

NALOPĀKHYĀNAM.

STORY OF NALA,

AN EPISODE OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA:

THE SANSKRIT TEXT,

WITH A COPIOUS VOCABULARY

AND

AN IMPROVED VERSION OF DEAN MILMAN'S TRANSLATION,

BY

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P R E F A C E.

THE Story of Nala, as told in the following pages, is an episode of the Mahá-bhárata, one of the two great Epic poems of the Hindús, containing no less than 107,389 ślokas or stanzas. It is extracted from the sixth chapter (fifty-third section) of the third Book or Vana-parvan. Like the rest of the Mahá-bhárata, its authorship is attributed to Kṛishṇa-Dvaipáyana, who is called Vyása, because he *arranged* the Vedas¹. It is not to be supposed, however, that the Vedas and Mahá-bhárata are really the work of the same author. The Vedas are many centuries older than the great Epic poem, and each is the composition of several authors. Probably an interval of several centuries separates the more ancient hymns of the Veda from the more modern; and a similar or perhaps greater separation may be observed between the older parts of the Mahá-bhárata and the more modern interpolations.

By ascribing this work to Vyása—who is also the reputed author of the Vedánta philosophy—it is merely implied that, at some time or other, order and sequence were given to what

¹ *Vivýása vedán yasmát sa tasmád vyása iti smṛitah.* Mahá-bh. I. 2417. He was called *Kṛishṇa* from his dark complexion, and *Dvaipáyana* because he was brought forth by Satyavatí on an *island* in the Jumná, his father being the Rishi Parásara. *Nyasto dvípe sa yad bálas tasmád Dvaipáyanaḥ smṛitah,* line 2416.

was before a mere congeries of distinct compositions by various authors.

Part of the *Mahá-bhárata* is considered by some¹ to be as old as the fourth century B. C.; but all Hindú chronology is more or less conjectural; and it would be impossible to fix with certainty the date of the composition of any of the principal episodes. The Story of Nala is not part of the main plot of the poem, and probably belongs to a much earlier period of Indian history. The subject of the great Epic is the war between the Kurus or hundred sons of Dhṛita-ráshṭra and their cousins the five sons of Páṇḍu. But about this leading-thread are collected a vast number of ancient legends and traditions, under the weight of which it is often lost, if not altogether broken. In all Oriental books of fables it is common for the principal narrative to be interrupted by a series of stories within stories, loosely connected with the original theme, and often completely overlaying it. So it is with the *Mahá-bhárata*. The episodes form by far the greater portion of the poem, and generally intervene to break the chain of the narrative, when the incidents are most stirring and the interest is most at its height. The war between the rival princes is doubtless founded on fact; and much valuable matter has been extracted from the narrative by Professor Lassen and other Sanskritists, in elucidation of the early history of India. According to the *Vishṇu-Purána*, Dhṛita-ráshṭra and Páṇḍu were the sons of the widow of Vicítira-vírya by his half-brother Vyása or Kṛishṇa-Dvaipáyana². This Vicítira-vírya

¹ See my 'Indian Wisdom' (W. H. Allen & Co., London), p. 317.

² As Vicítira-vírya (Vyása's half-brother) died without children, the Hindú law, like the Mosaic, permitted Vyása to raise up offspring to his deceased brother. Satyavatí, mother of Vyása, was afterwards wife of Sántanu.

was the son of Śántanu, who was the twenty-third in descent from Kuru, a celebrated prince of the Lunar race, himself the ninth king after Bharata, son of Dushyanta and Śakuntalá, from whom India is to this day called Bhárata-varsha. Vyása is thus reputed to be the actual grandfather of the princes whose quarrels and jealousies are narrated in the poem he is said to have arranged; and, from the genealogy, it is evident that although the sons of Dhṛita-ráshṭra are more usually called the descendants of Kuru, the sons of Páṇḍu were really descended from the same race.

The royal races of India are said to have diverged into two great lines, called Solar and Lunar. The hero of the Solar line, which commenced in Ikshváku, was Ráma-ándra¹, whose contests with the barbarous tribes of the south of India is described in the Rámáyana, the more ancient of the two great Epics. The Kurus and Páṇḍavas, as equally descendants of Kuru, belonged to the Lunar line, and probably represented different branches of one tribe of Sanskrit-speaking immigrants, who arrived in India at different times. According to the Mahá-bhárata, Páṇḍu, the father of the five Páṇḍavas, after yielding the succession to his blind brother Dhṛita-ráshṭra, retired to the mountains and died. His five boys were then adopted by Dhṛita-ráshṭra and educated with his own large family of a hundred sons. After escaping many dangers from the malevolence of their cousins, they were ultimately permitted to share with them in the sovereignty. Yudhisṭhira, the eldest of the Páṇḍavas, and his four brothers ruled at Indra-prastha (the modern Delhi), and Duryodhana with his ninety-nine brothers (usually

¹ This Ráma, who is the most celebrated incarnation of Vishṇu, must not be confounded with the two inferior Rámas, Paraśu-Ráma and Bala-Ráma. See my Sanskrit Dictionary (published at the Clarendon Press) under *Ráma*.

called the Kurus) were sovereigns at the neighbouring town of Hastiná-pura. The Pándavas, whose disposition was as amiable as that of the Kurus was malevolent, seem to have been very successful in subduing the districts contiguous to their own; and, notwithstanding the animosity of their neighbouring cousins, to have attained considerable prosperity. A great misfortune, however, overtakes them. Tempted to amuse themselves with dice, and yielding to a weakness which has ever been a fashionable failing amongst the Hindús, Yudhishtira loses all his possessions, at a game of hazard, to his cousin Duryodhana: and, retiring with his brethren into exile, lives for twelve years in the forest (*vana*). It is to console them under their affliction that the sage Vṛihadaśva relates to king Yudhishtira the Story of Nala, who, himself a virtuous monarch, lost his kingdom also through his passion for dice; but after suffering great hardships again recovered it.

The following short summary of the Story of Nala may be useful as an introduction to the study of the poem.

Nala, who is described as 'gifted with choicest virtues,' and is especially noted for his skill in driving, has only one fault, the inherent love of gambling¹. He was king of Nishadha, a country in central India, in the S. E. division, whence his other name of Naishadha. In a neighbouring country, called Vidarbha (the modern Berár), reigned Bhíma, whose only daughter, Damayantí, was so beautiful that her fame reached the ears of Nala. His interest in her being excited, was fanned into a flame by the following incident:—

Walking in his garden one day, and seeing some swans

¹ The epithet *aksha-priya*, 'fond of dice,' is applied to Nala in enumerating his good qualities (verse 3), and Kali, therefore, only assailed him in his weak point. See, however, the vocabulary under *aksha-priya*.

disporting themselves near him, the fancy takes him to catch one out of sport. The bird, addressing him in human language, promises, if he will release it, to fly to Damayantí and praise Nala in her presence. This plan being agreed upon and carried into effect, Damayantí becomes duly inspired with a passion for Nala. Bhíma, her father, seeing his daughter pining in secret, determines to celebrate her Svayamvara, that is, to proclaim the public choice of a husband by Damayantí, according to the custom of that age. All the princes of India, including Nala, flock to Vidarbha, as suitors for the hand of Damayantí. The gods also, hearing of her beauty, resolve to be present; and, meeting Nala on their road to the Svayamvara, commission him to plead their cause with Damayantí. He confesses himself enamoured also, and entreats to be excused; but being adjured sternly, promises to deliver their message, and is introduced by them unseen into the palace. There he has an interview with Damayantí, who, slighting the message of the gods, confesses her love to Nala, and her intention to choose him and him only. Accordingly, at the Svayamvara, in spite of the artifice of the deities who assume Nala's shape, she detects her lover by his shadow, (the gods having none,) and selects him. It appears that at the time of the Svayamvara, Kali, an evil genius, the fourth Age of the world or Vice personified, had set out for Vidarbha with the intention of making Damayantí his consort; but, hearing of the completion of the marriage-ceremony, he resolves out of jealousy to work the ruin of Nala. For twelve years he watches his opportunity, and at last, detecting Nala in some trifling neglect of his ablutions, enters and acquires power over his body. Infatuating his victim, he instigates him to play at dice with his brother Pushkara. The game goes on for many months; and Nala,

after losing his kingdom and all his possessions, is driven with Damayantí into exile. In the forest, Nala, still infatuated by Kali, deserts Damayantí ; who, wandering alone, and escaping many perils, at last finds a refuge at the court of the king of Úedi. Meanwhile, Nala, passing through the forest, rescues a serpent from a flaming bush. This serpent turns out to be Karkoṭaka, one of the principal Nágas (see vocabulary under नाग) or semi-divine beings inhabiting the regions under the earth. In return for the service rendered by Nala, Karkoṭaka promises to deliver Nala from the power of Kali. He accordingly metamorphoses Nala into a dwarfish charioteer, but gives him a magic garment, by assuming which he can at any time regain his proper form. Nala, now transformed to the short-armed Váhuka, enters the service of Rituparṇa, king of Ayodhyá, a monarch celebrated for his skill in dice. Meanwhile, king Bhíma, searching the world for his lost daughter, discovers her at length at Úedi, and sends for her thence to his own capital. There, pining for the lost Nala, she devises a plan to recover him. Suspecting that he is living, disguised as Váhuka, with Rituparṇa, king of Ayodhyá, she causes the latter to be told that king Bhíma would celebrate on the morrow a second Svayamvara for his daughter Damayantí. Rituparṇa determines to be present, but can only be so by the help of his charioteer Váhuka, whose skill in horsemanship enables him to drive from Ayodhyá to Vidarbha in one day. On the road Nala, disguised as Váhuka, agrees to impart to Rituparṇa his knowledge of horsemanship in return for that monarch's skill in dice. They make the exchange, and, arriving at Ayodhyá, Nala re-assumes his own form and is restored to his wife. Returning with her to Nishadha, he seeks Pushkara, renews the game, and wins back his kingdom. Then, with noble generosity, he

forgives Pushkara, and enters on a long and happy reign with his consort Damayantí.

That this Story of Nala, however comparatively modern the version in the Mahá-bhárata, is of great antiquity, may be proved by internal evidence. The prominence given to the deities Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, and Yama, and the absence of all allusion to the great Hindú Triad, connect the narrative more with the Vedic than the Epic and Puránic periods¹. If Nala was of the Solar race, as represented by Kálidása, he must have been the fourth from the great Ráma, son of Daśa-ratha, the genealogy, according to the Raghu-vaṅsa, running thus:—Raghu, Aja, Daśa-ratha, Ráma, Kuśa, Atithi, Nishadha, Nala, Nabhas. But if he belonged to the Lunar dynasty, reigning at Nishadha, when Rítuparna of the Solar race reigned at Ayodhyá, then we must assign him a much earlier date, and place him fourteen reigns before Ráma.

The story, no doubt, rests on a foundation of fact, and, on account of its age, is a favourite subject with Hindú poets. It not only appears as an episode to the Mahá-bhárata, but forms the subject of two other celebrated poems, one called the Nalodaya, attributed to the great Kálidása, the author of Śakuntalá; and the other called the Naishadha, written by Śrī Harsha. It is also introduced by Somadeva Bhaṭṭa into his collection of stories called Kathá-sarit-ságara, and told there with variations. It is, moreover, the subject-matter of a very curious composition, half prose, half verse, called Āmpú,

¹ According to Professor Brockhaus, the personification of Kali as the demon of the fourth Age, and not of the dice, shews that the modern arranger of the story did not understand this old Vedic term, and is another proof of the earlier existence of the Nala. The word Tretá (which denotes the second Age of the world) is also used for a throw of dice. See the second Act of the Mricchakati.

by an author named Tri-vikrama, and of a well-known work in Tamil, called the Nala-Rájá, and again of another in Telugu, by the poet Rághava, written about A. D. 1650; these latter poems being independent compositions, and not mere translations from the Sanskrit.

It is a noteworthy circumstance in the history of Indian literature, that the later Hindú poets, with much exuberance of fancy, displayed little originality in their conceptions. Whether they thought it a sacred duty to follow in the beaten track, or whether their inventive faculties were feeble, it rarely enters into their heads to devise a new story for themselves. They content themselves with the regular stock materials, and exercise their ingenuity either in diluting them or serving them up in a concentrated form, with here and there a few embellishments or additions of their own. The two Epic poems are their grand repertories. These gigantic compositions, like vast national banks with inexhaustible resources, are drawn upon freely by every poet. The history of Ráma, which is narrated at full length in the Rámáyana, is condensed into moderate dimensions by Kálidása in his Rághu-vaṅśa, reduced to a mere table of contents by Bhaṭṭi in his grammatical poem, and represented with dramatic richness of detail by Bhava-bhúti in his well-known play, the Uttara-Ráma-áaritra. Then we have a celebrated poet Mággha, writing his epic on a story taken from the seventh chapter of the second Book or Sabhá-parva of the Mahá-bhárata (the destruction of Śísúpála, king of Óedi, by Kṛishṇa); and the poet Bhárávi, the author of another well-known Epic called Kirátárjuniya (or the contest of Arjuna with Śiva as a mountaineer), selecting his subject from the fourth chapter of the third Book or Vana-parva of the same great poem. One advantage of this is, that if we have not

a variety of subjects, we have at least a diversity of styles. The same subject could not be treated by every author in the same way. We have, therefore, specimens of every shade of composition between the most tedious diffuseness and the most laconic curtness,—the most turgid ornament and the most severe simplicity. In no other language but the ductile, flexible, and infinitely copious Sanskrit could such opposite extremes be possible. The very same idea which by one author is expressed with a brevity unapproachable in English, is by another expanded and beaten out till the substance of the original metal almost disappears. In the one case we have every needless word rejected, and the meaning so obscured, that sentences have to be interpreted like oracles, and every line of text to be illustrated by pages of commentary; in the other, huge compounds are introduced, epithets heaped on epithets, metaphors on metaphors, till the mind of the venturesome reader is hopelessly bewildered. This is what has happened to the Story of Nala. Presented to us in the plainest manner in the Mahá-bhárata, it is condensed in the Nalodaya with a compression and concentration absolutely painful; in the Naishadha it is diluted by prolix descriptions or overdone with rich imagery; in Somadeva's Kathá-sarit-ságara it is again exhibited in its simple form; whilst in Tri-vikrama's Āmpú it is buried under a dead weight of long words, ponderous compounds, and inflated periods.

The main features of the present edition of the Mahá-bhárata version of the Nala will be patent at once.

In the first place, it presents, as far as possible, a pure and accurate text. Excellent MSS. of the Mahá-bhárata, belonging to the India Office and Bodleian Libraries, have been at my command, and the text of the following pages

is the result of a careful collation of these with the various printed editions already before the public.

With regard to the vocabulary appended to this work, I have only to say that I have spared no pains to make it more complete than that of the first edition, and to bring it into harmony with the fourth edition of my Sanskrit Grammar, also published by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press. The amount of labour entailed by a glossary of this kind is only to be appreciated by those who have themselves undergone it. I believe this to be the only vocabulary in which each word, as it stands in the text, whatever be its form, either of case or tense, or whatever the change in that form resulting from the rules of euphony, occupies its proper alphabetical place. Those who have had experience in teaching will understand the value of this aid to students just beginning to read a language abounding in intricate combinations and perplexing euphonic changes. There cannot be a greater mistake than to suppose that the amount of assistance required in a Sanskrit vocabulary is to be measured by that given in Greek or Latin glossaries. We have in Sanskrit two peculiarities. One is the constant use of long compound words; the other is the habit of joining words together by a strict system of euphony, which, though not carried to the same extreme in all printed books, must always be a source of perplexity. The learner has to make repeated references to his vocabulary, and every facility should be accorded to him. I have known pupils, who have worked their way steadily through the grammar, puzzle themselves hopelessly over the following three words in the first story of the Hitopadeśa, *visarpan tñ tandulakanān*, because, in accordance with euphonic laws, these words are printed in the text thus,—*visarpanstānstandulakanān* (विसर्प-

स्त्रांसकुलकथान्), while the original words, in their unchanged form, are exhibited in the glossary. If the words were divided, the difficulty would not be insurmountable: but not finding विसर्पेत्, the student concludes that he has mistaken the division. Referring again to the vocabulary, he finds व् and सप्, and taking these for his first words goes entirely wrong. Now according to my method, as before explained, the words would be separated in the text thus, —*visarpans táns tandulakanán*; and they would moreover be so exhibited in their proper places in the glossary, an explication of the euphonic changes being added. In all cases where separation is undesirable, as when two vowels blend into one, or when a final *i* or *u* has been changed to *y* or *v*, the whole combination is given, and the division of the words indicated.

I believe the present vocabulary will be found to contain every word in the text. If each separate article is not always as full of details as might be expected, it should be borne in mind that the perfection of a special work of this kind consists in its not being burdened with more words and meanings than are wanted for the one book which it elucidates. Moreover, the grammar is intended to go hand in hand with the vocabulary, and a complete explanation of a difficulty is often to be sought in the rules to which constant reference is made.

With regard to the metrical translation which accompanies this edition of the Nala, the late Dean Milman, shortly before his death, kindly adopted many of my suggestions for the improvement of his original version, so as to adapt it more closely to the text. Its continued use has revealed the need of further slight alterations, which I have been obliged to make on my own responsibility.

The metre of the Sanskrit text never varies from the regular śloka measure called Anuṣṭubh, an account of which, with a table of all the most common varieties of metre, is given at the end of the fourth edition of my Sanskrit Grammar, published at the Clarendon Press. It consists of sixteen syllables to the half-line or thirty-two to each verse of two lines.

The first line of the poem serves as a model for the whole, and with the exception of the six syllables, whose quantities are here marked by the usual prosodial marks (— || —), the poet is allowed the option of either long or short :

āśīd rājā nālō nāma || vīrasenasītō bālī.

Occasionally the 6th and 7th syllables are short instead of long.

M. W.

OXFORD, June 1879.

॥ नलोपाख्यानम् ॥

STORY OF NALA.

॥ नलोपाख्यानम् ॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

आसीद् राजा नलो नाम वीरसेनसुतो बली ।
उपपन्नो गुणैर् इष्टै रूपवान् अश्वकोविदः ॥१॥
अतिष्ठद् मनुजेन्द्राणां मूर्ध्नि देवपतिर् इव ।
उपर्युपरि सर्वेषाम् आदित्य इव तेजसा ॥२॥
ब्रह्मण्यो वेदविच् छूरो निषधेषु महीपतिः ।
अक्षप्रियः सत्यवादी महान् अक्षौहिणीपतिः ॥३॥
ईप्सितो वरनारीणाम् उदारः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
रक्षिता धन्विनां श्रेष्ठः साक्षाद् इव मनुः स्वयं ॥४॥
तथैवासीद् विदर्भेषु भीमो भीमपराक्रमः ।
शूरः सर्वगुणैर् युक्तः प्रजाकामः स चाप्रजः ॥५॥
स प्रजार्थं परं यत्नम् अकरोत् सुसमाहितः ।
तम् अभ्यगच्छद् ब्रह्मर्षिर् दमनो नाम भारत ॥६॥
तं स भीमः प्रजाकामस् तोषयामास धर्मवित् ।
महिषा सह राजेन्द्र सत्कारेण सुवर्चसं ॥७॥
तस्मै प्रसन्नो दमनः सभार्याय वरं ददौ ।
कन्यारत्नं कुमारांश्च चीन् उदारान् महायशः ॥८॥
दमयन्तीं दमं दान्तं दमनञ्च सुवर्चसं ।
उपपन्नान् गुणैः सर्वैर् भीमान् भीमपराक्रमान् ॥९॥

STORY OF NALA.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

LIVED of yore, a Rāja, Nala, Vírasena's mighty son,
Gifted he with choicest virtues, beauteous, skilled in taming steeds :
Head of all the kings of mortals, like the monarch of the gods,
Over, over all exalted, in his splendour like the sun :
Holy, deep-read in the Vedas, in Nishadha lord of earth ;
Loving dice, of truth unblemished, chieftain of a mighty host ;
The admired of noble women, generous, with each sense subdued ;
Guardian of the state ; of archers best, a present Manu he.

So there dwelt in high Vidarbha, Bhíma, terrible in strength,
With all virtues blest, but childless, long for children had he pined.
Many an holy act, on offspring still intent, had he performed.
To his court there came a Bráhmaⁿ, Damana the seer was named.
Him the child-desiring Bhíma, in all duties skilled, received,
Feasted with his royal consort, in his hospitable hall.
Pleased on him the grateful Daman, and his queen a boon bestowed,
One sweet girl, the pearl of maidens, and three fair and noble sons.
Damayantí, Dama, Dánta, and illustrious Damana,
Richly gifted with all virtues, mighty, fearful in their might.

दमयन्ती तु रूपेण तेजसा यशसा श्रिया ।
 सौभाग्येन च लोकेषु यशः प्राप सुमध्यमा ॥१०॥
 अथ तां वयसि प्राप्ते दासीनां समलंकृतं ।
 शतं शतं सखीनाञ्च पर्युपासच्च छचीम् इव ॥११॥
 तच्च स्म राजते भैमी सर्वाभरणभूषिता ।
 सखीमध्येऽनवद्याङ्गी विद्युत् सौदामिनी यथा ॥१२॥
 अतीव रूपसम्पन्ना श्रीर् इवायतलोचना ।
 न देवेषु न यक्षेषु तादृग् रूपवती क्वचित् ॥१३॥
 मानुषेष्वपि चान्येषु दृष्टपूर्वाथवा श्रुता ।
 चित्तप्रमाथिनी बाला देवानाम् अपि सुन्दरी ॥१४॥
 नलश्च नरशार्दूलो लोकेष्वप्रतिमो भुवि ।
 कन्दर्प इव रूपेण मूर्तिमान् अभवत् स्वयं ॥१५॥
 तस्याः समीपे तु नलं प्रशंसुः कुतूहलात् ।
 नैषधस्य समीपे तु दमयन्तीं पुनः पुनः ॥१६॥
 तयोर् अदृष्टकामोऽभूत् शृण्वतोः सततं गुणान् ।
 अन्योन्यं प्रति कौन्तेय स व्यवर्धत हृच्छयः ॥१७॥
 अशक्नुवन् नलः कामं तदा धारयितुं हृदा ।
 अन्तःपुरसमीपस्थे वन आस्ते रहो गतः ॥१८॥
 स ददर्श ततो हंसान् जातरूपपरिष्कृतान् ।
 वने विचरतां तेषाम् एकं जयाहं पक्षिणं ॥१९॥
 ततोऽन्तरीक्षगो वाचं व्याजहार नलं तदा ।
 हन्तव्योऽस्मि न ते राजन् करिष्यामि तव प्रियं ॥२०॥
 दमयन्तीसकाशे त्वां कथयिष्यामि नैषध ।
 यथा त्वदन्यं पुरुषं न सा मंस्यति कर्हिचित् ॥२१॥
 एवम् उक्तस् ततो हंसम् उत्ससर्ज महीपतिः ।
 ते तु हंसाः समुत्पत्य विदर्भान् अगमन्स् ततः ॥२२॥

Damayantí with her beauty, with her brilliance, brightness, grace,
Through the worlds unrivalled glory won the slender-waisted maid.
Her, arrived at bloom of beauty, sat a hundred slaves around,
And a hundred virgin handmaids, as around great Indra's queen.
In her court shone Bhíma's daughter, decked with every ornament,
'Mid her handmaids, like the lightning, shone she with her faultless form ;
Like the long-eyed queen of beauty, without rival, without peer.
Never 'mid the gods immortal, never 'mid the Yaksha race,
Nor 'mong men was maid so lovely, ever heard of, ever seen,
As the soul-disturbing maiden, that disturbed the souls of gods.
Nala too, 'mong kings the tiger, peerless among earthly men,
Like Kandarpa in his beauty, like that bright-embodied god.
All around Vidarbha's princess, praised they Nala in their joy ;
Ever praised they Damayantí, round Nishadha's noble king.
Hearing so each other's virtues, all unseen they 'gan to love.
Thus of each, O son of Kunti, the deep silent passion grew.

Nala, in his heart impatient, longer that deep love to bear,
To the grove, in secret, wandered, by the palace' inmost court.
There the swans he saw disporting, with their wings bedropped with gold :
Through the grove thus lightly moving one of these bright birds he caught.
But the bird, in human language, thus the wondering king addressed :
'Slay me not, O gentle monarch ! I will do thee service true ;
So in Damayantí's presence will I praise Nishadha's king,
Never after shall the maiden think of mortal man but thee.'

Thus addressed, at once the monarch let the bright-winged bird depart.
Flew away the swans rejoicing, to Vidarbha straight they flew ;

विदर्भनगरीं गत्वा दमयन्त्यास् तदान्तिके ।
 निपेतुस् ते गरुत्मन्तः सा ददर्श च तान् गणान् ॥२३॥
 सा तान् अद्भुतरूपान् वै दृष्ट्वा सखीगणावृता ।
 हृष्टा यहीतुं खगमांस् त्वरमाणोपचक्रमे ॥२४॥
 अथ हंसा विससृपुः सर्वतः प्रमदावने ।
 एकैकशस् तदा कन्यास् तान् हंसान् समुपाद्रवन् ॥२५॥
 दमयन्ती तु यं हंसं समुपाधावद् अन्तिके ।
 स मानुषीं गिरं कृत्वा दमयन्तीम् अथाब्रवीत् ॥२६॥
 दमयन्ति नलो नाम निषधेषु महीपतिः ।
 अश्विनीः सदृशो रूपे न समास् तस्य मानुषाः ॥२७॥
 तस्य वै यदि भार्या त्वं भवेथा वरवर्णिनि ।
 सफलं ते भवेज् जन्म रूपं चेदं सुमध्यमे ॥२८॥
 वयं हि देवगन्धर्वमानुषोरगराक्षसान् ।
 दृष्टवन्तो न चास्माभिर् दृष्टपूर्वस् तथाविधः ॥२९॥
 त्वञ्चापि रत्नं नारीणां नरेषु च नलो वरः ।
 विशिष्टाया विशिष्टेन सङ्गमो गुणवान् भवेत् ॥३०॥
 एवम् उक्त्वा तु हंसेन दमयन्ती विशाम्पते ।
 अब्रवीत् तत्र तं हंसं त्वमप्येवं नले वद ॥३१॥
 तथेत्युक्त्वाण्डजः कन्यां विदर्भस्य विशाम्पते ।
 पुनर् आगम्य निषधान् नले सर्वं न्यवेदयत् ॥३२॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने प्रथमः सर्गः ॥१॥

To Vidarbha's stately city : there by Damayantí's feet,
 Down with drooping plumes they settled, and she gazed upon the flock,
 Wondering at their forms so graceful, where amid her maids she sat.
 Sportively began the damsels all around to chase the birds ;
 Scattering flew the swans before them, all about the lovely grove.
 Lightly ran the nimble maidens, every one her bird pursued ;
 But the swan that through the forest gentle Damayantí chased,
 Suddenly, in human language, spake to Damayantí thus :—

‘ Damayantí, in Nishadha Nala dwells, the noble king ;
 Like the Ásvinas in beauty, peerless among men is he.
 O incomparable princess, to this hero wert thou wed,
 Noble birth and perfect beauty not unworthy fruit had borne.
 Gods, Gandharvas, men, the Serpents, and the Rákshasas we've seen ;
 All we've seen—of noble Nala never have we seen the peer.
 Pearl art thou among all women, Nala is the pride of men.
 If the peerless wed the peerless, blessed must the union be.’

When the bird thus strangely speaking gentle Damayantí heard,
 Answered thus the wondering maiden, ‘ Thus to Nala, speak thou too.’
 ‘ Be it so,’ replied the egg-born to Vidarbha's beauteous maid.
 Home then flew he to Nishadha, and to Nala told it all.

END OF BOOK I.

बृहदश्व उवाच ।

दमयन्ती तु तच्च कृत्वा वचो हंसस्य भारत ।
 ततः प्रभृति न स्वस्था नलं प्रति बभूव सा ॥१॥
 ततश्च चिन्तापरा दीना विवर्णवदना कृशा ।
 बभूव दमयन्ती तु निःश्वासपरमा तदा ॥२॥
 ऊर्ध्वदृष्टिर् ध्यानपरा बभूवोन्मत्तदर्शना ।
 पाण्डुवर्णा क्षणेनाथ हृच्छयाविष्टचेतना ॥३॥
 न शय्यासनभोगेषु रतिं विन्दति कर्हिचित् ।
 न नक्तं न दिवा शेते हा हेति रुदती पुनः ॥४॥
 ताम् अस्वस्थां तदाकारां सख्यस् ता जङ्गुर इङ्गितैः ।
 ततो विदर्भपतये दमयन्त्याः सखीजनः ॥५॥
 न्यवेदयत् ताम् अस्वस्थां दमयन्तीं नरेश्वरे ।
 तच्च कृत्वा नृपतिर् भीमो दमयन्तीसखीगणात् ॥६॥
 चिन्तयामास तत् कार्यं सुमहत् स्वां सुतां प्रति ।
 किम् इयं दुहिता मेऽद्य नातिस्वस्थेव लक्ष्यते ॥७॥
 स समीक्ष्य महीपालः स्वां सुतां प्राप्नयौवनां ।
 अपश्यद् आत्मना कार्यं दमयन्त्याः स्वयंवरं ॥८॥
 स सन्निमन्त्रयामास महीपालान् विशाम्पतिः ।
 अनुभूयताम् अयं वीराः स्वयंवर इति प्रभो ॥९॥
 श्रुत्वा तु पार्थिवाः सर्वे दमयन्त्याः स्वयंवरं ।
 अभिजग्मुस् ततो भीमं राजानो भीमशासनात् ॥१०॥
 हस्त्यश्वरथघोषेण पूरयन्तो वसुन्धरां ।
 विचित्रमाल्याभरणैर् बलैर् दृश्यैः स्वलंकृतैः ॥११॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

DAMAYANTÍ, ever after she the swan's sweet speech had heard,
 With herself she dwelt no longer, all herself with Nala dwelt.
 Lost in thought she sat dejected, pale her melancholy cheek,
 Damayantí sat and yielded all her soul to sighs of grief.
 Upward gazing, meditative, with a wild distracted look,
 Wan was all her soft complexion, and with passion heart-possessed,
 Nor in sleep nor gentle converse, nor in banquets found she joy ;
 Night nor day she could not slumber, Woe ! oh woe ! she wept and said.
 Her no longer her own mistress, from her looks, her gesture, knew
 Damayantí's virgin handmaids, to Vidarbha's monarch they
 Told how pined his gentle daughter for the sovereign of men.
 This from Damayantí's maidens when the royal Bhíma heard,
 In his mind he gravely pondered for his child what best were done.
 ' Wherefore is my gentle daughter from herself in mind estranged ?'
 When the lord of earth his daughter saw in blooming youth mature,
 Knew he for the Svayamvara Damayantí's time was come.
 Straight the lord of many peasants summoned all the chiefs of earth,
 ' Come ye to the Svayamvara all ye heroes of the world !'
 Damayantí's Svayamvara, soon as heard the kings of men,
 All obeyed king Bhíma's summons, all to Bhíma's court drew near ;
 Elephants, and steeds, and chariots, swarmed along the sounding land ;
 All with rich and various garlands, with his stately army each,

तेषां भीमो महाबाहुः पार्थिवानां महात्मनां ।
 यथार्हम् अकरोत् पूजां तेऽवसंस् तत्र पूजिताः ॥१२॥
 एतस्मिन् एव काले तु सुराणाम् ऋषिसत्तमौ ।
 अटमानौ महात्मानाव् इन्द्रलोकम् इतो गतौ ॥१३॥
 नारदः पर्वतश्चैव महाप्राज्ञौ महाव्रतौ ।
 देवराजस्य भवनं विविशाते सुपूजितौ ॥१४॥
 ताव् अर्चयित्वा मघवा ततः कुशलम् अव्ययं ।
 पप्रच्छानामयं चापि तयोः सर्वगतं विभुः ॥१५॥

नारद उवाच ।

आद्योः कुशलं देव सर्वत्र गतम् ईश्वर ।
 लोके च मघवन् कृत्स्ने नृपाः कुशलिनी विभो ॥१६॥

बृहदश्व उवाच ।

नारदस्य वचः श्रुत्वा पप्रच्छ बलवृचहा ।
 धर्मज्ञाः पृथिवीपालास् त्यक्तजीवितयोधिनः ॥१७॥
 शस्त्रेण निधनं काले ये गच्छन्त्यपराङ्मुखाः ।
 अयं लोकोऽक्षयस् तेषां यथैव मम कामधुक् ॥१८॥
 क्व नु ते क्षत्रियाः शूरा न हि पश्यामि तान् अहं ।
 आगच्छतो महीपालान् दयितान् अतिथीन् मम ॥१९॥
 एवम् उक्तस्तु शक्रेण नारदः प्रत्यभाषत ।

नारद उवाच ।

शृणु मे मघवन् येन न दृश्यन्ते महीक्षितः ॥२०॥
 विदर्भराज्ञो दुहिता दमयन्तीति विश्रुता ।
 रूपेण समतिक्रान्ता पृथिव्यां सर्वयोषितः ॥२१॥
 तस्याः स्वयंवरः शक्र भविता नचिराद् इव ।
 तत्र गच्छन्ति राजानो राजपुत्राश्च सर्वशः ॥२२॥

All the lofty-minded Rájas, Bhíma with the arm of strength,
As beseemed, received with honour, on their thrones of state they sat,

At this very hour the wisest of the sages, the divine,
Moving in their might ascended up from earth to Indra's world,
Great in holiness and wisdom, Nárada and Parvata,
Honoured entered they the palace of the monarch of the gods.
Them salutes the cloud-compeller, of their everlasting weal—
Of their weal the worlds pervading, courteous asks the immortal lord.

NÁRADA spake :

Well it fares with us, Immortal, in our weal the world partakes ;
In the world, O cloud-compeller, well it fares with all her kings.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

He that Bali slew and Vṛitra asked of Nárada again,
'All earth's just and righteous rulers, reckless of their lives in fight,
Who the shaft's descending death-blow meet with unaverted eye,
Theirs this everlasting kingdom, even as Kámadhuk is mine.
Where are they, the Kshatriya heroes? wherefore see I not approach
All the earth's majestic guardians, all mine ever-honoured guests?'
Thus addressed by holy Śakra, Nárada replied and said :

NÁRADA spake :

Hear me now, O cloud-compeller, why earth's kings appear not here.
Of Vidarbha's king the daughter Damayantí, the renowned—
Through the earth the loveliest women in her beauty she transcends—
Soon she holds her Svayamvara, soon her lord the maid will choose.
Thither all the kings are hastening, thither all the sons of kings,

तां रत्नभूतां लोकस्य प्रार्थयन्तो महीक्षितः ।
 काङ्क्षन्ति स्म विशेषेण बलवृत्तनिषूदन ॥ २३ ॥
 एतस्मिन् कथ्यमाने तु लोकपालाश्च सामिकाः ।
 आजग्मुर् देवराजस्य समीपम् अमरोत्तमाः ॥ २४ ॥
 ततस् ते शुश्रुवुः सर्वे नारदस्य वचो महत् ।
 श्रुत्वैव चाब्रुवन् हृष्टा गच्छामो वयम् अप्युत ॥ २५ ॥
 ततः सर्वे महाराज सगणाः सहवाहनाः ।
 विदर्भान् अभिजग्मुस् ते यतः सर्वे महीक्षितः ॥ २६ ॥
 नलोऽपि राजा कौन्तेय श्रुत्वा राज्ञां समागमं ।
 अभ्यगच्छद् अदीनात्मा दमयन्तीम् अनुव्रतः ॥ २७ ॥
 अथ देवाः पथि नलं ददृशुर् भूतले स्थितं ।
 साक्षाद् इव स्थितं मूर्त्या मन्मथं रूपसम्पदा ॥ २८ ॥
 तं दृष्ट्वा लोकपालास् ते भ्राजमानं यथा रविं ।
 तस्थुर् विगतसङ्कल्पा विस्मिता रूपसम्पदा ॥ २९ ॥
 ततोऽन्तरीक्षे विष्टभ्य विमानानि दिवोकसः ।
 अब्रुवन् नैषधं राजन् अवतीर्य नभस्तलात् ॥ ३० ॥
 भो भो नैषध राजेन्द्र नल सत्यव्रतो भवान् ।
 अस्माकं कुरु साहाय्यं दूतो भव नरोत्तम ॥ ३१ ॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने द्वितीयः सर्गः ॥ २ ॥

Suitors for her hand the Rájás, her of all the world the pearl,
O thou mighty giant-slayer! one and all approach to woo.

As he spake, the world-protectors with the god of fire drew near;
Of the immortals all, the highest stood before the king of gods.
As they all stood silent hearing Nárada's majestic speech,
All exclaimed in sudden rapture, 'Thither we likewise will go;'
All the immortals on the instant, with their chariots, with their hosts,
Hastened down towards Vidarbha, where the lords of earth were met.

Nala, too, no sooner heard he of that concourse of the kings,
Set he forth, with soul all sanguine, full of Damayanti's love.

Saw the gods, king Nala standing on the surface of the earth;
Standing in transcendent beauty, equal to the god of love.
Him beheld the world's high guardians, in his radiance like the sun;
Each arrested stood and silent, at his peerless form amazed.
All their chariots the celestials in the midway air have checked,
Through the blue air then descending, they Nishadha's king address:
'Ho! what, ho! Nishadha's monarch, Nala, king, for truth renowned;
Do our bidding, bear our message, O, most excellent of men!'

END OF BOOK II.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

तेभ्यः प्रतिज्ञाय नलः करिष्य इति भारत ।
 अथैतान् परिपप्रच्छ कृताञ्जलिर् उपस्थितः ॥१॥
 के वै भवन्तः कश्चासौ यस्याहं दूत ईप्सितः ।
 किञ्च तद् वो मया कार्यं कथयध्वं यथातथं ॥२॥
 एवम् उक्ते नैषधेन मघवान् अभ्यभाषत ।
 अमरान् वै निबोधास्मान् दमयन्त्यर्थम् आगतान् ॥३॥
 अहम् इन्द्रोऽयम् अग्निश्च तथैवायम् अपाम्पतिः ।
 शरीरान्तकरो नृणां यमोऽयम् अपि पार्थिव ॥४॥
 त्वं वै समागतान् अस्मान् दमयन्त्यै निवेदय ।
 लोकपाला महेन्द्राद्याः सभां यान्ति दिदृक्षुवः ॥५॥
 प्राप्तुम् इच्छन्ति देवास् त्वां शक्रोऽग्निर् वरुणो यमः ।
 तेषाम् अन्यतमं देवं पतित्वे वरयस्व ह ॥६॥
 एवम् उक्तः स शक्रेण नलः प्राञ्जलिर् अब्रवीत् ।
 एकार्थसमुपेतं मां न प्रेषयितुम् अर्हथ ॥७॥
 कथं तु जातसङ्कल्पः स्त्रियम् उत्सहते पुमान् ।
 परार्थम् ईदृशं वक्तुं तत् क्षमन्तु महेश्वराः ॥८॥

देवा ऊचुः ।

करिष्य इति संश्रुत्य पूर्वम् अस्मासु नैषध ।
 न करिष्यसि कस्मात् त्वं व्रज नैषध माचिरं ॥९॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

एवम् उक्तः स देवैस् तैर् नैषधः पुनर् अब्रवीत् ।
 सुरक्षितानि वेश्मानि प्रवेष्टुं कथम् उत्सहे ॥१०॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

NALA made his solemn promise, 'All your bidding will I do ;'
 Then with folded hands adoring humbly of their will enquired.
 'Who are ye ? to whom must Nala as your welcome herald go ?
 What is my commanded service ? tell me, mighty gods, the truth.'
 Spake the sovereign of Nishadha, Indra answered thus and said :—
 'Know us, the Immortals, hither come for Damayanti's love.
 Indra I, and yon is Agni, and the king of waters there—
 Slayer he of mortal bodies, Yama, too, is here, O king !
 Thou, O Nala, of our coming must to Damayanti tell :
 Thee to see, the world's dread guardians, Indra and the rest came down,
 Indra, Agni, Varun, Yama, each to seek thine hand are come.
 One of these celestial beings choose, O maiden, for thy lord.'
 Nala, thus addressed by Indra, with his folded hands replied :
 'Thus, with one accord commanding, on this mission send not me.
 How can man, himself enamoured, for another plead his cause ?
 Spare me then, ye gods, in mercy, this unwelcome service, spare.'

THE GODS spake :

'I will do your bidding freely,' thus thou'st said, Nishadha's king ;
 Wilt thou now belie thy promise ? Nala, go, nor more delay.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

By the gods adjured so sternly, thus rejoined Nishadha's king :—
 'Strictly guarded is yon palace, how may I find entrance there ?'

