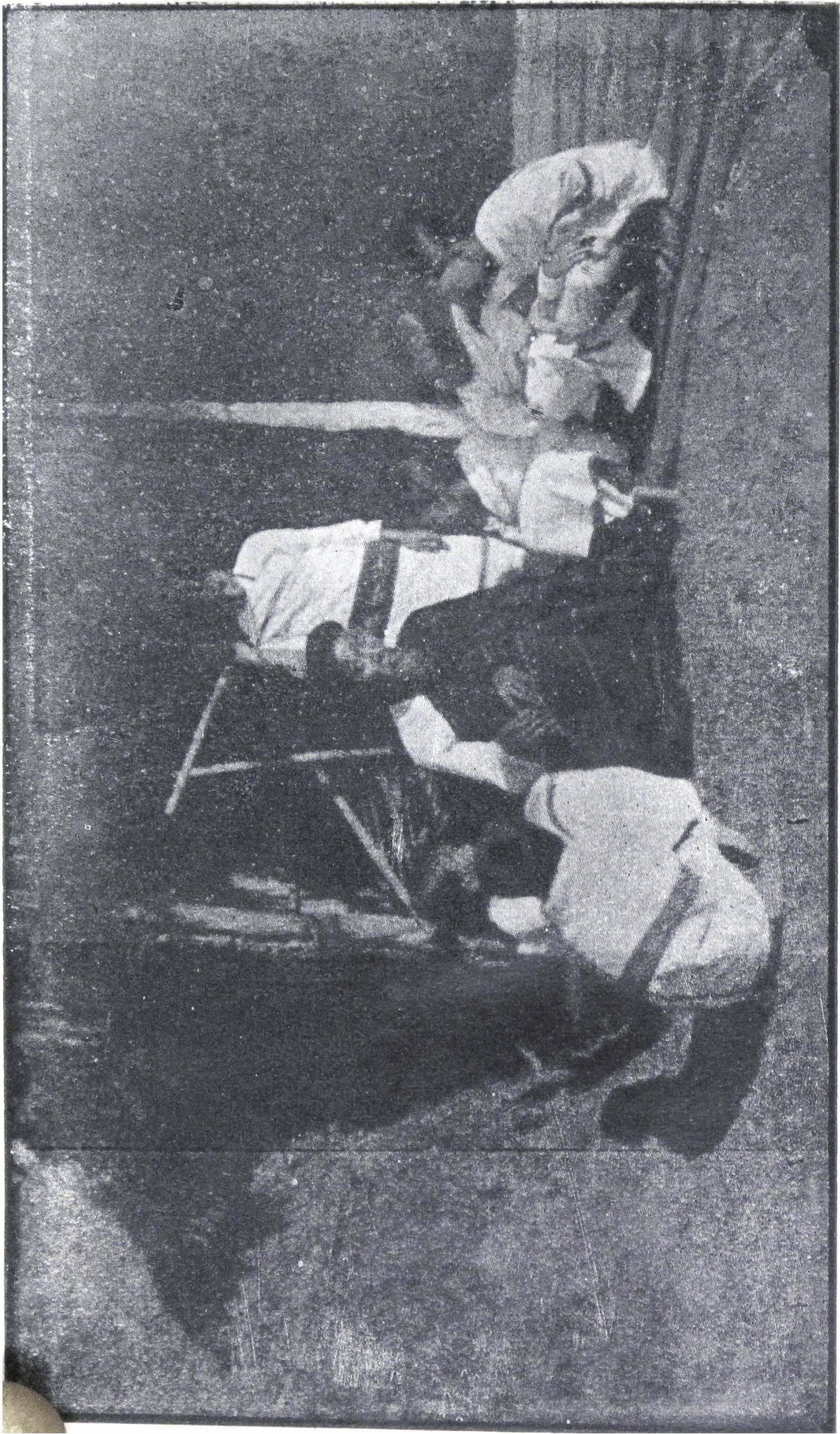




LEGENDS OF OLD LUSHAI

FREDERICK J. SANDY





An Interesting Story

Dr. K. W. Blinkworth.

Photo by

LEGENDS OF OLD LUSHAI

Collected and Translated

BY

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PREFACE

The legends now published represent what stood for imaginative literature to the Lushais through the ages before they had a written language. These hill tribes have but recently come into much contact with civilised people, and their folk-tales help to show what their life was like in that dark past when they were not only without the lore of books but were also the prey of fancies that peopled the earth with weird shapes and powers, wreaking their displeasure on defenceless mortals. On their raiding expeditions, as they halted on the march, they would sit around the large camp fire and listen to these stories. In their houses at the close of day, when the heavy work in the rice field was over, they would entertain each other by relating the legends of long ago. And thus to-day we have these tales, which incidentally throw fitful gleams of light upon what is still a shrouded past.

There are many intensely interesting problems connected with the history of the Lushais, and it may be hoped that a study of their folk-lore will furnish evidence concerning their past migrations and also concerning their relation to kindred tribes.

These legends are tending to die out among the rising generation of Lushais : to preserve them and also to help the Mission students in their study of English they have been translated and are now published.

F. J. S.

Aijal, October 31st 1919.

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LEGENDS OF OLD LUSHAI

THE MAID OF THE STARS

Once upon a time there was a man who had a rice field in which there was a well. Every day he went to the well to draw water but the water was always disturbed and muddy and unpleasant to taste. He wondered very much what was happening to pollute it and one day very early in the morning he went down near the well and hid himself, watching to see what would happen. Before long he saw a very beautiful maiden come tripping along. She was the Maid of the Stars. Every morning it was her custom to bathe in the well and thus the water got disturbed and muddy. When the owner of the field saw her he fell in love with

her at once and made up his mind to make her his bride. Before she knew there was anyone near he ran and caught her, and then led her off to his home. He took away her beautiful wings that shone like the stars and hid them from her in a large basket. They were married and in course of time they had seven sons. The names of the sons were Seer, Hunter, Hider, Digger, Pursuer, Captor and Preventer, which names were given to them because they excelled in these several ways.

The husband was always afraid that his wife might find her wings again and take to flight, so whenever he went out he left strict charge with his sons that they were never to show the starry wings to their mother. On no account whatever were they to do so.

One day when their father was in

the rice field the youngest boy was crying a great deal. He gave his mother no peace. At last she said to him, "You naughty boy, when your father is here you are always very happy, but when he is away you are always miserable. How is that?" The little boy stopped his crying to say, "When our father is here we may always see the beautiful starry wings, but when he is away we cannot look at them." Upon this she became very curious to know where the wings were, and begged her little boy to tell her. He wanted to play with the wings so he pointed out to her the large basket in which they were kept. The Starry Maiden at once took them and arrayed herself in them. She said to her children, "Children, do you think I am beautiful when I have on these wings?" The eldest son was afraid she would go away and he said,

“No, mother, those wings do not make you look at all beautiful.” The youngest boy however said, “Oh, mother, how pretty you are.” She flew with the wings a little way off and asked them again, when they gave the same replies. She then flew right away out of their sight up to the starry fields of heaven, where every night she looks down upon the earth and shines in ever new beauty.

DADDY BEAR AND MASTER MONKEY

Once upon a time there lived a monkey who enjoyed life very much. He made a swing in the forest, and wished for nothing better than to sit in it all day long and to swing to-and-fro. One day Daddy Bear came that way and said to him, "Master Monkey, let me use your swing." Master Monkey replied, "I am afraid my swing is not strong enough to hold such a large gentleman as you. Before you get on it I will climb up and fasten it more securely to the tree." Then Master Monkey climbed up and bit the rope of the swing until it was almost severed. When he came down again he invited Daddy Bear to try his swing. While Daddy Bear was swinging Master Monkey went to prepare some food, for he thought to himself, "Very soon Daddy

Bear will fall and be killed, and if I take some nuts and rice from my store to eat with his flesh he will make a nice meal for me." Before long Master Monkey heard the noise made by Daddy Bear falling from the swing. He hurried along to the place where the swing was, thinking of the nice meal he was about to make of dead Daddy Bear. When he got there however he found that Daddy Bear was still alive, for he had been barely scratched by his fall. So Master Monkey could not make the great feast he had thought to enjoy with the food he had brought and with the flesh of the bear, and to hide his confusion he said, "Daddy Bear, I heard you falling from my swing and I have brought some tasty food for you to eat, to help you recover from the shock of your fall." But Daddy Bear was not as foolish

as Master Monkey thought he was and could see through his trick. Daddy Bear got very angry and said, "No no, Master Monkey ! when you climbed the tree you pretended to strengthen the swing, while you really weakened it. Now I will pay you back " With that he looked so fierce and made such a terrible noise that Master Monkey got very frightened and made off quickly to the highest branch of a tall tree. Daddy Bear then devoured the tasty tit-bits which the monkey had brought, and so Master Monkey lost not only the meal he had expected but also the nuts and the rice which he had so long and so carefully hoarded.

LERSEEA THE HUMBLE CHIEF

Once upon a time there was a chief named Lerseea. He was a just man who when estimating people's worth did not trouble whether they were rich or poor as long as they had kind hearts. One day he and some of his men journeyed to a distant village which they had never before visited. When about to enter the village Lerseea whipped himself and caused large weals to rise on his skin. He also smeared his body with dust until he looked a very pitiable object. He and his men then went to the centre of the village and sat there. Everyone knew they were from Lerseea's village, but no one knew which of them was Lerseea. One by one the members of the party were invited to different houses for entertainment until at last the only one left was

Lerseea himself, who looked so wretched that no one wanted to take him in.

