

### BOOK III

#### CROWS AND OWLS

Here, then, begins Book III, called "Crows and Owls," which treats of peace, war, and so forth. The first verse runs:

Reconciled although he be,  
Never trust an enemy.  
For the cave of owls was burned,  
When the crows with fire returned.

"How was that?" asked the princes, and Vishnusharman told the following story.

In the southern country is a city called Earth-Base. Near it stands a great banyan tree with countless branches. And in the tree dwelt a crow-king named Cloudy with a countless retinue of crows. There he made his habitation and spent his time.

Now a rival king, a great owl named Foe-Crusher, had his fortress and his habitation in a mountain cave, and he had an unnumbered retinue of owls. This owl-king cherished a grudge, so that whenever he met a crow in his airings, he killed him and passed on. In this way his constant aggression gradually spread rings of dead crows about the banyan tree. Nor is this surprising. For the proverb says:

If you permit disease or foe  
To march unheeded, you may know  
That death awaits you, sure if slow.

Now one day Cloudy summoned all his counselors and said: "Gentlemen, as you are aware, our enemy is arrogant, energetic, and a judge of occasions. He always comes at nightfall to work havoc in our ranks. How, then, can we counter-attack? For we do not see at night, and in the daytime we cannot discover his fortress. Otherwise, we might go there and strike a blow. What course, then, shall we adopt? There are six possibilities—peace, war, change of base, entrenchment, alliances, and duplicity."

And they replied: "Your Majesty does well to put this question. For the saying goes:

Good counselors should tell their king,  
Unasked, a profitable thing;  
If asked, they should advise.  
While flatterers who shun the true  
(Which in the end is wholesome, too)  
Are foemen in disguise.

Therefore it is now proper to confer in secret session."

Then Cloudy started to consult severally his five ancestral counselors, whose names were Live-Again, Live-Well, Live-Along, Live-On, and Live-Long. And first of all he questioned Live-Again: "My worthy sir, what is your opinion under the circumstances?" And Live-Again replied: "O King, one should not make war with a powerful enemy. And this one is

powerful and knows when to strike. Therefore make peace with him. For the saying goes:

Bow your head before the great,  
Lifting it when times beseem,  
And prosperity will flow  
Ever onward, like a stream.

And again:

Make your peace with powerful foes  
Who are rich and good and wise,  
Who are seasoned conquerors,  
In whose home no discords rise.

Make your peace with wicked men,  
If your life endangered be;  
Life, itself first made secure,  
Gives the realm security.

And again:

Make your peace with him whose wont  
'Tis to conquer in a fight;  
Other foes will bend their necks  
To you, fearful of his might.

Even with equals make your peace;  
Victory is often given  
Whimsically; take no risks—  
Says the current saw in heaven.

Even with equals victory  
Whimsically may alight.  
Try three other methods first;  
Only *in extremis* fight.

And yet again:

See! The bully to whose soul  
Power is all, and peace is not,

Clashing with an equal foe,  
Crumbles like an earthen pot.

Land and friends and gold at most  
Have been won when battles cease;  
If but one of these should fail,  
It is best to live in peace.

When a lion digs for moles  
Hiding in their pebbly house,  
He is apt to break his nails,  
And at best he gets a mouse.

Therefore, where no prize is won  
And a healthy fight is sure,  
Never stir a quarrel, but  
Whatsoe'er the cost, endure.

By a stronger foe assailed,  
Bend as bends the river reed;  
Do not strike, as serpents do,  
If you wish your luck to speed.

Imitators of the reed  
Slowly win to glory's peak;  
But the luckless serpent-men  
Only earn the death they seek.

Shrink like turtles in their shells,  
Taking blows if need there be;  
Raise your head from time to time  
Like the black snake, warily.

To sum it up:

Never struggle with the strong  
(If you wish to know my mind)  
Who has ever seen a cloud  
Baffle the opposing wind?"

Having heard this view, the king said to Live-Well: "My worthy sir, I desire to hear your opinion also." And Live-Well said: "O King, I disagree. Inasmuch as the enemy is cruel, greedy, and unprincipled, you should most certainly not make peace with him. For the proverb says:

With foes unprincipled and false  
'Tis vain to seek accommodation:  
Agreements bind them not; and soon  
They show a wicked transformation.

Therefore you should, in my judgment, fight with him. You know the saying:

'Tis easy to uproot a foe  
Contemning fighters, never steady,  
Cruel and greedy, slothful, false,  
Foolish and fearful and unready.

"But more than this—we have been humiliated by him. Therefore, if you propose peace, he will be angry and will employ violence again. There is a saying:

The truculence of fevered foes  
By gentle measures is abetted:  
What wise physician tries a douche?  
He knows that fever should be sweated.

Conciliation simply makes  
A foeman's indignation splutter,  
Like drops of water sprinkled on  
A briskly boiling pan of butter.

Besides, the previous speaker's point about the strength of the enemy is not decisive.

The smaller often slays the great  
 By showing energy and vigor:  
 The lion kills the elephant,  
 And rules with unrestricted rigor.

And more than that:

Foes indestructible by might  
 Are slain through some deceptive gesture,  
 As Bhima strangled Kichaka,  
 Approaching him in woman's vesture.

And yet again:

When kings are merciless as death,  
 All foes are quick to knuckle under;  
 Quick, too, to kill the kings who fall  
 Into compassion's fatal blunder.

And he whose sun of glory sets  
 Before the glory of another  
 Is born in vain; he wastes for naught  
 The youthful vigor of his mother.

For Regal Splendor, unbesmeared  
 With foemen's blood as rich cosmetic,  
 Though dear, is insufficient for  
 Ambitions truly energetic.

And in a kingdom unbedewed  
 With foemen's blood in slaughter gory,  
 And hostile women's falling tears,  
 The king enjoys no living glory."

Having heard this view, the king put the question to Live-Along: "My worthy sir, pray express your opinion also." And Live-Along said: "O King, the enemy is vicious and powerful and unscrupulous.

Therefore you should make neither peace nor war with him. Only a change of base can be recommended. For the saying goes:

With vicious foemen, proud of power,  
 From hindering scruples free,  
 Adopt a change of base, not peace  
 Nor war, for victory.

Now change of base is known to be  
 No single thing, but twin—  
 Retreat, to save imperiled life;  
 Invasion, planned to win.

A warlike and ambitious king  
 May choose 'twixt April and  
 November—other months are barred—  
 To invade the hostile land.

For storming-parties—so the books  
 Prescribe—all times are fair,  
 If hostile forces show distress,  
 And lay some weakness bare.

A king should put his realm in charge  
 Of heroes strong and fit;  
 Then pounce upon the hostile land,  
 When spies have peopled it.

The case in hand requires, O King,  
 The base-change called Retreat,  
 Not peace nor war; the foe is vile,  
 And very hard to beat.

