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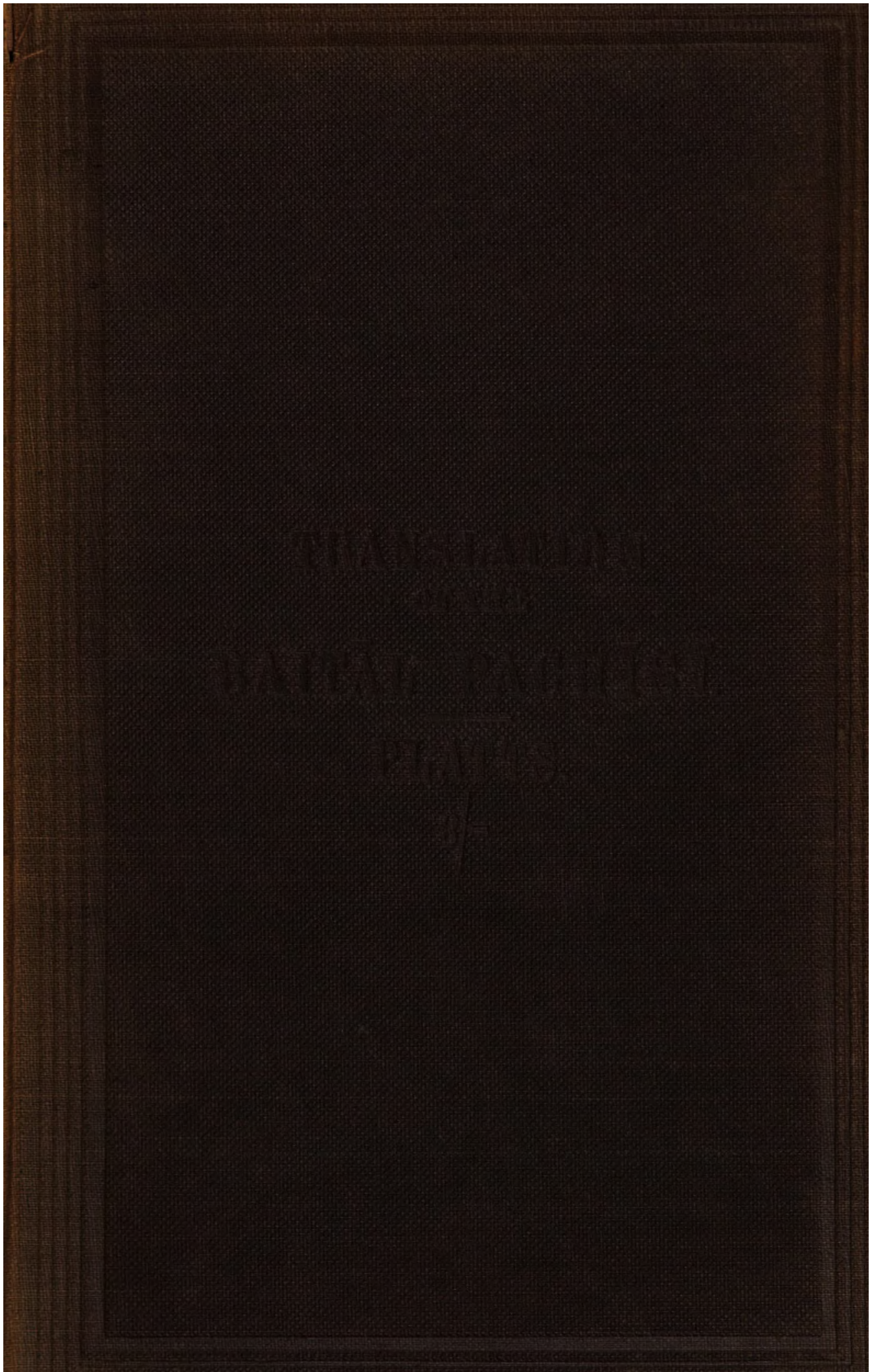
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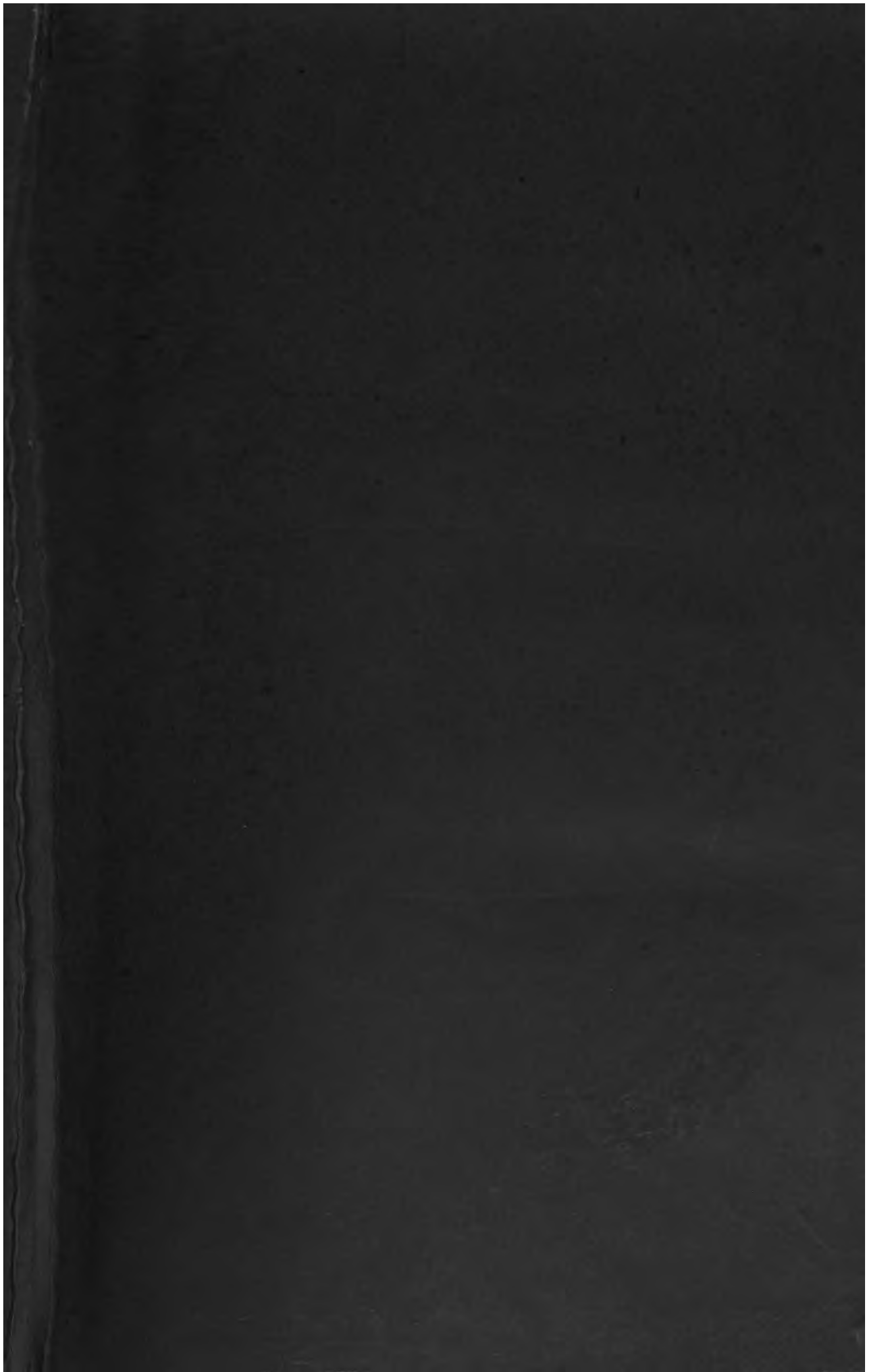


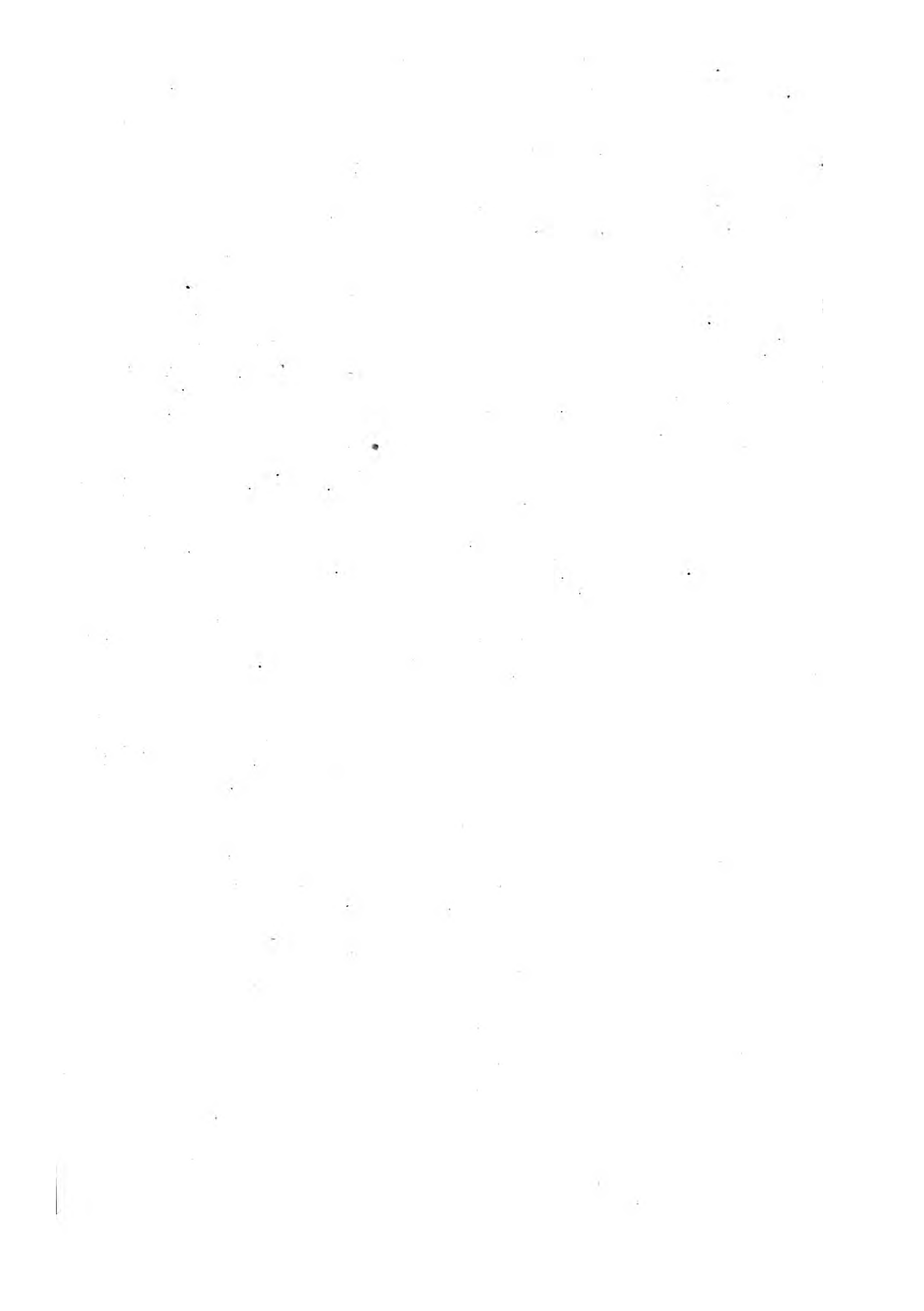
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THE
BAITĀL PACHCHISĪ;

OR THE
TWENTY-FIVE TALES OF A SPRITE.

TRANSLATED FROM

THE HINDI TEXT OF

DR. DUNCAN FORBES.

BY

JOHN PLATTS, ESQ..

ONE OF HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS IN THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES OF INDIA.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE English translation of these tales has been made by special request, to meet repeated demands for a translation of the text as edited by the late Dr. Duncan Forbes. The aim of the Translator has been to produce a work which would enable the student to study the original with facility and accuracy. It being considered that few save students who are compelled to study the Hindī original would be likely to peruse the work, the translation has been made as literal as it was possible to make it without doing unpardonable violence to English idiom. All difficulties have been boldly, if not successfully, met; and explanatory and other notes have been added, wherever the text appeared to call for such. The study of the translation must not be supposed to dispense with that of the Grammar of the language; it will be found, however, to prove of the highest utility to a student who has mastered the elementary principles of Grammar, and uses it—not as a mere “crib” but—for the purpose of discovering what light it sheds on the application of those principles.

P R E F A C E.

THE origin of these tales is as follows :—In the reign of the Emperor Muhammad Shāh, Rājā Jaisinh Sawā'ī (who was the ruler of Jainagar) ordered the eminent poet, named Sūrat, to translate the Baitāl Pachīsī (which was in the Sanskrit) into the Braj dialect. Thereupon he translated it into the dialect of Braj, in accordance with the king's command. And now, during the reign of the Emperor Shāhi 'Alam, and in the time of the lord of lords, the cream of exalted princes, the Privy-Counsellor of the Monarch of England, whose court stands as high as Saturn; the noblest of the noble, the Governor-General, Marquis Wellesley (may his government be perpetuated!); and in accordance with the bidding of His Honour, Mr. John Gilchrist (may his good fortune endure!); to the end that illustrious gentleman may learn and understand, the poet Mazhar Alī Khān (whose *nom de plume* is Vilā), with the aid of the poet Shri Lallū Lāl, rendered the same into easy language, such as high and low use in speaking, and which the learned

and the ignorant, the talented and the obtuse, would all comprehend, and which would be easy to the mind of every one, no difficulty of any kind presenting itself to the intellect, and wherein the dialect of Braj frequently occurs.

Now, in conformity with the command of the Professor of Hindī, the bounteous patron, His Honour, Captain James Mouat, (may his prosperity last long!) Tāriṇīcharaṇ Mitra, (in preparing the work) for the press, has struck out such Sanskrit and Braj words as seldom occur in the Urdū dialect, and introduced words in current use. Some words, however, in use among the Hindūs, the exclusion of which he regarded as detrimental, he has preserved intact. He trusts that the work may meet with a favourable reception.

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THE BAITAL PACHCHISI.



INTRODUCTORY TALE.

THERE was a city named Dhārānagar, the king of which was Gandharb Sen. He had four queens, and by them six sons, one more learned and more powerful than another. Fate ordaining, after some days the king died, and his eldest son, Shank by name, became king in his stead. Again, after some days, a younger brother, Vikram, after slaying his eldest brother, himself became king, and began to govern well. Day by day his dominion so increased that he became king of all India ;¹ and, after fixing his government on a firm basis, he established an æra.

After some time the king thought to himself that he ought to visit those countries of which he had

¹ *Jambudwīp* is the name of one of the seven divisions of the world, and implies the central division, or the known world ; according to the Baudhas, it is confined to India.

heard.¹ Having determined on this, he made over his throne to his younger brother Bhartharī, and himself assuming the guise of a devotee, set out to wander from land to land and forest to forest.

A Brahman was practising austerities in that city. One day a deity brought and presented to him the fruit of immortality. He then took the fruit home and said to his wife, "Whoever shall eat this will become immortal; the deity told me this at the time of giving the fruit." Hearing this, the Brahman's wife wept excessively, and began to say, "This is a great evil we have to suffer! For, becoming immortal, how long shall we go on begging alms? Nay, to die is better than this; (for) if we die, then we escape from the trials of the world." Then the Brahman said, "I took the fruit and brought it; but, hearing your words, I am bereft of understanding. Now I will do whatever you bid." Then his wife said to him, "Give this fruit to the king, and in exchange for it take wealth, whereby we may enjoy the advantages of this world as well as that to come."

Hearing this speech, the Brahman went to the king and gave him his blessing; (and) after explaining the circumstances of the fruit, said, "Great king! do you take this fruit and give me some wealth; there is happiness for me in your being long-lived." The

¹ *Lit.*—The king thought in his mind, "I should travel over those countries whose names I am hearing."

king having given the Brahman a lakh of rupees and dismissed him, entered the female apartments, and giving the fruit to the queen whom he loved most, said, "O queen! do thou eat this, for thou wilt become immortal, and wilt continue young for ever." The queen, hearing this, took the fruit from the king, (and) he came out into his court.

A certain kotwāl was the paramour of that queen: to him she gave the fruit. It so happened that a courtesan was the kotwāl's mistress; he gave the fruit to her and described its virtues. That courtesan thought to herself that the fruit was a fitting present for the king. Determining this in her mind, she went and presented the fruit to the king. His majesty took the fruit and dismissed her with much wealth; and contemplating the fruit, and pondering within himself, he became sick of the world, and began to say, "The perishable wealth of this world is of no use whatever; for through it one must ultimately fall into hell. Preferable to this is the practising of religious duties and the biding in the remembrance of the Deity, whereby it may be well in the future."

Coming to this determination, he entered the female apartments and asked the queen what she had done with the fruit (he gave her). She replied, "I ate it up." Then the king showed the queen that fruit. She, on the instant of setting eyes on it, stood aghast, and was unable to make any reply. After that, the

king having come forth, had the fruit washed, and ate it, and abandoning his kingdom and throne, assumed the guise of a devotee, and betook himself unaccompanied, and without holding communication with a soul, to the jungle.

The throne of Vikram became vacant. When this news reached king Indra, he sent a demon to guard Dhārānagar. He kept watch over the city day and night. To be brief, the report of this matter spread from country to country, that king Bhartharī had abandoned his government and gone away. King Vikram, too, heard the news, and immediately came to his country. It was then midnight: he was entering the city at that hour, when that demon called out, "Who art thou? and whither goest thou? Stand still (and) mention thy name." Then the king said, "It is I, king Vikram; I am entering my own city: who art thou, to challenge me?" Then the demon replied, saying, "The deities have sent me to guard this city: if you are really king Vikram, first fight with me, and then enter the city."

On hearing these words the king girt tight his waist-cloth and challenged the demon. Thereupon the demon, too, stood up to him. The battle began. At last the king threw the demon and sat upon his breast. Then he said, "O king! thou hast thrown me; I grant thy life as a boon." Upon this the king, laughing, said, "Thou art gone mad; whose life dost

thou grant? Did I will, I could slay thee; how canst thou grant me life?" Then the demon said, "O king! I am about to save thee from death; first attend to a tale of mine, and thereafter rule over the whole world free from all care." At length the king set him free, and began to listen attentively to his tale.

Then the demon addressed him thus: "There was in this city a very liberal king, named Chandrabhān. One day he went forth casually into the jungle; when, what should he behold but an ascetic hanging, head downwards, from a tree, and sustaining himself by inhaling smoke alone—neither receiving anything from any one, nor speaking to any one. Perceiving this state of his, the king returned home, and seating himself in his court, said, "Whoever will bring this ascetic (here), shall receive a lakh of rupees." A courtesan hearing these words, came to the king and spake thus: "If I obtain your majesty's leave, I will have a child begotten by that ascetic, and bring it here mounted on his shoulder."

"The king was astonished at hearing this speech, and binding the courtesan to (the fulfilment of her contract to) bring the ascetic by giving her a flake of betel-leaf,¹ dismissed her. She went to that wild,

¹ I am obliged to render thus periphrastically the words *tapaswi ke lāne ke wāste bīṛā dekar*. The *bīṛā* is a betel-leaf, made up with a preparation of areca-nut, chunam, cloves, &c. It is given and accepted as a pledge for the performance of an act.

and reaching the ascetic's place, perceived that he was really hanging head-downwards, neither eating nor drinking anything, and that he was withered up. In short, that courtesan prepared some sweetmeat, and put it into the ascetic's mouth: he, finding it sweet, ate it up with zest. Thereupon the courtesan applied more (to his mouth). Thus for two days did she continue feeding him with sweetmeat, by eating which he gained a certain degree of strength. Then, opening his eyes, and descending from the tree, he inquired of her, 'On what business hast thou come hither?'

"The courtesan replied, 'I am the daughter of a god; I was practising religious austerities in heaven; I have now come into this wild.' The devotee said again, 'Where is thy hut? Show me it.' Thereupon the courtesan brought the ascetic to her hut, and commenced feeding him with savoury (*lit.* six-flavoured) viands, so that the ascetic left off inhaling smoke, and took to eating food and drinking water daily. Eventually Cupid troubled him; upon which he had carnal intercourse with her, (and) vitiated his austerities; and the courtesan became pregnant. In ten months a boy was born. When he was some months old, the woman said to the devotee, 'O saint! you should now set out on a pilgrimage whereby all the sins of the flesh may be blotted out.'

"Deluding him with such words, she mounted the

boy on his shoulder, and started for the king's court, whence she had set out, after taking up the gage to accomplish this matter. When she came before the king, his majesty recognised her from a distance, and seeing the child on the shoulder of the devotee, began saying to the courtiers, 'Just see! this is the very same courtesan who went to bring the devotee!' They replied, 'O king! you are quite right; this is the very same; and be pleased to observe that all that she had stated in your majesty's presence ere she set forth, has come to pass.'"

"When the ascetic heard these remarks of the king and courtiers, he perceived that the king had adopted these measures to disturb his religious meditations. With these thoughts in his mind, the devotee returned from thence, and getting out of the city, slew the child, repaired to another jungle, and began to perform penance. And after some time that king died, and the devotee completed his penance."

"The short of the story is this, that you three men have been born under one asterism, one conjunction, and in one moment. You took birth in a king's house; the second was an oilman's (child); the third, the devotee, was born in a potter's house. You still govern here, while the oilman's son *was* the ruler of the infernal regions; but that potter, bringing his religious meditations to thorough perfection, has killed the oilman, turned him into a demon in a burning-

ground and placed him hanging head-downwards on a siris-tree, and is intent on killing you. If you escape him, you will rule. I have apprised you of all these circumstances; do not be careless with respect to them." Having narrated thus much, the demon departed. He (the king) entered his private palace.

When it was morn the king came forth, and took his seat (on the throne), and gave the order for a general court. As many servants as there were, great and small, all came and made their offerings in the presence, and festive music burst forth. An extraordinary gladness and rejoicing possessed the whole city, such that in every place, and every house, dance and song arose. After this the king began to govern justly.

It is related that one day an ascetic named Shānt-shīl appeared at the king's court with a fruit in his hand, and, presenting the fruit to the king, spread a cloth, and sat down there. After a short time he went away again. On his departure the king thought to himself that this was probably the person of whom the demon had spoken. Habouring this suspicion, he did not eat the fruit, and, summoning the steward, he gave it to him, with instructions to keep it carefully. The devotee, however, came constantly in this same manner, and left a fruit every day.

It so happened that one day the king went to inspect his stable, accompanied by some attendants.

During that interval the ascetic, too, arrived there, and presented the king with a fruit in the usual manner. He began tossing it in the air, when all of a sudden it fell from his hand on the ground, and a monkey took it up and broke it in pieces. So exquisite a ruby came out of it that the king and his attendants were astonished at the sight of its brilliance. Thereupon the king said to the devotee, "Why hast thou given me this ruby?"

On this he said, "O great king! it is written in the Shāstra that one should not go empty-handed to the following places, viz., those of kings, spiritual teachers, astrologers, physicians and daughters, for at these places one obtains benefit for benefit. Sire! why do you speak of a single ruby? As many fruits as I have given you, every one of them contains a jewel." Hearing these words, the king told the steward to bring all the fruits he had given to him. On receiving the king's order, the steward immediately brought them; and, having had the fruits broken open, he found a ruby in each. When he beheld so many rubies the king was excessively pleased, and, summoning a tester of precious stones, began having the rubies tested, saying the while, "Nothing will accompany one (from this world); integrity is the great essential in the world; tell me honestly, therefore, the exact value of each gem."

Hearing these words the jeweller said, "O king!

you have spoken the truth. He whose integrity is safe, his all is safe: integrity alone accompanies us, and that it is which proves of advantage in both worlds. Hear, O king! each gem is perfect as to colour, stone, and form. Were I to declare the value of each to be a crore of rupees, even that would not come up to the mark. Of a truth, each gem is worth a clime." Hearing this, the king was pleased beyond measure, and conferring a robe of honour on the jeweller, dismissed him; and taking the devotee's hand, he brought and seated him on the throne, and began thus: "My whole realm is not worth even one of these rubies; tell me, then, what is the explanation of this, that you, a religious mendicant, have presented me with so many gems?"

The ascetic said, "Your majesty! it is not proper to speak publicly of the following things, viz., magic and incantations, drugs employed in medicines, religious duties, family affairs, the eating of impure meats, evil speech which one has heard—all these things are not spoken of in public; I will tell you in private. Attend! it is a rule, that whatever is heard by three pairs of ears remains no secret; the words which reach two pairs of ears no man hears; while the contents of one pair of ears are unknown to Brahmā himself, not to speak of man." On hearing these words, the king took the devotee apart and began to say, "O holy man! you have given me so many rubies, and have

not once partaken of food even ; you have put me to great shame ! Let me know what it is you desire." The ascetic said, "Sire ! I am about to practice magical arts in a large body-burning-ground on the bank of the river Godāvārī, whereby I shall acquire supernatural powers, and so I beg of you to pass one whole night with me ; by your being near me my magic arts will succeed." Then the king said, "Very well ; I will come : leave word with me of the day." The ascetic said, "Do you come to me, armed and unattended, on the Tuesday evening of the dark half of the month Bhādon." The king replied, "You may go ; I will assuredly come, and alone."