In one of the houses of the village lived two brothers who were very poor but very kind. They saw the wretched-looking man in rags sitting in the middle of the village street, and one of them went out to him and said, "Friend, we have no food at all for we are very poor, but come to our house and you can keep warm by our fire. You are welcome to what little we have." Then Lerseea went to the house of the two brothers and gladly stayed with them. In the morning he told them who he was, and the other people of the village were mortified when they realised how they had treated the famous Lerseea, and they wanted him to go to another house to stay with some rich people. But Lerseea would not leave the two brothers who had shown themselves

such true friends. He was very kind to them ever afterward for they had pitied him when he seemed to be in distress. Invited by him they migrated to his village, and he gave them many cattle and other things, by which they became very rich. And thus was their kindness rewarded.

TIELOONGEE THE LOST SISTER

One day a little girl called Tieloongee was lying down under the cloth which her mother was weaving and her mother was all unconscious that she was there. By and by a man from the Chin Hills came along and offered to sell the woman an iron ball. Said the mother, "I have nothing else to buy it with, but if you like I will give my little daughter Tieloongee as the price of the iron ball." "Very well," said the man, "but how am I to get her to take her off with me?" The woman said, "I will send Tieloongee to draw water at the well, and you can then catch her and take her away." And so they agreed.

Now all this time Tieloongee had been listening, and she was very much afraid, especially when very soon after her mother sent her to the well to draw

water. Tieloongee did not know what to do. She could not run away, for then the wild beasts in the jungle would eat her, and if she went to the well the strange man would catch her, while if she went home her mother would do so. Very slowly, full of fear, with feet dragging and with a heavy heart, she went to the well. There the man who had bargained with her mother suddenly caught her and then took her away to his own country.

She had a little brother, and this boy used to play in the village street with the iron ball. Sometimes the other children would not play with him, and at such times they would shout out, "Who sold his sister for an iron ball? Who sold his sister for an iron ball?" The little boy did not know why they said this, and one day he asked his mother about it, and she told him what

had happened to his sister. He was very sorry indeed and wept to think of the cruel fate of his dear sister, and he soon said to his mother, "I cannot bear to think that my sister is a captive in a strange land. I will go and search for her and bring her back." "No," said his mother; "you cannot go now, you are too small." Some time afterward he said again that he wanted to go and search for his sister, but his mother gave him the same reply. Later on, when he had become quite a tall strong young man, nothing could deter him, and at the first opportunity he set off to look for his long lost sister. On the way he met an old man who was making a mortar for grinding rice. He said to the man, "Please tell me where my sister is." "Finish making this mortar for me and I will tell you," was the reply. He finished making the

mortar and then the old man gave him directions as to the way he was to go. He went on accordingly until he met an old man from the Chin Hills. "Sir," said he to the man, "do you know where my sister is?" This man was driving cattle and he said to the young man, "Follow my cattle, go wherever they go, sleep wherever they sleep, stay wherever they stay, and you will find your sister." The young man did as he was told. He followed the cattle. He went wherever they went, he slept wherever they slept, he stayed wherever they stayed, and at last they led him to a house. This was the house of his sister, but he did not yet know it. He entered the house and found there a young woman. They began to talk to each other and soon he found that this was his long lost and dear sister. They did not stay

long after his arrival but ran away together and made their way back to their own village, where they lived very happily and loved each other always.

THE BEAR, THE TIGER AND THE MONKEY

A bear one day came across a pool of clear water. He was so pleased with it that he determined to preserve it for himself and he set a monkey in charge of it to warn everyone else away. The bear then went off to the jungle to search for food. While he was away a deer came along and said to the monkey, "Please may I drink of this pool of water?" The monkey replied, "It is Daddy Bear's pool. If you are daring enough to drink what belongs to him you may do so." When the deer heard these words he was very frightened and raced swiftly away. Soon after a boar came and asked permission to drink, but when he heard the monkey's reply he too went off without further parley. At last a tiger came and asked if he might drink the water.

The monkey replied to him as he had done to the others, but the tiger was not afraid as they had been and he began to drink the water. Just then Daddy Bear came back with the food he had found and was very angry indeed when he saw the tiger drinking his precious water. He set upon the tiger to punish him and they had a battle royal. They fought fiercely, neither being able to kill the other. After fighting for a long time they got near the edge of a very high precipice over which they both rolled. They were instantly killed, and by their fighting lost everything, while the monkey satisfied himself with the water and the food which the bear had thought of enjoying.

SEEBOOTA AND DAREE

Once upon a time there was a chief whose name was Daree Pa. He took his braves to raid another village, and among the people he captured was a little boy called Seeboota. He was a clever little boy and Daree Pa took him to his own house to be a slave. Seeboota's life would not have been a very unhappy one if it had not been for Daree Pa's daughter Darlalpoee, called Daree for short. This girl was a very cruel girl. She had long brass hair-pins six inches long, and when she was angry she would stab poor Seeboota with these hair-pins until he often wished that he was dead. One day Daree was so unkind to him that he said to her, "How can you be so cruel to me? Don't you ever remember that life is like the Plough Stars that turn

upside down? Some day you will be poor in your turn, so have pity on me now." "Nonsense and rubbish!" said Daree, and she continued to act the tyrant as before.

By and by there was peace between the two villages and Seeboota was a slave no longer. He was now a young man, and he went to a fertile tract of land and set up as a chief. Very many people put themselves under his protection, and he became very rich and powerful. By this time Daree Pa was dead and as he had no sons others seized all his property and drove away his widow and her daughter Daree. They had nowhere else to go, so they decided to settle in Seeboota's village, thinking that he would be kind to them for old times' sake. So they went and lived in his village. Now Seeboota had never forgotten the cruelty he had suffered at

Daree's hand, so before long he decided how he would make her suffer.

A holiday for all the people was to be held soon, and Seeboota then gave an order to the young men of the village that Daree and nine cattle were to be led by ropes through the village and beaten until they died. The villagers did not dare to disobey their chief and they did as they were told. Seeboota would not allow any water to be given to Daree to drink. She was never allowed to rest. Up the village hill and down again without stopping she must tramp wearily, scourged by the thongs of the young men's whips. All except Seeboota were very sorry for Daree, but what he had suffered as a boy had made him so callous that he would not allow her old mother to give her as much as a drop of water to drink. And at the close of the day

the cattle were slain and eaten, and Daree too was killed.

Thus those who are cruel to others are storing up grief for themselves.

PEEHMOOAKEE AND HER SONG

Before the white man came and before the untamed Lushai language was caught and trammelled in books, many poets and sweet singers sang their songs in the villages of Lushai. The most famous of them all was Peehmooakee of the nightingale voice. Let us listen to her story.

From the time when she was a very little girl Peehmooakee loved to hear the tales which the old people told, tales of adventure, tales of wonderful creatures in the forest, and the legends that had been told by mother to daughter and by father to son for many many generations. She also loved to listen to the songs which the old people sang at the feasts, especially when the rice had been gathered in and everyone knew that there was food for all

to eat for many months ahead. Then all hearts were merry, and the older people would join in a happy time of feasting. The other girls preferred to play in the village street, while the boys had their work to do in fetching wood from the jungle for the fire in the chief's house and for the young men's sleeping hut. But Peehmooakee was different from the other girls. She loved to sit near the old people when they were singing, even when they sang for many hours without ceasing. And she learnt by heart all the songs and tales she had heard, so that no other girl or boy or man or woman, except those who were very very old, knew half as many songs and stories as Peehmooakee did when she was a little girl. But she did not remain a little girl always. By and by she had grown up into a good and beautiful woman. And

perhaps because she knew so much about the poets and singers who had lived long before, or perhaps just because music was in her heart and she was bound to sing, like the birds which need no other teacher but their own joy, she herself began to compose songs and to sing them. She sang them when she went to the rice field and bent down to sow the seed. She sang them when she went there in the rainy season to pluck the great weeds that would have choked the young rice plant. She sang merrily in the time of harvest. In the fields and in the house she was always happy and always singing. Her songs were so sweet that other people learnt them from her and they passed from village to village throughout the land. All the people in every part of the country loved to sing the songs that Peehmooakee sang.

This continued for several years, but by and by trouble came for the sweet singer. The chief of her village was not a very wise man, and the old men who should have been his counsellors were afraid to give him good advice, so when he began to be jealous of Peehmooakee's fame they helped to fan the flame of his ill-feeling. They all met together in the chief's house and discussed secretly what they should do to Peehmooakee that she might not annoy them any more. They were very cruel men, and at length they devised a most heartless plan, which on the very next day they proceeded to put into execution. They had a large grave dug, and having seized Peehmooakee they dragged her to the grave and began to bury her in it. In spite of this dreadful cruelty, however, Peehmooakee was not to be silenced. She still continued to sing

even when they were covering her with earth and stones. She had a very pretty gong and even when the cruel people thought they had put an end to her there came from the ground the sound of singing and the music of her gong. Their cruelty was sufficient to make her suffer but not to prevent her singing. And to this day all in Lushai-land remember the lovely singer and her songs. For music and beauty are like the flowers that may be beaten to the ground but shed their seeds to spring up in new strength and beauty in the days to come.

