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THE TWO BROTHERS.

A Folk-Tale of Kashmir.

Happily passed the days in the pulace, for the King was intensely fond of his wife, who thoroughly reciprocated his affection, while their children, two handsome boys, were clever, good and obedient, thought nobody equal to their parents throughout the wide, wide world. In such a household happiness was obliged to reign.

Every morning His Majosty was accustomed to sit with his wife for a while in one of the verandahs of the palace, during which quiet time together they were often interested in watching a pair of hirds carrying food to their younglings. One day they noticed a strange female bird flying with the other towards the nest and carrying some thorns in her bill. Curious to know what has happened, the King ordered one of the attendants to climb the tree and inquire, when it was discovered that male bird had lost his consort and therefore had taken to himself another, and the new bird, not liking to have to work for a nest of younglings which she had not hatched, thought that she would fetch them some thorns to eat and get rid of them, which she did, and the little birds were choked and died. All of them were seen lying-over the corpse

of their mother. When the King and Queen heard this they were both very sad. "Is this the way with us and with

the birds?" asked the King. "Yes," replied the Queen. 'But may it never be so in our case. Promise me, my beloved, that if I die first you will never marry again."

"Give me your hand, my darling," said the King. "I promise never to take to myself another wife. lest this same misfortune should happen to our sons that has come upon these poor young birds."

Then was the Queen comforted, and loved the King more than ever before. Strange to say, not long after this little incident Her Majesty, died. What a grici it was to the Kingi People thought for some time that he would also die, so much did be grieve over her death. At length, however, he railied and again occupicd himself in the affairs of the country. When a convenient space o. time had elapsed, the wazirs and mated." courtiers and other great men of the place commissioned some of their number to speak about marrying again. As will be inagined, this proved a most difficult and disagrecable task. At first His Majesty would not see them, but they persisted in their request till be promised to reconsider the matter, and at last consented. One of the chief wazir's daughters was proposed and accepted, and the marriage was celebrated.

Unhappy day! As was expected, the new Queen soon became jealous of the

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them. They tried hard to please her by anticipating her wants and never crossing her wish in any matter, but all in vain The Queen hated them and longed for the day when she could secure their ruin and banishment, She bided her time till she saw that the King was exceedingly fond of her and would do anything for her, and then she began to malign the Princes, saying how very disobedient and very abusive they were to her and how she could not have

endured their behavior if the King

had not been good and kind to her.

The King was exceedingly angry when

he heard this, and immediately gave

orders for the Princes to be secretly taken to a jungle and slain Never having lacen accustomed to question even their father a orders, the two young fellows went gladly with the soldiers. They knew not of their father's cruel order, but thought that he wished them to ride and see the jungle When, therefore, on reaching the place the soldiers drew their swords and made as if to strike them, they were much surprised, and

knew not what to do. "O God belp us!" the cried, and their cry was accepted. The stern hearts of the soldiers were filled with pity, so they dared not slay them. but let them go Irco.

Full of thankfulness to the Deity for His mercy towards them, the Princes rodo off on their horses as fast as they could and determined never to return to their own country again. They rode on far and fast till they came to a spring of water nure like crystal, by which they thought they would dine and rest. They arranged that both should not be askep at the same time, lest a robber or a wild beast should come and destroy them and the horses. So the elder brother went to sleep first and the younger brother watched While he watched, two birds named Sudabror and Budabror came and perched on a tree close by and began talking to one another.

"See," said Budabror, "there are two singing birds in that tree overhanging the spring. Do you know what kind of birds they are? '

"Yes," replied Budabror, "they are the most wonderful birds. I have heard say that whosoever eats the flesh of one of them will become King, and whosoever eats the flesh of the other will become a wazir and the wealthiest man in the world, for every morning he will find underneath him in the place where he lay seven jewels whose value cannot be esti-

The younger Prince was very much excited when he heard these words, and at once shot an arrow at them and killed them. He cooked both the birds, took one himself and left the other for his brother, who ate it as soon as he awoke. The following morning they resumed their journey On the way the younger suddenly remembered that his whip had been left behind. This whip be valued very highly and therefore went back for it. He found it by the spring, and was going to dismount and pick it up, when a great dragon came out of the water and bit his foot, so that he fell down senseless. In this

state be continued for hours. Meanwhile his brother got very tired of waiting and therefore went on, thinking his brother would overtake him before evening. He reached a certain city where he heard the King had recently died, and the people were in a state of great excitement concerning his successor. It appears that they had a custom of sending round an elephant to select their kings for tuent. Whomsoever the elephant acknowledged, they acknowledged, be he rich or poor, learned or ignorant, of their own country and speech or of another. This elephant was circumambulating the place when the elder Prince arrived, and on seeing him bowed at once before him Accordingly he was proclaimed King of the country and conducted to the palace.

