



The Pig saves the King's life

THERE was once a king who cherished knowledge and wisdom. Every day he was visited by wise men who came from near and far. They brought words of advice for the king. The king was ever anxious to learn new things and to exchange ideas with these men. Before they left, the king would ask each of them to write words of wisdom on a large wall in his court.

One day a certain Brahmin decided to visit the king. As he walked towards the palace, he tried to think of some wise statement he could write on the king's wall. But he could think of nothing new to write. All along the way, his mind was taken up with this problem. He still had not thought of any words of wisdom when, a short distance away from the king's palace, he came upon a pig rubbing itself in

the mud.

When he saw this, he said to himself, "You are rubbing and rubbing but I know what is in your mind. You wish to do me harm." Of course, the Brahmin was speaking about the pig. However, he decided to write these very words on the wall of the court.

As soon as he arrived, the Brahmin greeted the king and spoke to him quite briefly. He then hurried to the wall, wrote the words down and left right after. He did not want to spend much time in the palace. He feared that the king might want to discuss what he had written. Since he could see there was no wisdom in those words he thought it best to leave immediately.

That very day, the king's barber arrived at the palace. The king needed a shave and a haircut and he had summoned his barber. As soon as the barber was ready, the king seated himself just opposite the wall on which the Brahmin had written. The barber brought out his razors, scissors and combs. He started to rub and moisten the king's beard as he always did before shaving him.

While the barber was doing this, the king noticed what the Brahmin had written on the wall. The king



read the words a few times in his mind but could make no sense of them. He then decided to read them out loud.

"You are rubbing and rubbing but I know what is in your mind. You wish to do me harm," he stated, loud enough for the barber to hear.

The barber suddenly stopped what he was doing. The king still could not see any wisdom in those words so he read them out loud again.

When he could make nothing of what the Brahmin had written, he said to the barber, "Tell me, do you understand what I have said?"



"Yes," the barber muttered, "but it was not my idea. Your wife told me to do it."

"My wife told you to do it?" repeated the king, quite puzzled.

"Yes, she is the one who told me to cut your throat with my razor," he said trembling.

"Now, I understand the wisdom of those words. This Brahmin has saved my life," exclaimed the king.

The king ordered his wife to be brought before him. With her head bent in shame, she told the king how she had plotted with some of his enemies to have him killed.

Both the barber and the king's wife were put in prison. The king sent his men throughout the kingdom in search of the Brahmin. When the Brahmin was found, he was brought back to the palace where he lived happily for the rest of his life. The Brahmin could never understand why he was so favoured by the king. However, he felt that the pig had somehow helped in bringing about his good fortune.

