

EO 711

Folk-stories of the Land of Ind.



SRI GANESHA (The God of Learning.)

॥ मति गज वदना सुगुणी चरणां
 ॥ मति जा शिव गिरिजा सुत रिपु बलहरणा
 वदन सुगुणी चरणां

FOLK-STORIES

OF

THE LAND OF IND

BY

M. N. VENKATASWAMI, M.R.A.S., M.F.L.S.

*Author of Life of M. Nagloo, The Story of Bobbili,
Tulsemah and Nagaya ; or Folk-stories from
India, A Memoir of Ralph T. H. Griffith—
Translator of Ramayana, Heerammah
and Venkataswami ; or Folktales
from India*

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WITH A FOREWORD BY THE LATE
SIR NARAYAN CHANDAVARKAR, K.C.I.E.

MADRAS
METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE
1927

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TO
THE MOST HIGH, THE SUPREME, THE AL-
MIGHTY, THE PREMORDIAL BEING, THE GREAT
UNKNOWABLE, THE CREATOR, THE DESIGNER,
THE DESIGNER OF THIS

WORLD AND OF OTHER WORLDS

WHO INSTILLED HIS SPARK, WHAT IS LIFE,
IN THE LAURENTIAN EPOCH, WHEN THIS WORLD
WAS STRATIFIED IN ROCKS FIVE HUNDRED
THOUSAND YEARS, AND EVENTUALLY EVOLVED
THE HIGHEST PERFECTION

MAN

WHO DESPITE HIS VERSATILITIES, HIS POWERS
AND SOARINGS CAME TO BE

FALLEN, FALLEN, FALLEN,

TO RAISE WHOM HE AT VARIOUS EPOCHS IN
HIS INFINITE WISDOM SENT THE VARIOUS PRO-
PHETS TO THE EAST AND THE WEST THESE
SEVEN THOUSAND YEARS

THESE ANTHROPOLOGICAL LORES OR FOLK-
STORIES

ARE DEDICATED

WITH A PENITENT HEART BY THIS MORTAL,
OUT OF THANKFULNESS FOR HIS BEING
KEPT ALL THESE YEARS IN THIS
EVANESCENT LIFE,
AMIDST WEAL AND WOE,
BUT IN HONOUR AND PEACE.

PREFACE

The ancients of this classic land—Ārya bhūmi Bhāratvarsha, Hindustan, India—were no ordinary men. Immense and manifold are their lore. Even their folk-lore, as is found in the grand collection of their literature, ranks best in the world ; but unlike its philosophy it is scattered from Kasyapabhūmi in the far north to Krishna Kumari in the south, and from Kālikota in the east to Mumbadevi in the west. In other words, it is in the heads of the Indian people, or to use a Telugu expression, it is in their bellies, be they Āryas or aborigines of this vast land of monuments and temples. These traditional stories wherein are embodied the manners, customs, ceremonies, rituals, rites, etc, etc, of an old race—the Āryans—and surviving to the present day, have been handed down from father to son for untold generations and by the process of this handing down their significance is well-nigh lost. The noble and literary spirit, however, of the age is to collect these oral traditions and to understand them and to interpret the meanings that underlie them, as also to save them from being vitiated by a new civilization ; and with this praiseworthy object a noble array of collectors of both sexes—the majority are from Angalabhūmi—from time to time have appeared on the scene—we are concerned with India at the present moment—and amassed much material of unlettered primitive

culture and gave to the world, and yet the field seems to be inexhaustible. What actuated this learned band of collectors actuated me also, a humble man, and I went to the diggings in 1895 with a child-like spirit, and like the child that does not like to lose the sweets it once tasted, am working at it till the present moment.

As the result of my third diggings in the Indian mine of folk-lore, I present herewith fifteen stories. My friend, Mr. R. J. Samuel, one of the best of the human race, an Indian medical practitioner—a herbalist he calls himself—to whom I owe my life most certainly once, a Tamil gentleman and son of an Indian clergyman of the Church of England (London Mission) Tanjore, narrated five of the stories (III, IV, V, VII and IX) which he has brought from the classic land of the Tamulians, (the worth and value of whose cyclopean temples the astute archæologist is at a loss to determine,) the sympathetic medical man having heard the stories from his Tamil Pandit in the early seventies of the last century, while a relative of mine (M. Venkatamma) from the up-country of Bezwada narrated three of the stories (II, VI and IX.) Though the palm of credit may be divided between these two graphic storytellers for some of the best and longest of the stories in the collection, yet Sandhā (Puli) Abboy an old domestic servant from the Nagpur country, comes in for a share of credit for his

beautiful story of Manikkam and Moothiam which is of considerable length. Of the minor stories Mr. Shaikh Mowla of Vizagapatam narrated the story of the Two Birds; Mr. Damodhar Rao *alias* Ram Rao of Hyderabad, that of Ganesha which breathes of puranic origin; Tuljaram that of the Unsatisfied Ass, the smallest story in the collection, narrated while on the way to Baba Shurfudeen Pahadi; the writer's mother M. Tulsammah—who has long been dead narrated the story of the Sun, the Moon and their Mother; the writer's cousin M. Ramaswami that of the Prince, the Cucumber and the Rakshashi. I regret I could not recollect who narrated the story of "How Englishmen got a footing in India." Most probably my maternal uncle, Meddabalimi Ramaswami, must have related it many, many years ago, but it is a story narrated by several old people from the Chennapattanam country or the Benighted Presidency. The collection is fairly representative, an Indian Christian gentleman, a Mohammadan gentleman, a Brahmin gentleman, a Rajput, a Māla, in other words, a Native Doctor, a Translator, a Clerk, a Chaprasi, a domestic servant narrating the stories, the writer's mother, the writer's relative and the writer's cousin, a school boy, contributing in addition.

The stories have not been put in a chronological order or in the order I have written

them, by reason of making the longer and fascinating ones take the precedence, or foremost place, and the smaller ones a subsidiary or subordinate position. All the stories have begun to be written from 1901 to 1902, of which I, VIII, X, XIV, and XV have appeared in the *Indian Antiquary*—a journal devoted to Indian antiquarian, archaeological and other kindred matters—to the Editor of which my thanks are due for reproducing in this collection. Of the stories further, one under the editorship of Dr. Richard Crooke appeared in the *Folklore* (a journal which is doing so much for the cause of folklore of all countries) to which my thanks are equally due for the permission similarly accorded for production here.

The Indians have a great love for folk-stories or fables. Their interest for them never diminishes. Folk-stories have been the vehicle for imparting instruction or wisdom from time immemorial, and this is the object, pure and simple, of tradition. The narrator of a folk-story who is the mouth-piece of the chivalrous hero or the wise heroine, is the imparter, for the time being, of the instruction or wisdom the listeners receive. In the beautiful summer nights when the moon sheds its pure lustre and illumines the whole country around, while the heat indoor becomes unbearable, the people come outside their humble dwellings—women are to be at their chat-tels is the law of the orientals and they are

at their chattels, the mother admonishing a younger daughter-in-law with her garrulous tongue, or the blessed grown up daughter-in-law, over whom some of the furious storms of the domestic hearth have passed, lulls to sleep the children after giving them their night meals—and gathering round, narrate stories of kings and queens till the gong strikes twelve or one o'clock; and when sleep overpowers them, each one by one, without telling any body covers his head with a cloth and sleeps under the blue canopy of heaven. It sometimes happens that when some of the stories have been narrated, a listener cuts a practical joke, saying loudly Daiyam Vachinnadira, or Buthāyā (meaning the evil spirit has come) or avers that he saw Munaispooroodu or Moonaisparan putting on a snowy white dress cap-a-pie and holding a heavy stick in one of his hands and smoking a long cigar, standing over the commingled branches of the *Bud* and *Peepul* tree, and immediately the company breaks up in utter confusion, the narrator and listeners betaking themselves to their houses and passing their nights there, at least that night because of the fear engendered in them. In the rainy season also, when after a shower of rain, the moon appears in all its glory on the clear blue sky and with a freshness, the people emerge out of their low-roofed dwellings wherein they are baked, so to

speaking, by reason of occasional sultriness and sitting on the pial or open verandah of a Gramma Devi's temple, narrate stories; or in the small hours of morning of the winter season they gather round burning logs and, warming their hands and feet, tell to each other stories. This is the simple life of the people of India who may be called a purely pastoral people by reason of their arcadian habits, notwithstanding the rapid strides which education made through the agency of missionaries, whose noble object is dissemination of the seed of knowledge, and by a liberal educational policy adopted by the benign Government to teach or reach the masses.

As stated elsewhere I am actuated by the spirit that actuated the Indian folklorists—who, by the by, are of no mean order—and so have put together these stories in a collective form, but I am not responsible for the language in which they are couched or clothed by reason of my being a foreigner to it, as also by reason of my training which is not of an academic nature; yet I have tried to give them a classical stamp with the English I could command. For the use of the student a classification to the best of my ability has been drawn up on the lines followed for his Indian Nights Entertainments by the Rev. Charles Swynnerton, F. S. A. to whom my thanks fall due; a glossary of Indian terms and copious notes to elucidate the text are also given, and to enhance the utility of the

work I have given an Index on broad lines as recommended by the eminent Indian folklorist, Sir Richard Carnac Temple, *Bart.*, to whom my thanks are due, this work of Indexing, I may add, exacting from me more labour than any one of the stories. Despite the defects of language and other imperfections that may go against me, if any one of my bashful heroines or brave heroes or their attendants or friends, be they of the quadruped order or of the winged race, transports the gentle reader to their land, and lifts up from his head the cares of the world even for a moment or achieves the higher object of implanting in him a study of the Indian folklore in general in a scientific spirit, the author will consider himself amply compensated for the labour bestowed on the work for a year and a half, while performing his duties of an uncongenial nature and at high pressure, and moreover grieving over the loss of a sister who nobly considered her brother's welfare as her own.

In conclusion my best thanks are primarily due to my ever kind schoolmaster Mr. James Bremner, M.A., Professor of philosophy in the Hislop College, Nagpore, C.P., for seeing the English throughout the book spirited and correct. Secondly my best thanks would have been equally due to Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, K.C.I.E., for the Foreword, but as he is now dead pathetic interest attaches to that performance

of his. Thirdly my best thanks in no less measure are due, to Mr. H. W. Shawcross, M. A., Principal Jagirdars' College, Hyderabad, Deccan, for coming to my assistance in the matter of printing of these stories. Fourthly, my thanks are also due to my young friend, Mr. E. Ooma Shankar for the two pictures he had drawn for my book, the third picture of Sri Ganesha of the Elephant's head—how He had come by it *vide* a version in the collection—luckily without his mischievous little Carrier—the Rat, the destroyer of books, paper and clothes and propagator of plague—was purchased by me in the bazaar, the few fine lines underneath it were from the adoration of the deity sung by the *prima donna*, Vita by name, of the defunct Mahratti Theatrical Company of old Parshurām Rāmchandra Satey having a long-sounding name—*Chitha Chātaka Swālee Varsha Poonaykar Hindu Stree Natak Mandal!*

I now commend this little folk-story book to the gentle reader, entertaining a hope that it is savoury of good and bad taste in combination if not all good or all bad—like the wild *Voosiri Kāya* which tastes pungent at one time and sweet at another time—with which fruit the Indian mothers, compare the sisters' and brothers' sympathetic love to each.

HYDERABAD DECCAN, }
30th October, 1902. }

THE AUTHOR.

FOREWORD

IN publishing these Indian folk-tales Mr. M. N. Venkataswami, the folklorist from the Nagpore country, where, it would appear, he received his education at the well-known educational institution known as the F. C. Institution and Hislop College set up by the Scottish missionaries, is rendering a useful service in more ways than one. In his preface he tells us that these stories were collected by him at Nagpore and Secunderabad and include some narrated to him by his mother-in-law, his wife, and other relatives. It may without exaggeration be said of many a Hindu that in his childhood he received his home education on the lap and at the knee of his mother, grandmother, or other elderly lady relation, by means of fables, many of them of the kind published in this book. What Hindu, who has gone through that kind of training in the earlier years of his life and has had his faculty of imagination fostered thereby, can fail to realise, as he grows in age, that such home education, informal, crude, and primitive though it was, intended not for the purpose of education as such but merely to amuse the child, nevertheless contributed to his mental and moral development? In his *Prelude*, in which Wordsworth has traced the lines of his growth as a poet and citizen from his childhood to old age, he has

described in graphic terms the useful part played by such stories in the formation of character. Condemning as formal and artificial—as ‘knowledge without power’—the college education of his time at Cambridge, he points out in that autobiographic poem how the reading of stories of fiction, such as the *Arabian Nights*, *Don Quixote*, *Jack the Giant Killer*, and *Sabra in the Forest with St. George*, strengthened his imagination, made him forget himself, and brought his mind in harmony with Nature and man, imparting a freshness to the familiar face of human life—the daily life of the village-folk, men obscure and lonely, whose occupations he really loved and into the depths of whose souls he trained himself to see. Pointedly drawing attention to the most striking feature of childhood, *viz.* that children have a craving for fables, he draws the moral :—

'Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are ours,
And *they must* have their food. Our childhood sits,
Our simple childhood sits upon a throne,
That hath more power than all the elements.'

That is to say, the child's innate love of such stories is proof that Nature means that the child should begin its education through fictions, legends, and romances. The poet proceeds:—

'Ye dreamers then !
Forgers of daring tales ! we bless you then,
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Who make our wish, our power, our thought, a deed,
An empire, a possession.'

That is the value of stories of fiction—they take the child from the world seen into worlds unseen and accustom it to love of adventure, open its mind to realms of thought beyond the realm of the senses; in short, they foster the life of the spirit by teaching it that man lives not by bread alone. That is how the child becomes the father of the man.

Man is a creature of faith, and faith has been rightly defined by Charles Kingsley as reason exercised on the invisible. In other words, man, to be useful in life, must direct his faculty of thought and logic by the aid of his imaginative power, which Wordsworth defines as reason in its most exalted mood, born of courage, faith, the power of initiative and enterprise, and sympathy for all, high and low. Man must be a visionary, not a mere dreamer. He has to divine the future with the help of history, which is his past, and also by the light of his power of love for all creatures and the whole creation of which he is a part. It is given to him to interpret the world and rule it by becoming at one with it by the force of his head and heart. The facts of life, which are palpable to his senses, can give him no true meaning for his guidance, they are dead and oppressive things, lying like a burden in his head unless he has learnt to find the universal in them, unless, that is, those facts draw him out of his own

petty self and he becomes merged in the life of humanity. That is why a child naturally craves for fictions and draws satisfaction of the craving by becoming all eye and ear to tales and fables. The child does not care for what it sees with its eyes so much as for what it hears with its ears of the distant, the unseen, and the daring. The more a story is strange or romantic or adventurous, the more the child is delighted and interested, the more it sucks it in, as it were, and asks for more of the kind. This natural constitution of the child's mind was perceived most clearly by our Hindu sages of the ancient times to whom we owe the *Panchatantra*.

Of this beneficial influence of fictions and fables on man's mental and moral growth, one's own experience is the best test. Speaking for myself, I have never forgotten and can never forget how much I owed to the stories of fiction and fable narrated to me in my childhood by my maternal grand-mother, my mother, my aunts and other elderly lady relations. Legendary stories about the Moghul emperor Akbar and his minister Birbal formed the main portion of the stories they narrated. As I look back upon that period of my life and revive my memory of what I owe to my grandparents and mother, I can now see plainly how, without perhaps meaning to form my mind but just to amuse me, these lady educators of

my childhood contributed not a little to the seed-time of my mental and moral make-up. To cite but one of such stories told me in my youth, when I was seven years of age, I was sent to a school kept by a Christian missionary. It was the only school for children at that time in the town where we lived. In that school every morning we had readings from the Bible, in the course of which the missionary would indulge in strong denunciations of Hinduism. At home I was brought up by my maternal grand-father and grand-mother in the strict pieties of the Hindu religion. Having once complained to my grand parents of the denunciation, I asked them which religion was true, Hinduism or Christianity? They replied both were true. 'How could that be?' I asked. Then my grand-parents narrated to me a story, evidently a fable, to satisfy my curiosity and ease my mind. 'Once upon a time'—so the folk-tale, if I may so term it, ran—'a Hindu, a Mahomedan, and a Christian, went to Brahma, the Creator of the Universe. The Hindu prayed: "O Lord of the Creation, tell me whom I must worship." Brahma answered: "Images." Next questioned the Mahomedan in the same terms as the Hindu. To him Brahma replied by showing the palm of his hand with the five fingers held out. Last came the Christian and prayed likewise. To him Brahma made a sign of the Cross. Since

then the Hindu, the Mahomedan, and the Christian, have each his own form of worship, though God is one and the same to all. Each man, be he Hindu, Christian, or Mahomedan, approaches God in his own way as directed by Brahma.' Narrating this story, my grand-parents told me that the Christian missionary was but following the behest of Brahma in praising and following his own religion, and that my duty as a Hindu was to tolerate and respect his faith but at the same time to adhere to and follow mine, for such was Brahma's injunction. I do not know and I am still unaware that this story has found a place in any book of folklore ; but years after I had heard it, I came to realise how by means of it my grand-parents had taught me in effect to be tolerant and reverential to all religions and take for conduct in life what is good and godly in them.

The practical value of folk-lore as fiction, such as the stories collected with commendable arduousness and told in the following pages with equally commendable spirit by Mr. Venkataswami, the compiler, will be more clearly comprehended, if we bear in mind that fictions have played and still play an important and useful part in every nation's life, not only in its primitive conditions but also in its civilized stages. They have moulded and influenced national destinies and directed national aspira-

tions. Our ideals of the State, of society, and the home, which constitute the three most fundamental elements of man as a civilized social being, are born of and bred on fictions. Take the Magna Charta of English History. It is believed to have been the Charter of the Englishman's liberties; but that is a pure fiction. And yet the fable has become the cardinal fact of English progress. Such maxims, again, of the law and constitution as these: 'The King can do no wrong', 'The State is founded on a social contract', 'Man is born free', 'All men are born equal in the eye of law', 'A corporation is a person', 'The will of the people is the will of God' have made, though at times they have also marred, the fortunes of nations. They are still dominating man's political and social polity for better or worse. Like fables, they are good servants but bad masters. They conduce to the healthy progress of man, if he applies them to life wisely. They mislead him, if they exercise over him the tyranny of a dogma. They have that in common with folk-lore, and further, as pointed out by Dr. Hans Vaihinger in his book, '*The Philosophy of the As If*' they have a practical signification in human life. By means of them 'man as a unit of human society learns to orient himself from his childhood and grow into the strength and unity of the human relations of life'. In short, they convey, as the saying goes, truth in the form

of myth and lead us into the life of the universal. Ascribing the power of speech and action as human beings to birds, beasts, trees, and so forth, these fictions, legends, and fables train us from childhood to respect all creatures, and also the inanimate, as parts of a whole, members of the same body, so to say, called the Oversoul, whom the poet has aptly named 'the wisdom and spirit of the universe', 'the soul that is the eternity of thought', dwelling in the heart of all we see. It has been said of the novels of Dickens that most of the characters he has delineated are too good to be true, not real pictures of life as it is but so exaggerated as to read like fables, 'belonging to the world of phantasy.' So they are and it is because they are 'fantastic oddities' that they attract and capture the minds of men and that Dickens has become a popular novelist. Dickens by his novels and fantastic descriptions of persons in low and wretched conditions was able to plead for and bring about wholesome reforms in the life of the slums, in the administration on the Poor Law, and the Law Courts. He made his reader see visions of what ought to be by means of an enlarged because highly exaggerated portrait of life as it was in his time. His readers were able to see the visions because of the power of imagination developed by tales of fiction. 'Hitch your wagon to a star,' advises Emerson. In fact,

the advice counsels what is impossible. We can hitch a wagon to a star only in a fable; and yet the kernel of truth in the advice as a kernel of fact within man's power of enterprise and achievement of the ideals is obvious. The higher the mind aspires by the force of imagination and of the will to believe, the greater is its attainment, though the point aspired to is beyond reach and remains an ideal never realized but always a goal. Similar is the effect of the ideal created by fictions of folk-lore. They not only amuse and make us laugh but they also teach us to live a life of sympathy for all and cultivate the sense of humour as a cure to the world's sorrows and miseries.

In his Preface to this book the compiler has observed that 'India is without exaggeration the home of the fable.' I should venture to think it a necessary corollary to that fact of Indian history that to it we owe the strong hold which the cardinal principle of our civilization embodied in the maxim *ahimsa paramo dharma*—'the highest religion is to refrain from injury to all life, the life of all beasts and birds even'—has had for centuries on the Hindu mind.

In these ways, then, Mr. Venkataswami's book, replete with everything that is required of a folklorist, such as classification with new types evolved, index, etc., serves a national

purpose and cherishes a national tradition. therefore, humbly commend it to all, especially to those who revere the fragrant memories of their childhood's 'golden gleam'—golden because of the sunlight shed on it by the mothers' and grand-mothers' narration of fables—fables which aroused interest and amused and thereby served to lay the foundation of a life of humanity for the child growing into man.

N. G. CHANDAVARKAR.

KITTREDGE LODGE,
CUMBALLA HILL, BOMBAY,
November 18, 1922.

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	3	Sugunee	Suguna
		<i>In Mahratti.</i>	<i>In Mahratti.</i>
XXIII	3	Swynnerrton	Swynnerton.
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	4	25 poignard	poniard.
	10	12 happy	were happy.
	61	27 He did not	he did not.
	73	23 They	the.
	74	9 more than double	doubly more than those.
	74	26 and	an.
	91	1 her	its.
	98	20 The two Princess and their Sister.	The Two Princes and their Sister.
99 to 133	...	The two Princess and their Sister.	The Two Princes and their Sister.
	...	The two Princess and their Sister (Title).	The Two Princes and their Sister (Title).
	144	2 Princess	Princes.
	163	15 in	or.
	178	14 on	or.
	178	14 farther	father.
	181	15 in	or.
	186	15 Munaispurudan	Munaispurudu.
	188	2 a sister	a sister instrument.
	190	2 sololiqueis	soliloquises.

2

3

Folk-Stories from the Land of Ind.

I

Manikkam and Moothiam.

There was a very poor wood-cutter. He lost his parents : only his wife, a mere girl, was left to him. However much of firewood he might bring, he could not get more than four pice a day ; and on this he and his wife used to maintain themselves with great difficulty. The wood-cutter, in consequence, deplored his lot and cried bitterly, remembering his father and mother and saying ; " Where have you gone, my parents ? Have you left me ? O my mother ! O my mother ! where have you gone ? Have you forsaken me entirely ? O my father ! where have you gone ? Have you left me for good ? ". Crying bitterly thus, he went into the forest one day and looked on all sides, and, seeing a thoroughly dried tree, gave it a blow at the root. Down came the tree with a crushing noise, and a diamond of very fine lustre mysteriously fell into the wood-cutter's lap.

Now in the nether regions, Nagendra, the king of serpents, had become extremely displeased with his son for a certain fault committed by him, and visited his displeasure by

cursing him in the words : "Go thou into the *Naraloka* and sojourn there for twenty years for the fault committed by you." With the utterance of the curse, Nagendra took out the diamond—his own son—from his forehead and threw into the *Naraloka* and the diamond, as we have already seen, fell into the wood-cutter's lap.

The wood-cutter, evincing great delight, hid the diamond on his person as it fell, and hurrying home with the bundle of firewood, put the treasure in the last *donti koonda*. Again wending his way to the market, he sold the bundle of firewood this day for four annas instead of four pice ! The four annas which he earned and which was to him a very high sum, greatly pleased the wood-cutter. From the day on which he became possessed of the diamond, the Goddess of Lakshmi came to the wood-cutter in right earnest ; in other words Dame Fortune smiled on him.

In his daily avocation of going into the forest, bringing firewood and selling it, he forgot all about the diamond. One day the wood-cutter all of a sudden bethought him of the diamond, and hastily taking the firewood which he had cut, he ran home and searched for the diamond. What was his surprise to find in its place, a beautiful child ! He took this child to his wife and said, " Girl, God has given us a child whom

you have not given birth to. Take it and nurture it, don't be remiss in maternal duty towards it." The wood-cutter's wife with much tenderness brought up the child indoors, and though he attained to the age of ten years, he did not know what the sun was like.

Now the king of the place had an only daughter. She was five years of age. The king, anxious to give the princess the best education in all departments of knowledge, sent for the most learned *pandit* available. The wood-cutter, now a rich man, came to know of this, and calling his wife said, "Our son diamond has now reached his tenth year. We have not given him any education yet. I hear of a famous *pandit*."

"Do send for the *pandit* and ask him to impart instruction to our son," spoke the wood-cutter's wife with great alacrity. He accordingly sent for the *pandit* and asked him to impart instruction to his son in all the *Kalas* (arts).

"So be it," said the *pandit*, "send him to the *patashala* where the princess is being taught." The boy was accordingly sent, and, side by side with the princess, he made progress in his studies for some years, during which a true friendship grew up between the students. As time passed Moothiam (pearl), for that was the name of the Princess, became

a big girl, and the queen said to her husband one day, "Our daughter is now grown up. It is better to keep her at home. What would the neighbouring kings say, were they to come to know that she is still sent to a *patashala* though she is almost a woman?"

The king listening spoke in reply, "She had better cease going to the *patashala*."

This conversation was overheard by some of the *dasis* of the Princess, and they spoke in derision to Moothiam. "Only two days more to go to school. You will have to stay at home afterwards." "Really?" quoth the Princess in surprise. "Yes" said they.

Bearing this in mind the Princess, when she saw Manikkam in school next day, said:

"My father is going to keep me at home. Our meetings will, in consequence, be few and far between. What do you say if we run away from hence?"

"What! Are you mad?" asked Manikkam. "My poor father and mother would be killed if your royal parents were to come to know that I had eloped with you."

Thereupon the Princess, taking out a poignard that she kept concealed in her breast, said,

"If you don't come, I will, this moment, stab myself and fall at your feet, and lay the blame at your door."

"O what an injustice!" exclaimed Manikkam, and he kept quiet as a sign of acquiescence.

Gaining her point, Moothiam asked Manikkam to be present at the Temple of *Mahakal* exactly at midnight with two spare dresses.

Manikkam agreed, and, as soon as his school was over, he went home and told his parents, "Father dear, mother dear, I have not yet seen the bazaar, though I have attained to man's estate. I am anxious to see it. Give me the best dress and ornaments that you have, and I shall put them on and go." They granted his request, and Manikkam, as soon as the day had put on the mantle of darkness, attired himself in his best dress and putting on ornaments, made his way straight to the Temple with two spare dresses, and waited there.

The Princess, on her part, taking many gold and silver ornaments and two spirited horses, came at the appointed hour. Manikkam and Moothiam met, and without losing time started in hot haste. Next day in the midst of an interminable forest, the former felt thirsty and said to the latter, "O young one, I am feeling thirsty, I am dying of thirst." Thereupon the Princess climbed up a tree to see if she could find out a house in that jungle. For a long time she could not see any, at last in the dim distance, she espied smoke issuing from a solitary house. Thither, with Manikkam, she gallop-

ed and seeing an old woman on the way asked for water, and enquired if they might stay there for the day."

"O yes, my child, you can stay," said the old dame, "for as many days as you like. Everything is at your disposal. Immediately I shall get some firewood to cook meals. Here is water." So saying she left them, and the Princess and Manikkam unsaddled their horses.

Now the old woman was the mother of seven robbers infesting those jungly-tracts. Seeing her sons she said, "What are you thinking of my boys? You waste your days going hither and thither for a pinch of *Jonnapiittu* (Indian millet flour) or a handful of copper. Look here, and see this rich booty! I almost fainted at the sight. Here is enough to keep us in comfort for generations."