"Furthermore, a recessive movement is made, says the science of ethics, with due regard to cause and effect. The point is thus expressed in poetry:

When rams draw back, their butting fiercer stings;  
 The crouching king of beasts more deadly springs:  
 So wise dissemblers, holding vengeance sure,  
 In dumb communion with their hearts, endure.

And once again:

A king, abandoning his realm  
 To foes of fighting worth,  
 Preserves his life, as Fight-Firm did,  
 And later rules the earth.

And so, to sum it up:

The weak who, struggling with the strong,  
 Are not too proud to fight,  
 Bring great rejoicing to their foes,  
 And on their kinsmen, blight.

“Therefore, since you are engaged with a powerful foe, there is occasion for a change of base. It is no time for peace or war.”

When he had listened to this view, the king said to Live-On: “My worthy sir, pray express your opinion also.” And Live-On said: “O King, I disapprove of peace, war, and change of base, all three of them; and particularly change of base. For

A crocodile at home  
 Can beat an elephant;  
 But if he goes abroad,  
 A dog can make him pant.

And again:

When stronger foes attack,  
 Close in your fortress stay;  
 But sally to relieve  
 Your friends, and save the day.

If, panic-struck, you flee  
 When foes are at the door,  
 And leave the land to them,  
 You ne'er will see it more.

One man, entrenched, can hold  
 A hundred foes at bay  
 (Strong foes at that), therefore  
 In your entrenchment stay.

Therefore provide your fort  
 With shaft and gun; adorn  
 It well with moat and wall,  
 And store abundant corn.

Stand ever firm within,  
 Resolved to do or die:  
 So, living, earn renown;  
 Or dead, the starry sky.

And there is a further consideration:

The union of the weak  
 A powerful bully stumps:  
 The hostile blizzard spares  
 The shrubs that grow in clumps.

And single trees, though huge  
 And posted for defense,  
 May be uprooted by  
 The stout wind's violence.

While groves of trees, where each  
 Receives and gives defense,  
 Unitedly defy  
 The wind's fierce violence.

Just so, one man alone,  
 However brave he be,  
 Is scorned by foes, who soon  
 Proceed to injury."

Having listened to this view likewise, the king said to Live-Long: "My worthy sir, pray express your opinion also." And Live-Long said: "O King, from among the six possibilities, I recommend alliance. Pray adopt that. For the saying goes:

Though deft and brilliant, what good end  
 Can you attain without a friend?  
 The fire that seems immortal will  
 Die when the fanning wind is still.

"Therefore you should stay at home and seek some competent ally, to make a counterweight against the enemy. But if you leave home and travel, no one will give you so much as a friendly word. For the proverb says:

The wind is friend to forest-fire  
 And causes it to flame the higher;  
 The same wind blows a candle out.  
 Who cares what poor folk are about?

"Nor is it even essential that the ally be powerful; the alliance even of feeble folk makes for defense. You know the saying:

However weak, a bamboo stem  
 From others takes, and gives to them  
 Strength to resist uprooting: so  
 Weak kings unite against a foe.

"And how much more so, if you have alliance with the truly great! For the poet says:

Who is there whom a friendly state  
 With great folk does not elevate?  
 The raindrop, hiding in a curl  
 Of lotus-petal, shines like pearl.

"Thus, O King, there is no counterweight to your enemy save in alliance. Therefore let an alliance be concluded. Such is my opinion."

After these opinions had been given, Cloudy bowed low before an ancient, farsighted counselor of his race. This was a crow who had persevered to the last page of every textbook of social ethics, and his name was Live-Strong. "Father," said the king, "I had a secret purpose in questioning the others in your very presence; namely, that you might listen to everything, and instruct me as to what is fitting. Pray instruct me in the appropriate course of action."

And Live-Strong said: "My son, all that these have proposed is drawn from the textbooks of social ethics, and all is highly proper, each course in its own good time. But the present hour demands duplicity. You have heard the saying:

You must regard with like distrust  
 Both peace and warlike measures; must  
 Seek through duplicity your goal,  
 With powerful foes of evil soul.

"In this way those who themselves trust nobody and have a single eye to self-interest can win the trust of an enemy and easily destroy him. For the saying goes:

Shrewd enemies will cause a foe  
Whom they would ruin, first to grow:  
The flow of mucus by molasses  
Is first increased, but later passes.

And again:

To foe, to false friend, to female  
(Particularly her for sale)  
The man so simple as to give  
Straightforward conduct, does not live.

Proceed in pure straightforwardness  
With Brahmans, with the gods no less,  
With teachers, with yourself; but treat  
All other creatures to deceit.

A hermit mastering his soul  
May see life simple, see it whole;  
Not those who thirst for carnal things,  
Nor, most particularly, kings.

And so:

Strong through duplicity, you will  
Preserve your habitation still;  
For death will prove a friend in need,  
To crush a foe possessed by greed.

“Furthermore, if a vulnerable point appears in him,  
you will destroy him by being aware of it.”

But Cloudy said: “Father, I do not know his  
residence. So how shall I become aware of a vulner-  
able point?”

And Live-Strong replied: “My son, through spies  
I will reveal not only his dwelling, but also his vulner-  
able point. For

Cows see a thing by sense of smell;  
While Scripture serves the Brahman well;  
The king perceives by means of spies:  
And other creatures use their eyes.

And in this connection there is another saying:

The king, well served by spies, who knows  
The functionaries of his foes,  
Who knows his retinue no less,  
Is never plunged in deep distress.”

Then Cloudy said: “Father, what are these func-  
tionaries? What is their number? And of what char-  
acter are secret-service men? Pray tell me all.”

And Live-Strong replied: “On these points the  
sage Narada gave the following information when  
questioned by King Fight-Firm. In the hostile camp  
are eighteen functionaries; in one’s own, fifteen.  
Their conduct is discovered by assigning to each  
three secret-service men, by whose efforts both friends  
and enemies are kept in good control. The facts are  
put in a bit of doggerel:

The foe has eighteen functionaries;  
And you have five and ten:  
Give each, as unknown secretaries,  
Three secret-service men.

“The term ‘functionary’ implies a delegated task.  
If this be shamefully performed, it ruins the king; if  
admirably, it brings him high success.

“Now for details. The functionaries in the hostile  
camp are—the counselor, the chaplain, the com-  
mander-in-chief, the crown prince, the concierge, the

superintendent of the gynceum, the adviser, the tax-collector, the introducer, the master of ceremonies, the director of the stables, the treasurer, the minister for elephants, the assessor, the war-minister, the minister for fortifications, the favorite, the for-ester, and so forth. By sowing intrigue among these the enemy is subdued. In one's own camp the functionaries are—the queen, the queen-mother, the chamberlain, the florist, the lord of the bedchamber, the chief of the secret service, the star-gazer, the court physician, the purveyor of water, the purveyor of spices, the professor, the life-guard, the quartermaster, the bearer of the royal umbrella, and the geisha. It is by way of these that ruin befalls one's own party. As the saying goes:

Professor, star-scout, and physician  
Find flaws within your home position:  
The madman and snake-charmer know  
Points vulnerable in the foe."

