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THE ENCHANTED PARROT

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Being a Selection from the "Suka Saptati,"
or, The Seventy Tales of a Parrot,
Translated from the Sanskrit
Text by the Reverend

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*Translator of "The Satakas of Bhartrihari, The
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Introduction

THE Śuka Saptati, seventy tales of a parrot, are quite characteristic of Eastern story. The peg on which they hang is a certain Prabhâvatî. This lady's husband, whose name is Madana, has gone on a long journey. He has, however, left her his parrot, a bird which appears to be under a charm. Prabhâvatî, after her husband has been absent some little time, begins to feel rather dull, and her attendants, or friends, suggest that she had better look out for some admirer to console her during his absence. She accordingly is preparing to start on this errand, when the parrot suddenly finds his voice, and remarks very strongly on Prabhâvatî's disreputable intentions. Prabhâvatî makes up her mind to have the parrot's neck wrung, but before actually departing, and ordering the bloodthirsty deed to be carried out, she reflects that after all it is only a bird speaking, and tells him that she means to go in spite of his well-meant advice. This starts the parrot off, and he bids her go by all means, if she is as clever as some one whom he knows. Prab-

hâvatî asks him who this person may be, and wherein their cleverness consists. This leads to Story I, and just when the climax arrives the parrot stops, and asks Prabhâvatî and her friends how they think the story ends. Of course they don't know, and the parrot keeps them on tenterhooks for a bit, and finally tells them. By this time the evening is tolerably far advanced, so that it is of no use for Prabhâvatî to set out on her love-making expeditions, and she goes to bed with her attendants. This process is repeated for sixty-nine evenings, and finally Prabhâvatî's husband returns. From what he gathers, he does not altogether approve of his wife's goings on in his absence ; and seems as if he meant to proceed to extremities, when the eloquent parrot calms him down with the seventieth story, after which Madana's father observes a great festival in honour of his son and daughter-in-law, and the parrot, having worked out the charm (or the curse), ascends to heaven in a rain of flowers.

NOTE.

The tales all begin and end in a similar manner. I have given the introduction and conclusion to the first two as examples, but it does not seem necessary to go through all the stories in the same way. Some of the Tales have been omitted as unsuitable for translation into English.

THE ENCHANTED PARROT

ŚUKA SAPTATI

Homage to Śâradâ, the abode of Divine
Wisdom

THERE is a city called Chandrapura, whose king was Vikramasena. A man of noble family called Haridatta lived there too. He had a wife named Śringârasundarî, and a son—Madana. Madana's wife's name was Prabhâvatî, the daughter of Somadatta, a man of importance in the town. Now Madana was a bad son. He was entirely given up to the pleasures of sense, and cared for nothing but gambling, drink, and women. His father and mother were filled with grief and anxiety at their son's evil courses. One day a certain Trivikrama, a Brâhman, who had observed Haridatta's affliction, went to his house to see him, and took with him a confidential friend in the shape of a parrot. "My dear Haridatta," said the Brâhman, "take

care of this parrot, and treat it as though it were your own son ; I think very likely your grief will be alleviated by its knowledge and wisdom." So Haridatta took the parrot and handed it over to his son, who put it into a golden cage and kept it in his sleeping-chamber. One day the parrot was in a reflective mood and said—

"My son ! tears shed from your father's eyes for your wickedness bedew the ground. These evil courses will ruin you, as they ruined Devaśarma."

"And pray who was Devaśarma ?" replied Madana. The parrot said—

"There is a city called Panchapura, and in it lived a Brâhman called Satyaśarma. His wife was Dharmaśalâ, and his son Devaśarma. Devaśarma was so intent on the pursuit of sacred wisdom, that he forgot all about the duty he owed to his parents, and started for a distant country, where he performed penances on the banks of the Bhâgîrâthî. One day when he was on his pilgrimage, it so happened that a crane flying overhead dropped some excrement on him. The ascetic looked up with eyes of fury, and the unfortunate bird immediately fell to earth scorched to ashes at his glance.

"Devaśarma continued his journey, and presently reached the house of a Brâhman. The

Brâhman's wife was sent by her husband to meet him, and by his orders reproved Devaśarma for having destroyed so excellent a bird as the crane, finally telling him to go elsewhere and look for a lodging. So Devaśarma put up with the repulse and continued his journey, for the fact that his breach of temper was known made him feel very uncomfortable.

“ At last he reached Varanasî, and went to the dwelling of Dharma Vyâdha, a learned Brâhman, who had been changed, in consequence of a curse, into a butcher. He found the butcher at home—a rough, savage-looking man, his hands all covered with blood, the very image of the demon of destruction. Devaśarma stood still horrified at such a spectacle ; but the butcher bid him good-day, and inviting him into the house, gave him food and lodging. When he had been refreshed and rested, he said to the butcher : ‘ Tell me, where did you and your good wife learn your wisdom ? Whence did you gain this divine knowledge that you have ? ’

“ The butcher said—

“ ‘ He who observes rightly the duties that belong to his own condition ;

He whose mind is not distracted by outward objects, be they great or small ;

He who obeys his father, who is temperate in all things ;

He is the true devotee, he has the true wisdom, he has attained to virtue and righteousness.

“ ‘ Such am I and my wife ; but as for you, you have abandoned your father, you are a wanderer from your home, you are not worthy of being even spoken to by one of my position. I respect the duties of hospitality, therefore I have answered your question.’

“ Devaśarma said : ‘ And wherein does perfect discipline consist ? ’

“ The butcher replied—

“ ‘ Those who fail to honour those worthy of honour ;

Those who do not respect persons worthy of respect ;

Those who despise others.

Such as these do not enter paradise.’

“ On receiving this advice Devaśarma retraced his steps and went home again. He performed his duties, and so became famous in this world, and in the next attained to happiness.

“ This is what you must do,” continued the parrot. “ You must do your duty in the sphere in which you have been placed, and you must respect your parents’ wishes.”

At these words Madana repented of his conduct, returned home and behaved with due regard to his father and mother. Soon after, with their permission, he left them, took leave of his wife Prabhâvatî, and started for a far country. His wife dutifully mourned his absence for some days, when at last her friends advised her to stop her lamentations, and try and find some one to console her solitude. What they said was this: "A father, a husband, are all very well as long as they are alive, but when they are both dead, or as good as dead, it is a great mistake to waste one's life and youth in tears and lamentations. So though you have lost your husband you have not lost your youth and vigour, and you should make the best of both."

Prabhâvatî thought there was something in this advice, and proceeded to carry it out without delay, by falling in love with a certain Ganachandra. In fact, she went on in such a way that the parrot was moved to rebuke her severely and said: "Really! such behaviour is too bad!" and a good deal more to the same effect.

Prabhâvatî was so angry at the parrot's presuming to advise her, that she intended to tell her servants to wring the parrot's neck as soon as she was gone; before starting, however, she waited a

moment to offer some betel at the shrine of her protecting divinity.

While she was engaged upon this, the parrot said: "Well, good luck to you! Where are you going?"

She thought to herself, "After all, it is only a bird," and said laughing, "If you want to know, I am going to meet a lover."

"Shocking!" exclaimed the parrot; "I never heard of any woman of decent character doing such a thing! However, if your mind is made up, right or wrong, I suppose you must go. For—

"People of low character, when they are depressed, always try to get some kind of diversion; like the woman of light character who dragged the merchant's son about by his hair."

"And what was that?" said Prabhâvatî, making the parrot a respectful bow.

"If you *will* make love," answered the parrot, "by all means make love; but before you go, hear the tale I have to tell you."

Prabhâvatî assented, and the parrot said—

STORY I

IN a town called Chandrâvatî there lived a certain Râja. His name was Bhîma. A man called Mohana was also an inhabitant of the same town. He was the son of a prominent townsman, and was very rich. One day he fell in love with the wife of a fellow-citizen whose name was Lakshmî. So he got hold of a woman called Pûrnâ who was a sort of go-between in these matters, and commissioned her to take a message for him to Lakshmî when her husband was away from home. Pûrnâ, who had been handsomely feed, did as she was asked. She went to the house and said to Lakshmî, "There is a man here, in this town, who has fallen a victim to your attractions ; I wish you would invite him to your house." "Well !" replied Lakshmî, "this seems to me hardly the sort of thing that a woman of respectable character ought to do, but as you seem to have made the bargain with him, I will do as you wish. For, as the saying is—

" ' Hari cannot avoid the deadly poison ;

The tortoise bears up the world on his back ;

The ocean endures the submarine fire in its depths ;

Honest people always carry out their engagements, ' "

When she heard this Pûrnâ was charmed, and so in the evening she brought Lakshmî to her own house as the meeting place with Mohana. When it came to the point, Mohana was prevented from coming by an accident, and Lakshmî, who was anticipating some amusement, said: "Well! if Mohana can't come, you had better invite some one else." So Pûrnâ did as she was asked, and by some blunder or other brought Lakshmî her own husband as a visitor." The parrot continued: "Here was a pretty state of things; what do you suppose her husband did, and what do you suppose she did?"

Prabhâvatî and her friends replied: "We haven't the slightest idea; pray tell us what happened."

"Certainly," answered the parrot, "I shall be delighted to tell you, if you will wait here for a while."

They gladly assented, and after some time had passed, the parrot finished the story: "Lakshmî at once recognized her husband, and saying, 'Hullo! so it is you, is it? You have come back unexpectedly, have you?' seized him by his hair, and dragged him about saying, 'You scoundrel! You are always telling me that the only woman in the world you care for is your wife. Now I have found you out, and I will make you sorry for it.' Well,

the end of it all was that Haridatta pacified his wife with some difficulty, and at last persuaded her to go home with him."

Prabhâvatî and her friends were enchanted with the story, and as night was now tolerably far advanced they all went to bed.

STORY II

THE next evening Prabhâvatî began to think over her pursuit of a lover, and asked the parrot for his advice. The parrot said: "Go, by all means, if you desire to go! That is to say, if you are as clever in getting out of difficulties as Yaśodevî was."

"And pray who was Yaśodevî?" rejoined Prabhâvatî.

"If I tell you," replied the parrot, "and keep you here, perhaps you will carry out your intention of wringing my neck."

"Never mind," answered Prabhâvatî, "be the result what it may, I must hear the story of Yaśodevî."

So the parrot began—

"There is a town called Nandana, whose prince bore the same name. He had a son, Râjaśekhara,

and Râjaśekhara's wife was called Śaśiprabhâ. Now a certain Dhanasena came across her, and fell violently in love with her. He was absolutely consumed with the flame of his passion, and at last his mother, Yaśodevî, asked him what was the matter. With many sighs and tears he told her. He must have the prince's wife. She was very difficult to get hold of, but he could not live without her. On hearing this, Yaśodevî bid him be of good cheer, and said she would see what could be done. So she abstained from all food, and putting on her best clothes went to Śaśiprabhâ, taking with her a bitch. She assumed an appearance of grief, and taking Śaśiprabhâ aside, said to her : ' You see this bitch ; well, you and I and this bitch were sisters in a former existence. As for me, I had no compunction in accepting the advances of my lovers ; you received their addresses, but with some hesitation. But this was not the case with our sister. She would not have anything to do with men at any price ; she kept them at a distance, and now you see to what a condition she is reduced. She has to live as a bitch, all the time recollecting what she was. You, through your reluctance, may or may not remember your former state ; but as far as I am concerned, I have no recollection of it whatever, for I thoroughly enjoyed myself. And so I am

sorry for you, and I am come to warn you by showing you this bitch, and telling you her story. If you have got a lover I advise you to give him all he wants, and save yourself from the disagreeables of a future state like this. For the person who gives liberally will himself be the recipient of endless favours. It is said: "Those who beg from house to house, merely let you know that they are there; they do not ask for anything, for the liberal always give alms freely according to their condition, to those in need of assistance." "

"Śaśiprabhâ was quite overcome by this address, and embracing Yaśodevî wept over her and entreated her assistance in escaping from the fate which seemed to impend. So Yaśodevî introduced Śaśiprabhâ to her own son, and Râjaśekhara, who had been bribed with magnificent presents of gold and jewels, was quite willing to let her go, and thought that a great piece of good luck had befallen him.

"So Yaśodevî by her skill and cleverness cheated the prince of the princess, and gained her own ends. If you are as clever as she was, go; if not, stay at home—go to bed, and don't make a fool of yourself."

STORY III

IN a town called Viśâlâ, the ruler of which was Sudarśana, lived a merchant whose name was Vimala. Now Vimala was the possessor of two very beautiful and charming wives, and these ladies had attracted the attention of a rascal named Kuntala. He set his mind on getting hold of them somehow or other, and eventually went to the shrine of Durgâ, and, making a costly offering to the goddess, prayed her to make him exactly like Vimala. Durgâ granted him his petition, and he accordingly went straight to Vimala's house and took possession of it in the owner's absence. He speedily won all the servants over by handsome presents, and made himself so extremely agreeable to Vimala's wives that they gave him everything he asked for. The servants could not quite make out what it all meant, but they supposed that Vimala had at last learnt the fleeting and transitory nature of wealth, and had determined hereafter to be liberal. In due course of time the genuine Vimala returned home, and found the door locked against him. He was in a terrible state, and uttered curses and lamentations without end. While he was thus engaged some of his relations came by and he appealed in

vain to them: "Come and help me! I have been cheated by the prince of scoundrels!"

Presently a party of merchants came by who viewed the spectacle with astonishment. They too declined to give any assistance, so finally he went to the chief of the police and laid a complaint. "Sir!" he exclaimed, "I have been done by the biggest blackguard in the whole town." So the police took the matter up, and went to Vimala's house to set things straight.

Vimala did not accompany them, but he had taken care to rouse their interest in his case by a liberal expenditure of money. When they reached the house they saw Vimala (as they thought) indoors. So they said, "It is all right, there is Vimala inside!" Presently the real Vimala, who had followed them, appeared. They were rather at a loss to know which was which, and the end of it was that a disturbance arose, and a good deal of damage was done.