प्रवेक्ष्यसीति तं शक्रः पुनर् एवाभ्यभाषत ।
 स जगाम तथेत्युक्त्वा दमयन्त्या निवेशनं ॥११॥
 ददर्श तच्च वैदर्भीं सखीगणसमावृतां ।
 देदीपमानां वपुषा श्रिया च वरवर्णिनीं ॥१२॥
 अतीव सुकुमाराङ्गीं तनुमध्यां सुलोचनां ।
 आक्षिपन्तीम् इव प्रभां शशिनः स्वेन तेजसा ॥१३॥
 तस्य दृष्ट्वैव ववृधे कामस् तां चारुहासिनीं ।
 सत्यं चिकीर्षमाणस्तु धारयामास हृच्छयं ॥१४॥
 ततस् ता नैषधं दृष्ट्वा सम्भ्रान्ताः परमाङ्गनाः ।
 आसनेभ्यः समुत्पेतुस् तेजसा तस्य धर्षिताः ॥१५॥
 प्रशशंसुश्च सुप्रीता नलं ता विस्मयान्विताः ।
 न चैनम् अभ्यभाषन्त मनोभिस् त्वभ्यपूजयन् ॥१६॥
 अहो रूपम् अहो कान्तिर् अहो धैर्यं महात्मनः ।
 कोऽयं देवोऽथवा यक्षो गन्धर्वो वा भविष्यति ॥१७॥
 न तास् तं शक्रुवन्ति स्म व्याहर्तुम् अपि किञ्चन ।
 तेजसा धर्षितास् तस्य लज्जावत्यो वराङ्गनाः ॥१८॥
 अथैनं स्मयमानं तु स्मितपूर्वाभिभाषिणी ।
 दमयन्ती नलं वीरम् अभ्यभाषत विस्मिता ॥१९॥
 कस् त्वं सर्वानवद्याङ्ग मम हृच्छयवर्धन ।
 प्राप्नोऽस्यमरवद् वीर ज्ञातुम् इच्छामि तेऽनघ ॥२०॥
 कथम् आगमनं चेह कथं चासि न लक्षितः ।
 सुरक्षितं हि मे वेश्म राजा चैवीयशासनः ॥२१॥
 एवम् उक्तस्तु वैदर्भ्या नलस् तां प्रत्युवाच ह ।

नल उवाच ।

नलं मां विद्धि कल्याणि देवदूतम् इहागतं ॥२२॥
 देवास् त्वां प्राप्तुम् इच्छन्ति शक्रोऽग्निर् वरुणो यमः ।

'Thou shalt enter;' thus did Indra to the unwilling king reply.
 In the bower of Damayantí, as they spake, king Nala stood.
 There he saw Vidarbha's maiden, girt with all her virgin bands;
 In her glowing beauty shining, all excelling in her form;
 Every limb in smooth proportion, slender waist and lovely eyes;
 E'en the moon's soft gleam disdaining in her own o'erpowering light.
 As he gazed, his love grew warmer to the softly smiling maid,
 Yet to keep his truth, his duty, all his passion he suppressed.
 Then Nishadha's king beholding, all those maids with beauteous limbs
 From their seats sprang up in wonder, at his matchless form amazed.
 In their rapture to king Nala, all admiring, homage paid;
 Yet, not venturing to accost him, in their secret souls adored.
 'Oh the beauty! oh the splendour! oh the mighty hero's strength!
 Who is he? or god, or Yaksha, or Gandharba may he be?'
 Not one single word to utter, dared that fair-limbed maiden band;
 All struck dumb before his beauty, in their bashful silence stood.
 Smiling, first, upon the monarch, as on her he gently smiled,
 Damayantí, in her wonder, to the hero Nala spake:—
 'Who art thou of form so beauteous, thou that wakenest all my love?
 Cam'st thou here like an immortal? I would know thee, sinless chief.
 How hast entered in our palace? how hast entered all unseen?
 Watchful are our chamber-wardens, stern the mandate of the king.'
 By the maiden of Vidarbha Nala thus addressed, replied:—

NALA spake:

Know, O loveliest, I am Nala, here the messenger of gods,
 Gods desirous to possess thee; one of these, the lord of heaven,

तेषाम् अन्यतमं देवं पतिं वरय शोभने ॥ २३ ॥
 तेषाम् एव प्रभावेन प्रविष्टोऽहम् अलक्षितः ।
 प्रविशन्तं न मां कश्चिद् अपश्यन् नाप्यवारयत् ॥ २४ ॥
 एतदर्थम् अहं भद्रे प्रेषितः सुरसत्तमैः ।
 एतच्च कृत्वा शुभे बुद्धिं प्रकुरुष्व यथेच्छसि ॥ २५ ॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने तृतीयः सर्गः ॥ ३ ॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

सा नमस्कृत्य देवेभ्यः प्रहस्य नलम् अब्रवीत् ।
 प्रणयस्व यथाश्रद्धं राजन् किं करवाणि ते ॥ १ ॥
 अहं चैव हि यच्च चान्यन् ममास्ति वसु किञ्चन ।
 तत् सर्वं तव विश्रब्धं कुरु प्रणयम् ईश्वर ॥ २ ॥
 हंसानां वचनं यत् तु तन् मां दहति पार्थिव ।
 त्वकृते हि मया वीर राजानः सन्निपातिताः ॥ ३ ॥
 यदि त्वं भजमानां मां प्रत्याख्यास्यसि मानद ।
 विषम् अग्निं जलं रज्जुम् आस्थ्यास्ये तव कारणात् ॥ ४ ॥
 एवम् उक्तस् तु वैदर्भ्या नलस् तां प्रत्युवाच ह ।
 तिष्ठत्सु लोकपालेषु कथं मानुषम् इच्छसि ॥ ५ ॥
 येषाम् अहं लोककृताम् ईश्वराणां महात्मनां ।
 न पादरजसा तुल्यो मनस् ते तेषु वर्ततां ॥ ६ ॥
 विप्रियं ह्याचरन् मर्त्यो देवानां मृत्युम् ऋच्छति ।
 चाहि माम् अनवघाङ्गि वरयस्व सुरोत्तमान् ॥ ७ ॥

Indra, Agni, Varun, Yama, choose thou, princess, for thy lord.
 Through their power, their power almighty, I have entered here unseen ;
 As I entered in thy chamber none hath seen, and none might stay.
 This, the object of my mission, fairest, from the highest gods,
 Thou hast heard me, noble princess, even as thou wilt, decide.

END OF BOOK III.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

To the gods performed her homage, smiled she, and to Nala spake :—

‘Pledge to me thy faith, O Rája, how that faith may I requite?

I myself, and whatsoever in the world I have, is thine—

In full trust is thine—O grant me in thy turn thy love, O king!

’Tis the swan’s enamouring language that hath kindled all my soul.

Only for thy sake, O hero, are the assembled Rájás met.

But if thou mine homage scornest, scornest me, all honoured king,

Poison for thy sake, fire, water, the vile noose will I endure!

So, when spake Vidarbha’s maiden, Nala answered thus, and said :—

‘With the world’s dread guardians present wilt thou mortal husband choose?

¹⁰‘We with them, the world’s creators, with these mighty lords compared,

Lowlier than the dust they tread on, raise to them thy loftier mind.

Man the gods displeasing, hastens to inevitable death—

Fair-limbed! from that fate preserve me, choose the all-excelling gods.

विरजांसि च वासांसि दिव्याश् चिचाः स्रजस् तथा ।

भूषणानि च मुख्यानि देवान् प्राप्य तु भुङ्ख्व वै ॥ ८ ॥

य इमां पृथिवीं कृत्वां सङ्घिष्य यसते पुनः ।

हुताशम् ईशं देवानां का तं न वरयेत् पतिं ॥ ९ ॥

यस्य दण्डभयात् सर्वे भूतयामाः समागताः ।

धर्मम् एवानुरुध्यन्ति का तं न वरयेत् पतिं ॥ १० ॥

धर्मात्मानं महात्मानं दैत्यदानवमर्दनं ।

महेन्द्रं सर्वदेवानां का तं न वरयेत् पतिं ॥ ११ ॥

क्रियताम् अविशङ्केन मनसा यदि मन्यसे ।

वरुणं लोकपालानां सुहृद्वाक्यम् इदं शृणु ॥ १२ ॥

नैषधेनैवमुक्ता सा दमयन्ती वचोऽब्रवीत् ।

समाप्नुताभ्यां नेत्राभ्यां शोकजेनाथ वारिणा ॥ १३ ॥

देवेभ्योऽहं नमस्कृत्य सर्वेभ्यः पृथिवीपते ।

वृणे त्वाम् एव भर्तारं सत्यम् एतद् ब्रवीमि ते ॥ १४ ॥

ताम् उवाच ततो राजा वेपमानां कृताञ्जलिं ।

दौत्येनागत्य कल्याणि कथं स्वार्थम् इहोत्सहे ॥ १५ ॥

कथं ह्यहं प्रतिश्रुत्य देवतानां विशेषतः ।

परार्थे यत्नम् आरभ्य कथं स्वार्थम् इहोत्सहे ॥ १६ ॥

एष धर्मो यदि स्वार्थो ममापि भविता ततः ।

एवं स्वार्थं करिष्यामि तथा भद्रे विधीयतां ॥ १७ ॥

ततो वाष्पाकुलां वाचं दमयन्ती शुचिस्मिता ।

प्रत्याहरन्ती शनकैर् नलं राजानम् अब्रवीत् ॥ १८ ॥

उपायोऽयं मया दृष्टो निरपायो नरेश्वर ।

येन दोषो न भविता तव राजन् कथञ्चन ॥ १९ ॥

त्वञ्चैव हि नरश्रेष्ठ देवाश् चेन्द्रपुरोगमाः ।

आयान्तु सहिताः सर्वे मम यत्र स्वयंवरः ॥ २० ॥

Robes by earthly dust unsullied, crowns of amaranthine flowers,
 Every bright celestial glory, wedded to the gods, enjoy.
 He, who all the world compressing, with devouring might consumes,
 Sovereign of the gods, Hutása, where is she who would not wed?
 He, in awe of whose dread sceptre all the assembled hosts of men
 Cultivate eternal justice, where is she who would not wed?
 Him the all-righteous, lofty-minded, slayer of the infernal host,
 Of all gods, the mighty monarch, who is she that would not wed?
 Nor let trembling doubt arrest thee, in thy mind if thou couldst choose
 Varuṇa, amongst earth's guardians; hear the language of a friend.'

To the sovereign of Nishadha Damayantí spake, and said,
 And her eyes grew dim with moisture flowing from her inward grief:—
 'To the gods, to all, my homage, king of earth, I humbly pay;
 Yet thee only, thee, my husband, may I choose, Be this my vow!
 Answered he the trembling maiden, as with folded hands she stood,
 'Bound upon this solemn mission, mine own cause how dare I urge?
 Plighted by a sacred promise to the everlasting gods;
 Thus engaged to plead for others, for myself I may not plead.
 This my duty; yet hereafter come I on my own behalf,
 Then I'll plead mine own cause boldly, weigh it, beauteous, in thy thought.'
 Damayantí smiled serenely, and with tear-impeded speech,
 Uttered brokenly and slowly, thus to royal Nala spake:—
 'Yet I see a way of refuge, 'tis a blameless way, O king;
 Whence no sin to thee, O Rája, may by any chance arise.
 Thou, O noblest of all mortals, and the gods by Indra led,
 Come and enter in together, where the Svayamvara meets;

ततोऽहं लोकपालानां सन्निधौ त्वां नरेश्वर ।
 वरयिष्ये नरव्याघ्र नैवं दोषो भविष्यति ॥२१॥
 एवम् उक्तस्तु वैदर्भ्या नली राजा विशाम्पते ।
 आजगाम पुनस् तत्र यत्र देवाः समागताः ॥२२॥
 तम् अपश्यंस् तथायान्तं लोकपाला महेश्वराः ।
 दृष्ट्वा चैनं ततोऽपृच्छन् वृत्तान्तं सर्वम् एव तं ॥२३॥
 कश्चिद् दृष्ट्वा त्वया राजन् दमयन्ती शुचिस्मिता ।
 किम् अब्रवीच्च नः सर्वान् वद भूमिपतेऽनघ ॥२४॥

नल उवाच ।

भवन्निर अहम् आदिष्टो दमयन्त्या निवेशनं ।
 प्रविष्टः सुमहाकक्षं दण्डिभिः स्थविरैर् वृतं ॥२५॥
 प्रविशन्तश्च मां तत्र न कश्चिद् दृष्टवान् नरः ।
 ऋते तां पार्थिवसुतां भवताम् एव तेजसा ॥२६॥
 सख्यश् चास्या मया दृष्टास् ताभिश्च चाप्युपलक्षितः ।
 विस्मिताश्चाभवन् सर्वा दृष्ट्वा मां विबुधेश्वराः ॥२७॥
 वर्यमानेषु च मया भवत्सु रुचिरान्ना ।
 माम् एव गतसङ्कल्पा वृणीते सा सुरोत्तमाः ॥२८॥
 अब्रवीच्चैव मां बाला आयान्तु सहिताः सुराः ।
 त्वया सह नरव्याघ्र मम यत्र स्वयंवरः ॥२९॥
 तेषाम् अहं सन्निधौ त्वां वरयिष्यामि नैषध ।
 एवं तव महाबाहो दोषो न भवितेति ह ॥३०॥
 एतावद् एव विबुधा यथावृत्तम् उदाहृतं ।
 मया शेषे प्रमाणं तु भवन्तस् चिदश्वराः ॥३१॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने चतुर्थः सर्गः ॥४॥

Then will I, before the presence of the guardians of the world,
Name thee, lord of men! my husband, nor to thee may blame accrue.'

By the maiden of Vidarbha, royal Nala thus addressed,
Back again returned, where waited eager, the expecting gods.
Him, the mighty lords, earth's guardians, ere he yet drew near, beheld,
Him they saw, and bade him instant all his tidings to unfold—
'Was she seen of thee, O monarch, Damayantí with soft smile?
Spake she of us all? what said she? tell, O blameless lord of earth.'

NALA spake:

To the bower of Damayantí, on your solemn mission sent,
Entered I the lofty portal, by the aged warders watched;
Mortal eye might not behold me, there as swift I entered in;
None save that fair Rája's daughter, through your all-prevailing power.
And her virgin handmaids saw I, and by them in turn was seen;
And they all in mute amazement gazed upon me as I stood.
I described your godlike presence, but the maid with beauteous face
Chooses me, bereft of reason, O most excellent of gods!
Thus she spake, that maiden princess, 'Let the gods together come,
Come with thee, O king of mortals, where the Svayamvara meets;
There will I, before their presence, choose thee, Rája, for my lord.
So to thee, O strong-armed warrior, may no blame, no fault ensue.'
Thus it was, even as I tell you word for word did it befall;
As for what remains, the judgment rests with you, of gods the chief!

END OF BOOK IV.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

अथ काले शुभे प्राप्ते तिथौ पुण्ये क्षणे तथा ।
 आजुहाव महीपालान् भीमो राजा स्वयंवरे ॥१॥
 तच्च ह्युक्त्वा पृथिवीपालाः सर्वे हृच्छयपीडिताः ।
 त्वरिताः समुपाजग्मुर् दमयन्तीम् अभीप्सवः ॥२॥
 कनकस्तम्भरुचिरं तोरणेन विराजितं ।
 विविशुस् ते नृपा रङ्गं महासिंहा इवाचलं ॥३॥
 तत्रासनेषु विविधेष्व्वासीनाः पृथिवीक्षितः ।
 सुरभिस्त्रयधराः सर्वे प्रमृष्टमणिकुराडलाः ॥४॥
 तत्र स्म पीना दृश्यन्ते बाहवः परिधोपमाः ।
 आकारवर्णमुल्लक्षणाः पञ्चशीर्षा इवोरगाः ॥५॥
 सुकेशान्तानि चारूणि सुनासास्त्रिभुवाणि च ।
 मुखानि राज्ञां शोभन्ते नक्षत्राणि यथा दिवि ॥६॥
 तां राजसमितिं पुण्यां नागैर् भोगवतीम् इव ।
 सम्पूर्णां पुरुषव्याघ्रैर् व्याघ्रैर् गिरिगुहाम् इव ॥७॥
 दमयन्ती ततो रङ्गं प्रविवेश शुभानना ।
 मुष्णन्ती प्रभया राज्ञां चक्षूंषि च मनांसि च ॥८॥
 तस्या गात्रेषु पतिता तेषां दृष्टिर् महात्मनां ।
 तत्र तत्रैव सक्ताभून् न चचाल च पश्यतां ॥९॥
 ततः सङ्कीर्त्यमानेषु राज्ञां नामसु भारत ।
 ददर्श भैमी पुरुषान् पञ्च तुल्याकृतीन् अथ ॥१०॥
 तान् समीक्ष्य ततः सर्वान् निर्विशेषाकृतीन् स्थितान् ।
 सन्देहाद् अथ वैदर्भी नाभ्यजानान् नलं नृपं ॥११॥

VṚIHADAŚVA spake :

CAME the day of happy omen, moonday meet, and moment apt ;
 Bhíma to the Svayaṃvara summoned all the lords of earth.
 One and all, upon the instant, rose th' enamoured lords of earth,
 Suitors all to Damayantí in their loving haste they came.
 They, the court with golden columns rich, and glittering portal arch,
 Like the lions on the mountains entered they the hall of state.
 There the lords of earth were seated, each upon his several throne ;
 All their fragrant garlands wearing, all with pendant ear-gems rich.
 Arms were seen robust and vigorous as the ponderous battle mace,
 Some like the five-headed serpents, delicate in shape and hue :
 With bright locks profuse and flowing, fine-formed nose, and eye and brow,
 Shone the faces of the Rájas like the radiant stars in heaven.
 As with serpents, Bhogavatí, the wide hall was full of kings ;
 As the mountain-caves with tigers, with the tiger-warriors full.
 Damayantí in her beauty entered on that stately scene,
 With her dazzling light entrancing every eye and every soul.
 O'er her lovely person gliding all the eyes of those proud kings ;
 There were fixed, there moveless rested, as they gazed upon the maid.
 Then as they proclaimed the Rájas, (by his name was each proclaimed,)
 In dismay saw Bhíma's daughter, five in garb, in form the same.
 On those forms, all undistinguished each from each, she stood and gazed.
 In her doubt Vidarbha's princess Nala's form might not discern,

यं यं हि ददृशे तेषां तं तं मेने नलं नृपं ।
 सा चिन्तयन्ती बुद्ध्याथ तर्कयामास भाविनी ।
 कथं हि देवान् जानीयां कथं विद्यां नलं नृपं ॥ १२ ॥
 एवं सञ्चिन्तयन्ती सा वैदर्भी भृशदुःखिता ।
 श्रुतानि देवलिङ्गानि तर्कयामास भारत ॥ १३ ॥
 देवानां यानि लिङ्गानि स्थविरेभ्यः श्रुतानि मे ।
 तानीह तिष्ठतां भूमाव् एकस्यापि न लक्षये ॥ १४ ॥
 सा विनिश्चित्य बहुधा विचार्य च पुनः पुनः ।
 शरणं प्रति देवानां प्राप्नकालम् अमन्यत ॥ १५ ॥
 वाचा च मनसा चैव नमस्कारं प्रयुज्य सा ।
 देवेभ्यः प्राञ्जलिर् भूत्वा वेपमानेदम् अब्रवीत् ॥ १६ ॥
 हंसानां वचनं श्रुत्वा यथा मे नैषधो वृतः ।
 पतित्वे तेन सत्येन देवास् तं प्रदिशन्तु मे ॥ १७ ॥
 मनसा वचसा चैव यथा नाभिचराम्यहं ।
 तेन सत्येन विबुधास् तम् एव प्रदिशन्तु मे ॥ १८ ॥
 यथा देवैः स मे भर्ता विहितो निषधाधिपः ।
 तेन सत्येन मे देवास् तम् एव प्रदिशन्तु मे ॥ १९ ॥
 यथेदं व्रतम् आरब्धं नलस्याराधने मया ।
 तेन सत्येन मे देवास् तम् एव प्रदिशन्तु मे ॥ २० ॥
 स्वचैव रूपं कुर्वन्तु लोकपाला महेश्वराः ।
 यथाहम् अभिजानीयां पुण्यश्लोकं नराधिपं ॥ २१ ॥
 निशम्य दमयन्त्यास् तत् करुणं परिदेवितं ।
 निश्चयं परमं तथ्यम् अनुरागञ्च नैषधे ॥ २२ ॥
 मनोविशुद्धिं बुद्धिञ्च भक्तिं रागञ्च नैषधे ।
 यथोक्तं चक्रिरे देवाः सामर्थ्यं लिङ्गधारणे ॥ २३ ॥
 सापश्यद् विबुधान् सर्वान् अस्वेदान् स्रब्धलोचनान् ।

Whichsoe'er the form she gazed on, him her Nala, him she thought.

She within her secret spirit deeply pondering, stood and thought :

'How shall I the gods distinguish? royal Nala how discern?'

Pondering thus Vidarbha's maiden in the anguish of her heart—

Th' attributes of the immortals sought, as heard of yore, to see.

'Th' attributes of each celestial, that our aged sires describe,

As on earth they stand before me, not of one may I discern.'

Long she pondered in her silence, and again, again she thought.

To the gods, her only refuge, turned she at this trying hour:

With her voice and with her spirit she her humble homage paid.

Folding both her hands and trembling to the gods the maiden spake :

'As when heard the swan's sweet language chose I then Nishadha's king,

By this truth I here adjure ye, oh, ye gods, reveal my lord!

As in word or thought I swerve not from my faith, all-knowing powers!

By this truth I here adjure ye, oh, ye gods, reveal my lord!

As the gods themselves have destined for my lord Nishadha's king;

By this truth I here adjure ye, oh, ye gods, my lord reveal!

As my vow, so pledged to Nala, holily must be maintained,

By this truth I here adjure ye, oh, ye gods my lord reveal!

Each the form divine assume ye, earth's protectors, mighty lords;

So shall I discern my Nala, I shall know the king of men.'

As they heard sad Damayantí uttering thus her piteous prayer,

At her high resolve they wonder, steadfast truth and fervent love,

Holiness of soul, and wisdom, to her lord her constant faith.

As she prayed, the gods obedient stood with attributes revealed :

With unmoistened skins the Immortals saw she, and with moveless eyes ;

हृषितस्रयजोहीनान् स्थितान् अस्पृशतः क्षितिं ॥ २४ ॥

छायाद्वितीयो म्लानस्रग् रजःस्वेदसमन्वितः ।

भूमिष्ठो नैषधश्चैव निमेषेण च सूचितः ॥ २५ ॥

सा समीक्ष्य तु तान् देवान् पुण्यस्योक्तञ्च भारत ।

नैषधं वरयामास भैमी धर्मेण पाण्डव ॥ २६ ॥

विलज्जमाना वस्त्रान्ते जयाहायतलोचना ।

स्कन्धदेशेऽसृजत् तस्य स्रजं परमशीभनां ॥ २७ ॥

वरयामास चैवैनं पतित्वे वरवर्णिनी ।

ततो हा हेति सहसा मुक्तः शब्दो नराधिपैः ॥ २८ ॥

देवैर् महर्षिभिस् तत्र साधु साध्विति भारत ।

विस्मितैर् ईरितः शब्दः प्रशंसद्भिर् नलं नृपं ॥ २९ ॥

दमयन्तीं तु कौरव्य वीरसेनसुतो नृपः ।

आश्रासयद् वरारोहां प्रहृष्टेनान्तरात्मना ॥ ३० ॥

यत् त्वं भजसि कल्याणि पुमांसं देवसन्निधौ ।

तस्मान् मां विद्धि भर्तारम् एवं ते वचने रतं ॥ ३१ ॥

यावच्च मे धरिष्यन्ति प्राणा देहे शुचिस्मिते ।

तावत् त्वयि भविष्यामि सत्यम् एतद् ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ३२ ॥

दमयन्तीं तथा वाग्भिर् अभिनन्द्य कृताञ्जलिः ।

तौ परस्परतः प्रीतौ दृष्ट्वा त्वग्निपुरोगमान् ।

तान् एव शरणं देवान् जग्मतुर् मनसा तदा ॥ ३३ ॥

वृते तु नैषधे भैम्या लोकपाला महौजसः ।

प्रहृष्टमनसः सर्वे नलायाष्टौ वरान् ददुः ॥ ३४ ॥

प्रत्यक्षदर्शनं यज्ञे गतिञ्चानुत्तमां शुभां ।

नैषधाय ददौ शक्रः प्रीयमाणः शचीपतिः ॥ ३५ ॥

अग्निर् आत्मभवं प्रादाद् यत्र वाञ्छति नैषधः ।

लोकान् आत्मप्रभांश्चैव ददौ तस्मै हुताशनः ॥ ३६ ॥

Fresh their dust-unsullied garlands hovered they, nor touched the earth.
 By his shadow doubled, dust-soiled, garland-drooping, moist with sweat,
 On the earth Nishadha's monarch stood confessed, with twinkling eyes ;
 On the gods an instant gazed she, then upon the king of men ;
 And of right king Bhíma's daughter named Nishadha's king her lord.
 Modestly the large-eyed maiden lifted up his garment's hem,
 Round his shoulders threw she lightly the bright zone of radiant flowers.
 So she chose him for her husband, Nala, that high-hearted maid.
 Then ' alas ! alas ! ' burst wildly, from that conclave of the kings,
 And ' well done, well done,' as loudly, from the gods and sages broke.
 All in their extatic wonder glorified Nishadha's king.
 Then to royal Damayantí, Vírasena's kingly son,
 To that slender-waisted damsel spake he comfort in his joy ;
 ' Since thou'st own'd me for thine husband, in the presence of the gods,
 For thy faithful consort know me, aye delighting in thy words.
 While this spirit fills this body, maiden with the smile serene !
 Thine am I, so long thine only, this the solemn truth I vow.'
 Thus he gladdened Damayantí with the assurance of his faith.
 Then, rejoicing in each other, that blest pair, upon the gods
 Led by Agni, gazed in homage, on their great protectors gazed.

Chosen thus Nishadha's monarch, the bright guardians of the world,
 In their gladness all on Nala eight transcendant gifts bestowed ;
 To discern the visible godhead in the sacrifice, a gait
 Firm and noble, Śaśí's husband, Indra to king Nala gave.
 Agni gave his own bright presence whensoever the monarch called.
 All the worlds instinct with splendour through his power Hutása gave.

यमस्वप्नरसं प्रादाद् धर्मे च परमां स्थितिं ।
 अपाम्पतिर् अपाम्भावं यच्च वाञ्छति नैषधः ॥३७॥
 स्रजश्चोत्तमगन्धाढ्याः सर्वे च मिथुनं ददुः ।
 वरान् एवं प्रदायास्य देवास् ते षिदिवं गताः ॥३८॥
 पार्थिवाश्चानुभूयास्य विवाहं विस्मयान्विताः ।
 दमयन्त्याश्च मुदिताः प्रतिजग्मुर् यथागतं ॥३९॥
 गतेषु पार्थिवेन्द्रेषु भीमः प्रीतो महामनाः ।
 विवाहं कारयामास दमयन्त्या नलस्य च ॥४०॥
 उथ तच्च यथाकामं नैषधो द्विपदां वरः ।
 भीमेन समनुज्ञातो जगाम नगरं स्वकं ॥४१॥
 अवाप्य नारीरत्नं तु पुण्यश्लोकोऽपि पार्थिवः ।
 रेमे सह तथा राजन् शय्येव बलवृचहा ॥४२॥
 अतीव मुदितो राजा भाजमानोऽंशुमान् इव ।
 अरञ्जयत् प्रजा वीरो धर्मेण परिपालयन् ॥४३॥
 ईजे चाप्यश्वमेधेन ययातिर् इव नाहुषः ।
 अन्यैश्च बहुभिर् धीमान् क्रतुभिश्चाप्यदक्षिणैः ॥४४॥
 पुनश्च रमणीयेषु वनेषूपवनेषु च ।
 दमयन्त्या सह नली विजहारामरोपमः ॥४५॥
 जनयामास च नली दमयन्त्या महामनाः ।
 इन्द्रसेनं सुतञ्चापि इन्द्रसेनाञ्च कन्यकां ॥४६॥
 एवं स यजमानश्च विहरंश्च नराधिपः ।
 ररक्ष वसुसम्पूर्णा वसुधां वसुधाधिपः ॥४७॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने पञ्चमः सर्गः ॥५॥

Subtle taste in food gave Yama, and in virtue eminence ;
Varun gave obedient water to be present at his call ;
Garlands too of matchless fragrance ; each his double blessing gave.
Thus bestowed their gracious favours, to the heavens the gods returned ;
And the Rájás, who with wonder Nala's marriage saw confirmed
With the gentle Damayantí, as they came, in joy returned.
Thus the kings of earth departed ; Bhíma in his joy and pride,
Solemnized the stately bridals of the maiden and the king.
Fitting time when there he'd sojourned, best of men, Nishadha's king ;
Courteous parting with king Bhíma to his native city went.
Having gained the pearl of women the majestic lord of earth
Lived in bliss, as with his Saáci, he that those old giants slew.
In his joy the elated monarch, shining radiant as the sun,
Ruled the subjects of his kingdom with a just and equal sway.
Of the horse the famous offering, like Náhusa's mighty son,
Every sacrifice performed he, with rich gifts to holy men.
And full oft in flowering gardens, and delicious shady groves,
Like a god, the royal Nala took with Damayantí joy.
So begat from Damayantí, Nala, of heroic soul,
Indrasená one fair daughter, Indrasen one beauteous son.
Thus in sacrifice and pleasance took his joy the king of men,
So the earth with riches teeming ruled the sovereign of the earth.

END OF BOOK V.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

वृते तु नैषधे भैम्या लीकपाला महीजसः ।
 यान्तो ददृशुर् आयान्तं द्वापरं कलिना सह ॥१॥
 अथाब्रवीत् कलिं शक्रः सम्प्रेक्ष्य बलवृषहा ।
 द्वापरेण सहायेन कले ब्रूहि क्व यास्यसि ॥२॥
 ततोऽब्रवीत् कलिः शक्रं दमयन्त्याः स्वयंवरं ।
 गत्वा हि वरयिष्ये तां मनो हि मम तां गतं ॥३॥
 तम् अब्रवीत् प्रहस्येन्द्रो निवृत्तः स स्वयंवरः ।
 वृतस् तथा नली राजा पतिर् अस्मत्समीपतः ॥४॥
 एवम् उक्तस्तु शक्रेण कलिः क्रोधसमन्वितः ।
 देवान् आमन्व्य तान् सर्वान् उवाचेदं वचस् तदा ॥५॥
 देवानां मानुषं मध्ये यत् सा पतिम् अविन्दत ।
 तच्च तस्या भवेन् न्याय्यं विपुलं दण्डधारणं ॥६॥
 एवम् उक्ते तु कलिना प्रत्यूचुस् ते दिवोकसः ।
 अस्माभिः समनुज्ञाते दमयन्त्या नली वृतः ॥७॥
 का च सर्वगुणोपेतं नाश्रयेत नलं नृपं ।
 यो वेद धर्मान् अखिलान् यथावच् चरितव्रतः ॥८॥
 योऽधीते चतुरो वेदान् सर्वान् आख्यानपञ्चमान् ।
 नित्यं नृप्ता गृहे यस्य देवा यज्ञेषु धर्मतः ॥९॥
 अहिंसानिरतो यश्च सत्यवादी दृढव्रतः ।
 यस्मिन् सत्यं धृतिर् दानं तपः शौचं दमः शमः ॥१०॥
 ध्रुवाणि पुरुषव्याघ्रे लीकपालसमे नृपे ।
 एवंपुं नलं यो वै कामयेच् छपितुं कले ॥११॥

VṚIHADAŚVA spake :

NALA chosen by Bhīma's daughter, the bright guardians of the world,
As they parted thence, with Kali, Dvāpara approaching saw.

Kali as he saw, did Indra, did the giant-killer say,

' Here, with Dvāpara attended, whither, Kali, dost thou go ?'

Kali spake, ' The Svayamvara we of Damayantī seek ;

Her I go to make my consort, into her mine heart hath passed.'

' Closed and ended is that bridal,' Indra answered with a smile,

' Nala she hath chosen for husband, in the presence of us all.'

Thus addressed by Indra, Kali, in the transport of his wrath,

All the heavenly gods saluting, thus his malediction spake,

' Since before the Immortals' presence she a mortal spouse did choose,

Of her impious crime most justly, heavy be the penal doom.'

Kali hardly thus had spoken than the heaven-born gods replied :

' With our full and liberal sanction Damayantī chose her lord.

Who to Nala, with all virtue rich endowed, would not incline ?

He that rightly knows each duty, he who ever rightly acts,

He who reads the whole four Vedas, the Purāṇas too the fifth,

In whose palace with pure offerings ever are the gods adored,

Gentle to all living creatures, true in word and strict in vow ;

Good and constant he, and generous, holy, temperate, patient, pure ;

His are all these virtues ever, equal to the earth-guarding gods.

Thus endowed, the noble Nala, he, O Kali, that would curse,

आत्मानं स शपेन् मूढो हन्याद् आत्मानम् आत्मना ।
 एवङ्गुणं नलं यो वै कामयेच् छपितुं कले ॥१२॥
 कृच्छ्रे स नरके मज्जेद् अगाधे विपुले हृदे ।
 एवम् उक्त्वा कलिं देवा द्वापरञ्च दिवं ययुः ॥१३॥
 ततो गतेषु देवेषु कलिर् द्वापरम् अब्रवीत् ।
 संहर्तुं नोत्सहे कीपं नले वत्स्यामि द्वापर ॥१४॥
 भंशयिष्यामि तं राज्यान् न भैम्या सह रंस्यते ।
 त्वमप्यक्षान् समाविश्य साहाय्यं कर्तुम् अर्हसि ॥१५॥
 ॥ इति नलोपाख्याने षष्ठः सर्गः ॥६॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

एवं स समयं कृत्वा द्वापरेण कलिः सह ।
 आजगाम ततस् तच्च यच्च राजा स नैषधः ॥१॥
 स नित्यम् अन्तरप्रेप्सुर् निषधेष्ववसच् चिरं ।
 अथास्य द्वादशे वर्षे ददर्श कलिर् अन्तरं ॥२॥
 कृत्वा मूषम् उपस्पृश्य सन्ध्याम् अन्वास्त नैषधः ।
 अकृत्वा पादयोः शौचं तत्रैनं कलिर् आविशत् ॥३॥
 स समाविश्य च नलं समीपं पुष्करस्य च ।
 गत्वा पुष्करम् आहेदम् एहि दीप्य नलेन वै ॥४॥
 अक्षयूते नलं जेता भवान् हि सहितो मया ।
 निषधान् प्रतिपद्यस्व जित्वा राज्यं नलं नृपं ॥५॥
 एवम् उक्तस्तु कलिना पुष्करो नलम् अभ्ययात् ।
 कलिश्चैव वृषो भूत्वा गवां पुष्करम् अभ्यगात् ॥६॥
 आसाद्य तु नलं वीरं पुष्करः परवीरहा ।

On the fool recoil his curses, only fatal to himself.

Nala, gifted with such virtues, he, O Kali, who would curse—

Be he plunged in hell's dark torments, in the deep and vasty lake.'

Thus the gods to Kali speaking to their native heavens arose.

Soon as they had parted, Kali thus to Dvápára began :

' I my wrath can curb no longer, I henceforth in Nala dwell ;

From his kingdom will I cast him, from his bliss with his sweet bride.

Thou within the dice embodied, Dvápára, my cause assist.'

END OF BOOK VI.

VĪHADAŚVA spake :

BOUND by that malignant treaty, Kali with his dark ally,

Haunted they the stately palace, where Nishadha's monarch ruled ;

Watching still the fatal instant, in Nishadha long they dwelt.

Twelve long years had passed ere Kali saw that fatal instant come.

Nala after act uncleanly holy water having sipped,

Went to prayer, with feet unwashen ;—Kali seized the fatal hour.

Into Nala straight he entered, and possessed his inmost soul.

Pushkara in haste he summoned—' Come, with Nala play at dice,

Ever in the gainful hazard, by my subtle aid thou'lt win,

Even the kingdom of Nishadha, even from Nala all his realm.'

Pushkara by Kali summoned, to his brother Nala came,

In the chief of dice embodied, Kali Pushkara stood near.

Pushkara the hero-slayer to king Nala standing near :

दीव्यावेत्यब्रवीद् भ्राता वृषेणेति मुहुर् मुहुः ॥७॥
 न चक्ष्मे ततो राजा समाह्वानं महामनाः ।
 वैदर्भ्याः प्रेक्षमाणायाः पणकालम् अमन्यत ॥८॥
 हिरण्यस्य सुवर्णस्य यानयुग्यस्य वाससां ।
 आविष्टः कलिना द्यूते जीयते स्म नलस् तदा ॥९॥
 तम् अक्षमदसम्मत्तं मुहृदां न तु कश्चन ।
 निवारणेऽभवच् छक्तो दीव्यमानम् अरिन्दमं ॥१०॥
 ततः पौरजनाः सर्वे मन्त्रिभिः सह भारत ।
 राजानं द्रष्टुम् आगच्छन् निवारयितुम् आतुरं ॥११॥
 ततः सूत उपागम्य दमयन्त्यै न्यवेदयत् ।
 एष पौरजनो देवि द्वारि तिष्ठति कार्यवान् ॥१२॥
 निवेद्यतां नैषधाय सर्वाः प्रकृतयः स्थिताः ।
 अमृथमाणा व्यसनं राज्ञो धर्मार्थदर्शिनः ॥१३॥
 ततः सा वाष्पकलया वाचा दुःखेन कर्षिता ।
 उवाच नैषधं भैमी शोकीपहतचेतना ॥१४॥
 राजन् पौरजनो द्वारि त्वां दिदृक्षुर् अवस्थितः ।
 मन्त्रिभिः सहितः सर्वे राजभक्तिपुरस्कृतः ।
 तं द्रष्टुम् अर्हसीत्येवं पुनः पुनर् अभाषत ॥१५॥
 तां तथा रुचिरापाङ्गीं विलपन्तीं तथाविधां ।
 आविष्टः कलिना राजा नाभ्यभाषत किञ्चन ॥१६॥
 ततस् ते मन्त्रिणः सर्वे ते चैव पुरवासिनः ।
 नायम् अस्तीति दुःखार्ता व्रीडिता जग्मुर् आलयान् ॥१७॥
 तथा तद् अभवद् द्यूतम् पुष्करस्य नलस्य च ।
 युधिष्ठिर बहून् मासान् पुण्यश्लोकस्त्वजीयत ॥१८॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने सप्तमः सर्गः ॥७॥

‘Play we with the dice, my brother,’ thus again his brother said.
 Long the lofty-minded Rájá that bold challenge might not brook,
 In Vidarbha’s princess’ presence deemed he now the time for play.
 For his wealth, his golden treasures, for his chariots, for his robes,
 Then possessed by Kali, Nala in the game was worsted still.
 He with love of gaming maddened, of his faithful friends not one
 Might arrest the desperate frenzy of the conqueror of his foes.
 Came the citizens assembling, with the counsellors of state,
 To behold the king approached they to restrain his dread disease.
 Then the charioteer advancing thus to Damayantí spake :
 ‘ All the city, noble princess, stands assembled at the gate,
 Say thou to Nishadha’s monarch, “ All his subjects here are met ;
 Ill they brook this dire misfortune in their justice-loving king.” ’
 Then, her voice half-choked with anguish, spake the sorrow-stricken queen,
 Spirit-broken, Bhíma’s daughter to Nishadha’s sovereign spake,
 ‘ Rájá, lo ! the assembled city at the gate their king to see :
 With the counsellors of wisdom, by their loyal duty led.
 Deign thou, monarch, to admit them,’ thus again, again she said.
 To the queen with beauteous eyelids uttering thus her sad lament,
 Still possessed by wicked Kali, answered not the king a word.
 Then those counsellors of wisdom, and those loyal citizens,
 ‘ ’Tis not he,’ exclaimed in sorrow, and in shame and grief went home.
 Thus of Pushkara and Nala still went on that fatal play ;
 Many a weary month it lasted, and still lost the king of men.