"Father," said Cloudy, "what is the origin of the deadly feud between crows and owls?"

And Live-Strong answered: "Listen. I will tell you

#### HOW THE BIRDS PICKED A KING

Once upon a time the bird-clans gathered for consultation. There were swans and cranes and nightingales; there were peacocks, plovers, and owls; there were doves and pigeons and partridges; there were bluejays, vultures, skylarks; there were demoiselles and cuckoos and woodpeckers and many others.

And they said: "We have in Garuda a king, to be sure. But he is ever intent on serving holy Vishnu, and pays no heed to us. What is the good of a sham king? He does not defend us when we are in genuine distress—when we are caught in traps, for instance. There is a saying:

Only one, but anyone  
Is my king, when all is done—  
Only one who will restore  
Health and joy I felt before:  
Anyone, but only one—  
For the moon a single sun.

"Any other is king only in name. As the poet says:

Let him calm the panting breath  
Of his people, quivering  
Under blows; or he is Death  
Masquerading as a king.

And again:

These six should every man avoid  
Like leaky ships at sea—  
A dull professor; and a priest  
Without theology;

A king who does not give defense;  
A wife whose tongue can slash;  
A cowboy hankering for town;  
A barber after cash.

We must therefore pitch upon someone else as king of the birds."

Thereupon, observing that the owl had a venerable appearance, they all said: "Let this owl be our



king. And let a plentiful supply be provided of all substances prescribed for the anointing of a king."

Straightway water was brought from various holy streams; a bouquet of one hundred and eight roots was provided, including the one marked with a wheel and the yellow-stemmed lotus; and the lion-throne was set in place. Moreover, there was drawn on the ground a relief map of the seven continents, oceans, and mountains. A tiger-skin was spread. Golden jars were filled with five twigs, blossoms and grains; oblations were prepared; the most eminent bards chanted poetry. Furthermore, Brahmans, skilled in reciting the four Vedas, also chanted, while maidens sang songs, sweet holiday songs being their specialty. In the forefront was prepared a vessel of consecrated rice set off with white mustard, parched grain, rice-grains, yellow pigment, wreaths of flowers, conch-shells, and so forth. The materials for lustration ceremonies were provided, and holiday drums rumbled. In the midst of a consecrated spot strewn with potash stood the lion-throne, adorned by the person of the owl as he waited the anointing.

At that moment a crow came into the assembly from nobody knew where, announcing his entrance with a raucous caw. And he thought: "Well, well! What means this gathering of all the birds, and this great festival?"

But when the birds saw him, they whispered together: "He is the shrewdest of the birds, they say.

So let us have a speech from him, too. For the proverb says:

Of men, the barber smartest is;  
The jackal, of the beasts;  
The crow is cleverest of birds;  
The White-Robe, of the priests.

And besides:

Concerted counsels of the wise,  
If heedfully thought through,  
Will never founder, being sound  
From every point of view."

So the birds said to the crow: "You know, the birds have no king. They have therefore decided unanimously to anoint this owl as their supreme monarch. Please express your opinion also. You come in the nick of time."

Then the crow laughed and said: "Gentlemen, this is foolish. When you have eminent swans, peacocks, nightingales, partridges, sheldrakes, pigeons, cranes, and others, why anoint this ugly-faced fellow who is blind in the daytime? It seems wrong to me. For

Big hooked nose, and eyes asquint,  
Ugly face without a hint  
Of tenderness or beauty in 't.  
Good-natured, it is fierce to see;  
If he were mad, what might it be?

And furthermore:

Ugly, cruel, full of spleen,  
Every word he speaks is mean;

If you make the owl your king,  
You will fail in everything.

Besides, when Garuda is your king, what is this fellow good for? Suppose he has virtue, still a second king is not a good idea when you already have one. For the saying runs:

A single king of lordly sway  
Is good; but more than one will slay,  
Like plural suns on Judgment Day.

Why, the very name of your genuine king keeps others from taking liberties. As the proverb puts it:

Mere mention of a lordly monarch's name  
To mean men, straightway saves from loss and shame.

And there is a saying:

The feigning of a great commission  
Immensely betters your condition:  
Feigning a message from the moon,  
The rabbits dwelt in comfort soon."

"How was that?" asked the birds. And the crow told

#### HOW THE RABBIT FOOLED THE ELEPHANT

In a part of a forest lived an elephant-king named Four-Tusk, who had a numerous retinue of elephants. His time was spent in protecting the herd.

Now once there came a twelve-year drought, so that tanks, ponds, swamps, and lakes went dry. Then all the elephants said to the lord of the herd: "O King, our little ones are so tortured by thirst that

some are like to die, and some are dead. Pray devise a method of removing thirst." So he sent in eight directions elephants fleet as the wind to search for water.

Now those who went east found beside a path near a hermitage a lake named Lake of the Moon. It was beautiful with swans, herons, ospreys, ducks, sheldrakes, cranes, and water-creatures. It was embowered in flowering sprays of branches drooping under the weight of various blossoms. Both banks were embellished with trees. It had beaches made lovely by sheets of foam born of the splashing of transparent waves that danced in the breeze and broke on the shore. Its water was perfumed by the ichor-juice that oozed from elephant-temples washed clean of bees; for these flew up when the lordly creatures plunged. It was ever screened from the heat of the sun by hundreds of parasols in the shape of the countless leaves of trees on its banks. It gave forth deep-toned music from uncounted waves that turned aside on meeting the plump legs, hips, and bosoms of mountain maidens diving. It was brimming with crystal water, and beautified with thickets of water-lilies in full bloom. Why describe it? It was a segment of paradise.

When they saw this, they hastened back to report to the elephant-king.

So Four-Tusk, on hearing their report, traveled with them by easy stages to the Lake of the Moon. And finding a gentle slope all around the lake, the ele-

phants plunged in, thereby crushing the heads, necks, fore-paws and hind-paws of thousands of rabbits who long before had made their home on the banks. Now after drinking and bathing, the elephant-king with his followers departed to his own portion of the jungle.

Then the rabbits who were left alive held an emergency convention. "What are we to do now?" said they. "Those fellows—curse their tracks!—will come here every day. Let some plan be framed at once to prevent their return."

Thereupon a rabbit named Victory, perceiving their terror and their utter woe at the crushing of sons, wives, and relatives, said compassionately: "Have no fear. They shall not return. I promise it. For my guardian angel has granted me this grace."

And hearing this, the rabbit-king, whose name was Block-Snout, said to Victory: "Dear friend, this is beyond peradventure. For

Good Victory knows every fact  
The textbooks teach; knows how to act  
In every place and time. Where he  
Is sent, there comes prosperity.

And again:

Speak for pleasure, speak with measure,  
Speak with grammar's richest treasure,  
Not too much, and with reflection—  
Deeds will follow words' direction.