The Prince Sudaršana got all the blame for this; as it is said—

"The fire of revolt breaks out, produced by tyranny and oppression. It becomes unquenchable, and the majesty and the dignity of the prince is injured by it."

The whole matter then came before the prince,

and after some reflection he hit upon the following expedient. He took Vimala's wives apart and said: "Pray tell me! What presents did Vimala give you when he married you? How much money did he give you? What business does he carry on? What were his father and mother, and what is the position of his family?"

They answered his questions quite frankly, and he soon found out all he wanted to know. Then he put the same questions in their equivalent form to the two men. Their answers, of course, were quite different. So he decided that the true Vimala was the man whose answers corresponded with what the ladies had told him, and to him he restored his wives, while the other—the scoundrel—was turned out of the town.

STORY IV

THERE is a Brâhman settlement called Somaprabhâ, and in it lived a Brâhman, famous for his wisdom and righteousness, named Somasama. His daughter was remarkable for her beauty and grace, but she had the reputation of being a witch.

The consequence of this was, that in spite of her charms, no one could be found bold enough to marry her. Somasama therefore travelled about to try and find a husband for his daughter, and in the course of his wanderings reached Janasthâna—a Brâhman town. There he came across a Brâhman named Govinda, as stupid as he was poor, and he prevailed on him to take his daughter off his hands. So Govinda married the dangerous damsel, infatuated by her good looks, and that in spite of the advice of all his friends, who did their best to persuade him to have nothing to do with her. The union did not turn out a success, for the bride was active and lively, while Govinda was a dull, heavy sort of person; so she never ceased to lament the fact that she was quite thrown away on him. As the saying is: "A lord full of all the virtues is no good for a woman of life and energy: such energy as the virtuous and the ascetic possess is worthless; or only a source of evil."

One day she said to Govinda: "It is a long time since I left my parents; I wish you would take me to see them." Govinda willingly assented, and cleaned up his cart, preparatory to starting with his wife.

On the road they fell in with a young Brâhman

named Vishṇu, a remarkably smart and attractive young fellow. He at once took the fancy of Govinda's wife, and an attachment sprang up between them at first sight. For, as has been said—

“Love takes its origin from mutual glances: then the feelings are roused and it comes into existence. Then follows loss of sleep, emaciation, distraction, loss of self-control, madness, folly, death. Wise men tell us that these ten conditions are brought about in men by means of love.”

So the traveller wrote to Govinda, saying that he was a Brâhman named Vishṇu, an inhabitant of the neighbouring town, that he was on a journey but afraid to travel alone, so might he go with them.

The stupid Govinda consented without any misgivings, and the end of it was that one day when his back was turned, his fellow-traveller made such an inroad into the lady's affections that she fell a victim to his attractions, and told him her whole history, her name, and her family. Presently Govinda came back, and when he wanted to get into his cart they called him a thief and declined to let him come in, and after some disputing, Vishṇu committed a violent assault on him and beat him severely, assisted by the damsel's magical powers.

Govinda then went into the village close by, threw himself on his back and uttered piercing cries and lamentations. The villagers came and asked him what was the matter. "My good people," he exclaimed, "I have been assaulted and robbed of my wife by a scoundrel; come and help me!" At last the matter came to the ears of the chief of the police, and he ordered Vishṇu and the witch-like damsel to be brought before him. He asked the pair what answer they had to make to this charge. Vishṇu replied: "This is my wife; we were travelling quietly along the road when we met this man, who all of a sudden went out of his senses and attacked us." Govinda was then asked what he had to say; and he made as nearly as possible the same answer as Vishṇu.

A soothsayer happened to be present, but to find out the truth was quite beyond his powers. The question therefore arose how was the magistrate to come to a decision. The soothsayer then asked them some further questions, and said: "Would you tell me at what time you met on the road?" They both said, "After dinner." The soothsayer then took the two Brâhmans aside, and asked them separately, "What did the lady eat for dinner?" Govinda of course knew, and was able to answer the question without any diffi-

culty, but Vishṇu was quite at a loss, and did not know what to say ; so he lost his case and became an object of ridicule to every one, while they advised Govinda to let the lady go to the infernal regions and be rid of a nuisance. For it has been said—

“ A learned man given to love and wine ; a dancer who dances badly ;

A devotee who is stupid and foolish ; a parasite who is old and worn-out ;

A Brâhman who is ignorant of the Scriptures ; a kingdom whose ruler is a child ;

A friend who cannot give advice, and who is deceitful ; a wife who, rejoicing in her youth and beauty, makes love to other men ;

A wise man keeps clear of all these.”

A man too whose faculties are obscured by love, and who, despising common-sense advice, travels with his sweetheart along the highway, will certainly be attacked and robbed as Govinda was, who got into trouble because he would not listen to the advice of his friends.

STORY V

THERE is a city called Ujjayinî, and the king's name is Vikramâditya. His queen was Kâmalînâ. She was a lady of very noble family, and was the king's favourite wife. One day the king was dining with her and he gave her some roast fish. She looked at them and said: "Sir! I cannot bear to look at these men, much less to touch them!" On these words the fish burst into a loud laugh, so loud that it was heard by all the people in the town. The king could not understand this, so he asked the astrologers, who were acquainted with the language of birds, what the fish meant by their laughter. None of them could tell him; so he sent for his private chaplain, who was the head of the Brâhmans in the town, and said: "If you don't tell me what those fish meant by laughing at what the queen said, I shall send you and all the Brâhmans into exile." The chaplain, on hearing this, was a good deal upset, and asking for a few days' grace, went home. He was quite sure that he and the rest of the reverend gentlemen would have to go, for it seemed impossible to find any answer to the question. His daughter observed his depressed condition and said: "Father! what's the matter? Why do

you look so dismal? Tell me the cause of the trouble. You know people possessed of wisdom should not lose their self-possession even if difficulties arise. For it has been said—

“ ‘The man who is not overjoyed in prosperity, who is not cast down in adversity, who is steadfast in difficulties, such a man as this has been born for an everlasting ornament and protection to the world.’ ”

So the Brâhman told his daughter the whole story, and how the king had threatened to banish him ; since—

“ There is not a single person in this world on whose friendship or affection one can rely : how much less on that of a king who walks in the ways of treachery.

“ For it has been said—

“ ‘Cleanliness in a crow ; honesty in a gambler ; mildness in a serpent ; women satisfied with love ; vigour in a eunuch ; truth in a drunkard ; friendship in a king—who ever heard of these things ? ’

“ Moreover—

“ ‘Put not your trust in rivers, in savage beasts, in horned cattle, in armed men, in women, in princes. Kings are like soldiers clad in mail, savage, crooked in their ways as serpents that

creep on you for evil. A king slays with his smile ; he may pay honour, but he is dangerous ; the elephant kills with a touch, the serpent with a caress.'

" I have served the king," continued the Brâhman, " faithfully all these years, yet he has become my enemy, and will send me and my fellow Brâhmans into exile. It has been said—

" " A man may give up something for the sake of his family ;

He may give up his family for the sake of his village ;

He may give up his village for the sake of his country ;

But he will give up the whole world to save his life.' "

When the Brâhman's daughter heard that she said : " This, father, is all very true, but no respect will be paid to a servant that has been sent adrift by his master.

" For it has been said—

" " A man may be of the highest character, or very commonplace. If he devotes himself to the service of the ruler, whichever he may be, he will get nothing out of it. The king will take the first man he comes across, be he ignorant, or learned, honourable or dishonourable, into his service ; for

kings, women, and creepers generally lay hold of what is nearest to them.'

" Besides this—

" 'A man may be learned, energetic, skilful, ambitious, well versed in all his duties, but he is nothing without the prince's favour. A man may be nobly born, possessed of ability, but if he does not pay court to the prince he may just as well spend his life in begging or perpetual penance. One who falls into the power of diseases, crocodiles or kings, and the stupid man who does not know how to get out of a difficulty, will never keep his position in life.'

" For it has been said—

" 'Kings are as nothing to those wise and skilful persons who by their power bring lions, tigers, serpents and elephants into subjection. But—men who are wise rely on the king's favour, and so attain to eminence. The sandal grove can only flourish on Mount Malaya.'

" All the insignia of rank,—parasols, elephants, horses, are given by the king to those whom he delights to honour. You are the object of the king's affection and honour, therefore, my dear father, do not be downcast. The chief minister's duty is to clear up, from time to time, all the doubts which beset the king's mind. Therefore cheer

up! I will find out for you what the fish meant by their laughter."

The Brâhman at this advice felt somewhat comforted, and went and told the king what his daughter had said. The king was delighted, and immediately sent for the damsel. She came and made an elaborate obeisance to his majesty and said, "Sir! pray do not treat these Brâhmans so ill: it is not their fault. Pray tell me what kind of a laugh was it that you heard from the fish? Still, I am only a woman, and I wonder you are not ashamed to ask me to clear the matter up. For—

"A king may be vile, yet he is even then not as other men, but bears a divine form. You, Vikramâditya, as your name tells us, are the bearer of divine power. For it has been said—

"From Indra comes might; from Fire comes heat; from Yama wrath; from Kuvera riches; but a king is formed from Kâma and Vishṇu combined."

"The person you ought to blame is yourself, for it is your business to remove doubts and difficulties.

"Hear, then, what I have to tell you:—

"The fish! The fish! they laid upon the dish,
And they laughed when the queen called them men!
Would your Majesty know what these verses mean—
Think over them again and again.

“And if you can't find out the answer send for me. At any rate you cannot possibly doubt the queen's fidelity, seeing that she never goes out of doors.”

Neither the king nor his wise men had the slightest idea what these verses meant, and so the Brâhman's clever daughter went away, and left them in their bewilderment.

STORY VI

THE king spent a sleepless night trying to puzzle out the meaning of the verses. For, as it has been said—

“How should one sleep who is overwhelmed with debt, who has a disagreeable wife, who is surrounded by enemies?”

So after a miserable night the king sent again for the wise maiden and said: “I cannot make out what the fish meant by their laughter.”

“Your majesty had better not ask me,” she replied, “or perhaps you may repent of it as the merchant's wife did when she was determined to find out where the cakes came from.” The king

said, "And what was that?" She told him the following story:—

"There is a town called Jayantî, and a merchant whose name was Sumata lived in it. His wife was Padminî. He was unlucky enough to lose all his money; in consequence his family would have nothing more to do with him, for it is well known that wealth and friendship go together—

" 'He who has money has friends; he who has money has relations;

He who has money has wisdom: in fact, he is a man of importance.'

"It is said in the Mahâbhârata—

" 'There are five conditions in which a man though living may be regarded as dead: poverty, disease, stupidity, exile, hopeless slavery.' Also—

" 'A stranger, if he is a rich man, is a relation; but a kinsman, if he be poor, is an out-cast.'

"So this merchant used to take straw and wood into the market for sale. One day he could not find either, but he came across an image of Ganesa, made of wood. He thought to himself, 'This will suit my purpose very well.' For it has been said—

" 'There is nothing that a hungry man will not do for bread: and a man who is ruined has no con-

science. Such people will be guilty of any crime ; what a respectable man would not dream of doing, comes natural to them."

"So he made up his mind to break the image up for the sake of the wood, when Ganesa said to him : ' If you will leave my image alone I will give you every day five cakes made of sugar and butter ; you can come here for them, only you must not tell any one how you come by them. If you let the secret out, I shall be clear of my promise.'

"He gladly consented, and Ganesa gave him the five cakes which he took home and gave to his wife. With some of them she supplied the wants of her own house, and gave what was over to a friend. The friend asked her one day where the cakes came from ; Padminî could not answer the question, and the friend said, ' If you don't tell me, then there is an end of our friendship. For, as the saying is—

" ' Giving ; receiving ; imparting secrets ; asking questions ; eating in company ; these are the five proofs of friendship.'

"Padminî replied : ' My husband knows, but he says it is a secret and will not tell me ; even if I were to ask him a hundred times I should get nothing out of him.' The friend replied : ' Then

all I have to say is, that you must make a very bad use of your youth and beauty, if you can't find this out.'

"So Padminî asked her husband again, 'Where do those cakes come from?' 'By the favour of destiny,' he replied; 'for it has been said, "Fate, if it is on your side will accomplish your wishes. She will bring you what you want, even from a distant island, from the ends of the world, from the bottom of the sea. Once upon a time a mouse, making a hole for itself, fell into the jaws of a serpent. The serpent could not find anything to eat and was in the last stage of starvation, but refreshed by the lucky meal he went on his way rejoicing. So fate is the cause of man's rise or fall."'

"Padminî, when she found her husband would not tell her, refused to eat. He was put in a difficulty and said: 'If I tell you what you want to know disaster will follow, and you will be sorry for it.' Padminî, however, took no heed of warnings, but continued obstinate, and at last her husband was obliged to tell her; for it is said, 'When the gods want to ruin a man, they first take away his senses, so that he does not know evil from good.'

"Then, your majesty," continued the Brâhman's

daughter, " Sumati was prevailed on by his foolish wife to tell her the secret. For—

“ ‘ Even Râma failed to recognize the golden deer ;

Nahusha harnessed the Brâhmans to his chariot ;

Arjuna carried off both cow and calf ;

Yudhisthira gambled away his wife and his four brothers.

So often even a good man, in a crisis, becomes the victim of folly.’

“ Well ! Padminî got the secret out of her husband, and went and told her friend, and the result was that the friend sent her own husband to Ganesa, who gave him the cakes. Next day Padminî went with Sumata to Ganesa for the daily present, and he told them plainly that it was no use their coming any more to him, for the bargain had been broken and the cakes had been given to some one else. So Padminî’s husband gave her a good scolding, and they went home very sorry for what they had done. In the same way your majesty should not ask me to explain the meaning of the verses to you lest you repent of your knowledge. You had better make them out by yourself, without my help ; ” and so saying, she got up and went home,

STORY VII

AFTER another sleepless night the king not being able to find out the meaning of the verses, sent for the Brâhman's daughter again, and said, " Pray tell me the meaning of the verses without any more delay."

