CHAPTER - V

POPULAR BELIEFS AND PRACTICES AS REFLECTED IN THE KĀDAMBARĪ

Ever since the dawn of civilization, human beings have been holding some naive beliefs and performing certain rites. Whatever heights may be reached in the realm of knowledge, these beliefs and practices are always present in the heart of the common people. Many of the superstitious beliefs that are current now were in vogue then. The Kādambarī of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, which reflects the Indian society of the seventh century A.D., also contains many references of popular beliefs and practices.

POPULAR BELIEFS AND PRACTICES:

It is traced in the Kādambarī that people believed in the existence of some evil spirits. Therefore, they took various measures to protect themselves from the influence of the evil spirits. People used to draw a circle for protection from evil spirits formed by figures drawn with holy ashes around the bed of a pregnant lady, which is referred to in case of queen Vilāsavati. Commentator Bhanucandra remarks that it is a rite for ensuring the protection of the foetus and thus he remarks “in which the protection of the child in the womb was ensured by means of creepers with leaves painted on the walls for the sake of prosperity”. In this context, Bhanuchandra also refers to the custom in certain parts of India in which a manḍapa of kadali plants was

1. ...vāsabhavane bhūtilikhitapatralatāktaraksāparikṣepaṁ......
Kād. p.114

2. pāpapākhandaśaśākinidākīni prabhṛitināṁ praveśapratiṁbandhakāṁ
mantrādyousadhaprakāro yasmin/

Ibid.
creepers and leaves is prepared for a newly mature girl. Afterward, in the state of pregnancy, figures of creepers with leaves and flowers are drawn on the walls, sofas or ceilings for the proper growth of the fetus in the womb.³

In the Kādambarī, it is found that the floor of the lying-in-chamber of pregnant queen Vilāsavatī was decorated with the svastika mark⁴. This svastika is a particular kind of ornamental figure which is considered to be auspicious from very ancient times. This mark is generally drawn with red or white powder. Another popular belief was to burn the powdered sloughs of serpents and horns of rams mixed with ghee of goats in the bedchamber of a pregnant woman.⁵ It is also mentioned in the Kādambarī that nimba tree and other medicinal plants were burnt in the lying-in-chamber of Vilāsavatī to purify the air and ward off evil spirits⁶. Moreover, the use of a camphor lamp and the scattering of white mustard in the bed-chamber of a pregnant woman were also believed to ward off evil spirits⁷.

Again, at that time, people put the byāghranakha or the nails of a tiger (generally two) round the neck of a child to protect the child against the influence of an evil eye⁸. People also

3. "bhūtyā aisvāryāartham likhitā yā patralatā patrapalānvitā latā kalpalatā tava rakṣāyā garbhārtham yā parikṣepe dārdhyām yasmin / dṛṣṭaye hi desaviseṣe sa garbhāsambhūtyārtham prathamartau navodāyāḥ phalapatrānvita kadaifāchāya kriyā garbhānantarāṁ ca paryāṁ ka uttaračchade śāyanīyagrabhāvita vā phalapatrānvita likhī kalpalatā garbhasya puṣṭyarthaṁ viḍhyarthaṁ ca kriyate”

4. ... lekhābhīrālikhitasvistikabhaktijālāmuparacayāta .........

5. ... anavaratadahyamānājīyamiśrabhujaganirnokamesavānākṣodam .........

6. ... anaplaṣṭṣāhāaṣṭīṣṭhāṣṭhākṣēṣṣāḥ phalapratānvitā sthitāṣṭhaḥmugandham ........

7. ... patālakaprajvalitaṁiśca stītalapradipaiḥ gorocanāmisrāgaurasarsapaisca....

8. ... bālagriñveva vyāghranakhapāṇktimanditā gandakābhāranā ca ................

C.f., "ḥātakabāḍhavikatabyāghranakha pāṇktimanditagriṅvaṇe ............

