

he gave orders to the royal attendants, to appoint him to the duty of sentinel. Agreeably to this command, the officers fixed him in that post.

“It was the custom of this man to stand every night, resting on one foot, with his face directed towards the King’s upper apartments. It chanced one night, that the King was pacing back and forwards on the terraced roof of the palace, and looking out on every side, he observed some one standing below, resting on one foot. When the King perceived this, he called out to know who it was, and for what purpose he was standing on one foot. The Sentinel replied, ‘that he was anxious to get a sight of the royal countenance, and that now, by the assistance of his good fortune, having obtained it, he was overjoyed.’ While this conversation passed between the King and the Sentinel, a voice was heard from the plain, as of a person saying, ‘I am going! where is the person who is able to bring me back?’ The King, on hearing this, was extremely surprised, and enquired of the Sentinel whether he knew any thing of the cause of this exclamation. The Sentinel replied, ‘Great Prince! for some time past, at night-fall, I hear this exclamation, but owing to my duty of sentinel, I am unable to ascertain whose voice it is; but if your Majesty permit me, I will go without delay, and having accurately ascertained the cause, will return and explain the matter to your Majesty’s¹ attendants.’

“The moment the Sentinel obtained the King’s permission, he departed; and the King, immediately after, having covered himself up in a black blanket, followed the Sentinel. When the Sentinel reached the place from whence the voice proceeded, he found a beautiful woman standing in the road, crying out, ‘I am going! who is able to bring me back?’ On hearing this, the Sentinel inquired of the female who she was, and why she uttered these words. The woman replied, ‘I am the visible form of the King’s life, which being now

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¹ It is usual, in Hindustan, when an inferior is addressing a great man, for him to speak as if he was directing his conversation to the great man’s attendants; apparently, to mark his own inferiority and unworthiness to address himself personally to one so much his superior. In the same way, an inferior directs his letters to the “Attendants” of the person for whose perusal they are really designed.

come to a close, I am about to depart.' The Sentinel, on hearing this, said, 'How may you, who are the King's life, be made to return?' The Shade replied, 'If you will offer up your son's life, in exchange for that of the King, I will then certainly return, and the King having yet survived for some time, shall not quickly die.' This intelligence very much pleased the Sentinel when he heard it, and he answered, 'If by giving my own life, and my son's life, I may preserve the King, I will certainly give them; but do you stay for an hour, that I may go home to my house and fetch my son, to offer him up.' On saying this the Sentinel set off for his own house, and explained the matter to his eldest son. As soon as the Sentinel's son, who was a person of discrimination, heard all, he replied: 'The King of Tabristan is an upright monarch, a cherisher of his subjects, and one who alleviates the miseries and distresses of his people; if by my being offered up he should be preserved, it would be a most excellent thing, because by my death there can be no loss; but should any evil befall the King, some worthless person may become our sovereign in his place, through whose tyranny thousands upon thousands may perish, and the country be ruined; but by the King of Tabristan surviving, thousands upon thousands of the people will experience happiness, and the country will flourish in prosperity. Besides, I have heard from my teacher, who one day addressed his scholars to this effect: 'that if one of the attendants of a just King should be put to death to preserve the monarch's life, there would be no crime in the act.' God grant that so good a sovereign may not perish, and be succeeded by some unjust King. Take me, therefore, instantly into the presence of the Shade, and cut off my head.' The Sentinel then took his son before the Shade, and having bound him hand and foot, and his son's head being bent down, he was ready to strike it off. The Shade, on seeing this, instantly seized hold of the Sentinel's hand, and exclaimed, 'Do not behead thy child! God, who is the maker of all things, being highly satisfied with your disinterestedness and worth, has with great compassion permitted me to return, and exist for sixty centuries.' The Sentinel, on hearing these glad tidings, was very much delighted.

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" The King having overheard all this conversation, which took place between the Sentinel and the Shade, and having beheld every thing, reached home before the Sentinel, and began to pace up and down on the terrace as before.

" A short time having elapsed, the Sentinel presented himself before the King, and having made his obeisance, invoked a blessing on his Majesty, saying, ' May there be an increase of the King's life and power, and of his empire and army ! ' The King then enquired of the Sentinel, what he had ascertained with regard to the sound. The Sentinel replied, ' Great King ! command that it may be heard. ' A lovely female, of exquisite symmetry, who had deserted her abode, was seated in the middle of the road, and bewailing her misfortunes, saying, ' I am going ! is there no one who will bring me back ? ' When I got to this female, I effected a reconciliation between her and her Lord, by means of mild and conciliating language. This female has now agreed not to quit her dwelling place for sixty centuries. ' The King being delighted with the noble conduct and address of the Sentinel, said to him, ' Sentinel, the very moment you left the vicinity of the palace I followed you, and from a distance overheard the conversation that passed between you and the Shade, as well as that between you and your son, and I likewise beheld every thing which took place. God will reward you, and I will implore from Him that I may remove your poverty, and render you affluent. '

" Shortly after, the King having taken his seat on his throne, and being surrounded by all the judges and nobles of the land, he in their presence installed the Sentinel in the office of prime minister and treasurer, and confided to his care all the keys belonging to his office. "

The night was at an end, and the morning dawned, just as the Parrot finished this story. On this account Khojesta was unable to go to her lover ; and as she had been awake the whole night, listening to the story of the Parrot, she retired to rest upon a velvet couch.

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¹ Here, as in note 1, page 93, the Sentinel speaks as if he addressed himself to the attendants of the King.

THE THIRD STORY.

Of a Goldsmith and a Carpenter, who hid some Golden Images which they had stolen.

As soon as the sun had set and the moon arose, Khojesta, having adorned herself with many jewels, went into the presence of the Parrot, and requested permission from him that she might go and visit her lover. The Parrot answered her, saying, "On the very first night even, I gave you permission, why, therefore, have you made any delay? Go quickly; but if he to whom you are going covered with all these jewels, should covet them, and forget the love and esteem which he has for you, just as the Goldsmith who, through a desire to possess some golden images, relinquished a friendship that had long subsisted between him and the Carpenter, then what will you do?"

Khojesta, anxious to know the particulars of the story of the Goldsmith and the Carpenter, requested the Parrot to detail all the circumstances.

The Parrot began his relation, by saying: "In a certain city there was a Goldsmith and a Carpenter, between whom there existed so great an affection, that every one who saw them concluded they must be two brothers. It happened that the Goldsmith and Carpenter travelled together into a foreign country, and having arrived in a certain city, and being destitute of bills of exchange, they determined that, as there was an idol-temple in the city, in which were many golden images, it would be advisable to assume the garb of brahmans, and then to repair to the temple to perform the various rites of adoration to the divinities, so that, when an opportunity should offer, they might purloin a few images.

"Having formed this contrivance, these two persons, having dressed themselves like brahmans, went into the temple, where they began to perform the ritual of worship. The other brahmans, seeing their extreme piety, became ashamed, and a few of them ceased to attend the temple; and if any one asked them why they had abandoned the place, they would reply, 'that two brahmans
who

who had arrived, did pray and reverence the gods in such a way, that they, not being able to equal them, were ashamed, and consequently left the temple.

“ In this way all the former brahmans gradually quitted the place, and the Goldsmith and Carpenter, laying hold of the opportunity, took all the idols, and departed for their own country. When they arrived near their native city, they buried the images under a tree, and went to their own dwellings.

“ One night the Goldsmith having gone alone, took all the images out of the ground, and carried them to his own house; and going in the morning to the Carpenter, he said: ‘ Oh, Carpenter, you have forgotten former friendship, and have taken the whole of my share; how long do you think you will enjoy such wealth?’ The Carpenter, on hearing this, was astonished, and immediately understood that the Goldsmith had deceived him, and taken all the images. In consequence, the Carpenter said to him: ‘ Oh, Goldsmith, what you have done, that I comprehend; but you not having kept God in sight, have fixed this false imputation upon me; however, there is a God!’ Saying this, he began to think how he might obtain redress: as it was evident to the Carpenter that nothing was to be gained by quarrelling with the Goldsmith, he remained silent.

“ A few days after, the Carpenter carved a wooden image to resemble the Goldsmith, and he dressed it likewise in cloaths similar to his. He then got two little bear’s cubs, and was in the habit of putting the food of these cubs in the skirts and sleeves of the image; and out of these, when hungry, the young bears would go and feed.

“ As soon as the Carpenter saw that the young bears had conceived a great fondness for the image, he one day invited the Goldsmith and his wife, as well as many of the neighbouring females. The Goldsmith’s wife brought her two children with her. The Carpenter took the two children, and hid them; and having produced the bear’s cubs, screamed out, ‘ What a marvellous thing is this I see, the Goldsmith’s children have suddenly become like bears; this is a most afflicting circumstance!’ The Goldsmith, on hearing this exclamation, went to the spot, and having looked, exclaimed, ‘ Never, Carpenter, has it

happened that a human being has become a bear ; this is all a feint.' In short, the Goldsmith and Carpenter having quarrelled, went before the Cazy, who was the judge of that place. The Cazy called on the Carpenter to explain how it was possible that a human being could become a bear. The Carpenter replied, that the two children were playing together, when all on a sudden they fell on the ground, and were turned into bears. The Cazy asked him how such a story could be credited without some proof. The Carpenter answered : ' I have read in ancient books of one animal being transformed into another, but still retaining its former understanding ; now, if these have become bears, they will recognise the Goldsmith, and my assertion will be verified ; and if they have not been transformed, they will not go near him.' The Cazy having agreed to abide by this mode of proof, ordered the cubs to be brought. The Carpenter, in obedience to the order of the Judge, brought the young bears, and set them loose in the hall of justice, before all the people, of whom there were many present. The young bears, paying no attention to any thing else, but seeing the dress and form of the Goldsmith the same as that of the image, began to play and rub their heads against his feet. The Cazy seeing this before his face, said to the Goldsmith, ' I am fully convinced that your children have become bear's cubs. Take them home. Why have you uselessly quarrelled with the Carpenter ?'

" The Goldsmith, seeing there was no remedy, went to the house of the Carpenter, and having prostrated himself at his feet, said : ' Because I did not restore you your share, you have acted in this way ; now do you, having pardoned me, take your share, and restore me my children.' The Carpenter replied : ' You have acted treacherously with me, and have consequently been guilty of a great offence, which you ought never to repeat ; but having turned your thoughts away from it, there is a possibility that your children may quit the form of bears, and take that they had before.' The Carpenter then hinted at his share of the gold, and having received it, he restored the two children to the Goldsmith."

