

A TRANSLATION OF

“The Book of the Birds.”

(Paksi Pakaranam).

By J. CROSBY.

INTRODUCTION.

Attention was called long ago by Bastian, the eminent Oriental scholar, to the interesting collection of tales in Siamese known as “The Book of the Birds” (^{๒๕} ปักษี ปกวรรณา). The author and date of composition of this work are unknown. It can only be said that it is evidently of Indian origin, a fact which is indicated both by the subject matter of the stories which it comprises and by the form in which the first half of it is cast. Two full versions of the work exist in the Siamese language, one metrical and the other in prose. It is the former which I have attempted to transiate in the following pages.

A comparison of the two versions shows that the one in prose is the more complete, and that the metrical account is almost certainly an adaptation of it, or of an original which it resembles closely. The similarity between the two is, on the whole, very exact and the expressions and turns of phrase employed are in many cases identical. Unfortunately, a copy of the prose version did not come into my hands until I had finished the translation of the metrical and, doubtless, more popular account. Otherwise, I should have contented myself with the less laborious task of putting the prose narration into English. As it is, I have pointed out the principal differences between the two versions in an Appendix.

Of the metrical account it must be said that it can lay no claim whatever to literary distinction. It is full of needless repetitions and “padding” and is in some parts incoherent and obscure

to the point of being unintelligible. As might be expected in a work of a "poetical" nature, the details of the various stories are set forth with considerable elaboration, in a striving after the picturesque. The prose version, on the other hand, is more concise and is told in admirably simple and straightforward language. Though, as already stated, more complete than the metrical version, it is not on that account longer.

The metrical account is written in the popular form of verse known as the "klawn" (กลอน). The "klawn" in this instance consists of stanzas of eight syllables interlinked by a system of rhyme as follows :—

a	b	b	b	c	d
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
d	c	c	c	e	f
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
f	e	e	e	g	
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	etc.

In addition to and independent of the above scheme, rhymes are constantly occurring in the body of the stanzas themselves. The versificator has no compunction in introducing, upon occasion, an irregular number of syllables into a stanza or in sadly distorting words for the purposes of rhyme.

I would mention that a portion of the "Book of the Birds" has been cast into a metrical Siamese version of mixed measures in the form known as ลิลิต (Lilit). This second poetical version is called the "Lilit Paksi Noi," or ลิลิต of the Lesser Book of the Birds, and is to be found in the Vachiranana Magazine for February, 1904, (No. 113), under the heading ลิลิต ปักษี น้อย เปน นิทาน แก่ บัณฑิต ว่า ด้วย ศิริ จะ เปน ผู้ ไต แต่ง ไม่ได้ ความ. It comprises the story of Loka Brahma and Deva Brahma and gives an account of the eight riddles propounded by the latter to the former and of their solutions. It excludes the tales related by the young eagle and the mother eagle, respectively, but contains the instructions as to cleansing the person by three kinds of water

(masculine, feminine and neuter). These instructions appear in the prose version, but are lacking in the metrical version which I have translated.

The identification of all the various birds mentioned in the "Paksi Pakaranam" has afforded me no little difficulty. The better known birds were, of course, easily disposed of, but in two cases at least I have been unable to find an English equivalent. In other instances, though I have ventured on an equivalent, I submit my rendering with all diffidence.

In conclusion, my grateful thanks are due, for assistance in the work of translation and for much useful information, to Dr. Frankfurter and to the learned staff of the Vachiranana Library. I would also tender my cordial acknowledgements to the Very Reverend Father Colombet and to Mr. K. G. Gairdner, of the Survey Department, for valuable help in the identification of birds.

NOTE.—Passages bracketed thus () in the following translation have been inserted by myself, where I considered that the meaning called for them. Passages bracketed thus [] actually appear in the original.

PAKSI PAKARANAM.

(The Book of the Birds).

Introduction.

I beg to set forth the instructive tales contained in the Book of the Birds. These stories were told by our fathers and should be heard and pondered carefully. They afford excellent instruction, such as will teach good and bad alike how to acquire wisdom and to secure themselves against misfortune.

How the birds met together in council.

It is related that, once upon a time, the two-footed race of birds, to the number of a hundred, both large and small, met together in council. The night-heron, ¹ the parrot ² and the dove ³ were present, with other birds of many kinds. The adjutant bird ⁴ who is distinguished for his wisdom, opened the proceedings as follows :—

“ The weak are wont to be vexed by the thorns of misfortune. If their master be taken from them, they must struggle against great hardships. So is it with us birds one and all. The strong among us set themselves to work injury upon the feeble. It is meet that we should exalt some bird to be our protector and chief, whose care it shall be to direct us. Power and authority must be in him to keep the

1. นก แดงนก.—*Nycticorax griseus* (Pallegoix).
2. นก แดงเท้า.—I am unable to identify this bird, but I gather that it is one of the parrot species.
3. นก เาไฟ.—A variety of dove with partially red plumage.
4. นก กะเวียณ.—Warrington Smyth (“ Five years in Siam ”) identifies this with the adjutant bird.

erring in subjection and to grant us peace by putting an end to oppression. Who among you concurs in what I have spoken ? ”

The owl,¹ being in agreement, then made answer in the assembly :—

“ Sir, you have spoken wisely. It is meet and fair that we should seek a protector. The swan is a bird of goodly form and discreet conversation, capable of weighing the subtleties of right and of wrong. In my opinion, we should exalt him to be lord over us. We shall live under his orders and he will be our protector. It is meet that we should take the swan for our lord.”

To this the adjutant bird replied :—“ What you say regarding the beauty of the swan is true, sir. Yet in all his acts and movements he proceeds leisurely and at his ease, indifferent to the welfare of his friends, whom he neglects and heeds not. The crow, on the other hand, is a bird of great merit, whose worth and ability are manifest. He is not addicted to sinful pleasure nor will he suffer anyone to see him indulging in sexual intercourse. Should he go from home, he hastens to return at evening to his nest. Moreover, he is not indifferent to the troubles of his friends, whom he shelters and assists. If good or evil tidings befall, he is eager to carry the information.² Further, he builds a stout nest for his wife’s accommodation. Should the wandering cuckoo³ seek a refuge therein, the crow helps and protects him like a child of his own.

1. นก จ้ำนั ทิต.—I am informed that this bird is a variety of horned owl, and that it also known under the name นก ที่ด ที่อ.
2. The persistent cawing of a crow is deemed in Siam to announce the approaching occurrence of some event.
3. นก ตุเหว่า. Also known as นก กะเหว่า. *Eudynamis*

Honest and unsuspecting, the crow tends him without abhorrence, from the egg until he is fully grown. We should all of us consider these facts, sirs, and take the crow for our master. He is a very excellent bird."

On hearing these words, the birds all said among themselves :—" We will put these conflicting statements to the proof. The swan and the crow shall first make trial of their strength and convince our eyes and ears of their powers. We shall then know which is the mightier of the two. It is fitting that he should be made lord over us."

The trial of strength between the swan and the crow.

So they confronted the swan with the crow, matching the two birds evenly against one another that the assembly might put their powers to the proof. But they reflected :—" If we send them into the forest, we shall obtain no decisive result, for in that case they will be able to rest themselves if their strength fails and they become exhausted. It is a more decisive test to set them loose upon the ocean. He who is without fear will assuredly cross over in safety. He who is faint-hearted will assuredly lose his life."

Then the assembled birds proceeded to put their plan into execution, pitting the swan and the crow against one another and quickly setting them loose upon the sea. The swan at once soared into the air, like the bold bird that he is. The crow, too, flew over the eddying flood, seeking to contend against the powerful swan upon the deep where there is no shelter. But his heart fails him, for he sees no place of refuge. He is tossed hither and thither by the whirling wind, far from any bank upon which to find a footing. The swan descends and floats down the eddying tide. With feathers ruffled, he

honorata (or *malayana*): (Pallegoix). The Indian Koel. " It lays in May and June in the nests of crows." (Fauna of British India, Birds, Vol III, Blanford.)

moves at his ease over the wide expanse of waters. The crow, on the contrary, is exhausted by his efforts and can discover no shelter. Seeing the swan resting upon the deep, he himself alights upon it also. Soon a storm arises and howls around them with dreadful tumult, whilst heaving billows appear upon the raging sea. The swan rides the tempest fearlessly, but the crow is whirled around until he is on the point of sinking. Every feather on his body is drenched; almost dead, he is buffeted by the fierce waves repeatedly; choking, assailed by giddiness and nausea, he is all but drowned. 'Then he calls out to the swan:—"Oh! excellent and courageous one, pray come to my assistance. From this moment, I yield to you the victory. Have pity on me and help me." To these words of the crow the swan made due answer:—"Since you have ventured on this contest with me, it is as though you were my enemy and no friend of mine. It is not meet that I should help you to no purpose. I should rather allow you to suffer the death which you merit by your presumption in challenging me. You shall drown here in the ocean." The crow replied:—"If your intention is so ruthless and if you commit the mistake of leaving me to die, the birds will all suspect that you have murdered me. They will meditate evil against you and will blame you. But if you help me to escape from death, they will call you magnanimous and you will, moreover, acquire merit by your act. You will assuredly become chief among the birds, who will raise you to be their wise and prudent head." The words of the crow sounded agreeably in the ears of the golden swan, who considered how, when an enemy has once acknowledged his fault, it is customary to pardon him. When he had thus controlled his desire for vengeance, he made merit, therefore, by coming to the relief of the crow, whom, with protecting wings outstretched, he saved from drowning.

But the crow, when he had reached the shore again, puffed himself up and said angrily :—" You have been deceived, swan. Your wisdom is less than mine and you do not understand. I tricked you into conducting me to land, for my strength did not really fail me."

[This old story has been related in order to point the moral, how the feeble will deny their words and boastfully enter into rivalry with the mighty.]


After this, the assembled birds agreed with one accord to raise the swan to be their chief and lord. But the bold adjutant bird spoke in opposition :—" What is this ? It is not meet that we should take the swan for our lord without enquiry. There is a stigma attaching to him."

The other birds then asked :—" How is it that you declare the swan to be at fault ? Inform us, for we are in doubt as to how it may be."

The adjutant bird replied :—" I will tell you and will put an end to your doubting. The swan is at fault on account of his unseemly association with the crow. I will tell you the facts, as you wish.

The story of the marriage between the crow and the swan.

" There was once a bold swan of ancient lineage named Yugaraj, a bird of great wisdom and lord of a numerous following, who had taken up his abode in a fig-tree. Suvanna Hong¹ was the name of his wife, and this fair lady had borne him a daughter worthy of her race. There was also at that time a proud and fearless crow who lived at a distance from my lord swan and who was called Kola Deva Ka. He had a following of some five hundred retainers and possessed a comely wife, Ka Rata Ka by name, by whom he had a son excellent and worthy of all

1. , hamso, a swan

honour among birds. This son, being enamoured of the daughter of the golden swan, besought his parents as follows :—" Your child is in love with the pure and beautiful daughter of the golden swan. Help me by asking her in marriage from her father, in order that my desire may be fulfilled." On hearing his son, Kola Deva Ka was at a loss what to do. He replied :—" Ma'e no error ; we are crows ; do not allow yourself to remain thus enamoured. If I ask the swan for his daughter, is it likely that he will give her to us, since we are birds of a different race ? Do not think of this thing, for you will never succeed." But the black crow's son made answer :—" My father, if you do not speak on my behalf and if I do not obtain the swan's lovely daughter, I shall assuredly die of love." At these words Kola Deva Ka was filled with pity and feared lest his darling child should perish. So he gave his promise, saying : - " Weep not. I will endeavour to satisfy you and we will see what result is forthcoming." Then he chose out a crow of goodly presence, whom he entrusted with a message to the swan. This fair-spoken emissary, on receiving his instructions, hastened to the fig tree in which the swan had his lodging. There, perched upon a branch, he made known his business :—" My master has thought fit to send me to ask that your daughter may be joined to his cherished son in marriage. Pray listen favourably to his proposal." After hearing the request preferred by the crow for his daughter's hand, the comely Yugaraj asked for time in which to consult his kinsmen and, summoning his retainers in full assembly, proceeded to take counsel with them. " The black crow is bent on seeking my daughter in marriage. I would ask your advice as to whether it is meet or not that I should give her to him." The rusty black swan, whose wisdom is but as that of a child, observing that his senior was asking his opinion, made answer :—" The

plan is a fair one. It is fitting that your two distinguished houses should be allied, for both are glorious. The crow, too, is a great chief and has a following. He will be a support to us in the future." But the astute yellow swan opened his lips to forbid the match, saying:—"It is not seemly that the crow, who is of a different race and who is mean as a slave, should love a swan." Yugaraj listened to these divided counsels in silence. Undecided as to whose advice to take, he turned to consult with his wife. "The yellow swan and the black are engaged in a vain dispute," he said. "It is impossible to follow their confused discourse. What is your view, sweet wife?" Suvanna Hong replied:—"You should follow the mature counsel of the black swan. As for the yellow swan, he is a boy. What does he know? You should do as the black swan bids." At these words the king of the swans rejoiced and gave his pledge to the black crow. "Go tell your master that we will give him our daughter, as he wishes. Now return to the abode of your king." At this the royal messenger was glad and quickly took his leave. On arriving in the presence of the chief of the crows, he communicated the result of his interview. "The king of the swans is agreeable and bids me invite you to arrange for the marriage." Kola Deva Ka and his wife rejoiced that there was no obstacle to their scheme and hastened to prepare for the wedding of their son. Attended by their followers, they flew to the fig-tree, where the swans welcomed them courteously, and, conversing amiably, both parties set about the business. Yugaraj gave his daughter to the crow, as he had promised, and provided a pleasant lodging for the bridal pair to occupy. The parent crows with their attendants then took their leave and returned to their home.

"In course of time, the crow's son became sore distressed through lack of food. "Erstwhile,"

he reflected, "I used to live in pleasant quarters and was wont to feed on carrion flesh. Now that I am living with the swans, I am greatly troubled, for I can find only jungle fruits to eat. I must pretend to be going on a visit to my parents' nest, in order that I may find means to satisfy my craving." So he quickly persuaded his mate to take leave of the two royal swans, to whom he said :—"I, your son, keep thinking of my kindred. I am anxious to visit them with my wife, for it is long since I first came hither." The unsuspecting swans having granted permission for their departure, the crow led his spouse away from her own people and they quickly started on their flight. Half way upon their road, they came upon a dead body, which so attracted the crow that he could not restrain himself, but descended to eat of it. Filled with abhorrence, my lady swan could not bring herself to stay beside him. Unceasingly she urged him to come away, declaring that it was unseemly to devour carrion. But the crow, having found the flesh of a dead body to eat, could not stay his hunger. Roused to anger by his wife's reproaches, he retorted :—"Is it some lover of whom you are thinking, that you urge me thus much and will grant me no respite? Go on ahead, you hussy, to meet your paramour." Hearing these furious reproaches and being thus put to shame by her unfeeling husband, my lady swan quickly flew away from him. Seized with regret and aghast at his wife's departure, the crow hastened after her. Overtaking her, he led her to his home, but continued to eat carrion flesh notwithstanding, until my lady swan's feathers stood erect with disgust. Anxiously she cast about for a means of breaking with him, but could not readily find an occasion. That same day, however, it happened that the crow went out in search of food, whereupon, rejoicing greatly, she left him and flew back to the nest of her parents. There she related the whole

story to her father and mother, who listened to their daughter's tale with loathing. "The crow comes of a vile race," they said. "The yellow swan forbade this marriage, but we would not heed him. Infatuated, we followed the black swan's advice and have brought dishonour upon our family. By associating with the evil crow, we have ourselves become disgraced."

The story of the two swans, the tortoise and the cunning jackal.