The elephants, sir, making acquaintance with your ripe wisdom, will become aware of my majesty, wis-

dom, and energy, though I am not present. For the proverb says:

I learn if foreign kings be fools or no  
By their dispatches or their nuncio.

And there is a saying:

The envoy binds; he loosens what is bound;  
Through him success in war, if found, is found.

And if you go, it is as if I went myself. Because, if you

Speak what lies in your commission,  
Speak with careful composition,  
Grammar and good ethics seeking,  
'Tis as if myself were speaking.

And again:

This is, in brief, the envoy's care:  
An argument to fit the facts  
And sound results, so far as speech  
May be translated into acts.

"Depart then, dear friend. And may the office of envoy prove a second guardian angel to you."

So Victory departed and espied the elephant-king in the act of returning to the lake. He was surrounded by thousands of lordly elephants, whose ears, like flowering branches, were swaying in a dignified dance. His body was dappled with masses of pollen from his couch made of twigs from the tips of branches of flowering cassia trees; so that he seemed a laden cloud with many clinging lightning-flashes. His trumpeting was as deep toned and awe inspiring as the clash of

countless thunderbolts from which in the rainy season piercing flashes gleam. He had the glossy beauty of leaves in a bed of pure blue lotuses. His twisting trunk had the charm of a perfect snake. His presence was that of an elephant of heaven. His two tusks, shapely, smooth, and full, had the color of honey. Around his entire visage rose a charming hum from swarms of bees drawn by the fragrant perfume of the ichor-juice that issued from his temples.

And Victory reflected: "It is impossible for folk like me to come too near. Because, as the proverb puts it:

An elephant will kill you if  
He touch; a serpent if he sniff;  
King's laughter has a deadly sting;  
A rascal kills by honoring.

I must by all odds seek impregnable terrain before introducing myself."

After these reflections, he climbed upon a tall and jagged rock-pile before saying: "Is it well with you, lord of the two-tusked breed?" And the elephant-king, hearing this, peered narrowly about, and said: "Who are you, sir?" "I am an envoy," said the rabbit. "In whose service?" asked the elephant, and the envoy answered: "In the service of the blessed Moon." "State your business," said the elephant-king, and the rabbit stated it thus.

"You are aware, sir, that no injury may be done an envoy in the discharge of his function. For all

kings, without exception, use envoys as their mouth-pieces. Indeed, there is a proverb:

Though swords be out and kinsmen fall in strife,  
The king still spares the harsh-tongued envoy's life.

"Therefore by command of the Moon I say to you: 'Why, O mortal, why have you used violence upon others, with no true reckoning of your own power or your foe's? For the Scripture says:

All those who madly march to deeds,  
Not reckoning who are masters,  
Themselves or powerful enemies,  
Are asking for disasters.

"Now you have sinfully violated the Lake of the Moon, known afar by my sacred name. And there you have slain rabbits who are under my special protection, who are of the race of that rabbit-king cherished in my bosom. This is iniquitous. Nay, one would think you the only creature in the world who does not know the rabbit in the moon. But what is gained by much speaking? Desist from such actions, or great disaster will befall you at my hands. But if from this hour you desist, great distinction will be yours; for your body will be nourished by my moonlight, and with your companions you shall pursue your happy, carefree fancies in this forest. In the alternative case, my light shall be withheld, your body will be scorched by summer heat, and you with your companions will perish."

On hearing this, the elephant-king felt his heart

stagger, and after long reflection he said: "It is true, sir. I have sinned against the blessed Moon. Who am I that I should longer contend with him? Pray point out to me, and quickly, the way that I must travel to win the blessed Moon's forgiveness."

The rabbit said: "Come, sir, alone. I will point it out." So he went by night to the Lake of the Moon, and showed him the moon reflected in the water. There was the brilliant, quivering disk, of lustrous loveliness, surrounded by planets, the Seven Sages, and hosts of stars, all dancing in the reflection of heaven's broad expanse. And its circle was complete, with the full complement of digits.

Seeing this, the elephant said: "I purify myself and worship the deity," and he dropped upon the water a trunk that two men's arms might have encircled. Thereby he disturbed the water, the moon's disk danced to and fro as if mounted on a whirling wheel, and he saw a thousand moons.

Then Victory started back in great agitation, and said to the elephant-king: "Woe, woe to you, O King! You have doubly enraged the Moon." The elephant said: "For what reason is the blessed Moon angry with me?"

"Because," said Victory, "you have touched this water." So the elephant-king, with drooping ears, bowed his head to the very earth in deep obeisance, in order to win forgiveness from the blessed Moon. And he spoke again to Victory: "My worthy sir, in

all other manners, also, beseech for me the forgiveness of the blessed Moon. I shall never return here." And with these words he went to his own place.

"And that is why I say:

The feigning of a great commission, . . . .

and the rest of it.

"But worse remains behind. The owl is a seedy rascal, with a wicked soul. He could never protect subjects. Or rather, to say nothing of protection, you may anticipate actual danger from him. You know the stanza:

A seedy umpire is not very  
Pleasing to either adversary:  
Rabbit and partridge teach you that—  
They died, confiding in the cat."

"How was that? Tell us about it," said the birds, and the crow told the story of

#### THE CAT'S JUDGMENT

At one time I was myself living in a certain tree. And beneath the same tree dwelt another bird, a partridge. So by virtue of our near neighborhood there sprang up between us a firm friendship. Every day after taking our meals and airings we spent the evening hours in a round of amusements, such as repeating witty sayings, telling tales from the old story-books, solving puzzles and conundrums, or exchanging presents.

One day the partridge went foraging with other birds to a spot where the rice was ripe and abundant, and he did not return at nightfall. Of course, I missed him greatly and I thought: "Alas! Why does not my friend the partridge come home tonight? I am much afraid he is caught in some trap, or has even been killed." And many days passed while I grieved in this way.

Now one evening a rabbit named Speedy made himself at home in the partridge's old nest in the hole. Nor did I say him nay, for I despaired of seeing the partridge again.

However, one fine day the partridge, who had grown extremely plump from eating rice, remembered his old home and returned. This, indeed, is not to be wondered at.

No mortal has such joy, although  
In heaven's fields he roam,  
As in his city, in his land,  
And in his humble home.

Now when he saw the rabbit in the hole, he said reproachfully: "Come now, rabbit, you have done a shabby thing in occupying my apartment. Please begone, and lose no time about it."

"You fool!" said the rabbit, "don't you know that a dwelling is yours only while you occupy it?" "Very well, then," said the partridge, "suppose we ask the neighbors. For, to give you a legal quotation,

For ownership of cisterns, tanks,  
Wells, groves, and houses, too,  
The neighbors' testimony goes—  
Such is the legal view.

And again:

When house or field or well or grove  
Or land is in dispute,  
A neighbor's testimony is  
Decisive of the suit."

Then the rabbit said: "You fool! Are you ignorant of the consecrated tradition which says:

Suppose beside your neighbor you  
For ten long years abide,  
What weight have learned arguments?  
Eyewitnesses decide.

