Arranged in order due o'erhead
Like grass upon an altar spread.
Two glorious bows were gleaming there,
Like Indra's¹ in the rainy air,
Terror of foemen, backed with gold,
Meet for the mightiest hand to hold:
And quivered arrows cast a blaze
Bright gleaming like the Day-God's rays:
Thus serpents with their eyes aglow
Adorn their capital below.²

Great swords adorned the cottage, laid
Each in a case of gold brocade;
There hung the trusty shields, whereon
With purest gold the bosses shone.
The brace to bind the bowman's arm,
The glove to shield his hand from harm,
A lustre to the cottage lent
From many a golden ornament:
Safe was the cot from fear of men
As from wild beasts the lion's den.
The fire upon the altar burned,
That to the north and east was turned.
Bharat his eager glances bent
And gazed within the cot intent;
In deerskin dress, with matted hair,
Rāma his chief was sitting there:
With lion-shoulders broad and strong,
With lotus eyes, arms thick and long,
The righteous sovereign, who should be
Lord paramount from sea to sea,
High-minded, born to lofty fate,
Like Brahmā's self supremely great;

¹ The rainbow is called the bow of Indra.
² Bhogavatī, the abode of the Nāgas or Serpent race.
With Lakshman by his side, and her,
Fair Sita, for his minister.
And Bharat gazing, overcome
By sorrow for a while was dumb,
Then, yielding to his woe, he ran
To Rama and with sobs began:
'He who a royal seat should fill
With subjects round to do his will,
My elder brother,—see him here,
With silvan creatures waiting near.
The high-souled hero, wont to wear
The costliest robes exceeding fair,
Now banished, in a deerskin dress,
Here keeps the path of righteousness.
How brooks the son of Raghu now
The matted locks which load his brow,
Around whose princely head were twined
Sweet blossoms of the rarest kind?
The prince whose merits grew, acquired
By rites performed as he desired,
Would now a store of merit gain
Bought by his body’s toil and pain.
Those limbs to which pure sandal lent
The freshness of its fragrant scent,
Exposed to sun, and dust, and rain,
Are now defiled with many a stain.
And I the wretched cause why this
Falls on the prince whose right is bliss!
Ah me, that ever I was born
To be the people’s hate and scorn!''

Thus Bharat cried: of anguish sprung,
Great drops upon his forehead hung.
He fell o’erpowered—his grief was such—
Ere he his brother’s feet could touch.
As on the glorious prince he gazed
In vain his broken voice he raised:
'Dear lord'—through tears and sobbing came,
The only words his lips could frame.
And brave Śatrughna wept aloud,
As low at Rāma's feet he bowed.
Then Rāma, while his tears ran fast,
His arms around his brothers cast.
Guha, Sumantra came to meet
The princes in their wild retreat.
Vrihaspati and Śukra bright
Their greeting thus rejoice to pay
To the dear Lord who brings the night,
And the great God who rules the day.
Then wept the dwellers of the shade,
Whose eyes the princes, meet to ride
On mighty elephants, surveyed;
And cast all thought of joy aside.
Then Ráma gazed, and scarcely knew
Bharat so worn and changed in hue.
He raised him, kissed him on the head,
Embraced him, and thus kindly said:
'Where was thy father, brother dear,
That thou art come to seek me here?
Unmeet, if he be living yet,
Thy feet within the wood to set.
I pray thee now the cause declare
Why thou hast left the kingdom there,
With matted locks and deerskin dress
To roam the distant wilderness.'

Thus questioned by the prince, at length
Kaikeyí's son regained his strength,
And hand to hand in reverence laid,
To Ráma thus his answer made:
'The great-armed monarch, O my lord,
Has dared to do a thing abhorred,
Left us, and grieving for his son,
A home among the Gods has won.
My mother Queen Kaikeyí gave
The order to the king her slave,
And at the bidding of the dame
He wrought the sin which mars his fame.
A thirst for sway, her hopes are crossed,
She mourns her son, her husband lost,
And through her impious crime will go
For punishment to hell below.
Now O my lord, forgive me all;
Be gracious to thy lowly thrall:
Anointed king, accept to-day
Like Indra's self, the royal sway.
Be gracious, Prince, to lord and peer,
And widowed queens who seek thee here.
Accept the kingdom thine by right,
And so thy faithful friends delight.
Let the broad land no longer be
All widowed and forlorn of thee:
Let the full moon of autumn reign
Triumphant o'er the night again.
These lords and I before thee bend:
O Ráma, to our prayer attend.
O do not thou this grace deny:
Thy brother, pupil, slave am I.
Look on this venerable ring,
Advisers of our sire the king,
From age to age so honoured: thou
Shouldst grant their supplication now.'

As weeping thus the hero prayed,
His head at Ráma's feet he laid.
Like a mad elephant he sighed:
And Ráma gazed and thus replied:
'How, brother, can a man of worth,
True to his vows, of noble birth—
A man like me, commit a sin
The lordship of the land to win?
No slightest shade of fault I see,
O tamer of thy foes, in thee.
But ne'er shouldst thou in childish thought
The queen thy mother blame in aught.
O brother wise and sinless, know
The sacred laws would have it so,
That from good wife and son require
Obedience to their lord and sire.
And we are all the king's, for thus
The virtuous ever reckon us:
Yea brother, be it known to thee,
His wives, and sons, and pupils we.
His is the right, if he deem fit,
To bid me, throned as monarch, sit,
Or in a coat of bark expel,
And deerskin, in the wood to dwell.
And O remember, best of all
Who act as claims of duty call,
As to a virtuous sire is due,
Such honour claims a mother too.
So they whose lives have ever been
By duty led, the king and queen,
Said, 'Ráma, seek the forest shade':
And I (what could I else?) obeyed.
Thou must the royal power retain,
And o'er the famed Ayodhyá reign:
I dressed in bark my days will spend
Where Dándak's forest wilds extend.
So Daśaratha spoke, our king,
His share to each apportioning
Before his honoured servants' eyes:
Then, heir of bliss, he sought the skies.
The righteous monarch's honoured will,
Who in all revered, must guide thee still,
And thou must still enjoy the share
Assigned thee by our father's care.
So I till twice seven years are spent
Will roam this wood in banishment,
Contented with the lot which he,
Canto CI.  THE RAMAYAN.

My high-souled sire, has given me.
The charge the monarch gave, endeared
To all mankind, by all revered,
    Peer of the Lord Supreme,
Far better, richer far in gain
Of every blessing than to reign
    O'er all the worlds, I deem.'
CANTO CII.

BHARAT'S TIDINGS.

He spoke: and Bharat thus replied:
'If, false to every claim beside,
I ne'er in kingly duties fail,
What will my royal life avail?
Still should the custom be observed,
From which our line has never swerved,
Which to the younger son ne'er gives
The kingdom while the elder lives.
Now to Ayodhya rich and fair
With me, O Raghu's son, repair,
And to protect and gladden all
Our house, thyself as king install.
A king the world's opinion deems
A man: to me a God he seems,
Whose life in virtuous thoughts and deeds
The lives of other men exceeds.
When I in distant Kekaya stayed,
And thou hadst sought the forest shade,
Our father died, the saints' delight,
So constant in each holy rite.
Scarce with thy wife and Lakshman thou
Hadst journeyed forth to keep thy vow,
When mourning for his son, forspent,
To heavenly rest the monarch went.
Then up, O lord of men, away!
His funeral rites of water pay:
I and Satrughna, ere we came,
Neglected not the sacred claim.
But in the spirit-world, they say,
That gift alone is fresh for aye
Which best beloved hands have poured;
And thou his dearest art, my lord.
  For thee he longed, for thee he grieved,
  His every thought on thee was bent,
  And crushed by woe, of thee bereaved,
  He thought of thee as hence he went.'
CANTO CIII.

THE FUNERAL LIBATION.

When Ráma heard from Bharat each
Dark sorrow of his mournful speech,
And tidings of his father dead,
His spirits fell, his senses fled.
For the sad words his brother spoke
Struck on him like a thunder stroke,
Fierce as the bolt which Indra throws,
The victor of his Daitya foes.
Raising his arms in anguish, he,
As when the woodman hews a tree
With its fair flowery branches crowned,
Fainted and fell upon the ground.
Lord of the earth to earth he sank,
Helpless, as when a towering bank
With sudden ruin buries deep
An elephant who lay asleep.
Then swift his wife and brothers flew,
And water, weeping, o'er him threw.
As slowly sense and strength he gained,
Fast from his eyes the tears he rained,
And then in accents sad and weak
Kakutstha's son began to speak,
And mourning for the monarch dead,
With righteous words to Bharat said:
'What calls me home, when he, alas,
Has gone the way which all must pass?
Of him, the best of kings, bereft
What guardian has Ayodhya left?
How may I please his spirit? how
Delight the high-souled monarch now,
Who wept for me and went above
By me ungraced with mourning love?
Ah, happy brothers! you have paid
Due offerings to his parting shade.
E'en when my banishment is o'er,
Back to my home I go no more,
To look upon the widowed state
Rest of her king, disconsolate.
E'en then, O tamer of the foe,
If to Ayodhya's town I go,
Who will direct me as of old,
Now other worlds our father hold?
From whom, my brother, shall I hear
Those words which ever charmed mine ear
And filled my bosom with delight
Whene'er he saw me act aright?