When the Parrot had finished this story, he enjoined Khojesta not to go near

near her lover covered with her jewels; for, says the Parrot, "if he, like these two, should forget his affection, what then would you do?" When Khojesta heard this, she took off her jewels, and was just ready to go to her lover, but at this moment the morning began to dawn, and she deferred going that day.

THE FOURTH STORY.

Of a Young Nobleman, who formed an erroneous Opinion of the Conduct of a certain Soldier's Wife.

WHEN the sun had set and the moon arose, Khojesta came into the presence of the Parrot, and said: "You seem little aware of what I suffer; I am quite restless through love for the Prince; give me, therefore, permission to go to my lover to-night." The Parrot replied: "I am very much afflicted at your distress; you pass whole nights in listening to stories; but why don't you rather go to your lover? Still I have this apprehension, that if in the midst of this your Lord should come back, then you, not being able to visit your best beloved, will feel extremely mortified; just as the Nobleman's son was made by the Soldier's wife: so will it be with you." Khojesta, on hearing this, enquired the particulars respecting the Soldier's wife and the Nobleman's son. The Parrot began his relation as follows.

"In a certain city there was a Soldier, who had a very handsome wife; but the Soldier, fearful that she might go astray, never for a moment ceased to watch her most carefully. He for this reason would not leave his wife behind him, and go abroad to seek a livelihood. Having in consequence become miserably poor, his wife one day addressed him to this effect: 'Oh, my lord, why do you not go abroad; and why is it that you have given up service?' Her husband answered: 'Lest, when I am gone for employment, you should do what is improper; and through this idea I have not fixed you in any place, that I might go and seek service.' His wife replied: 'It is not right to form such an opinion, because the virtuous woman is not to be fooled by any one; while

while she who is depraved cannot be guarded by all the caution of her husband. In proof of this listen to the following story.

“ ‘ There was a Magician in a certain country, who, having transformed himself into an elephant, used to carry his wife on his back, and roam about from forest to forest ; yet, in spite of all this vigilance of her husband, she contrived to form an intimacy with another man.’ The Soldier enquired how the woman had managed to do so. His wife began her narration thus : ‘ A man, seeing an elephant with a canopy on its back, in the midst of a certain forest, being very much afraid, climbed up a tree. All on a sudden the elephant stopped under that very tree, and having taken off the canopy, went to graze. The man seeing that there was a beautiful woman under the canopy, came down from the tree, and the woman observing the man, came out from her canopy ; and after an interchange of sentiments, they both reposed themselves under the tree, and passed their time as was most agreeable to themselves. Shortly after this, the female took out a string covered with knots from a bag, and put another knot upon it. When the man saw this, he asked her for what purpose it was intended. The damsel replied : ‘ My master is a great magician, and by means of his art he changes himself into an elephant, and then he puts me on his back, and roams about from forest to forest, to the end that I may not converse with any other man ; yet, notwithstanding all his caution, I have contrived to be intimate with a hundred men ; and by way of remembrance, I have tied a hundred knots upon this cord, and through your kindness I have added another ; and it has now, altogether, one hundred and one knots.’ When the Soldier’s wife had finished her story, the Soldier asked her what she recommended him to do. The wife replied : ‘ Hear, my husband ! this is my advice. Do you try to procure a service in a foreign country ; and I will give you this nosegay, by which, as long as it remains fresh, you may know that I have in no way fallen from virtue ; but when it shall be withered, you may then be sure that I have done something wrong.’ The Soldier having heard the advice given him by his wife, determined upon going abroad ; and at the moment of departure she gave him the nosegay, and dismissed him.

“ Shortly

“ Shortly after the Soldier, having arrived in a certain city, took service under one of the nobles of the place. At the same time, he carefully preserved the nosegay given him by his wife. It being the winter season, the young Nobleman remarked to his companions, that at that season there was not a fresh flower to be seen in any garden, nor was it possible even for the most wealthy to obtain one; it was therefore most astonishing from whence this poor Soldier could obtain a fresh nosegay every day. His companions replied, that they too were very much puzzled by the same thing.

“ The young Nobleman, in consequence, enquired of the Soldier from whence and in what manner he got the nosegay. The Soldier told him how his wife had given it to him, and how she had informed him, that as long as it remained fresh, he might be certain that she continued virtuous, but that when he should find it faded, he might be sure that she had gone wrong; and that she, on saying this, had dismissed him. The young Nobleman, on hearing this, began to laugh, and told the Soldier that his wife must be a sorceress, and that by her charms she made the nosegay appear ever fresh.

“ There were two cooks in the service of the young Nobleman, who were very clever and shrewd; to one of these he gave orders to go to the Soldier's house, and by some stratagem to get acquainted with his wife, and then to return immediately and explain every thing, when it would be seen whether the nosegay was fresh or faded.

“ Agreeably to the orders of the Nobleman, the Cook set off for the Soldier's city, where, on his arrival, he commissioned an old woman to go to the Soldier's house. The old woman contrived some way or other to make known the wishes of the Cook to the Soldier's wife. She, after some conversation with the old woman, told her that she should first bring the man, that she might see whether he was a suitable person or not. The old woman in consequence conducted the Cook to the Soldier's house. The wife whispered in the Cook's ear: ‘ Do you leave this house instantly, and say to the old woman that you do not like this woman, and that you cannot form any intimacy with such a person; but you can come alone to my house; because, when these go-betweens

acquainted with these private affairs, they are sure to divulge them, therefore do not say a word to her on the subject.' The Cook just did as he was directed.

"There was in the Soldier's house a dry well, over which his wife placed a bed made of old rope, and covered the whole with a sheet, and had every thing ready before the Cook made his appearance. On the arrival of the Cook, the Soldier's wife made him a sign to sit down on the bed; but the instant he attempted to sit on it, he fell into the well, and began to roar out. The Soldier's wife then interrogated him as to who he was, and from whence he came. The Cook, seeing there was no help for it, related every thing regarding the Soldier and the young Nobleman; and being thus overtaken by misfortune, was unable to return home. The young Nobleman, surprised at the delay, dispatched the other Cook, giving him much money, and fitting him out like a merchant. When this Cook reached the Soldier's city, he fell, like the former one, into the well, where they both remained.

"The young Nobleman having reflected that not one of the two individuals whom he had sent had returned, was quite unable to conceive the cause of it; he therefore determined in his own mind to go himself. As soon as he had made up his mind to do so, he one day, under the pretence of going a hunting, left his house, and taking the Soldier with him, he reached the native country of the latter. The Soldier immediately went to his own house, and laid his nose-gay before his wife, and related to her every thing that had taken place; and she, in return, informed her husband of every thing.

"The next day the Soldier invited the Nobleman to his house, and shewed him all the rites of hospitality. The wife took the two Cooks out of the well, and directed them to dress themselves like women; and that, as she had some guests, they should wait upon them, and serve up the dishes, and that afterwards she would set them at liberty.

"The two Cooks dressed themselves like women, and carried in the dinner; but owing to their having remained in the well, and through bad food, all the hair of their heads and beards had fallen off: on this account the young Nobleman at first was not able to recognize them, and he asked the Soldier why he

he had shaved their heads ? The Soldier said that he should explain, presently, the offence they had committed. The young Nobleman, on looking at them more attentively, discovered that they were his Cooks ; and they likewise wept bitterly, and fell at his feet.

“ At that very moment the Soldier’s wife called out from her apartments : ‘ When you saw a nosegay in my husband’s hand you laughed, and sent these two persons to try the rectitude of my conduct ; you now know by your own eyes what kind of a woman I am.’ The young Nobleman, being very much ashamed, besought forgiveness.”

The Parrot having finished the story of the Soldier’s wife, told Khojesta to go at once to her lover, otherwise she would feel ashamed, in the same way as the young Nobleman was made by the Soldier’s wife. Just as Khojesta was on the point of setting off, the cock crew, and the morning broke, which prevented Khojesta from going that day.

THE FIFTH STORY.

Of a Goldsmith, a Carpenter, a Tailor, and a Pilgrim, who quarrelled about a Wooden Image.

WHEN the sun sank in the west and the moon shone forth in the east, Khojesta, having gone to the Parrot, requested permission to pay a visit to her lover. The Parrot answered : “ Oh, my mistress ! I nightly give you permission, why do you make delay ? I feel apprehensive through this, lest your Lord should return in the interval, and that you and he should have a quarrel, as fruitless as that which took place between the Goldsmith, the Carpenter, the Tailor, and the Pilgrim.” Khojesta, on hearing this, asked what was the cause of the quarrel between those four persons ?

The Parrot replied : “ Once on a time, a Goldsmith, a Carpenter, a Tailor, and a Pilgrim journeyed together into a foreign country ; and having one night reached an extensive plain, they thus communed with themselves : ‘ It is not safe

safe that we should all go to sleep at once ; let us therefore watch by turns, during the four watches of the night.' Such was the determination of these four individuals.

" The Carpenter took the first watch, and, by way of keeping off sleep, took out his adz, and employed himself in forming the figure of a woman out of a block of wood which happened to be there. The Goldsmith having taken his station the second watch, perceived the image, and guessed that it had been cut out by the Carpenter, who had thus shown his skill : but it struck him, that without ornaments it would not look handsome ; he therefore thought he would make some for its neck, hands, and feet, and bedeck it with them. The Goldsmith having formed a resolution to this effect, made some beautiful ornaments, and put them on the image. When the third watch had come, the Tailor being roused from sleep, and beginning to perform his watch, he saw there the wooden figure of a female, and adorned with jewels ; but standing naked, the Tailor in consequence sewed some garments, beautiful as those for a bride, and dressed the image with them, when it had a most lovely appearance. At the fourth watch, the Pilgrim having awakened from sleep, and taken his tour of duty, beheld this most fascinating figure. Immediately having purified his hands and feet by ablution, he implored of God that he would bestow life on the wooden image. That instant God bestowed life on it. The moment it obtained life, it began to talk like a human being.

