

# STORIES AND BIOGRAPHIES FOR CHILDREN

BOOK III

DEWAN CHAND SHARMA, M.A.  
H. SUTHERLAND STARK, B.A. (*Oxon.*).

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BOOK III

BY

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## PREFACE.

These books of stories and biographies have been written for school children who read in the Middle Schools of our country. Their language has been made as simple as possible, and all the persons and stories given in them are such as will greatly appeal to Indian boys. Thus, while the stories taken from the epics of the East and other sources will give delight to our boys, the biographies of kings, prophets, reformers, soldiers, and self-made men will highly instruct them. The exercises in English grammar, vocabulary, usages, and composition given at the end of each lesson will also, it is hoped, prove very useful to students. The author hopes that the books will be welcome in every school, library, and home. He also thanks Mr. H. Sutherland Stark for kindly revising the manuscript and correcting the final proofs.



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## THE STORY OF SARVANA

We have already learned how Rama was exiled at the wish of his step-mother, Kaikeyi; and how Dashratha, his father, died of grief for him. The death of Dashratha was due to a curse that had been pronounced years earlier. How that curse came to be placed on him, is an interesting story.

Sarvana was a young boy who was very obedient and respectful. He was born of parents who became blind through old age. His father was a sage who had spent years of his life in forests in prayer and penance. His mother, too, was a very pious woman. From morning to night she worshipped God.

“We have now become old,” said his parents to Sarvana one day, “and we wish you to take us to the holy city of Benares. It is our desire that we may spend the rest of our days there in prayer.”

“As you bid, my dear father and mother,” replied Sarvana cheerfully, “I shall take you to holy Benares. There I shall also stay and devote my life to your service.” Sarvana lost no time in carrying out the wish of his old parents.



He took them soon to the sacred city.

One day, on their way to Benares, they had to pass through a deep forest. Before they could make their way through it, night overtook them. Tired and hungry, they lay down to rest on a grassy plot in the forest.

At about midnight the old couple felt thirsty. Unable to bear thirst, they sent Sarvana to fetch water for them. Sarvana, who was an obedient son, was always prepared to serve his parents. So he at once took a pitcher in his hand, and set out in search of water.

Now King Dashratha, when young, was very fond of hunting. He used to spend days and days in the forest in search of game. He was also very skilful in the use of the bow and arrow. So sure was his aim that he could shoot an object even though blindfolded.

One day Dashratha went out as usual on a hunt. He came to the same forest as that through which Sarvana and his parents were travelling. The whole day he spent in search of game. At length night fell, and he found himself far from home. So he decided to pass the night in the forest.

Being thirsty and weary, he came to a pleasant pool of water in the midst of the forest.



He ate what food he had brought with him. After drinking from the cool water of the pool, he lay down to rest beside it.

Now Sarvana, who had set out to fetch water for his old parents, came to the same pool where Dashratha had been lying down. As it was dark, those two could not see each other.

Sarvana stepped into the water to fill the pitcher. The water, as it flowed into the pitcher, made a sound. It seemed as if some wild animal were drinking from that pool.

Dashratha awoke on hearing this sound. He at once shot an arrow in the direction from which the sound came. Swiftly did the arrow fly. It pierced deep into poor Sarvana's side.

"Oh! I am wounded!" cried Sarvana in pain.

Dashratha was stunned when he heard this. It was a man's cry instead of an animal's. "Oh! what have I done!" he said to himself. He then ran as fast as his legs could carry him to the bank of the pool.

"Oh God! I am dying," continued Sarvana, crying. "I know not who has shot me dead and why. Oh, my poor parents! What will happen to you without me?"



Dashratha went near the dying man. Kneeling down beside him, he humbly said to Sarvana: "Poor boy, it is I, Dashratha, King of Ayodhia. I am sorry I have struck you down with my arrow. Ah, I came to this forest to hunt. The whole day I hunted wild beasts. Finding myself far from home, I decided to pass the night beside this pool. Then I heard a sound. I thought some wild animal was drinking water. So in the darkness I shot an arrow at the animal. Never did I think that a human being could come to this lonely forest at such a late hour. I have unknowingly harmed you. For pity's sake, please pardon me."

Then Sarvana, who had been crying in pain all this while, said to Dashratha: "Mighty King! Never mind that you have killed me, a poor boy. I am Sarvana, the son of aged parents who are a short way off in this forest. I was taking them on a pilgrimage to holy Benares. Night overtook us in this forest, and we decided to pass the night here. Then my old father and mother felt thirsty, and I came here to fetch water for them. They do not know what has happened to me. Alas! who will take care of them now?"

"O Sarvana," Dashratha answered, "what can I do for them? Please let me know your wishes."



Then Sarvana slowly said: "O King, take water to them in that pitcher, and tell them all that has happened. Pay them my respects, and ask for their forgiveness. But before you go, please draw out this arrow from my side. It pains me so much."

The King drew out the arrow. The blood flowed freely from Sarvana's wound. The unfortunate boy thus died before the eyes of Dashratha.

The King then filled the pitcher with water and ran quickly to Sarvana's old parents. At a distance he could hear them saying, "We do not know why Sarvana is late this time. He has never been so late before. Perhaps he could not find any water near by."

Then Dashratha's heart failed him. He did not know how to go near the old couple. How could he break the news of the death of their only son to them?

As he came near, they heard his footsteps. Taking him to be their son, they said, "Sarvana, where have you been so long? Do you not know that we are dying of thirst?"

Dashratha first placed the pitcher on the ground. Then falling at the feet of the old man, he said: "Revered father, I am not Sarvana.



I am Dashratha, King of Ayodhia. I came to this forest to hunt. The whole day I spent in hunting wild animals. When night came on, I felt tired and hungry. So I decided to lie down near the pool. There your dear son Sarvana came to bring water for you. As the water flowed into the pitcher, I heard a sound. It seemed as if some wild animal were drinking water from the pool. Thinking thus, I shot my arrow at it. I found it too late that I had shot your son dead. I told him how unknowingly I had killed him. I then asked for his pardon, and what his last wishes were. Before he died, he asked me to take water for you, and to convey you his respects. I now beg of you for my life."

The old couple wept bitterly when they heard this sad news. They tore their hair and beat their breasts. After some time they asked Dashratha to take them to the place where Sarvana lay dead.

So Dashratha sadly led the unfortunate parents through the dark forest to the pool. There lay the dead body of Sarvana. The aged couple kissed their dead son and wept for a long time. At daybreak they asked Dashratha to get ready to perform the last rites of Sarvana.

So Dashratha gathered together some sticks



and dry leaves. Thus he made a funeral pile. When the dead body of Sarvana was placed on the pile, the old couple also got on to it. They asked Dashratha to set fire to it.

As Dashratha set fire to the pile, the old man said to him: "Look, O King! My heart is broken to-day and I die of grief for my son. Your heart will also be broken one day in the same way. You will also die of grief for your son."

Dashratha heard in silence the painful words of the dying man. The flames of the fire rose high, and burnt to ashes Sarvana and his aged parents.

### Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Curse, pronounced, penance, devote, prepare, blindfolded, weary, pitcher, gather, pilgrimage, revered, funeral, rites.

2. Write answers to the following questions:—

What sort of boy was Sarvana? What do you know about his parents? With what object did they desire to go to Benares? Why did they stop to rest in the forest? How was Sarvana killed? How did his parents give up their lives? What curse did they pronounce on Dashratha?



3. Make three sentences of your own like each of the following:—

(a) I heard a sound *as if* some wild animal were drinking water.

(b) He was *too* weak to walk.

(c) He ran very fast *lest* he should miss the train.

4. Pick out all the pronouns in paragraph 2 and write down the nouns for which they stand. Give also the number, gender and case of the pronouns you have selected.

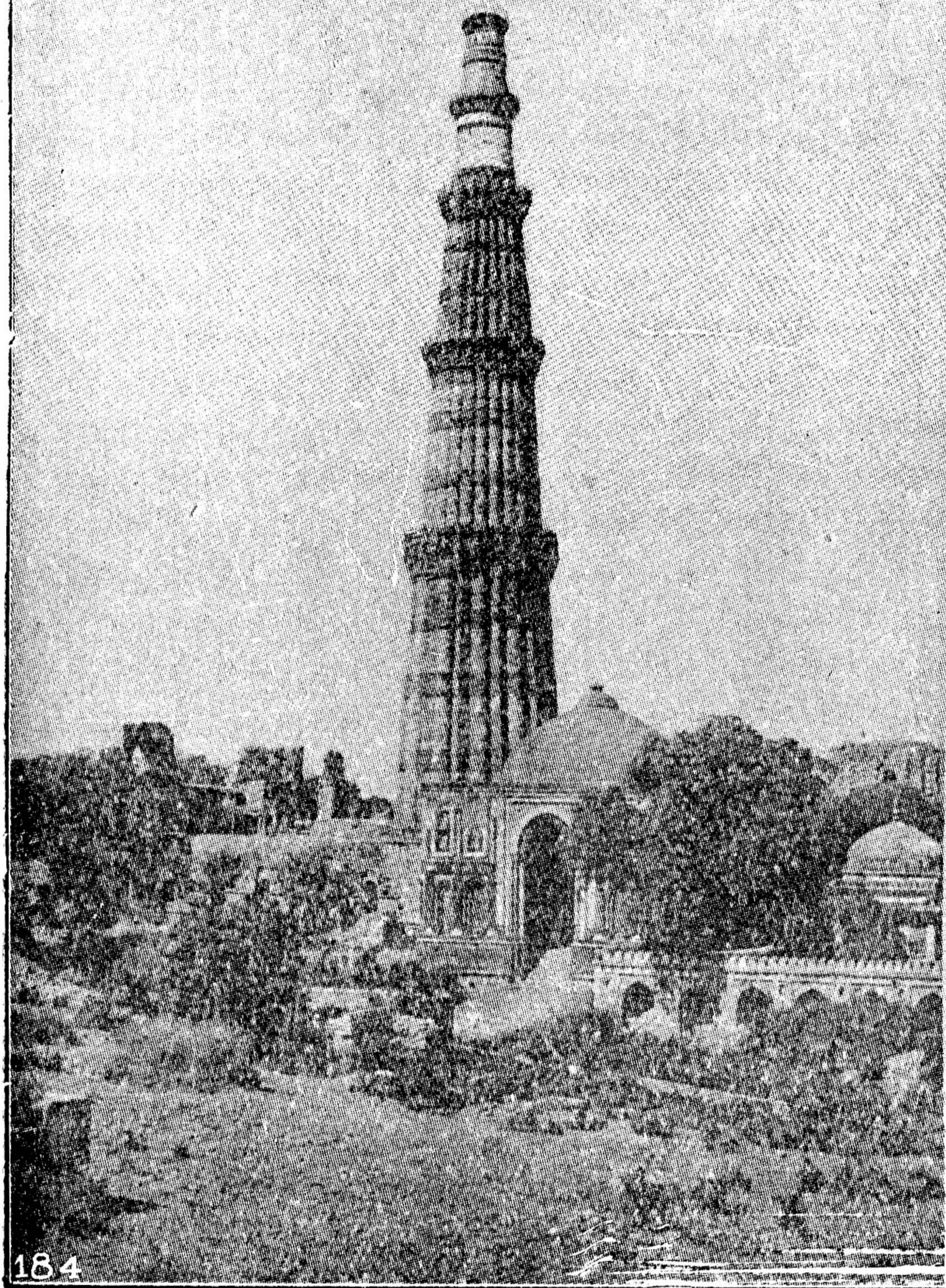
5. Give the possessive case of the following:—

Step-mother, father-in-law, children, men, horses, Thomas, George V.

