips may speak,  
 Good, splendid, mighty, bold and brave,  
 Wise in each plan to guide and save,  
 His brother, fired by lust of sway,  
 Drove forth the prince in woods to stray.  
 In all thy search for Sîtâ  
 heThy ready friend and help will be.  
 With him to aid thee in thy quest  
 Dismiss all sorrow from thy breast.  
 Time is a mighty power, and none  
 His fixed decree can change or shun.  
 So rich reward thy toil shall bless,  
 And naught can stay thy sure success.  
 Speed hence, O chief, without delay,  
 To strong Sugrîva take thy way.  
 This hour thy footsteps onward bend,  
 And make that mighty prince thy friend.  
 With him before the attesting flame  
 In solemn truth alliance frame.  
 Nor wilt thou, if thy heart be wise,  
 Sugrîva, Vânar king, despise.  
 Of boundless strength, all shapes he wears,  
 He hearkens to a suppliant's prayers,  
 And, grateful for each kindly deed,  
 Will help and save in hour of need,  
 And you, I ween, the power possess  
 To aid his hopes and give redress.  
 He, let his cause succeed or fail,  
 Will help you, and you must prevail.  
 A banished prince, in fear and woe  
 He roams where Pampâ's waters flow,  
 True offspring of the Lord of Light  
 Expelled by Bâli's conquering might.  
 Go, Raghu's son, that chieftain seek  
 Who dwells on Rishyamûka's peak.  
 Before the flame thy weapons cast  
 And bind the bonds of friendship fast.  
 For, prince of all the Vânar race,  
 He in his wisdom knows each place  
 Where dwell the fierce gigantic brood  
 Who make the flesh of man their food.  
 To him, O Raghu's son, to him  
 Naught in the world is dark or dim,  
 Where'er the mighty Day-God gleams  
 Resplendent with a thousand beams.

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He over rocky height and hill,  
 Through gloomy cave, by lake and rill,  
 Will with his Vânars seek the prize,  
 And tell thee where thy lady lies.  
 And he will send great chieftains forth  
 To east and west and south and north,  
 To seek the distant spot where she  
 All desolate laments for thee.  
 He even in Râvan's halls would find  
 Thy Sîtâ, gem of womankind.  
 Yea, if the blameless lady lay  
 On Meru's loftiest steep. Or, far  
 removed from light of day,  
 Where hell is dark and deep,  
 That chief of all the Vânar race  
 His way would still explore,  
 Meet the cowed giants face to face  
 And thy dear spouse restore."

Footnotes

314:1 Peace, war, marching, halting, sowing  
 dissensions, and seeking protection.

314:1b See Book I. Canto XVI.

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CANTO LXXIV.: KABANDHA'S DEATH.

When wise Kabandha thus had taught

The means to find the dame they sought,  
 And urged them onward in the quest,  
 He thus again the prince addressed: 'This path,  
 O Raghu's son, pursue  
 Where those fair trees which charm the view,  
 Extending westward far away,  
 The glory of their bloom display,  
 Where their bright leaves Rose-apples show,  
 And the tall Jak and Mango grow.  
 Whene'er you will, those trees ascend,  
 Or the long branches shake and bend.  
 Their savoury fruit like Amrit eat,  
 Then onward speed with willing feet.  
 Beyond this shady forest,

deckedWith flowering trees, your course direct.Another grove you then  
will findWith every joy to take the mind,Like Nandan with its charms  
displayed,Or Northern Kuru's blissful shade;Where trees distil their  
balmy juice.And fruit through all the year produce;Where shades with  
seasons ever fairWith Chaitraratha may compare:Where trees whose sprays  
with fruit are bowed

Rise like a mountain or a cloud.There, when you list, from time to  
time,The loaded trees may Lakshman climb,Or from the shaken boughs  
supplySweet fruit that may with Amrit vie.The onward path pursuing  
stillFrom wood to wood, from hill to hill,Your happy eyes at length will  
restOn Pampá's lotus-covered breast.

Her banks with gentle slope descend,  
Nor stones nor weed the eyes offend,And o'er smooth beds of silver  
sandLotus and lily blooms expand.There swans and ducks and curlews  
play,And keen-eyed ospreys watch their prey,And from the limpid waves are  
heardGlad notes of many a water-bird.Untaught a deadly foe to fearThey  
fly not when a man is near,And fat as balls of butter theyWill, when you  
list, your hunger stay.Then Lakshman with his shafts will takeThe fish  
that swim the brook and lake,Remove each bone and scale and fin,Or strip  
away the speckled skin,And then on iron skewers broilFor thy repast the  
savoury spoil.Thou on a heap of flowers shalt rest

And eat the meal his hands have dressedThere shalt thou lie on Pampá's  
brink.And Lakshman's hand shall give thee drink,Filling a lotus leaf with  
coolPure water from the crystal pool,To which the opening blooms hare  
lentThe riches of divinest scent.Beside thee at the close of dayWill  
Lakshman through the woodland stray,And show thee where the monkeys  
sleepIn caves beneath the mountain steep.Lurd-voiced as bulls they forth  
will burstAnd seek the flood, oppressed by thirst;Then rest a while,  
their wants supplied,Their well-fed bands on Pampá's side.Thou roving  
there at eve shalt seeRich clusters hang on shrub and tree,And Pampá  
flushed with roseate glow,And at the view forget thy woe.There shalt thou  
mark with strange delightEach loveliest flower that blooms by night,While  
lily buds that shrink from dayTheir tender loveliness display.In that far  
wild no hand but thineThose peerless flowers in wreaths shall  
twine:Immortal in their changeless pride,Ne'er fade those blooms and  
ne'er are dried.There erst on holy thoughts intentTheir days Matanga's  
pupils spent.

Once for their master food they sought,And store of fruit and berries  
brought.Then as they laboured through the dellFrom limb and brow the  
heat-drops fell:Thence sprang and bloomed those wondrous trees:Such holy  
power have devotees.Thus, from the hermits' heat-drops sprung,Their  
growth is ever fresh and young.There S'avari is dwelling yet,Who served  
each vanished anchoret.

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Beneath the shade of holy boughsThat ancient votaress keeps her vows.Her  
happy eyes on thee will fall,O godlike prince, adored by all,And she,  
whose life is pure from sin,A blissful seat in heaven will win.But cross,  
O son of Raghu, o'er,And stand on Pampa's western shore.A tranquil  
hermitage that liesDeep in the woods will meet thine eyes.No wandering  
elephants invadeThe stillness of that holy shade,But checked by saint  
Matanga's powerThey spare each consecrated bower.Through many an age  
those trees have stoodWorld-famous as Matanga's wood

Still, Raghu's son, pursue thy way:Through shades where birds are vocal  
stray,Fair as the blessed wood where roveImmortal Gods, or Nandan's  
grove.Near Pampa eastward, full in sight,Stands Rishyamuka's wood-crowned  
height.'Tis hard to climb that towering steepWhere serpents unmolested  
sleep.The free and bounteous, formed of oldBy Brahma, of superior  
mould,Who sink when day is done to restReclining on that mountain  
crest,What wealth or joy in dreams they viewAwaking find the vision  
true.But if a villain stained with crimeThat holy hill presume to

climb, The giants in their fury sweep  
 From the hill top the wretch  
 asleep. There loud and long is heard the loar  
 Of elephants on Pampa's  
 shore. Who near Matanga's dwelling stray  
 And in those waters bathe and  
 play. A while they revel by the flood,  
 Their temples stained with streams  
 like blood. Then wander far away dispersed,  
 Dark as huge clouds before they  
 burst. But ere they part they drink their fill  
 Of bright pure water from  
 the rill. Delightful to the touch, where meet  
 Scents of ail flowers divinely sweet,  
 Then speeding from the river  
 side Deep in the sheltering thicket hide.  
 Then bears and tigers shalt thou  
 view Whose soft skins show the sapphire's hue,  
 And silvan deer that wander,  
 nigh Shall harmless from thy presence fly.  
 High in that mountains wooded  
 side Is a fair cavern deep and wide,  
 Yet hard to enter: piles of rock  
 The portals-of the cavern block.'

1

By the eastern door a pool  
 Gleams with broad waters fresh and cool,  
 Where stores of roots and fruit abound,  
 And thick trees shade the grassy  
 ground. This mountain cave the virtuous-souled  
 Sugriva, and his Vánars  
 hold, And oft the mighty chieftain seeks  
 The summits of those towering  
 peaks, ' Thus spake Kabandha. high in air  
 His counsel to the royal  
 pair, Still on his neck that wreath he bore,  
 And radiance like the sun's he  
 wore, Their eyes the princely brothers raised  
 And on that blissful being  
 gazed: 'Behold, we go: no more delay;  
 Begin,' they cried, 'thy heavenward  
 way.' 'Depart,' Kabandha's voice replied,  
 'Pursue your search, and bliss betide.' Thus to the happy chiefs he  
 said, Then on his heavenward journey sped: Thus once again Kabandha won  
 A shape that glittered like the sun Without a spot or stain. Thus bade he  
 Ráma from the air To great Sugriva's side repair His friendly love to  
 gain.

Footnotes

316:1 Or as the commentator Titha says, S'ilápidháná,  
 rock-covered, may be the name of the cavern.

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 CANTO LXXV.: SAVARI

Thus counselled by their friendly guide

On through the wood the princes hied  
 Pursuing still the eastern road  
 To Pampa which Kabandha showed,  
 Where trees that on the mountains grew  
 With fruit like honey charmed the view  
 They rested weary for the night  
 Upon a mountain's wooded height,  
 Then onward with the dawn they hied  
 And stood, on Pampa's western side.  
 Where S'avan's fair home they viewed  
 Deep in that shady solitude.  
 The princes reached the holy ground  
 Where noble trees stood thick around,  
 And joying in the lovely view  
 Near to the aged votress drew.  
 To meet the sons of Raghu came,  
 With hands upraised, the pious  
 dame, And bending low with reverence meet  
 Welcomed them both and pressed  
 their feet, Then water, as beseems,  
 she gave, Their lips to cool, their  
 feet to lave. To that pure saint who never broke  
 One law of duty Ráma--  
 spoke: 'I trust no cares invade thy peace,  
 While holy works and zeal increase;  
 That thou content with scanty food  
 All touch of ire hast long subdued;  
 That all thy vows are well maintained;

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While peace of mind is surely gained:  
 That reverence of the saints who  
 taught The faithful heart due fruit has brought.'  
 The aged votaress pure  
 of taint, Revered by every perfect saint,  
 Rose to her feet by Ráma's  
 side And thus in gentle tones replied:  
 'My penance' meed this day I  
 see Complete, my lord, in meeting thee.  
 This day the fruit of birth I  
 gain, Nor have I served the saints in vain,  
 I reap rich fruits of toil and  
 vow, And heaven itself awaits me now,  
 When I, O chief of men, have  
 done Honour to thee the godlike one.  
 I feel, great lord, thy gentle eye  
 My earthly spirit purify, And I, brave tamer  
 of thy foes, Shall through thy  
 grace in bliss repose. Thy feet by  
 Chitrakáta strayed When those great  
 saints whom I obeyed, In dazzling  
 chariots bright of hue,

Hence to their heavenly mansions flew. As the high saints were borne away I heard their holy voices say: 'In this pure grove, O devotee, Prince Ráma soon will visit thee. When he and Lakshman seek this shade, Be to thy guests all honour paid. Him shalt thou see, and pass away To those blest worlds which ne'er decay.' To me, O mighty chief, the best Of lofty saints these words addressed. Laid up within my dwelling lie Fruits of each sort which woods supply, -- Food culled for thee in endless store From every tree on Pampá's shore.' Thus to her virtuous guest she sued And he, with heavenly lore endued, Words such as these in turn addressed To her with equal knowledge blest: 'Danu himself the power has told Of thy great masters lofty-souled. Now if thou wilt, mine eyes would fain Assurance of their glories gain.' She heard the prince his wish declare: Then rose she, and the royal pair Of brothers through the wood she led That round her holy dwelling spread. 'Behold Matanga's wood' she cried, 'A grove made famous far and wide,

Dark as thick clouds and tilled with herds Of wandering deer, and joyous birds. In this pure spot each reverend sire With offerings fed the holy fire. See here the western altar stands Where daily with their trembling hands The aged saints, so long obeyed By me, their gifts of blossoms laid. The holy power, O Raghu's son, By their ascetic virtue won, Still keeps their well-loved altar bright. Filling the air with beams of light. And those seven neighbouring lakes behold Which, when the saints infirm and old, Worn out by fasts, no longer sought, Moved hither drawn by power of thought. Look, Ráma, where the devotees Hung their bark mantles on the trees. Fresh from the bath: those garments wet Through many a day are dripping yet. See, through those aged hermits' power The tender spray, this bright-hued flower With which the saints their worship paid, Fresh to this hour nor change nor fade. Here thou hast seen each lawn and dell, And heard the tale I had to tell: Permit thy servant, lord, I pray, To cast this mortal shell away, For I would dwell, this life resigned, With those great saints of lofty mind, Whom I within this holy shade With reverential care obeyed.' When Ráma and his brother heard The pious prayer the dame preferred, Filled full of transport and amazed They marvelled as her words they praised. Then Ráma to the votaress said Whose holy vows were perfected 'Go, lady, where thou fain wouldst be, O thou who well hast honoured me.' Her locks in hermit fashion tied, Clad in hark coat and black deer-hide, When Ráma gave consent, the dame Resigned her body to the flame. Then like the fire that burns and glows. To heaven the sainted lady rose, In all her heavenly garments dressed, Immortal wreaths on neck and breast, Bright with celestial gems she shone Most beautiful to look upon, And like the flame of lightning sent A glory through the firmament. That holy sphere the dame attained, By depth of contemplation gained, Where roam high saints with spirits pure In bliss that shall for aye endure. Next: Canto LXXVI.: Pampá. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next CANTO LXXVI.: PAMPÁ.

When S'avarí had sought the skies And gained her splendid virtue's prize, Ráma with Lakshman stayed to brood O'er the strange scenes their eyes had viewed. His mind upon those saints was bent, For power and might preeminent And he to musing Lakshman spoke The thoughts that in his bosom woke:

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'Mine eyes this wondrous home have viewed Of those great saints with souls subdued, Where peaceful tigers dwell and birds, And deer abound in heedless herds. Our feet upon the banks have stood Of those seven lakes within the wood, Where we have duly dipped, and paid Libations to each royal shade. Forgotten now are thoughts of ill And joyful hopes my bosom fill. Again my heart is light and gay And grief and care have passed away. Come, brother, let us hasten where Bright Pampá's flood is fresh and fair,

And towering in their beauty near Mount Rishyamúka's heights appear, When,  
 offspring of the Lord of Light, Still fearing Báli's conquering might, With  
 four brave chiefs of Vánar race Sugriva makes his dwelling-place. I long  
 with eager heart to find That leader of the Vánar kind, For on that chief  
 my hopes depend That this our quest have prosperous end.' Thus Ráma  
 spoke, in battle tried, And thus Sumitrá's son replied: 'Come, brother,  
 come, and speed away: My spirit brooks no more delay.' Thus spake Sumitrá's  
 son, and then Forth from the grove the king of men With his dear brother by  
 his side To Pampá's lucid waters hied. He gazed upon the winds where  
 grew Trees rich in flowers of every hue. From brake and dell on every  
 side The curlew and the peacock cried, And flocks of screaming parrots  
 made Shrill music in the bloomy shade. His eager eyes, as on he went, On  
 many a pool and tree were bent. Inflamed with love he journeyed on Till a  
 fair flood before him shone. He stood upon the water's side

Which streams from distant hills supplied Mataranga's \* name that water  
 bore: There bathed he from the shelving shore. Then, each on earnest  
 thoughts intent, Still farther on their way they went. But Ráma's heart  
 once more gave way Beneath his grief and wild dismay. Before him lay the  
 noble flood Adorned with many a lotus bud. On its fair banks As'okas  
 glowed, And all bright trees their blossoms showed Green banks that silver  
 waves confined With lovely groves--were ringed and lined The crystal waters  
 in their flow Showed level sands that gleamed below. There glittering fish  
 and tortoise played, And bending trees gave pleasant shade.

There creepers on the branches hung

With lover-like embraces clung, There gay Gandharvas loved to meet, And  
 Kinnar sought the calm retreat. There wandering Vakshas\* found  
 delight, Snake gods and rovers of the night. Cool were the pleasant waters,  
 gay Each tree with creeper, flower, and spray. There flushed the lotus  
 darkly red, Here their white glory lilies spread, Here sweet buds showed  
 their tints of blue:

So carpets gleam with many a hue. A grove of Mangoes blossomed  
 nigh, Echoing with the peacock's cry. When Ráma by his brother's side The  
 lovely flood of Pampá eyed, Decked like a beauty, fair to see With every  
 charm of flower and tree, His mighty heart with woe was rent And thus he  
 spoke in wild lament 'Here, Lakshman, on this beauteous shore, Stands,  
 dyed with tints of many an ore, The mountain Rishyamúka bright With flowery  
 trees that crown each height. Sprung from the chief who, famed of yore, The  
 name of Rikshnrajas bore, Sugriva, chieftain strong and dread, Dwells on  
 that mountain's towering head. Go to him, best of men, and seek That prince  
 of Vánars on the peak, I cannot longer brook my pain, Or, Sítá lost, my  
 life retain.' Thus by the pangs of love distressed, His thoughts on  
 Sítá bent, His faithful brother he addressed, And cried in wild  
 lament. He reached the lovely ground that lay On Pampá's wooded  
 side, And told in anguish and dismay, The grief he could not hide.

With listless footsteps faint and slow His way the chief pursued,  
 Till Pampá with her glorious show Of flowering woods he viewed.  
 Through shades were every bird was found The prince with Lakshman  
 passed, And Pampá with her groves around Burst on his eyes, at  
 last.

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BOOK IV. 1

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CANTO I.: RÁMA'S LAMENT.

The princes stood by Pampá's side 2

Which blooming lilies glorified.

With troubled heart and sense o'erthrown There Ráma made his piteous  
 moan. As the fair flood before him lay The reason of the chief gave way; And  
 tender thoughts within him woke, As to Sumitrá's son he spoke: 'How

lovely Pampá's waters show,Where streams of lucid crystal flow!What  
glorious trees o'erhang the floodWhich blooms of opening lotus stud!Look  
on the banks of Pampá whereThick groves extend divinely fair;And piles of  
trees, like hills in size.Lift their proud summits to the skies.But  
thought of Bharat's

3 pain and toil,

And my dear spouse the giant's spoil,Afflict my tortured heart and  
pressMy spirit down with heaviness.Still fair to me though sunk in  
woeBright Pampá and her forest show.Where cool fresh waters charm the  
sight,And flowers of every hue are bright,  
The lotuses in close arrayTheir passing loveliness display,And pard and  
tiger, deer and snakeHaunt every glade and dell and brake.Those grassy  
spots display the hueOf topazes and sapphires' blue,And, gay with flowers  
of every dye,With richly broidered housings vie.What loads of bloom the  
high trees crown,Or weigh the bending branches down!And creepers tipped  
with bud and flowerEach spray and loaded limb o'erpower.Now cool  
delicious breezes blow,And kindle love's voluptuous glow,

When balmy sweetness fills the air,

And fruit and flowers and trees are fair.Those waving woods, that shine  
with bloom,Each varied tint in turn assume.Like labouring clouds they  
pour their showersIn rain or ever-changing flowers.Behold, those forest  
trees, that standHigh upon rock and table-land,As the cool gales their  
branches bend,Their floating blossoms downward send.See, Lakshman, how  
the breezes playWith every floweret on the spray.And sport in merry guise  
with allThe fallen blooms and those that fall.

See, brother, where the merry breezeShakes the gay boughs of flowery  
trees,Disturbed amid their toil a throngOf bees pursue him, loud in  
song.The Koils,

1b mad with sweet delight,

The bending trees to dance invite;And in its joy the wild wind singsAs  
from the mountain cave he springs.On speed the gales in rapid course,And  
bend the woods beneath their force,Till every branch and spray they  
bindIn many a tangled knot entwined.What balmy sweets those gales  
dispenseWith cool and sacred influence!Fatigue and trouble vanish:  
suchThe magic of their gentle touch.Hark, when the gale the boughs has  
bentIn woods of honey redolent,Through all their quivering sprays the  
treesAre vocal with the murmuring bees.The hills with towering summits  
rise,And with their beauty charm the eyes,Gay with the giant trees which  
brightWith blossom spring from every height:And as the soft wind gently  
swaysThe clustering blooms that load the sprays,The very trees break  
forth and singWith startled wild bees' murmuring.Thine eyes to yonder  
Cassias 2b turn

Whose glorious clusters glow and burn.

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Those trees in yellow robes behold,

Like giants decked with burnished gold.Ah me, Sumitrá's son, the  
springDear to sweet birds who love and sing,Wakes in my lonely breast the  
flameOf sorrow as I mourn my dame.Love strikes me through with darts of  
fire,And wakes in vain the sweet desire.Hark, the loud Koil swells his  
throat,And mocks me with his joyful note.I hear the happy wild-cock  
callBeside the shady waterfall.His cry of joy afflicts my breastBy love's  
absorbing might possessed.My darling from our cottage heardOne morn in  
spring this shrill-toned bird,And called me in her joy to hearThe happy  
cry that charmed her ear.See, birds of every varied voiceAround us in the  
woods rejoice,On creeper, shrub, and plant alight,Or wing from tree to  
tree their flight.Each bird his kindly mate has found,And loud their  
notes of triumph sound,Blending, in sweetest music like  
The distant warblings of the shrike.See how the river banks are linedWith  
birds of every hue and kind.Here in his joy the Koil sings,There the glad  
wild-cock flaps his wings.The bloom, of bright As'okas



1 where

The song of wild bees fills the air, And the soft whisper of the  
boughs Increase my longing for my spouse.

The vernal flush of flower and spray

Will burn my very soul away. What use, what care have I for life If I no  
more may see my wife Soft speaker with the glorious hair, And eyes with  
silken lashes fair? Now is the time when all day long The Koils fill the  
woods with song. And gardens bloom at spring's sweet touch Which my beloved  
loved so much. Ah me, Sumitrá's son, the fire Of sorrow, sprung from soft  
desire. Fanned by the charms the spring time shows, Will burn my heart and  
end my woes, Whose sad eyes look on each fair tree, But my sweet love no  
more may see. Ah me, Ah me, from hour to hour Love in my soul will wax in  
power, And spring, upon whose charms I gaze,

Whose breath the heat of toil allays, With thoughts of her for whom I  
strain My hopeless eyes, increase my pain. As fire in summer rages  
through The forests thick with dry bamboo, So will my fawn eyed love  
consume My soul o'erwhelmed with thoughts of gloom. Behold, beneath each  
spreading tree The peacocks dance

1b in frantic glee,

And, stirred by all the gales that blow, Their tails with jewelled windows  
glow, Each bird, in happy love elate, Rejoices with his darling mate. But  
sights like these of joy and peace My pangs of hopeless love increase. See  
on the mountain slope above The peahen languishing with love. Behold her  
now in amorous dance Close to her consort's side advance. He with a laugh  
of joy and pride Displays his glittering pinions wide; And follows through  
the tangled dell The partner whom he loves so well. Ah happy bird! no  
giant's hate Has robbed him of his tender mate; And still beside his loved  
one he Dances beneath the shade in glee. Ah, in this month when flowers are  
fair My widowed woe is hard to bear.

See, gentle love a home may find In creatures of inferior kind. See how the  
peahen turns to meet Her consort now with love-drawn feet.

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So, Lakshman, if my large-eyed dear, The child of Janak still were  
here, She, by love's thrilling influence, led, Upon my breast would lay her  
head. These blooms I gathered from the bough Without my love are useless  
now, A thousand blossoms fair to see With passing glory clothe each  
tree That hangs its cluster-burthened head Now that the dewy months

1 are fled,

But, followed by the bees that ply Their fragrant task, they fall and  
die. A thousand birds in wild delight Their rapture-breathing notes  
unite; Bird calls to bird in joyous strain, And turns my love to frenzied  
pain, O, if beneath those alien skies, There be a spring where Sítá lies, I  
know my prisoned love must be Touched with like grief, and mourn with  
me. But ah, methinks that dreary clime. Knows not the touch of spring's  
sweet time.

How could my black eyed love sustain, Without her lord, so dire a pain? Or  
if the sweet spring come to her In distant lands a prisoner, How may his  
advent and her met On every side with taunt and threat? Ah, if the  
springtide's languor came With sort enchantment o'er my dame, My darling of  
the lotus eye, My gently speaking love, would die; For well my spirit knows  
that she Can never live bereft of me With love that never wavered yet My  
Sítá's heart, on me is set, Who, with a soul that ne'er can stray, With  
equal love her love repay. In vain, in vain the soft wind brings Sweet  
blossoms on his balmy wings; Delicious from his native snow, To me like  
fire he seems to glow, O, how I loved a breeze like this When darling Sítá  
shared the bliss! But now in vain for me it blows To fan the fury of my  
woes. That dark-winged bird that sought the skies Foretelling grief with  
warning cries, Sits on the tree where buds are gay, And pours glad music  
from the spray. That rover of the fiels of air

Will aid my love with friendly care, And me with gracious pity guide

To my large-eved Videhan's side.

1b

Hark, Lakshman, how the woods around  
With love-inspiring chants resound, Where birds in every bloom-crowned  
tree Pour forth their amorous minstrelsy. As though an eager gallant wooed  
A gentle maid by love subdued, Enamoured of her flowers the bee  
Darts at the wind-rocked Tila tree.

2b

As 'oka, brightest tree that grows, That lends a pang to lovers' woes, Hangs  
out his gorgeous bloom in scorn And mocks me as I weep forlorn. O Lakshman,  
turn thine eye and see Each blossom-laden Mango tree, Like a young lover  
gaily dressed Whom fond desire forbids to rest Look, son of Queen Sumitrá  
through The forest glades of varied hue, Where blooms are bright and grass  
is green The Kinnars

3b with their loves are seen.

See, brother, see where sweet and bright Those crimson lotus charm the  
sight, And o'er the flood a radiance throw Fair as the morning's roseate  
glow. See, Pampá, most divinely sweet,  
The swan's and mallard's loved retreat, Shows her glad waters bright and  
clear, Where lotuses their heads uprear From the pure wave, and charm the  
view With mingled tints of red and blue. Each like the morning's early  
beams Reflected in the crystal gleams; And bees in their sweet toil  
intent Weigh down each tender filament There with gay lawns the wood  
recedes; There wildfowl sport amid the reeds, There roedeer stand upon the  
brink, And elephants descend to dunk. The rippling waves which winds make  
fleet Against the bending lilies beat, And opening bud and flower and  
stem Gleam with the drops that hang on them. Life has no pleasure left for  
me While my dear queen I may not see,

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Who loved so well those blooms that vie With the full splendour of her  
eye, O tyrant Love, who will not let My bosom for one hour forget The lost  
one whom I yearn to meet, Whose words were ever kind and sweet. Ah, haply  
might my heart endure

This hopeless love that knows not cure, If spring with all his trees in  
flower Assailed me not with ruthless power. Each lovely scene, each sound  
and sight Wherein, with her. I found delight, Has lost the charm so sweet  
of yore, And glads my widowed heart no more. On lotus buds I seem to  
gaze, Or blooms that deck Palás'a

1 sprays;

But to my tortured memory rise The glories of my darling's eyes. Cool  
breezes through the forest stray Gathering odours on their way, Enriched  
with all the rifled scent Of lotus flower and filament. Their touch upon my  
temples falls And Sitá's fragrant breath recalls. Now look, dear brother,  
on the right Of Pampá towers a mountain height Where fairest Cassia trees  
unfold The treasures of their burnished gold. Proud mountain king this  
woody side With myriad ores is decked and dyed, And as the wind-swept  
blossoms fall Their fragrant dust is stained with all. To yon high lands  
thy glances turn: With pendent fire they flash and burn, Where in their  
vernal glory blaze Palasa flowers on leafless sprays.

O Lakshinan, look! on Pampá's side What fair trees rise in blooming  
pride! What climbing plants above them show

Or hang their flowery garlands low

See how the amorous creeper rings The wind-rocked trees to which she  
clings, As though a dame by love impelled With clasping arms her lover  
held. Drunk with the varied scents that fill The balmy air. from hill to  
hill, From grove to grove, from tree to tree, The joyous wind is wandering  
free. These gay trees wave their branches bent By blooms, of honey  
redolent. There, slowly opening to the day, Buds with dark lustre deck the  
spray. The wild bee rests a moment where Each tempting flower is sweet and  
fair, Then, coloured by the pollen dyes, Deep in some odorous blossom

lies. Soon from his couch away he springs: To other trees his course he wings, And tastes the honeyed blooms that grow Where Pampá's lucid waters flow. See, Lakshman, see, how thickly spread With blossoms from the trees o'erhead, That grass the weary traveller woos With couches of a thousand hues,

And beds on every height arrayed With red and yellow tints are laid, No longer winter chills the earth: A thousand flowerets spring to birth, And trees in rivalry assume Their vernal garb of bud and bloom. How fair they look, how bright and gay With tasselled flowers on every spray! While each to each proud challenge flings Borne in the song the wild bee sings. That mallard by the river edge Has bathed amid the reeds and sedge: Now with his mate he fondly plays And fires my bosom as I gaze. Mandákini

1b is far renowned:

No lovelier flood on earth is found; But all her fairest charms combined In this sweet stream enchant the mind, O, if my love were here to look With me upon this lovely brook, Ne'er for Ayodhyá would I pine, Or wish that Indra's lot were mine. If by my darling's side I strayed O'er the soft turf which decks the glade, Each craving thought were sweetly stilled, Each longing of my soul fulfilled. But, now my love is far away, Those trees which make the woods so gay, In all their varied beauty dressed, Wake thoughts of anguish in my breast. That lotus-covered stream behold Whose waters run so fresh and cold,

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Sweet rill, the wildfowl's loved resort, Where curlew, swan, and diver sport; Where with his consort plays the drake, And tall deer love their thirst to slake, While from each woody bank is heard The wild note of each happy bird. The music of that joyous quire Fills all my soul with soft desire; And, as I hear, my sad thoughts fly To Sítá of the lotus eye, Whom, lovely with her moonbright cheek, In vain mine eager glances seek. Now turn, those chequered lawns survey Where hart and hind together stray. Ah, as they wander at their will My troubled breast with grief they fill, While torn by hopeless love I sigh For Sítá of the fawn-like eye. If in those glades where, touched by spring, Gay birds their amorous ditties sing, Mine own beloved I might see, Then, brother, it were well with me: If by my side she wandered still,

And this cool breeze that stirs the rill Touched with its gentle breath the brows Of mine own dear Videhan spouse. For, Lakshman, O how blest are those On whom the breath of Pampá blows, Dispelling all their care and gloom With sweets from where the lilies bloom! How can my gentle love remain Alive amid the woe and pain, Where prisoned far away she lies, -- My darling of the lotus eyes? How shall I dare her sire to greet Whose lips have never known deceit? How stand before the childless king And meet his eager questioning? When banished by my sire's decree, In low estate, she followed me. So pure, so true to every vow, Where is my gentle darling now? How can I bear my widowed lot, And linger on where she is not, Who followed when from home I fled Distracted, disinherited? My spirit sinks in hopeless pain When my fond glances yearn in vain For that dear face with whose bright eye The worshipped lotus scarce can vie. Ah when, my brother, shall I hear That voice that rang so soft and clear, When, sweetly smiling as she spoke, From her dear lips gay laughter broke? When worn with toil and love I strayed With Sítá through the forest shade, No trace of grief was seen in her, My kind and thoughtful comforter. How shall my faltering tongue relate To Queen Kaus'alyá Sítá's fate? How answer when in wild despair

She questions, Where is Sítá, where?

Haste, brother, haste: to Bharat hie, On whose fond love I still rely. My life can be no longer borne, Since Sítá from my side is torn.' Thus like a helpless mourner, bent By sorrow, Rama made lament; And with wise counsel Lakshman tried To soothe his care, and thus replied: 'O best of men, thy grief oppose, Nor sink beneath thy weight of woes. Not thus despond the

great and pureAnd brave like thee, but still endure.Reflect what anguish  
wings the heartWhen loving souls are forced to part;And, mindful of the  
coming pain,Thy love within thy breast restrain,For earth, though cooled  
by wandering streams,Lies scorched beneath the midday beams,  
Rávan his steps to hell may bend,Or lower yet in flight descend;But be  
tbou sure, O Raghu's son,Avenging death he shall not shun.Rise, Ráma,  
rise: the search begin,And track the giant foul with sin.Then shall the  
fiend, though far he fly,Resign his prey or surely die.Yea, though the  
trembling monster hideWith Sítá close to Diti's  
1 side,

E'en there, unless he yield the prize,Slain by this wrathful hand he  
dies.Thy heart with strength and courage stay,And cast this weakling mood  
away.Our fainting hopes in vain reviveUnless with firm resolve we  
strive.The zeal that fires the toiler's breastMid earthly powers is first  
and best.Zeal every check and bar defies,And wins at length the loftiest  
prize,In woe and danger, toil and care,Zeal never yields to weak  
despair.With zealous heart thy task begin,And thou once more thy spouse  
shalt win.Cast fruitless sorrow from thy soul,Nor let this love thy heart  
control.Forget not all thy sacred lore,But be thy noble self once more.'  
He heard, his bosom rent by grief,  
The counsel of his brother chief;Crushed in his heart the maddening  
pain,And rose resolved and strong again.Then forth upon his journey  
wentThe hero on his task intent,Nor thought of Pampá's lovely brook,  
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Or trees which murmuring breezes shook,Though on dark woods his glances  
fell,On waterfall and cave and dell;And still by many a care  
distressedThe son of Raghu onward pressed.As some wild elephant elate  
Moves through the woods in pride,So Lakshman with majestic gait  
Strode by his brother's side.He, for his lofty spirit famed,  
Admonished and condoled;Showed Raghu's son what duty claimed, And  
bade his heart be bold.Then as the brothers strode apace To  
Rishyamúka's height,The sovereign of the Vánar race

1

Was troubled at the sight.As on the lofty hill he strayed He saw  
the chiefs draw near:A while their glorious forms surveyed,  
And mused in restless fear.His slow majestic step he stayed And  
gazed upon the pair.And all his spirit sank dismayed By fear too  
great to bear.When in their glorious might the best Of royal chiefs  
came nigh,The Vánars in their wild unrest Prepared to turn and  
fly.They sought the hermit's sacred home

2

For peace and bliss ordained,And there, where Vánars loved to roam.  
A sure asylum gained.

Footnotes

319:1 Or Kishkindhá Kánda. Kishkindhá, the city of  
Báli the elder brother and enemy of Sugriva, is  
supposed to have been situated north of Mysore.

319:2 Pampá is said by the commentator to be the name  
both of a lake and a brook which flows into it. The  
brook is said to rise in the hill Rishyamúka.

319:3 Who was acting as Regent for Ráma and leading an ascetic life while  
he mourned for his absent brother.

319:1b The Indian Cuckoo.

319:2b The Cassia Fistula or Amaltás is a splendid tree  
like a giant laburnum covered with a profusion of  
chains and tassels of gold. Dr. Roxburgh well describes it as "uncommonly  
beautiful when in flower, few trees surpassing it in the elegance of its  
numerous long pendulous racemes of large bright-yellow flowers intermixed  
with the young lively green foliage." It is remarkable also for its

curious cylindrical black seed-pods about two feet long, which are called monkeys' walking-sticks.

320:1 "The Jonesia Asoca is a tree of considerable size, native of southern India. It blossoms in February and March with large erect compact clusters of flowers varying in colour from pale-orange to scarlet, almost to be mistaken, on a hasty glance, for immense trusses of bloom of an Ixora. Mr. Fortune considered this tree, when in full bloom superior in beauty even to the Amherstia. The first time I saw the Asoca in flower was on the hill where the famous rock-cut temple of Kali is situated, and a large concourse of natives had assembled for the celebration of some Hindoo festival. Before proceeding to the temple the Mahratta women gathered from two

trees, which were flowering somewhat below, each a fine truss of blossom, and inserted it in the hair at the back of her head. ....As they moved about in groups it, is impossible to imagine a more delightful effect than the rich scarlet bunches of flowers presented on their fine glossy jet-black hair". FIRMINGER, Gardening for India.

320:1b No other word can express the movements of peafowl under the influence of pleasing excitement, especially when after the long drought they hear the welcome roar of the thunder and feel that the rain is near.

321:1 The Dewy Season is one of the six ancient seasons of the Indian year, lasting from the middle of January to the middle or March.

321:1b Rāma appears to mean that on a former occasion a crow flying high overhead was an omen that indicated his approaching separation from Sītā; and that now the same bird's perching on a tree near him may be regarded as a happy augury that she will soon be restored to her husband.

321:2b A tree with beautiful and fragrant blossoms. 321:3b A race of semi-divine musicians attached to the service of Kuvera, represented as centaurs reversed with human, figures and horses' heads.

322:1 Butea Frondosa. A tree that bears a profusion of brilliant red flowers which appear before the leaves.

I omit five s'lokas which contain nothing but a list of trees for which, with one or two exceptions, there are no equivalent names in English. The following is Gorresio's translation of the corresponding passage in the Bengal recension:--

"Oh come risplendono in questa stagione di primavera i vitici, le galedupe, le bassie, le dalbergie, i diospyri...le tile, le michelie, le rott\*lerie, le pentaptere ed i pterospermi, i bombaci, le grislee, gli abri, gli amaranti e le dalbergie; i sirii, le galedupe, le barringtonie ed i palmizi, i xanthoeymi, il pepebetel, le verbosine e le ticaie, le nauclee le erythrine, gli asochi, e le tapie fanno d'ogni intorno pompa de' lor fiori."

322:1b A sacred stream often mentioned in the course of the poem, see Book II. Canto XCV.

323:1 A daughter of Daksha who became one of the wives of Kas'yapa and mother of the Daityas. She is termed the general mother of Titans and malignant beings. See Book I Cantos XLV, XLVI.

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CANTO II.: SUGRÍVA'S ALARM.

Sugrīva moved by wondering awe

The high-souled sons of Raghu saw, In all their glorious arms arrayed; And grief upon his spirit weighed. To every quarter of the sky He turned in fear his anxious eye, And roving still from spot to spot With troubled

steps he rested not. He durst not, as he viewed the pair, Resolve to stand and meet them there:

And drooping cheer and quailing breast

The terror of the chief confessed. While the great fear his bosom shook, Brief counsel with his lords he took; Each gain and danger closely scanned, What hope in flight, what power to stand, While doubt and fear his bosom rent, On Raghu's sons his eyes he bent, And with a spirit ill at ease Addressed his lords in words like these: 'Those chiefs with wandering steps invade The shelter of our pathless shade, And hither come in fair disguise Of hermit garb as Báli's spies.'

Each lord beheld with troubled heart Those masters of the bowman's art, And left the mountain side to seek Sure refuge on a loftier peak. The Vánar chief in rapid flight Found shelter on a towering height, And all the band with one accord Were closely gathered round their lord. Their course the same, with desperate leap Each made his way from steep to steep, And speeding on in wild career Filled every height with sudden fear. Each heart was struck with mortal dread, As on their course the Vánars sped, While trees that crowned the steep were bent And crushed beneath them as they went. As in their eager flight they pressed For safety to each mountain crest, The wild confusion struck with fear Tiger and cat and wandering deer. The lords who watched Sugriva's will Were gathered on the royal hill, And all with reverent hands upraised Upon their king and leader gazed. Sugriva feared some evil planned, Some train prepared by Báli's hand. But skilled in words that charm and teach, Thus Hanumán  
1b began his speech: Dismiss, dismiss thine idle fear,  
Nor dread the power of Báli here. For this is Malaya's glorious hill  
2b

Where Báli's might can work no ill. I look around but nowhere see The hated foe who made thee flee, Fell Báli, fierce in form and face: Then fear not, lord of Vánar race. Alas, in thee I clearly find The weakness of the Vánar kind,

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That loves from thought to thought to range, Fix no belief and welcome change. Mark well each hint and sign and scan, Discreet and wise, thine every plan. How may a king, with sense denied, The subjects of his sceptre guide?' Hanumán,

1 wise in hour of need,

Urged on the chief his prudent rede. His listening ear Sugriva bent, And spake in words more excellent: 'Where is the dauntless heart that free From terror's chilling touch can see Two stranger warriors, strong as those, Equipped with swords and shafts and bows, With mighty arms and large full eyes, Like glorious children of the skies Báli my foe, I ween, has sent

These chiefs to aid his dark intent. Hence doubt and fear disturb me still, For thousands serve a monarch's will, In borrowed garb they come, and those Who walk disguised are counted foes. With secret thoughts they watch their time, And wound fond hearts that fear no crime My foe in state affairs is wise, And prudent kings have searching eyes. By other hands they strike the foe: By meaner tools the truth they know. Now to those stranger warriors turn, And, less than king, their purpose learn. Mark well the trick and look of each; Observe his form and note his speech. With care their mood and temper sound, And, if their minds be friendly found, With courteous looks and words begin Their confidence and love to win. Then as my friend and envoy speak, And question where the strangers seek. Ask why equipped with shaft and bow Through this wild maze of wood they go. If does, O chief, as first appear Pure of all guile, in heart sincere, Detect in speech and look the sin And treachery that lurk within.' He spoke: the Wind-God's son obeyed. With ready zeal he sought the shade, And reached with hasty steps the wood Where Raghu's son and Lakshman stood.

2

The envoy in his faithful breast Pondered Sugrivá's high behest. From  
Rishyamúka's peak he hied And placed him by the princes' side. The Wind-  
God's son with cautious art Had laid his Vánar form apart, And wore, to  
cheat the strangers eyes, A wandering mendicant's disguise.

1b

Before the heroes' feet he bent And did obeisance reverent, And spoke, the  
glorious pair to praise, His words of truth in courteous phrase, High  
honour duly paid, the best Of all the Vánar kind addressed, With free  
accord and gentle grace, Those glories of their warrior race: 'O  
hermits, blest in vows, who shine Like royal saints or Gods divine, O best  
of young ascetics, say How to this spot you found your way, Scaring the  
troops of wandering deer And silvan things that harbour here Searching amid  
the trees that grow Where Pampá's gentle waters flow. And lending from your  
brows a gleam Of glory to the lovely stream.

Who are you, say, so brave and fair. Clad in the bark which hermits wear? I  
see you have the frequent sigh, I see the deer before you fly. While you,  
for strength and valour dread, The earth, like lordly lions, tread, Each  
bearing in his hand a bow, Like Indra's own, to slay the foe, With the  
grand paces of bull, So bright and young and beautiful The mighty arms you  
raise appear Like trunks which elephants uprear, And as you move this  
mountain-king

2b

Is glorious with the light you bring. How have you reached, like Gods in  
face, Best lords of earth, this lonely place,

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With tresses coiled in hermit guise, 1

And splendours of those lotus eyes? As God's who leave their heavenly  
sphere, Alike your beauteous forms appear. The Lords of Day and Night  
2 might thus

Stray from the skies to visit us. Heroic youth, so broad of chest, Fair  
with the beauty of the Blest, With lion shoulders, tall and strong, Like  
bulls who lead the lowing throng.

Your arms, unmatched for grace and length, With massive clubs may vie in  
strength. Why do no gauds those limbs adorn Where priceless gems were  
meetly worn? Each noble youth is fit, I deem, To guard this earth, as lord  
supreme, With all her woods and seas, to reign From Meru's peak to  
Vindhya's chain. Your smooth bows decked with dyes and gold Are glorious in  
their masters' hold, And with the arms of Indra

3 vie

Which diamond splendours beautify. Your quivers glow with golden  
sheen, Well stored with arrows fleet and keen, Each gleaming like a flery  
snake That joys the foeman's life to take. As serpents cast their sloughs  
away And all their new born sheen display, So flash your mighty swords  
inlaid With burning gold on hilt and blade. Why are you silent, heroes?  
Why My questions hear nor deign reply? Sugrivá, lord of virtuous mind. The  
foremost of the Vánar kind. An exile from his royal state, Roams through  
the land disconsolate. I Hanumán, of Vánar race, Sent by the king have  
sought this place, For he, the pious, just, and true.

In friendly league would join with you. Know, godlike youths, that I am  
one Of his chief lords, the Wind-God's son. With course unchecked I roam  
will, And now from Rishyamúka's hill. To please his heart, his hope to  
speed, I came disguised in beggar's weed.' Thus Hanumán, well trained in  
lore Of language spoke, and said no more. The son of Raghu joyed to hear The  
envoy's speech, and bright of cheer He turned to Lakshman by his side, And  
thus in words of transport cried: 'The counselor we now behold Of King  
Sugrivá righteous souled.

His face I long have yearned to see,

And now his envoy comes to me With sweetest words in courteous  
phrase Answer this mighty lord who slays His foemen, by Sugrivá sent. This

Vánar chief most eloquent. For one whose words so sweetly flow  
The whole Ríg-veda

1b needs must know,

And in his well-trained memory store  
The Yajush and the Sáman's lore. He  
must have bent his faithful ear  
All grammar's varied rules to hear. For his  
long speech how well he spoke!

In all its length no rule he broke. In eye, on brow, in all his face  
The keenest look no guile could trace. No change of hue, no pose of limb  
Gave sign that aught was false in him. Concise, unfaltering, sweet and  
clear, Without a word to pain the ear. From chest to throat, nor high nor  
low, His accents came in measured flow. How well he spoke with perfect  
art That wondrous speech that charmed the heart, With finest skill and  
order graced In words that knew nor pause nor haste! That speech, with  
consonants that spring From the three seats of uttering,

2b

Would charm the spirit of a foe Whose sword is raised for mortal blow. How  
may a ruler's plan succeed Who lacks such envoy good at need? How fail, if  
one whose mind is stored With gifts so rare assist his lord? What plans can  
fail, with wisest speech Of envoy's lips to further each?' Thus Ráma  
spoke: and Lakshman, taught In all the art that utters thought, To King  
Súgríva's learned spy Thus made his eloquent reply: 'Full well we know the  
gifts that grace Sugriva, lord of Vánar race,  
And hither turn our wandering feet That we that high-souled king may  
meet So now our pleasant task shall be To do the words he speaks by thee.'  
His prudent speech the Vánar heard, And all his heart with joy was  
stirred. And hope that league with them would bring Redress and triumph to  
his king.

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Footnotes

324:1 Sugriva, the ex-king of the Vánars, foresters, or  
monkeys, an exile from his home, wandering about the  
mountain Rishyamúka with his four faithful ex-ministers.

324:2 The hermitage of the Saint Matauga which his  
curse prevented Báli, the present king of the Vánars,  
from entering. The story is told at length in Canto XI. of this Book.

324:1b Hanumán, Sugriva's chief general, was the son  
of the God of Wind. See Book I, Canto XVI. 324:2b A range of hills in  
Malabar; the Western Ghats  
in the Deccan.

325:1 Válmíki makes the second vowel in this name long or short to suit  
the exigencies of the verse. Other

Indian poets have followed his example, and the same licence will be used  
in this translation.

325:2 I omit a recapitulatory and interpolated verse in a  
different metre, which is as follows:--Reverencing with  
the words, So be it, the speech of the greatly terrified and unequalled  
monkey king, the magnanimous Hanumán then went where (stood) the very  
mighty Ráma with Lakshman.

325:1b The semi divine Hanuma'n possesses. like the  
Gods and demons, the power of wearing all shapes at  
will, He is one of the Kámarúpís.

Like Milton's good and bad angels

"as they please

They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size Assume as likes  
them best, coudense or rare." 325:2b Himálaya is of course par excellence  
the

Monarch of mountains, but the complimentary title is  
frequently given to other hills as here to Malaya.

326:1 Twisted up in a matted coil as was the custom of  
ascetics.



326:2 The sun and the moon.

326:3 The rainbow.

326:1b The Vedas are four in number, the Rich or Rig-veda, the Yajush or Yajur-veda; the Sáman or Sáma-veda\*, and the Atharvan or Atharva-veda. See p. 3. Note.

326:2b The chest, the throat, and the head.

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CANTO IV: LAKSHMAN'S REPLY.

Cheered by the words that Ráma spoke,

Joy in the Vánar's breast awoke, And, as his friendly mood he knew, His thoughts to King Sugriva flew: 'Again,' he mused, 'my high-sou'ed lord Shall rule, to kingly state restored; Since one so mighty comes to save, And freely gives the help we crave.' Then joyous Hanumán, the best Of all the Vánar kind, addressed These words to Ráma, trained of yore In all the arts of speakers' lore:

1

'Why do your feet this forest tread By silvan life inhabited, This awful maze of tree and thorn Which Pampá's flowering groves adorn? He spoke: obedient to the eye Of Ráma Lakshman made reply, The name and fortune to unfold Of Raghu's son the lofty-souled: 'True to the law, of fame unstained, The glorious Das'aratha reigned. And, steadfast in his duty, long Kept the four castes 2 from scathe and wrong.

Through his wide realm his will was done,

And, loved by all, he hated none. Just to each creature great and small, Like the Good Sire he cared for all. The Agnishtom,

3 as priests advised,

And various rites he solemnized. Where ample largess ever paid The Brahmans for their holy aid. Here Ráma stands, his heir by birth, Whose name is glorious in the earth: Sure refuge he of all oppressed, Most faithful to his sire's behest. He, Das'aratha's eldest born Whom gifts above the rest adorn, Lord of each high imperial sign,

1b

The glory of his kingly line, Reft of his right, expelled from home, Came forth with me the woods to roam, And Sitá too, his faithful dame, Forth with her virtuous husband came, Like the sweet light when day is done Still cleaving to her lord the sun. And me his sweet perfections drew To follow as his servant true. Named Lakshman, brother of my lord Of grateful heart with knowledge stored Most meet is he all bliss to share, Who makes the good of all his care.

While, power and lordship caat away, In the wild wood he chose to stay, A giant came, --his name unknown, --And stole the princess left alone. Then Dití's son

2b who, cursed of yore.

The semblance of a Rakshas wore, To King Sugriva bade us turn The robber's name and home to learn. For he, the Vánar chief, would know The dwelling of our secret foe. Such words of hope spake Dití's son, And sought the heaven his deeds had won. Thou hast my tale. From first to last Thine ears have heard whate'er has past. Rama the mighty lord and I For refuge to Sugriva fly. The prince whose arm bright glory gained. O'er the whole earth as monarch reigned, And richest gifts to others gave, Is come Sugriva's help to crave; Son of a king the surest friend Of virtue, him who loved to lend His succour to the suffering weak, Is come Sugriva's aid to seek. Yes, Raghu's son whose matchless hand Protected all this sea-girt land, The virtuous prince, my holy guide, For refuge seeks Sugriva's side. His favour sent on great and small

Should ever save and prosper all. He now to win Sugriva's grace Has sought his woodland dwelling-place.

p. 328

Son of a king of glorious fame;--Who knows not Das'aratha's name?--From whom all princes of the earthReceived each honour due to worth;--Heir of that best of earthly kings,Ráma the prince whose glory ringsThrough realms below and earth and skies,For refuge to Sugriva flies.Nor should the Vánar king refuseThe boon for which the suppliant sues,But with his forest legions speedTo save him in his utmost need. Sumitrá's son, his eyes bedewedWith piteous tears, thus sighed and sued.Then, trained in all the arts that guideThe speaker, Hanumán replied: 'Yea, lords like you of wisest thought,Whom happy fate has hither brought,Who vanquish ire and rule each sense,Must of our lord have audience.Reft of his kingdom, sad, forlorn,Once Báli's hate now Báli's scorn,Defeated, severed from his spouse,

Wandering under forest boughs,Child of the Sun, our lord and kingSugriva will his succours bring,And all our Vánar hosts combinedWill trace the dame you long to find.' With gentle tone and winning graceThus spake the chief of Vánar race,And then to Raghu's son he cried:'Come, haste we to Sugrivá's side.' He spoke, and for his words so sweetGood Lakshman' paid all honour meet;Then turned and cried to Raghu's son:'Now deem thy task already done,Because this chief of Vánar kind,Son of the God who rules the wind,Declares Sugriva's self would beAssisted in his need by thee.Bright gleams of joy his cheek o'erspreadAs each glad word of hope he said;And ne'er will one so valiant deignTo cheer our hearts with hope in vain.' He spoke, and Hanumán the wiseCast off his mendicant disguise,And took again his Vánar form,Son of the God of wind and storm.High on his ample back in hasteBaghu's heroic sons he placed.And turned with rapid steps to findThe sovereign of the Vánar kind.

#### Footnotes

327:1 "In our own metrical romances, or wherever a poem is meant not for readers but for chanters and oral reciters, these formulae, to meet the same recurring case, exist by scores. Thus every woman in these metrical romances who happens to be young, is described as "so bright of ble," or complexion; always a man goes "the mountenance of a mule" before he overtakes or is overtaken. And so on through. a vast bead-roll of cases. In the same spirit Homer has his

eternal δ·α· ποδρα ἰδων, or τον δ·απαμειβομενος προσεφη, &c.

To a reader of sensibility, such recurrences wear an air of child-like simplicity, beautifully recalling the features of Homer's primitive age. But they would have appeared faults to all commonplace critics in literary ages."

DE QUINCEY. Homer and the Homericæ.

327:2 Brahmans the sacerdotal caste. Kshatriyas the royal and military, Vaisya the mercantile, and Sudras the servile.

327:3 A protracted sacrifice extending over several days. See Book I. p, 21 Note.

327:1b Possessed of all the auspicious personal marks that indicate capacity of universal sovereignty. See

Book I. p. 2, and, Note 3.

327:2b Kabandha. See Book III. Canto LXXIII.

Next: Canto V.: The League.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO V.: THE LEAGUE.

From Rishyamáka's rugged side

To Malaya's hills the Vánar hied

And to his royal chieftain there

Announced the coming of the pair:'See here with Lakshman' Ráma standsIllustrious in a hundred lands.Whose valiant heart will never quailAlthough a thousand foes assail;King Das'aratha's son, the graceAnd glory of Ikshváku's race.Obedient to his father's willHe cleaves to sacred duty still.With rites of royal pomp and prideHis sire the Fire-God gratified;Ten hundred thousand kine he freed,And priests enriched with

ample meed; And the broad land protected, famed  
For truthful lips and passions tamed. Through woman's guile his son has made  
His dwelling in the forest shade, Where, as he lived with every sense  
Subdued in hermit abstinence, Fierce Rávan' stole his wife, and he  
Is come a suppliant, lord, to thee.

Now let all honour due be paid To these great chiefs who seek thine aid.'  
Thus spake the Vánar prince, and, stirred With friendly thoughts, Sugriva  
heard. The light of joy his face o'erspread, And thus to Raghu's son he  
said: 'O Prince, in rules of duty trained, Caring for all with love  
unfeigned, Hanúmán's tongue has truly shown The virtues that are thine  
alone. My chiefest glory, gain, and bliss, O stranger Prince, I reckon  
this, That Raghu's son will condescend To seek the Vánar for his friend. If  
thou my true ally wouldst be Accept the pledge I offer thee, This hand in  
sign of friendship take, And bind the bond we ne'er will break.' He  
spoke, and joy thrilled Ráma's breast; Sugriva's hand he seized and  
pressed And, transport beaming from his eye, Held to his heart his new  
ally. In wanderer's weed disguised no more, His proper form Hanúmán  
wore. Then, wood with wood engendering,

1 came

Neath his deft hands the kindled flame. Between the chiefs that fire he  
placedp. 329

With wreaths of flowers and worship graced.

And round its blazing glory went The friends with slow steps reverent.  
Thus each to other pledged and bound In solemn league new transport  
found. And bent upon his dear ally The gaze he ne'er could satisfy. 'Friend  
of my soul art thou: we share Each other's joy, each other's care; 'To us  
the bliss that thrilled his breast Sugriva Raghu's son addressed. From a  
high Sál a branch he tore Which many a leaf and blossom bore, And the fine  
twigs beneath them laid A seat for him and Ráma made. Then Hanumán with  
joyous mind, Son of the God who rules the wind, To Lakshman gave, his seat  
to be, The gay branch of a Sandal tree. Then King Sugriva with his  
eyes Still trembling with the sweet surprise Of the great joy he could not  
hide, To Raghu's noblest scion cried: 'O Ráma, racked with woe and  
fear, Spurned by my foes, I wander here. Reft of my spouse, forlorn I  
dwell Here in my forest citadel. Or wild with terror and distress  
Roam through the distant wilderness. Vext by my brother Báli long My soul  
has borne the scathe and wrong. Do thou, whose virtues all revere, Release  
me from my woe and fear. From dire distress thy friend to free Is a high  
task and worthy thee.' He spoke, and Raghu's son who knew All sacred  
duties men should do. The friend of justice, void of guile, Thus answered  
with a gentle smile: 'Great Vánar, friends who seek my aid Still find their  
trust with fruit repaid. Báli, thy foe, who stole away Thy wife this  
vengeful hand shall slay. These shafts which sunlike flash and burn, Winged  
with the feathers of the \*ern, Each swift of flight and sure and  
dread, With even knot and pointed head, Fierce as the crashing fire-bolt  
sent By him who rules the firmament,

1

Shall reach thy wicked foe and like

Infuriate serpents hiss and strike.

Thou, Vánar King, this day shalt see The foe who long has injured thee Lie,  
like a shattered mountain, low, Slain by the tempest of my bow.' Thus  
Ráma spake: Sugriva heard,

And mighty joy his bosom stirred: As thus his champion he addressed: 'Now  
by thy favour, first and best Of heroes, shall thy friend obtain His realm  
and darling wife again Recovered from the foe. Check thou mine elder  
brother's might; That ne'er again his deadly spite May rob me of mine  
ancient right, Or vex my soul with woe.' The league was struck, a league  
to bring To Sítá fiends, and Vánar king

1b

Apportioned bliss and bale. Through her left eye quick throbbings shot,

2b

Glad signs the lady doubted not, That told their hopeful tale. The  
bright left eye of Báli felt An inauspicious throb that dealt A deadly  
blow that day. The fiery left eyes of the crew Of demons felt the throb,  
and knew The herald of dismay.

Footnotes 328:1 Fire for sacred purposes is produced by the  
attrition of two pieces of wood. In marriage and other  
solemn covenants fire is regarded as the holy witness in whose presence  
the agreement is made. Spenser in a description of a marriage, has  
borrowed from them the Roman rite what he (illegible) sacrificial fire:  
p. 329

"His owne two hands the holy knots did knit That none but death forever  
can divide. His owne two hands, for such a turn most fit, The \*ing fire did  
kindle and provide." Faery Queen, Book 1 XII. 37

329:1 Indra

Next: Canto VI.: The Tokens. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO VI.: THE TOKENS.

With joy that sprang from hope restored

To Ráma spake the Vánar lord: 'I know, by wise Hanúmán taught, Why thou the  
lonely wood hast sought, Where with thy brother Lakshman thou Hast  
sojourned, bound by hermit vow; Have heard how Sitá, Janak's child, Was  
stolen in the pathless wild, How by a roving Rákshas she Weeping was reft  
from him and thee; How, bent on death, the giants slew The vulture king, her  
guardian true, And gave thy widowed breast to know A solitary moaner's  
woe. But soon, dear Prince, thy heart shall be From every trace of sorrow  
free;

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For I thy darling will restore, Lost like the prize of holy lore.

1

Yea, though in heaven the lady dwell, Or prisoned in the depths of hell, My  
friendly care her way shall track And bring thy ransomed darling back.  
Let this my promise soothe thy care, Nor doubt the words I truly  
swear. Saints, fiends, and dwellers of the skies Shall find thy wife a  
bitter prize, Like the rash child who rues too late Thy treacherous lure of  
poisoned cate. No longer, Prince, thy loss deplore: Thy darling wife will I  
restore. 'Twas she I saw: my heart infers That shrinking form was doubtless  
hers. Which gaint Rávan', fierce and dread, Bore swiftly through the clouds  
o'erhead Still writhing in his strict embrace Like helpless queen oft  
serpent race,

2

And from her lips that sad voice came Shrieking thine own and Lakshman's  
name. High on a hill she saw me stand With comrades twain on either  
hand. Her outer robe to earth she threw, And with it sent her anklets  
too. We saw the glittering tokens fall, We found them there and kept them  
all. These will I bring: perchance thine eyes The treasured spoils will  
recognize.' He ceased: then Raghu's son replied To the glad tale, and  
eager cried: 'Bring them with all thy speed: delay No more, dear friend,  
but haste away.' Thus Ráma spoke. Sugriva hied  
Within the mountain's caverned side. Impelled by love that stirred each  
thought The precious tokens quickly brought,  
And said to Raghu's son, Behold

This garment and these rings of gold, In Ráma's hand with friendly  
haste The jewels and the robe he placed. Then, like the moon by mist  
assailed, The tear-dimmed eyes of Ráma failed; That burst of woe unmanned  
his frame, Woe sprung from passion for his dame. And with his manly  
strength o'erthrown, He fell and cried, Ah me! mine own! Again, again close  
to his breast The ornaments and robe he pressed. While the quick pants that  
shook his frame As from a furious serpent came. On his dear brother  
standing nigh He turned at length his piteous eye; And, while his tears  
increasing ran, In bitter wail he thus began: 'Look, brother, and behold

once moreThe ornaments and robe she wore,Dropped while the giant bore  
awayIn cruel arras his struggling prey,Dropped in some quiet spot, I  
ween,Where the young grass was soft and green;For still untouched by spot  
or stain

Their former beauty all retain.' He spoke with many a tear and sigh,And  
thus his brother made reply:'The bracelets thou hast fondly shown,And  
earrings, are to me unknown,But by long service taught I greetThe anklets  
of her honoured feet.'

1b

Then to Sugríva Ráma, bestOf Raghu's sons, these words addressed:  
'Say to what quarter of the skyThe cruel fiend was seen to fly.Bearing  
afar my captured wife,My darling dearer than my life.Speak, Vánar King,  
that I may knowWhere dwells the cause of all my woe;The fiend for whose  
transgression allThe giants by this hand shall fall.He who the Maithil  
lady stoleAnd kindled fury in my soul,Has sought his fate in senseless  
prideAnd opened Death's dark portal wide.Then toll me, Vánar lord, I  
pray, The dwelling of my foe.And he, beneath this hand, to-day To  
Yama's halls shall go.'

p. 331Footnotes

329:1b Báli the king de facto.

329:2b With the Indian, as with the ancient Greeks, the  
throbbing of the right eye in a man is an auspicious  
sign, the throbbing of the left eye is the opposite. In a woman the \* of  
signs are reversed.

On the alliance between Ráma and the monkeys see

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

330:1 The Vedas stolen by the demons Madhu and  
Kait'abha.

"The text has (Sanskrit text) which signifies literally  
"the lost vedic tradition." It seems that allusion is here made to the  
Vedas submerged in the depth of the sea, but promptly recovered by  
Vishn'u in one of his incarnation, as the brahmanic legend relates, with  
which the ordodoxy of the Bráhmans intended perhaps to allude to the  
prompt restoration and uninterrupted continuity of the ancient vedic  
tradition."

GORRESIO.330:2 Like the wife of a Nága or Serpent- God carried  
off by an eagle. The enmity between the King of birds  
and the serpent is of very frequent occurrence. It seems to be a  
modification of the strife between the Vedic Indra and the Ahi, the  
serpent or drought-fiend; between Apollón, and the Python, Adam and the  
Serpent.

330:1b He means that he has never ventured to raise his  
eyes to her arms and face, though he has ever been her  
devoted servant.

Next: Canto VII.: Ráma Consoled.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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CANTO VII.: RÁMA CONSOLED.

With longing love and woe oppressed

The Vánar chief he thus addressed:And lie, while sobs his utterance  
broke,Raised up his reverent hands and spoke: 'O Raghu's son, I cannot  
tellWhere now that cruel fiend may dwell,Declare his power and might, or  
traceThe author of his cursed race.Still trust the promise that I makeAnd  
let thy breast no longer ache.So will I toil, nor toil in vain,That thou  
thy consort mayst regain.So will I work with might and skillThat joy anew  
thy heart shall fill:The valour of my soul display,And Rávan and his  
legions slay.Awake, awake! unmanned no moreRecall the strength was thine  
of yore.Beseems not men like thee to wearA weak heart yielding to  
despair.Like troubles, too, mine eyes have seen,Lamenting for a long-lost  
queen;But, by despair unconquered yet,My strength of mind I ne'er  
forget.Far more shouldst thou of lofty soul

Thy passion and thy tears control, When I, of Vánar's humbler strain, Weep  
not for her in ceaseless pain. Be firm, be patient, nor forget The bounds  
the brave of heart have set In loss, in woe, in strife, in fear, When the  
dark hour of death is near. Up? with thine own brave heart advise: Not thus  
despond the firm and wise. But he who gives his childish heart To choose  
the coward's weakling part, Sinks, like a foundered vessel, deep In waves  
of woe that o'er him sweep. See, suppliant hand to hand I lay, And, moved  
by faithful love, I pray. Give way no more to grief and gloom, But all thy  
native strength resume. No joy on earth, I ween, have they Who yield their  
souls to sorrow's sway. Their glory fades in slow decline: 'Tis not for  
thee to grieve and pine. I do but hint with friendly speech The wiser part  
I dare not teach. This better path, dear friend, pursue, And let not grief  
thy soul subdue.' Sugriva thus with gentle art And sweet words soothed  
the mourner's heart, Who brushed off with his mantle's hem Tears from the  
eyes bedewed with them.

Sugriva's words were not in vain,  
And Ráma was himself again, Around the king his arms he threw And thus  
began his speech anew: 'Whate'er a friend most wise and true, Who  
counsels for the best, should do, Whate'er his gentle part should be, Has  
been performed, dear friend, by thee. Taught by thy counsel, O my lord, I  
feel my native strength restored. A friend like thee is hard to gain. Most  
rare in time of grief and pain. Now strain thine utmost power to trace The  
Maithil lady's dwelling place, And aid me in my search to find Fierce Rávan  
of the impious mind. Trust thou, in turn thy loyal friend, And say what aid  
this arm can lend To speed thy hopes, as fostering rain Quickens in earth  
the scattered grain. Deem not those words, that seemed to spring From  
pride, are false, O Vánar King. None from these lips has ever heard, None  
e'er shall hear, one lying word. Again I promise and declare, Yea, by my  
truth, dear friend, I swear.' Then glad was King Sugriva's breast, And  
all his lords their joy confessed,  
Stirred by sure hope of Ráma's aid, And promise which the prince had made.  
Next: Canto VIII.: Ráma's Promise. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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#### CANTO VIII.: RÁMA'S PROMISE.

Doubt from Sugriva's heart had fled,  
And thus to Raghu's son he said: 'No bliss the Gods of heaven deny. Each  
views me with a favouring eye. When thou, whom all good gifts attend, Hast  
sought me and become my friend. Leagued, friend, with thee in bold  
emprise My arm might win the conquered skies; And shall our banded strength  
be weak To gain the realm which now I seek? A happy fate was mine above My  
kith and kin and all I love. When, near the witness fire, I won Thy  
friendship, Raghu's glorious son. Thou too in ripening time shall see Thy  
friend not all unworthy thee. What gifts I have shall thus be shown: Not  
mine the tongue to make them known. Strong is the changeless bond that  
binds The friendly faith of noble minds. In woe, in danger, firm and  
sure Their constancy and love endure. Gold, silver, jewels rich and  
rare They count as wealth for friends to share. p. 332

Yea, be they rich or poor and low,  
Blest with all joys or sunk in woe, Stained with each fault or pure of  
blame, Their friends the nearest place may claim; For whom they leave, at  
friendship's call, Their gold, their bliss, their homes and all, He  
spoke by generous impulse moved, And Raghu's son his speech  
approved Glancing at Lakshman by his side, Like Indra in his beauty's  
pride. The Vánar monarch saw the pair Of mighty brothers standing there, And  
turned his rapid eye to view The forest trees that near him grew. He saw,  
not far from where he stood, A Sál tree towering o'er the wood. Amid the  
thick leaves many a bee Graced the scant blossoms of the tree, From whose  
dark shade a bough, that bore A load of leafy twigs, he tore, Which on the  
grassy ground he laid And seats for him and Ráma made, Hanúmán saw them  
sit, he sought A Sál tree's leafy bough and brought The burthen, and with

meek requestEntreated Lakshman, too, to rest.There on the noble  
 mountain's brow,  
 Strewn with the young leaves of the bough,Sat Raghu's son in placid  
 easeCalm as the sea when sleeps the breeze.Sugriva's heart with rapture  
 swelled,And thus, by eager love impelled,He spoke in gracious tone, that,  
 oftChecked by his joy, was low and soft:'I, by my brother's might  
 oppressed,By ceaseless woe and fear distressed,Mourning my consort far  
 away,On Rishyamúka's mountain stray.Expelled by Báli's cruel hateI wander  
 here disconsolate.Do thou to whom all sufferers flee,From his dread hand  
 deliver me.' He spoke, and Rama, just and brave,Whose pious soul to  
 virtue clave,Smiled as in conscious might he eyedThe king of Vánars, and  
 replied:'Best fruit of friendship is the deedThat helps the friend in  
 hour of need;And this mine arm in death shall layThy robber ere the close  
 of day.For see, these feathered darts of mineWhose points so fiercely  
 flash and shine,And shafts with golden emblem, cameFrom dark woods known  
 by Skanda's name,  
 lWinged from the pinion of the henn  
 Like Indra's bolts they strike and burn.With even knots and piercing  
 headEach like a furious snake is sped;With these, to-day, before thine  
 eyeShall, like a shattered mountain, lieBáli, thy dread and wicked  
 foe,O'erwhelmed in hideous overthrow.' He spoke: Sugriva's bosom  
 swelledWith hope and joy unparalleled.Then his glad voice the Vánar  
 raised,And thus the son of Raghu praised:'Long have I pined in depth of  
 grief;Thou art the hope of all, O chief.Now, Raghu's son, I bail thee  
 friend,And bid thee to my woes attend;For, by ray truth I swear it,  
 nowNot life itself is dear as thou,Since by the witness fire we metAnd  
 friendly hand in hand was set.Friend communes now with friend, and henceI  
 tell with surest confidence,How woes that on my spirit weighConsume me  
 through the night and day.' For sobs and sighs he scarce could  
 speak,And his sad voice came low and weak,As, while his eyes with tears  
 o'erflowed,The burden of his soul he showed.Then by strong effort,  
 bravely made,The torrent of his tears he stayed,  
 Wiped his bright eyes, his grief subdued,And thus, more calm, his speech  
 renewed:'By Báli's conquering might oppressed,Of power and kingship  
 dispossessed,Loaded with taunts of scorn and hateI left my realm and  
 royal state.He tore away my consort: sheWas dearer than my life to me,And  
 many a friend to me and mineIn hopeless chains was doomed to pine.With  
 wicked thoughts, unsated still,Me whom he wrongs he yearns to kill;And  
 spies of Vánar race, who triedTo slay me, by this hand have died.Moved by  
 this constant doubt and fearI saw thee, Prince, and came not near.When  
 woe and peril gather roundA foe in every form is found.Save Hanúmán, O  
 Raghu's son,And these, no friend is left me, none.Through their kind aid,  
 a faithful bandWho guard their lord from hostile hand,Rest when their  
 chieftain rests and bendTheir steps where'er he lists to wend,--Through  
 them alone, in toil and pain,My wretched life I still sustain.  
 p. 333Enough, for thou hast heard in brief  
 The story of my pain and grief.His mighty strength all regions know,My  
 brother, but my deadly foe.Ah, if the proud oppressor fell,His death  
 would all my woe dispel.Yea, on my cruel conqueror's fallMy joy depends,  
 my life, my all.This were the end and sure relief,O Ráma, of my tale of  
 grief.Fair be his lot or dark with woe.No comfort like a friend I know.'  
 Then Rama spoke: 'O friend, relateWhence sprang fraternal strife and  
 hate,That duly taught by thee, I mayEach foeman's strength and weakness  
 weigh:And skilled in every chance restoreThe blissful state thou hadst  
 before.For, when I think of all the scornAnd bitter woe thou long hast  
 borne.My soul indignant swells with painLike waters flushed with furious  
 rain.Then, ere I string this bended bow,Tell me the tale I long to  
 know,Ere from the cord my arrow fly,And low in death thy foeman lie.'  
 He spoke: Sugriva joyed to hear,Nor less his lords were glad of cheer:And  
 thus to Ráma mighty-souledThe cause that moved their strife he told;

Footnotes

332:1 The wood in which Skanda or Kártikeva was brought up:

'The Warrior-God

Whose infant steps amid the thickets strayedWhere the reeds wave over the holy sod.

See also Book I. Canto XXIX. Meghadúta

Next: Canto IX.: Sugríva's Story. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO IX.: SUGRÍVA'S STORY. 1

'My brother, known by Báli's name,

Had won by might a conqueror's fame.My father's eldest-born was he,Well honoured by his sire and me.My father died, and each sage lordNamed Báli king with one accord;And he, by right of birth ordained,The sovereign of the Vánars reigned.He in his royal place controlledThe kingdom of our sires of old,And I all faithful service lentTo aid my brother's government.The fiend Mávávi, him of yoreTo Dundubhi

2 his mother bore,--

For woman's love in strife engaged,A deadly war with Báli waged.When sleep had chained each weary frameTo vast Kishkindá's

1b gates he came.

And, shouting through the shades of night,Challenged his foeman to the fight.My brother heard the furious shout,And wild with rage rushed madly out.Though fain would I and each sad wife

Detain him from the deadly strife.He burned his demon foe to slay,And rushed impetuous to the fray.His weeping wives he thrust aside,And forth, impelled by fury, hied;While, by my love and duty led,I followed where my brother sped.Máyávi looked, and at the sightFled from his foes in wild affright.The flying fiend we quickly viewed.And with swift feet his steps pursued.Then rose the moon, whose friendly rayCast light upon our headlong way.By the soft beams was dimly shownA mighty cave with grass o'ergrown.Within its depths he sprang, and weThe demon's form no more might see.My brother's breast was all aglowWith fury when he missed the foe,And, turning, thus to me he saidWith senses all disquieted:'Here by the cavern's mouth remain;Keep ear and eye upon the strain,While I the dark recess exploreAnd dip my brand in foeman's gore.'I heard his angry speech, and triedTo turn him from his plan aside.He made me swear by both his feet,And sped within the dark retreat.

While in the cave he stayed, and IWatched at the mouth, a year went by.For his return I looked in vain,And, moved by love, believed him slain.I mourned, by doubt and fear distressed,And greater horror seized my breastWhen from the cavern rolled a flood,A carnage stream of froth and blood;And from the depths a sound of fear,The roar of demons, smote mine ear;But never rang my brother's shoutTriumphant in the battle rout.I closed the cavern with a block,Huge as a hill, of shattered rock.Gave offerings due to Báli's shade,And sought Kishkindhá, sore dismayed.Long time with anxious care I triedFrom Báli's lords his fate to hide,But they, when once the tale was known,Placed me as king on Báli's throne.There for a while I justly reigned

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And all with equal care ordained,When joyous from the demon slainMy brother Báli came again.He found me ruling in his stead,And, fired with rage, his eyes grew red.

He slew the lords who made me king,And spoke keen words to taunt and sting.The kingly rank and power I heldMy brother's rage with ease had quelled,But still, restrained by old respectFor claims of birth, the thought I checked.Thus having struck the demon downCame Báli to his royal town.With meek respect, with humble speech,His haughty heart I strove to reach.But all my arts were tried in vain,No gentle word his lips would



deign. Though to the ground I bent and set  
His feet upon my coronet: Still  
Bali in his rage and pride  
All signs of grace and love denied.'

Footnotes

333:1 "Sugrīva's story paints in vivid colours the  
manners, customs and ideas of the wild mountain tribes  
which inhabited Kishkindhya or the southern hills of the Deccan, of the  
people whom the poem calls monkeys, tribes altogether different in origin  
and civilization from the Indo-Sanskrit race." Gorresio. 333:2 A fiend  
slain by Báli.

333:1b Báli's mountain city.

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CANTO X.: SUGRÍVA'S STORY.

'I strove to soothe and lull to rest  
The fury of his troubled breast: Well art thou come, dear lord,' I  
cried. 'By whose strong arm thy foe has died. Forlorn I languished here,  
but now My saviour and defence art thou. Once more receive this regal shade  
1

Like the full moon in heaven displayed; And let the chouries\*,  
2 thus restored,

Wave glorious o'er the rightful lord. I kept my watch, thy word obeyed, And  
by the cave a year I stayed. But when I saw that stream of blood Rush from  
the cavern in a flood, My sad heart broken with dismay. And every wandering  
sense astray, I barred the entrance with a stone, -- A crag from some high  
mountain thrown -- Turned from the spot I watched in vain. And to Kishkindhá  
came again. My deep distress and downcast mien By citizen and lord were  
seen. They made me king against my will: Forgive me if the deed was ill.  
True as I ever was I see My honoured king once more in thee; I only ruled a  
while the state When thou hadst left us desolate.

This town with people, lords, and lands,  
Lay as a trust in guardian hands: And now, my gracious lord, accept The  
kingdom which thy servant kept. Forgive me, victor of the foe, Nor let thy  
wrath against me glow. See joining suppliant hands I pray, And at thy feet  
my head I lay. Believe my words: against my will The royal seat they made  
me fill. Unkinged they saw the city, hence They made me lord for her  
defence.' But Báli, though I humbly sued, Reviled me in his furious  
mood: 'Out on thee, wretch!' in wrath he cried With many a bitter taunt  
beside He summoned every lord, and all His subjects gathered at his  
call. Then forth his burning anger broke, And thus amid his friends he  
spoke: 'I need not tell, for well ye know, How fierce Máyaví, fiend and  
foe, Came to Kishkindhá's gate by night, And dared me in his wrath to  
fight.

I heard each word the demon said: Forth from my royal hall I sped; And, foe  
in brother's guise concealed, Sugrīva followed to the field. The mighty  
demon through the shade Beheld me come with one to aid: Then shrinking from  
unequal fight. He turned his back in swiftest flight. From vengeful foes  
his life to save He sought the refuge of a cave. Then when I saw the fiend  
had fled Within that cavern dark and dread, Thus to my brother cruel-  
eyed. Impatient in my wrath, I cried: 'I seek no more my royal town Till I  
have struck the demon down. Here by the cave in's mouth remain Until my hand  
the foe have slain.' Upon his faith my heart relied, And swift within the  
depths I hied. A year went by: in every spot I sought the fiend, but found  
him not. At length my foe I saw and slew. Whom long I feared when lost to  
view; And all his kinsmen by his side Beneath my vengeful fury died. The  
monster, as he reeled and fell, Poured forth his blood with roar and  
yell; And, filling all the cavern, dyed

The portal with the crimson tide. Upon my foeman slain at last One look,  
one pitying look, I cast. I sought again the light of day: The cave was  
closed and left no way. To the barred mouth I sadly came, And called aloud  
Sugrīva's name. But all was still: no voice replied,

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And hope within my bosom died. With furious efforts, vain at first, Through  
bars of rock my way I burst. Then, free once more, the path that brought My  
feet in safety home I sought. 'Twas thus Sugriva dared despise The claim of  
brothers' friendly ties. With crags of rock he barred me in, And for  
himself the realm would win. Thus Báli spoke in words severe; And then,  
unmoved by ruth or fear, Left me a single robe and sent His brother forth  
in banishment. He cast me out with scathe and scorn, And from my side my  
wife was torn, Now in great fear and ill at ease I roam this land with  
woods and seas, Or dwell on Rishyamúka's hill,  
And sorrow for my consort still. Thou hast the tale how first arose This  
bitter hate of brother foes. Such are the griefs neath which I pine, And  
all without a fault of mine. O swift to save in hour of fear, My prayer who  
dread this Báli, hear With gracious love assistance deign, And mine  
oppressor's arm restrain.' Then Raghu's son, the good and brave, With a  
gay laugh his answer gave: 'These shafts of mine which ne'er can  
fail, Before whose sheen the sun grows pale, Winged by my fury, fleet and  
fierce, The wicked Báli's heart shall pierce. Yea, mark the words I speak,  
so long Shall live that wretch who joys in wrong, Until these angered eyes  
have seen The robber of thy darling queen. I, taught by equal suffering,  
know What waves of grief above thee flow. This hand thy captive wife shall  
free, And give thy kingdom back to thee.' Sugriva joyed as Ráma  
spoke, And valour in his breast awoke. His eye grew bright, his heart grew  
bold, And thus his wondrous tale he told: Footnotes

334:1 The canopy or royal umbrella, one of the usual  
Indian regalia.

334:2 Whisks made of the hair of the Yak or Bos grunners, also regal  
insignia.

Next: Canto XI.: Dundubhi. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XI.: DUNDUBHI.

'I doubt not, Prince, thy peerless might,  
Armed with these shafts so keen and bright, Like all-destroying fires of  
fate, The worlds could burn and devastate. But lend thou first thy mind and  
ear Of Báli's power and might to hear. How bold, how firm, in battle  
tried, Is Báli's heart; and then decide. From east to west, from south to  
north On restless errand hunting forth,  
From farthest sea to sea he flies  
Before the sun has lit the skies. A mountain top he oft will seek. Tear  
from its root a towering peak. Hurl it aloft, as 'twere a ball, And catch  
it ere to earth it fall. And many a tree that long has stood In health and  
vigour in the wood, His single arm to earth will throw, The marvels of his  
might to show. Shaped like a bull, a monster bore The name of Dundubhi of  
yore: He matched in size a mountain height, A thousand elephants in might.  
By pride of wondrous gifts impelled, And strength he deemed  
unparalleled, To Ocean, lord of stream and brook, Athirst for war, his way  
he took. He reached the king of rolling waves Whose gems are piled in  
sunless caves, And threw his challenge to the sea; 'Come forth, O King, and  
fight with me.' He spoke, and from his ocean bed The righteous  
1 monarch heaved his head,

And gave, sedate, his calm reply To him whom fate impelled to die: 'Not  
mine, not mine the power,' he cried, 'To cope with thee in battle  
tried; But listen to my voice, and seek The worthier foe of whom I  
speak. The Lord of Hills, where hermits live And love the home his forests  
give, Whose child is S'ankar's darling queen,

2

The King of Snows is he I mean. Deep caves has he, and dark boughs  
shade The torrent and the wild cascade. From him expect the fierce  
delight Which heroes feel in equal fight. 'He deemed that fear checked  
ocean's king, And, like an arrow from the string, To the wild woods that

clothe the sideOf Lord Himálaya's hills he hied.Then Dundubhi, with  
hideous roar.  
Huge fragments from the summit toreVast as Airávat,  
3 white with snow,  
And hurled them to the plains below.Then like a white cloud soft,  
serene.The Lord of Mountains' form was seen.It sat upon a lofty crest.And  
thus the furious fiend addressed:'Beseems thee not, O virtue's friend,My  
mountain tops to rive and rend;

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For I, the hermit's calm retreat,For deeds of war am all unmeet,' The  
demon's eye with rage grew red,And thus in furious tone he said:'If thou  
from fear or sloth declineTo match thy strength in war with mine,Where  
shall I find a champion, say,To meet me burning for the fray?'He spoke:  
Himálaya, skilled in loreOf eloquence, replied once more,And, angered in  
his righteous mind,Addressed the chief of demon kind:'The Vánar Báli,  
brave and wise,Son of the God who rules the sides,

1

Sways, glorious in his high renown,Kishkindhá his imperial town.Well may  
that valiant lord who knows  
Each art of war his might opposeTo thine, in equal battle set,As Namuehi  
2 and Indra met.

Go, if thy soul desire the fray;To Báli's city speed away,And that  
uoconquered hero meetWhose fame is high for warlike feat.'He listened to  
the Lord of Snow,And, his proud heart with rage aglow,Sped swift away and  
lighted downBy vast Kishkindhá, Báli's town.With pointed horns to strike  
and goreThe semblance of a bull he bore,Huge as a cloud that downward  
bendsEre the full flood of rain descends.Impelled by pride and rage and  
hate,He thundered at Kishkindhá's gate;And with his bellowing, like the  
soundOf pealing drums, he shook the ground,He rent the earth and  
prostrate threwThe trees that near the portal grew.King Báli from the  
bowers withinIndignant heard the roar and din.Then, moonlike mid the  
stars, with allHis dames he hurried to the wall;And to the fiend this  
speech, expressedIn clear and measured words, addressed:'Know me for  
monarch. Báli styled,Of Vánar tribes that roam the wild.

Say why dost thou this gate molest,And bellowing thus disturb our rest?I  
know thee, mighty fiend: bewareAnd guard thy life with wiser care.'He  
spoke: and thus the fiend returned,While red with rage his eyeballs  
burned:'What! speak when all thy dames are nighAnd hero-like thy foe  
defy?

Come, meet me in the fight this day,  
And learn my strength by bold assay.Or shall I spare tbee, and  
relentUntil the coming night be spent?Take then the respite of a nightAnd  
yield thee to each soft delight.Then, monarch of the Vánar race.With  
loving arms thy friends embrace.Gifts on thy faithful lords bestow,Bid  
each and all farewell, and go.Show in the streets once more thy  
face,Instal thy son to fill thy place.Dally a while with each dear  
dame;And then my strength thy pride shall tameFor, should I smite thee  
drunk with wineEnamoured of those dames of thine,Beneath diseases bowed  
and bent,Or weak, unarmed, or negligent,My deed would merit hate and  
scornAs his who slays the child unborn.'

Then Báli's soul with rage was tired,Queen Tárá and the dames retired;And  
slowly, with a laugh of pride,The king of Vánars thus replied:'Me, fiend,  
thou deemest drunk with wine:Unless thy fear the fight decline,Come, meet  
me in the fray, and testThe spirit of my valiant breast.'He spoke in  
wrath and high disdain;And, laying down his golden chain,Gift of his sire  
Mahendra, daredThe demon, for the fray prepared;Seized by the horns the  
monster, vastAs a huge hill, and held him fast,Then fiercely dragged him  
round and round,And, shouting, hurled him to the ground.Blood streaming  
from his ears, he rose,And wild with fury strove the foes.Then Báli,  
match for Indra's might,With every arm renewed the fight.He fought with

fists, and feet, and knees,With fragments of the rock, and trees.At last  
the monster's strength, assailedBy S'akra's  
lb conquering offspring, failed.

Him Bali raised with mighty strain.And dashed upon the ground  
again;Where, bruised and shattered, in a tideOf rushing blood, the demon  
died.King Báli saw the lifeless corse,  
And bending, with tremendous forceRaised the huge bulk from where it  
lay,And hurled it full a league away.As through the air the body  
flew,Some blood-drops, caught by gales that blew,Welled from his  
shattered jaw and fellBy Saint Matanga's hermit cell:Matanga saw,  
illustrious sage,Those drops defile his hermitage,  
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And, as he marvelled whence they came,Fierce anger filled his soul with  
flame:'Who is the villain, evil-souled,With childish thoughts unwise and  
bold,Who is the impious wretch,' he cried,'By whom my grove with blood is  
dyed?'

Thus spoke Matanga in his rage,  
And hastened from the hermitage,When lo, before his wondering eyesLay the  
dead bull of mountain sizeHis hermit soul was nothing slowThe doer of the  
deed to know,And thus the Vánar in a burstOf wild tempestuous wrath he  
cursed:'Ne'er let that Vánar wander here,For, if he come, his death is  
near.

Whose impious hand with blood has dyedThe holy place where I abide,Who  
threw this demon corse and madeA ruin of the pleasant shade.If e'er he  
plant his wicked feetWithin one league of my retreat;Yea, if the villain  
come so nighThat very hour he needs must die.And let the Vánar lords who  
dwellIn the dark woods that skirt my cellObey my words, and speeding  
henceFind them some meeter residence.Here if they dare to stay, on allThe  
terrors of my curse shall fall.They spoil the tender saplings, dearAs  
children which I cherish here,Mar root and branch and leaf and spray,And  
steal the ripening fruit away.One day I grant, no further hour,To-morrow  
shall my curse have power,And then each Vánar I may seeA stone through  
countless years shall be.'The Vánars heard the curse and hiedFrom  
sheltering wood and mountain side.King Báli marked their haste and  
dread,And to the flying leaders said:'Speak, Vánar chiefs, and tell me  
whyFrom Saint Matanga's grove ye flyTo gather round me: is it well  
With all who in those woodlands dwell?'He spoke: the Vánar leaders  
toldKing Báli with his chain of goldWhat curse the saint had on them  
laid,Which drove them from their ancient shade.Then royal Báli sought the  
sage,With reverent hands to soothe his rage.The holy man his suppliant  
spurned,And to his cell in anger turned.That curse on Báli sorely  
pressed.And long his conscious soul distressed.Him still the curse and  
terror keepAfar from Rishyamúka's steep.He dares not to the grove draw  
nigh,Nay scarce will hither turn his eye.We know what terrors warm him  
hence,And roam these woods in confidence.Look, Prince, before thee white  
and dryThe demon's bones uncovered lie,Who, like a hill in bulk and  
length,Fell ruind for his pride of strength.See those high Sál trees  
seven in rowThat droop their mighty branches low,These at one grasp would  
Báli seize,And leafless shake the trembling trees.These tales I tell, O  
Prince, to showThe matchless power that arms the foe.How canst thou hope  
to slay him? howMeet Báli in the battle now?'

Sugriva spoke and sadly sighed:

And Lakshman with a laugh replied:'What show of power, what proof and  
testMay still the doubts that fill thy breast?'

He spoke. Sugriva thus replied:

'See yonder Sál trees side by side.King Báli here would take his  
standGrasping his bow with vigorous hand,And every arrow, keen and  
true.Would strike its tree and pierce it throughIf Ráma now his bow will  
bend,And through one trunk an arrow send;Or if his arm can raise and  
throwTwo hundred measures of his bow,Grasped by a foot and hurled through

air, The demon bull that moulders there, My heart will own his might and  
fain Believe my foe already slain.'

Sugrīva spoke inflamed with ire,  
Scanned Rāma with a glance of fire, Pondered a while in silent mood. And  
thus again his speech renewed: 'All lands with Bāli's glories ring, A  
valiant, strong, and mighty king; In conscious power unused to yield; A  
hero first in every field.

His wondrous deeds his might declare, Deeds Gods might scarcely do or  
dare; And on this power reflecting still I roam on Rishyamūka's hill. Awed  
by my brother's might I rove, In doubt and fear, from grove to grove, While  
Hanumān, my chosen friend, And faithful lords my steps attend; And now, O  
true to friendship's tie, I hail in thee my best ally. My surest refuge  
from my foes, And steadfast as the Lord of Snows. Still, when I muse how  
strong and bold Is cruel Bāli, evil-souled, But ne'er, O chief of Raghu's  
line, Have seen what strength in war is thine, Though in my heart I may not  
dare Doubt thy great might, despise, compare, Thoughts of his fearful deeds  
will rise And fill my soul with sad surmise. Speech, form, and trust which  
naught may move

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Thy secret strength and glory prove, As smouldering ashes dimly show The  
dormant fires that live below.' He ceased: and Rāma answered,  
while Played o'er his lips a gracious smile:

'Not yet convinced? This clear assay Shall drive each lingering doubt  
away.' Thus Rāma spoke his heart to cheer, To Dundubhi's vast frame drew  
near: He touched it with his foot in play And sent it twenty leagues  
away. Sugrīva marked what easy force Hurlled through the air that demon's  
corse Whose mighty bones were white and dried, And to the son of Raghu  
cried: 'My brother Bāli, when his might Was drunk and weary from the  
fight, Hurlled forth the monster body, fresh With skin and sinews, blood and  
flesh. Now flesh and blood are dried away. The crumbling bones are light as  
hay, Which thou, O Raghu's son, hast sent Flying through air in  
merriment. This test alone is weak to show If thou be stronger or the  
foe. By thee a heap of mouldering bone, By him the recent corse was  
thrown. Thy strength, O Prince, is yet untried: Come, pierce one tree: let  
this decide. Prepare thy ponderous bow and bring Close to thine ear the  
straining string. On yonder Sāl tree fix thine eye, And let the mighty  
arrow fly, I doubt not, chief, that I shall see  
Thy pointed shaft transfix the tree. Then come, assay the easy task, And do  
for love the thing I ask. Best of all lights, the Day-God fills  
With glory earth and sky: Himālaya is the lord of hills That heave  
their heads on high. The royal lion is the best Of beasts that  
tread the earth; And thou, O hero, art confessed First in heroic  
worth.'

Footnotes

335:1 Righteous because he never transgresses his  
bounds, and

"over his great tides  
Fidelity presides."

335:2 Himālaya, the Lord of Snow, is the father of Umā  
the wife of S'iva or S'ankar.

335:3 Indra's celestial elephant. 336:1 Bāli was the son of Indra. See  
p. 28.

336:2 An Asur slain by Indra. See p. 261 Note. He is,  
like Vritra, a form of the demon of drought destroyed  
by the beneficent God of the firmament.

336:1b Another name of Indra or Mahendra.

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CANTO XII.: THE PALM TREES.

Then Rāma, that his friend might know

His strength unrivalled, grasped his bow, That mighty bow the foe's  
dismay, -- And on the string an arrow lay. Next on the tree his eye he  
bent, And forth the hurtling weapon went. Loosed from the matchless hero's  
hold, That arrow, decked with burning gold, Cleft the seven palms in line,  
and through The hill that rose behind them flew:

Six subterranean realms it passed,  
And reached the lowest depth at last, Whence speeding back through earth  
and air It sought the quiver, and rested there.

1

Upon the cloven trees amazed. The sovereign of the Vánars gazed. With all  
his chains and gold outspread Prostrate on earth he laid his head. Then,  
rising, palm to palm he laid In reverent act, obeisance made, And joyously  
to Ráma, best Of war-trained chiefs, these words addressed: 'What  
champion, Raghu's son, may hope

With thee in deadly fight to cope, Whose arrow, leaping from the  
bow. Cleaves tree and hill and earth below? Scarce might the Gods, arrayed  
for strife By Indra's self, escape, with life Assailed by thy victorious  
hand: And how may Báli hope to stand? All grief and care are past away, And  
joyous thoughts my bosom sway, Who have in thee a friend, renowned. As  
Varun

2 or as Indra, found.

Then on! subdue, -- 'tis friendship's claim, -- My foe who bears a brother's  
name. Strike Báli down beneath thy feet: With suppliant hands I thus  
entreat, 'Sugríva ceased, and Ráma pressed The grateful Vánar to his  
breast; And thoughts of kindred feeling woke In Lakshman's bosom, as he  
spoke: 'On to Kishkindhá, on with speed! Thou, Vánar King, our way shalt  
lead, Then challenge Báli forth to fight. Thy foe who scorns a brother's  
right.' They sought Kishkindhá's gate and stood Concealed by trees in  
densest wood, Sugríva, to the fight addressed, More closely drew his  
cinctured vest, And raised a wild sky-piercing shoutp. 339

To call the foeman Báli out.

Forth came impetuous Báli, stirred To fury by the shout he heard. So the  
great sun, ere night has ceased, Springs up impatient to the east. Then  
fierce and wild the conflict raged As hand to hand the foes engaged, As  
though in battle mid the stars Fought Mercury and fiery Mars.

1

To highest pitch of frenzy wrought With fists like thunderbolts they  
fought, While near them Ráma took his stand, And viewed the battle, bow in  
hand. Alike they stood in form and might, Like heavenly As'vins

2 paired in fight,

Nor might the son of Raghu know Where fought the friend and where the  
foe; So, while his bow was ready bent. No life-destroying shaft he  
sent. Crushed down by Báli's mightier stroke Sugríva's force now sank and  
broke, Who, hoping naught from Ráma's aid, To Rishyamúka fled  
dismayed, Weary, and faint, and wounded sore, His body bruised and dyed  
with gore, From Báli's blows, in rage and dread, Afar to sheltering woods  
he fled.

Nor Báli farther dared pursue, The curbing curse too well he knew. 'Fled  
from thy death!' the victor cried, And home the mighty warrior  
hied. Hanúmán, Lakshman, Raghu's son Beheld the conquered Vánar run. And  
followed to the sheltering shade Where yet Sugríva stood dismayed. Near and  
more near the chieftains came, Then, for intolerable shame, Not daring yet  
to lift his eyes, Sugríva spoke with burning sighs: 'Thy matchless strength  
I first beheld, And dared my foe, by thee impelled. Why hast thou tried me  
with deceit And urged me to a sure defeat?

Thou shouldst have said, 'I will not slay

Thy foeman in the coming fray. 'For had I then thy purpose known I had not  
waged the fight alone.' The Vánar sovereign, lofty-souled, In plaintive  
voice his sorrows told. Then Ráma spake: 'Sugríva, list, All anger from thy  
heart dismissed, And I will tell the cause that stayed Mine arrow, and

withheld the aid. In dress, adornment, port, and height, In splendour,  
 battle-shout, and might,  
 No shade of difference could I see Between thy foe, O King, and thee. So  
 like was each, I stood at gaze, My senses lost in wildering maze, Nor  
 loosened from my straining bow A deadly arrow at the foe, Lest in my doubt  
 the shaft should send To sudden death our surest friend. O, if this hand in  
 heedless guilt And rash resolve thy blood had spilt, Through every land, O  
 Vánar King, My wild and foolish act would ring, Sore weight of sin on him  
 must lie By whom a friend is made to die; And Lakshman, I, and Sítá, best Of  
 dames, on thy protection rest. On, warrior! for the fight prepare; Nor fear  
 again thy foe to dare. Within one hour thine eye shall view My arrow strike  
 thy foeman through; Shall see the stricken Báli lie Low on the earth, and  
 gasp and die. But come, a badge about thee bind, O monarch of the Vánar  
 kind. That in the battle shock mine eyes The friend and foe may  
 recognize. Come, Lakshman, let that creeper deck With brightest bloom  
 Sugríva's neck, And be a happy token, twined  
 Around the chief of lofty mind.' Upon the mountain slope there grew A  
 threading creeper fair to view, And Lakshman plucked the bloom and  
 round Sugríva's neck a garland wound, Graced with the flowery wreath he  
 wore, The Vánar chief the semblance bore Of a dark cloud at close of  
 day Engarlanded with cranes at play, In glorious light the Vánar glowed As  
 by his comrade's side he strode. And, still on Ráma's word intent, His  
 steps to great Kishkindhá bent.

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Footnotes

338:1 The Bengal recension makes it return In the form  
 of a swan.

338:2 Varuna is one of the oldest of the Vedic Gods, corresponding in  
 name and partly in character to the  
 ο·παυ·ς of the Greeks and is often regarded as the  
 supreme deity. He upholds heaven and earth, possesses extraordinary power  
 and wisdom, sends his messengers  
 through both worlds, numbers the very winkings of men's eyes, punishes  
 transgressors whom he seizes with his deadly noose, and pardons the sins  
 of those who are penitent. In later mythology he has become the God of  
 the sea.

339:1 Budha, not to be confounded with the great  
 reformer Buddha, is the son of Soma or the Moon, and  
 regent of the planet Mercury. Angára is the regent of Mars who is called  
 the red or the fiery planet. The encounter between Michael and Satan is  
 similarly said to have been as if

"Two planets rushing from aspect malign Of fiercest opposition in  
 midsky Should combat, and their jarring spheres compound."  
 Paradise Lost. Book VI.

339:2 The As'vins or Heavenly Twins, the Dioskuri or  
 Castor and Pollux of the Hindus, have frequently been  
 mentioned. See p. 36, Note

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CANTO XIII.: THE RETURN TO  
 KISHKINDHÁ.

Thus with Sugríva, from the side  
 Of Rishyamuka, Ráma hied, And stood before Kishkindhá's gate Where Báli  
 kept his regal state. The hero in his warrior hold Raised his great bow  
 adorned with gold, And drew his pointed arrow bright As sunbeams, finisher  
 of fight. Strong-necked Sugríva led the way With Lakshman mighty in the  
 fray. Nala and Níla came behind With Hanumán of lofty mind. And valiant  
 Tára, last in place, A leader of the Vánar race. They gazed on many a tree  
 that showed The glory of its pendent load, And brook and limpid rill that  
 made Sweet murmurs as they seaward strayed. They looked on caverns dark and

deep, On bower and glen and mountain steep, And saw the opening lotus  
stud With roseate cup the crystal flood, While crane and swan and coot and  
drake

Made pleasant music on the lake, And from the reedy bank was heard The note  
of many a happy bird. In open lawns, in tangled ways, They saw the tall  
deer stand at gaze, Or marked them free and fearless roam, Fed with sweet  
grass, their woodland home. At times two flashing tusks between The wavings  
of the wood were seen, And some mad elephant, alone, Like a huge moving  
hill, was shown. And scarcely less in size appeared Great monkeys all with  
dust besmeared. And various birds that roam the skies, And silvan  
creatures, met their eyes, As through the wood the chieftains sped, Anil  
followed where Sugriva led. Then Ráma, as their way they made, Saw near  
at hand a lovely shade, And, as he gazed upon the trees, Spake to Sugriva  
words like these; 'Those stately trees in beauty rise, Fair as a cloud in  
autumn skies, I fain, my friend, would learn from thee What pleasant grove  
is that I see.' Thus Ráma spake, the mighty souled; And thus his tale  
Sugriva told: 'That, Ráma, is a wide retreat That brings repose to weary  
feet.

Bright streams and fruit and roots are there, And shady gardens passing  
fair. There, neath the roof of hanging boughs, The sacred Seven maintained  
their vows. Their heads in dust were lowly laid, In streams their nightly  
beds were made. Each seventh night they broke their fast, But air was still  
their sole repast, And when seven hundred years were spent To homes in  
heaven the hermits went. Their glory keeps the garden yet, With walls of  
stately trees beset. Scarce would the Gods and demons dare, By Indra led,  
to enter there. No beast that roams the wood is found, No bird of air,  
within the bound; Or, thither if they idly stray, They find no more their  
homeward way. You hear at times mid dulcet tones The chime of anklets,  
rings, and zones. You hear the song and music sound, And heavenly fragrance  
breathes around, There duly burn the triple fires

1

Where mounts the smoke in curling spires, And, in a dun wreath, hangs  
above The tall trees, like a brooding dove. Round brunch and crest the  
vapours close Till every tree enveloped shows A hill of lazulite when  
clouds

Hang round it with their misty shrouds. With Lakshman, lord of Raghu's  
line, In reverent guise thine head incline, And with fixt heart and  
suppliant hand Give honour to the sainted band. They who with faithful  
hearts revere The holy Seven who harboured here, Shall never, son of Raghu,  
know In all their lives an hour of woe.' Then Ráma and his brother  
bent. And did obeisance reverent With suppliant hand and lowly head, Then  
with Sugriva onward sped. Beyond the sainted Seven's abode Far on their way  
the chieftains strode, And great Kishkindhá's portal gained, The royal town  
where Báli reigned. Then by the gate they took their stand All ready armed  
a noble band, And burning every one To slay in battle, hand to hand,  
Their foeman, Indra's son,

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CANTO XIV.: THE CHALLENGE.

They stood where trees of densest green

Wove round their forms a veiling screen. O'er all the garden's pleasant  
shade The eyes of King Sugriva strayed,

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And, as on grass and tree he gazed, The fires of wrath within him  
blazed. Then like a mighty cloud on high, When roars the tempest through  
the sky, Girt by his friends he thundered out His dread sky-rending battle-  
shout Like some proud lion in his gait, Or as the sun begins his  
state, Sugriva let his quick glance rest On Ráma whom he thus  
addressed: 'There is the seat of Báli's sway. Where flags on wall and  
turret play, Which mighty bands of Vánars hold, Rich in all arms and store



of gold. Thy promise to thy mind recall That Báli by thy hand shall fall. As kindly fruits adorn the bough. So give my hopes their harvest now.'

In suppliant tone the Vánar prayed, And Raghu's son his answer made 'By Lakshman's hand this flowery twine Was wound about thee for a sign. The wreath of giant creeper throws About thy form its brilliant glows, As though about the sun were set The bright stars for a coronet. One shaft of mine this day, dear friend, Thy sorrow and thy fear shall end. And, from the bowstring freed, shall be Giver of freedom, King, to thee. Then come, Sugriva, quickly show, Where'er he lie, thy bitter foe; And let my glance the wretch descry Whose deeds, a brother's name belie. Yea, soon in dust and blood o'erthrown Shall Báli fall and gasp and groan. Once let this eye the foeman see, Then, if he live to turn and flee, Despise my puny strength and shame With foul opprobrium Ráma's name. Hast thou not seen his hand, O King, Through seven tall trees one arrow wing? Still in that strength securely trust, And deem thy foeman in the dust, In all my days, though surely tried By grief and woe, I ne'er have lied; And still by duty's law restrained

Will ne'er with falsehood's charge be stained. Cast doubt away: the oath I swear Its kindly fruit shall quickly bear, As smiles the land with golden grain By mercy of the Lord of rain. Oh, warrior to the gate I defy Thy foe with shout and battle-cry. Till Báli with his chain of gold Come speeding from his royal hold. Blood hearts, with warlike fire aglow, Brook not the challenge of a foe: Each on his power and might relies, And most before his fathers eyes.

King Báli loves the fray too well

To linger in his citadel, And, when he hears thy battle-shout, All wild for war will hasten out.' He spoke. Sugriva raised a cry That shook and rent the echoing sky, A shout so fierce and loud and dread That stately bulls in terror fled, Like dames who fly from threatened stain In some ignoble monarch's reign. The deer in wild confusion ran Like horses turned in battle's van. Down fell the birds, like Gods who fall When merits fail, 1, at that dread call. So fiercely, boldened for the fray, The offspring of the Lord of Day Sent forth his furious shout as loud As thunder from a labouring cloud, Or, where the gale blows fresh and free, The roaring of the troubled sea.

Footnotes

340:1 Called respectively Gárhapatra, Áhavanīya, and

Dakshina, household, sacrificial, and southern.

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CANTO XV.: TARÁ.

That shout, which shook the land with fear, In thunder smote on Báli's ear, Where in the chamber barred and closed The sovereign with his dame reposed. Each amorous thought was rudely stilled, And pride and rage his bosom filled. His angry eyes flashed darkly red, And all his native brightness fled, As when, by swift eclipse assailed, The glory of the sun has failed. While in his fury uncontrolled He ground his teeth, his eyeballs rolled, He seemed a lake wherein no gem Of blossom decks the lotus stem. He heard, and with indignant pride Forth from the bower the Vánar hied. And the earth trembled at the beat And fury of hit hastening feet. But Tára to her consort flew, Her loving arms around him threw. And trembling and bewildered, gave Wise counsel that might heal and save: 'O dear my lord, this rage control That like a torrent floods thy soul, And cant these idle thoughts away Like faded wreath of yesterday, O tarry till the morning light, Then, if thou wilt, go forth and fight.

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Think not I doubt thy valour, no; Or deem thee weaker than thy foe, Yet for a while would have thee stay Nor see thee tempt the fight to-day. Now list, my loving lord, and learn The reason why I bid thee turn. Thy foeman came in wrath and pride, And thee to deadly fight defied, Thou wentest out: he

fought, and fledSore wounded and discomfited.But yet, untaught by late defeat,He comes his conquering foe to meet.And calls thee forth with cry and shout:Hence spring, my lord, this fear and doubt.A heart so bold that will not yield,But yearns to tempt the desperate field,Such loud defiance, fiercely pressed,On no uncertain hope can rest.So lately by thine arm o'erthrown,He comes not back, I ween, alone.Some mightier comrade guards his side,And spurs him to this burst of pride.For nature made the Vānar wise:

On arms of might his hope relies;And never will Sugrīva seekA friend whose power to save is weak.Now listen while my lips unfoldThe wondrous tale my Angad told.Our child the distant forest sought,Aud, learnt from spies, the tidings brought.Two sons of Das'arathu, sprungFrom old Ikshváku, brave and young,Renowned in arms, in war untamed--Rāma and Lakshman are they named--Have with thy foe Sugrīva madeA league of love and friendly aid.Now Rāma, famed for exploit high,Is bound thy brother's firm ally,Like fires of doom

1 that ruin all

He makes each foe before him fall.He is the suppliant's sure defence,The tree that shelters innocence.The poor and wretched seek his feet:In him the noblest glories meet.With skill and knowledge vast and deepHis sire's commands he loved to keep;With princely gifts and graces storedAs metals deck the Mountains' Lord.

2

Thou canst not, O my hero, standBefore the might of Rāma's hand;For none may match his powers or dareWith him in deeds of war compare.

Hear, I entreat, the words I say,Nor lightly turn my rede away.O let fraternal discord cease,And link you in the bonds of peace.Let consecrating rites ordain

Sugrīva partner of thy reign.

Let war and thoughts of conflict end,And be thou his and Rāma's friend,Each soft approach of love begin.And to thy soul thy brother win;for whether here or there he be,Thy brother still, dear lord, is he.Though far and wide these eyes I strainA friend like him I seek in vain.Let gentle words his heart incline,And gifts and honours make him thine,Till, foes no more, in love allied,You stand as brothers side by side.Thou in high rank wast wont to holdSugrīva, formed in massive mould;Then come, thy brother's love regain,For other aids are weak and vain.If thou would please my soul, and stillPreserve me from all fear and ill,I pray thee by thy love be wiseAnd do the thing which I advise.Assuage thy fruitless wrath, and shunThe mightier arms of Raghu's son;

For Indra's peer in might is he,A foe too strong, my lord, for thee.'

Footnotes

341:1 The store of merit accumulated by a holy or austere life secures only a temporary seat in the mansion of bliss. When the lapse of time this store is exhausted, return to earth is unavoidable.

342:1 The conflagration which destroys the world at the end of a Yuga or age

342:2 Himalaya.

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CANTO XVI.: THE FALL OF BÁLI.

Thus Tárá with the starry eyes   1b

Her counsel gave with burning sighs.

