

some cranes; and in a hole at the foot of the tree lived a serpent who used to eat their little ones. Now a certain old crane, hearing the wail of the cranes afflicted with grief, said—Get some fish and have them spread one by one in a line from the burrow of the mungooses to the hole of the serpent. Then by the mungooses coming here, being attracted by the food, the serpent will necessarily be seen and killed on account of their natural antipathy. Now this being done what was expected came to pass. But the mungooses heard the cry of the young cranes; so after that they mounted the trees and ate the young ones of the cranes. For this reason we say—While thinking out a remedy a wise man, &c. On seeing you borne along by us the people must say something. Hearing that if you will give a reply your death is certain. So, all matters considered, you should stay here.

The tortoise replied—What? Am I a fool? I will not say anything. Then the plan being put into execution, all the cow-herds observing the tortoise in that situation ran after him and exclaimed:—Among them one said—If this tortoise falls he should be roasted just here and eaten. Another said—He should be dressed on the spot and eaten. A third said—We will take him home and eat him. On hearing those harsh words the tortoise, full of rage and forgetting his original resolve, said—You shall eat ashes. But just as he uttered these words he fell down and was killed by the cow-keepers. Hence I say—That fool who does not, &c. Now the crane, employed as a spy, came there and said—My lord, just at the beginning I had said it was necessary to search the castle every moment. You did not do that: and so the fruit of your neglect to attend to it (my warning) has been experienced. As to the burning of the fortress it was done by a crow named Meghavarṇa at the instigation of the minister, the Vulture. The king, sighing, said—

He, who puts confidence in his enemies either for affection (shown) or a friendly act done, is awakened (roused to stern reality) when ruined, like a man sleeping when fallen from the top of a tree.

63. The spy said—When, having effected the burning of the castle, Meghavarṇa went away, Chitravarṇa being pleased said—Let this Meghavarṇa be installed king of this Karpura-dvīpa. For it is said—