

what he meant by carrying a dog about on his shoulder? The Brahmin, completely nonplussed, gave up the beast, purified himself with water, and went home. The rogues took up the goat and ate it.

The peacock-king asked the crow how he could live so long in the enemy's country. The crow said, he who works for his own ends or his master's profit, cannot afford to be nice as to what he does. The old serpent Mandaviserpa carried his enemies on his back, that he might in the end eat them. The serpent who was old, and darted after his prey with difficulty left his place in a deserted garden, crept through the broken wall, and lay dejected near the margin of a small lake. A frog saw him in this plight, and asked him why he did not look after food. The serpent whetted the frog's curiosity by saying he did not know why a frog should take an interest in his ill-fated life, and then said he had bitten and killed the son of a Brahmin, who smote him with a curse, compelling him thenceforth to carry frogs on his back, at their pleasure. Some of the finest passages in the *Hitopadesa* are put in the serpent's account of the death of the young Brahmin, and the accompanying reflections over life, death, and that sorrow which, in some form, is the invariable concomitant of human life. Life decays like the evaporation of water from a jar, imperceptibly, but surely. The water dries up; and each day's life brings every living being a stage nearer death. All things earthly are transient. Even friendships are rare, and of short duration. A plank may meet a plank in midocean, but never to meet again; and in like manner on the great sea of life, is the meeting of friends. As the wavelets of a river run on and never return; so, night and day, and in a stream that flows on for ever, glide away the lives of mortals. The frog told the serpent's story to the king of the frogs, who went and took a daily ride on the serpent's back. On the first day he glided along swiftly to the delight of the frog-king. On the second day his pace was sluggish, and when asked the reason, he said he was exhausted for want of food. Upon this, the frog-king gave the serpent leave to eat some of the common frogs. I accept this great favor from your majesty, said the serpent; and daily thenceforth he partook of the frogs till none of the common frogs was left; and then, he ate the king.

The minister said: And I fear lest you think with reason enough of old stories. The goose-king is a fit ally, and we should