But Báli, by her prayers unmoved,Spurned her advice, and thus reproved:'How may this insult, scathe, and scornBy me, dear love, be tamely born?My brother, yea my foe, comes nighAud dares me forth with shout and cry.Learn, trembler! that the valiant, theyWho yield no step in battle fray,Will die a thousand deaths but ne'erAn unavenged dishonour

bear. Nor, O my love, be thou dismayed Though Ráma lend Sugríva aid, For one so pure and duteous, one Who loves the right, all sin will shun, Release me from thy soft embrace, And with thy dames thy steps retrace: Enough already, O mine own, Of love and sweet devotion shown. Drive all thy fear and doubt away; I seek Sugríva in the fray His boisterous rage and pride to still, And tame the foe I would not kill. My fury, armed with brandished trees,

Shall strike Sugríva to his knees:

p. 343

Nor shall the humbled foe withstand The blows of my avenging hand, When, nerved by rage and pride, I beat The traitor down beneath my feet. Thou, love, hast lent thine own sweet aid, And all thy tender care displayed; Now by my life, by these who yearn To serve thee well, I pray thee turn. But for a while, dear dame, I go To come triumphant o'er the foe.' Thus Báḥ spake in gentlest tone: Soft arms about his neck were thrown; Then round her lord the lady went With sad steps slow and reverent. She stood in solemn guise to bless With prayers for safety and success, Then with her train her chamber sought By grief and racking fear distraught. With serpent's pantings fierce and fast King Báli from the city passed. His glance, as each quick breath he drew, Around to find the foe he threw, And saw where fierce Sugríva showed His form with golden hues that glowed, And, as a fire resplendent, stayed

To meet his foe in arms arrayed. When Báli, long-armed chieftain, found Sugríva stationed on the ground, Impelled by warlike rage he braced His warrior garb about his waist, And with his mighty arm raised high Rushed at Sugríva with a cry. But when Sugríva, fierce and bold, Saw Báli with his chain of gold. His arm he heaved, his hand he closed, And face to face his foe opposed. To him whose eyes with fury shone, In charge impetuous rushing on, Skilled in each warlike art and plan, Báli with hasty words began: 'My ponderous hood, to fight addressed. With fingers clenched and arm compressed. Shall on thy death doomed brow descend And, crashing down, thy life shall end.' He spoke; and wild with rage and pride, The fierce Sagríva thus replied: 'Thus let my arm begin the strife And from thy body crush the life.' Then Báli, wounded and enraged, With furious blows the battle waged. Sugríva seemed, with blood-streams dyed, A hill with fountains in his side. But with his native force unspent A Sál tree from the earth he rent, And like the bolt of Indra smote On Báli's head and chest and throat. Bruised by the blows he could not shield, Half vanquished Báli sank and reeled, As sinks a vessel with her freight Borne down by overwhelming weight.

Swift as Suparna's

1 swiftest flight

In awful strength they rushed to fight:

So might the sun and moon on high Encountering battle in the sky. Fierce and more fierce, as fought the foes, The furious rage of combat rose. They warred with feet and arms and knees, With nails and stones and boughs and trees, And blows descending fast as rain Dyed each dark form with crimson stain, While like two thunder-clouds they met With battle-cry and shout and threat. Then Ráma saw Sugríva quail, Marked his worn strength grow weak and fail. Saw how he turned his wistful eye To every quarter of the sky. His friend's defeat he could not brook. Bent on his shaft an eager look, Then burned to slay the conquering foe, And laid his arrow on the bow. As to an orb the bow he drew Forth from the string the arrow flew

Like Fate's tremendous discus hurled By Yama

2 forth to end the world.

So loud the din that every bird The bow-string's clans with terror heard, And wildly fled the affrighted deer As though the day of doom were near, So, deadly as the serpent's fang, Forth from the string the arrow sprang. Like the red lightning's flash and flame It flew unerring to its

aim,And, hissing murder through the air,Pierced Báli's breast, and  
quivered there.Struck by the shaft that flew so wellThe mighty Vánar  
reeled and fell,As earthward Indra's flag they pullWhen As'viní's fair  
moon is full

3

Footnotes

342:1b Tárá means 'star'. The poet plays upon the name  
by comparing her beauty to that of the Lord of stars, the  
Moon.

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CANTO XVII.: BÁLI'S SPEECH.

Like some proud tree before the blast

Brave Báli to the ground was cast,Where prostrate in the dust he  
rolledClad in the sheen of glistening gold,

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As when upturn the standard liesOf the great God who rules the skies.When  
low upon the earth was laidThe lord whom Vánar tribes obeyed,Dark as a  
moonless sky no moreHis land her joyous aspect wore.Though low in dust  
and mire was rolledThe form of Báli lofty-souled,Still life and valour,  
might and graceClung to their well-loved dwelling-place.That golden chain  
with rich gems set,The choicest gift of Sákra,

1 yet

Preserved his life nor let decaySteal strength and beauty's light  
away.Still from that chain divinely wroughtHis dusky form a glory  
caught,As a dark cloud, when day is done,Made splendid by the dying sun.  
As fell the hero, crushed in fight,There beamed afar a triple lightFrom  
limbs, from chain, from shaft that drankHis life-blood as the warrior  
sank.The never-failing shaft, impelledBy the great bow which Ráma  
held,Brought bliss supreme, and lit the wayTo Brahmá's worlds which ne'er  
decay.

2

Ráma and Lakshman nearer drewThe mighty fallen foe to view,Mahendra's  
son, the brave and bold,The monarch with his chain of gold,With lustrous  
face and tawny eyes,Broad chest, and arms of wondrous size,Like Lord  
Mahendra fierce in fight,Or Vishnu's never-conquered might,Now fallen  
like Yayáil

3 sent

From heaven, his store of merit spent.Like the bright flame that pales  
and dies,Like the great sun who fires the skies,Doomed in the general  
doom to fallWhen time shall end and ruin all.    The wounded Báli, when he  
sawRáma and Lakshman nearer draw.Keen words to Raghu's son, impressedWith  
justice' holy stamp, addressed:    'What fame, from one thou hast not  
slainIn front of battle, canst thou gain,  
Whose secret hand has laid me lowWhen madly fighting with my foe?From  
every tongue thy glory rings,A scion of a line of kings,True to thy vows,  
of noblest race,With every gentle gift and grace:Whose tender heart for  
woe can feel,And joy in every creature's weal:Whose breast with high  
ambition swell--Knows duty's claim and ne'er rebels.They praise thy  
valour, patience, ruth,Thy firmness, self-restrain, and truthThy hand  
prepared for sin's control.All virtues of a princely soul.I thought of  
all these gifts of thine,And glories of an ancient line,I set my Tárá's  
tears at naught,I met Sugriva and we fought.O Ráma, till this fatal mornI  
held that thou wouldst surely scornTo strike me as I fought my foeAnd  
thought not of a stranger's blow,But now thine evil heart is shown,A  
yawning well with grass o'ergrown.Thou wearest virtue's badge,  
1b but guile

And meanest sin thy soul defile.I took thee not for treacherous fire,A  
sinner clad in saint's attire;Nor deemed thou idly wouldst profess

The show and garb of righteousness. In fenced town, in open land, Ne'er hast thou suffered at this hand, Nor canst of proud contempt complain: Then wherefore is the guiltless slain! My harmless life in woods I lead, On forest fruits and roots I feed. My foeman in the field I sought, And ne'er with thee, O Ráma, fought. Upon thy limbs, O King, I see the raiment of a devotee; And how can one like thee, who springs from a proud line of ancient kings. Beneath fair virtue's mask, disgrace his lineage by a deed so base? From Raghu is thy long descent, For duteous deeds preëminent: Why, sinner clad in saintly dress, Roamest thou through the wilderness? Truth, valour, justice free from spot, The hand that gives and grudges not, The might that strikes the sinner down, These bring a prince his best renown. Here in the woods, O King, we live on roots and fruit which branches give.

2b

p. 345 Thus nature framed our harmless race:

Thou art a man supreme in place. Silver and gold and land provoke the fierce attack, the robber's stroke. Canst thou desire this wild retreat, The berries and the fruit we eat? 'Tis not for mighty kings to tread the flowery path, by pleasure led. Theirs be the arm that crushes sin, Theirs the soft grace to woo and win: The steadfast will that guides the state, Wise favour to the good and great; And for all time are kings renowned who blend these arts and ne'er confound, But thou art weak and swift to ire, Unstable, slave of each desire. Thou tramplest duty in the dust, And in thy bow is all thy trust. Thou carest naught for noble gain, And treatest virtue with disdain, While every sense its captive draws to follow pleasure's changing laws, I wronged thee not in word or deed, But by thy deadly dart I bleed. What wilt thou, mid the virtuous, say to purge thy lasting stain away? All these, O King, must sink to hell, The regicide, the infidel, He who in blood and slaughter joys, A Bráhmaṇ or a cow destroys, Untimely weds in law's despite, Scorning an elder brother's right,

1

Who dares his Teacher's bed ascend, The miser, spy, and treacherous friend. These impious wretches, one and all, Must to the hell of sinners fall. My skin the holy may not wear, Useless to thee my bones and hair; Nor may my slaughtered body be the food of devotees like thee. These five-toed things a man may slay and feed upon the fallen prey; The mailed rhinoceros may die, And, with the hare his food supply. Iguanas he may kill and eat, With porcupine and tortoise meat.

1b

But all the wise account it sin

To touch my bones and hair and skin. My flesh they may not eat; and I a useless prey, O Ráma, die. In vain my Tárá reasoned well, On dull deaf ears her counsel fell. I scorned her words though sooth and sweet, And hither rushed my fate to meet, Ah for the land thou rulest! she finds no protection, lord, from thee, Neglected like some noble dame by a vile husband dead to shame.

Mean-hearted coward, false and vile. Whose cruel soul delights in guile, Could Das'aratha, noblest king, Beget so mean and base a thing? Alas! an elephant, in form of Ráma, in a maddening storm of passion casting to the ground the girth of law

2b that clipped him round,

Too wildly passionate to feel the prick of duty's guiding steel,

3b

Has charged me unawares, and dead I fall beneath his murderous tread. How, stained with this my base defeat. How wilt thou dare, where good men meet, To speak, when every tongue will blame with keen reproach this deed of shame? Such hero strength and valour, shown upon the innocent alone, Thou hast not proved in manly strife on him who robbed thee of thy wife. Hadst thou but fought in open field and met me boldly unconcealed, This day had

been thy fate to fall, Slain by this hand, to Yama's hall. In vain I  
strove, and struck by thee Fell by a hand I could not see. Thus bites a  
snake, for sins of yore, A sleeping man who wakes no more. Sugriva's foeman  
thou hast killed,  
And thus his heart's desire fulfilled But, Ráma, hadst thou sought me  
first, And told the hope thy soul has nursed, That very day had I  
restored The Maithil lady to her lord; And, binding Rávan with a chain, Had  
laid him at thy feet unslain.

p. 346

Yea, were she sunk in deepest hell, Or whelmed beneath the ocean's swell, I  
would have followed on her track And brought the rescued lady back, As  
Hayagríva

1 once set free

From hell the white As'vatari. 2

That when my spirit wings its flight Sugriva reign, is just and right. But  
most unjust, O King, that I, Slain by thy treacherous hand, should lie, Be  
still, my heart: this earthly state Is darkly ruled by sovereign Fate. The  
realm is lost and won: defy Thy questioners with apt reply.'

3

Footnotes 343:1 Suparna, the Well-winged, is another name of  
Garuda the King of Birds. See p. 28, Note.

343:2 The God of Death.

343:3 The flag-staff erected in honour of the God Indra is lowered when  
the festival is over. As'viní in  
astronomy is the head of Aries or the first of the twenty-eight lunar  
mansions or asterisms.

344:1 Indra the father of Báli.

344:2 It is believed that every creature killed by Ráma  
obtained in consequence immediate beatitude. 'And  
blessed the hand that gave so dear a death.'

344:3 "Yayāti was invited to heaven by Indra, and  
conveyed on the way thither by Mátali, Indra's  
charioteer. He afterwards returned to earth where, by his virtuous  
administration he rendered all his subjects exempt from passion and  
decay.' HARRETT C. D. OF INDIA

344:1b The ascetic's dress which he wore during his

exile. 344:2b There is much inconsistency in the passages of  
the poem in which the Vánara are spoken of, which  
seems to point to two p. 345: widely different legends.

The Vánars are generally represented as semi-divine beings with  
preternatural powers, living in houses and eating and drinking like men  
sometimes as here, as monkeys pure and simple, living in woods and eating  
fruit and roots.

345:1 For a younger brother to marry before the elder is  
a gross violation of Indian law and duty. The same law  
applied to daughters with the Hebrews: "It must not be so done in our  
country to give the younger before the first-born." GENESIS xix. 26.

345:1b "The hedgehog and porcupine, the lizard, the  
rhinoceros, the tortoise, and the rabbit or hare, wise  
legislators \*delure\* lawful food among five-toed animals." \*MANU, i.\* 18.

345:2b "He can not buckle his distempered cause  
Within the belt of rule." MACBETH.

345:3b The Ankus' or iron hook with which an elephant is driven and  
guided.

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CANTO XVIII.: RÁMA'S REPLY.

He ceased: and Ráma's heart was stirred

At every keen reproach he heard. There Báli lay, a dim dark sun, His course  
of light and glory run; Or like the bed of Ocean dried Of his broad floods

from side to side, Or helpless, as the dying fire, Hushed his last words of righteous ire. Then Ráma, with his spirit moved, The Vánar king in turn reproved: 'Why dost thou Báli, thus revile, And castest not a glance the while On claims of duty, love, and gain, And customs o'er the world that reign? Why dost thou blame me, rash and blind, Fickle as all thy Vánar kind. Slighting each rule of ancient days Which all the good and prudent praise? This land, each hill and woody chase, Belongs to old Ikshváku's race:

With bird and beast and man, the whole

Is ours to cherish and control. Now Bharat, prompt at duty's call, Wise, just, and true, is lord of all.

Each claim of law, love, gain he knows, And wrath and favour duly shows. A king from truth who never bends, And grace with vigour wisely blends; With valour worthy of his race, He knows the claims of time and place, Now we and other kings of might, By his ensample taught aright, The lands of every region tread That justice may increase and spread. While royal Bharat, wise and just, Rules the broad earth, his glorious trust, Who shall attempt, while he is lord, A deed by Justice held abhorred? We now, as Bharat has decreed, Let justice guide our every deed, And toil each sinner to repress Who scorns the way of righteousness. Thou from that path hast turned aside, And virtue's holy law defied. Left the fair path which kings should tread, And followed pleasure's voice instead. The man who cleaves to duty's law Regards these three with filial awe--The sire, the elder brother, third Him from whose lips his lore he heard. Thus too, for duty's sake, the wise Regard with fond paternal eyes The well-loved younger brother, one

Their lore has ripened, and a son. Fine are the laws which guide the good, Abstruse, and hardly understood; Only the soul, enthroned within The breast of each, knows right from sin But thou art wild and weak of soul, And spurnest, like thy race, control; The true and right thou canst not find. Tht blind consulting with the blind. Incline thine ear and I will teach The cause that prompts my present speech This tempest of thy soul assuage Nor blame me in thine idle rage. On this great sin thy thoughts bestow, The sin for which I lay thee low. Thou, Báli, in thy brother's life Hast robbed him of his wedded wife, And keepest, scorning ancient right, His Rumá for thine own delight. Thy son's own wife should scarcely be More sacred in thine eyes than she. All duty thou hast scorned, and hence Comes punishment for dire offence. For those who blindly do amiss There is, I ween, no way but this: To check the rash who dare to stray From custom which the good obey, I may not, sprung of Kshatriya line, p. 347

Forgive this heinous sin of thine:

The laws for those who sin like thee The penalty of death decree. Now Bharat rules with sovereign sway, And we his royal word obey. There was no hope of pardon, none, For the vile deed that thou hast done, That wisest monarch dooms to die The wretch whose crimes the law defy; And we, chastising those who err, His righteous doom administer. My soul accounts Sugriva dear E'en as my brother Lakshman here. He brings me blessing, and I swore his wife and kingdom to restore: A bond in solemn honour bound When Vánar chieftains stood around. And can a king like me forsake His friend, and plighted promise break? Reflect, O Vánar, on the cause, The sanction of eternal laws, And, justly smitten down, confess Thou diest for thy wickedness, By honour was I bound to lend Assistance to a faithful friend; And thou hast met a righteous fate Thy former sins to expiate. And thus wilt thou some merit win

And make atonement for thy sin. For hear me, Vánar King, rehearse What Manu I spake in ancient verse,--

This holy law, which all accept Who honour duty, have I kept: 'Pure grow the sinners kings chastise, And, like the virtuous, gain the skies; By pain

or full atonement freed, They reap the fruit of righteous deed, While kings  
who punish not incur The penalties of those who err. 'Mándhátá

2 once, a noble king,

Light of the line from which I spring, Punished with death a devotee When  
he had stooped to sin like thee; And many a king in ancient time Has  
punished frantic sinners' crime, And, when their impious blood was  
spilt, Has washed away the stain of guilt. Cease, Báli, cease; no more  
complain: Reproaches and laments are vain. For thou art justly punished:  
we Obey our king and are not free. Once more, O Báli, lend thine ear  
Another weightiest plea to hear.

For this, when heard and pondered well. Will all complaint and rage  
dispel. My soul will ne'er this deed repent,

Nor was my shaft in anger sent. We take the silvan tribes beset With snare  
and trap and gin and net, And many a heedless deer we smite From thickest  
shade, concealed from sight. Wild for the slaughter of the game, At stately  
stags our shafts we aim. We strike them bounding scared away, We strike  
them as they stand at bay, When careless in the shade they lie, Or scan the  
plain with watchful eye. They turn away their heads; we aim, And none the  
eager hunter blame. Each royal saint, well trained in law Of duty, loves  
his bow to draw And strike the quarry, e'en as thou Hast fallen by mine  
arrow now, Fighting with him or unaware, -- A Vánar thou. -- I little care.

1b

But yet, O best of Vánars, know That kings who rule the earth bestow Fruit  
of pure life and virtuous deed. And lofty duty's shard-won meed. Harm not  
thy lord the king: abstain From ant and word that cause him pain; For kings  
are children of the skies Who walk this earth in men's disguise. But thou,  
in duty's claims untaught, thy breast with blinding passion fraught,  
Assailest me who still have clung To duty, with thy bitter tongue.' He  
ceased; and Ball sore distressed The sovereign claims of law confessed, And  
freed, o'erwhelmed with woe and shame, The lord of Raghu's race from  
blame. Then, reverent palm to palm applied, To Ráma thus the Vánar  
cried: 'True, best of men, is every word That from thy lips these ears have  
heard, It ill beseems a wretch like me To bandy empty words with  
thee. Forgive the angry taunts that broke From my wild bosom as I spoke. And  
lay not to my charge, O King,

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My mad reproaches' idle sting. Thou, in the truth by trial trained, Best  
knowledge of the right hast gained: And layest, just and pure within, The  
meetest penalty on sin. Through every bond of law I burst, The boldest  
sinner and the worst. O let thy right-instructing speech Console my heart  
and wisely teach.' Like some sad elephant who stands Fast sinking in the  
treacherous sands,

Thus Báli raised despairing eyes; Then spake again with sobs and sighs:  
'Not for myself, O King, I grieve, For Tárá or the friends I leave, As for  
sweet Angad, my dear son, My noble, only little one. For, nursed in luxury  
and bliss, His father he will mourn and miss, And like a stream whose fount  
is dry Will waste away and sink and die, -- My own dear child, my only  
boy, His mother Tárá's hope and joy. Spare him, O son of Raghu, spare The  
child entrusted to thy care. My Angad and Sugriva treat E'en as thy heart  
considers meet, For thou, O chief of men, art strong To guard the right and  
punish wrong. O, if thou wilt thine ear incline To hear these dying words  
of mine, He and Sugriva will to thee As Bharat and as Lakshman be. Let not  
my Tárá, left forlorn, Weep for Sugriva's wrathful scorn; Nor let him, for  
her lord's offence, Condemn her faithful innocence. And well and wisely may  
he reign If thy dear grace his power sustain: If, following thee his friend  
and guide,

He turn not from thy hest aside: Thus may he reign with glory, nay Thus to  
the skies will win his way. Though stayed by Tárá's fond recall, By thy  
dear hand I longed to fall. Against my brother rushed and fought, And  
gained the death I long have sought.' Then Ráma thus the prince



consoledFrom whose clear eyes the mists were rolled:'Grieve not for those  
thou leavest thus,Nor tremble for thyself or us,For we will deal with  
thine and theeAs duty and the laws decree.He who exacts and he who  
pays,Is justly slain or justly slays,Shall in the life to come have  
bliss;For each has done his task in this.Thou, wandering from the right,  
art madePure by the forfeit thou hast paid.Thy weight of sins is cast  
aside,And duty's claim is satisfied.Then grieve no more, O Prince, but  
clearThy bosom from all doubt and fear,For fate, inexorably stern,Thou  
hast no power to move or turn.Thy princely Angad still will shareMy  
tender love. Sugriva's care;And to thy offspring shall be shownAffection  
that shall match thine own.'

#### Footnotes

346:1 Hayagríva, Horse-necked, is a form of Vishnu

346:2 "As'vatara is the name of a chief of the Nágas or  
serpents which inhabit the regions under the earth; it is  
also the name of a Gandharva. As'vatari ought to be the wife of one of  
the two, but I am not sure that this conjecture is right. The commentator  
does not say who this As'vatari is, or what tradition or myth, is alluded  
to. Vimalabodha reads As'vatari in the nominative case, and explains,  
As'vatari is the sun, and as the sun with his rays brings back the moon  
which has been sunk in the ocean and the infernal regions, so will I  
bring back Sítá." GORRESIO.

346:3 That is, 'Consider what answer you can give to  
your accusers when they charge you with injustice in  
killing me.'

347:1 Manu, Book VIII. 318. "But men who have  
committed offences and have received from kings the  
punishment due to them, go pure to heaven and become as clear as those  
who have done well."347:2 Mándhátá was one of the earlier descendants of  
Ikshváku. His name is mentioned in Ráma's genealogy,  
p. 81.

347:1b I cannot understand how Válmiki could put such  
an excuse as this into Ráma's mouth. Ráma with all  
solemn ceremony, has made a league of alliance with Báli's younger  
brother whom he regards as a dear friend and almost as an equal, and now  
he winds up his reasons for killing Báli by coolly saying: 'Besides you  
are only a monkey, you know, after all, and as such I have every right to  
kill you how, when, and where I like.'

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#### CANTO XIX.: TÁRÁ'S GRIEF.

No answer gave the Vánar king

To Ráma's prudent counselling.Battered and bruised by tree and stone,By  
Ráma's arrow overthrown,Fainting upon the ground he lay,Gasping his  
troubled life away. But Tárá in the Vánar's hallHeard tidings of her  
husband's fall;Heard that a shaft from Ráma's bowHad laid the royal Báli  
low.Her darling Angad by her side,Distracted from her home she hied.Then  
nigh the place of battle drewThe Vánars, Angad's retinue.They saw the  
bow-armed Ráma: dreadFell on them, and they turned and fled.Like helpless  
deer, their leaders slain,So wildly fled the startled train.But Tárá saw,  
and nearer pressed.And thus the flying band addressed:'O Vánars, ye who  
ever standAbout our king, a trusty band,Where is the lion master?  
whyForsake ye thus your lord and fly?Say, lies he dead upon the plain,  
A brother by a brother slain,Or pierced by shafts from Ráma's bowThat  
rain from far upon the foe?' Thus Tárá questioned, and was still:Then,  
wearers of each shape at will,The Vánars thus with one accordAnswered the  
Lady of their lord:'Turn, Tárá turn, and half undoneSave Angad thy  
beloved son.Tnere Ráma stands in death's disguise,And conquered Báli  
faints and dies.He by whose strong arm, thick and fast,Uprooted trees and  
rocks were cast,Lies smitten by a shaft that cameResistless as the

lightning flame. When he, whose splendour once could vie  
With Indra's, regent of the sky,  
Fell by that deadly arrow, all  
The Vánars fled who marked his fall.  
Let all our chiefs their succours bring,  
And Angad be anointed king:

p. 349

For all who come of Vánar race  
Will serve him set in Báli's place.  
Or else our conquering foes to-day  
Within our wall will force their way,  
Polluting with their hostile feet

The chambers of thy loved retreat.  
Great fear is on us. all and one.  
Those who have wives and who have none,  
They lust for power, are fierce and bold,  
Or hate us for the strife of old.'

She heard their speech as, sore afraid,

Arrested in their flight, they stayed,  
And gave her answer as became  
The spirit of so true a dame: 'Nay, what have I to do with pelf,  
With son, with kingdom, or with self,  
When he, my noble lord, who leads  
The Vánars 'like a loin, bleeds?  
His high-souled victor will I meet,  
And throw me prostrate at his feet.'  
She hastened forth, her bosom rent  
With anguish, weeping as she went,  
And striking, mastered by her woes,  
Her head and breast with frantic blows.  
She hurried to the field and found  
Her husband postrate on the ground,  
Who quelled the hostile Vánars' might,  
Whose bank was never turned in flight:  
Whose arm a massy rock could throw  
As Indra hurls his bolts below:  
Fierce as the rushing tempest, loud  
As thunder from a labouring cloud:  
When'er he roared his voice of fear

Struck terror on the boldest ear:  
Now slain, as, hungry for the prey,  
A tiger might a lion slay:  
Or when, his serpent foe to seek,  
Suparna 1 with his furious beak

Tears up a sacred hillock, long  
The reverence of a village throng,  
Its altar with their offerings spread,  
And the gay flag that waved o'er  
her head. She looked and saw the victor stand  
Renting upon his bow his hand:  
And fierce Sugriva she descried,  
And Lakshman by his brother's side,  
She passed them by, nor stayed to view,  
Swift to her husband's side she flew;  
Then as she looked, her strength gave way.  
And in the dust she fell and lay.  
Then, as if startled ere the close  
Of slumber, from the earth she rose.  
Upon her dying husband, round  
Whose soul the coils of Death were wound,  
Her eyes in agony she bent  
And called him with a shrill lament.  
Sugriva, when he heard her cries,  
Aid saw the queen with weeping eyes,

And youthful Angad standing there,

His load of grief could hardly bear.

Footnotes  
349:1 A name of Garuda the king of birds, the great enemy of the Serpents.

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CANTO XX.: TÁRÁ'S LAMENT.

Again she bent her to the ground,

Her arms about her husband wound.  
Sobbed on his breast, and sick and faint  
With anguish poured her wild complaint:  
Brave in the charge of battle, boast  
And glory of the Vánar host,  
Why on the cold earth wilt thou lie  
And give no answer when I cry!  
Up, warrior, from thy lowly bed!  
A meeter couch for thee is spread.  
It ill beseems a glorious king  
On the bare ground his limbs to fling.  
Ah, surely must thy love be strong  
For her whom thou hast governed long,  
If thou, my hero, canst recline  
On her cold breast forsaking mine.  
Or, famed for justice through the laud,  
Thou on the road to heaven hast planned  
Some city fairer far than this  
To be thy new metropolis.  
Are all our pleasures ended now.  
With those delicious hours which thou  
And I, dear lord, together spent  
In woods that breathed the honey's scent?  
Whelmed in my sorrow's boundless sea,  
There is no joy, no hope, for me,  
When my beloved lord, who led  
The Vánars to the fight, is dead,  
My widowed heart is stern and cold.  
Or, at the sight mine eyes behold,  
O'er-mastered would it end this ache  
And in a thousand

fragments break. Ah noble Vánar, doomed to pay  
The penalty of all today--  
Sugriva from his home expelled. And Rumá  
lb from his arms withheld.

Our Vánar race and thee to save. Wise counsel for thy weal I gave; But  
thou, by wildest folly stirred, Wouldst give no credence to my word. And  
now wilt woo the nymphs above. And shake their souls with pangs of  
love. Ah, never could it be that thou Beneath Sugriva's power shouldst  
bow, Thy conqueror is none but Fate Whose mandates all who breathe  
await. And does no thrill of anguish run Through the stern breast of  
Raghu's son, Whose base hand dealt a coward's blow, And smote thee fighting  
with thy foe! Reft of my lord my days, alas!

p. 350 In bitter bitter woe will pass:

And I, long blest-with every good, Must bear my dreary widowhood. And when  
his uncle's brow is stern, When his fierce eyes with fury burn, Ah, what  
will be my Angad's fate, So fair and young and delicate? Come, darling, for  
the last sad sight, Of thy dear sire who loved the right; For soon thine  
eyes will long in vain A look at that loved face to gain. And, hero, as thy  
child draws near, With tender words his spirit cheer; Thy dying wishes  
gently speak, And kiss him on the brows and cheek. High fame, I ween, has  
Ráma won By this great deed his hand has done, His debt to brave Sugriva  
paid And kept the promise that he made. Be happy, King Sugriva, lord Of Rumá  
to thine arms restored: Enjoy uninterrupted reign, For he, thy foe, at  
length is slain. Dost thou not hear me speak, and why Hast thou no word of  
soft reply? Will thou not lift thine eyes and see These dames who look to  
none but thee? 'From their sad eyes, as Tára spoke,  
The floods of bitter sorrow broke: Then, pressing close to Angad's  
side, Each lifted up her voice and cried:  
How couldst thou leave thine Angad thus,  
And go, for ever go, from us-- Thy child so dear in brave attire, Graced  
with the virtues of his sire? If e'er in want of thought, O chief, One deed  
of mine have caused thee grief, Forgive my folly, I entreat, And with my  
head I touch thy feet.'

Again the hapless Tára wept

As to her husband's side she crept, And wild with sorrow and dismay Sat on  
the ground where Báli lay.

Footnotes

349: lb Sugriva's wife.

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CANTO XXI.: HANUMÁN'S SPEECH.

There, like a fallen star, the dame

Fell by her lord's half lifeless frame; And Hanumán drew softly near, And  
strove her grieving heart to cheer: 'By changeless law our bliss and  
woe From ancient worth and folly flow. What fruits soe'er we cull, the  
seeds Were scattered by our former deeds.

1

Why mourn another's mournful fate, And weep, thyself unfortunate? Be calm,  
O thou whose heart is wise, for none deserves another's sighs. Look up,  
with idle sorrow strive: Thy child, his heir, is yet alive. Let needful  
rites be duly done, Nor in thy woe forget thy son. Regard the law which all  
obey: They spring to life, they pass away. Begin the task that bids thee  
rise, And stay these tears, for thou art wise. Our lord the king is doomed  
to die, On whom ten million hearts rely, Kind, liberal, patient, true, and  
just

Was lie in whom they place their trust, And now he seeks the land of  
those Who for the right subdue their foes. Each Vánar lord with all his  
train, Each ranger of this wild domain, And Angad here, thy darling, see A  
governor and friend in thee. These twain

lb whose hearts with sorrow ache

The funeral rites shall undertake, And Angad by his mother's care Be king,  
 his father's rightful heir. Now let him pay, as laws require, His sacred  
 duty to his sire, Nor one solemnity omit Of all that mighty kings befit. And  
 when thy loud eye sees thine own Dear Angad on his father's throne, Then,  
 lightened of its load of pain, Thy spirit will have rest again.'  
 She heard his speech, she heaved her head,  
 Looked upon Hanumán and said,  
 'Sweeter my slain lord's limbs to touch,  
 Than Angad or a hundred such. No rule or right, a widowed dame, O'er Angad  
 or the realm I claim, Sugriva is the uncle, he In every act supreme must  
 be,  
 I pray thee, chief, this plan resign, Nor claim from me what ne'er is  
 mine. The father with his tender care Guards the dear child the mother  
 bare, Where'er I be, no sweeter task, No happier joy I hope or ask Than thus  
 to sit with loving eyes And watch the bed where Báli lies.

Footnotes

350:1 "Our deeds still follow with us from afar. And  
 what we have been makes us what we are."

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CANTO XXII.: BÁLI DEAD.

There breathing still with slow faint sighs  
 Lay Báli on the ground: his eyes,  
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Damp with the tears of death, he raised, On conquering Sugriva gazed, And  
 then in clearest speech expressed The tender feelings of his breast; 'Not  
 to my charge, Sugriva, lay Thine injuries avenged to-day; But rather blame  
 resistless Fate That urged me on infuriate. Fate ne'er agreed our lives to  
 bless With simultaneous happiness: To dwell like brothers side by side In  
 tender love was still denied. The Vánars' realm is thine to-day: Begin, O  
 King, thy rightful sway;

1

for I must go at Yama's call To sojourn in his gloomy hall; Must part and  
 leave this very hour My life, my realm, my kingly power, And go instead of  
 these to gain Bright glory free from spot and stain.  
 Now at thy hands one boon I seek With the last words my lips shall  
 speak, And, though it be no easy thing, perform the task I give thee,  
 King. This son of mine, no foolish boy, Worthy of bliss and nursed in joy, -  
 -See, prostrate on the ground he lies, The hot tears welling from his  
 eyes-- The child I love so well, more sweet Than life itself, for woe  
 unmeet, --To him be kindly favour shown: O guard and keep him as thine  
 own. Retain him ever by thy side, His father, helper, friend, and  
 guide. From fear and woe his young life save, And give him all his father  
 gave. Then Tára's son in time shall be Brave, resolute, and famed like  
 thee, And march before thee to the fight Where stricken fiends shall own  
 his might. While yet a tender stripling, fame Shall bruit abroad his  
 warrior name, And brightly shall his glory shine For exploits worthy of his  
 line. Child of Sushen,

2 my Tára well

Obscurest lore can read and tell; And, trained in wondrous art,  
 divines Each mystery of boding signs. Her solemn warning ne'er despise,  
 Do boldly what her lips advise; For things to come her eye can see, And  
 with her words events agree. And for the son of Raghu's sake The toil and  
 danger undertake:

For breach of faith were grievous wrong,

Nor wouldst thou be unpunished long. Now, brother, take this chain of  
 gold, Gift of celestial hands of old, Or when I die its charm will flee, And  
 all its might be lost with me.'

The loving speech Sugriva heard.

And all his heart with woe was stirred. Remorse and gentle pity stole  
Each thought of triumph from his soul: Thus fades the light when Ráhu  
1b mars

The glory of the Lord of Stars. 2b

All angry thoughts were staved and stilled And kindly love his bosom  
filled. His brother's word the chief obeyed And took the chain as Báli  
prayed. On little Angad standing nigh The dying hero fixed his eye, And,  
ready from this world to part, Spoke the fond utterance of his heart: 'Let  
time and place thy thoughts employ:

In woe be strong, he meek in joy. Accept both pain and pleasure,  
still Obedient to Sugriva's will. Thou hast, my darling, from the first With  
tender care been softly nursed; But harder days, if thou wouldst  
win Sugriva's love, must now begin. To those who hate him ne'er incline, Nor  
count his foe a friend of thine. In all thy thoughts his welfare  
seek, Obedient, lowly, faithful, meek. Let no rash suit his bosom pain, Nor  
yet from due requests abstain.

3b

Each is a grievous fault, between The two is round the happy mean.'  
Then Báli ceased: his eyeballs rolled

In stress of anguish uncontrolled His massive teeth were bared to view, And  
from the frame the spirit flew. Their lord and leader dead, the crowd Of  
noblest Vánars shrieked aloud: 'Since thou, O King, hast sought the  
skies All desolate Kishkindhá lies. Her woods, where Vánars loved to  
rove, Are empty now, and hill and grove. From every eye the light is  
fled, Since thou, our mighty lord, art dead. Thine was the unwearied arm  
that bore

The brunt of deadly fight of yore With Golabh the Gandharva, when, Lasting  
through five long years and ten,

p. 352

The dreadful conflict knew no stay In gloom of night, in glare of day; And  
when the fifteenth year had past Thy dire opponent fell at last. If such a  
foeman fell beneath Our hero's arm and awful teeth Who freed us from our  
terror, how Is conquering Báli fallen now?'

Then when they saw their leader slain

Great anguish seized the Vánar train, Weeping their mighty chief, as  
when In pastures near a lion's den The cows by sudden fear are  
stirred, Slain the bold bull who led the herd. And hapless Tára sank  
below The whelming waters of her woe, Looked upon Báli's face and  
fell Beside him whom she loved so well, Like a young creeper clinging  
round A tall tree prostrate on the ground. Footnotes

350:1b Sugriva and Angad.

351:1 Angad himself, being too young to govern, would  
be Yuvarāja or heir-apparent.

351:2 Sushena was the son of Varuna the God of the sea,

351:1b A demon with the tail of a dragon, that causes eclipses by  
endeavouring to swallow the sun and moon.

351:2b The Lord of Stars is the Moon.

351:3b Or the passage may be interpreted: 'Be neither too obsequious or  
affectionate, nor wanting in due respect  
of love.'

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CANTO XXIII.: TÁRÁ'S LAMENT.

She kissed her lifeless husband's face,  
She clasped him in a close embrace, Laid her soft lips upon his head; Then  
words like these the mourner said:

'No words of mine wouldst thou regard,

And now thy bed is cold and hard. Upon the rude rough ground

o'erthrown, Beneath thee naught but sand and stone. To thee the earth is  
dearer far Than I and my caresses are, If thou upon her breast wilt lie, And

to my words make no reply. Ah my beloved, good and brave, Bold to attack  
and strong to save, Fate is Sugriva's thrall, and we In him our lord and  
master see. Lo, by thy bed, a mournful band, Thy Vánar chiefs lamenting  
stand. O hear thy nobles' groans and cries, O mark thy Angad's Weeping  
eyes, O list to my entreaties, break The chains of slumber and awake. Ah me,  
my lord, this lowly bed Where rest thy limbs and fallen head,  
Is the cold couch where smitten lay Thy foemen in the bloody fray. O noble  
heart from blemish free, Lover of war, beloved by me, Why hast thou fled  
away and left Thy Tárá of all hope bereft! Unwise the father who allows His  
child to be a warrior's spouse, For, hero, see thy consort's fate, A widow  
now moat desolate, For ever broken is my pride, My hope of lasting bliss  
has died, And sinking in the lowest deep Of sorrow's sea I pine and  
weep. Ah, surely not of earthly mould, This stony heart is stern and  
cold, Or, in a hundred pieces rent, It had not lingered to lament. Dead,  
dead! my husband, friend, and lord In whom my loving hopes were  
stored, First in the field, his foemen's dread, My own victorious Báli,  
dead! A woman when her lord has died, Though children flourish by her  
side, Though stores of gold her coffers fill, Is called a lonely widow  
still. Alas, thy bleeding gashes make Around thy limbs a purple lake: Thus  
slumbering was thy wont to lie  
On cushions bright with crimson dye. Dark streams of welling blood  
besmear Thy limbs where dust and mire adhere, Nor have I strength, weighed  
down by woe, Mine arms about thy form to throw. The issue of this day has  
brought Sugriva all his wishes sought, For Ráma shot one shaft and he Is  
freed from fear and jeopardy. Alas, alas, I may not rest My head upon thy  
wounded breast, Obstructed by the massive dart Deep buried in thy bleeding  
heart.'

Then Níla from his bosom drew

The fatal shaft that pierced him through, Like some tremendous serpent  
deep In caverns of a hill asleep. As from the hero's wound it came, Shot  
from the shaft a gleam of flame, Like the last flashes of the  
sun Descending when his course is run. From the wide rent in crimson  
flood Rushed the full stream of Báli's blood, Like torrents down a  
mountain's side With golden ore and copper dyed. Then Tárá brushed with  
tender care The dust of battle from his hair, While her sad eyes poured  
down their rain

Upon her lord untimely slain. Once more she looked upon the dead; Then to  
her bright-eyed child she said: 'Turn hither, turn thy weeping eyes Where  
low in death thy father lies. By sinful deed and bitter hate Our lord has  
met his mournful fate. Bright as the sun at early morn To Yama's halls is  
Báli borne. Then go, my child, salute the king, From whom our bliss and  
honour spring.

Obedient to his mother's hest

His father's feet he gently pressed

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With twining arms and lingering hands: 'Father', he cried, there Angad  
stands.' Then Tárá: 'Art thou stern and mute, Regardless of thy child's  
salute? Hast thou no blessing for thy son, No word for little Angad,  
none? O, hero, at thy lifeless feet Here with my boy I take my seat, As some  
sad mother of the herd, By the fierce lion undeterred, Lies moaning by the  
grassy dell Wherein her lord and leader fell.

How, having wrought that awful rite, The sacrifice of deadly fight. Wherein  
the shaft by Ráma sped Supplied the place of water shed, How hast thou  
bathed thee at the end Without thy wife her aid to lend?

1

Why do mine eyes no more behold Thy bright beloved chain of gold, Which,  
pleased with thee, the Immortals' King About thy neck vouchsafed to  
fling? Still lingering on thy lifeless face I see the pride of royal  
race: Thus when the sun has set his glow Still rests upon the Lord of  
Snow. Alas my hero! undeterred Thou wouldst not listen to my word. With

tears and prayers I sued in vain:Thou wouldst not listen, and art slain.Gone is my bliss, my glory: IAnd Angad now with thee will die.'  
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CANTO XXIV.: SUGRÍVA'S LAMENT.

But when Sugriva saw her weep  
O'erwhelmed in sorrow's rushing deep.Swift through his bosom pierced the stingOf anguish for the fallen king.At the sad sight his eyes beheldA flood of bitter tears outwelled,And, with his bosom racked and rent,To Ráma with his train he went.He came with faltering steps and slowWhere Ráma held his mighty bowAnd arrow like a venomed snake,And to the son of Raghu spake:'Well hast thou kept, O King, thy vow:The promised fruit is gathered now.But life is marred, my soul to-dayTurns sickening from all joy away.

For, while this queen laments and sighs  
Amid a mourning people's cries,And Angad weeps his father slain,How can my heart delight to reign?For outrage, fury, senseless pride,My brother, doomed of yore, has died.Yet, Raghu's son, in bitter woeI mourn his fated overthrow.

Ah, better far in pain and illTo dwell on Rishyamúka stillThan gain the heaven of Gods and allIts pleasures by my brother's fall.Did not he cry,-  
-great-hearted foe,--'Go, for I will not slay thee, Go'?With his brave soul those words agree:My speech, my deeds, are worthy me.How can a brother counterweighHis grievous loss with joys of sway,And see with dull unpitying eyeSo brave and good a brother die?His lofty soul was nobly blind:My death alas, he ne'er designed;But I, urged blindly on by hate,Sought with his life my rage to sate.He smote me with a splintered tree:I groaned aloud and turned to flee,From stern reproaches he forbore,And gently bade me sin no more.Serene and dutiful and goodHe kept the laws of brotherhood:I, fierce and greedy, vengeful, base,Showed all the vices of our race.Ah me, dear friend, my brother's fateLays on my soul a crushing weight:A sin no heart should e'er conceive,But at the thought each soul should grieve:Sin such as Indra's when his blow Laid heavenly Vis'varúpa 1b low.

Yet earth, the waters of the seas,The race of women and the treesWere fain upon themselves to takeThe weight of sin for Indra's sake.But who a Vánar's soul will free,Or ease the load that crushes me?Wretch that I am, I may not claimThe reverence due to royal name.How shall I reign supreme, or dareAffect the power I should not share?Ah me, I sorrow for my sin,The ruin of my race and kin,Polluted by a hideous crimeWorld-hated till the end of time.Alas, the floods of sorrow rollWith whelming force upon my soul:So gathers the descending rainIn the deep hollow of the plain.

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Footnotes

353:1 Sacrifices and all religious rites begin and end with ablution, and the wife of the officiating Brahman takes an important part in the performance of the holy ceremonies.

353:1b Vis'varúpa, a son of Twashtri or Vis'vakarma the heavenly architect, was a three-headed monster slain by Indra.

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CANTO XXV.: RÁMA'S SPEECH.

Then Raghu's son, whose feeling breast  
Shared the great woe that moved the rest,Strove with wise charm their grief to easeAnd gently spoke in words like these: 'You ne'er can raise the dead to blissBy agony of grief like thisCease your lament, nor leave undoneThe funeral task you may not shun.As nature orders o'er the deadYour tributary tears are shed,But Fate, directing each event,Is still

the lord preeminent. Yes, all obey the changeless laws  
 Of Fate the universal cause, By Fate, the lives of all proceed,  
 That governs every word and deed, None acts, none sees his hest obeyed.  
 But each and all by Fate are swayed. The world its ordered course maintains,  
 And o'er that course Fate ever reigns. Fate ne'er exceeds the rule of Fate:  
 Is ne'er too swift, is ne'er too late, And making nature its ally  
 Forgets no life, nor passes by. No kith and kin, no power and force  
 Can check or stay its settled course, No friend or client, grace or  
 charm, That victor of the world disarm. So all who see with prudent eyes  
 The hand of Fate must recognize, For virtue rules, or love, or gain,  
 As Fate's unchanged decrees ordain. Báli has died and won the meed  
 That waits in heaven on noble deed, Throned in the seats the brave may reach  
 By liberal hand and gentle speech, True to a warrior's duty, bold  
 In fight, the hero lofty-souled Deigned not to guard his life: he died,  
 And now in heaven is glorified. Then cease these tears and wild despair:  
 Turn to the task that claims your care, For Báli's is the glorious fate  
 Which warriors count most fortunate.' When Ráma's speech had found a close.  
 Brave Lakshman, terror of his foes, With wise and soothing words addressed  
 Sugríva still with woe oppressed: 'Arise Sugríva,' thus he said, 'Perform  
 the service of the dead. Prepare with Tára and her son That Báli's rites  
 be duly done. A store of funeral wood provide Which wind and sun and time  
 have dried And richest sandal fit to grace The pyre of one of royal race.  
 With words of comfort soft and kind Console poor Angad's troubled mind,  
 Nor let thy heart be thus cast down, For thine is now the Vánars' town.  
 Let Angad's care a wreath supply, And raiment rich with varied dye,  
 And oil and perfumes for the fire, And all the solemn rites require.  
 Go, hasten to the town, O King, And Tára's little quickly bring.  
 A virtue is despatch: and speed Is best of all in hour of need.  
 Go, let a chosen band prepare The litter of the dead to bear.  
 For stout and tall and strong of limb Must be the chiefs who carry him.'  
 He spoke, --his friends' delight and pride, --Then stood again by Ráma's side.  
 When Tára I heard the words he said  
 Within the town he quickly sped, And brought, on stalwart shoulders  
 laid, The litter for the rites arrayed, Framed like a car for Gods,  
 complete With painted sides and royal seat, With latticed windows deftly  
 made, And golden birds and trees inlaid:  
 Well joined and wrought in every part, A marvel of ingenious art.  
 Where pleasure mounds in carven wood And many a graven figure stood.  
 The best of jewels o'er it hung, And wreaths of flowers around it clung,  
 And over all was raised on high A canopy of saffron dye,  
 While like the sun of morning shone The billiant blooms that lay thereon.  
 That glorious litter Ráma eyed. And spake to Lakshman by his side:  
 'Let Báli on the bier be placed And with all funeral service graced.'  
 Sugríva then with many a tear Drew Báli's body to the bier  
 Whereon, with weeping Angad's aid, The relics of the chief were laid.  
 Neath many a vesture's varied fold, And wreaths and ornaments and gold.  
 Then King Sugríva bade them speed The obsequies by law decreed:  
 'Let Vánars lead the way and throw Rich gems around them as they go,  
 And be the chosen bearers near Behind them, laden with the bier.  
 No costly rite may you deny, Used when the proudest monarchs die:  
 As for a king of widest sway. Perform his obsequies to-day,'

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Sugríva gave his high behest; Then Princely Tára and the rest,  
 With little Angad weeping, led The long procession of the dead.  
 Behind the funeral litter came, With Tára first, each widowed dame  
 In tears and shrieks her loss deplored, Add cried aloud, My lord!  
 My lord! While wood and hill and valley sent In echoes back  
 the shrill lament. Then on a low and sandy isle Was reared  
 the hero's funeral pile By crowds of toiling Vánars,  
 where The mountain stream ran fresh and fair. The Vánar chiefs,  
 a noble



band, Had laid the litter on the sand, And stood a little space apart, Each mourning in his inmost heart. But Tára, when her weeping eye Saw Báli, on the litter lie, Laid his dear head upon her lap, And wailed aloud her dire mishap; 'O mighty Vánar, lord and king, To whose fond breast brave, and bold, Rise, look upon me as of old.

Rise up, my sovereign, dost thou see A crowd of subjects weep for thee? Still o'er thy face, though breath has fled. The joyous light of life is spread: Thus around the sun, although he set, A crimson glory lingers yet. Death clad in Ráma's form to-day Hast dragged thee from the world away. One shaft from his tremendous bow Dooms us to widowhood and woe. Hast thou, O Vánar King, no eyes Thy weeping wives to recognize, Who for the length of way unmeet Have followed thee with weary feet? Yet every moon-faced beauty here By thee, O King was counted dear. Lord of the Vánar race, hast thou No eyes to see Sugriva now? About thee stands in mournful mood A sore-afflicted multitude, And Tára and thy lords of state Around their monarch weep and wait, Arise my lord, with gentle speech, As was thy wont, dismissing each, Then in the forest will we play And love shall make our spirits gay.' The Vánar dames raised Tára, drowned In floods of sorrow, from the ground; And Angad with Sugriva's aid, O'erwhelmed with anguish and dismayed, Weeping for his departed sire, Placed Bali's body on the pyre: Then lit the flame, and round the dead Paced slowly with a mourner's tread. Thus with full rites the funeral train. Performed the service for the slain, Then sought the flowing stream and made Libations to the parted shade. There, setting Angad first in place, The chieftains of the Vánar race, With Tára and Sugriva, shed The water that delights the dead.

Footnotes

354:1 The Vánar chief, not to be confounded with Tára.

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CANTO XXVI.: THE CORONATION.

Each Vánar councillor and peer

In crowded numbers gathered near Sugriva, mournful king, while yet His vesture from the wave was wet, Before the chief of Raghu's seed Unwearied in each arduous deed, They stood and raised the reverent hand As saints before Lord Brahmá stand, Then Hanumán of massive mould, Like some tall hill of glistening gold, Son of the God whose wild blasts shake The forest, thus to Ráma spake: 'By thy kind favour, O my lord, Sugriva, to his home restored Triumphant, has regained to-day His rank and power and royal sway. He now will call each faithful friend, Enter the city, and attend With sage advice and prudent care To every task that waits him there. Then balm and unguent shall anoint Our monarch, as the laws appoint, And gems and precious wreaths shall be His grateful offering, King, to thee. Do thou, O Ráma, with thy friend

Thy steps within the city bend; Our ruler on his throne install, And with thy presence cheer us all.' Then, skilled in lore and arts that guide The speaker, Raghu's son replied: 'For fourteen years I might not break The mandate that my father spake; Nor can I, till that time be fled, The street of town or village tread. Let King Sugriva seek the town Most worthy of her high renown, There let him be without delay Anointed, and begin his sway. This answered, to Sugriva then Thus spake anew the king of men: 'Do thou who knowest right ordain Prince Angad consort of thy reign; For he is noble, true, and bold, And trained a righteous course to hold Gifts like his sire's thait youth adorn Born eldest to the eldest born.

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This is the month of Srávana 1first

Of those that see the rain-clouds burst. Four months, thou knowest well, extends The season when the rain descends. No time for deeds of war is this.

Seek thou thy fair metropolis, And I with Lakshman, O my friend, The time  
 upon this hill will spend. An ample cavern opens there Made lovely by the  
 mountain air, And lotuses and lilies fill The pleasant lake and murmuring  
 rill. When Kártik's  
 2 month shall clear the skies,  
 Then tempt the mighty enterprise. Now, chieftain to thy home repair, And be  
 anointed sovereign there.'  
 Sugriva heard: he bowed his head:  
 Within the lovely town he sped Which Bali's royal will had swayed, Where  
 thousand Vánar chiefs arrayed Gathered in order round their king, And led  
 him on with welcoming. Low on the earth the lesser crowd Fell in  
 prostration as they bowed. Sugriva looked with grateful eyes, Spoke to them  
 all and bade them rise. Then through the royal bowers he strode Wherein the  
 monarch's wives abode. Soon from the inner chambers came The Vánar of  
 exalted fame; And joyful friends drew near and shed King-making balm upon  
 his head, Like Gods anointing in the skies  
 Their sovereign of the thousand eyes. 3  
 Then brought they, o'er their king to hold The white umbrella decked with  
 gold, And chouries with their waving hair In golden handles wondrous  
 fair; And fragrant herbs and seed and spice, And sparkling gems exceeding  
 price, And every bloom from woods and leas,  
 And gum distilled from milky trees;  
 And precious ointment white as milk, And spotless robes of cloth and  
 silk, Wreaths of sweet flowers whose glories gleam In grassy grove, on lake  
 or stream. And fragrant sandal and each scent That makes the soft breeze  
 redolent; Grain, honey, odorous seed, and store Of oil and curd and golden  
 ore; A noble tiger's skin, a pair Of sandals wrought with costliest  
 care, Eight pairs of damsels drawing nigh Brought unguents stained with  
 varied dye. Then gems and cates and robes displayed Before the twice-born  
 priests were laid, That they would deign in order due To consecrate the  
 king anew. The sacred grass was duly spread And sacrificial flame was  
 fed, Which Scripture-learned priests supplied  
 With oil which texts had sanctified. Then, with all rites ordained of  
 old, High on the terrace bright with gold, Whereon a glorious carpet  
 lay, And fresh-culled garlands sweet and gay, Placed on his throne, Sugriva  
 bent His looks toward the Orient. In horns from forehead of the bull. In  
 pitchers bright and beautiful, In urns of gold the Vánara took Pure water  
 brought from stream and brook, From every consecrated strand And every sea  
 that beats the land. Then, as prescribed by sacred lore And many a mighty  
 sage of yore,  
 1b  
 The leaders of the Vánars poured The sacred water on their lord.  
 2b  
 From every Vánar at the close Of that imperial rite arose Shouts of glad  
 triumph, loud and long Repeated by the high-souled throng. Sugriva, when  
 the rite was done, Obeyed the hest of Raghu's son. Prince Angad to his  
 breast he strained. And partner of his sway ordained. Once more from all  
 the host rang out The loud huzza and jovful shout. 'Well done! well done!'  
 each Vánar cried. And good Sugriva glorified.

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Then with glad voices loudly raised  
 Were Râma and his brother praised; And bright Kishkindha shone that  
 day With happy throngs and banners gay.

Footnotes

356:1 S'râvan: July-August. But the rains begin a month  
 earlier, and what follows must not be taken literally.  
 The text has púrvo' yam várshiko másah S'râvanah ###. The Bengal  
 recension has the same, and Gorresio translates: ' Equestro il mese  
 S'râvana (Inglio-agosto) primo della stagione plovosa, in cui diligano le  
 acque.'

356:2 Kártik: Ootober-November.

356:3 "Indras, as the nocturnal sun, hides himself, transformed, in the starry heavens: the stars are his eyes. The hundred- eyed or all-seeing (panoptês) Argos placed as a spy over the actions of the cow beloved by Zeus, in the Hellenic equivalent of this form of Indras." DE GUBERNATIS, Zoological Mythology, Vol. I, p. 418.

356:1b Baudháyana and others.

356:2b Sugríva appears to hare been consecrated with all the ceremonies that attended the Abhisheka or coronation of an Indian prince of the Aryan race. Compare the preparations made for Rama's consecration, Book II. Canto III. Thus Homer frequently introduces into Troy the rites of Hellenic worship.

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CANTO XXVII.: RÁMA ON THE HILL.

But when the solemn rite was o'er,  
And bold Sugríva reigned once more,The sons of Rhaghu sought the  
hill,Prasravan of the rushing rill,Where roamed the tiger and the  
deer,And lions raised their voice of fear;Thick set with trees of every  
kind,With trailing shrubs and plants entwined;Home of the ape and monkey,  
lairOf mountain cat and pard and bear,In cloudy gloom against the skyThe  
sanctifying hills rose high.Pierced in their crest, a spacious caveTo  
Raghu's sons a shelter gave.Then Ráma, pure from every crime,In words  
well suited to the timeTo Lakshman spake, whose faithful zealWatched  
humbly for his brother's weal:'I love this spacious cavern whereThere  
breathes a fresh and pleasant air.Brave brother, let us here  
remainThroughout the season of the rain.For in mine eyes this mountain  
crestIs above all, the loveliest.Where copper-hued and black and white  
Show the huge blocks that face the height;Where gleams the shine of  
varied ore,Where dark clouds baog and torrents roar;Where waving woods  
are fair to see,And creepers climb from tree to tree;Where the gay  
peacock's voice is shrill,And sweet birds carol on the hill;Where odorous  
breath is wafted farFrom Jessamine and Sinduvár;

1

And opening flowers of every hueGive wondrous beauty to the view.See,  
too, this pleasant water nearOur cavern home is fresh and clear;And  
lilies gay with flower and budAre glorious on the lovely flood.This cave  
that fares north and eastWill shelter us till rain has ceased;And  
towering hills thut rise behindWill screen us from the furious wind.Close  
by the cavern's portal liesAnd level stone of ample sizeAnd sable hue, a  
mighty blockLong severed from the parent rock.Now let thine eye bent  
northward rest

A while upon that mountain creat,  
High as a cloud that brings the rain,And dark as iron rent in twain.Look  
southward, brother, now and view

A cloudy pile of paler hueLike Mount Kailása's topmost heightWhere ores  
of every tint are bright,See, Lakshman, see before our caveThat clear  
brook eastward roll its waveAs though 'twere Ganga's infant rillDown  
streaming from the three-peaked billSee, by the water's gentle  
flowAs'oka, sal, and sandal grow.And every lovely tree most fairWith leaf  
and bud and flower is there.See there, beneath the bending treesThat  
fringe her bank, the river flees,Clothed with their beauty like a maidIn  
all her robes and gems arrayed,While from the sedgy banks are heardThe  
soft notes of each amorous bird.O see what lovely islets studLike gems  
the bosom of the flood.And sárases and wild swans crowdAbout her till she  
laughs aloud.See, lotus blooms the brook o'erspread,Some tender blue,  
some dazzling red,And opening lilies white as snowTheir buds in rich  
profusion show.There rings the joyous peacock's scream,There stands the  
curlew by the stream,And holy hermits love to throngWhere the sweet  
waters speed along.

Ranged on the grassy margin shine Gay sandal trees in glittering line, And  
all the wondrous verdure seems The offspring of creative dreams, O  
conquering Prince, there cannot be A lovelier place than this we see. Here  
sheltered on the beauteous height Our days will pass in calm delight.  
Nor is Kishkindhá's city, gay  
With grove and garden, far away. Thence will the breeze of evening  
bring Sweet music as the minstrels sing; And, when the Vánars dance, will  
come The sound of labour and of drum. Again to spouse and realm  
restored. Girt by his friends, the Vánar lord Great glory has acquired; and  
how Can he be less than happy now? 'This said, the son of Raghu made His  
dwelling in that pleasant shade Upon the mountain's shelving side That  
sweetly all his wants supplied. But still the hero's troubled mind No  
comfort in his woe could find. Yet mourning for his stolen wife Dearer to  
Ráma than his life. Chief when he saw the Lord of Night Rise slowly o'er  
the eastern height,

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He tossed upon his leafy bed  
With eyes by sleep unvisited. Outwelled the tears in ceaseless flow, And  
every sense was numbed by woe. Each pang that pierced the mourner  
through Smote Lakshman's faithful bosom too, Who, troubled for his  
brother's sake, With wisest words the prince bespake: 'Arise, my brother,  
and be strong: Thy hero heart has mourned too long. Thou knowest well that  
tears and sighs Will mar the mightiest enterprise. Thine was the soul that  
loved to dare: To serve the Gods was still thy care; And ne'er may sorrow's  
sting subdue A heart so resolute and true. How canst thou hope to slay in  
fight The giant cruel in his might? Unwearied must the champion be Who  
strives with such a foe as he. Tear out this sorrow by the root; Again be  
bold and resolute. Arise, my brother, and subdue The demon and his wicked  
crew. Thou canst destroy the earth, her seas, Her rooted hills and giant  
trees

Unseated by thy furious hand: And shall one fiend thy power withstand? Wait  
through this season of the rain Till suns of autumn dry the plain, Then  
shall thy giant foe, and all His host and realm, before thee fall. I wake  
thy valour that has slept Amid the tears thine eyes have wept; As drops of  
oil in worship raise The dormant flame to sudden blaze.'

The son of Raghu heard: he knew

His brother's rede was wise and true; And, honouring his friendly guide, In  
gentle words he thus replied: 'Whate'er a hero firm and bold, Devoted,  
true, and lofty-souled Should speak by deep affection led, Such are the  
words which thou hast said. I cast away each pensive thought That brings  
the noblest plans to naught, And each uninjured power will strain Until the  
purposed end we gain. Thy prudent words will I obey, And till the close of  
rain-time stay, When King Sugriva will invite To action, and the streams be  
bright. The hero saved in hour of need Repays the debt with friendly deed:  
But hated by the good are they Who take the boon and ne'er repay.'

Footnotes

357:1 Vitex Negundo.

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CANTO XXVIII.: THE RAINS.

'See, brother, see' thus Ráma cried

On Mályavat's 1 dark-wooded side,

'A chain of clouds. like lofty hills, The sky with gathering shadow  
fills. Nine months those clouds have borne the load Conceived from sunbeams  
as they glowed, And, having drunk the seas, give birth, And drop their  
offspring on the earth. Easy it seems at such a time That flight of cloudy  
stairs to climb, And, from their summit, safely won, Hang flowery wreaths  
about the sun. Bee how the flash of evening's red Fringes the fleecy clouds  
o'erhead Till all the sky is streaked and lined With bleeding wounds  
incarnadined, Or the wide firmament above Shows like a lover sick with

loveAnd, pale with cloudlets, heaves a sighIn the soft breeze that  
wanders by.See, by the fervent heat embrowned,How drenched with recent  
showers, the groundPours out in floods her gushing tears,Like Sítá wild  
with torturing fears.So softly blows this cloud-borne breeze  
Cool through the boughs of camphor treesThat one might hold it in the  
cupOf hollowed hands and drink it up.See, brother, where that rocky  
steep,Where odorous shrubs in rain-drops weep,Shows like Sugriva when  
they shedThe royal balm upon his head.Like students at their task  
appearThese hills whose misty peaks are near:Black deerskin  
2 garments wrought of cloud  
Their forms with fitting mantles shroud,Each torrent from the summit  
pouredSupplies the place of sacred cord.

3

And winds that in their caverns moan.

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Sound like the voice's undertone. 1

From east to west red lightnings flash,And, quivering neath the golden  
lash,The great sky like a generous steedGroans inly at each call to  
speedYon lightning, as it flashes throughThe giant cloud of sable  
hue,Recalls my votaress Sítá pressedMid struggles to the demon's  
breast.See, on those mountain ridges standSweet shrubs that bud and bloom  
expand.The soft ram ends their pangs of grief.  
And drops its pearls on flower and leaf.But all their raptures stab me  
throughAnd wake my pining love anew.

2

Now through the air no wild bird flies,Each lily shuts her weary eyes;And  
blooms of opening jasmin showThe parting sun has ceased to glowNo captain  
now for conquest burns,But homeward with his host returns;For roads and  
kings' ambitious dreamsHave vanished neath descending streams.This is the  
watery month

3 wherein

The Sáman's 4 sacred chants begin.

Áshádha 5 past, now Kosal's lord 6

The harvest of the spring has stored, 7

And dwells within his palace freed

From every care of pressing need

Full is the moon, and fierce and strongImpetuous Sarjú

1b roars along

As though Ayodhyá's crowds ran outTo greet their king with echoing  
shout.In this sweet time of ease and restNo care disturbs Sugriva's  
breast,The foe that marred his peace o'erthrown,And queen and realm once  
more his own.Alas, a harder fate is mine,Reft both of realm and queen to  
pine,And, like the bank which floods erode,  
I sink beneath my sorrow's load.Sore on my soul my miseries weigh,And  
these long rains our action stay,While Rávan seems a mightier foeThan I  
dare hope to overthrow.I saw the roads were barred by rain,I knew the  
hopes of war were vain;Nor could I bid Sugriva rise,Though prompt to aid  
my enterprise.E'en now I scarce can urge my friendOn whom his house and  
realm depend,Who, after toil and peril past,Is happy with his queen at  
last.Sugriva after rest will knowThe hour is come to strike the blow,Nor  
will his grateful soul forgetMy succour, or deny the debtI know his  
generous heart, and henceAwait the time with confidenceWhen he his  
friendly zeal will show,And brooks again untroubled flow.'

2b

Footnotes

358:1 Mályavat: "The name of this mountain appears to me to be erroneous,  
and I think that instead of Mályavat  
should be read Malayavat, Malaya is a group of mountains situated exactly  
in that southern part of India where Ráma now was. while Mályavat is  
placed to the north east." GORRESIO.

358:2 Mantles of the skin of the black antelope were the prescribed dress of ascetics and religious students.  
 358:3 The sacred cord worn as the badge of religious initiation by men of the three twice-born castes.  
 359:1 The hum with which students con their tasks.  
 359:2 I omit here a long general description of the rainy season which (is?) not found in the Bengal recension and appears to have been interpolated by a far inferior and much later hand than Valmiki's. It is composed in a metre different from that of the rest of the Canto, and contains figures of poetical rhetoric and commonplaces which are the delight of more recent poets.  
 359:3 Praushthapada or Bhadra, the modern \*Bhaden\*, corresponds to half of August and half of September.  
 359:4 The Sáman or Sâma-veda, the third of the four Vedas, is really merely a reproduction of parts of the Rig-veda, transposed and scattered about piece-meal, only 78 verses in the whole being, it is said, untraceable to the present recension of the Rig-veda.  
 359:5 Āshádha is the month corresponding to parts of June and July.  
 359:6 Bharat, who was regent during Râma's absence.  
 359:7 Or with Goriesio, following the gloss of another commentary: "Has completed every holy rite and accumulated stores of merit."

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CANTO XXIX.: HANUMÁN'S COUNSEL.

No flash of lightning lit the sky.

No cloudlet marred the blue on high.The Saras

3b missed the welcome rain,

The moon's full beams were bright again.Sugrîva, lapped in bliss, forgotThe claims of faith, or heeded not;And by alluring joys misledThe path of falsehood learned to treadIn careless ease he passed each hour,And dallied in his lady's bowerEach longing of his heart was stilled,And every lofty hope fulfilled.With royal Rumá by his side,Or Tará yet a dearer bride,

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He spent each joyous day and nightIn revelry and wild delight,Like Indra whom the nymphs enticeTo taste the joys of Paradise.The power to courtiers' hands resigned,To all their acts his eyes were blind.All doubt, all fear he cast asideAnd lived with pleasure for his guide. But sage Hanumán, firm and true,Whose heart the lore of Scripture knew,Well trained to meet occasion, trainedIn all by duty's law ordained,Strove with his prudent speech to find\*Set\* access to the monarch's mind.He, skilled in every gentle artOf eloquence that wins the heart,Sugrîva from his trance to wake,His salutary counsel spake: 'The realm is won, thy name advanced,The glory of thy house enhanced,And now thy foremost care should beTo aid the friends who succoured thee.He who is firm and faithful foundTo friendly ties in honour bound,Will see his name and fame increaseWide sway is his who truly boastsThat friends and treasure, self and hosts,Are blest in one harmonious whole,Are subject to his firm control.Do thou, whose footsteps never strayFrom the clear bounds of duty's way.Assist, as honour bids thee, nowThy friends, observant of thy vow.For if all cares we lay not by.And to our friend's assistance fly.We, after, toil in idle haste,And all the late endeavour waste.

Up! nor the promised help delayUntil the hour have slipped away.Up! and with Raghu's son renewThe search for Sitá lost to view.The hour is come: he hears the call,But not on thee reproaches fallFrom him who labours to repressHis eager spirit's restlessness.Long joined to thee in friendly

tiesHe made thy fame and fortune rise,In gentle gifts by none excelled.In  
splendid might unparalleled.Up, to his succour, King! repayThe favour of  
that prosperous day,And to thy bravest captains sendPrompt mandates to  
assist thy friend,The cry for help thou wilt not spurnAlthough no grace  
demands return:And wilt thou not thine aid affordTo him who realm and  
life restored?Exert thy power, and thou hast wonThe love of Dasaratha's  
son:And will then for his summons wait,And till he call thee,  
hesitate?Think not the hero needs thy powerTo save him in the desperate  
hour:He with his arrows could subdueThe Gods and all the demon crew,And  
only waits that he may see

Redeemed the promise made by thee.For thee he risked his life and  
fought,For thee that great deliverance wrought.Then let us trace through  
earth and skiesHis lady wheresoe'er she lies.Through realms above,  
beneath, we flee,And plant our footsteps on the sea.Then why, O Lord of  
Vanary, stillDelay us waiting for thy will?Give thy commands, O King, and  
sayWhat task has each and where the way.Before thee myriad Vanars standTo  
sweep through heaven, o'er seas and land.' Sugriva heard the timely  
redeThat roused him in the day of need,And thus to Nila prompt and  
braveHis hest the imperial Vanar gave: 'Go, Nila, to the distant  
hostsThat keep in arms their several posts,And all the armies that  
protectThe quarters,

1 with their chiefs, collect.

To all the luminaries placedIn intermediate regions haste,And bid each  
captain rise and leadHis squadrons to their king with speedDo thou  
meanwhile with strictest careAll that the time requires prepare.The  
loitering Vanar who delaysTo gather here ere thrice five days,  
Shall surely die for his offence,Condemned for sinful negligence.'

Footnotes

359:1b The river on which Ayodhyá was built.

359:2b I omit a sloka or f\*\*\*s on altitude and

lugratirade repeated word for word from the la Canto

359:3b The Indian crane a magnificent bird easily domesticated.

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CANTO XXX.: RÁMA'S LAMENT.

But Ráma in the autumn night

Stood musing on the mountain height.While grief and love that scorned  
controlShook with wild storms the hero's soul.Clear was the sky, without  
a cloudThe glory of the moon to shroud.And bright with purest silver  
shoneEach hill the soft beams looked upon,He knew Sugriva's heart was  
bentOn pleasure, gay and negligent.He thought on Janak's child  
forlornFrom his fond arms for ever torn.He mourned occasion slipping  
by,And faint with anguish heaved each sigh

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He sat where many a varied streakOf rich ore marked the mountain peak.He  
raised his eyes the sky to view.And to his love his sad thoughts flew.He.  
heard the Sáras cry, and faintWith sorrow poured his love-born  
plaint:She, she who mocked the softest toneOf wild birds' voices with her  
own,--

Where strays she now, my love who playedSo happy in our hermit shade 'How  
can my absent love beholdThe bright trees with their flowers of gold,And  
all their gleaming glory seeWith eyes that vainly look for me?How is it  
with my darling whenFrom the deep tangles of the glenFloat carols of each  
bird elateWith rapture singing to his mate?In vain my weary glances  
roveFrom lake to hill, from stream to grove:I find no rapture in the  
scene,And languish for my fawn-eyed queen.Ah, does strong love with wild  
unrest,Born no the autumn, stir her breast?And does the gentle lady  
pineTill her bright eyes shall look in mine?' Thus Raghu's son in  
piteous tone,O'erwhelmed with sorrow, made his moan.E'en as the bird that  
drinks the rains

1

To Indra thousand-eyed complains. Then Lakshman who had wandered  
through the copses where the berries grew, Returning to the cavern found His  
brother chief\* in sorrow drowned, And pitying the woes that broke The  
spirit, of the hero spoke: 'Why east thy strength of soul away,  
And weakly yield to passion's sway? Arise, my brother, do and dare Ere  
action perish in despair. Refill the firmness of thy heart, And nerve thee  
for a hero's part. Whose is the hand unscathed to sieze The red flame  
quickened by the breeze? Where is the foe will dare to wrong Or keep the  
Maithil lady long?' Then with pale lips that sorrow dried The son of Raghu  
thus replied: Lord Indra thousand-eyed, has sent The sweet rain from the  
firmament, Sees the rich promise of the grain, And turns him to his rest  
again. The clouds with voices loud and deep, Veiling each tree upon the  
steep, Up on the thirsty earth have shed Their precious burden and are  
fled.

Now in kings' hearts ambition glows:

They rush to battle with their foes;

1b

But in Sugriva's sloth I see No care for deeds of chivalry. See, Lakshman,  
on each breezy height A thousand autumn blooms are bright. See how the  
wings of wild swans gleam On every islet of the stream. Four months of  
flood and rain are past:

A hundred years they seemed to last To me whom toil and trouble tried, My  
Sitá severed from my side. She, gentlest woman, weak and young, Still to  
her lord unwearied clung. Still by the exile's side she stood In the wild  
ways of Dandak wood, Like a fond bird disconsolate If parted from her  
darling mate. Sugriva, lapped in soft repose. Untouched by pity for my  
woes, Scorns the poor exile, dispossessed, By Rávan's mightier arm  
oppressed, The wretch who comes to sue and pray From his lost kingdom far  
away. Hence falls on me the Vánar's scorn, A suitor friendless and  
forlorn. The time is come: with heedless eye He sees the hour of action  
fly, -- Unmindful, now his hopes succeed, Of promise made in stress of  
need. Go seek him sunk in bliss and sloth, Forgetful of his royal oath, And  
as mine envoy thus upbraid The monarch for his help delayed: 'Vile is the  
wretch who will not pay The favour of an earlier day, Hope in the  
suppliant's breast awakes, And then his plighted promise breaks.  
Noblest, mid all of women born, Who keeps the words his lips have  
sworn. Yea, if those words be good or ill. Maintains his faith unbroken  
still. The \*ss who forget to aid The friend who helped them when they  
prayed, Dishonoured in their death shall lie, And dogs shall pass their  
corpses by. Sure thou wouldst see my strained arm hold My bow of battle  
backed with gold, Wouldst gaze upon its awful form Like lightning flashing  
through the storm, And hear the clanging bowstring loud As thunder from a  
labouring cloud His valour and his strength I know: But pleasure's sway  
now sinks them low With thee, my brother, for ally That strength and valour  
I defy

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He promised, when the rains should end, The succour of his arm to  
lend. Those months are past: he dares forget. And, lapped in pleasure,  
slumbers yet. No thought disturbs his careless breast For us impatient and  
distressed. And, while we sadly wait and pine, Girt by his lords he quaffs  
the wine.

Go, brother, go, his palace seek, And boldly to Sugriva speak. Thus give  
the listless king to know What waits him if my anger glow: Still open, to  
the gloomy God, Lies the sad path that Báli trod. 'Still to thy plighted  
word be true, Lest thou, O King, that path pursue. I launched the shaft I  
pointed well. And Báli, only Báli, fell. But, if from truth thou dare to  
stray, Both thee and thine this hand shall slay. 'Thus be the Vánar king  
addressed, Then add thyself what seems the best.

Footnotes



360:1 The troops who guard the frontiers on the north,  
south, east and west.

361:1 The Chátake, Cualus Melanoleucus, is supposed to drink nothing but  
the water for the clouds.

361:1b The time for warlike expeditions began when the rains had  
ceased.Next: Canto XXXI.: The Envoy.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO XXXI.: THE ENVOY.

Thus Ráma spoke, and Lakshman then

Made answer to the prince of men:'Yea, if the Vánar, undeterredBy fear of  
vengeance, break his word,Loss of his royal power ere longShall pay the  
traitor for the wrong,Nor deem I him so void of senseTo brave the bitter  
consequence.But if enslaved to joy he lie,And scorn thy grace with  
blinded eye,Then let him join his brother slain:Unmeet were such a wretch  
to reign.Quick rises, kindling in my breast,The wrath that will not be  
repressed,And bids me in my fury slayThe breaker of his faith to-day.Let  
Báli's son thy consort traceWith bravest chiefs of Vánar race.'

Thus spoke the hero, and aglow

With rage of battle seized his bow.But Ráma thus in gentler moodWith  
fitting words his speech renewed:'No hero with a soul like thineTo paths  
of sin will e'er incline.

He who his angry heart can tameIs worthiest of a hero's name.Not thine,  
my brother, be the partSo alien from the tender heart,Nor let thy feet by  
wrath misledForsake the path they loved to tread.From harsh and angry  
words abstain:With gentle speech a hearing gain,And tax Sugríva with the  
crimeOf failing faith and wasted time.'

Then Lakshman, bravest of the brave,

Obedied the best that Ráma gave,To whom devoting every thoughtThe Vánar's  
royal town he sought.As Mandar's mountain heaves on highHis curved peak  
soaring to the sky,So Lakshman showed, his dread bow bentLike Indra's  
1 in the firmament.

His brother's wrath, his brother's woeInflamed his soul to fiercest  
glow.The tallest trees to earth were castAs furious on his way he  
passed,And where he stepped, so fiercely fleet,The stones were shivered  
by his feet.He reached Kishkindhá's city deepEmbosomed where the hills  
were steep,Where street and open square were linedWith legions of the  
Vánar kind.

Then, as his lips with fury swelled,The lord of Raghu's line beheldA  
stream of Vánar chiefs outpouredTo do obeisance to their lord.But when  
the mighty prince in viewOf the thick coming Vánars drew,They turned them  
in amaze to seizeCraggs of the rock and giant trees.He saw, and fiercer  
waxed his ire,As oil lends fury to the fire.Scarce bad the Vánar  
chieftains seenThat wrathful eye, that troubled mienFierce as the God's  
who rules the dead,When, turned in wild affright, they fled,Speeding in  
breathless terror allSought King Sugríva's council hall,And there made  
known their tale of fear,That Lakshman wild with rage, was near.The king,  
untroubled by alarms,Held Tára in his amorous arms,And in the distant  
bower with herHeard not each clamorous messenger.Then, summoned at the  
lords' behestForth from the city portals pressed.Each like some elephant  
or cloud,The Vánars in a trembling cloud:Fierce warriors all with massive  
jawsAnd terrors of their tiger claws.Some matched ten elephants, and some  
A hundred's strength could overcome.Some chieftains, mightier than the  
rest,Ten times a hundred's force possessed.With eyes of fury Lakshman  
viewedThe Vánars' tree-armed multitude.Thus garrisoned from side to  
sideThe city walls assault defied.Beyond the moat that girt the  
wallAdvanced the Vánar chiefs; and allUpon the plain in \*numbers  
\*made,(?) Impetuous warriors, stood arrayed.

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Red at the sight flashed Lakshman's eyes,His bosom heaved tumultuous  
sighs,And forth the fire of fury brokeLike flame that flashes through the

smoke. Like some fierce snake the hero stood: His bow recalled the expanded  
 hood, And in his shaft-head bright and keen The flickering of its tongue  
 was seen: And in his own all-conquering might The venom of its deadly  
 bite. Prince Angad marked his angry look, And every hope his heart  
 forsook. Then, his large eyes with fury red, To Angad Lakshman turned and  
 said: 'Go tell the king that Lakshman waits  
 For audience at the city gates, Whose heart, O tamer of thy foes, Is heavy  
 with his brother's woes. Bid him to Ráma's word attend, And ask if he will  
 aid his friend. Go, let the king my message learn: Then hither with all  
 speed return.' Prince Angad heard and wild with grief Cried as he looked  
 upon the chief: 'Tis Lakshman's self: impelled by ire He seeks the city of  
 my sire. At the fierce words and furious look Of Raghu's son he quailed  
 and shook, Back through the city gates he sped, And, laden with the tale of  
 dread, Sought King Sugriva, filled his ears And Rumá's with his doubts and  
 fears. To Rumá and the king he bent, And clasped their feet most  
 reverent, Clasped the dear feet of Tárá, too, And told the startling tale  
 anew. But King Sugriva's ear was dulled, By love and wine and languor  
 lulled, Nor did the words that Angad spake The slumberer from his trance  
 awake. But soon as Raghu's son came nigh The startled Vánars raised a  
 cry, And strove to win his grace, while dread Each anxious heart  
 disquieted.

They saw, and, as they gathered round, Rose from the mighty throng a  
 sound Like torrents when they downward dash, Or thunder with the  
 lightning's flash. The shouting of the Vánars broke Sugriva's slumber, and  
 he woke: Still with the wine his eyes were red, His neck with flowers was  
 garlanded. Roused at the voice of Angad came Two Vánar lords of rank and  
 fame; One Yaksha, one Prabhava hight, - Wise counsellors of gain and  
 right. They came and raised their voices high, And told that Raghu's son  
 was nigh: 'Two brothers steadfast in their truth, Each glorious in the  
 bloom of youth, Worthy of rule, have left the skies,  
 And clothed their forms in men's disguise.  
 One at thy gates, in warlike hands Holding his mighty weapon, stands. His  
 message is the charioteer That brings the eager envoy near, Urged onward by  
 his bold intent, And by the hest of Ráma sent.

1

The gathered Vánars saw and fled, And raised aloud their cry of dread. Son  
 of Queen Tárá, Angad ran To parley with the godlike man.  
 Still fiery-eyed with rage and hate Stands Lakshman at the city gate, And  
 trembling Vánars scarce can fly Scathed by the lightning of his eye. Go  
 with thy son, thy kith and kin, The favour of the prince to win, And bow  
 thy reverent head that so His fiery wrath may cease to glow. What righteous  
 Ráma bids thee, do, And to thy plighted word be true.'

Footnotes

362:1 The rainbow.

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CANTO XXXII.: HANUMAN'S COUNSEL.

Sugriva heard, and, trained and tried

In counsel, to his lords replied: 'No deed of mine, no hasty word The anger  
 of the prince has stirred. But haply some who hate me still And watch their  
 time to work me ill, Have slandered me to Raghu's son, Accused of deeds I  
 ne'er have done. Now, O my lords--for you are wise--Speak truly what your  
 hearts advise. And, pondering each event, inquire The reason of the  
 prince's ire. No fear have I of Lakshman: none: No dread of Raghu's  
 mightier son. But wrath, that fires a friendly breast Without due cause,  
 distrubs my rest. With labour light is friendship gained. But with severest  
 toil maintained. And doubt is strong, and faith is weak,

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And friendship dies when traitors speak. Hence is my troubled bosom  
 cold With fear of Rama lofty-souled;

For heavy on my spirit weigh His favours I can ne'er repay.' He ceased:  
 and Hanuman of all The Vánars in the council hall In wisdom first, and  
 rank, expressed The thoughts that filled his prudent breast: 'No marvel  
 thou rememberest yet The service thou shouldst ne'er forget, How the brave  
 prince of Raghu 'a seed Thy days from fear and peril freed; And Báli for thy  
 sake o'erthrew, Whom Indra's self might scarce subdue. I doubt not Ráma's  
 anger burns For the scant love thy heart returns. For this he sends his  
 brother, him Whose glory never waxes dim. Sunk in repose thy careless  
 eye Marks not the seasons as they fly, Nor sees that autumn has begun With  
 dark blooms opening to the sun. Clear is the sky no cloudlet mars The  
 splendour of the shining stars. The balmy air is soft and still, And clear  
 and bright are lake and rill. Thou heedest not with blinded eyes The hour  
 for warlike enterprise. Hence Lakshman hither comes to break Thy slothful  
 trance and bid thee wake. Then, Monarch, with a patient ear  
 The high-souled Ráma's message hear, Which, reft of wife and realm and  
 friends, Thus by another's mouth he sends. Thou, Vánar King, hast done  
 amiss: And now I see no way but this; Before his envoy humbly stand And sue  
 for peace with suppliant hand. High duty bids a courtier seek His master's  
 weal, and freely speak. So by no thought of fear controlled My speech, O  
 King, is free and bold, For Ráma, if his anger glow, Can, with the terrors  
 of his bow. This earth with all the Gods subdue, Gandharvas,  
 1 and the demon crew.

Unwise to stir his wrathful mood Whose favour must again be wooed. And,  
 most of all, unwise for one Grateful like thee for service done. Go with  
 thy son and kinsmen: bend Thy humble head and greet thy friend. And, like a  
 fond obedient spouse, Be faithful to thy plighted vows.

Footnotes 363:1 In a note on the corresponding passage in the  
 Bengal recension Gorresio says: 'The text here makes  
 use of a strange and something more than bold metaphor which I have  
 sought to modify. The text says: "Here is Lakshman the charioteer of  
 words who by the orders of Rama has come hither upon the ear of  
 resolution." In his Italian translation he renders the passage: "Here is  
 Laksh- man, the brother of Rama who by his orders comes hither the  
 determined bearer of words."

364:1 Indra's associates in arms, and musicians of his  
 heaven.

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CANTO XXXVIII.: LAKSHMAN'S ENTRY.

Through the fair city Lakshman came,  
 Invited in Sugríva's name. Within the gates the guardian bands, Of Vánars  
 raised their suppliant hands, And in their ordered ranks, amazed, Upon the  
 princely hero gazed, They marked each burning breath he drew, The fury of  
 his soul they knew. Their hearts were chilled with sudden fear; They gazed,  
 but dared not venture near, Before his eyes the city, gay With gems and  
 flowery gardens, lay, Where \*fane and palace rose on high, And things of  
 beauty charmed the eye. Where trees of every blossom grew Yielding their  
 fruit in season due To Vánars of celestial seed Who wore each varied form  
 at need, Fair-faced and glorious with the shine Of heavenly robes and  
 wreaths divine. There sandal, aloe, lotus bloomed, And there delicious  
 breath perfumed The city's broad street, redolent Df sugary mead  
 1b and honey scent. There many a lofty palace rose  
 Like Vindhya or the Lord of Snows, And with sweet murmur sparkling  
 rills Leapt lightly down the sheltering hills. On many a glorious palace,  
 raised For prince and noble,

2b Lakshman gazed:

Like clouds of paly hue they shone With fragrant wreaths that hung  
 thereon: There wealth of jewels was enshrined, And fairer gems of  
 womankind. There gleamed, of noble height and size, Like Indra's mansion in  
 the skies, Protected by a crystal fence Of rock, the royal residence, With

roof and turret high and bright  
Like Mount Kailása's loftiest height.  
There blooming trees, Mahendra's gift,  
High o'er the walls were seen to lift  
Their golden fruited boughs, that made  
With leaf and flower delicious shade.  
He saw a band of Vánars wait,  
p. 365

Wieiding their weapons, at the gate  
Where golden portals flashed  
between Celestial garlands red and green.  
Within Sugriva's fair abode  
Unchecked the mighty hero strode,  
As when the sun of autumn shrouds  
His glory in a pile of clouds.  
Through seven wide courts he quickly passed,  
And reached the royal tower at last,  
Where seats were set with couch and bed  
Of gold and silver richly spread.  
While the young chieftain's feet drew near  
The sound of music reached his ear,  
As the soft breathings of the flute  
Came blending with the voice and lute.  
Then beauty showed her youth and grace  
And varied charm of form and face:  
Soft bright-eyed creatures, fair and young,  
--Gay garlands round their necks were hung,  
And greater charms to each were lent  
By richest dress and ornament.  
He saw the calm attendants wait  
About their lord in careless state,  
Heard women's girdles chime in sweet  
Accordance with their tinkling feet.  
He heard the anklet's silvery sound,  
He saw the calm that reigned around,  
And o'er him, as he listened, came  
A rush of rage, a flood of shame.  
He drew his bowstring: with the clang  
From ease to west the welkin rang:  
Then in his modest mood withdrew  
A little from the ladies' view.  
And sternly silent stood apart.  
While wrath for Ráma filled his heart.

Sugriva knew the sounding string,  
And at the call the Vánar king  
Sprang swiftly from his golden seat,  
And feared the coming prince to meet.  
Then with cold lips that terror dried  
To beauteous Tárá thus he cried:  
'What cause of anger, O my spouse  
Fair with the charm of lovely brows,  
Sets Lakshman's gentle breast on fire,  
And brings him in unwonted ire?  
Say, canst thou see, O faultless dame,  
A cause to till his soul with flame?  
For there must be a reason when  
Such fury stirs the king of men.  
Reveal the sin, if sin of mine  
Anger the lord of Raghu's line.  
Or go thyself, his rage subdued,  
And with soft words his favour woo.  
Soon as on thee his eyes are set  
His heart this anger will forget,  
For men like him of lofty mind  
Are never stern with womankind.  
First let thy gentle speech disarm  
His fury, and his spirit charm,

And I, from fear of peril free,

The conqueror of his foes will see.'

She heard: with faltering steps  
and slow, With eyes that shone with trembling glow.

With gold-girt body gently bent  
To meet the stranger prince she went.  
When Lakshman saw the Vánar queen  
With tranquil eyes and modest mien,  
Before the dame he bent his head,  
And anger, at her presence, fled.  
Made bold by draughts of wine, and cheered  
By Lakshman look no more she feared,  
And in the trust his favour lent  
She thus addressed him eloquent:  
'Whence springs thy burning fury? say;  
Who dares thy will to disobey?  
Who checks the maddened flames that seize  
On forests full of withered trees?  
Then Lakshman spoke, her mind to ease,  
His kind reply in words like these:  
'Thy lord his days in pleasure spends,  
Heedless of duty and of friends.  
Nor dost thou mark, though fondly true,  
The evil path his steps pursue.  
He cares not for affairs of state,  
Nor us forlorn and desolate,  
But sits a mere spectator still,  
A sensual slave to pleasure's will.  
Four months were fixed, the time agreed  
When he should help us in our need:  
But, bound in toils of pleasure fast,  
He sees not that the months are past.  
Where beats the heart which draughts of wine

To virtue or to gain incline?  
Hast thou nor heard those draughts destroy  
Virtue and gain and love and joy?  
For those who, helped at need, refuse  
Their aid in turn, their virtue lose:  
And they who scorn a friend disdain  
A treasure naught may buy again.  
Thy lord has cast his friend away,  
Nor feared from virtue's path to stray.  
If this he true, declare, O dame  
Who knowest duty's every claim.  
What further work remains for us  
Deceived and disappointed thus.'

She listened, for his words were

kind. Where virtue showed with gain combined, And thus in turn the prince  
addressed, As hope was rising in his breast: 'No time, no cause of wrath I  
see With those who live and honour thee: And thou shouldst bear without  
offence Thy servant's fitful negligence. I know the seasons glide  
away, While Ráma maddens at delay I know what deed our thanks has earned, I  
know that grace should be returned But still I know, whatever befall, That  
conquering love is lord of all; p. 366

Know where Sugriva's thoughts, possessed

By one absorbing passion, rest. But he whom sensual joys debase Heeds not  
the claim of time and place, And sees not with his blinded sight His duty  
or his gain aright. O pardon him who loves me! spare The Vánar caught in  
pleasure's snare, And once again let Ráma grace With favour him who rules  
our race. E'en royal saints, whose chief delight Was penance and austere  
rite, At love's commandment have unbent, Beguiled by sweetest  
blandishment. And know, Sugriva, roused at last, The order to his lords has  
passed. And, long by love and bliss delayed. Wakes all on fire your hopes  
to aid. A countless host his city fills, New-gathered from a thousand  
hills: Impetuous chiefs, who wear at need Each varied form, his legions  
lead. Come then, O hero, kept aloof By modest awe, nor fear reproof: A  
faithful friend untouched by blame May look upon another's dame.' He  
passed within, by Tára pressed, And by his own impatient breast.  
Refulgent there in sunlike sheen Sugriva on his throne was seen. Gay  
garlands round his neck were twined, And Rumá by her lord recline.

Footnotes

364:1b Maireya, a spirituous liquor from the blossoms  
of the *Lythrum fruticosum*, with sugar, &c.

364:2b Their names are as follows: Angad, Mainda, Dwida, Gavaya,  
Gaváksha, Gaja, Sarabha, Vidyunmáli,  
Sampáti, Súrýaksa, Hanumán, Virabáhu, Subáha, Nala, Kúmuda, Sushena,  
Tára, Jámbuvatu, Dadhivakra, \*Nila, S'upátala, and Sunetra.

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CANTO XXXIV.: LAKSHMAN'S SPEECH

Sugriva started from his rest

With doubt and terror in his breast. He heard the prince's furious tread He  
saw his eyes glow fiercely red. Swift sprang the monarch to his  
feet Upstarting from his golden seat. Rose Rumá and her fellows, too, And  
closely round Sugriva drew, As round the moon's full glory stand Attendant  
stars in glittering band. Sugriva glanced with reddened eyes, Raised his  
joined hands in suppliant guise Flew to the door, and rooted there Stood  
like the tree that grants each prayer.

1

And Lakshman saw, and, fiercely moved, With angry speech the king  
reproved:

'Famed is the prince who loves the truth,

Whose soul is touched with tender ruth, Who, liberal, keeps each sense  
subdued, And pays the debt of gratitude. but all unmeet a king to be, The  
meanest of the mean is he Who basely breaks the promise made

To trusting friends who lent him aid. He sins who for a steed has lied, As  
if a hundred steeds had died: Or if he lie, a cow to win, Tenfold as heavy  
is the sin. But if the lie a man betray, Both he and his shall all decay.

1b

O Vánar King, the thankless man Is worthy of the general ban. Who takes  
assistance of his friends, And in his turn no service lends. This verse of  
old by Brahmá sung Is echoed now by every tongue. Hear what He cried in  
angry mood Bewailing man's ingratitude: 'For draughts of wine for  
slaughtered cows, For treacherous theft, for broken vows A pardon is  
ordained: but none For thankless scorn of service done.' Ungrateful, Vánar  
King, art thou, And faithless to thy plighted vow. For Ráma brought thee  
help, and yet Thou shunnest to repay the debt: Or, grateful, thou hadst

surely pressedTo aid the hero in his quest.Thou art, in vulgar pleasures  
drowned,False to thy bond in honour bound.Nor yet has Ráma's guileless  
heartDiscerned thee for the thing thou art--

A snake who holds the frogs that criesAnd lures fresh victims as it  
dies.Brave Ráma, born for glorious fate,Has set thee in thy high  
estate,And to the Vánars' throne restored,Great-souled himself, their  
mean-souled lord.Now if thy pride disown what he,High thoughted prince,  
has done for thee,Struck by his arrows shalt thou fall,And Báli meet in  
Yama's hall.Still open, to the gloomy God,Lies the sad path thy brother  
trod.Then to thy plighted word be true,Nor let thy steps that path  
pursue.Me thinks the shafts of Ráma, shotLike thunderbolts, thou heedest  
not,Who canst, absorbed in sensual bliss,Thy promise from thy mind  
dismiss.'

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Footnotes

366:1 The Kalpadruma or Wishing-tree is one of the  
trees of Svarga or Indra's Paradise: it has the power of  
granting all desires.366:1b The meaning is that if a man promises to give  
a

horse and then breaks his word he commits a sin as  
great as if he had killed a hundred horses.

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CANTO XXXV.: TÁRÁ'S SPEECH.

He ceased: and Tárá starry-eyed

Thus to the angry prince replied:'Not to my lord shouldst thou addressA  
speech so fraught with bitterness:Not thus reproached my lord should  
be,And least of all, O Prince, by thee.He is no thankless coward--no--  
With spirit dead to valour's glow.From paths of truth he never strays,Nor  
wanders in forbidden ways.Ne'er will Sugriva's heart forget,By Ráma  
saved, the lasting debt.Still in his grateful breast will liveThe succour  
none but he could give.Restored to fame by Ráma's grace,To empire o'er  
the Vánar race,From ceaseless dread and toil set free,Restored to Rumá  
and to me:By grief and care and exile tried,New to the bliss so long  
denied,Like Visvámitra once, alas,He marks not how the seasons pass.That  
saint ten thousand years remained,By sweet Ghritáchís

1 love enchained,And deemed those years, that flew away

So lightly, but a single day.O, if those years unheeded flewBy him who  
times and seasons knew,Unequalled for his lofty mind.What marvel meaner  
eyes are blind?Then be not angry, Raghu's son,And let thy brother feel  
for oneWho many a weary year has spentStranger to love and  
blandishment.Let not this wrath thy soul inflame,Like some mean wretch  
unknown to fame:For high and noble hearts like thineLove mercy and to  
truth incline,Calm and deliberate, and slowWith anger's raging fire to  
glow.At length, O righteous prince, relent,Nor let my words in vain be  
spent.This sudden blaze of fury slake,I pray thee for Sugriva's sake.He  
would renounce at Ráma's callRumá and Angad, me and allWho call him lord:  
his gold and grain,The favour of his friend to gain.His arm shall slay  
the fiend more baseIn soul than all his impious race,And happy Ráma  
reuniteTo Sitá, rival in delightOf the triumphant Moon when he  
Rejoins his darling Rohiní. 1b

Ten million million demons guardThe gates of Lanká firmly barred.All hope  
until that host be slain,To smite the robber king is vain.Nor with  
Sugriva's aid aloneMay king and host be overthrown.Thus ere he died--for  
well he knew--Spake Báli, and his words are true.I know not what his  
proofs might be,But speak the words he spake to me.Hence far and wide our  
lords are sentTo raise the mightiest armament.For their return Sugriva  
waitsEre he can sally from his gates.Still is the oath Sugriva sworeKept  
firmly even as before:And the great host this day will beAssembled by the  
king's decree,Ten thousand thousand troops, who wearThe form of monkey

and of bear, Prepared for thee the war to wage: Then let thy wrath no longer rage. The matrons of the Vánar race See marks of fury in thy face; They see thine eyes like blood are red, And will not yet be comforted.' Footnotes

367:1 The story is told in Book 1. Canto LXIII., but the charmer there is called Menaká.

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CANTO XXXVI.: SUGRÍVA'S SPEECH.

She ceased: and Lakshman gave assent,  
Won by her gentle argument. So Tárá's pleading, just and mild, His softening heart had reconciled. His altered mood Sugriva saw, And cast aside the fear and awe Like raiment heavy with the rain Which on his troubled soul had lain. Then quickly to the ground he threw His flowery garland, bright of hue, Which round his royal neck he wore, And, sobered, was himself once more. Then turning to the princely man In soothing words the king began: 'My glory, wealth, and royal sway To other hands had passed away: But Ráma to my rescue came, And gave me back my power and fame. O Lakshman, say, whose grateful heart

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Could nurse the hope to pay in part, By service of a life, the deed Of Ráma sprung of heavenly seed?

His foeman Rávan shall be slain, And Sítá shall be his again. The hero's side I will not leave, But he the conquest shall achieve. What need of help has he who drew His bow, and one great arrow flew Trough seven tall trees, a mountain rent, And cleft the earth with force unspent? What aid needs he who shook his bow, And at the sound the earth below With hill and wood and rooted rock Quaked feverous with the thunder shock? Yet all my legions will I bring. And follow close the warrior king Marching on his impetuous way Fierce Rávan and his hosts to slay. If I be guilty of offence, Careless through love or negligence, Let him his loyal slave forgive; For error cleaves to all who live.' Thus king Sugriva, good and brave, In humble words his answer gave, Softened was Lakshman's angry mood Who thus his friendly speech renewed: 'My brother, Vánar King, will see A champion and a friend in thee. So strong art thou, so brave and bold, So pure in thought, so humble-souled, That thou deservest well to reign

And all a monarch's bliss to gain. Lend thou my brother aid, and all His foes beneath his arm will fall. Full well the words thou speakest suit A chieftain wise and resolute. With grateful heart that loves the right, And foot that never yields in tight. O come, and my sad brother cheer Who mourns the wife he holds so dear. O pardon, friend, my harsh address, And Ráma's frantic bitterness.'

Footnotes

367:1b Rohiní is the name of the ninth Nakshatra or lunar asterism personified as a daughter of Daksha, and the favourite wife of the Moon.

Aldebaran is the principal star in the constellation.

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CANTO XXXVII.: THE GATHERING.

He ceased: and King Sugriva cried

To sage Hanúmán 1 by his side:

'Summon the Vánar legions, those Who dwell about the Lord of Snows: Those who in Vindhyan groves delight, Kailása's, or Mahendra's height, Dwell on the Five bright Peaks, or where Mandar's white summit cleaves the air: Wherever they are wandring free

In highlands by the western sea, On that east hill whence springs the sun, Or where he sinks when day is done. Call the great chiefs whose legions till The forests of the Lotus Hill,

1b

Where every one in strength and size  
With the stupendous Anjan  
2b vies.

Call those, with tints of burnished gold  
Whom Mahás'aila's caverns  
hold: Those who on Dhúnira roam, or hide  
In the wild woods on Meru's  
side. Call those who, brilliant as the sun,  
On high Mahárun leap and  
run, Quaffing sweet juices that distil  
From odorous trees upon the hill,  
Call those whom tranquil haunts  
delight Where dwell the sage and anchorite  
In groves that through their  
wide extent Exhale a thousand blossoms' scent.  
Send out, send out: from  
coast to coast Assemble all the Vánar host:  
With force, with words, with  
gifts of price Compel, admonish and entice.  
Already envoys have been sent  
To warn them of their lord's intent.  
Let others urged by thee repeat  
My mandate that their steps be fleet.  
Those lords who yielding to the sway  
Of love's delight would fain delay,  
Urge hither with the utmost speed,  
Or with thee to my presence lead:  
And those who linger to the last  
Until ten days be come and passed,  
And dare their sovereign to defy.  
For their offence shall surely die.  
Thousands, yea millions, shall there be,  
Obedient to their king's decree,  
The lions of the Vánar race,  
Assembled from each distant place.  
Forth shall they haste like hills in size,  
Or mighty clouds that veil the skies,  
And swiftly speeding on their way  
Bring all our legions in array.'

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He ceased: the son of Váyu I heard,  
Submissive to his sovereign's word;  
And sent his rapid envoys forth  
To east and west and south and north.  
They bent their airy course afar  
Along the paths of bird and star,  
And sped through ether farther yet  
Where Vishnu's splendid sphere is set.

2

By sea, on hill, by wood and lake  
They called to arms for Ráma's sake,  
As each with terror in his breast  
Obeyed his awful king's behest.  
Three million Vánars, fierce and strong  
As Anjan's self, a wondrous throng.  
Sped from the spot where Ráma still  
Gazed restless from the woody hill.  
Ten million others, brave and bold,  
With coats that shone like burning  
gold, Came flying from the mountain crest  
Where sinks the weary sun to rest.  
Impetuous from the northern skies,  
Where Mount Kailása's summits rise,  
Ten hundred millions hasted, hued  
Like manes of lions, ne'er subdued:  
The dwellers on Himálaya's side,  
Whose food his roots and fruit supplied,

With rangers of the Vindhyan chain  
And neighbours of the Milky Main.

3

Some from the palm groves where they fed,  
Some from the woods of betel sped:  
In countless numbers, fierce and brave,  
They came from mountain, lake, and cave.  
As on their way the Vánars went  
To rouse each distant armament,  
They chanced that wondrous tree to view  
That on Himálaya's summit grew.  
Of old upon that sacred height  
Was wrought Mahes'var's

4 glorious rite,

Which every God in heaven beheld,  
And his glad heart with triumph swelled.  
There from pure seed at random sown  
Bright plants with luscious fruit had grown,  
And, sweet as Amrit to the taste,  
The summit of the mountain graced.  
Who once should eat the virtuous fruit  
That sprang from so divine a root,  
One whole revolving moon should be  
From every pang of hunger free.

The Vánars culled the fruit they found

Ripe on the sacrificial ground  
With rare celestial odours sweet,  
To lay them at Sugriva's feet.  
Those noble envoys scoured the land  
To summon every Vánar band

Then swiftly homeward at the head  
Of countless armaments they sped.  
They gathered by Kishkindhá's wall.  
They thronged Sugriva's palace hall,  
And, richly laden, bare within  
That fruit of heavenly origin.  
Their gifts before their king they spread,  
And thus in tones of triumph said:  
'Through every



land our way we took To visit hill and wood and brook, And all thy hosts  
from east to west Flock hither at their lord's behest. 'Sugrīva with  
delighted look The present of his envoys took. Then bade them go, with  
gracious speech Rewarding and dismissing each.

Footnotes

368:1 Vālmīki and succeeding poets make the second  
vowel in this name long or Short at their pleasure.

368:1b Some of the mountains here mentioned are fabulous and others it is  
impossible to identify. Sugrīva  
means to include all the mountains of India from Kailās the residence of  
the God Kuvera, regarded as one of the  
loftiest peaks of the Himālayas, to Mabendra in the extreme south, from  
the mountain in the east where the sun is said to rise to Astáchal or the  
western mountain where he sets. The commentators give little assistance:  
that Mahās'aila, &c. are certain mountains is about all the information  
they give.

368:2b One of the celestial elephants of the Gods who  
protect the four quarters and intermediate points of the  
compass.

369:1 Va'yu or the Wind was the father of Hanumán.

369:2 The path or station of Vishnu is the space  
between the seven Risbis or Ursa Major, and Dhruva or  
the polar star.

369:3 One of the seven seas which surround the earth in  
concentric circles.

369:4 The title of Mahes'var \* or Mighty Lord is sometimes given to  
Indra, but more generally to S'iva  
whom it here denotes.

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CANTO XXXVIII.: SUGRÍVA'S  
DEPARTURE.

Thus all the princely Vánars, true

To their appointed tasks, withdrew. Suigrīva deemed already done The work  
he planned for Raghu's son. Then Lakshman gently spoke and cheered Sugrīva  
for his valour feared: 'Now, chieftain, if thy will be so. Forth from  
Kishkindhá let us go.' Sugrīva's heart swelled high with pride As to the  
prince he thus replied: 'Come, speed we forth without delay: 'Tis mine thy  
mandate to obey.' Sugrīva bade the dames adieu, And Tárá and the rest  
withdrew. Then at their chieftain's summons came The Vánars first in rank  
and fame, A trusty brave and reverent band, Meet e'en before a queen to  
stand. They at his call made haste to bring The litter of the glorious  
king. 'Mount, O my friend.' Sugrīva cried, And straight Sumitrá's son  
complied. Then took by Lakshman's side his place  
The sovereign of the woodland race, Upraised by Vánars, fleet and  
strong. Who bore the glittering load along. On high above his royal head A  
paly canopy was spread, And chouries white in many a hand The forehead of  
the monarch fanned, And shell and drum and song and shout Pealed round him  
as the king passed out.

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About the monarch went a throng Of Vánar warriors brave and strong, As  
onward to the mountain shade Where Ráma dwelt his way he made. Soon as the  
lovely spot he viewed Where Ráma lived in solitude, The Vánar monarch, far-  
renowed, With Lakshman, lightly stepped to ground, And to the son of Raghu  
went Joining his raised hands reverent. As their great leader raised his  
hands, So suppliant stood the Vánar bands. Well pleased the son of Raghu  
saw Those legions, hushed in reverent awe, Stand silent like the tranquil  
floods That raise their hands of lotus buds. But Ráma, when the king, to  
greet

His friend, had bowed him at his feet, Raised him who ruled the Vanar race, And held him in a close embrace: Then, when his arms he had unknit, Besought him by his side to sit, And thus with gentle words the best Of men the Vánar king addressed: 'The prince who well his days divides, And knows aright the times and tides To follow duty, joy, or gain, He, only he, deserves to reign. But he who wealth and virtue leaves, And every hour to pleasure cleaves, False from his bliss like him who wakes From slumber on a branch that breaks. True king is he who smites his foes, And favour to his servants shows, And of that fruit makes timely use Which virtue, wealth, and joy produce. The hour is come that bids thee rise To aid me in my enterprise. Then call thy nobles to debate, And with their help deliberate.' 'Lost was my power,' the king replied, 'All strength had fled, all hope had died The Vánars owned another lord, But by thy grace was all restored. All this, O conqueror of the foe, To thee and Lakshman's aid I owe

And his should be the villain's shame Who durst deny the sacred claim. These Vánar chiefs of noblest birth Have at my bidding roamed the earth, And brought from distant regions all Our legions at their monarch's call: Fierce bears with monkey troops combined, And apes of every varied kind, Terrific in their forms, who dwell In grove and wood and bosky dell: The bright Gaudharvas' brood, the seed Of Gods, 1 they change their shapes at need.

Each with his legions in array, Hither, O Prince, they make their way, They come: and tens of millions swell To numbers that no tongue may tell.

1b

For thee their armies will unite With chiefs, Mahendra's peers in might. From Meru and from Vindhya's chain They come like clouds that bring the rain. These round thee to the war will go, To smite to earth thy demon foe; Will slay the Rákshas and restore Thy consort when the fight is o'er."Footnotes

370:1 See Book I. Canto XVI.

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CANTO XXXIX.: THE VÁNAR HOST.

Then Ráma, best of all who guide

Their steps by duty, thus replied: 'What marvel if Lord Indra send The kindly rain, O faithful friend? If, thousand-rayed, the God of Day Drive every darksome cloud away? Or, rising high, the Lord of Night Flood the broad heaven with silver light? What marvel, King, that one like thee The glory of his friends should be? No marvel, O my lord, that thou Hast shown thy noble nature now. Thy heart, Sugriva, well I know: Naught from thy lips but truth may flow, With thee for friend and champion all My foes beneath my arm will fall. The Rákshas, when my queen he stole, Brought sure destruction on his soul, Like Anuhláda

2b who beguiled

Queen Sachí called Puloma's child. Yes, near, Sugriva, is the day When I my demon foe shall slay, As conquering Indra in his ire Slew Queen Paulomi's haughty sire.' 3b

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He ceased: thick clouds of dust rose high To every quarter of the sky: The very sun grew faint and pale Behind the darkly-gathering veil. The mighty clouds that hung o'erhead From east to west thick darkness spread, And earth to her foundations shook With hill and forest, lake and brook. Then hidden was the ground beneath Fierce warriors armed with fearful teeth, Hosts numberless, each lord in size A match for him who rules the skies: From many a sea and distant hill, From rock and river, lake and rill. Some like the morning sun were bright. Some, like the moon, were silver white: These green as lotus fibres, those White-coated from their native snows.

1

Then S'atabali came in view  
Girt by a countless retinue.  
Like some gold mountain high in air  
Tará's illustrious sire  
2 was there.

There Rumá's father, 3 far-renowned,  
With tens of thousands ranged around.  
There, tinted like the tender green  
Of lotus filaments, was seen,  
Compassed by countless legions, one  
Whose face was as the morning sun,  
Hanúmán's father good and great, Kesari,  
4 wisest in debate.

There the proud king Gaváksha, feared  
For his strong warrior arm, appeared.  
There Dhúmra, mighty lord, the dread  
Of foes, his ursine legions led.  
There Panas, first for warlike fame,  
With twenty million warriors came.  
There glorious Níla, dark of hue,  
Arrayed his countless troops in view.  
There moved lord Gavaya brave and bold,  
Resplendent like a hill of gold,  
And near him Darímukha stood  
With millions from the hill and wood  
And \*Dwivid famed for strength and speed,  
And Mamda, both of Asvin seed.  
There Gaja, strong and glorious, led  
The countless troops around him spread,  
And Jámbaván

5 the king whose sway  
The bears delighted to obey,  
With swarming myriads onward pressed  
True to his lord Sugríva's hest;  
And princely Ruman, dear to fame,  
Led millions whom no hosts could tame,  
All these and many a chief beside  
1b Came onward fierce in warlike pride.  
They covered all the plain, and still  
Pressed forward over wood and hill.  
In rows for many a league around  
They rested on the grassy ground;  
Or to Sugríva made their way.  
Like clouds about the Lord of Day,  
And to the king their proud heads bent  
In power and might preeminent.  
Sugríva then to Ráma sped.  
And raised his reverent hands, and said  
That every chief from coast to coast  
Was present with his warrior host.

Footnotes

370:1b The numbers are unmanageable in English verse. The poet speaks of hundreds of arbudas; and an arbuda is a hundred millions.