In the meantime a *Komti* passed by the robbers' house, and seeing Moothiam and Manikkam, and taking them from their manner and bearing for persons in high estate, exclaimed, "O royal personages, what are you doing here? This is the abode of robbers. The old hag must have gone to bring her seven sons, the robbers, to make short work of you."

Hearing this, both the Princess and Manikkam were frightened and, quickly saddling their horses, galloped for life. The robbers who now appeared on the scene, started in pursuit.

"What do you say now?" asked Moothiam.
"We are lost," replied Manikkam.

"Is this all?" rejoined the clever Princess. Seizing her bow and taking out arrows from her pouch, she took aim, and killed all the robbers one after another.

"What! are they all killed? I shall go and see" said Manikkam. "Are you so foolish as to risk your life?" was her reply. "No, I am not, I simply want to see them," he rejoined. "Please yourself then", said she. Now among the fallen there was one still living. He threw himself at the feet of Manikkam and pleaded for life. "I shall be your groom to look after your horses," said he. "Don't spare his life. It is better to kill him. You shall repent of it," said the Princess. "No, no, you are unkind. I shall spare his life," spoke Manikkam, thus giving the robber the boon of life. The fellow, in the capacity of groom, followed Manikkam and the Princess with great ostensible zeal and submission. Some time after they moved on and Manikkam spoke to the princess, "I feel rather sick, I must retire for a little while" and to a bush hard by he went, and the groom followed.

"Give me your head-dress to hold, prince," said the groom. "This is good," thought Manikkam, and gave the head-dress.

"Your scimitar also," said the groom. To lighten himself he gave the scimitar also.

Now the ex-robber taking the scimitar pounced upon Manikkam and killed him. Returning to the Princess he said, "Where shall you escape now? Move on, strumpet, move on, strumpet."

Hearing these words and realizing that Manikkam was killed by the robber, she began to lament. The miscreant coming near, gently enquired: "Why do you lament?" "You enquire why I lament. Well, the man whom you have killed was a god to me. He would pick up my whip, he would pick up my kerchief or anything that fell from my hand," replied the Princess, taking in the situation. "I shall do that service. Don't lament," said the robber, moving on. "So be it," said the Princess, inwardly thinking, "I shall revenge myself upon this man." Some time after, she, from the horseback, let her whip fall from her hand, and the robber stopped to pick it up; at that juncture down came the scimitar on his neck severing him in two. Revenge over, she turned her course to where Manikkam fell. Joining his head with the trunk and placing the dead body on the intertwining of branches, she set up a loud lamentation, and in the depth of sorrow gave vent to disjointed expressions, such as, "O what a destiny! Unfortunate being am I in this world. I wish my mother had not given me birth. I have selected him for beauty and left my parental home. He is killed." The dense forests

reverberated the lamentations in that part of the night. At that hour *Parwati* and *Parmeshwara* were taking the morning air and the 'princess' lamentations distinctly fell on the ears of *Parwati*. She said to her husband, "Let us go and enquire." "Wherever we go accompanied by women it is always a troublesome work," said *Parmeshwara*. Taking himself the form of an old man and his consort that of an old woman, they went to the spot from whence issued the lamentations and enquired of the Princess, "O young one, why do you lament in the midst of the night? Let us know what is the cause of your sorrow."

"O Bhagwanta, O Sambashiva," replied the princess falling at his feet and sobbing at intervals, "what may I tell you? I am the most unfortunate being in the world. I am the greatest sinner. I have selected the young man," pointing to the corpse, "but he suffered death at the hands of a robber in this forest. This is the cause of my sorrow."

Shiva at once knew that the young man was the son of the King of the Serpents and that he was for a season exiled to *Naraloka* with human form because of a fault committed by him. So he gave the woman a *vibudikāya*, and told her to dry up her tears and apply the *vibhudikāya* to the body of the deceased. She did accordingly and Manikkam came to life. "O I have been sleeping soundly. O where are

we now?" said he awaking. "What a mad creature you are!" said the Princess; "were not violent hands laid on you by the robber?" Then he remembered the event and asked how he had come to be alive. She explained everything and he thanked her.

Without tarrying there long, Manikkam and Moothiam mounting their horses, started on their course, and before long they came to a large city. Here they engaged a mansion, purchased carriages and lived in style and happy.

It was the habit of Manikkam to go for a drive in the evenings. One evening, the king of the country saw him, and being struck by his majestic appearance, took him to the palace, and making him sit by his side, asked, "Who are you my son? Whence do you come?"

The young man diplomatically replied that he was the king of such a country, and that he had come on such and such a business. He repeated all this in detail to the Princess when he returned home. "Good," said she, "but continue the friendship. Don't be slack." Some days after, the Princess thought, "It is not good to be separate. It is better to be joined as one." Fixing a day for marriage, she advanced through Manikkam money to the rice man, *dhall*-man and *ghee*-man for the necessary *pullas* of rice, the necessary *sers* of *dhall* and *maunds* of

ghee, to be delivered at the mansion on the appointed day; also money to dancing-girls to be present during the marriage with their attendants and musical instruments—the *vina*, *mroodang* and *tālāloo* (cymbals). In like manner he advanced to all, made all preliminaries to the marriage, even to the issue of invitations, and the only arrangement remaining to be made was for flowers.

In this connection, the Princess sent Manikkam next day with an advance of money to a noted flower-woman. The flower-woman saw Manikkam, and falling in love with him at first sight, reflected within herself, "This young man is a beautiful person. Now is the chance. Such a chance may not occur again." She said to him, "I have a garland of jessamines. He who wears it will look more resplendent than what he naturally is." Suiting the action to the words, she, being a great sorceress, garlanded poor Manikkam, and he at once turned into a goat. She removed him at once and put him on the *ootti*.

Ten days elapsed, and Manikkam neither came nor was heard of. Moreover, the marriage was fixed to take place on the morrow. The princess in consequence was in great sorrow, but setting aside her sorrow for the time, she went to the rice man and the others to say that the marriage was postponed to another day, and also informed the guests of the alteration in the

programme. She went to the flower-woman also, disguised of course throughout as a man and prince, and told her of the postponement of the marriage. The flower-woman, being captivated with the beautiful appearance of the supposed prince, as she had been previously with the handsome appearance of Manikkam, said, "I have a garland of jessamines. He who wears it will look more resplendent than what he really is." The Princess did not say anything, but, noting these words, came away and was engulfed in sorrow as before.

The next day she went to the King of the country, still disguised as Manikkam, and said, "Father, I am anxious to hear *Bhagvatam*, *Krishnaleela*." The king got a spacious pandal set up, sent for the *Bhagvatam* players, and invited all the neighbouring princes and nobles to its recital that evening. The princes and nobles attended, as well as the populace, who of course come in considerable number to such entertainments without being invited and form the most interested part of the assembly. It was not so with the Princess. She was not in the least interested in the *Bhagvatam* performance: she was patrolling the pandal. Her object was to find out whether Manikkam had come there. "He might be here" she thought, "as he was fond of those entertainments from a very early age."

The first *Bhagvatam* was a failure in this respect. The Princess became melancholy but

again went to the King and said, "Father dear, I am very anxious to hear *Bhagvatam* once more." The King again sent for the *Bhagvatam* players and issued notices as before to the princes and nobles. The princes and the nobles came, so also did the people, uninvited of course, and were witnessing it. The princess, as before, was partrolling the pandal without her attention being diverted in the least, her object being to discover Manikkam in the assembly. She was again disappointed.

We have left Manikkam as a goat on the *ootti* in the flower-woman's house. Goat though he was by day, he was not so at night. At night the flower-woman would give him his own form and shape and spend her time in his company. One day Manikkam heard of the *Bhagvatam* performance at the King's residence and being naturally fond of it, told the flower-woman, "I hear of *Bhagvatam* performance at the King's, which I am very anxious to see."

"Why should you care? You have doubtless seen many. Are you still fond of them?" asked the flower-woman. "Give me permission for a second. I shall simply see the *Dramatis personæ* and hear their singing possibly and shall come back immediately," spoke Manikkam again, imploringly.

"Very well I give you permission. I spit and you run, and before the spittle is dried up, you are to be back. Take care, if you don't come I shall reduce you to ashes." Manikkam went and catching a glimpse of the singers was back to the flower-woman's. "He is to be trusted," thought she, and when he asked permission to see the second *Bhagvatam* she gave it, but, as before, threatened that if he didn't come back she would in the twinkling of an eye mingle him with the dust.

The Princess, though disappointed at not finding Manikkam at the first and second *Bhagvatam* performances, yet hoping to find him perchance at the third *Bhagvatam*, went to the King and said, "Father dear, I am very anxious to listen to *Bhagvatam* once more." The King, always a kind-hearted man, without refusing her request at once sent for the *Bhagvatam* players and ordered them to give another performance, naming the day, and issued notices to princes and nobles to attend. They came and the people also flocked in increased numbers because of the circulation among themselves of notices of the gathering and were enjoining themselves immensely. The Princess as on previous occasions patrolled the pandal in search of Manikkam. While so doing, she came upon the object of her search running away. "Where are you running to, and where are you now?" asked she. "Come

along with me and I will tell you on the way " or else she will reduce me to dust," said she. While proceeding in hot haste he detailed to the Princess, who was keeping pace with him in rapid walk; how, when he had gone with the earnest money for flowers, he was turned into a goat by the flower-woman and put on the *ootti* ever since; how he was given his original shape during nights and again transformed into a goat during the day; how he, hearing of *Bhagvatam* performances at the King's, had with difficulty obtained permission to see them for a few seconds; and how he was threatened to be reduced to dust if he did not return within the prescribed time. Moothiam listened and then returned. Her mind being now relieved of a great anxiety, she entered the pandal and seating herself among the princes, witnessed and listened to the *Bhagvatam* with attention for the first time.

The next morning the Princess went to the palace and told the King " Father dear, I shall show you a great wonder. Only give me twenty soldiers."

The King gave the soldiers, and she taking them repaired directly to the flower woman, and said, " We have a goat. We want to make it fight with the goat that you have."

" I have no goat ", answered the flower-woman at once.

"Have you not? Are you speaking the truth? Is it not on the *ootti*?" said the Princess.

"No," proudly retorted the flower-woman. Hardly had she uttered the word when her house was surrounded by the soldiers and the goat bought down from the *ootti*. The woman was pinioned and carried to the palace with the goat. Seeing this the flower-woman said, "Take care of the goat. See that it does not lose its horns or is in any way endangered. Otherwise I shall make you pay."

The Princess, also, without loss of time came to the palace, and entering one of the ladies' private rooms, combed her hair, braided or parted it in the middle, and robing herself in her female garments, appeared before the King, saying, "I am your daughter." At once sending for the goat she searched for something on its person. In the hair of the neck she discovered a garland of jessamines thoroughly knotted. She unloosened the garland and in that moment Manikkam was standing in human form in flesh and blood. She presented her lover to the King and said, "This is the husband I vowed to marry. I had made every preliminary for the ceremony, even to the issuing of invitations, but owing to the flower-woman, as you now understand, the marriage did not come off. With your permission I shall punish the woman according to her deserts." Saying so,

she put two or three potfuls of water in an active lime-kiln, and when it was boiling, she had the flower-woman put into it. Thus perished the sorceress.

In due course the marriage of Manikkam and the Princess was celebrated with great *eclat*. The King's only daughter was also given to him in marriage. Manikkam was enjoying connubial bliss with his wives and external signs seemed to indicate that this state of things would continue for a long time. But this was not to be. Manikkam's time for departure for *Nagaloka* had arrived. His father's curse had run its course. His mother in consequence thought about him and taking human shape and a basketful of *Ber* fruit came in quest of him to this earth, nay to the very country where her son Manikkam was.

After considerable wanderings in the city, with the basket of fruit on her head, she came to the foot of the palace and cried "*Gangaraigu pandlu*, Heigho *Gangaraigu pandlu*, who will buy?" Moothiam from the palace heard the cry, and revolving in her mind, "I have tasted *Raigu pandlu*. But *Gangaraigu pandlu* never. What must they be like?" She at once called the fruiterer. "Do come, old woman, up the stairs." She came and both Moothiam and her sister—the co-wife—purchased the fruit with a pearl measure. While they were so engaged, the old woman discovered reflections of Manikkam in Moothiam's face, and at once came to

the conclusion that she must be his beloved wife. The two wives reserved for their husband a portion of the purchased fruit. He did not touch it "They are grown in rank vegetation in my father's garden. My mother is anxious to get me back perhaps. My time also has approached," thought he and kept quiet.

A few days after, the old woman again came, and again Moothiam and her sister purchased fruit from her. In the course of garrulous talk, the old woman asked Moothiam casually, "How do you take your meals? Don't you eat with your husband in one dish as we do?"

"No" said Moothiam. "Strange people you are. You should take your meals with your husband in one dish lovingly" suggested the old woman and departed. Her idea was that the girl should be killed by her husband's nail poison.

Three days after, the old woman came with the fruit and in the course of conversation asked Moothiam, "What is your name? What is your house-name"?

"My name is Moothiam, but I don't know the house-name," replied the Princess.

"Then how did you marry a man who has no house-name"? asked the mar-plot.

Moothiam turned pale. She was much abashed. In the night she asked her husband the information.

"I shall certainly tell you", said Manikkam, inwardly wishing to put her off "but the King will drive us out of the kingdom. He will not keep us here for one moment."

"That matters little. Tell it me," persisted Moothiam.

"You are driving me to desperation. O young one, let me be with you for some time," said Manikkam imploringly.

"Fie!—Don't talk in that manner, I want your house-name," said Moothiam disdainfully.

"So be it. Come to the sea-shore on such and such a day and I will give you my house-name," said he, baffled in all attempts to evade the enquiry.

It was soon bruited abroad that the King's son-in-law was to go to the sea-shore on such and such a day to give out his house-name, and people in numbers assembled on the sea-shore that day.

When Manikkam entered the sea and, standing in the waters up to the waist, said, 'I am *Nagaraja's* son', he was immediately transformed into a serpent of twelve yards in length and began traversing the wide, wide sea, with rapid zig-zag movements. In the twinkling of an eye Moothiam jumped into the deep blue sea and swam after her husband. The angry billows beat against her. The furious waves tore away her clothes from her,

may her husband wanted to drive his fangs into her with a view to dissuade her from following him. But Moothiam neither cared for the perils that beset her, nor was frightened by them. Manikkam himself pitying her took her on his back and reached *Nagendrā's* garden in due time. There he kept her concealed, giving her a *cheerai* and a *ravikay* to wear and ordering the celestial cow to supply her with two *seers* of milk in the morning, at noon and in the evening. When Manikkam next came, he advised Moothiam to sweep thoroughly, put cowdung water on, and remove hard pebbles and sharp-pointed thorns from, the way leading to a hillock where his father used to go every day of full moon. He advised her also to take a hundred and one eggs, and after boring a little hole in each egg, to place them on the hillock along with a bowl of milk containing five plantains. "*Nagaraja*, with the snake world," said Manikkam, "will come, and being extremely pleased will ask the person who has done all this to name a boon, and you are to ask the diamond on his forehead."

Moothiam on the stated day did all as was advised. The *Nagaraja* came with the whole of the snake world, dancing, jumping, frisking, hissing, and said, "I have experienced great joy. Never have I experienced it before. I am greatly pleased with the person who has done all this. I will grant him any boon he asks."

But the Princess asked no boon. She was all trembling. She hid herself in the covert of a bush on seeing the snake-world.

The next day Manikkam came and said to Moothiam, "Did you ask the boon?" "No, I was sore afraid", said she. "You are still in ruts. The fat is not reduced. So I shall get the milk ration reduced from two to one *seer*," said Manikkam, and accordingly ordered the celestial cow.

Now somehow or other Manikkam's snake-wife, whom he married before he came to *Naraloka*, got an inkling of Moothiam. The snake-wife, being in the garden, and becoming jealous, as women always are, gave her a dirty piece of cloth saturated with oil, ordering it to be washed as clean as a conch-shell. Moothiam showed it to Manikkam, and with tears in her eyes said, "How can I wash this as clean as a conch-shell? Had it not been dirtied by oil, I would have done it, but now, as it is, it is impossible."

Manikkam could not bear to see Moothiam weeping. He looked overhead and saw a swarm of sea-cranes. He called them, and giving the dirty piece of cloth, ordered it to be brought back as clean as a conch-shell. They obeyed his order, bringing the cloth thoroughly cleaned, and Moothiam took it to *Nagaraja's* daughter-in-law who asked, "Have you cleaned it?"

"Yes," replied Moothiam.

"I know the trick, Manikkam got it done for you. But never mind ! You cannot escape from my hands."

Saying so, she brought a pot, and giving it to Moothiam bade her bring water in it from the well. Now this pot was full of holes, and how could water be retained in it ? Again with tears in her eyes, Moothiam took it to Manikkam saying, "How can I bring water in a pot full of holes ?" Her husband pitying her, and not bearing to see her weep, called the little frogs and ordered them on pain of punishment to close up the holes in the pot. In obedience to order they stuck their small bodies into the holes and Moothiam brought water in the pot without any difficulty and gave it to Manikkam's snake-wife. "I know the trick" said she, "Manikkam is again at the bottom. Never mind, you shall not escape from my hands."

Again the full-moon day came, and Moothiam as previously advised by Manikkam, thoroughly swept, put cow-dung water on, and removed hard pebbles and sharp-pointed thorns or brambles from the way by which *Nagendra* was accustomed to go to the hillock. She took a hundred and one eggs, and after boring a little hole in each egg, she placed them on the hillock along with a bowl of milk containing five plantains. As before, *Nagendra* with the whole of

the snake-world came hissing, jumping, frisking, dancing, and exclaimed, "I have again experienced great joy. Never have I experienced it before. I am greatly pleased with the person who has done all this. Whatever boon he asks I shall grant." But the Princess again asked no boon: she was so afraid. She hid herself behind a tree.

The next day Manikkam came and calling Moothiam enquired, "Did you ask the boon?" "No, I was sore afraid."

"You were afraid? Were you—of being bitten to death without my order? You are still in ruts. Good. I shall get the milk ration reduced from one to half *seer*. Take note that if you don't ask the boon next time, I shall certainly order you to be bitten to death by a snake."

Again the third full-moon day came. Moothiam as before thoroughly swept, put cow-dung water on, and cleaned the way leading to the *Nagendra's* hillock removing all obstacles such as scattered brambles and hard pebbles therefrom; and she took a hundred and one eggs, and after boring a little hole in each egg, she placed them on the hillock along with a bowl of milk containing five plantains. As before Nagendra with the whole of the snake-world came hissing gambolling, dancing, making jubilation in every way, and at once exclaimed.

"For the third time I have experienced great joy. Never have I experienced it before. Greatly am I pleased with the person who has done all this. Whatever boon he asks I shall grant."

This time Moothiam summoned courage after past experience, and appearing with diffidence before *Nagendra* said, "O Lord of Serpents, I have every thing—throne, palace, wealth—by your kindness ; only grant me your diamond."

He was sorry but for his word ; and at once threw up the diamond. Manikkam immediately came up and taking his wife Moothiam, came to *Naraloka* and joined his other wife. His foster-parents of this earth joined him with great pleasure at his solicitation. These are there. We are here. The story has come to an end ; so go now, and come after.

II

The Nymph of the Wire Hill.

A king had two wives. The eldest wife brought forth no children, so he built a separate palace for her a mile distance, and lived with his younger wife, and waited, but she also had no issue. "O what is the use of my staying?" said he, and handing over the kingdom to the minister to be governed in his name, he set out to a forest. In the forest which he reached, there was an anchorite practising austerities. He saw the king and asked, "Where are you going, O king?"

"I have married two wives. Neither of them bore any offspring, so leaving my kingdom I am going to distant countries."

"Why do you go to distant countries? There is a mango tree yonder, you climb and pluck three mango fruits and give them to your wives. They will bring forth children," said the anchorite. Accordingly the king went up the tree and plucked as many fruits as he chose, but only three remained with him. Again, he went up and plucked as many fruits as before. But only three remained, and for the third time he climbed the tree and plucked many fruits, but strange to say, only three remained, and with these he returned to his country and gave them to his younger wife. The wife ate the fruits and threw away the peel and the seed underneath the cot.

Now it was the duty of the senior queen's maid to go to the younger queen's palace and bring provisions—wheat, rice, vetch, etc., every morning for her mistress, and as usual the maid servant went in the morning after the arrival of the king, and saw mango peels and seeds underneath the young queen's cot. "O, the king brought nice fruits and gave to his younger wife, but none to his elder wife," thought she, and as she got the rations she put the mango peels and seeds under the grain, and came to her mistress' palace and spoke: "See, lady, the king has brought such

nice fruits. He gave all of them to his younger wife and none to you." "The younger wife is near him, and he gave her the fruits. I am distant and he gave me none," said she with calmness of temper, and taking the seeds, broke them and ate the kernel thereof, giving the husk to her mare.

In due course the king's younger wife brought forth two sons, his senior wife gave birth to a tortoise, and the mare to a foal. The senior queen was very kind to her offspring, though it was but a tortoise: she would let it sleep on her cot, and nursed it tenderly. Now the tortoise was no other than a human being of tender years. When all people were asleep, he would come out of his tortoise shell and taking food from the vessels, eat thereof, and go to *Davendraloka* to learn. For a long time the queen and the servant-maid were very much perplexed as to what became of the food in the vessels. "This won't do; the thief must be caught," said the queen. Cutting open her finger, and boring a little hole in a lime she inserted the finger in it and went to sleep. In the meantime the lad stirring out, put away the tortoise-shell underneath the cot, and partaking of curry and rice; went to *Davendraloka*. When the mother, smarting under the pain of the finger, got up and found that the tortoise had gone, her grief can better be imagined than described.

"God gave me a tortoise. I did not despise the gift. The very tortoise is taken away from me. I do not know why God has taken it away," lamented she; and when the paroxysms of grief had subsided, she searched all about the place and found a tortoise-shell. "I understand the trick now;" muttered the queen, "my child has gone somewhere. He will come back presently," and with these words she tore the shell and went to her slumber again. In the meantime the lad returned, and finding no shell he aroused his mother. She got up, took him in her lap, and impressing sweet kisses on his cheeks, upbraided him in the words, "Son dear, you have been hiding yourself so many days. You did not show yourself to these sinful eyes even for a day."

"Make me a box, mother dear," said the son, "and in it you can keep my meals as well. That shall be my habitation for a season inasmuch as the covering is gone." The mother did accordingly, and the lad stayed in the box, receiving his training, however, in *Davendra-lokâ*, to which he used to repair every day without fail. The king's two sons also were receiving their instructions at the hands of a good *pandit*.

In the course of his conversation with the king, the minister one day remarked, "Our place would look pre-eminently charming were

we possessed of the "Nymph of the Wire Hill". The king, at once longing for the unattainable object, became extremely uneasy, and, refusing food and drink, laid himself down on a cot in great depression of spirits. The younger queen, making ready water and meals, came and asked her husband to get up and take a bath and have meals. "No, I do not want any," said he. She entreated him with tears but it was of no avail. "I do not want any food" were the words he uttered, refusing the wife's entreaties. In the meantime the princes came, whom the mother had informed that their father had refused food and drink, and that her entreaties were of no avail. So they approached the king and spoke, "O father dear, what ails thee? Why are you in the dumps? What do you want? What can we do for you? We shall do whatever you bid us do. Pray tell."

"If you bring," said the king, the "Nymph of the Wire Hill" I would consider you *brave*. If you don't bring her I shall have your heads cut off and hung up on the gateway of the fortress."

Immediately the two princes set out. The son of the senior queen also wanted to go when the queen questioned him as follows: "Why do you go, son dear? You are so beautiful!"

"I must go, mother," replied the son. "If the Nymph of the Wire Hill is not brought, my

father will die : he has refused food and drink. My brothers cannot bring her. I must go and bring her." Hearing these words the queen applied some colyrium to the boy's face in order that he might appear dark in appearance, and he set out on his winged horse bidding his mother farewell.

In due course he came to a city where the waters, which issued from the bathing place of daughter of the reigning king, formed a large stream and the Princess set up a pillar near them with an inscription to the effect that she would marry him who jumped across the stream. The two princes, before the arrival of their brother, came to this very place, and reading the writing reasoned between themselves, "Who will cross such a large stream?" forded the stream, and moved on. But our Tortoise Prince examined the waters, and saying to himself, "They issue from a bathing place," spurred on his horse, and in the twinkling of an eye both the rider and the animal were on the other side of the stream. The Princess who was up on the balcony, observed the feat and told her father, "Father dear, two young men have forded the river, and the third one who is following them, jumped across the stream. He is my husband." The king spoke by way of reply, "I saw the two young men myself also. They are beautiful. Leaving them, you say that the dark boy is your husband."

"Don't say that, father. He is my husband." Hearing this the king sent his minister to call the young man. "I won't go to the king unless those two young men who are preceding me also come," replied the prince. The minister now shouted for the young men. "What business has the king with us?" said they, "you want the young man. Take him."

"No, no, the king wants all three of you," said the minister. They came. The king asked the two princes what their country was, and they replied that their country was such and such, and that they were the sons of the king of the country. Then he put the question to the third Prince who replied, "I have no country. I am a young ascetic, visiting foreign lands" yet the Princess was given to the young man in marriage, and the marriage was celebrated with great pomp. For three days the three brothers stayed in the country, and on the third day when they were to set out, the Prince said to his wife. "I hear, my love, the Wire Hill is down this side. Which is the way to it? Do you know?"

"I do not know, my lord," replied she, "but in the country before you, there is a city where there is a Princess. If you ask her, she will tell you," and drooping her head she added, "my lord, I see you are going to the Wire Hill. I do not know whether you will come

back. Suppose you meet your fate, which God forbid, what will be the sign or omen of it?" "Well, O little one, when your *Mangalasustram* assumes a black tinge, conclude that I am dead, and come to the Hill." So spoke the Prince, and, bidding his wife adieu, set out with his brothers and came to the country.

Now in that country, there was a Princess, who, obtaining her father's permission, issued a proclamation that she would marry him who should buy all the necessaries of life for a pie. "Who can get all the provisions—food-grains etc.—for a pie? Let it go, let it go", said the two Princes, and moved on their course, while the third went to the palace, and, receiving a pie from the steward, he went to the bazaar and gave the coin to a *Komti*, and asked him to tie up in a bundle a unit of all the food grains, vetch, etc., that were in his shop. The *Komti* tied them up in a bundle, and the young man, taking it together with some *ghi* (clarified butter) on a leaf and a faggot of wood, went to the steward and handing them over to him, followed his brothers.

In the meantime the Princess went to the king and said, "Father dear, the young man who is going away has brought all the provisions for a pie. My marriage with him must be celebrated." Hearing this the father spoke as follows:—"Yes, two young men have preceded

the third. They appear to be princes, and are beautiful. You must marry one of them."

