

On hearing the voice of Citragrīva outside, Hiranyaka came out and felt sorry for the plight of the doves. The rat pointed out that nobody could oppose fate and proved it with illustrations. He added :—"Though elephants and cobras are mightier and fiercer than men, it is because of fate that they are being controlled by smaller people than they themselves. Hiranyaka cut to pieces the threads of the net and set the doves free. Next day the doves flew away to their places. Seeing the generosity shown by the rat, the crow wanted to be friendly with the rat. The crow mentioned this to the rat. But the rat refused to be friendly thinking that it was a ruse to get him killed for his food. But the crow promised to be grateful for ever to the rat for saving the doves which belonged to the community of birds to which the crow also belonged. But the rat retorted that gratitude was a quality which was absent in any living being and generally harm was the reward for any favour done. The crow was greatly grieved to hear the words of Hiranyaka and told him that he (crow) would commit suicide if the rat did not take him as his friend. At last the rat took pity on the crow and they became friends. Time passed on and then there broke out a famine in the land. The crow decided to shift his abode and told the rat about it. He said he was going to a lake on the banks of which lived a friend of his, a tortoise. The tortoise, he added, would fetch for him from the lake plenty of fish to eat. The rat was also affected by the famine and so he also decided to accompany the crow. The crow took the rat in its beak and they both reached the lake where lived the tortoise named Manthara. The crow introduced Hiranyaka to the tortoise and the tortoise asked him the reason why he left his previous abode.

The rat said:—"There was a bhikṣu (one who lives on alms) named Cūḍākarna living in a house in my place. He used to eat only what was required to maintain life in him. He would cook his own food and keep the remains everyday in his kitchen. I used to eat that food and live. Then one day another Sannyāsin named Brhatsphik (Viṇākarna) came to this house. Every night Viṇākarna used to read the Purāṇas to Cūḍākarna. Cūḍākarna would sit and make a sound on the bow kept nearby to drive me away. The first time he did so Viṇākarna who was reading resented the interrupting sound and asked Cūḍākarna why he made it. He then explained that it was intended to drive away the rat coming to steal the food. I was forced to starve and I became lean and weak. Even rivers would go dry if there are no rains. Only those with wealth would have friends. Begging is a nuisance to others. Everywhere it is important to acquire good and faithful friends. When a good man is in danger only good men rush to help him. When an elephant falls into a pit it is always another elephant which comes to its rescue. Therefore I desire to make friends with you."

All the three, the crow, the rat and the tortoise lived together happily. Then one day a deer named Citrāṅgada escaping from a hunter came frightened to their midst and started living with them. One day the deer which went in search of food did not return even after dusk and so the crow went in search of the deer and found it trapped in a hunter's net. The crow informed the rat about it and the rat immediately came and started gnawing at the strings of the net. In the mean-

time the tortoise desirous of knowing the plight of Citrāṅgada crawled to the place of accident. The rat had already torn to pieces the net and the crow and the rat said that it was unwise of Manthara to have come so far crawling as there was danger from the hunter coming to the place soon. Before the deer could endorse the views of his friends the hunter came to the scene. The deer, the crow and the rat escaped. The hunter saw the crawling tortoise and caught it. Binding it with a string the hunter placed it on the ground. In the meantime the friends of Manthara who had escaped hit upon a plan to rescue the tortoise. The deer lay down pretending to be dead at a place far away from the place but within the sight of the hunter. The crow sat perched on its body as if pecking at its flesh. The hunter saw it and went to take the dead body of the deer. The moment the hunter turned away from the tortoise the rat went and cut the string binding the tortoise and set it free. Before the hunter reached the deer it ran away. So all were saved. This is the benefit of having good friends.

3) *Sandhivigraha (Peace and war)*. We must make friends with people only after knowing them well. There was once a big banyan tree in a forest which was inhabited by many crows. Their leader was a crow named Meghavarṇa. About three kilometres away from this tree was another banyan tree on which lived a number of owls. Their leader was an owl named Amardana. The crows and the owls were great enemies.

One day Amardana king of the owls with a large army of a lakh of his subjects attacked the crows at night. The crows could not see at night and so all the crows excepting a few of the top ones were killed. Meghavarṇa, the king, and his ministers, Uddipaka, Sandipaka, Anudipaka and Cirañjivī and a few other subjects were the only ones who escaped from there somehow. They sat in council at a place and thought of the ways and means to wreak vengeance on the owls. Uddipaka said that when the strength of the enemy was great it was advisable to move away to another place, or to seek the aid of mighty people or to surrender to the enemy. It was the nature of dogs to leave one's place and go to another place, Sandipaka said. Others also were of the same opinion. Cirañjivī alone did not express any opinion and so the king asked him why he was sitting silent.

Cirañjivī said:—"Oh King, we became enemies of the owls because of our bad tongue. I shall tell you the story of an ass which met with its death because of its bad words. Once a washerman had a donkey to carry his load of clothes to and fro. The poor washerman did not have sufficient earnings to feed the donkey well and so he let it loose to go and eat of its own accord to appease its hunger. The donkey started going to the fields of other people and eating their grains. People started hurting the donkey and so the washerman did a clever thing. He covered the donkey with the hide of a tiger and let it loose. People mistook it for a tiger and did not dare to go near and hurt it. Then one day a farmer keeping watch over the fields at night felt suspicious of the fake tiger and covering himself with a blanket and with a bow and arrow in his hand stealthily approached the donkey. The poor donkey mistook the farmer for a she-donkey and brayed and approached