

THE  
**Bengali Ramayanas**

*Being Lectures delivered to the Calcutta University  
in 1916, as Ramtanu Lahiri Research Fellow  
in the History of Bengali Language  
and Literature.*

By  
**Rai Saheb Dineshchandra Sen, B.A.**

Fellow Calcutta University and Author of *History of Bengali Language and  
Literature* *Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature*  
*Chaitanya and his Companions* *History of Medieval  
Vaishnava Literature* *Folk Literature of  
Bengal* *Banga Bhasa o Sahitya*  
and other works



Published by the  
**UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA**

1920

## PREFACE

There is a controversy still going on, and it is doubtful whether a solution will be unanimously accepted in future, as to whether the Epic of Vālmīki or the Jātaka-literature belongs to an earlier period of composition. It is now unanimously held by the orientalist that the metrical portions of the Jataka-stories are older than their prose-matter. We find that many passages of the birth-stories, written in verse, show a close and unmistakable affinity with those of the Epic, and on an examination and analysis of both these monuments of Indian Literature, the Jatakas and the Epic, I have arrived at the conclusion that the Epic belongs to a later age. But I cannot expect that my conclusion on this point will be accepted by all.

One of the evidences in support of my theory, upon which I have laid much stress, is that the Epic of Vālmīki is replete with stories that are materially similar to a large number of birth-tales even in detail. Such for example are the Sama Jātaka which closely resembles the story of the Andhamuni in the Rāmāyana and the Sambula

Jātaka where the goblin appears exactly in the same light as does Rāvanā in the Açoka-garden before the heroic and chaste wife of Rāma. In the Vessantara Jātaka the speeches of Vessantara and Maddi on the eve of the former's banishment are so akin to the speeches of Rāma and Sita on a similar occasion that here the difference of names seems to be the only point of divergence. Again, in the same Jātaka the prince's mother Phusati mourns over the banishment of her son in a strain that at once reminds the reader of the lamentations of Kausalya and Bharata after the exile of Rama. The story of Riṣya Çringa again offers a close parallel to that of the Nalinikā Jātaka, and one of the passages in which the monkey-king Vāli admonished Rāma is exactly like the one in the Mahā Sutasoma Jātaka in which the ogre is censured by the Great Being. Such instances may be easily multiplied, so that the Daçaratha Jātaka is but one of the numerous birth-stories where we find fables and legends akin to and sometimes almost the same as we find in the Rāmāyaṇa. Regarding the marriage of Sitā with her elder brother Rāma as narrated in the Daçaratha Jātaka, we find that the custom of marrying one's sister was current among many tribes and especially so with the Çakyas, amongst whom it was so extensively prevalent that at one time when their enemies the Koliyas

ridiculed them for it, instead of feeling ashamed, they boasted of such connection (*vide* Kunāla-Jātaka, translated by H. T. Francis, the Jātaka No. 536, p. 219). All these have led me to believe that these and similar other stories had been extensively current in this country before the advent of Vālmiki who treated these scattered episodes as materials for his immortal Epic changing them in such a manner as to suit the new ideal of domestic purity set up by him. A comparative literary estimate of the crude and archaic birth-tales and the grand and artistic Epic has also strengthened my conviction that the former belongs to an earlier period than the latter. To say that Vālmiki was indebted to these birth-stories for his materials is not in the least to detract from the great merit and worth of the Epic-master. Shakespeare is not a whit less admired because of the fact that he freely used Holinshed's Chronicles and many previous literary works extant on the continent for dramatic treatment.

Another theory that I have put forward in these lectures is that originally the legends of Rāma and Rāvaṇa were prevalent in this country as distinctly different tales, independent of each other. These were subsequently mixed up somehow or other, and Vālmiki for the first time gave the united story the consistency and

hoary antiquity. The Bengali literature is thus found linked with the thoughts and ideas of a pre-Sanskritic period, and in some of its early phases may be traced to be an expression of human thought of a much earlier date than the 8th or 9th century A. D. from which its written specimens have come down to us.

