

[Note. The substance of this story occurs in the Vinaya, Vol. IV. page 5.]

Footnotes

^71:1 The 'Six' were notorious Brethren who are always mentioned as defying the rules of the Order.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 73] [j029]

No. 29.

KANHA-JATAKA.

“With heavy loads.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about the Double Miracle, which, together with the Descent from Heaven, will be related in the Thirteenth Book, in the Sarabhamiga-jataka [*1].

After he had performed the Double Miracle and had made a stay in Heaven, the All-knowing Buddha descended at the city of Samkassa on the day of the Great Pavarana [*2] Festival, and thence passed with a large following to Jetavana.

Gathering together in the Hall of Truth, the Brethren sat praising the virtues of the Master, saying, “Sirs, peerless is the Buddha; none may bear the yoke borne by the Buddha. The Six teachers, though they protested so often that they, and they only, would perform miracles, yet not a single miracle did they work. O! how peerless is the Master!”

Entering the Hall and asking the theme which the Brethren were discussing in conclave [194], the Master was informed

that their theme was no other than his own virtues.

“Brethren,” said the Master, “who shall now bear the yoke borne by me? Even in bygone days, when I came to life as an animal, I was unmatched.” And, so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as a bull. And while he was still a young calf, his owners, who had been lodging with an old woman, made him over to her in settlement of their reckoning. She reared him like her own child, feeding him on rice-gruel and rice and on other good cheer. The name he became known by was “Granny’s Blackie.” Growing up, he used to range about with the other cattle of the village, and was as black as jet. The village urchins used to catch hold of his horns and ears and dewlaps, and have a ride; or they would hold on to his tail in play, and mount on his back.

One day he thought to himself, “My mother is very poor; she has painfully reared me, as if I were her own child. What if I were to earn some money to ease her hard lot?”

Thenceforth he was always looking out for a job. Now, one day a young merchant at the head of a caravan came with five hundred waggons to a ford the bottom of which was so rough that his oxen could not pull the waggons through. And even when he took out the five hundred pairs of oxen and yoked the lot together to form one team, they could not get a single cart by itself across the river. Close

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by that ford the Bodhisatta was about with the other cattle of the village, And the young merchant, being a judge of cattle, ran his eye over the herd to see whether among them there was a thorough-bred bull who could pull the

waggons across. When his eye fell on the Bodhisatta, he felt sure he would do; and, to find out the Bodhisatta's owner, he said to the herdsmen, "Who owns this animal? If I could yoke him on and get my waggons across, I would pay for his services." Said they, "Take him and harness him, then; he has got no master hereabouts."

But when the young merchant slipped a cord [195] through the Bodhisatta's nose and tried to lead him off, the bull would not budge. For, we are told, the Bodhisatta would not go till his pay was fixed. Understanding his meaning, the merchant said, "Master, if you will pull these five hundred waggons across, I will pay you two coins per cart, or a thousand coins in all."

It now required no force to get the Bodhisatta to come. Away he went, and the men harnessed him to the carts. The first he dragged over with a single pull, and landed it high and dry; and in like manner he dealt with the whole string of waggons.

The young merchant tied round the Bodhisatta's neck a bundle containing five hundred coins, or at the rate of only one for each cart. Thought the Bodhisatta to himself, "This fellow is not paying me according to contract! I won't let him move on!" So he stood across the path of the foremost waggon and blocked the way. And try as they would, they could not get him out of the way. "I suppose he knows I've paid him short," thought the merchant; and he wrapped up a thousand coins in a bundle, which he tied round the Bodhisatta's neck, saying, "Here's your pay for pulling the waggons across." And away went the Bodhisatta with the thousand pieces of money to his "mother."

"What's that round the neck of Granny's Blackie?" cried the children of the village, running up to him. But the Bodhisatta

made at them from afar and made them scamper off, so that he reached his “mother” all right. Not but what he appeared fagged out, with his eyes bloodshot, from dragging all those five hundred waggons over the river. The pious woman, finding a thousand pieces of money round his neck, cried out, “Where did you get this, my child?” Learning from the herdsmen what had happened, she exclaimed, “Have I any wish to live on your earnings, my child? Why did you go through all this fatigue?” So saying, she washed the Bodhisatta with warm water and rubbed him all over with oil; she gave him drink and regaled him with due victuals. And when her life closed, she passed away, with the Bodhisatta, to fare according to her deserts.

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When he had ended this lesson to shew that the Buddha was unmatched in the past as then, he shewed the connexion by uttering, as Buddha, this stanza:—

[196] With heavy loads to carry, with bad roads,

They harness ‘Blackie’; he soon draws the load.

After his lesson to shew that only ‘Blackie’ could draw the load, he shewed the connexion, and identified the Birth by saying, “Uppala-Vanna was the old woman of those days, and I myself ‘Granny’s Blackie.’”

Footnotes

^73:1 No. 483.

^73:2 The festival at the end of the rainy season (Mahavagga IV. 1).

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j030]

No. 30.

MUNIKA-JATAKA.