"Father dear," said the daughter, "don't say that, please. I will marry the young man who acted up to my wishes as set forth in the proclamation." The king now sent his minister to call the young man. "I will come on condition that those men who are in advance of me also come," replied the Prince. The minister called the princes. "What concern have you with us?" said they. "If you want the young man you had better take him," "This won't do," said the minister, and made the princes come to the palace. The king first of all asked the two young men who they were and what country they belonged to. "We are the sons of such and such a king and our country is such and such," replied they. Turning to the third he put the same questions and received the reply, "I am an ascetic, I have no parents. I am going from one country to another." In spite of this confession, the Princess was married by the king to the young man. The bridegroom stayed for three days and on the third day, on which he was to set out, he asked his wife, "Wife dear, which is the way to the Wire Hill?" "I do not know my lord, but there is a Princess in advance of you who will tell you if you ask of her," replied she, and putting on a woe-begone appearance she added, "you are going to Wire Hill, my lord, suppose

you come by serious harm or death which God forbid, how am I to know it? What is the sign?" The Prince gave a flower saying, "If this withers up and assumes a black colour, conclude that I am dead, and come to the Hill." With these words he bade a hasty farewell to the Princess and set out. The two Princes who have already started were talking to each other, "We are so beautiful and nobody marries us. He is dark, and every Princess falls in love with him and marries him." In due course they came to a country.

In that country there was a Princess, who hung up on the palace-walls a Drawing from the *Devendraloka* with a writing underneath in weird characters. Obtaining her father's permission she sent forth a manifesto as follows:— 'He who deciphers the writing under the picture and explains it, to him shall be given my hand in marriage.' The two Princes went and looked at the picture, but they could not read the writing, much less explain it. The third Prince went and cast a glance at the picture, read the writing, and announced himself to the Princess and spoke. "I shall read and explain the writing," which he did fully and lucidly. The Princess was mightily pleased and reported to the King "Father dear, here is a young man who has read and explained the legend of the picture from the *Devendraloka*." He was also pleased and at once celebrated the marriage of

his daughter with the Prince. For three days the Prince stayed, and on the last day he spoke to his wife, "O Little One, The Wire Lady is said to reside on the Wire Hill. Which is the road to the Hill?" The Princess replied, "Great kings came but nobody could manage to carry off the 'Nymph of the Wire Hill'. How can you manage, my Lord? It is impossible."

"But O Little One, if I don't bring her, my father will die", rejoined the Prince. "Suppose you come to grief, which God forbid! the undertaking is so beset with perils: how am I to know it my Lord", asked the wife, putting on a woe-begone appearance. Upon which he planted a lily and said, "If the plant dies, conclude that I am dead and come to the Hill." Whereupon the Princess, referring to his enquiry said, "If you go to the southern side of the Hill you will come across a wire. If you catch hold of it, it will take you to the palace of the Princess, who, hailing your arrival, will come to embrace you, when you must say 'Mother, don't touch me.' Thanking his wife for the information and wishing her good-bye, the Prince came to the Wire Hill where he saw that his brothers had already arrived and wandering about the Hill. He enquired of them "Why do you wander about the Hill?" They did not reply, but they said to each other, "If we tell him, he will marry the "Nymph of

the Wire Hill " also and carry her away " ; and the Prince muttering to himself " so that's it," tethered his steed where the two Princes had tethered theirs, caught hold of the wire and went up the Hill. The " Nymph of the Wire Hill " appeared before him, and saying, " O Little One you have come after such a long time " wanted to embrace him but he said, " Mother, don't touch me " She took the hint, gave him a hot water bath over the head, and supplied him with meals. Some time after, the " Nymph of the Wire Hill " in front and the Prince behind her, set out, and almost reached the foot of the Hill when she cried out, " My parrot cage, my parrot cage ! " and the Prince saying " Mother, I will fetch it," went up the hill by the aid of the wire. In the meantime, the two Princes saw the " Nymph of the Wire Hill " at the foot of the Hill.—" He has married three Princesses already and is now carrying away the " Nymph of the Wire Hill," said the brothers greatly bewildered. What was their astonishment to see the Prince descending the Wire Hill carrying the cage in his hands. " If we cut the wire he will be dead and gone," said one brother to another, and quickly suiting their action to the words, did what their evil minds bad them to do, and down came the young man with the parrot cage with great crash and

was instantly killed. The Princes, then compelling the "Nymph of the Wire Hill" to mount the Prince's steed, set out for the city.

The evil omens showed themselves to the Prince's wives. The first wife's *Mangalasurum* assumed a black colour. "Some mishap has befallen my husband. He asked me to come to the Hill," said she to herself in tears and set out lamenting. The flower given to the second wife by the Prince withered and assumed a dark hue. "My husband had come by some harm. He asked me to come to the Hill," said she to herself and started weeping. On the road the first wife and the second wife of the Prince met each other. "Why do you weep?" asked the one. "Why do you weep?" asked the other. "My husband has gone to the Wire Hill, he has come by death. I am going there," said the second wife.

"My husband also has gone to the Wire Hill. He has met his fate there. I am going thither," said the first wife.

"Then we are both his wives", said the two Princesses after a little conversation, and started on their course with one object in common. In the meantime the third lamenting wife of the Prince met them. "Why do you weep?" asked they of her. "My husband has gone to the Wire Hill. He has suffered death there. I am going thither," replied she,

"Your husband and our husband is one and the same. We three of us are his wives. Our goal is the same", said the two Princesses, and with one object in common all the three moved on and in due course reached the Hill. There they saw their husband's bones scattered prominently in all directions, upon which their lamentation had better be imagined than described. When the paroxysms of grief were over, the youngest wife asked her co-wives to collect and adjust the bones, while she retired for a while. She left them and went to a cistern, and, having bathed there seven times, and putting on wet clothes and standing in the attitude of half contemplation, wept, and spread out the folds of her garments as if to receive something.

Parmeshwara heard her lamentations, and *Parvati* at the moment spoke unto him. "She is crying to her God that her husband be brought to life. Instantly *Parmeshwara* threw a life-giving rod into the folds of the Princess' garments. Receiving it she came to her co-wives, who had by this time collected the bones and adjusted them in their proper places. The life-giving rod instilled life into the Prince who sat up and exclaimed, "What a sweet sleep I have had." The next moment he saw his three wives and asked the reason of their being there. They explained and he now recalled the chain of circumstances which brought him there. Half an hour after this the youngest Princess went

again to the cistern and, having taken a bath seven times, threw the life-giving rod into it and returned.

Very soon afterwards the Prince with his three wives set out and in due course reached his youngest wife's father's capital where after staying for three days and receiving presents of elephants, horses and retinue from the King, he moved on, and came to the country of his second wife). Staying for three days and receiving presents of elephants, horses, and retinue he set out again. In due course he came to the country of his first wife where also after staying for three days and receiving similar presents of horses, elephants and retinue, he started once again and by rapid marches reached his own country, and pitched his camp in a garden.

Calling his wives he said, "My mother will come. One of you should hold the *Pullem*, another should wash her feet and offer a seat, while the third should wipe them." With these words the Prince left them and went to his mother, who, upon seeing him, fell on his neck and shedding tears exclaimed:—"My son, my son, you have come after all, and I have been anxious." He soon told her of his having married princesses, and these daughters-in-law were awaiting her. She came and the Princesses did as was directed. One held a

Pullem, the other washed the queen's feet and offered a seat, while the third wiped the feet and the queen was mightily pleased with their humility as much as with their comeliness. We shall now leave the Prince and his mother in the company of her daughters-in-law and go to the two Princes.

The two Princes in due course had reached their country with the 'Nymph of the Wire Hill', and the father was immensely delighted and applauded his two boys for having brought the 'Nymph of the Wire Hill,' and declared to the people that no two Princes of equal prowess and valorous deeds to his sons were to be found on the face of the earth. The Princess also on their part went about bragging.

But the 'Nymph of the Wire Hill,' fretted and constantly wondered what had become of the young man who fell from the Hill headlong, whether he was dead ; and when the King made overtures to her, she said, "I have certain *Devendra's* vows to be performed. If you get me some cobra-lilies, I will perform the vows and then marry you." Her object in asking for these lilies was to find out particulars relating to the Prince, for she was fully convinced that if any one could bring the cobra-lilies which are only to be found at the end of seven and seven fourteen seas, beyond the sea of milk, it would be he alone. The King summoning the

two Princes said to them, "Your mother wants some cobra-lilies for the performance of her vows. Will you go and get them?" "It is not a difficult affair, father dear, we will go and get them" said they, and mounting their steeds, set out.

Now the third Prince saw his two brothers going out to fetch the cobra-lilies, and he at once ran to his youngest wife and said, "My brothers are going to bring cobra-lilies; I will go too."

"O Young One, how are they going to fetch them? asked she." "They are in the sea of milk which is beyond seven and seven fourteen seas."

"What do you advise?" the Prince asked in haste, and she gave him some seeds after repeating certain incantations over them. She gave him a letter also and said to him, "When you come to the sea, throw these seeds into it, and the sea will make a way for you and you can walk straight on dry shod. When you come to the sea of milk at the end of seven and seven fourteen seas, you will see a tortoise. Throw the letter to it, and it will take the letter to the Lord of Serpents. The Lord of Serpents will send back the tortoise, and you must take your seat on its back and go to the Lord of Serpents who will give the cobra-lilies and send you back."

Cordially thanking his wife for her help, and bidding her, his other two wives and his mother a hasty farewell, he hurriedly started, and when he came to the sea he did as he had been bidden. He threw the seeds on the sea and the sea opened a passage for him. He passed along it and came to the sea of milk, and seeing a tortoise, he threw the letter to it. The tortoise took the letter and ran to the "Lord of Serpents" who sent the tortoise back to bring the young man, and the Prince mounting the tortoise went to the "Lord of Serpents," who received him with every mark of respect, put him up at his own house and saw to every facility of his, and possessing a daughter, the celestial Swain whom he was rearing, he gave her in marriage to the Prince, and plucking some cobra-lilies he gave them to him and said, "Here take the cobra-lilies and go safely back to your country with your wife, my daughter" and he ordered the tortoise to carry them. The tortoise took the Prince and Princess on its back across the seven and seven fourteen seas, and set them down on the seashore of their country.

Now the other two Princes who set out in a bragging fashion to fetch the lilies were at a loss, as they did not know how to cross the vast seas that lay before them, and with these thoughts foremost in their mind they sat on the sea-beach. In the mean time our Prince and his wife appeared before them. "Here he is.

He is not dead. He has married another Princess and is coming with a bunch of flowers, which are doubtless cobra-lilies. We had better get them from him" said the brothers to each other and immediately proffered their services to the Prince with great eagerness, and one of them took the bunch of flowers. The Prince did not object, and they came with the Prince and his wife in an orderly manner as far as the outskirts of the country and then, as if by magic, disappeared with the bunch of cobra-lilies and showed themselves to the King who, on receiving the flowers declared: "In all the sublunary world no one has such brave sons as I have," and without losing time he repaired to the Palace of the "Nymph of the Wire Hill." She received the flowers from the King, but was more than convinced in her heart that the Prince was alive, and so said to her suitor, "I will now perform the *Devandra's* vows. Kindly issue invitations to kings, princes and noblemen." The invitations were issued, and all the neighbouring kings, princes and nobles, including the king's two sons, came and sat in the Assembly Hall. Their wives, too, including all the blood relatives, such as sisters and daughters, came and sat in the Hall in the places allotted to them. There sat also the King's younger wife, and her maids. Casting a glance over the assembled crowd, the Wire Nymph said; "I see the younger wife of the King, but nowhere

do I see his senior queen, or her son in the assembly." Whereupon the King was confused, and, muttering to himself, "How can she have a son without my knowing it?" sent for her. She came followed by her son and her four daughters-in-law all as resplendent as the full moon in its glory.

The "Wire Nymph" now began her harangue. "Do you think, O King, that it was your two sons by the younger queen that brought me from the Wire Hill?" Nothing of the sort. "It was your son by the senior queen. We descended the Hill together and I cried out 'for my parrot cage,' and quick as lightning, he ran up the Hill by the wire and was returning with the cage, when the two princess at the foot of the hill broke the wire, and the young man fell headlong from the summit and was killed, but, by the merits of his wives, he was given a second birth. Do you want to know who brought the cobra-lilies? Your two sons, you think. Nothing of the sort. I knew they could not and that is why I required special flowers for the sham ceremony of the performance of the *Devendra's* vows, as a test to find out whether the Prince was dead or alive; for I knew that he alone could bring them. And in truth it was your son by the senior queen that had brought the flowers, and your sons imposed upon the

“Prince and managed by fraud to palm them
“off on you as theirs.”

The King changed colour, and, calling his two sons from the assembly, cried out. “Are these things so?” They hung their heads in shame and confusion and proved their guilt. The King spat on their faces and bade them begone, and, calling forth his really heroic and really brave son, pressed him to his breast and wept. And soon after the assembly broke up and the kings, princes and noblemen with their friends went to their respective countries, the King embraced all his daughters-in-law and his senior wife. She at first upbraided him for his partiality to his younger wife and for forgetting her altogether! Then she unfolded to him how their son, of whom they had so much reason to be proud of, was conceived after eating the kernel of the anchorite’s mango, how he had been at first a tortoise, how she had nursed the animal nevertheless, and how she to her great joy found one night that the tortoise was a human child though under the tortoise covering. The King listened to everything in silence and astonishment.

In due course the King married the ‘Wire Nymph,’ and some days after performed the marriage of his son with the four Princesses to which the fathers of the three Princesses, as also the foster father of the fourth Princess—the

Lord of the Serpents—were invited. They were enraptured with delight to find that their son-in-law was not the son of a humble ancho-rite but a member of the royal family like themselves. The next thing the King did was to crown his son with all pomp and glory, and abdicate the throne in his favor, himself leading a life of retirement in the company of his wives and taking no active part whatsoever in the affairs of State.

III

The Four Friends

In a certain country the King, the Prime Minister, the Personal Secretary and the Master-carpenter lived in great friendliness; and they had no progeny for a long time. One day the King, all of a sudden, saw a grey hair in his mustachios and in great trepidation fell a thinking and exclaimed, drawing a long breath. "O what's the use of this life to me? I am advancing in years and there is no one to ascend the throne on my death. Calling his councillors, including the Minister, the Personal Secretary and the Master-carpenter, he asked their advice as to what should be done under the circumstances. The councillors could not give any advice, but the Minister, the Personal Secretary and the Master-carpenter, who were also in low spirits as much as the king and for the same reason,

proposed that the King should retire to a forest and meditate on the Supreme Being. The King in great eagerness approved of the proposal and retired to a forest, the Minister, the Personal Secretary and the Master-carpenter accompanying him, and meditated, subsisting on nothing for seven days, his friends doing the same ; and in due course they returned to their country. Now the meditation won the blessing of God and the King's wife conceived, the Minister's wife conceived, the Personal Secretary's wife conceived, and the Master-carpenter's wife conceived and, in their season, the queen first of all, brought forth a son, secondly, the Minister's wife brought forth a son, thirdly, the Personal Secretary's wife gave birth to a male child and fourthly the Master-carpenter's wife also brought forth a son. In due course the children grew and when they attained their fifth year they were put to school. Like their fathers, they were also living in great brotherly affection. Their daily work was that, after taking meals, the Master-carpenter's son, would repair to the Personal Secretary's house and taking his friend, the Secretary's son would conjointly go to the Minister's mansion, where taking their friend the Minister's son, they would go together to the palace, and calling out the king's son as their eldest brother, wait for him ; and when he joined them they would go together to school. When school was over



**' Here, take it. Am I not worth more than the parrot
that you molest me thus ? ' (See page 47.)**

in the evening they would return to their respective residences. On the way to their homes, the king's son would unstring his bow and shoot whatever birds that came across and the other boys would pick them up for him. Unfortunately, one day while returning from school, the king's son espied a parrot of beautiful plumage and variegated colours perched on a tree. Quick as thought he bent his bow and shot, and down came the bird with a thud. It managed to soar a little, but the exertion proving too much, it fell in the king's concubine's palace-compound, and this the king's son was unaware of.

Immediately the King's son sent one of his companions to fetch the parrot, but the king's concubine, though she had it, refused to give it up, and the king's son therefore went in person to the concubine's palace and demanded the parrot. The concubine in great anger pressed the bird hard in her closed fist, and wrenching its neck, threw it before him saying, "Here, take it. Am I not worth more than the parrot that you molest me thus? The king's son saw that the bird's soul had fled and giving vent to the expression, "I do not want the dead thing, I do not want the dead thing," came away and returned with his companions who entertained grave fears as the incident had taken place in the concubine's quarter, whose character as an intriguer was well-known. The

concubine in the mean time had called her attendants and strongly impressed on them that, in case the king came, they were not to open the door till he was tired of knocking, and when he was very tired and about to retrace his steps they were to call him, open the door, and show him in; and when he asked them as to how their mistress had fared, they were to say that she was very much indisposed. Giving directions thus, the woman, with a view to assert falsely that the king's son had dealt with her in a shameful manner, broke her bangles, scratched her hands and feet, caused hurts over the body with a piece of bangle glass, and applying saffron paste to the hurts, she waited pensively in her private apartment for the king. When the king came, the maids followed her mistress' directions to the very letter: they would not open the door though the king was knocking at it for a long time and was tired and exhausted. When he almost persuaded himself to go away and indeed retraced his steps in anger, open the door, flew in walked the king and enquiry was made of the servant as to what was the matter with her mistress and where she was. "She is very much indisposed", said they, "and is in her apartment." Thither the king went and enquired how she fared. She spun a long tale,—she told him that his son had entered her palace, without the least delicacy of feeling and brutally

THE FOUR FRIENDS

outraged her, exhibiting at the same time the scratches on her face, hands and feet in corroboration of her story. The King listened with rapt attention to every thing that his favourite had to say. On returning to the palace he immediately summoned to his presence the executioners and ordered that his son the Prince, at that midnight hour, should be carried to the jungle and there executed. Accordingly they entered the King's son's chamber and were just going to carry away the cot on which he slept when the queen awoke and saw to her horror that the executioners were taking away her son to be executed for what crime she did not know. Quickly repressing her feelings she ran to the treasury and, fetching four or five bags of silver, put them on the cot and spoke to the executioners as follows:—"O executioners, take this largesse. If you have mercy on that innocent child of mine, do spare his life. If you are destitute of mercy which is an heavenly gift you can follow your own course." The executioners, who knew that the King was devoid of sense, replied, "O gracious Lady, know that we shall not do such a murderous deed. We have been eating your salt all these long years. We shall try to save the Prince; we shall leave him in the jungle and bringing blood-marks of some animal, pass them off on the king as those of the

executed Prince." Pledging thus, the hangmen started with the King's son on the cot, and covering a good deal of distance, they set him down in an unfrequented jungle, and waited for the dawn of day, thinking amongst themselves that if the young man were to be awake in the night he would be frightened. When the day dawned, leaving the money bags where they were, they quietly came away to the metropolis, killing on the way a deer and dipping their handkerchiefs in its blood, produced them before the King in proof that his son was executed. The King believed it and was satisfied and informed the concubine of what he had done, and she was extremely glad to hear of it.

The King's son, after the sun was high up over the horizon, awoke and found that he was on his cot true enough, but not in the palace but in the jungle. He could not for the world understand what had brought him there, and moreover he found it impossible to trace his way in that thick jungle leading to the metropolis. At the accustomed hour he felt the cravings of hunger which he satisfied by plucking a few of the jungle fruits and eating them, and quenching his thirst at the running rill. As regards his three companions, they got up as usual and taking their meals came to the palace with a view to accompany the Prince and shouted, "Brother, Brother." No answer came nor was the Prince to be found. The Prince's mother,

the queen, however came and calling them aside, asked them quickly what they had done on the road while returning from school yesterday. They explained how the Prince shot a beautiful parrot; how the fallen and seemingly dead bird got up by its own strength and flew a few paces when its strength failing, it fell in the compound of the king's concubine's palace; how the Prince sent them one after the other for the bird and the concubine, though having it with her, refused to deliver it up; and how at last the Prince went in person and demanded the bird; how the concubine squeezed it in her hand and twisting its neck threw it before him saying, "Am I not worth this? You molest me thus?" and how the Prince seeing the bird dead, left the concubine's saying, "I do not want the dead bird, I do not want the dead thing", and how they straightway came away. Reflecting for a while, the queen with tears in her eyes said, "Your brother might have been dead by now. The executioners, as ordered by the king, took him in the midnight hour to the jungle and I do not know whether they have beheaded him or otherwise. Beloved children, you may now go to school." Dismissed thus, the boys, after what they have heard, returned to their homes in a confused state, and throwing away their books, partook of some refreshment, and taking a bag of money for expenses, they set out in search

of the Prince ; when they had covered a good deal of distance, and had come into the heart of the jungle, they saw the Prince plucking jungle fruits and berries and eating them. They at once ran to him and embraced him tenderly, protesting that all the things have happened on account of the king having listened to his concubine with regard to the parrot affair. "Let a veil be thrown over the subject, and now tell me," spoke the Prince, "Are you returning to your homes or do you mean to visit new countries and new places?"

"We shall not return to our homes" said the youths. "We shall visit new countries and new places." With this resolution, the quartette set out on their travels and came to a village where the King's son stayed in the encampment, and the Minister's son, the Personal Secretary's son and the Master-carpenter's son, who had always looked to the King's son from the beginning with feelings of respect, went to the bazar. Cooking delicious viands to the best of their ability, they attended upon the King's son, and taking meals themselves, they set out again—their thirst for foreign travel was such—with their friend the King's son—and thus for years they traversed the land from east to west and from north to south. At length they came to a spot where they saw a big stone buried by the side of the road on which was inscribed the writing, "Beware, beware when a man goes

by one road the next man to take another or evil is sure to befall. So kindly note this and don't depart from it." The quartette on reading the writing were dumbfounded. Moreover on seeing the four roads emerging out from the main road before them, they wept like little children, saying amongst themselves, "We travelled together for so many years and now we come to be separated by cruel fate". Hardly had they repressed their tears when they saw flowers of variegated colours growing on the bank of a rivulet. Going to them as if impelled by some inward force they plucked four flowers of different colours and began to exclaim as if they have lost their heads, "White flower stands for Prince, blue flower for Minister's son, green for Personal Secretary's son, and red for Master-carpenter's son." They entered into an agreement, that if any one of them, separated as they would be, were to be married, an injunction was to be laid on the wife or a condition to be imposed on the bride before marriage, that her husband when he came by death, should not be buried in earth but laid in a cradle. Agreement thus made and farewells spoken, the quartette with great reluctance and heavy hearts took to the four different roads. In due course, the Minister's son and the Master-carpenter's son and the Personal Secretary's son came to find themselves in countries of which they became kings. It was not so with the

King's son. The more he advanced into the interior, the greater the country was marked by the utter absence of hamlets and human beings, and became characterized by impenetrable jungle. It was the habitation of a powerful Rakshasha who had a palace there, in which he was rearing a Princess from her infancy. When the King's son set his foot on the soil there, the Princess spoke or asked in great alarm, "O what brought you here my friend? a Rakshasha is inhabiting the palace. Run for your life, as he will presently be returning from his foraging expedition and will swallow you up in the twinkling of an eye."

"Let your fears be dispelled, O fair creature, and deign to watch my valour," replied the Prince, sitting hard by the threshold without being seen. Soon after the Rakshasha came with long strides, and exclaiming, "I smell a man, I smell a man" stooped low at the doorway to enter the palace, when down came the sharp sword of the Prince on his neck with crushing force, severing the head from the body. The Princess was astonished and immensely delighted to see the wondrous exploit, yet she sobbed for the fallen giant who, as a father, had reared her up from infancy in the palace. Soon she stopped her sobbing and requested the Prince to dig a grave and bury the giant in it, which he did.

Now the Prince, since the day he saw the Princess, was bewitched by her charms and finding a favourable opportunity he began the old language of love and was happily successful in his suit. He married her according to the *Gandharva* laws of marriage, previously obtaining a solemn promise that, in case he died, he should not be buried but laid in a cradle. The pair lived in the jungle happily. Everything required for subsistence was there. There was grain and pulse in granaries, *ghi* and other necessities in the stores, cattle and sheep in the pens and jewels and precious stones in the treasury, which the proudest and richest of sovereigns of the earth had not. They were not in want of anything. In the morning the King's son's duty consisted in taking up his bow and arrows and entering the interior of the forest and shooting as many birds as he liked, and returning with the game; at midday he was busy with his parrots of which he had a regular aviary, caressing them, feeding them, coaxing the new ones to talk and making the old ones chat pleasantly and fluently with the Princess and himself. In the evenings the King's son would speak to his wife about his bosom friends • whom cruel fate had separated from him, the Minister's son, the Personal Secretary's son and the Master-carpenter's son. He would tell how the one, by virtue of the science of astrology, could say what happened to individuals,

by day or by night irrespective of distance or time ; how the other could call a dead body to life ; and how the third could construct a car that would travel in the aerial regions. One way or other time sped pleasantly at the palace for a considerable number of years.

Now one day the Princess expressed a wish to visit the river-bank fringing the forest. "Don't entertain such an idea," said the Prince. "Who knows but some unforeseen accident may happen and you may be taken away from me." Paying no heed to what her husband said, the Princess some days after renewed her request, and again the Prince spoke to her, "Don't entertain such an idea. Perchance you may be involved in a difficulty because of your extreme loveliness and I shall be the loser." Again, paying no heed to what her husband said, the Princess for the third time falling at his feet, requested of him to take her to the river bank. The King's son could not but take her after so much entreaty. The Princess had a delicious bath in the river, but hurrying to get home, she forgot one of her anklets which she had removed from her person along with other ornaments, previous to her bath and put it on the river-bank.

Now on the other side of the river, there sojourned an old woman. She espied the ornament which shone in the sun's rays, and immediately crossing the river and coming to

where it lay, she took it up and put it in her lap. Returning to her own country, where she presented it to the King, who seeing it swooned away. Immediately on regaining consciousness, he drew the anklet to his bosom and declared, "The beauty of the ornament is such that the wearer's beauty must be transcendental. To him who brings its wearer I shall grant half of my kingdom and wealth". Immediately the old woman, taking betel-leaf from the royal hands as a sign of bargain struck, went to the river-bank, and swimming to the other side at the back of the palace of the Prince and Princess, piled up dried sticks, fallen leaves, and tanglewood and set fire to it; and by the side of this burning mass, she sat weeping in a low subdued tone. The Prince and the Princess heard the plaintive cries, and the latter who was of a tender heart told her husband, "Somebody is weeping at the back of the palace. We should go and ascertain the cause of it." "That's nothing" said the Prince, "be at ease." The Princess again expressed a wish that they should go and ascertain the cause, and the Prince, knowing as he did of the Princess's persistent nature, took her to the spot from whence the cries emanated. The old woman, on seeing the Princess, cried the more bitterly and exclaimed, "Daughter dear. I had a daughter completely resembling you. She died and I am cremating her here."

With this the wily old dame pretended to fall into a state of unconsciousness for a while. The innocent Princess seeing the old woman's tears and her exhausted frame, and believing what she had said to be true, pitied her case and spoke, "You had better come and put up with me, inasmuch as you say that you had a daughter resembling me. Consider me as your dead daughter come to life." This was what the old hag required: she went into the palace at once as no second invitation was required, and after keeping quite quiet for a considerable time and watching a good deal, the sorry wretch embraced the earliest opportunity for the accomplishment of her wicked deed of mixing a deadly poison in the wheaten cakes, and placing them before the Prince on his return from the chase. He unsuspectingly ate them and immediately after died. The sorrow of the wife for the deceased had better be imagined than described. For two days she clung to her husband's body not leaving it, and sobbing, weeping, and wailing all the time. "What's the use of crying?" said the old hag "God had taken him away. Assuage your sorrow and let's bury the Prince." "No. That should not be the case," spoke the Princess. "My husband advised me to put his dead body in a cradle and suspend it to a beam." This was done accordingly.