6. Give a short conversation which took place between Sarvana and Dashratha after the latter had shot the former.



تہجینار دہلی





## THE QUTB MINAR

If you ever go to Delhi, you will see there many famous old buildings. Perhaps no other city in the world has so many historic buildings as Delhi. The reason is that Delhi has been the capital city of India from ancient times.

Delhi consists of seven cities, which lie in ruins for miles round the present city. Thousands of years ago, it was first founded by Raja Yudhishtira. He named it "Indraprastha." The fort of Indrapat, or Purana Kila, still stands to show the old site of Indraprastha.

The present city was built by Shah Jahan, the great Mughal Emperor of India. It was known in those days as Shahjahanabad. To adorn the city he constructed many buildings, such as the Jama Masjid, the Lal Kila, the Diwan-i-Khas, and the Diwan-i-Am. Under British rule, however, Calcutta was for a long time the capital of India.

In 1911 a grand coronation durbar was held in Delhi. At this durbar His Majesty King George V, Emperor of India, was present in



person. He issued an imperial proclamation, and transferred the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi. To house the offices of the Government of India and their staff, a new city has now been built. This new city is called "New Delhi." It is thus the eighth city bearing the name Delhi. It contains many splendid buildings.

The Qutb Minar is one of the oldest and most famous of all the buildings of ancient Delhi. It is said to be the highest tower in the world. It lies about eleven miles away from modern Delhi. It can be seen for many miles round.

More than seven hundred years ago, India was conquered by Shahab-ud-Din Ghauri, the King of Ghazni. Shahab-ud-Din himself went back to his native country after conquering India. But Qutb-ud-Din Aibak, the general of his army, remained to govern India in his name.

Qutb-ud-Din Aibak was originally a slave boy. He was once offered even for sale in the market of Ghazni. Struck with his intelligence, Shahab-ud-Din bought him at a high price. The boy gave many proofs of his intelligence to his master, and he was pleased with him. So he gave him one job after another. At last he became the general of the army. He was then the most trusted servant of his master.



Qutb-ud-Din Aibak, who was left in India as Shahab-ud-Din's viceroy, governed the kingdom well. He also extended it greatly. After his master's death he made himself King of India. He chose Delhi as his capital. There he minted coins in his own name.

To commemorate the victory of his master over India, Qutb-ud-Din built a tower at Delhi. It is known after his name as the Qutb Minar. But he had hardly finished the first storey, when death took him away. It is interesting to note that he lies buried in Lahore.

The remaining four storeys of the Minar were completed by his son-in-law and successor Altmash. Altmash, too, like his master was a slave. He also rose by his intelligence and ability, and became his master's son-in-law. He lies buried not far from the Minar.

Many years after it had been completed, the Qutb Minar was damaged by lightning. The two top storeys were, therefore, built again by Firoz Shah Tughlaq, another Emperor of India. Firoz Shah Tughlaq rebuilt not only the two top storeys, but added also a cupola or *chhatti* to it. This made the Minar still more grand. This cupola was afterwards struck by lightning and fell down. An earthquake later on damaged the other parts of



the tower.

The British Government had by then come into power. It appointed a special engineer, Major Robert Smith, to repair the Minar. He did so at great expense. The Government of India now has a special department, called the Archaeological Department. Its duty is to look after ancient monuments and historic buildings. Very large sums are spent every year on their repairs.

The Qutb Minar is about 240 feet high, and consists of five storeys. These storeys are divided by four balconies, the undersides of which are most beautifully carved. The first storey is 95 feet high, the second is 51 feet, the third 41 feet, the fourth 25 feet and the last 22 feet.

The Minar is 47 feet in diameter at the bottom, and only nine feet at the top. Thus it is broad at the bottom and narrow at the top.

The first three storeys are built entirely of red sandstone, while the last two are made partly of red sandstone and partly of marble. Several inscriptions are beautifully carved round the Minar. These inscriptions contain words in praise of the builder, Qutb-ud-Din; his master, Shahab-ud-Din Ghauri; and his successor and son-in-law, Altmash. Verses from the Quran and the ninety-nine names of *Allah* or God, are also



carved on the Minar.

A winding staircase leads to the top of the Minar. It is placed inside the building, and consists of seventy-nine steps. The view from the top is very striking. All the famous buildings are seen spread out on every side for miles and miles.

Of the buildings situated close to the Qutb Minar, the most notable is the Qutb Mosque. This mosque, as its name shows, was also built by Qutb-ud-Din Aibak. The Qutb Minar was not built only as a tower of victory. It was also a place from which people were called to prayer in this mosque.

Inside the mosque stands the famous iron pillar. It is thought to be very much older than the Mosque and the Minar. The Mosque was afterwards greatly extended by Altmash and Ala-ud-Din Khilji.

Of Ala-ud-Din's additions to the mosque, the most noteworthy is its gateway to the south. It is known after Ala-ud-Din as Alai Darwaza. It is built of fine sandstone and marble.

Another remarkable building of Ala-ud-Din is the Alai Minar in the Mosque. It was to be twice as big as the Qutb Minar. But it was never completed owing to the death of Ala-ud-Din.



### Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary :—

Historic, to adorn, coronation, proclamation, transferred, viceroy, minted, commemorate, storey, balconies.

2. Answer the following questions in writing :—

Why has Delhi a great number of historic buildings? By whom was it first founded? Name some of the buildings built by Shah Jahan in Delhi. Name some of the beautiful buildings in New Delhi. Who was Qutb-ud-Din Aibak? By whom was the Qutb Minar originally built and with what object? What other buildings are situated near about the Qutb Minar? Give some of the additions of Ala-ud-Din to the Qutb Mosque.

3. Write short notes on the following :—

Shah Jahan, Indraprastha, New Delhi, Altmash, Feroz Shah Tughlaq, Alai Minar.

4. Write an account of any historic building you have seen.

5. Form adjectives from the following :—

Emperor, year, tower, king, death.

6. Write a letter to your brother and briefly describe therein the Qutb Minar and its adjoining buildings.



## THE ONE-EYED MAN WHO OUTWITTED TEN THUGS

Once upon a time there lived in a certain village a man who was blind of one eye. Though he was wanting in the sense of sight, he was by no means helpless. In fact, he was far more clever than many other people.

One day he stood in great need of money. He tried to procure it by all possible means, but without the least success. At last he sent his son to a neighbouring town to sell his goat.

In that town there lived a group of ten Thugs. They used to cheat simple villagers and poor travellers. As the boy entered the town with his goat, one of the Thugs came up and said to him, "How much will you sell your dog for?"

The boy laughed at hearing this question and said: "Surely you must be a fool, if you cannot see any difference between a goat and a dog!"

"Very well," said the Thug. "If you do not want to sell your dog to me, you may try other customers. Wander in the town as much as you like and tire out your legs."



The boy kept silent, and went on his way with his goat. He had not gone far, when the second Thug came up to him and spoke in the same way. After him came the third Thug; and so on till the nine of them had come.

As each of them had said exactly the same thing, the boy said to himself, "I am mistaken. My father has given me a dog to sell instead of a goat." So when the tenth Thug met him, the boy sold his goat for only two rupees. He then felt sure that the animal must be a dog.

When the boy returned home, he gave his father only two rupees as the price he had obtained for the goat. At this the One-Eyed Man flew into a rage and shouted: "A goat for two rupees! No, you must have spent the rest of the money, boy. Confess, or I shall beat you."

The boy, trembling with fear, related the full details of his meeting with the Thugs. Then the One-Eyed Man, who was a greater Thug than all the ten Thugs put together, cried: "I see, those rascals have cheated me then of my goat! Very well, I shall pay them back in the same coin."

Next day the One-Eyed Man took his donkey, and started for the town. At nightfall he came to the house, in which the ten Thugs



used to meet before parting for the night.

“Good evening, friends,” said he to the Thugs. “I have come to the town to make some purchases. Night has overtaken me and I am a stranger here. Will you, therefore, kindly give me and my donkey a night’s lodging?”

The Thugs looked at one another, and made their sign. It meant that he was a stranger whom they could cheat out of his donkey. “You are welcome, friend,” their leader replied.

The Thugs pretended to be hospitable to the stranger. They ran to bring hay and water for the donkey and food for its owner. Then the One-Eyed Man quietly slipped two rupees into the donkey’s mouth. When the animal saw grass and water, it jumped and brayed. Out dropped the two silver pieces, making a ringing sound on the floor. The man picked up the silver pieces. Kicking his donkey, he exclaimed: “Fool, why have you given me only two rupees to-day? Don’t you know that I have come all the way to buy things for my daughter’s marriage and require more money?”

The Thugs were astonished to see a donkey which gave money to its owner. They at once became anxious to buy such an animal.



“Good man,” said the Thugs to the One-Eyed Man, “pray sell this donkey to us. We shall give you as much money as you ask for it.”

“No, no,” replied the man. “I am sorry this cannot be. This is not a donkey to sell. It is the only means of my livelihood. Money is soon spent; but the money which this donkey gives has no end. It is like a piece of land which always yields new crops.”

At length after a good deal of bargaining, the Thugs bought the donkey for five hundred rupees.

The One-Eyed Man left the place the next morning. Before starting he said to the Thugs: “You must remember one thing. When this donkey goes into new hands, it requires to be well fed. It also requires to be shut up in a room for a month, before it begins to give money every day.”

The Thugs then made a big manger in a room, and filled it with grass and water. Then they shut the donkey in that room. On the thirtieth day they went to open the door. They were then full of hopes of getting money every day. But the door was so heavy that they could not move it.

“Perhaps the donkey has given out so much



money," they said to one another, "that the room is full of it. It is why the door has been blocked."

With great difficulty they broke open the door. They were surprised to find that the donkey had fallen down dead behind it. It had eaten up all the food and drunk all the water. It had then swollen up and burst and thus died.

"That rascal has cheated us of our money," they said to one another. "Let us go and teach him a lesson."

In the meantime the One-Eyed Man knew what would happen and what the Thugs would do. So he had already said to his wife: "Look here. Take a lamb's skin. Fill it with lamb's blood and tie it round your body under your dress. When I ask for refreshments, you must bring unripe melons one after another. Then I shall get angry and plunge my knife into the lamb's skin round your stomach. Then you should fall down and pretend to be dead. After a while I shall apply some snuff to your nose. At this you will sneeze and get up."

On the due date the Thugs came to him. They were full of rage, as he had expected. As they rushed into his house, the One-Eyed Man said: "Good morning, friends. How lucky, indeed, to have a visit from you! Pray sit down



and have some refreshments before we talk business."

The Thugs made signs to one another. These signs meant that there was no harm in taking refreshments. The man could be killed after taking refreshments.

The One-Eyed Man then called out his wife to bring some refreshments for his friends. She did exactly as she had been instructed to do by her husband. One after another she brought water-melons, but they were all unripe.

The man then worked himself into anger. And knife being ready at hand, he plunged it into her stomach.

She fell down at once, and a stream of blood ran out on the ground. She struggled for life as a dying person does. After a while she lay down as if dead.

The Thugs seeing this cried out, "What has he done? He has killed his wife. Let us fly in safety lest any one should accuse us of the murder."

"Do not be afraid," said the One-Eyed Rogue, more calmly. "As soon as my anger cools down, I shall bring her back to life. This is not the first time that I have done so."

After a short time, the Thugs thought that his anger had cooled. He took out a little snuff-



box from his pocket at that time and applied a pinch of snuff to his wife's nose. She sneezed several times. Presently, to the astonishment of the Thugs, she came to life again."

The Thugs were struck with wonder at the wonderful power of the snuff. "We must have it," they whispered to one another.