Thus Rama spoke: then nearer came
And looking on his moonbright dame,
'Sita, the king is gone,' he said:
'And Lakshman, know thy sire is dead,
And with the Gods on high enrolled:
This mournful news has Bharat told.'
He spoke: the noble youths with sighs
Rained down the torrents from their eyes.
And then the brothers of the chief
With words of comfort soothed his grief:
'Now to the king our sire who swayed
The earth be due libations paid.'
Soon as the monarch's fate she knew,
Sharp pangs of grief smote Sita through:
Nor could she look upon her lord
With eyes from which the torrents poured.
And Ráma strove with tender care
To soothe the weeping dame's despair,
And then, with piercing woe distressed,
The mournful Lakshman thus addressed:
'Brother, I pray thee bring for me
The pressed fruit of the Ingudi,
And a bark mantle fresh and new,
That I may pay this offering due.
First of the three shall Sítá go,
Next thou, and I the last: for so
Moves the funereal pomp of woe.'

Sumantra of the noble mind,
Gentle and modest, meek and kind,
Who, follower of each princely youth,
To Ráma clung with constant truth,
Now with the royal brothers' aid
The grief of Ráma soothed and stayed,
And lent his arm his lord to guide
Down to the river's holy side.
That lovely stream the heroes found,
With woods that ever blossomed crowned,
And there in bitter sorrow bent
Their footsteps down the fair descent.
Then where the stream that swiftly flowed
A pure pellucid shallow showed,
The funeral drops they duly shed,
And 'Father, this be thine,' they said.
But he, the lord who ruled the land,

1 'The order of the procession on these occasions is that the children precede according to age, then the women and after that the men according to age, the youngest first and the eldest last: when they descend into the water this is reversed, and resumed when they come out of it.'

CAREY AND MARSHMAN.
Filled from the stream his hollowed hand,
And turning to the southern side
Stretched out his arm and weeping cried:
'This sacred water clear and pure,
An offering which shall aye endure,
To thee, O lord of kings, I give:
Accept it where the spirits live!'

Then, when the solemn rite was o'er,
Came Ráma to the river shore,
And offered, with his brothers' aid,
Fresh tribute to his father's shade.
With jujube fruit he mixed the seed
Of Ingudíś from moisture freed,
And placed it on a spot o'erspread
With sacred grass, and weeping said:
'Enjoy, great King, the cake which we
Thy children eat and offer thee!
For ne'er do blessed Gods refuse
To share the food which mortals use.'

Then Ráma turned him to retrace
The path that brought him to the place,
And up the mountain's pleasant side
Where lovely lawns lay fair, he hied.
Soon as his cottage door he gained,
His brothers to his breast he strained.
From them and Sítá in their woes
So loud the cry of weeping rose,
That like the roar of lions round
The mountain rolled the echoing sound.
And Bharat's army shook with fear
The weeping of the chiefs to hear.
'Bharat', the soldiers cried, 'tis plain,
His brother Ráma meets again,
And with these cries that round us ring
They sorrow for their sire the king.
Then leaving car and wain behind,
One eager thought in every mind,
Swift toward the weeping, every man,
As each could find a passage, ran.
Some thither bent their eager course
With car, and elephant, and horse,
And youthful captains on their feet
With longing sped their lord to meet,
As though the new-come prince had been
An exile for long years unseen.
Earth beaten in their frantic zeal
By clattering hoof and rumbling wheel,
Sent forth a deafening noise as loud
As heaven when black with many a cloud.
Then, with their consorts gathered near,
Wild elephants in sudden fear
Rushed to a distant wood, and shed
An odour round them as they fled.
And every silvan thing that dwelt
Within those shades the terror felt,
Deer, lion, tiger, boar, and roe,
Bison, wild-cow, and buffalo.
And when the tumult wild they heard,
With trembling pinions flew each bird,
From tree, from thicket, and from lake,
Swan, koïl, curlew, crane, and drake.
With men the ground was overspread,
With startled birds the sky o'erhead.
Then on his sacrificial ground
The sinless, glorious chief was found.
Loading with curses deep and loud
The hump-back and the queen, the crowd.
Whose cheeks were wet, whose eyes were dim,
In fond affection ran to him.
While the big tears their eyes bedewed,
He looked upon the multitude,
And then as sire and mother do,
His arms about his loved ones threw.

Some to his feet with reverence pressed,
Some in his arms he strained:
Each friend, with kindly words addressed,
Due share of honour gained.
Then, by their mighty woe o'ercome,
The weeping heroes' cry
Filled, like the roar of many a drum,
Hill, cavern, earth, and sky.
CANTO CIV.

THE MEETING WITH THE QUEENS.

Vāsīśthā with his soul athirst
To look again on Rāma, first
In line the royal widows placed,
And then the way behind them traced.
The ladies moving, faint and slow,
Saw the fair stream before them flow,
And by the bank their steps were led
Which the two brothers visited.
Kauśalyā with her faded cheek
And weeping eyes began to speak,
And thus in mournful tones addressed
The queen Sumitrā and the rest:
'See, in the wood the bank's descent,
Which the two orphan youths frequent,
Whose noble spirits never fall,
' Though woes surround them, rest of all.
Thy son with love that never tires
Draws water hence which mine requires.
This day, for lowly toil unfit,
His pious task thy son should quit.'

As on the long-eyed lady strayed,
On holy grass, whose points were laid
Directed to the southern sky,
The funeral offering met her eye.
When Rāma's humble gift she spied
Thus to the queens Kauśalyā cried:
'The gift of Rāma's hand behold,
His tribute to the king high-souled,
Offered to him, as texts require,
Lord of Ikshváku's line, his sire!
Not such I deem the funeral food
Of kings with godlike might endued.
Can he who knew all pleasures, he
Who ruled the earth from sea to sea,
The mighty lord of monarchs, feed
On Ingudí's extracted seed?
In all the world there cannot be
A woe, I ween, more sad to see,
Than that my glorious son should make
His funeral gift of such a cake.
The ancient text I oft have heard
This day is true in every word:
'Ne'er do the blessed Gods refuse
To eat the food their children use.'

The ladies soothed the weeping dame:
To Ráma's hermitage they came,
And there the hero met their eyes
Like a God fallen from the skies.
Him joyless, rest of all, they viewed,
And tears their mournful eyes bedewed.
The truthful hero left his seat,
And clasped the ladies' lotus feet,
And they with soft hands brushed away
The dust that on his shoulders lay.
Then Lakshman, when he saw each queen
With weeping eyes and troubled mien,
Near to the royal ladies drew
And paid them gentle reverence too.
He, Daśaratha's offspring, signed
The heir of bliss by Fortune kind,
Received from every dame no less
Each mark of love and tenderness,
And Sita came and bent before
The widows, while her eyes ran o'er,
And pressed their feet with many a tear.
They when they saw the lady dear
Pale, worn with dwelling in the wild,
Embraced her as a darling child:
'Daughter of royal Janak, bride
Of Daśaratha's son,' they cried,
'How couldst thou, offspring of a king,
Endure this woe and suffering
In the wild forest? When I trace
Each sign of trouble on thy face—
That lotus which the sun has dried,
That lily by the tempest tried,
That gold whereon the dust is spread,
That moon whence all the light is fled—
Sorrow assails my heart, alas!
As fire consumes the wood and grass.'

Then Rāma, as she spoke distressed,
The feet of Saint Vaśishṭha pressed,
Touched them with reverential love,
Then near him took his seat:
Thus Indra clasps in realms above
The Heavenly Teacher's feet.
Then with each counsellor and peer,
Bharat of duteous mind,
With citizens and captains near,
Sat humbly down behind.
When with his hands to him upraised,
In devotee's attire,
Bharat upon his brother gazed
Whose glory shone like fire,

* Vrihaspati, the preceptor of the Gods.
As when the pure Mahendra bends
   To the great Lord of Life,
Among his noble crowd of friends
   This anxious thought was rise:
‘What words to Raghu’s son to-day
   Will royal Bharat speak,
Whose heart has been so prompt to pay
   Obeisance fond and meek?’
Then steadfast Ráma, Lakshman wise,
   Bharat for truth renowned,
Shone like three fires that heavenward rise
   With holy priests around.
CANTO CV.

RÁMA'S SPEECH.

A while they sat, each lip compressed,
Then Bharat thus his chief addressed:
' My mother here was made content;
To me was given the government.
This now, my lord, I yield to thee:
Enjoy it, from all trouble free.
Like a great bridge the floods have rent,
Impetuous in their wild descent,
All other hands but thine in vain
Would strive the burden to maintain.
In vain the ass with steeds would vie,
With Tárkshya, birds that wing the sky;
So, lord of men, my power is slight
To rival thine imperial might.
Great joys his happy days attend
On whom the hopes of men depend,
But wretched is the life he leads
Who still the aid of others needs.
And if the seed a man has sown,
With care and kindly nurture grown,
Rear its huge trunk and spring in time
Too bulky for a dwarf to climb,
Yet, with perpetual blossom gay,
No fruit upon its boughs display,
Ne'er can that tree, thus nursed in vain,
Approval of the virtuous gain.

¹ Garuḍ, the king of birds.
The simile is meant to be
Applied, O mighty-armed, to thee,
Because, our lord and leader, thou
Protectest not thy people now.
O, be the longing wish fulfilled
Of every chief of house and guild,
To see again their sun-bright lord
Victorious to his realm restored!
As thou returnest through the crowd
Let roars of elephants be loud,
And each fair woman lift her voice
And in her new-found king rejoice.'