The moment the King's son died, the white flower which stood as the emblem for the

Prince in the garlands of the Prince's friends, faded away, and the Minister's son, the Chief Secretary's son and the Master-carpenter's son at once came to know that their eldest brother the Prince—for this is the light in which they regarded him from the outset—had died, and immediately they set out from their respective countries. When they reached the junction, the three met, and the writing on the stone permitting in cases of special emergency for more than one person to travel by the same way, they set out by the way by which the King's son set out first and alone, and made their way into the dreary forest.

The Princess, by this persuasion and that, had in the mean time so completely submitted to the woman's control, that in a very few days, the hag enticed her away to her country, and pretending to be going to a friend's in the Palace, she took her with her and presented her to the King. The King on seeing the Princess fainted, nature so freely lavished on her such sublime beauties, and the duration of the fainting being over, he proposed to marry her.

"I shall not take the step. No, oh no," said she with great presence of mind, recognising the position in which she was placed by the false, the treacherous, and the perfidious old woman, whom she had loved as a mother. "Not for six months to come, as I have some vows

to be performed. After the expiration of the period the King will be at liberty to take me to be his spouse." The King, complying with her request, put her on the topmost storey of the palace with every comfort, luxury and ease, at the same time putting a strong guard round the palace so that the lady might not escape. The privileged visitor to her apartment was only the old woman herself, who every morning carried a bouquet of flowers which the Princess, being weighed down under sorrow, would throw away without caring to inhale the perfume thereof. Exactly three months after, the Prime Minister's son, the Private Secretary's son and the Master-carpenter's son came to the palace in the sylan wilds, but found none in it except the body of the Prince in a cradle, which they identified unquestionably as that of their friend, the starlings, the parroquets, the parrots and the cuckatoos reared by the Prince, continued to utter the stereotyped words taught them "King's son, get up. King's son, get up." Without losing time, the Secretary's son offered prayers to the Great Soul and, unsheathing his sword, touched the body. Immediately the limbs moved or showed signs of vitality, and the Prince getting up, exclaimed "My dear, my dear." But his wife was not to be found. There stood however his three friends, the Prime-Minister's son, the Private Secretary's son, and the Master-carpenter's son, who fell on his neck

and shed tears in profusion. "Where is my wife? Where is my wife?" enquired he of them.

"We never saw your wife," said they, and now at once before his mind's eye there stood the old-woman and he exclaimed—"Now I recollect, now I recollect. The old witch! The marplot came and poisoned me and has taken away my wife. I told her not to take the old hag into the palace, notwithstanding her protestations of sorrow for the death of her daughter, which I now conceive to be pure fiction." Saying so, the Prince taking his three friends went to the other side of the river and entered the country of the old woman. Now, the Prince was quite changed in appearance since his revival. So when he entered the old woman's house and asked her to cook meals for them she answered, "I could not, my young ones. There is a new queen come here. She is shortly to be married to the King. I must make a bunch of flowers to be taken to her. So you see I have no time to cook meals for you." Thereupon they rejoined "We are very hungry, you prepare for us some food, and we shall make a bunch of flowers for you." She consented, and the Prince made a bouquet in a curious sort of way, but put inside it a letter informing the Princess of his coming to life and arrival in the country with his friends, and advising her to tell the King to make a car

to ascend to the skies to get a view of the country, after which she was to say she would marry the King. Inside the bouquet he put his signet ring also, and a thorn at the end. Making it up thus, the Prince gave the bouquet to the old woman who took it to the palace and presented it as usual to the Princess. The Princess had a great mind to throw it away, as she had done on so many previous occasions, but its curious arrangement of flowers so distinct from the previous ones, attracted her notice. She examined it and found a thorn, which she removed, and immediately opened the bunch, and what was her delight to find her husband's signet ring and a letter in his handwriting, the contents of which she devoured eagerly; she sent word to the King that, as she wanted to get a view of the country before the immediate fulfilment of her vow and celebration of marriage, she wished a car to be made which would take her into the aerial regions and bring her back.

The King was overjoyed to find from the message sent by the Princess, that she had made up her mind to marry him after obtaining a view of the country from the car, so he immediately summoned all the carpenters to his presence and ordered them to build a car that could go up and down the skies. "It is impossible to build such a car", said they, and the King now ordered all the people to

come forward and declare whether any of them could build a car that could travel in the aerial regions. With these people came the Prince and his friends, the Prime Minister's son, the Secretary's son and the Master-carpenter's son. The people and the carpenters having declared their inability, the Master-carpenter's son stepped forward and said, "I will build the car, but it will cost you very much."

The King instantly tendered the money asked, and ordered that the work of building the car be at once put in hand. In due time the car was built, the first storey of which was to accommodate the princes, the second to accommodate the builders or engineers, and the third to keep miscellaneous things. When the car was taken before the King, he was extremely pleased. The Princess in due time was dressed and bejewelled, and came and ensconced herself on the seat provided for her in the car in the first storey. In the next storey sat the builders or engineers to look after the machinery, and at the foot of the young men sat the old woman saying, "I cannot persuade myself to allow the Princess to go alone." The car began to move, and when it had ascended the skies tolerably high, the builder brought it to a standstill there. The Princess, after asking the Prince's pardon for persisting in doing what he had forbidden her to do so many times, spoke in loud accents from the high altitude, "O fool

of a king, don't try to marry other men's wives by compulsion, estranging them from their wedded love or against their will," and immediately disappeared from sight, the car going up and up. The King heard what the Princess spoke and immediately falling on his face, he died of grief. As regards the mischievous old woman,—she was sent down to the nether regions by the Prince, her bones being scattered to the four winds. The Prince with the Princess and his friends, descended into the city of his friend the Prime Minister's son who was a crowned King of the country, and stayed there enjoying the hospitality offered him and his wife for a considerable time. Then he set out to the city of his other friend, the Chief Secretary's son who was also crowned a King of another country. After enjoying hospitality there he came into the city of his third friend the Master-carpenter's son. There after taking all his three friends he set out with an immense army to wage war with his father. The old King, on seeing the large army that had come into his country, became greatly troubled within himself and opened negotiations for peace. Immediately without exhibition of any aggressive spirit on the part of the Prince, the tents were pitched in the open air, the old King called in, and questioned, "What made you to murder your son?"

"He had behaved disrespectfully towards his mother" replied the King, referring to his

courtesan, and immediately the three friends interfered and enquired whether there was any truth in the matter. "So I was informed, and I have no reason to doubt", again replied the King. The young man now vociferously spoke "Call the woman". The woman came. They questioned her as follows:—

"Is it a fact that the King's son behaved disrespectfully towards you?" She trembled, quivered and was covered with confusion. The guilt was proved and she was ordered to be thrown into the lime-pit. The old King, now coming to know that it was his son whom he had sent into the forest to be killed, and whom his mother had saved, that had come to fight with him, was sore afraid and asked pardon for his inhumane conduct in the past. The pardon was granted, after which the Prince went into the inner palace and seeing his mother, fell on her neck and wept tears of joy, at the same time expressing that, had it not been for her, he would not have been living then but would have quitted the world long ago for no fault of his but his birth.

In due course the Prince became King and reigned for many a long year, and amidst his regal duties and family happiness. He did not forget to send for his feathery friends from the sylvan palace. His human friends, it need not be mentioned, were always welcome at his palace.

IV

The Prince and the Parrot

In a certain country there lived a poor wood-cutter and his wife. They had no children. The avocation of the wood-cutter was to go to the forest, and bring a bundle of firewood which he would vend for four annas, giving of the proceeds half an anna in charity and the rest to his wife. With the money the woman would buy the usual necessities and cook meals for the night, which they would both take, the wife keeping something for her husband for the next morning.

One day, after bringing firewood from the jungle, the wood-cutter rested underneath a Banian tree. While there with the bundle on his back, he saw a pair of royal parrots bringing fruit, and entering one of the crevices of the tree, and evidently feeding their young ones and flying away. The wood-cutter noticed the behaviour of the birds, and inferring that there must be a young parrot, climbed the tree, put his hand in a crevice, and, as luck would have it, discovered a young parrot. Immediately taking it out and putting it in his bosom, he came down carefully, and searching about the tree, came across a creeper from which he made a small cage and placed the bird therein. On coming home, he put the cage in his wife's hand,

and spoke thus :—"God has not given us offspring for a long time. He has now given us a parrot for offspring. We must bring it up."

The wood-cutter and his wife were living in a hut to which there were no doors, and being sore afraid of cats they watched the bird by turns during the night. In the day-time, when the wood-cutter was away, the wife kept a sharp look out on her charge. "This wont do," said the wood-cutter to himself one day seeing the bird yet untaught. Going to a school master in the town, he made the following request giving the bird into his hand, "Sir, if you be kind enough to rear the bird and teach him for a few months, I shall be under great obligations to you. I am a poor man and quite unable to pay you any money, but I shall bring and give you a bundle of firewood instead, for the labour of rearing and teaching my child."

As promised, the wood-cutter would bring with great regularity, a bundle of firewood and throw it into the school master's compound, and then going to the school master and looking at the parrot lovingly and caressing it, would enquire "Has my son began to lisp?" The school-master would reply, "I never saw it chirping or making any noise yet." This state of things continued for a considerable time, and in the meantime, the parrot, which was kept in the centre of the school room, became the school

boys' pet and they would feed him with different sorts of fruits. The result was that the bird acquired every bit of knowledge which the school master imparted to his pupils, yet it outwardly seemed to be a dumb bird.

The school master's order was that every boy, by turns, should watch the parrot after the school was closed and during the interval. On one of these watches, one of the boys whose turn it was to watch, recited as school boys do, a piece of poetry from the Anthology, and immediately the parrot from the cage lifted up its head, called the boy a fool, and corrected the mistake made. The boy was greatly astonished at a parrot correcting him. The next day was the Prince's turn, and while he was watching, he began to read from one of his books and happened to make a mistake. Immediately the parrot, bawling out, 'You Prince, fool of a Prince, making such a mistake,' corrected him. The Prince was greatly astonished at the correction made by the parrot, yet he treasured up the insult, muttering to himself "Birdie, I will have revenge on you some day."

The wood-cutter, after these events, came with his usual bundle of firewood to the school master's and unloading the bundle in his compound, enquired, "Has my son begun to lisp or talk?" "I never heard the parrot talk" replied the school master, "but one of the boys says that, not only does it talk but it tries to teach

and correct them in their lessons when they go wrong. However, you call over next week." Hearing this the wood-cutter wended his way homeward. The parrot never knew hitherto that the wood-cutter was its parent, but of course it used to see him bring firewood and make enquiry "Has my son begun to talk?" One day, it dawned on the bird, that the wood-cutter was its parent, so when the next week arrived and the wood-cutter put in his appearance and put the usual question to the school master "Has my son begun to talk?" "I believe so" replied the school master, "all the boys say to that effect, nay more, that it is in a position to correct them, but I have not found out the fact for myself. So call over here next week." "His mother is very anxious to see him," spoke the wood-cutter. Furthermore she is fretting for him." So the school master permitted the bird to be taken. The wood-cutter took the cage with great eagerness, and was going home, and the parrot on the way, to the man's great wonder, began to converse as a human being. "Father dear," said it, "I did not know that you were my parent. I often saw you, but I thought you might have a son in school after whom you were enquiring from the school master." The wood-cutter's wife, on seeing the parrot, ran a few steps in advance, took the bird in her hand and kissing it tenderly, exclaimed, "Son dear, you have now become a

great man ". " So am I, mother ", replied the bird, to the woman's great astonishment. " Don't you be sorry on any account, I will provide for you both."

Now the parrot, as it was a heavenly bird, knew the secrets of the world. That was a gift from God. The wood-cutter's wife was in the habit of saving a few coppers daily from her husband's earnings for years, and the bird, having this fact before his mind, spoke unto the woman. " Mother dear. Please bring me the pot wherein you were putting money by way of saving so many years." The savings were poured out and came to fifty rupees, and the parrot now calling the wood-cutter spoke, " Father dear. Take a few rupees and carry me to the goldsmiths' street and enquire where the chief goldsmith resides. I will enter into a bargain with him to make me a nice good cage." Accordingly, the wood-cutter took the bird to the goldsmiths' street and made enquiries after the chief goldsmith. The goldsmith came and asked who was enquiring after him.

Immediately the parrot came out of the creep-er-cage, and saluting the goldsmith spoke :— " We are poor people, sir. My father is only a wood-cutter. I would request of you to kindly make a nice and pretty cage for me with lock and key. May I know what your lowest charges would be, considering our circumstances ?" The

goldsmith, who was astonished to hear the parrot talk in the manner it had done, replied that his charges would be ten rupees, and begged that something by way of earnest money be given him. The wood-cutter, receiving a hint from the bird, tendered the money to the goldsmith, who promised to give the cage within four days from date and at such and such an hour. The wood-cutter now wended his way to the bazaar with the parrot, and purchased, as desired by the bird, the necessaries of life with the remainder of the money and came home. The bird now calling the wood-cutter's wife spoke, "Mother dear, you can manage with the provisions for the month and by the end of that time I shall have earned much money." The wood-cutter's wife and the wood-cutter, in the absence of a strong cage, watched the bird, since the time it was brought from school, night and day with great care as before; and when the day fixed by the goldsmith came, the wood-cutter and the parrot repaired to the goldsmiths' street, and immediately the goldsmith brought in the cage. The parrot was greatly pleased with it, and asked his parent, the wood-cutter, to pay up the balance due on a betel-leaf; and the goldsmith observing the respect he was paid, refused to receive any more money, but the bird begged of him to accept it for his labour or trouble, which he did eventually after much persuasion. The bird now installed

itself in the cage, and told the wood-cutter to lock him in and take him home. On reaching home the parrot called the wood-cutter's wife and said, "Mother dear, just look how this cage is made, so beautiful, so nice, so secure. There's now no danger to apprehend from cats and dogs." The next morning it called its father and spoke, "Father dear, take a large and broad sheet of white cloth, and carrying me to the Chowk, spread the cloth and set me down." The wood-cutter did as was advised, and the bird, now raising a lofty voice, began singing wonderful songs unheard of before, with such effect and feeling that the populace rushed in crowds to the place where the parrot was, and began to listen with rapt attention, and exclaiming, bravo! at intervals. The populace admired the talents displayed by the bird in the histrionic art, as well as the explanations he gave of the snatches of song, and poured out gold *mohurs*, rupees and silver pieces without stint. These in a few hours came to thousands of rupees, and the bird now spoke to the wood-cutter, "Father dear, remove the cloth, collect the money, and carry me home." The wood-cutter, as was required of him, gathered together the moneys with a heart full of joy, and taking the bird, reached home and showed the moneys earned to his wife. The wife was astonished, saying in an awestruck whisper "What! So much money earned in a few hours!" She

went to the bird and pressed it to her bosom tenderly, while the Parrot spoke, "Father and Mother dear, there's now no lack of anything for many a year to come."

The next day also, the wood-cutter, at the bidding of the parrot, went to the Chowk, and spreading the cloth on the ground, placed the cage on it, when immediately the bird began to sing wonderful songs as yesterday, and people from all parts of the Chowk rushed in an immense throng to the spot and were held spell-bound by harmonies of sounds, as much by the newness of the themes as by the masterly spirit in which some of the snatches of songs were explained or rendered, and threw gold *mohurs*, rupees and silver coins of every value by way of reward.

While the crowd was still there undispersed, the young Prince happened to return home from school through the Chowk way, and seeing a vast concourse of people, he stopped with a view to ascertain what was the matter. They people immediately cleared the way for him, and the Prince advancing straightway, came to where the crowd was densest and saw the songster. The bird who was not singing at the moment, at once recognized the Prince, and calling him a sot, enquired what business he had there. The Prince was covered with confusion at the insult offered him in the

presence of so many people, and, immediately leaving the place, reached home duly engulfed in sorrow, vowing "I will starve the parrot, and kill it as soon as I become possessed of it."

While the Prince was vowing thus in his heart of hearts in his parental home, the wood-cutter winding up his business at the Chowk for the day, reached home with the parrot. The earnings of the day were more than double those of yesterday, and the parrot, inviting the wood-cutter's attention to it, spoke. "Father dear, we have sufficient funds to last for years. Now call in the best architects, masons, and workmen and build a castle for us." The wood-cutter gave effect to the bird's wishes, and the architects, masons and workmen came and laid the foundation of the building in an auspicious hour. The Prince still breathing vengeance went to his father and spoke thus :— "Father dear, there is a wood-cutter in the country. He has a parrot. I want you to buy it for me."

"Why? Why do you want it?" asked the King.

"I want it" replied the son. "If I don't get it, I will not live, I will put an end to my life."

The Prince being the only son and darling child, the King was prevailed upon to bid the minister to send for the wood-cutter.

Now the parrot had means of knowing the private affairs of men, and coming to know about the King's order, he called the wood-cutter and said that such and such a man would call on him, and take him before the King ; the King would ask him to part with the parrot for a price, but that he was to say that he would not part with it for less than the two treasuries, named ' Rama and Laksman ', and that after speaking so much, he was to keep quiet, and for the rest the bird would manage. The wood-cutter mentally noted what was told him, and, in the meantime, arrived the messenger from the King, requiring the wood-cutter's immediate presence before His Majesty the King. The woodcutter, in obedience to the message, came to the Royal Court. At the time the King was holding a levee, and as soon as the levee was over, he entered the throne room and ordered the wood-cutter into his presence. The wood-cutter made his appearance, and prostrated himself before the King, leaving the cage before the throne. Suddenly the parrot fluttered its wings ' rup, rup, ' and drooped its head : in other words it pretended to be dying. The Prince was standing by the side of the King at the time, and the King turning to him asked " Is this the parrot you want ? "

" Yes father ", replied the son.

" It is already half-way to Yamaloka ", said he.

"No father, no, it is simply pretending. You do not know what a cunning bird it is."

The King now looking at the parrot, asked "Well, parrot. Are you going to die?"

Instantly the parrot, as if aroused from a day-dream, lifted up its neck, and clapping its wings, showed signs of vitality, and reverentially bowing unto the King, spoke in a clear human voice. "No, King. Oh no. I was simply pretending."

Greatly astonished, the King turned to the wood-cutter and asked what price he would take for the parrot. "If it is not displeasing to your Majesty I will speak," said the wood-cutter. "Say on, don't be afraid."

"Unless I be given the two treasures 'Rama and Lakshman' I shall not part with my parrot."

"Hardly had these words emanated from the lips of the wood-cutter than the King turned pale and reflected in his mind, "when we give away these treasures, we shall turn beggars". Casting a look at his son he bade the wood-cutter begone, adding that he would send for him in due time. In the evening he paid a visit to his queen, and in the course of his conversation spoke:—"Just look, our Prince is greatly desirous of buying a parrot for which the owner wants our treasures 'Rama and Lakshman'. When we part with these treasures how shall

we live in the world ?" The queen listened, and with tears in her eyes, said in a mild tone :— " He is our only son. Let him have his heart's desire. You can send for the man and buy the parrot for the Prince. If God spares our lives, we shall replenish the treasures in the course of a year or two."

The King acquiesced, and very soon ordered the wood-cutter into his presence. The wood-cutter came, and the King entered into an agreement with him to deliver his two treasures 'Rama and Lakshman' and to receive in return the parrot from the wood-cutter. So according to the terms of the agreement, the King received the parrot, who on leaving its foster-parents, expressed himself thus :— " Father dear, mother dear, you must not be sorry on my account. I shall soon return to you after doing untold good to the Prince. With the wealth you acquire, you will be able to live like royal personages, with every facility, comfort, servants and all. So the wood-cutter, now being permitted to remove the treasures, brought a long line of carts and removed them to his residence. The Prince, in due course, receiving the parrot from his father, spoke to the bird as follows :—" Birdie, I will have my revenge on you for the insults you have offered me. You have come into my possession. I will starve you to death, and be satisfied." But the parrot spoke not a word. It simply

put on an attitude of meditation : it was praying to God. The Prince, true to his word, gave no food or drink to the bird on the first day, gave no food or drink on the second day, gave nothing on the third day, on the fourth day, on the fifth day, on the sixth day, on the seventh day. On the eighth day it was languishing.

Now all about the place, there spread the rumour that the King had purchased a parrot, giving as its price the two treasuries 'Rama and Lakshman,' and the people were wondering what must be the merits of the bird, and were eagerly desirous of seeing it. The rumour spread in the palace also, and the King's concubine sent word to the Prince to send the parrot at noon, as she wanted to make its acquaintance. The Prince deferred sending it from day to day for seven days, and on the eighth day reflected on this wise, "The message has been coming from my step-mother, for the parrot for the last eight days, every day exactly at noon and the bird itself is now dying. Moreover it is now four o'clock, so let me send it ; and resolution thus formed, the prince went to the parrot and spoke, "I want to send you to my step-mother with the cage. Will you go ?" "There is no use of sending me with the cage," replied the bird.

"Then I will have your wings clipped and send you."

"I will go there in a trice and return."

"But you will fly away."

"No, Prince. No, I assure you I will not fly away. I will be your saviour and benefactor nay, obtain for you, the pleasures of the world."

Hearing which, the prince opened the cage and let off the bird.

Now the King's concubine had been carrying on with the Minister, and four o'clock is the time in which her paramour kept company with her in her palace. The parrot, as soon as it was let off, came staggering and sat in the window of the palace, and what did it see?—The king's concubine and the minister holding a tête-a-tête without any regard to propriety. The King's concubine and the Minister at once inferred that that was the bird the Prince was to send, and greatly agitated in their minds, reflected that it would reveal their secret amours to to its master the Prince, who would in turn reveal to the King who would as a matter of fact, put them to death for their criminal doings. While they were confabulating as to how to avoid the impending castastrophe, the parrot returned to the Prince. He was overjoyed to see it back: he immediately gave it food and drink and asked its pardon for his past inhumane treatment, and seeing that it was in a good frame of mind, enquired, "What is the news, birdie?"

"Nothing" said the bird. "You will come to know of it ere long."

In the night the King went to the concubine's palace and knocked at the door. A servant-maid appeared. He asked her, 'How is your Mistress?', and receiving a reply that she was unwell, he entered the apartment without announcing himself and what did he see?—His lady-love presented a sorrowful figure: all the bangles on the wrist were broken, glass scratches about the face, hands and breast were perceptible, and cloth about the chest, torn. The role which the concubine was playing, was the plan which she and her treacherous lover had formed in order to convict the innocent Prince of guilt. Pitying her condition, the King asked her, "What's the matter?" "What may I say?" said she, rising with an effort from her cot on which she was lying. "You seem to have a wonderful son. In the evening the Prince entered my apartment, and made unlawful proposals. I treated them with disdain, and the consequence was that I was subjected to this treatment. Was it right on the part of your son to behave thus towards one who stood to him in the relation of a mother?" The King on hearing this startling revelation, grew furious and hardly had the day dawned than he issued a decree, ordering that gallows be erected and tom-tom beaten to let people know of the execution that was to take place of the

Prince in expiation of the crime he had committed. Accordingly gallows was erected and the tom-tom beat, and people assembled in numbers. The Prince was ordered to make ready to march to the gallows. On receiving this order the Prince was dumbfounded, as he could not recollect the crime he had committed for which he was to suffer the world's scandalous form of punishment, that of hanging on the gibbet, proclaiming guilt before heaven, earth and men even after parting with precious life. Instantly calling his parrot he asked "What is this, parrot dear? My life to forfeit for no fault of mine." "You are innocent. You are innocent. I know," said the bird. "I have known all this beforehand. Don't you lose heart. Act up to my advice and you will be saved. Now listen. When you come out of the palace with a view to march to the place of execution, you will see a pure white steed grazing on the palace-lawn. It is a celestial animal. Ask the man in whose charge you will be, that you may be permitted to ride on the steed, averring that you are not able to go to the place on foot. When this request is granted, for I believe that this request will not be set at nought, ask that you may be permitted to carry your pet-bird, that is myself with you, giving as the reason that you don't wish to be separated from your parrot during the few hours that you will have your being in this world. This

request also will be granted. The steed will first of all cover some distance, and then soar heavenward and disappear, and after a while, descend into a country, where we shall begin our life anew without coming by any danger." As stated by the parrot, the Prince, when he got down from the palace and walked a few steps, saw a pearly white steed grazing on the palace-lawn. He asked his keeper's permission to ride on that animal, averring that he was not able to walk the distance. The request was granted. After a time, he requested that he be permitted to carry his parrot, as he did not wish to be separated from it during the few hours he was to live on this earth. This request was also granted. Now the steed, after covering some distance in a slow manner, began, all of a sudden, to soar heavenward with the Prince and the parrot—people's attention being riveted to it, and in the twinkling of an eye, he mounted the highest aerial regions and disappeared from sight; and in due course, made a descent into another country, where the party installed themselves in an inn. The inn keeper was a old garrulous lady. Soon after the meals were over, the Prince interrogated her, "O Grand Ma', O Grand Ma'. Who is the king reigning in the country? What are the topics of the place?"

"Such and such a king is reigning in the country", replied she "but what topics may I

give you? The principal topic is, that the king of the country has a charming daughter. He had a separate palace built for her, and is keeping her there. I carry flowers to the Princess every day. One who is solicitous of winning her hand, should go to the palace and ring the bell by way of announcement, and a maid in attendance on the Princess, appears and hands over to him a casket of crushed pearls. The condition on which the Princess may be won is that the pearls should be made whole or turned into their pristine state as veritable pearls. Many young and rich princes before you were anxious to win the sweet lady, but failed, and how could it be otherwise? Who will be able to make crushed pearls whole? Moreover the habit of the whimsical king is to weigh his daughter, the Princess, against five flowers every alternate morning." The Prince listened to this narration with rapt attention, and immediately was lost in pensiveness, and the parrot observing his crestfallen face enquired, "Father dear, why are you sorrowful? Don't give way to distress like this. Listening to what the old woman had said, you long to have the Princess. Well, you shall have the Princess with the aid of my brother, the celestial steed. Now don't give way to distress anymore."

The following morning the Princess took a bath, and taking her seat on a golden chair on

the terrace of the palace, was drying her long ringlets of jet-black hair, when the parrot came and sat before her gazing eyes. The Princess, admiring the extreme beauty of the bird, asked one of her servant-maids to catch it. The maid went to catch the parrot. It dodged. Again, she went to catch. Again it dodged and spoke to the Princess, "There is no use of your servant catching me. You must try to catch me yourself." Upon which, the Princess rose from her seat to catch the bird. It dodged. Again, she went to catch with great eagerness. Again it dodged. Thus dodging by sitting here, by setting there, the parrot of its own accord, came and sat on the Princess' shoulder and joined its lips with hers. The Princess in turn pressing it to her breast most tenderly impressed one thousand and one kisses and asked, "Parrot dear, who are the parents that brought you up?" "My parents are celestials but my present parent is a Prince more beautiful than yourself. I do not suppose he will take a liking for you. But I dare say that, if you were to see him once, you would not like to be parted from him for life," replied the bird. Upon which the Princess asked where his lodging was. "We are putting up in the inn close to your palace," replied the Bird "and I suppose he may ring the bell and announce himself as all the Princes have done in the past.

Well, with the view that you may distinguish him, I shall bring my father here to night."

"That is quite impossible: my palace is well guarded by my father's retainers."

"Nay, believe me, it is quite possible for we shall come by the skies. I have your permission to bring him, I suppose."

"Yes. I shall be very happy to receive him."

In the night, when all the people had gone to sleep, the parrot said to the Prince, "Father dear, now ride on your steed. We shall go down to the palace."