"Friend," the Thugs said to the Man, "the donkey gave us no money at all as you had said. We came to-day to get back our money or take your life. But we shall forgive the past injury if you will sell this wonderful medicine to us."

The One-Eyed Rogue at first refused to part with that medicine. He said that he had obtained it after years' labour. So he could not give it away. But the Thugs pressed him very much to sell it to them. So at last he sold the snuff for two hundred rupees.

The Thugs took the snuff and went home in great delight. As soon as they reached there, they divided the snuff equally amongst themselves.

To test the wonderful power of the medicine, they killed their wives at night. They tried hard to blow the snuff into the noses of their wives. But try as they might, the women could not be restored to life again. They greatly feared lest



they should be hanged for the murder of their wives. So they buried the dead bodies in their houses, and quietly left the town for good.

### Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Helpless, to procure, customers, rascals, pretending, hospitable, hay, brayed, livelihood, manger, snuff, wonderful.

2. Write sentences making use of the following phrases:—

In fact, instead of, at all, in order to, for good.

3. Answer the following questions in writing:—

Why did the One-Eyed Man send his son to the neighbouring town? Who were the Thugs? How was the boy convinced by them that his goat was a dog? What resolve did the One-Eyed Man make to revenge himself on the Thugs? How did he manage to show that his donkey yielded money? What instructions did he give to the Thugs when he left them for his home? How were the Thugs disappointed in their hopes? What instructions did he give to his wife before the Thugs visited him at his house? What use did the Thugs make of the snuff, which they had purchased from the One-Eyed Rogue?

4. Express the meanings of the following in simple words:—

(a) Though he was wanting in the sense of sight, he was by no means helpless.

(b) I shall pay them back in the same coin.



- (c) It is like a piece of land which always yields new crops.
- (d) She struggled for life as a dying person does. After a while she lay down as if dead.
- (e) They tried hard to blow the snuff into the noses of their wives. But, try as they might the women could not be restored to life again.

5. Change the following statements into questions :—

- (a) The rascal has cheated us of our money.
- (b) The Thugs used to meet at a house before parting for the night.
- (c) The donkey requires to be well fed and cared for.
- (d) One after another she brought unripe water-melons.

6. What lesson do you draw from this story? Relate any other story which teaches the same lesson.



## THE JUSTICE OF MAHMUD

Some nine hundred years ago there ruled in Ghazni a great king, named Mahmud. He was a great soldier and a brave fighter. He was also a great patron of art and learning. He built mosques and palaces, gardens and pleasure-houses, schools and libraries. Learned men from far and near came and lived at his court.

Alberuni and Firdausi lived during his time. Alberuni was a great astronomer. Firdausi was the author of a famous Persian poem, the Shah-nama. Above all, Mahmud was a wise and just ruler. There are many stories which show his great wisdom and his love of justice. Some of these can never be forgotten. Here are a few of them.

One day Mahmud was sitting in his court. Two men came, and presented to him their petitions for justice. Both of them claimed the same calf. One said that the calf belonged to him, because it had been born of his cow. The other said that he was its owner, because it was his cow and not the other man's that had given birth



to that calf. Now it was a very strange case. It stood thus.

Both the petitioners used to send their cows to graze in the same pasture-land outside their village. One day, when the cows were out, each of them gave birth to a calf. One calf died as soon as it was born. The other sucked the milk of both the cows.

It so happened that neither the owners nor the shepherds were present, when the calves were born. So both the owners claimed the living calf. As they could not decide the matter between themselves, they went to the king for justice.

Mahmud carefully listened to what the petitioners had to say. He thought over the whole matter for a while. He then ordered the cows and the calf to be taken to a stream close by. The calf was then placed in a boat, and paddled out into the middle of the stream. As soon as this was done, the real mother of the calf sprang into the water and swam after its calf. The other cow took no notice of what had happened. Thus was the case decided, to the great astonishment of all.

On another occasion Mahmud was sitting in his court, hearing petitions. A poor old widow came to him. She fell on her knees before



Mahmud and said humbly: "My lord, I am a poor old widow and have only one son. He refuses to give me food and shelter. I am, as Your Majesty sees, too old to work and earn my bread. Now what am I to do?"

Mahmud's heart was moved to pity. He at once sent for the son of the widow. "Why don't you support your mother?" Mahmud asked the young man in a stern voice. "Don't you see that she is too old to work and earn her living?"

"But I do not owe her anything," replied the young man. "I have already supported her for the last two years. Now I have a wife and a child to support and care for. My means are too slender to enable me to help my mother."

Mahmud then said to one of the servants in attendance, "Fasten a skin of water round the body of this unthankful young man. He shall pound ten seers of rice every day. If he fails to do this, he shall be whipped."

No sooner was the order given than it was obeyed. The young man could not finish even half of all this work. He got tired and left it off. He was then whipped and whipped, but all in vain. The man was too tired to work any more. At last he was carried to the king in a half-dead condition.



As the young man was brought before the king, Mahmud said to him, "Ungrateful man! do you see now how difficult it is to work with a weight round your body? Your mother carried you when you were a baby. She fed you on her own milk for many months. Then she taught you to walk and to talk. She cared for you for years till you were able to marry a wife and get a son. Shame upon you, if you are still ungrateful to your mother. Your mother's debt you can never pay, however much you try to do so. Therefore go and treat her kindly."

The young man made a low salaam to the king for his kind advice. He respected and served his mother for the rest of her life.

On another occasion Mahmud was sitting in his palace. He suddenly saw a man who had a pair of fowls in his hand. As the man saw that the king was looking at him, he made a sign. Mahmud did not understand the meaning of the sign. So he took no notice of it. Next time when Mahmud looked at him, the man made the same sign. But the king again disregarded it. The third time when the signal was made, Mahmud called the man into his presence and said to him, "Who are you? What are you doing here?"



The man answered, "My lord, I am a hunter. To-day I hunted in my own name and the Sultan's name, and killed two pairs of fowls. So I have brought one pair for Your Majesty."

Mahmud ordered the fowls to be taken from him. For the next two days the man came again with a pair of fowls each day for the king. But on the fourth day he came empty-handed. Looking very sad, he stood under the king's window.

Mahmud looked at the young man. He thought that some misfortune had surely befallen him. So he called the man into his presence, and said to him, "Why do you look sad to-day? Why are you empty-handed?"

The man replied: "My lord, I hunted to-day as usual in my name, as well as in the name of Your Majesty, and have lost my leg."

Mahmud smiled and ordered five hundred rupees to be given to the hunter. When the man was about to leave, Mahmud smilingly said to him: "Do not make me your partner in future unless I am present."

At another time a poor man complained to Mahmud that one of his courtiers had come to his house the previous night to insult his daughter. The king asked him to inform him the next time the offence was repeated. The man obeyed and



went back home.

The next day the man ran to the king and said, "Sire! The courtier has again come to my house to-night." At this Mahmud at once took his sword, and accompanied the man to the place. Arriving there, he put out the lamp and slew the courtier in the darkness. He called for light. He then thanked God, and ordered for food and drink to be brought.

"My lord," exclaimed the man in astonishment; "why did you extinguish the lamp?"

The king replied, "I thought that the courtier must be my own son, for no other man could be so bold. I had not the courage to kill my son while I saw him. So I put out the light."

The man then said to him, "Why did you thank God on seeing the face of the man after you had killed him?"

The king replied, "When I found that the dead man was not my son, I thanked God."

"And why did you ask for food, and drink at this late hour," asked the man for the third time.

The king again replied, "Because I had sworn that I would not touch food or drink till I had seen your wrong righted."



## Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Patron, astronomer, ungrateful, petitions, favour, paddled, stern, slender, pounded, allotted, beheld, fowls, signal, disregarded, insult, offence, slew, extinguish.

2. Express the meaning of the last paragraph in simple words of your own.

3. Write answers to the following questions:—

Who was Mahmud? By what acts is he known as a great patron of art and learning? Name two of the famous men of his court. How did the dispute about the calf arise? Why was the calf taken to the middle of the stream? In what way was the young man taught to treat his mother kindly?

4. Change the following from Direct into Indirect and *vice versa*:—

- (a) Mahmud said to the young man in a stern voice, "Don't you see that she is too old to work and earn her living?"
- (b) So he called the man into his presence and asked him why he looked sad and why he had come empty-handed.
- (c) Mahmud said to him, "Do not make me your partner in future unless I am present."
- (d) Mahmud smiled and ordered five hundred rupees to be given to the hunter.



5. Insert suitable prepositions in the following blanks :—

(a) The boy complained——the headmaster.

(b) You should abstain——drink.

(c) The master was angry——him.

(d) Don't laugh——beggars.

6. If you were a king, how would you have treated the hunter?



## SANYUKATA

In days gone by there ruled a Rajput king at Delhi. He had two daughters, but no son. One of his daughters was married to the King of Ajmere, and the other was the Queen of Kanauj. Each daughter gave birth to a son. To the Queen of Kanauj was born Jai Chand; while Prithi Rai was the son of the Queen of Ajmere. Prithi Rai was a little younger than Jai Chand.

Now, unhappily, both these princes wished to be king of Delhi at the death of their grandfather. But the old King of Delhi loved Prithi Rai more than Jai Chand. Before his death, therefore, he named Prithi Rai as his successor. At this, great jealousy grew up between Jai Chand and Prithi Rai. Prithi Rai was brave and generous, but Jai Chand was cunning and revengeful. So Jai Chand vowed that Prithi Rai would suffer at his hands.

As soon as Prithi Rai became king of Delhi, he declared that he was the chief of all the princes. No one disputed his title, and he became the over-



lord of all the Rajput princes. He began to receive tribute from all of them.

He ruled his kingdom well. He fought many great battles, in all of which he was victorious. This spread his fame far and wide. He came to be celebrated in song and story.

Of all his courtiers he liked the poet Chand most. The King and the poet often used to roam about the country disguised as poor minstrels. One day they went to Kanauj. One of the objects of Prithi Rai's visit to that city was to see for himself Sanyukata. She was the beautiful daughter of Jai Chand.

Often had Chand sung her praises. The poet had told him that she was tall and graceful. She possessed every kind of charm. She wore her hair long, and her large eyes shone like stars. She was as noble and heroic as she was beautiful.

The poet's praise had filled the heart of Prithi Rai with a longing to see the princess. One of the first things he did when he reached the city of Kanauj was to go near her palace. Then he climbed a high tree which overlooked the garden of the palace. Standing on a branch of the tree he saw at last the princess. She was at that time playing with flowers. No sooner did he see her than he fell in love with her. He then



said to himself, "None but Sanyukata shall be my queen."

But Prithi Rai knew that his love was hopeless. Jai Chand was his mortal enemy. He would rather kill his daughter than allow her to marry him. He would sooner throw her to the wolves than give her away in marriage to Prithi Rai.

How was the King of Delhi then to win the hand of Sanyukata? Long did he think over this problem. Finally he hit upon a clever plan. He went to his old nurse who had brought him up. He touched her feet, and told her the story of his love. She listened to him patiently; and, after he had finished, the kind nurse said: "Do not despair, my son. Give me only your portrait. I shall go on a journey to Kanauj, and win her love for you."

At this the King gave her one of his portraits painted on ivory. With this concealed amidst her belongings, the old nurse left Delhi in the company of some merchants.

As soon as she reached Kanauj, she tried to get into the palace of Jai Chand. In this she was successful. Once in the palace, she worked very hard. So she was chosen to be a special attendant of the princess.