"Ibid., p. 119

"Ibid., p. 120

"Ibid., p. 115

"Ibid., p. 39

"HC., IV., p. 64
round the neck of a child a thread with its knot dyed with gorocanā. Gorocanā means a bright yellow pigment prepared from the urin-

bile of a cow or a yellow substance found in the head of a cow. In Harṣacarita also, such references can be traced. A Brāhmaṇa is said to adorn his ear with girikarnikā flower and the flowers were interwoven with the tips of durvā grass which were smeared with rocanā.1

gorocanā was used to ward off evil spirits and the evil eye.

The white mustard was also believed to protect against such spirits which is clearly mentioned in the Tattvaprakāśika commentary of the Kādambarī. While explaining the vinyastagaurasarsapānaṇmisrābhūtīleśā in the Kādambarī, the commentator states - vinyasto gaurasarsapānāḥ siddhāarthastāṁ misrō bhūpāleśo yasya / bhūtādibhyā raksārthamayāṁ vidhiḥ / sarisapānāṁ 
tasminraksōghno bhūtanāśanaṁ / iti rabhasah.11 Generally, the parents used to put these white mustard on their heads which is clearly noted in the Kādambarī12 and the Harṣacarita13.

In the Kādambarī, the practice of wearing talismans is referred to. In the then society, people used the white mustard talisman for children. It was known as gaurasarsapa. This type of reference may be noted in the Harṣacarita too.14 In this context, it may be noted that:

9. ....gorocanācitrakāṇṭhahasūtrāɡraṇṭhiruttānasāyō dasānasūnyasmitānanaḥ patrānāṁ janayiṣyati me hṛdayāhlādam

Kād., p. 106

10. rocanācitrādurvāgrapallavagrathigārikākākṣumakṛtaṅkapṣurāḥ

HC., I., p. 25

Kād., p. 106

11. ...Kād. 

12. ...Ibid.

13. (a) ......śikhāsaktasiddhārthakāh ......................

(b) ......deve cottamāṅganihitarakṣāsarsape ............

Ibid., IV., p. 64

14. .........deve cottamāṅganihitarakṣāsarsape, samunmiṣāpratāpagnisphula 
gorocānapīṇjaritavapusī..............................

Ibid.
mentioned that king Tārāpiḍa visualized a son giving delight to his heart by his “curly hair dyed tawny with the herb-mixture called sarvaṅgaṇadhi with a small quantity of ashes mixed with white mustard applied over his head”\(^\text{15}\). It appears from this reference that white mustard was applied to the heads of children both for its medical properties and its supposed capacity to protect children from evil. In Kādambarī there is the reference to the use of ghee mixed with ashes as a means of protecting the child from evil spirits\(^\text{16}\).

It is also recorded in the Kādambarī that baby Candrāpiḍa’s hair was dyed with a herb-mixture called sarvaṅgaṇadhi\(^\text{17}\) which is a collection of various medicinal herbs pounded together. That was also intended to protect the child from evil spirits.

Thus it is found that there was a widespread belief in ghosts, spirits, goblins etc., in the Indian society of the seventh century A.D. and various practices were in vogue to avert these evil forces.

In the then society, people used to sprinkle the water sanctified by the repetition of vedic mantras to remove every sort of evil from the place whereon it was sprinkled\(^\text{18}\). Water has been associated with great efficacy and magico-curative value from very ancient times. It was conceived in the Vedic period that water has that capacity to remove the evil of a person. It is stated in the Atharvaveda that water sometimes washes the evil and at other times it carries the evil away.

\(^{15}\) tāluni vinyastagurasarṣaponmīśrabbūtileṣo..............
Kād., p. 106

\(^{16}\) nihitaraksāghṛtabinduni tāluni............................
Ibid., p. 106

\(^{17}\) sarvaṅgaṇadhipiṅjarajatilakeso........................................
Ibid.

\(^{18}\) adhyayanamukharadvijaganaviprakṛtyamāṇasāntyudakalavam....
Ibid., p. 120

\(^{19}\) ariprā āpo apa ripramasmat /
prāsmadeno vahantu pra duṣvapnyair vatantu //
AV., 16.1 11
In the *Kādambarī*, it is mentioned that the learned Brāhmaṇas used to sprinkle water sanctified by the repetition of Vedic mantras with the purpose of removing every sort of evil from the place whereon the new-born baby was kept\(^{20}\). Moreover, in the then society, it was the practice of touching water and fire on the part of those who come to visit a newly born baby. This was believed to save the baby from the evil eyes of visitors\(^{21}\). According to the commentator Bhānucandra, this practice was performed so that the eye of the person could exert no evil influence on the new-born baby\(^{22}\).