Now all round the palace, sentries were mounting guard, and there was bustle and commotion also, but the Prince and the parrot riding on the celestial animal, noiselessly descended on the terrace in the middle of the night. The steed stood, and they entered the palace with light steps. The Princess immediately awoke from her sleep, and with love already inflamed in her breast, she embraced the Prince who stood before her, and modestly asked him how he had come into the country, and whether pleasure or business had brought him. The Prince satisfied her on the point, and he, in his turn, asked how she had come to know about him. "That garrulous but pretty parrot of yours has been telling me all about you" added she. After which they conversed freely and found pleasure in each other's company and a

few hours before leaving her, the Prince said. "My love, to-morrow I will ring the bell, going to send crushed pearls are you as usual?" "No, My Lord. I shall send you whole pearls," replied the Princess, and they parted with expressions of regret for the time being.

In the morning the Prince went to the palace, and rang the bell. Immediately a servant-maid appeared and put in his hand a casket of pearls; receiving which, he returned to his lodging and what was his surprise to find the pearls whole, not crushed. The Princess fulfilled her promise so kindly that the Prince went to the palace in the night and thanked her most cordially.

Again the next morning the Prince went to the palace and sent in the casket of pearls. The Princess opening it before her companions, exclaimed in a shrill tone, "These are veritable whole pearls. I must acquaint my parents of it." In the meantime, the king came to weigh the Princess against flowers but the Princess already advanced with the casket and said, "Father dear, some Prince was here yesterday to ring the bell. We gave him the casket of crushed pearls. Today he brings them whole. Here they are." The king opened the casket and found to his surprise the pearls whole, upon which he enquired who the Prince was. "He is a Prince from a remote country. It is not known who he is, Your Majesty," replied one of the Princess's companions.

Again he asked "What is his parentage?" "I plead my ignorance of it, Your Majesty," spoke the companion. "Then I am not going to give my daughter to him."

Whereupon, the Princess became sorrowful unto shedding tears, yet she could not, for fear, express her feelings. The secret visits of the Prince to her all the same became constant, and to add to her anxiety she was weighed against flowers, and was found not lighter than the prescribed number of flowers put in the balance against her weight, for how could the young lady be lighter, despite her seemingly undisturbed face while she kept company? The father had his doubts, but he remained inexorable in not permitting the marriage to be performed, though his daughter gently hinted once or twice. She informed the Prince of this state of things, and afraid as she was, because of her having conceived, she and the Prince put their heads together and determined to flee the country as a last resource. So one day the Princess made every thing ready; and in the night the Prince came, and putting her on the celestial steed and attaching the faithful parrot to the animal's neck, he himself took his seat, mounted the skies, and was high up in the aerial regions where Varuna reigns supreme.

On the dizzy heights of cloudland from which no land was seen, and from where, look where

you will, you see nothing but the wide, wide sea and the green saltish brine, the Princess felt thirsty and hungry, and the Prince, espying a far off island, alighted thereon with the Princess and the parrot attached to the steed's neck; and after giving the exhausted Princess refreshments and water and taking some himself he went to sleep.

Now in the night, while they were sleeping a heavy squall came. The waves rose to a man's height and the sea overflowed its waters. The steed, seeing the dangers of the island being submerged under the current, rose in the air, leaving the couple in a critical situation. Poor creatures! imagine their trepidation and dismay when the waters, with one sweep of unparalleled velocity, rushed on the unfortunate souls in the pitch dark night while they were embraced in the arms of sleep. In their eager search for some object to catch hold of to save themselves from a watery grave, they, as good luck would have it, found a spar of wood to which they clung and the current carried them along, until a large wave broke on them and separated them from each other. The Prince was carried by the raging current to a distant shore, while the Princess was conveyed to another country and thrown upon the beach in an unconscious state. An old woman, of a morning came to the sea-side to gather firewood and seeing a lady of great beauty lying, took

her home, tended her, brought her to life, and looked after her comforts. There was a young king at the time reigning in the country. Going to the palace one day, the old woman informed the King of her having found, some days back, on the sea-beach, a lady of queenly beauty, probably a Princess who, she said, was staying with her. Rewarding the old woman, the king ordered that the lady should be brought into the palace, where he was so allured by her unexaggerated beauty, that he at once expressed a wish to marry her. "No such thing, Sir;" said the Princess "for six months on account of certain vows. On the expiration of which, you have my consent to carry out your wish." Now the habit of the Princess was to get up very early in the morning, throw different sorts of fruits and scatter different seeds of grain on the palace-terrace so that the birds of the air might be attracted to the spot to eat the fruits and grain thereof, her idea being that the Prince's parrot might be induced thus to come over there, in the company of her species.

We must now go to the Prince. Poor Prince, as has already been said, was carried away by the force of the current to a distant country where he secured services under a *Maniara* on consideration of meals and an insignificant pay. His business was to hawk about the place for the vend of eatables stuffed with chillies during the day and return in the evenings.

His clothes had become shabby for want of wherewithal to buy a second suit. As regards the steed and the parrot: they alighted in a different country, and the king of the country being struck with the nobility of the animal, walked straight up and caught hold of him, and removing the parrot-cage from the neck, tethered the horse in his stable-yard. The animal would not allow a groom to come near it, and the king himself, at stated times, had green grass and water carried with him and himself would place them before him.

Some days after, the king ordered that the parrot cage should be washed entire and while a servant was so washing it by turning it upside down, the parrot flew and quickly going near the celestial animal, and whispering in its ear to be strict even with the king as hitherto, it mounted the skies. From that day its habit was to fly at day time to distant countries in search of its mother—the Princess—and return when the evening shades prevailed to the steed to pass the night chatting with him. Thus it traversed almost all the countries—near and distant—for two or three months in the search and almost despaired of securing success, when one day, in one of its random flights in one of the directions, it happened to fall in with a large number of its species on the wing. It also went with them and alighted on a palace-terrace, and what was its delight to find the

object of her search—its mother the Princess—watching all the parrots with interest ; when all the birds had departed, it came near the Princess and gently perched on her shoulder, and immediately the Princess recognizing the parrot, cried bitterly.

“ Please don’t be sorry. Don’t give way to grief like this. Be not broken-hearted. There will be sun-shine. There will be brighter times hereafter. I shall now be in search of father, and find out where he is, in the meantime please don’t lose heart. After finding father I will come here with the steed, and take you away from the clutches of the king, only be patient till then.” Speaking thus the parrot flew away and from that day it began revisiting country after country in search of the Prince for a considerable time, but no trace of him was found, and the parrot half persuaded itself to give up the search as futile, when one noon it took an aimless flight to a country which it had visited twice or thrice before and feeling tired, perched on a tree. Under the self same tree, there was the object of its search, the veritable Prince ; who, after hawking about the palace in the noonday sun, was taking a siesta, the remaining unsold pastries, eatables, chillies fried in oil, being close by him. The parrot looked at the man in rags and tatters intently for a moment, and immediately gave out a cry of delight exclaiming, ‘ My father,

my father.' The man awoke and sat up, and the parrot now perching on his shoulder, kissed him and at once the former recollections, one after the other, rushed to his mind, and he suddenly exclaimed as if he had gone mad, 'Son dear. How did you manage to find me?' The bird replied, "I was in search of you, father, and travelled in all the countries, and was on the eve of giving up the search as fruitless, when I now luckily come upon you. I have already found mother. She is in a distant country, kept in the palace of the king of the country, who evinced a desire to marry her, and she refused, and asked him to wait for six months as she had to perform certain vows—and this is a subterfuge employed to put off marriage." When asked by the bird as to what he was doing, the Prince replied :— "I am engaged as a servant under the *Maniara* for meals and a trifle. There are no spare clothes to put on nor have I the wherewithal to purchase them," Whereupon the bird spoke, "Now when you go to your master, tell him in plain language, that you won't work under him unless he gives you five rupees a month. He will, I prognosticate, put you on that pay. Now work on the pay for two months, saving a good deal from it. I will return after the two months and take you with me."

True to its word, the Parrot came after the lapse of two months, and the first question it put

the Prince was "What have you saved, father?" "Six rupees" was the reply." "Now let's go to the tailor," said the parrot and off they went, and forthwith ordered a plain suit of clothes and a groom's livery. They went to the tailor next day and got dresses, and after the Prince had taken leave of the *Maniara*, both set out for the country where the steed was. And after walking and walking for a number of days, they reached the outskirts of the country, where the parrot told the Prince to exchange his dress for that of the groom, and ask the king for work on reaching the palace. The Prince complied, and they both came to the gateway of the palace where the parrot left him, and going to the steed, quietly spoke in his ears, "Our father has come here in a groom's dress soliciting employment. When you first see him, pretend to kick and bite, and neigh terribly. In other words, show yourself rowdy and then be quieted. He will feed you, water you, scrub you till such time that he finds an opportunity to take you from the place for the rescue of the Princess who is in a king's palace in a distant country." The king, as soon as he heard that a groom was waiting at the gateway for service, sent for him at once and asked whether he would look after an unmanageable steed. "Oh yes," replied the pseudo-groom. Upon which the king enquired what wages he would demand. "One rupee a

day," was the reply. The king agreed to pay, and the man's services were engaged; and when the new groom went before the steed for the first time, it looked at him fiercely and neighing vigorously, began to kick and bite and break the rope with which it was tethered, and the other grooms thought that the last day of the new groom had arrived. But after a while, the steed became quite quiet and the groom placed before it green grass and water, and moreover began to scrub it with impunity at which the king's other grooms were really astonished. Every day the king used to pay the groom his wages. The groom also used to be interested in his work: he allowed the steed, what to the outside world looked like complete freedom for a few days, then he began to ride on it bareback, and lastly practised riding on it with saddle on in the palace precincts, and when this was continued for a few days, the groom begged permission that the steed be taken outside for a long ride with saddle on, and the permission was given. So the steed was brought out of the palace stables, and the supposed groom rode on it with the saddle when it, like a highly vicious animal, raised its forefeet skyward, and again touching the ground with the feet, it began to move backward and forward in such a restless manner as to make the rider lose his hold or equilibrium for a while.

Then he began to rise upwards, and the simple king thought that the supposed groom would be killed. He did not know that the steed was a celestial animal, and would be in its element when it went up. In due time, the steed disappeared or vanished out of sight, and the parrot joining it, the trio now came down into the country where the Prince was encamped in a mangoe-tope close by the river-bank. Immediately the parrot ran to the palace and entering the Princess' chamber informed her: "Mother dear, Father has come with the steed to rescue you. Tomorrow you send word to the king that you will perform your vows, and that before marrying him, you would like to give a dinner in the evening to all the inhabitants of the place, and the dinner will be served out by you." She did as was advised, and the king, overjoyed at the immediate prospect of connubial bliss with the sweetest of princesses, immediately ordered that all the brass-vessels, utensils etc., should be taken to the riverbank, and very soon the cooking operations began. In the evening, the Princess came and expressed a wish to take a bath in the river before serving out the meals. The king granted her wish, and she taking her bath, served out the meals to each and every one and, espying a beautiful steed on the other side of the river, longed to ride on it. The king at once despatched a

messenger to the owner of the steed to enquire whether he would give his steed on hire.

"Yes" replied the Prince, and this was what he expected; so when the steed was brought in, the Princess began to be afraid to ride the animal and hence asked the owner to gently put her up on the steed's back. The pretended owner did so. Again she pretended to be afraid, and again asked the owner to sit at her back. He obeyed, and the steed now cantered to some distance, and then all of a sudden began to rise from the ground as if by superhuman power and was in the welkin. The king seeing this phenomenon, gave out a yell, and exclaiming broken-heartedly, "You're gone, you're gone from me" gave up the ghost. The Prince with the Princess and the parrot came on the steed to his fatherland, where his mother was well nigh unto death, and the father keeping indifferent health and continually brooding over his being the cause of his only son's disappearance from the country, and the same attributable to his having lent an easy ear to the hearsay of his concubine; and when the news was imparted to the king and the queen, that their only son had arrived, their delight knew no bounds. The father at once got up from his bed in spite of infirmities and embraced his son, and asked pardon for the evil he had done unto him in an inauspicious hour, listening to the slander of his concubine. The mother,



. and then all of a sudden began to rise from the ground as if by super human power and was in the welkin. (See page 96.)

despite her dangerous condition, fell on the Prince's neck and alternately wept and kissed him, and also kissed the Princess and enquired how things had been with him, ill or well, since the time he left the place under the most painful circumstances. The Prince narrated how, mounting the celestial steed by the kind advice of his faithful parrot, he got down in a country with those friends and lived there; how ardently he aspired to the hand of the Princess of the country with success through the instrumentality of the Parrot, and how he had to flee from the country with the Princess, her father not consenting to the union; how he alighted from his steed on an uninhabited island, where overnight the sea overflowed and the furious element carried them away where it willed, the Princess going to one country and he to another, and how for a long time, during which he served in a menial capacity, for meals; how a reunion with the Princess took place, all this was attributable to his constant friends the Parrot and the Steed; and how he lastly came to his mother country. The Queen listened to all this revelation with mingled sorrow and surprise and said in a feeble tone, "They are now things of the past. Now the Princess and yourself are to be united by the sacred rites of marriage", and immediately consulting her husband, despatched fast running couriers to the land of the Princess, inviting the

king and the queen to come and witness their daughter's marriage with the Prince. They came. The preparations were already made, the pandal towering the skies was already put up; so was the mud platform, as big as the earth itself, called into existence, and need it be said, that the bridal of the Prince and the Princess was celebrated with great eclat and pomp, all the people assembled ratifying the contract by throwing turmeric-coloured rice on the bride and the bridegroom when the Tali was tied. In due course the Prince was crowned and he reigned in the country with justice and firmness. Now as regards the concubine, she was thrown into a burning lime-kiln; the steed went to Indraloka and the parrot to the wood-cutter who hailed its arrival with genuine pleasure.

The Two Princess and their Sister

In a country there was a poor woman. She had three daughters. The woman, her husband having died, was serving in the King's palace in a menial capacity. One day, a fairy, taking the shape of an old woman, came to the woman's house to beg. The eldest and the second girl took no notice of her, but the youngest, who was of a kind-hearted disposition, at once sent word to her mother to bring some delicious food when she returned. Accordingly

the mother on her return brought some delicious food which the youngest girl served to the fairy and made her eat. The fairy ate heartily and when she rose to go, called the three girls and blessed them.

Now in the evening, as was their wont, the girls came out dressed, and after arranging their paraphernalia, began to walk in the garden at the back of their house, and while they were picking some jessamines, the fairy made them each think on different things.

"In case I marry a ship's captain I shall stitch a sail for my husband's vessel with my own hands and neatly keep his home," spoke the eldest girl. "In case I marry a King, I shall bring forth a boy and decorate my husband's house with decorations of my own designing," spoke the second girl. "In case I marry a Prince," spoke the third girl, "I shall bring forth two children—a boy and a girl. The boy will have a golden chain on his neck and the girl two stars on her forehead."

While the girls were talking thus, a ship's captain passed by and overhearing the conversation, stopped short, but could not for bashfulness go there and then and speak out his mind; and now from another direction, came a King and a Prince evidently returning from an hunting expedition, and they, too, hearing the conversation and seeing the girls, brought their

"Yes" replied she in a low tone putting down her head out of bashfulness. The King now asked the second girl, "Are you going to marry me, a King?" "Yes" replied she in a low tone hanging down her head.

The Prince at last, asked the youngest girl "Are you going to marry a Prince?" "Yes" replied she, in an undertone with her face to the ground. Accordingly the ship-captain, the King and the Prince took with them the respective girls and married, taking care beforehand to remind the brides of their declaration in the garden. The eldest girl, who married the captain, as she had declared, made a sail for her husband's vessel and neatly kept his house. The second girl who married the King as declared, decorated his house with decorations of her own designing and was well nigh in the family way, the declaration about to be fulfilled in its entirety. The youngest girl, who married the Prince, advanced in pregnancy also and waited so that her declaration might be fulfilled.

In the meantime the ship-captain's wife became extremely jealous of her sisters' situa-

tion in life and of the declarations they had made ; and when she came to know that they were *enciente*, her jealousy reached the highest point. She fully made up her mind to disappoint them, and then upbraided them for not fulfilling the declaration they made to their husbands. With this end in view, the captain's wife repeated her visits to her sisters and would enquire of them with seeming kindness, 'How are you ?' 'How do you feel ?' The girls were taken in, and fully trusted their eldest sister, and one day, the King's wife enquired of her sister, 'How do women in the world bring forth children ?' 'I had better not explain the mystery, young as you are, but I must tell you that their eyes are bandaged preparatory to their confinement' replied the sister, and the simpleton believed the words. When the days of confinement drew near, the captain's wife was ready at the palace with a wooden block, and when she saw that her sister was in labour, she bandaged her eyes. The girl brought forth a male child, and the captain's wife, sorely afraid that the declaration would be fulfilled, had the child at once removed by her confidential maid-servant and ordered it to be thrown into the sea. In its place, the wooden-block, wrapped in swaddling clothes, was put by the side of the mother, whose eye-bandage was now removed and the block shown with the words 'Here it is, the child you have brought forth.'

The inexperienced mother believed the words of her sister.

A few hours after, the Princess, also began to suffer from the pangs of maternity, and she immediately sent word to her eldest sister to come over and see that she was safely delivered. The captain's wife immediately came, taking care to bring with her with the greatest privacy, two pups, a he-one with white stripes on the neck, and a she-one with red spots close to the eyes, which her husband had brought quite recently from a distant country. The wily woman's first concern was to bandage the eyes of the girl, who after a long travail brought forth twins, a boy with a golden chain on the neck and a girl with two stars on the forehead, in accordance with the declaration made. Immediately the dark room where the confinement took place was resplendently lit up, and the captain's wife in great trepidation, had the infants removed with all possible haste by her confidential maid-servant and ordered to be thrown into the sea, and in their place had the two pups substituted. This over, she had the bandage loosened from the girl's eyes and pointing to the pups, spoke sarcastically 'You have not fulfilled your declaration. You have brought forth these two pups!'. With these words, she left the Princess with great cheerfulness of mind, but the girl was engulfed

in sorrow for the non-fulfilment of her declaration.

Now news of his wife's confinement had already reached the Prince in the forest where he was hunting, and he with great haste returned to his capital to see his new-born babies. Hardly had he reached his wife's chambers than he saw his sister-in-law come forward and crack a joke with him, that his wife had brought forth two beautiful pups! Upon which the Prince's anger knew no bounds. The King, for bringing forth a wooden block did no injury to his wife, except that he spoke not a word with her, nor had he anything to do with her after that event. He simply left her in the palace where she was, supplied with the necessaries of life. It was not so with the Prince. He was a man of hasty temper; for, as soon as he heard the sarcastic words of his sister-in-law, he flew into a great passion, and at once ordered that the two pups brought forth by his wife should be chained and buckled on to her neck, and that the girl be removed near the gates of the palace where there was a discarded building, and that remnants of food be thrown to her and to her puppies. The order was given effect to, and the girl passed a considerable number of years in great misery.

Now as regards the fate of the three infants. The captain's wife's confidential maid-servant

was ordered to throw the infants into the sea, but the woman pitied the poor innocents, and so making a wicker basket, she put them in after duly covering them with warm clothes, and let it float in the sea, calling on Heaven to witness that the guilt was not hers, showering imprecations on her mistress' head at the same time for playing such dire mischief towards helpless things. The moment the wicker basket was consigned to the waters to the care of all-pervading Providence, the old fairy whom the girl, who married the Prince, treated so kindly in her parental home, now came, taking the shape of a huge vulture and spreading out her broad wings, shielded the infants from the scorching rays of the sun. This was her duty during the day; but at night she would bring the basket to the shore, and, going to the village, bring milk and feed the infants with it. Thus with great care she brought them up for four months.

One day a rich country merchant who had no children, and who performed all sorts of ceremonies and observed every sort of vow to get offspring but in vain, left his shores to go to another country for purposes of trade and his vessel came to where the basket was floating. The fairy bird seeing the vessel approach, flew off intentionally, so that the basket with its charge might be exposed to the full gaze of the merchant. The merchant, as was expected by the fairy, saw it at once, anchored his vessel,

and taking in the basket, and producing out of it the beautiful infants, exclaimed, "Here are direct gifts of God vouchsafed unto me in a mysterious manner", and at once sailed back to his country, and reaching home, called his wife and spoke: "Darling, God has given us gifts. Here they are—these three infants of great resplendence whom I have not expected in this life. Treat them as your own children." The merchant's wife accordingly tended the infants most carefully, feeding them with milk for a considerable number of months, till such time that they began to eat rice.

It so happened one day that the merchant's wife began to comb the hair of the girl whom she regarded as her daughter, and in place of hair coming off she found pearls dropping from the head! The pearls were very valuable ones and the merchant, who was no loser for having brought up the infants, one of whom was yielding such an harvest of precious shells, in truth, gave up his trade in merchandise and became a pearl-merchant and the richest man in the country. Day after day, the merchant and his wife were delighted to see the children, and not a day passed without their kissing them, petting them and showing every endearment to them. In fact, they looked upon them as their own children without the least difference. The merchant gave the boys education, and made

them take lessons in athletic sports. Furthermore he purchased for them two noble steeds, and when they attained to the age of seven years, they got permission of the merchant to go and shoot ; and availing themselves of the permission, they would go into the jungle at noon and return in the evenings with the spoils of the chase. Thus the brothers passed their time.

One day, while the boys were away at the chase, and their sister was in her room, the merchant and his wife began to speak amongst themselves privately and in an undertone in this manner : " Suppose the children were to come to know that we are not their real parents, they might ask of us naturally to be permitted to go in search of their parents. In such a case we do not know how we would make up our minds to grant them leave, so fond are we of them. We do not know how we will pass our time without them." While they were thus conversing, the girl came into the room all of a sudden, overheard the conversation, and immediately her face fell and, as soon as her brothers returned from hunting, she called them near and spoke : " Brothers, I have come to know the real secret. We thought that the merchant and his wife were our parents, but they are not. They merely brought us up from our infancy. We, therefore, must ask them the truth in the matter.

If they say that we are not their real children but adopted, then we must find out our parents." Accordingly the brothers and sister went to the merchant and his wife and addressed them: "Father dear, mother dear. Tell us whether we are your own children or adopted ones"; and immediately the old pair's countenance fell; and after a pause, they made the children sit on their laps and imprinting soft kisses on their cheeks said: "Dear children we will tell you the truth. For many, many years we had no children. We observed many vows and performed ceremonies and built many caravanserais and done many charitable deeds, but God did not bless us with any issue. For two years we concentrated our thoughts on the All-powerful. One day I, in my capacity as merchant, set out with merchandise for another country for the purpose of trade, and after a few days' voyage I saw in the mid-ocean, a wicker basket and a large vulture shielding it from the sun. When my vessel came near, the bird flew and I cast anchor and took in the basket; and what was my astonishment and delight to find in it three infants of great beauty. Accepting these gifts from God, I turned back to my country without a moment's delay and delivered them to your mother who, in fact, brought you up so tenderly. So you see we are not your real parents. In case

you wish to go in search of your parents, I shall have a vessel constructed and victualled, and you will be permitted to go and find out your parents." True to his word the merchant ordered the building of a ship, the seats to be finely upholstered, appliances duly fitted, and taste and luxuriance shown in every detail ; and when it was victualled and everything ready, he sacrificed a blue pigeon and installed his three foster children in the ship, and soon the farewells were spoken with many a loving kiss and term of endearment and she set sail.

Now the fairy, the guardian angel of the royal children, had the course of the ship directed towards the country of their parents and, as soon as they reached the country and anchored their ship, she took the shape of a white pigeon and sitting on the shoulder of the girl and calling the boys, spoke in clear tones as follows:—

"My children. Do take my advice. I am the person that protected you when you were infants and thrown into the sea. There are still persons in the country who are intent on killing you all,—your mother's sister who had thrown you into the sea, and her servant woman, both of whom are still alive, will poison you all. Whatever edibles you are in need of, I shall supply to you ready hand but you are not to dine outside your ship. There are in the country, not far from each other,

the King, the father of the girl, and the Prince, the father of you two boys. When they see you they will be drawn towards you. First of all, they would be thunderstruck by your sudden arrival and majestic appearance, and take you for some much higher persons come into the country in disguise, but you can explain clearly to them that you belong to a royal family as they. The King and the Prince from the adjoining country will invite you to dinner. You will respond to the invitation, but you are not to touch the viands placed before you as poison will be mixed with same by your mother's sister. The wicked woman will thus see her way to encompass your death. In the course of a few days of your stay in the country, the Prince will kindly say 'Come and stay with me in the palace' upon which you can say that you would like to live in a separate castle. He will give you a separate castle where you can stay." The brothers listened to what the fairy had spoken, and things came to pass as she had predicted. At first they were considered to be much higher beings, but when it was known that they were only of royal blood, the neighbouring Prince and the King invited them in due time, and they barely escaped with their lives from being poisoned. The Prince gave them a castle, wherein the royal brothers and the sister stayed. The former

would, as hitherto, go to hunt in the forest and the latter, closing the doors, confined herself to her chamber in the castle. Thus were they safe from harm's way at the hands of the captain's wife, their mother's sister. But the wily woman hit upon a plan of bringing to destruction the two princes, and the plan was that she ordered her confidential servant-maid to go to the Princes' castle disguised as a beggar and sing near the castle, remarking, "You have a good voice and the Princess will listen, for she must have a taste for music, and what person in the world has not a taste for music? and at the finishing of your song she will send for you and ask you how you have come, to retain such a fine modulation of the voice still in spite of your advance in age, when you should answer by attributing that to your having drunk the dancing-water obtainable at a pool in a locality beyond the burning forest, and this will make her ask her brothers to get the dancing-water and they will perish in the attempt to get it." The maid did as was ordered. She went to the castle and sang one of her dulcet songs. The Princess listened to and was captivated by it, and calling the maid, she asked her how she had come to possess such a fine modulation of the voice in spite of her advance in age. The crafty servant-maid at once attributed that to her having tasted the dancing-water existing be-

yond the burning forest. The Princess on hearing the fact, dismissed the supposed beggar with presents and became uneasy and fretted about. And when the brothers returned, they enquired of her "What ails thee?"

"Nothing;" replied she, "what may I say? I am left alone, and you pursue your pleasures of the chase in the forest. There is no one to keep company with me. Moreover I have not a good voice to keep me engaged by singing to myself. I hear that there is a water called the dancing-water at a pool existing beyond the burning-forest. Any one drinking the water is sure to be improved in the voice." Listening to all this the eldest brother said: That is not a matter of great difficulty of acquirement. I shall try my best to get it for you." Accordingly he got up the next morning very early and saddling his horse, started off in the direction of the burning-forest and, after riding and riding, he reached the confines where the burning-forest begins, when he saw the same fairy in the shape of a pigeon lying on the ground as if dead. He immediately brought his horse to a stand still and took the bird up when lo! the bird came to life and informed the Prince of the dangers on the way that one meets with; and immediately began to fly ahead of the horse and face the fierce blaze. In due course, the rider, the horse and the pigeon came to the pool of the dancing-

water where, look wherever you will, you see nothing but myriads of human forms turned into black rocks. These were the men who went for the water and were petrified thus at the hands of the Giant in charge of the water without acquiring it. The Prince, without entertaining any fear, drank water himself, gave some to his thirsty animal and, filling a phial of it, directed his course homewards. The pigeon, as before, flew ahead of the horse till the confines of the burning-forest were reached when it took leave and disappeared; and the Prince, after a ride of a day or two, reached his castle and bade his sister bring a basin. The girl brought it, and he poured the contents of the phial into it; and she, without losing much time, tasted a little of the water, and soon observed a remarkable change in her voice.