When he had completed the above story, the adjutant bird stated how, according to an old tale, the swans were greatly at fault for yet another reason, inasmuch as they incurred the ridicule of the cunning jackal, whom they provided with a meal. The assembled birds thereupon asked him :—"How is it that you say the swan is at fault for yet another reason? You who know the story, pray tell it to us for we are ignorant of it." So the adjutant bird related this further account of the swan's misconduct :—

"There were once two swans who were friends and who lived on the top of a stately mountain. They were in the habit of disporting themselves in a pond which abounded in lotus lilies, a most excellent and delectable spot. In those same pure and flower-strewn waters there was a tortoise, who had offered his services to the two golden swans as an attendant and who was much loved by them in return. This inquisitive tortoise once asked of the swans :—"In what place do you dwell, my masters?" The swans replied :—"We dwell upon the top of an overhanging mountain, by a sheet of water infinitely pleasant and abounding in lotus lilies. Enemies and disease are unknown there. We bathe in Mucalindo,¹ the delectable lake, in a region which is comparable

1. मूकलिन. Mucalindo is the name of one of the seven Mahásaras, or great lakes, situated in the mythical region of Himavanta, (Childers, Pali Dictionary).

to the celestial mansions for happiness." The delighted tortoise,¹ on hearing that place compared to heaven, desired to visit it. "Be gracious, my masters," he said to the swans. "I would fain see the august king of your country. Have pity on me and take me up with you. I will serve you devotedly and will wait upon you with your food." My lord swans, according to the story, opposed the vain request of the tortoise and forbade him, saying :—"You are but a black tortoise who dwells on low-lying ground. It is not fitting that you should go up to live upon a mountain. Do not go, black tortoise ; believe us, you will only meet with your death. We hold this thing to be impossible." But the tortoise coaxed them into compliance, until they said :—"We will not hinder you from proceeding in accordance with your wish. We will, however, lay this one command upon you, which you must obey. You must address no one in anger, if your object is to be accomplished." The tortoise bowed himself down respectfully and undertook to follow out the command of his two masters. The swans then procured a stick, which they made the tortoise seize in the middle with his mouth ; they thereupon took each of them one end of the stick in his beak and, with outstretched wings, flew through the air bearing the tortoise between them.

' A jackal in the forest, happening to see the swans carrying the tortoise along with them howled at the stupid birds in derision. "Comrades," he cried mockingly to his fellows, "look at the flying tortoise. It is indeed a fitting sight. Where will

1. ក្រណ្តុំ ក្រណ្តុំ is the phrase which here appears in the original. ក្រណ្តុំ—a tortoise, it said to be a word of Cambodian origin.

you find the like ? ” Moved to wrath by the jackal’s cry, the tortoise was on the point of abusing him. Angrily he opened his mouth to speak, and, losing his hold upon the stick, fell to the ground, where the jackal made a very pleasant meal off him.

“ Thus the swans, by their folly, brought about the death of the tortoise. Even so do hot-tempered persons come by misfortune and lose their lives.”

When the adjutant bird had completed his second tale, the other birds resolved among themselves :—“ The adjutant bird is patient and knows beforehand the occasions of good and of evil. It is fitting that he should be our master.” Then the parrot spoke :—“ Wait a moment, for I have something to declare. The adjutant bird speaks with two voices and his statements are inconsistent. At first he extolled the swan, saying that he was superior to all others, and would have raised him to be our master. Now he has changed his tone and speaks disparagingly of the swan, whom he blames for his stupidity.¹ He has not acted rightly in relating his stories. It is not fitting that we should take him for our lord.” Having put the adjutant bird to shame by these reproaches, the parrot proceeded :—“ The adjutant bird has referred to the merits of the crow, whereas in truth that bird is a very vulgar creature.” Then, at the

1. There is obviously some confusion here, as the adjutant bird has never proposed the election of the swan to the chief place of honour. The prose version gives the correct sense quite clearly as follows :—“ Then the parrot said to the adjutant bird :—‘ At first you praised the crow, declaring him to be superior to the swan. Now you say that the crow, by associating with the swan, brought the latter into disgrace. Since you speak with two voices in this way, are we to listen to you further ? ’ ”

request of the other birds, he told the following tale of the mean crow's rashness :—

**The story of the
crows who tried
to drink up the
ocean.**

“ Once upon a time there were two unmannerly crows, husband and wife, who lived in a nest by the sea-shore and who possessed a following of over a thousand retainers, over whom they ruled. It happened that the crew of a junk once landed at that spot, for the purpose of making oblations to the spirits of the place. Votive offerings of meat and food were prepared to secure the assistance of the devas and were set down at the edge of the water. The pair of black crows, seeing this abundant display and rejoicing at the prospect of a full meal, flew to partake of the offerings in the sacrificial trays, both sweets and savouries. When they had eaten to their satisfaction, they observed a bowl of intoxicating liquor placed near them, the contents of which they drank up entirely, mistaking them for water. Inebriated and bemused with their draught, they saw the wide ocean before them and, deeming it to be some spring or rivulet, cheerfully went down to bathe in it. No sooner had they done so than their lives were in jeopardy, for a wind arose and, buffeted by the fierce waves, they were driven apart. The powers of the female bird failing her, she sank and was drowned, but her husband had sufficient strength to gain the shore. Missing his mate, he said in his foolish pride :—
“ My darling is adrift upon the great sea. By draining the ocean completely, I shall recover her again.” Accordingly, he gave orders to his followers that they should empty the mighty sea of its water. “ My wife,” he told them, “ has been separated from me and is adrift upon the flood. When you have drained it dry, I shall recover her.” The thousand and more attendants of the crow received their master's bidding with reluctance ; but they were forced into compliance, since they feared the penalty of disobedience. Drawing the salt water

into their mouths, they flew with it to the jungle and there spat it out upon the ground. Night and day they toiled at their hopeless task, till they were all of them at the point of death. Their throats became parched, their voices dried up and their strength exhausted. Seeing the army of crows thus in danger of perishing, the guardian devas of the ocean were filled with pity. Changing themselves into the form of yakshas and fiercely brandishing clubs, they drove the terrified band away with menaces. Thus the crows owed their escape from destruction to the compassion of the devas.

“The folly of the crow is beyond comparison. In all that he does, he acts without reflection. Thus was it that, on another occasion, he incurred the penalty of his rashness.”

When the parrot had finished speaking, the other birds enquired :—“You are versed in these matters, sir. How is it that you declare the crow to have incurred the penalty of acting without reflection ?”

The parrot then unfolded this tale :—

**The story of the
unmannerly
crows and
astrologer's
revenge.**

“There was once a great astrologer, who, with all his household, had gone out to admire the stately trees in a certain garden. A flock of crows, happening to fly past, dropped their excrement upon the head of the sage, who, incensed thereat, seized a stick and flung it at them. He was too late to hit them, however, and was left harbouring plans of vengeance against them. At that same season a monkey chanced to climb up the royal elephant stables and set fire to the building. The flames spread to the roof, and, as the elephant-overseer was unable to release them in time, the animals within sustained many and dangerous burns. The king of that country then ordered enquiries to be made if there was anyone who knew of a

medicine which, when applied to the elephants, would alleviate their sufferings. Upon this the astrologer, perceiving an opportunity of gratifying his revenge, addressed the King as follows :—" Oil obtained from the crow is an excellent remedy. If put upon your elephants, it will cure them of their burns within three days. I beseech Your Majesty to take note of my recommendation." The King heard the sage and at once gave orders to his Ministers that they should hasten to arrange for a slaughter of crows, in order to obtain oil for application to the elephants. The Ministers received the royal command and, hurriedly summoning their attendants, proceeded to shoot dead the whole tribe of crows.

" Thus it came to pass that the misconduct of the crows brought about their own destruction. Nor is this all. The crow brings ruin upon whomsoever he may live with."

On the conclusion of the parrot's second story, the birds all enquired further :—" You say that there is yet more to tell of the crow's misconduct. What is the meaning of your statement that the associates of the crow incur misfortune ? Pray inform us." The parrot thereupon, as he was bidden, related another old story thus :—

**The story of
the pelican and
of the crows
who took shelter
with him.**

" There was formerly a thick rubber tree, fully thirty wals in height, standing in a tall forest.¹ A pelican had taken up his abode in the pleasant shade of this tree, and to him there once came a pair of crows at nightfall. " Allow us to take shelter here for a while," they besought him. " It is already the close of evening and too late for us to go further. Have pity upon us travellers, sir." The pelican would

1. ป่ารัง Literally :— A forest of "rang" trees.

ต้นไม้รัง—The tree *Shorea Robusta*.

not receive them, and repulsed them, saying :—" It is contrary to all custom that you should share my lodging. Our fathers forbade us ever to associate with strangers. Do not disturb me, for I will not have you." But the crows pleaded with him :—" Have pity upon us, for twilight has fallen. Allow us but to take shelter in a fork of your tree and we will depart at sunrise. Grant us a favour for this one night." Melted by these soft words, the pelican permitted the crows to remain, and they found a comfortable resting-place for themselves in a fork of the rubber tree, upon which they dropped their excrement during the night. Next morning, at break of day, the pair of crows flew away. In course of time, a seed contained in the droppings of the crows began to sprout and developed into a stout fig tree with hanging roots. Now, it chanced that a hunter who was passing through that forest one day, in search of game, noticed the roots of the fig-tree reaching down to the ground. Rejoicing at his opportunity, he quickly ascended by their aid to where the pelican was installed and was thus enabled to capture and to kill him.

" Thus is it the wont of the crow to bring calamity upon his associates."

Upon this, the myna¹ said :—" The parrot knows all the customs of the ancients. We should bow down to him and raise him to be our master. By virtue of his merit, he should be governor of the whole race of birds, to support and to protect them." On the other birds asking him in what way the parrot had proved his wisdom, the myna replied :—" The wisdom of the parrot is unrivalled, as I will show you by the following tale.

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1. นกสีดึกา *Eulabes intermedia* or *cristatus*. This bird appears to be identical with or akin to the นกขุนทอง.

The story of the
parrot who
obtained a
mango from the
forbidden
orchard.

“ There was once a king named Brahmadata, who ruled over a prosperous city and who was famous for his riches. This King was troubled at heart by the fact that his Queen was childless. One day a deva from heaven appeared to his royal spouse in a dream and declared to her :—‘ If you can obtain a fruit to eat from the mango-orchard in the forest of Himavanta,¹ your wishes will be gratified and you will bear a precious son of boundless merit. On being thus apprised in a vision, the flower-like lady quickly rose from slumber and, when the Prince her husband came to visit her, communicated to him the substance of what the deva had told her in her dream. When the Righteous One² heard her story, he was sorely perplexed. ‘ It is most difficult to reach this mango orchard, which is situated in the lofty forest of Himavanta. No human being can attain to it. Whom shall I find capable of bringing me a fruit from it ? ’ Then he bethought himself of a certain parrot which he possessed. ‘ I have brought him up and he is an excellent servant. He seems a suitable messenger to send, for, being a bird, he can fly through the air. ’ Thus considering, the King repaired to the cage of the parrot and explained to him his intentions. ‘ My son, I have a business in hand. I am anxious to obtain a fruit from the mango-orchard in the lofty forest of Himavanta. I can find no fitting emissary to send

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1. หิมาวันต์ Elsewhere appearing as หิมวันต์ “ *Himavanta* is a region of mystery or romance, the fairy land of the Buddhists. It forms the northern part of India, and contains the great mountain chain of Himalaya....It is overgrown with mighty forests, and contains seven vast lakes (*māhasarā*).... Himavanta is the resort of Paccekabuddhas, Arhats, Devas, Rishis, Yakshas, etc., and of every species of wild animal; and teems with marvels of every description.” (Childers.)
 2. พระทอง ขรรค์, i. e. the King.

but yourself. You will assuredly achieve my object." On receiving this mission from the glorious Prince, the parrot humbly replied :—"I respectfully pledge myself to obtain this fruit, in accordance with Your Majesty's orders." Rejoicing at the prospect of his wish being fulfilled, the King presented the bird with a cage, in token of his appreciation.

"Then the parrot raised his wings in respectful salutation and took his leave, speeding away from the confines of the palace in quest of the mango-fruit. Everywhere did he seek for it, till he met a flock of parrots coming from the jungle, for whom he waited and from whom he enquired after the mango orchard. "Sirs, have you seen it anywhere? Pray give me the information for which I am searching." The flock of parrots made answer:—"We have not seen it anywhere." The King's emissary was greatly troubled and, hastening away, met yet another flock of birds, whom he questioned and who were similarly unable to inform him. After receiving their answer, he came upon a third flock of birds, who inhabited a tall forest, and he enquired again after the mango-fruit. "Sirs you come from the jungle. In what forest have you seen the forbidden mango-orchard?" These birds replied:—"We have indeed seen the mango-orchard, which is no ordinary one, for it belongs to the Lord Vessavaṇa¹ and is rigorously guarded by a band of a thousand fierce yakshas. It is fenced round with a net-work of iron and whoever approaches it meets with his death. Do not aspire to procure a fruit from it, for you cannot succeed." The parrot then said:—"Kind sirs, bring me to this place. It matters not if I encounter destruction, for I do not

1. ท้าวเวศสุวรรณ. Vessavaṇa (Kuvera) is, according to Hindu mythology, one of the four guardians of the world.

value my life." The flock of birds would not agree, representing that they would only share his fate if they did so. But the parrot entreated them to lead him, were it only to a sight of the spot. So, moved to compassion, they brought him to the mango-garden and there left him, fearing to take part with him, lest it should cost them their lives.

"Reflecting on the wonderful news which he had heard, the parrot secreted himself upon the branch of a tree. When night had passed, seeing that the time was favourable, he quickly flew through the meshes of the network, striking against it in his passage and causing it to shake. Being thus made aware of his presence, the demons sprang upon him and seized him before he had time to escape. In threatening tones they questioned him. "Eh! How is this? This is indeed a venturesome bird who comes to steal away the fruit of our mango-trees. He knows not that his life is forfeit. How comes he to entertain this proud notion?" The courageous parrot then made reply:— "I have undertaken a mission from my King and have come in quest of a fruit from your mango-orchard. Though I may die, yet I set no store upon my life, being anxious to acknowledge the favours which I have received from my master. Ah, sirs! Though you may despatch me on the road to heaven, yet will I show my gratitude for bounties conferred upon me. My life is of no account." When the yakshas heard these fair words, perceiving the great fidelity of the parrot, they took pity upon him and entreated their chief, whose duty it was to guard the iron network upon the right hand, saying:— "We are filled with compassion for this parrot who has come hither. Pray give him a mango-fruit. What matters it?" The leader of the band of yakshas set to guard the orchard then declared himself to the parrot as follows:— "The Lord Vessavana has appointed

me to maintain a perpetual watch over these fruits and to keep an account of them. I cannot serve you by giving you one of my own accord, for my lord would blame me if I did so. If you would obtain a mango-fruit, you must listen to what I will now tell you. There is a very learned hermit who has his dwelling upon a certain rocky mountain, where he practices religious rites, giving himself up to contemp'tation and the offering of sacrifices with fire. The great King of the demons reveres this *rishi* and is in the habit of presenting him with as many as four of these mango-fruits at a time. You should go and pay your homage to the holy man and beg one of them from him." On being so instructed, the parrot took his leave and proceeded in search of the saint. When he arrived at the sage's dwelling, he made obeisance with bent head, whereupon the holy man asked him to declare the object of his visit. Then the parrot raised his wings above his head in respectful salutation and unfolded the story of the mission which had been laid upon him by his King. "His Majesty is anxious to procure a mango-fruit from the orchard of Himavanta and I have undertaken to obtain one for him. Hearing of Your Holiness' manifold powers, I have come to your hermitage to beg that you will give me such a fruit." While they were still talking together, it happened that the Lord Vessavana sent the demons, his servants, to present to the saint at his dwelling some mangoes from the forbidden orchard. The sage ate two of these himself; then, calling the parrot, for whom he had conceived an affection, he fastened another of them around his neck. Rejoicing at the attainment of his wishes, the parrot quickly took his leave of the holy man and sped back to his own country with the mango, which he presented to King Brahmadata. Glad at heart, the King bestowed gifts upon him in token of the royal affection, offering him flowers and roasted rice

mixed with honey¹ upon a golden plate. Then the King took the mango fruit and gave it to his lovely spouse, in satisfaction of her longing. Having eaten the whole of it, the lady became pregnant and, after ten months, brought forth a young prince of unequalled beauty. Rejoicing at this achievement of his desire, King Brahmadata granted to the parrot as his domain a wide and rich forest measuring three leagues in extent. There the parrot was appointed to govern, with a great following of birds. Hunters with bows were forbidden to invade the precincts and guards were set to patrol his territory, that access might be forbidden to hostile interlopers. Peace and quiet thus reigned within his borders, so that beasts of all kinds, both great and small, were attracted thither in order to enjoy the blessings of his rule.

“From this story,” the myna continued, “we perceive that the parrot is a bird of wisdom, who knows how to protect himself to a marvellous degree. Though at the very point of death, he yet escaped destruction, afterwards attaining to felicity and becoming lord of a following. We should raise him to be the master of us all, for he is both prudent and brave. If we make him lord over us, he will be a refuge to us in our troubles.”