The people all with longing moved,
The words that Bharat spoke approved,
And crowding near to Rāma pressed
The hero with the same request.
The steadfast Rāma, when he viewed
His glorious brother's mournful mood,
With each ambitious thought controlled,
Thus the lamenting prince consoled:
'I cannot do the things I will,
For Rāma is but mortal still.
Fate with supreme, resistless law-
This way and that its slave will draw.
All gathered heaps must waste away,
All lofty lore and powers decay.
Death is the end of life, and all,
Now firmly joined, apart must fall.
One fear the ripened fruit must know,
To fall upon the earth below;
So every man who draws his breath
Must fear inevitable death.
The pillared mansion, high, compact,
Must fall by Time's strong hand attacked;
So mortal men, the gradual prey
Of eld and ruthless death, decay.
The night that flies no more returns:
Yamuna for the Ocean yearns;
Swift her impetuous waters flee,
But roll not backward from the sea.
The days and nights pass swiftly by
And steal our moments as they fly,
E'en as the sun's unpitying rays
Drink up the floods in summer blaze.
Then for thyself lament and leave
For death of other men to grieve,
For if thou go or if thou stay,
Thy life is shorter day by day.
Death travels with us: death attends
Our steps until our journey ends,
Death, when the traveller wins the goal,
Returns with the returning soul.
The flowing hair grows white and thin,
And wrinkles mark the altered skin.
The ills of age man's strength assail:
Ah, what can mortal power avail?
Men joy to see the sun arise,
They watch him set with joyful eyes:
But ne'er reflect, too blind to see,
How fast their own brief moments flee.
With lovely change for ever new
The seasons' sweet return they view,
Nor think with heedless hearts the while
That lives decay as seasons smile.
As haply on the boundless main
Meet drifting logs and part again,
So wives and children, friends and gold,
Ours for a little time we hold:
Soon by resistless laws of fate
To meet no more we separate.
In all this changing world not one
The common lot of all can shun:
Then why with useless tears deplore
The dead whom tears can bring no more?
As one might stand upon the way
And to a troop of travellers say:
"If ye allow it, sirs, I too
Will travel on the road with you":
So why should mortal man lament
When on that path his feet are bent
Which all men living needs must tread,
Where sire and ancestors have led?
Life flies as torrents downward fall
Speeding away without recall,
So virtue should our thoughts engage,
For bliss' is mortals' heritage.
By ceaseless care and earnest zeal
For servants and for people's weal,
By gifts, by duty nobly done,
Our glorious sire the skies has won.
Our lord the king, o'er earth who reigned,
A blissful home in heaven has gained
By wealth in ample largess spent,
And many a rite magnificent;
With constant joy from first to last
A long and noble life he passed,
Praised by the good, no tears should dim
Our eyes, O brother dear, for him.
His human body, worn and tried
By length of days, he cast aside,
And gained the godlike bliss to stray

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1 To be won by virtue.
In Brahma's heavenly home for aye,
For such the wise as we are, deep
In Veda lore, should never weep.
Those who are firm and ever wise
Spurn vain lament and idle sighs.
Be self-possessed: thy grief restrain:
Go, in that city dwell again.
Return, O best of men, and be
Obedient to our sire's decree,
While I with every care fulfil
Our holy father's righteous will,
Observing in the lonely wood
His charge approved by all the good.

Thus Rama of the lofty mind
To Bharat spoke his righteous speech,
By every argument designed
Obedience to his sire to teach.
CANTO CVI.

BHARAT'S SPEECH.

Good Bharat, by the river side,
To virtuous Rāma's speech replied,
And thus with varied lore addressed
The prince, while nobles round him pressed
'In all this world whom e'er can we
Find equal, scourge of foes, to thee?
No ill upon thy bosom weighs,
No thoughts of joy thy spirit raise.
Approved art thou of sages old,
To whom thy doubts are ever told.
Alike in death and life, to thee
The same to be and not to be.
The man who such a soul can gain
Can ne'er be crushed by woe or pain.
Pure as the Gods, high-minded, wise,
Concealed from thee no secret lies.
Such glorious gifts are all thine own,
And birth and death to thee are known,
That ill can ne'er thy soul depress
With all-subduing bitterness.
O let my prayer, dear brother, win
Thy pardon for my mother's sin,
Wrought for my sake who willed it not
When absent in a distant spot.
Duty alone with binding chains
The vengeance due to crime restrains,
Or on the sinner I should lift
My hand in retribution swift,
Can I who know the right, and spring
From Daśaratha, purest king—
Can I commit a heinous crime,
Abhorred by all through endless time?
The aged king I dare not blame,
Who died so rich in holy fame,
My honoured sire, my parted lord,
E'en as a present God adored.
Yet who in lore of duty skilled
So foul a crime has ever willed,
And dared defy both gain and right
To gratify a woman's spite?
When death draws near, so people say,
The sense of creatures dies away;
And he has proved the ancient saw
By acting thus in spite of law.
But O my honoured lord, be kind,
Dismiss the trespass from thy mind,
The sin the king committed, led
By haste, his consort's wrath, and dread.
For he who veils his sire's offence
With tender care and reverence—
His sons approved by all shall live:
Not so their fate who ne'er forgive.
Be thou, my lord, the noble son,
And the vile deed my sire has done,
Abhorred by all the virtuous, ne'er
Resent, lest thou the guilt too share.
Preserve us, for on thee we call,
Our sire, Kaikeyī, me, and all
Thy citizens, thy kith and kin;
Preserve us and reverse the sin.
To live in woods a devotee
Can scarce with royal tasks agree,
Nor can the hermit's matted hair
Suit fitly with a ruler's care.
Do not, my brother, do not still
Pursue this life that suits thee ill.
Mid duties of a king we count
His consecration paramount,
That he with ready heart and hand
May keep his people and his land.
What Warrior born to royal sway
From certain good would turn away,
A doubtful duty to pursue,
That mocks him with the distant view?
Thou wouldst to duty cleave, and gain
The meed that follows toil and pain.
In thy great task no labour spare:
Rule the four castes with justest care.
Mid all the four, the wise prefer
The order of the householder:
Canst thou, whose thoughts to duty cleave,
The best of all the orders leave?
My better thou in lore divine,
My birth, my sense must yield to thine:
While thou, my lord, art here to reign,
How shall my hands the rule maintain?
O faithful lover of the right,
Take with thy friends the royal might,
Let thy sires' realm, from trouble free,
Obey her rightful king in thee.
Here let the priests and lords of state
Our monarch duly consecrate,
With prayer and holy verses blessed

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1 The four religious orders, referable to different times of life are, that of the student, that of the householder, that of the anchorite, and that of the mendicant.
By Saint Vasishtha and the rest.
Anointed king by us, again
Seek fair Ayodhya, there to reign,
And like imperial Indra girl
By Gods of Storm, thy might assert.
From the three debts' acquaintance earn,
And with thy wrath the wicked burn,
O'er all of us thy rule extend,
And cheer with boons each faithful friend.
Let thine enthronement, lord, this day
Make all thy lovers glad and gay,
And let all those who hate thee flee
To the ten winds for fear of thee.
Dear lord, my mother's words of hate
With thy sweet virtues expiate,
And from the stain of folly clear
The father whom we both revere.
Brother, to me compassion show,
I pray thee with my head bent low,
And to these friends who on thee call,—
As the Great Father pities all.
But if my tears and prayers be vain,
And thou in woods wilt still remain,
I will with thee my path pursue
And make my home in forests too.'

Thus Bharat strove to bend his will
With supplicant head, but he,
Earth's lord, inexorable still
Would keep his sire's decree.
The firmness of the noble chief
The wondering people moved,
And rapture mingling with their grief,
All wept and all approved.

1 To Gods, men, and Manes.
‘How firm his steadfast will, ‘they cried,
   Who keeps his promise thus!
Ah, to Ayodhya’s town,’ they sighed,
   ‘He comes not back with us.’
The holy priests, the swains who tilled
   The earth, the sons of trade,
And e’en the mournful queens, were filled
   With joy as Bharat prayed,
And bent their heads, their weeping stilled
   A while, his prayers to aid.
Thus, by his friends encompassed round,
He spoke, and Ráma far renowned
To his dear brother thus replied,
Whom holy rites had purified:
‘O thou whom Queen Kaikeyí bare
The best of kings, thy words are fair.
Our royal father, when of yore
He wed her, to her father swore
The best of kingdoms to confer,
A noble dowry meet for her;
Then, grateful, on the deadly day
Of heavenly Gods’ and demons’ fray,
A future boon on her bestowed
To whose sweet care his life he owed.
She to his mind that promise brought,
And then the best of kings besought
To bid me to the forest flee,
And give the rule, O Prince, to thee.
Thus bound by oath, the king our lord
Gave her those boonos of free accord,
And bade me, O thou chief of men,
Live in the woods four years and ten.
I to this lonely wood have hied
With faithful Lakshman by my side,
And Sítá by no fears deterred,
Resolved to keep my father’s word.
And thou, my noble brother, too
Shouldst keep our father’s promise true:
Anointed ruler of the state
Maintain his word inviolate.
From his great debt, dear brother, free
Our lord the king for love of me,
Thy mother’s breast with joy inspire,
And from all woe preserve thy sire.
’Tis said, near Gaya’s holy town ¹
Gaya, great saint of high renown,
This text recited when he paid
Due rites to each ancestral shade:
‘A son is born his sire to free
From Put’s infernal pains:
Hence, saviour of his father, he
The name of Puttra gains.’
Thus numerous sons are sought by prayer,
In Scripture trained, with graces fair,
That of the number one some day
May funeral rites at Gaya pay.
The mighty saints who lived of old
This holy doctrine ever hold.
Then, best of men, our sire release
From pains of hell, and give him peace.
Now Bharat, to Ayodhya speed,
The brave Satruighna with thee lead,
Take with thee all the twice-born men,
And please each lord and citizen.
I now, O King, without delay

¹ Gaya is a very holy city in Behar. Every good Hindu ought once in his life to make funeral offerings in Gaya in honour of his ancestors.