The two Princes again, as hitherto, continued the pastime of chasing in the forest. And a few days after, in their absence as before, there came the captain's wife's confidential servant-maid to find out, at her mistress' order, whether the two young men had perished in the attempt. As before in the guise of a wandering beggar, she stood before the castle, and singing a song in her beautiful voice, asked for alms. The Princess opened her castle-door and called her in, and with candour or great openness of mind informed her of her eldest brother

having brought the dancing-water, which she produced. She also informed her of her having tasted some of it and that her voice greatly improved in consequence, and that she could sing most charmingly. The supposed beggar complimented the Princess on the acquisition of the dancing-water and, after receiving the usual alms left her and reported to her mistress that her design had failed, as the dancing-water had been brought and both the Princes were living without harm befalling them to the smallest extent. The captain's wife was extremely sorry, yet she thought of another plan and told her servant-maid to go to the Princess' castle and create in her mind a desire to possess the singing apple guarded by one hundred and one devils and growing on the tallest of trees reaching the skies, and lying beyond the burning-forest where, by magic, men have been turned into pillars of stone. 'This time,' the captain's wife added in conclusion, 'the Princes were sure to come to destruction.'

According to instructions the servant-maid, well versed in all the diplomatic arts of artifice, again went to the Princess' castle in her usual guise of an itinerant or strolling beggar and began to sing a charming song with great feeling, as only a woman can. The Princess, susceptible to the charms—and what man or woman is not susceptible to the charms of the

fine arts?—called her in, and exclaiming, ‘excellent, superb,’ herself sang a snatch of a romantic song as an evidence that her voice had greatly improved since she had tasted the dancing-water. The servant-maid nodded her head as a sign of approval, and looking round, slyly remarked: “The castle is complete in all respects but one. It has not the apple-fruit, the tree of which is not far off from where the dancing-water is, which is in close touch with the burning-forest. If it were to be hung up in the centre of the hall, it will sing melodious songs at all hours of day and night, and you will not be required to exert yourself by singing.” “Ah! Ah! Is that so?” said the Princess. When the brothers returned, she had a scowl on the face and kept to herself, and the elder Prince observing the visage and reticent manner, asked, “What’s the matter, sister?” “What may I say?” replied the Princess, “You both leave me and go away. I am immured here within the walls of the castle with the lifeless dancing-water for my companion. But I hear that there is an apple called the singing apple, the tree of which is not far off from where you brought the dancing-water. If you get that for me, I shall be very happy indeed. We both shall sing simultaneously and alternately and be jolly and not feel ennui.” Hardly had these words proceeded from the mouth of the girl than the younger

brother spoke. "You need not be anxious and fretful about it, sister. I tell you, I shall get you the thing within the course of a few days." And the next morning he got up early to go in search of the apple tree, and in the meantime his other brother awoke and saddled his horse and both set out. The elder brother thought of keeping his brother back and dissuaded him in every way, but he paying no heed to these expostulations followed his brother. When they approached the burning forest, the heat became appalling and the blaze or flames intolerable, and the younger Prince was almost scorched when luckily he saw on the ground a white pigeon cut up. He took it up in his hand, when behold! it came to life, and making itself known to him as the guardian angel of the family, spoke: "Follow me, summon up courage and I shall take you safe. Your brother has already traversed the ground. He doesn't require any assistance. He will follow us." With these words she advanced ahead of the younger Prince's horse. The elder Prince followed his brother on his horse and she led the brothers from the unendurable warmth of the burning fires. When at length they neared the spot where the pool of dancing-water lay, the young Prince looked all round and what did he see? Innumerable black rocks in standing attitude; and they enquired of the pigeon, "What are they?" "They are kings, princes, nobles

and their retinue so transformed into rocks. They tried to get the dancing-water but the giant who guarded the pool caught them up and transformed them as you see them now " replied the pigeon. With safety, however, and in the absence of the giant as previously, the brothers and their animals refreshed themselves at the pool and proceeded straight on towards the singing apple tree which was about fifty miles distant, the bird, as before, taking the lead and shading the Princes from the warmth issuing from the flames of the burning-forest.

In due course, they came near the singing apple tree, and great was their astonishment to see it a veritable botanical wonder. It was profusely covered with beautiful young leaves on all the branches, and so tall was it that it seemed to court friendship with the passing clouds or hold communion with the blue vault of Indra's heaven, and only one solitary fruit it had, jutting out from the topmost branch, while round the tree there were black pillars of stone and the Princes asked of the pigeon "What are they?" "They were kings, princess and great-men who came to become possessed of the apple-tree and were turned thus to rocks." "Now how to get the fruit ourselves?" said they, "it seems to be a superhuman task to reach it." "There is no doubt about it," replied the bird, "but I can do one thing to get it. I will go to the very top of the tree and bend the branch

whereon the fruit is, to the very ground and you can pluck it. Don't miss it or else all will be over with you. Now be sharp." Saying so, the pigeon was on the tree in the twinkling of an eye, and bent the branch low to the ground, and the ever ready and anxious Princes plucked the fruit without missing it, and the fruit instantly began to chant forth most melodious songs, both devotional and secular, and the brothers were quite captivated. Soon after they put it in their bosom and, without tarrying there any longer, remounted their horses and began their homeward journey, the kind pigeon advancing in the front and shielding them from every harm. In due course they came to the pool of dancing-water where they refreshed themselves, man and beast, and providing themselves with a phial of the dancing-water they crossed the last of the limits of the burning-forest, where the pigeon bade them farewell, and the Princes traversed the remaining distance by themselves and reached their country. The sister came forward and received them with great delight. The Princes' long absence made her anxious, and innocent as she was, she did not know that the requests made at the instigation of the itinerant singing-beggar were fraught with danger and peril to her brothers. They gave her the singing apple and the dancing-water. She twisted the branch into a knot and suspended the fruit to the ceiling right above where stood the basin

of dancing-water which was now replenished. The apple began to pour forth songs which the damsels of the Celestial Court could not have sung, and the girl was satisfied.

The Princes, as usual, began to go in pursuit of the chase in the forest from the morrow, and in their absence after the lapse of a week or so, the confidential servant woman was ordered by the captain's wife to find out whether the Princes came back or perished in the attempt to bring the singing apple. She came in her usual guise of a strolling, singing beggar, and standing before the castle door, sang the snatches of a song in her most charming tone, and the Princess listening to it from inside, opened the door and called her in. The wily woman after greeting the Princess, asked in the course of her conversation whether the singing apple was brought.

"Don't you make it out? Are you deaf? It is singing the most superb strains just over your head," said the girl. The woman expressed great delight and, receiving a handsome present, left the Princess and informed her mistress that the apple had been brought and the Princes were hale and hearty. The captain's wife put her finger on the chin in astonishment, and thinking of another expedient by which the Princes might be removed from the world, said: "You will this time also go in your usual guise.

and tell the Princess in your tricky way that the place—her castle—will look far more beautiful if she were possessed of one thing more, the absence of which detracted so much from the merit. You should refer the singing bird which sings songs of all climes and nationalities and which is not far off from where the dancing-water and the singing apple formerly were.” “This time,” the captain’s wife added in conclusion “the Princes will not get the thing, but surely perish in the attempt.”

According to instructions, the servant-maid came to the castle in her usual guise of a peripatetic singing beggar and sang a pathetic song, in her high soprano voice, choosing the subject from the immortal bard Valmiki’s epic, and the Princess listening to it from inside, opened the door and called her in. The pseudo-beggar looked around and seemingly pleased, naively remarked, “The palace is grand and superb in every thing; you have the dancing-water and the singing apple but the greater part of the beauty is marred through the lack of one thing, and that is the tiny singing bird which sings the most beautiful songs of the human race. If you have it, which is to be found in the lone mountain not far off from the dancing-water or the singing apple, the castle will be comparable to Paradise itself.”

Remarking thus, and receiving a handsome charity, the disguised beggar-woman left the

castle. The next moment the Princess became morose and fretted about. In the meantime, the brothers returned from the hunt, and observing the moroseness as depicted on the Princess' face, the elder Prince asked, "What ails thee, sister?"

"What may I say?" replied the girl. "I made two requests to you and you have complied with them, but I have a last request to make to you and the request is, that you will try your utmost to get the thing for me. I have heard that there is a tiny bird living in the lone mountain not far off from where the dancing-water and the singing apple had been brought. It is the most beautiful songster. It chants the songs of all the world's peoples and the winged race is said to learn sweet notes from it. I wish you to try and get it for me."

The brothers the next morning set out, and hardly reached just where the burning forest begins than the fairy in the guise of a pigeon, as before, appeared, and understanding their errand, took the lead as before, and shielding them from the warmth of the burning flames, passed across where the dancing-water and the singing apple tree stood and at last came to the foot of a mountain. The Princes now got down from their horses, tethered the animals to a tree, and they saw the bird of which they were in search, picking up grain solitarily on

the top of the mountain. The fairy already advised the young men to be very careful of themselves, and also to be careful in getting hold of the bird, as in case they missed they were sure to be rolled down into the subterranean cave below where they would be transformed into a being, half human with flesh and blood above the waist and the rest below down to feet, of stone. Further, the fairy pigeon said that she would be on the top of the mountain and pretend to be eating grain, when both the Princes should climb up the mountain, and while climbing there would emanate from all directions threatenings, damnings, cursings, raillery, and some of the unknown voices would have the audacity even to falsely accuse: 'There the murderers are going, the murderers are going, catch hold of them, catch hold of them, pinion them, pinion them,' but the Princes were not to mind them, they were to come up straight, as in case they turned back with a view to see from whence the audacious bustle emanated or to answer or to rebut the charge, that moment they would be turned into pillars of stone. They were to come to the top, and she would be waiting for them. Instructing thus, the pigeon flew to the top of the mountain and pretended to pick up grain.

The young men now began the ascent and had almost gone one half of the way in spite of the unknown voices, and now the volume of

the noise increased, and with it the number of cursings, damnings and raillery as also the threatenings, 'The murderers are going, the murderers, are going, catch hold of them, catch hold of them, pinion them, pinion them, kill them, kill them' became more pronounced and intolerable and yet, amidst these unmerited accusations and earsplitting confusion, the Princes ascended the other half of the way and reached the top of the mountain where the bird was picking up seeds of grain. It observed them and understood their inward motive so when the Princes deftly managed to entrap it it did not permit itself to be caught. The project failed and at once they rolled down the mountain into the bottom of the subterranean vault filled with kings, princes and grand personages all transformed into beings, half flesh and blood above the waist and the rest below reaching to the feet of stone. The Princes found themselves in this state at the entrance of the vault facing each other, but mute and motionless as was the case with all. The fairy's sorrow had better he imagined than described at the state of things that had taken place, but she was quite helpless.

We must now leave the Princes and go to their sister. She waited a fortnight and the Princes did not return at which she blamed herself for sending them, and became anxious and found no relish in her meals. In the mean-

time the disguised beggar-woman came and enquired whether the princes had come with the singing bird. 'No,' she replied and sent her away without caring the least for her songs, as all her thoughts were centred on her brothers, and moreover, she dreamt dreams foreboding ill to her brothers. For four days more she waited and the anxiety becoming intense she said to herself 'there is no use of waiting any more' and taking up one of her brother's dresses, she attired herself in it and, saddling a mild charger, rode on it and taking the name of Providence, took the direction by which her brothers went, and after riding and riding she came to the confines where the burning forest begins and here on the way found strewn, a pigeon cut up. Immediately she halted her horse and exclaiming "Ah! Ah! I know you, birdie, you have come to this push," took the bird up, when lo! it came to life and spoke "My child, where are you bound for?" "In search of my brothers." "But they have been transformed into stone," at which the girl wept.

The fairy pacified her and spoke: "Don't you be sorry, my kind soul. Follow me, and I will take you to the place where they are now" and with these words she took the lead and shielded the Princess from the hot and suffocating winds of the burning forest. In due course they came to where the dancing water was,

where the Princess got down from the horse and washed her face, hands, and feet, and drinking a little of the water at the pool, and giving some to her animal, she looked around and saw an innumerable number of black stone pillars and enquired of the fairy, "What are they?" "These are the princes and other great men that came and tried to get some of the water and the owner of the pool, who is a giant, had them transformed as you see them," replied the fairy. This the Princess listened to and was frightened and gave vent to the expression: "My curse light on that singing wench, who can be none other than the agent of our arch enemy, the captain's wife! At her instigation I have sent my two brothers to their doom."

Without losing time, the Princess and the fairy again set out and covering a good deal of ground came to where the singing apple-tree stood, and the fairy spoke "Just look at the tallest of trees. It seems towering the skies. This is the singing apple tree. On the topmost branch of it was hung the solitary singing apple, now lending grace to your castle." Struck with fear the Princess exclaimed "O what have I done? I wished for my brothers' doom myself, listening to the wily sweet-voiced beggar woman by requesting or longing for an object which is inaccessible, and the acquisition of which was so fraught with danger and difficulty."

Further travelling for a week or so, they came to the foot of the mountain whereon was the singing bird, and the Princess recognized at once her brothers' two horses with saddles on and evidently loosened from the tethers with which they were bound, and became sorrowful, and after some moments held a consultation with the fairy as to the manner by which they would be able to climb the mountain, get hold of the bird and, regaining her brothers, get them transformed to their original form.

"Child," replied the fairy "you need not be sorry or anxious. I will devise or suggest a plan, and you must carry it out to the very letter. The plan is, that I will go to the top of the mountain first where the bird is,—you must know that it is not a bird; it is a giant assuming the form of the winged race for years—you will see it pretending to pick up its food. You follow me some time after, and while going up you will hear emanating from all directions, threatenings, cursings, railery, boisterous words and confusing noises, but you are not to pay any heed to them. You are not to speak a word by way of answer or defiance, or turn behind to find out from whence the noise came, otherwise you will be turned into a rock and rolled down later into the subterranean vault. Frail as women are, and you are no exception, you will stuff your ears with cotton; and, as soon as you reach the

mountain-top, you lie down on your back as if you are dead with your eye-lids open, and I will come and peck at your eyes, nose, etc., and you are not to move in the least. The mountain-bird seeing me doing this and, after I am gone, will come close to you, sit on your face and on your shoulders and other parts of the body, and when it sits on the palm of your hand you draw your fingers in the twinkling of an eye, catching hold of the bird tight and firm. Don't you leave it, I tell you. The bird will give you every promise, but don't you leave the grip of the hand or slacken your hold at the prospect of the brilliant promises. If you let it off, that very moment you will roll down by the mountain into the subterranean vault where you will be transformed into a being half of flesh and blood from the waist upwards and the rest downwards to the feet of stone, and put thus in the vault as your brothers had been dealt with. Catch hold of the bird carefully and tight, and tying up its feet, enquire where the steps are that lead to the subterranean vault. It will tell you when you will be able to release, besides your brothers, the kings, princes and others." As advised by the fairy, the Princess ascended the top of the mountain blocking her ears with cotton and unmindful of the infernal noises coupled with threats etc., that reigned supreme about her, and laid down on her back with eyes

open and remained as if in death, and the pigeon approached quietly and, sitting on the body, pretended to peck at the eyes and other parts of the body. The mountain-bird, observing the action, concluded that the girl was dead and coming near, sat with impunity on the Princess and pecked at the eyes. But when it sat on the palm of the hand, the Princess brought together the five fingers closing the palm tightly and firmly and thus caught the bird, and immediately got up from her lying position. The bird's consternation had better be imagined than described. It craved, it begged, it made large promises. It made pathetic appeals in order to get a release, but all to no avail. The Princess remained unmoved or obdurate and listened to no importunities, couched though they were in elegant language, and asked the mountain-bird where the steps were that lead to the subterranean vault. It spoke: "Take two of my feathers and blow them in the wind and where the feathers stand there you will see steps formed for going down the bottom of the vault". The Princess did accordingly and went straight down, having the bird in her hand, into the vault below, and the first thing she saw at the entrance were her two brothers in flesh and blood from head to waist and the rest of stone downwards, facing each other and dumb and speechless. Then she ordered to be restored to their original form in flesh and blood in full.

The bird uttered a talismanic word and the instant the Princes received their form in flesh and blood in its entirety and their gift of speech immediately returned to them, and they fell on their sister's neck and wept and thanked her. She now ordered that the kings, princes, and high dignitaries who were there in the vault for years be restored to their original form in flesh and blood in entirety. The bird did, and all of them were restored and they out of gratefulness for the favour done to them, fell at the feet of the Princess and came to the top of the mountain. She now ordered that the black pillars scattered all about the mountains, which are the retinue of the kings and princes thus petrified, be transformed into their original human form. The bird did it. The kings, the princes and the high dignitaries recognised their retinue. But as regards their animals, the horses, camels, elephants, they broke the ropes with which they have been tethered at the every outset and multiplied and became wild in the jungle and some of the original animals have died, but the men managed with difficulty to catch some of them that could take the road and set out to their respective countries, once more thanking their fair deliverer.

The Princess also accompanied by her brothers, and taking the singing bird, set out very soon, the ever faithful fairy, to whom all success was due, taking the lead as before and

shielding them from the perils on the way. In due course they came to where stood the singing-apple tree, so tall was it that to look at its top-most branch one's turban would come to the ground, yet the solitary singing-apple was brought down by the Princes! Traversing some distance, they came to where the pool of dancing-water was, where the party and animals refreshed themselves and again set out for the last of the stages of the burning forest, where now the fairy, whom the Princess and her brothers could not adequately thank her, took leave of them, and the short journey which now remained was performed, and the party reached their country.

During the absence of the Princess and her brothers, the Prince reigning in the country came to invite the royal sojourners to his marriage, but as they were absent he put off the marriage to another date. On their return, he came, and on the occasion he found only the Princess. He enquired after her health as also the health of her brothers, and she in return asked his, and while he was waiting for a reply or response as to her gracing the marriage-pandal with her presence accompanied by her brothers, the Princess asked, "Father will you taste a cucumber growing in my garden?"

"Yes, daughter" said he.

Accordingly she selected a nice large cucumber and, taking the inside out, put in its place

pearls of great price, and when the fruit was placed before the Prince, he cut it open and to his astonishment found that it was stuffed with pearls! and he at once exclaimed, "What a wonder! Here is a cucumber full of pearls of inestimable price!"

The Princess by way of reply spoke. "It is not a wonder, father, in comparison to the one I have heard in this country. That wonder beats all. A certain magnate's wife brought forth two puppies—a male and a female. Is it possible? Is it real? I have been thinking about it."

"I do not know about the thing," "said the reigning Prince, 'but some time ago, I speak from personal experience, the Princess, my wife, brought forth two puppies, and for that I sent her into the discarded building behind my palace these many years, and so selected a damsel for marriage to which I now invite you."

"Well, you may invite the Kings, Princes and the magnates and also the rich merchant who lives in such and such a country. My brothers and I will assuredly come, but on condition, that I will deliver an address, after which you may go on with your marriage ceremonies." The Prince consented and without losing time issued notices to all the Kings, the neighbouring tributary Princes, magnates, zamindars and to the merchant Prince; and on the day of marriage

all of them have arrived including the merchant Prince from a distant seaport town. The Princess and her two brothers also arrived, bringing with them the dancing-water, the singing-apple and the singing-bird and took their seats allotted to them in the centre of the pavilion and close to the marrying Prince, and when the marriage ceremony was about to begin, the Princess reminded the Prince of his promise. He at once remembered it and permitted the address to be delivered.

"Most Noble Kings of a long line of ancestry, illustrious Princess and great men of the land," began the Princess in clear tones of feminine delicacy. "I have to deliver to you an address, a few words, a request on the side of humanity, call it an address if you please. I may be pardoned for this strange procedure before the marriage and not sanctioned by law and unprecedented by custom or tradition. The Prince has selected a damsel for his marriage, nay the bride elect is here, I see, but first, let him bring forth from the discarded building the lady, his first legitimate wife, who has been confined these eighteen years with two pups. She is innocent, I tell you, she is innocent." Hardly were these words uttered than there was a lull, and the Prince immediately went to the tower of the discarded building, taking a palanquin and a few servants, and brought his wife into the pavilion, decorated and dressed in all haste.

Again, after some moments, the Princess resumed :—

“ Request over. Now a complaint. The Prince some time ago invited my elder brother to a feast and the viands placed before him were mixed with poison. I have carefully preserved some of the same. Here it is ”. Saying so, she took it out from her person and threw it to some dogs and cats which she had sent for. They ate it and died immediately, so virulent was the poison, and the assembled guests were quite astonished.

Now she began for the third time. “ It is to you, Fountains of Justice,” said she, “ I appeal for an exemplary punishment to be awarded to the party who had done the deed. The parties are the captain’s wife and her confidential companion and servant and they are among the assembled guests.” Delivering thus she sat down, of course, after asking pardon of the assembly for having tried their patience.

Now the dancing-water in the golden basin, which was perfectly still till then, bubbled up and the assembled people watched the silvery spray with wonder and admiration as the rising water gained in strength and energy, and hardly this subsided than the singing-apple commenced singing songs with perfect intonation and grace to the astonishment of the assembly, and as soon as the singing came to an end, the singing-bird, who was gloomy and morose since it was caught and caged, and whose possession

or gift of histrionic faculty was looked upon as a myth, now took up the thread and sang the most romantic and charming songs of all countries and of all nationalities in their respective tongues, observing the canons of music and the laws of harmonies of sounds and enthralled the whole audience. This over, the bird spoke. "I am going to tell you a story in song of course. Do listen," And the charming songster began the story of the Royal children. He sang in delightful strains but with straightforward narrative the whole history of the two princes and their sister, thus revealing their fate for the first time to the assembled court. And lastly concluded his wonderful tale with these words: "Now my story is over. I am the singing-bird. In this vast assembly there are the heroes of the story and the heroine of it present. I see also the parents of the Prince born with a golden chain on the neck and of the Princess with two stars on the forehead. I see the parents of the other Prince, the King and the Queen of the country who are here now. I see also the wicked designer, the captain's wife, and her wicked servant. I have nothing to say further." Upon which 'Fie! Fie! spit on her face, spit on her face, away, away with such a wicked woman from such a joyous assembly,' and other expressions like these rang through the Hall. With great vigour the captain's wife and her accomplice of wicked deeds were

immediately removed, the former sent to a lime-kiln to be burnt alive therein and the latter banished the country.

Now the Prince and the Princess who had already become familiar with their father the reigning Prince, now fell on their mother's neck and wept. And the other Prince who had already seen his father on the occasion of his invitation to his palace, now fell on his mother's neck and wept, and immediately streams of milk issued from the breasts of the discarded queens with great force and fell full on the faces of their offspring, wetting their lips and cheeks. Sometime after, the young folks advanced to their respective fathers and embraced them.

The assembly not long after broke up, of course, after duly celebrating the marriage of the reigning Prince with the girl selected to be his wife, the betrothals having been already performed. And need it be said that the discarded queens have been taken into favour by their respective husbands, and there was rejoicing in both the countries of the reigning Prince and the King. The Princes and their sister are living with their respective parents and in their own countries. Their acquisition of the unattainables, the dancing-water, the singing-apple and the chorister-bird are with them. Greater than these acquisitions is the fairy, their guardian angel who is with them still.

VI

Puli Raja or the Tiger Prince

There was once a King who, though he paid many a vow, had no heir. At last, in despair, his Queen urged him to retire to the forest. So he made over the kingdom to his minister and they went off to the forest, in which lived many tigers, but none of them harmed mankind. One day the Queen saw a tigress with her cubs, and she said, "I wish God would bestow on me even a tiger cub!" And as she prayed her wish was granted, and in due time she bore a tiger cub, which they named Puli Raja, the Tiger Prince. They had a nice cage made and put him in it, and he was brought up there, and they did not go to see him for many a long day. But when at last they visited him he said, "It is time I were married. Get me a wife."

The King was much distressed at this, and consulted his minister. "Be not troubled," he answered. "Give me four bags of *varas*, and I will get him a bride." The King gave the money to the minister and he started off. By-and-by he came to an inn. So he went in to eat, and when he paid for his meals he opened the bags in the forecourt of the house and began counting the money. "Why have you brought this money?" the innkeeper asked. "I have come to buy a girl to be wife for the King's son." "Take my eldest daughter," said she. Accordingly the girl was brought to the country and

the King had a marriage booth made as high as the sky, and a marriage platform as large as the earth, and she was married to a knife, the bride thinking piteously all the time, "Why is this? The King is said to have a son, and I am married to a knife!" In the evening she was taken to the Tiger Prince and put into his cage. But next morning they found that he had torn her to pieces.

Again the Tiger Prince prayed to his father for a wife. And the minister engaged to buy one for eight bags of *varas*. Again he went to the innkeeper, who asked, "Is my daughter well?" The minister answered, "She is well. But I want a second wife for the Prince." "Take my youngest daughter," said the innkeeper. So the minister mounted her on the elephant which carried the money and set out with her for the palace.

On the way he got down to bathe, and while he was away a party of women passed by to draw water, and the girl heard them say, "The other day a girl was married to the Tiger Prince and he gobbled her up. Now a second girl is going to him, and he will serve her in the same way." At this the girl began to weep, and just then the Lord Siva and Parvati his spouse were flying in the sky. The Goddess heard the cry of a woman, and brought Siva to the spot, who said, "Daughter, why dost thou weep?" "Because I am to be mar-

ried to the Tiger Prince," said the girl, "and he killed my sister, and I fear he will kill me." And Siva answered, "Take a garland of *kasinda* flowers, a bowl of water, and a handful of sand. When you are taken to the Tiger Prince put the garland round his neck, sprinkle the sand and water over him, and he will turn into a beautiful young man." But she objected. "When his parents see the man with me they will ask whence he came, and why I have driven the Tiger Prince into the jungle. How can I clear myself?" The Lord Siva answered, "Take off the garland from his neck, sprinkle sand and water over him again, and he will turn into a tiger once more; then they cannot help believing you."

So the girl was brought to the palace, and wedded with the same ceremonies as her sister and on the bridal night she was placed in the cage of the Tiger Prince. When he saw her, he sprang upon her to rend her, but she put the garland on his neck, and sprinkled the sand and water over him, and behold! he was turned into a young man, and they enjoyed each other's society till the morning. Then the King and Queen came to visit them, and were amazed when they saw a young man in place of the Tiger Prince. "Do you want your *Puli Raja*?" the bride asked; and turned him into a tiger again, and then restored him to human form. His parents were overwhelmed with joy, and the pair lived happily for many days.

By and by the Princess became big with child, and her girl-cousin, who envied her, came to Puli Raja and said, "Her mother desires to see her; let me take her to our own people." He gave his consent, and the two girls set out together. On the way they came to a well, and the cousin proposed that they should look at their reflections in the water. "I am not beautiful, as you are" said she, "but let me put on your jewels, and let us look again, and you will see what a difference that makes." The Princess gave her the jewels, but when she came to the brink of the well to look again, the cousin pushed her in.

Now there lived an old snake in this well, who suffered much from a great boil just on his hood. When the Princess fell in, she dropped just on the neck of the snake; the boil burst and he was cured. In his joy the snake dived with her down, down through the water, till they came to Nagaloka, the snake kingdom beneath the earth. He took her to his wife. "This is our daughter, who has healed me of my painful disease. Tend her well and treat her with honour." So the Princess remained in the underworld with the snakes, and there in due time she gave birth to a son.

But the cousin went to the Tiger Prince and pretended to be his wife. "How can this be?" said Puli Raja to himself? "My wife was ruddy and beautiful, not like this one." But

at last, though with great misgivings, he accepted her as his wife, and in course of time she bore him a son.