370:2b Anuhláda or Anuhráda is one of the four sons of the mighty Hiranyakasipu, an Asur or a Daitya son of Kasyapa and Diti and killed by Vishnu in his incarnation of the Man-Lion Narasinha. According to the Bhágavata Purána the Daitya or Asur Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyáksha his brother, both killed by Vishnu, were born again as Rávan and Kumbhakarna his brother.'

370:3b Putoma, a demon, was the father-in-law of Indra who destroyed him in order to avert an imprecation. Paulomit is a patronymic denoting Sachi the daughter of Puloma.

371:1 "Observe the variety of colours which the poem attributes to all these inhabitants of the different mountainous regions, some white, others yellow, &c. Such different colours were perhaps peculiar and distinctive characteristics of those various races." GORRESSIO.

371:2 Sushen.

371:3 Tara.

371:4 Kesari was the husband of Hanumnán's mother, and is here called his father.

371:5 "I here unite under one heading two animals of p.

372 but which from some gross resemblances, probably helped by an equivocal in the language, are closely affiliated in the Hindoo myth.....a reddish colour of the skin, want of symmetry and ungainliness of form, strength in hugging with the fore paws or arms, the faculty of climbing, shortness of tail(?), sensuality,

capacity of instruction in dancing and in music, are all characteristics which more or less distinguish and meet in bears as well as in monkeys In the Rámáyanam, the wise Jámnavant, the Odysseus of the expedition of Lanká, is called now king of the bears (rikshaparthivah), now great monkey (Mahákapih). DeGubernatis: Zoological Mythology, Vol. II. p. 97.  
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CANTO XL.: THE ARMY OF THE EAST.

With practiced eye the king reviewed  
The Vánars' counties multitude,And, joying that his hest was done,Thus  
spake to Raghu's mighty son:'See, all the Vánar hosts who fearMy  
sovereign might are gathered here.Chiefs strong as Indra's self, who  
speedWher'er they list, these armies lead.Fierce and terrific to the  
viewAs Daityas or the Dánav

2b crew,

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Famed in all lands for souls afireWith lofty thoughts, they never  
tire,O'er hill and vale they wander free,And islets of the distant  
sea.And these gathered myriads, allWill serve thee, Ráma, at thy  
call.Whate'er thy heart advises, say:Thy mandates will the host obey.'  
Then answered Ráma, as he pressedThe Vánar monarch to his breast:'O  
search for my lost Sítá, striveTo find her if she still survive:  
And in thy wondrous wisdom traceFierce Rávan to his dwelling-place.And  
when by toil and search we knowWhere Sítá lies and where the foe,With  
thee, dear friend, will I deviseFit means to end the enterprise.Not mine,  
not Lakshman's is the powerTo guide us in the doubtful hour.Thou,  
sovereign of the \*Vanars, thouMust be our hope and leader now.' He  
ceased: at King Sugriva's callNear came a Vánar strong and tall.Huge as a  
towering mountain, loudAs some tremendous thunder cloud,A prince who  
warlike legions led:To him his sovereign turned and said:'Go, take ten  
thousand

1 of our race

Well trained in lore of time and place,And search the eastern region;  
throughGroves, woods, and hills thy way pursue,There seek for Sítá, trace  
the spotWhere Rávan hides, and weary not.Search for the captive in the  
cavesOf mountains, and by woods and waves.To Surjú,

2 Kauá\*ikí, 3 repair,

Bhagíra's daughter 4 fresh and fair.

Search mighty \*Yámun's 5 peak, explore

Swift Yamu\*ná's 6 delightful shore,Sarasvati 7 and Sindhu's 8 tide,

And rapid S'ona's 1b pebbly side.

Then roam afar by Mahí's 2b bed

Where Kálamahí's groves are spread.

Go where the silken tissue shines,Go to the land of silver mines.

3b

Visit each isle and mountain steepAnd city circled by the deep,And  
distant villages that highAbout the peaks of Mandar lie.Speed over  
Yavadwipa's land,

4b

And see Mount S'is'ir 5b proudly stand

Uplifting to the skies his headBy Gods and Dánavs visited.Search each  
ravine and mountain pass,Each tangled thicket deep in grass.Search every  
cave with utmost careIf haply Ráma's queen be there.Then pass beyond the  
sounding seaWhere heavenly beings wander free,And S'ona's

6b waters swift and strong

With ruddy billows foam along.Search where his shelving banks  
descend,Search where the hanging woods extendTry if the pathless thickets  
screenThe robber and the captive queen.Search where the torrent floods  
that rendThe mountain to the plains descend:

Search dark abysses where they rave, Search mountain slope and wood and cave  
Then on with rapid feet and gain The inlands of the fearful main  
Where, tortured by the tempest's lash, Against rude rocks the billows dash:  
An ocean like a sable cloud, Whose margent monstrous serpents crowd;  
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An ocean rising with a roar To beat upon an iron shore. On, onward still!  
your feet shall tread Shores of the sea whose waves are red, Where  
spreading wide your eyes shall see The guilt-tormenting cotton tree  
1

And the wild spot where Garud 2 dwells  
Which gems adorn and ocean shells, High as Kallása, nobly decked, Wrought  
by the heavenly architect.  
3

Huge giants named Mandehas 4 there  
In each foul shape they love to wear, Numbing the soul with terror's  
chill, Hang from the summit of the hill. When darts the sun his earliest  
beam They plunge them in the ocean stream, New vigour from his rays  
obtain, And hang upon the rocks again  
Speed onward still: your steps shall be At length beside the Milky  
Sea Whose every ripple as it curls Gleams glorious with its wealth of  
pearls. Amid that sea like pale clouds spread The white Mount Rishabh  
5 rears his head.

About the mountain's glorious waist Woods redolent of bloom are braced. A  
lake where lotuses unfold Their silver buds with threads of  
gold, Sudar's an ever bright and fair Where white swans sport, lies  
gleaming there, The wandering Kinnar's  
6 dear resort,

Where heavenly nymphs and Yakshas 7 sport.

On! leave the Milky Sea behind: Another flood your search shall find, A  
waste of waters, wild and drear. That chills each living heart with  
fear. There see the horse's awful head, Wrath-born, that flames in Ocean's  
bed.

1b

There rises up a fearful cry From the sea things that move thereby, When,  
helpless, powerless for flight, They gaze upon the horrid sight. Past to  
the northern shore, and then Beyond the flood three leagues and ten Your  
wondering glances will behold Mount Játarúpa 2b bright with gold.

There like the young moon pale of hue

The monstrous serpent 3b will ye view,

The earth's supporter, whose bright eyes Resemble lotus leaves in size. He  
rests upon the mountain's brow, And all the Gods before him bow. Ananta  
with a thousand heads His length in robes of azure spreads. A triple-headed  
palm of gold--Meet standard for the lofty-souled--Springs towering from  
the mountain's crest Beneath whose shade he loves to rest, So that in  
eastern realms each God May use it as a measuring-rod. Beyond, with burning  
gold aglow, The eastern steep his peaks will show, Which in unrivalled  
glory rise A hundred leagues to pierce the skies, And all the neighbouring  
air is bright With golden trees that clothe the height. A lofty peak  
uprises there Ten leagues in height and one league square \*Saumanas\*,  
wrought of glistering gold, Ne'er to be loosened from its hold. There his  
first step Lord Vishnu placed When through the universe he paced, And with  
his second lightly pressed The loftiest peak of Meru's crest. When north of  
Jambudwip 4b the sun

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A portion of his course has run.

And hangs above this mountain height, Then creatures see the genial  
light. Vaikhánases,

1 saints far renowned,

And Bálaklulvas, 2 love the ground

Where in their glory half divine. Touched by the morning glow, they  
shine The light that flashes from that steep Illumines all Sudars' and wip,  
3

And on each creature, as it glows, The sight and strength of life bestows. Search well that mountain's woody side If Rávan there his captive hide. The rising sun, the golden hill The air with growing splendours fill, Till flashes from the east the red Of morning with the light they shed. This, where the sun begins his state, Is earth and heaven's most eastern gate. Through all the mountain forest seek By waterfall and cave and peak. Search every nook and bosky dell, If Rávan there with Sítá dwell. There, Vánars, there your steps must stay: No farther eastward can ye stray. Beyond no sun, no moon given light, But all is sunk in endless night. Thus far, O Vánar lords, may you O'er sea and land your search pursue. But wild and dark and known to none Is the drear space beyond the sun. That mountain whence the sun ascends Your long and weary journey ends.

Now go, and in a month return, And let success my praises earn, He who  
beyond the month shall stay Will with his life the forfeit pay.'

[illegible]

372:1 I reduce the unwieldy numbers of the original to  
more modest figures.372:2 Sarayú now Sarjú is the river on which Ayodhyá  
was built.

372:6 The Jumna. The river is personified as the twin sister of Yama, and hence regarded as the daughter of the Sun.

373:1 A fabulous thorny rod of the cotton tree used for torturing the wicked in hell. The tree gives its name, Sálmali, to one of the seven Dwípas, or great divisions of the known continent: and also to a hell where the wicked are tormented with the pickles of the tree.

373:2 The king of the feathered creation.373:3 Vis´vakarmá, the Muleiher of the Indian heaven.

373:4 "The terrific fiends named Mandehas attempt to devour the sun: for Brahmá denounced this curse upon them, that without the power to perish they should die every day (and revive by night) and therefore a fierce contest occurs (daily) between them and the sun."

WILSON'S Vishnu Purána. Vol.II. p. 250.

373:5 Said in the Vishnu Purána to be a ridge projecting from the base of Meru to the north.

373:6 Kinnars are centaurs reversed, beings with equine head and human bodies.

373:7 Yakshas are demi-gods attendant on "Ruyera"\* the God of wealth.

373:1b Aurva was one of the descendants of Bhrigu From his wrath proceeded a flame that threatened to destroy the world, had not Aurva cast it into the ocean where it remained concealed, and having the face of a horse. The legend is told in the Mahábharat. I. 6\*3\*02.

373:2b The word Játarupa means gold.373:3b The celebrated mythological serpent king Sesha, called also Ananta or the infinite, represented as bearing the earth on one of his thousand heads.

373:4b Jambudwípa is in the centre of the seven great dwípas or continents into which the world is divided, and in the centre of Jambudwípa is the golden p. 374 mountain Meru 84,000 yojans high, and crowned by the great city of Brahmá, Sse WILSON'S Vishnu Purána, Vol II, p. 110.

374:1 Vaikhánases are a race of hermit saints said to have sprung from the nails of Prajápati.

374:2 "The wife of Eratu, Samnti, brought forth the sixty thousand Válakhilyas, pigmy sages, no bigger than a joint of the thumb, chaste, pious, resplendent as the rays of the Sun" WLLSOK'S Vishnu Purána.

374:3 The continent in which Sudarsan or Meru stands, i. e. Jambudwip.

374:4 The names of some historical peoples which occur in this Canto and in the Cantos describing the south and north will be found in the ADDITIONAL NOTES. They are bare lists, not susceptible of a metrical version.Next: Canto XLI.: The Army of The South.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next CANTO XLI.: THE ARMY OF THE SOUTH.

He gathered next a chosen band

For service in the southern land.He summoned Níla son of Fire,And, offspring of the eternal Sire,Jámbaván bold and strong and tall.And Hanumán, the best of all,And many a valiant lord beside,

1b

With Angad for their chief and guide.'Go forth,' he cried, 'with all this hostExploring to the southern coast:The thousand peaks that Vindhya showsWhere every tree and creeper grows:Where Narmadá's

2b sweet waters run,

And serpents bask them in the sun:Where Krishnavení,

3b currents flee,

And sparkles fair Godávaií. 4b

Through Mekhal, 5b pass and Utkal's, 6b land:

Go where Das'árna's, 7b cities stand.

Avanti, 8b seek, of high renown,  
 And Abravanti's, 9b glorious town.  
 Search every hill and brook and caveWhere Dandak's woods their branches  
 waveAvomukh's, 10b woody hill explore  
 Whose sides are bright with richest ore,.  
 lifting his glorious head on highFrom bloomy groves that round him lie.  
 p. 375  
 Search well his forests where the breezeBlows fragrant from the sandal  
 trees.Then will you see Káveri's  
 1 stream  
 Whose pleasant waters glance and gleam,And to the lovely banks enticeThe  
 sportive maids of Paradise.High on the top of Malaya's  
 2 hill,  
 In holy musing, calm and still,Sits, radiant as the Lord of  
 Light,Agastya,  
 3 noblest anchorite.  
 Soon as that lofty-thoughted lordHis high permission shall accord,Pass  
 Tāmraparni's  
 4 flood whose isles  
 Are loved by basking crocodiles.The sandal woods that fringe her  
 sideThose islets and her waters hide;While, like an amorous matron,  
 sheSpeeds to her own dear lord the sea.Thence hasting on your way  
 beholdThe Pándyas'  
 5 gates of pearl and gold.  
 Then, with your task maturely planned,On ocean's shore your feet will  
 stand.Where, by Agastya's high decree,  
 Mahendra, 6 planted in the sea,  
 With tinted peaks against the tideRises in solitary pride,And glorious in  
 his golden glowSpurns back the waves that beat below.Fair mountain,  
 bright with creepers' bloomAnd every tint that trees assume,Where Yaksha,  
 God, and heavenly maidMeet wandering in the lovely shade,At changing moon  
 and solemn tideBy Indra's presence glorified.One hundred leagues in fair  
 extentAn island  
 7 fronts the continent:  
 No man may tread its glittering shoreWith utmost heed that isle  
 explore,For the fair country owns the swayOf Rávan whom we burn to day.  
 A mighty monster stands to keep  
 The passage of the southern deep,Lifting her awful arms on highShe grasps  
 e'en shadows as they fly.Speed through that isle, and onward stillWhere  
 in mid sea the Flowery Hill  
 1b  
 Haies on high his bloomy headBy saints and angels visited.There, with a  
 hundred gleaming peaksBright as the sun, the sky he seeks,One glorious  
 peak the Lord of Day  
 Gilds ever with his loving ray;Thereon ne'er yet the glances fellOf  
 thankless wretch or infidel.Bow to that hill in reverence due,And then  
 once more your search pursue.Beyond that glorious mountain hie,And  
 Súrjaván,  
 2b proud hill is nigh.  
 Your rapid course yet farther bendWhere Vaidyut's  
 3b airy peaks ascend.  
 There trees of noblest sort, profuseOf wealth, their kindly gifts  
 produce.Their precious fruits, O Vánars, taste,The honey sip, and onward  
 haste.Next will ye see Mount Kunjar rise,Who cheers with beauty hearts  
 and eyes.There is Agastya's  
 4b mansion, decked  
 By heaven's all moulding architect.Near Bhogavatí  
 5b stands, the place  
 Where dwell the hosts of serpent race:A broad-wayed city, walled and  
 barred,Which watchful legions keep and guard,The fiercest of the serpent



youth, Each awful for his venom'd tooth: And throned in his imperial hall Is Vāsuki

6b who rules them all.

Explore the serpent city well, Search town and tower and citadel, And scan each field and wood that lies Around it, with your watchful eyes.

Beyond that spot your way pursue: A noble mountain shall ye view, Named Rishabh, like a mighty bull, With gems made bright and beautiful.

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All trees of sandal flourish there Of heavenly fragrance, rich and rare. But, though they tempt your longing eyes, Avoid to touch them, and be wise. For Rohitas, a guardian band Of fierce Gandharvas, round them stand, Who five bright sovereign lords

1 obey,

In glory like the God of Day. Here by good deeds a home is won. With shapes like fire, the moon, the sun. Here they who merit heaven by worth Dwell on the confines of the earth. There stay; beyond it, dark and drear, Lies the departed spirits' sphere, And, girt with darkness, far from bliss, Is Yama's sad metropolis.

2

So far, my lords, o'er land and sea Your destined course is plain and free. Beyond your steps you may not set, Where living thing ne'er journeyed yet. With utmost care these realms survey, And all you meet upon the way.

And, when the lady's course is traced, Back to your king, O Vānars, haste. And he who tells me he has seen. After long search, the Maithil queen, Shall gain a noble guerdon: he In power and bliss shall equal me. Dear as my very life, above His fellows in his master's love; I call him, yea though stained with crime. My kinsman from that happy time.'

Footnotes

374:1b Suhotra, S'arāri, S'aragulma, Gain, Gavāk-ha, Gavaya, Sushena, Gandhamādana, Ulkāmukha, and Ananga.

374:2b The modern Nerbudda.

374:3b Krishnavenī is mentioned in the Vishnu Purnna as 'the deep Krishnaven' '\* but there appears to be no clue to its identification.

374:4b The modern Godavery. 374:5b The Mekbaías or Mekalas according to the

Patānas live in the Vindhya hills, but here they appear among the peoples of the south.

374:6b Utkal is still the native name of Oriss\*.

374:7b The land of the people of the 'ten forts.'

Professor Hall in a note on WLL.- SONS Vishnu

Purana, Vol. II. p.160 says: "The oral traditions of the vicinity to this day assign the name of Dasarna to a region lying to the east of the District of Cbundeeyree."

374:8b Avantí is one of the ancient names of the celebrated Ujjayin or Oujein in Central India.

374:9b Not identified

374:10b Ayemukh means iron faced. The mountun is not identified.

375:1 The Káverí or modern Cauvery is well known and has always borne the same appellation, being the Chaberis of Ptolemy.

375:2 One of the seven principal mountain chains: the southern portion of the Western Gháts. 375:3 Agastya is the great sage who has already

frequently appeared as Rāma's friend and benefactor.

375:4 Tāmraparni is a river rising in Malaya.

375:5 The Pándyas are a people of the Decean.

375:6 Mahendra is the chain of hills that extends from Orissa and the northern Sircars to Gondwána, part of

which near Ganjam is still called Mahendra Malay or hills of Mahendra.

375:7 Lanká, Sinhaladvipa, Sarandib, or Ceylon,

375:1b The Flowery Hill of course is mythical.

375:2b The whole of the geography south of Lanká is of course mythical. Sûryaván means Sunny.

375:3b Vaidyut means connected with lightning.

375:4b Agastya is here placed far to the south of Lanká. Earlier in this Canto he was said to dwell on Malaya.

375:5b Bhogavatí has been frequently mentioned: it is the capital of the serpent Gods or demons, and usually

represented as being in the regions under the earth.375:6b Vásuki is according to some accounts the king

of the Nágas or serpent Gods.

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CANTO XLII.: THE ARMY OF THE WEST.

Then to Sushen Sugríva bent,

And thus addressed him reverent:'Two hundred thousand of our bestWith thee, my lord, shall seek the west.Explore Suráshtra's

3 distant plain,

Explore Váhlíka's 4 wild domain,

And all the pleasant brooks that fleeThrough mountains to the western sea.Search clustering groves on mountainheights,And woods the whom of

anchorites.Search where the breezy hills are high,Search where the desert regions lie.Search all the western land beset

With woody mountains like a net.

The country's farthest limit reach,And stand upon the ocean beach.There wander through the groves of palmWhere the soft air is full of

balm.Through grassy dell and dark ravineSeek Rávan and the Maithil queen.Go visit Somagiri's

1b steepWhere Sindhu 2b mingles with the deep.

There lions, borne on swift wings, roam

The levels of their mountain home,And elephants and monsters bear,Caught from the ocean, to their lair.You Vánars, changing forms at will.With

rapid search must scour the hill,And his sky-kissing peak of goldWhere loveliest trees their blooms unfold.There golden-peaked, ablaze with

light,Uprises Páriyátra's

3b height

Where wild Gandharvas, fierce and fell,In bands of countless myriads dwell.Pluck ye no fruit within the wood;Beware the impious

neighbourhood,Where, very mighty, strong, and hardTo overcome, the fruit they guard.Yet search for Janak's daughter still,For Vánars there need

fear no ill.Near, bright asturkis, Vajra

4b named,

There stands a hill of diamond framed.Soaring a hundred leagues in pride,With trees and creepers glorified.Search there each cave and dark

abyssBy waterfall and precipice.Far in that sea the wild waves beatOn Chakraván's

5b firm-rooted feet.

Where the great discus, 6b thousand rayed,

By Vísvakarmá's 7b art was made.When Panchajan 8b the fiend was slain.

And Hayagríva, 9b fierce in vain,

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Thence taking shell and discus went

Lord Vishnu, God preeminent.On sixty thousand hills of goldWith wondering eyes shall ye behold,Where in his glory every oneIs brilliant as the

morning sun.Full in the midst King Meru,

1 best

Of mountains, lifts his lofty crest,On whom of yore, as all have

heard,The sun well-pleased this boon conferred:'On thee, O King, on thee

and thineLight, day and night, shall ever shine.Gandharvas, Gods who love thee wellAnd on thy sacred summits dwell,Undimmed in lustre, bright and fair,The golden sheen shall ever share.'The Vis'vas,  
 2 Vasus 3 they who ride  
 The tempest, 4 every God beside,  
 Draw nigh to Meru's lofty crestWhen evening darkens in the west,And to the parting Lord of DayThe homage of their worship pay,Ere yet a while, unseen of all,Behind Mount Asta's  
 5 peaks he fall.Wrought by the heavenly artist's care  
 A glorious palace glitters there,And round about it sweet birds singWhere the gay trees are blossoming:  
 The home of Varun  
 1b high souled-lord,  
 Wrist-girded with his deadly cord. 2b  
 With ten tall stems, a palm between  
 Meru and Asta's hill is seen:Pure silver from the base it springs,And far and wide its lustre flings.Seek Rávanthe dame by brook,In pathless glen, in leafy nookOn Meru's crest a hermit livesBright with the light that penance gives:Sávarni  
 3b is he named, renowned  
 As Brahmá's peer, with glory crowned.There bowing down in reverence speakAnd ask him of the dame you seek.Thus far the splendid Lord of DayPursues through heaven his ceaseless way,Shedding on every spot his light;Then sinks behind Mount Asta's height,Thus far advance: the sunless seaBeyond is all unknown to me.Sushen of mighty arm, long triedIn peril, shall your legions guide,Receive his words with high respect,And ne'er his lightest wish neglect.He is my consort's sire, and hence Deserves the utmost reverence.'

#### Footnotes

- 376:1 S'ailúsha, Gramini, Siksha, Suka, Babhru.  
 376:2 The distant south beyond the confines of the earth is the home of departed spirits and the city of Yama the God of Death.  
 376:3 Suráshtra, the 'good country,' is the modern Surat.  
 376:4 A country north-west of Afghanistan, Baíkh  
 376:1b The Moon-mountain here is mythical.  
 376:2b Sindhu is the Indus.  
 376:3b Páriyátra, or as more usually written Páripátra, is the central or western portion of the Vindhya chain which skirts the province of Malwa.  
 376:4b Vajra means both diamond and thunderbolt, the two substances being supposed to be identical.376:5b Chakraván means the discus-bearer.  
 376:6b The discus is the favourite weapon of Vishnu  
 376:7b The Indian Hephaistos or Vulcan.  
 376:8b Panchajan was a demon who lived in the sea in the form of a conch shell. WILSON'S Vishnu Pura'na,\* V. 21.  
 376:9b Hayagríva,Horse-necked, is the name of a Daitya who at the dissolution of the universe caused by Brahmá's sleep, seized and carried off the Vedas. Vishnu slew him and recovered the sacred treasures.  
 377:1 Meru stands in the centre of Jambudwípa and consequently of the earth. "The sun travels round the world, keeping Meru always on his right. To the spectator who fronts him, therefore, as he rises Meru must be always on the north; and as the sun's rays do not penetrate beyond the centre of the mountain, the regions beyond, or to the north of it must be in darkness, whilst those on the south of it must be in light: north and south being relative, not absolute, terms, depending on the position of the spectator with regard

to the Sun and Meru." WILSON'S Vishnu Pura'na, Vol. II. p. 243.

Note.377:2 The Vis'vadevas are a class of deities to whom sacrifices should be daily offered, as part of the ordinary worship of the householder. According to the Váyun Purána this is a privilege conferred on them by Brahmá and the Pitris as a reward for religious austerities practised by them upon Himálaya.

377:3 The eight Vasus were originally personifications like other Vedic deities, of natural phenomena, such as Fire, Wind, &c. Their appellations are variously given by different authorities.

377:4 The Maruts or Storm-Gods, frequently addressed and worshipped as the attendants and allies of Indra.

377:5 The mountain behind which the sun sets.

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CANTO XLIII.: THE ARMY OF THE  
NORTH.

Forth went the legions of the west:

And wise Sugríva addressedS'atabal, summoned from the crowd.To whom the sovereign cried aloud:'Go forth, O Vánarf, go forth,Explore the regions of the north.Thy host a hundred thousand be,And Yama's sons  
4b attend on thee.

With dauntless courage, strength, and skillSearch every river, wood, and hill.Through every land in order goRight onward to the Hills of Snow.Search mid the peaks that shine afar,In woods of Lodh and Deodár.  
5b

Search if with Janak's daughter, screenedBy sheltering rocks, there lie the fiend

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The holy grounds of Soma treadBy Gods and minstrels visited.Reach Kála's mount, and flats that lieAmong the peaks that tower on high.

Then leave that hill that gleams with ore,And fair Sudars'an's heights explore.Then on to Devasakhát

1 hie.

Loved by the children of the sky.A dreary land you then will seeWithout a hill or brook or tree,A hundred leagues, bare, wild, and dreadIn lifeless desolation, spread.Pursue your onward way, and hasteThrough the dire horrors of the wasteUntil triumphant with delightYou reach Kailása'stering height.There stands a palace decked with gold,For King Kuvera

2 wrought of old,

A home the heavenly artist plannedAnd fashioned with his cunning hand.There lotuses adorn the floodWith full-blown flower and opening budWhere swans and mallards float, and gayApsarases

3 come down to play.

There King Vaisravan's   4 self, the lord

By all the universe adored,Who golden gifts to mortals sends,Lives with the Guhyakas

5 his friends.

Search every cavern in the steep,And green glens where the moonbeams sleep.If haply in that distant groundThe robber and the dame be found.Then on to Krauncha's hill,   6 and through

His fearful pass your way pursue:

Though dark and terrible the valeYour wonted courage must not fail.There through abyss and cavern seek,On lofty ridge, and mountain peak.On, on! pursue your journey stillBy valley, lake, and towering hill.Reach the North Kurus' land, where restThe holy spirits of the blest;Where golden buds of lilies gleamResplendent on the silver stream, And leaves of azure turkis throw

Soft splendour on the waves below. Bright as the sun at early morn  
Fair pools that happy clime adorn, Where shine the loveliest flowers on stems  
Of crystal and all valued gems. Blue lotuses through all the land  
The glories of their blooms expand, And the resplendent earth is strown  
With peerless pearl and precious stone. There stately trees can scarce uphold  
The burthen of their fruits of gold, And ever flaunt their gay attire  
Of flower and leaf like flames of fire. All there sweet lives untroubled spend  
In bliss and joy that know not end, While pearl-decked maidens laugh, or sing  
To music of the silvery string. 1b

Still on your forward journey keep, And rest you by the northern  
deep, Where springing from the billows high Mount Somagiri

2b seeks the sky,

And lightens with perpetual glow The sunless realm that lies below. There,  
present through all life's extent, Dwells Brahmá Lord preeminent, And round  
the great God, manifest In Rudra

3b forms high sages rest.

Then turn, O Vánarsrch no more, Nor tempt the sunless, boundless shore.'

Footnotes

377:1b One of the oldest and mightiest of the Vedic  
deities; in later mythology regarded as the God of the  
sea.

377:2b The knotted noose with which he seizes and  
punishes transgressors.

377:3b Sávarni Manu, Manuspring of the Sun by Chháyá. 377:4b The poet has  
not said who the sons of Yama are.

377:5b The Lodhra or Lodh (Symplocoa Racemosa)  
and the Devadárueoda Deodar are well known trees.

378:1 The hills mentioned are not identifiable. Soma means the Moon.

Kála, black; Sudaras'an, fair to see;  
and Devasakhá friend of the Gods

378:2 The God of Wealth.

378:3 The nymphs of Paradise.

378:4 Kuvera the son of Vis'ravas.

378:5 A class of demigods who, like the Yakshas, are  
the attendants of Kuvera, and the guardians of his  
treasures.

378:6 Situated in the eastern part of the Himálaya chain,  
on the north of Assam. The mountain was torn asunder  
and the pass formed by the War-God Kártikeya and Paras'uráma.

Next: Canto XLIV.: The Ring. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XLIV.: THE RING.

But special counselling he gave

To Hanumánwise and brave:

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To him on whom his soul relied, With friendly words the monarch cried: 'O  
best of Vánarsght can stay By land or sea thy rapid way, Who through the  
air thy flight canst bend, And to the Immortals' home ascend. All realms, I  
ween, are known to thee With every mountain, lake, and sea. In strength and  
speed which naught can tire Thou, worthy rival of thy sire The mighty  
monarch of the wind, Where'er thou wilt a way canst find. Exert thy power,  
O swift and strong, Bring back the lady lost so long, For time and place, O  
thou most wise, Lie open to thy searching eyes.' When Ráma heard that  
special best To Hanumáne the rest, He from the monarch's favour drew Hope of  
success and trust anew

That he on whom his lord relied, In toil and peril trained and tried, Would  
to a happy issue bring The task commanded by the king. He gave the ring  
that bore his name, A token for the captive dame, That the sad lady in her  
woe The missive of her lord might know. 'This ring,' he said, 'my wife will  
see, Nor fear an envoy sent by me. Thy valour and thy skill combined, Thy

resolute and vigorous mind, And King Sugriva's behest, With joyful hopes  
inspire my breast.'

Footnotes

378:1b "The Uttara Kurus, it should be remarked, may have been a real people, as they are mentioned in the Altareya Bráhmaṇa I. 14 ... "Wherefore the several nations who dwell in this northern quarter, beyond the Himavat, the Uttara Kurus and the Uttara Madras are consecrated to glorious dominion, and people term them the glorious. In another passage of the same work, however, the Uttara Kurus are treated as belonging to the domain of mythology." MUIR's Sanskrit Texts. Vol.

I p. 494. See ADDITIONAL NOTES.

378:2b The Moon-mountain.

378:3b The Rudras are the same as the storm winds, more usually called Maruts, and are often associated with Indra. In the later mythology the Rudras are regarded as inferior manifestations of S'iva, and most of their names are also names of Siva. Next: Canto XLV.: The Departure. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO XLV.: THE DEPARTURE.

Away, away the Vánars

Like locusts o'er the land outspread. To northern realms where rising high  
The King of Mountains cleaves the sky, Fierce S'atabal with vast array  
Of Vánarior's led the way. Far southward, as his lord decreed, Wise  
Hanumān Wind-God's seed, With Angad his swift way pursued, And Tára's  
warlike multitude, Strong Vinata with all his band Betook him to the  
eastern land, And brave Sushen in eager quest Sped swiftly to the gloomy  
west. Each Vánarftain sought with speed The quarter by his king  
decreed, While from his legions rose on high The shout and boast and battle  
cry: 'We will restore the dame and beat The robber down beneath our feet. My  
arm alone shall win the day From Rávanin single fray, Shall rob the robber  
of his life, And rescue Ráma's captive wife All trembling in her fear and  
woe.

Here, comrades, rest: no farther go: For I will vanquish hell, and  
she Shall by this arm again be free. The rooted mountains will I rend, The  
mightiest trees will break and bend. Earth to her deep foundations  
cleave, And make the calm sea throb and heave. A hundred leagues from steep  
to steep In desperate bound my feet shall leap. My steps shall tread  
unchecked and free. Through woods, o'er land and hill and sea, Range as  
they list from flood to fell, And wander through the depths of hell.

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CANTO XLVI.: SUGRÍVA'S.

'How, King,' cried Ráma, 'didst thou gain

Thy lore of sea and hill and plain? 'I told thee how,' Sugriva, From Báli's  
arm Máyaví

1

To Malaya's hill, and strove to save His life by hiding in the cave. I told  
how Báli sought, to kill His foe, the hollow of the hill; Nor need I, King,  
again unfold The wondrous tale already told. Then, wandering forth, my way  
I took By many a town and wood and brook. I roamed the earth from place to  
place, Till, like a mirror's polished face, The whole broad disk, that lies  
between Its farthest bounds, mine eyes had seen. I wandered first to  
eastern skies Where fairest trees rejoiced mine eyes, And many a cave and  
wooded hill Where lilies robed the lake and rill. There metal dyes that  
hill

2 adorn

Whence springs the sun to light the morn. There, too, I viewed the Milky  
sea, Where nymphs of heaven delight to be.

Then to the south I made my way  
From regions of the rising day,  
And roamed o'er Vindhya, where the breeze  
Is odorous of sandal trees.  
Still in my fear I found no rest:  
I sought the regions of the west,  
And gazed on Asta,  
3 where the sun

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Sinks when his daily course is run  
Then from that noblest hill I fled  
And to the northern country sped,  
Saw Himavánt

1 and Meru'  
Meru'sp,

And stood beside the northern deep.  
But when, by Báli's might oppressed,  
E'en in those wilds I could not rest,  
Came Hanumánwise and brave,  
And thus his prudent counsel gave:  
'I told thee how Matanga

2 cursed

Thy tyrant, that his head should burst  
In pieces, should be dare invade  
The precincts of that tranquil shade.  
There may we dwell in peace and be  
From thy oppressor's malice free.  
'We went to Rishyamúka's,  
And spent our days secure from ill  
Where, with that curse upon his head,  
The cruel Báli durst not tread.'

Footnotes

379:1 Canto IX.

379:2 Udayagiri or the hill from which the sun rises.

379:3 Asta is the mountain behind which the sun sets.

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CANTO XLVII.: THE RETURN.

Thus forth in quest of Sitá

The legions King Sugríva.  
To many a distant town they hied  
By many a lake and river's side.  
As their great sovereign's order taught,  
Through valleys, plains, and groves they sought.  
They toiled unresting through the day:  
At night upon the ground they lay  
Where the tall trees, whose branches swayed  
Beneath their fruit, gave pleasant shade.  
Then, when a weary month was spent,  
Back to Prasravan's hill they went,  
And stood with faces of despair  
Before their king Sugrívae.  
Thus, having wandered through the east,  
Great Vinata his labours ceased,  
And weary of the fruitless pain  
Returned to meet the king again,  
Brave S'atabali to the north  
Had led his Vánarons forth.  
Now to Sugríva he sped  
With all his host dispirited.  
Sushen the western realms had sought.  
And homeward now his legions brought.  
All to Sugriva came, where still

He sat with Ráma on the hill.  
Before their sovereign humbly bent  
And thus addressed him reverent:  
'On every hill our steps have been,  
By wood and cave and deep ravine;

And all the wandering brooks we know

throughout the land that seaward flow,  
Our feet by thy command have traced  
The tangled thicket and the waste,  
and dens and dingles hard to pass  
for creeping plants and matted grass  
Well have we searched with toil and pain,  
And monstrous creatures have we slain  
But Hanumánoblest mind  
The Maithil lady yet will find;  
For to his quarter of the sky

1b

The robber fiend was seen to fly,'

Footnotes

380:1 Himálaya, the Hills of Snow.

380:2 Canto XI.  
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CANTO XLVIII.: THE ASUR'S DEATH.

But Hanumánl onward pressed

With Tára, Angad, and the rest,  
Through Vindhya's pathless glens he sped  
And left no spot unvisited.  
He gazed from every mountain height,  
He sought each cavern dark as night,  
And wandered through the bloomy shade  
By pool and river and cascade,  
But, though they sought in every place,  
Of Sitáthey found no trace.  
On fruit and woodland berries fed  
Through many a lonely wild they sped,  
And reached at last, untouched by fear,  
A desert

terrible and drear: A fruitless waste, a land of gloom  
Where trees were bare of leaf and bloom  
Where every scanty stream was dried, And niggard  
earth her roots denied. No elephants through all the ground,  
No buffaloes or deer are found. There roams no tiger, pard, or bear,  
No creature of the wood is there. No bird displays his glittering wings,  
No tree, no shrub, no creeper springs. There rise no lilies from the flood,  
Resplendent with their flower and bud, Where the delighted bees may  
throng About the fragrance with their song. There lived a hermit Kandu  
named, For truth and wealth of penance famed. Whom fervent zeal and holy  
rite Had dowered with all-surpassing might. His little son, a ten year  
child--So chanced it--perished in the wild. His death with fury stirred  
the sage, Who cursed the forest in his rage, Doomed from that hour to  
shelter none, A waste for bird and beast to shun.

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They searched by every forest edge, They searched each cave and mountain  
ledge, And thickets whence the water fell Wandering through the tangled  
dell. Striving to do Sugriva's They roamed along each leafy rill. But vain  
were all endeavours, vain The careful search, the toil and pain. Through  
one dark grove they scarce could wind, So thick were creepers  
intertwined. There as they struggled through the wood Before their eyes an  
Asur

1 stood. High as a towering hill, his pride  
The very Gods in heaven defied. When on the fiend their glances fell Each  
braced him for the combat well. The demon raised his arm on high, And  
rushed upon them with a cry. Him Angad smote,--for, sure, he thought This  
was the fiend they long had sought. From his huge mouth by Angad  
felled, The blood in rushing torrents welled, As, like a mountain from his  
base Uptorn, he dropped upon his face. Thus fell the mighty fiend: and  
they Through the thick wood pursued their way; Then, weary with the toil,  
reclined Where leafy boughs to shade them twined.

Footnotes

380:1b Hanumān the leader of the army of the south  
which was under the nominal command of Angad the  
heir apparent.

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CANTO XLIX.: ANGAD'S SPEECH.

Then Angad spake: 'We Vánars

Have searched each valley, cave, and dell, And hill, and brook, and dark  
recess, And tangled wood, and wilderness. But all in vain: no eye has  
seen The robber or the Maithil queen. A dreary time has passed away, And  
stern is he we all obey. Come, cast your grief and sloth aside: Again be  
every effort tried; So haply may our toil attain The sweet success that  
follows pain. Laborious effort, toil, and skill, The firm resolve, the  
constant will Secure at last the ends we seek: Hence, O my friends, I  
boldly speak. Once more then, noble hearts, once more Let us to-day this  
wood explore, And, languor and despair subdued, Purchase success with toil  
renewed.

Sugriva king austere,

And Rāma's wrath we needs must fear. Come, Vánarsye think it wise, And do  
the thing that I advise'

Then Gandhamādan replied With lips that toil and thirst had dried; 'Obey  
his words, for wise and true Is all that he has counselled you. Come, let  
your hosts their toil renew And search each grove and desert through, Each  
towering hill and forest glade. By lake and brook and white cascade, Till  
every spot, as our great lord Commanded, be again explored.' Uprose the  
Vánars and all, Obedient to the chieftain's call, And over the southern  
region sped Where Vindhya's tangled forests spread. They clomb that hill  
that towers on high Like a huge cloud in autumn's sky, Where many a cavern  
yawns, and streaks Of radiant silver deck the peaks. In eager search they



wandered throughThe forests where the Lodh trees grew,Where the dark leaves were thick and green,But found not Ráma's darling queen.Then faint with toil, their hearts depressed,Descending from the mountain's crest,Their weary limbs a while to easeThey lay beneath the spreading trees.

Footnotes

381:1 The Bengal recension--Corrosions edition-- calls this Asur or demon the son of Máricha

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CANTO L.: THE ENCHANTED CAVE.

Angad and Tára by his side,

Again rose HanumántriedEach mountain cavern, dark and deep,And stony pass and wooded steep,The lion's and the tiger's home,By rushing torrents white with foam.Then with new ardour, south and west,O'er Vindhya's height the search they pressed.The day prescribed was near and theyStill wandered on their weary way.They reached the southern land besetWith woody mountains like a net.At length a mighty cave they spiedThat opened in a mountain's side.Where many a verdant creeper grewAnd o'er the mouth its tendrils threw.Thence issued crane, and swan, and drake,And trooping birds that love the lake.The Vánarsed within to coolTheir fevered lips in spring or pool.Vast was the cavern dark and dread,Where not a ray of light was shed;Yet not the more their eyesight failed,p. 382

Their courage sank or valour quailed.

On through the gloom the VánarssedWith hunger, thirst, and toil distressed,Poor helpless wanderers, sad, forlorn,With wasted faces wan and worn.At length, when life seemed lost for aye,They saw a splendour as of day,A wondrous forest, fair and bright,Where golden trees shot flamy light.And lotus-covered pools were thereWith pleasant waters fresh and fair,And streams their rippling currents rolledBy seats of silver and of gold.Fair houses reared their stately heightOf burnished gold and lazulite,And glorious was the lustre thrownThrough lattices of precious stone.And there were flowers and fruit on stemsOf coral decked with rarest gems,And emerald leaves on silver trees,And honeycomb and golden bees.Then as the Vánarser drew,A holy woman met their view.Around her form was duly tiedA garment of the blackdeer's hide.

1

Pure votaress she shone with lightOf fervent zeal and holy rite.Then Hanumánre the rest

With reverent words the dame addressed:'Who art thou? say: and who is lordOf this vast cave with treasures stored?'

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CANTO LI.: SVAYAMPRABHÁ

'Assailed by thirst and hunger, dame,

Within a gloomy vault we came.We saw the cavern opening wide,And straight within its depths we hied.But utterly amazed are weAt all the marvels that we see.Who are the golden trees that gleamWith splendour like the morning's beam?These cates of noblest sort? these roots?This wondrous store of rarest fruits?Whose are these calm and cool retreats,These silver homes and golden seats,And lattices of precious stones?Who is the happy lord that ownsThe golden trees, of rarest scent,Neath loads of fruit and blossom bent?Who, strong in holy zeal, had powerTo deck the streams with richest dower,And bade the lilies bright with goldThe glory of their blooms unfold,

Where fish in living gold below

The sheen of changing colours show?Thine is the holy power, I ween,That beautified the wondrous scene;

But if another's, lady, deignTo tell us, and the whole explain.'To him the lady of the caveIn words like, these her answer gave:'Skilled Maya framed in days of oldThis magic wood of growing gold.The chief artificer

in placeWas he of all the Dánav.He, for his wise enchantments famed,This  
glorious dwelling planned and framedHe for a thousand years enduredThe  
sternest penance, and securedFrom Brahmá of all boons the best,The  
knowledge Us'anas  
1b possessed.

Lord, by that boon, of all his will,He fashioned all with perfect  
skill;And, with his blissful state content,In this vast grove a season  
spent.By Indra's jealous bolt he fellFor loving Hemá's  
2b charms too well.

And Brahmá on that nymph bestowedThe treasures of this fair abode,Wherein  
her tranquil days to spendIn happiness that ne'er may end.Sprung of a  
lineage old and high,Merusávarni's

3b daughter, I

Guard ever for that heavenly dameThis home, Svayamprabhát

4b my name,-For I have loved the lady long,

So skilled in arts of dance and song.But say what cause your steps has  
ledThe mazes of this grove to tread.

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How, strangers did ye chance to spyThe wood concealed from wanderer's  
eye?Tell clearly why ye come: but firstEat of this fruit and quench your  
thirst.'

Footnotes

382:1 The skin of the black antelope was the ascetic's  
proper garb.

382:1b Us'anas is the name of a sage mentioned in the Vedas. In the epic  
poems he is identified with S'ukra,  
the regent of the planet Venus, and described as the preceptor of the  
Asuras or Daityas, and possessor of vast knowledge.

382:2b Hemáne of the nymphs of Paradise.

382:3b Merusávarni general name for the last four of the fourteen Manus.

382:4b Svayamprabhá "self-luminous" is according to

DE GUBERNATIS the moon: "In the

Svayamprabhátoo, we meet with the moon as a good fairy who, from the  
golden palace which she reserves for her friend Hemá golden one:) is  
during a month the guide, in the vast cavern of Hanumant and his  
companions, who have lost their way in the search of the dawn Sitáis is  
not quite accurate: HanumHanumán and his companions wander for a month in  
the cavern without a guide, and then Svayamprabhás them out.

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CANTO LII.: THE EXIT.

'Ráma,' he cried, 'a prince whose sway

All peoples of the earth obey,To Dandak's tangled forest cameWith his  
brave brother and his dame.From that dark shade of forest boughsThe giant  
Rávan stole his spouse.Our king Sugriva's orders sendThese Vánars forth  
to aid his friend,That so the lady be restoredUninjured to her sorrowing  
lord.With Angad and the rest, this bandHas wandered through the southern  
land,With careful search in every placeThe lady and the fiend to traceWe  
roamed the southern region o'er,And stood upon the ocean's shore.By  
hunger pressed our strength gave way;Beneath the spreading trees we  
lay,And cried, worn out with toil and woe,'No farther, comrades, can we  
go.'Then as our sad eyes looked aroundWe spied an opening in the  
ground,Where all was gloomy dark behindThe creeping plants that o'er it  
twined.Forth trooping from the dark-recess

Came swans and mallards numberless,With drops upon their shining wingsAs  
newly bathed where water springs.'On, comrades, to the cave,' I criedAnd  
all within the portal hied.Each clasping fast another's handFar onward  
pressed the Vánar band;And still, as thirst and hunger drove,We traced  
the mazes of the grove.Here thou with hospitable careHast fed us with the  
noblest fare,Preserving us, about to die,With this thy plentiful  
supply.But how, O pious lady, say,May we thy gracious boon repay?' He

ceased: the ascetic dame replied: 'Well, Vánars, am I satisfied. A life of holy works I lead, And from your hands no service need.' Then spake again the Vánar chief: 'We came to thee and found relief. Now listen to a new distress, And aid us, holy votaress. Our wanderings in this vasty cave Exhaust the time Sugríva gave. Once more then, lady, grant release, And let thy suppliants go in peace Again upon their errand sped, For King Sugríva's ire we dread.

And the great task our sovereign set, Alas, is unaccomplished yet.' Thus Hanumán their leader prayed, And thus the dame her answer made: Scarce may the living find their way Returning hence to light of day; But I will free you through the might Of penance, fast, and holy rite. Close for a while your eyes, or ne'er May you return to upper air.' She ceased: the Vánars all obeyed; Their fingers on their eyes they laid, And, ere a moment's time had fled, Were through the mazy cavern led. Again the gracious lady spoke, And joy in every bosom woke: 'Lo, here again is Vindhya's hill, Whose valleys trees and creepers fill; And, by the margin of the sea, Prasravan where you fain would be.' With blessings then she bade adieu, And swift within the cave withdrew.

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#### CANTO LIII.: ANGAD'S COUNSEL.

They looked upon the boundless main

The awful seat of Varun's reign. And heard his waters roar and rave Terrific with each crested wave. Then, in the depths of sorrow drowned, They sat upon the bosky ground, And sadly, as they pondered, grieved For days gone by and naught achieved. Pain pierced them through with sharper sting When, gazing on the trees of spring, They saw each waving bough that showed The treasures of its glorious load, And helpless, fainting with the weight Of woe they sank disconsolate. Then, lion-shouldered, stout and strong, The noblest of the Vánar throng, Angad the prince imperial rose, And, deeply stricken by the woes That his impetuous spirit broke, Thus gently to the chieftains spoke: 'Mark ye not, Vánars, that the day Our monarch fixed has passed away? The month is lost in toil and pain, And now, my friends, what hopes remain? On you, in lore of counsel tried,

Our king Sugríva most relied. Your hearts, with strong affection fraught,  
p. 384

His weal in every labour sought, And the true valour of your band Was blazoned wide in every land. Forth on the toilsome search you sped, By me-- for so he willed it-- led. To us, of every hope bereft, Death is the only refuge left. For none a happy life may see Who fails to do our king's decree. Come, let us all from food abstain, And perish thus, since hope is vain. Stern is our king and swift to ire, Imperious, proud, and fierce like fire, And ne'er will pardon us the crime Of fruitless search and wasted time. Far better thus to end our lives, And leave our wealth, our homes and wives, Leave our dear little ones and all, Than by his vengeful hand to fall. Think not Sugríva's wrath will spare Me Báli's son, imperial heir: For Raghu's royal son, not he, To this high place anointed me, Sugríva, long my bitter foe,

With eager hand will strike the blow, And, mindful of the old offence, Will slay me now for negligence, Nor will my pitying friends have power To save me in the deadly hour. No--here, O chieftains, will I lie By ocean's marge, and fast and die.' They heard the royal prince declare The purpose of his fixt despair; And all, by common terror moved, His speech in these sad words approved: 'Sugríva's heart is hard and stern, And Ráma's thoughts for Sítá yearn. Our forfeit lives will surely pay For idle search and long delay, And our fierce king will bid us die The favour of his friend to buy.' Then Tára softly spake to cheer The Vánars' hearts oppressed by fear: 'Despair no more, your doubts dispel: Come in this ample cavern dwell. There may we live in blissful ease Mid springs and fruit and bloomy

trees, Secure from every foe's assault, For magic framed the wondrous vault. Protected there we need not fear Though Ráma and our king come near; Nor dread e'en him who batters down The portals of the foeman's town.' 1

Footnotes

384:1 Purandara, the destroyer of cities; the cities being the clouds which the God of the firmament bursts open with his thunderbolts, to release the waters imprisoned in these fortresses of the demons of drought.

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CANTO LIV.: HANUMÁN'S SPEECH.

But Hanumán, while Tára, best

Of splendid chiefs his thought expressed, Perceived that Báli's princely son A kingdom for himself had won.

1b

His keen eye marked in him combined The warrior's arm, the ruler's mind, And every noble gift should grace The happy sovereign of his race: Marked how he grew with ripening age More glorious and bold and sage, -- Like the young moon that night by night Shines on with ever waxing light, -- Brave as his royal father, wise As he who counsels in the skies:

2b

Marked how, forwearied with the quest, He heeded not his liege's hest, But Tára's every word obeyed Like Indra still by Sukra

3b swayed.

Then with his prudent speech he tried To better thoughts the prince to guide, And by division's skilful art The Vánars and the youth to part: 'Illustrious Angad, thou in fight Hast far surpassed thy father's might,

Most worthy, like thy sire of old, The empire of our race to hold. The Vánars' fickle people range From wish to wish and welcome change. Their wives and babes they will not leave And to their new-made sovereign cleave. No art, no gifts will draw away The Vánars from Sugriva's sway, Through hope of wealth, through fear of pain Still faithful will they all remain. Thou fondly hopest in this cave The vengeance of the foe to brave. But Lakshman's arm a shower will send Of deadly shafts those walls to rend. Like Indra's bolts his shafts have power To cleave the mountain like a flower. O Angad, mark my counsel well: If in this cave thou choose to dwell,

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Footnotes

384:1b Perceived that Angad had secured, through the love of the Vánars, the reversion of Sugriva's kingdom; or, as another commentator explains it, perceived that Angad had obtained a new kingdom in the enchanted cave which the Vánars, through love of him, would consent to occupy.

384:2b Váchaspati, Lord of Speech, the Preceptor of the Gods.

384:3b Sukra is the regent of the planet Venus, and the preceptor of the Daityas.

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CANTO LVI:

These Vánar hosts with one accord

Will quit thee for their lawful lord, And turn again with thirsty eyes To wife and babe and all they prize. Thou in the lonely cavern left Of followers and friends bereft, Wilt be in all thy woe, alas, Weak as a blade of trembling grass: And Lakshman's arrows, keen and fierce From his strong bow, thy heart will pierce. But if in lowly reverence meek Sugriva's court with us thou seek, He, as thy birth demands, will share The kingdom with the royal heir. Thy loving kinsman, true and wise, Looks on thee still with

favouring eyes. Firm in his promise, pure is he, And ne'er will vex or injure thee. He loves thy mother, lives for her A faithful friend and worshipper. That mother's love thou mayst not spurn: Her only child, return, return. 'Next: Canto LV.: Angad's Reply Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

#### CANTO LV.: ANGAD'S REPLY

'What truth or justice canst thou find,'  
Cried Angad, 'in Sugriva's mind? Where is his high and generous soul, His purity and self-control? How is he worthy of our trust, Righteous, and true, and wise, and just, Who, shrinking not from sin and shame, Durst take his living brother's dame? Who, when, in stress of mortal strife His noble brother fought for life, Against the valiant warrior barred The portal which he stood to guard? Can he be grateful--he who took The hand of Ráma, and forsook That friend who saved him in his woes, To whom his life and fame he owes? Ah no! his heart is cold and mean, What bids him search for Ráma's queen? Not honour's law, not friendship's debt, But angry Lakshman's timely threat. No prudent heart will ever place Its trust in one so false and base, Who heeds not friendship, kith or kin, Who scorns the law and cleaves to sin. But true or false, whatever he be,  
One consequence I clearly see; Me, in my youth anointed heir Against his wish, he will not spare, But strike with eager hand the blow That rids him of a household foe. Shall I of power and friends despoiled, In all my purpose crossed and foiled,--Shall I Kishkindhá seek, and wait, Like some poor helpless thing, my fate? The cruel wretch through lust of sway Will seize upon his hapless prey, And to a prison's secret gloom The remnant of my years will doom. 'Tis better far to fast and die Than hopeless bound in chains to lie, Your steps, O Vánars, homeward bend And leave me here my life to end. Better to die of hunger here Than meet at home the fate I fear Go, bow you at Sugriva's feet, And in my name the monarch greet. Before the sons of Raghu bend, And give the greeting that I send Greet kindly Rumá too, for she A son's affection claims from me, And gently calm with friendly care My mother Tárá's wild despair; Or when she hears her darling's fate The queen will die disconsolate.'

Thus Angad bade the chiefs adieu: Then on the ground his limbs he threw Where sacred Darbha

1 grass was spread,

And wept as every hope had fled. The moving words of Angad drew Down aged cheeks the piteous dew. And, as the chieftains' eyes grew dim, They swore to stay and die with him. On holy grass whose every blade Was duly, pointing southward, laid, The Vánars sat them down and bent Their faces to the orient, While 'Here, O comrades, let us die With Angad,' was the general cry.

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#### CANTO LVI.: SAMPÁTI.

Then came the vultures' mighty king

Where sat the Vánars sorrowing,--Sampáti,

2 best of birds that fly

On sounding pinions through the sky, Jatáyus' brother, famed of old, Most glorious and strong and bold. Upon the slope of Vindhya's hill He saw the Vánars calm and still.

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These words he uttered while the sight Filled his fierce spirit with delight: 'Behold how Fate with changeless laws Within his toils the sinner draws, And brings me, after long delay, A rich and noble feast to-day, These Vánars who are doomed to die My hungry maw to satisfy.' He spoke no more: and Angad heard The menace of the mighty bird; And thus, while anguish filled his breast, The noble Hanumán addressed: 'Vivasvat's 1 son has sought this place For vengeance on the Vánar race.'

See, Yama, wroth for Sítá's sake, Is come our guilty lives to take. Our king's decree is left undone, And naught achieved for Raghu's son. In duty have we failed, and hence Comes punishment for dire offence. Have we not heard the marvels wrought By King Jatáyus, 2 how he fought

With Rávan's might, and, nobly brave, Perished, the Maithil queen to save? There is no living creature, none, But loves to die for Raghu's son, And in long toils and dangers we Have placed our lives in jeopardy. Blest is Jatáyus, he who gave His life the Maithil queen to save, And proved his love for Ráma well When by the giant's hand he fell. Now raised to bliss and high renown He fears not fierce Sugriva's frown. Alas, alas! what miseries spring From that rash promise of the king!

3

His own sad death, and Ráma sent With Lakshman forth to banishment: The Maithil lady borne away: Jatáyus slain in mortal fray: The fall of Báli when the dart Of Ráma quivered in his heart:

And, after toil and pain and care, Our misery and deep despair.' He ceased: the feathered monarch heard, His heart with ruth and wonder stirred: 'Whose is that voice,' the vulture cried, 'That tells me how Jatáyus died, And shakes my inmost soul with woe For a loved brother's overthrow? After long days at length I hear The glorious name of one so dear. Once more, O Vánar chieftains, tell How King Jatáyus fought and fell. But first your aid, I pray you, lend, And from this peak will I descend. The sun has burnt my wings, and I No longer have the power to fly.'

Footnotes

385:1 The name of various kinds of grass used at sacrificial ceremonies, especially, of the Ku'sa grass, *Poa cynosuroides*, which was used to strew the ground in preparing for a sacrifice, the officiating Brahmans being purified by sitting on it. 385:2 Sampáti is the eldest son of the celebrated Garuda the king of birds.

386:1 Vivasvat or the Sun is the father of Yama the God of Death.

386:2 Book III. Canto LI.

386:3 Das'aratha's rash oath and fatal promise to his wife Kaikeyí.

Next: Canto LVII.: Angad's Speech. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LVII.: ANGAD'S SPEECH.

Though grief and woe his utterance broke

They trusted not the words he spoke; But, looking still for secret guile, Reflected in their hearts a while: 'If on our mangled limbs he feed, We gain the death ourselves decreed.' Then rose the Vánar chiefs, and lent Their arms to aid the bird's descent; And Angad spake: There lived of yore A noble Vánar king who bore The name of Riksharajas, great And brave and strong and fortunate. His sons were like their father: fame Knows Báli and Sugriva's name. Praised in all lands, a glorious king Was Báli, and from him I spring. Brave Ráma, Das'aratha's heir, A glorious prince beyond compare, His sire and duty's law obeyed, And sought the depths of Dandaks' shade Sítá his well-beloved dame, And Lakshman, with the wanderer came. A giant watched his hour, and stole The sweet delight of Ráma's soul. Jatáyus, Das'aratha's friend,

Swift succour to the dame would lend. Fierce Rávan from his car he felled, And for a time the prize withheld. But bleeding, weak with years, and tired, Beneath the demon's blows expired, Due rites at Ráma's hands obtained, And bliss that ne'er shall minish, gained. Then Ráma with Sugriva made A covenant for mutual aid, And Báli, to the field defied, By conquering Ráma's arrow died. Sugriva then, by Ráma's grace, Was monarch of the Vánar race. By his command a mighty host Seeks Ráma's queen from coast to coast. Sent forth by him, in every spot We looked for her, but find her not. Vain is the toil, as though by night We sought to find the Day-God's

light. In lands unknown at length we found  
A spacious cavern under ground,  
Whose vaults that stretch beneath the hill  
Were formed by Maya's magic skill.  
Through the dark maze our steps were bent,  
And wandering there a month we spent,

p. 387 And lost, in fruitless error, thus

The days our king allotted us. Thus we though faithful have  
transgressed, And failed to keep our lord's behest. No chance of safety can  
we see, No lingering hope of life have we. Sugriva's wrath and Ráma's  
hate Press on our souls with grievous weight; And we, because 'tis vain to  
fly, Resolve at length to fast and die.'

Next: Canto LVIII: Tidings of Sitá. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO LVIII: TIDINGS OF SITÁ.

The piteous tears his eye bedewed

As thus his speech the bird renewed; 'Alas my brother, slain in fight  
By Rávan's unresisted might! I, old and wingless, weak and worn, O'er his sad  
fate can only mourn. Fled is my youth: in life's decline My former strength  
no more is mine. Once on the day when Vritra

1 died,

We brothers, in ambitious pride, Sought, mounting with adventurous  
flight, The Day-God garlanded with light. On, ever on we urged our way  
Where fields of ether round us lay, Till, by the fervent heat assailed, My  
brother's pinions flagged and failed. I marked his sinking strength, and  
spread My stronger wings to screen his head, Till, all my feathers burnt  
away, On Vindhya's hill I fell and lay. There in my lone and helpless  
state I heard not of my brother's fate.' Thus King Sampáti spoke and  
sighed:

And royal Angad thus replied: 'If, brother of Jatáyus, thou Hast heard the  
tale I told but now, Obedient to mine earnest prayer The dwelling of that  
fiend declare. O, say where cursed Rávan dwells, Whom folly to his death  
impels.'

He ceased. Again Sampáti spoke,

And hope in every breast awoke: 'Though lost my wings, and strength  
decayed, Yet shall my words lend Ráma aid. I know the worlds where Vishnu  
trode,

1b

I know the realm of Ocean's God; How Asurs fought with heavenly foes, And  
Amrit from the churning rose.

2b

A mighty task before me lies, To prosper Ráma's enterprise, A task too hard  
for one whom length Of days has rifled of his strength. I saw the cruel  
Rávan bear A gentle lady through the air. Bright washer form, and fresh and  
young, And sparkling gems about her hung. 'O Ráma, Ráma!' cried the  
dame, And shrieked in terror Lakshman's name, As, struggling in the giant's  
hold, She dropped her gauds of gems and gold. Like sun-light on a mountain  
shone

The silken garments she had on, And glistened o'er his swarthy form As  
lightning flashes through the storm. That giant Rávan, famed of old, Is  
brother of the Lord of Gold.

3b

The southern ocean roars and swells Round Lanká, where the robber dwells In  
his fair city nobly planned And built by Vis'vakarmá's

4b hand.

Within his bower securely barred, With monsters round her for a  
guard, Still in her silken vesture clad Lies Sitá, and her heart is sad. A  
hundred leagues your course must be Beyond this margin of the sea. Still to  
the south your way pursue, And there the giant Rávan view. Then up, O  
Vánars, and away! For by my heavenly lore I say, There will you see the  
lady's face. And hither soon your steps retrace. In the first field of air  
are borne The doves and birds that feed on corn. The second field supports

the crowsAnd birds whose food on branches grows.Along the third in  
balanced flightSail the keen osprey and the kite.Swift through the fourth  
the falcon springsThe fifth the slower vulture wings.

Up to the sixth the gay swans rise,

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Where royal Vainateya 1 flies.

We too, O chiefs, of vulture race,Our line from Vinatá may  
trace,Condemned, because we wrought a deedOf shame, on flesh and blood to  
feed.But all Suparna's

2 wondrous powers

And length of keenest sight are ours,That we a hundred leagues  
awayThrough fields of air descry our prey.Now from this spot my gazing  
eyeCan Rávan and the dame descry.Devise some plan to overleapThis barrier  
of the briny deep.Find the Videhan lady there,And joyous to your home  
repair.Me too, O Vánars. to the sideOf Varun's

3 home the ocean, guide,

Where due libations shall be paidTo my great-hearted brother's shade.'

Footnotes387:1 Vritra, 'the coverer, hider, obstructor (of rain)' is  
the name of the Vedic personification of an imaginary  
malignant influence or demon of darkness and drought supposed to take  
possession of the clouds, causing them to obstruct the clearness of the  
sky and keep back the waters. Indra is represented as battling with this  
evil influence, and the pent-up clouds being practically represented as  
mountains or castles are shattered by his thunderbolt and made to open  
their receptacle.

387:1b Frequent mention has been made of the three  
steps of Vishnu typifying the rising, culmination, and  
setting of the sun.

387:2b For the Churning of the Sea, see Book I, Canto  
XLV.

387:3b Kuvera, the God of Wealth.

387:4b The Architect of the Gods.

Next: Canto LIX.: Sampati's Story.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous  
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CANTO LIX.: SAMPATI'S STORY.

They heard his counsel to the close,

Then swiftly to their feet they rose;And Jambavan with joyous breastThe  
vulture king again addressed: "Where, where is Sítá? who has seen,Who  
borne away the Maithil queen?Who would the lightning flight withstandOf  
arrows shot by Lakshman's hand" Again Sampátí spoke to cheerThe Vánars  
as they bent to hear:'Now listen, and my words shall showWhat of the  
Maithil dame I know,And in what distant prison liesThe lady of the long  
dark eyes.Scorched by the fiery God of Day,High on this mighty hill I  
lay.A long and weary time had passed,And strength and life were failing  
fast.Yet, ere the breath had left my frame,My son, my dear Supárs'va,  
came.Each morn and eve he brought me food,And filial care my life  
renewed.But serpents still are swift to ire.Gandbarvas slaves to soft  
desire.And we, imperial vultures, need

A full supply our maws to feed.Once he turned at close of day,Stood by my  
side, but brought no prey.He looked upon my ravenous eye,Heard my  
complaint and made reply:

'Borne on swift wings ere day was light

I stood upon Mahendra's

1b height,

And, far below, the sea I viewedAnd birds in countless multitude.Before  
mine eyes a giant flewWhose monstrous form was dark of hueAnd struggling  
in his grasp was borneA lady radiant as the morn.Swift to the south his  
course he bent,And cleft the yielding element.The holy spirits of the  
airCame round me as I marvelled there,And cried as their bright legions  
met:'O say, is Sítá living yet?'Thus cried the saints and told the nameOf



him who held the struggling dame. Then while mine eye with eager  
look Pursued the path the robber took, I marked the lady's streaming  
hair, And heard her cry of wild despair. I saw her silken vesture rent And  
stripped of every ornament, Thus, O my father, fled the time:  
Forgive, I pray, the heedless crime. 'In vain the mournful tale I heard My  
pitying heart to fury stirred. What could a helpless bird of air, Reft of  
his boasted pinions, dare? Yet can I aid with all that will And words can  
do, and friendly skill.'

Footnotes

388:1 Garuda, son of Vinatá, the sovereign of the birds.

388:2 "The well winged one," Garuda.

388:3 The God of the sea.

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CANTO LX.: SAMPÁTI'S STORY

Then from the flood Sampáti paid

Due offerings to his brother's shade. He bathed him when the rites were  
done. And spake again to Báli's son: 'Now listen, Prince, while I relate How  
first I learned the lady's fate. Burnt by the sun's resistless might I fell  
and lay on Vindhya's height. Seven nights in deadly swoon I passed, But  
struggling life returned at last. Around I bent my wondering view, But  
every spot was strange and new. I scanned the sea with eager ken, And rock  
and brook and lake and glen, I saw gay trees their branches wave, And  
creepers mantling o'er the cave. I heard the wild birds' joyous song, And  
waters as they foamed along, And knew the lovely hill must be Mount Vindhya  
by the southern sea.

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Revered by heavenly beings, stood Near where I lay, a sacred wood,  
Where great Nis'akar dwelt of yore And pains of awful penance bore. Eight  
thousand seasons winged their flight Over the toiling anchorite--Upon that  
hill my days were spent,--And then to heaven the hermit went. At last,  
with long and hard assay, Down from that height I made my way, And wandered  
through the mountain pass Rough with the spikes of Darbha grass. I with my  
misery worn, and faint Was eager to behold the saint: For often with  
Jatáyus I Had sought his home in days gone by. As nearer to the grove I  
drew The breeze with cooling fragrance blew, And not a tree that was not  
fair, With richest flower and fruit was there. With anxious heart a while I  
stayed Beneath the trees' delightful shade, And soon the holy hermit,  
bright With fervent penance, came in sight. Behind him bears and lions,  
tame As those who know their feeder, came, And tigers, deer, and snakes  
pursued His steps, a wondrous multitude, And turned obeisant when the  
sage Had reached his shady hermitage. Then came Nis'ákar to my side  
And looked with wondering eyes, and cried: 'I knew thee not, so dire a  
change Has made thy form and feature strange. Where are thy glossy  
feathers? where The rapid wings that cleft the air? Two vulture brothers  
once I knew: Each form at will could they endue. They of the vulture race  
were kings, And flew with Mátaris'va's  
1 wings.

In human shape they loved to greet Their hermit friend, and clasp his  
feet, The younger was Jatáyus, thou The elder whom I gaze on now. Say, has  
disease or foeman's hate Reduced thee from thy high estate?

Footnotes

388:1b Mahendra is chain of mountains generally  
identified with part of the Gháts of the Peninsula.

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CANTO LXI.: SAMPÁTI'S STORY.

'Ah me I o'erwhelmed with shame and weak

With wounds,' I cried, 'I scarce can speak. My hapless brother once and  
I Our strength of flight resolved to try.

And by our foolish pride impelled  
Our way through realms of ether held. We vowed before the saints who  
tread The wilds about Kailása's head, That we with following wings would  
chase The swift sun to his resting place. Up on our soaring pinions  
through The fields of cloudless air we flew. Beneath us far, and far  
away, Like chariot wheels bright cities lay, Whence in wild snatches rose  
the song Of women mid the gay-clad throng, With sounds of sweetest music  
blent And many a tinkling ornament. Then as our rapid wings we strained The  
pathway of the sun we gained, Beneath us all the earth was seen Clad in her  
garb of tender green, And every river in her bed Meandered like a silver  
thread.

We looked on Meru far below. And Vindhya and the Lord of Snow, Like  
elephants that bend to cool Their fever in a liliated pool. But fervent heat  
and toil o'ercame The vigour of each yielding frame, Our weary hearts began  
to quail, And wildered sense to reel and fail. We knew not, fainting and  
distressed, The north or south or east or west. With a great strain mine  
eyes I turned Where the fierce sun before me burned, And seemed to my  
astonished eyes The equal of the earth in size.

1b

At length, o'erpowered, Jatáyus fell Without a word to say farewell, And  
when to earth I saw him hie I followed headlong from the sky.

2b

With sheltering wings I intervened And from the sun his body screened, But  
lost, for heedless folly doomed, My pinions which the heat consumed. In  
Janasthán, I hear them say, My hapless brother fell and lay. I, pinionless  
and faint and weak, Dropped upon Vindhya's woody peak. Now with my swift  
wings burnt away, Reft of my brother and my sway. From this tall mountain's  
summit I

Will cast me headlong down and die.

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Footnotes

389:1 Mátarisva is identified with Váyu, the wind.

389:1b Of course not equal to the whole earth, says the  
Commentator, but equal to Janasthán.

389:2b This appears to be the Indian form of the stories of Phaethon and  
Daedalus and Icarus.

Next: Canto LXII.: Sampáti's Story. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO LXII.: SAMPÁTI'S STORY.

'As to the saint I thus complained

My bitter tears fell unrestrained. He pondered for a while, then broke The  
silence, and thus calmly spoke: 'Forth from thy sides again shall spring, O  
royal bird, each withered wing, And all thine ancient power and  
might Return to thee with strength of sight. A noble deed has been  
foretold In prophecy pronounced of old: Nor dark to me are future  
things, Seen by the light which penance brings. A glorious king shall rise  
and reign, The pride of old Ikshváku's strain. A good and valiant prince,  
his heir, Shall the dear name of Ráma bear. With his brave brother Lakshman  
he An exile in the woods shall be, Where Rávan, whom no God may slay,

1

Shall steal his darling wife away, In vain the captive will be wooed With  
proffered love and dainty food, She will not hear, she will not taste: But,  
lest her beauty wane and waste, Lord Indra's self will come to her  
With heavenly food, and minister. Then envoys of the Vánar race By Ráma  
sent will seek this place. To them, O roamer of the air, The lady's fate  
shalt thou declare. Thou must not move--so maimed thou art Thou canst not  
from this spot depart. Await the day and moment due, And thy burnt wings  
will sprout anew. I might this day the boon bestow And bid again thy  
pinions grow, But wait until thy saving deed The nations from their fear  
have freed. Then for this glorious aid of thine The princes of Ikshváku's

line, And Gods above and saints below  
Eternal gratitude shall owe. Fain  
would mine aged eyes behold  
That pair of whom my lips have told,  
Yet wearied here I must not stay,  
But leave my frame and pass away.'

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CANTO LXIII.: SAMPÁTI'S STORY.

'With this and many a speech beside.

My failing heart he fortified,

With glorious hope my breast inspired,

And to his holy home retired. I scaled the mountain height, to view  
The region round, and looked for you. In ceaseless watchings night and day  
A hundred seasons passed away, And by the sage's words consoled  
I wait the hour and chance foretold. But since Nis'ákar sought the skies.  
And cast away all earthly ties, Full many a care and doubt has pressed  
With grievous weight upon my breast. But for the saint who turned aside  
My purpose I had surely died. Those hopeful words the hermit spake,  
That bid me live for Ráma's sake, Dispel my anguish as the light  
Of lamp and torch disperse the night.'

He ceased: and in the Vánars' view  
Forth from his side young pinions grew,  
And boundless rapture filled his breast  
As thus the chieftains he addressed:

'Joy, joy! the pinions, which the Lord  
Of Day consumed, are now restored  
Through the dear grace & boundless might  
Of that illustrious anchorite. The tire of youth within me burns,  
And all my wonted strength returns. Onward, ye Vánars, toil strive,  
And you shall find the dame alive. Look on these new-found wings,  
and hence be strong in surest confidence.'

Swift from the crag he sprang to try  
His pinions in his native sky. His words the chieftains' doubts had stilled?  
And every heart with courage filled.

1b

Footnotes

390:1 According to the promise, given him by Brahmá.

See Book 1. Canto XIV.

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CANTO LXIV.: THE SEA.

Shouts of triumphant joy outrang

As to their feet the Vánars sprang: And, on the mighty task intent,  
Swift to the sea their steps they bent. They stood and gazed upon the deep,  
Whose billows with a roar and leap On the sea banks were wildly hurled,  
--The mirror of the mighty world. There on the strand the Vánars stayed  
And with sad eyes the deep surveyed, Here, as in play, his billows rose,  
And there he slumbered in repose. Here leapt the boisterous waters,  
high As mountains, menacing the sky, And wild infernal forms between  
The ridges of the waves were seen.

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They saw the billows rave and swell, And their sad spirits sank and fell;  
For ocean in their deep despair Seemed boundless as the fields of air.  
Then noble Angad spake to cheer The Vánars and dispel their fear:

'Faint not: despair should never find Admittance to a noble mind. Despair,  
a serpent's mortal bite, Benumbs the hero's power and might.'

Then passed the weary night, and all Assembled at their prince's call,  
And every lord of high estate Was gathered round him for debate. Bright was the  
chieftains' glorious band Round Angad on the ocean strand, As when the  
mighty Storm-Gods meet Round Indra on his golden seat. Then princely Angad  
looked on each, And thus began his prudent speech: 'What chief of all our  
host will leap A hundred leagues across the deep? Who, O illustrious  
Vánars, who Will make Sugriva's promise true, And from our weight of fear  
set free The leaders of our band and me! To whom, O warriors, shall we owe  
A sweet release from pain and woe, And proud success, and happy lives  
With our dear children and our wives, Again permitted by his grace To look with

joy on Ráma's face, And noble Lakshman, and our lord  
The king, to our sweet homes restored?' Thus to the gathered lords he spoke;  
But no reply the silence broke. Then with a sterner voice he cried: 'O  
chiefs, the nation's boast and pride, Whom valour strength and power  
adorn, Of most illustrious lineage born, Where'er you wilt you force a  
way, And none your rapid course can stay. Now come, your several powers  
declare. And who this desperate leap will dare?

Footnotes

390:1b In the Bengal recension the fourth Book ends  
here, the remaining Cantos being placed in the fifth.

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CANTO LXV.: THE COUNCIL.

But none of all the host was found

To clear the sea with desperate bound, Though each, as Angad bade,  
declared His proper power and what he dared.

1

Then spake good Jambavan the sage, Chief of them all for reverend age;

'I, Vánar chieftains, long ago

Limbs light to leap could likewise show, But now on frame and spirit  
weighs The burthen of my length of days. Still task like this I may not  
slight, When Ráma and our king unite. So listen while I tell, O  
friends, What lingering strength mine age attends. If my poor leap may  
avail, Of ninety leagues, I will not fail. Far other strength in  
youth's fresh prime I boasted, in the olden time, When, at Prahláda's  
1b solemn rite,

I circled in my rapid flight Lord Vishnu, everlasting God, When through the  
universe he trod. But now my limbs are weak and old,

My youth is fled, its fire is cold, And these exhausted nerves to strain In  
such a task were idle pain,' Then Angad due obeisance paid, And to the  
chief his answer made: 'Then I, ye noble Vánars, I myself the mighty leap  
will try: Although perchance the power I lack To leap from Lanká's island  
back' Thus the impetuous chieftain cried, And Jambavan the sage

replied: 'Whate'er thy power and might may be, This task, O Prince, is not  
for thee. Kings go not forth themselves, but send The servants who their  
best attend. Thou art the darling and the boast, The honoured lord of all  
the host. In thee the root, O Angad, lies Of our appointed enterprise; And  
thee, on whom our hopes depend, Our care must cherish and defend.' Then  
Báli's noble son replied: 'Needs must I go whate'er betide, \*\*\* For, if no  
chief this exploit dare, What waits us all save blank despair, -- Upon the  
ground again to lie In hopeless misery, fast, and die? For not a hope of  
life I see If we neglect our king's decree\*'

Then spoke the aged chief again: '\*\*\* Now your attempt shall not be in  
vain, For to the task will I incite A chieftain of sufficient might.'

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Footnotes

391:1 Each chief comes forward and says how far he  
can leap. Gaja says he can leap ten yojans. Gavaksha  
can leap twenty. Gavaya thirty.\* and so on up to ninety.

391:1b Prahláda, the son of H\*\*\*iranyakasipu, was a  
pious Datya remarkable for his devotion to Vishnu, and  
was on this account persecuted by his father.

Next: Canto LXVI.: Hanumán. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO LXVI.: HANUMÁN.

The chieftain turned his glances where

The legions sat in mute despair; And then to Hanumán, the best Of Vánar  
lords, these words addressed: 'Why still, and silent, and apart, O hero of  
the dauntless heart? Thou keepest measured in thy mind The laws that rule  
the Vánar kind, Strong as our king Sugriva, brave As Ráma's self to slay or

save, Through every land thy praise is heard, Famous as that illustrious  
bird, Arishtanemi's son,

1 the king

Of every fowl that plies the wing. Oft have I seen the monarch sweep  
With sounding pinions o'er the deep, And in his mighty talons bear  
Huge serpents struggling through the air. Thy arms, O hero, match in might  
The ample wings he spreads for flight; And thou with him mayest well compare  
In power to do, in heart to dare. Why, rich in wisdom, power, and skill,  
O hero, art thou lingering still? An Apsaras 2 the fairest found

Of nymphs for heavenly charms renowned,

Sweet Punjikasthala, became A noble Vānar's wedded dame. Her heavenly title  
heard no more, Anjanā was the name she bore, When, cursed by Gods, from  
heaven she fell In Vānar form on earth to dwell, New-born in mortal shape  
the child Of Kunjar monarch of the wild. In youthful beauty wondrous  
fair, A crown of jewels about her hair, In silken robes of richest dye  
She roamed the hills that kiss the sky. Once in her tinted garments dressed  
She stood upon the mountain crest, The God of Wind beside her came, And  
breathed upon the lovely dame. And as he fanned her robe aside  
The wondrous beauty that he eyed In rounded lines of breast and limb  
And neck and shoulder ravished him; And captured by her peerless charms

He strained her in his amorous arms,

Then to the eager God she cried In trembling accents, terrified: 'Whose  
impious love has wronged a spouse So constant in her nuptial vows?' He  
heard, and thus his answer made:

'O, be not troubled, nor afraid. But trust, and thou shalt know ere long  
My love has done thee, sweet, no wrong. So strong and brave and wise shall  
be The glorious child I give to thee. Might shall be his that naught can  
tire, And limbs to spring as springs his sire,' Thus spoke the God; the  
conquered dame Rejoiced in heart nor feared me shame. Down in a cave  
beneath the earth The happy mother gave thee birth. Once o'er the summit of  
the wood Before thine eyes the new sun stood. Thou sprangest up in haste to  
seize What seemed the fruitage of the trees. Up leapt the child, a wondrous  
bound, Three hundred leagues above the ground, And, though the angered Day-  
God shot His fierce beams on him, feared him not. Then from the hand of  
Indra came A red bolt winged with wrath and flame. The child fell smitten  
on a rock. His cheek was shattered by the shock, Named Hanumān

1b thenceforth by all

In memory of the fearful fall, The wandering Wind-God saw thee lie  
With bleeding cheek and drooping eye, And stirred to anger by thy woe  
Forbade each scented breeze to blow.

The breath of all the worlds was stilled, And the sad Gods with terror  
filled Prayed to the Wind, to calm the ire And soothe the sorrow of the  
sire. His fiery wrath no longer glowed, And Brahmā's self the boon  
bestowed That in the brunt of battle none Should slay with steel the Wind-  
God's son. Lord Indra, sovereign of the skies, Bent on thee all his  
thousand eyes, And swore that ne'er the bolt which he Hurls from the heaven  
should injure thee, 'Tis thine, O mighty chief, to share The Wind-God's  
power, his son and heir. Sprung from that glorious father thou. And thou  
alone, canst aid us now. This earth of yore, through all her climes, I  
circled one-and-twenty times, And gathered, as the Gods decreed, Great  
store of herbs from hill and mead, Which, scattered o'er the troubled  
wave. The Amrit to the toilers gave,

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But now my days are wellnigh told, My strength is gone, my limbs are  
old, And thou, the bravest and the best, Art the sure hope of all the rest.  
Now, mighty chief, the task assay: Thy matchless power and strength  
display Rise up, O prince, our second king, And o'er the flood of ocean  
spring. So shall the glorious exploit vie With his who stepped through  
earth and sky.'

He spoke: the younger chieftain heard, His soul to vigorous effort  
stirred, And stood before their joyous eyes Dilated in gigantic size.

Footnotes

392:1 The Bengal recension calls him Arishtaneimi's  
brother "The commentator says "Arishtanemi is Aruna."

Aruna the charioteer of the sun is the son of Kas'yapa and Vinatá and by  
consequence brother of Garuda called Vainat\*eya from Vinatá his mother,"  
GORRESIO.

392:2 A nymph of Paradise.

392:1b Hanu or Hanú means jaw. Haunmán or  
Hanúmán means properly one with a large jaw. Next: Canto LXVII.: Hanuman's  
Speech. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO LXVII.: HANUMAN'S SPEECH.

Soon as his stature they beheld.

Their fear and sorrow were dispelled; And joyous praises loud and long Rang  
out from all the Vánar throng. On the great chief their eyes they bent In  
rapture and astonishment, As, when his conquering foot he raised, The Gods  
upon Naráyan

2 gazed.

He stood amid the joyous crowd, Bent to the chiefs, and cried aloud: 'The  
Wind-God, Fire's eternal friend. Whose blasts the mountain summits  
rend, With boundless force that none may stay, Takes where he lists his  
viewless way, Sprung from that glorious father, I In power and speed with  
him may vie, A thousand times with airy leap Can circle loftiest Meru's  
steep: With my fierce arms can stir the sea Till from their bed the waters  
flee And rush at my command to drown This land with grove and tower and  
town. I through the fields of air can spring Far swifter than the feathered  
King, And leap before him as he dies.

On sounding pinions through the skies, I can pursue the Lord of  
Light Uprising from the eastern height, And reach him ere his course be  
sped With burning beams engarlanded, I will dry up the mighty main, Shatter  
the rocks and rend the plain. O'er earth and ocean will I bound, And every  
flower that grows on ground,

And bloom of climbing plants shall show

Strewn on the ground, the way I go. Bright as the lustrous path that  
lies Athwart the region of the skies.

1b

The Maithil lady will I find, -- Thus speaks mine own prophetic mind, -- And  
cast in hideous ruin down The shattered walls of Lanká's town.' Still on  
the chief in rapt surprise The Vánar legions bent their eyes, And thus  
again sage Jámaván Addressed the glorious Hanumán; 'Son of the Wind, thy  
promise cheers The Vánars' hearts, and calms their fears, Who, rescued from  
their dire distress. With prospering vows thy way will bless. The holy  
saints their favour lend, And all our chiefs the deed commend Urging thee  
forward on thy way;

Arise then, and the task assay. Thou art our only refuge; we. Our lives and  
all, depend on thee.' Then sprang the Wind-God's son the best Of Vánara,  
on Mahendra's crest. And the great mountain rocked and swayed By that  
unusual weight dismayed, As reels an elephant beneath The lion's spring and  
rending teeth. The shady wood that crowned him shook, The trembling birds  
the boughs forsook, And ape and pard and lion fled From brake and lair  
disquieted.

Footnotes

393:1 Vishnu, the God of the Three Steps.

393:2 Náráyan, 'He who moved upon the waters,' is

Vishnu. The allusion is to the famous three steps of that  
God.

393:1b The Milky Way. Next: Book V Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
Next

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CANTO I.: HANUMÁN'S LEAP.

Thus Rávan's foe resolved to trace

The captive to her hiding-placeThrough airy pathways overheadWhich  
heavenly minstrels visited.With straining nerve and eager brows,Like some  
strong husband of the cows,In ready might he stood preparedFor the bold  
task his soul has dared.O'er gem-like grass that flashed and glowedThe  
Vánar like a lion strode.Roused by the thunder of his tread,The beasts to  
shady coverts fled.Tall trees he crushed or hurled aside,And every bird  
was terrified.Around him loveliest lilies grew,Pale pink, and red, and  
white, and blue,And tints of many a metal lentThe light of varied  
ornament.Gandharvas, changing forms at will.And Yakshas roamed the lovely  
hill,Aud countless Serpent-Gods were seenWhere flowers and grass were  
fresh and green.As some resplendent serpent takesHis pastime in the best  
of lakes,So on the mountain's woody height

The Vánar wandered with delight.Then, standing on the flowery sod,He paid  
his vows to saint and God.Swayambhu

2 and the Sun he prayed,

And the swift Wind to lend him aid,And Indra, sovereign of the skies,To  
bless his hardy enterprise.Then once again the chief addressedThe Vánars  
from the mountain crest:'Swift as a shaft from Ráma's bow

To Rávan's city will I go,

And if she be not there will flyAnd seek the lady in the sky;Or, if in  
heaven she be not found,Will hither bring the giant bound.' He ceased;  
and mustering his mightSprang downward from the mountain height,While,  
shattered by each mighty limb,The trees unrooted followed him.The shadow  
on the ocean castBy his vast form, as on he passed,Flew like a ship  
before the galeWhen the strong breeze has tilled the sail,And where his  
course the Vánar heldThe sea beneath him raged and swelled.Then Gods and  
all the heavenly trainPoured flowerets down in gentle rain;Their voices  
glad Gandharvas raised,

And saints in heaven the Vánar praised.Fain would the Sea his succour  
lendAnd Raghu's noble son befriend.He, moved by zeal for Ráma's sake,The  
hill Maináka

1b thus bespake:

'O strong Maináka, heavens decreeIn days of old appointed theeTo be the  
Asurs bar, and keepThe rebels in the lowest deep.Thou guardest those whom  
heaven has cursedLest from their prison-house they burst,And standest by  
the gates of hellTheir liminary\* sentinel.To thee is given the power to  
spreadOr spring above thy watery bed.Now, best of noble mountains,  
riseAnd do the thing that I advise,E'en now above thy buried crestFlies  
mighty Hanumán, the bestOf Van\*sis, moved for Ráma's sakeA wonderous deed  
to undertake.Lift up thy head that he may stayAnd rest him on his weary  
way.' He heard, and from his watery aboud,As bursts the sun from \*\*\*\*\*  
cloud,Rose swift. Crowned with plant and tree,And stood above the foamy\*  
sea.

2b

There with his lofty peaks apraisedBright as a hundred suns he blazed,  
And crest and crag of burnished goldFlashed on the flood that round him  
rolled,\*

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The Vánar thought the mountain roseA hostile bar to interpose,And, like a  
wind-swept cloud, o'erthrewThe glittering mountain as he flew.Then from  
the falling hill rang outA warning voice and joyful shout.Again he raised  
him high in airTo meet the flying Vánar there,And standing on his topmost  
peakIn human form began to speak:

'Best of the Vánars' noblest line, A mighty task, O chief, is thine. Here for a while, I pray thee, light And rest upon the breezy height. A prince of Raghu's line was he Who gave his glory to the Sea,

2

Who now to Rama's envoy shows High honour for the debt he owes. He bade me lift my buried head Uprising from my watery bed, And woo the Vanar chief to rest A moment on my glittering crest, Refresh thy weary limbs, and eat My mountain fruits for they are sweet.

I too, O chieftain, know thee well;—Three worlds thy famous virtues tell; And none, I ween, with thee may vie Who spring impetuous through the sky. To every guest, though mean and low. The wise respect and honour show; And how shall I neglect thee, how Slight the great guest so near me now? Son of the Wind, 'tis thine to share The might of him who shakes the air; And,--for he loves his offspring,--he Is honoured when I honour thee. Of yore, when Krita's age

3 was new,

The little hills and mountains flew Where'er they listed, borne on wings More rapid the feathered king's.

4

But mighty terror came on all The Gods and saints who feared their fall. And Indra in his anger rent

Their pinions with the bolts he sent. When in his ruthless fury he Levelled his flashing bolt at me, The great-souled Wind inclined to save, And laid me neath the ocean's wave. Thus by the favour of the sire I kept my cherished wings entire; And for this deed of kindness done I honour thee his noble son.

O come, thy weary limbs relieve, And honour due from me receive. 'I may not rest,' the Vanar cried; 'I must not stay or turn aside. Yet pleased am I, thou noblest hill, And as the deed accept thy will.' Thus as he spoke he lightly pressed With his broad hand the mountain's crest. Then bounded upward to the height Of heaven, rejoicing in his might, And through the fields of boundless blue, The pathway of his father, flew. Gods, saints, and heavenly bards beheld That flight that none had paralleled, Then to the Nagas' mother

1b came

And thus addressed the sun-bright dame: 'See, Hauum'an with venturous leap Would spring across the mighty deep,--A Viinar prince, the Wind-God's seed: Come, Suras'a, his course impede. In Rakshas form thy shape disguise, Terrific, like a hill in size: Let thy red eyes with fury glow, And high as heaven thy body grow. With fearful tusks the chief defy. That we his power and strength may try. He will with guile thy hold elude, Or own thy might, by thee subdued.' Pleased with the grateful honours paid,

The godlike dame their words obeyed, Clad in a shape of terror she Sprang from the middle of the sea, And, with fierce accents that appalled All creatures, to the Vanar called: 'Come, prince of Vanars, doomed to be My food this day by heaven's decree. Such boon from ages long ago To Brahma's favouring will I owe.' She ceased, and Hanuman replied, By shape and threat terrified: 'Brave Rama with his Maithil spouse Lodged in the shade of Dandak's boughs. Thence Ravan king of giants stole Sita the joy of Rama's soul.

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By Ráma's high behest to her I go a willing messenger; And never shouldst them hinder one Who toils for Das'aratha's son. First captive Sítá will I see, And him who sent and waits for me, Then come and to thy will submit, Yea, by my truth I promise it. 'Nay, hope not thus thy life to save; Not such the boon that Brahma gave. Enter my mouth,' was her reply, 'Then forward on thy journey hie!' 1

'Stretch, wider stretch thy jaws,' exclaimed The Vánar chief, to ire inflamed; And, as the Rákshas near him drew, Ten leagues in height his



stature grew. Then straight, her threatening jaws between, A gulf of twenty leagues was seen. To fifty leagues he waxed, and still Her mouth grew wider at her will. Then smaller than a thumb became, Shrunk by his power, the Vánar's frame.

2

He leaped within, and turning round Sprang through the portal at a bound. Then hung in air a moment, while He thus addressed her with a smile: 'O Daksha's child,

3 farewell at last!

For I within thy mouth have passed. Thou hast the gift of Brahmá's grace: I go, the Maithil queen to trace. 'Then, to her former shape restored, She thus addressed the Vánar lord: 'Then forward to the task, and may Success and joy attend thy way! Go, and the rescued lady bring In triumph to her lord and king.'

Then hosts of spirits as they gazed The daring of the Vánar praised. Through the broad fields of ether, fast Garud's royal self, he passed, The region of the cloud and rain, Loved by the gay Gandharva train, Where mid the birds that came and went Shone Indra's glorious bow unbent, And like a host of wandering stars Flashed the high Gods' celestial cars. Fierce Sinhiká

1b who joyed in ill

And changed her form to work her will, Descried him on his airy way And marked the Vánar for her prey. 'This day at length,' the demon cried, 'My hunger shall be satisfied, 'And at his passing shadow caught Delighted with the cheering thought. The Vánar felt the power that stayed And held him as she grasped his shade, Like some tall ship upon the main That struggles with the wind in vain. Below, above, his eye he bent And scanned the sea and firmament. High from the briny deep upreared The monster's hideous form appeared, 'Sugriva's tale,' he cried, 'is true: This is the demon dire to view Of whom the Vánar monarch told, Whose grasp a passing shade can hold.' Then, as a cloud in rain-time grows.

His form, dilating, swelled and rose. Wide as the space from heaven to hell Her jaws she opened with a yell, And rushed upon her fancied prey With cloud-like roar to seize and slay. The Vánar swift as thought compressed His borrowed bulk of limb and chest, And stood with one quick bound inside The monstrous mouth she opened wide. Hid like the moon when Ráhu

2b draws

The orb within his ravening jaws. Within that ample cavern pent The demon's form he tore and rent, And, from the mangled carcass freed, Came forth again with thought-like speed.

3b

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Thus with his skill the fiend he slew, Then to his wonted stature grew. The spirits saw the demon die. And hailed the Vánar from the sky: 'Well hast thou fought a wondrous fight Nor spared the fiend's terrific might, On, on! perform the blameless deed, And in thine every wish succeed. Ne're can they fail in whom combine Such valour; thought, and skill as thine.' Pleased with their praises as they sang,

Again through fields of air he sprang, And now, his travail well nigh done, The distinct shore was almost won, Before him on the margin stood In long dark line a waving wood, And the fair island, bright and green With flowers and trees, was clearly seen, And every babbling brook that gave Her lord the sea a tribute wave. He lighted down on Lamba's peak Which tinted metals stain and streak, And looked where Lanká's splendid town Shone on the mountain like a crown.

Footnotes

394:1 This Book is called Sundar or the Beatiful. To a European taste it is the most intolerably tedious of the

whole poem, abounding in repetition, overloaded description, and long and useless speeches which impede the action of the poem. Manifest interpolations of whole Cantos also occur. I have omitted none of the action of the Book, but have occasionally omitted long passages of common-place description, lamentation, and long stories which have been again and again repeated.

394:2 Brahmá the Self-Existent.

394:1b Maináka was the son of Rimálaya\* and Mená or Menaka.

394:2b Thus Milton makes the hills of heaven self-moving at command:

'At his comma\*d the uprooted hills retired Each to his place, they heard his voice and went Obsequious'

395:1 The spirit of the mountain is separable from the mountain. Himalaya has also been represented as standing in human on one of his own peaks.

395:2 Sagar or the Sea is said to have derived its name from Sagar. The story is fully told in Book I, Cantos XLII, XLIII, and XLIV.

395:3 Kritu is the first of the four ages of the world, the golden age, also called Satya.

395:4 Parvata means a mountain and in the Vedas a cloud. Hence in later mythology the mountain have taken the place of the clouds as the objects of the attacks of Indra the Sun-God. The feathered king is Garuda.

395:1b "The children of Surasa were a thousand mighty many-headed serpents, traversing the sky." WILLSON'S Vishnu Purana, Vol.II. p.73.

396:1 She means, says the Commentator, pursue thy journey if thou can.

396:2 If Milton's spirits are allowed the power of infinite self-extension and compression the same must be conceded to Válmiki's supernatural beings. Given the power as in Milton the result in Válmiki is perfectly consistent.

396:3 "Daksha is the son of Brahmá and one of the Prajápatís or divine progenitors. He had sixty daughters, twenty-seven of whom married to Kas'yapa produced, according to one of the Indian cosmogonies, all mundane beings. Does the epithet, Descendant of Daksha, given to Surasá, mean that she is one of those daughters? I think not. This epithet is perhaps an appellation common to all created beings as having sprung from Daksha." GORRESIO.

396:1b Sinhiká is the mother of Ráhu the dragon's head or ascending node, the chief agent in eclipses. 396:2b Ráhu is the demon who causes eclipses by attempting to swallow the sun and moon.

396:3b According to De Gubernatis, the author of the very learned, ingenious, and interesting though too fanciful Zoological Mythology. Hanuman here represents the sun entering into and escaping from a cloud. The biblical Jonah, according to him, typifies the same phenomenon. Sádi, p. 395 speaking of sunset, says

Yûnas andar-i-dihán-i máhi shud: Jonas was within the fish's mouth. See ADDITIONAL NOTES.

Next: Canto II.: Lanká.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO II.: LANKÁ.

The glorious sight a while he viewed,  
Then to the town his way pursued.Around the Vanar as he wentBreathed from  
the wood delicious scent,And the soft grass beneath his feetWith gem-like  
flowers was bright and sweet.Still as the Vanar nearer drewMore clearly  
rose the town to viewThe palm her fan-like leaves displayed,Priyálas

1 lent their pleasant shade,  
And mid the lower greenery farConspicuous rose the Kovidár

2.

A thousand trees mid flowers that glowedHung down their fruit's delicious  
load

3,

And in their crests that rocked and swayedSweet birds delightful music  
made.And there were pleasant pools whereonThe glories of the lotus  
shone;And gleams of sparkling fountains, stirredBy many a joyous water-  
bird.

Around, in lovely gardens grew

Blooms sweet of scent and bright of hue,And Lanká, seat of Rávan's sway,  
Before the wondering Vánar lay:With stately domes and turrets  
tall,Encircled by a golden wall,And moats whose waters were aglowWith  
lily blossoms bright below:For Sitá's sake defended wellWith bolt and bar  
and sentinel,And Rakshases who roamed in bandsWith ready bows in eager  
hands.He saw the stately mansions riseLike pale-hued clouds in autumn  
skies;Where noble streets were broad and bright,And banners waved on  
every height.Her gates were glorious to beholdRich with the shine of  
burnished gold:A lovely city planned and deckedBy heaven's creative  
arhitect

1b,

Fairest of earthly cities meetTo be the Gods' celestial seat.The Vánar by  
the northern gateThus in his heart began debate'Our mightiest host would  
strive in vainTo take this city on the main:A city that may well defyThe  
chosen warriors of the sky;A city never to be wonE'en by the arm of  
Raghu's son.Here is no hope by guile to winThe hostile hearts of those  
within.

'Twere vain to war, or bribe, or sowDissension mid the Vánar foe.But now  
my search must I pursueUntil the Maithil queen I view:And, when I find  
the captive dame,Make victory mine only aim.But, if I wear my present  
shape,How shall I enter and escapeThe Rákshas troops, their guards and  
spies,And sleepless watch of cruel eyes?The fiends of giant race who  
holdThis mighty town are strong and bold;And I must labour to eludeThe  
fiercely watchful multitude.I in a shape to mock their sightMust steal  
within the town by night,Blind with my art the demons' eyes,And thus  
achieve my enterprise.How may I see, myself unseenOf the fierce king, the  
captive queen.And meet her in some lonely place,With none beside her,  
face to face?'

When the bright sun had left the skies

The Vánar dwarfed his mighty size,

p. 398And, in the straitest bounds restrained,

The bigness of a cat retained. 1

Then, when the moon's soft light was spread,Within the city's walls he  
sped.

Footnotes

397:1 The Buchanania Latifolia.

397:2 The Bauhinia Variegata.

397:3 Through the power that Rávan's stern  
mortifications had won for him his trees bore flowers  
and fruit simultaneously.

397:1b Vis'vakarmá is the architect of the Gods.

Next: Canto III.: The Guardian Goddess.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index  
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CANTO III.: THE GUARDIAN GODDESS.

There from the circling rampart's height

He gazed upon the wondrous sight;Broad gates with burnished gold  
displayed,And courts with turkises inlaid;With gleaming silver, gems, and  
rowsOf crystal stairs and porticoes.In semblance of a Rakshas dameThe  
city's guardian Goddess came,--For she with glances sure and keenThe

entrance of a foe had seen,--And thus with fury in her eyeAddressed him with an angry cry:'Who art thou? what has led thee, say,Within these walls to find thy way?Thou mayst not enter here in spiteOf Ravan and his warriors' might.'And who art thou?' the Vanar cried,By form and frown unterrified,'Why hast thou met me by the gate,And chid me thus infuriate?' He ceased: and Lanka made reply:'The guardian of the town am I,Who watch for ever to fulfilMy lord the Rakshas monarch's will.But thou shalt fall this hour, and deep

Shall be thy never-ending sleep.Again he spake:'In spite of theeThis golden city will I see.Her gates and towers, and all the prideOf street and square from side to side,And freely wander where I pleaseAmid her groves of flowering trees;On all her beauties sate mine eye.Then, as I came, will homeward hie.' Swift with an angry roar she smoteWith her huge hand the Vanar's throat.The smitten Vanar, rage-impelled,With fist upraised the monster felled:But quick repented, stirred with shameAnd pity for a vanquished dame,When with her senses troubled, weakWith terror, thus she strove to speak:'O spare me thou whose arm is strong:O spare me, and forgive the wrong.

The brave that law will ne'er transgress

That spares a woman's helplessness.Hear, best of Vanars, brave and bold,What Brahma's self of yore foretold;'Beware,' he said, 'the fatal hourWhen thou shalt own a Vanar's power.Then is the giants' day of fear,For terror and defeat are near.'Now, Vanar chief, o'ercome by thee, I own the truth of heaven's decree.For Sita's sake will ruin fallOn Ravan, and his town, and all.'

Footnotes

398:1 So in Paradise Lost Satan when he has stealthily entered the garden of Eden assumes the form of a cormorant.

Next: Canto IV.: Within The City.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO IV.: WITHIN THE CITY.

The guardian goddess thus subdued.

The Vanar chief his way pursued,And reached the broad imperial streetWhere fresh-blown flowers were bright and sweet.The city seemed a fairer skyWhere cloud-like houses rose on high,Whence the soft sound of tabors cameThrough many a latticed window frame,And ever and anon rang outThe merry laugh and joyous shout.From house to house the Vanar wentAnd marked each varied ornament,Where leaves and blossoms deftly strungAbout the crystal columns hung.Then soft and full and sweet and clearThe song of women charmed his ear,And, blending with their dulcet tones,Their anklets' chime and tinkling zones.He heard the Rakshas minstrel singThe praises of their matchless king;And softly through the evening airCame murmurings of text and prayer,Here moved a priest with tonsured head,And there an eager envoy sped,Mid crowds with hair in matted twineClothed in the skins of deer and kine,--Whose only arms, which none might blame,Were blades of grass and holy flame

1b

There savage warriors roamed in bandsWith clubs and maces in their bauds,Some dwarfish forms, some huge of size.With single ears and single eyes.Some shone in glittering mail arrayedWith bow and mace and flashing blade;Fiends of all shapes and every hue,Some fierce and foul, some fair to view.

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He saw the grisly legions waitIn strictest watch at Rávan's gate,Whose palace on the mountain crestRose proudly towering o'er the rest,Fenced with high ramparts from the foe,And lotus-covered moats below.But Hanuman, unhindered, foundQuick passage through the guarded bound,Mid elephants of noblest breed,And gilded car and neighing steed.

Footnotes398:1b Priests who fought only with the weapons of

religion, the sacred grass used like the verbena of the  
Romans at sacred rites and the consecrated fire to consume the offering  
of ghee.

Next: Canto VI. : The Court.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO VI. 1: THE COURT.

The palace gates were guarded well

By many a Rákshas sentinel,And far within, concealed from view,Were dames  
and female retinueFor charm of form and face renowned;Whose tinkling  
armlets made a sound,Clashed by the wearers in their glee,Like music of a  
distant sea.The hall beyond the palace gate,Rich with each badge of royal  
state,

Where lines of noble courtiers stood,

Showed like a lion-guarded wood.There the wild music rose and fellOf drum  
and tabor and of shell,Through chambers at each holy tideBy solemn  
worship sanctified.Through grove and garden, undismayed,From house to  
house the Vánar strayed,And still his wondering glances bentOn terrace,  
dome, and battlement:Then with a light and rapid treadPrahasta's

1b home he visited,And Kumbhakarna's 2b courtyard where

A cloudy pile rose high in air;

And, wandering o'er the hill, exploredThe garden of each Rákshas  
lord.Each court and grove he wandered through,Then nigh to Rávan's palace  
drew.She-demons watched it foul of face,Eace\* armed with sword and spear  
and mace,And warrior fiends of every hue,A strange and fearful  
retinue.There elephants in many a row,The terror of the stricken foe.Huge  
Airávat,

3b deftly trained

In battle-fields, stood ready chained.Fair litters on the ground were  
setAdorned with gems and golden net.Gay bloomy creepers clothed the  
walls;Green bowers were there and picture halls,And chambers made for  
soft delight.Broad banners waved on every height.And from the roof like  
Mandar's hillThe peacock's cry came loud and shrill.

4b

Footnotes

399:1 I omit Canto V. which corresponds to chapter XI. in Gorresio's  
edition. That scholar justly observes: "The  
eleventh chapter, Description of Evening, is certainly the work of the  
Rhapsodists and an interpolation of later date. The chapter might be  
omitted without any injury to the action of the poem, and besides the  
metre, style, conceits and images differ from the general tenour of the  
poem; and that continual repetition of the same sounds at the end of each  
hemistich which is not exactly rime, but assonance, reveals the  
artificial labour of a more recent age.' The following sample will  
probably be enough. I am unable to show the difference of style in a  
translation:

Fair shone the moon, as if to lendHis cheering light to guide a  
friend,And, circled by the starry host,Looked down upon the wild sea-  
coast.The Vánar cheiftain raised his eyes,And saw him sailing through the  
skiesLike a bright swan who joys to takeHis pastime on a silver lake;Fair  
moon that calms the mourner's pain.Heaves up the waters of the main,And  
o'er the \*hie beneath him throwsA tender light of soft repose,The charm  
that clings to Mandar's hill,Gleams in the sea when winds are still,And  
decks the lilly's opening flower,Showed in that moon her sweetest power.

Next: Canto VII.: Ravan's Palace.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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CANTO VII.: RAVAN'S PALACE.

He passed within the walls and gazed

On gems and gold that round him blazed,And many a latticed window  
brightWith turkis and with lazulite.

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Through porch and ante-rooms he passed  
Each richer, fairer than the last;  
And spacious halls were lances lay.  
And bows and shells, in fair array:  
A glorious house that matched in show  
All Paradise displayed below.  
Upon the polished floor were spread  
Fresh buds and blossoms white and red,  
And women shone, a lovely crowd,  
As lightning flashes through a cloud:  
A palace splendid as the sky  
Which moon and planets glorify:  
Like earth whose towering hills unfold  
Their zones and streaks of glittering gold;  
Where waving on the mountain brows  
The tall trees bend their laden boughs,  
And every bough and tender spray  
With a bright load of bloom is gay,

And every flower the breeze has bent  
Fills all the region with its scent.  
Near the tall palace pale of hue  
Shone lovely lakes where lilies blew,  
And lotuses with flower and bud  
Gleamed on the bosom of the flood.  
There shone with gems that flashed afar  
The marvel of the Flower-named

1 car,

Mid wondrous dwellings still confessed  
Supreme and nobler than the rest.  
Thereon with wondrous art designed  
Were turkis birds of varied kind.  
And many a sculptured serpent rolled  
His twisted coil in burnished gold.  
And steeds were there of noblest form  
With flying feet as fleet as storm:  
And elephants with deftest skill  
Stood sculptured by a silver rill,  
Each bearing on his trunk a wreath  
Of lilies from the flood beneath.  
There Lakshmi,

2 beauty's heavenly queen,

Wrought by the artist's skill, was seen  
Beside a flower-clad pool to stand  
Holding a lotus in her hand.

Footnotes 399:1b One of the Rákshas lords.

399:2b The brother Rávan.

399:3b Indra's elephant.

399:4b Rávan's palace appears to have occupied the whole extent of ground, and to have contained within its outer walls the mansions of all the great Rakshas chiefs. Ravan's own dwelling seems to have been situated within the enchanted chariot Pushpak: but the description is involved and confused, and it is difficult to say whether the chariot was inside the palace or the palace inside the chariot.

Next: Canto VIII.: The Enchanted Car. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO VIII.: THE ENCHANTED CAR.

There gleamed the car with wealth untold

Of precious gems and burnished gold;

Nor could the Wind-God's son withdraw

His rapt gaze from the sight he saw, By Vis'vakarmá's

1b self proclaimed

The noblest work his hand had framed. Uplifted in the air it glowed  
Bright as the sun's diurnal road. The eye might scan the wondrous frame  
And vainly seek one spot to blame, So fine was every part and fair  
With gems inlaid with lavish care. No precious stones so rich adorn  
The cars wherein the Gods are borne, Prize of the all-resistless might  
That sprang from pain and penance rite,

2b

Obedient to the master's will It moved o'er wood and towering hill,  
A glorious marvel well designed By Vis'vakarmá's artist mind,  
Adorned with every fair device That decks the cars of Paradise.  
Swift moving as the master chose

It flew through air or sank or rose, 3b

And in its fleetness left behind The fury of the rushing wind:  
Meet mansion for the good and great, The holy, wise, and fortunate.  
Throughout the chariot's vast extent Were chambers wide and excellent,  
All pure and lovely to the eyes As moonlight shed from cloudless skies.  
Fierce goblins, rovers

of the nightWho cleft the clouds with swiftest flightIn countless hosts  
that chariot drew,With earrings clashing as they flew.

Footnotes

400:1 Pushpak from pushpa a flower. The car has been  
mentioned before in Ravan's expedition to carry off  
Sitá, Book III. Canto XXXV.

400:2 Lakshmi is the wife of Vishnu and the Goddess  
of Beauty and Felicity. She rose, like Aphrodite, from  
the foam of the sea. For an account of her birth and beauty, see Book 1.  
Canto XLV.Next: Canto IX.: The Ladies' Bower.Sacred Texts Hinduism  
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CANTO IX.: THE LADIES' BOWER.