Fool! Fool! Did you never hear the dictum of the sage Narada?

The title to possession is  
A ten years' habitation  
With men. But with the birds and beasts  
Mere present occupation.

"Hence, even supposing this apartment to be yours, still it was unoccupied when I moved in, and now it is mine."

"Well, well!" replied the partridge, "if you appeal to consecrated tradition, come with me, and we will consult the specialists. It shall be yours or mine according to their decision." "Very well," said the other, and together they started off to have their suit

decided. I, too, was at their heels, out of curiosity. "I will just see what comes of all this," I said to myself.

Now they had not traveled far when the rabbit asked the partridge: "My good fellow, who is to pass judgment on our disagreement?" And the partridge answered: "On a sand-bank by the sacred Ganges—where there is sweet music from the dancing waves that intercross and break when the water is swept by nimble breezes—there dwells a tomcat whose name is Curd-Ear. He abides unshaken in his vow of penance and self-denial, and character has begotten compassion."

But when the rabbit spied the cat, his soul staggered with terror, and he said: "No, no! He is a seedy rascal. You must have heard the proverb:

Oh, never trust a rogue for all  
His pharisaic puzzling:  
At holy shrines some saints are found  
Quite capable of guzzling."

Upon hearing this, Curd-Ear, whose manner of life had been assumed for the purpose of making an easy livelihood, desired to win their confidence. He therefore gazed straight at the sun, stood on his hind-legs, lifted his fore-paws, blinked his eyes, and in order to deceive them by pious sentiments, delivered the following moral discourse. "Alas! Alas! All is vanity. This fragile life passes in a moment. Union with the beloved is an empty dream. Family endear-

ments are a conjurer's trick. But for the moral law, there would be no escape. Oh, listen to Scripture!

Each transitory day, O man,  
To moral living give;  
Else, like the blacksmith's bellows, you  
Suck air, but do not live.

And furthermore:

Non-moral learning is a curse,  
A dog's tail, nothing less,  
That does not save from flies and fleas,  
Nor cover nakedness.

And yet again:

A rotten ear among the wheat,  
Among the birds a bat,  
Is he who spurns the moral law;  
The merest living gnat.

The flowers and fruit are better than the tree;  
Better than curds is butter said to be;  
Better than oil-cake, oil that trickles free;  
Better than mortal man, morality.

The praise of constant steadfastness  
Some wise professors sing;  
But moral earnestness is swift,  
Though many fetters cling.

Forget your prosings manifold;  
The moral law is briefly told:  
To help your neighbor—this is good;  
To injure him is devilhood."

Having listened to this moral discourse, the rabbit said: "Friend partridge, here on the river-bank is

the saint who expounds the moral law. Let us ask him."

But the partridge said: "After all, he is our natural enemy. Let us ask him from a distance." So together they began to question him: "O holy moralist, a dispute has arisen between us. Pray give judgment in accordance with the moral law. And whichever of us is found to speak falsely, him you may eat."

"Dear friends," said the cat, "I implore you not to speak thus. My soul abhors every act of cruelty, that street-sign pointing to hell. Surely, you know the Scripture:

The holy first commandment runs—  
Not harsh, but kindly be—  
And therefore lavish mercy on  
Mosquito, louse, and flea.

Why speak of hurting innocence?  
For he, with purpose fell  
Who injures even noxious beasts,  
Is plunged in ghastly hell.

"Nay, even those who slay living creatures in the act of sacrifice are befuddled, and their hermeneutic theology is at fault. And if you object to me the passage, 'One should sacrifice with goats,' in that passage the word 'goats' signifies grain that has aged seven years. 'Go, oats'—such is the true exegesis. And then, consider the passage:

If he who cuts down trees or cattle,  
Or makes a bloody slime in battle,

Should thereby win to heaven—well,  
Who (let me ask you) goes to hell?

"No, no. I shall eat nobody. However, I am somewhat old and do not readily distinguish your voices from a distance. So how am I to determine winner and loser? In view of this, pray draw near and make me acquainted with the case. Then I can pronounce a judgment that discriminates the essence of the matter, and thus causes no impediment in my march to the other world. You know the stanza:

If any man, from pride or greed,  
Timidity or wrath,  
Judge falsely, he has set his foot  
On hell's down-sloping path.

And again:

Who wrongs a sheep, slays kinsmen five;  
Who wrongs a cow, slays ten;  
A hundred die for maidens wronged;  
A thousand die for men.

"Therefore confide in me and speak clearly at the edge of my ear."

Why spin it out? That seedy rogue won their trust so fully that both drew near him. Then, of course, he seized them simultaneously, one with his paw, the other with the saw of his teeth. And when they were dead, he ate them both.

"And that is why I say:

A seedy umpire is not very . . . .

and the rest of it.



"Just so, you, too, being blind at night, if you take as overlord this seedy fellow who is blind in the daytime, will go the way of the rabbit and the partridge. Reflect on this, then do what seems proper."

And all the birds, after listening to the crow's remarks, said: "He speaks well," and they flew to their homes, planning to reassemble for consultation on the question of a king. Only the owl remained with his consort, for he was blind in the daytime. There he sat in his chair of state, awaiting the anointing. And he called out: "Ho, there! Who takes my orders? Why is the ceremony delayed?"

Thereupon his consort said: "My dear sir, the crow has found means to hold up the ceremony. And the birds have gone flying away. Only that crow, for some reason or other, remains here all alone. Rise at once, and I will conduct you home."

Then the owl was deeply disappointed, and he said: "You monster! Why have you wronged me by preventing the regal anointing? From this day there is enmity between us. For the proverb says:

When arrows pierce or axes wound  
A tree, it grows together sound;  
From cruel, ugly speech you feel  
A wound that time will never heal."

Thereupon he went home with his consort, while the crow reflected: "Dear me! I have burdened myself with a needless enmity by speaking so. I should have remembered:

All spoken words, if harsh and heedless  
And inappropriate and needless,  
Are self-condemnatory slips  
That turn to poison on the lips.

And again:

However wise and strong you be,  
Beware the needless enemy:  
You would not swallow poison down  
Because a doctor lives in town.

No man of sense vituperates  
Another, while the public waits;  
For even truth should be concealed,  
If causing sorrow when revealed.

And finally:

Reflect with many a chosen friend;  
Reflect alone, and to the end;  
Then act. You are intelligent,  
And fame's and wealth's recipient."

After these reflections, the crow also left the spot.

"For this cause, my son, we have an inherited feud with the crows."

"Father," said Cloudy, "what should we do under the circumstances?" And Live-Strong answered: "Even in these circumstances there is an effective procedure other than the six expedients. This I will adopt, and will myself lead the way to conquer the enemy. I will deceive them and put them in a fatal situation. For the saying goes:

The strong, deft, clever rascals note,  
Who robbed the Brahman of his goat."