After some time, one day a bangle-merchant went past the well, crying, "Bangles, ! lacquered bangles ! glass bangles ! Who wants bangles ?" Then the Princess called to him out of the well, and said, "Merchant, fit a set of bangles on my wrists." "How can I come into the well ?" he asked. "Come down the steps," said she. So he came down, and while he was fitting on the bangles her son cried, and she sang to him thus :

" My darling ! my princeling Venkayya ! the tiger's own son,

No Kasindha was needed to beautify thee, little man,
O hush thee, the old, kind-hearted man will do thee no harm

While he fits pretty bangles on mother's soft pretty arm.

And the bangle-seller was amazed at her gentle words.

He then went to the palace of the Tiger Prince and began to cry, "Bangles to sell ! Who wants bangles ?" The false Princess called to him to come in, and as he was fitting the bangles on her wrists her baby cried, and she cursed him as low-born mothers are wont to curse their children. The bangle-merchant reproved her, and said, "Why do you curse

your child as the low-born do, and you a Princess? But lately I saw in the under-world a lady who soothed her child when he cried, and sang thus to him.

"My darling! my princeling Venkayya! the tiger's own son,

No Kasindha was needed to beautify thee little man.
O hush thee, the old, kind-hearted man will do thee no harm

While he fits pretty bangles on mother's soft pretty arm."

The Tiger Prince was close by and heard his words. Then he bethought himself of his tiger-birth, and of the wife and the garland; and when the bangle-merchant left the pretended wife's room he called him and said, "Lead me to the lady of whom you just now spoke."

So they went to the well, and the merchant caused the Prince to put two strings of bangles round his neck that he might look like a brother bangle-seller; and descending the steps of the well he called, "Bangles to sell! who needs bangles?" The lady called him and the child cried, and she hushed him by singing to him as before.

"My darling! my princeling Venkayya! the tiger's own son,

No Kasindha was needed to beautify thee little man.
O hush thee, the old, kind-hearted man will do thee no harm

While he fits pretty bangles on mother's soft pretty arm," *

Instantly Puli Raja rose from his seat and took hold of the lady's hand and asked her how she came to be there, and she told him how her cousin had plotted against her life, and how the snake had befriended her.

Then the twelve-headed snake came up, and the Princess said to him, "Your son-in-law is come, father!" So the Tiger Prince asked his leave to take his wife home. "That cannot be," said the snake; "my wife will soon be delivered, and it is my daughter, your wife, who must name the young ones. Afterwards I will gladly send her to you." So by and by the snake's wife gave birth to a brood of snakes, and on an auspicious day the Princess named them. The biggest she called by one fine name, the next by another, and so on; but the smallest she called headless little Nagannah.

When the little snake heard his name he was angry for he thought the Princess mocked him, and he muttered to himself, "When my brother-in-law the Tiger Prince takes her home by and by, I will bite her." So he hid in a melon, and came back with them to the palace. And when they got there the Tiger Prince hastened to his father to arrange for the execution of the false Princess. Then the snake said to himself, "My sister will go to the bath, and then I will bite her here." But when she had eaten and washed, he said, "Let her suckle her child first, and then I will bite her."

Meanwhile the Tiger Prince returned home and began to play at chess with the Princess. By and by he said, "I have won," and she said, "No! I have won; I swear it by the head of our child Chinna Nagannah!" So the snake knew she had meant no scorn to him when she gave him the same name as that of her own son. So he came out of the melon and confessed his designs; and the Princess was rejoiced at her escape and feasted him royally, and he returned to the under world.

So the Tiger Prince and the Princess lived happily ever after; and by and by the old King yielded his throne to his son, and the reign of Puli Raja was long, happy, and prosperous.

VII

The Prince and His Brothers

There was a King in a certain country. He had seven sons. They were put to school, and when their course of studies was finished the father called his eldest son and said, "Son dear, I am anxious that you should marry. Are you willing?" "Yes, as you wish, Father dear," replied the son, and retired.

The King now called his second son, and put the same question, "Son dear, I am anxious that you should marry. Are you willing?" and received the same answer, "Yes as you

wish, Father dear." He now called the third son and asked the same thing and received the same answer. In like manner the fourth, fifth and sixth son were called in their turn, and the same question put and the same stereotyped answer received; but when the King called the seventh and youngest son and spoke unto him "Son dear, I am anxious that you should marry. Are you willing?" The young man replied "Yes, Father dear, on condition that the seven brides be of one family, and the seven sisters be married to us, seven brothers".

Accordingly the King despatched letters to all countries and enquired of seven girls in one family to be wedded to his sons. People laughed at the idea, and said to themselves, "How could a family have seven daughters unmarried at the same time?" In due course replies were received from the kings and, as the people thought, to the effect that not a royal house had seven daughters to be married, but some families had two, three and four girls to be given in marriage. The father received the information with great sorrow and calling his youngest son said, "What's to be done now?" "Build a large vessel, Father dear, victualling and manning it at the same time. My six brothers and I will go on a voyage in it and bring seven damsels for our marriage", said the youngest son. Accordingly the King had a vessel constructed, profuse pro-

visions put in it and complement of men furnished. Embarking in it, the Princess set sail and, after a number of days, they espied land which they neared. Casting anchor, the youngest Prince at once got out of the vessel, and seeing a nicely paved foot-path, he began to walk on it. Hardly had he walked a mile or two in the straight course than he saw a grey horse tied up in a grove of mango trees. It called him, and the young man wondering at the horse talking like a human being, went close to the animal, who now asked him, "Where are you going? What is your story?"

"Where am I going?" replied the Prince. "We are seven brothers. My father, though he tried, was not successful in getting seven girls in a family to be married to us. Therefore, I, in company with my brothers, have taken the trouble to come over here to secure seven girls in a family for our partners." "All right I will show you the way by which you will accomplish your object, but you should do me a little service. Will you kindly take up the gram-bag and tie it up to my mouth?" spoke the horse.

The Prince, as requested, took up the bag, which now in a miraculous manner began to be filled with gram, and tied to the animal's mouth. The horse ate to its full, and the bag was put in its former place on the ground. And now the horse again addressed the young man in these

words, "Will you do me another favour? Will you put aright the bucket turned upside down?" In compliance, the Prince put the bucket aright, and instantaneously water began to come into it in a miraculous manner. The horse drank to its heart's content, and the bucket inverted itself as before. For the third time the horse addressed the Prince: "You should now do me the last piece of kindness. Will you kindly shake the blanket for me?" He did as was desired, and green grass in a miraculous manner fell from it which the horse ate, and began to speak now to the Prince in right earnestness as follows:—"My good Prince. I now advise you how to obtain your desires. Go straight by the footpath by which you have come, and you will find to your right, a palatial two-storied building. Enter it, find the paraphernalia of the fair sex arranged for seven. In the centre you will see a large chair with a palmyra-leaved book thereon. Seat yourself on the chair and taking the book in your hand be reading it. In the meantime, seven girls, the daughters of the old hermit, living in the upper story will come and begin to play with you, tickle you, crack jokes with you. But don't you talk with them, don't you •mind them, and it is only when the eldest girl comes and swears solemnly, that no harm will come unto you that you are to talk, open negotiations of marriage and accomplish your object. When the object is accomplished and

you leave for you country, don't forget to inform me to that effect."

As informed by the horse, the Prince came upon a palatial building to the righthand side of the footpath which he entered, and found female costumes, ornaments, etc., all arranged or set in order for seven, and also found a large chair with a palmyra-leaved tome. Taking his seat on the chair he began poring over the tome, when from the first floor of the building, came seven girls of most exquisite beauty, and they began to make fun of the young man, crack jokes with him, and titillate him. But nothing could make him talk to them, and it is only when the eldest girl solemnly declared that he would not come by harm at their hands, that he talked with them without reserve, opened negotiations and obtained the consent of the old hermit to take the seven girls to his father's land for their marriage with the seven Princes. So without loss of time he brought them and installed them on board the vessel, when he thought of his friend the horse. Hastily telling his brothers that he would immediately return, he ran to the horse and thanking him for his kindness and informing him that he would be off to his mother country, returned to the vessel, when lo! the vessel was gone. It disappeared as if by magic; upon which the Prince, with dejected mien, returned to the horse and explained his situation. The

animal pacified him in the words : " Do not be afraid," and very soon fell to eating gram, drinking water and eating grass, the young man making all these things accessible to the animal as before repeating the former processes. When this was over it asked the young man to fold up the blanket in two and put it on its back. He did so and the horse again asked him to put the bit hanging on to a tree close by, to its mouth. This also was done, when the animal asked the Prince to ride on him, advising him at the same time not to be afraid but to catch hold of him with a firmness as he would cross the wide, wide sea by flying in space. Hardly had the Prince, as asked, mounted the animal and settled firmly on the back than it rose in the higher regions with great velocity and after travelling in space for a considerable time, slackened its speed and alighted in a country.

Now this country was the country of the horse where, by a strange spell or curse of God, there were no adult males, but only children and women. The horse, in its descent halted in the portico of the palace, while the Prince with all boldness ran upstairs. What did he see or what was his astonishment to find a Princess of great beauty and perfect symmetrical features—and this was the daughter of the horse, who before his transformation, was the King of the country—and need it be said that he fell in

love with her, and she, who had not yet seen a man in full manhood, fell in love with him in turn. Though coyly admitting not to have reciprocated the love, she offered him a seat and sweetly asked of him as to wherefrom and why he had come. He explained to her that he had come from such and such a distant country, where his brothers treacherously deserted him and left for their native land. "Never mind that," said the Princess after hearing the story, "you come and stay with me." He acquiesced; and as the Prince was willing to marry the Princess and the latter was like minded and there being no incongruity in their age, they were married by the *Gandharva* laws of marriage, and became man and wife. For some time they lived harmoniously, and one day the Prince said to the horse, "I want to go to my father's place." The horse took him; and when he went to the main entrance of the surrounding wall with a view to gain admittance into the palace the sentry asked him, "Who are you? and what is your case?" "I am the youngest son of the King. I want to see my Father," replied the Prince. "You cannot go in. You are ordered to be thrown into the tiger's cage for basely deserting your brothers in the search expedition for the girls. The seven girls whom they have searched and brought were, six of them at any rate, married to the six princes. While the seventh girl who

was to have married to you is evidently made a slave in the palace to her six sisters and her case, from what I hear, is a deplorable one", spoke the sentry, and added in conclusion, "Now I won't leave you, as according to the behest of His Majesty, you are, as previously informed by me, ordered to be thrown into the tiger's cage." "So be it. I pass my word of honour that I shall return in five minutes when you can execute the King's command," replied the Prince; and immediately leaving the sentry, he made his way for his friend the horse who was still standing and told him: "I am ordered to be thrown into a tiger's cage for charges fabricated and brought against me by my treacherous brothers."

"You need not be sorry or lose your heart for that," said the horse. "Cut two round pieces of this leather (which he gave) one brown and one red. Keep them with you very carefully. When they throw you into the tiger's cage and the famishing tiger pounces on you, show him the red piece and immediately a goat will interpose between you both. The tiger will tear the animal and satisfy its hunger, after which you may have your share of the raw flesh • and thus keep body and soul together; and when the tiger feeling thirsty wants to strike at you, show him the brown piece of leather and immediately a nice pond will be formed between you both, where the animal will slake its thirst

and go away, when you may have your share of the water. These conditions fulfilled, you can sleep in the cage with safety. You need not be sorry on any account. Whenever you want me I am at your call." So saying, the horse left for its country, and the Prince, as pledged, handed himself over to the sentry. The sentry calling in the prefect of the Police, had the Prince thrown into the tiger's cage pursuant to the King's command issued already, and the King informed of the matter. Now as soon as the tiger's cage was opened, the tiger advanced with great fury with a view to make short work of the young man. But he, at the proper moment, showed the talismanic red piece of leather and immediately a goat stood between the human being and the beast; and the latter tearing the goat, ate its flesh, drank its blood and went away seemingly satiated to one of its corners, the Prince making his meals on the remnants of the raw flesh as there was no other alternative. A few minutes after, the tiger feeling thirsty growled and wanted to strike its paw at the young man, but the young man who was alert and did not lose his presence of mind showed the brown piece of leather as before and immediately a pond was formed, where the tiger slaked its thirst and retired to one of its corners, the Prince now quenching his thirst also. Thus many days the Prince had passed with the beast of prey in the cage, and

none knew that he was living—and the King of course did not care whether he was living or dead.

Now the Prince's wife, the horse's daughter, who was with child at the time of her husband's departure from her country to see his father, brought forth a male child in its season. When he attained the age of four or five years, she seriously reflected on the duty devolved on her of educating the son in the absence of the male parent, and putting the reflection into action, sent one of her expert maid-servants to her husband's country to induce a teacher to come over as also to make enquiries regarding her husband. The maid-servant succeeded in only one object relating to the teacher. The teacher came over and on an auspicious day started a school. The royal pupil joined and was learning. In due course the sons of the rich and the poor, in the absence of any other school, also joined and were learning with the little Prince who used to be very cruel with his companions ; and various were the complaints made to the teacher about him.

The teacher could not take any step to redress their grievance as the person complained against was the son of the Princess, and he was in the service of that Princess. He was for a long time thinking what to do and at last, a thought struck him and he calling his boys in

the absence of the little Prince, taught them to enquire of each other his father's name while playing with the Princes and lastly to enquire the Prince himself of it, and when he could not say, they all should set up a simultaneous laughter. "After that," the teacher added, "the Prince will treat you kindly." Bearing this in mind, the boys when they met together to play played the first game, and when the moment arrived to take respite they, as previously arranged, enquired of each other his father's name and received replies, that such and such was the name, and lastly they asked the Prince of his father's name and he could not say it. Whereupon they as one laughed and remarked at the same time 'you are born without a father.' Upon this the little Prince in great chagrin left them and abruptly going to his mother asked, "What is my father's name?" "His name is so and so," said the Princess "He went to see his father when you were conceived. He has not returned yet." "Write to him to come quickly," said the little Prince.

The Princess accordingly wrote a letter to her father-in-law (not to the Prince reflecting on this wise that, had he been in the country or alive and in good health, he would certainly have been at her side) requesting him to send over his son who married her. The King without going near, much less seeing the cage for many years,

wrote back to say that he had been thrown into the tiger's cage and there must be his bones only now lying. The little Prince was informed of this by the sorrowing mother and he quickly asked her to write back to ask for the very bones of his father as he wanted them to consign them to the holy Ganges. The Princess again wrote to her father-in-law asking him to pack up the bones and send them to her. The King commanded one of his attendants to go to the tiger's cage and see whether there be bones of any human being in it, and if so to pack them up and send them to such and such a place. The man went, and what was his surprise to find, instead of bones, a strong and healthy man with a rubicund appearance sitting in the cage with the tiger. To him the man imparted the intelligence: "O Prince, His Majesty the King, your father, had ordered that your bones should be taken out and the same sent to the Princess your wife to such and such a place, but as you are alive you are at liberty to come out and go to your spouse." The Prince came out and duly wished the presence of his friend the horse. The horse came and greeted him. The Prince thanked him with an overflowing heart and averred that the life he possessed belonged to the horse. In due course, the young man mounting on the animal came to his wife's country. Happy was the meeting of the couple and of the little Prince the son who, on seeing

his father, ran to him and fell on his neck, the father hugging him to his breast and kissing him tenderly.

Shortly after the horse who, as mentioned before, was no other than the King of the country, called the Prince and termed him "my son-in-law" to his wonderment. He also called the Princess his daughter and his grandson, and spoke unto them, "My loves, by a strange curse I am mentamorphosed to a horse. The curse has now run its course, and I am going to assume my natural form. Daughter dear, you just hold my head. Let my grandson hold the tail. My son-in-law, you please take your sword and give me a cut across the body." The Prince was sorry and could not bring himself to perform such an inhuman deed on his friend the horse. But the animal persisted, averring that that course alone would make him assume his natural shape. So he gave a sword-cut athwart the body of the animal, when lo ! the horse disappeared and in its place stood a King with his crown jewels and its paraphernalia, who drawing close to his daughter, his son-in-law and his grandson, kissed them tenderly. And soon after ablutions and meals, the King took them into a room on the underground floor that opened into or lead to a cell. "Here the whole of my army, the male members, have turned into rocks. The duration of the curse is past", said he and

taking up a vessel of water that was in one of the corners and a retan lying hard by, he sprinkled the water on the rocks and tapped at them thrice with the retan when behold ! the whole army, as if from sleep, arose and marched past the King saluting him and singing a paen. The army very soon joined their relatives, and the King with his daughter, his son-in-law and his grandson, retraced his steps to the palace and ere long issued a proclamation, granting the army their respective posts as held individually by them before

Two months after, the Prince, persuading his father-in-law the King, mustered a large force and taking the little Princess his son, went to war with his father. The old king, seeing a tremendous army coming into the country to invade it, was frightened beyond bounds and sued for peace. Peace was granted under certain conditions and the Prince now pitching his tent on the open plain convened all the neighbouring kings. The kings came when the victorious Prince demanded that the six sons of the king of the country should be brought to the convention in fetters. Accordingly they were brought, and the Prince asked them to declare solemnly before the assembled kings whether they had negotiated for the girls. They hung down their heads by way of reply. Again he asked them whether they had not behaved treacherously towards him in sailing

away without him. Again they hung down their heads. To corroborate the evidence, the Princes' wives and their sister, the miserable girl in the palace who had become their slave and who was to have married the Prince, were put under an oath to tell the truth in the matter. They declared solemnly that the six princes had not looked much less negotiated for them. Everything was done by the youngest prince and that their husbands simply reached the country in the ship. Upon which the assembled kings without one dissentient voice, adjudged that the six Princess should go into prison for a season, but the youngest Prince, the victorious brother, taking compassion on them, interceded on their behalf and got them pardoned. By the time the convention had dissolved or dispersed, the father who now came to know that the person who had come to wage war with him was no other than his youngest son, and recalling now how his brothers had poisoned his mind against him and with what a harshness he had treated him for no fault of his, and feeling remorse went near him and with tears in his eyes embraced him. In due course he solemnized his marriage with the seventh discarded princess and, shortly after, abdicated his throne crowning the youngest son in the palace as the King of the country.

The new King is reigning in the country and also in the country of his father-in-law who has

now become a *Vanaprastha*, and is enjoying life with his two wives, and amidst luxuries which he affords to buy with the resources at his hands. As regards the little Prince his son, he is still training himself in the Patashala, now in political sciences though, with a view to succeed his father in the Kingdom when the time comes. He has now overcome his weakness ; he treats the Patashala boys with every mark of kindness. To this day they think that it is the audacious trick which their guru taught and they played on the Prince, that made him a different man now from what he was before.

VIII

The Prince, the Cucumber, and the Rakshashi

A CERTAIN king had seven sons who used to tend cattle in the forest. One day they saw a great number of fish in a tank, and so they drove off the cattle to graze and at once began to catch the fish. When this was finished, one of the brothers went to see where the cattle were grazing. He did not find them, but heard a rumour that they had been carried off by a neighbouring Rākshashī.

"Never mind," said the brothers:—"Our father will be pleased with the seven basketful of fish," and they carried the fish home.

On seeing them, the king asked "Where are the cattle?"

"We were catching fish and the Rākshashī lifted the cattle," replied the princes.

Whereupon the king, out of sheer anger, slew six of his sons, and when he was about to slay the seventh and last, the prince said, "O father, don't kill me, I will bring the cattle home."

"Very well, bring the cattle home," replied the king.

In search of the missing cattle the prince traversed many forests without success, and he thought of returning home despondingly to meet his fate, when he suddenly came upon a shepherd boy, whom he questioned as to the way leading to the Rākshashī's abode.

"Go this way," said the shepherd-boy, pointing out a long and straight road, "taking three cucumbers from the field, and when you come to the place where three roads meet, place the three cucumbers on the three ways. Watch which cucumber moves and that's the road you are to take."

The prince did accordingly, and the cucumber on the central road moved, and so the prince went on by that road, taking the cucumber as his companion and eating the others.

When he was half way on the road, the cucumber called out 'Brother, brother.'

"Who is the man calling me?" said the prince, looking round.

"I," replied the cucumber.

"What is it, brother?" said the prince.

"Well, I have something to say to you," replied the cucumber. The Rākshashî will put a mat on a well and ask you to sit on it. Beware! She will mix poison in some food and will ask you to eat. Beware."

A little later the cucumber again called to the prince, 'Brother, brother.' and said, "the time for the Rākshashî to be delivered is at hand, and when she is about to give birth leave me on the ground, and I will drive the cattle home."

"Very well," said the prince, and moved on, and in due course reached the Rākshashî's abode, and as soon as she saw him she put a mat on the well and asked him to sit on it.

"O, don't trouble! I don't want to sit down," said the prince.

She then mixed poison in some food and offered it to the prince.

"O, don't trouble! I don't want to eat," said he.

"Well, stay where you are," said the Rākshashî, who was now in labour. "As soon as I am delivered, I will come out."

At this juncture, the cucumber asked to be left on the ground. The prince did as he was desired, and the cucumber drove the cattle home.

When the Rākshashī knew of this, she took the new-born infant in her arms and at once rushed upon the prince to swallow him up, but the cucumber made him climb up a palmyra tree close by. The Rākshashī put her infant to sleep on the ground, and began to climb up also. The cucumber then pinched the infant and it cried out and down came the Rākshashī and pacified the infant. She then climbed half way up the tree again, when the cucumber again repeated the pinch with the same result. This the cucumber did three times, and then, thinking to itself that the Rākshashī seemed to never get tired, had recourse to another stratagem. It climbed the tree unknown to the Rākshashī before she began, and stuck two pointed thistles into the tree about half-way up. The Rākshashī's eyes ran into them and became blinded. This brought her down off the tree with immense force and she was killed. The cucumber then killed her child, and, all fear being vanished, the prince started for his home taking the cucumber with him. His father was very glad to receive him and the cattle, and revoked the order for the prince's execution.

Now the prince kept his life-preserver the cucumber in a pot very safely. He used to enquire after its welfare every morning and evening with a shout of 'Brother,' and used to

receive a reply of 'Yes, brother.' This continued for some time, till one day his household complained of having no curry for the night. Whereupon the prince's sisters said, "There's a cucumber in the pot ; make it into a pickle." As soon as the Cucumber was cut open, the whole house was turned into blood.

The prince, on his return home that evening, shouted as usual for his brother the Cucumber, and, receiving no reply, went up to the pot and saw that there was no Cucumber in it, upon which he ran at once to his mother and asked where the Cucumber was.

"I took it from the pot, and when I cut it open to make pickle with it, the house and all was turned into blood."

"My life-preserver is gone, why should I live," howled the prince and committed suicide. The parents followed suit for grief at the loss of their son, and the cattle also, bemoaning the loss they had sustained by the death of their protector, ate a poisonous herb and died.

IX

The Cowherd and the Prince

- There was a king in a certain country. He had a daughter. Before her palace there was a Banian tree on which a big bird used to perch with pertinacity every day in the week. The king issued a proclamation to the effect: "He,

who shoots the bird, shall be given my daughter in marriage." And accordingly, kings and princes from various countries came and essayed to bring the bird down but failed.

Now there was a young cowherd in the service of Paidaraisi Peddammah. He used often to pass with his cattle under the balcony of the palace. One day as usual, the palace was swept and the rubbish and dust thrown on the dunghill, and the young man, observing a few grains of gram therein, picked them up and began eating. When the Princess saw him she called the attention of her servant-maid, and spoke: "Who will marry that young man and lay the hem of her drapery for him?" The young man heard the conversation and immediately drove his cattle on, and reaching Paidaraisi Peddammah's, put the cattle in their pen and made his way straight for the farm, and there made a sling and picked two or three pebbles; and next day, while driving the cattle, he saw the bird, aimed at it with deliberation, and brought it down. The kings and princes from foreign countries who were present, witnessed the feat and spoke amongst themselves with great astonishment. "We had so many weapons, firearms, bows, slings, catapults; and the bird could not be killed. Just fancy an ordinary cowherd should have brought it down." In due course, the young man in accordance with the proclamation issued, was

married to the Princess, but he would not exchange a word with his newly wedded wife. Some days had elapsed with this state of things, and one day the Princess told her mother "Mother, your son-in-law, the young man, does not talk with me at all." "Fie! Don't mind it," said the Queen, "we shall marry you to your Maina Mama" (*i.e.* the Queen's brother or the Princess' maternal uncle) and in fact the Princess was married again to the Queen's brother without the least compunction. The poor young cowherd, without any arrangements being made for his meals, was sent ostensibly to watch an out-of-the-way garden where tigers and leopards prowled, but the object underlying was that he might fall a victim to those wild beasts or denizens of the forest.

Now on the bridal night, the Princess's new husband sat on a cot, and the wife brought betels, nuts, cardamoms, cloves, etc., on a tray from which he chose a piece of nut and was about to put it in his mouth, when a rat passed by him and he threw the piece which accidentally came by the rodent and killed it. Whereupon he called his wife's attention to the occurrence saying "See, what a valorous man I am. I have killed a rat with a piece of nut!"

"But my husband (referring to the young cowherd) used to kill tigers and leopards," replied the wife despising the deed; and when her new husband had gone to sleep, she took a tray

arranging on it sweet viands and pastry, went to the garden where her husband—the young cowherd—was at that part of the night. The first sight that met her gaze was a tiger shot and lying at full length on the ground at the first gateway, the second sight was a leopard lying dead at the second gateway; treading a few paces further she came to where her husband was, and placed before him the viands which he partook. In the meantime the wind blew and rain descended and both the cowherd and the Princess were at the mercy of the elements, the latter however, all the while preserving the hem of her drapery from being wet. Some time after, the rain had abated and in fact disappeared, and the young man muttered, "All the clothes are wet. There is not a dry piece of cloth to recline my head on." Whereupon the Princess spoke: "Here is the hem of my drapery. It is dry. I will spread it and you lay your head thereon." At this the young man laughed and spoke for the first time with the Princess, "You did not spread the hem of drapery ere this, and you said scornfully when I wanted to satisfy the cravings of hunger by picking up to eat a few grains of gram under the balcony of the palace, 'What woman will marry him and lay the hem of her drapery (meaning with the view to receive such a wretched young man as that.)' This is the reason why I did not speak with you till now."

"Ah! Ah! is this the reason? I forgot all about it. Had I known it I would have laid the hem of my drapery for my victorious husband," thus said the wife, and both came to the palace. The daughter explained to her royal parents the cause of her husband's moroseness in the words "Father dear, mother dear, your son-in-law, when he was tending cattle for the Paidarasi Peddammah, had to pass by the balcony with a cattleherd and one day picked up some grains of gram from the dunghill and was about to eat when I called the attention of my maid and remarked 'Will any woman marry such a young man and lay the hem of her drapery for him?'" It appears that he had overheard the conversation and treasured it up, and it was when I laid the hem of my drapery for him yesternight when there was not a dry cloth to lay his head on he laughed and spoke and explained of his sullenness to me hitherto. Hearing which the parents laughed and the queen sent away her brother to a distant land and again for the second time was celebrated the marriage of the Princess with the young cowherd amidst great pomp and rejoicing.

X

The Snipe and the Ant
(A CUMULATIVE RHYME)

A Snipe was rearing an Ant with great tenderness : tenderness that would not permit the An-

to seek its food even. On one occasion in the absence of the Snipe, the Ant said to itself, "I am getting too lazy, I am not permitted even to go and seek my food. I shall go today and bring my own food." With this resolution it started forth and, seeing a rice-pounder working, it ran near it, and taking an ear of corn, was returning triumphantly when the rice-pounding girl saw it and crushed it mercilessly."