Where stately mansions rose around,

A palace fairer still he found,Whose royal height and splendour  
showedWhere Ravan's self, the king, abode,A chosen band with bow and  
swordGuarded the palace of their lord,Where Ráksha's dames of noble  
raceAnd many a princess fair of faceWhom Rávan's arm had torn awayFrom  
vanquished kings in slumber lay.

p. 401

There jewelled arches high o'erheadAn ever-changing lustre shedFrom ruby,  
pearl, and every gemOn golden pillars under them.Delicious came the  
tempered airThat breathed a heavenly summer there,Stealing through bloomy  
trees that boreEach pleasant fruit in endless store.No check was there  
from jealous guard,No door was fast, no portal barred;Only a sweet air  
breathed to meetThe stranger, as a host should greet

A wanderer of his kith and kinAnd woo his weary steps within.He stood  
within a spacious hallWith fretted roof and painted wall,The giant  
Rávan's boast and pride,Loved even as a lovely bride.'Twere long to tell  
each marvel there,The crystal floor, the jewelled stair,The gold, the  
silver, and the shineOf chrysolite and almandine.There breathed the  
fairest blooms of spring;There flashed the proud swan's silver wing,The  
splendour of whose feathers brokeThrough fragrant wreaths of aloe  
smoke.'Tis Indra's heaven,' the Vánar criedGazing in joy from side to  
side;'The home of all the Gods is this,The mansion of eternal  
bliss.'There were the softest carpets spread,Delightful to the sight and  
tread,Where many a lovely woman layO'ercome by sleep, fatigued with  
play.The wine no longer cheered the feast,The sound of revelry had  
ceased.The tinkling feet no longer stirred,No chiming of a zone was  
heard.So when each bird has sought her nestAnd swans are mute and wild  
bees rest,Sleep the fair lilies on the lake

Till the sun's kiss shall bid them wake.Like the calm field of winter's  
skyWhich stars unnumbered glorify,So shone and glowed the sumptuous  
roomWith living stars that chased the gloom.'These are the stars,' the  
chieftain cried,'In autumn nights that earth-ward glide,In brighter forms  
to reappearAnd shine in matchless lustre here.'With wondering eyes a  
while he viewedEach graceful form and attitude.One lady's head was  
backward thrown,Bare was her arm and loose her zone.The garland that her  
brow had gracedHung closely round another's waist.Here gleamed two little  
feet all bareOf anklets that had sparkled there,Here lay a queenly dame  
at restIn all her glorious garments dressed,There slept another whose  
small handHad loosened every tie and band,In careless grace another  
layWide gems and jewels cast away,Like a young creeper when the treadOf  
the wild elephant has spreadConfusion and destruction round,And cast it  
flowerless to the ground.Here lay a slumberer still as death,Save only  
that her balmy breath

Raised ever and anon the lace that floated o'er her sleeping face.There,  
sunk in sleep, an amorous maidHer sweet head on a mirror laid,Like a fair  
lily bending tillHer petals rest upon the rill.Another black-eyed damsel  
pressedHer lute upon her heaving breast,As though her loving arms were  
twinedRound him for whom her bosom pined.Another pretty sleeper roundA

silver vase her arm's had woundThat seemed, so fresh and fair and youngA  
wreath of flowers that o'er it hung.In sweet disorder lay a throngWeary  
of dance and play and song,Where heedless girls had sunk to restOne  
pillowed on anothers breastHer tender cheek half seen beneathBed roses of  
the falling wreath,The while her long soft hair concealedThe beauties  
that her friend revealed.With limbs at random interlacedBound arm and leg  
and throat and waist,Wreath of women lay asleepBlossoms in a careless  
heap.

Footnotes  
400:1b Vis'vakarmá is the architect of the Gods, the  
Hephaestos or Mulciber of the Indian heaven.

400:2b Rávan in the resistless power which his long austerities had  
endowed him with, had conquered his  
brother Kuvera the God of Gold and taken from him his greatest treasure  
this enchanted car.

400:3b Like Milton's heavenly car      'Itself instinct with  
spirit.'

Next: Canto X.: Rávan Asleep.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous  
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CANTO X.: RÁVAN ASLEEP.

Apart a dais of crystal rose

With couches spread for soft repose.Adorned with gold and gems of  
priceMeet for the halls of Paradise.A canopy was o'er them spreadPale as  
the light the moon beams shed,And female figures,  
1 deftly planned,

The faces of the sleepers fanned,There on a splendid couch, asleepOn  
softest skins of deer and sheep.Dark as a cloud that dims the dayThe  
monarch of the giants lay,Perfumed with sandal's precious scentAnd gay  
with golden ornament.

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His fiery eyes in slumber closed,In glittering robes the king reposedLike  
Mandar's mighty hill asleepWith flowery trees that clothe his steep.Near  
and more near the VánarThe monarch of the fiends to view,And saw the  
giant stretched supineFatigued with play and drunk with wine.

While, shaking all the monstrous frame,His breath like hissing serpents'  
came.With gold and glittering bracelets gayHis mighty arms extended  
layHuge as the towering shafts that bearThe flag of Indra high in  
air.Scars by Airávat's impressedShowed red upon his shaggy breast.And on  
his shoulders were displayedThe dints the thunder-bolt had made.

1

The spouses of the giant kingAround their lord were slumbering,And, gay  
with sparkling earrings, shoneFair as the moon to look upon.There by her  
husband's side was seenMandodarífavourite queen,The beauty of whose  
youthful faceBeamed a soft glory through the place.The Vánared the dame  
more fairThan all the royal ladies there,And thought, 'These rarest  
beauties speakThe matchless dame I come to seek.Peerless in grace and  
splendour, sheThe Maithil queen must surely be.'

Footnotes401:1 Women, says Válmíki. But the commentator says  
that automatic figures only are meant. Women would  
have seen Hanumán and given the alarm.

Next: Canto XI.: The Banquet Hall.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous  
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CANTO XI.: THE BANQUET HALL.

But soon the baseless thought was spurned

And longing hope again returned:'No: Ráma's wife is none of these,No  
careless dame that lives at ease.Her widowed heart has ceased to careFor  
dress and sleep and dainty fare.She near a lover ne'er would lieThough  
Indra wooed her from the sky.Her own, her only lord, whom noneCan match  
in heaven, is Raghu's son.'      Then to the banquet hall intentOn strictest  
search his steps he bent.He passed within the door, and foundFair women



sleeping on the ground,Where wearied with the song, perchance,The merry  
game, the wanton dance,Each girl with wine and sleep oppressed  
Had sunk her drooping head to rest.

That spacious hall from side to sideWith noblest fare was well  
supplied,There quarters of the boar, and hereRoast of the buffalo and  
deer,There on gold plate, untouched as yetThe peacock and the hen were  
set.

There deftly mixed with gait and curdWas meat of many a beast and bird,Of  
kid and porcupine and hare,And dainties of the sea and air.There wrought  
of gold, ablaze with shineOf precious stones, were cups of wine.Through  
court and bower and banquet hallThe Vánared and viewed them all;From end  
to end, in every spot,For Sítá but found her not.

Footnotes

402:1 Rávan fought against Indra and the Gods, and his  
body was still scarred by the wounds inflicted by the  
tusks of Indra's elephant and by the fiery bolts of the Thunderer.  
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CANTO XII.: THE SEARCH RENEWED.

Again the Vánar chief began

Each chamber, bower, and hall to scan.In vain: he found not her he  
sought,And pondered thus in bitter thought:'Ah me the Maithil queen is  
slain:She, ever true and free from stain,The fiend's entreaty has  
denied.And by his cruel hand has died.Or has she sunk, by terror  
killed,When first she saw the palace filledWith female monsters evil  
mienedWho wait upon the robber fiend?No battle fought, no might  
displayed,In vain this anxious search is made;Nor shall my steps, made  
slow by shame,Because I failed to find the dame,Back to our lord the king  
be bent,For he is swift to punishment.In every bower my feet have  
been,The dames of Rávan I seen;But Ráma's spouse I seek in vain,And all  
my toil is fruitless pain.How shall I meet the VánarI left upon the ocean  
strand?How, when they bid me speak, proclaim  
These tidings of defeat and shame?How shall I look on Angad's eye?What  
words will JámavánYet dauntless hearts will never failTo win success  
though foes assail,And I this sorrow will subdueAnd search the palace  
through and through,Exploring with my cautious treadEach spot as yet  
unvisited.' Again he turned him to exploreEach chamber, hall, and  
corridor,And arbour bright with scented bloom.And lodge and cell and  
picture-room.

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With eager eye and noiseless feetHe passed through many a cool  
retreatWhere women lay in slumber drowned;But Sítá nowhere found.

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CANTO XIII.: DESPAIR AND HOPE.

Then rapid as the lightning's flame

From Rávan's halls the Vánar cameEach lingering hope was cold and  
dead,And thus within his heart he said:'Alas, my fruitless search is  
done:Long have I toiled for Raghu's son;And yet with all my care have  
seenNo traces of the ravished queen.It may be, while the giant throughThe  
lone air with his captive flew,The Maithil lady, tender-souled,Slipped  
struggling from the robber's hold,And the wild sea is rolling nowO'er  
Sítá of the beauteous brow.Or did she perish of alarmWhen circled by the  
monster's arm?Or crushed, unable to withstandThe pressure of that  
monstrous hand?Or when she spurned his suit with scorn,Her tender limbs  
were rent and torn.And she, her virtue unsubdued,Was slaughtered for the  
giant's food.Shall I to Raghu's son relateHis well-beloved consort's  
fate,My crime the same if I reveal

The mournful story or conceal?If with no happier tale to tellI seek our  
mountain citadel,How shall I face our lord the king,And meet his angry

questioning?How shall I greet my friends, and brookThe muttered taunt,  
the scornful look?How to the son of Raghu goAnd kill him with my tale of  
woe?For sure the mournful tale I bearWill strike him dead with wild  
despair.And Lakshman ever fond and true,Will, undivided, perish  
too.Bharat will learn his brother's fate,And die of grief  
disconsolate,And sad Satrughna with a cryOf anguish on his corpse will  
die.Our king Sugrivar found;True to each bond in honour bound.Will mourn  
the pledge he vainly gave,And die with him he could not save.Then Rumá  
his devoted wifeFor her dead lord will leave her life,And Tára, widowed  
and forlorn,Will die in anguish, sorrow-worn.

On Angad too the blow will fall

Killing the hope and joy of all.The ruin of their prince and king  
The Vánarsls with woe will wring,And each, overwhelmed with dark  
despair,Will beat his head and rend his hair.Each, graced and honoured  
long, will missHis careless life of easy bliss,In happy troops will play  
no moreOn breezy rock and shady shore,But with his darling wife and  
childWill seek the mountain top, and wildWith hopeless desolation,  
throwHimself, his wife, and babe, below.All no: unless the dame I findI  
ne'er will meet my Vánar,Here rather in some distant dellA lonely hermit  
will I dwell,Where roots and berries will supplyMy humble wants until I  
die;Or on the shore will raise a pyreAnd perish in the kindled fire.Or I  
will strictly fast untilWith slow decay my life I kill,And ravening dogs  
and birds of airThe limbs of Hanumánl tear.Here will I die, but never  
bringDestruction on my race and king.But still unsearched one grove I  
seeWith many a bright As'oka tree.There will I enter in, and throughThe  
tangled shade my search renew.

Be glory to the host on high,The Sun and Moon who light the sky,The Vasus  
1 and the Maruts' 2 train,

Ádityas 3 and the As'vins 4 twain.

So may I win success, and bringThe lady back with triumphing,'

Next: Canto XIV.: The As'oka Grove.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO XIV.: THE AS'OKA GROVE.

He cleared the barrier at a bound;

He stood within the pleasant ground,

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And with delighted eyes surveyedThe climbing plants and varied shade,He  
saw unnumbered trees unfoldThe treasures of their pendent gold,As,  
searching for the Maithil queen,He strayed through alleys soft and  
green;And when a spray he bent or brokeSome little bird that slept  
awoke.Whene'er the breeze of morning blew,Where'er a startled peacock  
flew,The gaily coloured branches shedTheir flowery rain upon his headThat  
clung around the Vánar tillHe seemed a blossom-covered hill,

1

The earth, on whose fair bosom layThe flowers that fell from every  
spray,Was glorious as a lovely maidIn all her brightest robes arrayed,He  
saw the breath of morning shakeThe lilies on the rippling lake  
Whose waves a pleasant lapping madeOn crystal steps with gems inlaid.Then  
roaming through the enchanted ground,A pleasant hill the Vánar found,And  
grottoes in the living stoneWith grass and flowery trees  
o'ergrown.Through rocks and boughs a brawling rillLeapt from the bosom of  
the hill,Like a proud beauty when she fliesFrom her love's arms with  
angry eyes.He clomb a tree that near him grewAnd leafy shade around him  
threw.'Hence,' thought the Vánar, 'shall I seeThe Maithil dame, if here  
she be,These lovely trees, this cool retreatWill surely tempt her  
wandering feet.Here the sad queen will roam apart.And dream of Ráma in  
her heart,'

Footnotes

403:1 The Vasus are a class of eight deities, originally  
personifications of natural phenomena.

403:2 The Maruts are the winds or Storm-Gods.403:3 The Ādityas originally seven deities of the

heavenly sphere of whom Varuna is the chief. The name

Āditya was afterwards given to any God, specially to Sūrya the Sun.

403:4 The As'vins are the Heavenly Twins, the Castor and Pollux of the Hindus.

Next: Canto XV.: Sítá.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous   Next  
CANTO XV.: SÍTÁ.

Fair as Kailása white with snow

He saw a palace flash and glow,A crystal pavement gem-inlaid,And coral steps and colonnade,And glittering towers that kissed the skies,Whose dazzling splendour charmed his eyes.There pallid, with neglected dress,Watched close by fiend and giantess,Her sweet face thin with constant flowOf tears, with fasting and with woe;Pale as the young moon's crescent whenThe first faint light returns to men:

Dim as the flame when clouds of smoke

The latent glory hide and choke;Like Rohiní the queen of starsOppressed by the red planet Mars;From her dear friends and husband torn,Amid the cruel fiends, forlorn,Who fierce-eyed watch around her kept,A tender woman sat and wept,Her sobs, her sighs, her mournful mien,Her glorious eyes, proclaimed the queen.'This, this is she,' the Vánar cried,'Fair as the moon and lotus-eyed,

I saw the giant Rávan bearA captive through the fields of air.Such was the beauty of the dame;Her form, her lips, her eyes the same.This peerless queen whom I beholdIs Ráma's wife with limbs of gold.Best of the sons of men is he,And worthy of her lord is she.'

Footnotes

404:1 The poet forgets that Hanumán has reduced himself to the size of a cat.

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CANTO XVI.: HANUMÁN'S LAMENT.

Then, all his thoughts on Sítá bent,

The Vánar chieftain made lament:'The queen to Ráma's soul endeared,By Lakshman's pious heart revered,Lies here,--for none may strive with Fate,A captive, sad and desolate.The brothers' might full well she knows,And bravely bears the storm of woes,As swelling Gangá in the rainsThe rush of every flood sustains.Her lord, for her, fierce Báli slew,Virádha's monstrous might o'erthrew,For her the fourteen thousand slainIn Janasthán bedewed the plain.And if for her Ikshváku's sonDestroyed the world 'twere nobly done.This, this is she, so far renowned,Who sprang from out the furrowed ground,

1b

Child of the high-souled king whose swayThe men of Mithilá obey;The glorious lady wooed and wonBy Das'aratha's noblest son;And now these sad eyes look on herMid hostile fiends a prisoner.From home and every bliss she fled

By wifely love and duty led,And heedless of a wanderer's woes,A life in lonely forests chose.This, this is she so fair of mould.Whose limbs are bright as burnished gold.

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Whose voice was ever soft and mild.Who sweetly spoke and sweetly smiled.O, what is Ráma's misery! howHe longs to see his darling now!Pining for one of her fond looksAs one athirst for water brooks.Absorbed in woe the lady seesNo Rákshas guard, no blooming trees.Her eyes are with her thoughts, and theyAre fixed on Ráma far away.'

Footnotes

404:1b Sítá 'not of woman born,' was found by King Janak as he was turning up the ground in preparation for

a sacrifice, See Book II. Canto CXVIII. Next: Canto XVII.: Sítá's  
Guard. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XVII.: SÍTÁ'S GUARD.

His pitying eyes with tears bedewed,  
The weeping queen again he viewed, And saw around the prisoner stand Her  
demon guard, a fearful band.

1

Some earless, some with ears that hung Low as their feet and loosely  
swung: Some fierce with single ears and eyes, Some dwarfish, some of  
monstrous size: Some with their dark necks long and thin With hair upon the  
knotty skin: Some with wild locks, some bald and bare, Some covered o'er  
with bristly hair: Some tall and straight, some bowed and bent With every  
foul disfigurement: All black and fierce with eyes of fire. Ruthless and  
stern and swift to ire: Some with the jackal's jaw and nose. Some faced  
like boars and buffaloes: Some with the heads of goats and kine, Of  
elephants, and dogs, and swine: With lions' lips and horses' brows, They  
walked with feet of mules and cows: Swords, maces, clubs, and spears they  
bore In hideous hands that reeked with gore, And, never sated, turned  
afresh

To bowls of wine and piles of flesh. Such were the awful guards who  
stood Round Sítá in that lovely wood, While in her lonely sorrow she Wept  
sadly neath a spreading tree. He watched the spouse of Ráma  
there Regardless of her tangled hair, Her jewels stripped from neck and  
limb, Decked only with her love of him.

Footnotes

405:1 Somewhat similarly has Ariosto described the  
band of monster at the gate of the city of Alcina:

"Non fu veduta mai piú strana torma,  
Piú monstuosi volti e peggio fatti; Alcun' dal collo in giù d'uomini han  
forma, Col viso altri di simie, altri di gatti; Stampano alcun con pié  
caprigni l'orma, Alcuni son centauri agili ed atti."

Orlando Furioso, Canto VI. Next: Canto XVIII.: Rávan. Sacred Texts  
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CANTO XVIII.: RÁVAN.

While from his shelter in the boughs

The Vánar looked on Ráma's spouse He heard the gathered giants raise The  
solemn hymn of prayer and praise.--Priests skilled in rite and ritual,  
who The Vedas and their branches

1b knew.

Then, as loud strains of music broke His sleep, the giant monarch  
woke. Swift to his heart the thought returned Of the fair queen for whom he  
burned; Nor could the amorous fiend control The passion that absorbed his  
soul. In all his brightest garb arrayed He hastened to that lovely  
shade. Where glowed each choicest flower and fruit. And the sweet birds  
were never mute. And tall deer bent their heads to drink On the fair  
streamlet's grassy brink. Near that As'oka grove he drew,--A hundred dames  
his retinue. Like Indra with the thousand eyes Girt with the beauties of  
the skies. Some walked beside their lord to hold The chouries, fans, and  
lamps of gold. And others purest water bore

In golden urns, and paced before. Some carried, piled on golden  
plates. Delicious food of dainty cates; Some wine in massive bowls  
whereon The fairest gems resplendent shone. Some by the monarch's side  
displayed, Wrought like a swan, a silken shade: Another beauty walked  
behind, The sceptre to her care assigned. Around the monarch gleamed the  
crowd As lightnings flash about a cloud. And each made music as she  
went With zone and tinkling ornament. Attended thus in royal state The  
monarch reached the garden gate, While gold and silver torches, fed With  
scented oil a soft light shed.

2b

He, while the flame of fierce desire  
Burnt in his eyes like kindled  
fire, Seemed Love incarnate in his pride,  
His bow and arrows laid aside.

1

His robe, from spot and blemish free  
Like Amrit foamy from the sea,

2

Hung down in many a loosened fold  
Inwrought with flowers and bright with  
gold. The Vānar from his station viewed,  
Amazed, the wondrous multitude, Where,  
in the centre of that ring Of  
noblest women, stood the king, As  
stands the full moon fair to view,  
Girt by his starry retinue.

Footnotes

405:1b The six Angas or subordinate branches of the  
Vedas are 1. Sikshá, the science of proper articulation  
and pronunciation: 2. Chhandas, metre: 3. Vyakarana, linguistic analysis  
or grammar: 4. Nirukta, explanation of difficult Vedic words: 5.  
Jyotisha, Astronomy, or rather the Vedic Calendar: 6. Kalpa, ceremonial.

405:2b There appears to be some confusion, of time

here. It was already morning when Hanumán entered  
the grove, and the torches would be needless.

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CANTO XIX.: SÍTA'S FEAR.

Then o'er the lady's soul and frame

A sudden fear and trembling came, When, glowing in his youthful pride, She  
saw the monarch by her side. Silent she sat, her eyes depressed, Her soft  
arms folded o'er her breast, And, --all she could, --her beauties  
screened From the bold gazes of the fiend. There where the wild she-demons  
kept Their watch around, she sighed and wept. Then, like a severed bough,  
she lay Prone on the bare earth in dismay. The while her thoughts on love's  
fleet wings Flew to her lord the best of kings. She fell upon the ground,  
and there Lay struggling with her wild despair, Sad as a lady born again To  
misery and woe and pain, Now doomed to grief and low estate, Once noble  
fair and delicate: Like faded light of holy lore, Like Hope when all her  
dreams are o'er; Like ruined power and rank debased, Like majesty of kings  
disgraced: Like woman \*\*\* led by erring slips,  
The moon that labors in eclipse A pool with all her lillies\* dead An army  
when its king has fled: So sad and helpless wan and worn, She lay among the  
fiends forlorn.

Footnotes

406:1 Rávan is one of those beings who can 'limb\*  
them as they will' and can of course assume the  
loveliest form to please human eyes as well as the terrific\* shape that  
sits \* the king of the Rákshas.

406:2 White and lovely as the Arant or nectar recovered  
from the depths of the Milky Sea when churned by the  
assembled Gods. See Book I. Canto XLV.

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CANTO XX.: RÁVAN'S WOOING.

With amorous look and soft address

The fiend began his suit to press: 'Why wouldst thou, lady lotus-eyed, From  
my fond glance those beauties hide? Mine eager suit no more repel: But love  
me, for I love thee well. Dismiss, sweet dame, dismiss thy fear; No giant  
and no man is near. Ours is the right by force to seize What dames soe'er  
our fancy please.

1b

But I with rude hands will not touch A lady whom I love so much. Fear not,  
dear queen: no fear is nigh: Come, on thy lover's love rely. Some little  
sign of favor show, Nor lie enamoured of thy woe. Those limbs upon that  
cold earth laid. Those tresses twined in single braid,

2b

The fast and woe that wear thy frame, Beseem not thee, O beauteous  
dame. For thee the fairest wreaths were meant, The sandal and the aloe's  
scent, Rich ornaments and pearls of price, And vesture meet for Paradise.  
With dainty cates shouldst thou be fed, And rest upon a sumptuous bed. And  
festive joys to thee belong, The music, and the dance and song. Rise, pearl  
of women, rise and deck With gems and chains thine arms and neck. Shall not  
the dame I love be seen In venture worthy of a queen? Methinks when thy  
sweet form was made His hand the wise Creator stayed; For never more did he  
design A beauty meet to rival thine. Come, let, us love while we yet  
may, For youth will fly and charms decay. Come cast thy \*\*\* fear aside And  
to my lo\*e, my chosen bride. The gem\*s and jewels that my hands Has reft  
from every plundered land, --To thee I give th\*\*\* this day And at thy feet  
my kingdom lay.

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The broad rich earth will I o'errun, And leave no town unconquered,  
none; Then of the whole an offering make To Janak,  
1 dear, for thy sweet sake.

In all the world no power I see Of God or man can strive with me.  
Of old the Gods and Asurs set In terrible array I met: Their scattered  
hosts to earth I beat, And trod their flags beneath my feet. Come, taste of  
bliss and drink thy fill, And rule the slave who serves thy will. Think not  
of wretched Ráma: he Is less than nothing now to thee. Stript of his glory,  
poor, dethroned, A wanderer by his friends disowned, On the cold earth he  
lays his head, Or is with toil and misery dead. And if perchance he lingers  
yet. His eyes on thee shall ne'er be set. Could he, that mighty monarch,  
who Was named Hiranyakas'ipu. Could he who wore the garb of gold Win Glory  
back from Indra's hold?

2

O lady of the lovely smile, Whose eyes the sternest heart beguile, In all  
thy radiant beauty dressed My heart and soul thou ravishest. What though  
thy robe is soiled and worn, And no bright gems thy limbs adorn, Thou  
unadorned art dearer far Than all my loveliest consorts are. My royal home  
is bright and fair; A thousand beauties meet me there. But come, my  
glorious love, and be  
The queen of all those dames and me.'

Footnotes

406:1b Rávan in his magic car carrying off the most  
beautiful women reminds us of the magician in Orlando  
Furioso, possessor of the flying horse.

"Volando talor s'aza ne le stelle, \*E por quasis talor 'a terra rade';  
\*Bie porta con tui tutte le belle \*Donna che trova perquella contrade." \*

406:2b Indian women twisted their long hair in a single  
braid as a sign of mourning for their absent husbands.

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CANTO XXI.: SITA'S SCORN.

She thought upon her lord and sighed,  
And thus in gentle tones replied: 'Beseems thee not, O King, to woo A  
matron, to her husband true. Thus vainly one might hope by sin And evil  
deeds success to win. Shall I, so highly born, disgrace My husband's house,  
my royal race?

Shall I, a true and loyal dame,  
Defile my soul with deed of shame?' Then on the king her back she  
turned, And answered thus the prayer she spurned: 'Turn, Rávan, turn thee  
from thy sin; Seek virtue's paths and walk therein. To others dames be  
honour shown; Protect them as thou wouldst thine own. Taught by thyself,  
from wrong abstain Which, wrought on thee, thy heart would pain.

1b

Beware: this lawless love of thineWill ruin thee and all thy line;And for thy sin, thy sin alone,Will Lanká perish overthrown.Dream not that wealth and power can sway

My heart from duty's path to strayLinked like the Day-God and his shine,I am my lord's and he is mine.Repent thee of thine impious deed;To Ráma's side his consort lead.Be wise; the hero's friendship gain,Nor perish in his fury slain.Go, ask the God of Death to spare,Or red bolt flashing through the air.But look in vain for spell or charmTo stay my Ráma's vengeful arm.Thou, when the hero bends his bow,Shalt hear the clang that heralds woe,Loud as the clash when clouds are rentAnd Indra's bolt to earth is sent.Then shall his furious shafts be sped,Each like a snake with fiery head.And in their flight shall hiss and flameMarked with the mighty archer's name.

2b

Then in the fiery deluge allThy giants round their king shall fall.'

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Footnotes407:1 Janak, king of Mithilá, was Sitá's father.

407:2 Hiranyakas'ipu was a king of the Daityas celebrated for his blasphemous impieties. When his pious son Prahlada praised Vishun the Daitya tried to kill him, when the God appeared in the incarnation of the man-lion and tore the tyrant to pieces.

407:1b Do unto others as thou wouldst they should do unto thee, is a precept frequently occurring in the old Indian poems.

This charity is to embrace not human beings only, but bird and beast as well: "He prayeth best who loveth best all things both great and small"

407:2b It was the custom of Indian warriors to mark their arrows with their ciphers or names, and it seems to have been regarded as a point of honour to give an enemy the satisfaction of knowing who had shot at him. This passage however contains, if my memory serves me well, the first mention in the poem of this practice, and as arrows have been so frequently mentioned and described with almost every conceivable epithet, its occurrence here seems suspicious. No mention of, or allusion to writing has hitherto occurred in the poem.Next: Canto XXII.: Rávan's Threat.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO XXII.: RÁVAN'S THREAT.

Then anger swelled in Rávan's breast,

Who fiercely thus the dame addressed:'Tis ever thus: in vain we sueTo woman, and her favour woo.A lover's humble words impelHer wayward spirit to rebel.The love of thee that fills my soulStill keeps my anger in control.As charioteers with bit and reinThe swerving of the steed restrain.The love that rules me bids me spareThy forfeit life, O thou most fair.For this, O Sitá, have I borneThe keen reproach, the bitter scorn,And the fond love thou boastest yetFor that poor wandering anchoret;Else had the words which thou hast saidBrought death upon thy guilty head.Two months, fair dame, I grant thee stillTo bend thee to thy lover's will.If when that respite time is fledThou still refuse to share my bed,My cooks shall mince thy limbs with steelAnd serve thee for my morning meal.'

1 The minstrel daughters of the skies

Looked on her woe with pitying eyes,And sun-bright children of the Gods

2

Consoled the queen with smiles and nods.She saw, and with her heart at ease,Addressed the fiend in words like these;'Hast thou no friend to love thee, noneIn all this isle to bid thee shunThe ruin which thy crime will bringOn thee and thine, O impious King?Who in all worlds save thee could

wooMe, Ráma's consort pure and true,As though he tempted with his  
 loveQueen Sachí  
 3 on her throne above?  
 How canst thou hope, vile wretch, to flyThe vengeance that e'en now is  
 nigh,When thou hast dared, untouched by shame,To press thy suit on Ráma's  
 dame?Where woods are thick and grass is highA lion and a hare may lie;My  
 Ráma is the lion, thouArt the poor hare beneath the bough,Thou raillest at  
 the lord of men.But wilt not stand within his ken,  
 What! is that eye unstricken yet  
 Whose impious glance on me was set?Still moves that tongue that would not  
 spareThe wife of Das'aratha's heir?' Then, hissing like a furious  
 snake,  
 The fiend again to Sítá spake:'Deaf to all prayers and threats art  
 thou,Devoted to thy senseless vow.No longer respite will I give,And thou  
 this day shalt cease to live;Now I, as sunlight kills the morn,Will slay  
 thee for thy scathe and scorn.' The Rákshas guard was summoned: allThe  
 monstrous crew obeyed the call,And hastened to the king to takeThe orders  
 which he fiercely spake:'See that ye guard her well, and tame,Like some  
 wild thing, the stubborn dame,Until her haughty bough be bentBy mingled  
 threat and blandishment.'  
 1b

The monsters heard: away he strode,And passed within his queens'  
 abode.

Footnotes

408:1 This threat in the same words occurs in Book III.

Canto LVI.

408:2 Rávan carried off and kept in his palace not only earthly  
 princesses but the daughters of Gods and Gandharvas.

408:3 The wife of Indra.

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CANTO XXIII.: THE DEMONS' THREATS

Then round the helpless Sítá drew

With fiery eyes the hideous crew,And thus assailed her, all and each,With  
 insult, taunt, and threatening speech:'What! can it be thou prizest  
 notThis happy chance, this glorious lot,To be the chosen wife of oneSo  
 strong and great, Pulastya's son?Pulastya--thus have sages told--Is mid  
 the Lords of Life

2b enrolled.

Lord Brahmá's mind-born son was he,Fourth of that glorious  
 company.Vis'ravas from Pulastya sprang,--Through all the worlds his glory  
 rang.And of Vis'ravas, large-eyed dame!Our king the mighty Rávan came.His  
 happy consort thou mayst be:Scorn not the words we say to thee' One  
 awful demon, fiery-eyed,Stood by the Maithil queen and cried:'Come and be  
 his, if thou art wise.Who smote the sovereign of the skies,And made the  
 thirty Gods and three,  
 3bO'ercome in furious battle, flee.

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Thy lover turns away with scorn

From wives whom grace and youth adorn.Thou art his chosen consort,  
 thouShall be his pride and darling now." Another, Vikatá by name,In  
 words like these addressed the dame:The king whose blows, in fury  
 dealt,The Nágas

1 and Gandharvas 2 felt,

In battle's fiercest brunt subdued,Has stood by thee and humbly wooed.And  
 wilt thou in thy folly missThe glory of a love like this?Scared by his  
 eye the sun grows chill,The wanderer wind is hushed and still.The rains  
 at his command descend,And trees with new-blown blossoms bend.His word  
 the hosts of demons fear.And wilt thou, dame, refuse to hear?Be  
 counselled; with his will comply,Or, lady, thou shalt surely die.'



Footnotes408:1b These four lines have occurred before. Book III.  
Canto LVI.

408:2b Prajāpatis are the ten lords of created beings first created by  
Brahmā; somewhat like the Demiurgi of the  
Gnostics.

408:3b "This is the number of the Vedic divinities  
mentioned in the Rig-veda. In p. 409 Ashtaka I. Sūkta  
XXXIV. the Rishi Hiranyastúpa invoking the As'vins  
says: À Násatyá tribhirekádasair iha devebniryátam: "O Násatyas (As'vins)  
come hither with the thrice eleven Gods," And in Sūkta XIV. the Rishi  
Praskanva addressing his hymn to Agni (ignis, fire), thus invokes him:  
"Lord of the red steeds, propitiated by our prayers lead hither the  
thirty-three Gods." This number must certainly have been the actual  
number in the early days of the Vedic religion: although it appears  
probable enough that the thirty-three Vedic divinities could not then be  
found co-ordinated in so systematic a way as they were arranged more  
recently by the authors of the Upanishads. In the later ages of Bramanism  
the number went on increasing without measure by successive mythical and  
religious creations which peopled the Indian Olympus with abstract beings  
of every kind. But through lasting veneration of the word of the Veda the  
custom regained of giving the name of "the thirty-three Gods" to the  
immense phalanx of the multiplied deities." GORRESIO.

409:1 Serpent-Gods who dwell in the regions under the  
earth.

409:2 In the mythology of the epics the Gandharvas are the heavenly  
singers or musicians who form the  
orchestra at the banquets of the Gods, and they belong to the heaven of  
India in whose battles they share.

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CANTO XXIV.: SÍTÁ'S REPLY.

Still with reproaches rough and rude

Those fiends the gentle queen pursued:What! can so fair a life  
displease,To dwell with him in joyous ease?Dwell in his bowers a happy  
queenIn silk and gold and jewels' sheen?Still must thy woman fancy  
clingTo Ráma and reject our king?Die in thy folly, or forgetThat wretched  
wandering anchorite.Come, Sita, in luxurious bowersSpend with our lord thy  
happy hours;The mighty lord who makes his ownThe treasures of the worlds  
o'erthrown.'

Then, as a tear bedewed her eye,

The hapless lady made reply:'I loathe, with heart and soul detestThe  
shameful life your words suggest.Eat, if you will, this mortal frame:My  
soul rejects the sin and shame.A homeless wanderer though he be,In him my  
lord, my life I see,And, till my earthly days be done,Will cling to great  
Ikshváku's son.

Then with fierce eyes on Sítá set

They cried again with taunt and threat:Each licking with her fiery  
tongueThe lip that to her bosom hung,And menacing the lady's lifeWith  
axe, or spear or murderous knife:'Hear, Sítá, and our words obey.Or  
perish by our hands to-day,Thy love for Raghu's son forsake,And Rávan for  
thy husband take,Or we will rend thy limbs apartAnd banquet on thy  
quivering heart.Now from her body strike the head,And tell the king the  
dame is dead.Then by our lord's commandment sheA banquet for our band  
shall be.Come, let the wine be quickly broughtThat frees each heart from  
saddening thought.Then to the western gate repair,And we will dance and  
revel there.'

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CANTO XXV.: SÍTÁ'S LAMENT.

On the bare earth the lady sank,

And trembling from their presence shrankLike a strayed fawn, when night  
is dark,And hungry wolves around her bark.

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Then to a shady tree she crept,And thought upon her lord and wept.By fear  
and bitter woe oppressedShe bathed the beauties of her breastWith her hot  
tears' incessant flow,And found no respite from her woe.As shakes a  
plantain in the breezeShe shook, and fell on trembling knees;While at  
each demon's furious lookHer cheek its native hue forsook.She lay and  
wept and made her moanIn sorrow's saddest undertone,And, wild with grief,  
with fear appalled,On Ráma and his brother called:'O dear Kaus'alyá,  
I hear me cry!

Sweet Queen Sumitrá 2, list my sigh!True is the saw the wise declare:  
Death comes not to relieve despair.'Tis vain for dame or man to  
pray;Death will not hear before his day;Since I, from Ráma's sight  
debarred,And tortured by my cruel guard,Still live in hopeless woe to  
grieveAnd loathe the life I may not leave.Here, like a poor deserted  
thing,My limbs upon the ground I fling,And, like a bark beneath the  
blast,Shall sink oppressed with woes at last.Ah, blest are they,  
supremely blest,Whose eyes upon my lord may rest;Who mark his lion, port,  
and hearHis gentle speech that charms the ear.Alas, what antenatal  
crime,What trespass of forgotten timeWaighs on my soul, and bids me  
bowBeneath this load of misery now?'

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#### CANTO XXVI.: SITÁ'S LAMENT

'I Ráma's wife, on that sad day.

By Rávan's arm was borne away,Seized, while I sat and feared no ill,By  
him who wears each form at will,A helpless captive, left forlornTo  
demons' threats and taunts and scorn,Here for my lord I weep and sigh,And  
worn with woe would gladly die.For what is life to me afarFrom Ráma of  
the mighty car?The robber in his fruitless sinWould hope his captives  
love to win.My meaner foot shall never touchThe demon whom I loathe so  
much.The senseless fool! he knows me not,Nor the proud soul his love  
would blot.

Yea, limb from limb will I be rent,  
But never to his prayer consent;Be burnt and perish in the fire,But never  
meet his base desire.My lord was grateful, true and wise,And looked on  
woe with piting eyes;But now, recoiling from the strifeHe pities not his  
captive wife.

Alone in Janasthán he slewThe thousands of the Rákshas crew.His arm was  
strong, his heart was brave,Why comes he not to free and save?Why blame  
my lord in vain surmiseHe knows not where his lady lies.O, if he knew,  
o'er land and seaHis feet were swift to set me free;This Lanká, girdled  
by the deep.Would fall consumed, a shapeless heap,And from each ruined  
home would riseA Rákshas widow's groans and cries.'

#### Footnotes

410:1 The mother of Ráma.

410:2 The mother of Lakshman.

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#### CANTO XXVII.: TRIJATÁ'S DREAM.

Their threats unfear'd, their counsel spurned,  
The demons' breasts with fury burned.Some sought the giant king to  
bearThe tale of Sita's fixt despair.With threats and taunts renewed the  
restAround the weeping lady pressed.But Trijatá, of softer mould,A  
Rákshas matron wife and old,With pity for the captive moved,In words like  
these the fiends reproved:"Me, me," she cried,'eat me, but spareThe  
spouse of Das'aratha's heirLast night I dreamt a dream; and stillThe fear  
and awe my bosom chill;For in that dream I saw foreshown,Our race by  
Ráma's hand o'erthrown.I saw a chariot high in the air,Of ivory exceeding

fair. A hundred steeds that chariot drew As swiftly through the clouds it  
flew, And, clothed in white, with wreaths that shone, The sons of Raghu  
rode thereon, I looked and saw this lady here, Clad in the purest white,  
appear High on the snow white hill whose feet  
The angry waves of ocean beat. And she and Ráma met at last Like light and  
sun when night is past, Again I saw them side by side. On Rávan's car they  
seemed to ride, And with the princely Lakshman flee To northern realms  
beyond the sea.

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Then Rávan, shaved and shorn, besmeared With oil from head to foot,  
appeared. He quaffed, he raved: his robes were red: Fierce was his eye, and  
bare his head. I saw him from his chariot thrust; I saw him rolling in the  
dust. A woman came and dragged away The stricken giant where he lay, And on  
a car which asses drew The monarch of our race she threw, He rose erect, he  
danced and laughed, With thirsty lips the oil he quaffed, Then with wild  
eyes and streaming mouth Sped on the chariot to the south.

1

Then, dropping oil from every limb, His sons the princes followed him, And  
Kumbhakarna,

2 shaved and shorn,

Was southward on a camel borne. Then royal Lanká reeled and fell  
With gate and tower and citadel, This ancient city, far-renowned: All life  
within her walls was drowned; And the wild waves of ocean rolled O'er Lanká  
and her streets of gold. Warned by these signs I bid you fly; Or by the  
hand of Ráma die, Whose vengeance will not spare the life Of one who vexed  
his faithful wife. Your bitter taunts and threats forgo: Comfort the lady  
in her woe, And humbly pray her to forgive; For so you may be spared and  
live, '

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CANTO XXX. 3: HANUMÁN'S  
DELIBERATION.

The Vánar watched concealed: each word

Of Sítá and the fiends he heard,

And in a maze of anxious thought

His quick-conceiving bosom wrought. 'At length my watchful eyes have  
seen, Pursued so long, the Maithil queen, Sought by our Vánar hosts in  
vain From east to west, from main to main, A cautious spy have I  
explored The palace of the Rákshas lord, And thoroughly learned, concealed  
from sight, The giant monarch's power and might. And now my task must be to  
cheer The royal dame who sorrows here. For if I go, and sooth her not, A  
captive in this distant spot, She, when she finds no comfort nigh, Will  
sink beneath her woes and die. How shall my tale, if unconsol'd I leave  
her. be to Ráma told? How shall I answer Raghu's son, 'No message from my  
darling, none!'

The husband's wrath, to fury fanned, Will scorch me lifeless where I  
stand, Or if I urge my lord the king To Lanká's isle his hosts to bring, In  
vain will be his zeal, in vain The toil, the danger, and the pain. Yea,  
this occasion must I seize That from her guard the lady frees,

1b

To win her ear with soft address And whisper hope in dire distress. Shall  
I, a puny Vánar, choose The Sanskrit men delight to use? If, as a man of  
Bráhma kind, I speak the tongue by rules refined. The lady, yielding to  
her fears, Will think 'tis Rávan's voice she hears. I must assume my only  
plan--The language of a common

2b man.

Yet, if the lady sees me nigh,  
second passage, may perhaps be understood

not a language in which words different from Sanskrit were used, but the employment of formal and elaborate diction, MUIR'S Sanskrit Texts, Part II. p. 166.)

p. 412 In terror she will start and cry;

And all the demon band, alarmed, Will come with various weapons armed. With their wild shouts the grove will fill. And strive to take me, or to kill. And, at my death or capture, dies The hope of Ráma's enterprise. For none can leap, save only me, A hundred leagues across the sea. It is a sin in me, I own, To talk with Janak's child alone. Yet greater is the sin if I Be silent, and the lady die. First I will utter Ráma's name. And laud the hero's gifts and fame. Perchance the name she holds so dear Will soothe the faithful lady's fear.'

Footnotes

411:1 In the south is the region of Yama the God of Death, the place of departed spirits.

411:2 Kumbhakarna was one of Rávan's brothers.

411:3 I omit the 28th and 29th Cantos as an unmistakeable interpolation. Instead of advancing the

story it goes back to Canto XVII. containing a lamentation of Sítá after Rávan has left her, and describes the the auspicious signs sent to cheer her, the throbbing of her left eye, arm, and side. The Canto is found in the Bengal recension. Gorresio translates it. and observes: "I think that Chapter XXVIII.--The Auspicious Signs--is an addition, a later interpolation by the Rhapsodists. It has no bond of connexion either with what precedes or follows it, and may be struck out not only without injury to, but positively to the advantage of the poem. The metre in which this chapter is written differs from that which is generally adopted in the course of the poem.'

411:1b The guards are still in the grove, but they are asleep; and Sítá has crept to a tree at some distance from them.

411:2b "As the reason assigned in these passages for not addressing Sítá in Sanskrit such as a Bráhman would

use is not that she would not understand it, but that it would alarm her and be unsuitable to the speaker, we must take them as indicating that Sanskrit, if not spoken by women of the upper classes at the time when the Rámáyana was written (whenever that may have been), was at least understood by them, and was commonly spoken by men of the priestly class, and other educated persons, By the Sanskrit proper to

p. 412 an [ordinary Next: Canto XXXI.: Hanumán's Speech. Sacred Texts

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CANTO XXXI.: HANUMÁN'S SPEECH.

Then in sweet accents low and mild

The Vánar spoke to Janak's child: 'A noble king, by sin unstained, The mighty Das'aratha reigned. Lord of the warrior's car and steed, The pride of old Ikshváku's seed. A faithful friend, a blameless king. Protector of each living thing. A glorious monarch, strong to save, Blest with the bliss he freely gave, His son, the best of all who know The science of the bended bow, Was moon-bright Ráma, brave and strong Who loved the right and loathed the wrong Who ne'er from kingly duty swerved, Loved by the lands his might preserved. His feet the path of law pursued; His arm rebellious foes subdued. His sire's command the prince obeyed And, banished, sought the forest shade, Where with his wife and brother he Wandered a saintly devotee. There as he roamed the wilds he slew The bravest of the Rákshas crew. The giant king the prince beguiled,

And stole his consort, Janak's child. Then Ráma roamed the country round, And a firm friend, Sugríva, found, Lord of the Vánar race, expelled From his own realm which Báli held, He conquered Báli and restored The kingdom to the rightful lord. Then by Sugríva's high decree The Vánar legions searched for thee, Sampáti's counsel bade me leap A hundred

leagues across the deep.And now my happy eyes have seenAt last the long-sought Maithil queen.Such was the form, the eye, the graceOf her whom Ráma bade me trace.'

He ceased: her flowing locks she drew  
To shield her from a stranger's view;Then, trembling in her wild surprise,Raised to the tree her anxious eyes.

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CANTO XXXII.: SÍTÁ'S DOUBT.

Her eyes the Maithil lady raised

And on the monkey speaker gazed.She looked, and trembling at the sightWept bitter tears in wild affright.She shrank a while with fear distraught,Then, nerved again, the lady thought:'Is this a dream mine eyes have seen,This creature, by our laws unclean?O, may the Gods keep Ráma, still,And Lakshman, and my sire, from ill!It is no dream: I have not slept,But, trouble-worn, have watched and weptAfar from that dear lord of mineFor whom in ceaseless woe I pine,No art may soothe my wild distressOr lull me to forgetfulness.I see but him: my lips can frameNo syllable but Ráma's name.Each sight I see, each sound I hear,Brings Ráma to mine eye or ear,The wish was in my heart, and henceThe sweet illusion mocked my sense.'Twas but a phantom of the mind,And yet the voice was soft and kindBe glory to the Eternal Sire, 1

Be glory to the Lord of Fire,

The mighty Teacher in the skies, 2

And Indra with his thousand eyes,And may they grant the truth to beE'en as the words that startled me.'

p. 413

Footnotes

412:1 Svayambhu, the Self-existent, Brahmá.

412:2 Vrihaspati or Váchaspati, the Lord of Speech and preceptor of the Gods.

Next: Canto XXXIII.: The Colloquy.[Sacred Texts](#) [Hinduism](#) [Index](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#)

CANTO XXXIII.: THE COLLOQUY.

Down from the tree Hanumán came

And humbly stood before the dame.Then joining reverent palm to palmAddressed her thus with words of balm:'Why should the tears of sorrow rise,Sweet lady, to those lovely eyes,As when the wind-swept river floodsTwo half expanded lotus buds?Who art thou, O most fair of face?Of Asur,

1 or celestial race?

Did Nága mother give thee birth?For sure thou art no child of earth.Do Rudras

2 claim that heavenly form?

Or the swift Gods 3 who ride the storm?

Or art thou Rohiní 4 the blest,

That star more lovely than the rest,--Reft from the Moon thou lovest wellAnd doomed a while on earth to dwell?Or canst thou, fairest wonder, beThe starry queen Arundhatí,

5

Fled in thy wrath or jealous prideFrom her dear lord Vas'ishtha's side?Who is the husband, father, sonOr brother, O thou loveliest one, Gone from this world in heaven to dwell,For whom those eyes with weeping swell?Yet, by the tears those sweet eyes shed,Yet, by the earth that bears thy tread,

6

By calling on a monarch's name,No Goddess but a royal dame.Art thou the queen, fair lady, say,Whom Rávan stole and bore away?Yea, by that agony of woe,That form unrivalled here below,That votive garb, thou art, I ween,King Janak's child and Ráma's queen.'

Hope at the name of Ráma woke,  
And thus the gentle lady spoke: 'I am that Sítá wooed and won  
By Das'aratha's royal son, The noblest of Ikshváku's line;  
And every earthly joy was mine. But Ráma left his royal home  
In Dandak's tangled wilds to roam. Where with Sumitrá's son and me,  
He lived a saintly devotee. The giant Rávan came with guile  
And bore me thence to Lanká's isle. Some respite yet the fiend allows,  
Two months of life, to Ráma's spouse. Two moons of hopeless woe remain.  
And then the captive will be slain.'

#### Footnotes

413:1 The Asurs were the fierce enemies of the Gods.

413:2 The Rudras are manifestations of S'iva.

413:3 The Maruts or Storm Gods.

413:4 Rohiní is an asterism personified as the daughter of Daksha and the favourite wife of the Moon. The chief star in the constellation is Aldebaran.

413:5 Arundhatí was the wife of the great sage Vas'ishtha, and regarded as the pattern of conjugal excellence. She was raised to the heavens as one of the Pleiades.

413:6 The Gods do not shed tears; nor do they touch the ground when they walk or stand. Similarly Milton's angels marched above the ground and "the passive air upbore their nimble tread."

Virgil's 'vera incessu patuit dea' may refer to the same belief.

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#### CANTO XXXIV.: HANUMÁN'S SPEECH.

Thus spoke the dame in mournful mood,  
And Hanumán his speech renewed: 'O lady, by thy lord's decree  
I come a messenger to thee. Thy lord is safe with steadfast friends,  
And greeting to his queen he sends, And Lakshman, ever faithful bows  
His reverent head to Ráma's spouse.' Through all her frame the rapture ran,  
As thus again the dame began: 'Now verily the truth I know  
Of the wise saw of long ago: 'Once only in a hundred years  
True joy to living man appears.' He marked her rapture-beaming hue,  
And nearer to the lady drew, But at each onward step  
he took Suspicious fear her spirit shook. 'Alas, Alas,' she cried in fear.  
'False is the tale I joyed to hear. 'Tis Rávan, 'tis the fiend, who tries  
To mock me with a new disguise. If thou, to wring my woman's heart,  
Hast changed thy shape by magic art, And wouldst a helpless dame beguile,

The wicked deed is doubly vile. But no: that fiend thou canst not be: Such joy I had from seeing thee. But if my fancy does not err,  
And thou art Ráma's messenger, The glories of my lord repeat: For to these ears such words are sweet. The Vánar knew the lady's thought,

1b

And gave the answer fondly sought:

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'Bright as the sun that lights the sky  
Dear as the Moon to every eye. He scatters blessings o'er the land  
Like bounties from Vais'ravan's 1 hand.

Like Vishnu strong and unsubdued, Unmatched in might and fortitude. Wise, truthful as the Lord of Speech, With gentle words he welcomes each. Of noblest mould and form is he, Like love's incarnate deity. He quells the fury of the foe, And strikes when justice prompts the blow. Safe in the shadow of his arm The world is kept from scathe and harm. Now soon shall Rávan rue his theft, And fall, of realm and life bereft. For Ráma's wrathful hand shall wing

His shafts against the giant king. The day, O Maithil Queen, is near When he and Lakshman will be here, And by their side Sugríva lead His countless hosts of Vánar breed. Sugríva's servant, I, by name Hanúmán, by his order

came. With desperate leap I crossed the sea To Lanká's isle in search of thee,  
No traitor, gentle dame, am I: Upon my word and faith rely.'

Footnotes

413:1b That a friend of Rama would praise him as he should be praised, and that if the stranger were Rávan in disguise he would avoid the subject.

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CANTO XXXV.: HANUMAN'S SPEECH.

With joyous heart she heard him tell

Of the great lord she loved so well, And in sweet accents, soft and low,  
Spoke, half forgetful of her woe: 'How didst thou stand by Ráma's side?  
How came my lord and thou allied? How met the people of the wood  
With men on terms of brotherhood? Declare each grace and regal sign  
That decks the lords of Raghu's line. Each circumstance and look relate  
Tell Ráma's form and speech, and gait.' 'Thy fear and doubt,' he cried,  
'dispelled, Hear, lady, what mine eyes beheld. Hear the imperial signs that  
grace The glory of Ikshváku's race. With moon-bright face and lotus  
eyes, Most beautiful and good and wise, With sun-like glory round his  
head, Long-suffering as the earth we tread, He from all foes his realm  
defends. Yea, o'er the world his care extends. He follows right in all his  
ways, And ne'er from royal duty strays. He knows the lore that strengthens  
kings;

His heart to truth and honour clings. Each grace and gift of form and  
mind Adorns that prince of human kind; And virtues like his own endue  
His brother ever firm and true. O'er all the land they roamed distraught,  
And thee with vain endeavour sought, Until at length their wandering feet  
Trod wearily our wild retreat. Our banished king Sugríva spied The princes from  
the mountain side. By his command I sought the pair And led them to our  
monarch there. Thus Ráma and Sugríva met, And joined the bonds that knit  
them yet, When each besought the other's aid, And friendship and alliance  
made. An arrow launched from Ráma's bow Laid Báli dead, Sugríva's foe. Then  
by commandment of our lord The Vánar hosts each land explored. We reached  
the coast: I crossed the sea And found my way at length to thee.'

1b

Footnotes 414:1 Kuvera the God of Gold.

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CANTO XXXVI.: RÁMA'S RING.

'Receive,' he cried, 'this precious ring, 2b

Sure token from thy lord the king:

The golden ring he wont to wear: See, Ráma's name engraven there. 'Then, as  
she took the ring he showed, The tears that spring of rapture flowed. She  
seemed to touch the hand that sent The dearly valued ornament, And with her  
heart again at ease, Replied in gentle words like these: 'O thou, whose  
soul no fears deter. Wise, brave, and faithful messenger! And hast thou  
dared, o'er wave and foam, To seek me in the giants' home! In thee, true  
messenger, I find The noblest of thy woodland kind. Who couldst, unmoved by  
terror, brook On Rávan, king of fiends, to look.

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Now may we commune here as friends, For he whom royal Ráma sends Must needs  
he one in danger tried, A valiant, wise, and faithful guide.

Say, is it well with Ráma still? Lives Lakshman yet untouched by ill? Then  
why should Ráma's hand be slow To free his consort from her woe? Why spare  
to burn, in search of me, The land encircled by the sea? Can Bharat send no  
army out With banners, cars and battle shout? Cannot thy king Sugríva  
lend His legions to assist his friend?' His hands upon his head he  
laid And thus again his answer made: 'Not yet has Ráma learnt where lies His  
lady of the lotus eyes, Or he like Indra from the sky To S'achí's

1 aid, to thee would fly.

Soon will he hear the tale, and then, Roused to revenge, the lord of  
men Will to the giants' island lead Fierce myriads of the woodland  
breed, Bridging his conquering way, and make The town a ruin for thy  
sake. Believe my words, sweet dame; I swear By roots and fruit, my woodland  
fare, By Meru's peak and Vindhva's chain, And Mandar of the Milky Main, Soon  
shalt thou see thy lord, though now He waits upon Prasravan's  
2 brow, Come glorious as the breaking morn,  
Like Indra on Airávat 3 borne.

For thee he looks with longing eyes; The wood his scanty food supplies. For  
thee his brow is pale and worn, For thee are meat and wine forsworn. Thine  
image in his heart he keeps, For thee by night he wakes and weeps. Or if  
perchance his eyes he close And win brief respite from his woes, E'en then  
the name of Sítá slips In anguish from his murmuring lips. If lovely  
flowers or fruit lie sees, Which women love, upon the trees, To thee, to  
thee his fancy flies. And 'Sítá! O my love!' he cries.'

Footnotes

414:1b Sítá of course knows nothing of what has  
happened to Ráma since the time when she was carried  
away by Rávan, The poet therefore thinks it necessary to repeat the whole  
story of the meeting between Ráma and Sugriva, the defeat of Báli, and  
subsequent events. I give the briefest possible outline of the  
story. 414:2b DE GUBERNATIS thinks that this ring which  
the Sun Ráma sends to the Dawn Sítá is a symbol of the  
sun's disc.

415:1 S'achí is the loved and lovely wife of Indra, and  
she is taken as the type of a woman protected by a  
jealous and all-powerful husband.

415:2 The mountain near Kishkindhá.

415:3 Airávat is the mighty elephant on which Indra  
delights to ride.

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CANTO XXXVII.: SÍTÁ'S SPEECH.

'Thou bringest me,' she cried again,  
'A mingled draught of bliss and pain Bliss, that he wears me in his  
heart, Pain, that he wakes and weeps apart, O, see how Fate is king of  
all, Now lifts us high, now bids us fall, And leads a captive bound with  
cord The meanest slave, the proudest lord, Thus even now Fate's stern  
decree Has struck with grief my lord and me. Say, how shall Ráma reach the  
shore Of sorrow's waves that rise and roar, A shipwrecked sailor, well nigh  
drowned In the wild sea that foams around? When will he smite the demon  
down, Lay low in dust the giants' town, And, glorious from his foes'  
defeat, His wife, his long-lost Sítá, meet? Go, bid him speed to smite his  
foes Before the year shall reach its close. Ten months are fled but two  
remain, Then Rávan's captive must be slain. Oft has Vibhíshan,  
1b just and wise,

Besought him to restore his prize. But deaf is Rávan's senseless ear:  
His brother's rede he will not hear. Vibhíshan's daughter

2b loves me well:

From her I learnt the tale I tell, Avindhva

3b prudent, just, and old,

The giant's fall has oft foretold; But Fate impels him to despise His word  
on whom he most relies. In Ráma's love I rest secure, For my fond heart is  
true and pure, And him, my noblest lord, I deem In valour, power, and might  
supreme.' As from her eyes the waters ran, The Vánar chief again  
began: 'Yea, Ráma, when he hears my tale, Will with our hosts these walls  
assail, Or I myself, O Queen, this day Will bear thee from the fiend  
away, Will lift thee up, and take thee hence To him thy refuge and  
defence; Will take thee in my arms, and flee; To Ráma far beyond the  
sea; Will place thee on Prasravan hill Where Raghu's son is waiting still.'



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'How canst thou bear me hence?' she cried, 'The way is long, the sea is wide. To bear my very weight would be  
A task too hard for one like thee.' 1

Swift rose before her startled eyes The Vánar in his native size, Like  
Mandar's hill or Meru's height, Encircled with a blaze of light. 'O come,'  
he cried, 'thy fears dispel, Nor doubt that I will bear thee well. Come, in  
my strength and care confide, And sit in joy by Ráma's side.' Again she  
spoke: 'I know thee now, Brave, resolute, and strong art thou; In glory  
like the Lord of Fire With storm-swift feet which naught may tire But yet  
with thee I may not fly: For, borne so swiftly through the sky, Mine eyes  
would soon grow faint and dim, My dizzy brain would reel and swim, My  
yielding arms relax their hold, And I in terror uncontrolled Should fall  
into the raging sea Where hungry sharks would feed on me. Nor can I touch,  
of free accord, The limbs of any save my lord. If, by the giant forced  
away, In his enfolding arms I lay, Not mine, O Vánar, was the blame; What  
could I do, a helpless dame? Go, to my lord my message bear, And bid him  
end my long despair.'

Footnotes

415:1b Vibhíshan is the wicked Rávan's good brother.

415:2b Her name is Kalá, or in the Bengal recension  
Nandá.

415:3b One of Rávan's chief councillors.

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CANTO XXXVIII.: SITÁ'S GEM.

Again the Vánar chief replied,  
With her wise answer satisfied: 'Well hast thou said: thou canst not  
brave The rushing wind, the roaring wave. Thy woman's heart would sink with  
fear Before the ocean shore were near. And for thy dread lest limb of  
thine Should for a while be touched by mine, The modest fear is worthy  
one Whose cherished lord is Raghu's son. Yet when I sought to bear thee  
hence I spoke the words of innocence, Impelled to set the captive free By  
friendship for thy lord and thee. But if with me thou wilt not try The  
passage of the windy sky,  
Give me a gem that I may show,  
Some token which thy lord may know.' Again the Maithil lady spoke, While  
tears and sobs her utterance broke: 'The surest of all signs is this, To  
tell the tale of vanished bliss. Thus in my name to Ráma speak: 'Remember  
Chitrakúta's peak.

And the green margin of the rill 1b

That flows beside that pleasant hill, Where thou and I together  
strayed Delighting in the tangled shade. There on the grass I sat with  
thee And laid my head upon thy knee. There came a greedy crow and pecked The  
meat I waitd to protect And, heedless of the clods I threw, About my head  
in circles flew, Until by darling hunger pressed He boldly pecked me on the  
breast. I ran to thee in rage and grief And prayed for vengeance on the  
thief. Then Ráma

2b from his slumber rose

And smiled with pity at my woes. Upon my bleeding breast he saw The  
scratches made by beak and claw. He laid an arrow on his bow. And launched  
it at the shameless crow. That shaft, with magic power endued, The bird,  
where'er he flew, pursued, Till back to Raghu's son he fled And bent at  
Ráma's feet his head.

3b

Couldst thou for me with anger stirred Launch that dire shaft upon a  
bird, And yet canst pardon him who stole The darling of thy heart and  
soul? Rise up, O bravest of the brave.

And come in all thy might to save. Come with the thunders of thy bow, And  
smite to earth the Rakshas foe.' She ceased; and from her glorious

hairShe took a gem that sparkled thereA token which her husband's  
eyesWith eager love would recognize.His head the Vánar envoy bentIn low  
obeisance reverent.And on his finger bound the gemShe loosened from her  
diadem.

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Footnotes

416:1 Hanumán when he entered the city had in order to  
escape observation condensed himself to the size of a  
cat.

416:1b The brook Mandákiní, not far from Chitrakúta  
where Ráma sojourned for a time.

416:2b The poet here changes from the second person to the third.416:3b  
The whole long story is repeated with some  
slight variations and additions from Book II. Canto  
XCVI. I give here only the outline.

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CANTO XLI. 1: THE RUIN OF THE GROVE.

Dismissed with every honour due

The Vánar from the spot withdrew.Then joyous thought the Wind-God's  
son:'The mighty task is wellnigh done.The three expedients I must  
leave;The fourth alone can I achieve.

2

These dwellers in the giants' isleNo arts of mine can reconcile.I cannot  
bribe: I cannot sowDissension mid the Rákshas foe.Arts, gifts, address,  
these fiends despise;But force shall yet their king chastise.Perchance he  
may relent when allThe bravest of his chieftains fall.This lovely grove  
will I destroy,The cruel Rávan's pride and joy.The garden where he takes  
his easeMid climbing plants and flowery treesThat lift their proud tops  
to the skies,Dear to the tyrant as his eyes.Then will he rouse in wrath,  
and leadHis legions with the car and steedAnd elephants in long array,And  
seek me thirsty for the fray.The Rákshas legions will I meet,  
And all his bravest host defeat;Then, glorious from the bloody plain,Turn  
to my lord the king again.'   Then every lovely tree that boreFair  
blossoms, from the soil he tore,Till each green bough that lent its  
shadeTo singing birds on earth was laid.The wilderness he left a  
waste,The fountains shattered and defaced:O'erthrew and levelled with the  
groundEach shady seat and pleasure-mound.Each arbour clad with climbing  
bloom,Each grotto, cell, and picture room,Each lawn by beast and bird  
enjoyed,Each walk and terrace was destroyed.

And all the place that was so fair

Was left a ruin wild and bare,As if the fury of the blastOr raging fire  
had o'er it passed.

Footnotes

417:1 I omit two Cantos of dialogue. Sítá tells

Hanumán again to convey her message to Ráma and bid him hasten to rescue  
her. Hanumán replies as before

that there is no one on earth equal to Ráma, who will soon come and  
destroy Rávan. There is not a new idea in the two Cantos: all is  
reiteration.

417:2 The expedients to vanquish an enemy or to make  
him come to terms are said to be four: conciliation,  
gifts, disunion, and force or punishment. Hanumán considers it useless to  
employ the first three and resolves to punish Rávan by destroying his  
pleasure-grounds.

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CANTO XLII.: THE GIANTS ROUSED.

The cries of startled birds, the sound

Of tall trees crashing to the ground, Struck with amaze each giant's ear. And filled the isle with sudden fear. Then, wakened by the crash and cries, The fierce shefiends unclosed their eyes, And saw the Vánar where he stood Amid the devastated wood. The more to scare them with the view To size immense the Vánar grew; And straight the Rákshas warders cried Janak's daughter terrified Whose envoy, whence, and who is he, Why has he come to talk with thee? Speak, lady of the lovely eyes, And let not fear thy joy disguise.' Then thus replied the Maithil dame Of noble soul and perfect frame. 'Can I discern, with scanty skill, These fiends who change their forms at will?' 'Tis yours to say: your kin you meet; A serpent knows a serpent's feet. I weet not who he is: the sight Has filled my spirit with affright.' Some pressed round Sítá in a ring; Some bore the story to their king: 'A mighty creature of our race, In monkey form, has reached the place. He came within the grove,' they cried, 'He stood and talked by Sítá's side, He comes from Indra's court to her, Or is Kuvera's messenger; Or Ráma sent the spy to seek His consort, and her wrongs to wreak. His crushing arm, his trampling feet Have marred and spoiled that dear retreat, And all the pleasant place which thou So lovest is a ruin now. The tree where Sítá sat alone Is spared where all are overthrown. Perchance he saved the dame from harm: Perchance the toil had numbed his arm.' Then flashed the giant's eye with fire Like that which lights the funeral pyre. He bade his bravest Kinkars

1b speed

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And to his feet the spoiler lead. Forth from the palace, at his hest, Twice forty thousand warriors pressed. Burning for battle, strong and fierce, With clubs to crush and swords to pierce, They saw Hanúmán near a porch,

And, thick as moths around a torch, Rushed on the foe with wild attacks Of mace and club and battle-axe. As round him pressed the Rákshas crowd, The wondrous monkey roared aloud, That birds fell headlong from the sky: Then spake he with a mighty cry: 'Long life to Das'aratha's heir, And Lakshman, ever-glorious pair Long life to him who rules our race, Preserved by noblest Ráma's grace I am the slave of Kosal's king,

1

Whose wondrous deeds the minstrels sing. Hanúmán I, the Wind-God's seed: Beneath this arm the foemen bleed. I fear not, unapproached in might, A thousand Rávans ranged for fight, Although in furious hands they rear The hill and tree for sword and spear, I will, before the giants' eyes, Their city and their king chastise; And, having communed with the dame, Depart in triumph as I came.' At that terrific roar and yell The heart of every giant fell. But still their king's command they feared And pressed around with arms upreared. Beside the porch a club was laid: The Vánar caught it up, and swayed The weapon round his head, and slew The foremost of the Rákshas crew. Thus Indra vanquished, thousand-eyed, The Daityas who the Gods defied. Then on the porch Hanúmán sprang, And loud his shout of triumph rang. The giants looked upon the dead, And turning to their monarch fled. And Rávan with his spirit wrought To frenzy by the tale they brought, Urged to the fight Prahasta's son, Of all his chiefs the mightiest one.

Footnotes

417:1b Kinkar means the special servant of a sovereign, who receives his orders immediately p. 418 from his master. The Bengal recension gives these Rákshases an epithet which the Commentator explains 'as generated in the mind of Brahmá.'

418:1 Ráma de jure King of Kosal of which Ayodhyá was the capital. Next: Canto XLIII.: The Ruin of The Temple. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XLIII.: THE RUIN OF THE

TEMPLE.

The Wind-God's son a temple 1b scaled  
Which, by his fury unassailed,  
High as the hill of Meru, stood Amid the ruins of the wood; And in his fury  
thundered out Again his haughty battle-shout: 'I am the slave of Kosal's  
King Whose wondrous deeds the minstrels sing.' Forth hurried, by that shout  
alarmed, The warders of the temple armed With every weapon haste  
supplied, And closed him in on every side, With bands that strove to pierce  
and strike With shaft and axe and club and pike. Then from its base the  
Vánar tore A pillar with the weight it bore. Against the wall the mass he  
dashed, And forth the flames in answer flashed, That wildly ran o'er roofs  
and wall In hungry rage consuming all. He whirled the pillar round his  
head And struck a hundred giants dead. Then high upheld on air he rose  
And called in thunder to his foes: 'A thousand Vánar chiefs like me Roam at  
their will o'er land and sea, Terrific might we all possess: Our stormy  
speed is limitless. And all, unconquered in the fray, Our king Sugriva's  
word obey. Backed by his bravest myriads, he Our warrior lord will cross  
the sea, Then Lanká's lofty towers, and all Your hosts and Rávan's self  
shall fall. None shall be left unslaughtered; none Who braves the wrath of  
Raghu's son.'

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CANTO XLIV.: JAMBUMÁLI'S DEATH.

Then Jambumáli, pride and boast

For valour of the Rákshas host, Prahasta's son supremely brave. Obeyed the  
hest that Rávan gave: Fierce warrior with terrific teeth, With sanguine  
robes and brilliant wreath. A bow like Indra's own

2b, and store

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Of glittering shafts the chieftain bore. And ever as the string he  
\*\*tried The weapon with a roar replied, Loud as the crashing thunder sent By  
him who rules the firmament. Soon as the foeman came in view Borne on a car  
which asses drew. The Vánar chieftain mighty-voiced Shouted in triumph and  
rejoiced. Prahasta's son his bow-string drew, And swift the winged arrows  
flew. One in the face the Vánar smote, Another quivered in his throat. Ten  
from the deadly weapon sent His brawny aims and shoulders rent.

Then as he felt each galling shot The Vánar's rage waxed fiercely hot. He  
looked, and saw a mass of stone That lay before his feet o'erthrown. The  
mighty block he raised and threw, And crashing through the air it flew. But  
Jambumah shunned the blow, And rained fresh arrows from his bow. The  
Vánar's limbs were red with gore: A Sál tree from the earth he tore, And,  
ere he hurled it undismayed, Above his head the missile swayed. But shafts  
from Jambumah's bow Cut through it ere his hand could throw. And thigh and  
arm and chest and side With streams of rushing blood were dyed. Still  
unsubdued though wounded oft The shattered trunk he raised aloft, And down  
with well-directed aim On Jambumah's chest it came. There crushed upon the  
trampled grass He lay an undistinguished mass, The foeman's eye no more  
could see His head or chest or arm or knee. And bow and car and steeds  
1 and store

Of glittering; shafts were seen no more. When Jambumah's death he  
heard, King Rávan's heart with rage was stirred And forth his general's  
sons he sent,

For power and might preeminent.

Footnotes

418:1b Chaityapráśāda is explained by the  
Commentator as the place where the Gods of the  
Rákshases were kept. Goiresio translates it by 'un grande edificio.'

418:2b The bow of Indra is the rainbow.

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CANTO XLV.: THE SEVEN DEFEATED.

Forth went the seven in brave attire,  
In glory brilliant as the fire. Impetuous chiefs with massive bows, The  
quellers of a host of foes:  
Trained from their youth in martial lore,  
And masters of the arms they bore: Each emulous and fiercely bold, And  
banners wrought with glittering gold Waved o'er their chariots, drawn at  
speed By coursers of the noblest breed. On through the ruins of the grove At  
Hannmán they fiercely drove, And from the ponderous bows they strained A  
shower of deadly arrows rained. Then scarce was seen the Vánar's  
form Enveloped in the arrowy storm. So stands half veiled the Mountains'  
King When rainy clouds about him cling. By nimble turn, by rapid bound He  
shunned the shafts that rained around, Eluding, as in air he rose. The  
rushing chariots of his foes, The mighty Vánar undismayed Amid his archer  
foemen played,  
As plays the frolic wind on high Mid bow-armed  
lb clouds that fill the sky,  
He raised a mighty roar and yell That fear on all the army fell, And then,  
his warrior soul aglow With fury, rushed upon the foe, Some with his open  
hand he beat To death and trampled with his feet; Some with fierce nails he  
rent and slew, And others with his fists o'erthrew; Some with his legs, as  
on he rushed, Some with his bulky chest he crushed: While some struck  
senseless by his roar Dropped on the ground and breathed no more. The  
remnant, seized with sudden dread, Turned from the grove and wildly  
fled. The trampled earth was thickly strown With steed and car and flag  
o'erthrown, And the red blood in rivers flowed From slaughtered fiends o'er  
path and road.

Footnotes

419:1 We were told a few lines before that the chariot  
of Jambumah was drawn by asses. Here horses are spoken of. The  
Commentator notices the discrepancy  
and says that by horses asses are meant.

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CANTO XLVI.: THE CAPTAINS.

Mad with the rage of injured pride  
King Ráven summoned to his side The valiant \*\*\* who led his host, Supreme  
in war and honoured most. 'Go forth,' he cried, 'with car and steed, A\*\*  
\*\*\*\* feet this monkey lead. But watch each chance of time and place To  
seize this thing of silvan race. For from his wondrous exploits he No  
monkey of the woods can be,  
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But some new kind of creature meant To work us woe, by Indra  
sent. Gandharvas, Nágas, and the best Of Yakshas have our might  
confessed. Have we not challenged and subdued The whole celestial  
multitude? Yet will you not, if you are wise, A chief of monkey race  
despise. For I myself have Báli known, And King Sugríva's power I own. But  
none of all their woodland throng Was half so terrible and strong.'

Obedient to the words he spake They hastened forth the foe to  
take. Swift were the cars whereon they rode, And bright their weapons  
flashed and glowed. They saw: they charged in wild career With sword and  
mace and axe and spear. From Durdhar's bow five arrows sped And quivered in  
the Vánar's head. He rose and roared; the fearful sound Made all the region  
echo round. Then from above his weight he threw On Durdhar's car that near  
him drew. The weight that came with lightning speed Crushed pole and axle,  
car and steed. It shattered Durdhar's head and neck, And left him lifeless  
mid the wreck. Yúpáksha saw the warrior die, And Virúpáksha heard his  
cry, And, mad for vengeance for the slain, They charged their Vánar foe  
again. He rose in air: they onward pressed And fiercely smote him on the  
breast. In vain they struck his iron frame: With eagle swoop to earth he

came, Tore from the ground a tree that grew Beside him, and the demons  
slew. Then Bhásakama raised his spear, And Praghas with a laugh drew  
near, And, maddened at the sight, the two  
Against the undaunted Vánar flew. As from his wounds the torrents  
flowed, Like a red sun the Vánar showed. He turned, a mountain peak to  
seize With all its beasts and snakes and trees. He hurled it on the pair:  
and they Crushed, overwhelmed, beneath it lay.

Footnotes

419:1b Armed with the bow of Indra, the rainbow.

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CANTO XLVII.: THE DEATH OF AKSHA.

But Rávan, as his fury burned,

His eyes on youthful Aksha 1 turned,

Who rose impetuous at his glance And shouted for his bow and lance.

He rode upon a glorious car

That shot the light of gems afar. His pennon waved mid glittering gold And

bright the wheels with jewels rolled. By long and fierce devotion won That

car was splendid as the sun. With rows of various weapons stored; And

thought-swift horses whirled their lord Racing along the earth, or

rose High through the clouds whene'er he chose. Then fierce and fearful war

between The Vánar and the fiend was seen. The Gods and Asurs stood

amazed, And on the wondrous combat gazed. A cry from earth rose long and

shrill, The wind was hushed, the sun grew chill. The thunder bellowed from

the sky, And troubled ocean roared reply. Thrice Aksha strained his

dreadful bow,

Thrice smote his arrow on the foe, And with full streams of crimson

bled Three gashes in the Vánar's head. Then rose Hanumán in the air To shun

the shafts no life could bear. But Aksha in his car pursued, And from on

high the fight renewed With storm of arrows, thick as hail When angry

clouds some hill assail. Impatient of that arrowy shower The Vánar chief

put forth his power, Again above his chariot rose And smote him with

repeated blows. Terrific came each deadly stroke: Breast neck and arm and

back he broke; And Aksha fell to earth, and lay With all his life-blood

drained away.

Footnotes

420:1 Rávan's son.

Next: Canto XLVIII.: Hanumán Captured. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO XLVIII.: HANUMÁN CAPTURED.

To Indrajit 1b the bold and brave

The giant king his mandate gave:

'O trained in warlike science, best In arms of all our mightiest, Whose

valour in the conflict shown To Asurs and to Gods is known, The Kinkars

whom I sent are slain, And Jambumáli and his train; The lords who led our

giant bands Have fallen by the monkey's hands; With shattered cars the

ground is spread, And Aksha lies amid the dead. Thou art my best and

bravest: go, Unmatched in power, and slay the foe.'

p. 421

He heard the hest: he bent his head; Athirst for battle forth he sped. Four

tigers fierce, of tawny hue, With fearful teeth, his chariot drew.

Hanumán heard his strong bow clang, And swiftly from the earth he

sprang, While weak and ineffective fell The archer's shafts though pointed

well.

The Rákshas saw that naught might kill The wondrous foe who mocked his

skill, And launched a magic shaft to throw A binding spell about his

foe. Forth flew the shaft: the mystic charm Stayed his swift feet and

numbed his arm. Through all his frame he felt the spell, And motionless to

earth he fell. Nor would the reverent Vánar loose The bonds that bound him

as a noose. He knew that Brahmá's self had charmed The weapon that his

might disarmed. They saw him helpless on the ground, And all the giants  
pressed around, And bonds of hemp and bark were cast About his limbs to  
hold him fast. They drew the ropes round feet and wrists; They beat him  
with their hands and fists. And dragged him as they strained the cord With  
shouts of triumph to their lord.

1

Footnotes

420:1b Conqueror of Indra, another of Rávan's sons. Next: Canto XLIX.:

Rávan. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO XLIX.: RÁVAN.

On the fierce king Hanúmán turned

His angry eyes that glowed and burned. He saw him decked with wealth  
untold Of diamond and pearl and gold, And priceless was each wondrous  
gem That sparkled in his diadem. About his neck rich chains were twined, The  
best that fancy e'er designed, And a fair robe with pearls bestrung Down  
from his mighty shoulders hung. Ten heads he reared,

2 as Mandar's hill

Lifts woody peaks which tigers fill. Bright were his eyes, and bright,  
beneath, The flashes of his awful teeth. His brawny arms of wondrous  
size Were decked with rings and scented dyes His hands like snakes with  
five long heads Descending from their mountain beds. He sat upon a crystal  
throne Inlaid with wealth of precious stone, Whereon, of noblest work, was  
set A gold-embroidered coverlet, Behind the monarch stood the best  
Of beauteous women gaily dressed. And each her giant master fanned, Or  
waved a chourie in her hand. Four noble courtiers

1b wise and good

In counsel, near the monarch stood, As the four oceans ever stand About the  
sea-encompassed land. Still, though his heart with rage was fired, The  
Vánar marvelled and admired: 'O what a rare and wondrous sight! What  
beauty, majesty, and might! All regal pomp combines to grace This ruler of  
the Rákshas race. He, if he scorned not right and law, Might guide the  
world with tempered awe: Yea, Indra and the Gods on high Might on his  
saving power rely.'

Footnotes

421:1 The sloka which follows is probably an

interpolation, as it is inconsistent w<sup>th</sup> the questioning

in Canto L.: He looked on Ravan in his pride, And boldly to the monarch  
cried: 'I came an envoy to this place From him who rules the Vánar  
race. 421:2 The ten heads of Rávan have provoked much

ridicule from European critics. It should be remembered

that Spenser tells us of "two brethren giants" "The one of which had two  
heads, the other three;" and Milton speaks of the "four-fold visaged  
Four," the four Cherubic shapes each of which had four faces.

Next: Canto L.: Prahasta's Questions. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO L.: PRAHASTA'S QUESTIONS.

Then fierce the giant's fury blazed

As on Hanúmán's form he gazed, And shaken by each wild surmise He spake  
aloud with flashing eyes: 'Can this be Nandi

2b standing here,

The mighty one whom all revere? Who once on high Kailása's hill Pronounced  
the curse that haunts me still? Or is the woodland creature one Of Asur  
race, or Bali's

3b son?

The wretch with searching question try: Learn who he is, and whence; and  
why He marred the glory of the grove, And with my captains fiercely  
strove.'

p. 422

Prahasta heard his lord's behest, And thus the Vánar chief addressed: 'O  
monkey stranger, be consoled: Fear not, and let thy heart be bold. If thou

by Indra's mandate sentThy steps to Lanká's isle hast bent,With fearless words the cause explain,  
And freedom thou shalt soon regain.Or if thou comest as a spyDespatched by Vishnu in the sky,Or sent by Yama, or the LordOf Riches, hast our town explored;Proved by the prowess thou hast shownNo monkey save in form alone;Speak boldly all the truth, and beReleased from bonds, unharmed and free.But falsehood spoken to our kingSwift punishment of death will bring.'

He ceased: the Vánar made reply;

'Not Indra's messenger am I,Nor came I hither to fulfilKuvera's hest or Vishnu's will.I stand before the giants hereA Vánar e'en as I appear.I longed to see the king--'twas hardTo win my way through gate and guard.And so to gain my wish I laidIn ruin that delightful shadeNo fiend, no God of heavenly kindWith bond or chain these herbs may bind.The Eternal Sire himself of oldVouchsafed the boon that makes me bold,From Brahmá's magic shaft released

1

I knew the captor's power had ceased,The fancied bonds I freely brooked,And thus upon the king have looked.My way to Lanká have I won,A messenger from Raghu's son.'

Footnotes

421:1b Durdhar, or as the Bengal recension reads

Mahodara, Prahasta, Mahápárs'va, and Nikumbha.

421:2b The chief attendant of S'iva.

421:3b Bali, not to be confounded with Báli the Vánar, was a celebrated Daitya or demon who had usurped the empire of the three worlds, and who was deprived of two thirds of his dominions by Vishnu in the Dwarf incarnation.

Next: Canto LI.: Hanumán's Reply.Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index   Previous  
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CANTO LI.: HANUMÁN'S REPLY.

My king Sugriva greets thee fair,

And bids me thus his rede declare.Son of the God of Wind, by nameHanumán, to this isle I came.To set the Maithil lady freeI crossed the barrier of the sea.I roamed in search of her and foundHer weeping on that lovely ground.Then in the lore of duty trained,Who hast by stern devotion gainedThis wondrous wealth and power and fameShouldst fear to wrong another's dame.

Hear thou my counsel, and be wise:

No fiend, no dweller in the skiesCan bear the shafts by Lakshman shot,Or Ráma when his wrath is hot.O Giant King, repent the crimeAnd soothe him while there yet is time.Now be the Maithil queen restoredUninjured to her sorrowing lord.Soon wilt thou rue thy dire mistake:She is no woman but a snake,Whose very deadly bite will beThe ruin of thy house and thee.

Thy pride has led thy thoughts astray,That fancy not a hand may slayThe monarch of the giants, screenedFrom mortal blow of God and fiend.Sugriva still thy death may be:No Yaksha, fiend, or God is heAnd Ráma from a woman springs,The mortal seed of mortal kings.O think how Báli fell subdued;Think on thy slaughtered multitude.Respect those brave and strong allies;Consult thy safety, and be wise.I, even I, no helper needTo overthrow, with car and steed,Thy city Lanká half divine:The power but not the will is mine.For Raghu's son, before his friendThe Vánar monarch, strove to endWith his own conquering arm the lifeOf him who stole his darling wife.Turn, and be wise, O Rávan turn;Or thou wilt see thy Lanká burn,And with thy wives, friends, kith and kinBe ruined for thy senseless sin.'

Footnotes422:1 When Hanumán was bound with cords Indrajit released his captive from the spell laid upon him by the magic weapon.



Next: Canto LII.: Vibhishan's Speech.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO LII.: VIBHÍSHAN'S SPEECH.

Then Rávan spake with flashing eye:

'Hence with the Vánar: let him die.Vibíshan heard the stern behest,And pondered in his troubled breast;Then, trained in arts that soothe and pleaseAddressed the king in words like these:

'Revoke, my lord, thy fierce decree,

And hear the words I speak to thee.Kings wise and noble ne'er condemnTo death the envoys sent to them:Such deed the world's contempt would drawOn him who breaks the ancient law.

1b

Observe the mean where justice lies,And spare his life but still chastise.'

p. 423

Then forth the tyrant's fury broke,And thus in angry words he spoke:'O hero, when the wicked bleedNo sin or shame attends the deed.The Vánar's blood must needs be spilt,The penalty of heinous guilt.'

Again Vibhíshan made reply:'Nay, hear me, for he must not die.Hear the great law the wise declare:'Thy foeman's envoy thou shalt spare.' 'Tis true he comes an open foe:'Tis true his hands have wrought us woeBut law allows thee, if thou wilt,A punishment to suit the guilt.The mark of shame, the scourge, the brand,The shaven head, the wounded hand.Yea, were the Vánar envoy slain,Where, King of giants, were the gain?On them alone, on them who sentThe message, be the punishment.For spake he well or spake he ill,He spake obedient to their will.And, if he perish, who can bearThy challenge to the royal pair?Who, cross the ocean and inciteThy death-doomed enemies to fight?'

Footnotes

422:1b "One who murders an ambassador i (rája

\*bhata) goes to Tuptakumbha, the hell of heated

caldrons." WILSON's Vishya Purana, Vol. II pg 217. p. 423 "It will be remembered that the envoys of King

David had the half of their beards shaved off by Hanun,

King of Ammon. (2 Sam. X.)" WHEELER, Hist, of India, Vol. II. 342.

Next: Canto LIII.: The Punishment.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LIII.: THE PUNISHMENT.

King Rávan, by his pleading moved,

The counsel of the chief approved: 'Thy words are wise and true; to killAn envoy would beseech us illYet must we for his crime inventSome fitting mode of punishment.The tail, I fancy, is the partMost cherished by a monkey's heart.

1

Make ready: set his tail aflame,And let him leave us as he came,And thus disfigured and disgracedBack to his king and people haste.' The giants heard their monarch's speech;And, filled with burning fury, eachBrought strips of cotton cloth, and roundThe monkey's tail the bandage wound.As round big tail the bands they drewHis mighty form dilating grew Vast as the flame that bursts on high

Where trees are old and grass is dry.Each hand and strip they soaked in oil,And set on fire the twisted coil.Delighted as they viewed the blaze, The cruel demons stood at gaze:And mid loud drums and shells rang outThe triumph of their joyful shout.They pressed about him thick and fastAs through the crowded streets he passed,Observing with attentive careEach rich and wondrous structure there,Still heedless of the eager cryThat rent the air, The spy! the spy! Some to the captive lady ran.And thus in joyous words began:'That copper-visaged monkey, heWho in the garden talked with thee,Through Lanká's town is led a show,And round his tail the red flames glow.'The mournful news the lady heardThat with fresh

grief her bosom stirred.Swift to the kindled fire she wentAnd prayed  
before it reverent:'If I my husband have obeyed,And kept the ascetic vows  
I made,Free, ever free, from stain and blot,O spare the Vánar; harm him  
not.' Then leapt on high the flickering flameAnd shone in answer to the  
dame.The pitying fire its rage forbore:The Vánar felt the heat no  
more.Then, to minutest size reduced,  
1bThe bonds that bound his limbs he loosed,  
And, freed from every band and chain,Rose to his native size again.He  
seized a club of ponderous weightThat lay before him by the gate,Rushed  
at the fiends that hemmed him round,And laid them lifeless on the  
ground,Through Lanká's town again he strode,And viewed each street and  
square and road,--Still wreathed about with harmless blaze,A sun  
engarlanded with rays.

p. 424

Footnotes

423:1 I have not attempted to tone down anything in  
this Canto. I give a faithful translation.

423:1b "Behold a wonder! they but now who seemed In bigness to surpass  
earth's giant sons, Now less than  
smallest dwarfs in narrow room Throng numberless."

Paradise Lost, I, 716.Next: Canto LIV.: The Burning of Lanká.Sacred Texts  
Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LIV.: THE BURNING OF LANKÁ.

'What further deed remains to do

To vex the Rákshas king anew?The beauty of his grove is marred,Killed are  
the bravest of his guard.The captains of his host are slain;But forts and  
palaces remain.Swift is the work and light the toilEach fortress of the  
foe to spoil.' Reflecting thus, his tale ablazeAs through the cloud red  
lightning plays,He scaled the palaces and spreadThe conflagration where  
he sped.From house to house he hurried on,And the wild flames behind him  
shone.Each mansion of the foe he scaled,And furious fire its roof  
assailedTill all the common ruin shared:Vibhíshan's house alone was  
spared.From blazing pile to pile he sprang,And loud his shout of triumph  
rang,As roars the doomsday cloud when allThe worlds in dissolution  
fall.The friendly wind conspired to fanThe hungry flames that leapt and  
ran,And spreading in their fury caught

The gilded walls with pearls inwrought,Till each proud palace reeled and  
fellAs falls a heavenly citadel. Loud was the roar the demons raisedMid  
walls that split and beams that blazed,As each with vain endeavour  
stroveTo stay the flames in house or grove.The women, with dishevelled  
hair,Flocked to the roofs in wild despair,Shrieked out for succour, wept  
aloud,And fell, like lightning from a cloud.He saw the flames ascend and  
curlRound turkis, diamond, and pearl,While silver floods and molten  
goldFrom ruined wall and latice rolled.As fire grows fiercer as he  
feedsOn wood and grass and crackling reeds,So Hanumán the ruin eyedWith  
fury still unsatisfied.

Next: Canto LV.: Fear For Sítá.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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CANTO LV.: FEAR FOR SÍTÁ.

But other thoughts resumed their sway

When Lanká's town in ruin lay;And, as his bosom felt their weighHe stood  
a while to meditate'What have I done?', he thought with shame,'Destroyed  
the town with hostile flame.O happy they whose firm controlChecks the  
wild passion of the soul;Who on the fires of anger throwThe cooling drops  
that check their glow.But woe is me, whom wrath could leadTo do this  
senseless shameless deed.The town to fire and death I gave,Nor thought of  
her I came to save,--Doomed by my own rash folly, doomedTo perish in the  
flames consumed.If I, when anger drove me wild.Have caused the death of  
Janak's child,The kindled flame shall end my woe,Or the deep fires that  
burn below,

1

Or my forsaken corse shall be Food for the monsters of the sea. How can I meet Sugriva? how Before the royal brothers bow, -- I whose rash deed has madly foiled.

The noble work in which we toiled? Or has her own bright virtue shed Its guardian influence round her head? She lives untouched, -- the peerless dame; Flame has no fury for the flame.

2

The very fire would ne'er consent To harm a queen so excellent, -- The high-souled Ráma's faithful wife, Protected by her holy life. She lives, she lives. Why should I fear For one whom Raghu's sons hold dear? Has not the pitying fire that spared The Vánar for the lady cared?' Such were his thoughts: he pondered long, And fear grew faint and hope grew strong. Then round him heavenly voices rang, And, sweetly tuned, his praises sang: 'O glorious is the exploit done By Hanumán the Wind-God's son. The flames o'er Lanká's city rise: The giants' home in ruin lies. O'er roof and wall the fires have spread, Nor harmed a hair of Sítá's head.'

Next: Canto LVI: Mount Arishta. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LVI: MOUNT ARISHTA.

He looked upon the burning waste,  
Then sought the queen in joyous haste, With words of hope consoled her heart,  
And made him ready to depart.

p. 425

He sealed Arishta's glorious steep Whose summits beetled o'er the deep. The woods in varied beauty dressed Hung like a garland round his crest, And clouds of ever changing hue A robe about his shoulders threw. On him the rays of morning fell To wake the hill they loved so well, And bid unclothe those splendid eyes That glittered in his mineral dyes. He woke to hear the music made By thunders of the white cascade, While every laughing rill that sprang From crag to crag its carol sang. For arms, he lifted to the stars His towering stems of Deodárs, And morning heard his pealing call In tumbling brook and waterfall.

He trembled when his woods were pale And bowed beneath the autumn gale, And when his vocal reeds were stirred His melancholy moan was heard. Far down against the mountain's feet The Vánar heard the wild waves beat; Then turned his glances to the north. Sprang from the peak and bounded forth, The mountain felt the fearful shock And trembled through his mass of rock. The tallest trees were crushed and rent And headlong to the valley sent, And as the rocking shook each cave Loud was the roar the lions gave. Forth from the shaken cavern came Fierce serpents with their tongues aflame; And every Yaksha, wild with dread, And Kinnar and Gandharva, fled.

Footnotes

424:1 The fire which is supposed to burn beneath the sea.

424:2 Sítá is likened to the fire which is an emblem of purity.

Next: Canto LVII.: Hanumán's Return. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO LVII.: HANÚMÁN'S RETURN.

Still, like a winged mountain, he  
Sprang forward through the airy sea, 1

And rushing through the ether drew The clouds to follow as he flew, Through the great host around him spread, Grey, golden, dark, and white, and red. Now in a sable cloud immersed,

Now from its gloomy pall he burst, Like the bright Lord of Stars concealed A moment, and again revealed. Sunábha

1b passed, he neared the coast

Where waited still the Vánar host. They heard a rushing in the skies, And lifted up their wondering eyes. His wild triumphant shout they knew That louder still and louder grew, And Jámbaván with eager voice Called on the

Vánars to rejoice: 'Look he returns, the Wind-God's son, And full success  
his toils have won; Triumphant is the shout that comes Like music of a  
thousand drums.' Up sprang the Vánars from the ground  
And listened to the wondrous sound Of hurtling arm and thigh as through The  
region of the air he flew, Loud as the wind, when tempests rave, Roars in  
the prison of the cave. From crag to crag, from height to height; They  
bounded in their mad delight, And when he touched the mountain's  
crest, With reverent welcome round him pressed. They brought him of their  
woodland fruits, They brought him of the choicest roots, And laughed and  
shouted in their glee The noblest of their chiefs to see. Nor Hanúmán  
delayed to greet Sage Jámaván with reverence meet; To Angad and the chiefs  
he bent For age and rank preëminent, And briefly spoke: 'These eyes have  
seen, These lips addressed, the Maithil queen.' They sat beneath the waving  
trees, And Angad spoke in words like these: 'O noblest of the Vánar kind For  
valour power and might combined, To thee triumphant o'er the foe Our hopes,  
our lives and all we owe. O faithful heart in perils tried,  
p. 426 Which toil nor fear could turn aside,  
Thy deed the lady will restore, And Ráma's heart will ache no more,'

1

#### Footnotes

425:1 I omit two stanzas which continue the metaphor  
of the sea or lake of air. The moon is its lotus, the sun  
its wild-duck, the clouds are its water-weeds, Mars is its shark and so  
on. Gorresio remarks: 'This comparison of a great lake to the sky and of  
celestial to aquatic objects is one of those ideas which the view and  
qualities of natural scenery awake in lively fancies. Imagine one of  
those grand and splendid lakes of India covered with lotus blossoms,  
furrowed by wild-ducks of the most vivid colours, mantled over here and  
there with flowers and water weeds &c. and it will be understood how the  
fancy of the poet could readily compare to the sky radiant with celestial  
azure the blue expanse of the water, to the soft light of the moon the  
\*\*\*\*\* hue of the lotus, to the splendour of the sun the brilliant  
colours of the wild-fowl, to the stars the flowers, to the cloud the  
weeds that float upon the water &c.'

425:1b Sunábha is the mountain that rose from the sea when Hanúmán passed  
over to Lanká.

Next: Canto LXI.: The Feast of Honey. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index

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CANTO LXI.: THE FEAST OF HONEY.

They rose in air: the region grew

Dark with their shadow as they flew. Swift to a lovely grove

2 they came

That rivalled heavenly Nandan's 3 fame

Where countless bees their honey stored, --The pleasance of the Vánars'  
lord, To every creature fenced and barred, Which Dadhimukh was set to  
guard, A noble Vánar, brave and bold, Sugríva's uncle lofty-souled. To Angad  
came with one accord The Vánars, and besought their lord That they those  
honeyed stores might eat That made the grove so passing sweet. He gave  
consent: they sought the trees Thronged with innumerable bees. They rifled  
all the treasured store, And ate the fruit the branches bore, And still as  
they prolonged the feast Their merriment and joy increased. Drunk with the  
sweets, they danced and bowed, They wildly sang, they laughed aloud. Some  
climbed and sprang from tree to tree, Some sat and chattered in their  
glee.

Some scaled the trees which creepers crowned, And rained the branches to  
the ground. There with loud laugh a Vánar sprang Close to his friend who  
madly sang, In doleful mood another crept To mix his tears with one who  
wept. Then Dadhimukh with fury viewed The intoxicated multitude. He  
looked upon the rifled shade, And all the ruin they had made; Then called  
with angry voice, and strove To save the remnant of the grove, But warning

cries and words were spurned,And angry taunt and threat returned.Then  
fierce and wild contention rose:With furious words he mingled blows.They  
by no shame or fear withheld,By drunken mood and ire impelled,Used claws,  
and teeth, and hands, and beatThe keeper under trampling feet.

Footnotes

426:1 Three Cantos of repetition are omitted.426:2 Madhuvan the 'honey-  
wood.'

426:3 Indra's pleasure-ground or elysium.

Next: Canto LXV. : The Tidings.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous  
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CANTO LXV. 1b: THE TIDINGS.

On to Prasravan's hill they sped

Where blooming trees their branches spread.To Raghu's sons their heads  
they bentAnd did obeisance reverent.Then to their king, by Angad led,Each  
Vánar chieftain bowed his head;And Hanumán the brave and boldHis tidings  
to the monarch told;But first in Ráma's hand he placedThe gem that Sítá's  
brow had graced:'I crossed the sea: I searched a whileFor Sítá in the  
giants' isle.I found her vexed with taunt and threatBy demon guards about  
her set.Her tresses twined in single braid,On the bare earth her limbs  
were laid.Sad were her eyes: her cheeks were paleAs shuddering flowers in  
winter's gale.I stood beside the weeping dame,And gently whispered Ráma's  
name:With cheering words her grief consoled,And then the whole adventure  
told.She weeps afar beyond the sea,And her true heart is still with  
thee.She gave a sign that thou wouldst know,  
She bids thee think upon the crow,And bright mark pressed upon her  
browWhen none was nigh but she and thou.She bids thee take this precious  
stone,The sea-born gem thou long hast known.'And I', she said, 'will dull  
the stingOf woe by gazing on the ring.One little month shall I  
sustainThis life oppressed with woe and pain:And when the month is ended,  
IThe giants' prey must surely die.'

p. 427

Footnotes

426:1b Three Cantos consisting of little but repetitions  
are omitted. Dadhimukh escapes from the infuriated  
monkeys and hastens to Sugriva to report their misconduct. Sugriva infers  
that Hanumán and his band have been successful in their search, and that  
the exuberance of spirits and the mischief complained of, are but the  
natural expression of their joy. Dadhimukh obtains little sympathy from  
Sugriva, and is told to return and send the monkeys on with all possible  
speed.Next: Canto LXVI.: Ráma's Speech.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index  
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CANTO LXVI.: RÁMA'S SPEECH.

There ceased the Vánar: Ráma pressed

The treasured jewel to his breast,And from his eyes the waters brokeAs to  
the Vánar king he spoke:'As o'er her babe the mother weeps,This flood of  
tears the jewel steepes.This gem that shone on Sítá's headWas Janak'a gift  
when we were wed,And the pure brow that wore it lentNew splendour to the  
ornament.This gem, bright offspring of the wave,The King of Heaven to  
Janak gave,Whose noble sacrificial riteHad filled the God with new  
delight.Now, as I gaze upon the prize,Methinks I see my father's  
eyes.Methinks I see before me standThe ruler of Videha's land.

1

Methinks mine arms are folded nowRound her who wore it on her brow.Speak,  
Hanumán, O say, dear friend,What message did my darling send?O speak, and  
let thy words impartTheir gentle dew to cool my heart.Ah, 'tis the crown  
of woe to see

This gem and ask 'Where, where is she?'If for one month her heart be  
strong,Her days of life will yet be long.But I, with naught to lend  
relief,This very day must die of grief.Come, Hanumán, and quickly  
guideThe mourner to his darling's side.O lead me--thou hast learnt the

way--I cannot and I will not stay.How can my gentle love endure,So timid,  
delicate, and pure,The dreadful demons fierce and vileWho watch her in  
the guarded isle?No more the light of beauty shinesFrom Sítá as she weeps  
and pines.But pain and sorrow, cloud on cloud.Her moonlight glory dim and  
shroud.O speak, dear Hanumán, and tellEach word that from her sweet lips  
fell,Her words, her words alone can giveThe healing balm to make me  
live.'

2

#### Footnotes

427:1 Janak was king of Videha or Mithilá in Behar.427:2 The original  
contains two more Cantos which end

the Book, Canto LXVII begins thus: 'Hanumán thus  
addressed by the great-souled son of Raghu related to the son of Raghu  
all that Sítá had said.' And the two Cantos contain nothing but Hanumán's  
account of his interview with Sítá, and the report of his own speeches as  
well as of hers.

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BOOK VI. 1b

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#### CANTO I.: RÁMA'S SPEECH.

The son of Raghu heard, consoled,  
The wondrous tale Hanumán told;And, as his joyous hope grew high,In  
friendly words he made reply:

'Behold a mighty task achieved.

Which never heart but his conceived.Who else across the sea can  
spring,Save Váyu

2b and the Feathered King? 3b

Who, pass the portals strong and high.Which Nágas,

4b Gods, and fiends defy,

Where Rávan's hosts their station keep,--And come uninjured o'er the  
deep?By such a deed the Wind-God's sonGood service to the king has  
done,And saved from ruin and disgraceLakshman and me and Raghu's  
race.Well has he planned and bravely fought.And with due care my lady  
sought.But of the sea I sadly think,And the sweet hopes that cheered me  
sink.How can we cross the leagues of foamThat keep us from the giant's  
home?What can the Vánar legions more  
Than muster on the ocean shore?'

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#### CANTO II.: SUGRÍVA'S SPEECH.

He ceased: and King Sugríva tried

To calm his grief, and thus replied:'Be to thy nobler nature true,Nor let  
despair thy soul subdue.This cloud of causeless woe dispel,For all as yet  
has prospered well,And we have traced thy queen, and knowThe dwelling of  
our Rákshas foe.Arise, consult: thy task must beTo cast a bridge athwart  
the sea,The city of our foe to reachThat crowns the mountain by the  
beach;

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And when our feet that isle shall tread,Rejoice and deem thy foeman  
dead.The sea unbridged, his walls defyBoth fiends and children of the  
sky,Though at the fierce battalions' headLord Indra's self the onset  
led.Yea, victory is thine beforeThe long bridge touch the farther  
shore,So fleet and fierce and strong are theseWho limb them as their  
fancies please.

Away with grief and sad surmiseThat mar the noblest enterprise,And with  
their weak suspicion blightThe sage's plan, the hero's might.Come, this  
degenerate weakness spurn,And bid thy dauntless heart return,For each  
fair hope by grief is crossedWhen those we love are dead or lost.Arise, O  
best of those who know,Arm for the giant's overthrow.None in the triple

world I seeWho in the fight may equal thee;None who before thy face may  
standAnd brave the bow that arms thy hand,Trust to these mighty Vánars:  
theyWith full success thy trust will pay,When thou shalt reach the  
robber's hold,And loving arms round Sítá fold.'

Footnotes

427:1b The Sixth Book is called in Sanskrit Yuddha-  
Kánda or The War, and Lanká-Kánda. It is generally  
known at the present day by the latter title.427:2b Váyu is the God of  
Wind.

427:3b Garuda the King of Birds.

427:4b Serpent-Gods.

Next: Canto III.: Lanká.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO III.: LANKÁ.

He ceased: and Raghu's son gave heed,  
Attentive to his prudent rede:Then turned again, with hope inspired,To  
Hanumán, and thus inquired:

'Light were the task for thee, I ween,  
To bridge the sea that gleams betweenThe mainland and the island shore.Or  
dry the deep and guide as o'er.Fain would I learn from thee whose  
feetHave trod the stones of every street,Of fenced Lanká's towers and  
forts,And walls and moats and guarded ports,And castles where the giants  
dwell,And battlemented citadel.O Váyu's son, describe it all,With palace,  
fort, and gate, and wall.'

He ceased: and, skilled in arts that guide

The eloquent, the chief replied:

'Vast is the city, gay and strong,  
Where elephants unnumbered throng,And countless hosts of Rákshas breed  
Stand ready by the car and steed,Four massive gates, securely barred,All  
entrance to the city guard,With murderous engines fixt to throwBolt,  
arrow, rock to check the foe,  
And many a mace with iron head  
That strikes at once a hundred dead.Her golden ramparts wide and highWith  
massy strength the foe defy,Where inner walls their rich inlayOf coral,  
turkis, pearl display.Her circling moats are broad and deep,Where  
ravening monsters dart and leap.By four great piers each moat is  
spannedWhere lines of deadly engines stand.In sleepless watch at every  
gateUnnumbered hosts of giants wait,And masters of each weapon, rearThe  
threatening pike and sword and spear.My fury hurled those ramparts  
down,Filled up the moats that gird the town,The piers and portals  
overturned,And stately Lanká spoiled and burned,Howe'er we Vánars force  
our wayO'er the wide seat of Varun's

1 sway,

Be sure that city of the foeIs doomed to sudden overthrow,Nay, why so  
vast an army lead?

Brave Angad, Dwivid good at need,Fierce Mainda, Panas famed in fight,And  
Níla's skill and Nala's might,And Jámaván the strong and wise,Will dare  
the easy enterprise.Assailed by these shall Lanká fallWith gate and  
rampart, tower and wall.Command the gathering, chief: and theyIn happy  
hour will haste away.'

Next: Canto IV.: The March.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO IV.: THE MARCH.

He ceased; and spurred by warlike pride

The impetuous son of Raghu cried:'Soon shall mine arm with wrathful  
joyThat city of the foe destroy.Now, chieftain, now collect the host,And  
onward to the southern coast!The sun in his meridian towerGives glory to  
the Vánar power.The demon lord who stole my queenBy timely flight his  
life may screen.She, when she knows her lord is near,Will cling to hope  
and banish fear,Saved like a dying wretch who sipsThe drink of Gods with  
fevered lips.Arise, thy troops to battle lead:All happy omens counsel  
speed.The Lord of Stars in favouring skiesBodes glory to our

enterprise. This arm shall slay the fiend; and she. My consort, shall again be free.

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Mine upward-throbbing eye foreshows  
The longed-for triumph o'er my foes.  
Far in the van be Níla's post,  
To scan the pathway for the host,  
And let thy bravest and thy best,  
A hundred thousand, wait his hest.  
Go forth, O warrior Níla, lead  
The legions on through wood and mead  
Where pleasant waters cool the ground,  
And honey, flowers, and fruit abound,  
Go, and with timely care prevent  
The Rákshas foeman's dark intent.  
With watchful troops each valley guard  
Ere brooks and fruits and roots be marred  
And search each glen and leafy shade  
For hostile troops in ambushade.  
But let the weaklings stay behind:  
For heroes is our task designed.  
Let thousands of the Vánar breed  
The vanguard of the armies lead:  
Fierce and terrific must it be  
As billows of the stormy sea.  
There be the hill-huge Gaja's place,  
And Gavaya's, strongest of his race,  
And, like the bull that leads the herd,  
Gaváksha's, by no fears deterred.  
Let Rishabh, matchless in the might  
Of warlike arms, protect our right,  
And Gandhamádan next in rank  
Defend and guide the other flank.  
I, like the God who rules the sky  
Borne on Airávat 1 mounted high  
On stout Hanúmán's back will ride,  
The central host to cheer and guide.  
Fierce as the God who rules below,  
On Angad's back let Lakshman show  
Like him who wealth to mortals shares,

2

The lord whom Sárvaabhauma 3 bears.

The bold Sushen's impetuous might,  
And Vegadars' í's piercing sight,  
And Jámbaván whom bears revere,  
Illustrious three, shall guard the rear.'

He ceased, the royal Vánar heard,

And swift, obedient to his word,  
Sprang forth in numbers none might tell  
From mountain, care, and bosky dell,  
From rocky ledge and breezy height,  
Fierce Vánars burning for the fight.  
And Ráma's course was southward bent  
Amid the mighty armament.  
On, joyous, pressed in close array  
The hosts who owned Sugríva's sway,  
With nimble feet, with rapid bound  
Exploring, ere they passed, the ground,  
While from ten myriad throats rang out  
The challenge and the battle shout.

On roots and honeycomb they fed,  
And clusters from the boughs o'erhead,  
Or from the ground the tall trees tore  
Rich with the flowery load they bore.  
Some carried comrades, wild with mirth,  
Then cast their riders to the earth,  
Who swiftly to their feet arose  
And overthrew their laughing foes.  
While still rang out the general cry,  
'King Rávan and his fiends shall die,'  
Still on, exulting in the pride  
Of conscious strength, the Vánars hied,  
And gazed where noble Sahya, best  
Of mountains, raised each towering crest.  
They looked on lake and streamlet, where  
The lotus bloom was bright and fair,  
Nor marched--for Ráma's hest they feared  
Where town or haunt of men appeared.  
Still onward, fearful as the waves  
Of Ocean when he roars and raves,  
Led by their eager chieftains, went  
The Vánars' countless armament.  
Each captain, like a noble steed  
Urged by the lash to double speed,  
Pressed onward, filled with zeal and pride,  
By Ráma's and his brother's side,  
Who high above the Vánar throng  
On mighty backs were borne along,  
Like the great Lords of Day and Night  
Seized by eclipsing planets might.  
Then Lakshman radiant as the morn,

On Angad's shoulders high upborne.  
With sweet consoling words that woke  
New ardour, to his brother spoke:  
'Soon shalt thou turn, thy queen regained  
And impious Rávan's life-blood drained,  
In happiness and high renown  
To dear Ayodhyá's happy town.  
I see around exceeding fair  
All omens of the earth and air.  
Auspicious breezes sweet and low  
To greet the Vánar army blow,  
And softly to my listening ear  
Come the glad cries of bird and deer.  
Bright is the sky around us, bright  
Without a cloud the Lord of Light,  
And S'ukra 1b with propitious love

Looks on thee from his throne above.  
The pole-star and the Sainted Seven

2b



Shine brightly in the northern heaven, And great Tris'anku,  
3b glorious king,

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Ikshvāku's son from whom we spring, Beams in unclouded glory near His holy  
priest

1 whom all revere.

Undimmed the two Vis'ákhás 2 shine,

The strength and glory of our line, And Nairrit's 3 influence that aids  
Our Rákshas foemen faints and fades.

The running brooks are fresh and fair, The boughs their ripening clusters  
bear, And scented breezes gently sway The leaflet of the tender spray. See,  
with a glory half divine The Vánars' ordered legions shine, Bright as the  
Gods' exultant train Who saw the demon Tárak slain. O let thine eyes these  
signs behold, And bid thy heart be glad and bold.'

The Vánar squadrons densely spread

O'er all the country onward sped, While rising from the rapid beat Of  
bears' and monkeys' hastening feet Dust hid the earth with thickest  
veil, And made the struggling sunbeams pale. Now where Mahendra's peaks  
arise Came Ráma of the lotus eyes And the long arm's resistless might, And  
clomb the mountain's wood-crowned height. Thence Das'aratha's son  
beheld Where billowy Ocean rose and swelled. Past Malaya's peaks and  
Sahya's chain The Vánar legions reached the main, And stood in many a  
marshalled band On loud-resounding Ocean's strand. To the fair wood that  
fringed the tide

Came Das'aratha's son, and cried: 'At length, my lord Sugríva, we have  
reached King Várun's realm the sea, And one great thought, still-vexing,  
how To cross the flood, awaits us now. The broad deep ocean, that denies A  
passage, stretched before us lies. Then let us halt and plan the while How  
best to storm the giant's isle.'

He ceased: Sugríva on the coast

By trees o'ershadowed stayed the host, That seemed in glittering lines to  
be The bright waves of a second sea. Then from the shore the captains  
gazed On billows which the breezes raised

To fury, as they dashed in foam

O'er Várun's realm, the Asurs' home:

1b

The sea that laughed with foam, and danced With waves whereon the sunbeams  
glanced: Where, when the light began to fade, Huge crocodiles and monsters  
played; And, when the moon went up the sky, The troubled billows rose on  
high From the wild watery world whereon A thousand moons reflected  
shone: Where awful serpents swam and showed Their fiery crests which  
flashed and glowed,

Illuminating the depths of hell, The prison where the demons dwell. The eye,  
bewildered, sought in vain The bounding line of sky and main: Alike in  
shade, alike in glow Were sky above and sea below. There wave-like clouds  
by clouds were chased, Here cloud-like billows roared and raced: Then shone  
the stars, and many a gem That lit the waters answered them. They saw the  
great-souled Ocean stirred To frenzy by the winds, and heard, Loud as ten  
thousand drums, the roar Of wild waves dashing on the shore. They saw him  
mounting to defy With deafening voice the troubled sky. And the deep bed  
beneath him swell In fury as the billows fell.