“Then envy not poor Munika.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana about being seduced by a plump young woman, as will be related in the Thirteenth Book in the Culla-Narada-Kassapa-jataka [*1].

Then the Master asked that Brother, saying, “Is it true, Brother, as they say, that you are passion-test?” “It is true, sir,” was the reply. “Brother,” said the Master, “she is your bane; even in bygone days, you met your end and were made into a relish for the company on her marriage-day.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time, when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as an ox, named Big Red, on the squire’s estate in a certain hamlet. And he had a younger brother who was known as Little Red. There were only these two brothers to do all the draught-work of the family. Also, the squire had an only daughter, whose hand was asked in marriage for his son by a gentleman of the town. And the parents of the girl, with a view to furnishing dainty fare [197] for the wedding guests, began to fatten up a pig named Munika.

Observing this, Little Red said to his brother, “All the loads that have to be drawn for this household are drawn by you and me, my brother; but all they give us for our pains is sorry grass and straw to eat. Yet here is the pig being

victualled on rice! What can be the reason why he should be treated to such fare?"

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Said his brother, "My dear Little Red, envy him not; for the pig eats the food of death. It is but to furnish a relish for the guests at their daughter's wedding, that the family are feeding up the pig. Wait but a little time and the guests will be coining. Then will you see that pig lugged out of his quarters by the legs, killed, and in process of conversion into curry." And so saying, he repeated this stanza:—

Then envy not poor Munika; 'tis death

He eats. Contented munch your frugal chaff,— The pledge
and guarantee of length of days.

Not long afterwards the guests did arrive; and Munika was killed and cooked into all manner of dishes. Said the Bodhisatta to Little Red, "Did you see Munika, dear brother?" "I have indeed seen, brother, the outcome of Munika's feasting. Better a hundred, nay a thousand, times than such food is ours, though it be but grass, straw, and chaff;—for our fare harms us not, and is a pledge that our lives will not be cut short."

When he had ended his lesson to the effect that the Brother had thus in bygone days been brought to his doom by that young woman and had been made into a relish for the company [198], he preached the Truths, at the close whereof the passion-tost Brother reached the First Path of Salvation. Also the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, "The passion-tost Brother was the pig Munika of those days, the young woman is the same in both cases, Ananda was Little Red, and I myself Big Red."

[Note. See hereon Benfey's Panca-Tantra, page 228, where the migrations of this popular story are traced. See also Jatakas Nos. 286 and 477.]

Footnotes

^75:1 No. 477.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j031]

No. 31.

KULAVAKA-JATAKA.

“Let all the forest's nestlings.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a brother who drank water without straining it [*1].

Tradition says that two young Brothers who were friends went from Savatthi into the country, and took up their abode in a pleasant spot. After staying here as long as they wanted, they departed and set out for Jetavana in order to see the Perfect Buddha.

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One of them carried a strainer; the other had none; so both of them used the same strainer before drinking. One day they fell out. The owner of the strainer did not lend it to his companion, but strained and drank alone by himself.

As the other was not allowed the strainer, and as he could not endure his thirst, he drank water without straining it. In due course both reached Jetavana and with respectful

salutation to the Master took their seats. After friendly words of greeting, he asked whence they had come.

“Sir,” said they, “we have been living in a hamlet in the Kosala country, whence we have come in order to see you.” “I trust you have arrived as good friends as you started?” Said the brother without a strainer, “Sir, he fell out with me on the road and would not lend me his strainer.”, Said the other, “Sir, he didn’t strain his water, but—wittingly—drank it down with all the living things it contained.” “Is this report true, Brother, that you wittingly drank off water with all the living things it contained?” “Yes, sir, I did drink unstrained water,” was the reply. “Brother, the wise and good of bygone days, when flying in rout along the deep in the days of their sovereignty over the City of the Devas, thought scorn to slay living-creatures in order to secure power for themselves. Rather, they turned their chariot back, sacrificing great glory in order to save the lives of the young of the Garulas [*1].” And, so saying, he told this story of the past.

[199] Once on a time there was a king of Magadha reigning at Rajagaha in the land of Magadha. And just as he who is now Sakka came to life in his preceding birth in the hamlet of Macala in the land of Magadha, even so was it in the selfsame hamlet that the Bodhisatta came to life in those days as a young noble. When the day for his naming came, he was named ‘Prince Magha,’ but when he grew up, it was as ‘Magha the young Brahmin’ that he was known. His parents took a wife for him from a family of equal rank with their own; and he, with a family of sons and daughters growing up round him, excelled in charity, and kept the Five Commandments.