Having thus exacted a promise from the king and taken leave, he, for his part, went into a temple and made preparations, and taking all necessaries with him, went and fixed himself in a place for burning bodies ; while here the king began to ponder (over what had happened). In the meantime the moment (for him to depart) too, arrived. Upon this the king there and then girt on his sword, tightened the cloth he wore between his legs, and betook himself alone to the devotee by night, and greeted him. The devotee requested him to be seated, whereupon the king sat down, and then perceived goblins, evil spirits, and witches, in various frightful shapes, dancing around ; while the ascetic, seated in the centre, was striking two skulls together by way of music. The king felt

no fear or alarm on beholding this state of things; but said to the devotee, "What command is there for me?" He replied, "O king! now that you have come, do this;—at a distance of two *kos* south of this place is a burning-ground, wherein is a siris-tree, on which a corpse is suspended; bring that (corpse) to me at once to this place, where I shall be performing my devotions." Having despatched the king thither, he himself settled down in devotional attitude and began muttering prayers.

For one thing, the darkness of the night was in itself terrifying; more than this, the downpour of the rain was as unceasing as if it would rain for once and all that night; whilst the goblins and ghosts, too, were creating such an uproar, that even daring heroes would have been agitated at the spectacle;—the king, however, went on his way. The snakes, which kept coming and twining themselves about his legs, he used to disentangle by repeating incantations. At length, when after passing somehow or other over a perilous road, the king reached the burning-ground, he perceived that goblins were constantly seizing men and destroying them; witches continually munching the livers of children; tigers were roaring, and elephants screaming. In short, when he noticed the tree, he perceived that every leaf and branch of it, from the root to the topmost twig, was burning furiously, while from all four sides arose a tumultuous cry of "Kill

him! kill him! Seize him! seize him! Take care he does not escape!"

The king had no fears on beholding that state of things; but he said to himself, "It may or may not be so, but (I am convinced) this is the same devotee about whom the demon spoke to me." And having gone close and observed, he perceived a corpse fastened by a string, and hanging head downwards. He was glad to see the corpse, thinking his trouble had been rewarded. Taking his sword and shield, he climbed the tree fearlessly, and struck such a blow with the sword that the rope was severed and the corpse fell down, and instantly began to weep aloud. On hearing his voice the king was pleased, and began to say to himself, "Well! this man at least is alive." Then, descending, he enquired of him who he was. He burst out laughing as soon as he heard (the question). The king was greatly astonished at this. Again the corpse climbed up the tree and suspended himself. The king, too, that instant climbed up, and clutching him under his arm, brought him down, and said, "Vile wretch! tell me who thou art." He made no reply. The king reflected and said to himself, "Perhaps this is the very oilman whom the demon said the devotee had deposited in the place where bodies are burnt." Thus reflecting, he bound him up in his mantle and brought him to the devotee. The man who displays

such courage will (be sure to) succeed in his undertakings.

Then the sprite¹ said, "Who art thou? and whither art thou taking me?" The king replied, "I am king Vikram, and am taking thee off to a devotee." He rejoined, "I will go on one condition,—if thou utterest a word on the way, I will come straight back." The king agreed to his condition and went off with him. Then the sprite said, "O king! those who are learned, discerning, and wise—*their* days are passed in the delight of song and the shāstras, while the days of the unwise and foolish are spent in dissipation and sleep. Hence, it is best that this long road should be beguiled by profitable converse: do you attend, O king! to the story I relate."

¹ *Betāl* or *baitāl*, is a sprite haunting cemeteries (or, rather, places where bodies are burned,) and animating dead bodies.

TALE I.

“THERE was a king of Banāras, named Pratāpmukṭ; and Bajra-mukṭ was the name of his son, whose queen’s name was Mahādevī. One day the prince, accompanied by his minister’s son, went to the chase, and advanced far into a jungle, in the midst of which he beheld a beautiful tank, on the margin of which wild geese, brāhmanī ducks, male and female, cranes and water-fowl were, one and all, disporting; on all four sides *ghāts* of solid masonry were constructed: within the tank, the lotus was in full bloom: on the sides were planted trees of different kinds, under the dense shade of which the breezes came cool and refreshing, while birds were warbling on the boughs; and in the forest bloomed flowers of varied hues, on which whole swarms of bees were buzzing;—(such was the scene) when they arrived by the margin of that tank, and washed their hands and faces, and re-ascended.”

“On that spot was a temple sacred to Mahādeva. Fastening their horses, and entering the temple, they paid adoration to Mahādeva, and came out. While

they were engaged in adoration, the daughter of a certain king, accompanied by a host of attendants, came to another margin of the tank to bathe; and, having finished her ablutions, meditations and prayers, she, with her own maidens, began to walk about in the shade of the trees. On this side the minister's son was seated, and the king's son was walking about, when, suddenly, his eyes, and the eyes of the king's daughter, met. As soon as he beheld her beauty, the king's son was fascinated, and began saying to himself, 'You wretch, Cupid! why do you molest me?' And when the princess beheld the prince, she took in her hand the lotus-flower which she had fixed on her head after her devotions, placed it to her ear, bit it with her teeth, put it under her foot, then took it up and pressed it to her bosom, and, taking her maidens with her, mounted (her chariot) and departed home."

"And the prince, sinking into the depths of despair, and overwhelmed with grief on account of her absence, came to the minister's son, and with a feeling of shame laid before him the actual state of affairs, saying, 'O friend! I have seen a most beautiful damsel; (but) I know neither her name nor her abode: should I not possess her, I will give up my life: this I am firmly resolved upon in my mind.' Hearing these circumstances, the minister's son caused him to mount, and brought him home, it is true; but the king's son was so restless from grief at separation, that he entirely

abandoned writing, reading, eating, drinking, sleeping, the business of government—everything. He used to be constantly sketching her portrait and gazing at it and weeping; not speaking himself, nor listening to what others said.”

“When the minister’s son saw this state of his, the result of separation from his flame, he said to him, ‘Whosoever treads the path of love doth not survive; or if he survive, he suffers great sorrow.¹ On this account the wise avoid treading this path.’ The king’s son, on hearing his words, replied, ‘I, in sooth, have entered upon this path, be there joy in it or be there pain.’ When he heard so determined a speech from him, he (the minister’s son) said, ‘Great king! at the time of leaving did she say anything to you, or you to her?’ Upon this he made answer, saying, ‘I said nothing, nor did I hear anything from her.’ Then the minister’s son said, ‘It will be very difficult to find her.’ He said, ‘If she be secured, my life will be preserved; otherwise, it is lost.’”

“He enquired again, ‘Did she make no signs even?’ The prince said, ‘These are the gestures she made,—suddenly seeing me, she took the lotus-flower from her head, put it to her ear, bit it with her teeth, placed it under her foot, and pressed it to her bosom.’ On hearing this, the minister’s son said, ‘I have compre-

¹ *Lit.*—Whosoever has placed his step in the path of love has not survived after it; or if he has survived, then he has experienced great affliction.

hended her signs, and discovered her name, habitation, and all about her.' He (the prince) replied, 'Explain to me whatever you have discovered.' He began to say, 'Attend, O king! Her having taken the lotus-flower from her head and put it to her ear, is equivalent to her having informed you that she is an inhabitant of the Karnāṭak (Carnatic); and in biting it with her teeth, she intimated that she is the daughter of king Danta-vāṭ; and by pressing it under her foot, she declared that her name is Padmāvati; and in again taking it up and pressing it to her bosom, she informed you that you dwell in her heart.' When the prince heard these words, he said to him, 'It is advisable that you take me to the city in which she dwells.' No sooner had he said this than both dressed themselves, girt on their arms, and taking some jewels with them, mounted their horses and took the road to that quarter."

"Having reached the Karnāṭak after several days, and having arrived below the palaces of the king in their stroll through the city, what do they see there but an old woman sitting at her door and plying her cotton-wheel. The two, dismounting from their horses, approached her, and began to say, 'Mother! we are travelling merchants, our goods are following us; we have come on ahead to seek a lodging; if you will give us a place, we will abide.' On looking at their faces and hearing their words, the old woman took compassion on them and said, 'This house is yours;

remain here as long as you please.' In short, they took possession of the house on hearing this; and after some delay the old woman came and kindly sat with them, and began chatting with them. On this, the minister's son enquired of her, 'What family and relations have you got? and how do you subsist?' The old woman said, 'My son is very comfortably provided for in the king's service, and your humble servant is the wet-nurse of Padmāvati, the king's daughter; in consequence of old age having overtaken me I remain at home, but the king provides for my maintenance. Once a day, however, I go regularly to see that girl; it is on my return from thence, in my home, alone, that I give vent to my woe.' "

"Hearing these words, the prince rejoiced at heart, and said to the old woman, 'When you are starting to-morrow, please carry a message from me too.' She replied, 'Son! what need to defer it till to-morrow? I will this moment convey any message of yours that you communicate to me.' Then he said, 'Do you go and tell her this,—The prince whom you saw on the margin of the tank on the fifth day of the light half of the month Jeth has arrived here.' "

"On hearing these words the old woman took her stick and went to the palace. When she got there she found the princess sitting alone. When she appeared before her, she (the princess) saluted her.

The old woman gave her her blessing, and said, 'Daughter! I tended you in your infancy, and suckled you. God has now caused you to grow up: what my heart now desires is, that I should see you happy in your prime, then should I, too, receive comfort.' Addressing her in such affectionate words as these, she proceeded to say, 'The prince whose heart you took captive on the fifth day of the light half of Jeth, by the side of the tank, has alighted at my house, (and) has sent you this message, for you to perform the promise you made him, now that he has arrived. And I tell you, for my part, that that prince is worthy of you, and is as excellent in disposition and mental qualities as you are beautiful.' "

"On hearing these words she became angry, and applying sandal to her hands, and slapping the face of the old woman, began to say, 'Wretch! get out of my house!' She rose annoyed, and went, in that very condition, straight to the prince, and related all that had happened to her. The prince was astounded at these words. Then the minister's son spoke, saying, 'Great king! feel no anxiety; this matter has not come within your comprehension.' Hereupon he said, 'True; do you then explain it, that my mind may obtain rest.' He said, 'In smearing sandal on the ten fingers, and striking the (woman on the) face, she intimated, that when the ten nights of moonlight shall come to an end, she will meet you in the dark.' "

“To be brief, after ten days the old woman again went and announced him; then she tinged three of her fingers with saffron, and struck them on her cheek, saying, ‘Get out of my house!’ After all, the old woman moved from thence in despair, and came and related to the prince all that had occurred. He was engulfed in an ocean of sorrow as soon as he heard it. Seeing this state of his, the minister’s son said again, ‘Be not alarmed, the purport of this matter is something else.’ He replied, ‘My heart is disquieted; tell me quickly.’ Then he said, ‘She is in the state which women are in every month, and hence has stipulated for three days more; on the fourth day she will send for you.’ In short, when the three days elapsed, the old woman made enquiries after her health on the part of the prince. Then she brought the old woman angrily to the western wicket, and turned her out. Again the old woman came and informed the prince of this event: he became cast-down at hearing it. On this the minister’s son said, ‘The explanation of the affair is, that she has invited you to-night by way of that wicket.’ He was pleased beyond measure at hearing this. To be brief, when the hour arrived, they took out brown suits of clothes, arranged them, fastened on their turbands, dressed themselves, placed their weapons in order about them, and were ready; by this time midnight had passed. At that time an

universal stillness prevailed, when they, too, pursued their way in unbroken silence.”

“When they arrived near the wicket, the minister’s son remained standing without, and he (the prince) entered the wicket. What does he perceive, but the princess, too, standing there expecting him! Thus their eyes met. Then the princess laughed, and, closing the wicket, took the prince with her into the festive chamber. Arrived there, the prince beheld censers filled with perfume alight in different parts of the room, and maidens dressed in garments of various colours standing respectfully, with hands joined, each according to her station; on one side a couch of flowers spread; atr-holders, pān-boxes, rose-water bottles, trays and four-partitioned boxes arranged in order; on another side, compound essences, prepared sandal-wood, mixed perfumes, musk, and saffron filled in metal cups; here, coloured boxes of exquisite confections laid out; there, sweetmeats of various kinds placed in order; all the doors and walls adorned with pictures and paintings, and holding such faces, that the beholder would be enchanted at the very sight of each single one. In short, everything that could contribute to pleasure and enjoyment was got together. The whole scene was one of an extraordinary character, of which no adequate description can be given.”

“Such was the apartment to which the princess Padmāvati took the prince and gave him a seat, and

having his feet washed, and applying sandal to his body, and placing a garland of flowers round his neck, and sprinkling rose-water over him, began fanning him with her own hands. Upon this the prince said, 'At the mere sight of you I have become refreshed; why do you take so much trouble? These delicate hands are not fit to handle a fan; give me the fan; you be seated.' Padmāvati replied, 'Great king! you have been at great trouble to come here for my sake, it behoves me to wait upon you.' Then a maiden took the fan from the princess's hand, and said, 'This is my business; I will attend on you, and do you both enjoy yourselves.' They began eating betel-leaf together, and engaging in familiar conversation, when, by this time, it became morning. The princess concealed him; (and) when night came on, they again engaged in amorous pleasures. Thus several days passed away. Whenever the prince showed a wish to depart the princess would not permit him. A month passed thus; then the prince became much disturbed, and very anxious."

"Once it happened that he was sitting alone by night and thinking thus to himself, 'Country, throne, family,—everything had already been separated from me; but such a friend as mine, by whose means I found all this happiness, even him have I not met for a whole month! What will he be saying in his heart? and how do I know what may be happening to him?' He was sitting occupied with these anxious

thoughts when, in the meanwhile, the princess too arrived, and seeing his predicament, began to inquire, 'Great king! what grief possesses you that you are sitting so dispirited here? Tell me.' Then he said, 'I have a very dear friend, the son of the minister; for a whole month I have received no accounts of him: he is such a clever, learned friend, that through *his* talents (it was that) I obtained thee, and *he* (it was who) explained all thy secrets.' The princess said, 'Great king! your soul is really there; what happiness can you enjoy here? Hence, this is best,—I will prepare confections and sweetmeats, and all kinds of meats, and have them sent; do you, too, go there and feast and comfort him well, and return with your mind at ease.' "

" On hearing this the prince rose up and came forth; and the princess had different kinds of sweetmeats, with poison mixed, cooked and sent. The prince had but just gone and sat beside the minister's son when the sweetmeats arrived. The minister's son enquired, 'Great king! how did these sweetmeats come here?' The prince replied, 'I was sitting there anxious concerning you, when the princess came, and looking at me, asked, 'Why do you sit cast-down? Explain the reason of it.' On this I gave her a full account of your skill in reading secrets.¹ On hearing this ac-

¹ In thus translating, I take *bhed-chaturāi* as a compound: other translators render it, "the secrets of your cleverness," which seems to me to be grammatically inadmissible, and to lose the sense.

count, she gave me permission to come to you, and had these sent for you; if you will partake of them, my heart, too, will be rejoiced.' Then the minister's son said, 'You have brought poison for me; it is well, indeed, that *you* did not eat of it. Sire! listen to a word from me,—a woman has no love for her lover's friend: you did not act wisely in mentioning my name there.' On hearing this the prince said, 'You talk of such a thing as no one would ever do: if man have no fear of man, it is to be presumed he fears God at least.' "

"With these words he took a round sweetmeat from among them and threw it to a dog. As soon as the dog ate it he died convulsed. Seeing this turn of affairs, the prince became incensed, and began to say, 'It is unbecoming to associate with so false a woman; up to this hour her love has found place in my heart; now, however, it is all over.'¹ On hearing this the minister's son said, 'Your majesty! what has happened, has happened (*i.e.*, let bygones be bygones); you should now act in such a manner that you may be able to get her away to your home.' The prince said, 'Brother! this, too, can be accomplished by you alone.' The minister's son said, 'To-day do this

¹ This translation may seem rather free, but it is not wide of the sense, which is, "I know well that I have no love for her now." This peculiarly idiomatic use of the word *ma'lûm* occurs in the *Bagh-o-bahâr*, *Arâyishi Mahfil*, and many other Urdu works, and has ever proved a stumbling-block to translators.

one thing,—go again to Padmāvati, and do just what I tell you,—first go and display much regard and affection for her; (and) when she falls asleep, take off her jewels, and strike her on the left thigh with this trident, and instantly come away from thence.’ ”

“ Having received these instructions, the prince went to Padmāvati at night, and after much affectionate conversation, they both lay down together to sleep; but he was secretly watching his opportunity. To be brief, when the princess fell asleep, he took off all her ornaments, struck her on the left thigh with the trident, and came to his own house. He recounted all the occurrences to the minister’s son, and laid the jewels before him. He then took up the jewels, took the prince with him, and, assuming the guise of a devotee, went and sat in a place for burning bodies. He himself took the part of a spiritual teacher, and making him (the prince) his disciple, said to him, ‘ You go into the market and sell these jewels; if anyone should seize you while doing this, bring him to me.’ ”

“ Receiving his instructions, the prince took the jewels with him to the city, and showed them to a goldsmith in close proximity to the king’s palace-gate. As soon as he saw them he recognised them, and said, ‘ These are the princess’s jewels; tell me truly, where did you get them?’ He was saying this to him when ten or twenty more men gathered round. To be brief, the

kotwāl, hearing the news, sent men and had the prince, together with the jewels and the goldsmith, seized and brought before him, and inspecting the jewels, asked him to state truly where he had got them. When he said, 'My spiritual preceptor has given them to me to sell, but I know not whence he got them,'—then the kotwāl had the preceptor also apprehended and brought before him, and taking them both, together with the jewels, into the presence of the king, related all the circumstances."

"On hearing the narrative the king addressed the devotee, saying, 'Master! whence did you obtain these jewels?' The devotee said, 'Your majesty! on the fourteenth night of the dark lunar fortnight I visited a burning-ground to perfect some spells for a witch: when the witch came, I took off her jewels and apparel, and made the impression of a trident on her left thigh; in this way these ornaments came into my possession.' On hearing this statement of the devotee's, the king went into his private apartments, and the devotee to his seat¹ (in the burning-ground). The king said to the queen, 'Just see if there is a mark on Padmāvati's left thigh or not, and (if so) what sort of a mark there is.' The queen having gone and looked, found the mark of a trident. She returned

¹ The *āsan* is, generally, the skin of a deer, or leopard, or tiger, which religious mendicants carry with them to sit upon. The hide of a black antelope is commonly preferred. Some of the gods are fabled to use the lotus-flower for the purpose.

and said to the king, 'Your majesty! there are three parallel marks; indeed, it appears as if some one had struck her with a trident.' "

"On hearing this account, the king came out and sent for the kotwāl, and told him to go and bring the devotee. The kotwāl set off to bring the devotee on the instant of receiving the order; and the king began reflecting thus,—'The affairs of one's household, and the intentions of one's heart, and any loss which has befallen one—these it is not right to disclose to anyone;' when, in the interval, the kotwāl brought the devotee into the presence. Then the king took the devotee aside and questioned him, saying, 'Spiritual guide! what punishment is laid down in the scriptures for a woman?' On this the devotee said, 'Your majesty! if a Brahman, a cow, a wife, a child, or any one dependent on us, be guilty of a disgraceful act, it is prescribed that such should be banished from the country.' "

"On hearing this the king had Padmāvati conveyed away in a litter and left in a jungle. Thereupon both the prince and the minister's son started from their lodging on horseback, went to that jungle, took the Princess Padmāvati with them, and set out for their own country. After some days each reached his father's house. The greatest joy took possession of all, high and low; and these (*i. e.*, the prince and the princess,) entered upon a life of mutual happiness."

After relating so much of the tale the sprite asked King Vikramājīṭ, "To which of those four does guilt attach? If you do not decide this point, you will be cast into hell." King Vikram said, "The guilt attaches to the king." The sprite replied, "How does the sin fall on the king?" Vikram answered him thus, "The minister's son simply did his duty to his master; and the kotwāl obeyed the king's command; and the princess attained her object; hence, the guilt falls on the king for having inconsiderately expelled her from the country."

On hearing these words from the king's mouth, the sprite went and suspended himself on that same tree.

TALE II.

ON looking about him, the king perceived that the sprite was not present; so he went straight away back, and, reaching that place, climbed up the tree, bound the corpse, and placing him on his shoulders, set off. Then the sprite said, "O king! the second story is as follows:—"

"On the bank of the Yamunā (Jamnā) is a city named Dharmasthal, the king of which is named Gunādhip. Moreover, a Brahman named Kesava lives there, who is in the habit of performing his devotions and religious duties on the banks of the Jamnā; and his daughter's name was Madhumāvati. She was very beautiful. When she became marriageable, her mother, father, and brother, were all three intent on getting her married. It happened that while her father had gone one day, with one of his supporters,¹ to a marriage ceremony somewhere, and

¹ *Jajmān*, from the Sanskrit *Yajamāna*, is a person who institutes a sacrifice, and pays for it. In a village where there is a hereditary priest, the priest's fees are paid by the villagers (who constitute his *jajmān*), and that whether they choose to employ his services, or those of any other

her brother to his teacher's in the village, for instruction, in their absence a Brahman's son came to the house. Her mother, seeing the youth's beauty and excellent qualities, said, 'I will give my daughter in marriage to thee.' And there the Brahman had agreed to give his daughter to a young Brahman; while his son had given his word to a Brahman at the place where he had gone to study, that he would give him his sister."

"After some days those two (*i.e.*, the father and son) arrived with the two youths, and here (at home) the third youth was stopping from the first (awaiting them). One's name was Tribikram, the other's Bāman; the third's Madhusūdan; they were all on a par in point of good looks, moral excellence, learning, and age. On seeing them, the Brahman began to reflect thus, 'One girl, and three suitors-elect! To whom shall I give her, to whom not? And we have all three given our words to the three of them: this is a strange piece of business that has happened! What shall I do?'"

"He was sitting reflecting thus when in the meantime a snake bit the girl, (and) she died. On hearing the news, her father, brother, and the three youths, all five ran off in a body, and, after much toil and trouble, brought all the snake-charmers, conjurers,

priest. I object, therefore, to the meaning of "employer" as being inexact, and to that of "customer" as being both inexact and inelegant.

and as many practisers of magic arts for the purpose of expelling poison, as there were (in the place). They all looked at the girl, and said she could not be restored to life. The first said, 'A man bitten by a snake on the fifth, sixth, eighth, nine, or fourteenth day of the lunar month does not survive.' A second said, 'One who has been bitten on a Saturday or Tuesday, too, does not live.' A third said, 'Poison which has ascended (into the system) when the moon is in the fourth, tenth, ninth, sixteenth, nineteenth, and third asterisms of its path, does not descend.'¹ A fourth said, 'One bitten in any of the following members, viz., an organ of sense, the lips, the cheek, the neck, the abdomen, or the navel, cannot escape.' A fifth said, 'In this instance even Brahma could not restore to life; of what account are we then? Do you now perform her funeral rites; we are off.' Having said this, the conjurers went away; and the Brahman took the corpse away, burnt it in the place for such rites, and went off."

"Now, after he had gone, those three youths acted in this wise:—One of them picked up and fastened together her charred bones, and becoming a religious mendicant, went forth to wander from forest to forest.

¹ Any one who has seen the conjurers at work will know that the operator always pretends to work the poison out of the system *downwards*, from the head towards the feet; hence the expressions "ascending" and "descend" in connection with the action of the poison.

The second, having tied her ashes up in a bundle, built a hut, and began living on that very spot. The third became a devotee, furnished himself with a wallet and neck-band, and set out to wander from land to land. One day he went to a Brahman's house in some country for food. The resident¹ Brahman, on seeing him, began to say. 'Very well; eat food here to-day.' On hearing this he sat down there. When the food was ready, he had his hands and feet washed, and took and seated him in the square place where the food was cooked, and himself sat down near him; and his wife came to serve out the food. Some was served, some remained, when her youngest son cried, and seized the border of his mother's mantle. She was trying to make him let it go, but he would not; and as much as she tried to soothe him, he but cried the more, and became more obstinate. On this the Brahman's wife, becoming angry, took up the child and threw him into the burning fire-place; the child was burnt to ashes."

"When the Brahman (the guest) witnessed this occurrence, he rose up without eating anything. Then the master of the house said, 'Why do you not eat?' He replied, 'How can one partake of food in his house where a diabolical deed has been perpetrated.' On hearing this the householder arose, and going to

¹ The word *grihastī* means properly a Brahman who is settled in a house and performs the duties of the father of a family.

another part of his house, brought a book on the science of restoring to life, took a charm from it, muttered some prayers, and brought his son back to life. Then that Brahman, seeing this wonder, began to ponder in his mind, 'If this book were to fall into my hands I, too, could restore my beloved to life.' Having made up his mind on this point, he ate the food, and tarried there. To be brief, when night came on, after some time all partook of supper, and went and lay down in their respective places, and were chatting together on one subject or another. The Brahman, too, went and lay down apart, but kept lying awake. When he thought that the night was far advanced, and all had gone to sleep, he arose quietly, softly entered his (host's) room, took that book, and decamped; and in the course of several days he arrived at the place where he (the father) had burnt the Brahman's daughter. He found the other two Brahmans there also, sitting and conversing together. Those two also, recognising him, approached and met him, and inquired, saying, 'Brother! you have wandered from land to land, it is true; but, tell us, have you learned any science as well?' He said, 'I have learned the science of restoring the dead to life.' As soon as they heard this, they said, 'If you have learned this, restore our beloved to life.' He replied, 'Make a heap of the ashes and bones, and I will restore it to life.' They gathered together the

ashes and bones. Then he took a charm out of the book, and muttered prayers; the girl rose up alive. Thereupon Cupid so blinded the three of them that they began wrangling among themselves."