She answered: " You must not importune the gods with entreaties or repentance will follow, as was the case with the Brâhman who fell in love with Sthagikâ. There is a town somewhere or other—it matters not where—whose king is Vîrâbhya, and in it lived a Brâhman called Keśava. One day the thought occurred to him: ' Why should I not increase the wealth my father has left me? for it has been said—

" ' The glory that you gain from your own virtues is the truest; next best is that which you gain from your father; but that which comes to you from a remoter source is worth nothing.'

" So he started with a view of getting more money, and in the course of his wandering passed through several towns, and places of sacred pilgrimage. At last he reached an out-of-the-way place where he saw an ascetic sitting cross-legged in meditation.

" The Brâhman came up to him, and made a

respectful obeisance. The ascetic ceased meditating for a moment, and seeing the Brâhman said: 'To whom in this world should liberality be shown? who should be protected? to whom should be granted what seems almost impossible of acquirement?'

"The Brâhman rose up from his humble posture and said: 'Sir! To *me*. I am in the pursuit of wealth.'

"The ascetic knew that his visitor was a Brâhman and was quite shocked to hear him utter such an unworthy sentiment, for it has been said—

"'To see a distinguished person begging, in a state of poverty, asking for what he ought not to want, troubles the mind, though one is prepared to give. For a good man, though he may be himself in trouble, performs his duty to another. The sandal tree may be broken in a thousand pieces, but it still keeps its cooling power.'

"The ascetic therefore gave his visitor a magic cloak, and said: 'Whenever you shake this, 500 gold pieces will fall from it; but you must not give it to any one, or say where the money comes from.'

"The Brâhman thanked the ascetic and departed with his cloak. Next morning he shook it, and immediately became the possessor of 500 gold pieces.

He then proceeded on his travels and reached a town called Ratuavati, where he fell violently in love with a young lady called Sthagikâ. She could not make out where all the money came from, and her mother to whom she confided her doubts said: 'Well, what is this Brâhman's business, for he seems to have plenty of money. How does he come by it?' So she asked her admirer but he would not tell her. By dint of worrying, however, she got it out of him, and he let out all about the magic cloak. The consequence was that she waited till he was asleep and then stole the cloak, and as now he had lost all his money, the girl's mother showed him the door. It has been said—

“ ‘There is not much cleverness required to deceive one who has confidence in us,

Nor is much courage required to kill one who is asleep.’

“ The Brâhman, when he woke up could not find his cloak, and went and laid a complaint before the magistrates, asserting with great vehemence that he had been robbed. The case was therefore tried, and the mother and daughter were charged with the theft. The mother said: 'This good-for-nothing fellow made love to my daughter. He has invented this story about his cloak—no sensible person could believe such nonsense. The whole

thing is a fabrication from beginning to end. He came to my house, and my servants finding that he was a foreigner turned him out of doors, and we sent the cloak back to the holy man who gave it him.' This decided the case against the Brâhman, and he lost both Sthagikâ and his cloak all through letting out the secret, and this may be your majesty's fate too, if you persist in your curiosity." With these words the damsel got up and went home.

STORY VIII

THE king was still unable to fathom the meaning of the verses, so the next day he sent for the Brâhman's daughter. She said: "Your majesty! You should not be so importunate. A king should not be so pertinacious, whether the objects at which he aims be good or bad. Kings are as the body, and their subjects are only their limbs. Still if I obey your commands evil will befall you as it befel the merchant who lost his home and all that he had." "How was that?" said the king. The Brâhman's daughter answered: "There is a place called Tripura, and in it lived Prince Vikrama.

A merchant inhabited that city whose wife's name was Subhagâ. She was a person of very light, frivolous disposition, and do what he would he could not keep her within bounds. One day when she was wandering about the town and getting into mischief, she came across a merchant who lived in the house of a Yaksha. She promptly fell in love with him, and as he very willingly responded to her advances, she made up her mind to run away with him. Before going she called a confidential maid-servant and said: 'I am going away for a bit: directly after I have started do you set the house on fire, and my husband will be so taken up in trying to put it out that he will not find out I am gone. I shall be back again before long.' So no sooner had Subhagâ started, than her confidant set the place on fire, and her husband who had had his suspicions of the merchant, left keeping guard over the Yaksha's house and came home to try and put the fire out. Meanwhile her plan succeeded perfectly, while the house was burnt down.

"Thus the merchant lost house and everything, and that will be your majesty's fate if you are so determined. If, however, you permit I will tell you what you want to know, myself." So saying she departed.

STORY IX

NEXT morning the king, who was still quite unable to find the answer, sent for the Brâhman's daughter and said: "You promised to tell me the meaning of those verses; for I cannot make out what they mean myself." The girl replied: "If you cannot find out the meaning, then listen to me. You have among your soothsayers and wise men, one called Pushpakâra. He is their head. I believe he is a very prudent discreet person. Tell me—why is he called Pushpakâra." The king replied: "He is rightly called Pushpakâra, because when he smiles it seems as if a shower of blossoms fell from his countenance. This was reported to be his characteristic, and so messengers were sent to fetch him to prove the truth of this report about him. When he came he neither laughed nor was there any shower of blossoms that fell from him, and for that reason they call him 'The bond of secrecy.'" The Brâhman's daughter said: "And why did not Pushpakâra laugh? Do you know the reason?" "I haven't the least idea," replied the king. "Then you should make him tell you," rejoined the Brâhman's daughter, "for, it has been said—

" 'A king should gain a kingdom by righteousness ;

In righteousness he should rule it ;

By righteousness the king guards his subjects from harm and becomes their refuge.'

" You have asked me what the fish meant by laughing. You ask him the same question. Perhaps he will answer it and tell you at the same time why he did not laugh himself."

So the king sent for Pushpakâra, and as he was a wise man, and of some importance, he made him valuable presents and asked him why he did not laugh, and why the fish did. He replied : " Family scandals should not be talked about. Loss of money, sorrow of mind, difficulties at home, fraud, contempt—these are things which no wise man ever publishes. Still the command of the king must be obeyed ; for the glory of a king, equal to that of Sudra, has surpassing power on the earth ; the very name of a righteous, energetic king, surpasses the sun in magnificence. Therefore I will answer your majesty's question. I found out that my wife was in love with some one else, and therefore grief stopped my laughter."

Then the king put his own difficulty before the wise man, and the latter gave no answer but struck the queen full in the face. The queen pretended to faint, and Pushpakâra burst into a fit of laughter. The king was extremely angry and looking at the

magician and the Brâhman's daughter, said, "What is there to laugh at? What do you mean by this?" "Sir," replied the magician making a profound bow, "the queen did not faint the other night when she was struck by the young men in whose company she was. Now when I strike her she faints, or pretends to faint." The king grew still more angry and said, "What is this? do you know it of your own knowledge?" The magician answered, "I saw it with my own eyes, and if your majesty is not convinced I will prove it to you." The king went into the matter and found out everything. The magician said, "I suppose your majesty sees now why the Brâhman's daughter would not tell you the reason why the fish laughed." The end of it was that Pushpakâra and the Brâhman's daughter were sent home in a considerable state of trepidation, while the queen and her lovers were sewn up in a sack, and thrown into the river.

STORY X

IN a town called Râjapura lived a paterfamilias whose name was Devasa. He had two wives,

Śringâravatî and Subhagâ. They were both ladies of a very amorous disposition, and were continually engaged in flirtations with one admirer or another, which they were mutually careful to conceal from their husband. One day Subhagâ was entertaining a lover in the house when her husband appeared outside, carrying a shrub in his hand which he had dug up. Here was a pretty state of things ; what was to be done ! Śringâravatî's readiness, however, did not fail her, and after having stripped off most of Subhagâ's clothes, turned her out of doors. Her husband came up and seeing Subhagâ in this condition said : " And pray, what is the meaning of this." " The truth is," answered Śringâravatî, " Subhagâ saw you coming in carrying that shrub in your hand, and directly she saw it she went mad, tore off her clothes, and ran out of doors. Do go and put it back again in the place from which you took it. Perhaps if you do she may recover her wits." The stupid man did as he was asked, and directly his back was turned they let the lover out of the house.

STORY XI

IN a village called Dâbhila lived a rustic whose name was Viloohana. His wife was called Rambhikâ; she was a frivolous, ill-conducted person, but no one ventured to take advantage of her, because her husband was very stern and disagreeable. One day she went to the well to draw some water and saw a very good-looking young man—the son of a Brâhman—the other side of the road. She greeted him with a glance, and he, being well versed in the language of the eyes, readily responded. For it is said :—

“ Even an animal knows what you mean if you speak out ;

Elephants and horses go forward at the word of command ;

But a man of wisdom can divine the unspoken word ;

For him a hint is sufficient.”

So he went up to the lady and said : “ Well, what do you want with me ? ” “ Follow me,” she replied. “ Come to our house and pay your respects to my husband : I will manage all the rest. Mind you are very polite ! ”

So saying, she started off with the young Brâhman behind her. Her husband was a little aston-

ished when he saw her returning home with a strange young man, but she came up to him and said, "Let me introduce this gentleman to you."

"And pray," said he, "who may he be?"

"He is my brother," she answered, "I have not seen him since we were quite children; he has come here to pay me a visit and I want to hear how all my relations are getting on." The young man took care to tell exactly the same story as Rambhikâ, and Vilochana, who was charmed with his manners and politeness, begged him to make himself quite at home. So Rambhikâ entertained him to the best of her ability. Presently her husband went off to bed. Rambhikâ thereupon began to redouble her attentions to her visitor, but he remonstrated, saying, "Oh! this won't do at all! Did you not say that I was your brother? If so you are my sister, and you have got all you want." "Don't talk such nonsense," she replied; "has it not been said—

" 'He who rejects the advances of a beautiful damsel, and despises her sighs, is fit only for the infernal regions' ? "

With these words she uttered a piercing shriek, and woke up her husband.

The young man, terrified at what was going to happen, fell at her feet, and promised her that if

she would spare his life he would do anything she wanted. So she took some meal and milk that was standing near, lighted a candle, and was stirring them up when her husband came in. She said, "Don't disturb yourself! My brother has a fit of the colic, and I was so frightened that I screamed out, and I am making this mixture to try and ease him." Her fool of a husband saw what she was doing, and believing her story went back to bed. The young Brâhman, under pretence of illness, remained a whole month in the house, greatly to his own and Rambhikâ's satisfaction.

STORY XII

THERE is a village called Naluda, and in it lived a very rich potter. His wife Sôbhikâ was a person of very indifferent reputation, and fond of attracting notice. One day when her husband was away from home she was entertaining one of her lovers, when the master of the house returned unexpectedly. She was put into a considerable difficulty, but retaining her presence of mind, she took her lover to a vakula tree, which grew just outside the house, and said, "Climb up at once

into that tree and hide yourself ;” which he did, leaving his coat on the ground at the foot of the tree. Presently her husband came up, and seeing the coat said : “ Hullo ! what is this ? ” “ Oh ! nothing,” replied his wife ; “ it is only the coat of a man who is escaping from his creditors, and he climbed up into this tree in such a hurry to get out of their way that he left his coat behind him.” When the potter heard this he called to the man who was up the tree and bid him come down. Accordingly the quasi-fugitive came down with some misgivings, but they were quickly dispelled, for the lady’s husband invited him into the house and entertained him hospitably, while Śobhikâ was delighted at the success of her stratagem.

STORY XIII

IN a town called Nâgapura there lived a merchant whose wife was Râjikâ. She was a good-looking but a frivolous person, though her husband knew nothing about the way in which she used to go on. One day he had gone to dinner, when she saw one of her admirers coming, whom she had invited to come and see her. So she went to her husband

and said, "There is no butter in the house; I must go and buy some." He gave her the money and off she started under the pretence of buying the butter, and went for a walk with her lover. Meanwhile her husband waited for her return, every moment getting more hungry and more angry. At last she was obliged to return, so she covered her head and hands, and the small coin her husband had given her with which to buy the butter, with dust. When she appeared her husband met her, and being by this time boiling over with wrath, he exclaimed: "What have you been about? What is the meaning of this delay?" With tears and sobs she pointed to the dust with which she was covered and said, "Pray, don't be angry! I dropped the money in the dust, and I have been all this time looking for it: please brush the dust off me." Her husband, moved by her lamentations, was ashamed of his anger, and brushed off the dust with all kinds of endearing expressions.

STORY XIV

THERE is a city called Padmavatî: a merchant lived there whose name was Dhanapala, and he

had a wife—Dhanaśrí—of whom he was extremely fond. One day this merchant went away on business to a distant country, taking with him a large sum of money.

After his departure his wife remained indoors in a state of grief : she neither ate, nor bathed, nor spoke to her friends. She neglected herself, and took no trouble about her personal appearance.

The soft note of the cuckoo borne on the breeze from Malaya : the soothing hum of the bees : the scent of the jasmine : these fall upon our senses. If Spring moves us not with such scents and sounds then her coming is only as the coming of the king of death. At such a time as this even the mind of the temperate undergoes a change. One of Dhanaśrí's friends said to her : " My love ! don't waste your youth and beauty ! Listen to me ! The cuckoo, the lord of love, is speaking to you in his sweet low note. The Spring covers the face of the earth. Put all pride away. Women should accept the honour due to them. Youth passes. Life is uncertain. Enjoy yourself while you may." At these words she exclaimed, " I can no longer delay ! tell me ! what shall I do ? " A lover came by and she followed him. While she was in his company he cut off her lock of hair, and just at that moment her husband returned. Reflecting

for a moment, she said to him, "Wait a minute or two outside, till I have got the house into order!" and running to the shrine of her protecting deity, she laid the lock of hair at the foot of the image. Then she brought her husband into the house, and with slow, deliberate steps, led him to the shrine, and said: "My husband! offer your thanksgiving to the goddess!" He did so; meanwhile he saw the lock of hair and said to his wife, "What is this?" "This," she replied, "is the fulfilment of my vow. I promised the goddess that I would offer her a lock of my hair, if she would bring you back safe and sound. You have returned, and I have kept my promise." On this her stupid husband worshipped the goddess with great veneration, and lavished more affection than ever on his wife.