Gentlemen, I shall in the course of my discourses tell you that it is very likely that versions of the story of Rāma earlier than that of Vālmiki still exist in the Indian literature, that one of such stories was expanded by Vālmiki, for which he alone is not responsible. By the time when he wrote, there had grown a hundred ballads about Rāma not anticipated in the original story, and these minor streams latterly flowed into the great ocean of the Epic poem. We shall also see that traces of Rāmāyaṇic episodes prior to those of the period of Vālmiki are to be found in the Bengali Rāmāyaṇas. In dealing with this historical question we shall have to abandon some of our deep-rooted and orthodox sentiments ; but these are inevitable in the field of historical research, and for all this, gentlemen, I should first of all crave your indulgence.

(b) *The Daṣaratha Jātaka—its relation to the Rāmāyaṇa.*

In many of the commentaries of the Sanskrit Rāmāyaṇa, there seems to be a definite hint

indicating the existence of Rāmāyaṇic ballads earlier than the great Epic.<sup>1</sup>

The earlier legends

The commentator Rāmānanda refers to Agniveçya Rāmāyaṇa and Vimalabodha Baudhāyaṇa's Rāmāyaṇa; these were probably versions of the story other than those of Vālmiki. Weber has proved that the original Rāmāyaṇic story is contained in the Buddhistic legend called the Daçaratha Jātaka.<sup>2</sup> It is mentioned in the Chulla Vagga, Samanta Paśādikā, Mahāvaiṇsa, Paramatthadipikā and other early sacred books of the Buddhists that the Jātaka stories which are 550 in number, were recited at the first council of the Buddhist monks in 543 B. C. These were again recited at the next council of the Buddhists held at Vaisali in 443 B. C. They were recited

The probable date of the Daçaratha Jātaka.

a third time at the third Buddhist council called by King Açoka at Pataliputra and were reduced to writing at the time of Devanam Piya Piya-tissa of Ceylon (247-207 B.C.). Some scholars are inclined to deny altogether the sitting of the first Buddhist council in 543 B. C. But it is universally admitted that most of these Jātaka stories were not only current at the time of the Buddha who, according to the Buddhists, himself related them to his disciples, but were

<sup>1</sup> The Viçvakosha, Vol. XXVI, p 527, L III-V.

<sup>2</sup> The Indian Antiquary, 1872

transmitted from a much earlier period. The Daçaratha Jātaka written in Pali, in which Sitā is described as the uterine sister of Rāma and afterwards his bride, is one of those stories which possessing a naive and primitive simplicity, are to be traced to a period of remote antiquity. Prof. Rhys Davids says that the earliest Jātaka stories are those in which the Buddha is identified with some sages and teachers *of olden times in his previous births, and "not with an animal."*<sup>1</sup> Prof. Bühler, a high authority on Indian History, says that these earlier Buddhist Jātakas "do not describe the condition of India in the third or fourth century B.C., but an older one." Another unmistakable evidence regarding the date of Daçaratha Jātaka is the one furnished by the bas-reliefs on the Bharut and Sanchi stupas (2nd century B.C.). Among the carvings on the railings round these stupas are several scenes of this Jātaka.<sup>2</sup> This Jātaka gives us the story of Rāma as prevalent in the country in ancient times. The Buddha connects this story with one of his previous births as he does the rest of the Jātakas. What the date of the origin of the Daçaratha Jātaka is we cannot definitely ascertain, but from the manner in which the story is related, it is natural to surmise that the story was already an old one at the time of the Buddha.

---

<sup>1</sup> Buddhist India.

