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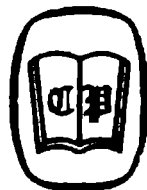
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# Himalayan Folklore

by  
Rev. E. S. Oakley  
and  
Tara Dutt Gairola



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## PREFACE

**I**N my childhood I was fond of hearing stories of the ancient heroes of my own district of Garhwal, in the Himalayan Hills, from local bards. My interest in those stories grew into a passion during my school and college days. I used to call the bards or *Hurkias*, as they are locally called, from far and wide, during the college vacations, and hear their quaint and thrilling legends and ballads.

I well remember that once I related some of those legends to my Professor, Mr. J. G. Jennings of the old Muir Central College, Allahabad, who was struck with their rustic charm and poetry; and said that they were quite Homeric in spirit. He advised me to collect and publish them.

Owing to various causes I could not begin the work of collecting them for several years. There is no written folklore of the Himalayan region, comprising the districts of Garhwal, Almora and Naini Tal. It has come down through word of mouth, the *Hurkias*, who are the local bards, being its chief repositories.

During the last ten or twelve years I have been devoting the little time which I could spare from my professional work, especially at night, to hearing those legends and writing them down.

Owing to my professional and other engagements and continued ill-health, the progress has been slow. I was, however, able to write down about one hundred legends of ancient heroes and ballads during the period. But, before I could digest them, I fell seriously ill ; hence, the work has been considerably delayed.

In 1920 the Rev. E. S. Oakley of Almora, who has made considerable researches in Himalayan folklore, read a paper before the U. P. Historical Society on the Folklore of Kumaun, which aroused great public interest in the subject. In 1924 I read a paper on the Folklore of Garhwal before the same learned Society, which was also much appreciated by eminent poets and scholars, like Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Professors Sheshadri and Telang. This encouraged me to take up the work seriously and I began to sort and arrange the material I had collected.

In 1929 I happened to make the acquaintance of the Rev. E. S. Oakley, mentioned above, and showed him the MSS. of the Folk-tales which I

had translated. He took a keen interest in my work and very generously placed all his valuable collection on the subject at my disposal. The collection included his own notes and those of the late Rai Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti Bahadur, the latter of whom had made extensive researches in the subject during his official career in the Garhwal district in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Mr. Oakley's collection covers a wide range of folklore literature of the Himalayan hills and also contains his learned notes on the same. The discovery of this valuable collection, and the kind offer of help by Mr. Oakley, further encouraged me to undertake the task of writing a book on the subject.

In spite of my failing health I have been able to translate and put into shape thirty-two stories selected from my own collection and to select about sixty-five tales from Mr. Oakley's and Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti's collections, mentioned above, which are presented to the public in this volume.

The work, being the first of its kind, is apt to be somewhat crude and inartistic. My only apology for writing the book is to create interest in this important branch of knowledge, which has, unfortunately, been much neglected in the past.

Should my hope be realized in any degree I shall consider my labour amply rewarded.

In conclusion, I beg to acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to the Rev. E. S. Oakley for his generously placing his valuable collection at my disposal and giving me permission to utilize his material in this book. The second section of this book contains the folk-tales from Mr. Oakley's and Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti's collections, with a learned introduction and notes by the former.

I also wish to express my thanks to Mr. J. M. Clay, C.S.I., C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to Government, United Provinces ; to Mr. D. A. Barker and Mrs. Barker of Sheringham, England ; to Mr. W. F. G. Browne, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner, Garhwal ; and to Professor P. Seshadri, Principal, Government College, Ajmer, for their kindly revising the manuscript of this book.

TARA DUTT GAIROLA.

SANTIASERAM, PAURI,

GARHWAL: *August* 5, 1934.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### *Importance of the subject*

“The beliefs of the people, their legends, and their songs are the source of nearly all literatures; and their institutions and customs are the origin of those of modern times. And today to the new science of folklore (which, as Mr. Andrew Lang says, must be taken to include psychical research or psychical science), archaeology, anthropology, and comparative anthology and religion are indispensable. Thus folklore offers the scientific means of studying man in the sense meant by the poet who declared that the proper study of mankind is man.”\* Although folklore, about a century ago, was considered beneath the serious consideration of scholars in Europe, they have now been devoting their talents to a scientific study of the folklore of their countries; and a vast literature has grown up on the subject. But it is to be regretted that very little research work has, so far, been done in this important branch of study in India, a sub-continent, inhabited by a great variety of peoples, with varying

\* Introduction of *Fairy Faith in the Celtic Countries* by Dr. Evans Wentz, p. XVIII.

beliefs, legends, customs, superstitions and traditions. True, some useful books on Indian folklore have been written by Indian and European scholars, such as Sir Herbert Risley's *The Peoples of India* ; W. Crook's *Tribes and Castes of Northern India* ; Lal Behari De's *Folklore of Bengal* ; *The Romantic Tales from the Punjab* by the Rev. C. Swynnerton ; S. M. Sastri's *Indian Folk-tales* ; M. N. Venkata Swami's *Folk-stories of the Land of India*. But, so far as I am aware, very little research work has been carried out either by the Government or private agency on the subject.

### *Himalayan Folklore*

As regards the Folklore of the Himalayan districts of Garhwal, Almora and Naini Tal, including the Indian State of Tehri Garhwal, the subject-matter of the present inquiry, the earliest record on the subject available is a series of articles contributed by Mr. Traill, who was the Senior Assistant Commissioner of the Garhwal district in the thirties of the nineteenth century, to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Some mention of the local folklore is also found in the Revenue Settlement Report of Garhwal of 1833. In 1884, Mr. G. T. Atkinson compiled the Gazetteer of the



Himalayan districts. Part II of that learned work contains the history and ethnology of the country. But it is a matter of surprise that even that great scholar's references to the local folklore are very meagre. It seems his attention was not drawn to this branch of inquiry. Rai Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti Bahadur, who was for a long time Senior Assistant Commissioner in Garhwal, made considerable researches in the folklore of that district. His notes on the subject have been preserved by the Rev. E. S. Oakley. Pandit Ganga Datt also published some books on the subject, the most important being *The Folklore of Kumaon*, which mostly deals with local proverbs and witty sayings. But the most devoted worker in the field of Kumaon folklore is the Rev. E. S. Oakley of Almora, who has given much of his time to a close study of the subject and carried on research work for over forty years. His most valuable manuscript notes, contained in three volumes, show the amount of untiring labour he has spent in collecting the material. Mr. Oakley applied himself, for the first time, to a scientific study of the subject, as will be evident from his introduction and extremely interesting notes on the stories given in section II of this book. A close study of his manuscript

stimulated me to undertake the present work. The work of Mr. Oakley will remain a landmark in all future work on this subject.

### *Natural Environment*

Western scholars have propounded various theories to explain the belief in gods, spirits or fairies contained in the folklore. The most important is the Naturalistic theory, according to which, the folklore of a country is largely, if not wholly, moulded by its natural environment. Though it is true that the basic principles underlying the folklore of all countries are the same, as shown by Mr. Oakley and other scholars, natural environment exercises a great influence in giving the folklore of each country its peculiar distinguishing features.

In discussing the Himalayan folklore it is, therefore, necessary to describe very briefly the natural environment of the country in order to show its peculiar differentiating features.

The Himalayas contain some of the highest mountains in the world, the peaks of which are perpetually shrouded by mists and snow. The two most sacred rivers of India, the Ganges and the Jumna, take their rise in the Himalayas. From the Vedic times down to the present, the Himalayas

have been held in the highest reverence by the Hindus. On the great *Kailas* mountain stands the throne of Siva, while myriads of gods, goddesses, fairies and demons haunt its high hills and deep glens. Hindu mythology is full of the great wars fought between gods and demons in these mountains. It was the glory of the Himalayas which made the ancient sage exclaim: "He who thinks of the *Himachal*, though he should not behold Him, is greater than he who performs all worship at Kashi; as the dew is dried up by the morning sun, so are the sins of mankind by the sight of *Himachal*."\*

The Himalayas are the Olympus of India. The adventures of the Pandavas, when they retired to the Himalayas and perished in the eternal snows, are sung in the *Mahabharat* as well as in the local folklore. The Himalayas were mostly inaccessible in former times. Only a few mendicants and adventurous explorers could penetrate their innermost recesses and snow covered peaks. Those high hills and deep glens were believed to be the haunts of gods, demons and fairies; and beautiful legends and myths were invented to describe the life of those mysterious dwellers in the Himalayas.

\* Atkinson's *Himalayan Districts*, part 2, p. 271.

The folklore of the Himalayas, apart from its mythological legends, has reference to the mediaeval period of its history and reflects the social and political conditions of those times. In fact it throws vivid light on the religious, social, and political history of the period. Hence the historical importance of the subject.

As will be clearer later on, the Himalayan folklore, while based on the common principles of human nature and mental attainment, as explained by Mr. Oakley, has peculiar characteristics and charm of its own, due to the natural environment mentioned above. In many respects it is as sublime and mysterious as the Himalayas themselves, in whose bosom it has been nurtured.

### *Sub-division of Himalayan Folklore*

Himalayan folklore may be conveniently divided into seven parts: (1) Legends of Ancient Heroes, (2) Fairy Tales, (3) Ghost and Demon Tales, (4) Bird and Beast Lore, (5) Magic, (6) Witty Sayings, and (7) Ballads and Songs. They have all been represented in the present volume. There are also a number of local proverbs and riddles which have been published by the late Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti in his book entitled *The Folklore of*

*Kumaon*. Hence they have been omitted from the present volume.

I shall now discuss very briefly each of the heads mentioned above.

### *Legends of Ancient Heroes*

These legends describe the battles fought between the various kings, chieftains and heroes dwelling in the Himalayas. They relate mostly to the period between A.D.800 and 1700. The writer has not come across any legend which is earlier or later than that period, except the mythological legends taken from the *Mahabharat* or other works of Hindu mythology.

These legends of ancient heroes present a very vivid picture of the social, political and religious life of the country during the middle ages, and supply very useful material for the history of that period. The only history of these Himalayan districts, with any pretensions to authenticity, is given in Atkinson's *Himalayan Districts*, part II, mentioned above.

But with due deference to that great scholar I am constrained to say that his description are very meagre, and even the pedigrees of the various

kings given by him are not authentic. He does not describe the political and social conditions of that period correctly and leaves an unpleasant impression on the mind of the reader that the society was barbarous and uncivilized and devoid of all the noble qualities of head and heart.

The legends of the heroes given in this book give a truer picture of society in those days, and they throw into bold relief the many redeeming features of those times.

It is true that the legends have come down from mere word of mouth and may have undergone considerable changes through such a length of time. Still, it is remarkable how the local bards have preserved their spirit. In some cases they are able to preserve the long and complicated pedigrees of princes and heroes, which, though somewhat different from the pedigrees given in Atkinson's Gazetteer and other books, are interesting. As stated above, the pedigrees given by Atkinson are conflicting in many respects and cannot be strictly accurate. He depended mostly on the information supplied by local people and their historical value is not great. Another recent work on the history of Garhwal is a book written by Pandit Hari Krishna Raturi of Tehri Garhwal. He has also mostly relied on oral evidence, which cannot be called authentic.

*Historical Material in the Legends*

I shall now discuss the historical material contained in the legends of heroes given in this book. The earliest legend, No. 2, relates to the period of Raja Ajai Pal of Garhwal. Mr. Atkinson, relying on the authority of General Cunningham, has given the date of Ajai Pal's reign as 1358. There is nothing beyond the date of his reign given in Mr. Atkinson's Gazetteer. There are, however, inscriptions in the Dewalgarh Temple of Garhwal district which show that grants of lands were made to those temples on the birth of Ajai Pal in A.D. 1254 which would show that the date given by Atkinson is incorrect. The folklore, however, gives very interesting information about Ajai Pal having subjugated at least some of the fifty-two chiefs who ruled in Garhwal before his time. The legend describes Ajai Pal's war against a local chief named Kaffu Chawhan.

It further shows the chivalrous character of Ajai Pal in paying military honour to the great hero Kaffu, who fought against him. Ajai Pal's name appears in many magical incantations of that period which shows that he was a very powerful prince.

The legend throws a flood of light on the heroic character of Kaffu and the high ideal of honour and chastity held by the women of those days.

The next legend is about Raja Man Sah, who, according to Atkinson, flourished in A.D. 1547, and according to Hari Krishna Raturi, ruled from A.D. 1591 to 1610. The historians give no further particulars about the prince. The inscriptions in the Dewalgarh Temple and in the Temple at Devaprayag in Garhwal of A.D. 1608 and 1610, respectively, show that Man Sah made grants to those temples in those years. There is also an inscription in stone in a temple near Pauri, Garhwal, of 17th *gate* Magh 1649 Sambat, corresponding to A.D. 1592, showing a grant of land made to that temple on the first anniversary of the birth of Man Sah. These facts are in conflict with the year given by Mr. Atkinson. The legend, however, gives an account of his war against Lakshmi Chand, Raja of Champawatgarh, in the Almora district, who, according to the same authority, ruled from 1597 to 1620 ; this cannot be correct, if the local legend about Man Sah's war against Lakshmi Chand be correct. For, according to the list of Garhwal Rajas given on page 447 of the Gazetteer, Man Sah must have died before



A.D. 1580. This shows that no reliable history of these princes exists. According to the legend, Raja Man Sah also subdued most of the chieftains and established a settled government. The taking of command by the widow of Raja Lakshmi Chand, and her fighting heroically against the enemy, prove the heroic character of the women of those days.

Another most important character in the Himalayan legends is Guru Gyan Chand of Champawatgarh. The prince, according to Mr. Atkinson, ruled from 1698 (Gazetteer, page 571). But on pages 500 and 501 of the Gazetteer three lists of the Chand Princes are given. According to list A Guru Gyan Chand ascended the throne in 1431 and ruled for 45 years; while according to lists B and C he ascended the throne in 1350 and reigned for 13 years. Guru Gyan Chand figures in many legends covering a very long period. In Kala Bhandari's legend (No. 3), Gyan Chand called Kala to fight against the four Pahlwans and gave him large presents to reward him for slaying them.

In another legend (No. 9, Ajwa Bampla), Guru Gyan Chand called Mani Padyar, Salu and Malu, and Ajwa Bampla in succession, and at long intervals, to fight against the Pahlwans. This must

have covered a period of more than twelve years. Again, in legend No. 16 after Kunj Pal had been murdered at the instigation of Gyan Chand, the former's posthumous son Khetra Pal, at the early age of twelve years, fought against Gyan Chand and killed him. All these facts, if true, would make the reign of Guru Gyan Chand, as given in list A mentioned above, seem more probable. Legend 16 refers to the oppression of Gyan Chand and his brothers over their *khaiqars* of *Chauras patties*; and the revolt of the latter, headed by Kunj Pal, who fought against Gyan Chand and killed him and all his kith and kin. This fact is not mentioned by any historian.

Another group of the Himalayan Princes who figure largely in the Himalayan folklore are the Katyura Rajas. The original home of this house was at Joshimath near the present famous shrine of Badrinath. A long line of illustrious princes of this house seems to have ruled at Joshimath, and they extended their territory right up to the Sutlej. Subsequently they migrated to the Katyur valley in the Almora district. The earliest record of the Katyura Princes is of the ninth century. The account of the Katyura Rajas given in Atkinson's

Gazetteer is also very meagre and their pedigrees do not appear to be quite correct.

From a close similarity between the Kumaon copper plates of the Katyura Princes and the Mughir and other plates of Bengal, General Cunningham and Mr. Atkinson infer that the Katyura Rajas were the descendants of the Pal dynasty of Magadh. But there does not seem to be convincing evidence of this. There are many legends of the Katyura Rajas which speak very highly of their generosity and heroism; out of them I have selected only five, (legends Nos. 13, 17, 18, 21 and 22). Legend No. 17 refers to Jag Deo Panwar, who is also described in this legend as belonging to the Katyura family. His pedigree given there is Jai Kand Panwar, Maikand Panwar, Daulat Rai Randhaul and Jag Deo Panwar. In the pedigree of the Askot family in the Almora district, on page 531 of Atkinson's Gazetteer, we find Jai Singh Deo as being twenty-fourth in the list; while Pritamdeo and Dhamdeo of the legends Nos. 18 and 19, respectively, are Nos. 45 and 46 of the list. There is also a note opposite No. 49, Akhya Pal of Atkinson's list, that he left Katyur for Askot in A.D. 1279. If this list be correct, Jai Singh or Jai Deo Panwar must have flourished in the

middle of the ninth century, allowing twenty years for the reign of each intervening King. Pritamdeo and Dhamdeo being respectively, three and four degrees removed from Abhya Pal, must have flourished in the twelfth century.

In legend No. 22 the pedigree of Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo is given. The only common ancestors in this pedigree and the pedigree of the Askot family, mentioned above, are Asanti, Basanti, Gaura and Pritamdeo. It is difficult to say which of the pedigrees is correct. There is no mention of Malu Sahi of legend No. 13, who was also a Katyura Prince, in Atkinson's Gazetteer.

Jai Chand's legend refers to the dedication of half of his territory for the worship of the goddess Mahakali. This probably refers to the grant of villages to the temple of Kali at Kalimath near Guptashi in the Garhwal district.

In Pritamdeo's legend there is mention of the Narsingh Temple at Joshimath in Garhwal. This shows that these Katyura Princes then lived at Joshimath.

On page 536 of Atkinson's Gazetteer a pedigree of the Katyuras of the Pali branch is given. This list begins from Asanti Deo, from whom Pritamdeo is ninth in descent, whose son is Dhamdeo, who is

said to have migrated to southern Garhwal and established himself in the Patlidoon. This is in conflict with the pedigrees of the Askot Katyuras mentioned above. These facts go to show that the pedigrees given in Atkinson's Gazetteer are far from being accurate and are no better than the pedigrees given in the legends described in this book. It may be that the pedigrees given in these traditions and preserved in the memories of the local bards, who are the descendants of the *Hurkias*, the family bards of the Kings and chieftains, whose heroic deeds they sang, are more likely to be accurate than the pedigrees in the Gazetteer.

Legend No. 18 relates to Raja Pritamdeo of Katyuragarh. From this legend it would appear that Dhamdeo was a nephew of Pritamdeo, who succeeded him. Dhamdeo asked Amardeo Pundir of Mayapur Hat to give his daughter Moladei in marriage to Pritamdeo, which was resented by Amardeo on the ground of Pritamdeo's social inferiority. This would show that Katyuras were not high caste Rajputs.

Legend No. 21 refers to Brahmdeo, a Katyura Prince, who ruled over Katyuragarh. In the legend his father's name is given Gambhirdeo, while from the pedigree of the Askot branch of

Katyuras given on page 531 of the Gazetteer he is placed just below Dhamdeo. Either the pedigree is incorrect, or Brahmdeo may have succeeded Dhamdeo on failure of the latter's male issue. Brahmdeo lived about A.D. 1200. Brahmdeo had been betrothed to Birma Dotiali of Dotigarh, a *Khasia* Princess. He was subsequently married to Bijora, sister of Kalu Kalni, who was also a *Khasia* chief. The legend further on says that Raja Trimal Chand of Champawatgarh asked the hand of Birma Dotiali in marriage for his son Khadga Singh. Trimal Chand ruled in 1625-38, according to Mr. Atkinson ; while his name does not appear in the lists of the Chand Rajas on p. 500 of the Gazetteer. There seems an error in the ages of these princes. From the marriage of Birma Dotiali in both the Katyura and the Chand families it would appear that the Chands and the Katyuras were of equal social status. Hence the remark of Mr. Atkinson on page 503 of the Gazetteer that Katyuras were of inferior social status to the Chands of Champawatgarh does not seem to be correct. Legend No. 22 refers to the war between the Katyura chiefs Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo and the Raja of Champawatgarh. This legend would show that, at that time, the Katyuras had been

subjugated by the Chand Rajas of Champawatgarh. Another interesting fact mentioned in this legend is that the Katyuras, though they had been subdued by the Chands, considered themselves of higher social status than the Chands. This legend further shows that the Katyuras subsequently succeeded in throwing off the yoke of the Chands and declaring their own independence.

From the above brief observations it would appear that the principal high class Rajput families in the Himalayan districts of Kumaon were the Chands of Champawatgarh, the Pals of Garhwal and Katyura Princes of Katyuragarh, who originally lived at Joshimath in Garhwal and subsequently migrated to the Katyur valley or Kartikaipur in the Almora district. All the other chieftains and heroes whose legends are included in this volume belonged to either inferior Rajput or Khasia castes. Notwithstanding a certain social inferiority, the latter were as heroic and warlike as the former and had social relations with them.

### *Political Life in the Folklore*

I shall now describe, very briefly, the political, social and religious life of the people as disclosed in the folklore of that period. The period between A.D. 800 and 1700 referred to in the legends, given

in this volume, may be called the heroic age of the Himalayan districts. The first glimpse of the political life of the country reveals a large number of petty chieftains or Thakurs, constantly fighting and destroying each other on the slightest pretext. There were no established governments. The clans or tribes dwelling in the glens or on mountain tops had their own headmen or chieftains, who led them in both offensive and defensive wars. Their quarrels generally arose out of some love intrigue or some aggressive behaviour of their neighbours. There were blood feuds which lasted for generations. The widows of those killed in battle either became *Satis* (committed suicide) or concealed themselves in the jungle and brought up their infant sons until the latter grew up and were able to take revenge on their enemy. In some cases the widows, or the daughters of the heroes killed in the battle, fought against their enemies and killed them. Sometimes the widowed mothers exhorted their sons to go and fight against their enemy. The weapons in vogue in those days were bows and arrows, daggers and swords. Some heroes killed their enemies with bamboo staves and with logs of wood and stones heaped on mountain tops which they rolled down on the enemy.



Later on, we find that three or four tribal chiefs subdued other chieftains and established some sort of government. But still, those potentates always depended upon their feudatory chiefs for help against their enemies. Sometimes, when the kings oppressed their tenants or feudatory chiefs, the latter revolted, attacked their king, and killed him and all his kith and kin and asserted their own independence. Such were the blood-thirsty Mahara Khasias, who killed Thorchand and Bhagchand of Champawatgarh, with all their kith and kin. The women played a most heroic part in the whole political history of that period. They were the source of inspiration to their husbands or sons in all their wars against the enemies. They exhorted their young sons to fight against their enemy and return either with the shield or on the shield, as the Spartan mother would have said.

In legend No. 20 (Hyunraj Mahara) there is a most pathetic scene of the mother of Dattu and Chandu, who had been killed by the Maharas, filling a large cauldron with milk mixed with poison, which she gave to all the members of her families to drink. She preferred death to being touched by the Mahara Khasias.

Needless to say that these noble traits of character have been preserved by the women of India even up to the present day.

### *Social Life in the Folklore*

Some aspects of the social life of those days have already been referred to in the previous remarks. The whole society was originally divided into three castes—Brahmans, Rājputs (including Khasias), and Doms. Subsequently some of the more pushing Khasia or Rajput chiefs brought the other chieftains under their rule. The number of Brahmans seems to have been very small. They were mostly magicians, whose services were requisitioned by those chieftains for killing their enemies by means of magical incantations. The Belwals of Belihat of legend No. 20 are an instance in point. Marriages seem to have been celebrated according to the regular Brahmanical form. Great sanctity seems to have been attached to the marriage tie. The men were very jealous of their wives' chastity and were ready to lay down their lives rather than see their women's honour violated. The custom of *Sati* was common.

The *Hurkias*, a sub-caste of Doms, were the family bards of all kings and heroes. They accompanied their masters to the battlefield and cheered

them, while fighting, by singing warlike songs. It is these songs which have been preserved by their descendants up to the present day.

It is interesting to note that in legend No. 9 (Ajwa Bampla) there is mention of two young heroes, Salu and Malu, who had a common wife Dudukela. This shows that the custom of polyandry was also prevalent in those days.

### *Religion in the Folklore*

As regards the religion of those people, they seem to have believed in ghosts, demons, fairies, village godlings like Jhalimali, Nagraja, Narsing, Ghandial, Khetrapal, Goril, Nirankar, etc. But the family goddess of most of the heroes was Jhalimali, who figures in almost all the legends of ancient heroes.

This belief in the supernatural beings or spirits is still the popular religion of these hills. The faith in supernatural beings is not confined to these Himalayan regions. As shown by Dr. Evans Wentz in his *Fairy Faith in the Celtic Countries*, such beliefs were common in pre-historic times all over the world, and are the sources of nearly all modern religions.

It will be evident to any unbiassed reader of the ancient folklore of the Himalayas that the people

of those days, under the inspiration of their religion, compare favourably with any other nation of that age in heroism and other moral qualities. I will show, later on, how the belief of the Himalayan countries in fairies and ghosts is almost identical with the beliefs of other countries.

### *Himalayan Fairies*

To quote again Dr. Evans Wentz :

“In ancient and in modern times, man’s belief in gods, spirits, or fairies has been the direct result of his attempts to explain or to rationalize natural phenomena . . . the belief in fairies often anthropomorphically reflects the natural environment as well as the social condition of the people who hold the belief.”\* The fairies are called the *Acharis*, *Kechries*, *Pari* or *Chancharis* in the Himalayas. According to Mr. Oakley, “They are fairies or women who move in the firmament—young women of surpassing beauty, sumptuously clothed, supposed to belong to the court of Indra, as dancing girls and to be very fond of bathing and playing in water, and of gathering flowers and ferns on the tops of lofty mountains and in remote forests, where are springs, lakes and natural ponds of clear and crystal

\* Introduction page XXI of Dr. Wentz’s *Fairy Faith in the Celtic Countries*.

water. They are said to fly or float along the sky without any visible wings . . . the snowy ranges are supposed to be their proper haunts." To this description of the Himalayan fairies I would add the following quotation from my lecture on the Folklore of Garhwal mentioned above: "They (the *Acharis*) are not like the malignant spirits of other countries. They are good-hearted fairy people, fond of young folk ; they enter into and 'possess' young girls. There are beautiful stories about their carrying away to their mountain abodes young warriors, as described in the legend of Surju Kunwar. They returned Surju on the latter's promising to marry them on his return from Tibet. There is another beautiful ballad of a young man having been carried away by them, while sitting on a ridge facing the *Khaint Hill*, the abode of the fairies, playing on his fife. They, however, allowed him to go home to meet his sweetheart, Bhana, after extorting a promise from him to return and surrender himself to them on the appointed day.

The *Acharis* are the spirits of young unmarried girls of respectable families who died without the due performance of their funeral rites. They are also the daughters of Ravan, King of Lanka. Ravan offered them to Siva, the presiding deity of the

Himalayas, who made them His *Chelis*. Hence they dwell on high snowy peaks. According to another legend, the *Acharis* went to a flower garden and began to dance and pluck flowers. There they met the God Krishna and became his *Gopis*, and still dance the eternal celestial dance with him."

The above description of Himalayan fairies will show that Himalayan fairylore is as beautiful as that of ancient Greece.

#### *Ghosts and Demons in Himalayan Folklore*

As regards ghosts and demons, they are called *Masan*, *Bhut*, *Paret*, *Khabesh* in the Himalayan folklore. *Masans* or *Khabesh* include demons. They are thus defined by Mr. Oakley: "*Masan* exists in places where dead bodies are burnt, generally at the confluence of two rivers. He is said to be at the head of the other ghosts who haunt such places and rules over them as a great king of genii. The belief is that most wicked people or persons who die by accidents—such as falling from a precipice or a tree, drowning, being bitten by snakes or killed by wild beasts, women who die in child-birth, or within four days of menses, suicides, and all persons who die a violent death, or those whose funeral rites have been neglected become ghosts for a time."

To this description I would add that young persons who die in foreign countries, leaving dear ones at home, also become ghosts, who enter into and “possess” some of their relatives, who dance and send for and embrace their dear ones and weep in a most pathetic manner. These ghosts, called *Gharbhut*, are transformed into spirits and cease to haunt their earthly home when their images are placed in some temple or holy place. There are other kinds of *Bhuts* also, such as *Ranbhuts*, or those killed in battle, *Pret*, *Khabes*, *Aheri*.

In former times during the internecine wars among the various tribes, those killed in wars became *Bhuts* and “possessed” the surviving members of their tribes. Those *Ranbhuts* still “possess” and dance in several villages of the Himalayas, periodically, and big feasts are given in their honour. Some of the varieties of those ghosts—such as *Masan*, *Pret*, *Khabes* and *Aheri* are malignant beings who trouble and even cause the death of those “possessed” by them. They are driven away by means of magical incantations called “*Rakhwalis*” accompanied by elaborate “*puja*” or religious ceremonies.

The *Masan*, *Khabes* or demons, though generally malignant, yet have some redeeming features. In

legend No. 18 of Pritamdeo, the *Samwa Masan* took pity on the youth of Dhamdeo, who had gone to kill him, and disclosed the secret of his death. In the other ghost stories contained in Chapter V we have other instances of a *Masan's* capacity to reciprocate love, and to manifest other virtues.

As regards the third and fifth sub-divisions of the Himalayan folklore, the reader is referred to the Introduction of Section II of the volume and to the chapter dealing with those subjects.

### *Magic in Himalayan Folklore*

I shall now consider the subject of magic as found in Himalayan folklore. Sir James Frazer in his book, *The Golden Bough*, abridged edition of 1928, on page 11, divides magic into two parts—homoeopathic magic and contagious magic. “Homoeopathic magic is based on the principle that like produces like and is applied in the attempt which has been made by many people in many ages to injure or destroy an enemy by injuring or destroying an image of him in the belief that, just as the image suffers, so does the man, and that when it perishes, he must die.”\* Contagious magic is thus defined on para. 3, page 37 of the same book. “Contagious magic proceeds upon the notion that

\* Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, para. 2, p. 12.



things which have been once conjoined must remain ever afterwards, even when quite dissevered from each other, in such a sympathetic relation that whatever is done to the one must similarly affect the other.”

Examples of homoeopathic magic are very numerous in Himalayan folklore. There is a vast folklore literature on this branch of magic, relating to charms and incantations for destroying the enemy, curing diseases, and sterility, and exorcising evil spirits. When it is intended to kill the enemy by means of magic, parings of his nails and hair are used, and also his image made of barley flour. I give below the English translation of one incantation from Mr. Oakley's collection: Incantation to drive away evil spirit by mustard seeds—“Salutations to spiritual guide, to earth, king of justice, wind, water, moon and sun. O Mustard, O Mustard, thou art my sister and I am thy brother. Thou goest. Thou goest wherever I send thee. I shall sow thee in the plains and reap thee in the hills. Red mustard, black mustard, yellow mustard, who produced thee or made thee spring up? Mahadeo created thee and Parbati sowed thee. What shall I do with this mustard? Its seeds are small, but its fruit like

*bel* fruit. By these seeds I shall kill (destroy the effect of) great demons, *daityas* (devils), *mar* (dead bodies), *Masan*, *bhut* (ghosts), *paret*, *chall* (a kind of ghost who causes momentary fright but does no injury), *chhidra* (another kind of ghost), *dit* (evil eye), *mantra* (spell, incantation), *trap* (fear), *hunḡar* (curse), evil eye of a black Brahman (much feared), fair shudra's Khasia's evil eye. Drive away effect of evil eye of a ragged ascetic. I will drive away evil eye of flowing water, evil eye of mewling cat (meaning crying), evil eye of a barking dog, evil eye of a blowing wind. I am under the protection of the hero Hanuman who will curse anyone who disobeys me. O go away, by command of God!"

Instances of contagious magic are also numerous in Himalayan folklore. In legend No. 20 the Belwals had carried away the he-buffaloes of Hyunraj Mahara to be sacrificed to the goddess Kali, accompanied by magical incantations, in order to kill Hyunraj. Another instance of contagious magic is found in the legend of Surju (No. 4) at whose departure from home some ill omens occurred. The water soaked in ashes for washing his clothes turned black instead of red, and his pet goat Tila sneezed, and the hair of his head began to fall out. In the same story there are other instances of such magic.

As soon as Surju was killed in Tibet the blade of his sword at Dwarka fell, the flowers withered, and the milk turned into blood. We have other instances of contagious magic in the ghost and demon tale No. 3, in which the demon's soul dwelt in the body of a parrot in a far off island and the demon died as soon as the parrot was killed. In legend No. 18 also we have an instance of such magic. Here the demon's soul dwelt in Raja Pritamdeo's body, and no sooner was the former killed than the latter also died.

On page 184 of Frazer's *Golden Bough* are given instances collected from various countries of the world of the transference of the human soul into animals. Such instances are in abundance in Himalayan folklore.

In legend No. 4 (Surju Kunwar), Surju's wife, Bijora, transformed her horse into a bee. We have instances of a youth being converted into a ram by measuring his body with charmed strings. In the demon folklore there are instance of demon's soul being transferred to a parrot and so on.

#### *External Soul in Himalayan Folklore*

Frazer discusses the subject of external souls in folk-tales: "The soul of a person may be either in an animate or inanimate object, and so long as this

object which he calls his life or soul remains unharmed, the man is well ; if it is injured he suffers ; if it is destroyed he dies."\* The most interesting example of such external soul is contained in the tale of the demon in Chapter V, story 3. As regards the external soul in plants, discussed on page 681 of the *Golden Bough*, we have the instance of the flowers withering on the death of Surju in legend No. 4.

### *Other Forms of Magic*

There are other peculiar forms of magic found in Himalayan folklore which are not found in the folklore of other countries.

In legend No. 4 there is a beautiful description of Krishna rubbing his right side and producing a swarm of black bees, who carry his letter to Surju. There is also the account of Sidwas catching all the fairies in a net by means of his magical powers and forcing them to restore the full beauty of Surju, which they had stolen away. In this and other folk-tales we find a magician restoring a dead person to life by his magical incantations.

The above account would show that Himalayan folklore is as rich in magic as that of any other country.

\* *Golden Bough*, p. 668.

As regards the remaining sub-heads of Himalayan folklore, namely, wit and wisdom, and bird and animal lore, dealt with in Chapters II and III of this book, I refer the reader to the Introduction by Mr. Oakley to section II of the book and the notes under each chapter.

I have not been able to include the ballads in this volume for want of space.

### *Conclusion*

The above brief summary of Himalayan folklore will show that it is of absorbing interest and offers a very rich field for research work in this important subject of ethnology.

As remarked at the beginning of this Introduction, folklore is the source of almost all religions. Hence a study of the folklore of a country is essential for the correct understanding of its religion. My own belief is that the *Puranas*, the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayan* of the Hindus, which contain their popular religion, and the Old Testament of the Christians are really the folklore of those times, which the sages collected and arranged in those books. It is also my belief that by a sympathetic study and understanding of the folklore of the various peoples of the world, the great truth will be

discovered that all are closely related, in spite of their accidental differences, and that, in the great purpose of God, all nations of mankind are made of one blood, of one heart and mind, to dwell together on this earth and fulfil one united destiny.

TARA DUTT GAIROLA.

SANTIASHRAM, PAURI,  
GARHWAL

# HIMALAYAN FOLKLORE

## SECTION I

### CHAPTER I—LEGENDS OF HEROES

#### I. RAJA MAN SAH

ONCE upon a time a Prince by name Bahadur Sah ruled in Garhwal, whose capital was Srinagar. On his death he was succeeded by his son Man Sah. On the occasion of his coronation Raja Man Sah summoned all the chiefs and Sardars of his kingdom to the darbar and ordered them to bring their Sanads and copper plates (*Tama Patra*). All the Sardars attended except Surju Dangwal who had fled from Garhwal and taken refuge at the court of Raja Lakshmi Chand of Champawat in Kumaon, soon after Raja Bahadur Sah's death. Raja Man Sah wrote a letter to Surju ordering him to return to Garhwal. But Surju refused to return and said that he was better off at Champawat. To a second letter of Raja Man Sah he returned the same answer. He then wrote to Raja Lakshmi Chand to send back Surju to Srinagar. But he (Raja Lakshmi Chand) refused to do as he was requested and threatened to invade Garhwal and raze its capital to the ground, if Raja

Man Sah insisted upon demanding Surju. This enraged Raja Man Sah who collected a large army and invaded Champawat. On reaching Champawat, a fierce battle was fought between the armies of Lakshmi Chand and Man Sah, which raged for several days. The ground was covered with blood and the bodies of the dead. Jackals and tigers fed on the corpses. After seven days Raja Lakshmi Chand fled away from the battlefield. On hearing this his Rani reproached him for his cowardice and took over the command of the army. She fought most heroically for several days; but was overpowered by the enemy's forces and she surrendered. She handed over Surju to Raja Man Sah, who brought him back to Garhwal.

## 2. KAFFU CHAWHAN

Once upon a time a Prince by name Ajai Pal ruled over Garhwal. At his coronation all the chiefs and nobles of his kingdom attended his darbar to pay homage to him, except Kaffu Chawhan who lived in the fort called Upgarh. The Raja summoned him to his darbar; but he replied that he (Kaffu) was like a lion among beasts and as vulture among birds and would not pay homage to Ajai Pal. The Raja warned him that if he persisted in his disloyalty, his territory would be invaded.



Kaffu replied that far from paying homage to Ajai Pal, he (Kaffu) would invade Srinagar, the capital of Ajai Pal, and destroy his palace and gardens. Ajai Pal could not bear this insult and invaded Kaffu's territory with a large army under his personal command. He reached the banks of the Ganges opposite the strong and high fort of Upgarh. The mother of Kaffu saw from the window of the fort the opposite bank of the river covered with a huge mass of men and asked Kaffu what it was. Kaffu said that it was the army of Raja Ajai Pal whom he had offended by refusing to pay homage. On hearing this Kaffu's mother wept and said, "O my dear and only son, thou canst not possibly fight against such odds single-handed. Go and apologize to the Raja, who, I am sure, will pardon thee." Kaffu replied, "I cannot stoop so low. I belong to a true Kshatriya family. My father's soul would curse me from heaven for my cowardice." Kaffu descended from his fort and cut the ropes of the suspension bridge which crossed the river. When Ajai Pal's army went to attack Kaffu's fort next morning they found the bridge broken and informed Ajai Pal about it. Ajai Pal was much enraged and ordered his army to put up another suspension bridge and surrounded the fort. Seeing

this Kaffu's mother was much frightened and again remonstrated with her son. Kaffu said that he would not yield even if his head was separated from his body. Kaffu put on his armour and riding his war horse rushed out of the fort and attacked the enemy with the utmost heroism. He destroyed the whole army of the enemy single-handed. Streams of blood flowed and the ground was covered with corpses. After killing the whole army of Ajai Pal, Kaffu went to the river side to rest. One of the officers of Kaffu's army had been fighting with a small army elsewhere. But they were all killed by the enemy. Kaffu's mother, seeing this, thought that Kaffu too had shared the same fate. She preferred suicide to falling a prey to the enemy. She, therefore, set fire to the fort and perished with the rest of Kaffu's family. When Kaffu returned home, victorious, he was stunned by the terrible sight and stood, as though turned to stone, at the gate of the fort. In the meantime some of Ajai Pal's army arrived, and seeing Kaffu in that plight informed Ajai Pal, who was overjoyed and went himself to the place. Then Ajai Pal said to his men, "As Kaffu would not bow to me while he was alive cut off his head in such a way that it may fall at my feet." When the soldiers

were about to cut off Kaffu's head, he shook with rage, swallowed two handfuls of dust and stared at Ajai Pal with contemptuous smile. When Kaffu's head was separated from his body, instead of falling at Ajai Pal's feet it fell towards his head. Ajai Pal was so struck with the heroism of Kaffu that he performed his funeral rites with military honours on the banks of the river.