² Putra is the name of that region of hell to which men are doomed who leave no son to perform the funeral rites which are necessary to assure the happiness of the departed. Putra, the common word for a son, is said by the highest authority to be derived from Put and the deliverer.
To Dāṇḍak wood will bend my way,
And Lakṣman and the Maithil dame
Will follow still, our path the same.

Now, Bharat, lord of men be thou,
   And o'er Ayodhya reign:
The silvan world to me shall bow,
   King of the wild domain.
Yea, let thy joyful steps be bent
   To that fair town to-day,
And I as happy and content,
   To Dāṇḍak wood will stray.
The white umbrella o'er thy brow
   Its cooling shade shall throw:
I to the shadow of the bough
   And leafy trees will go.
Śatrughna, for wise plans renowned,
   Shall still on thee attend;
And Lakṣman, ever faithful found,
   Be my familiar friend.
Let us his sons, O brother dear,
   The path of right pursue,
And keep the king we all revere
   Still to his promise true.
CANTO CVIII.

JÁVÁLI'S SPEECH.

Thus Ráma soothed his brother's grief:
Then virtuous Jáváli, chief
Of twice-born sages, thus replied
In words that virtue's law defied:
'Hail, Rághu's princely son, dismiss
A thought so weak and vain as this.
Canst thou, with lofty heart endowed,
Think with the dull ignoble crowd?
For what are ties of kindred? can
One profit by a brother man?
Alone the babe first opes his eyes,
And all alone at last he dies.
The man, I ween, has little sense
Who looks with foolish reverence
On father's or on mother's name:
In others, none a right may claim.
E'en as a man may leave his home
And to a distant village roam,
Then from his lodging turn away
And journey on the following day.
Such brief possession mortals hold
In sire and mother, house and gold,
And never will the good and wise
The brief uncertain lodging prize.
Nor, best of men, shouldst thou disown
Thy sire's hereditary throne,
And tread the rough and stony ground
Where hardship, danger, woes abound.
Come, let Ayodhya rich and bright
See thee enthroned with every rite:
Her tresses bound in single braid!
She waits thy coming long delayed.
O come, thou royal Prince, and share
The kingly joys that wait thee there,
And live in bliss transcending price
As Indra lives in Paradise.
The parted king is naught to thee,
Nor right in living man has he:
The king is one, thou, Prince of men,
Another art: be counselled then.
Thy royal sire, O chief, has sped
On the long path we all must tread.
The common lot of all is this,
And thou in vain art robbed of bliss.
For those—and only those—I weep
Who to the path of duty keep;
For here they suffer ceaseless woe,
And dying to destruction go.
With pious care, each solemn day,
Will men their funeral offerings pay:
See, how the useful food they waste:
He who is dead no more can taste.
If one is fed, his strength renewed
Where'er his brother takes his food,
Then offerings to the parted pay:
Scarce will they serve him on his way.
By crafty knaves these rules were framed,
And to enforce men's gifts proclaimed:
'Give, worship, lead a life austere,

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1 It was the custom of Indian women when mourning for their absent husbands to bind their hair in a long single braid.

Carey and Marshman translate, 'the one-tailed city.'
Canto CVIII. THE RAMAYAN.

Keep lustral rites, quit pleasures here.'
There is no future life: be wise,
And do, O Prince, as I advise.
Enjoy, my lord, the present bliss,
And things unseen from thought dismiss.
Let this advice thy bosom move,
The counsel sage which all approve;
To Bharat's earnest prayer incline,
And take the rule so justly thine.'
CANTO CIX.

THE PRAISES OF TRUTH.

By sage Jávali thus addressed,
Ráma of truthful hearts the best,
With perfect skill and wisdom high
Thus to his speech made fit reply:
'Thy words that tempt to bliss we fear,
But virtue’s garb they falsely wear.
For he from duty’s path who strays
To wander in forbidden ways,
Allured by doctrine false and vain,
Praise from the good can never gain.
Their lives the true and boaster show,
Pure and impure, and high and low.
Else were no mark to judge between
Stainless and stained and high and mean,
They to whose lot fair signs may fall
Were but as they who lack them all,
And those to virtuous thoughts inclined
Were but as men of evil mind
If in the sacred name of right
I do this wrong in duty’s spite;
The path of virtue meanly quit,
And this polluting sin commit,
What man who marks the bounds between
Virtue and vice with insight keen,
Would rank me high in after time,
Stained with this soul-destroying crime?
Whither could I, the sinner, turn,
How hope a seat in heaven to earn,
If I my plighted promise break,
And thus the righteous path forsake?
This world of ours is ever led
To walk the ways which others tread,
And as their princes they behold,
The subjects too their lives will mould.
That truth and mercy still must be
Beloved of kings, is Heaven's decree.
Upheld by truth the monarch reigns,
And truth the very world sustains.
Truth evermore has been the love
Of holy saints and Gods above;
And he whose lips are truthful here
Wins after death the highest sphere.
As from a serpent's deadly tooth,
We shrink from him who scorns the truth.
For holy truth is root and spring
Of justice and each holy thing,
A might that every power transcends,
Linked to high bliss that never ends.
Truth is all virtue's surest base,
Supreme in worth and first in place.
Oblations, gifts men offer here,
Vows, sacrifice, and rites austere,
And Holy Writ, on truth depend:
So men must still that truth defend.
Truth, only truth protects the land,
By truth unharmed our houses stand;
Neglect of truth makes men distressed,
And truth in highest heaven is blessed.
Then how can I, rebellious, break
Commandments which my father spake—
I ever true and faithful found,
And by my word of honour bound?
My father's bridge of truth shall stand
Unharmed by my destructive hand:
Not folly, ignorance, or greed
My darkened soul shall thus mislead.
Have we not heard that God and shade
Turn from the hated offerings paid
By him whose false and fickle mind
No pledge can hold, no promise bind?
Truth is all duty: as the soul,
It quickens and supports the whole.
The good respect this duty: hence
Its sacred claims I reverence.
The Warrior's duty I despise
That seeks the wrong in virtue's guise:
Those claims I shrink from, which the base,
Cruel, and covetous embrace.
The heart conceives the guilty thought,
Then by the hand the sin is wrought,
And with the pair is leagued a third,
The tongue that speaks the lying word.
Fortune and land and name and fame
To man's best care have right and claim;
The good will aye to truth adhere,
And its high laws must men revere.
Base were the deed thy lips would teach,
Approved as best by subtle speech.
Shall I my plighted promise break,
That I these woods my home would make?
Shall I, as Bharat's words advise,
My father's solemn charge despise?
Firm stands the oath which then before
My father's face I soothly swore,
Which Queen Kaikeyi's anxious ear
Rejoiced with highest joy to hear.
Still in the wood will I remain,
With food prescribed my life sustain,
And please with fruit and roots and flowers
Ancestral shades and heavenly powers.
Here every sense contented, still
Heeding the bounds of good and ill,
My settled course will I pursue,
Firm in my faith and ever true.
Here in this wild and far retreat
Will I my noble task complete;
And Fire and Wind and Moon shall be
Partakers of its fruit with me.
A hundred offerings duly wrought
His rank o'er Gods for Indra bought,
And mighty saints their heaven secured
By torturing years on earth endured.'

That scoffing plea the hero spurned,
And thus he spake once more,
Chiding, the while his bosom burned,
Jáváli's impious lore:
'Justice, and courage ne'er dismayed,
Pity for all distressed,
Truth, loving honour duly paid
To Bráhman, God, and guest—
In these, the true and virtuous say,
Should lives of men be passed:
They form the right and happy way
That leads to heaven at last.
My father's thoughtless act I chide
That gave thee honoured place,
Whose soul, from virtue turned aside,
Is faithless, dark, and base.
Wo rank the Buddhist with the thief, ¹  
And all the impious crew  
Who share his sinful disbelief,  
And hate the right and true.  
Hence never should wise kings who seek  
To rule their people well,  
Admit, before their face to speak,  
The cursed infidel.  
But twice-born men in days gone by,  
Of other sort than thou,  
Have wrought good deeds, whose glories high  
Are fresh among us now:  
This world they conquered, nor in vain  
They strove to win the skies:  
The twice-born hence pure lives maintain,  
And fires of worship rise.  
Those who in virtue's path delight,  
And with the virtuous live,—  
Whose flames of holy zeal are bright,  
Whose hands are swift to give,  
Who injure none, and good and mild  
In every grace excel,  
Whose lives by sin are undefiled,  
We love and honour well.'  
Thus Ráma spoke in righteous rage  
Javáli's speech to chide,  
When thus again the virtuous sage  
In truthful words replied:  
'The atheist's lore I use no more,  
Not mine his impious creed:  
His words and doctrine I abhor,

¹ The verses in a different metre with which some cantos end are all to be regarded with suspicion. Schlegel regrets that he did not exclude them all from his edition. These lines are manifestly spurious. See Additional Notes.
Assumed at time of need,
E'en as I rose to speak with thee,
The fit occasion came
That bade me use the atheist's plea
To turn thee from thine aim.
The atheist creed I disavow,
Unsay the words of sin,
And use the faithful's language now
Thy favour, Prince, to win.
CANTO CX.