CHOORA LOSES HIS WAY

Choora and his wife had become very poor. They had eaten all their rice and it was not yet time to gather in the year's harvest. They considered for a long time what they had better do. In their house there was a very large earthenware vessel of which they were very proud. But now because they were so poor they determined to sell this vessel in order to buy rice. The next morning after they had so decided Choora prepared to set off to the nearest village, one day's journey away, and there try to sell the vessel. Before he left, his wife warned him to be very careful with the vessel and told him that he was not to put it on the ground at all, for fear of breaking it, but that when he was tired of carrying it on one shoulder he was to change it to the

other. Choora went off very early, carrying the huge vessel on his right shoulder. His load was heavy, but as he had been so carefully warned not to risk breaking the pot he did not dare to halt on the way for a rest, and so have to put the pot on the ground. He went on and on. When he had gone about half-way his right shoulder began to ache very badly and he determined to make a change. He remembered what his wife had told him, not to put the pot on the ground, but to put it on the other shoulder. He wondered how he could get it to the other side without putting it on the ground, and was very puzzled about the matter. After thinking for some time, he turned himself round and at once said to himself, "There! The pot is on the other side now," and went on walking. He did not realise that he was going back to his own village, and

he went on travelling all the afternoon, until the shadows grew very long. When the sun was setting he got back to his own village, but he thought it was the place towards which he had set out in the morning. His little children saw him and they quickly called to him, "Father! Father! How glad we are that you have come home." But Choorā merely said to himself, "These are very nice and friendly little children in this village, to call me their father as they do. I am glad I have reached such a neighbourly place at the end of my long day's journey."

TLOOMTAYA AND THE MAID OF THE SKIES

Once upon a time there was a very beautiful maiden who was called the Maid of the Skies. She was also very charming, and many young men in the country around coveted the honour of being her husband. She would not, however, listen to any of them, and she lived alone with her father. Not many days' journey away from this beautiful maiden's village there lived a family of brothers, the youngest of whom was Tloomtaya. These brothers had often talked about the Maid of the Skies, and at last as she still remained unwedded they made up their minds that they would go to her village and see if one of them could be successful in making her his wife. They therefore arrayed themselves in their best cloths, put oil on their hair and went out towards the

village of the beautiful maiden. Their youngest brother, Tloomtaya, was with them, but they took little notice of him as he was the youngest and a modest youth. They walked in single file, and as they set out they said to the people of their village, "We are going to pay our addresses to the Maid of the Skies. Who is the best man of us?" And the villagers replied, "The first one, Tloomtaya." So his brothers said to Tloomtaya, "Youngster, get into the middle." He then marched in the middle between his two brothers. A little further on they said to some people again, "We are going to pay our addresses to the Maid of the Skies. Which of us is the best man?" And the people replied, "The middle one, Tloomtaya." So his brothers said to Tloomtaya, "Youngster, get behind." Tloomtaya went behind the others and

so on they went. They met some more people and to these they said again, "We are going to pay court to the Maid of the Skies. Which of us is the best man?" And the people replied, "The last one, Tloomtaya." At this his brothers were very angry and said to Tloomtaya, "Youngster, you run away home." And Tloomtaya went home, while they went on until they arrived at the house of the beautiful maiden. When they got there the Maid of the Skies called to her father and said, "Father, here are strangers come to visit us." Her father said, "Are they welcome or unwelcome?" She replied, "Unwelcome." Then her father said, "Make them a present of something worthless, give them rice to eat, and send them off." And this she did. By and by Tloomtaya who had been left behind determined that although he was looked down upon by

his brothers, he would himself pay court to the beautiful Maid of the Skies. So he started on his journey. On the way he saw a cruel hawk trying to catch a pretty bird. Tloomtaya was sorry for the bird and shouted until the hawk was frightened and let the bird go. The bird was very grateful to the young man for his kindness and said to him, "Whenever you are in distress just call me, and I will fly to help you?" And Tloomtaya went on his way. At length he arrived at the house of the Maid of the Skies. When she saw him she welcomed him in, and she thought she had never seen a more handsome youth in all her life. She said to him, "When my father comes in he will say to you, 'If you wish to marry my daughter you must tell me which end of the house is towards the top of the hill,' and you must answer him, 'The right-hand side,'

and when he asks you, 'Where are the lower parts of the post of the house?' you must tell him, 'In the ground.'"

Then the beautiful maiden called to her father, "Father, come home quickly. There is a visitor in our house." Her father replied, "Is he welcome or unwelcome?" She replied, "Welcome." Said her father, "Cook him some meat and some rice for his journey and send him going." But the maiden did not wish to send her visitor away in that fashion. By and by her father came home. He put the questions to Tloomtaya of which the maiden had warned him, and of course Tloomtaya answered them correctly. Then he said to Tloomtaya, "If you really wish to marry my daughter, you must go to that pool of water in the centre of the village and bring me a spoonful of the water without wetting the under

part of the spoon.” When the young man heard these words and saw what a difficult thing he had been given to do in order to win the maiden he loved, he became very sad indeed. He knew not what to do. He wandered about the village in his distress, but found no comfort. He then remembered the words of the little bird he had rescued on the way, and he thought, “I am afraid the little bird can give me no help but at least I can try him.” He then said softly, “Come, little birdie, come.” Presently he saw a speck high in the air. This grew larger until he recognised the little bird, come back to help him. They went together to the pool of water and there the little bird took up some water drop by drop in its bill and poured it into the spoon until the spoon was quite full. The young man was full of

gladness and went joyfully to claim his bride, and as her father saw that the youth was well able to look after her he placed no more obstacles in the way. They were married and Tloom-taya led the beautiful maiden to his home, where they lived together very happily ever after.

CHOORA AND THE LOST MELODY

Once upon a time Choorā went to a village which he had not visited for a long time. While he was there he heard one of the young men whistling a tune. This tune took Choorā's fancy for he had never before heard any one whistling. He went to the young man when there was no one else about and asked him how much he wanted for his music. The young man agreed to sell it for the price of three large cows, and Choorā was delighted to buy the tune. He became very happy, whistling all the time he was in that village so that he might not forget the tune. After a few days he had to return home, so off he went whistling his precious tune on the way. By and by as he began to think of his village and a dispute which he had

there with one of his neighbours he unconsciously stopped whistling. He went on in this way for some time until suddenly he realised that the tune had gone. Vainly he tried to bring it back again, vainly he attempted this sound and that, hoping that he would hit upon the tune again. Nothing that he could do was of any use. He then began retracing his steps and looking along the path he had come, and in the jungle on both sides, in search of what he had lost. Soon there came along a Poi man who asked him what he was looking for. "If I knew that," was the reply, "I would not be wasting my time and troubling myself to look for it." The Poi wanted to help Choora and yet he did not know what in the world to look for. He began looking about him in sympathy with Choora but he could find nothing. At length

he began whistling to himself as though to say, "This is indeed a hopeless task." But directly Choorā heard him whistling he shouted out, "That is what I have been looking for all the time. That is what I lost." And he began whistling the tune again and went happily on his way.

THE FALSE ALARM

Once upon a time there was a wonderful stone in the village of Rooaloong. This stone could speak the language of human beings, and it was so proud of itself that every morning it shouted, "Beware! the head-hunters are coming." Then all the villagers would rush to defend themselves, only to find that they had been deceived by a false alarm. At length the villagers could bear this conduct no longer. When next the stone called aloud its alarm and the villagers found that it was again false they were very angry, and rushing to the stone which had deceived them they hacked off its head. The remainder of its body may still be seen in the village of Rooaloong, a perpetual warning to those who do not speak the truth.