To this the Brahminy kite replied:—“Wait, sir. You have praised the parrot to the skies. Yet he has his faults, too. It was he who pointed out the way to the wicked man, thereby compassing his own destruction. For he is foolish of speech.”

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1. น้ำผึ้ง คดุก เข้า คดก คดก มาดา. Religious offerings in Siam, upon occasion, take the form of the variety of roasted rice known as เข้า คดก and of flowers. (เข้า คดก คดก ไม้)

The other birds asked of the skilful kite:— “ How is it that you call the parrot stupid to the extent of causing his own death ? Tell us the tale, for we are still in doubt.” The kite then related this story :—

**The story of
the parrot, the
wicked man and
the two tigers.**

“ There was once a parrot who had made his home in a hollow in the branch of a fig-tree which stood near the entrance to a forest. This parrot was on terms of close friendship with a great tiger, who lived in a cave together with his aged father. The old tiger, being blind, was supported by the efforts of his son, who supplied him with food, and they both of them dwelt upon a mountain. At that same time there was a certain man of evil character, who had previously been in the service of the King of Benares, but whom the latter had driven out from that city on account of his misconduct. Wandering in exile through the forest, this man came one day, as the sun was setting behind the hills and darkness was falling, to the fig-tree in which the parrot had his lodging. Stirred to pity at the sight of him, the parrot addressed him fairly in this wise:—“ Eh, sir ! Wait here and go no further. You will encounter danger in the forest, for night is setting in.” At these words, the man of evil character answered the parrot insolently. “ I fear no danger”, said he. “ Do not talk with me. It is useless,” Seeing that the man would not stop, the parrot thus compassionately addressed him again :— “ You are bent on proceeding through the jungle without heeding me. Should you be threatened by a tiger with whom you may afterwards meet, tell him that you and I are friends. On being so informed, he will assuredly let you off with your life.” Conceiving an attachment for the man, the parrot, in an access of affection, then flew close to him. He, wicked and covetous creature that he was, seeing his opportunity, stretched out his hand and, seizing the bird, tore open its breast and wantonly devoured

it. Thereupon he hastened on his way through the jungle and at last fell in with the tiger, who stood barring his path.

"I am the friend of a parrot named Tula Tila," the man then said. "He commended me to you while upon my journey". Believing the wicked man's story and gladly regarding him as a dear friend of his own, no less than of the parrot, the tiger led him to the place where his father was. Then the tiger went out in search of food, leaving the man to dwell at his ease with his sire in their lair upon the mountain. Being conscience-stricken, however, the man was moved to inform the aged tiger of what he had done. "The parrot, who is your son's friend," he said, "was killed and devoured by me as I came hither." The father of the tiger was filled with sorrow for his friend the parrot at this news. Nevertheless, he kept silent and spoke no word; but, on the return of his son, he told him what he had heard. "This impious man informs me that he has cruelly killed and eaten your comrade. Who would be guilty of such barbarity? He related the story to me while you were away." Uncertain as to the truth of his father's words, the tiger hastened off to look for himself. At the hollow in the tree which had been the lodging of the parrot he saw only feathers strewn around. Perceiving by this token that his friend was dead, he mourned greatly and shed abundant tears of affection.

"But the cruel man was furiously incensed against the tiger's father. "I have told him a secret," he reflected, "and he has been so indiscreet as to reveal it to his son." When, therefore, he saw the young tiger's departure, being violently enraged and fearing that the latter might be on the point of returning, he made no delay, but hastened to kill the old tiger and then fled from the cave. As he was hurrying through the forest, he met with the

young tiger, who asked him whither he was going: Trembling with fear, the man bowed his head and, prostrating himself at the feet of the tiger, spoke as follows:—"Oh! invincible one! I have done wrong and I crave forgiveness. In pity spare my life and do not kill me." At this prayer for pardon, the anger of the tiger was abated, for he was mourning only the death of his murdered friend, not knowing that the wicked man had slain his father also. So he spared the man, deeming that the parrot's destruction was fated,¹ and returned to the cave in which he dwelt, only to find his father lying dead. Then, his heart bursting with grief, he bowed his head and bewailed the loss of beloved sire.

"Thus, for all that the myna has told you of his excellence, the parrot became the prey of the wicked man. In my opinion he is not without his faults."

Thereupon, the peacock spoke:—"The partridge² is renowned as being comparable to a *rishi* who is versed in all the worshipful arts. We should raise him to be our governor."

But the kite opposed him, saying:—"You extol the partridge, being his friend. But you are wrong in likening him to a learned teacher. I fear that he rather resembles the *rishi* who wished to eat the birds."

1. คิต เหน่ เบน เหวร กัณ. The word เหวร would seem to convey the meaning of "miseries or pains for committed sins; vengeance," (Pallegoix). The idea, apparently, is that the parrot has but suffered the penalty for having killed the man in some previous state of existence. The man having now slain the parrot in his turn, the two are quits (เบน เหวร กัณ).
2. นก กระทาก. The Chinese francolin (a kind of partridge).

The other birds asked the kite : — “ What is this story of a *rishi* ? Pray give us an account of the matter.”

The kite then answered their enquiries by relating the following old tale :—

**The story of
the impious
rishi and the
pigeons.**

“ There was once a holy teacher who lived in a tall forest, where he edified the beasts by righteously instructing them in the divisions of the law. It came to pass that this ascetic abandoned his hermitage of leaves, whereupon another *rishi*, a man of impious and shameless character, installed himself in it. Men took this cruel *rishi* for some good hermit and bowed themselves before him in homage, whilst the infatuated beasts continued to receive instruction from him as they had done from his predecessor. He, for his part, taught them to persevere in the path of self-restraint. One day it chanced that a certain devout man presented a bird-curry to the *rishi*, which the latter ate and found remarkably to his liking. He hastened to ask of the man :—“ My son, what is it that you have curried ? Is it meat or is it some bird that tastes so remarkably well ? ” The devout man replied that it was the flesh of a pigeon. Having ascertained the fact, the impious *rishi* reflected :—“ There are pigeons in the neighbouring monastery. I will devise a means of catching one, that I may cut it up and eat it.” As soon as the devout man had gone, therefore, seizing a piece of wood and a lump of earth, he repaired to a stone seat, where he waited for the birds to come. Now, the pigeons had heard that a holy man was imparting the tenets of religion to the beasts, and they consequently proceeded to the hermitage, in front of which they flew down. Observing the mien of the evil sage, however, they scented danger and would not go near him. The impious *rishi* feigned gladness on seeing them

and addressed them in terms of false friendship:—
 “How is it that you will not approach that I may admire you, and why do you not come to receive instruction from me as was formerly your wont? I will procure beans and sesamum for you to eat.” But the pigeons, seeing the piece of wood by his side, said:—“This base-born¹ sage is a man of cruel and fierce character. We can see that he wishes to beguile us, in order that he may kill and devour us.” These words roused the impious *rishi* to a fit of such uncontrollable anger that he seized the piece of wood and hurled it at the pigeons, whereupon the latter, startled, flew quickly away.

“Even so, sirs, in my opinion, it is to be feared that the worthy partridge will prove like the impious *rishi* who unrighteously sought to beguile the pigeons in order to make a meal off them. I do not approve of the suggestion that the partridge should be set over us. He will be as bad as the artful *rishi* in the old story which I have just related to you.”

When the kite had ceased, the peacock then said:—“I, too, will tell you a story. Listen, I beg of you, and take warning.²”

1. ^{၁၂၂}၂. Of low caste. Pali *damilo*, which means “a Dravidian, a Tamil, a Malabar.” (Childers).
2. There would appear to be no connection between the next tale and anything which has gone before. A comparison with the prose version, however, shows that there is a hiatus in the metrical version here and that the peacock's first story is aimed against the kite. At the conclusion of the latter's tale the prose version goes on as follows:—“Then the peacock said, ‘The kite is of a cruel disposition. All the birds are aware that he is (himself) like a wicked and sinful *rishi* who should relate false matter to no useful purpose. Like the witless man who conferred a benefit upon the fierce viper, in the hope of gaining a reward.’ The assembled birds therefore asked, ‘What tale is there in connection with the man who conferred a benefit upon the fierce viper, in the hope of gaining a reward?’ The peacock then related to them the following story.”

The story of the
foolish man,
the viper and
crow-pheasant.

“ There was once a man, who, when journeying on a certain road, met with a crow-pheasant¹ and a viper engaged in mortal combat. Seeing that the poisonous snake was on the point of being killed, the man stopped and reflected as follows:—“ I would fain show pity on the snake and render him a service. I wander through desert places in search of a living. If I now assist this viper, in time to come I shall assuredly gain my reward. Should I meet with some great snake upon the way, he will not dare to bite me, who will have conferred a benefit upon his fellow.” So thinking, he grasped a stick and, followed by the snake, angrily chased the crow-pheasant from side to side. Greatly infuriated, the bird asked of him:—“ Whither are you going, sir, and for what unknown reason do you interfere with me? This snake and I are engaged in conflict and no third party should be so bold as to molest me. I ask you, sir, are you in any way related to the viper? Answer me truly, what is your object in rendering him this service?” The man replied:—“ It is your ruthless intention to kill the viper and I wish to acquire merit by assisting him. He will assuredly show his gratitude to me in the future.” “ Alas, sir! ” the crow-pheasant made answer. ‘ Beware of rashly associating with him. I am not deceiving you, but would warn you for your own advantage against foolishly doing him a service. Should he escape, he will not spare your life. If you disbelieve me, you will assuredly meet with your death. Pray hasten away from here, since it is useless for you to remain and it is unworthy of you to seek a quarrel with

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1. 鶻 鶻. I am informed that this is the same bird as the 鶻 鶻, the common coucal or crow-pheasant (*centropus sinensis*.)

me.” Hearing himself so addressed, the man became furiously enraged and, stick in hand, drove the crow-pheasant away, threatening him with blows. The crow-pheasant fled with wings outstretched to shield himself, but the man had not gone far in pursuit when, treading accidentally upon the tail of the snake, the latter turned and bit him. The man died of the bite, the service which he thought to render to the snake being the the cause of his undoing.

“If we consider the matter,” the peacock went on, “we shall see that the partridge is a bird of exceeding worth. He should be promoted to exercise supreme authority over us, for he is skilled in all the arts and sciences and, by dint of patient study, has acquired much knowledge.”

The assembly of birds thereupon said:—“We wish to know the whole truth. Relate to us why it is that you heap all manner of praises upon the partridge.”

The peacock then told another story as follows:—

**The story of the
partridge who
became an
instructor.**

“In the city of Benares there dwelt formerly a man versed in ancient lore, who instructed the populace, many of whom attached themselves to his service. As this eminent doctor was possessed of great knowledge, his disciples; men and women alike, were devoted to him, providing him with food at the proper hours, both sweets and savouries. One day, this learned teacher, having practised religious rites with unwearying assiduity and being made restless by the power of his own knowledge, was seized with a desire to go far away from the city. So he informed his disciples of his intention. “I am about to go out from the city. You must hasten to the jungle and build me a stout hermitage in which to lodge. When I have installed myself in it, I will continue to give instruction as before. Do you hurry forth to fulfil my command.” The

disciples of the sage, on receiving this order, repaired without delay to a great forest, where they cut timber and erected a hermitage for their master. The eminent doctor, who was versed in the three branches of knowledge,¹ then left the city and went into the wilderness, where he dwelt at his ease, devoting all his time to instruction. The people followed to learn from him continually, bringing him dainty dishes to eat and waiting upon him zealously. Now it chanced that a bold and clever partridge heard how this teacher was dwelling in a hermitage by the side of a hill and how the people of Benares were all repairing to his dwelling-place, in order to pay their respects to him and to enjoy the delights of instruction from his lips. The partridge thereupon said to himself:—"I am anxious to acquire knowledge and I will, therefore, hide myself and listen to the precepts of the holy man without informing anyone. In course of time I shall thus assuredly get to know as much as any scholar." So thinking, the bird concealed himself upon a branching fig-tree and there heard the instructions of the preceptor, which he kept in memory, so that he became thoroughly skilled in them. Soon afterwards, the eminent doctor was smitten with a lingering malady. Physicians nursed him for long, but, his symptoms becoming aggravated, at last he died, whereupon the people wept for him without ceasing and all his disciples nearly perished of grief. "We have not acquired one tithe of our preceptor's knowledge," they cried. "What is now the best course for us to pursue?"

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1. รู้ใน โลกย์ ไตร จักร.=รู้ใน ไตร เพท, skilled in the three branches of knowledge. These are:—(1). ราชศาสตร์, state-craft, (2). โหราศาสตร์, astrology, (3). ขรรพศาสตร์, the common law.

Others said :—" Our teacher's death is comparable to the loss of a pure emerald. Whom shall we find to impart knowledge to us in his stead ? "

Seeing the people plunged in sorrow and hearing them complain that they were not yet skilled in what they had learnt, the partridge, who had borne in mind all the practices of religion, flew down and thus addressed them :—" I pity you, sirs. I know not how it is that you are thus sore at heart." The people made answer to him :—" Our aged teacher died but yesterday. We had attached ourselves to him as his disciples, but had not yet mastered his instructions and we are now weeping for the death of him whom we loved. We can find no preceptor here to whom to have recourse in his stead." " Grieve not," the partridge replied. " I will teach you the sacred incantations and the holy lore, for I am well versed in them and am possessed of wisdom." The people, when they heard this, exclaimed :—" This is a bird of extraordinary merit." Then they invited him to be their teacher and to impart knowledge to them on the spot.

" The partridge is a wise bird, sirs," the peacock concluded. " The story I have told you is a true one in every respect. We should raise him to be chief over us for his prudence."

But the kite replied :—" I cannot yet agree. We must first consider this doubtful question. The partridge has had his defects from of old, as I will relate to you.

The story of
the learned par-
tridge, the kite,
the wicked rishi
and the tiger.

" The learned partridge continued to impart instruction daily and dwelt at his ease in the hermitage in the forest. His disciples from Benares devoted themselves assiduously to the pursuit of knowledge and he taught them thus for a long time. One day at last the wise partridge said to his

followers :—" I am ill at ease in this spacious dwelling, whither enemies can come to molest me. If you love me, you will hasten to choose clean and precious materials wherewith to construct a suitable cage in which I can take up my residence." The disciples of the master accordingly hastened away to make selection in fulfilment of his commands and returned to the forest bringing with them a cage of gold, into which he entered, rejoicing at having found a place of abode such as he desired. The people afterwards resumed their studies under his guidance.

" Now, this partridge had long been a friend of a great tiger, and a hen kite was on terms of close intimacy with them both. Being without a nest, the kite had sought shelter in the cell of the partridge, where she remained for several months. Thither the tiger delighted to come daily, in order to visit his two friends, whilst the partridge, for his part, continued to be maintained in comfort by his disciples. One day it chanced that the Prince of Benares was holding a joyous festival, such as the populace love to behold. The disciples of the partridge repaired to see these gay celebrations, leaving their master alone with the kite, and so that morning, until noon, no one came to receive instruction. There was living at that time a certain hermit of a violent and rude temper, a man devoid of all affection, whose only object in life was to create trouble. This hermit had entered within the borders of the delectable country of Benares and, whilst strolling through the forest for his pleasure, was gladdened by the sight of the cell of the learned partridge. On approaching nearer, the impious sage observed no sign of any human creature, but noticed the presence of the kite, who was attempting to escape him. The cruel *rishi*, without thought of the sin he was committing, immediately killed her

and then, looking carefully around, beheld the partridge as well. He reflected :—"I would fain get that bird. I must kill him and eat him, too. There is no one whom I need fear." So thinking, he waited no longer, but put his hand into the golden cage and, seizing the partridge, cruelly dashed out his life. Thus the kite and the learned partridge became food for the wicked sage.