### 3. KALA BHANDARI

Once upon a time there lived one Kala Bhandari at a place called Lakhimpur. His father's name was Biru Bhandari. Kala Bhandari was a great hero and performed great feats of strength while yet a child. While twelve years of age he saw a girl of surpassing beauty standing before him and making advances to him in a dream. He woke up in great excitement. This girl, Udaimala by name, was far-famed for her beauty. Her father's name was Dhamdeo who lived in Kalnikot. Kala Bhandari wandered about like a madman in search of his love. At last he reached Kalnikot and managed to enter the apartments of Udaimala. The lovers lived in concealment for some days. Kala Bhandari then came out and requested Dhamdeo to give him Udaimala in marriage. Dhamdeo agreed on condition that Kala Bhandari paid him one *supa*

(winnowing basket) of rupees, which Kala Bhandari agreed to do.

Kala Bhandari then returned home. In the meantime four warriors of great fame went to Champawat, the capital of Guru Gyan Chand, and challenged him to send a warrior to fight with them and threatened to destroy his capital if he failed to comply. Guru Gyan Chand was much troubled. He called together his ministers and courtiers for advice. They all said that the only man who could oppose those warriors was Kala Bhandari, who, though only a lad of twelve years, possessed extraordinary strength. A messenger was at once dispatched to Kala Bhandari. But Kala Bhandari's father would not let him go.

At last he was persuaded to agree. Kala Bhandari reached Champawat and went to Raja Gyan Chand, who, on seeing his tender age, was disappointed. He could not believe that so young a boy could defeat those mighty warriors. Kala Bhandari ordered that the palace drums, instead of being beaten in honour of the four warriors, should thenceforth be beaten in his honour. The offended warriors called for an explanation, and were told by Guru Gyan Chand that he had sent for a warrior

to fight with them, and that this warrior had ordered the drums to be beaten in his own name.

Kala Bhandari now appeared upon the scene and challenged the warriors to fight with him. They all rushed at him together; but he protested, saying that it was unfair that four men should attack one. Then they selected two of their number to fight with him. After a long struggle, Kala Bhandari dashed them on the ground and killed them.

On seeing this the remaining two committed suicide.

Guru Gyan Chand was much pleased at the heroism of Kala Bhandari and gave him rewards in cash and kind. Kala Bhandari returned home laden with presents and sent the promised bride-prince to Dhamdeo.

In the meantime one Rupu Gangsara of Gangsarihat had gone to Dhamdeo to ask the hand of his daughter Udaimala. He distributed large sums of money among Dhamdeo's courtiers to win their favour and also gave rich presents to Dhamdeo. Dhamdeo was thus induced to give Udaimala in marriage to Rupu. The marriage day was fixed and Rupu went with a large procession to marry Udaimala.

When the day of marriage approached Udaimala appeared in a dream to Kala Bhandari and told him about her impending marriage with Rupu, and asked him to come and take her away. When Kala Bhandari woke he was much perplexed. He told his father about it, who tried to dissuade him from going and advised him to give up all idea of marrying Dhamdeo's daughter. But Kala Bhandari could not be persuaded. He smeared his body with ashes and disguising himself as a *sadhu* started for Kalnikot, and reached there just before the marriage of Udaimala with Rupu. He managed to enter the apartment of Udaimala. It was arranged between them that she should not perform the ninth *phera* (step) with Rupu, on the pretext that she would do so after seeing her *guru*. At the appointed time the wedding ceremony began with much pomp, and large gifts were distributed to Brahmans and the poor. After the eighth *phera*, she refused to perform the ninth *phera*, which completes the marriage, saying that she would not perform it until she had seen her *guru*, who was a *sadhu*.

After feasting and rejoicing the procession started for home. The marriage procession reached the banks of the Ganges and rested there. Bards entertained the marriage party with music and dancing.

In the meantime Kala Bhandari, disguised as a *sadhu*, also arrived. When Udaimala saw him she said that her *guru* had arrived and that he was well versed in dancing with sword and shield in hand. They requested the *sadhu* to entertain the party, and gave him a sword and shield for the purpose. The *sadhu* arranged the bridegroom's party and the bride's party in separate rows. Then the *sadhu* began to dance and suddenly cut off the heads of all the men of the bridegroom's party with his sword. Only Lula Gangola, younger brother of Rupu, escaped. He implored Kala not to kill him, and Kala took pity on him and spared him.

After killing all the enemy Kala went to Udaimala. As Kala felt very thirsty, Udaimala ordered Lula to fetch water for him to drink. Lula fetched the water from a spring. He also brought a large stone concealed under his clothes. While Kala was drinking water Lula hurled the stone on his head with such force that Kala staggered and died, but not before he had drawn his sword and cut off Lula's head.

Udaimala was left alone to bewail her fate. After weeping and crying she regained her courage and placed the head of Kala on her right knee and

that of Rupu on her left knee. She then mounted the funeral pyre and became *Sati*.

#### 4. SURJU KUNWAR

Once upon a time a Prince, Sonpal by name, ruled over Tibet. He had seven daughters, the eldest of whom was named Jotramala. She was as beautiful as the full moon. She prayed for several years to the goddess Ganges to grant her a husband as beautiful as herself. The goddess granted her prayer and said that the God Krishna himself would become her husband.

After a while Krishna saw her in a dream in Dwarka and fell in love with her. He sent a letter through the black bees to his brother Surju, who lived at Bimlikot, telling him about his love for Jotramala and asking him to go to Tibet and bring Jotramala to Dwarka. The bees hovered over Surju's head, sat on his shoulders and dropped the letter on his lap. Surju read the letter and told his mother about its contents. Surju's mother remonstrated, saying that whoever went to Tibet never returned—it being the land of magic. But Surju said that he could not disobey his elder brother Krishna, and, so, prepared himself to start for Dwarka. Meanwhile several ill-omens occurred. The water soaked in ashes for washing Surju's



clothes turned black instead of red. Surju's pet goat Tila sneezed. The hair of Surju's head began to fall out. But Surju did not mind those omens, and, riding on his horse, started off for Dwarka. He reached the *Kailash* mountain, the abode of seven witches. The witches invited Surju to their house and feasted him. After eating Surju fell asleep. While asleep they measured his body with a magic thread of three strands and converted him into a spotted ram.

Surju's wife, Bijora, saw him in that plight in a dream. She was a witch possessing great magical powers. She put on male dress and riding a fleet pony and equipping herself with all the magical appliances left for the *Kailash* mountain. On arriving there she transformed her horse into a bee, sat on a tree and began to play upon a flute. The seven witches, delighted by her divine music, assembled round the tree. They invited her to their house and feasted her. Queen Bijora then charmed them by her magical powers and compelled them to point out the place where Surju was tied. The Queen reconverted Surju into a man and requested him to return home. But Surju insisted on going to Dwarka and proceeded on his journey. On reaching Dwarka Krishna received him with

great honour and requested him to go to Tibet and bring Jotramala. Surju consented; but begged Krishna to send Sidwa of Ramoligarh to accompany him to Tibet.

Krishna sent a letter to Sidwa again, through his black bees, asking him to come at once. The black bees sat on Sidwa's shoulders and dropped the letter in his lap. Sidwa and Bidwa were two great heroes who lived at Ramoligarh. They wore blankets weighing nine maunds each and tiger skins five hundred cubits in length. They had lion shaped drums hanging round their shoulders and seven-mouthed conches. Each of them owned twelve score sheep and six score of herds of cattle.

Sidwa read the letter and prepared himself to start for Dwarka. He put on his helmet. He was a great magician and equipped himself with many instruments of magic. He rushed down from his mountain home like a dreadful dragon. He blew his seven-mouthed conch; the sound of which attracted the fairies who dwelt on the Khaint mountain. They hovered round him and were at his beck and call. Sidwa rode his fleet horse and started for Dwarka. Overcoming many dangers on the way he reached Dwarka. He was received with much honour by Krishna.

When Surju and Sidwa were about to leave for Tibet, Surju's mother wept and entreated him not to go. Surju would not listen, but told her to keep some milk in a dish, a naked sword with its blade upwards and a garland of flowers. He said that if the milk turned into blood, the sword fell and the flowers withered she would know that he was dead.

The expedition reached the mountain pass called *Saudankhal*, the last place from which their country could be seen. The next stage was *Rikhnikhal*. There, while they were fast asleep, the nymphs from the Khaint mountain carried away Surju to their mountain home leaving Sidwa alone.

Sidwa blew his conch which drew all the nymphs back. Sidwa forced them to restore Surju. They brought Surju back; but they had taken away half his beauty. The expedition met with various other accidents on the way. They passed through the country where men walked on one foot. The king of that country opposed the expedition; but was defeated. They then reached a ridge called *Pipaldhar*. There Sidwa began to play upon his flute. Immediately all the nymphs of Khaint re-appeared. Sidwa caught them in a net and forced them to restore Surju to his full beauty. They consented on

condition that Surju would marry them on his return from Tibet. Surju agreed to the condition. At last they reached the banks of a river in Tibet where a large bathing fair used to be held at the Bikhwat Shankrant (April), which Jotramala was expected to attend. Sidwa began to crack jokes with Surju and pretended illness. He fell into a deep sleep from which he did not awake till the fair was over. In the meantime Jotramala arrived in a palanquin with a large retinue. On seeing Jotramala Surju went up to her and delivered Krishna's message to her. On reading the letter Jotramala took Surju home. Surju lived with Jotramala in the palace. The other sisters of Jotramala became jealous of Surju and made a plot to poison him.

One day while Jotramala had gone to the spring to wash Surju's clothes, her sisters invited Surju to a dinner.

They poisoned his food and killed Surju and buried his corpse in a cellar full of salt.

On this the milk at Dwarka turned into blood, the blade of the sword fell down and the flowers of the garland withered. Seeing this Krishna knew that Surju had been killed.

He then sent for Bidwa brother of Sidwa and informed him about the death of Surju and requested

to proceed to Tibet and restore Surju to life by means of his magical powers. Bidwa disguised himself as a *sadhu* and after encountering many difficulties reached the place where Sidwa was still asleep. He awoke him and scolded him for his lethargy. He informed Sidwa about the death of Surju. On hearing this Sidwa shook with rage. They went to King Sonpal's palace, caught hold of his daughters and threatened to kill all of them unless they showed them the dead body of Surju. Sonpal's daughters showed them the place where the corpse of Surju was buried. The two brothers by means of their wonderful magical powers brought Surju back to life. They killed Sonpal and his six daughters who had poisoned Surju and placed Sonpal's son Ajaipal on the throne of Tibet. They then brought Jotramala to Dwarka, who was then married to Krishna. Sidwa also brought the seven nymphs of Khaint to Dwarka and married them according to his promise.

##### 5. KALI HARPAL

Once upon a time a Prince by name Kunwari Pal ruled over Dunagiri Hat. He had a *Sera* (irrigated land), known as *Ratwari Sera*, which produced twenty *khars* of paddy (one *khars* equals about 16

maunds). The *Sera* could not be cultivated for a long time owing to the ravages of a boar called Kailu, who lived at Lohanigarh. Kunwari Pal once resolved to reclaim it and took a large number of men there for the purpose. They ploughed it, sowed a paddy crop, and strongly fenced it round. As soon as Kunwari Pal's men returned home Kailu dreamed that *Ratwa Sera* had been sown. He collected an army of six score boars and proceeded to destroy the *Sera*. They broke down the whole fence and destroyed the crops.

After some time Kunwari Pal sent his men to irrigate the fields. They found all the crops completely destroyed and reported it to Kunwari Pal.

Kunwari Pal was very angry and collected a large number of men in order to kill Kailu. They went to *Ratwari Sera* where Kailu and his army were lying in the fields. On seeing the Raja's men Kailu ordered his followers to retire, as he would fight against the enemy single-handed. Kunwari Pal ordered his men to surround the field in which Kailu was lying, and threatened to kill any one who allowed him to escape. When Kailu heard this he decided to make his escape in the direction in which Kunwari Pal was standing in order to save the rest from being killed. Kailu leaped over

Kunwari Pal's head and escaped. The Raja was much vexed and took a vow not to rest till he had killed Kailu. He asked his courtiers for advice. They said that one Nandu Mahar lived at Dunagiri Hat, who had a daughter by name Bimla, who was of surpassing strength and beauty. And that if the Raja could marry her a great hero would be born from her, who alone could kill the boar Kailu. The Raja went to Dunagiri Hat with a large retinue to ask Nandu to give him Bimla in marriage. When the party approached Nandu's house, the latter took them for an enemy and loosed his two ferocious he-buffaloes named Chaunria and Bhaunria upon them. The buffaloes attacked them and threatened to tear them with their horns. The Raja assured Nandu that they were friends and not enemies and begged him to call back the buffaloes. Nandu, who was himself a great warrior, said that his daughter Bimla alone could catch the buffaloes. He sent Bimla to bring back the buffaloes. She caught hold of the buffaloes by the horns, brought them home and tied them up.

The Raja was struck by the beauty and strength of Bimla and requested Nandu to give her to him in marriage. Nandu agreed and the marriage was celebrated with much pomp and rejoicing.

Kunwari Pal brought Bimla home and lived happily with her. Kunwari Pal had six other Ranis. In course of time Bimla was with child. The other Ranis of Kunwari Pal grew jealous of Bimla and made a plot to kill her child when it was born. During her confinement, Kunwari Pal kept a guard over Bimla's house and engaged a clever nurse for her. The six Ranis of Kunwari Pal in collusion with the guard and the nurse bandaged Bimla's eyes, saying that it would not be auspicious for her to see her first born son after delivery. The Ranis removed the baby and threw it in a bush of nettles in a garden close by and placed a cylindrical stone by the side of Bimla and told her and the Raja that she had been delivered of a stone instead of a human being. The six Ranis taunted Kunwari Pal and said that his most beloved Rani had brought forth a stone instead of a child. The Raja believed them and turned out Bimla in anger. Bimla wandered about homeless in utter despair. She chanced to pass through the place where the baby had been thrown and heard a cry from the bush. On going near the bush she saw a baby buried under the nettles. She searched and picked him up and was convinced by his remarkable beauty and strength that he was her



own son and named him Kali Har Pal. She ran back to the Raja with the baby. But the six queens of the Raja again taunted the Raja, saying that his most virtuous Rani had stolen another man's baby in order to deceive him. The Raja again disbelieved Bimla and turned her out; turning a deaf ear to her entreaties. Then Bimla went to her father's house; but was refused admission, as Kunwari Pal had written to Nandu not to give her shelter. Thus rejected, Bimla went into a dense forest and made her home in a mountain cave called *Dhoula Udyar*, living on wild roots and herbs. The child grew up, and, when he was twelve years old, he used to go out into the jungle to catch deer, stags and other game, and bring them home. One day he came home riding on a tiger and killed him with one blow. He wore the skins of wild animals, and his hair and nails grew long. He looked like a denizen of the forest.

One day, while he was sitting on a hill, some merchants passed, carrying a large amount of goods. The merchants took him for some strange wild animal and fled away in a fear. Kali Har Pal brought all their merchandize to his mountain home. On another occasion he chanced to come to

the irrigated fields of Nandu where they were transplanting the paddy crop. He went and stopped the water channel. He then destroyed all the fields and seized the food which Nandu's men had with them and brought it to his mother. He inquired from Bimla about the owner of the *Sera* and also about his own father. Bimla tried to put him off, but Kali persisted. She then told him the whole story of her misfortune. On hearing this Kali was full of rage and started for Nandu's village with his mother. On nearing the village he sent for and ordered Nandu to come and receive him on pain of punishment. Nandu was much afraid and came out to receive Kali and his mother and took them to his house. Kali and his mother lived at the house of Nandu for some time. But Kali began to do all sorts of mischief.

On one occasion when asked to fetch a load of fuel from the forest, he went to Nandu's *goth* (cow-shed) and cut the legs off all his buffaloes and brought a huge load of them to Nandu's house. This frightened Nandu and his wife who wanted to get rid of him. One day Nandu's wife taunted Kali, saying that, if he was a true hero, he should go and kill the boar, Kailu, of Loharigarh who had destroyed his father's *Sera*. Kali inquired about

Kailu's whereabouts and at once started for Lohargarh. He fought with Kailu and his army of boars and killed them all. He then returned to Nandu's house.

In the meantime Raja Kunwari Pal began to make preparations for installing his younger son Chand Pal on the throne. Nandu informed Kali Har Pal about it. Kali was in a great rage and wrote to Kunwari Pal telling the whole story of their exile and claimed to be the rightful heir to the throne. He also informed Kunwari Pal that he had killed Kailu. On reading the letter Kunwari Pal was much pleased. He went and brought Kali Har Pal in a triumphant procession and installed him on the throne. Kali Har Pal pardoned his father and step-mothers for their misdeeds.

But the six Ranis of Kunwari Pal did not give up their wickedness and were bent upon killing Kali.

One day they told Kali that one of his step-brothers had been killed by some enemy in the Punjab and that he should go and kill the enemy and bring back the head of the deceased.

Kali went and, after killing the enemy, brought back the head of his step-brother. When Kali's step-mothers heard about Kali's triumphant return

home they made another plot to kill him. They got a deep trench dug on the way, fixed sharp spikes in it, and had it covered with leaves and mud. When Kali rode over the road, his horse fell into the trench and Kali and his horse were wounded with the spikes and died. On hearing about Kali's death the old Kunwari Pal and his Queen Bimla fainted and died. Thus was the career of a great hero cut short by the treachery and jealousy of his step-mothers.

#### 6. BAGA RAWAT

In days of yore a long line of Princes ruled over Katyurgarh. One of them was Baga Rawat. His grandfather's name was Kali Nag. Kali Nag's son was Gangu Rawat whose son was Baga Rawat. Baga built a strong fort at Katyurgarh. He had five sons, whose names were Anandu Rawat, Doma Rawat, Kalni Rawat and Adam Khan.

When his eldest son Anandu became of marriageable age Baga was anxious to marry him, but could not find a suitable bride.

In a village nearby there lived three brothers named Gyanu, Hari Singh and Bhow Singh who belonged to a good Patwal Rajput family. Baga went and asked Gyanu to give his daughter

in marriage to his son Anandu. The Patwals looked down upon Baga as being of an inferior caste and refused his request. Baga was a great warrior and sent an ultimatum to the Patwals to the effect that, if they refused to marry their daughter with his son, he would invade their territory and carry away the girl forcibly. Gyanu Patwal was frightened and agreed to marry his daughter to Baga's son, and the marriage was performed with due ceremony.

When Gyanu's brothers heard about the marriage they were very angry and ex-communicated Gyanu. The whole village boycotted Gyanu's family and stopped all their supplies, with the result that Gyanu's family began to starve.

At last he left the village and went to Baga Rawat for help. Baga received him most cordially. Gyanu told Baga all about his trouble. Baga sent fifty men to assist him in ploughing his fields. When the fifty men were ploughing Gyanu's fields a piece of clay dropped into the field of Hari Singh lower down. On this Hari Singh lost his temper and killed forty-nine men of Baga and sent away the remaining one crying to Baga. The man informed Baga of the death of his men. On hearing this Baga was very angry and took a vow to

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be revenged. He and his sons went in search of Hari Singh. On the way they met Hari Singh's younger brother Bhow Singh who was returning home. They attacked him and killed him.

When Hari Singh heard about the death of his brother, he, in his turn, was determined to revenge his brother's death. He went to Katyurgarh and killed Baga's brother. Baga was much grieved at the death of his brother. Baga and his sons then began to devise plans for killing Hari Singh. In the meantime some Aujis (drummers) belonging to Hari Singh's village went to Katyurgarh to beg alms, as is customary during the month of Chait (April). Baga inquired from them about the whereabouts of Hari Singh and was told that he had gone to Srinagar, the capital of the Garhwal Raja, and would be returning shortly.

Baga and his sons waylaid Hari Singh who was returning in a palanquin from the darbar of the Garhwal Raja, accompanied by his five Ranis and a large number of attendants. Baga went up to Hari Singh's palanquin and stabbed him. The men of Hari Singh's party fought against Baga and his sons, but were all killed. The five Ranis of Hari Singh became *Sati*.



One day when Baga and his sons were away from home, Baga's Rani was combing her hair at a window of her balcony. Some evil spirit "possessed" her and she died suddenly. On returning home Baga found his wife dead and was much grieved. Baga and his sons first suspected that her death had been caused by the enemy; but on examining her body they did not find any injuries and hence concluded that it must have been due to the influence of some demon. Baga's eldest son Anandu went out in search of the demon. When he had gone some distance he came upon a spot which was covered with human corpses. Anandu heaped the corpses together and slept on them at night. At midnight the demon arrived and threatened to devour Anandu. Anandu took his sword and cut off the head of the demon. But as soon as the head of the demon was severed from the body several other heads sprang up in its place. The more heads Anandu cut off the more heads sprang up. Anandu was exhausted and prayed to his family goddess for help. He then heard a voice saying that he should replace the heads cut off on the body of the demon. Anandu did as ordered, and thus the demon was killed.

Anandu returned victorious and performed the funeral rites of his mother on the banks of the Ganges.

Once Baga told his son Anandu to go to the darbar of the Garhwal Raja and request him to grant them some irrigated lands where they could grow paddy, as their lands produced only Jhangora (millet). The Raja granted them *Bansuli Sera*, which lay within the territory of the Raja of Kumaon as Jagir. Baga and his sons settled down at *Bansuli Sera*. One day Anandu went to the darbar of the Kumaon Raja, but gave precedence to the Garhwal Raja over the Kumaon Raja when saluting the latter. The Kumaon Raja was offended at this and offered to give him large presents if he omitted the name of the Garhwal Raja when saluting him (the Kumaon Raja). Anandu declined to do so and left the territory of the Kumaon Raja.

Baga and Anandu then proceeded to the Delhi Darbar. On reaching Delhi they camped in a beautiful garden of the Emperor of Delhi near a tank which contained fishes of various hues. They began to catch the fish and do damage in the garden. When the report was made to the Emperor, he sent a great wrestler Akal Khan to bring them to the darbar. When Akal Khan

approached them and began to abuse them, Anandu pulled out his tongue and sent him back crying. When the Emperor saw this he was much frightened and devised means to kill them. He ordered the path leading to the darbar to be dug up and fixed sharp spikes all along the trench which was then covered with leaves with mud spread over them. Then the King invited Baga and his son to the darbar promising to confer a *jagir* on them. As soon as Baga and Anandu walked over the path leading to the darbar they fell into the trench and were killed.

#### 7. PANCHU THAG

There was a village called Bamora of which the inhabitants were well-to-do. In the neighbourhood of that village there lived a highway robber known as Panchu Thag. He used to terrorise the women-folk of the neighbouring villages by robbing them of their jewellery and dishonouring them. He used to assault the travellers with his club and rob them. In a neighbouring village of Kailadhukri there lived one Narain Saun. His wife's name was Rikhola. A son was born to them whom they named Musa Saun. Musa Saun was a most promising child and men predicted his future greatness. When he grew up he heard

stories of the atrocities of Panchu which made his blood boil with indignation; and he took a vow to kill Panchu. One day he asked his mother to allow him to go out to purchase a pair of bullocks for ploughing his irrigated lands which had been lying waste for a long time. His mother warned him, saying that if he went out with money he was sure to be robbed and killed by Panchu. But the more Musa heard about the atrocities of Panchu the stronger grew his determination to kill him. One day Musa looked into the account books of his father, which showed that a gold bracelet had been pledged by his father to Panchu and had not yet been redeemed. Musa showed the entry to his mother and said that he was going to Panchu to redeem the bracelet. His mother again dissuaded him.

One day Musa and his mother went together to grind grain in their water mill of which the upper stone was one yard thick. Musa, in order to show his strength to his mother, broke the upper part of the millstone with one blow of his fist. He told his mother that if he could break such a thick millstone with one blow of his fist, surely he could kill Panchu also.

Being thus assured of his strength she gave him permission to go to Bamora village and fight against Panchu. Musa put on gold bracelets and ear-rings, donned his armour and started for Bamora. He was accompanied by two men who carried his tiffin basket. Panchu met Musa on the way and exulted on seeing his jewellery. He hurled a log of wood at Musa; but Musa took no notice of it. Then he threw another log with greater force. Musa looked at Panchu and asked who he was and why he had hurled the log of wood at him, an innocent passer-by. Panchu inquired whose son he was and where he was going. Musa said his mother's name was Rikhola and that he was going to Bamora. On hearing this Panchu said, "Ah! thy mother is my own sister. What present hast thou brought for thy aunt?" Musa replied, "Uncle, you seem to be very greedy. If my aunt welcomes me, and puts vermilion on my forehead, I shall present her with a gold mohar." Panchu said, "Dear nephew, give me the gold mohar to keep. I shall hand it over to thee when thou makest its present to thy aunt." Musa replied. "Uncle, if I give the gold mohar to you and then ask it back, my aunt will think that I had begged the gold mohar from her own husband."

When Panchu knew that Musa could not be cheated in that way he begged him to give him something to eat, saying that he had not taken anything for several days. Musa gave him some food from his tiffin basket. When they started, each wished to lead the way. At last two coolies who carried the tiffin basket went first. Musa followed them and Panchu walked last. While climbing up a high hill Musa was very tired. Panchu thought that it was good opportunity to kill Musa and lifted his club to kill him. On seeing this Musa took out his dagger and said, "Uncle, why did you lift your club?" Panchu replied, "Oh, dear nephew, there is some dust on your head, I want to brush it off with this club." Musa said, "Oh, one stroke of this club is enough to break my head." Panchu replied, "Don't be afraid, I use this stick for all purposes." Then they continued to climb up till the ridge was reached from which the Bamora village was visible. Panchu again lifted his club to kill him. Musa drew his dagger. They fought for seven days and seven nights, with varying success. At last Panchu threw Musa on the ground and sat on his chest. Musa pulled out his dagger and thrust it into Panchu's chest from below. Panchu's chest was

cut open and he soon expired. On searching his body Musa found four thousand rupees which he brought back home.

The two companions of Musa had fled away home during the fight between Panchu and Musa and informed Musa's mother that both Panchu and Musa had been killed in the fight.

On hearing this Musa's mother and the whole village were in deep mourning. But their joy knew no bounds when they saw Musa returning home triumphantly. There was general rejoicing in all the villages on the death of the robber Panchu, who had been a scourge in that locality. The people called their village bards to sing songs to celebrate the victory of Musa over Panchu. These songs are still sung in those villages.

#### 8. BHAGDEO THE WARRIOR

Once upon a time a great Prince named Koku Rawat lived in Kokukot. He had seven queens, but no male issue. He, therefore, married another wife named Kunjavati, a girl of surpassing beauty. Koku Rawat made her his principal Rani. This aroused the jealousy of the other Ranis. In due course Kunjavati was with child. In the ninth month of her pregnancy she felt a craving for deer's

flesh and requested Koku to procure it for her. Koku Rawat offered to provide her with the flesh of goats, fish, and fowls; but the Rani wanted venison only. Despite his old age the Raja could not refuse the Rani's request and made preparations for a shooting expedition. He collected a large number of men and invited his nephew (sister's son) Khim Singh from Khimsari Kot to accompany him. Khim Singh dissuaded Koku from going out to risk his life in the jungles. But the Raja could not be persuaded. The party camped at Sanglana on the first day; their next stage was Ulna and the third at *Suyana*. They beat all the forests but could not find any trace of a deer. On the fourth day the party became very tired and rested near a spring. The Raja saw a deer close by. He ordered his men to surround the deer and not let it escape. The deer leaped over the Raja's head and escaped. The Raja was much vexed and chased the deer till it reached Gangoli Hat. At Gangoli Hat there lived a great warrior by name Gauria, who was eighty years old and had seven sons and fourteen grandsons. His dagger weighed nine maunds. He had a hemp rope a hundred cubits long girded round his waist. The deer ran and sat on the lap of Gauria Gangola. In the



meantime Koku and his party arrived and demanded the deer from him. Gauria, out of compassion for the deer, refused to surrender it. He said he would rather give his own son in exchange for the deer.

On this Koku became very angry and challenged Gauria to fight with him. A great battle ensued.

At last Gauria cut off Koku's head with his dagger. Koku's men then attacked Gauria; but were all killed, except Khim Singh who managed to escape. Khim Singh went back home and informed Rani Kunjavati of the death of her husband. He pretended to console Kunjavati and offered to support her. He, however, robbed Kunjavati of all her property and reduced her to utter destitution. Kunjavati was with child when her husband died. In due course she was delivered of a son of unusual beauty and strength. His eyes shone like a diamond. He had long shapely arms and legs and was as strong as a he-buffalo. He was most precocious in growth and people predicted a great future for him. He was named Ransura Bhagdeo. When he was twelve years of age he inquired from his mother about his father. The mother replied, with tears in her eyes, "My child, thou wast born without a father; but do not

let it trouble you.” Bhagdeo rejoined, “Mother, if it be so, thou must have stolen me from some one else.” Bhagdeo continued to press his mother. At last she told the whole story of his father’s death.

On hearing it Bhagdeo was full of rage and broke nine stools on which he sat, one after another. The house shook. He asked his mother’s permission to go and fight with the enemy. The mother remonstrated and said, “My son, when even thy father with his large army could not kill the enemy, how canst thou kill him single-handed?” Bhagdeo had a step-sister by name Ransula. She too possessed great strength. One day she took nine Dons (about eight maunds) of wheat to grind at a watermill in Gangoli Hat village. The water channel of the mill also irrigated the fields of Gauria Gangola, known as *Nauni Pindi Sera*. When Ransula diverted the water channel into the mill the crops of Gauria’s field dried. The matter was reported to Gauria. He went to the water mill to see what was happening. Finding Ransula there he abused her, and Ransula retaliated. Then Gangola became furious, and Ransula caught hold of him, and tied his hands and feet round the wheel of the mill.

Next morning when Gangola's seven sons did not find their father at home, they went out to search for him and found him tied round the wheel of the mill and unconscious. They untied him and squeezing out the water from his stomach brought him back to his senses. They then stripped Ransula of all her jewellery and brought her to their home.

When Bhagdeo heard about it he took a vow to take revenge. Bhagdeo started for Gangoli Hat. He reached the *Nauni Pindi Sera* of the Gangolas and began to destroy it. On seeing this Gauria Gangola ordered his Champhu Hurkia to go and find out who the man was. Champhu went to the *chaunri* (platform) on which Bhagdeo was sitting and inquired who he was. Bhagdeo related his whole story to him. On hearing this Champhu fell at Bhagdeo's feet and said, "Sir, I am your family bard. I accompanied your father during his war against Gangolas. After his death I was made a prisoner of war by the enemy. The Gangolas also captured your father's war-horse and hounds. I am now at your service. You should first get back the horse and the hounds. Then only will you be able to defeat the enemy." Champhu then took Bhagdeo to Gauria's stables

where the horse was tied. The horse at once recognized its old master and became quite tame. Bhagdeo also seized the hounds. The dogs also recognized Bhagdeo and began to lick his hands. Then Champhu gave Bhagdeo his father's sword and other arms, which had also been captured by Gauria. Thus equipped, Bhagdeo marched into the courtyard of Gauria's palace before daybreak and smashed the floor of the courtyard with the hoofs of his horse. He then rode to the *Nauni Pindi Sera* and destroyed the crops.

Gauria recognized the horse and feared that some enemy had come to attack them. He called his seven sons and informed them of the danger. The seven sons of Gangola became furious, and, putting on their arms, went towards the *Nauni Pindi Sera* and challenged Bhagdeo to fight with them. They fought for several days. At last Bhagdeo caught them one by one and hurled them up in the air. The hounds tore their bodies to pieces as they fell on the ground. Then Bhagdeo galloped into the courtyard of Gauria's palace. Champhu Hurkia walked ahead into the palace singing. Bhagdeo tied Gauria to the pillars of his balcony. He then killed all the Ranis and the grandsons of Gauria and rescued Ransula. Bhagdeo then dug

up the head of his father and brought it home in a triumphant procession. On reaching home Bhagdeo performed the funeral rites of his father and ruled over his country in peace and prosperity.

#### 9. AJWA RAMPLA

Once upon a time, when Guru Gyan Chand ruled over Champawatgarh, four wrestlers from the four quarters of the world went there and gave an ultimatum to the Raja that he should either send a Pahlwan to wrestle with them or they would turn him out of his kingdom. Gyan Chand called his courtiers together for advice. They said that Mani Padyar was the greatest warrior in their kingdom and should be sent for. Four men were sent with a letter to Mani Padyar requesting him to come and defeat the enemy, and offering him large rewards. When the Raja's men reached Mani Padyar's house, he was smoking in his balcony; while his wife Janjali was cooking food. Mani Padyar was eighty years of age. His hump touched the heavens; while his belly reached the nether regions. On reading the Raja's letter Mani accepted the invitation and made preparations for going to Champawatgarh. He asked his wife to wash his clothes and prepare food for the journey. His old

wife tried to dissuade him, but Mani would not listen to her. Mani Padyar smoked his *huqqa* which weighed nine maunds. He tied round his waist nine maunds of roasted flour (*satu*) and the same quantity of tobacco for his journey. He tied wooden planks on the back and front part of his body in order to keep it straight. He put on his armour. His wife began to weep. He consoled her and said that heroes and he-goats were born to die an early death.

On the way he met a demon named Bhumneswar, who challenged him to fight with him. They fought for two days and two nights. At last Mani dashed the demon on the ground and killed him. He then rested a while, smoked his huge *huqqa* and proceeded. On reaching Champawat he was received by the Raja with due honours. All eyes were turned on him. But the people were astonished at his old age and had misgivings about his success against the enemy. Mani Padyar told the Raja to stop the rations of the four Pahlwans. When their rations were discontinued the Pahlwans became wild with rage. They threw away their caps; their top-knots began to wave in the air; and they ground pebbles with their teeth in rage.

They threatened to raze the whole of Champawatgarh to dust. Early next morning, Mani Padyar went to the Pahlwans and, calling them hungry jackals, challenged them to fight. All the four Pahlwans attacked Mani Padyar. Mani Padyar fought against them single-handed for six days and six nights. At last he fell on the ground like a huge log of sandal wood and died. The Pahlwans then went to the Raja and inquired if he could send another warrior to fight against them. The Raja again called his courtiers. They said that Salu and Malu Negis of Bawalikot alone could oppose the enemy. Salu and Malu were twin brothers of twelve years of age. They had a common wife named Dudukela. They were as beautiful as the full moon, as bright as the flame of a lamp. Their breasts shone like the sun and their back parts like the moon.

The Raja sent four men to call Salu and Malu. When the messengers arrived Salu and Malu were playing dice in their balcony and predicted that some great event would happen to them soon. In the meantime the messengers delivered the Raja's letter. In the letter Gyan Chand had promised them great rewards of land and money if they fought against the four Pahlwans and killed them.

Salu and Malu made preparations for the journey to Champawat. Rani Dudukela, who was as soft as a ball of butter and as beautiful as the full moon, remonstrated with tears in her eyes and said, "Who-soever went to Champawatgarh did not return." But they did not listen to her entreaties. Dudukela begged them to let her accompany them. But they shut her up in a room of the palace and left for Champawat. When they reached Champawat they were received with due honours. The Ranis of the Raja cast aside their veils and peeped at them and wondered how such raw lads could fight against the formidable Pahlwans. Salu and Malu ordered all the supplies of the Pahlwans to be stopped. The Pahlwans were again in a great rage. They went to Guru Gyan Chand and inquired whether he had brought any other warrior. Salu and Malu challenged them to fight. They fought eight days and eight nights. At last the Pahlwans threw Salu and Malu on the ground and sat on their chests and killed them. When Dudukela heard about the death of her husbands she was mad with grief and could not be consoled. Then she heard a voice from heaven saying that she should not despair and that a son would be born to her who would avenge his father. On hearing this Dudukela was consoled.



In due course she was delivered of a male child. Dudukela recalled the death of her husbands and feared lest her new-born son should share the same fate. She threw the baby into a bush of nettles in utter despair and became blind with grief. The baby, who was a born hero, first lived upon the leaves of the nettle. When he had eaten up all the leaves he began to eat its stem; and when he had finished the stems he dug up its roots and lived upon them till he was six months old. Then he went to his mother and said, "Mother, why didst thou throw me into the nettle bush? I am hungry. Give me some food to eat." Dudukela wept and replied, "Who art thou, and why dost thou jeer at me?" The child assured her that he was her son. The mother said, "I shall believe that thou art my son, if thou causest my right breast to give milk and restorest my vision." The baby prayed and milk began to flow from Dudukela's right breast and the vision of her eyes was restored. She then saw her child, recognized him, and, embracing him, wept for joy. She named him Ajwa Bampla. She took the child to her brother Dham Singh, and laid the child at his feet and prayed for help. She related to him the whole story of her adversity and how the child

had survived after having been thrown into the nettles. She requested her brother to take the child with him to his cowshed in the jungle, so that he might not go back to his own home and be taken to Champawat like his father by Gyan Chand's men. Dham Singh took Ajwa to his cowshed. When Ajwa was six years of age, he questioned Dham Singh about his father. Dham Singh put him off by saying that his father had gone abroad to earn money. Ajwa now began to perform extraordinary feats of strength. He would bring from the jungle loads of grass and fuel which even six grown up men could not lift. He would bring home live stags and deer and jump over poles a hundred feet high. When Ajwa was twelve years old he once returned from the jungle riding on a big tiger. He took the tiger to his uncle and to his mother and said that he had brought a toy from the jungle. The mother wept and was afraid. When Ajwa was twelve years old he was taunted by his playmates who said that he was born without a father. He felt it keenly and ran to his uncle and wept and entreated him to let him know his father's whereabouts. Dham Singh gave an evasive reply, but Ajwa pressed him. At last Dham Singh was obliged to

send him (Ajwa) back to his mother. As soon as Ajwa reached home, four messengers arrived with a letter from Raja Gyan Chand. The messengers delivered the letter to Ajwa. In the letter Gyan Chand had mentioned the death of Salu and Malu, and requested Ajwa, who was reported to be a greater hero than his father, to come and fight against the enemy of his father. Dudukela scolded the King's men, refused to send her son to Champawat and told them to go away. But Ajwa was determined to go and would not listen to his mother's entreaties. When Dudukela saw that Ajwa could not be dissuaded she asked Ajwa to give her an assurance of his power to defeat such a formidable enemy. Ajwa jumped over a pole one hundred cubits high and crushed to powder with his feet the *ritha* nuts which were spread underneath. He also turned his father's clubs weighing one hundred maunds, threw them up in the air and supported them on his little fingers. By these tests Dudukela was assured of her son's success against the enemy and gave him permission to go.