" When the night began to decline and the sun appeared, these four persons arose from sleep, and all became enamoured with the figure, nay, frantick. First, the Carpenter asserted, that having shaped the wood and given it a form, he was consequently entitled to her. The Goldsmith affirmed, that by his jewels she had been made as beautiful as a bride ; while the Tailor contended, that as he had made the clothes which covered her nudity, and had thereby preserved her from shame, he ought on that account to possess her. To this it was answered by the Pilgrim, that she was but a wooden image till, by his intercession, she had obtained life, and become a human being ; and that he would consequently take possession of her.

" Thus

"Thus were these four persons contending with one another, when suddenly a stranger arrived at that place. On this they all began to ask him to whom she belonged of right? The stranger replied: 'This is my wife, whom you, having seduced from my house, have brought here.' He in consequence took the four, together with the female, before the magistrate. The magistrate, on looking at her, declared that she was his own brother's wife, whom his brother took abroad with him, but that they had killed his brother and taken his wife. The magistrate, in consequence, took them all prisoners, and carried them before the Cazy. The moment the Judge beheld her, he said: 'From whence have you brought her? for this woman was for a long time my slave; but, having robbed my house of much property and ready money, she ran away. Now I have recovered her; but the goods and ready money, where are they? This instant produce them.'

"In this manner there was a most fierce dispute on all sides; and many people collected around to enjoy the sport. Among these an old man cried out, 'This dispute can be settled by none of you; but in a certain place there is an old and very large tree; and when it happens that a cause cannot be determined by human decision, it is usual to repair into the presence of that tree, when these words, 'it is true,' or 'it is false,' issue from it.'

"On hearing this, these seven persons, having taken the maiden with them, went to the tree, and stated the case. The tree split asunder of itself, and the damsel stepped nimbly into the middle of it, when the tree immediately reunited as it was before, and the jewels and cloaths of the female's person remained outside. The tree then announced that each had obtained what belonged to him."

The Parrot having finished this, addressed Khojesta, saying: "My dear mistress! I fear lest your lord should return and then confine you, in which case you will fall into disgrace with your lover. Therefore, arise quickly, and go to him." Just as Khojesta was on the point of setting off, the morning dawned, and the cock began to crow, and, in consequence, she deferred going.

THE SIXTH STORY.

Of a certain Fakir, who fell in love with the Daughter of the King of Canouge.

WHEN the sun had sunk in the west, and the moon arose in the east, Khojesta, being adorned with many ornaments, went into the presence of the Parrot, and said to him: "I nightly come to you, and give you the trouble of telling me amusing stories, and you likewise are prevented from going to sleep; I therefore feel very much distressed, and, indeed, the praise of your kindness exceeds description."

The Parrot replied: "I am your devoted servant, and yet cannot find an opportunity to make myself useful to you. There was a king named Ray Rayan, whose history you most probably have heard: just in that way I will very speedily effect a union between you and your best beloved." Khojesta enquired what were the circumstances of Ray Rayan's history.

The Parrot said: "The King of Canouge had a most beautiful and lovely daughter. A certain Fakir, beholding the beauty of the damsel, became enamoured with her, and was even like one frantick for her. When he became a little more composed in mind, he bethought himself to this effect: 'I am but a Fakir, and she is the King's daughter. I am in no way her equal; it is a very foolish thing that I should pretend to marry the daughter of a king.' Then again he reflected, that love, whether of a king or a beggar, was just the same, and that by making his case known to the King, he should undoubtedly obtain the Princess. The Fakir having settled all this in his own mind, a few days after sent a message to the King, demanding his daughter. The King, on hearing the request, got very angry, and gave orders to his Minister to punish the Fakir. The Minister represented that it was not a royal duty to give pain to a holy man; but that if his Majesty should order it, he would contrive some way of removing him from the city. The King approved of the Minister's suggestion, and desired him to put it in practice.

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“ The Minister then summoned the Fakir into his presence, and told him, that if he would bring an elephant's load of gold coin into the royal assembly, he should then obtain the Princess. The Fakir, being very anxious about the business, never failed to ask whoever he met for some way of attaining his wishes. Some one seeing him very much distressed, said to him : ‘ Oh, Fakir ! your desire will never be fulfilled by any other person than by Ray Rayan, who is a most generous man ; by merely asking him, you will obtain the elephant's load of gold coin.’ The Fakir having heard this, after making enquiry, reached the presence of Ray Rayan, and having represented his situation, begged for an elephant's load of gold coin. Ray Rayan that instant complied with his wishes. The Fakir immediately took the loaded elephant before the King, who turned to his Minister and said : ‘ No good has resulted from your device, for he has brought the elephant's load of gold. Now, what is to be done ?’ The Minister hearing this, replied : ‘ I am well aware from whence he has got so much wealth ; he must have been given it by Ray Rayan ; for, except himself, there is no other mortal who would make such a gift. It is now necessary, therefore, to try some other expedient.’ He then addressed the Fakir, and said : ‘ You cannot possibly obtain the King's daughter for a load of gold coin.’ The Fakir then asked him, what more he wished for : he had but to mention it, and he would bring it. The Minister replied, that if he would bring Ray Rayan's head, he should undoubtedly obtain the Princess.

“ The Fakir returned into the presence of Ray Rayan, and told him that the King wanted his head, which, if he would give, he should then obtain the Princess. When Ray Rayan heard this request, he said to the Fakir, ‘ Keep up your spirits ; and as to my head, be under no uneasiness about it ; for I have put it in my hands, and whosoever wishes for it, to him will I give it. My advice therefore is, that you bind my neck with a rope, and take me into that King's presence, and say to him : ‘ The person about whose head you spoke, him I have brought to you : in your presence I will cut off his head.’ On hearing this, if he should consent to it, that instant strike off my head from my body ;

but

but if he should desire any other thing whatsoever, that having made ready, I will give it to him.'

"The Fakir, having in that way bound a rope round Ray Rayan's neck, took him before the King, and said: 'The person for whose head you expressed a wish, him I have brought in person. Speak but the word, and I will strike off his head before you.' When the King beheld the greatness of soul of Ray Rayan, he threw himself at his feet, and said: 'In humanity, and in heroick feeling, there is no mortal greater than thyself in the whole earth. How is it possible that I should take your head? My daughter is your purchased slave, give her to whom you list.' On saying this the King sent for his daughter: and gave her over into the hand of Ray Rayan."

The Parrot having finished this story, said: "Oh, my dear mistress! if, by my head even I should be of service to you, I would even give that, and feel no regret at its loss. Go, quickly, to your best beloved."

When Khojesta, who was anxious to go, got up for that purpose, the morning had dawned, and on this account she was prevented from going that day.

THE SEVENTH STORY.

Of a Merchant who lost his Daughter.

WHEN the sun set and the moon arose, Khojesta, being very pensive, went and sat down by the Parrot. The Parrot said to her: "My dear mistress, why are you so thoughtful to-night?" Khojesta answered: "It occurred to my mind last night, is my beloved sensible or foolish, learned or illiterate? I will endeavour to find this out; for if he is foolish, I will not live with him; as it is death to dwell with a fool or blockhead." The Parrot recommended her to go to her lover's abode, and try his judgment by telling him the story of the Merchant's daughter; when, if he should make a suitable reply, she might then be certain that he was really clever. Khojesta then enquired the particulars of the story of the Merchant's daughter.

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The Parrot, on hearing her question, began thus : “ There lived in the kingdom of Cabool a wealthy Merchant, who had a beautiful daughter, named Johera. All the wealthy men of the city were desirous of marrying the maiden ; but she declined making choice of any of them, declaring to her father, that she would only marry some worthy and well-informed person. This determination became known every where.

“ In a certain city there were three young men, who were profoundly skilled in the sciences, and having heard this report, repaired to the city of Cabool, and said to the father : ‘ We have heard that your daughter wishes to have a well-informed husband : now we three have in consequence come here : do you make trial of our attainments. One is deeply versed in the science of astrology : he can reveal the very spot where any thing is deposited which has been lost, and by whom it has been taken. The second is so skilful in mechanics, that he can make a horse out of wood, upon which whoever mounts, can go with the rapidity of the wind wherever he wishes. The third is very expert in archery : at whomsoever he shoots an arrow, he pierces his body through and through, and there does not remain a mark of the size of half a mustard-seed. I have now made known to you our qualifications ; let your daughter make choice of whom she likes best among us.’

“ The Merchant, on hearing this account of the accomplishments of these three persons, made it known to his daughter, who replied : ‘ I will consider the matter in my mind, and will give them my answer to-morrow.’ Still she had fixed in her own mind to make choice of one of them. But when the damsel went to sleep at night, a fairy came and carried her off, and placed her on a high mountain.

“ In the morning the Merchant sought for his daughter, but not finding her any where, he addressed himself to the astrologer to learn where she was. The Astrologer, having meditated for a short time, said : ‘ Your daughter has been carried away by a fairy, who has placed her on an exceedingly high mountain, which is inaccessible to man.’ The Merchant then having got the Mechanician to make a horse, and having mounted the Archer upon it, he sent

him to the mountain. The Archer being mounted on the horse, arrived with the velocity of the wind on the mountain, and having killed the fairy with an arrow, he conducted the damsel to her father's house; and likewise told the father, that he must have the damsel. The Astrologer contended that he was entitled to her, as he had ascertained the spot where she was; while the Mechanician asserted that he ought to possess her, as it was by mounting the horse made by him that the Archer had reached the mountain. In this manner a violent contest arose among these four persons."

The Parrot having finished the story, said: "Now ask your lover which of the three persons was best entitled to the damsel. If he gives you the right answer, then you may be certain that he is a man of sense."

When Khojesta heard this, she said: "Oh, Parrot! do you tell me first who should possess her." The Parrot answered, "That the person who killed the fairy with an arrow should gain her." Khojesta asked, "Why should the person who made the calculation not possess her, or he who made the horse?"

The Parrot answered, "That these two persons had merely displayed their skill; but that the Archer, despising death, went to a place full of danger, and after suffering much hardship, killed the fairy, and brought back the maiden: on this account he should obtain her."

The Parrot having finished the story, told Khojesta to go to her lover; but just as she got up to depart, the cock crew, and the morning dawned, and on this account Khojesta did not go that day.

THE EIGHTH STORY.

Of a Prince of Babylon, who became Enamoured with a certain Damsel.

