

alive he was greatly relieved and immensely happy and he blessed Cirakāri. (Chapter 266, Śānti Parva).

CIRAÑJIVI. The name of a crow, a character in the 'Pañcatantra'. (See under Meghavarṇa).

CIRANTAKA. A son of Garuḍa. (Śloka 1, Chapter 101, Udyoga Parva).

CIRAVĀSAS I. A Kṣatriya King born as a rebirth of an asura Krodhavaśa. (Śloka 61, Chapter 67, Ādi Parva).

CIRAVĀSAS II. A yakṣa. He stayed in the court of Kubera worshipping him. (Śloka 10, Chapter 10, Sabhā Parva).

CIRĀYUS. An ancient King of the country Cirāyu. Nāgārjuna was a minister of this King. Nāgārjuna knew the secret of 'Rasāyanasiddhi'. Once Nāgārjuna prepared a medicine for himself and the King which if taken would keep them eternally young. They took medicine accordingly.

After some days a child of the minister died. Grief-stricken Nāgārjuna decided to prepare Amṛta which would eradicate death from this world. He had prepared it but there remained one more medicine to be added to this. The auspicious moment to add the same was to come only after five days and Nāgārjuna waited. The devas were frightened. If Amṛta was made available on earth men would become Devas. Devas could not bear this and so they sent the Aśvinikumāras to the earth to persuade Nāgārjuna to desist from his work of preparing Amṛta. Further they informed him that his dead child was living happily in heaven. He agreed to stop his work.

After some time Cirāyus crowned his son Jivahara as the heir-apparent. Overjoyed Jivahara ran to his mother Dhanaparā to give her the glad tidings. Dhanaparā told her son thus: "My child, why should you be so happy to think that you have become the heir-apparent. Several sons of your father had already become yuvarājas and died before becoming King. Your father has taken a medicine from Nāgārjuna and that will keep him eternally young. None of his sons can aspire to be the King. Your father is now eight hundred years old and will live long. Many of you will become yuvarājas but not the King. I will therefore suggest a way to tide over this difficulty. Everyday in the afternoon Nāgārjuna would come outside the palace and enquire whether anybody is in need of anything. At that time he would give whatever was asked for. It is an opportunity when you can ask for his head. When Nāgārjuna is dead your father would either die of grief or go to the forests. Then you can become the King."

Jivahara was pleased to hear this suggestion and he went that after-noon to the palace of Nāgārjuna and when Nāgārjuna as usual came out with his query Jivahara asked for his head. Most willingly Nāgārjuna offered his head to be chopped off. But the effect of the medicine made even the strongest cut by the sword ineffective. Jivahara lost many swords without Nāgārjuna getting even a small scratch on his neck. The hubbub brought the King to the scene and he immediately asked Nāgārjuna to withdraw his head but Nāgārjuna refused saying, "Oh, King, in my ninety-nine previous births I have offered my head like this and please do not ask me to desist from making this offer for the hundredth time".

So saying he embraced the King and taking a powder from his body smeared it on the sword and asked Jivahara to strike again. This time very easily Jivahara severed the head from the body of Nāgārjuna. The King was greatly aggrieved and he renounced all and went to the forest and led a pious life.

Cirāyus' son Jivahara became King. But Nāgārjuna's sons killed him and his mother died of grief. (Taraṅga, Ratnaprabhā Lambaka, Kathāsaritsāgara).

CIRIṆI. A river. It was on the banks of this river that Vaivasvata Manu clad in bark-skin and with knotted hair did penance. (Śloka 6, Chapter 187, Vana Parva).

CITAL. (Termites). Cital has got its own place in the purāṇas. Devī Bhāgavata has the following story about the origin of it.

Mahāviṣṇu once looking at the face of Lakṣmī laughed without any apparent reason. Lakṣmī, thinking that Viṣṇu was laughing at her and that he had an eye on some other woman more beautiful than her lost her temper and cursed Viṣṇu that his head would be severed from his body.

No sooner was the curse pronounced than the asuras came in batches fully armed and challenged Viṣṇu to war. Single-handed the Lord fought the asuras with one bow. The fight did not end though it continued for thousands of years. Viṣṇu felt tired and decided to rest awhile. He planted one end of the untied bow on the ground, rested his chin on the other and sat in Padmāsana. Being very tired the Lord remained asleep for a long time in this posture.

About this time the devas made preparations to perform a yajña. All the devas except Mahāviṣṇu attended that yajña. Since he was the master of yajñas performed for purposes of the devas they could not begin it in his absence. So, Brahmā and others went in search of Viṣṇu to Vaikuṅṭha. But he was not to be found there. Then Brahmā and others found out with their eyes of knowledge where Viṣṇu was and they went to the place where he was sleeping. They waited there for a long time, yet Viṣṇu did not awake from sleep. Then Brahmā hit at a plan to awaken Viṣṇu. It was to create citals (termites) to eat the end of the bow. When they had eaten away the end of the bow planted on the ground the cord binding the two ends of it would break, the bow would straighten up and the speedy movement of it would awaken Viṣṇu.

According to this plan Brahmā created citals, but his other plans were not acceptable to the citals. They argued that the advantage of awakening the Lord from sleep would go only to the devas, while its sin would fall upon them.

They argued,

Nidrābhaṅgaḥ kathāchedo
Dampatyoh prītibhedanam /
Śiśumātrvibhedaśca
Brahmahatyāsamaṁ smṛtam //*

Brahmā conceded the justness of this argument and agreed that, in future, a part of the result of yajñas shall go to citals. It was after this that havis (a crucial offering) which, in the course of being submitted to the fire falls on the sides of the pit of fire became the share of citals (termites). This promise of Brahmā pleased the citals, and they did as was bidden by Brahmā and

*To disturb one in sleep, to interrupt a story, to separate husband and wife as also mother and child from each other—these things are tantamount to Brahmahatyā (killing of the brahmin).