"At that season, the tiger had repaired to the Eastern portion of the forest. When the sun's rays were slanting towards the West, he bethought himself of his two dear friends and, having partaken of a meal, returned to the woodland hermitage. There he was surprised to see the feathers of the kite strewn upon the ground and the hermit lying stretched in a refreshing sleep. Scenting mischief, he entered within and looked for his comrades. "Eh!" he cried." "This is strange. I see only birds' feathers scattered around. My friends must have come by their death and this impious sage has, without doubt, killed and eaten them. Why should I spare his life?" Enraged at the *rishi's* treacherous conduct, the tiger bit his foot (to awaken him) and thus threateningly addressed him :—"Reverend sir, you have come hither and have eaten the kite, have you not?" Opening his eyes and seeing the tiger, the wicked hermit was ready to die of fear. "This "beast," he said to himself, "demands a truthful answer to his question. If I do not acknowledge my misdeed, I shall be in sore straits, for in that case he will ruthlessly kill me, who am defenceless. I must hasten to make a confession, though I will contrive that it shall be only a partial one. The tiger will then spare me." So the sage addressed the tiger in these terms :—"I have done wrong, sir, inasmuch as I have made a repast off the kite. But I am ignorant as to the fate of the partridge." The tiger replied :—"Do not seek to evade me. If

you do not tell me the whole truth, there will certainly be trouble between us." The *rishi* then said :— "A merchant from the kingdom of Kalinga,¹ a remarkably evil man, whom I did not question, stole away the partridge and, putting him into his wallet, went off with him into the jungle." To this the tiger made answer :—"Aha, reverend sir ! Your tale is scarcely a consistent one. At first you stated that you know nothing about this matter. Now you say that a merchant has taken the partridge away. He is no ordinary *rishi*, this pitiless man, who thus infamously despises the precepts of religion and has recourse to shameless subterfuges. We will settle this affair between us ere the day is done." Then the tiger took the sage in his mouth for a short way along a road leading to the West, until they came to a lotus pond, where there lived a *yogi* leading a life of extreme sanctification. The tiger brought the cruel sage into this hermit's dwelling and there unfolded the story of his unheard-of duplicity. The *yogi*, a saint thoroughly acquainted with all the paths of sanctification, then questioned the wicked *rishi* on the matter. "Do not put me off with adroit answers", he said. "Since you have taken the monastic vows upon you, how is it that you are not completely versed in the precepts of your order ? Why do you wander abroad killing live creatures and then have recourse to lies ? I ask you in all fairness. If this thing is true, you must confess to it on the spot." Being thus questioned, the impious *rishi* made no further effort at denial, but, conscious of his guilt, acknowledged that he had eaten the partridge. The *yogi* thereupon gave judgment that the forsworn monk should suffer a violent end and he was accordingly worried to death by the tiger.

1. กะลิง กวราช. *Kālingá*, "Name of a people and country on the Coromandel coast" (Childers).

“So runs the old story. I do not think the partridge worthy of being raised to the high office of chief over us. Being foolish above other birds, he allowed the wicked *rishi* to seize him and make a meal off him.”¹

Hearing this pronouncement by the kite, the lapwing² said :—“The vulture possesses wisdom above other creatures within the borders of Himavanta. He observes the sacred precepts, as all birds may see. He feeds upon no living thing, whilst in strength he is equal to the great garuda bird. He can fly over the mountain-tops to a height of two hundred leagues. Though the myriad other birds in this world should advance against him, they must yet fear his might and flee before him. We should raise him to be our lord and thus secure his protection.”

But the pelican disagreed and spoke in disparagement of the vulture. “He is coarsely made and evil-smelling. I can see no virtue in him, for he is all faults. What you have just said in regard to him, sir, does not meet the case.”

The assembled birds thereupon asked the pelican :—“Eh ! What mean you, sir ? Is there some story in this connection ? If so, pray tell us the old tale.”

The ancient pelican then proceeded thus :—

1. The prose version points the moral of this story more explicitly by indicating the folly of the partridge in ever allowing himself to be confined in a cage at all.
2. ^လမာ ^အကုလ ^အဘိဝံသ. The stilted plover (Burmese lapwing).

The story of the
vulture who
chose the tiger
and the dog for
his Ministers.

“Once upon a time, the vulture was king of the forest and appointed the tiger to be his chief minister, to rule over the jungle. For his second minister, the vulture chose the dog, who is an evil beast, ill-favoured and shameful. These two were honoured with the duty of guarding their master, forming his council from thenceforth and dwelling in the region of Himavanta. Wherever a dead body was to be found, thither my lord vulture would repair, quitting his nest in the branches of a tree, and the tiger with the dog would hasten to follow him. The three of them would then fall to feeding upon foul carrion. This continued to occur every day, and at the close of each evening they would return to their forest. In long course of time, it happened that my lord vulture went out at the usual time in quest of food by himself, without informing his two ministers. The latter were afflicted with the pangs of hunger in consequence and the fierce tiger was thus moved to kill the other creatures in the forest without mercy.

“In view of this incident, in what way is the vulture worthy that you should extol his virtue and propose him for our master ? ”

The bold stork¹ then spoke :—

“Of a surety, sirs, I will choose you a leader who will meet with our requirements. In the Brahminy kite we see a bird of comely shape who is fair to look upon. His beak is sufficiently sharp, his neck is white, his talons are long. He catches and devours at his ease even the fishes which swim in the waters of the Jumna. We birds should raise him to be chief amongst us, that we may abide under his care. Pray tell me if you approve or not.”

1. นก คณก น้จ.—*Tantalus leucocephalus* (Pallegoix).
The painted stork or pelican ibis.

The cuckoo had been hitherto paying silent attention. Hearing this proposition put before the meeting of the birds, sweet words fell from him as follows :—" I do not agree, for I fear that the kite will prove to be like the cat, who, by feigning to sit rapt in contemplation, was able to deceive the swarm of rats and to make a meal off them."

The other birds thereupon enquired :—" Eh ! How is that ? Pray tell us."

Then the cuckoo duly explained the comparison which he had drawn by relating this old tale :—

The story of the
hypocritical cat
and the swarm
of rats.

" There was once a learned *rishi*, a past master in the science of charms and incantations, who dwelt in a certain tall forest. This holy man had a fine tom-cat which he had reared up and which lived comfortably in its master's cell, never stirring from his side. There was also a swarm of rats in the same forest, who, observing with gladness the benevolent disposition of the holy man, had placed themselves under his protection and taken up their abode in his hermitage. The *rishi* had forbidden the cat to go near these rats or to molest them. After more than a year had passed in this way, the cat began to chafe against his master's orders, and, being desirous of eating the rats, spent his time in devising a means of gratifying his wish. One day, therefore, when the puissant scholar had retired to his couch and was slumbering peacefully, the cat approached him stealthily and, stealing away his rosary, hastily fled away from the hermitage with it in his mouth. Proceeding to a secluded spot, the cat there seated himself upon a stone between overhanging rocks and, placing the rosary around his neck in order to delude the rats, pretended to have fallen into a religious ecstacy. Thus he remained, with eyes closed, seemingly dead to the world around him. The rats soon afterwards issued

forth from their comfortable quarters in the hermitage and gaily set out on an excursion into the forest. On arriving in the neighbourhood of the cat, finding him plunged in silent meditation with eyes shut and head bent, they stopped and looked up at him curiously. Observing through lids slightly opened that they were walking around him without coming nearer, the cat thus addressed them:—"Alas, friends! Why do you harbour suspicion and show your distrust of me? I have given myself up to meditation and there is no evil intention in my mind." Taking the cat at his word, the rats ventured to come near and ran nimbly by him in search of food, without a thought of danger. But, as the last of the swarm was passing, the cat stretched out a paw and caught him, providing himself thus with the meal which he desired. This proceeding was repeated on many subsequent occasions, to the cat's great contentment, until almost a thousand of the rats had been killed by him. Then the leader of the swarm bethought himself:—"Of a certainty, this black cat has been preying upon us. My followers seem to have become strangely less in numbers, and this is because he has deluded them and devoured them to his heart's content. Far be it from remaining so. I will myself hide beneath a tree which I am in the habit of frequenting and will order my followers to disport themselves at a distance from the cat. (By watching what happens,) I shall assuredly arrive at the truth of the matter this day." Having concerted this plan with his following, the leader of the rats concealed himself at the foot of a high mountain; the other rats then proceeded in the direction of the cat and walked past him, but at a safe distance. The cat rushed out and pounced upon them; but the rats, (being now upon their guard), made off quickly and were able to escape him. From that day, they abandoned the hermitage of the *yogi*.

“ Since the kite has been mentioned,” continued the cuckoo, “ I have expressed my view concerning him by relating this old and instructive tale. It is not that I am wilfully bent on standing in his light. For I regulate my conduct upon four principles.”

The other birds thereupon addressed the cuckoo persuasively :—“ What mean you by your four principles ? ” they asked. “ We beg of you to explain.”

The cuckoo replied :—“ I will tell you. Do not fear to remember my words and to learn by them.

“ The first principle is this :—Good may turn out to be evil. Consider well, therefore, and avoid the extreme of obstinacy and arrogance.

“ The second principle is this :—A kind act may bring punishment upon the doer. The wise man will turn his mind from such folly.

“ The third principle is this :—A service rendered to one’s fellow-creatures may be the cause of incurring a great sin.

“ The fourth principle is this :—A deed done with cruel intent may become a source of benefit to others.

“ He who observes the above principles strictly will prosper long. A timely knowledge of them is acquired by few men.”

The other birds then asked :—“ What is your meaning ? Please explain these old sayings to us clearly and without concealment ”

So the cuckoo duly proceeded to relate the following :—

**The story of the
poor man, his
child, the snake
and the
mongoose.**

“ The first principle is that a good deed may prove to be a very evil one.

“ There was once a miserably poor man of base extraction, who had a little son upon whom he

doated. This needy person possessed also a mongoose, which he had acquired long before the birth of his son and which he fed and cherished like a child of his own. The mongoose could speak the language of man very distinctly and he never left his master's house, where he was careful to scrutinise all comers, driving away crows and fowls and similar unwelcome visitors without ceasing. One day, the poor man, being minded to wander forth from his dwelling, took his son in his arms and laid him in a cradle. Having hastened to put the boy to sleep by singing a slow lullaby, he left his house and proceeded to the city of Benares in quest of food wherewith to relieve his extreme want. There such as were not destitute give him a share of what they had. Now, it chanced that, while he was away, the poor man's evil fate caused a big cobra to enter his home and to bite his son, so that the child died. Seeing this, the mongoose was filled with rage and, seizing the poisonous snake firmly in his mouth, he shook the life out of it. In the evening, the father hurried back to his house, longing to see his boy again. Saying to himself, "The child is resting and cannot yet have awakened from sleep," he went up to the cradle, only to find his dearly loved son a corpse. On recovering from his stupefaction, he made examination and saw that the boy's clothes were covered with blood. Inflamed to sudden anger, as though he had been wounded by an arrow, he cried:—"The villainous mongoose has done this thing. In vain have I pampered and nourished him. Now he has indeed shown his gratitude for my kindness. Why should I spare this base and hairy-faced beast, who has bitten my child to death?" So saying, he seized a stick and with it belaboured the mongoose, who, unable to escape, yielded up his life. When his grief had abated, the poor man then set about preparing for the immediate burial of his son. But, on lifting

the child's body, he beheld the cobra lying dead in the cradle. "Eh! this is strange," said he. "On looking at this poisonous snake, I see clearly that he has been wounded. He has undoubtedly been bitten by the mongoose." Thereupon the poor man repented of his deed and cried:—"I have been mistaken. It is the snake which caused the death of my son, and the mongoose sought to show his gratitude (by avenging the child's death). I have been too hasty and did not allow myself time for reflection. Thus have I lost a creature which I loved." The distracted man was near to dying of sorrow and mourned his favourite mongoose for the greater part of a day.

"That, sirs, is how good may, on consideration, turn out to be evil."

After being enlightened by hearing the above tale, the assembled birds asked the cuckoo to inform them further. "How say you that a kind act may bring punishment upon the doer? Pray explain that old saying also."

The cuckoo thereupon told this old story:—

The story of the
parrot and the
miraculous
jujube-fruit.

"Once upon a time, there was an eminent king whose heart was set upon observing the Law unceasingly and whose people lived in great happiness under his rule. This prince kept a parrot, which he had set to keep guard over his fair palace of gold. One day, having bowed himself before his lord and taken his leave, the parrot set out upon a journey to the region of Himavanta. There he met with a hermit who was practising the duties of religion on the borders of a forest near the great Mount Meru. This holy man had planted in that spot a countless number of jujube trees, some thousand of them, so that they were everywhere to be seen. The parrot, (on coming that way), raised his wings in salutation before the learned hermit and waited for what

he might have to say. Seeing the parrot approach him where he dwelt on the borders of the forest, the *rishi* asked :—" What bird are you who are passing through the wood alone and who have succeeded in reaching the confines of Himavanta ? " The bird replied :—" I am a parrot, a servant of the king of a great city, of whom I have taken my leave in order to visit the jungle. I am indeed fortunate to have met with your reverence. I crave leave to lodge with you in your cell for a while. Ere long I shall take my leave of you again and return whence I came. Grant me this favour, I beg of you." Taking pity upon the parrot, the saint then allowed him to share his dwelling in the forest, and from that day forth the blameless bird lodged with the learned man, whom he understood how to wait upon like any human being. Daily he would go forth into the dense jungle in search of fruits, which, when he had obtained them, he would carry in his beak and offer to the scholar. This continued for a long season, until at last the bird took his leave of the holy man, saying, " My thoughts are turning towards the city where I have my home. It is long since I left the good King, my master, and I must return into his presence." Inspired by affection for the parrot, the saint made selection in his orchard of a large jujube-fruit, which he plucked and handed to his departing guest. " Bear this back with you carefully in your beak," he said, and continued, " Whosoever eats of this jujube-fruit will be beautified beyond all knowledge. He will be freed from disease and his life will be prolonged to ten thousand years." Having uttered these words, the sage fell into a religious ecstasy, whilst the parrot, (bearing the jujube-fruit with him), mounted into the air, whence he could survey his road and the country beneath him, and sped back to the royal city.

“There he presented himself before the Righteous One, to whom he offered the jujube-fruit which the learned hermit had given to him, relating the true story of the gift in every particular. The prince rejoiced on hearing the tale and, at once accepting the fruit, sent it to the keeper of the royal gardens that the seed contained in it might be planted. In course of time, a tree grew up from this seed and fructified within the palace grounds. A fruit from the same tree, being blown to the earth by the wind one day, chanced to fall near a hole in which a snake had made his home. Gladly seizing his opportunity and thinking it to be some live creature, the snake rushed out and bit at it, but quickly spat it out again on finding what it really was. The jujube-fruit, however, had already been infected with the reptile’s venom. Now it happened that the keeper of the royal gardens was visiting the palace grounds on urgent business. Walking lightly and making careful search, he found and picked up the fallen fruit, which he thereupon brought and laid at the feet of the Righteous One. The latter presented it to a certain old woman, saying, “Eat this. It will cure you of the pains of age and your life will be prolonged.” The old woman made obeisance and hastened to accept the fruit; but, before she had time to eat the whole of it, she fell dead. Incensed against the parrot, the King cried:—“He has deceived me and has been the cause of this calamity.” So saying, he ordered the bird to be taken and killed. Thus the parrot came by his death, which he owed to an act of gratitude on his own part.

“Some time afterwards, the King commanded that a certain criminal who had incurred his wrath and had been disgraced with imprisonment should make trial by eating a fruit of the jujube-tree, for the Prince was anxious to learn the truth of the

matter. No sooner had the criminal eaten the jujube-fruit than his soul was flooded with pure bliss ; no infirmities came to vex him and he prospered in bodily health. But the King was troubled and suspicious. " How is it that things have fallen out so ? " he asked. Then he ordered that a search should be made in the pleasure-gardens for some clue to the mystery. In accordance with the royal wish, the keeper of the gardens hastened to the palace grounds, which he explored stealthily and with care. Happening to look upon the ground, he came upon the hole in which dwelt the poisonous snake. His memory serving him accurately, he cried :—" I cannot be mistaken ; it was here that the jujube-fruit had fallen. Perchance the fierce snake had spat out his venom upon it. Fool that I am, not to have perceived this in time." Then he entered the royal presence and related what he had discovered to the King, who thereafter sat plunged in sorrow at the recollection of his favourite parrot, whose death he had caused.

" That is how a kind act was rewarded with punishment and brought no good return. Do you all take note, sirs. So runs the old tale."

When they had heard the cuckoo recount his third story correctly in every respect, the other birds addressed him humbly :—" We are greatly in doubt as to that other saying of yours, namely, that a service rendered to one's fellow-creatures may be a cause of sin and misfortune. Pray unfold this matter to us also for our edification."