<sup>2</sup> Oldenberg's table published in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. XVIII, 1897

The statement in the Jātaka that Rāma ruled his kingdom for 1,600 years proves that the story had already grown mythological in character in the 6th century B.C., when it was probably transmitted to the Buddhists. If not actually in the very form in which we find the Daṣaratha Jātaka, the legend of Rāma was akin to the story of the Jātaka in its main features in a much earlier age. Now let us discuss the conclusions arrived at by some of the recent European writers as to the age of Vālmīki.

The latest scholar who speaks with authority on the date of Vālmīki's Rāmāyana is Dr. A. B. Keith. According to him the 4th century B.C. is the probable date of composition of the Rāmāyana.<sup>1</sup> He successfully refutes the arguments in favour of an earlier date which Jacobi assigns to the Epic on the strength of certain astronomical calculations. Weber places the poem in the 1st or 2nd century B.C.<sup>2</sup> So the evidence is clear that the Jātaka story is earlier of the two, though Dr. Keith is in favour of the theory that both the Jātaka story and the Epic used an older source.<sup>3</sup> The crude early form of the Jātaka story is apparent and marked, and leaves but little doubt that it represents the earliest form

<sup>1</sup> Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Weber's History of Sanskrit Literature, translated by J. Mann, p. 194 (1882)

<sup>3</sup> Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April, 1914, p. 319.



in which the tale of Rāma originally existed among the people. Apart from the chronological data, the internal evidence of the epic will substantiate the truth of the statement that the *Jātaka* story is much earlier. Had Vālmiki's great Epic been composed before the time of Daçaratha *Jātaka*, the author of the latter could not but have introduced into it some of the great embellishments of the Epic master's story. The Jaina Rāmāyana by Hemchandra Āchārya composed in the 12th century A.D. could not help doing so. In fact if such a wonderful epic as the Ramāyana had existed, the *Jātaka* story could not have been so simple, so colourless and unassuming and devoid of some of the greatest names of the Epic as those of Kaikeyī and Kauçalyā, Rāvaṇa, Hanumāna, Sugrīva, etc. And the fact is striking that Vālmiki's Rāmāyana contains some verses which are mere Sanskrit translations of the Pāli verses of the Daçaratha *Jātaka*, in case it is proved that the latter is earlier than the Epic. By comparing the Epic with the legend of the Buddhists one cannot but be struck by the improvement made on the crude story by the touch of one of the greatest of world's master minds. For the sake of comparison I shall first of all reproduce the Buddhistic story, a little abridged from its original. The theory is untenable that the Daçaratha *Jātaka* was an attempt on the part of the Buddhists to treat the Brahminic legend with contempt.

Such a theory is absurd on the face of it, as a perusal of the former will clearly show that in it a high regard for Rāma forms one of its chief features, the Buddha himself announcing that in a previous birth he was born as Rāma and his father Çuddhodana as Daçaratha. I have prepared the following translation of the Daçaratha Jātaka with the help of my friend Samana Punnananda, Lecturer of Pali in our University.

## DAÇARATHA JĀTAKA

There was a King of Benares named Daçaratha. He had 16,000 queens of whom there was one who was the chief. She had two sons Rāma and Lakṣmanana-kumāra and a daughter named Sītā. The chief queen died in course of time, whereupon Daçaratha the King chose one of his remaining wives as the chief queen. The latter became very dear to him. She gave birth to a son named Bharata-kumāra. The king offered a boon to the queen out of his love for her. But she said that she would want the boon on some future occasion. So she waited till Bharata, her son, became six years old. Then she sought the boon from the king her husband. She wanted the kingdom for her son. The Rājā was very angry and said that it was very wicked of her to ask such a boon, when he had two grown-up sons born of his first wife. The queen