WHEN the sun had departed for the west, and the moon shone forth in the east, Khojesta drew near the Parrot and said: "Oh, Parrot! I am about to go into the presence of my best beloved, to try his understanding, whether he is truly intelligent or not. If he is really clever, I shall then conceive an affection for him."

him, otherwise I shall bear with the affliction of my heart, and remain quiet. Because the wise have said, 'That it is not proper to put trust in the affection of these three, namely, women, children, and foolish people.'” The Parrot, on hearing this, replied: “Oh, mistress, your remark is just; but it is proper that you should go to-night to your lover and tell him some tale, and then ask him for an answer; if he should give such an answer as you wish, you may then believe him to be wise.” To this Khojesta replied, “Tell me what story I should ask him about?” The Parrot began as follows.

“The son of the King of Babylon one day having entered a temple, saw a most lovely female, with a face resplendent as the full moon, having raven-coloured locks, an eye like a deer, lips red as the Bimba fruit, a slender waist, and a motion graceful as a swan; and becoming enamoured with her, he placed his head at the feet of the divinity of the place, and after praise and adoration thus addressed him: ‘Oh, mighty Lord! if you will marry me to this damsel, I will make my head an offering in your presence.’ He afterwards sent to the father of the damsel by the means of an agent, saying that he was desirous of marrying his daughter. The person employed represented this to the father, who gave his consent, and married his daughter to the Prince, according to the custom of his caste, and in conformity to the ordinances. The Prince afterwards, accompanied by his bride, returned to his palace, where they dwelt together. Some days afterwards the maiden’s father sent a message, inviting his daughter and his son-in-law to his house. The Prince, when he had received the invitation, being accompanied by his wife, and taking a Brahman who was one of his companions along with him, went to his father-in-law’s house. When he arrived near the temple of the Divinity, it occurred to the Prince that he had promised the God, that if he would bestow the damsel upon him, he would then give his head as an offering: now having got the damsel, it was but right that he should keep his promise. The Prince having thus resolved, entered the temple by himself, and having cut off his own head placed it at the feet of the God. Afterwards the Brahman, who was his companion, on entering the temple and seeing his head cut off, became very much terrified,

terrified, fearing that it would be said 'I have killed the Prince, through desire of possessing the Princess; it is better, therefore, that I cut off my head.' Having thus determined, he cut off his head, and fell at the feet of the Divinity of the place. Shortly after, the damsel being surprised at the delay in her husband's coming out, went into the temple, when seeing her husband and the Brahman's head cut off, she was confounded, and exclaimed: 'What a calamity has befallen me in the way, that such a fate should have overtaken my Lord. There is now no farther utility in life, I will cut off my own head, and will be burned with him.' On saying this she was about to cut off her head, when on the instant these words issued from the God: 'Oh, damsel! cut not off your head, but take up the severed heads of these, and quickly fix them on their bodies, and they shall again live.' When the damsel heard these words, she being in a great state of agitation, joined her husband's head to the body of the Brahman, and the Brahman's head to her husband's body. The moment they were joined, they both regained life, and stood before the damsel. Shortly after a fierce dispute arose between¹ the body of the King's son and the head of the Brahman. The head says: 'She is my wife, and I will have her:' and the body says: 'She is mine, and I'll take her.'"

When the Parrot had related this story to Khojesta, he said: "Now, mistress, if you desire to judge of the ability of your lover, tell him this story, and ask him who should possess the damsel; if he is clever, he will be able to answer you correctly, otherwise he will not give a proper reply." Khojesta said: "But do you first tell me who should obtain the damsel." The Parrot replied: "Then hear, oh mistress! the head is the seat of intellect and the sovereign

¹ This is an oversight, and it should be, "between the head and body of the King's son;" because it is not only required by the sense, but is clearly intended by the writer, as is shewn in this passage, which occurs shortly after: "The head is the seat of intellect and the sovereign of the body; therefore on whatever body was the head of the Prince of Babylon, that body was entitled to the damsel." The same mistake occurs in the Persian *Táti Námah*, and in the Hindoostanny *Tota Kahání*.

sovereign of the body; therefore, on whatever body was the head of the Prince of Babylon, that body was entitled to the damsel."

When Khojesta heard this story, she was prepared to go to her lover, but the morning broke, and the cock began to crow; on this account her departure for that day was deferred.

THE NINTH STORY.

Of a King, who did not accept a Merchant's Daughter.

WHEN the sun was set and the moon arose, Khojesta, being very much ashamed, went to the Parrot, and said: "Oh, Parrot! listen to the state of my mind; the wise have said, 'That the woman who has no shame is worse than all other women;' I will therefore not go near a strange man, but wait with patience at home, because this is a shameless transaction." The Parrot replied: "Oh, mistress! whatever you say is undoubtedly true; but I am afraid, lest that if you suffer with patience, you will be distressed and afflicted like the King." Khojesta, on hearing this, enquired the cause of the King's distress.

The Parrot replied: "In a certain city there was a Merchant, who possessed much money, goods, horses, and elephants, and who had likewise a beautiful daughter. The report of her beauty spread from country to country, and all the respectable people of the place, through desire of marrying the maid, went to the father's house, and used every entreaty, but the Merchant would not give his consent. When the damsel became marriagable, the Merchant addressed a letter to the King of the country, saying: 'My daughter is extremely beautiful, having a face lovely as the full moon, an eye like a deer, jetty locks, and a walk majestick as an elephant. The feathered race are overpowered and fascinated on hearing the nectar of her words. The maiden is every way worthy of becoming a queen. If your Majesty should kindly accept of her, then I am exalted in nature, and a common man is ennobled.'

“ When the King had perused this letter, and listened to the messenger, he became very much pleased, and reflected in his own mind, that when the destiny of any person was favourable, every desirable thing then came of its own accord to him. After this idea, he directed four of his confidential Ministers to go to the Merchant's house, and see if his daughter was a suitable person ; and if so, immediately to conduct her to him. In consequence, the Ministers having gone to the Merchant's house, and having strictly examined her beauty, became confounded in intellect. Shortly after, having recovered themselves, they thus debated together : ‘ If the King should behold so beautiful a woman he would lose his senses, and never quit her day and night, nor apply himself to the affairs of the empire, and consequently all public business would be ruined.’ The Ministers having thus reflected, came back to the King's presence, and represented : ‘ Oh, great King! the damsel is not so very beautiful ; there are many women as handsome as her in the royal palace ; for this reason we have not brought her.’ The King having heard their answer, replied : ‘ If the matter is as you say, in that case I have no desire for the maiden.’

“ The Merchant becoming very much distressed at the King not having made choice of his daughter, gave her in marriage to the Superintendent of the police of the city. But the maid thought in her own mind, that it was very extraordinary, that though she was so very beautiful the King had not accepted of her.

“ It happened some time after this, that he was taking a tour towards the house of the Superintendent of police, and that the damsel, having displayed all her beauty, was seated on the top of the house. The King, fascinated, enquired from the neighbours who she was. They informed him that she was the daughter of such a Merchant, and had been espoused by the Superintendent of police. The King, on hearing this intelligence, summoned his Ministers, and told them that they had committed a great offence, in falsely representing so beautiful a girl to be ugly. The Ministers pleaded, that on beholding the extreme beauty of the maid, they had apprehended that on taking

taking her to his Majesty he would abandon his royal duties, and lose his senses; and on that account they had represented the matter falsely. The King accepted their excuse, and said: 'You have so far done well; but I, having seen the damsel, cannot contain myself.' His courtiers represented to him, that he should first demand her from the Superintendent of police, and that if he would not surrender her, then his Majesty should take her by force. The King replied: 'I am the King; such an act as this would be highly improper, because it is unjust and oppressive: neither is it the duty of a monarch to afflict his subjects.'

"After this the King's thoughts were continually fixed upon the damsel, and in the course of a short time, falling very ill, he suffered uncommon distress, and died."

The Parrot having finished this story, said to Khojesta: "Oh, my mistress! it is not my recommendation that you should depend upon patience, but that you should arise and go to your best beloved; for if you, like the King, should not have an interview with him, you too will be afflicted by sickness." On this Khojesta was ready to set out, when the cock began to crow, and the morning dawned, and on this account she was unable to go that day.

THE TENTH STORY.

Of a Merchant and a Barber, who beat some Brahmans with a Staff.

WHEN the sun had set, and the moon with all the starry host arose, Khojesta being dressed in cloths of satin brocaded with gold, and ornamented with jewels, went to the Parrot to get his permission, and said: "Oh, Parrot! I wish this midnight to go to my best beloved, tell me, therefore, whatever story remains." On hearing this, the Parrot began as follows.

"In a certain city there dwelt a wealthy Merchant; but he was childless, and on this account he considered in his own mind: 'I have on coming into this world collected much wealth together, but I have no offspring, and on my

my death some other will enjoy these riches ; it is then better to give all this property to the religious mendicant, the poor man, and the widow.' The Merchant having considered this in his own mind, distributed all his wealth in charity ; and at night, on going to sleep, he had a dream, in which a person said to him : ' Oh, wealthy man ! I am your destiny ; you have this day bestowed all your property upon the poor, how will you be able to support your worldly expenses ? This consideration has not made you reserve any thing ; on this account I have come for the purpose of giving you advice. To-morrow I will assume the form of a brahman, and when I shall appear before you, at that instant do you break my head with a staff ; I shall through that beating fall on the ground, and on dying my body will turn to gold. Do you then cut up my body and take the gold, which will be in quantity equal to my size.'

" The next day, when the Merchant's destiny, which had assumed the form of a brahman arrived, the Barber was shaving the Merchant. The Merchant immediately got up and struck the brahman a few blows on the head, when he dropt down dead, and was turned into gold. As the Barber had seen this, the Merchant gave him a few pieces of gold, and told him to tell no one. The Barber concluded in his own mind, that brahmans might be converted into gold by breaking their heads. The Barber having taken up this idea, on returning home invited several brahmans, and conducted them to his house, where he belaboured them with a staff, so that their heads were pounded to pieces, and blood began to fall in streams. They too, on being beaten, roared out, and many people on hearing them being collected together, carried the Barber before the Judge of the place. The Judge interrogated the Barber as to the reason why he had beaten the brahmans. The Barber pleaded that he had gone to the Merchant's house, when a brahman made his appearance, and that the Merchant gave the brahman a few blows with a staff, by which the brahman was killed, and his body turned into gold. That having seen this himself, he conceived that if he were to give some brahmans a sound drubbing with a staff, he should then get plenty of gold. In consequence of this he had beaten the brahmans ; but that instead of any one of them turning
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ing to gold, the only result was a great uproar. When the Judge heard this from the Barber he summoned the Merchant into his presence, and asked him what story was this which the Barber told. The Merchant answered, that the Barber had been his servant, but that for some time past he had been crazy. The Judge, trusting to the Merchant's statement, commanded the Barber to be driven away."