Having related so much of the tale, the sprite said, "O king! tell me this; to whom did that woman (by right) belong? (or, whose wife was she?)." King Vikram replied, "To him who built the hut and stayed there." The sprite said, "If he had not preserved the bones, how could she have been restored to life? And if the other had not returned instructed in the science, how could he have restored her to life?" The king made answer thus:—"He who had preserved her bones, occupied the place of her son; and he who gave her life, became, as it were, her father; hence, she became the wife of him who built a hut and remained there with the ashes." On hearing this answer, the sprite went again and suspended himself on that tree. The king, too, arrived close at his heels, and, having bound him, and placed him on his shoulder, started off with him again.

TALE III.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Bardwān, wherein is a king named Rūpsen. It happened one day that the king was seated in an apartment adjoining the gate (of his palace), when, from without the gate, the loud voices of some people reached him. The king said, 'Who is at the gate? and what noise is that taking place?' Upon this the gate-keeper replied, 'Great king! you have asked a fine question! Knowing this to be the gate of a wealthy personage, numbers of persons of all kinds come and sit at it for the sake of money, and converse on a variety of topics; this is *their* noise.'"

"On hearing this the king kept silent. In the meanwhile a traveller, named Birbar, a Rājput, came from the south to the king's gate, in the hope of obtaining service. The gate-keeper, after ascertaining his circumstances, said to the king, 'Your majesty! an armed man has come in the hope of entering your service, and stands at the door: with your majesty's leave he shall come before you.' Having heard this,

the king gave the order to bring him in. He went and brought him. Then the king asked, 'O Rājput! How much shall I allow thee for daily expenses?' On hearing this Bīrbar said, 'Give me a thousand *tolās* (about 833 oz.) of gold daily, and I shall be able to subsist.' The king enquired, 'How many persons are there with you (dependent on you)?' He replied, 'First, my wife; second, a son; third, a daughter; fourth, myself: there is no fifth person with me.' Hearing him speak thus, all the people of the king's court turned away their faces and began laughing; but the king began to consider why he had asked for a large sum of money. Ultimately he thought it out in his own mind, that a vast sum of money given away will some day prove of advantage. Coming to this conclusion, he sent for his treasurer and said, 'Give this Bīrbar a thousand *tolās* of gold daily from my treasury.'"

"On hearing this order, Bīrbar took a thousand *tolās* of gold for that day, and brought it to the place where he was staying, and dividing it into two parts, distributed one half among the Brahmans; and again dividing the remaining half into two parts, distributed one portion thereof among pilgrims, devotees, the worshippers of Vishnu, and religious mendicants; and of the one part which remained he had food cooked and fed the poor, and what remained over he consumed himself. In this way he, with his wife and children,

used regularly to subsist. And every night he used to take his sword and shield and go and mount guard over the king's couch; and when the king, roused from sleep, used to call out, 'Is any one in waiting?' then he used to answer, 'Bīrbar is in attendance; what may be your commands?' Thus answered he whenever the king called out, and thereupon, whatever he (the king) ordered to be done, he executed."

"In this way, through eagerness for wealth, he used to keep awake the whole night long; nay, whether eating, drinking, sleeping, sitting still, or moving about (that is to say) during the whole twenty-four hours (*lit.* eight watches), he used to keep his lord in mind. The practice is, that if one person sells another, this one becomes sold; but a servant, by entering service, sells *himself*; and, when sold, he becomes a dependant; and once dependant, he has no prospect of peace. It is notorious, that however clever, wise, and learned he may be, still, when he is in his master's presence, he remains quite silent, like a dumb person, through fear. So long as he is aloof from him, he is at rest. On this account it is that the learned say, 'To perform the duties of a servant is more difficult than to perform religious duties.'"

"(To) the story: It is related, that one day the weeping voice of a woman chanced to come at night-time from the burning-ground. On hearing it the king

called out, 'Is any one in waiting?' Birbar instantly answered, 'I am here; your commands.' Thereupon the king gave him this order,—'Go to the spot whence yon weeping voice of a woman proceeds, and enquire of her the cause of her weeping, and return quickly.' Having given him this order the king began to say to himself, 'Whosoever desires to test his servant should order him to do things in season and out of season; if he execute his order, know that he is worth something; and if he object, be sure that he is worthless. And in this same way prove brethren and friends in days of adversity, and a wife in poverty.' "

"In fine, on receiving this order, he took the direction whence the sound of her weeping proceeded; and the king also, after dressing himself in black, followed him secretly, for the purpose of observing his courage. In this interval Birbar arrived there. What does he behold in the burning-ground, but a beautiful woman, lavishly decked with jewels from head to foot, crying aloud and bitterly! At one moment she was dancing, at another leaping, at another running; and not a tear in her eyes! And while repeatedly beating her head, and crying out, 'Alas! alas!' she kept dashing herself on the ground. Seeing this her condition, Birbar asked, 'Why art thou crying and beating thyself so violently? Who art thou? and what trouble has befallen thee?'"

"On this she said, 'I am the royal glory.' Birbar

said, 'Why art thou weeping?' Upon this she began relating her case to Bīrbar, saying, 'Impious acts (*lit.* acts such as a Shūdra performs) are committed in the king's house, whence misfortune will find admission therein, and I shall depart thence; after the lapse of a month the king will suffer much affliction and die; this is the sorrow which makes me weep. Further, I have enjoyed great happiness in his house, and hence this regret: and this matter will in nowise prove false.'"

"Bīrbar then asked, 'Is there any such remedy for it, whereby the king may escape, and live a hundred years?' She said, 'Towards the east, at a distance of four *kos* (eight miles), is a temple sacred to (the goddess) Devī; if you will cut off your son's head with your own hand, and offer it to that goddess, then the king will reign a hundred years precisely as he now reigns, and no harm of any kind will befall the king.'"

"As soon as he had heard these words, Bīrbar went home, and the king also followed him. To be brief, when he got home, he awoke his wife, and minutely related the whole story to her. On hearing the circumstances, she roused the son alone; but the daughter also awoke. Then that woman said to her boy, 'Son! by sacrificing your head the king's life will be saved, and the government, too, will endure.' When the boy heard this, he said, 'Mother! in the

first place, it is your command; in the second, it is for my lord's service; thirdly, if this body come of use to a deity, nothing in the world is better for me, in my opinion, than this: it is not right to delay any longer now in this business. There is a saying, 'If one have a son, to have him under control,—a body, free from disease,—science, such that one benefits thereby,—a friend, prudent,—a wife, submissive,—if these five things are obtainable by man, they are the bestowers of happiness and the averters of trouble: if a servant be unwilling, a king parsimonious, a friend insincere, and a wife disobedient, these four things are the banishers of peace and the promoters of misery.' ”

“Bīrbar again addressed his wife, saying, 'If thou wilt willingly give up thy child, I will take him away and sacrifice him for the king.' She replied, saying, 'I have no concern with son, daughter, brother, kinsfolk, mother, father, or any one; from you it is that my happiness proceeds; and in the moral Code, too, it is thus written,—'A woman is purified neither by offerings nor by religious offices; her religion consists in serving and honouring her husband, no matter whether he be lame, maimed in the hands, dumb, deaf, blind of both eyes, blind of one eye, a leper, hunch-backed,—of whatever kind he be, if she perform any description of virtuous action in the world, while she does not obey her husband, she will fall into

hell.' His son said, 'Father! the man by whom his master's business is accomplished—*his* continuing to live in the world is attended with advantage; and in this there is advantage in both worlds.' Then his daughter said, 'If the mother give poison to the daughter, and the father sell the son, and the king seize everything, then whose protection shall we seek?'"

"The four, deliberating with one another somewhat after the above fashion, went to the temple of Devī. The king also secretly followed them. When Birbar arrived there, he entered the temple, paid his adoration to Devī, and joined his hands in supplication, and said, 'O Devī! grant that by the sacrificing of my son the king may live a hundred years.' Saying so much, he struck such a blow with the sword that his son's head fell upon the ground. On witnessing her brother's death, the daughter struck a blow with the sword on her own neck, so that her head and body fell asunder. Seeing her son and daughter dead, Birbar's wife struck such a stroke with the sword on her own neck, that her head was severed from her body. Further, seeing the death of those three, Birbar, reflecting in his mind, began to say, 'When my *son* is dead, for whose sake shall I retain service? and to whom shall I give the gold I receive from the king?' Having reflected thus, he struck such a blow with the sword on his own neck, that his

head was severed from his body. Again, beholding the death of these four, the king said to himself, 'For my sake the lives of his family have perished; accursed is it any longer to govern a realm for which the whole family of one is destroyed, while one holds sovereignty; it is no virtue thus to reign.' Having deliberated thus, the king was on the point of killing himself with the sword; in the meantime, however, Devī came and seized his hand, and said, 'Son! I am well pleased at thy courage, and will grant thee whatever boon thou mayest ask of me.' The king said, 'Mother! if thou art pleased, restore all these four to life.' Devī said, 'This same shall take place,' and on the instant of saying it, Bhawānī brought the water of life from the nether regions, and restored all four to life. After that the king bestowed half his kingdom on Bīrbar."

Having related so much, the sprite said, "Blessed is the servant who did not grudge his life, and that of his family, for his master's sake! And happy is the king who showed no eagerness to cling to his dominion and his life. O king! I ask you this,—Whose virtue, of those five, was the most excellent?" Then King Vikramājīt said, "The king's virtue was the greatest." The sprite asked, "Why?" Then the king answered, saying, "It behoves the servant to lay down his life for his master, for this is his duty; but since the king

gave up his throne for the sake of his servant, and valued not his life at a straw, the king's merit was the superior." Having heard these words, the sprite again went and suspended himself on the tree in that burning-ground.

TALE IV.

THE king, having gone there again, bound the sprite and brought him away. Then the sprite said, "O king! there is a town named Bhogwatī, of which Rūpsen is the king, and he has a parrot named Chūrāman. One day the king asked the parrot, 'What different things do you know?' Then the parrot said, 'Your majesty! I know everything.' The king rejoined, 'Tell me, then, if you know where there is a beautiful maiden equal to me in rank.' Then the parrot said, 'Your majesty! in the country of Magadh there is a king named Magadheshwar, and his daughter's name is Chandrāvati; you will be married to her. She is very beautiful, and very learned.'"

"On hearing these words from the parrot, the king summoned an astrologer named Chandrakānt, and asked him, 'To what maid shall I be married?' He also, having made the discovery through his knowledge of astrology, said, 'There is a maiden named Chandrāvati; you will be married to her.'

Hearing these words, the king summoned a Brahman, and after explaining all, said to him at the moment of despatching him to King Magadheshwar, 'If you return, after placing the arrangements for my marriage on a firm basis, I will make you happy.' Having heard these words, the Brahman took leave."

"Now, in the possession of King Magadheshwar's daughter was a *mainā*, whose name was Madanmanjarī. In the same way the princess, too, one day asked Madanmanjarī, 'Where is there a husband worthy of me?' On this the *mainā* said, 'Rūpsen is the King of Bhogwatī; *he* will be thy lord.' To be brief, unseen (of one another), the one had become enamoured of the other, when, in the course of a few days, the Brahman also arrived there, and delivered his own sovereign's message to that king. He too consented to his proposal, and summoning a Brahman of his own, entrusted to him the nuptial gifts and all customary things, sent him along with that Brahman, and gave him this injunction, 'Do you go and present my compliments to the king, and having marked his forehead with the usual unguents, return quickly: when you return I will make preparations for the wedding.'"

"The short of the story is, the two Brahmans set out thence. In the course of some days they arrived at King Rūpsen's, and related all the occurrences of that place. On hearing this the king was pleased,

and after making all (necessary) preparations, set out to be married. Reaching that country after some days, he married, and after receiving the bridal gifts and dowry, and bidding adieu to the king, started for his own kingdom. When leaving, the princess took Madanmanjarī's cage with her too. After some days they arrived in their own country, and commenced living happily in their palace."

"It happened one day that the cages of both the parrot and the *mainā* were placed near the throne, and the king and queen entered into conversation, saying, 'No one's life passes happily without a companion; hence it is best for us to marry the parrot and *mainā* to one another, and put them both in one cage; then will they also live happily.' After conversing together thus, they had a large cage brought, and put both into it."

"Some days after, the king and queen were seated conversing with each other, when the parrot began to talk to the *mainā*, saying, 'Sexual intercourse is the essence of all bliss in this world; and he who, on being born into the world, has not enjoyed sexual intercourse—his life has been passed in vain. Hence, do thou let me copulate with thee.' On hearing this the *mainā* said, 'I have no desire for a male.' Thereupon he inquired 'Why?' The *mainā* said, 'The male sex are sinful, irreligious, deceivers, and wife-killers.' Hearing this, the parrot said, 'The female

sex, too, are deceitful, false, stupid, avaricious creatures, and murderesses.’”

“When the two commenced wrangling in this manner, the king asked, ‘Why are you two quarrelling with each other?’ The *mainā* replied, ‘Great king! the male sex are evil-doers and wife-killers, and hence I have no desire to have a male partner. Your majesty! I will tell you a tale, do you be pleased to hearken; for such (as I describe them) are men.’”

THE MAINA’S STORY.

“‘There was a city named Ilāpur, and a merchant named Mahādhan dwelt there, who could not get a family. On this account he was continually making pilgrimages and keeping fasts, and always hearing the Purānas read, and he used to give gifts largely to the Brahmans. In fine, after some considerable time, by God’s will, a son was born in that merchant’s house. He celebrated the event with great pomp, and gave large gifts to the Brahmans and bards, and also gave away a good deal to the hungry, thirsty, and indigent. When he reached the age of five years, he placed him (in school) for instruction. He used to leave home for the purpose of learning, but used to gamble with the boys when he got there.’”

“‘After some time the merchant died, and he (the

son) becoming his own master, used to spend his days in gambling and his nights in fornication. Thus he dissipated his whole wealth in a few years, and having no alternative, quitted his country, and proceeding from bad to worse, arrived at the city of Chandrapur. In that place dwelt a merchant named Hemgupt, who possessed much wealth. He went to him, and mentioned his father's name and circumstances. He (the merchant) felt instant pleasure on hearing these accounts ; and rising and embracing him, inquired, 'How came you here?' Then he said, 'I had engaged a vessel, and set out for an island to trade, and having arrived there, and sold the goods, had taken in other goods as cargo, and left with the vessel for my own land, when suddenly so violent a storm arose that the ship was wrecked, and I was left seated on a plank ; and so, drifting on, I have reached this shore. But I feel a sense of shame at having lost all my property and wealth. How can I now return and show my face to my fellow-citizens in this state ?''

“‘ To be brief, when he uttered such words in his presence, he (the merchant) too began to think to himself, ‘ God has relieved me of any anxiety without any effort of my own (*lit.* I sitting at home) ; now, a coincidence like this occurs through the mercy of God alone ; it behoves me to make no delay now. The

best thing to be done is to give my girl in marriage¹ to him ; whatever is done now is best ; as for the morrow—who knows what it may bring forth !’ Forming this grand design in his mind, he came to his wife and began to say, ‘ A merchant’s son has arrived ; if you approve, we will give Ratnāvati in marriage to him.’ She, too, was delighted on hearing (this), and said, ‘ Sir merchant ! when God brings about a coincidence like this, then alone does it occur ; for the desire of our hearts has been obtained without our bestirring ourselves in the least (*lit.*, we sitting quietly at home) ; hence, it is best not to delay, but quickly send for the family priest, have the auspicious moment determined, and give her away in marriage.’ Hereupon the merchant sent for the priest, had the fortunate planetary conjunction determined, and gave his daughter away, bestowing a large dowry upon her. In fine, when the marriage had taken place, they commenced living together there.”

“ ‘To proceed :—After some days, he said to the merchant’s daughter, ‘ A long time has passed since I arrived in your land, and no news of my household has reached me, and my mind remains troubled in consequence. I have told you my whole case ; you should now so explain matters to your mother that

¹ *Lit.* “make the girl’s hands yellow.” Among the Hindūs, for some days before marriage, the hands of a betrothed couple are stained yellow with turmeric.

she may, of her own free will, allow me to depart, that I may return to my own city. If it be your wish, do you also come.' On this, she said to her mother, 'My husband desires permission to depart to his own land; do you, too, act in such a manner now that his mind may receive no pain.'"

"The merchant's wife went to her husband, and said, 'Your son-in-law asks leave to return home.' On hearing this, the merchant said, 'Very well; we will let him go, for we can exercise no authority over a stranger's son; we will do that alone wherein his pleasure consists.' Having said this, he sent for his daughter, and asked, 'Will you go to your father-in-law's, or remain at your mother's? Speak your own mind.' At this she blushed, and gave no answer, (but) returned to her husband, and said, 'My parents have declared that they will do that wherein your pleasure consists; don't you leave me behind.' To be brief, the merchant summoned his son-in-law, loaded him with wealth, and dismissed him, and allowed his daughter to accompany him in a litter, together with a female servant. After this, he set out from thence."

"When he reached a certain jungle, he said to the merchant's daughter, 'There is great danger here; if you will take off your jewels and give them to me, I will fasten them round my waist; when we come to a town you can put them on again.' She no sooner

heard this than she took off all her ornaments, and he having taken them, and sent away the bearers of the litter, killed the woman-servant and threw her into a well, and pushing her (his wife) into a well also, went off to his own country with all the jewels."

" 'In the meantime, a traveller came along that road, and hearing the sound of weeping, stopped, and began to say to himself, 'How comes the weeping voice of a human being (to be heard) in this jungle?' Having reflected thus, he proceeded in the direction of the sound of the crying, and perceived a well. On looking into it, what does he behold but a woman weeping! Then he took out the woman, and commenced questioning her on her circumstances, saying, 'Who art thou, and how didst thou fall into this (well)?' On hearing this, she said, 'I am the daughter of Hem-gupt, the merchant, and was accompanying my husband to his country, when thieves waylaid us, killed my servant and threw her into a well, and bound and carried off my husband together with my jewels. I have no intelligence of him, nor he of me.' When he heard this, the traveller took her along with him, and left her at the merchant's door."

" 'She went to her parents. They, at the sight of her, began enquiring, 'What has happened to thee?' She said, 'Robbers came and plundered us on the road, and after killing the servant and casting her into a well, pushed me into a dry well, and bound and

carried off my husband, together with my jewels. When they began demanding more money, he said to them, 'You have taken all I possessed, what have I now left?' Beyond this, whether they killed him or let him go, I have no knowledge.' Then her father said, 'Daughter! feel no anxiety; thy husband lives, and, God willing, will join thee in a few days, for robbers take money, not life.'"

"'In fine, the merchant gave her other ornaments in place of all that had disappeared, and comforted and consoled her greatly. And the merchant's son, also, having reached home, and sold the jewels, spent his days and nights in the company of loose women, and in gambling, so much so, that all his money was expended. Then he came to want bread. At last, when he began to suffer extreme misery, he one day bethought himself of going to his father-in-law's, and pretending that a grandson had been born to him, and that he had come to congratulate him on the event. Having determined on this in his mind, he set out."

"'In the course of several days he arrived there. When he was about to enter the house, his wife saw from the front that her husband was coming (and said to herself), 'He must not be allowed to turn back through any apprehension he may feel.' Upon this she approached him and said, 'Husband! be not at all troubled in mind; I have told my father that rob-

bers came and killed my servant, and after making me take off all my jewels, and casting me into a well, bound and carried off my husband. Do you tell the same tale; feel no anxiety; the house is yours, and I am your slave.' After speaking thus she entered the house. He went to the merchant, who rose and embraced him, and questioned him on all that had befallen him. He related everything precisely as his wife had instructed him to do."

" 'Rejoicings took place throughout the house. Then the merchant, after providing him with the means of bathing, and placing food before him, and after ministering much comfort, said, 'This house is yours, abide (here) in peace.' He commenced living there. In brief, after several days the merchant's daughter came and lay with him one night with her jewels on, and fell asleep. When it was midnight, he perceived that she had fallen into a sound sleep. He then inflicted such a wound on her neck, that she died; and after stripping her of all her jewels, he took the road to his own country.' "

" 'After narrating so much the *mainā* said, 'This, your majesty! I saw with my own eyes. For this reason I have no wish to have anything to do with a male. You see, your majesty! what villains men are! Who would love such, and so cherish a serpent in her own home? Will your majesty be pleased to consider this point,—What crime had that woman committed?' "

“Having heard this, the king said, ‘O parrot! do you tell me what faults there are in women.’ Thereupon the parrot said, ‘Attend, O king!’

THE PARROT'S STORY.

“‘There is a city (called) Kanchanpur, where (dwelt) a merchant, named Sāgardatt, whose son's name was Shridatt. The name of another city is Jayshripur, where there was a merchant, named Somadatt, and his daughter's name was Jayshri. She had married the son of that merchant, and the son had gone to a certain country to trade. She used to live at her parents' house. In fine, when he had spent twelve years in trading, and she arrived at woman's estate here, she one day addressed a companion of hers thus: ‘Sister! my youth is being wasted; up to this moment I have tasted none of the world's joys.’ On hearing these words, her companion said to her, ‘Be of good cheer! God willing, thy husband will soon come and join thee.’”

“‘She got vexed at these words, and ascending to the upper chamber, and peeping through the lattice, saw a young man coming along. When he drew near her, his eyes and hers suddenly met. The hearts of both went forth to one another. Then she said to her companion, ‘Bring that man to me.’ On hearing this, the companion went and said to him, ‘Somadatt's

daughter wishes to see you in private ; but do you come to my house.' She then put him on the track to her house. He said, 'I will come at night.' The companion came and informed the merchant's daughter that he had promised to come at night. When she heard this, Jayshri said to her companion, 'You go home ; when he arrives, let me know, and I will also come when free to leave home.' "

" "On hearing her words, her companion went home, and seating herself at the door, began watching for his coming. In the meantime he arrived. She seated him in the doorway, saying, 'You sit here ; I will go and give notice of your arrival.' And she came to Jayshri and said, 'Your sweetheart has arrived.' On hearing this she said, 'Wait awhile ; let the household go to sleep, and then I will come.' And so, after some delay, when it was near midnight, and all had gone to sleep, then she arose softly and accompanied her, and arrived there in a very short time ; and the two met in her house without restraint. When nearly an hour and a half¹ of night remained, she rose and returned home, and went quietly to sleep ; and he also went to his house at daybreak."

" "Many days passed thus. At last her husband, too, returned from foreign parts to his father-in-law's house. When she beheld her husband she became

¹ *Lit.*—"Four *gharis*." A *ghari* is equal to twenty-four minutes ; and hence the exact time would be six minutes more than "an hour and a half."

troubled in mind, and said to her companion, 'Such is my anxiety, what shall I do? whither shall I go? Sleep, hunger, thirst, all are forgotten; nothing is agreeable to me (*lit.* neither hot nor cold pleases me). And she told her the whole state of her heart. To be brief, she got through the day somehow or other; but at night, when her husband had finished supper, his mother-in-law had a bed made for him in a separate building, and sent word to him to go and take repose, while she said to her daughter, 'You go and do your duty to your husband.'"

"She turned up her nose and knitted her brows on hearing this, and remained silent. On this her mother rebuked her sharply, and sent her off to him. Being powerless, she went there, but lay on the bed with her face turned away. The more he kept addressing her in words of tenderness, the more vexed would she become. On this he presented her with all the various descriptions of apparel, and the jewels which he had brought for her from different places, and said, 'Wear these.' Then, in truth, she became still more vexed, and frowned and turned away her face. And he, too, went to sleep in despair; for he was fatigued with the journey. To her, however, thinking of her lover, sleep came not."

"When she thought that he was in an unconscious sleep, she arose softly, and leaving him asleep, went fearlessly in the dark night to the abode of her lover;

and a thief seeing her on the way, thought to himself, 'Where can this woman be going, alone, with her jewels on, at this midnight hour.' Thus soliloquising, he followed her. In short, she managed somehow to reach her lover's house. Now, there, a snake had bitten and left him; he was lying dead. She thought he was sleeping. Being, as it was, consumed with the fire of separation, she clasped him to her without restraint, and began caressing him; and the thief from a distance was watching the fun."

"An evil spirit, too, was seated on a pipal tree there, looking on at the scene. All at once it came into his mind to enter his (dead) body and have carnal intercourse with her. Having resolved on this, he entered the body, and after having intercourse with her, bit off her nose with his teeth, and went and sat on the same tree. The thief observed all these occurrences. And she, in despair, went as she was, all stained with blood, to her companion, and related all that had happened. Whereupon her companion said, 'Go quickly to thy husband ere yet the sun rise, and, arrived there, weep aloud and bitterly. If any one should question thee, say, 'He has cut off my nose.'"