In the *Kādambarī*, Bāṇabhaṭṭa has described about a practice known as *avataraṇa*\(^{23}\). Things like white mustard seeds dyed yellow rice or fried rice, bread and others were placed in a pot with it and the ladies waved them round the face of a person and gradually lowered the pot as a means of keeping off or doing away with the influence of bad influence. The customary rite included the throwing away of the cooked rice covered with curds, coconuts etc. after waving them round the head of a person as a protection against the evil spirits or casting off evil spirits or against the evil eyes of men. In the *Kādambarī*, all such ceremonies and talismans are resorted to in the case of spying Vilāsavatī for the sake of protecting the child in her womb. *Avataraṇa* was performed for Vilāsavatī by the old ladies of the household versed in every sort of formal ceremonies. It is described that the pot of cooked rice were contained in golden vessels and a thin but unbroken layer of curds were put over them. A handful of flowers

---

\(^{20}\) ... adhyayanamukharadvijagaṇaviprakīryamānasāntyudakalavam....

\(^{21}\) ...ambhaḥ pavakām ca śṛṣṭvā viveṣā /

\(^{22}\) bālakadarsāne dṛṣṭīdōsanīvanāṅārthametat /

\(^{23}\) ......kriyamāṇāvataraṇakamaṅgalāṁ............

\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 120

\(^{21}\) Ibid., p. 121

\(^{22}\) as quoted in HP

\(^{23}\) Ibid., p. 118
scattered on them. Heaps of fishes with their mouths uncut were thrown with pieces of fresh flesh into it. Lamps were kept burning in a conical bamboo box surrounded by red cloth. The old ladies kept white mustard mixed with gorocana and water in their joined hands.

Moreover, it was the old practice to draw the figure of dolls in black ink on the walls or in the entrance of the room occupied by a woman just delivered. People placed two jewelled auspicious pitchers, full of water in the door-region of the lying-in-chamber of a pregnant lady. Jars full of water were regarded as auspicious and were placed at the entrance of houses and near the beds to ward off evil spirits. Moreover, it was the old practice to draw the iigin dolls in black ink on the walls or in the entrance of the room occupied by a woman just delivered. People placed two jewelled auspicious pitchers, full of water in the door-region of the lying-in-chamber of a pregnant lady. Jars full of water were regarded as auspicious and were placed at the entrance of houses and near the beds to ward off evil spirits.

In the age of the Kādambari, people performed a rite known as svāstyayana which could avert the evil and bring welfare by recitation of certain mantras. Another practice known as balividhāna was also in vogue at that time in which people offered oblations to deities for the protection of the new-born baby.

In the then society, it was considered auspicious to recite:

24. ...kanakapatraparigithairavicchinnnaviralāvasthitadadhilavaiḥ jalatarāṅgataram.

25. ...asaktabahuputrikālamkritena..................

26. ...manimayamaṅgalakakālasāyagalāsūnyenā............

27. ...analapuṣyamaṅgārīṣṭatalapallavālāsīdāḥūmagandham....

28. ...upapādymānānasvāstyayananam....................

29. ...kriyamaṅgāsūrakṣabalividhānam........................
no desire of a pregnant woman unfulfilled. People believed that it might be either abortion of the child or if born it might be deformed. It was a popular belief that the longings of a pregnant lady must be scrupulously fulfilled and it is traceable in many works of the Sanskrit poets.

The belief in tāntrika and magical rites is also noted in the Kādambarī. In the then society, people knew about antardhānamantra. It is a tāntrika mantra believed to be capable of making a person invisible.