The Parrot having finished this story, said to Khojesta: "Oh, mistress! do you go to your lover." On this Khojesta rose up to depart, but just at that moment the cock crew, and the morning dawned, and on this account Khojesta was unable to go that day.

The End of the Stories taken from the Tales of a Parrot.

FOUR STORIES

TAKEN FROM

THE COLLECTION

ENTITLED THE

STORIES OF THE THIRTY-TWO IMAGES OF VICRAMÁDITYA.

THE STORY OF THE EIGHTEENTH IMAGE.

AGAIN, on another day, King Bhoj approached the Throne for the purpose of being installed; that instant the Eighteenth Image addressed the King, saying: "Hear, oh King Bhoj! he alone who possesses greatness similar to King Vicramáditya, may ascend this throne." King Bhoj replied: "Oh, Image! of what nature was the greatness of King Vicramáditya?"

The Image made answer: "Hear, oh King Bhoj! in the reign of Vicramáditya there was a wealthy Merchant, named Bhadra Sen. The Merchant

having accumulated great riches, his son Purandar, on his father's death, began to squander the property, and quickly dissipated the whole of it : he paid no attention to the remonstrances of his neighbours.

“ A learned Brahman, who was a friend of the father of Purandar, having called one day on Purandar, said to him : ‘ Oh, son of my deceased friend ! that wealth which is acquired after many toils, and never steadfastly abides by any one, that wealth you are remorselessly squandering away. The greatness of a man consists in the permanence of his wealth. This wealth has been allegorised in the sacred books as *Fortune* ; and *Vishnu* having been made the husband of *Fortune*, is represented as the lord of the three worlds. *Fortune* is described to have sprung from the Ocean, which has thus been called *Rat-nákar*, or the mine of gems ; from *Fortune*, *Candarpa*, god of love, was born ; hence it is that *Candarpa* lords it over even *Brahmá*, and the other gods. Believe, therefore, that whatever greatness and glory is possessed by man, all is derived from *Fortune*. Hence it is that I say, that that wealth which is *Fortune*, should not be wasted.’ To this speech of the Brahman, Purandar replied : ‘ Oh Brahman, listen ! wealth certainly will exist ; even without exertion it is found, just in the manner as the milk is in the coconut ; and it will depart, for no one can say with certainty when any thing goes, nor how it goes ; just as the kernels disappear from the wood-apple, which is the food of the elephant. Therefore, where is the advantage of hoarding up riches ? ’

“ In this way, having disregarded the admonition of the Brahman, he kept squandering his money away from day to day, till in a short time he became extremely poor, and no one to whom he went shewed him the least respect. Purandar, being extremely disheartened by receiving no attention wherever he went, reflected in his own mind that it was better for him, who was destitute of wealth, to inhabit a forest, the abode of tigers and other ferocious beasts, having the roots of trees for a dwelling, leaves and fruit for food, the bark of trees for his vestment, and grass for his bed, than to dwell at any time with purse-proud relations.

“ Various

“ Various reflections of this nature having passed through his mind, Purandar travelled into the interior of the country. Having passed through many places, he at length arrived in a town called *Pítapúra*. On arriving in that place, he heard at night-time the plaintive cry of a female. Afterwards, when it was morning, he made enquiry of the inhabitants of the town what woman it was whose cries he had heard the night before. The town's people informed him, that they too had every night heard the cries of some woman weeping; that they knew not what woman it was, but that they all were seized with the greatest dread on hearing them, and felt very uneasy.

“ Purandar having a few days after returned to his own country, related all these circumstances to the King. When Vicramáditya heard them, being seized with a desire to ascertain the cause of the woman's lamentation, he mounted his enchanted slipper, and taking Purandar in company, arrived in the city of *Pítapúra*. On reaching the place, after continual research, he got a clue that the cries of the woman proceeded from a very thick forest, which was at a little distance from the town. As soon then as he heard the woman cry, he rushed sword in hand into the forest on the instant, and got to the spot where she was. On reaching the place, he beheld a most beautiful and youthful female, whom a merciless Demon, of terrifick form, was engaged in beating. King Vicramáditya having seen this, and being greatly moved to compassion, began to upbraid the demon, and said: ‘ Ho, vile Demon! what claim hast thou to generous feeling, in thus striking a helpless female? If thou hast any might, come forth and fight with me.’ When the Demon heard the challenge from the King, being extremely enraged, he prepared to fight with him. The King fought with the Demon for some time, and at last struck off his head with his sword, and killed him.

“ The female was as much delighted as a dead person would be on recovering life, and having come into the King's presence, thanked him with joined hands, saying: ‘ Oh, King of kings! just as the heron, beneficent of its own nature, having destroyed the serpent, releases the frog which has fallen into his mouth, in a similar way, you having destroyed the Demon, have delivered me
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from him. How shall I ever make you an adequate return? I am childless; but if I had a son I would give him, that he might be your servant.' Having uttered these humble expressions, she prostrated herself at the feet of the Monarch. Then rising up, she said: 'Conceive me from this day your handmaid: I possess nine hundred vessels filled with gold; consider them all your own.' The King having in this way listened to the humble representation of the female, acceded to her wishes, and having given the whole of the wealth, as well as the woman herself, to Purandar, he established him in that place; and then mounted his enchanted slipper, and returned to his own capital."

The Eighteenth Image having related this story to King Bhoj, said: "Oh, King Bhoj! you have heard of the greatness of soul of King Vicramāditya, if you possess such, come and seat yourself on this throne." King Bhoj, having heard these words, was quieted for that day

The End of the Eighteenth Story.

THE STORY OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH IMAGE.

THE Twenty-eighth Image began thus to describe the great qualities of the glorious King Vicramāditya, to deter King Bhoj from ascending the Throne. "Listen, oh King Bhoj! One day a certain learned man, who was skilled in the *Sāmudrak* science, being fatigued with travelling, sat down on the roots of a tree close to the town to rest himself. This *Pandit* was able truly to know, by the marks on any man or woman's person, whatever related to their good or evil fortune. He having seen the print of a man's foot on the dust in that place, and that it was endowed with the mark called the lotos-form, thought in his own mind, 'Whatever person's foot is marked with the lotos, that person is undoubtedly to be a King; therefore this footstep is certainly that of a King. But, if he be indeed a King, why should he walk on foot in the outskirts of the city?' He was thus disconcerted in mind by this doubt, when at the moment a very poor man, carrying a load of wood on his head, passed by
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on the road. The print of this man's foot, and that of the former footstep, were exactly similar in form, which, on being observed by the Pandit, he was firmly convinced that the two footsteps both belonged to this man : of this he had no doubt ; but what surprized him was, how a person having such a mark on his foot could be so poor. The Pandit was sitting very much dejected in countenance at this idea, when at that moment King Vicramáditya reached the spot, and seeing the Pandit very much downcast, he asked him who he was, and why he was sitting so dejected. The Pandit replied : ' I am one learned in the Sámudrak science, and being fatigued by travelling, sat down here ; but having seen an extremely poor person with the lotos-form on his right foot, I am thoughtful on account of this disagreement with the rules of the science.'

" The King on hearing this made no reply, but returned to his palace, and having assembled his Pandits, sat in Council ; and having, by means of a messenger, procured the attendance of the Pandit whom he had seen on the road, he said to him : ' Well, Pandit, where is the poor man to be found whom you saw with the lotos-form on his foot ? ' The Pandit replied, that the man was carrying a load of wood, and had entered the city, and that consequently he must be somewhere in it. The King then asked him if he knew his name. To this he answered that he did not ; but that his appearance was so and so. The King, on hearing the reply of the Pandit, having caused a search to be made by his messengers, had the man brought into his presence, and saw with his own eyes that the matter was as the Pandit had stated. The King therefore said to the Pandit : ' It is not possible to determine the meaning of the rules of the science without limiting what is general by that which is special. Be certain, therefore, that if you accurately examine the rules of the science, this man must undoubtedly have some powerful inauspicious mark, which does not allow the good mark to be of any advantage.'

" The Pandit having heard this remark from the King, carefully examined the rules of the science, and said : ' Great Monarch ! in whom the lotos-form

is found, he certainly is a King : this is the general rule. Where the mark of a crow's foot is found at the lower part of the palate, it renders many kind of royal marks of no avail, and the man continues poor : this is the special rule.'

" The King having heard the opinion of the Pandit, and having by some contrivance seen that the mark of a crow's foot was quite evident on the lower part of the man's palate, he dismissed him ; and addressing himself to the Pandit, said : ' Pandit, I am convinced that you are truly skilful in the Sámudrak science ; now, tell me, what regal mark is on my person ? ' The Pandit having again and again examined the King's person, was unable to find any mark. The King told him to reflect upon the rules of the science, and ascertain what was the special exception in his case. The Pandit replied : ' Oh, great King ! if there shall be no visibly auspicious mark on a man's body, or if there should be an evident bad mark, and if he should have the mark called the *karbura mantra*, or variegated charm, within the left side of the body, then the good or evil marks mentioned in the science become of no avail, and the other produces every good consequence of an auspicious mark.' The King, for the sake of ascertaining the truth of the science, took a razor in his hand, and was on the point of cutting open his left side. The Pandit seized hold of the King's hand, and said : ' Great Prince ! so much temerity is improper. Those essences which are beyond the reach of the senses, are ascertained by their effects ; just as God is an essence, yet to whom is he visible ? Yet, through the means of this world, there is as perfect a proof of him as if he were before our eyes. All the fruits of visible good marks are indeed perfect in you likewise ; the *karbura mantra* must consequently be in your Majesty's left side ; what use therefore can there be in cutting open your person to make it visible ? ' When the King heard these words from the Pandit, he thought that the sacred books were not to be doubted ; and having therefore desisted from opening his side, he gave many presents of a gratifying nature to the Pandit, and dismissed him."