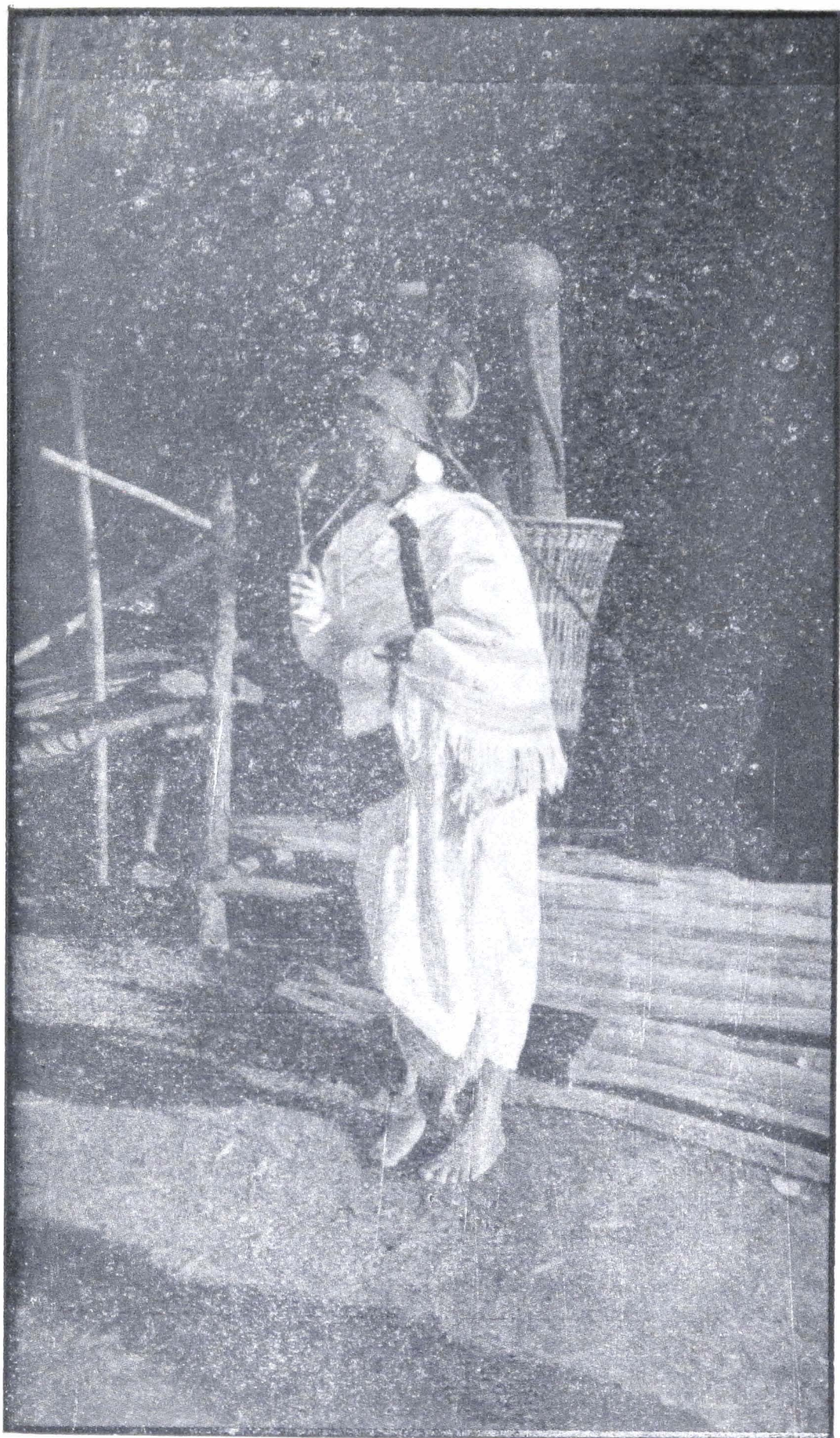


Photo by **A Woman Carrying Water** *Dr. K. W. Blinkworth.*

CHOOORA'S CHOICE

Choorra and Nahya were great chums. They had got hold of a large blanket and a hatchet, and they decided to use them in turn. The prior choice fell to Choorra and he said, "I choose to have the cloth by day, and the hatchet by night." So every day he could be seen in the hot sun wearing a thick blanket, while his companion worked away with the hatchet. And at night Choorra shivered with the cold, for his only covering was then a useless hatchet, while his friend lay snugly wrapped in the blanket.

THE TIGER AND THE FROG

Once upon a time a tiger who was very proud of his strength and swiftness boasted to a little frog of his superiority. To his great surprise the frog would not admit that the tiger was either swifter or stronger than he, and they then agreed to run a race, in which the tiger was very sure that he himself would easily be the winner. They agreed upon the course they should run, and stood waiting for the signal. When this was given and the tiger began to run, the tiny frog at once jumped upon his back. The frog was so small that he was unnoticed by the tiger, who ran on and on with great swiftness. Just as he was about to reach the goal the little frog jumped to the ground, hopped in before the great tiger, and was proclaimed the winner. At this

the tiger was very much surprised and declared that he had never seen such a thing in all his life.

The tiger then challenged the frog to a stone throwing competition. "Let us see," he said, "who can throw a stone the furthest." And the frog agreed to try his strength with the tiger. The tiger threw the stone as far as ever he could, and all the onlookers said that surely no one, least of all the little frog, could throw further than that. However the frog stepped up to the line and threw a stone into a dove's nest, and the dove flew off with the stone on its back far far away and high up in the sky, where it looked just like the stone which the frog had thrown. And here again the frog was declared the winner, for the stone he had thrown had gone further than the stone of the tiger. Because of these

feats the frog became very famous, and all the other animals stood in fear of him, for none of them ever imagined that they could be as swift or as strong as the tiger.

THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTER AND THE SNAKE

On the way to Cham-pie, quite near the road, there is a cave which every traveller notices. A very remarkable story is told about this place. Once upon a time a giant snake lived in the cave, and near by was a large village. The people of the village were afraid of the snake, and as they thought it was an evil spirit they frequently gave it offerings. They usually gave the snake goats or other animals to eat, but sometimes they gave their children to it, for they thought that by so doing they would prevent the snake being angry and inflicting some terrible punishment upon them. This had gone on for a long time when one day a Poi man who was travelling that way stopped at the village to lodge there for the night. He soon observed that all

the people seemed very sad. There was no singing in the young men's common sleeping-place, there was no sound of children playing in the village street. All was hushed and still. The Poi himself began to feel depressed and he asked the people what was the matter. They told him of the unhappy fate that was hanging over one whom they all loved. All the children had been sacrificed to the snake which they feared and the time had come when the only one left to be sacrificed was their chief's only daughter, a beautiful girl who was kind to everyone and whose voice was full of music. When the Poi heard the cause of their sadness he felt very sorry for them and for the poor girl who was marked out to be the next victim of the snake, and he determined to make an effort to save her. He therefore took a large

hatchet and went to the cave where the giant snake dwelt, and as soon as he saw its long body he attacked it with all his might. At first he was afraid he could not vanquish it, for it was very strong and very huge. But after fighting for a long time, and when he himself was nearly exhausted, he succeeded in giving the snake a tremendous blow near the head, and killed it outright.

The villagers were so delighted that they could not do enough to show their gratitude to the stranger who had delivered them from the awful state of fear in which they had lived. The only reward he wanted however was to be permitted to marry the charming girl whose life he had saved, and as her gratitude had grown into love they soon became husband and wife and lived very happily together.

HOW THE GOAT OBTAINED HIS HORNS

Once upon a time in the far away long ago the animals were not all as we see them now. Many changes have taken place as those of you who have heard the old-time tales will know. And I will tell you how one important change came about. In the olden time the dog had horns very much like those which the goat has now, but the goat was without any. Both the dog and the goat came daily searching for food about the houses, and would eat all they could find lying there. The goat however had a great advantage over the dog. Because of its horns the dog was unable to eat from the large vessel in which the women pounded the rice, whereas the goat grew quite fat through being able to eat up all the food in it. However hard the dog might try to

get at the food he could not do so, while the goat ate it all up very quickly. The dog was very tired of going half-starved in this way, and one day he said to the goat, "Friend, I have two beautiful horns which I have worn ever since I was very small, but you have never had such beautiful adornments. If you would like to have them I will give them to you." The goat had often gazed longingly at the horns so now he was delighted and gladly accepted the dog's offer.

In a little while the dog was sorry that he had given his horns away for he found that he could not fight as well without them. He felt like a man who goes hunting without a spear. Therefore he went to the goat and said, "I have had enough of this. Give me back the horns you are wearing." But the goat had found them very

useful and refused to give them back. And to this day the dog has not forgiven him, but whenever they meet the dog and the goat show that they are enemies. The dog would have been wiser if he had remembered to think twice before he spoke once.

CHOORA AND HIS CAPTORS

You must know that Choora had a large field on the side of a hill, in which he grew rice. In this field he built a tiny house of wood and bamboo, and there he sometimes slept at night, when there was much work to be done in the field.

In the morning as he went to his field he was in the habit of calling out, "Is any one there?" before going to the little house, for fear that some of his enemies might be hiding in it. One day when he had so shouted there came back a reply, "Hullo!" Choora heard this and thought to himself, "There are enemies hiding in my little country-house, I will go back home." So back he went. The next morning he came again, and as was his custom he shouted, "Is anyone

there?" His enemies were still there, but they did not want him to know it, so they kept quite still and made no reply. Choorá called yet again, and as no sound came in reply he ventured to go into the field. As he drew near them the men who were hiding suddenly rushed out upon him and captured him. They then began to lead him off to their own country, which was some days' journey away. As they were going along Choorá said to them, "Comrades, I will show you how our fore-fathers did when they caught anyone." "What did they do?" asked the men. "Grasp my elbows, and I will show you," he said. They all gripped his elbows and thus they went on. Suddenly he straightened his right arm, hit one of the men severely, and ran right away. They chased him however, and when they had caught him they held him securely that

he might not get free again. By and by Choorā said to the men, "Take hold of me gently and I will go along quietly with you." Ere long Choorā complained of a pain in his foot. He said, "I have stepped on a thorn, and it has entered my foot. Let us sit down in a row and do one of you take the thorn out of my foot or I cannot go on walking." So they all sat down in a row. Now the place where they sat was very steep and rocky, and Choorā sat in the highest place. When the man next to him attempted to take out the thorn, Choorā thrust out his leg and the man fell against his next friend and he against the next and so they all rolled down the hill. While they were thus wasting their time Choorā made good his escape, and showed that though he was very foolish yet at times he could be very clever.

VIECHUCKA THE STRONG MAN

Once upon a time there lived a very strong man whose name was Viechucka. There was no one in all the district where he lived who could compare with him in strength. He therefore designed to journey through distant lands to find out whether there lived in all the world any one who was stronger than he. He set out upon his travels and ere he had gone far he overtook a man named Carrier. This man had a pole across his shoulders and from each end there was suspended a wide moor. When Viechucka saw this man and the great feat of strength he was performing he was amazed and said to Carrier, "Astonishing! How can you carry such wide stretches of country?" Carrier replied, "Friend, have you not heard of the fame of the strong man

Viechucka? He says that he will travel throughout the countries of the earth to see if there be any man stronger than he, and I am now practising in order to be ready to compete with him when he comes." Whereupon the other said, "I am Viechucka." Carrier would not believe this, so Viechucka said to him, "Very well then, we won't argue about it. Let us wrestle, and let the one who is defeated become the servant of the other." Carrier agreed to these terms and they at once began wrestling with each other without more delay. Each struggled hard for the mastery, but at length Viechucka showed himself the stronger and Carrier became his servant, promising to wait upon him faithfully for the mere honour of being near so famous a man. Then they journeyed on together.

After they had travelled for some

distance the two companions met a man who was known as Sand-fly Sawbones. This man's friends were very proud of him and were never tired of saying what wonderful things he could do in dissecting the tiny sand-flies that are no bigger than the point of a pin. Said Viechucka to him, "Friend, how is it that you can operate on such tiny creatures as sand-flies? They are so wonderfully small." Sawbones replied, "Why, that famous man Viechucka has declared his intention of travelling everywhere to see if there be any better man than he, and I am practising this work that I may be ready for him when he comes here." Viechucka said to him, "I myself am Viechucka." Sand-fly Sawbones refused to believe this, so Viechucka challenged him to a wrestling match and promised to show quickly that he was indeed the famous strong man. He further said,

“ Let him who is conquered become the servant of the stronger man.” The other agreed to these terms and they both set to right heartily. Sawbones showed himself a valiant wrestler, but for all that it was Viechucka who proved to be the better man, and after he had thrown Sawbones the latter became his servant and promised to serve him faithfully in all circumstances, after which all three went off together.