Bāṇbhaṭṭa has referred to some manuscripts containing magical spells, mystical formulae and incantations, written on pure leaves with red-lac and coloured with smoke of incense to impregnate them. Those manuscripts were known as kuhakatantramantapustikā. The work kuhaka means a cheat, a trickster or juggler. Tantra means magical and mystical formulae for the attainment of superhuman power and the mode of worshipping deities. Moreover, the Atharvavedic rite of black magic, designed to cause mischief to enemies and so on known as abhicārakriyā is referred to in the Kādambarī. The Atharvaveda contains numerous magical spells, mystical formulae and incantations.
which are employed for malevolent purposes such as the destruction of enemies, demons, sorcerers, witchcraft, rival wives and so on. They believed in such types of abhicāräkriyās in the age of the Kādambarī. Mention is made to this abhicāräkriyā in the Harsacarita of Bānabha also. Bhāravi in his Kirāṭārjunīya also, refers to abhicāräkriyās that time people believed in the existence of a class of goblins known Vetalas who were supposed to occupy the dead bodies. They were greedy for the offering of blood and they roamed everywhere in search of it. People believed that the Vetalas were as tall as the tāla tree. In the Harsacarita, it is said that people offered blood to propitiate the goblins called Vetalas.

In the then society, one kind of magic ointment known as siddhāṇjana was in use. That type of ointment or collyrium had miraculous power of healing eyesores, curing blindness, revealing hidden treasures etc. In the Kādambarī, it is stated that the old Dravida ascetic used the siddhāṇjana in the eyes intending to find some hidden treasures but lost one of his eyes on account of the harmful ingredients of the collyrium wrongly put in it by an impostor. In the Harsacarita too, the use of a magical collyrium is noted. When a person

36. (a)... bhuvanabhasmikārābhicārarucapanacaturā rudhirāhahibhirivara...... HC...II...p.23
(b)... dhātutata iva ca sumerorasaurvadhābhicārarucapanapūnānaḥ... Ibid. VIII. p.140
37. (a)...idamindra śrīyuhī somapa yaś tvā hṛdā śocatā johavīmi / vṛścāmi tāmi kuśīneva vṛksyay oṣmākaṁ mana idāmn hahini // AV...2. 12.3 ;
Ibid... 2. 12.6 ; Ibid... 2.18.1-5 ; Ibid... 3. 6.1-8 ; Ibid... 5. 8.1-9 ; Ibid... 5. 14.1-3
38. (a)... athābhhipāyaṃniva vidvīṣaḥ purāḥ purodhasāropitahetisam hātiḥ/babhāra ramyo/prasā bhīṣaṇaṁ gatah kriyāṁ mantra ivaśbhicārikāṁ
// Kirāṭā... 3...p.56
40. (a)... balirudhirapānatśrayaḥ samāgataisca vēṭālairiva tālairidyamānānapulamunedopah... Kād... p.535
41. (a)... kuvādidattasiddhāṇjanasphutitaikalocanataya.... Kād... p.538
applied that infatuating collyrium to the eye, he by his beauty can
fascinate the eyes of all.\textsuperscript{42}

Regarding popular beliefs, there are some other beliefs also noted in the \textit{Kādambari}. At that time people considered the sight of a widow as unlucky. After the death of Puṇḍarīka, Mahāsveta considered herself as \textit{amaṅgalabhūta}\textsuperscript{43} which bears the meaning that the sight of a widow is inauspicious. On this relevant point, Tattvaparakāśikā commentary quotes, \textit{amaṅgaL, vaidhavyādasivarūpaṃ} \textsuperscript{44}. Again, a woman in her monthly course was considered unholy and unfit to be touched.\textsuperscript{45} At that time, the fear of people, afraid of their husbands’ destruction at the hands of enemies in the war, gave up dressing their hair and they allowed their hair to hang down to their full length.\textsuperscript{46}

In the then society, people believed that a dream seen at night was always unfailing in their result.\textsuperscript{47} In the \textit{Harṣacaritra}, it is noted that the dreams seen in the small hours of the morning come to be true.\textsuperscript{48} At that time, it was the practice among people to report a dream to a \textit{ācārya} who was learned in the science of dreams.