The cuckoo replied with the following account :—

**The story of the
hunter who
became a hermit,
of the kinnaris
and of the giant
spider.**

" Formerly, there lived in the kingdom of Kalinga a hunter, a man of great goodness, who, being piously inclined, abandoned his worldly goods and took up his abode upon the slopes of the lofty

Mount Krailasa,¹ upon the borders of Himavanta. There he refrained from killing the wild bison or the buffalo, reciting prayers with eyes closed and fasting for many days without suffering harm. Now that same place was the home of fair *kinnaris*,² young maidens of dazzling beauty, who were wont to walk abroad there daily to the number of over a hundred. There lived also (in the neighbourhood) a spider of shambling gait, who had spun his web at the entrance to a cave and who was as big in circumference as a cart-wheel. All perished who became entangled in his web. If a *kinnari* fell into his outspread snare, the spider would kill and devour her. This grievous state of affairs continued for long and the *kinnaris* of flower-like beauty became daily more afflicted. At last they sought out the hunter where he was following the practices of religion upon the lofty mountain, and unfolded to him the tale of how the spider had spun his web and was devouring all such as fell into it. "Have pity upon us," they begged him, "and assist us by compassing the destruction of our enemy. If you gratify our wish, we will be your slaves for life." But the hunter made answer:—"I have taken the monastic vows and have abandoned my home in order to practise the observances of religion upon this lofty mountain. It is no business of mine boldly to dispute the victory with any creature. To do so would be contrary to the discipline of my order. I will not perform what you ask, for I fear lest calamity should overtake me." When they heard these words

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1. ไกรลาศ.—"Fabulous mountain in the region of Himaphan." (Pallegoix). *Keláso*, one of the principal peaks of the mountain chain of Himalaya, within the region of Himavanta. (Childers).
 2. กิณรี or กิณราว. Pallegoix calls these creatures "Wood-nymphs with a human body and bird's feet." *Kinnaro* (masc.), *kinnari* (fem.), a class of demi-gods, half human, half bird, in the service of Kuvera.

of the hunter, the *kinnaris* hastened into the forest, whence they returned, bringing with them a lovely lady, who visited the hunter in his dwelling and thus besought him :—"Do you have mercy upon me, sir, and I will consent to become your handmaiden for as long as my life shall last." On beholding this damsel, the hunter was lost in love for her and forgot his vows. Rising up, he seized a club, by the aid of which he attacked and slew the spider. Thereafter, he forsook the religious life and gave himself up to the charms of the fair *kinnari*.

"Thus did matters fall out in the old parable which I have been imparting to you."

At the close of this last story, the assembled birds all of them asked further :—"We beg of you to expound your fourth saying, namely, that a deed done with cruel intent may clearly be a source of benefit (to others.) We would fain remember the tale in this connection. Is it a good one?"

The cuckoo thereupon duly related as follows:—

"The story of the
"pra" bird, the
stag and the
river-turtle.

"Once upon a time, there lived a "pra"¹ bird who had for his close friend a stag,² with whom he was wont to wander at large in the forest. One day, these two animals, when traversing a high mountain path, came to a large pond into which they both of

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1. นก ปร. I have not been able to identify this bird. It has been suggested to me that it is, perhaps, identical with the นกเขียวดำ or green pigeon (*crocopus viridifrons*); but such can scarcely be the case since, from the extra details given in the prose version, the นก ปร would appear to be a night bird. (See Appendix).
 2. ละมั่ง. The *cervus eldi* or swamp deer. Burmese "Thamin."

them resolved to plunge. Deep down in the pond out of sight there dwelt a river-turtle,¹ to whose ear the voices of the stag and the bird penetrated through the eddying water. Quickly and stealthily rising above the surface, the turtle observed the pair consorting amicably together and called out:—"Whence do you come, sirs, and why have you descended to this pond? You have not enlightened me, who guard this lofty mountain spot, to which I came more than ten years ago." To this the bird made answer:—"All creatures have recourse to water, to cleanse themselves from sweat. We are indeed fortunate to have come hither." So saying, he descended into the pond to refresh himself. On hearing the "pra" bird's words, the turtle pleaded as follows:—"I have long lived a solitary life and am lonely at heart. I am rejoiced at having met with you to-day and would fain offer myself to you as a friend. My intentions are honest, and I speak without guile. Should trouble or calamity assail us in any way, let us consult together (for our common advantage)." The stag and the bird raised no objection to this proposal. "But we must bind ourselves by an oath," they said, "in proof of our good faith and in confirmation of our resolve." So the three creatures immediately swore an oath in testimony of their honest intentions, whereupon they became united to one another in the ties of love and friendship. The turtle then said:—"I am very sad and troubled at heart, for hunters are wont to bring their hooks to this pond and to fish in it. Misfortune will on this account one day assuredly overtake me." The "pra" bird replied:—"I, too, am not free from danger.

1. ชะนีน้ำ. *Chitra indica* (long-necked river turtle). (Pallegoix). Soft-shelled Turtle, *Trionyx*. (Flower, Notes on the Fauna of Siam in the Bangkok Directory.)

Snares are set for me in the tall forest, and, if I thoughtlessly alight upon them when in quest of food, I am lost beyond all hope of escape." The stag also said :—"I am in great trouble as well, for hunters lie in ambush and shoot at me. I have cross-bows and nets outspread to fear in plenty. Should I one day fall into a trap, it will be my death. We are all of us in exactly the same case, sirs. Come ! I will unfold a plan to you. Should any one of us three fall into distress, let him who is so in danger at once think of the other two, who, on becoming aware of his plight, will immediately hasten to his rescue. In this way we shall assuredly escape the perils which threaten us." Having amicably agreed to this suggestion, the three creatures parted from one another at sunset.

"One day subsequently, the stag went out in search of food upon a high mountain and became entangled in a net which a hunter had spread across a path in the jungle. Unable to free himself and at a loss what to do, the stag remembered how his two comrades had undertaken to come to his aid in the hour of mortal necessity. His thoughts going out to his friend of the pond and to the "pra" bird, as had been concerted, those two creatures were filled with great uneasiness, as though a burning fire had laid hold upon them. "Eh!" they said, "something is surely amiss with our dear friend. He must be in some danger, as he foretold might happen." The turtle and the "pra" bird did not forsake their comrade the stag, but hastened through the forest, until they beheld him entangled in the net, which they bit through and so freed him.

"No sooner had this been effected, than the hunter arrived upon the scene, whereupon the bird flew on to a bamboo-clump. But the slow-crawling turtle remained on the ground, unable to effect his escape. In desperation, he concealed himself in the

brushwood at the edge of the path, where he was captured by the hunter, who was walking stealthily along from side to side of the road, in search of anything he might find. Rejoicing at his catch and intending to kill the turtle for a meal, the hunter slung him to a stick which he was carrying over his shoulder. The stag and the "pra" bird, however, did not abandon their friend in this contingency, but anxiously followed him through the forest. The hunter hastened on his way, till he came to a tree at the entrance to a cave where there was a pool of water. There he stopped, as the sun was already high in the heavens, and, setting the turtle down on the road by the side of the pool, he hastened to partake of food. The "pra" bird then flew out from where he had been hiding and, stretching himself on his back with wings outspread upon a fork of the neighbouring tree, pretended to be dying. So lying, he waited in silence for what the woodland hunter would do. The latter, being an old and very stupid man, imagining that the bird was on the point of expiring and desiring to acquire it, at once ran out and noisily began to climb the tree. When he perceived that the evil intentions of the hunter were diverted towards his friend the bird, the stag was indeed glad. Running out from the jungle, he approached the turtle and bit at the cord made from a creeping plant which served to bind him to the stick. When this had been severed, he took the turtle in his mouth and carried him to the pool, into which he cast him without delay. This done, the stag turned into the forest again. As soon as he had seen the stag disappear, the "pra" bird flew away from the tree, leaving the hunter discomfited and vanquished by reason of his own thoughtlessness.

"In this way, a deed done with mischievous intent may become a very source of benefit to others. So the tale has been told from of old, and I have remembered it and related it to you,

“As for your intention to appoint the kite your master, it does not meet with my approval. Pray consider this matter more coolly and at leisure. (In the meantime) I invite you to listen to the following story.”¹

So saying, the cuckoo recounted yet further:—

The story of the dishonest man and the secret of the mango-tree that would grow up in a day.

“There was once a young man who, after newly quitting the monastic order, incurred the penalty of his fault in not obeying the commands of his learned instructor. This ex-monk was formerly well-known to the people of Benares, in which city he had dwelt. He subsequently forsook his home and repaired in pursuit of knowledge to the jungle, where he met with an aged scholar, who lived by the side of a mountain path. Prostrating himself and raising his hands in salutation before the saint, the young man begged for permission to dwell with him, in order to receive instruction. The aged scholar replied:—“Learn from me, and I will show you a wonderful thing, namely, how to plant a mango-tree, so that in half a day it will bring forth fruit ripe for eating. But, should you afterwards be asked how this is done, beware of revealing the secret to any worthless or dishonest person. Not good, but rather evil, will

1. Here again there is a hiatus in the metrical version which destroys the connection between the following story and the preceding portion of the text. According to the prose version it is at this point that the assembled birds resolve to elect the cuckoo as their chief. The cuckoo excuses himself and advises them to choose some one more suitable, who must not be “like the man who came to a bad end through not obeying his instructor.” On being asked his meaning, the cuckoo then recounts the tale of the dishonest man and the secret of the mango-tree.

For the rest, the story is sadly confused in the metrical version. It is not the young man who had “newly quitted the monastic order” who incurred the penalty of any fault, but the vagabond to whom he revealed his secret. The prose version contains a more consistent account. (See Appendix).

result if you disobey me. Lay my words to heart." The Brahmin then showed the young man how the feat was to be accomplished, the latter remembering his instructions in every particular, so that, by dint of persistence, he was enabled to make successful trial of the experiment himself. Thereafter, being occupied with affairs of his own, he took his leave of the sage. At that same time, there was living a wretched fellow of base extraction, lustful and an adulterer, who came to the young man and wheedled his secret out of him. This low vagabond then boldly offered his services to the King of a great country, saying:—"I can plant a mango-tree, so that in one brief day you shall gather fruit from it." The Righteous One rejoiced greatly on hearing the vagabond and promised him:—"If it be as you say, I will maintain you in my service from henceforth." At these words, the base fellow proceeded to do as his instructor had taught him, confidently planting a mango-seed in front of the place where His Majesty was sitting.

"In a very short while, a tree grew up, bearing fruit ripe and fragrant and of an excellent taste. Stretching forth his hand and plucking fruit after fruit, the vagabond handed them to the Prince, who ate them and found them to his liking. The Prince then rewarded his new servant with gifts of cloth and of silver, at the same time asking him:—"Where and of whom did you learn this art? I would fain know the whole truth of the matter. Your skill is indeed great, young man." But the vagabond invented a false answer, saying:—"I acquired my art in all its completeness from a venerable teacher in a far-distant land. He has now long been dead." From that moment the low fellow's skill entirely forsook him, because he had lied to the King. Thus it happened that, when the Prince ordered him to produce another mango-tree,

his efforts were without result. Inflamed with anger against him,¹ the Righteous One commanded that he should be expelled from the palace and driven out beyond the confines of the city. Wandering alone in the jungle, the vagabond ultimately became the food of a savage tiger."

When they had fully heard the above instructive story as told by the cuckoo, the assembled birds agreed together, saying :—" We will raise this very cuckoo to the most honourable position amongst us, because of his ready wisdom and cunning. We will place ourselves under his powerful protection."

But the cuckoo excused himself. " Such is not my wish," he said. " There are birds in the forest in plenty. Choose for your chief the one who is most suited to be so exalted. My ambitions do not lie in that direction, for my powers and knowledge are not great."

The selection of
the garuda bird
as king.

At these words of the black cuckoo, the other birds were silent and fell to pondering. Some of them then said :—" We see the garuda bird² to be of great excellence. It is fitting that we should prostrate ourselves at his royal feet and ask leave to place ourselves under his tutelage. For his might is renowned, whereby he captures and slays the nagas in the lower world."³ The assembled birds

1. โกรธใจ ดัง ไฟ กาดป. Literally, "angry like the cyclic fire." A *Kappa* (กาดป) is a vast period or cycle of time during which a world is completely destroyed, (by fire, water or wind), only to be renovated again.

2. พระยา กรุฑ.

3. "The Garudas are a gigantic race of birds, ever at war with the Nágas." (Childers). The original has ปาทาล = Pátála, the lower region where the Nágas have their home.

agreed to this proposal and, hastening on their way through the forest, proceeded to cross Mount Hatsakan.¹

After three days, they arrived at the confines of the region of Himavanta, where they bowed themselves in respectful salutation before the garuda bird and awaited his commands. Looking out from his abode in the Simbali forest,² the fair-winged one³ beheld the crowd of waiting birds stretching as far as the eye could see. Flying down to them, he enquired:—"For what purpose have you come hither, sirs?" The crowd of birds bowed themselves down and explained their wishes to him, begging that he would grant them the favour (of his protection.) Hearing their request, the garuda bird was glad and thus addressed them with a smiling countenance:—"You would fain become my subjects, sirs, and I will receive you as such, in accordance with your desires. Now, do you return to your home and I will appoint a regent to keep continual guard over you in my stead." The fair-winged one then selected the "karawek"⁴ bird to be, after himself, the chief among the birds, whom he enjoined to obey, all of them, his representative's commands. Third after himself he constituted the eagle,⁵ whose duty it should be to decide petty

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1. เขาหัตถ์กรรพ. Assakaṇṇo, one of the *kulācalas*, or seven vast concentric circles of rock or mountain which surround Mount Meru. (Childers).
 2. ภูพาน นิมพาลี ที่ ตำบลกนิ. "Simbalī, The silk-cotton tree, *Bombax Heptaphyllum*. *Simbalidaho*, name of a lake on Mount Meru, round which dwell the *supannas* (*garuḍas*) in a simbalī forest." (Childers).
 3. ฟ้าขาว. *Supanno*; (fair-winged bird)—a *Garuḍa*.
 4. กาวะเวก. A "fabulous bird enchanting by his song." (Pallegoix). Childers has "*Karaviko*, the Indian cuckoo."
 5. อินทรี.

disputes, whilst the tribe of vultures were appointed chiefs of sections to inspect and enumerate the community.

When the fair-winged one had given his orders to the assembled birds in this sense, they returned to the forest whence they had come. From that time onwards, they enjoyed uninterrupted felicity and were fortunate in all their comings and goings.

**The story of the
"sai" bird and
the elephant.**

In course of time, it chanced that a "sai" bird¹ had laid her eggs in the track of an elephant. For many days she had not ventured to go far away from them in search of food and, (whenever she did leave the spot), she would return in 'due season to sit upon them. So things continued with her in the forest for long. Now, there was a certain elephant who had taken up his abode in that same forest, through which he was wont to roam in quest of grass and leaves growing by the mountain side. One day, he happened to eat his way as far as the path (on which the "sai" bird had laid her eggs.) "Do not come in this direction, sir," the bird said. "My eggs are concealed here upon the ground." But the elephant, being of an evil and angry disposition and untroubled by a conscience, persisted in holding straight on his course, feeding as he came. Ignoring all the remonstrances of the "sai" bird, he trampled her eggs to pieces in his arrogance. Flying on to a "rang"² tree, the bird thereupon cursed him thus:— "Vile wretch, I will be even with you. You shall not escape the fate which will follow you to your destruction." Then she flew through the jungle to the place of the "karawek "

1. นกไต่. This is also a bird which I have been unable to identify. It has been suggested that it may, possibly, be the hoopoe. That it is not a large bird is clear from the prose version of the subsequent story of the vulture who married the "sai" bird's daughter. (See Appendix).

2. ต้นรัง. *Shorea robusta* or *obtusata*.

bird, the first among the feathered tribe, to whom she unfolded her tale. "I had been searching for food alone in the tangled jungle, without meeting with a single friend or acquaintance, when I was taken with the birthpains. Being unable to return, I laid my eggs in the track of an elephant in the middle of the path. A bold and violent elephant came along and trampled them into dust, without heeding my remonstrances. Replying to me with violent and boastful words, he has deliberately killed my offspring this day. Pray show pity upon me and protect and help me." The "karawek" bird was incensed on hearing this complaint. "This elephant is a great bully and does not fear me," he said. Then he ordered the vulture to go quickly and to peck out the eyes of the elephant, thus reducing him to the extremity of distress. The vulture received the command, and, taking his leave, sped over hill and dale through the forest, until he saw the elephant feeding at his ease in his own place. Having previously concealed himself, the vulture sprang forth and pecked out both the eyes of the animal, who was left blind and unable to seek his way. Aimlessly he wandered about in quest of food on the edge of the forest, in sore trouble by reason of the sin which he had committed. But the "sai" bird, bent on revenge, followed him to where he was stumbling on his road in the wood, ignorant of where he was. Seeing him thus, she spoke to her friend, the frog:—"Should the great elephant come near the swamp in which you live, do you call out to him. Since he is sightless, he will assuredly think that there is a jungle path in front of him and will blindly make for it." The blind elephant (chancing to come that way), the frog, on being so apprised, called out to him in resonant tones, hearing which he allowed himself to be deceived and, proceeding in the direction of the sound, fell into the water. Thus did he encounter

destruction, according to the old tale.