By and by as on they went they came upon a man who was known as Log-Roller. He was bravely rolling a tremendously thick log along the pathway. Viechucka said to him, “ However can you manage to move such a huge log along ? ” The Log-Roller replied, “ Sir, have you not heard that the famous Viechucka is about to visit all the villages of every land to see if there is anyone who will dare to challenge his

supremacy? I am getting myself ready to meet him by rolling these great logs about." Then Viechucka declared himself to the Log-Roller, who would not believe, however, that he was the much-talked-of strong man. Viechucka thereupon said to him, "Very well, if you do not believe me let us wrestle, and I will quickly show you that I am Viechucka. But first let us agree that whoever is beaten in the contest shall become the servant of the other." Log-Roller agreed to this, and they began to wrestle mightily. Again Viechucka showed himself the stronger man and soon threw his opponent, who thereupon became his servant and promised to be faithful to him till death. Then all four went on together.

As they journeyed they met a man called Suction, who was sucking up a great expanse of water. Viechucka

observing him said, "Good friend, what is this you are doing?" Suction replied, "The noted Viechucka is travelling through the land and I am preparing myself to challenge him." As before, Viechucka said who he was and again he was disbelieved. Viechucka then proposed a contest upon the same terms as those on which he had wrestled with the other men he had met. Suction agreed and they both struggled hard for the mastery. Suction was strong but Viechucka was stronger, and having thrown Suction he attached him to himself as a companion for his travels.

By this time the wayfarers had got hungry, and they rested awhile on the roadside to deliberate upon the best method of satisfying their wants. They said to one another, "Come, we have been journeying a long time and we are all famishing. Let us make a meal of

some fish from this river near by.' For they had seen a wide river in the valley below them in which shoals of large fishes were swimming. They went down to the water's edge and there they made Suction draw up the water of the river until all the fishes were flapping about on the mud, there being not enough water in which to swim. The five travellers quickly threw what fish they wanted out upon the bank. But when they had gone so far towards preparing for themselves a good meal, they found that they had no fire with which to cook the fish they had caught. Now at the spring from which flowed the river near them there lived an old old wicked fairy. She had a large fire and was engaged in baking clay pots. Carrier was deputed to fetch a brand from her fire. He went and said to her, " Mistress Fairy, please give me a por-

tion of your fire." The fairy replied in anger,

" I'll turn you upside down :

Don't mutter ' fire ' to me.

I'll jail you in a tiny pot,

From which you'll ne'er get free."

With that she quickly exerted her magic power and imprisoned him in one of the clay pots which she was baking, and try as hard as ever he might he could not set himself free. By and by his friends, who were wondering what had become of him, sent Sand-fly Sawbones to bring tidings of him and also to get some of the fire they so badly needed. When Sawbones addressed the fairy he was treated in the same way as his companion had been, and she imprisoned him by her magic power in a hard-baked clay pot. Time passed without the return of either of the messengers, so Log-Roller was

sent in his turn to try to glean news of them and also to fetch some of the precious fire. When he also came with his enquiries the fairy vented her wrath upon him as she had done upon his friends, confining him in a little clay pot. As he also did not return Suction was sent upon the same errand, only to meet with a like fate to those who had gone before. Matters now looked serious to Viechucka. He said to himself, "Whatever is the matter with all these men? I myself must go and see what has become of them, and fetch what I want." He went off in search of his companions, and coming to where the fairy lived he said to her, "Madam, please give me some of your bright fire." This she did not wish to do, and was about to cast the same spell over Viechucka as she had cast over his companions. She barely had time

to say,

“ I’ll turn you upside down,” before Viechucka raised his iron staff and struck her a great blow upon the head, that nearly killed her. She began to weep and to beg for mercy. “ Forgive me. Oh ! forgive me, and I will restore your friends to you,” she screamed, and Viechucka refrained from striking her any more. The fairy then picked up a withered leaf from off the ground, dipped it in water and waved it over the clay pots in which the travellers were imprisoned, and they were all restored to their leader. Each took a flaming brand from the fairy’s fire and all went back to their camping ground on the bank of the river. There they cooked their fish in comfort and ate it with great content.

After they had eaten as much as ever they could, for they were very

hungry, they resumed their journey. Ere long they came to a lake, wide and dark and deep, in the middle of which there abode a family of gnomes, seven brothers. When he learnt that they dwelt there Viechucka said to his boon companions, "Come, let us kill these gnomes." Sand-fly Sawbones therefore began to swim to the centre of the lake, but as he drew near the seven gnomes pounced upon him and pounded him until he died. The next one to venture was Log-Roller, and they did the same to him as to his friend and threw his body on the shore. Then Carrier swam across and they treated him also in the same summary way, raining blows upon him until he died, and then casting his body upon the beach. Then Suction said, "How now ! I will go and see what I can do to put this matter right." Whereupon he manfully swam towards the place

where the gnomes were, but only to meet the same fate as his friends.

By this time Viechucka was very angry at the treatment his brave companions had received. He took his famous iron staff and reaching the centre of the lake he there engaged the seven gnomes in a royal fight. He became very exhausted, still he exerted all his strength and would not give up. At length the gnomes said, "Hold! we give in." But Viechucka did not stop slashing at them. He smote them every one until they were all dead, and they were so disfigured that their best friends would not have recognised them. Viechucka then went to the place where his friends' bodies were lying. He looked sorrowfully upon them. While doing so he remembered what the wicked fairy had previously done to revive them. He took a withered leaf as she had done,

dipped it in water and waved it over the dead bodies, when to his great joy they all came to life again, and with him they resumed their journey.

They came that same day to a strange part of the country where there was a tree with a huge trunk. On this trunk a colony of evil spirits lived who were the terror of all the country-side around. Viechucka said to his merry companions, "Come! let us make a raid upon this nest of wickedness." And they all went forward with zest. When they got near the tree they crept along very quietly, making no sound to warn the evil spirits. Reaching the foot of the tree Viechucka took his iron staff and smote the tree, making the evil spirits come hurry-skurrying out, all of them as red as red can be. Viechucka struck mighty blows upon one of the great branches of the tree

and killed most of them, while others betook themselves off with all speed. He then climbed the tree and clasping it with arms and legs shook it until all the gnomes who were left in it fled away in terror.

After this victory Viechucka said to his followers, "Where shall we go next? There is no one who can withstand us." He himself replied and said, "In that village above us an elephant, a tiger and a bear exact tribute from the people. Every day they devour one human being. Come! let us go and deliver the unhappy people of that village." So they went on until they arrived at the village, where they determined to stay for the night. They all entered the house where they were to sleep. In that same house there was a beautiful maiden about whom all her friends were very troubled

and they were weeping bitterly. Viechucka said to the people of the house, "Why do you weep in this way for your daughter when she is here alive and well? "Ah!" said they, "how glad we were to think that our dutiful daughter was growing up into womanhood, but now we are glad no longer, for alas! the time has come when we must give her up to the bear as tribute. After he had heard her parents' story and had seen the grief of the fair maiden, and had also observed how good and beautiful she was, Viechucka said to the old people, "If I can deliver your daughter from the power of this merciless tyrant will you let her be my wife?" They willingly agreed to this. Just then the great bear came ambling along, his huge body swaying to-and-fro. Drawing near the house he grunted, "Tribute! Give me tribute." Viechucka heard

him and shouted in reply, "Who is it who thus comes here talking of tribute? I will give you such tribute as you will not care for." The bear grunted, "Who is it that dares to speak to me in such a manner? I will quickly eat him up." Viechucka replied, "Try to enter this house and you will soon find out who I am." The bear then tried to enter the house, when Viechucka took his iron staff and smote him with might and main, until he had broken his body into small pieces, which the children picked up.

Viechucka then claimed as his reward the hand of the fair maiden, which was readily given.

The travellers then went on to the house where the tiger exacted tribute. Here also they found the people weeping in great sorrow. Viechucka asked them the cause of their sadness and they gave

him the same reply as the people in the former house. He then offered to effect deliverance for them as he had done for their friends, and they gladly accepted his kind offer. At night the tiger came as usual to exact his cruel tribute, and Viechucka spoke to him in the same way as to the bear. Afterwards Viechucka took his iron staff and wielded it to such good use that he smashed the tiger's head to fragments. Having thus accomplished their purpose the companions went off together to the house where the elephant exacted tribute. Now this elephant was of a very huge size indeed. He was as large as the largest house in the village. Again there were people distressed concerning their daughter, who was to be given as tribute, and they were delighted when Viechucka offered his aid to deliver them from their fearful oppressor. The elephant

came that night and Viechucka spoke to him as he had previously done to the bear and the tiger. He then dealt out to him the treatment he deserved, and all the people shared the elephant's flesh between them.

After all these adventures Viechucka called the companions of his journey together and said to them, "There is no one in the wide world who can conquer us. Let us now separate and each go his own way." They then saluted each other as valiant and true companions and all went to their respective homes.

REEMENHOIEE OR THE CRIMSON FLOWER.