END OF BOOK VII.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

दमयन्ती ततो दृष्ट्वा पुण्यश्लोकं नराधिपं ।
 उन्मत्तवद् अनुन्मत्ता देवने गतचेतसं ॥ १ ॥
 भयशोकसमाविष्टा राजन् भीमसुता ततः ।
 चिन्तयामास तत् कार्यं सुमहत् पार्थिवं प्रति ॥ २ ॥
 सा शङ्कमाना तत्पापं चिकीर्षन्ती च तत्प्रियं ।
 नलञ्च हृतसर्वस्वम् उपलभ्येदम् अब्रवीत् ॥ ३ ॥
 वृहत्सेनाम् अतियशां तां धार्मीं परिचारिकां ।
 हितां सर्वार्थकुशलाम् अनुरक्तां सुभाषितां ॥ ४ ॥
 वृहत्सेने व्रजामात्यान् आनाम्य नलशासनात् ।
 आचक्ष्व यद् धृतं द्रव्यम् अवशिष्टञ्च यद् वसु ॥ ५ ॥
 ततस् ते मन्त्रिणः सर्वे विज्ञाय नलशासनं ।
 अपि नो भागधेयं स्याद् इत्युक्त्वा नलम् आब्रजन् ॥ ६ ॥
 तास्तु सर्वाः प्रकृतयो द्वितीयं समुपस्थिताः ।
 न्यवेदयद् भीमसुता न च स प्रत्यनन्दत ॥ ७ ॥
 वाक्यम् अप्रतिनन्दन्तं भर्तारम् अभिवीक्ष्य सा ।
 दमयन्ती पुनर् वेश्म व्रीडिता प्रविवेश ह ॥ ८ ॥
 निशम्य सततं चाक्षान् पुण्यश्लोकपराङ्मुखान् ।
 नलञ्च हृतसर्वस्वं धार्मीं पुनर् उवाच ह ॥ ९ ॥
 वृहत्सेने पुनर् गच्छ वार्ष्णेयं नलशासनात् ।
 सूतम् आनय कल्याणि महत् कार्यम् उपस्थितं ॥ १० ॥
 वृहत्सेना तु तच् छ्रुत्वा दमयन्त्या प्रभाषितं ।

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

DAMAYANTÍ then beholding Puṇyaśloka, king of men,
 Undistracted, him distracted with the maddening love of play.
 In her dread and in her sorrow thus did Bhíma's daughter speak ;
 Pondering on the weighty business that concerned the king of men ;
 Trembling at his guilty frenzy, yet to please him still intent.
 Nala, 'reft of all his treasures, when the noble woman saw,
 Thus addressed she Vṛihatsená, her old faithful slave and nurse,
 Friendly, in all business dextrous, most devoted, wise in speech :
 ' Vṛihatsená, go, the council as at Nala's call convene,
 Say what he hath lost of treasure, and what treasure yet remains.'
 Then did all that reverend council, Nala's summons as they heard,
 ' Our own fate is now in peril,' speaking thus, approach the king.
 And a second time his subjects all assembling, crowded near,
 And the queen announced their presence ; of her words he took no heed.
 All her words thus disregarded, when king 'Bhíma's daughter found,
 To the palace Damayantí to conceal her shame returned.
 When the dice she heard for ever adverse to the king of men,
 And of all bereft, her Nala, to the nurse again she spake :
 ' Go again, my Vṛihatsená, in the name of Nala, go,
 To the charioteer, Várshṇeya, great the deed must now be done.'
 Vṛihatsená on the instant Damayantí's words she heard,

वार्ष्णेयम् आनयामास पुरुषैर् आप्तकारिभिः ॥ ११ ॥
 वार्ष्णेयं तु ततो भैमी सान्त्वयन् स्रक्षण्या गिरा ।
 उवाच देशकालज्ञा प्राप्तकालम् अनिन्दिता ॥ १२ ॥
 जानीषे त्वं यथा राजा सम्यग्वृत्तः सदा त्वयि ।
 तस्य त्वं विषमस्थस्य साहाय्यं कर्तुम् अर्हसि ॥ १३ ॥
 यथा यथा हि नृपतिः पुष्करेणैव जीयते ।
 तथा तथास्य वै द्यूते रागो भूयोऽभिवर्धते ॥ १४ ॥
 यथा च पुष्करस्याक्षाः पतन्ति वशवर्तिनः ।
 तथा विपर्ययश्चापि नलस्याक्षेषु दृश्यते ॥ १५ ॥
 सुहृत्स्वजनवाक्यानि यथावन्न शृणोति च ।
 ममापि च तथा वाक्यं नाभिनन्दति मोहितः ॥ १६ ॥
 नूनं मन्ये न दोषोऽस्ति नैषधस्य महात्मनः ।
 यत्तु मे वचनं राजा नाभिनन्दति मोहितः ॥ १७ ॥
 शरणं त्वां प्रपन्नाऽस्मि सारथे कुरु मवचः ।
 न हि मे शुध्यते भावः कदाचिद् विनशेद् अपि ॥ १८ ॥
 नलस्य दयितान् अश्वान् योजयित्वा मनोजवान् ।
 इदम् आरोप्य मिथुनं कुण्डिनं यातुम् अर्हसि ॥ १९ ॥
 मम ज्ञातिषु निक्षिप्य दारकौ स्यन्दनं तथा ।
 अश्वान्श्चेमान् यथाकामं वस वान्यत्र गच्छ वा ॥ २० ॥
 दमयन्त्यास्तु तद् वाक्यं वार्ष्णेयो नलसारथिः ।
 न्यवेदयद् अशेषेण नलामात्येषु मुख्यशः ॥ २१ ॥
 तैः समेत्य विनिश्चित्य सोऽनुज्ञातो महीपते ।
 ययौ मिथुनम् आरोप्य विदर्भास् तेन वाहिना ॥ २२ ॥
 हयांस् तत्र विनिक्षिप्य सूतो रथवरं च तं ।
 इन्द्रसेनाञ्च तां कन्याम् इन्द्रसेनञ्च बालकं ॥ २३ ॥
 आमन्त्र्य भीमं राजानम् आर्तः शोचन् नलं नृपं ।

Caused the charioteer be summoned by her messengers of trust.
 Bhíma's daughter to Várshṇeya, winning with her gentle voice,
 Spake, the time, the place well choosing for the deed, nor spake in vain :
 ' Well thou know'st the full reliance that in thee the king hath placed,
 In his fatal hour of peril wilt not thou stand forth to aid ?
 As by Pushkara is worsted, ever more and more the king,
 More and more the fatal frenzy maddens in his heart for play.
 As to Pushkara obedient ever fall the lucky dice,
 Thus those dice to royal Nala still with adverse fortune fall.
 Nor the voice of friend or kindred, as beseems him, will he hear ;
 E'en to me he will not listen, in the madness of his heart.
 Of the lofty-minded Nala well I know 'tis not the sin,
 That my words this senseless monarch in his frenzy will not hear.
 Charioteer, to thee my refuge come I, do thou my behest ;
 I am not o'er calm in spirit, haply he may perish thus.
 Yoke the much-loved steeds of Nala, fleet of foot, as thought, are they,
 In the chariot place our children, to Kuṇḍina's city go.
 Leave the children with my kindred, and the chariot and the steeds ;
 Then or dwell there at thy pleasure, or depart where'er thou wilt.'
 When the speech of Damayantí heard king Nala's charioteer,
 He, the chief of Nala's council, thus in full divan addressed,
 Weighed within their solemn conclave, and their full assent obtained,
 With the children in the chariot to Vidarbha straight he drove.
 There he rendered up the horses with the chariot, there he left
 That young maiden Indrasená, Indrasen, that noble boy.
 To king Bhíma paid his homage, sad, for Nala's fall distressed,

अटमानस् ततोऽयोध्यां जगाम नगरीं तदा ॥२४॥
 ऋतुपर्णे स राजानम् उपतस्थे मुदुःखितः ।
 भृतिञ्चोपययौ तस्य सारथ्येन महीपतेः ॥२५॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने अष्टमः सर्गः ॥८॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

ततस् तु याते वार्षीये पुण्यश्लोकस्य दीव्यतः ।
 पुष्करेण हतं राज्यं यच्चान्यद् वसु किञ्चन ॥१॥
 हतराज्यं नलं राजन् प्रहसन् पुष्करोऽब्रवीत् ।
 द्यूतं प्रवर्ततां भूयः प्रतिपाणोऽस्ति कस् तव ॥२॥
 शिष्टा ते दमयन्त्येका सर्वम् अन्यज् जितं मया ।
 दमयन्त्याः पणः साधु वर्ततां यदि मन्यसे ॥३॥
 पुष्करेणैवम् उक्तस्य पुण्यश्लोकस्य मन्युना ।
 व्यदीर्यतेव हृदयं न चैनं किञ्चिद् अब्रवीत् ॥४॥
 ततः पुष्करम् आलीक्य नलः परममन्युमान् ।
 उत्सृज्य सर्वगात्रेभ्यो भूषणानि महायशः ॥५॥
 एकवासा ह्यसंवीतः सुहृच्छ्लोकविवर्धनः ।
 निश्चक्राम ततो राजा त्यक्त्वा सुविपुलां श्रियं ॥६॥
 दमयन्त्येकवस्त्राऽथ गच्छन्तं पृष्ठतोऽन्वगात् ।
 स तया वाह्यतः सार्धं चिरात् नैषधोऽवसत् ॥७॥
 पुष्करस्तु महाराज घोषयामास वै पुरे ।
 नले यः सम्यग् आतिष्ठेत् स गच्छेद् बध्यतां मम ॥८॥

Thence departing, to Ayodhyá, took the charioteer his way.
 In his grief to Rítuparṇa, that illustrious king, he came,
 As his charioteer, the service entered of the lord of earth.

END OF BOOK VIII.

VṚIHADAŚVA spake:

SCARCE Várshṇeya had departed, still the king of men played on,
 Till to Pushkara his kingdom, all that he possessed, was lost.
 Nala then, despoiled of kingdom, smiling Pushkara bespake:
 'Throw we yet another hazard, Nala, where is now thy stake?
 There remains but Damayantí, all thou hast beside, is mine.
 Throw we now for Damayantí, come, once more the hazard try.'
 Thus, as Pushkara addressed him, Puṇyaśloka's inmost heart
 By his grief was rent asunder, not a single word he spake.
 And on Pushkara, king Nala in his silent anguish gazed.
 All his ornaments of splendour from his person stripped he off,
 With a single vest, scarce covered, 'mid the sorrow of his friends,
 Slowly wandered forth the monarch fallen from such an height of bliss.
 Damayantí with one garment slowly followed him behind.
 Three long nights Nishadha's monarch there without the gates had dwelt.
 Proclamation through the city then did Pushkara bid make,
 'Whosoe'er befriendeth Nala shall to instant death be doomed.'

पुष्करस्य तु वाक्येन तस्य विज्ञेयणेन च ।
 पौरा न तस्य सत्कारं कृतवन्तो युधिष्ठिर ॥९॥
 स तथा नगराभ्यासे सत्कारार्हो न सत्कृतः ।
 चिराचम् उषितो राजा जलमात्रेण वर्तयन् ॥१०॥
 पीड्यमानः क्षुधा तत्र फलमूलानि कर्षयन् ।
 प्रातिष्ठत ततो राजा दमयन्ती तम् अन्वगात् ॥११॥
 क्षुधया पीड्यमानस्तु नलो बहुतिथेऽहनि ।
 अपश्यच्च छकुनान् काञ्चिद् धिरण्यसदृशच्छदान् ॥१२॥
 स चिन्तयामास तदा निषधाधिपतिर् बली ।
 अस्ति भक्ष्यो ममाद्यायं वसु चेदं भविष्यति ॥१३॥
 ततस् तान् परिधानेन वाससा स समावृणोत् ।
 तस्य तद् वस्त्रम् आदाय सर्वे जग्मुर् विहायसा ॥१४॥
 उत्पतन्तः खगा वाक्यम् एतद् आहुस् ततो नलं ।
 दृष्ट्वा दिग्वाससं भूमौ स्थितं दीनम् अधोमुखं ॥१५॥
 वयम् अक्षाः सुदुर्बुद्धे तव वासो जिहीर्षवः ।
 आगता न हि नः प्रीतिः सवाससि गते त्वयि ॥१६॥
 तान् समीक्ष्य गतान् अक्षान् आत्मानञ्च विवाससं ।
 पुण्यश्चोक्तस् तदा राजन् दमयन्तीम् अथाब्रवीत् ॥१७॥
 येषां प्रकोपाद् ऐश्वर्यात् प्रच्युतोऽहम् अनिन्दिते ।
 प्राणयात्रां न विन्दे च दुःखितः क्षुधयान्वितः ॥१८॥
 येषां कृते न सत्कारम् अकुर्वन् मयि नैषधाः ।
 त इमे शकुना भूत्वा वासोऽप्यपहरन्ति मे ॥१९॥
 वैषम्यं परमं प्राप्नो दुःखितो गतचेतनः ।
 भर्ता तेऽहं निबोधेदं वचनं हितम् आत्मनः ॥२०॥
 एते गच्छन्ति बहवः पन्थानो दक्षिणापथं ।
 अवन्तीम् चक्षुवन्तञ्च समतिक्रम्य पर्वतं ॥२१॥

Thus, as Pushkara gave order, in the terror of his power,
Might the citizens no longer hospitably serve the king.
Near the walls, of kind reception worthiest, but by none received,
Three nights longer staid the monarch, water was his only drink.
He in unfastidious hunger plucked the fruits, the roots of earth.
Then went forth again the outcast; Damayantí followed slow.
In the agony of famine Nala, after many days,
Saw some birds around him settling with their golden tinctured wings.
Then the monarch of Nishadha thought within his secret heart,
These to-day my welcome banquet, and my treasure these will be.
Over them his single garment spreading light he wrapped them round.
Up that single garment bearing to the air they sprang away;
And the birds above him hovering thus in human accents spake,
Naked as they saw him standing on the earth, and sad, and lone:—
'Lo, we are the dice, to spoil thee thus descended, foolish king!
While thou hadst a single garment all our joy was incomplete.'
When the dice he saw departing, and himself without his robe,
Mournfully did Puṇyaśloka thus to Damayantí speak:
'They, O blameless, by whose anger from my kingdom I am driven,
Life-sustaining food unable in my misery to find—
They, through whom Nishadha's people, may not house their outcast king—
They, the forms of birds assuming, my one robe have borne away.
In the dark extreme of misery, sad and frantic as I am,
Hear me, princess, hear and profit by thy husband's best advice.
Hence are many roads diverging to the region of the south,
Passing by Avantí's city, and the height of Rikshaván;

एष विन्ध्यो महाशैलः पयोष्णी च समुद्रगा ।
 आश्रमाथ महर्षीणां बहुमूलफलान्विताः ॥२२॥
 एष पन्था विदर्भाणाम् असौ गच्छति कोशलान् ।
 अतःपरञ्च देशोऽयं दक्षिणे दक्षिणापथः ॥२३॥
 एतद् वाक्यं नलो राजा दमयन्तीं समाहितः ।
 उवाचासकृद् आर्तो हि भैमीम् उद्दिश्य भारत ॥२४॥
 ततः सा वाष्पकलया वाचा दुःखेन कर्षिता ।
 उवाच दमयन्ती तं नैषधं करुणं वचः ॥२५॥
 उद्वेजते मे हृदयं सीदन्यङ्गानि सर्वशः ।
 तव पार्थिव सङ्कल्पं चिन्तयन्त्याः पुनः पुनः ॥२६॥
 हृतराज्यं हृतरथं विवस्त्रं क्षुभृषान्वितं ।
 कथम् उत्सृज्य गच्छेयम् अहं त्वां निर्जने वने ॥२७॥
 आन्तस्य ते क्षुधार्तस्य चिन्तयानस्य तत् सुखं ।
 वने घोरे महाराज नाशयिथाम्यहं क्रमं ॥२८॥
 न च भार्यासमं किञ्चिद् विद्यते भिषजां मतं ।
 औषधं सर्वदुःखेषु सत्यम् एतद् ब्रवीमि ते ॥२९॥

नल उवाच ।

एवम् एतद् यथाथ त्वं दमयन्ति सुमध्यमे ।
 नास्ति भार्यासमं मित्रं नरस्यार्तस्य भेषजं ॥३०॥
 न चाहं त्यक्तुकामस् त्वां किमर्थं भीरु शङ्कसे ।
 त्यजेयम् अहम् आत्मानं न चैवं त्वाम् अनिन्दिते ॥३१॥

दमयन्त्युवाच ।

यदि मां त्वं महाराज न विहातुम् इहेच्छसि ।
 तत् किमर्थं विदर्भाणां पन्थाः समुपदिश्यते ॥३२॥
 अत्रैमि चाहं नृपते न तु मां त्यक्तुम् अर्हसि ।

Vindhya here, the mighty mountain, and Payoshní's seaward stream;
 And the lone retreats of hermits, richly stored with roots and fruits.
 This will lead thee to Vidarbha, this to Kośala away,
 Far beyond the region stretches southward to the southward clime.'
 In these words to Damayantí did the royal Nala speak,
 More than once to Bhíma's daughter anxious pointing out the way.
 She, with voice half-choked with sorrow, with her weight of woe oppressed,
 These sad words did Damayantí to Nishadha's monarch speak:—
 'My afflicted heart is breaking, and my sinking members fail,
 When, O king, thy desperate counsel once I think of, once again.
 Robbed of kingdom, robbed of riches, naked, thirst and hunger-worn;
 How shall I depart and leave thee in the wood by man untrod?
 When thou sad and famine-stricken thinkest of thy former bliss,
 In the wild wood, oh, my husband, I thy weariness will soothe!
 Like a wife, in every sorrow, this the wise physicians own,
 Healing herb is none or balsam, Nala, 'tis the truth I speak.'

NALA spake:

Slender-waisted Damayantí, true, indeed, is all thou'st said;
 Like a wife no friendly medicine to afflicted man is given.
 Fear not that I thee abandon, Wherefore, timid, dread'st thou this?
 Oh, myself might I abandon, and not thee, thou unreproached!

DAMAYANTÍ spake:

If indeed, oh mighty monarch, thou wilt ne'er abandon me,
 Wherefore then towards Vidarbha dost thou point me out the way?
 Well, I know thee, noble Nala, to desert me far too true,

चेतसा त्वपकृष्टेन मां त्यजेथा महीपते ॥३३॥
 पन्थानं हि ममाभीष्टणम् आख्यासि च नरोत्तम ।
 अतोनिमित्तं शोकं मे वर्धयस्यमरोपम ॥३४॥
 यदि चायम् अभिप्रायस् तव ज्ञातीन् व्रजेद् इति ।
 सहिताव् एव गच्छावो विदर्भान् यदि मन्यसे ॥३५॥
 विदर्भराजस् तच्च त्वां पूजयिष्यति मानद ।
 तेन त्वं पूजितो राजन् सुखं वत्स्यसि नो गृहे ॥३६॥
 ॥ इति नलोपाख्याने नवमः सर्गः ॥९॥

नल उवाच ।

यथा राज्यं तव पितुस् तथा मम न संशयः ।
 न तु तच्च गमिष्यामि विषमस्थः कथञ्चन ॥१॥
 कथं समृद्धो गत्वाऽहं तव हर्षविवर्धनः ।
 परिच्युतो गमिष्यामि तव शोकविवर्धनः ॥२॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

इति ब्रुवन् नलो राजा दमयन्तीं पुनः पुनः ।
 सान्त्वयामास कल्याणीं वाससीऽर्धेन संवृतां ॥३॥
 ताव् एकवस्त्रसंवीताव् अटमानाव् इतस्ततः ।
 क्षुत्पिपासापरिश्रान्तौ सभां काञ्चिद् उपेयतुः ॥४॥
 तां सभाम् उपसम्प्राप्य तदा स निषधाधिपः ।
 वैदर्भ्या सहितो राजा निषसाद महीतले ॥५॥
 स वै विवस्त्रो विकटो मलिनः पांशुगुण्डितः ।

Only with a soul distracted would'st thou leave me, lord of earth.
 Yet, again, the way thou pointest, yet, again, thou best of men,
 Thus my sorrow still enhancing, oh, thou like the immortal gods!
 If this be thy better counsel, 'to her kindred let her go,'
 Be it so, and both together, to Vidarbha set we forth.
 Thee Vidarbha's king will honour, honour'd in his turn by thee;
 Held in high respect and happy in our mansion thou shalt dwell.

END OF BOOK IX.

NALA spake :

MIGHTY is thy father's kingdom, once was mine as mighty too ;
 Never will I there seek refuge in my base extremity.
 There I once appeared in glory, to the exalting of thy pride ;
 Shall I now appear in misery, to the increasing of thy shame ?

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

Nala thus to Damayantí spake again, and yet again,
 Comforting the noble lady, scant in half a garment clad.
 Both together by one garment covered, roamed they here and there ;
 Wearied out by thirst and famine, to a cabin they drew near.
 When they reached that lowly cabin then did great Nishadha's king
 With the princess of Vidarbha on the hard earth seat them down ;
 Naked, with no mat to rest on, wet with mire and stained with dust.

दमयन्त्या सह श्रान्तः सुष्वाप धरणीतले ॥६॥
 दमयन्त्यपि कल्याणी निद्रयाऽपहृता ततः ।
 सहसा दुःखम् आसाद्य सुकुमारी तपस्विनी ॥७॥
 सुभ्रायां दमयन्त्यां तु नली राजा विशाम्पते ।
 शोकोन्मथितचिन्तात्मा न स्म शेते यथा पुरा ॥८॥
 स तद् राज्यापहरणं सुहृत्यागञ्च सर्वशः ।
 वने च तं परिध्वंसं प्रेक्ष्य चिन्ताम् उपेयिवान् ॥९॥
 किं नु मे स्याद् इदं कृत्वा किं नु मे स्याद् अकुर्वतः ।
 किं नु मे मरणं श्रेयः परित्यागो जनस्य वा ॥१०॥
 माम् इयं ह्यनुरक्तैव दुःखं प्राप्नोति मत्कृते ।
 मग्निहीना त्वियं गच्छेत् कदाचित् स्वजनं प्रति ॥११॥
 मयि निःसंशयं दुःखम् इयम् प्राप्स्यत्यनुव्रता ।
 उत्सर्गे संशयः स्यात्तु विन्देतापि सुखं क्वचित् ॥१२॥
 स विनिश्चित्य बहुधा विचार्य च पुनः पुनः ।
 उत्सर्गे मन्यते श्रेयो दमयन्त्या नराधिपः ॥१३॥
 न चैषा तेजसा शक्या कैश्चिद् धर्षयितुं पथि ।
 यशस्विनी महाभागा मङ्गलैक्यं पतिव्रता ॥१४॥
 एवं तस्य तदा बुद्धिर् दमयन्त्यां न्यवर्तत ।
 कलिना दुष्टभावेन दमयन्त्या विसर्जने ॥१५॥
 सोऽवस्त्रताम् आत्मनश्च तस्याश्चाप्येकवस्त्रतां ।
 चिन्तयित्वाऽध्यगाद् राजा वस्त्रार्थस्यावकर्तनं ॥१६॥
 कथं वासो विकर्तयं न च बुध्येत मे प्रिया ।
 विचिन्त्यैवं नली राजा सभां पर्यचरत् तदा ॥१७॥
 परिधावन् अथ नल इतश्चेतश्च भारत ।
 आससाद् सभोद्देशे विकीर्षं खड्गम् उत्तमं ॥१८॥
 तेनार्थं वाससश् छित्त्वा निवस्य च परन्तपः ।

Weary then with Damayantí on the earth he fell asleep.
Sank the lovely Damayantí by his side with sleep opprest,
She thus plunged in sudden misery, she the tender, the devout.
But while on the cold earth slumbered Damayantí, all distraught
Nala in his mind by sorrow might no longer calmly sleep ;
For the losing of his kingdom, the desertion of his friends,
And his weary forest-wanderings, painful on his thought arose.
' If I do it, what may follow? what if I refuse to do ?
Were my instant death the better, or to abandon her I love ?
But to me too deep devoted suffers she distress and shame ;
Reft of me she home may wander to her royal father's house.
Faithful wandering ever with me certain sorrow will she bear,
But if separated from me chance of solace may be hers.'
Long within his heart he pondered, and again, again weighed o'er.
Best he thought if Damayantí to desert, that wretched king.
From her virtue none dare harm her in the lonely forest way,
Her the fortunate, the noble, my devoted wedded wife.
Thus his mind on Damayantí dwelt in its perverted thought,
Wrought by Kali's evil influence to desert his lovely wife.
Of himself without a garment, and of her with only one
As he thought, approached he near her to divide that single robe.
' How shall I divide the garment by my loved one unperceived ?'
Pondering this within his spirit round the cabin Nala went.
In that narrow cabin's circuit Nala wandered here and there,
Till he found without a scabbard, shining, a well-tempered sword.
Then when half that only garment he had severed, and put on,

सुप्तम् उत्सृज्य वैदर्भीं प्राद्रवद् गतचेतनः ॥१९॥
 ततो निवृत्तहृदयः पुनर् आगम्य तां सभां ।
 दमयन्तीं तदा दृष्ट्वा रुरोद निषधाधिपः ॥२०॥
 यां न वायुर् न चादित्यः पुरा पश्यति मे प्रियां ।
 सेयमद्य सभामध्ये शेते भूमाव् अनाथवत् ॥२१॥
 इयं वस्त्रावकर्तेन संवीता चारुहासिनी ।
 उन्मत्तेव वरारोहा कथं बुद्ध्वा भविष्यति ॥२२॥
 कथम् एका सती भैमी मया विरहिता शुभा ।
 चरिष्यति वने घोरि मृगब्यालनिषेविते ॥२३॥
 आदित्या वसवो रुद्रा अश्विनौ समरुद्रणौ ।
 रक्षन्तु त्वां महाभागे धर्मेणासि समावृता ॥२४॥
 एवमुक्त्वा प्रियां भार्या रूपेणाप्रतिमां भुवि ।
 कलिनापहतज्ञानो नलः प्रातिष्ठद् उद्यतः ॥२५॥
 गत्वा गत्वा नलो राजा पुनर् एति सभां मुहुः ।
 आकृष्यमाणः कलिना सौहृदेनावकृष्यते ॥२६॥
 द्विधेव हृदयं तस्य दुःखितस्याभवत् तदा ।
 दोलेव मुहुर् आयाति याति चैव सभां प्रति ॥२७॥
 अवकृष्टस्तु कलिना मोहितः प्राद्रवन् नलः ।
 सुप्तम् उत्सृज्य तां भार्या विलप्य करुणं बहु ॥२८॥
 नष्टात्मा कलिना स्पृष्टस् तत् तद् विगणयन् नृपः ।
 जगामैकां वने शूण्ये भार्याम् उत्सृज्य दुःखितः ॥२९॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने दशमः सर्गः ॥१०॥

In her sleep Vidarbha's princess, with bewildered mind he fled.
Yet, his cruel heart relenting, to the cabin turns he back ;
On the slumbering Damayanti gazing, sadly wept the king :
'Thou, that sun nor wind hath ever roughly visited, my love !
On the hard earth in a cabin sleepest with thy guardian gone.
Thus attired in half a garment she that aye so sweetly smiled,
Like to one distracted, beauteous, how at length will she awake ?
How will't fare with Bhíma's daughter, lone, abandoned by her lord,
Wandering in the savage forest, where wild beasts and serpents dwell ?
May the suns and winds of heaven, may the genii of the woods,
Noblest, may they all protect thee, thine own virtue thy best guard.'
To his wife of peerless beauty on the earth, 'twas thus he spoke.
Then of sense bereft by Kali Nala hastily set forth ;
And departing, still departing he returned again, again ;
Dragged away by that bad demon, ever by his love drawn back.
Nala, thus his heart divided into two conflicting parts,
Like a swing goes backward, forward, from the cabin, to and fro.
Torn away at length by Kali flies afar the frantic king,
Leaving there his wife in slumber, making miserable moans.
Reft of sense, possessed by Kali, thinking still on her he left,
Passed he in the lonely forest, leaving his deserted wife.

END OF BOOK X.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

अपक्रान्ते नले राजन् दमयन्ती गतक्रमा ।
 अबुध्यत वरारोहा सन्त्रस्ता विजने वने ॥१॥
 अपश्यमाना भर्तारं शोकदुःखसमन्विता ।
 प्राक्रोशद् उच्चैः सन्त्रस्ता महाराजेति नैषधं ॥२॥
 हा नाथ हा महाराज हा स्वामिन् किं जहासि मां ।
 हा हताऽस्मि विनष्टाऽस्मि भीताऽस्मि विजने वने ॥३॥
 ननु नाम महाराज धर्मज्ञः सत्यवाग् असि ।
 कथम् उक्त्वा तथा सत्यं सुप्तम् उत्सृज्य मां गतः ॥४॥
 कथम् उत्सृज्य गन्तासि दक्षां भार्याम् अनुव्रतां ।
 विशेषतोऽनपकृते परेणापकृते सति ॥५॥
 शक्यसे ता गिरः सम्यक्कर्तुं मयि नरेश्वर ।
 यास् तेषां लोकपालानां सन्निधौ कथिताः पुरा ॥६॥
 नाकाले विहितो मृत्युर् मर्त्यानां पुरुषर्षभ ।
 यच्च कान्ता त्वयोत्सृष्टा मुहूर्तमपि जीवति ॥७॥
 पर्याप्तः परिहासोऽयम् एतावान् पुरुषर्षभ ।
 भीताऽहम् अतिदुर्धर्ष दर्शयात्मानम् ईश्वर ॥८॥
 दृश्यसे दृश्यसे राजन् एष दृष्टोऽसि नैषध ।
 अवार्यं गुल्मैर् आत्मानं किं मां न प्रतिभाषसे ॥९॥
 नृशंस वत राजेन्द्र यन् माम् एवङ्गताम् इह ।
 विलपन्तीं समागम्य नाश्वासयसि पार्थिव ॥१०॥
 न शोचाम्यहम् आत्मानं न चान्यदपि किञ्चन ।
 कथं नु भवितास्येक इति त्वां नृप रोदिमि ॥११॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

SCARCE, O king, had Nala parted, Damayantí now refreshed,
 Wakened up, the slender-waisted, timorous in the desert wood.
 When she did not see her husband, overpowered with grief and pain,
 Loud she shriek'd in her first anguish, ' Where art thou, Nishadha's king?
 Mighty king! my soul-protector; O my lord! desert'st thou me?
 Oh, I'm lost! undone for ever, helpless in the wild wood left;
 Faithful once to every duty wert thou not, and true in word?
 Art thou faithful to thy promise to desert me thus in sleep?
 Could'st thou then depart, forsaking thy devoted, constant wife?
 Her in sooth that never wronged thee, wronged indeed, but not by her.
 Keep'st thou thus thy solemn promise, oh, unfaithful lord of men,
 There, when all the gods were present, plighted to thy wedded wife?
 Death is but decreed to mortals at its own appointed time;
 Hence one moment, thus deserted, one brief moment do I live.—
 But thou'st had thy sport—enough then, now desist, O king of men,
 Mock not thou a trembling woman, show thee to me, O my lord!
 Yes, I see thee, there I see thee hidden as thou think'st from sight,
 In the bushes why conceal thee? answer me, why speak'st thou not?
 O ungentle prince of monarchs! to this piteous plight reduced,
 Wherefore wilt thou not approach me to console me in my woe?
 For myself I will not sorrow, nor for aught to me befalls.
 Thou art all alone, my husband, I will only mourn for thee.

कथं नु राजंस् तृषितः क्षुधितः श्रमकर्षितः ।
 सायाह्ने वृक्षमूलेषु माम् अपश्यन् भविष्यसि ॥१२॥
 ततः सा तीव्रशोकार्ता प्रदीप्तेव च मन्युना ।
 इतश्चेतश्च रुदती पर्यधावत् दुःखिता ॥१३॥
 मुहुर् उत्पतते बाला मुहुः पतति विह्वला ।
 मुहुर् आलीयते भीता मुहुः क्रोशति रोदिति ॥१४॥
 अतीव शोकसन्तप्ता मुहुर् निःश्वस्य दुःखिता ।
 उवाच भैमी निःश्वस्य रुदत्यथ पतिव्रता ॥१५॥
 यस्याभिशापाद् दुःखार्तो दुःखं विन्दति नैषधः ।
 तस्य भूतस्य नो दुःखाद् दुःखम् अभ्यधिकं भवेत् ॥१६॥
 अपापचेतसं पापो य एवं कृतवान् नलं ।
 तस्माद् दुःखतरं प्राप्य जीवत्वमुखजीविकां ॥१७॥
 एवं तु विलपन्ती सा राज्ञो भार्या महात्मनः ।
 अन्वेषमाणा भर्तारं वने श्वापदसेविते ॥१८॥
 उन्मत्तवद् भीमसुता विलपन्ती ततस्ततः ।
 हा हा राजन् इति मुहुर् इतश्चेतश्च धावति ॥१९॥
 तां क्रन्दमानाम् अत्यर्थं कुररीम् इव वाशती ।
 करुणं बहु शोचन्तीं विलपन्तीं मुहुर् मुहुः ॥२०॥
 सहसाभ्यागतां भैमीम् अभ्यासपरिवर्तिनीं ।
 जयाहाजगरो याहो महाकायः क्षुधान्वितः ॥२१॥
 सा यस्यमाना याहेण शोकेन च परिभ्रुता ।
 नात्मानं शोचति तथा यथा शोचति नैषधं ॥२२॥
 हा नाथ माम् इह वने यस्यमानाम् अनाथवत् ।
 याहेणानेन विजने किमर्थं नानुधावसि ॥२३॥
 कथं भविष्यसि पुनर् माम् अनुस्मृत्य नैषध ।
 शापान् मुक्तः पुनर् लब्धा बुद्धिं चेतो धनानि च ॥२४॥

How will't fare with thee, my Nala, thirsting, famished, faint with toil?
Nor beholding me await thee underneath the trees at eve.'
Then, in all her depth of anguish, with her trouble as on fire,
Hither, thither, went she weeping, all around she went and wailed.
Now springs up the desolate princess, now falls down in prostrate grief;
Now she pines in silent sorrow, now she shrieks and wails aloud.
So consumed with inward misery, ever sighing more and more,
Spake at length king Bhíma's daughter, spake the still devoted wife:
'He, by whose dire imprecation Nala this dread suffering bears,
May he far surpass in suffering all that Nala suffers now.
May the evil one, to evil, who the blameless Nala drives,
Smitten by a curse as fatal, live a dark unblest life.'
Thus her absent lord lamenting that high-minded Rája's queen,
Everywhere her lord went seeking in the satyr-haunted wood.
Like a maniac, Bhíma's daughter, wandered wailing here and there;
And 'alas! alas! my husband,' everywhere her cry was heard.
Her beyond all measure wailing like the osprey screaming shrill,
Miserably still deploring, still renewing her lament.
Suddenly king Bhíma's daughter, as she wandered near his lair,
Seized a huge gigantic serpent in his raging famine fierce.
In the grasp of that fierce serpent, round about with terror girt,
Not herself she pities only, pities she Nishadha's king.
'O my guardian, thus unguarded in this savage forest seized,
Seized by this terrific serpent, wherefore art not thou at hand?
How will't be, when thou rememberest once again thy faithful wife,
From this dreadful curse delivered, mind, and sense, and wealth returned?

आन्तस्य ते क्षुधार्तस्य परिग्लानस्य नैषध ।
 कः श्रमं राजशार्दूल नाशयिष्यति तेऽनघ ॥ २५ ॥
 ततः कश्चिन् मृगव्याधो विचरन् गहने वने ।
 आक्रन्दमानां संश्रुत्य जवेनाभिससार ह ॥ २६ ॥
 तां तु दृष्ट्वा तथा यस्ताम् उरगेणायतेक्ष्णां ।
 त्वरमाणा मृगव्याधः समभिक्रम्य वेगतः ॥ २७ ॥
 मुखतः पाटयामास शस्त्रेण निशितेन च ।
 निर्विचेष्टं भुजङ्गं तं विशस्य मृगजीवनः ॥ २८ ॥
 मोक्षयित्वा स तां व्याधः प्रक्षाल्य सलिलेन च ।
 समाश्रास्य कृताहाराम् अथ पप्रच्छ भारत ॥ २९ ॥
 कस्य त्वं मृगशावाक्षि कथञ्चाभ्यागता वनं ।
 कथञ्चेदं महत् कृच्छ्रं प्राप्तवत्यसि भाविनि ॥ ३० ॥
 दमयन्ती तथा तेन पृच्छ्यमाना विशाम्पते ।
 सर्वम् एतद् यथावृत्तम् आचक्षेऽस्य भारत ॥ ३१ ॥
 ताम् अर्धवस्त्रसंवीतां पीनश्रोणिपयोधरां ।
 सुकुमारानवद्याङ्गीं पूर्णचन्द्रनिभाननां ॥ ३२ ॥
 अरालपक्ष्मनयनां तथा मधुरभाषिणीं ।
 लक्षयित्वा मृगव्याधः कामस्य वशम् ईयिवान् ॥ ३३ ॥
 ताम् एवं स्रक्षण्या वाचा लुब्धको मृदुपूर्वया ।
 सान्वयामास कामार्तस् तद् अबुध्यत भाविनी ॥ ३४ ॥
 दमयन्त्यपि तं दुष्टम् उपलभ्य पतिव्रता ।
 तीव्ररोषसमाविष्टा प्रज्ज्वालेव मन्युना ॥ ३५ ॥
 स तु पापमतिः क्षुद्रः प्रधर्षयितुम् आतुरः ।
 दुर्धर्षां तर्कयामास दीप्ताम् अग्निशिखाम् इव ॥ ३६ ॥
 दमयन्ती तु दुःखार्ता पतिराज्यविनाकृता ।
 अतीतवाक्पथे काले शशापेनं रुषान्विता ॥ ३७ ॥

When thou'rt weary, when thou'rt hungry, when thou'rt fainting with fatigue,
Who will soothe, O blameless Nala, all thy weariness, thy woe?

Then a huntsman, as he wandered in the forest jungle thick,
As he heard her thus bewailing, in his utmost haste drew near.
By the serpent that long-eyed one firmly grasped when he beheld,
Instant did the nimble huntsman, rapidly as he came on,
Strike that unresisting serpent with a sharp and mortal shaft:
In the mouth he pierced that serpent, skill'd in slaughter of the chase.
Her released he from her peril washed he then with water pure,
And with sylvan food refreshed her, and with soothing words address'd:
'Who art thou that roam'st the forest with the eyes of the gazelle;
How to this extreme of misery, noble lady, hast thou fallen?'
Damayantí, by the huntsman, thus in soothing tone addressed,
All the story of her misery told him, as it all befell;
Her, scant-clothed in half a garment, with soft-swelling limbs and breast,
Form of youthful faultless beauty, and her fair and moonlike face,
And her eyes with brows dark arching, and her softly-melting speech,
Saw long time that wild-beast hunter, kindled all his heart with love.
Then with winning voice that huntsman, bland beginning his discourse,
Fain with amorous speech would soothe her; she his dark intent perceived.
Damayantí, chaste and faithful, soon as she his meaning knew,
In the transport of her anger, her indignant soul took fire,
In his wicked thought the dastard her yet powerless to subdue;
On the unsubdued stood gazing, as like some bright flame she shone.
Damayantí, in her sorrow, of her realm, her lord bereft,
Deemed the time gone by for parley, uttered loud her curse of wrath,—

यथाऽहं नैषधाद् अन्यं मनसापि न चिन्तये ।
 तथायं पततां क्षुद्रः परासुर् मृगजीवनः ॥३८॥
 उक्तमात्रे तु वचने तथा स मृगजीवनः ।
 व्यसुः पपात मेदिन्याम् अग्निदग्ध इव दुमः ॥३९॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्यान एकादशः सर्गः ॥११॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

सा निहत्य मृगव्याधं प्रतस्थे कमलेक्षणा ।
 वनं प्रतिभयं शून्यं भ्रिस्त्रिकागणनादितं ॥१॥
 सिंहश्रीपिरुख्याग्रमहिषर्षगणैर् युतं ।
 नानापक्षिगणाकीर्णं म्लेच्छतस्करसेवितं ॥२॥
 शालवेणुधवाश्रयतिन्दुकेद्भुदकिंशुकैः ।
 अर्जुनारिष्टसञ्चनं स्यन्दनैश्च सशाल्मलैः ॥३॥
 जम्बूामलोध्रखदिरसालवेचसमाकुलं ।
 पद्मकामलकलक्षकदम्बोडुम्बरावृतं ॥४॥
 बदरीविल्वसञ्चनं न्ययोधैश्च समाकुलं ।
 प्रियालतालखर्जूरहरीतकविभीतकैः ॥५॥
 नानाधातुशतैर् नद्यान् विविधान् अपि चाचलान् ।
 निकुञ्जान् परिसङ्घुष्टान् दरीश्याद्भुतदर्शनाः ॥६॥
 नदीः सरांसि वापीश्च विविधांश्च मृगद्विजान् ।
 सा बहून् भीमरूपांश्च पिशाचोरगराक्षसान् ॥७॥
 पल्वलानि तडागानि गिरिकूटानि सर्वशः ।
 सरितो निर्भरांश्चैव ददर्शाद्भुतदर्शनान् ॥८॥

‘As my pure and constant spirit swerves not from Nishadha’s lord,
 Instant so may this base hunter lifeless fall upon the earth.’
 Scarce that single word was uttered, suddenly that hunter bold
 Down upon the earth fell lifeless, like a lightning-blasted tree.

END OF BOOK XI.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

SLAIN that savage wild-beast hunter, onward went the lotus-eyed,
 Through the dread and desert forest ringing with the cricket’s song ;
 Full of lions, pards, and tigers, stags, and buffalos, and bears,
 Where all kinds of birds were flocking, and wild men and robbers dwelt.
 Thick with Sáls, bamboos, Ásvatthas, Dhavas, and the Ebon dark,
 Oily Inguds, Kinśuks, Arjuns, Ním trees, Syandans, Sálmalas ;
 Full with Rose-apples and Mangoes, Lodh trees, Catechus and Canes,
 Blushing Lotuses, Kadambas, and the tree with massy leaves ;
 Close o’erspread with Jujubes, Bel trees, tangled with the holy Fig,
 Palms, Priyálas, Dates, Harítas, trees of every form and name.
 Pregnant with rich mines of metal many a mountain it enclosed,
 Many a shady resonant arbour, many a deep and wondrous glen ;
 Many a lake, and pool, and river, birds and beasts of every shape.
 She, in forms terrific round her, serpents, elves, and giants saw :
 Pools, and tanks of lucid water, and the shaggy tops of hills,
 Flowing streams and headlong torrents saw, and wondered at the sight.