STORY XV

THERE is a city called Śalipura and in it dwelt a merchant who had a son named Gunakara. The son's wife's name was Śridevyâ and she had a hankering after a man called Subuddhi. Her

flirtations were the talk of the whole place, but her husband was so devoted to her that he would not listen to a word against her. For it has been said—

“Friends can see only virtues: enemies only vices.”

One day her father-in-law found her asleep with one of her admirers, and without waking her he took off one of her anklets. Soon after this she woke up and found the anklet was gone, so she said nothing about it, but went straight off and joined her husband who was in bed. In the middle of the night she woke him up and said: “Your father, thinking I was asleep, came in and stole one of the anklets off my feet. This is most insulting! who ever heard of a father-in-law stealing his daughter-in-law’s anklets?” So Gunakara got up in a great rage and fell foul of his father for having stolen his wife’s anklet. “Well,” replied the father, “the truth is, that I found your wife asleep with some one else, and I took the anklet off her foot.” Śridevyâ answered, “This is absolutely untrue, for at this particular time I was with my husband. I am perfectly willing to prove the truth of what I say by the ordeal.” Now this was the ordeal. In a village a short distance off, lived a famous Yaksha: suspected persons were

taken before the Yaksha, who seized hold of them, and if they were innocent of the charge brought against them they escaped out of his clutches safe and sound. So the good-for-nothing woman being run to earth by her father-in-law, went to her lover and said, "To-morrow morning I have to go through the ordeal before the Yaksha. Mind you are there, and just before I go up to the Yaksha, seize me round the neck." He didn't quite see the point of it, but agreed to do as he was told. Next day Śridevyâ, accompanied by a great crowd of people, having bathed took some fresh flowers, and went before the Yaksha. As she was coming up to him her lover came forward and according to the arrangement seized her round the neck with both arms. She uttered a loud shriek and rushed off to go through some rites of purification, while her assailant was driven off by the bystanders. After completing her purification she came back, and offering the flowers respectfully to the Yaksha said: "Sir! your reverence! With the exception of my husband, and that man who just now seized me by the neck, no man has ever come near me. If I do not speak the truth may I suffer the just penalty." So saying she submitted to the ordeal and escaped without injury. The Yaksha, who saw through the whole business, said nothing, but silently

applauded her cleverness, and she returned home with her reputation fully established.

STORY XVI

THERE is a certain town in which lived a merchant who had a wife called Mugdhikâ. She was a flighty and self-willed kind of person. Her husband was very much dissatisfied with her behaviour, and called together a family council complaining that she was always going out at night. They charged her with this and she retorted that they had made a great mistake, for it was her husband who was always out at night. So after some discussion they came to the following conclusion: "Whichever of you," they said, "after this is first out at night is to be considered the guilty party." Mugdhikâ, in spite of this decision, took the first opportunity of going out, and her husband finding that she was not in the house locked the door and went to bed. Presently she came home and knocked, but her husband refused to let her in, so she took a large stone and threw it with a splash into the tank, and then went and waited behind the door. Her husband heard the

splash, and thinking she had tumbled into the tank went out to see what had happened. Mugdhikâ immediately slipped into the house and bolted the door. Her husband then finding himself locked out, began to expostulate loudly, exclaiming, "My dear wife! Pray let me in!" He made such a noise that she was afraid he would bring the police to the house, so she opened the door and let him in, at the same time saying: "In future, my dear, let us cease to find fault with one another."

STORY XVII

IN a city called Viśâlâ lived a devout Brâhman, and he had a son to whom he taught all the wisdom of the sacred scriptures. Now one day the son, whose name was Gunadhya, took leave of his parents and went into a distant country, where his wisdom gained him a great reputation, and where he meditated long and earnestly, how he might gain some profit from his learning. At last he bought an ox, and with it he started on a journey. As he was leading it along the road, he caught sight of a very attractive damsel, so finding a person who was

willing to let him tie up the ox in his stable, he asked her to recommend him a lodging. So Gunadhya having settled himself and the ox started off to visit the object of his affections. He found her at home, and having spent the night at her house got up very early the next morning and carried off her anklet. Meanwhile a servant came by and seeing the ox tied up asked to whom it belonged. The woman who had lent Gunadhya the stable, knowing where the owner was gone maintained a discreet silence: for, it has been said—

“Loss of money; sorrow of mind; domestic scandals; fraud; contempt; these are things that a wise man never talks about.”

In the course of the day, Gunadhya, who had been gambling, and who had had exceedingly bad luck, met the damsel whose anklet he had stolen, as he was coming out of the gambling-house. She immediately seized hold of him, and being in her clutches, he shouted out, “Help—police—I am caught by a disreputable woman,” and he made such a noise that she was forced to let him go. He then walked behind her calling her by all sorts of uncomplimentary epithets, until she was glad to take him down a back street, and give him her bracelet to keep him quiet. So—

“He who can put up with disasters, or take no heed of them, and who never loses his head in difficulties,—such a man is worthy of all commendation.”

STORY XIX

IN a city called Karala lived a certain Sodhâka, a man of great importance in the town. His wife Santikâ was very much devoted to him. There was also a merchant in the same town whose wife Svachchhandâ was frivolous and ill-conducted. She was always trying to attract Sodhâka's attention, but he never took the slightest notice of her. One day he went to pay his respects to a holy man called Manoratha and Svachchhandâ followed him into the house.

It has been well said—

“A man has power over himself only so long as he continues in the path of virtue; so long as he keeps his senses in subjection; so long as he behaves discreetly. So long, the glances of lovely damsels shot forth from the bows of their arching eyebrows, may fall on him, but they will not destroy his peace of mind.”

The police seeing Svachchhandâ's manœuvres

surrounded Manoratha's house and Santikâ hearing of it went to the house with sound of music, and said to the guards, "I have made a vow after I have seen the holy man, to return into a solitary place. Will you therefore accept this trifle of money and let me go into the house?" They gladly allowed her to enter; so she went and changed clothes with Svachchhandâ, remaining inside herself while Svachchhandâ went away disguised in her clothes. Next morning the police saw Sodhâka leaving the house accompanied by his own wife. They did not know what to make of it, but saw plainly that they had been done in some way or other.

STORY XX

ON the banks of the Sâbhramatî is a town called Sankhapura, and in it lived a certain Sûra, a rich farmer. His wife's name was Kelikâ. She was a flighty, ill-conducted person, and violently attached to a Brâhman who lived on the other side of the river. So being over head and ears in love with this Brâhman, she used to cross the river with a friend at night, and pay him sundry visits. Her husband eventually discovered that his wife was

always going over to the other side of the river, and followed her one night to try and find out what she was about. She was returning from one of these expeditions and caught sight of him; so she filled a pot with water, and went with her friend into a small shrine which stood on the river bank, in which was an image of one of the deities. After crowning the image with flowers, and washing it, she tipped a wink to her friend, and said, "Divine lady! some time ago you told me that if I did not wash and adorn your image, my husband would die within a few days. Now I have acted in obedience to your command, I pray you therefore that his life may be prolonged!" Her friend uttered a fervent "amen" to this petition, and the lady's husband who had followed her close by heard all this. So he went away, not knowing that he had been seen, delighted with his wife's fidelity and affection.

STORY XXII

IN a certain village there lived a farmer called Sodhâka. His wife's name was Mâdhakâ. One day she was going along the road carrying some

meal, when she met a man called Surâpâla, and she put the meal down by the roadside and went and sat down and had a talk with him. Meanwhile a rascal called Mâladeva came by, and he mixed the meal up into the shape of a camel. When Mâdhakâ came back and saw what had been done she picked up the camel very carefully, so as not to break it and went home. On reaching home her husband met her, and seeing the camel made out of meal exclaimed: "What in the world is this?" His wife replied, "Well! you must know that a few nights ago I dreamt that you had been eaten by a camel. Now set to work and eat the camel up that the camel may not eat you!" When he heard this he was delighted at his wife's thoughtful affection and ate up the camel without any further delay.

STORY XXIII

NEXT day Prabhâvatî's friends addressed her and said: "Go where the sandalwood ointment is rubbed off by the sweat which falls: Go! where the sounds of love are manifold; where the tinkle

of the anklets is silent : where everything incites to love. Go ! where the universal law of love prevails. For—

“ ‘ Health ; pleasure ; peace ; power ; lordship ; These are as nothing without love.’ ”

“ It has been said—

“ ‘ The women with long half-closing eyes : looking at their own forms resplendent with beauty in the curving mirrors, wait with longing for the lover’s approach. It is through their attractiveness that women gain the fruit of love.’ ”

The parrot answered :

“ Men are easily won over : they always speak fair : It is the speaker of unpleasant though wholesome truths who cannot find a listener. But why say more ? You and your friends are determined on evil deeds.”

The parrot continued :—

There is a town called Padmavatî : where the rays of the sun shine on streets paved with jewels, as though the glow of the gems on the hood of the serpent king had come down to earth.

The king’s name was Sudarśana.

What praise can be too great for such a king as this, devoted to the guardianship of his subjects, the prince of a city where the sun looks down upon no evil ?

His wife was called Śringârasundarî, and in her companionship he spent the hot season.

When the sun scorches : when the long days are unbearable : when the wind is the breath of a furnace : when everything is dried up or perishes through the heat. Sandalwood ointment : light clothing : refreshing drink : these things bringing coolness and delight conquer the heat. The heat is but a slave to those who at midday anoint themselves with the sandal, who bathe at evening, whose nights are tempered by the wind of the fans.

There was a merchant in the town called Chandana, and he and his wife Prabhâvatî, passed the hot season on the roof of their house.

Even the sun supported in the heaven by his rays, descends into the ocean when his day is done. For it has been said—

“When fate is hostile it is useless to try and reach greatness !”

Even the thousand rays cannot support the sun when his time for setting is come. Then the sun, sunk low in the heaven, his brilliancy departed, shines like a piece of coral : and presently the wide-eyed moon comes forward and takes up his place, rising over the Eastern mountain, accompanied by the myriads of stars, to kill the darkness. The moon standing with her head above the Eastern

mountain in the beginning of night, shines forth—a torch to the world overwhelmed by the gloom. The moon rising from behind the Eastern mountain shines resplendent as she lies in the lap of her beloved night, or as she stands gleaming on Kṛishna's head.

Such were the days and nights when Chandana and his wife passed their time together. They had a son whose name was Rama, and to him his father taught the mysteries of the divine wisdom.

His mother prayed to Chandra and said: "I have but one only son: I am therefore exceedingly pained with anxiety." Chandra replied: "It is best for you, that you should have but one son: for a son that is clever, gentle, self-denying, discreet, the abode of the arts, the dwelling-place of virtue: one only son such as this is all sufficient. Besides: what is the good of more sons: they may produce grief and care. It is better to be satisfied with one whose nature, whose disposition is noble." But Prabhâvatî was not satisfied; so she took a woman called Dhûrtamâyâ into her confidence, and said: "If you will procure a son for me, able to resist all the deceitful arts of women, I will give you 100 pieces of gold." "I will give you a son," replied Dhûrtamâyâ, "and if he falls a victim to female seduction, I will forfeit to you

twice as many pieces of money." So the bargain was concluded and signed and the son was placed in the merchant's house, where he became the object of all the wiles that women could devise.

The arts of women are these : deceitful speech ; craft ; oaths ; pretended emotions ; pretended weeping ; pretended laughter ; meaningless expressions of pleasure and pain ; asking questions with a deferential air ; indifference ; equanimity, in prosperity, or adversity ; making no difference between good and evil ; sidelong glances directed towards lovers : that is the list of the accomplishments practised by the ladies of the town.

So the son handed over according to the agreement by Dhûrtamâyâ, was sent by his father to the island of Suvarna to acquire wealth. In that island lived a lady called Kalâvatî, and with her he spent a whole year. One day he said to Kalâvatî : " Pray tell me ! my youngest sister has often said, that although she was skilled in all the arts of attracting men, she never could succeed in getting anything out of her admirers. How is this to be accomplished ? " Kalâvatî repeated this to her mother : " My dear ! " replied the old lady, " it is quite clear that this admirer of yours is well up in the ways of women : you can't catch him like this ; perhaps flattery might succeed. When

he is thinking of going back home, you say that you want to go with him, and that if he leaves you, you will drown yourself—and so on. I daresay he would give you anything you liked to ask for.” Kalâvatî answered, “ My dear mother ! don't put it in that way : I care nothing for his money without him, and it has been said—

“ ‘ Do not set your heart on riches gained by wickedness, or from an enemy whom you have humiliated.’ ”

Her mother answered : “ Not at all, my daughter ; riches are the cause of death or life. It has been said—

“ ‘ A man who acts with energy is sure to prosper ; for energy in all matters is the road to fortune.

Those who have not revealed secrets ; who have done no evil ; who have not slain without cause ; they attain glory.

Fate is the cause of justice and injustice : the cause of honour and of dishonour. Fate makes a man both a giver and an asker.’

“ You do as I have told you,” continued her mother, “ I will manage all the rest.” So she listened to the advice her mother had given, and the end of it was, that the merchant's son gave her all his money, and after she had got hold of several millions

which had belonged to him, he was turned out of doors and sent adrift.

So Kalâvatî's admirer returned home having lost both money and credit. His father, seeing him in this condition, was much distressed, and asked how it had all come about. He did not like to tell him, but told his spiritual father, who said : " My son, do not be cast down ! Good luck and bad luck are equally the lot of man. Why should wise men think so much of money ? If it goes, grieve not after it : if it comes back, care not for it."

