

the tortoise finished speaking a chariot appeared from heaven to take the King away. The King after leaving me and the owl in their proper places ascended to heaven in the chariot.

ALAGHU. A son born to Vasiṣṭha by Ūrjā. Rāja (Rajas) Gātra, Urdhvabāhu, Savana, Śukra and Sutapas, who were great hermits, were brothers of Alaghu, who has another name 'Alagha'. (Agni Purāna, Chapter 20).

ALAKĀ. The city of Kubera.

ALAKANANDĀ. River Gaṅgā of devaloka. The river gaṅgā of the earth when it flows through devaloka is called Alakanandā and is called Vaitaraṇī when it flows through Pitṛloka (nether world). Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana (Vyāsa) declares that Deva Gaṅgā with crystal pure water flowing in devaloka under the name Alakanandā and Vaitaraṇī of the nether world, a terror to sinners, are the same as the Gaṅgā of the earth. (Śloka 21 and 22, Chapter 170, Bhāṣā Bhārata, A.P.).

Starting from Viṣṇupāda Alakanandā flows through Devayāna which blazes with the splendour of a crore of beautiful many-storeyed buildings. Flowing from there to Candramaṇḍala (moon) and flooding it completely flows down to Brahmāloka. From there it divides into four rivulets and flows to the four different sides with the names Sītā, Cakṣus, Alakanandā and Bhadrā. Of these Sītā falls on the thickly wooded mountain tops of Mahāmeru and flowing from there through Gandhamādana by the side of Bhadrāśvavaṛṣa falls down in the eastern ocean. Cakṣus falls on the top of Mālyavān mountain and flowing through Ketumāla falls down in the western ocean. The most sacred of the group, Alakanandā, falls on the mountain of Hemakūṭa and from there flows through Bhāratavaṛṣa and falls down in the southern ocean. The fourth, Bhadrā, falling on the top of the Mountain, Sṛṅgavān flows to the northern ocean. Of these the most sacred is Alakanandā which flows through Bhāratavaṛṣa and it is believed that even those who think of taking a bath in that will acquire the benefit of performing yāgas like Aśvamedha and Rājāsūya. (Eighth Skandha of Śrī Mahādevībhāgavata).

ALAMBALA. A giant who used to eat human flesh. This cannibal was the son of Jaṭāsura. This asura (Alambala) fought on the side of the Kauravas in the Kurukṣetra battle because Bhīmasena had killed his father, Jaṭāsura. In the battle, Ghaṭotkaca cut off the head of this mighty warrior and magician and threw his head into the war-chariot of Duryodhana. (M.B., Droṇa Parva, Chapter 149).

ALAMBATĪRTHA. A holy place where there was a sacred bath. Garuḍa, when he went to devaloka (the realm of the gods) to bring Amṛtam (ambrosia) took rest in this holy place. (See under the word Garuḍa. Also M.B., Ādi Parva, Chapter 39, Stanza 39).

ALAMBUṢA I. Son of the giant Rṣyaśṛṅga. He had fought on the side of the Kauravas. (M.B., Udyoga Parva, Chapter 167, Stanza 33). There was a combat between Alambuṣa and Ghaṭotkaca, on the first day of the battle of Kurukṣetra.

"Alambuṣa shot ninety sharpened pointed arrows at the son of Bhīmasena (Ghaṭotkaca), cut his body in several places. Though he was full of wounds, he fought all the more fiercely". (Bhāṣā Bhārata, Bhīṣma Parva, Chapter 45, Stanzas 43, 44).

Alambuṣa had engaged Abhmanyu, Sātyaki, Ghaṭotkaca, Kuntibhoja and Bhīmasena all mighty men of arms, in single combat, in the Kaurava battle. It is seen that he has got another name, Sālakaṭamka. He was killed by Ghaṭotkaca in the battle. (M.B. Droṇa Parva, Chapter 109, Stanzas 22 to 33).

ALAMBUṢA II. Another king on the side of the Kauravas. Sātyaki killed this king. (Mahābhārata, Droṇa Parva, Chapter 140, Stanza 13).

ALAMBUṢA III. A king of the Rākṣasas. It is seen that this Alambuṣa was defeated and driven away from the battle-field by Arjuna. (Droṇa Parva, Chapter 167, Stanzas 37 to 47).

ALAMBUṢA IV. A giant, the son of Jaṭāsura. Ghaṭotkaca killed this giant in the battle.

ALAMBUṢĀ. A celestial woman born to Kaśyapa by his wife Pradhā.

1) *Genealogy.* Begins from Viṣṇu in the following order: Brahmā-Kaśyapa-Alambuṣā.

2) *How she enticed the hermit Dadhīca.* In days of yore there was an ascetic named Dadhīca. He began doing tapas on the bank of the river Sarasvatī. Indra was in consternation. Indra sent this celestial maid Alambuṣā to entice the hermit. When the ascetic got down to the river, Alambuṣā approached him with enticing actions and expressions. When the hermit saw her he became passionate and he had seminal flow. The sperm fell into the river. The river became pregnant and delivered a child in due course. He was called Sārasvata.

Alambuṣā brought the child before Dadhīca, who blessed the child and said that there would be a drought in the country continuously for twelve years and that at that juncture Sārasvata would recite passages from the Scripture to the Brahmins who had forgotten them. The much pleased Sarasvatī and Sārasvata went back.

At that time Indra lost his Vajrāyudha (weapon of thunderbolt) somewhere. The Asuras (enemies of Gods) made an onslaught on the gods and their realm. Indra knew that with a weapon made by the bone of Dadhīca the Asuras could be destroyed. Indra asked the Gods to bring the bone. They came down to the earth and requested Dadhīca to give them a bone. Dadhīca giving his bone died and attained heaven. With his bones Indra made a good deal of weapons such as the Vajrāyudha, wheel weapons, maces and sticks and with them Indra slew all the Daityas (Asuras).

After this there was a great famine in the country. As there was no rain, crops failed and lands became dry and the Brahmins left the country. Sārasvata alone remained with his mother. After twelve years the famine and starvation came to an end. By then the Brahmins had forgotten the hymns and mantras of the Vedas. They approached the boy Sārasvata and renewed their memory. (Mahābhārata, Śalya Parva, Chapter 51).

3) *Punarjanma (Rebirth).* Long ago Indra went to Brahmā. There was one Vasu called Vidhūma also with Indra. When these two were standing near Brahmā, Alambuṣā also came there to pay homage to Brahmā. The garments she had on were displaced by wind. Vidhūma saw the dazzling beauty of her body and was overpowered by libido. Alambuṣā who understood this, was filled with passion for him. Brahmā who saw the changes in them looked at Indra with displeasure. Indra knowing the mind of Brahmā cursed them: "Both of you who have lost meekness shall become human be-