The princess came to value her much, for



the old nurse looked after her with much care. On hot summer nights she would fan the princess with a fan of peacock's feathers, and tell her tales of Prithi Rai's love for her. In the mornings she would prepare a bath for her. She also waited upon her, when she was taking her meals.

In this way she filled the princess with a burning desire to see Prithi Rai. One day the princess asked her, "Is the prince of Delhi really as handsome and brave as you say?"

"He is famous throughout the land for his bravery," answered the nurse. "You can find whether he is beautiful or not by looking at his portrait."

Saying these words, the old nurse showed the princess the portrait of Prithi Rai. The princess was much delighted to see the portrait. She never grew weary of looking at it. One day when the old nurse was telling her some tale of Prithi Rai's bravery, she said: "How do you know so much about Prithi Rai? How did you come by his portrait?"

The nurse then gave out the secret. She told the princess that she had been sent by Prithi Rai to tell her all about his love.

But as Sanyukata's love for Prithi Rai grew, so her father's jealousy of him also increased.



Every day he plotted to disgrace Prithi Rai, and he soon found an opportunity to do so.

His daughter was now a maiden of marriageable age. He, therefore, had the day fixed, when she was to choose her husband. All the princes were invited to Kanauj. The city and the palace were splendidly decorated.

The princes came with their long trains of servants, displaying all their riches and splendour. Their hearts beat high, for every one of them hoped that he would marry Sanyukata.

On the appointed day all these princes were dressed brightest in their finest robes and jewels. Then they waited in the big hall of the palace for Sanyukata. She was led into the hall, dressed in the richest clothes. She was a proud and beautiful girl, and was attended by her maid-servants. In her hand she held a garland of flowers. This she was to put round the neck of the man of her choice. Slowly she moved along the line of princes. The bards at that time told her of the bravery of all. Yet she did not like to choose any one of them as her husband. She saw every prince, but was disappointed not to find Prithi Rai there. This filled her with grief.

But, as she stood near the door of the hall,



her eyes fell upon an ugly image of Prithi Rai. Her father had invited Prithi Rai to act as door-keeper. The proud Prithi Rai had felt insulted at this, and had not come. In his stead, therefore, an ugly image of him had been placed at the door.

The sight of the image hurt Sanyukata very much, but she did not know what to do. She knew that her father was bent upon offending Prithi Rai.

Presently, however, a thought flashed across her mind. Though her father did not honour Prithi Rai, she adored him. Proudly she walked up to the image, and placed the garland of flowers round its neck. At this great confusion arose in the hall. Her father made up his mind to punish her for this act. But before he had done so, a horseman appeared from amidst the crowd. He came to Sanyukata, and raised her on to his horse. Then he galloped away with her at full speed.

It is easy to guess who this horseman was—none other, of course, than Prithi Rai. He had come, disguised as a soldier, to Kanauj in the company of Chand. He had stayed outside the hall, and had been watching everything from there. As soon as he saw his chance, he rode into the hall and ran away, as we have seen, with



the princess. Thus he married the lady of his choice.

Prithi Rai lived very happily with his queen. But one day war arose with Mohammad Ghauri who attacked Delhi. A great battle was fought at Thaneswar. Mohammad Ghauri was wounded, and his army was defeated.

But as soon as Mohammad Ghauri became well, he got another army ready. His army this time was far larger than that of Prithi Rai. The king of Delhi was, therefore, much troubled, and asked the advice of his wife. She told him to fight bravely and destroy his enemies.

His wife's brave words filled Prithi Rai with courage. He went forth to fight Mohammad Ghauri again on the plains of Thaneswar. But before the battle was fought, he sent a message to Mohammad Ghauri, saying, "Why should we fight? Let us make peace and spare the lives of our brave soldiers." To this Mohammad Ghauri replied that he would consult his brother about the matter. So till he received a message from him, there would be peace between the two armies.

But Mohammad Ghauri did not mean what he said. That very night he fell upon the sleeping army of Prithi Rai, and defeated it completely.



Many Rajput soldiers were killed. Prithi Rai himself was taken prisoner, and brutally murdered.

As soon as the news was brought to Sanyukata that her husband had been killed, she had a funeral pile made ready. Without a moment's hesitation she leapt into the red flames of the fire. Thus she died.

### Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Disputed, tribute, celebrated, disguised, minstrels, graceful, attendant, portrait, plotted, marriageable, flashed, confusion, galloped, brutally.

2. Write answers to the following questions:—

How were Jai Chand and Prithi Rai related to each other? Why did they become jealous of each other? What sort of man was Prithi Rai? How has he come to be celebrated in song and story? Who was Sanyukata? How did Prithi Rai win her as his queen?

3. Explain the following with reference to the context:—

(a) He would rather kill his daughter than allow her to marry him.

(b) His daughter was now a maiden of marriageable age.

(c) At this great confusion arose in the hall.

(d) "Why should we fight? Let us make peace and spare the lives of our brave soldiers."



4. Change the following from Direct into Indirect speech:—

- (a) He said to himself, "None but Sanyukata shall be my queen."
- (b) He sent a message to Mohammad Ghauri, saying, "Why should we fight? Let us make peace and spare the lives of our brave soldiers."
- (c) She said to the nurse, "Is the prince of Delhi really as handsome and brave as you say?"

5. Convert the following into negative sentences:—

- (a) He ruled his kingdom well.
- (b) Give me only your portrait.
- (c) I shall take a journey to Kanauj.
- (d) The princess came to value her much.
- (e) The sight of the image hurt Sanyukata very much.

6. Describe in your own words the *Swayamvara* of Sanyukata.



# THE STORY OF THREE FRIENDS

Once upon a time there were three friends. One of them was a prince, the second was a Brahman, and the third was a carpenter. Each of them had a special gift. The prince could disappear at will. The Brahman could make the dead live again. The carpenter could make a magic horse of sandal-wood which could fly in the air very fast.

One day the prince fell out with his father. The king, therefore, banished him from his kingdom. When the prince's two friends heard of his banishment, they made up their minds to go with him. So the Brahman and the carpenter set out to follow the prince. But, as ill-luck would have it, the prince went one way and his two friends followed a wrong path. On and on they went, ever trying to find out the prince, but all in vain.

As the prince wandered on, he came to a palace situated in a lonely forest. He was surprised to see it. He went in to enquire who lived in that grand building in that deserted place. As



soon as he entered it, a most beautiful woman came forward to meet him. She welcomed him in and then began to weep. "Why do you weep?" the prince asked her in surprise.

"I weep, O young man," she replied, "because you appear to be a prince, but you have come into the jaws of death. Perhaps you do not know that a demon lives here. He has eaten every human being for miles around. He is expected back soon and will devour you, too."

"Do not be afraid on my account," said the prince in reply. "I can make myself invisible whenever I like. The demon cannot detect my presence here." The woman then gave the prince something to eat, and he lay down to rest.

In the evening the demon came back. As usual he began to tell the woman of his daily adventures. During the conversation she asked him cleverly the secret of his life.

"You go out daily in the morning," she said, "and come back very late in the evening. People, as you know, are after your life. I am always afraid lest some day they should kill you. They hate me also on account of you. So I sometimes fear they will kill me also after your death."

"Rest assured, my darling," said the demon. "My life is quite safe. Unless that tree in the



court-yard withers away or is cut down, I shall never die, for my life lies within it. Nobody else knows this secret.”

Next morning the demon went out as usual. As soon as he was out of sight, the woman told the prince all that the demon had said to her last night. The prince took an axe from the woman and cut down the tree, root and branch. Every time the prince hit the tree, loud cries, like the cries of pain, came out of it. It seemed as if each stroke fell on the demon himself. So when the tree fell down, the demon also fell down dead.

When people heard that the cruel demon had been killed, they came in crowds to thank the prince. All the people, who had left their houses on account of the demon, came back. Thus the villages around were again inhabited. The surrounding land became once more cultivated. Henceforth the people were happy and prosperous. They begged the prince not to go away. So the prince stayed with the beautiful woman in that grand palace.

One day the woman was combing her hair by a window of the palace. After she had finished, she forgot her comb and left it lying on the sill. A crow flew down and carried away the



comb. The crow took it to a distant country, and dropped it on the roof of a house. The owner of the house picked up the comb. He found that it was the most beautiful comb he had ever seen. It was studded with precious gems and diamonds. He thought it belonged to the queen of his country. So he brought it to the king. He also told the king how he had found it.

The name of the owner was written on the comb. The king, therefore, desired very much to see its owner. He sent messengers in every direction. He promised a rich reward to any person who would bring the owner of the comb to him.

Now it chanced that there was an old woman who knew the owner. She belonged to the country in which the demon had lived. She had not returned there even after his death. She saw the comb, and promised to bring its owner to the king.

She, therefore, went to the wife of the prince and took up service with her. One day, finding an opportunity, she poisoned the prince. The queen was much grieved at his death. She would not part with his dead body. She had it placed in a big box and kept it in her private room. She had often heard of her husband's two friends



and what they could do. She always hoped to meet them some day and get her husband restored to life.

As time went on the queen forgot her sorrow. The cunning old woman persuaded the young queen to leave that place. She then brought her to her own house and informed the king of her success. The king came and took away the young queen to his palace. The king desired to marry her. But the queen told him to wait for six months, while she was in mourning for her dead husband.

At her desire the king got a little palace built for her near the roadside. She was allowed to live there with the old woman as her maid-servant. The day of her marriage drew nearer and nearer, but she always prayed for some news of her dead husband's friends.

One day she saw, from the window of her palace, two young men passing along the road. A thrill of joy at once ran through her body. The old woman was not then in the palace. She had gone to the city to buy something. The queen beckoned them to stop. She asked them who they were and where they were going.

"We are travellers," replied they. "We are finding out our friend, the prince, whom we have lost."



“Come in,” she said, “and tell me more about him. Perhaps I may help you.”

So they came into the palace and told her the whole story.

“I can give you back your friend, the prince,” she replied. “But, alas! he is dead.”

“That does not matter,” said the Brahman. “Show me where he is and I shall restore him to life.”

“But you should be careful to say so,” she said. “Somebody might report it to the king who wants to marry me. He has waited for six months at my request. But now the day of marriage has come near. Your dead prince is lying at another palace far away from this place. I do not know how we can escape from here.”

“Fear not,” said the carpenter. “I can make a horse of sandal-wood. This horse will fly very fast and take us to that palace in a short time.”

She then wrote to the king for some sandal-wood. She said she required that in connection with her marriage with him. The day of the marriage was near and the king was anxious to please her. So he sent her as much sandal-wood as was required for the making of the magic horse.



When the horse was ready, the queen and her husband's two friends rode on its back. They soon reached the demon's palace.

The box which contained the dead body of the prince was then opened, and the body was taken out. The Brahman went seven times round the dead prince, muttering some strange words. Lo! at this the prince rose up, and all was gladness and joy in the palace.

### Exercises

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary :—

Banished, demon, invisible, to detect, adventures, sill, studded, recognised, restored, mourning, thrill, magic, muttering.

2. Write answers to the following questions :—

What gifts had each of the three friends? Why did the Brahman and the carpenter leave their houses? Why did they not meet their friend, the prince? Why did the young woman weep to see the prince? In what did the life of the demon lie? How was this secret discovered? What effect had the death of the demon on the people and the country? How did the comb of the young woman come to the hands of the king? Why did the queen carefully keep the dead body of the prince? How did the queen and her husband's two friends reach the prince's palace? How was the prince restored to life?

3. Give the meanings of the following and use them



in sentences of your own:—

To fall out, to set out, to run through, to make off, to send for, to give in.

4. Correct the following:—

- (a) Why you are weeping?
- (b) How long the king waited to marry with the queen?
- (c) Why the king became angry at the prince?
- (d) They replied that we are travellers and are finding out our friend, the prince.

