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The Six Simpletons and Other Stories

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mess would naturally eject it at once. The whole of the pot was emptied out and Elisha was obliged to provide from his secret hoard a mess of porridge.

The so-called miraculous draught of fishes is not in my opinion described in such a way as to suggest a miracle at all, but rather to illustrate the interest that Christ took in the daily pursuits of his followers. In the Lake of Tiberias certain fish collected in large numbers before the breeding season round the mouth of small streams. Their shoals can be seen by a man walking on the shore of the lake, which is at many places shelving, much more easily than by people in a boat.

NELSON ANNANDALE.

THE SIX SIMPLETONS AND OTHER STORIES.

(*Folk-lore*, vol. xxxi. p. 77.)

SIR GEORGE GRIERSON'S note on the travels of "The Prince that Didn't Exist," reminds me of another familiar tale found in regions far distant from one another. Miss Sitā Devi has recently published, in the Bengali language, a delightful little volume of folk-tales entitled *Nireṭ Gurur Kahinī*, composed chiefly of the misfortunes which befel a simpleton Brāhman called Nireṭ and his five disciples, as silly as himself, known by the significant names of Ākāṭ, Hābā, Hādā, Bokā and Ahmak. This legend Miss Sitā has borrowed from *The Adventures of the Gooroo Noodle*, by Benjamin Barrington, I.C.S., itself copied from the eighteenth century version of the Rev. P. Vesci, in the Tamil language, published under the title of *Guru Para-mārttan*. Now it happens that about 1886 I was told this same story in the Boḍo or Kachāri language in Assam by a Kachāri friend of mine called Samson, with some variations. No doubt the story is found all over India, but that it should be common to Hindu Trichinopoli and to the non-Hindu Kachāri *dwārs* is surprising.

J. D. ANDERSON.