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The Twenty-eighth Image said: " Oh, King Bhoj ! that King is worthy to sit on this throne who possesses similar resolution." Srí Bhoj, having heard this narration, remained quiet for that day.

The End of the Twenty-eighth Story.

THE STORY OF THE TWENTY-NINTH IMAGE.

THE Twenty-ninth Image, seeing King Bhoj approaching the Throne for the purpose of being installed, said: " Oh, King Bhoj ! the glorious King Vicramáditya sat on this Throne ; I am about to relate a story respecting him : listen ! One day a Necromancer arrived at King Vicramáditya's gate, and said to the porter : ' Oh, Porter, I having heard the renown of the glorious Vicramáditya, King of kings, am come from a very distant land for the purpose of being introduced in the royal presence ; make my representation known to the King.' The Gentleman-Usher having represented the case to his Majesty, in conformity to the royal orders, commanded the Porter to conduct him in. The Necromancer being made aware of the court-etiquette by hundreds of Goldsticks, reached the margin of the royal court, and began to gaze at the splendour of the well-ordered assembly. When he beheld the glorious Vicramáditya, King of kings, seated on his throne, fanned with the white *chúmar*, adorned with various gems, and waited on with the golden sceptre, and the argent canopy, surrounded by hundreds of discriminating and learned Ministers, as well for consultation as for business, and by Kálidás and the other Pandits renowned for various knowledge, he represented, with joined hands, that if his Majesty, together with his Ministers, would look with attention, he would exhibit some surprising sights to them. When the King heard the request of the Necromancer, he gave orders to begin.

" Scarcely had the Necromancer received the King's permission, when a man with a sword in one hand, and holding a beautiful young woman by the other, suddenly made his appearance before the King, and thus addressed him : ' Oh,
King

King of kings ! some declare that the object of the highest importance in this world is knowledge ; but to this I cannot assent ; for my own opinion is, that lovely females and abundance of wealth are the things of the greatest consequence : for this reason no one willingly trusts these into the hands of another. But to-day there is to be a battle in the ethereal regions between the Gods and Titans, and it is my duty to go to the assistance of *Indra*. This is my Wife, dearer to me than life itself. It is not fitting to go to a field of battle accompanied by a woman. I have not sufficient confidence to depart after having entrusted her to some one else ; but knowing that the King of kings is truly pious, cherishing a stranger as he would his own family, one who keeps his senses under subjection, and possesses the most benevolent feelings, I place my Wife in his care, and depart for the field of battle. My request is, that till my return your Majesty will make every effort to protect her, and confer so important a favour on me.'

" When the King heard this request he complied with it ; and the Husband having given his wife in charge to the Monarch, took leave of the King, and before the eyes of all present, he ascended into the air from the place of the royal assembly. Till the moment he was out of sight, the King and the whole of his courtiers continued with upraised eyes fixed in astonishment. After he had become invisible to all, the heavens were filled as it were with the war-shout of combatants. On hearing these sounds, the King and all his court became like statues from surprise. At this instant the two hands of the Husband dropt in the assembly ; next fell his two feet ; and after a short delay, his severed head came tumbling down. When the Wife beheld her Husband's head, after bitter lamentation, she thus addressed the King : ' Oh, great Monarch ! just as the moon-beam disappears with the moon, and in the same way as the lightning vanishes with the cloud, exactly so is it the first duty of a wife to attend upon her Lord ; I am determined, therefore, to follow my Husband. Let an order be issued to prepare the funeral pile and the other requisites.' The King, who was most tender hearted, replied to her : ' Most devoted of wives ! the engagements we enter into in this life are only binding

as

as long as life continues. While your Lord was alive, so long was he your Husband ; at present, what connection subsists between you ? Where consists the virtue of abandoning life for a person with whom all connection has ceased ? Here is now what is at your option : if you no longer desire enjoyments, take refuge in practising the rites of those who study the Divine perfections, and devote yourself to the worship of God ; if, however, you still take delight in the pursuit of pleasure, you shall be married to whatever worthy man you will select, and enjoy the highest state of bliss. I will give abundance of wealth : want you shall in no way feel.'

" This devoted Wife, on hearing the King's words, replied : ' Great King ! your Majesty is an evident incarnation of Religion, therefore religion must be encouraged by your Majesty. Even though it is possible to practise the rites of those who study the Divine perfections, by abandoning our passions, still the duties of a faithful wife are to be upheld. Yet in this human frame there is an unsteadiness, even on making the greatest effort, in the acquisition of salutary knowledge ; and in the exercise of discretion, the powerful foe to lust and the other passions. Difficult is it, therefore, to maintain the duties of widowhood as laid down in the Scriptures ! Easy is it to deviate from the duties of a widow ! And just as the wife has a right over the wealth acquired by her husband, even so should the death of the wife follow that of her lord. Besides, at the nuptial hour, in the presence of Fire, with the recitation of sacred texts, the marriage is completed by the promise of the wife's husband to be faithful ' to the dissolution of the body.' The energy of a man is typified under a female form, yet man can exist without his energy ; but the energy cannot subsist without man. As an illustration of this, the fire which is formed of the *Mummantra* and *Mahaushadha*, &c., subsists without its inflammatory power, but the inflammatory power is never found without fire. Further, great Prince, it is experienced in this world, that for whatever reason life is quitted, there must be an extremity of affection for that object. Therefore, oh great King ! by popular belief, by scripture, and by reason, what I design should be accomplished. And under what idea would your Majesty

forbid any voluntary act? Upon whatever object the mind is steadfastly intent, the prohibition of any one else is altogether nugatory; just as much as the attempt to arrest the stream of a river rushing downwards.'

"The King, being convinced by this discourse, that the Wife was resolved to be burned with her Husband, said to her: 'Oh, faithful Wife! all which you have declared is perfectly true; as to what I recommended, it was only to try your constancy.' The King, after saying these few words to this devoted Wife, gave orders preparatory to the funeral rites, and the woman being extremely agitated, entered the pit of the funeral pile in pursuit of her Husband, with as much alacrity as a person burnt up by the heat of the warm season, enters the most refreshing water.

"Whilst the King and all his courtiers were engaged in applauding the chastity, piety, and noble conduct of the Wife, the Husband appeared in the assembly, wounded in every part of his body, and covered with streams of blood. The King and his courtiers being perfectly astonished, began to stare at one another. The Husband addressed the King, saying: 'Oh, great King! the affair about which I went being now accomplished, and having likewise obtained renown from it, I am returned; give orders, therefore, that my Wife be now restored to me; I am about to return to my own country.' When the King heard these words, not being able to fix in his own mind what answer he should give, he began to look at his Ministers. The Ministers, guessing what were the King's wishes, said to the man: 'Most renowned warrior! a little while after you left this, a head resembling yours dropt down before us. Your Wife, beholding your head, after much lamentation, not paying any attention to his Majesty's remonstrances, burnt herself along with it. The place of the funeral pile is visible, go and see it.'

"The Husband, on hearing the reply of the Ministers, remained silent for a short time; then leaving a deep sigh, he addressed the King: 'Great King! must all the praise of the exalted justice which is attributed to your Majesty by the inhabitants of the Three Worlds,* be falsified by the untowardness of my fate?

* Viz. Heaven, Earth, and Tartarus.

fate? But if your Majesty, knowing my Wife to be extremely beloved by me, is only sporting with me, then, such sport should not be practised. Not having seen my beloved Wife for a long time, I am extremely uneasy in mind.' The King replied that it was no trick, it was nothing but the truth. The Husband answered: 'Great King! I well know the extent of your Majesty's equity; it is now incumbent on you to restore my Wife to me, or to give me your own.' The King, on hearing this, through dread of injuring his fame for justice, went that instant into the Queen's apartments, and taking the Queen-Consort by the hand, led her into the assembly. When he got there, the man had disappeared. At that moment the Necromancer presented himself before the King, and represented with joined hands: 'Oh, King of kings! I exhibited this illusion by means of magick: every thing you have seen was deceptive: put away all uneasiness, and regain your tranquillity.' The King being very much delighted with these words of the Necromancer, sent the Queen back to her own apartments, and seated himself in the assembly. Just at this time a present arrived in the presence of the King, which was sent by the King of the land of *Pándya*, consisting of a collection of various riches, together with hundreds of elephants, horses, &c. King Vicramáditya gave all these to the Necromancer, and having thus gratified him, he dismissed him."

The Twenty-ninth Image then said: "Oh, King Bhoj! whatever Monarch is thus in awe of justice, he is worthy to sit on this throne."

The glorious King Bhoj was stopped by these words for that day.

The End of the Twenty-ninth Story.

THE STORY OF THE THIRTY-FIRST IMAGE.

AGAIN, on another day, the Thirty-first Image said to King Bhoj who was standing near the Throne: "Oh, King Bhoj! listen a little to an account of the greatness of soul of Vicram, to whom this Throne belonged.

"One day a Merchant's son, who had come to the city of *Avanti*, for the purpose

purpose of traffick from the village of *Prán Satwa*, having beheld the custom of the people of the city, and of King Vicramáditya, on returning to his own village, related every thing to his father, saying : ‘ Oh, father ! I observed a wonderful circumstance in Avantí. For all the articles which are exposed in the shops for sale, and which are not bought by purchasers, King Vicramáditya gives a suitable price and takes them himself, through apprehension that the city may have a bad name.’ On hearing this account from his son’s mouth, that crafty Merchant formed an iron image called Poverty, and exposed it for sale in the market in the city of Avantí. The chapmen who came to this knavish Merchant, asked what the thing was, and its price. The Merchant, on hearing their question, replied, that its name was Poverty, and its price ten thousand pieces of gold ; and that the moment that any one should purchase it, Fortune would that instant desert him. When the buyers heard this answer, they all retired disconcerted, wishing that it might belong to their enemy. The whole day being past in this way, when the evening came, the royal scouts represented the whole affair in the presence of the King ; who to preserve his word, gave the ten thousand pieces of gold for the iron image, and put it in his magazine.