यूथशो ददृशे चाच विदर्भाधिपनन्दिनी ।
 महिषांश्च वराहांश्च ऋक्षांश्च वनपन्नगान् ॥९॥
 तेजसा यशसा लक्ष्म्या स्थित्या च परया युता ।
 वैदर्भीं विचरत्येका नलम् अन्वेषती तदा ॥१०॥
 नाबिभ्यत् सा नृपसुता भैमी तत्राय कस्यचित् ।
 दारुणाम् अटवीं प्राप्य भर्तृव्यसनपीडिता ॥११॥
 विदर्भतनया राजन् विललाप सुदुःखिता ।
 भर्तृशोकपरीताङ्गी शिलातलम् अथाश्रिता ॥१२॥

दमयन्युवाच ।

व्यूढोरस्क महाबाहो नैषधानां जनाधिप ।
 क्व नु राजन् गतोऽसीह त्यक्त्वा मां विजने वने ॥१३॥
 अश्वमेधादिभिर् वीर क्रतुभिर् भूरिदक्षिणैः ।
 कथम् इष्ट्वा नरव्याघ्र मयि मिथ्या प्रवर्तसे ॥१४॥
 यत् त्वयोक्तं नरश्रेष्ठ मत्समक्षं महाद्युते ।
 स्मर्तुम् अर्हसि कल्याण वचनं पार्थिवर्षभ ॥१५॥
 यच्चोक्तं विहगैर् हंसैः समीपे तव भूमिप ।
 मत्समक्षं यदुक्तञ्च तदवेक्षितुम् अर्हसि ॥१६॥
 चत्वार एकतो वेदाः साङ्गोपाङ्गाः सविस्तराः ।
 स्वधीता मनुजव्याघ्र सत्यम् एकं किलैकतः ॥१७॥
 तस्माद् अर्हसि शशुम्न सत्यं कर्तुं नरेश्वर ।
 उक्तवान् असि यद् वीर मत्सकाशे पुरा वचः ॥१८॥
 हा वीर ननु नामाहम् इष्टा किल तवानघ ।
 अस्याम् अटव्यां घोरायां किं मां न प्रतिभाषसे ॥१९॥
 भक्षयत्येष मां रौद्री व्यान्तास्यो दारुणाकृतिः ।
 अरण्यराट् क्षुधाविष्टः किं मां न चातुम् अर्हसि ॥२०॥

And the princess of Vidarbha gazed where, in their countless herds,
 Buffalos and boars were feeding, bears, and serpents of the wood.
 Safe in virtue, bright in beauty, glorious, and of high resolve,
 Now alone, Vidarbha's daughter wandering, her lost Nala sought.
 Yet no fear king Bhúma's daughter for herself might deign to feel,
 Travelling the dreary forest, only for her lord distressed ;
 Him she mourned, that noble princess, him in bitterest anguish wailed,
 Every limb with sorrow trembling stood she on a beetling rock ;

DAMAYANTÍ spake :

Monarch, with broad chest capacious, monarch, with the sinewy arm,
 Me in this dread forest leaving, whither hast thou fled away ?
 Thou the holy Ásvamedha, thou each costliest sacrifice
 Hast performed, to me, me only, in thy holy faith thou'st failed.
 That which thou, O best of husbands, in mine hearing hast declared,
 Thy most solemn vow remember, call to mind thy plighted faith.
 Of the swift-winged swans the language uttered, monarch, by thy side,
 That thyself, before my presence, didst renew, bethink thee well.
 Thou the Vedas, thou the Angas, with the Upángas oft has read,
 Of each heaven-descended volume one and simple is the truth.
 Therefore, of thy foes the slayer ! reverence thou the sacred truth
 Of thy solemn plighted promise, in my presence sworn so oft.
 Am not I the loved so dearly, purely, sinlessly beloved ?
 In this dark and awful forest wherefore dost thou not reply ?
 Here with monstrous jaws wide yawning, with his fierce and horrid form,
 Gapes the forest-king to slay me, and thou art not here to save.

न मे त्वदन्या काचिद्धि प्रियाऽस्तीत्यब्रवीः सदा ।
 ताम् ऋतां कुरु कल्याण पुरीक्षां भारतीं नृप ॥ २१ ॥
 उन्मत्तां विलपन्तीं मां भार्याम् इष्टां नराधिप ।
 ईप्सिताम् ईप्सितो नाथ किं मां न प्रतिभाषसे ॥ २२ ॥
 कृशां दीनां विवर्णाञ्च मलिनां वसुधाधिप ।
 वस्त्वार्धप्रावृताम् एकां विलपन्तीम् अनाथवत् ॥ २३ ॥
 यूथभ्रष्टाम् इवैकां मां हरिणीं पृथुलोचन ।
 न मानयसि माम् आर्यं रुदतीम् अरिर्कर्षण ॥ २४ ॥
 महाराज महारण्ये अहम् एकाकिनी सती ।
 दमयन्त्यभिभाषे त्वां किं मां न प्रतिभाषसे ॥ २५ ॥
 कुलशीलोपसम्पन्न चारुसर्वाङ्गशोभन ।
 नाद्य त्वां प्रतिपश्यामि गिराव् अस्मिन् नरोत्तम ॥ २६ ॥
 वने चास्मिन् महाघोरे सिंहव्याघ्रनिषेविते ।
 शयानम् उपविष्टं वा स्थितं वा निषधाधिप ॥ २७ ॥
 प्रस्थितं वा नरश्रेष्ठ मम शोकविवर्धन ।
 कं नु पृच्छामि दुःखार्ता त्वदर्थे शोककर्षिता ॥ २८ ॥
 कश्चिद् दृष्टस् त्वयाऽरण्ये सङ्गत्येह नलो नृपः ।
 को नु मे वाऽथ प्रष्टव्यो वनेऽस्मिन् प्रस्थितं नलं ॥ २९ ॥
 अभिरूपं महात्मानं परव्यूहविनाशनं ।
 यम् अन्वेषसि राजानं नलं पद्मनिभेक्षणं ॥ ३० ॥
 अयं स इति कस्याद्य श्रोथामि मधुरां गिरं ।
 अरण्यराड् अयं श्रीमांश चतुर्दष्टो महाहनुः ॥ ३१ ॥
 शार्दूलोऽभिमुखोऽभ्येति व्रजाम्येनम् अशङ्किता ।
 भवान् मृगाणाम् अधिपस् त्वम् अस्मिन् कानने प्रभुः ॥ ३२ ॥
 विदर्भराजतनयां दमयन्तीति विद्धि मां ।
 निषधाधिपतेर् भार्यां नलस्यामिचघातिनः ॥ ३३ ॥

None but I, thou'st said, for ever, none but I to thee am dear!
Make this oft-repeated language, make this oft-sworn promise true.
To thy queen bereft of reason, to thy weeping wife beloved,
Why repliest thou not—her only thou desir'st—she only thee?
Meagre, miserable, pallid, tainted with the dust and mire,
Scantly clad in half a garment, lone, with no protector near;
Large-eyed! like a hind that wanders separate from the wonted herd,
Thou regard'st me not, thus weeping, oh thou tamer of thy foes!
Mighty king, alone yet virtuous, in the vast and trackless wood,
Damayantí, I address thee, wherefore answerest not my voice?
Nobly born, and nobly minded, beautiful in every limb,
Do I not e'en now behold thee, in this mountain, first of men!
In this lion-haunted forest, in this tiger-howling wood,
Lying down or seated, standing, or in majesty and might
Moving, do I not behold thee, the enhancer of my woe?
Whom shall I address, afflicted, wasted by my grief for thee?
'Hast thou haply seen my Nala in the solitary wild?'
Who will answer me enquiring for my lost one in the wood,
Beautiful and royal-minded, conqueror of a host of foes?
'Him thou seek'st with eyes of lotus, Nala, sovereign of men—
Lo, he's here!' whose voice of music may I hear thus sweetly speak?
Lo, with fourfold tusks before me, and with wide and gaping jaws,
Stands the forest-king, the tiger, I approach him without fear.
Of the beasts art thou the monarch, all this forest thy domain;
Of Vidarbha's king the daughter, Damayantí know thou me,
Consort of Nishadha's sovereign, Nala, slayer of his foes—

पतिम् अन्वेषतीम् एकां कृपणां शोककवितां ।
 आश्वासय मृगेन्द्रेह यदि दृष्टस् त्वया नलः ॥३४॥
 अथवारण्यनृपते नलं यदि न शंससि ।
 मां खादय मृगश्रेष्ठ दुःखाद् अस्माद् विमोचय ॥३५॥
 श्रुत्वाऽरण्ये विलपितं ममैष मृगराद् स्वयं ।
 यात्येतां मृष्टसलिलाम् आपगां सागरङ्गमां ॥३६॥
 इमं शिलोच्चयं पुण्यं शृङ्गेर् बहुभिर् उच्छ्रितैः ।
 विराजन्निर् दिविस्पृग्भिर् नैकवर्णैर् मनोहरैः ॥३७॥
 नानाधातुसमाकीर्णं विविधोपलभूषितं ।
 अस्वारण्यस्य महतः केतुभूतम् इवोत्थितं ॥३८॥
 सिंहशार्दूलमातङ्गवराहर्षमृगायुतं ।
 पतत्रिभिर् बहुविधैः समन्ताद् अनुनादितं ॥३९॥
 किंशुकाशोकवकुलपुन्नागैर् उपशोभितं ।
 कर्णिकारधवल्लक्षैः सुपुष्पैर् उपशोभितं ॥४०॥
 सरिन्निः सविहङ्गाभिः शिखरैश्च समाकुलं ।
 गिरिराजम् इमं तावत् पृच्छामि नृपतिं प्रति ॥४१॥
 भगवन् अचलश्रेष्ठ दिव्यदर्शन विश्रुत ।
 शरण्य बहुकल्याण नमस् तेऽस्तु महीधर ॥४२॥
 प्रणमे त्वाभिगम्याहं राजपुत्रीं निबोध मां ।
 राज्ञः स्रुषां राजभार्यां दमयन्तीति विश्रुतां ॥४३॥
 राजा विदर्भाधिपतिः पिता मम महारथः ।
 भीमो नाम क्षितिपतिश् चातुर्वर्ण्यस्य रक्षिता ॥४४॥
 राजसूयाश्वमेधानां क्रतूनां दक्षिणावतां ।
 आहर्ता पार्थिवश्रेष्ठः पृथुचार्वञ्चितेक्षणः ॥४५॥
 ब्रह्मण्यः साधुवृत्तश्च सत्यवाग् अनसूयकः ।
 शीलवान् वीर्यसम्पन्नः पृथुशीर् धर्मविच् छुचिः ॥४६॥

Seeking here my exile husband, lonely, wretched, sorrow-driven,
Thou, O king of beasts, console me, if my Nala thou hast seen ;
Or, O lord of all the forest, Nala if thou canst not show,
Best of savage beasts, devour me, from this misery set me free.
Hearing thus my lamentation, now does that fell king of beasts
Go towards the crystal river, flowing downward to the sea.—
Turn I to this holy mountain, crowned with many a lofty peak,
In its soul-exalting splendour, rising, many-hued, to heaven ;
Full within of precious metals, rich with many a glowing gem,
Rising o'er this spreading forest like a banner broad and high,
Ranged by elephants and lions, tigers, boars, and bears, and stags ;
Sweetly sounding all around me with the songs of many birds ;
All the trees of richest foliage, all the trees of stateliest height,
All the flowers and golden fruitage on its crested summits wave,
Down its peaks in many a streamlet dip the water-birds their wings :
This, the monarch of all mountains, ask I of the king of men ;
O all-honoured Prince of Mountains, with thy heaven-ward soaring peaks,
Refuge of the lost, most noble, thee, O Mountain, I salute ;
I salute thee, lowly bowing, I, the daughter of a king ;
Of a king the royal consort, of a king's son I the bride.
Of Vidarbha the great sovereign, mighty hero is my sire,
Named the lord of earth, king Bhíma, of each caste the guardian he ;
Of the holy Aśvamedha, of the regal sacrifice,
He the offerer, best of monarchs, known by large and lustrous eyes.
Pious, and of life unblemished, true in word, of generous speech,
Affable, courageous, prosperous, skilled in every duty, pure.

सम्यग्गोप्ता विदर्भाणां निर्जितारिगणः प्रभुः ।
 तस्य मां विद्धि तनयां भगवंस् त्वाम् उपस्थितां ॥४७॥
 निषधेषु महाराजः अशुरो मे नरोत्तमः ।
 गृहीतनामा विख्यातो वीरसेन इति स्म ह ॥४८॥
 तस्य राज्ञः सुतो वीरः श्रीमान् सत्यपराक्रमः ।
 क्रमप्राप्तं पितुः स्वं यो राज्यं समनुशास्ति ह ॥४९॥
 नलो नामारिहा श्यामः पुण्यश्लोक इति श्रुतः ।
 ब्रह्मण्यो वेदविद् वाग्मी पुण्यकृत् सोमपोऽग्निमान् ॥५०॥
 यष्टा दाता च योद्धा च सम्यक्चैव प्रशासिता ।
 तस्य माम् अचलश्रेष्ठ विद्धि भार्याम् इहागतां ॥५१॥
 त्यक्तश्रियं भर्तृहीनाम् अनाथां व्यसनान्वितां ।
 अन्वेषमाणां भर्तारं तं वै नरवरोत्तमं ॥५२॥
 खम् उल्लिखद्भिर् एतैर् हि त्वया शृङ्गशतैर् नृपः ।
 कच्चिद् दृष्टोऽचलश्रेष्ठ वनेऽस्मिन् दारुणे नलः ॥५३॥
 गजेन्द्रविक्रमो धीमान् दीर्घबाहुर् अमर्षणः ।
 विक्रान्तः सत्यवाग् वीरो भर्ता मम महायशः ॥५४॥
 निषधानाम् अधिपतिः कच्चिद् दृष्टस् त्वया नलः ।
 किं मां विलपन्तीम् एकां पर्वतश्रेष्ठ विह्वलां ॥५५॥
 गिरा नाश्रासयस्यद्य स्वां सुताम् इव दुःखितां ।
 वीर विक्रान्त धर्मज्ञ सत्यसन्ध महीपते ॥५६॥
 यद्यस्यस्मिन् वने राजन् दर्शयात्मानम् आत्मना ।
 कदा सुहृद्गधगम्भीरां जीमूतस्वनसन्निभां ॥५७॥
 श्रोथामि नैषधस्याहं वाचं ताम् अमृतोपमां ।
 वैदर्भीत्येव विस्पष्टां शुभां राज्ञो महात्मनः ॥५८॥
 आम्नायसारिणीम् अञ्जनां मम शोकविनाशिनीं ।
 भीताम् आश्रासयत मां नृपते धर्मवत्सल ॥५९॥

Of Vidarbha the protector, conqueror of a host of foes;
 Know me of that king the daughter lowly thus approaching thee.
 In Nishadha, mighty Mountain! dwelt the father of my lord,
 High the name he won, the illustrious VÍrasena was he called.
 Of this king the son, the hero, prosperous and truly brave,
 He who rules his father's kingdom by hereditary right,
 Slayer of his foes, dark Nala, Puṇyaśloka is he called;
 Holy, Veda-read, and eloquent, Soma-quaffing, fire-adoring,
 Sacrificer, liberal giver, warrior, in all points a king,—
 Of this monarch, best of mountains! know, the wife before thee stands,
 Fallen from bliss, bereft of husband, unprotected, sorrow-doomed,
 Seeking everywhere her husband, him the best of noblest men.
 Best of mountains, heaven-upsoaring, with thy hundred stately peaks,
 Hast thou seen the kingly Nala in this dark and awful wood?
 Like the elephant in courage, wise, impetuous, with long arms,
 Valiant, and of truth unquestioned, my heroic, glorious lord;
 Hast thou seen Nishadha's sovereign, mighty Nala hast thou seen?
 Why repliest thou not, O Mountain, sorrowing, lonely, and distressed,
 With thy voice why not console me as thine own afflicted child?

Hero, mighty, strong in duty, true of promise, lord of earth!
 If thou art within the forest show thee in thy proper form.
 When so eloquently deep-toned, like the sound of some dark cloud,
 Shall I hear thy voice, oh Nala! sweet as the Amṛita draught,
 Saying, 'daughter of Vidarbha!' with distinct, with blessed sound,
 Musical as holy Veda, rich, and soothing all my pain;
 Thus console me, trembling, fainting, thou, oh virtue-loving king!

इति सा तं गिरिश्रेष्ठम् उक्त्वा पार्थिवनन्दिनी ।
 दमयन्ती ततो भूयो जगाम दिशम् उत्तरां ॥६०॥
 सा गत्वा चीन् अहोरात्रान् ददर्श परमाङ्गना ।
 तापसारण्यम् अतुलं दिव्यकाननदर्शनं ॥६१॥
 वशिष्ठभृग्वचिसमैस् तापसैर् उपशोभितं ।
 नियतैः संयताहारैर् दमशौचसमन्वितैः ॥६२॥
 अन्नक्षैर् वायुभक्षैश्च पर्णाहारैस् तथैव च ।
 जितेन्द्रियैर् महाभागैः स्वर्गमार्गदिदृशुभिः ॥६३॥
 वल्कलाजिनसंवीतैर् मुनिभिः संयतेन्द्रियैः ।
 तापसाध्युषितं रम्यं ददर्शाश्रममण्डलं ॥६४॥
 नानामृगगणैर् जुष्टं शाखामृगगणायुतं ।
 तापसैः समुपेतञ्च सा दृष्ट्वैव समाश्वसत् ॥६५॥
 सुभूः सुकेशी सुश्रोणी सुकुचा सुद्विजानना ।
 वर्चस्विनी सुप्रतिष्ठा स्वसितायतलोचना ॥६६॥
 सा विवेशाश्रमपदं वीरसेनसुतप्रिया ।
 योषिट्रलं महाभागा दमयन्ती तपस्विनी ॥६७॥
 साऽभिवाद्य तपोवृक्षान् विनयावनता स्थिता ।
 स्वागतं त इति प्रोक्त्वा तैः सर्वैस् तापसैश्च सा ॥६८॥
 पूजां चास्या यथान्यायं कृत्वा तत्र तपोधनाः ।
 आस्यताम् इत्यथोचुस् ते ब्रूहि किं करवामहे ॥६९॥
 तान् उवाच वरारोहा कश्चिद् भगवताम् इह ।
 तपस्यग्निषु धर्मेषु मृगपक्षिषु चानघाः ॥७०॥
 कुशलं वो महाभागाः स्वधर्माचरणेषु च ।
 तैर् उक्त्वा कुशलं भद्रे सर्वचेति यशस्विनि ॥७१॥
 ब्रूहि सर्वानवद्याङ्गि का त्वं किञ्च चिकीर्षसि ।
 दृष्ट्वैव ते परं रूपं द्युतिञ्च परमाम् इह ॥७२॥

To the holiest of mountains spake the daughter of the king.
Damayantí then set forward toward the region of the north.
Three days long, three nights she wandered, then that noble woman saw
The unrivalled wood of hermits like to a celestial grove.
To Váśiṣṭha, Bhṛigu, Atri, equal was that sacred crew ;
Self-denying, strict in diet, temperate, and undefiled ;
Water-drinking, air-inhaling, and the leaves their simple food ;
Mortified, for ever blessed, seeking the right way to heaven ;
Bark for vests and skins for raiment wore those hermits, sense-subdued.
She beheld the pleasant circle of those hermits' lonely cells ;
Round them flocks of beasts were grazing, wantoned there the monkey-tribes.
When she saw those holy dwellings all her courage was revived.
Lovely-browed, and lovely-tressed, lovely-bosom'd, lovely-lipp'd,
In her brightness, in her glory, with her large dark beauteous eyes,
Entered she those hermit-dwellings, wife of Vírāsena's son ;
Pearl of women, ever blessed, Damayantí the devout.
She those holy men saluting stood with modest form half-bent.
'Hail, and welcome!' thus those hermits instant with one voice exclaimed.
And those sacred men no sooner had the fitting homage paid,
'Take thy seat,' they said, 'oh lady! and command what we must do.'
Thus replied the slender-waisted, 'Blessed are ye, holy men ;
In your sacred fires, your worship blameless, with your beasts and birds.
Doth the grace of heaven attend you in your duties, in your deeds?'
Answered they, 'The grace of heaven ever blesses all our deeds.
But say thou, of form so beauteous, who thou art, and what thou would'st?
As thy noble form we gaze on, on thy brightness as we gaze,

विस्मयो नः समुत्पन्नः समाश्रसिहि मा शुचः ।
 अस्वारण्यस्य देवी त्वम् उताहोऽस्य महीभृतः ॥७३॥
 अस्याश्च नद्याः कल्याणि वद सत्यम् अनिन्दिते ।
 साऽब्रवीत् तान् ऋषीन् नाहम् अरण्यस्यास्य देवता ॥७४॥
 न चाप्यस्य गिरेर् विप्रा नैव नद्याश्च देवता ।
 मानुषीं मां विजानीत यूयं सर्वे तपोधनाः ॥७५॥
 विस्तरेणाभिधास्यामि तन् मे शृणुत सर्वशः ।
 विदर्भेषु महीपालो भीमो नाम महीपतिः ॥७६॥
 तस्य मां तनयां सर्वे जानीत द्विजसत्तमाः ।
 निषधाधिपतिर् धीमान् मलो नाम महायशः ॥७७॥
 वीरः सङ्ग्रामजिद् विद्वान् मम भर्ता विशाम्पतिः ।
 देवताभ्यर्चनपरो द्विजातिजनवत्सलः ॥७८॥
 गोप्ता निषधवंशस्य महातेजा महाबलः ।
 सत्यवाग् अस्त्रवित् प्राज्ञः सत्यसन्धोऽरिमर्दनः ॥७९॥
 ब्रह्मण्यो दैवतपरः श्रीमान् परपुरञ्जयः ।
 नलो नाम नृपश्रेष्ठो देवराजसमद्युतिः ॥८०॥
 मम भर्ता विशालाक्षः पूर्णेन्दुवदनोऽरिहा ।
 आहर्ता ऋतुमुख्यानां वेदवेदाङ्गपारगः ॥८१॥
 सपत्नानां मृधे हन्ता रविसोमसमप्रभः ।
 स कैश्चिन् निकृतिप्रज्ञैर् अनार्यैर् अकृतात्मभिः ॥८२॥
 आहूय पृथिवीपालः सत्यधर्मपरायणः ।
 देवने कुशलैर् जिज्ञैर् जितो राज्यं वसूनि च ॥८३॥
 तस्य माम् अवगच्छध्वं भार्यां राजर्षभस्य वै ।
 दमयन्तीति विख्यातां भर्तुर् दर्शनलालसां ॥८४॥
 सा वनानि गिरीश्चैव सरांसि सरितस् तथा ।
 पल्वलानि च सर्वाणि तथाऽरण्यानि सर्वशः ॥८५॥

In amaze we stand and wonder, cheer thee up, and mourn no more.
 Of the wood art thou the goddess, or the mountain-goddess thou ;
 Or the goddess of the river ? Blessed Spirit, speak the truth.
 'Nor the sylvan goddess am I,' to the Wise she thus replied ;
 'Neither of the mountain, Bráhmans, nor the river-nymph am I.
 Know me but a mortal being, O, ye rich in holiness !
 All my tale at length I'll tell you, if meet audience ye will give.
 In Vidarbha mighty guardian Bhíma dwells, the lord of earth ;
 Of that noble king the daughter, best of twice-born, know ye me.
 And the monarch of Nishadha, Nala wise and great in fame ;
 Brave in battle, conqueror, prudent is my lord, the peasants' king ;
 To the gods devout in worship, friendly to the Bráhman race,
 Of Nishadha's race the guardian, great in glory, great in might,
 True in word, in weapons skilful, wise and slayer of his foes ;
 Pious, heaven-devoted, prosperous, conqueror of hostile towns ;
 Nala named, the best of soveraigns, splendid as the king of gods.
 Know that large-eyed chief, my husband, like the full-orbed moon his face,
 Giver he of costly offerings, deep in holy volumes read ;
 Slayer of his foes in battle, glorious as the sun and moon.
 He by some most evil-minded, unrespected, wicked men,
 After many a challenge yielding, he the virtue-loving king,
 By these clever gamesters, fraudulent, was bereft of realm and wealth.
 Know ye me the hapless consort of that noble king of kings,
 Damayantí, so they name me, yearning for my husband's sight.
 I through forests, over mountains, stagnant marsh and river broad,
 Lake with wide pellucid surface, through the long and trackless wood,

अन्वेषमाणा भर्तारं नलं रणविशारदं ।
 महात्मानं कृतास्त्रञ्च विचरामीह दुःखिता ॥८६॥
 कश्चिद् भगवतां रम्यं तपोवनम् इदं नृपः ।
 भवेत् प्राप्नो नलो नाम निषधानां जनाधिपः ॥८७॥
 यत्कृतेऽहम् इदं दुर्गे प्रपन्ना भृशदारुणं ।
 वनं प्रतिभयं घोरं शार्दूलमृगसेवितं ॥८८॥
 यदि कैश्चिद् अहोरात्रैर् न द्रक्ष्यामि नलं नृपं ।
 आत्मानं श्रेयसा योक्ष्ये देहस्यास्य विमोचनात् ॥८९॥
 को नु मे जीवितेनार्थस् तम् ऋते पुरुषर्षभं ।
 कथं भविष्याम्यद्याहं भर्तृशोकाभिपीडिता ॥९०॥
 तथा विलपन्तीम् एकाम् अरण्ये भीमनन्दिनीं ।
 दमयन्तीम् अथोचुस् ते तापसाः सत्यदर्शिनः ॥९१॥
 उदर्कस् तव कल्याणि कल्याणो भविता शुभे ।
 वयं पश्यामस् तपसा क्षिप्रं द्रक्ष्यसि नैषधं ॥९२॥
 निषधानाम् अधिपतिं नलं रिपुनिपातिनं ।
 भैमि धर्मभृतां श्रेष्ठं द्रक्ष्यसे विगतज्वरं ॥९३॥
 विमुक्तं सर्वपापेभ्यः सर्वरत्नसमन्वितं ।
 तद् एव नगरं भूयः प्रशासतम् अरिन्दमं ॥९४॥
 द्विषतां भयकर्तारं सुहृदां शोकनाशनं ।
 पतिं द्रक्ष्यसि कल्याणि कल्याणाभिजनं नृपं ॥९५॥
 एवम् उक्त्वा नलस्येष्टां महिषीं पार्थिवात्मजां ।
 तापसाऽन्तर्हिताः सर्वे सामिहोचाश्रमास् तदा ॥९६॥
 सा दृष्ट्वा महद् आश्चर्यं विस्मिता ह्यभवत् तदा ।
 दमयन्त्यनवद्याङ्गी वीरसेननृपसुषा ॥९७॥
 किं नु स्वप्नो मया दृष्टः कोऽयं विधिर् इहाभवत् ।
 क्व नु ते तापसाः सर्वे क्व तद् आश्रममण्डलं ॥९८॥

Ever seeking for my husband Nala, skilful in the fight.
 Mighty in the use of weapons, wander, desolate and sad.
 Tell me, to this pleasant sojourn, sacred to these holy men,
 Hath he come, the royal Nala? hath Nishadha's monarch come?
 For whose sake through ways all trackless, terrible, have I set forth,
 In this drear, appalling forest, where the deer and tiger range,
 If I see not noble Nala ere few days, few nights are o'er,
 I to heavenly bliss will join me, from this mortal frame set free.
 Reft of him, my princely husband, what have I to do with life?
 How endure existence longer, for my husband thus distressed?'

To the lady thus complaining, lonely in the savage wood,
 Answered thus those holy hermits, spake the gifted seers the truth:—
 'There will be a time hereafter, beautiful, the time will come,
 Through devotion now we see him, and thou too wilt see him soon;
 That good monarch of Nishadha, Nala, slayer of his foes;
 That dispenser of strict justice, Bhíma's daughter! free from grief,
 From all sin released, thou'lt see him glittering in his royal gems,
 Governing again that city, o'er his enemies supreme.
 To his foemen causing terror, to his friends allaying grief,
 Thou, oh noble, shalt thy husband see, that king of noble race!'

To the much-loved wife of Nala, to the princess speaking thus,
 Vanished then those holy hermits, with their sacred fires, their cells.
 As she gazed upon the wonder, wrapt in mute amaze she stood;
 Damayantí, fair-limbed princess, wife of Vírāsena's son:
 'Have I only seen a vision, what hath been this wondrous chance?
 Where are all those holy hermits, where the circle of their cells?

क्व सा पुण्यजला रम्या नदी द्विजनिषेविता ।
 क्व नु ते ह नगा हृद्याः फलपुष्पोपशोभिताः ॥९९॥
 ध्यात्वा चिरं भीमसुता दमयन्ती शुचिस्मिता ।
 भर्तृशोकपरा दीना विवर्णवदनाऽभवत् ॥१००॥
 सा गत्वाथापरां भूमिं वाष्पसन्दिग्धया गिरा ।
 विललापाश्रुपूर्णाक्षी दृष्ट्वाऽशोकतरुं ततः ॥१०१॥
 उपगम्य तरुश्रेष्ठम् अशोकं पुष्पितं वने ।
 पल्लवापीडितं हृद्यं विहङ्गैर् अनुनादितं ॥१०२॥
 अहोवतायम् अगमः श्रीमान् अस्मिन् वनान्तरे ।
 आपीडैर् बहुभिर् भाति श्रीमान् पर्वतराड् इव ॥१०३॥
 विशोकां कुरु मां क्षिप्रम् अशोक प्रियदर्शन ।
 वीतशोक भयाबाधं कञ्चित् त्वं दृष्टवान् नृपं ॥१०४॥
 नलं नामारिर्मर्दनं दमयन्त्याः प्रियं पतिं ।
 निषधानाम् अधिपतिं दृष्टवान् असि मे प्रियं ॥१०५॥
 एकवस्त्रार्धसंवीतं सुकुमारतनुत्वचं ।
 ष्यसनेनार्दितं वीरम् अरण्यम् इदम् आगतं ॥१०६॥
 यथा विशोका गच्छेयम् अशोकनग तत् कुरु ।
 सत्यनामा भवाशोक अशोकः शोकनाशनः ॥१०७॥
 एवं साऽशोकवृक्षं तम् आर्ता वै परिगम्य ह ।
 जगाम दारुणतरं देशं भैमी वराङ्गना ॥१०८॥
 सा ददर्श नगान् नैकान् नैकाश्च सरितस् तथा ।
 नैकांश्च पर्वतान् रम्यान् नैकांश्च मृगपक्षिणः ॥१०९॥
 कन्दरांश्च नितम्बांश्च नदीश्चाद्भुतदर्शनाः ।
 ददर्श सा भीमसुता पतिम् अन्वेषती तदा ॥११०॥
 गत्वा प्रकृष्टम् अध्वानं दमयन्ती शुचिस्मिता ।
 ददर्शाथ महासार्थं हस्त्यश्वरथसङ्कुलं ॥१११॥

Where that pure and pleasant river, haunted by the dipping birds?
 Where those trees with grateful umbrage, with their pendant fruits and flowers?
 Long within her heart she pondered, Damayantí with sweet smile,
 For her lord, to grief abandoned, miserable, pale of hue;
 To another region passed she, there with voice by weeping choked
 Mourns she, till with eyes o'erflowing an Aśoka tree she saw.
 Best of trees, the Aśoka blooming, in the forest she approached,
 Gemmed all o'er with glowing fruitage, vocal with the songs of birds.
 'Ah, behold, amid the forest flourishes this happy tree,
 With its leafy garlands radiant as the joyous mountain-king.
 O thou tree with pleasant aspect from my sorrow set me free!
 Vítasoka, hast thou seen him, hast the fearless Rája seen,
 Nala, of his foes the slayer, Damayantí's lord beloved?
 Hast thou seen Nishadha's monarch, hast thou seen mine only love,
 Clad in half a single garment, delicate and soft of skin?
 Hast thou seen th' afflicted hero wandering in this forest lone?
 That I may depart ungrieving, fair Aśoka, answer me.
 Truly be thou named Aśoka, as the extinguisher of grief.'
 Thus in her o'erpowering anguish moved she round the Aśoka tree.
 Then she went her way in sadness to a region still more dread.
 Many a tree she stood and gazed on, many a river passed she o'er;
 Passed she many a pleasant mountain, many a wild deer, many a bird;
 Many a hill and many a cavern, many a bright and wondrous stream,
 Saw king Bhíma's wandering daughter as she sought her husband lost.
 Long she roamed her weary journey, Damayantí with sweet smile;
 Lo, a caravan of merchants, elephants, and steeds, and cars,

उत्तरनां नदीं रम्यां प्रसन्नसलिलां शुभां ।
 सुशान्ततोयां विस्तीर्णां हृदिनीं वेतसैर् वृतां ॥ ११२ ॥
 प्रोद्भुतां क्रौञ्चकुरैश् चक्रवाकोपकूजितां ।
 कूर्मयाहभ्रूषाकीर्णां पुलिनद्वीपशोभितां ॥ ११३ ॥
 सा दृष्ट्वैव महासार्थं नलपत्नी यशस्विनी ।
 उपसर्प्य वरारोहा जनमध्यं विवेश ह ॥ ११४ ॥
 उन्मत्तरूपा शोकार्ता तथा वस्त्रार्धसंवृता ।
 कृशा विवर्णा मलिना पांशुध्वस्तशिरोरुहा ॥ ११५ ॥
 तां दृष्ट्वा तत्र मनुजाः केचिद् भीताः प्रदुदुवुः ।
 केचिच् चिन्तापरास् तस्युः केचित् तत्र प्रचुकुशुः ॥ ११६ ॥
 प्रहसन्ति स्म तां केचिद् अभ्यसूयन्ति चापरे ।
 अकुर्वन्त दयां केचित् पप्रच्छुश्चापि भारत ॥ ११७ ॥
 काऽसि कस्यासि कल्याणि किं वा मृगयसे वने ।
 त्वां दृष्ट्वा व्यथिताः स्मेह कञ्चित् त्वम् असि मानुषी ॥ ११८ ॥
 वद सत्यं वनस्यास्य पर्वतस्याथवा दिशः ।
 देवता त्वं हि कल्याणि त्वां वयं शरणं गताः ॥ ११९ ॥
 यक्षी वा राक्षसी वा त्वम् उताहोऽसि सुराङ्गना ।
 सर्वथा कुरु नः स्वस्ति रक्ष चास्मान् अनिन्दिते ॥ १२० ॥
 यथाऽयं सर्वथा सार्थः क्षेमी शीघ्रम् इतो व्रजेत् ।
 तथा विधत्स्व कल्याणि यथा श्रेयो हि नो भवेत् ॥ १२१ ॥
 तथोक्त्वा तेन सार्थेन दमयन्ती नृपात्मजा ।
 प्रत्युवाच ततः सार्थी भर्तृष्यसनपीडिता ॥ १२२ ॥
 सार्थवाहञ्च सार्थञ्च जना ये तत्र केचन ।
 युवस्थविरबालाश्च सार्थस्य च पुरोगमाः ॥ १२३ ॥
 मानुषीं मां विजानीत मनुजाधिपतेः सुतां ।
 नृपक्षुषां राजभार्यां भर्तृदर्शनलालसां ॥ १२४ ॥

Passing o'er a pleasant river, with its waters cool and clear.

'Twas a still stream broad and waveless, girt about with spreading canes ;
There the curlew, there the osprey, there the red-geese clamouring stood ;
Swarmed the turtles, fish and serpents, there rose many a shoal and isle.

When she saw that numerous concourse, Nala's once all-glorious wife,
Entered she, the slender-waisted, in the midst of all the host ;
Maniac-like in form and feature, and in half a garment clad,
Thin and pallid, travel-tainted, matted all her locks with dust.
As they all beheld her standing some in terror fled away ;
Some stood still in speechless wonder, others raised their voice and cried ;
Mocked her some with cruel tauntings, others spake reproachful words ;
Others looked on her with pity, and enquired her state, her name.

'Who art thou ? whose daughter, Lady, in the forest seek'st thou aught ?

At thy sight we stand confounded, art thou of our mortal race ?

Of this wood art thou the goddess ? of this mountain ? of that plain ?

Who art thou, O noble lady, thee, our refuge, we adore.

Art thou sylvan nymph or genius, or celestial nymph divine ?

Every way regard our welfare, and protect us, undespised :

So our caravan in safety may pursue its onward way,

So ordain it, O illustrious ! that good fortune wait on all.'

Thus addressed by that assemblage, Damayantí, kingly-born,

Answered thus with gentle language, grieving for her husband lost.

Of that caravan the leader, and the whole assembled host,

Youths and boys, and grey-haired elders, and the guides, thus answered she :

'Know me, like yourselves, a mortal, daughter of a king of men,

Of another king the consort seeking for my royal lord ;

विदर्भराड् मम पिता भर्ता राजा च नैषधः ।
 नली नाम महाभागस् तम् मार्गाम्यपराजितं ॥१२५॥
 यदि जानीथ नृपतिं क्षिप्रं शंसत मे प्रियं ।
 नलं पुरुषशार्दूलम् अमित्रगणसूदनं ॥१२६॥
 ताम् उवाचानवद्याङ्गीं सार्थस्य महतः प्रभुः ।
 सार्थवाहः शुचिर् नाम शृणु कल्याणि मञ्चुचः ॥१२७॥
 अहं सार्थस्य नेता वै सार्थवाहः शुचिस्मिते ।
 मनुष्यं नलनामानं न पश्यामि यशस्विनि ॥१२८॥
 कुञ्जरघ्नीपिमहिषशार्दूलर्क्षमृगान् अपि ।
 पश्याम्यस्मिन् वने कृत्स्ने ह्यमनुष्यनिषेविते ॥१२९॥
 ऋते त्वां मानुषीं मर्त्यं न पश्यामि महावने ।
 तथा नो यक्षराड् अद्य मणिभद्रः प्रसीदतु ॥१३०॥
 साऽब्रवीद् बणिजः सर्वान् सार्थवाहञ्च तं ततः ।
 क्व नु यास्यति सार्थोऽयम् एतद् आख्यातुम् अर्हसि ॥१३१॥

सार्थवाह उवाच ।

सार्थोऽयं चेदिराजस्य सुबाहोः सत्यदर्शिनः ।
 क्षिप्रं जनपदं गन्ता लाभाय मनुजात्मजे ॥१३२॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने द्वादशः सर्गः ॥१२॥

Know, Vidarbha's king, my father, and Nishadha's king, my lord,
 Nala, is his name, the glorious, him, th' unconquered, do I seek.
 Know ye aught of that good monarch, tell me, quick, of my beloved,
 Of the tiger hero, Nala, slayer of a host of foes.'

Of the caravan the captain thus the lovely-limbed addressed,
 Śuci was his name, the merchant : 'Hear, illustrious queen, my speech ;
 Of this caravan the captain I, O Lady with sweet smile,
 Him that bears the name of Nala nowhere have these eyes beheld.
 Elephants, and pards, and tigers, lynxes, buffaloes, and bears,
 See I in this trackless forest, uninhabited by men ;
 Save thyself, of human feature, nought of human form, I've seen.
 So may he, the king of Yakshas, Manibhadra, guard us well.'
 To the merchants all she answered, to the leader of the host :
 'Tell me whither do ye travel? whither bound your caravan?'

THE CAPTAIN OF THE CARAVAN spake :

'To the realm of Cedi's sovereign, truth-discerning Subáhu,
 Soon this caravan will enter, travelling in search of gain.'

END OF BOOK XII.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

सा तच् छ्रुत्वानवद्याङ्गी सार्थवाहवचस् तदा ।
 जगाम सह तेनैव सार्थेन पतिलालसा ॥ १ ॥
 अथ काले बहुतिथे वने महति दारुणे ।
 तडागं सर्वतोभद्रं पद्मसौगन्धिकं महत् ॥ २ ॥
 ददृशुर् बणिजो रस्यं प्रभूतयवसेन्धनं ।
 बहुपुष्पफलोपेतं नानापक्षिनिषेवितं ॥ ३ ॥
 निर्मलस्वादुसलिलं मनोहारि सुशीतलं ।
 सुपरिश्रान्तवाहास् ते निवेशाय मनो दधुः ॥ ४ ॥
 सम्मते सार्थवाहस्य विविशुर् वनम् उत्तमं ।
 उवास सार्थः स महान् वेलाम् आसाद्य पश्चिमां ॥ ५ ॥
 अथार्धरात्रसमये निःशब्दस्तिमिते तदा ।
 सुप्ते सार्थे परिश्रान्ते हस्तियूथम् उपागमत् ॥ ६ ॥
 पानीयार्थं गिरिनदीं मदप्रस्रवणाविलां ।
 अथापश्यत सार्थं तं सार्थजान् सुबहून् गजान् ॥ ७ ॥
 ते तान् याम्यगजान् दृष्ट्वा सर्वे वनगजास् तदा ।
 समाद्रवन्त वेगेन जिघांसन्तो मदोत्कटाः ॥ ८ ॥
 तेषाम् आपततां वेगः करिणां दुःसहोऽभवत् ।
 नगाप्राद् इव शीर्षानां शृङ्गाणां पततां क्षितौ ॥ ९ ॥
 स्यन्दताम् अपि नागानां मार्गा नष्टा वनोद्भवैः ।
 मार्गं संरुध्य संसुप्तं पद्मिन्याः सार्थम् उत्तमं ॥ १० ॥
 ते तं ममर्दुः सहसा चेष्टमानं महीतले ।
 हाहाकारम् प्रमुञ्चन्तः सार्थिकाः शरणार्थिनः ॥ ११ ॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

THIS the lovely princess hearing from the captain of the band,
 With the caravan set forward, seeking still her royal lord.
 Long their journey through the forest, through the dark and awful glens.
 Then a lake of loveliest beauty, fragrant with the lotus flowers,
 Saw those merchants, wide and pleasant, with fresh grass and fuel rich ;
 Flowers and fruits bedecked its borders where the birds melodious sang :
 In its clear delicious waters, soul-enchanting, icy cool,
 With their beasts all overwearied, thought they then to plunge and bathe.
 At the signal of the captain entered all that pleasant grove.
 At the close of day arriving there encamped they for the night.