There was once a beautiful woman whose name was Reemenhoiee. Her husband's name was Zallthleea and he loved her very dearly. She was greatly famed for her beauty, and her special pride was her hair, which was as beautiful as it was possible to be. Reemenhoiee was very proud of her beauty and frequently went to the river which flowed near her house, where she entertained herself by bathing and by gazing at her reflection in the water. One day when she was so engaged one of her long, beautiful hairs became detached from her fair head, and floating down with the stream was soon swallowed by a large fish. Some time after this happened, the servants of a king who lived lower down on the banks of that

river were catching fish for him. While doing so they caught one that was very much larger than any other fish that they had ever seen in the river. The king's servants were very much surprised when they saw what had come to their net, and they said to each other, "What can this fish have eaten to make it so big?" They carefully examined it and found that inside it there was a long and beautiful hair, so long indeed that when wound round a reel it filled a large basket. They took it to their master the king.

When the king saw the hair so fine and bright he became possessed with a great longing to see the owner of it. He issued a command to his servants saying, "Go and find out for me the name of the owner of this hair." And in obedience to his wishes his servants set out and travelled

along the bank of the river towards its source, seeking the woman whose head had borne such beautiful hair. In their hands they took for her gifts of oranges, lemons and many other kinds of fruit. All along the banks on both sides of the river they searched and enquired until at length they came to the house where Reemenhoiee lived.

When they reached the house they were unable to open the door; they therefore shouted aloud,

“ You of the iron house,
You of the brass house,
What may your name be ? ”

Within the house Reemenhoiee heard them singing, and it appealed to her vanity that strangers should thus enquire after her. She also replied in song,

“ I have no special name,
No honoured name is mine.

I live on water pure and sweet,
And food unmixed with brine."

When they heard these words the king's messengers were satisfied that they had found the object of their quest, and at once they set out upon their return journey. Arriving at the palace, they went into the presence of the king and they told him, "The maiden says that her name is, 'She who lives on water pure and sweet.'" The king, when he heard this, was not very pleased and he said to his servants, "There can be no such name as that. Go again and ask what the maiden's name really is." They therefore set out again and travelled until they came to where Reemenhoiee lived. They sang to her as before,

"You of the iron house,
You of the brass house,
What may your name be?"

She replied to them as she had previously done, and they could do nothing but give the same message again to the king. This answer, however, was not enough for him, and yet again he bade them return to find out the real name of the object of his desire. This time the maiden deigned to be more communicative, and replied in song,

“Crimson Flower is my name ;
Crimson as a burning flame.”

Hearing these words the messengers hastened with all speed to the king's palace and requested an audience of him. But even as they were sitting in the waiting room they were so concerned in asking about the welfare of their friends that they quite forgot the words of the fair maid who had sung to them of the crimson flower. Crestfallen and not daring to go into the presence of the king without the name for which

he was waiting, they again made their journey to the hills to find out the name of the owner of the beautiful head of hair. They enquired of her as before, and her reply was the same,

“Crimson Flower is my name ;
Crimson as a burning flame.”

Bent on making sure that they would remember the name aright this time they kept on muttering to themselves all along the way back the first syllable of the words which she had sung to them, “Crim.”

If one stumbled, all said “Crim.” If they sat down at mid-day to eat food they all said “Crim.” If they crossed a river one of them would be sure to say “Crim.” Travelling in this way they came again to the palace and by this time they could think or speak of nothing else but “Crim.” Even in the presence of the king all they could say

of the name of the beautiful woman about whom they had been sent to enquire was "Crim."

The king was again very dissatisfied with them. He told them, "There can be no such name as 'Crim.' Go quickly on pain of dire penalties and bring back to me the full name correctly."

The messengers went yet once again to the house of Reemenhoiee and addressed her as before. She replied to them as on their former journey, and this time they heard it clearly, they understood it rightly and they remembered it correctly, until they arrived at the palace of the king. At once they told him the name of the beautiful owner of the hair. For the first time he accepted their message, and he said, "That is a name."

After he had heard Reemenhoiee's name the king wished to marry her,

and he cared nothing for the fact that she was already married and that she and her husband loved each other dearly. He sent trusty messengers to bring her to him. When they arrived at the door of her house they found that it was locked and there was no way of getting into the house unless it was opened from the inside. Reemenhoiee's husband had gone on a journey and had locked the door of the house lest strangers might come and steal away his beautiful wife. The messengers had in their hands the king's gifts, and with these they sought to tempt Reemenhoiee to leave the protection of her house. They climbed on to the roof and from there they dropped first some lemons, but these did not tempt her. Next they tried other fruit, but still with no effect. At last they dropped some sweet and juicy oranges, and these she could not

resist. She hastily snatched at them as they were falling, and at that very moment the men on the roof bent down and caught her by a lock of her beautiful hair. They threatened to pull this out by the roots if she would not open the door to them, and as that was a punishment she could not bear to think of she opened the door, when they quickly entered and made her their prisoner. Before the king's messengers had time to take her away she charged her fowls and all the other creatures that dwelt in her house to tell her husband immediately he arrived, how she had been taken off. She also said to them, "As I go along I will unroll a long thread of cotton. If he follows that he will find me." She had time only to give these directions before her captors hurried her away.

In a very short time her husband returned and as soon as he entered the



Photo by

A Group of Lushai Chiefs

Mrs. W. L. Scott, B.A.

house the fowls and the dogs and the cat and the pigeons and the pigs and the cattle rushed to him and all told him what their mistress had said. He at once set out to follow his beloved Reemenhoiee, without as much as waiting to eat food. He easily followed her by keeping in sight the cotton thread which was clearly visible on the path. About nightfall he came up with the party who were taking off his wife, and as he fell upon them suddenly and took them by surprise he was able to slay the strangers who had stolen his dear one from him. He led her back to their own home where no wicked king ever troubled them again.

CHOOORA AND THE FLY

One day Choorora caught a very pretty fly. Its wings were like the colours of the rainbow, and Choorora was delighted with his capture. He said to himself, "I will sell this pretty fly and become a rich man." So he started along the path leading to Mongping village, and as he went he shouted aloud, "Who will buy my pretty fly?"

There were some men working in a rice field near the path, and when they heard what Choorora was shouting they came to him and said, "Where is the fly? We may buy it, but we should like to see it first." Choorora said to them, "O foolish people, how can you see the fly before you buy it? If I show it to you it will fly away." They said, "But how can we buy it without seeing it? We must see it first." At last

Choorā agreed to show them the pretty fly. “But,” said he, “if it escapes you must pay me for it.” Then he opened his hand and showed them the fly. No sooner did the little creature feel that it could spread its wings than off it flew, while the villagers looked at it with open mouths. And because they had caused him the loss of his pretty fly, they all had to join together and make Choorā a present of a big cow.

TOOALVOONGEE AND ZALLPALA

Once upon a time there lived a man named Zallpala, and his wife whose name was Tooalvoongee. One day there came to their house a man called Poon-teea, who was greatly taken with Tooalvoongee's beauty, and he said to her husband, "Is Tooalvoongee your wife or your sister?" He replied, "She is my sister." Poon-teea said again, "Tell me truly whether she is your wife or your sister." Now Zallpala believed that Poon-teea had not enough money to pay the price of a wife and thought there was no danger if he said she was his sister, but he was afraid that if he said she was his wife Poon-teea would take her away from him. He therefore declared emphatically that Tooalvoongee was his sister. Poon-teea then said, "If so, what price do you

want for her, as I intend to make her my wife?" Zallpala replied, "I want as many amber beads as would break with their weight the four posts of a bed, as many large brass gongs piled on the floor as would reach to the sleeping place above, a wall of guns reaching to the roof of my house, as many cloths as would break a shelf with their weight and as many oxen as can stand under a house. Give me all these and you shall have Tooalvoongee for your wife." But he never dreamt that any human being could give such a price for his wife, however beautiful she might be. Poonteea however brought along all that Zallpala had demanded, whereupon Zallpala said, "I told you what was untrue. She is my wife, not my sister; I was proud of her and afraid to lose her, that was why I said that she was my sister."

Now this man Poonteea was a sorcerer, and he had obtained the beads and the gongs and the guns and the cloths and the oxen which he had brought for Zallpala, by making tiny clay models of all these things and then changing the models by magic into real beads and gongs and guns and cloths and oxen. When the husband said, "Tooalvoongee is my wife," Poonteea became very angry and wished to cast a spell over Zallpala and kill him, but he hid his feelings from Zallpala, who did not know that he was a sorcerer, and he went to his own home to meditate on a scheme to wreak his vengeance on Zallpala.

Tooalvoongee was sharper witted than her husband, and she had found out what kind of a person Poonteea was. She said to her husband, "By and by, when Poonteea offers you some roast

sweet potato and some rice beer, do not accept them from him. He is a sorcerer and intends to poison you." Then she went off to her work in the field. As she had said he would, Poonteea came and offered to her husband some sweet potato and some rice beer, but Zallpala having been warned by his good wife refused to eat them. Poonteea pressed him to do so, and thinking that perhaps there was really no harm in it, Zallpala yielded, and ate the food and drank the rice beer. Then Poonteea returned to his own village.

Some time afterward Zallpala died, having been poisoned by the things he had been given to eat. Directly he heard that Zallpala was dead, Poonteea came to make Tooalvoonge his wife. He then led her to his own village.

After they had been living together for a while Tooalvoonge told Poonteea

that she wished to visit her old home. He was not willing for her to do so, but she determined that she would stay with him no longer. In order to prevent her going Poonteea carefully sharpened a very large knife, and secretly placed it near the door of his house with the edge upward and then went off, to the rice field. When he had gone out of sight Tooalvoongee made off, and as she was leaving the house to go to her old village she stepped on the edge of the knife and cut her foot badly. She quickly tore off a strip of her cloth, with which she bandaged her foot, and on she went, carrying all her household goods on her back.