The story of the  
Jātaka

was frightened and retired to her own private chamber. But on another occasion the queen sought the same boon from the king, whereupon he thought within himself that the wicked queen being in power, might do harm to the princes. He, accordingly, advised his two sons to leave the capital and seek help of some other powerful chief, or dwell in the forest till smoke would issue from his funeral pyre (*i.e.*, till his death). Then they should return and take the kingdom by force. He consulted the astrologers as to how long he would live. They said that the span of his life extended to 12 years more. He now directed his two sons to return to the capital after 12 years and seize the royal umbrella. They complied with the wishes of their royal father and left the palace weeping. Sitā also accompanied her brothers. A vast assembly of people followed them with tears in their eyes, but the princes by sweet words persuaded them to return to the capital. Continuing their journey till they reached the Himālayas, they selected a spot where fruits and nourishing vegetable-roots were found in plenty and made an *āçrama* there, and lived like hermits. Here Lakṣmaṇa and Sitā addressed Rāma and said, "You are the eldest of us and we honour you as father. Stay in the *āçrama* and we will gather roots and fruits for you." So Rāma used to stay in the *āçrama*, and his brother and sister went to the forest every day in quest of food. After 9 years

Daçaratha, unable to support any longer the grief of parting with his children, breathed his last. The queen now made preparations for the installation of Bharata on the throne of Benares. The ministers objected saying that the royal umbrella belonged to the elder brothers. Bharata himself said that what the ministers had spoken was fair and just, and that he should himself go to bring his brothers back from the forest. So Bharata, the young prince, marched with his army and with the people of his city to find out his half-brothers. He encamped near Rāma's *āṅraṇa* and approached him with tears in his eyes. He fell at the feet of Rāma and wept as he communicated the news of the father's death. Rāma did not lose control over himself, nor did he betray any emotion. In the evening Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā returned with fruits and Rāma Pandit thought that if he would give out the news of his father's death at that moment, the effect of grief might well nigh prove crushing. So assuming an air of anger, he said, "Why have you been so late to-day? As punishment for this, go and bathe in yonder stream." When they enjoyed the cool bath, he informed them of the death of Daçaratha. They bitterly wept at the news. But Rāma Pandit did not show any sign of grief. Bharata asked Rāma as to how the latter could control his passions.

Here Rāma gave him a philosophical discourse on the fleeting nature of things in a few

couplets of verses. One of them runs as follows :

“फलानां इव पद्मानं निश्चं पपतान भयं  
एवं जात नं मञ्जानं निश्चं मरुत्तोभयं ।”<sup>1</sup>

His advice and philosophy removed their grief.

Bharata entreated Rāma Pandit to come to Benares and accept the kingdom ; whereupon Rāma said, “Go with Lakṣmaṇa and Sitā and rule the kingdom.” Being asked why he should not himself go, he replied, “My father ordered me to return to the capital after 12 years. That time is not yet over. I cannot violate his order.” Bharata asked who was to reign in Benares for the intervening time. Rāma Pandit thereupon advised him to return to the capital with his straw-slippers which, he said, might be placed on the throne, and the brothers might rule the kingdom as regents.

So they returned, and the ministers used to dispense justice and decide cases in the presence of the throne on which Rāma's slippers were placed. If their judgment was wrong, the slippers would of themselves move and strike each other ; if right they would remain fixed in their position.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. The Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyākāṇḍa, Verse XVII. “कदा फलानां पद्मानां नाम्ब पपतान्भयं । एवं मरुत्तं जातकं नाम्ब मरुत्तोभयं ॥”

After three years Rāma came to Benares, and as soon as the news reached them, Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā with all the citizens of Benares went out and met him in a garden on the outskirts of the city. Here Rāma was duly installed as king, and Sītā was made his chief queen. They then entered the city being carried in a richly decorated chariot with great pomp. Rāma was an ideal monarch and ruled the kingdom justly for 1,600 years.