THE SONS OF IKŚHVĀKU.¹

Then spake Vaśishṭha who perceived
That Rāma's soul was wroth and grieved:
'Well knows the sage Jáváli all
The changes that the world befall;
And but to lead thee to revoke
Thy purpose were the words he spoke.
Lord of the world, now hear from me
How first this world began to be.
First water was, and naught beside;
There earth was formed that stretches wide.
Then with the Gods from out the same
The Self-existent Brahmā came.
Then Brahmá² in a boar's disguise
Bade from the deep this earth arise;
Then, with his sons of tranquil soul,
He made the world and framed the whole.
From subtlest ether Brahmá rose:
No end, no loss, no change he knows.
A son had he, Maríchi styled,
And Kaśyap was Maríchi's child.
From him Vivasvat sprang: from him
Manu, whose fame shall ne'er be dim.
Manu, who life to mortals gave,
Begot Ikśhvāku good and brave:

¹ This genealogy is a repetition with slight variation of that given in Book I. Canto LXX.
² In Gorresio's recension identified with Viṣṇu. See Muir's Sanskrit Texts, Vol. IV. pp. 29, 30.
First of Ayodhya's kings was he,
Pride of her famous dynasty.
From him the glorious Kukshi sprang,
Whose fame through all the regions rang.
Rival of Kukshi's ancient fame,
His heir the great Vikukshi came.
His son was Vāṇa, lord of might,
His Anaraṇya, strong in fight.
No famine marred his blissful reign,
No drought destroyed the kindly grain;
Amid the sons of virtue chief,
His happy realm ne'er held a thief.
His son was Prithu, glorious name,
From him the wise Triśanku came:
Embodied to the skies he went
For love of truth preëminent.
He left a son renowned afar,
Known by the name of Dhundhumār.
His son succeeding bore the name
Of Yuvanāśva dear to fame.
He passed away. Him followed then
His son Māndhātā, king of men.
His son was blest in high emprise,
Susandhi, fortunate and wise.
Two noble sons had he, to wit
Dhruvasandhi and Prasenajit.
Bharat was Dhruvasandhi's son:
His glorious arm the conquest won.
Against his son King Asit, rose
In fierce array his royal foes,
Haihayas, Tālajanghas styled,
And Śaśivindhus fierce and wild.
Long time he strove, but forced to yield
Fled from his kingdom and the field.
The wives he left had both conceived—
So is the ancient tale believed:—
One, of her rival's hopes afraid,
Fell poison in the viands laid.
It chanced that Chyavan, Bhrigu's child,
Had wandered to the pathless wild
Where proud Himálaya's lovely height
Detained him with a strange delight.
Then came the other widowed queen
With lotus eyes and beauteous mien,
Longing a noble son to bear,
And wooed the saint with earnest prayer.
When thus Kálindá, fairest dame,
With reverent supplication came,
To her the holy sage replied:
'O royal lady, from thy side
A glorious son shall spring ere long,
Righteous and true and brave and strong;
He, scourge of foes and lofty-souled,
His ancient race shall still uphold.'

Then round the sage the lady went,
And bade farewell, most reverent.
Back to her home she turned once more.
And there her promised son she bore.
Because her rival mixed the bane
To render her conception vain,
And her unripened fruit destroy,
Sagar she called her rescued boy.  
He, when he paid that solemn rite,
Filled living creatures with affright:
Obedient to his high decree
His countless sons dug out the sea.

1 From sa with, and gára poison.

2 See Book I, Canto XL.
Prince Asamanj was Sagar's child:
But him with cruel sin defiled
And loaded with the people's hate
His father banished from the state.
To Asamanj his consort bare
Bright Anśumán his valiant heir.
Anśumán's son, Dilipa famed,
Begot a son Bhagírath named.
From him renowned Kakutstha came:
Thou bearest still the lineal name.
Kakutstha's son was Raghu: thou
Art styled the son of Raghu now.
From him came Purushádak bold,
Fierce hero of gigantic mould:
Kalmáshapáda's name he bore,
Because his feet were spotted o'er.
Śankhan his son, to manhood grown,
Died sadly with his host o'erthrown,
But ere he perished sprang from him
Sudarśan, fair in face and limb.
From beautiful Sudarśan came
Prince Agnivarna; bright as flame.
His son was Śighraka, for speed
Unmatched; and Maru was his seed.
Praśuśruka was Maru's child:
His son was Ambarísha styled.
Nabhush was Ambarísha's heir
With hand to strike and heart to dare.
His son was good Nábhág, from youth
Renowned for piety and truth.
From great Nábhág sprang children two,
Aja and Suavrát pure and true.
From Aja Daśaratha came,
Whose virtuous life was free from blame.
His eldest son art thou: his throne,
O famous Râma, is thine own.
Accept the sway so justly thine,
And view the world with eyes benign.
For ever in Ikshvâku's race
The eldest takes his father's place,
And while he lives no son beside
As lord and king is sanctified.

The rule by Raghu's children kept
Thou must not spurn to-day.
This realm of peerless wealth accept,
And like thy father sway.
CANTO CXI.

COUNSEL TO BHARAT.

Thus said Vasishtha, and again
To Rama spake in duteous strain:
'All men the light of life who see
With high respect should look on three:
High honour ne'er must be denied
To father, mother, holy guide.
First to their sires their birth they owe,
Nursed with maternal love they grow:
Their holy guides fair knowledge teach:
So men should love and honour each.
Thy sire and thou have learned of me,
The sacred guide of him and thee,
And if my word thou wilt obey
Thou still wilt keep the virtuous way.
See, with the chiefs of every guild
And all thy friends, this place is filled:
All these, as duty bids, protect;
So still the righteous path respect.
O, for thine aged mother feel,
Nor spurn the virtuous dame's appeal:
Obey, O Prince, thy mother dear,
And still to virtue's path adhere.
Yield thou to Bharat's fond request,
With earnest supplication pressed,
So wilt thou to thyself be true,
And faith and duty still pursue.'

Thus by his saintly guide addressed
With pleas in sweetest tones expressed,
The lord of men in turn replied
To wise Vasishtha by his side:
"The fondest son's observance ne'er
Repays the sire and mother's care:
The constant love that food provides,
And dress, and every need besides:
Their pleasant words still soft and mild,
Their nurture of the helpless child:
The word which Daśaratha spake,
My king and sire, I ne'er will break."

Then Bharat of the ample chest
The wise Sumantra thus addressed:
"Bring sacred grass, O charioteer,
And strew it on the level here.
For I will sit and watch his face
Until I win my brother's grace.
Like a robbed Brāhman will I lie, ¹
Nor taste of food nor turn my eye,
In front of Rāma's leafy cot,
And till he yield will leave him not."

When Bharat saw Sumantra's eye
Looked up to Rāma for reply.
The prince himself in eager haste
The sacred grass in order placed.
Him great and mighty Rāma, best
Of royal saints, in turn addressed:
"What, Bharat, have I done, that thou
Besiegest me," a suppliant now?
Thus stretched, to force redress for wrongs.
To men of Brāhman birth belongs,

¹ A practice which has frequently been described, under the name of dharna, by European travellers in India.
² Compare Milton's "beseeching or beseeching."
Not those upon whose kingly head
The consecrating drops are shed.
Up, lord of men! arise, and quit
This fearful vow for thee unfit.
Go, brother, seek Ayodhya's town,
Fair city of supreme renown.

But Bharat, as his seat he took,
Cast all around an eager look:
'O people, join your prayers with mine,
And so his stubborn heart incline.'

And all the people answered thus:
'Full well is Rama known to us.
Right is the word he speaks, and he
Is faithful to his sire's decree;
Nor can we rashly venture now
To turn him from his purposed vow.'

Then Rama spoke: 'O Bharat, heed
Thy virtuous friends, and mark their reade.
Mark well what I and these advise,
And duly view with clearer eyes.
Thy hand on mine, O hero, place,
Touch water, and thy sin efface.'

Then Bharat rose: his hand he dipped,
And purifying water sipped:
'Each citizen,' he cried, 'give ear,
Attend, each counsellor and peer.
My mother planned, by me untaught,
To win the sway I never sought:
Ne'er Raghu's son could I despise,
In duty's lore supremely wise.
Now if obedience to our sire
This dwelling in the woods require,
I, till the destined years be spent,
Will dwell alone in banishment.'
The virtuous Ráma, wonder-stirred,  
The faithful speech of Bharat heard,  
And thus the hero's feelings found  
Due utterance, as he gazed around:  
'Stil to my father's word I hold,  
Whate'er he bought, or pledged, or sold:  
Ne'er shall his living promise be  
Annulled by Bharat or by me.  
Not thus my task will I evade,  
My exile on another laid:  
Most wise was Queen Kaikeyí's rede,  
And just and good my father's deed.  
Dear Bharat's patient soul I know,  
How reverence due he loves to show;  
In him, high-souled and faithful found,  
Must each auspicious grace abound.  
When from the woods I turn again  
I with his aid shall nobly reign,  
With one so good, of peerless worth,  
A glorious lord of happy earth.  
Her boon Kaikeyí sought and won:  
I, as my father swore, have done:  
And O, do thou, my brother dear,  
The monarch's name from falsehood clear.'
CANTO CXII.

THE SANDALS.

High wonder mingled with delight
Took the great sages at the sight,
Thrilling their breasts who came to view
The meeting of the peerless two.
The saints and sages' holy train
Departed to their home again,
And high each holy voice was raised,
And thus the glorious brothers praised.

'High fate is his, the sire of two
Most virtuous sons, so brave and true:
With wonder and with joy intense
Our ears have heard their conference.
Then the great sages, longing all
To see the ten-necked tyrant fall,
To Bharat, bravest of the brave,
Their salutary counsel gave:

'O thou of lofty lineage born,
Whom wisdom, conduct, fame adorn,
Thou for thy honoured father's sake
Shouldst Ráma's righteous counsel take.
All debts to Queen Kaikeyí paid,
Thy sire his home in heaven has made,
So virtuous Ráma we would see
From filial obligation free.'
Thus gave each royal sage advice,

1 Ten-headed, ten-necked, ten-faced, are common epithets of Rávan the giant king of Lanká.
High saint, and hard of Paradise;
Then quickly vanishing from view
Each to his proper home withdrew.
Then Rāma's face his rapture showed,
And his full heart with joy overflowed,
While, as the sages panted thence,
He paid his humble reverence.

