FOREWORD

Volume 2

It is a source of great pleasure to me that, by being invited to write the Foreward to this volume, I have been given an opportunity of paying tribute to the memory of an old friend and a great scholar. If, here, I confine myself to the latter aspect of his character, it is at the same time impossible to abstain from associating with it recollections of a cordial friendship extending over more than forty years. It was in Calcutta, in 1880, that I first met Charles Henry Tawney, who was then Principal of the Sanskrit College and had already achieved a high reputation for Sanskrit learning. A warm friendship, fostered on both sides by similarity of tastes, and on my part by his ever-ready kindness and help, then strang up, and continued unchecked from that time till his lamented death two years ago in Camberley. A master of the Sanskrit language, and widely read in other branches of knowledge, he was an ideal translator of Somadeva's famous work, into the spirit of which he readily allowed himself to enter. The Attic salt of his fancy—a perpetual source of joy to those who were intimate with him—enabled him to reproduce the dry humour of the Sanskrit author in a sympathetic phraseology that few could equal. Whether it was such sophisms as those with which Yaugandharāyaṇa won over the simple straightforward soldier, Rumaṇvat, or such mock solemnity as that with which he tells the exploits of the two scapegrace rogues, Śiva and Māshava, in this translation we seem to hear the original author's very voice. But it was not only as a capable translator that Tawney shone. A remarkably wide range of reading enabled him to adorn his work with numerous parallels taken from the legends of other countries, and that at a time when little had been done in the scientific examination of folk-lore. Since the first volume appeared in 1880 there has been a great advance in that science, and throughout the quest, up to the present day, his version of the *Kathā Sarit Sāgara* has been an indispensable tool in the hands of inquirers, without which much that has been discovered would still remain unknown. Now, with Mr Penzer's edition, the seed then sown by him has borne—too late, alas, to rejoice the original sower—rich and ample fruit, and, as Tawney himself would have done, we can welcome his admirable additions to the original notes, bringing Tawney's information up to date and making correction of such few mistakes as the advance

of science has rendered inevitable. Besides these notes Mr Penzer has added several appendixes of really absorbing interest, in which he has summarised all the information that has up to the present time been collected regarding certain important questions connected with folk-lore and anthropology that arise in the course of editing the work. I shall refer to some of these later on, but here a general expression of appreciation cannot be omitted.

My knowledge of the subject is not sufficient to justify me in attempting to emulate Sir Richard Temple's example by giving notes on the origin and history of the many stories contained in this volume. That is a thing that I must leave to other and more capable hands; but a good part of my life was spent in fairly intimate relations with the peoples of the Ganges Valley, and I may, perhaps, be pardoned if I jot down a few disjointed reminiscences that may illuminate passages which struck me as I read through the tales and Mr Penzer's notes.

On the very first page of this volume we are told how the amorous king, Udayana of Vatsa, absorbed in the delights o fhis harem, neglected the responsibilities of his rule, and again, on page 55, a similar story is told of King Ādityasena of Ujjayinī. For India such stories are only too true to life. Over and over again does history tell us how kings have been destroyed, and how India has been lost, through the love of women. Somadeva tells us how, in each of the two cases mentioned by him his ministers succeeded in arousing the royal voluptuary to a sense of his kingly duties, and we have a pretty version of the same idea for modern times in the well known story of the poet Vihārī and King Jai Sing Mirza of Ambēr, who reigned in the seventeenth century. Jai Singh had been a mighty warrior, serving the emperor with high renown, but, in an evil moment, he wedded a girl wife of surpassing beauty. He retired with her into his inner apartments, and gave orders that any person disturbing him with official business should be blown from a gun. So matters went on for a year, and ended in dire confusion, but none of the ministers dared acquaint the king. At last the poet solved the problem by composing a verse that, while obstensibly praising the beauty of the young queen, gave no uncertain hint as to the state of affairs.[1] This he concealed among the flower petals that each day were sent into the inner apartments of the palace to form the bed of the happy couple. In the morning the paper remained stiff among the withered petals and bruised the king's body. He drew it out, read it, and at once returned to a sense of his responsibilities. he came forth, held a public court, summoned the ingenious poet and promised him a gold coin for every verse that he might bring him. As a result the kingdom was

saved, and Vihārī became a rich man; for he wrote seven hundred more verses that were later put together by his admirers and form that inimitable collection of miniature picture-poems known all over North India as the *Bihārī Satsaī* or the "Seven Centuries of Vihārī."