"She went thither on the instant of hearing her companion's words, and commenced weeping and wailing excessively. Hearing the noise of her weeping, all her relations came, and lo! she had no nose,—was sitting noseless! Then they exclaimed, 'O you shameless,

wicked, pitiless, mad wretch! Why have you bitten off her nose without any fault on her part?' He, too, became alarmed on witnessing this farce, and began to say to himself, 'Trust not a wanton-minded woman, a black snake, an armed man, an enemy,—and fear the wiles of a woman. What can an eminent poet not describe? What does he not know who has acquired supernatural power? What absurd nonsense does a drunkard not chatter? What can a woman not accomplish? True it is, that the defects of horses, the thunder of the clouds, the wiles of woman, and the destiny of man,—these things even the gods do not comprehend; what power has man, then (to understand them)?'”

““In the meantime her father gave information of the occurrence to the city magistrate. Policemen came from the station there, and bound and brought him before the magistrate. The magistrate of the city gave notice to the king. The king having sent for him, and questioned him about the case, he declared he knew nothing. And on his summoning the merchant's daughter, and interrogating her, she replied, 'Your majesty! when you see plainly (what has happened), why do you question me?' Then the king said to him, 'What punishment shall I inflict on thee?' On hearing this, he replied, 'Do unto me whatever you deem just.' The king said, 'Away with him, and impale him!' On receiving

the king's order the people took him away to impale him."

“ ‘Observe the coincidence;—that thief was also standing there, looking on at the scene. When he was convinced that this man was about to be unjustly put to death, he raised a cry for justice. The king summoned him, and asked, ‘Who art thou?’ He said, ‘Great king! I am a thief; and this man is innocent; his blood is about to be unjustly shed; you have not given judgment at all wisely.’ Hereupon the king summoned him (the husband) also, and questioned the thief, saying, ‘Declare the truth on thy honour! What are the facts of this case?’ The thief then gave a detailed account of the circumstances; and the king, too, comprehended them thoroughly. Ultimately he sent attendants, and had the woman's nose brought from the mouth of her lover, who was lying dead, and inspected it. Then he was assured that the man was guiltless, and the thief truthful. Hereupon the thief said, ‘To cherish the good, and punish evil-doers, has from of old been a duty of kings.’ ”

“After relating so much of the tale, the parrot Chūrāman said, ‘Great king! such embodiments of all crime are women! The king having had the woman's face blackened and her head shaved, had her mounted on an ass, and taken round the city, and then set at liberty; and after giving betel-leaf to the

thief and the merchant's son, he allowed them to depart.' ”

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, “O king ! to which of these two does the greater guilt attach ?” Then King Bir Vikramājīt said, “To the woman.” On this the sprite said, “How so ?” On hearing this, the king said, “However depraved a man may be, still some sense of right and wrong remains in him ; but a woman does not give a thought to right and wrong ; hence great guilt attached to the woman.” Hearing these words, the sprite went again and hung himself on the same tree. The king went again and took him down from the tree, tied him up in a bundle, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him away.

TALE V.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Ujjain, of which Mahābal was king. Now, he had an envoy named Haridās. The name of that envoy's daughter was Mahādevī. She was extremely beautiful. When she became marriageable, her father thought that he ought to seek a husband for her, and give her in marriage. In short, the girl one day said to her father, 'Father! give me in marriage to some one who is possessed of all accomplishments. On this, he said, 'I will give thee to one who is acquainted with all science.' "

"One day subsequent to this, the king summoned Haridās, and said, 'There is in the south a king named Harichand; go and ask after his health and welfare for me, and bring me news thereof.' On receiving the king's command he took leave, and arriving at that king's after some days, delivered to him the whole message of his royal master, and took up his permanent abode near that monarch."

"To be brief, it happened one day that the king

questioned him, saying, 'Haridās! has the Iron Age (*i. e.*, the fourth age of the world, or the age of vice) begun yet or not?' On this he put his hands together and said, 'Your majesty! we are already in the Iron Age (*lit.* the Iron Age is present); for falsehood is rife in the world, and truth has decreased; people utter soft words to one's face, while they harbour deceit in their hearts; virtue has vanished; vice has increased; the earth has begun to yield less fruit; kings have begun levying contributions by violence; Brahmans have become covetous; women have abandoned modesty; the son obeys not the father's command; brother trusts not brother; friendship has departed from amongst friends; faith is no longer found in masters, and servants have cast aside the duty they owe to masters, and every description of impropriety meets the eye.'"

"When he had said all this to the king, his majesty arose and went into the private apartments, and he (the envoy) came and sat down in his own place. In the meantime a Brahman's son came to him and said, 'I have come to solicit something of you.' On hearing this, he said, 'What request have you to make? Mention it.' He replied, 'Give me your daughter in marriage.' Haridās said, 'I will give her to him in whom all accomplishments exist.' Hearing this, he rejoined, 'I am acquainted with all the sciences.' Then said the envoy, 'Show me some-

thing of thy knowledge ; I shall thus be able to judge whether thou art versed in science.' Hereupon the Brahman's son said, 'I have made a car which has this marvellous property, that it will convey you in a moment to any place you may wish to go to.' Then Haridās replied, 'Bring the car to me in the morning.'"

"In fine, he brought the car to Haridās early in the morning. Then the two mounted the car, and arrived in the City of Ujjain. Here, however, it so happened that, previous to his arrival, another Brahman's son had come, and said to his eldest son, 'Give me your sister in marriage;' and he also had replied, saying, 'I will give her to one who is learned in all the sciences;' and that Brahman's son, too, had said, 'I am acquainted with all knowledge and science.' On hearing this, he had said, 'To you will I give her.' Another Brahman's son had said to the girl's mother, 'Give me your daughter.' She, too, had given him the same answer; viz., 'I will give my girl to him who is acquainted with all science.' That Brahman's son also had replied, 'I am acquainted with the whole body of science contained in the *Shāstras*, and can shoot an arrow which will hit an object which is merely heard, and not seen.' On hearing this, she, too, had said, 'I consent, and will give her to thee.'"

"In short, all the three suitors had come and met together in this way. Haridās began to think to himself, 'One girl and three suitors! to whom shall

I give her, and to whom not?' He was troubled with this thought, when a demon came at night and carried off the girl to the summit of a mountain in the Vindhya range. It is said that too much of anything is not good. Sītā was exceedingly beautiful, and Rāvan carried her off; King Balī gave gifts largely, —he became indigent; Rāvan utterly ruined his family by his excessive pride."

"In brief, when morn arrived, and none of the household found the girl, they began to fancy all sorts of things; and the three suitors, too, on hearing of the matter, came there. One of them was a wise man,—him Haridās questioned, saying, 'O wise man! tell me whither the girl has gone?' He considered for a moment or so, and said, 'A demon has carried off your daughter, and lodged her on a mountain.' On this, the second said, 'I will kill the demon and bring her back.' Then, again, the third said, 'Mount my car and bring her back.' On the instant of hearing this, he mounted the car, reached the place, slew the demon, and forthwith brought her back. And then they began quarrelling with one another. Thereupon the father pondered over the matter in his mind, and said, 'All of them have conferred obligations on me, to whom shall I give her, and to whom not?'"

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, "Now, king Vikram! whose wife, out of the three, did the maiden become?" He replied, "She

became the wife of him who slew the demon and brought her back." The sprite said, "The good qualities of all were on a par,—how came she to become his wife?" The king replied, "The other two simply conferred favours, for which they were recompensed; but this one fought with and slew him (the demon) and brought her away, hence she became his wife." On hearing this the sprite went again to the same tree, and suspended himself on it, and the king, too, went immediately, bound the sprite, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him off as before.

TALE VI.

AGAIN the sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Dharmpur, of which Dharmshil was king; and his minister's name was Andhak. He said one day to the king, 'Your majesty! build a temple, and place an image of Devī therein, and pay constant adoration thereto, for this is said in the *Shāstra* to possess great merit.' Thereupon the king had a temple built and (the image of) Devī placed in it, and began offering adoration after the manner prescribed by the Vedas; and he would not drink water without having worshipped."

"When a considerable time had passed thus, the minister said one day, 'Great king! the saying is well known,—The house of a sonless man is empty, a fool's mind is empty, and everything pertaining to an indigent person is empty.' On hearing these words, the king went to the temple of Devī, and joining his hands in supplication, began to extol her, saying, 'O Devī! Brahmā, Vishnū, Rudra, Indra await thy bidding the livelong day; and thou it was

who didst seize the demons Mahish-āsura, Chand Mund, Raktbīj, and slaying the evil spirits, relieved the earth of its burthen; and wheresoever trouble has befallen thy worshippers, there thou hast gone and aided them; and in this hope I have approached thy threshold; fulfil now the desire of my heart also.”

“When the king had celebrated the praises of the goddess to this extent, a voice issued from the temple of Devī, saying, ‘King! I am well pleased with thee; ask any boon that thou may’st desire.’ The king said, ‘Mother! if thou art pleased with me, grant me a son.’ Devī replied, ‘King! thou shalt have a son (who shall be) very powerful and very glorious.’ Then the king made offerings of sandal, unbroken rice, flowers, incense, lamps and consecrated food, and paid adoration. Moreover, he made it a practice of worshipping thus daily. To be brief, after some days a son was born to the king. The king, with his family and kindred, proceeded with music and song, and worshipped at the shrine of Devī.”

“In the meantime, it happened one day that a washerman, accompanied by a friend of his, was coming from a certain town towards this city, and the temple of Devī met his eye. He resolved on prostrating himself (before the shrine). At that moment he beheld a washerman’s daughter, who was very handsome, coming towards him. He was fascinated at the sight of her, and went to worship Devī. After

prostrating himself, he joined his hands in supplication, and said in his heart, ' O Devī ! if, through thy favour, my marriage to this beautiful being should take place, I will devote my head as an offering to thee.' After making this vow, and prostrating himself, he took his friend with him, and went to his own city."

" When he arrived there, the separation (from his love) so troubled him that sleep, hunger, thirst—all were forgotten. He spent the whole day in thoughts of her. On perceiving this woful state of his, his friend went and told his father all the circumstances. His father also became alarmed on hearing these things, and reflecting on the matter began to say, ' From observing his state it seems (to me) that if his betrothal to that maiden does not take place, he will grieve to death ; wherefore it is better to marry him to the girl, that thus he may be saved.' "

" Having thus considered, he took his son's friend with him, and on reaching that town, went to the girl's father and said, ' I have come to solicit something of you ; if you will grant my request, I will make it known.' He replied, ' If I possess the thing, I will give it ; speak out.' Having secured his promise thus, he said, ' Give your daughter in marriage to my son.' On hearing this, he too agreed to the proposal ; and having had a priest called in, and the day, the auspicious conjunction, and the moment determined, said, ' Bring your son ; I, for my part, will stain my daugh-

ter's hands yellow.¹ On hearing this, he arose, returned to his own house, got ready all the requisites for the marriage, and set out for the ceremony; and on reaching the place, and having the marriage ceremony performed, he took his son and daughter-in-law with him and returned home; and the bride and bridegroom commenced a happy life together."

"Again, after some time, an occasion of rejoicing arose at the girl's father's, and so an invitation came to these (the bride and bridegroom) also. The wife and husband got ready, and taking their friend with them, set out for that city. When they arrived near the place, the temple of Devī came in sight, and then his vow came to his mind. Thereupon he reflected and said to himself, 'I am a great liar, and a very irreligious wretch, for I have lied to Devī herself!' Having said this to himself, he spoke to his friend, saying, 'Do you tarry here while I pay a visit to Devī.' And to his wife he said, 'Do thou also stay here.' Having said this and gone to the temple, he bathed in the pool, went before Devī, joined his hands in supplication, addressed her reverentially, and raised a sword and struck himself on the neck. His head was severed from his body, and fell upon the ground."

"To be brief, after some delay, his friend thought that as he had been gone a very long while and had

¹ See note at page 50.

not yet returned, he ought to go and see (what had happened); so he said to the wife, 'Stay here; I will soon hunt him up and bring him here.' Having said this, he went into the temple of Devī, and lo! his (friend's) head was lying apart from his body! On beholding this state of things there, he began to say to himself, 'The world is a hard place! No one will suppose that he, with his own hand, offered his head as a sacrifice to Devī; on the contrary, they will say, that, as his wife was very beautiful, he (the friend), in order to possess her, killed him, and is practising this artful trick. Therefore it is preferable to die here; whereas to obtain an evil reputation in the world is not desirable.' "

" Having said this, he bathed in the pool, came into the presence of Devī, joined his hands and made obeisance, and taking up the sword, struck himself on the neck, so that his head was severed from his body. And she, weary of standing there alone, and watching for their return till she quite despaired, went in quest of them into the temple of Devī. Arrived there, what does she behold but the two lying dead! Then, seeing them both dead, she thought to herself, 'People will not believe that these two have voluntarily offered themselves as sacrifices to Devī. Everybody will say that the widow was a wanton wretch, (and) that she killed them both and left them that she might indulge

in her depravity. It is better to die than to endure such infamy.’”

“After reflecting thus, she plunged into the pool (and bathed), and coming into the presence of Devī, bowed her head in obeisance; (then) taking up the sword, was about to strike herself on the neck, when Devī descended from the throne, and came and seized her hand, and said, ‘Daughter! ask a boon; I am well-pleased with thee.’ On this she said, ‘Mother! if thou art pleased with me, restore these two to life.’ Then Devī said, ‘Unite their heads to their bodies.’ In the tumult of her joy she changed the heads in putting them on. And Devī brought the water of life and sprinkled it upon them. The two rose up alive, and began disputing one with another; one saying, ‘She is my wife;’ the other, ‘She is mine.’”

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, “Now king Vikramājīt! of which of these two is she the wife?” The king said, “Hearken! The guiding principle for this is laid down in the book of law, thus: ‘The Ganges is the best of rivers, and Sumeru is the most excellent of mountains, and Kalpavriksh¹ is the most excellent of trees, (and) the head is supreme among all the members of the body. According to this judgment she becomes the wife of him

¹ *Kalpavriksh* is a fabulous tree, yielding all wishes, said to exist in the paradise of India.

who possesses the superior member.'” On hearing these words the sprite went and again suspended himself on that tree; and the king having gone and bound him, placed him on his shoulder and carried him off.

TALE VII.

THE sprite said, "O king ! there is a city named Champāpur, the king of which is Champakeshwar. And the queen's name is Sulochanā, and the daughter's Tribhuvan-sundarī. She is an eminently-beautiful woman, whose face is like the moon, hair like black clouds, eyes like a gazelle's, eyebrows (arched) like a bow, nose like a parrot's (beak), neck like a pigeon's, teeth like the grains of a pomegranate ; the redness of whose lips resembles that of the *kandūrī*,¹ whose waist is like a leopard's, hands and feet like the tender lotus, complexion like the champā-flower ; in short, the bloom of her youth was daily on the increase."

"When she became marriageable, the king and queen began to feel anxious in their minds. And the news spread among the monarchs of the different countries (round about) that so beautiful a girl had been born in the palace of king Champakeshwar that, at a mere glance at her beauty, gods, men, and holy sages,

¹ The *kandūrī* is a cucurbitaceous plant with red fruit, or the gourd of the *momordica monadelpha*. Its Hindī name is *bimb*.

remain fascinated. Thereupon the kings of the different countries had each his likeness painted, and sent it by the hands of a Brahman to king Champakeshwar. The king received and showed the portraits of all the monarchs to his daughter, but none of them suited her fancy. Thereupon the king said, 'Do thou, then, make a public choice of a husband.' To this, too, she did not agree, but said to her father, 'Father! give me to him who possesses the three qualities of beauty, strength, and superior knowledge.'

"In fine, when several days had elapsed, four suitors came from four different countries. Then the king said to them, 'Do each of you set forth clearly before me the superior qualities and knowledge he possesses.' One of them said, 'I possess such knowledge that I manufacture a cloth and sell it for five rubies. When I realise the price, I give one of the rubies to Brahmans, of another I make an offering to the gods, a third I wear on my own person, a fourth I reserve for my wife, the fifth I sell, and constantly support myself with the money so obtained. No one else possesses this knowledge. And as to the good looks I possess,—they are open to view.' The second said, 'I am acquainted with the languages of both land and aquatic beasts and birds; have no equal in strength; and my beauty is before you.' The third said, 'So well do I comprehend the learned writings

that no equal of mine exists ; and my beauty is before your eyes.' The fourth said, 'I stand alone in my knowledge of the use of weapons ;¹ there is no one like me ; I can shoot an arrow which will strike an object which is heard, but not seen ; and my beauty is famous in the world,—you, too, must surely see it.' ”

“On hearing the statements of the four of them, the king began to think to himself, ‘All four are on a par as to excellences ; to which should I give the girl?’ Having reflected thus, he went to his daughter and set forth the virtues of the whole four of them, and said, ‘To which of them shall I give thee (in marriage)?’ On hearing this, she hung down her head through modesty, and kept silent, making no answer.”

After relating so much of the story, the sprite said, “Now, King Vikram ! for which of them is this woman suited?” The king replied, “He who makes cloth and sells it is a *sūdra* by caste ; and he who knows the languages is a *bais* by caste ; he who has studied the learned writings is a *Brahman* ; and he

¹ I suspect an error in the text here ; viz., *shāstra* for *shastra* ; for the third suitor had already claimed the possession of unrivalled excellence in the *shāstras*, while the fourth boasts of his superior skill in *archery*, which would certainly seem to accord better with *shastra* than *shāstra*. Moreover, the judgment of King Vikram shows satisfactorily, I think, that *shastra* is the word intended.

who hits with an arrow an object which is simply heard, and not seen, is of *her* caste: the woman is suitable for him." On hearing these words, the sprite went again and hung himself on that tree; and the king, too, went thither, bound him, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him off.

TALE VIII.

THEN the sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Mithalāvati, the king of which is Gunādhip. A young rājput, named Chiramdeva, came from a distant land to enter his service. He used to go daily to pay his respects to the king, but did not obtain an interview. And in the course of a year he consumed all the money he had brought (with him) while tarrying here without employment, and there (in his native land), his home went to ruin."

"It happened one day that the king mounted his horse for the chase, and Chiramdeva also joined his cavalcade. The king became accidentally separated from his followers in a forest, and the attendants lost themselves in another jungle; one, however, Chiramdeva, was following the king. At length, he called out, and said, 'Your majesty! all the attendants have remained behind, while I am accompanying you, making my horse keep pace with yours.' On hearing this, the king reined in his horse, and so he came up (to

the king). The king looked at him, and asked, 'How hast thou become so emaciated?' "

"Then he replied, 'If I live with a master, such that he cherishes thousands of people, while he takes no thought of me, no blame (attaches) to him for this, but rather my own fate is to blame. As, for example, by daylight the whole world is clearly visible; yet it is not visible to the owl;—what blame can be imputed to the sun for this? It is astonishing to me that he who caused the means of subsistence to reach me in my mother's womb, should take no thought of me now, when I have been born, and am capable of enjoying worldly aliment. I know not whether he sleeps or is dead. And, in my opinion, it is better to swallow deadly poison and die, than to ask for goods and money from a great man who, while giving the same, makes a wry face, and turns up his nose (in contempt), and raises his brows. Now these six things render a man contemptible,—first, the friendship of a perfidious man; second, causeless laughter; third, altercation with a woman; fourth, the serving a bad master; fifth, riding a donkey; sixth, unpolished (or uncouth) speech.¹ And the following five things the Creator records in a man's destiny at the time of his birth,—First, length of life; second, acts; third, wealth; fourth, know-

¹ *Lit.*—A dialect without Sanskrit.

ledge ; fifth, reputation. O king ! so long as a man's virtues¹ are conspicuous, all continue to be his servants ; but when his virtues decrease, his very friends become his enemies. This one thing, however, is certain ; by serving a good master one derives benefit sooner or later ; he does not remain unbenefited.' ”

“ On hearing this, the king pondered over all these words, but did not then make any reply. He said this to him, however, ‘ I feel hungry ; bring me something to eat from somewhere.’ Chiramdeva said, ‘ Your majesty ! bread² is not to be obtained here.’ Having said this, he went into the jungle, killed a deer, took out a flint and steel from his pocket, kindled a fire, broiled some slices of meat, and served up a plentiful meal to the king, and partook of it himself as well. To be brief, when the king was quite satisfied,³ he said, ‘ Now, Rājput ! conduct me to the city, for the road is not known to me.’ He conducted the king into the city, and brought him to his palace. Then the king appointed him to an office, and bestowed many robes and jewels upon him. After that, he continued in close attendance upon the king.”

¹ I should much prefer translating “so long as a man's fortunes are in the ascendant,” were it not that none of the lexicons I have seen sanctions the sense of “fortunes” for *punya*.

² *Lit.*—“Grain-food,” which might mean boiled rice, or cakes of bread and boiled pulse.

³ *Lit.*—When the king's belly was filled.

“In short, the king one day sent that Rājput on some business to the sea-side. When he reached the sea-shore, he beheld a temple (dedicated) to Devī. He entered it, and worshipped Devī. But, on the instant of his coming out thence, a beautiful damsel came up to him from behind, and began questioning him, saying, ‘O man! why hast thou come here?’ He replied, ‘I have come in quest of pleasure, and at the sight of thy beauty I am fascinated.’ She said, ‘If thou hast any design on me, first go and bathe in this pool; after that I will listen to whatever thou shalt say to me.’”

“On the instant of hearing this, he took off his clothes, entered the pool and dipped, and came out, and lo! he was standing in his own city! On beholding this marvel, he was filled with fear, and returning home in his helplessness, clothed himself, and went and related the whole story to the king. The king no sooner heard it than he said, ‘Show me this wonder also.’ This said, he ordered the horses, and both mounted and set off. After several days, they reached the sea-shore, and entered the same temple of Devī, and paid adoration. Farther, when the king came out, the very same damsel, accompanied by a female friend, came and stood beside the king, and on beholding the king’s handsome appearance, became fascinated, and said, ‘O king! I will execute any command you may give me.’ The king replied,

saying, 'If thou wilt obey my command, become the wife of my servant.' She said, 'I have become the slave of thy beauty, how then can I become his wife?' The king replied, 'It was but this instant thou saidst to me, 'I will obey any command you may give me.' Now, whatever the good promise they perform. Keep thy plighted word, (and) become the wife of my servant.' On hearing this, she said, 'Your word is law to me.' Thereupon the king married his servant to her without the usual ceremonies,¹ and brought them both with him to his palace."

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, "Tell me, O king! Of master and servant, whose was the greater virtue?" The king said, "The servant's." The sprite said again, "Was not the merit of the king greater, who obtained so beautiful a woman, and bestowed her on his servant?" Thereupon king Bir Vikramājīṭ said, "What superior merit is there in their conferring favours, whose office it is to do so? But he who, while having his own interests to attend to, promotes the interests of another—*he* is the greater. For this reason, the servant's merit was the greater." On hearing these words, the sprite went and hung himself on that same tree; and the king went and again took him down from thence, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him away.

¹ A *gandharb* marriage is one where the usual formalities are dispensed with, and the parties become man and wife by mutual consent.

TALE IX.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Madanpur, where was a king named Bīrbar. Now, in that same country there was a merchant named Hiranyadatt, whose daughter's name was Madansenā. One day, in the spring-time, she went, with her female friends, into her garden, to stroll about and enjoy the scene. It so happened that, previous to her coming out, Somdatt, the son of a merchant named Dharm-datt, had come, with a friend, to take a stroll in the forest. On his return thence, he came into that garden; (and) on beholding her, became enamoured, and began to say to his friend, 'Brother! Should she ever be united to me, then my living will be to some purpose; and if not, then my living in the world is in vain.'"

"Addressing these words to his friend, (and) being distracted by the pangs of separation, he involuntarily approached her, and seizing her hand, began to say, 'If thou wilt not love me, I will sacrifice my life on

thy account.' She replied, 'Act not thus; that would be a sin.' Then he said, 'Thy amorous glances have pierced my heart, and the fire of separation from thee has consumed my body; my whole consciousness and understanding have been destroyed by this pain; and at this moment, through the overpowering influence of love, I have no regard for right or wrong; but if thou wilt give me thy word, new life will enter my soul.' She said, 'On the fifth day from this day my marriage will take place; but I will first have intercourse with thee, and afterwards abide at my husband's.' After giving him this promise, and taking her oath (to keep it) she departed to her home, and he to his."

"To be brief, on the fifth day her marriage took place. Her husband brought her to his home after the marriage. After some days the wives of her husband's younger and elder brothers compelled her to go to her husband at night. She entered the nuptial chamber, and sat quietly down in a corner. In the meantime, her husband seeing her, took her hand, and made her sit on the bed. In fine, as he was about to embrace her, she shook him off with her hand, and related to him all that she had promised the merchant's son. On hearing this her husband said, 'If thou really desirest to go to him, go.'"