5. Change the following from Direct into Indirect form of speech:—

- (a) “I weep, O young man,” she replied, “because you appear to be a prince, but you have come into the jaws of death.”
- (b) “Fear not,” said the carpenter. “I can make a horse of sandal-wood. This horse will fly very fast and take us to that palace in a short time.”
- (c) “That does not matter,” said the Brahman. “Show me where he is and I shall restore him to life.”

6. Write a letter to your friend in Calcutta relating the story in your own words.



## CHAND BIBI

In the 16th century the kingdom of Ahmednagar in the Deccan was very prosperous. It became most prosperous in the reign of Husain Nizam Shah. He was as bold in war as wise in counsel. To this king was born a daughter, who was named Chand Bibi.

In her childhood Chand Bibi was like a flower in a garden, tended by careful hands. The favourite child of her parents, she grew up in the quiet of the zenana. Wherever her eyes fell she saw beautiful things. Outside the walls of her palace, her eyes fell upon the most lovely flowers. Inside the palace she saw gold-embroidered curtains and velvet carpets. Thus, even at an early age she imbibed the love of beauty from her surroundings. This expanded her mind. It also made her large-hearted.

Her education, however, was not neglected. She learnt to paint flowers very early. She learnt also to play upon the vina. She loved music greatly. With her soft and melting voice she sang



many a charming song. She knew also how to read and write the Marathi tongue, the vernacular language of Ahmednagar. Besides this she mastered Persian and Arabic.

But her education was cut short by her marriage at the age of ten with Ali Adal Shah of Bijapore. It should be borne in mind that this marriage was the result of political considerations. It was arranged because the Sultans of Ahmednagar and Bijapore wished to strengthen their bond of friendship.

Sultana Chand Bibi was happy with her husband. The Sultan did not keep her within the four walls of her home, but took her out with him. She thus became his best companion. If he went out riding, she also seated herself on a tall horse and accompanied him. If there was a public ceremony, she took her seat by his side. She was with him when he talked to his ministers. She sat by his side when he received ambassadors from other courts. She rode out at the head of the company during the chase. She was ever ready to form one of the party that rode out to subdue a rebellious chief.

Living in this manner at the court of Bijapore, Chand Bibi charmed everyone by her beauty, her courage, her sympathy, and her kind disposi-



tion. Loved by her husband, she was also respected by her subjects. A great sorrow, however, fell upon her when Ali Adal Shah died. She was then left a childless widow.

Even as a widow she had no time to indulge in grief. She had impressed her subjects with her courage, kindness and wisdom. So with one voice they appointed her regent of the kingdom and guardian of the new king. Thus at the age of twenty-six she was called upon to do the highest of public duties.

Luckily for her kingdom she was not new to these duties. During the lifetime of her husband she had been his best adviser and wisest minister. Not only was she a familiar figure at the durbars, but she was also well known to her soldiers. The ministers of the state respected her for her wisdom. The soldiers were encouraged by the sight of this fearless lady.

In spite of this she did not gain much success as a regent. The reason was that the ministers were selfish and ambitious. One of them went so far as to ignore her wholly. He killed her most loyal friend. He had her also exiled to the hill fort of Satara. Another tried to create distrust between her and her ward. A third turned traitor. He joined his forces with those of the neighbour-



ing kings, and laid siege to Bijapore.

It was during the siege of Bijapore that the people came to know of her greatness. In that difficult position she did not appear to be a weak and tender woman. She proved herself to be a brave ruler who wished to save the honour of her kingdom. She, therefore, put herself at the head of her soldiers and bravely defended the city.

So well did she manage this task that the enemies began to fear for their safety. At last they thought of coming to terms with her. "It is impossible to fight this woman," they said. "Whenever she appears amongst her soldiers, they worship her as a goddess. She is present where others are afraid to go. If a soldier faints, she revives his spirits. If anybody is wounded, she dresses his wounds. Her soldiers fight with bravery, because they know she admires bravery." The result was that her enemies raised the siege. Thus the inhabitants of Bijapore were left in peace and security.

After some time she set the house in order at Bijapore. Then anarchy broke out at Ahmednagar. The nobles of that kingdom, therefore, sent a message to her to return to her old home. She alone, they said, could save the kingdom from ruin.



And this was quite true. After her father's death, Ahmednagar had not known a single peaceful day. Her brother was quite unlike her. If she was kind and courteous, he was harsh and hot-tempered. So bad was his temper that he had offended all his ministers by his fits of anger. He had gone so far as to attempt the life of his own son who had dared to oppose his will. After a reign of eighteen years he met with a violent end. He was put to death by his own son, whose life he had once plotted against. His son, in turn, was publicly put to death by one of his ministers. Confusion had, therefore, fallen upon this kingdom, where the ministers were ambitious and the kings were insecure.

In addition to this, the kingdom was in danger of being invaded by enemies. Akbar, the Mughal Emperor of Delhi, had begun to conquer other provinces. The kingdom of Ahmednagar was one of those provinces on which he had set his heart. It was at such a time that Chand Bibi was sent for to restore peace.

She had not been there very long when Prince Murad, Akbar's son, marched upon the fort of Ahmednagar. Finding it impossible to scale the high walls of the fort, he tried mining



operations. He thought he would be able to make a breach in the walls by firing these mines. But he was reckoning without the genius of Chand Bibi.

One morning the enemy succeeded in making a breach in one of the walls. The soldiers of Ahmednagar were filled with despair at this. But Chand Bibi was as hopeful as ever. She put on her armour and held a sword in her hand. She covered her face with a light veil, and then stepped into the breach. When the soldiers saw the brave lady and heard her words of courage, they made ready to resist the attack of the Mughals. The Mughal army came with all its might, but the soldiers of Ahmednagar shot arrows, threw stones and poured burning oil upon them. The result was that line after line of Mughal soldiers was driven back.

Prince Murad thus had to confess his defeat. But he hoped to make good his losses next day. When the day dawned, he found that Chand Bibi's soldiers had repaired the breach. Prince Murad, therefore, retired with his army, heavily defeated.

Four years later Prince Daniyal, Akbar's third son, invaded Ahmednagar a second time. Chand Bibi again organised the defence of the



city. But she had secret fears that her defence would fail.

In the first place, the Mughal forces were more numerous than before. At the same time, they possessed a large number of guns and engines. In addition to this the nobles of Ahmednagar were divided among themselves.

Thus, she thought that her chances of success were few. So Chand Bibi entered into communication with the enemy in order to secure peace on the most honourable terms. But the messenger proved unfaithful. Instead of delivering the letter to Prince Daniyal, he showed it to the hostile nobles in her own camp.

They naturally wanted to use this letter against her. To them it was a clear proof of Chand Bibi's treachery. "We are betrayed. We are betrayed," they shouted in the streets of Ahmednagar. They thus gathered round them an excited and ignorant mob.

Without knowing the real facts the mob insisted on the immediate death of Chand Bibi. She, poor woman, watched the excited mob from the window of the palace. But she tried in vain to calm their excitement. At length some of them broke into her palace. Before she could find an opportunity to clear her position, they plunged



their daggers into her body.

Thus died a noble and heroic woman, killed by those very people whom she had tried to save.

### Exercises

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Prosperous, tended, embroidered, curtains, imbibed, conferred, disposition, indulge, traitor, revived, treachery.

2. Answer the following questions in writing:—

What sort of king was Husain Nizam Shah? Describe the early life of Chand Bibi. Why was she married to the king of Bijapore? How did her husband treat her? What position did she hold after her husband's death? Why did she not gain any success as a regent? Why did she leave Bijapore for Ahmednagar? How was Ahmednagar conquered by Prince Daniyal? How did she meet with her end?

3. Explain the following in easy English:—

(1) This marriage was the result of political considerations.

(2) Even as a widow she had no time to indulge in grief.

(3) Luckily for her kingdom she was not new to these duties.

(4) In that difficult.....kingdom.

(5) Confusion had, therefore, fallen upon this kingdom, where the ministers were ambitious and the kings were insecure.

(6) Finding it impossible to scale the high walls of the fort, he tried mining operations.



(7) But he was reckoning without the genius of Chand Bibi.

(8) If she was kind and courteous, he was harsh and hot-tempered.

(9) But she had secret fears that her defence would fail.

4. Analyse the following and parse the words italicised:—

(1) The kingdom of Ahmednagar was one of those provinces on which he had set his *heart*.

(2) But Chand Bibi was as *hopeful* as ever.

5. Describe in your own words the siege of the fort of Ahmednagar by Prince Murad and the part which Chand Bibi played in defending it.

6. Write a letter to your sister and describe briefly therein the life-story of Chand Bibi.



## GURU GOVIND SINGH

Guru Govind Singh, says a writer, had the courage of a soldier and the enthusiasm of a devotee. He was a warrior as well as a religious leader. When he was on the pulpit he gave laws that people still obey. When he was on the battle-field he fought like a hero. When he was in the company of the Sikhs he appeared to be a humble fakir. But when he sat on his *masnad*, no king could excel him in glory.

He filled the minds of his countrymen with new hopes. He taught them that the lowest is equal to the highest. At a time when people were not good and religion was not pure, he taught them simplicity of manners and purity of worship. Before his time the Sikhs were men of peace, but he taught them how to fight with sword in their hand. Thus he filled their minds with the desire for social freedom, national greatness and religious liberty.

Guru Govind was the only son of Tegh Bahadur. He was born at Patna in 1660 A.D. He was only fifteen years old, when he succeeded





GURU GOBIND SINGH JI.



to his father's *gadi*. His *gadi*, however, was not a bed of roses for him. His enemies, whose number was very large, always troubled him. It is said that he never had freedom from care even for a day.

To prepare himself for the work that lay before him, he retired to the hills of the Upper Jumna. There he read books, and spent much of his time in practising archery. During this period he formed his plans for the social and political reform of the Sikhs. He improved his knowledge of Hindi and Persian. He made himself familiar with the history of the people of India. All this made him resolve to abolish caste and to tell the people that they were all equal.

Guru Govind Singh attracted a large number of followers. He combined them into a regular army and brought them under military discipline. He had a big drum made. Whenever that drum was beaten all his followers assembled to do his bidding. All this made the hill chiefs suspicious of Govind Singh.

So they began to cause him trouble. At this, Govind Singh's mother and his uncle said to him: "Why do you invite the opposition of your enemies by making a show of your army? Our business is that of religion. What have we to



do with fighting? Give up this idea about an army.”

To this Govind Singh replied, “My enemies are jealous of me for nothing. I do not trouble any man. I do not like to fight anyone. But if anybody wishes to fight with me I shall not behave like a coward and run away.” These brave words of his satisfied his mother, and ever after that she kept quiet.

After a short time Guru Govind Singh had to fight against the hill rajas. They were under the leadership of Fateh Shah of Srinagar. But the rajas suffered a heavy defeat, and Govind Singh and his followers gained strength. In this way Guru Govind Singh lived till the age of 35, gathering his followers round him and fighting the unfriendly hill rajas.

Govind Singh was not only a noted warrior, but he was also a learned man. He loved to read religious books. He asked a number of bards to translate the religious books of the Hindus, such as the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. The stories of Rama and Krishna and the other Hindu heroes were also translated at his wish, and he read them again and again. His purpose was to fill the hearts of his soldiers with courage to defend their faith.



Govind Singh was thirty years old, when he first thought of forming the Sikhs into one people. When his plans were ready, he asked all of them to attend the great Baisakhi fair at Anandpur. The people came there in large numbers, and great was their enthusiasm. Carpets were spread on a high piece of ground. A place close by was enclosed with tents. When this had been done, the Guru asked a Sikh to go at midnight and tie five goats inside the enclosure. He asked him not to tell it to anybody.