Footnotes

428:1 The God of the sea.

429:1 Indra's elephant. 429:2 Kuvera, God of wealth.

429:3 Kuvera's elephant.

429:1b The planet Venus, or its regent who is regarded  
as the son of Bhrigu and preceptor of the Daitvas.

429:2b The seven rishis or saints who form the constellation of the Great  
Bear.

429:3b Tris'anku was raised to the skies to form a constellation in the southern hemisphere. The story in told in Book I. Canto LX.

430:1 The sage Vis'vámitra, who performed for Tris'anku the great sacrifice which raised him to the heavens.

430:2 One of the lunar asterisms containing four or originally two stars under the regency of a dual divinity Indrágni, Indra and Agni.

430:3 The lunar asterism Múla, belonging to the Rákshases.

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CANTO V.: RÁMA'S LAMENT.

There on the coast in long array

The Vánars' marshalled legions lay,Where Níla's care had ordered wellThe watch of guard and sentinel,And Mainda moved from post to postWith Dwivid to protect the host.

Then Ráma stood by Lakshman's side.

And mastered by his sorrow cried:'My brother dear, the heart's distress,As days wear on, grows less and less.But my deep-seated grief, alas,Grows fiercer as the seasons pass.Though for my queen my spirit longs,And broods indignant o'er my wrongs,Still wilder is my grief to knowThat her young life is passed in woe.Breathe, gentle gale, O breathe where sheLies prisoned, and then breathe on me,

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And, though my love I may not meet,Thy kiss shall be divinely sweet.

Ah, by the giant's shape appalled,On her dear lord for help she called,Still in mine ears the sad cry ringsAnd tears my heart with poison stings.Through the long daylight and the gloomOf night wild thoughts of her consumeMy spirit, and my love suppliesThe torturing flame which never dies.Leave me, my brother; I will sleepCouched on the bosom of the deep.For the cold wave may bring me peaceAnd bid the fire of passion cease.One only thought my stay must be,That earth, one earth, holds her and me,To hear, to know my darling livesSome life-supporting comfort gives,As streams from distant fountains runO'er meadows parching in the sun.Ah when, my foeman at my feet,Shall I my queen, my glory, meet,The blossom of her dear face raiseAnd on her eyes enraptured gaze,Press her soft lips to mine again,And drink a balm to banish pain!Alas, alas! where lies she now,My darling of the lovely brow?On the cold earth, no help at hand,Forlorn amid the Rákshas band,King Janak's child still calls on me,Her lord and love, to set her free.But soon in glory will she riseA crescent moon in autumn skies,And those dark rovers of the night.Like scattered clouds shall turn in flight.'

Footnotes

430:1b The Asurs or demons dwell imprisoned in the depths beneath the sea.

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CANTO VI.: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

But when the giant king surveyed

His glorious town in ruin laid,And each dire sign of victory wonBy Hanumán the Wind-God's son,He veiled his angry eyes oppressedBy shame, and thus his lords addressed:'The Vánar spy has passed the gateOf Lanká long inviolate,Eluded watch and ward, and seenWith his bold eyes the captive queen.My royal roof with flames is red,The bravest of my lords are dead,And the fierce Vánar in his hateHas left our city desolate.Now ponder well the work that liesBefore us, ponder and advise.With deep-observing judgment scanThe peril, and mature a plan.From counsel, sages say, the root,Springs victory, most glorious fruit.First ranks the king,

when woe impends  
Who seeks the counsel of his friends,  
Of kinsmen ever faithful found,  
Or those whose hopes with his are bound,  
Then with their aid his strength applies,  
And triumphs in his enterprise.  
Next ranks the prince who plans alone,  
No counsel seeks to aid his own,  
Weighs loss and gain and wrong and right,  
And seeks success with earnest might.  
Unwisest he who spurns delays,  
Who counts no cost, no peril weighs,  
Speeds to his aim, defying fate,  
And risks his all, precipitate.  
Thus too in counsel sages find  
A best, a worst, a middle kind.  
When gathered counsellors explore  
The way by light of holy lore,  
And all from first to last agree,  
Is the best counsel of the three.  
Next, if debate first waxes high,  
And each his chosen plan would try  
Till all agree at last, we deem  
This counsel second in esteem.  
Worst of the three is this,  
when each assails with taunt his fellow's speech;  
When all debate, and no consent  
Concludes the angry argument.  
Consult then, lords; my task shall be  
To crown with act your wise decree.  
With thousands of his wild allies  
The vengeful Ráma hither hies;  
With unresisted might and speed  
Across the flood his troops will lead,

Or for the Vánar host will drain  
The channels of the conquered main.'

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CANTO VII.: RÁVAN ENCOURAGED.

He ceased: they scorned, with blinded eyes,  
The foeman and his bold allies,  
Raised reverent bands with one accord,  
And thus made answer to their lord: 'Why yield thee, King, to causeless fear?  
A mighty host with sword and spear  
And mace and axe and pike and lance  
Waits but thy signal to advance.  
Art thou not he who slew of old  
The Serpent-Gods, and stormed their hold;  
Scaled Mount Kailása and o'erthrew  
Kuvera 1 and his Yaksha crew,

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Compelling S'iva's haughty friend  
Beneath a mightier arm to bend?  
Didst thou not bring from realms afar  
The marvel of the magic car,  
When they who served Kuvera fell  
Crushed in their mountain citadel?  
Attracted by thy matchless fame  
To thee, a suppliant, Maya came,  
The lord of every Dánava  
band, And won thee with his daughter's hand.

Thy arm in hell itself was felt,  
Where Vásuki 1 and S'ankha dwelt,

And they and Takshak, overthrown,  
Were forced thy conquering might to own.  
The Gods in vain their blessing gave  
To heroes bravest of the brave,  
Who strove a year and, sorely pressed,  
Their victor's peerless might confessed.  
In vain their magic arts they tried,  
In vain thy matchless arm defied.  
King Varun's sons with fourfold force,  
Cars, elephants, and foot, and horse,  
But for a while thy power withstood,  
And, conquered, mourned their hardihood.  
Thou hast encountered, face to face,  
King Yama 2 with his murdering mace.

Fierce as the wild tempestuous aea,  
What terror had his wrath for thee,  
Though death in every threatening form,  
And woe and torment, urged the storm?  
Thine arm a glorious victory won  
O'er the dread king who pities none;  
And the three worlds, from terror freed,  
In joyful wonder praised thy deed.  
The tribe of Warriors, strong and dread  
As Indra's self, o'er earth had spread;  
As giant trees that towering stand  
In mountain glens, they filled the land.  
Can Raghu's son encounter foes

Fierce, numerous, and strong as those?  
Yet, trained in war and practised well,  
O'ermatched by thee, they fought and fell,  
Stay in thy royal home, nor care  
The battle and the toil to share;  
But let the easy fight be won  
By Indrajit 3 thy matchless son.

All, all shall die, if thou permit,  
Slain by the hand of Indrajit.'

Footnotes

431:1 The God of Riches, brother and enemy of Rávan  
and first possessor of Pushpak the flying car.

432:1 King of the Serpents. S'ankha and Takshak are two of the eight Serpent Chiefs.

432:2 The God of Death, the Pluto of the Hindus.

432:3 Literally Indra's conqueror, so called from his victory over that God.Next: Canto VIII.: Prahasta's Speech.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO VIII.: PRAHASTA'S SPEECH.

Dark as a cloud of autumn, dread

Prahasta joined his palms and said:

'Gandharvas, Gods, the hosts who dwell

In heaven, in air, in earth, in hell,Have yielded to thy might, and

howShall two weak men oppose thee now?Hanúmán came, a foe disguised,And

mocked us heedless and surprised,Or never had he lived to fleeAnd boast

that he has fought with me.Command, O King, and this right handShall

sweep the Vánars from the land,And hill and dale, to Ocean's shore,Shall

know the death-doomed race no more.But let my care the means deviseTo

guard thy city from surprise.'

Then Durmukh cried, of Rákshas race:

'Too long we brook the dire disgrace.He gave our city to the flames,He

trod the chambers of thy dames.Ne'er shall so weak and vile a

thingUnpunished brave the giants' king.

Now shall this single arm attackAnd drive the daring Vánars back,Till to

the winds of heaven they flee,Or seek the depths of earth and sea.'

Then, brandishing the mace he bore,

Whose horrid spikes were stained with gore,While fury made his eyeballs

red,Impetuous Vajradanshtra said:

'Why waste a thought on one so vile

As Hanúmán the Vánar, whileSugriva, Lakshman, yet remain,And Ráma

mightier still, unslain?This mace to-day shall crush the three,And all

the host will turn and flee.Listen, and I will speak: incline,O King, to

hear these words of mine,For the deep plan that I proposeWill swiftly rid

thee of thy foes.Let thousands of thy host assumeThe forms of men in

youthful bloom,In war's magnificent arrayDraw near to Raghu's son, and

say:'Thy younger brother Bharat sendsThis army, and thy cause

befriends.'Then let our legions hasten nearWith bow and mace and sword

and spear,And on the Vánar army rain

Our steel and stone till all be slain.If Raghu's sons will fain

believe,Entangled in the net we weave,The penalty they both must pay,And

lose their forfeit lives to-day.'

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Then with his warrior soul on fire,Nikumbha spoke in burning ire: 'I,

only I, will take the field,And Ragha's son his life shall yield.Within

these walls, O Chiefs, abide,Nor part ye from our monarch's side.'

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CANTO IX.: VIBHÍSHAN'S COUNSEL.

A score of warriors 1 forward sprang,

And loud the clashing iron rang

Of mace and axe and spear and sword,As thus they spake unto their

lord:'Their king Sugriva will we slay,And Raghu's sons, ere close of

day,And strike the wretch Hanúmán down,The spoiler of our golden town.'

But sage Vibhíshan strove to calmThe chieftains' fury; palm to palmHe

joined in lowly reverence, pressedBefore them, and the throng addressed:

2

'Dismiss the hope of conquering oneSo stern and strong as Raghu's

son.In due control each sense he keepsWith constant care that never

sleeps.Whose daring heart has e'er conceivedThe exploit Hanumán

achieved,Across the fearful sea to spring,The tributary rivers' king?O

Rákshas lords, in time be wise,Nor Ráma's matchless power despise.And

say, what evil had the sonOf Raghu to our monarch done,

Who stole the dame he loved so well  
 And keeps her in his citadel;  
 If Kharu in his foolish pride  
 Encountered Ráma, fought, and died,  
 May not the meanest love his life  
 And guard it in the deadly strife?  
 The Maithil dame, O Rákshas King,  
 Sore peril to thy realm will bring.  
 Restore her while there yet is  
 time, Nor let us perish for thy crime.  
 O, let the Maithil lady go  
 Ere the avenger bend his bow  
 To ruin with his arrowy showers  
 Our Lanká with her gates and towers.  
 Let Janak's child again be free  
 Ere the wild Vánars cross the sea,  
 In their resistless might assail  
 Our city and her ramparts scale.  
 Ah, I conjure thee by the ties  
 Of brotherhood, be just and wise.  
 In all my thoughts thy good I seek,  
 And thus my prudent counsel speak.  
 Let captive Sitá be restored  
 Ere, fierce as autumn's sun, her lord  
 Send his keen arrows from the string  
 To drink the life-blood of our king.  
 This fury from thy soul dismiss,  
 The bane of duty, peace, and bliss.  
 Seek duty's path and walk therein,  
 And joy and endless glory win.  
 Restore the captive, ere we feel  
 The piercing point of Ráma's steel.  
 O spare thy city, spare the lives  
 Of us, our friends, our sons and wives.' Thus  
 spake Vibhíshan wise and brave:  
 The Rákshas king no answer gave,  
 But bade his lords the council close,  
 And sought his chamber for repose.

Footnotes

433:1 Their names are Nikumbha, Rabhasa, Súrýas'atru,  
 Suptaghna, Yajnakopa, Mahápárava, Mahodara,  
 Agniketu, Ras'miketu, Durdharsha, Indrasatru, Prahasta, Virupáksha,  
 Vajradanshtra, Dhúmráksha, Durmukha, Mahábala.

433:2 Similarly Antenor urges the restoration of Helen:

'Let Sparta's treasures be this hour restored, And Argive Helen own  
 her ancient lord. As this advice ye practise or reject, So hope  
 success, or dread the dire effect,'

POPE'S Homer's Iliad, Book VII.

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CANTO X.: VIBHÍSHAN'S COUNSEL.

Soon as the light of morning broke,  
 Vibhíshan from his slumber woke,  
 And, duty guiding every thought,  
 The palace of his brother sought.  
 Vast as a towering hill that shows  
 His peaks afar, that palace rose.  
 Here stood within the monarch's gate  
 Sage nobles skilful in debate.  
 There strayed in glittering raiment through  
 The courts his royal retinue,  
 Where in wild measure rose and fell  
 The music of the drum and shell,  
 And talk grew loud, and many a dame  
 Of fairest feature went and came  
 Through doors a marvel to behold,  
 With pearl inlaid on burning gold:  
 Therein Gandharvas or the fleet  
 Lords of the storm might joy to meet.  
 He passed within the wondrous pile,  
 Chief glory of the giants' isle:  
 Thus, ere his fiery course be done,  
 An autumn cloud admits the sun.  
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 He heard auspicious voices raise  
 With loud accord the note of praise,  
 And sages, deep in Scripture,  
 sing Each glorious triumph of the king.  
 He saw the priests in order stand,  
 Curd, oil, in every sacred hand;  
 And by them flowers were laid and grain,  
 Due offerings to the holy train.  
 Vibhíshan to the monarch bowed,  
 Raised on a throne above the crowd:  
 Then, skilled in arts of soft address,  
 He raised his voice the king to bless,  
 And sate him on a seat where he  
 Full in his brother's sight should be.  
 The chieftain there, while none could hear,  
 Spoke his true speech for Rávan's ear,  
 And to his words of wisdom lent  
 The force of weightiest argument: 'O brother, hear!  
 since Ráma's queenA captive in thy house has been,  
 Disastrous omens day by day  
 Have struck our souls with wild dismay.  
 No longer still and strong and clear  
 The flames of sacrifice appear,  
 But, restless with the frequent spark,  
 Neath clouds of smoke grow faint and dark.  
 Our ministering priests turn pale  
 To see their wonted offerings fail,  
 And ants and serpents creep and crawl

Within the consecrated hall. 1

Dried are the udders of our cows, Our elephants have juiceless brows,  
2

Nor can the sweetest pasture stay The charger's long unquiet neigh. Big  
tears from mules and camels flow Whose staring coats their trouble  
show, Nor can the leech's art restore Their health and vigour as  
before. Rapacious birds are fierce and bold: Not single hunters as of  
old, In banded troops they chase the prey, Or gathering on our temples  
stay. Through twilight hours with shriek and howl Around the city jackals  
prowl, And wolves and foul hyaenas wait Athirst for blood at every gate. One  
sole atonement still may cure These evils, and our weal assure. Restore the  
Maithil dame, and win An easy pardon for thy sin.'

The Rákshas monarch heard, and moved

To sudden wrath his speech reproved: 'No danger, brother, can I see: The  
Maithil dame I will not free. Though all the Gods for Rāma fight, He yields  
to my superior might.' Thus the tremendous king who broke  
The ranks of heavenly warriors spoke, And, sternly purposed to resist, His  
brother from the hall dismissed.

Footnotes

434:1 The Agnisálá or room where the sacrificial fire  
was kept.

434:2 The exudation of a fragrant fluid from the male elephant's temples,  
especially at certain seasons, is  
frequently spoken of in Sanskrit poetry. It is said to deceive and  
attract the bees, and is regarded as a sign of health and masculine  
vigour.

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CANTO XI.: THE SUMMONS.

Still Rávan's haughty heart rebelled.

The counsel of the wise repelled, And, as his breast with passion  
burned, His thoughts again to Sitá turned. Thus, to each sign of danger  
blind, To love and war he still inclined. Then mounted he his car that  
glowed With gems and golden net, and rode Where, gathered at the monarch's  
call, The nobles filled the council hall. A host of warriors bright and  
gay With coloured robes and rich array, With shield and mace and spear and  
sword, Followed the chariot of their lord Mid the loud voice of shells and  
beat Of drums he raced along the street, And, ere he came, was heard  
afar The rolling thunder of his car. He reached the doors: the nobles  
bent Their heads before him reverent: And, welcomed with their loud  
acclaim, Within the glorious hall he came. He sat upon a royal seat With  
golden steps beneath his feet, And bade the heralds summon all  
His captains to the council hall. The heralds heard the words he spake, And  
sped from house to house to wake The giants where they slept or spent The  
careless hours in merriment. These heard the summons and obeyed: From  
chamber, grove, and colonnade, On elephants or cars they rode, Or through  
the streets impatient strode. As birds on rustling pinions fly Through  
regions of the darkened sky, Thus cars and mettled coursers through The  
crowded streets of Lanká flew. The council hall was reached, and then, As  
lions seek their mountain den. Through massy doors that opened wide, With  
martial stalk the captains hied. Welcomed with honour as was meet They  
stooped to press their monarch's feet,

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And each a place in order found On stool, on cushion, or the ground. Nor  
did the sage Vibhishan long Delay to join the noble throng. High on a car  
that shone like flame With gold and flashing gems he came, Drew near and  
spoke his name aloud,

And reverent to his brother bowed.

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CANTO XII.: RAVAN'S SPEECH.

The king in counsel unsurpassed  
His eye around the synod cast, And fierce Prahasta, first and best  
Of all his captains, thus addressed: 'Brave master of each warlike art,  
Arouse thee and perform thy part. Array thy fourfold forces  
1 well

To guard our isle and citadel.' The captain of the hosts obeyed, The  
troops with prudent skill arrayed; Then to the hall again he hied, And  
stood before the king and cried: 'Each inlet to the town is  
closed Without, within, are troops disposed. With fearless heart thine aim  
pursue And do the deed thou hast in view,' Thus spoke Prahasta in the  
zeal That moved him for the kingdom's weal. And thus the monarch, who  
pursued His own delight, his speech renewed: 'In ease and bliss, in toil  
and pain, In doubts of duty, pleasure, pain, Your proper path I need not  
tell. For of yourselves ye know it well. The Storm-Gods, Moon, and planets  
bring

New glory to their heavenly king, 2

And, ranged about your monarch, ye Give joy and endless fame to me. My  
secret counsel have I kept, While senseless Kumbhakarna slept. Six months  
the warrior's slumbers last And bind his torpid senses fast; But now his  
deep repose he breaks, The beat of all our champions wakes. I captured,  
Ráma's heart to wring, This daughter of Videha's king. And brought her from  
that distant land

3

Where wandered many a Rákshas band.

Disdainful still my love she spurns.

Still from each prayer and offering turns, Yet in all lands beneath the  
sun No dame may rival Sítá, none, Her dainty waist is round and slight, Her  
cheek like autumn's moon is bright. And she like fruit in graven gold Mocks  
her

1b whom Maya framed of old.

Faultless in form, how firmly tread Her feet whose soles are rosy red! Ah,  
as I gaze her beauty takes My spirit, and my passion wakes. Looking for  
Ráma far away She sought with tears a year's delay Nor gazing on her love-  
lit eye

Could I that earnest prayer deny. But baffled hopes and vain desire At  
length my patient spirit tire. How shall the sons of Raghu sweep To  
vengeance o'er the pathless deep? How shall they lead the Vánar  
train Across the monster-teeming main? One Vánar yet could find a way To  
Lanká's town, and burn and slay. Take counsel then, remembering still That  
we from men need fear no ill; And give your sentence in debate, For  
matchless is the power of fate. Assailed by you the Gods who dwell In  
heaven beneath our fury fell. And shall we fear these creatures bred In  
forests, by Sugriva led? E'en now on ocean's farther strand, The sons of  
Das'aratha stand. And follow, burning to attack Their giant foes, on Sítá's  
track. Consult then, lords for ye are wise: A seasonable plan devise. The  
captive lady to retain, And triumph when the foes are slain. No power can  
bring across the foam Those Vánars to our island home; Or if they madly  
will defy Our conquering might, they needs must die.'

Then Kumbhakarna's anger woke. And wroth at Rávan's words he spoke: 'O  
Monarch, when thy ravished eyes First looked upon thy lovely prize, Then  
was the time to bid us scan Each peril and mature a plan. Blest is the king  
who acts with heed, And ne'er repents one hasty deed; And hapless he whose  
troubled soul Mourns over days beyond control.

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Thou hast, in beauty's toils ensnared, A desperate deed of boldness  
dared; By fortune saved ere Ráma's steel One wound, thy mortal bane, could  
deal. But, Rávan, as the deed is done, The toil of war I will not shun. This  
arm, O rover of the night, Thy foemen to the earth shall smite, Though  
Indra with the Lord of Flame, The Sun and Storms, against me came. E'en  
Indra, monarch of the skies, Would dread my club and mountain size, Shrink

from these teeth and quake to hear  
The thunders of my voice of fear.  
No second dart shall Ráma cast:  
The first he aims shall be the last.  
He falls, and these dry lips shall drain  
The blood of him my hand has slain;  
And Sitá, when her champion dies,  
Shall be thine undisputed prize.'

Footnotes

435:1 Consisting of warriors on elephants, warriors in chariots, charioteers, and infantry.

435:2 Indra, generally represented as surrounded by the Maruts or Storm-Gods.

435:3 Janasthán, where Ráma a lived as an ascetic.

435:1b Máyá, regarded as the paragon of female beauty, was the creation of Maya the chief artificer of the Datyas or Dinavs.

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CANTO XIII.: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

But Mahápárs'va saw the sting

Of keen reproach had galled the king;  
And humbly, eager to appease  
His anger, spoke in words like these: 'And breathes there one so cold and weak  
The forest and the gloom to seek  
Where savage beasts abound, and spare  
To taste the luscious honey there?  
Art thou not lord? and who is he  
Shall venture to give laws to thee?  
Love thy Videhan still, and tread  
Upon thy prostrate foeman's head.  
O'er Sitá's will let thine prevail,  
And strength achieve if flattery fail.  
What though the lady yet be coy  
And turn her from the proffered joy?  
Soon shall her conquered heart relent  
And yield to love and blandishment.  
With us let Kumbhakarna fight,  
And Indrajit of matchless might  
We need not other champions, they  
Shall lead us forth to rout and slay.  
Not ours to bribe or soothe or part  
The foeman's force with gentle art,  
Doomed, conquered by our might, to feel

The vengeance of the warrior's steel.' The Rákshas monarch heard, and moved  
By flattering hopes the speech approved: 'Hear me,' he cried, 'great chieftain, tell  
What in the olden time befell,--A secret tale which, long suppressed,  
Lies prisoned only in my breast. One day--a day I never forget--Fair Punjikasthalá

1 I met,

When, radiant as a flame of fire,  
She sought the palace of the Sire.  
In passion's eager grasp I tore  
From her sweet limbs the robes she wore,  
And heedless of her prayers and cries  
Strained to my breast the vanquished prize.  
Like Nalini

2 with soil distained.

The mansion of the Sire she gained,  
And weeping made the outrage known  
To Brahmá on his heavenly throne.  
He in his wrath pronounced a curse,--That lord who made the universe:  
'If, Rávan, thou a second time  
Be guilty of so foul a crime,  
Thy head in shivers shall be rent:  
Be warned, and dread the punishment.  
Awed by the threat of vengeance still  
I force not Sitá's stubborn will.  
Terrific as the sea in might:  
My steps are like the Storm-Gods' flight;

But Ráma knows not this, or he  
Had never sought to war with me.  
Where is the man would idly brave  
The lion in his mountain cave,  
And wake him when with slumbering eyes  
Grim, terrible as Death, he lies?  
No, blinded Ráma knows me not:  
Ne'er has he seen mine arrows shot;  
Ne'er marked them speeding to their aim  
Like snakes with cloven tongues of flame.  
On him those arrows will I turn,  
Whose fiery points shall rend and burn.  
Quenched by my power when I assail  
The glory of his might shall fail,  
As stars before the sun grow dim  
And yield their feeble light to him.'

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CANTO XIV.: VIBHÍSHAN'S SPEECH.

He ceased: Vibhíshan ill at ease



Addressed the king in words like these: O Rávan, O my lord, beware  
Of Sitá dangerous as fair, Nor on thy heedless bosom hang  
This serpent with a deadly fang. O King, the Maithil dame restore  
To Raghu's matchless son before Those warriors of the woodlands,  
vast As mountain peaks, approaching fast, Armed with fierce teeth and claws,  
enclose Thy city with unsparing foes. O, be the Maithil dame restored  
Ere loosened from the clanging cord  
p. 437

The vengeful shafts of Ráma fly, And low in death thy princes lie.  
In all thy legions hast thou one A match in war for Raghu's son?  
Can Kumbhakarna's self withstand, Or Indrajit, that mighty hand?  
In vain with Ráma wilt thou strive: Thou wilt not save thy soul alive

Though guarded by the Lord of Day And Storm-Gods' terrible array,  
In vain to Indra wilt thou fly, Or seek protection in the sky,  
In Yama's gloomy mansion dwell, Or hide thee in the depths of hell.' He ceased;  
and when his lips were closed Prahasta thus his rede opposed: 'O timid heart,  
to counsel thus! What terrors have the Gods for us? Can snake, Gandharva,  
fiend appal The giants' sons who scorn them all? And shall we now our birth  
disgrace, And dread a king of human race?' Thus fierce Prahasta counselled  
ill; But sage Vibhíshan's constant will The safety of the realm ensued;  
Who thus in turn his speech renewed: 'Yes, when a soul defiled with sin  
Shall mount to heaven and enter in, Then, chieftain, will experience  
teach The truth of thy disdainful speech. Can I, or thou, or these or  
all Our bravest compass Ráma's fall, The chief in whom all virtues  
shine, The pride of old Ikshváku's line, With whom the Gods may scarce  
compare In skill to act, in heart to dare? Yea, idly mayst thou vaunt thee,  
till

Sharp arrows winged with matchless skill From Ráma's bowstring, fleet and  
fierce As lightning's flame, thy body pierce. Nikumbha shall not save thee  
then, Nor Rávan, from the lord of men. O Monarch, hear my last appeal,  
My counsel for thy kingdom's weal, This sentence I again declare: O giant  
King, beware, beware! Save from the ruin that impends Thy town, thy people,  
and thy friends; O hear the warning urged once more: To Raghu's son the  
dame restore.'

Footnotes

436:1 One of the Nymphs of Indra's heaven.

436:2 The Lotus River, a branch of the heavenly Gangá.

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CANTO XV.: INDRAJIT'S SPEECH.

He ceased: and Indrajit the pride

Of Rákshas warriors thus replied: 'Is this a speech our king should  
hear, This counsel of ignoble fear? A scion of our glorious race Should  
ne'er conceive a thought so base, But one mid all our kin we  
find. Vibhíshan, whose degenerate mind No spark of gallant pride  
retains. Whose coward soul his lineage stains. Against one giant what can  
two Unhappy sons of Raghu do? Away with idle fears, away! Matched with our  
meanest, what are they? Beneath my conquering prowess fell The Lord of  
earth and heaven and hell,

1

Through every startled region dread Of my resistless fury spread; And Gods  
in each remotest sphere Confessed the universal fear. Rending the air with  
roar and groan, Airávt

2 to the earth was thrown.

From his huge head the tusks I drew, And smote the Gods with fear anew.  
Shall I who tame celestials' pride, By whom the fiends are terrified, Now  
prove a weakling little worth, And fail to slay those sons of earth?' He  
ceased: Vibhíshan trained and tried In war and counsel thus replied 'Thy  
speech is marked with scorn of truth, With rashness and the pride of  
youth. Yea, to thy ruin like a child Thou pratest, and thy words are  
wild. Most dear, O Indrajit, to thee Should Rávan's weal and safety be, For

thou art called his son, but thouArt proved his direst foeman now,When  
warned by me thou hast not triedTo turn the coming woe aside.Both thee  
and him 'twere meet to slay,Who brought thee to this hall to-day,And  
dared so rash a youth admitTo council where the wisest sit.Presumptuous,  
wild, devoid of sense,Filled full of pride and insolence,Thv reckless  
tongue thou wilt not ruleThat speaks the counsel of a fool.Who in the  
fight may brook or shunThe arrows shot by Raghu's sonWith flame and fiery  
vengeance sped,Dire as his staff who rules the dead?O Rávan, let thy  
people live,  
And to the son of Raghu giveFair robes and gems and precious ore,And Sitá  
to his arms restore.'

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Footnotes

437:1 Trilohanatha, Lord of the Three Worlds, is a title  
of Indra.

437:2 The celestial elephant that carries Indra.

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CANTO XVI.: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

Then, while his breast with fury swelled,  
Thus Rávan spoke, as fate impelled:   'Better with foes thy dwelling  
make,Or house thee with the venomed snake,Than live with false familiar  
friendsWho further still thy foeman's ends.I know their treacherous mood,  
I knowTheir secret triumph at thy woe.They in their inward hearts  
despiseThe brave, the noble, and the wise,Grieve at their bliss with  
rancorous hate,And for their sorrows watch and wait:Scan every fault with  
curious eye,And each slight error magnify.Ask elephants who roam the  
wildHow were their captive friends beguiled.'For fire,' they cry, 'we  
little care,For javelin and shaft and snare:Our foes are traitors, taught  
to bindThe trusting creatures of their kind.'Still, still, shall  
blessings flow from cows,

1

And Brahmans love their rigorous vows;Still woman change her restless  
will,And friends perfidious work us ill,What though with conquering feet  
I tread

On every prostrate foeman's head;What though the worlds in abject  
fearTheir mighty lord in me revereThis thought my peace of mind  
destroysAnd robs me of expected joys.The lotus of the lake receivesThe  
glittering rain that gems its leaves,But each bright drop remains  
apart:So is it still with heart and heart,Deceitful as an autumn  
cloudWhich, though its thunderous voice be loud,On the dry earth no  
torrent sends,Such is the race of faithless friends,No riches of the  
bloomy sprayWill tempt the wandering bee to stayThat loves from flower to  
flower to range;And friends like thee are swift to change,Thou blot upon  
thy glorious line,If any giant's tongue but thineHad dared to give this  
base advice,He should not live to shame me twice,'   Then just Vibhíshan  
in the heatOf anger started from his seat,And with four captains of the  
bandSprang forward with his mace in hand;Then, fury flashing from his  
eye,Looked on the king and made reply:   'Thy rights, O Rávan, I allow:  
My brother and mine elder thou.Such, though from duty's path they  
stray,We love like fathers and obey,But still too bitter to be borneIs  
thy harsh speech of cruel scorn.The rash like thee, who spurn control,Nor  
check one longing of the soul,Urged by malignant fate repelThe faithful  
friend who counsels well,A thousand courtiers wilt thou meet,With  
flattering lips of smooth deceit;But rare are they whose tongue or  
earWill speak the bitter truth, or hear.Unclose thy blinded eyes and  
seeThat snares of death encompass thee,I dread, my brother, to beholdThe  
shafts of Ráma, bright with gold,Flash fury through the air, and redWith  
fires of vengeance strike thee dead,Lord, brother, King, again

reflect,Nor this mine earnest prayer reject,O, save thyself, thy royal town,Thy people and thine old renown."

Footnotes438:1 As producers of the ghi, clarified butter or sacrificial oil, used in fire-offerings.

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CANTO XVII.: VIBHÍSHAN'S FLIGHT.

Soon as his bitter words were said,

To Raghu's sons Vibhíshan fled. 1b

Their eyes the Vánar leaders raisedAnd on the air-borne Bákshas gazed,Bright as a thunderbolt, in sizeLike Meru's peak that cleaves the skies,In gorgeous panoply arrayedLike Indra's self he stood displayed,And four attendants brave and boldShone by their chief in mail and gold.Sugríva then with dark surmiseBent on their forms his wondering eyes,And thus in hasty words confessedThe anxious doubt that moved his breast:' Look, look ye Vánars, and beware:That giant chief sublime in airWith other four in bright arrayComes armed to conquer and to slay.'

p. 439

Soon as his warning speech they heard,The Vánar chieftains undeterredSeized fragments of the rock and trees,And made reply in words like these:

'We wait thy word: the order give,And these thy foes shall cease to live.Command us, mighty King, and allLifeless upon the earth shall fall.' Meanwhile Vibhíshan with the fourStood high above the ocean shore.Sugríva and the chiefs he spied,And raised his mighty voice and cried:'From Rávan, lord of giants, IHis brother, named Vibhíshan, fly.From Janasthán he stole the childOf Janak by his art beguiled,And in his palace locked and barredSurrounds her with a Rákshas guard,I bade him, plied with varied lore,His hapless prisoner restore.But he, by Fate to ruin sent,No credence to my counsel lent,Mad as the fevered wretch who seesAnd scorns the balm to bring him ease.He scorned the sage advice I gave,He spurned me like a base-born slave.I left my children and my wife,And fly to Raghu's son for life.I pray thee, Vánar chieftain, speedTo him who saves in hour of need,And tell him famed in distant landsThat, suppliant here Vibhíshan stands.' The Rákshas ceased: Sugriva hied

To Raghu's noble son and cried: 'A stranger from the giant host,Borne o'er the sea, has reached the coastA secret foe, he comes to slay,As owls attack their heedless prey.'Tis thine, O King, in time of needTo watch, to counsel, and to lead,Our Vánar legions to dispose,And guard us from our crafty foes.Vibhíshan from the giants' isle.King Rávan's brother, comes with guileAnd, feigning from his king to flee,Seeks refuge Raghu's son, with thee.Arise, O Ráma, and preventBy bold attack his dark intent.Who comes in friendly guise preparedTo slay thee by his arts ensnared.' Thus urged Sugríva famed for loreOf moving words, and spoke no more.Then Ráma thus in turn addressedThe bold Hanúmán and the rest:'Chiefs of the Vanár legions eachOf you heard Sugríva's speech.What think ye now in time of fear,When peril and distress are near,In every doubt the wise dependFor counsel on a faithful friend' They heard his gracious words, and then

Spake reverent to the lord of men:'O Raghu's son, thou knowest wellAll things of heaven and earth and hell.'Tis but thy friendship bids us speakThe counsel Ráma need not seek.So duteous, brave, and true art thou,Heroic, faithful to thy vow.Deep in the scriptures, trained and tried,Still in thy friends wilt thou confide.Let each of us in turn impartThe secret counsel of his heart,And strive to win his chief's assent.By force of wisest argument.' They ceased and Angad thus began:'With jealous eye the stranger scan:Not yet with trusting heart receiveVibhíshan, nor his tale believe.These giants wandering far and wideTheir evil nature falsely hide,And watching with malignant skillAssail us when we fear no ill.Well ponder every hope and fearUntil

thy doubtful course be clear; Then own his merit or detect His guile, and welcome or reject.' Then Sarabhu the bold and brave In turn his prudent sentence gave: 'Yea, Ráma, send a skilful spy With keenest tact to test and try.

Then let the stranger, as is just, Obtain or be refused thy trust.' Then he whose heart was rich in store Of scripture's life-directing lore. King Jāmbaván, stood forth and cried: 'Suspect, suspect a foe allied With Rávan lord of Lanká's isle, And Rákshas sin and Rákshas guile.' Then Maiuda, wisest chief, who knew The wrong, the right, the false, the true, Pondered a while, then silence broke, And thus his sober counsel spoke: 'Let one with gracious speech draw near And gently charm Vibhíshan's ear, Till he the soothing witchery feel And all his secret heart reveal. So thou his aims and hopes shalt know, And hail the friend or shun the foe.' 'Not he,' Hanúmán cried, 'not he Who taught the Gods,

I may rival thee,

Supreme in power of quickest sense, First in the art of eloquence. But hear me soothly speak, O King, And learn the hope to which I cling. Vibhíshan comes no cratty spy: Urged by his brother's fault to fly. With righteous soul that loathes the sin, He fled from Lanká and his kin. p. 440

If strangers question, doubt will rise

And chill the heart of one so wise. Marred by distrust the parle will end, And then wilt lose a faithful friend. Nor let it seem so light a thing To sound a stranger's heart, O King. And he, I ween, whate'er he say, Will ne'er an evil thought betray. He comes a friend in happy time, Loathing his brother for his crime. His ear has heard thine old renown, The might that struck King Báli down, And set Sugríva on the throne. And looking now to thee alone He comes thy matchless aid to win And punish Rávan for his sin. Thus have I tried thy heart to move, And thus Vibhíshan's truth to prove. Still in his friendship I confide; But ponder, wisest, and decide.'

Footnotes

438:1b This dessertion to the enemy is somewhat abrupt, and is narrated with brevity not usual with

Válmiki. In the Bengal recension the preceding speakers and speeches differ considerably from those given in the text which I follow.

Vibhíshan is kicked from his seat by Rávan, and then, after telling his mother what has happened, he flies to Mount Kailása where he has an interview with Siva, and by his advice seeks Ráma and the Vanar army.

439:1 Vrihuspatí the preceptor of the Gods.

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CANTO XVIII.: RÁMA'S SPEECH.

Then Ráma's rising doubt was stilled,

And friendly thoughts his bosom filled. Thus, deep in Scripture's lore, he spake: 'The suppliant will I ne'er forsake, Nor my protecting aid refuse When one in name of friendship sues. Though faults and folly blot his fame, Pity and help he still may claim.' He ceased: Sugríva bowed his head And pondered for a while, and said: 'Past number be his faults or few, What think ye of the Rákshas who, When threatening clouds of danger rise, Deserts his brother's side and flies? Say, Vánars, who may hope to find True friendship in his faithless kind?' The son of Raghu heard his speech: He cast a hasty look on each Of those brave Vánar chiefs, and while Upon his lips there played a smile, To Lakshman turned and thus expressed The thoughts that moved his gallant breast: 'Well versed in Scripture's lore, and sage And duly reverent to age, Is he, with long experience stored,

Who counsels like this Vánar lord. Yet here, methinks, for searching eye Some deeper, subtler matter lies. To you and all the world are known The perils of a monarch's throne, While foe and stranger, kith and

kinBy his misfortune trust to win.By hope of \*such advantage  
 led,Vibhíshan o'er the sea has fled.  
 He in his brother's stead would reign,  
 And our alliance seeks to gain;And we his offer may embrace,A stranger  
 and of alien race.But if he comes a spy and foe,What power has he to  
 strike a blowIn furtherance of his close design?What is his strength  
 compared with mine?And can I, Vánar King, forgetThe great, the universal  
 debt,Ever to aid and welcome thoseWho pray for shelter, friends or  
 foes?Hast thou not heard the deathless praiseWon by the dove in olden  
 days,Who conquering his fear and hateWelcomed the slayer of his mate,And  
 gave a banquet, to refreshThe weary fowler, of his flesh?Now hear me,  
 Vánar King, rehearse  
 What Kandu 1 spoke in ancient verse,  
 Saint Kanva's son who loved the truthAnd clave to virtue from his  
 youth:'Strike not the suppliant when he standsAnd asks thee with  
 beseeching handsFor shelter: strike him not althoughHe were thy father's  
 mortal foe.No, yield him, be he proud or meek,The shelter which he comes  
 to seek,And save thy foeman, if the deedShould cost thy life, in  
 desperate need.'And shall I hear the wretched cry,And my protecting aid  
 deny?Shall I a suppliant's prayer refuse,And heaven and glory basely  
 lose?No, I will do for honour sakeE'en as the holy Kandu spake,Preserve a  
 hero's name from stain,And bliss in heaven and glory gain.Bound by a  
 solemn vow I swearThat all my saving help should shareWho sought me in  
 distress and cried,'Thou art my hope, and none beside,'Then go, I pray  
 thee, Vánar King,Vibhíshan to my presence bring.Yea, were he Rávan's  
 self, my vowForbids me to reject him now.' He ceased: the Vánar king  
 approved;And Ráma toward Vibhíshan moved.  
 So moves, a brother God to greet,Lord Indra from his heavenly seat.  
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#### Footnotes

440:1 In Book II. Canto XXI, Kandu is mentioned by

Ráma as an example of filial obedience. At the  
 command of his father he is said to have killed a cow.

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#### CANTO XIX.: VIBHÍSHAN'S COUNSEL.

When Raghu's son had owned his claim

Down from the air Vibhíshan came,And with his four attendants bentAt  
 Ráma's feet most reverent. 'O Ráma,' thus he cried, 'in meVibhíshan,  
 Rávan's brother see.By him disgraced thine aid I seek,Sure refuge of the  
 poor and weak.From Lanká, friends, and wealth I fly.And reft of all on  
 thee rely.On thee, the wretch's firmest friend,My kingdom, joys, and life  
 depend.' With glance of favour Ráma eyedThe Rákshas chief and thus  
 replied: 'First from thy lips I fain would hearEach brighter hope, each  
 darker fear.Speak, stranger, that I well may knowThe strength and  
 weakness of the foe.' He ceased: the Rákshas chief obeyed,And thus in  
 turn his answer made: 'O Prince, the Self-existent gaveThis boon to  
 Rávan; he may braveAll foes in fight; no fiend or snake,Gandharva, God,  
 his life may take.His brother Kumbhakarna vies

In might with him who rules the skies.The captain of his armies--  
 famePerhaps has taught the warrior's name--Is terrible Prahanta, whoKing  
 Manibhadra's

1 self o'erthrew.

Where is the warrior found to faceYoung Indrajit, when armed with  
 braceAnd guard

2 and bow he stands in mail

And laughs at spear and arrowy hail?Within his city Lanká dwellTen  
 million giants fierce and fell,Who wear each varied shape at willAnd eat  
 the flesh of those they kill.These hosts against the Gods he led.And  
 heavenly might discomfited.' Then Ráma cried: 'I little heedGigantic

strength or doughty deed. In spite of all their might has done  
 The king, the captain, and the son shall fall beneath my fury dead,  
 And thou shalt reign in Rávan's stead. He, though in depths of earth he dwell,  
 Or seek protection down in hell,  
 Or kneel before the Sire supreme,  
 His forfeit life shall ne'er redeem. Yea, by my brothers' lives I swear,  
 I will not to my home repair till Rávan and his kith and kin  
 Have paid in death the price of sin.' Vibhíshan bowed his head and  
 cried: 'Thy conquering army will I guide to storm the city of the foe,  
 And aid the tyrant's overthrow.' Thus spake Vibhíshan: Ráma pressed  
 The Rákshas chieftain to his breast, and cried to Lakshman: 'Haste and bring  
 Sea-water for the new-made king.' He spoke, and o'er Vibhíshan's head  
 The consecrating drops were shed. Mid shouts that hailed with one accord  
 The giants' king and Lanká's lord, 'Is there no way,' Hanúmán cried,  
 'No passage o'er the boisterous tide? How may we lead the Vánar host  
 In triumph to the farther coast?' Thus, 'said Vibhíshan, 'I advise:  
 Let Raghu's son in suppliant guise entreat the mighty Sea to lend  
 His succour and this cause befriend. His channels, as the wise have told,  
 By Sagar's sons were dug of old,

1b

Nor will high-thoughted Ocean scorn a prince of Sagar's lineage born.'  
 He ceased; the prudent counsel won the glad assent of Raghu's son.  
 Then on the ocean shore a bed of tender sacred grass was spread,  
 Where Ráma at the close of day like fire upon an altar lay.

Footnotes

441:1 A King of the Yakshas, or Kuvera himself, the God of Gold.

441:2 The brace protects the left arm from injury from the bow-string,  
 and the guard protects the fingers of the right hand.

Next: Canto XX.: The Spies. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
 CANTO XX.: THE SPIES.

Sárdúla, Rávan's spy, surveyed

The legions on the strand arrayed. And bore, his bosom racked with  
 fear, these tidings to the monarch's ear: 'They come, they come. A  
 rushing tide, ten leagues they spread from side to side, and on to storm  
 thy citv press, fierce rovers of the wilderness. Rich in each princely  
 power and grace, the pride of Das'aratha's race, Ráma and Lakshman lead  
 their bands, and halt them on the ocean sands. O Monarch, rise, this peril  
 meet; risk not the danger of defeat.

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First let each wiser art be tried; bribe them, or win them, or  
 divide. 'Such was the counsel of the spy: And Rávan called to S'uka:  
 'Fly, Sugríva lord of Vánars seek, and thus my kingly message speak:  
 'Great power and might and fame are thine. Brave scion of a royal line,  
 King Riksharajua's son, in thee a brother and a friend I see. How wrouged  
 by me canst thou complain? What profit here pretend to gain? If from the  
 wood the wife I stole of Ráma of the prudent soul, what cause hast thou to  
 mourn the theft? Thou art not injured or bereft. Return, O King, thy steps  
 retrace and seek thy mountain dwelling-place. No, never may thy hosts  
 within My Lanká's walls a footing win. A mighty town whose strength  
 defies the gathered armies of the skies.' He ceased: obedient S'uka  
 heard; with wings and plumage of a bird he rose in eager speed and  
 through the air upon his errand flew. Borne o'er the sea with rapid wing  
 He stood above the Vánar king, and spoke aloud, sublime in air. 'Thy message  
 he was charged so bear. The Vánar heard the words he spoke, and quick  
 redoubling stroke on stroke on head and pinions hemmed him round and bore  
 him struggling to the ground. The Rákshas wounded and distressed these  
 words to Raghu's son addressed: 'Quick, quick! This Vánar host \*  
 restrain,

For heralds never must be slain.To him alone, a wretch untrue,The  
punishment of death is dueWho leaves his master's speech unsaidAnd speaks  
another word \* instead'Moved by the suppliant speech and prayerUp sprang  
the prince and cried, forbear.Saved from his wild assailant's blowsAgain  
the Rákshas herald roseAnd borne on light wings to the skyAddressed  
Sugriva from on high:'O Vánar Monarch, chief enduedWith power and  
wonderous fortitude.What answer is my king the fearAnd scourge of weeping  
worlds, to hear?''Go tell thy lord,' Sugriva cried.'Thou, Ráma's foe, art  
thus defied.His arm the guilty Bali slew;Thus, tyrant, shalt thee perish  
too,Thy sons, thy friends, proud King and allThy kith and kin with thee  
shall fall;And emptied of the giant's brood,Burnt \* Lanká be a solitude.  
Fly to the Sun-God's pathway, go  
And hide thee deep in hell below:In vain from Ráma shalt thou fleeThough  
heavenly warriors fight for thee.Thine arm subdued, securely bold,  
The Vulture-king infirm and old:But will thy puny strength availWhen  
Raghu's wrathful sons assail?A captive in thy palace liesThe lady of the  
lotus eyes:Thou knowest not how fierce and strongIs he whom thou hast  
dared to wrong.The best of Raghu's lineage, heWhose conquering hand shall  
punish thee.' He ceased: and Augad raised a cry;'This is no herald but  
a spy.Above thee from his airy postHis rapid eye surveyed our host,Where  
with advantage he might scanOur gathered strength from rear to van,Bind  
him. Vánars, bind the spy,Nor let him back to Lanká fly.' They hurled  
the Rákshas to the ground,Thiey grasped his neck, his pinions bound,And  
firmly held bear while \* in vainHis voice was lifted to complain.But  
Ráma's heart inclined to spare,He listened to his plaint and prayer,And  
cried aloud: 'O Vánars, cease;The captive from his bonds  
release.'Footnotes

441:1b The story is told in Book I. Cantos XL., XLI.,  
XLII.

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CANTO XXI.: OCEAN THREATENED.

His hands in reverence Ráma raised

And southward o'er the ocean gazed:Then on the sacred grass that madeHis  
lowly couch\* his limbs\* he laid,His head on that strong arm reclinedWhich  
Sitá, best of womankind,Had loved in happier days to holdWith soft arms  
decked\* with pearls and gold.Then rising from his bed of grass,'This  
day,' he cried, 'the host shall passTriumphant to the southern shore,Or  
Ocean's self shall be no more \*.'Thus vowing in his constant breastAgain  
he turned him to his rest,And there, his eyes in slumber closed,Silent  
beside the sea reposed.Thrice rose the Day-God thrice he set,The lord of  
Ocean came not yet,Thrice came the night, but Raghu's sonNo answer by his  
service won.To Lakshman thus the hero cried,His eyes aflame with wrath  
and pride: 'In vain the softer gifts that graceThe good are offered to  
the base. \*Long-suffering, patience, gentle speech

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Their thankless hearts can never reach.

The world to him its honour paysWhose ready tongue himself can praise.Who  
scorns the true, and hates the right,Whose hand is ever raised to  
smite.Each milder art is tried in vain:It wins no glory, but disdain.And  
victory owns no softer charmThan might which nerves a warrior's arm.My  
humble suit is still deniedBy Ocean's overweening pride.This day the  
monsters of the deepIn throes of death shall wildly leap.My shafts shall  
rend the serpents curledIn caverns of the watery world,Disclose each  
sunless depth and bareThe tangled pearl and coral there.Away with mercy!  
at a timeLike this compassion is a crime.Welcom, the battle and the foe!  
My bow! my arrows and my bow!This day the Vánars' feet shall treadThe  
conquered Sea's exhausted bed,And he who never feared beforeShall tremble  
to his farthest shore." Red flashed his eyes with angry glow;

He stood and grasped his mighty bow, Terrific as the fire of doom  
Whose quenchless flames the world consume. His clanging cord the archer  
drew. And swift the fiery arrows flew Fierce as the flashing levin sent  
By him who rules the firmament. Down through the startled waters sped  
Each missile with its flaming head. The foamy billows rose and sank,  
And dashed upon the trembling bank Sea monsters of tremendous form  
With crash and roar of thunder storm. Still the wild waters rose and fell  
Crowned with white foam and pearl and shell. Each serpent, startled from his rest,  
Raised his fierce eyes and glowing crest. And prisoned Dánavs  
1 where they dwelt

In depths below the terror felt. Again upon his string he laid  
A flaming shaft, but Lakshman stayed His arm, with gentle reasoning tried  
To soothe his angry mood, and cried: 'Brother, reflect: the wise control  
The rising passions of the soul. Let Ocean grant, without thy threat,  
The boon on which thy heart is set. That gracious lord will ne'er refuse  
When Ráma son of Raghu sues.'

He ceased: and voices from the air Fell clear and loud, Spare, Ráma,  
spare.

Footnotes

443:1 Fiends and enemies of the Gods.

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CANTO XXII.:

With angry menace Rama, best

Of Raghu's sons, the Sea addressed: 'With fiery flood of arrowy rain  
Thy channels will I dry and drain. And I and all the Vánnr host  
Will reach on foot the farther coast. Thou shalt not from destruction save  
The creatures of the teeming wave, And lapse of time shall ne'er efface  
The memory of the dire disgrace' Thus spoke the warrior, and prepared  
The mortal shaft which never spared, Known mystic weapon, by the name  
Of Brahma, red with quenchless flame Great terror, as he strained the bow,  
Struck heaven above and earth below Through echoing skies the thunder pealed  
And startled mountains rocked and reeled The earth was black with sudden night  
And heaven was blotted from the sight. Then ever and anon the glare  
Of meteors shot through murky air, And with a wild terrific sound  
Red lightnings struck the trembling ground. In furious gusts the fierce wind blew:  
Tall trees it shattered and overthrew, And, smiting with a giant's  
stroke, Huge masses from the mountain broke. A cry of terror long and  
shrill Came from each valley, plain, and hill. Each ruined dale, each riven  
peak Re-echoed with a wail or shriek. While Raghu's son undaunted  
gazed The waters of the deep were raised, And, still uplifted more and  
more, Leapt in wild flood upon the shore. Still Ráma looked upon the  
tide And kept his post unterrified. Then from the seething flood  
upreared Majestic Ocean's form appeared, As rising from his eastern  
height Springs through the sky the Lord of Light. Attendant on their  
monarch came Sea serpents with their eyes aflame. Like lazulite mid burning  
gold His form was wondrous to behold. Bright with each fairest precious  
stone A chain about his neck was thrown. Calm shone his lotus eyes  
beneath The blossoms of his heavenly wreath, And many a pearl and sea-born  
gem Flashed in the monarch's diadem. There Gangá, tributary queen. And  
Sindhu 1b by his lord, were seen,

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And every stream and brook renowned

In ancient story girt him round. Then, as the waters rose and swelled,  
The king with suppliant hands upheld, His glorious head to Ráma bent  
And thus addressed him reverent: 'Air, ether, fire, earth, water, true  
To nature's will, their course pursue; And I, as ancient laws ordain,  
Unfordable must still remain. Yet, Raghu's son, my counsel hear:  
I ne'er for love or hope or fear Will pile my waters in a heap  
And leave a pathway through the deep. Still shall my care for thee provide  
An easy passage o'er the tide, And like a city's paven street  
Shall be the road beneath thy feet.' He



ceased: and Ráma spoke again: 'This spell is ne'er invoked in vain. Where shall the magic shaft, to spend the fury of its might, descend?' 'Shoot,' Ocean cried, 'thine arrow forth with all its fury to the north. Where sacred Drumakulya lies, whose glory with thy glory vies, There dwells a wild Abhira 1 race, As vile in act as foul of face, Fierce Dasyus 2 who delight in ill, And drink my tributary rill. My soul no longer may endure their neighbourhood and touch impure. At these, O son of Raghu, aim thine arrow with the quenchless flame.' Swift from the bow, as Ráma drew his cord, the fiery arrow flew. Earth groaned to feel the wound, and sent a rush of water through the rent; and famed for ever is the well of Vrana 3 where the arrow fell.

Then every brook and lake beside throughout the region Ráma dried. But yet he gave a boon to bless and fertilize the wilderness: No fell disease should taint the air, and sheep and kine should prosper there: Earth should produce each pleasant root, the stately trees should bend with fruit; Oil, milk, and honey should abound, and fragrant herbs should clothe the ground. Then spake the king of brooks and seas to Raghu's son in words like these: 'Now let a wondrous task be done by Nala, Visvakarma's son. Who, born of one of Vánar race, Inherits by his father's grace a share of his celestial art. Call Nala to perform his part, and he, divinely taught and skilled, a bridge athwart the sea shall build.' He spoke and vanished Nala, best of Vánar chiefs, the king addressed: 'O'er the deep sea where monsters play a bridge, O Ráma, will I lay; For, sharer of my father's skill, mine is the power and mine the will. 'Tis vain to try each gentler art to bribe and soothe the thankless heart; In vain on such is mercy spent; It yields to naught but punishment. Through fear alone will Ocean now a passage o'er his waves allow. My mother, ere she bore her son, this boon from Visvakarma won: 'O Mandari, thy child shall be in skill and glory next to me.' But why unbidden should I fill thine ear with praises of my skill? Command the Vánar hosts to lay foundations for the bridge to-day.' He spoke: and swift at Ráma's best up sprang the Vánars from their rest, The mandate of the king obeyed and sought the forest's mighty shade. Unrooted trees to earth they threw, and to the sea the timber drew. The stately palm was bowed and bent, as okas from the ground were rent, and towering Sals and light bamboos, and trees with flowers of varied hues, with loveliest creepers wreathed and crowned, shook, reeled, and fell upon the ground. With mighty engines piles of stone and seated hills were overthrown: Unprisoned waters sprang on high, in rain descending from the sky: And ocean with a roar and swell heaved wildly when the mountains fell. Then the great bridge of wondrous strength was built, a hundred leagues in length. Rocks huge as autumn clouds bound fast with cordage from the shore were cast, and fragments of each riven hill, and trees whose flowers adorned them still. Wild was the tumult, loud the din as ponderous rocks went thundering in. Ere set of sun, so toiled each crew, ten leagues and four the structure grew; The labours of the second day gave twenty more of ready way, and on the fifth, when sank the sun, The whole stupendous work was done. O'er the broad way the Vánars sped, nor swayed it with their countless tread.

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Exultant on the ocean strand Vibhishan stood, and, mace in hand, longed eager for the onward way, and chafed impatient at delay. Then thus to Ráma trained and tried in battle King Sugriva cried: 'Come, Huma's broad back ascend; Let Angad help to Lakshman lend. These high above the sea shall bear their burthen through the ways of air.' So, with Sugriva, borne o'erhead Ikshvaku's sons the legions led. Behind, the Vánar hosts pursued their march in endless multitude. Some skimmed the surface of the wave, to some the air a passage gave. Amid their ceaseless roar the sound of

Ocean's fearful voice was drowned,As o'er the bridge by Nala plannedThey hastened on to Lanká's strand,Where, by the pleasant brooks, mid treesLoaded with fruit, they took their ease.

Footnotes  
443:1b The Indus.

444:1 Cowherds, sprung from a Bráhmaṇ and a woman of the medical tribe, the modern Ahíras.

444:2 Barbarians or outcasts.

444:3 Vrana means wound or rent.

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CANTO XXIII.: THE OMENS.

Then Ráma, peerless in the skill

That marks each sign of good and ill,Strained his dear brother to his breast,And thus with prudent words addressed:'Now, Lakshman, by the water's sideIn fruitful groves the host divide,That warriors of each woodland raceMay keep their own appointed place.Dire is the danger: loss of friends,Of Vánaras and of bears, impends.Distained with dust the breezes blow,And earth is shaken from below.The tall hills rock from foot to crown,And stately trees come toppling down.In threatening shape, with voice of fear,The clouds like cannibals appear,And rain in fitful torrents, redWith sanguinary drops, is shed.Long streaks of lurid light investThe evening skies from east to west.And from the sun at times a ballOf angry fire is seen to fall.From every glen and brake is heardThe boding voice of beast and bird:From den and lair night-prowlers run And shriek against the falling sun.Up springs the moon, but hot and redKills the sad night with woe and dread;No gentle lustre, but the gloom.That heralds universal doom.A cloud of dust and vapour marsThe beauty of the evening stars,And wild and fearful is the skyAs though the wreck of worlds were nigh.Around our heads in boding flightWheel hawk and vulture, crow and kite;And every bird of happy noteShrieeks terror from his altered throat.Sword, spear and shaft shall strew the plainDyed red with torrents of the slain.To-day the Vánar troops shall closeAround the city of our foes.'

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CANTO XXIV.: THE SPY'S RETURN.

As shine the heavens with autumn's moon

Refulgent in the height of noon,So shone with light which Ráma gaveThat army of the bold and brave,As from the sea it marched awayIn war's magnificent array,And earth was shaken by the beatAnd trampling of unnumbered feet.Then to the giants' ears were borne,The mingled notes of drum and horn,And clash of tambours smote the sky,And shouting and the battle cry.The sound of martial strains inspiredEach chieftain, and his bosom fired:While giants from their walls replied,And answering shouts the foe defied,Then Ráma looked on Lanká whereBright banners floated in the air,And, pierced with anguish at the view.His loving thoughts to Sitá flew.'There, prisoned by the giant, liesMy lady of the tender eyes,Like Rohini the queen of starsO'erpowered by the fiery Mars.'Then turned he to his brother chief

And cried in agony of grief:'See on the hill, divinely plannedAnd built by Vis'vakarmá's hand,The towers and domes of Lanká riseIn peerless beauty to the skies.Bright from afar the city shinesWith gleam of palaces and shrines,Like pale clouds through the region spreadBy Vishnu's self inhabited.Fair gardens grow, and woods betweenThe stately domes are fresh and green,Where trees their bloom and fruit display,And sweet birds sing on every spray.Each bird is mad with joy, and beesSing labouring in the bloomy treesOn branches by the breezes bowed.Where the gay Koíl's voice is loud.'      This said, he ranged with warlike artEach body of the host apart.

'There in the centre,' Ráma cried, 'Be Angad's place by Nila's side. Let Rishabh of impetuous might Be lord and leader on the right, And Gandhamádan, next in rank, Be captain of the farther flank. Lakshman and I the hosts will lead, And Jámaván of ursine breed, With bold Sushen unused to fear, And Vegadarsí, guide the rear.' Thus Ráma spoke: the chiefs obeyed; And all the Vánar hosts arrayed Showed awful as the autumn sky When clouds embattled form on high. Their arms were mighty trees o'erthrown And massy blocks of mountain stone. One hope in every warlike breast, One firm resolve, they onward pressed, To die in fight or batter down The walls and towers of Lanká's town. Those marshalled legions Ráma eyed, And thus to King Sugríva cried: 'Now, Monarch, ere the hosts proceed, Let S'uka, Rávan's spy, be freed.' He spoke: the Vánar gave consent And loosed him from imprisonment: And S'uka, trembling and afraid, His homeward way to Rávan made. Loud laughed the lord of Lanká's isle: 'Where hast thou stayed this weary while? Why is thy plumage marred, and why Do twisted cords thy pinions tie? Say, comest thou in evil plight The victim of the Vánars' spite?' He ceased: the spy his fear controlled, And to the king his story told:

'I reached the ocean's distant shore, Thy message to the king I bore, In sudden wrath the Vánars rose, They struck me down with furious blows; They seized me helpless on the ground, My plumage rent, my pinions bound. They would not, headlong in their ire, Consider, listen, or inquire; So fickle, wrathful, rough and rude Is the wild forest multitude. There, marshalling the Vánar bands, King Ráma with Sugríva stands, Ráma the matchless warrior, who Virádha and Kabandha slew, Khara, and countless giants more. And tracks his queen to Lanká's shore. A bridge athwart the sea was cast, And o'er it have his legions passed. Hark I heralded by horns and drums The terrible avenger comes. E'en now the giants' isle he fills With warriois huge as clouds and hills, And burning with vindictive hate Will thunder soon at Lanká's gate.

Yield or oppose him: choose between

Thy safety and the Maithil queen.' He ceased: the tyrant's eyeballs blazed With fury as his voice he raised:

'No, if the dwellers of the sky, Gandharvas, fiends assail me, I Will keep the Maithil lady still, Nor yield her back for fear or ill. When shall my shafts with iron bail My foeman, Raghu's son, assail, Thick as the bees with eager wing Beat on the flowery trees of spring? O, let me meet my foe at length, And strip him of his vaunted strength, Fierce as the sun who shines afar Stealing the light of every star. Strong as the sea's impetuous might My ways are like the tempest's flight; But Ráma knows not this, or he In terror from my face would flee.'

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CANTO XXV. 1: RÁVAN'S SPIES.

When Ráma and the host he led

Across the sea had safely sped. Thus Rávan, moved by wrath and pride. To S'uka and to Sáran cried: 'O counsellors, the Vánar host Has passed the sea from coast to coast, And Das'aratha's son has wrought A wondrous deed surpassing thought. And now in truth I needs must know The strength and number of the foe. Go ye, to Ráma's host repair And count me all the legions there. Learn well what power each captain leads His name and fame for warlike deeds. Learn by what artist's wondrous aid That bridge athwart the sea was made; Learn how the Vánar hoat came o'er And halted on the island shore. Mark Ráma son of Raghu well; His valour, strength, and weapons tell. Watch his advisers one by one, And Lakshman, Raghu's younger son. Learn with observant eyes, and bring Unerring tidings to your king.' He ceased: then swift in Vánar guise

Forth on their errand sped the spies.They reached the Vánars, and,  
dismayed,Their never-ending lines surveyd:Nor would they try, in mere  
despair,To count the countless legions there,  
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That crowded valley, plain and hill,That pressed about each cave and  
rill.Though sea-like o'er the land were spreadThe endless hosts which  
Ráma led,The bridge by thousands yet was lined,And eager myriads pressed  
behind.But sage Vibhíshan's watchful eyesHad marked the giants in  
disguise.He gave command the pair to seize,And told the tale in words  
like these: 'O Ráma these, well known erewhile,Are giant sons of  
Lanká's isle.Two counsellors of Rávan sentTo watch the invading  
armament.' Vibhíshan ceased: at Ráma's lookThe Rákshas envoys quailed  
and shook;Then suppliant hand to hand they pressedAnd thus Ikshváku's son  
addressed:'O Ráma, bear the truth we speak:Our monarch Rávan bade us  
seekThe Vánar legions and survey

Their numbers, strength, and vast array'. Then Ráma, friend and hope  
and guideOf suffering creatures, thus replied: 'Now giants, if your  
eyes have scannedOur armies, numbering every band,Marked lord and chief,  
and gazed their fill,Return to Rávan when ye will.It aught remain, if  
aught anewYe fain would scan with closer view,Vibhíshan, ready at your  
call,Will lead you forth and show you all.Think not of bonds and capture;  
fearNo loss of life, no peril here:For, captive, helpless and unarmed,An  
envoy never should be harmed.Again to Lanká's town repair,Speed to the  
giant monarch there,And be these words to Rávan told,Fierce brother of  
the Lord of Gold:'Now, tyrant, tremble for thy sin:Call up thy friends,  
thy kith and kin,And let the power and might be seenWhich made thee bold  
to steal my queen.To-morrow shall thy mournful eyeBehold thy bravest  
warriors die,And Lanká's city, tower and wall,Struck by my fiery shafts,  
will fall.Then shall my vengeful blow descendIts rage on thee and thine  
to spend,

Fierce as the fiery bolt that flewFrom heaven against the Dánav crew,Mid  
these rebellious demons sentBy him who rules the firmament.' Thus spake  
Ikshváku's son, and ceased:The giants from their bonds releasedLauded the  
King with glad accord,And hasted homeward to their lord.Before the tyrant  
side by sideS'uka and Sáran stood and cried:

'Vibhíshan seized us, King, and fain

His helpless captives would have slain.But glorious Ráma saw us;  
he,Great-hearted hero, made us free.There in one spot our eyes beheldFour  
chiefs on earth unparalleled,Who with the guardian Gods may vieWho rule  
the regions of the sky.There Ráma stood, the boast and prideOf Raghu's  
race, by Lakshman's side.There stood the sage Vibhíshan, thereSugríva  
strong beyond compare.These four alone can batter downGate, rampart,  
wall, and Lanka's town.Nay, Ráma matchless in his form,A single foe, thy  
town would storm:So wondrous are his weapons, heNeeds not the succour of  
the three.

Why speak we of the countless trainThat fills the valley, hill and  
plain,The millions of the Vánar breedWhom Ráma and Sugríva lead?O King,  
be wise, contend no more,And Sitá to her lord restore.'

Footnotes

446:1 Here in the Bengal recension (Gorresio's edition),  
begins Book VI.

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CANTO XXVI.: THE VÁNAR CHIEFS.

'Not if the Gods in heaven who dwell,

Gandharvas, and the fiends of hellIn banded opposition riseAgainst me,  
will I yield my prize.Still trembling from the ungentle touchOf Vánar  
hands ye fear too much,And bid me, heedless of the shame,Give to her lord  
the Maithil dame.' Thus spoke the king in stern reproof;Then mounted to  
his palace roofAloft o'er many a story raised,And on the lands beneath

him gazed. There by his faithful spies he stood  
And looked on sea and hill  
and wood. There stretched before him far away  
The Vánars' numberless  
array: Scarce could the meadows' tender green  
Beneath their trampling feet  
be seen. He looked a while with furious eye,  
Then questioned thus the  
nearer spy: 'Bend, Sáran, bend thy gaze, and show  
The leaders of the Vánar  
foe Tell me their heroes' names, and teach  
The valour, power and might of  
each.' Obedient Sáran eyed the van,  
The leaders marked, and thus began: That chief conspicuous at the head  
Of warriors in the forest bred, Who hither bends his ruthless eye  
And shouts his fearful battle cry:

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Whose voice with pealing thunder shakes  
All Lanká, with the groves and  
lakes And hills that tremble at the sound, Is Nila, for his might  
renowned: First of the Vánar lords controlled  
By King Sugríva lofty-  
souled. He who his mighty arm extends, And his fierce eye on Lanká bends, In  
stature like a stately tower, In colour like a lotus flower, Who with his  
wild earth-shaking cries Thee, Rávan, to the field defies, Is Angad, by  
Sugríva's care Anointed his imperial heir: In wondrous strength, in martial  
fire Peer of King Bali's self, his sire; For Ráma's sake in arms  
arrayed Like Varun called to S'akra's aid. Behind him, girt by warlike  
bands, Nala the mighty Vánar stands,  
The son of Vis'vakarmá, he Who built the bridge athwart the sea. Look  
farther yet, O King, and mark That chieftain clothed in Sandal bark. 'Tis  
S'weta, famed among his peers, A sage whom all his race reveres. See, in  
Sugríva's ear he speaks, Then, hasting back, his post reseek, And turns  
his practised eye to view The squadrons he has formed anew. Next Kumud  
stands who roamed of yore On Gomati's

1 delightful shore,

Feared where the waving woods invest His seat on Mount Sanrochan's  
crest. Next him a chieftain strong and dread, Comes Chanda at his legions'  
head; Exulting in his warrior might He hastens, burning for the fight. And  
boasts that his unaided powers Shall cast to earth thy walls and  
towers. Mark, mark that chief of lion gait, Who views thee with a glance of  
hate As though his very eyes would burn The city walls to which they  
turn: 'Tis Rambha, Vánar king; he dwells In Krishnagiri's tangled  
dells, Where Vindhya's pleasant slopes are spread And fair Sudars'an lifts  
his head. There, listening with erected ears,  
S'arabha, mighty chief, appears. His soul is burning for the strife, Nor  
dreads the jeopardy of life. He trembles as he moves, for ire, And bends  
around his glance of fire. Next, like a cloud that veils the sides, A  
chieftain of terrific size, Conspicuous mid the Vánars, comes With battle  
shout like rolling drums, 'Tis Panas, trained in war and tried,  
Who dwells on Páriyátra's side.

He, far away, the chief who throws A glory o'er the marshalled rows That  
ranged behind their captain stand Exulting on the ocean strand, Is Vinata  
the fierce in fight. Preëminent like Dardur's height. That chieftain  
bending down to drink On lovely Vená's verdant brink, Is Krathan; now he  
lifts his eyes And thee to mortal fray defies. Next Gavaya comes, whose  
haughty mind Scorns all the warriors of his kind. He comes to trample -  
such his boast - On Lanká with his single host. 'Footnotes

448:1 The Goomtee.

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CANTO XXVII.: THE VÁNAR CHIEFS.

'Yet more remain, brave chiefs who stake

Their noble lives for Ráma's sake. See, glorious, golden-coated, one Who  
glisters like the morning sun, Whom thousands of his race surround, 'Tis  
Hara for his strength renowned, Next comes a mighty chieftain, he Whose  
legions, armed with rock and tree, Press on, in numbers passing tale, The  
ramparts of our town to scale. O Rávan, see the king advance Terrific with

his fiery glance, Girt by the bravest of his train, Majestic as the God of Rain, Parjanya, when his host of clouds About the king, embattled, crowds: On Rikshaván's high mountain nursed, In Narmadá

1b he slakes his thirst,

Dhúmra, proud ursine chief, who leads Wild warriors whom the forest breeds. His brother, next in strength and age, In Jámaván the famous sage. Of yore his might and skill he lent To him who rules the firmament, And Indra's liberal boons repaid

The chieftain for the timely aid. There like a gloomy cloud that flies Borne by the tempest through the skies, Pramáthi stands: he roamed of yore The forest wilds on Gangá's shore, Where elephants were struck with dread And trembling at his coming fled. There on his foes he loved to sate The old hereditary hate.

2b

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Look, Gaja and Gaváksha show Their lust of battle with the foe. See Nala burning for the fray, And Níla chafing at delay, Behind the eager captains press Wild hosts in numbers numberless, And each for Ráma's sake would fall Or force his way through Lanká's wall.'

Footnotes

448:1b The Anglicized Nerbudda. 448:2b According to a Pauranik legend Kes'arí

Hanúmán's putative father had killed an Asur or demon who appeared in the p. 449 form of an elephant, and hence arose the hostility between Vánars and elephants.

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CANTO XXVIII.: THE CHIEFTAINS.

There Sáran ceased: then S'uka broke

The silence and to Rávan spoke: 'O Monarch, yonder chiefs survey: Like elephants in size are they, And tower like stately trees that grow Where Gangá's nursing waters flow; Yea, tall as mountain pines that fling Long shadows o'er the snow-crowned king. They all in wild Kishkindhá dwell And serve their lord Sugríva well. The Gods' and bright Gandharvas' seed, They take each form that suits their need. Now farther look, O Monarch, where Those chieftains stand, a glorious pair, Conspicuous for their godlike frames; Dwivid and Mainda are their names. Their lips the drink of heaven have known, And Brahmá claims them for his own. That chieftain whom thine eyes behold Refulgent like a hill of gold, Before whose wrathful might the sea Roused from his rest would turn and flee, The peerless Vánar, he who came To Lanká for the Maithil dame, The Wind-God's son Hamúmán; thou Hast seen him once, behold him now. Still nearer let thy glance be bent, And mark that prince preëminent Mid chieftains for his strength and size And splendour of his lotus eyes. Far through the worlds his virtues shine, The glory of Ikshváku's line. The path of truth he never leaves, And still through all to duty cleaves. Deep in the Vedas, skilled to wield The mystic shafts to him revealed: Whose flaming darts to heaven ascend, And through the earth a passage rend: In might like him who rules the sky; Like Yama, when his wrath grows high: Whose queen, the darling of his soul. Thy magic art deceived and stole: There royal Ráma stands and longs For battle to avenge his wrongs.

Near on his right a prince, in hue

Like pure gold freshly burnished, view: Broad is his chest, his eye is red, His black hair curls about his head: 'Tis Lakshman, faithful friend, who shares His brother's joys, his brother's cares. By Ráma's side he loves to stand And serve him as his better hand, For whose dear sake without a sigh

The warrior youth would gladly die On Ráma's left Vibhíshan view, With giants for his retinue: King-making drops have dewed his head, Appointed monarch in thy stead. Behold that chieftain sternly still, High towering

like a rooted hill, Supreme in power and pride of place, The monarch of the Vánar race. Raised high above his woodland kind, In might and glory, frame and mind, His head above his host he shows Conspicuous as the Lord of Snows. His home is far from hostile eyes Where deep in woods Kishkindhá lies. A glistering chain which flowers bedeck With burnished gold adorns his neck. Queen Fortune, loved by Gods and kings, To him her chosen favourite clings. That chain he owes to Ráma's grace, And Tárá and his kingly place. In him the great Sugríva know, Whom Ráma rescued from his foe.'

1

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CANTO XXIX.: S'ÁRDÚLA CAPTURED.

The giant viewed with earnest ken

The Vánars and the lords of men; Then thus, with grief and anger moved, In bitter tone the spies reproved: 'Can faithful servants hope to please Their master with such fates as these? Or hope ye with wild words to wring The bosom of your lord and king? Such words were better said by those Who come arrayed our mortal foes. In vain your ears have heard the sage, And listened to the lore of age, Untaught, though lectured many a day, The first great lesson, to obey, 'Tis marvel Rávan reigns and rules Whose counsellors are blind and fools. Has death no terrors that ye dare To tempt your monarch to despair,

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From whose Imperial mandate flow Disgrace and honour, weal and woe? Yea, forest trees, when flames are fanned About their scorching trunks, may stand;

But naught can set the sinner free When kings the punishment decree. I would not in mine anger spare The traitorous foe-praising pair, But years of faithful service plead For pardon, and they shall not bleed. Henceforth to me be dead: depart, Far from my presence and my heart.' Thus spoke the angry king: the two Cried, Long live Rávan, and withdrew, The giant monarch turned and cried To strong Mahodar at his side: 'Go thou, and spies more faithful bring. More duteous to their lord the king.' Swift at his word Mahodar shed, And came returning at the head Of long tried messengers, who bent Before their monarch reverent. 'Go quickly hence,' said Rávan 'scan With keenest eyes the foeman's plan. Learn who, as nearest friends, advise And mould each secret enterprise. Learn when he wakes and goes to rest, Sound every purpose of his breast. Learn what the prince intends to-day: Watch keenly all, and come away.' With joy they heard the words he said: Then with S'árdúla at their head About the giant king they went With circling paces reverent. By fair Suvela's grassy side The chiefs of Raghu's race they spied, Where, shaded by the waving wood, Vibhíshan and Sugríva stood. A while they rested there and viewed The Vánars' countless multitude. Vibhíshan with observant eyes Knew at a glance the giant spies, And bade the warriors of his train Bind the rash foes with cord and chain: 'S'árdúla's is the sin,' he cried. He neath the Vánars' hands had died, But Ráma from their fury freed The captive in his utmost need, And, merciful at sight of woe, Loosed all the spies and bade them go. Then home to Lanká's monarch fled The giant chiefs discomfited.

Footnotes

449:1 Here follows the enumeration of Sugríva's forces

which I do not attempt to follow. It soon reaches a

hundred thousand billions. Next: Canto XXX.: Sárdúla's Speech. Sacred Texts

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CANTO XXX.: SÁRDÚLA'S SPEECH.

They told their lord that Ráma still

Lay waiting by Suvela's hill.

The tyrant, flushed with angry glow,

Heard of the coming of the foe, And thus with close inquiry  
pressed S'árdúla spokesman for the rest: 'Why art thou sad, night-rover?  
speak: Has grief or terror changed thy cheek? Have the wild Vánars' hostile  
bands assailed thee with their mighty hands? S'árdúla heard, but scarce  
might speak; His trembling tones were faint and weak; 'O Giant King, in  
vain we try the purpose of the foe to spy. Their strength and number none  
may tell, And Ráma guards his legions well. He leaves no hope to prying  
eyes, And parley with the chiefs denies: Each road and path a Vánar  
guard, Of mountain size, has closed and barred. Soon as my feet an entrance  
found By giants was I seized and bound, And wounded sore I fell  
beneath Their fists and knees and hands and teeth.

Then trembling, bleeding, wellnigh dead To Ráma's presence was I led. He in  
his mercy stooped to save, And freedom to the captive gave. With rocks and  
shattered mountains he has bridged his way athwart the sea, And he and all  
his legions wait embattled close to Lanká's gate. Soon will the host thy  
wall assail, And, swarming on, the rampart scale, Now, O my King, his  
consort yield, Or arm thee with the sword and shield. This choice is left  
thee: choose between Thy safety and the Maithil queen.

1

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CANTO XXXI.: THE MAGIC HEAD.

The tyrant's troubled eye confessed

The secret fear that filled his breast. With dread of coming woe  
dismayed He called his counsellors to aid; Then sternly silent, deep in  
thought, His chamber in the palace sought. Then, as the surest hope of  
all, The monarch bade his servants call

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Vidyujjihva, whom magic skill made master of the means of ill. Then spake  
the lord of Lanka's isle: 'Come, Sita with thine arts beguile. With magic  
skill and deftest care a head like Ráma's own prepare. This head, long  
shafts and mighty bow, To Janak's daughter will we show.' He ceased.  
Vidyujjihva obeyed, And wondrous magic skill displayed; And Rávan for the  
art he showed an ornament of price bestowed. Then to the grove where Sitá  
lay the lord of Lanká took his way.

Pale, wasted, weeping, on the ground the melancholy queen he found, Whose  
thoughts in utmost stress of ill were fixed upon her husband still. The  
giant king approached the dame, Declared in tones of joy his name; Then  
heeding naught her wild distress bespake her, stern and pitiless: "The  
prince to whom thy fancies cling though loved and wooed by Lanká's  
king, Who slew the noble Khara, -- he is slain by warriors sent by me. Thy  
living root is hewn away. Thy scornful pride is tamed to-day. Thy lord in  
battle's front has died, And Sitá shall be Rávan's bride. Hence, idle  
thoughts: thy hope is fled; What wilt thou, Sitá, with the dead? Rise,  
child of Janak, rise and be the queen of all my queens and me. Incline  
thine ear, and I will tell, Dear lady, how thy husband fell. He bridged his  
way across the sea with countless troops to fight with me. The setting sun  
had flushed the west when on the shore they took their rest. Weary with  
toil no watch they kept, Securely on the sand they slept. Prahasta's troops  
assailed our foes,

And smote them in their deep repose. Scarce could their bravest prove  
their might; They perished in the dark of night. Axe, spear, and sword,  
directed well, Upon the sleeping myriads fell. First in the fight  
Prahasta's sword reft of his head thy slumbering lord, Roused at the din  
Vibhishan rose, The captive of surrounding foes, And Lakshman through the  
woods that spread around him with his Vánars fled. Hanumán fell: one deadly  
stroke the neck of King Sugriva broke And Maunta sank, and Dwivil  
lay gasping in hand his life away. The Vánars died, or fled dispersed  
Like cloudlets when the storm has burst.



Some rose aloft in air, and more  
 Ran to the sea and filled the shore.  
 On shore, in woods, on hill and plain  
 Our conquering giants left the  
 slain. Thus my victorious host o'erthrew  
 The Vanars, and thy husband  
 slew: See, rudely stained with dust, and red  
 With dropping blood, the  
 severed head." Then, turning to a Rákshas slave,  
 The ruthless king his  
 mandate gave; And straight Vidyujjihva who bore  
 The head still wet with dripping gore,  
 The arrows and the mighty bow, Bent  
 down before his master low. 'Vidyujjihva,'  
 cried Rávan, 'place the head  
 before the lady's face, And let her see  
 with weeping eyes That low in death  
 her husband lies.' Before the queen the  
 giant laid the beauteous head  
 his art had made. And Ravan cried:  
 'Thine eyes will know These arrows and  
 the mighty bow. With fame of this by  
 Ráma strung The earth and heaven and  
 hell have rung. Prahasta brought it  
 hither when His hand had slain thy  
 prince of men. Now, widowed Queen,  
 thy hopes resign: Forget thy husband  
 and be mine.'

Footnotes

450:1 I omit the rest of this canto, which is mere  
 repetition. Rávan gives in the same words his former  
 answer that the Gods, Gandharvas and fiends combined shall not force him  
 to give up Sitá. He then orders S'árdúla to tell him the names of the  
 Vánar chieftains whom he has seen in Ráma's army. These have already been  
 mentioned by S'uka and Sáran.

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CANTO XXXII.: SITÁ'S LAMENT.

Again her eyes with tears o'erflowed.

She gazed upon the head he showed. Gazed on the bow so famed of yore,  
 The glorious bow which Ráma bore. She gazed upon his cheek and brows,  
 The eyes of her beloved spouse; His lips, the lustre of his hair,  
 The priceless gem that glittered there. The features of her Lord she knew,  
 And, pierced with anguish at the view, She lifted up her voice and cried:  
 "Kaikey, are thou satisfied? Now all thy longings are fulfilled;  
 The joy of Rughu's race is killed, And ruined is the ancient line,  
 Destroyer, by that hand of thine. Ah, what offense, O cruel dame,  
 What fault in Ráma couldst thou blame, To drive him clad in hermit dress  
 With Sitá to the wilderness?' Great trembling seized her frame,  
 and she Fell like a stricken plantain tree. As \*\*\*\* the \*\*\*\*\*  
 lays at length Slowly regaining sense and strength, On the dear head she  
 \*\*\*\*\* her eye

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And cried with very bitter cry:

'Ah, when thy cold dead cheek I view, My hero, I am murdered too. Then  
 first a faithful woman's eyes See sorrow, when her husband dies. When thou,  
 my lord, wast nigh to save, Some stealthy hand thy death wound gave. Thou  
 art not dead: rise, hero, rise; Long life was thine, as spake the  
 wise Whose words, I ween, are ever true, For faith lies open to their  
 view. Ah lord, and shall thy head recline On earth's cold breast, forsaking  
 mine, Counting her chill lap dearer far Than I and my caresses are? Ah, is  
 it thus these eyes behold Thy famous bow adorned with gold, Whereon of yore  
 I loved to bind Sweet garlands that my bands had twined? And hast thou  
 sought in heaven a place Amid the founders of thy race, Where in the home  
 deserved so well Thy sires and Das'aratha dwell? Or dost thou shine a  
 brighter star In skies where blest immortals are, Forsaking in thy lofty  
 scorn

The race wherein thy sires were born? Turn to my gaze. O turn thine  
 eye: Why are thy cold lips silent, why? When first we met as youth and  
 maid. When in thy hand my hand was laid, Thy promise was thy steps should  
 be Through life in duty's path with me. Remember, faithful still, thy  
 vow, And take me with thee even now. Is that broad bosom where I hung,  
 That neck to which I fondly clung, Where flowery garlands breathed their  
 scent By hungry dogs and vultures rent? Shall no funereal honours grace The

parted lord of Raghu's race,Whose bounty liberal fees bestowed.For whom  
the fires of worship glowed?Kaus'alyá wild with grief will seeOne sole  
survivor of the threeWho in their hermit garments wentTo the dark woods  
in banishment.Then at her cry shall Lakshman tellHow, slain by night, the  
Vánars fell;How to thy side the giants crept,And slew the hero as he  
slept.Thy fate and mine the queen will know,And broken-hearted die of  
woe.For my unworthy sake, for mine,Ráma, the glory of his line,  
Who bridged his way across the main,Is basely in a puddle slain;And I,  
the graceless wife he wed,Have brought this ruin on his head.Me, too, on  
him, O Rávan, slay:

The wife beside her husband lay.

By his dear body let me rest,Cheek close to cheek and breast to breast,My  
happy eyes I then will close.And follow whither Ráma goes.' Thus cried  
the miserable dame;When to the king a warder came,Before the giant  
monarch bowedAnd said that, followed by a crowdOf counsellors and lords  
of state,Prahasta stood before the gate,And, sent by some engrossing  
care,Craved audience of his master there.The anxious tyrant left his  
seatAnd hastened forth the chief to meet:Then summoning his nobles  
all,Took counsel in his regal hall. When Lanká's lord had left the  
queen,The head and bow no more were seen.The giant king his nobles  
eyed,And, terrible as Yama, cried:'O faithful lords, the time is  
come:Gather our hosts with beat of drum.

Nigh to the town our foeman draws:Be prudent, nor reveal the cause.'

The nobles listened and obeyed:Swift were the gathered troops arrayed,And  
countless rovers of the nightStood burning for the hour of tight.

Next: Canto XXXIII.: Saramá.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XXXIII.: SARAMÁ.

But Saramá, of gentler mood,

With pitying eyes the mourner viewed,Stole to her side and softly  
toldGlad tidings that her heart consoled.Revealing with sweet voice and  
smileThe secret of the giant's guile.She, one of those who night and  
dayWatching in turns by Sítá lay.Though Rákshas born felt pity's  
touch,And loved the hapless lady much. 'I heard,' she said, 'thy bitter  
cry,Heard Rávan's speech and thy reply,For, hiding in the thicket near,No  
word or tone escaped mine ear.When Rávan hastened forth I bentMy steps to  
follow as he went,And learnt the secret cause that droveThe monarch from  
the As'oka grove.Believe me, Queen, thou needst not weepFor Ráma  
slaughtered in his sleep.Thy lion lord of men defiesBy day attack, by  
night surprise.Can even giants slay with easeVast hosts who fight with  
brandished tree,For whom, with eye that never sleeps,  
His constant watch thy Ráma keeps?

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Lord of the mighty arm and chest,Of earthly warriors first and best,Whose  
fame through all the regions rings,Proud scion of a hundred kings;Who  
guards his life and loves to lendHis saving succour to a friend:Whose bow  
no hand but his can strain,--Thy lord, thy Ráma is not slain.Obedient to  
his master's will,A great magician, trained in ill.With deftest art  
surpassing thoughtThat marvellous illusion wrought.Let rising hope thy  
grief dispel:Look up and smile, for all is well.And gentle Lakshmí,  
Fortune's Queen,Regards thee with a favouring mien.Thy Ráma with his  
Vánar trainHas thrown a bridge athwart the main,Has led his countless  
legions o'er,And ranged them on this southern shore.These eyes have seen  
the hero standGirt by his hosts on Lanká's strand,And breathless spies  
each moment bringFresh tidings to the giant king;And every peer and lord  
of state

Is called to counsel and debate.'

She ceased: the sound, long loud and clear,

Of gathering armies smote her ear,Where call of drum and shell rang  
out,The tambour and the battle shout;And, while the din the echoes  
woke,Again to Janak's child she spoke:'Hear, lady, hear the loud

alarmsThat call the Rákshas troops to arms,From stable and from stall  
they leadThe elephant and neighing steed,Brace harness on with deftest  
care,And chariots for the fight prepare.Swift o'er the trembling ground  
careerMailed horsemen armed with axe and spear.And here and there in road  
and streetThe terrible battalions meet.I hear the gathering near and  
far,The snorting steed, the rattling car.Bold chieftains, leaders of the  
brave,Press densely on, like wave on wave,And bright the evening sunbeams  
glanceOn helm and shield, on sword and lance.Hark, lady, to the ringing  
steel,Hark to the rolling chariot wheel:Hark to the mettled courser's  
neighAnd drums' loud thunder far away.The Queen of Fortune holds thee  
dear,

For Lanká's troops are struck with fear,And Ráma with the lotus eyes,Like  
Indra monarch of the skies,With conquering arm will slay his foeAnd free  
his lady from her woe.Soon will his breast support thy head,And tears of  
joy thine eyes will shed.Soon by his mighty arm embracedThe long-lost  
rapture wilt thou taste,And Ráma, meet for highest bliss,Will gain his  
guerdon in thy kiss.'

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CANTO XXXIV.: SARAMÁ'S TIDINGS.

Thus Saramá her story told:

And Sitá's spirit was consoled.As when the first fresh rain is shedThe  
 parching earth is comforted.Then, filled with zeal for Sitá's sake,Again  
 in gentle tones she spake,And, skilled in arts that soothe and  
 please,Addressed the queen in words like these;'Thy husband, lady, will I  
 seek,Say the fond words thy lips would apeak,And then, unseen of any  
 eye,Back to thy side will swiftly fly.My airy flights are speedier  
 farThan Garuda's and the tempest are.'

Then Sitá spake: her former woe

Still left her accents faint and low:'I know thy steps, which naught can  
 stay,Can urge through heaven and hell their way.Then if thy love and  
 changeless willWould serve the helpless captive still,Go forth and learn  
 each plot and guilePlanned by the lord of Lanká's isle.With magic art  
 like maddening wineHe cheats these weeping eyes of mine.

Torments me with his suit, nor sparesReproof or flattery, threats or  
 prayers.These guards surround me night and day;My heart is sad, my senses  
 stray;And helpless in my woe I fearThe tyrant Rávan even here.'

Then Saramá replied:'I go

To learn the purpose of thy foe,Soon by thy side again to standAnd tell  
 thee what the king has planned.'She sped, she heard with eager earsThe  
 tyrant speak his hopes and fears.Where, gathered at their master's  
 call,The nobles filled the council hall;Then swiftly, to her promise  
 true,Back to the As'oka grove she flew.The lady on the grassy  
 ground,Longing for her return, she found;Who with a gentle smile, to  
 greetThe envoy, led her to a seatThrough her worn frame a shiver ranAs  
 Saramá her tale began:'There stood the royal mother: sheBesought her son  
 to set thee free,

p. 454And to her counsel, tears and prayers,

The elder nobles added theirs:'O be the Maithíl queen restoredWith honour  
 to her angry lord.Let Janasthán's\* unhappy fightBe witness of the hero's  
 might.Hanuúmán o'er the waters cameAnd looked upon the guarded dame.Let  
 Lanká's chiefs who fought and fellThe prowess of the leader tell.'In vain  
 they sued, in vain she wept,His purpose still unchanged he kept.As clings  
 the miser to his gold,He would not loose thee from his hold.No, never  
 till in death he lies,Will Lanká's lord release his prize.Soon slain by  
 Ráma's arrows allThe giants with their king will fall,And Ráma to his  
 home will leadHis black-eyed queen from bondage freed.'

An awful sound that moment rose

From Lanká's fast-approaching foes,Where drum and shell in mingled  
 pealMade earth in terror rock and reel.The hosts within the walls

arrayedStood trembling, in their hearts dismayed;Thought of the tempest  
soon to burst,Aud Lanká's lord, their ruin, cursed.Next: Canto XXXV.:  
Malyaván's Speech.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next  
CANTO XXXV.: MALYAVÁN'S SPEECH.

The fearful notes of drum and shell

Upon the ear of Rávan fell.One moment quailed his haughty look,One moment  
in his fear he shook,But soon recalling wonted pride,His counsellors he  
sternly eyed,And with a voice that thundered throughThe council had\*  
began anew: 'Lords, I have heard--your tongues have told--How Raghu's  
son is fierce and bold.To Lanká's shore has bridged his wayAnd hither  
leads his wild array.I know your might, in battle tried,Fighting and  
conquering by my side.Why now, when such a foe is near,Looks eye to eye  
in silent fear?

He ceased, his mother's sire well known

For wisdom in the council shown,Malyaván \*, sage and faithful guide.Thus  
to the monarch's speech replied: 'Long reigns the king in safe  
repose.Unmoved by fear of vanquished foes,Whose feet\* by saving knowledge  
ledIn justice's\* path delight to tread:

Who knows to sheath the sword or wield,To sue for peace\*, to strike or  
yield:

Prefers, when foes are stronger, peace,

And bids a doubtful conflict cease.Now, King, the choice before thee  
lies,Make peace with Ráma, and be wise.This day the captive queen  
restoreWho brings the foe to Lanká's shore.The Sire by whom the worlds  
are swayedOf yore the Gods and demons made.With these Injustice sided;  
thoseFair Justice for her champions chose.Still Justice dwells with Gods  
above;Injustice, fiends and giants love.Thou, through the worlds that  
fear thee, longHast scorned the right and loved the wrong,And Justice,  
with thy foes allied,Gives might resistless to their side.Thou, guided by  
thy wicked will,Hast found delight in deeds of ill,And sages in their  
holy rest\*Have trembled, by thy power oppressed.But they, who check each  
vain desire,Are clothed with might which burns like fire.In them the  
power and glory liveWhich zeal and saintly fervour give.Their constant  
task, their sole delightIs worship and each holy rite,  
To chant aloud the Veda hymn,Nor let the sacred fire grow dim.Now through  
the air like thunder ringThe echoes of the chants they sing.The vapours  
of their incense riseAnd, veil with cloudy pall the skies,And Rákshas  
might grows weak and faintKilled by the power of sage and saint.By  
Brahmá's boon thy life was screenedFrom God, Gandharva, Yaksha \*,  
fiend;But Vánars, men and bears\* arrayedAgainst thee now, thy shores  
invade.Red meteors, heralds of despairFlash\* frequent through the humid\*  
air,Foretelling to my troubled mindThe ruin of the Rákshas kindWith awful  
thundering overheadClouds black as night are densely spread,And oozing\*  
from the gloomy pallGreat drops of blood on Lanká fallDogs roam through  
house and shrine to stealThe sacred oil \* and curd and meal.Cats pair  
with tigers\*, hounds with swine,And asses' foals are born of kine.In  
these and countless signs I traceThe ruin of the giant race,'Tis Vishnu's  
self who comes to stormThy city, clothed in Ráma's form;For, well I ween,  
no mortal hand

The ocean with a bridge has spanned.O giant King, the dame release,And  
sue to Raghu's son for peace'

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CANTO XXXVI.: RÁVAN'S REPLY.

But Rávan's breast with fury swelled,

And thus he spake by Death impelled,While, under brows in anger  
bent,Fierce glances from his eyes were sent:'The bitter words which thou,  
misledBy friendly thought, hast fondly said,Which praise the foe and  
counsel fear,Unheeded fall upon mine ear.How canst thou deem a mighty

foe This Ráma who, in stress of woe, Seeks, banished as his sire  
decreed, Assistance from the Vánar breed? Am I so feeble in thine  
eyes, Though feared by dwellers of the skies, -- Whose might in many a  
battle shown The glorious race of giants own? Shall I for fear of him  
restore The lady whom I hither bore, Exceeding fair like Beauty's Queen

1

Without her well-loved lotus seen? Around the chief let Lakshman  
stand, Sugriva, and each Vánar band, Soon, Malyaván, thine eyes will  
see This boasted Ráma slain by me. I in the brunt of war defy  
The mightiest warriors of the sky; And if I stoop to combat men, Shall I be  
weak and tremble then? This mangled trunk the foe may rend, But Rávan ne'er  
can yield or bend, And be it vice or virtue, I This nature never will  
believe. What marvel if he bridged the sea? Why should this deed disquiet  
thee? This, only this, I surely know, Back with his life he shall not go.  
Thus in loud tones the king exclaimed,  
And mute stood Malyaván ashamed, His reverend head he humbly bent, And  
slowly to his mansion went. But Rávan stayed, and deep in care Held counsel  
with his nobles there, All entrance to secure and close, And guard the city  
from their foes. He bade the chief Prahasta wait Commander at the eastern  
gate. To fierce Mahodara, strong and brave, To keep the southern gate, he  
gave, Where Mahápáras'va's might should aid The chieftain with his hosts  
arrayed. To guard the west -- no chief more fit -- He placed the warrior  
Indrajit, His son, the giant's joy and boast,  
Surrounded by a Rákshas host: And mighty Sáraṇ hastened forth With Suka to  
protect the north.

1b

'I will myself,' the monarch cried, 'Be present on the northern  
side.' These orders for the walls' defence The tyrant gave, then parted  
thence, And, by the hope of victory fired, To chambers far within, retired.

Footnotes

455:1 Lakshmi is the Goddess both of beauty and  
fortune, and is represented with a lotus in her hand.

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CANTO XXXVII.: PREPARATIONS.

Lords of the legions of the wood,

The chieftains with Vibhíshan stood, And, strangers in the foeman's  
land, Their hopes and fears in council scanned: 'See, see where Lanká's  
towers ascend, Which Rávan's power and might defend, Which Gods,  
Gandharvas, fiends would fail To conquer, if they durst assail. How shall  
our legions pass within, The city of the foe to win, With massive walls and  
portals barred Which Rávan keeps with surest guard?' With anxious looks the  
walls they eyed: And sage Vibhíshan thus replied: 'These lords of mine

2b can answer: they

Within the walls have found their way, The foeman's plan and order  
learned, And hither to my side returned. Now, Ráma, let my tongue  
declare How Rávan's hosts are stationed there. Prahasta heads, in warlike  
state, His legions at the eastern gate. To guard the southern portal  
stands Mahodara, girt by Rákshas bands, Where mighty Mahápáras'va, sent  
By Rávan's hest, his aid has lent. Guard of the gate that fronts the  
west Is valiant Indrajit, the best Of warriors, Rávan's joy and pride; And  
by the youthful chieftain's side Are giants, armed for fierce attacks With  
sword and mace and battle-axe. North, where approach is dreaded most, The  
king, encompassed with a host Of giants trained in war, whose hands Wield  
maces, swords and lances, stands.

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All these are chiefs whom Rávan chose As mightiest to resist his foes; And  
each a countless army

1 leads

With elephants and cars and steeds.' Then Ráma, while his spirit  
burnedFor battle, words like these returned:'The eastern gate be Níla's  
care.Opponent of Prahasta there.The southern gate, with troops arrayedLet  
Angad, Báli's son, invade.The gate that fronts the falling sunShall be by  
brave Hanúmán won;Soon through its portals shall he leadHis myriads of  
Vánar breed.The gate that fronts the north shall be  
Assailed by Lakshman and by me.For I myself have sworn to killThe tyrant  
who delights in ill.Armed with the boon which Brahmá gave,The Gods of  
heaven he loves to brave.And through the trembling worlds he  
flies,Oppressor of the just and wise.Thou, Jámaván, and thou, O KingOf  
Vánars, all your bravest bring,And with your hosts in dense arrayStraight  
to the centre force your way.But let no Vánar in the stormDisguise him in  
a human form.Ye chiefs who change your shapes at will,Retain your Vánar  
semblance still.Thus, when we battle with the foe,Both men and Vánars  
will ye know,In human form will seven appear;Myself, my brother Lakshman  
here;Vibhíshan, and the four he ledFrom Lanká's city when he fled.'

Thus Raghu's son the chiefs addressed:

Then, gazing on Suvela's crest,Transported by the lovely sight,He longed  
to climb the mountain height.

Footnotes  
455:1b The poet appears to have forgotten that Suka  
and Sáran were dismissed with ignominy in Canto  
XXIX., and have not been reinstated.

455:2b The four who fled with him. Their names are  
Anala\*, Panasa, Sampáti, and Pramati.

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CANTO XXXVIII.: THE ASCENT OF  
SUELA.

'Come let us scale,' the hero cried,

'This hill with various metals dyed.This night upon the breezy  
crestSugríva, Lakshman, I, will rest,With sage Vibhíshan, faithful  
friend,His counsel and his lore to lend.From these tall\* peaks each eager  
eyeThe foeman's city shall espy,Who from the wood my darling stoleAnd  
brought long anguish on my soul.'

Thus spake the lord of men, and bent

His footsteps to the steep ascent,And Lakshman, true in weal and woe,Next  
followed with his shafts and bow.Vibhíshan followed, next in place,The  
sovereign of the Vánar race,And hundreds of the forest kindThronged with  
impetuous feet, behind.The chiefs in woods and mountains bredFast  
followed to Suvela's head,And gazed on Lanká bright and fairAs some gay  
city in the air.

On glittering gates, on ramparts raisedBy giant hands, the chieftains  
gazed.They saw the mighty hosts that, skilledIn arts of war, the city  
filled,And ramparts with new ramparts lined,The swarthy hosts that stood  
behind.With spirits burning for the fightThey saw the giants from the  
height,And from a hundred throats rang outDefiance and the battle  
shout.Then sank the sun with dying flame,And soft the shades of twilight  
came,And the full moon's delicious lightWas shed upon the tranquil night.

Footnotes

456:1 The numbers here are comparatively modern: ten  
thousand elephants, ten thousand chariots, twenty  
thousand horses and ten million giants.

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CANTO XXXIX.: LANKÁ.

They slept secure: the sun arose

And called the chieftains from repose.Before the wondering Vánars,  
gayWith grove and garden, Lanká lay,Where golden buds the Champak  
showed,And bright with bloom As'oka glowed,And palm and Sál and many a  
treeWith leaf and flower were fair to see.They looked on wood and lawn  
and glade,On emerald grass and dusky shade,Where creepers filled the air

with scent. And luscious fruit the branches bent, Where bees inebriate  
loved to throng, And each sweet bird was loud in song. The wondering Vánars  
passed the bound That circled that enchanting ground, And as they came a  
sweet breeze through The odorous alleys softly blew. Some Vánars, at their  
king's behest, Onward to bannered Lanká pressed, While, startled by the  
strangers' tread, The birds and deer before them fled. Earth trembled at  
each step they took, And Lanká at their shouting shook. Bright rose before  
their wondering eyes

Trikata's \* peak that kissed the skies, And, clothed with flowers of every  
hue, And its golden alin \* thr \*. More fair to see the \* mountain's head  
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A hundred leagues in length was spread. There Rávan's town, securely  
placed, The summit of Trikúta graced. O'er leagues of land she stretched in  
pride, A hundred long and twenty wide. They saw a lofty wall enfold The  
city, built of blocks of gold, They saw the beams of morning fall On dome  
and fane within the wall, Bright with the shine that mansion gives Where  
Vishnu in his glory lives. White-created like the Lord of Snows Before them  
Rávan's palace rose. High on a thousand pillars raised With gold and  
precious stone it blazed, Guarded by giant warders, crown And ornament of  
Lanká's town.

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CANTO XL.: RÁVAN ATTACKED.

Still stood the son of Raghu where

Suvela's peak rose high in air, And with Sugriva turned his eye To scan  
each quarter of the sky. There on Trikúta, nobly planned And built by  
Vis'vakarmá's hand, He saw the lovely Lanká, dressed In all her varied  
beauty, rest. High on a tower above the gate The tyrant stood in kingly  
state, The royal canopy displayed Above him lent its grateful shade, And  
servants, from the giant band, His cheek with jewelled chowries fanned. Red  
sandal o'er his breast was spread, His ornaments and robe were red: Thus  
shows a cloud of darksome hue With golden sunbeams flashing through. While  
Ráma and the chiefs intent Upon the king their glances bent, Up sprang  
Sugriva from the ground And reached the turret at a bound. Unterrified the  
Vánar stood, And wroth, with wondrous hardihood, The king in bitter words  
addressed,

And thus his scorn and hate expressed:

'King of the giant race, in me

The friend and slave of Ráma see. Lord of the world, he gives me power To  
smite thee in thy fenced tower. 'While through the air his challenge  
rang, At Rávan's face the Vánar sprang. Snatched from his head the kingly  
crown And dashed it in his fury down. Straight at his foe the giant  
flew, His mighty arms about him threw. With strength resistless swung him  
round And dashed him panting to the ground,  
Unharm'd amid the storm of blows

Swift to his feet Sugriva rose. Again in furious fight they met: With  
streams of blood their limbs were wet, Each grasping his opponent's  
waist. Thus with their branches interlaced, Which, crimson with the flowers  
of spring, From side to side the breezes swing, In furious wrestle you may  
see The Kins'uk and the Seemal tree.

1

They fought with fists and hands, alike Prepared to parry and to  
strike. Long time the doubtful combat, waged With matchless strength and  
fury, raged.

Each fiercely struck, each guarded well, Till, closing, from the tower  
they fell, And, grasping each the other's throat, Lay for an instant in the  
moat, Then rose, and each in fiercer mood The sanguinary strife  
renewed. Well matched in size and strength and skill They fought the  
dubious battle still. While sweat and blood their limbs bedewed They met,  
retreated, and pursued: Each stratagem and art they tried, Stood front to

front and swerved aside. His hand a while the giant stayed And called his magic to his aid. But brave Sugriva, swift to know The guileful purpose of the foe, Gained with light leap the upper air. And breath and strength and spirit then; Then, joyous as for victory won, Returned to Raghu's royal son.

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CANTO XLI.: RÁMA'S ENVOY.

When Ráma saw each bloody trace

On King Sugriva's limbs and face, He cried, while, sorrowing at the view, His arms about his friend he threw: 'Too venturesome chieftain, kings like us Bring not their lives in peril thus; Nor, save when counsel shows the need, Attempt so bold, so rash a deed. Remember. I, Vibhishan all Have sorrowed fearing for thy fall. O do not--for us all I speak--These desperate adventures seek, 'I could not,' cried Sugriva, 'brook Upon the giant king to look,

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Nor challenge to the deadly strife The fiend who robbed thee of thy wife. 'Now Lakshman, marshal,' Ráma cried, 'Our legions where the woods are wide, And stand we ready to oppose The fury of our giant foes. This day our armies shall ascend The walls which Rávan's powers defend, And floods of Rákshas blood shall stain The streets encumbered with the slain.' Down from the peak he came, and viewed The Vánars' ordered multitude. Each captain there for battle burned, Each fiery eye to Lanká turned. On, where the royal brothers led To Lanká's walls the legions sped. The northern gate, where giant foes Swarmed round their monarch, Ráma chose Where he in person might direct The battle, and his troops protect. What arm but his the post might keep Where, strong as he who sways the deep,

1

Mid thousands armed with bow and mace, Stood Rávan mightiest of his race? The eastern gate was Níla's post. Where marshalled stood his Vánar host, And Mainda with his troops arrayed, And Dwivid stood to lend him aid. The southern gate was Angad's care, Who ranged his bold battalions there. Hanúmán by the port that faced The setting sun his legions placed, And King Sugriva held the wood East of the gate where Rávan stood. On every side the myriads met, And Lanká's walls of close beset That scarce the roving gale could win

A passage to the hosts within. Loud as the angry ocean's roar When wild waves lash the rocky shore, Ten thousand thousand throats upsent A shout that tore the firmament, And Lanká with each grove and brook And tower and wall and rampart shook. The giants heard, and were appalled: Then Raghu's son to Angad called, And, led by kingly duty,

2 gave

This order merciful as brave: 'Go, Angad, Rávan's presence seek, And thus my words of warning speak: 'How art thou changed and fallen now, O Monarch of the giants, thou Whose impious fury would not spare Saint, nymph, or spirit of the air; Whose foot in haughty triumph trod On Yaksha, king, and Serpent God:

How art thou fallen from thy pride

Which Brahmá's favour fortified! With myriads at thy Lanká's gate I stand my righteous ire to sate, And punish thee with sword and flame, The tyrant fiend who stole my dame. Now show the might, employ the guile, O Monarch of the giants' isle, Which stole a helpless dame away:

Call up thy power and strength to-day. Once more I warn thee, Rákshas King, This hour the Maithil lady bring, And, yielding while there yet is time, Seek, suppliant, pardon for the crime, Or I will leave beneath the sun No living Rákshas, no, not one. In vain from battle wilt thou fly, Or borne on pinions seek the sky; The hand of Ráma shall not spare; His fiery shaft shall smite thee there.'



He ceased: and Angad bowed his head;  
Thence like embodied flame he sped, And lighted from his airy road  
Within the Rákshas king's abode. There sate, the centre of a ring  
Of counsellors, the giant king. Swift through the circle Angad pressed,  
And spoke with fury in his breast: 'Sent by the lord of Kosal's land,  
His envoy here, O King, I stand, Angad the son of Báli:  
fame has haply taught thine ears my name. Thus in the words of Ráma  
I am come to warn thee or defy: Come forth, and fighting in the van  
display the spirit of a man. This arm shall slay thee, tyrant: all

Thy nobles, kith and kin shall fall: And earth and heaven, from terror  
freed, shall joy to see the oppressor bleed, Vibhíshan, when his foe is  
slain, Anointed king in peace shall reign. Once more I counsel thee:  
repent, Avoid the mortal punishment, With honour due the dame restore,  
And pardon for thy sin implore.'

Loud rose the king's infuriate cry:

'Seize, seize the Vánar, let him lie.' Four of his band their lord  
obeyed, And eager hands on Angad laid. He purposing his strength to  
show gave no resistance to the foe, But swiftly round his captors cast  
his mighty arms and held them fast. Fierce shout and cry around him rang:  
Light to the palace roof he sprang, There his detaining arms unwound.  
And hurled the giants to the ground, Then, smiting with a fearful stroke,  
A turret from the roof he broke, -- As when the fiery levin sent

p. 459 By Indra from the clouds has rent

The proud peak of the Lord of Snow, -- And flung the stony mass below.  
Again with loud terrific cry he sprang exulting to the sky, And, joyous for his  
errand done, stood by the side of Raghu's son.

Footnotes

457:1 The Rusuk \* also called Palas'a, is Bruten Frondosa, a tree that bears beautiful red crescent shaped blossoms and is deservedly a favorite with poets. \* ?????? Seekal the silk cotton \* ????? bush also bears red blossoms.

458:1 Varuna.

458:2 The duty of a king to save the lives of his people and avoid bloodshed until milder methods have been tried in vain.

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CANTO XLII.: THE SALLY.

Still was the cry, 'The Vánar foes

Around the leaguered city close. 'King Rávan from the terrace gazed  
And saw, with eyes where fury blazed, The Vánar host in serried ranks  
Press to the moat and line the banks, And, first in splendour and in place,  
The lion lord of Raghu's race. And Ráma looked on Lanká where Gay flags were  
streaming to the air, And, while keen sorrow pierced him through, His  
loving thoughts to Sitá flew: 'There, there in deep affliction lies My  
darling with the fawn-like eyes. There on the cold bare ground she  
keeps Sad vigil and for Ráma weeps. 'Mad with the thought, 'Charge,  
charge,' he cried. 'Let earth with Rákshas blood be dyed.' Responsive to  
his call rang out a loud, a universal shout, As myriads filled the moat  
with stone, Trees, rocks, and mountains overthrown, And charging at their  
leader's call pressed forward furious to the wall.