"Having received her husband's permission, she started for the merchant's place. A thief seeing her

on the road, came up to her in delight, and said, 'Whither goest thou alone, at this midnight hour, in this pitch-darkness, bedecked with such garments and jewels?' She replied, 'To the place where my dearly beloved dwells.' On hearing this the thief said, 'Who is thy protector here?' She began to say, 'Cupid, my protector, with his bow and arrows, is with me.' Having said this, she then related her whole story to the thief, from beginning to end, and said, 'Do not spoil my attire; I give thee my word that, when I return thence, I will deliver my jewels to thee.'"

"On hearing this, the thief said to himself, 'She leaves me, in truth, with a promise to deliver up her jewels to me; then why should I spoil her attire?' Thus reflecting, he let her go. (He) himself sat down there, while she went to the place where Somdatt was lying asleep. She having suddenly roused him as soon as she got there, he arose bewildered, and commenced saying, 'Art thou the daughter of a god, or sage, or serpent?'¹ Tell me truly, who art thou? and whence art thou come to me?' She replied, 'I am the daughter of a man—the daughter of the merchant Hiranyadatt; Madansenā is my name; and dost thou not remember that thou didst forcibly seize my hand in the grove, and didst insist on my giving thee my oath; and I swore, at thy bidding, that I would leave

¹ *Nāg* is the name of the fabulous serpents (said to have a human face), inhabiting Pātāla, or the infernal regions.

the man I was married to and come to thee? I have come accordingly; do unto me whatever thou pleasest.' ”

“On this he asked, ‘Hast thou told this story to thy husband, or not?’ She replied, saying, ‘I have mentioned the whole affair, and after becoming acquainted with everything, he has allowed me to come to thee.’ Somdatt said, ‘This matter is like jewels without apparel, or food without clarified butter, or singing out of tune—all these things are alike. Similarly, dirty garments mar beauty, bad food saps the strength, a wicked wife deprives of life, a bad son ruins the family. Whereas a demon takes life on his being enraged, a woman, either as a friend or a foe, is in both cases the occasion of sorrow. What a woman does not do is of little moment; for she does not give utterance to the thoughts of her mind; and what is at the tip of her tongue she does not reveal; and what she does, she does not tell of. A wonderful creature has God created in the world in woman.’ ”

“After uttering these words, the merchant’s son answered her, saying, ‘I will have nothing to do with another’s wife.’ On hearing this she took her way back home again. On the way she met the thief, (and) told him the whole story. The thief, on hearing it, applauded her highly, and let her go. She came nigh her husband and told him all the circumstances; but her husband evinced no affection for

her, and said, 'The beauty of the cuckoo consists in its note alone; a woman's beauty consists in her fidelity to her husband; and the beauty of an ugly man is his knowledge; the beauty of a devotee is his patient suffering.' "

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, "O king! whose is the highest merit of these three?" King Vikramājīit replied, "The thief's merit is the greatest." The sprite said, "How?" The king replied, "Seeing her heart set on another man, her husband gave her up; through dread of the king, Somdatt let her alone; whereas there was no reason for the thief's leaving her unmolested. Hence the thief is the superior." On hearing this, the sprite went again and suspended himself on that tree; and the king also went there, took him down from the tree, bound and placed him on his shoulder, and once more carried him away.

TALE X.

THE sprite said, "O king! in the country of Gaur there is a city called Baradmān, and the king of that place was named Gunshekhar. His minister was a follower of the Jain persuasion, Abhaichand by name. Through his persuasion, the king, too, entered the pale of the Jain religion. He prohibited the worship of Shiva, as also that of Vishnū, and offerings of cattle, grants of land, oblations¹ to deceased ancestors, gambling and intoxicating liquors—all these he interdicted: no one was allowed to practise them in the city, and no one could carry away bones to the Ganges. And the minister, too, with the king's sanction for these matters, had it proclaimed in the city, that whoever performs these acts, the king will confiscate all his property, and inflict punishment on him, and expel him from the city."

"Thereafter the minister said one day to the king,

¹ These oblations consist of balls (*pinḍ*) of meat, or rice mixed up with milk, curds, flowers, &c., and offered to the manes at the several Shrāddhas (or funeral ceremonies and worship of the manes) by the nearest surviving relations.

‘ Attend, O king ! to an exposition of the sacred law :—
Whosoever takes the life of any one, this same takes his life also in another state of existence. It is on account of this sin that living and dying are inseparable from man on his entering this world. He is born again and again, and again he dies. Hence, it behoves man, on his being born into the world, to treasure up virtuous deeds. Observe (how) Brahmā, Vishnū, Mahādeva, in one form or another, become incarnate in the world under the influence of love, anger, covetousness; or infatuation ! A cow, forsooth, is superior to them, for she is free from passion, hatred, pride, anger, covetousness, infatuation ; moreover, she sustains the subjects. And the sons which are born to her also impart the utmost ease to the living things of the earth, and cherish them. It is for this reason that all the deities and holy sages hold the cow sacred. Therefore, to worship the gods, is not well : worship the cow in this world. And it is a duty to protect the life of every animal, from the elephant to the ant, including beasts, birds, &c., up to man ; there is no duty equal to that in the world. Those who add to their flesh by eating the flesh of other creatures, ultimately suffer the torments of hell. Hence it is incumbent on man to preserve life. Those who regard not the sufferings of others, but go on destroying the life of other creatures, and eating them—their lives are shortened on the earth, and they are born cripples, or

lame, or blind of one eye, or blind of both eyes, or dwarfs, or hunch-backed, or with some such bodily defect. According to the limbs of beasts and birds which they devour, they eventually lose similar members of their own. Further, the drinking of intoxicating liquors is a great sin. Hence the consumption of flesh and intoxicating drinks is not right.’”

“Thus unfolding to the king the wisdom stored up in his mind, the minister made him so sound a convert to the Jain faith, that whatever he advised the king did; and he paid no respect to any Brahman, ascetic, itinerant devotee, or religious mendicant;¹ and governed his kingdom according to this religion. One day, coming under the power of death, he died. Thereupon his son, Dharm-dhwaj by name, ascended the throne, and began to reign. One day, having had the minister, Abhaichand, seized, and seven plaits made of the hair on his head, and his face blackened, and (the minister) himself seated on a donkey, and a drum beaten and hands clapped (in derision) after him, he then banished him from the kingdom, and carried on his government free from all anxiety.”

“One day, in the spring-time, the king, accompanied by his queens, went to take a stroll in a garden. There was a large tank in that garden, and

¹ The *sewṛā*, *sanyāsī*, and *darwesh*, are all religious mendicants; the first is of the Jain religion, the second a Brahman, and the third a Muhammadan.

the lotus was in full bloom therein. On beholding the beauty of the tank, the king stripped off his clothes, and went down to bathe. Having plucked a flower, and come to the side, he was handing it to one of the queens, when it slipped from his hand and fell on the queen's foot; and by the blow it inflicted the queen's foot was broken. On this the king became alarmed, and forthwith coming out from the tank, began applying remedies; and in the meantime night came on, and the moon shone forth. No sooner did the moon's beams fall, than blisters arose on the body of the second queen. Farther, just then the sound of a wooden pestle from some householder's suddenly reached the third queen, and she was instantly attacked with so severe a headache, that she fainted away."

After narrating so much, the sprite said, "O king! which of these three was the most delicate?" The king replied, "The one who got the pain in the head and fainted away, she was the most delicate." On hearing these words, the sprite again went and suspended himself on that tree; and the king went there and took him down, and, making a bundle of him, placed him on his shoulder, and walked off with him.

TALE XI.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! there is a city named Punyapur, the king of which was named Bal-labh, and his minister's name was Satyaprakāsh, (and) the name of the minister's wife was Lakshmī. One day the king said to his minister, 'If one who is a king does not enjoy himself with beautiful women, his holding sovereignty is in vain.' Having said this, and made over the burthen of government to the minister, he himself gladly entered upon a course of amorous pleasures. He abandoned all cares of the state, and commenced spending his days and nights in enjoyment."

"It so happened that, one day, the minister was sitting dejected at home, when his wife asked him, 'Husband! you seem to me to be very weak?' He replied, saying, 'Night and day the cares of government weigh heavily on me, and hence my body has become feeble; while the king is the whole day long occupied with his own pleasures and enjoyment.' The minister's wife said, 'O husband! you have

carried on the government for a long time, now take leave of the king, and undertake a pilgrimage for a few days.' ”

“He remained silent on hearing this speech of hers. Afterwards, when he stirred out (lit. when he rose thence), he went to the king at the time of his holding a court, and, obtaining his permission to go, set out on a pilgrimage. Journeying on, he reached Setband Rāmeshwar,¹ on the sea-coast. As soon as he arrived there, he visited the shrine of Mahādeva, and came out (of the temple), when, his gaze happening to stray towards the sea, what does he behold, but a (marvellous) tree of gold come up out of it, the leaves of which were emeralds, the blossoms topazes, the fruits corals,—it presented a most beautiful sight! And seated on the tree was a very beautiful woman, holding a lute in her hands, and singing in most soft and sweet strains. After a few minutes the tree disappeared in the ocean.”

“After beholding this spectacle there, the minister turned back and came to his own city, and, proceeding to the king, made obeisance, and joining his hands,

¹ *etband* (from the Sanskrit *setu-bandha*) signifies a dike or bridge, and is applied to the ridge of rocks between the Coromandel coast and Ceylon. This dike or bridge is said to have been built by the allies of Rāma (*i.e.*, the monkey army under the leadership of Hanumān), when he invaded Ceylon to recover his wife Sītā, who had been carried off thither by Rāvan. It is said that, as fast as the monkeys built up the dike, Rāvan destroyed it; so, to prevent his doing this, Rāma erected a temple to Shiva (the god adored by Rāvan) at the extremity of the dike. Thenceforth Setband Rāmeshwar became a place of pilgrimage.

said, 'Your Majesty! I have witnessed a marvellous sight!' The monarch said, 'Describe it.' The minister said, 'Your majesty! men of olden time have said that one should not speak of such things as are beyond the comprehension of any one, and which no one would credit. But this thing I saw plainly with my eyes, and hence I speak of it. Your majesty! at the place where the Lord Raghunāth¹ has bridged the ocean, lo! a golden tree came up out of the sea, which was so splendidly loaded with emerald leaves, topaz flowers, and coral fruit, that a description of it is impossible! And upon it was a very beautiful woman, with a lute in her hands, singing the sweetest of strains. But after a few minutes that tree was lost to sight in the ocean.' "

" On hearing these words, the king entrusted the government to the minister, and set out alone for the sea-shore. After several days he arrived there, and entered the temple to pay adoration to Mahādeva; and having bowed down and worshipped, he came out, when lo! the same tree, woman, and all, rose up (out of the sea). As soon as the king saw her, he leaped into the sea, and went and sat on the same tree. She, together with the king, descended to the nether regions.² She looked at him (the king) and said,

¹ Raghunāth (*i.e.*, the lord of the family of Raghu,) is a title of Rāma, who, as an incarnation of Vishnū, was born in the family of Raghu.

² *Pātāla* is one of the seven Hindu hells, and the region under the earth which is the abode of the Nāgas, or serpents with human faces.

‘Valiant man! Why hast thou come hither?’ The king replied, ‘I have come, attracted by thy beauty.’ She rejoined, ‘If thou wilt not have intercourse with me during the dark fortnight of the lunar month, I will marry thee.’ The king consented to this arrangement. Notwithstanding this, however, she took the king’s solemn promise, and then married him.”

“To be brief, when the dark nights set in, she said, ‘Your majesty is not to remain near me to-day.’ On hearing this, the king left her, taking his sword with him; and going apart, kept secret watch. When it was midnight, a demon came, and, on the instant of arriving, folded her in his arms. No sooner did the king witness this, than he rushed forward with his sword, and said, ‘Foul fiend! lay not thy hand on my wife before my eyes! First fight with me. It was only ere I had set my eyes on you that fear possessed me; now I have no fear.’”

“This said, he drew his sword, and struck such a blow, that the head (of the demon) was severed from the body, and lay quivering on the ground. On beholding this, she said, ‘O gallant man! thou hast done me a great kindness!’ After saying this, she spoke again, saying, ‘It is not every mountain that contains rubies, nor every city that holds true men, nor does the sandal-tree grow in every forest, nor do pearls exist in the head of every elephant.’ Thereupon the king enquired, ‘Why did this demon come to thee on the fourteenth night of the waning moon?’”

“ She said, ‘ My father’s name is Vidyādhara. I am said Vidyādhara’s daughter. Sundarī is my name. Now it was an established custom for my father not to partake of food without me. One day I was not at home at meal-time ; thereupon father became angry and pronounced a curse on me, saying, ‘ A demon will come and embrace thee every fourteenth night of the waning moon.’ On hearing this, I said, ‘ Father ! you have indeed given me your curse ; but now have mercy on me !’ He replied, ‘ When an intrepid man shall come and slay that demon, thou wilt escape from this curse.’ Now, therefore, I have escaped from that curse ; and I will now go and pay my respects to my father.’ ”

“ The king said, ‘ If thou appreciatest the kindness I have done thee, come at once and visit my dominions ; after that, go and visit thy father.’ She said, ‘ Very well ; I consent to what you say.’ Thereupon the king brought her with him to his capital. Festive music and rejoicing began to take place. The news spread throughout the city that the king had arrived. Then songs of congratulation and merry-making commenced in every house ; and after that, all the musicians and singers of the city came and offered their congratulations at the court. The king gave away many presents, and performed many pious acts.”

“ Again, after some days that fair one said, ‘ Now, your majesty ! I will go to my father’s.’ The king said in sadness, ‘ Very well : go.’ When she perceived

the king to be sad, she said, 'Your majesty! I will not go.' The king said, 'Why hast thou given up the idea of going to thy father?' She replied, 'I have now become one of the human race, and my father is a demi-god;¹ were I to go now, he would show me no respect: this is my reason for not going.' On hearing this the king was highly delighted, and gave away lacs of rupees in presents and religious offerings. Hearing of these matters touching the king, the minister died broken-hearted."

Having told so much of the tale, the sprite said, "O king! why did the minister die?" Then king Bir Vikramājīt said, "The minister perceived that the king had taken to sensual enjoyments, and banished all the cares of government from his mind; that the subjects had lost their master (or protector); and so, no one would heed what he (the minister) said. This is the anxiety of which he died." Having heard this, the sprite went again and hung himself on that tree. The king went again, as on previous occasions, and placed him on his shoulder, and carried him away.

¹ The *Gandharvas* are demi-gods inhabiting Indra's heaven, and serving as celestial musicians.

TALE XII.

THE sprite said, "O king Bīr Vikramājīt! There is a city named Chūrāpur, where a king named Chūrāman ruled, whose spiritual teacher's name was Devaswāmī, and he had a son named Hariswāmī. He was as beautiful as Cupid, equalled Brihaspati¹ in his knowledge of scientific and religious treatises, and was as wealthy as Kuvera. He wedded and brought home a Brahman's daughter, whose name was Lāvanyavatī."

"To be brief, one night in the hot season they were both sleeping soundly on the flat roof of a summer house. The woman's veil accidentally slipped off her face, while a demi-god, seated on a car, was proceeding somewhere through the air. His gaze suddenly falling upon her, he lowered the car, and placing her, asleep, on the car, flew off with her. After some time the Brahman also awoke, and lo! his wife was not (beside him). On this he became alarmed, and coming down from thence, searched throughout the

¹ *Brihaspati* is the regent of the planet Jupiter, and the preceptor of the gods. *Kuvera* is the god of wealth.

house. When he did not find her there either, he went about seeking her through all the streets and lanes of the city, but did not find her. Thereupon he began to say to himself, 'Who has carried her off? and whither has she gone?'"

"In short, when his efforts were of no avail, he returned home helpless and regretful, and searched for her there a second time, but did not find her. When the house appeared desolate to him without her, he lost all self-control in his disquietude and misery, and began crying out, Oh, darling of my soul! oh, darling of my soul! Further, being exceedingly agitated by her separation from him, he gave up the position of a householder, renounced the world, girt a simple waist-cloth round his loins, rubbed the ashes of burnt cow-dung on his body, put on a necklace of beads, quitted the town, and set out on a pilgrimage. Proceeding on his pilgrimage from town to town, and village to village, he reached a certain town at mid-day."

"When extreme hunger left him no alternative, he made a cup-shaped vessel of the leaves of a dhāk-tree, and carrying it to the house of a Brahman, said to him, 'Give me some food in alms.' (The fact is, when a man comes under the influence of love, he has no thought of duty, caste, or food; and, regardless of everything, he eats food wherever he can obtain it.) When he begged alms of the Brahman, he (the Brah-

man) took the cup-shaped vessel from him and entered the house, and brought it (back) to him filled with rice boiled in milk. He took the cup, and came to the margin of a tank. There was a large banyan-tree there. He placed the cup at the root of that, and went to wash his face and hands in the tank."

"A black snake came out from the roots of the tree, and having dipped its mouth into the cup, went away; and so the whole contents of the cup had become poisoned, when, in the meantime, he also returned after washing his hands and face. This matter, however, was unknown to him; while hunger, on the other hand, beset him sorely. (Thus) he ate the rice and milk as soon as he came, and the poison instantly entered his system. Thereupon he went to the Brahman and said, 'Thou hast given me poison, and I am now dying of it.' Having said so much, he reeled and fell, and died. Again, the Brahman, seeing him dead, turned his own wife out of the house, and said, 'Go thou hence, thou murderess of a Brahman!'"

Having told so much of the tale, the sprite said, "O king! to which of these does the guilt of killing a Brahman attach?" The king said, "Poison exists in a snake's mouth as a matter of course; therefore no guilt attaches to it. Again, the Brahman gave him alms, considering him to be hungry; (therefore) guilt does not attach to him. Further, the Brahman's wife had given him alms at the bidding of her hus-

band; she, too, is without sin. And he ate the milk and rice unwittingly, and hence he also is guiltless. In short, whoever imputes guilt to anyone of these, is himself a sinner." On hearing this, the sprite went again and hung on to that tree; and the king also went there, and taking him down and binding him, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him away from there.

TALE XIII.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Chandra-hriday, and a king named Randhīr ruled there. There was in the city a merchant named Dharmdhvaj, whose daughter's name was Shobhanī; and indeed she was very beautiful. Her youthful prime was daily developing itself, and her beauty was each moment increasing."

"It so happened that robberies became a nightly occurrence in that city. When the merchants experienced much vexation at the hands of the thieves, they all went to the king in a body and said, 'Your majesty! thieves have committed great outrage in the city; we can no longer dwell in the place.' The king replied, saying, 'Well; what has happened is beyond remedy (*lit.*, what has happened, has happened); but henceforth you shall suffer no annoyance; I will take vigorous measures against them.' After saying this, the king summoned a number of people and told them off to keep guard, and directed them how to keep watch, and commanded them to slay the thieves wherever they found them, without asking any questions."

“People began to keep watch over the city, by night, and yet robberies took place. All the merchants proceeded in a body to the king, and said, ‘Your majesty has sent watchmen, and yet the thieves have not decreased in number, and thefts occur daily.’ The king replied, ‘Do you take your leave now; from to-night I will go forth to watch over the city.’ On hearing this, they left the king, and went each to his own home. Now, when it was night, the king took his sword and shield, and, on foot and alone, began his watch over the city. Having advanced some distance in the course of his watch, and looked closely, he perceived a thief coming towards him. On seeing him, the king called out, ‘Who art thou?’ He replied, saying, ‘I am a thief; who art thou?’ The king said (in reply), ‘I also am a thief.’ He was pleased on hearing this, and said, ‘Let us commit a robbery together.’”

“Settling this matter between them, the king and the thief, conversing with one another, entered one of the quarters of the city, and after committing thefts in several houses, carried off the articles, and came to a well without the city, and having gone down into it, ultimately reached the chief city of the nether regions. The thief stationed the king at the gate, and took the money and treasures to his own house. In the meantime a woman-servant came out of his house, and, seeing the king, began to say, ‘Your majesty! what a

place you have come to with that miscreant! Well will it be if, ere he return, you fly hence as fast as you possibly can; otherwise he will kill you as soon as he arrives.' The king replied, 'But I do not know the road! In which direction should I go?' Then the servant showed him the road, and the king came to his palace."

"In fine, on the following day the king, with all his forces, went to the chief city of the nether regions by the road down the well, and surrounded the entire household of the thief; but the thief, escaping by some other road, went to the ruler of that city, who was a demon, and said, 'A king has led an attack against my house with the view to kill me; at this moment, either you must aid me, or I will give up dwelling in your city, and take my abode in some other place.' On hearing this, the demon said, graciously, 'You have supplied me with food; I am well pleased with you.' Having said this, the demon went where the king was with his army, surrounding the house, and began devouring the men and horses. And the king fled on beholding the form of the demon; and all such as were able to run away, escaped; and the rest the demon devoured."

"To be brief, the king was running off alone, when the thief came and cried out, 'Art thou, a Rajpūt, flying from the battle?' On the instant of hearing this, the king halted again, and the two confronted

one another, and began to fight. At length the king overcame him, and bound his hands behind his back, and brought him into the city. After that, having had him bathed and washed, and clothed in fine apparel, and mounted on a camel, he sent him all round the city, accompanied by a crier, and ordered the impaling stake to be erected for him. Whoever among the people of the city saw him said, 'This same thief has plundered the whole city, and the king will now impale him.' "

"When the thief arrived near the house of the merchant Dharmdhwaj, the merchant's daughter hearing the sound of the crier's drum, asked her handmaid, 'What is this proclamation about?' She replied, 'The king has brought captive the thief who used to commit robberies in the city. Now he will impale him.' On hearing this, she also came running (to the lattice) to see. No sooner did she behold the thief's comeliness and manly form than she became fascinated; and, coming to her father, said, 'Do you go to the king this moment, and return with that thief released.' The merchant said, 'How can it be expected that, at my request, the king will release the thief who has robbed his whole city, and on whose account his whole army has been destroyed?' She again urged, 'If you have to give up even all you possess for the king to release him, do you bring him away free; and should he not come, I too will sacrifice my life.' "

“On hearing this, the merchant went to the king, and said, ‘Your majesty! receive five lacs of rupees from me, and set the thief at liberty.’ The king said, ‘This thief robbed the whole city, and my whole army was swallowed up through him. I will not on any account let him go.’ When the king did not heed his request, he returned home in despair, and said to his daughter, ‘I said all that it was right to say, but the king did not consent.’ ”

“In the meantime, having had the thief taken round the city, they brought him to a stand-still near the impaling stake. Now, the thief having heard of the predicament of the merchant’s daughter, first laughed aloud, and then wept bitterly. The people the while pulled him down on the stake. And the merchant’s daughter, receiving intimation of his death, came to the same place to devote herself to death for his sake. She had a funeral pile constructed, and sitting thereon, had the thief taken off the stake, placed his head on her lap, and quietly seated herself to be burnt. She was on the point of having the torch put to it (the pile), when (a temple sacred to Devī happening to be on the spot) Devī instantly came out of her temple and said, ‘Daughter! I am pleased with thy courage; request a boon.’ She said, ‘Mother! if thou art pleased with me, restore this thief to life.’ Thereupon the goddess said, ‘Even so shall it be.’ Having said this, she brought nectar from the under-world, and restored the thief to life.”

Having told so much of the story, the sprite inquired, "Say, O king! why the thief first laughed, and why he afterwards wept?" The king said, "I know the reason why he laughed, and I know also why he wept. Attend, O sprite! The thief thought within himself,—'Now that she is giving up all that she possesses to the king for my sake, what return can I make?' He wept at the thought of this. Again, however, he reflected, 'She loved me when I was about to die: the ways of God are altogether inscrutable; He bestows wealth on the unlucky, knowledge on one of low origin, a beautiful wife on a fool, and He causes rain to fall in showers on the mountains.' Thinking of such things, he laughed." On hearing this, the sprite went again and hung on to that tree. The king returned there, and unloosing him, made a bundle of him, placed him on his shoulder, and took him away.

TALE XIV.

THE sprite said, "Attend, King Vikram! There is a city named Kusmāvati, of which one Subichār was king, whose daughter's name was Chandra-prabhā. When she became marriageable, she went out one spring day, along with her companions, to stroll about in the garden. Now, before arrangements had been made for the ladies to come out (*i.e.*, before the garden had been cleared of all strangers and others not permitted to set eyes on the women), a Brahman's son, named Manswī, of twenty years or so, very handsome, had come into the garden in the course of his wanderings, and meeting with cool shade under a tree, had fallen asleep there. The king's attendants came and made arrangements for the ladies of the seraglio in the garden, but it so happened that none of them saw the Brahman's son sleeping there; and so he continued sleeping under that tree, and the princess entered the garden with her attendants. Strolling about with her companions, where does she come but to the place where the Brahman's son was

sleeping! She no sooner arrived there than he also awoke at the sound of the people's footsteps. The eyes of both met; and to such a degree did they come under Cupid's power, that on the one side the Brahman's son fell upon the ground in a swoon, on the other, she too was so beside herself, that her legs began to tremble. Her companions, however, quickly laid hold of her on the very instant. At last, they laid her down in a litter, and brought her home. And the Brahman's son was lying in so complete a state of insensibility here, that he had no consciousness whatever of his body or mind."