When his father heard all that had happened he went to Dhûrtamâyâ and said : " I have come to tell you that a great misfortune has happened. My son has fallen a victim to the treachery of a woman." " Who has not been ruined by women ? " replied Dhûrtamâyâ : " for it has been said : ' A man who gains wealth becomes proud : he who falls into calamities loses his senses : whose will is not shaken by women ? Who can be the friend of a king ? Who has not come into the power of death ? Who does not respect a rich man ? Who that falls into the net of the evil escapes without loss ? ' Therefore if you will take a passage for me in a ship, I will go back with your son. It has been said : ' Damage may be repaid with damage :

injury with injury : if you pull out my feathers, I will pull out your hair.'

" I agreed that if your son were cheated by a woman I would be responsible. For : ' Though the earth, supported by the serpent king, the mighty mountain, the tortoise, the elephant, may move, that which has been determined by the wise and thoughtful is never moved, even in the course of ages.' "

So Dhûrtamâyâ and Chandana's son went back to Suvarna. All the inhabitants including Kâlavatî welcomed him, but he did not recover his money. The question was therefore—What could Dhûrtamâyâ do? Well! as the money was not forthcoming, she put on the disguise of a Chaṇḍalâ, and went about trying to find an opportunity of getting it back. In the course of her wanderings she came across Chandana's son in the company of Kâlavatî. He saw her at the same time, and rushed to meet her, a line of action which had been already agreed upon between them. Kâlavatî followed him, and exclaimed, " Pray who is this? " He replied : " This is my mother ; I have not seen her since I lost all my money ! " Dhûrtamâyâ seizing hold of his hand greeted him affectionately, and said : " My son ! you went to this lady's house ! You fell a victim to her wiles but after a

time you escaped. You know all the money you took away belonged to me."

This she kept on asserting with oaths and imprecations, until Kâlavatî and her mother took the woman disguised as a Chaṇḍalâ into the house and said: "Madam! tell us: Where do you come from? What is your name? In short who are you?" "I," she replied, "am one of Sudarśana's minstrels, the king of Padmavatî: this son of mine took away all my money, and you stole it from him." Kâlavatî and her mother were thoroughly frightened and said: "Here is the money! pray take it!" "No," answered Dhûrtamâyâ, "not unless the king of this country gives me permission."

Then they fell down at her feet and said: "We pray you accept it and have mercy on us!" So she took it, and having been treated with the greatest respect by Kâlavatî and her mother, went back with Rama rejoicing to their own country.

STORY XXV

THERE is a town called Chandrapurâ, and in it lived a Buddhist mendicant. His name was Siddhasena, and he had a high reputation among

the townspeople. One day a white-robed ascetic arrived there, a man of the most exalted virtue. He became a great attraction to every one, so much so that the Buddhist devotee was quite thrown into the shade. The Buddhist was very much put out at all the veneration being transferred from himself to the newcomer, and so he dispatched a damsel of fascinating exterior to try and lure away his rival from the strict path of virtue. The professor of exalted virtue was a somewhat impressionable person, and the damsel succeeded perfectly; the result was that there was a good deal of talk in the town. The Buddhist took care to make the scandal as public as possible, and the townspeople said that the Buddhist was evidently a very religious person, but the virtuous ascetic, in spite of his white robes, was no better than he should be. The end of it was that the ascetic lighted a fire and burnt his white clothes, after which he bid farewell to the young lady who had been the cause of all the trouble, and started off very early the next morning as a half-naked mendicant. So the gossip came to an end, and the people said, After all, our Buddhist devotee is not equal to the holy man who wore the white garments.

STORY XXVI

IN a village called Jalaudha lived a certain Râjaputra, a very brave man. His wife's name was Ratnâdevî. A man called Devasa and his son Dhavala were inhabitants of the same village. Both of these two were in love with Ratnâdevî, but they kept it a secret from each other. One day the father and the son were both in the Râjaputra's house when unexpectedly the master of the house returned. Ratnâdevî was in a difficulty, but she made signs to the son, who saw what had happened, and went out at once in a great state of trepidation. On the doorstep he ran up against the returning Râjaputra, who exclaimed: "Hullo! what is the meaning of this?" She replied: "This unfortunate person has been ill-treated by his father and came here to ask you for protection. His father followed him here, and I did not dare to ask the son in. Still as it has been said: 'A true Kshâtrya is one who is able to protect the good, and whose bow is all powerful when an emergency arises. But he who has both the power and the means, and who does nothing, is as a man who promises without performing.'"

The Râjaputra exclaimed with indignation, "Go and call the son in!" and he very willingly accepted the invitation.

STORY XXVIII

THERE is a large village called Kukhâdâ ; in it dwelt a certain Jarasa, who was a great fool. His wife's name was Devikâ : she was a flighty, ill-conducted person, and had a lover—a Brâhman—whom she used to meet under a Vibhâtaka tree, some way from the village. These meetings were a great subject of gossip in the place, and in course of time her husband heard of them. So he made up his mind to see into the matter himself and went and climbed into the tree. What he saw from his hiding-place fully justified all the gossip and he called out to his wife : “ You good-for-nothing hussy ! You have been up to this game for some time past.” She was put into somewhat of a difficulty and said : “ I don't know what you mean ! ” “ I will let you know what I mean,” he answered, “ if you will just wait till I come down.” So she promised to wait till he came down from the tree, and meanwhile sent her lover away. At last her husband reached the ground : “ It is of no use your making excuses,” he said, “ you have been caught in *flagranti delicto*.” “ My dear husband ! ” she replied, “ You must know that this tree has very peculiar properties : any one who climbs up into it can see at once whether their husband or wife has attractions away from home.”

Her husband replied, "Well, you climb up and see if it is so." Which she did, and cried out: "You good-for-nothing wretch! you have been running after other women for days and days." As this was perfectly true the fool had nothing to say, and so he made it up with his wife and they went home together.

STORY XXIX

IN a village called Sîkulî, there was a very rich merchant. He had a wife whose name was Sundarî, and she was always carrying on flirtations with a certain Mohana. One day she was entertaining her lover in the house when she saw her husband approaching. This was a pretty fix, so getting together all her ingenuity she made her lover—who had not a rag on, get into a hammock, and rushed out herself to meet her husband. Standing at a distance she cried out: "Be quick! go and call the sorcerers to come here! there is a naked ghost in the house and it has got into the hammock." So her husband, who was a great blockhead, started off at full speed to fetch the magicians to lay the ghost, and she ran back into the house and turned

her lover out. When her husband came back, she met him with a firebrand in her hand and said: "My dear! it is all right! I have killed the ghost with this firebrand."

STORY XXX

SOMEWHERE or other—it matters not where, there is a cemetery called Bhûtavana, and in it dwelt two demons whose names were Kurâla, and Uttâla. They each had a wife and a dispute arose between them, whose wife was the best-looking. They were out for a walk with their wives one day, when they came across a certain Mûladeva. They promptly seized him by the arms, and said that unless he told them at once which of the two ladies was the more beautiful, they would certainly kill him. Now the two ladies in question were both of them very old and absolutely hideous: so it was quite evident that if Mûladeva told the truth he could not possibly escape destruction. So he reflected a minute, and then he said: "He who has a charming wife, to him she is the most beautiful thing in the world." At these words the two demons were delighted and immediately let the tactful Mûladeva go free.

STORY XXXI

IN a forest called Madharâ lived a lion whose name was Pingala. He was the terror of all the beasts in the forest, for he used to wander about and kill one after another. So they met together and made a bargain with him, that if he would leave them alone, they would supply him every day with one beast for his dinner.

At last a hare's turn came to satisfy the lion's hunger and he declined to carry out the agreement. The other animals remonstrated with him and said : " You must go, or we shall have the lion eating up all the beasts as he used to do." The hare replied : " Don't trouble yourselves ! he won't eat up many more." So at about midday he appeared before the lion, going very slowly, and said : " Sir ! I was travelling along the road to come to you, when I was seized and kept a prisoner by one of your enemies ; so I am afraid I am a little late ! " " One of my enemies ! " exclaimed the lion, " and pray where is he ? Let me see him at once." The cunning hare led the lion into an enclosure where there was a well, and looking down into the water the lion saw his own reflection. The foolish lion thereupon in a great rage jumped down into the water and was drowned. For it has been said—

“Wisdom, not force, is the support of a people in fear :

Just as a mighty lion was killed by an insignificant hare.

The arrow shot by a mighty archer may or may not kill :

But the deliberations of a crafty minister will overturn both kingdom and people.”

STORY XXXII

IN Sântipura lived a person of some importance whose name was Mâdhava, and he had a daughter-in-law called Rajanî. She was beautiful and clever, but at the same time light and frivolous in her behaviour. One day her mother-in-law sent her to the market to buy some wheat. So she started on her errand, and having brought what was required, she tied up the wheat in a bundle and was returning home. Presently she met one of her admirers, so she put down her bundle in a corner of the market, and went off to amuse herself with him. Meanwhile a man happened to come by, and seeing the bundle, took out the wheat and filled it up with sand. Rajanî stayed longer than she had

intended, and eventually came back in a great hurry, and without looking into the bundle to see if the wheat was safe inside, picked it up and went home. On arriving home her mother-in-law took the bundle and opened it, when to her astonishment she found nothing but sand. So she said to Rajani, "What is the meaning of this?" "My dear mother," replied Rajani, "Unfortunately I dropped the money you gave me in the middle of the market place, and so it came about that all this sand must have got into the bundle along with the money when I picked it up." Then her mother-in-law hunted about in the sand to try and find the money, of course unsuccessfully; so not being able to make out what it all meant, she held her tongue and said nothing more on the matter.

STORY XXXIII

IN a town called Śankhapura lived a gardener called Śankara who was very rich. His wife's name was Rambhikâ and he was absolutely devoted to her. One day Śankara had arranged to hold a feast at his house in honour of his ancestors, and it so happened that Rambhikâ had on the same

day invited four of her admirers to come to see her. She had been out selling flowers at a stall in the market, in the morning, and had come across them, one after another—a barber, a shopkeeper's son, an officer, and a musician. She had asked each of them separately, and they had all accepted her invitation. So next day when the gardener had gone into his garden, the shopkeeper's son arrived first to pay his addresses to the gardener's wife. He was shown into the bathroom, and had hardly begun his bathing operations, when the barber was seen running up to the house. So he was turned out of the bathroom, exactly as he was, and pushed into a little outhouse of wattle and daub where the gardener kept his pots. The barber then went into the bathroom, and was not half through his bath, when the musician appeared. So he in turn was shoved into the outhouse, and told to be careful, for there was a serpent somewhere about in it, with a brood of young ones. The barber thought to himself, "Well! I must keep quiet for a bit!" and just at that moment, up came the officer. The musician who was in the bathroom was hurriedly got out and hidden in the outhouse behind some pots. The gardener was then seen coming home, so the officer was concealed in the same place as the others. Then the festival began, and the gardener and his

friends proceeded to carry out all the ceremonies in due form. Presently some food was taken to the four suitors, who were ignorant of each other's presence. No sooner had the shopkeeper's son taken the food than he spit it out in disgust. The barber, who recollected the warning about the serpent, hearing the sound became so frightened that his feelings got the better of him. The shopkeeper's son who had heard the warning given to the barber was in such a state of alarm that he upset some of the pots, and one of them fell on the barber who was a little below him. This completed the barber's terror, who rushed out of the house shouting "Murder." The rest hearing the noise and the shouting were all equally terrified, so they too ran out of the house, and hurried away down the road, while the gardener and his friends looked on with astonishment. He could not make out what it all meant, and he asked his wife for an explanation. "My dear!" she replied, "it is quite clear that the ceremonies in honour of your ancestors were not performed with a devout mind: therefore these forefathers of yours, though they are all famishing, will not eat, and have run away in disgust." So by her advice he repeated the ceremonies, but his forefathers never returned to take part in them.

STORY XXXIV

IN a certain town lived a Brâhman called Sambha. He was a regular gambler, and was always travelling about from one place to another. One day he was making his way along the road, when he saw a very good-looking girl minding a field. He addressed her in a familiar tone, and asked her to come for a walk, at the same time promising to give her a piece of money. So she agreed and went along with him. After a time, he turned to her and said: "What shall I give you?" "What you offered," she replied. Well! while they were arguing the point, they came close to the village where the girl lived. The Brâhman picked five ears of corn and followed close behind her; when they reached the village, he made signs of contempt, and cried out: "See here! all you inhabitants of this place who are good for anything! Here is a girl who has sold herself to me for these five ears of corn. The girl was dumbfounded and did not know what answer to make, while the villagers of course believed what the Brâhman said.

STORY XXXV

ONCE upon a time there was a corn merchant whose name was Śambhaka. It so happened that he was obliged to go to a place called Saragrâma on business, and he called at a storekeeper's house. The storekeeper was not at home, but his wife was, and she was not at all disinclined to carry on a flirtation with any man she chanced to meet. Before long the pair were on the best of terms, to such an extent, indeed, that the visitor gave her a ring, as a small acknowledgment of her kindness to him. The time came for him to leave, and then he asked the lady to return him the ring. She looked on the ring as, in fact, a payment for services rendered, and declined to hand it over, so how was he to get it back? Well, this was the way he went to work. The corn merchant—since he could not get hold of the ring—went to the storekeeper who was in the shop and said: "Give me the 100 measures of seed you owe me." The storekeeper said, "A hundred measures of seed! what are you talking about? I don't owe you anything!" "Oh, yes, you do!" replied the other, "for when you were away from home, I bought a hundred measures of seed from your wife, and I paid her with a ring which is worth double the amount of seed that I bought." The storekeeper was

very angry, and said to his wife : " Our shop will get a nice reputation if you are going on in this sort of way : hand over the ring at once." Which she did, and so the corn merchant departed, no worse off than he had come, for he not only got back his ring, but a hundred measures of seed for nothing.