The story of the
thrushes whose
eggs were laid
by the sea shore.

At that time there were living also a pair of goodly thrushes¹ a bold couple, husband and wife. Being pregnant and near her time, the hen-bird said to her mate :—“ Where is a good place in which to lay my eggs ? Do you hasten to satisfy me by fetching grass wherewith to make a nest which shall provide us with a suitable lodging.” The husband replied :—“ For what reason are you so anxious, my dear ? Do not worry about a nest at all, since it is a useless and tiring waste of strength to bring grass for constructing one. When you are about to lay your eggs, do you proceed to the sea-shore for the purpose. That is a better plan and one which entails no labour.” To this the wife made answer :—“ Should a storm arise, the waves will dash against our offspring and destroy them.” But the husband said :—“ Do not resent my proposal. Should disaster befall us on the strand, I will allow the God of the Sea² no rest and he will of a certainty be obliged to restore our children to us again.” So the pair hastened to the water's edge, where the hen-bird scratched a hole in the sand in which she secreted herself and laid her eggs. The cock bird used thereafter to go out in search of food by the wayside, returning in due season to the comfortable home (which his wife had fashioned) by the shore. But

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1. นกปรอด. I cannot ascertain the precise name of this bird, which is a common one in the neighbourhood of Bangkok. For want of a better term, I have ventured to call it the thrush. Mitchell

(Siamese-English Dictionary) defines the นกปรอด as a “small fruit-eating birdlike a thrush.” Another authority describes the bird to me as follows :—“ Size of a thrush ; yellow beak ; greenish body ; grey eye, size of that of a thrush.”

2. พระมหาสมุทร. The Ocean, personified.

at last there came a day when ruin overtook these birds ; for, with a sound of confusion and tumult, a wind arose which lashed the ocean into fury. Great billows beat against and up the beach and the eggs of the thrushes were swept down into the deep. Bereft of thought and uncertain what to do, the terrified pair had fled before the waves ere they had time to rescue their offspring. Bewailing the latter, the hen-bird said :—“ The penalty for our past misdeeds is indeed overtaking us to our destruction and there is no escape from it. That plan of yours was in truth a fine one, my husband.” But the cock-bird replied :—“ Grieve not, but wait and see what will now happen.” Moved to extreme wrath and indignation against the God of the Sea, he repaired immediately with his wife to the “ karawek ” bird, who filled the office of Chief Minister. To him the pair unfolded the story of the wrong which had been wrought upon them from afar, begging him to take pity on them upon this occasion. When he had heard their exact account of what had happened, the “ karawek ” bird cried out, as it were on fire with anger :—“ Fie upon you, God of the Ocean. I will forthwith present myself before my lord the garuda bird and induce him to engage in combat with you. Great though you may be, you will assuredly not withstand his power. For my lord is a bird of might.” So saying, he betook himself, together with the two thrushes, to the abode of the mighty and fair-winged one in the Simbali forest. Entering the royal presence, and bowing his head, the “ karawek ” bird unfolded his tale, adding nothing to the truth, but saying :—“ These thrushes had gone out to seek for food on the slopes of a mountain. Being pregnant, the hen-bird descended with her mate and laid her eggs at the water’s edge. But the fierce and oppressive God of the Sea caused billows to arise which overwhelmed the eggs and swept them away. All in

vain did the parent birds seek for them on the shore. This tyrannical Ocean is without fear or shame. Will my lord take note of these tidings?" The garuda bird was roused to fury, as though he had been pierced by some deadly arrow. Flapping his wings, he cried :— " Good ! We shall see ! The God of the Sea and I will engage in combat." So saying, the royal and fair-winged one hastened through the tall forest, crossing mountains and rocks, until he came to the shore of the Ocean. There he made known his presence in so terrible a voice that the waters trembled to their depths and, when he flapped his wings, they were near to being consumed. The God of the Sea was aghast when he heard the kingly garuda bird. On fire with anxiety, he fell from his throne of glittering gold. " What danger is this which approaches ? " he asked. Then, rising up from the bottomless depths, he beheld the fair-winged one in all his miraculous might. Approaching near, the God of the Sea enquired softly :— " What is it which has stirred you to anger, my lord ? Or on what business have you come hither ? Vouchsafe me a word in answer. Be not wrathful, but resolve my doubts and tell me what is amiss." The fair-winged one replied :— " One of my birds having come and laid her eggs by the edge of these great waters, the waves rose and overwhelmed them and they disappeared in the flood. Those eggs you must restore quickly ; otherwise, I shall be greatly wroth and shall punish you, without respect for your person. All birds in this place are my subjects." When he heard the words of the garuda bird, the God of the Sea called his fishes together and thus commanded them :— " Whoever among you is in possession of the eggs of the most worthy thrush let him return them at once." Then a great fish, which had swallowed the eggs, hastened to vomit them out again, whereupon the thrushes, rejoicing at the recovery of their offspring, returned

to the forest once more. Mounting into the air, too, the kingly and fair-winged one quickly attained to his abode. From that time forth, he dwelt in peace, whilst the company of birds enjoyed a long period of happiness.

The story of the vulture who married the daughter of the "sai" bird.

In course of time, it chanced that the chief of the vultures had ascertained that the "sai" bird had a lovely daughter. "The "sai" bird cherishes her in his nest," he said to himself. "No one has been to seek her hand, for her father will not yet allow her to take a husband. By what means can I obtain her for myself? Since I fear the voice of scandal, I must contrive to send some vulture advanced in years and versed in the usages of honourable parlance duly to ask for her in marriage. So will my purpose assuredly be accomplished." Next morning, accordingly, he gave his commands to an aged vulture, saying:—"It is my purpose to despatch you humbly to implore from the "sai" bird his daughter's hand (on my behalf). See to it that you succeed." The aged vulture received this order with gladness. Hastening forth, he came, in a short while, to the edge of a forest where the "sai" bird had his dwelling beneath the shade of a tree. Entering the presence of the "sai" bird, he made known his purpose. "The chief of the vultures, my master, is sad at heart and lies plunged in meditation. He has sent me hither in the hope that, through me, his wishes may be fulfilled. I invite you, sir, to consider the friendly proposal (which I am about to make)." Then he besought the hand of the "sai" bird's daughter in the precise terms which his master had enjoined upon him. "We are willing to abide by what you think best. Is there any hindrance to our plan?" The "sai" bird replied:—"I must first consider your proposition in all its bearings. But I think that your master's desires may be gratified and that, after a time, his

suit may be successful." When this interview had closed, the aged vulture returned to his lord and made known to him what had passed, exhorting him to rouse himself and to hasten his preparations. The "sai" bird, for his part, took counsel with his wife, who agreed to the suggested match. So, having fixed upon an auspicious day, they united their daughter in marriage to her suitor. But she, when she had gained the vulture for a husband, was like to die of grief on account of the great stench of carrion which hung about him. Nightly did she ponder over her trouble, until one day the vulture said to her :—" My darling, for a whole year I have been wearying of our nest. My mother is old and dwells far away. She may be ill, for all that I can tell. I know not, indeed, if she be alive or dead and my mind is filled with all manner of misgivings, It is my purpose, fair wife, to hasten with you to visit her for one night (in order that I may have news of her.)" Hearing this, the "sai" bird's daughter was moved to indigation ; but she reflected that it would be unwise to oppose her husband, lest he should become angry. So she feigned compliance and answered him :—" I have no business to detain me. If you go, pray take me with you, that I, too, may see the confines of Himavanta." Next morning, therefore, at break of day, the vulture led his wife forth into the forest. Crossing mountains and streams, ere long they arrived at the nest of his people. Having made obeisance before the mother of her husband, the "sai" birds's daughter, being anxious to escape and to return once more to her home, urged her mate to depart again. On their way back, however, they stopped by the bank of a river and the misshapen vulture went down to the water's edge. There he saw floating the body of a dead dog, at the flesh of which he proceeded to tear and to devour it. Seeing this with her own eyes, his mate knew that her husband was unclean. His meal

being completed, the vulture, refreshed and glad at heart, hastened back with his wife to their dwelling in the jungle, whither they arrived as the sun was setting. Then the "sai" bird's daughter sought out her mother, to whom she unfolded her story, concealing nothing of the truth. "My husband is indeed depraved," she said. "I have seen him go down and devour the body of a dead dog which was floating down by the edge of a stream. Was ever such a spouse as mine to be found? Would that I were dead! I loathe his vile and stinking person." But her father answered her thus :—"It is not good that you should live together, lest harm should befall. To-morrow morning, we will make haste to seek out our lord and will relate to him the tale of the deception which has been practised upon us." The three unhappy "sai" birds passed a sleepless night, the parents consulting with their dearly-loved daughter as to what steps should be taken to remedy their distress. At the first dawn of day, the three of them repaired to the nest of my lord the "karawek" bird, the glorious chief minister. Before him they laid their whole complaint as to the arrogant conduct of the vulture. The "karawek" bird, that noble minister, was greatly angered. "The presumptuous vulture has behaved like a slave," he cried. "It is not fitting that this couple should be wedded to one another. He must be chidden and restrained for his own improvement." Then he gave this order to the sparrow :—"Go and inform the vulture of what we have spoken. Hasten to summon him to our presence without delay. We would question him with regard to this affair." Hearing himself so commanded, the sparrow did not tarry, but flew away through the forest to the nest of the vulture, to whom he duly delivered his message, saying :—"The Chief Minister bids you to his presence." Ignorant of what might be afoot, my lord vulture enquired :—"What think you is the purpose

of this summons? Pray tell me clearly, that I may be warned in time ere I seek the master's presence." But the sparrow answered :—" I cannot tell you, for the master (merely) employed me as his messenger. Do you make haste, sir, I beg of you. If you delay over long, he will be angry and you will incur punishment." Not knowing what his fate was to be, the startled vulture quitted his nest with all speed and flew rapidly to the borders of Himavanta. When the sun's rays were high in the heavens, he reached the abode of the "karawek" bird, the first among the feathered tribe. The "karawek" bird then declared the truth to him in every particular, saying :—" You have been united in the close ties of marriage to the daughter of the "sai" bird. Yet, since the two of you are birds of a different kind, it is not fitting that you should love one another. You must break with your wife and cease to associate with her. We consider that you have acted contrary to established custom." The vulture did not venture to disobey this injunction, for he feared lest he should be brought to ruin and shame (if he did so). So he restored the "sai" bird's daughter to her father and she dwelt in happiness from that day forth.

The story of the
two devas, Loka
Brahma
and Deva Brahma,
and of the
eight riddles.

At that time there were two devas, one of whom was the guardian of a high mountain who had never been careful to observe the precepts of religion. Loka Brahma was his name. The other bold deva was strict in the observances of religion and of almsgiving and was named the lord Deva Brahma.¹ His great might extended to every region and he

1. เทวพรหม (Deva Brahma) and โลกพรหม (Loka Brahma) appear to have been two divinities who presided over the world at the beginning of things. The former represented the principle of good and the latter that of evil.

abode in a celestial mansion beyond the forests upon Mount Meru. This angel was inflamed with anger against Loka Brahma. "I will put an end to him," he said, "since he observes not the holy rules, but despises religion, and goes about killing his fellow-creatures. I must needs satisfy myself by destroying him. Why should I spare this wicked deva? I would fain ask him certain riddles, and, should he return me false answers, I will slay Loka Brahma in punishment for his impiety." So thinking, he set forth from his golden mansion and proceeded on his way through the tall forests. When Loka Brahma saw him coming, that bold deva descended and saluted him with joined hands. Deva Brahma then said:—'Sir! You are the mighty lord of these forests and I have come hither that I may hold converse with you and ask you for honest replies regarding certain matters. Eight riddles were propounded by the ancients. Do you solve them quickly, if you can.

"The first riddle is this:—What rule should human beings follow in the conduct of their loves?

"The second is:—When partaking of food, in which direction should a man turn his face?

"The third is:—When relieving nature, towards which quarter should the face be turned, deva?

"The fourth is:—What is the proper conduct to follow when, at the hour of night, a man retires to sleep with a woman for his pleasure? Explain to me, sir Deva.

"The fifth is:—What course is to be followed regarding the clothing of the person, both by day and by night, in order that we may prosper in body and in mind and that no mishap may come to vex us?

“The sixth is:—At sunrise, where does the virtue of the human body¹ reside? Tell me how a man should then cleanse himself, that he may be freed from blemish.

“The seventh is:—From midday till afternoon, by what means is the virtue that dwells within us to be served?

“The eighth asks, what is that precept of universal application, (the observance of which) preserves Bráhmaṇas², and ordinary mortals, the nagas and the race of garuda birds and all the angelic powers alike?³

1. ศิริ ที่ กายา. Also referred to subsequently as วาณี,

or simply as ศิริ. Literally, splendour or glory (of the person). The expression is a difficult one to render in English; it would seem to denote the inherent virtue or excellence of the individual. As will be seen, this attribute is regarded as residing now in one portion of the human body, now in another, according to the time of day. Certain rules of conduct are necessary for its preservation, and the prose version shows that to elicit these is the object of all the eight riddles propounded by Deva Brahma. The prose version speaks of an

angel or deva in connection with the ศิริ or วาณี, (เทวดาถือ ศิริ, เทวดาเป็นศิริ). See Appendix.

2. พราหมณา. Bráhmaṇa—an Arhat, or one who has attained final sanctification. (Childers).
3. The language of the Siamese original is here obscure. The eighth riddle is stated by Deva Brahma

as follows:—ข้อ แปล ท่าน ว่า สำหรับ กับ โลก
ย่อม รักษาพราหมณาแด่มนุษย์ ทั้ง นาค ครุฑ

เทวฤทธิทั่วพิศา. I offer my attempt at a translation for what it is worth. The statement of the eighth riddle in the prose version is no clearer:—

การบ ๘ ประการ อยู่ สำหรับ โลก นี้ แด่ ท่าน อยู่

“ Answer me, I pray you, the above eight riddles, which have been asked from of old.”

Loka Brahma replied :—“ I am not learned in the Law and cannot remember ancient maxims. I have not learnt from any instructor the solutions of the eight riddles which you have propounded.”

When my lord Deva Brahma heard this, he was more incensed than ever against the guardian angel of the mountain. “ If you do not solve them correctly,” he said, “ I will slay you.”

Loka Brahma thereupon was greatly afraid and his heart was consumed within him, as it were by fire. “ If I acknowledge myself to be at fault,” he thought to himself, “ however hard I may pray for my life, yet my lord will not listen to me.” Then he spoke as follows :—“ I crave time for reflection. I do not seek to evade you ; but I would fain consult with all who are of my house. At the end of seven days I will give you the answers. Should I not satisfy your demands, then may you kill me and despatch me to the world of spirits.”

At these words, the kingly Deva Brahma was glad at heart. Having agreed to the (evil deva's) request, he quitted that lofty mountain and, putting forth his power, rose into the air and repaired to his delectable mansion.

But the deva Loka Brahma returned to his dwelling overcome with grief. Sad and sore at heart, he pondered for two days, at the expiration of which

รักษา โดก ทั้งปวง ท่านจงวิดิฉันาไป ให้เรา พัง
 ในกาดบัดนี้ เทอญ. All of which sounds more
 like a reference to the riddles which have come
 before than the propounding of a fresh one. A
 sentence must have dropped out.

he left his home and stole forth in search of a solution to the riddles, but without success, Unhappy and afflicted, he wandered aimlessly about, meeting with no one (who could enlighten him), until six days had elapsed. Then, observing a great tree before him as twilight was falling, he mounted into it and took shelter there, perplexed and losing all zest of life to such an extent that sleep forsook him.