"During this interval two Brahmans, named Shashī and Mūldeva, from the country of Kanvrū, where they had studied the (occult) sciences, happened to pass by there. Mūldeva, seeing the Brahman's son lying, said, 'Shashī! how is it that he is lying in such utter unconsciousness?' He replied, 'A damsel has shot forth the arrows of her eyes from the bow of her eyebrows; hence he is lying insensible.' Mūldeva said, 'We ought to rouse him.' He replied, 'What need is there for you to rouse him?' He did not heed Shashī's words, but sprinkled water over him, and restored him to consciousness, and asked, 'What has been the matter with thee?' The Brahman said, 'One should relate his troubles to him who can remove them; for what is to be gained by relating your sorrows to him who, on hearing of them, is unable to

remove them?' He said, 'Well, tell me your troubles; I will remove them.' "

"On hearing this, he said, 'It was but now that the princess came here with her companions; and it was through seeing her that I have fallen into this state. Should I obtain possession of her, I will preserve my life; otherwise I will abandon life.' Then he replied, 'Come to my abode; I will exert myself to the utmost to obtain her; and, if I should not succeed, I will bestow great wealth upon thee.' Thereupon Manswī said, 'God has created many a jewel in the world; but the jewel, woman, surpasses all; and for her sake it is that man treasures up wealth. When I have lost the woman, what will I do with the wealth? Brute beasts are better off in the world than those who do not possess themselves of handsome wives. The fruit of merit is wealth, and the advantage of wealth is ease, and the consequence of ease is (the taking) a wife; now, what happiness can there be where there is no wife?' On hearing this, Mūldeva said, 'I will give thee whatsoever thou may'st ask for.' Then he said, 'O Brahman obtain that same maiden's hand for me.' Mūldeva thereupon said, 'So be it; come along with me; I will have that very maiden bestowed on thee.' "

"In short, ministering much comfort to him, he took him to his house; and when he reached there, he prepared two magic pills. One pill he gave to the

(young) Brahman, saying, 'When thou puttest this into thy mouth, thou wilt be turned into a girl of twelve years; and when thou takest it out of thy mouth, thou wilt become the self-same man thou wert before.' He said further, 'Put this into thy mouth.' On his putting it into his mouth, he became a girl of twelve years. And he, (Mūldeva) having put the other pill into his own mouth, became transformed into an old man of eighty years; and taking that young girl with him, he proceeded to the king."

"The king, seeing the Brahman, saluted him, gave him a seat, and another to the young girl also. Then the Brahman gave him his blessing in verse, saying, 'May he whose glory pervades the three worlds; and who, taking the form of a dwarf, deceived¹ King Bali; and who, taking monkeys with him, bridged the ocean;² and who, supporting the mountain (Go-

¹ Bali was a powerful king, who, by his austerities and devotion, overcame Indra in battle, and obtained power over heaven and earth. The gods became alarmed at this, and sought the aid of Vishnū, who visited the earth in the form of a dwarf, and went before Bali, who, according to custom, offered him presents. These the dwarf, affecting utter contempt for worldly wealth, declined, saying he merely wanted as much territory as could be comprised in three of his paces. Bali laughed, and granted his request; whereupon the dwarf increased his stature to prodigious dimensions, and, at one step, placed his foot on the heavens; at the next, on the earth; and, no room remaining for the third step, he placed his foot on Bali's head, and so, pressed him down to the region of *Nāga-loka*, beneath the earth, where he was kept in confinement, and bound with bonds made of twisted serpents.

² *Vide* note at page 93.

vardhan) on his hand,¹ protected the cowherds from the bolts of Indra,—may the same Vāsudeva protect you!’ On hearing this, the king inquired, ‘Whence has your highness come?’ The Brahman, Mūldeva, replied, ‘I have come from the other side of the Ganges, and my home is there; and I had gone to bring away my son’s wife, (and) in my absence, a general flight from the village took place; and so I know not whither my wife and son have fled to. And now, with this girl with me, how shall I seek them? It is, therefore, advisable that I leave this (girl) with your majesty. Keep her with the greatest care until I return.’ ”

“On hearing these words of the Brahman’s, the king began thinking to himself, ‘How shall I take charge of a very beautiful young woman? And if I do not take her, this Brahman will curse me, (and) my dominion will be overthrown.’ Having thought this over in his mind, the king said, ‘Your highness! the command you have given me shall be obeyed.’ On this, the king summoned his daughter, and said, ‘Daughter! take this Brahman’s daughter-in-law and keep her with you, with all care and attention; and, whether sleeping or waking, eating or drinking, or moving about, do not let her be away from you for a moment.’ On hearing this, the princess took hold of

¹ This allusion to the exploits of Krishna the curious reader will find fully explained in the 26th chapter of the “Prem Sāgar.”

the hand of the Brahman's daughter-in-law, and led her away to her own apartment. At night, the two slept in one bed, and began conversing with each other. In the course of conversation, the Brahman's daughter-in-law said, 'Tell me, O princess! to what trouble is it owing that you have become so worn and feeble?''

"The princess said, 'I went one day in the spring, accompanied by my female friends, to stroll about in the garden, and there beheld a very handsome, Cupid-like Brahman, and our eyes met. He swooned away on one side, and I became unconscious on the other. Then my companions, seeing my predicament, brought me home. And I am totally ignorant of both his name and his abode. His image fills my eyes, and I have not the least desire for food and drink. It is through this trouble that my body has been reduced to the state you see.' On hearing this, the Brahman's daughter-in-law said, 'What wilt thou give me if I bring thy beloved and thee together?' The princess said, 'I will remain thy slave for ever.' Hearing this, he took the magic pill out of his mouth and became a man again; and she was abashed at beholding him. After that, the Brahman's son married her after the fashion of Gandharb marriages¹; and used constantly to convert himself thus into a man at night, and to

¹ *Vide* note at page 82.

remain a woman by day. At length, after six months, the princess became pregnant."

"They say that, one day, the king went with his whole family to a marriage festival at his minister's house. There the minister's son beheld that Brahman's son disguised as a woman, and fell in love as soon as he saw her (or him), and began to say to a friend of his, 'If this woman does not become mine, I will sacrifice my life.' In the interval, the king having partaken of the feast, returned to the palace with his family. But the condition of the minister's son became most painful through the anguish of separation from his beloved, and he gave up food and water. Seeing this state (of his), his friend went and informed the minister. And the minister, on hearing the story, went and said to the king, 'Your majesty! love for that Brahman's daughter-in-law has brought my son to a wretched state. He has given up eating and drinking. If you would kindly give the Brahman's daughter-in-law to me, his life would be saved.'"

"On hearing this, the king said angrily, 'Thou fool! It is not the nature of kings to do such a wrong. Hearken! Is it right to give away to another that which is given in trust, without the permission of the person making over the trust, that you mention this matter to me?' On hearing this, the minister returned home in despair. But perceiving the suffer-

ing of his son, he also gave up meat and drink. When three days passed without the minister's eating and drinking, then, indeed, all the officials combined, and said to the king, 'Your majesty! the minister's son is in a precarious state, and in the event of his dying, the minister, too, will not survive. And on the minister's dying, the affairs of the state will come to a stand-still. It is better that you consent to that which we state.' Hearing this, the king gave them permission to speak. Then one of them said, 'Your majesty! it is long since that old Brahman left this, and he has not returned; God knows whether he is dead or alive. It is therefore right that you give that Brahman's daughter-in-law to the minister's son, and so uphold your kingdom; and should he return, you can give him villages and wealth. Should he not be satisfied with this, get his son married (to another maiden) and let him depart.' "

" On hearing this, the king sent for the Brahman's daughter-in-law, and said, 'Go thou to the house of my minister's son.' She said, 'The virtue of a woman is destroyed by her being gifted with excessive beauty, and a Brahman's character is lost by his serving a king, and a cow is ruined by grazing in remote pastures, and wealth vanishes on meeting with abuse.' After saying so much, she added, 'If your majesty would give me to the minister's son, settle this matter with him, viz., that he will do whatever I tell him; then will I

go to his house.' The king said, 'Say! what should he do.' She replied, 'Your majesty! I am a Brahman woman, and he is a Kshatrī by caste; hence it is best that he first perform all the prescribed pilgrimages; after that I will cohabit with him.' "

"When he heard this speech, the king sent for the minister's son and said to him, 'Go thou, first, and visit all the places of pilgrimage; after that I will give the Brahman's girl to thee.' On hearing these words from the king, the minister's son said, 'Your majesty! let her go and take up her abode in my house, and then I will go on pilgrimage.' After hearing this, the king said to the Brahman's girl, 'If thou will first go and take up thy abode in his house, he will set out on pilgrimage.' Having no alternative, the Brahman's girl went at the king's bidding and took up her abode in his house. Then the minister's son said to his wife, 'Do you both live together in one place, on terms of the greatest affection and friendliness, and on no account quarrel and fight with each other, and never go to a strange house.' "

"Having given them these instructions, he, for his part, set out on a pilgrimage; and here (at home), his wife, whose name was Saubhāgya-sundarī, lying at night on one bed along with the Brahman's daughter-in-law, began conversing on various topics. After some time the wife of the minister's son spake as follows:—'O friend! at this moment I am consumed

with the flame of love; but how can my desire be attained?' The other said, 'If I accomplish thy desire, what wilt thou give me?' She replied, 'I will be thy humble and obedient slave for ever.' On this he took the magic pill out of his mouth and became transformed into a man. Thus he regularly transformed himself into a man by night, and into a woman by day. After that, indeed, great love existed between the two of them."

"In short, six months passed away in this manner, and the minister's son returned. On the one hand, the people hearing of his arrival, began to rejoice; and on the other, the Brahman's daughter-in-law, having taken the magic pill out of her mouth and transformed herself into a man, came out from the house by way of the wicket, and went off. Again, after some time, he came to the same Brahman, Mūldeva, who had given him the magic pill, and told him his whole story from beginning to end. Then Mūldeva, after hearing all the circumstances, took the magic pill from him and gave it to his companion, Shashī, and each of them put the pill (he had) into his mouth. One was transformed into an old man, and the other a young man of twenty. After this the two went to the king's."

"The king saluted them on the instant of seeing them, and gave them seats. And they, too, gave (the king) their blessings. After inquiring after their health and welfare, the king spake to Mūldeva, saying, 'Where have you been detained for so many days?'

The Brahman said, 'Your majesty! I went to search for this son of mine, and having discovered him, I have brought him to you. If you will now give up his wife, I will take both daughter-in-law and son home.' Then the king related the whole story to the Brahman. The Brahman became very angry on hearing it, and said to the king, 'What proceeding is this, for thee to give my son's wife to another? Well! thou hast acted as thou pleasedst; but now receive my curse.' Thereupon the king said, 'O holy man! be not angry; I will do whatever you bid me.' The Brahman said, 'So be it; if, through fear of my curse, thou wilt do as I say, then give thy daughter in marriage to my son.' On hearing this, the king summoned an astrologer, and after having the auspicious conjunction and moment determined, gave his daughter in marriage to the Brahman's son. Then he took leave of the king and came to his own village, bringing the princess, together with her dowry, along with him."

"On hearing this intelligence, the Brahman Man-swī also came there, and commenced quarrelling with him, saying, 'Give me my wife.' The Brahman named Shashī said, 'I have married her before ten witnesses and brought her home; she is my wife.' He replied, 'She is with child by me; how can she become thy wife?' And they went on wrangling with each other. Mūldeva reasoned much with both of them, but neither heeded what he said."

After relating so much of the story, the sprite said,

“Say, king Bīr Vikramājīt! whose wife was she?” The king replied, “She became the wife of the Brahman Shashī.” Then the sprite said, “Pregnant by the other Brahman, how could she become the wife of this one?” The king said, “No one was aware of her being with child by that Brahman; whereas this one married her in the presence of ten arbitrators; therefore she became his wife. And the child, too, will have the right to perform his funeral obsequies.” On hearing this, the sprite went and hung on to the same tree. Again did the king go, and, after binding the sprite, and placing him on his shoulder, carry him away.

TALE XV.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a mountain named Himāchal, where there is a city of the demi-gods (or celestial musicians); and king Jīmūketu ruled there. Once upon a time he worshipped Kalpabriksh¹ a great deal for the sake of a son. Thereupon Kalpabriksh was pleased, and said, 'I am pleased at perceiving thy services to me; ask any boon thou desirest.' The monarch replied, saying, 'Grant me a son, so that my kingdom and my name may endure.' It (the tree) said, 'Even so shall it be.'"

"After some time the king had a son. He experienced extreme joy, and held rejoicings with much noise and display. After making numerous presents and charitable gifts, he summoned the priests and fixed on a name for him. The priests named him Jīmūt-bāhan. When he became twelve years of age he began to worship Shiva; and having completed the study of all the learned writings, became a very

¹ *Vide* note, p. 72.

intelligent, meditative, resolute, intrepid, and learned man ; there was no equal of his in those times. And as many people as dwelt under his sway, all were alive to their respective duties.”

“ When he attained to manhood, he, too, worshipped Kalpabriksh assiduously ; whereupon Kalpabriksh was pleased, and said to him, ‘ Ask whatsoever thou desirest, I will give it to thee.’ On this, Jimūt-bāhan said, ‘ If you are pleased with me, take away all poverty from my subjects, and let all those who dwell in my dominions become equal in point of possessions and riches.’ When Kalpabriksh granted the boon, all became so well off by the possession of wealth, that no one would obey the order of any person, and no one would do work for any one.”

“ When the subjects of that realm became such as has been described, the brothers and kinsfolk of the king began to reason together, saying, ‘ Both father and son are completely under the influence of religion, and the people do not obey their commands ; it is therefore best to seize and imprison the pair of them, and take their kingdom from them.’ In fine, the king was not on his guard against them ; and they having plotted together, went with an army and surrounded the king’s palace.”

“ When this news reached the king, he said to his son, ‘ What shall we do now ?’ The prince said, ‘ Your majesty ! you be pleased to abide here in peace ; I will away and destroy them this instant.’ The king

said, 'O son! this body is frail, and riches, too, are unabiding; when a man is born, death, too, attends him; hence we should now give up dominion, and practise religious duties. It is not right to commit a heinous sin for the sake of such a body, and for the sake of a kingdom; for even king Yudhisht̥hir experienced remorse after his great war with the descendants of Bharat.' On hearing this, his son said, 'So be it! make over the government to your kinsmen, and you yourself depart and practise religious austerities.' "

" Having resolved on this, and summoned his brothers and nephews, and handed over the government to them, father and son both ascended the mountain Malayāchal, and on reaching the summit, built a hut and dwelt there. A friendship arose between Jimūt-bāhan and a holy sage's son. One day the king's son and the son of the sage went out together for a stroll on the top of the mountain. A temple, sacred to Bhawānī, came in sight there. Within the temple, a princess, with a lute in her hands, was singing in front of the goddess. The eyes of the princess and those of Jimūt-bāhan met, and both became smitten with love. But the princess, restraining her feelings, and stricken with shame, turned her steps homeward; and he, too, for his part, being put to shame by the presence of the sage's son, came to his own place. That night was passed by both the lovers (*lit.* rose-cheeked ones) in extreme restlessness."

" As soon as morn appeared, the princess set out

from her quarter, for the temple of Devī, and the prince, too (starting from this side), no sooner arrived than he perceived that the princess was there. Then he asked her female companion, 'Whose daughter is she?' The companion said, 'She is the daughter of king Malayketu; her name is Malayāvati, and she is a virgin as yet.' After saying this, the companion (spoke) again (and) asked the prince, 'Say, handsome man! whence have you come? and what is your name?' He replied, 'I am the son of the monarch of the demi-gods, whose name is Jīmūt-ketu; and my name is Jīmūt-bāhan. In consequence of our Government being overthrown, we, father and son, have come and taken up our abode here.' "

"Again, the companion, after hearing these words, related all to the princess. She was much pained at heart on hearing them, and returned home; and at night she lay down with a load of care on her mind. But her companion perceiving this state of her's, disclosed the story to her mother. The queen, on hearing it, mentioned it to the king, and said, 'Your majesty! your daughter has become marriageable; why do you not seek a husband for her?' On hearing this, the king thought the matter over in his mind, and that very moment summoned his son Mitrāvasu, and said, 'Son! seek a husband for your sister and bring him here.' Then he spoke, saying, 'The king of the demi-gods, Jīmūt-ketu by name, and whose son is named Jīmūt-bāhan, having abandoned his king-

dom, has, I hear, come here with his son.' On hearing this, king Malay-ketu said, 'I will give the girl to Jimūt-bāhan.' "

" Having said this, he bade his son go and bring Jimūt-bāhan from the king's. He, on receipt of the king's command, set out for that house, and, on arriving there, said to the father, 'Let your son accompany me, as my father has sent for him to bestow his daughter upon him.' On hearing this, king Jimūt-ketu sent his son along with him, and he came here (to King Malay-ketu's house). Then King Malay-ketu celebrated his marriage Gandharb fashion. When his marriage had taken place, he brought the bride and Mitrāvasu with him to his own house. Then the three of them paid their respects to the king, and the king also gave them his blessing. Thus did that day pass.' "

" On the morrow's morn, however, the two princes went out, as soon as they rose, to take a walk on that mountain of Malayāgir.¹ On reaching the place, what does Jimūt-bāhan perceive but a very lofty heap of something white. Thereupon he questioned his brother-in-law, saying, 'Brother! how is it that this white heap is seen here?' He replied, 'Millions of

¹ This mountain has already been called Malayāchal; the change of name is merely apparent, however, for *achal* and *giri* both signify *hill* or *mountain*; Malayā is the actual name. It is a mountain south of the Narbada, and is made famous in Sanskrit poetry for the cool southerly breeze which always prevails there.

young *nāgs* (or serpents with human faces) come here from the infernal regions; these *Garur*¹ comes and devours; this heap is composed of their bones.' On hearing this, Jīmūt bāhan said to his brother-in-law, 'Friend! you go home (alone) and take your food; for I always engage in worship at this hour, and the time for me to worship has now arrived.' "

"On hearing this, he did go; and Jīmūt-bāhan having advanced further, the sound of weeping began to reach him. When, continuing his advance in the direction of the sound of the voice, he reached the spot, what does he behold but an old woman weeping with the burden of her trouble. He went up to her and asked, 'Why weepest thou, mother?' Thereupon she said, 'To-day comes the turn of the serpent Sankhchūr, who is my son; Garur will come and eat him up; it is on account of this trouble that I weep.' He said, 'O mother! weep not; I will give up my life in lieu of thy son's.' The old woman said, 'Pray do not so! *thou* art my (son) Sankhchūr.' "

"She was saying this, when, at that moment, Sankhchūr arrived; and hearing (her words), said, 'Your majesty! worthless wretches like myself are born and die in vast numbers; but a just and com-

¹ *Garur* is a gigantic bird with a human face, said to be the vehicle of Vishnū. He is the elder brother of Indra, being the produce of the second egg laid by Banitā. This will account for Garur's possessing the power to bring nectar from the nether regions.

passionate being like you is not born every day (*lit.* every hour); do not, therefore, sacrifice your life for mine; for, thousands of human beings will be benefited by your remaining alive; whereas it makes no difference whether I live or die.' Then Jimūt-bāhan said, 'It is not the way of true men to say (that they will do a thing) and (then) not to do it. Go thou whence thou camest.' "

"When he heard this, Shankhchūr, for his part, went to pay adoration to Devī, and Garuḥ descended from the sky. In the meantime, the prince perceived that each leg of his was as long as four bamboos, and his beak was as long as a palm-tree, his belly like a mountain, his eyes like gates, and his feathers like clouds. All at once he rushed with open beak upon the prince. The first time the prince saved himself; but the second time he flew off with him in his beak, and began wheeling upwards in the air. While this was going on, a bracelet, on the jewel of which the prince's name was engraved, became unfastened, and fell, all covered with blood, before the princess. She fell down in a swoon at the sight of it."

"When, after a few minutes, she recovered her senses, she sent word of all that had happened to her father and mother. They came (to her) on hearing of this calamity, and on seeing the ornament covered with blood, burst into tears. Now, the three of them set out in quest (of him), and, on the road, Shankhchūr too joined them, and advancing beyond them, went

to the place where he had seen the prince, and began calling out repeatedly, saying, 'O Garur! let him go! let him go! He is not thy food. *My* name is Shankchūr. I am thy food.'"

"On hearing this, Garur descended in alarm, and thought to himself, 'I have eaten either a Brahman or a Kshatrī; what is this I have done!' After this, he said to the prince, 'O man! tell me truly; why art thou giving up thy life?' The prince replied, 'O Garur! trees cast their shade over others; and while they themselves stand in the sun, blossom and bear fruit for the benefit of others. Such is the character of good men and trees. What is the advantage of this body if it do not come of use to others? The saying is well known that, 'The more they rub sandal-wood, the more it gives out its perfume; and the more they go on peeling the sugar-cane, and cutting it up into pieces, the more does its flavour increase; and the more they pass gold through the fire, the more surpassingly beautiful does it become. Those who are noble do not give up their natural qualities even on losing their lives. What matters it whether men praise them or blame them? What matters it whether riches abide with them or not? What does it signify whether they die this moment, or after a length of time? The men who walk in the path of rectitude place not their feet in any other path, happen what may. What matters it

whether they are fat or lean? In fact, his living is bootless whose body proves of no benefit (to anyone); while those who live for the good of others—their living is advantageous. To live for the mere sake of living, is the way in which dogs and crows, even, cherish life. Those who lay down their lives for the sake of a Brahman, a cow, a friend, or a wife, nay, more, for the sake of a stranger, assuredly dwell in paradise for ever.’”

“Garuṛ said, ‘Everyone in the world cherishes his own life; and scarce, indeed, are those in the world who lay down their own lives to save the lives of others.’ After saying this, Garuṛ added, ‘Ask a boon; I am pleased with thy courage.’ On hearing this, Jīmūt-bāhan said, ‘O god! if you are pleased with me, then henceforth eat no more serpents, and restore to life those you have eaten.’ On hearing this, Garuṛ brought the water of life from the infernal regions, and sprinkled it over the bones of the serpents, so that they rose up alive again. And he said to him (the prince), ‘O Jīmūt-bāhan, by my favour thy lost kingdom will be restored to thee.’”

“After granting this boon, Garuṛ departed to his own abode, and Sankhchūr also went home; and Jīmūt-bāhan too left the place, and met his father-in-law and mother-in-law and wife on the road. Then he came in their company to his father. When they heard of these circumstances, his uncle and cousins,

and indeed all his kinsfolk, came to visit him, and after falling at his feet (to implore forgiveness), took him away, and placed him on the throne."

After relating so much of the story, the sprite asked, "O king! whose virtue was greatest among these?" King Bir Vikramājīṭ replied, "Sankhchūr's." "How so?" asked the sprite. The king said, "Sankhchūr, who had gone away (and so, got safe off,) returned to give up his life, and saved him (the prince) from being eaten by Garur." The sprite said, "Why was not the virtue of him greatest, who laid down his life for another?" The king replied, "Jīmūt-bāhan was a *Kshatrī* by caste. He was accustomed to holding his life in his hand, and hence he found it no hard matter to sacrifice his life." On hearing this, the sprite went again and hung on to that tree; and the king, having gone there and bound him, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him off.

TALE XVI.

THE sprite said, "O King Bir Vikramājī! there is a city named Chandra-shekhar, and a merchant named Ratandatt was an inhabitant thereof. He had one only daughter, whose name was Unmādinī. When she attained to womanhood, her father went to the king of the place, and said, 'Your majesty! I have a daughter (lit. there is a girl in my house); if you desire to possess her, take her; otherwise I will give her to some one else.' "

"When the king heard this, he summoned two or three old servants, and said to them, 'Go and inspect the appearance of the merchant's daughter.' They came to the merchant's house at the monarch's bidding, and all became fascinated at the sight of the girl's beauty,—such beauty, as if a brilliant light was placed in a dark house; eyes like those of a gazelle; plaits of hair like female snakes; eyebrows like a bow; nose like a parrot's; a set of teeth (lit. the set of thirty-two) like a string of pearls; lips like the

kandūrī;¹ throat like a pigeon's; waist like the leopard's; hands and feet like a tender lotus; a face like the moon, a complexion of the colour of the *champā*, a gait like that of a goose, and a voice like the cuckoo's; at the sight of her beauty the female divinities of Indra's paradise would feel abashed."

"On beholding beauty of this kind, so abundantly rich in all graces, they decided among themselves, (saying), 'If such a woman enter the king's household, the king will become her slave, and will not give a thought to the affairs of government. Hence, it is better to tell the king that she is ill-favoured, (and) not worthy of him.' Having determined thus, they came thence to the king, and gave the following account:—'We have seen the girl; she is not worthy of you.' On hearing this, the king said to the merchant, 'I will not wed her.' Thereupon what does the merchant do on returning home, but give his daughter in marriage to one Balbhadra, who was the commander-in-chief of the king's army. She took up her abode in his house."