The younger Prince was restored to life in the following manner. Living near the spring was a logi, who was accustomed to visit it once every six months for the purpose of getting a little water thence When he reached the place and saw the lifeless body of the young man he was filled with pity. He knew that the dragon of the spring had done this, so he muttered an incantation and the waters dried up and the monster appeared

"Why have you emptied the spring?" said the dragou

"Because you have slain this young men. Why did you do this thing?" the logi replied.

"O jogit" said the dragon, "there were two birds that often visited this

To The....

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place and filled the air with their zones. The Prince Lilled them Therefore did I bite him."

"You have done whitelity." said the logi. "Listen I stract the poison from the man's fast, a that he Ineth again, or you half die "

"Forgive me," said the dragon, "and I will oboy you " Thus the Prince was restored to

life. After thanking the jogs he departed. However, is outertunately, took the wrong road and instead of following after his proteer arrived at a cillage that was the re-ort of a hard of flerce ruther. By chance he said at the lance of one of these rubbers and as ed for hospitain which was readily granted. This gave him a most hearty welconstand provided him with the best of shoet but, aixs, was a be went to lie down at night the hed stead broke and he descended right amough the flooring, down into a toath-ome dungeon Poor fellow) he would have died there if the daughter of one of the robbers had not seen him and latten in fore with him. She thoroughly knew the ins and out- of the boure, and goessing that the stranger had been precipitated into the grave, an they called it, she secretly visited him and carried him some food, in return for which the Prince gave ber seven jewels. This she did every morning and got seven jewels each time During these visits the girl's love increased rapidly, and as she was very beautiful and very clever, the Brince reciprocated her affection and promised to marry her as soon as possible. At last they both gotfree from the place and escaped as last as the swilt horse would carry: them to the sesside, where they immediately embarked on a ship about to sail

Among the other passengers inthat ship was a merchant who was so captivated with the girl's beauty that be desired to kill the Prince and make her his wife Accordingly one. day while he and the Prince were. playing nard in the prow of the vese sel, the Prince bent forward over the ship, when the merchant gave him a push Fortunately his wife happened to be standing by one of the park holes, and, seeing her husband's body, appearing, put out her hands and saved him There was great sorrow among the crew and the passengers when the report was circulated that the Prince had fallen overboard, for the Prince had ordered his wife not to discover the matter till there reached their destination. The merchant professed to be more grieved than any one except the beautiful wife-However, he soon recovered and commenced paying attentions to bee and at length asked her to marry him. The girl put him off for six mouths, saying that if she did not hear anything about her husband during that time she would be his wife.

In a few months the ship reached ber destination, where the Prince revealed himself, and charged the merchant with attenuiting to drawn him, whereon the man was put in prison to await his trial lig a remarkable coincidence they disembarked by the chief city of the country; over which the eldest Prince was reigning. This King was in great. solrow at the time, wondering what had become of his brother; so to comfort himself he had given arthus to his chief wazir to tell him a tale every evening. He hoped also was in thisway he should hear something of his brother, as the wazir o'iem reinted stories founded on what he bad seen and beard during the day. The day the ship arrived this waste's. daughter came down to the show and: seard the strange story of the Prince and his wife and the wicked merchant which she repeated to her lather is the evening. On the following evening he wazir related to the King what

e had heard. Where is the Prince and his wife?" equired the King, much excited. "Send for him immediately" At last have found my long-lost brotherite We can imagine what a joycous meeting there was between the two brothers They fell on each other's

neck and went The younger Prince was appointed: chief wasir of the country and the wicked merchant was banged.

In course of a few years some monsengers from their father reached the country and said that the old King was longing to see them, as he had discovered his wife's wickedness and had banished her Accordingly the two brothers started without delay to see their father. They arrived safely and saw the old man and were reconciled. Soon afterwards their father died, when the elder brother succeeded to the throne and the younger went and governed the country that belonged to the other Prince. Helle of them prospered exceedingly were famed for their skill and tice and kindness

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