STORY XXXVI

ONCE upon a time there was a farmer called Sûrapâla, whose wife Nâyinî was always worrying him to give her a silk dress. " My dear," he invariably replied, " we are farmers ; who ever heard of one of our family wearing a silk dress ? cotton is the proper stuff for us." So one day Nâyinî met one of the village officials, and gave him an invitation to dinner. Her husband heard of this, and when he came home he said, " This invitation to one of the officials of the village is most improper : besides, the man is not a friend of mine." " Why, then," she replied, " do you not grant me the favour I ask of you ? Give me the silk dress." The farmer said : " Well ! I will give you the silk dress, if you will cancel this invitation." " Give me the dress," she answered, " and I will do as you wish."

So he gave her the dress. Now the question was, how was this intended guest to be put off? Well! this was how it was done. Nâyinî said to the official she had invited: "When you come to dinner, mind and bring all the rest of the village functionaries with you. I will take care and give you a good dinner." So they all came in a body, and had an excellent entertainment; and they one and all said: "Well, this Sûrapâla is a lucky fellow: no one could be nicer or kinder than his wife is." And that was the way she kept her promise and cancelled the invitation.

STORY XXXVII

IN a village called Sangrama there once lived a farmer. A man of the name of Pûrṇapâla was a ploughman on the farm, and when the weather was too bad for work in the fields, he used to work in his master's house. Now Sûrapala had a daughter named Subhagâ, and she took a violent fancy to this ploughman, and used to go and meet him in a copse on the farm some way from the house. At last some of the labourers were rather scandalized at these goings on, so they went and told Sûrapala.

He made up his mind to go and see for himself the truth of these stories, so one day he went and hid himself in a place where he could see everything, without being seen himself. What he found out led him to think that there must be some foundation for the stories which had been told him. The ploughman, however, had discovered somehow or other that his master had been looking on, so he said with a sigh: "What a life mine is! Here I have to plough, to get out the weeds, to work from morning to night. I might as well be in the infernal regions. However, my master is a good man, and I must do the best I can for him; so here I am off to work." Sûrapala heard what the ploughman said, and so far from believing the scandalous stories that had been told him, thought the man absolute perfection.

STORY XXXIX

THERE was a merchant of the name of Bhûdhara who lived in a town called Kundina. Unfortunately he lost all his money, and though it was not through any fault of his own, he was cut by all his family and relations. As it has been said—

“ A rich man is wise ; a rich man is generous ; a rich man is the incarnation of virtue ; a rich man is thought much of, and has no end of friends. But if his money go, everything else goes with it.”

So this Bhûdhara having lost everything that he possessed except some weights and scales, went away to another country, leaving the relics of this property in the care of a friend, who was also a merchant. After a time he made another fortune and returned to his own country. The first thing he did was to go to his friend and ask for the weights and scales. The merchant did not want to give them up, and after some demur he said : “ Really I am very sorry, but they have been eaten by the mice.” Bhûdhara said nothing but bided his time, and one day soon after this he was walking by the merchant’s house, and saw his boy playing outside. Bhûdhara promptly kidnapped the boy. The merchant was in a terrible state at the loss of his son, and started off with his whole family to try and find him. One of the neighbours met the party, who were full of weeping and lamentations, and said (hearing the cause of all this grief) : “ Oh ! I know where the boy is ; I saw him with Bhûdhara.” So they went to Bhûdhara’s house, and the father asked

Bhûdhara to give him up his son. "My dear friend," replied Bhûdhara, "I am really very sorry, but I cannot! Your boy was with me, we were walking along the bank of the river, when an eagle came and carried him off." On this the father grew very angry and had Bhûdhara up before the magistrates, on the charge of having made away with his son. Bhûdhara appeared to answer the charge, and when the judge asked him what he had to say, he replied: "My lord! in a place where the mice can eat up weights and scales of iron, an eagle might easily carry off an elephant—much more a boy."

The magistrate who heard the case decided that when the merchant returned the weights and scales his boy should be restored to him, and so the end of it was that Bhûdhara got back his weights and scales, and the merchant, though he recovered his boy, was punished for the theft.

STORY XL

THERE were two men, one called Subuddhi, the other Kubuddhi, between whom a mutual friendship had arisen. One day Subuddhi was obliged

to leave home on a long journey, and Kubuddhi took advantage of his absence to make love to his wife. After a time Subuddhi completed his business and returned home, when Kubuddhi showed how unreal and deceitful his friendship was. Approaching Subuddhi with a great show of affection, he said: "My dear friend, tell me if in the course of your travels you have seen anything curious or remarkable?" "Yes, I have," replied Subuddhi, "for on the banks of a certain river, near a town called Manoratha, I saw a mango tree bearing fruit out of season." "Is that really so?" asked Kubuddhi. "Yes, it is," rejoined the other. "I am telling you the exact truth." "Well," said Kubuddhi, "if this turns out to be the exact truth, as you say it is, then you shall take away from my house whatever you can carry in your two hands; if not, then I will do the same by you." The bargain was agreed upon, and Kubuddhi the very same night went and picked the fruit off the tree on which it was growing. So when the matter came to be tested, and the fruit could not be found, Subuddhi seemed to have got the worst of it, and as Kubuddhi was very anxious to get possession of his friend's wife, he demanded that the bargain should be carried out. Subuddhi, somehow or other, had

become perfectly acquainted with his friend's intention, and what he did was this. He put his wife on the top of the house and pulled down the staircase. Kubuddhi soon appeared on the scene, and Subuddhi said to him: "I am very glad to see you; pray take out of my house whatever you like." So Kubuddhi, who could not reach the lady on the housetop, went off to get a ladder. "Stop!" said Subuddhi; "this will never do! The bargain is, that you may take what you like out of my house with your two hands; there is nothing about ladders in the agreement." So Kubuddhi got the worst of it and had to go home again without having gained his object, besides which he became the laughing-stock of the whole town.

STORY XLII

IN a village called Devalâkhya lived a prince whose name was Râjasinha. His wife was a person of irreproachable reputation, but very ill-tempered and quarrelsome. One day she had a violent altercation with her husband, and in consequence left home and started off with her two

sons to her father's house. She travelled through several towns and villages, and at last reached a large wood near Malaya, where she saw a tiger. The tiger saw her too, and came towards her lashing his tail with rage. She felt somewhat alarmed, but put on a bold front, and administering a smart slap to her sons she said: "What do you mean by quarrelling over who is to have a tiger to eat? Can't you see one here close by? Eat him first and then we will go and find another." The tiger heard all this, and thinking to himself, "Surely this lady must be indeed a formidable person," took to his heels and ran away in terror.

STORY XLIII

PRESENTLY a jackal met him. He burst into a fit of laughter and said: "Hullo! here is a tiger running away from something in a fright." "Friend jackal," replied the tiger, "the sooner you go off to some far distant country the better, for there is a most terrible person hereabouts—a regular tiger-eater! such as one only hears of in fables. She has almost been the death of me; as soon as I saw her, I ran away as fast as I could." "Well, I am

surprised," said the jackal. "Do you mean that you are afraid of what after all is only a piece of human flesh?" "I was close to her," answered the tiger, "and what she did and said was enough to frighten any one." The jackal answered: "Well, I think I shall go by myself and see if I can find this tiger-eating lady. You had perhaps better not come, as she might recognize you again." "Whether you go with me or without me," replied the tiger, "it will make no difference; you are certain to be destroyed."

"Well, then," said the jackal, "let me mount on your back, and we will go together." So the jackal was tied on the tiger's back and off they started, and very soon found the tiger-eater with her two sons. She felt a little nervous at first, seeing the tiger had come back accompanied by a jackal, but reflecting a minute she cried out: "You rascally jackal! once upon a time you used to bring me three tigers at once; what do you mean by coming here with only one?" The tiger heard this, and was so frightened that he turned and fled with the jackal on his back.

STORY XLIV

THE tiger continued his headlong course, while the jackal, tied on the tiger's back, suffered the greatest discomfort and inconvenience. The question for him was, how to get out of this unfortunate position, for the tiger in deadly fear tore through rivers, over mountains, through forests. Suddenly he burst into a loud fit of laughter. The tiger exclaimed: "Well! I can't see what there is to laugh at!" "A great deal, I think," replied the jackal. "It has just occurred to me how cleverly we have cheated that scoundrelly tiger-eater. Here I am safe and sound with your help, and she has been left behind, no one knows where. That was why I laughed. So, my dear tiger, do let me get down and see where we are." The tiger felt flattered and willingly loosed the jackal off his back. No sooner had he done so than he suddenly fell down dead, and the jackal went off rejoicing. For it has been said—

"Wisdom is better than pomp and display, for by it men may gain place, riches, and honour: but he who is devoid of wisdom falls into dire misfortune. The strength of the ignorant is used to carry out the business of another, even as the

surpassing might of an elephant is made subject to man."

STORY XLVI

IN a town called Vatsoma lived a Brâhman as poor as he was wise. His wife's name was Karagarâ (the poisoner) and it fitted her to a nicety. All the animals for miles round were terrified at her, and a certain goblin who lived in a tree near the house was so much afraid of her that he ran away into the forest. Soon after the Brâhman followed their example for the same reason, and left his home. In the course of his journey he met this goblin; and the goblin said to him, "You seem to have had a long journey. You must be tired and hungry, come with me and I will give you something to eat."

The Brâhman, who recognized the quality of his would-be host, felt a little nervous and said: "With pleasure, but if I accept your hospitality will you let me go again?" "Certainly I will," replied the goblin, "you need not be the least afraid. The fact is this. I know who you are, for you were once my master. I used to live in a tree just out-

side your house, and I ran away because I was afraid of your wife Karagarâ. You may depend upon my behaving towards you as I ought. We will go now to Mrigavatî. The king's daughter, Sulochanâ, is very ill, and the physicians have given her up. You will very likely with your knowledge and wisdom be able to do what the doctors cannot. When we have reached Mrigavatî I will leave you."

Before long they arrived at Mrigavatî, where they heard a proclamation inviting any person who was able and willing, to come forward and cure the king's daughter. So the Brâhman on the strength of this proclamation went to the king's Court and performed the required cure. After this the goblin declined to leave him, as he had promised. So the Brâhman said: It is written—

"Men of good family, students of the sacred Scriptures may not break their promises: how much less one who is of immortal race."

On this the goblin was ashamed and went away, and the Brâhman received the king's daughter, and half the kingdom, a reward far beyond anything he had hoped or expected.

STORY XLVII

So the Brâhman and the princess enjoyed the delights of sovereignty. Not long afterwards, however, the goblin came and carried off Sulochanâ. The family were distracted, and sent to ask a famous magician to come and help them. He declined to have anything to do with the business on any terms, so the Brâhman started off on his own account to try and get Sulochanâ out of the goblin's clutches.

When he reached the place, the goblin jeered at him, making use of all kinds of insulting expressions. "I have carried out my part of the business," he said. "Now, my reverend friend, look out for yourself."

The Brâhman said nothing, but waited a minute, and then went up to the goblin and whispered: "Listen! Karagarâ is coming, she is just behind me. I came on in advance to tell you." This was enough for the goblin, and hearing Karagarâ's name he dropped Sulochanâ, took to his heels, and gave the Brâhman no more trouble.

So the Brâhman having accomplished his mission returned with high honour to Mrigavatî.

STORY XLVIII

THERE was a king called Narada, in Patalîpura. He was the sovereign of the whole world, for by his wisdom and the wisdom of his ministers all kings and princes were made subject to him. Now King Narada lost all his sense of duty, and was on the point of gambling away both money and kingdom when he was prevented from doing so by his prime minister. The stupid king was very angry at his will being opposed and put his prime minister, whose name was Śakatala, in prison. Śakatala remained so long in the prison that people began to think that he must be dead. Just about this time the king of a neighbouring country sent some messengers to Narada with a couple of mares to test his abilities. The point put before the king was this. Of the two mares which is the dam, and which is the filly. The mares were exactly alike in all points, and persons, skilled in horse-flesh, were summoned from all parts of the kingdom to give their opinion. No one, however, could be found to find an answer to the question; so Śakatala, the late minister, occurred to Narada, for it was quite clear that without him neither king nor country were of much account. It is said—

“The overthrow of an honest and virtuous minister endowed with wisdom means the over-

throw of the realm and the sovereign. When the kingdom has been ruined it is of no use to try and find the minister."

Reflecting on such maxims, the king sent for the chief of his police, and asked them whether anything were known of Śakatala. "Something may possibly be known," answered the chief; "but nothing accurately: for it was forbidden under the severest penalties to have anything to do with Śakatala." However, the police went to the prison where Śakatala had been confined, found him, and brought him out, paying him the utmost respect, telling him that he was worthy of all honour, that he was a friend, a spiritual father, a prince, one to whom all looked for refuge.

A prince is a protector in adversity ;

A spiritual superior is an instructor in the sacred Scriptures ;

A friend shows sympathy to those in trouble ;

A ruler is a refuge in time of fear.

So the minister said to the king : " Sir ! what is it that you want to know ? " The king put the problem before Śakatala, and asked him to solve it. So Śakatala had the two mares saddled and bridled, and took them on to the neighbouring race course. After having galloped them up and down for some time, he had the saddles and bridles taken

off, and turned them loose in a paddock. He very soon found out which was which, for the dam licked the filly all over, and the filly showed every sign of affection. So having found out the answer, Śakatala went and told the king, and not only received his former position, but gained great credit and riches for himself.

STORY I

IN a certain town in a remote quarter of the world lived two friends; the name of one was Dharmabuddhi, of the other Dushtabuddhi. One day they started on an expedition to try and make some money, and having been very successful, they determined to return to their native town. Before starting they decided to take some part of their money home with them, and to bury the remainder, and far the larger part, under a pîpal tree, with the idea of returning eventually and dividing it between them. This having been done they went to their respective homes, well pleased, and prepared to thoroughly enjoy themselves. Well now! just hear what Dushtabuddhi did—indeed, I am ashamed to say what he did; for—

“ It is not fitting to relate what is base and wicked ; Evil deeds should not even be spoken of.”