In the then society, an interesting practice was to present \textit{pūrṇapātra}. People distributed as presents a pot or a dish filled

\begin{itemize}
\item[42.] \textit{ākaraṇanājanamivacaśuṣoh}...............................HC., I, p.10
\item[43.] \textit{tadanurāgakṛṣmisamidampunyabahulamastamitalajjamamaṅgalabhūtaṃ}.......................Kād., p.263
\item[44.] Ibid. 
\item[45.] \textit{puṣpavatyapi pavitrā}...............................Ibid, p.40
\item[46.] \textit{ahitakalatralakalatābhīḥ saha pralambatāmupayayau bhujayugalam}...................Ibid., p.128
\item[47.] \textit{avitathaphalāśca prāyo nisāvasānasamayadrṣṭā bhavanti svapnāḥ}................Ibid., p.110
\item[48.] \textit{vāsateyyāsturīye yāme pratyuṣasyeva svapne}...............................HC., V., p.74
\item[49.] \textit{svapnadarsānāscaryānyācāryānāmāmacakṣe}..................................Kād., p.109
\end{itemize}
valuables such as clothes, ornaments etc. on festive occasions. It was also playfully snatched away by the relatives, friends and servants. This practice was known as *pūrṇapāṭrahaṇa*.50

In the society of the seventh century A.D., it was a popular practice to sing the *sūtikāmaṅgalaragītikā* in the lying-in-chamber of a pregnant lady. These were the auspicious songs sung for the well-being of a woman in confinement. It is found stated in *Kādambarī* that the bed-chamber of queen Vilāsavatī was charming on account of the auspicious songs sung by the old ladies.51 Moreover, at that time, it was a practice to draw the figures of mātrās or guardian-deities of children on a cloth-board, known as *mātrpata* in the lying-in-chamber of a pregnant lady. The mātrās are the divine mothers attending on a preg- nant lady. The mātrās are the divine mothers attending on a pregnant lady. They are eight in number known as: - Brāhmī, Māheśvarī, Cāndī or Caṅḍī, Vārāhī, Vaiṣṇavī, Kaumārī, Cāmunīḍā, and Carcikā.52

Again in the lying-in-chamber, white silver pots filled with water were placed near the head of the pregnant woman for better comfortable sleep and to ward off evil.53 In the *Kādambarī* all these references are made in the context of queen Vilāsavatī when she was confined in the lying-in-chamber, expecting her baby.

Some other practices, which were in vogue in the then society, are also mentioned in the *Kādambarī*. The practice of *śiva-balā*.

50. (a) . .kada me tanayamamahotsavānandamirbharo hariṣyati pūrṇapātraṁ pariṣkramaṁ...Ibid., p. 106
(b) . .pūrṇapāṭrahaṇāvīluppyamānanavasanabhūṣaṇāḥ samkṣobhitanagaro.............Ibid., p. 108
51. .....anekavṛddhāṇgarabdhasūtikāmaṅgalaragītikāmanoharam..........................Ibid., p. 118
52. brahmī māheśvarī caṅḍī (caṅḍī) vārāhī vaiṣṇavī tathā /kaumārī caiva cāmunīḍā carcikeyaṣṭa mātrāḥ //TPC. , Ibid. ...
53. ......sirobhāgavinyadhadhavanidrāmaṅgalarakālam.................Ibid., p. 114
referred to in the Kādambare, in which people offered food to monkeys\(^{54}\). Again, people kept monkeys in or near the stables due to the supposition that they prevented harm to the horses due to the presence of evil eyes.\(^{55}\) In this context, Bhānucaṇḍra states in his commentary, \textit{aśvānāṁ dṛṣṭidosabādhanārthamāsvāśālāyāṁ kapayah\textit{ sthānānti} iti rājñāmācārāh\(^{56}\)}

There was another practice prevalent in the then society to place a \textit{trṇapurūsa} or human figures made of grass in the fields with a view to frighten away birds, deer, beasts etc.\(^{57}\).

At that time, it was customary to make marks with the fingers of the hand on the roots of trees such as \textit{aśoka} etc, and on various things. People also decked the utensils as mortar, pestle and grinding stones etc. with five-finger prints of yellow flour or turmeric powder. The five fingers were dipped in turmeric powder mixed with water and the mortar etc., were smeared with the finger marks\(^{58}\). This practice is referred to by Bāṇabhaṭṭa in the \textit{Harsacarita} also.\(^{59}\)

The belief that \textit{bakula} plant blossoms and put forth flowers when women pour mouthfuls of wine over them is recorded in the \textit{Kādambari}. So did the \textit{aśoka} tree by their kicks and the \textit{priyanga} by the touch of the ladies\(^{60}\). In ancient time, it was believed by poets...