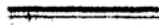
“ At the close of that very night, the Fortune of the State, having assumed a form, begged leave to depart. The King having joined his hands, began to recite her praise, and thus addressed her : ‘ Oh, Mother, Fortune of the State ! what is my fault ? why do you quit me without any offence ? ’ Fortune replied : ‘ You have not committed any offence ; but Poverty and I cannot dwell in the same abode. On this account I am going.’ When the King heard these words, he said : ‘ If you are going on this account, then you may depart ; I cannot deviate from my word.’ Fortune, on hearing this reply, departed. Immediately after, all those qualities which ennoble man, consisting of Judgment, Resignation, Forbearance, Compassion, Understanding, &c. departed in the same way. Still the King was not shaken from his promise. Then came the personified form of Truth, and begged leave to depart. The King not allowing her to quit him, besought her by every humble expression not to
desert

desert him ; and said to her : ‘ For you I have given up the Fortune of the State, Judgment, &c.; on what consideration are you about to leave me ? ’ Truth replied : ‘ I am the devoted attendant upon Judgment and the other qualities, and am not able to subsist without them. Therefore, oh great Prince, if you do not really desert me, depart from the promise by which you guard that being, Poverty ; or with your own hand cut off your head, and abandon this body : in another frame I will abide with you.’ On hearing these words, through the dread of breaking his vow of truth, and being incapable of deviating from his word, he took his sword in his hand. At the moment that he was ready to cut off his own head, Truth seized hold of his hand, and said : ‘ Great Prince ! I only spoke these words to try the extent of your steadfastness in religion : I now know that you are truly religious. The heart of man is my dwelling-place : I will not therefore in any way desert you ; I am entirely yours.’ A short time after this, the Fortune of the State, Judgment, and the other qualities, being bound by Truth, all returned.”

The Thirty-first Image then addressed King Bhoj to this effect : “ The man who in this manner has truth for his aim, is worthy to sit on this throne.”

King Bhoj was disconcerted for that day by these words.

The End of the Thirty-first Story.



FOUR STORIES

TAKEN FROM

THE WORK

ENTITLED

THE TOUCHSTONE OF MEN.

THE STORY OF THE TENDER-HEARTED HERO.

THE man of feeling is the worthiest of all men, and is a benefactor to the whole world: the reciting his praise is every where auspicious. This is an account of one.

There is a city on the banks of the river Cálindí, called Yoginípura, the Yavan King of which was *Alábuddin*. He on a certain occasion became enraged with his General, Mahimásáh, who, knowing his angry master to be given to take away life, reflected, that no reliance could be placed in a furious Monarch. The wise have declared, that no trust should be put in a king, a spy, and a serpent; for at the moment they appear to shew you every respect, and before any apprehension can be entertained, they may destroy you. Now therefore, before I am confined, I should preserve my life by retiring to some other place. On forming this resolution, he fled with his family; and during his flight he reflected that they would be unable to go to a distance; and that escape without them was impossible. It has been remarked, that for a person to desert his family for the sake of preserving his own life, is like departing for the next world; and of what value is life to him? Now, in this place there is King Hambír Dév, a warrior of great compassion, I will remain under his protection.

Having thus determined, the Mahometan General went to King Mahimásáh, and represented to him: "Oh, great Prince! I have taken refuge with you through fear of being put to death by my Sovereign, who is enraged against me

me without a cause. If you can protect me, afford me encouragement, and if not, I will depart from this for some other place." King Hambír Dév, on hearing his request, answered: "Yavan, you have sought an asylum with me: as long as life endures, the God of death himself shall not oppress you. What then is the Yavan King? he is contemptible: dwell here in safety." Mahimásáh encouraged by these words, began to dwell without dread in the fortress of Ranstambhan, or the stay of war.

When the Yavan King learnt that Mahimásáh was in the fortress, becoming inflamed with choler against King Hambír Dév, he caused the earth to tremble with his elephants, horse, and infantry; and having made the neighbouring nations deaf with the sound of all his chariots, he surmounted the distance of the road in one day; and having reached the gate of the fortress, he poured in a shower of arrows, similar to the torrents which fall from the clouds at the dissolution of the world. King Hambír Dév having his fortress provided with a ditch on all sides, and being guarded by walls constructed with battlements, and ornamented with flags, poured back such a volley of arrows, that the twanging of the bowstrings was intolerable to the ear, and the heavens were darkened by their flight.

After the first assault, the Yavan King despatched a Herald to Hambír Dév. When the messenger arrived, he announced: "Oh, King! the most august Lord of the Faithful thus commands you: 'Surrender Mahimásáh, or I will to-morrow morning reduce your fortress to dust, and send you and him to the abode of death.'" King Hambír Dév having heard this summons, answered: "Herald, what reply can I make to thee? I will answer thy master with the edge of the sword; it shall not be in words simply. Listen! even Death cannot shew himself in the nature of an enemy to those to whom I have granted an asylum; what then can the Yavan King effect?" When his despised Herald returned, the Yavan King becoming greatly enraged, again commenced the assault.

In the contests which took place between both armies, many brave men fought face to face; some took to flight; others were killed, and many fought with

with desperation. In this way three years elapsed in daily combats. The Yavan King having only half his army remaining, and finding himself unable to take the fortress, began to prepare to return to his own capital. At this moment two wicked Ministers of Hambír Dév, called Ráy Malla and Ráy Pála, having agreed together, went to the Yavan Sovereign, and thus addressed him : " Let not your Majesty depart from this for any other place ; a famine has taken place among us ; we two know the true state of every thing regarding our fortress. To-morrow or the day after we will contrive to make the place your own." The Mahometan King having rewarded these two Ministers, blocked up the gate of the fortress.

King Hambír Dév, seeing impending misfortune, thus addressed his soldiers : " Oh, native warriors of India ! What can be effected in battle by a limited force against the Yavan King, accompanied as he is by so large an army ? Neither have we the approbation of those best skilled in the knowledge of war. Do you therefore retire to a distance from the fortress." His soldiers implored him, saying : " Great King ! through your benevolence to a Mahometan, and owing to your great tenderness of heart, you have determined to perish in battle : now we are devoted to you. How can we abandon a master like you, and tread in the path of infamy ? It is impossible. The Yavan King is a person of no importance ; we will force him to seek another place, and by that means we shall be able to preserve those who have taken refuge here. Therefore the first consideration is, that means be taken to save those who have sought an asylum."

The Moslim General immediately replied : " Great Prince ! I am a foreigner and a man of no distinction, why therefore will you destroy your wife, your offspring, your kingdom, and your own life, for the purpose of saving me ?" Hambír Dév replied : " Mabimásáh ! use not such an argument as this. If durable fame could be acquired by this perishable body, formed as it is of elemental matter, who then would desire to quit it ? If you will attend to my words, I can send you to a place of safety." The Yavan General answered : " Let not your Majesty lay these commands on me ; I will before all make an
attack

attack, sword in hand, on the enemy ; but remove the females from the fortress." The women all replied : " Our lords are determined to go to the heavenly mansions in defence of a refugee ; how shall we exist on earth without them ? Just as the tendril cannot support itself without clasping the tree, in the same way the wife cannot subsist without her husband in this life. In this world the existence of the virtuous wife is connected with the life of her lord ; we, therefore, who are the partners of heroes, will do that which is worthy of us ; we will perish in fire. And because that King Hambír Dév has resolved to abandon life for the sake of an alien, and that his warriors have determined on battle, for the same reason their wives have made choice of perishing by fire."

The next morning, King Hambír Dév, being dressed in armour and mounted on his elephant, issued out from his fortress, joined by his chosen warriors. He then destroyed with the sword the enemy's army, as well as the elephants, and all the cavalry ; and having attacked the infantry, he filled them with terror, and put those monsters to flight. The earth was flushed by him with streams of blood ; but being wounded by an arrow, he fell from the back of his elephant with his face to the foe ; and quitting his mortal frame, he was absorbed in the solar sphere.

The Poets sung his praises, and exclaimed : " No King is able to quit a magnificent palace, a youthful queen endowed with every grace, and ample treasures ; yet Hambír Dév surrendered all these, and fell in battle to preserve the life of one who had taken refuge with him."

The End of the Story of the Tender-hearted Hero.

THE TALE OF THE HERO WHO WAS DEVOTED TO TRUTH.

In the Iron Age, mankind being drowned in lust and other passions, will become speakers of falsehood ; but by hearing this story of the Hero who was devoted to truth, they will be delivered from every sin.

In former times there reigned in the city of Hastinánagar a Yavan King, called Mahá Malla; he ruled the whole land as far as the shores of the ocean. King Káphar, being unable to endure the predominance of Mahá Malla, having collected together all his forces, marched to attack him. The Yavan Monarch, knowing that King Káphar had arrived in his neighbourhood, collected round him many hundred thousand of the finest cavalry from Balkh and other quarters, and accepted battle in the outskirts of his capital. In the engagement that took place between both armies, the troops under Mahá Malla being defeated by the brave soldiers of King Káphar, fled from the field of battle. When the Yavan Monarch beheld his own warriors fleeing through fear of death, as so many lions would from a herd of elephants, he exclaimed: "My warriors! is there no Prince or Rájput among you who, by the force of his arm, can for a short time arrest the flight of the troops, broken by the fear of the enemy?" On hearing these words of their Sovereign, two Rájputs, called Nara Singh Dév, of the Carnatick, and Chachik Dév, of the Cháhuván caste, addressed the King, saying: "Oh, Lord! who now can check the flight of your troops? through fear of the enemy they are now fleeing with the rapidity of a falling torrent. If your Majesty will move about back and forward, and then return here again, we in the mean time will make the enemy acquainted with the edge of the sword, or cause them to repose on the funeral pile." The Yavan Sovereign replied: "Worthy are you of applause! none but yourselves could act with such intrepidity!"

Then Nara Singh Dév, with the bared arm of valour, having impelled his horse to move like a thunderbolt, dashed forward, and being unobserved by the enemy, penetrated to the very centre of King Káphar's army, when he thrust his spear into the heart of King Káphar, whom he found beneath a glowing argent canopy. King Káphar fell dead upon the earth by the blow. At that very instant Cháchik Dév, seeing him fallen on the ground, and deserted by life, cut off his head, and carried it into the presence of his Sovereign. The Yavan Monarch, on beholding this severed head, enquired to whom it belonged. Cháchik Dév told him it was the head of King Káphar. The

Yavan

Yavan King then enquired what Hero had killed him. Cháchik Dév answered: "Oh, King of kings! the immortal Nara Singh Dév, of unequalled valour, and the first of men, killed King Káphar: I having followed him, cut off Káphar's head." The Yavan Lord then enquired, where is Nara Singh Dév? Cháchik Dév replied: "Oh, King of the land! I saw Nara Singh Dév nearly deprived of life by the guards of King Káphar, who were trembling with rage at their master's death. Where he has gone, or where he is now, I know not." The Yavan King seeing the Leader dead and the enemy in full flight, was highly delighted, and called out to his own troops, who were engaged in the pursuit: "My brave men! why do you destroy a flying foe? Bring me now the saviour of my empire, and the destroyer of King Káphar; bring me Nara Singh Dév, the noblest of men."