For Dushtabuddhi went and dug up all the money and carried it off to his own house. When the time came for dividing the money, the two friends went together to the tree under which it had been buried, but, of course, it was not to be found. So Dharmabuddhi went before the magistrate, told him what had happened, and charged Dushtabuddhi with having stolen the money. Dushtabuddhi was called upon to answer this accusation, and he offered security for £1,000 to clear himself by oath. The magistrate agreed to this course, and having taken security of Dushtabuddhi the parties went home. Dushtabuddhi then told his father what had happened, and having told him what to do, hid him in the hollow of the pîpal tree. Next morning, the magistrate, the plaintiff, the defendant, and all the inhabitants of the town, went to the tree in great expectation. Dushtabuddhi went through a regular course of purification, and then making a profound obeisance to the tree, said that the truth would soon be known. “ Most noble tree ! ” he exclaimed, “ I pray you speak the truth ! Did I take the money or did I not ? ” His father hidden in the pîpal tree answered, “ Certainly not ! ” and as every one present heard the answer, it seemed

pretty clear that Dushtabuddhi was innocent of the theft. But Dharmabuddhi was not to be taken in, for he had recognized the voice of Dushtabuddhi's father. So he went and set fire to the tree. Presently the old gentleman was seen scrambling out of the hollow, scorched with the fire, and almost suffocated. On this the magistrate had Dushtabuddhi arrested, punished him, and ordered him to restore Dharmabuddhi the money which he had stolen.

STORY LI

THERE is a town called Chamatkârapura, and it was inhabited by a pious and wealthy people. One day some Brâhmans living there made up their minds to go on a pilgrimage to the Lord of Vallabhî, and they started with a goodly company of horses and chariots, together with their wives and children, taking with them plentiful supplies for the journey. On the road they were attacked by a band of thieves, and they fled in all directions. One of the reverend gentlemen whose name was Gângila happened to be lame, consequently he was unable to run away with the rest of the party. So he re-

mained in the carriage which conveyed him, and pretending not to be the least alarmed, called out to his brother who was with him, and said: "Tell me! How many elephants and horses have you got! Be quick and bring me my magic bow and I will very speedily put an end to these rascals." The thieves hearing this took themselves off at once. For—

If a man speaks wisely and suitably—and does not lose his head,

No one can possibly get the better of him.

STORY LII

IN a remote part of the world lies a town called Pratishtâna. The name of the king's son was Durdamana, and he began to think that he ought to be making a position for himself and not to rely on his father. So he started off with three friends like minded with himself, one the son of a Brâhman, another the son of a merchant, the third a young carpenter. They held a consultation as to the best way to begin their expedition, and finally decided to pay their respects to the ocean, the abode of hidden treasures. For it is said—

“The house of the wise, the well-born, those endowed with constancy and good fortune, is as the king’s palace.

“Good men always help the good, even as an elephant in the mire is drawn out by an elephant.”

So with these maxims in mind, after having fasted, and offered the due number of sacrifices, they approached the ocean with their entreaties, and the ocean was so pleased with them that he gave them each a magic jewel.

They seemed to have made a good start, so they each handed their jewel over to the keeping of the merchant, who promised to take care of it for them. The merchant, however, was a rogue, and he took the jewels and sewed them upon the band of his trousers with the idea of keeping them himself. Soon after this they were travelling along the road, when the merchant, who was a little behind the rest, suddenly cried out loudly: “Help! stop thief! I have been robbed.” The others came running up to see what was the matter and he said, “I just turned aside off the road for a moment, and I was set on by some thieves, and I have lost everything, your jewels included.” His companions heard what he said, and commented upon it among themselves. Their opinion was that the man was a scoundrel,

and that he had made away with their property. A day or two after they reached a city called Air-âratî, where a certain Buddhisara lived. He was the king's chief minister, and his fame reached over the whole world. When disputants came before him, they had only to state their case and without the smallest delay he gave his decision, and the decision was always right. So the son of the prince with his other two friends went and laid the whole matter before him. They said: "If you will only examine into the matter, and question us separately, you are certain to find out all the truth, your penetration cannot fail to get to the bottom of the mystery." When Buddhisara heard this he was somewhat perplexed. He tried his best but he could not come to any conclusion as to the thief, or the whereabouts of the jewels, and went home in a very dejected state. His daughter observed that he seemed very much out of sorts, and asked him what was the matter. The minister told her the story and she said, "My dear father! don't put yourself out! I will find out where the jewels are." "A likely thing indeed," replied the minister. "If I cannot find it out, I don't know how you possibly can." She answered—

"No one in this world ought to say, 'My skill has forsaken me':

For who can know more than very little of anything ?

Difficulties are removed by the eyes which beam with knowledge,

Just as darkness is dispelled by a lantern carried in the hand."

So in obedience to his daughter's wish, the minister invited the whole party to his house. They bathed and dined sumptuously and then were shown to their beds each in separate rooms. Then the minister's daughter went to the prince first and made overtures of love to him, at the same time asking him for £100. He replied, "I have no money with me but, if you will let me go home and fetch some, I will return and give it to you." She said, "Oh, no! that will not do for me, I must have it now," and went on to the Brâhman who made pretty much the same answer. So she next tried the carpenter. He said, "I have not got the money with me, but if you will wait I will gladly let you have £100." Declining to let the carpenter have credit she finally went to the merchant, and addressed herself to him. He replied, "I have not got any money, but here are four valuable jewels which you can have if you like," and he took them out of his trousers where they had been sewn up. She took them and saying, "Well! I must just go

and have them tested to see if they are genuine," handed them over to her father, who restored to each man the property that belonged to him.

STORY LIV

ONCE upon a time there was a king called Dharmadatta, who ruled over Śakrāvati. He was endued with righteousness—the essence of all virtues. Suśila was his chief minister, and beside him was another man living in the place, whose name was Vishṇu. This Vishṇu had been a minister, but somehow or other he had lost his money as well as the position which he formerly used to hold. The consequence was that he grew morose and disagreeable—quite wrapped up in himself, and the contemplation of his misfortunes. Moreover, the king took a dislike to him—entirely ignored his existence. One day Suśila asked the king how it was that Vishṇu had grown so dull and dejected: but the king took no notice of Suśila's remark. Suśila therefore continued: "Sir! Vishṇu is honourable and charming: he is excellent at diplomacy; you ought to send him upon a mission somewhere or other." The king hearing what Suśila said, did

not feel any more amiably disposed towards Vishṇu ; so he sealed up some ashes in a parcel and told Vishṇu to take them to Śaturdamana, the King of Vidiśâ. Vishṇu immediately started on his mission and gave the parcel to King Śaturdamana, without knowing what it contained. The king opened the parcel, and when he found what was inside it, he was exceedingly angry. So it seemed as if Vishṇu were placed in a somewhat critical position, but he was a very prudent man, and seeing how angry the King of Vidiśâ was, he said :—

“ Sir ! My lord has been offering the Aśva-medha sacrifice, and to do your majesty honour, he has sent you some of the ashes from the sacrificial mound. They spring from the union of the three fires : they bring purification, prosperity, protection from evil. It has been said—

“ ‘ Elephants are a noble offering ; horses are a noble offering ;

But in what kingdom will you find a nobler offering than the ashes of the holy sacrifice ? ’ ”

So saying he took the ashes up in his hand and presented them to the King of Vidiśâ. His majesty was so pleased with the offering, and the speech, that he loaded Vishṇu with riches and honour, and sent him back to his own country.

STORY LV

IN the village of Charmakûta lived a Brâhman called Śrîdhara. In the same place there was a cobbler who had made a pair of shoes for Śrîdhara, and though he was always asking him to pay for the shoes, he never could get the money : all that Śrîdhara said was, " Some day or other you shall be satisfied ! " So time went by, and at last the cobbler seized hold of the Brâhman and demanded payment. This was very awkward for the Brâhman, for he had no money whatever. So being a man of expedients he said : " My worthy cobbler ! I told you that you should be satisfied before long. Now a son has been born to the lord of the village : are you satisfied or not ? " The cobbler was in a dilemma, for he knew that if he said " No ! " he would fall under the lord's displeasure ; if " Yes ! " he would lose the money owing to him. So of the two evils he chose the least, and let the Brâhman off without paying.

STORY LVII

THERE was a king called Vikramârka, and his wife's name was Chandralekhâ. She took a violent fancy

to one of the king's wise men, a certain Subhakara, and used to correspond with him frequently. Besides this she was always making assignations with him and going to his house. One night in the rainy season the queen started to visit Subhakara. "The king of the rains was come; the noise of thunder the drums that heralded his approach; the roaring of the clouds the chorus of singers that went before him; the flashes of lightning his victorious banners. The dark days, the floods of rain, the oceans of mud, the flashing of the lightning. These things stand in the way and prevent women meeting their lovers."

The king discovered that Chandralekhâ had started for Subhakara's house, so he put on dark clothes, took a sword in his hand, and followed her without her knowing it.

Subhakara met the queen at the door of the house, and repeated these verses—

"When the sky is all in confusion; when blinding darkness is over the whole earth; when the night watches are stunned with the noise; in such a condition of things as this, why do you come from the innermost apartments of the sovereign who burns up his enemies as the fire which lies within the ocean? Surely it is a mere pretence that women cannot endure even the eye of the lotus."

The king heard Subhakara's words, and felt flattered; meanwhile the wise man comforted the queen with delicate attentions and pleasant speeches.

Next morning the king sent for the queen, and summoned the Pandit to meet her. Turning to Subhakara, he said: "Surely it is a mere pretence that women cannot endure even the eye of the lotus." Subhakara, hearing this, gave himself up for lost, for he thought that everything had been found out, for—

"Even in a humble dwelling, punishment follows evil doing;

How much more in the king's palace."

So he reflected for a moment, and then he said—

"Thy glory, most noble lord, rules the waters of the ocean filled with terrible monsters, penetrates even to the heaven, climbs the inaccessible mountain; is powerful even in hell filled with poison-breathing monsters. O love incarnate! Surely the fear of women that can face this must be feigned."

The king heard what the Pandit said, and looked at him and the queen. He thought to himself: Here is a wise and prudent man, he is not easy to catch out, but as for women there is no difficulty with them. So he took the queen by the hand, and said to the wise man: "Here is the queen,

take her ! ” The Pandit was delighted, but as a discreet man should, he concealed his feelings, and he said : “ How can a man who knows not the Scriptures distinguish between good and evil ? How can a man who is blind distinguish between beauty and ugliness ? ”

And so the end of it was that the Pandit, as a reward for his discretion, fully enjoyed the queen’s company by the permission of the king.

STORY LIX

IN a village called Sangama lived a Râjaputra, who was as stupid as he was ill-tempered. His wife’s name was Rukminî. One day they started off together on a pilgrimage to a shrine, and on the road he caught Rukminî making sheep’s eyes at a passer by. The Râjaputra very naturally concluded that she wanted to attract attention, so he turned back at once, and went home. When he reached his house he expressed himself pretty strongly, and locked his wife up. She thought to herself, “ Well ! so much for this ! Before I am many hours older I will bring some one into the house, and make love to him right under my stupid

husband's nose." After a time her husband let her out again, and the first person she chanced to meet was the admirer whom she had lately met when she was travelling with her husband. So she called out to him and said: "Come and see me this evening, and we will sit under the tamarind tree in the courtyard." He was very glad to come, and in due course put in an appearance, and found rest and refreshment provided for him under the tamarind tree. As soon as he was comfortably settled she sent for her husband, and he came with his bow and arrows. "You, my dear husband," she said, "are a famous shot! You are a mighty hero! Your skill and prowess is the common talk of the whole earth! I wish you would just lop a bit off the moonlight for me."

The Râjaputra, who really was a great fool, took his bow and aimed at a streak of moonlight, and missed his mark; at this she clapped her hands and laughed. When he heard her jeers at his clumsiness he tried to find another arrow but failed, and while he was fumbling in the dark she cried out and said: "You fool! I have carried out my intention, and I have brought my admirer right into the middle of your house. You are a good shot, but this time you are unlucky. Now I am off, so good-bye to you." So saying she mounted a horse and

went with her lover ; and the Râjaputra, too much ashamed of his failure to say anything, let her go without a word. Indeed, who that has given his affection to women has not suffered for it ? For it has been said—

“ Even Brâhma himself fell into the snare ; who can be a match for women ? Women are the root of the tree of painful existence, the ground in which grows the tree of wickedness, the flower from which comes the fruit of penitence. How can women bring peace ? From women spring confusion ; confusion overtakes those who have to do with women. Casting them off, then we may perhaps attain to happiness.”

Prabhâvatî answered the Parrot and said—

“ But women are the cause of existence ; women are the cause of growth ;

Women are the cause of pleasure. How can they be evil ?

Without them there can be no enjoyment ; without them no pleasure.

Without them a man is of no account.”

Also—

“ Women have been created as a jar of ambrosia ; a mine of pleasure ; the abode of love. What can bring peace and happiness more than the society of a lovely woman ? ”

The Parrot heard what she had to say, and replied : “ There is a good deal of difference between coats of mail, elephants, and horses—between wool, wood, and stone—between water, women and men.”

STORY LX

A CERTAIN king built a magnificent hall, and adorned it lavishly with gold and jewels. A neighbouring sovereign, hearing of its splendour, sent an envoy called Haridatta, with a present of elephants, horses and jewels, to find out whether the hall were as magnificent as it was reported to be. When he arrived he interviewed the king, and said : “ Sir ! Your Majesty ! May I be allowed to see the famous hall that you have built ? ” The king willingly assented and told Haridatta that he should see it on the following morning. Next day the envoy was conducted to the hall, and he was so dazzled with its magnificence, that he could not make up his mind whether it was real, or whether he was dreaming. So he took a nut out of his pocket and threw it on the floor, which convinced him of the reality of all that he saw, and he returned home filled with astonishment and admiration.

STORY LXI

THERE was a certain merchant who lived in a village called Khorasama. His wife's name was Tejukâ, very good-looking, but frivolous and light-minded. One day she went with some of her friends to see a religious procession, and she came across a very handsome man, for whom she immediately conceived a violent attachment. For—

“At a wedding, in the king's palace, in the house of another, a woman is sure to get into mischief.”