On the road as she journeyed she met a party of boys who were driving some cattle, and she enquired of them in song,
“ You who sticks o’er cattle wave,
Have you seen my husband’s grave ?”

The boys replied,

“ On your loved one’s resting place
A flower red profusely grows,
Hunting trophies stand in rows.”

Tooalvoongee threw a reward of some *koi* beans to the boys and on she went. She next saw some girls playing with *koi* beans, and she sang to them,

“ You whose game is with the bean,
Have you my love’s deep vault seen ?”

The girls replied in chorus,

“ On your loved one’s resting place
A flower red profusely grows,
Hunting trophies stand in rows.”

Tooalvoongee made a present of some *koi* beans to the girls, which they used for their game, and she went on her way. As she went she saw some children playing in a circle. Tooalvoongee said to them,

“ You who round a circle race,
Where’s my dear one’s resting place ?”

The children stopped their playing to reply to her,

“ On your loved one’s resting place
A flower red profusely grows,
Hunting trophies stand in rows.”

Tooalvoongee again gave a present of some *koi* beans as a reward for the information she had received and she went on her way, while the children continued their game.

Tooalvoongee travelled on until she came to her husband’s grave, and on it she found a little ancient woman. Tooalvoongee said to her, “ Old lady, I want to die ; pierce me to the heart and I bequeath you all my clothes and all these goods I have here.” The ancient woman replied, “ I certainly will not slay you.” She would not consent for a long time to kill Tooalvoongee, but after much persuasion she agreed to do so, and Tooalvoongee lay

upon her husband's grave, the ancient woman killing her by piercing her to the heart.

Poonteea coming along in pursuit of Tooalvoongee a little time after, found her lying dead upon the place where her husband was buried. Poonteea would not give up his pursuit of her. He also threw himself upon Zallpala's grave and killed himself there. The spirits of all three took upon them the shape of butterflies. Tooalvoongee and Zallpala flew off together, flying high up in the sunshine, but Poonteea could not fly very high above the ground. He was jealous of the other two and tried to express his jealousy by singing,

“ Giddy, gaudy butterflies,

Flitting gaily through the skies !”

but the happy pair above him were well content to leave him severely alone.

KOONGOREE AND THE GOBLINS (Part I)

A man was one day shredding some bamboo fibre when the bamboo pierced his thumb, and out of the thumb there grew a tiny little girl, whom her parents called Koongoree. At first she was very small and a grain of millet satisfied her hunger. She grew bigger and then a grain of rice was enough for her. And so as the months went on she grew into a big girl.

In time Koongoree grew up to maidenhood, and she was seen to be very beautiful indeed. Among those who sought her hand was a young tiger-man. This tiger-man said many flattering words to Koongoree and also made himself very agreeable to her father, so that at length everything was arranged to the satisfaction of all concerned and they were married, and

the tiger-man led her off, saying that he would take her to his own village. Immediately they had got beyond the village boundary the young man changed into the tiger that he really was, and growling "Hook! Hook! Hook!" he hurried her off.

While the tiger-man was thus hurrying Koongoree away, an old woman was carrying wood from the jungle and was very much afraid when she saw the tiger with Koongoree. She hastily dropped her basket of sticks and raced home to the village. Running with all speed into the house of Koongoree's father she panted, "Oh! Oh! Oh! Your child! Your child!" and sank on the floor, unable to say another word. The neighbours gathered round and some said, "Be quiet. The old woman wants to say something, but she is too exhausted to speak. Let us give

her some boiled rice to revive her." This they did, and when the old woman had revived a little she said, "Your daughter Koongoree's husband has changed into a tiger. I saw him running off with her while he growled 'Hook! Hook! Hook!' and I was frightened out of my wits."

When Koongoree's father heard what the old woman said he was much concerned for his daughter's safety and happiness. He killed a large ox for a feast to which he invited all the neighbours, and while they gathered round he said to them, "He who is brave enough to go after my daughter Koongoree to rescue her can eat of this feast which I have prepared, and afterwards he can marry her without paying any price for her."

Now in that village there were two young men named Pawteera and

Hrangchala who were very poor. They determined to do their best to rescue Koongoree so they ate of the feast and then they set out on their journey of deliverance. Arriving in course of time at Koongoree's new home they entered the house and found that her husband was not there. She was afraid that her husband the tiger-man would devour the visitors when he came so she hid them upon an upper shelf out of sight.

While they were hiding, the tiger-man came home in a drunken frenzy, and when he had entered the house he roared,

“I smell the flesh of a toothsome
man,

To cook it get ready the largest
pan.”

Said his wife to him, “I am here. Do you want to eat me?”
“No, not you,” he replied. In his

drunken stupor, as he got sleepy, he muttered again and again,

“I smell the flesh of a toothsome man,

I'll gobble him quickly, stop it who can.”

After a while he fell fast asleep.

Early the following morning Koon-goree hid her guests just outside the village. When he awoke her husband said to her, “Prepare for me seven packages of food, for I am going off to the jungle to stay there for seven days.” This she did, and he took the food and went off to the jungle. He stayed there only one day, however, and then he returned to his wife. The next morning after his return he said to her, “Koongoree, prepare me six packages of food, for I am going off to-day to the jungle for six days.” She did as she was told and he went off to the jungle,

where he stayed for two days. This he did for some time : the shorter the period he said he would stay in the jungle, the longer he actually remained there.

At length, when he asked for one package of food, Koongoree knew that he would stay away for seven days. She saw him off and she then quickly prepared a jar of very sweet beer which she placed on the floor of the house. She begged of a neighbour some grass seeds, some water seeds and some fire seeds, and then she went off with the young men who had been in hiding.

When the tiger-man came back Koongoree was not there to greet him, but he had no idea that she had gone far away. He sat down and drank the beer which he saw in the jar, became very drunk, and fell asleep. Whenever he revived a little he called out, "Koongoree, are you there?" And

the cat, who had been taught to do so by her mistress, would reply, "Of course I am here. Where else should I be?"

Next morning when he awoke the tiger-man found to his great surprise that his wife was not in the house. Even the cat had made herself scarce. And the tiger-man became very troubled. He climbed upon the roof of the house and looked in every direction for signs of his runaway wife. By and by he saw the light reflected by Koon-goree's arm ornaments, and grunting "Hook! Hook! Hook!" he set off after her.

When he had almost caught up with the party a man in the sky warned them, saying, "He has nearly overtaken you. Throw out your seeds of grass on the road." This they did, and the grass sprang up quickly and formed

great thickets in which the tiger-man could get along only with great difficulty. While he was struggling and floundering in the tall grass the fugitives hurried off as fast as they could, and were able to travel a good distance. At length, however, he had passed through all the grass-grown land and he resumed the chase. When he had nearly caught them they were again warned and told to scatter the water seeds which they had brought with them. This they did, when the tiger was hindered by a great flood, and while he was swimming hither and thither in this, Koon-goree and her friends were able to go a great distance in advance. By and by the tiger-man had swum across the water, and he followed the runaways swiftly with tail erect. When he was again about to over-

take them the man in the sky warned them, saying, "He has nearly caught you again. Throw away your seeds of fire." They did so, and between the tiger-man and Koongoree great flames burst up from the ground. By this means they were able to delay the tiger, but it was only for a time, and soon he was following them as before.

At sunset Koongoree and her companions reached a lodging place where they were safe for the night. The tiger-man was full of rage, and all night he crept round the place where they were, roaring his desire for Koongoree and her friends. Taking advantage of a favourable opportunity during the night, Hrangchala took up his bow and arrow and shot the tiger dead. Thus in a moment they were fortunately delivered from

the evil power of the tiger-man, and were able to go on their way without any more fear of him.



KOONGOREE AND THE GOBLINS (Part II)

On their way home after they had killed the tiger, the travellers lodged the first night at a crossway where some goblins dwelt. In order to protect her Pawteera and Hrangchala placed Koongoree between them. During the night the goblins came to them and said, "Who dares thus trespass on our land?" The other two were sleeping, so Hrangchala replied,

“ Two valiant men lodge here
to-night,
Who've used their strength in
many a fight ;
And now a tiger's head they show,
To prove their prowess with the
bow.”

The goblins, on hearing this, said to each other, "It will not do for us

to meddle with these doughty travellers," and they quickly left them to their slumbers.

Later on in the night the fire had died down, when the goblins came again and asked the same question as before. But a brave response from Hrangchala again made them retreat.

The night seemed long to Hrangchala, the watchful guard of the two sleepers, and by and by he began to feel very sleepy. He awoke his friend Pawteera and said to him, "Pawteera, I want you to keep watch instead of me, for I am very sleepy and wish to rest awhile. If you are unable to keep awake, or if the goblins make a big attempt to take away Koongoree, call me at once. If you cannot rouse me quickly put a red-hot skewer to my nose." Pawteera promised that he would do

this, so Hrangchala went comfortably to sleep, and Pawteera began his watch.

The night seemed very long to the lonely Pawteera, and the shapes in the forest danced as the flames of the fire flared up and died down. By and by, when the fire was very low, the goblins came again and shouted as before, "Who has dared thus to trespass on our territory to sleep?" Pawteera heard them and was frightened. In a tearful voice he replied,

"Two valiant men lodge here
to-night,
Who've used their strength in
many a fight;
And now a tiger's head they show,
To prove their prowess with the
bow."

But when the goblins heard him

they knew it was but a coward who was speaking to them. As the fire died down lower and lower so they came nearer and nearer, and Pawteera shook with fright. When they saw this the goblins made a rush and captured Koongoree. Pawteera shouted to his companion, "Get up! Get up!" He awoke at once and not seeing Koongoree he said to his friend, "They have captured her, have they not?" Pawteera replied, "Yes, they have. I called you and called you, but I could not make you hear me."