When the midnight came, all noiseless came in silence deep and still,
 Weary slept the band of merchants, lo, a herd of elephants,
 Oozing moisture from their temples, came to drink the troubled stream.
 When that caravan they gazed on, with their slumbering beasts at rest,
 The tame elephants they scented, those wild forest-elephants ;
 Forward rush they fleet and furious, mad to slay, and wild with heat ;
 Irresistible the onset of the rushing ponderous brutes,
 As the peaks from some high mountain down the valley thundering roll.
 Strewn was all the way before them with the boughs, the trunks of trees ;
 On they rushed to where the travellers slumbered by the lotus-lake.
 Trampled down and vainly struggling, helpless on the earth they lay.
 ' Woe, oh, woe ! ' shrieked out the merchants, wildly some began to fly,

वनगुल्मांश्च धावन्तो निद्रान्धा बहवोऽभवन् ।
 केचिद् दन्तैः करैः केचित् केचित् पद्भ्यां हता गजैः ॥१२॥
 निहतोष्ठाश्च बहुलाः पदातिजनसङ्कुलाः ।
 भयाद् आधावमानाश्च परस्परहतास् तदा ॥१३॥
 घोरात् नादान् बिमुञ्चन्तो निपेतुर् धरणीतले ।
 वृक्षेष्वारूढ्य संख्याः पतिता विषमेषु च ॥१४॥
 एवम् प्रकारैर् बहुभिर् दैवेनाक्रम्य हस्तिभिः ।
 राजन् विनिहतं सर्वं समृद्धं सार्धमगडलं ॥१५॥
 आरावः सुमहांश्चासीत् चैलोक्यभयकारकः ।
 एषोऽग्निर् उत्थितः कष्टस् चायध्वं धावताधुना ॥१६॥
 रत्नराशिर् विशीर्णोऽयं गृह्णीध्वं किं प्रधावथ ।
 सामान्यम् एतद् द्रविणं न मिथ्यावचनं मम ॥१७॥
 एवम् एवाभिभाषन्तो विद्रवन्ति भयात् तदा ।
 पुनर् एवाभिधास्यामि चिन्तयध्वं सकातराः ॥१८॥
 तस्मिंस् तथा वर्तमाने दारुणे जनसङ्घये ।
 दमयन्ती च बुबुधे भयसन्त्रस्तमानसा ॥१९॥
 अपश्यद् वैशसं तच्च सर्वलोकभयङ्करं ।
 अदृष्टपूर्वं तद् दृष्ट्वा बाला पद्मनिभेक्षणा ॥२०॥
 संसक्तवदनाश्चासा उत्तस्थौ भयविह्वला ।
 ये तु तच्च विनिर्मुक्ताः सार्धात् केचिद् अविक्षताः ॥२१॥
 तेऽब्रुवन् सहिताः सर्वे कस्येदं कर्मणः फलं ।
 नूनं न पूजितोऽस्माभिर् मणिभद्रो महायशः ॥२२॥
 तथा यक्षाधिपः श्रीमान् न वै वैश्रवणः प्रभुः ।
 न पूजा विघ्नकर्तृणाम् अथवा प्रथमं कृता ॥२३॥
 शकुनानां फलं वाऽथ विपरीतम् इदं ध्रुवं ।
 यहा न विपरीतास्तु किम् अन्यद् इदम् आगतं ॥२४॥

In the forest-thickets plunging ; some stood gasping, blind with sleep ;
And the elephants down beat them with their tusks, their trunks, their feet.
Many saw their camels dying, mingled with the men on foot,
And in frantic tumult rushing wildly struck each other down ;
Many miserably shrieking cast them down upon the earth,
Many climbed the trees in terror, on the rough ground stumbled some.
Thus in various wise and fatal, by the elephants assailed,
Lay that caravan so wealthy, scattered all abroad or slain.
Such, so fearful was the tumult, the three worlds seemed all appalled :
'Tis a fire amid the encampment, save ye, fly ye, for your lives.
Lo, your precious pearls ye scatter, take them up, why fly so fast ?
Save them, 'tis a common venture, fear ye not that I deceive.'
Thus t' each other shrieked the merchants as in fear they scattered round.
'Yet again I call upon you, cowards ! think ye what ye do.'
All around this frantic carnage raging through the prostrate host,
Damayanti, soon awakened, with her heart all full of dread ;
There she saw a hideous slaughter, the whole world might well appal.
To such sights all unfamiliar gazed the queen with lotus-eyes,
Pressing in her breath with terror slowly rose she on her feet.
And the few that scaped the carnage, few that scaped without a wound,
All at once exclaimed together : 'Of whose deeds is this the doom ?
Hath not mighty Manibhadra adoration meet received ?
And Vaisravaṇa the holy, of the Yakshas lord and king,
Have not all that might impede us, ere we journied, been addressed ?
Was it doomed, that all good omens by this chance should be belied ?
Were no planets haply adverse ? how hath fate, like this, befall'n !'

अपरे त्वब्रुवन् दीना ज्ञातिद्रव्यविनाकृताः ।
 याऽसावद्य महासार्थे नारी ह्युन्मत्तदर्शना ॥२५॥
 प्रविष्टा विकृताकारा कृत्वा रूपम् अमानुषं ।
 तयेयं विहिता पूर्वं माया परमदारुणा ॥२६॥
 राक्षसी वा ध्रुवं यक्षी पिशाची वा भयङ्करी ।
 तस्याः सर्वम् इदं पापं नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥२७॥
 यदि पश्येम तां पापां सार्थघ्नीं नैकदुःखदां ।
 लोष्टभिः पांशुभिश्चैव तृणैः काष्ठैश्च मुष्टिभिः ॥२८॥
 अवश्यमेव हन्याम सार्थस्य किल कृत्यकां ।
 दमयन्ती तु तच्च क्षुत्वा वाक्यं तेषां सुदारुणं ॥२९॥
 हीता भीता च संविप्सा प्राद्रवद् यत्र काननं ।
 आशङ्कमाना तत् पापम् आत्मानं पर्यदेवयत् ॥३०॥
 अहो ममोपरि विधेः संरम्भो दारुणो महान् ।
 नानुबध्नाति कुशलं कस्येदं कर्मणः फलं ॥३१॥
 न स्मराम्यशुभं किञ्चित् कृतं कस्यचिद् अखपि ।
 कर्मणा मनसा वाचा कस्येदं कर्मणः फलं ॥३२॥
 नूनं जन्मान्तरकृतं पापम् आपतितं महत् ।
 अपश्चिमाम् इमां कष्टाम् आपदं प्राप्तवत्यहं ॥३३॥
 भर्तृराज्यापहरणं स्वजनाञ्च पराजयः ।
 भर्षा सह वियोगश्च तनयाभ्याञ्च विच्युतिः ॥३४॥
 निर्नाथता वने वासी बहुव्यालनिषेविते ।
 अथापरेद्युः सम्प्राप्ते हतशिष्टा जनास् तदा ॥३५॥
 देशात् तस्माद् विनिष्क्रम्य शोचन्ते वैशसं कृतं ।
 भातरं पितरं पुत्रं सखायञ्च नराधिप ॥३६॥
 अशोचत् तत्र वैदर्भी किं नु मे दुष्कृतं कृतं ।
 योऽपि मे निर्जनेऽरण्ये सम्प्राप्तोऽयं जनार्णवः ॥३७॥

Others answered in their misery, reft of kindred and of wealth,
 'Who is that ill-omened woman, that with maniac-staring eyes,
 Joined our host, mis-shaped in aspect, and with scarcely human form?
 Surely all this wicked witchcraft by her evil power is wrought;
 Witch or sorceress she, or demon, fatal cause of all our fears,
 Hers is all the guilt, the misery, who such damning proof may doubt?
 Could we but behold that false one, murderess, bane of all our host,
 With the clods, the dust, the bamboos, with our staves, or with our fists,
 We would slay her on the instant, of our caravan the fate.'
 But no sooner Damayanti their appalling words had heard,
 In her shame and in her terror to the forest shade she fled.
 And that guilt imputed dreading thus her fate began to wail:
 'Woe is me, still o'er me hovers the terrific wrath of fate;
 No good fortune e'er attends me, of what guilt is this the doom?
 Not a sin can I remember, not the least to living man.
 Or in deed, or thought, or language, of what guilt is this the doom?
 In some former life committed expiate I now the sin;
 To this infinite misfortune hence by penal justice doomed.
 Lost my husband, lost my kingdom, from my kindred separate;
 Separate from noble Nala, from my children far away,
 Widowed of my rightful guardian, in the serpent-haunted wood.'

Of that caravan at morning then the sad surviving few,
 Setting forth from that dread region, o'er that hideous carnage grieve;
 Each a brother mourns, or father, or a son, or dearest friend.
 Still Vidarbha's princess uttered: 'What the sin that I have done?
 Scarcely in this desert forest had I met this host of men,

स हतो हस्तियूथेन मन्दभाग्याद् ममैव तत् ।
 प्राप्त्यं सुचिरं दुःखं नूनम् अद्यापि वै मया ॥ ३८ ॥
 नाप्राप्तकालो म्रियते श्रुतं वृद्धानुशासनं ।
 यद् नाहम् अद्य मृदिता हस्तियूथेन दुःखिता ॥ ३९ ॥
 न ह्यदैवं कृतं किञ्चिन् नराणाम् इह विद्यते ।
 न च मे बालभावेऽपि किञ्चित् पापकृतं कृतं ॥ ४० ॥
 कर्मणा मनसा वाचा यद् इदं दुःखम् आगतं ।
 मन्ये स्वयंवरकृते लोकपालाः समागताः ॥ ४१ ॥
 प्रत्याख्याता मया तत्र नलस्यार्थाय देवताः ।
 नूनं तेषां प्रभावेन वियोगं प्राप्तवत्यहम् ॥ ४२ ॥
 एवमादीनि दुःखार्ता सा विलप्य वराङ्गना ।
 प्रलापानि तदा तानि दमयन्ती पतिव्रता ॥ ४३ ॥
 हतशेषैः सह तदा ब्राह्मणैर् वेदपारगैः ।
 अगच्छद् राजशार्दूल चन्द्रलेखेव शरदी ॥ ४४ ॥
 गच्छन्ती सा चिराद् बाला पुरम् आसादयद् महत् ।
 सायाहे चेदिराजस्य सुबाहोः सत्यदर्शिनः ॥ ४५ ॥
 अथ वस्त्रार्धसंवीता प्रविवेश पुरोत्तमं ।
 तां विह्वलां कृशां दीनां मुक्तकेशीम् अमार्जितां ॥ ४६ ॥
 उन्मत्ताम् इव गच्छन्तीं ददृशुः पुरवासिनः ।
 प्रविशन्तीं तु तां दृष्ट्वा चेदिराजपुरीं तदा ॥ ४७ ॥
 अनुजग्मुस् तत्र बाला यामिपुत्राः कुतूहलात् ।
 सा तैः परिवृताऽगच्छत् समीपं राजवेश्मनः ॥ ४८ ॥
 तां प्रासादगताऽपश्यद् राजमाता जनैर् वृतां ।
 धात्रीम् उवाच गच्छेनाम् आनयेह ममान्तिकं ॥ ४९ ॥
 जनेन क्लिश्यते बाला दुःखिता शरणार्थिनी ।
 तादृग् रूपञ्च पश्यामि विद्योतयति मे गृहं ॥ ५० ॥

By the elephants they perish, this is through my luckless fate ;
 A still lengthening life of sorrow I henceforth must sadly lead.
 Ere his destined day none dieth, this of aged seers the lore ;
 Therefore am not I too trampled by this herd of furious beasts.
 Every deed of living mortal by o'er-ruling fate is done.
 Yet no sin have I committed, in my blameless infancy,
 To deserve this dire disaster, or in word, or deed, or thought.
 For the choosing of my husband are the guardians of the world,
 Angry are the gods? rejected for the noble Nala's sake,
 From my lord this long divorcement through their power do I endure.'
 Thus the noblest of all women to bewail her fate began,
 The deserted Damayantí, with these sad and bitter words.
 With some Veda-reading Bráhmans that survived that scattered host,
 Then she went her way in sadness, like the young autumnal moon.
 Wandering long, a mighty city that afflicted queen drew near :
 'Twas the king of Cedi's city, truth-discerning Subáhu.
 Scantly clad in half a garment entered she that stately town.
 Her disturbed, emaciate, wretched, with dishevelled hair, unwashed,
 Like a maniac, onward-moving, saw that city's wondering throng.
 Gazing on her as she entered to the monarch's royal seat ;
 All the city boys her footsteps followed in their curious play ;
 Circled round by these she wandered near the royal palace-gate.
 From the lofty palace-terrace her the mother of the king
 Saw, and thus her nurse addressed she, 'Go, and lead that wanderer in !
 Sad she roves, without a refuge, troubled by those gazing men.
 Yet in form so bright, irradiate, is our palace where she moves ;

उन्मत्तवेशा कल्याणी श्रीर् इवायतलोचना ।
 सा जनं वारयित्वा तं प्रासादतलम् उत्तमं ॥५१॥
 आरोप्य विस्मिता राजन् दमयन्तीम् अपृच्छत ।
 एवमप्यसुखाविष्टा विभर्षि परमं वपुः ॥५२॥
 भासि विद्युद् इवाभेषु शंस मे काऽसि कस्य वा ।
 न हि ते मानुषं रूपं भूषणैर् अपि वर्जितं ॥५३॥
 असहाया नरेभ्यश्च नोद्विजस्यमरप्रभे ।
 तच् झुत्वा वचनं तस्या भैमी वचनम् अब्रवीत् ॥५४॥
 मानुषीं मां विजानीहि भर्तारं समनुव्रतां ।
 सैरन्धीं जातिसम्पन्नां भुजिष्ठां कामवासिनीं ॥५५॥
 फलमूलाशनाम् एकां यचसायम्प्रतिश्रयां ।
 असङ्ख्येयगुणो भर्ता माञ्च नित्यम् अनुव्रतः ॥५६॥
 भक्ताऽहम् अपि तं वीरं ह्यायेवानुगता पथि ।
 तस्य देवात् प्रसङ्गोऽभूद् अतिमाचं स्म देवने ॥५७॥
 द्यूते स निर्जितश्चैव वनम् एक उपेयिवान् ।
 तम् एकवसनं वीरम् उन्मत्तम् इव विह्वलं ॥५८॥
 आश्वासयन्ती भर्तारम् अहमप्यगमं वनं ।
 स कदाचिद् वने वीरः कस्मिंश्चित् कारणान्तरे ॥५९॥
 क्षुत्परीतस्तु विमनास् तदप्येकं व्यसर्जयत् ।
 तम् एकवसना नम्रम् उन्मत्तवद् अचेतसं ॥६०॥
 अनुव्रजन्ती बहुला न स्वपामि निशास् तदा ।
 ततो बहुतिथे काले सुप्ताम् उत्सृज्य मां क्वचित् ॥६१॥
 वाससोऽर्धं परिच्छिद्य त्यक्तवान् माम् अनागसं ।
 तं मार्गमाणा भर्तारं दह्यमाना दिवानिशं ॥६२॥
 साऽहं कमलगर्भाभम् अपश्यन्ती हृदि प्रियं ।
 न विन्दाम्यमरप्रख्यं प्रियं प्राणेश्वरं प्रभुं ॥६३॥

Though so maniac-like, half-clothed, like Heaven's long-eyed queen she seems.
 Then the nurse those men dispersing, quickly to the palace-top
 Made her mount, and in amazement her the mother-queen addressed:
 'Thus though bowed and worn with sorrow such a shining form thou wear'st,
 As through murky clouds the lightning; tell me who thou art and whose:
 For thy form is more than human, of all ornament despoiled:
 Men thou fear'st not, unattended, in celestial beauty safe.'

Hearing thus her gentle language Bhîma's daughter made reply:
 'Know me like thyself a mortal, a distressed, devoted wife;
 Of illustrious race a handmaid, making where I will mine home;
 On the roots and wild-fruits feeding, lonely, at the fall of eve,
 Gifted with unnumber'd virtues is my true, my faithful lord,
 And I still the hero followed, like his shadow on the way.
 'Twas his fate, with desp'rate fondness, to pursue the love of play,
 And in play subdued and ruined entered he yon lonely wood.
 Him, arrayed in but one garment, like a madman wandering wild,
 To console my noble husband I too entered the deep wood.
 He within that dreary forest from some accidental cause,
 Wild with hunger, reft of reason, that one single robe he lost.
 I with but one robe, him naked, frantic, and with mind diseased,
 Following through the boundless forest, many a night I had not slept.
 Then, when I had sunk to slumber, me the blameless leaving there,
 Half my garment having severed, he his sinless consort fled.
 Seeking him, my outcast husband, day and night am I consumed:
 Him I see not, ever shining, like the lotus-cup, beloved;
 Find him not, most like th' immortals, lord of all, my life, my soul.'

ताम् अश्रुपरिपूर्णाक्षीं विलपन्तीं तथा बहु ।
 राजमाताऽब्रवीद् आर्तां भैमीम् आर्ततरा स्वयं ॥६४॥
 वसस्व मयि कल्याणि प्रीतिर् मे परमा त्वयि ।
 मृगयिष्यन्ति ते भद्रे भर्तारं पुरुषा मम ॥६५॥
 अपि वा स्वयम् आगच्छेत् परिधावन् इतस्ततः ।
 इहैव वसती भद्रे भर्तारम् उपलप्स्यसे ॥६६॥
 राजमातुर् वचः श्रुत्वा दमयन्ती वचोऽब्रवीत् ।
 समयेनोत्सहे वस्तुं त्वयि वीरप्रजायिनि ॥६७॥
 उच्छिष्टं नैव भुञ्जीयां न कुर्यां पादधावनं ।
 न चाहं पुरुषान् अन्यान् प्रभाषेयं कथञ्चन ॥६८॥
 प्रार्थयेद् यदि मां कश्चिद् दास्यस् ते स पुमान् भवेत् ।
 बध्यश्च तेऽसकृन् मन्द इति मे व्रतम् आहितं ॥६९॥
 भर्तुर् अन्वेषणार्थन्तु पश्येयं ब्राह्मणान् अहं ।
 यद्य् एवम् इह कर्तव्यं वत्स्याम्यहमसंशयं ॥७०॥
 अतोऽन्यथा न मे वासो वर्तते हृदये क्वचित् ।
 तां प्रहृष्टेन मनसा राजमातेदमब्रवीत् ॥७१॥
 सर्वम् एतत् करिष्यामि दिष्ट्या ते व्रतम् ईदृशं ।
 एवम् उक्त्वा ततो भैमीं राजमाता विशाम्पते ॥७२॥
 उवाचेदं दुहितरं सुनन्दां नाम भारत ।
 सैरन्धीम् अभिजानीष्व सुनन्दे देवरूपिणीं ॥७३॥
 वयसा तुल्यतां प्राप्ता सखी तव भवत्वियं ।
 एतया सह मोदस्व निरुद्धिग्रमनाः सदा ॥७४॥
 ततः परमसंहृष्टा सुनन्दा गृहम् आगमत् ।
 दमयन्तीम् उपादाय सखीभिः परिवारिता ॥७५॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने त्रयोदशः सर्गः ॥१३॥

Even as thus, with eyes o'erflowing, uttered she her sad lament,
 Sad herself, sad Bhíma's daughter did the mother-queen address :
 'Dwell with me, then, noble Lady, deep the joy in thee I feel,
 And the servants of my household shall thy royal husband seek.
 Haply hither he may wander as he roams about the world ;
 Dwelling here in peace and honour thou thy husband wilt rejoin.'

To the king of Cedi's mother Damayantí made reply :

'On these terms will I live with thee, mother of heroic sons—
 That I eat not broken victuals, wash not feet with menial hand ;
 Nor with stranger men have converse, in my chaste, secluded state.
 If that any man demand me, be he punished ; if again,
 Death-doomed be the wretch on th' instant, this the vow that I have sworn.
 Only, if they seek my husband, holy Bráhmans will I see.
 Be my terms by thee accepted, gladly will I sojourn here,
 But on other terms no sojourn will this heart resolved admit.'

Then to her with joyful spirit spake the mother of the king :

'As thou wilt shall all be ordered, be thou blest, since such thy vow.'
 Speaking thus to Bhíma's daughter did the royal mother then
 In these words address her daughter, young Sunandá was her name :
 'See this handmaid, my Sunandá, gifted with a form divine ;
 She in age thy lovely compeer, be she to thee as a friend ;
 Joined with her in sweet communion, take thy pleasure without fear.'
 Young Sunandá, all rejoicing, to her own abode went back,
 Taking with her Damayantí, circled with her virgin peers.

END OF BOOK XIII.

बृहदश्व उवाच ।

उत्सृज्य दमयन्तीं तु नलो राजा विशाम्पते ।
 ददर्श दावं दह्यन्तं महान्तं गहने बने ॥१॥
 तत्र शुश्राव शब्दं वै मध्ये भूतस्य कस्यचित् ।
 अभिधाव नलेत्युच्चैः पुण्यस्योकेति चासकृत् ॥२॥
 मा भैर् इति नलस्योक्त्वा मध्यम् अप्तेः प्रविश्य तं ।
 ददर्श नागराजानं शयानं कुण्डलीकृतं ॥३॥
 स नागः प्राञ्जलिर् भूत्वा वेपमानो नलं तदा ।
 उवाच मां विद्धि राजन् नागं कर्कोटकं नृप ॥४॥
 मया प्रलब्धो महर्षिर् नारदः स महातपाः ।
 तेन मन्युपरीतेन शप्नोऽस्मि मनुजाधिप ॥५॥
 तिष्ठ त्वं स्थावर इव यावद् एव नलः क्वचित् ।
 इतो नेता हि तत्र त्वं शपाद् मोक्ष्यसि मत्कृतात् ॥६॥
 तस्य शपाद् न शक्नोऽस्मि पदाद् विचलितुं पदं ।
 उपदेक्ष्यामि ते श्रेयस् चातुम् अर्हेति मां भवान् ॥७॥
 सखा च ते भविष्यामि मत्समो नास्ति पन्नगः ।
 लघुश्च ते भविष्यामि शीघ्रम् आदाय गच्छ मां ॥८॥
 एवम् उक्त्वा स नागेन्द्रो बभूवाङ्गुष्ठमाचकः ।
 तं गृहीत्वा नलः प्रायाद् देशं दावविवर्जितं ॥९॥
 आकाशदेशम् आसाद्य विमुक्तं कृष्णवर्त्मना ।
 उत्सृष्टुकामं तं नागः पुनः कर्कोटकोऽब्रवीत् ॥१०॥
 पदानि गणयन् गच्छ स्वानि नैषध कानिचित् ।
 तत्र तेऽहं महाबाहो श्रेयो धास्यामि यत् परं ॥११॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

DAMAYANTÍ when deserting royal Nala fled, ere long
 Blazing in the forest jungle he a mighty fire beheld ;
 Thence, as of a living being, from the midst a voice he heard :
 ‘ Hasten, Nala !’ oft and loudly, ‘ Puṇyaśloka, haste,’ it cried.
 ‘ Fear thou not,’ king Nala answered, plunging in the ruddy flame ;
 There he saw the King of Serpents lying, coiled into a ring.
 There with folded hands the Serpent trembling, thus to Nala spake :
 ‘ Me, Karkoṭaka, the Serpent know, thou sovereign of men ;
 Nárada, the famous hermit, I deceived, the holy sage ;
 He in righteous indignation smote me with this awful curse :
 Stay thou there as one unmoving till king Nala passing by
 Lead thee hence ; save only Nala, none can free thee from this curse.
 Through this potent execration I no step have power to move ;
 I the way to bliss will show thee, if thou sav’st me from this fate.
 I will show thee noble friendship, Serpent none is like to me ;
 Lightly shall I weigh, uplift me in thy hand, with speed, O king.’
 Thus when spake the King of Serpents to a finger’s size he shrank ;
 Him when Nala lightly lifted to the unburning space he passed.
 To the air all cool and temperate brought him, by the flame unreachd.
 As he fain on th’ earth would place him, thus Karkoṭaka began :
 ‘ Move thou now, O king, and slowly, as thou movest, count thy steps.
 Then the best of all good fortune will I give thee, mighty armed !’

ततः सङ्घातुम् आरब्धम् अदशद् दशमे पदे ।
 तस्य दष्टस्य तद्रूपं क्षिप्रम् अन्तरधीयत ॥ १२ ॥
 स दृष्ट्वा विस्मितस् तस्थाव् आत्मानं विकृतं नलः ।
 स्वरूपधारिणं नागं ददर्श च महीपतिः ॥ १३ ॥
 ततः कर्कोटको नागः सान्त्वयन् नलम् अब्रवीत् ।
 मया तेऽन्तर्हितं रूपं न त्वां विद्युर् जना इति ॥ १४ ॥
 यत्कृते चासि निकृतो दुःखेन महता नल ।
 विषेण स मदीयेन त्वयि दुःखं निवत्स्यति ॥ १५ ॥
 विषेण संवृतैर् गात्रैर् यावत् त्वां न विमोक्ष्यति ।
 तावत् त्वयि महाराज दुःखं वै स निवत्स्यति ॥ १६ ॥
 अनागा येन निकृतस् त्वम् अनर्हो जनाधिप ।
 क्रोधाद् असूययित्वा तं रक्षा मे भवतः कृता ॥ १७ ॥
 न ते भयं नरव्याघ्र दंष्ट्रिभ्यः शत्रुतोऽपि वा ।
 ब्रह्मर्षिभ्यश्च भविता मत्प्रसादाद् नराधिप ॥ १८ ॥
 राजन् विषनिमित्ता च न ते पीडा भविष्यति ।
 सङ्ग्रामेषु च राजेन्द्र शश्वज् जयम् अवाप्स्यसि ॥ १९ ॥
 गच्छ राजन् इतः सूतो वाहुकोऽहम् इति ब्रुवन् ।
 समीपम् ऋतुपर्णस्य स हि वेदाक्षनैपुणं ॥ २० ॥
 अयोध्यां नगरीं रम्याम् अद्य वै निषधेश्वर ।
 स तेऽक्षहृदयं दाता राजाश्चहृदयेन वै ॥ २१ ॥
 इक्ष्वाकुकुलजः श्रीमान् मित्रञ्चैव भविष्यति ।
 भविष्यसि यदाऽक्षज्ञः श्रेयसा योक्ष्यसे तदा ॥ २२ ॥
 समेष्यसि च दरिस् त्वं मास्म शोके मनः कृथाः ।
 राज्येन तनयाभ्याञ्च सत्यम् एतद् ब्रवीमि ते ॥ २३ ॥
 स्वरूपञ्च यदा द्रष्टुम् इच्छेथास् त्वं नराधिप ।
 संस्मर्तव्यस् तदा तेऽहं वासश्चेदं निवासयेः ॥ २४ ॥

Ere the tenth step he had counted, him the sudden Serpent bit :
 As he bit him, on the instant all his kingly form was changed.
 There he stood and gazed in wonder, Nala, on his altered form.
 In his proper shape the Serpent saw the sovereign of men.
 Then Karkoṭaka the Serpent thus to Nala comfort spake :
 ‘Through my power thy form is altered, lest thou should’st be known of men.
 He through whom thou’rt thus afflicted, Nala, with intensest grief,
 Through my poison, shall in anguish ever dwell within thy soul.
 All his body steeped in poison till he free thee from thy woe,
 Shall he dwell within thee prison’d in the ecstasy of pain.
 So from him, by whom, thou blameless ! sufferest such unworthy wrong,
 By the curse I lay upon him thy deliverance shall be wrought.
 Fear not thou the tusked wild boar, foeman fear not thou, O king,
 Neither Bráhmaṇ fear, nor Sages, safe through my prevailing power.
 King, this salutary poison gives to thee nor grief nor pain ;
 In the battle, chief of Rájás, victory is ever thine.
 Go thou forth, thyself thus naming, ‘Váhuka, the charioteer,’
 To the royal Rítuparṇa, in the dice all-skilful he ;
 To Ayodhyá’s pleasant city, sovereign of Nishadha ! go ;
 He his skill in dice will give thee for thy skill in taming steeds :
 Of Ikshváku’s noble lineage he will be thy best of friends.
 Thou the skill in dice possessing soon wilt rise again to bliss ;
 With thy consort reunited yield not up thy soul to grief.
 Thou thy kingdom, thou thy children wilt regain, the truth I speak.
 When again thou would’st behold thee in thy proper form, O king,
 Summon me to thy remembrance, and this garment put thou on :

अनेन वाससाञ्छन्नः स्वरूपं प्रतिपत्स्यसे ।
 इत्युक्त्वा प्रददौ तस्मै दिव्यं वासीयुगं तदा ॥ २५ ॥
 एवं नलञ्च सन्दिश्य वासो दत्त्वा च कौरव ।
 नागराजस् ततो राजंस् तत्रैवान्तरधीयत् ॥ २६ ॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने चतुर्दशः सर्गः ॥ १४ ॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

तस्मिन् अन्तर्हिते नागे प्रययौ नैषधो नलः ।
 ऋतुपर्णस्य नगरं प्राविशद् दशमेऽहनि ॥ १ ॥
 स राजानम् उपातिष्ठद् वाहुकोऽहम् इति ब्रुवन् ।
 अश्वानां वाहने युक्तः पृथिव्यां नास्ति मत्समः ॥ २ ॥
 अर्थकृच्छ्रेषु चैवाहं प्रष्टव्यो नैपुणेषु च ।
 अन्नसंस्कारम् अपि च जानाम्यन्यैर् विशेषतः ॥ ३ ॥
 यानि शिल्पानि लोकेऽस्मिन् यच्चैवान्यत् सुदुष्करं ।
 सर्वं यतिष्ये तत् कर्तुम् ऋतुपर्ण भरस्व मां ॥ ४ ॥

ऋतुपर्ण उवाच ।

वस वाहुक भद्रं ते सर्वम् एतत् करिष्यसि ।
 शीघ्रयाने सदा बुद्धिर् धियते मे विशेषतः ॥ ५ ॥
 स त्वम् आतिष्ठ योगं तं येन शीघ्रा हया मम ।
 भवेयुर् अश्वार्थक्षोऽसि वेतनं ते शतं शताः ॥ ६ ॥
 त्वाम् उपस्थास्यतश्चैव नित्यं वर्षेण्यजीवलौ ।
 एताभ्यां रंस्यसे सार्धं वस वै मयि वाहुक ॥ ७ ॥
 एवम् उक्तो नलस् तेन न्यवसत् तत्र पूजितः ।
 ऋतुपर्णस्य नगरे सहवर्षेण्यजीवलः ॥ ८ ॥

In this garment clad resum'st thou instantly thy proper form.'
 Saying thus, of vests celestial gave he to the king a pair.
 And king Nala, thus instructed, gifted with these magic robes,
 Instantly the King of Serpents vanished from his sight away.

END OF BOOK XIV.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

VANISHED thus the King of Serpents set Nishadha's Rája forth,
 Rituparṇa's royal city on the tenth day entered he.
 Straight before the royal presence, 'Váhuka am I,' he said,
 'In the skill of taming horses on the earth is not my peer ;
 Use me, where the arduous counsel, where thou want'st the dexterous hand ;
 In the art of dressing viands I am skilful above all.
 Whatsoe'er the art, whatever be most difficult to do,
 I will strive to execute it, take me to thy service, king.'

RITUPARNA spake :

'Váhuka, I bid thee welcome, all this service shalt thou do,
 On my horses' rapid motion deeply is my mind engaged.
 Take thou then on thee the office, that my steeds be fleet of foot,
 Of my horse be thou the master, hundred hundreds is thy pay :
 Ever shalt thou have for comrades Várshṇeya and Jívala :
 With these two pursue thy pleasure, Váhuka, abide with me.'
 Thus addressed, did Nala, honoured by king Rituparṇa long,
 With Várshṇeya in that city and with Jívala abide :

स वै तत्रावसद् राजा वैदर्भीम् अनुचिन्तयन् ।
 सायं सायं सदा चेमं श्लोकम् एकं जगाद ह ॥९॥
 क्व नु सा क्षुत्पिपासार्ता आन्ता शेते तपस्विनी ।
 स्मरन्ती तस्य मन्दस्य कं वा साऽद्योपतिष्ठति ॥१०॥
 एवं ब्रुवन्तं राजानं निशायां जीवलोऽब्रवीत् ॥११॥
 काम् इमां शोचसे नित्यं श्रोतुम् इच्छामि बाहुक ।
 आयुष्मन् कस्य वा नारी याम् एवम् अनुशोचसि ॥१२॥
 तम् उवाच नलो राजा मन्दप्रज्ञस्य कस्यचित् ।
 आसीद् बहुमता नारी तस्यादृढतरं वचः ॥१३॥
 स वै केनचिद् अर्थेन तया मन्दो व्ययुज्यत ।
 विप्रयुक्तः स मन्दात्मा भ्रमत्यसुखपीडितः ॥१४॥
 दृश्यमानः स शोकेन दिवाराचम् अतन्द्रितः ।
 निशाकाले स्मरंस् तस्याः श्लोकम् एकं स्म गायति ॥१५॥
 स विभ्रमन् महीं सर्वां क्वचिद् आसाद्य किञ्चन ।
 वसत्यनर्हस् तद्दुःखं भूय एवानुसंस्मरन् ॥१६॥
 सा तु तं पुरुषं नारी कृच्छ्रेऽप्यनुगता वने ।
 त्यक्त्वा तेनाल्पपुण्येन दुष्करं यदि जीवति ॥१७॥
 एका बालाऽनभिज्ञा च मार्गाणाम् अतथोचिता ।
 क्षुत्पिपासापरीताङ्गी दुष्करं यदि जीवति ॥१८॥
 श्वापदाचरिते नित्यं वने महति दारुणे ।
 त्यक्त्वा तेनाल्पभाग्येन मन्दप्रज्ञेन मारिष ॥१९॥
 इत्येवं नैषधी राजा दमयन्तीम् अनुस्मरन् ।
 अज्ञातवासं न्यवसद् राजस् तस्य निवेशने ॥२०॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने पञ्चदशः सर्गः ॥१५॥

There abode he, sadly thinking of Vidarbha's daughter still.
 In the evening, every evening uttered he this single verse ;
 'Where is she, by thirst and hunger worn, and weary, pious still,
 Thinking of her unwise husband, in whose presence is she now ?'
 Thus the Rájá, ever speaking, Jívala one night addressed ;
 'Who is she, for whom thou grievest ? Váhuka, I fain would hear.
 Who may be the lady's husband ? tell mé—length of days be thine !'
 Answered thus the royal Nala, 'To a man of sense bereft,
 Once belonged a peerless lady, most infirm of word was he ;
 From some cause from her dissevered went that frantic man away,
 In his foolish soul thus parted wanders he, by sorrow racked ;
 Day and night, and still for ever by his parching grief consumed :
 Nightly brooding o'er his sorrows sings he this sad single verse.
 O'er the whole wide earth a wanderer, chance-alighting in some place,
 Dwells that woful man, unworthy, ever wakeful with his grief.
 Him that noble lady following, in the forest lone and dread,
 Lives, of that bad man forsaken, hard it is to say, she lives !
 Lone, and young, the ways unknowing, undeserving of such fate,
 Pines she there with thirst and hunger, hard it is to say, she lives.
 In that vast and awful forest, haunted by fierce beasts of prey,
 Jívala, she roams forsaken by that hapless senseless lord.'
 Thus remembering Damayantí did Nishadba's king unknown
 Long within that dwelling sojourn, in the palace of the king.

