

happy monarch began to fall, but was arrested by the voice of Vis'vámitra when half way between heaven and earth where the body of the monarch still remains. Hence the well-known expression “विश्वकुरिवान्तरा तिष्ठ” (Sak. II.).

वृद्ध The great architect of the gods otherwise called विश्वकर्मेन्. His daughter संज्ञा was married to the sun but, as she was unable to endure his effulgence, the divine architect placed the sun upon his lathe and cut off a part of his lustre (R. VI. 32) which he used in making the discus of Vishnu, the trident of S'iva and the weapons of other gods.

वक्ष A celebrated Prajapati born from the thumb of Brahman (म.). He was the chief of patriarchs. He had many daughters. One of these, Sati, was married to S'iva. At a great sacrifice performed by Daksha neither Sati nor S'iva was invited. Sati, however, attended and on being insulted threw herself into the flames of the sacrifice and perished. S'iva, exasperated, tore off a lock of his hair and cast it with violence to the ground. It started up into being a demon, named Virabhadra, who, ordered by S'iva, destroyed the sacrifice and, according to some accounts, beheaded Daksha himself.

वत्सत्रेय One of the three sons of Atri and Anasūya.

वसु One of the wives of Kas'yapa, the mother of the Dānavas.

वसवती Daughter of Bhīma, king of Vidarbha. She was a paragon of beauty. She exchanged her love with that of king Nala through the medium of a golden swan and chose him for her husband in the teeth of a host of competitors among whom were the

four gods, Indra, Agni, Yama and Varuna. The lovely pair passed some years very happily. In course of time, however, Nala, in an inauspicious hour, was induced to play at dice with his brother Pushkara and staked every thing except his wife and himself. The ill-fated pair was then driven into wilderness all but naked. There with her husband Damayanti passed through a series of strange adventures, all the while remaining strictly faithful to her lord. She, while asleep, was one day forsaken by her frantic husband and had in her helplessness to resort to the parental roof. After some time, however, she and Nala were brought together and passed the rest of their lives happily.

वशरथ Son of Aja and father of Rāma. He had three wives—Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikeyī but no issue. On the performance of a sacrifice for the attainment of progeny Kausalyā bore to him Rāma, Sumitrā Lakshmana and S'atrughna and Kaikeyī Bharata. The king was extremely fond of his sons and when Kaikeyī demanded the exile of Rāma by a boon promised to her before, he tried to dissuade her from her purpose by the most abject entreaties. Seeing that they had no effect he complied with the demand but ended his life in sorrow and lamentation. See कैकेयी and राम.

वसिष्ठी A daughter of Daksha who became one of the wives of Kas'yapa and the mother of the *Dāityas*.

वसिष्ठा A king of the Solar race. He is described as a grand ideal of what a king should be. He had a lovely queen but no issue. For this he applied to the sage Vasishtha, who advised him and his wife to tend the celestial cow Nandini'. The