\(^{54}\) (a)\ldots śivābhyo māṁsabalipindamanudiniṁ nisi samutsasarja\ldots . \textit{Ibid.}, p. 109

(b)\ldots catvareṣu śivabalimupajahāra\ldots \textit{Ibid.}

55. \ldots \textit{aśvamandurāparibhraṣṭagairavaultahbhavanadādimiphalaiḥ} \ldots \textit{kāpibhājai}. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 145

56. \ldots \textit{mrgaḥbhayakṛtatrmapurusakai} \ldots \textit{Ibid.}, p. 333.

57. \ldots \textit{tāpasaṁkumārikābhirmūlabhāgadatapīṣṭapāṃcāṅgulasya} \ldots \textit{Ibid.}, p. 73-74

58. \ldots \textit{piṣṭapāṃcāṅgulamaṇḍyamānolukhalamulasālāṣīṣāyugakaranam} \ldots \textit{HC. IV.}, p. 68

59. \ldots \textit{kadacīdbakulataruriva kāminīganduṣasidhūrdhārāsvādamudito vikāsam} \ldots \textit{Kād.}, p. 99-100
the *bakula* and *asoka* trees blossom when sprinkled with wine by mouths of charming ladies and kicked by them respectively. It may be made in this context that in many Sanskrit compositions such references are met with.

**OMENS AND PORTENTS:**

References to some omens and portents are also found in the *Kādambarī* which are noted below:

In the seventh century A.D., people believed that the blooming of flowers untimely was a bad omen. The appearance of flowers out of their proper season was looked upon as ominous indicating the approaching dissolution of the world. Commenting, Bhānucandra quotes:

\[ \text{drumāśadhisēṣānāmakāle kusum-odgaman,} \]
\[ \text{phalaprasavayorbandhāṃ mahotpātām vidurbudhāḥ.} \]

Moreover, it was a popular belief among the people that a bee-hive attaching a house is inauspicious.

---

61. "...strīnāmī sparśātpriyāngurvikarati bakulāḥ śūndhugandūṣasakūṭpadāghatāsokastalakarūvakaṃ uravakaṃ ugyanāḥ sādābhīyām / mundāro narmākhyātaṇumriduhasanaceṣu vaktvātācūto gītān-Manemerurvikasati ca puṟo nartanātākāmarah।"

Mallinātha on Meghā, 2

62. (a)...prabhāpravāhāirubhayatāstanadodahalobhāyatāī kīsālayātī raktāsokāvāvā
dvākārśayanti.......... H.C., I, p. 14
(b)...raktāsoka, marṣāṇīyāḥ pāda-prahārāḥ............. Ibid., V, p. 83
(c)...antahpurabālabakulaka vārunīgandūṣa-grahaṇadurlalita........... Ibid
(d) asūtāḥ sadyāḥ kusumāṇyaśokākāḥ skandhāprabhṛtyeva sapallavāni / pādenanāpāi kṣata sundarīnām samparkamānāṣini jānupurena //
Kumāra., III, p. 20

(e) akusumatimaśokām dohadāpekṣyāḥ vā pṛānāhitaśirasāṁ vā kāntamārdāpāradha Māla, III, p. 17

(f)...mūle gandūṣasakāsa vā iņa bakulaiśyite puspavarṣṭyā......... Ratnā., I, p. 18

63. "...akālakusumaprasavā vā manoharaḥ kṛty opī lokavināśahetvāh /
Kād., p. 176

64. TPC., Ibid.
65. "...upasrṭā iṇa kṣudrādhisthītabhavanāḥ /
Ibid.
Another sign of bad omen was to see several moons in the sky. People believed that when a grave calamity was at hand, quivering orbs of the moon were supposed to be visible in the sky. Such was the belief in Europe in the Middle Ages also. Shakespeare in his *King John* has mentioned about such belief. The relevant passages are noted below:

Hubert: My Lord, they say five moons were seen to-night. Four were fixed and the fifth did whirl about. The other four in wonder.