Her husband's blue-eared war-horse had become wild since his master's death. Dudukela told Ajwa to bring him back from the jungle.

He found the horse in the jungle. The horse, recognizing his former master's son, shed tears of joy. Ajwa brought the horse home and rode on his back to Champawatgarh. The horse flew up to the clouds and dropped down on Champawatgarh.

Ajwa was received by the Raja and his people with great honours. Ajwa ordered all supplies to the enemy to be stopped. Next morning Ajwa went and began to answer the call of nature just in front of the enemy's camp. Seeing this the Pahlwans became furious and threatened to kill Ajwa for having dared to insult them. Ajwa begged their pardon and said that he was a mere child and had come in search of service. The Pahlwans asked him what pay he would accept. Ajwa replied that he was willing to serve for any pay. He further enquired whether they were cobblers or sweepers by caste. The Pahlwans lost their temper and began to beat him. Ajwa roared like a lion and challenged them to fight and said that he had come to revenge his father. He caught hold of all the four warriors and killed two of them with his sword. He pulled out the eyes of the third and cut off the nose of the fourth. After killing and mutilating the Pahlwans Ajwa

went to Guru Gyan Chand's Darbar and saluted the Raja. In the meantime some cunning courtier of the Raja smeared his own clothes with the blood of the Pahlwans who had been killed and hastened to the Raja and said that he had killed the enemy. But Ajwa took out the eyes and the piece of the cut nose from his pocket as a proof of his having killed the enemy. Guru Gyan Chand was convinced of Ajwa's victory, bestowed large presents and a *jagir* on him and appointed him as his Dewan. The courtiers became jealous of him and told the Raja that Ajwa cast an evil eye on the Raja's Rani. The Raja believed the courtiers and ordered four executioners to take Ajwa to a distant jungle and pluck out his eyes and leave him there. But the executioners knew that the charge against Ajwa was false and that Ajwa had rendered great services to the country. They, therefore, spared Ajwa and taking out the eyes of a goat showed them to the Raja.

Ajwa went back to his home and lived there. In the meantime the relations of the four Pahlwans who had been defeated by Ajwa invaded Champawatgarh and began to give much trouble to the Raja and his people. Gyan Chand repented of his folly in having punished Ajwa. The execu-

tioners informed him that they had spared Ajwa who had gone back to his home.

Gyan Chand sent a letter to Ajwa, apologized, and requested him to come and kill the enemy, and offered half his kingdom as a reward. Ajwa went to Champawatgarh and defeated the enemy. The Raja gave him large presents and half his kingdom as a reward. Ajwa returned home in a triumphant procession and ruled over his country in happiness and prosperity.

#### 13. BRAHMA KUNWAR

Once upon a time Krishna sat with his friends at Dwarka, and began to play dice. Narad Muni, who was also present in the assembly, said that Moti Mala, a princess of surpassing beauty, who lived at Joula Tal in Tibet, possessed a special kind of dice and advised Krishna to obtain the dice from her and to marry her. Krishna asked his generals one by one to go to Joula Tal, but none ventured to go to the mysterious land of Tibet. The God Krishna rubbed his body and produced a swarm of black bees and ordered them to carry his letter to his younger brother Brahma Kunwar who lived at Brahmkot. The black bees flew like the wind and hovered over the house of Brahma. They

filled all the rooms of his palace, which frightened the inmates. Then the bees sat on the right shoulder of Brahma, which indicated that they had been sent by his elder brother Krishna. The bees dropped the letter in the lap of Brahma. In the letter Krishna had requested Brahma to come at once, proceed to Tibet, and bring Moti Mala and the special dice which she possessed. On reading the letter Brahma got ready to start and asked his queen to wash his clothes and prepare food for the journey. The Rani in vain tried to dissuade him. Several bad omens occurred; but Brahma heeded them not. He donned his armour and mounted his famous horse called Raghubansi. He spurred his horse which flew up into the clouds and dropped down at Dwarka. He was received with due honours. Krishna requested him to proceed to Tibet and bring Moti Mala and the pair of dice which she had. He gave a ring as a present to Moti Mala. Brahma Kunwar agreed and started on his journey. After encountering great hardships on the way he reached Joula Tal. While Brahma was bathing at a spring, Moti Mala's maid servant Swara went there to fetch water. Brahma inquired as to whose maid she was. She replied that she was Moti Mala's servant. Swara

requested Brahma to help her in lifting the pitcher on her head. While lifting the pitcher Brahma Kunwar dropped the ring which Krishna had given him into the pitcher. While Moti Mala was taking out water from the pitcher she found a ring in it. She picked it up and saw Krishna's name engraved on it. The very sight of the ring caused Moti Mala to fall in love with Krishna. Next morning she sent a letter to Brahma Kunwar through Swara and invited him to meet her. Brahma managed to enter Moti Mala's apartment. He told her that Krishna had sent him to bring her; also the pair of dice which she possessed. Moti Mala asked Brahma to play dice with her. When they began to play, Moti Mala sat towards the east and made Brahma sit facing towards the west. (East is believed to be auspicious, while west is inauspicious.)

Moti Mala first won Brahma's horse, then his jewellery and clothes, and, finally, his ownself. Brahma was perplexed. He pondered and suspected some trick on the part of Moti Mala. He feigned to be thirsty and asked Moti Mala to fetch water for him. When she had gone to fetch water Brahma asked Swara to disclose to him the secret of Moti Mala's success. She told him that



he should exchange places with Moti Mala and then play the dice. When Moti Mala returned Brahma sat in Moti Mala's place and asked her to sit in his place. The play was then resumed. Moti Mala began to lose and Brahma recovered all that he had lost and finally won Moti Mala and her maid, Swara. Brahma asked her to accompany him to Dwarka. But Moti Mala replied, with a taunt, that he should first convince her of his power to take her safely to Dwarka, by going to Chandangarh and bringing her sister Pathar Mala, who was married to the Serpent King of that place.

Pathar Mala's place was strongly fenced round with bamboo hedges, and its revolving gates were guarded by dragons. Brahma Kunwar accepted the challenge and flew back to Dwarka to consult Krishna. Krishna encouraged Brahma, assured him of success, and requested him to go to Chandangarh and encounter all the dangers like a true Kshatriya. Thus encouraged by Krishna, Brahma again flew to Chandangarh on his famous horse and dropped down near the gate of the Serpent King's fort at Chandangarh. The fort was strongly fenced with bamboo hedges, and with deep trenches. The palace inside where Pathar Mala lived was all made of glass. Brahma spurred his horse, which

jumped over the fence and the trenches and dropped down on the courtyard of the palace. He managed to enter the apartment of Pathar Mala and met her there. Pathar Mala was charmed by his beauty and fell in love with him. Her husband, the Serpent King, was away from home. Brahma slept on Pathar Mala's bed and fell into deep sleep. In the meantime the Serpent King arrived and scented a human being inside his palace. He rushed into Pathar Mala's room in great fury, and, finding Brahma sleeping in Pathar Mala's bed, stung him and killed him instantaneously.

The Serpent King buried Brahma's corpse in a cellar full of salt.

As soon as Brahma died Krishna dreamt about his death. He at once sent a letter through his black bees to Bidwa, the younger brother of Sidwa, who lived at Ramoligarh, and requested him to proceed to Chandangarh at once and bring back Brahma Kunwar. Bidwa, like his brother Sidwa, was a great hero and magician. He was dreadful like a lion or like a venomous cobra. He wore a blanket weighing nine maunds. He had a belt one hundred cubits long. On reading Krishna's letter, Bidwa put on his armour and equipped

himself with all the magical appliances and at once rushed to Dwarka like a storm. Krishna told him about Brahma's death and requested him to proceed to Chandankot, kill the Serpent King there; restore Brahma to life and bring Pathar Mala.

Bidwa started for Chandankot and, encountering many difficulties in the way, reached there. He went straight to the Serpent King's palace and challenged him to fight with him. After a long and severe struggle Bidwa killed the Serpent King. He then went to Pathar Mala and asked her to show him the place where Brahma's body was buried. He dug up the corpse and by means of his supernatural powers restored Brahma to life.

Bidwa and Brahma then took Pathar Mala to Joulagarh, and from there brought Moti Mala and Pathar Mala with the pair of dice to Dwarka, in a triumphant procession. Moti Mala was married to Krishna while Pathar Mala was married to his younger brother Brahma Kunwar.

## II SAUNU AND BIRMU

Once upon a time there lived two brothers named Saunu and Birmu in Kalavatikot. The name of Saunu's wife was Kunjavati. Birmu, who was older than Saunu, was very cunning. He did not want

to give Saunu any share in the ancestral property. He complained to Saunu that Kunjavati had caused their cattle to damage the crops of the other villagers and made them their enemies. He advised Saunu to kill his wife. Saunu believed his brother and went in search of his wife in order to kill her. He found her tending cattle. When he raised his dagger to kill her, she fell at his feet and prayed for mercy. She said that she would go and live at her father's house and remain faithful to her husband. Saunu was moved by her entreaties and spared her. She went to live at her father's house. Saunu returned home and told Birmu that he had killed his wife and asked him to find him another wife. Birmu told his four sons, whose names were Gaja, Gaje Singh, Uddi and Udai Singh, to drive Saunu out of Kalavatikot. Saunu wandered about and at last settled down in a deserted village called Banjakot. He then brought his wife from her father's house, reclaimed some waste-land and became prosperous. One day he went out shooting in the Harijali jungle, where his brother Birmu had also gone to shoot with his attendants.

Saunu shot four deer and sent one to his brother. Birmu became jealous of Saunu's success. He

sent the deer to Guru Gyan Chand, King of Champawat, with a letter in which he reported against Saunu for his disloyalty to the King, and his shooting wild animals against the King's orders. Guru Gyan Chand was very angry and sent a large army to punish Saunu. When Saunu saw the King's army approaching he committed suicide, leaving behind his Rani Kunjavati. When Birmu heard about Saunu's death he went to Banjakot and feigned much sympathy with Kunjavati. He cunningly robbed her of all her property, offering to support her if she went to live with him. But Kunjavati knew his wickedness and refused to go. She was reduced to extreme poverty and was obliged to support herself by begging. Kunjavati was with child when her husband died. In due course twin sons were born to her, Sheo Ram and Maya Ram. She feared lest Birmu should kill them also and took them to the dense forest called Sarupani and lived in a grotto called the *Dhoula* cave. The twins were born heroes and performed extraordinary feats of strength even in their childhood. One day, when going out to fetch herbs and roots, she forbade them to leave the grotto, and tried to frighten them by telling them that a certain demon, called 'Ghogar,' lived in the

neighbourhood. The boys, who were then six years old, felt a great curiosity to see 'Ghogar' and went out to a neighbouring ridge in search of it. They came across a big tiger and, taking him for 'Ghogar,' caught him and brought him to their grotto and tied him there to show to their mother. When their mother returned, both of them ran out to meet her and said that they had caught 'Ghogar,' she had mentioned, and brought him to show to her. On seeing the tiger, Kunjavati was frightened and told her sons to untie it. She prayed to the tiger, calling him the king of the forests, and offered him her own person if he spared her sons. The tiger went back into the jungle. On another occasion Kunjavati had prohibited her sons from crossing a certain ridge from which Kalavatikot was visible. But the boys, out of curiosity, crossed the forbidden ridge and from there saw Kalavatikot. They went near the village and saw Birmu and his four sons ploughing their Sera (irrigated land) called *Gajlika Sera*. They approached Birmu; and, on being questioned, told him all about themselves. Birmu feigned great affection for them, praised their heroic demeanour, and said that he would like to see them wrestle with his four sons. Sheo Ram and Maya Ram agreed

and dashed two of them on the ground with such force that they died. On seeing this, Birmu said: "My dear nephews, I don't blame you for killing my two sons, it was a mere accident. Come to my house and have a dinner. You must be feeling very hungry." Birmu asked their permission to go ahead to order a meal for them. On reaching home he informed the widows of his deceased sons that Sheo Ram and Maya Ram had killed their husbands, that he had invited them to a dinner, and he suggested that they should mix poison in the food. When the two widows saw Sheo Ram and Maya Ram they were charmed by their beauty and did not poison the food. Birmu was extremely disappointed. After partaking of the meal Sheo Ram and Maya Ram went back to their forest home and related the story to their mother. The mother wept and related to them her whole story. Sheo Ram and Maya Ram were much enraged and brought their mother back to their home Banjakot. Sheo Ram and Maya Ram then went in search of Birmu's surviving sons in order to kill them. Gaja and Gaje Singh, the surviving sons of Birmu, were returning on elephants from an expedition to the Doon with a large booty, followed by a large number of attendants. Sheo Ram and

Maya Ram met them on the way, saluted them, and told them how their two brothers had been killed by them in a wrestling match. Maya Ram and Sheo Ram further demanded their father's half share in the ancestral property; failing which they would kill them also. Gaja and Gaje Singh were much enraged and refused to give Maya Ram and Sheo Ram the least share in the property. On this a fight ensued between them, lasting for nine days and nine nights. At last Maya Ram and Sheo Ram killed Gaja and Gaje Singh with all their attendants and carried off all the booty. Maya Ram then went to his maternal aunt who lived with her husband at Sidakot. He took presents, and was accompanied by a large number of attendants. On seeing the party approaching Sidakot, the husband of Maya Ram's aunt suspected that some enemy had come to invade his territory. He took a large army to oppose them and, without making an inquiry, killed Maya Ram.

In the meantime Sheo Ram invaded Kalawatikot, killed Birmu and brought the four widows of the four sons to Banjakot. On learning of the death of his dear brother Maya Ram, Sheo Ram was overpowered by grief and killed himself with a dagger. On hearing about the death of her sons



Kunjavati too fainted away. Only the four widows of Birmu's sons survived. Thus was the whole family ruined through the wickedness of Birmu.

## 12. HANSA KUNWAR

Once upon a time a Prince named Jhalu Rai ruled in Khimsari Hat. His queen's name was Dhungawati, by whom he had seven sons. Their names were Chhani Kunwar, Mani Kunwar, Sal Kunwar, Mal Kunwar, Hati Kunwar, Hansa Kunwar and Bhagdeo Kunwar. They owned several villages. Jhalu Rai was very old. His hump touched the heavens and his belly was as deep as the nether lands. There was a great famine in Khimsari Hat and Jhalu Rai's family began to starve. The daughter of Trimal Chand, a Prince of Champawat Hat, name Saru, had been betrothed to Hansa Kunwar. Jhalu Rai told his sons to go to Trimal Chand for help. When they reached Trimal Chand's house, he loosed his hounds to scare them away. Thus disappointed they returned home. When they could not get food from anywhere they sold their brother Hati Kunwar to Kunjai Pal, King of Nandnikot, for twenty *khars* (one *khar* is about sixteen maunds)

of *jhangora* (millet) grain, which they brought home. Jhalu Kunwar inquired about Hati Kunwar. They replied that he had got employed under Kunjai Pal. On hearing this old Jhalu Rai was much pleased. When about to die he called his other sons to his side, blessed them and expired. When Trimal Chand saw the house of Khimsari Hat reduced to such extreme poverty, he hit upon a plan to avoid the marriage of his daughter to Hansa Kunwar. He wrote a letter to Ghoga, the warrior of Biral Nagar, in which he said that he would give his daughter in marriage to him if he killed the seven sons of Jhalu Rai, who wanted to carry her away by force, and also promised him a big *jagir*. At the same time he also wrote another letter to Hansa Kunwar to the effect that Ghoga was about to elope with his daughter Saru, who had been betrothed to him (Hansa), and that he should come and fight against Ghoga. On receiving the letters Ghoga and his fourteen comrades on the one hand, and Hansa and his seven brothers on the other, proceeded to Champawatgarh to fight against each other. Raja Trimal Chand received Ghoga and his party with great honours, while Hansa and his brothers remained unnoticed and camped near

a spring. When the men of Ghoga went to fetch water from the spring Hansa did not allow them to fill their water pots. They returned without water and reported the matter to Ghoga. Ghoga and his fourteen comrades were furious, went to the spring and challenged Hansa to fight with them. They fought for two days and two nights with varying success. Trimal Chand witnessed the fight from the balcony of his palace. Chhani Kunwar engaged with Ghoga; but was killed after a most heroic fight. Then Hansa Kunwar fought against Ghoga and killed him and his other comrades. On hearing about the death of Ghoga and his party, Kunjai Pal of Kunjnikot collected a large army and attacked Hansa and his brothers. Hansa fought against Kunjai Pal's army for two days and two nights. At last Kunjai Pal cut off the head of Hansa Kunwar. Saru too was witnessing the battle in breathless suspense and, when Hansa Kunwar fell on the ground, she fainted. The earth shook like an earthquake when Hansa Kunwar fell on the ground.

When Hati Kunwar saw that Hansa and the other brothers had been killed he rushed into the battlefield and killed Kunjai Pal and his army. He then entered Trimal Chand's palace and killed

him and his sons, and razed his palace to the ground. When Saru recovered her senses, she prayed to Hati Kunwar to let her become *Sati* with her lord Hansa Kunwar. Hati Kunwar prepared a funeral pyre. Saru mounted it and, placing Hansa's corpse on her lap, was burnt to ashes. After performing the funeral rites of the deceased, Hati Kunwar went to bathe at a spring. In the meantime two sons of Kunjai Pal by name Bighni and Bijai Pal arrived. While Hati Kunwar was bathing they shot arrows at his naked body, which pierced him through and through and killed him. Thus did the house of Khimsari Hat become extinct through the treachery of Trimal Chand.

### 13. MALU SAHI AND RAJULA

Once upon a time Raja Dham Sahi, son of Pithora Chand, reigned in Katyuragarh. His Rani's name was Dharmavati. The Raja, who was very old, had no issue. They prayed for twelve years to their family God for a son, who, at last, granted their prayer. A most beautiful son was born to them, who was named Malu Sahi. Malu Sahi was a most precocious child and was a born hero. Simultaneously with the birth of Malu Sahi, a daughter was also born to Raja Saunpati Sonk of Saunkot, who was named Rajula. It seemed as

if Providence had wedded Malu Sahi and Rajula even before their birth. When Malu Sahi was twelve years of age, his father, Dham Sahi, married him to two beautiful princesses named Hansia and Kausia. In the meantime Rajula also grew up and was of marriageable age. Princes from far and wide went to seek the hand of Rajula. Saun Pal agreed to marry her to Guna Pal, Prince of Jalander. An auspicious day was fixed for their marriage. When the marriage day approached, Rajula saw Malu Sahi in a dream and was charmed with his beauty. At the same time Malu Sahi also saw Rajula in a dream, telling him about her impending marriage with Guna Pal and inviting him to come and take her away. On awaking Malu Sahi became uneasy and told his mother about his dream and expressed a strong desire to go and fetch Rajula.

All remonstrances by his mother failed and Malu Sahi started for Saunkot. He passed through the country of the Durials where lived seven witches. On seeing Malu Sahi the witches fell in love with him and tried all their wits to entrap him. But Malu Sahi overpowered them by his super-magical powers and proceeded further. He then reached the Trijugi peak, the

abode of Siva. There he prayed to the God to help him in his enterprise. Then he proceeded further and at last reached Saunkot. He disguised himself as a *sadhu* and sat in front of Raja Saunpati's palace. Saunpati was much impressed with the saintly look of the *sadhu* and ordered his servants to take him inside the palace and to look after his comforts. Malu Sahi met Rajula in the palace and told her all about his dream. The two lovers lived happily until the marriage day of Rajula with Guna Pal approached. Then Rajula began to grow anxious and besought Malu Sahi to take her away.

On the eve of her wedding Rajula ran away with Malu Sahi. As soon as Guna Pal came to know about it, he pursued them with a large number of followers and saw them crossing a rope bridge over a river.

While Guna Pal's men were crossing the bridge Malu Sahi cut the ends of the rope and caused them to be drowned in the river. Malu Sahi then triumphantly carried Rajula to his home in Katyuragarh and married her with great eclat.

There was great rejoicing in Katyuragarh and Malu Sahi lived happily with his queen.

## 14. GANGU RAMOLA

The genealogy of the house of Ramolas of Ramolihat is as follows :

(1) Jainu, (2) Birmu, (3) Kripa, (4) Pirtu, (5) Saktu, (6) Bhaktu, (7) Asa, (8) Musa, (9) Jagdeo, (10) Bhagdeo, (11) Aila, (12) Gaila, (13) Joga, (14) Ghoga, (15) Gangu.

Gangu had two sons, Sidwa and Bidwa. Sidwa's son was Kharak Singh.

Gangu lived at Ramolihat. He owned ten *ryulas* of lands as *jagir*. His wife's name was Mainavati. Gangu was one hundred years of age. He had riches like stones and grain like heaps of dust; but had no issue.

Gangu was a heretic and did not believe in gods. He was also very proud and did not salute anybody. He used to take away forcibly the sacrificial goats of his subjects and levied taxes on unmarried girls and dry buffaloes.

God Krishna wanted to chastise him for his heresy. One day Krishna went to Ramolihat disguised as a Brahman. Gangu had gone to Haryali forest to tend his ten score flocks. His Rani and the other people of Ramolihat were surprised at the supernatural appearance of the

Brahman. On being asked by the Rani the Brahman replied that he was Gangu's family priest, and had come to consult his horoscope to find out whether Gangu's stars were propitious enough to bestow on him a male issue. The Brahman saw Gangu's horoscope and then suddenly disappeared. Gangu returned home soon after and was told about the Brahman. But Gangu rebuked his Rani and did not believe in astrology. Suddenly Gangu began to feel a severe pain in his back. All his wealth was reduced to dust and the grain of his granaries was all eaten up by ants. His flocks began to die and his crops to wither. Gangu enquired from his wife what the cause of their misfortune might be. She replied that it was due to the wrath of the Brahman who had lately visited their home. The whole family of Gangu began to starve; but still Gangu did not give up his heresy and repent. Then God Krishna called out to Gangu from the high peak of Kalma mountain. Gangu enquired who he was. The God replied, "I am thy family God and will restore all thy lost wealth, if thou wilt build a temple for me at Baruni Sema." Gangu said, "I will believe in you if you can recount my pedigree." The God gave Gangu's pedigree all right. Still Gangu could



not be converted from his scepticism and said, " Ah, perhaps you might have learnt it from others. I will believe that it was the voice of my family God if you could kill a demon who dwells in this neighbourhood."

The God blew his trumpet and the demon suddenly appeared before him. The demon's name was Heramba. On seeing the Brahman, Heramba said, exultingly, that she had been without food for a long time, and had found a victim at last. Krishna replied, " Let us first sit on the swing by turns and try each other's strength and then you may devour me." Krishna first sat on the swing and asked Heramba to lift it. She tried her utmost but could not lift the swing. Then Krishna got down and asked the demon to ascend the swing. When Heramba had ascended the swing Krishna gave it such a push that the swing rose up to the clouds and Heramba fell down from it and was killed. Her head fell into the Masi forest. The whole of Ramoligarh shook when the demon fell to the ground. Gangu sent two mutes to see what had happened. When the mutes approached Krishna they recovered their speech. They returned home and told Gangu that the demon had been killed by the God and that he had

restored their speech. Still Gangu would not believe in the God. He said that the demon must have been killed by accident, as none could kill her. Then God Krishna went to Gangu's house, disguised as a *sadhu*, and begged for milk and curds. Gangu pushed him out and ordered his wife to give the *sadhu* only coarse grains as alms. But Mainavati gave him fine rice instead. The *sadhu* blessed Mainavati and cursed Gangu, saying that he would become a leper. Gangu immediately became a leper and was in a great agony. Still Gangu would not give up his heresy. Then the God became a serpent and a scorpion, in turn, and sat on Gangu's bed. But Gangu threw them away and did not heed the warning. At last the God caused all the water springs in Ramolihat to dry up. The people began to die of thirst. Gangu ordered water to be brought from the Ganges. But it was changed into blood as soon as Gangu lifted it to his lips. There was universal distress in Ramolihat. Mainavati advised Gangu to consult the Brahmans as to the cause of their calamity. At last Gangu was persuaded to go to consult the Brahmans. While going, Gangu's path was crossed by a servant. The Brahmans told Gangu that his misfortune was due to the wrath of his family God Krishna and that he

should go on a pilgrimage to Dwarka and appease the God's wrath. At last Gangu repented and went on a pilgrimage to Dwarka and prayed to God Krishna and begged to be forgiven. Krishna was pleased with Gangu and ordered him to build a temple at Sem and dedicate it to him. Gangu built a large temple at Sem, but it disappeared as soon as it was completed. Then Gangu built more temples at Asin Sem, Barasin Sem, Gupt Sem, Luka Sem, Bhuka Sem, Mukhem and Prakat Sem. On building these temples prosperity returned to Ramolihat and Gangu was restored to his former health and good fortune. Two sons were born to Gangu, whose names were Sidwa and Bidwa, who became great heroes.

#### 15. BIGHNI AND BIJAI PAL

Once there lived a Prince named Kunj Pal at Kalavatikot. He had many villages. His large granaries were over-full of grain. He possessed large herds and flocks and was very rich. He had two sons named Kirti Pal and Chand Pal.

He liked his younger son Chand Pal better than Kirti Pal on account of his noble qualities. When Kunj Pal grew old and was about to die, he called his two sons to his side and divided his property

between them. He gave a much larger share of his property to Chand Pal, which offended Kirti Pal extremely, so much so that when Kunj Pal died Kirti Pal did not take part in Kunj Pal's funeral rites.

Chand Pal was a great warrior. His chest was three cubits broad and round like a *ritha* nut. His forehead was broad, and his moustaches were long and thick. His eyes were beautiful like those of a gazelle.

After the death of Kunj Pal, Kirti Pal became still more envious of his brother and hatched a plot to kill him and take possession of his property. He wrote to the Raja of the Doon that Chand Pal had made a conspiracy to kill him (the Raja of Doon) and that he should come and punish Chand Pal. On hearing this the Raja of the Doon collected a large army of Harwals and invaded Chand Pal's territory.

On seeing the enemy approaching Chand Pal thought that, perhaps, they had come to attack his brother Kirti Pal. He told his Rani, Anna Mala, about it and expressed a wish to go to help his brother against the enemy. Anna Mala replied, "Your brother Kirti Pal owes you a grudge, because of the unequal distribution of the property

by your father. I fear he has brought the enemy to take his revenge upon you." But Chand Pal was too generous to listen to his wife's advice. He went to Kirti Pal, and, informing him of the danger, offered his services to him. The cunning Kirti Pal feigned great affection for Chand Pal and thanked him for the offer, and said, "Dear brother, I am too old to fight. I am afraid thou wilt have to fight the enemy single-handed. But I am confident thou wilt gain victory over the enemy and vindicate the honour of our house." Chand Pal readily consented. He called Champhu, his family bard, and asked him to accompany him to the battlefield. He donned his helmet and armour, rode his famous war-horse and galloped towards the enemy's camp, while Champhu danced ahead, playing on his *kurki* (a small drum) and singing stirring songs in praise of his master's prowess. The Harwals were cooking their food in their camp when Chand Pal arrived. Chand Pal rode into their kitchen and polluted their food. He then challenged the Harwals to fight against him. A big battle ensued. Chand Pal soon killed the whole army of Harwals. The ground was covered with the corpses of the enemy, and streams of blood began to flow. One of the

Harwals, however, managed to escape and brought Moguls for help. A large army of the Moguls arrived and fought against Chand Pal. Chand Pal killed them too, after a severe battle.

Chand Pal then returned home in a triumphant procession, and, approaching his brother Kirti Pal, related how, through God's grace, the whole army of the enemy had been killed, and congratulated Kirti Pal on the victory. The treacherous Kirti Pal feigned to be pleased and ordered a sumptuous feast for Chand Pal. He then asked Chand Pal to go to bathe at the spring close by. When Chand Pal put off his clothes and was bathing, Kirti Pal stealthily went and stabbed Chand Pal from behind, inflicting mortal wounds. While dying, Chand Pal looked back towards his assassin and said, "Oh thou traitor! Is this the reward for my services? O villain! God will punish thee for thy foul deed." So saying, Chand Pal gave up the ghost. Kirti Pal then went to Chand Pal's house and plundered all his property, leaving his widow Anna Mala utterly destitute. Anna Mala wept bitterly, but the rascal was unmoved. Anna Malla was with child when her husband died and was soon delivered of twin sons Bighni (ominous) and Bijai Pal (victorious). She wept

when the children were born, as she feared that Kirti Pal would kill them also as soon as he heard about their birth.

She took them into a jungle and brought them up there, living upon wild roots and fruits. Bighni Pal and Bijai Pal were giants and began to perform great feats of strength from their very childhood. They brought live tigers and rode on them. When they were twelve years of age, they enquired from their mother about their father. The mother wept and gave evasive replies; and scolded them for their inquisitiveness. But the boys would not rest content and pressed their mother to tell them about their father. At last she related the whole story of her adversity and how their uncle Kirti Pal had killed their father. On hearing this Bighni Pal and Bijai Pal were much enraged and took a vow not to rest until they had wreaked vengeance on Kirti Pal. They went straight to Kirti Pal's house and enquired from him about their father. The treacherous Kirti Pal pretended to be much grieved about the death of his brother, embraced his nephews, and shedding crocodile tears, told them that their father, his dear brother, had been killed by the enemy. He pretended to receive them kindly

and offered them milk to drink. At the same time he secretly sent word to his wife to mix poison in the milk and bring two cups for Bighni and Bijai Pal. The two brothers drank the poisoned milk and became unconscious. Kirti Pal was overjoyed, thinking them to be dead, and he ordered their bodies to be thrown into a river. The bodies floated for a long distance and were eventually thrown by the current on the bank. On reaching the bank they revived and recovered consciousness. Bighni and Bijai Pal then went home and related the story to their mother, Anna Mala. Anna Mala was overjoyed and thanked God for having saved her sons from the enemy. She then gave them strict orders not to stir out of their den. But Bighni and Bijai Pal's blood boiled with rage against Kirti Pal. They went to Kirti Pal's house, and, dragging him and his treacherous wife out, dashed them on the ground and killed them. Kirti Pal had five sons, Runki, Khunki, Bhanu, Kamla and Moti, who were great warriors. They fought most ferociously against Bighni and Bijai Pal for one day and one night. At last Bighni and Bijai Pal killed them all. Then the whole army of Kirti Pal went to fight against Bighni and Bijai Pal; but they, too, were



killed by them. Then the victors entered the palace of Kirti Pal and found the five widows of Kirti Pal's sons there. The widows craved for mercy. But they killed them also; saying that they would not leave a single seed of the tyrant Kirti Pal alive. They destroyed and plundered the palace of Kirti Pal and brought the booty to their home. Then they brought their mother from the jungle and reigned over their kingdom in peace and happiness.

#### 16. KUNJI PAL AND KIRTI PAL

Once upon a time Guru Gyan Chand was the King of Champawatgarh. He had two brothers, Thor Chand and Trimal Chand, who owned many villages in *jagir*. They exacted various kinds of illegal taxes from their Khaikars of Chauras Pattis, who were as numerous as mustard seeds. The Khaikars were sore distressed at the illegal exactions of Thor Chand and Trimal Chand and in vain appealed to Guru Gyan Chand for redress. At that time there lived two brothers, Kirti Pal and Kunji Pal, at Thati Silakot. Kunji Pal was a great hero and called all the Khaikars together and resolved to stop payment of all such illegal taxes. When Guru Gyan Chand heard of this he was

furious and determined to punish the Khaikars and their ring-leaders severely. He called his brothers and courtiers for advice; who all decided that a large army should be sent to punish the recalcitrant Khaikars.

Guru Gyan Chand then ordered his *pahris* (watchmen) to proclaim by beat of drum among his subjects that they should all collect together and be ready to invade the territory of the Khaikars. Twelve thousand troops soon paraded in the *chandni chauk* (courtyard) of Guru Gyan Chand's palace and all other preparations for the invasion were in full swing. Then Raja Gyan Chand sent a letter to Kunji Pal offering him a large plot of irrigated land, yielding twelve *khars* (about 200 maunds) rice per crop as a reward, if he persuaded the Khaikars to pay up the arrears of the taxes; and if he failed to do so, Guru Gyan Chand threatened to invade his Thati Silakot and raze it to the ground.

Kunji Pal was a great warrior. His breast was six cubits broad, his feet were one and a quarter cubits in length, his head alone weighed five maunds. On reading the Raja's letter his blood boiled with rage. The hair on his arms stood on end and the strings of his coat burst asunder.

He showed the letter to his elder brother, Kirti Pal. But the latter was indifferent and said that he was too old to fight. Kunji Pal wrote on the back of the letter challenging Gyan Chand to come and fight against him. Gyan Chand then invaded Thati Silakot with a large army. The enemy surrounded the fort of Thati Silakot at night and set fire to it. When the whole fort was on fire Kunji Pal awoke and went to Kirti Pal for help. But the treacherous Kirti Pal did not stir out of his bed and began to curse Kunji Pal for having courted the trouble. Kunji Pal then went out and saw the fort surrounded by the enemy and on fire. Kunji Pal reproached Gyan Chand for having attacked him stealthily at night. Kunji Pal extinguished the fire and then, putting on his armour, rushed into the midst of the army of Gyan Chand and mowed down the whole army with his shining dagger. Raja Gyan Chand and his two brothers escaped and fled to Champawatgarh. The battlefield was covered with corpses and streams of blood flowed.

Kunji Pal then brought all the booty home. He offered half the share of the booty to his brother Kirti Pal. But the greedy Kirti Pal refused and demanded a double share. The

generous Kunji Pal granted his this unreasonable request.

Though Kunji Pal had defeated Gyan Chand, still he was in constant fear of Gyan Chand and became anxious of his wife Ganga Mala, who was with child. He went to his wife with a heavy heart and warned her of the possible danger. In order to save his wife and his unborn child he scooped a deep hollow on the side of a mountain and stocked it with provisions sufficient for twelve years. He consoled his wife, took her there and placed her in the grotto. Bidding farewell to his wife he said, "I have roused the wrath of Raja Gyan Chand, who is sure to leave no stone unturned to kill me. I shall fight him to the bitter end and will not yield. I have made sufficient provision for you for twelve years. I hope a son will be born to you who will take you out of this grotto and wreak revenge on the enemy." Ganga Malla wept bitterly and entreated Kunji Pal to go and apologize to the King. But the hero would not stoop to apologize and was prepared for the worst. He embraced his wife and, putting a huge stone on the entrance of the grotto, returned to Thati Silakot.

After a while Gyan Chand again sent a letter to Kunji Pal in which he said that the tenants of Kumoli village in the Doon had revolted against him and stopped paying taxes. He requested Kunji Pal to go and quell the disturbance and offered to give his daughter Leela Vati in marriage to his son and to grant a *jagir* of several villages as a reward.

Kunji Pal showed the letter to his brother Kirti Pal and asked him to accompany him. Kirti Pal again declined. At last Kunji Pal persuaded him to go. They rode on two fleet horses and reached a ridge called Tama Dhonda, from where the Doon was visible. From there they saw the beautiful Doon, with its teeming population and prosperous villages. They also saw the village of Kumoli where the enemy lived. On seeing the enemy's village Kirti Pal became extremely nervous and refused to proceed further. He thrust his head into a hollow, with his back turned outwards, like a coward.

Kunji Pal galloped towards the enemy's country. His horse flew up in the clouds and then dropped down on the borders of the Doon, where the enemy had placed, by way of challenge, a heavy drum and a club weighing a hundred

maunds. Kunji Pal struck the drum with such force that its sound reached Kumoli, where the enemy resided. He also lifted up the huge club and, hurling it up in the air, held it on his shoulders and then threw it towards Kumoli. The club fell over the gate of the enemy's fort with a terrible sound and smashed it. The village folk were panic-stricken and ran away to the jungle. Kunji Pal marched on and reached the village of Silori. On the way he met a group of village girls who were going to fetch water from a spring. The girls rebuked Kunji Pal for not salaaming them. Kunji Pal enquired who they were. They replied that they hailed from the village which had refused payment of rents to Raja Gyan Chand. On hearing this Kunji Pal broke their pitchers with his club and went on his way. When he had gone a little distance, the enemy (Asurs) attacked him with spears and arrows. But as Kunji Pal was wearing a steel coat and helmet, the arrows had no effect on him. Kunji Pal killed twelve thousand men of the enemy with his dagger. The enemy then surrendered and paid up all the arrears of the rents to Gyan Chand. Kunji Pal brought a large booty from the Doon, and reached the place where Kirti Pal lay hid in

the hollow. Kunji Pal told his brother about his victory and asked him to accompany home. When Kirti Pal saw Kunji Pal bringing a large amount of booty, Kirti Pal began to beat his breast and cry, saying that, while Kunji Pal was taking so much booty home, he (Kirti Pal) would return empty-handed. Kunji Pal generously offered to give him half. But Kirti Pal would not take less than double the share. Kunji Pal enquired why he had not returned home. Kirti Pal replied, "How could I leave my dear brother alone? When I saw you fighting against the enemy I wished I could lift up this mountain and hurl it on the enemy. O brother, on going home you should tell the people that you could not have defeated the enemy if I had not helped you." Kunji Pal readily agreed. On reaching home, Kunji Pal told the people as desired by Kirti Pal, and sent a double share of the booty to Kirti Pal's house. Kirti Pal's wife was overjoyed to hear of her husband's achievements and sang songs in praise of his heroism.

Kunji Pal then wrote to Gyan Chand informing him about his victory over the enemy and asking for the promised reward. Gyan Chand was at his wits' end and did not know how to reply.

Kunji Pal then wrote to him again that he was coming to Champawatgarh and that he (Gyan Chand) should make preparations for his reception.

