

she might perchance wander to her relatives. With a sword that he found near the shed he cut off one half of the cloth and throwing the instrument away departed, having first returned again and again, dragged away by *Kali*, but drawn back by love (III, 62). When *Damayanti* awoke, she lamented and cursed the being through whose imprecation *Nala* suffered woe, saying that it should lead a still more miserable life. Thereupon, wandering on, she was seized by a gigantic serpent and rescued by a hunter; as the hunter, after comforting her, tried to force her to love him, he was cursed by her and fell down lifeless upon the ground (III, 63). Description of the forest, *Damayanti's* lamentations. She went in a northerly direction for three days and nights, then she came to an asylum of ascetics, who told her that she should again become happy together with *Nala*. Then the asylum disappeared. Sometime afterwards, having proceeded a long way, she met with a body of merchants landing on the banks of a river; its leader was *Çuci* (v. 2529, "so help us now, *Mañibhadra*, the king of *Yakshas*"), and it was bound for the city of the *Cedi* king *Subāhu* (III, 64). *Damayanti* followed the caravan. Once, at midnight, the caravan was destroyed by wild elephants and many men were trodden to death, which some ascribed to their not having worshipped *Mañibhadra* or *Vaiçravaṇa*, the kings of *Yakshas*, others to their having received *Damayanti*, whom they thought to be a *Rākshasa* or *Piçāca* or *Yaksha* woman, and resolved upon killing her when they saw her. Hearing this *Damayanti* fled. The next day the remnant of the caravan left the place. *Damayanti*, with the brahmins that had survived the slaughter of the caravan, came towards evening to the city of the *Cedi* king *Subāhu*. The boys began to follow her; when she came before the palace of the king, the queen-mother let the nurse take her in. *Damayanti* agreed to stay there on the conditions that she should not eat remnants, not wash anyone's feet, nor speak with other men, but be protected against all aspirations. The queen gave her as a *sairindhri* to her daughter *Sunandā* (III, 65).—§ 348: *Nala*, having deserted *Damayanti*, saw a conflagration in the forest and therefrom heard a voice calling him by name and saw the *Nāga Karkoṭaka*, who unable to stir, told him that he had deceived the great *ṛshi Nārada* and been cursed by him with the words: "Stay thou here immobile until *Nala* takes thee hence, then thou shalt be freed from my curse," and asked him to deliver him and promised to instruct him in respect of his welfare. The snake then became as small as a thumb, and *Nala* taking him up went to a spot free from fire. *Karkoṭaka* let him proceed yet counting his steps, and bit him at the tenth step (*adaçad daçame pade*) (see Nil. and PCR.). Then the form of *Nala* was changed, in order that people might not recognize him, and *Karkoṭaka* assumed his own form, and said that *Kali* dwelling in *Nala* should be tortured by his venom, and that *Nala* should have no fear from animals with fangs, from enemies, and from men versed in the Veda (*brahmavidbhyah*), and told him to go to *Ayodhya* and present himself as a *sūta Bāhuka* before *Rtuparna* (of the race of *Ikshvaku*), who would give *Nala* his skill in dice (*akshahrdaya*) in exchange for *Nala's* knowledge of horses (*açvahrdaya*), and when he had become an adept at dice he should have prosperity and meet with his wife and children and regain his kingdom. The *Nāga* king then gave *Nala* two pieces of celestial cloth, saying that when he desired to get back his own form he should remember him and wear

this garment. Then he disappeared (III, 66).—§ 349: On the tenth day *Nala* entered the city of *Rtuparna*; he approached the king and named himself *Bāhuka*, and said that he surpassed everybody in managing steeds and might be consulted in matters of difficulty (*arthakṛcchreshu*) and affairs of skill (*naipuneshu*), and that he was versed in the art of cooking. Then he was appointed superintendent of *Rtuparna's* horses on a pay of 10,000, and *Vārshneya* and *Jivala* should be under his direction. Every evening he recited the *çloka*, "Where lies that helpless one (*tapasvini*) afflicted with hunger and thirst and worn with toil (*çrāntā*), or upon whom does she now wait (*upatishṭhati*)?" Once *Jivala* asked him who she was, and *Nala* related to him the main features of his story without naming her or himself (III, 67).—§ 350: *Bhīma* sent out brahmins in all directions to search for *Nala* and *Damayanti*, promising 1,000 kine, etc., to him that should find them. At length the brahmin *Sudeva*, the friend of *Damayanti's* brother, recognized *Damayanti* in the city of the *Cedis*, seated with *Sunandā* during the time of the king's prayers (*punyaḥāvācane rājñah*), and told her who he was and that her relatives and children were well. Beholding *Damayanti* weeping and conversing in private with *Sudeva*, *Sunandā* caused her mother to question *Sudeva* (III, 68). *Sudeva* told the story of *Damayanti*, and that he had recognized her by a mole between her eyebrows, which was now almost covered with dust as her whole body. Then *Sunandā* washed away the dust and the queer-mother recognized her by the mole as the daughter of her sister, as she and *Damayanti's* mother were both daughters of the *Daçarṇa* king *Sudāman*, and she herself had been bestowed on *Vīrabāhu* and her sister on *Bhīma*; she had witnessed *Damayanti's* birth in the palace of her father in the *Daçarṇa* country. At her own request *Damayanti* was brought in a litter carried by men and protected by a large escort to the city of *Bhīma*, and was received with respect and worshipped the gods and brahmins. *Bhīma* gave unto *Sudeva* 1,000 kine, etc. The next day *Damayanti* let her mother cause *Bhīma* to send brahmins out in all directions to seek for *Nala*. *Damayanti* ordered them everywhere to recite the *çlokas*: "O beloved gambler, where hast thou gone, cutting off half of my garment," etc., but to take care that no one knew that it was on her command (III, 69).—§ 351: After a long time the brahmin *Parṇada* told that he had in *Ayodhya* visited *Bhāṅgāsuri* (i.e. *Rtuparna*), and that *Bāhuka* had been affected by hearing his *çloka*, and had said to him: "Chaste women, though overtaken by calamity, yet protect themselves," etc. *Damayanti* then thanked *Parṇada* and promised him great wealth and consulted with her mother, and, without *Bhīma's* knowing it, sent *Sudeva*, who told *Rtuparna* that to-morrow *Damayanti* would hold another *svayamvara* (III, 70). When ordered by *Rtuparna* to conduct him to the *svayamvara* of *Damayanti*, *Bāhuka* felt his heart bursting with grief, but promised to go there in a single day; he yoked four horses born in *Sindhu* (description of their marks), made *Vārshneya* sit on the chariot, and set out with so great speed that *Vārshneya* thought he must be *Mātali* or *Çālihotra*, who had taken a human shape, or *Nala* (III, 71).—§ 352: As the chariot was coursing thus, *Rtuparna* lost his upper garment, and *Nala* declared that it was impossible to recover it, as they had already travelled one *yojana* thence. As *Rtuparna* rightly indicated the number of fruits of