"How was that?" asked Cloudy. And Live-Strong told the story of

### THE BRAHMAN'S GOAT

In a certain town lived a Brahman named Friendly who had undertaken the labor of maintaining the sacred fire. One day in the month of February, when a gentle breeze was blowing, when the sky was veiled in clouds and a drizzling rain was falling, he went to another village to beg a victim for the sacrifice, and said to a certain man: "O sacrificer, I wish to make an offering on the approaching day of the new moon. Pray give me a victim." And the man gave him a plump goat, as prescribed in Scripture. This he put through its paces, found it sound, placed it on his shoulder, and started in haste for his own city.

Now on the road he was met by three rogues whose throats were pinched with hunger. These, spying the plump creature on his shoulder, whispered together: "Come now! If we could eat that creature, we should have the laugh on this sleety weather. Let us fool him, get the goat, and ward off the cold."

So the first of them changed his dress, issued from a by-path to meet the Brahman, and thus addressed that man of pious life: "O pious Brahman, why are you doing a thing so unconventional and so ridiculous? You are carrying an unclean animal, a dog, on your shoulder. Are you ignorant of the verse:

The dog and the rooster,  
The hangman, the ass,  
The camel, defile you:  
Don't touch them, but pass."

At that the Brahman was mastered by anger, and he said: "Are you blind, man, that you impute doghood to a goat?" "O Brahman," said the rogue, "do not be angry. Go whither you will."

But when he had traveled a little farther, the second rogue met him and said: "Alas, holy sir, alas! Even if this dead calf was a pet, still you should not put it on your shoulder. For the proverb says:

Touch not unwisely man or beast  
That lifeless lie;  
Else, gifts of milk and lunar fast  
Must purify."

Then the Brahman spoke in anger: "Are you blind, man? You call a goat a calf." And the rogue said: "Holy sir, do not be angry. I spoke in ignorance. Do as you will."

But when he had walked only a little farther through the forest, the third rogue, changing his dress, met him and said: "Sir, this is most improper. You are carrying a donkey on your shoulder. Yet the proverb tells you:

If you should touch an ass—be it  
In ignorance or not—  
You needs must wash your clothes and bathe,  
To cleanse the sinful spot.

Pray drop this thing, before another sees you."

So the Brahman concluded that it was a goblin in quadruped form, threw it on the ground, and made for home, terrified. Meanwhile, the three rogues met, caught the goat, and carried out their plan.

“And that is why I say:

The strong, deft, clever rascals note, . . . .

and the rest of it.

“Moreover, there is sound sense in this:

Is any man uncheated by  
New servants' diligence,  
The praise of guests, the maiden's tears,  
And roguish eloquence?

Furthermore, one should avoid a quarrel with a crowd, though the individuals be weak. As the verse puts it:

Beware the populace enraged;  
A crowd's a fearsome thing:  
The ants devoured the giant snake  
For all his quivering.”

“How was that?” asked Cloudy. And Live-Strong told the story of

#### THE SNAKE AND THE ANTS

In a certain ant-hill lived a prodigious black snake, and his name was Haughty. One day, instead of following the beaten path out of his hole, he tried to crawl through a narrower crevice. In doing so, he suffered a wound, because his body was huge, and the opening was small, and fate willed it so.

Then the ants gathered about him, drawn by the odor of blood from the wound, and drove him frantic. How many did he kill? Or how many crush? Yet their uncounted phalanx stung him in every member, and enlarged the numerous wounds. And Haughty perished.

“And that is why I say:

Beware the populace enraged, . . . .

and the rest of it.

“Furthermore, O King, I have something to tell you, which you must consider, and ponder, and do.”

“Father,” said Cloudy, “tell me what you have in mind.” And Live-Strong said: “Listen, my son. I have discovered a fifth device, different from the well-known four—conciliation, intrigue, bribery, and fighting. And it is this. You must turn against me, revile me with the hardest-hearted words you can find, smear me with blood (which you will provide) in order to deceive the enemy's spies, throw me out at the foot of this banyan tree, and depart yourself to Antelope Mountain. And there you must stay with your retinue until by clever planning I win the trust of all the enemy, discover the heart of their fortress, and kill them—for they are blind in the daytime. This plan I devised on the assumption that their fortress is of simple construction, without egress at the rear. For the saying goes:

A fort must have for egress, say  
 The specialists, a gap;  
 If this be lacking, it is not  
 A fortress, but a trap.

Nor should you feel any pity for me. For the proverb says:

Pet and pamper servants well;  
 Love them as you love your life:  
 Yet consider them as dry  
 Tinder in the hour of strife.

Nor must you balk me in my design. For once more:

Cherish servants like yourself;  
 Guard them as you guard your life  
 Every day for one sole day,  
 When you meet your foe in strife."

With these words he started a sham fight with the king. And Cloudy's retinue, seeing Live-Strong jabber with unbridled license at the king, started up to kill him. But Cloudy said: "Out of my path, you. I take upon myself the chastisement of this traitorous scoundrel." With this he pounced upon him, pecked at him gently, smeared him with blood (which he had provided), and departed with his retinue for Antelope Mountain, as Live-Strong had recommended.

At this juncture the owl's consort, acting as spy for the enemy, went and reported in detail to the owl-king the disgrace of Cloudy's prime minister. And the owl-king, informed of the occurrence, started with his retainers at sundown on a crow-hunt. And he said: "Hasten, friends, hasten! The enemy is

panic-stricken, is in full flight, and can be readily caught. For the proverb says:

In flight, a fort becomes a trap  
 Where all defense is lacking;  
 'Tis easy then to beat a king  
 Whose men are busy packing."

With this battle-cry they flew to attack the banyan tree. And failing to find a single crow, King Foe-Crusher gleefully perched on a branch, and while the court poets chanted flatteries, he gave orders: "Ho there! Discover their line of retreat. Before they establish themselves in a fort, I will be at their heels and will kill them."

At this point Live-Strong reflected: "If the enemy simply go home after learning what we have done, I shall have accomplished nothing. For the proverb says:

The first or second evidence  
 Of genuine intelligence  
 Is—leave a business unbegun,  
 Or, if begun, then see it done.

It would have been better not to undertake this than to see the undertaking fail. I will reveal myself by letting them hear me caw."

So he cawed with a feeble squeak. And the owls, hearing this, started up to kill him. But Live-Strong said: "Gentlemen, I am Cloudy's minister, Live-Strong, reduced to this state by Cloudy himself. Pray inform your own king. I have much to discuss with him."

So the owl-king, informed by his followers, came, beheld with astonishment the scars of many wounds, and said: "Well, sir! How did you fall into this condition? Tell me."

And Live-Strong said: "O King, listen. Yesterday that rascal Cloudy, seeing how many crows you had killed, was distracted by wrath and grief, and started for your fortress. Whereupon I said: 'You should not march against him. For they are strong, and we are weak. Now the proverb advises those who wish to thrive:

Do not, even in thought, offend  
Stronger foes who will not bend;  
They will feel no loss or shame;  
You will die, a moth in flame.