When the light of the next day revealed the paths to them the two companions went in search of Koongoree. Now as she went she had dropped a thread along the path and her friends recognised this and followed the track of it until at last it led them to an opening in the

ground. This was too small for them to enter, so Hrangchala pulled up by the roots some of the bushes that were growing near the opening, and thus he brought into sight the village of the goblins. When he saw it, Hrangchala shouted aloud to the goblins below, "Give me back my Koongoree. If you don't I will drop one of my brass hair-ornaments upon your village and it will destroy a whole street of you." The goblins were not frightened by this threat, and would not release Koongoree. He then fulfilled his threat, and dropped his hair-ornament on the goblins' village. Falling on a long row of their dwellings it killed a large number of the goblins. Hrangchala then shouted to those who were left, "Give me back my Koongoree. If you don't, I will drop my comb on you and destroy

another street.” They again refused to do so, and defied Hrangchala. He then dropped his comb upon their village, with the result that another street was reduced to ruins.

The goblins now got frightened, and said to one another, “If things go on at this rate we shall all be destroyed. Let us appease this man and save our lives.” They then chose the most beautiful fairy-maiden among them and offered her to Hrangchala. But he said, “This girl is not my Koongoree : she will not do for me,” and he gave her a push that sent her back again into the goblins’ den.

They then tried him with a number of other fairy-maidens, but none was as fair in his eyes as Koongoree, and he would not be content with any of them. At length he himself went

down into the dwelling-place of the goblins, and there sought for his beloved Koongoree. He found her all smeared with paint and hidden away in a corner of a house, from whence he took her and washed her in all the water that could be found in the goblins' village, which was not very much. The three travellers then set their faces homewards.

Time will not permit me to tell all the adventures of these three. It will be enough to say here that in good time the brave Hrangchala and the beautiful Koongoree were married and lived in their native village respected and beloved of all, and their children were never tired of hearing of their adventures with the tiger-man and the goblins.

THE MAGIC STONE

Once upon a time there was an orphan boy whose name was Fahrataya. He lived with his widowed mother, and they were very very poor. Their house was near the bank of a river, and one day there came to them some foreign boatmen whose boat was aground.

According to the religion of these boatmen, to set their boat free they thought they should offer a human sacrifice to the evil spirits, so they came to where Fahrataya lived and enquired of his mother as to whether she knew of anyone whom they could buy for the purpose. The woman was so poor that she agreed to sell her son to these boatmen for them to sacrifice him to the spirits. While this was happening Fahrataya

was in the jungle keeping watch over some rice. As he was doing so a dragon drew near him which had swallowed a wonderful magic stone, and was being pursued by some men who wanted the magic stone for themselves. The dragon begged Fahrataya to protect it from its pursuers. The youth replied, "How can such a helpless person as I render help to you, a great dragon? You are mighty among the creatures of the jungle, and it would be impossible for me to hide you from those who seek your life." The dragon replied, "I can make myself appear very very small. I will turn into a needle and you can thrust me into your hair, where no one would ever think of looking for me." "Very well then," said Fahrataya, "if you do that I am willing to help you."

The dragon then became a needle, which Fahrataya hid in his hair. By and by the men who were hunting the dragon came along, and they followed its track as far as the place where Fahrataya stood; there it ceased and they were very puzzled because they could find no further trace of it. They did not understand in the least how the dragon could have disappeared in that mysterious way, and they said to the young man, "Have you not seen the great dragon. Rulhreuva passing this way?" He replied, "If it is such a great dragon as you say, it must be a huge creature. However do you think I could escape seeing it if it came anywhere near me? What a question for you to ask!" And the men said to each other, "Come! We have thought wrongly of

this boy. Let us give him all our rice and go. Evidently he knows nothing of the dragon we are seeking." So they gave all their rice to Fahrataya and returned to their home. As soon as the men had gone, the dragon became its usual size, and it said to the youth, "Fahrataya, choose what you would like to have best of all." He replied, "I should like to have that magic stone of yours." The dragon was very grateful to Fahrataya for his timely help, so it yielded up the magic stone without any demur.

Soon came the foreign boat-men, and they seized Fahrataya. When night came he said to the magic stone, "If what the dragon said is true, if you are truly subject to me, let swarms of tiny sand-flies come about these men." This command was obey-

ed, and the boat-men were tormented by swarms of tiny flies that would not let them sleep. At the break of day he said again to the wonderful stone, "If what the dragon said is true, and if you are indeed subject to me, let all these sand-flies disappear." As soon as he spoke all the swarms of flies disappeared in a twinkling, and the boatmen quickly fell asleep.

When they were asleep Fahrataya said as he looked at the magic stone, "If what the dragon said is true, and if this stone is indeed subject to me, let this boat that is now aground be set free." As he spoke the words the boat moved and glided swiftly down the river until it arrived at the village where the boatmen lived. Thus there was no necessity to offer up Fahrataya as a sacrifice, and he

owed his gratitude to the magic stone.

One of the boatmen soon got to know that Fahrataya had some mysterious power to assist him, but he had no idea what it was, or how it helped him. He claimed Fahrataya as his property and having led the youth off to his own home he became very proud of his captive, and by and by he said to him, "You must have the Tipperah Rajah's daughter to be your wife." Soon after that he went off to the Rajah's court to speak on behalf of the young man. There were soldiers guarding the princess, and they said to the young man's master, "What do you want here?" He replied, "I am going to take off your Rajah's daughter to be the wife of my young friend." They said to him, "How can such a crea-

ture as you think to take off our Rajah's daughter like that?" With these words they seized the man and hewed him to pieces. When Fehrtaya heard that his master was dead he immediately thought of his wonderful stone, and he said to it, "If the dragon's word is true, and if you are really subject to my will, let my master live again." As he said the words his master came again to life and stood upon his feet. Three times did his master go to the Rajah's palace, and three times did Fehrtaya by virtue of the magic stone restore him to life. At length the Tipperah Rajah was impressed by the wonderful way in which the man constantly reappeared, and thinking that he must be a man of wonderful power the Rajah granted his request. He exacted one condition, which was that the

whole of his palace should be covered with a sheeting of pure gold. This condition Fahrataya quickly fulfilled, and he covered the palace, its walls and floors and pillars and ceilings, all of them with brightly shining gold that glittered dazzlingly in the sunshine.

Now Fahrataya had a number of servants who obeyed his commands. Among these were a rat, an otter and a crow. These three he sent to observe the princess and to see whether she was worthy to be his wife. It was night when they reached the palace and they went to the door that led into the room where the princess slept, and there they spoke very much to each other and made a great deal of noise, but the princess slept heavily and heard nothing of them. They returned to Fahrataya and

he enquired of them, "Is the princess worthy to be my wife?" They replied, "She is not a bad-tempered young woman, but she is likely to leave you before she has lived long with you." Fahrataya thought he could safely marry her on this expression of opinion, and the wedding was celebrated with a great feast, as befitted the occasion.

Before very long the Rajah's daughter became disappointed, and she suddenly left Fahrataya, taking with her the magic stone, which by now she had come to know had very wonderful powers.

Immediately the stone left Fahrataya's house all the wonderful covering of gold that was on the Rajah's palace disappeared, and the Rajah was very angry, so angry that he sent an order to kill Fahrataya, who had

as the Rajah thought deceived him. Fahrataya begged for a short time of grace in which he might endeavour to get back the magic stone, and this the Rajah allowed him. He then sent forth his faithful servants, the rat, the otter and the crow, to search for the magic stone. Ere long they found the princess, and she, because she did not know where else to hide it, was keeping the stone in her mouth. When they saw this they decided that they would wait until she had fallen asleep. They knew that she was a heavy sleeper, and they made up their minds to try to take out the stone when she was in a deep sleep. They waited, and when the princess was asleep the rat tickled her nostril with its tail, the princess opened her mouth wide, and they took out the precious stone.

The problem now was, how to convey it back to Fahrataya. The other two said to the crow, "You are strong: you carry the stone." The crow replied, "When I hear my friends busily cawing on the branches of the trees I myself shall not be able to refrain from cawing, and thus I am afraid I shall drop the magic stone." His companions said to him, "For the sake of saving Fahrataya from death, do your best not to open your mouth when you are carrying the stone." As the crow was flying through the air with the magic stone in his beak, he came near a tree where a great company of crows were struggling and fighting over the juice of the sweet flowers that grew on the tree. The crow could not help cawing just once, and immediately he opened his mouth the stone dropped into the sea,

where a great fish swallowed it. Even then it lit up all the water around. His two companions said to the otter, "You are at home in the water. Go down and recover the magic stone for us." The otter went down and by the vigour with which he attacked the big fish he soon recovered the magic stone. The three companions rejoiced at its recovery and they put it out in the sun on a large stone to dry. A kite saw it and flew down and quickly seized and swallowed it. The three travellers were quite at a loss now to know what to do. As they sat disconsolate they saw some soldiers. These soldiers were really wizards, and the otter, knowing this, said to them, "I don't think you can bewitch that kite so as to make her drop the stone which is in her mouth." This hurt the vanity of



Photo by **Two Daughters of Chiefs** *Dr. K. W. Blinkworth*

the wizards, and they said, "What makes you think we cannot do it?" They then shot down the kite and the travellers very joyfully recovered the treasure they sought. They went gladly on their way and soon arrived at Fahrataya's house. As soon as they got there the palace of the Tipperah Rajah shone again with the brightness of pure gold. The Rajah could see that Fahrataya was not to blame, so he punished his daughter for running away and gave him instead of her, his youngest daughter who was much more beautiful and charming. So they were married and they lived together in great happiness and prosperity ever after.