Then Bharat shook in every limb
As suppliant thus he spoke to him:
'The duty of a king respect,
Held by our race in high respect:
And O, thy gracious ear incline
To heed my mother's prayer and mine.
The mighty realm to rule and tend
For me alone is task too hard
No power have I the love to gain
Of noble citizen, and swain
All those who know thee, warrior friend,
On thee their e'ry glance relies,
As labouring hands who till the plain
Look fondly for the Lo, I of Rain.
O wisest Prince, thy realms are e're,
And make its firm foundations sure.
Kakutsthu's son, thy mighty arm
Can keep the nation free from harm.
He spoke, and fell in sorrow drowned
At Rāma's feet upon the ground,
And there the hero sued and sighed,
And 'Hear me, Raghu's son' he cried.

Then Rāma raised him up, and pressed
His brother to his loving breast,
And sweetly as a wild swan cried
To Bharat dark and lotus-eyed:
'So just and true thy generous soul,
Canto CXII.  THE RAMAYAN.

Thy hand may well this earth control:
But many a sage his aid will find,
With counsellor, and peer, and friend:
With these advise: their counsel ask,
And so perform thy arduous task.
The moon his beauty may forgo,
The cold forsake the Hills of Snow,
And Ocean o'er his banks may sweep,
But I my father's word will keep
Now whether love of thee or greed.
Thy mother led to plan the deed,
Forth from thy breast the memory throw,
And fill'd love and reverence show.

Thus spake Kusalya's son: again
Bharat repaid in humble strain
To him who matched the sun in might
And lovely as the young moon's light:
'Pru, noble brother, I entreat,
These sandals on thy blessed feet:
These, bad of man, with gold-bedecked,
The realm and people will protect.'

Then Rama as his brother pray'd,
Pronch his feet the sandals laid;
And these with fond affection gave
To Bharat's hand, the good and brave
Then Bharat bowed his reverent head
And thus again to Rama said:
'Through fourteen seasons will I wear
The hermit's dress and matted hair:
With fruit and roots my life sustain,
And still beyond the realm remain,
Longing for thee to come again
The rule and all affairs of state
I to these shoes will delegate.'
And if, O tamer of thy foes,
When fourteen years have reached their close,
I see thee not that day return,
The kindled fire my frame shall burn.'

Then Ráma to his bosom drew
Dear Bharat and Śatrughna too:
'Be, never wroth,' he cried, 'with her,
Kaikeyí's guardian minister:
This, glory of Ikshváku's line,
Is Sítá's earnest prayer and mine.'
He spoke, and as the big tears fell,
To his dear brother bade farewell.
Round Ráma, Bharat strong and bold
    In humble reverence paced,
When the bright sandals wrought with gold
    Above his brows were placed.
The royal elephant who led
    The glorious pomp he found,
And on the monster's mighty head
    Those sandals duly bound.
Then noble Ráma, born to swell
    The glories of his race,
To all in order bade farewell
    With love and tender grace—
To brothers, counsellors, and peers,—
    Still firm, in duty proved,
Firm, as the Lord of Snow uprears
    His mountains unremoved.
No queen, for choking sobs and sighs,
    Could say her last adieu:
Then Ráma bowed, with flooded eyes,
    And to his cot withdrew.
CANTO CXIII.

Bharat's Return.

Bearing the sandals on his head
Away triumphant Bharat sped,
And clomb, Satrughna by his side,
The car wherein he wont to ride.
Before the mighty army went
The lords for counsel eminent,
Vaśishtha, Vāmadeva next,
Jáváli, pure with prayer and text.
Then from that lovely river they
Turned eastward on their homeward way
With reverent steps from left to right
They circled Chitrakūṭa's height,
And viewed his peaks on every side
With stains of thousand metals dyed.
Then Bharat saw, not far away,
Where Bharadvája's dwelling lay,
And when the chieftain bold and sage
Had reached that holy hermitage,
Down from the car he sprang to greet
The saint, and bowed before his feet.
High rapture filled the hermit's breast,
Who thus the royal prince addressed:
'Say, Bharat, is thy duty done?
Hast thou with Ráma met, my son?'

The chief whose soul to virtue clave
This answer to the hermit gave:
'I prayed him with our holy guide:'
But Raghu’s son our prayer denied,
And long besought by both of us
He answered Saint Vaśishṭha thus:
‘True to my vow, I still will be
Observant of my sire’s decree:
Till fourteen years complete their course
That promise shall remain in force.’
The saint in highest wisdom taught,
These solemn words with wisdom fraught,
To him in lore of language learnt,
Most eloquent himself returned:
‘Obey my rede: let Bharat hold
This pair of sandals decked with gold:
They in Ayodhya shall ensure
Our welfare, and our bliss secure.’
When Rāma heard the royal priest
He rose, and looking to the east
Consigned the sandals to my hand
That they for him might guard the land.
Then from the high-souled chief’s abode
I turned upon my homeward road,
Dismissed by him, and now this pair
Of sandals to Ayodhya bear.’

To him the hermit thus replied,
By Bharat’s tidings gratified:
‘No marvel thoughts so just and true,
Thou best of all who right pursue,
Should dwell in thee, O Prince of men,
As waters gather in the glen.
He is not dead: we mourn in vain:
Thy blessed father lives again,
Whose noble son we thus behold
Like Virtue’s self in human mould.’

He ceased: before him Bharat fell
To clasp his feet, and said farewell:
His reverent steps around him bent,
And onward to Ayodhya went.
His host of followers stretching far
With many an elephant and car,
Waggon and steed, a mighty train,
Traversed their homeward way again.
O'er holy Yamuna they sped,
Fair stream, with waves en garlanded,
And then once more the rivers' queen,
The blessed Ganga's self was seen.
Then making o'er that flood his way,
Where crocodiles and monsters lay,
The king to Sringeri drew
His host and royal retinue.
His onward way he thence pursued,
And soon renowned Ayodhya viewed.
Then burnt by woe and sad of cheer
Bharat addressed the charioteer:
'Ah, see, Ayodhya dark and sad,
Her glory gone, once bright and glad:
Of joy and beauty reft, forlorn,
In silent grief she seems to mourn.'
CANTO CXIV.

BHARAT'S DEPARTURE.

Deep, pleasant was the chariot's sound
As royal Bharat, far renowned,
Whirled by his mettled courser's fast
Within Ayodhya's city passed.
There dark and drear was every home
Where cats and owls had space to roam.
As when the shades of midnight fall
With blackest gloom, and cover all:
As Rohini, dear spouse of him
Whom Râhu hates,¹ grows faint and dim,
When, as she shines on high alone,
The demon's shade is o'er her thrown:
As burnt by summer's heat a rill
Scarce trickling from her parent hill,
With dying fish in pools half dried,
And fainting birds upon her side:
As sacrificial flames arise
When holy oil their food supplies,
But when no more the fire is fed
Sink lustreless and cold and dead:
Like some brave host that filled the plain,
With harness rent and captains slain,
When warrior, elephant, and steed
Mingled in wild confusion bleed:
As when, all spent her store of worth,

¹ The spouse of Rohini is the Moon: Râhu is the demon who causes eclipses.
Rocks from her base the loosened earth:
Like a sad fallen star no more
Wearing the lovely light it wore:
So mournful in her lost estate
Was that sad town disconsolate.
Then car-borne Bharat, good and brave,
Thus spake to him the steeds who drave:
'Why are Ayodhyá's streets so mute?
Where is the voice of lyre and lute?
Why sounds not, as of old, to-day
The music of the minstrel's lay?
Where are the wreaths they used to twine?
Where are the blossoms and the wine?
Where is the cool refreshing scent
Of sandal dust with aloe bient?
The elephant's impatient roar,
The din of cars, I hear no more:
No more the horse's pleasant neigh
Rings out to meet me on my way.
Ayodhyá's youths, since Ráma's flight,
Have lost their relish for delight:
Her men roam forth no more, nor care
Bright garlands round their necks to wear.
All grieve for banished Ráma: feast,
And revelry and song have ceased:
Like a black night when floods pour down,
So dark and gloomy is the town.
When will he come to make them gay
Like some auspicious holiday?
When will my brother, like a cloud
At summer's close, make glad the crowd?'
Then through the streets the hero rode,
And passed within his sire's abode,
Like some deserted lion's den,
Forsaken by the lord of men.
Then to the inner bowers he came,
Once happy home of many a dame,
   Now gloomy, sad, and drear,
Dark as of old that sunless day
When wept the Gods in wild dismay:
   There poured he many a tear.

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1 'Once,' says the Commentator Tirtha, 'in the battle between the Gods and demons the Gods were vanquished, and the sun was overthrown by Rahu. At the request of the Gods Atri undertook the management of the sun for a week.'
CANTO CXV.

NANDIGRÁM.¹

Then when the pious chief had seen
Lodged in her home each widowed queen,
Still with his burning grief oppressed
His holy guides he thus addressed:
'I go to Nandigrám: adieu,
This day, my lords to all of you:
I go, my load of grief to bear,
Rest of the son of Raghu there.
The king my sire, alas, is dead,
And Ráma to the forest fled;
There will I wait till he, restored,
Shall rule the realm, its rightful lord.'