On hearing this Gyan Chand shook with rage. He called his brothers and courtiers and said that the marriage of their daughter to Kunji Pal's son, their Khaikar, would be a great disgrace to their family. Gyan Chand's brothers and courtiers advised him not to be too anxious as they would set matters right when Kunji Pal arrived. Soon afterwards Kunji Pal and Kirti Pal arrived at Champawatgarh and went straight into Gyan Chand's palace. They were received by Gyan Chand and his brother with a show of honour and were taken to the palace. A smoke was prepared for the guests. But they treacherously mixed poison with the tobacco. Kunji Pal suspected foul play and warned his brother not to smoke. Kunji Pal had greater regard for his brother's life than even for his own. They both declined to smoke. When Kirti Pal knew that his life was in danger he began to tremble with fear. But Kunji Pal cheered him up and said that such cowardice did not become a hero.

Then a sumptuous feast was prepared for the guests. But Kunji Pal again begged to be excused,



saying that they were accustomed to cook their own food. Then Raja Gyan Chand ordered rations to be supplied to them and also sent some servants for fetching water and doing other menial work. But Kunji Pal again suspected danger, sent away the servants, asked his brother to cook the food and went himself to fetch water. But Kirti Pal said that it would be derogatory to his honour to do the cooking. On this Kunji Pal became angry with Kirti Pal and cooked for himself alone, leaving Kirti Pal to starve. Kirti Pal got much offended with Kunji Pal. When Gyan Chand heard about the quarrel between them, he called Kirti Pal to his house at night and promised to give his daughter Leela Vati in marriage to his son if he killed Kunji Pal while he was asleep.

At first Kirti Pal hesitated; but at last he agreed. At night when Kunji Pal was fast asleep, the villainous Kirti Pal tied his hands and feet with chains and stabbed him with the dagger given to him by Gyan Chand. Kunji Pal received a mortal wound. He looked towards Kirti Pal and said, "O thou traitor, whom I loved more than myself and to whom I have shown so many favours. Thou hast not scrupled to kill thy own brother with the enemy's dagger; yet I forgive thee.

Remember me to my wife and be kind to her and her child when it is born." But the villain was unmoved and cut off Kunji Pal's head and took it to Gyan Chand.

Next morning Kirti Pal went to Gyan Chand and asked him to redeem his promise and to marry his daughter to his son. But Gyan Chand refused and ordered him to leave the palace. Kirti Pal continued to remonstrate. Gyan Chand loosened his ferocious dogs upon him. Kirti Pal fled and jumped into a river to save his life, and, at last, reached home. He told the people that Gyan Chand had killed Kunji Pal and that he (Kirti Pal) had narrowly escaped. But the truth was soon found out.

In the meantime Kunji Pal's wife, Ganga Mala, was delivered of a male child in the mountain cave. The baby was a giant. His back was one cubit broad. Ganga Mala wept and threw away the baby in a corner of the grotto, saying that it was better that he should die at the very birth than be killed by the enemy like his father. The baby crawled back to his mother's side and began to cry.

Ganga Mala was charmed by the beauty of the baby and began to suckle him and named him Khetra Pal. On the third day after his birth

while Gangadei was warming him at fire, he kicked at the iron tripod lying near and broke it. When Khetra Pal was twelve years of age he heard some sound outside the grotto and enquired from his mother what it was. Ganga Mala told him not to bother about the outside world. But Khetra Pal's curiosity could not be overcome and he continued questioning his mother. At last Ganga Mala told him that the sound was of the hoofs of the horses of the sons and grandsons of Kirti Pal, who was his uncle. She wept and related the whole story of their exile, his father Kunji Pal's enmity with Gyan Chand, and how Kirti Pal had killed Kunji Pal. On hearing this Khetra Pal's blood boiled with rage. He kicked against the rock placed against the entrance of the grotto and threw it open.

He then brought his mother out and asked her to show him their home and that of Kirti Pal. Ganga Mala took him to a high mountain peak and from there, showed him their home, Silakot, and the house of Kirti Pal. Khetra Pal then went straight to his house and found it in ruins. Then he went to Kirti Pal's house and found him very prosperous. He then returned to his mountain

home, made another grotto in the forest, and removed his mother into it.

Khetra Pal used to kill wild animals and live upon their flesh. He also made garments of leaves for himself and his mother.

One day, while he was going out in search of game, he came across the flocks belonging to Guru Gyan Chand, which his shepherd Nandu was tending. Khetra Pal killed all of them and carried them in a huge load to his cave. Nandu pursued him. Khetra Pal hid himself in the bushes and remained concealed for nine days and nights. There Guru Gorakh Nath and the other nine Sidhas appeared before him, and, taking pity on him, gave him a magical coat, called *jhar jhar khanta*, and a flute, saying that, by putting on the robe, the wearer would become invisible, and, by playing on the flute, his enemy would dance to death. They blessed Khetra Pal and disappeared. Khetra Pal was overjoyed and taking the robe and the flute proceeded straight to Champawatgarh. On the way he met one hundred coolies who were carrying slates for Guru Gyan Chand. The coolies began to crack jokes with Khetra Pal, who was wearing a coat of leaves and looked like a wild animal. Khetra Pal played on the flute, when

all the coolies began to dance and died. Then Khetra Pal arrived at Champawatgarh. In the meantime Gyan Chand had already heard of the death of his men. He had posted one thousand soldiers to guard his palace. On reaching the gate, Khetra Pal put on the magical coat which made him invisible. He thus passed through the palace gate unnoticed. He then entered the apartments of Gyan Chand's daughter, Leela Vati, and related to her his whole story. They lived together for several days. When Gyan Chand came to know about Khetra Pal's presence, he sent a large army to arrest him. But as soon as the troops approached, Khetra Pal played on his magical flute, when all the soldiers began to dance, and died one by one. Gyan Chand was extremely frightened at this, called Khetra Pal to him, prayed for mercy, and offered to give his daughter in marriage to him. The marriage was celebrated in a right royal manner. Khetra Pal then asked Gyan Chand to give back his (Khetra Pal's) father's head to him. As soon as Kunji Pal's head was dug up, it flew up in the sky and immediately bullets showered down on Gyan Chand's palace, destroying it completely, and killing all the inmates.

Then Khetra Pal, with his queen, brought Kunj Pal's head on a palanquin in a triumphant procession to his home. He then brought his mother from the forest. Khetra Pal then went to Kirti Pal's house, killed him and all his family, and razed his palace to the ground.

Having revenged himself on his enemies, Khetra Pal celebrated his victory with great pomp and lived happily with his wife and mother.

#### 17. JAG DEO PANWAR (KATYURA)

The pedigree of Jagdeo Panwar is as follows:

Jaikand Panwar, Maikand Panwar, Daulat Rai, Randhaura Panwar, and Jagdeo Panwar.

Jagdeo Panwar and his cousin, Jai Singh Panwar, ruled in Dharanagari. While Jagdeo was famous for his generosity, Jai Singh was a great miser. There lived one Chanchu Bhat of Malsigarh, who had one daughter named Mahakali; while one Betal Bhat of the same place had four sons. Chanchu Bhat was much grieved, as he had no sons who could beg alms and support him as Betal Bhat's sons did. When his daughter Mahakali, who was the Goddess Kali incarnate, came to know this, she consoled Chanchu Bhat and said that she could earn much more by begging than all the four

sons of Betal put together. On hearing this Chanchu Bhat asked Mahakali to go to Dharanagari to beg alms. Mahakali took her begging bowl in hand and first went to Jai Singh's house. Jai Singh, in order to deceive Mahakali, made all his courtiers put on the same kind of dress as he himself was wearing. Mahakali could not find out which was Jai Singh. Mahakali cursed Jai Singh for deceiving her. When Raja Jagdeo saw this, he was much annoyed with Jai Singh. He invited Mahakali to his palace and offered to give her whatever she should ask. On this, by way of retort, Jai Singh promised Mahakali double the amount of presents which Jagdeo would give. Then Mahakali went to Jagdeo's house to beg alms. Jagdeo consulted his ministers as to what present he should give to her. Some suggested elephants, some lands, some money, but Jagdeo was not satisfied. He wished to offer the head of one of his seven Ranis as a sacrifice to Mahakali. He went and asked each one of his Ranis if they were willing. Six of them declined. The seventh Rani, called Chauhani, whom the King had discarded ever since her marriage at the age of seven, expressed her willingness to sacrifice herself for the sake of her husband. She attired herself in her best garments,

as if she were going to meet her Lord, and begged Jagdeo to cut off her head as a sacrifice to Mahakali, saying that there could be no greater honour for a woman than to offer herself as a sacrifice to please her husband. As soon as Jagdeo lifted his sword to kill Chauhani, Mahakali stopped him, and said that she would not accept the sacrifice of a woman; but that he should offer his own head as a sacrifice to her. The Raja pondered and, at last, ordered his own head to be cut off as a sacrifice. Mahakali returned home with Jagdeo's head and related the story to Chanchu Bhat. Chanchu Bhat was greatly moved by Jagdeo's magnanimity and requested Mahakali to go back and restore Jagdeo to life. Mahakali went and, placing the head on the body of Jagdeo, sprinkled nectar on the corpse and restored it to life. Then Mahakali went to Jai Singh and asked him to redeem his promise. Jai Singh was at his wits' end and did not know what to do. He had not the courage either to offer himself or his son as a sacrifice to Mahakali, and hid himself in a dark room of his palace in shame. Mahakali cursed him and returned to Jagdeo's house. Jagdeo Panwar by deed, engraved upon a copper plate, dedicated half of his territory for the worship of



Mahakali. This copper plate still exists, thus immortalizing Jagdeo's name.

#### 18. RAJA PRITAMDEO

In days gone by, a long line of illustrious Princes ruled over the fair Kingdom of Katyur.

The following is the pedigree of those Princes :

Urni Kunwar, Jat Kunwar, Sat Kunwar, Aichand, Baichand, Hunga Dawar, Changa Dawar, Gorabadal, Pirthu, Gangadeo, and Pritamdeo.

Pritamdeo possessed immense wealth and large territories. But he had no issue. When he became old he longed for a son. One day he shut himself in a dark room and lay on a broken bed in despair. The palace drums ceased to beat and the court was not held. He did not eat or drink because of his extreme grief. He had a nephew named Brahmdeo. On hearing about Pritamdeo's distress, Brahmdeo approached him, tried to console him, and said that a man should not despair of progeny until he has married seven wives, and that he (Brahmdeo) would arrange a marriage for him. Pritamdeo agreed.

A Prince named Amardeo Pundir ruled over the neighbouring country of Mayapur Hat.

His pedigree is given thus :

Asa Teg Pundir, Bhag Teg Pundir, Nur Teg Pundir, Saldeo Pundir, Balti Pundir, Airdeo Pundir, Bairdeo Pundir, Asal Teg Pundir, Asram Pundir, Bharti Pundir, Kartan Pundir, and Amardeo Pundir.

Amardeo Pundir had a queen named Jamola, but no issue. Jamola performed great penances and prayed to God Siva for issue. Siva was pleased with her and granted her prayer. In course of time a daughter was born to Rani Jamola, who was named Moladei. Moladei was exceedingly beautiful. When she was seven years of age, Brahmdeo sent a letter to Amardeo Pundir requesting him to give his daughter Moladei in marriage to Pritamdeo. On reading the letter Amardeo Pundir was full of rage. He wrote back to say that the proposal was preposterous. In the first place, Pritamdeo was not of equal social status with him; secondly, he was like a grandfather to the girl. Brahmdeo sent another letter to Amardeo threatening to invade his territory if the latter did not comply with his request. Amardeo was frightened and consented to give his daughter to Pritamdeo. The betrothal ceremony was performed and an auspicious day was fixed for the marriage. On the appointed day Pritamdeo was

taken in a silver palanquin in a great procession to Mayapur Hat. When the marriage ceremony was being performed, and before the ninth step was taken, which completes the marriage-tie, Moladei taunted Pritamdeo in these terms: "Thou, whose head and beard are as white as whey, whose back is bent like a hook, should be ashamed of marrying me, a girl of seven years of age; who am like a grand-daughter to thee." Hearing these words Pritamdeo was much distressed and left the marriage altar and returned home with his men. But Amardeo Pundir felt it a great disgrace that the bridegroom should leave the bride at the marriage altar. He called the blood-thirsty *Maharas* of Kotligarh and sent Moladei in a palanquin to the house of Pritamdeo. Pritamdeo was forced by the *Maharas* to keep Moladei as his wife, by threatening to kill him if he ever ill-treated Moladei. After some time Pritamdeo jeeringly told Moladei to go back to her father's house and conceive a son. Moladei took it as an insult and replied that she would prefer to go on a pilgrimage to various holy places and pray for a son. She accordingly went on a pilgrimage to Badrinath and performed severe penances at the various places of worship. On returning to Joshimath she prayed

most fervently in the temple of Narsingh for a son. The god was pleased with her and caused the rays of the sun to penetrate her womb, by the heat of which she became pregnant. In due course a son of extraordinary beauty and strength was born to her, who was named Dula Dhamdeo. In order to purify herself on the eleventh day after the birth of the son, Moladei went to bathe in the river. A hair from her head dropped in the water and was swallowed by a fish. A fisherman, Bhana by name, of Bhanikot, had cast his net lower down in the river. The fish was caught in the net. The fisherman brought the fish home and presented it to his master Bhaga Turank, Raja of Bhanikot. On cutting open the fish's stomach, a long and beautiful hair was found in it. Bhaga was charmed by its beauty and enquired from Bhana as to where he had caught the fish and asked him to take him there. The fisherman took Bhaga to Nagni Ghat. There he saw Moladei bathing in the river and was charmed by her beauty. Bhaga pitched his tent on the banks of the river nearby and ordered his men to bring Moladei to him. On seeing the men, Moladei was much frightened and prayed to her family goddess to save her honour. As soon as Bhaga's men approached Moladei they all lost their

eyesight. She again prayed that, if she was a truly virtuous woman, the enemy might die. When lo! a shower of thunderbolts fell from the sky on Bhaga and his men and they all perished. Then Moladei returned with her child to Katurgarh. On seeing her son, the other Ranis of Pritamdeo became envious of her; and told Pritamdeo that she had given birth to a bastard son. But Pritamdeo was so much struck by the likeness and beauty of Dhamdeo that he could not disown him. But the other Ranis of Pritamdeo continued to poison his mind against Moladei and her son.

When Dhamdeo was twelve years of age, Pritamdeo, at the instigation of his other Ranis, ordered Dhamdeo to go and kill a demon, called Samwa, who lived in a deep lake nearby, and had carried off seven score of Pritamdeo's buffaloes and drowned them in the lake. Dhamdeo went and challenged Samwa to fight with him. Samwa was struck by the beauty and youth of Dhamdeo and advised him not to risk his life. But when Dhamdeo would not listen, the demon said, "My boy, my soul dwells in the body of your father, Pritamdeo. If you are determined to kill me you should first kill Pritamdeo. Dhamdeo then went back

and killed Pritamdeo. No sooner did Pritamdeo die than the demon also expired.

Dhamdeo then ascended the throne of Katyurgarh and ruled over his kingdom in peace and prosperity.

#### 19. SUMERU RAUTELA AND RANI SURMA

Once two Princes, Chand and Badal, lived at a place called Chandikot. Their pedigree is given thus :

Loki Pal and Triloki Pal, Than Chand,  
Bhan Chand, whose sons were Chand and  
Badal.

Badal was the elder brother. They were very powerful chieftains, owning several villages and were very rich. Each of them had seven Ranis, but had no issue, which made them very anxious. In course of time Badal's eldest Rani, name Kunjavati, was with child and felt a great craving for the flesh of a deer, and requested her husband to procure the same. Badal offered her mutton, fowls and other kinds of flesh, but she would have none of these. Being thus pressed by his Rani, Badal collected a large number of men and went on a shooting expedition. They beat the whole forests of Khairna and Dhoulana, but saw no trace of a deer. When tired and thirsty they camped near

the irrigated fields, known as *Jabli Sera*. The land belonged to Chand and Badal; but the Dewan of Delhi laid claim to it and did not allow it to be cultivated.

On seeing the fine plot of land lying waste, Badal enquired about it and, on being told the reason, was much enraged and said, "How dare the Dewan, a Khasia, prevent us from cultivating our own land?" He called his brother Chand, with a large number of men, and ordered the land to be ploughed. The men repaired the water channel which irrigated the lands and diverted all the water of the stream into it.

When the Dewan heard about it, he shook with rage. He was eighty years old and had seven sons and fourteen grandsons. He took a large scythe with him and went and sat at the head waters of the irrigated channel. He broke the channel and stopped its water. When the water of the channel dried up, Chand and Badal thought that, perhaps, their buffaloes Chauria and Bhauria had broken the channel. Badal asked Chand to go and drive away the buffaloes and repair the water channel. No sooner had Chand reached the spot than the Dewan, who lay in a bush, rushed out and cut off Chand's head with the scythe and

threw it into the water channel. The whole water of the *gul* became red with blood. Badal thought that, perhaps, Chand had killed the buffaloes and himself went to see what had happened. As soon as Badal went near the place where Chand had been killed, the Dewan again rushed out and killed Badal, too, with the scythe. When the men of Chand and Badal saw this they returned home and informed the Ranis of Chand and Badal about the death of their husbands. The whole Chandikot was in deep mourning. The thirteen Ranis of Chand and Badal became *satis*. But Kunjavati, the fourteenth Rani of Badal, who was with child, was prevailed upon not to commit suicide. In due course Kunjavati was delivered of a son. There was great rejoicing in Chandikot. Brahmans were called to prepare the child's horoscope. The Brahmans named the baby Sumeru Rautela and declared that the child could only survive if he was married on the fifth day after his birth. On hearing this, four Brahmans were immediately dispatched in four quarters in search of a bride. They searched far and wide, but could not find any suitable girl. At last they learnt that King Sarang of Sarali Mandal had a daughter named Surma, who was twelve years of age. Princes



from far and near had gone to ask her hand, but she had rejected them all. The Brahmans of Chandikot went to Raja Saran and requested him to give his daughter in marriage to their Prince, who was represented to be a youth of marriageable age. The Brahmans prevailed upon Surma and her father to agree and an auspicious day was fixed for the marriage of Surma with Sumeru. Raja Saran asked the Brahmans to bring the bridegroom with a marriage procession on the appointed day. But the clever Brahmans begged to be excused and said that, according to the time-honoured family custom of the Chandikot Princes, the bridegroom never went to the bride's house ; but that their marriage was performed with a dagger. After much discussion Saran yielded and the marriage of Surma was celebrated with a dagger with much pomp and show. When the marriage procession returned to Chandikot, Sumeru, who was a baby of five days, was made to lie on the bed with Surma. The baby began to cry. At first Surma thought that the child was her stepson. But she was shocked to learn that he was her own bridegroom. At last Surma, with the instinct of true womanhood, reconciled herself to her lot and began to nurse her husband and cherish dreams of future matrimonial

bliss, when the child would grow up. Sumeru was a born giant. When five years of age he performed extraordinary feats of strength and looked like a lad of sixteen. In the meantime the old Dewan learnt of the birth of Sumeru and his romantic marriage with Surma and of her surpassing beauty. The old hatred against Surma's father rankled in his breast and he resolved to kidnap Surma. He sent a clever *kutni* (go-between) to Rani Surma. When the *kutni* reached Surma's house she embraced Surma and said that she was Surma's aunt (father's sister) and had been sent by her father to look after her and her baby husband. Rani Surma believed her; and treated her with great hospitality. One day the *kutni* asked Rani Surma to accompany her to a water spring. Surma consented. It had been arranged between the Dewan and the *kutni* that she should bring Surma to the spring on the appointed day, where the Dewan would wait for them.

As soon as Rani Surma reached the spring, the Dewan saw her and was charmed with her beauty. He rushed forward with his men and forcibly carried away Rani Surma, in spite of her cries and wailing. On reaching home the Dewan wanted

to marry her immediately; but Rani Surma said that she had taken a vow of celibacy for twelve years, after which she would marry him, and that, if he forced her to marry earlier, she would commit suicide. All persuasions of the Dewan failed. At last the Dewan, thinking that none could take away Surma from his custody, kept her under a strong guard and allowed her to live in separate apartments.

In the meantime Kunjavati, mother of Sumeru, sent men in all directions in search of Rani Surma.

At last she heard that the Rani had been carried off by the Dewan, but she could do nothing. When Sumeru was five years of age he enquired of his mother about his wife. Kunjavati wept and replied that she had gone to her father's house. When Sumeru was twelve years old he brought live tigers home and uprooted big trees. He again enquired from his mother about the whereabouts of his wife. At first Kunjavati gave evasive replies, but, on Sumeru's pressing her, she told him that she had been forcibly taken away by the Dewan. She also told him how the Dewan had killed Sumeru's father and uncle. On hearing this Sumeru was on fire with rage and took a vow not to rest till he had killed the enemy. He went to Delhi, where

the Dewan lived, and, disguising himself as a *sadhu*, stopped near the water spring from which water was taken to the Dewan's house. One morning a maid-servant of Surma went to the spring for water. The *sadhu* enquired whose maid she was. She replied that she was taking water for Rani Surma.

On further questioning, she told him that she had taken a vow of chastity for twelve years. Sumeru then sent a letter to Surma through the maid-servant. Rani Surma's joy knew no bounds on reading the letter. She pretended to scold the maid for having brought the letter from a stranger, wrote a reply on its back and ordered the maid to take back the letter to the man who had given it. In reply she told him all that had befallen her and requested Sumeru to come and take her away. On reading the letter Sumeru thought it would be very cowardly on his part to steal away his wife from another's house. He therefore decided to go and fight with the enemy, and then take his wife openly.

One day Rani Surma requested the Dewan to allow her to feast all the *sadhus* of the town. The Dewan gave her permission. All the *sadhus* assembled, including Sumeru. After the feast

Sumeru stayed in Rani Surma's apartment and lived there unnoticed for a long time.

One day some men of the Dewan saw a man sleeping in Surma's bed and informed the Dewan.

The Dewan was much enraged and surrounded Surma's room with a large number of troops. Sumeru was fast asleep; but was aroused by the noise of the men outside. Rani Surma began to weep and clasped Sumeru in despair.

Sumeru roared like a lion and challenged the enemy to fight. He rushed into the army of the Dewan and soon mowed them down with his dagger like blades of grass. Then he caught hold of the Dewan and plucked out his eyes, plundered his house and took away Rani Surma in a triumphant procession. When they returned home there was great rejoicing in Chandikot and Sumeru ruled over his people happily.

#### 20. HYUNRAJ MAHARA

Once upon a time a great warrior named Hyunraj Mahara lived at Kotligarh. He had six brothers. His pedigree is as follows:

Hirambh, Birambh, Doli, Tegraj, Saunraj Sardar, Ilu Mahara, Tilu Mahara, Sejaki Mahara, and Hyunraj Mahara.

The Maharas were a blood-thirsty and ferocious

race who applied human blood instead of vermilion on their foreheads. They were Khaikars of the Raja of Champawatgarh. The pedigree of the Champawatgarh Rajas is given thus: Hardeo, Virdeo, Phonjdeo, Bhirchand, Bachand, Tarachand, Nirmalchand, Thorchand, and Kharak Singh.

The Rajas of Champawatgarh exacted various illegal dues from the Khaikars; such as one seer of ghee per milch buffalo, one leg of each goat killed, twenty per cent. of the money received as bride price, taxes on disused water-mills. Hyunraj Mahara stopped these illegal dues. On this Kharak Singh, Raja of Champawatgarh, sent an ultimatum to Hyunraj Mahara ordering him either to pay the dues or to leave Kotligarh. On reading the Raja's order the Mahara replied that the Raja could do what he liked. The Maharas had a large plot of irrigated land known as *jawari-ka-sera*. Kharak Singh and his brother went with a large army to destroy *jawari-ka-sera*. Hyunraj and his elder brother Sejki were in the jungle, tending their cattle, while their old mother Singola alone was at home. On seeing the enemy Singola sent word to her sons informing them of the destruction of their fields by the Raja's men. The two brothers were much enraged and returned home and

made preparations for opposing the Raja's men. Their mother Singola remonstrated and advised them not to quarrel with the Raja, and warned them of the danger. But the seven brothers rebuked their mother for her cowardice. They took out their swords and marched into the enemy's camp. The Maharas cut down the whole army of Thorchand and Bhagchand and brought their heads home and offered them to their family goddess Jhalimali as a sacrifice. When the news of Thorchand and Bhagchand's death reached Champawatgarh, the whole country was in great mourning. Then the surviving brothers of Thorchand hit upon a plan to kill the Maharas. The Belwals of Gauri Gujrant were the family priests of the Maharas. They were great magicians. The brothers of Thorchand sent for the Belwals and offered to give them large rewards if they killed Hyunraj and his brothers by means of their magical powers. The Belwals agreed and went to Kotligarh, and found the old mother of Hyunraj at home. The Mahara brothers had gone to the jungle. The wicked Belwals did not even return the greetings of the lady. They tied her to a post and carried away her two male buffaloes, named Chandu and Bendu, in order to offer them as a

sacrifice to their goddess in connexion with the magic rites. When the Maharas returned home and saw their mother tied hand and foot, they enquired who had done it. She told them that their own priests, the Belwals, had tied her up and taken away Chandu and Bendu. The Maharas shook with rage. They took out their swords and went to Gauri Gujrant where the Belwals lived. The pedigree of the Belwals is as follows :

Asha Bhat, Thel Bhat, Alu Bhat, Thalu Bhat, Daya Rai Bhat, Maya Rai Bhat, and Bhawanand. Bhawanand had three sons—  
Ishwari Datt, Kashi Ram and Keshi Ram.

When the Maharas reached Gauri Gujrant, Kashi Ram was engaged in magical incantations against them in the temple of the Goddess Kali, where the male buffaloes Chandu and Bendu were to be sacrificed. The Maharas went and caught hold of Kashi Ram then and there. They then killed the other brothers also. Only two kinsmen of Kashi Ram escaped. Their names were Battu and Chandu. Battu had a wife named Dangwalia and Chandu's wife was named Mainavati Bughania. Dattu and Chandu had a sister whose son was Hindua. In the month of Chait, Dattu and Chandu were sowing paddy in their fields with



twelve yokes of bullocks. Hidua was also with them. Hindua took the bullocks to a spring. When Hindua reached the spring, Pingla, the mother of the Maharas, was filling her pitcher. Hindua told Pingla to remove her pitcher and let the bullocks drink. A quarrel ensued and Hindua broke Pingla's pitcher. Pingla came home weeping and told her sons about it. The Maharas were much enraged and went to the fields of Dattu and Chandu. They unyoked the bullocks, broke their legs, and threw them into the spring from which Dattu and Chandu drank water. Dattu and Chandu collected a large army of Kurmals, Bhutuyals, Saunds and Padyars and attacked the Maharas. But the Maharas killed all of them. When the mother of Dattu and Chandu saw that her sons had been killed, she filled a large cauldron with milk and mixed poison in it. Then she called all her family together and told them that it was much better to commit suicide than let their bodies be touched by the Mahara Khasias. They all drank the poisoned milk and died. Thus the whole line of the Belwals became extinct. The Maharas set fire to the houses of the Belwals and returned home triumphantly.

## 21. BRAHMA DEO AND BIRMA DOTIALI

Once a great Prince Brahmdeo ruled over the fair fort of Katyurgarh. His father's name was Gambhirdeo. He was very beautiful and strong. His moustaches were like those of a lion, his eyes were as beautiful as of a deer, and his chest was broad. At that time three Dotiyal chiefs named Man Singh, Iswaru and Raghurai ruled in Dotigarh. Iswaru had a daughter named Birma Dotiali. She was a most beautiful girl; her breast shone like the sun; her back part was as fair as the full moon; her body was soft like butter; her forehead was broad and full. Birma had been betrothed to Brahmdeo while she was seven years of age. Gambhirdeo, however, fell ill and before his death hurriedly married his son Brahmdeo to Bijora, sister of the Princes of Kalunikot, whose names were Kalu Kaluni, Melu Kaluni and Mahideo Kaluni. In course of time Brahmdeo had seven daughters from Rani Bijora. But he had no son. The names of the daughters were Naranga, Saranga, Phulavati, Narangdevi, Sarangdevi, Indradevi and Gangavati. Raja Brahmdeo was anxious to get a son to continue his line, as the daughters were like a fruit without seeds. When Dotiali Birma was of a marriageable age, Princes

from far and wide went to seek her hand; but her father did not give her to any of them. At last Raja Nirmal Chand of Champawatgarh asked her in marriage for his son Khadag Singh. Her father Iswaru agreed. An auspicious day was fixed for the wedding and preparations were made for the same. When the marriage day was near at hand, Dotiali Birma sent a letter to Brahmdeo saying that she had been betrothed to him while she was a child of seven years of age and that she had committed no fault to cause him to desert her. She also informed him of her impending marriage with Khadag Singh, Prince of Champawatgarh, and invited him to come and take her away.

On reading the letter Brahmdeo was perplexed and went to his mother and brother Dhamdeo for advice, who warned him against the danger. But Brahmdeo made up his mind to go and marry Birma Dotiali. He was a great magician, and, as Doti was a land of magic, he equipped himself with all the instruments of magic and left for Dotigarh. When he arrived near Doti, he stopped at a water-mill to smoke. Iswaru Dotial's men had brought a large quantity of grain to grind at the mill for Birma's wedding. He enquired from

them about Birma's marriage. Brahmdeo disguised himself as a Brahman and reached Iswaru Dotial's house, just when Khadag Singh and his marriage party arrived. After the reception of the bridegroom's party, Brahmdeo, in the guise of a musician, went where the marriage party were seated, and, bowing down before them, asked their permission to entertain them with his music. He went round dancing and playing on his musical instrument and made them unconscious by means of his magical incantations. Then Brahmdeo went up to the balcony where Birma was seated and introduced himself to her and told her of his magical powers. Princess Birma was much pleased and, embracing Brahmdeo as her true lord, advised him to take her away before the bridegroom's party regained consciousness. Brahmdeo, by another magical feat, made the gate-keepers and all the other inmates of Iswaru's house also unconscious. Then Brahmdeo carried Birma safely to the banks of the Rajan River. After crossing the river they reached Devali. From there they went to the Mori hill where they stopped for the night. Brahmdeo was very tired, and, resting on the lap of his Rani, fell into a deep slumber. Brahmdeo did not wake till after sunrise next morning.

When Khadag Singh and his party recovered consciousness next morning, they searched for the bride, but could not find her in Iswaru's house. A great confusion arose and people ran in all directions in search of the bride. At last they suspected the strange magician who had also mysteriously disappeared. They also learnt about Birma's betrothal to Brahmdeo. They suspected that he might have eloped with Birma. Khadag Singh and his men pursued Brahmdeo and found him asleep in Birma's lap on the Mori hill. When Birma saw Khadag Singh she began to weep, but did not dare awaken Brahmdeo. At last her hot tears fell on Brahmdeo's cheeks, which made him start up. It was considered a sin in olden times to awaken a sleeping person. Brahmdeo scolded Birma for having awakened him. But when she told him of the impending danger, he rose and saw the enemy coming towards them. Brahmdeo and Birma mounted their horses and rode off to Katyurgarh. But on reaching home Brahmdeo was extremely exhausted and shut himself up in a room. When his seven daughters saw the enemy approaching, they went to their father and urged him to go and fight against the enemy. But Brahmdeo expressed his inability to fight, taunted

them, and said, "If I had only one son, instead of you seven daughters, he would go and fight the enemy and save my honour." His daughters felt much humiliated and consoled their father and begged his leave to go and fight the enemy. But Brahmdeo rebuked them and said, "How could weak girls like you dare oppose the formidable enemy?" The daughters replied, "Father, if we be thy true daughters we will surely conquer the enemy." Brahmdeo, in order to test their strength, erected a pole thirty-two cubits high and asked his daughters to jump over it one by one. They all succeeded. Then they requested their father to give them soldiers' uniforms to wear. Brahmdeo gave them steel helmets and armour and swords. The seven girls prayed to their family goddess, bowed down before their parents and mounted their war-horses. They reached the banks of the Rajan River where the army of the enemy was encamped. The Routelis drew their swords and rushed into the army of the enemy and began to cut off their heads like so many plantain trees. The ground was covered with the dead bodies of the enemy and streams of blood flowed. They soon killed the whole army of the enemy, but the old Nirmalchand concealed himself

in the hollow of an oak tree. The Routelis were quite exhausted and sat down near a spring to rest. Nirmalchand pursued them. All the seven sisters went to the spring to drink water; and the youngest began to wash her face. In the meantime Nirmalchand collected his surviving men and surrounded the Routelis and challenged them to fight. The Routelis had put their swords and arrows aside and were helpless. They ran in different directions. But Nirmalchand's men chased them and killed them like so many wild gourds.

Then Nirmalchand collected more men and invaded Katyurgarh. On seeing the enemy, Brahmdeo closed the gates of his fort and ordered Bhikan, the porter, to guard it. The enemy managed to enter the fort by bribing the gate-keeper. In the meantime Brahmdeo prayed to his family goddess Jhalimali for help. The goddess granted his prayer and caused the enemy to lose their sight. They began to fight among themselves. A great confusion arose, in which they killed each other. Thus was Nirmalchand and his whole army destroyed. Brahmdeo then performed the funeral rites of his daughters, whose heroic deeds are still sung in Katyurgarh.

22. RAJA BRAHMDEO'S WAR AGAINST THE  
CHAMPAWAT RAJAS

The pedigree of Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo Princes of Katyargarh is as follows :

Brahm Kunwar, Jot Kumar, Sat Kumar, Urni Kumar, Dham Kumar, Asanti, Basanti, Gora Sabla Rai, Milchaunri Rai, Milchauri Ujjan, whose sons were Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo.

Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo were feudatory chiefs under the Kings of Champawatgarh. Owing to the various illegal exactions of the Rajas of Champawatgarh, Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo stopped their tribute and declared their independence. Rajas Thorchand and Bhagchand, who ruled over Champawatgarh, were much enraged and sent an ultimatum to Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo either to send their tribute or leave Katyargarh. Dhamdeo treated the letter with contemptuous silence. In order to further annoy and insult Thorchand and Bhagchand, they collected a large heap of small broken pieces of earthen pots to represent the cash presents and put them in a box. They also filled a pitcher with wasps and closed it to represent presents in kind and sent them to Champawatgarh. Thorchand and Bhagchand were pleased on receiv-



ing the tribute and ordered the presents to be taken inside their house. They closed the doors of the room and first opened the pitcher. As soon as the lid was removed a large swarm of wasps rushed out and stung Thorchand, Bhagchand and their Ranis. Thorchand and Bhagchand were much enraged at the effrontery of Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo. They sent another letter to Brahmdeo asking him to give his daughter in marriage to Thorchand, failing which, his territory would be invaded and his fort razed to the ground. On reading the letter Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo's blood boiled with rage. They said, "How dare the Chands of Champawatgarh, who are inferior to us in social status, ask the hand of our daughter in marriage?" They replied, refusing either to pay any tribute or to give their daughter in marriage to Thorchand. They challenged the Chands to come with all their forces to a place called *Jawari Sera* and fight against them. The Chand Rajas accepted the challenge and brought a large army of Mughals, Pathans and Kumaonis to *Jawari Sera*. The whole valley of *Jawari* was covered with the enemy's army, and looked as white as the frost in winter or *guiral* trees in full bloom in spring. The enemy destroyed the paddy crops of *Jawari Sera*. The women of Katyur

began to weep and cry like the *Meluri* bird; and the whole city was in a great panic. Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo put on their armour, and, drawing their swords, rushed into the army of the enemy, which was under command of Thorchand. They killed the whole army of the enemy. Thorchand was killed by Brahmdeo. Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo then returned to Katyurgarh triumphantly. There was great rejoicing in Katyurgarh. Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo proclaimed their independence and ruled in peace.

23. ADHAPATI CHAUHAN AND DHAMDEO  
CHAUHAN

Once upon a time there lived seven brothers of the Chauhan clan of Rajputs at Khailapur, the eldest of whom was named Dhamdeo. Their pedigree is given thus:

Urmi Nag, Kurmi Nag, Rai Mangal, Afati, Mafati, Dhamdeo and his six brothers.

One day Dhamdeo and his brothers collected a large number of men and went out shooting in the Gupti Patal forest. After beating the forest for a whole day they found a deer and chased it, but it escaped. At last they came upon a partridge and shot at it but the partridge flew away into the neighbouring territory of Mayapur Hat where lived seven brothers of the Pundir clan. Their names were

Jaiteg Pundir, Asal Teg Pundir, Alti Pundir, Batli, Kaituri, Aurati, Burati. As soon as the partridge reached Mayapur Hat the blood-thirsty Pundirs caught and shut it in a room.

The Chauhans pursued it and on reaching Mayapur Hat requested the Pundirs to give up the partridge. But Asal Teg Pundir said that, as the bird had crossed into his territory, he would keep it even at the cost of his life. Adhapati Chauhan remonstrated with the Pundirs and advised them not to risk their lives for the sake of a bird. But they would not yield. Then Adhapati Chauhan broke open the door of Asal Teg's room where the partridge was hid. As soon as the partridge began to fly Asaldeo caught it and cut its head off with his sword and hung it over the door of his room. Adhapati attempted to seize the partridge, but the Pundirs resisted and challenged them to fight. A severe battle ensued between them. The Pundir brothers killed all the Chauhans one by one. Adhapati Chauhan had seven sons by his wife named Chaurura. Their names were Jit Singh, Bhup Singh, Kedar Singh, Uttam Singh and Bhopal Singh. On hearing about the death of her husband and his brothers, Chaurura Chauhani exhorted her sons to go and wreak vengeance on the

Pundirs. The Pundirs had hung the head of Adhapati Chauhan over the door of their house in place of the head of the partridge. Jit Singh and his brothers took a vow to fight against their enemy and bring back the head of their father. The seven brothers went and challenged the Pundirs to fight. After a long struggle the Pundirs killed all the Chauhan brothers. Chauhani pronounced a curse against the Pundirs and fainted away.

Thus the whole family of the brave Chauhans perished for the sake of a partridge.

#### 24 BELWALS OF BELIHAT

The pedigree of Belwals of Belihat is as follows:

Nagu, Bagu, Kagdas, Bagdas, Chhuri-jantar, Bharimal, Raghudipati, Khundajeet. Khundajeet had eight sons—Bhawa Nand, Kashi Ram, Salig Ram, Ishwari Datt, Hari Datt, Nathi Ram, Rewat Ram and Moti Ram.