A sadder instance is that of the gallant Pṛithīrāj, the Chauhān monarch of Delhi. He wooed and carried off by force the fair Sanjogin, daughter of Jaichand of Kanauj. In the ensuing war Jaichand, hard pressed by Pṛithīrāj, called to his assistance the Musalmāns, who had already invaded India, and who had established themselves at Lahore. Lulled in the arms of Sanjogin, Pṛithīrāj paid little heed to the threatening storm. When he awoke it was too late. The storm had burst in all its fury, and Pṛithīrāj was defeated and slain in "The Great Battle" of A.D. 1192 at Thānesar. Sanjogin ended her life upon his funeral pyre, and Delhi became, and remained until it was captured by the English in the Mutiny, a Moslem capital.

The long story of Vidūshaka (p. 54 ff.) suggests more than one parallel with the beliefs of the Indian peasant of to-day. On page 57 Mr penzer supplies an interesting note on horses in folk-lore and their devotion to their masters. The Rājpūt *Lay of Ālhā* is full of this. Each of the heroes possesses a horse of fairy breed that saves him in many a difficult situation. For instance, Malkhān's mare, Kabūtrī, or "the Pigeon," is ridden by her master in a furious battle charge. I quote Waterfield's translation[2]:

"As the lion the kine, as the wolf the sheep,
As the schoolboy drives the ball,
So trench by trench did Malkhān leap
With his Rājpūts following all.

'If I gave thee barley in winter,
And oil in time of rain,
If Parmāl stinted thee not of milk
In thy foalhood lightsome and vain,

'Kabūtrī, my mare, my Pigeon,
Mind honour save this day,
And let not thy foot take a backward step
Whilst foes uphold the fray!'

Kabūtrī arched her brown neck free,
And they rushed on the Chauhān men;
But, where her master dealt with three,
The mare she smote down ten.

For with teeth she tore and he heels she flang
That she mad a passage wide,
And each howda she passed, in air she sprang,
That her lord might reach the side."

In India it is natural that elephants should play a rôle similar to that of horses. In folk-lore they betray, ro serve, their masters like human beings, and even converse with them in human voice. We have a striking example of this in the same *Lay of Ālhā*. Dasrāj's elephant, Pachsāwaḍ, has been carried off by his enemy, Karinghā, and years later, when Dasrāj's sons, Ālhā and Ūdan, with their cousin, Malkhān, wage a war of vengeance on their father's murderer, we find Pachsāwaḍ faithfully serving his new masters, Jambay and his son Karinghā, and aiding in the capture of Ūdan. On hearing the news, Devī, Dasrāj's widow, hastens to the battle-field and accosts the elephant[3]:

"A mother's yearning filled her breast,
For fear she nothing shrunk;
As it were a cow her calf caressed,
She clasped Pachasāwaḍ's trunk.

'I reared thee up in my house from youth,
And gave thee milk good store;
O little of grace, was this thy truth,
My Ūdan to bind so sore?'

At her words a shame o'er Pachsāwaḍ came,
'I was pledged to the king Jambay;
I have eaten his salt, 'twis in me no fault
I should bind thine Ūdan Ray.

'Were Malkhān now to the battle sear,

He would soon set Ūdan free.'"

Following Pachsāwaḍ's advice, she dispatches Malkhān to the field, and he challenges Karinghā, mounted on Pachsāwaḍ, with Ūdan as his prisoner, to mortal combat. Karinghā orders his Mahout to charge upon Malkhān:

"The driver laid on strokes well told,
Not a step Pachsāwaḍ went;
His trunk between his tusks he rolled,
And down on his knees he bent.