Some in their headlong ardour scaled The rampart's height, the guard  
assailed, And many a ponderous fragment rent From portal, tower, and  
battlement. Huge gates adorned with burnished gold Were loosed and lifted  
from their hold; And post and pillar, with a sound Like thunder, fell upon  
the ground. At every portal, east and west And north and south, the  
chieftains pressed Each in his post appointed led His myriads in the forest  
bred.

'Charge, let the gates be opened wide:

'Charge, charge, my giants,' Rávan cried. They heard his voice, and loud and long Rang the wild clamour of the throng, And shell and drum their notes upsent, And every martial instrument. Forth, at the bidding of their lord From every gate the giants poured, As, when the waters rise and swell. Huge waves preceding waves impel.

Again from every Vánar throat

A scream of fierce defiance smote The welkin: earth and sea and sky Reëchoed with the awful cry. The roar of elephants, the neigh Of horses eager for the fray. The frequent clash of warriors' steel, The rattling of the chariot wheel. Fierce was the deadly fight: opposed In terrible array they closed, As when the Gods of heaven enraged With rebel fiends wild battle waged. Axe, spear, and mace were wielded well: At every blow a Vánar fell. But shivered rock and brandished tree Brought many a giant on his knee, To perish in his turn beneath The deadly wounds of nails and teeth.

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CANTO XLIIII.: THE SINGLE COMBATS.

Brave chiefs of each opposing side

Their strength in single combat tried. Fierce Indrajit the fight began With Angad in the battle's van. Sampátí, strongest of his race, Stood with Prajangha face to face. Hanúmán, Jambumáli met In mortal opposition set. Vibhíshan, brother of the lord Of Lanká, raised his threatening sword And singled out, with eyes aglow With wrath, S'atrughna for his foe. The mighty Gaja Tapan sought, And Níla with Nikumbha fought. Sugríva, Vánar king, defied Fierce Pragas long in battle tried, And Lakshman fearless in the fight Encountered Virúpáksha's might. To meet the royal Ráma came Wild Agniketu fierce as flame; Mitraghana, he who loved to strike His foeman and his friend alike: With Ras'miketu, known and feared Where'er his ponderous flag was reared; And Yajnakopa whose delight Was ruin of the sacred rite. These met and fought, with thousands more, And trampled earth was red with gore Swift as the bolt which Indra sends When fire from heaven the mountain rends Smote Indrajit with furious blows On Angad queller of his foes. But Angad from his foeman tore The murderous mace the warrior bore,

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And low in dust his coursers rolled, His driver, and his car of gold. Struck by the shafts Prajangha sped, The Vánar chief Sampátí bled, But, heedless of his gashes he Crushed down the giant with a tree. Then car-borne Jambumáli smote Hanumán on the chest and throat; But at the car the Vánar rushed, And chariot, steeds, and rider crushed. Sugríva whirled a huge tree round, And struck fierce Pragas to the ground. One arrow shot from Lakshman's bow Laid mighty Virúpáksha low. His giant foes round Ráma pressed And shot their shafts at head and breast; But, when the iron shower was spent, Four arrows from his bow he sent, And every missile, deftly sped; Cleft from the trunk a giant head.

1

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CANTO XLIV.: THE NIGHT.

The lord of Light had sunk and set:

Night came; the foeman struggled yet; And fiercer for the gloom of night Grew the wild fury of the fight. Scarce could each warrior's eager eye The foeman from the friend descry. 'Rákshas or Vánar? say;' cried each, And foe knew foeman by his speech. 'Why wilt thou fly? O warrior, stay: Turn on the foe, and rend and slay: Such were the cries, such words of fear Smote through the gloom each listening ear. Each swarthy rover of the night Whose golden armour flashed with light, Showed like a towering hill embraced By burning woods about his waist. The giants at the Vánars

flew, And ravening ate the foes they slew: With mortal bite like serpent's fang, The Vánars at the giants sprang, And car and steeds and they who bore The pennons fell bedewed with gore, No serried band, no firm array The fury of their charge could stay Down went the horse and rider, down Went giant lords of high renown. Though midnight's shade was dense and dark, With skill that swerved not from the mark Their bows the sons of Raghu drew, And each keen shaft a chieftain slew. Uprose the blinding dust from meads Ploughed by the cars and trampling steeds, And where the warriors fell the flood Was dark and terrible with blood. Six giants  
1b singled Ráma out, And charged him with a furious shout Loud as the roaring of the sea When every wind is raging free. Six times he shot: six heads were cleft; Six giants dead on earth were left. Nor ceased he yet: his bow he strained, And from the sounding weapon rained A storm of shafts whose fiery glare Filled all the region of the air; And chieftains dropped before his aim Like moths that perish in the flame. Earth glistened where the arrows fell, As shines in autumn nights a dell Which fireflies, flashing through the gloom, With momentary light illumine. But Indrajit, when Báli's son  
2b The victory o'er the foe had won. Saw with a fury-kindled eye His mangled steeds and driver die; Then, lost in air, he fled the fight, And vanished from the victor's sight. The Gods and saints glad voices raised, And Angad for his virtue praised; And Raghu's sons bestowed the meed Of honour due to valorous deed. Compelled his shattered car to quit, Rage filled the soul of Indrajit, Who brooked not, strong by Brahmá's grace Defeat from one of Vánar race. In magic mist concealed from view His bow the treacherous warrior drew, And Raghu's sons were first to feel The tempest of his winged steel. Then when his arrows failed to kill The princes who defied him still, He bound them with the serpent noose,  
3b

The magic bond which none might loose.

Footnotes

460:1 I have omitted several of these single combats, as there is little variety in the details and each duel results in the victory of the Vánar or his ally.

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CANTO XLV.: INDRAJIT'S VICTORY.

Brave Ráma, burning still to know

The station of his artful foe,

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Gave to ten chieftains, mid the best Of all the host, his high behest. Swift rose in air the Vánar band: Each region of the sky they scanned: But Rávan's son by magic skill Checked them with arrows swifter still, When streams of blood from chest and side The dauntless Vánars' limbs had dyed. The giant in his misty shroud Showed like the sun obscured by cloud. Like serpents hissing through the air, His arrows smote the princely pair; And from their limbs at every rent A stream of rushing blood was sent. Like Kins'uk trees they stood, that show In spring their blossoms' crimson glow. Then Indrajit with fury eyed Ikshváku's royal sons, and cried: 'Not mighty Indra can assail Or see me when I choose to veil My form in battle: and can ye, Children of earth, contend with me? The arrowy noose this hand has shot Has bound you with a hopeless knot; And, slaughtered by my shafts and bow, To Yama's hall this hour ye go.'

He spoke, and shouted. Then anew

The arrows from his bowstring flew, And pierced, well aimed with perfect art, Each limb and joint and vital part. Transfixed with shafts in every

limb.Their strength relaxed, their eyes grew dim.As two tall standards  
side by side,With each sustaining rope untied.Fall levelled by the  
howling blast,So earth's majestic lords at lastBeneath the arrowy tempest  
reeled,And prostrate pressed the battle field.

Footnotes

460:1b Yajnas'atru, Maháphráva, Mahodar,

Vajradanshtra, S'uka, and Sáran.460:2b Angad.

460:3b A mysterious weapon consisting of serpents  
transformed to arrows which deprived the wounded  
object of all sense and power of motion.

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CANTO XLVI.: INDRAJIT'S TRIUMPH.

The Vánar chiefs whose piercing eyes

Scanned eagerly the earth and skies,Saw the brave brothers wounded  
soreTransfixed with darts and stained with gore.The monarch of the Vánar  
race,With wise Vibhíshan, reached the place;Angad and Níla came  
behind,And others of the forest kind,And standing with Hanúmán  
thereLamented for the fallen pair.Their melancholy eyes they raised;In  
fruitless search a while they gazed,But magic arts Vibhíshan knew;Not  
hidden from his keener view,Though veiled by magic from the rest,The son  
of Rávan stood confessed,Fierce Indrajit with savage prideThe fallen sons  
of Raghu eyed,And every giant heart was proudAs thus the warrior cried  
aloud:

'Slain by mine arrows Ráma lies,

And closed in death are Lakshman's eyes.Dead are the mighty princes  
whoDúshan and Khara smote and slew.

The Gods and fiends may toil in vainTo free them from the binding  
chain.The haughty chief, my father's dread,Who drove him sleepless from  
his bed,While Lanká, troubled like a brookIn rain time, heard his name  
and shook:He whose fierce hate our lives pursuedLies helpless by my  
shafts subdued.Now fruitless is each wondrous deedWrought by the race the  
forests breed,And fruitless every toil at lastLike cloudlets when the  
rains are past.'Then rose the shout of giants loudAs thunder from a  
bursting cloud,When, deeming Ráma, dead, they raisedTheir voices and the  
conqueror praised.

Still motionless, as lie the slain,

The brothers pressed the bloody plain,No sigh they drew, no breath they  
heaved,And lay as though of life bereaved.Proud of the deed his art had  
done,To Lanká's town went Rávan's son,Where, as he passed, all fear was  
stilled,And every heart with triumph filled.Sugríva trembled as he  
viewedEach fallen prince with blood bedewed,And in his eyes which  
overflowedWith tears the flame of anger glowed.

'Calm,' cried Vibhíshan, 'calm thy fears,And stay the torrent of thy  
tears.Still must the chance of battle change,And victory still delight to  
range.Our cause again will she befriendAnd bring us triumph in the  
end.This is not death: each prince will breakThe spell that holds him,  
and awake;Nor long shall numbing magic bindThe mighty arm, the lofty  
mind.'

He ceased: his finger bathed in dew

Across Sugríva's eyes he drew;From dulling mist his vision freed.And  
spoke these words to suit the need:'No time is this for fear: awayWith  
fainting heart and weak delay.Now, e'en the tear which sorrow wringsFrom  
loving eyes destruction brings.Up, on to battle at the headOf those brave  
troops which Ráma led.Or guardian by his side remainTill sense and  
strength the prince regain.Soon shall the trance-bound pair revive,And  
from our hearts all sorrow drive.Though prostrate on the earth he lie,  
p. 462Deem not that Ráma's death is nigh;

Deem not that Lakshmí will forgetOr leave her darling champion yet.Rest  
here and be thy heart consoled;Ponder my words, be firm and bold.I,

foremost in the battlefield,Will rally all who faint or yield.Their  
staring eyes betray their fear;They whisper each in other's ear.They,  
when they hear my cheering cryAnd see the friend of Ráma nigh,Will cast  
their gloom and fears awayLike faded wreaths of yesterday.'

Thus calmed he King Sugriva's dread;

Then gave new heart to those who fled.Fierce Indrajit, his soul on  
fireWith pride of conquest, sought his sire,Raised reverent hands, and  
told him all,The battle and the princes' fall.Rejoicing at his foes'  
defeatUpsprang the monarch from his seat,Girt by his giant courtiers:  
roundHis warrior son his arms he wound,Close kisses on his head  
applied,And heard again how Ráma died.Next: Canto XLVII.: Sitá.Sacred  
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CANTO XLVII.: SITÁ.

Still on the ground where Ráma slept

Their faithful watch the Vánars kept.There Angad stood o'erwhelmed with  
griefAnd many a lord and warrior chief;And, ranged in densest mass  
around,Their tree-armed legions held the ground.Far ranged each Vánar's  
eager eye,Now swept the land, now sought the sky,All fearing, if a leaf  
was stirred,A Rákshas in the sound they heard.The lord of Lanká in his  
hall,Rejoicing at his foeman's fall,Commanded and the warders cameWho  
ever watched the Maithil dame.'Go,' cried the Rákshas king, 'relateTo  
Janak's child her husband's fate.Low on the earth her Ráma lies,And dark  
in death are Lakshman's eyes.Bring forth my car and let her rideTo view  
the chieftains side by side.The lord to whom her fancy turnedFor whose  
dear sake my love she spurned,Lies smitten, as he fiercely ledThe battle,  
with his brother dead.Lead forth the royal lady: go

Her husband's lifeless body show.Then from all doubt and terror freeHer  
softening heart will turn to me.'They heard his speech: the car was  
brought;

That shady grove the warders sought

Where, mourning Ráma night and day,The melancholy lady lay.They placed  
her in the car and throughThe yielding air they swiftly flew.The lady  
looked upon the plain,Looked on the heaps of Vánar slain,Saw where,  
triumphant in the fight,Thronged the fierce rovers of the night,And Vánar  
chieftains, mournful-eyed,Watched by the fallen brothers' side.There  
stretched upon his gory bedEach brother lay as lie the dead,With  
shattered mail and splintered bowPierced by the arrows of the foe.When on  
the pair her eyes she bent,Burst from her lips a wild lamentHer eyes  
o'erflowed, she groaned and sighedAnd thus in trembling accents cried:

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CANTO XLVIII.: SITÁ'S LAMENT.

'False are they all, proved false to-day,

The prophets of my fortune, theyWho in the tranquil time of oldA blessed  
life for me foretold,Predicting I should never knowA childless dame's, a  
widow's woe,False are they all, their words are vain.For thou, my lord  
and life, art slain.False was the priest and vain his loreWho blessed me  
in those days of yoreBy Ráma's side in bliss to reign:For thou, my lord  
and life, art slain.They hailed me happy from my birth,Proud empress of  
the lord of earth.They blessed me--but the thought is pain--For thou, my  
lord and life, art slain.Ah, fruitless hope! each glorious signThat  
stamps the future queen is mine,With no ill-omened mark to showA widow's  
crushing hour of woe.They say my hair is black and fine,They praise my  
brows' continuous line;My even teeth divided well.My bosom for its  
graceful swell.They praise my feet and fingers oft;  
They say my skin is smooth and soft,And call me happy to possessThe  
twelve fair marks that bring success.

1

But ah, what profit shall I gain?Thou, O my lord and life, art slain.The  
flattering seer in former daysMy gentle girlish smile would praise,

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And swear that holy water shed  
By Bráhma's hands upon my head  
Should make me queen, a monarch's bride:  
How is the promise verified?  
Matchless in might the brothers slew  
In Janasthán the giant crew,  
And forced the indomitable sea  
To let them pass to rescue me.  
Theirs was the fiery weapon hurled  
By him who rules the watery world;

1

Theirs the dire shaft by Indra sped;  
Theirs was the mystic Brahmá's Head.

2

In vain they fought, the bold and brave:  
A coward's hand their death-wounds gave.  
By secret shafts and magic spell  
The brothers, peers of Indra, fell.  
That foe, if seen by Ráma's eye  
One moment, had not lived to fly.  
Though swift as thought, his utmost speed  
Had failed him in the hour of need.  
No might, no tear, no prayer may stay  
Fate's dark inevitable day.  
Nor could their matchless valour shield  
These heroes on the battle field.  
I sorrow for the noble dead, I mourn  
My hopes for ever fled;  
But chief my weeping eyes o'erflow  
For Queen Kaus'alyá's hopeless woe.  
The widowed queen is counting now  
Each hour prescribed by Ráma's vow,  
And lives because she longs to see  
Once more her princely sons and me.'

Then Trijatá,

3 of gentler mould

Though Rákshas born, her grief consoled:

'Dear Queen, thy causeless woe dispel:  
Thy husband lives, and all is well.  
Look round: in every Vánar face  
The light of joyful hope I trace.  
Not thus, believe me, shine the eyes  
Of warriors when their leader dies.  
An Army, when the chief is dead,  
Flies from the field dispirited.  
Here, undisturbed in firm array,  
The Vánars by the brothers stay.  
Love prompts my speech; no longer grieve;  
Ponder my counsel, and believe.  
These lips of mine from earliest youth  
Have spoken, and shall speak, the truth.  
Deep in my heart thy gentle grace  
And patient virtues hold their place.  
Turn, lady, turn once more  
Thine eye: Though pierced with shafts the heroes lie,  
On brows and cheeks with blood-drops wet  
The light of beauty lingers yet.  
Such beauty ne'er is found in death,  
But vanishes with parting breath.  
O, trust the hope these tokens give:  
The heroes are not dead, but live.'

Then Sítá joined her hands, and sighed,

'O, may thy words be verified!' The car was turned, which fleet as thought  
The mourning queen to Lanká brought.  
They led her to the garden, where  
Again she yielded to despair,  
Lamenting for the chiefs who bled  
On earth's cold bosom with the dead.

Footnotes

462:1 On each foot, and at the root of each finge. 463:1 Varun.

463:2 The name of one of the mystical weapons the command over which was given by Vis'vámित्रa to Ráma, as related in Book I.

463:3 One of Sítá's guard, and her comforter on a former occasion also.

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CANTO XLIX.: RÁMA'S LAMENT

Ranged round the spot where Ráma fell

Each Vánar chief stood sentinel.  
At length the mighty hero broke  
The trance that held him, and awoke.  
He saw his senseless brother, dyed  
With blood from head to foot, and cried:  
'What have I now to do with life  
Or rescue of my prisoned wife,  
When thus before my weeping eyes,  
Slain in the fight, my brother lies?  
A queen like Sítá I may find  
Among the best of womankind,  
But never such a brother, tried  
In war, my guardian, friend, and guide.  
If he be dead, the brave and true,  
I will not live but perish too.  
How, reft of

Lakshman, shall I meet My mother, and Kaikeyí greet? My brother's eager question brook, And fond Sumitrá's longing look? What shall I say, o'erwhelmed with shame To cheer the miserable dame? How, when she hears her son is dead, Will her sad heart be comforted? Ah me, for longer life unfit This mortal body will I quit; For Lakshman slaughtered for my sake, From sleep of death will never wake. Ah when I sank oppressed with care, Thy gentle voice could soothe despair. And art thou, O my brother, killed? Is that dear voice for ever stilled? Cold are those lips, my brother, whence Came never word to breed offence? Ah stretched upon the gory plain My brother lies untimely slain; Numbed is the mighty arm that slew The leaders of the giant crew. Transfixed with shafts, with blood-streams red. Thou liest on thy lowly bed:

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So sinks to rest, his journey done, Mid arrowy rays the crimson sun. Thou, when from home and sire I fled, The wood's wild ways with me wouldst tread: Now close to thine my steps shall be, For I in death will follow thee. Vibhíshan now will curse my name, And Ráma as a braggart blame. Who promised--but his word is vain-- That he in Lanká's isle should reign. Return, Sugriva: reft of me Lead back thy Vánars o'er the sea, Nor hope to battle face to face With him who rules the giant race. Well have ye done and nobly fought, And death in desperate combat sought. All that heroic might can do, Brave Vánars, has been done by you. My faithful friends I now dismiss: Return: my last farewell is this.'

Bedewed with tears was every cheek

As thus the Vánars heard him speak. Vibhíshan on the field had stayed The Vánar hosts who fled dismayed. Now lifting up his mace on high With martial step the chief drew nigh. The hosts who watched by Ráma's side Beheld his shape and giant stride. 'Tis he, 'tis Rávan's son, they thought: And all in flight their safety sought.

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CANTO L.: THE BROKEN SPELL.

Sugriva viewed the flying crowd,

And thus to Angad cried aloud: 'Why run the trembling hosts, as flee Storm-scattered barks across the sea?' 'Dost thou not mark,' the chief replied, Transfixed with shafts, with bloodstreams dyed, With arrowy toils about them wound, The sons of Raghu on the ground?'

That moment brought Viohishan\* near.

Sugriva knew the cause of fear, And ordered Jámavan, who led The bears, to check the hosts that fled. The king of bears his hest obeyed: The Vanars' headlong flight was stayed A little while Vibhíshan eyed The brothers fallen side by side. His giant fingers wet with dew Across the heroes' eyes he drew, Still on the pair his sad look bent, And spoke these word in wild lament: 'Ah for the mighty chiefs brought low By coward hand and stealthy blow! Brave pair who loved the open fight, Slain by that rover of the night.

Dishonest is the victory won By Indrajit my brother's son. I on their might for aid relied, And in my cause they fought and died. Lost is the hope that soothed each pain: I live, but live no more to reign, While Lanká's lord, untouched by ill, Exults in safe defiance still.'

'Not thus,' Sugriva said, 'repine,

For Lanká's isle shall still be thine. Nor let the tyrant and his son Exult before the fight be done, These royal chiefs, though now dismayed, Freed from the spell by Garud's aid, Triumphant yet the foe shall meet And lay the robber at their feet.'

His hope the Vánar monarch told,

And thus Vibhíshan's grief consoled. Then to Sushen who at his side Expectant stood, Sugriva cried: 'When these regain their strength and sense, Fly, bear them to Kishkindhá hence. Here with my legions will I

stay, The tyrant and his kinsmen slay, And rescued from the giant king. The  
 Maithil lady will I bring,  
 Like Glory lost of old, restored By S'akra, heaven's almighty lord.'  
 Sushen made answer: 'Hear me yet: When Gods and fiends in battle met, So  
 fiercely fought the demon crew, So wild a storm of arrows flew, That  
 heavenly warriors faint with pain, Sank smitten by the ceaseless  
 rain. Vrihaspati,  
 I with herb and spell,  
 Cured the sore wounds of those who fell. And, skilled in arts that heal  
 and save, New life and sense and vigour gave. Far, on the Milky Ocean's  
 shore, Still grow those herbs in boundless store; Let swiftest Vánars  
 thither speed And bring them for our utmost need. Those herbs that on the  
 mountain spring Let Panas and Sampāti bring, For well the wondrous leaves  
 they know. That heal each wound and life bestow. Beside that sea which,  
 churned of yore, The amrit on its surface bore, Where the white billows  
 lash the land, Chandra's fair height and Drona stand. Planted by Gods each  
 glittering steep Looks down upon the milky deep. Let fleet Hanúmán bring us  
 thence Those herbs of wondrous influence.'  
 Meanwhile the rushing wind grew loud,  
 Red lightnings flashed from banks of cloud. The mountains shook, the wild  
 waves rose, And smitten with resistless blows

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Unrooted fell each stately tree That fringed the margin of the sea. All  
 life within the waters feared Then, as the Vánars gazed, appeared King  
 Garud's self, a wondrous sight, Disclosed in flames of fiery light. From  
 his fierce eye in sudden dread All serpents in a moment fled. And those  
 transformed to shaft that bound The princes vanished in the ground. On  
 Raghu's sons his eyes he bent, And hailed the lords armipotent. Then o'er  
 them stooped the feathered king, And touched their faces with his wing. His  
 healing touch their pangs allayed, And closed each rent the shafts had  
 made. Again their eyes were bright and bold, Again the smooth skin shone  
 like gold. Again within their shell enshrined Came memory and each power of  
 mind: And, from those numbing bonds released,  
 Their spirit, zeal, and strength increased. Firm on their feet they stood,  
 and then Thus Ráma spake, the lord of men: 'By thy dear grace in sores  
 need From deadly bonds we both are freed. To these glad eyes as welcome  
 now As Aja

I or my sire art thou.

Who art thou, mighty being? say, Thus glorious in thy bright array. 'He  
 ceased: the king of birds replied, While flashed his eye with joy and  
 pride: 'In me, O Raghu's son, behold One who has loved thee from of  
 old: Garud, the lord of all that fly, Thy guardian and thy friend am I. Not  
 all the Gods in heaven could loose These numbing bonds, this serpent  
 noose, Wherewith fierce Rávan's son, renowned For magic arts, your limbs  
 had bound. Those arrows fixed in every limb Were mighty snakes, transformed  
 by him. Blood thirsty race, they live beneath The earth, and slay with  
 venomous teeth. On, smite the lord of Lanká's isle, But guard you from the  
 giants' guile Who each dishonest art employ And by deceit brave foes  
 destroy. So shall the tyrant Rávan bleed, And Sítá from his power be  
 freed.'

Thus Garud spake: then, swift as thought, The region of the sky he  
 sought, Where in the distance like a blaze Of fire he vanished from the  
 gaze. Then the glad Vánars joy rang out In many a wild tumultuous  
 shout, And the loud roar of drum and shell Startled each distant sentinel.

Footnotes

464:1 The preceptor of the Gods.

465:1 Ráma's grandfather.

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CANTO LI.: DHÚMRÁKSHA'S SALLY.



King Rávan, where he sat within,  
Heard from his hall the deafening din, And with a spirit ill at  
ease Addressed his lords in words like these: 'That warlike shout, those  
joyous cries, Loud as the thunder of the skies, Up sent from every Vánar  
throat, Some new-born confidence denote. Hark, how the sea and trembling  
shore Re-echo with the Vánars' roar. Though arrowy chains, securely  
twined Both Ráma and his brother bind, Still must the fierce triumphant  
shout Disturb my soul with rising doubt. Swift envoys to the army send, And  
learn what change these cries portend,' Obedient, at their master's  
call. Fleet giants clomb the circling wall. They saw the Vánars formed and  
led: They saw Sugriva at their head, The brothers from their bonds  
released: And hope grew faint and fear increased. Their faces pale with  
doubt and dread, Back to the giant king they sped, And to his startled ear  
revealed

The tidings of the battle field. The flush of rage a while gave place To  
chilling fear that changed his face: 'What? cried the tyrant, 'are my  
foes Freed from the binding snakes that close With venom'd clasp round head  
and limb, Bright as the sun and fierce like him: The spell a God bestowed  
of yore, The spell that never failed before? If arts like these be useless,  
how Shall giant strength avail us now Go forth, Dhúmráksha, good at  
need, The bravest of my warriors lead: Force through the foe thy conquering  
way, And Ráma and the Vánars slay' Before his king with reverence  
due Dhúmráksha bowed him, and withdrew. Around him at his summons  
came Fierce legions led by chiefs of fame. Well armed with sword and spear  
and mace, They hurried to the gathering place, And rushed to battle, borne  
at speed By elephant and car and steed.

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CANTO LII.: DHÚMRÁKSHA'S DEATH.

The Vánars saw the giant foe  
Pour from the gate in gallant show,  
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Rejoiced with warriors' fierce delight And shouted, longing for the  
fight. Near came the hosts and nearer yet: Dire was the tumult as they  
met, As, serried line to line opposed, The Vánars and the giants  
closed. Fierce on the foe the Vánars rushed, And, wielding trees, the  
foremost crushed; But, feathered from the heron's wing, With eager flight  
from sounding string. Against them shot with surest aim A ceaseless storm  
of arrows came: And, pierced in head and chest and side, Full many a Vánar  
fell and died. They perished slain in fierce attacks With sword and pike  
and battle-axe; But myriads following undismayed Their valour in the fight  
displayed. Unnumbered Vánars rent and torn With shaft and spear to earth  
were borne.

But crashed by branchy trees and blocks Of jagged stone and shivered  
rocks Which the wild Vánars wielded well The bravest of the giants  
fell. Their trampled banners strewed the fields, And broken swords and  
spears and shields; And, crushed by blows which none might stay, Cars,  
elephants, and riders lay. Dhúmráksha turned his furious eye And saw his  
routed legions fly. Still dauntless, with terrific blows, He struck and  
slew his foremost foes. At every blow, at every thrust, He laid a Vánar in  
the dust. So fell they neath the sword and lance In battle's wild Gandharva  
1 dance,

Where clang of bow and clash of sword Did duty for the silvery chord, And  
hoofs that rang and steeds that neighed Loud concert for the dancer  
made. So fiercely from Dhúmráksha's bow His arrows rained in ceaseless  
flow, The Vánar legions turned and fled To all the winds  
discomfited. Hanúmán saw the Vánars fly: He heaved a mighty rock on  
high. His keen eyes flashed with wrathful fire, And, rapid as the Wind his  
sire, Strong as the rushing tempests are,

He hurled it at the advancing car.Swift through the air the missile sang:The giant from the chariot sprang,Ere crushed by that terrific blowLay pole and wheel and flag and bow.Hanúmán's eyes with fury blazed:A mountain's rocky peak he raised,  
Poised it on high in act to throw,  
And rushed upon his giant foe.Dhúmráksha saw: he raised his maceAnd smote Hanúmán on the face,Who maddened by the wound's keen pangAgain upon his foeman sprang;And on the giant's head the rockDescended with resistless shock.Crushed was each limb: a shapeless massHe lay upon the blood-stained grass.

Footnotes

466:1 The Gandharvas are warriors and Minstrels of  
Indra's heaven.Next: Canto LIIII.: Vajradanshtra's Sally.Sacred Texts  
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CANTO LIIII.: VAJRADANSHTRA'S

SALLY.

When Rávan in his palace heard  
The mournful news, his wrath was stirred;And, gasping like a furious snake,To Vajradanshtra thus he spake:  
'Go forth, my fiercest captain, lead  
The bravest of the giants' breed.Go forth, the sons of Raghu slayAnd by their side Sugríva lay.'  
He ceased: the chieftain bowed his head  
And forth with gathered troops he sped.Cars, camels, steeds were well arrayed,And coloured banners o'er them played.Rings decked his arms:  
about his waistThe life-protecting mail was braced,And on the chieftain's forehead setGlittered his cap and coronet.Home on a bannered car that glowedWith golden sheen the warrior rode.And footmen marched with spear and swordAnd bow and mace behind their lord.In pomp and pride of warlike state

They sallied from the southern gate,But saw, as on their way they sped,Dread signs around and overhead.For there were meteors falling fast,Though not a cloud its shadow cast;And each ill-omened bird and beast,Forboding death, the fear increased,While many a giant slipped and reeled,Falling before he reached the field.They met in mortal strife engaged,And long and fierce the battle raged.Spears, swords uplifted, gleamed and flashed,And many a chief to earth was dashed.A ceaseless storm of arrows rained,And limbs were pierced and blood-distained.Terrific was the sound that filledThe air, and every heart was chilled,As hurtling o'er the giants flewThe rocks and trees which Vánars threw.Fierce as a hungry lion whenUnwary deer approach his den,  
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Angad, his eyes with fury red,Waving a tree above his head.Rushed with wild charge which none could stayWhere stood the giants' dense array.Like tall trees levelled by the blast  
Before him fell the giants fast,And earth that streamed with blood was strownWith warriors, steeds, and cars o'erthrown.

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CANTO LIV.: VAJRADANSHTRA'S

DEATH.

The giant leader fiercely rained  
His arrows and thee fight maintained.Etime the clanging cord he drewHis certain shaft a Vánar slew.Then, as the creatures he has madeFly to the Lord of Life for aid,To Angad for protection fledThe Vánar hosts dispirited.Then raged the battle fiercer yetThen Angad and the giant met.A hundred thousand arrows, hotWith flames of fire the giant shot;And every shaft he deftly sentHis foeman's body pierced and rent.From Angad's limbs ran floods of gore:A stately tree from earth he tore,Which, maddened as his gashes bled,He hurled at his opponent's head.His bow the

dauntless giant drew; To meet the tree swift arrows flew, Checked the huge missile's onward way, And harmless on the earth it lay. A while the Vánar chieftain gazed,  
 Then from the earth a rock he raised Rent from a thunder-splitten height, And cast it with resistless might. The giant marked, and, mace in hand, Leapt from his chariot to the sand, Ere the rough mass descending broke The seat, the wheel, the pole and yoke.  
 Then Angad seized a shattered hill, Whereon the trees were flowering still, And with full force the jagged peak Fell crashing on the giant's cheek. He staggered, reeled, and fell: the blood Gushed from the giant in a flood. Reft of his might, each sense astray, A while upon the sand he lay. But strength and wandering sense returned Again his eyes with fury burned, And with his mace upraised on high He wounded Angad on the thigh. Then from his hand his mace he threw, And closer to his foeman drew.  
 Then with their fists they fought, and smote On brow and cheek and chest and throat. Worn out with toil, their limbs bedewed, With blood, the strife they still renewed, Like Mercury and fiery Mars Met in fierce battle mid the stars.  
 A while the deadly fight was stayed: Each armed him with his trusty blade Whose sheath with tinkling bells supplied, And golden net, adorned his side; And grasped his ponderous leather shield To fight till one should fall or yield. Unnumbered wounds they gave and took: Their wearied bodies reeled and shook. At length upon the sand that drank Streams of their blood the warriors sank, But as a serpent rears his head Sore wounded by a peasant's tread, So Angad, fallen on his knees, Yet gathered strength his sword to seize; And, severed by the glittering blade, The giant's head on earth was laid.

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Footnotes

467:1 I omit Cantos LV., LVI., LVII., and LVIII. which relate how Akampan and Prahasta sally out and fall.

There is little novelty of incident in these Cantos and the result are exactly the same as before. In Canto LV.

Akampan, at the command of Rávan, leads forth his troops. Evil omens are seen and heard. The enemies meet, and many fall on each side, the Vánars transfixed with arrows, the Rákshases crushed with rocks and trees.

In Canto LVI. Akampan sees that the Rákshases are worsted, and fights with redoubled rage and vigour. The Vánars fall fast under his "nets of arrows." Hanumán comes to the rescue. He throws mountain peaks at the giant which are dexterously stopped with flights of arrows; and at last beats him down and kills him with a tree.

In Canto LVII. Rávan is seriously alarmed. He declares that he himself, Kumbhakarna or Prahasta, must go forth. Prahasta sallies out vaunting that the fowls of the air shall eat their fill of Vánar flesh.

In Canto LVIII. the two armies meet. Dire is the conflict; ceaseless is the rain of stones and arrows. At last Níla meets Prahasta and breaks his bow. Prahasta leaps from his car, and the giant and the Vánar fight on foot. Níla with a huge tree crushes his opponent who falls like a tree when its roots are cut.

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CANTO LIX.: RÁVANS SALLY.

They told him that the chief was killed,  
 And Rávan's breast with rage was filled. Then, fiercely moved by wrath and pride, Thus to his lords the tyrant cried:

'No longer, nobles, may we show

This lofty scorn for such a foe  
 By whom our bravest, with his train  
 Of steeds and elephants, is slain.  
 Myself this day will take the field,  
 And Raghu's sons their lives shall yield.'

High on the royal car, that glowed  
 With glory from his face, he rode;  
 And tambour shell and drum pealed  
 out, And joyful was each giant's shout.  
 A mighty host, with eyeballs  
 red Like flames of kindled fire, he led.  
 He passed the city gate, and  
 viewed, Arrayed, the Vánar multitude,  
 Those wielding massy rocks, and  
 these Armed with the stems of upturned trees,  
 And Ráma with his eyes  
 aglow With warlike ardour viewed the foe,  
 And thus the brave Vibhíshan, best  
 Of weapon-wielding chiefs,  
 addressed: 'What captain leads this bright array  
 Where lances gleam and  
 banners play, And thousands armed with spear and sword  
 Await the bidding of  
 their lord?'

'Seest, thou,' Vibhíshan answered, 'one  
 Whose face is as the morning sun,  
 Preëminent for hugest frame?  
 Akampan  
 1 is the giant's name

Behold that chieftain, chariot-borne,  
 Whom Brahmá's chosen gifts adorn.  
 He wields a bow like Indra's own;  
 A lion on his flag is shown,  
 His eyes with  
 baleful fire are lit: 'Tis Rávan's son,' 'tis Indrajit  
 There, brandishing in  
 mighty hands His huge bow, Atikáya stands.  
 And that proud warrior o'er  
 whose head A moon-bright canopy is spread:  
 Whose might, in many a battle  
 tried, Has tamed imperial Indra's pride;  
 Who wears a crown of burnished  
 gold, Is Lanká's lord the lofty-souled.'

He ceased: and Ráma knew his foe,  
 And laid an arrow on his bow: 'Woe to the wretch,' he cried, 'whom fate  
 Abandons to my deadly hate.' He spoke, and, firm by Lakshman's side,  
 The giant to the fray defied.

The lord of Lanká bade his train  
 Of warriors by the gates remain,  
 To guard the city from surprise  
 By Ráma's forest-born allies.  
 Then as some monster of the sea  
 Cleaves swift-advancing  
 billows, he Charged with impetuous onset through  
 The foe, and cleft the  
 host in two. Sugriva ran, the king to meet:  
 A hill uprooted from its seat  
 He hurled, with trees that graced the height  
 Against the rover of the  
 night: But cleft with shafts that checked its way  
 Harmless upon the earth  
 it lay. Then fiercer Rávan's fury grew,  
 An arrow from his side he  
 drew, Swift as a thunderbolt, aglow  
 With fire, and launched it at the  
 foe. Through flesh and bone a way it found,  
 And stretched Sugriva on the  
 ground. Sushen and Nala saw him fall,  
 Gaváksha, Gavaya heard their  
 call, And, poisoning hills, in act \* to fling  
 They charged again the giant  
 king. They charged, they hurled the hills in vain.

He checked them with his arrowy rain,  
 And every brave assailant felt  
 The piercing wounds his missiles dealt,  
 Then smitten by the shafts that  
 came Keen, fleet, and thick, with certain aim,  
 They fled to Ráma, sure  
 defence Against the oppressor's violence,  
 Then, reverent palm to palm  
 applied, Thus Lakshman to his brother cried: 'To me, my lord,  
 the task  
 entrust To lay this giant in the dust.' 'Go, then,' said Ráma,  
 'bravely  
 fight; Beat down this rover of the night. But he, unmatched in bold  
 emprise. Fears not the Lord of earth and skies,  
 Keep on thy guard: with  
 keenest eye Thy moments of attack espy. Let hand and eye in due  
 accord Protect thee with the bow and sword.'

Then Lakshman round his brother threw  
 His mighty arms in honour due,  
 Bent lowly down his reverent head,  
 And onward to the battle sped.  
 Hanúmán from afar beheld  
 How Rávan's shafts the  
 Vánars quelled: To meet the giant's car he ran,  
 Raised his right arm and  
 thus began: 'If Brahmá's boon thy life has screened  
 From Yaksha, God, Gandharva, fiend.  
 With these contending fear no ill,  
 But tremble at a Vánar still.' With fury flashing from his eye  
 The lord of  
 Lanká made reply. 'Strike, Vánar, strike, the fray begin,  
 Aml hope eternal  
 fame to win This arm shall pr \* thee in the \* ??

And end thy glory and thy life.' 'Remember,' cried the Wind-God's son, 'Remember all that I have done, My prowess, King, thou knowest well, Shown in the fight when Aksha  
1 fell.'

With heavy hand the giant smote Hanúmán on the chest and throat, Who reeled and staggered to and fro, Stunned for a moment by the blow. Till, mustering strength, his hand he reared And struck the foe whom Indra feared. His huge limbs bent beneath the shock, As mountains, in an earthquake, rock, And from the Gods and sages pealed Shouts of loud triumph as he reeled. But strength returning nerved his frame: His eyeballs flashed with fiercer flame. No living creature might resist That blow of his tremendous fist Which fell upon Hanúmán's flank: And to the ground the Vánar sank, No sign of life his body showed: And Rávan in his chariot rode At Níla; and his arrowy rain Eell on the captain and his train. Fierce Níla stayed his Vánar band, And, heaving with his single hand A mountain peak with vigorous swing Hurlled the huge missile at the king. Hanúmán life and strength regained, Burned for the fight and thus complained: 'Why, coward giant, didst thou flee And leave the doubtful fight with me?' Seven mighty arrows keen and fleet The giant launched, the hill to meet; And, all its force and fury stayed, The harmless mass on earth was laid. Enraged the Vánar chief beheld The mountain peak by force repelled, And rained upon the foe a shower Of trees uptorn with branch and flower. Still his keen shafts which pierced and rent Each flying tree the giant sent: Still was the Vánar doomed to feel The tempest of the winged steel. Then, smarting from that arrowy storm, The Vánar chief condensed his form, 2

And lightly leaping from the ground On Rávan's standard footing found; Then springing unimpeded down Stood on his bow and golden crown. The Vánar's nimble leaps amazed Ikshváku's son who stood and gazed. The giant, raging in his heart, Laid on his bow a fiery dart; The Vánar on his flagstaff eyed, And thus in tones of fury cried: 'Well skilled in magic lore art thou: But will thine art avail thee now? See if thy magic will defend Thy life against the dart I send.' Thus Rávan spake, the giant king, And loosed the arrow from the string. It pierced, with direst fury sped, The Vánar with its flaming head. His father's might, his power innate Preserved him from the threatened fate. Upon his knees he fell, distained With streams of blood, but life remained, Still Rávan for the battle burned: At Lakshman next his car he turned, And charged amain with furious show, Straining in mighty hands his bow. 'Come,' Lakshman cried, 'assay the fight: Leave foes unworthy of thy might.' Thus Lakshman spoke: and Lanká's lord Heard the dread thunder of the cord, And mad with burning rage and pride In hasty words like these replied: 'Joy, joy is mine, O Raghu's son: Thy fate to-day thou canst not shun. Slain by mine arrows thou shalt tread The gloomy pathway of the dead.' Thus as, he spoke his bow he drew, And seven keen shafts at Lakshman flew, But Raghu's son with surest aim Cleft every arrow as it came. Thus with fleet shafts each warrior shot Against his foe, and rested not. Then one choice weapon from his store, By Brahmá's self bestowed of yore, Fierce as the flames that end the world, The giant king at Lakshman hurled. The hero fell, and racked with pain, Scarce could his hand his bow retain. But sense and strength resumed their seat And, lightly springing to his feet, He struck with one Tremendous stroke And Rávan's bow in splinters broke. From Lakshman's cord three arrows flew And pierced the giant monarch through. Sore wounded Rávan closed, and round Ikshváku's son his strong arms wound. With strength unrivalled, Brahmá's gift, He strove from earth his foe to lift. 'Shall I,' he cried, 'who overthrow Mount Meru and the Lord of Snow, And heaven and all who dwell therein, Be foiled by one of Ráma's kin?' But though he heaved, and toiled,

and strained,Unmoved Ikshváku's son remained.His frame by those huge arms  
compressedThe giant's God given \*\*\*\*\*But conscious that himself \* was  
part

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Of Vishnu, he was firm in heart.

The Wind-God's son the fight beheld,

And rushed at Rávan, rage-impelled.Down crashed his mighty hand the  
foeFull in the chest received the blow.His eyes grew dim, his knees gave  
way,And senseless on the earth he lay.

The Wind-God's son to Ráma bore

Deep-wounded Lakshman stained with gore.He whom no foe might lift or  
bendWas light as air to such a friend.

The dart that Lakshman's side had cleft,

Untouched, the hero's body left,And flushing through the air afar

Resumed its place in Rávan's car;And, waxing well though wounded sore,He  
felt the deadly pain no more.And Rávan, though with deep wounds  
pained,Slowly his sense and strength regained,And furious still and  
undismayedOn bow and shaft his hand he laid.

Then Hanúmán to Ráma cried:

'Ascend my back, great chief, and rideLike Vishnu borne on Garud's  
wing,To battle with the giant king.'So, burning for the dire attack,Rode  
Ráma on the Vánar's back,And with fierce accents loud and slowThus gave  
defiance to the foe,While his strained bowstringmade a soundLike thunder  
when it shakes the ground:'Stay, Monarch of the giants, stay,The penalty  
of sin to pay.Stay! whither wilt thou fly, and howEscape the death that  
waits thee now?'

No word the giant king returned:

His eyes with flames of fury burned.His arm was stretched, his bow was  
bent,And swift his fiery shafts were sent.Red torrents from the Vánar  
flowed:Then Ráma near to Rávan strode,

And with keen darts that never failed,The chariot of the king  
assailed.With surest aim his arrows flew:The driver and the steeds he  
slew.And shattered with the pointed steelCar, flag, and pole and yoke and  
wheel.As Indra hurls his bolt to smiteMount Meru's heaven-ascending  
height,So Ráma with a flaming dartStruck Lanká's monarch near the  
heart,Who reeled and fell beneath the blowAnd from loose fingers dropped  
his bow.Bright as the sun, with crescent head,From Ráma's bow an arrow  
sped,And from his forehead, proud no more,Cleft the bright coronet he  
wore.

Then Ráma stood by Rávan's side

And to the conquered giant cried:'Well hast thou fought: thine arm has  
slainStrong heroes of the Vánar train.I will not strike or slay thee  
now,For weary, faint with fight art thou.To Lanká's town thy footsteps  
bend,And there the night securely spend.To-morrow come with car and  
bow,And then my prowess shall thou know.'He ceased: the king in humbled  
pride

Rose from the earth and naught replied.With wounded limbs and shattered  
crownHe sought again his royal town.

Footnotes

468:1 'It is to be understood,' says the commentator,  
'that this is not \* the Akampan who has already been  
slain.\*

469:1 Ravan's son, whom Hanúmán killed when he first  
visited Lanká.

469:2 Níla was the son of Agni the God of Fire and possessed, like  
Milton's demons, the power of dilating  
and condensing his form at pleasure.

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CANTO LX.: KUMBHAKARNA ROUSED.

With humbled heart and broken pride  
 Through Lanká's gate the giant hied, Crushed, like an elephant beneath  
 A lion's spring and murderous teeth, Or like a serpent 'neath the wing  
 And talons of the Feathered King. Such was the giant's wild alarm  
 At arrows shot by Ráma's arm; Shafts with red lightning round them curled,  
 Like Brahmá's bolts that end the world.  
 Supported on his golden throne,  
 With failing eye and humbled tone, 'Giants,' he cried, ' the toil is  
 vain, Fruitless the penance and the pain, If I whom Indra owned his  
 peer, Secure from Gods, a mortal fear. My soul remembers, now too late,  
 Lord Brahmá's words who spoke my fate: 'Tremble, proud Giant,' thus they  
 ran, 'And dread thy death from slighted man. Secure from Gods and demons  
 live, And serpents, by the boon I give. Against their power thy life is  
 charmed, But against man is still unarmed.'  
 This Ráma is the man foretold By Anarama's\*  
 1 lips of old:  
 Fear, Rávan, basest of the base: For of mine own imperial race  
 A prince in after time shall spring And thee and thine to ruin bring.  
 And Vedavati,  
 2 ere she died  
 Slain by my ruthless insult, cried:  
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 'A scion of my royal line Shall slay, vile wretch, both thee and  
 thine.' She in a later birth became King Janak's child, now Ráma's  
 dame. Nandís' vara  
 1 foretold this fate,  
 And Umá 2 when I moved her hate,  
 And Rambhá, 3 and the lovely child  
 Of Varun 4 by my touch defiled.  
 I know the fated hour is nigh: Hence, captains, to your stations fly.  
 Let warders on the rampart stand: Place at each gate a watchful band;  
 And, terror of immortal eyes, Let mightiest Kumbhakarna rise.  
 He, slumbering, free from care and pain, By Brahmá's curse, for months has lain.  
 But when Prahasta's death he hears, Mine own defeat and doubts and  
 fears, The chief will rise to smite the foe And his unrivalled valour  
 show. Then Raghu's royal sons and all The Vánars neath his might will  
 fall.'  
 The giant lords his hest obeyed,  
 They left him, trembling and afraid, And from the royal palace strode  
 To Kumbhakarna's vast abode. They carried garlands sweet and fresh,  
 And reeking loads of blood and flesh. They reached the dwelling where he lay,  
 A cave that reached a league each way, Sweet with fair blooms of lovely  
 scent And bright with golden ornament. His breathings came to fierce and  
 fast, Scarce could the giants brook the blast. They found him on a golden  
 bed With his huge limbs at length outspread.  
 They piled their heaps of venison near,  
 Fat buffaloes and boars and deer. With wreaths of flowers they fanned his  
 face, And incense sweetened all the place. Each raised his mighty voice as  
 loud As thunders of an angry cloud, And conches their stirring summons gave  
 That echoed through the giant's cave. Then on his breast they rained their  
 blows. And high the wild commotion rose When cymbal vied with drum and  
 horn. And war cries on the gale upborne Through all the air loud discord  
 spread, And, struck with fear, the birds fell dead. But still he slept and  
 took his rest. Then dashed they on his shaggy chest Clubs, maces, fragments  
 of the rock: He moved not once, nor felt the shock. The giants made one  
 effort more With shell and drum and shout and roar. Club, mallet, mace, in  
 fury plied, Rained blows upon his breast and side. And elephants were urged  
 to aid, And camels groaned and horses neighed. They drenched him with a  
 hundred pails, They tore his ears with teeth and nails. They bound together  
 many a mace And beat him on the head and face; And elephants with ponderous  
 tread Stamped on his limbs and chest and head. The unusual weight his

slumber broke:He started, shook his sides, and woke;And, heedless of the wounds and blows,Yawning with thirst and hunger rose,His jaws like hell gaped fierce and wide,Dire as the flame neath ocean's tide. Red as the sun on Meru's crestThe giant's face his wrath expressed,And every burning breath he drewWas like the blast that rushes throughThe mountain cedars. Up he raisedHis awful head with eyes that blazedLike comets, dire as Death in formWho threatens the worlds with fire and storm.The giants pointed to their storesOf buffaloes and deer and boars,And straight he gorged him with a floodOf wine, with marrow, flesh, and blood.He ceased: the giants ventured nearAnd bent their lowly heads in fear.Then Kumbhakarna glared with eyesStill heavy in their first surprise,Still drowsy from his troubled rest,And thus the giant band addressed.'How have ye dared my sleep to break?No trifling cause should bid me wake.Say, is all well? or tell the needThat drives you with unruly speedTo wake me. Mark the words I say,The king shall tremble in dismay,

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Of Vishnu, he was firm in heart. The Wind-God's son the fight beheld, And rushed at Rávan, rage-impelled.Down crashed his mighty hand the foeFull in the chest received the blow.His eyes grew dim, his knees gave way.And senseless on the earth he lay. The Wind-God's son to Ráma boreDeep-wounded Lakshman stained with gore.He whom no foe might lift or bendWas light as air to such a friend.The dart that Lakshman's side had cleft,Untouched, the hero's body left,And flashing through the air afarResumed its place in Rávan's car;And, waxing well though wounded sore,He felt the deadly pain no more.And Rávan, though with deep wounds pained,Slowly his sense and strength regained,And furious still and undismayedOn bow and shaft his hand he laid. Then Hanumán to Ráma cried:'Ascend my back, great chief, and rideLike Vishnu borne on Garud's wing,To battle with the giant king.'So, burning for the dire attack,Rode Ráma on the Vánar's back,And with fierce accents loud and slowThus gave defiance to the foe,While his strained bowstring made a soundLike thunder when it shakes the ground:

'Stay, Monarch of the giants, stay,The penalty of sin to pay.Stay; whither wilt thou fly, and howEscape the death that waits thee now?' No word the giant king returned:His eyes with flames of fury burned.His arm was stretched, his bow was bent,And swift his fiery shafts were sent.Red torrents from the Vánar flowed:Then Ráma near to Rávan' strode,And, with keen darts that never failed,The chariot of the king assailed.With surest aim his arrows flew:The driver and the steeds he slew,And shattered with the pointed steelCar, flag and pole and yoke and wheel.As Indra hurls his bolt to smiteMount Meru's heaven-ascending height,So Ráma with a flaming dartStruck Lanká's monarch near the heart,Who reeled and fell beneath the blowAnd from loose fingers dropped his bow.Bright as the sun, with crescent head,From Ráma's bow an arrow sped,And from his forehead, proud no more,Cleft the bright coronet he wore.

Then Ráma stood by Rávan's sideAnd to the conquered giant cried: 'Well hast thou fought: thine arm has slainStrong heroes of the Vánar train.I will not strike or slay thee now,For weary, faint with fight art thou.To Lanká's town thy footsteps bend,And there the night securely spend.To-morrow come with car and bow,And then my prowess shall thou know.' He ceased: the king in humbled prideRose from the earth and naught replied.With wounded limbs and shattered crownHe sought again his royal town.

#### Footnotes

470:1 An ancient king of Ayodhyá said by some to have been Prithu's father.

470:2 The daughter of King Kus'adhwaja. She became an ascetic, and being insulted by Rávan in the woods where she was

p. 471 performing penance, destroyed



herself by entering fire, but was born again as Sitá to be in turn the destruction of him who had insulted her.

471:1 Nandis'vara was S'iva's chief attendant. Rávan had despised and laughed at him for appearing in the form of a monkey and the irritated Nandis'vara cursed him and foretold his destruction by monkeys.

471:2 Rávan once upheaved and shook Mount Kailása the favourite dwelling place of S'iva the consort of Umá, and was cursed in consequence by the offended Goddess.

471:3 Rambhá, who has several times been mentioned in the course of the poem, was one of the nymphs of heaven, and had been insulted by Rávan.

471:4 Punjikasthalá was the daughter of Varun. Rávan himself has mentioned in this book his insult to her, and the curse pronounced in consequence by Brahmá.

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CANTO LX.: KUMBHAKARN'A ROUSED.

With humbled heart and broken pride

Through Lánka's gate the giant hied, Crushed, like an elephant beneath A lion's spring and murderous teeth, Or like a serpent neath the wing And talons of the Feathered King. Such was the giant's wild alarm At arrows shot by Ráma's arm; Shafts with red lightning round them curled, Like Brahmá's bolts that end the world. Supported on his golden throne, With failing eye and humbled tone, 'Giants,' he cried, 'the toil is vain, Fruitless the penance and the pain, If I whom Indra owned his peer, Secure from Gods, a mortal fear. My soul remembers, now too late, Lord Brahmá's words which spoke my fate: 'Tremble, proud Giant,' thus they ran, 'And dread thy death from slighted man. Secure from Gods and demons live, And serpents, by the boon I give. Against their power thy life is charmed, But against man is still unarmed, 'This Ráma is the man foretold By Anaranra's 1 lips of old:

'Fear, Rávan', basest of the base: For of mine own imperial race A prince in after time shall spring And thee and thine to ruin bring. And Vedavatí,

2 ere she died

Slain by my ruthless insult, cried:

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'A scion of my royal line Shall slay, vile wretch, both thee and thine. 'She in a later birth became King Janak's child, now Ráma's dame. Nandis'vara

1 foretold this fate,

And Umá 2 when I moved her hate,

And Rambhá, 3 and the lovely child

Of Varun 4 by thy touch defiled.

I know the fated hour is nigh: Hence, captains, to your stations fly. Let warders on the rampart stand: Place at each gate a watchful band; And, terror of immortal eyes, Let mightiest Kumbhakarna rise. He, slumbering, free from care and pain, By Brahmá's curse, for months has lain. But when Prahasta's death he hears, Mine own defeat and doubts and fears, The chief will rise to smite the foe

And his unrivalled valour show. Then Raghu's royal sons and all The Vánars neath his might will fall.' The giant lords his hest obeyed, They left him, trembling and afraid, And from the royal palace strode To Kumbhakarna's vast abode. They carried garlands sweet and fresh, And reeking loads of blood and flesh. They reached the dwelling where he lay, A cave that stretched a league each way, Sweet with fair blooms of lovely scent And bright with golden ornament. His breathings came so fierce and fast. Scarce could the giants brook the blast. They found him on a golden bed With his huge limbs at length outspread.

They piled their heaps of venison near,  
Fat buffaloes and boars and deer. With wreaths of flowers they fanned his  
face, And incense sweetened all the place. Each raised his mighty voice as  
loud As thunders of an angry cloud, And conchs their stirring summons  
gave That echoed through the giant's cave. Then on his breast they rained  
their blows. And high the wild commotion rose When cymbal vied with drum  
and horn.

And war cries on the gale upborne Through all the air loud discord  
spread, And, struck with fear, the birds fell dead. But still he slept and  
took his rest. Then dashed they on his shaggy chest Clubs, maces, fragments  
of the rock: He moved not once, nor felt the shock. The giants made one  
effort more With shell and drum and shout and roar. Club, mallet, mace, in  
fury plied, Rained blows upon his breast and side, And elephants were urged  
to aid, And camels groaned and horses neighed. They drenched him with a  
hundred pails, They tore his ears with teeth and nails. They bound together  
many a mace And beat him on the head and face; And elephants with ponderous  
tread Stamped on his limbs and chest and head. The unusual weight his  
slumber broke: He started, shook his sides, and woke; And, heedless of the  
wounds and blows, Yawning with thirst and hunger rose. His jaws like hell  
gaped fierce and wide, Dire as the flame neath ocean's tide. Red as the sun  
on Meru's crest The giant's face his wrath expressed, And every burning  
breath he drew Was like the blast that rushes through

The mountain cedars. Up he raised His awful head with eyes that blazed Like  
comets, dire as Death in form Who threatens the worlds with fire and  
storm. The giants pointed to their stores Of buffaloes and deer and  
boars, And straight he gorged him with a flood Of wine, with marrow, flesh,  
and blood. He ceased: the giants ventured near And bent their lowly heads  
in fear. Then Kumbhakarna glared with eyes Still heavy in their first  
surprise, Still drowsy from his troubled rest, And thus the giant band  
addressed. 'How have ye dared my sleep to break? No trifling cause should  
bid me wake. Say, is all well? or tell the need That drives you with unruly  
speed To wake me. Mark the words I say, The king shall tremble in dismay,

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The fire be quenched and Indra slain Ere ye shall break my rest in vain.'  
Yupáksha answered: 'Chieftain, hear; No God or fiend excites our fear. But  
men in arms our walls assail: We tremble lest their might prevail.  
For vengeful Ráma vows to slay The foe who stole his queen away, And,  
matchless for his warlike deeds, A host of mighty Vánars leads. Ere now a  
monstrous Vánar came. Laid Lanká waste with ruthless flame, And Aksha,  
Rávan's offspring, blew With all his warrior retinue. Our king who never  
trembled yet For heavenly hosts in battle met. At length the general dread  
has shared, O'erthrown by Ráma's arm and spared.' He ceased: and  
Kumbhakarna spake: 'I will go forth and vengeance take; Will tread their  
hosts beneath my feet, Then triumph-flushed our king will meet. Our giant  
bands shall eat their fill Of Vánars whom this arm shall kill. The princes'  
blood shall be my draught, The chieftains' shall by you be quaffed.' He  
spake, and, with an eager stride That shook the earth, to Rávan hied,

Footnotes

472:1 An ancient king of Ayodhyá said by some to have been Prithu's  
father.

472:2 The daughter of King Kus'adhwaja. She became  
an ascetic, and being insulted by Rávan in the woods  
where she was p. 473 performing penance, destroyed  
herself by entering fire, but was born again as Sitá to be in turn the  
destruction of him who had insulted her.

473:1 Nandisvara was S'iva's chief attendant. Rávan had  
despised and laughed at him for appearing in the form  
of a monkey and the irritated Nandis'vara cursed him and foretold his  
destruction by monkeys.

473:2 Rávan once upheaved and shook Mount Kailása

the favourite dwelling place of S'iva the consort of Umá, and was cursed in consequence by the offended Goddess.

473:3 Rambhá, who has several times been mentioned in the course of the poem, was one of the nymphs of heaven, and had been insulted by Rávan.

473:4 Punjikasthalá was the daughter of Varun. Rávan himself has mentioned in this book his insult to her, and the curse pronounced in consequence by Brahma.

Next: Canto LXI.: The Vánars' Alarm. Sacred Texts   Hinduism   Index  
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CANTO LXI.: THE VÁNARS' ALARM.

The son of Raghu near the wall

Saw, proudly towering over all, The mighty giant stride along  
Attended by the warrior throng; Heard Kumbhakarna's heavy feet  
Awake the echoes of the street; And, with the lust of battle fired,  
Turned to and inquired: 'Vibhíshan, tell that chieftain's name  
Who rears so high his mountain frame; With glittering helm and lion eyes,  
Preeminent in might and size Above the rest of giant birth,  
He towers the standard of the earth; And all the Vánars when they see  
The mighty warrior turn and flee.' 'In him,' Vibhíshan answered, 'know  
Vis'ravas' son, the Immortals' foe, Fierce Kumbhakarniia,  
mightier far Than Gods and fiends and giants are. He conquered Yama in the fight,  
And Indra trembling owned his might. His arm the Gods and fiends subdued,  
Gandharvas and the serpent brood. The rest of his gigantic race

Are wonderous strong by God-given grace;

But nature at his birth to him

Gave matchless power and strength of limb. Scarce was he born, fierce monster,  
when He killed and ate a thousand men. The trembling race of men, appalled,  
On Indra for protection called; And he, to save the suffering world, His bolt at Kumbhakarna hurled.  
So awful was the monster's yell That fear on all the nations fell, He, rushing on with furious roar,  
A tusk from huge Airávat tore, And dealt the God so dire a blow That Indra reeling left his foe,  
And with the Gods and mortals fled To Brahmá's throne dispirited. 'O Brahmá,' thus the suppliants cried, 'Some refuge for this woe provide.  
If thus his maw the giant sate Soon will the world be desolate.' The Self-existent calmed their woe,  
And spake in anger to their foe: 'As thou wast born, Paulastya's son, That worlds might weep by thee undone,  
Thou like the dead henceforth shalt be: Such is the curse I lay on thee.' Senseless he lay, nor spoke nor stirred;  
Such was the power of Brahmá's word. But Rávan, troubled for his sake, Thus to the Self-existent spake: 'Who lops the tree his care has reared  
When golden fruit has first appeared? Not thus, O Brahmá, deal with one Descended from thine own dear son.

1

Still thou, O Lord, thy word must keep He may not die, but let him sleep. Yet fix a time for him to break  
The chains of slumber and awake. 'He ceased: and Brahmá made reply; 'Six months in slumber shall he lie  
And then arising for a day Shall cast the numbing bonds away. 'Now Rávan in his doubt and dread  
Has roused the monster from his bed, Who comes in this the hour of need  
On slaughtered Vánars flesh to feed. Each Vánar, when his awe-struck eyes Behold the monstrous chieftain, flies.  
With hopeful words their minds deceive, And let our trembling hosts believe They see no giant, but, displayed,  
A lifeless engine deftly made.' Then Ráma called to Nila: 'Haste, Let troops near every gate be placed,  
And, armed with fragments of the rock And trees, each lane and alley block.'

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Thus Rama spoke: the chief obeyed,

And swift the Vánars stood arrayed, As when the black clouds their battle form,  
The summit of a hill to storm

Footnotes

474:1 Pulastya was the son of Brahmá and father of  
Vis'ravas or Paulustya the father of Rávan and  
Kumbhakaina.

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#### CANTO LXII: RÁVAN'S REQUEST

Along bright Lanká's royal road

The giant, roused from slumber, strode, While from the houses on his head  
A rain of fragrant flowers was shed. He reached the monarch's gate  
whereon Rich gems and golden fretwork shone. Through court and corridor  
that shook Beneath his tread his way he took, And stood within the chamber  
where His brother sat in dark despair. But sudden, at the grateful sight  
The monarch's eye again grew bright. He started up, forgot his fear, And drew  
his giant brother near. The younger pressed the elder's feet And paid the  
King observance meet, Then cried: 'O Monarch, speak thy will, And let my  
care thy word fulfil. What sudden terror and dismay Have burst the bonds in  
which I lay?' Fierce flashed the flame from Rávan's eye. As thus in wrath  
he made reply: 'Fair time, I ween, for sleep is this, To lull thy soul in  
tranquil bliss, Unheeding, in oblivion drowned,  
The dangers that our lives surround. Brave Ráma, Das'aratha's son, A  
passage o'er the sea has won, And, with the Vánar monarch's aid. Round  
Lanká's walls his hosts arrayed. Though never in the deadly field My  
Rákshas troops were known to yield, The bravest of the giant train Have  
fallen by the Vánars slain. Hence comes my fear. O fierce and brave, Go  
forth, our threatened Lanká' save. Go forth, a dreadful vengeance take: For  
this, O chief, I bade thee wake. The Gods and trembling fiends have  
felt The furious blows thine arm has dealt. Earth has no warrior, heaven  
has none To match thy might, Paulustya's eon, '

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#### CANTO LXIII.: KUMBHAKABNA'S

BOAST.

Then Kumbhakarna laughed aloud

And cried; 'O Monarch, once so proud,

We warned thee, but thou wouldst not hear

And now the fruits of sin appear. We warned thee, I, thy nobles, all Who  
loved thee, in thy council hall. Those sovereigns who with blinded

eyes Neglect the foe their hearts despise, Soon, falling from the their  
high estate Bring on themselves the stroke of fate. Accept at length, thy  
life to save, The counsel sage Vibhíshan gave, The prudent counsel spurned  
before, And Sita to her lord restore.'

1

The monarch frowned, by passion moved And thus in angry words reproved: '

Wilt thou thine elder brother school, Forgetful of the ancient rule That  
bids thee treat him as the sage Who guides thee with the lore of age? Think

on the dangers of the day, Nor idly throw thy words away:

If, led astray, by passion stirred, I in the pride of power have erred; If  
deeds of old were done amiss. No time for vain reproach is this. Up,

brother; let thy loving care The errors of thy king repair.' To calm his

wrath, his soul to ease, The younger spake in words like these: 'Yea, from  
our bosoms let us cast All idle sorrow for the past. Let grief and anger be

repressed: Again be firm and self-possessed. This day, O Monarch, shalt

thou see The Vánar legions turn and flee, And Ráma and his brother

slain With their hearts' blood shall dye the plain Yea, if the God who

rules the dead, And Varun their battalions led; If Indra with the Storm-

Gods came Against me, and the Lord of Flame, Still would I fight with all

and slay Thy banded foes, my King, to-day. If Raghu's son this day

withstand The blow of mine uplifted hand. Deep in his breast my darts shall

sink, And torrents of his life-blood drink. O fear not, in my promise

trust;This arm shall lay him in the dust,Shall leave the fierce Sugriva dyed  
With gore, and Lakshman by his side,And strike the great Hanúmán down.The spoiler of our glorious town.'

2

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Footnotes

475:1 I omit a tedious sermon on the danger of rashness and the advantages of prudence, sufficient to irritate a less passionate hearer than Rávan.

475:2 The Bengal recension assigns a very different speech to Kumbhakarna and makes him say that Nárada the messenger of the Gods had formerly told him that p.

473 Vishnu himself incarnate as Das'aratha's son should come to destroy Rávan.

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CANTO LXIV.: MAHODARA'S SPEECH.

He ceased: and when his lips were closed

Mahodara thus his rede opposed:'Why wilt thou shame thy noble birthAnd speak like one of little worth?Why boast thee thus in youthful prideRejecting wisdom for thy guide?How will thy single arm opposeThe victor of a thousand foes,Who proved in Janasthán his mightAnd slew the rovers of the night?The remnant of those legions, theyWho saw his power that fatal day.Now in this leaguered city dreadThe mighty chief from whom they fled.And wouldst thou meet the lord of men,Beard the great lion in his den,And, when thine eyes are open, breakThe slumber of a deadly snake?Who may an equal battle wageWith him, so awful in his rage.Fierce as the God of Death whom noneMay vanquish, Das'aratha's son?But, Rávan, shall the lady stillRefuse compliance with thy will?No, listen, King, to this design

Which soon shall make the captive thine.This day through Lanka's streets proclaimThat four of us

1 of highest fame

With Kumbhakarna at our headWill strike the son of Raghu dead.Forth to the battle will we goAnd prove our prowess on the foe.Then, if our bold attempt succeed,No further plans thy hopes will need.But if in vain our warriors strive,And Raghu's son be left alive,We will return, and, wounded sore,Our armour stained with gout of gore,Will show the shafts that rent each frame,Keen arrows marked with Ráma's name,And say we giants have devouredThe princes whom our might o'erpowered.Then let the joyful tidings spreadThat Raghu's royal sons are dead.To all around thy pleasure show,Gold, pearls, and precious robes, bestow.Gay garlands round the portals twine,Enjoy the banquet and the wine.Then go, the scornful lady seek,And woo her when her heart is weak.

Rich robes and gold and gems display,

And gently wile her grief away.Then will she feel her hopeless state,Widowed, forlorn, and desolate;Know that on thee her bliss depends,Far from her country and her friends;Then, her proud spirit overthrown,The lady will be all thine own.'

Footnotes

476:1 Mahodara, Dwijihva, Sanhráda, and Vitardana.

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CANTO LXV.: KUMBHAKARNA'S SPEECH.

But haughty Kumbhakarna spurned

His counsel, and to Rávan turned:'Thy life from peril will I freeAnd slay the foe who threatens thee.A hero never vaunts in vain,Like bellowing clouds devoid of rain,Nor, Monarch, be thine ear inclinedTo counsellors

of slavish kind,Who with mean arts their king misleadAnd mar each gallant  
plan and deed.O, let not words like his beguileThe glorious king of  
Lanka's isle.' Thus scornful Kumbhakarna cried,And Rávan with a laugh  
replied:'Mahodar fears and fain would shunThe battle with Ikshvaku's  
son.Of all my giant warriors, whoIs strong as thou, and brave and  
true?Ride, conqueror, to the battle ride,And tame the foeman's senseless  
pride.Go forth like Yama to the field,And let thine arm thy trident  
wield.Scared by the lightning of thine eye  
The Vanar hosts will turn and fly;And Rama, when he sees thee near,With  
trembling heart will own his fear.' The champion heard, and, well  
content,Forth from the hall his footsteps bent.He grasped his spear, the  
foeman's dread,Black iron all, both shaft and head.Which, dyed in many a  
battle, boreGreat spots of slaughtered victims' gore.The king upon his  
neck had thrownThe jewelled chain which graced his own.And garlands of  
delicious scentAbout his limbs for ornament.Around his arms gay bracelets  
clung,And pendants in his ears were hung.Adorned with gold, about his  
waistHis coat of mail was firmly braced,And like Náráyan  
lb or the God  
Who rules the sky he proudly trod.Behind him went a mighty throngOf giant  
warriors tall and strong,

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On elephants of noblest breeds.With cars, with camels, and with  
steeds:And, armed with spear and axe and swordWere fain to battle for  
their lord.

1Footnotes

476:1b A name of Vishn'u.

Next: Canto LXVI.: Kumbhakarna's Sally.Sacred Texts Hinduism Index  
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CANTO LXVI.: KUMBHAKARNA'S SALLY.

In pomp and pride of warlike state

The giant passed the city gate.He raised his voice: the hills, the  
shoreOf Lanka's sea returned the roar.The Vánars saw the chief draw  
nighWhom not the ruler of the sky,Nor Yama, monarch of the dead,Might  
vanquish, and affrighted fled.When royal Angad, Báli's son,Saw the scared  
Vánars turn and run,Undaunted still he kept his ground,And shouted as he  
gazed around:'O Nala, Níla, stay nor letYour souls your generous worth  
forget,O Kumud and Gaváksha, whyLike base-born Vánars will ye fly?Turn,  
turn, nor shame your order thus:This giant is no match for us' They  
heard his voice: the flight was stayed;Again for war they stood  
arrayed,And hurled upon the foe a showerOf mountain peaks and trees in  
flower.Still on his limbs their missiles rained:Unmoved, their blows he  
still sustained,And seemed unconscious of the stroke  
When rocks against his body broke.Fierce as the flame when woods are  
dryHe charged with fury in his eye.Like trees consumed with fervent  
heatThey fell beneath the giant's feet.Some o'er the ground, dyed red  
with gore,Fled wild with terror to the shore,And, deeming that all hope  
was lost,Ran to the bridge they erst had crossed.Some clomb the trees  
their lives to save,Some sought the mountain and the cave;Some hid them  
in the bosky dell,And there in deathlike slumber fell.

When Angad saw the chieftains fly

He called them with a mighty cry:'Once more, O Vánars, charge once  
more,On to the battle as before.In all her compass earth has not,To hide  
you safe, one secret spot.What! leave your arms? each nobler dameWill  
scorn her consort for the shame.This blot upon your names efface,And keep  
your valour from disgrace.Stay, chieftains; wherefore will ye run,A band  
of warriors scared by one?' Scarce would they hear: they would not  
stay,And barely spoke in wild dismay:'Have we not fought, and fought in  
vain

Have we not seen our mightiest slain?The giant's matchless force we  
fear,And fly because our lives are dear.'But Báli's son with gentle

artDispelled their dread and cheered each heart.They turned and formed  
and waited stillObedient to the prince's will.

Footnotes

477:1 There is so much commonplace repetition in  
these Sallies of the Rákshas chieftains that omissions  
are frequently necessary. The usual ill omens attend the sally of  
Kumbhakarna, and the Canto ends with a description of the terrified  
Vánars' flight which is briefly repeated in different words at the  
begining of the next Canto.

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CANTO LXVII.: KUMBHAKARNA'S

DEATH.

Thus from their flight the Vánars turned,  
And every heart for battle burned,Determined on the spot to dieOr gain a  
warrior's meed on high.Again the Vánars stooped to seizeTheir weapons,  
rocks and fallen trees;Again the deadly fight began,And fiercely at the  
giant ran.Unmoved the monster kept his place:He raised on high his awful  
mace,Whirled the huge weapon round his headAnd laid the foremost  
Vánars'dead.Eight thousand fell bedewed with gore,Then sank and died  
seven hundred more.Then thirty, twenty, ten, or eightAt each fierce onset  
met their fate,And fast the fallen were devouredLike snakes by Garud's  
beak o'erpowered.Then Dwivid from the Vánar van.Armed with an uptorn  
mountain, ran,Like a huge cloud when fierce winds blow,And charged amain  
the mountain foe.With wondrous force the hill he threw:  
O'er Kumbhakarna's head it flew,And falling on his host afarCrushed many  
a giant, steed, and car.Rocks, trees, by fierce Hanúmán sped,Rained fast  
on Kumbhakarna's head.Whose spear each deadlier missile stopped,And  
harmless on the plain it dropped.

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Then with his furious eyes aglowThe giant rushed upon the foe,Where, with  
a woody hill upheaved,Hanúmán's might his charge received.Through his  
vast frame the giant feltThe angry blow Hanúmán dealt.He reeled a moment,  
sure distressed,Then smote the Vánar on the breast,As when the War-God's  
furious strokeThrough Krauncha's hill a passage broke.

1

Fierce was the blow, and deep and wideThe rent: with crimson torrents  
dyed,Hanúmán, maddened by the pain,Roared like a cloud that brings the  
rain,And from each Rákshas throat rang outLoud clamour and exultant  
shout.Then Níla hurled with mustered mightThe fragment of a mountain  
height;Nor would the rock the foe have missed,  
But Kumbhakarna raised his fistAnd smote so fiercely that the massFell  
crushed to powder on the grass.Five chieftains of the Vánar race

2

Charged Kumbhakarna face to face,And his huge frame they wildly beatWith  
rocks and trees and hands and feet.Round Rishabh first the giant woundHis  
arms and hurled him to the ground,Where speechless, senseless, wounded  
sore,He lay his face besmeared with gore.Then Níla with his fist he  
slew,And S'arabh with his knee o'erthrew,Nor could Gaváksha's strength  
withstandThe force of his terrific hand.At Gandhamádan's eager callRushed  
thousands to avenge their fall,Nor ceased those Vánars to assailWith knee  
and fist and tooth and nail.Around his foes the giant threwHis mighty  
arms, and nearer drewThe captives subject to his will:Then snatched them  
up and ate his fill.There was no respite then, no pause:Fast gaped and  
closed his hell-like jaws:Yet, prisoned in that gloomy cave,Some Vánars  
still their lives could save:Some through his nostrils found a way,Some  
through his ears resought the day.

Like Indra with his thunder, like  
The God of Death in act to strike,

The giant seized his ponderous spear, And charged the foe in swift career. Before his might the Vánars fell, Nor could their hosts his charge repel. Then trembling, nor ashamed to run, They turned and fled to Raghu's son. When Báli's warrior son

1b beheld

Their flight, his heart with fury swelled. He rushed, with his terrific shout, To meet the foe and stay the rout. He came, he hurled a mountain peak, And smote the giant on the cheek. His ponderous spear the giant threw: Fierce was the cast, the aim was true; But Angad, trained in war and tried, Saw ere it came, and leapt aside. Then with his open hand he smote the giant on the chest and throat. That blow the giant scarce sustained; But sense and strength were soon regained. With force which nothing might resist He caught the Vánar by the wrist, Whirled him, as if in pastime, round, And dashed him senseless on the ground. There low on earth his foe lay crushed: At King Sugriva next he rushed, Who, waiting for the charge, stood still, And heaved on high a shattered hill, He looked on Kumbhakarna dyed With streams of blood, and fiercely cried: 'Great glory has thine arm achieved, And thousands of their lives bereaved. Now leave a while thy meaner foes, And brook the hill Sugriva throws.' He spoke, and hurled the mass he held: The giant's chest the stroke repelled, Then on the Vánars fell despair, And Rákshas clamour filled the air. The giant raised his arm, and fast Came the tremendous 2b spear he cast.

Hanúmán caught it as it flew, And knapped it on his knee in two. The giant saw the broken spear: His clouded eye confessed his fear; Yet at Sugriva's head he sent A peak from Lanká's mountain rent.

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The rushing mass no might could stay: Sugriva fell and senseless lay. The giant stooped his foe to seize, And bore him thence, as bears the breeze A cloud in autumn through the sky. He heard the sad Immortals sigh, And shouts of triumph long and loud Went up from all the Rákshas crowd. Through Lanka's gate the giant passed Holding his struggling captive fast, While from each terrace, house, and tower Fell on his haughty head a shower Of fragrant scent and flowery rain, Blossoms and leaves and scattered grain.

1

By slow degrees the Vánars' lord Felt life and sense and strength restored. He heard the giants' joyful boast: He thought upon his Vánar host. His teeth and feet he fiercely plied. And bit and rent the giant's side, Who, mad with pain and smeared with gore, Hurling to the ground the load he bore. Regardless of a storm of blows Swift to the sky the Vánar rose, Then lightly like a flying ball High overleapt the city wall, And joyous for deliverance won Regained the side of Raghu's son. And Kumbhakarna, mad with hate And fury, sallied from the gate, The carnage of the foe renewed And filled his maw with gory food. Slaying, with headlong frenzy blind, Both Vánar foes and giant kind. Nor would Sumitra's valiant son 2

The might of Kumbhakarna shun,

Who through his harness felt the sting Of keen shafts loosened from the string. His heart confessed the warrior's power, And, bleeding from the ceaseless shower That smote him on the chest and side, With words like these the giant cried: 'Well fought, well fought, Sumitra's son; Eternal glory hast thou won, For thou in desperate fight hast met The victor never conquered yet, Whom, borne on huge Airávat's back, E'en Indra trembles to attack, Go, son of Queen Sumitrá, go: Thy valour and thy strength I know. Now all my hope and earnest will Is Ráma in the fight to kill. Let him beneath my weapons fall, And I will meet and conquer all.'

The chieftain, of Sumitrá born,

Made answer as he laughed in scorn: 'Yea, thou hast won a victor's fame From trembling Gods and Indra's shame. There waits thee now a mightier



foeWhose prowess thou hast yet to know. There, famous in a hundred lands, Ráma the son of Raghu stands.' Straight at the king the giant sped,

And earth was shaken at his tread. His bow the hero grasped and strained, And deadly shafts in torrents rained. As Kumbhakarna felt each stroke From his huge mouth burst fire and smoke; His hands were loosed in mortal pain And dropped his weapons on the plain. Though reft of spear and sword and mace No terror changed his haughty face. With heavy hands he rained his blows And smote to death a thousand foes. Where'er the furious monster strode While down his limbs the red blood flowed Like torrents down a mountain's side, Vánars and bears and giants died. High o'er his head a rock he swung, And the huge mass at Ráma flung. But Ráma's arrows bright as flame Shattered the mountain as it came. Then Raghu's son, his eyes aglow With burning anger, charged the foe, And as his bow he strained and tried With fearful clang the cord replied. Wroth at the bowstring's threatening clang To meet his foe the giant sprang. High towering with enormous frame Huge as a wood-crowned hill he came. But Ráma firm and self-possessed In words like these the foe addressed:

'Draw near, O Rákshas lord, draw near, Nor turn thee from the fight in fear. Thou meetest Ráma face to face, Destroyer of the giant race. Come, fight, and thou shalt feel this hour. Laid low in death, thy conqueror's power.' He ceased: and mad with wrath and pride The giant champion thus replied: 'Come thou to me and thou shalt find A foeman of a different kind. No Khara, no Virádha,--thou Hast met a mightier warrior now. The strength of Kumbhakarna fear, And dread the iron mace I rear This mace in days of yore subdued The Gods and Dánava multitude. Prove, lion of Ikshváku's line. Thy power upon these limbs of mine. Then, after trial, shalt thou bleed, And with thy flesh my hunger feed.' He ceased and Ráma, undismayed, Upon his cord those arrows laid

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Which pierced the stately Sál trees through, And Báli king of Vánars slew. They flew, they smote, but smote in vain Those mighty limbs that felt no pain.

Then Ráma sent with surest aim The dart that bore the Wind-God's name. The missile from the giant tore His huge arm and the mace it bore, Which crushed the Vánars where it fell: And dire was Kumbhakarna's yell. The giant seized a tree, and then Rushed madly at the lord of men. Another dart, Lord Indra's own, To meet his furious onset thrown, His left arm from the shoulder lopped, And like a mountain peak it dropped. Then from the bow of Ráma sped Two arrows, each with crescent head; And, winged with might which naught could stay, They cut the giant's legs away. They fell, and awful was the sound As those vast columns shook the ground; And sky and sea and hill and cave In echoing roars their answer gave. Then from his side the hero drew A dart that like the tempest flew--No deadlier shaft has ever flown Than that which Indra called his own--Nor could the giant's mail-armed neck The fury of the missile check. Through skin and flesh and bone it smote And rent asunder head and throat. Down with the sound of thunder rolled

The head adorned with rings of gold, And crushed to pieces in its fall A gate, a tower, a massive wall. Hurling to the sea the body fell: Terrific was the ocean's swell, Nor could swift fin and nimble leap Save the crushed creatures of the deep.

Thus he who plagued in impious pride

The Gods and Bráhmans fought and died. Glad were the hosts of heaven, and long The air re-echoed with their song.

1

Footnotes

478:1 Karttikeya the God of War, and the hero and incarnation Paras'urama are said to have cut a passage

through the mountain Krauncha, a part of the Himálayan range, in the same way as the immense gorge that splits the Pyrenees under the towers of Marboré was cloven at one blow of Roland's sword Durandal.

478:2 Rishabh, S'arabh, Níla, Gaváksha, and Gandhamádan. 478:1b Angad. The text calls him the son of the son of him who holds the thunderbolt, i.e.. the grandson of Indra.

478:2b Literally, weighing a thousand bháras. The bhára is a weight equal to 2000 palas, the pala, is equal to four kars'as, and the kars'a to 11375 French grammes or about 176 grains troy. The spear seems very light for a warrior of Kumbhakarna's strength and stature and the work performed with it.

479:1 The custom of throwing parched or roasted grain, with wreaths and flowers, on the heads of kings and conquerors when they go forth to battle and return is frequently mentioned by Indian poets.

479:2 Lakshman.

480:1 I have abridged this long Canto by omitting some vain repetitions, commonplace epithets and similes and other unimportant matter. There are many verses in this Canto which European scholars would rigidly exclude as unmistakeably the work of later rhapsodists. Even the reverent Commentator whom I follow ventures to remark once or twice: Ayam s'loka prak shipta iti bahavah, 'This s'loka or verse is in the opinion of many interpolated.' Next: Canto LXVIII.: Rávan's Lament. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next CANTO LXVIII.: RÁVAN'S LAMENT.

They ran to Rávan in his hall

And told him of his brother's fall: 'Fierce as the God who rules the dead, Upon the routed foe he fed; And, victor for a while, at length Fell slain by Ráma's matchless strength, Now like a mighty hill in size His mangled trunk extended lies, And where he fell, a bleeding mass, Blocks Lanká's gate that none may pass.' The monarch heard: his strength gave way; And fainting on the ground he lay. Grieved at the giants' mournful tale, Long, shrill was Atikáya's wail; And Tris'iras in sorrow bowed His triple head, and wept aloud, Mahodar, Mahápárs'va shed Hot tears and mourned their brother dead. At length, his wandering sense restored, In loud lament cried Lanká's lord:

Ah chief, for might and valour famed,

Whose arm the haughty foeman tamed, Forsaking me, thy friends and all, Why hast thou fled to Yama's hall?

Why hast thou fled to taste no more The slaughtered foeman's flesh and gore? Ah me, my life is done to-day: My better arm is lopped away. Whereon in danger I relied, And, fearless, Gods and fiends defied. How could a shaft from Ráma's bow The matchless giant overthrow, Whose iron frame so strong of yore The crushing bolt of Indra bore? This day the Gods and sages meet And triumph at their foe's defeat. This day the Vánar chiefs will boast And, with new ardour fired, their host In fiercer onset will assail Our city, and the ramparts scale. What care I for a monarch's name, For empire, or the Maithil dame? What joy can power and riches give, Or life that I should care to live, Unless this arm in mortal fray The slayer of my brother slay? For me, of Kumbhakarna reft, Death is the only solace left; And I will seek, o'erwhelmed with woes, The realm to which my brother goes. Ah me ill-minded, not to take His counsel when Vibhíshan spake When he this evil day foretold

My foolish heart was overbold: I drove my sage adviser hence, And reap the fruits of mine offence.'

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CANTO LXIX.: NARÁNTAK'S DEATH.

Pierced to the soul by sorrow's sting  
Thus wailed the evil-hearted king. Then Tris'iras stood forth and  
cried: 'Yea, father, he has fought and died, Our bravest: and the loss is  
sore: But rouse thee, and lament no more. Hast thou not still thy coat of  
mail, Thy bow and shafts which never fail? A thousand asses draw thy  
car Which roars like thunder heard afar. Thy valour and thy warrior  
skill, Thy God-given strength, are left thee still. Unarmed, thy matchless  
might subdued The Gods and Da'nav multitude. Armed with thy glorious  
weapons, how Shall Raghu's son oppose thee now? Or, sire, within thy palace  
stay; And I myself will sweep away Thy foes, like Garúd when he makes A  
banquet of the writhing snakes Soon Raghu's son shall press the plain, As  
Narak

1 fell by Vishnu slain,  
Or S'ambar 2 in rebellious pride Who met the King of Gods 3 and died.'

The monarch heard: his courage grew,  
And life and spirit came anew. Devántak and Narántak heard, And their  
fierce souls with joy were stirred; And Atikáya

4 burned to fight,  
And heard the summons with delight; While from the rest loud rang the  
cry, 'I too will fight,' 'and I,' 'and I.' The joyous king his sons  
embraced, With gold and chains and jewels graced, And sent them forth with  
stirring speech Of benison and praise to each. Forth from the gate the  
princes sped And ranged for war the troops they led. The Vánar legions  
charged anew. And trees and rocks for missiles flew. They saw Narántak's  
mighty form Borne on a steed that mocked the storm. To check his charge in  
vain they strove: Straight through their host his way he clove, As springs  
a dolphin through the tide: And countless Vánars fell and died,  
And mangled limbs and corpses lay  
To mark the chief's ensanguined way, Sugrívá saw them fall or fly When  
fierce Narántak's steed was nigh, And marked the giant where he sped O'er  
heaps of dying or of dead.

He bade the royal Angad face That bravest chief of giant race. As springs  
the sun from clouds dispersed, So Angad from the Vánars burst. No weapon  
for the fight he bore Save nails and teeth, and sought no more. 'Leave,  
giant chieftain,' thus he spoke, 'Leave foes unworthy of thy stroke, And  
bend against a nobler heart The terrors of thy deadly dart.' Narántak  
heard the words he spake: Fast breathing, like an angry snake, With bloody  
teeth his lips he pressed And hurled his dart at Angad's breast. True was  
the aim and fierce the stroke, Yet on his breast the missile broke. Then  
Angad at the giant flew. And with a blow his courser slew: The fierce hand  
crushed through flesh and bone, And steed and rider fell  
o'erthrown. Narántak's eyes with fury blazed: His heavy hand on high he  
raised And struck in savage wrath the head Of Báli's son, who reeled and  
bled, Fainted a moment and no more: Then stronger, fiercer than before Smote  
with that fist which naught could stay, And crushed to death the giant  
lay.

Footnotes

481:1 Narak was a demon, son of Bhúmi or Earth, who  
haunted the city Prágjyotisha.

481:2 S'ambar was a demon of drought.

481:3 Indra.

481:4 Devántak (Slayer of Gods) Narántak (Slayer of Men) Atiktaya (Huge  
of Frame) and Tris'iras (Three  
Headed) were all sons of Rávan.

Next: Canto LXX.: The Death of Tris'iras. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index  
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CANTO LXX.: THE DEATH OF TRIS'IRAS.

Then raged the Rákshas chiefs, and all  
Burned to avenge Narántak's fall. Devántak raised his club on high And  
rushed at Angad with a cry. Behind came Tris'iras, and near Mahodara charged  
with levelled spear. There Angad stood to fight with three: High o'er his

head he waved a tree, And at Devántak, swift and true  
As Indra's flaming bolt, it flew. But, cut by giant shafts in twain,  
With minished force it flew in vain. A shower of trees and blocks of stone  
From Angad's hand was fiercely thrown; But well his club Devántak plied  
And turned each rock and tree aside. Nor yet, by three such foes assailed,  
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The heart of Angad sank or quailed. He slew the mighty beast that bore  
Mahodar: from his head he tore a bleeding tusk, and blow on blow  
Fell fiercely on his Rákshas foe.

The giant reeled, but strength regained, And furious strokes on Angad rained,  
Who, wounded by the storm of blows, Sank on his knees, but swiftly rose.  
Then Tris'iras, as up he sprang, Drew his great bow with awful clang,  
And fixed three arrows from his sheaf Full in the forehead of the chief.  
Hanúmán saw, nor long delayed To speed with Níla to his aid, Who at  
the three-faced giant sent a peak from Lanká's mountain rent. But Tris'iras  
with certain aim Shot rapid arrows as it came: And shivered by their force  
it broke And fell to earth with flash and smoke. Then as the Wind-God's son  
came nigh, Devántak reared his mace on high. Hanúmán smote him on the  
head And stretched the monstrous giant dead. Fierce Tris'iras with fury  
strained His bow, and showers of arrows rained That smote on Níla's side  
and chest: He sank a moment, sore distressed; But quickly gathered strength  
to seize A mountain with its crown of trees. Crushed by the hill, distained  
with gore, Mahodar fell to rise no more. Then Tris'iras raised high his  
spear

Which chilled the trembling foe with fear And, like a flashing meteor  
through The air at Hanúmán it flew. The Vánar shunned the threatened  
stroke, And with strong hands the weapon broke. The giant drew his  
glittering blade: Dire was the wound the weapon made Deep in the Vánar's  
ample chest, Who, for a moment sore oppressed, Raised his broad hand,  
regaining might, And struck the rover of the night. Fierce was the blow:  
with one wild yell Low on the earth the monster fell, Hanúmán seized his  
fallen sword Which served no more its senseless lord, And from the monger  
triple-necked Smote his huge heads with crowns bedecked. Then Mahápárs'va  
burned with ire; Fierce flashed his eyes with vengeful fire. A moment on  
the dead he gazed, Then his black mace aloft was raised, And down the mass  
of iron came That struck and shook the Vánar's frame. Hanúmán's chest was  
well nigh crushed, And from his mouth red torrents gushed: Yet served one  
instant to restore His spirit: from the foe he tore  
His awful mace, and smote, and laid The giant in the dust dismayed. Crushed  
were his jaws and teeth and eyes: Breathless and still he lay as lies A  
summit from a mountain rent By him who rules the firmament.

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CANTO LXXI.: ATIKÁYA'S DEATH.

But Atikáya's wrath grew high

To see his noblest kinsmen die. He, fiercest of the giant race, Presuming  
still on Brahmá's grace; Proud tamer of the immortals' pride, Whose power  
and might with Indra's vied, For blood and vengeful carnage burned, And on  
the foe his fury turned. High on a car that flashed and glowed Bright as a  
thousand suns he rode. Around his princely brows was set A rich bejewelled  
coronet. Gold pendants in his ears he wore; He strained and tried the bow  
he bore, And ever, as a shaft he aimed, His name and royal race  
proclaimed. Scarce might the Vánars brook to hear His clanging bow and  
voice of fear: To Raghu's elder son they fled, Their sure defence in woe  
and dread. Then Ráma bent his eyes afar And saw the giant in his car Fast  
following the flying crowd And roaring like a rainy cloud. He, with the  
lust of battle fired,

Turned to Vibhíshan and inquired: 'Say, who is this, of mountain size, This  
archer with the lion eyes? His car, which strikes our host with awe, A  
thousand eager coursers draw. Surrounded by the flashing spears Which line

his car, the chief appears  
Like some huge cloud when lightnings play  
About it on a stormy day;  
And the great bow he joys to hold  
Whose bended back is bright with gold,  
As Indra's bow makes glad the skies,  
That best of chariots glorifies.  
O see the sunlike splendour flung  
From the great flag above him hung,  
Where, blazened with refulgent lines,  
Ráhu

1 the dreadful Dragon shines.

Full thirty quivers near his side,  
His car with shafts is well supplied:

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And flashing like the light of stars  
Gleam his two mighty scimitars.  
Say, best of giants, who is he  
Before whose face the Vánars flee?' Thus Ráma spake.  
Vibhíshan eyed the giants chief, and thus replied: 'This Ráma, this is Rávan's son:

High fame his youthful might has won.  
He, best of warriors, bows his ear  
The wisdom of the wise to hear.  
Supreme is he mid those who know  
The mastery of sword and bow.  
Unrivalled in the bold attack  
On elephant's or courser's back,  
He knows, beside, each subtler art,  
To win the foe, to bribe, or part.  
On him the giant hosts rely,  
And fear no ill when he is nigh.  
This peerless chieftain bears the name  
Of Atikáva huge of frame, Whom  
Dhanyamáliní of yore To Rávan lord of Lanká bore.' Roused by his bow-string's awful clang,  
To meet their foes the Vánars sprang.  
Armed with tall trees from Lanká's wood,  
And rocks and mountain peaks, they stood.  
The giant's arrows, gold-bedecked,  
The storm of hurtling missiles checked;  
And ever on his foemen poured  
Fierce tempest from his clanging cord;  
Nor could the Vánar chiefs sustain  
His shafts' intolerable rain.  
They fled: the victor gained the place  
Where stood the lord of Raghu's race,  
And cried with voice of thunder: 'Lo,  
Borne on my car, with shaft and bow,  
I, champion of the giants, scorn  
To fight with weaklings humbly born.  
Come forth your bravest, if he dare,  
And right with one who will not spare.'  
Forth sprang Sumitrá's noble child,

1

And strained his ready bow, and smiled;  
And giants trembled as the clang  
Through heaven and earth reechoing rang.  
The giant to his string applied  
A pointed shaft, and proudly cried: 'Turn, turn, Sumitrá's son and fly,  
For terrible as Death am I  
Fly, nor that youthful form oppose,  
Untrained in war, to warriors' blows.  
What! wilt thou waste thy childish breath  
And wake the dormant fire of death?  
Cast down, rash boy, that useless bow:  
Preserve thy life, uninjured go.' He ceased: and stirred by wrath & pride  
Sumitrá's noble son replied: 'By warlike deed, not words alone,  
The valour of the brave is shown.  
Cease with vain boasts my scorn to move,

And with thine arm thy prowess prove.

Borne on thy car, with sword and bow,  
With all thine arms, thy valour show.  
Fight, and my deadly shafts this day  
Low in the dust thy head shall lay,

And, rushing fast in ceaseless flood,  
Shall rend thy flesh and drink thy blood.' His giant foe no answer made,  
But on his string an arrow laid.  
He raised his arm, the cord he drew,  
At Lakshman's breast the arrow flew.  
Sumitrá's son, his foemen's dread,  
Shot a fleet shaft with crescent head,  
Which cleft that arrow pointed well,  
And harmless to the earth it fell.  
A shower of shafts from Lakshman's bow  
Fell fast and furious on the foe  
Who quailed not as the missiles smote  
With idle force his iron coat.  
Then came the friendly Wind-God near,  
And whispered thus in Lakshman's ear: 'Such shafts as these in vain assail  
Thy foe's impenetrable mail.  
A more tremendous missile try,  
Or never may the giant die.  
Employ the mighty spell, and aim  
The weapon known by Brahma's name.' He ceased -  
Sumitrá's son obeyed: On his great bow the shaft was laid,  
And with a roar like thunder, true  
As Indra's flashing bolt, it flew.  
The giant poured his shafts like rain  
To check its course, but all in vain.  
With spear and mace and sword he tried

To turn the fiery dart aside. Winged with a force which naught could check. It smote the monster in the neck, And, sundered from his shoulders, rolled to earth his head and helm of gold.

Footnotes

482:1 The demon of eclipse who seizes the Sun and Moon.

483:1 Lakshman.

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CANTO LXXII.: RÁVAN'S SPEECH.

The giants bent, in rage and grief,  
Their eyes upon the fallen chief: Then flying wild with fear and pale  
To Rávan bore the mournful tale. He heard how Atikáya died, Then turned him to  
his lords, and cried: 'Where are they now--my bravest--where, Wise to  
consult and prompt to dare? Where is Dhúmráksha, skilled to wield  
All weapons in the battle field? Akampan, and Prahasta's might, And Kumbhakarna  
hold in fight? These, these and many a Rákshas more, Each master of the  
arms he bore,

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Who every foe in fight o'erthrew, The victors none could e'er subdue, Have  
perished by the might of one, The vengeful arm of Raghu's son. In vain I  
cast mine eyes around, No match for Ráma here is found, No chief to stand  
before that bow Whose deadly shafts have caused our woe.

Now, warriors, to your stations hence; Provide ye for the wall's  
defence, And be the As'oka garden, where The lady lies, your special  
care. Be every lane and passage barred, Set at each gate a chosen guard. And  
with your troops, where danger calls, Be ready to defend the walls. Each  
movement of the Vánars mark; Observe them when the sides grow dark; Be  
ready in the dead of night, And ere the morning bring the light. Taught by  
our loss we may not scorn These legions of the forest-born."

He ceased: the Rákshas lords obeyed;

Each at his post his troops arrayed: And, torn with pangs that pierced him  
through The monarch from the hall withdrew.

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CANTO LXXIII.: INDRAJIT'S VICTORY.

But Indrajit the fierce and bold

With words like these his sire consoled: 'Dismiss, O King, thy grief and  
dread, And be not thus disquieted. Against this numbing sorrow strive, For  
Indrajit is yet alive; And none in battle may withstand The fury of his  
strong right hand. This day, O sire, thine eyes shall see The sons of Raghu  
slain by me.'

He ceased: he bade the king farewell:

Clear, mid the roar of drum and shell, The clash of sword and harness  
rang As to his car the warrior sprang. Close followed by his Rákshas  
train Through Lanká's gate he reached the plain. Then down he leapt, and  
bade a band Of giants by the chariot stand: Then with due rites, as rules  
require, Did worship to the Lord of Fire. The sacred oil, as texts  
ordain, With wreaths of scented flowers and grain, Within the flame in  
order due That mightiest of the giants threw.

There on the ground were spear and blade And arrowy leaves and fuel  
laid; An iron ladle deep and wide,

And robes with sanguine colours dyed.

Beside him stood a sable goat: The giant seized it by the throat, And  
straight from the consuming flame Auspicious signs of victory came. For  
swiftly, curling to the right, The fire leapt up with willing  
light Undimmed by smoky cloud, and, red Like gold, upon the offering  
fed. They brought him, while the flame yet glowed, The dart by Brahmá's  
grace bestowed, And all the arms he wielded well Were charmed with text and  
holy spell.

Then fiercer for the fight he burned,  
And at the foe his chariot turned, While all his followers lifting  
high Their maces charged with furious cry. Dire, yet more dire the battle  
grew, As rocks and trees and arrows flew. The giant shot his shafts like  
rain, And Vánars fell in myriads slain, Sugriva, Angad, Nila felt The wounds  
his hurtling arrows dealt, His shafts the blood of Gaya drank;  
Hanúmán reeled and Mainda sank. Bright as the glances of the sun Came the  
swift darts they could not shun. Caught in the arrowy nets he wove. In vain  
the sons of Raghu strove; And Ráma, by the darts oppressed, His brother  
chieftain thus addressed: 'See, first this giant warrior sends Destruction,  
mid our Vánar friends, And now his arrows thick and fast Their binding net  
around us cast. To Brahmá's grace the chieftain owes The matchless power  
and might he shows; And mortal strength in vain contends With him whom  
Brahmá's self befriends. Then let us still with dauntless hearts Endure  
this storm of pelting darts. Soon must we sink bereaved of sense; And then  
the victor, hurrying hence, Will seek his father in his hall And tell him  
of his foemen's fall.' He ceased: o'erpowered by shaft and spell The sons  
of Raghu reeled and fell. The Rákshas on their bodies gazed; And, mid the  
shouts his followers raised, Sped back to Lanká to relate In Rávan's hall  
the princes' fate. Next: Canto LXXIV.: The Medicinal Herbs. Sacred Texts  
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#### CANTO LXXIV.: THE MEDICINAL HERBS.

The shades of falling night concealed

The carnage of the battle field,

p. 485

Which, hearing each a blazing brand, Hanúmán and Vibhíshan scanned, Moving  
with slow and anxious tread Among the dying and the dead. Sad was the scene  
of slaughter shown Where'er the torches' light was thrown. Here mountain  
forma of Vánars lay Whose heads and limbs were lopped away Arms legs and  
fingers strewed the ground, And severed heads lay thick around. The earth  
was moist with sanguine streams, And sighs were heard and groans and  
screams. There lay Sugriva still and cold, There Angad, once so brave and  
bold. There Jámaván his might reposed, There Vegadars' í's eyes were  
closed; There in the dust was Nala's pride, And Dwivid lay by Mainda's  
side. Where'er they looked the ensanguined plain Was strewn with myriads of  
the slain; 1

They sought with keenly searching eyes

King Jámaván supremely wise. His strength had failed by slow decay, And  
pierced with countless shafts he lay. They saw, and hastened to his  
side, And thus the sage Vibhíshan cried: 'Thee, monarch of the bears, we  
seek: Speak if thou yet art living, speak.' Slow came the aged chief's  
reply; Scarce could he say with many a sigh: 'Torn with keen shafts which  
pierce each limb, My strength is gone, my sight is dim; Yet though I scarce  
can raise mine eyes. Thy voice. O chief. I recognize. O, while these ears  
can hear thee, say, Has Hanumán survived this day?' 'Why ask,' Vibhíshan  
cried, 'for one Of lower rank, the Wind-God's son? Hast thou forgotten,  
first in place, The princely chief of Raghu's race? Can King Sugriva claim  
no care, And Angad, his imperial heir?' 'Yea, dearer than my noblest  
friends Is he on whom our hope depends. For if the Wind-God's son  
survive, All we though dead are yet alive. But if his precious life be  
fled Though living still we are but dead: He is our hope and sure relief.'  
Thus slowly spoke the aged chief: Then to his side Hanúmán came, And with  
low reverence named his name.

Cheered by the face he longed to view

The wounded chieftain lived anew. 'Go forth,' he cried, 'O strong and  
brave, And in their woe the Vánars save.' No might but thine, supremely  
great, May help us in our lost estate, The trembling bears and Vánars  
cheer, Calm their sad hearts, dispel their fear. Save Raghu's noble sons,  
and heal The deep wounds of the winged steel. High o'er the waters of the  
sea To far Himálaya's summits flee. Kailása there wilt thou behold, Aud

Rishabh, with his peaks of gold. Between them see a mountain rise  
Whose splendour will enchant thine eyes; His sides are clothed above, below, With  
all the rarest herbs that grow. Upon that mountain's lofty crest Four  
plants, of sovereign powers possessed, Spring from the soil, and flashing  
there Shed radiance through the neighbouring air. One draws the shaft: one  
brings again The breath of life to warm the slain; One heals each wound;  
one gives anew

To faded cheeks their wonted hue. Fly, chieftain, to that mountain's  
brow And bring those herbs to save us now.' Hanúmán heard, and springing  
through The air like Vishnu's discus  
1b flew.

The sea was passed: beneath him, gay With bright-winged birds, the  
mountains lay, And brook and lake and lonely glen, And fertile lands with  
toiling men. On, on he sped: before him rose The mansion of perennial  
snows. There soared the glorious peaks as fair As white clouds in the  
summer air. Here, bursting from the leafy shade, In thunder leapt the wild  
cascade. He looked on many a pure retreat Dear to the Gods' and sages'  
feet: The spot where Brahmá dwells apart, The place whence Rudra launched  
his dart;

2b

Vishnu's high seat and Indra's home, And slopes where Yama's servants  
roam. There was Kuvera's bright abode; There Brahma's mystic weapon  
glowed. There was the noble hill whereon

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Those herbs with wondrous lustre shone. And, ravished by the glorious  
sight,

Hanúmán rested on the height. He, moving down the glittering peak, The  
healing herbs began to seek: But, when he thought to seize the prize, They  
hid them from his eager eyes. Then to the hill in wrath he spake: 'Mine arm  
this day shall vengeance take, If thou wilt feel no pity, none, In this  
great need of Raghu's son.' He ceased: his mighty arms he bent And from the  
trembling mountain rent His huge head with the life it bore, Snakes,  
elephants, and golden ore. O'er hill and plain and watery waste His rapid  
way again he traced. And mid the wondering Vánars laid His burthen through  
the air conveyed. The wondrous herbs' delightful scent To all the host new  
vigour lent. Free from all darts and wounds and pain The sons of Raghu  
lived again, And dead and dying Vánars healed Rose vigorous from the battle  
field.

Footnotes 485:1 In such cases as this I am not careful to reproduce  
the numbers of the poet, which in the text which I  
follow are 670,000,000; the Bengal recension being content with thirty  
million less.

485:1b The discus or quoit, a sharp-edged circular  
missile is the favourite weapon of Vishnu.

485:2b To destroy Tripura the triple city in the sky, air and earth,  
built by Maya for a celebrated Asur or  
demon, or as another commentator explains, to destroy Randarpa or Love.

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CANTO LXXV.: THE NIGHT ATTACK.

Sugriva spake in words like these:

'Now, Vánar lords, the occasion seize. For now, of sons and brothers  
reft, To Rávan little hope is left: And if our host his gates assail His  
weak defence will surely fail.'

At dead of night the Vánar bands

Rushed on with torches in their hands. Scared by the coming of the  
host Each giant warder left his post. Where'er the Vánar legions came Their  
way was marked with hostile flame That spread in fury to devour Palace and  
temple, gate and tower. Down came the walls and porches, down Came stately  
piles that graced the town. In many a house the fire was red, On sandal



wood and aloe fed. And scorching flames in billows rolled  
O'er diamonds and pearls and gold. On cloth of wool, on silk brocade,  
On linen robes their fury preyed. Wheels, poles and yokes were burned,  
and all the coursers' harness in the stall;

And elephants' and chariots' gear, The sword, the buckler, and the  
spear. Scared by the crash of falling beams, Mid lamentations, groans and  
screams

Forth rushed the giants through the flames

And with them dragged bewildered dames, Each, with o'erwhelming terror  
wild, Still clamping to her breast a child. The swift fire from a cloud of  
smoke Through many a gilded lattice broke, And, melting pearl and coral,  
rose O'er balconies and porticoes. The startled crane and peacock  
screamed As with strange light the courtyard gleamed, And fierce unusual  
glare was thrown. 'Twas shrinking wood and heated stone. From burning stall  
and stable freed Rushed frantic elephant and steed. And goaded by the  
driving blaze Fleed wildly through the crowded ways. As earth with fervent  
heat will glow When comes her final overthrow; From gate to gate, from  
court to spire Proud Lanká was one blaze of fire, And every headland, rock  
and bay Shone bright a hundred leagues away. Forth, blinded by the heat and  
flame Ran countless giants huge of frame;

And, mustering for fierce attack, The Vánars charged to drive them  
back, While shout and scream and roar and cry Re-echoed through the earth  
and sky. There Rama stood with strength renewed, And ever, as the foe he  
viewed, Shaking the distant regions rang His mighty bow's tremendous  
clang. Then through the gates Nikumbha hied, And Kumbha by his brother's  
side, Sent forth--the bravest and the best--To battle by the king's  
behest. There fought the chiefs in open field, And Angad fell and Dwivid  
reeled. Sugriva saw: by rage impelled He crushed the bow which Kumbha  
held. About his foe Sugriva wound His arms, and, heaving from the ground The  
giant hurled him o'er the bank; And deep beneath the sea he sank. Like  
mandar hill with furious swell Up leapt the waters where he fell. Again he  
rose: he sprang to land And raised on high his threatening hand: Full on  
Sugriva's chest it came And shook the Vánar's massy frame, But on the  
wounded bone he broke His wrist--so furious was the stroke. With force that  
naught could stay or check,  
Sugriva smote him neath the neck. The fierce blow crashed through flesh  
and bone And Kumbha lay in death o'erthrown. Nikumbha saw his brother  
die, And red with fury flashed his eye. He dashed with mighty sway and  
swing

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His axe against the Vánar king; But shattered on that living rock It split  
in fragments at the shock. Sugriva, rising to the blow, Raised his huge  
hand and smote his foe. And in the dust the giant lay Gasping in blood his  
soul away.

1

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CANTO XCIII.: RÁVAN'S LAMENT.

They sought the king, a mournful train,  
And cried. 'My lord, thy son is slain. By Lakshmau's hand, before these  
eyes, The warrior fell no more to rise. No time is this for vain regret: Thy  
hero son a hero met; And he whose might in battle pressed Lord Indra and  
the Gods confessed, Whose power was stranger to defeat, Has gained in  
heaven a blissful seat.

The monarch heard the mournful tale:

His heart was faint, his cheek was pale; His fleeting sense at length  
regained, In trembling tones he thus complained: 'Ah me, my son, my pride:  
the boast And glory of the giant host. Could Lakshman's puny might  
defeat The foe whom Indra feared to meet? Could not thy deadly arrows  
split Proud Mandar's peaks, O Indrajit,

And the Destroyer's self destroy?And wast thou conquered by a boy?  
I will not weep: thy noble deedHas blessed thee with immortal meedGained  
by each hero in the skiesWho fighting for his sovereign dies.Now,  
fearless of all meaner foes.The guardian Gods  
lb will taste repose:

But earth to me, with hill and plain,In\* desolate, for thou art slain.Ah,  
whither hast thou fled, and leftThy mother, Lanká, me bereft;Left pride  
and state and wives behind,And lordship over all thy kind?I fondly hoped  
thy hand should payDue honours on my dying day:And couldst thou, O  
beloved, fleeAnd leave thy funeral rites to me?Life has no comfort left  
me, none,O Indrajit my son, my son.'

Thus wailed he broken by his woes:

But swift the thought of vengeance rose.In awful wrath his teeth he  
gnashed,And from his eyes red lightning flashed.Hot from his mouth came  
fire and smoke,As thus the king in fury spoke:

'Through many a thousand years of yore

The penance and the pain I bore,And by fierce torment well sustained  
The highest grace of Brahmá, gained,His plighted word my life  
assured,From Gods of heaven and fiends secured.He armed my limbs with  
burnished mailWhose lustre turns the sunbeams pale,In battle proof gainst  
heavenly bandsWith thunder in their threatening hands.Armed in this mail  
myself will goWith Brahmá's gift my deadly bow,And, cleaving through the  
foes my way,The slayers of my son will slay.'