Once a great calamity befell the Belwals of Belihat. They sowed grain which produced nothing but husk. Their families gave birth to daughters only; their she-buffaloes bore bull calves; their goats, he-goats; their cows gave birth to bulls. The Belwals prayed to their family gods in vain. They then consulted an astrologer of repute as to

the cause of their misfortunes. The astrologer said that it was due to the wrath of Badrinath and that they should propitiate him by going on a pilgrimage to his shrine.

The Belwals then went on a pilgrimage to Badrinath. They reached a place called *Bhatwa-ka-Sain* and pitched their tents there. While halting there, they saw a lady of surpassing beauty, who was also going on a pilgrimage. Her name was Jusyani. The Belwals were charmed by her beauty and forcibly dragged her into their tent.

When their old mother Dangwalia, who had accompanied them, heard about it she scolded them, and warned them of the danger of taking another man's wife. But the wicked Belwals would not listen. They gave up the pilgrimage and returned home with Jusyani. They camped at a place called *Amrika Sain*. While their mother was cooking food Chhotu Budera, the husband of Jusyani, arrived and began to play with a ball near their kitchen and threw it into the kitchen. The old lady abused him, saying that he had polluted her food. Chhotu Budera retaliated and a quarrel ensued. She then called her eight sons who challenged Chhotu to fight with them. A severe fight ensued between the Belwals and Chhotu

Budera. At last Chhotu killed all the Belwals and took away his wife.

The mother of the Belwals wept bitterly and returned home. Her eight daughters-in-law, thus widowed, wrote to Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo, Rajas of Katyargarh, who were their *jajmans*, informing them about the deaths of their husbands. On hearing this Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo went to Belihat. The widows related the story of their bereavement and requested Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo to wreak vengeance on Chhotu.

Brahmdeo and Dhamdeo went with their armies to *Amri Sera*, where Chhotu Budera was camping. On meeting Chhotu Budera they rebuked him for having killed the Brahmans and challenged him to fight with them. After a severe battle Chhotu Budera with his large army of Moghals and Pathans was killed.

Then Dhamdeo and Brahmdeo returned home in triumphant procession and celebrated their victory over the enemy of their priests in a suitable manner.

#### 25. CHHAPLIA HYUNR

Once upon a time a Prince named Chhaplia Hyunr ruled at Ujain Nagri. He sent out challenges to all the Princes far and near for a trial of

strength. He sent one challenge to Asa Rawat, who lived at Bhagotikot, and another to Bhowan Singh of Maili Jawari. All the warriors who accepted the challenge assembled at Patli Doon. Phondu Mandrawal of Manduka Sain informed Chhaplia of the arrival of those warriors. Chhaplia went out to fight against them. A great warrior, name Rudri Kathait of Bamsu Bangar, was also amongst them. Chhaplia first challenged Rudri Kathait to fight with him. A great battle ensued between them lasting for seven days. On the seventh day Chhaplia flew up in the clouds, came down upon Rudri and cut off all his limbs with his dagger. Rudri fell on the ground; but soon recovered himself and shot an arrow at Chhaplia, which pierced his heart. In the meantime, Bhow Singh Bhandari came to Chhaplia's rescue. He drew his dagger and cut off Rudri's head.

Rudri left a son named Udi, who was a mere baby. On coming of age he inquired from his mother as to who had killed his father. At first she gave evasive replies; but, when pressed, she related the whole story how his father had been killed by Chhaplia and Bhow Singh at Patli Doon. On hearing this Udi was in a great rage. He put on his armour and rode off to Patli Doon. On

reaching there he inquired as to who had killed his father. Chhaplia Hyunr replied that he had done it and challenged him to fight. A severe battle ensued between them lasting for ten days. On the tenth day Chhaplia cut Udi's head. One Belu Naithani of Naithanikot, who was in Udi's army, approached Chhaplia and said, "O Prince, you are a god according to Shastras. I bow down before you. I have never seen a greater warrior than you. Take off your armour and allow me to be your charioteer." While driving, Belu taunted the Kshatriyas, and said that they were a race of tyrants and hence Pharas Ram, the Brahman warrior, had killed them. On hearing this Chhaplia became angry and challenged Belu to fight with him. A severe battle raged between them lasting for twelve days. At last Belu shot an arrow at Chhaplia which pierced his heart. On this Belu retorted and said, "Hast thou, a Kshatriya, exhausted all thy strength against me, a Brahman?" Chhaplia was stung by the taunt, and mustering courage, bandaged his wounds and cut off Belu's head with his dagger. Then Chhaplia killed the whole army of Belu, after which he also expired.



## 26. ASA RAWAT

Once upon a time there lived a great warrior Asa Rawat by name, at the fair fort of Bhopatikot. He possessed large granaries full of grain and immense wealth. On one occasion Bhopatikot was visited by a great famine and all the granaries of Asa became empty and his large family was in danger of starvation. When all his resources were exhausted he resolved to kill himself and all his family rather than see them perish one by one of hunger. He ordered a meal and mixed poison in it. He only spared one of his wives who was with child. The rest of the family partook of the poisoned meal and died.

In due course the widow of Asa Rawat was delivered of a son of unusual strength and beauty. He was named Bhana Rawat. At his birth the portico of his palace cracked and the four famous horses of his father died. The four tubs in which the baby was bathed broke one after another. Bhana was as bright as the flame of a lamp and as beautiful as the full moon. When the boy grew up he performed many extraordinary feats of strength. Bhana and his mother were in great distress. Bhana went for help to his aunt (father's sister) who was very rich and lived at Airankot. The aunt taunted

him by saying that he was a bastard, as his father had died before his birth. On hearing this Bhana was much ashamed. He left his aunt's place and went abroad begging. At last he reached Kulunikot, where lived a Prince by name Dharni Kaluni. Bhana went to Dharni and begged for some employment. Dharni Kaluni was much impressed by the beauty of the lad and thought that he was some Prince in disguise. Dharni had a young daughter, named Saru, who lived in the forest, tending his herds and flocks. Dharni told Bhana that if he wanted to serve he should go to his cattleshed in the forest and help his daughter to look after his flocks and herds. When Bhana reached the cattleshed Saru warned him that her two he-buffaloes, Chandu and Bhandu, were very ferocious and killed every man who went near them. On hearing this Bhana pulled the horns of the buffaloes. Saru was struck by the beauty and strength of Bhana. Bhana and Saru fell in love with each other. After a while Bhana proposed to marry her. He enquired whether she had been previously betrothed to anyone else. Saru replied that she had been betrothed to one of the seven brothers of the Butolas who lived at Gwari Tachwar. On hearing this Bhana resolved to kill the Butolas of Gwari Tachwar and

then marry Saru. So he went back home, and put on his father's armour, and, riding his famous spotted war horse, started for Gwari Tachwar. On arriving there he challenged the Butolas to fight with him. The Butolas were the *fojdars* (Governors) of their *patti*. They collected a large army to fight against the enemy. Bhana rushed into the army of the Butolas and killed them right and left. Streams of blood flowed; and the earth was covered with corpses. The Butolas lay hidden under the heaps of dead bodies and managed to escape. They proceeded to Dharni Kaluni's house and asked him to give his daughter in marriage to them at once. The marriage ceremony commenced. Before the ninth step of the marriage had been taken by the pair, Bhana dropped down, as if from the clouds. Dharni Kaluni had anticipated the danger and had fixed sharp pointed spikes round the marriage altar. Bhana's horse stepped on the spikes and was pierced by them and fell down. Bhana too was mortally wounded by the spikes. Bhana bandaged the wounds, and, taking hold of a big slab of stone in his hands, killed all the seven Butola brothers with their retinue. He also killed Dharni Kaluni and all his people. He then reclined on the lap of Saru and expired. Saru wept

bitterly and prepared a funeral pyre. She put on a white sari, and, applying vermilion to her forehead, mounted the funeral pyre and became *Sati*.

### 27. GORIL

In days of old an illustrious line of Princes ruled at Champawatgarh. Their pedigree was as follows :

Samal Rai, Malu Rai, Alu Rai, and Jhalu Rai.

Jhalu Rai had seven queens, but no children. One day Jhalu Rai went out shooting with a large retinue. While shooting in the jungle he felt thirsty and ordered his men to fetch water for him. After a long search they came upon a small tank of water with two fountains, one of gold and the other of silver. There was also a temple near the tank. They opened the doors of the temple, and, to their surprise, found a goddess inside the temple. The goddess inquired why they were taking water from her tank. They replied that their King, who had come to that forest to hunt, felt very thirsty and that they were taking water for him. The name of the goddess was Kalindra. She did not allow the Raja's men to take water from her tank. The men went back to the Raja and reported the matter to him. The Raja was enraged and attacked the temple of Kalindra. On seeing the goddess, Jhalu

Rai fell in love with her and brought her home in a palanquin and married her. In due course Kalindra was with child. Jhalu Rai distributed alms among the poor by way of thanksgiving. When Kalindra was about to give birth to her child Jhalu Rai called a clever nurse to attend her. The other seven queens of Jhalu Rai were envious, and, in collusion with the nurse, confined Kalindra in a dark room. Before delivery, the nurse and the seven queens bandaged Kalindra's eyes, saying that it would be unlucky for her to see her first born child at the time of delivery. Kalindra heard a voice from inside her womb saying, "Oh mother, I wish to come into the world: through which part of your body shall I come out?" The mother replied "My dear child, come out the usual way." The child said, "I am divine: I shall be born through your left eye, as Krishna was born through the right eye of his mother Devaki." Immediately the child was delivered through the left eye of Kalindra. The child's name was Goril. The child was super-human. He had twenty arms and rode on a wooden horse. As soon as the step-mothers of Goril saw him, they shut him in a casket of gold, which they threw into a river. They placed a cylindrical stone by the side of Kalindra

and declared that she had been delivered of a stone instead of a human child. Goril called out to his father from inside the casket as it floated down the river telling Jhalu Rai that he was his son and was born from his queen Kalindra. When he heard the cry Jhalu Rai had the casket taken out of the river, and, on opening it, found a child of extraordinary beauty inside it. On learning of the treachery of his seven queens, Jhalu Rai ordered them to be beheaded, and celebrated the birth of his son in a right royal manner. On Jhalu Rai's death he was succeeded on the throne of Champawatgarh by his son Goril, who became famous for his noble qualities of head and heart. One instance of his justice and universal love may be quoted :

“ A dove had a nest on a *ruini* tree within his kingdom. The dove had her nestlings in that nest. There lived five Dotial Princes in the neighbouring territory of Dotigarh. They were great tyrants. One day they chanced to pass under the *ruini* tree on which the dove's nestlings were. While the Dotials sat under the *ruini* tree, the dove brought some food in her bill for her nestlings and entered the nest, on which the young ones came out of the nest and began to twitter and to eat the food. On

seeing this, the cruel Dotials killed the young birds with their arrows. The bereaved mother cried bitterly, frantic with grief. She went and sat over the throne of Goril and shed tears, which fell in Goril's lap. Goril looked up and saw a dove weeping. The dove narrated her sad story to him. Goril was moved by righteous indignation and vowed not to rest till he had caused the cruel Dotials to shed tears of blood.

Goril at once collected a large army and invaded the territory of the Dotials and killed all of them by way of punishment of their having killed the dove's nestlings."

Goril ruled over his kingdom justly as Ram ruled over Ajodhia, and was deified after his death. A large number of temples are still to be found in the Himalayas dedicated to Goril.

#### 28. RANU RAWAT AND SUPIA RAWAT

Once there lived a chieftain named Hinwa Rawat at Kulawalikot, who held a *jagir* of several villages from the Raja of Srinagar. He had a son named Bhinwa. Both Hinwa and his son Bhinwa were great warriors. Bhinwa had a wife whose name was Mainawati.

A tribe of Airwals lived in the Doon who owed allegiance to the Raja of Srinagar. Owing to the

illegal exactions of the Raja they revolted against him. The Raja sent a letter to Hinwa requesting him to go and subdue the Airwals. On reading the letter Hinwa began to make preparations for the expedition. His son Bhinwa said, "Father, you are old and will not be able to fight alone. I will accompany you in the expedition." Hinwa consented. They both started for the Doon. After encountering many difficulties they reached the village where the Airwals lived and challenged them to fight. A severe battle ensued, which lasted for nine days and nine nights. On the tenth night a truce was arranged between the contending parties and both sides went to rest. While Hinwa was asleep some men from the enemy's camp went and stabbed him to death. The battle was resumed next morning. Bhinwa was furious at the murder of his father and fought single-handed against the enemy, but was at last killed in the battle. When the news of Hinwa and Bhinwa's death reached Kulawalikot, there was deep mourning throughout the kingdom.

Mainawati, wife of Bhinwa, was a great heroine and bore the calamity with fortitude and vowed to revenge the death of her father-in-law and husband. She had a son, named Ranu Rawat, by



Bhinwa, and the boy was then twelve years of age. Mainawati called her son and said, "Dear Ranu, thy father and grandfather have been killed by the enemy. Thou art a worthy son of a worthy father. Go and revenge thy forefather's death." On hearing this, Ranu was afraid, and began to weep. Mainawati again addressed him thus, "My son, be of good cheer. Thou hast descended from a long line of warriors. Thou hast sucked the milk which can break through even an iron plate. Surely thou canst kill the enemy. Fear not, go and fight, and vindicate the honour of thy family." So saying, she pressed her breast and caused a stream of her milk to flow with such force that it made a hole in a thick iron plate. Ranu mustered courage and obeyed. He began to prepare for the expedition. Mainawati then said to Ranu, "My son, thy cousin (father's sister's son), Jhankru, lives at Airakot. Go and ask him to accompany thee to the Doon." Ranu went to Jhankru and said, "Cousin, thou mayest have heard that my father and grandfather have been killed by the Airwals of the Doon. I am determined to be revenged and fight against them. I pray thee to accompany me in the expedition."

Ranu had a young and beautiful wife named Bimla. On seeing her Jhankru fell in love with her and was anxious to stay at home. When Ranu was ready to start, he requested Jhankru to accompany him. But Jhankru pretended illness and replied, "Cousin, I am too ill to fight against the enemy. You are more than a match for them. Allow me to stay and look after your home affairs during your absence."

Ranu gave him permission to stay. Ranu donned his armour and helmet and rode off to the Doon accompanied by his family bard Champhu. After encountering many hardships Ranu reached the Doon and sent a challenge to the Airwals to fight against him. The Airwals collected a large army to fight against Ranu. A big battle ensued which lasted for nine days and nine nights. Ranu mowed down the army of the Airwals with his sword like figs. While Ranu was fighting against the enemy Champhu *hurķia* was singing songs in praise of his master in order to cheer him. After killing the whole army of the Airwals, Ranu marched into their village and killed all the inhabitants thereof. The Airwals had buried the heads of Hinwa and Bhinwa in a drain under the staircase of their house. Ranu dug up the heads and brought them

home in a triumphant procession. While returning home Ranu saw Jhankru in a dream sleeping on the bed of his wife Bimla. Ranu started and trembled with rage. He rushed towards his home like a roaring lion. In the meantime Bimla had heard of the approach of Ranu and hastily concealed Jhankru in a cornbin. On reaching Bimla's room, Ranu caught hold of Bimla and threatened to kill her, unless she showed her paramour. Bimla remonstrated in vain. At last the cunning Bimla hit upon a plan to save herself and her paramour. She tauntingly replied, "Sir, you are falsely accusing me, but forget that you yourself have cruelly deserted your former wife, Sushila, daughter of Birwa Bhandari of Birukot, to whom your father had betrothed you while you were still in your mother's womb. She is about to be remarried to one Melu Kulani of Kalunikot. If you are a true hero go and fetch her home first. Then shall I willingly offer myself as a sacrifice to her." Ranu was vexed by these sarcastic words of Bimla and resolved to bring Sushila from Bimlikote and then offer Bimla as a sacrifice to her.

He started for Bimlikot at once. On reaching Bimlikot Ranu disguised himself as a *sadhu*, and sat on the way leading to Melu Kaluni's house.

He saw a girl of surpassing beauty being taken in a palanquin in a great procession from Melu Kaluni's house. Ranu went up to Birwa Bhandari and said, "O Birwa, I am the Guru of Melu Kaluni. I have come to congratulate the bride on her marriage. Allow me to speak to her in private." Birwa bowed down and gave the *sadhu* permission to see the bride. Ranu went up to the bride's palanquin, introduced himself to her and said, "Dear, dost thou not know that we were betrothed to each other while yet unborn? Pray, pardon me for my neglecting thee so long. I love thee most dearly and have come to take thee away." Sushila was charmed by the beauty and youth of Ranu and accepted Ranu as her partner. Ranu then threw off his disguise, and, approaching Birwa Bhandari, said, "Birwa, thou hast no right to take away this girl, who had been betrothed to me long ago. I will not allow thee to take her and I challenge thee to fight with me." A great battle ensued between them. Ranu mowed down Birwa and his men with his dagger like so many figs. Kalu, brother of Melu Kaluni, alone escaped. Ranu carried away Sushila towards his home.

Ranu was completely exhausted and rested on the banks of a river and fell into a deep slumber.

Kalu pursued them and reached the place where Ranu was asleep. He stealthily stabbed Ranu inflicting mortal wounds. Ranu started up from his sleep, and, looking towards Kalu, caught him by the neck and dashed him to death.

Ranu's strength soon began to fail. He clasped Sushila and ejaculated, "Dear Sushila, thou hast sacrificed thy all for my sake. Alas! I have made thee the most miserable creature on earth. I am departing from this world, leaving thee to the care of God. May God unite us in the next. Adieu!" So saying, Ranu expired. Sushila wept bitterly; but there was none to console or sympathize with her. She then placed Ranu's dead body on a funeral pyre, mounted it herself and placing Ranu's head in her lap set fire to it and was soon burnt to ashes.

After the death of Ranu a posthumous son was born to Bimla, who was named Supia Rawat. He was a greater warrior than his father. When he was still a stripling he heard the story of the death of his forefathers, which made his blood boil. He vowed to wreak vengeance on the enemy. He first went to Kalunikot and killed all the sons and grandsons of Melu Kaluni. Then he proceeded to Birukot and killed Birwa Bhandari, with all his

kith and kin. Lastly, he went to the house of Jhankru and killed him and all his family.

Supia then returned home in a triumphant procession. On reaching home he went to his mother Bimla and said, "O thou wretched old hag, thou hast been the cause of the ruin of our family. The only punishment suitable for thy foul deed is death." So saying Supia drew his sword to kill her. But Mainawati stopped him and said that it was a great sin to kill one's own mother, however wicked she might be. Supia was thus persuaded to spare Bimla.

After killing all his enemies Supia ruled in peace.

#### 29. BIRTH OF DEOKI, MOTHER OF KRISHNA

In the Himalayan folklore Krishna is called the King of the Nags, or Nag Raja. There are many songs sung describing the birth of Krishna and his early life.

The substance of one song is given below :

The genealogy of the Nag dynasty is as follows :

Ami Nag, Phani Nagi, Sisar Nag, Bisar Nag, Tataki Nag, Basuki Nag, father of Krishna.

This genealogy, though somewhat different from that given in the Purans, is interesting.

King Auk had four queens—Diti, Aditi, Kadru and Banita. From Kadru were born 2,740 daughters. She married 2,700 of her daughters to the moon, and from them were born the kings of the Lunar dynasty. She married the remaining daughters to the sun, and from them were born the kings of the Solar dynasty. The male issue from Kadru were the vultures; while those from Banita were the snakes.

The gods were born from Diti and the demons from Aditi.

Once upon a time Kansa was the king of the demons. He oppressed both gods and men. He levied illegal taxes of various kinds, such as on unmarried girls and on the grass that grew in the forest. He forced the gods to accept his suzerainty. Then the gods approached Brahma in a body for consultation. They cut open their thighs and filled an earthen jar with their blood. Brahma said, "From this blood will issue forth a being, who will destroy Kansa and other demons."

They then sent the jar, carefully packed, to Kansa by way of homage. Kansa was much pleased and ordered the jar to be handed over to his old mother, aged eighty years. Her name was Pawan Rekha. Pawan Rekha opened the vessel and

looked into it. While thus leaning over the pot, she inhaled the vapour arising from it. They penetrated into her womb and caused her to become pregnant. When she became aware of it, she was alarmed, and called her seven sons to her, and told them about it, adding that it foreboded evil to the family. In due course Pawan Rekha was delivered of a female child, whom the astrologers named Deoki. They also predicted that her eighth child would destroy Kansa and other demons.

### 30. THE INVENTION OF PLOUGHING

After the Guru had created the earth and all things that dwell in it, man approached him and said, "How shall I live on this earth?" The Guru first called the lion and asked him to plough the earth. The lion replied that he was the king of the forest and it would be derogatory for him to plough. Then the Guru called the other animals, one by one, who all declined to plough. At last the bullock was asked and he agreed. The Guru was very pleased with him and blessed him thus, "Thou shalt be worshipped by men in the Kali Age. Thou shalt be anointed, worshipped and feasted on the twelve days of the Dewali festival. Silver caps will be put on thy horns and none will



remain without thee." Then the Guru called Melu, the ploughman, and said, "Of what wilt thou make the plough?" Melu named all the metals from gold to iron, one by one. But God said, "The poor cannot afford to make their ploughs of these precious metals. Make the plough of wood and the ploughshare of iron." Then Melu went to the blacksmith and asked him to make a plough of wood for him, and offered nine *khar*s (one *khar* is equal to about 16 maunds) of paddy as wages. But the Guru said, "The poor will not be able to pay as much as that. Let the wages for making a plough be one winnowing basketful only for all alike." Then the Guru called the bullock and put the silver caps on his horns. He also created butter to rub his neck with, so that the yoke might not hurt it. He then ordered the swine to rub the butter on the bullock's neck with his snout. The boar ate a part of the butter himself and rubbed a little on the bullock's neck. Hence the neck of the bullock has remained soft and is hurt with the yoke. The Guru cursed the swine; and foretold that in the Kali Age he would meet a cruel death by his stomach being pierced with a sharp stick (this refers to the way in which a swine is killed).

## 31. NIRANKAR

The following curious story is sung during the worship of Nirankar :

“ Kavar, the weaver, had dedicated one basketful of grain and two cocoanuts to Nirankar.

Nirankar went to Kavar's house to receive the offerings, in the guise of a beggar, while Kavar was away. He asked for alms from Kavar's wife. She said that the only grain left in the house was the basket which had been dedicated to Nirankar. The beggar told her to give him out of this. Kavar's wife went on taking out the grain from the big basket in order to fill the beggar's bowl, but could not fill it. She emptied the whole basket, still the bowl could not be filled. She then took out the two cocoanuts also and offered them to the beggar. The *sadhu* told her to close her eyes, which she did. On reopening her eyes she found, to her great astonishment, all her room over-full with grain and two sons playing by her side in place of one—but the *sadhu* had disappeared. He was a cripple and had put the two cocoanuts in his armpits. While running back from Kavar's house, the two cocoanuts dropped down in an unclean place and were changed into male and female swines. This story is evidently invented to explain

why the Doms in the Hills sacrifice pigs to Nirankar instead of goats.

### 32. SONG IN HONOUR OF NIRANKAR

The following song describes the genesis of the world thus :

“ In the beginning there was neither earth, nor sky, nor water. Nirankar, the Guru, alone existed. The Guru rubbed his right side and from the sweat thereof a female vulture was born. The Guru rubbed his left side and from the sweat thereof a male vulture was produced. Thus the female vulture was placed over the male. The name of the female vulture was Soni Garuri, and of the male, Brahma Garur. The Guru was surprised that while he wished to create human beings who would serve him, vultures were produced instead. The male vulture flew to the east and then to the north. He then came to marry Soni Garuri. Soni Garuri said, “O dear, you and I have been created by the same Guru and are brother and sister. How can we marry each other?” She then made taunting remarks about his ugly shape, which caused Brahma Garur to weep. Then Soni repented and picked up the tear-drops which had fallen from the Garur’s eyes. The tears penetrated

into her womb and she became pregnant. She flew to the abode of Brahma Garur and begged him to build a nest for her to lay eggs in. The Garur retorted, "You are an unchaste woman. How did you become pregnant? You are also very ugly. I cannot accept you as my wife." Soni began to weep. Brahma, who was moved by her helplessness, said, "There is neither earth nor water. Where can I build a nest for thee? Come, and lay eggs on my wings." Soni replied: "You are the vehicle of Vishnu and would be polluted by my laying eggs on your body."

The egg dropped down and was divided into two halves. The lower half became the earth and the upper half the sky. The fluids inside the egg became the sea and the fleshy substance the land.

Thus did Nirankar create the world.

## SECTION II

### INTRODUCTION BY REV. F. S. OAKLEY

THE fact has often been remarked that almost all races, however remote from one another in place and time, and however little related in language, have practically much the same myths. The same may be said of the fairy tales and folklore of different countries. This has given rise to much speculation. Some have thought that the elements of folklore, representing such remarkable similarities, must be genealogically descended from ideas prevalent at a time when the human race was practically one, and undivided. It is obviously impossible to trace such a connection historically, since we have nothing but the folktales themselves to go upon; although it can be seen that the old Sanskrit stories, such as those contained in the Panch-Tantra and also many other stories, are the originals of much in the folklore of Asia and England. Much ingenuity was wasted in the last half century on attempts to show the descent for fables philologically; and an Indian origin was ascribed in the elaborate speculations of Max Muller, Sir G. Coxe and others, to Greek and

Roman mythology. Sanskrit etymologies were expected to explain everything. More recent inquirers have realized that etymology does not really explain the origin of a myth or fable. A more real solution to the puzzle is found in the reflection that all races began at the same mental level, and human nature from the beginning being a constant quantity, the same ideas, in almost the same forms, were evolved in various countries, representing the attempt of early man to formulate some theory of the natural appearances around him. Many of these are incredibly rude and gross even in the beautiful mythology of Greece. It is not because some deep spiritual meaning is concealed beneath the rude form, but because they faithfully reflect the ideas of early men, handed down in a modified form to a more refined age in which they appear as strange survivals, like Pan and the Fauns and Satyrs, presenting themselves in the company of well-bred ladies and gentlemen. In the folktales of every land we have survivals of the primitive conception of the world and the forces of nature. In this connection it is not easy to distinguish between mythology and folklore ; for both represent an early stage of consciousness when man's fancy worked with freedom and was

employed to give an explanation of all things. We are apt to think too seriously of the so-called religious ideas of non-christian peoples. They are largely relics of man's early unrestrained fancy, consecrated, to some extent, in later times, by custom and priestly adoption; but, originally, on the same level as our nursery tales. To the early intelligence of our remote ancestors everything was alive. Life was a constant surprise, and miracles happened every hour. Nothing was inconceivable, because everything was possible. Hence the wonderful richness of fancy which characterises these early pictures. Hence also the peculiar ascription of life to all kinds of objects. A savage state is even now existing in some countries to which the name of Animism and Fetishism have been applied. The vivid sense of life as existing everywhere, combined with a vague and confused idea as to what constitutes life and soul, gave rise to the notions familiar to us in our commonest fables and folktales. We may take for example the idea of a magician's soul or life as something which he can hide away in order to keep it safe from enemies, but whose hiding-place the hero of the story discovers, with fatal consequences to the wizard. This is said to be a real belief among some savage

tribes existing today. In Mr. W. B. Yeats' charming review of Irish folktales there is a story about the souls of drowned sailors being kept in lobster pots at the bottom of the sea ; and when these were turned up the souls escaped. In Grim's Fairy-tales we read of the house of Death where the souls of men burn as candles, and when one goes out a life ceases. In the same book we read of a child's soul being present in a rose which blossomed afresh when the child died ; and of another child whose life was identified with that of a toad the killing of which caused it to die also. A manuscript collection of Himalayan folktales has come into the writer's possession, made a good many years ago, by an Indian official in Garhwal. It is interesting to come across a story in which the familiar feature above mentioned finds a place. The story is given below exactly as told by the peasants of Garhwal in the long winter evenings.

In an island beyond the seven seas there lived a demon who had a beautiful daughter. A certain prince, hearing of her beauty, fell in love with her fame and set off to gain her hand in marriage. It took him six months to travel to the island, but at last he arrived there and found a large and beautiful city adorned with gold,



silver and precious stones, but with no human beings in its streets. The inhabitants of the city had all been devoured by the fiend. At length, after wandering about the place for some hours, he espied the princess sitting at a window of the royal palace. He approached and entered into conversation with her. She earnestly advised him to go away at once, saying "Wretched mortal, what ill fate has brought thee here only to be devoured by my father who is even now gone to hunt for human prey? You will surely fall into his clutches unless you escape quickly, for no man who visits this barren island is ever spared by him. He can traverse a hundred miles in a few minutes. You had better be off with all speed." The prince replied, "Beautiful lady, I have come hither for your sake only. After passing through all manner of dangers and hardships I can not forsake you now, even should I be eaten by your father. I shall willingly die in the attempt to gain you." The princess, touched by his devotion, then showed him some gourds which the demon had filled with different articles intended for his own defence. The first contained mist, and the second thorns, the third water, the fourth mountains. By means of these the demon hoped to be able to

escape from every adversary. She also showed the prince an iron cage in which a parrot was kept, and in the parrot was the demon's life. She then instructed him how he should proceed when attacked by the demon. As soon as the prince had taken the gourds in his hands, the fiend felt sick and giddy, his life being threatened; and perceiving that an attempt was being made to destroy him, he ran homewards. The prince thereupon dashed down the mist gourd, which spread darkness in his path. Then he broke the thorn gourd, the water gourd, the mountain gourd, one after another, and these threw obstacles in his way and hindered his approach to the house. Yet, in spite of all these hindrances, he was making his way rapidly homewards. When he had come quite near, the prince severed the legs of the parrot with his sword, and immediately the demon fell down. He, however, managed to drag along his body over the ground towards his enemy. But just as he was about to close with the prince, the latter killed the parrot outright, whose death at once caused that of the demon. The prince married the daughter, and returned triumphantly to his own country, taking with him his beautiful bride.

Another story embodies the same idea, and mentions also a profusion of magical properties which would be exceedingly useful to any official on tour, such as a fairy flute, flying bed, a self-tying rope, an automatic club, a self-cooking pot and auto-distributing spoon. The wizard's life was concealed in an insect inhabiting the body of a parrot kept in an iron cage, which again was secured in an innermost chamber, there being six outer rooms carefully padlocked leading to it, and the keys of these rooms were kept by the magician himself. As soon as the hero (who in this case also was the lover of the wizard's daughter) opened the first room, the wizard felt feverish, when the second room was unlocked, he had high fever. The magic flute when played called down a number of heavenly nymphs (Apsaras, it is to be presumed), who danced bewitchingly and produced a shower of celestial flowers (Parijat flowers) which have wonderful properties.



## CHAPTER II—WIT AND WISDOM

**W**E turn now to stories connected with the supernatural, and sagas such as are found in the popular lore of most countries. Readers may think that some of these Himalayan tales in their mingling of subtle fancy, rustic charm, and reminiscence of old-world superstitions, compare not unfavourably with the famous Murchen collected by the brothers Grim, or, the familiar stories of our Celtic and English folklore.

### 1. WARNING TO MISERS

Once a king proclaimed throughout his dominions that he would give a lakh of rupees to any man who could consent to be entombed alive. Half the sum was to be paid in advance and the other half if he came out unscathed from the ordeal. A rich miser was attracted by the glittering offer, and volunteered. He was taken in procession by the king's officers, accompanied by a great concourse of spectators. On the way to this place he was met by a dervish, who asked for

alms, telling the miser that as he was going to be buried, he ought to give away something for the benefit of his soul. As he had nothing else about him to give, the miser jestingly handed over to the dervish the shell of an almond which he picked up from the ground. The dervish said, "You will get the reward of what you have given me" The man was then buried in a tomb, which was closed up. While in this living grave he saw many hideous sights. Horrid ghosts came to devour him and venomous snakes assailed him ; but the almond shell stood him in good stead ; for it was interposed between the jaws of the serpents every time they sought to bite him. Next morning the king came to the place and ordered the tomb to be opened, expecting that the entombed man would certainly have perished ; but to the astonishment of all the man was found alive. He was taken out, bathed and sumptuously attired, and told to accompany the king to his palace to receive the remainder of the promised reward. He, however, flatly refused to go, declaring that he must return home at once to attend to his affairs ; promising however to come back later. On reaching home he without a moment's delay began distributing the whole of his wealth to the poor, so

deeply had the lesson of that dreadful night impressed itself on his mind. He gave away all his possessions not leaving anything for himself or his children. On going to receive the second half of the lakh of rupees from the king, he related what had occurred to him while in the tomb, and taking the money distributed that also to the poor.

The idea that alms given in one's life-time will be repaid in the future world is found in many old legends. It is clearly expressed in the Vendidad of the Zendavesta, where we find it stated, "At the head of the Chirival bridge (over which the souls have to pass after death), the holy bridge made by Mazdu, they ask for their spirits the reward for the wordly goods which they gave away." Referring to the idea of the return of alms, Sir Walter Scott quotes a passage from an old manuscript in the Cotton Library, descriptive of the district of Cleveland in Elizabeth's reign—"When any dieth, certain women sing a song to the dead body, reciting the journey that the party deceased must go, and they are of belief (such is their fondness) that once in their lives it is good to give a pair of new shoes to a poor man, for as much as after this life they are to pass bare-foot through a great land full of thorns and furzen, except by the

merit of the alms aforesaid they have redeemed the forfeit, for at the edge of the land an old man shall meet them with the same shoes that are given by the party when he was living, and after he had shod them dismisseth them to go through thick and thin without scratch or scathe." The verses which are quoted by Scott, and which the writer has himself heard recited by an old Cleveland woman are the following among others:

“ If ever thou gave hosen or shoon  
 Every night and all, sit thee down and put  
 them on,  
 And Christ receive thy saul.  
 But if hosen and shoon thou never gave  
 nane,  
 Every night and all,  
 The furzen shall prick thee to the bare  
 bane,  
 And Christ receive thy saul,  
 If ever thou gave either milk or drink,  
 every night and all,  
 The fire shall never make thee shrink, and  
 Christ receive thy saul.”

According to Mannhardt and Grimm a pair of shoes was deposited in the grave in Scandinavia and Germany for this very purpose. In one



district of the latter the term "todtens shuh" or dead-shoe is applied to a funeral. In Scandinavia the shoe is named *hel-sko* or *hell-shoe*.

## 2. THE LUCKY SIMPLETON

There were once two brothers, the elder of whom was a cunning rogue who always kept the younger one hard at work grazing the cattle and tilling the land, and gave him only four "chapaties" or breadcakes for his daily meal. One day the younger while sowing in the field ran short of seed-corn, so returned home for a fresh supply. As the elder brother and his wife had gone out for a time, he looked round the house and found a quantity of nice food ready baked in the kitchen. He quietly took his seed and went back to his work, but on return he received the usual fare and none of the good things he had seen ready. Anger rose in his heart, and he taxed his brother with his unkind treatment. His brother mockingly told him that the reason of his getting only four chapaties for his dinner was because his Luck was asleep at a place beyond the seven seas. However his jesting words turned out truer than he imagined. The young man believed what his elder brother said, and set off to go and awake his

good fortune. While wandering in a forest seeking the way to the place of which he had been told, he noticed a snake climbing up a tree to devour the young ones of a vulture which had made its nest there. He killed the snake, and saved the lives of the young birds, and having no other place of lodging he lay down for the night beneath the tree. When the parent birds came back to their nest with food, in the evening, they were told by the young vultures of the great deliverance that they owed to the young man lying below. The old birds thanked him very heartily and asked if they could be of any service to him. He told them his story and then the vultures offered to carry him over the seas to arouse his luck, and bring him back again on the wings. Before they started, a certain tree standing near that spot requested him to find out from his luck the cause of its being withered, and to inform it on his return. The birds fulfilled the promise, and carried him to the country where his fortune lay. He aroused it and asked it to help him. First of all he very unselfishly enquired why the tree was withering. His fortune told him it was because of a serpent hidden under its roots guarding a great treasure which was buried there. He

must kill the serpent and then the tree would recover and he would gain possession of the gold and jewels. He was conveyed back over the seven seas by the vultures, and returning to the forest he found the treasure and appropriated it. The tree also became green as had been foretold. On his way home he caught and tamed a beautiful horse that was running wild, and continued his journey on its back. Coming to the dominions of a certain king, he found the place in gloom owing to the serious illness of the king's favourite daughter. All efforts of the royal physicians had failed and the king was offering huge reward to any one who could cure her. The young man recommended some simple remedy that he had learnt in his native village, and by good luck the girl rapidly recovered. The king was so grateful that he offered to make him his son-in-law and gave him rich rewards. So at length he reached home with great wealth and honour owing to the awakening of his good fortune.

We see, curiously illustrated in the above story, the materialising character of popular religious thought, which here conceives of the karma or destiny, a man's past acts in former lives, as a person who can go to sleep and requires to be

awakened. The notion of treasures being guarded by serpents is exceedingly common and is probably to be ascribed to the fact of snakes making their dwellings under the ground. In the Volsunga Saga a great treasure was guarded by the serpent Fafner who was slain by Sigurd.

### 3. THE PRECIOUS COUNSEL

A certain rich man had two sons, and when they grew up he gave them each a sum of Rs.4,000 to start business with. The elder son went into trade, but the younger one bought with the money four pieces of advice from a celebrated Faqir. These were: (1) Never to walk or travel alone, (2) Not to sit on any bed before examining it, (3) To remain awake in time of danger, and (4) To suppress anger. He made up his mind to abide carefully by these rules, for which he had paid so highly, and set off on his travels. In accordance with the first rule, as he had no one else to take with him, he picked up a crab from a pool by the wayside and kept it in his cap. Arriving at a certain place he ate his food and lay down to sleep. While he slept a cobra came and was about to bite his head, when the crab attacked it. A fight ensued, the noise of which awoke the sleeper, and he killed the snake. Thus he found

the value of the first counsel, that had been given to him by the holy man. It had cost him a thousand rupees, but it had saved his life. He continued his journey, and as night fell he came to a house in which lived a beautiful but wicked woman. She received him hospitably, and after feasting him with the best, showed him a richly covered bed on which he was to sleep. Before lying down, however, he remembered the second rule, and looked under the bed. To his horror he saw that it was placed over a deep and dark ditch. Thus having discovered the evil intentions of the woman, he promptly killed her and took possession of all her property. Congratulating himself on the good results of following the Faqir's advice, he pursued his journey and came to a city. He found lodging in the house of an old widow. She told him that he was welcome to stay in her house, but that, unhappily, that very night it was the turn of her son to be devoured by a demon. Inquiring into this strange story, he was told that the demon had taken up its abode within the body of the king's daughter in the form of a snake. It would have devoured the princess long ago, and perhaps the king and all his courtiers, if they had not arranged to supply it with a

man every night to satisfy its appetite. The snake issued from the mouth of the princess at night, and assuming gigantic human countenance, ate up the victim provided. On hearing this ghastly story the young man was in no wise afraid, but confiding in the third rule which had been given him by the Faqir, he offered to take the place of the widow's son. She was only too glad to allow him to do so, and he repaired to the palace. He asked for a dozen lamps to be placed around him, and seated himself, sword in hand, in the princess's apartment. He took care to keep awake all the time. At last the demon appeared and began to put out the lamps. When it was just about to extinguish the last one the young man started up and slew it with his sword. He still remained awake watching all sides of the room, but nothing further happened. The king and his courtiers were delighted to find the demon killed and the princess delivered from the demon. The king married the man to the princess and gave him much wealth. Some time after he returned to his original home to tell his first wife and other relatives of all his good fortune. Many years had passed, the wife had borne a son who was now grown up, and who came forth along with his

mother to greet him. Seeing the young man there in company of his wife, and not knowing who he was, the father at first flew into a rage and was about to strike him dead, but remembering the fourth counsel, he kept quiet, and on learning that this was his son, he rejoiced more than all at this last proof of the value of the sage's advice.