And Ālhā then with all his men
Came charging o'er the plain;
With a battle shout their swords flashed out,
Like the sweep of the hurricane.

'Pachsāwaḍ doth play me false to-day;
He quits the foremost line';
Karinghā's soul was troubled sore,
And round he turned his eyne.

Then straight he bade Papīhā[4] bring,
And lighted down to ride;
From his courser's back did Malkhān spring,
And sat by Ūdan's side.

Ūdan unbound he laid on the ground,
And Rupnā Bendulā[5] led;
Queen Devī down from her litter came,
And worshipped Pachsāwaḍ's head.

With sandal free, so fair to see,
She painted his frontal wide;
'Behold I entrust my sons to thee,
Now help in this perilous tide.

‘Lo, Ālhā, here thy father’s breast,
Mount up, my son, and ride’:
He climbed, and stood on the painted wood
And sat as he grasped the side.”

In this way, Pachsāwaḍ having returned to his former allegiance, the battle is resumed, and ends with the villain Karingaā’s satisfactory death at the hands of Malkhān.

Again, the fatal brides of the same story of Vidūshaka (pp. 69 and 74), whose husbands die one after the other on the wedding night, have their counterpart in Kāshmīrī legent of the present day.[6] Here, however, it is a python, issuing from the princess’s mouth, not a visiting Rākshasa, who kills the bridegroom. He is duly slain by the here, who, like Vidūshaka, wins the lady for his wife, and, we hope, lives happy with her ever after.

On page 81 ff., in his note on Rāhu, the demon of eclipse, Mr Penzer tells us how, in the Indian Central Provinces, he is the deity of the sweeper cast. There can be no doubt about Rāhu being an aboriginal god, who has been borrowed by the Indro-Aryans as a demon, but who still retains his divine character among the non-Aryan, or semi-Aryan, lowest classes. In Northern India he is the god of the Dusādhs, a degraded caste, and is the object of a remarkable ceremony of fire-worship. On certain festal days a long trench is filled with burning coals, on which the devotees walk barefoot without apparently receiving any harm.[7]

Cutting off the nose of an unfaithful wife, as narrated on page 88, is still practised in India. An old friend, a Civil surgeon in Bihār, told me that he had more than once sewed on the nose of an erring spouse. There is a well-authenticated story that a woman once came to a surgeon with her severed nose. There was no time to be lost, so there and then, in the bungalow verandah, he set her on a table, and laid down beside her the severed portion while he prepared the surface of the wound. A watchful crow interfered with the operation, flew down and carried off the tasty piece of flesh, so that the unfortunate patient had to go noseless for the rest of her days. The moral, of course, is that spouses should remain faithful, or else, if this is impossible, that crows should not be encouraged in the neighbourhood of Indian hospitals.

In the story of Kārttikeya (p. 101) we are told how Kāma—the Indian God of Love—was consumed by a glance of the irate Śiva, but was allowed to be born again—without a body—in the minds of animate creatures. We shall see later on

how the curse was removed, and how Kāma received bodily form in the shape of Kṛishṇa's son, Pradyumna; but here I may mention that this story of his having no body seems to be an interesting example of false folk-etymology. One of his names was "Ananga," which was popularly explained as *an-anga*, or "in-corporeal"; but, as Professor Konow has pointed out,[8] the word has probably an altogether different meaning, which can hardly be given in these pages. Popular etymology has dived it wrongly, and has thus given birth to a pretty legend that has inspired some of the most famous poetry of India.