"It is said that, one day, the royal cavalcade passed by that way; and she too was standing, fully attired, on her house-top, at the moment; (and) her eyes and those of the monarch chanced to meet. The king began to say to himself, 'Is this the daughter of a god, or a female divinity, or the daughter of a human being?' The short of it is, he was fascinated

¹ *Vide* note, page 74.

at the sight of her beauty, and returned thence to his palace in a state of extreme agitation. The warder, on beholding his countenance, said, 'Your majesty! what bodily pain are you suffering from?' The monarch replied, 'While coming along the road to-day I saw a beautiful woman on a house-top. I know not whether she is a houri, or a fairy, or a human being; but her beauty drove my mind distracted all at once; and hence (it is that) I am agitated.' "

"On hearing this, the door-keeper said, 'Your majesty! she is the daughter of that same merchant (who offered his daughter to you). Balbhadra, your majesty's commander-in-chief, has brought her home as his wife.' The king said, 'Those whom I sent to see her appearance have deceived me.' After saying this, the king ordered the mace-bearer to bring those persons before him without delay. On receiving this order from the king, the mace-bearer went and brought them. In short, when they came before the king, his majesty said, 'The errand on which I sent you, and that which was the desire of my heart—these things you failed to accomplish; on the contrary, you fabricated a false story, and gave it to me as an answer. Now, to-day, I have seen her with my own eyes. She is so beautiful a woman, rich in all distinguishing qualities, that it would be difficult to meet with her equal in these times.' "

"On hearing this, they said, 'What your majesty

says is true; but graciously listen to the object we had in view in representing her to your majesty as ill-favoured. We decided among ourselves that, if so beautiful a woman enter the royal household, your majesty would become her slave on the instant of beholding her, and would neglect all the affairs of the State, and so the kingdom would go to ruin. It was in consequence of this apprehension that we invented such a story, and laid it before you.' ”

“ When he heard this, the king *said* to them, ‘ You speak the truth ;’ but he experienced the greatest uneasiness thinking of her. Now, the king’s distress of mind was known to everyone, when, at the moment, Balbhadra, too, arrived, and putting his hands together (in humble supplication), stood before the king, and said, ‘ O lord of the earth ! I am your servant, she is your hand-maid, and you to suffer so much pain on her account ! Be pleased, therefore, to give the order that she may be brought before you.’ On hearing these words, the king said very angrily, ‘ It is a grievous wrong to approach another’s wife ! What is this thou hast said to me ? What ! am I a lawless wretch, that I should commit an infamous deed ! The wife of another is as a mother, and the wealth of another is on a par with mud. Hear me, brother ! As a man regards his own heart, so should he regard the hearts of others.’ Balbhadra spoke again, saying, ‘ She is my servant. When I give her

to your majesty, how can she any longer be the wife of another?' The king replied, 'I will not commit an act whereby reproach would attach to me in the world.' The commander-in-chief said again, 'Your majesty! I will turn her out of the house, and place her somewhere else, and after making a prostitute of her, will bring her to you.' Thereupon the monarch said, 'If thou makest a harlot of a virtuous woman I will punish thee severely.' "

"After saying this, the king pined at the recollection of her, and, in the course of ten days, died. Then the commander-in-chief, Balbhadra, went and asked his spiritual teacher, 'My master has died for the sake of Unmādinī; what is it right for me to do now? Favour me with your commands in this matter.' He said, 'It is the duty of a servant to give up his life also after his master's.' This servant gladly went to the place where they had conveyed the king for cremation. During the time in which the king's funeral pile was got ready, he, too, had quitted himself of his ablutions and devotions; and when they lighted the pile, he too drew near the pile, and raising his joined hands to the sun, began to say, 'O Sun-deity! in thought, word and deed, I solicit the gratification of this desire, viz., that at every successive birth I may meet with this same master, and (for this) hymn your praises.' Having uttered this, he bowed in adoration, and leaped into the fire."

“When Unmādinī received this intelligence, she went to her spiritual teacher, and telling him all, asked, saying, ‘Your highness! what is the duty of a wife?’ He replied, ‘It is by doing her duty to him to whom her father and mother have given her that she is termed a woman of good family; and it is thus written in the book of law, viz.—The woman who in her husband’s lifetime practises austerities and fasting, shortens the life of her husband, and is finally cast into hell. But the best thing is this, that a woman by doing her duty to her husband, no matter how wanting he may be, secures her own salvation. Moreover, the woman who entertains the desire to sacrifice herself for her husband in the burning-ground, most undoubtedly derives as much benefit from as many steps as she takes towards this as would be derived from an equal number of horse-sacrifices.¹ Further, there is no virtue equal to that of a woman’s sacrificing herself for her husband on the funeral pile.’ On hearing this, she made her salutation, and returned home; and after bathing, and performing her devotions, and giving large gifts to Brahmans, went to the funeral pile, and going once round to the right in adoration, said, ‘O Lord! I am Thy servant in each succeeding birth.’ Having said this, she, too, went and seated herself in the fire, and was consumed.”

¹ The *ashwamedha*, or horse-sacrifice, is one performed by powerful kings alone, as it involves a vast expense. It is regarded as of the highest efficacy, and as far excelling all ordinary sacrifices.

After relating so much of the story, the sprite said, "O king! whose virtue was greatest of these three?" King Bīr Vikramājīt replied, "The king's." The sprite said, "How so?" The king replied, "He left alone the wife given to him by the commander-in-chief, while he sacrificed his life on her account, and yet preserved his virtue. It behoves a servant to lay down his life for his master; and it is right for a wife to sacrifice herself for her lord. Therefore the virtue of the king was greatest." Having heard these words, the sprite went and hung on to that same tree. The king, too, followed him, and again bound him, and placed him on his shoulder, and carried him away.

TALE XVII.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! there was a king of Ujjain, named Mahāsain; and an inhabitant of that place was a Brahman, Devasharmā, whose son's name was Guṇākar. He (the son) turned out a great gambler; so much so that he lost at play all the wealth the Brahman possessed. Thereupon all the members of the family turned Guṇākar out of house and home. And he could not help himself in any way; (so) having no other resource, he took his departure from the place, and in several days' time came to a certain city. What does he see there but a devotee sitting over a fire, and inhaling smoke by way of penance. After saluting him, he, too, sat down there. The devotee asked him, 'Wilt thou eat anything?' He replied, 'Your highness! of course I will eat, if you give me (something).' The devotee filled a human skull with food and brought it to him. On seeing it he said, 'I'll not eat food out of this skull.'"

"When he did not partake of the food, the ascetic

repeated such an incantation, that a fairy¹ appeared before him with joined hands, and said, 'Your highness! I will execute any command you may give me.' The ascetic said, 'Give this Brahman whatever food he desires.' On hearing this, she built a very fine house, and furnishing it with all comforts, took him away with her from that place, and seating him on a stool, placed various kinds of condiments and meats, by dishfuls, before him. He ate whatever he liked to his heart's content. Again, after this, she placed the pān-box before him, and after rubbing down saffron and sandal in rose-water, applied (the mixture) to his body. Farther, she clothed him in garments scented with sweet perfumes, threw a garland of flowers round his neck, and bringing him away thence, seated him on a bed. Now while this was taking place it became evening, and she, too, having first decked herself out, went and sat on the bed, and the Brahman passed the whole night in pleasure and enjoyment."

"When morn arrived, the fairy went away to her own place, and he came to the devotee and said, 'Master! she's gone away; what shall I do now?' The ascetic said, 'She came through the power of magic art, and abides near him who possesses the art.' He replied, 'Impart this art to me, your highness! that I may practise it.' Then the devotee gave him a

¹ *Yakshani* is a female *Yaksha*, or kind of demi-god, attendant on *Kuvera*, the god of wealth.

charm, and said, 'Practise this charm for forty days, at midnight, sitting in water, and with a steadfast mind.' Thus used he to go to practise the charm, while many and various frightful objects appeared in view; but he felt no alarm at any of them. When the time expired, he came to the devotee and said, 'Your highness! I come from practising (the charm) for the number of days you prescribed.' He said, 'Now practise it for that number of days, sitting in fire.' He replied, 'Master! I will go and pay a visit to my family, and then return and practise it.' "

"After saying this to the devotee, he took leave and went home; and when his relations saw him, they embraced him and commenced weeping; while his father said, 'O *Guṇākar*; where have you been so many days, and why did you forget your home! O my son, it is said that, he who leaves a faithful wife and lives apart, and turns his back on a youthful woman, or he who does not care for one who loves him, is on a level with the lowest¹ of the low. It is said, farther, that no virtue equals the domestic virtues, and no woman in the world imparts happiness equal to that which the mistress of one's house imparts; and those who slight their parents are impious men, and their future state will never, never be one of salvation; thus has *Brahmā* declared.' "

"On this *Guṇākar* spoke, saying, 'This body is

¹ *Lit.*—Is equal to a *chanḍāl*, or man of the lowest of the mixed tribes.

composed of flesh and blood, which same is food for worms; and its nature is such that, if you neglect it for a day, a fetid smell proceeds from it. Fools are they who feel affection for such a body, and wise are they who set not their heart on it. Further, it is of the nature of this body that it is repeatedly born and destroyed. What dependence can one place on such a body! Cleanse it ever so much, it does not become clean; just as an earthen vessel, filled with filth, does not become clean by washing the outer surface; or however much one washes charcoal, it does not become white. Again, by what means can that body become clean, in which the fount of impurity is never-failing? Having said so much, he spoke again, saying, 'Whose father (is one)? Whose mother? Whose wife? Whose brother?'¹ The way of this world is such, that numbers come and numbers depart. Those who offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings consider Agni (fire) their god; while those who are deficient in understanding make an image and worship it as god; but the class of ascetics regard god as in their very bodies. I will not practise such domestic duties (as those you have mentioned), but will practise religious meditation.'"²

“Having said this, he bid adieu to his kindred, and

¹ This may also be rendered, “Who has a father,” &c.

² *Yogābhyās* may mean, either “the particular practice of devotion by which union with God is supposed to be obtained,” or “the practice of the magic art.”

came where the devotee was, and practised the charm, seated in fire. The fairy, however, did not come. Then he went to the devotee, and the devotee said to him, 'Hast thou not acquired the art?' Thereupon he said, 'Just so, Master! I have not acquired it!'"

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, 'Say, O king! why did he not acquire the art?' The king replied, saying, 'The practiser was of two minds, (*i e.*, did not give his undivided attention to the task), and hence he failed to acquire it. And it is said that a spell is perfected by (the operator's) being of one mind (or by his giving his entire mind to it), and does not succeed on his thoughts being divided. Further, it is also said that those who are wanting in liberality do not obtain celebrity; and those who lack truthfulness are without shame; those who are wanting in justice do not acquire wealth; and those who lack meditation do not find God."

"When the sprite heard this he said, 'How can the operator who sat in fire to work his spell be termed two-minded?' The king replied, 'When, at the time of practising the spell, he went to visit his family, the devotee said to himself in vexation, 'Why did I teach the magic art to so vacillating an operator?' and it was in consequence of this that he did not acquire the art. And it is said, that however much a man may exert himself, destiny attends him all the

same ; and whatever number of things he may achieve by force of his intellect, he, nevertheless, obtains that alone which fate has recorded." On hearing this the sprite went again and hung on to that tree ; and the king, too, followed him, and having bound him, and placed him on his shoulder, took him away.

TALE XVIII.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! There was a city named Kubalpur, the name of the king of which was Sudakshī. Now, a merchant named Dhanākshī used also to live in that city, and he had a daughter whose name was Dhanvatī. He gave her in marriage in her childhood to a merchant named Gaurīdatt. After a considerable time she had a girl, whom she named Mohanī. When she attained to some years, her father died, and the merchant's kinsfolk seized all his property. She, in her helplessness, left the house in the darkness of the night, and taking her daughter with her, set out for the house of her parents."

"After proceeding but a short distance, she lost the road, and came upon a burning-ground, where a thief was stretched upon an impaling-stake. Her hand quite unexpectedly came in contact with his foot. He called out, 'Who is it that put me to pain just now?' On this she replied, 'I have not willingly inflicted pain on you; forgive my fault.' He said, 'No one gives

either pain or pleasure to another; according as the Creator decrees one's fate shall be, so he experiences; and those who affirm that they did such and such things, are very unwise; for men are fixed to the cord of fate, which draws them after it whithersoever it pleases. The ways of the Creator are utterly inscrutable; for men propose a thing to themselves, and He brings something quite different to pass.'"

"On hearing this, Dhanvatī said, 'O man! who art thou?' He replied, 'I am a thief; this is my third day on the impaling-stake, and life will not quit the body.' She said, 'For what reason?' He replied, saying, 'I am unmarried; if thou wilt give me thy daughter in marriage, I will give thee ten millions of gold-mohurs.' It is notorious that greediness of gain is the root of all evil, pleasure the source of pain, and love the source of sorrow. Whoever keeps clear of these three lives happy. It is not every one, however, who can give them up. Eventually, Dhanvatī, through greed, became willing to give him her daughter, and asked, 'It is my desire that thou shouldst have a son; but how can this be?' He replied, saying, 'When she attains to womanhood, send for a handsome Brahman, and give him five hundred gold-mohurs, and place her with him; thus will she have a son.'"

"When she heard this, Dhanvatī married the girl to him by giving her four turns round the stake. Then the thief said to her, 'There is a banyan-tree

near a large well of masonry to the east of this ; the gold-mohurs lie buried beneath it ; go thou and take them.' He said this, and died. She went in the direction indicated, and on arriving there, took a few gold-mohurs from those buried, and came to her parents' house. After relating her story to them, she brought them with her to her husband's land. 'Then she built a large house and began living in it ; and the girl increased in stature daily.'

" When she had become a woman, she was standing one day with a female companion on the house-top, and casting her eyes along the road, while just at that moment a young Brahman passed that way, and she, at the sight of him, was smitten with love, and said to her friend, ' O my friend ! bring this man to my mother.' On hearing this, she went and brought the Brahman to her mother. She said, on seeing him, ' O Brahman ! my daughter is young ; if thou wilt lie with her, I will give thee a hundred gold-mohurs for a son.' On hearing this, he said, ' I will do so.' "

" Whilst they were conversing thus, evening came on. They gave him food to his mind, and he supped. It is a well known saying that enjoyment is of eight kinds,—1. Perfume ; 2. Woman ; 3. Apparel ; 4. Song ; 5. *Pān* ; 6. Food ; 7. The couch ; 8. Ornaments. All these existed there. To be brief, when the first watch of the night was at hand (or, was nigh passed),

he repaired to the nuptial chamber, and spent the whole night in pleasure and enjoyment with her. When it became morning, he went home, and she arose and came to her companions. Then one of them enquired, 'Say! What pleasures did you enjoy with your love in the night?' She replied, 'When I went and sat near him, a kind of tremour made itself felt in my heart; (but) when he smiled and took hold of my hand, I was quite overcome, and no consciousness of what took place remained to me. And it is said that if a husband be—1. possessed of renown; 2. brave; 3. clever; 4. a chief; 5. liberal; 6. endowed with good qualities; 7. a protector of his wife,—such a man a wife never forgets even in the world to come, much less in this world.'

"The gist of the story is, that on that very night she conceived. When the full time came, a boy was born. On the sixth night, the mother saw in a vision an ascetic, with matted hair on his head, a shining moon on his forehead, ashes of burnt cow-dung rubbed over him, wearing a white Brahminical thread, seated on a white lotus, wearing a necklace of white snakes, with a string of skulls thrown round his neck, and with a skull in one hand and a trident in the other, thus assuming a most terrifying appearance, come before her, and begin to say, 'To-morrow, at midnight, place a bag of one thousand gold-mohurs in a large basket, and enclosing this boy therein, leave it at the gate of the palace.'"

As soon as she saw this, her eyes opened. And on its becoming morning, she told all the circumstances to her mother. When her mother heard this, she, on the following day, put the boy in a basket in the very manner directed, and left him at the king's gate. Now, here (at the palace) the king saw an apparition with ten arms, five heads, each head having three eyes in it, and a moon upon it, very large teeth, a trident in his hand—a most terrifying form, which came before him and said, 'O king! a basket is placed at thy door; bring away the child that is in it; he it is who will maintain thy dominion.'"

"As soon as the king heard this, his eyes opened. He then related the whole affair to the queen. After that, rising up thence, and coming to the door, he perceived the basket placed there. On the instant of opening the basket and peering into it, he beheld a boy and a bag of one thousand gold-mohurs in it. He took up the child himself, and told the door-keepers to bring in the bag. He then went into the female apartments, and placed the child on the queen's lap."

"By this time the day broke. The king came out, and summoning the sages and astrologers, questioned them, saying, 'Tell me, what marks of royalty are perceptible in this child?' Thereupon one of the sages, who was acquainted with the science of interpreting the spots on the human body, spoke, saying,

‘Your majesty! three marks are distinctly perceived on this child; 1. a broad chest; 2. a high forehead; 3. a large face; in addition to these, your majesty! the whole thirty-two marks which are assigned to man exist in this one. Have no apprehensions on his account; he will rule over the kingdom.’ On hearing this, the king was pleased, and taking off a chaplet of pearls from his own neck, presented it to that Brahman; and after giving large gifts to all the Brahmans, he bade them name the child. Then the sages said, ‘Your majesty! be pleased to sit down with the queen fastened to you; let her majesty sit with the child in her lap; and summon all the musicians, singers, and others employed on festive occasions, and cause rejoicings to take place; then will we give him a name after the manner prescribed by the sacred writings.’”

“When the monarch heard this, he ordered his minister to do whatever they bid him. The minister had rejoicings for the birth of the child forthwith proclaimed throughout the city. On hearing this, all the professional rejoicers were in attendance, and congratulatory songs rung forth from every home; festive music began to strike up in the king’s palace, and rejoicing to take place. Then the king and the queen, with the child in her lap, came and sat within a square filled with coloured meal, perfumes, and sweetmeats, and the Brahmans began reading the scrip-

tures. An astrologer from among the Brahmans, having first determined the auspicious planetary conjunction and time, named the child Hardatt. After that, he grew daily. At length, at the age of nine years, he finished the study of the six learned volumes, and fourteen sciences, and became a profound scholar. In the meantime, according to what was willed by God, it happened that his father and mother died. He ascended the throne, and began to govern justly.”

“After several years, the king one day thought to himself, ‘What have I done for my parents in return for being born in their family? The saying is that, —Those who are compassionate, deal compassionately with all; they it is who are wise, and to them it is that Paradise is allotted. And the gifts, worship, religious penances, pilgrimages, and listening to the scriptures of those who are not pure of heart, is all in vain. And those who perform the funeral ceremonies and worship of the Manes without faith, and in pride, derive no advantage thereby, and so, their fathers go with their desires unfulfilled.’ Reflecting and pondering on this matter, the king decided that he ought now to perform the funeral ceremonies of his fathers. Thereupon King Hardatt proceeded to Gayā, and on arriving there, invoked the names of his fathers, and began offering oblations¹ to them on the bank of

¹ These oblations consist of balls (*pinḍ*) or lumps of meat, or rice mixed up with milk, curds, flowers, &c.

the River Phalgū, when the hands of all three¹ came up out of the river. He was troubled in mind on seeing this, wondering to which of the hands he should give (the oblations), and to which not."

Having reached this stage of the story, the sprite said, "O King Vikram! to which of the three was it right to give the oblations?" Then the king said, "To the thief." The sprite said again, "For what reason?" Thereupon he (the king) said, "The seed of the Brahman had been bought; and the king took a thousand gold mohurs and brought up the boy; and therefore neither of these two had any right to the oblation." On hearing these words, the sprite went again and hung on to that tree, and the king carried him away bound from thence.

¹ That is the thief's, the Brahman's who begat him, and the king's who adopted him. The Hindus believe that when a son performs the ceremony in question, the father is permitted to come from the other world and receive the oblation

TALE XIX.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Chitrakūt, the king of which was Rupdatt. One day he mounted his horse and went forth alone to hunt; and, having lost his way, got into a great forest. What does he see on going there but a large tank, in which lotuses were flowering, and various kinds of birds were sporting. On all four sides of the tank cool and perfume-laden breezes were blowing under the shade of the dense foliage of the trees. He, for his part, was overcome with the heat, (so) he tied his horse to a tree, and spread the saddle-cloth, and sat down. A half-hour or so had passed when the daughter of a holy sage, very beautiful, and in the prime of youth, came to gather flowers. Seeing her plucking the flowers, the king became deeply enamoured. When she was returning to her abode, after gathering the flowers, the king said, 'What conduct is this of yours, for you not to attend to me when I have come as a guest to your abode?'"

"On hearing this she stood still again. Then

the king said, 'They say that if one of low caste come as a guest to the house of one of the highest caste, even he is entitled to respect; and whether he be a thief, or an outcast, or an enemy, or a parricide,—if such a one even comes to one's house, it is right to show him honour; for a guest is more to be honoured than anyone else.' When the king spoke thus, she stood still. Then, in truth, the two began to ogle one another. In the meantime the holy sage also came up. The king saluted the devotee on seeing him, and he (in return) blessed him, saying, 'May you live long.' "

"Having said so much, he asked the king, 'Why have you come here?' He replied, 'Your holiness! I have come a hunting.' He said, 'Why dost thou commit a great sin? It is said that one man commits a sin and many men reap the fruits thereof.' The king said, 'Your holiness! kindly favour me with your judgment of right and wrong.' Thereupon the sage said, 'Attend, your majesty! A great wrong is done in killing an animal that lives in the forest, supporting itself on grass¹ and water; and it is a very meritorious act in man to cherish beasts and birds. It is said, moreover, that those who render unapprehensive the timid and refuge-seeking, receive the reward of those who are most liberal givers. It is also said, that no religious austerity equals forbear-

¹ The text has *tan*, by mistake, for *trin*.

ance, and no happiness equals that of contentment, and no wealth equals friendship, and there is no virtue like mercy. Moreover, those men who are conscious of their duties, and show no pride on acquiring riches, accomplishments, learning, renown, or supremacy; and those who are content with their own wives, and are truth-speakers—such men obtain final salvation hereafter. And those who kill ascetics with matted hair, and without clothes and arms, experience the torments of hell at the last. And the king who does not punish the oppressors of his subjects, he also experiences the torments of hell. And those who have carnal intercourse with a king's wife, or the wife or daughter of a friend, or with a woman eight or nine months advanced in pregnancy—they are cast into the (lowest and) greatest hell of all. Thus is it declared in the book of law and religion.' ”

“On hearing this, the monarch said, ‘The sins which I have heretofore committed in ignorance are done, and are beyond recall; henceforth, God willing, I will not commit such again.’ The holy sage was pleased at the king's speaking thus, and said ‘I will grant thee any boon thou may'st ask for; I am highly pleased with thee.’ Then the king spoke, saying, ‘Your holiness! if you are pleased with me, give me your daughter.’ When the sage heard this, he married his daughter to the king, after the manner of Gandharb marriages, and departed to his own

place. Then the king took the saint's daughter and set out for his capital. On the road, about mid-way, the sun set and the moon rose. Then the king, seeing a shady tree, alighted beneath it, and tying the horse to its root, spread his saddle-covering and lay down along with her. Thereupon, at the hour of midnight, a Brahman-devouring demon came and awoke the king, saying, 'O king! I will devour thy wife.' The king said, 'Act not so; whatever thou askest for, I will grant.' Then the demon said, 'O king! if thou wilt cut off the head of a Brahman's son seven years' old, and give it to me with thine own hand, I will not eat her.' The king replied, 'Even so will I do; but do thou come to me seven days hence in my capital, and I will give it thee.' "

"Having bound the king by a promise thus, the demon departed to his own place; and on the morn arriving, the king also left and came to his palace. The minister hearing of it (*i e.*, the king's arrival) made great rejoicings, and came and presented gifts; and the king, after telling the minister of the adventure (with the demon), asked, 'Say, what expedient shall we adopt in the matter, for the demon will come on the seventh day?' The minister said, 'Your majesty! feel no anxiety whatever; God will make all right.' After saying so much, the minister had an image made of a maund and a quarter of gold, and jewels studded therein, and having it placed on a

cart, and (conveyed away, and) set up at a point where four roads met, he said to the keepers thereof, 'If any persons come to look at this, say to them that any Brahman who will allow the king to cut off the head of a seven-year-old son of his may take possession of this.' Having said this, he came away. Thereupon the keepers used to say this to those who came to look at it (the image)."

"Two days passed away without any result. On the third day, however, a weakly Brahman, who had three sons, hearing of this matter, came home and began saying to his wife, 'If thou wilt give a son of thine to the king for a sacrifice, an image of a maund and a quarter of gold, and studded with jewels, will come into the house.' On hearing this, his wife said, 'I will not give the youngest son.' The Brahman said, 'The eldest I will not part with.' When the second son heard this, he said, 'Father! give me up.' He replied, 'Very well.' Then the Brahman spoke again, saying, 'Wealth it is which is the source of all happiness in this world. Now, what happiness can reach him who lacks wealth? and if one be poor, his coming into the world is useless.' "

"Having said this, he took the second son, and gave him up to the guards, and brought away the image to his house; and the people, for their part, took the boy to the minister. Further, when seven days passed away, the demon, too, came. The king

took sandal, unbroken rice, flowers, perfumes, lamps, food for the deity, fruits and betel-leaf, and paid adoration to him ; and, summoning the boy, took his sword in his hand, and stood ready to sacrifice him. Thereupon the boy first laughed, and then wept. While he was doing this, the king struck him a blow with the sword, so that his head was severed (from his body). True it is, as the sages have said,—Woman is the source (*lit.* mine) of misery in the world, the abode of imprudence¹ (or immorality), the destroyer of courage (or daring), and the occasioner of infatuation, (and) the bereaver of virtue. Who has pronounced such a source (*lit.* root) of venom to be the highest good? Again, it is said,—Store up wealth against adversity, and disburse wealth to guard your wife, and give up wealth and wife to save your own life.”