#### 4. THE THREE FOOLS

Three fools, while roving together in a jungle, met with a lake full of beautiful fishes. Seeing this, one expressed his regret and asked how would these poor fishes survive if a wild fire were to beset the body of water. The other clown rejoined, "Oh, it was an easy thing for them (the fishes) to climb up trees if such a catastrophe should ever come to them by chance." The third idiot, contradicting his companion, said, that the fishes were not buffaloes which could mount the trees. They then departed, after making their respective observations on the place they had come across.

#### 5. THE SAGACIOUS DOG

A certain man, who owed Rs.300 to a creditor, had nothing to discharge his debt with except a dog which he had trained to watch his house. On being pressed by the creditor for repayment

of his loan, the poor man gave his dog as a pledge for three years. The rich man took the dog with him and went away. One night when the rich man was away from his house some thieves came. In spite of the alarm given by the dog in barking at them, no one awoke from sleep to detect and arrest them. Thus unguarded, the pilferers found opportunity of entering the house and taking away the riches from it. They concealed the booty in a deep ditch in a neighbouring jungle. The dog, unable to do anything to prevent their doing so, silently noted their movement. On the next day when the master of the house came home the dog frequently fawned at his feet and made signs to go somewhere. On noticing the conduct of the dog the master followed the animal, which took him to the trench, where he found the stolen property. He then took his riches home. He was so glad to recover his property through the sagacity of the dog that he wrote a letter to his debtor acknowledging the discharge of his loan through his dog, which he returned with many thanks to him. The dog returned to his former master with the letter hanging on his neck. The master of the house, seeing the dog returning home in breach of his pledge, shot him down. He found



then the letter on his body, which he read to his never-ceasing sorrow, and afterwards he committed suicide through grief.

#### 6. A SENSELESS FOOL

A fool once shaved his head (an inauspicious omen performed only on the death of one's own near and dear kinsman), when his she-buffalo gave birth to a male young one. The universal custom is to get such a calf bathed in cold water as soon as it is born. The man thrust the head of the young calf into a wooden vessel full of water for the purpose. When he wanted to take the head out of the utensil he could not do so: he devised a plan to effect his purpose. With a sword he severed the head of the calf from its body. Then the beheaded portion would not come out of it. He was then obliged to break the vessel. The last business might have been done before, to save the young one and the wooden vessel, if the man had had any sense.

#### 7. A VILLAGE WISEACRE

There was once a certain man in an out-of-the-way village. The man being a Padhan (headman) pretended to be philosopher and a man of wisdom. He used to be resorted to for advice in

every case which the other residents of the village did not understand themselves.

Once a certain man of the village found the outer frame of a sieve, and being himself ignorant of what it was, took it to the leading man for examination. The man after carefully inspecting it drew his conclusion and said, " My friend, this is nothing but the frame or disc of the moon. Once the sun and the moon fought together and the latter on being vanquished got his ring broken and it fell down on the earth. You see it has been eaten into by insects."

At another time a certain inhabitant of the village reported to the philosopher that his crops were damaged or eaten by some animal with extraordinary large feet, and requested him to find out what it was. The so-called philosopher went himself to inspect the damage and the tracks of the feet of the animal which had damaged the fields. On examining the same, he inferred that it was some deer, which after fastening the millstones to its feet, seems to have trodden on and marked the fields. Going a little further he and the others accompanying him, saw an elephant asleep there. This the so-called philosopher deduced to be nothing but either concentrated

darkness of the night (or vapour of the night after the sunset), or the one of Delhi (referring to an elephant which he had seen years ago in that city).

#### 8. THE DEBTOR BORROWS WITH CHEERFULNESS BUT REPAYS WITH SORROW

The Kauravas and the Pandavas are the chief characters of the Sanskrit poem of the Mahabharat. One half of the ancient Delhi kingdom belonged to one, and the other half to the other. The latter five brothers after having undergone the punishment of 13 years, claimed to have their half of the kingdom, but the former declined to give them their share. The Pandavas were thus obliged to have resort to a battle, in which all the kings of India had joined for help on both sides. The Kauravas, who were already in possession of the kingdom, had money enough to defray the expenses of such a great war as it was, but the Pandavas, having just finished the time of their banishment or sojourn, had nothing to cope with the expenses of such a great war. As nothing less than trillions of money was necessary for the purpose, the eldest brother of the Pandavas, Yudhisthar, had recourse to Kuver, the treasurer of the gods, and deputed his youngest brother to

go to him, to ask for a loan of trillions of rupees for the war. Kuver asked the young Pandava whether he would repay the money with the same glad humour with which he wanted to borrow. "The same disposition," was the reply. On this Kuver declined to lend him any money. Yudhisthar was very sorry to hear of the refusal of Kuver, and sent then his fourth brother for the loan to Kuver, who, after having received the same answer to his question, did not agree to lend him any money. Yudhisthar then sent his second and third brother one after the other; they also brought the same flat refusal from Kuver, owing to his having received the same answer to the question put to them. Then Yudhisthar went himself for the loan to Kuver, who put him the same question, in answer to which Yudhisthar said, "Dear Sir, it is next to an impossibility for a debtor to discharge his debt with the same cheerfulness with which he borrows the money. He borrows with a glad heart, but repays it with sorrow and regret". This answer satisfied Kuver, who allowed Yudhisthar to take any amount of money that he might be in want of, and considered him to be a truthful man, and certain to repay him the money which he was then borrowing.

## 9. WONDERFUL FEATS OF TWO ASCETICS

In former times, Dervishes were totally devoted to God and his service, being quite indifferent to the world and worldly things. So they were endowed with supernatural power to work out wonders. Some four hundred years ago a Fakir by name Hardwarpuri went to try another ascetic by name Shravan Nath, at Hardwar, as to the power of his devotion. So he repaired to his house and asked his disciples to fill his vessel of only one chatak in capacity with oil. They came with a vessel of oil to accede to his prayer. Scers, nay, jars of oil were poured into it, but it was not filled. The news reached Shravan Nath, who himself came with a small reedful of oil, and began to fill the utensil up with it ; yet it was not filled up, nor did the pouring stream of oil cease to fall into the vessel incessantly for three days and nights. The performance of these wonderful feats brought both of them into close communion with each other.

It was a rule with Shravan Nath to feed thousands of ascetics and Brahmins during the Hardwar fairs. Once, while doing so, he ran short of ghee (clarified butter in which cakes are fried) and it

was not to be had in the bazar; so the saint ordered his servants to borrow 100 jars of ghee from the Ganges. His servants filled 100 jars of the Ganges water in place of ghee. This water baked the cakes like the ghee, to the amazement of the cooks and other people present there on that occasion. After the fair was over the ascetic ordered 100 jars of ghee to be purchased and poured into the Ganges as a repayment of the ghee borrowed from the Ganges.

10. A FAQIR ALONE CAN JUDGE THE MERIT  
OF ANOTHER FAQIR

A Fakir is discerned and judged only by another Fakir in regard to the nature of his devotion. It was during the reign of a certain Mohammadan ruler that a common Mohammadan dervish by name Alam Shah used to live in one of the suburbs of Delhi. He used to beg cooked food from door to door, and live in a hut thatched with leaves and grass. He had nothing but a cow, which he used to tether and drink her milk in the same way as her own calf did. He was said to be very fond of playing with the boys to whom he was wont to teach Persian and Arabic, in which languages he was a thorough scholar. He was not a well-known man, but seemed to be a common beggar and

known only to the people of the suburb. Years elapsed. He lived there in this way quite unnoticed, uncared for, and unregarded. Once upon a time another Mohammadan dervish by name Shutarbeg (who alone seemed to know the merit of Alam Shah) started from Arabia with a view to have some communion with Alam Shah about God and divine things. The former had sent a letter to the latter to this effect beforehand. He mounted and rode on a lion, with a bridle made of two living cobras, and travelled towards Delhi, to the utter astonishment of the people he met with. The nearer he approached Delhi the more widely the alarm spread and struck the people of the city with wonder and terror who did not fail to inform Alam Shah of the approach of the Arab ascetic. When the news came to Alam Shah that Shutarbeg was only at 2 miles distance, he was teaching boys on one of the walls of a house in ruins, and wanted to go ahead to receive him. The citizens of the city and suburb earnestly requested Alam Shah not to go to receive him on foot, but to ride either on an elephant, a pony, or a chariot of theirs. On this Alam Shah said that he wanted nothing of the sort for his vehicle, but directed the wall on which he and his boys sat,

to take him to the foreign ascetic. The said wall, under his order, began to move like an animate thing along the road by which the Arabian faqir was coming. They met, one showing the other the merit of his own devotion. The former brought the latter to his own hut, tying his lion with his own cow. They remained together for many weeks. At last when the foreign ascetic was ready to depart he found his lion had disappeared, and asked the Delhi faqir for it. In reply to his query he said that it was consigned by him to the care of his cow, so he should ask the cow for it. The other fakir accordingly asked the cow for his lion, which she vomited up, to the amazement of the Arabian fakir, and the other people assembled there. The foreign fakir after having mounted his lion departed. The Delhi fakir also disappeared with his cow the very next day.

## II. FAITH IN GOD'S BOUNTY

There were two brothers in a certain family, both of whom were married, and used to live separately from each other. The elder was very diligent, and always devoted his time to work, but the younger one being very lazy used to do nothing but sleep and otherwise idle away his



time. His wife was very angry with the conduct of her husband, and not unfrequently she used to taunt him with his slothfulness. Her husband when so tasked and worried in this way used to say, that if God was ever pleased with him he would send wealth and riches inside his house himself, by breaking open his roof. One day his wife, while grazing her cattle in the jungle, found some clue of a jar full of gold mohars buried there. She instantly covered it with grass and earth so that no one else might detect it, with a view to take it at night, and requested her husband to help her to convey the money home. The husband still insisted on God's sending it himself inside his home, and said that he would not act like a thief to get the riches. As she could not prevail on him any further, she was at last obliged to share it with her elder sister-in-law (the wife of the elder brother) and told her the happy news. The latter, having made herself fully aware of the whereabouts of the alleged wealth, refused to accompany her, saying that she would not risk her life by going there at night, but, cunningly, she thought in her mind that she and her husband would go there alone and appropriate the whole of it themselves. After this, when she found her

younger sister asleep together with her husband she took her own husband with her and repaired to the jungle where the riches were said to have been buried. As soon as they arrived at the spot they began to unearth the jar of gold, but no sooner was this done by them than numbers of hornets assailed and stung them. This prevented them from further digging the place for the money. They thought that they were imposed on by their relation to be thus troubled and killed by the means invented for the purpose. In their rage they thought of revenging themselves on them (the younger brother and his wife) for their enmity by throwing the jar of wasps or hornets itself into the chimney hole of their house as a return for the injury. They did accordingly. As the hornets had already flown out of the jar, the gold mohars which it still retained were poured into the room wherein the younger brother and his wife had slept. On seeing the heap of gold mohars inside his house the younger brother cried out, "Lo, God is pleased with me now, and so He has thrown riches inside my house Himself, by having the roof of his house broken open for the purpose". So the confidence of the younger brother in the goodwill of God was justified.

## 12. THE IMPATIENT CREDITOR

Creditors or money-lenders, in the pre-British times, were considered and treated by their debtors as their exclusive lords and despotic masters, as next to the reigning king. A creditor's appropriation of any of the moveables pertaining to his debtors, even without their consent, was quite tolerated. He could swear his debtor not to eat any of his meals or come out of his house, or could shut him up inside his house, or kindle fire on the threshold of his door, unless or until the loan was repaid. Moreover, he could take the sons or daughters of the borrower as slaves for himself, either for a time or for their whole lives. Thus the creditors were wont to go to their debtor's houses themselves for realization of their loans. The presence of a creditor had a stunning effect on the debtor, if the latter was not in a position to discharge his debt.

Once a certain creditor went to the house of his debtor to ask for the repayment of his loan. The latter was not at home but his wife, being otherwise unable to repay the debt, had presence of mind to show him four large white pumpkins kept in her house, representing them to be the eggs given birth to by her mare, and promised him to

pay the debt as soon as the eggs were hatched, by selling the horses which should come from the eggs. The creditor trusted her word, and having himself become impatient to take the eggs in payment for his money, asked her to let him have them at once. The debtor's wife said, "Sir, the eggs when hatched would fetch not less than Rs.400 how can you take them in return for only Rs.100 of yours?" The creditor said, "I must have them now, otherwise I will charge you double interest". She yielded to this demand of her husband's creditor, and said, "Sir, you are master of our household, you can take them in lieu of your money, but they are not mature yet ; they are to be conveyed to your home very carefully by a path which runs along the tops of the mountains, on the bottom of a basket turned up, otherwise, they will rot on your way home". The impatient creditor observed these precautions, and started for his home, putting the eggs (pumpkins) on the other side of a basket, on his head. While he was thus conveying them over the tops of the mountains, all of them rolled down a precipice into a forest slope, where deer were grazing. The fall of the pumpkins startled the deer, and they ran away in alarm at the sight of the creditor, who was fully convinced

in his mind, that the deer were the horses born from the eggs which had been broken by the fall. The creditor arrived at his home in a disappointed mood, when his children flocked to him as usual, and asked their father where he had come from, and what he had brought for them. On his relating the whole story of his unsuccessful speculation and the loss of four valuable horses, one of his sons said eagerly that he would have gladly ridden one of them if his father had brought them home. Being already mortified by the unfortunate transaction, his son's foolish saying so provoked him to anger that he could not refrain from killing him.

### 13. A DERVISH'S WISE ADVICE

There was a Raja of a certain country, who used to feed a certain dervish constantly for some years, in his own palace. After the death of this king his son also made it a rule to place a dish of food before the ascetic with his own hand. One day no sooner was the plate of food laid before him by the prince than the Fakir began to weep and mourn over it. On the prince's enquiring the cause of his sadness the devotee said, "Oh my son, I am sorry to say that the courtiers of your father have conspired to

have you assassinated and your kingdom taken, so it behoves you now to leave this country at once, and go to a strange country. Take your money in gold, silver, and precious stones with you, and act on my exhortations and never forget them for a minute.

They are these :

*1st*—Rest or stay out of the way (not on any road).

*2nd*—Do not sit in the bed of another without thoroughly striking it before you do so.

*3rd*—One's sister is a sister during his prosperity.

*4th*—One's friend is a friend during his adversity.

The prince started taking his money. After travelling some distance he felt exhausted, and remembering the advice of the Fakir, wanted to rest in a place out of the way. After getting some refreshment there, he travelled on (leaving the bag of his money at the spot unwittingly). When he was at some distance from the place, he noticed the loss of his valuable bag, to his utter despair. He returned to the out-of-the-way place where he had left it. On finding his bag there he was very happy and thankful to the devotee for the invaluable

advice by which he was so immensely benefited. He again resumed his journey, and arrived in a secluded forest where a witch had placed a bed with a white sheet spread over it, apparently for the rest and refreshment of fatigued travellers, but with the secret intent of having them killed so that she might appropriate their property. This bed was placed over a deep ditch, so that the sojourner should go down to destruction as soon as he sat on it. The witch said, "Dear son, you are welcome, get yourself refreshed by reposing on this bed, and then take your meal, which I shall gladly get ready for you after a while." The prince again remembered the advice of the Fakir. As soon as he gave 2 or 3 strokes on it, the covering sheet sank down, and the deep hole became visible. The prince after having fully understood the treacherous purpose of the woman, slaughtered her there and then. Then he proceeded to a town where his own sister was married. He sent a message to her that he was waiting for her in a certain suburb of the town. His sister, considering him to be in a beggarly state, had not only paid no heed to him, but denied him to be her brother; a fact which the prince found to agree with the prophecy of the hermit. He then left the town and proceeded to

another place where he heard a friend of his was living. In order to try the advice of his admonisher he sent word to him also. He immediately came to the prince, and took him to his house with great courtesy and regard, and, placing all his property at his disposal, eagerly requested him to stay and live there. The prince after staying there for some days, repaired to another town where he was wedded to the daughter of the king of the country, who made the reins of his kingdom over to the young prince, his son-in-law. Having thus attained the princely office the prince after some years returned to his own country with a large army, and in all the splendour of a king with a view to take possession of his kingdom. While thus proceeding his sister came to welcome and receive him, but the king dealt with her as became a potentate. The prince thereafter continued to think of and remember his patron saint as long as he lived.

14. THE GODLY MAN IS AS MAD TO THE  
WORLD AS THE WORDLY MAN  
TO THE SOUL

A really religious man, who was quite unconcerned with wordly affairs, used to be nicknamed a "Mad Man" by the worldly people wherever he went. Being so despised and ridiculed in this



world he was at last forced to go and complain to God about the bad treatment he received at the hands of the unspiritual people. On this God instanced to him great and most renowned statesmen, politicians, warriors, and others of great capacities and qualifications who had eventually done nothing for their immortal soul after death, and all their deeds became of none effect. God said that the godly man was no doubt as mad to the world as were the worldly men to the soul. The pious man then returned home quite pleased and satisfied with his own behaviour, and thenceforward paid no regard to what the world said about him.

#### 15. YOUR MAJESTY IS THE FOURTH FOOL

Once a certain king directed his minister to produce four fools before him. The official set out in search of them. While engaged in the expedition he noted a man going mounted on a pony with the packet of his luggage on his head. The minister taking him for a fool ordered him to accompany him. On going further he found a certain man distributing sweetmeats for the joy he felt on account of birth of a child to his long estranged wife, who had deserted him and gone to another man as a concubine many years since. The envoy took him also with him. With these

two aforesaid dunces the officer went to the king and presented them. Each of them was made to relate his doings to the monarch, who was quite satisfied with the deficiency of their reason. After this the king asked his minister, "Why do you bring only two fools instead of four as ordered?" "Sir, I am the 3rd fool, who instead of spending my valuable time in profitable and wise works, am squandering it in search of fools and idiots." The king then asked for the fourth, the administrator to this eager query of his replied, "My Lord, may I be excused from replying to this question?" The king insisted on a reply. The minister then said, "Your majesty is the fourth fool, who is so earnestly intent on finding out fools instead of wise men."

#### 16. DISCERNMENT OF GOD OR GOD HELPS A RIGHTEOUS PERSON

Once upon a time, a certain hermit who was living in a secluded forest far off from human habitations felt a doubt as to Sri Krishna being an incarnation of God. He invariably heard from the people he met with, that the former had always sided with and helped the Pandavas against the Kauravas; a quality or disposition opposed to the

divine will. So once he set out from his hut in order to test the merit of the parties concerned. After having had his meal he went to the king of the Kauravas in the afternoon. He was welcomed and received by the king. The king asked, "Where have you come from?" The saint answered, "From Dwarka." The king again asked him, "What is Sri Krishna doing now-a-days?" The saint answered, "He has fixed a needle, in the opposite side, on the ground in an expansive lawn, and having himself mounted an elephant with his wives he goes backward and forward through its eye." The king hearing this story of the hermit, contemptuously laughed at him and said, "Oh man, you are not at all a godly man as you appear to be, but a liar and scoundrel; for you talk foolishly. You had better turn your face and go away, or else you will be thrown into prison to rot there for your life." Having patiently endured the abuse as a saint should, the hermit again begged to be allowed to present his request, and prayed the king. "Sir, you are lord of the world, you will be merciful to me and grant me a present of a cow. A son has recently been born to me, and I am obliged to have him fed with the milk of the cow." On this the king asked him, "What propitious day is this?"

and have you not already had your food?" The saint rejoined, "Oh lord of the earth, today is not a fast day, and I have taken my food already. But the urgency of the case has brought me here, for if my son does not get cow's milk today it is not unlikely that he may die without it." To this the king said, "You certainly deserve to be expelled from my court. The day on which you ask for a gift of a cow, is not a propitious day, the time is afternoon. Yourself and I have both had our food. All these things are opposed to the teaching of the Hindu scriptures. You must at once go home without any further discussion, or else you will be driven in disgrace out of this place. But you can come to me again in the early morning of some sacred day, fasting, and ask me for the gift of a cow." The saint then left the place and went to the king of the Pandavas, a couple of miles off, on the same day. On his arrival there he was received with great regard and reverence by the king who said, "Oh saint, you are heartily welcome. You have purified and blessed me and my country by your holy appearance. Where do you come from?" The saint answered, "From Dwarka." "What is Sri Krishna doing there now-a-days?" To this the saint gave the same reply as to the king of the

Kauravas. The king of the Pandavas was highly pleased with the reply, and said, "Though it is beyond the capacity of human conception, it is an easy thing for Almighty God, such as Sri Krishna himself is, to thrust the whole universe through the eye of a needle. Oh holy sage, have mercy upon me, if I can be of any service to you." The saint asked for a cow for the maintenance of his newly-born son. The king without any objection or scruple ordered a cow to be given to the saint, who selected one. While taking it home the entire herd of the kine began to follow or accompany it, in spite of the efforts of the herdsmen and other people to keep them back. When the report reached the king he ordered that the entire herd of the kine should be allowed to go with the sage. All these events brought the hermit to his senses, and he was thenceforward convinced in his mind that the Pandavas were the righteous people, and Sri Krishna was a true incarnation of God, ready to help and protect those who are virtuous and humble in spirit.

17. A SIMPLETON WHO FOLLOWED HIS  
INSTRUCTIONS TOO LITERALLY

There was once a simpleton in a certain village. When ready to go to the house of his father-in-law

he asked his relations what to say to the members of his family. They instructed him to say "Yes" or "No" as the occasion might require. Accordingly he noted these words in his mind. Then he asked them what he should say to those who might meet him on the way. He was told to say "Good morning." With these directions impressed on his heart he started.

He reached a place where a fowler having concealed himself in a bush, had spread his net to catch birds. He met the simple man, just at the time when the birds were about to enter his net. No sooner did the dupe bid him good morning than the birds flew away, alarmed by his voice. The fowler being greatly enraged at his conduct inflicted a good beating on the fool, who exclaimed, "What am I to say then, instead of good morning?" The fowler instructed him to say "continue to come and be ensnared" (referring to his own desire to catch birds). Noting this instruction of the fowler the simpleton went on, and meeting thieves in the way he repeated the aforesaid speech to them. Of course on hearing such a sarcastic speech about their own profession, they also became very angry and gave a thrashing to the man. He happened to ask them, "Sirs, you beat me for what I said to you,

what am I to say then?" They replied telling him to say "Continue to bring and deposit" (referring to their own purpose). With this instruction of the thieves the simple man took his way. No sooner did he see men bearing a dead body (to be burnt) on their head, than he began to repeat the sentence told to him and was thereupon beaten by them for his abusive language. The simpleton asked them, "Friends what should I say then?" They said "Say, be not so always" (as the occasion required). With this instruction of theirs he went on. Sooner he saw a marriage procession coming, and he uttered the last mentioned sentence (be not so ever) and was again beaten by the people who formed the procession, because of this foolish and ominous saying. At last he arrived at the house of his father-in-law and was received with great regard and affection. His mother-in-law asked him, "Are you quite well?"

He says "Yes" (as originally tutored by his own kinsmen).

She asked again "Is my daughter well?"

He says "No."

She asks, "Is she sick"?

He says, "Yes".

She asks, "Is she not improving?"

He says "No."

She asks, "Is she dead"?

He says "Yes".

At this all the members of the family began to mourn over her. The wife of the simpleton was safe and alive, but it was only the instruction given to the idiot which caused all this pain and alarm.

#### 18. IN THIS AGE ALL ARE SINNERS

When God created the world, the heavens and all the things therein, he divided infinite time into four ages: viz. first, the age of truth and innocence; second, three-fourth righteousness and one-fourth iniquity; third, half of righteousness, half of sin; fourth, made of entire sin. Along with other things he also provided 84 extensive hells for the occupation of sinners. Of course when first made they were wholly unoccupied. So God sent for the four ages and asked each of them to fill the hells. The first age came and expressed his inability to send even one person to the hells. The second on his appearance before God promised to send a few to the hells, but expressed his inability to fill them up. Then the third age made his appearance and promised to fill them to a certain extent but not up to their brim. After this the fourth age arrived, and after seeing the 84 large and wide hells uttered



a sigh, and humbly asked God, "My Lord, you know that I am the most powerful of all my colleagues and that to fill up thy hells to the top is nothing to me. They are hardly large enough to contain the multitudes of people whom I shall daily send to them. So let me have ten fold more space for them." This means that almost all the people of this age are sinners and deserve to be sent to hell.

#### 19. A CRIPPLE FAVOURED BY LUCK

There was a man and his wife in a certain town who used to get their living by selling grass and fuel. Though very poor the pair were very anxious to have a son. At last they had a son born to them, who had no hands and feet. They nourished him with parental love and care. When he was full grown they became tired of him and grumbled at him, saying that they had to feed a son who was of no help to them, and the son used to reply to them that it was his own luck, and not his parents', which was feeding him. This invariable statement of his provoked them further. At last impelled by the ungratefulness of their son, they took him to a solitary jungle and left him there unprovided and uncared for, and returned to their home. On the evening of the same day the cows which were accustomed to graze in some neigh-

bouring jungle, instead of returning homeward, fled, in spite of the efforts of the cowherds to stop them, to the place where the limbless child had been laid by his parents. Thus the boy was brought to the notice of the cowherds by their cattle. Seeing him in this helpless state in the jungle, the herds kindled a fire near him, and fed him with their own hands before returning home with their kine. They did not forget to feed him in this way for months and years. One night, seeing flames of fire from a distance, a travelling saint, supposing the place (to be a habitation of men, went to the place) and saw the limbless boy with whom he stayed that night. Before his departure next morning, the sage asked him if there were any thing he wanted. The boy in reply said that nothing in the universe could help him except his own fate (formed of the consequence of his own doing in this and in the previous births) which he was obliged to endure, denying at the same time either the favour or disfavour of God, to the utter amazement of the godly saint. The saint then went straight to God and informed him of the boy's miserable state and his strong and firm belief in fate, against the power and influence of any God whatsoever. Then God came himself with the

saint to see the boy, and asked him whether he could do anything for him. The boy refused to accept his help, and relied on his own fate. But God having compassion on the boy made him a good looking boy, complete in all his limbs. But he not only did not acknowledge the mercy of God, but again ascribed his regeneration to his fate alone. He was after this married to the only daughter of the king of that country, who leaving his country to the boy (his son-in-law) went away to some jungle for penances and the purification of his soul. The boy, having thus become the king of the country, as a good son should, sent for his parents, who were still living on the proceeds of the sale of their grass and fire wood; gave them sufficient wealth and land to live like great people, and said to them openly that there was no occasion whatever for any blame, since fate reigns over every creature in the world.

20. A FAITHFUL WIFE WHO SAVED HER  
HUSBAND FROM DEATH

There was a certain man who had no children at all. With a view to obtain a son he performed many penances and prayed to God for one. God granted him a son whose age was to be limited to 12 years. His parents proposed, when he attained

the age of 11 years, to marry him and to leave their home for good so that they might not see the death of their son before they themselves died. So the father started in search of a wife for his son. He arrived in a village where a certain man had daughters, who were conversing with each other about the manner in which each of them would treat her husband if she were married. The eldest said she would kill her husband and then go away from his house; the second said that she would always trouble her husband; the third said she would starve him; the fourth said that she would never obey him; the fifth and youngest one, remonstrating with her other sisters, said that she would never cease to love and obey her husband, with her heart and soul, and would save him even at the sacrifice of her own life. After hearing the fanciful proposals of the five sisters the man felt inclined to ask for the youngest sister for his son. He asked her father for the girl and she was married to his son. The nearer the term of 12 years approached the more anxious and miserable the parents felt. But the girl thought that she was the only cause of their anxiety and discomfiture. So one day she plainly asked them to let her go to her father's house, since they had become very unhappy since

her marriage to their son. Hearing such pleading they were obliged to disclose the secret of their imminent misfortune. Before the fatal night of her husband's death was to fall due she had a house built at the burning ghat (place where dead bodies are consumed) with four doors leading into it. On the evening of the predicted fatal night she took her husband there and seated him on a bed in the centre of it. At one door she placed a burning lamp as a guardian, and addressed it thus "Oh holy light, be vigilant in your duty, and do not allow any visible or invisible soul or spirit to enter this night, or else I will extinguish you from the face of the world for ever." At the second door she put a vessel of water as a watchman, and addressed him, "Oh holy water, the habitation of God, be attentive to your duty of forbidding entrance into the house to any perceptible or imperceptible soul. On the failure of your duty I shall have you destroyed or extirpated for ever from the face of the earth; I give you my oath on this." In the third gate she placed some grain as a sentinel and said to it, "Oh grain, a form of God to nourish the world, I solemnly assign to you the duty of preventing the entrance of any soul or spirit into the house this night for my sake, or else you will have the punish-

ment of being annihilated for ever from the face of the earth." In the fourth door she herself sat to meet the danger. When the fixed hour came the messengers of death came to take the soul of the boy, but they were not allowed to enter the room. So they went back to their master, Death, and told their stories. At this, Death, being curious to see the supernatural power of the protectors, who had set his verdict at defiance, repaired to the house himself to take the soul of the youth as ordained before. No sooner had he entered the house by the door where the girl was keeping watch, than she bowed down to him saying, "Father, have mercy on me, the most miserable creature in the world, by sparing the boy to whom I have been wedded." Death, on being so affectionately and humbly addressed by a girl of very tender age, could not but spare her husband and said to her "Daughter, I have been so moved by your humble petition, that I leave your husband for 12 years multiplied by 120 years in this world." The Death having wished happiness to the young pair departed from the house.

#### 21. THE TWO CLEVER THIEVES

There was a hereditary thief once upon a time. He had two sons, who not caring for their father's

profession, used to idle away their time in other ways. So the father was very angry with them and chastised them. So they came to their senses and agreed to learn the profession. After having been thoroughly trained in the art of theft for some years, they were at last sent by their father to steal. On the first day they stole a valuable necklace of big pearls out of the palace of the king of the country; on the second day jewellery and on the third day a large amount of money. In spite of careful search and investigation by the police officers of the king no clue could be found to the outrageous actions of the criminals. For they used to commit their thefts at night, and to sit in the kings' courtyard during the day time, after having attired themselves gorgeously like great persons. In such a state of affairs, the king and his courtiers adopted a plan to discover them. An elephant loaded with a great treasure was let loose to find out the offender. The thieves unseen by others sank the elephant in a deep ditch and took away the money at night. The elephant disappeared next day. Then a courtesan was deputed. She started for the city and roved from door to door among the women of the houses asking for a little of the elephant's dung which she needed for some

medicine, and she offered an exorbitantly high price for it. The mother of the young thieves being ignorant of the real business of her sons, sold it to the procuress who at once sealed or marked the house with cow-dung and went to the palace and reported her success in the presence of the thieves themselves, who had sat there in the disguise of gentlemen. The court proposed to search the house of the woman (who had sold the elephant's dung) next morning. The thieves at once went and put similar marks of dung on all the houses of the city. Next day when the police officers and minister were led by the witch to the house of the woman to arrest her, to the bewilderment of the expert woman they found all the houses bearing a similar mark. So she could not succeed in pointing out the house of the thieves and so they were left undiscovered.

One night the thieves, and their father, entered the palace by a window on one of the high walls of the house, by fixing pegs in the wall and hanging a rope on them for going up and down it. As soon as they had thrown down the valuable articles the guards awoke and were about to arrest them, but the young men got off quickly. Seeing their father, an old man, unable to act as they did, and about to



be apprehended by the guards, they cut off his head and threw it away. As the body could not be identified the police conveyed it to every street of the town offering it to anyone who might ask for it for burning (as a means of discovery). No one asked for it or mourned over it. At last the police had to burn the body to ashes by the king's orders, so they took it to the funeral ghat for that purpose, a great crowd following them out of curiosity to see the consumption of the headless corpse. It was necessary according to their religion for the heirs of the deceased to mourn and bemoan him at the last funeral rite, so the mother of the thieves (the wife of the deceased) taking a pot of curds thrust herself into the dense throng and fell down with her curds in consequence of being pushed. So she feigned to weep over her curds, saying, "Oh my dear curds, what has become of you? and where have you gone to, leaving me alone here?" No one understood her stratagem. Her sons, who had the head of their father which it was necessary to have burnt with the body, enclosed it in a drum, and followed the rabble in the disguise of beggar minstrels, lamenting over their father and singing sad ballads and hymns. When the pyre was in flames the beggar minstrels (the young thieves)

insisted on receiving gifts from the police officials (no such ceremony is an occasion for alms). No sooner were they reprimanded for their improper begging than they became angry and threw the drum (containing the head of their father) into the burning flames and pretended to weep over their drum, all the people being ignorant of the real reason. In reality they were weeping over the death of their father.

## 22. THE BHADRA OUTWITTED

Once a certain man started from his home to the house of his father-in-law on a day rendered unpropitious by Bhadra (an unlucky moment). The Bhadra followed him in the form of his own shadow. When he arrived there the Bhadra did the same. To his father and mother-in-law and to his own wife also two faces (he and the Bhadra in his shape) of like form and stature appeared to their amazement. None of them could in any way distinguish the real man and the Bhadra in his image. Two men of the same countenance and stature stood at dinner and bed. The girl was claimed by each of them equally. At last the parents permitted the girl to go with her husband. She followed both to some distance when two roads from different directions met. The real husband was taking

his wife to his own house but the Bhadra attempted to take her by another road. So a conflict took place when an arm of the girl was caught by her own husband and another by the Bhadra ghost. The real husband at last had recourse to the Raja of the place; so did the Bhadra ghost, each claiming the damsel to be his own wife before the king. After hearing the parties the ingenious king had a water-pot with two holes put before him, and wanted to test thereby the real man. So he said that he would allow him to have the wife who would pass into the vessel from one hole, and come out through the other, twice or thrice. Of course, it was impossible for a human being to compress himself thus and then come out through the hole. The other form Bhadra did this, however, as desired by the king. While in the act of doing so, the Bhadra ghost was shut up by the king within the vessel, by closing the holes. The king then allowed the man and his wife to go home, keeping the ghost confined within the pot for some months, when it disappeared by evaporation. The Hindus therefore take care to avoid days polluted by the Bhadra, for all their undertakings, such as going on pilgrimage or other journeys, performing religious and social duties, building and occupying

new houses, etc. On the whole nothing good is commenced during the portion of day and night which is eclipsed by the Bhadra. This prevails during the first or second half of certain lunar dates, being the shade of a certain planet, according to astrology.

### 23. WISDOM SUPERIOR TO WEALTH

There were once two men, one noted for his ingeniousness and the other for his wealth. They quarrelled with each other about each one's superiority to the other. They went to wise and learned men to decide their respective claims and preciousness, and had arbitrators appointed for the purpose, but to no effect. They then resorted to the subordinate king of the country, who, being himself unable to decide between them, referred them to the superior king. They then represented their case to him, who ordered them to file a joint application on the subject matter. On receipt of their petition the superior king passed an order on it that the parties should be beheaded, and sent it to the subordinate one for execution of the sentence, after having them chained and hand-cuffed as though convicted of some grave offence. Being thus suddenly humiliated and mortified by the sentence, they began to repent of their contention,

and the ingenious man asked the wealthy man, "Dear sir, can you think of any alternative by which to escape the imminent calamity?" The wealthy man replied, "Dear brother, I do not see any, but I am willing to spend the whole of my wealth, billions of rupees, to save my life, for it is all useless to me after I die." The wise man again asked, "Sir, will you then give me half of your wealth on condition that your life is saved?" The opulent man rejoined, "Certainly I will," and he instantly wrote a letter to the wise man to this effect and gave it to him, as an assurance. The wise man kept the letter in his possession and went to the sub-king with his comrade and earnestly implored him to have them beheaded at once then and there. The king, astonished at such a request to meet instant death, enquired, "Gentlemen, what is it that makes you so impatient to give up your lives so readily? For we human beings are always naturally anxious to prolong our lives even for a few minutes at the sacrifice of the whole of our riches." The wise man said, "My lord, since we are destined to die, we must die a pious and cheerful death in accordance with our scriptures, which plainly set forth that an innocent death will secure to the deceased the felicity of paradise, whereas it will annihilate

him and his posterity from the face of the earth, who kills or causes to be killed an innocent person. The saying of the wise man made a great impression on the mind of the king, and acted as a deterrent against his execution of the sentence passed by the higher authority. Under such circumstances, the sub-king sent the parties back to the higher king, saying that he himself was unable to execute them, for, it would be a great shock to his conscience. They appeared then before the supreme king and related every thing that had passed in the meantime, and showed the letter which had occasioned the rich man to write to the wise man to save his life. The king said, "You are at liberty to go where you please, since you have decided the matter under issue, yourself, inasmuch as the rich man has acknowledged the superiority of the wise man."

#### 24. THE THING MOST APPRECIATED IN THE WORLD

Once upon a time there was a king of a certain country who placed recorders of gossip at all the gates which led to his capital. Once four women passed by one of the recording stations arguing among themselves the thing most appreciated in the world. One woman claimed the superiority of

the flesh, the second that of liquor, the third suggested harlots, and the other insisted that falsehood stood first. The recorder heard their conversation, and noted the topics they discussed together with the whereabouts of each of the women. The register, as usual, was sent at the end of the month to the king for his perusal. The king sent for the women and commanded each of them to prove their words.

“What further proof can you demand of me, my lord, of the fondness for flesh in the animal and vegetable kingdom?”, exclaimed the first woman, “You can see it with your own eyes. First of all is not flesh devoured by mankind and the bones chewed by dogs? The refuse of bones is eaten by the ants and other insects, and what they leave is disposed of by the vegetable kingdom. As no portion of flesh is left unutilized, does it not claim ascendancy over all other edible things in the world?” The king noted all she had said in his own mind, and permitted her to go.

