

BRAHMADATTA IV. A king who ruled over the country of Kāśī. One night he saw two swans flying in the air. They were of golden colour. There were a number of swans around them. They seemed like two lightnings in the midst of white clouds. Brahmadata wished to see them again. His desire increased to such an extent that he had desire for nothing else. He consulted his ministers and made a lake. Every creature which seemed beautiful to him was brought to that place. Hearing this those two swans also came there. By and by he tamed them and asked them how they got the golden colour. The swans said thus : "Oh King! you might have heard of the famous mountain Mandara, which is the field of games of the Devas (gods). At the time of the churning of the milk sea when this mountain was used as churn-drill, Amṛtāni (celestial nectar of immortality) touched this mountain. So the flowers, fruits and roots in the vicinity of this mountain got the power of removing death, wrinkles etc. Candracūḍa also will come to this mountain occasionally to play on the top of it and so it became more glorious than the mount Kailāsa. One day while Mahādeva was playing in those gardens he had to leave on an urgent matter concerning Gods. So he left Pārvatī there and went away. Devī began to walk about in those gardens with pangs of separation. Spring season came. The Gaṇas (servants of Śiva) and the maids of Pārvatī attended on her. One day Maṇipuṣpeśvara, a Gaṇa, hankered after Candralekhā, daughter of Jayā. She had been engaged in fanning Pārvatī. Both were young and their figures suited each other. Candralekhā reciprocated his love. Understanding this Piṅgeśvara and Guheśvara, two gaṇas looked at each other and smiled. Seeing this Devī looked round with anger to see what caused them to smile. They squinted their eyes and showed Maṇipuṣpeśvara and Candralekhā to Devī. Because of separation she had been much worried, weary and sad. So all these affairs made her angry. She said : "It is good that you behave like this when I am in this plight ! The two are making love. Seeing that, you are laughing. May these two dotards be born on the earth and become husband and wife there. Let you two who laughed before me without humility also be born on the earth, first as poor Brāhmaṇas, and then as Brahmarakṣas (demon friends), outcasts, robbers, dogs with tails cut off and finally as various kind of birds." Thus she cursed the four of gaṇas. Then a gaṇa named Dhūrjaṭa said to Pārvatī : "Devī, this is unfortunate. They have not committed any severe crime." Devī got angry at him and cursed him too : "May you also be born on the earth as a human being." After this Jaya the loved maid of Pārvatī requested her for absolution from curse, for all. The Devī said that all of them would get absolution at the place of penance of Brahmā and other gods and would return here. Of these, Candralekhā and her husband and Dhūrjaṭa would be happy on the earth. The two others would lead a miserable life on the earth." (Kathāsaritsāgara, Padmāvatilambaka, Taraṅga 1).

BRAHMADĒVA. A warrior who fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas against the Kauravas in the battle of Mahābhārata. His duty was to protect the army in the rear. (M.B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 196, Stanza 25).

BRAHMĀDUMBARA. A holy place in Kurukṣetra. In Mahābhārata, Vana Parva, Chapter 83, Stanza 71, it is said that this place is auspicious to Brahmā.

BRAHMAHATYĀ. Killing a Brāhmaṇa is called Brahma-hatyā. In ancient India killing a Brāhmin was considered to be a great sin. He, who committed this sin had to build a hut in the forest and live there for a period of twelve years, or make an alms-pot called 'Śivaśirodhvaja' and wander about begging alms, to purify his soul, or else to attempt to jump into a blazing fire thrice with bowed head, or perform one of the three sacrifices Aśvamedha, Svarjit or Gosava. If none of these was possible, he had to give all the wealth he had to Brāhmins well-versed in Vedas, as gift. It is mentioned in Agnipurāṇa, Chapter 169, that if any of the vows mentioned above was performed he would be absolved from the sin of Brahma-hatyā.

BRAHMAJIT. A son of Kālanemi. (Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa 35:38).

BRAHMAMEDHYĀ. A river, famous in the Purāṇas. Mention is made about this river in Mahābhārata Bhīṣmaparva, Chapter 9, Stanza 32.

BRĀHMAMUHŪRTA. The period of forty-eight minutes before the sunrise is called Brāhmamuhūrta. The deity of this period is Brahmā. In Agni Purāṇa, Chapter 155, it is instructed that one should wake up at this period and engage in prayer and meditation.

BRĀHMAṆA. (BRĀHMIN).

(1) *Origin.* Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras are the caturvarṇas or the four castes. The Purāṇas say that the four castes originated from different parts of the body of Brahmā. See Manusmṛti, Chapter 1, Stanza 87

"Sarvasyāsya tu sargasya
Guptyartham sa mahādyutiḥ
Mukhabāhūrūpajjānām
Pṛthakkarmānyakalpayat.

(With a view to sustain the world, Brahmā ordered activities, for the four castes (Brāhmaṇa Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, and Śūdra) who were born from his face, arms, thighs and feet). From this statement it is seen that the Brāhmaṇas were born from the face, Kṣatriyas from the arms, Vaiśyas from the thighs and Śūdras from the feet of Brahmā.

2) *The activities of a Brāhmaṇa.* The duties of a Brāhmaṇa are, performing sacrifice, and encouraging others to perform sacrifice, learning Vedas and teaching Vedas, giving gifts and getting remuneration. A Brāhmaṇa has two births in one life. Till the time of investiture with the sacred string is one birth and from that period onwards is the second birth. So a Brāhmaṇa is called 'dvija' or twice-born.

The Brāhmaṇas were allowed to do the works of agriculture, keeping cows, trade and commerce and Kuśīda (money-lending). Living on the interest of money giving out as loan is Kuśīda. But they should not trade on products from cow, jaggery, salt, lac and flesh. The suffix 'Śarnā' should be added to the name of Brāhmaṇa. A Brāhmaṇa can have four wives.

BRĀHMAṆA (M). See Veda.

BRAHMĀṆḌA. The word Brahmāṇḍa means the aṇḍa of Brahmā (aṇḍa-egg), the Supreme Being which is the root of the origin of the universe. At a time long ago, which is beyond reckoning, there was nothing but an egg. This egg was split into two and from it a male