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said, “Your majesty! a man weeps at the moment of dying; will you account for this,—Why did he (the boy) laugh?” The monarch replied, “He laughed at the thought of this,—viz., That in infancy a mother protects (her child), and on his growing up the father cherishes him; (and) in both good and bad times a king befriends his subjects,—such is the way of the

¹ The only meanings assigned to *bintī* in the vocabulary are, “submission,” “respects,” “solicitation,” none of which seem to apply here. Deriving the word from the Sanskrit *vi-nīti*, I prefer giving it the signification I have done.

world; whereas, my predicament is such that my father and mother have delivered me over to the king through greed of wealth, and he stands, sword in hand, ready to slay me, and the demon desires a sacrifice; no single one of them feels (a spark of) pity." On hearing this, the sprite went and hung on to that same tree; and the king also speedily arrived there, and binding him, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him off.

TALE XX.

THE sprite said, "O king! there is a city named Bishālpur, the king of which was named Bipuleshwar. In his city lived a merchant whose name was Arthdatt, and his daughter's name was Anang-manjarī. He had married her to a merchant of Kanwalpur, named Munnī. Some days after, the merchant crossed the ocean on a mercantile venture; and when she attained to womanhood here (at home), she was standing one day in the pavilion, and observing what was going on in the road, when at that moment a Brahman's son named Kamalākar was coming along. The eyes of the pair met, and they became enamoured of each other at first sight. Again, after a quarter of an hour or so, recovering self-possession, the Brahman's son, in the restlessness consequent on separation from his beloved, proceeded to the house of his friend; and here she, too, was in extreme distress through the pain of separation from him, when, in the meantime, a female companion came and took her up; she had,

however, no self-consciousness remaining. Then she (the companion) sprinkled rose-water (over her) and made her smell perfumes, and while so doing, her senses returned, and she said, 'O Cupid! Mahādeva burnt thee to ashes,¹ and yet thou wilt not desist from thy knavish tricks, but comest and inflictest pain on innocent, feeble women.' "

"She was uttering these words, when evening came on, and the moon appeared. Then she said, while gazing at the moonlight, 'O moon! I used to be told that the water of life is in you, and that you shed it in your beams; to-day, however, even you have begun to pour down venom.' She then said to her companion, 'Take me up, and lead me away from this place, for I am being burnt to death by the moonlight.' Thereupon she raised her and took her to the pavilion, and said, 'Dost thou feel no shame at uttering such words?' Then she said, 'O friend! I am fully aware of all; but Cupid has wounded me, and rendered me void of shame; and I make great efforts to be patient, but the more I continue to be consumed with the fire of separation, the more venom-like does home appear to me.' The companion said, 'Keep thy mind at ease; I will relieve thee of all thy suffering.' "

¹ Mahādeva, or *hiva*, was once engaged in religious meditation, when Kāmdeva, or Cupid, excited amorous desires within his breast; whereupon the angry god reduced him to ashes by a fiery glance. The curious reader will find a detailed account of the circumstance in the fifty-sixth Chapter of the *Prem Sagar*.

Having said thus much, the companion went home, and she (the love-lorn) determined in her mind that she would quit this body for his sake, and, being born again, enjoy life well with him. With this longing in her mind, she threw a noose on her neck, and was about drawing it tight, when the companion arrived, and instantly taking the rope off her neck, said, 'Everything can be attained by living, not by dying.' She replied, 'Better is it to die than suffer such pain.' The companion said, 'Repose awhile, and I will go and bring him.' "

"Having said this, she went to the place where Kamalākar was, and taking a secret look at him, perceived that he also was much disturbed by the separation from his beloved, while his friend was rubbing down sandal in rose water and applying it to his body, and fanning him with tender leaves of the plantain-tree; despite which, he was crying out all aflame (with passion) and saying to his friend, 'Bring me poison, I will sacrifice my life and be released from this suffering. Observing this state of his, she said to herself, 'However courageous, learned, sagacious, discreet, and patient a man may be, Cupid reduces him to a state of distraction all the same.' These thoughts having passed through her mind, the companion said to him, 'O Kamalākar! Anangmanjari has sent word to thee to come and bestow life on her.' He replied, 'She, indeed, has given life to me.' "

After saying this, he rose up, and the companion went to her (the love-sick maiden), taking him along with her. When he got there, lo! she was lying dead! Thereupon he also uttered a cry of anguish, and therewith his spirit fled. And when it became morning, her household took both of them to the burning-ground, and arranging the pile, placed them thereon and set fire to it, when, in the meantime, her husband also arrived at the burning-ground, on his return from abroad. Then, hearing the sound of the people's weeping, he went there, and what does he behold but his wife burning with a strange man! He, also, being distracted with love, burnt himself to death in the same fire. The people of the city, hearing this intelligence, began saying one to another, 'Neither has eye seen, nor ear heard of so wonderful an event!'

After relating so much of the story, the sprite said, "O king! whose love, of these three, was greatest?" The king said, "Her husband was the deepest lover." "Why?" said the sprite. The king replied, "He, who, on seeing his wife dead for another's sake, put aside anger, and cheerfully laid down his life through love for her—he is the deepest lover." Hearing these words, the sprite went again and hung on to that tree. The king, too, went there, bound him, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him off.

TALE XXI.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! there is a city named Jaysthal, the king of which was named Varddhamān. In his city was a Brāhman named Vishnuswāmī, who had four sons; one a gambler, the second a lover of women, the third a fornicator, the fourth an atheist. The Brahman was one day admonishing his sons, saying, 'Wealth abides not in the house of him who gambles.' The gambler became greatly annoyed at hearing this. And he (the father) spoke again, saying, 'It is said in the Rājñit (or book of policy), Cut off the nose and ears of a gambler, and expel him from the land, so that others may not gamble; and although the gambler may have a wife and family in his house, do not consider them as in the house, for there's no knowing when he may lose them (at play). Again, those who are attracted by the wiles of courtesans purchase suffering for their own souls, while they part with their all under the influence of harlots, and take to stealing in the end. It is said, farther, that wise men keep far away from such women as ensnare their

hearts in a moment ; whereas the unwise give up their hearts, and so lose all their honesty, good disposition, reputation, conduct, judgment, piety, and moral character. Moreover, the exhortation of their spiritual preceptors is unpalatable to them. It is also said that—When one has lost his own sense of shame, why should he fear to dishonour any one else? And there is a proverb to the effect that—When will the cat that devours its own young allow a rat to escape!’ He went on to say, ‘Those who do not acquire knowledge in their childhood, and who on attaining to manhood become engrossed in amorous pleasures, and continue to pride themselves on their youth,—those persons, in their old age, are consumed with regretful longings (for that which they have neglected in their youth).’ ”

“On hearing these words, all four of them came mutually to the decision that it was better for an ignorant man to die than live ; and hence, it was best for them to visit some other land and study science. Determining on this, they went to another city, and after some time, having studied and become learned, they set out for their home. What do they see on the road but a Kanjar,¹ who, after skinning and cutting up a dead tiger, and making a bundle of its bones, was about to take them away. Thereupon they said

¹ Kanjar is the name of a low caste of people generally employed in mean offices, such as carrying away carcasses, &c. The snake-charmers are of his caste.

to one another, 'Come, let each of us put his knowledge to the proof.' Having determined on this, one of them called him (the Kanjar) and gave him something, and taking the bundle, sent him away; and, quitting the road, they opened the bundle. One of them arranged all the bones in their proper places, repeated an incantation and sprinkled something over them, so that they became united. In the same way the second brought the flesh together on the bones. The third, in the same manner, fixed the skin on the flesh. The fourth, in the same way, raised it to life. Thereupon it devoured the whole four of them as soon as it arose."

After reaching this point of the story, the sprite said, "Your majesty! who was the greatest fool of those four? King Vikram replied, "He who restored it to life was the greatest fool. And it is said, that knowledge without wisdom is of no use whatever; on the contrary, wisdom is superior to learning; and those who lack wisdom die just as he who raised the tiger to life died." When the sprite heard these words, he went and suspended himself on that same tree. Again did the king bind him, place him on his shoulder, and carry him away as before.

TALE XXII.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! there is a city named Biswapur, the king of which was named Bidagdha. A Brahman, named Nārāyan, dwelt in his city. He one day began thinking to himself, 'My body has become old, and I am acquainted with the science which enables one to enter another's body; it is therefore better that I quit this old body, and enter the body of some young man and enjoy life.' When he had determined on this in his mind, he set about entering a youthful body; but first he wept, and then he laughed, and after that he entered it and came home. All his kinsfolk, however, were aware of what he had done, and thereupon he said to them, 'I have now become an ascetic.'"

"Having said this, he began to recite (as follows): 'He who dries up the fountain of hope with the fire of austere devotion, and placing his soul therein, (thus) deadens his senses—he may be termed a wise

devotee. But the way of the people of this world is (such), that the body may waste away, the head shake, the teeth drop out, and they walk about with a stick in their old age, yet, even then, desire is not quenched. And thus it is that time passes away—day comes, night arrives, a month is over, a year is completed; one is a child, then an old man, while nothing is known as to who one himself is (*lit.* I am), and who others are, and why one grieves for another. One comes, another goes, and ultimately all life must depart—not one of these will remain. Many and various bodies are there, and many and various minds, and many and various affections, and various kinds of delusions has Brahmā created; but the wise escape these, and quenching hope and desire, shaving their heads, taking a staff and water-pot in their hands, subduing the passions of love and anger, become ascetics, and wander barefooted from one place of pilgrimage to another; these same find eternal salvation. This world, moreover, is as a dream; to whom can you impart pleasure in it, to whom pain? It is even like the new leaf shooting from the centre of the plaintain tree, wherein is no pith whatever. And those who pride themselves on riches, youth, or knowledge, are unwise. Again, they who turn devotees, and, taking a water-pot in hand, beg alms from door to door, and nourishing their bodies with milk, clarified butter, and sugar, become lustful, and

have sexual intercourse with women, they nullify their religious meditations.' After repeating so much, he proceeded, saying, 'I will now go on a pilgrimage.' On hearing these words, his relations were much pleased."

"Having told so much of the story, the sprite said, "Your majesty! why did he weep, and why did he laugh?" Then the king said, "Calling to mind his mother's love in his infancy, and the happiness of his youth, and from a feeling of affection in having remained so many days in that body, he wept; and having succeeded in his art, and entered a new body, he laughed with pleasure." On hearing these words, the sprite went and hung on to the same tree; (and) again did the king bind him as before, place him on his shoulder, and carry him away.

TALE XXIII.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! there was a city named Dharmpur, where a king named Dharmaj ruled. In his city was a Brahman named Govind, versed in the whole four Vedas and all the six learned treatises, and a careful observer of all his religious duties; and Haridatt, Somdatt, Yagyadatt and Brahmaddatt were his four sons. They were very learned, very clever, and at all times obedient to their father. After some time his eldest son died, and he, too, was at the point of death through grief for him."

"At that time, Vishnusharmā, the king's family priest, came and began reasoning with him, saying, 'When this (being) man enters the mother's womb, he first suffers pain there; secondly, falling under the influence of love in youth, he endures the anguish of separation from his beloved; thirdly, becoming old, he is involved in suffering through his body being feeble. In brief, many are the sorrows attendant on (man's) being born in the world, and few (are) the

joys ; for the world is the source of sorrow. If a man were to climb to the top of a tree, or go and sit on the summit of a mountain, or remain hiding in water, or sneak into an iron cage and remain therein, or go and conceal himself in the infernal regions—even then death would not let him escape. Moreover, whatever one may be—whether learned or a fool, rich or poor, wise or unwise, strong or weak—still, this all-devouring death lets no one escape. The full duration of a man's life is a hundred years ; of this, half passes away in night, and half of the half in childhood and old age ; the remainder is spent in contention, the (distress arising from) separation from those we love, and affliction. Further, the soul that is, is as restless as a watery wave ; how, then, can it yield man any peace ? And now, in this Iron Age, to meet with truthful men is a difficult matter ; while countries are daily laid waste, kings are avaricious, the earth yields little fruit, thieves and evil doers commit violence on the earth, and but little of religion, devotion, and truth remain in the world ; kings are tyrannical, Brahmans covetous, men have fallen under the influence of women, wives have become wanton, sons have begun reviling their fathers, and friends (have begun to display) enmity. Observe, further, that death did not even spare the great Chimanyu, whose maternal uncle was Kanhaiya, and father Arjun. And when Yama¹ carries off a

¹ *Yama* is the judge of the deceased, and ruler of the infernal regions : also, the god of death.

man, wealth remains behind in his house, and father, mother, wife, son, brothers and kindred—no one proves of any avail ; his good and evil deeds, his vices and his virtues alone accompany him ; while those same kinsfolk take him to the burning-ground and burn him. And see (how) the night comes to an end on one side, while day dawns on the other ; here the moon sets, there the sun rises. In the same way youth departs, old age comes on ; thus, also, time goes on passing away, and yet, even while perceiving this, man does not learn wisdom. Observe, again, in the First, or Golden Age, Mandhāta, a great king, who filled (*lit.* covered) the whole earth with the fame of his virtue ; and in the Second, or Silver Age, the glorious monarch Rāmchandra, who, bridging the sea, destroyed such a fortress as Laṅkā, and slew Rāvan ; and in the Third Age, Yudhisṭhir reigned in such a manner that people sing of his renown to this day—yet death did not spare even these. Moreover, the birds which fly in the air, and the animals which dwell in the sea, when the hour arrives, even these fall into trouble. No one has escaped sorrow on coming into this world. To grieve on this account is folly. It is best, therefore, to practise religious duties.’”

“ When Viṣṇuśarmā had reasoned with him in this manner, it came into the Brahman’s mind that he would thenceforth perform meritorious and pious acts. Having thought this over in his mind, he said to his

sons, 'I am about to sit down to a sacrifice; you go and bring me a turtle from the sea.' On receiving their father's command, they went to a fisherman, and said, 'Take a rupee, and catch a turtle for us.' He took it, and caught one, and gave it to them. Then the eldest of the brothers said to the second, 'Do thou take it up.' He said to the youngest, 'Brother! do thou take it up.' He replied, saying, 'I will not touch it; a bad smell will cling to my hands, and I am very nice¹ in (my) eating.' The second said, 'I am very particular in my intercourse with women.' The eldest said, 'I am particular in (the matter of) sleeping on a bed.' "

"Thus did the three of them begin wrangling; and leaving the turtle where it was, they proceeded, quarrelling the while, to the king's gate, and said to the gatekeeper, 'Three Brahmans have come seeking justice; go thou and tell this to the king.' On hearing this, the doorkeeper went and informed the king. The king summoned them, and asked, 'Why are you quarrelling one with another?' Then the youngest of them said, 'Your majesty! I am very particular as to food.' The second said, 'Lord of the earth! I am very particular as to women.' The

¹ I hazard this meaning for *chatur* in the teeth of the vocabulary and the dictionaries, as, the meanings contained therein do not seem to me to apply. The student, however, may, if he pleases, substitute "sharp" or "clever" for "nice."

eldest said, 'Incarnation of justice! I am particular in the matter of beds.' "

"When the monarch heard this, he said, 'Each of you submit to a trial.' They said, 'Very well.' The king sent for his cook, and said, 'Prepare various kinds of condiments and meats, and give this Brahman a thoroughly good repast.' On hearing this, the cook went and prepared food, and taking with him the one who was nice in the matter of food, seated him in front of the dishes. He was on the point of taking up a mouthful and putting it into his mouth, when an offensive smell came from it. He let it go, washed his hands, and came to the king. The king asked, 'Didst thou enjoy thy repast?' Then he said, 'Your majesty! I perceived a disagreeable smell in the food, (and) did not eat.' The king said again, 'State the cause of the offensive smell.' He replied, 'Your majesty! it was rice which had been grown on a burning-ground; the smell of corpses proceeded from it, and hence I did not eat it.' "

"On hearing this, the king summoned his steward, and asked, 'Sirrah! from what village does this rice come?' He replied, 'From Shibpur, your majesty!' The king said, 'Summon the landholder of that village.' Thereupon the steward had the landholder brought before the monarch. The king asked him, 'On what land was this rice grown?' He replied, 'On a burning-ground, your majesty!' When the

king heard this, he said to that Brahman, 'Thou art indeed a connoisseur in the matter of food.' "

"After this, he had the one who was nice in the matter of women sent for, and having a bed laid out in an apartment, and all the requisites for enjoyment placed therein, had a beautiful woman brought and placed near him, and the two while lying down began conversing with each other. The king was secretly looking on through a lattice. Now, the Brahman was about to give her a kiss, when smelling her breath, he turned away his face, and went to sleep. The king having witnessed this conduct, entered his palace and sought repose. Rising early in the morning, he came into the court, and summoned that Brahman, and asked, 'O Brahman! didst thou pass the night pleasantly?' He replied, 'Your majesty! I found no pleasure.' 'Why?' asked the king again. The Brahman replied, 'The smell of a goat proceeded from her mouth, and my mind was much distressed in consequence.' When the king heard this, he summoned the procuress, and inquired, 'Whence didst thou bring this (woman)? and who is she?' She said, 'She is my sister's daughter; her mother died when she was three months old, and I brought her up on goat's milk.' On hearing this, the monarch said, 'Thou art indeed a connoisseur in respect of women.' "

"After that he had a very fine bed prepared, and caused the Brahman who was a nice judge of beds to

sleep thereon. On its becoming morning, the king sent for him, and asked, 'Didst thou sleep comfortably through the night?' He replied, 'Your majesty! I had no sleep the whole night long.' 'Why?' asked the king. He replied, 'Your majesty! in the seventh fold of the bedding there was a hair, which was pricking my back, and I had no sleep in consequence.' On hearing this, the king looked into the seventh fold of the bedding, and lo! a hair was found. Thereupon he said to him, 'Thou art indeed a nice judge of beds.' "

After relating so much of the story, the sprite asked, "Who was the greatest connoisseur of those three?" King Bīr Vikramajit replied, "He who was the connoisseur in the matter of beds." When the sprite heard this, he went again and hung on to that tree; (and) the king also went there on the instant, and bound him, placed him on his shoulder, and carried him away.

TALE XXIV.

THE sprite said, "Your majesty! in the country of Kaling there was a Brahman named Yagya Sharmā, whose wife's name was Somadattā. She was very beautiful. The Brahman began offering sacrifices, whereupon his wife had a beautiful boy. When he attained the age of five years, his father began teaching him the *Shāstras*. At the age of twelve years he had finished the study of all the *Shāstras*, and become a great scholar; and he began to be in constant attendance upon, and to help his father."

"After the lapse of some time the boy died, and in their sorrow for him his parents uttered loud cries of lamentation and wailing. On receiving this news all his kinsfolk hastened thither, and fastening the boy upon a bier, took him away to the burning-ground; and when there, began repeatedly gazing at him, and saying to one another, 'See! even in death he appears beautiful!' They were uttering words like these, and arranging the pyre, while an ascetic was also seated there engaged in religious austerity. He

hearing these words began to think to himself, 'My body has become very old; if I enter this boy's body, I can practise religious meditation with ease and comfort.' "

"Having thought thus, he entered the body of the child, turned round, and pronouncing the names of Rām (Balarām) and Krishn, sat up as one sits up from sleep. When the people witnessed this, they all returned to their homes in astonishment; while his father lost all desire for the world on witnessing this marvel; first he laughed, then he wept."

After relating so much of the story, the sprite said, "Say, your majesty! why he laughed, and why he wept." Thereupon the king said, "Seeing the ascetic enter his body, and so learning the art (of changing one's own body for another) he laughed; and through regret at having to quit his own body he wept, thinking, 'Thus shall I too some day have to abandon my own body.' " Hearing this, the sprite went again and suspended himself on that tree; and the king, too, arriving close at his heels, bound him, put him on his shoulder, and carried him away.

TALE XXV.

THEN the sprite said, "Your majesty! there is a city in the south named Dharmpur, a king of which was named Mahābal. Once upon a time another king of that same region led an army against and invested his capital. He continued fighting for several days. When his army went over (in part) to the enemy, and a portion was cut to pieces, then, having no help for it, he took his wife and daughter with him, and went forth by night into the jungle. After he had penetrated several miles (lit. *kos*) into the jungle, the day broke, and a village came in view. Then, leaving the queen and princess seated beneath a tree, he went himself towards the village to get something to eat, and in the meantime (a body of) Bhils came and surrounded him, and told him to throw down his arms."

"On hearing this, the king commenced discharging arrows, and they did the same from their side. Thus did the fight last for three hours, and several of the

Bhils were slain. In the meantime an arrow struck the king's forehead with such force that he reeled and fell, and one of them came up and cut off the king's head. When the queen and princess saw the king dead, they took their way back to the jungle weeping and beating their breasts. After having proceeded a *kos* or two thus, they got tired and sat down, and began to be troubled with many an anxious thought."

"During this time a king, named Chandrasen, together with his son, while pursuing the game, came into that jungle, and the king noticing the foot-prints of the two (women), said to his son, 'Whence have the foot-prints of human feet come in this vast forest?' The prince replied, 'Your majesty! these are women's foot-prints; a man's foot is not so small.' The king observed, 'True, man has not got such delicate feet.' The prince said again, 'They have just this moment passed.' The monarch said, 'Come, let us seek them in the jungle; if we find them, I will give her whose foot this large one is to thee; and I will take the other.' Having entered into this mutual compact, they went forward, and perceived the two seated. They were delighted on seeing them, and seating them on their horses in the manner agreed upon, they brought them home. The prince took possession of the queen, and the king of the princess."

Having related so much of the story, the sprite said,

“Your majesty! what relationship will there be between the children of these two?” On hearing this, the king held his tongue through ignorance.

Then the sprite said in great glee, “Your majesty! I have been highly pleased at witnessing your patience and courage; I tell you one thing, however; do you attend thereto,—viz.: one, the hairs of whose body are like thorns, and whose body (itself) is like wood, and whose name is Shāntshīl, has come into your city, and he it is who has deputed you to fetch me, (while) he himself is seated in the burning-ground working his spells, and desires to kill you. I therefore forewarn you, that when he has finished his devotions, he will say to you, ‘Your majesty! prostrate yourself so that eight parts of your body may touch the ground.’ You should then say, ‘I am the king of kings, and all potentates bow low in salutation before me; up to this hour I have not bowed in adoration to any one, and I know not how to do so; you are a spiritual teacher, kindly show me how to do so, and then will I do it.’ When he bows down, give him such a blow with your sword that his head may become severed (from his body); then will you reign uninterruptedly; whereas, if you will not do this, he will slay you, and reign permanently.”

Having warned the king in these words, the sprite came out of that corpse, and went his way; and while somewhat of night still remained, the king brought

the corpse and placed it before the ascetic. The ascetic became glad on seeing it, and lauded the king greatly. After that, he repeated incantations and raised the corpse to life, and offered up a burnt-offering in sacrifice: and sitting with his face southwards, offered to his god all the materials he had prepared; and after offering up betel leaf, flowers, incense, lamps, and consecrated food, he said to the king, "Make obeisance; very glorious will thy dignity become, and the eight supernatural faculties¹ will always abide in thy house."

On hearing this, the king called to mind the words of the sprite, and joining his hands, said with the utmost humility, "Your reverence! I know not how to bow in adoration; you, however, are a spiritual teacher; if you will kindly teach me, I will do it." As the ascetic, on hearing this, lowered his head to prostrate himself, that instant the king struck him such a blow with his sword that his head was severed; and the sprite came and showered down flowers. It is declared that there is nothing unlawful in slaying him who would himself slay another."

¹ These powers are—1. *Mahimā*, or the faculty of making one's self as bulky as one pleases. 2. *Laghimā*, or the faculty of making one's self as light as one pleases. 3. *Animā*, or the power of making one's self infinitely small. 4. *Prakāmya*, or the power of gratifying one's desires. 5. *Vashita*, or power of subjecting all things to one's will. 6. *Ishita* or supreme sway. 7. *Prāpti*, or the power of obtaining everything. 8. *Kāmāvasāyitvam*, or the power of subduing and quenching natural desire.

At that time Indra and the rest of the gods, having witnessed the king's courage, mounted their cars and began to raise shouts of victory and exultation. And king Indra said in pleasure to king Bīr Vikramājīt, "Ask a boon." Then the king joined his hands and said, "Your majesty! Let this story concerning me become famous in the world." Indra replied, "So long as the moon, sun, earth and sky endure, this story shall be famous; and thou shalt be ruler over the whole earth."

After saying this, king Indra went to his place, and the king took those two corpses and threw them both into the oil-cauldron. Thereupon the two heroes came and presented themselves, and began to say, "What command is there for us?" The king replied, "When I remember you, then do you come." Taking from them their promise to do this, the king returned home, and began to attend to his government. It is said that,—Whether one be learned or a fool, a child or a man, he alone who is wise will win success.

