

कालमीकि The first poet and the famous author of the *Ra'ma'yana*. Though a *Bra'hmana* by birth he led a depraved life and was a notorious cut-throat, but was reclaimed by *Narada*. One day while he was engaged in his devotions he saw a fowler in the act of shooting at a pair of curlews and a curse fell from his mouth in the shape of a regular stanza. The sage discovered that it was a new mode of composition and by the advice of *Brahman* (म.) composed the *Ra'ma'yana*. *Sitā*, when repudiated by her husband, took refuge with this sage who brought up her twin sons.

वासवदत्ता Is the name of the heroine of several popular stories. She is represented to be the daughter of *Pradyota* in the *Ratna'vali*, of *Chandamaha'sena* in the *Katha'saritsa'gara*, (See उदयन), and of *Śringāras'ekhara* in *Vas. D.* In *M. M.* 11, she is said to have been betrothed by her father to *Sanjaya*, while in *Vas. D.* she is represented as betrothed to *Pushpaketu* and carried off by *Kandarpa* *ketu*. Most probably the same *Va'savadatta* is not referred to in the several stories.

वासुकि A serpent chief worn by *Śiva* on his person.

विचित्रवीर्य Half-brother of *Bhī'shma* and father of *Dhritarāshtra* and *Pāndu*, who were begotten on his widows *Ambikā* and *Ambā'likā* respectively by *Vyāsa*. See अंबा, अंबिका, अंबालिका and भीष्म.

विदुर When *Satyavati* begged *Vyāsa* to beget progeny on *Ambikā* and *Ambā'likā*, *Ambikā*, terrified by *Vyāsa*'s austere appearance, sent to him one of her slave girls, dressed in her clothes. This girl became

the mother of *Vidura*. *Vidura* is famous for his wisdom and righteous conduct.

विनता One of the wives of *Kas'yapa* and mother of *Garuda* (q. v.)

विराट The king of the *Matsyas*. The *Pāndavas* lived incognito at his palace for one year. His daughter *Uttarā* was married to *Abhimanyu* and became the mother of *Parikshit* who succeeded *Yudhishtira* to the throne of *Hastināpura*.

विराध A demon killed by *Ra'ma* while in exile.

विश्ववत्स The son of *Pulastya* and the father of *Kuvera* (by a *Brāhmana* wife), *Ra'-vana*, *Kumbhakarna*, *Bibhishana*, *S'ūrpanakhā*, &c.

विश्वकर्मा See स्वर्ग.

विश्वामित्र A celebrated sage. Originally he was a *Kshatriya* but by the power of his religious austerities was raised to the rank of a *Bra'hmana*. He is represented as a great rival of *Vasishtha* who refused, for a long time, to acknowledge his *Brāhmanaship*. Out of jealousy *Vis'vāmित्रa* once caused the hundred sons of *Vasishtha* to be destroyed but *Vasishtha* was as quiet as ever. Like *Vasishtha*, *Vis'vāmित्रa* saw several generations of kings and was a party to incidents too numerous to mention.

विष्णु The second deity of the Hindu triad and the most popular of the Hindu gods. The epic poems and the *Purā'nas* are full of myths relating to this deity. For an enumeration of his incarnations See under अवतार.

वृक A powerful demon slain by *Indra*. He