Next day the people assembled to hear the Guru preach. Standing before them, he asked: "Is there anyone here who is ready to lay down his life for me?" For a long time the Guru received no reply. But when he repeated his question a third time, Daya Singh, a Sikh of Lahore, came forward and said, "O true king! I am your humble follower. You can take my life if you will." The Guru took Daya Singh inside the enclosure and asked him to remain there. He then cut off a goat's head and showed the people a sword red with drops of blood.

Once again the Guru asked, "Is there any other Sikh who will offer his head to me?" After a long pause, Dharam Das of Delhi came forward and answered: "O Guru, take my



head.” The Guru took him to the enclosure and asked him also to remain there. He killed a second goat, and, as before, showed the great gathering his sword stained red with drops of blood.

He asked for the head of a third Sikh. At this some Sikhs ran away with fear. Others thought that the Guru had lost his reason. Yet three Sikhs came forward, ready to lay down their lives for him.

The Guru was struck with the devotion of these five Sikhs. He dressed them in fine clothes and said to them: “You are true Sikhs. Our faith will now spread.” After this he gave them some water to drink which had been stirred with a dagger. “This water,” said Guru Govind, “will change jackals into lions. Those who drink it will be happy here and hereafter.”

He had hardly stirred water with his dagger, when his wife passed by with some sweetmeats. He threw the sweetmeats also into the holy water, and said aloud that the Sikhs would ever live like friends. He then called his followers “Singhs” or lions. He asked them to wear long hair. He told them to be brave and never to run away from the battle-field. He asked them also to help the poor and protect those who asked for help. Here



are some of the Guru's commandments: "Love your own wife, and covet not the wives of other people. Worship no idols. Rise early in the morning. Read the hymns of the Granth Sahib, and be loyal to your Guru."

After the five Sikhs had drunk the holy water, he asked them to give some water to him. At this the Sikhs were astonished, but the Guru said: "Do not be astonished. There is no difference between you and me. We are all equal." So the Guru was also purified by the sacred water. His name Govind Rai was then changed into Govind Singh.

The next thing that Govind Singh did was to collect an army. Eighty thousand men soon gathered round his flag. Before he led them to the battle-field, he gave them an inspiring address. In this address he said: "Live like brothers. Do not borrow money. If you borrow, pay the debt in full. Love truth. Repeat the sacred prayers before eating. Look not at an unclothed woman. Daily go to a Sikh temple. Give a tenth part of your income for religious purposes."

Guru Govind Singh was a brave man. At Aurangzeb's death Bahadur Shah, who was one of Aurangzeb's sons, sought his help. The Guru helped him to the throne, and accompanied him to the south on an expedition. At Nander, on



the banks of the Godavari, the Guru was wounded by a Pathan. When he lay on his death-bed, he asked his followers to remember God, for everything else was perishable. Then he got up, took his bath, put on new clothes, and soon after breathed his last.

Many miracles are ascribed to Guru Govind Singh. It is said that childless wives bore children after receiving his blessings. He banished disease from a village and made salt water sweet. He could make a dry tree bring forth leaves and fruit. But the greatest thing he did was to form the Sikhs into a nation of brave, virtuous and God-fearing men.

### Exercises

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Pulpit, *masnad*, excel, glory, retired, abolish, discipline, suspicious, behave, bards, enclosure, stirred, dagger, flag, expedition, perishable, miracles.

2. Write answers to the following questions:—

When did Guru Govind Singh succeed to his father's *gadi*? Why did he go to the hills of the Upper Jumna? How did he spend his time there? Who was Fateh Shah? With what object did Guru Govind Singh ask his followers to attend the Baisakhi fair at Anandpur? How did he test their devotion to him? What miracles are ascribed to him?



3. Give in simple English the meanings of the following:—

- (a) His *gadi* was not a bed of roses for him.
- (b) When he sat on his *masnad*, no king could excel him in glory.
- (c) Others thought that the Guru had lost his reason.
- (d) Many miracles are ascribed to Guru Govind Singh.

4. Insert suitable words in the following blanks:—

- (a) Guru Govind, the———son of Tegh Bahadur, was born———Patna———1660 A.D.
- (b) He never had freedom———care even for a day.
- (c) Guru Govind Singh had to fight———the hill rajas.
- (d) There is no difference———you and me.
- (e) My enemies are jealous———me.

5. Write to dictation the paragraph beginning with “Many miracles are ascribed to Guru Govind Singh.”

6. Give in your own words some of the teachings of Guru Govind Singh.



## A FOOLISH TAUNT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

After winning Draupadi, the Pandavas divided the kingdom. They took the one-half themselves and gave the other half to their cousins, the Kauravas. The Kauravas continued to live in Hastinapur. But the Pandavas founded for themselves a new city called Indraprastha.

This new city was a large and magnificent one. It was surrounded by high walls. These walls were pierced through by high gateways, which led into the city from all the four sides. Inside the city were beautiful palaces and splendid mansions. Handsome gardens in which grew lovely flowers, were laid out everywhere. The people were happy and prosperous, for peace and plenty reigned.

In this new city Yudhishtira ruled his people justly and wisely. He conquered the neighbouring kingdoms with the help of his brothers, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahdeva. At length his power had increased so greatly that he was considered to be the most powerful king on earth.



All the other kings obeyed him and paid him heavy tributes.

But no emperor in those days could attain to such a high position unless he performed a *Rajasuya-Yagya*. The *Rajasuya-Yagya* was a magnificent sacrifice which was attended by all the kings. Large gifts of money and jewels were given in charity to the poor and the Brahmans.

In order to claim the right of being called the "King of Kings," Yudhishtira decided to perform the *Rajasuya-Yagya*. Kings from far and near came to pay their homage to Yudhishtira. Among the Kauravas came Duryodhana, the eldest of them. He was accompanied by his brothers and his other relatives. Duryodhana, as we have already learned, was very jealous of the growing prosperity and glory of the Pandavas. He had several times attempted unsuccessfully to destroy them. He was thus unwilling to attend this grand sacrifice, but could not help doing so. He did not wish to give needless offence by remaining absent.

During his stay in Indraprastha, Duryodhana was astonished at the wealth of his cousins. The palace in which the Pandavas lived was the most wonderful he had ever seen. It was full of novel designs wonderfully made by the ablest of



engineers and the most expert of architects.

One day Duryodhana was walking through it leisurely. He came across a floor so beautifully made that it looked just like a pool of water. Duryodhana drew up his clothes that they might not get wet. Then he came to a stretch of water. It was so clear and calm that he took it to be dry land. He walked into it and made his clothes wet.

Soon afterwards he came across a door of glass. He thought that the door was open. He walked on and struck his head against it. Later on, he came to an open door which appeared to be closed. He tried to open it but, meeting nothing, he fell through it.

All these incidents were watched by Draupadi from a balcony. She was greatly amused and laughed at Duryodhana, saying, "Blind son of a blind father."

Draupadi's words contained an insult to Duryodhana and his blind father, Dharitrashtira. Duryodhana was already jealous of the achievements of the Pandavas. It was therefore no wonder that these words cut him to the quick. He made up his mind to revenge himself on Draupadi and the five brothers.

Duryodhana had an uncle named Shakuni,



king of Gandhara. One day he paid Duryodhana a visit. Shakuni found, to his surprise, that Duryodhana had grown very weak. Shakuni asked him the cause of the sorrow which had fallen on him. But Duryodhana at first would not tell him anything. At last, after a good deal of persuasion, Duryodhana opened his heart to his uncle.

“You need not despair, Duryodhana,” replied Shakuni. “Yudhishtira, I know, is very fond of gambling. If he is once invited to play, he will never refuse a challenge. At the same time, he does not know how to play. But I am, on the other hand, an expert player at dice. There is nobody in the country who is my equal in this matter. Invite Yudhishtira, therefore, to a gambling match and I shall win for you all his wealth, his kingdom, and his possessions.”

Duryodhana felt greatly comforted, when he heard these words of Shakuni. He immediately hastened to his father, Dharitrashtira, and told him all that had happened.

“As to my honour,” Duryodhana said to his father, “I do not care much; but Draupadi has publicly dishonoured your good self. I have, therefore, made up my mind to take revenge on her and the Pandavas.”



Then Duryodhana explained to his father the scheme Shakuni had thought out for him. As Dharitrashta's honour was involved in the matter, he agreed to his son's wicked plan. When this was agreed upon, a formal challenge was sent to Yudhishta. He was asked to come and play a friendly gambling match at Hastinapur.

Yudhishta and his brothers knew that Duryodhana had evil intentions against them in sending this invitation. But as it was an invitation from Dharitrashta, his own father's brother, Yudhishta did not think it proper to refuse. The Pandu prince, therefore, readily gave his consent. A large and beautiful hall was especially built for this purpose. Seats were arranged in it both for the players and for the spectators.

In the meantime Yudhishta, with his brothers and Draupadi, mounted on a chariot drawn by swift horses, arrived at Hastinapur. They were welcomed by their cousins and their friends. Soon all the people present there took their seats, and the play began between Shakuni and Yudhishta.

Shakuni, as we can imagine, did not play fair. One by one Yudhishta staked his jewels, his horses, his elephants and his chariots, and lost them all. Then he staked his kingdom with



all it contained, and this too he lost. Maddened by this defeat, he staked one by one his brothers, and they too were won by Shakuni. At last he staked himself, and himself also he lost.

Only one stake was left to Yudhishtira, and that the most precious of all—the lovely Draupadi herself. Goaded by the taunting words of Duryodhana and Shakuni, Yudhishtira was foolish enough to stake her and lose her too.

Yudhishtira and his brothers were now the slaves of Duryodhana, and were entirely at his mercy. The wicked Duryodhana was burning to revenge himself on Draupadi for the taunting words she had publicly thrown at him and at his father. He at once ordered Draupadi to be brought, by force if necessary, to the court to get her punishment. Dushasana was Duryodhana's younger brother and his helper in all that Duryodhana did. To bring her to the court he immediately ran to the women's room where Draupadi was.

As soon as Draupadi came to know that she was to be taken to the court before Duryodhana, she fainted and fell senseless on the ground. When she recovered, she appealed to Dushasana, and protested against her being taken. "Yudhishtira has lost himself," she cried, "therefore



he had no right to stake me.” But none would listen to her protests and appeals.

At last, finding that no help could come to her, poor Draupadi became wild with shame and anger. She fled from Dushasana and tried to hide herself. But the rude Dushasana ran after her. He caught her by her long flowing hair and dragged her to the court.

Weeping and crying, Draupadi was made to stand before Duryodhana and Dharitrashtira. She cried out to the Pandavas for help; but they were now Duryodhana’s slaves. The rules of the game also forbade them to speak.

But when she was thus being insulted, Krishna came to her rescue. Thus was her honour saved.

### Exercises

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary :—

Founded, magnificent, pierced, mansions, neighbouring, tributes, homage, offence, leisurely, balcony, staked, protested.

2. Write answers to the following questions :—

Who founded Indraprastha? Give a short description of the city. What do you understand by the *Rajasuya-Yagya*? Why did Draupadi laugh at Duryodhana? Who was Shakuni? What scheme of revenge did he propose



to Duryodhana? Why did Yudhishtira lose everything he possessed? How did Duryodhana revenge himself on Draupadi?