“दस वक्ष्य सहस्रानि सृष्टिं वक्ष्य सतानि च  
कञ्चुगिव महाबाहु रामो राज्यं अकारयि ॥”

In his previous birth Çuddhodana was Daça-ratha, Mahāmāyā was the mother of Rāma, Sītā was Rahula's mother, Bharata was Ānanda and Lakṣmaṇ Sariputta. The people devoted to Rāma were those who have followed me in this life and I was Rāma.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no mention here of Rāma's going to the Deccan, of the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa or of the great fight between Rāma and the King of Laṅkā. In this story we learn that Rāma was a popular prince who went to the forest with his brother and sister not accatdnt

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Rāmāyaṇa, Laṅkā Kāṇḍa, Verse 104: “दस वक्ष्यं सहस्रानि सृष्टिं वक्ष्यं सतानि च । आदितः सृष्टिः श्रीमान् रामो राज्यं अकारयत् ॥”

<sup>2</sup> Jātaka, edited by V. Fausboll, Vol. IV, Ekadash Nipataka, pp. 129-130.

by any lofty ideal, as we find in the Epic, but by what may be called the instinct of self-preservation. The only occasion on which he showed a spirit of renunciation was when he declined to return to the kingdom and ascend the throne for three years after his father's death. This he did in conformity with the letter rather than the spirit of his father's words. His attitude of composure at the news of Daçaratha's death and the philosophical discourse delivered to his brothers on the occasion are further points showing him as endowed with great wisdom. Śitū is described as sister of Rāma and Lakṣmana. The fact of her marriage with Rāma in the concluding portion of the story certainly sounds strange. But students of ancient history know very well that this was the practice of Egyptians and Babylonians. This was also the special feature of the Çākya amongst the royal dynasties of India. The Çākya kings preferred to marry their own sisters. They were very particular about preserving the purity of royal blood and would not allow foreign blood to be mixed with it. In fact, it is said of one of their earliest kings that he referred this point to the councillors of his court and asked if for preserving the sacredness and purity of royal blood, marriage between brother and sister could be allowed. The councillors said "Sakkate"—

Marrying one's own sister an old custom with the Egyptians, the Çākya and other races

*i.e.*, it was allowable, and from this word of the councillors the dynasty came to be known as **Çākya**. It was at first a nick-name, much as the **Hināyaṇa** is, given to the dynasty by the other races of Indian kings who looked upon this practice with abhorrence.

This story thus relates the legend that was prevalent in Northern India about Rāma at a very early period of history. Daçaratha was the King of Benares and Rāma spent his life of exile in the Himālayas, so it is a purely Northern legend. How the story of a Dravidian king abducting a princess and that of a fierce war fought mainly between the two non-Aryan tribes—the Rakṣasas and monkeys—was engrafted on the simple story of the Jātaka is not yet clearly known, but may possibly be traced by future research. We know, however, for certain that in the Buddhist world, in the centuries when Ajātaçatru, Chandra Gupta and Açoka were the monarchs of Northern India, this simple legend was believed throughout the length and breadth of the favoured seat of the Indian Aryans.

(c) *The Sama, Vessantara and other Jātakas.*

It will appear from a critical study of the birth-stories that they represent the earliest versions of the mass of legends current in the Pre-Buddhistic India. We find these stories,



one and all, associated with the Buddha and the fact is significant inasmuch as it shows that the Buddhists aimed at popularising their Master and enhancing the value of these highly instructive but fragmentary tales in the eyes of the people. Just in the same manner the Hindu revivalists introduced their gods and goddesses into the different Purāṇas. The Paurāṇika legends, again, present many notable aspects of similarity with the Buddhist birth-stories, a fact which speaks much in favour of the theory that the Buddhists and Renaissance scholars used a common stock of Indo-Aryan legends suiting their own individual purposes and religious opinions.