END OF BOOK XV.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

हृतराज्ये नले भीमः सभार्ये प्रेष्यतां गते ।
 द्विजान् प्रस्थापयामास नलदर्शनकाङ्क्षया ॥१॥
 सन्दिदेश च तान् भीमो वसु दत्त्वा च पुष्कलं ।
 मृगयध्वं नलं यूयं दमयन्तीश्व मे सुतां ॥२॥
 अस्मिन् कर्मणि सम्पन्ने विज्ञाते निषधाधिपे ।
 गवां सहस्रं दास्यामि यो वस् ताव् आनयिष्यति ॥३॥
 अयहारांश्च दास्यामि यामं नगरसम्मितं ।
 न चेच् छक्याव् इहानेतुं दमयन्ती नलोऽपि वा ॥४॥
 ज्ञातमात्रेऽपि दास्यामि गवां दश शतं धनं ।
 इत्युक्त्वास् ते ययुर् हृष्टा ब्राह्मणाः सर्वतो दिशं ॥५॥
 पुरराष्ट्राणि चिन्वन्तो नैषधं सह भार्यया ।
 नैव क्वापि प्रपश्यन्ति नलं वा भीमपुत्रिकां ॥६॥
 ततश् चेदिपुरीं रम्यां सुदेवो नाम वै द्विजः ।
 विचिन्वानोऽथ वैदर्भीम् अपश्यद् राजवेश्मनि ॥७॥
 पुण्याहवाचने राज्ञः सुनन्दासहितां स्थितां ।
 मन्दं प्रख्यायमानेन रूपेणाप्रतिमेन तां ।
 निबद्धां धूमजालेन प्रभाम् इव विभावसोः ॥८॥
 तां समीक्ष्य विशालाक्षीम् अधिकं मलिनां कृशां ।
 तर्कयामास भैमीति कारणैर् उपपादयन् ॥९॥

सुदेव उवाच ।

यथेयं मे पुरा दृष्टा तथारूपेयम् अङ्गना ।
 कृतार्थोऽस्यद्य दृष्ट्वेमां लोककान्ताम् इव श्रियं ॥१०॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake:

NALA thus bereft of kingdom with his wife to slavery sunk,
 Forth king Bhíma sent the Bráhmans, Nala through the world to seek.
 Thus the royal Bhíma charged them, with abundant wealth supplied:—
 ‘Go ye now and seek king Nala, Damayantí seek, my child:
 And, achieved this weighty business, found Nishadha’s royal lord,
 Which of you shall hither bring them shall a thousand kine receive;
 And a royal grant for maintenance of a village like a town.
 If nor hither Damayantí nor king Nala may be brought,
 Know ye where they are, rich guerdon still we give, ten hundred kine.’
 Thus addressed, the joyful Bráhmans went to every clime of earth,
 Through the cities, through the kingdoms, seeking Nala and his queen:
 Nala, or king Bhíma’s daughter, in no place might they behold.
 Then a Bráhman, named Sudeva, came to pleasant Cedi-pur;
 There within the kingly palace he Vidarbha’s daughter saw,
 Standing with the fair Sunandá, on a royal holiday.
 With her beauty once so peerless worthy now of little praise,
 Like the sun-light feebly shining through the dimness of a cloud.
 Gazing on the large-eyed princess, dull in look, and wasted still,
 Lo, he thought, king Bhíma’s daughter, pondering thus within his mind.—

SUDEVA spake:

E’en as once I went to see her, such is yonder woman’s form,
 I my work have done, beholding, like the goddess world-adored,

पूर्णचन्द्रनिभां श्यामां चारुवृत्तपयोधरां ।
 कुर्वन्तीं प्रभया देवीं सर्वा वितिमिरा दिशः ॥ ११ ॥
 चारुपद्मविशालाक्षीं मन्मथस्य रतीम् इव ।
 इष्टां समस्तलोकस्य पूर्णचन्द्रप्रभाम् इव ॥ १२ ॥
 विदर्भसरसस् तस्माद् दैवदोषाद् इवोद्भृतां ।
 मलपङ्कानुलिम्बाङ्गीं मृणालीम् इव चोद्भृतां ॥ १३ ॥
 पौर्णमासीम् इव निशां राहुयस्तनिशाकरां ।
 पतिशोकाकुलां दीनां शुष्कस्रोतां नदीम् इव ॥ १४ ॥
 विध्वस्तपर्णकमलां विचासितविहङ्गमां ।
 हस्तिहस्तपरामृष्टां व्याकुलाम् इव पद्मिनीं ॥ १५ ॥
 सुकुमारीं सुजाताङ्गीं रत्नगर्भगृहोचितां ।
 दह्यमानाम् इवार्केण मृणालीम् इव चोद्भृतां ॥ १६ ॥
 रूपौदार्यगुणोपेतां मण्डनार्हाम् अमण्डितां ।
 चन्द्रलेखाम् इव नवां व्योम्नि नीलाभसंवृतां ॥ १७ ॥
 कामभोगैः प्रियैर् हीनां हीनां बन्धुजनेन च ।
 देहं धारयतीं दीनां भर्तृदर्शनकाङ्क्षया ॥ १८ ॥
 भर्ता नाम परं नार्यो भूषणं भूषणैर् विना ।
 एषा हि रहिता तेन शोभमाना न शोभते ॥ १९ ॥
 दुष्करं कुरुतेऽत्यन्तं हीनो यद् अनया नलः ।
 धारयत्यात्मनो देहं न शोकेनावसीदति ॥ २० ॥
 इमाम् असितकेशान्तां शतपचायतेक्षणां ।
 सुखार्हां दुःखितां दृष्ट्वा ममापि व्यथते मनः ॥ २१ ॥
 कदा नु खलु दुःखस्य पारं यास्यति वै शुभा ।
 भर्तुः समागमात् साध्वी रोहिणी शशिनो यथा ॥ २२ ॥
 अस्या नूनम् पुनर्लाभाद् नैषधः प्रीतिम् एष्यति ।
 राजा राज्यपरिभ्रष्टः पुनर् लब्धा च मेदिनीं ॥ २३ ॥

Like the full moon, darkly beauteous, with her fair and swelling breasts,
Her, the queen, that with her brightness makes each clime devoid of gloom,
With her lotus-eyes expanding, like Manmatha's queen divine ;
Like the moonlight in its fulness, the desire of all the world ;
From Vidarbha's pleasant waters her by cruel fate plucked up,
Like a lotus-flower uprooted, with the mire and dirt around ;
Like the pallid night, when Ráhu swallows up the darkened moon ;
For her husband wan with sorrow, like a gentle stream dried up ;
Like a pool, where droops the lotus, whence the affrighted birds have fled,
By the elephant's proboscis, in its quiet depths disturbed ;
Tender, soft-limbed, in a palace fit, of precious stones, to dwell ;
Like the lotus-stem, uprooted, parched and withered by the sun ;
Fair as generous, of adornment worthy, yet all unadorned,
Like the young moon's slender crescent in the heavens by dark clouds veiled ;
Widowed now of all love's pleasures, of her noble kin despoiled,
Wretched, bearing life, her husband in her hope again to see.
To the unadorned, a husband is the chiefest ornament ;
Of her husband if forsaken she in splendour is not bright.
Difficult must be the trial ; does king Nala, left of her,
Still retain his wretched body, nor with sorrow pine away ?
Her with her dark flowing tresses, with her long and lotus-eyes,
Worthy of all joy, thus joyless, as I see, my soul is wrung.
To the furthest shore of sorrow when will pass this beauteous queen ?
To her husband reunited, as the moon's bride to the moon ?
Her recovering shall king Nala to his happiness return,
King, albeit despoiled of kingdom, he his realm shall reassume ;

तुल्यशीलवयोर्युक्तां तुल्याभिजनसंवृतां ।
 नैषधोऽर्हति वैदर्भीं तञ्चेयमसितेक्षणाम् ॥ २४ ॥
 युक्तं तस्याप्रमेयस्य वीर्यसत्त्ववतो मया ।
 समाश्वासयितुं भार्यो पतिदर्शनलालसां ॥ २५ ॥
 अहम् आश्वासयाम्येनां पूर्णचन्द्रनिभाननां ।
 अदृष्टपूर्वां दुःखस्य दुःखार्तां ध्यानतत्परां ॥ २६ ॥

बृहदश्व उवाच ।

एवं विमृश्य विविधैः कारणैर् लक्षणैश्च तां ।
 उपागम्य ततो भैमीं सुदेवो ब्राह्मणोऽब्रवीत् ॥ २७ ॥
 अहं सुदेवो वैदर्भिं भ्रातुस् ते दयितः सखा ।
 भीमस्य वचनाद् राज्ञस् त्वाम् अन्वेष्टुम् इहागतः ॥ २८ ॥
 कुशली ते पिता राज्ञि जननी भ्रातरश्च ते ।
 आयुष्मन्तौ कुशलिनी तत्रस्थौ दारकौ च तौ ॥ २९ ॥
 त्वक्तृते बन्धुवर्गाश्च गतसत्त्वा इवासते ।
 अन्वेषारो ब्राह्मणाश्च भ्रमन्ति शतशो महीं ॥ ३० ॥
 अभिज्ञाय सुदेवं तं दमयन्ती युधिष्ठिर ।
 पर्यपृच्छत तान् सर्वान् क्रमेण सुहृदः स्वकान् ॥ ३१ ॥
 रुरोद च भृशं राजन् वैदर्भीं शोककर्षिता ।
 दृष्ट्वा सुदेवं सहसा भ्रातुर् इष्टं द्विजोत्तमं ॥ ३२ ॥
 ततो रुदन्तीं तां दृष्ट्वा सुनन्दा शोककर्षितां ।
 सुदेवेन सहैकान्ते कथयन्तीञ्च भारत ॥ ३३ ॥
 जनित्र्याः कथयामास सैरन्धी रोदितीति वै ।
 ब्राह्मणेन समागम्य तां वेत्थ यदि मन्यसे ॥ ३४ ॥
 अथ चेदिपतेर् माता राज्ञश्चान्तःपुरात् तदा ।
 जगाम यत्र सा बाला ब्राह्मणेन सहाभवत् ॥ ३५ ॥

In their age and virtues equal, equal in their noble race,
 He alone of her is worthy, worthy she alone of him.
 Me beseems it of that peerless, of that brave and prudent king,
 To console the loyal consort, pining for her husband's sight.
 Her will I address with comfort, with her moonlike glowing face ;
 Her with woe once unacquainted, woful now and lost in thought.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

Thus when he had gazed and noted all her marks, her features well,
 To the daughter of king Bhíma thus the sage Sudeva spake :
 ' I am named Sudeva, lady, I, thy brother's chosen friend,
 By king Bhíma's royal mandate hither come in search of thee.
 Well thy sire, thy royal mother, well thy noble brethren fare,
 And well fare those little infants, well and happy are they both.
 For thy sake thy countless kindred sit as though of sense bereft :
 Seeking thee a hundred Bráhmans now are wandering o'er the earth.'
 She no sooner knew Sudeva, Damayantí, of her kin,
 Many a question asked in order, and of every friend beloved.
 And the daughter of Vidarbha freely wept, so sudden thus
 On Sudeva, best of Bráhmans, gazing, on her brother's friend.
 Her beheld the young Sunandá weeping, wasted with distress,
 As she thus her secret converse with the wise Sudeva held.
 Thus she spake unto her mother, ' Lo, how fast our handmaid weeps,
 Questioning the holy Bráhman, who she is, thou soon may'st know.'
 Forth the king of Cedi's mother from the inner chamber went,
 And she passed where with the Bráhman that mysterious woman stood.

ततः सुदेवम् आनाय्य राजमाता विशाम्पते ।
 पप्रच्छ भार्या कस्येयं सुता वा कस्य भाविनी ॥३६॥
 कथञ्च भ्रष्टा ज्ञातिभ्यो भर्तुर् वा वामलोचना ।
 त्वया च विदिता विप्र कथम् एवङ्गता सती ॥३७॥
 एतद् इच्छाम्यहं श्रोतुं त्वत्तः सर्वम् अशेषतः ।
 तत्त्वेन हि ममाचक्ष्व पृच्छन्त्या देवरूपिणीं ॥३८॥
 एवम् उक्तस् तया राजन् सुदेवो द्विजसत्तमः ।
 सुखीपविष्ट आचष्टे दमयन्त्या यथातथं ॥३९॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने षोडशः सर्गः ॥१६॥

सुदेव उवाच ।

विदर्भराजो धर्मात्मा भीमो नाम महाद्युतिः ।
 सुतेयं तस्य कल्याणी दमयन्तीति विश्रुता ॥१॥
 राजा तु नैषधो नाम वीरसेनसुतो नलः ।
 भार्येयं तस्य कल्याणी पुण्यश्लोकस्य धीमतः ॥२॥
 स द्यूते निर्जितो भ्रात्रा हृतराज्यो महीपतिः ।
 दमयन्त्या गतः सार्धं न प्राज्ञायत कर्हिचित् ॥३॥
 ते वयं दमयन्त्यर्थे चरामः पृथिवीम् इमां ।
 सेयम् आसादिता बाला तव पुत्रनिवेशने ॥४॥
 अस्या रूपेण सदृशी मानुषी न हि विद्यते ।
 अस्या ह्येष भुवोर् मध्ये सहजः पिप्पुर् उत्तमः ॥५॥
 श्यामायाः पद्मसङ्काशी लक्ष्मितीऽन्तर्हितो मया ।
 मलेन संवृतो ह्यस्याश् छन्नोऽभेद्येव चन्द्रमाः ॥६॥

Them the mother-queen Sudeva bade before her presence stand ;
 And she asked, ' Whose wife, whose daughter may this noble stranger be ?
 From her kindred how dissevered, from her husband, the soft-eyed ?
 Is she known to thee, O Bráhmaṇ, how to this sad state reduced ?
 This I fain would hear, and clearly, all her strange and wondrous tale.
 Tell me all that hath befallen to this heaven-formed, plainly tell.'
 Best of Bráhmans, thus Sudeva, by the mother-queen addressed,
 All the truth of Damayantí, sitting at his ease, declared.

END OF BOOK XVI.

SUDEVA spake :

' IN Vidarbha the just monarch, Bhíma, in his glory dwells.
 Of that king is she the daughter, Damayantí is her name ;
 And the Rája of Nishadha, Nala, Vírasena's son,
 Of that king is she the consort, Puṇyaśloka named, the Wise.
 Him in play his brother worsted, spoiled of realm the king of earth.
 He set forth with Damayantí, whither is unknown of men.
 For the sake of Damayantí wander we about the earth ;
 Till I found yon noble woman in the palace of your son.
 Like to her of mortal women is there none, her beauty's peer ;
 In the midst, between her eyebrows, from her birth a lovely mole
 Dark was seen, and like a lotus that hath vanished from my sight,
 Covered over with defilement, like the moon behind a cloud.

चिह्नभूतो विभूत्यर्थम् अयं धात्रा विनिर्मितः ।
 प्रतिपत्कलुषस्येन्दीर् लेखा नातिविराजते ॥७॥
 न चास्या नश्यते रूपं वपुर्मलसमाचितं ।
 असंस्कृतम् अपि व्यक्तं भाति काञ्चनसन्निभं ॥८॥
 अनेन वपुषा बाला पिप्पुनाऽनेन सूचिता ।
 लक्षितेयं मया देवी निभृतोऽग्निर् इवीष्मणा ॥९॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

तच्च कृत्वा वचनं तस्य सुदेवस्य विशाम्पते ।
 सुनन्दा शोधयामास पिप्पुप्रच्छादनं मलं ॥१०॥
 स मलेनापकृष्टेन पिप्पुस् तस्या व्यरोचत ।
 दमयन्त्यास् तदा व्यभ्रे नभसीव निशाकरः ॥११॥
 पिप्पुं दृष्ट्वा सुनन्दा च राजमाता च भारत ।
 रुदन्यौ तां परिष्वज्य मुहूर्तम् इव तस्यतुः ॥१२॥
 उत्सृज्य वाष्पं शनकै राजमातेदम् अब्रवीत् ।
 भगिन्या दुहिता मेऽसि पिप्पुनाऽनेन सूचिता ॥१३॥
 अहञ्च तव माता च राज्ञस् तस्य महात्मनः ।
 सुते दशार्णोधिपतेः सुदाम्नश् चारुदर्शने ॥१४॥
 भीमस्य राज्ञः सा दत्ता वीरबाहोर् अहं पुनः ।
 त्वं तु जाता मया दृष्टा दशार्णेषु पितुर् गृहे ॥१५॥
 यथैव ते पितुर् गेहं तथैव मम भाविनि ।
 यथैव च ममैश्वर्ये दमयन्ति तथा तव ॥१६॥
 तां प्रहृष्टेन मनसा दमयन्ती विशाम्पते ।
 प्रणम्य मातुर् भगिनीम् इदं वचनम् अब्रवीत् ॥१७॥
 अज्ञायमानापि सती सुखम् अस्युषिता त्वयि ।
 सर्वकामैः सुविहिता रक्ष्यमाणा सदा त्वया ॥१८॥

This soft mole by Brahmá fashioned, sign of his creative power,
 As at change the moon's thin crescent only dim and faintly gleams.
 Yet her beauty is not faded; though her form be soiled with dust,
 Unadorned, it shines more nobly, like the native unwrought gold.
 With that beauteous form yon woman, gifted with that lovely mole,
 Instant knew I for the Princess, as the heat betrays the fire.'

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

To Sudeva as she listened uttering thus his strange discourse :
 ' All the dust that mole concealing young Sunandá washed away.
 By the obscuring dust unclouded shining out that mole appeared ;
 On the brow of Damayantí, like the unclouded moon in heaven.'
 Gazing on that mole, Sunandá, and the mother of the king,
 Wept as fondly they embraced her, and an instant silent stood.
 Then her tears awhile suppressing, thus the royal mother spake :
 ' Thou art mine own sister's daughter, by that beauteous mole made known ;
 I, oh beauteous, and thy mother, of that lofty-minded king,
 Are the daughters, king Sudáman, he that in Daśárṇa reigns ;
 She was wedded to king Bhíma, and to Vírabáhu I.
 In my father's home, Daśárṇa once I saw thee, newly-born.
 As to me thy father's lineage is akin, so mine to thee ;
 Whatsoe'er my power commandeth, Damayantí, all is thine.'

To the queen did Damayantí, in the gladness of her heart,
 Having bowed in courteous homage to her mother's sister, speak :
 ' While unknown I might continue, gladly dwelt I here with thee ;
 Every want supplied on th' instant, guarded by thy gentle care.

सुखात् सुखतरो वासो भविष्यति न संशयः ।
 चिरविप्रोषितां मातर् माम् अनुज्ञातुम् अर्हसि ॥ १९ ॥
 दारकौ च हि मे नीतौ वसतस् तत्र बालकौ ।
 पित्रा विहीनौ शोकातौ मया चैव कथं नु तौ ॥ २० ॥
 यदि चापि प्रियं किञ्चिद् मयि कर्तुम् इहेच्छसि ।
 विदर्भान् यातुम् इच्छामि शीघ्रं मे यानम् आदिश ॥ २१ ॥
 वाढम् इत्येव ताम् उक्त्वा हृष्टा मातृश्रुत्वा नृप ।
 गुप्तां बलेन महता पुत्रस्यानुमते ततः ॥ २२ ॥
 प्रास्थापयद् राजमाता श्रीमतीं नरवाहिना ।
 यानेन भरतश्रेष्ठ ह्यन्नपानपरिच्छदां ॥ २३ ॥
 ततः सा नचिराद् एव विदर्भान् अगमत् पुनः ।
 तां तु बन्धुजनः सर्वः प्रहृष्टः समपूजयत् ॥ २४ ॥
 सर्वान् कुशलिनो दृष्ट्वा बान्धवान् दारकौ च तौ ।
 मातरम् पितरञ्चोभौ सर्वञ्चैव सखीजनं ॥ २५ ॥
 देवताः पूजयामास ब्राह्मणांश्च यशस्विनी ।
 परेण विधिना देवी दमयन्ती विशाम्पते ॥ २६ ॥
 अतर्पयत् सुदेवञ्च गोसहस्रेण पार्थिवः ।
 प्रीतो दृष्ट्वैव तनयां यामेण द्रविणेन च ॥ २७ ॥
 सा व्युष्टा रजनीं तत्र पितुर् वेश्मनि भाविनी ।
 विश्रान्ता मातरं राजन् इदं वचनम् अब्रवीत् ॥ २८ ॥
 मां चेद् इच्छसि जीवन्तीं मातः सत्यम् ब्रवीमि ते ।
 नरवीरस्य चैतस्य नलस्यानयने यत ॥ २९ ॥
 दमयन्त्या तथोक्त्वा तु सा देवी भृशदुःखिता ।
 वाष्येणापिहिता राजन् नोत्तरं किञ्चिद् अब्रवीत् ॥ ३० ॥
 तदवस्थां तु तां दृष्ट्वा सर्वम् अन्तःपुरं तदा ।
 हाहाभूतम् अतीवासीद् भृशञ्च प्ररुरोद ह ॥ ३१ ॥

Yet than even this pleasant dwelling, a more pleasant may there be ;
 Long a banished woman, mother ! give me leave from hence to part,
 Thither where my infant children dwell, my tender little ones,
 Orphaned of their sire, in sorrow orphaned, ah, how long of me !

If thou yet wilt grant a favour, o'er all other favours dear,
 To Vidarbha would I journey, quick the palanquin command.'

'Be it so,' her mother's sister, joyful, instant made reply.

Guarded by a mighty army, with th' approval of her son,
 Sent the queen, that happy lady, in a palanquin, by men
 Borne aloft, and well provided with all raiment, drink, and food.

Thus the princess to Vidarbha after brief delay returned.

Her her whole assembled kindred welcomed home with pride and joy,
 All in health she found her kinsmen, and that lovely infant pair,
 With her mother, with her father, and her troop of female friends.
 To the gods she paid her worship, to the Bráhmans in her joy ;
 So the queenly Damayantí all in noblest guise performed.

And her royal sire Sudeva, with the thousand kine made glad,
 Joyous to behold his daughter, with a village and much wealth.
 There, when in her father's palace she the quiet night had passed,
 In these words the noble lady to her mother 'gan to speak :

'If in life thou would'st preserve me, mother, hear the truth I speak ;
 Home to bring the hero Nala be it now thy chiefest toil.'

Thus addressed by Damayantí, very sorrowful the queen
 Clouded all her face with weeping, not a word in answer spake.
 But the princess, thus afflicted, when the female train beheld,
 'Woe ! oh woe !' they shrieked together, all in pitying sadness wept.

ततो भीमं महाराजं भार्या वचनम् अब्रवीत् ।
 दमयन्ती तव सुता भर्तारम् अनुशोचति ॥३२॥
 अपकृष्य च लज्जां सा स्वयम् उक्तवती नृप ।
 प्रयतन्तु तव प्रेथाः पुण्यश्लोकस्य मार्गणे ॥३३॥
 तथा प्रदेशितो राजा ब्राह्मणान् वशवर्तिनः ।
 प्रास्थापयद् दिशः सर्वा यतध्वं नलमार्गणे ॥३४॥
 ततो विदर्भाधिपतेर् नियोगाद् ब्राह्मणास् तदा ।
 दमयन्तीम् अथो सृत्वा प्रस्थिताः स्मेत्यथाब्रुवन् ॥३५॥
 अथ तान् अब्रवीद् भैमी सर्वराष्ट्रेष्विदं वचः ।
 ब्रूयास्त जनसंसत्सु तत्र तत्र पुनः पुनः ॥३६॥
 क्व नु त्वं कितव च्छित्त्वा वस्त्रार्धं प्रस्थितो मम ।
 उत्सृज्य विपिने सुप्राम् अनुरक्तां प्रियां प्रिय ॥३७॥
 सा वै यथा समादिष्टा तथास्ते त्वत्प्रतीक्षिणी ।
 दृश्यमाना भृशं बाला वस्त्रार्धेनाभिसंवृता ॥३८॥
 तस्या रुदन्याः सततं तेन शोकेन पार्थिव ।
 प्रसादं कुरु वै वीर प्रतिवाक्यं वदस्व च ॥३९॥
 एवम् अन्यच्च वक्तव्यं कृपां कुर्याद् यथा मयि ।
 वायुना धूयमानो हि वनं दहति पावकः ॥४०॥
 भर्तव्या रक्षणीया च पत्नी हि पतिना सदा ।
 तन् नष्टम् उभयं कस्माद् धर्मज्ञस्य सतस् तव ॥४१॥
 ख्यातः प्राज्ञः कुलीनश्च सानुक्रोशो भवान् सदा ।
 संवृत्तो निरनुक्रोशः शङ्के मद्भाग्यसङ्घ्यात् ॥४२॥
 तत् कुरुष्व नरव्याघ्र दयां मयि नरेश्वर ।
 आनृशंस्यं परो धर्मस् त्वत्त एव मया श्रुतः ॥४३॥
 एवं ब्रुवाणान् यदि वः प्रतिब्रूयाद् धि कश्चन ।
 स नरः सर्वथा ज्ञेयः कश्चासौ क्व च वर्तते ॥४४॥

To the mighty Rája Bhíma did the queen that speech relate.
 ‘ Damayantí, lo, thy daughter for her husband sits and mourns ;
 Breaking through all bashful silence, thus, oh king, to me she spake :
 “ Be it now thy servants’ business to find out the king of men. ” ’
 Urged by her the king his Bráhmans, to his will obedient all,
 Sent around to every region, ‘ Be your care the king to find.’
 Then those Bráhmans at the mandate of Vidarbha’s royal lord,
 First drew near to Damayantí, ‘ Lo, now set we forth,’ they said.
 Then to them spake Bhíma’s daughter, ‘ In all realms be this your speech,
 Wheresoever men assemble, this repeat again, again :
 Whither went’st thou then, oh gamester ! half my garment severing off,
 Leaving in the forest sleeping, all forsaken, thy beloved ?
 Even as thou commandedst, sits she, sadly waiting thy return.
 Parched with sorrow sits that woman, in her scant half-garment glad.
 Oh to her thus ever weeping in the extreme of her distress,
 Grant thy pity, noble hero, answer to her earnest prayer !
 Be this also said, to move him to compassionate my state,
 For by wind within the forest fanned, intensely burns the fire.
 Ever by her consort guarded and sustained the wife should be.
 Why hast thou forgot both duties, thou in every duty skilled ?
 Thou wert ever called the generous, thou the pitiful, the wise.
 Art thou now estranged from pity through my sad injurious fate ?
 Prince of men, O grant thy pity, grant it, lord of men, to me ;
 “ Mercy is the chief of duties,” oft from thine own lips I’ve heard.
 Thus as ye are ever speaking should there any one reply,
 Mark him well, lest he be Nala, who he is, and where he dwells.

यश्चैवं वचनं श्रुत्वा ब्रूयात् प्रतिवचो नरः ।
 तद् आदाय वचस् तस्य ममावेद्यं द्विजोत्तमाः ॥४५॥
 यथा च वो न जानीयाद् ब्रुवतो मम शासनात् ।
 पुनरागमनञ्चैव तथा कार्यम् अतन्द्रितैः ॥४६॥
 यदिवाऽसौ समृद्धः स्याद् यदिवाऽप्यधनो भवेत् ।
 यदिवाऽप्यर्थकामः स्याज् ज्ञेयं तस्य चिकीर्षितं ॥४७॥
 एवम् उक्त्वास् त्वगच्छंस् ते ब्राह्मणाः सर्वतो दिशः ।
 नलं मृगयितुं राजंस् तदा व्यसनिनं तथा ॥४८॥
 ते पुराणि सराष्ट्राणि यामान् घोषांस् तथाश्रमान् ।
 अन्वेषन्तो नलं राजन् नाधिजग्मुर् द्विजातयः ॥४९॥
 तच्च वाक्यं तथा सर्वे तच्च तच्च विशाम्पते ।
 श्रावयाञ्चक्रिरे विप्रा दमयन्त्या यथेरितं ॥५०॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने सप्तदशः सर्गः ॥१७॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

अथ दीर्घस्य कालस्य पर्णादो नाम वै द्विजः ।
 प्रत्येत्य नगरं भैमीम् इदं वचनम् अब्रवीत् ॥१॥
 नैषधं मृगयानेन दमयन्ति मया नलं ।
 अयोध्यां नगरीं गत्वा भाङ्गासुरिर् उपस्थितः ॥२॥
 श्रावितश्च मया वाक्यं त्वदीयं स महामते ।
 ऋतुपर्णो महाभागो यथोक्तं वरवर्णिनि ॥३॥
 तच्च श्रुत्वा नाब्रवीत् किञ्चिद् ऋतुपर्णो नराधिपः ।
 न च पारिषदः कश्चिद् भाष्यमाणा मयासकृत् ॥४॥

He who to this speech hath listened, and hath thus his answer made,
 Be his words, O best of Bráhmans, treasured and brought home to me,
 Lest he haply should discover that by my command ye speak,
 That again ye may approach him, do ye this without delay.
 Whether he be of the wealthy, whether of the poor he be;
 Be he covetous of riches, learn ye all he would desire.
 Thus addressed, went forth the Bráhmans to the realms on every side,
 Seeking out the royal Nala in his dark concealed distress.
 They through kingdoms, cities, hamlets, pastoral dwellings, hermits' cells,
 Nala everywhere went seeking, yet those Bráhmans found him not.
 All in every part went speaking in the language they were taught;
 In the words of Damayantí spake they in the ears of men.

END OF BOOK XVII.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

LONG the time that passed, a Bráhman, wise Paráda was his name,
 Home returning to the city, thus to Bhíma's daughter spake :
 ' Damayantí! royal Nala as I sought, Nishadha's king,
 Came I to Ayodhyá's city; there Bhángásuri approached,
 Stood before me, eager listening to the words thou had'st us speak,
 He, the prosperous Rítuparṇa, thy own words, O lady fair.
 Thus as spake I, answered nothing Rítuparṇa, king of men;
 Nor of all that full assemblage, more than once addressed by me.

अनुज्ञातं तु मां राज्ञा विजने कश्चिद् अब्रवीत् ।
 ऋतुपर्णस्य पुरुषो बाहुको नाम नामतः ॥५॥
 सूतस् तस्य नरेन्द्रस्य विरूपो ह्रस्वबाहुकः ।
 शीघ्रयानेषु कुशलो मिष्टकर्ता च भोजने ॥६॥
 स विनिःश्वस्य बहुशो रुदित्वा च पुनः पुनः ।
 कुशलञ्चैव मां पृष्ट्वा पश्चाद् इदम् अभाषत ॥७॥
 वैषम्यम् अपि सम्प्राप्ता गोपायन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
 आत्मानम् आत्मना सत्यो जितस्वर्गा न संशयः ॥८॥
 रहिता भर्तृभिश्चैव न क्रुध्यन्ति कदाचन ।
 प्राणांश् चारिचकवचान् धारयन्ति वरस्त्रियः ॥९॥
 विषमस्थेन मूढेन परिभ्रष्टमुखेन च ।
 यत् सा तेन परित्यक्ता तत्र न क्रोडुम् अर्हति ॥१०॥
 प्राणयात्रां परिप्रेप्सोः शकुनैर् हृतवाससः ।
 आधिभिर् दह्यमानस्य श्यामा न क्रोडुम् अर्हति ॥११॥
 सत्कृताऽसत्कृता वाऽपि पतिं दृष्ट्वा तथागतं ।
 भ्रष्टराज्यं श्रिया हीनं क्षुधितं व्यसनामृतं ॥१२॥
 तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा त्वरितोऽहम् इहागतः ।
 श्रुत्वा प्रमाणं भवती राज्ञश्चैव निवेदय ॥१३॥
 एतच् छ्रुत्वाऽश्रुपूर्णाक्षी पर्णादस्य विशाम्पते ।
 दमयन्ती रहोऽभ्येत्य मातरं प्रत्यभाषत ॥१४॥
 अयम् अर्थो न संवेद्यो भीमे मातः कथञ्चन ।
 त्वत्सन्निधौ नियोक्ष्येऽहं सुदेवं द्विजसत्तमं ॥१५॥
 यथा न नृपतिर् भीमः प्रतिपद्येत मे मतिं ।
 तथा त्वया प्रयत्न्यं मम चेत् प्रियम् इच्छसि ॥१६॥
 यथा चाहं समानीता सुदेवेनाशु बान्धवान् ।
 तेनैव मङ्गलेनाशु सुदेवो यातु माचिरं ॥१७॥

By the king dismissed, when sate I in a solitary place,
 One of Rítuparna's household, Váhuka his name, drew near,
 Charioteer of that great Rája, with short arms and all deformed,
 Skilled to drive the rapid chariot, skilled the viands to prepare.
 He, when much he'd groaned in anguish, and had wept again, again,
 First his courteous salutation made, then spake in words like these :

“ Even in the extreme of misery noble women still preserve
 Over their ownelves the mastery, by their virtues winning heaven ;
 Of their faithless lords abandoned, anger feel not even then.
 In the breastplate of their virtue noble women live unharmed.
 By the wretched, by the senseless, by the lost to every joy,
 She by such a lord forsaken yet to anger will not yield.
 Against him his sustenance seeking, of his robe by birds despoiled,
 Him consumed with utmost misery, still no wrath the dark-hued feels ;
 Treated well, or ill-entreated, when her husband she beholds,
 Spoiled of bliss, bereft of kingdom, famine-wasted, worn with woe.”

Having heard the stranger's language, hither hasted I to come.
 Thou hast heard, be thine the judgment, to the king relate thou all.
 To Parńada having listened, with her eyes o'erflowed with tears,
 Secretly went Damayantí, and her mother thus addressed :

‘ Let not what I speak, to Bhíma, O my mother, be made known—
 In thy presence to Sudeva, best of Bráhmans, I would speak.
 Let not this my secret counsel to king Bhíma be disclosed ;
 This the object we must compass if thy daughter thou wouldst please,
 As myself was to my kindred swiftly by Sudeva brought,
 With the same good fortune swiftly may Sudeva part from hence

समानेतुं नलं मातर् अयोध्यां नगरीम् इतः ।
 विश्रान्तं तु ततः पश्चात् पयोदं द्विजसत्तमं ॥ १८ ॥
 अर्चयामास वैदर्भीं धनेनातीव भाविनी ।
 नले चेहागते विप्र भूयो दास्यामि ते वसु ॥ १९ ॥
 त्वया हि मे बहु कृतं यथा नान्यः करिष्यति ।
 यद् भर्षाऽहं समेषामि शीघ्रम् एव द्विजोत्तम ॥ २० ॥
 एवम् उक्तोऽथाश्वस्य ताम् आशीर्वदेः समङ्गलैः ।
 गृहान् उपययौ चापि कृतार्थः सुमहामनाः ॥ २१ ॥
 ततः सुदेवम् आभाष्य दमयन्ती युधिष्ठिर ।
 अब्रवीत् सन्निधौ मातुर् दुःखशोकसमन्विता ॥ २२ ॥
 गत्वा सुदेव नगरीम् अयोध्यावासिनं नृपं ।
 ऋतुपर्णे वचो ब्रूहि सम्पतन् इव कामगः ॥ २३ ॥
 आस्थास्यति पुनर् भैमी दमयन्ती स्वयंवरं ।
 तत्र गच्छन्ति राजानो राजपुत्राश्च सर्वशः ॥ २४ ॥
 तथा च गणितः कालः शोभूते स भविष्यति ।
 यदि सम्भावनीयस् ते गच्छ शीघ्रम् अरिन्दम ॥ २५ ॥
 सूर्योदये द्वितीयं सा भर्तारं वरयिष्यति ।
 न हि स ज्ञायते वीरो नलो जीवति वा न वा ॥ २६ ॥
 एवं तया यथोक्तो वै गत्वा राजानम् अब्रवीत् ।
 ऋतुपर्णे महाराज सुदेवो ब्राह्मणस् तदा ॥ २७ ॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने अष्टादशः सर्गः ॥ १८ ॥

To Ayodhyá's city, mother, home to bring my royal lord.'

Resting from his toil, Parṇáda, of the Bráhmaṇ race the best,
 Did the daughter of Vīdarbha honour, and with wealth reward.
 'Bráhmaṇ! home if come my Nala, richer guerdon will I give;
 Much hast thou achieved, and wisely, so as none but thou has done.
 That again with my lost husband, noblest Bráhmaṇ, I may meet.'
 Thus addressed, his grateful homage and his benedictions paid,
 Having thus achieved his mission, home the wise Parṇáda went.

Then accosting good Sudeva, Damayantí thus began,
 And before her mother's presence in her pain and grief she spake:
 'Go, Sudeva, to the city, where Ayodhyá's Rájá dwells,
 Speak thou thus to Rítuparṇa, (thither coming as by chance):—
 "Once again her Svayamvara does king Bhíma's daughter hold,
 Damayantí, thither hasten all the kings and sons of kings.
 Closely now the time is reckoned when to-morrow's dawn appears;
 If that thou would'st win the princess, speed thou, tamer of thy foes.
 When the sun is in his rising she a second lord will choose:
 Whether lives or is not living, royal Nala, no one knows."'
 Thus, as he received his mission, hastening to the king, he spake,
 To the royal Rítuparṇa spake Sudeva, in these words.

END OF BOOK XVIII.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

श्रुत्वा वचः सुदेवस्य ऋतुपर्णो नराधिपः ।
सान्त्वयन् श्लक्ष्णया वाचा वाहुकं प्रत्यभाषत ॥ १ ॥
विदर्भो यातुम् इच्छामि दमयन्त्याः स्वयंवरं ।
एकाहा हयतत्त्वज्ञ मन्यसे यदि वाहुक ॥ २ ॥
एवम् उक्तस्य कौन्तेय तेन राज्ञा नलस्य ह ।
व्यदीर्यत मनो दुःखात् प्रदध्यौ च महामनाः ॥ ३ ॥
दमयन्ती वदेद् एतत् कुर्याद् दुःखेन मोहिता ।
अस्मदर्थे भवेद् वाऽयम् उपायश्च चिन्तितो महान् ॥ ४ ॥
नृशंसं वत वैदर्भीं कर्तुकामा तपस्विनी ।
मया श्लुद्रेण निकृता कृपणा पापबुद्धिना ॥ ५ ॥
स्त्रीस्वभावश्च चलो लोके मम दोषश्च दारुणः ।
स्याद् एवम् अपि कुर्यात् सा विवासाद् गतसौहृदा ॥ ६ ॥
मम शोकेन संविप्रा निराश्यात् तनुमध्यमा ।
नैवं सा कर्हिचित् कुर्यात् सापत्या च विशेषतः ॥ ७ ॥
यद् अत्र सत्यं वाऽसत्यं गत्वा वेत्स्यामि निश्चयं ।
ऋतुपर्णस्य वै कामम् आत्मार्यं च करोम्यहं ॥ ८ ॥
इति निश्चित्य मनसा वाहुको दीनमानसः ।
कृताञ्जलिर् उवाचेदम् ऋतुपर्णे नराधिपं ॥ ९ ॥
प्रतिजानामि ते वाक्यं गमिष्यामि नराधिप ।
एकाहा पुरुषध्याग्र विदर्भनगरीं नृप ॥ १० ॥
ततः परीक्षाम् अश्वानां चक्रे राजन् स वाहुकः ।
अश्वशालाम् उपागम्य भाङ्गासुरिनृपाज्ञया ॥ ११ ॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

HEARING thus Sudeva's language, R̥ituparṇa, king of men,
 With a gentle voice and blandly, thus to Váhuka began :
 'Where the princess Damayantí doth her Svayamvara hold,
 Skilled in horses! to Vidarbha, in one day I fain would go.'
 In these words the unknown Nala by his royal lord addressed,
 All his heart was torn with anguish, thus the lofty-minded thought—
 'Can she speak thus, Damayantí, thus with sorrow frantic act?
 Is't a stratagem thus subtly for my sake devised and plann'd?
 To desire this deed unholy is that holy princess driven,
 Wrong'd by me, her basest husband, miserable, mind-estranged!
 Fickle is the heart of woman, grievous too is my offence!
 Hence she thus might act ignobly in her exile, reft of friends,
 Soul-disturbed by my great sorrow, in the excess of her despair.
 No! she could not thus have acted, she with noble offspring blest.
 Where the truth, and where the falsehood, setting forth, I best shall judge,
 I the will of R̥ituparṇa, for my own sake, will obey.'
 Thus within his mind revolving, Váhuka, his wretched mind,
 With his folded hands addressed he R̥ituparṇa, king of men :
 'I thy mandate will accomplish, I will go, O king of men,
 In a single day, O Rája, to Vidarbha's royal town.'
 Váhuka of all the coursers did a close inspection make,
 Entering in the royal stable by Bhángásuri's command.

स त्वर्यमाणो बहुश ऋतुपर्णेन वाहुकः ।
 अश्वान् जिज्ञासमानो वै विचार्य च पुनः पुनः ॥१२॥
 अध्वगच्छत् कृशान् अश्वान् समर्थान् अध्वनि क्षमान् ।
 तेजोबलसमायुक्तान् कुलशीलसमन्वितान् ॥१३॥
 वर्जिताँल् लक्ष्णैर् हीनैः पृथुप्रोथान् महाहनून् ।
 शुद्धान् दशभिर् आवर्तैः सिन्धुजान् वातरंहसः ॥१४॥
 दृष्ट्वा तान् अब्रवीद् राजा किञ्चित् कोपसमन्वितः ।
 किम् इदं प्रार्थितं कर्तुं प्रलब्धव्या न ते वयं ॥१५॥
 कथम् अल्पबलप्राणा वक्ष्यन्तीमे हया मम ।
 महदध्वानम् अपि च गन्तव्यं कथम् ईदृशैः ॥१६॥

वाहुक उवाच ।

एको ललाटे द्वौ मूर्ध्नि द्वौ द्वौ पार्श्वोपपार्श्वयोः ।
 द्वौ द्वौ वक्षसि विज्ञेयौ प्रयाणे चैक एव तु ॥१७॥
 एते हया गमिष्यन्ति विदर्भान् नाच संशयः ।
 यान् अन्यान् मन्यसे राजन् ब्रूहि तान् योजयामि ते ॥१८॥

ऋतुपर्णे उवाच ।

त्वम् एव हयतत्त्वज्ञः कुशलो ह्यसि वाहुक ।
 यान् मन्यसे समर्थान्स् त्वं क्षिप्रं तान् एव योजय ॥१९॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

ततः सदश्वान्श् चतुरः कुलशीलसमन्वितान् ।
 योजयामास कुशलो जवयुक्तान् रथे नलः ॥२०॥
 ततो युक्तं रथं राजा समारोहत् त्वरान्वितः ।
 अथ पर्यपतन् भूमौ जानुभिस् ते हयोत्तमाः ॥२१॥

Ever urged by Rituparṇa, Váhuka, in horses skilled,
 Long within himself debating which the fleetest steeds to choose,
 He approached four slender coursers, fit and powerful for the road,
 Blending mighty strength with fleetness, high in courage and in blood ;
 Free from all the well-known vices, broad of nostril, large of jaw ;
 With the ten good marks distinguished, bred in Sindhu, fleet as wind.
 As he gazed upon those coursers spoke the king, almost in wrath :
 'Is then thus fulfilled our mandate? think not to deceive us so.
 How will these my coursers bear us, slight in strength and slightly breathed?
 How can such a way be travelled, and 'so long, by steeds like these?'—

VÁHUKA spake :

'Two on th' head, one on the forehead, two and two on either flank—
 Two, behold, the chest discloses, and upon the crupper one—
 These the horses to Vidarbha that will bear us, doubt not thou ;
 Yet, if others thou preferest, speak, and I will yoke them straight.'

RITUPARṆA spake :

'In the knowledge thou of horses, Váhuka, hast matchless skill ;
 Whichso'er thou think'st the fittest harness thou without delay.'

VṚIHADAŚVA spake :

Then those four excelling horses, nobly bred, of courage high,
 In their harness to the chariot did the skilful Nala yoke.—
 To the chariot yoked as mounted in his eager haste the king,
 To the earth those best of horses bowed their knees and stooped them down.

ततो नरवरः श्रीमान् नलो राजा विशाम्पते ।
 सान्त्वयामास तान् अश्वान् तेजोबलसमन्वितान् ॥२२॥
 रश्मिभिश्च समुद्यम्य नलो यातुम् इयेष सः ।
 सूतम् आरोप्य वाष्णीयं जवम् आस्थाय वै परं ॥२३॥
 ते चोद्यमाना विधिवद् वाहुकेन हयोत्तमाः ।
 समुत्पेतुर् अथाकाशं रथिनं मोहयन् इव ॥२४॥
 तथा तु दृष्ट्वा तान् अश्वान् वहतो वातरंहसः ।
 अयोध्याधिपतिः श्रीमान् विस्मयं परमं ययौ ॥२५॥
 रथघोषं तु तं श्रुत्वा हयसङ्ग्रहणञ्च तत् ।
 वाष्णीयश् चिन्तयामास वाहुकस्य हयज्ञतां ॥२६॥
 किं नु स्याद् मातलिर् अयं देवराजस्य सारथिः ।
 तथा तल्लक्षणं वीरे वाहुके दृश्यते महत् ॥२७॥
 शालिहोत्रोऽथ किं नु स्याद् धयानां कुलतत्त्ववित् ।
 मानुषं समनुप्राप्तो वपुः परमशोभनं ॥२८॥
 उताहो स्विद् भवेद् राजा नलः परपुरञ्जयः ।
 सोऽयं नृपतिर् आयात इत्येव समचिन्तयत् ॥२९॥
 अथवा यां नलो वेद विद्यां ताम् एव वाहुकः ।
 तुल्यं हि लक्ष्ये ज्ञानं वाहुकस्य नलस्य च ॥३०॥
 अपिचेदं वयस् तुल्यं वाहुकस्य नलस्य च ।
 नायं नलो महावीर्यस् तद्विद्यश्च भविष्यति ॥३१॥
 प्रच्छन्ना हि महात्मानश् चरन्ति पृथिवीम् इमां ।
 दैवेन विधिना युक्ताः प्रच्छन्नाश्चापि रूपतः ॥३२॥
 भवेत्तु मतिभेदो मे गात्रवैरूप्यतां प्रति ।
 प्रमाणात् परिहीनस्तु भवेद् इति मतिर् मम ॥३३॥
 वयःप्रमाणं तत् तुल्यं रूपेण तु विपर्ययः ।
 नलं सर्वगुणैर् युक्तं मन्ये वाहुकम् अन्ततः ॥३४॥

Then the noblest of all heroes, Nala, with a soothing voice,
 Spake unto those horses, gifted both with fleetness and with strength.
 Up the reins when he had gathered he the charioteer bade mount
 First, Várshņeya, skilled in driving, at full speed then set he forth.