**How Loka
Brahma learnt
the answers to
the eight riddles.**

Now, an eagle chanced to have her lodging in that same tree. (When Loka Brahma mounted into it), she had gone out in quest of food, leaving her offspring in her nest, and had not yet returned. Her search being fruitless that day, dejected and anxious on account of her darling children, she came back to her home at the close of evening. Her little ones thereupon asked her:— “How is it, mother, that we see you bringing nothing for us to-day? From morning till night, we have not had rice or water or meat or fish, be it ever so little, and we are disappointed.” The mother bird answered:— “My heart is almost broken. I have searched for food along the sandbanks in the river, but have not found one single thing to bring back wherewith to sustain your lives. To-morrow, however, good fortune will assuredly be ours and we shall, beyond all doubt, feed upon a human body. For the excellent and mighty Deva Brahma has asked for the solution of eight riddles from Loka Brahma, who has requested time for reflection. If he cannot give the required answers within seven days, at the most, he is to be put to death. The seven days will be completed to-morrow and Deva Brahma will then slay him.” (Hearing this,) the young birds enquired:— “How say you, mother? Make us acquainted with this matter, we beg of you. Why should the Glorious One kill the mighty lord Loka Brahma?” The mother bird replied:— “The royal

deva Loka Brahma is unable to solve correctly the eight riddles contained in the sacred writings from of old. When asked by the lord Deva Brahma, he could not give the answers, but undertook to furnish them within a period of seven days. (In the meanwhile), he has been visiting all the devas of the zodiac, but without finding any one to solve the riddles for him. To-morrow the seven days will be ended and he must be slain." On receiving this explanation from their mother, the young birds desired to know what these eight ancient riddles were. "Help us and tell us for our understanding," they begged. But the mother bird answered gently :— "Do not ask me. This is no matter for us unreasoning creatures to unravel." Her young ones, however, spoke coaxingly to her and persisted in their enquiries until dawn was near to breaking. Unable to resist longer, the great eagle then stated the riddles as follows :—

"The first is :—What rule should be observed by men in the conduct of their loves ?

"The second is :—When partaking of food, towards which quarter should the face be turned ?

"The third is :—Towards which quarter should a man turn his face, when performing the functions of nature ?

[The Deva could not answer].

"The fourth is :—What is the proper conduct to follow when sleeping with a woman ?

"The fifth is :—During the night time, what course should be followed regarding the clothing of the body ?

"The sixth is :—In the early morning, where does the virtue of the human body¹ reside ?

“The seventh is:—Where does the virtue of the human body reside at mid-day? [The Deva did not know].

“The eighth enquires, what is the first of all precepts, inasmuch as sorrow and grief are man’s daily portion?¹ [Loka Brahma here confessed his ignorance].”

(At this point), the mother bird paused to reflect and seemed about to offer a further explanation. So the young birds addressed her thus:—“Reveal the whole of these matters to us fully, mother, we pray you. Declare to us the solutions to the eight riddles which you have propounded.” The mother bird then replied:—

“To the first question the answer is:—All who are included within the cycle of transmigrations should refrain from carnal desire on the eighth and fifteenth days (of the waxing and the waning moons), which are holy days,² and they should similarly restrain themselves during the festivals of Songkran³ and Trut Sat.⁴

“The answer to the second question is:—When regaling one’s self with food, the face should be turned towards the East.

1. The original is here again obscure:—แปล นั้น ท่าน ว่า อะไร ใหญ่ ใน โลกย์ ทุกข์แต่ โศก ชนม์ ทุก อັນนมี อยุ่.
2. วัน พระ.
3. สงกรานต์. The Songkran festival marks the beginning of the old Siamese Solar year and is observed at the time when the sun passes from the Zodiacal sign of Pisces into that of Aries (about April).
4. ตรุษศัต. Trut Sat is the Autumn festival, which occurs at the end of the tenth Siamese month.

“ The answer to the third question, my dears, is this :—When performing the functions of nature, the face should be turned towards the forests of the West.

“ Fourthly, the man who seeks enjoyment in the embraces of a young damsel should make her lie on his left-hand side and should restrain her from passing over his feet.

“ The answer to the fifth question is :—On retiring to rest at night, it is a meritorious thing not to neglect the body. Do not, therefore, strip the clothes from off your person. Everyone should remember this precept.

“ The answer to the sixth question is :—In the morning, the virtue of the human body resides in the face, which should then be washed with water from the river, that the person may be cleansed.

“ The answer to the seventh question is :—At mid-day, the virtue within us passes down into the breast. At that hour, all men should proceed to bathe themselves.

“ Eighthly, when we retire to rest, the virtue within us resides in the feet, which it is well, therefore to wash at night. So shall we be happy, and our griefs will be dissipated, though they be greater than mountains. We shall ever rejoice together such time as we care for the indwelling virtue of our bodies.”¹

(When the mother bird had concluded, one of) her offspring said :—“ I have a story to tell. Do you listen, mother, for it is an excellent tale.” Then the young bird related to her as follows :—

1. A comparison with the prose version shows another hiatus here. See Appendix for the circumstances connected with the recital of the two following tales.

**The young
eagle's story of
the dishonest
servant who
stole from the
rich man, his
master.**

“There was once a certain man who had lived in the direst poverty and who, his fate having overtaken him, was on the point of death. This man had a dearly loved son, whom he called to sit beside him during his last hours and whom he instructed thus:—“My son, I am about to die and to leave you. Do you conduct yourself carefully and keep yourself from evil. If any man is charitably disposed towards you and assists you, you must set yourself to return the favours which he may manifest towards you. Be not base, but constant in gratitude.” After his father’s death, with this exhortation in his mind, the son wandered forth in pitiable and shameful plight. Unthinkable distress and want in every form, both of food and of lodging, were his portion, until at last he found shelter in the house of a rich man. There he abode for long in joy and in great comfort, industriously performing the work (of a servant). One day, the rich man called him to sit by his side and thus benevolently addressed him:—“To-morrow, I intend to entrust you with the silver and the gold and all the other articles which you see here and to send you out from this city with them, to pursue your way through the forest, until you arrive at the capital of the Kingdom of Kalinga. There you must sell my diamonds and my sapphires and the whole of my merchandise.” The young man accepted this mission with ready obedience and hastened away to make his preparations. Next morning, having partaken of a hurried meal, he collected carefully all the various articles of merchandise, the diamonds and the sapphires, and, having arranged them in loads, set out upon his journey, thinking to himself:—“Every one of these valuables is now in my possession. When I have traded with them and acquired treasure to the value of ten thousand pieces or so, I will restore nothing to the rich man.” So reflecting he smiled with inward satisfaction. After fifteen

days spent in traversing the forest, he came out upon the fair city of Kalinga and sold his precious stones and the whole of his merchandise within that dominion. Thereafter, he did not return to his own city, but, his intentions towards the rich man being dishonest, proceeded to dissipate all the treasure which had come into his hands. Then, when nothing was remaining, he fell into distress and lacked even food wherewith to satisfy his hunger. He was obliged, in consequence, to go back to the house of the rich man, to whom he confessed his fault. But the rich man reviled him, saying :—“ Oh ! Shameless and evil-minded one ! You are a dishonourable cheat and scoundrel. Am I to be rewarded with such base conduct, who have loved you and showered kindnesses upon you ? ” Then the rich man ordered his slaves :—“ Take this black-faced creature and cast him into prison, that he may speedily realise (how great has been his offence). ”

“ Thus, because he would not follow his parent’s advice, misfortune came upon that young man and he endured imprisonment for the rest of his life, as a punishment for his dishonesty. ”

(When the young eagle had concluded his tale), the mother bird made answer :—“ I will tell you another story to illustrate the same truth. Do you listen and remember, dear child.

The mother
eagle’s story of
the wagtail and
the kite.

“ There was once a wag-tail¹ who lived in the forests of Himavanta and who, when about to die, similarly imparted such advice to her child as would keep free from blemish those who bore it in mind.

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1. นกมดไถ. Another bird which I have not been able to identify. According to one authority, it is a kind of wag-tail. Another thinks it may, possibly, be the ground-lark. I have ventured to call it a wag-tail. Perhaps it is the *Limonidromus indicus*

Being very advanced in years, this bird was continually thinking of her dear offspring with anxiety, as, on account of his tender years, he was ignorant how to procure a living for himself. "There will assuredly be enemies to vex him," she said to herself, "and I am old and cannot escape from death." So reflecting, she called her son forthwith and hastened to exhort him as follows :—"I fear for you on account of your tender age, since you do not know how to find a living in the jungle. Your chief care should be to dwell within the shade of some tree. Though the kite or the crow may come that way, they will not see you there, as you will be sufficiently screened from their view. Do not venture forth and idly scratch up the ground in search of food. (Should you do so), disaster will inevitably befall you." Having faithfully committed this advice to memory, the son entered within the borders of the forest in quest of food. After a long time had elapsed, the mother bird died ; the wag-tail, her son, continued, however, to bear her instructions strictly in mind and did not fail to observe them when going into the jungle. But at last, one day, forgetting himself, he left the cover of his tree in idle search of a meal upon the edge of the wood. A large kite happened to be flying past at the time and, pouncing upon the wag-tail, carried him off, holding him firmly in his beak in the anticipation of making a repast off him. On coming to his senses, the wag-tail cried :—"I have erred in forgetting my mother's advice and must now pay the penalty, even to the losing of my life." The kite who had carried

(Forest-Wagtail), which, according to Oates (*Fauna of British India, Birds, Vol. II*), is met with in Siam, "is found in well-wooded parts of the country and frequently runs about under the shade of trees." This tallies with the mother-bird's advice to her son that his "chief care should be to dwell within the shade of some tree."

him off and was bearing him along in his beak, in the meantime, held upon his way. Hearing the wag-tail complain that he had forgotten the advice of his mother, the kite replied :—" Since that is so, I will release you. On reaching your native earth again, little bird, do you bear carefully in mind the words of your parent. In that way you may, perhaps, save your life." But the kite thought to himself :—" He will never be able to escape me. Though I let him loose, he will not go very far." So he flew down with the wag-tail and released him. Rejoicing greatly, the latter ran off and, observing a crevice (in the ground), concealed himself in it before his captor had had time to see or to think. Thus the kite was disappointed of his meal.

" But the youth who was sent on a mission by the rich man did not call to mind the wise counsels of his mother. He was consequently imprisoned as a punishment for his folly and disobedience."

In the relation of the above stories the mother eagle and her children found a solace for their troubles until, wearied out, they fell asleep in their nest.

**Conclusion of
the story of
Loka Brahma
and Deva
Erahma.**

(During all this time), Loka Brahma, the royal deva, had not slept, but had sat up in the tree listening to the eagle as she expounded the riddles to her beloved children. Committing all eight of the solutions carefully to memory, the deva was glad and said :—" I shall not die. To-morrow we shall see what we shall see." When the morning beams of the sun were lighting the world, Loka Brahma left the tree and, putting forth his powers, reached his abode on the edge of the mountain, where he awaited the coming of the royal Deva Brahma. The king of the angels arose from his couch with the red rays of the sun, bent upon his deed of destruction. " This time," said he, " we shall see how Loka Brahma will fare. If he does

not return me straightforward answers to the riddles, I will slay him and send him down to the world of ghosts." Then seizing his sword, he put forth his powers and, leaving his mansion, flew through the air until he saw the guardian angel Loka Brahma established upon an overhanging rock. Approaching Loka Brahma, he asked him :—" Why are you sitting thus dejected and sorrowful ? What solutions have you found, after reflection, to the eight questions which I put to you ? The period of respite upon which you fixed expires to-day. How is it that you are silent ? " Thereupon Loka Brahma expounded the riddles correctly in every respect, in accordance with the explanation which the eagle had given to her children. Hearing this, the mighty Deva Brahma rejoiced exceedingly and, his anger being appeased, he spoke as follows :—" Loka Brahma, do you remember what you have just uttered. So will you acquire merit in the future." So saying, the lord Deva Brahma put forth his might and quickly returned (to his abode) through the air.¹

The story of the young man, the white elephant and the magic bone.

Long after this, it chanced that there was a certain rich man who was greatly troubled on account of his son. " I am very old," he said, " and, before many days are over, I must die. Since my child is a wilful lad,² I must admonish and

1. The prose-version ends here with the story of Loka Brahma and Deva Brahma. The following tale has evidently been included in the metrical version as a later addition. It has no apparent connection whatever with the Book of the Birds proper. As will be seen, it is not related by a bird, nor does a bird figure in it in any way.
2. ลูกเรานี้มันไม่ใคร่เอาถ่าน. I learn that this metaphor is taken from an ore which, in the process of smelting, obstinately refuses to give up its metal. Of such an ore it is said ไม่เอาถ่าน, " it will not take the charcoal," meaning, presumably, that it will not yield to treatment by fire.

instruct him." Then he called his boy to his side and set himself to instruct him in the time-honoured way, saying :—" My son, I am like a tree that is near to the river bank and I can see no escape from death. When I am gone, do not delight in evil and offensive courses, as before. Should you enter the royal service, be not stupid, but place yourself under the protection of the Highest, my child. Entrust yourself to him and let him employ you always. Obey my counsel, and in course of time you will benefit." The youth listened to these words of his father and bore them carefully in mind. Subsequently, his father died and he wept for him long. Then, having performed the funeral rites (for his sire), he abandoned his worldly goods and set out upon his travels, mindful of the old counsel impressed upon him by his father, that he would benefit by placing himself under the protection of a great lord. But he could find no very high master, saving only the white elephant in the royal palace, who was both great and fair to look upon. Besides him, there was no other whom he could see. So, having quickly made his decision, he visited the keeper of the white elephant in the great stable and earnestly besought (employment there), in accordance with his father's behest. The elephant-keeper sat and listened to him with a smile of inward satisfaction. " This fellow must be mad," he thought. " If I delude him, I shall be able to make use of him for many days for the purpose of fetching grass and carrying water." Then, to achieve his end, the elephant-keeper spoke as follows :—" My lord elephant here is indeed a great lord and I live happily under his protection. He is feared by the people everywhere." Thinking that he had attained his object, the rich man's son went to live with the elephant-keeper, working hard and helping to carry (grass) and to draw water. Every day he went up to the elephant and washed the animal, so that the

keeper extolled him, saying : — “ This is an excellent lad. He is strong and industrious and never flags.” One day, when newly recovered from “ must ”, the elephant saw the youth approaching to tend him. It so chanced that the old head keeper was then absent in the jungle. The elephant said : — “ You are of a very kind disposition, sir. I would fain employ you for once on a mission to my distant home.” The rich man’s son replied : — “ My lord, I came hither in order to place myself under your protection and for the sole purpose that Your Highness might become my master. If you have any business in hand, be pleased to employ me on it forthwith.” “ I wish to send you into the forest,” said the elephant, “ to visit my family and relatives. I know not if they are ill (or well), alive or dead. Do you go forth and enquire.” The rich man’s son then made answer : — “ Sir, if I meet with those elephants in the forest, will they not kill me? How think you?” The fierce elephant thereupon vomited up a magic bone,¹ which he gave to the youth sorrowfully and with tears of regret, saying : — “ Take this with you, sir. It will protect you against the onslaughts of elephants. When the keeper returns, do not tell him of this. Obey my instructions.” The rich man’s son took the magic bone and hastened out of the city to

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1. ฝ่ายพระยาช้าง ๖ ข่าย ก็คาย คด. The คด appears to be a magic substance which renders the possessor of it immune from danger and invulnerable. It is said to exist as a bone on rare occasions in animals and in men (in the latter case it is to be found in the roof of the mouth). It is also said to lie concealed sometimes as a hard substance within the nests of white ants. It can, apparently, be passed from hand to hand without losing its virtue. In the present case, the elephant brings the คด up from some portion of his interior economy.

the jungle. Crossing hills, he pursued his path among the mountains until nightfall, when he stopped and sought shelter by lying down in the shadow of a tree. At break of dawn, he hurried on his way again and so continued, alone, for fourteen days.

(At last) there approached the youth a herd of wild elephants who were feeding in the forest upon bamboo-shoots, which they were breaking off with a crashing noise. Coming upon him and taking him for some stray animal, they charged him with shrill trumpetings. The rich man's son, however, did not fly as they drew near, but held aloft the magic bone which the white elephant had given to him. No sooner did they behold it, than the wild elephants stopped short in surprise and asked him :— " Whence did this thing come ? Pray tell us the whole truth of the matter." The youth made answer :— " My lord the white elephant has sent me hither." Hearing this, the herd understood, (for the white elephant was related to them), and they all of them united in questioning the young man as to their kinsman's whereabouts. The youth replied :— " My lord the male white elephant lives happily in pleasant quarters. But he is obliged to remain in his stable within the city and is on that account to be pitied." Having delivered himself of his story, next morning, when the dawn was lighting up the world, the rich man's son took his leave and returned to the white elephant, to whom he related all that had occurred. Recognising from his tale that he was speaking the truth, the white elephant conceived an affection for him and said :— " Out of your love for me, you have been at pains to go into the forest and to endure bodily hardships. This magic bone is of great excellence and I will make you a present of it. Do you accept it and your ambitions will be gratified. Enter the service of the King and utilise it in effecting the capture of ele-

phants who are ferocious or on "must." You will not acquire dignity by remaining here. Though you set yourself to live under my protection till you die, you will achieve no great distinction. Hasten, therefore, to remove yourself far from my sight." At these words, the youth sorrowfully bowed his head and prostrated himself before the white elephant.

