

22) *Kingdom restored to Sugrīva.* The very next day Sugrīva took Rāma to Kiṣkindhā, and the former challenged Bāli for a combat. Rāma, from a distance, viewed the fierce fight between the brothers, but he could not do anything as it was impossible to distinguish between Bāli and Sugrīva on account of their very close resemblance. Sugrīva, who was defeated in the first round and retired from fight felt angry towards Rāma, but was soon satisfied with Rāma's explanation for his inaction. To distinguish Sugrīva from Bāli Śrī Rama, the next day, put a garland on the former's neck and wearing the garland Sugrīva challenged Bāli a second time to a duel. Though Bāli's wife, Tārā, this time prevented him from accepting the challenge Bāli paid no heed to her protests and rushed forth for the duel.

Bāli and Sugrīva fought again, and this time Rāma from his concealment behind a tree shot an arrow at the chest of Bāli. The arrow felled him. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa then came into the open and Bāli spoke disparagingly to Rāma about shooting the arrow from concealment. Rāma answered him saying that if he had seen him (Rāma) face to face he would have become his devotee and he had to shoot Bāli from his hiding place as it was not proper to kill one's devotees. At last, after handing over charge of his wife and son Aṅgada, to Sugrīva, Bāli breathed his last. Śrī Rāma decided to crown Sugrīva as King and install Aṅgada as crown prince and returned to Rṣyamūkācala for rest after entrusting, under the supervision of Lakṣmaṇa, Hanūmān and Jāmbavān with the duty of making preparations for the coronation. Though Sugrīva invited Śrī Rāma to Kiṣkindhā when preparations for coronation were over, the latter declined the invitation gracefully and deputed Lakṣmaṇa to represent him at the ceremony. Lakṣmaṇa installed Sugrīva as the Mahārāja, Aṅgada as crown prince, Rumā as queen and Tārā as queen-mother. Also, Hanūmān was appointed as Sugrīva's minister. Those things over, Lakṣmaṇa returned to Rāma at Rṣyamūkācala.

23) *Lakṣmaṇa's wrath.* The next four months were rainy period. Even after that Sugrīva did not make necessary arrangements to search for Sītā. At Rāma's instance Lakṣmaṇa went to Kiṣkindhā to enquire about the reason for the delay. The monkeys were alarmed by the grave appearance of Lakṣmaṇa and Tārā came out and apologised to him. Arrangements were soon finalised for the quest of Sītā. Armies of many lakhs of monkeys were deputed to the eight regions to search for Sītā. Suśeṇa was appointed chief of the army for the west, Śatabali for the north, Vinata for the east and Aṅgada for the south. As the south was the chief place for the search, monkeys like Hanūmān, Jāmbavān, Vivida, Nala, Nila, Kumuda, each of them an expert in various ways, were appointed chiefs of different matters. Every chief and his assistant was given suitable instructions by Lakṣmaṇa and Sugrīva, and accordingly the army of monkeys began its march under the leadership of Hanūmān.

24) *Words of recognition.* To convince Sītā that it was really the emissary of Rāma who went to her the latter imparted to Hanūmān the following three sentences for timely use.

(i) "When I took leave of you for life in exile in the forest you (Sītā) who were then in the inner apartment

dressed in ordinary fashion came out in the same dress prepared to follow me saying 'I too...' feigning anger'.

(ii) When, for our life in the forest, we had left the city and approached a shrubbery, Sītā in her childish ignorance and goodness of heart told me "This place will do for our forest life."

(iii) While she was one day massaging my leg in our bedroom she threw away from her finger the ring studded with stones. When I asked her the reason for it she answered me as follows :—This ring studded with stones may prove to be of danger to me. When your feet touched the hard granite rock it turned out into a world beauty (Ahalyā). Under the circumstances how much more beautiful would be the woman, who would be created by the touch of your foot on the beautiful stone of the ring? And, because of that beauty you may...me...and then...". We two—I and Sītā—alone knew about the above incident.

Carrying thus Śrī Rāma's signet ring and words of recognition Hanūmān went along with the army, which started for the south. Sugrīva gave one month's time to the searching parties to find out Sītā and warned them that their throats would be cut if they failed in their mission.

25) *Saw Svayamprabhā.* Aṅgada, Hanūmān, Jāmbavān and others during their search came to an extensive forest. They were dead tired with hunger and thirst. The leader of the party looked about for something to eat and drink when he saw small birds flying up from a distant pit. From drops of water falling from the wings of the birds it was inferred that the pit contained water. When Hanūmān and others entered the pit (cave) and walked a great distance they came to a spacious garden. They were astonished to find a solitary beauty there, and she related to them her autobiography as follows:—

I am the faithful maid of Rambhā. The powerful asura called Caturāsya wanted me to procure Rambhā for him and he got this garden city built by Mayācārya, the architect of the Daityas, for me as reward for my service to him in the matter of Rambhā. Various kinds of gems light this place and creepers and trees supply food materials. Catuāsrya, I and Rambhā alone were living here. But, Indra came to know of it, came here, killed Caturāsya and took away Rambhā with him. He cursed me to lead a solitary life here as punishment for having helped Caturāsya. I prayed for redemption from the curse and Indra told me, that after thousands of years a company of monkeys would come here in search of Sītā and that after entertaining them with food I must see Rāma and then return to Svarga. I have thus been awaiting your arrival and now I am leaving the place, which will vanish as soon as I quit it. All of you, please stand there with eyes closed and I shall send you back to the place where you were before coming here.

Accordingly the monkeys stood there with eyes closed and when they opened their eyes there was neither the garden city nor Svayamprabhā there but they were standing in the old plain. Svayamprabhā appeared before Rāma, praised him and then went to Svarga.

26) *Met Sampātī.* The monkeys again went southward, reached Mahendragiri and descending on its southern side came to the shores of the southern sea. They could advance no further to the south. They were suffering