King John: Five moons!

Hubert: Old men and beldams in the streets, do prophesy no dangerously. 67

The shaking of the mountain was supposed to portend misfortune which is noted in the *Kādambari*. 68 Again, the eclipse of the sun and the moon were regarded as precursors of the evil world. 69 Moreover, preternatural redness of the horizon was conceived as a strange foreboding to the kings 70. The reference of this evil was also noted in the *Harṣacarita* also 71. People believed that the redness in the horizon might indicate the danger to the king or general destruction of the kingdom. The falling of meteorites was also considered as an evil omen and it indicated death.

---

66. *pracaladbhirmattavāraṇairutpatacandramandalaṇibhasīcā*..............
   ibid., p. 186
67. *Shakespeare, King John, Act.IV, Scene II, p.350*
68. *sarvatasācā kulaparvatākaraṇī pracaladbhir*.............
   *Kād., p. 186*
69. *dasāvadanavināśasāpi sūnāu candrasūryāvivavāh kabadhagratānāu samaṁ rāmalakaṁ samārtiyaṁ asā*
   ibid., p. 43
70. *digdāheva pātalikriyānaṁammaratatalam*.............
   ibid., p. 184
cf. *taduktam brhatsamhitayāxh - “dāho disāṁ rajabhayaya pito desāya na-sa-huṣa-svārnah” iti //*
71. *dine dine dāruṇā disāṁ dāhā drśyante /*
   *HC. VI. p. 98*
The sight of comet was considered to be portentous too. The rise of comet was generally regarded as a sign of destruction. Kālidāsa also has referred to this evil omen in his _Kumārasambhava_.

It is observed in the _Kādambarī_ that the throbbing of the right eye is an auspicious omen in the case of men and the reverse in the case of women. The right eye of king Tārāpiḍa was throbbing constantly and he was greeted instantly with the gladsome news of Vilāsavati’s pregnancy. But in case of Mahāśveta, it was just opposite. When she went to meet Puṇḍarīka, her right eye was throbbing constantly. Afterwards when she came to know about the sudden death of Puṇḍarīka, she realised the evil consequence of the throbbing of her right eye. Some references are also met with in the _Harṣacarita_ where it is described that the throbbing of left eye in case of men portends misfortune. The great poet Kālidāsa too observed that the throbbing of right arm or right eye is an auspicious omen for men and for women it is the reverse. Shakespeare also referred to a similar belief in his play _Othello_ where Desdemona says, “Mine eyes do itch; doth it mean—”

72. tārakāvarṣamivādharmanivāsāpisūnāṁ…………
73. mitramandalasyotpātaketurahitajanasya…………
74. upaplavāya lokānāṁ dhūmaketurivottithāḥ……
75. daksinenākṣṇā parisphuratābhinnandyamanastatkālasevāsamucitena…
76. daksinēksanaphuraṇena ca prathamameva manasyāhitasaṁkā…. 
77. prabuddāsyā cāsyā muhurmuhdaksinetaramksi paspandē /
78. (a) sāntamidamāsramapadāṁ sphuṣatā ca bāhuḥ kutāḥ phalamihāsyā 
(b) aho, kim me vāmetaraṁ nayanaṁ visphuratī………………
(c) manorathāya naśāṁse kim bāho ! spandase vṛthā………
(d) savyeṣṭareṇa sphuṣatā tādksṇā /
bode weeping?” 79 Thus, it may be noticed that such beliefs are popular among the people of the Western countries also. Even in this modern age, such beliefs are still current in the Indian society.

That the belief in omens and portents was widespread in the Indian society of the seventh Century A.D. is attested by the existence of the class of people called nimittajña and sakunajña. They were expert in the science of augury. 80 It may be noted in Kadambari that queen Vilásavatī showed respect to this class of people. 81

***************

79. Shakespeare, Othelo, IV.
80. nimitatjanupacaçara / sakunajñaavidāmādaramadarsyat /
81. Ibid.

Kād., p.109