They heard the high-souled prince's speech,
And thus with ready answer each
Of those great lords their chief addressed,
With Saint Vaśishtha and the rest:
'Good are the words which thou hast said,
By brotherly affection led,
Like thine own self, a faithful friend,
True to thy brother to the end:
A heart like thine must all approve,
Which naught from virtue's path can move.'

Soon as the words he loved to hear
Fell upon Bharat's joyful ear,
Thus to the charioteer he spoke:
'My car with speed, Suanantra, yoke.'

¹ Now Nundgaon, in Oudh.
Then Bharat with delighted mien
Obeisance paid to every queen,
And with Śatrughna by his side
Mounting the car away he hied.
With lords, and priests in long array
The brothers hastened on their way,
And the great pomp the Brāhmans led
With Saint Vaśishṭha at their head.
Then every face was eastward bent
As on to Nandigrām they went.
Behind the army followed, all
Unsummoned by their leaders’ call,
And steeds and elephants and men
Streamed forth with every citizen.
As Bharat in his chariot rode
His heart with love fraternal glowed,
And with the sandals on his head
To Nandigrām he quickly sped.
Within the town he swiftly pressed,
Alighted, and his guides addressed:
‘To me in trust my brother’s hand
Consigned the lord-ship of the land,
When he these gold-wrought sandals gave
As emblems to protect and save.’
Then Bharat bowed, and from his head
The sacred pledge deposited,
And thus to all the people cried
Who ringed him round on every side:
‘Haste, for these sandals quickly bring
The canopy that shades the king.
Pay ye to them all reverence meet
As to my elder brother’s feet,
For they will right and law maintain
Until King Rāma come again.’
My brother with a loving mind
These sandals to my charge consigned:
I till be come will guard with care
The sacred trust for Raghu’s heir.
My watchful task will soon be done,
The pledge restored to Raghu’s son;
Then shall I see, his wanderings o’er,
These sandals on his feet once more.
My brother I shall meet at last,
The burthen from my shoulders cast,
To Ráma’s hand the realm restore
And serve my elder as before.
When Ráma takes again this pair
Of sandals kept with pious care,
And here his glorious reign begins,
I shall be cleansed from all my sins,
When the glad people’s voices ring
With welcome to the new-made king,
Joy will be mine four-fold as great
As if supreme I ruled the state.’

Thus humbly spoke in sad lament
The chief in fame preëminent:
Thus, by his reverent lords obeyed,
At Nandigrán the kingdom swayed.
With hermit’s dress and matted hair
He dwelt with all his army there.
The sandals of his brother’s feet
Installed upon the royal seat,
He, all his powers to them referred,
Affairs of state administered.

In every care, in every task,
When golden store was brought,
He first, as though their rode to ask,
Those royal sandals sought.
CANTO CXVI.

THE HERMIT'S SPEECH.

When Bharat took his homeward road
Still Ráma in the wood abode:
But soon he marked the fear and care
That darkened all the hermits there.
For all who dwelt before the hill
Were sad with dread of coming ill:
Each holy brow was lined by thought,
And Ráma's side they often sought.
With gathering frowns the prince they eyed,
And then withdrew and talked aside.

Then Raghu's son with anxious breast
The leader of the saints addressed:
'Can aught that I have done displease,
O reverend Sage, the devotees?
Why are their loving looks, O say,
Thus sadly changed or turned away?
Has Lakshman through his want of heed
Offended with unseemly deed?
Or is the gentle Sítá, she
Who loved to honour you and me—
Is she the cause of this offence,
Failing in lowly reverence?'

One sage, o'er whom, exceeding old,
Had many a year of penance rolled,
Trembling in every aged limb
Thus for the rest replied to him:
'How could we, O beloved, blame
Canto CXVI. THE RAMAYAN.

Thy lofty-souled Videhan dame,
Who in the good of all delights,
And more than all of anchorites?
But yet through thee a numbing dread
Of fiends among our band has spread;
Obstructed by the demons' art
The trembling hermits talk apart.
For Rāvan's brother, overbold,
Named Khara, of gigantic mould,
Vexes with fury fierce and fell
All those in Janasthán¹ who dwell.
Resistless in his cruel deeds,
On flesh of men the monster feeds:
Sinful and arrogant is he,
And looks with special hate on thee.
Since thou, beloved son, hast made
Thy home within this holy shade,
The fiends have vexed with wilder rage
The dwellers of the hermitage.
In many a wild and dreadful form
Around the trembling saints they swarm,
With hideous shape and foul disguise
Their terrify our holy eyes.
They make our loathing souls endure
Insult and scorn and sights impure,
And flocking round the altars stay
The holy rites we love to pay.
In every spot throughout the grove
With evil thoughts the monsters rove,
Assailing with their secret might
Each unsuspecting anchorite.
Ladle and dish away they fling,
Our fires with floods extinguishing.

¹ A part of the great Dandak forest.
And when the sacred flame should burn
They trample on each water-urn.
Now when they see their sacred wood
Plagued by this impious brotherhood,
The troubled saints away would roam
And seek in other shades a home:
Hence will we fly, O Rāma, ere
The cruel fiends our bodies tear.
Not far away a forest lies
Rich in the roots and fruit we prize,
To this will I and all repair
And join the holy hermits there:
Be wise, and with us thither flee
Before this Khara injure thee.
Mighty art thou, O Rāma, yet
Each day with peril is beset,
If with thy consort by thy side
Thou in this wood wilt still abide.

He ceased: the words the hero spake
The hermit's purpose failed to break:
To Raghu's son farewell he said,
And blessed the chief and comforted;
Then with the rest the holy sage
Departed from the hermitage.

So from the wood the saints withdrew,
And Rāma bidding all adieu
In lowly reverence bent:
Instructed by their friendly speech,
Blest with the gracious love of each,
To his pure home he went.
Nor would the son of Raghu stray
A moment from that grove away

From which the saints had fled.
And many a hermit thither came
Attracted by his saintly fame
And the pure life he led.
CANTO CXVII.

ANASÚYÁ.

But dwelling in that lonely spot
Left by the hermits pleased him not.
' I met the faithful Bharat here,
The townsmen, and my mother dear:
The painful memory lingers yet,
And stings me with a vain regret.
And here the host of Bharat camped,
And many a courser here has stamped,
And elephants with ponderous feet
Have trampled through the calm retreat.'
So forth to seek a home he hied,
His spouse and Lakshman by his side.
He came to Atri's pure retreat,
Paid reverence to his holy feet,
And from the saint such welcome won
As a fond father gives his son.
The noble prince with joy unsighned
As a dear guest he entertained,
And cheered the glorious Lakshman too
And Sítá with observance due.
Then Anasúyá at the call
Of him who sought the good of all,
His blameless venerable spouse,
Delighting in her holy vows,
Came from her chamber to his side:
To her the virtuous hermit cried:
'Receive, I pray, with friendly grace -
Canto OXVII. THE RAMAYAN.

This dame of Maithil monarchs' race:
To Ráma next made known his wife,
The devotee of saintliest life:
'Ten thousand years this votaress spent
On sternest rites of penance spent;
She when the clouds withheld their rain,
And drought ten years consumed the plain,
Caused grateful roots and fruit to grow
And ordered Gángá here to flow:
So from their cares the saints she freed,
Not let these checks their rites impede.
She wrought in Heaven's behalf, and made
Ten nights of one, the Gods to aid:\nLet holy Anasúyá be
An honoured mother, Prince, to thee.
Let thy Videhan spouse draw near
To her whom all that live revere,
Stricken in years, whose loving mind
Is slow to wrath and ever kind.'

He ceased: and Ráma gave assent,
And said, with eyes on Sítá bent:
'O Princess, thou hast heard with me
This counsel of the devotee:
Now that her touch thy soul may bless,
Approach the saintly votaress:
Come to the venerable dame,
Far known by Anasúyá's name:
The mighty things that she has done
High glory in the world have won.'

Thus spoke the son of Rághi: she
Approached the saintly devotee,
Who with her white locks, old and frail,

---

1 When the saint Mándavya had doomed some saint's wife, who was Anasúyá's friend to become a widow on the morrow.
Shook like a plantain in the gale.
To that true spouse she bowed her head,
And 'Lady, I am Sítá,' said:
Raised suppliant hands and prayed her tell
That all was prosperous and well.
    The aged matron, when she saw
Fair Sítá true to duty's law,
Addressed her thus: 'High fate is thine
Whose thoughts to virtue still incline.
Thou, lady of the noble mind,
Hast kin and state and wealth resigned
To follow Ráma forced to tread
Where solitary woods are spread.
Those women gain high spheres above
Who still unchanged their husbands love,
Whether they dwell in town or wood,
Whether their hearts be ill or good.
Though wicked, poor, or led away
In love's forbidden paths to stray,
The noble matron still will deem
Her lord a deity supreme.
Regarding kiu and friendship, I
Can see no better, holier tie,
And every penance-rite is dim
Beside the joy of serving him.
But dark is this to her whose mind
Promptings of idle fancy blind,
Who led by evil thoughts away
Makes him who should command obey.
Such women, O dear Maithil dame,
Their virtue lose and honest fame,
Enslaved by sin and folly, led
In these unholy paths to tread.
But they who good and true like thee
The present and the future see,
Like men by holy deeds will rise
To mansions in the blissful skies.