The second woman then appeared to prove her statement: “Dear Sir,” she said “liquor, that is to say, strong drink is comparatively more costly than other beverages. It deprives its devotees of their senses, when under its influence, besides draining

their resources. Notwithstanding these evil results it is impossible for them to withstand its temptation, and in the end it brings its victims to bankruptcy and the grave. Yet there are always others to take their place and still the worship of drink goes on." The king, convinced in his mind by her argument, allowed her to go.

The third woman came there and began to speak: "Sir, you know well that people seduced by harlots become bankrupt and contract various diseases in their society, which eventually lead them to poverty and to the grave; still they are not got rid of. They are so madly attached to the prostitutes that they have no care left for their moral and spiritual character, or their worldly prospects. These facts conclusively prove that I am right in my statement." After having heard so much the king let the third woman go.

The fourth woman was called and she spoke, "Sire, the love of falsehood stands unrivalled, if you will only permit yourself to see it." She was then eagerly requested by the king and his courtiers to explain her words. She continued, "My lords, I cannot explain to you unless you pay me Rs.10,000." She was at once paid the sum. After sending the money to her home she said, "Dear



sirs, wonderful things are to be seen, from yonder banyan tree. On the Amawas (when there is no moon) but only by those who are real sons of their fathers (i.e. not born of paramours of their mothers) and no person who is born a bastard, can see them.” She then went away to her home. After some month the day fixed arrived, when all the people, including the king, waited to see the promised spectacle. So the woman was sent for. She came there in time and conveyed the assembled company to the banyan tree, and again told them to climb up the tree from whence they would see wonderful things, provided they were the real sons of their fathers. First up went the royal priest. He saw nothing but the usual view, so that he became suspicious of his birth, and to conceal the blemishes of his mother he felt obliged to tell a lie, and professed to have seen wonders and marvellous sights of the three worlds. The king next mounted the tree. He saw nothing, but he too would not confess, so followed the example of the royal priest. These facts led every one of those assembled there to climb the tree and pretend they had seen wonderful sights. After this all repaired to their respective homes. While at home some of them asked most solemnly and confidentially their intimate friends

about the alleged shows. They privately whispered that they saw nothing at all. The whispers also leaked out to the king who, emboldened thereby, asked his royal priest, who said he also saw nothing. The king also blurted out the secret of his seeing nothing there. Gradually every one said publicly that he saw nothing from the banyan tree. The king and his people at last found themselves thus imposed upon by the woman who was immediately arrested and brought before the king to answer to the charge of cheating. To that charge she replied, "Sirs, I told you beforehand that falsehood had the greatest relish in the world. It was only the relish of the falsehood which caused you to dance like puppets under its wonderful power or influence." The humour of the whole thing appealed to the king, and so the woman was acquitted of the charge.

#### 25. AN UPRIGHT OFFICER

Once a great officer, with a view to test the truthfulness of his subordinates, said to them during the daytime that he could see the stars in the sky, looking towards the firmament at the same time. On his so addressing them the whole crowd, except one, began to say at once, "Certainly Sir, we can also see them distinctly, shining in the sky." The

other man kept silence during this time. The officer then looking towards him asked him whether he could see the stars which he did. Rather indignantly, the man replied, "My Lord, I can hardly see anything amidst the blazing rays of the sun; I wonder whether I have had my eyes spoilt or whether you all have." The officer was greatly pleased with the man for his clear and upright conscience, and he openly censured the sycophancy of the others, who, he said, had no consciences or only dull ones, and were unfit to exercise judgment.

#### 26. A JUST AND WISE KING

A certain one-armed man had 500 gold mohars which he had covered concealed under a certain tree in a certain jungle. He used to make sure of it by occasionally looking at it. A time came when to his despair he found it taken away. So thinking it stolen, he was constrained to lay a complaint about this before the king of the country, saying at the same time that he had no witnesses to produce, either to the riches being deposited there by himself, or to its being taken away by anybody. That just and wise king, after having inspected the spot, sent for all the physicians of his kingdom and inquired from each of them as to

the medical use of the leaves, roots, and bark of the tree under which the wealth was buried and the diseases for which they were administered. After acquainting himself with the information thus derived he then ascertained from them the persons suffering from the particular malady which was cured by the specific tree under which the money had been hidden. This elaborate investigation brought the culprit to light, who confessed and returned the money. The whole kingdom applauded the action of the king in discovering the money lost.

#### 27. THE KING IS LIKE THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

There was once a poor family consisting of husband and wife, the latter of whom when starving urged her husband to go to the king who was like a Philosopher's Stone (turned all to gold that it touches). The beggar had only an iron *tawa* (plate) for cooking bread; he took it with him and went to the king, thinking that if he caused the *tawa* to touch some part of the king's body it would become gold. So he touched the king with great difficulty, and asked nothing, but began to rub the plate on the king's body. The king was startled and asked him what he was doing. The

beggar said he (the king) was considered to be a Philosopher's Stone and had brought that to be turned into gold. The king was very pleased to hear of this idea and ordered him to stay with him while in court. In a few days people thought him to be a great favourite of the king and all litigants gave him gifts to gain the favour of the king. In a few days he had earned lakhs of rupees. Once the king asked if he had earned anything. The poor beggar said that he had collected some lakhs of rupees. So the king said he was really a Philosopher' Stone in that sense.

## CHAPTER III—ANIMAL LORE

### I. THE FOXES AND THE ELEPHANT

ONCE a band of foxes conspired together to kill and eat an elephant. The whole body went to the elephant and their spokesman addressed him as follows: “My Lord, we are badly in need of a king to rule over us, and all our plans are random and ill-concerted since the death of our former king the lion. If you will be so kind as to become our king, we shall all be entirely at your service. You will no longer have to roam about looking for food, for we shall provide you with every necessity, while you sit at home at ease.”

The elephant, suspecting no ill, agreed to their artful suggestions and assumed the royal office. From that time they used to gather fodder for him and all waited upon him on tip-toe to carry out his slightest command. Once they brought him some delicious soft grass out of a marshy place, and the elephant enjoyed it more than any other food. They supplied him with it constantly and he relished it more and more. The foxes then told the elephant, “We are ready always to bring

to your majesty anything you wish, but perhaps it would be better if you condescended to go with us some day to the place where we get the grass, and point to us the kind you prefer." The elephant accompanied the foxes to the place, and began to feed greedily on the soft grass of the swamps. The further he went the more he sank into it. When he had gone to a little depth the foxes said, "My Lord, allow us to lift you up." The elephant still feeding away with his mouth full of grass said, "Dear friends, do so by all means." So they all used their united strength to raise him up. After lifting him somewhat they let him plump down again suddenly, and repeating the process several times, as if anxious to drag him out of the mud, they at length caused him to sink entirely in the marsh, where he was drowned, and the cunning foxes devoured his carcass.

In some parts of India where the jackal is commoner than the fox, he figures much more largely than that animal in folklore; and as Mr. J. L. Kipling in his 'Beast and Man in India' says, "The jackal is the true Mr. Reynard of Eastern folklore, the great originator of the best of our fox stories—sweet toothed, mischievous, lurking, and as full of resource as Brer Rabbit". Mr. Kipling

also reminds us that his Sanskrit-born name, gidar, means greedy, and is doubtless from the same root (Sanskrit gridhnu). In the two jackal stories of the present collection, it is the jackal's consistent cunning in saving himself trouble and imposing on his betters that is dwelt on.

## 2. THE JACKAL AND THE TIGER'S DEN

There was once a jackal whose wife presented him with young ones. They, poor things, felt very unhappy, as she had no house for her cubs. The father promised to make a house for them in a certain jungle, and every day after taking his morning meal he would go off, but instead of working he would sleep the whole day. On his return in the evening he pretended he had begun the house, and that it was taking a long time on account of certain contentions which he described, making a long yarn about it every evening; and this pretence he carried on for months. The mother jackal became very angry with him for this troublesome delay. So, one day, as he was going through the forest he spied the den of a tiger and returned home with the glad news that the house was ready for occupation. The next day he took his wife and family to the cave and installed them in it. He then instructed his wife that when he



gave a certain signal she was to bite her cubs and make them cry, and when he should ask why they were crying, to tell him that they wanted the flesh of a tiger, and would not eat the stale one which he had killed for them yesterday. Towards evening the jackal placed himself at the entrance of the cave, and presently the tiger returned, and seeing the jackal gave a loud roar and made a spring towards him. But at that moment the mother jackal inside made her cubs cry loudly, and the father asked what was the matter. She replied from within that her young ones wanted fresh tiger meat and refused to eat the stale flesh of the tiger killed the day before. This talk of theirs so frightened the tiger that he left the place instantly and fled for his life to a distant jungle, and never disturbed them any more.

### 3. THE JACKALS AND THE TIGERS

The hills were the original abode of the jackals, and the plains of the Bhabar (just below the hills) were inhabited by the tigers. Once these two species proposed an exchange of territory, and the jackals arrived in the Bhabar just when the tigers had started to the hills by the same route. The sight of so many tigers together rather frightened the jackals, for they feared they might be attacked

and devoured, but they did not lose their presence of mind. Seeing the carcase of an elephant lying there, one of the jackals mounted on it, placing all his comrades around, and loudly declaring that he had killed it. The company of tigers was now drawing near, and as they advanced the jackal cried, "Bring me my scimitar that I may break the skull of this first tiger." The tigers hearing this, and seeing the boastful attitude of the jackal on the dead body of an elephant, were greatly alarmed. Those behind pushed forward the tigers in point, and they began to growl and quarrel among themselves, and made no progress. The jackal who professed to have slain an elephant then addressed the tigers, "Dear Brothers, you have no occasion to fear us. Let us all be friends. The way to do this is by arranging a close alliance between the two tribes. Now you have many young females among you. Let one of them be married to me." The tigers, imposed on by the proud words and attitude of the jackal, consented to the proposed connexion, and a tigress was married to the jackal, who took her to his den. One day when they felt hungry they went out to hunt. The tigress, whose mental superiority began to assert itself, posted the jackal at a narrow

pass with instructions to kill animals there when driven up by her from the jungle. Some deer were then driven through the gorge, but the jackal could not kill one of them. The tigress on her return finding nothing killed asked him the cause. He replied it was quite improper to kill an animal when it was frightened, and he gave her a box on the ear by way of correcting her for asking such a foolish question. She endured it, as he was her husband, and she owed him wifely obedience. Then she took him to a large herd of deer, but the jackal only killed a fawn which could not run away. On her questioning him about it, he gave her another cuff which she endured patiently. The third time she charged him to kill some buffaloes for their food, which of course he was unable to do, and she was obliged to go and kill them herself. Taking offence at this, the jackal struck her angrily, saying that he would have destroyed them slowly and playfully and not as she has done at one full stroke. On another occasion they began to cross a large river. The tigress got across, but the jackal could not and returned from the water. She was obliged then to swim back and take her husband over. No sooner did they arrive at the bank than he gave her another blow charg-

ing her with going off without his permission. They had again occasion to return to the opposite bank of the river. The tigress reached the other side by swimming straight across, but the jackal let himself float down the river and reached the other shore two miles below the spot. On meeting the tigress he reprimanded her severely for her insolence in not accompanying him. But this time when he offered to beat her, she killed the wretch.

#### 4. THE TIGER AND THE TRAVELLER

A man-eating tiger was once caught in a trap in the forest. Seeing a man pass by, the tiger earnestly and piteously implored him to open the trap and set him free, at the same time promising to give the traveller a fine pair of gold bracelets, which he had found on the body of a man recently killed by him, as soon as he was let loose. The traveller, tempted by this rich offer, opened the door of the trap and let him out. As soon as he was free, the tiger ungratefully attacked the man, who pleaded earnestly with the beast, and at last persuaded him to submit the matter to arbitration. The trees of the forest and fox were to be the umpires. The trees were of opinion that though mankind on the whole was their enemy, yet as

every one would be requitted according to his deeds, they would say nothing. The fox on his part demanded to see the parties in the dispute return to their original positions, so that he might judge easily between them. The tiger was made to re-enter the trap and the man closed the door of it and went by. Thereupon the fox decided that either party should remain as they were. They went off home and the tiger remained imprisoned in the trap to meet with the due reward of his deeds.

#### 5. THE SHE-GOAT AND THE LEOPARD

Once upon a time a highly respectable old she-goat was grazing in a jungle, when she spied a leopard lying in wait to kill her. Instead of being frightened or running away, she assumed a calm attitude and did not move a pace from the spot, shewing that she was quite prepared and willing to meet her end. This uncommon behaviour of her made the leopard pause and he asked the goat what she meant by it. So he enquired, "Dear sister, I am about to kill you, why do you stand so undauntedly in your place?" She replied, "Dear brother, I have already discharged my worldly duty to my owner, who has been enriched by my giving birth to numerous progeny twenty-one times for

his benefit. To tell the truth he has been brought by this means to a state of prosperity from a very miserable condition, owing to the children I have borne. For two years I have ceased to have young ones, and since then my unkind master has taken no care of me and refuses to provide fodder. He drives me to the jungle every morning to graze and has no concern for me now. I heard him talking last night with his family, saying that "I should be killed for meat. He is certain to kill me without the least regard for the benefits he has received from me during my past life. As I am quite convinced in my mind of the selfishness of mankind I thought it a good thing to be killed and eaten by any animal other than a man. So I was very glad when I saw you lying in wait to kill me." The leopard was touched by this speech of the she-goat, and made friends with her. They used to wander about together in the jungle from that day, and the leopard allowed no harm to come to her. Indeed so kind was the leopard to the goat that he once caught hold of the trunk of an elephant and made him promise to take the goat on his back and feed her with twigs and leaves.

## 6. THE FELINE RACE

The cat is said to be the ancestor of leopards and tigers, though these have developed to such a superior size. Their qualities and disposition are just the same as those of the cat. The cat taught her progeny every shift and device of her kind, but fearing danger from their large stature she kept back from them the art of climbing trees as a means of escape for herself, should they turn upon her at any time. And so it proved. For, when they grew to full size, they attacked their grandmother, the cat, who escaped by climbing a tree, an art in which leopards and tigers are to this day deficient.

## 7. THE CUNNING FOE

A leopard, a wolf, a wild cat, a fox and a mouse once conspired to kill a big antelope in the forest, a feat which none of them singly could achieve. The crafty fox said, "Our friend the mouse will gnaw the hoofs of the antelope while he sleeps and then the leopard will easily catch and kill him. We can then enjoy the flesh for a long time." The mouse and the leopard did their part of the bargain successfully. Then the others assembled to take their share of the antelope. The artful fox said, "Brothers, here

is the fat deer lying on the ground. You should all go to the river to perform the due ablution, and I will take care of the carcass until you return. So they all went to the river-side and the fox remained to think out some means of appropriating the whole deer. On his return the leopard found the fox deep in thought and asked him why he looked so anxious, "What do you advise? Shall we not eat the flesh and play with each other?" The fox replied, "Dear brother, I am sorry to tell you that the mouse has invoked a terrible curse on you. He has said, "Blasted be the strength and powers of the leopard, for he will gorge himself with the flesh of the deer, and leave nothing for me who helped to kill it." Aghast at this news, and fearing the curse, the leopard left the spot and hid himself in a distant jungle. Then the mouse came, and to him the fox said, "Brother, the jungle-cat says he does not wish to eat the flesh of the deer, preferring yours. I warn you of the danger. You may do as you please." The mouse withdrew to his hole, where he stayed trembling with fear. Next the wolf came. The fox said to him, "Dear friend, I am sorry to say that the leopard is very angry at the idea of any of us sharing in the deer. He has gone off to fetch his



family to eat it. Do as you like, but as you are stronger than I am, I will leave you here." The wolf thereupon turned tail and bolted. The wild cat only remained. The fox said, "My dear cat, the leopard, the wolf and the mouse have all run away after being defeated by me, you and I will fight a duel for the deer. The cat also hastily departed, leaving the fox to enjoy the whole antelope alone.

### 8. A TANGLED YARN

Once an old woman and her grandson lived together. The boy used to graze sheep and goats in the jungle. One day the grand-mother called loudly, telling him to return home as a hurricane was coming. A leopard who was lurking near, waiting his chance of carrying off one of the flock, overheard what she said and began to wonder what a hurricane was. He already knew that a storm meant a high wind but this new word puzzled and alarmed him. So he hid himself among the sheep and goats, and along with them entered the sheep-fold for the night. Not long after, four thieves crept in to steal a goat from the shed. In the darkness they felt among the animals, and finding the leopard to be the largest and fattest, put a rope round his neck and led him away. The leopard,

still in vague fear of the hurricane, submitted. At break of day the thieves, finding to their amazement that their fat sheep was a large leopard, at once set him free and hastily climbed up into the hollow trunk of a dried tree, fearing an attack from the beast. But the leopard had no mind for hostilities. He fled away into the jungle, and there met a bear, who asked him why he was running away so fast. The leopard replied, "Brother, I have just narrowly escaped the terrible peril called 'Hurricane'." The bear rejoined, "My dear Sir, We jungle beasts are afraid of no one. You are surely alarmed without cause: show me this Hurricane. I will fight him." The leopard, feeling reassured, led the bear to the hollow tree, as the place where the hurricane was lying concealed. The bear climbed up the trunk and dropped his tail into it to feel and ascertain the nature of the danger. The thieves caught hold of it and began to tug with all their might. The bear in terror pulled and got his tail much bruised and hurt before he could tear himself away. The bear and the leopard ran off into the jungle and there met a tiger, who enquired the reason of their panic. The leopard and the bear told their stories. The tiger, dismissing the report with

contempt, offered to help them if they would show him the danger. So the three wild beasts started off again. The thieves, seeing the tiger with two allies coming towards them, climbed further up the tree. The tiger took his station under the tree and roared frightfully, which so terrified one of the thieves that he fell down on the tiger's back and clasped him so tightly that the tiger thought he was being ridden by a demon and took to flight. In running, the thief was thrown down by the tiger and lay unconscious. When all three beasts had reached a safe distance, they congratulated one another on their escape. The tiger grumbled angrily at the leopard and the bear, on account of the wrong information they had given him, saying, "You quite misled me, saying the hurricane was a kind of dragging thing, whereas I found him to be a rider of beasts. If I had known that, I would not have ventured to approach it."

Learned anthropologists tell us that early man conceived animals as being quite as wise as himself, but the above story belongs to a more modern cycle, and not unpleasingly attempts to describe the half light of animal intelligence in relation to human beings.

## 9. A GOAT'S RESOURCES

Once a shepherd, in the days when the speech of the animals was more generally understood, asked one of his goats what protection he had against unforeseen dangers if he went alone into the jungle. The goat replied, "Sir, I have four brothers (legs) who can run and carry me away ; two brethren armed with clubs for my defence (horns) two brothers to fan me (ears) ; and one to drive off flies (tail).

## 10. THE SENSITIVE TIGER

The elephant, says Mr. J. L. Kipling, is often represented in Indian Folklore as peculiarly sensitive, though probably with little cause. It is rare, however, to find the tiger credited with a thin skinned liability to be hurt in his feelings, as in the following story.

A certain Brahmin, having to marry his daughter, went into a far country to earn money for her dowry. Passing through a jungle he met a tiger who asked where he was going and for what purpose. The Brahmin told his story with strict truth, and the tiger taking him to his den showed him all the gold ornaments and jewels which he had collected from the persons of those whom he had slain. The tiger very generously told him to

take them all as the marriage portion of his daughter, adding a request that he would invite him also to the wedding ; but saying that he wished to have a private corner assigned him at the ceremonies, lest the people should be alarmed by his presence. The marriage day arrived, and the tiger, according to promise, was accommodated in a cellar under the house. In the midst of the festivities the guests began to notice an unpleasant odour (from the tiger) and asked the Brahmin the cause of it. The Brahmin, afraid of telling out the secret, said it must be coming from the manure-heap in the yard, a remark which was overheard by the tiger. The marriage ceremony being over, the tiger, deeply wounded by the words of his host, commanded him to strike off his head with an axe, or, he would kill him. To save his life the Brahmin had at last to strike the tiger in the manner indicated. The blow which he gave to the tiger's head made an incision an inch deep. The tiger told him to return to see him after a week. The Brahmin did so, and found the wound already healed up. The tiger admonished him, " My friend, the bodily wound you inflicted on me has healed in this short time, but the mental wound you caused me is still unhealed. In future, take

care not to hurt the feelings of other people. for such impressions remain unerascd for a long time, as the proverb says, " Sometimes words wound more than swords."

## II. THE ELEPHANT AND THE MOUSE

An elephant and a mouse met in a forest. The elephant, scarcely deigning to notice the little animal, began to abuse him saying, " You mean and wretched creature, you are only fit to gaze at me from a distance. I can, if I like, tread you into nothing with a single stamp of my foot." The mouse answered him, " Oh, greatest of beasts, I salute you. The same God has created us both for different purposes, and has endowed us with different powers, according to our need. You need not be proud, for both of us will soon perish. If you depend on your strength, I depend on my wisdom. So there is in reality nothing to boast about." The elephant replied, " We are indeed of the same earth, but I am born far superior by nature, and your duty is simply to submit to me and pay obeisance to my higher qualities ; otherwise you must be punished. Wisdom has no ascendancy over nature." Thus they disputed angrily. The mouse, in order to convince the elephant of the superiority of wisdom, began to dig

a ditch in the ground where the elephant was accustomed to walk. Accordingly one day the latter fell into the hole, and was utterly helpless to extricate himself. Thus humbled, the elephant begged the mouse's pardon, and acknowledged the superiority of wisdom, whereupon the mouse filled up the ditch and enabled the elephant to come out.

#### 12. THE CAT AND THE MOUSE

A certain cat once asked a mouse to give him his daughter in marriage, forgetting the law of nature. The mouse was so puffed up at the idea of this noble alliance that he agreed to the request, in spite of its strangeness, and a date was fixed for the wedding. Following the usual custom, a train of cats formed the marriage procession, and went with a drum to the mouse's dwelling, or rather hole. The maternal relatives of the bride were gathered there, also accompanied by a drummer to receive the bridegroom and his party. Just as the two processions were advancing towards each other, the drummer of the cats, forgetting himself, sounded the war signal, "One to catch two!" (One cat to catch two mice) "One to catch two." Understanding the signal and also yielding to the force of habit, the mouse's drummer sounded, "Run away and hide! Run away and hide," which the

mice promptly did ; and on the arrival of the cats there was not a single member of the bride's party to be seen. They called from outside "Oh foolish mouse, come out and hear us." The mice from within answered, " O artful and greedy cats, speak on, we are listening inside." The end of it was that no marriage took place.

### 13. AN UNGRATEFUL FOX CHASTISED BY GOD

A fox once entered the stomach of the dead body of a camel for the purpose of eating into its intestines. He devoured them for some days, without in the least thinking as to how he would come out of it. In the meanwhile the way by which the fox penetrated to the belly of the dead body, having been closed owing to the drying of the skin in the sun, the fox was tightly pressed within it. Being subjected to such a difficult position the fox prayed God for a rainfall so that the skin might be softened to enable him to make his way out. God granted his request by causing rainfall on the dried body. As soon as the animal had come out, he let God at defiance, saying that he was all-powerful himself, even to have rain of his own sweet will, and tried to escape from God's presence. God therefore had a damsel of tar made, and put it up in the jungle, placing a bit of



meat in its hand. The fox came there and asked for the meat, but it could not and did not give it. Being enraged at this conduct of the tar damsel, the animal gave it two buffets, which stuck him to it. This provoked him more. In his further attempts to extricate himself from it, his whole body became fast to the tar. Seeing him in this plight, God chastised him, and then he came to his senses, and praised God for His greatness, with self-humiliation and mortification

The "slimness" of the fox has often been dwelt on in folklore, but the following story exhibits his cynical cunning as well.

#### 14. A FOX AND A BEAR

##### (1)

A fox and a bear made friends, and agreed to set up a joint establishment. They bought a buffalo for the sake of its milk, and it was agreed that the buffalo should be tethered in the jungle and watched by either in turn. The fox would milk her in the day after she had been grazed by the bear, and vice versa. The good honest bear used to carry out his duty thoroughly and feed the buffalo with plenty of leaves and twigs, which he pulled off the trees. The fox thus fared well and got plenty of milk. When it was the bear's turn,

however, to milk the animal, he could hardly get any, for the fox neither would nor could feed it properly. After a time the fox grew tired of a milk-diet, and thought he would like to eat the flesh of the buffalo. He therefore took it to graze along the edge of a steep precipice, and it was not long in falling over. The buffalo, however, did not fall quite to the bottom, but lodged half-way down ; so the fox brought his friend the bear to lift her up, and himself stood at the top of the cliff to give his advice and help in the operation. With great exertion the bear raised the buffalo. Just as he was reaching the top, the fox gave him a vigorous push and both bear and buffalo rolled to the bottom and lay dead. The fox had now the materials for a grand feast, but he found himself unable to remove the skin of the buffalo, and so went to the Doms, the low-caste villagers, who alone in the hill country eat the flesh of the buffalo, even when dead, and invited them to come and cut up the corpse and eat it. A great concourse of Doms gathered, leaving their village entirely empty, and, while they were cutting up the buffalo, the fox went and set fire to their houses. Returning, he informed the Doms that their village was burning, whereupon they, of course, rushed off to

their houses, and were occupied a long time in putting out the fire. The fox proceeded in a leisurely manner to devour the flesh, and when he was well satisfied, he went up to the top of a ridge, and sang his well-known ditty about how pleasant it was to have killed his brother the bear and to have burnt the huts of the Doms to ashes.

### 15. THE FOX AND THE BEAR

(2)

Once a fox chose a bear as a companion and they used to walk about everywhere together. The fox, being the more cunning animal, used to dupe the bear in every way for his amusement. One day in the jungle they came upon a large hornets' nest, and the fox, intending to play a trick on the bear, began to beat on the hollow hornets' hill, which sounded like a drum. The bear's simple mind was quite charmed with the proceeding, as the fox had anticipated, and he asked the fox to let him try playing the drum on the hornets' nest. The fox replied, "O Yes, dear brother bear, now beat it soundly and it will make a fine noise." The bear began to dance and beat the nest with his great feet. and it was soon broken in, when all the hornets rushed out and stung the bear terribly to the great delight of his malicious friend. Another

time the sly fox hung up a swing over a precipice and began to swing himself in it, while the bear sat and watched. The fox made out he was having a fine time and enjoying himself greatly. The stupid bear, believing what the fox said, asked for a turn in the swing for a few minutes. The fox said, "Certainly, dear brother bear ; but remember that if you push the swing hard and make it go far out, the pleasure will be all the greater." The bear got into the swing, and the fox gave it a great jerk which made the cord break, and the bear fell down the steep, bumping himself very severely, to the secret delight of his false companion.

A third time the wicked fox cut off the tail of a dead buffalo and put it inside a hole in the wall under a terrace which overhung a deep valley. Then he went to his friend, the bear, and informed him that a buffalo had got into the wall, and if they pulled hard enough they could get him out and eat him. They went to the spot, and the bear, taking hold of the tail, dragged it out with all his force and unbalancing himself rolled down the precipice and was killed.

#### 16. THE AMBITIOUS MOUSE

Once upon a time there was a certain mouse who had a beautiful daughter of marriageable age.

He was very ambitious and determined to espouse her to the most powerful personage in the world, in order to raise the level of his own social position. With this purpose in view he went to the sun and offered his daughter in marriage, but the sun declined the honour saying, "Oh my dear mouse, I would gratefully accept your kind offer, were it not that my circumstances prevent me, for these reasons. First, I am the centre and focus of heat, and your daughter would be unable to bear my scorching rays. Secondly, I have no house to live in. Thirdly, having to travel incessantly day and night round the earth, I have no time to earn food and clothing for her. So you had better go to my brother, the moon, and marry your girl to him." At once the mouse journeyed to the moon, to whom he made the same offer to give him his daughter in marriage. The moon received the mouse with great courtesy and etiquette and said "Dear Sir, I am not a proper match for your daughter, since I have stains on my body, in consequence of which I conceal myself in the day-time and appear only at night. Besides, the cloud has supremacy over me, inasmuch as he can cover me up at any time. It behoves you then to give your daughter to the cloud, who is stronger than I am."

The father accordingly went to the cloud and made his offer. The cloud put forward his inability to marry the girl since he was easily blown away by his enemy, the wind, and so referred him to the wind as a husband for his daughter. Accordingly his next visit was to the wind. The wind said, "Alas, Dear Sir, I am not at all a big person in the world ; true, I can blow away all things, with the exception of the stone, and he is bigger and heavier than I am. Better you should give your daughter to the stone." The old mouse at once betook himself to the stone, who said, "Woe is me! I am an inanimate thing, quite unable to move. How can I earn bread and clothing for your daughter? Why not go to the earth, who produces savoury edible grains and vegetables, besides precious stones and valuable metals. He could marry your daughter and provide her with every luxury and necessity." To this suggestion, the mouse thankfully paid his respects to the earth, and represented his case. The earth said, "Your offer is welcome, but I cannot marry your daughter, being bound by the roots of trees, which I bear on my head, and I am then prevented from going here and there in search of livelihood. You had better go to the tree and espouse your daughter to him. He is superior to

me." The mouse then started to the tree, and addressed him. The tree said, "Though I do control the earth in some way, still your little mice are superior, for you cut and eat into my roots and make me wither, so you should give your daughter in marriage to the mouse, for, he, being so powerful can certainly accept your offer." In this manner the mouse, after all, had to go to the mouse to whom his daughter was married with great rejoicings and feasting.

## CHAPTER IV—BIRD FOLKLORE

**T**HE cuckoo in England is believed to change into a hawk in winter (sparrow hawk). In Germany after St. John's Day, about the time when it becomes mute. Kelly asks, "As the form of the cuckoo remotely resembles that of the falcon tribe, may we conjecture that hence in German tradition that bird in some degree represents the fire-bringing falcon of the Aryans?" Manhardt says, "The cuckoo is the messenger of Thor, the god in whose gift were health and strength, length of days and marriage blessings." And therefore it is that people call upon the bird to tell how long they have to live, and how soon they will be married, and how many children they shall have ; and that in Schauenburg the person who acts at a wedding as master of the ceremonies carries a cuckoo in his staff.

Kelly says: "The cuckoo's connexion with storms and tempests is not clearly determined, but the owl's is indisputable. Its cry is believed in England to foretell hail and rain ; the latter of which is usually accompanied with lightning, and the practice of nailing it to the barndoor, to



await the lightning, is common throughout Europe, and is mentioned in an ancient treatise on agriculture.

The robin—In Ireland (Gerard Vallency says) the Druids represented this bird as the king of birds. This superstitious respect offended most Christian missionaries, who taught the people to hunt and kill it on Christmas Day. In other countries it is a sacred bird. To take its life or even rob its nest in the Pays de Caux is regarded as a crime of such atrocity that it will bring down the lightning upon the homestead of the offender. In Perigord the swallow is called "lapula de Dieu" and is regarded as the messenger of life.

The raven, sacred to Odin and Apollo, the German and Greek form of the Aryan Rudra, was and indeed is yet, pre-eminently the bird of ill-omen. Othelo says, "Oh, it comes o'er my memory, as doth the raven o'er the infected house boding ill." The raven's power of scenting carrion from a great distance may have originally influenced, as in the case of the dog and the owl, its selection as a personification of impending death or other calamity. The raven was the standard of the Scandinavian Vikings, as the

eagle was that of the ancient Romans and of the French today.

Many other birds possess somewhat similar attributes to the raven, such as crows, magpies, jackdaws, etc. Ramsay, the author of the "Elminthologia," says, "If a crow fly but over the house and croak thrice, how do they fear, they or someone in the family shall die."

The croaking of crows and ravens foreboded rain. In this particular they resembled the woodpecker. It was (still is) held that to see a crow on the left hand is a sinister omen. The old formula it still credited, "One for sorrow, two for mirth, three for a wedding and four for death." On sight of a magpie turn round thrice, or mark a cross with the toe on the ground, to avert calamity.

The woodpecker, perhaps, of all the fire-bringing birds, has most permeated the ancient mythologies. The Latins named it Picus, whose brother (or double) Pilumnus, was the god of bakers and millers. In early times the millers pounded their corn with a pestle, and pilum signified both pestle and Javelin which are equally types of the thunderbolt. The tapping of the beak of the woodpecker was regarded as partaking of a similar character. On the birth of a child it was customary at Rome

to prepare a couch for Pilumnus and Pitumnus, who were believed to bring the fire of life, and were supposed to remain until the vitality of the infant was indisputable. The Romans likewise styled the woodpecker Martins and Feromius, from the god Mars and Sabine goddess Feronia. The name Feronia is indicative of fire or soul-bringing, intimately connected with that of Phoroneus, the Prometheus of a Peloponnesian legend, relating to the original procuring of the heavenly fire. Dr. Kuhn says both the names are identical with epithets commonly applied to the Aryan fire god Churannya, which signifies "one who pounces down, or bears down rapidly." Picus was the son of Saturn, and first king of Latium, as well as a fire-bringing bird. This, Kelly observes, "is only another way of saying that he like Manu, Manyas, Minos, Phoroneus, and other fire-bringers, is the first man; and therefore it is that, under the name of Picaninus, he continued in later times to be the guardian genius of children, along with his brother Piluminus."

A remarkable coincidence between the Anglo-Saxon pedigree of Odin, which makes Beev or Beowulf, one of his ancestors, and the story of the first king of Latium, is noticed by Gervinus. Bee-

wolf, that is "bee-eater," is the German name for the woodpecker. Among the various lightning birds of the Aryan mythology, some were regarded as portentous of evil. Others, as the robin, the stork, and the woodpecker, on the contrary, were regarded with favour and specially protected. The red beak of the robin, the red legs of the stork, and red patch of the woodpecker, were believed to result from their lightning origin.

In German the robin is held in as much regard as it is in England. The Anglo-Saxon name, "Herodh-be-osht" or "Heodbeht" signifies flame bright, which was one of the appellations of Thor. In illustration of the reverence paid to the red-breast, a writer in *Notes and Queries* relates the beautiful story, which he had heard from his nurse, a native of Carnarvonshire.

"Far away in a land of woe, darkness, spirits of evil and fire, day by day does the little bird bear in his bill a drop of water to quench the flame. So near to the burning stream does he fly that his dear little feathers are scorched; and hence he is named Bromhn-ddyn (i.e. breast burned, or breast scorched). To serve little children, the robin dares approach the infernal pit. No good child will hurt the devoted benefactor of men. The

robin returns from the land of fire, and, therefore, he feels the cold of winter far more than his brother birds. He shivers in the brumal blast; hungry he crips before your door. Oh! my child, thou in gratitude throw a few crumbs to poor Red-breast."

The Stork is in Germany ever a welcome guest, and wheels are placed on the roofs of houses in Hesse, in order to encourage the storks to build their nests thereon. Their presence is supposed to render the building safe against the ravages of fire.

#### I. THE TITIWA BIRD AND THE SEA

The bird called Tityan or Tittiwa had made her nest on the sea-shore. One day the tide rising higher than usual came up and washed away the nest with her young ones. Enraged at her loss, she set to work to dry the ocean by emptying out its waters. She began to take up the water in her bill and threw it on the land. Seeing her so determined, the sea became alarmed, and after a while, the tide returning threw back her young ones unharmed up on the beach.

In such stories as these we see the characteristic difference between the Greek mind as represented in Aesop's fables and the Indian spirit. They are

not so much fables as parables, in depth and subtility.

## 2. THE LISTIA BIRD AND THE ELEPHANT

A small bird known in the hills as Listia had built her nest in a bush and had hatched her young ones in it. The female bird one day left her mate in charge of the nest and went away to pick food for the young ones. In the interval an elephant passing by ate up the bush and killed the young, in spite of the distracted cries of the male bird. The female returning with food in her bill, overwhelmed with grief at her loss, resolved to die, unless her mate would slay the elephant in revenge for his barbarous treatment of her family. The husband tried to comfort her, assuring her that he would find some means of destroying this mighty foe by appealing to his friends for help. He then repaired to the woodpecker (Kath Khoriya) and after telling his sad story, added, "My dear friend, I am undone unless you aid me. One's own hand barely reaches a single cubit, but the hand of friendship extends a thousand leagues." The woodpecker promised, and went to his friend the black-bee, who after hearing all about the case, sought his friend the frog, and related the circumstances to him. The frog also promised to help. Then

they arranged a plot against the elephant. They made their way to the spot where the elephant was wont to rest. The black-bee buzzed in his ear until he was soothed to sleep, and then the woodpecker pecked out his eyes. The elephant, waking up, could not make out what had happened to him, but after a while, feeling thirsty, went staggering about in his blindness trying to find some water. The voice of the frog was then heard at a distance, and the elephant naturally thought he would be able to find water in that direction. The frog went on gradually in front of him, croaking as he went, until he reached a precipitous place, and the poor elephant followed, until at last he fell down the cliff and was killed. The Listia bird and his wife were then satisfied with their revenge.

The above story reminds us strongly of the tale of the Dog and Sparrow in Grimm, as well as of the cruel vengeance taken by the cock and hen, the duck, egg, pin and needle upon the unfortunate Squire Korbes.

### 3. A RASH MOTHER TURNED INTO A WILD DOVE

There is a kind of wild dove in the hills of Kumaun and Garhwal which flies very swiftly.

During spring and summer it sings a sweet song sounding like "Pur putli purai, purai," which means, "Oh delicate bird, all, all (are there)." The song is accounted for in this way. Once upon a time there lived a woman and her daughter. Having gathered some wild berries one day they put them away in a sunny place outside their cottage, and in consequence of the sun's heat they dried and shrank. After a day or two the woman remembered the berries and found them less in quantity than before. Getting into a furious rage, and believing that the daughter had eaten up some of the berries contrary to her orders, she struck her a blow on the head which caused her to die on the spot. The next day there was a shower of rain which wetted the berries and made them swell up again to their former size. Seeing this, and understanding her rash act, the unfortunate mother was seized with remorse, and after a while, dying, was turned into the bird which still sings its song of repentance vainly calling upon the spirit of her daughter in the woods.

#### 4. AN ANXIOUS BROTHER TURNS INTO A WILD PIGEON

A wild pigeon sings his song "Bhai bhukho, Bhai bhukho, bhukho," "my brother is hungry."



The song is accounted for thus. A certain man was dangerously ill. His brother came to see him in the evening. The sick man called out to his family to prepare some food for his brother in the above words, and while speaking became unconscious and died. This last thought of his became as it were a fixed idea, and his soul, unable to rest, was transformed into a bird which ever cries out "Bhai bhukho."