3. Explain the following in simple words:—

- (a) It was full of novel designs wonderfully made by the ablest of engineers and the most expert of architects.
- (b) Draupadi's words contained an insult to Duryodhana and his old father Dharitrashtira.
- (c) At last after a good deal of persuasion Duryodhana opened his heart to his uncle.
- (d) Maddened by this defeat, he staked one by one his brothers.
- (e) These words cut him to the quick.

4. Change the following from the Active Voice into the Passive Voice and *vice versa*:—

- (a) All the other kings obeyed him and paid him heavy tributes.
- (b) The Rajasuya-Yagya was attended by all the kings.
- (c) I shall win for you all his wealth, his kingdom and his possessions.
- (d) All the people present there were astonished to see the spectacle.
- (e) She laughed at Duryodhana.

5. Give the meanings of the following and use them in sentences of your own:—

To fall through, to take off, to be bent upon.

6. Give a short description of the gambling match played between Yudhishtira and Shakuni.



## RANJIT SINGH

Ranjit Singh will ever be remembered in Indian history as the founder of the Sikh kingdom. The Sikhs were always at war with one another. But it was he who formed them into a nation. One by one he subdued his enemies till all came to own him as their leader. He was able to do so, because he had a large army. This army had been trained by foreigners and able generals. If his successors had had his character and ability, the Sikh kingdom would not have fallen to pieces. But his only son Kharak Singh who succeeded him on the throne had not his brains. His grandson, Nao Nihal Singh, also lived for only a short time after his accession to the throne. The kingdom of Ranjit Singh thus came to an untimely end.

The rise of the Sikhs in the Punjab was an event of great importance. They were divided into two classes—the Majha and the Malwa. They first settled as cultivators of land. Gradually they came to own those very lands which they had at first tilled for others. Later on, they became so powerful that they began to fight the





MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH



Mohammedan chiefs. These wars led to the rise of twelve chiefs. These independent chiefs were always at war with the Mohammedans and with one another. How Ranjit Singh subdued them is an interesting story.

Ranjit Singh was born at Gujranwala in the year 1780 A.D. He was the son of Sardar Mahan Singh, the bold leader of a famous family of the Sikhs. This family was founded by Budha Singh. Budha Singh was a great robber, who, with his mare, was the terror of the people living near him. He was wounded some forty times, and died only after his family had risen into fame. His two sons were as fearless as their father. Charat Singh, the father of Mahan Singh, was a great soldier who was killed in a battle.

Charat Singh's son, Mahan Singh, thus became a chief, when he was only twelve years old. In 1774 he married Maharaj Kaur who became the mother of Ranjit Singh. Mahan Singh had a brief but eventful career. He was always at war with his neighbours. He died when he was only twenty-seven years of age.

Ranjit Singh was only twelve years old, when his father died. But he knew already something of fighting, because he had accompanied his father on many expeditions. His father was once besieg-



ing the fort of a Mohammedan chief. At that time the uncle of the chief climbed on to the elephant on which Ranjit Singh was riding. He was on the point of killing the child, when one of his father's attendants struck him down. Ranjit Singh was thus familiar with the dangers of war, even when he was a mere boy.

On the death of his father, Ranjit Singh was left to the care of his mother-in-law, Sada Kaur. She was a very wise and ambitious woman. She placed all her men and money at the disposal of Ranjit Singh. With her aid he was able to establish his power. He, however, soon grew tired of his mother-in-law. According to some accounts, he confined her in a fortress where she soon died. He got rid of his mother also, because he did not like her wicked ways. Some say he killed her with his own hands. Others say he had her poisoned.

After the death of his mother and his mother-in-law, Ranjit Singh was free to act in the way he liked best. His first thoughts were now turned towards the possession of Lahore. Zaman Shah, a descendant of Timur, had seized Lahore in 1797. While crossing the river Jhelum he had lost twelve of his guns. He asked Ranjit Singh to drag the guns out of the river and send them back to him.



In reward for this he promised to give him the post of Governor. Ranjit Singh managed this difficult task well and was made Governor of Lahore by Zaman Shah. He was then only twenty years of age. As soon as he became master of Lahore he thought of making the Sikhs a great military power.

But the Sikh chiefs had grown jealous of his increasing power. They were determined to do away with him. He knew all about this and demanded the Zam Zama gun from the Sikh chiefs of Amritsar. The Sikhs refused to give the gun back to him. Ranjit Singh, therefore, attacked their fort at Amritsar. He was able to conquer the city of Amritsar and bring back the gun to Lahore in triumph. This brave deed made him master of both the religious and political capitals of the Punjab.

He next made a treaty with the British. This treaty gave him the sole possession of the country north of the Sutlej. Then he advanced towards Multan, which was ruled by an Afghan family. The Governor of Multan paid him a large sum of money and asked him to leave him in peace. This induced him to attack the place again, but without any success. He, however, had resolved to seize Multan, and was able to do this



after many desperate attempts.

In the following year he conquered Kashmir also. Similarly, he advanced as far as Attock and met the Afghans in open battle. He conquered Peshawar and the whole district of Hazara.

Ranjit Singh was at war all his life, and he fought generally to conquer. His efforts told upon his health. In the cold weather of 1836 he had an attack of paralysis. From that day he became an invalid and was carried in a palanquin to view his troops. Every attempt was made to cure him, but his disease could not be cured. He knew his end was near. Calling his son Kharak Singh to his bedside he, therefore, made him his heir. He distributed twenty-five lacs of rupees among the poor. He breathed his last on the 27th of June, 1839.

What kind of man was Ranjit Singh? Though short of stature, he was a very strong, active, bold and fearless soldier. An excellent horseman, he could remain in the saddle the whole day without feeling tired in the least. He was extremely fond of horses. It was his great desire to possess the best horses available. He was also an expert swordsman.

It is said he had all the signs of greatness.



He possessed intellectual strength as well as ability for leadership. He was born to command. It was, therefore, very difficult to disobey him. He had the highest courage.

Above all, Ranjit Singh possessed unlimited perseverance. If he set his heart upon anything, no obstacle could make him change his course. He chose his officers well and wisely. He had no pity for an officer who had failed in his work. But he was very generous to those who had served him ably and successfully. Though some of his counsellors forbade the employment of Brahmins and Mohammedans in his service, he never distrusted these people. He used to think that just as Jats made brave soldiers, so Brahmins, Khattris and Mohammedans made wise councillors. His foreign minister was a Mohammedan, while one of his generals was a Brahmin. In the choice of his officials he cared for nothing except merit. His court was, therefore, full of wise ministers like Fakir Aziz-ud-din and Raja Dina Nath. He had capable generals like Hari Singh Nalwa. His army was the finest ever known in the history of India.

This was so because it had been trained by Frenchmen. Ranjit Singh knew fully well what things went to make a great State.



He had his failings also. He was very fond of strong drinks. Though he drank hard, he never allowed this habit to interfere with the discharge of his duties. He produced a powerful impression upon every man who saw him. European travellers who came to his court went back with the impression that he was a born ruler.

### Exercises

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary :—

Subdued, foreigners, eventful, expeditions, to besiege, disposal, confined, descendant, triumph, desperate, paralysis, invalid, palanquin, perseverance.

2. Study the construction, expressed in italics, of the following sentences and make five sentences like each of them :—

(a) Others say he *had* her *poisoned*.

(b) *If* his successor *had had* his character and ability, the Sikh kingdom *would not have fallen to pieces*.

(c) Gradually they *came to own* those very lands which they had at first tilled for others.

3. Answer the following questions in writing :—

(a) What was the condition of the Sikhs before Ranjit Singh?

(b) When and where was Ranjit Singh born?

(c) Who was Sada Kaur and what sort of woman was she?

(d) How did Ranjit Singh possess Lahore?



- (e) How did he conquer Amritsar?
- (f) How did he conquer the rest of the Punjab?
- (g) What did he die of?
- (h) Say what you know about his character.

4. Analyse the following sentences and parse the italicised words:—

- (a) How Ranjit Singh subdued *them* all is an interesting *story*.
- (b) Though *short* of stature, he *was* a very powerful soldier.
- (c) Ranjit Singh *knew* fairly *well* what things went to make a great State.
- (d) In the *choice* of his officers he cared for nothing *except* merit.

5. What is an abstract noun? Make abstract nouns from the following nouns:—

Enemy, leader, king, woman, court.

6. Describe briefly how Ranjit Singh became the leader of the Sikhs.



## BEHRAMJI M. MALABARI

Behramji Malabari's life shows what hard work, character and perseverance can do. Born in extreme poverty, Behramji was yet able to become famous and great. He owed all his success to his own efforts and to the blessings of Providence. His life is a wonderful lesson in self-help.

Behramji M. Malabari was born in Baroda in the year 1853. His father was a poor clerk in the Gaekwar's service. He received a salary of only twenty rupees a month. On account of some misunderstanding with her husband, Behramji's mother left Baroda for Surat. There her parents used to live.

On their way to Surat the mother and the child were waylaid by dacoits. But their poor and helpless condition made a strong appeal to the robbers. Instead of depriving them of whatever they had, they conducted them safely to their home.

A short time after her arrival at Surat, Behramji's mother came to know of her husband's



death. She now married a second time. She did so, because she wished to have some one to look after her dear son. But the second marriage did not prove very happy. Behramji's mother was, therefore, left as poor and helpless as ever.

In spite of her poverty she had a great desire to educate her son. She sent him to a small school, which was run by an old Parsi teacher. It is said this teacher knew nothing about reading and writing, but was interested only in religious verses. He would, therefore, make the boys repeat those verses loudly. Their meaning, it is said, neither he nor his pupils understood. If anybody made a mistake, he was most mercilessly beaten with a long stick. Whenever he found that the boys were tired of study, he made them spin cotton. Thus he divided the time of the students in his charge between repeating verses and spinning cotton.

Behramji was soon taken away from this school, of which he had very sad memories. He went to another school, where his native language, Gujrati, was taught. Here he had to read with a Brahmin teacher who charged no fees. But the boys had to pay him for schooling in other ways. Some gave him rice; others supplied him with the other necessities of life. Those boys who were



too poor to give him anything had to work in his house. One had to sweep the floor; another to bring water; and a third to cook his food. In this school Behramji learned his mother tongue, of which he became a great master afterwards.

Behramji did not stay at the Brahmin's school for long, for he was sent to another school at Surat. The schoolmaster there was a very cruel man. He used to flog his pupils, whenever they happened to make a mistake.

Whenever he flogged a boy, it was his practice to make the other boys repeat their sacred verses as loudly as they could. He did this so that the boy's cries should not be heard. The sight of the teacher made Behramji very miserable, and he often told his mother of his troubles. His mother, a very kind lady, asked him to take heart and persevere. Behramji took her advice in good faith. Nor had he ever to repent of it.

His teacher, though a cruel man, was a great Persian scholar. So Behramji read with him all the old Persian books. He thus became a great master of the Persian language.

Behramji was twelve years old, when his mother died. This brought about a great change in him. While his mother was alive, he used to be a boy fond of fun and play. He was very



fond of music and used to keep the company of many singers. He was, therefore, known for singing popular tunes in a charming way.

More than this, he used to be fond of practical jokes. One day he saw a tired shopkeeper lying asleep in his cart. Behramji got together a few boys, and with their help dragged the cart to the burning ghat. The shopkeeper was sleeping so soundly that he did not know where he was being carried. When, however, the young boys had brought him to the burning ghat, he suddenly woke up. There he found that the boys had practised a joke upon him. On making this discovery he threatened the boys. But before he could take his revenge, the boys had disappeared.

With the death of his mother all fun fled from his life. He himself wrote that before her death he was a mere boy, but that after her death he became a man. He now began to work very hard. Since he wanted money to pay for his own education, he began to earn it by teaching some children. Yet even this did not bring him enough of an income. But a kind-hearted missionary took him into the mission school as a free scholar.

