

The traveller, who through the lust of a bracelet, sank in deep mire and being caught by an old tiger, lost his life.

The pigeons asked how it was ; whereupon he related—

#### FABLE 1.

Once while roaming in the southern forest I saw—A certain old tiger, having bathed and taken Kusa grass in his paw, used to address (the passers by sitting) on the margin of a lake (thus)—“Ho, ho, travellers, take this gold bracelet.” Then a certain traveller, attracted by greed, thought to himself—This happens by good luck. But I must not proceed in a matter where there is personal risk. For,

Although a desired object be obtained from an undesirable source, the result is not good ; even nectar (or sweet-food), which is contaminated with poison, leads to death.

But an attempt to get wealth is in every case, attended with peril. And it is said in connection with this—

Without embarking upon an adventure a man does not see good fortune ; but if he does embark upon it and lives (survives it), he see it.

Let me therefore carefully see it. He said aloud—‘Where is thy bracelet ?’ The tiger stretched forth his paw and shewed it. The traveller said—How am I to trust thee who art ferocious ? The tiger replied—Listen, O traveller. Formerly, indeed, in the days of youth, I was extremely wicked. On account of my slaughter of many a cow and man, my sons and wife perished ; and I am without issue. I was then advised by a holy man to practise charity and do such other holy deeds. Following his counsel, I am now in the habit of bathing and giving gifts ; I am old and have lost my nails and teeth ; how can I not be an object of confidence then ! For,

- P. 7. Sacrificing, studying one’s prescribed portion (of the Vedas), charity, penance, truthfulness, patience, forgiveness and freedom from avarice—this is the eightfold way of doing religious duties as laid down in the Smritis. — 8.

Out of these the first four may be practised even for display, while the last four are found in the magnanimous-hearted only.

And so great is my freedom from desire, that I wish to give away, to any body whatsoever, the gold bracelet although secure in my hand. Yet the (indiscriminate) talk of the people