Again, it has been said—

“At home ; in the desert ; at a sacrifice ; in a pilgrimage ; at a festival ; in a crowd ; in a desert ; in a town ; in a village ; free to roam about ; shut up at home ; in the field ; in the threshingfloor ; coming in, going out ; by day or by night ; it matters not where, a woman is certain to go wrong.”

So Tejukâ, seeing this man, made signs and called him to her, and said : “I am a good deal taken with you ; but my husband is a very disagreeable, ill-tempered man, and he won't let me go out of doors. You come outside the house, and throw in a pot with a serpent in it. The serpent will escape, and I shall cry out that I have been bitten. Then you must come by disguised as a doctor, and my husband will call you in.” So he did exactly as had been arranged, came to the house and threw the

pot in. Tejukâ cried out immediately : " Help ! I have been bitten by a serpent that was in this pot." She made a great noise over it, and her husband was very much alarmed. Just at that moment the man disguised as a doctor passed by the house. Tejukâ cried : " Go and get the doctor to ease my pain ! Go and get the wood for my funeral pile, for I shall certainly die." So her husband, seeing this man who he thought was a doctor standing at the door of the house, went and called him in. The pretended doctor looked at the lady's wound, and said to her husband : " This is a very dangerous bite ; but you are fortunate in having come across me, for I can certainly cure her." The merchant implored the doctor to save the life of his wife. Then the doctor put some very pungent ointment on Tejukâ, and said to her husband : " Don't be alarmed ! the drug that I have is strong enough to counteract any poison ; perhaps you would like to apply it yourself." The merchant proceeded to do as he was asked, but the ointment made his eyes water to such an extent that he was obliged to give it up, and saying to the doctor, " I think you had better put this stuff on yourself," he went out of the room.

In the merchant's absence the doctor and his sweetheart thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and the

crafty Tejukâ was soon cured of the serpent's bite. The merchant was quite delighted at the cure, and placed himself and his house quite at the doctor's service. So the doctor after this paid the merchant's house a good many visits, to the great satisfaction of the merchant's wife.

STORY LXV

IN a town called Ganasthâna lived a devotee. His name was Śrivatsa, and he was a follower of Maheśvara. One day he started for Varanasî with one of his disciples, and on the road this disciple saw a piece of meat, and stopped to pick it up.

He was seen to do this by a number of ascetics who were close by, so Śrivatsa was put in somewhat of a difficulty. For they all came in a body and jeered at this devotee and his disciple who had made such a blunder. To their remarks he said: "Yes! this is a disciple of mine, and it is quite true that he picked up a piece of meat; but the truth is, that he didn't know it was a piece of meat, or he would not have made this mistake."

STORY LXVI

IN a far away country there is a delightful forest, remote from the dwellings of men. It stretches far and wide over the land, and the birds love it. And in that forest there is a cool sheltered pasture, through which a river flows, and on its bank a fig tree throws its shade. There the king of the geese used to rest with his flock, wearied with their day's wandering.

One day when the geese had gone away, a fowler came and spread a net about the tree. In the evening they returned in their wonted fashion, and were all caught in the net. Their king then, seeing that they had all been taken prisoners, set his wits to work to deliver them from the toils. After reflecting on the case, he said—

“My children! when the fowler comes back in the morning, lie perfectly quiet, and pretend to be dead. Then he will think you are really dead, and will take you out of the net and throw you aside; after which jump up, and fly away as fast as you can.”

So it turned out. In the morning the fowler came back to see if he had caught the geese. They all lay perfectly still, and he thought they were dead; so he took them out of the net and threw them on

the ground. No sooner had he done this than they flew off back to their homes, and so escaped his clutches.

STORY LXVII

IN a forest called Pushpâkara, lived a small monkey whose name was Vanapriya. One day he was walking close to the river bank, when he saw a crocodile basking in the sun. "Friend Crocodile," said he, "are you tired of life that you have come so close into land?" The crocodile heard what the monkey said and replied: "He who has a situation that suits him, he who receives due wages for his services, is perfectly content with the place in which he happens to be. For it has been said—

" 'Lanka is altogether made of gold, yet I care nothing for it: Ayodhya, the home of my fathers, is but poor, yet I delight in it.' But there is something more than that, for your acquaintance has added additional pleasure to my existence. For it is written—

" 'A sacred bathing-place is only profitable sometimes. But the mere sight of a good man is always a source of purification.' So now a piece of

luck has happened to me, in that I have come across one who speaks such kindly words as you."

"My dear Crocodile," answered the monkey, "from this day forward I shall be entirely devoted to you, for your words are indeed the words of friendship. As it has been said—

"'Friendship, in the opinion of wise men, is the society of the good.' Therefore," continued the monkey, "let me offer you such hospitality as I am capable of." So saying he brought the crocodile some ripe fruit as sweet as nectar.

So after this every day the monkey used to bring his friend the crocodile plaintain fruit, and the crocodile took it home to his wife. One day she asked him where this fruit came from, and he told her the whole story, exactly as it all happened. She thought to herself, "This monkey seems to enjoy excellent fruit, I wonder what his ordinary food is like," and so, being in a condition which gave her a craving for all sorts of strange out-of-the-way things, she said to her husband: "I must have some of that fruit which the monkey is always eating: if you don't get it for me I shall certainly die." So off the crocodile started on his errand, and soon arrived at the river bank where he had met the monkey the first time. The monkey was there, and the crocodile said to him, "My dear

friend! Your brother's wife is very anxious to see you; will you come with me to our house?" The monkey accepted the invitation, and without any hesitation mounted the crocodile's back, and they started on their journey. On the way the monkey became a little anxious, and said: "It has occurred to me how am I to find my way back?" The crocodile recognized the monkey's difficulty, and explained carefully to him the way home. The monkey replied, 'My good crocodile! It is of no use your telling me all this, I am sure I should not recollect it. Besides, I think my affection for you has something lessened, so it is of no use my going home with you.' The crocodile rejoined, "Well: where shall I put you down?" "My dear friend!" answered the monkey, "haven't you heard the saying: "My heart is always in the fig tree: my desire always for the sacred fig'? If you know what that means you will take me back at once."

The stupid crocodile at these words turned round and took the monkey back to the river bank, and as soon as they had got there, the monkey jumped off the crocodile's back, and scrambled up into the tree. When he was well out of reach, he turned round and said with a jeer, "Go along with you! as long as I am up here I am out of your clutches.

Wise men say, ' There can be no friendship between creatures that live on land and those that live in the water.' " So the crocodile turned back and went sadly home, and the moral is : That he who has wit enough, can get out of difficulties, whatever they may be.

STORY LXVIII

IN Vidyasthâna, a Brâhman village, lived a certain Brâhman called Keśava. One day he was going to bathe in the lake, when he met the charming daughter of a merchant. He immediately fell in love with her. Soon after this he was coming back from his bath, and he met her again. She had a pitcher of water, and she asked him if he would kindly help her to put it on her head. He gladly assented and as he was helping her up with the jug, he kissed her. Her father happened to be close by, and saw this, so he summoned Keśava for assaulting his daughter. The Brâhman was placed in a difficulty, but he had a friend whose name was Vitarka, and he hearing what had happened went to the Brâhman and said : " My dear fellow ! Listen to me ; when you come before the court, .

mind you speak very indistinctly, so that no one can understand you." Well, Keśava followed his advice and the judge who could not make out a word he said, exclaimed: "I cannot see that this man is guilty of anything. Indeed, I should say he was a most respectable person." And so by the help of Vitarka's wit and friendship he not only escaped condemnation, but acquired a very good character.

STORY LXIX

THERE was once a merchant, whose wife was named Vagikâ, and he was extremely fond of her. It so happened one day that her husband wanted a bath. She was getting it ready for him, when all of a sudden she saw one of her admirers going along the road. So, saying that she had not enough water, she ran out of the house, pretending that she was going to get some more, and stayed out a considerable time with her friend. All this time her husband was waiting for his bath, and so the question for her was this, what excuse to make for her lengthened absence. She reflected for a moment, and then with a great splash jumped into the tank

just outside the house—at the same time shouting, “Help! I am drowning.” Her husband heard the noise and the splash, and thinking to himself, “Hullo! that wife of mine has tumbled into the tank,” went and pulled her out, and brought her into the house, without making any remark, or asking her any questions.

At the conclusion of these stories, Madana returned from his expedition, and was received by Prabhâvati with every demonstration of affection.

The Parrot said, very slowly and solemnly—

“Affection in women means nothing; pride in women means nothing:

All the time that you have been absent, she has been my friend, and has been devoted to me.”

Madana heard what the Parrot said, but he did not pay much attention to it. The Parrot smiled and continued: “He who hears good advice and follows it, is blessed both in this world and in the next.” Madana therefore was induced to ask the Parrot what he meant. Prabhâvatî at this felt a little bit anxious as to what might come out, for it has been said—

“The good are always bold sustained by consciousness of good.

The wicked are always afraid, for their evil con-

sciences make cowards of them." So Prabhâvatî said to her husband—

"Sir! your place has been well supplied, for in this house dwells a Parrot, who seems to have come direct from the abode of the gods, and who speaks words of wisdom. He has been even as a husband and son to me."

The Parrot at these words felt a little ashamed of himself, for it did not seem to him that he had merited such compliments. So Madana turned to Prabhâvatî and said: "Pray, what were the words of wisdom with which the Parrot consoled you?"

She replied: "My lord! a speaker of truth may be found, but it is not so easy to find a listener, for it has been said—

"Men who say what is pleasant are always welcome :

But those who tell unpalatable truths, will not find an audience.

Women are unstable; they have little or no affection for their husbands; they think much of themselves; they are ignorant; weak; careless in the performance of their duties. Women exercise their powers of attraction, and then when they have caught a man they draw him out like a fish in a net. They are as changeable

as the waves of the sea, continually shifting like the evening clouds; when they have gained their object they cast a man aside as a squeezed out rag. They enter a man's heart, and fill him with confusion, rage, deceit. What will not women accomplish?'

"Now, my husband! hear me. After your departure, for a time I kept you in remembrance, though there was separation between us. Then evil friends came by, and tried to lead me astray. This bird prevented my following after them, and held me back for seventy nights, by means of the stories which he told me. So I was prevented from following my desires, and my designs of evil were not fulfilled. From to-day—whether in life or in death—you, my husband, shall be my chief object."

At the conclusion of this harangue, Madana turned to the Parrot and asked what in the world it all meant.

The Parrot answered: "Speech must not be uttered hastily by the wise; those who know what is right and proper, must act accordingly. Sir! I say nothing of the foolish, drunkards, women, persons afflicted with disease, those in love, the weak, the wrathful. The mad, the careless, the timid, the starving, such as these have but few virtues. There are ten who know not the way of

righteousness—the mad, the careless, the drunkard, the feeble, the wrathful, the glutton, the hasty, the coward, the covetous, the lustful.”

“Pray grant Prabhâvatî pardon for her shortcomings ; indeed they were not her fault, but the fault of her evil companions. For it is said—

“ ‘ The virtuous fall into evil ways through contact with the depraved.

Even Bhishma stole a cow under the influence of Daryodhana.

The king’s daughter was led astray by a Vidyâdhara : but, though her fault was plain, she was forgiven by her father.’ ”

The Parrot then told Madana the following story—

“ There is a mountain called Malaya, and on the top of it is Manohara, a city of the Gandharvas. In it lived a certain Madana, a Gandharva, and he had a wife whose name was Ratnâvalî. Their daughter was Madanamanjarî. She was extremely beautiful and fascinating and every one who saw her absolutely lost his senses, whether god or hero. It was quite impossible to find a husband for her sufficiently good-looking. It so happened one day that a certain Nârada came by ; when he saw her he was so fascinated by her charms that he went off his head. After a time, however, Nârada, who was

a Rishi, came to himself, and he solemnly cursed her, in these words : ' Since the fire of passion has been kindled in me at the sight of your beauty, you shall be the victim of deceit.' Then her father, hearing the curse, bowed to the ground before the Rishi, and said : ' Sir ! show compassion on my daughter, and grant her forgiveness !' Nârada replied : ' She shall indeed be deceived, but she shall not suffer loss, nor shall she fail in gaining a husband. On the top of Mount Meru is a city called Vipula, and in it dwells the Gandharva, Kanaprabha. He shall be your daughter's husband.' With these words Nârada departed, and according to his promise Madanamanjarî was given in marriage to the Gandharva. Soon after this her husband left her, and went on a journey to Kailasa. She was inconsolable at his departure, and lay full length on a stone slab in the courtyard of her home. Here she was seen by a Vidyâdhara, who made advances of love to her. She declined them without hesitation, but he eventually, putting on the form of her husband, accomplished his object. Before long her husband returned, but it appeared to him that she was not particularly glad to see him. He thought that there must be some counter-attraction, and eventually he worked himself up to such a state of jealousy, that he contemplated putting an end to his wife's exist-

ence. So Madanamanjarî, seeing her end in view, went to the shrine of the goddess Durgâ, and made loud lamentation. The goddess heard her complaints and said to her husband, 'Noble Gandharva! your wife is guiltless: she was deceived by a Vidyâdhara, who put on your form. Since she was ignorant of the real state of things, how could she be to blame? Besides the cause of all this is the curse pronounced on her by the Rishi Nârada. Now the curse is worked out, and since she is free from guilt you must take her back.' Hearing the words of the goddess, Kanaprabha took his wife home, and they lived happily together.

"So, Madana," continued the Parrot, "if you have any confidence in my words, receive your wife kindly, for there is no evil in her."

Then Madana, obedient to the Parrot's wish, took Prabhavatî home, and his father Haridatta, rejoicing at his son's return, made a great feast. While the festival was proceeding, a rain of flowers fell from heaven, and the Parrot—the adviser and confidant of Prabhavatî—freed from the curse which had compelled him to wear a parrot's form, ascended to the abode of the gods, and Madana and Prabhavatî passed the remainder of their lives in peace and happiness.