Conclusion. The above are tales which were told of old by our fathers, whose words see to it that you remember.

THE END.



APPENDIX.

Principal differences between the metrical and prose versions of the "Paksi Pakaranam."

The prose version opens with an irrelevant account of how the company of *rishis*, sages and devas repaired to Vishnu (พระนารายณ์), in order to obtain from him the gift of long life. Vishnu in his turn conducts them to Siva (พระอิศวร), who gives them to drink of the elixir of life (น้ำอมฤตย์), thereby conferring upon them length of days. The above account is followed abruptly by the commencement of the "Book of the Birds" proper:— "At that time the whole race of birds.....met together in that place in council," etc.

PAGE 13. The story of the two swans, the tortoise and the cunning jackal.

The prose version assigns names to the two swans:— Suvanna Ratana (สุวรรณรัตน์), and Panbadit (บรรพทิศย์).

PAGE 16. The story of the crows who tried to drink up the ocean.

According to the prose version, the two crows lived in a tree near a port on the frontiers of the territory of Benares. Offerings were made to the guardian angels of the sea by the relatives of sailors whose return was overdue, in order to ensure their safe arrival.

PAGE 17. The story of the unmannerly crows and the astrologer's revenge.

The prose version states that the garden to which the astrologer had repaired was situated in เมืองสาวัตถี, (Savatthi, name of a town in India, the capital of Kosala.—Childers).

PAGE 20. The story of the parrot who obtained a mango from the forbidden orchard.

In the prose version the deva who appeared to the Queen was Indra himself.

After setting out in search of the forbidden mango-orchard, the parrot, according to the prose version, meets with seven successive flocks of other parrots before obtaining an answer to his enquiries.

The network surrounding the orchard is represented as consisting of seven layers.

PAGE 33. The story of the learned partridge, the kite, the wicked *rishi* and the tiger.

The prose version speaks of a kite and her young one as having taken refuge in the hermitage of the partridge. The wicked *rishi* on his arrival kills the partridge first and then the young kite, which he discovers beneath the bed. The mother kite appears subsequently and asks after the missing birds. The wicked *rishi* replies that a merchant who had come that way before him may be responsible for their disappearance. On his pointing out a road to the East as that along which the merchant has departed, the mother kite sets off in pursuit. The rest of the tale is as told in the metrical version.

PAGE 38. The story of the vulture who chose the tiger and the dog for his ministers.

In the prose version it is the tiger and the jackal who form the vulture's council. The prose version gives a more complete account of this story. According to that account, it was the vulture's wont to fly through the air in search of carrion; his subjects would follow after him upon the ground, repairing to the spot at which they might observe him descend, in the certainty of finding food there. One day, however, the vulture said to himself:—"It is not fitting that I, who am chief of the whole community, should go out in quest of food for others in this way." Thereafter he adopted the course of flying so high that his followers were unable to discern him. After seeking for him in vain everywhere, they became afflicted with the pangs of hunger. But the tiger and the jackal

refused to extend their protection to the other animals, on the ground that no gratitude would be shown to them for doing so ; those who wished to go to live elsewhere, they said, were at liberty to depart. Many of the animals then left that particular forest. The numbers of those remaining being thus diminished, other animals came in from without and preyed upon them, the tiger and the jackal withholding their assistance.

Even in the above form, it must be confessed that the story is rather lacking in point.

PAGE 39. The story of the hypocritical cat and the swarm of rats.

In the prose version, it is only a single rat which, at the end of the tale, is sent near the cat as a decoy, the others lying in hiding to see what would happen.

PAGE 41. The story of the poor man, his child, the snake and the mongoose.

The prose version states that the poor man had a wife and a daughter, the latter ten months old. The wife subsequently dies. The snake attacks the infant daughter whilst the father has gone out to bathe. In the end, the father is so overcome with grief that he forsakes his home and goes to live elsewhere.

PAGE 43. The story of the parrot and the miraculous jujube-fruit.

In the prose version the name of the Prince is given as สมเด็จพระเทพนหาราช, His Majesty King Devana Maháraj, and it is stated that he reigned in เมืองอุเจนีนคร (Ujjení, the city of Oujein). It appears that the jujube-trees were planted by the hermit on account of their medical properties.

PAGE 46. The story of the hunter who became a hermit, of the *kinnaris* and of the giant spider.

The *kinnaris*, according to the prose version, lived in the cave across which the spider had spun his web, whilst the hunter was a brahmin from the kingdom of Kalinga who had abandoned family and riches in order to lead a life of devotion.

PAGE 48. The story of the "pra" bird, the stag and the river-turtle.

In the prose version, it is the river-turtle who bites through the net into which the stag had fallen. Whilst he is doing so, the "pra" bird repairs to the door of the hunter's house and there utters his cry. Hearing the cry, the hunter wakes up and concludes that it is not yet dawn. He therefore delays issuing forth to inspect the net which he has set, thus affording the river-turtle time to complete the release of the stag.

It seems clear from this incident that the प्रा पक्षि is a night bird of some kind.

PAGE 52. The story of the dishonest man and the secret of the mango-tree that would grow up in a day.

The prose version furnishes the following account of this story:—

There was once a man of the lowest caste, a native of Benares, who had proceeded as a student to the city of Takkasilā (เมืองคักสีลา, a renowned University town in the Punjab). There he had learnt from an eminent doctor a charm whereby to plant a mango-tree which would grow up in a single day. On his return to Benares, he imparts this secret to a young man who visits him and whom he thus enjoins:—"If you are questioned, say openly that you learnt this thing in my house." The second recipient of the secret subsequently plants a mango-tree in the prescribed way before the King, to whom he offers fruit from it, and is rewarded for so doing. This process is repeated on other occasions and the young man grows rich in consequence, until at last one day the King asks him where he has acquired his knowledge of the trick. The young man, being ashamed to confess that he had learnt it from one who belonged to the lowest caste, falsely states that he has acquired it from an eminent doctor in Takkasilā. The charm thereupon loses its efficacy and, when the King again bids him plant a mango-tree as before, his attempt is unsuccessful. On the King interrogating him, he admits that he learnt the secret from a man of low caste, that he had lied through shame and that the charm had therefore lost its efficacy. The enraged King

accuses him of ingratitude towards his teacher and expels him from the city. The young man then seeks out his former instructor, who drives him away in his turn. Unable to procure food from any house, the young man proceeds to the forest, where he is ultimately devoured by a tiger.

PAGE 54. The selection of the garuda bird as King.

In the prose version the garuda bird appoints officers under him to rule over the feathered tribe as follows :—

The eagle is nominated viceroy (อุปราช).

The “karawek” bird is nominated chief councillor (เอกมนตรี).

The vulture is nominated first minister (อัครมหาเสนาบดี).

The wise parrot is appointed to be the royal sage or pundit (ราชบัณฑิต).

The learned cuckoo is nominated astrologer (ปโรหิต).

The egret (นกยาง) is nominated minister (เสนาบดี).

The crow is nominated district officer (แขวง).

PAGE 56. The story of the “sai” bird and the elephant.

The prose version places this story after the one next following in the metrical version. It gives the name of the elephant as Dandapa (ทณฑะปะ).

According to the prose version, the “sai” bird first of all carries her complaint to the crow, who lays it before the egret. The latter orders the crow to peck out the elephant’s eyes and the “sai” bird induces the fly to lay its eggs in the animal’s eye-sockets. She further induces the frog to descend into a ravine and to call out from thence when the blind elephant chances to come that way. The elephant, hearing the frog’s voice, deems that there must be a pool of water where in reality there is only a precipice. Being thirsty, he makes for the cliff and falls over it, only to meet his death, as his body is broken upon the rocks. Thereat the “sai” bird rejoices, saying, “This time I have seen my enemy’s back.”

PAGE 58. The story of the thrushes whose eggs were laid by the sea-shore.

The prose version relates the above story, not of the นกปรอด, but of the นกนางแอ่น (*copsychus saularis*, the magpie-robin.—Pallegoix). The husband's name is said to be Utulipan (อุตุธิปาน) and that of the wife Patawkan (ปะตอกัน).

In the prose version, it is the male bird who lays a complaint against the Ocean and he does so in the first instance before the crow, who refers the matter to the adjutant-bird. The latter has recourse to the "royal bird" (ราชบุคซึ, meaning, presumably, the eagle), who in his turn reports the affair to the garuda bird.

The prose version states that the eggs of the magpie-robin had been swallowed by the fish named มหาตมิ้ง, (*Mahatimi*, name of a mythical fish of vast size.—Childers).

The prose version goes on to say that, after the return of the eggs to the magpie-robins, the garuda bird issues instructions to the "royal bird" that, in future, all petty grievances shall be settled among the members of the feathered tribe themselves without having to put any one to the great inconvenience of reporting to him direct. Thereafter, the garuda bird imparts his blessing to the other birds and returns to his own abode. The story of the "sai" bird and the elephant then follows in a sequence more natural than that in which it occurs in the metrical account, since it is not the garuda bird himself, but his lieutenants, who figure in it.

PAGE 61. The story of the vulture who married the daughter of the "sai" bird.

This tale takes a shorter form and one more flattering to the vulture in the prose version.

According to the latter account, the parent "sai" birds dare not refuse to yield up their daughter, as, being small and without protectors, they fear that the vulture will kill them if they do so. After the marriage both the daughter of the "sai" bird and the vulture are unhappy, inasmuch as they are birds of a different

race. For this reason the parent "sai" birds lay a complaint before the egret, who summons the vulture and thus addresses him :—"You being of high lineage and the "sai" bird's daughter being of lowly origin, you are no fit mate for her. Moreover, you are a bird of great size and she is small. Misfortune will come of your alliance with her. You should choose a wife of your own race and standing and so prosper." At these words, the vulture rejoices and restores the "sai" bird's daughter to her parents, after which both she and her former husband live in happiness, each in their own manner.

There is no mention in the prose version of a visit to the vulture's mother or of the vulture devouring carrion. As told in the metrical version, this tale is but a variant of the previous story of the marriage between the crow and the swan.

PAGE 64. The story of the two devas, Loka Brahma and Deva Brahma, and of the eight riddles.

The prose version begins this tale by stating :—"Once upon a time, there were two devas who presided over the world (อยู่สำหรับโลก). One was named Deva Brahma and the other Loka Brahma."

PAGE 68. How Loka Brahma learnt the answers to the eight riddles.

The prose version makes the mother eagle refer to the answers to the riddles as showing the "eight ways of ministering to the inherent virtue which dwells within mankind". (วิธี ๘ ประการ สำหรับมนุษย์ในโลก). The mother eagle goes on to say :—"If a man observes these eight rules, the angel of such virtue (เทวดาเป็นศิริ) will bless him and will abide in him and preserve him. If he neglects them, the angel of adversity (เทวดาเป็นกาลกิณี) will transform him, his honours will fall from him and all his knowledge will vanish."

The prose version gives the answers to some of the riddles differently from the metrical account, as thus :—

1st riddle. A man should abstain from sensual pleasure on the seventh, eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth days of the waxing

and waning moons. Also on the festivals of Trut (วันตรุษ) and of Songkran, on the occasion of eclipses of the sun or moon, and on one's own birthday.

Fifth riddle. When a man retires to rest, he should distinguish between apparel for day wear and for night wear and should not confuse them. He should put on his body-cloth in such a way as to show a "tail" and the knot in the cloth which forms a pocket in front (ให้หมายชายพกไว้). If my rendering is correct, the sense of the last injunction is, apparently, to wear one's body-cloth in the form of a Siamese "panung."

According to the prose version, after the mother eagle has revealed the answers to the eight riddles, her child asks her:—"Suppose that a man who has formerly observed the prescribed eight rules of conduct is subsequently misled by the illusions of the senses and no longer ministers to the virtue that is in him. If he afterwards realises his folly, will that virtue (ศีล) come to dwell within him again?" The mother replies that, if he again ministers to it, it will return once more. The young eagle thereupon proceeds to relate the story of the dishonest servant who stole from the rich man, his master.

PAGE 72. The young eagle's story of the dishonest servant who stole from the rich man, his master.

The prose version states that it was a mother who instructed her son in the way he should go. The latter bore her words in mind, and on that account gained the confidence of the rich man into whose service he had entered. One day, the rich man loads five hundred waggon's with merchandise and sets out, in company with his servant, to sell his wares in a foreign country. The servant is entrusted with the care of his master's treasure, which, neglecting his mother's counsel, he steals away at midnight in the jungle. When he has dissipated the proceeds of his theft, he returns to his master, intending to seize an opportunity of robbing him again. The rich man, however, casts him into prison, where he dies.

On the conclusion of this tale, the prose version makes the young eagle point the moral of it as showing how difficult it is to

regain the path of virtue once that path has been forsaken. The mother eagle replies that misfortune is sure to befall such as disregard their parents' advice, and herself then relates the story of the wagtail and the kite.

PAGE. 73. The mother eagle's story of the wagtail and the kite.

This tale takes the following form in the prose version :—

There was once a wagtail who instructed her son that, in order to avoid danger, he was to seek his food only in crevices (in the ground), where he would not be seen. There was also at that time a kite, who counselled her offspring always, when in quest of a meal, to spare such creatures as respected their parents' advice ; otherwise, ruin would overtake him. In course of time, the mothers of the two young birds mentioned died. The young wagtail at first followed out the instructions which he had received and sought his food only in crevices in the earth. But at last, one day, he ventured out into the open and was promptly captured by the young kite. Reflecting on how he had disregarded his mother's advice, the wagtail began to weep and, his tears falling on to the kite's feet, the attention of that bird was attracted. He thereupon asked the wagtail :—" Though born a male, do you fear death that you are thus weeping ? " The wagtail replied :—" It is not on that account that I weep, but because, in venturing out into the open and so allowing you to capture me, I disregarded my mother's advice. Had I obeyed my mother, how would you ever have been able to seize me ? " To this the kite made answer :—" Do you instal yourself in some suitable place, even as your mother taught you. I shall still know how to get at you and make a meal off you." " In that case," said the wagtail, " do you release me." The kite accordingly let him go, whereupon he took refuge in a cranny in the ground and from thence called out to the kite :—" Now I am in such a place as my mother recommended. You are at liberty to do your worst against me." Hearing this, the kite forgot the injunction which his own mother had laid upon him and, being incensed, swooped down with the intention of effecting the capture of the wagtail again. Instead of which, his breast striking against the ground, he met with his death thereby.

The prose version goes on to say that, when the mother eagle has ended her story, she indicates the following moral:—"Whoever forsakes the path of virtue, but is genuinely anxious to enter on it again and remembers his mother's counsel, as did the wagtail, will save himself from destruction. But the dishonest servant in the previous story, on returning to his master, still harboured evil intentions against him and was therefore cast into prison and allowed to die there." The young eagle still expresses a doubt as to whether, having once lapsed from virtue, it is possible to recover one's self. The mother eagle rejoins that, though a man's body may be tainted and filthy (from sin), yet, if he wishes to persevere in the path of virtue, he can cleanse his person by washing it with water of three kinds:—(a) masculine water (น้ำบุรุษย์ตั้งค์), (b) feminine water (น้ำอิตถ์ตั้งค์), and (c) neuter water (น้ำนงปง์ตั้งค์). Masculine water is that of streams and canals; feminine water is that of the river; neuter water is that of ponds and wells. If a man wishes to cultivate the virtue or excellence that should be dwelling within him (ศีริ), he must take masculine water in a clean vessel, formulating his wish as he does so and firmly believing that it will be granted to him. He must then drink of the water and bathe in it. If he would induce the เทวดามนุษย์ (literally, human angel), to protect him, he should take feminine water from the river, proceeding as in the case of masculine water. If he wishes to be cured of disease, he should take neuter water and act in the same way as before. Water standing in the fields, which serves to nourish the paddy crops and which cannot remain for long, must not be utilised at all.

After the above exposition, the mother eagle reminds her offspring that it is late and time that they were sleeping.

The metrical version contains no reference to the process of cleansing the person by three kinds of water, which is, however, set forth in the "Lilit Paksi Noi."

PAGE 75. Conclusion of the story of Loka Brahma and Deva Brahma.

The prose version ends with the expounding of the riddles by Loka Brahma, in accordance with the solutions which he has overheard from the eagle. The story of the young man, the white elephant and the magic bone appears in the metrical version only,