Behramji's life in those days was a round of



constant work. He used to teach his pupils for four hours in the day, besides attending school for six hours. Sometimes he cooked his own meals. All this meant hard work, but Behramji was never afraid of it. In this way he passed his Matriculation Examination. Before he left school, he was a very proficient Gujarati scholar. In his leisure moments he used to write Gujarati verses. These verses became very popular and were published in book form.

Not content with writing Gujarati verses, he turned his hand to the composition of English verses also. His English poems show that he had much mastery over that language. But they do not contain so much pure poetry as do his Gujarati poems.

The love of writing grew upon him and he started a newspaper. In this newspaper he wrote some excellent articles. Though this journal was run at a loss, he did not discontinue it. In course of time he became very influential on account of his sound opinions and forcible writing. He was specially trusted as a leader of social reform and as a man who wished to establish friendship between Englishmen and Indians.

The thing which touched him most was the helpless condition of widows in India. He tried



to improve their lot by drawing the attention of the public to the hardships of their life. All this had a good effect upon the people, and widows came to be treated with greater kindness.

He played an important part in bringing about better relations between Englishmen and Indians. He taught Indians to appreciate the good points in the character of Englishmen. He also made Englishmen understand Indians more thoroughly. This was a very valuable service to his country, because true understanding is the only path to friendship.

Behramji turned his attention to many other things as well. He was always a good friend to poor students. He always helped those people who lived in a famine-stricken area. On one occasion he sent money for the relief of some poor boys with the words: "The money that I am sending is small. I wish I could have given more, but I cannot help it. I may tell you that on account of the help that I am giving to you at this time my own children will be without some comfort for some time."

Behramji founded a Social Service League and a home for consumptives. The Social Service League aimed at opening schools for the poor as well as at rendering help to people in time of need.



It is said that he gave away his life insurance policies for the running of these institutions.

Behramji was trusted by the Government as well as by the people. His desires were simple. He was offered titles, but he declined them. He was offered many high posts both in Bombay and in some native States, but he would not accept any. He said that his life was given to the poor, and then he would serve always. That was Malabari's inspiration all his life—to be a helper of the poor and a friend to widows. He passed away on July 12, 1912. His death was mourned by the rich as well as by the poor.

Malabari's life tells us what self-help and self-sacrifice can achieve.

### Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Blessings, Providence, misunderstanding, waylaid, dacoits, conducted, to flog, tunes, missionary, proficient, appreciate, consumptive.

2. Express the following in easy English:—

- (a) While his mother was alive, he used to be a boy fond of fun and play.
- (b) Before her death he was a mere boy, but after her death he became a man.
- (c) The love of writing grew upon him.



(d) True understanding is the only path to friendship.

3. Make sentences using the following phrases:—

On one's way, as—as, neither—nor, too poor to give, in good faith, fun and play, in course of time, as well as.

4. Pick out the clauses in the following sentences and analyse them:—

(a) Some gave him rice; others supplied him with the other necessities of life.

(b) The schoolmaster there was a very cruel man, who used to flog his pupils whenever they happened to make a mistake.

5. Change the following from Active into Passive Voice and *vice versa*:—

(a) The boys had to pay him for schooling in other ways.

(b) On their way to Surat the mother and the child were waylaid by dacoits.

(c) He tried to improve their lot.

(d) Behramji was trusted by the Government as well as by the people.

6. What lessons do you draw from the life of Behramji Malabari?



## GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE

Someone has described the life of Gopal Krishna Gokhale in a sentence:—"Graduate at eighteen; Professor at twenty; Editor of a journal at twenty-one; Secretary of the Provincial Conference at twenty-five; Secretary of the National Congress at twenty-nine; leading witness before a most important commission at thirty-one; Provincial Legislator at thirty-four; Imperial Legislator at thirty-nine; National Envoy to the Imperial Government at forty." This shows how full of achievements was the life of the late Mr. Gokhale.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born at Kolhapur in 1866. His parents were poor, but not so poor as to be unable to send him to school. He studied first at Kolhapur and then in Bombay. He always shone as one of the most distinguished students in his class.

He spent his childhood like most other boys of his class. Games, as in the case of all young boys, naturally claimed a large share of his attention. He was not many years old, when a sorrow





GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE.



entered into his life. His father passed away when he was only twelve years of age. The death of his father left him very poor. For some time Gopal Krishna's mother doubted whether she should be able to continue his schooling. But at this time his elder brother came forward to help him. By many acts of self-sacrifice he maintained him at college and enabled him to complete his education.

Up to that time Gokhale's life might have appeared to many people to be dull and uninteresting. In truth his talents were still slowly revealing themselves. Books were Gokhale's great friends, and he was a great reader. All that he studied during his college days was to be of great help to him in his after-life.

He was specially fond of history. He did not read history to learn by heart only the dates of battles. He studied it with the purpose of discovering the qualities which make nations great. He loved European history most of all, because through it he could see how men had worked for freedom.

He also showed a taste for Economics. This taught him how people could increase their wealth. His great wish was that India should follow the example of other countries, and try to make her-



self rich and great.

Above all, he liked to read books by great and eminent writers. He had a wonderful memory, and was able to learn by heart whole speeches by great orators. He himself, by this means, learned how to speak and write good English. This was of great help to him as a public man.

When Gokhale was eighteen years of age, he passed the B.A. Examination of the University of Bombay. The time had now come for him to choose his life's work. First he thought of law, but soon he gave up this idea. Then he wished to become an engineer, but even this he began to dislike after some time. He then thought of borrowing money and going to England to prepare for the Indian Civil Service examination. Even this did not appeal to him after some time.

At last he joined the Deccan Education Society as a life-member. This meant that he was to work in one of the schools run by the Society for twenty years. He was to draw only a small salary, which could supply only his simplest needs. It was a great sacrifice on his part to select such a career. But he was one who cared more for doing some service to his country than for acquiring wealth.



After joining the Society, Gokhale became a professor in the Fergusson College at Poona. There he remained for full twenty years. In the college he taught students such different subjects as English and Mathematics. Later on, he took up History and Political Economy, the subjects for which he had the greatest liking.

As a teacher he was very successful. His students loved and respected him. He created in their minds a real taste for the subjects which he taught. He also filled them with a desire for service and self-sacrifice.

Gokhale was not merely a professor content with teaching his classes. He sometimes went out to collect funds for the college. He was also elected a Fellow of the Bombay University, and had his share in making that university the great body which it is to-day. He also edited a journal. In this he discussed in an intelligent and reasonable way the more important public questions of the day.

During these years Gokhale was in constant touch with Mahadev Govind Ranade, one of the greatest leaders of the Maharashtra. It was from him that he acquired his passion for public service, his high sense of duty, his enthusiasm for noble causes, and his love of ideals.



Gokhale was thirty-one years of age, when he went to England to give evidence on Indian expenditure before a Royal Commission. He knew his subject well, and his evidence proved of great value. He explained to the people of England some of India's troubles, and how they could be remedied.

On his return from England he became a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. There he always fought for the rights of the people in a sensible and intelligent way. Thus he won a great name for himself as a speaker and debater.

In 1902 Gokhale completed his twenty years of service as a member of the Deccan Education Society. He then gave up teaching at the Fergusson College. He thought of devoting himself entirely to the service of his country.

When he was about to retire from the college, his students presented him with an address of farewell. To this he made a very inspiring reply, in which he said: "I hear within me a voice, which urges me to take this course. It is purely from a sense of duty that I am seeking this position. Public life in India has a few rewards, but many trials. But one thing is clear, we must give up ourselves to this work in a spirit of hope



and faith.”

That very year he became a member of the Supreme Legislative Council. Lord Curzon, who was then Viceroy of India, said that Gokhale was the ablest Indian he had ever come across. He wanted, indeed, to bestow a high title upon him, but Gokhale refused this honour. He thought it was not in keeping with the simple mode of life which he had chosen.

In the Supreme Legislative Council, he always fought for the rights of his countrymen. The speeches which he delivered there showed his vast knowledge, his sincerity of purpose and his clearness of style. They are useful even to-day and are still read by many people.

Gokhale had not long entered public life when he founded the Servants of India Society. The object of this body is to train selfless workers in the cause of the country. Its members accept only very small salaries. Before they begin their actual work, they spend their time in study and thought. They lead a very humble life and promise to work for the good of India.

Gokhale paid several visits to England. On each of these occasions he took great pains to inform Englishmen about the true condition of India. More than once he toured through the



various parts of India, including the United Provinces and the Punjab. Wherever he went, he delivered lectures. In these lectures he asked Indians to do their duty to their country. He was chosen to be the President of the Benares Congress—an honour to which all Indian leaders aspire.

In 1912 he went to South Africa to help the Indian settlers there. His visit was very useful, because it led to an improvement in the condition of Indians in that part of the Empire.

Hard work, lecturing and constant travelling told upon Gokhale's health in the end. In 1915 he passed away, loved and admired alike by his friends and his opponents.

Gokhale was a patriot in the true sense of the word. He loved India. His great desire was to help it to become a great country. His life was very simple and unselfish. He cared neither for money nor for fame. The height of his ambition was to do his duty. As a speaker he won fame in his day. But, above all, he was a man of action. He did not believe in words alone. He wanted to *do* things. Whatever he undertook he carried out in a spirit of unselfishness that was an example to all his countrymen.

His heart was set upon many things, but he



laboured especially to raise the position of Indians in Government services. He thought that Indians were capable of doing everything. They should be given a better chance. They should not occupy inferior positions only, but should also be given positions of trust and power in their country. In recent years this has come to pass, and to-day we find Indians holding some of the highest offices in our land.

Another of Gokhale's aims was that Indians should get the best education. He pointed out how in Europe 90 per cent. of the school-going population attended school, whereas in India the percentage in his day was only 11. His ideal was that every Indian child should be educated. To achieve this he moved a resolution in the Supreme Legislative Council that free and compulsory education should be given throughout the country. This, as we know, has also come to pass in many parts of India.

Another of Gokhale's great desires was that India should have industries of its own. India, he declared, could not depend upon agriculture only. Indians should also learn to make useful articles both in factories and in their own homes.

Many indeed were the services rendered by this great Indian to his country, and his memory will ever live in the hearts of his fellow countrymen.



## Exercises.

1. Look up the meanings of the following words in your dictionary:—

Graduate, editor, conference, commission, envoy, legislator, achievements, distinguished, maintained, talents, revealing, eminent, career, revered, enthusiasm, evidence, inspiring, trials.

2. Use the following phrases in sentences of your own:—

As in the case of, in truth, by heart, most of all, above all, such as.

3. Explain the following in simple English:—

(a) Games, as in the case of all young boys, naturally claimed a large share of his attention.

(b) By many acts of self-sacrifice he maintained him at college.

(c) In truth his talents were still slowly revealing themselves.

(d) Public life in India has a few rewards, but many trials.

(e) Gokhale refused this honour, because he considered it was not in keeping with the simple mode of life which he had chosen.

4. Analyse the following and parse the words italicised:—

(a) To this he made a very *inspiring* reply, in *which* he said, "I *hear* within me a voice, which urges me to take this course."

(b) Lord Curzon, who was then *Viceroy* of India, said that Gokhale was the *ablest* Indian he had ever come across.

(c) They should not occupy inferior positions only,



*but* should also be given positions of trust and power in their *country*.

5. (a) Form adjectives from the following:—

Heart, trust, agriculture, time, duty.

(b) Make nouns from the following:—

Aspire, know, occupy, believe, attend.

6. Give in your own words a short account of the life of Gokhale.