Then, by his grief to frenzy wrought,

The captive in the grove he sought.Swift through the shady path he  
sped:Earth trembled at his furious tread.Fierce were his eyes: his  
monstrous handHeld drawn for death his glittering brand.

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There weeping stood the Maithil dame:She shuddered as the giant came.Near  
drew the rover of the nightAnd raised his sword in act to smite;But, by  
his nobler heart impelled,One Rákshas lord his arm withheld:'Wilt thou,  
great Monarch,' thus he cried,'Wilt thou, to heavenly Gods allied,  
Blot for all time thy glorious fame,The slayer of a gentle dame?What!  
shall a woman's blood be spiltTo stain thee with eternal guilt,Thee deep  
in all the Veda's lore?Far be the thought for evermore.Ah look, and let  
her lovely faceThis fury from thy bosom chase.'

He ceased: the prudent counsel pleased

The monarch, and his wrath appeased;Then to his council hall in hasteThe  
giant lord his steps retraced.

1

Footnotes

487:1 I have briefly despatched Kumbha and

Nikumbha, each of whom has in the text a long Canto

to himself. When they fall Rávan sends forth Makaráksha or Crocodile-Eye,  
the son of Khara who was slain by Ráma in the forest before the abduction  
of Sitá. The account of his sallying forth, of his battle with Ráma and  
of his death by the fiery dart of that hero occupies two Cantos which I  
entirely pass over. Indrajit again comes forth and, rendered invisible by  
his magic art slays countless Vánars with his unerring arrows. He  
retires to the city and returns bearing in his chariot an effigy of Sitá,  
the work of magic, weeping and wailing by his side. He grasps the lovely  
image by the hair and cuts it down with his scimitar in the sight of the  
enraged Hanúmán and all the Vánar host. At last after much fighting of  
the usual kind Indrajit's chariot is broken in pieces, his charioteer is  
slain, and he himself falls by Lakshman's hand, to the inexpressible  
delight of the high-souled saints, the nymphs of heaven and other  
celestial beings.

487:1b The Lokapálas are sometimes regarded as  
deities appointed by Brahmá at the creation of the

word\* to act as guardians of different orders of beings, but more commonly they are identified with the deities presiding over the four cardinal and four intermediate points of the compass, which, according to Manu V.96, are 1, Indra, guardian of the East; 2, Agni, of the South-east; 3, Yama, of the South; 4, Súra, of the South-west: 5, Varuna, of the West; 6, Pavana or Váyu, of the North-west; 7, Kuvera, of the North; 8, Soma or Chandra, of the North-east.

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CANTO XCVI.: RÁVAN'S SALLY.

The groans and cries of dames who wailed

The ears of Lanká's lord assailed, For from each house and home was sent  
The voice of weeping and lament. In troubled thought his head he bowed,  
Then fiercely loosing on the crowd Of nobles near his throne he broke  
The silence, and in fury spoke: 'This day my deadly shafts shall fly,  
And Raghu's sons shall surely die. This day shall countless Vánars bleed  
And dogs and kites and vultures feed. Go, bid them swift my car prepare,  
Bring the great bow I long to bear: And let my host with sword and shield  
And spear be ready for the field.'

From street to street the captains passed

And Rákshas warriors gathered fast. With spear and sword to pierce and strike,  
And axe and club and mace and pike.

2

Then Rávan's warrior chariot 1b wrought With gold and rich inlay was brought.

Mid tinkling bells and weapons' clang The monarch on the chariot sprang,  
Which, decked with gems of every hue, Eight steeds of noble lineage drew.  
Mid roars of drum and shell rang out From countless throats a joyful shout.  
As, girt with hosts in warlike pride. Through Lanká's streets the tyrant hied.  
Still, louder than the roar of drums, Went up the cry 'He comes, he comes,  
Our ever conquering lord who trod Beneath his feet both fiend and God.'  
On to the gate the warriors swept Where Raghu's sons their station kept.  
When Rávan's car the portal passed The sun in heaven was overcast.  
Earth rocked and reeled from side to side And birds with boding voices cried.  
Against the standard of the king A vulture flapped his horrid wing.  
Big gouts of blood before him dropped, His trembling steeds in terror stopped.  
The hue of death was on his cheek, And scarce his flattering tongue could speak,  
When, terrible with flash and flame, Through murky air a meteor came.  
Still by the hand of Death impelled His onward way the giant held.  
The Vánars in the field afar

Heard the loud thunder of his car. And turned with warriors' fierce delight  
To meet the giant in the fight. He came: his clanging bow he drew  
And myriads of the Vánars slew. Some through the side and heart he cleft,  
Some headless on the plain were left. Some struggling groaned with mangled thighs,  
Or broken arms or blinded eyes.

2b

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Footnotes

488:1 I omit two Cantos in the first of which Ráma with an enchanted Gandharva weapon deals destruction among the Rákshases sent out by Rávan, and in the second the Rákshas dames' lament the slain and mourn over the madness of Rávan.

488:2 I omit several weapons for which I cannot find distinctive names, and among them the Sataghní or Centicide, supposed by some to be a kind of fire-arms or rocket, but described by a commentator on the Mahábhárata as a stone or cylindrical piece of wood studded with iron spikes.

488:1b The chariots of Rávan's present army are said to have been one hundred and fifty million in number with

three hundred million elephants, and twelve hundred million horses and asses. The footmen are merely said to have been 'unnumbered.'  
488:2b I omit Cantos XCVII., XCVIII., and XCIX,  
which describe in the usual way three single combats  
between Sugrīva and Angad on the Vānar side and Virūpaksha, Mahodar, and Mahápārs'va on the side of the giants. The weapons of the Vānars are trees and rocks: the giants fight with swords, axes, and bows and arrows. The details are generally the same as those of preceding duels. The giants fall, one in each Canto.

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CANTO C.: RAVAN IN THE FIELD.

The plain with bleeding limbs was spread,  
And heaps of dying and of dead. His mighty bow still Rāma strained, And  
shafts upon the giants rained. Still Angad and Sugrīva, wrought to fury,  
for the Vānars fought. Crushed with huge rocks through chest and  
side Mahodar, Mahápārs'va died, And Vinūpaksha stained with gore Dropped on  
the plain to rise no more. When Rāvan saw the three o'erthrown He cried  
aloud in furious tone: 'Urge, urge the car, my charioteer. The haughty  
Vānars' death is near. This very day shall end our griefs For leaguered  
town and slaughtered chiefs. Rāma the tree whose lovely fruit Is Sītā,  
shall this arm uproot, -- Whose branches with protecting shade Are Vānar  
lords who lend him aid.' Thus cried the king: the welkin rang As forth the  
eager coursers sprang, And earth beneath the chariot shook With flowery  
grove and hill and brook. Fast rained his shafts: where'er he sped  
The conquered Vānars fell or fled, On rolled the car in swift career Till  
Raghu's noble sons were near. Then Rāma looked upon the foe And strained  
and tried his sounding bow. Till earth and all the region rang Re-echoing  
to the awful clang. His bow the younger chieftain bent. And shaft on shaft  
at Rāvan sent. He shot: but Rāvan little recked; Each arrow with his own he  
checked, And headless, baffled of its aim, To earth the harmless missile  
came; And Lakshman stayed his arm o'erpowered By the thick darts the giant  
showered. Fierce waxed the fight and fiercer yet, For Rāvan now and Rāma  
met, And each on other poured amain The tempest of his arrowy rain. While  
all the sky above was dark With missiles speeding to their mark Like clouds,  
with flashing lightning twined About them, hurried by the wind. Not fiercer  
was the wondrous fight When Vritra fell by Indra's might. All arts off war  
each foeman knew, And trained alike, his bowstring drew. Red-eyed with fury  
Lankā's king Pressed his huge fingers on the string,  
And fixed in Rāma's brows a flight Of arrows winged with matchless flight.  
Still Raghu's son endured, and bore  
That crown of shafts though wounded sore. O'er a dire dart a spell he  
spoke With mystic power to aid the stroke. In vain upon the foe it  
smote Rebounding from the steelproof coat. The giant armed his bow anew, And  
wondrous weapons hissed and flew, Terrific, deadly, swift of flight, Beaked  
like the vulture and the kite, Or bearing heads of fearful make, Of lion,  
tiger, wolf and snake.

1

Then Rāma, troubled by the storm Of flying darts in every form Shot by an  
arm that naught could tire, Launched at the foe his dart of fire, Which,  
sacred to the Lord of Flame, Burnt and consumed where'er it came. And many  
a blazing shaft beside The hero to his string applied. With fiery course of  
dazzling hue Swift to the mark each missile flew, Some flashing like a  
shooting star, Some as the tongues of lightning are; One like a brilliant  
plant, one In splendour like the morning sun.

Where'er the shafts of Rāma burned The giant's darts were foiled and  
turned. Far into space his weapons fled, But as they flew struck thousands  
dead.

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CANTO CI.: LAKSHMAN'S FALL.

When Rávan saw his darts repelled,  
With double rage his bosom swelled. He summoned, wroth but undismayed, A  
mightier charm to lend its aid. And, fierce as fire before the blast, A  
storm of missiles thick and fast, Spear, pike and javelin, mace and  
brand, Came hurtling from the giant's hand. But, mightier still, the arms  
employed By Raghu's son their force destroyed, And every dart fell dulled  
and spent By powers the bards of heaven had lent. With his huge mace  
Vibhishan slew The steeds that Ravan's chariot drew.

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Then Rávan hurled in deadly ire A ponderous spear that flashed like  
fire: But Ráma's arrows checked its way, And harmless on the earth it  
lay, The giant seized a mightier spear, Which Death himself would shun with  
fear. Vibhishan with the stroke had died, But Lakshman's hand his bowstring  
plied,

And flying arrows thick as hail Smote fiercely on the giant's mail. Then  
Rávan turned his aim aside, On Lakshman looked and fiercely cried: 'Thou,  
thou again my wrath hast braved, And from his death Vibhishan saved. Now in  
his stead this spear receive Whose deadly point thy heart shall cleave.'  
He ceased: he hurled the mortal dart

By Maya forged with magic art. The spear, with all his fury flung. Swift,  
flickering like a serpent's tongue, Adorned with many a tinkling  
bell, Smote Lakshman, and the hero fell. When Ráma saw, he heaved a sigh, A  
tear one moment dimmed his eye. But tender grief was soon repressed And  
thoughts of vengeance filled his breast. The air around him flashed and  
gleamed As from his bow the arrows streamed; And Lanká's lord, the foeman's  
dread, O'erwhelmed with terror turned and fled.

Footnotes 489:1 It is not very easy to see the advantage of having  
arrows headed in the way mentioned. Fanciful names  
for war-engines and weapons derived from their resemblance to various  
animals are not confined to India. The "War-wolf" was used by Edward I.  
at the siege of Brechin, the "Cat-house" and the "Sow" were used by  
Edward III. at the siege of Dunbar.

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CANTO CII.: LAKSHMAN HEALED.

But Ráma, pride of Raghu's race,  
Gazed tenderly on Lakshman's face, And, as the sight his spirit  
broke, Turned to Sushen and sadly spoke: 'Where is my power and valour?  
how Shall I have heart for battle now, When dead before my weeping eyes My  
brother, noblest Lakshman, lies? My tears in blinding torrents flow, My  
hand unnerved has dropped my bow The pangs of woe have blanched my  
cheek. My heart is sick, my strength is weak. Ah me, my brother! Ah, that  
I By Lakshman's side might sink and die Life, war and conquest, all are  
vain If Lakshman lies in battle slain. Why will those eyes my glances  
shun? Hast thou no word of answer, none? Ah, as thy noble spirit flown And  
gone to other worlds alone? Could thou not let thy brother seek Those  
worlds with thee? O speak, O speak! Rise up once more, my brother,  
rise, Look on me with thy loving eyes. Were not thy steps beside me still  
In gloomy wood, on breezy hill?

Did not thy gentle care assuage Thy brother's grief and fitful rage? Didst  
thou not all his troubles share, His guide and comfort in despair?'

As Ráma, vanquished, wept and sighed

The Vánar chieftain thus replied: 'Great Prince, unmanly thoughts  
dismiss, Nor yield thy soul to grief like this, In vain those burning tears  
are shed: Our glory Lakshman is not dead. Death on his brow no mark has  
set, Where beauty's lustre lingers yet. Clear is the skin, and tender  
hues Of lotus flowers his palms suffuse. O Ráma, cheer thy trembling  
heart; Not thus do life and body part, Now, Hanumán, to thee I speak: Hie  
hence to tall Mahodaya's

1 peak

Where herbs of sovereign virtue growWhich life and health and strength  
bestowBring thou the leaves to balm his pain,And Lakshman shall be well  
again.'

He ceased: the Wind-God's son obeyed

Swift through the clouds his way he made.He reached the hill, nor stayed  
to find

The wondrous herbs of healing kind,From its broad base the mount he  
toreWith all the shrubs and trees it bore,Sped through the clouds again  
and showedTo wise Sushen his woodv load.

2

Sushen in wonder viewed the hill,And culled the sovereign salve of  
ill.Soon as the healing herb he found,The fragrant leaves he crushed and  
ground.Then over Lakshman's face he bent,Who, healed and strengthened by  
the scentOf that blest herb divinely sweet,Rose fresh and lusty on his  
feet.

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CANTO CIII.: INDRA'S CAR.

Then Raghu's son forgot his woe;

Again he grasped his fallen bowAnd hurled at Lanká's lord amainThe  
tempest of his arrowy rain.

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Drawn by the steeds his lords had brought,Again the giant turned and  
fought.And drove his glittering chariot nighAs springs the Day-God  
through the sky.Then, as his sounding bow he bent,Like thunderbolts his  
shafts were sent,As when dark clouds in rain time shedFierce torrents on  
a mountain's head.High on his car the giant rode,On foot the son of Raghu  
strode.The Gods from their celestial heightIndignant saw the unequal  
fight.Then he whom heavenly hosts revere,Lord Indra, called his  
charioteer:

'Haste, Matali,' he cried,'descend;To Raghu's son my chariot lend.  
With cheering words the chief address;And all the Gods thy deed will  
bless.'

He bowed; he brought the glorious car

Whose tinkling bells were heard afar;Fair as the sun of morning,  
brightWith gold and pearl and lazuliteHe yoked the steeds of tawny  
hueThat swifter than the tempest flew.Then down the slope of heaven he  
hiedAnd stayed the car by Ráma's side.'Ascend, O Chief.' he humbly  
cried,'The chariot which the Gods provide.The mighty bow of Indra  
see,Sent by the Gods who favour thee;Behold this coat of glittering  
mail,And spear and shafts which never fail.'

Cheered by the grace the Immortals showed

The chieftain on the chariot rode.Then as the car-borne warriors metThe  
awful fight raged fiercer yet.Each shaft that Rávan shot becameA serpent  
red with kindled flame,And round the limbs of Ráma hungWith fiery jaws  
and quivering tongue.But every serpent fled dismayedWhen Raghu's valiant  
son displayedThe weapon of the Feathered King, 1

And loosed his arrows from the string.

But Rávan armed his bow anew,And showers of shafts at Ráma flew,While the  
fierce king in swift careerSmote with a dart the charioteer.An arrow shot  
by Rávan's handLaid the proud banner on the sand,And Indra's steeds of  
heavenly strainFell by the iron tempest slain.On Gods and spirits of the  
airFell terror, trembling, and despair.The sea's white billows mounted  
high

With froth and foam to drench the sky.

The sun by lurid clouds was veiled,The friendly lights of heaven were  
paled;And, fiercely gleaming, fiery MarsOpposed the beams of gentler  
stars.

Then Ráma's eyes with fury blazed

As Indra's heavenly spear he raised.Loud rang the bells: the glistering  
headBright flashes through the region shed.Down came the spear in swift  
descent:The giant's lance was crushed and bent.Then Rávan's horses brave  
and fleetFell dead beneath his arrowy sleet.Fierce on his foeman Ráma  
pressed,And gored with shafts his mighty breast.  
And spouting streams of crimson dyedThe weary giant's limbs and side.

1b

Footnotes

490:1 Apparently a peak of the Himalaya chain.

490:2 This exploit of Hanumán is related with  
inordinate prolixity in the Bengal recension (Gortesio's  
text) Among other adventures he narrowly escapes being shot by Bharat as  
he passes over Nandigram near Ayodhyá. Hanumán stays Bharat in time, and  
gives him an account of what has befallen Ráma and Sitá in the forest and  
in Lanká.

491:1 As Garud the king of birds is the mortal enemy of  
serpents the weapon sacred to him is of course best  
calculated to destroy the serpent arrows of Rávan.

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CANTO CVI.: GLORY TO THE SUN.

There faint and bleeding fast, apart

Stood Rávan raging in his heart.Then, moved with ruth for Ráma's  
sake,Agastya

2b came and gently spake:

'Bend, Ráma, bend thy heart and earThe everlasting truth to hearWhich all  
thy hopes through life will blessAnd crown thine arms with full  
success.The rising sun with golden rays,Light of the worlds, adore and  
praise:The universal king, the lordBy hosts of heaven and fiends  
adored.He tempers all with soft control.He is the Gods' diviner soul;And  
Gods above and fiends belowAnd men to him their safety owe.He Brahmá,  
Vishnu, S'iva, heEach person of the glorious Three,Is every God whose  
praise \*?? tell,The King of Heaven,

3b the Lord of Hell:   4b

Each God revered from times of old,The Lord of War,

5b the King of Gold:   6bp. 492

Mahendra, Time and Death is he,   1

The Moon, the Ruler of the Sea.

He hears our praise in every form,--The manes,

2 Gods who ride the storm,   3

The As'vins,   4 Manu,   5 they who stand

Round Indra,   6 and the Sádhyas'   7 band

He is the air, and life and fire,The universal source and sire:He brings  
the seasons at his call,Creator, light, and nurse of all.His heavenly  
course he joys to run,Maker of Day, the golden sun.The steeds that whirl  
his car are seven,

8

The flaming steeds that flash through heaven.Lord of the sky, the  
conqueror partsThe clouds of night with glistering darts.He, master of  
the Vedas' lore,Commands the clouds' collected store:He is the rivers'  
surest friend;He bids the rains, and they descend.Stars, planets,  
constellations ownTheir monarch of the golden throne.Lord of twelve  
forms,

9 to thee I bow,

Most glorious King of heaven art thou.O Ráma, he who pays arightDue  
worship to the Lord of LightShall never fall oppressed by ill,But find a  
stay and comfort still.

Adore with all thy heart and mindThis God of Gods, to him resigned;And  
thou his saving power shalt knowVictorious o'er thy giant foe.

10

## Footnotes

491:1b I omit Cantos CIV. and CV. in which the fight is renewed and Rávan severely reprimands his charioteer for timidity and want of confidence in his master's prowess, and orders him to charge straight at Ráma on the next occasion.

491:2b The celebrated saint who has on former occasions assisted Ráma with his gifts and counsel.

491:3b Indra.

491:4b Yama.

491:5b Kartikeva.\*

491:6b Kuvera.492:1 Varun.

492:2 The Pitris, forefathers or spirits of the dead, are of two kinds, either the spirits of the father, grandfathers and great-grandfathers of an individual or the progenitors of mankind generally, to both of whom obsequial worship is paid and oblations of food are presented.

492:3 The Maruts or Storm-Gods.

492:4 The Heavenly Twins, the Castor and Pollux of the Hindus.

492:5 The Man par excellence, the representative man and father of the human race regarded also as God.

492:6 The Vasus, a class of deities originally personifications of natural phenomena.

492:7 A class of celestial beings who dwell between the earth and the sun.

492:8 The seven horses are supposed to symbolize the seven days of the week.

492:9 One for each month in the year.492:10 This Canto does not appear in the Bengal

recension. It comes in awkwardly and may I think be considered as an interpolation, but I paraphrase a portion of it as a relief after so much fighting and carnage, and as an interesting glimpse of the monotheistic ideas which underlie the Hindu religion. The hymn does not readily lend itself to metrical translation, and I have not attempted here to give a faithful rendering of the whole. A literal version of the text and the commentary given in the Calcutta edition will be found in the Additional Notes.

A canto is here omitted. It contains fighting of the ordinary kind between Ráma and Rávan, and a description of sights and sounds of evil omen foreboding the destruction of the giant.

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CANTO CVIII.: THE BATTLE.

He spoke, and vanished: Ráma raised

His eyes with reverence meet, and praisedThe glorious Day-God full in  
view:Then armed him for the fight anew.Urged onward by his charioteerThe  
giant's foaming steeds came near,And furious was the battle's dinWhere  
each resolved to die or win.The Rákshas host and Vánar bandsStood with  
their weapons in their hands,And watched in terror and dismayThe fortune  
of the awful fray.The giant chief with rage inflamedHis darts at Ráma's  
pennon aimed;But when they touched the chariot madeBy heavenly hands  
their force was stayed.Then Ráma's breast with fury swelled;He strained  
the mighty bow he held.And straight at Rávan's banner flewAn arrow as the  
string he drew--A deadly arrow swift of flight,Like some huge snake  
ablaze with light,Whose fury none might e'er repel,--And, split in twain,  
the standard fell.At Ráma's steeds sharp arrows, hot  
With flames of fire, the giant shot.Unmoved the heavenly steeds  
sustainedThe furious shower the warrior rained,As though soft lotus  
tendrils smoteEach haughty crest and glossy coat,Then volleyed swift by  
magic art,Tree, mountain peak and spear and dart,Trident and pike and



club and maceFlew hurtling straight at Ráma's face.But Ráma with his  
steeds and carEscaped the storm which fell afarWhere the strange  
missiles, as they rushedTo earth, a thousand Vánars crushed.

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CANTO CIX.: THE BATTLE.

With wondrous power and might and skill

The giant fought with Ráma still.Each at his foe his chariot drove,And  
still for death or victory strove.The warriors' steeds together  
dashed,And pole with pole reëchoing clashed.Then Ráma launching dart on  
dartMade Rávan's coursers swerve and start.Nor was the lord of Lanká  
slowTo rain his arrows on the foe,Who showed, by fiery points assailed,No  
trace of pain, nor shook nor quailed.Dense clouds of arrows Ráma shotWith  
that strong arm which rested not,And spear and mace and club and  
brandFell in dire rain from Rávan's hand.The storm of missiles fiercely  
castStirred up the oceans with its blast,And Serpent-Gods and fiends who  
dwellBelow were troubled by the swell.The earth with hill and plain and  
brookAnd grove and garden reeled and shook:The very sun grew cold and  
pale,And horror stiled the rising gale.God and Gandharva, sage and saint  
Cried out, with grief and terror faint:O may the prince of Raghu'  
lineGive peace to Bráhmans and to kine,And, rescuing the worlds,  
o'erthrowThe giant king our awful foe.'

Then to his deadly string the pride

Of Raghu's race a shaft applied.Sharp as a serpent's venom'd fangStraight  
to its mark the arrow sprang,And from the giant's body shredWith  
trenchant steel the monstrous head.There might the triple world  
beholdThat severed head adorned with gold.But when all eyes were bent to  
view,Swift in its stead another grew.Again the shaft was pointed  
well:Again the head divided fell;But still as each to earth was  
castAnother head succeeded fast.A hundred, bright with fiery flame,Fell  
low before the victor's aim,Yet Rávan by no sign betrayedThat death was  
near or strength decayed.The doubtful fight he still maintained,And on  
the foe his missiles rained.In air, on earth, on plain, on hill,With  
awful might he battled still;And through the hours of night and day  
The conflict knew no pause or stay.

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CANTO CX.: RÁVAN'S DEATH.

Then Mátali to Ráma cried:

'Let other arms the day decide.Why wilt thou strive with useless toilAnd  
see his might thy efforts foil?Launch at the foe thy dart whose fireWas  
kindled by the Almighty Sire.'He ceased: and Raghu's son obeyed:Upon his  
string the hero laidAn arrow, like a snake that hissed.Whose fiery flight  
had never missed:The arrow Saint Agastya gaveAnd blessed the chieftain's  
life to saveThat dart the Eternal Father madeThe Monarch of the Gods to  
aid;By Brahmá's self on him bestowedWhen forth to fight Lord Indra  
rode.'Twas feathered with the rushing wind;The glowing sun and fire  
combinedTo the keen point their splendour lent;The shaft, ethereal  
element,By Meru's hill and Mandar, prideOf mountains, had its weight  
supplied.He laid it on the twisted cord,He turned the point at Lanká's  
lord,And swift the limb-dividing dart

Pierced the huge chest and cleft the heart,And dead he fell upon the  
plainLike Vritra by the Thunderer slain.The Rákahas host when Rávan  
fellSent forth a wild terrific yell,Then turned and fled, all hope  
resigned,Through Lanká's gates, nor looked behindHis voice each joyous  
Vánar raised,And Ráma, conquering Ráma, praised.Soft from celestial  
minstrels cameThe sound of music and acclaim.Soft, fresh, and cool, a  
rising breezeBrought odours from the heavenly trees,And ravishing the

sight and smellA wondrous rain of blossoms fell:And voices breathed round  
Raghu's son:'Champion of Gods, well done, well done.'

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CANTO CXI.: VIBHÍSHAN'S LAMENT.

Vibhishan saw his brother slain,

Nor could his heart its woe contain.O'er the dead king he sadly bentAnd  
mourned him with a loud lament:'O hero, bold and brave.' he  
cried,'Skilled in all arms, in battle tried.Spoiled of thy crown, with  
limbs outspread.

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Why wilt thou press thy gory bed?Why slumber on the earth's cold  
breast,When sumptuous couches woo to rest?Ah me, my brother over  
bold,Thine is the fate my heart foretold:But love and pride forbade to  
hearThe friend who blamed thy wild career.Fallen is the sun who gave us  
light,Our lordly moon is veiled in night.Our beacon fire is dead and  
coldA hundred waves have o'er it rolled.What could his light and fire  
availAgainst Lord Ráma's arrowy hail?Woe for the giants' royal tree,Whose  
stately height was fair to see.

His buds were deeds of kingly grace,His bloom the sons who decked his  
race.With rifled bloom and mangled boughThe royal tree lies prostrate  
now.'"Nay, idly mourn not," Ráma cried,'The warrior king has nobly  
died,Interpid hero, firm through all.So fell he as the brave should  
fall;And ill beseems it chiefs like usTo weep for those who perish  
thus.Be firm: thy causeless grief restrain,And pay the dues that yet  
remain,

Again Vibhishan sadly spoke:

'His was the hero arm that brokeEmbattled Gods' and Indra's  
might,Unconquered ere to-day in fight.He rushed against thee, fought and  
fell,As Ocean, when his waters swell,Hurling his might against a  
rock,Falls spent and shattered by the shockWoe for our king's untimely  
end,The generous lord the trusty friend:Our sure defence when fear  
arose,A dreaded scourge to stubborn foes.O, let the king thy hand has  
slainThe honours of the dead obtain.'Then Ráma answered. 'Hatred dies  
When low in dust the foeman lies.Now triumph bids the conflict cease,And  
knits us in the bonds of peace.Let funeral rites be duly paid.And be it  
mine thy toil to aid.'

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CANTO CXII.: THE RÁKSHAS DAMES.

High rose the universal wail

That mourned the monarch's death, and, paleWith crushing woe, her hair  
unbound,Her eyes in floods of sorrow drowned,Forth from the inner  
chambers cameWith trembling feet each royal dame,Heedless of those who  
bade them stayThey reached the field where Rávan lay;

There falling by their husband's side,

'Ah, King! ah dearest lord!' they cried.Like creepers shattered by the  
stormThey threw them on his mangled form.One to his bleeding bosom  
creptAnd lifted up her voice and wept>About his feet one mourner  
clung.Around his neck another hung.One on the giant's severed head.Her  
pearly tears in torrents shedFast as the drops the summer showerPours  
down upon the lotus flower.'Ah, he whose arm in anger rearedThe King of  
Gods and Yama feared.While panic struck their heavenly train,Lies  
prostrate in the battle slain.

Thy haughty heart thou wouldst not bend,Nor listen to each wiser  
friend.Ah, had the dame, as they implored,Been yielded to her injured  
lord,We had not mourned this day thy fall,And happy had it been for  
all.Then Ráma and thy friends contentIn blissful peace their days had  
spent.Thine injured brother had not fled.Nor giant chiefs and Vánars  
bled.Yet for these woes we will not blame.Thy fancy for the Maithil

dame, Fate, ruthless Fate, whom none may bend  
Has urged thee to thy hapless end.'

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CANTO CXIII.: MANDODARÍ'S LAMENT.

While thus they wept, supreme in place,  
The loveliest for form and face. Mandodarí drew near alone, Looked on her  
lord and made her moan: 'Ah Monarch, Indra feared to stand In fight before  
thy conquering hand. From thy dread spear the Immortals ran; And art thou  
murdered by a man? Ah, 'twas no child of earth, I know, That smote thee with  
that mortal blow. 'Twas Death himself in Ráma's shape, That slew thee:  
Death whom none escape. Or was it he who rules the skies Who met thee,  
clothed in man's disguise? Ah no, my lord, not Indra: he In battle ne'er  
could look on thee. One only God thy match I deem: It was Vishnu's self,  
the Lord Supreme, Whose days through ceaseless time extend And ne'er began  
and ne'er shall end: He with the discus, shell, and mace. Brought ruin on  
the giant race. Girt by the Gods of heaven arrayed Like Vánar hosts his  
strength to aid, He Ráma's shape and arms assumed

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And slew the king whom Fate had doomed,  
In Janasthán when Khara died With giant legions by his side, No mortal was  
the unconquered foe In Ráma's form who struck the blow. When Hanumán the  
Vanár came And burnt thy town with hostile flame, I counselled peace in  
anxious fear: I counselled, but thou wouldst not hear. Thy fancy for the  
foreign dame Has brought thee death and endless shame. Why should thy  
foolish fancy roam? Hadst thou not wives as fair at home? In beauty, form  
and grace could she, Dear lord, surpass or rival me? Now will the days of  
Sítá glide In tranquil joy by Ráma's side: And I--ah me, around me raves A  
sea of woe with whelming waves. With thee in days of old I trod Each spot  
beloved by nymph and God; I stood with thee in proud delight On Mandar's  
side and Meru's height; With thee, my lord, enchanted strayed In  
Chaitraratha's

1 lovely shade, And viewed each fairest scene afar  
Transported in thy radiant car. But source of every joy wast thou, And all  
my bliss is ended now.

Then Ráma to Vibhíshan cried:

'Whate'er the ritual bids, provide. Obsequial honours duly pay, And these  
sad mourners grief allay. 'Vibhíshan answered, wise and true. For duty's  
changeless law he knew: 'Nay one who scorned all sacred vows And dared to  
touch another's spouse, Fell tyrant of the human race, With funeral rites I  
may not grace.'

Him Raghu's royal son, the best

Of those who love the law, addressed: 'False was the rover of the night, He  
loved the wrong and scorned the right. Yet for the fallen warrior plead The  
dauntless heart, the valorous deed. Let him who ne'er had brooked  
defeat, The chief whom Indra feared to meet, The ever-conquering lord,  
obtain The honours that should grace the slain. 'Vibhíshan bade his friends  
prepare The funeral rites with thoughtful care. Himself the royal palace  
sought Whence sacred fire was quickly brought,  
With sandal wood and precious scents And pearl and coral ornaments. Wise  
Bráhmans, while the tears that flowed Down their wan cheeks their sorrow  
sowed,

Upon a golden litter laid

The corpse in finest ropes arrayed. Thereon were flowers and pennons  
hung, And loud the monarch's praise was sung. Then was the golden litter  
raised, While holy fire in order blazed. And first in place Vibhíshan  
led The slow procession of the dead, Behind, their cheeks with tears  
bedewed, Came sad the widowed multitude. Where, raised as Bráhmans ordered,  
stood Piled sandal logs, and scented wood, The body of the king was set High  
on a deerskin coverlet. Then duly to the monarch's shade The offerings for

the dead they paid, And southward on the eastern side  
An altar formed and fire supplied. Then on the shoulder of the dead  
The oil and clotted milk were shed. All rites were done as rules ordain:  
The sacrificial goat was slain. Next on the corpse were perfumes thrown  
And many a flowery wreath was strown;

And with Vibhíshan's ready aid Rich vesture o'er the king was laid. Then  
while the tears their cheeks bedewed Parched grain upon the dead they  
strewed; Last, to the wood, as rules require, Vibhíshan set the kindling  
fire.

Then having bathed, as texts ordain,

To Lanká went the mourning train. Vibhíshan, when his task was done, Stood  
by the side of Raghu's son. And Ráma, freed from every foe, Unstrung at  
last his deadly bow, And laid the glittering shafts aside. And mail by  
Indra's love supplied.

Footnotes

495:1 The garden of Kuvera, the God of Riches.

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CANTO CXIV: VIBHÍSHAN

CONSECRATED.

Joy reigned in heaven where every eye

Had seen the Lord of Lanká die. In cars whose sheen surpassed the  
sun's Triumphant rode the radiant ones: And Rávan's death, by every  
tongue. And Ráma's glorious deeds were sung. They praised the Vánars true  
and brave, The counsel wise Sugríva gave. The deeds of Hanumán they  
told, The valiant chief supremely bold, The strong ally, the faithful  
friend. And Sitá's truth which naught could bend.

To Mátali, whom Indra sent,

His head the son of Raghu bent: And he with fiery steeds who clove The  
clouds again to Swarga drove.

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Round King Sugríva brave and true His arms in rapture Ráma threw, Looked on  
the host with joy and pride,

And thus to noble Lakshman cried:

'Now let king-making drops be shed,

Dear brother, on Vibhíshan's head For truth and friendship nobly shown, And  
make him lord of Rávan's throne. 'This longing of his heart he told: And  
Lakshman took an urn of gold And bade the wind-fleet Vánars bring Sea water  
for the giants' king. The brimming urn was swiftly brought: Then on a  
throne superbly wrought Vibhíshan sat, the giants' lord, And o'er his brows  
the drops were poured. As Raghu's son the rite beheld His loving heart with  
rapture swelled: But tenderer thoughts within him woke, And thus to Hanumán  
he spoke:

'Go to my queen: this message give:

Say Lakshman and Sugríva live. The death of Lanká's monarch tell, And bid  
her joy, for all is well.'

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CANTO CXV.: SITÁ'S JOY.

The Vánar chieftain bowed his head.

Within the walls of Lanká sped, Leave from the new-made king obtained, And  
Sitá's lovely garden gained. Beneath a tree the queen he found, Where  
Rákshas warders watched around. Her pallid cheek, her tangled hair, Her  
raiment showed her deep despair, Near and more near the envoy came And  
gently hailed the weeping dame. She started up in sweet surprise, And  
sudden joy illumed her eyes. For well the Vánar's voice she knew, And hope  
reviving sprang and grew.

'Fair Queen,' he said, 'our task is done:

The foe is slain and Lanká won. Triumphant mid triumphant friends Kind  
words of greeting Ráma sends. 'Blest for thy sake, O spouse most true, My

deadly foe I met and slew. Mine eyes are strangers yet to sleep: I built a bridge athwart the deep And crossed the sea to Lanká's shore To keep the mighty oath I swore.

Now, gentle love, thy cares dispel, And weep no more, for all is well. Fear not in Rávan's house to stay For good Vibhíshan now bears sway, For constant truth and friendship known.

Regard his palace as thine own.'

He greets thee thus thy heart to cheer, And urged by love will soon be here.'

Then flushed with joy the lady's cheek.

Her eyes o'erflowed, her voice was weak; But struggling with her sobs she broke Her silence thus, and faintly spoke: 'So fast the flood of rapture came, My trembling tongue no words could frame. Ne'er have I heard in days of bliss A tale that gave such joy as this. More precious far than gems and gold The message which thy lips have told.'

His reverent hands the Vánar raised

And thus the lady's answer praised: 'Sweet are the words, O Queen, which thou True to thy lord, hast spoken now, Better than gems and pearls of price, Yea, or the throne of Paradise. But, lady, ere I leave this place, Grant me, I pray, a single grace.

Permit me, and this vengeful hand Shall slay thy guards, this Rákshas band, Whose cruel insult threat and scorn Thy gentle soul too long has borne.'

Thus, stern of mood, Hanumán cried:

The Maithil lady thus replied: 'Nay, be not wroth with servants: they, When monarchs bid must needs obey. And, vassals of their lords, fulfil Each fancy of their sovereign will. To mine own sins the blame impute, For as we sow we reap the fruit. The tyrant's will these dames obeyed When their fierce threats my soul dismayed.'

She ceased: with admiration moved

The Vánar chief her words approved: 'Thy speech,' he cried, 'is worthy one Whom love has linked to Raghu's son. Now speak, O Queen, that I may know Thy pleasure, for to him I go.' The Vánar ceased: then Janak's child Made answer as she sweetly smiled: 'My first, my only wish can be, O chief, my loving lord to see.' Again the Vánar envoy spoke, And with his words new rapture woke: 'Queen, ere this sun shall cease to shine Thy Ráma's eyes shall look in thine. Again the lord of Raghu's race Shall turn to thee his moon-bright face. His faithful brother shall thou see And every friend who fought for thee, And greet once more thy king restored Like S'achí

1 to her heavenly lord.'

To Raghu's son his steps he bent And told the message that she sent.

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Footnotes

496:1 The consort of Indra.

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CANTO CXVI.: THE MEETING.

He looked upon that archer chief

Whose full eye mocked the lotus leaf, Arid thus the noble Vánar spake: 'Now meet the queen for whose dear sake Thy mighty task was first begun, And now the glorious fruit is won. Overwhelmed with woe thy lady lies, The hot tears streaming from her eyes. And still the queen must long and pine Until those eyes be turned to thine.'

But Ráma stood in pensive mood,

And gathering tears his eyes bedewed. His sad looks sought the ground: he sighed And thus to King Vibhíshan cried: 'Let Sítá bathe and tire her head And hither to my sight be led In raiment sweet with precious scent, And gay with golden ornament.'

The Rákshas king his palace sought,

And Sítá from her bower was brought. Then Rákshas bearers tall and strong,  
 Selected from the menial throng,  
 Through Lanká's gate the queen, arrayed in glorious robes and gems,  
 conveyed. Concealed behind the silken screen, Swift to the plain they bore  
 the queen, While Vánars, close on every side, With eager looks the litter  
 eyed. The warders at Vibhíshan's hest The onward rushing throng  
 repressed, While like the roar of ocean loud Rose the wild murmur of the  
 crowd. The son of Raghu saw and moved With anger thus the king  
 reproved: 'Why vex with hasty blow and threat The Vánars, and my rights  
 forget? Repress this zeal, untimely shown: I count this people as mine  
 own. A woman's guard is not her bower, The lofty wall, the fenced tower: Her  
 conduct is her best defence, And not a king's magnificence. At holy rites,  
 in war and woe, Her face unveiled a dame may show; When at the Maiden's  
 Choice

1 they meet,

When marriage troops parade the street. And she, my queen, who long has  
 lain

In prison racked with care and pain,

May cease a while her face to hide, For is not Ráma by her side?

Lay down the litter: on her feet Let Sítá come her lord to meet. And let  
 the hosts, of woodland race Look near upon the lady's face.'

Then Lakshman and each Vánar chief

Who heard his words were filled with grief. The lady's gentle spirit  
 sank, And from each eye in fear she shrank, As, her sweet eyelids veiled  
 for shame. Slowly before her lord she came. While rapture battled with  
 surprise She raised to his her wistful eyes. Then with her doubt and fear  
 she strove, And from her breast all sorrow drove. Regardless of the  
 gathering crowd, Bright as the moon without a cloud, She bent her eyes, no  
 longer dim, In joy and trusting love on him.

Footnotes

497:1 The Swayamvara, Self-choice or election of a husband by a princess or daughter of a Kshatriya at a public assembly of suitors held for the purpose. For a description of the ceremony see Nala and Damayantí an episode of the Mahábhárat translated by the late Dean Milman, and Idylls from the Sanskrit.

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CANTO CXVII.: SÍTÁ'S DISGRACE.

He saw her trembling by his side,

And looked upon her face and cried: 'Lady, at length my task is done, And  
 thou, the prize of war, art won, This arm my glory has retrieved, And all  
 that man might do achieved; The insulting foe in battle slain And cleared  
 mine honour from its stain. This day has made my name renowned And with  
 success my labour crowned. Lord of myself, the oath I swore Is binding on  
 my soul no more. If from my home my queen was reft, This arm has well  
 avenged the theft, And in the field has wiped away The blot that on mine  
 honour lay. The bridge that spans the foaming flood, The city red with  
 giants' blood; The hosts by King Sugriva led Who wisely counselled, fought  
 and bled; Vibhíshan's love, our guide and stay-- All these are crowned with  
 fruit to-day. But, lady, 'twas not love for thee That led mine army o'er the  
 sea. 'Twas not for thee our blood was shed,

Or Lanká filled with giant dead. No fond affection for my wife Inspired me  
 in the hour of strife. I battled to avenge the cause Of honour and insulted  
 laws. My love is fled, for on thy fame Lies the dark blot of sin and  
 shame; And thou art hateful as the light

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That flashes on the injured sight. The world is all before thee: flee: Go  
 where thou wilt, but not with me. How should my home receive again A  
 mistress soiled with deathless stain? How should I brook the foul

disgrace, Scorned by my friends and all my race? For Rávan bore thee  
through the sky, And fixed on thine his evil eye. About thy waist his arms  
he threw, Close to his breast his captive drew, And kept thee, vassal of  
his power, An inmate of his ladies' bower.'

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CANTO CXVIII.: SÍTÁ'S REPLY.

Struck down with overwhelming shame

She shrank within her trembling frame. Each word of Ráma's like a dart Had  
pierced the lady to the heart; And from her sweet eyes unrestrained The  
torrent of her sorrows, rained. Her weeping eyes at length she dried, And  
thus mid choking sobs replied: 'Canst thou, a high-born prince, dismiss A  
high-born dame with speech like this? Such words befit the meanest  
hind, Not princely birth and generous mind, By all my virtuous life I  
swear I am not what thy words declare. If some are faithless, wilt thou  
find No love and truth in womankind? Doubt others if thou wilt, but own The  
truth which all my life has shown. If, when the giant seized his  
prey, Within his hated arms I lay, And felt the grasp I dreaded, blame Fate  
and the robber, not thy dame. What could a helpless woman do? My heart was  
mine and still was true, Why when Hanúmán sent by thee

Sought Lanká's town across the sea, Couldst thou not give, O lord of  
men, Thy sentence of rejection then? Then in the presence of the  
chief Death, ready death, had brought relief, Nor had I nursed in woe and  
pain This lingering life, alas in vain. Then hadst thou shunned the  
fruitless strife Nor jeopardied thy noble life, But spared thy friends and  
bold allies Their vain and weary enterprise. Is all forgotten, all? my  
birth, Named Janak's child, from fostering earth? That day of triumph when  
a maid My trembling hand in thine I laid? My meek obedience to thy will, My  
faithful love through joy and ill,  
That never failed at duty's call--

O King, is all forgotten, all?'

To Lakshman then she turned and spoke

While sobs and sighs her utterance broke: 'Sumitrá's son, a pile  
prepare, 'My refuge in my dark despair. I will not live to bear this  
weight Of shame, forlorn and desolate. The kindled fire my woes shall  
end And be my best and surest friend.'

His mournful eyes the hero raised

And wistfully on Ráma gazed, In whose stern look no ruth was seen, No mercy  
for the weeping queen. No chieftain dared to meet those eyes, To pray, to  
question or advise.

The word was passed, the wood was piled

And fain to die stood Janak's child. She slowly paced around her lord. The  
Gods with reverent act adored, Then raising suppliant hands the dame Frayed  
humbly to the Lord of Flame; 'As this fond heart by virtue swayed From  
Raghu's son has never strayed, So, universal witness, Fire Protect my body  
on the pyre, As Raghu's son has idly laid This charge on Sítá, hear and  
aid.'

She ceased: and fearless to the last

Within the flame's wild fury passed. Then rose a piercing cry from  
all Dames, children, men, who saw her fall Adorned with gems and gay  
attire Beneath the fury of the fire.

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CANTO CXIX.: GLORY TO VISHNU.

The shrill cry pierced through Ráma's ears

And his sad eyes o'erflowed with tears, When lo, transported through the  
sky A glorious band of Gods was nigh. Ancestral shades,

1 by men revered,

In venerable state appeared. And he from whom all riches flow,

And Yama Lord who reigns below:King Indra, thousand-eyed, and heWho  
wields the sceptre of the sea.

3

The God who shows the blazoned, bull, 4

And Brahmá Lord most bountifulBy whose command the worlds were madeAll  
these on radiant cars conveyed,

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Brighter than sun-beams, sought the placeWhere stood the prince of  
Raghu's race,And from their glittering seats the bestOf blessed Gods the  
chief addressed:

'Couldst thou, the Lord of all, couldst thou,Creator of the worlds, allow  
Thy queen, thy spouse to brave the fireAnd give her body to the pyre?Dost  
thou not yet, supremely wise,Thy heavenly nature recognize?They ceased:  
and Ráma thus began:'I deem myself a mortal man.Of old Ikshváku's line, I  
springFrom Das'aratha Kosal's king.'He ceased: and Brahmá's self  
replied:'O cast the idle thought aside.Thou art the Lord Náráyan, thouThe  
God to whom all creatures bow.Thou art the saviour God who woreOf old the  
semblance of a boar;Thou he whose discus overthrowsAll present, past and  
future foes;Thou Brahmá, That whose days extendWithout beginning, growth  
or end;The God, who, bears the bow of horn,Whom four majestic arms  
adorn;Thou art the God who rules the senseAnd sways with gentle  
influence;Thou all-pervading Vishnu LordWho wears the ever-conquering  
sword;Thou art the Guide who leads aright,Thou Krishna of unequalled  
might.Thy hand, O Lord, the hills and plains,And earth with all her life  
sustains;Thou wilt appear in serpent form

When sinks the earth in fire and storm.Queen Sítá of the lovely browsIs  
Lakshmí thy celestial spouse.To free the worlds from Rávan thouWouldst  
take the form thou wearest now.Rejoice: the mighty task is done:Rejoice,  
thou great and glorious one.The tyrant, slain, thy labours end:Triumphant  
now to heaven ascend.High bliss awaits the devoteeWho clings in loving  
faith to thee,Who celebrates with solemn praiseThe Lord of ne'er  
beginning days.On earth below, in heaven aboveGreat joy shall crown his  
faith and love.And he who loves the tale divineWhich tells each glorious  
deed of thineThrough life's fair course shall never knowThe fierce  
assault of pain and woe.'

1

Footnotes

498:1 The Pitris or Manes, the spirits of the dead.

498:2 Kuvera, the God of Wealth.498:3 Varun, God of the sea.

498:4 Máhadeva or S'iva whose ensign is a bull.

499:1 The Address to Ráma, both text and commentary,  
will be found literally translated in the Additional

Notes. A paraphrase of a portion is all that I have attempted here.

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CANTO CXX.: SÍTÁ RESTORED.

Thus spoke the Self-existent Sire:

Then swiftly from the blazing pyreThe circling flames were backward  
rolled,And, raising in his gentle holdAlive unharmed the Maithil dame,The  
Lord of Fire embodied came.Fair as the morning was her sheen,And gold and  
gems adorned the queen.Her form in crimson robes arrayed,Her hair was  
bound in glossy braid.Her wreath was fresh and sweet of scent,Undimmed  
was every ornament.Then, standing close to Ráma'a side,The universal  
witness cried:'From every blot and blemish freeThy faithful queen returns  
to thee.In word or deed, in look or mindHer heart from thee has ne'er  
declined.By force the giant bore awayFrom thy lone cot his helpless  
prey;And in his bowers securely keptShe still has longed for thee and  
wept.With soft temptation, bribe and threat,He bade the dame her love  
forget:But nobly faithful to her lord,



Her soul the giant's suit abhorred. Receive, O King, thy queen again, Pure, ever pure from spot and stain.'

Still stood the king in thoughtful mood

And tears of joy his eyes bedewed. Then to the best of Gods the best Of warrior chiefs his mind expressed:

'Twas meet that mid the thousands here

The searching fire my queen should clear; For long within the giant's bower She dwelt the vassal of his power. For else had many a slanderous tongue Reproaches on mine honour flung, And scorned the king who, love-impelled, His consort from the proof withheld. No doubt had I, but surely knew That Janak's child was pure and true, That, come what might, in good and ill Her faithful heart was with me still. I knew that Rávan could not wrong My queen whom virtue made so strong. I knew his heart would sink and fail, Nor dare her honour to assail, As Ocean, when he raves and roars. Fears to o'erleap his bounding shores. Now to the worlds her truth is shown, And Sítá is again mine own.

Thus proved before unnumbered eyes, On her pure fame no shadow lies. As heroes to their glory cleave, Mine own dear spouse I ne'er will leave.'

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He ceased: and clasped in fond embrace On his dear breast she hid her face.

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CANTO CXXI.: DAS'ARATHA.

To him Mahes'var thus replied:

'O strong-armed hero, lotus-eyed, Thou, best of those who love the right, Hast nobly fought the wondrous fight. Dispelled by thee the doom that spread Through trembling earth and heaven is fled. The worlds exult in light and bliss, And praise thy name, O chief, for this. Now peace to Bharat's heart restore, And bid Kausalyá weep no more. Thy face let Queen Kaikeyí see, Let fond Sumitrá gaze on thee. The longing of thy friends relieve, The kingdom of thy sires receive. Let sons of gentle Sítá born Ikshváku's ancient line adorn. Then from all care and foemen freed Perform the offering of the steed. In pious gifts thy wealth expend, Then to the home of Gods ascend, Thy sire, this glorious king, behold. Among the blest in heaven enrolled. He comes from where the Immortals dwell: Salute him, for he loves thee well.' His mandate Raghu's sons obeyed,

And to their sire obeisance made, Where high he stood above the car In wondrous light that shone afar, His limbs in radiant garments dressed Whereon no spot of dust might rest. When on the son he loved so well The eyes of Das'aratha fell, He strained the hero to his breast And thus with gentle words addressed: 'No joy to me is heavenly bliss, For there these eyes my Ráma miss. Enrolled on high with saint and sage, Thy woes, dear son, my thoughts engage. Kaikeyí's guile I ne'er forget: Her cruel words will haunt me yet, Which sent thee forth, my son, to roam The forest far from me and home. Now when I look on each dear face, And hold you both in fond embrace, My heart is full of joy to see The sons I love from danger free. Now know I what the Gods designed, And how in Ráma's form enshrined The might of Purushottam lay, The tyrant of the worlds to slay. Ah, how Kausalyá will rejoice To hear again her darling's voice, And, all thy weary wanderings o'er,

To gaze upon thy face once more.

Ah blest, for ever blest are they Whose eyes shall see the glorious day Of thy return in joy at last, Thy term of toil and exile past. Ayodhyá's lord, begin thy reign, And day by day new glory gain,'

He ceased: and Ráma thus replied:

'Be not this grace, O sire, denied. Those hasty words, that curse revoke Which from thy lips in anger broke: 'Kaikeyí, be no longer mine: I cast thee off, both thee and thine.' O father, let no sorrow fall On her or

hers: thy curse recall.' 'Yea, she shall live, if so thou wilt,' The sire replied, 'absolved from guilt.' Round Lakshman then his arms he threw, And moved by love began anew: 'Great store of merit shall be thine, And brightly shall thy glory shine; Secure on earth thy brother's grace. And high in heaven shall be thy place. Thy glorious king obey and fear: To him the triple world is dear. God, saint, and sage, by Indra led, To Rāma bow the reverent head, Nor from the Lord, the lofty-souled, Their worship or their praise withhold. Heart of the Gods, supreme is he, The One who ne'er shall cease to be.'

On Sítá then he looked and smiled;

'List to my words' he said, 'dear child, Let not thy gentle breast retain One lingering trace of wrath or pain. When by the fire thy truth be proved, By love for thee his will was moved. The furious flame thy faith confessed Which shrank not from the awful test: And thou, in every heart enshrined, Shalt live the best of womankind.'

He ceased: he bade the three adieu,

And home to heaven exulting flew.

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CANTO CXXII.: INDRA'S BOON.

Then Indra, he whose fiery stroke

Slew furious Páka, turned and spoke: 'A glorious day, O chief, is this, Rich with the fruit of lasting bliss. Well pleased are we: we love thee well Now speak, thy secret wishes tell.'

Thus spake the sovereign of the sky,

And this was Rāma's glad reply: 'If I have won your grace, incline To grant this one request of mine. Restore, O King: the Vánar dead Whose blood for me was nobly shed.

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To life and strength my friends recall, And bring them back from Yama's hall. When, fresh in might the warriors rise, Prepare a feast to glad their eyes. Let fruits of every season glow, And streams of purest water flow.'

Thus Raghu's son, great-hearted, prayed, And Indra thus his answer made:

'High is the boon thou seekest: none Should win this grace but Raghu's son. Yet, faithful to the word I spake, I grant the prayer for thy dear sake. The Vánars whom the giants slew Their life and vigour shall

renew. Their strength repaired, their gashes healed Whose torrents dyed the battle field, The warrior hosts from death shall rise \*Like sleepers when their slumber flies.'

Restored from Yama's dark domain The Vánar legions filled the plain, And, round the royal chief arrayed, With wondering hearts obeisance paid. Each God the son of Raghu praised, And cried as loud his

voice he raised: 'Turn, King, to fair Ayodhyá speed, And leave thy friends of Vánar breed. Thy true devoted consort cheer After long days of woe and fear. Bharat, thy loyal brother, see, A hermit now for love of thee. The

tears of Queen Kaus'alyá dry, And light with joy each stepdame's eye; Then consecrated king of men Make glad each faithful citizen,' They ceased:

and borne on radiant cars Sought their bright home amid the stars. Next:

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CANTO CXXIII.: THE MAGIC CAR.

Then slept the tamer of his foes

And spent the night in calm repose. Vibhishan came when morning broke, And hailed the royal chief, and spoke: 'Here wait thee precious oil and

scents, And rich attire and ornaments. The brimming urns are newly filled, And women in their duty skilled, With lotus-eyes, thy call attend, Assistance at thy bath to lend.'

'Let others,' Rāma cried, 'desire These precious scents, this rich attire, I heed not such delights as these, For faithful Bharat, ill at ease, Watching for me is

keeping now Far far away his rigorous vow. By Bharat's side I long to stand, I long to see my fatherland.

Far is Ayodhvá: long, alas,

The dreary road and hard to pass.' 'One day,' Vibhíshan cried, 'one day Shall bear thee o'er that length of way. Is not the wondrous chariot mine, Named Pushpak, wrought by hands divine.

The prize which Rávan seized of old Victorious o'er the God of Gold This chariot, kept with utmost care, Will waft thee through the fields of air, And thou shalt light unwearied down In fair Ayodhyá's royal town. But yet if aught that I have done Has pleased thee well, O Raghu's son; If still thou carest for thy friend, Some little time in Lanká spend; There after toil of battle rest Within my halls an honoured guest. 'Again the son of Raghu spake: 'Thy life was perilled for my sake. Thy counsel gave me priceless aid: All honours have been richly paid. Scarce can my love refuse, O best Of giant kind, thy last request. But still I yearn once more to see My home and all most dear to me; Nor can I brook one hour's delay: Forgive me, speed me on my way.' He ceased: the magic car was brought, Of yore by Vis'vakarmá wrought. In sunlike sheen it flashed and blazed; And Raghu's sons in wonder gazed. Next: Canto CXXIV.: The Departure. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO CXXIV.: THE DEPARTURE.

The giant lord the chariot viewed,

And humbly thus his speech renewed: 'Behold, O King, the car prepared: Now be thy further will declared.' He ceased: and Ráma spake once more: 'These hosts who thronged to Lanká's shore Their faith and might have nobly shown, And set thee on the giants' throne. Let pearls and gems and gold repay The feats of many a desperate day, That all may go triumphant hence Proud of their noble recompense. 'Vibhíshan, ready at his call, With gold and gems enriched them all. Then Ráma clomb the glorious car That shone like day's resplendent star. There in his lap he held his dame Vailing her eyes in modest shame. Beside him Lakshman took his stand, Whose mighty bow still armed his hand, 'O King Vibhíshan,' Ráma cried, 'O Vánar chiefs, so long allied,

p. 502 My comrades till the foemen fell,

List, for I speak a long farewell. The task, in doubt and fear begun, With your good aid is nobly done. Leave Lanká's shore, your steps retrace, Brave warriors of the Vánar race Thou, King Sugríva, true, through all, To friendship's bond and duty's call, Seek far Kishkindha with thy train And o'er thy realm in glory reign. Farewell, Vibhíshan, Lanká's throne Won by our arms is now thine own, Thou, mighty lord, hast nought to dread From heavenly Gods by Indra led. My last farewell, O King, receive, For Lanká's isle this hour I leave.'

Loud rose their cry in answer: 'We,

O Raghu's son, would go with thee. With thee delighted would we stray Where sweet Ayodhyá's groves are gay, Then in the joyous synod view King-making balm thy brows bedew; Our homage to Kaus'alyá pay, And hasten on our homeward way.'

Their prayer the son of Raghu heard,

And spoke, his heart with rapture stirred: 'Sugríva, O my faithful friend, Vibhíshan and ye chiefs, ascend. A joy beyond all joys the best Will fill my overflowing breast, If girt by you, O noble band, I seek again my native land. 'With Vánar lords in danger tried Sugríva sprang to Ráma's side, And girt by chiefs of giant kind Vibhíshan's step was close behind. Swift through the air, as Ráma chose, The wondrous car from earth arose. And decked with swans and silver wings Bore through the clouds its freight of kings.

Next: Canto CXXV.: The Return. Sacred Texts Hinduism Index Previous Next

CANTO CXXV.: THE RETURN.

Then Ráma, speeding through the skies,

Bent on the earth his eager eyes: 'Look, Sítá, see, divinely planned  
And built by Vis'vakarmá's hand, Lanká the lovely city rest  
Enthroned on Mount Trikúta's crest  
Behold those fields, ensanguined yet, Where Vánar hosts and  
giants met. There, vainly screened by charm and spell, The robber Rávan  
fought and fell. There knelt Mandodari

1 and shed

Her tears in floods for Rávan dead. And every dame who loved him sent  
From her sad heart her wild lament.

There gleams the margin of the deep, Where, worn with toil, we sank to  
sleep. Look, love, the unconquered sea behold, King Varun's home ordained  
of old, Whose boundless waters roar and swell Rich with their store of  
pearl and shell. O see, the morning sun is bright On fair Hiranyanábha's  
1b height, Who rose from Ocean's sheltering breast

That Hanumán might stay and rest. There stretches, famed for evermore, The  
wondrous bridge from shore to shore. The worlds, to life's remotest  
day. Due reverence to the work shall pay, Which holier for the laps of  
time Shall give release from sin and crime. Now thither bend, dear love,  
thine eyes Where green with groves Kishkindhá lies, The seat of King  
Sugriva's reign, Where Báli by this hand was slain.

2b

There Ríshyamúka's hill behold Bright gleaming with embedded gold. There  
too my wandering foot I set, There King Sugriva first I met. And, where yon  
trees their branches wave, My promise of assistance gave. There, flushed  
with lilies, Pampá shines With banks which greenest foliage lines, Where  
melancholy steps I bent And mourned thee with a mad lament. There fierce  
Kabandha, spreading wide His giant arms, in battle died. Turn, Sítá, turn  
thine eyes and see In Janasthán that glorious tree: There Rávan, lord of  
giants slew Our friend Jatáyas brave and true, Thy champion in the hopless\*  
strife, Who gave for thee his noble life.

Now mark that glade amid the trees Where once we lived as devotees. See,  
see our leafy cot between Those waving boughs of densest green, Where Rávan  
seized his prize and stole My love the darling of my soul. O, look again:  
beneath thee gleams Godávári the best of streams, Whose lucid waters  
sweetly glide By lilies that adorn her side. There dwelt Agastya, holy  
sage, In plantain-sheltered hermitage. See S'arabhanga's humble shed  
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Which sovereign Indra visited. See where the gentle hermits dwell Neath  
Atri's rule who loved us well; Where once thine eyes were blest to see His  
sainted dame who talked with thee. Now rest thine eyes with new delight On  
Chitrakúta's woody height, See Jumna flashing in the sun Through groves of  
brilliant foliage run. Screened by the shade of spreading boughs There  
Bharadvája keeps his vows, There Gangá, river of the skies, Bolls the sweet  
wave that purifies,

There S'ringavera's towers ascend Where Guha reigns, mine ancient friend. I  
see, I see thy glittering spires, Ayodhyá, city of my sires. Bow down, bow  
down thy head, my sweet, Our home, our long-lost home to greet.'

Footnotes

502:1 Ravan's queen.

502:1b Or Maináka.

502:2b Here, in the North-west recension, Sítá  
expresses a wish that Tará and the wives of the Vánar  
chiefs should be invited to accompany her to Ajodhyá. The car descends,  
and the Vánar matrons are added to the party. The Bengal recension  
ignores this palpable interruption.

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CANTO CXXVI.: BHARAT CONSOLED.

But Ráma bade the chariot stay,

And halting in his airy way, In Bharadvá's holy shade His homage to the  
hermit paid. 'O saint,' he cried, 'I yearn to know My dear Ayodhyá's weal

and woe. O tell me that the people thrive, And that the queens are yet alive.' Joy gleamed in Bhardvāja's eye, Who gently smiled and made reply: 'Thy brother, studious of thy will, Is faithful and obedient still. In tangled twine he coils his hair: Thy safe return is all his care. Before thy shoes he humbly bends, And to thy house and realm attends. When first these dreary years began, When first I saw the banished man, With Sitá, in his hermit coat, At this sad heart compassion smote. My breast with tender pity swelled: I saw thee from thy home expelled, Reft of all princely state, forlorn, A hapless wanderer travel-worn, Firm in thy purpose to fulfil

Thy duty and thy father's will. But boundless is my rapture now: Triumphant, girt with friends, art thou. Where'er thy wandering steps have been, Thy joy and woe mine eyes have seen. Thy glorious deeds to me art known, The Bráhmans saved, the foes o'erthrown. Such power have countless seasons spent In penance and devotion lent. Thy virtues, best of chiefs, I know, And now a boon would fain bestow. This hospitable gift I receive:

Then with the dawn my dwelling leave. 'The bended head of Ráma showed His reverence for the grace bestowed; Then for each brave companion's sake He sought a further boon and spake: 'O let that mighty power of thine The road to fair Ayodhyá line With trees where fruit of every hue The Vánars' eye and taste may woo, And flowers of every season, sweet With stores of honeyed juice, may meet, 'The hero ceased: the hermit bent His reverend head in glad assent; And swift, as Bharadvāja willed, The prayer of Ráma was fulfilled. For many a league the lengthening road Trees thick with fruit and blossom showed

With luscious beauty to entice The taste like trees of Paradise. The Vánars passed beneath the shade Of that delightful colonnade, Still tasting with unbounded glee The treasures of each wondrous tree.

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CANTO CXXVII.: RÁMA'S MESSAGE.

But Ráma, when he first looked down

And saw afar Ayodhyá's town, Had called Hanumán to his side, The chief on whom his heart relied, And said: 'Brave Vánar, good at need, Haste onward, to Ayodhyá speed, And learn, I pray, if all be well With those who in the palace dwell. But an thou speedest on thy way Awhile at S'ringavera stay. Tell Guha the Nishádas' lord, That victor, with my queen restored, In health and strength with many a friend Homeward again my steps I bend Thence by the road that he will show On to Avodhyá swiftly go. There with my love my brother greet, And all our wondrous tale repeat. Say that victorious in the strife I come with Lakshman and my wife, Then mark with keenest eye each trace Of joy or grief on Bharat's face. Be all his gestures closely viewed, p. 504

Each change of look and attitude.

Where breathes the man who will not cling To all that glorifies a king? Where beats the heart that can resign An ancient kingdom, nor repine To lose a land renowned for breeds Of elephants and warrior steeds? If, won by custom day by day, My brother Bharat thirsts for sway, Still let him rule the nations, still The throne of old Ikshváku fill. Go, mark him well: his feelings learn, And, ere we yet be near return.' He ceased: and, garbed in human form, Forth sped Hanumán swift as storm. Sublime in air he rose, and through The region of his father flew. He saw far far beneath his feet Where Gangá's flood and Jumna meet. Descending from the upper air He entered S'ringavera, where King Guha's heart was well content To hear the message Ráma sent. Then, with his mighty strengtn renewed, The Vánar chief big way pursued, Válu kiní was far behind, And Gomatí with forests lined, And golden fields and pastures gay With flocks and herds beneath him lay. Then Nandigráma charmed his eye Where flowers were bright with every dye, And trees of lovely foliage

madeWith meeting boughs delightful shade,Where women watched in trim  
arrayTheir little sons' and grandsons' play.His eager eye on Bharat  
fellWho sat before his lonely cell.In hermit weed, with tangled  
hair,Pale, weak, and worn with ceaseless care.His royal pomp and state  
resignedFor Ráma still he watched and pined,Still to his dreary vows  
adhered,And royal Ráma's shoes revered.Yet still the terror of his  
armPreserved the land from fear and harm. The Wind-God's son, in form a  
man,Raised reverent hands and thus began:'Fond greeting, Prince, I bring  
to thee,And Ráma's self has sent it: heFor whom thy spirit sorrows yetAs  
for a hapless anchoretIn Dandak wood, in dire distress,With matted hair  
and hermit dress.This sorrow from thy bosom fling,And hear the tale of  
joy I bring.This day thy brother shalt thou meetExulting in his foe's  
defeat,

Freed from his toil and lengthened vow,The light of victory on his  
brow,With Sítá, Lakshman and his friendsHomeward at last his steps he  
bends.' Then joy, too mighty for control,Rushed in full flood o'er  
Bharat's soul;His reeling sense and strength gave way,And fainting on the  
earth he lay,At length upspringing from the ground,His arms about Hanumán  
wound,With tender tears of rapture sprung,He dewed the neck to which he  
clung:'Art thou a God or man,' he cried,'Whom love and pity hither  
guide?For this a hundred thousand kine,A hundred villages be thine.A  
score of maids of spotless livesTo thee I give to be thy wives,Of golden  
hue and bright of face,Each lovely for her tender grace.' He ceased a  
while by joy subdued,And then his eager speech renewed;

Footnotes

503:1 The arghya, a respectful offering to Gods and venerable men  
consisting of rice, dúivá grass, flowers  
etc, with water.

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CANTO CXXVIII.: HANUMÁN'S STORY.

'In doubt and fear long years have passed

And glorious tidings come at last.True, true is now the ancient  
verseWhich men in time of bliss rehearse:Once only in a hundred  
yearsGreat joy to mortal men appears.But now his woes and triumph  
tell,And loss and gain as each befell.'He ceased: Hanumán mighty-  
souledThe tale of Ráma's wanderings toldFrom that first day on which he  
stoodIn the drear shade of Dandak wood.He told how fierce Virádha fell;He  
told of S'arabhanga's cellWhere Ráma saw with wondering eyesIndra  
descended from the skies.He told how Súrpanukhi came,Her soul aglow with  
amorous flame,And fled repulsed, with rage and tears,Reft of her nose and  
severed ears.He told how Ráma's might subduedThe giants' furious  
multitude;How Khara with the troops he ledAnd Tris'iras and Dúshan  
bled:How Ráma, tempted from his cot,  
The golden deer pursued and shot,And Rávan came and stole awayThe Maithil  
queen his hapless prey,When, as he fought, the dame to save,His noble  
life Jatáyus gave:How Ráma still the the search renewed,The robber to his  
hold pursued,Bridging the sea from shore to shore,And found his queen to  
part no more.

1

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Footnotes

504:1 I have abridged Hanuman's outline of Ráma's  
adventures, with the details of which we are already  
sufficiently acquainted.

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CANTO CXXIX.: THE MEETING WITH

BHARAT.

O'erwhelmed with rapture Bharat heard

The tale that all his being stirred, And, heralding the glad event, This  
 order to Satrugna sent: 'Let every shrine with flowers be gay Let incense  
 burn and music play. Go forth, go forth to meet your king, Let tabours  
 sound and minstrels sing, Let bards swell high the note of praise Skilled  
 in the lore of ancient days. Call forth the royal matrons: call Each noble  
 from the council hall. Send all we love and honour most, Send Bráhmans and  
 the warrior host, A glorious company to bring In triumph home our lord the  
 king.' Great rapture filled S'atrughna's breast, Obedient to his  
 brother's hest. 'Send forth ten thousand men' he cried, 'Let brawny arms be  
 stoutly plied, And, smoothing all with skilful care, The road for Kosal's  
 king prepare. Then o'er the earth let thousands throw  
 Fresh showers of water cool as snow, And others strew with garlands  
 gay With loveliest blooms our monarch's way. On tower and temple porch and  
 gate Let banners wave in royal state. And be each roof and terrace  
 lined With blossoms loose and chaplets twined.' The nobles hasting forth  
 fulfilled His order as S'atrughna willed. Sublime on elephants they  
 rode Whose gilded girths with jewels glowed. Attended close by thousands  
 more Gay with the gear and flags they bore. A thousand chiefs their steeds  
 bestrode, Their glittering cars a thousand showed. And countless hosts in  
 rich array Pursued on foot their eager way. Veiled from the air with silken  
 screens In litters rode the widowed queens. Kausalyá first, acknowledged  
 head And sovereign of the household, led: Sumitrá next, and after, dames Of  
 lower rank and humbler names. Then compassed by a white-robed throng Of  
 Bráhmans, heralded with song, With shouts of joy from countless  
 throats, And shells' and tambours' mingled notes, And drums resounding long  
 and loud, Exulting Bharat joined the crowd.  
 Still on his head, well-trained in lore Of duty, Ráma's shoes he bore. The  
 moon-white canopy was spread With flowery twine engarlanded  
 And jewelled chouries, meet to hold  
 O'er Ráma's brow, shone bright with gold, Though Nandigráma's town they  
 neared, Of Ráma yet no sign appeared. Then Bharat called the Vánar chief And  
 questioned thus in doubt and grief: 'Hast thou uncertain, like thy kind, A  
 sweet delusive guile designed? Where, where is royal Ráma? show The hero,  
 victor of the foe. I gaze, but see no Vánars still Who wear each varied  
 shape at will.' In eager love thus Bharat cried, And thus the Wind-God's  
 son replied: 'Look, Bharat, on those laden trees That murmur with the song  
 of bees; For Ráma's sake the saint has made Untimely fruits, unwonted  
 shade. Such power in ages long ago Could Indra's gracious boon bestow. O,  
 hear the Vánars' voices, hear The shouting which proclaims them near E'en  
 now about to cross they seem Sweet Gomati's delightful stream.  
 I see, I see the car designed By Brahmá's own creative mind, The car which,  
 radiant as the moon, Moves at the will by Brahmá's boon; The car which once  
 was Rávan's pride, The victor's spoil when Rávan died. Look, there are  
 Raghu's sons: between The brothers stands the rescued queen. There is  
 Vibhishan full in view, Sugriva and his retinue.' He ceased: then  
 rapture loosed each tongue: From men and dames, from old and young, One  
 long, one universal cry, 'Tis he, 'tis Ráma, smote the sky. All lighted down  
 with eager speed From elephant and car and steed, And every joyful eye  
 intent On Ráma's moonbright face was bent. Entranced a moment Bharat  
 gazed: Then reverential hands he raised, And on his brother humbly  
 pressed The honours due to welcome guest. Then Bharat clomb the car to  
 greet His king and bowed him at his feet, Till Ráma raised him face to  
 face And held him in a close embrace. Then Lakshman and the Maithil dame He  
 greeted as he spoke his name  
 1 He greeted next, supreme in place,  
 The sovereign of the Vánar race, And Jámaván and Báli's son,  
 p. 506  
 And lords and chiefs, omitting none. 1  
 Sugriva to his heart he pressed And thus with grateful words  
 addressed: 'Four brothers, Vánar king, were we, And now we boast a fifth in

thee. By kindly acts a friend we know: Offence and wrong proclaim the  
foe, 'To King Vibhishan then he spake: 'Well hast thou fought for Rāma's  
sake.' Nor was the brave S'atrughna slow His reverential love to show To  
both his brothers, as was meet, And venerate the lady's feet. Then Rāma to  
his mother came, Saw her pale cheek and wasted frame, With gentle words her  
heart consoled, And clasped her feet with loving hold. Then at Sumitra's  
feet he bent, And fair Kaikeyi's, reverent, Greeted each dame from chief to  
least, And bowed him to the household priest. Up rose a shout from all the  
throng: 'O welcome, Rāma, mourned so long. Welcome, Kausalyā's joy and  
pride, '

Ten hundred thousand voices cried. Then Bharat placed, in duty taught, On  
Rāma's feet the shoes he brought: 'My King, ' he cried, 'receive again The  
pledge preserved through years of pain, The rule and lordship of the  
land Entrusted to my weaker hand. No more I sigh o'er sorrows past, My birth  
and life are blest at last In the glad sight this day has shown, When Rāma  
comes to rule his own.' He ceased: the faithful love that moved The  
prince's soul each heart approved; Nor could the Vānar chiefs refrain From  
tender tears that fell like rain. Then Rāma, stirred with joy anew, His  
arms about his brother threw, And to the grove his course he bent Where  
Bharat's hermit days were spent. Alighting in that pure retreat He pressed  
the earth with eager feet. Then, at his hest, the car rose high And sailing  
through the northern sky Sped homeward to the Lord of Gold Who owned the  
wondrous prize of old.

## Footnotes

505:1 In these respectful salutations the person who  
salutes his superior mentions his own name even when  
it is well known to the person whom he salutes.

506:1 I have omitted the chieftains' names as they could  
not be introduced without padding. They are Mainda,  
Dwivid, Nīla Rishabh, Sushen, Nala, Gavāksha, Gandhamādan, S'arabh, and  
Panas.

506:2 The following addition is found in the Bengal  
recension: But Vais'ravan (Kuvera) when he beheld his  
chariot said unto it: 'Go, and carry Rāma, and come unto me when my  
thought shall call thee, And the chariot returned unto Rāma:' and he  
honoured it when he had heard what had passed.

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## CANTO CXXX.: THE CONSECRATION.

Then, reverent hand to hand applied,  
Thus Bharat to his brother cried: 'Thy realm, O King, is now  
restored, Uninjured to the rightful lord. This feeble arm with toil and  
pain, The weighty charge could scarce sustain. And the great burthen  
wellnigh broke The neck untrained to bear the yoke. The royal swan  
outspeeds the crow: The steed is swift, the mule is slow, Nor can my feeble  
feet be led O'er the rough ways where thine should tread. Now grant what  
all thy subjects ask: Begin, O King, thy royal task. Now let our longing  
eyes behold The glorious rite ordained of old, And on the new-found  
monarch's head Let consecrating drops be shed.' He ceased: victorious  
Rāma bent His head in token of assent. He sat, and tongs trimmed with  
care His tangles of neglected hair Then, duly bathed, the hero shone With  
all his splendid raiment on. And Sitā with the matrons' aid  
Her limbs in shining robes arrayed, Sumantra then, the charioteer, Drew,  
ordered by S'atrughnu near, And stayed within the hermit grove The chariot  
and the steeds he drove. Therein Sugrīva's consorts, graced With gems, and  
Rāma's queen were placed, All fain Ayodhyā to behold: And swift away the  
chariot rolled. Like Indra Lord of Thousand Eyes, Drawn by fleet lions  
through the skies, Thus radiant in his glory showed King Rāma as he  
homeward rode, In power and might unparalleled. The reins the hand of  
Bharat held. Above the peerless victor's head The snow-white shade



S'atrughna spread, And Lakshman's ever-ready hand  
His forehead with a chourie fanned. Vibhishan close to Lakshman's side  
Sharing his task a chourie plied. Sugriva on S'atrurjay came, An elephant of hugest frame:  
Nine thousand others bore, behind, The chieftains of the Vánar kind  
All gay, in forms of human mould, With rich attire and gems and gold. p. 507

Thus borne along in royal state

King Rama reached Ayodhya's gate With merry noise of shells and drums  
And joyful shouts, He comes, he comes, A Brahman host with solemn tread,  
And kine the long procession led, And happy maids in ordered bands  
Threw grain and gold with liberal hands. Neath gorgeous flags that waved in rows  
On towers and roofs and porticoes. Mid merry crowds who sang and cheered  
The palace of the king they neared. Then Raghu's son to Bharat, best of duty's  
slaves, these words addressed: 'Pass onward to the monarch's hall. The  
high-souled Vánars with thee call, And let the chieftains, as is meet, The  
widows of our father greet. And to the Vánar king assign Those chambers,  
best of all, which shine With lazulite and pearl inlaid, And pleasant  
grounds with flowers and shade, 'He ceased: and Bharat bent his  
head; Sugriva by the hand he led And passed within the palace where  
stood couches which S'atrughna's care, With robes and hangings richly dyed, And  
burning lamps, had seen supplied.

Then Bharat spake: 'I pray thee, friend, Thy speedy messengers to  
send, Each sacred requisite to bring That we may consecrate our  
king.' Sugriva raised four urns of gold, The water for the rite to hold, And  
bade four swiftest Vánars flee And fill them from each distant sea. Then  
east and west and south and north The Vánar envoys hastened forth. Each in  
swift flight an ocean sought And back through air his treasure brought, And  
full five hundred floods beside Pure water for the king supplied. Then girt  
by many a Bráhmaṇ sage, Vasishtha, chief for reverend age, High in a throne  
with jewels graced King Ráma and his Sitá placed. There by Jábáli, far  
revered, Vijay and Kasyap's son appeared; By Gautam's side Kátváyana  
stood, And Vámadeva wise and good, Whose holy hands in order shed The pure  
sweet drops on Ráma's head. Then priests and maids and warriors,  
all Approaching at Vasishtha's call, With sacred drops bedewed their  
king, The centre of a joyous ring, The guardians of the worlds, on high,  
And all the children of the sky From herbs wherewith their hands were  
filled Bare juices on his brow distilled. His brows were bound with  
glistering gold Which Manu's self had worn of old, Bright with the flash of  
many a gem. His sire's ancestral diadem. Satrughna lent his willing aid And  
o'er him held the regal shade: The monarchs whom his arm had saved The  
chouries round his forehead waved. A golden chain, that flashed and  
glowed With gems the God of Wind bestowed: Mahendra gave a glorious  
string Of fairest pearls to deck the king, The skies with acclamation  
rang, The gay nymphs danced, the minstrels sang. On that blest day the  
joyful plain Was clothed anew with golden grain. The trees the watching  
influence knew, And bent with fruits of loveliest hue, And Rama's  
consecration lent New sweetness to each flowret's scent. The monarch, joy  
of Raghu's line, Gave largess to the Bráhmans, kine And steeds unnumbered,  
wealth untold Of robes and pearls and gems and gold. A jewelled chain,  
whose lustre passed The glory of the sun, he cast  
About his friend Sugriva's neck; And, Angad Báli's son to deck, He gave a  
pair of armlets bright With diamond and lazulite. A string of pearls of  
matchless hue Which gleams like tender moonlight threw Adorned with gems of  
brightest sheen, He gave to grace his darling queen. The offering from his  
hand received A moment on her bosom heaved; Then from her neck the chain  
she drew, A glance on all the Vánars threw, And wistful eyes on Ráma bent  
As still she held the ornament. Her wish he knew, and made reply To that mute  
question of her eye: 'Yea. love; the chain on him bestow Whose wisdom truth  
and might we know, The firm ally, the faithful friend Through toil and  
peril to the end, Then on Hanúmán's bosom hung The chain which Sitá's  
hand had flung: So may a cloud, when winds are still With moon-lit silver

gird a hill. To every Vánar Ráma gave Rich treasures from the mine and wave. And with their honours well content Homeward their steps the chieftains bent. Ten thousand years Ayodhyá, blest With Ráma's rule, had peace and rest. No widow mourned her murdered mate, No house was ever desolate. The happy land no murrain knew, The flocks and herds increased and grew.

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The earth her kindly fruits supplied, No harvest failed, no children died. Unknown were want, disease, and crime: So calm, so happy was the time.

1

Footnotes

508:1 Here follows in the original an enumeration of the chief blessings which will attend the man or woman who reads or hears read this tale of Ráma. These blessings are briefly mentioned at the end of the first Canto of the first book, and it appears unnecessary to repeat them here in their amplified form. The Bengal recension (Gorresio's edition) gives them more concisely as follows: 'This is the great first poem blessed and glorious, which gives long life to men and victory to kings, the poem which Válmíki made. He who listens to this wondrous tale of Ráma unwearied in action shall be absolved from all his sins. By listening to the deeds of Ráma he who wishes for sons shall obtain, his heart's desire, and to him who longs for riches shall riches be given. The virgin who asks for a husband shall obtain a husband suited to her mind, and shall meet again her dear kinsfolk who are far away. They who hear this poem which Válmíki made shall obtain all their desires and all their prayers shall be fulfilled.'

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RAVAN DOOMED.

SECTION XIII. Afterwards Rishya-shringa said again to the King "I will perform another sacrificial act to secure thee a son." Then the son of Vibhanduka, of subdued passions, seeking the happiness of the king, proceeded to perform the sacrifice for the accomplishment of his wishes. Hither were previously collected the gods, with the Gandharvas, the Siddhas and the sages, for the sake of receiving their respective shares, Brahma too, the sovereign of the gods, with Sthanoo, and Narayana, chief of beings and the four supporters of the universe, and the divine mothers of all the celestials, met together there. To the Ushwa-medha, the great sacrifice of the magnanimous monarch, came also Indra the glorious one, surrounded by the Muroots. Rishya-shringi then supplicated the gods assembled for their share of the sacrifice (saying), "This devout king Dusha-rutha, who, through the desire of offspring, confiding in you, has performed sacred austerities, and who has offered to you the sacrifice called Ushwa-medha, is about to perform, another sacrifice for the sake of obtaining sons. To him thus desirous of offspring be pleased to grant the blessing: I supplicate you all with joined hands. May he have four sons, renowned through the universe." The gods replied to the sage's son supplicating with joined hands, "Be it so: thou, O brahman, art ever to be regarded by us, as the king is in a peculiar manner. The lord of men by this sacrifice shall obtain the great object of his desires. Having thus said, the gods preceded by Indra, disappeared. They all then having seen that (sacrifice) performed by the great sage according to the ordinance went to Prajapati the lord of mankind, and with joined hands addressed Bráhma the giver of blessings, "O Brháma, the Rakshas Ravana by name, to whom a blessing was awarded by thee, through pride troubleth all of us the gods, and even the great sages, who perpetually practise sacred austerities. We, O glorious one, regarding the promise formerly granted by thy kindness that he should be

invulnerable to the gods, the Danuvas and the Yukshas have born (sic) all, (his oppression); this lord of Rakshases therefore distresses the universe; and, inflated by this promise unjustly vexes the divine sages, the Yukshas, and Gandhavras, the Usooras, and men: where Ravana remains there the sun loses his force, the winds through fear of him do not blow, the fire ceases to burn; the rolling ocean, seeing him, ceases to move its waves. Vishruvna, distressed by his power, has abandoned Lanka and fled. O divine one save us from Ravana, who fills the world with noise and tumult. O

giver of desired things, be pleased to contrive a way for his destruction."

Bruhma thus informed by the devas, reflecting, replied, Oh! I have devised the method for slaying this outrageous tyrant. Upon his requesting, "May I be invulnerable to the divine sages, the Gandharvas, the Yakshas, the Rakshasas

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and the serpents," I replied "Be it so." This Rakshus, through contempt, said nothing respecting man; therefore this wicked one shall be destroyed by man. The gods, preceded by Shukra, hearing these words spoken by Bruhmá, were filled with joy.

At this time Vishnool the glorious, the lord of the world, arrayed in yellow, with hand ornaments of glowing gold, riding on Vinuteya, as the sun on a cloud, arrived with his conch, his discus, and his club in his hand. Being adored by the excellent celestials, and welcomed by Bruhma, he drew near and stood before him. All the gods then addressed Vishnool, "O Mudhool-sooduna, thou art able to abolish the distress of the distressed. We intreat thee, be our sanctuary, O Uchyoota." Vishnool replied, "Say, what shall I do?" The celestials hearing these his words added further. "The virtuous, the encourager of excellence, eminent for truth, the firm observer of his vows, being childless, is performing an Ushwamedha for the purpose of obtaining offspring. For the sake of the good of the universe, we intreat thee, O Vishnool, to become his son. Dividing thyself into four parts, in the wombs of his three consorts equal to Huri, Shree, and Keertee, assume the sonship of king Dusha-rutha, the lord of Uyodhya, eminent in the knowledge of duty, generous and illustrious, as the great sages. Thus becoming man, O Vishnool, conquer in battle Ravuna, the terror of the universe, who is invulnerable to the gods. This ignorant Rakshus Ravuna, by the exertion of his power, afflicts the gods, the Gundhurvas, the Siddhas, and the most excellent sages; these sages, the Gundhurvas, and the Upsaras, sporting in the forest Nunduna have been destroyed by that furious one. We, with the sages, are come to thee seeking his destruction. The Siddhas, the Gundhurvas, and the Yakshas betake themselves to thee, thou art our only refuge; O Deva, afflicter of enemies, regard the world of men, and destroy the enemy of the gods." Vishnool, the sovereign of the gods, the chief of the celestials, adored by all beings, being thus supplicated, replied to all the assembled gods (standing) before Bruhma, "Abandon fear; peace be with you; for your benefit having killed Ravuna the cruel, destructively active, the cause of fear to the divine sages, together with all his posterity, his courtiers and counsellors, and his relations, and friends, protecting the earth, I will

remain incarnate among men for the space of eleven thousand years."

Having given this promise to the gods, the divine

Vishnool, ardent in the work, sought a birth-place among men. Dividing himself into four parts, he whose eyes resemble the lotos and the pulasa, the lotos petal-eyed, chose for his father Dusha-ratha the sovereign of men. The divine sages then with the Gundhurvas, the Roodras, and the (different sorts of) Upsaras, in the most excellent strains, praised the destroyer of Mudhool, (saying) "Root up Ravuna, of fervid energy, the

devastator, the enemy of Indra swollen with pride. Destroy him, who causes universal lamentation, the annoyer of the holy ascetics, terrible, the terror of the devout Tupuswees. Having destroyed Ravuna, tremendously powerful, who causes universal weeping, together with his army and friends, dismissing all sorrow, return to heaven, the place free from stain and sin, and protected by the sovereign of the celestial powers." Thus far the Section, containing the plan for the death of Ravuna.

#### CAREY AND

MARSHMAN. The Rámáyan ends, epically complete, with the triumphant return of Ráma and his rescued queen to Ayodhyá and his consecration and coronation in the capital of his forefathers. Even if the story were not complete, the conclusion of the last Canto of the sixth Book, evidently the work of a later hand than Válmiki's, which speaks of Ráma's glorious and happy reign and promises blessings to those who read and hear the Rámáyan, would be sufficient to show that, when these verses were added, the poem was considered to be finished. The Uttarakánda or Last Book is merely an appendix or a supplement and relates only events antecedent and subsequent to those described in the original poem. Indian scholars however, led by reverential love of tradition, unanimously ascribe this Last Book to Válmiki, and regard it as part of the Rámáyan.

Signor Gorresio has published an excellent translation of the Uttarakánda, in Italian prose, from the recension current in Bengal;

1 and Mr. Muir has epitomized a portion of the book in the Appendix to the Fourth Part of his Sanskrit Texts (1862). From these scholars I borrow freely in the following pages, and give them my hearty thanks for saving me much wearisome labour. p. 517

"After Ráma had returned to Ayodhyá and taken possession of the throne, the rishis [saints] assembled to greet him, and Ágastya, in answer to his questions recounted many particulars regarding his old enemies. In the Krita Yuga (or Golden Age) the austere and pious Brahman rishi Pulastya, a son of Brahmá, being teased with the visits of different damsels, proclaimed that any one of them whom he again saw near his hermitage should become pregnant. This had not been heard by the daughter of the royal rishi Trinavindu, who one day came into Pulastya's neighbourhood, and her pregnancy was the result (Sect. 2, vv. 14 ff.). After her return home, her father, seeing her condition, took her to Pulastya, who accepted her as his wife, and she bore a son who received the name of Vis'ravas. This son was, like his father, an austere and religious sage. He married the daughter of the muni Bharadvája, who bore him a son to whom Brahmá gave the name of Vais'ravan--Kuvera (Sect. 3, vv. 1 ff.). He performed austerities for thousands of years, when he obtained from Brahmá as a boon that he should be one of the guardians of the world (along with Indra, Varuna, and Yáma) and the god of riches. He afterwards consulted his father Vis'ravas about an abode, and at his suggestion took possession of the city of Lanká, which had formerly been built by Vis'vakarma for the Ráxasas, but had been abandoned by them through fear of Vishnu, and was at that time unoccupied. Ráma then (Sect. 4) says he is surprised to hear that Lanká had formerly belonged to the Ráxasas, as he had always understood that they were the descendants of Pulastya, and now he learns that they had also another origin. He therefore asks who was their ancestor, and what fault they had committed that they were chased away by Vishnu. Ágastya replies that when Brahmá created the waters, he formed certain beings,--some of whom received the name of Ráxasas,--to guard them. The first Ráxasa kings were Heti and Praheti. Heti married a sister of Kála (Time). She bore him a son Vidyutkes'a, who in his turn took for his wife

Lankatankatá, the daughter of Sandhyá (V. 21). She bore him a son Sukes'a, whom she abandoned, but he was seen by S'iva as he was passing by with his wife Párvatí, who made the child as old as his mother, and immortal, and gave him a celestial city. Sukes'a married a Gandharví called Devavatí who bore three sons, Mályavat, Sumáli and Máli. These sons practised intense austerities, when Brahmá appeared and conferred on them invincibility and long life. They then harassed the gods. Vis'vakarman gave them a city, Lanká, on the mountain Trikúta, on the shore of

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the southern ocean, which he had built at the command of Indra....The three Ráxasas, Mályavat and his two brothers, then began to oppress the gods, rishis, etc.; who (Sect. 6, v.1 ff.) in consequence resort for aid to Mahádeva, who having regard to his protégé Sukes'a the father of Mályavat, says that he cannot kill the Ráxasas. but advises the suppliants [\*supplicants?}] to go to

Vishnu, which they do, and receive from him a promise that he will destroy their enemies. The three Ráxasa kings, hearing of this, consult together, and proceed to heaven to attack the gods. Vishnu prepares to meet them. The battle is described in the seventh section. The Ráxasas are defeated by Vishnu with great slaughter, and driven back to Lanká, one of their leaders, Máli, being slain. Mályavat remonstrates with Vishnu, who was assaulting the rear of the fugitives, for his unwarrior-like conduct, and wishes to renew the combat (Sect. 8, v. 3 ff.). Vishnu replies that he must fulfil his promise to the gods by slaying the Ráxasas, and that he would destroy them even if they fled to Pátála.

These Ráxasas, Agastya says, were more powerful than Rávana, and, could only be destroyed by Náráyana, i.e. by Ráma himself, the eternal, indestructible god. Sumáli with his family lived for along time in Pátála, while Kuvera dwelt in Lanká. In section 9 it is related that Sumáli once happened to visit the earth, when he observed Kuvera going in his chariot to see his father Vis'ravas. This leads him to consider how he might restore his own fortunes. He consequently desires his daughter Kaikasí to go and woo Vis'ravas, who receives her graciously. She becomes the mother of the dreadful Rávana, of the huge Kumbhakarna, of Súrpanakhá, and of the righteous Vibhíshana, who was the last son. These children grow up in the forest. Kumbhakarna goes about eating rishis. Kuvera comes to visit his father, when Kaikasí takes occasion to urge her son

Rávana to strive to become like his brother (Kuvera) in splendour. This Rávana promises to do. He then goes to the hermitage of Gokarna with his brothers to perform austerity. In section 10 their austere observances are described: after a thousand years' penance Rávana throws his head into the fire. He repeats this oblation nine times after equal intervals, and is about to do it the tenth time, when Brahmá appears, and offers a boon. Rávana asks immortality, but is refused. He then asks that he may be indestructible by all creatures more powerful than men; which boon is accorded by Brahmá together with the recovery of all the heads he had sacrificed and the power of assuming any shape he pleased. Vibhíshana asks as his boon that "even amid the greatest calamities he may think only of righteousness, and that the weapon of Brahmá may appear to him unlearned, etc. The god grants his request, and adds the gift of immortality. When Brahmá is about to offer a boon to Kumbhakarna, the gods interpose, as, they say, he had eaten seven Apsarases and ten followers of Indra, besides rishis and men; and beg that under the guise of a boon stupefaction may be inflicted on him. Brahmá thinks on Sarasvatí, who arrives and, by Brahmá's command, enters into Kumbhakarna's mouth that she may speak for him. Under this influence he asks that he may receive the boon of sleeping for many years, which is

granted. When however Sarasvatí has left him, and he recovers his own consciousness, he perceives that he has been deluded. Kuvera by his father's advice, gives up the city of Lanká to Rávana." 1  
Rávana marries (Sect. 12,) Mandodarí the beautiful daughter of the Asur Maya whose

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name has several times occurred in the Rámáyan as that of an artist of wonderful skill. She bears a son Meghanáda or the Roaring Cloud who was afterwards named Indrajit from his victory over the sovereign of the skies. The conquest of Kuvera, and the acquisition of the magic self-moving chariot which has done much service in the Rámáyan, form the subject of sections XIII., XIV. and XV. "The rather pretty story of Vedavatí is related in the seventeenth section, as follows: Rávana in the course of his progress through the world, comes to the forest on the Himálaya, where he sees a damsel of brilliant beauty, but in ascetic garb, of whom he straightway becomes enamoured. He tells her that such an austere life is unsuited to her youth and attractions, and asks who she is and why she is leading an ascetic existence. She answers that she is called Vedavatí, and is the vocal daughter of Vrihaspati's son, the rishi Kus'adhvaja, sprung from him during his constant study of the Veda. The gods, gandharvas, etc., she says, wished that she should choose a husband, but her father would give her to no one else than to Vishnu, the lord of the world, whom he desired for his son-in-law. Vedavati then proceeds: "In order that I may fulfil

this desire of my father in respect of Náráyana, I wed him with my heart. Having entered into this engagement I practise great austerity. Náráyana and no other than he, Purushottama, is my husband. From the desire of obtaining him, I resort to this severe observance. Rávana's passion is not in the least diminished by this explanation and he urges that it is the old alone who should seek to become distinguished by accumulating merit through austerity, prays that she who is so young and beautiful shall become his bride; and boasts that he is superior to Vishnu. She rejoins that no one but he would thus contemn that deity. On receiving this reply he touches the hair of her head with the tip of his finger. She is greatly incensed, and forthwith cuts off her hair and tells him that as he has so insulted her, she cannot continue to live, but will enter into the fire before his eyes. She goes on "Since I have been insulted in the forest by thee who art wicked-hearted, I shall be born again for thy destruction. For a man of evil desire cannot be slain by a woman; and the merit of my austerity would be lost if I were to launch a curse against thee. But if I have performed or bestowed or sacrificed aught may I be born the virtuous daughter, not produced from the womb, of a righteous man." Having thus spoken she entered, the blazing fire. Then a shower of celestial flowers fell (from every part of the sky). It is she, lord, who, having been Vedavatí in the Krita age, has been born (in the Treta age) as the daughter of the king of the Janakas, and (has become)

thy [Ráma's] bride; for thou art the eternal Vishnu. The mountain-like enemy who was [virtually] destroyed before by her wrath, has now been slain by her having recourse to thy superhuman energy." On this the commentator remarks: "By this it is signified that Sítá was the principal cause of Rávana's death; but the function of destroying him is ascribed to Ráma." On the words, "thou art Vishnu," in the preceding verse the same commentator remarks: "By this it is clearly affirmed that Sítá was Laxmí. This is what Parás'ara says: "In the god's life as Ráma, she became Sítá, and in his birth as Krishna [she became] Rukminí."

1

In the following section (XVIII.) "Rávana is described as violently interrupting a sacrifice which is being performed by king Marutta, and the assembled

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gods in terror assume different shapes to escape; Indra becomes a peacock, Yama a crow, Kuvera a lizard, and Varuna a swan; and each deity bestows a boon on the animal he had chosen. The peacock's tail recalls Indra's thousand eyes; the swan's colour becomes white, like the foam of the ocean (Varuna being its lord); the lizard obtains a golden colour; and the crow is never to die except when killed by a violent death, and the dead are to enjoy the funeral oblations when they have been devoured by the crows." 1

Rávan then attacks Arjuna or Kárttavírya the mighty king of Máhishmati on the banks of the Narmadá, and is defeated, captured and imprisoned by Arjuna. At the intercession of Pulastya (Sect. XXII.) he is released from his bonds. He then visits Kishkindhá where he enters into alliance with Báli the King of the Vánars: "We will have all things in common," says Rávan, "dames, sons, cities and kingdoms, food, vesture, and all delights." His next exploit is the invasion of the kingdom of departed spirits and his terrific battle with the sovereign Yama. The poet in his description of these regions with the detested river with waves of blood, the dire lamentations, the cries for a drop of water, the devouring worm, all the tortures of the guilty and the somewhat insipid pleasures of the just, reminds one of the scenes in the under world so vividly described by Homer, Virgil, and Dante. Yama is defeated (Sect. XXVI.) by the giant, not so much by his superior power as because at the request of Brahmá Yama refrains from smiting with his deadly weapon the Rákshas enemy to whom that God had once given the promise that preserved him. In the twenty-seventh section Rávan goes "under the earth into Pátála the treasure-house of the waters inhabited by swarms of serpents and Daityas, and well defended by Varun." He subdues Bhogavati the city ruled by Vásuki and reduces the Nágas or serpents to subjection. He penetrates even to the imperial seat of Varun. The God himself is absent, but

his sons come forth and do battle with the invader. The giant is victorious and departs triumphant. The twenty-eighth section gives the details of a terrific battle between Rávan and Mándhátá King of Ayodhya, a distinguished ancestor of Ráma. Supernatural weapons are employed on both sides and the issue of the conflict is long doubtful. But at last Mándhátá prepares to use the mighty weapon "acquired by severe austerities through the grace and favour of Rudra." The giant would inevitably have been slain. But two pre-eminent Munis Pulastya and Gálava beheld the fight through the power given by contemplation, and with words of exhortation they parted King Mándhátá and the sovereign of the Rákshases. Rávan at last (Sect. XXXII.) returns homeward carrying with him in his car Pushpak the virgin daughters of kings, of Rishis, of Daityas, and Gandharvas whom he has seized upon his way. The thirty-sixth section describes a battle with Indra. in which the victorious Meghanáda son of the giant, makes the King of the Gods his prisoner, binds him with his magic art, and carries him away (Sect. XXVII.) in triumph to Lanká. Brahmá intercedes (Sect. XXXVIII.) and Indrajit releases his prisoner \*\*\* obtaining in return the boon that sacrifice to the Lord of Fire shall always make him invincible in the coming battle. In sections XXXIX, XL, "we have a legend related to Ráma by the sage Agastya to account for the stupendous strength of the monkey Hanumat, as it had been described in the Rámáyana. Rama naturally wonders (as

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perhaps many readers of the Rámáyana have done since) why a monkey of such marvellous power and prowess had not easily overcome Báli and secured the throne for his friend Sugríva. Agastya replies that Hanumat was at that time under a curse from a Rishi, and consequently was not conscious of his own might."

1 The whole story of the marvellous Vánar is here given at length, but nothing else of importance is added to the tale already given in the Rámáyana. The Rishis or saints then (Sect. XL.) return to their celestial seats, and the Vánars, Rákshases and bears also (Sect. XLIII.) take their departure. The chariot Pushpak is restored to its original owner Kuvera, as has already been related in the Rámáyan. The story of Ráma and Sitá is then continued, and we meet with matter of more human interest. The winter is past and the pleasant spring-time is come, and Ráma and Sitá sit together in the shade of the As'oka trees happy as Indra and S'achí when they drink in Paradise the nectar of the Gods. "Tell me, my beloved," says Ráma, "for thou wilt soon be a mother, hast thou a wish in thy heart for me to gratify?" And Sitá smiles and answers: "I long, O son of Raghu, to visit the pure and holy hermitages on the banks of the Ganges and to venerate the feet of the saints who there perform their rigid austerities and live on roots and berries. This is my chief desire, to stand within the hermits' grove were it but for a single day," And Ráma said: "Let not the thought trouble thee: thou shalt go to the grove of the ascetics," But slanderous tongues have been busy in Ayodhyá, and Sitá has not been spared. Ráma hears that the people are lamenting his blind folly in taking back to his bosom the wife who was so long a captive in the palace of Rávan. Ráma well knows her spotless purity in thought, word, and deed, and her perfect love of him; but he cannot endure the mockery and the shame and resolves to abandon his unsuspecting wife. He orders the sad but still obedient Lakshman to convey her to the hermitage which she wishes to visit and to leave her there, for he will see her face again no more. They arrive at the hermitage, and Lakshman tells her all. She falls fainting on the ground, and when she recovers her consciousness sheds some natural tears and bewails her cruel and undeserved lot. But she resolves to live for the sake of Ráma and her unborn son, and she sends by Lakshman a dignified message to the husband who has forsaken her: "I grieve not for myself," she says "because I have been abandoned on account of what the people say, and not for any evil that I have done, The husband is the God of the wife, the husband is her lord and guide; and what seems good unto him she should do even at the cost of her life." Sitá is honourably received by the saint Válmiki himself, and the holy women of the hermitage are charged to entertain and serve her. In this calm retreat she gives birth to two boys who receive the names of Kus'a and Lava. They are carefully brought up and are taught by Válmiki himself to recite the Rámáyan. The years pass by: and Ráma at length determines to celebrate the As'vamedha or Sacrifice of the Steed. Válmiki, with his two young pupils, attends the ceremony, and the unknown princes recite before the delighted father the poem which recounts his deeds. Ráma inquires into their history and recognizes them as his sons. Sitá is invited to return and solemnly affirm her innocence before the great assembly.

"But Sitá's heart was too full; this second ordeal was beyond even her. power to submit to, and the poet rose above the ordinary Hindu level of women

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when he ventured to paint her conscious purity as rebelling: "Beholding all the spectators, and clothed in red garments, Sitá clasping her hands and bending low her face, spoke thus in a voice choked with tears: 'as I, even in mind, have never thought of any other than Ráma, so may Mádhaví the goddess of Earth, grant me a hiding-place.' As Sitá made this oath, lo! a marvel appeared. Suddenly cleaving the earth, a divine throne of marvellous beauty rose up, borne by resplendent dragons on their heads: and seated on it, the goddess of Earth, raising Sitá with her arm, said to her, 'Welcome to thee!' and placed her by her side. And as the



queen, seated on the throne, slowly descended to Hades, a continuous shower of flowers fell down from heaven on her head."

1

"Both the great Hindu epics thus end in disappointment and sorrow. In the Mahábhárata the five victorious brothers abandon the hardly won throne to die one by one in a forlorn pilgrimage to the Himálaya; and in the same way Ráma only regains his wife, after all his toils, to lose her. It is the same in the later Homeric cycle-the heroes of the Iliad perish by ill-fated deaths. And even Ulysses, after his return to Ithaca, sets sail again to Thesprotia, and finally falls by the hand of his own son. But in India and Greece alike this is an afterthought of a self-conscious time, which has been subsequently added to cast a gloom on the strong cheerfulness of the heroic age."

2

"The termination of Ráma's terrestrial career is thus told in Sections 116 ff. of the Uttarakánda. Time, in the form of an ascetic, comes to his palace gate, and asks, as the messenger of the great rishi (Brahmá) to see Ráma. He is admitted and received with honour, but says, when he is asked what he has to communicate, that his message must be delivered in private, and that any one who

witnesses the interview is to lose his life. Ráma informs Laxmana of all this, and desires him to stand outside. Time then tells Ráma that he has been sent by Brahmá, to say that when he (Ráma, i.e. Vishnu) after destroying the worlds was sleeping on the ocean, he had formed him (Brahmá) from the lotus springing from his navel, and committed to him the work of creation; that he (Brahmá) had then entreated Ráma to assume the function of Preserver, and that the latter had in consequence become Vishnu, being born as the son of Aditi, and had determined to deliver mankind by destroying Ravana, and to live on earth ten thousand and ten hundred years; that period, adds Time, was now on the eve of expiration, and Ráma could either at his pleasure prolong his stay on earth, or ascend to heaven and rule over the gods, Ráma replies, that he had been born for the good of the three worlds, and would now return to the place whence he had come, as it was his function to fulfil the purposes of the gods. While they are speaking the irritable rishi Durvásas comes, and insists on seeing Ráma immediately, under a threat, if refused, of cursing Ráma and all his family.

Laxmana, preferring to save his kinsman, though

knowing that his own death must be the consequence of interrupting the interview of Ráma with Time, enters the palace and reports the rishi's message to Ráma. Ráma comes out, and p. 523

when Durvásas has got the food he wished, and

departed, Ráma reflects with great distress on the words of Time, which require that Laxmana should die. Laxmana however exhorts Ráma not to grieve, but to abandon him and not break his own promise. The counsellors concurring in this advice, Ráma abandons Laxmana, who goes to the river Sarayú, suppresses all his senses, and is conveyed bodily by Indra to heaven. The gods are delighted by the arrival of the fourth part of Vishnu. Ráma then resolves to install Bharata as his successor and retire to the forest and follow Laxmana. Bharata however refuses the succession, and determines to accompany his brother. Ráma's subjects are filled with grief, and say they also will follow him wherever he goes. Messengers are sent to S'atrughna, the other brother, and he also resolves to accompany Ráma; who at length sets out in procession from his capital with all the ceremonial appropriate to the "great departure," silent, indifferent to external objects, joyless, with S'rí on his right, the goddess Earth on his left, Energy in front, attended by all his weapons in human shapes, by the Vedas in the forms of Brahmans, by the Gáyatri, the Omkára, the Vashatkára, by rishis, by his women, female slaves, eunuchs, and servants. Bharata with his family, and S'atrughna, follow together with

Brahmans bearing the sacred fire, and the whole of the people of the country, and even with animals, etc., etc. Ráma, with all these attendants, comes to the banks of the Sarayú. Brahmá, with all the gods and innumerable celestial cars, now appears, and all the sky is refulgent with the divine splendour, Pure and fragrant breezes blow, a shower of flowers falls. Ráma enters the waters of the Sarayú; and Brahmá utters a voice from the sky, saying: "Approach, Vishnu; Rághava, thou hast happily arrived, with thy godlike brothers. Enter thine own body as Vishnu or the eternal ether. For thou art the abode of the worlds: no one comprehends thee, the inconceivable and imperishable, except the large-eyed Máyá thy primeval spouse." Hearing these words, Ráma enters the glory of Vishnu with his body and his followers. He then asks Brahmá to find an abode for the people who had accompanied him from devotion to his person, and Brahmá appoints them a celestial residence accordingly."

1

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#### ADDITIONAL NOTES

QUEEN FORTUNE. 'A curious festival is celebrated in honour of this divinity (Lakshmi) on the fifth lunar day of the light half of the month Mâgha (February), when she is identified with Saraswatí the consort of Brahmá, and the goddess of learning. In his treatise on festivals, a great

modern authority, Raghunandana, mentions, on the faith of a work called Samvatsara-sandipa, that Lakshmi is to be worshipped in the forenoon of that day with flowers, perfumes, rice, and water; that due honour is to be paid to inkstand and writing-reed, and no writing to be done. Wilson, in his essay on the Religious Festivals of the Hindus (works, vol. ii, p. 188. ff.). adds that on the morning of the 2nd February, the whole of the pens and inkstands, and the books, if not too numerous and bulky, are collected, the pens or reeds cleaned, the inkstands scoured, and the books wrapped up in new cloth, are arranged upon a platform, or a sheet, and strewn over with flowers and blades of young barley, and that no flowers except white are to be offered. After performing the necessary rites,.....all the members of the family assemble and make their prostrations; the books, the pens, and ink having an entire holiday; and should any emergency require a written communication on the day dedicated to the divinity of scholarship, it is done with chalk or charcoal upon a black or white board.'

Chambers's Encyclopaedia. Lakshmi.

#### INDRA.

'The Hindu Jove or Jupiter Tonans, chief of the secondary deities. He presides over swarga or paradise, and is more particularly the god of the atmosphere and winds. He is also regent of the east quarter of the sky. As chief of the deities he is called Devapati, Devadeva, Surapati, etc; as lord of the atmosphere Divaspati: as lord of the eight Vasus or demigods, Fire, etc., Vâsava: as breaking cities into fragments, Purandara, Puranda: as lord of a hundred sacrifices (the performance of a hundred As'vamedhas elevating the sacrificer to the rank of Indra) S'atakratu, S'atamakha; as having a thousand eyes, Sahasráksha; as husband of S'achí, S'achípati. His wife is called S'achí, Indráni, Sakráni, Maghoni, Indras'akti, Pulomajá, and Paulomi. His son is Jayanta. His pleasure garden or elysium is Nandana; his city, Amarávati; his palace, Vaijayanta; his horse, Uchchaihs'ravas, his elephant, Airávata; his charioteer, Mátali.'

Professor M. William's English-Sanskrit Dictionary.

#### Indra.

#### VISHNU.

'The second person of the Hindu triad, and the most celebrated and popular of all the Indian deities. He is the personification of the preserving power, and became incarnate in nine

different forms, for the preservation of mankind in various emergencies. Before the creation of the universe, and after its temporary annihilation, he is supposed to sleep on the waters, floating on the serpent Sesha, and is then identified with Náráyana. Brahmá, the creator, is fabled to spring at that time from a lotus which grows from his navel, whilst thus asleep .....His ten avatárs or incarnations are:

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1. The Matsya, or fish. In this avatár Vishnu descended in the form of a fish to save the pious king Satyavrata, who with the seven Rishis and their wives had taken refuge in the ark to escape the deluge which then destroyed the earth. 2, The Kúrma, or Tortoise. In this he descended in the form of a tortoise, for the purpose of restoring to man some of the comforts lost during the flood. To this end he stationed himself at the bottom of the ocean, and allowed the point of the great mountain Mandara to be placed upon his back, which served as a hard axis, whereon the gods and demons, with the serpent Vásuki twisted round the mountain for a rope, churned the waters for the recovery of the amrita or nectar, and fourteen other sacred things. 3. The Varáha, or Boar. In this he descended in the form of a boar to rescue the earth from the power of a demon called 'golden-eyed,' Hiranyáksha. This demon had seized on the earth and carried it with him into the depths of the ocean. Vishnu dived into the abyss, and after a contest of a thousand years slew the monster. 4 The Narasinha, or Man-lion. In this monstrous shape of a creature half-man, half-lion, Vishnu delivered the earth from the tyranny of an insolent demon called Hiranyakas'ipu. 5.