Urged by Váhuka, those coursers, to the utmost of their speed,
 All at once in th' air sprung upward, as the driver to unseat.
 Then, as he beheld those horses bearing him as fleet as wind,
 Did the monarch of Ayodhyá in his silent wonder sit.

When the rattling of the chariot, when the guiding of the reins,
 When of Váhuka the science saw he, thus Várshņeya thought:

'Is it Mátali, the chariot of the king of heaven that drives?

Lo, in Váhuka each virtue of that godlike charioteer!

Is it Sálihotra, skilful in the breed, the strength of steeds,

That hath ta'en a human body, thus all-glorious to behold?

Is't, or can it be, king Nala, conqueror of his foemen's realms?

Is the lord of men before us?' thus within himself he thought.

'If the skill possessed by Nala, Váhuka possesseth too,

Lo, of Váhuka the knowledge and of Nala equal seems;

And of Váhuka and Nala thus alike the age should be.

If 'tis not the noble Nala it is one of equal skill.

Mighty ones, disguised, are wandering in the precincts of this earth.

They, divine by inborn nature, but in earthly forms concealed.

His deformity of body that my judgment still confounds;

Yet that proof alone is wanting, what shall then my judgment be?

In their age they still are equal, though unlike that form misshaped,

Nala gifted with all virtues, Váhuka I needs must deem.'

एवं विचार्य बहुशो वाष्ण्यः पर्यचिन्तयत् ।
 हृदयेन महाराज पुण्यश्लोकस्य सारथिः ॥३५॥
 ऋतुपर्णस्तु राजेन्द्रो बाहुकस्य हयज्ञतां ।
 चिन्तयन् मुमुदे राजा सहवाष्ण्यसारथिः ॥३६॥
 ऐकाम्यञ्च तथोत्साहं हयसङ्ग्रहणे च तत् ।
 परं यत्नञ्च सम्प्रेक्ष्य परां मुदम् अवाप ह ॥३७॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने नवदशः सर्गः ॥१९॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

स नदीः पर्वतांश्चैव वनानि च सरांसि च ।
 अचिरेणातिचक्राम खेचरः खे चरञ्च इव ॥१॥
 तथा प्रयाते तु रथे तदा भाङ्गासुरिर् नृपः ।
 उत्तरीयम् अधोऽपश्यद् भ्रष्टं परपुरञ्जयः ॥२॥
 ततः स त्वरमाणस्तु पटे निपतिते तदा ।
 यहीथामीति तं राजा नलम् आह महामनाः ॥३॥
 निगृह्णीष्व महाबुद्धे हयान् एतान् महाजवान् ।
 वाष्ण्यो यावद् एतं मे पटम् आनयताम् इह ॥४॥
 नलस् तं प्रत्युवाचाथ दूरे भ्रष्टः पटस् तव ।
 योजनं समतिक्रान्तो नाहर्तुं शक्यते पुनः ॥५॥
 एवम् उक्तो नलेनाथ तदा भाङ्गासुरिर् नृपः ।
 आससाद् वने राजन् फलवन्तं विभीतकं ॥६॥
 तं दृष्ट्वा बाहुकं राजा त्वरमाणोऽभ्यभाषत ।
 ममापि सूत पश्य त्वं सङ्ख्याने परमं बलं ॥७॥

Thus the charioteer Várshṇeya sate debating in his mind ;
 Much, and much again he pondered, in the silence of his thought.
 But the royal Rítuparṇa, Váhuka's surpassing skill,
 With the charioteer Várshṇeya, sat admiring, and rejoiced.
 In the guiding of the coursers his attentive hand he watched,
 Wondered at his skill consummate, in consummate joy himself.

END OF BOOK XIX.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

OVER rivers, over mountains, through the forests, over lakes,
 Fleetly passed they, rapid gliding, like a bird along the air.
 As the chariot swiftly travelled, lo, Bhángásuri the king
 Saw his upper garment fallen from the lofty chariot-seat ;
 Though in urgent haste, no sooner he his fallen mantle saw
 Than the king exclaimed to Nala, ' Pause, and let us take it up :
 Check, an instant, mighty-minded ! check thy fiery-footed steeds,
 While Várshṇeya, swift dismounting, bears me back my fallen robe.'
 Nala answered, ' Far behind us doth thy fallen garment lie ;
 Five miles, lo, it lies behind us, turn we not, to gain it, back.'
 Answered thus by noble Nala, then Bhángásuri the king
 Bowed with fruit, within the forest, saw a tall Vibhítak-tree :
 Gazing on that tree, the Rája spake to Váhuka in haste,
 ' Now, O charioteer, in numbers thou shalt see my passing skill.

सर्वः सर्वं न जानाति सर्वज्ञो नास्ति कश्चन ।
 नैकत्र परिणिष्ठाऽस्ति ज्ञानस्य पुरुषे क्वचित् ॥८॥
 वृक्षेऽस्मिन् यानि पर्णानि फलान्यपि च वाहुक ।
 पतितान्यपि यान्यत्र तत्रैकम् अधिकं शतं ॥९॥
 एकम् अत्राधिकं पत्रं फलम् एकञ्च वाहुक ।
 पञ्चकोट्योऽथ पत्राणां द्वयोर् अपि च शाखयोः ॥१०॥
 प्रचिनुह्यस्य शाखे द्वे याश्चाप्यन्याः प्रशाखिकाः ।
 आभ्यां फलसहस्रे द्वे पञ्चोनं शतम् एव च ॥११॥
 ततो रथम् अवस्थाप्य राजानं वाहुकोऽब्रवीत् ।
 परोक्षम् इव मे राजन् कथ्यसे शत्रुकर्षण ॥१२॥
 प्रत्यक्षम् एतत् कर्तास्मि शतयित्वा विभीतकं ।
 अथात्र गणिते राजन् विद्यते न परोक्षता ॥१३॥
 प्रत्यक्षं ते महाराज शतयिष्ये विभीतकं ।
 अहं हि नाभिजानामि भवेद् एवं न वेति च ॥१४॥
 सङ्ख्यास्यामि फलान्यस्य पश्यतस् ते जनाधिप ।
 मुहूर्तम् अपि वार्षेयो रश्मीन् यच्छतु वाजिनां ॥१५॥
 तम् अब्रवीन् नृपः सूतं नायं कालो विलम्बितुं ।
 वाहुकस् त्वब्रवीद् एनं परं यत्नं समास्थितः ॥१६॥
 प्रतीक्षस्व मुहूर्तं त्वम् अथवा त्वरते भवान् ।
 एष याति शिवः पन्था याहि वार्षेयसारथिः ॥१७॥
 अब्रवीद् ऋतुपर्णस्तु सान्त्वयन् कुरुनन्दन ।
 त्वम् इव यन्ता नान्योऽस्ति पृथिव्याम् अपि वाहुक ॥१८॥
 त्वकृते यातुम् इच्छामि विदर्भान् हयकोविद ।
 शरणं त्वां प्रपन्नोऽस्मि न विघ्नं कर्तुम् अर्हसि ॥१९॥
 कामञ्च ते करिष्यामि यन् मां वक्ष्यसि वाहुक ।
 विदर्भान् यदि यात्वाद्य सूर्यं दर्शयितासि मे ॥२०॥

Each one knows not every science, none there is who all things knows :
 Perfect skill in every knowledge in one mind there may not be.
 Of the leaves on yonder fruit-tree, Váhuka, and of the fruits,
 Would'st thou know how many are fallen? one above a hundred, there.
 One leaf here above a hundred, and one fruit, O Váhuka !
 And of leaves are five ten millions hanging on those branches two.
 Those two branches if thou gather, and the twigs that on them grow,
 On those two are fruits two thousand and a hundred, less by five.'
 Then, when he had check'd the chariot, answered Váhuka the king,
 'What thou speakest, to mine eyesight all invisible appears ;
 Visible I'll make it, cleaving yonder tall Vibhítak-tree ;
 Then, when I have strictly numbered, I mistrust mine eyes no more.
 In thy presence, mighty monarch, I will sever yonder branch ;
 Whether it may be, or may not, this not done, I cannot know ;
 I will number, thou beholding, all its fruits, O king of men,
 But an instant let Várshņeya hold the bridles of the steeds.'
 To the charioteer the Rájá answered, 'Time is none to stay.'
 Váhuka replied, all eager his own purpose to fulfil,
 'Either stay thou here an instant, or go onward in thy speed,
 With the charioteer Várshņeya go, for straight the road before.'
 Answered him king Rítuparņa with a bland and soothing voice :
 'Charioteer ! on earth thine equal, Váhuka, there may not be ;
 By thy guidance, skilled in horses ! to Vidarbha I would go :
 I in thee have placed reliance, interrupt not then our course :
 Willingly will I obey thee, Váhuka, in what thou ask'st,
 If this day we reach Vidarbha ere the sun hath sunk in night.'

अथाब्रवीद् वाहुकस् तं सङ्क्षाय च विभीतकं ।
 ततो विदर्भान् यास्यामि कुरुष्वैवं वचो मम ॥ २१ ॥
 अकाम इव तं राजा गणयस्वेत्युवाच ह ।
 एकदेशञ्च शाखायाः समादिष्टं मयाऽनघ ॥ २२ ॥
 गणयस्वास्य तन्नञ्च ततस् त्वं प्रीतिम् आवह ।
 सोऽवतीर्य रथात् तूर्णं शतयामास तं द्रुमं ॥ २३ ॥
 ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो राजानम् इदम् अब्रवीत् ।
 गणयित्वा यथोक्तानि तावन्येव फलानि च ॥ २४ ॥
 अत्यद्भुतम् इदं राजन् दृष्टवान् अस्मि ते बलं ।
 श्रोतुम् इच्छामि तां विद्यां ययैतज् ज्ञायते नृप ॥ २५ ॥
 तम् उवाच ततो राजा त्वरितो गमने नृपः ।
 विद्यक्षहृदयज्ञं मां सङ्क्षाने च विशारदं ॥ २६ ॥
 वाहुकस् तम् उवाचाथ देहि विद्याम् इमां मम ।
 मत्तोऽपि चाश्वहृदयं गृहाण पुरुषर्षभ ॥ २७ ॥
 ऋतुपर्णस् ततो राजा वाहुकं कार्यगौरवात् ।
 हयज्ञानस्य लोभाच्च तथेत्येवाब्रवीद् वचः ॥ २८ ॥
 यथोक्तं त्वं गृहाणेदम् अक्षाणां हृदयं परं ।
 निक्षेपो मेऽश्वहृदयं त्वयि तिष्ठति वाहुक ॥ २९ ॥
 एवम् उक्त्वा ददौ विद्याम् ऋतुपर्णो नलाय वै ।
 तस्याश्वहृदयज्ञस्य शरीराद् निःसृतः कलिः ।
 कर्कोटकविषं तीक्ष्णं मुखात् सततम् उद्धमन् ॥ ३० ॥
 कलेस् तस्य तदार्तस्य शापान्निः स विनिःसृतः ।
 स तेन कर्षितो राजा दीर्घकालम् अनात्मवान् ॥ ३१ ॥
 ततो विषविमुक्तात्मा स्वं रूपम् अकरोत् कलिः ।
 तं शम्भुम् ऐच्छत् कुपितो निषधाधिपतिर् नलः ॥ ३२ ॥
 तम् उवाच कलिर् भीतो वेपमानः कृताञ्जलिः ।

Váhuka replied, 'No sooner have I numbered yonder fruits,
 To Vidarbha will I hasten, grant me then my prayer, O king.'
 Then the Rájá, all reluctant, 'Stay then, and begin to count;
 Of one branch one part, O blameless, that one designated part,
 Man of truth, begin to number, and make glad thine inmost soul.'
 From the chariot quick alighting Nala tore the branch away.
 Then, his soul possess'd with wonder, to the Rájá thus he said;
 'Having counted, as thou saidest, even so many fruits there are,
 Marvellous thy power, O monarch, by mine eyes beheld and proved,
 Of that wonder-working science fain the secret would I hear.'
 Then the Rájá spake in answer, eager to pursue his way,
 'I of dice possess the science, and in numbers thus am skilled.'
 Váhuka replied, 'That science if to me thou wilt impart,
 In return, O king, receive thou my surpassing skill in steeds.'
 Then the Rájá Rítuparṇa, by his pressing need induced,
 Eager for that skill in horses, 'Be it so,' thus 'gan to say;
 'Well, O Váhuka, thou speakest, thou my skill in dice receive,
 And of steeds thy wondrous knowledge be to me a meet return.'
 Rítuparṇa all his science, saying this, to Nala gave.
 Soon as he in dice grew skilful, Kali from his body passed,
 All Karkoṭaka's foul poison vomiting from out his mouth.
 Straight from forth his tortured body issued Kali's fiery curse.
 Nala, wasted by that conflict, came not instant to himself.
 But, released from that dread venom, Kali his own form resumed:
 And Nishadha's monarch, Nala, fain would curse him in his ire.
 Him addressed th' affrighted Kali, trembling, and with folded hands:

कोपं संयच्छ नृपते कीर्तिं दास्यामि ते परां ॥३३॥
 इन्द्रसेनस्य जननी कुपिता माऽशपत् पुरा ।
 यदा त्वया परित्यक्ता ततोऽहं भृशपीडितः ॥३४॥
 अक्सं त्वयि राजेन्द्र सुदुःखम् अपराजित ।
 विषेण नागराजस्य दह्यमानो दिवानिशं ॥३५॥
 शरणं त्वां प्रपन्नोऽस्मि शृणु चेदं वचो मम ।
 ये च त्वां मनुजा लोके कीर्तयिष्यन्त्यतन्द्रिताः ॥३६॥
 मत्प्रसूतं भयं तेषां न कदाचिद् भविष्यति ।
 भयार्तं शरणं यातं यदि मां त्वं न शप्स्यसे ॥३७॥
 एवम् उक्तो नलो राजा न्ययच्छत् कोपम् आत्मनः ।
 ततो भीतः कलिः क्षिप्रं प्रविवेश विभीतकं ॥३८॥
 कलिस् त्वन्येन नादृश्यत् कथयन् नैषधेन वै ।
 ततो गतज्वरो राजा नैषधः परवीरहा ॥३९॥
 सम्प्रणष्टे कलौ राजन् सङ्क्षाय च फलान्युत ।
 मुदा परमया युक्तस् तेजसाऽथ परेण च ॥४०॥
 रथम् आरूढ्य तेजस्वी प्रययौ जवनैर् हयैः ।
 विभीतकश्चाप्रशस्तः संवृत्तः कलिसंश्रयात् ॥४१॥
 हयोत्तमान् उत्पततो द्विजान् इव पुनः पुनः ।
 नलः सञ्चोदयामास प्रहृष्टेनान्तरात्मना ॥४२॥
 विदर्भाभिमुखो राजा प्रययौ स महायशाः ।
 नले तु समतिक्रान्ते कलिर् अप्यगमद् गृहं ॥४३॥
 ततो गतज्वरो राजा नलोऽभूत् पृथिवीपतिः ।
 विमुक्तः कलिना राजन् रूपमाचवियोजितः ॥४४॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने विंशतितमः सर्गः ॥२०॥

'Lord of men, restrain thine anger, I will give thee matchless fame ;
Indrasena's wrathful mother laid on me her fatal curse,
When by thee she was deserted, since that time, O king of men,
I have dwelt in thee in anguish, in the ecstasy of pain.
By the King of Serpents' poison I have burned by day, by night :
To thy mercy now for refuge flee I, hear my speech, O king :
Wheresoe'er men, unforgetful, through the world shall laud thy name,
Shall the awful dread of Kali never in their soul abide.
If thou wilt not curse me, trembling, and to thee for refuge fled.'
Thus addressed, the royal Nala all his rising wrath suppressed,
And the fearful Kali entered in the cloven Vibhítak-tree :
To no eyes but those of Nala visible, had Kali spoken.
Then the monarch of Nishadha, from his inward fever freed,
When away had vanished Kali, when the fruits he had numbered all,
Triumphing in joy unwonted, blazing in his splendour forth,
Proudly mounting on the chariot, onward urged the rapid steeds.
But that tree by Kali entered since that time stands aye accursed.
Those fleet horses, forward flying, like to birds, again, again,
All his soul elate with transport, Nala swifter, swifter drove ;
With his face towards Vidarbha rode the Rájá in his pride :
And when forward Nala journeyed, Kali to his home returned.
So released from all his sufferings Nala went, the king of men,
Dispossessed by Kali, wanting only now his proper form.

END OF BOOK XX.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

ततो विदर्भान् सम्प्राप्तं सायाहूे सत्यविक्रमं ।
 ऋतुपर्णं जना राज्ञे भीमाय प्रत्यवेदयन् ॥ १ ॥
 स भीमवचनाद् राजा कुरिडनं प्राविशत् पुरं ।
 नादयन् रथघोषेण सर्वाः सविदिशो दिशः ॥ २ ॥
 ततस् तं रथनिर्घोषं नलाश्वास् तच्च शुश्रुवुः ।
 श्रुत्वा तु समाहृथन्त पुरेव नलसन्निधौ ॥ ३ ॥
 दमयन्ती तु शुश्राव रथघोषं नलस्य तं ।
 यथा मेघस्य नदतो गभीरं जलदागमे ॥ ४ ॥
 परं विस्मयम् आपन्ना श्रुत्वा नादम् महास्वनं ।
 नलेन सङ्गृहीतेषु पुरेव नलवाजिषु ॥ ५ ॥
 सदृशं हयनिर्घोषं मेने भैमी तथा हयाः ।
 प्रासादस्थाश्च शिखिनः शालास्थाश्चैव वारणाः ।
 हयाश्च शुश्रुवुस् तस्य रथघोषं महीपतेः ॥ ६ ॥
 ते श्रुत्वा रथनिर्घोषं वारणाः शिखिनस् तथा ।
 प्रणेदुर् उन्मुखा राजन् मेघनाद इवोत्सुकाः ॥ ७ ॥

दमयन्त्युवाच ।

यथाऽसौ रथनिर्घोषः पूरयन् इव मेदिनीं ।
 ममाह्लादयते चेतो नल एष महीपतिः ॥ ८ ॥
 अद्य चन्द्राभवक्लं तं न पश्यामि नलं यदि ।
 असङ्ख्येयगुणं वीरं विनंक्ष्यामि न संशयः ॥ ९ ॥
 यदि चैतस्य वीरस्य बाहोर् नाद्याहम् अन्तरं ।
 प्रविशामि सुखस्पर्शं न भविष्याम्यसंशयं ॥ १० ॥

VṚIHADAŚVA spake :

WITH the evening in Vidarbha, men at watch, as they drew near,
 Mighty R̥ituparṇa's coming, to king Bh̥íma did proclaim.
 Then that king, by Bh̥íma's mandate, entered in Kuṇḍina's walls,
 All the region round him echoing with the thunders of his car.
 But the echoing of that chariot when king Nala's horses heard,
 In their joy they neighed and trampled, even as Nala's self were there.
 Damayantí, too, the rushing of king Nala's chariot heard,
 As a cloud that hoarsely thunders at the coming of the rains.
 All her heart was thrilled with wonder at that old familiar sound.
 On they seemed to come, as Nala drove of yore his trampling steeds :
 Like it seemed to Bh̥íma's daughter, and e'en so to Nala's steeds.
 On the palace-roofs the peacocks, th' elephants within their stalls,
 And the horses heard the rolling of the mighty monarch's car.
 Elephants and peacocks hearing the fleet chariot rattling on,
 Up they raised their necks and clamoured, as at sound of coming rain.

DAMAYANTÍ spake :

' How the rolling of yon chariot, filling, as it seems, the earth,
 Thrills my soul with unknown transport! it is Nala, king of men.
 If this day I see not Nala with his glowing moonlike face,
 Him, the king with countless virtues, I shall perish without doubt.
 If this day within th' embraces of that hero's clasping arms,
 I his gentle pressure feel not, without doubt I shall not live.

यदि मां मेघनिर्घोषो नोपगच्छति नैषधः ।
 अद्य चामीकरप्रख्यं प्रवेक्ष्यामि हुताशनं ॥११॥
 यदि मां सिंहविक्रान्तो मत्सवारणविक्रमः ।
 नाभिगच्छति राजेन्द्रो विनंक्ष्यामि न संशयः ॥१२॥
 न स्मराम्यनृतं किञ्चिन् न स्मराम्यपकारतां ।
 न च पर्युषितं वाक्यं स्वैरेष्वपि कदाचन ॥१३॥
 प्रभुः क्षमावान् वीरश्च दाता चाभ्यधिको नृपैः ।
 रहोऽनीचानुवर्ती च क्लीववद् मम नैषधः ॥१४॥
 गुणांस् तस्य स्मरन्त्या मे तत्पराया दिवानिशं ।
 हृदयं दीर्यत इदं शोकात् प्रियविनाकृतं ॥१५॥
 एवं विलपमाना सा नष्टसञ्ज्ञेव भारत ।
 आरुरोह महद् वेश्म पुण्यश्लोकदिदृक्षया ॥१६॥
 ततो मध्यमकक्षायां ददर्श रथम् आस्थितं ।
 ऋतुपर्णे महीपालं सहवर्षेयवाहुकं ॥१७॥
 ततोऽवतीर्य वर्षेयो वाहुकश्च रथोत्तमात् ।
 हयांस् तान् अवमुच्याथ स्थापयामास वै रथं ॥१८॥
 सोऽवतीर्य रथोपस्थाद् ऋतुपर्णो नराधिपः ।
 उपतस्थे महाराजं भीमं भीमपराक्रमं ॥१९॥
 तं भीमः प्रतिजयाह पूजया परया ततः ।
 अकस्मात् सहसा प्राप्तं स्त्रीमन्त्रं न स्म विन्दति ॥२०॥
 किं कार्यं स्वागतं तेऽस्तु राज्ञा पृष्टः स भारत ।
 नाभिजज्ञे स नृपतिर् दुहिचर्ये समागतं ॥२१॥
 ऋतुपर्णोऽपि राजा स धीमान् सत्यपराक्रमः ।
 राजानं राजपुत्रं वा न स्म पश्यति कञ्चन ॥२२॥
 नैव स्वयंवरकथां न च विप्रसमागमं ।
 ततो विगणयन् राजा मनसा कोशलाधिपः ॥२३॥

If Nishadha's monarch comes not, with the sound of thunder-cloud,
 I this day the fire will enter, burning like the hue of gold.
 In his might like the strong lion, like the raging elephant,
 Comes he not, the prince of princes, I shall perish without doubt.
 Not a falsehood I remember, I remember no offence;
 Not an idle word remember, in his noble converse free.
 Lofty, patient, like a hero, liberal beyond all kings,
 Nought ignoble, as the base-born, even in private, may he do.
 As I think upon his virtues, as I think by day, by night,
 All this heart is rent with anguish, widowed of its own beloved.'

Thus lamenting, she ascended, as with frenzied mind possessed,
 To the lofty mansion's summit to behold the king of men.
 In the middle court high seated in the car, the lord of earth,
 Rítuparṇa with Várshṇeya and with Váhuka she saw,
 When Várshṇeya from that chariot, and when Váhuka came down,
 He let loose those noble coursers, and he stopped the glowing car.
 From that chariot-seat descended Rítuparṇa, king of men,
 To the noble monarch Bhíma he drew near, for strength renowned.
 Him received with highest honour Bhíma, for without due cause
 Deemed not he the Rája's visit, nor divined his daughter's plot;
 'Wherefore com'st thou? hail and welcome!' thus that gracious king enquires;
 For his daughter's sake he knew not that the lord of men had come.
 But the Rája Rítuparṇa, great in wisdom as in might,
 When nor king within the palace, nor king's son he could behold,
 Nor of Svayamvara heard he, nor assembled Bráhmans saw,
 Thus within his mind deep pondering spoke of Kośala the lord :

आगतोऽस्मीत्युवाचैनं भवन्तम् अभिवादकः ।
 राजापि च स्मयन् भीमो मनसा समचिन्तयत् ॥ २४ ॥
 अधिकं योजनशतं तस्यागमनकारणं ।
 ग्रामान् बहून् अतिक्रम्य नाध्यगच्छद् यथातथं ॥ २५ ॥
 अल्पकार्यं विनिर्दिष्टं तस्यागमनकारणं ।
 पश्चाद् उदर्के ज्ञास्यामि कारणं यद् भविष्यति ॥ २६ ॥
 नैतद् एवं स नृपतिस् तं सत्कृत्य व्यसर्जयत् ।
 विश्राम्यताम् इत्युवाच क्लान्तोऽसीति पुनः पुनः ॥ २७ ॥
 स सत्कृतः प्रहृष्टात्मा प्रीतः प्रीतेन पार्थिवः ।
 राजप्रेषैर् अनुगतो दिष्टं वेश्म समाविशत् ॥ २८ ॥
 ऋतुपर्णे गते राजन् वार्ष्णेयसहिते नृपे ।
 वाहुको रथम् आदाय रथशालाम् उपागमत् ॥ २९ ॥
 स मोचयित्वा तान् अश्वान् उपचर्य च शास्त्रतः ।
 स्वयं चैतान् समाश्रास्य रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ॥ ३० ॥
 दमयन्ती तु शोकार्ता दृष्ट्वा भाङ्गामुरिं नृपं ।
 सूतपुत्रञ्च वार्ष्णेयं वाहुकञ्च तथाविधं ॥ ३१ ॥
 चिन्तयामास वैदर्भी कस्यैष रथनिस्वनः ।
 नलस्येव महान् आसीन् न च पश्यामि नैषधं ॥ ३२ ॥
 वार्ष्णेयेन भवेन् नूनं विद्या सेवोपशिक्षिता ।
 तेनाद्य रथनिर्घोषो नलस्येव महान् अभूत् ॥ ३३ ॥
 आहोस्विद् ऋतुपर्णोऽपि यथा राजा नलस् तथा ।
 तथाऽयं रथनिर्घोषो नैषधस्येव लक्ष्यते ॥ ३४ ॥
 एवं सा तर्कयित्वा तु दमयन्ती विशाम्पते ।
 दूतीं प्रस्थापयामास नैषधान्वेषणे शुभा ॥ ३५ ॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने एकविंशतितमः सर्गः ॥ २१ ॥

‘Hither, O majestic Bhíma, to salute thee am I come.’

But king Bhíma smiled in secret, as he thought within his mind

On the object of this journey of a hundred Yojanas.

‘Passing through so many cities for this cause he set not forth ;

For this cause of little moment to our court he hath not come,

’Tis not so ;—perchance hereafter I may know his journey’s aim.’

After royal entertainment then the king his guest dismissed :

‘Take then thy repose,’ thus said he, ‘weary of thy journey, rest.’

He refreshed, with courteous homage of that courteous king took leave,

Ushered by the royal servants to th’ appointed chamber went :

There retired king Řituparṇa, with Várshṇeya in his suite.

Váhuka, meantime, the chariot to the chariot-house had led,

There the coursers he unharnessed, skilfully he dressed them there,

And with gentle words caressed them, on the chariot-seat sat down.

But the woful Damayantí, when Bhángásuri she’d seen,

And the charioteer Várshṇeya, and the seeming Váhuka,

Thought within Vidarbha’s princess, ‘Whose was that fleet chariot’s sound ?

Such it seems as noble Nala’s, yet no Nala do I see.

Hath the charioteer Várshṇeya Nala’s noble science learned ?

Therefore did the thundering chariot sound as driven by Nala’s self ?

Or may royal Řituparṇa like the skilful Nala drive ?

Therefore did the rolling chariot seem as of Nishadha’s king ?’

Thus when Damayantí pondered in the silence of her soul,

She, the beauteous, sent her handmaid to that king her messenger.

END OF BOOK XXI.

दमयन्त्युवाच ।

गच्छ केशिनि जानीहि क एष रथवाहकः ।
 उपविष्टो रथोपस्थे विकृतो ह्रस्वबाहुकः ॥१॥
 अभ्येत्य कुशलं भद्रे मृदुपूर्वं समाहिता ।
 पृच्छेथाः पुरुषं ह्येनं यथातत्त्वम् अनिन्दिते ॥२॥
 अत्र मे महती शङ्का भवेद् एष नलो नृपः ।
 यथा च मनसस् तुष्टिर् हृदयस्य च निर्वृतिः ॥३॥
 ब्रूयाश्चैनं कथान्ते त्वं पर्यादवचनं यथा ।
 प्रतिवाक्यञ्च सुश्रोणि बुध्येथास् त्वम् अनिन्दिते ॥४॥

बृहदश्व उवाच ।

ततः समाहिता गत्वा दूती वाहुकम् अब्रवीत् ।
 दमयन्त्यपि कल्याणी प्रासादस्था स्युषैक्षत ॥५॥

केशिन्युवाच ।

स्वागतं ते मनुष्येन्द्र कुशलं ते ब्रवीम्यहं ।
 दमयन्त्या वचः साधु निबोध पुरुषर्षभ ॥६॥
 कदा वै प्रस्थिता यूयं किमर्थम् इह चागताः ।
 तत् त्वम् ब्रूहि यथान्यायं वैदर्भी श्रोतुम् इच्छति ॥७॥

वाहुक उवाच ।

श्रुतः स्वयंवरो राज्ञा कौशलेन महात्मना ।
 द्वितीयो दमयन्त्या वै भविता श्व इति द्विजात् ॥८॥

DAMAYANTÍ spake :

‘ SPEED thee, Keśíní, enquire thou who is yonder charioteer,
 On the chariot-seat reposing, all deformed, with arms so short ?
 Blessed maid, approach, and courteous open thou thy bland discourse :
 Undespis’d ! ask thou thy question, and the truth let him reply.
 Much and sorely do I doubt me, whether Nala it may be,
 As my bosom’s rapture augurs, as the gladness of my heart.
 Speak thou, ere thou close the converse, even as good Parṇáda spake,
 And his answer, slender-waisted, undespis’d ! remember thou.’

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

Then to Váhuka departing went that zealous messenger,
 On the lofty palace-terrace Damayantí sat and gazed.

KEŚÍNÍ spake :

‘ Happy omen mark thy coming, I salute thee, king of men :
 Of the princess Damayantí hear, O lord of men, the speech :
 “ From what region came ye hither ? with what purpose are ye come ? ”
 Answer thou, as may beseem you, so Vidarbha’s princess wills.’

VÁHUKA spake :

‘ Soon a second Svayamvara, heard the king of Kośala,
 Damayantí holds : to-morrow will it be, the Bráhman said :

श्रुत्वैतत् प्रस्थितो राजा शतयोजनयायिभिः ।
हयैर् वातजवैर् मुख्यैर् अहम् अस्य च सारथिः ॥९॥

केशिन्युवाच ।

अथ योऽसौ तृतीयो वः स कुतः कस्य वा पुनः ।
त्वञ्च कस्य कथञ्चेदं त्वयि कर्म समाहितं ॥१०॥

वाहुक उवाच ।

पुण्यश्लोकस्य वै सूतो वार्ष्णेय इति विश्रुतः ।
स नले प्रदुते भद्रे भाङ्गासुरिम् उपस्थितः ॥११॥
अहम् अथश्चकुशलः सूतत्वे च प्रतिष्ठितः ।
ऋतुपर्णेन सारथ्ये भोजने च वृतः स्वयं ॥१२॥

केशिन्युवाच ।

अथ जानाति वार्ष्णेयः क्व नु राजा नली गतः ।
कथञ्च त्वयि चैतेन कथितं स्यात् तु वाहुक ॥१३॥

वाहुक उवाच ।

इहैव पुषौ निक्षिप्य नलस्याशुभकर्मणः ।
गतस् ततो यथाकामं नैष जानाति नैषधं ॥१४॥
न चान्यः पुरुषः कश्चिन् नलं वेत्ति यशस्विनि ।
गूढश् चरति लोकेऽस्मिन् नष्टरूपो महीपतिः ॥१५॥
आत्मैव तु नलं वेत्ति या चास्य तदनन्तरा ।
न हि वै स्वानि लिङ्गानि नलः शंसति कर्हिचित् ॥१६॥

केशिन्युवाच ।

योऽसाव् अयोध्यां प्रथमं गतवान् ब्राह्मणस् तदा ।
इमानि नारीवाक्यानि कथयानः पुनः पुनः ॥१७॥

Hearing this, with fleetest coursers, that a hundred Yojans speed,
Set he forth, the wind less rapid, and his charioteer am I.'

KEŚINÍ spake :

' Who the third that journeys with you? who is he, and what his race?
Of what race art thou? this office wherefore dost thou undertake?'

VÁHUKA spake :

' 'Tis the far-renowned Várshņeya, Puṇyaśloka's charioteer :
He, when Nala fled, fair lady! to Bhángásuri retired.
Skilful I in taming horses, and a famous charioteer.
Rituparna's chosen driver, dresser of his food am I.'

KEŚINÍ spake :

' Knows the charioteer Várshņeya whither royal Nala went?
Of his fortune hath he told thee? Váhuka, what hath he said?'

VÁHUKA spake :

' He of the unhappy Nala safe the children borne away,
Wheresoe'er he would departed, of king Nala knows he nought :
Nothing of Nishadha's Rájá, fair one! living man doth know.
Through the world, concealed, he wanders, having lost his proper form.
Only Nala's self of Nala knows, and his own inward soul,
Of himself to living mortal Nala will no sign betray.'

KEŚINÍ spake :

' He that to Ayodhyá's city went, the holy Bráhmaṇ first,
Of his faithful wife these sayings uttered once and once again :

क्व नु त्वं कितव च्छिन्ना वस्त्रार्थं प्रस्थितो मम ।
 उत्सृज्य विपिने सुप्ताम् अनुरक्तां प्रियां प्रिय ॥ १८ ॥
 सा वै यथा समादिष्टा तथास्ते तत्प्रतीक्षिणी ।
 दह्यमाना दिवाराचं वस्त्रार्थेनाभिसंवृता ॥ १९ ॥
 तस्या रुदन्याः सततं तेन दुःखेन पार्थिव ।
 प्रसादं कुरु वै वीर प्रतिवाक्यं वदस्व च ॥ २० ॥
 तस्यास् तत् प्रियम् आख्यानं प्रवदस्व महामते ।
 तद् एव वाक्यं वैदर्भीं श्रोतुम् इच्छत्यनिन्दिता ॥ २१ ॥
 एतच् छ्रुत्वा प्रतिवचस् तस्य दत्तं त्वया किल ।
 यत् पुरा तत् पुनस् तन्नो वैदर्भीं श्रोतुम् इच्छति ॥ २२ ॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

एवम् उक्तस्य केशिन्या नलस्य कुरुनन्दन ।
 हृदयं व्यथितञ्चासीद् अश्रुपूर्णे च लोचने ॥ २३ ॥
 स निगृह्यात्मनो दुःखं दह्यमानो महीपतिः ।
 वाष्पसन्दिग्धया वाचा पुनर् एवेदम् अब्रवीत् ॥ २४ ॥

वाहुक उवाच ।

वैषम्यमपि सम्प्राप्ता गोपायन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
 आत्मानम् आत्मना सत्यो जितस्वर्गा न संशयः ॥ २५ ॥
 रहिता भर्तृभिश्चापि न कुध्यन्ति कदाचन ।
 प्राणांश् चारिषकवचान् धारयन्ति वरस्त्रियः ॥ २६ ॥
 विषमस्थेन मूढेन परिभ्रष्टसुखेन च ।
 यत् सा तेन परित्यक्ता तच्च न क्रोडुम् अर्हति ॥ २७ ॥
 प्राणयाचां परिप्रेप्तोः शकुनैर् हतवाससः ।
 आधिभिर् दह्यमानस्य श्यामा न क्रोडुम् अर्हति ॥ २८ ॥

"Whither went'st thou then, O gamester, half my garment severing off;
 Leaving in the forest sleeping, all forsaken, thy belov'd?
 Even as thou commanded'st, sits she, sadly waiting thy return,
 Day and night, consumed with sorrow, in her scant half-garment clad.
 Oh! to her for ever weeping, in the extreme of her distress,
 Grant thy pity, noble hero, answer to her earnest prayer."
 Speak again the words thou uttered'st, words of comfort to her soul,
 The renowned Vidarbha's princess fain that speech would hear again,
 When the Bráhmaṇ thus had spoken, what thou answered'st back to him,
 That again Vidarbha's princess in the self-same words would hear.'

VRIHADAŚVA spake:

Of king Nala, in such language by fair Keśiní addressed,
 All the heart was wrung with sorrow, and the eyes o'erflowed with tears.
 But his anguish still suppressing, inly though consumed, the king,
 With a voice half-choked with weeping, thus repeated his reply.

VÁHUKA spake:

'Even in the extreme of misery, noble women still preserve
 Over their ownselves the mastery, by their virtues winning heaven;
 By their faithless lords abandoned, anger feel they not, e'en then;
 In the breastplate of their virtue, noble women live unharmed.
 By the wretched, by the senseless, by the lost to every joy,
 She by such a lord forsaken to resentment will not yield.
 Against him, his sustenance seeking, of his robe by birds despoiled,
 Him consumed with utmost misery, still no wrath the fair one feels;

सकृताऽसकृता वाऽपि पतिं दृष्ट्वा तथागतं ।
 भृष्टराज्यं श्रिया हीनं क्षुधितं व्यसनामृतं ॥२९॥
 एवं ब्रुवाणस् तद् वाक्यं नलः परमदुःखितः ।
 न वाष्पम् अशक्तं सोढुं प्ररुरोदाथ भारत ॥३०॥
 ततः सा केशिनी गत्वा दमयन्तै न्यवेदयत् ।
 तत् सर्वं कथितञ्चैव विकारञ्चैव तस्य तं ॥३१॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने द्वाविंशतितमः सर्गः ॥२२॥

बृहदश्व उवाच ।

दमयन्ती तु तच्च कृत्वा भृशं शोकपरायणा ।
 शङ्कमाना नलं तं वै केशिनीम् इदम् अब्रवीत् ॥१॥
 गच्छ केशिनि भूयस् त्वं परीक्षां कुरु वाहुके ।
 अब्रुवाणा समीपस्था चरितान्यस्य लक्ष्य ॥२॥
 यदा च किञ्चित् कुर्यात् स कारणं तच्च भाविनि ।
 तच्च सञ्चेष्टमानस्य लक्ष्यन्ती विचेष्टितं ॥३॥
 न चास्य प्रतिबन्धेन देयोऽग्निर् अपि केशिनि ।
 याचते न जलं देयं सर्वथा त्वरमाणया ॥४॥
 एतत् सर्वं समीक्ष्य त्वं चरितं मे निवेदय ।
 निमित्तं यत् त्वया दृष्टं वाहुके दैवमानुषं ।
 यच्चान्यदपि पश्येथास् तच्चाख्येयं त्वया मम ॥५॥
 दमयन्तैवम् उक्त्वा सा जगामाथ च केशिनी ।
 निशम्याथ हयज्ञस्य लिङ्गानि पुनर् आगमत् ॥६॥
 सा तत् सर्वं यथावृत्तं दमयन्तै न्यवेदयत् ।
 निमित्तं यत् तया दृष्टं वाहुके दिव्यमानुषं ॥७॥

Treated well, or ill-entreated, when her husband thus she sees
 Spoiled of bliss, bereft of kingdom, famine-wasted, worn with woe.²
 In these words as spake king Nala in the anguish of his heart,
 Could he not refrain from weeping, his unwilling tears burst forth.
 Then fair Keśiní departing, told to Damayantí all,
 All that Váhuka had spoken, all th' emotion he betrayed.

END OF BOOK XXII.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

HEARING this, fair Damayantí, all abandoned to her grief,
 Thinking still that he was Nala, spake to Keśiní again :
 'Go, O Keśiní, examine Váhuka and all his acts,
 Silent take thy stand beside him, and observe whate'er he does ;
 And when any act soever, virtuous maiden ! he may do,
 Closely watching all his movements, mark the bearing of the man.
 Nor, fair Keśiní, be given him fire his labours to assist :
 Neither be there given him water, in thy haste, at his demand :
 All, when thou hast well observed him, every act to me repeat,
 Every act, divine or mortal, that in Váhuka appears ;
 And whatever else thou seest, be it straightway told to me.'
 Thus addressed by Damayantí Keśiní again set forth ;
 Of the tamer of the horses every act observed, came back ;
 Every act as she had seen it she to Damayantí told :
 Each divine or mortal wonder that in Váhuka appeared.