You should seek peace by paying him tribute.' When he heard this, he was made furious by rascally advisers, suspected me of being a partisan of yours, and reduced me to this state. Therefore your royal feet are now my sole refuge. In a word, so long as I can stir, I will conduct you to his abode, and cause the total destruction of the crows."

On hearing this, Foe-Crusher took counsel with the counselors who had served his father and his grandfather. They were five in number, and their names were Red-Eye, Fierce-Eye, Flame-Eye, Hook-Nose, and Wall-Ear.

So first he questioned Red-Eye: "My worthy sir, what is to be done under the circumstances?" And

Red-Eye said: "O King, what is there to consider here? Kill him without hesitation. For the proverb says:

Kill a weakling, lest he grow  
Hard to smite;  
Later, with augmented power  
He will fight.

Besides, you know how common people say: 'A lost chance brings a curse.' And again:

He who will not when he may,  
When he will, he shall have nay.

And this too:

The lighted funeral pile you may  
Break up and fling apart;  
But love, when torn and patched again,  
Lives in an aching heart."

"How was that?" asked Foe-Crusher. And Red-Eye told the story of

#### THE SNAKE WHO PAID CASH

There was once a Brahman in a certain place. His time was wholly spent in unproductive farming.

Now one day, toward the end of summer, the heat was too much for him, and he dozed in the shade of a tree in the middle of his field. Not far away he saw, peering over an ant-hill, a terrifying snake that thrust forward a great, swelling hood. And he reflected: "Surely, this is the guardian deity of the field, and I never paid him honor. That is why my farm-work is unproductive. I will pay him honor."

Thereupon he begged milk from somebody, put it in a saucer, went to the ant-hill, and said: "O guardian of the field! All this long time I did not know that you were living here. Therefore I paid you no honor. From now on, please be gracious to me." With this he presented the milk and went home.

Now when he came back in the morning and looked about, he found a gold dinar in the saucer. So he went there every day alone, and offered milk, receiving a dinar each time. One day, however, the Brahman went to town, instructing his son to carry milk to the ant-hill. And the boy took the milk there, set it down, and went home again.

The next day he went there, found a single dinar, and thought: "Surely, this ant-hill is full of dinars. I will kill that fellow and get them all." With this purpose, while offering milk the next day, the Brahman's boy struck the snake on the head with a cudgel. Yet somehow—for fate willed it so—the snake did not die. Instead, he furiously struck the boy with his sharp fangs to such effect that the boy died at once. And the relatives cremated him on a woodpile near the field.

On the second day the father returned. And learning from his relatives the cause of his son's death, he found the facts as stated. And he said:

Be generous to all that lives;  
 Receive the needy guest:  
 If not, your own life fades away  
 Like swans from lotus nest.

"How was that?" asked the men. And the Brahman told the story of

#### THE UNSOCIAL SWANS

There was once a king named Gay-Chariot in a certain place. He owned a lake named Lotus Lake, which his soldiers guarded carefully. For many golden swans lived there, and they gave one tail-feather apiece every six months.

Now to that lake came a great bird, all of gold. And they told him: "You cannot live among us. For we have rented this lake at the rate of a tail-feather for six months." And so, to cut a long story short, a dispute arose.

Then the great bird sought the king's protection, saying: "O King, those birds ask: 'What will our king do? We give lodging to nobody.' And I said: 'You are not very polite. I will go and tell the king.' This is the situation. The king must decide."

Then the king said to his men: "Go, you. Kill all the birds and bring them here at once." And they started immediately, obeying the king's command.

Now one old bird saw the king's men with clubs in their hands, and he said: "Well, kinsmen, this is rather unpleasant. We must all hang together. Let us fly up and away." And they did so.

"And that is why I say:

Be generous to all that lives, . . .  
 and the rest of it."

So in the morning the Brahman took milk again, went to the spot, and called out, in an effort to win the snake's confidence: "My son met the death that suited his intelligence." Then the snake said:

The lighted funeral pile you may  
Break up and fling apart;  
But love, when torn and patched again,  
Lives in an aching heart.

"Thus, when he is dead, you will without effort enjoy a thornless kingdom."

Having listened to this proposal, the king asked Fierce-Eye: "My worthy sir, what is your opinion?" And Fierce-Eye said: "O King, his advice is heartless. For one does not kill a suppliant. No doubt you have heard the old story:

The dove (there mentioned) entertained  
His suppliant foeman slaughter-stained;  
Paid honor due, his guest to greet;  
And sacrificed himself for meat."

"How was that?" asked Foe-Crusher. And Fierce-Eye told the story of

#### THE SELF-SACRIFICING DOVE

A ghastly fowler plied his trade  
Of horror in a forest; made  
All living creatures hold their breath:  
He seemed to them the god of death.

He had no comrade on the earth,  
No friend, no relative by birth.  
They all renounced him; he had made  
Them do so by his horrid trade.

For you know

The dreadful wretches bringing death  
On those who love their living breath,  
With natural repulsion (like  
Fierce serpents) fill before they strike.

To snare, to imprison, and to drub  
He took a net, a cage, a club,  
And wandering daily in the wood,  
He brought all creatures harm, not good.

While he was in the wood one day,  
The sky grew black with clouds straightway;  
So wild the wind, so fierce the rain,  
It seemed the world dissolved in pain.

Then, as the heart within him quivered,  
And every limb grew numb and shivered,  
He sought where might a refuge be,  
And chanced to come upon a tree.

Now as he rested, near and far  
In sudden-clearing skies, each star  
Shone bright; and he had wit to pray:  
"O Lord, be kind to me today."

There was a dove upon the tree  
Whose nest was in a cavity;  
And since his wife was absent long,  
He grieved for her in mournful song:

"The wind and rain were very great,  
And my beloved wife is late  
In coming home. When she is not  
At home, home is an empty spot.

"The house is not the home; but where  
The wife is found, the home is there.  
The home without the wife is less  
To me than some wild wilderness.

"Some wives their life's devotion give,  
And in and for the husband live;  
Whatever man has such a wife  
Is heaped with blessings all his life."

From fowling-cage the female dove  
Had caught the speech of grief and love;  
And she was deeply gratified,  
And to her husband thus replied:

"No woman earns the name of bride  
Whose husband is not satisfied.  
If he is happy, she may know  
The gods she venerates are so.

"That woman should be burned entire  
(Like vines that fade in forest-fire  
While blossoms drop from clustered side)  
Whose husband is not satisfied."

And she continued:

"Oh, harken heedfully, my dear;  
My words are good for you to hear;  
Though it should cost your life, defend  
The guest who seeks in you a friend.

"Here lies a fowler; as a guest  
He asks for comfort at your nest.  
Since cold and hunger press him sore,  
Begudge him not from honor's store.

And the Scripture says:

"Whoever does not give his best  
To cheer the late-arriving guest  
Will see his merit borne away,  
And for the other's sins will pay.

"Oh, let no hate against him rise  
Who caged the wife you idolize;  
It is my sins of former lives  
That, fateful, hold me in the gyves.