So keep thee pure from taint of sin,
Still to thy lord be true,
And fame and merit shalt thou win,
To thy devotion due.'
Thus by the holy dame addressed
Who banished envy from her breast,
Her lowly reverence Sítá paid,
And softly thus her answer made:
‘No marvel, best of dames, thy speech
The duties of a wife should teach:
Yet I, O lady, also know
Due reverence to my lord to show.
Were he the meanest of the base,
Unhonoured with a single grace,
My husband still I ne’er would leave,
But firm through all to him would cleave
Still rather to a lord like mine
Whose virtues high-exalted shine,
Compassionate, of lofty soul,
With every sense in due control,
True in his love, of righteous mind,
Like a dear sire and mother kind.
E’en as he ever loves to treat
Kauśalyá with observance meet,
Has his behaviour ever been
To every other honoured queen.
Nay, more, a sonlike reverence shows
The noble Ráma e’en to those
On whom the king his father set
His eyes one moment, to forget.
Deep in my heart the words are stord,
Said by the mother of my lord,
When from my home I turned away
In the lone fearful woods to stray.
The counsel of my mother deep
Impressed upon my soul I keep,
When by the fire I took my stand,
And Ráma clasped in his my hand.
And in my bosom cherished yet,
My friends' advice I ne'er forget:
Woman her holiest offering pays
When she her husband's will obeys.
Good Sávitrí her lord obeyed,
And a high saint in heaven was made,
And for the self-same virtue thou
Hast heaven in thy possession now.
And she with whom no dame could vie,
Now a bright Goddess in the sky,
Sweet Róhíṇí the Moon's dear Queen,
Without her lord is never seen:
And many a faithful wife beside
For her pure love is glorified.'

Thus Sítá spake: soft rapture stole
Through Anasúyá's saintly soul:
Kisses on Sítá's head she pressed,
And thus the Maithil dame addressed:
'I by long rites and toils endured
Rich store of merit have secured:
From this my wealth will I bestow
A blessing ere I let thee go.
So right and wise and true each word
That from thy lips mine ears have heard,
I love thee: be my pleasing task
To grant the boon that thou shalt ask.'

Then Sítá marvelled much, and while
Played o'er her lips a gentle smile,
'All has been done, O Saint,' she cried,
And naught remains to wish beside.
She spake; the lady's meek reply
Swelled Anasûyâ's rapture high:
'Sítâ,' she said, 'my gift to-day
Thy sweet contentment shall repay.
Accept this precious robe to wear,
Of heavenly fabric, rich and rare,
These gems thy limbs to ornament,
This precious balsam sweet of scent.
O Maithil dame, this gift of mine
Shall make thy limbs with beauty shine,
And breathing o'er thy frame dispense
Its pure and lasting influence.
This balsam on thy fair limbs spread
New radiance on thy lord shall shed,
As Lakshmi's beauty lends a grace
To Vishnu's own celestial face.'

Then Sítâ took the gift the dame
Bestowed on her in friendship's name,
The balsam, gems, and robe divine,
And garlands wreathed of bloomy twine;
Then sat her down, with reverence meet,
At saintly Anasûyâ's feet.
The matron rich in rites and vows
Turned her to Râma's Maithil spouse,
And questioned thus in turn to hear
A pleasant tale to charm her ear:
'Sítâ, 'tis said that Raghu's son
Thy hand, mid gathered suitors, won.
I fain would hear thee, lady, tell
The story as it all befell:
Do thou repeat each thing that passed,
Canto CXVIII. THE RAMAYAN.

Reviewing all from first to last,
Thus spake the dame to Sítá: she
Replying to the devotee,
‘Then, lady, thy attention lend,’
Rehearsed the story to the end:
‘King Janak, just and brave and strong,
Who loves the right and hates the wrong,
Well skilled in what the law ordains
For Warriors, o'er Videha reigns.
Guiding one morn the plough, his hand
Marked out for rites the sacred land,
When, as the ploughshare cleft the earth,
Child of the king I leapt to birth.
Then as the ground he smoothed and cleared,
He saw me all with dust besmeared,
And on the new-found babe, amazed
The ruler of Videha gazed.
In childless love the monarch pressed
The welcome infant to his breast:
‘My daughter,’ thus he cried, ‘is she:’
And as his child he cared for me.
Forth from the sky was heard o'erhead
As 'twere a human voice that said:
‘Yea, even so: great King, this child
Henceforth thine own be justly styled.’
Vidcha's monarch, virtuous-souled,
Rejoiced o'er me with joy untold,
Delighting in his new-won prize,
The darling of his heart and eyes.
To his chief queen of saintly mind
The precious treasure he consigned,
And by her side she saw me grow,
Nursed with the love which mothers know.
Then as he saw the seasons fly,
And knew my marriage-time was nigh,
My sire was vexed with care, as sad
As one who mourns the wealth he had:
'Scorn on the maiden's sire must wait
From men of high and low estate:
The virgin's father all despise,
Though Indra's peer, who rules the skies.'
More near he saw, and still more near,
The scorn that filled his soul with fear,
On trouble's billowy ocean tossed,
Like one whose shattered bark is lost.
My father knowing how I came,
No daughter of a mortal dame,
In all the regions failed to see
A bridegroom meet to match with me.
Each way with anxious thought he scanned.
And thus at length the monarch planned:
'The Bride's Election will I hold,
With every rite prescribed of old.'
It pleased King Varun to bestow
Quiver and shafts and heavenly bow
Upon my father's sire who reigned,
When Daksha his great rite ordained.
Where was the man might bend or lift
With utmost toil that wondrous gift?
Not e'en in dreams could mortal king
Strain the great bow or draw the string
Of this tremendous bow possessed,
My truthful father thus addressed
The lords of many a region, all
Assembled at the monarch's call:
'Whoe'er this bow can manage, he
The husband of my child shall be.'
The suitors viewed with hopeless eyes
That wondrous bow of mountain size,
Then to my sire they bade adieu,
And all with humbled hearts withdrew.
At length with Viśvāmitra came
This son of Raghu, dear to fame;
The royal sacrifice to view
Near to my father's home he drew,
His brother Lakshman by his side,
Rāma, in deeds heroic tried.
My sire with honour entertained
The saint in lore of duty trained,
Who thus in turn addressed the king:
'Rāma and Lakshman here who spring
From royal Daśaratha, long
To see thy bow so passing strong.'

Before the prince's eyes was laid
That marvel, as the Brāhman prayed.
One moment on the bow he gazed,
Quick to the notch the string he raised,
Then, in the wondering people's view,
The cord with mighty force he drew.
Then with an awful crash as loud
As thunderbolts' that cleave the cloud,
The bow beneath the matchless strain
Of arms heroic snapped in twain.
Thus, giving purest water, he,
My sire, to Rāma offered me.
The prince the offered gift declined
Till he should learn his father's mind;
So horsemen swift Ayodhyā sought
And back her aged monarch brought.
Me then my sire to Rāma gave,
Self-ruled, the bravest of the brave.
And Urmilā, the next to me,
Graced with all gifts, most fair to see,
My sire with Raghu's house allied,
And gave her to be Lakshman's bride.
Thus from the princes of the land
Lord Ráma won my maiden hand,
And him exalted high above
Heroic chiefs I truly love.
When Anasúyá, virtuous-souled,
Had heard the tale by Sítá told,
She kissed the lady’s brow and laced
Her loving arms around her waist.

'With sweet-toned words distinct and clear
Thy pleasant tale has charmed mine ear,
How the great king thy father held
That Maiden’s Choice unparalleled.
But now the sun has sunk from sight,
And left the world to holy Night.
Hark! how the leafy thickets sound
With gathering birds that twitter round:
They sought their food by day, and all
Flock homeward when the shadows fall.
See, hither comes the hermit band,
Each with his pitcher in his hand:
Fresh from the bath, their locks are wet,
Their coats of bark are dripping yet.
Here saints their fires of worship tend,
And curling wreaths of smoke ascend:
Borne on the flames they mount above,
Dark as the brown wings of the dove.
The distant trees, though well-nigh bare,
Gloom thickened by the evening air,
And in the faint uncertain light
Shut the horizon from our sight.
The beasts that prowl in darkness rove
On every side about the grove,
And the tame deer, at ease reclined
Their shelter near the altars find.
The night o'er all the sky is spread,
With lunar stars engarlanded,
And risen in his robes of light
The moon is beautifully bright.
Now to thy lord I bid thee go:
Thy pleasant tale has charmed me so:
One thing alone I needs must pray,
Before me first thyself array:
Here in thy heavenly raiment shine,
And glad, dear love, these eyes of mine.'

Then like a heavenly Goddess shone
Fair Sita with that raiment on.
She bowed her to the matron's feet,
Then turned away her lord to meet.
The hero prince with joy surveyed
His Sita in her robes arrayed,
As glorious to his arms she came
With love-gifts of the saintly dame.
She told him how the saint to show
Her fond affection would bestow
That garland of celestial twine,
Those ornaments and robes divine.
Then Rama's heart, nor Lakshman's less,
Was filled with pride and happiness,
For honours high had Sita gained,
Which mortal dames have scarce obtained.
Thee honoured by each pious sage
Who dwelt within the hermitage,
Beside his darling well content
That sacred night the hero spent.

The princes, when the night had fled,
Farewell to all the hermits said,
Who gazed upon the distant shade,
Their lustral rites and offerings paid
The saints who made their dwelling there
In words like those addressed the pair:
'O Prince, monsters fierce and fell
Around that distant forest dwell:
On blood from human veins they feed,
And various forms assume at need,
With savage beasts of fearful power
That human flesh and blood devour.
Our holy saints they rend and tear
When met alone or unaware,
And eat them in their cruel joy:
These chase, O Rima, or destroy.
By this one path our hermits go
To fetch the fruits that yonder grow:
By this O Prince, thy feet should stray
Through pathless forests far away.
Thus by the reverent saints addressed,
And by their prayers auspicious blessed,
He left the holy crowd:
His wife and brother by his side,
Within the mighty wood he sired.
So sinks the Day-God in his pride
Beneath a bank of cloud.