

make a treaty with him. The king was not for giving up the war, and waxed angry and blustered, till his minister reminded him that any ill considered action would lead to regret, as did the Brahmins killing of the mungoose. The Brahmin Madhava lived in Uj-jain. One day his wife left him at home, to be for a short time custodian of their young child; and shortly after came an invitation to him from the king to attend a Sraddha ceremony. The Brahmin was poor and feared if he did not go at once somebody else might go in his place. Still he hesitated on account of the child. In the end he resolved to leave the child in the protection of a tame mungoose which lived in the house. So he went, and had not been long away when a cobra approached the child's bed. The mungoose killed it, and tore it in pieces in his rage. Soon after, the Brahmin came back, and the mungoose rolled at his feet for joy. But when the Brahmin saw that his mouth and feet were bloodstained, he at once concluded that the beast had killed his child; and in his wrath he killed the mungoose. When he went into his house he found the child safe and a deadly serpent torn to pieces, and then he bitterly repented his hasty and cruel deed. Do not, said the minister to the king, you in like manner give way to passion in these negotiations. The king yielded to the advice of his minister; and Vishnusarmans lessons are thus brought to a close.

There is a striking similarity between these fables, and many found in the Greek, and other branches, of Indogermanic literature. Which of these literatures has given, and which has received, and to what degree, are still vexed questions. Some scholars incline with Jacob Grimm to the opinion that many of these apologues must have had a common origin, in the distant past, before either Grecian or Indian literature was in being. Their Indian parentage is without doubt Buddhistic. Numerous Indian stories from old Buddhist books, are found in Chinese works written more than a thousand years ago, while many of the animal fables are in the Jatakas or Buddhist birth stories of which there are five hundred and fifty. Thus it is tolerably certain, that many of these stories which, in different quarters of the earth, for ages have given instruction to, and provoked mirth amongst men, are offshoots from one of the greatest of, what are called, the natural religions of the world.