

sent him to Kurukṣetra to do penance. As a result of the penance Sārasvata got an original Kramapāṭha (serial lessons) of the Taittirīya saṁhitā. He taught those serial lessons to his disciples. In course of time these serial lessons got the name Sārasvatapāṭha, which earned metaphysical and philosophical importance.

SĀRASVATA III. A hermit who lived in the western regions. It is stated in Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, Chapter 201, Verse 30, that this Sārasvata was the son of the hermit Atri.

SĀRASVATA IV. Mention is made in Padma Purāṇa, Svargakhaṇḍa, about another hermit Sārasvata, who taught the Vedas to several disciples in Tuṅgakāraṇya.

SĀRASVATA V. The people who lived in a particular region of Western Bhārata. (Bhāgavata, Skandha 9).

SARASVATĪ I. Goddess of learning.

1) *Birth.* Sarasvatī is the daughter of Brahmā. Kāmadeva was born from Brahmā's heart; Krodha (anger) was born from his eyebrows; Lobha, from his lower lip, Sarasvatī, from his face; the Sindhus from his genitals, and Nirṛti, from his anus.

The following story about the birth of Sarasvatī is from Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Chapter 43 :—

Brahmā got ready for creation, and while in meditation sattvaguṇa (sublime quality) began swelling up in his mind wherefrom a girl was born. Brahmā asked her who she was. She answered : "I am born from you. You fix for me a seat and duties." Then Brahmā told her that her name was Sarasvatī and ordained that she should stay on the tip of everybody's tongue. You dance especially on the tongues of learned people. You should also exist on earth in the form of a river, and assuming a third form you should live in me too." Sarasvatī agreed to this.

2) *Curse of Sarasvatī.* See under Gaṅgā.

3) *Misled Kumbhakarna.* When Kumbhakarna requested Brahmā for a boon, Sarasvatī, at the instance of the latter, lodged herself in the tongue of Kumbhakarna and made him ask for Nidrāvatva (Sleep), something different from what he really desired to get Viz. Nirdevatva (absence of Devas).

4) *Received Baḍavāgni.* (all-consuming fire). Baḍavāgni was born at the quarrel between the Bhārgavas and Hehayas. Baḍavāgni is flames of Aurva, the Bhārgava. (See under Aurva). It was Sarasvatī who took the Agni to the ocean. As a result of this, Sarasvatī, became a river in India. The story is told in the Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa of Padma Purāṇa as follows:—

The world was about to be burnt in. Baḍavāgni, which originated from Aurva, when Indra requested Sarasvatī thus: "Oh ! Devi ! you should deposit this agni in the western ocean; or else the world will be consumed in its flames." To this Sarasvatī told Viṣṇu as follows: "I am not a free person. I will do nothing without the permission of my father. Therefore, please think of some other means."

The Devas, who understood Sarasvatī's nature, went to Brahmā with their case. Immediately he called Sarasvatī to him and asked her to deposit Baḍavāgni in the western ocean for the safety of himself and the Devas. Unable to disobey her father, Sarasvatī, with tears in her eyes, agreed to do so. Then Gaṅgā followed her and she told the former that she (Gaṅgā) would

see her flowing northwards when she reached the eastern region surrounded by Devas.

Sarasvatī sent back her companions like Gaṅgā, Yamunā Manoramā, Gāyatrī and Sāvitrī who followed her. Then she appeared at the āśrama of Uttanka under the Plakṣa tree in the presence of the Devas. Just as Śiva carried Gaṅgā, the Plakṣa tree bore Sarasvatī and immediately did Śiva give to her Baḍavāgni in a pot. Because of his blessing the agni did not burn her hands. She went towards the north with the pot and came to Puṣkarīṇī, and she stopped there to redeem the sins of people. It is believed to this very day that those who drink water from the Puṣkara will attain Brahma-loka.

From Puṣkara Sarasvatī flowed towards the west and reaching a date-garden not far off from Puṣkara it rose up again where Sarasvatī is known as Nandā as well. There is also another reason for the name Nandā. Once upon a time there was a King called Prabhañjana. While hunting in the forest he saw a deer inside a cluster of shrubs and he shot an arrow at it. Then the deer told the King: "What a crime is this ! You have wounded me, who am feeding my child. I have heard that the King shall not kill a deer while it is engaged in drinking, sleeping or mating. May you, who have done this cruel act, be transformed into a tiger and roam about this thorny forest." Saying again and again that he did not notice that the deer was feeding its child, the King begged for absolution from the curse. Taking pity on the weeping king the deer told him that he would be redeemed from the curse when he had talked with the cow called Nandā, which would go there after a hundred years.

According to the above curse the king got transformed into a tiger and spent hundred years eating wild animals. After hundred years were over a herd of cows came there grazing under the leadership of a cow called Nandā. Beautiful Nandā used to walk ahead of the other cows and graze alone at a secret place in the forest. There was a mountain called Rohita there, on the banks of the river. The northern side of the mountain was a dense forest infested by cruel animals. There lived there a very cruel and terrible tiger as big as a mountain. A generous person called Nanda was feeding the cows with grass etc. Nandā, the cow, got separated from the herd and came to the river when the tiger ran after it asking it to stop. Crying aloud the cow said: Oh tiger; I have a child, which has not begun even tasting grass and it is awaiting the return of its mother to the cow-shed at dusk. I shall go and take leave of the child and return so that you may eat me."

Taking pity on the cow the tiger granted its prayer. It returned duly to the tiger at dusk. The tiger, taken by surprise, by the honesty of the cow enquired of it its name, and the cow answered that it was named Nandā by its master, Nanda. As soon as the name was uttered Prabhañjana was released from his old curse and he became the former king. Dharmadeva then appeared there and asked her to choose the boon she liked and she replied as follows:— "I, with my child, must attain the ultimate place and position, and let this place become a sacred place for munis. Also, let this river Sarasvatī, come to be known as Nandā, by my name." Nandā immediately ascended to heaven and Prabhañjana returned to his palace. River Sarasvatī came to be