I have already given reasons in support of my belief that the Daçaratha Jātaka forms the ground-work of Vālmiki's epic. But this is not all; strwn over various stories of the Jātaka literature are to be found materials with which the details of the Rāmāyana seem to have been worked out. The name of the Sama Jātaka deserves special mention in this connection. Here we have the story of a blind couple whose only son, Sama by name, while engaged in filling a water-jar from the Migasamma river was shot by the poisoned arrow of Piliyakkha, the King of Benares, who had taken him for a strange animal. So close a parallel this Jātaka offers to the story of the blind sage found in the Rāmāyana, that in many respects

the one seems to be but a reproduction of the other. Sāma was the only prop of the blind couple, so was the son of the blind sage as described in the Rāmāyaṇa ; the former belonged to a non-Brahmin caste and so did the latter. Both of them were shot under the same circumstances by kings labouring under the same wrong impression, and the parents of both were ascetics. It was the King

Sāma Jātaka and  
the tale of the Andha  
Muni.

of Benares who first appeared before the parents to tell the disastrous tale in the same fashion as did the King of Ayodhya in the Rāmāyaṇa. The expressions of grief and lamentation found in the Rāmāyaṇic episode and the Jātaka are in many places exactly similar to each other. Thus laments the father of the wounded Sāma :

“ Who now will sweep the floor for us,  
Or bring us water, hot or cold ?  
Who fetch us forest-roots and fruits,  
As we sit helpless, blind, and old ? ”

*Cowell's Jātaka, Book XII, p. 50.*

Vālmiki has the following parallel couplet for the blind sage, the Andha-muni :

“ कन्दमूलफलं हत्वा को मां प्रियमिवातिथिम् ।  
भोजयिष्यत्सर्वकर्मसमप्रयत्नमनायकम् ॥ ”

*Ayodhyākāṇḍa, 64th Canto, śloka 34.*

In the Vessantara Jātaka, again, we meet with a situation, which at once reminds us of the scene as depicted in the Rāmāyaṇa where Sītā, on the eve of Rāma's banishment, uses a tender and pathetic language to persuade her husband to accept her as a companion of his exiled life. Vessantara in the Jātaka gives a realistic picture of the dangers and inconveniences of forest-life before his wife Maddi essentially in the same strain as does Rāma before Sītā. Maddi declares :

The  
Jātaka

Vessantara

“Kindle a blazing fiery flame  
The fiercest that can be,  
There I would rather die the death  
Than live apart.”

*Correll's Jātaka, Book XXII, p. 257.*

just as Sītā says

“यदि मां दुःखितामिदं वनं नेतुं न चेच्छसि  
विषमग्निं जलं वाहमास्त्रास्त्रे मृत्युकारणात् ।”

*Ayodhyākāṇḍa, 30th Canto, śloka 21.*

Vessantara, before leaving his father's kingdom, distributes charity in the same manner as does Rāma, which is another interesting point of similarity.

There is a remarkable concord of sentiments between the lamentations of Phusati, the mother of Vessantara, and those of Kausalyā and Bharata,

after Rāma's banishment. For Kausalyā's lamentations I refer my readers to the Ayodhyākāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa (61st Canto, glokas 3-10) and quote the following groups of verses from the Vessantara Jātaka and Bharata's speech, which will at once show the close affinity between the two. Says Phusati :—

“ Bright yellow robes, Gandhara make, once round  
about him shone,  
 Or glowing scarlet as he went, as he went, today  
he goes alone.  
 Once hosts of men escorted him with goodly banners  
flower,  
 Like forests full of flowering trees , today he goes alone.  
 With chariot, litter, elephant he went in former days,  
 Today the prince Vessantara afoot must tramp the ways  
 He once by sandal scent perfumed, awaked by dance  
and song.  
 How wear rough skins, how axe and pot and pingo  
bear along,  
 How can a banisht prince put on the robe of bark to  
wear ;  
 To dress in bark and grass how will the princess Maddi  
bear ?  
 Maddi, who once Benares cloth and linen used to wear  
 And fine kodumbara, how bark and grasses will  
she bear ?

\* \* \* \* \*

The finest slippers she could wear would hurt her feet  
of late  
 To-day how can the lovely one afoot now go her gait ?  
 How can the timid beauteous one now walk the forest  
glade ?”