In due course the Snipe returned from the river-bank with fishes, etc., but could not find its protege. It searched all about the place and found no traces of the Ant. At last a thought occurred to it and it went near the rice-pounder and what was its horror to find its darling crushed and dead. When the first paroxysms of grief were over it went to the river-bank and brooded over the loss. The River seeing the Snipe in that plight enquired,

"O Snipe, O Snipe, you are always jolly and brisk. How is it you are sorry, today?"

"What may I say, River?" replied the Snipe. I have been rearing an Ant with great tenderness. It had come by death unexpectedly and therefore I am brooding over the loss."

"If that is so, I shall also participate in your sorrow" said the River and at once changed portion of its limpid and clear waters into sand and mud. An Elephant that used to slake its thirst in the River finding the water sandy and muddy enquired,"

"O River, River, your waters are always clear and limpid. How is it that they are sandy and muddy today? "What may I say?" replied the River.

The Snipe lost its Darling,
The River flows part of its course muddy.

"If that is so, I shall also participate in your sorrow." So saying it broke one of its tusks.

A Banian tree that used to shelter the Elephant under its outspread leaves, seeing that it has only one tusk enquired,

"O Elephant, Elephant, you had always two tusks. How is it that you have only one tusk?" "What may I say?" replied the Elephant.

The Snipe lost its Darling,
The River flows part of its course muddy,
The Elephant broke one of its tusks.

"If that is so I shall also participate in your sorrow." So saying it shed its leaves.

A white Crane that was to roost on the Banian tree in the evenings, seeing the tree denuded of all its leafy covering enquired,

"O Banian tree, O Banian tree, you are always in full leaf. How is it that you are denuded of all your leaves today?"

"What may I say?" replied the Banian Tree.

The Snipe lost its Darling,
The River flows part of its course muddy,
The Elephant broke one of its tusks,
The Banian tree shed its leaves.

"If that is so, I shall also participate in your sorrow." So saying it pierced one of its eyes with a thorn.

A Farmer in whose fields the Crane used to feed itself seeing it blind of one eye enquired,

"O Crane, Crane you had always two eyes. How is it that you have only one eye now?"

"What may I say?" replied the Crane.

The Snipe lost its Darling,
The River flows part of its course muddy,
The Elephant broke one of its tusks,
The Banian Tree shed its leaves,
The Crane pierced one of its eyes.

"If that is so, I shall also participate in your sorrow." So saying he began to plough in a zigzag manner.

The Farmer's wife who brought food for her husband seeing him plough in a zigzag manner enquired :—

"O Farmer, Farmer, you would always plough straight. How is it you are today ploughing in a zigzag manner?"

"What may I say?" replied the Farmer.

The Snipe lost its Darling,
The River flows part of its course muddy,
The Elephant broke one of its tusks,
The Banian tree shed its leaves,
The Crane pierced one of its eyes,
The Farmer ploughed in a zigzag manner.

"If that is so, I shall also participate in your sorrow. So saying she broke the Congee-pot.

The Mother-in-law who was grinding *raggi* seeing the Daughter-in-law return without the Congee-pot enquired,

“O Daughter-in-law, O Daughter-in-law, how is it that you are returning to-day without the Congee-pot?”

“What may I say, mother-in-law?” replied the Daughter-in-law.

The Snipe lost its Darling,
The River flowing part of its course muddy,
The Elephant broke one of its tusks,
The Banian tree shed its leaves,
The Crane pierced one of its eyes,
The Farmer ploughed in a zigzag manner,
The Farmer's wife broke her Congee-pot.

“If that is so. I shall also participate in your sorrow.” So saying the old woman broke her hip with the mill-stone and died.

XI

The Bird and the King

A tiny little bird uttering melodious sounds sat on the terrace of a king's palace. The king was very pleased and called out to an attendant and said, “Put the bird into a golden cage and give it the sweetest seeds to eat.”

- Scarcely was the bird put into the cage, than another bird of the same kind, uttering the wildest cries, came and sat on the terrace. Displeased with the discordant sounds, the king called out to an attendant to kill it.

The order was about to be executed, when the first bird in great humbleness of spirit, said : " O, what are you doing ? O just king, listen to the words of the unprotected, and revoke your order."

अहं मुनीनां वचनं श्रुणोमि

श्रुतः राज न् मनाथ वाक्यम्

न तस्य दोषो न च मद् गुणो वा

संसर्गजा दोषगुणा भवन्ति.

" I have lived in the abodes of saints, and listened to their sweet talk, while this my brother was brought up by a butcher, and learnt his unearthly notes from the cries of animals when being slaughtered. It is neither his fault, nor do I possess merit. Good or bad (in persons) is the outcome of association."

Satisfied with the explanation, the king revoked his order for the death of the other bird.

XII

The Unsatisfied Ass

In summer the ass puts on an healthy appearance but does not do so in the rains. A story is told explaining the cause of it as follows :—

That after making a good feast on grass in the rainy season when the hills and dales are thoroughly carpetted with grass, the ass looks back and seeing the green grass, sighs and says to himself, "Ho! I have not eaten anything. It is all there." The sighing tells upon the constitution of the ass and makes it what it appears in the rains—a poor thing.

XIII

The Sun, the Moon and their Mother

Once the Sun and the Moon Kings went out to dinner. The mother on their return asked the eldest, "What have you brought for me, *Nāyana*?" "What have I brought for you mother? I went to enjoy myself," replied the Sun. Upon which she cursed him saying, "You shall rise early in the mornings and your duty will be, to begin with, to watch the passers on their way to answer calls of nature, and then to scorch them with your fierce rays for which they will blame you."

Now turning to her younger son, the mother asked, "What have you brought for me, *Nāyana*?" "Bring the vessels, porringer etc." said the Moon and soon emptied into them the viands he had collected in his long nails. The mother was mightily pleased and blessed him in the words, "You shall rise in the cool of the evenings and the earth's inhabitants would hail

your coming with delight and thank you for the effulgence you will shed on them with your pure, serene rays."

XIV

Ganesha and How He had come by the Elephant's Trunk

Once upon a time the goddess Parwati went to bathe, and asked her son Ganesha to keep a watch outside and see that none enter her rooms. Ganesha acted up to his mother's instruction, and in the interim Shiva came and demanded admittance. "I won't let you go, Father. My mother is taking a bath inside and asked me to keep a watch outside and see that none enter her rooms," said the son.

"Did she wish that I, her husband, should not go in," roared out Shiva, and trembling with rage he cut off Ganesha's head there and then without an afterthought.

Bathing over, Parwati dressed and came and what was her surprise to find her son killed and lying in a pool of blood, the head disappearing and the choleric Shiva standing.

"What have you done?" asked she in surprise. "He wouldn't let me in and I killed him," replied Shiva.

"This is not good. Recall him to life." "But I don't see the head." "Send *Ganās* out in all directions to bring the head."

Accordingly, the *Ganās* went in all directions but nowhere could they find Ganesha's head. They found an elephant's head instead which they brought with them. This, Shiva fixed on to the trunk and recalled his son to life. Repenting of his deed he conferred a boon on Ganesha, that whenever a new work is undertaken he will be invoked first. This is done to this day.

XV

How Englishmen Got a Hold in India

First of all the English landed in Madras, and applied to the Nawab of the place for land equal to a sheep's skin. The Nawab, thinking that the land applied for was not much, gave his permission.

Thereupon the cunning Englishmen cut a sheep's skin into very thin strips, and joining them on to one another, encircled the place with this leather-string and the Nawab was felt bound by his word. Thus did the English come to possess the first land in India, which they augmented from time to time by slow conquests.

NOTES

STORY I

- Page 1. Four pice = 1 anna in copper coins.
2. Four annas = $\frac{1}{4}$ rupee in silver.
The Table is as follows :—
3 Pies make one pice.
12 Pies or 4 pice make one anna.
16 Annas make one rupee.
15 Rupees make one gold mohar.
Pie. Pice (3 pies each) half pice ($1\frac{1}{2}$ pie each) double pice (six pies each) are copper coins. Two anna pieces, four anna pieces, eight anna pieces and rupees are silver coins. Gold mohars as the adjective implies are gold coins.
- Page 2. Dontikoonda—one of the dontooloo. Dontooloo are earthen pots numbering six or seven ranging in size and arranged in a pyramidal form. In them are kept rice, chillies, tamarind, turmeric, salt, etc., etc.
- Page 3. Kalās—Arts or Sciences. There are 64 of them. They are known as the Chatu-shasta Kalas or 64 sciences.
- Page 5. Mahakal (literally Great Time) i.e., Goddess Kali who was the tutelary Goddess of King Vikramaditya of Oojein. There is a famous temple of great antiquity dedicated to her memory at Oojein on the River Supra.

Page 7. "Please yourself then" said she The original or Telugu is 'Neeku neewai naku nainey' meaning literally "You are for yourself. I am for myself" i.e. If anything happens to you as you persist in going notwithstanding I tell you not to go you take the chance. I shall see to myself.

Page 9. Vibhudhi Kāya—A white circular ball of some kind of mild chunam resembling pipe clay. It is carried by the 'Jangums' or followers of Shivite faith with them. No evil spirits are said to disturb one who has the *Vibhudhi Kaya* under his pillow.

Page 11. Mreedung—The 'Tubla, an Indian musical instrument.

Pages 11, 13, 15 and 16. Ootti, Utkoo or Arapa—Space or accommodation made on the mainbeam inside a house by placing wooden planks crosswise, whereon clothes, etc., are kept.

Page 12. Bhagvatam—a Work that narrates the Krishna Leela or Exploits of Krishna. Portions from it are acted by the Bhagvatam players.

Page 17. Gangaraigu pandlu, Ber fruits (*Zizyphus jujuba*) of the large kind. They are called "Chuwa" Ber probably because of their resemblance in size to small rats. Chuwa in Hindustani means a rat.

STORY II

Page 31 as also 34 and 35 — 'O Little one' used by the young husband as also by the young wife. There will be a difference in the gender and this is easily distinguished.
e. g.

O Chinna *dānā*—O young or little one meaning O little or young woman when the term is used by a husband. O Chinna *wāḍā* 'O young or little one' meaning O little or young man when the term is used by a wife.

Page 31 as also 36. Mangalasutram or Tali—A circular piece of gold tied round the neck of the bride by the bridegroom, and this ratifies the marriage contract.

Page 31. Pie—See note under Story I.

Page 38, 39. Pullem. A tray either of gold or brass on which camphor is kept burning and carried before a great personage by the host of a house.

Page 40. Cobra lilies—Nāgamullailoo in Telugu or as in the original. A variety of lilies.

STORY III

Page 55. Gandharva Laws of Marriage. In the absence of a priest the contracting parties enter a temple and in the presence of the deity garland themselves or throw wreaths of flowers on each other's neck and thus they are said to become

man and wife, in perfect legitimate manner. The right of contracting Gandharva marriages is vested in royal personages and this too only permitted in the absence of priests.

STORY IV

Page 70. Goldsmith street—A whole street occupied by goldsmiths, a guild.

Page 70. 'Please bring the pot.' Women hoard the coins saved from their daily expenditure near the fire place. Buried treasures do not remain at one place. They shift from their original position. The author's farther lost 12,000 Rupees on the treasure buried by him, by this subterranean movement.

Page 72. 'Take a large and broad sheet of white cloth.' Indian showmen and some beggars, Fakirs and so on spread a white sheet wherever they squat. The idea is, that when money is thrown it will fall within the borders of the cloth and may be easily picked up.

Page 75. Yamaloka—the world where Yama the God of Death resides in charge of souls.

Page 81. 'Stood as a rock' a Telugu idiom literally rendered, means 'greatly perplexed and unaware as how to proceed.'

Page 89. Maniara—A man who sells edibles stuffed with chillies and fried in oil. They are made from a kind of vetch (moong)

pounded. These edibles are greatly demanded by those who go in for arrack or toddy.

Page 98. Tali—See note under Story II and with the heading 'Mangalasutram.'

STORY V

Page 129. 'One's turban comes to the ground' a Telugu idiom literally rendered, means that 'it is very, very high' or of dizzy height.

STORY VI

Page 136. 'and the king had a marriage booth made as high as the sky and a marriage platform as large as the earth.' All Indian marriages are conducted in a booth made of bamboos and decorated with plantain leaves and flowers. In this is erected a platform of earth in which the bridegroom and bride are seated. After their robes are knotted together they are led round the sacred fire lighted in the booth, while appropriate *mantras* or holy texts of the Veda are recited—Note by Dr. Richard Crooke.

Page 136. 'and the girl was married to a Knife.' The usual ritual in proxy-marriages among high caste Hindoos. Sometimes a sword is used. Note by Dr. Richard Crooke.

Page 141. 'but the smallest she called the headless little Nagannah. 'Thala poyina' chinna

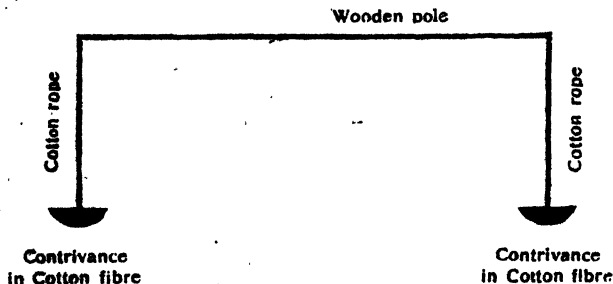
Nagannah in Telugu. Chinna Naganna literally means 'little brother snake or little Naga.'

STORY VII

Page 148. Gandharva laws of marriage.—See note under Story III.

STORY VIII

Page 157. Kavidiful or as much as a Kavidī can hold. A Kavidī is a long horizontal pole about two yards in length from the ends of which are suspended two strong ropes made of cotton fibre, and about one 3rd in length of the pole with the contrivance in the cotton rope to hold two baskets or two brass pots—a basket or pot at both the sides or ends. The Kavidī is in the form of a balance on a large scale minus the fulcrum.



The equilibrium of the Kavidī is maintained by the Kavidī's horizontal pole exactly in the centre resting on the apex of the arm at equal distance.

STORY IX

Page 161. A big bird. Probably an owl is meant. In Telugu an owl is called a 'pedda pakshi' literally meaning a big bird.

Page 162. Paidaraisi Peddammah, an Indian hospice keeper of the folk-stories. The hero or heroine goes first to her house and lodges and boards there and acquires information of the country from the old garrulous woman whose work is also that of arranging and carrying a bunch of flowers to the Princess or daughter of the King of the country.

Page 163. 'Your son-in-law the young man.' The young girl in the Hindu bride would not say 'my husband' out of decorum or bashfulness.

Page 163. Maina Māma or maternal uncle. Amongst the aristocracy—in some cases amongst the plebians also—when a suitable match is not found it is usual to give away one's daughter to the wife's brother and thus save the odium of having given a girl to one who is beneath one's dignity.

The maternal uncle may not possess qualifications to be the eligible person or suitable partner for the princess or the girl of affluent circumstances. Or in the present case, where a princess is married to a man in accordance with the sending forth of a proclamation, and the man becomes undesirable by reason of his habits, then a plea is hit upon for sending him away and the queen's or

wife's brother is chosen or selected and the girl married again to avoid scandal.

Page 163. Betels and chewing the betel or pepperine leaves. In India there are large fields where the leaf is cultivated. The writer remembers having seen a number of these fields in Ramtek (Ramaghiri of Kālidasa's Meghaduta) a place of pilgrimage twenty miles from Nagpur C.P. The betel—you have the Hindustani name of Pan—grown here is considered to be the best. Nut.—Areca nut is meant—is a chief ingredient in the composition, the minor ingredients being lime (*chunam*) catechou, cloves, nutmeg, and cinnamon. All these go together to make the tiny betel packages that are kept for sale in the bazaars of India, in the theatre-houses or in the tobaccoists' shops.

STORY X

General Note

In the present story the sympathy shown by the farmer in ploughing his field in a zigzag manner and the farmer's mother doing fatal injury to herself, the sympathies of the animals, birds and inanimate things not to be taken into consideration, may be imaginary, but it may not be so with the breaking of the *conjes* pot by the farmer's wife. An instance here may be given. When the guns fired from the Seetabuldi Fort at Nagpore on the morning of the 20th

January, 1891 announcing the burial in London of the Queen's Grandson, Prince Albert Victor, the bevy of maidens that came to the water hydrants and filled or were filling their pitchers came to know that the firing of the guns was because of the event of burial, they at once poured down the contents of the pots as a sign of sorrow or sympathy, and only after the gun firing was over that they again filled their pitchers with water and returned to their homes.

STORY XIII

The sun and the moon are considered as 'Male beings' by the Hindus e.g. Surya Chandra Rajuloo meaning the sun and the moon kings. One class of Rajputs is said to descend from the sun and the other from the moon and therefore they term themselves Surya Chandra Vamshes belonging to the genealogy of the sun or moon as the case may be. Sanskrit poets speak of the Sun as the husband of day and the Moon as the husband of night.

Page 171. Nāyana, Telugu, a form of endearment to a child or grown up person by a mother, father or an elderly person, literally meaning a father.

Page 171. What have I brought for you, mother? A Telugu idiom when rendered means 'I have not brought anything for you, mother.' This meaning alone is inferred.

STORY XV

Page 178. Nawab. A magnate. There are many nawābs, in Hyderabad, Deccan. In the long list of titles of His Highness the Nizam, the Ruler of the Deccan Sir Mahbub Ali Khan, G.C.S.I., (now the ruling H.E.H. Sir Oosman Ali Khan, G.C.S.I.) occurs the title of Nawāb also, meaning thereby, that title is not of ordinary significance.

GLOSSARY

B

Bazaar H.	...	Market.
Bhagvantha T.	...	God.

C

Cheerai T.	...	Dress of Indian woman, Sâri.
Chowk H.	...	Main thoroughfare, Boulevard.
Congee T.	...	Gruel.
Croze S.	...	Two miles.

D

Dâsees T.	...	Maid servants or female slaves.
Dayvendra T.	...	Indra.
Dayvendraloka T.	...	Indra's heaven.
Dhall H.	...	A kind of Vetch.

G

Ganâs S.	...	Collection (of servants).
Ghi H.	...	Clarified butter.
Grammadaivy T.	...	Village goddess.

J

Jonna T.	...	Indian Millet.
Jonnappittu T.	...	Indian Millet (pounded.)
Jowari H.	...	Indian Millet.
Jungle H.	...	Forest.

K

Kalās S.	...	Sciences or Arts.
Kārāgruham T.	...	Prison-house.
Kasinda T.	...	A flower (<i>Cassia occidentalis</i> .)
Komti T.	...	A Hindu grocer.

L

Lakshmi T.	...	Fortune or Wealth or Goddess of Wealth.
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M

Maina Māma T.	...	Maternal uncle.
Manikkam T.	...	Diamond—Common name of males (Telugu and Tamil.)
Moothiam T.	...	Pearl. Name of Telugu females.
Moonaisparan Tam.	}	A Hindu godling.
Moonaispurudan T.		

N

Nāgaloka T.	...	Snake-regions or the Under-world.
Nāgarāja T.	...	King Cobra.
Nāgendra T.	...	Lord of Serpents.
Naraloka T.	...	Abode of mortals.
Nawab U.	...	A magnate.

P

Pandit H.	...	A learned man.
Parmeshwar S.	...	The Great Lord (God.)
Parwati S.	...	Consort of Parmeshwar.

P

- Pātāla T.** ... Underworld or snake regions.
Pātshāla S. ... School.
Pulla H. ... An Indian measure, 120 seers or 240 lb. in weight.
Puli T. ... A Tiger.
Puli Raja T. ... Tiger-king.

R

- Raggi or Ragguloo T.** Indian Millet.
Raygupandlu T. ... Bér fruits, (*Zizyphus jujuba*).
Rākshasha T. ... An ogre.
Rākshashi T. ... An ogress.
Ravikay T. ... Indian bodice, (H. Choli.)
Rupée Rupia S. ... A silver coin worth 1s. 4d. at the present rate of exchange.

S

- Sér T.** ... An Indian weight of 2lb.
Shiva or Sāmbashiva S. ... Shivite God.

T

- Tālāloo T.** ... Cymbals.
Tope H. ... A Grove of trees.

V

- Vanaprastha S.** ... Dweller in a forest.
Varā T. ... A silver coin worth about 7 shillings in sterling.

V

- Vina T. ... A stringed instrument a sister guitar.
- Voosirikaya T. ... Aonla, (Hindi) *emblica officinalis*.

W

- Wazir W. ... Minister.

Z

- Zamindar H. ... A landed proprietor.

Note

H. stands for Hindi.

S. „ „ Sanskrit.

T. „ „ Telugu.

Tam. „ „ Tamil.

U. „ „ Urdu.

For words not found in glossary, please turn to Notes.

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OPINIONS ON THE LAST PUBLISHED BOOK

HEERAMMA AND VENKATASWAMI OF FOLK-TALES FROM INDIA: By M. N. Venkataswami, with a prefatory note by the Rev. J. C. Knight-Anstey, xxiv plus 230 pp. with 4 pictures. (Madras, S.P.C.K.) 1923.

Mr. Venkataswami is a diligent student of the folklore of South India, and his first contributions on the subject appeared in the *Indian Antiquary* many years ago. Since then he has published such legends and tales in book form, with the titles of *The Story of Bobbili* (1912) and *Tulsemnah and Nagaya* (1918). But a strange fatality has dogged his literary productions: nearly all the printed copies of these two books as well as of his father's life (reviewed by us in February, 1909) have been successively destroyed, by fire, flood or other mischance. But Mr. Venkataswami's persistence is unconquerable. He has brought out the present collection of 101 folk-tales in a beautifully printed and bound volume, enriched with notes, a glossary of oriental terms and a careful index. The stories are classified according to their subject-matter into "supernatural," "adventure and romance," "droll," "caste eccentricities," "professional character illustrations," "about gods and goddesses," "about Europeans," "beast fables" and "ancient cosmography." They will delight the general reader and also throw light on the "back of the people's mind" in Southern India.

Professed students of folk-lore would have been greatly helped if the author had been at pains to point out to what locality and among what caste or profession each story is confined and tried to trace its origin and

travels. It is essential to get, if possible, the original pre-Aryan and aboriginal form of a folk-lore, and not the modern version as spoilt by Sanskritists and Hindus to give it a "pure orthodox" colouring. Sir Herbert Risley in a circular issued for the Indian Ethnological Society explained the importance of getting back to the very fountain-head of our ancient traditions and customs, and rejecting their modern "civilised" versions, —which are utterly useless for purposes of scientific study. Mr. Venkataswami ought to be alive to this side of the subject.

To the general reader, for whom the book is intended, South Indian folk-lore, with its quaint humour, should be delicious. Readers of Major Bevens' *Thirty-five Years in India* (2 Vols.) and of *Gooroo Noodle* know what a rich vein of wit and wisdom in primitive simplicity is still afforded by the south to those who have eyes and ears for it. For the general reader, one or two of Mr. Venkataswami's tales are of dubious taste, as they reflect the mediaeval way of looking at these matters.—Professor Jadunath Sarkar, in the "Modern Review" for November, 1923.

CHURCH HOUSE,
HYDERABAD, DECCAN,
9th July, 1923.

DEAR MR. VENKATASWAMI,

I may inform you that the stories are very interesting and ought to be very popular.

Wishing you a hearty good-bye,

I remain,

Your sincerely,

L. S. DUDLEY.

OPINIONS ON THE LAST PUBLISHED BOOK III

WARE'S HOTEL,
SUFFOLK SQUARE,
CHELTENHAM,
1st October, 1923.

DEAR MR. VENKATASWAMI,

Your book of Folk-stories from India duly reached me after its return voyage. I am afraid I cannot review it, but I have read it with great pleasure. Some of the stories are charming.

Your sincerely,
C. A. KINCAID.

DITCHINGHAM HOUSE,
NORFOLK,
8th January, 1924.

DEAR SIR,

It is most kind of you to have sent me your Folklore books. I read a number of the tales with great interest, and much admire the knowledge they display.

I fear it is impossible for me to attempt a book about India ; my acquaintance with that vast land is far too superficial.

Wishing you well and again thanking you,

Believe me,

Yours truly,

H. RIDER HAGGARD.

IV OPINIONS ON THE LAST PUBLISHED BOOK

M. N. VENKATASWAMI,

M. R. A. S., M. F. L. S.,

The Retreat, Hyderabad, Deccan, India.

DEAR MR. VENKATASWAMI,

I am in receipt of your kind post card of 16th ultimo. Many thanks for it. I have not finished your book yet. I am sipping it lest I should exhaust it by drinking the contents *ekdum*.

Yours sincerely,

M. NARSING RAO.

SECUNDERABAD, DECCAN,

20th January, 1924.

MY DEAR MR. VENKATASWAMI,

It is very kind of you to write to me acknowledging receipt of my M.O. for your book. I have read your book with great pleasure. It reminded me vividly of the most happy time we spent together with our late lamented Master* whose soul may rest in peace. I have read the appreciative references published in your book from distinguished personages with great pleasure. You are undoubtedly an Author whose name must be handed down to posterity. With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

M. NARSING RAO.

* Dr. Syed Ali Bilgrami.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
MADRAS,
18th February, 1924.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 16th instant in which you enquire when His Excellency will be leaving Madras. His Excellency leaves Madras on the 8th April and sails from Bombay on the 12th by S. S. "Malwa." I feel sure he will find a copy of your book most interesting to read on the voyage.

Yours very truly,
E. C. SMITH.

M. N. VENKATASWAMI, ESQ.,
The Retreat, Hyderabad, Deccan.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
MADRAS,
10th March, 1924.

No. L 13-2.

PRIVATE SECRETARY,
MADRAS.

SIR,

I much regret that no acknowledgment was sent you of the copy of your book which you were kind enough to send for His Excellency's (Lord Willingdon's) acceptance. I was under the impression that I had acknowledged it. I am to let you know that His Excellency was very pleased to have the copy of "Folk-tales from India" and will enjoy reading it. Yours truly,

E. C. SMITH.

M. N. VENKATASWAMI, ESQ.,
The Retreat, Hyderabad, Deccan.

H. E. H. The Nizam's Educational Department,
No. 427, 14th February, 1925.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
H. E. H. the Nizam's Dominions,
To

M. N. VENKATASWAMI, ESQ.,

Sub-Librarian, State Library, Hyderabad.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter, dated 18th February, 1924,
I beg to inform you that the decision of the Text Book
Committee is as follows:—

Folk-tales from India by M. N. Venkataswami,
M.R.A.S.

Suitable for Libraries of Secondary Schools.

Yours faithfully,

M. MOHAMED ALI,

for Assistant Director.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
(AUSTRALIAN MISSION),
HYDERABAD, DECCAN,

27th March, 1925.

I have read Mr. Venkataswami's book of Folk-stories
with great interest. They should be very interesting
as a new contribution to folk-lore. He has presented
them in a charming way having gleaned many from his
own personal enquiries. I hope the publication will
prove a success—as also his book of essays* which he has
printed.

F. C. PHILIPS.

(*Note—Not printed yet).

WESLEYAN MISSION HOUSE,
RAMKOTE,
HYDERABAD, DECCAN,
4th August, 1927.

From

REV. E. PRIESTLEY.

DEAR MR. VENKATASWAMI,

I am greatly enjoying your previous book of stories and shall look forward to reading your new book as soon as it is published.

Yours sincerely,

E. PRIESTLEY.

NATHIGALI,
N. W. F.

2nd June, 1928.

DEAR MR. VENKATASWAMI,

I read your South Indian Folk-tales with great interest. The stories are not only interesting in themselves, but throw several sidelights on many recesses of a South Indian mind which have, so far, remained unveiled. I trust the publication of these stories will meet with the success they deserve.

Yours sincerely,

K. P. S. MENON,

