ART. XXVIII.—*A Modern Parallel to the Culla-Paduma Jataka* (193). Told and recorded by Ram-Rap, Brahman, of Dattawali, district Aligarh. [Communicated by W. H. D. ROUSE, M.R.A.S.]

[Mr. W. Crooke, late of Mirzapur, and Editor of North Indian *Notes and Queries*, kindly gave me the notes of the following story as told by the Brahman. In his version the story is much shortened, the Iguana episode does not occur, and the finale is different. But this story is more dramatic than the Jataka, and it is not improbable that here we have a version nearer than that is to the original.]

In a certain village lived a Brahman, who had a very beautiful wife; so fair was she, that all the women of her family envied her. When the Brahman saw the state of things, he gave up his wealth, and, taking his wife with him, journeyed away to another country. After they had gone some distance, the wife said to her husband: "O my good husband, I am very thirsty." The Brahman replied: "O my wife, sit down here, and I will go find you water." The wife sat down, and away went her husband on the search for water. The wife suffered so for want of water that at last she died, and when her husband returned he found her dead, and began to bewail his loss. Suddenly there came a voice from above, which said: "O Brahman, why do you weep? Your wife is dead, but if you love her very much, you may give half of your life to her, and then she will revive." The Brahman purified himself by bathing; and then, taking some water in his right hand, and some kusha grass, he gave half of his life to his wife. The woman revived; they drank water and went onwards.

By-and-bye they came to a village, and there halted in a garden. The Brahman went into the village to beg alms, and in the meanwhile his wife took a walk in the garden.

The woman saw a cripple in the garden, drawing water from a well, and singing as he drew water. She went up to the cripple and heard the singing with delight; in fact, she fell in love with the man for his singing, and told him so, begging him to gratify her. At first he refused, pleading that he was a cripple; but she persisted, threatening to curse him should he not consent, and the cripple at last did as she wished. Then the woman said: "Henceforth my life is yours, and all that I have."

By this time the Brahman had returned. He brought food with him, and the wife cooked it, and gave to him and the cripple, and they did eat.

When they were ready to go, the woman said to her husband, "Here is a cripple who has pleased me very much with his songs, and I beg of you to take him also with us." "My dear wife," replied the Brahman, "it is hard enough to look after ourselves on the journey, and who will look after this cripple? Leave him to go about his business." But the woman said: "My lord, bring me a bamboo box, and I will carry the cripple in it. He shall not trouble you." The Brahman was a kind man, and did as his wife asked: he brought her a box, and she put the cripple in it, and carried it on her head. Thus they set out towards the forest.

In the heart of the forest, the woman thought to herself, that so long as this Brahman lived, she would not be able to gratify her desires without fear. So watching her chance, while the Brahman was leaning over a well, she pushed him in, and then proceeded with her cripple paramour upon her head in the box.

They came to a city, and the servants of the Raja brought her into the Raja's presence. They opened the box, and finding in it the cripple, asked who he was? The woman replied: "He is my husband: for fear of his enemies I wander about with him on my head, and now I have

taken refuge in your kingdom. Do with us as you please." The king said: "You may dwell here, and you shall have a monthly allowance. When your husband's enemy comes, send word to me."

The woman then began to live comfortably in the city.

Now it so happened that some Banjaras¹ went into the forest and fished the Brahman out of the water. It is said that before a man's life is completed, nothing can do him harm; not man nor beast, fire nor water. So the Brahman revived, and he went to the same city where his wife was with her paramour. The woman saw her husband, and hurrying before the Raja, said to him: "O Raja, my husband's enemy has come." The Raja then sent his men, and at the direction of the false wife they brought the Brahman into court as the enemy. The Raja asked: "O man, why dost thou trouble that poor cripple?" The Brahman thought to himself: "What is the use of my loving this woman any more, when she has no love for me, and all but murdered me herself?" Then he said: "O Raja, I do not trouble her or her husband. All I ask of her is the half of my life, which she owes to me. Let her give me that, and I will have no more to do with her or her husband." The Raja, on hearing this, thought the man was a liar; and the woman, who did not know how the Brahman had lent her his life, said, "How can I do this which he asks?" The Brahman said: "Wash your hands and feet, and put on a new dress, pure and clean, and then say after me the words I shall tell you." She did so, and repeated: "What I received from this Brahman I now give him again." As she said the words, she fell down dead. The Raja was astonished to see this, and inquired what it all meant. When the Brahman had told his story, the Raja said: "It is foolish to believe the words of a woman."

¹ A tribe whose chief occupation is the carrying of grain.