केशिन्युवाच ।

दृढं शुच्युपचारोऽसौ न मया मानुषः क्वचित् ।
 दृष्टपूर्वः श्रुतो वापि दमयन्ति तथाविधः ॥८॥
 ह्रस्वम् आसाद्य सञ्चारं नासौ विनमते क्वचित् ।
 तं तु दृष्ट्वा यथासङ्गम् उत्सर्पति यथासुखं ॥९॥
 ऋतुपर्णस्य चार्थाय भोजनीयम् अनेकशः ।
 प्रेषितं तच्च राज्ञा तु मांसं बहु च पाशवं ॥१०॥
 तस्य प्रक्षालनार्थाय कुम्भास् तथोपकल्पिताः ।
 ते तेनावेक्षिताः कुम्भाः पूर्णा एवाभवंस् ततः ॥११॥
 ततः प्रक्षालनं कृत्वा समधिश्चित्य वाहुकः ।
 नृणमुष्टिं समादाय सवितुस् तं समादधत् ॥१२॥
 अथ प्रज्वलितस् तच्च सहसा ह्यथवाहनः ।
 तद् अद्भुततमं दृष्ट्वा विस्मिताऽहम् इहागता ॥१३॥
 अन्यच्च तस्मिन् सुमहद् आश्चर्यं लक्षितं मया ।
 यद् अग्निम् अपि संस्पृश्य नैवासौ दह्यते शुभे ॥१४॥
 छन्देन चोदकं तस्य वहत्यावर्जितं द्रुतं ।
 अतीव चान्यत् सुमहद् आश्चर्यं दृष्टवत्यहं ॥१५॥
 यत् स पुष्पाण्युपादाय हस्ताभ्यां ममृदे शनैः ।
 मृद्यमानानि पाणिभ्यां तेन पुष्पाणि तान्यथ ॥१६॥
 भूय एव सुगन्धीनि हृषितानि भवन्ति हि ।
 एतान्यद्भुतलिङ्गानि दृष्ट्वाऽहं द्रुतम् आगता ॥१७॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

दमयन्ती तु तच्च क्षुत्वा पुण्यश्लोकस्य चेष्टितं ।
 अमन्यत नलं प्राप्तं कर्मचेष्टाभिसूचितं ॥१८॥
 सा शङ्कमाना भर्तारं नलं वाहुकरूपिणं ।

KEŚINÍ spake :

‘ Very holy is he, never mortal man in all my life
 Have I seen, or have I heard of, Damayantí, like to him.
 He drew near the lowly entrance, bowed not down his stately head ;
 On the instant, as it saw him, up th’ expanding portal rose.
 For the use of Řituparṇa much and various viands came ;
 Sent, as meet, by royal Bhíma, and abundant animal food.
 These to cleanse, with meet ablution, were capacious vessels set ;
 As he looked on them, the vessels stood, upon the instant, full.
 Then, the meet ablutions over, Váhuka went forth and took
 Of the withered grass a handful, held it upward to the sun :
 On the instant, brightly blazing, shone the all-consuming fire.
 Much I marvelled at the wonder, and amazed am hither come ;
 Lo, a second greater marvel sudden burst upon my sight !
 He that blazing fire stood handling, yet unharmed, unburned remained.
 At his will flows forth the water, and as quickly sinks again.
 And another greater wonder, lady, did I there behold :
 He the flowers which he had taken gently moulded in his hands,
 In his hands the flowers, so moulded, as with freshening life endued,
 Blossomed out with richer fragrance, stood erect upon their stems :
 All these marvels having noted, swiftly came I back to thee.’

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

Damayantí when these wonders of the king of men she heard,
 Thought yet more king Nala present, by his acts and mien revealed.
 She her royal lord suspecting in the form of Váhuka,

केशिनीं ह्यक्षण्या वाचा रुदती पुनर् अब्रवीत् ॥ १९ ॥
 पुनर् गच्छ प्रमत्तस्य वाहुकस्योपसंस्कृतं ।
 महानसाच् छृतं मांसं समादायैहि भाविनि ॥ २० ॥
 सा गत्वा वाहुकस्याये तन् मांसम् अपकृथ च ।
 अत्युष्णम् एव त्वरिता तत्क्षणात् प्रियकारिणी ।
 दमयन्त्यै ततः प्रादात् केशिनी कुरुनन्दन ॥ २१ ॥
 सोचिता नलसिद्धस्य मांसस्य बहुशः पुरा ।
 प्राश्य मत्वा नलं सूतं प्राक्रोशद् भृशदुःखिता ॥ २२ ॥
 वैक्लथं परमं गत्वा प्रक्षाल्य च मुखं ततः ।
 मिथुनं प्रेषयामास केशिन्या सह भारत ॥ २३ ॥
 इन्द्रसेनां सह भ्रात्रा समभिज्ञाय वाहुकः ।
 अभिदुत्य ततो राजा परिष्वज्याङ्गम् आनयत् ॥ २४ ॥
 वाहुकस् तु समासाद्य सुतौ सुरसुतोपमौ ।
 भृशं दुःखपरीतात्मा सुस्वरं प्ररुरोद ह ॥ २५ ॥
 नैषधो दर्शयित्वा तु विकारम् असकृत् तदा ।
 उत्सृज्य सहसा पुत्रौ केशिनीम् इदम् अब्रवीत् ॥ २६ ॥
 इदं सुसदृशं भद्रे मिथुनं मम पुत्रयोः ।
 अतो दृष्ट्वैव सहसा वाष्पम् उत्सृष्टवान् अहं ॥ २७ ॥
 बहुशः सम्पतन्तीं त्वां जनः शङ्केत दोषतः ।
 वयञ्च देशातिथयो गच्छ भद्रे यथासुखं ॥ २८ ॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने त्रयोविंशतितमः सर्गः ॥ २३ ॥

With a gentle voice and weeping spake to Keśiní again :

‘Go, again, and whilst he heeds not, meat by Váhuka prepared
From the kitchen softly taking hither Keśiní return.’

She to Váhuka approaching, unperceived stole soft away

Of the well-cooked meat a morsel, warm she bore it in her haste,
And to Damayantí gave it, Keśiní, without delay.

Of the food prepared by Nala oft the flavour had she tried ;

Tasting it she shrieked in anguish, ‘Nala is yon charioteer.’

Stirred by vehement emotion, of her mouth ablution made :

She her pair of infant children sent with Keśiní to him.

Soon as he young Indrasená with her little brother saw,

Up he sprang, his arms wound round them, to his bosom folding both.

When he gazed upon the children, like the children of the gods,

All his heart o’erflowed with pity, and aloud his tears broke forth.

Yet Nishadha’s lord perceiving she his strong emotion marked,

From his hold released the children, and to Keśiní spake thus :

‘Oh! so like mine own twin children was yon lovely infant pair,

Seeing them thus unexpected have I broken out in tears.

If so oft thou comest hither men some evil will suspect,

We within this land are strangers, beauteous maiden, part in peace.’

END OF BOOK XXIII.

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

सर्वे विकारं दृष्ट्वा तु पुण्यश्लोकस्य धीमतः ।
 आगत्य केशिनी क्षिप्रं दमयन्त्यै न्यवेदयत् ॥१॥
 दमयन्ती ततो भूयः प्रेषयामास केशिनीं ।
 मातुः सकाशं दुःखार्ता नलदर्शनकाङ्क्षया ॥२॥
 परीक्षितो मे बहुशो वाहुको नलशङ्कया ।
 रूपे मे संशयस् त्वेकः स्वयम् इच्छामि वेदितुं ॥३॥
 स वा प्रवेश्यतां मातर् मां वानुज्ञातुम् अर्हसि ।
 विदितं वाऽथ वाऽज्ञातं पितुर् मे संविधीयतां ॥४॥
 एवम् उक्त्वा तु वैदर्भ्या सा देवी भीमम् अब्रवीत् ।
 दुहितुस् तम् अभिप्रायम् अन्वजानात् स पार्थिवः ॥५॥
 सा वै पित्राभ्यनुज्ञाता मात्रा च भरतर्षभ ।
 नलं प्रवेशयामास यत्र तस्याः प्रतिश्रयः ॥६॥
 तां स्म दृष्ट्वैव सहसा दमयन्तीं नलो नृपः ।
 आविष्टः शोकदुःखाभ्यां बभूवाश्रुपरिमुतः ॥७॥
 तं तु दृष्ट्वा तथायुक्तं दमयन्ती नलं तदा ।
 तीव्रशोकसमाविष्टा बभूव वरवर्णिनी ॥८॥
 ततः काषायवसना जटिला मलपङ्क्तिनी ।
 दमयन्ती महाराज वाहुकं वाक्यम् अब्रवीत् ॥९॥
 पूर्वं दृष्टस् त्वया कश्चिद् धर्मज्ञो नाम वाहुक ।
 सुप्ताम् उत्सृज्य विपिने गतो यः पुरुषः स्त्रियं ॥१०॥
 अनागसं प्रियां भार्यां विजने अममोहितां ।
 अपहाय तु को गच्छेत् पुण्यश्लोकम् अच्युते नलं ॥११॥

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

SEEING the profound emotion of that wisest king of men,
 Keśiní in haste returning told to Damayantí all.
 Then again did Damayantí give to Keśiní command,
 To approach her royal mother, in her haste her lord to see.
 ‘Váhuka we’ve watched most closely, Nala we suspect him still ;
 Only from his form we doubt him, this myself would fain behold.
 Cause him enter here, my mother, or permit me him to seek ;
 Known or unknown to my father let it be decided now.’
 By that handmaid thus accosted, then the queen to Bhíma told
 All his daughter’s secret counsel, and the Rája gave assent.
 Instant from her sire the princess from her mother leave obtained,
 Bade them make king Nala enter in the chamber where she dwelt.
 Sudden as he gazed upon her, upon Damayantí gazed,
 Nala, he was seized with anguish, and with tears his eyes o’erflowed.
 And when Damayantí gazed on Nala thus approaching near,
 With an agonizing sorrow was the noble lady seized.
 Clad, then, in a scarlet mantle, hair-dishevelled, mire-defiled,
 Unto Váhuka this language Damayantí thus addressed :
 ‘Váhuka beheld’st thou ever an upright and noble man
 Who departed and abandoned in the wood his sleeping wife ?
 The beloved wife and blameless, in the wild wood worn with grief,
 Who was he who thus forsook her ? who but Nala, king of men ?

किं नु तस्य मया बाल्याद् अपराहं महीपतेः ।
 यो माम् उत्सृज्य विपिने गतवान् निद्रया हतां ॥१२॥
 साक्षाद् देवान् अपहाय वृत्तो यः स मया पुरा ।
 अनुव्रतां साभिकामां पुत्रिणीं त्यक्तवान् कथं ॥१३॥
 अग्नौ पाणिं गृहीत्वा तु देवानाम् अयतस् तथा ।
 भविष्यामीति सत्यं तु प्रतिश्रुत्य क्व तद् गतं ॥१४॥
 दमयन्त्या ब्रुवन्त्यास् तु सर्वम् एतद् अरिन्दम ।
 शोकजं वारि नेत्राभ्याम् असुखं प्राप्तवद् बहु ॥१५॥
 अतीव कृष्णसाराभ्यां रक्तान्ताभ्यां जलं तु तत् ।
 परिस्रवद् नलो दृष्ट्वा शोकार्ताम् इदम् अब्रवीत् ॥१६॥
 मम राज्यं प्रणष्टं यद् नाहं तत् कृतवान् स्वयं ।
 कलिना तत् कृतं भीरु यच्च त्वाम् अहम् अत्यजं ॥१७॥
 त्वया तु पापः कृच्छ्रेण शपेनाभिहतः पुरा ।
 वनस्थया दुःखितया शोचन्त्या मां दिवानिशं ॥१८॥
 स मच्छरीरे त्वच्छापाद् दक्षमानोऽवसत् कलिः ।
 त्वच्छापदग्धः सततं सोऽग्नाव् अग्निर् इवाहितः ॥१९॥
 मम च थ्ववसायेन तपसा चैव निर्जितः ।
 दुःखस्यान्नेन चानेन भवितव्यं हि नौ शुभे ॥२०॥
 विमुच्य मां गतः पापस् ततोऽहम् इह चागतः ।
 त्वदर्थं विपुलश्रीणि न हि मेऽन्यत् प्रयोजनं ॥२१॥
 कथं तु नारी भर्तारम् अनुरक्तम् अनुव्रतं ।
 उत्सृज्य वरयेद् अन्यं यथा त्वं भीरु कर्हिचित् ॥२२॥
 दूताश् चरन्ति पृथिवीं कृत्वां नृपतिशासनात् ।
 भैमी किल स्म भर्तारं द्वितीयं वरयिष्यति ॥२३॥
 स्वैरवृत्ता यथाकामम् अनुरूपम् इवात्मनः ।
 श्रुत्वैव चैतत् त्वरितो भाङ्गासुरिर् उपस्थितः ॥२४॥

To the lord of earth, from folly, what offence can I have given
 That he fled, within the forest leaving me by sleep oppressed?
 Openly, the gods rejected, was he chosen by me, my lord:
 Could he leave the true, the loving, her that hath his children borne!
 By the nuptial fire, in presence of the gods, he clasped my hand,
 "I will be," this truth he plighted, where is now that promise gone?"

While all this in broken accents sadly Damayantí spake,
 From her eyes the drops of sorrow flowed in copious torrents down.
 Those dark eyes, with vermeil corners, thus with trembling moisture dewed,
 When king Nala saw and gazed on, to the sorrowful he spake:
 'Gaming that I lost my kingdom, 'twas not mine own guilty deed,
 That was wrought by Kali, timid! hence it was I thee forsook.
 Therefore smitten was the miscreant by thy scathing curse long since
 In the wild wood as thou wanderedst, grieving day and night for me,
 He then dwelt within my body, burning with that powerful curse,
 Ever burning, fiercer, hotter, as when fire is heaped on fire.
 He by my religious patience, my devotion, now subdued,
 Lo! the end of all our sorrows, beautiful! is now at hand.
 I, the evil one departed, hither have made haste to come;
 For thy sake, O round-limbed! only; other business have I none.
 Yet, O how may high-born woman from her vowed, her plighted lord
 Swerving, choose another husband, even as thou, O trembler, would'st?
 Over all the earth the heralds travel by the king's command,
 "Now the daughter of king Bhíma will a second husband choose,
 Free from every tie, as wills she, as her fancy may beseem,"
 Hearing this, came hither speeding king Bhángásuri in haste.'

दमयन्ती तु तच्च द्युत्वा नलस्य परिदेवितं ।
 प्राञ्जलिर् वेपमाना च भीता च नलम् अब्रवीत् ॥२५॥
 न माम् अर्हसि कल्याण दोषेण परिशङ्कितुं ।
 मया हि देवान् उत्सृज्य वृतस् त्वं निषधाधिप ॥२६॥
 तवाधिगमनार्थं तु सर्वतो ब्राह्मणा गताः ।
 वाक्यानि मम गाथाभिर् गायमाना दिशो दश ॥२७॥
 ततस् त्वां ब्राह्मणो विद्वान् पर्णादो नाम पार्थिव ।
 अभ्यगच्छत् कौशलायाम् ऋतुपर्णनिवेशने ॥२८॥
 तेन वाक्ये कृते सम्यक् प्रतिवाक्ये तथाहते ।
 उपायोऽयं मया दृष्टो नैषधानयने तव ॥२९॥
 त्वाम् ऋते न हि लोकेऽन्य एकाहा पृथिवीपते ।
 समर्थो योजनशतं गन्तुम् अश्वैर् नराधिप ॥३०॥
 स्पृशेयं तेन सत्येन पादाब् एतौ महीपते ।
 यथा नासक्तं किञ्चिद् मनसापि चराम्यहं ॥३१॥
 अयं चरति लोकेऽस्मिन् भूतसाक्षी सदागतिः ।
 एष मे मुञ्चतु प्राणान् यदि पापं चराम्यहं ॥३२॥
 तथा चरति तिग्मांशुः परेण भुवनं सदा ।
 स मुञ्चतु मम प्राणान् यदि पापं चराम्यहं ॥३३॥
 चन्द्रमाः सर्वभूतानाम् अन्तश्चरति साक्षिवत् ।
 स मुञ्चतु मम प्राणान् यदि पापं चराम्यहं ॥३४॥
 एते देवास् त्रयः कृत्स्नं चैलीक्यं धारयन्ति वै ।
 विब्रुवन्तु यथासत्यम् एते वाऽद्य त्यजन्तु मां ॥३५॥
 एवम् उक्तस् तथा वायुर् अन्तरीक्षाद् अभाषत ।
 नैषा कृतवती पापं नल सत्यं ब्रवीमि ते ॥३६॥
 राजन् शीलनिधिः स्फीतो दमयन्त्या सुरक्षितः ।
 साक्षिणो रक्षिणश् चास्या वयं चीन् परिवत्सरान् ॥३७॥

Damayantí, when from Nala heard she this his grievous charge,
 With her folded hands, and trembling, thus to Nala made reply :
 ‘ Do not me, O noble-minded, of such shameless guilt suspect,
 Thou, when I the gods rejected, Nala, wert my chosen lord.
 Only thee to find, the Bráhmans went to the ten regions forth,
 Chaunting to their holy measures, but the words that I had taught.
 Then that Bráhman wise, Parṇáda, such the name he bears, O king,
 Thee in Kośalá, the palace of king Rituparṇa, found.
 There to thee my words addressed he, answer there from thee received.
 I this subtle wile imagined, king of men, to bring thee here.
 Since, beside thyself, no mortal in the world, within the day,
 Could drive on the fleetest coursers for a hundred Yojanas.
 To attest this truth, O monarch ! I would touch thy sacred feet ;
 Even in heart have I committed never evil thought ’gainst thee.
 He through all the world that wanders, witness the all-seeing wind,
 Let him now of life bereave me, if in this ’gainst thee I’ve sinned :
 And the sun that moveth ever over all the world, on high,
 Let him now of life bereave me, if in this ’gainst thee I’ve sinned.
 Witness, too, the moon that permeates every being’s inmost thought ;
 Let this god of life bereave me, if herein ’gainst thee I’ve sinned.
 These three gods are they that govern the three worlds, so let them speak ;
 This my sacred truth attest they, or this day abandon me.’

Thus adjured, a solemn witness, spake the wind from out the air ;
 ‘ She hath done or thought no evil, Nala, ’tis the truth we speak :
 King, the treasure of her virtue in its fulness hath she kept,
 Her we have watched and guarded ever closely for three livelong years.

उपायो विहितश्चायं त्वदर्शम् अतुलीऽनया ।
 न ह्येकाहा शतं गन्ता त्वाम् ऋतेऽन्यः पुमान् इह ॥३८॥
 उपपन्ना त्वया भैमी त्वञ्च भैम्या महीपते ।
 नाच शङ्का त्वया कार्या सङ्गच्छ सह भार्यया ॥३९॥
 तथा ब्रुवति वायौ तु पुष्पवृष्टिः पपात ह ।
 देवदुन्दुभयो नेदुर् ववौ च पवनः शिवः ॥४०॥
 तद् अद्भुततमं दृष्ट्वा नली राजाऽथ भारत ।
 दमयन्त्यां विशङ्कां तां व्यपाकर्षद् अरिन्दम ॥४१॥
 ततस् तद् वस्त्रम् अरजः प्रावृणोद् वसुधाधिपः ।
 संस्मृत्य नागराजं तं ततो लेभे स्वकं वपुः ॥४२॥
 स्वरूपिणं तु भर्तारं दृष्ट्वा भीमसुता तदा ।
 प्राक्रीशद् उच्चैर् आलिङ्ग्य पुण्यश्लोकम् अनिन्दिता ॥४३॥
 भैमीम् अपि नली राजा भ्राजमानो यथा पुरा ।
 सस्वजे स्वसुतौ चापि यथावत् प्रत्यनन्दत ॥४४॥
 ततः स्वोरसि विन्यस्य वक्त्रं तस्य शुभानना ।
 परीता तेन दुःखेन निशश्वासायतेक्षण ॥४५॥
 तथैव मलदिग्धाङ्गीं परिष्वज्य शुचिस्मितां ।
 सुचिरं पुरुषव्याघ्रस् तस्थौ शोकपरिमुतः ॥४६॥
 ततः सर्वं यथावृत्तं दमयन्त्या नलस्य च ।
 भीमायाकथयत् प्रीत्या वैदर्भीजननी नृप ॥४७॥
 ततोऽब्रवीद् महाराजः कृतशौचम् अहं नलं ।
 दमयन्त्या सहीपेतं कल्यं द्रष्टा सुखीषितं ॥४८॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

ततस् तौ सहितौ रात्रिं कथयन्तौ पुरातनं ।
 वने विचरितं सर्वम् जषतुर् मुदितौ नृप ॥४९॥

This unrivalled scheme she plotted only for thy absent sake;
 In one day a hundred Yojans who beside thyself may drive?
 Thou hast met with Bhíma's daughter, Bhíma's daughter meets with thee,
 Cast away all jealous scruple, to thy bosom take thy wife.'

Even as thus the wind was speaking, flowers fell showering all around:
 And the gods sweet music sounded on the zephyr floating light.
 As on this surpassing wonder royal Nala stood and gazed,
 Of the blameless Damayantí melted all his jealous doubts.
 Then by dust all undefiled he the heavenly vest put on,
 Thought upon the King of Serpents, and his proper form resumed.
 In his own proud form her husband Bhíma's royal daughter saw;
 Loud she shrieked, the undespised, and embraced the king of men.
 Bhíma's daughter, too, king Nala, shining glorious as of old,
 Clasped unto his heart, and fondled gently that sweet infant pair.
 Then her face upon his bosom, as the lovely princess laid,
 In her calm and gentle sorrow, softly sighed the long-eyed queen.
 He, that form still mire-defiled, as he clasped with smile serene,
 Long the king of men stood silent, in the ecstasy of woe.
 All the tale of Damayantí, and of Nala all the tale,
 To king Bhíma, in her transport, told Vidarbha's mother-queen.
 Then replied that mighty monarch, 'Nala, his ablutions done,
 Thus re-joined to Damayantí I to-morrow will behold.'

VRIHADAŚVA spake:

They the night in joy together passed relating, each to each,
 All their wanderings in the forest, and each wild adventure strange.

गृहे भीमस्य नृपतेः परस्परसुखैषिणौ ।
 वसेतां हृष्टसङ्कल्पौ वैदर्भीं च नलश्च ह ॥५०॥
 स चतुर्थे ततो वर्षे सङ्गम्य सह भार्यया ।
 सर्वकामैः सुसिद्धार्थो लब्धवान् परमां मुदं ॥५१॥
 दमयन्त्यपि भर्तारम् आसाद्याप्यायिता भृशं ।
 अर्धसञ्जातशस्येव तीयं प्राप्य वसुन्धरा ॥५२॥
 सैवं समेत्य व्यपनीय तन्द्रां शान्तज्वरा हर्षविवृद्धसत्त्वा ।
 रराज भैमी समवाप्तकामा शीतांशुना राचिर् इवोदितेन ॥५३॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्याने चतुर्विंशतितमः सर्गः ॥ २४ ॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

अथ तां व्युषितो राचिं नलो राजा स्वलङ्कृतः ।
 वैदर्भ्या सहितः काले ददर्श वसुधाधिपं ॥१॥
 ततोऽभिवादयामास प्रयतः श्वशुरं नलः ।
 ततोऽनु दमयन्ती च ववन्दे पितरं शुभा ॥२॥
 तं भीमः प्रतिजयाह पुत्रवत् परया मुदा ।
 यथार्हं पूजयित्वा च समाश्रासयत प्रभुः ।
 नलेन सहितां तत्र दमयन्तीं पतिव्रतां ॥३॥
 ताम् अर्हणां नलो राजा प्रतिगृह्य यथाविधि ।
 परिचर्यां स्वकां तस्मै यथावत् प्रत्यवेदयत् ॥४॥
 ततो बभूव नगरे सुमहान् हर्षजः स्वनः ।
 जनस्य सम्प्रहृष्टस्य नलं दृष्ट्वा तथागतं ॥५॥

In king Bhíma's royal palace, studying each the other's bliss,
 With glad hearts Vidarbha's princess and the kingly Nala dwelt.
 In his fourth year of divorcement, reunited to his wife,
 Richly fraught with every blessing, at the height of joy he stood.
 Damayantí too re-wedded, still increasing in her bliss,
 Like as the glad earth to water opens its half-budding fruits,
 She of weariness unconscious, soothed each grief, and full each joy,
 Every wish fulfilled, shone brightly as the night when high the moon.

END OF BOOK XXIV.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

WHEN that night was passed and over, Nala, that high-gifted king,
 Wedded to Vidarbha's daughter, in fit hour her sire beheld.
 Humbly Nala paid his homage to the father of his queen,
 Reverently did Damayantí pay her homage to her sire.
 Him received the royal Bhíma, as his son, with highest joy,
 Honoured, as became him, nobly: then consoled that monarch wise
 Damayantí, to king Nala reconciled, the faithful wife.
 Royal Nala all these honours, as his homage meet, received:
 And in fitting terms, devotion to the royal Bhíma paid.
 Mighty then through all the city ran the wakening sound of joy;
 All in every street exulting at king Nala's safe return.

अशीभयन्त नगरं पताकाध्वजमालिनं ।
 सिक्ताः समुष्टपुष्पाद्या राजमार्गाः स्वलङ्कृताः ॥६॥
 द्वारि द्वारि च पौराणां पुष्पभङ्गः प्रकल्पितः ।
 अर्चितानि च सर्वाणि देवतायतनानि च ॥७॥
 ऋतुपर्णोऽपि शुश्राव बाहुकच्छद्भिनं नलं ।
 दमयन्त्या समायुक्तं जहृषे च नराधिपः ॥८॥
 तम् आनाय्य नलो राजा क्षमयामास पार्थिवं ।
 स च तं क्षमयामास हेतुभिर् बुद्धिसम्मितैः ॥९॥
 स सकृतो महीपालो नैषधं विस्मिताननः ।
 दिष्ट्या समेतो दारैः स्वैर् भवान् इत्यभ्यनन्दत ॥१०॥
 कञ्चित्तु नापराधं ते कृतवान् अस्मि नैषध ।
 अज्ञातवासं वसतो मद्रुहे वसुधाधिप ॥११॥
 यदि वा बुद्धिपूर्वाणि यद्यबुद्ध्यापि कानिचित् ।
 मया कृतान्यकार्याणि तानि त्वं क्षन्तुम् अर्हसि ॥१२॥

नल उवाच ।

न मेऽपराधं कृतवांस् त्वं स्वल्पम् अपि पार्थिव ।
 कृतेऽपि च न मे क्रोधः क्षन्तव्यं हि मया तव ॥१३॥
 पूर्वं ह्यपि सखा मेऽसि सम्बन्धी च जनाधिप ।
 अत ऊर्ध्वं तु भूयस् त्वम् प्रीतिम् आहर्तुम् अर्हसि ॥१४॥
 सर्वकामैः सुविहितैः सुखम् अस्युषितस् त्वयि ।
 न तथा स्वगृहे राजन् यथा तव गृहे सदा ॥१५॥
 इदञ्चैव हयज्ञानं त्वदीयं मयि तिष्ठति ।
 तद् उपाकर्तुम् इच्छामि मन्यसे यदि पार्थिव ॥१६॥
 एवम् उक्त्वा ददौ विद्याम् ऋतुपर्णाय नैषधः ।
 स च तां प्रतिजयाह विधिदृष्टेन कर्मणा ॥१७॥

All the city with their banners and with garlands decked they forth.
 All the royal streets well watered, and with stainless flowers were strewn;
 And from door to door the garlands of festooning flowers were hung;
 And of all the gods the altars were with fitting rites adorned.
 Rítuparṇa heard of Nala in the guise of Váhuka,
 Now re-wed to Damayantí, and the king of men rejoiced.
 To the king, before his presence, Nala courteous made excuse,
 In his turn Ayodhyá's monarch in like courteous language spake.
 He, received thus hospitably, wondering to Nishadha's king,
 'Bliss be with thee, reunited to thy queen:' 'twas thus he said.
 'Have I aught offensive ever done to thee, or said, O king,
 Whilst unknown within my palace thou wert dwelling, king of men?
 If designed or undesigning any single act I've done
 I might wish undone, thy pardon grant me, I beseech thee, king.'

NALA spake:

'Not or deed or word discourteous, not the slightest hast thou done;
 Hadst thou, I might not resent it, freely would I pardon all.
 Thou of old, my friend, my kinsman wert, O sovereign of men,
 From this time henceforth thy friendship still on me thou must bestow.
 Every wish anticipated, pleasantly I dwelt with thee;
 Not in mine own palace dwelt I ever, as, O king, in thine.
 My surpassing skill in horses, all is thine that I possess;
 That on thee bestow I gladly, if, O king, it seem thee good.'

Nala thus to Rítuparṇa gave his subtle skill in steeds,
 Gladly he received the present, with each regulation meet.

गृहीत्वा चाश्वहृदयं राजन् भाङ्गासुरिर् नृपः ।
 निषधाधिपतेश्चापि दत्त्वाऽश्वहृदयं नृपः ।
 सूतम् अन्यम् उपादाय ययौ स्वपुरम् एव ह ॥ १८ ॥
 चतुपथे गते राजन् नलो राजा विशाम्पते ।
 नगरे कुण्डिने कालं नातिदीर्घम् इवावसत् ॥ १९ ॥

॥ इति नलोपाख्याने पञ्चविंशतितमः सर्गः ॥ २५ ॥

वृहदश्व उवाच ।

स मासम् उथ कौन्तेय भीमम् आमन्त्र्य नैषधः ।
 पुराद् अल्पपरीवारो जगाम निषधान् प्रति ॥ १ ॥
 रथेनैकेन शुभ्रेण दन्तिभिः परिषोडशैः ।
 पञ्चाशद्भिर् हयैश्चैव षट्शतैश्च पदातिभिः ॥ २ ॥
 स कम्पयन् इव महीं त्वरमाणो महीपतिः ।
 प्रविवेश सुसंरब्धस् तरसैव महामनाः ॥ ३ ॥
 ततः पुष्करम् आसाद्य वीरसेनसुतो नलः ।
 उवाच दीव्याव पुनर् बहु वित्तं मयार्जितं ॥ ४ ॥
 दमयन्ती च यच्चान्यद् मम किञ्चन विद्यते ।
 एष वै मम सन्त्यासस् तव राज्यं तु पुष्कर ॥ ५ ॥
 पुनः प्रवर्ततां द्यूतम् इति मे निश्चिता मतिः ।
 पथेनैकेन भद्रं ते प्राणयोश्च पणावहे ॥ ६ ॥
 जित्वा परस्वम् आहत्य राज्यं वा यद्विवा वसु ।
 प्रतिपाणः प्रदातव्यः परमो धर्म उच्यते ॥ ७ ॥

Gifted with that precious knowledge, then Bhángásuri the king,
 When in dice his skill mysterious to king Nala he had given,
 Home returned to his own city with another charioteer.
 Rituparna thus departed, Nala, then, O king of men
 In the city of Kuṇḍina sojourned for no length of time.

END OF BOOK XXV.

VRIHADAŚVA spake :

THERE a month when he had sojourned, of king Bhíma taking leave,
 Guarded he by few attendants to Nishadha took his way.
 With a single splendid chariot, and with elephants sixteen,
 And with fifty armed horsemen, and six hundred men on foot ;
 Making, as 'twere, earth to tremble, hastening onward, did the king
 Enter awful in his anger, and terrific in his speed.
 Then the son of Viraṣeṇa to king Pushkara drew near ;
 ' Play we once again,' then said he, ' much the wealth I have acquired :
 All I have, even Damayantí, every treasure I possess,
 Set I now upon the hazard, Pushkara, thy kingdom thou :
 In the game once more contend we, 'tis my settled purpose this,
 Brother, at a single hazard, play we boldly for our lives.
 From another he who treasures, he who mighty realm hath won,
 'Tis esteemed a bounden duty to play back the counter game.

न चेद् वाञ्छसि द्यूतं त्वं युद्धद्यूतं प्रवर्ततां ।
 द्वैरथेनास्तु वै शान्तिस् तव वा मम वा नृप ॥ ८ ॥
 वंशभोज्यम् इदं राज्यम् अर्थितव्यं यथातथा ।
 येन केनाप्युपायेन वृद्धानाम् इति शासनं ॥ ९ ॥
 द्वयोर् एकतरे बुद्धिः क्रियताम् अद्य पुष्कर ।
 कैतवेनाक्षवत्यां वा युद्धे वा नाम्यतां धनुः ॥ १० ॥
 नैषधेनैवम् उक्तस्तु पुष्करः प्रहसन् इव ।
 ध्रुवम् आत्मजयं मत्वा प्रत्याह पृथिवीपतिं ॥ ११ ॥
 दिष्ट्या त्वयाऽर्जितं वित्तं प्रतिपाणाय नैषध ।
 दिष्ट्या च दुष्करं कर्म दमयन्त्याः क्षयं गतं ॥ १२ ॥
 दिष्ट्या च ध्रियसे राजन् सदारोऽद्य महाभुज ।
 धनेनानेन वै भैमी जितेन समलङ्कृता ॥ १३ ॥
 माम् उपस्थास्यति व्यक्तं दिवि शक्रम् इवाप्सराः ।
 नित्यशो हि स्मरामि त्वां प्रतीक्षेऽपि च नैषध ॥ १४ ॥
 देवनेन मम प्रीतिर् न भवत्यसुहृद्गणैः ।
 जित्वा त्वद्य वरारोहां दमयन्तीम् अनिन्दितां ॥ १५ ॥
 कृतकृत्यो भविष्यामि सा हि मे नित्यशो हृदि ।
 श्रुत्वा तु तस्य ता वाचो बह्वबद्धप्रलापिनः ॥ १६ ॥
 इयेष स शिरश छेत्तुं खड्गेन कुपितो नलः ।
 स्मयंस्तु रोषताम्राक्षस् तम् उवाच ततो नलः ॥ १७ ॥
 पणावः किं व्याहरसे जितो न व्याहरिष्यसि ।
 ततः प्रावर्तत द्यूतं पुष्करस्य नलस्य च ॥ १८ ॥
 एकपाणेन वीरेण नलेन स पराजितः ।
 स रत्नकीर्षनिचयैः प्राणेन पणितोऽपि च ॥ १९ ॥
 जित्वा च पुष्करं राजा प्रहसन् इदम् अब्रवीत् ।
 मम सर्वम् इदं राज्यम् अभ्ययं हतकराटकं ॥ २० ॥

If thou shrinkest from the hazard, be our game the strife of arms,
 Meet we in the single combat all our difference to decide.
 An hereditary kingdom may by any means be sought,
 Be re-won by any venture, this the maxim of the seers.
 Of two courses set before thee, Pushkara, the option make,
 Or in play to stand the hazard, or in combat stretch the bow.
 By Nishadha's lord thus challenged, Pushkara, with smile suppressed,
 As secure of easy victory, answered to the lord of earth :
 'Oh what joy! abundant treasures thou hast won, again to play.
 Oh what joy! of Damayantí, now the hard-won prize is mine.
 Oh what joy! again thou livest with thy consort, mighty-armed!
 With the wealth I win bedecked soon shall Bhíma's daughter stand,
 By my side, as by great Indra stands the Apsará in heaven.
 Still on thee hath dwelt my memory, still I've waited, king, for thee ;
 In the play I find no rapture but 'gainst kinsman like thyself.
 When this day the round-limbed princess Damayantí, undespised,
 I shall win, I rest contented, still within mine heart she dwells.'

Hearing his contemptuous language frantically thus pouring forth,
 With his sword th' indignant Nala fain had severed off his head.
 But with haughty smile, with anger glaring in his blood-red eyes,
 'Play we now, nor talk thus idly, conquered, thou'lt no longer talk.'
 Then of Pushkara the gaming and of Nala straight began ;
 In a single throw by Nala was the perilous venture gained ;
 Pushkara, his gold, his jewels, at one hazard all was won !
 Pushkara in play thus conquered, with a smile the king rejoined :
 'Mine again is all this kingdom, undisturbed, its foes o'ercome.

वैदर्भी न त्वया शक्या राजापसद वीक्षितुं ।
 तस्यास् त्वं सपरीवारो मूढ दासत्वम् आगतः ॥ २१ ॥
 न त्वया तत् कृतं कर्म येनाहं विजितः पुरा ।
 कलिना तत् कृतं कर्म त्वं च मूढ न बुध्यसे ॥ २२ ॥
 नाहं परकृतं दोषं त्वय्याधास्ये कथञ्चन ।
 यथामुखं वै जीव त्वं प्राणान् अवमुजामि ते ॥ २३ ॥
 तथैव सर्वसम्भारं स्वम् अंशं वितरामि ते ।
 तथैव च मम प्रीतिस् त्वयि वीर न संशयः ॥ २४ ॥
 सौहार्दं चापि मे त्वत्तो न कदाचित् प्रहास्यति ।
 पुष्कर त्वं हि मे भ्राता सञ्जीव शरदः शतं ॥ २५ ॥
 एवं नलः सान्त्वयित्वा भ्रातरं सत्यविक्रमः ।
 स्वपुरं प्रेषयामास परिष्वज्य पुनः पुनः ॥ २६ ॥
 सान्त्वितो नैषधेनैवं पुष्करः प्रत्युवाच ह ।
 पुण्यस्योक्तं तदा राजन् अभिवाद्य कृताञ्जलिः ॥ २७ ॥
 कीर्तिर् अस्तु तवाक्षय्या जीव वर्षायुतं सुखी ।
 यो मे वितरसि प्राणान् अधिष्ठानञ्च पार्थिव ॥ २८ ॥
 स तथा सकृतो राज्ञा मासम् उथ तदा नृपः ।
 प्रययौ स्वपुरं हृष्टः पुष्करः स्वजनावृतः ॥ २९ ॥
 महत्या सेनया सार्धं विनीतैः परिचारकैः ।
 भ्राजमान इवादित्यो वपुषा भरतर्षभ ॥ ३० ॥
 प्रस्थाप्य पुष्करं राजा वित्तवन्तम् अनामयं ।
 प्रविवेश पुरीं श्रीमान् अत्यर्थम् उपशोभितां ।
 प्रविश्य सान्त्वयामास पौरांश्च निषधाधिपः ॥ ३१ ॥
 पौरजानपदाश्चापि सम्प्रहृष्टतनूरुहाः ।
 ऊचुः प्राञ्जलयः सर्वे सामान्यप्रमुखा जनाः ॥ ३२ ॥
 अद्य स्म निर्वृता राजन् पुरे जनपदेऽपि च ।

Fallen king! Vidarbha's daughter by thine eyes may ne'er be seen.
 Foolish king! thou'rt now her bondsman, thou and thine to slavery sunk.
 Not thyself achieved the conquest that subdued me heretofore;
 'Twas achieved by mightier Kali, that thou didst not, fool, perceive.
 Yet my wrath, by him enkindled, will I not 'gainst thee direct;
 Live thou henceforth at thy pleasure, freely I thy life bestow,
 And of thine estate and substance give I thee thy fitting share.
 Such my pleasure, in thy welfare, hero, do I take delight,
 And mine unabated friendship never shall from thee depart.
 Pushkara, thou art my brother, may'st thou live a hundred years!'

Nala thus consoled his brother, in his conscious power and strength;
 Sent him home to his own city, once embracing, once again.
 Pushkara, thus finding comfort, answered to Nishadha's lord,
 Answered he to Puṇyaśloka, bowing low with folded hands:
 'Everlasting be thy glory! may'st thou live ten thousand years!
 That my life to me thou grantest, and a city for mine home!'

Hospitably entertain'd, there a month when he had dwelt,
 Cheered in spirit to his city, Pushkara, with all his kin,
 With a well-appointed army, of attendant slaves a host,
 Shining like the sun, departed, in his full meridian orb.

Pushkara thus crowned with riches, thus unharmed, when he dismissed,
 Entered then his royal city, with surpassing pomp, the king.
 As he entered, to his subjects Nala spake the words of peace,
 From the city, from the country, all, with hair erect with joy,
 Came, with folded hands addressed him, and the counsellors of state.
 'Happy are we now, O monarch, in the city, in the fields,

उपासितुं पुनः प्राप्ता देवा इव शतक्रतुं ॥३३॥
 प्रशान्ते तु पुरे हृष्टे सम्प्रवृत्ते महोत्सवे ।
 महत्या सेनया राजा दमयन्तीम् उपानयत् ॥३४॥
 दमयन्तीम् अपि पिता सत्कृत्य परवीरहा ।
 प्रास्थापयद् अमेयात्मा भीमो भीमपराक्रमः ॥३५॥
 आगतायां तु वैदर्भ्यां सपुत्रायां नलो नृपः ।
 वर्तयामास मुदितो देवराड् इव नन्दने ॥३६॥
 ततः प्रकाशतां यातो जम्बुद्वीपे स राजसु ।
 पुनः शशास तद् राज्यं प्रत्याहृत्य महायशः ।
 ईजे च विविधैर् यज्ञैर् विधिवच् चाप्तदक्षिणैः ॥३७॥

॥ इति नलीपाख्यानं समाप्तम् ॥

Setting forth to do thee homage, as to Indra all the gods.'

Then at peace the tranquil city, the first festal gladness o'er,
With a mighty host escorted, Damayantí brought he home.
Damayantí rich in treasures, in her father's blessings rich,
Glad dismissed the mighty-minded Bhíma, fearful in his strength.
With the daughter of Vidarbha, with his children in his joy,
Nala lived, as lives the sovereign of the gods in Nandana.
Re-ascended thus to glory, he, among the kings of earth,
Ruled his realm in Jambudvípa, thus re-won, with highest fame;
And all holy rites performed he with devout munificence.

END OF THE STORY OF NALA.