Thus runs Bharata's speech :—

“महाराजकुलीनेन महाभागेन धीमता ।  
जातो दशरथेनोर्ब्धां न रामः स्वमुमर्हति ॥  
अजिनोत्तरसंस्तोर्णे वरास्तरणसञ्चये ।  
शयित्वा पुरुषध्यान्नः कथं श्रेते महीतले ॥  
प्रासादापविमानेषु वल्लभीषु च सर्व्वदा ।  
हेमरजतभीमेषु वरास्तरणशालिषु ॥  
पुष्पसञ्चयचित्त्रेषु चन्दनागुरुगन्धिषु ।  
पाण्डुराभ्रप्रकाशेषु शुकसङ्घर्षतेषु च ॥  
प्रासादवरवर्ष्येषु गीतवत्सु, सुगन्धिषु ।  
उषित्वा मेरुकल्पेषु क्षतकाञ्चनभित्तिषु ॥  
गीतवादित्रनिर्घोषैर्वराभरणनिःस्वनैः ।  
मृदङ्गधरशब्दैश्च सततं प्रतिबोधितः ॥  
वन्दिभिर्वन्दितः काले बहुभिः सूतमागधैः ।  
गाथाभिरनुरुपाभिः सुतिभिश्च परन्तपः ॥

The persuasive entreaties of Maddi, the princess, for being permitted to accompany her royal husband in his exile will at once remind the reader of the Rāmāyaṇa of the memorable speech of Sitā on a similar occasion. I make a short extract from the Jātaka story.

“ It is not meet and right, my king, that thou alone  
shouldst fare ;  
Whatever journey thou shalt go, I also will be there.  
Give me the choice to die with thee or live from  
thee apart,  
Death is my choice, unless I can live with thee  
where thou art.



claims of the Rāmāyana and the Jātakas to priority of date should be impartially considered and an unbiassed judgment passed after a critical balancing of evidences. Now, if it is urged that the Jātakas were put into their present form after the composition of Vālmiki's epic, how are we to explain the object involved in such an attempt? What earthly benefit could be derived from such a grotesque effort at dismantling a monumental building—at breaking a connected account such as the epic presents into a thousand pieces and in taxing imagination for inventing new names for the various characters in these numerous fragments of stories? Would it not, on the other hand, be more rational to conclude that these Jātakas constituted the original materials out of which the poet built up his immortal epic, which was a complete performance, with the details supplied by this legendary lore merged in the vastness of the epic-master's infinite scheme? It may be also true that the Jātaka writers and Vālmiki were equally indebted to a common stock of legends. In that case I am firmly convinced from the crude and primitive nature of the Jātaka-narratives, that they were composed at an earlier date than Vālmiki's Rāmāyana.

That the Brahminic Renaissance tried to establish the priority of Vālmiki's epic over earlier Rāma legends by creating monstrous

fables is evidenced by the existence of a declaration widely known in this country that Vālmiki had composed the Rāmāyaṇa 60,000 years before Rāma was born. There can be no rational explanation for the origin of this fable unless we admit it to be a device for silencing those amongst whom a knowledge of earlier Rāma-legends such as the Daçaratha Jātaka still lingered.

(d) *Home and monastery.*

Buddhism differed from Brahminism in one essential point. Mercy for the lower animals is not to be met with in the Buddhistic religious books alone. The rituals and sacrifices vary among the different sects of a common religion. In these points Buddhism does not show any marked difference from the established religion of the R̥ṣhis. The Buddhist theology has been so completely traced to the philosophical school of Kapila that many scholars believe the former to have evolved out of the latter. But there is a difference. Buddhism and Jainism have an originality which is undeniable. This lay in organising the Monkish orders. The R̥ṣhis of the Upaniṣadas recognised the training of the Gārhasṭhya āçrama as essentially necessary for completing the spiritual life. Spiritual culture in India could not be complete without one's passing through the training of the domestic life.