Mr Penzer, on p. 117 *ff.*, has given an important note on nudity in magic. In India the ceremonial use of nudity is especially prevalent in the north-east, where the population is largely of Tibeto-Burman origin. For instance, in Rangpur—a Bengal district bordering on Assam—in time of drought, the women set up by night a plantain-tree in honour of a non-Aryan god named Hudum Deo, and dance round it naked, singing obscene songs.[9] Mr Penzer refers to a similar custom among the Meithei women of Manipur, who also are not of Aryan stock; and in Assam and parts of Bengal, when one person wishes to insult another, he makes himself naked before him. When I was a magistrate in Murshidabad a complainant who was angry at having failed to prove his case, met his enemies on the way home and insulted them in this manner. I shall never forget the speechless fury of these men when they came to me about it, although they had previously borne the abuse and perjury in the witness-box with unmoved faces. Perjury was a thing to be expected, and could be met in the orthodox manner by counter-perjury,—but this conduct was breaking the rules of the game. In an Assam bazaar, when two old crones fall out there is a race between them as to who can disrobe first, in order to win a battle that had begun with only wordy warfare.

The use of iron in the birth-chamber to scare away evil spirits, described by Mr Penzer (p. 166 *ff.*), is, I believe, universal in India. I have come across it as far north as Kashmīr, where, as elsewhere, not only is iron found in the lying-in room, but the woman's drink is water in which a piece of red-hot iron has been quenched.[10] This might be supposed to be a kind of rude tonic, but the superstition regarding the metal as a demon-scarer shows its true nature.

On page 192 we are told how Śaktideva was swallowed by an enormous fish and afterwards rescued. this, as Mr penzer shows, is a common feature in Indian stories, but the *locus classicus* is the tale of Kṛishnṇ's son, Pradyumna. We have seen above how Kāma had been consumed by Śiva and condemned for ever to be

bodiless. The curse being remitted, he was born again as Pradyumna. His wife Rati, who all these ages had been searching for him without success, was shortly before this born as Māyāvatī, and became the wife of a demon named Śambara. Śambara, hating Kṛishṇa, stole Pradyumna while yet a babe and cast him into the sea. There he was swallowed by a great fish, which was afterwards caught and came into Śambara's kitchen. The child wad found inside it and was taken care of and reared by Māyāvatī. When he grew up the pair learnt from Nārada that they were respectively Kāma and Rati, and so Pradyumna killed Śambara, and, taking Māyāvatī with him, returned to his parents. The whole story is told in detail in the *Bhāgavata Purā*
ña.[11]

Mr Penzer has a most interesting note on the sacred cow of the Hindūs. He is inclined to look upon the Hindū veneration of this animal as dating from prehistoric times. Now it is a curious fact that, north of Kashmīr, there is the important Dard tribe of Shiṇs, the members of which loathe cows. The inhabit the country round Gilgit, and once extended far to the east, into Tibet. These people are certainly of Aryan stock, but, in my opinion, are not Indo-Aryans. They probably came, independently of the great Indo-Aryan migration, into their present seat from the north, over the Pāmīrs. To these people the cow, so far from being sacred, is abhorrent. This has been noted by more than one observer.[12] For instance, Drew says:

"They hold the cow in abhorrence; they look on it much in the same way that the ordinary Muhammadan regards the pig. They will not drink cow's milk, nor do they eat or make butter from it. Nor even will they burn cowdung, the fuel that is so commonly used in the East. Some cattle they are obliged to keep for ploughing, but they have as little as possible to do with them; when the cow calves they will put the calf to the udder by pushing it with a forked stick, and will not touch it with their hands."

Here we have apparently an ancient taboo among non-Indian Aryans, contrasted with the sacredness attributed to the same animal by their Indian cousins; and this leads us to the consideration that in prehistoric times, before the Indo-Aryan invasion, the still united Aryans looked upon the cow as subject to certain taboos, which developed independently on two separate lines, into the complete taboo of the Shiṇs, and into the reverence of a sacred animal among the Indo-Aryans.