Vámana, or Dwarf. This avatár happened in the second age of the Hindús or Tretáyug, the four preceding are said to have occurred in the first or Satyayug; the object of this avatár was to trick Balí out of the dominion of the three worlds. Assuming the form of a wretched dwarf he appeared before the king and asked, as a boon, as much land as he could pace in three steps. This was granted; and Vishnu immediately expanding himself till he filled the world, deprived Balí at two steps of heaven and earth, but in consideration of some merit, left Pátála still in his dominion. 6. Parasuráma. 7. Rámchandra, 8. Krishna, or according to some Balaráma. 9. Buddha. In this avatár Vishnu descended in the form of a sage for the purpose of making some reform in the religion of the Brahmins, and especially to reclaim them from their proneness to animal sacrifice. Many of the Hindús will not allow this to have been an incarnation of their favourite god. 10. Kalki, or White Horse. This is yet to come. Vishnu mounted on a white horse, with a drawn scimitar, blazing like a comet, will, according to prophecy, end this present age, viz. the fourth or Kaliyug, by destroying the world, and then renovating creation by an age of purity.'

WILLIAMS'S DICTIONARY. Vishnu.

S'IVA. A celebrated Hindú God, the Destroyer of creation, and therefore the most formidable of the Hindú Triad. He also personifies reproduction, since the Hindú philosophy excludes the idea of total annihilation without subsequent regeneration. Hence he is sometimes confounded with Brahmá, the creator or first person of the Triad. He is the particular God of the Tántrikas, or followers of the books called Tantras. His worshippers are termed S'aivas, and although not so numerous as the Vaishnavas, exalt their god to the highest place in the heavens, and combine in him many of the attributes which properly belong to the other deities. According to them S'iva is Time, Justice, Fire, Water, the Sun, the Destroyer and Creator. As presiding over generation, his type is the Linga, or Phallus, the origin probably of the Phallic emblem of Egypt and Greece. As the God of generation and justice, which latter character he shares with the god Yama, he is represented riding a white bull. His

own colour, as well as that of the bull, is generally white, referring probably to the unsullied purity of Justice,  
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His throat is dark-blue; his hair of alight reddish colour, and thickly matted together, and gathered above his head like the hair of an ascetic. He is sometimes seen with two hands, sometimes with four, eight, or ten, and with five faces. He has three eyes, one being in the centre of his forehead, pointing up and down. These are said to denote his view of the three divisions of time, past, present, and future. He holds a trident in his hand to denote, as some say, his relationship to water, or according to others, to show that the three great attributes of Creator, Destroyer, and Regenerator are combined in him. His loins are enveloped in a tiger's skin. In his character of Time, he not only presides over its extinction, but also its astronomical regulation. A crescent or half-moon on his forehead indicates the measure of time by the phases of the moon; a serpent forms one of his necklaces to denote the measure of time by years, and a second necklace of human skulls marks the lapse and revolution of ages, and the extinction and succession of the generations of mankind. He is often represented as entirely covered with serpents, which are the emblems of immortality. They are bound in his hair, round his neck, wrists, waist, arms and legs; they serve as rings for his fingers, and earrings for his ears, and are his constant companions, S'iva has more than a thousand names which are detailed at length in the sixty-ninth chapter of the S'iva Purán'a.-- WILLIAMS'S DICTIONARY, S'iva.

APSARASES.

'Originally these deities seem to have been personifications of the vapours which are attracted by the sun, and form into mist or clouds: their character may be thus interpreted in the few hymns of the Rigveda where mention is made of them. At a subsequent period when the Gandharva of the Rigveda who personifies there especially the Fire of the Sun, expanded into the Fire of Lightning, the rays of the moon and other attributes of the elementary life of heaven as well as into pious acts referring to it, the Apsarasas become divinities which represent phenomena or objects both of a physical and ethical kind closely associated with that life; thus in the Yajurveda Sunbeams are called the Apsarasas associated with the Gandharva who is the Sun; Plants are termed the Apsarasas connected with the Gandharva Fire: Constellations are the Apsarasas of the Gandharva Moon: Waters the Apsarasas of the Gandharva Wind, etc. etc..... In the last Mythological epoch when the Gandharvas have saved from their elementary nature merely so much as to be musicians in the paradise of Indra, the Apsarasas appear among other subordinate deities which share in the merry life of Indra's heaven, as the wives of the Gandharvas, but more especially as wives of a licentious sort, and they are promised therefore, too, as a reward to heroes fallen in battle when they are received in the paradise of Indra; and while, in the Rigveda, they assist Soma to pour down his floods, they descend in the epic literature on earth merely to shake the virtue of penitent Sages and to deprive them of the power they would otherwise have acquired through unbroken austerities.'--GOLDSTÜCKER'S Sanskrit Dictionary.

VISHN'U'S INCARNATION AS RÁMA.

'Here is described one of the avatárs, descents or manifestations of Vishn'u in a visible form. The word avatár signifies literally descent. The avatár which is here spoken of, that in which, according to Indian traditions, Vishn'u descended

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and appeared upon earth in the corporeal form of Ráma, the hero of the Rámáyana, is the seventh in the series of Indian avatars. Much has been

said before now of these avatars, and through deficient knowledge of the ideas and doctrines of India, they have been compared to the sublime dogma of the Christian Incarnation. This is one of the grossest errors that ignorance of the ideas and beliefs of a people has produced. Between the avatars of India and the Christian Incarnation there is such an immensity of difference that it is impossible to find any reasonable analogy that can approximate them. The idea of the avatars is intimately united with that of the Trimúrti; the bond of connection between these two ideas is an essential notion common to both, the notion of Vishnu. What is the Trimurti? I have already said that it is composed of three Gods, Brahma (masculine), Vishnu the God of avatárs, and S'iva. These three Gods, who when reduced to their primitive and most simple expression are but three cosmogonical personifications, three powers or forces of nature, these Gods, I say, are here found, according to Indian doctrines, entirely external to the true God of India, or Brahma in the neuter gender. Brahma is alone, unchangeable in the midst of creation: all emanates from him, he comprehends all, but he remains extraneous to all: he is Being and the negation of beings. Brahma is never worshipped; the indeterminate Being is never invoked; he is inaccessible to the prayers as the actions of man; humanity, as well as nature, is extraneous to him. External to Brahma rises the Trimurti, that is to say, Brahmá (masculine) the power which creates, Vishnu the power which preserves, and S'iva the power which destroys: theogony here commences at the same time with cosmogony. The three divinities of the Trimurti govern the phenomena of the universe and influence all nature. The real God of India is by himself without power; real efficacious power is attributed only to three divinities who exist externally to him. Brahmá, Vishnu, and S'iva, possessed of qualities in part contradictory and attributes that are mutually exclusive, have no other accord or harmony than that which results from the power of things itself, and which is found external to their own thoughts. Such is the Indian Trimurti. What an immense difference between this Triad and the wonderful Trinity of Christianity! Here there is only one God, who created all, provides for all, governs all. He exists in three Persons equal to one another, and intimately united in one only infinite and eternal substance. The Father represents the eternal thought and the power which created, the Son infinite love, the Holy Spirit universal sanctification. This one and triune God completes by omnipotent power the great work of creation which, when it has come forth from His hands, proceeds in obedience to the laws which He has given it, governed with certain order by His infinite providence.

The immense difference between the Trimurti of India and the Christian Trinity is found again between the avatars of Vishnu and the Incarnation of Christ. The avatar was effected altogether externally to the Being who is in India regarded as the true God, The manifestation of one essentially cosmogonical divinity wrought for the most part only material and cosmogonical prodigies. At one time it takes the form of the gigantic tortoise which sustains Mount Mandar from sinking in the ocean; at another of the fish which raises the lost Veda from the bottom of the sea, and saves mankind from the waters. When these avatars are not cosmogonical they consist in some protection accorded to

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men or Gods, a protection which is neither universal nor permanent. The very manner in which the avatár is effected corresponds to its material nature, for instance the mysterious vase and the magic liquor by means of which the avatár here spoken of takes place. What are the forms which Vishnu takes in his descents? They are the simple forms of life; he becomes a tortoise, a boar, a fish, but he is not obliged to take the form of intelligence and liberty, that is to say, the form of man, In the avatár of Vishnu is discovered the

inpress of pantheistic ideas which have always more or less prevailed in India. Does the avatár produce a permanent and definitive result in the world? By no means. It is renewed at every catastrophe either of nature or man, and its effects are only transitory..... To sum up then, the Indian avatár is effected externally to the true God of India, to Brahma; it has only a cosmogonical or historical mission which is neither lasting nor decisive; it is accomplished by means of strange prodigies and magic transformations; it may assume promiscuously all the forms of life; it may be repeated indefinitely. Now let the whole of this Indian idea taken from primitive tradition be compared with the Incarnation of Christ and it will be seen that there is between the two an irreconcilable difference. According to the doctrines of Christianity the Everlasting Word, Infinite Love, the Son of God, and equal to Him, assumed a human body, and being born as a man accomplished by his divine act the great miracle of the spiritual redemption of man. His coming had for its sole object to bring erring and lost humanity back to Him; this work being accomplished, and the divine union of men with God being re-established, redemption is complete and remains eternal.

The superficial study of India produced in the last century many erroneous ideas, many imaginary and false parallels between Christianity and the Brahmanical religion. A profounder knowledge of Indian civilization and religion, and philological studies enlarged and guided by more certain principles have dissipated one by one all those errors. The attributes of the Christian God, which by one of those intellectual errors, which Vico attributes to the vanity of the learned, had been transferred to Vishnu, have by a better inspired philosophy been reclaimed for Christianity, and the result of the two religions, one immovable and powerless, the other diffusing itself with all its inherent force and energy, has shown further that there is a difference, a real opposition, between the two principles.'--GORRESIO.  
KUS'A AND LAVA, Page 10.

As the story of the banishment of Sítá and the subsequent birth in Válímiki's hermitage of Kus'a and Lava the rhapsodists of the Rámáyan, is intimately connected with the account in the introductory cantos of Válímiki's composition of the poem, I shall, I trust, be pardoned for extracting it from my rough translation of Kálidása's Raghuvan's'a, parts only of which have been offered to the public.

'Then, day by day, the husband's hope grew high,  
Gazing with love on Sítá's melting eye:With anxious care he saw her  
pallid cheek,And fondly bade her all her wishes speak.'Once more I fain  
would see,' the lady cried,'The sacred groves that rise on Gangá's side,  
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Where holy grass is ever fresh and green,And cattle feeding on the rice  
are seen:There would I rest awhile, where once I strayedLinked in sweet  
friendship to each hermit maid.'And Ráma smiled upon his wife, and  
sware,With many a tender oath, to grant her prayer.It chanced, one  
evening, from a lofty seatHe viewed Ayodhyá stretched before his feet:He  
looked with pride upon the royal roadLined with gay shops their  
glittering stores that showed,He looked on Sarjú's silver waves, that  
boreThe light barks flying with the sail and oar;He saw the gardens near  
the town that lay,Filled with glad citizens and boys at play.Then swelled  
the monarch \*bosom with delight,And his heart triumphed at the happy  
sight.He turned to Bhadra, standing by his side,--

Upon whose secret news the king relied.--And bade him say what people  
said and thoughtOf all the exploits that his arm had wrought.The spy was  
silent, but, when questioned still.Thus spake, obedient to his master's  
will:'For all thy deeds in peace and battle doneThe people praise thee.  
King, except for one:This only act of all thy life they blame,--Thy

welcome home of her, thy ravished dame.' Like iron yielding to the iron's blow. Sank Ráma, smitten by those words of woe. His breast, where love and fear for empire vied, Swayed, like a rapid swing, from side to side. Shall he this rumour scorn, which blots his life, Or banish her, his dear and spotless wife? But rigid Duty left no choice between His perilled honour and his darling queen. Called to his side, his brothers wept to trace The marks of anguish in his altered face. No longer bright and glorious as of old. He thus addressed them when the tale was told: 'Alas! my brothers, that my life should blot The fame of those the Sun himself begot: As from the labouring cloud the driven rain Leaves on the mirror's polished face a stain. E'en as an elephant who loathes the stake And the strong chain he has no power to break, I cannot brook this cry on every side, That spreads like oil upon the moving tide.

I leave the daughter of Videha's King, And the fair blossom soon from her to spring,

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As erst, obedient to my sire's command, I left the empire of the sea-girt land. Good is my queen, and spotless; but the blame Is hard to bear, the mockery and the shame. Men blame the pure Moon for the darkened ray. When the black shadow takes the light away And, O my brothers, if ye wish to see Ráma live long from this reproach set free, Let not your pity labour to control The firm sad purpose of his changeless soul.'

Thus Ráma spake. The sorrowing brothers beard

His stern resolve, without an answering word; For none among them dared his voice to raise, That will to question:--and they could not praise. 'Beloved brother,' thus the monarch cried To his dear Lakshman, whom he called aside.--Lakshman, who knew no will save his alone Whose hero deeds through all the world were known:--'My queen has told me that s\*he longs to rove Beneath the shade of Saint Válmíki's grove: Now mount thy car, away my lady bear; Tell all, and leave her in the forest there.' The car was brought, the gentle lady smiled,

As the glad news her trusting heart beguiled. She mounted up: Sumantra held the reins; And forth the coursers bounded o'er the plains. She saw green fields in all their beauty dressed, And thanked her husband in her loving breast. Alas! deluded queen! she little knew How changed was he whom she believed so true; How one she worshipped like the Heavenly Tree Could, in a moment's time, so deadly be. Her right eye throbbed,--ill-omened sign, to tell The endless loss of him she loved so well, And to the lady's saddening heart revealed The woe that Lakshman, in his love, concealed. Pale grew the bloom of her sweet face,--as fade The lotus blossoms,--by that sign dismayed. 'Oh. may this omen,'--was her silent prayer,--'No grief to Ráma or his brothers bear I'

When Lakshman, faithful to his brother, stood

Prepared to leave her in the distant wood, The holy Gangá, flowing by the way, Raised all her hands of waves to bid him stay. At length with sobs and burning tears that rolled Down his sad face, the king's command he told; As when a monstrous cloud, in evil hour,

p. 531 Rains from its labouring womb a stony shower.

She heard, she swooned, she fell upon the earth, Fell on that bosom whence she sprang to birth. As, when the tempest in its fury flies, Low in the dust the prostrate creeper lies, So, struck with terror sank she on the ground, And all her gems, like flowers, lay scattered round. But Earth, her mother, closed her stony breast. And, filled with doubt, denied her daughter rest. She would not think the Chief of Raghu's race Would thus his own dear guiltless wife disgrace. Stunned and unconscious, long the lady lay, And felt no grief, her senses all astray. But gentle Lakshman, with a brother's care, Brought back her sense, and with her sense, despair. But not her wrongs, her shame, her grief, could wring One angry word against her lord the King: Upon herself alone the blame she laid. For tears and sighs that would not yet be stayed. To soothe her anguish Lakshman gently

strove;He showed the path to Saint Válmiki's grove;And craved her pardon  
for the share of illHe wrought, obedient to his brother's will.'O, long  
and happy, dearest brother, live!I have to praise', she cried,' and not  
forgive:To do his will should be thy noblest praise;As Vishn'u ever  
Indra's will obeys.Return, dear brother: on each royal dameBestow a  
blessing in poor Sítá's name,And bid them, in their love, kind pity take  
Upon her offspring, for the father's sake.And speak my message in the  
monarch's ear,The last last words of mine that he shall hear:'Say, was it  
worthy of thy noble raceThy guiltless queen thus lightly to disgrace?For  
idle tales to spurn thy faithful bride,Whose constant truth the searching  
fire had tried?Or may I hope thy soul refused consent,And but thy voice  
decreed my banishment?Hope that no care could turn, no love could stayThe  
lightning stroke that falls on me to-day?That sins committed in the life  
that's fledHave brought this evil on my guilty head?Think not I value now  
my widowed life,Worthless to her who once was Ráma's wife.I only live  
because I hope to seeThe dear dear babe that will resemble thee.And then  
my task of penance shall be done,

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With eyes uplifted to the scorching sun;So shall the life that is to come  
restoreMine own dear husband, to be lost no more.'And Lakshman swore her  
every word to tell,Then turned to go, and bade the queen farewell.Alone  
with all her woes, her piteous criesRose like a butchered lamb's that  
struggling dies.The reverend sage who from his dwelling came  
For sacred grass and wood to feed the flame,Heard her loud shrieks that  
rent the echoing wood,And, quickly following, by the mourner stood.Before  
the sage the lady bent her low,Dried her poor eyes, and strove to calm  
her woe.With blessings on her hopes the blameless manIn silver tones his  
soothing speech began:'First of all faithful wives, O Queen, art thou;And  
can I fail to mourn thy sorrows now?Rest in this holy grove, nor harbour  
fearWhere dwell in safety e'en the timid deer.Here shall thine offspring  
safely see the light,And be partaker of each holy rite.Here, near the  
hermits' dwellings, shall thou laveThy limbs in \*Tonse's\* sin-destroying  
wave,And on her isles, by prayer and worship, gainSweet peace of mind,  
and rest from care and pain.Each hermit maiden with her sweet soft  
voice,Shall soothe thy woe, and bid thy heart rejoice:With fruit and  
early flowers thy lap shall fill,And offer grain that springs for us at  
will.And here, with labour light, thy task shall beTo water carefully  
each tender tree,And learn how sweet a nursing mother's joyEre on thy  
bosom rest thy darling boy.'

That very night the banished Sítá bare

Two royal children, most divinely fair.The saint Válmiki, with a friend's  
delight,

Graced Sítá's offspring with each holy rite.Kus'a and Lava--such the  
names they bore--Learnt, e'en in childhood, all the Vedas' lore;And then  
the bard, their minstrel souls to train,Taught them to sing his own  
immortal strain.And Ráma's deeds her boys so sweetly sang,That Sítá's  
breast forgot her bitterest pang.

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Then Sítá's children, by the saint's command, Sang the Rámáyan,  
wandering through the land. How could the glorious poem fail to gain  
Each heart, each ear that listened to the strain! So sweet each  
minstrel's voice who sang the praise Of Ráma deathless in Válmiki's  
lays. Ráma himself amid the wondering throng Marked their fair forms,  
and loved the noble song, While, still and weeping, round the nobles  
stood, As, on a windless morn, a dewy wood. On the two minstrels all  
the people gazed, Praised their fair looks and marvelled as they  
praised; For every eye amid the throng could trace Ráma's own image  
in each youthful face. Then spoke the king himself and bade them say  
Who was their teacher, whose the wondrous lay. Soon as Válmiki, mighty  
saint, he saw, He bowed his head in reverential awe.



'These are thy children' cried the saint, 'recall Thine own dear Sítá, pure and true through all. 'O holy father,' thus the king replied, 'The faithful lady by the fire was tried; But the foul demon's too successful arts Raised light suspicions in my people's hearts. Grant that their breasts may doubt her faith no more, And thus my Sítá and her sons restore.'

Raghuvans'a Cantos XIV, XV.

PARAS'URÁMA, PAGE 87.

'He cleared the earth thrice seven times of the Kshatriya caste, and filled with their blood the five large lakes of Samanta, from which he offered libations to the race of Bhrigu. Offering a solemn sacrifice to the King of the Gods Paras'uráma presented the earth to the ministering priests. Having given the earth to Kas'vapa, the hero of immeasurable prowess retired to the Mahendra mountain, where he still resides; and in this manner was there enmity between him and the race of the Kshatriyas, and thus was the whole earth conquered by Paras'uráma.' The destruction of the Kshatriyas by Paras'uráma had been provoked by the cruelty of the Kshatriyas. Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. II. p.334. The scene in which he appears is probably interpolated for the sake of making him declare Ráma to be Vishnu. 'Herr von Schlegel has often remarked to me,' says Lassen, 'that without injuring the connexion of the story all the chapters [of the Rámáyan] might be omitted in which Ráma is regarded as an incarnation of Vishn'u. In fact, where the incarnation of Vishn'u as the four sons of Das'aratha is described, the great sacrifice is already ended, and all the priests remunerated at the termination, when the new sacrifice begins at which the Gods appear, then withdraw, and then first propose the incarnation to Vishnu, p. 534

If it had been an original circumstance of the story, the Gods would certainly have deliberated on the matter earlier, and the celebration of the sacrifice would have continued without interruption.' LASSEN, Indische Alterthumskunde, Vol. I. p.489.

YAMA, PAGE 68. Son of Vivasvat=Jima son of Vivanghvat, the Jamahid of the later Persians.

FATE PAGE 68. 'The idea of fate was different in India from that which prevailed in Greece. In Greece fate was a mysterious, inexorable power which governed men and human events, and from which it was impossible to escape. In India Fate was rather an inevitable consequence of actions done in births antecedent to one's present state of existence, and was therefore connected with the doctrine of metempsychosis. A misfortune was for the most part a punishment, an expiation of ancient faults not yet entirely cancelled.' GORRESIO.

VIS'VÁMITRA. PAGE 76.

'Though of royal extraction, Vis'vámitra conquered for himself and his family the privileges of a Brahman. He became a Brahman, and thus broke through all the rules of caste. The Brahmans cannot deny the fact, because it forms one of the principal subjects of their legendary poems. But they have spared no pains to represent the exertions of Vis'vámitra, in his struggle for Brahmanhood, as so superhuman that no one would easily be tempted to follow his example. No mention is made of these monstrous penances in the Veda, where the struggle between Vis'vámitra, the leader of the Kus'ikas or Bharatas, and the Brahman Vas'ishtha, the leader of the white-robed Tritsus, is represented as the struggle of two rivals for the place of Purohita or chief priest and minister at the court of King Sudás, the son of Pijavana.' Chips from a German Workshop, Vol. II. p.336.

HOUSEHOLD GODS, PAGE 102.

'No house is supposed to be without its tutelary divinity, but the notion attached to this character is now very far from precise. The deity who is the object of hereditary and family worship, the

Kuladevátá, is always one of the leading personages of the Hindu mythology, as S'iva, Vishnu or Durgá, but the Grihadevatá rarely bears any distinct appellation. In Bengal, the domestic god is sometimes the Sábagrám stone, sometimes the tulasi plant, sometimes a basket with a little rice in it, and sometimes a water-jar--to either of which a brief adoration is daily addressed, most usually by the females of the family. Occasionally small images of Lakshmi or Chandi fulfil the office, or should a snake appear, he is venerated as the guardian of the dwelling. In general, however, in former times, the household deities were regarded as the unseen spirits of ill, the ghosts and goblins who hovered about every spot, and claimed some particular sites as their own. Offerings were made to them in the open air, by scattering a little rice with a short formula at the close of all ceremonies to keep them in good humour. The household gods correspond better with the genii locorum than with the lares or penates of antiquity.' H. H. WILSON p. 535 PAGE 107.

S'aivya, a king whom earth obeyed,  
Once to a hawk a promise made.

The following is a free version of this very ancient story which occurs more than once in the Mahábhárat:

THE SUPPLIANT DOVE.

Chased by a hawk there came a dove

With worn and weary wing, And took her stand upon the hand Of Kás'i's mighty king. The monarch smoothed her ruffled plumes And laid her on his breast, And cried, 'No fear shall vex thee here, Rest, pretty egg-born, rest! Fair Kás'i's realm is rich and wide, With golden harvests gay, But all that's mine will I resign Ere I my guest betray.' But panting for his half won spoil The hawk was close behind. And with wild cry and eager eye Came swooping down the wind:

'This bird', he cried, 'my destined prize, 'Tis not for thee to shield: 'Tis mine by right and toilsome flight O'er hill and dale and field. Hunger and thirst oppress me sore, And I am faint with toil: Thou shouldst not stay a bird of prey Who claims his rightful spoil. They say thou art a glorious king, And justice is thy care: Then justly reign in thy domain, Nor rob the birds of air.' Then cried the king: 'A cow or deer For thee shall straightway bleed, Or let a ram or tender lamb Be slain, for thee to feed. Mine oath forbids me to betray My little twice-born guest: See how she clings with trembling wings To her protector's breast.' 'No flesh of lambs,' the hawk replied, 'No blood of deer for me; The falcon loves to feed on doves And such is Heaven's decree. But if affection for the dove

p. 536 Thy pitying heart has stirred,

Let thine own flesh my maw refresh, Weighed down against the bird.' He carved the flesh from off his side, And threw it in the scale, While women's cries smote on the skies With loud lament and wail. He hacked the flesh from side and arm, From chest and back and thigh, But still above the little dove The monarch's scale stood high. He heaped the scale with piles of flesh, With sinews, blood and skin, And when alone was left him bone He threw himself therein. Then thundered voices through the air; The sky grew black as night; And fever took the earth that shook To see that wondrous sight. The blessed Gods, from every sphere, By Indra led, came nigh: While drum and flute and shell and lute Made music in the sky. They rained immortal chaplets down, Which hands celestial twine, And softly shed upon his head Pure Amrit, drink divine. Then God and Seraph, Bard and Nymph Their heavenly voices raised, And a glad throng with dance and song

The glorious monarch praised. They set him on a golden car That blazed with many a gem; Then swiftly through the air they flew, And bore him home with them. Thus Kás'i's lord, by noble deed, Won

heaven and deathless fame:      And when the weak protection seek      From  
thee, do thou the same.

Scenes from the Ramayan, &c.

PAGE 108.

The ceremonies that attended the consecration of a king (Abhisheka lit. Sprinkling over) are fully described in Goldstücker's Dictionary, from which the following extract is made: 'The type of the inauguration ceremony as practised at the Epic period may probably be recognized in the history of the inauguration of Ráma, as told in the Rámáyana, and in that of the inauguration of Yudhishtira, as told in the Mahábháratha. Neither ceremony is described in these poems

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with the full detail which is given of the vaidik rite in the Aitareya-Bráhmaṇam; but the allusion that Ráma was inaugurated by Vasishtha and the other Bráhmaṇas

in the same manner as Indra by the Vasus...and the observation which is made in some passages that a certain rite of the inauguration was performed 'according to the sacred rule'...admit of the conclusion that the ceremony was supposed to have taken place in conformity with the vaidik injunction.... As the inauguration of Ráma was intended and the necessary preparations for it were made when his father Das'aratha was still alive, but as the ceremony itself, through the intrigues of his step-mother Kaikeyí, did not take place then, but fourteen years later, after the death of Das'aratha, an account of the preparatory ceremonies is given in the Ayodhyákánda (Book II) as well as in the Yuddha-Kánda (Book VI.) of the Rámáyana, but an account of the complete ceremony in the latter book alone. According to the Ayodhyákánda, on the day preceding the intended inauguration Ráma and his wife Sítá held a fast, and in the night they performed this preliminary rite: Ráma having made his ablutions, approached the idol of Náráyana, took a cup of clarified butter, as the religious law prescribes, made a libation of it into the kindled fire, and drank the remainder while wishing what was agreeable to his heart. Then, with his mind fixed on the divinity he lay, silent and composed, together with Sítá, on a bed of Kus'a-grass, which was spread before the altar of Vishnu, until the last watch of the night, when he awoke and ordered the palace to be prepared for the solemnity. At day-break reminded of the time by the voices of the bards, he performed the usual morning devotion and praised the divinity. In the meantime the town Ayodhyá had assumed a festive appearance and the inauguration implements had been arranged...golden water-jars, an ornamented throne-seat, a chariot covered with a splendid tiger-skin, water taken from the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna, as well as from other sacred rivers, tanks, wells, lakes, and from all oceans, honey, curd, clarified butter, fried grain, Kus'a-grass, flowers, milk; besides, eight beautiful damsels, and a splendid furious elephant, golden and silver jars, filled with water, covered with Udumbara branches and various lotus flowers, besides a white jewelled chourie, a white splendid parasol, a white bull, a white horse, all manner of musical instruments and bards....In the preceding chapter...there are mentioned two white chouries instead of one, and all kinds of seeds, perfumes and jewels, a scimitar, a bow, a litter, a golden vase, and a blazing fire, and amongst the living implements of the pageant, instead of the bards, gaudy courtesans, and besides the eight damsels, professors of divinity, Bráhmaṇas, cows and pure kinds of wild beasts and birds, the chiefs of town and country-people and the citizens with their train.'

PAGE 109.

Then with the royal chaplains they      Took each his place \*in\* long  
array.

The twice born chiefs, with zealous heed,      Made ready what the rite  
would need.

'Now about the office of a Purohita (house priest). The gods do not eat the food offered by a king, who has a house-priest (Purohita). Thence the king even when (not) intending to bring a sacrifice, would appoint a Bráhmaṇ to the office of house-priest.' HA\*UG'S A\*dureya Bráhmaṇam. Vol. II. p. 523. 35

p. 538

PAGE 110.

There by the gate the Sáras screamed.

The Sáras or Indian Crane is a magnificent bird easily domesticated and speedily constituting himself the watchman of his master's house and garden. Unfortunately he soon becomes a troublesome and even dangerous dependent, attacking strangers with his long bill and powerful wings, and warring especially upon 'small infantry' with unrelenting ferocity.

PAGE 120. My mothers or my sire the king.

All the wives of the king his father are regarded and spoken of by Ráma as his mothers.

PAGE 125.

Such blessings as the Gods o'erjoyed

Poured forth when Vritra was destroyed.

Mythology regards Vritra as a demon or Asur, the implacable enemy of Indra, but this is not the primitive idea contained in the name of Vritra. In the hymns of the Veda Vritra appears to be the thick dark cloud which Indra the God of the firmament attacks and disperses with his thunderbolt.' GORRESIO.

'In that class of Rig-veda hymns which there is reason to look upon as the oldest portion of Vedic poetry, the character of Indra is that of a mighty ruler of the firmament, and his principal feat is that of conquering the demon Vritra, a symbolical personification of the cloud which obstructs the clearness of the sky, and withholds the fructifying rain from the earth. In his battles with Vritra he is therefore described as 'opening the receptacles of the waters,' as 'cleaving the cloud' with his 'far-whirling thunderbolt,' as 'casting the waters down to earth.' and 'restoring the sun to the sky.' He is in consequence 'the upholder of heaven, earth, and firmament,' and the god 'who has engendered the sun and the dawn.' CHAMBERS'S CYCLOPÆDIA, Indra.

'Throughout these hymns two images stand out before us with overpowering distinctness. On one side is the bright god of the heaven, as beneficent as he is irresistible: on the other the demon of night and of darkness, as false and treacherous as he is malignant... The latter (as his name Vritra, from var, to veil, indicates) is pre-eminently the thief who hides away the rain-clouds... But the myth is yet in too early a state to allow of the definite designations which are brought before us in the conflicts of Zeus with Typhôn and his monstrous progeny, of Apollôn with the Pythôn, of Bellerophôn with Chimaira of Oidipous with the Sphinx, of Hercules with Cacus, of Sigurd with the dragon Fafnir; and thus not only is Vritra known by many names, but he is opposed sometimes by Indra, sometimes by Agni the fire-god, sometimes by Trita, Brihaspati, or other deities; or rather these are all names of one and the same god:

πολλ•ν •νομ•των μορφ• μ•α.

Cox's Mythology of the Aryan Nations. Vol. II. p.

326.p. 539

PAGE 125.

And that prized herb whose sovereign power

Preserves from dark misfortune's hour. 'And yet more medicinal is it than that Moly, That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave; He called it Haemony, and gave it me, And bade me keep it as of sovereign use 'Gainst all enchantment, mildew, blast, or damp, Or ghastly furies' apparition.' Comus.

The Moly of Homer, which Dierbach considers to have been the Mandrake, is probably a corruption of the Sanskrit Múla a root.

PAGE 136.

True is the ancient saw: the Neem

Can ne'er distil a honeyed stream.

The Neem tree, especially in the Rains, emits a strong unpleasant smell like that of onions. Its leaves however make an excellent cooling poultice, and the Extract of Neem is an admirable remedy for cutaneous disorders.

PAGE 152.

Who of Nisháda lineage came.

The following account of the origin of the Nishádas is taken from Wilson's Vishnu Purána, Book I. Chap. 15. 'Afterwards the Munis beheld a great dust arise, and they said to the people who were nigh: "What is this?" And the people answered and said: "Now that the kingdom is without a king, the dishonest men have begun to seize the property of their neighbours. The great dust that you behold, excellent Munis, is raised by troops of clustering robbers, hastening to fall upon their prey." The sages, hearing this, consulted, and together rubbed the thigh of the king (Vena), who had left no offspring, to produce a son. From the thigh, thus rubbed, came forth a being of the complexion of a charred stake, with flattened features like a negro, and of dwarfish stature. "What am I to do," cried he eagerly to the Munis. "Sit down (nisháda)," said they. And thence his name was Nisháda. His descendants, the inhabitants of the Vindhyá mountain, great Muni, are still called Nishádas and are characterized by the exterior tokens of depravity.' Professor Wilson adds, in his note on the passage: 'The Matsya says that there were born outcast or barbarous races, Mlechchhas, as black as collyrium. The Bhágavata describes an individual of dwarfish stature, with short arms and legs, of a complexion as black as a crow, with projecting chin, broad flat nose, red eyes, and tawny hair, whose descendants were mountaineers and foresters. The Padma (Bhúmi Khanda) has a similar description; adding to the dwarfish stature and black complexion, a wide mouth, large ears, and a protuberant belly. It also particularizes his posterity as Nishádas, Kirátas, Bhillas, and other barbarians and Mlechchhas, living in woods and on mountains. These passages intend, and do not much exaggerate, the uncouth appearance of the Gonds, Koles, Bhils, and other uncivilized tribes, scattered along the forests and mountains of Central India from Behar to Khandesh, and who are, not improbably, the predecessors of the present occupants of the cultivated portions of the country. They are always very black, ill-shapen, and dwarfish, and have countenances of a very African character.' p. 540

Manu gives a different origin of the Nishádas as the offspring of a Bráhma father and a Súdra mother. See Muir's Sanskrit Texts, Vol. I. p. 481.

PAGE 157. Beneath a fig-tree's mighty shade,

With countless pendent shoots displayed. 'So counselled he, and both together went Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose The fig-tree: not that kind for fruit renowned, But such as at this day, to Indians known, In Malabar or Deccan spreads her arms Branching so broad and long, that in the ground The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow About the mother tree, a pillared shade High overarched, and echoing walks between.'

Paradise Lost, Book IX,

PAGE 161.

Now, Lakshman, as our cot is made,

Must sacrifice be duly paid.

The rites performed in India on the completion of a house are represented in modern Europe by the familiar 'house-warming.'

PAGE 169.

I longed with all my lawless will     Some elephant by night to kill.  
One of the regal or military caste was forbidden to kill  
an elephant except in battle.

Thy hand has made no Bráhmaṇ bleed.

'The punishment which the Code of Manu awards to the slayer of a Brahman was to be branded in the forehead with the mark of a headless corpse, and entirely banished from society; this being apparently commutable for a fine. The poem is therefore in accordance with the Code regarding the peculiar guilt of killing Brahmins; but in allowing a hermit who was not a Divija (twice-born) to go to heaven, the poem is far in advance of the Code. The youth in the poem is allowed to read the Veda, and to accumulate merit by his own as well as his fathers pious acts; whereas the exclusive Code reserves all such privileges to Divijas, invested with the sacred cord.' Mrs. SPEIR'S Life in Ancient India, p. 107.

PAGE 174. THE PRAISE OF KINGS.

'Compare this magnificent eulogium of kings and kingly government with what Samuel says of the king and his authority: And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen: and some shall run before his chariots.

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And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instrument of war, and instruments of his chariots.

And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

And he will take your fields, and your vineyards and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.     He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.     And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you. I. Samuel, VIII.

In India kingly government was ancient and consecrated by tradition: whence to change it seemed disorderly and revolutionary: in Judea theocracy was ancient and consecrated by tradition, and therefore the innovation which would substitute a king was represented as full of dangers.' GORRESIO.

S'ÁLMALÍ PAGE 1:6.

According to the Bengal recension S'álmalí appears to have been another name of the Vipás'á. S'álmalí may be an epithet signifying rich in Bombax heptaphyllon. The commentator makes another river out of the word.

BHARATH'S RETURN, PAGE 178. 'Two routes from Ayodhyá to Rájagriha or Girivraja are described. That taken by the envoys appears to have been the shorter one, and we are not told why Bharath returned by a different road. The capital of the Kekeyas lay to the west of the Vipás'á. Between it and the S'atadru stretched the country of the Bahikas. Upon the remaining portion of the road the two recensions differ. According to that of Bengal there follow towards the east the river Indamatí, then the town Ajakála belonging

to the Bodhi, then Bhulingá, then the river S'aradandá. According to the other instead of the first river comes the Ikshumatí...instead of the first town Abhikála, instead of the second Kulingá, then the second river. According to the direction of the route both the above-mentioned rivers must be tributaries of the S'atadrú...The road then crossed the Yamuná (Jumna), led beyond that river through the country of the Panchálas, and reached the Ganges at Hástinapura, where the ferry was. Thence it led over the Rámagangá and its eastern tributaries, then over the Gomati, and then in a southern direction along the Málini, beyond which it reached Ayodhyá\*. In Bharath's journey the following rivers are passed from west to east: Kutikeshtiká, Uttániká, Kutiká, Kapívatí, Gomatí according to Schlegel, and Hiranyairatí, Uttáriká, Kvtilá, Kapivati, Gomatí according to Gorresio. As these rivers are to be looked for on the east of the Ganges, the first must be the modern K\*oh, a small affluent of the Rámagangá, over which the highway cannot have gone as it bends too far to the north. The Uttániká or Uttáriká must be the Rámagangá, the Kutiká or Kutilá its eastern tributary Kos'ilá, the Kapívatí the next tributary which on the maps has different names, Gurra or above Kailas,

p. 542

lower down Bhaigu. The Gomatí (Goomtee) retains its old name. The Málini, mentioned only in the envoys' journey, must have been the western tributary of the Sarayú now called Chuká.' LASSEN'S Indische Alterthumskunde, Vol. II. P. 524,

PAGE 183.

What worlds await thee, Queen, for this?  
 'Indian belief divided the universe into several worlds (lokáh). The three principal worlds were heaven, earth, and hell. But according to another division there were seven: Bhúrloka or the earth, Bhuvarloka or the space between the earth and the sun, the seat of the Munis, Siddhas, &c., Svarloka or the heaven of Indra between the sun and the polar star, and the seventh Brahmaloка or the world of Brahma. Spirits which reached the last were exempt from being born again.'

GORRESIO.

PAGE 203.

When from a million herbs a blaze  
 Of their own luminous glory plays.

This mention of lambent flames emitted by herbs at night may be compared with Lucan's description of a similar phenomenon in the Druidical forest near Marseilles, (Pharsalia, III. 420.).

Non ardentis fulgere incendia silvae.  
 Seneca, speaking of Argolis, (Thyestes, Act IV), says:--

Tota solet

Micare flamma silva, et excelsae trabes Ardent sine igni.  
 Thus also the bush at Horeb (Exod. II.) flamed, but was not consumed. The Indian explanation of the phenomenon is, that the sun before he sets deposits his rays for the night with the deciduous plants. See Journal of R. As. S. Bengal, Vol. II. p. 339.

PAGE 219.

We rank the Buddhist with the thief.  
 Schlegel says in his Preface: 'Lubrico vestigio insistit V. Cl. \*Heerenius\*, prof. Gottingensis, in libro suo de commerciis veterum populorum (OPP. Vol. HIST. XII, pag. 129,) dum putat, ex mentione sectatorum Buddhas secundo libro Rameidos iniecta de tempore, quo totum carmen sit conditum, quicquam legitime concludi posse.... Sunt versus spurii, reiecti a Bengalibus in sola commentatorum recensione leguntur. Buddhas quidem mille fere annis ante Christum natum visit: sed post multa demumsecula, odio internecivo inter Brachmanos et Buddhas sectatores orto, his denique ex India pulsus, fingi potuit iniquissima criminatio, eos animi immortalitatem poenasque et

praemia in vita futura negare. Praeterea metrum, quo concinnati sunt hi versus, de quo metro mox disseram, recentiorem aetatem arguit....Poenitet me nunc mei consilii, quod non statim ab initio,...eiecerim cuncta disticha diversis a sloco vulgari metris composita. Metra sunt duo: pariter ambo constant quatuor hemistichiis inter se aequalibus, alterum undenarum syllabarum, alterum duodenarum, hunc in modum:

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V -- v -- | -- v v -- | v -- Vv -- v -- | -- v v -- | v -- v V

Cuius generis versus in primo et secundo Rameidos libro nusquam nisi ad finem capitum apposita inveniuntur, et huic loco unice sunt acomodata, quasi peroratio, lyricis numeris assurgens, quo magis canorae cadant clausulae: sicut musici in concentibus extremis omnium vocum instrumentorumque ictu fortiore aures percellere amant. Igitur disticha illa non ante divisionem per capita illatam addi potuerunt: hanc autem grammaticis deberi argumento est ipse recensio dissensus, manifesto inde ortus, quod singuli editores in ea constituenda suo quisque iudicio usi sunt; praeterquam quod non credibile est, poetam artis suae peritum narrationem continuam in membra tam minuta dissecuisse. Porro discolor est dictio: magniloquentia affectatur, sed nimis turgida illa atque effusa, nec sententiarum pondere satis suffulta. Denique nihil fere novi affertur: ampli ficantur prius dicta, rarius aliquid ex capite sequente anticipatur. Si quis appendices hosce legendo trasiliat, sentiet slocum ultimum cum primo capitis proximi apte coagmentatum, nec sine vi quadam inde avulsum. Eiusmodi versus exhibet utraque recensio, sed modo haec modo illa plures paucioresve numero, et lectio interdum magnopere variat.'

"The narrative of Ráma's exile in the jungle is one of the most obscure portions of the Rámáyana, inasmuch as it is difficult to discover any trace of the original tradition, or any illustration of actual life and manners, beyond the artificial life of self-mortification and selfdenial said to have been led by the Brahman sages of olden time. At the same time, however, the story throws some light upon the significance of the poem, and upon the character in which the Brahmanical author desired to represent Ráma; and consequently it deserves more serious consideration than the nature of the subject-matter would otherwise seem to imply.

According to the Rámáyana, the hero Ráma spent more than thirteen years of his exile in wandering amongst the different Brahmanical settlements, which appear to have been scattered over the country between the Ganges and the Godáveri; his wanderings extending from the hill of Chitra-kúta in Bundelkund, to the modern town of Nasik on the western side of India, near the source of the Godáveri river, and about seventy-five miles to the north-west of Bombay. The appearance of these Brahmanical hermitages in the country far away to the south of the Raj of Kasala, seems to call for critical inquiry. Each hermitage is said to have belonged to some particular sage, who is famous in Brahmanical tradition. But whether the sages named were really contemporaries of Ráma, or whether they could possibly have flourished at one and the same period, is open to serious question. It is of course impossible to fix with any degree of certainty the relative chronology of the several sages, who are said to have been visited by Ráma; but still it seems tolerably clear that some belonged to an age far anterior to that in which the Rámáyana was composed, and probably to an age anterior to that in which Ráma existed as a real and living personage; whilst, at least, one sage is to be found who could only have existed in the age during which the Rámáyana was produced in its present form. The main proofs of these inferences are as follows. An interval of many centuries seems to have elapsed

between the composition of the Rig-Veda and that of the Rámáyana: a conclusion



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which has long been proved by the evidence of language, and is generally accepted by Sanskrit scholars. But three of the sages, said to have been contemporary with Rāma, namely, Vis'vāmitra, Atri and Agastya, are frequently mentioned in the hymns of the Rig-Veda; whilst Vālmīki, the sage dwelling at Chitra-kūta, is said to have been himself the composer of the Rāmāyana. Again, the sage Atri, whom Rāma visited immediately after his departure from Chitra-kūta, appears in the genealogical list preserved in the Mahā Bhārata, as the progenitor of the Moon, and consequently as the first ancestor of the Lunar race: whilst his grandson Buddha [Budha] is said to have married Ilā, the daughter of Ikhs'vāku who was himself the remote ancestor of the Solar race of Ayodhyā, from whom Rāma was removed by many generations. These conclusions are not perhaps based upon absolute proof, because they are drawn from untrustworthy authorities; but still the chronological difficulties have been fully apprehended by the Pundits, and an attempt has been made to reconcile all contradictions by representing the sages to have lived thousands of years, and to have often re-appeared upon earth in different ages widely removed from each other. Modern science refuses to accept such explanations; and consequently it is impossible to escape the conclusion that if Vālmīki composed the Rāmāyana in the form of Sanskrit in which it has been preserved, he could not have flourished in the same age as the sages who are named in the Rig-Veda." WHEELER'S History of India, Vol. II, 229.

PAGE 249.

And King Himālaya's Child.

Umā or Pārvatī, was the daughter of Himālaya and Menā. She is the heroine of Kālidāsa's Kumāra-Sambhava, or Birth of the War-God.

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Strong Kumbhakarna slumbering deep

In chains of never-ending sleep.

"Kumbhakarna, the gigantic brother of the titanic Rāvan,--named from the size of his ears which could contain a Kumbha or large water-jar--had such an appetite that he used to consume six months' provisions in a single day. Brahmā, to relieve the alarm of the world, which had begun to entertain serious

apprehensions of being eaten up, decreed that the giant should sleep six months at a time and wake for only one day during which he might consume his six months' allowance without trespassing unduly on the reproductive capabilities of the earth." Scenes front the Rāmāyan, p. 153, 2nd Edit.

PAGE 257.

Like S'iva when his angry might

Stayed Daksha's sacrificial rite.

The following spirited version of this old story is from the pen of Mr. W. Waterfield:

"[This is a favorite subject of Hindú sculpture, especially on the temples of Shiva, such as the caves of Elephanta and Ellora. It, no doubt, is an allegory of the contest between the followers of Shiva and the worshippers of the Elements, who observed the old ritual of the Vedas; in which the name of Shiva is never mentioned.]

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Daksha for devotion     Made a mighty feast:Milk and curds and butter,

Flesh of bird and beast,

Rice and spice and honey,

Sweetmeats ghí and gur, 1

Gifts for all the Bráhmans,     Food for all the poor.

At the gates of Gangá

2

Daksha held his feast;

Called the gods unto it,    Greatest as the least.  
 All the gods were gathered  
     Round with one accord; All the gods but Umá,    All but Umá's lord.  
 Umá sat with Shiva  
     On Kailása hill: Round them stood the Rudras    Watching for their will.  
 Who is this that cometh  
     Lilting to his lute? All the birds of heaven    Heard his music,  
 mute. Round his head a garland  
     Rich of hue was wreathed: Every sweetest odour    From its blossoms  
 breathed.  
 'Tis the Muni Nárad;  
     'Mong the gods he fares, Ever making mischief    By the tales he bears.  
 "Hail to lovely Umá!  
     Hail to Umá's lord! Wherefore are they absent    For her father's board?  
 "Multiplied his merits  
     Would be truly thrice, Could he gain your favour    For his sacrifice."  
 Worth of heart was Umá;  
     To her lord she spake:--"Why dost thou, the mighty,    Of no rite  
 partake?  
 "Straight I speed to Daksha  
     Such a sight to see: If he be my father,    He must welcome thee."  
 Wondrous was in glory  
     Daksha's holy rite; Never had creation    Viewed so brave a sight.  
 Gods, and nymphs, find fathers,  
     Sages, Bráhmans, sprites,--Every diverge creature    Wrought that rite  
 of rites.  
 Quickly then a quaking  
     Fell on all from far; Umá stood among them    On her lion car.  
 "Greeting, gods and sages,  
     Greeting, father mine! Work hath wondrous virtue,    Where such aids  
 combine.  
 "Guest-hall never gathered  
     Goodlier company: Seemeth all are welcome.    All the gods but me."  
 Spake the Muni Daksha,    Stern and cold his tone:--  
 "Welcome thou, too, daughter,    Since thou com'st alone.  
 "But thy frenzied husband  
     Suits another shrine; He is no partaker    Of this feast of mine.  
 "He who walks in darkness  
     Loves no deeds of light: He who herds with demons    Shuns each kindly  
 sprite.  
 "Let him wander naked.--  
     Wizard weapons wield,--Dance his frantic measure    Round the funeral  
 field.  
 "Art thou yet delighted  
     With the reeking hide, Body smeared with ashes.    Skulls in necklace  
 tied?  
 "Thou to love this monster!  
     Thou to plead his part! Know the moon and Gangá    Share that faithless  
 heart "Vainly art thou vying  
     With thy rivals' charms. Are not coils of serpents    Softer than thine  
 arms?"  
 Words like these from Daksha  
     Daksha's daughter heard: Then a sudden passion    All her bosom stirred.  
 Eyes with fury flashing.  
     Speechless in her ire, Headlong did she hurl her    'Mid the holy fire.  
 Then a trembling terror  
     Overcame each one, And their minds were troubled    Like a darkened sun;  
 p. 546  
 And a cruel Vision,    Face of lurid flame, Umá's Wrath incarnate,    From  
 the altar came.

Fiendlike forms by thousands      Started from his side,  
 'Gainst the sacrificers      All their might they plied:  
 Till the saints availed not  
     Strength like theirs to stay, And the gods distracted      Turned and fled  
 away.  
 Hushed were hymns and chanting,  
     Priests were mocked and spurned; Food defiled and scattered;      Altars  
 overturned.--  
 Then, to save the object  
     Sought at such a price, Like a deer in semblance      Sped the sacrifice.  
 Soaring toward the heavens,  
     Through the sky it fled? But the Rudras chasing      Smote away its head.  
 Prostrate on the pavement  
     Daksha fell dismayed:--" Mightiest, thou hast conquered      Thee we ask  
 for aid." Let not our oblations  
     All be rendered vain; Let our toilsome labour      Full fruition gain."  
 Bright the broken altars  
     Shone with Shiva's form; "Be it so!" His blessing      Soothed that  
 frantic storm.  
 Soon his anger ceases,  
     Though it soon arise;--But the Deer's Head ever      Blazes in the  
 skies."

Indian Ballads and other Poems. URVASÎ, PAGE 286.

"The personification of Urvasî herself is as thin as that  
 of Eôs or Selênê. Her name is often found in the Veda  
 as a mere name for the morning, and in the plural number it is used to  
 denote the dawns which passing over men bring them to old age and death.  
 Urvasî is the

bright flush of light overspreading the heaven before the  
 sun rises, and is but another form of the many mythical  
 beings of Greek mythology whose names take us back to the same idea or  
 the same root. As the dawn in the Vedic hymns is called Urûkî, the far-  
 going (Têlephassa,  
 Têlephos), so is she also Uruasî, the wide-existing or wide-spreading; as  
 are Eurôpê, Euryanassa, Euryphassa, and many more of the sisters of  
 Athênê and Aphroditê. As such she is the mother of Vasishtha, the bright  
 being, as Oidipous is the son of Iokastê; and although Vasishtha, like  
 Oidipous, has become a mortal bard or sage, he is still the son of Mitra  
 and Varuna, of night and day. Her lover Purûravas is the counterpart of  
 the Hellenic Polydeukês; but the continuance of her union with him  
 depends on the condition that she never sees him unclothed. But the  
 Gandharvas, impatient of her long sojourn among mortal men resolved to  
 bring her back to their bright home; and Purûravas is thus led unwittingly  
 to disregard her warning. A ewe with two lambs was tied to her couch, and  
 the Gandharvas stole one of them; Urvasî said, "They take away my  
 darling, as if I lived in a land where there is no hero and no man." They  
 stole the second, and she upbraided her husband again. Then Purûravas  
 looked and said, "How can that be a land without heroes or men where I  
 am?" And naked he sprang up; he thought it was too long to put on his  
 dress. Then the Gandharvas sent a flash of lightning, and Urvasî saw her  
 husband naked as by daylight. Then she vanished. "I come back," she said,  
 and went. 'Then he bewailed his vanished love in bitter grief.' Her  
 promise to return was fulfilled, but for a moment only, at the Lotos-  
 lake, and Purûravas in vain beseeches her to tarry longer. 'What shall I  
 do with thy p. 547

speech?' is the answer of Urvasî. 'I am gone like the first  
 of the dawns. Purûravas, go home again. I am hard to be caught like the  
 winds.' Her lover is in utter despair; but when he lies down to die, the  
 heart of Urvasî was melted, and she bids him come to her on the last  
 night of the year. On that night only he might be with her; but a son

should be born to him. On that day he went up to the golden seats, and there Urvasî told him that the Gandharvas would grant him one wish, and that he must make his choice. 'Choose thou for me,' he said: and she answered, 'Say to them, Let me be one of you.'

Cox's Mythology of the Aryan Nations. Vol. I. p. 397 PAGE 324.

The sovereign of the Vānar race.

"Vānar is one of the most frequently occurring names

by which the poem calls the monkeys of Rāma's army. Among the two or three derivations of which the word Vānar is susceptible, one is that which deduces it from [Sanskrit: \*\*] which signifies a wood, and thus Vānar would mean a forester, an inhabitant of the wood. I have said elsewhere that the monkeys, the Vānars, whom Rāma led to the conquest of Ceylon were fierce

woodland tribes who occupied the mountainous regions of the south of India, where their descendants may still be seen. I shall hence forth promiscuously employ the word Vānar to denote those monkeys, those fierce combatants of Rāma's army." GORRESIO.

PAGE 326.

No change of hue, no pose of limb

Gave sign that aught was false in him. Concise, unfaltering, sweet and clear, Without a word to pain the ear, From chest to throat, nor high nor low, His accents came in measured flow.

Somewhat similarly in The Squire's Tale:

'He with a manly voice said his message, After the form used in his language, Withouten vice of syllable or of letter. And for his talē shouldē seem the better Accordant to his wordēs was his chere, As teacheth art of speech them that it lere.

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RĀMA'S ALLIANCE WITH SUGRĪVA. "The literal interpretation of this portion of the

Rāmāyana is indeed deeply rooted in the mind of the Hindu. He implicitly believes that Rāma is Vishnu, who became incarnate for the purpose of destroying the demon Rāvana: that he permitted his wife to be captured by Rāvana for the sake of delivering the gods and Brāhmans from the oppressions of the Rākshasa; and that he ultimately assembled an army of monkeys, who were the progeny of the gods, and led them against the strong-hold of Rāvana at Lankā, and delivered the world from the tyrant Rākshasa, whilst obtaining ample revenge for his own personal wrongs.

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One other point seems to demand consideration, namely, the possibility of such an alliance as that which Rāma is said to have concluded with the monkeys. This possibility will of course be denied by modern critics, but still it is interesting to trace out the circumstances which seem to have led to the acceptance, of such a wild belief by the dreamy and marvel loving Hindi. The south of India swarms with monkeys of curious intelligence and rare physical powers. Their wonderful instinct for organization, their attachment to particular localities, their occasional journeys in large numbers over mountains and across rivers, their obstinate assertion of supposed rights, and the ridiculous caricature which they exhibit of all that is animal and emotional in man, would naturally create a deep

impression.... Indeed the habits of monkeys well deserve to be patiently studied; not as they appear in confinement, when much that is revolting in their nature is developed, but as they appear living in freedom amongst the trees of the forest, or in the streets of crowded cities, or precincts of temples. Such a study would not fail to awaken strange ideas; and although the European would not be prepared to regard monkeys as sacred animals he might be led to speculate as to their origin by the light of data, which are at present unknown to the naturalist whose observations have been derived from the menagerie alone.

Whatever, however, may have been the train of ideas which led the Hindú to regard the monkey as a being half human and half divine, there can be little doubt that in the Rámáyana the monkeys of southern India have been confounded with what may be called the aboriginal people of the country. The origin of this confusion may be easily conjectured. Perchance the aborigines of the country may have been regarded as a superior kind of monkeys; and to this day the features of the Marawars, who are supposed to be the aborigines of the southern part of the Carnatic, are not only different from those of their neighbours, but are of a character calculated to confirm the conjecture. Again, it is probable that the army of aborigines may have been accompanied by outlying bands of monkeys impelled by that magpie-like curiosity and love of plunder which

are the peculiar characteristics of the monkey race; and this incident may have given rise to the story that the army was composed of Monkeys." WHEELER'S History of India. Vol. II. pp. 316 ff.

THE FALL OF BÁLI, PAGE 342.

"As regards the narrative, it certainly seems to refer to some real event amongst the aboriginal tribes: namely, the quarrel between an elder and younger brother for the possession of a Ráj; and the subsequent alliance of Ráma with the younger brother. It is somewhat remarkable that Ráma appears to have formed an alliance with the wrong party, for the right of Báli was evidently superior to that of Sugríva; and it is especially worthy of note that Ráma compassed the death of Báli by an act contrary to all the laws of fair fighting. Again, Ráma seems to have tacitly sanctioned the transfer of Tárá from Báli to Sugríva, which was directly opposed to modern rule, although in conformity with the rude customs of a barbarous age; and it is remarkable that to this day the marriage of both widows and divorced women is practised by the Marawars, or aborigines of the southern Carnatic, contrary to the deeply-rooted prejudice which exists against such unions amongst the Hindús at large." WHEELER'S History of India, Vol. II. 324. p. 549

THE VÁNAR HOST, PAGE 370.

"The splendid Marutas form the army of Indras, the red-haired monkeys and bears that of Râmas; and the mythical and solar nature of the monkeys and bears of the Râmâyanam manifests itself several times. The king of the monkeys is a sun-god. The ancient king was named Bâlin, and was the son of Indras. His younger brother Sugrívas, he who changes his shape at pleasure (Kâmarúpas), who, helped by Râmas, usurped his throne, is said to be own child of the sun. Here it is evident that the Vedic antagonism between Indras and Vishnus is reproduced in a zoological and entirely apish form. The old Zeus must give way to the new, the moon to the sun, the evening to the morning sun, the sun of winter to that of spring; the young son betrays and overthrows the old one.... Râmas, who treacherously kills the old king of the monkeys, Bâlin, is the equivalent of Vishnus, who hurls his predecessor Indras from his throne; and Sugrívas, the new king of the monkeys resembles Indras when he promises to find the ravished Sitá, in the same way as Vishnus in one of his incarnations finds again the lost vedás. And there are other indications in the Râmâyanam of opposition between Indras and the monkeys who assist Râmas. The great monkey Hanumant, of the reddish colour of gold, has his jaw broken, Indras having struck him with his thunderbolt and caused him to fall upon a mountain, because, while yet a child, he threw himself off a mountain into the air in order to arrest the course of the sun, whose rays had no effect upon him. (The cloud rises from the mountain and hides the sun, which is unable of itself to disperse it; the tempest comes, and brings flashes of lightning and thunder-bolts, which tear the cloud in pieces.) The whole legend of the monkey Hanumant represents

the sun entering into the cloud or darkness, and coming out of it. His father is said to be now the wind, now the elephant of the monkeys (Kapikunjaras), now Kes'arin, the long-haired sun, the sun with a mane, the lion sun (whence his name of Kes'arinak putrah). From this point of view, Hanumant would seem to be the brother of Sugrivas, who is also the offspring of the sun....

All the epic monkeys of the Râmâyanam are described in the twentieth canto of the first book by expressions which very closely resemble those applied in the Vedic hymns to the Marutas, as swift as the tempestuous wind, changing their shape at pleasure, making a noise like clouds, sounding like thunder, battling, hurling mountain-peaks, shaking great uprooted trees, stirring up the deep waters, crushing the earth with their arms, making the clouds fall. Thus Bâlin comes out of the cavern as the sun out of the cloud.... But the legend of the monkey Hanumant presents

another curious resemblance to that of Samson. Hanumant is bound with cords by Indrajit, son of Râvanas; he could easily free himself, but does not wish to do so. Râvanas to put him to shame, orders his tail to be burned, because the tail is the part most prized by monkeys....

The tail of Hanumant, which sets fire to the city of the monsters, is probably a personification of the rays of the morning or spring sun, which sets fire to the eastern heavens, and destroys the abode of the nocturnal or winter monsters." DE GUBERNATIS, Zoological Mythology, Vol. II. pp. 100 ff.

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"The Jaitwas of Rajputana, a tribe politically reckoned as Rajputs, nevertheless trace their descent from the monkey-god Hanuman, and confirm it by alleging that their princes still bear its evidence in a tail-like prolongation of the spine; a tradition which has probably a real ethnological meaning, pointing out the Jaitwas as of non-Aryan race."

\* TYLOR'S Primitive

Culture, Vol. I. p. 341.

PAGE 372. The names of peoples occurring in the following s'lokas are omitted in the metrical translation:

'Go to the Brahmamâlas, 1 the Videhas, 2 the Mâlavas, 3 the Kâs'ikos'âlas, 4 the Mâgadnas, 5 the Pundras, 6 and the Angas, 7 and the land of the weavers of silk, and the land of the mines of silver, and the hills that stretch into the sea, and the towns and the hamlets that are about the top of Mandar, and the Karnaprâvaranas,

8 and the

Oshthakarnakas, 9 and the Ghoralobamukhas, 10 and the

p. 551

swift Ekapâdakas 1 and the strong imperishable Eaters of Men, and the Kirâtas 2 with stiff hair-tufts, men like gold and fair to look upon: And the Eaters of Raw Fish, and the Kirâtas who dwell in islands, and the fierce Tiger-men 3 who live amid the waters.'

PAGE 374.

'Go to the Vidarbhas 4 and the Rishtikas 5 and the Mahishikas, 6 and the Matsyas 7 and Kalingas 8 and the Kausikas 9...and the Andhras 10 and the Pundras 11 and the Cholas 12 and the Pandyas 13 and the Keralas. 14 'Go to the

p. 552 Mlechchhas 1 and the Pulindas 2 and the S'ûrasenas, 3

and the Prasthalas and the Bharatas and Madrakas 4 and

the Kâambojas 5 and the Yavanas 6 and the towns of the

S'akas 7 and the Varadas. 8

NORTHERN KURUS, PAGE 378.

Professor Lassen remarks in the Zeitschrift für die

Kunde des Morgenlandes, ii. 62: "At the furthest accessible extremity of the earth appears Harivarsha with the northern Kurus. The region of Hari or Vishnu belongs to the system of mythical geography; but the case is different with the Uttara Kurus. Here there is a real basis of geographical fact; of which fable has only taken advantage, without creating it. The Uttara Kurus were formerly quite independent of the mythical system of dvīpas, though they were included in it at an early date." Again the same writer says at p. 65: "That the conception of the Uttara Kurus is based upon an actual country and not on mere invention, is proved (1) by the way in which they are mentioned in the Vedas; (2) by the

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existence of Uttara Kuru in historical times as a real country; and (3) by the way in which the legend makes mention of that region as the home of primitive

customs. To begin with the last point the Mahabharata speaks as follows of the freer mode of life which women led in the early world, Book I. verses 4719-22: 'Women were formerly unconfined and roved about at their pleasure, independent. Though in their youthful innocence they abandoned their husbands, they were guilty of no offence; for such was the rule in early times. This ancient custom is even now the law for creatures born as brutes, which are free from lust and anger. This custom is supported by authority and is observed by great rishis, and it is still practiced among the northern Kurus.'

"The idea which is here conveyed is that of the continuance in one part of the world of that original blessedness which prevailed in the golden age. To afford a conception of the happy condition of the southern Kurus it is said in another place M.-Bh, i. 4346. "The southern Kurus vied in happiness with the northern Kurus and with the divine rishis and bards."

Professor Lassen goes on to say: "Ptolemy (vi. 16.) is also acquainted with Uttara Kuru. He speaks of a mountain, a people, and a city called Ottorakorra. Most of the other ancient authors who elsewhere mention this name, have it from him. It is a part of the country which he calls Serica; according to him the city lies twelve degrees west from the metropolis of Sera, and the mountain extends from thence far to the eastward. As

Ptolemy has misplacced the whole of eastern Asia beyond the Ganges, the relative position which he assigns will guide us better than the absolute one, which removes Ottorakorra so far to the east that a correction is inevitable. According to my opinion the Ottorakorra of Ptolemy must be sought for to the east of Kashgar." Lassen also thinks that Megasthenes had the Uttara Kurus in view when he referred to the Hyperboreans who were fabled by Indian writers to live a thousand years. In his Indian antiquities, (Ind. Alterthumskunde, i. 511, 512. and note,) the same writer concludes that though the passages above cited relative to the Uttara Kurus indicate a belief in the existence of a really existing country of that name in the far north, yet that the descriptions there given are to be taken as pictures of an ideal paradise, and not as founded on any recollections of the northern origin of the Kurus. It is probable, he thinks, that some such reminiscences originally existed, and still survived in the Vedic era, though there is no trace of their existence in latter times." Muir's Sanskrit Texts, Vol. II. pp. 336, 337. PAGE 428.

Trust to these mighty Vanars.

The corresponding passage in the Bengal recension has

"these silvans in the forms of monkeys, vanaran kapiropinah." "Here it manifestly appears," says

Gorresio, "that these hosts of combatants whom Rama led to the coitqnest of Lanka (Ceylon) the kingdom and seat of the Hamitic race, and whom the

poem calls monkeys, were in fact as I have elsewhere observed, inhabitants of the mountainous and southern regions of India, who were wild-looking and not altogether unlike monkeys. They were perhaps the remote ancestors of the Malay races."

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PAGE 481.

"Art thou not he who slew of old The Serpent-Gods, and stormed their hold."

All these exploits of Rávan are detailed in the Uttarakánda, and epitomized in the Appendix.

PAGE 434.

Within the consecrated hall.

The Bráhmaṇ householder ought to maintain three sacred fires, the Gárhapatya, the Akavaniya and the Dakshina. These three fires were made use of in many Brahmanical solemnities, for example in funeral rites

when the three fires were arranged in prescribed order.

PAGE 436.

Fair Punjikasthalá I met.

"I have not noticed in the Uttara Kánda any story about the daughter of Varuna, but the commentator on the text (VI 60, 11) explains the allusion to her thus:

"The daughter of Varuna was Punjikasthalí. On her account, a curse of Brahmá, involving the penalty of death, [was pronounced] on the rape of women." MUIR, Sanskrit Texts, Part IV.

Appendix.

PAGE 452.

"Shall no funereal honours grace

The parted lord of Raghu's race?"

"Here are indicated those admirable rites and those funeral prayers which Professor Müller has described in his excellent work, Die Todtenbestattung bei den Brahmanen, Sítá laments that the body of Ráma will not be honoured with those rites and prayers, nor will the Bráhmaṇ priest while laying the ashes from the pile in the bosom of the earth, pronounce over them those solemn and magnificent words: 'Go unto the earth, thy mother, the ample, wide, and blessed earth.... And do thou, O Earth, open and receive him as a friend with sweet greeting: enfold him in thy bosom as a mother wraps her child in her robes.'" GORRESIO.

PAGE 462.

Each glorious sign

That stamps the future queen is mine.

We read in Josephus that Caesar was so well versed in chiromancy that when one day a soi-disant son of Herod had audience of him, he at once detected the impostor because his hand was destitute of all marks of royalty.

PAGE 466.

In battle's wild Gandharva dance.

"Here the commentator explains: 'the battle resembled the dance of the Gandharvas,' in accordance with the notion of the Gandharvas entertained in his day. They were regarded as celestial musicians enlivening with their melodies

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Indra's heaven and the banquets of the Gods. But the Gandharvas before becoming celestial musicians in popular tradition, were in the primitive and true signification of the name heroes, spirited and ardent warriors, followers of Indra, and combined the heroic character with their atmospherical deity. Under this aspect the dance of the Gandharvas may be a very different thing from what the commentator means, and may signify the horrid dance of war." GORRESIO.



The Homeric expression is similar, "to dance a war-dance before Ares."

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By Anaranya'a lips of old.

"The story of Anaranya is told in the Uttara Kanda of the Rámáyana....' Anaranya a descendant of Ixváku and King of Ayodhyá, when called upon to fight with Rávana or acknowledge himself conquered, prefers the former alternative; but his army is overcome, and he himself is thrown from his chariot. When Rávana triumphs over his prostrate foe, the latter

says that he has been vanquished not by him but by fate, and that Rávana is only the instrument of his overthrow; and he predicts that Rávana shall one day be slain by his descendant Ráma." Sanskrit Texts, IV., Appendix.

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"With regard to the magic image of Sítá made by Indrajit, we may observe that this thoroughly oriental idea is also found in Greece in Homer's Iliad, where Apollo forms an image of Aeneas to save that hero beloved by the Gods: it occurs too in the Aeneid of Virgil where Juno forms a fictitious Aeneas to save Turnus:

Tum dea nube cava tenuem sine viribus umbram In faciem Aeneae (visu mirabile monstrum) Dardaniis ornat telis; clipeumque jubaque Divini assimulat capitis; dat inania verba; Dat sine mente sonum, gressusque effingit euntis.

(Aeneidos, lib X.)" GORRESIO.

PAGE 489. "To Raghu's son my chariot lend."

"Analogous to this passage of the Rámáyana, where Indra sends to Ráma his own chariot, his own charioteer, and his own arms, is the passage in the Aeneid where Venus descending from heaven brings celestial arms to her son Aeneas when he is about to enter the battle:

At Venus aethereos inter dea candida nimbos Dona fereus aderat;...  
... Arma sub adversa posuit radiantia quercu. Ille, deae donis et tanto laetus honore, Expleri nequit, atque oculos per singula volvit, Miraturque, interque manus et brachia versat Terribilem cristis galeam flammisque vomentem, Fatiferumque ensem, loriam ex aere rigentcm.

(Aeneidos, lib. VIII)" GORRESIO.

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PAGE 489. Agastya came and gently spake.

"The Muni or saint Agastya, author of several Vedic hymns, was celebrated in Indo-Sanskrit tradition for having directed the first brahmanical settlements in the southern regions of India; and the Mahábhárata gives him the credit of having subjected those countries, expelled the Rákshases. and given security to the solitary ascetics, who were settled there. Hence Agastya was regarded in ancient legend as the conqueror and ruler of the southern country. This tradition refers to the earliest migrations made by the Sanskrit Indians towards the south of India. To Agastya are attributed many marvellous mythic deeds which adumbrate and veil ancient events; some of which are alluded to here and there in the Rámáyana." GORRESIO.

The following is the literal translation of the Canto, text and commentary, from the Calcutta edition:

Having found Ráma weary with fighting and buried in deep thought, and Rávan standing before him ready to engage in battle, the holy Agastya, who had come to see the battle, approached Ráma and spoke to him thus: "O mighty Ráma, listen to the old mystery by which thou wilt conquer all thy foes in the battle. Having daily repeated the Ádityahridaya (the delighter of the mind of the Sun) the holy prayer which destroys all enemies (of him who repeats it) gives victory, removes all sins,

sorrows and distress, increases life, and which is the blessing of all blessings, worship the rising and splendid sun who is respected by both the Gods and demons, who gives light to all bodies and who is the rich lord of all the worlds, (To the question why this prayer claims so great reverence; the sage answers) Since yonder

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sun is full of glory and all gods reside in him (he being their material cause) and bestows being and the active principle on all creatures by his rays; and since he protects all deities, demons and men with his rays.

He is Brahmá,

1 Vishnu, 2 Siva, 3 Skanda, 4 Prajápati, 5  
Mahendra, 6 Dhanada, 7 Kála, 8 Yama, 9 Soma, 10  
Apám Pati i.e. The lord of waters, Pitris, 11 Vasus, 12

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Sádhyas, 1 Asvins, 2 Maruts, 3 Manu, 4 Váyu, 5 Vahni, 6  
Prajá, 7 Prána, 8 Ritukartá, 9 Prabhákara, 10 (Thou, 11  
art) Aditya, 12 Savitá, 13 Súra, 14 Khaga, 15 Púshan, 16  
Gabhastimán, 17 Suvarnasadris'a, 18 Bhánu, 19  
Hiranyaretas, 20 Divákara, 21 Haridas'va, 22  
Sahasrárchish, 23 Saptasapti, 24 Marichimán, 25  
Timironmathana, 26 Sambhu, 27 Twashtá, 28  
Mártanda, 29 Ans'umán, 30 Hiranyagarbha, 31 Sis'ira, 32  
Tapana, 33 Ahaskara, 34 Ravi, 35 Agnigarbha, 36  
Aditiputra, 37 Sankha, 38 Sis'iranás'ana, 39 Vyomanátha, 40 Tamobhedí, 41  
Rigyajussámapáraga, 42

Ghana-\*

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vríshti. 1 Apám-Mitra, 2 Vindhyavíthíplavangama, 3  
A'tapí, 4 Mandalí, 5 Mrityu (death), Pingala, 6  
Sarvatápana, 7 Kavi, 8 Vis'va, 9 Mahátejas, 10 Rakta, 11  
Sarvabhavodbhava. 12 The Lord of stars, planets, and  
other luminous bodies, Vis'vabhávana, 13 Tejasvinám-  
Tejasvi, 14 Dwádas'átman: 15 I salute thee, I salute thee  
who art the eastern mountain. I salute thee who art the  
western mountain. I salute thee who art the Lord of all the luminous  
bodies. I salute thee who art the Lord of days.

I respectfully salute thee who art Jaya,

16 Jayabhadra, 17

Haryas'va, 18 O Thou who hast a thousand rays, I  
repeatedly salute thee. I repeatedly and respectfully  
salute thee who art A'ditya, I repeatedly salute thee who art Ugra,  
19 Víra, 20 and Sáranga. 21 I salute thee who  
openest the lotuses (or the lotus of the heart). I salute thee who art  
furious. I salute thee who art the Lord of Brahmá, S'iva and Vishnu. I  
salute thee who art the sun, A'dityavarchas,  
22 splendid, Sarvabhaksha, 23 and  
Raudravapush. 24

I salute thee who destroyest darkness, cold and enemies: whose form is  
boundless, who art the destroyer of the  
ungrateful; who art Deva; 25 who art the Lord of the  
luminous bodies, and who appearest like the heated gold. I salute thee  
who art Hari,

26 Vis'vakarman, 27 the  
destroyer of darkness, and who art splendid and Lokasákshin.

28 Yonder sun destroys the whole of the  
material world and also creates it. Yonder sun dries (all earthly  
things), destroys them and causes rain with his rays. He wakes when our  
senses are asleep; and resides within all beings. Yonder sun is Agnihotra  
29 and also

the fruit obtained by the

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performer of Agnihotra. He is identified with the gods, sacrifices, and the fruit of the sacrifices. He is the Lord of all the duties known to the world, if any man, O Rághava, in calamities, miseries, forests and dangers, prays to yonder sun, he is never overwhelmed by distress. Worship, with close attention Him the God of gods and the Lord of the world; and recite these verses thrice, whereby thou wilt be victorious in the battle. O brave one, thou wilt kill Rávana this very instant."

Thereupon Agastya having said this went away as he came. The glorious Ráma having heard this became free from sorrow. Rághava whose senses were under control, being pleased, committed the hymn to memory, recited it facing the sun, and obtained great delight. The brave Ráma having sipped water thrice and become pure took his bow, and seeing Rávana, was delighted, and meditated on the sun.

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His horses poured their burning tears. I have omitted the Canto from which this line is taken because it describes signs and portents similar to those which have occurred in preceding books. But the weeping of the horses is new and is too Homeric to be passed by unnoticed. I borrow the following extract from De Quincey: "The old Homeric superstition which connects horses by the closest sympathy, and even by prescience, with their masters--that superstition which Virgil has borrowed from Homer in his beautiful episode of Mezentins (Rhaebe diu, res si qua diu mortalibus ulla est, Viximus)-- still lingers unbroken in Crete. Horses foresee the fates of riders who are doomed, and express their prescience by weeping in a human fashion. The horses of Achilles weep in "Iliad" xvii, on seeing Automedon their beloved driver prostrate on the ground. With this view of the horse's capacity, it is singular, that in Crete this animal by preference should be called to αλογου, the brute, or irrational creature. But the word •ππος has, by some accident, been lost in the modern Greek. As an instance both of the disparaging name, and of the ennobling superstition, take the following stanza from a Cretan ballad of 1825, written in the modern Greek:--

"Ωντεν εκβαλλικευε,

Εκλαιε τ• αλογο του.

Και τοτεσα το εγνωρισε Πως ειναι • θανατος του"

"Upon which he mounted, and his horse wept; and then he saw clearly how this should bode his death."

Under the same old Cretan faith, Homer in "Iliad" xvii.

437, says:--

"Δ•κρυα δ• σφι

Θερμ• κατ• βλεφ•ρων χαμ•δισ ••ε μυρομ•νοι•ν •νι•χοιο ποθ•".

"Tears, scalding tears, trickled to the ground from the eyelids of them (the horses), fretting through grief for the loss of their charioteer." DE QUINCEY. Homer and the Homeridae.

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RÁVAN'S FUNERAL. "In the funeral ceremonies of India the fire was placed on three sides of the pyre; the Dakshina on the south, the Gárhapatya on the west, and the Áhavaniya on the east. The funeral rites are not described in detail here, and it is therefore difficult to elucidate and explain them. The poem assigns the funeral ceremonies of Aryan Brahmans to the Rákshases, a race different from them in origin and religion, in the same way as Homer sometimes introduces into Troy the rites of the Grecian cult." GORRESIO.

Mr. Muir translates the description of the funeral from

the Calcutta edition, as follows: "They formed, with Vedic rites, a funeral pile of faggots of sandal wood, with padmaka wood, us'ira grass, and sandal, and covered with a quilt of deer's hair. They then performed an unrivalled obsequial ceremony for the Ráxasa prince, placing the sacrificial ground to the S.E. and the fire in the proper situation. They cast the ladle filled with curds and ghee on the shoulder 1 of the deceased; he (?) placed the car on the feet, and the mortar between the

thighs. Having deposited all the wooden vessels, the [upper] and lower fire-wood, and the other pestle, in their proper places, they departed. The Ráxasas having then slain a victim to their prince in the manner prescribed in the S'ástras, and enjoined by great rishis, cast [into the fire] the coverlet of the king saturated with ghee. They then, Vibhíshana included, with afflicted hearts, adorned Rávana with perfumes and garlands, and with various vestments, and besprinkled him with fried grain. Vibhíshana having bathed, and having, with his clothes wet, scattered in proper form tila seeds mixed with darbha grass, and moistened with water, applied the fire [to the pile]."

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The following is a literal translation of Brahmá's address to Ráma according to the Calcutta edition, text and commentary:

"O Ráma, how dost thou, being the creator of all the world, best of all those who have profound knowledge of the Upanishads and all-powerful as thou art, suffer Sitá to fall in the fire? How dost thou not know thyself as the best of the gods? Thou art one of the primeval Vasus,

2 and also their lord and creator. Thou art thyself the lord and first creator of the three worlds. Thou art the eighth (that is Mahádeva) of the Rudras,

3 and also the fifth 4 of the Sádhyas. 5 (The poet describes Ráma as made of the following gods) The As'vinikumáras (the twin divine physicians of the gods) are thy ears; the sun and the moon are thy eyes; and thou hast been seen in the beginning and at the end of creation. How dost thou neglect the daughter of Videha (Janaka like a man whose actions are directed by the dictates of nature?" Thus addressed by Indra, Brahmá and

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the other gods, Ráma the descendant of Raghu, lord of the world and the best of the virtuous, spoke to the chief of the gods. "As I take myself to be a man of the name of Ráma and son of Das'aratha, therefore, sir, please tell me who I am and whence have I come." "O thou whose might is never failing," said Brahmá to Kákutstha the foremost of those who thoroughly know Brahmá, "Thou art Náráyana,

1 almighty, possessed of fortune, and armed with the discus. Thou art the boar 2 with one tusk; the conqueror of thy past and future foes. Thou art Brahmá true and eternal or undecaying. Thou art Vis'vaksena, 3 having four arms; Thou art Hrishíkes'a,

4 whose bow is made of horn; Thou art Purusha, 5 the best of all beings; Thou art one who is never defeated by any body; Thou art the holder of the sword (named Nandaka). Thou art Vishnu (the pervader of all); blue in colour: of great might; the commander of armies; and lord of villages. Thou art truth. Thou art embodied intelligence, forgiveness, control over the senses, creation, and destruction. Thou art Upendra

6 and

Madhusúdana. 7 Thou art the creator of Indra, the ruler over all the world, Padmanábha. 8 and destroyer of enemies in the battle. The divine Rishis call thee shelter of refugees, as well as the giver of shelter. Thou hast a thousand horns,

9 a hundred heads. 10 Thou art  
respected of the respected; and the lord and first creator of the three  
worlds. Thou art the forefather and shelter of Siddhas,  
11 and Sádhyas. 12 Thou all sacrifices;  
Vashfatkára, 13 Omkára. 14 Thou art beyond those who  
are beyond our senses. There is none who knows who thou art and who knows  
thy beginning and end. Thou art seen in all material objects, in  
Bráhmans, in cows, and also in all the quarters, sky and streams. Thou  
hast a thousand feet, a hundred heads, and a thousand eyes. Thou hast  
borne the material objects and the earth with the mountains; and at the  
bottom of the ocean thou art seen the great serpent. O Ráma, Thou hast  
borne the three worlds, gods, Gandharvas,  
15 and demons. I am, O  
Ráma, thy heart; the goddess of learning is thy tongue; the gods are the  
hairs of thy body; the closing of thy eyelids is called the night: and  
their opening is called the day. The Vedas are thy Sanskáras.

16 Nothing can  
exist without thee. The whole world is thy body; the surface of the earth  
is thy stability. p. 562  
O S'rívatsalakshana, fire is thy anger, and the moon is  
thy favour. In the time of thy incarnation named Vámana, thou didst  
pervade the three worlds with thy three steps; and Mahendra was made the  
king of paradise by thee having confined the fearful Bali.

1 Sitá  
(thy wife) is Lakshmi; and thou art the God Vishnu, 2  
Krishna, 3 and Prajapati. To kill Rávan thou hast  
assumed the form of a man; therefore, O best of the virtuous, thou hast  
completed this task imposed by us (gods). O Ráma, Ravana has been killed  
by thee: now being joyful (e. i. having for some time reigned in the  
kingdom of Ayodhyá,) go to paradise. O glorious Ráma, thy power and thy  
valour are never failing. The visit to thee and the prayers made to thee  
are never fruitless. Thy devotees will never be unsuccessful. Thy  
devotees who obtain thee (thy favour) who art first and best of mankind,  
shall obtain their desires in this world as well as in the next. They who  
recite this prayer, founded on the Vedas (or first uttered by the sages),  
and the old and divine account of (Ráma) shall never suffer defeat."

THE MEETING, PAGE 503. The Bharat-Miláp or meeting with Bharat, is the  
closing  
scene of the dramatic representation of Ráma's great victory and  
triumphant return which takes place annually in October in many of the  
cities of Northern India. The Rám-Lalá or Play of Ráma, as the great  
drama is called, is performed in the open air and lasts with one day's  
break through fifteen successive days. At Benares there are three nearly  
simultaneous performances, one provided by H. H. the Maharajah of Benares  
near his palace at Ramnaggur, one by H. H. the Maharajah of Vizianagram  
near the Missionary settlement at Sigra and at other places in the city,  
and one by the leading gentry of the city at Chowká Ghát near the  
College. The scene especially on the great day when the brothers meet is  
most interesting: the procession of elephants with their gorgeous howdahs  
of silver and gold and their magnificently dressed riders with priceless  
jewels sparkling in their turbans, the enthusiasm of the thousands of  
spectators who fill the streets and squares, the balconies and the  
housetops, the flowers that are rained down upon the advancing car, the  
wild music, the shouting and the joy, make an impression that is not  
easily forgotten.

Still on his head, well trained in lore Of duty, Ráma's shoes he  
bore.

Ráma's shoes are here regarded as the emblems of royalty or possession.  
We may compare the Hebrew "Over Edom will I cast forth my shoe." A

curiously similar passage occurs in LYSCHANDER'S Chronicon Greenlandiaë Rhythmicon: "Han sendte til Irland sin skiden skoe,

Og bød den Konge. Som der monne boe, Han skulde dem hæderlig bære Pan Juuledag i sin kongelig Pragt, Og kjende han havde sit Rige og Magt Af Norges og Quernes Herre."

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He sent to Ireland his dirty shoes, And commanded the king who lived there To wear them with honour On Christmas Day in his royal state, And to own that he had his kingdom and power From the Lord of Norway and the Isles. Notes & Queries, March 30, 1872.

I end these notes with an extract which I translate from Signor Gorresio's Preface to the tenth volume of his Rámáyan, and I take this opportunity of again thankfully acknowledging my great obligations to this eminent S'anskritist from whom I have so frequently borrowed. As Mr. Muir has observed, the Bengal recension which Signor Gorresio has most ably edited is throughout an admirable commentary on the genuine Rámáyan of northern India, and I have made constant reference to the faithful and elegant translation which

accompanies the text for assistance and confirmation in difficulties:

"Towards the southern extremity and in the island of Lanká (Ceylon) there existed undoubtedly a black and ferocious race, averse to the Aryans and hostile to their mode of worship: their ramifications extended through the islands of the Archipelago, and some traces of them remain in Java to this day.

The Sanskrit-Indians, applying to this race a name

expressive of hatred which occurs in the Vedas as the name of hostile, savage and detested beings, called it the Rákshas race: it is against these Rákshases that the expedition of Ráma which the Rámáyan celebrates is directed. The Sanskrit-Indians certainly altered in their traditions the real character of this race: they attributed to it physical and moral qualities not found in human nature; they transformed it into a race of giants; they represented it as monstrous, hideous, truculent, changing forms at will, blood-thirsty and ravenous, just as the Semites represented the races that opposed them as impious, horrible and of monstrous size. But notwithstanding these mythical exaggerations, which are partly due to the genius of the Aryans so prone to magnify everything without measure, the Rámáyan in the course of its epic narration has still preserved and noted here and there some traits and peculiarities of the race which reveal its true character. It represents the Rákshases as black of hue, and compares them with black clouds and masses of black collyrium; it attributes to them curly woolly hair and thick lips, it depicts them as loaded with chains, collars and girdles of gold, and the other bright ornaments which their race has always loved, and in which the kindred races of the Soudan still delight. It describes them as worshippers of matter and force. They are hostile to the religion of the Aryans whose rites and sacrifices they disturb and ruin...Such is the Rákshas race as represented in the Rámáyan; and the war of the Aryan Ráma forms the subject of the epic, a subject certainly real and historical as far as regards its substance, but greatly exaggerated by the ancient myth. In Sanskrit-Indian tradition are found traces of another struggle of the Aryans with the Rákshas races, which preceded the war of Ráma. According to some pauranic legends, Kárttavírya a descendant of the royal tribe of the Yádavas, contemporary with Parasurama and a little anterior to Ráma, attacked Lanká and took Rávan prisoner. This well shows how ancient and how deeply rooted in the Aryan race is the thought of this war which the Rámáyan celebrates.

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"But," says an eminent Indianist 1 whose learning I highly appreciate, "the Rámáyan is an allegorical epic, and no precise and historical value can be assigned to it.

Sítá signifies the furrow made by the plough, and under this symbolical aspect has already appeared honoured with worship in the hymns of the Rig-veda; Ráma is the bearer of the plough (this assertion is entirely gratuitous; these two allegorical personages represented agriculture introduced to the southern regions of India by the race of the Kosalas from whom Ráma was descended; the Rákshases on whom he makes war are races of demons and giants who have little or nothing human about them; allegory therefore predominates in the poem, and the exact reality of an historical event must not be looked for in it." Such is Professor Weber's opinion. If he means to say that mythical fictions are mingled with real events,

Forsan in alcun vero suo arco percuote,  
as Dante says, and I fully concede the point. The interweaving of the myth with the historical truth belongs to the essence, so to speak, of the primitive epopeia. If Sítá is born, as the Rámáyan feigns, from the furrow which King Janak opened when he ploughed the earth, not a whit more real is the origin of Helen and Aeneas as related in Homer and Virgil, and if the characters in the Rámáyan exceed human nature, and in a greater degree perhaps than is the case in analogous epics, this springs in part from the nature of the subject and still more from the symbol-loving genius of the orient. Still the characters of the Rámáyan, although

they exceed more or less the limits of human nature, act notwithstanding in the course of the poem, speak, feel, rejoice and grieve according to the natural impulse of human passions. But if by saying that the Rámáyan is an allegorical epic, it is meant that its fundamental subject is nothing but allegory, that the war of the Aryan Ráma against the Rákshas race is an allegory, that the conquest of the southern region and of the island of Lanká is an allegory, I do not hesitate to answer that such a presumption cannot be admitted and that the thing is in my opinion impossible. Father Paolino da S. Bartolommeo,  
2 had already, together

with other strange opinions of his own on Indian matters, brought forward a similar idea, that is to say that the exploit of Ráma which is the subject of the Rámáyan was a symbol and represented the course of the sun: thus he imagined that Brahmá was the earth, Vishnu the water, and that his avatárs were the blessings brought by the fertilizing waters, etc. But such ideas, born at a time when Indo-sanskrit antiquities were enveloped in darkness, have been dissipated by the light of new studies. How could an epic so dear in India to the memory of the people, so deeply rooted for many centuries in the minds of all, so propagated and diffused through all the dialects and languages of those region, which had become the source of many dramas which are still represented in India, which is itself represented every year with such magnificence and to such crowds of people in the neighbourhood of Ayodhyá, a poem welcomed at its very birth with such favour, as the legend relates, that the recitation of it by the first wandering Rhapsodists has consecrated and made famous all the places celebrated

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by them, and where Ráma made a shorter or longer stay, how, I ask, could such an epic have been purely allegorical? How, upon a pure invention, upon a simple allegory, could a poem have been composed of about fifty thousand verses, relating with such force and power the events, and giving details with such exactness? On a theme purely allegorical there may easily be composed a short mythical poem, as for example a poem on Proserpine or Psyche: but never an epic so full of traditions and historical memories, so intimately connected with the life of the people, as the Rámáyan.

1 Excessive readiness to find allegory

whenever some traces of symbolism occur, where the myth partly veils the historical reality, may lead and often has led to error. What poetical work of mythical times could stand this mode of trial? could there not be made, or rather has there not been made a work altogether allegorical, out of the Homeric poems? We have all heard of the ingenious idea of the anonymous writer, who in order to prove how easily we may pass beyond the truth in our wish to seek and find allegory everywhere, undertook with keen subtlety to prove that the great personality of Napoleon I. was altogether allegorical and represented the sun. Napoleon was born in an island, his course was from west to east, his twelve marshals were the twelve signs of the zodiac, etc.

I conclude then, that the fundamental theme of the Rámáyan, that is to say the war of the Aryan Ráma against the Rákshases, an Hamitic race settled in the south, ought to be regarded as real and historical as far as regards its substance, although the mythic element intermingled with the true sometimes alters its natural and genuine aspect.

How then did the Indo-Sanskrit epopeia form and complete itself? What elements did it interweave in its progress? How did it embody, how did it clothe the naked and simple primitive datum? We must first of all remember that the Indo-European races possessed the epic genius in the highest degree, and that they alone in the different regions they occupied produced epic poetry...But other causes and particular influences combined to nourish and develop the epic germ of the Sanskrit-Indians. Already in the Rig-veda are found hymns in which the Aryan genius preluded, so to speak, to the future epopeia, in songs that celebrated the heroic deeds of Indra, the combats and the victories of the tutelary Gods of the Aryan races over enemies secret or open, human or superhuman, the exploits and the memories of ancient heroes. More recently, at certain solemn occasions, as the very learned A. Weber remarks, at the solemnity, for example of the As'vamedha of sacrifice of the horse, the praises of the king who ordained the great rite were sung by bards and minstrels in songs composed for the purpose, the memories of past times were recalled and honourable mention was made of the just and pious kings of old. In the Bráhmanas, a sort of prose commentaries annexed to the Vedas, are found recorded stories and legends which allude to historical events of the past ages, to ancient memories, and to mythical events. Such popular legends which the Bráhmanas undoubtedly gathered from tradition admirably suited the epic tissue with which they were interwoven by successive hands.....Many and various mythico-historical traditions suitable for epic development, were diffused among the Aryan races, those for example which are related

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in the four chapters containing the description of the earth, the Descent of the Ganges, etc. The epic genius however sometimes created beings of its own and gave body and life to ideal conceptions. Some of the persons in the Rámáyan must be, in my opinion, either personifications of the forces of nature like those which are described with such vigour in the Sháhnámah, or if not exactly created, exaggerated beyond human proportions; others, vedic personages much more ancient than Ráma, were introduced into the epic and woven into its narrations, to bring together men who lived in different and distant ages, as has been the case in times nearer to our own, in the epics, I mean, of the middle ages.

In the introduction I have discussed the antiquity of the Rámáyan; and by means of those critical and inductive proofs which are all that an antiquity without precise historical dates can furnish I have endeavoured to establish with all the certainty that the subject admitted, that the original composition of the Rámáyan is to be assigned to about



the twelfth century before the Christian era. Not that I believe that the epic then sprang to life in the form in which we now possess it; I think, and I have elsewhere expressed the opinion, that the poem during the course of its rhapsodical and oral propagation appropriated by way of episodes, traditions, legends and ancient myths.....But as far as regards the epic poem properly so called which celebrates the expedition of Ráma against the Rákshases I think that I have sufficiently shown that its origin and first appearance should be placed about the twelfth century B C.; nor have I hitherto met with anything to oppose this chronological result, or to oblige me to rectify or reject it.....But an eminent philologist already quoted, deeply versed in these studies, A. Weber, has expressed in some of his writings a totally different opinion; and

the authority of his name, if not the number and cogency of his arguments, compels me to say something on the subject. From the fact or rather the assumption that Megasthenes

1 who lived some time in India has

made no mention either of the Mahábhárat or the Rámáyan Professor Weber argues that neither of these poems could have existed at that time; as regards the Rámáyan, the unity of its composition, the chain that binds together its different parts, and its allegorical character, show it, says Professor Weber, to be much more recent than the age to which I have assigned it, near to our own era, and according to him, later than the Mahábhárat. As for Megasthenes it should be observed, that he did not write a history of India, much less a literary history or anything at all resembling one, but a simple description, in great part physical, of India: whence, from his silence on literary matters to draw inferences regarding the history of Sanskrit literature would be the same thing as from the silence of a geologist with respect to the literature of a country whose valleys, mountains, and internal structure he is exploring, to conjecture that such and such a poem or history not mentioned by him did not exist at his time. We have only to look at the fragments of Megasthenes collected and published by Schwanbeck to see what was the nature and scope of his Indica..... But only a few fragments of Megasthenes are extant; and to pretend that they should be argument and proof enough to judge the antiquity of a poem is to press the laws of criticism too far. To Professor Weber's argument as to the more or

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less recent age of the Rámáyan from the unity of its composition, I will make one sole reply, which is that if unity of composition were really a proof of a more recent age, it would be necessary to reduce by a thousand years at least the age of Homer and bring him down to the age of Augustus and Virgil; for certainly there is much more unity of composition, a greater accord and harmony of parts in the Iliad and the Odyssey than in the Rámáyan. But in the fine arts perfection is no proof of a recent age: while the experience and the continuous labour of successive ages are necessary to extend and perfect the physical or natural sciences, art which is spontaneous in its nature can produce and has produced in remote times works of such perfection as later ages have not been able to equal."

Footnotes

516:1 The Academy, Vol. III., No 43, contains an able and interesting notice of this work from the pen of the Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Cambridge: 'The Uttarakánda.' Mr. Cowell remarks, 'bears the same relation to the Rámáyana, as the Cyclic poems to the Iliad. Just as the Cypria of Stasinus, the Aethiopis of Arctinus, and the little Iliad of Lesches completed the story of the p. 517 Iliad, and not only added the series of events which preceded and followed it, but also founded episodes of their own on isolated allusions in Homer, so the Uttarakánda is intended to

complete the Rámáyana, and at the same time to supplement it by intervening episodes to explain casual allusions or isolated incidents which occur in it. Thus the early history of the giant Rávana and his family fills nearly forty Chapters, and we have a full account of his wars with the gods and His conquest of Lanká, which all happened long before the action of the poem commences, just as the Cypria narrated the birth and early history of Helen, and the two expeditions of the Greeks against Troy; and the latter chapters continue the history of the hero Ráma after his triumphant return to his paternal kingdom, and the poem closes with his death and that of his brothers, and the founding by their descendants of various kingdoms in different parts of India.'

518:1 Muir, Sanskrit Texts, Part IV., pp. 414 ff.

519:1 MUIR, Sanskrit Texts, Part IV, 391, 392.520:1 See Academy, III., 43.

521:1 Academy, Vol. III., No. 43.

522:1 E. B. Cowell. Academy, No. 48. The story of Sítá's banishment will be found roughly translated from the Raghurans'a, in the Additional Notes.

522:2 E. B. Cowell. Academy, Vol, III, No. 48.

523:1 Muir, Sanskrit Texts, Part IV., Appendix.

545:1 Ghí: clarified butter. Gur: molasses.

545:2 Haridwar (Anglicè Hurdwar) where the Ganges enters the plain country.

550:\* Campbell in 'Journ. As. Soc. Bengal,' 1866, Part ii, p. 182;

Latham, 'Descr. Eth.' Vol. ii. p. 456;

Tod, 'Annals of Rajasthan,' Vol. i. p. 114.

550:1 Said by the commentator to be an eastern people between the Himálayan and Vindhyan chains.

550:2 Videha was a district in the province of Behar, the ancient Mithilá or the modern Tirhoot.550:3 The people of Malwa.

550:4 "The Kás'ikos'alas are a central nation in the Váyu Purána. The Rámáyana places them in the east.

The combination indicates the country between Benares and Oude....

Kos'ala is a name variously applied. Its earliest and most celebrated application is to the country on the banks of the Sarayú, the kingdom of Ráma, of which Ayodhyá was the capital.... In the Mahábhárata we have one Kos'ala in the east and another in the south, besides the Prák-Kos'alas and Uttara Kos'alas in the east and north. The Puránas place the Kos'alas amongst the people on the back of Vindhya; and it would appear from the Váyu that Kus'a the son of Ráma transferred his kingdom to a more central position; he ruled over Kos'ala at his capital of Kús'asthali of Kus'avatí, built upon the Vindhyan precipices." WILSON'S Vishnu Púrana, Vol. II. pp. 157, 172.

550:5 The people of south Behar.

550:6 The Pundras are said to be the inhabitants of the western provinces of Bengal. "In the

Aitareyabráhmana, VII. 18, it is said that the elder sons of Vis'vamisra were cursed to become progenitors of most abject races, such as Andhras, Pundras, S'abararas, Pulindas, and Mútibas." WILSON'S Vishnu Purána Vol. II. 170.550:7 Anga is the country about Bhagulpore, of which

Champá was the capital.

550:8 A fabulous people, 'men who use their ears as a covering.' So Sir John Maundeville says: "And in another Yle ben folk that han gret Eres and long, that hangen down to here knees,' and Pliny, lib, iv. c. 13: "In quibus nuda alioquin corpora praegrandes ipsorum

aures tota contegunt." Strabo calls them •νωτ•κοιτοι'.

Isidore calls them Panotii.

550:9 'Those whose ears hang down to their lips.'

550:10 'The Iron-faces.'

551:1 'The One-footed.'

"In that Contree," says Sir Jhon Maundevile, "ben folk, that han but o foot and thei gon so fast that it is marvaylle: and the foot is so large that it schadeweth alle the Body azen the Sonne, when thei wole lye and rest hem." So Pliny, Natural History, lib. vii. c. 2: speaks of *Hominum gens...singulis cruribus, mirae pernecitatis ad saltum; eosdemque Sciopodas vocari, quod in majori aestu, humi jacentes resupini, umbrâ se pedum protegant.*" These epithets are, as Professor Wilson remarks,

"exaggerations of national ugliness, or allusions to peculiar customs, which were not literally intended, although they may have furnished the Mandevilles of ancient and modern times." Vishnu Purâna, Vol. II. p. 162.

551:2 The Kirrhadae of Arrian: a general name for savage tribes living in woods and mountains

551:3 Said by the commentator to be half tigers half men.

551:4 The kingdom seems to have corresponded with the greater part of Berar and Khandesh.

551:5 The Bengal recension has Kishikas, and places them both in the south and the north.

551:6 The people of Mysore.

551:7 "There are two Matsyas, one of which, according to the Yantra Samráj, is identifiable with Jeypoor. In the Digvijaya of Nakula he subdues the Matsyas further to the west, or Gujerat." WILSON'S Vishnu Purâna, Vol. II. 158. Dr. Hall observes: "In the Mahâbhârata Sabhâ-parwan, 1105 and 1108, notice is taken of the king of Matsya and of the Aparamatsyas; and, at 1082, the Matsyas figure as an eastern people. They are placed among the nations of the south in the Râmâyana Kishkindhâ-kânda, XLI., II, while the Bengal recension, Kishkindhâ-kânda, XLIV., 12, locates them in the north."

551:8 The Kalingas were the people of the upper part of the Coromandel Coast, well known, in the traditions of the Eastern Archipelago, as Kling. Ptolemy has a city in that part, called Caliga; and Pliny Calingae proximi mari." WILSON'S Vishnu Purâna, Vol. II. 156, Note.

551:9 The Kaus'ikas do not appear to be identifiable.

551:10 The Andhras probably occupied the modem Telingana.

551:11 The Pundras have already been mentioned in Canto XL.

551:12 The inhabitants of the lower part of the Coromandel Coast; so called, after them, Chola-mandala.

551:13 A people in the Deccan.

551:14 The Keralas were the people of Malabar proper. 552:1 A generic term for persons speaking any language but Sanskrit and not conforming to the usual Hindu institutions.

552:2 "Pulinda is applied to any wild or barbarous tribe.

Those here named are some of the people of the deserts along the Indus; but Pulindas are met with in many other positions, especially in the mountains and forests across Central India, the haunts of the Bheels and Gonds. So Ptolemy places the Pulindas along the banks of the Narmadá, to the frontiers of Larice, the Látá or Lár of the Hindus,--Khandesh and part of Gujerat." WILSON'S Vishnu Purâna, Vol. II. 159, Note.

Dr. Hall observes that "in the Bengal recension of the Râmâyana the Pulindas appear both in the south and in the north. The real Râmâyana K.-k., XLIII., speaks of the northern Pulindas."

552:3 The S'úrasenas were the inhabitants of Mathurá, the Suraseni of Arrian.

552:4 These the Mardi of the Greeks and the two preceding tribes appear to have dwelt in the north-west of Hindustan.

552:5 The Kámbojas are said to be the people of Arachosia. They are always mentioned with the north-western tribes.

552:6 "The term Yavanas, although, in later times, applied to the Mohammedans, designated formerly the Greeks.... The Greeks were known throughout Western Asia by the term Yavan, or Ion, Ἴωνες; the ... of the Hindus.... That the Macedonian or Bactrian Greeks were most usually intended is not only probable from their position and relations with India, but from their being usually named in concurrence with the north-western tribes, Kámbojas, Daradas, Páradas, Báhlíkas, S'akas &c., in the Rámáyana. Mahábhárata, Puránas, Manu, and in various poems and plays." WILSON'S Vishnu Purána Vol. II. p. 181, Note.

552:7 These people, the Sakai and Sacae of classical writers, the Indo-Scythians of Ptolemy, extended, about the commencement of our era, along the west of India, from the Hindu Kosh to the mouths of the Indus.

552:8 The corresponding passage in the Bengal recension has instead of Varadas Daradas the Dards or inhabitants of the modern Dardistan along the course of the Indus, above the Himálayas, just before it descends to India.

556:\* From the word yonder it would appear that the prayer is to be repeated at the rising of the Sun. 556:1 The creator of the world and the first of the Hindu triad.

556:2 He who pervades all beings; or the second of the Hindu triad who preserves the world.

556:3 The bestower of blessings; the third of the Hindu triad and the destroyer of the world

556:4 A name of the War-God; also one who urges the senses to action.

556:5 The lord of creatures; or the God of sacrifices.

556:6 A name of the King of Gods; also all-powerful.

556:7 The giver of wealth. A name of the God of riches.

556:8 One who directly urges the mental faculties to action.

556:9 One who moderates the senses, also the God of the regions of the dead.

556:10 One who produces nectar (amrita) or one who is always possessed of light; or one together with Umá (Ardhanáris'vara).

556:11 The names or spirits of departed ancestors.

556:12 Name of a class of eight Gods, also wealthy.

557:1 They who are to be served by Yogís; or a class of Gods named Sádhyas.

557:2 The two physicians of the Gods: or they who pervade all beings.

557:3 They who are immortal; or a class of Gods forty-nine in number.

557:4 Omniscient; or the first king of the world.

557:5 He that moves; life; or the God of wind.

557:6 The God of fire.

557:7 Lord of creatures.

557:8 One who prolongs our lives.

557:9 The material cause of knowledge and of the seasons.

557:10 One who shines. The giver of light.

557:11 The hymn entitled the Ádityahridaya begins from this verse and the words, thou art, are understood in the beginning of this verse.

557:12 One who enjoys all (pleasurable) objects; The son of Aditi, the lord of the solar disk.

557:13 One who creates the world i.e. endows beings with life or soul, and by his rays causes rain and thereby

produces corn.

557:14 One who urges the world to action or puts the world in motion, who is omnipresent.

557:15 One who walks through the sky; or pervades the soul.

557:16 One who nourishes the world i. e. is the supporter.

557:17 One having rays (Gabhasti) or he who is possessed of the all-pervading goddess Lakshmi.557:18 One resembling gold.

557:19 One who is resplendent or who gives light to other objects.

557:20 One whose seed (Retas) is gold; or quicksilver, the material cause of gold.

557:21 One who is the cause of day.

557:22 One whose horses are of tawny colour; or one who pervades the whole space or quarters.

557:23 One whose knowledge is boundless or who has a thousand rays.

557:24 One who urges the seven (Pránas) that is the two eyes, the two ears, the nostrils and the organ of speech, or whose chariot, is drawn by seven horses.

557:25 Vide Gabhastimán.

557:26 One who destroys darkness, or ignorance.

557:27 One from whom our blessings or the enjoyments

of Paradise come.557:28 The architect of the gods; or one who lessens the miseries of our birth and death.

557:29 One who gives life to the lifeless world.

557:30 One who pervades the internal and external worlds; or one who is resplendent.

557:31 He who is identified with the Hindu triad, i.e. the creator (Brahmá) the supporter (Vishnu) and the destroyer (S'iva)

557:32 Cold or good natured. He is so called because he allays the three sorts of pain.

557:33 One who is the lord of all.

557:34 Vide Divákara.

557:35 One who teaches Brahmá and others the Vedas.

557:36 One from whom Rudra the destroyer or the third of the Hindu triad springs.

557:37 One who is knowable through Aditi i.e. the eternal Brahma-vidyá.557:38 Great happiness or the sky

557:39 The destroyer of cold or stupidity.

557:40 The Lord of the sky.

557:41 Vide Timironmathana.

557:42 One who is known through the Upanishads.

558:1 He who is the cause of heavy rain.

558:2 He who is a friend to the good, or who is the cause of water.

558:3 One who moves in the solar orbit.

558:4 One who determines the creation of the world; or who is possessed of heat.

558:5 One who has a mass of rays; or who has Kaustubha and other precious stones as his ornaments.

558:6 He who urges all to action; or who is yellow in colour.558:7 One who is the destroyer of all.

558:8 One who is omniscient; or a poet.

558:9 One who is identified with the whole world.

558:10 One who is of huge form.

558:11 One who pleases all by giving nourishment; or who is red in colour.

558:12 One who is the cause of the whole world.

558:13 One who protects the whole world.

558:14 The most glorious of all that are glorious.

558:15 One who is identical with the twelve months.  
 558:16 One who gives victory over all the worlds to those who are faithfully devoted to him; or the porter of Brahmá, named Jaya.  
 558:17 One who is identical with the blessing which can be obtained by conquering all the worlds; or with the porter of Brahmá named Jayabhadra.558:18 One who has Hanúmán as his conveyance.  
 558:19 One who controls the senses; or is furious with those who are not his devotees.  
 558:20 He who is free in moving the senses; or urges all beings to action.  
 558:21 He who can be known through the Pranava (the mystical Om-kára.)  
 558:22 One who is the knowledge of Brahmá.  
 558:23 One who devours all things.  
 558:24 He who is the destroyer of all pains; and of love, and hate, the causes of pain; and ignorance which is the cause of love and hate.  
 558:25 One who is bliss; or the mover.  
 558:26 One who destroys ignorance and its effects.  
 558:27 The doer of all actions.  
 558:28 One who beholds the universe; who is a witness of good and bad actions.  
 558:29 Sacrifice of the five sensual fires.  
 560:1 According to Ápastamba (says the commentator) it should have been placed on the nose: this must therefore have been done in conformity with some other Sútras."  
 560:2 A class of eight gods.  
 560:3 A class of eleven gods called Rudras.  
 560:4 Named Viryaván.  
 560:5 A class of divine devotees named Sádhyas.  
 561:1 One who resides in the water.  
 561:2 The third incarnation of Vishnu, that bore the earth on his tusk.  
 561:3 One whose armies are everywhere.  
 561:4 One who controls the senses.561:5 He who resides in the heart, or who is full, or all-pervading.  
 561:6 Vámana, or the Dwarf incarnation of Vishnu.  
 561:7 The killer of Madhu, a demon.  
 561:8 He from whose navel, the lotus, from which Brahmá was born, springs.  
 561:9 He who has a thousand horns. The horns are here the Sákhas of the Sáma-veda.  
 561:10 One who has a hundred heads. The heads are here meant to devote a hundred commandments of the Vedas.  
 561:11 Siddhas are those who have already gained the summit of their desires.  
 561:12 Sádhyas are those that are still trying to gain the summit.  
 561:13 A mystic syllable uttered in Mantras.  
 561:14 A mystic syllable made of the letters . . . which respectively denote Brahmá, Vishnu, and S'iva.561:15 A class of divine gods.  
 561:16 Sanskáras are those sacred writings through which the divine commands and prohibitions are known.  
 562:1 Bali. a demon whom Vámana confined in Pátála.  
 562:2 Vishnu, the second of the Hindu triad.  
 562:3 Krishna, (black coloured) one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu.  
 564:1 A. Weber, Akademische Vorlesungen, p. 181.

564:2 Systema brahmanicum, liturgicum, mythologicum, civile, exmonumentis Indicis, etc.

565:1 Not only have the races of India translated or epitomized it, but foreign nations have appropriated it

wholly or in part, Persia, Java, and Japan itself.

566:1 In the third century B. C.

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