For well you know:

"Disease, and poverty, and pain,  
With woe that prison brings amain,  
Are all the fruit of one sole tree,  
Our own, our past iniquity.

"Abandon, therefore, thoughts of hate  
Deriving from my captive state;  
On virtue set your heart; and pay  
This man such honor as you may."

On listening to his darling, who  
Seemed virtue-woven through and through,  
An unknown courage fired the dove;  
He gave the fowler words of love.

"A hearty welcome, sir, to you;  
What for your service may I do?  
No more let anxious fancies roam,  
For here with me you are at home."

In answer to his kindly words  
Replied the murderer of birds:  
"Well, dove, the cold is in me still;  
Give me a remedy for chill."



The dove then brought a bonfire's sole  
Surviving ember—one live coal,  
And where a pile of dry leaves lay,  
He kindled it to fire straightway.

"Now, sir, take heart; forgetting fear,  
Resuscitate your members here;  
Alas! I cannot put to flight  
The cravings of your appetite.

"One patron feeds a thousand men;  
One feeds a hundred; one feeds ten.  
But I, whose virtue does not thrive,  
Scarce keep my puny self alive.

"Ah, if you have not in your nest  
Provision for a single guest,  
Why occupy today, tomorrow  
A nest that harbors naught but sorrow?

"I shall destroy my body, fain  
To end its living with its pain,  
That nevermore I stand confessed  
Powerless to aid a needy guest."

And thus he blamed himself, you see;  
The greedy fowler went scot-free:  
Then—"I may yet your craving sate,  
If one mere moment you will wait."

Whereat that creature free from sin,  
Joy-quivering his soul within,  
Walked round the fire, as it had been  
His cherished home, and entered in.

When this the greedy fowler saw,  
Compassion filled his soul, and awe.

He, while the dove was cooking, spoke  
What from his heart a passage broke:

"None loves his soul, 'tis very plain,  
Who smears it with a sinful stain.  
The soul commits the sin; and late  
Or soon, the soul must expiate.

"My thoughts are evil; my desire  
Is ever set on what is dire:  
It needs but little wit to tell  
I steer my course for ghastly hell.

"A moral lesson let me draw  
From what my savage spirit saw.  
The high-souled dove, that I may eat,  
Has sacrificed himself for meat.

"Henceforth let all enjoyment be  
An unfamiliar thing to me;  
I'll share the shallow water's fate  
In August; will evaporate.

"Cold, wind, and heat I will embrace,  
Grow thin and dirty, form and face,  
Will fast by every method known,  
Seek virtue, perfect and alone."

The fowler then apieces tore  
Club, peg, net, cage—and what is more,  
Set free the wretched female dove  
Who sorrowed for her perished love.

But she, released from clutches dire,  
Beheld her husband in the fire;  
Whereat she gave expression so  
To thoughts of horror and of woe:

"My lord! My love! What shall I do  
With life that drags, apart from you?  
What profit has a wretched wife,  
Without a husband, of her life?"

"For self-esteem, respect, and pride,  
The family honor paid a bride,  
Authority with all the brood  
Of servants, die with widowhood."

Now after this lamenting sore,  
This sorrow bitter evermore,  
She went where lay her heart's desire,  
Walked straight into the blazing fire.

And lo! She sees her husband shine—  
Oh, wonder!—in a car divine;  
Her body wears a heavenly gown;  
And heavenly gems hang pendent down.

While he, become a god, addressed  
True consolation to her breast:  
"The deed that you have done, is meet  
In following your husband, sweet.

"There grow upon a man alive  
Some thirty million hairs and five;  
So many years in heaven spend  
Wives following husbands to the end."

So he joyfully took her into the chariot, embraced her, and lived happily. But the fowler sank into the deepest despondency, and plunged into a great forest, meditating death.

And there he saw a forest-fire  
And entered it; for all desire

Was dead. His sins were burned away;  
He went to heaven, there to stay.

"And that is why I say:

The dove (there mentioned) entertained, . . . .

and the rest of it."

Having listened to this, Foe-Crusher asked Flame-Eye: "What is your opinion, sir, things standing as they do?" And Flame-Eye said:

"She who always shrank from me  
Hugs me to her breast.  
Thank you, benefactor! Take  
What you like the best."

And the thief replied:

"Nothing here that I should like;  
Should I want a thing,  
I'll return if she does not  
Passionately cling."

"But," asked Foe-Crusher, "who is she that does not cling? And who is the thief? I should like to hear this one in detail." And Flame-Eye told the story of

#### THE OLD MAN WITH THE YOUNG WIFE

There was once an aged merchant in a certain town, and his name was Lovelorn. To such an extent had love clouded his reason that, when his wife died, he gave much money in order to marry the daughter of a penniless shopkeeper. But the girl was heart-broken and could not bear to look at the old merchant. This, indeed, might have been anticipated.

The silvered head will sue in vain,  
 A maiden's love beseeching;  
 The maid, despising it, is fain  
 To flee afar with screeching;  
 Like Hangman's Well it causes pain,  
 Where dead men's bones are bleaching.

And furthermore:

Slow, tottering steps the strength exhaust;  
 The eye unsteady blinks;  
 From driveling mouth the teeth are lost;  
 The handsome figure shrinks;  
 The limbs are wrinkled; relatives  
 And wife contemptuous pass;  
 The son no further honor gives  
 To doddering age. Alas!

Now one night, while she was turning her back to him in bed, a thief entered the house. And she was terrified at seeing a thief, and embraced her husband, old as he was. He, for his part, felt every limb thrill with astonishment and love, and he thought: "Gracious me! Why does she hug me tonight?" Then, peering narrowly about, he discovered the thief in a corner, and reflected: "No doubt she embraces me from fear of him." So he said to the thief:

"She who always shrank from me,  
 Hugs me to her breast;  
 Thank you, benefactor! Take  
 What you like the best."

And the thief made reply:

"Nothing here that I should like;  
 Should I want a thing,

I'll return if she does not  
 Passionately cling."

"Thus advantage may be anticipated from a benefactor, thief though he be. How much more from a suppliant guest? Besides, having been maltreated by them, he will labor for our success, or for the revelation of their vulnerable point. In view of this, he should not be killed."

Having listened to this view, Foe-Crusher questioned another counselor, namely, Hook-Nose. "My worthy sir, what should be done under the present circumstances?" And Hook-Nose answered: "O King, he should not be killed. For

From enemies expect relief,  
 If discord pierce their host;  
 Thus, life was given by the thief  
 And cattle by the ghost."

"How was that?" asked Foe-Crusher. And Hook-Nose told the story of

#### THE BRAHMAN, THE THIEF, AND THE GHOST

There was once a poor Brahman in a certain place. He lived on presents, and always did without such luxuries as fine clothes and ointments and perfumes and garlands and gems and betel-gum. His beard and his nails were long, and so was the hair that covered his head and his body. Heat, cold, rain, and the like had dried him up.