#### 5. FAITH IN GOD SAVED THE PIGEONS

The following story reminds us of Chaucer's Chanticleer and the dream he related to his loving spouse :

A pair of wild pigeons used to live on a tree in a certain forest. The male dove, while asleep at night, saw in dream that a fowler with a pair of hawks was pursuing them, and that he himself was greatly alarmed. On awaking in the morning, all trembling and distressed, he related the dream to his wife, the female dove. After hearing her husband's story the she-dove said, "Husband, we have no need to fear anything in the world so long as we have harmed no one. Let us rest assured under the care of Heaven since we are innocent creatures." While they were thus chatting together a real hunter appeared with falcons

in his hand. He let loose the hawks after the pigeons, who flew up into the sky. The fowler, impatient to have his prey, shot off two arrows, aiming at the pigeons. But, as it chanced, he slew the two falcons and the arrows falling down again killed the man himself. Thus the doves were saved, and the confidence of the females in the Divine protection was justified.

#### 6. THE CUCKOO

It is curious to find the cuckoo, a bird of evil reputation in Europe, regarded in India as a virtuous creature and even as an injured innocent. Its habit of appropriating the nests of other birds is not recognized, and in the following story the crow is represented as the trespasser :

A crow and a cuckoo had their nests in the same tree. They hatched their own young ones, but the crow slyly took the young ones of the cuckoo and put them in her own nest and her own in that of the cuckoo's. The cuckoo was surprised to find the substitution, and at once demanded her offspring back again. The crow however refused, claiming them as her own, and the dispute could not be settled in any way. The cuckoo had at last to resort to the court of the king of the country. The young ones of both the parties were medically

examined, and it was found that the cuckoo was undoubtedly in the right, and her claim would have been allowed, if the crow had not gone secretly to the Chief Judge and said that if he would give a verdict in his favour she would carry him to heaven on her wings and show him his forefathers. The judge was tempted by this remarkable bribe, and gave sentence in favour of the crow, supporting his judgment by saying that it is no unusual thing for dark-coloured persons to beget children of lighter complexion, and for light complexioned people to have darker offspring. The judge now demanded the fulfilment of the crow's promise. The crow took him on her wings, and conveyed him to a far off region, where he beheld his ancestors gasping and moaning in all the torments of hell. He was beside himself with grief and horror to see them in this plight, and besought them to tell him the reason of their awful condition. The ancestors replied, "Dear descendant, you are the cause of all our trouble. By having given a false verdict you have condemned us all to hell, and on your departure from the world, you also will suffer the same fate." The Judge went away stricken to the heart, and repented to the last day of his life.

The following story combines the frequently occurring type of the fortunate younger son with some suggestions of an Eastern Dick Whittington, and of several other nursery favourites.

### 7. A WONDERFUL MOUSE

A certain rich banker had four sons by one wife and one by another. After the death of their father the four first-named brothers drove their younger brother from the house and would not allow him any share in the business. When they went to the chase, the younger brother followed them. They killed a deer and carried it home, while he caught and brought in a dove's young ones to serve for soup and meat. But his mother instead of killing them kept and fostered the young doves. Next day when his brothers caught fish he caught a mouse, which also his mother kept as a pet. She seems to have been fond of animals, for she had in addition a cat and a dog which had been driven away by her stepsons on account of some offence, and a crow as well.

The four brothers went to trade in a foreign country. The younger also went on his travels taking with him only his cat. She soon made him rich by bringing him numbers of gold mohars in her mouth from the wealthy houses of the town.

His brothers hearing of his prosperity became jealous, and went to entice the mouse from his house, saying that they wished to have his alliance and help as the most ingenious of the animals. The mouse promised to join them if they would promise to get a buffalo to supply him with milk. They did so. While sucking the milk, the mouse spitefully began biting the udder of the buffalo, which ceased to give milk. The mouse informed the brothers that the buffalo no longer served them, because it had been defiled by their touch and that they must get him another. This they did ; and the mouse partly sucked the milk and wasted the rest. Many other mischievous tricks he played till at last the four brothers seeing him so hostile drove him away from their house, and set a trap at the door to catch him and kill him if he came back. He was too wise to return, and took up his abode again at the younger brother's house. After this the mother of the younger man addressed the dog, cat, crow, mouse and young doves, saying " My good creatures, I have nourished you like my children all this time, now I am going to have my son married, what help can each of you give for this purpose ? " The mouse said, " I can get as much paddy as you need to feed the guests." The

cat said, "I can supply you with as many gold mohurs as you require for the marriage expenses." The dog said, "I will steal from the bazar all the ghee and treacle-cakes that you need." The crow said, "I will get you a valuable ring for the bride-groom." The dove said, "I cannot supply you with anything, but I can save you if you are threatened by death at any time." So the marriage took place with great splendour. Unfortunately the wedding ring was lost, and no one could tell where it had gone. The four animals met to consider how they should recover the ring. The crow promised to find it wherever it might be, the mouse to snatch it away and the dog to defend it from the attacks of others. After a while the crow discovered the thief, who used to walk about with it on his finger in the daytime and sleep with it in his mouth at night. One night the mouse went and slyly thrust his tail up the nostril of the thief while he was asleep, and in sneezing the man threw out the ring, which was seized by the cat, and the dog running about, bit him. While taking the ring home, the cat saw a piece of meat which tempted him to put the ring on the ground while he ate the juicy morsel. A hawk dashed down and carried it off. But the mouse was equal

to this emergency also. He lay down as if dead, instructing the cat to seize the falcon, when the latter should pounce on him. This was done, and the ring was recovered from the falcon's body. The dog was now entrusted with the ring, but as he was conveying it to his master, he drank in a stream and dropped it to the bottom. They all despaired of recovering it; but the mouse again rose to the occasion. By his instructions they set to work to cut through the bank and turn aside the course of the stream just above the place where the ring had fallen in. The stream below it became dry and the fish began to gasp and die for want of water. One after another was opened, and the ring was at last found and given to their master.

After some time the man fell ill and was summoned to the mansion of the dead by Death's messengers. The mother now begged the dove to redeem her promise. The dove repaired to the kingdom of Death, and arriving at the court of King Yama, sang such a sweet song that the King was pleased and asked what was her request. She begged that the life of her kind master might be spared. The King's Chancellor, after looking into the Book of Destiny, announced that the man's

appointed days were ended and that he must die. Touched by the dove's entreaties, however, King Death prolonged the man's life up to 500 years, and he, his mother and the animals continued long to live in happiness together.

#### 8. THE FOX AND THE PARTRIDGE

A fox entered into friendship with a partridge. Once the fox said he was hungry, and asked for food. The partridge went to the door of a water-mill and fluttered there. The owner of the mill, who was grinding grain, came out to watch her. The partridge took him to a great distance by fluttering before him. The fox ate up the flour of the mill. Then they met again in the jungle. The fox said, "My friend partridge, I have a great hankering for curds." So they came to a cow-herd where curds were kept for sale. So he fluttered before the cowherd ; he laid the curd on the ground and went after the partridge, in the meantime the fox ate up the curd. Then the fox said to the partridge, "O friend, make me laugh heartily." Once a great many people were going their ways, so the partridge flew and sat on the head of a man for a second, then on another's, so in this way he fluttered about. Every one gave a stick



to the head on which the partridge sat, and so there was a beating of heads, at which the fox laughed.

## CHAPTER V—GHOST AND DEMON LORE

### I. THE KAYASTH AND THE DEMON

A CERTAIN Kayasth, who was on his travels in search of a livelihood, arrived at a certain city in the evening. Finding no abode in the city he was told to lodge in a certain deserted house outside the city (supposed to have been haunted by a devil) which had been deserted by its owners. The traveller ignorant of what had caused the house to be deserted, went and occupied it. As soon as he had prepared some victuals, including strong drink for himself in the night, a demon of hideous form and features appeared before him, expressing his hunger. The poor Kayasth being already frightened with his terrible form and stature, could not but place the whole of his food before him. He devoured it all with immense relish and satisfaction, leaving nothing for the owner. He said to the man, "Friend, what have you come here for?" The man replied, "Sir, I have come here seeking employment." The demon said, "You had better stay on here for the present and prepare food, as nice as you have already done, for me every night. Every morning you will find Rs.2 under yonder lamp. You can purchase necessaries with it."

The man continued to feed the *jinn* for years in this way, and sent his savings from the daily allowance to his home. The demon used to appear before him at supper-time in the evening in that house, and then to disappear. The Kayasth having thus found enough for livelihood in the service of the *jinn* cheerfully served him for a very long time. One night he asked permission of the demon to go home. The *jinn* granted it and gave him immense wealth. Besides, he gave the man three hairs out of his moustache and told him that he would come to his help at any time if a little bit of his hair was burnt. So the Kayasth returned to his home. After some time the king of the country was conquered and his country taken by his adversary, and the king took to flight into the forest. The Kayasth hearing of his defeat went to the king and offered his help, but the king laughed at him, considering him to be too inferior for such a difficult task. The poor man instantly put a piece of the hair the *jinn* had given him into the fire, and the demon appeared at that very moment. The man told him about the misfortunes of his king. The *jinn* at once produced lakhs of demons like himself, who drove out the foreign king and disappeared. The king of the country

divided his kingdom into two parts and gave half of it to the Kayasth, as a reward for his services. So the latter was made a king by the help of the ghost.

## 2. THE PRINCESS AND THE ENCHANTED SWORD

A certain prince went to espouse a beautiful princess. The latter said, "Oh prince, I cannot give you my hand in marriage unless you procure me the beautiful tank, on the bank of which is a terrace paved with copper sheets, silver stairs leading to it, with a gold throne placed in its centre together with a tree with emerald leaves, topaz buds, diamond flowers, pearl fruits, which I saw last night in my dream." The prince immediately repaired to the forest in search of such a scene. After wandering about through various forests and secluded places he at last fortunately saw a dervish in a jungle at evening time. Fearing to approach him, the prince seated himself at a distance, in a secluded corner. But the saint, who had observed him, enquired from him, "What is the object that has brought you into the jungle?" The prince replied, "Sir, I have a great longing to marry a certain princess, but she will not accept my proposal until I secure her the objects of her dream, which

is this: A beautiful tank of crystal water, on the bank of which is built a terrace paved with copper plates, silver stairs leading to it, a gold throne placed on the centre of the terrace, together with a shining tree of emerald leaves, diamond buds, and pearl fruits, which the princess saw in her dream, and she wishes to receive this property from the one who desires her hand. So I have been roving here and there in the jungles for many months in search of such a scene." The sage said, "Dear prince, I can give you a clue to where it is, but it is very difficult for a human being to obtain it, unless he starves for several days and nights previous to going to the place and accomplishing his object. The prince said, "Sir, I am ready to do it at any expense of bodily trouble and mental determination, and will surely act in the way you instruct me." The saint said, "Go to the extreme east with this enchanted sword I give you. You will find the tank there, where you will have to fast for the period I have already prescribed for you. On the eighth day seven fairies will come to bathe in that tank one after another. As soon as the first copper fairy has bathed, behead her with this sword, she will then turn into a copper terrace; the second or the silver fairy will become silver stairs leading to

the copper bank, the third emerald fairy will form an emerald tree, the fourth or the gold fairy will become a throne of gold, the fifth or the topaz fairy its buds, the sixth or the diamond fairy its flowers, the seventh or the pearl fairy its fruits. Be sufficiently firm and bold in the pursuit of your object. I bid you goodbye and wish you success." The prince immediately set out in the direction indicated, and did what was told him to do. When he arrived at the lake, he achieved his purpose by killing the seven fairies one by one. He then brought the princess there, who after seeing all the objects of her dream, became very happy and married the prince.

### 3. THE PRINCE AND THE DEMON'S DAUGHTER

There lived once a demon in an island beyond the seven oceans. This devil had a beautiful daughter. A certain prince being enamoured of her set out to obtain her. The journey to that place took him six months. On his arrival there he found a large and beautiful city full of gold, silver and precious stones, but devoid of human beings, the inhabitants of this city having all been devoured by the fiend. He saw the damsel sitting near a window of a big palace. No sooner did

the girl see the prince than she advised him to go away at once, and said, "Oh human being, what evil fortune brought you here, only to be devoured by my father who has just gone far off to hunt for human beings and other animals? How will he spare you, who have come to this barren island and fallen into his clutches? He can scent human beings, and walks hundreds of miles in a few strides. So you had better run away with as swift speed as you possibly can." The prince said, "Oh excellent lady, I have come here only for your sake, after undergoing a great many hardships and troubles. I cannot leave you now, whether you kill me yourself or cause me to be eaten by your father." The lady thus touched by the speech of the prince shewed him some gourds provided by the fiend for the protection and defence of his own life. The first contained mist, the second thorns, the third water, the fourth mountains to be placed before one's adversary, and the iron cage in which a parrot was kept, which contained the soul of the demon (i.e. the death and troubles of the bird meant those of the fiend himself). She then instructed him in detail how to kill the devil. No sooner had the prince taken the four gourds in his hand than the devil felt giddy and feverish. Per-

ceiving that an attempt was being made against his life he ran towards his home. The prince dashed down the mist gourd, which made darkness come in his way. Then he broke the thorn gourd, the water gourd, and the mountain gourd one by one. All these threw obstacle after obstacle in his way and greatly impeded his speed towards his home. In spite of all these impediments in his way he continued his journey. When he had come near his home the two legs of the parrot were severed, and the demon became lame. He however dragged his body along to kill his enemy. Just as the demon was close to his antagonist, the latter killed the parrot which caused the death of the demon. After being thus delivered from the demon the prince married the daughter and returned to his home with his bride triumphing in his success and good luck.

#### 4. THE PRINCE AND THE CELESTIAL FLOWERS

A certain king who had already lost his queen was deprived of his kingdom by another potentate. He retreated to the forest with his two sons and resorted to selling firewood in the city for their sustenance. The younger brother finding it too tedious for him to convey wood for sale to the town left his work and went on his travels. He became



servant of a certain banker, assuming the attitude of a dumb man, but doing work like a skilful man. The son of the banker, who knew the daughter of the king of the town, was to elope with her. They had consequently sent on ahead money, jewellery and precious stones laden on ponies. At the moment when the banker's son was to start, the servant had him arrested and locked up by the banker, and with the permission of the banker he rode a pony and went off to seize the riches his son had sent away. Supposing that the banker's son had set out, the princess also started. Both of them arrived in a certain town in the evening. When she saw the dumb man she was afraid of him, but having no one else to help her she made him signs to get lodging and provision, which the dumb man got ready for her to her satisfaction. They both slept together placing a dagger between them as a pledge of chastity. After some days he sent the banker his property and himself became a servant of the king of the city, getting a thousand rupees a day, with the agreement that he should do the work which could not be done by other servants of the king. The high pay he got made him an object of envy to the other servants of the king, and the king, being

influenced by them, ordered the prince one day to bring him the flowers of *parijat*, or the celestial flowers, an impossibility for any human being. After having obtained sentinels to guard his house during his absence, he immediately set out for the purpose. While on his travels he found a deserted town with only one damsel living in it. He made acquaintance with her and played *chauparh* with her for some time. In the evening she told him to go away from her house, for, if not, her father, a demon, would devour him. The prince said that he could not part with her for any amount of danger to his life. So she changed him into a fly. When the demon came he cried out, "Human scent, human scent." The girl said all the people had already been eaten by him with the exception of herself. The next day when the fiend had gone hunting, she changed the prince again into a man. In this way they enjoyed each other's company not for days only but for months. One day the prince requested the woman to get either her father or himself killed. She said she would get rid of her father, the devil. In the night when the demon came she complained to him and said, "O, father, I am very anxious nowadays for you, since your own brother in disguise, I hear, has come here

to kill you. How can you defend yourself against his attacks." The demon replied, "My dear daughter, do not be afraid for my life, I cannot be killed by any one in the world. For my soul is secure in the body of a beetle, which is again secure in the body of a parrot, which is kept within the iron-barred cage. This cage is secured again in the innermost room, there being six outer rooms duly padlocked, leading to it. The keys of all these locks are with me. The girl eagerly asked the demon further, "You are likely to lose the keys; so will you kindly leave the keys in my care for my peace of mind?" The fiend acceded to her wish and gave her the keys. The girl again said, "Father, my eyes are always looking for your coming home; will you kindly tie a bell to your neck so that I may hear the ringing of it when you approach home, for my comfort?; otherwise, my mind is always uneasy for your sake." The demon immediately complied with her request, by putting on a bell round his neck, and started to hunt human beings for his food. The very next day as soon as she opened the first room, the demon felt feverish; on unlocking the second room he had a high fever; finding that he had been deceived by his daughter, he ran towards home, but in the

interval all the rooms were opened and the parrot and the beetle were killed. The demon died. The prince married the girl, who wished him to take her home, but the prince said, "My darling, I have to fulfill another promise to the king (whose servant I am) of bringing him the celestial flowers; so you must remain here comforted and guarded by servants, until I can produce the flowers before my king." His wife said, "Very well, you are at liberty to do so, but go to the remotest jungles which are generally inhabited by ascetics, who alone are able to give you instructions as to how and where the flowers are to be obtained." So the prince went to the jungles. He met with a Fakir to whom he represented his need. The ascetic told him that the flowers were either to be had in the heavens or in the world under the earth. He advised him to continue his journey onward. The prince did so and came across another ascetic, who advised him also to go on to gain his purpose. Then he met with a third dervish who told him that on a certain night all the heavenly gods and fairies descend at a certain place on the earth, where they dance to the tune of a flute during the night, and whenever the flute is blown the fairies dance and the celestial flowers fall down on them.

They disappear next morning. So you must go there and take courage and use the opportunity to bring in as many flowers as you like. The prince accordingly got to the place on that night and saw the show. The celestial beings disappeared as soon as the day broke and left the flute there. The prince, instead of bringing the flowers he wanted, took up the flute (the chief source of the spectacle and phenomenon, and also the flowers which the tune of the flute produced), and brought it to the third or the last Fakir, and produced the entertainment afresh. The ascetic expressed a desire to receive the wonderful flute from the prince, who agreed to part with it on receiving in return the self-striking club, and the self-binding rope from the Fakir. Both agreed to the conditions. So the prince returned, after having given the flute to the dervish. While on his way he commanded the club and the rope to beat and bind the Fakir, and to take back his flute. They did it. He arrived at the hut of the second dervish and showed him the flute and its manner of working. The latter was so enchanted with the flute that he asked for it in exchange for the self-cooking vessel and self-distributing provision spoon which he had. The prince having bartered his flute for the vessel and

the spoon, resumed his way. Again he ordered the club and the rope to bring his flute back, the next moment he saw his own order complied with, and the flute placed before him. Then he started and met with the first dervish and showed him the flute and related the way in which he had obtained it. This Fakir also wanted it in return for the self-flying bed he had. The prince readily agreed to the bargain, and gave him the flute. As soon as he had left the place, mounting the self-flying bed he ordered his club and rope to get his flute back, and his command was instantly obeyed. Thence he went to the daughter of the demon, and placing her and himself together with all the riches of the deserted town on the flying bed, reached the destination of the king, who had sent him for the celestial flowers. There he arranged to show the display one night. No sooner had he tuned the flute than the fairies appeared, and danced so bewitchingly that the celestial flowers poured down on them in the presence of the king and his courtiers. The king and his retinue were so fascinated with the extraordinary and amazing scene that the whole assembly heartily thanked and congratulated him on his supernatural achievement of his purpose. The flowers thus produced were

collected by the order of the king. After this the prince invited the king and his courtiers to his own lodging, told them that he was a prince, and that he had taken service on account of his poverty. After having feasted them he begged leave from the king to return to his own country. Next day he rode the flying bed with the two maidens and his riches, and arrived in his own country. After having conquered the foreign king with the club and rope, he put his elder brother on the throne: himself serving as a minister to him. He married the daughter of the king he had brought with him, to his elder brother, the king, and he himself married the daughter of the demon who was trained in a hundred and eight arts.

#### 5. THE GHOST AND THE SICK MAN

Some years ago a post peon arrived at a house at night. On entering it he found a sick man lying on his bed with no one else in the house. The sick man welcomed the peon and said that he should stay there and get his food, pointing out the baskets of rice and flour, the vessels and ghee as well. The peon having kindled fire began to cook his food, doing everything himself. The peon forgot to take salt for his food with him to the kitchen. (It is forbidden to a Hindu, in the

Kumaon hills, to go out of the kitchen when the victuals are being cooked, unless he has partaken of them.) So the peon expressed his regret to the sick man that he had not taken salt with him for the food. On this the sick man pointed out the vessel of salt, hanging to one of the beams of the house, about 10 or 12 yards off from the bed, at the same time he stretched forth his hand to the beam to reach the salt. This extraordinary scene so terrified the peon that he at once quitted the place naked, leaving his clothes and badge, and ran for shelter to another village. The sick man pursued him for some distance. The peon reached another village with great fatigue and exhaustion at midnight. There he was told that all the inmates of the house had died of some epidemic contagious disease. All of them were burnt by the surviving members of the family, but the one who died last was not taken away by any one to be burnt. Everybody was afraid to approach the house. Next day, when the peon, in company of many of the villagers, went there to take his badge and clothes, they found the dead body lying in the bed, and they also noticed that flowers of mustard were sticking between its toes, as it had chased the peon through the mustard fields. They then



concluded that some ghost had entered the dead body to frighten the peon.

#### 6. THE GHOST AND THE FIREWOOD

Once a traveller arrived in the evening at a place near a burning ghat where he collected some pieces of firewood (remnants of the funeral pyre) on the bank of a river for his own use. He kindled a fire and cooked his food on it. After getting his food he slept near the fire. At midnight a number of ghosts came to him, each of them crying, "Give me my fuel, give me my fuel." He was frightened at the sight, and ran away to a neighbouring village, leaving all the wood and fire. [The remaining wood of the funeral fire is considered to be the property of the dead men (ghosts). The approach to such wood is dreaded.]

#### 7. A MAGICAL CONTEST

A certain Brahman, having no children, went to a Jogi (ascetic) and implored him to bless him with progeny. The latter, after giving him some wonderful medicinal root, claimed the first-born for his disciple. The Brahman agreed to fulfil the condition, as soon as he was given the sons so promised. The Jogi then departed. The man in due time got two sons who grew to manhood. The

same Jogi came to the man and asked for the elder son, who was readily given him. But the man requested the ascetic to take his younger son also for a training under him. The latter granted his request. So the Jogi took both the sons of the man with him, and instead of teaching his art to both alike excluded the younger from the boon, and began to train the elder one, supposing him to be his own disciple, inside a room, which was shut against the younger one. But the latter, being smart and inquisitive, gave his ears and mind to what was taught inside to his brother, by stealthily standing close to the door, which was shut, and attentively hearing what was taught to his brother inside. Once the Fakir gave each a wooden bowl to be oiled. The elder one begged oil and clarified butter from door to door, for the purpose and got it a little oiled; but the younger one, on the contrary, contrived a better plan for so doing. He purchased bowlful of oil on credit, and returned it next day on the plea of its being of a bad quality and so got his bowl fully greased in the process. Finding the younger one more ingenious than the other, the ascetic drove him from his house. The younger lad came to his father and told him that he would metamorphose himself

into a nice mare which he would sell to any one for Rs. 500 but he should not part with the bridle, otherwise he would come to great troubles. When the boy had transformed himself into a mare, his father took him to market for sale. The very same ascetic, who knew him to be the boy, purchased it. He made it over to his disciple (the elder brother) with instructions that she should get fodder and water at home, that is not be taken out for the purpose. The disciple acted on the advice of his tutor for a considerable time. One day it so happened that the disciple of the ascetic, forgetting the counsel of his instructor, took the mare to a river, so that she might drink water. No sooner had the mare touched the water of the river than she disappeared, turning into a fish. On hearing this from his follower the ascetic assumed the form of a fisherman, to catch the counterfeited fish. When the fisherman was about to catch the fish, it turned itself into a bee, the fisherman became a hornet to kill it. The bee then transformed itself into one of the pearls in the wreath worn by the daughter of the king of the country. On feeling some sensation, the princess threw off her garland on the pavement of her palace. No sooner was this done than the ascetic

having metamorphosed himself into a cock began to eat up the scattered pearls (with a view to kill the boy). Just before the boy was about to be devoured by his adversary he transformed himself into a cat, and killed the cock, his enemy.

#### 8. THE GHOST AND THE FOUR WOMEN

There was once a well-to-do man in a certain village. One night a stray hunting party of a king reached the village in a tired condition. They were well fed and taken care of by the man that night. Next morning they joined the king. On inquiring about the events of the past night they related the hospitality of the man to the king. The iniquitous ruler, instead of recognizing the goodness of the man, was led by their report to covet his wealth. He directed his servants to plunder him of his wealth. The party accordingly did so. The inmates of the house, the old man and his wife, the four sons and their wives, left the house for good, with hardly anything in their possession to live on. But the wife of the youngest son had concealed sixteen gold mohars on her person. When they felt hungry, the woman gave her father-in-law one gold mohar to purchase food with. The old man went off with it and never

returned. So she was obliged to give another mohar to her mother-in-law for the same purpose. She also acted in the same way. Then each of the four sons was charged with a mohar to buy food for the family. But they also eloped in a similar way. The four young women, thus left alone, set to work with the money they had got in their possession. First of all they purchased male apparel for themselves and wore it with great turbans on their heads to hide their braided hair. They then accepted service in the court of the same king, and appeared as tidy and energetic young men, worthy of service in every way. They served the king for a considerable time without the least suspicion on the part of the other six. One night on the death of the only son of the king, they were ordered to take the dead body to the funeral *ghat* (spot where dead bodies used to be burnt) to be burnt. They took the body instantly to the place in spite of the widespread fear of a certain ghost said to appear at night and to frighten to death those who by ill chance went there. No sooner did they arrive there than a ghost with horrible features appeared before them. One of them clung to him undauntedly taking hold firmly of his matted hair. After an obstinate fight the evil

spirit at last yielded to them. They would not set him free unless he would give them a promise to effect whatever they wanted from him. Being so constrained, he pledged his word to accomplish whatever they required from him. On these conditions he was let loose. First of all they ordered him to make the dead body of the prince alive. He did this, and the son of the king was restored to life. The next thing they wanted of him was to revive all the dead bodies burnt there during the last hundred years. He effected this also. Then he was ordered to build buildings and furnish them for the accommodation of those thus revived. This was instantly done. As the four disguised women did not go back the same night, the king sent his servants next morning to look after them. They saw the prince alive and the other wonderful things effected. They at once went to the sovereign with the glad tidings. But the ruler, not believing at all what they had said, came himself there out of curiosity and found his only son alive, to his unbounded joy. In return for which he gladly shared half of his kingdom with the four pretended men. (Evil spirits are believed to possess supernatural powers.)

## 9. THE DEAD MAN WHO MOVED AND TALKED

Once upon a time a certain man and his wife lived in a house in the midst of a dense forest together with their cattle. The man fell ill and died at night. The next morning a relative of his came to inquire after his health, and as soon as he had arrived the dead man began to move and talk. The wife of the deceased, who had found him quite dead in the night was happy to see him alive on the arrival of her kinsman. She said with folded hands, "Dear kinsman, I have no proper words to thank you for the recovery of my husband, who was perfectly dead in the night, but no sooner have you arrived and felt his pulse than he has become convalescent. So you are the sole cause of a new life being given him." Her relative was also delighted to find him alive, and congratulated her on her good luck. The woman then asked her kinsman what food she might prepare for him. The dead man, now possessed of his senses and lying in his bed, before her query was answered, interposed, and said, "I and my kinsman will not take our meal now, but at night together (with the evident view to prevent his departure from the place after eating as generally was the case). You must go today to a neighbour-

ing village to invite the people here tomorrow morning, as I wish to see them on account of the joy I feel at my recovery." So she went away as directed, to bring the neighbours (meaning to burn the dead body). They ate nothing during the day but in the evening, the dead man (ghost) told him (the kinsman) to prepare food. He did so. While so employed in the kitchen he wanted salt and expressed his wish. The dead man then stretched forth his hand to a place (where salt was kept) five yards distant from his bed in order to fetch the salt for him. This supernatural conduct of the ghost so frightened the man that he ran away for fear, and the ghost pursued him until the man embraced a cow tightly in the cowshed for fear of him. (The theory is that the cow being very holy the ghosts and demons fear to approach it.) On the withdrawal of the ghost the man ran home with his wife. The next morning when the wife of the deceased brought the neighbours to her home, they found the man dead. So the dead body was burnt by them.

#### 10. A GHOST IN A MILL

A man once at night was in a water-mill shed, on the bank of a certain river, which was used as a burning *ghat* (place where dead bodies are burnt)



by the people of the neighbourhood. While his grain was in the process of being ground in the mill, it stopped of a sudden. On coming out he found that the water which ran through the channel to work the mill was directed into the river by the breaking up of the dam. So he shut up the dam again and got the mill moving as before. It was nearly midnight when a ghost, assuming the appearance of a man, entered the shed, and asked the man, "Do you like to eat flesh?" The man replied in the affirmative, but at the same time believed him to be nothing but a ghost. No sooner did the ghost leave the shed to bring flesh for the man than the latter, all shivering with fear, ran away to his village, leaving his corn behind in the mill. The ghost ran after him with the leg of a human being (the flesh he had promised to bring); saying repeatedly in a loud voice, "He was just here, where is he gone to?, he was just here, where is he gone to?" The ghost pursued him to his own village, but could not enter his house. He went with others next morning to the water-mill to bring his grain during the day time, for he was so terrified at the scene of the past night that he dared not go there alone.

## II. THE GHOST AND HIS SON

A certain man died and left an only son of 10 or 12 years old. When the said body was being taken to the burning *ghat* to be burnt, the boy insisted on accompanying his father, but the other people and his mother prevented his doing so. But he stealthily went to a ridge from which he saw the site where his deceased father was burnt. Supposing that his father was made to reside there (at the funeral pyre) he began to go there at night addressing him repeatedly, "Father, father," quite unconscious of his father having been a ghost, but to no purpose. One night while doing so the boy saw his father (a ghost in the exact appearance of his father) whom he embraced believing him to be his own father, and told him that while at home he used to feed him well with ghee and milk, and now he got nothing of the sort since he (his father) had left him. On this the ghost pointed out the ruin of a certain house in the neighbourhood to the boy, and told him that he should dig there and appropriate the riches it contained. He accordingly razed the wall of the ruin and found a jar of money under it. The ghost never appeared to the boy again.

## 12. A GIRL AND HER SNAKE HUSBAND

A man had a wife. The man was angry with her. He said to himself, "I can get 2 slabs of stone by breaking it, but cannot get anything from my wife; she is foolish and useless." Thinking this he drove her away. After she had been driven away she went to a field and began to live there and supported herself by begging alms. One day she found a small thing (stick like snake). She kept it, put it in a basket and on the next day she saw it was filled with the snake. Then she put it in a larger basket. The next day it had again filled the basket. Afterwards she went to her husband's house and began to live unknown to the husband. She put the snake into a barn (*bhakar*). Next day she saw that it was also filled. Her husband knew that she had come back through his servant. He also took no care of her. He forgot all about her doings, forgot that he had driven her away and let her stay. She told her husband she had borne a son; she required, she said, a house to keep it in. He got a house of three storeys built and she put the serpent there. Next day it filled the three storeyed house. Now the serpent placed his head on the threshold and entirely filled the three storeys. The woman told her husband that her

child had grown up and he should now be married. The Brahman husband hesitated for a moment thinking who would marry this serpent. Seeking everywhere he could not find any wife to the snake son. He found a poor Brahman's daughter whose father was dead. He gave the girl's mother Rs.6,000 and took away her daughter and married her to his son—the snake. She was brought home. When the girl grew up the mother-in-law told the girl to apply oil to the body of her son, the snake. She was told by her mother-in-law to sit in the place the snake would leave for her. She went on the first day; the snake left a space for her and put his head aside from the threshold. She passed the night in great discomfort. She had no room to lie down. She wept her ill fortune. The next day when night came, her mother-in-law told her to wait on him. The snake left some more room for her than before. She applied the oil to him quite easily and passed the night with comfort. On the third day the girl told her mother-in-law the snake had given her more room now. The mother-in-law told her to go daily and to see what would happen. On the third day she again went to him. The snake left all the three storeys. He made his body small so that she could pass through

all the rooms. On the fourth day the snake left half the bed for her, and putting off his outer skin he appeared as a beautiful man. She went with joy to her mother-in-law and related all that had happened. The mother-in-law went to look but found him still a snake, because while his wife went to her mother-in-law, he put on the skin again. The mother-in-law was puzzled and told his wife to burn the outer skin along with her own bodice. A piece of his outer skin fell when she was doing so. When the man rose from sleep he inquired about this and asked what had become of the outer skin. She said, "I don't know. My bodice has also gone." Then she went joyfully to her mother-in-law. He found that piece of outer skin which had fallen from her hands, and he again made it large and covered himself with it. She told her mother-in-law she had done so. He was still a man. She went and found him still a snake. She returned to her daughter-in-law and told that she had not burnt the outer skin totally. On the sixth day the mother-in-law told her that she should take her bodice and burn the outer skin with great care. The daughter-in-law went on the sixth day to him, and in the night time when he put it off, she took it slyly and burnt it with the

bodice of the mother-in-law and slept with him. The snake man rose from sleep and could not find the skin. She said she did not know who had taken his outer skin and her bodice. While she went to her mother-in-law and told her with joy that the son was man and took her to see him. He was now in the form of a man and could not change to a snake. The mother was now very happy.

(A treasure buried in the ground becomes a snake, and that snake if kept by human beings turns into a man.)

### 13. THE BOY AND THE DEMONESS

A person was taking 15 goats to his home. He met with a demoness (Rakshasii) on the road. She followed him like a country woman or villager. In the evening they lodged on the road. They both ate their food and the person tied his goats and went to sleep. When the man was asleep, the woman devoured two goats. Now he had 13 left. On getting up early in the morning, seeing two goats less, he was perplexed. He could not find out about them. When the demoness was asked what had become of the goats, she told him that she did not know. "You and I both slept. I don't know who has taken away the goats."

Afterwards he went towards his home. Again the woman followed him. In the way they again lodged by the road. The second night she devoured four goats. Now he had nine left. When she was asked she made the same reply. In this way she devoured all the goats. One day, the demoness in the shape of a country wife hid herself. On the second day, she appeared in a beautiful disguise of a 15 years' old girl and came forward. He imagined her to be very beautiful. He told her he wanted to marry her. She agreed. He took her home. He reached home. He had four more wives in his house. When night came they all went to sleep, she devoured one of the four. On the second night she devoured the second, on the third the third. On the fourth night it was the turn of the fourth. The fourth wife who was pregnant went away with his son of 14 years to a neighbouring house. Taking rest for some hours she told her son, "The new wife of your father has devoured all your step-mothers: Now we must consider a place. When I tell my husband, he, instead of killing her, will rebuke and kill me, and she will not be injured by him." Afterwards the son went on thinking of a place for getting rid of the new wife. He went to the

bazar and met with an old woman who used to wipe the blood off the demoness' mouth. The boy told the old woman he would give a gold mohar if she could ask the demoness where her soul lived. The old woman was an intimate friend of the demoness and the demoness used to come to her daily, and the old woman used to kill lice on her head and wipe the blood from her mouth. The boy went to his mother and told her that he had begun to make a plan for killing the demoness. On the second day the old woman asked her (the demoness), when she came to her as usual, where her soul lived. She replied, "I am the daughter of a distinguished demon (Rakshash) and my soul lives across the seven oceans. There is a large peepul tree which has spread its branches long and which is a rest for travellers. In those branches many parrots live. On the top of that tree is a nest and there is a large parrot in which my soul lives." Next day when the boy came to the old woman, he asked her if she had inquired about the demoness' soul. The old woman told him that she had asked, "If you give me two gold mohars, I will show you." The boy gave her two gold mohars and was told by her the secret. Now the boy went home and began to think how he should manage



to go across the seven oceans. He again returned to the old woman and asked her to inquire from the demoness how he was to cross them. On the second day when the demoness came to the old woman and she was wiping her bloody mouth and killing lice began to tell her to be careful and not loose the thing by which the ocean is crossed. The demoness fell into the trap and told her that she had a sandal (of one foot) which was kept in a box under her bed (which she had brought with her). But said she, "Don't tell anyone. I have told you these as my close friend. You must conceal all this as you have concealed my eating men and animals." There in the man's (her husband's) house, the demoness ate all the horses and cattle and injured some of the suburbs of the city. When the demoness had gone the boy came hiding (slyly) and asked the old woman if she had inquired from the demoness. The old woman said, "Yes. I require 4 gold mohars from you for telling the secret." He gave her 4 gold mohars. Then she informed him about the sandal under her bed in a box in her chamber. The boy returned home thoughtfully. He did not tell anything to his mother. In the night he disguised himself as a faqir, and went to his father's house, where she

lived. He told the people that he wanted alms. The demoness came and brought some flour meal to give him. The faqir told her that he did not want the flour. He wants to see the owner of the house. Then hearing this from the upper house the father came downstairs and asked him what he wanted. He replied that he required a night's lodging in the room next to his own, and gave him fuel for burning. He lit a fire and when he was given food he ate heartily. At two o'clock in the morning, he prayed, "If I had right in this house, a stone of this wall will slide away and there will be a hole." According to his words the stone went aside and there was a hole. He went through the hole secretly to the next room, where his father and step-mother were lying. He took away the trunk under the bed and came back through the hole. Again putting the trunk into fire (to open it) he took out the sandal and again restored the trunk and came back and smoked tobacco, knowing that there would be questioning about the hole. He prayed it might be closed if he had any right in that house. The hole became as before; and at 4 o'clock he went towards the seven oceans. He applied the sandal on one of his feet and by its help crossed the seven oceans in a

moment. At 6 o'clock he was by the peepul tree and saw many parrots there. On the top he saw the large parrot sitting. He had taken a sword with him before crossing the ocean. Slowly he climbed up the tree and prayed to God that the life of that parrot would not be taken from her, but it would fall down. He at once darted on the parrot, and hit it with his sword and cut the parrot's feet and wings. The pain of the parrot soon affected the demoness there. She began to die. He took the parrot still alive with him and crossed the seven oceans and appeared before his father and told him all that had happened. He was much praised by his father and country men. The demoness came out and asked him, "What is this?" Showing her the parrot she replied, "This is my life. Don't kill it any more. I will give you many lakhs of rupees from my father's house." The boy refused and before all the people and before his father and mother he killed the parrot and the demoness thereupon died.