At length, after much search, the King discovered Nara Singh Dév pierced through and through the body by many iron arrows, having thousands of flowing streams of blood, resembling the budding blossoms of the Butea Frondosa, and fainting from excessive pain. The moment that he saw him he alighted from his horse, and said to him: "Nara Singh Dév, can you survive this?" He replied: "Oh, King of kings! has your Majesty been made acquainted with what I have performed?" The King answered: "Cháchik Dév informed me that you destroyed my enemy; through him I have learnt all that you have accomplished." Nara Singh Dév answered: "If he for whose welfare I undertook an enterprise of great difficulty, knows all regarding it, then, indeed, has the tree of my exertions borne fruit, and I shall live for a long time." After this, the Yavan Monarch having caused the many arrows which were sunk in Nara Singh Dév's body to be extracted, he, by administering many kinds of remedies, and the use of regimen, in the course of a short time perfectly cured him.

After this the Yavan King presented thousands of the finest horses, innumerable golden canopies, and chámars as well as much money to Nara Singh Dév; who having received these favours, represented to his Sovereign: "Oh, King of kings! fighting is the natural duty of Rájputs. What surprising deed therefore

therefore have I performed, that I should be so distinguished? Be that as it is, if my reward has been decreed, then let Cháchik Dév be likewise honoured. He, actuated by a love of truth, brought the head of your foe into your presence, and extolled my fame. He made no ostentatious display of his own generous feeling. Having brought the head of a foe, who had been destroyed, he did not say 'I have slain him;' therefore you should in the first place reward Cháchik Dév." To this Cháchik Dév replied: "Rájput! such praise should not be spoken on my account: why should I receive the reward of your valour, or enjoy that which has been rejected by another?" On hearing this Nara Singh Dév replied: "Oh, heroick Cháchik Dév, devoted to truth, worthy art thou of applause. I discern by this love of truth, that thou art endowed with wisdom, the son of a virtuous mother, a noble spirit, worthy of the highest applause!" The Yavan King being delighted by this mutual interchange of approbation between these two Rájputs, bestowed equal rewards on them both.

The End of the Story of the Hero who was devoted to Truth.

A TALE IN PRAISE OF THE SCIENCE OF ARMS.

THE science of books is naturally subordinate to the science of arms; for when an empire is protected by arms, then literature begins to be cultivated.

There was a royal city named *Dhárá*, in which there dwelt a Brahman called Sarmá the Discreet, who had a son named Nirvivék, or the Thoughtless, who being averse to the study of the Vêda, and destitute of good habits, was devoted to hunting along with those wretched people who follow it as a livelihood. On a certain occasion this Brahman, in compliance with his mother's request, not having gone to the forest to hunt, staid at home. Just then, hearing the cooing of some doves, and seeing them in a hole in an Idol-Temple, he thought to himself, that he would climb up on the top of it, and get possession of them by throwing them all down. It has been remarked in the

Sástras,

Sāstras, that the lustful man has no delight in any other object but women, and the crafty man is never pleased except when he is engaged in some base act; the mischievous man, too, is never happy except he is committing mischief.

The Brahman having climbed up the Temple to possess himself of the pigeons, put his hand into the hole, when imagining that a snake which was in it, was a pigeon, he drew it to him; immediately the snake twined itself round the Brahman's arm. The Brahman considered: "If I do not let the snake go, I shall never be able to get down, supporting myself by one hand; and if I let the snake go, it will bite me; now what shall I do?" Being thus involved in misfortune, he began to roar out from terror, "Oh, good people! save me!" Moralists writers have observed, that those persons who do not forego their errors, and continue to be engaged in a vicious course of conduct, suffering from the fruit of their actions, are always in affliction. On hearing the cries of the Brahman, many people assembled around the place. King Bhoj likewise, having heard of the circumstance, came to the spot to preserve the life of a Brahman; but the crowd, owing to agitation and hurry, were unable to fix upon any means for his relief, and remained quite inactive.

King Bhoj seeing the Brahman hanging from the summit of a Temple, resembling the peak of a mountain, and with the other arm enveloped in the folds of a snake, called out to the people: "Oh, assembled multitude, is there any one among you who is able to save this Brahman; and in such a way that he, being rescued from danger, may safely descend from this Temple? I will give a hundred thousand pieces of gold to whoever is able to effect this." On hearing these words, a Rājput named Singhala, who was extremely expert in archery, replied: "Oh, Chief of men! it is not necessary to employ much exertion; with very little pains I will bring the Brahman to the bottom. But, he! Brahman shew me the arm which is surrounded by the snake." The Brahman immediately did so. The Rājput fixed an iron arrow in his bow, and having drawn the weapon to his ear, then let fly, and cut off the snake's head from his body. The snake's body being loosed by the blow, fell to the ground.

The Brahman immediately let go the crest of the snake ; and being free from apprehension, and having the command of himself, descended from the Temple. King Bhoj, on seeing this, being highly pleased, bestowed the promised reward upon the Rájput ; and having presented him likewise with costly garments, and many kinds of ornaments, made him happy. A Poet, who was present and witnessed the circumstance, recited some poetry on the occasion, of which the signification is this : “ Singhala, the Rájput, having rescued the Brahman, and obtained a hundred thousand pieces of gold, was honoured by his Sovereign ; what advantages, therefore, may not a man derive by skill in arms ? That is to say, he may obtain even an empire as well as other valuable acquisitions.”

The End of the Tale in Praise of Arms.

A TALE SHEWING THE USE OF DROLLERY.

SUCH people as are able to make the wealthy laugh by their gesticulation, or by a play upon words, are celebrated every where for their drollery. Here is an illustration.

There was a King named Supratáp, in the city of *Káncchipurí*. In this city four Robbers had entered a wealthy man's house by means of a mine which they had dug into it, and were all taken as they came out at the mouth of the mine with their property, by the watchmen of the city, and carried before the King. When the King learnt their offence, he, in a legal way, sentenced them to be empaled, and gave orders to that effect to the Executioner. Those who are acquainted with the principles of morality have declared, that the encouragement of the virtuous, and the punishment of the vicious, constitute the duty of a monarch. The Executioner, agreeably to the King's decree, conducted these four Robbers outside the city, and put three of them to death on the stake. The fourth then began to think, that as death was near at hand, it would be as well to devise some means for his own preservation, for when death takes place, all endeavour is fruitless. Moreover, if any man who is
tortured

tortured by disease, or dying under the King's sceptre, can contrive the means of his own preservation, then such a man rescues himself from the gates of death. I should therefore make some effort to save my life. Having fixed on this, he said to the Executioner: "Executioner, you have now put three of us to death, but do you procure me for a moment an interview with the King, and afterwards put me to death. The reason is this, that I am acquainted with a most admirable piece of knowledge, which on my being put to death would perish; I would first, therefore, reveal this knowledge to the King, and afterwards you can execute your office; by that means this knowledge will remain in the world."

When the Executioner heard this relation he said: "Oh, Thief, thou art a great blockhead! Having come to the place of execution, thou entertainest a wish to live! thou art the vilest of men; why should the King wish to learn thy knowledge?" The Robber again said: "Executioner! what injury shall I do to the King's affairs? If the King shall hear my secret, he will be glad of it; nay, he will be pleased with you, and reward you." The Executioner being moved by the Robber's entreaty, informed the King about this secret. The King having heard of it, for his amusement summoned the Robber before him, and enquired of him: "What secret is this you know?" The Robber having respectfully joined his hands, represented: "Please your Majesty, I am acquainted with the secret of growing gold." The King, on hearing this, having smiled a little, said it was very surprising. The Robber stated: "Oh, King of kings! by sowing a grain of gold about the size of a mustard seed, in the usual way, it will in the course of one month be as big as the trunk of a tree, and will bear about a *pal*¹ weight of golden blossom; but your Majesty can judge for yourself on beholding it." The King affecting astonishment, said: "Robber, is this true?" The Robber, who had a rope round his neck, joining his hands, made answer: "Who dare utter a falsehood in the presence of your Majesty? If my assertion is false, my life will be forfeited at the end of a month; and if it be verified, favour will be manifested towards me." The King, for the sake of enjoying the amusement, told him he might undertake it.

The

¹ A *pal* is equal $2\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. troy.

The Robber then had a grain of gold of the size of a mustard seed, made by a goldsmith, and having cleared away a spot of ground within the confines of the palace, and close to the pleasure-pond, he addressed the King, saying: "Please your Majesty, every thing is ready, who do you command to sow this seed?" The King directed him to sow it himself. The Robber replied: "Please your Majesty, it is not in my province to sow the seed; had it been so, I had not been thus miserable. Whoever has never at any time stolen any thing, can alone sow this seed; therefore let your Majesty sow it." The King having reflected for a short time, said: "I remember to have taken some money from my father to bestow upon religious mendicants, and part I kept for myself. This was, in some measure, a theft; I cannot therefore sow it." The Robber then said: "Let your Minister sow it." The Minister answered: "I am engaged in the King's affairs, how can I therefore say that I have never stolen any thing?" The Robber, on this said: "Let the Chief Justice sow it." The Chief Justice replied: "I used, when a child, to steal the sweetmeats which my mother laid by."

When the Robber heard all these replies, he said: "Alas! why then should my life alone be forfeited?" All the courtiers began to laugh when they heard his exclamation; and the King having smiled, said: "And your life, Robber, shall not be forfeited." The King then looked towards his Ministers, and said: "This Robber is a shrewd intelligent fellow, and an adept in drollery; he shall remain near my person, and exhilarate me by his stories." The Robber being saved from destruction by the King's order, remained near his Majesty. At that time every one reflected, that there was not in the world one more vile than a thief, and yet this one had saved himself from death by his drollery, which was, consequently, a more useful quality than many other petty attainments.

THE END OF THE TRANSLATIONS.