I have much more that I could write about this interesting volume, but considerations of space compel me to restrict myself to Mr Penzer's very full treatment of the legends about poison-damsels in his important Appendix 10. It is curious how the different versions of the story current in widely distant parts of India agree even in small details. Pr Penzer (p. 301) quotes Barbosa's account of Maḥmūd of Gajarāt, who was so poisonous that "when a fly touched him, as soon as it reached his flesh it forthwith died and swelled up." Wh have also read on page 284 how Chāṇakya saved Chandragupta from a poison-damsel who had been sent to him by Rākshasa, but we are not told how he detected her poisonous character. We learn this, however, from another work written in Bihār—the *Purushaparīksha* of the poet Vidyāpati Ṭhakkura, who flourished in the Fourteenth century. He too, in chapter xx of his work, tells the story of Chāṇakya, and describes how he recognised the dangerous nature of the girl by noting that *when flies settled on her to sip her perspiration they fell down dead*.

Perhaps I may add a few instances of my personal experience regarding the effects of opium to the very interesting account given by Mr Penzer in the same appendix. Most of my Indian service was in the poppy-growing districts of Bihār, and for part of the time I was in charge of the Opium Department. I found ample evidence that among the millions of people with whom I was brought into contact the number of confirmed opium-sots was very small indeed. As for the educated classes, I have often been told that a man, after he has passed his fortieth year, should eat opium in moderation, merely to keep him in good health; and, though I have had hundreds of officials under me, I can remember only two of them who were slaves to the habit. One of these managed to do his work, if not brilliantly, at least efficiently, and lived to retire on a pension, when I lost sight of him. The other was once found asleep in his office and was threatened with dismissal. He was able to pull himself together and the offence was not repeated. As for the peasantry, every little cultivator in the opium districts kept back a small quantity of the drug, which he had to hand over to Government. This he stored at home as a family medicine, and took a little of it when he felt out of sorts. It may in fact be said that the people of Bihār, owing to generations of use, have as a body become immune to the evil effects of the drug. The evils that do arise from its use are seen in the case of its introduction among a population hitherto unaccustomed to it and, hence, not immune. Here its ravages are terrible, and total prohibition, as in the case in Burma, is the only remedy.

It will be seen, therefore, that in the case of opium there is evidence that its use through many generations makes consumers immune to its evil effects, and that the power of restricting its use within the limits of moderation appears to be an hereditary habit acquirable by an entire nationality. That this immunity, as in the case of snake-charmers' traditional immunity to cobra poison, was an observed fact familiar to the Indian mind can easily be conceived, which strengthens Mr Penzer's explanation of the origin of the legend of his poison-damsels.

I have now trespassed more than enough on Mr Penzer's kindness and on the space allotted for this Foreword. I therefore conclude with again congratulating him on his success in honouring my old friend's *magnum opus* by the preparation of this edition with such competent and, at the same time, such reverent hands.

GEORGE A GRIERSON.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Bihārī Satsaī, 630. <back>

[2] The *Lay of Ālhā* (Oxford University Press, 1923), p. 234. <back>

[3] P. 120. <back>

[4] Papīhā was the name of Karinghā's horse. <back>

[5] Bendulā was the name of Ūdan's horse, and Rupnā here acts as squire. <back>

[6] See *Hātim's Tales* (London, 1923), p. 69 ff. For numerous other variants of the Tobit legend see Groome, *Folk-Lore*, vol. ix, p. 226. <back>

[7] See Risley, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, I, 254, and also page 169 of this work. <back>

[8] In the *Wackernagel Festschrift*, p. 1 *ff*. The word is probably merely an intensive form derived from the root *añj*, "anoint." <back>

[9] See the present writer in *Journ. As. Soc. Bengal*, vol. xlvi, Pt. I, p. 188. <back>

[10] Cf. *Islām in India*, p. 23. <back>

[11] X, lv. See also *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, Wilson-Hall trans., v, 73 *ff*. <back>

[12] *E.g.* Drew, *Jummoo and Kashmir*, 428; Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, 37; Shaw, "Stray Arians in Tibet," *Journ. As. Soc. Bengal,* xlvii, Pt. I, 29. <back>

END