In that village there were just thirty families, and one day the men were standing in the middle of the village transacting the affairs of the village. The Bodhisatta had kicked aside the dust from where he was standing, and was standing there in comfort, when up came another and took his stand there. Then the Bodhisatta made himself another comfortable standing-place,—only to have it taken from him like the first. Again and again the Bodhisatta began afresh until he had made comfortable standing-places for every man there. Another time he put up a pavilion,—which later on he pulled down, building a hall with benches and a jar of water inside. Another time these thirty men were led by the Bodhisatta to

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become like-minded with himself; he established them in the Five Commandments, and thenceforth used to go about with them doing good works. And they too doing good works, always in the Bodhisatta's company, used to get up early and sally forth, with razors and axes and clubs in their hands. With their clubs they used to roll out of the way all stones that lay on the four highways and other roads of the village; the trees that would strike against the axles of chariots, they cut down; rough places they made smooth; causeways they built, dug water-tanks, and built a hall; they shewed charity and kept the Commandments. In this wise did the body of the villagers generally abide by the Bodhisatta's teachings and keep the Commandments.

Thought the village headman to himself, "When these men used to get drunk and commit murders and so forth, I used to make a lot of money out of them not only on the price of their drinks but also by the fines and dues they paid. But now here's this young brahmin Magha bent on making them keep the Commandments; he is putting a stop to murders

and other crime.” [200] And in his rage he cried, “I’ll make them keep the Five Commandments!” And he repaired to the king, saying, “Sire, there is a band of robbers going about sacking villages and committing other villainies.” When the king heard this, he bade the headman go and bring the men before him. And away went the man and hauled up as prisoners before the king every one of those thirty men, representing them to be the rascals. Without enquiry into their doings, the king commanded offhand that they should be trampled to death by the elephant. Forthwith they made them lie down in the king’s court-yard and sent for the elephant. The Bodhisatta exhorted them, saying, “Bear in mind the Commandments; love the slanderer, the king and the elephant as yourselves.” And they did so.

Then the elephant was brought in to trample them to death. Yet lead him as they might, he would not approach them, but fled away trumpeting loudly. Elephant after elephant was brought up;—but they all fled away like the first. Thinking that the men must have some drug about their persons, the king ordered them to be searched. Search was made accordingly, but nothing was found;—and so they told the king. “Then they must be muttering some spell,” said the king; “ask them whether they have got a spell to mutter.”

The question being put to them, the Bodhisatta said they had got a spell. And this the king’s people told his majesty. So the king had them all summoned to his presence and said, “Tell me your spell.”

The Bodhisatta made answer, “Sire, we have no other spell than this, that not a man among the whole thirty of us destroys life, or takes what is not given, or misconducts himself, or lies; we drink no strong drink; we abound in lovingkindness; we shew charity; we level the roads,

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dig tanks, and build a public hall;—this is our spell, our safeguard, and our strength.”

Well-pleased with them, the king gave them all the wealth in the slanderer’s house and made him their slave; and he gave them the elephant and the village to boot.

Thenceforward, doing good works to their hearts’ content, they sent for a carpenter and caused him to put up a large hall at the meeting of the four highways; but [201] as they had lost all desire for womankind, they would not let any woman share in the good work.

Now in those days there were four women in the Bodhisatta’s house, whose names were Goodness, Thoughtful, Joy, and Highborn. Of these Goodness, finding herself alone with the carpenter, gave him a *douceur*, saying,—“Brother, contrive to make me the principal person in connexion with this hall.”

“Very good,” said he. And before doing any other work on the building, he had some pinnacle-wood dried, which he fashioned and bored and made into a finished pinnacle. This he wrapped up in a cloth and laid aside. When the hall was finished, and it was time to put on the pinnacle, he exclaimed, “Alas, my masters, there’s one thing we have not made.” “What’s that?” “Why, we ought to have a pinnacle.” “All right, let one be got.” “But it can’t be made out of green wood; we ought to have a pinnacle which had been cut some time ago, and fashioned, and bored, and laid by.” “Well, what is to be done now?” “Why, have a look round to see if anybody has got such a thing in his house as a ready-made pinnacle for sale.” As they looked round accordingly, they found one in the house of Goodness, but could not buy

it of her for any money. “If you will make me a partner in the good work,” said she, “I will give it you for nothing.”

“No,” was the reply, “we do not let women have a share in the good work.”

Then said the carpenter to them, “My masters, what is this you say? Save the Realm of Brahma, there is no place from which women are excluded. Take the pinnacle, and our work will be complete.”

Consenting, they took the pinnacle and completed their hall. They had benches put up, and jars of water set inside, providing also a constant supply of boiled rice. Round the hall they built a wall with a gate, strewing the space inside the wall with sand and planting a row of fan-palms outside. Thoughtful too caused a pleasaunce to be laid out at this spot, and not a flowering or fruit-bearing tree could be named which did not grow there. Joy, too, caused a water-tank to be dug in the same place, covered over with the five kinds of lotuses, beautiful to behold. High-born did nothing at all.

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The Bodhisatta fulfilled these seven injunctions,—to cherish one’s mother, to cherish one’s father, to honour one’s elders, to speak truth, [202] to avoid harsh speech, to eschew slander, and to shun niggardliness:—

Whoso supports his parents, honours age,

Is gentle, friendly-spoken, slandering not, Unchurlish,
truthful, lord—not slave—of wrath, —Him e’en the Thirty
Three [*1] shall hail as Good.

Such was the praiseworthy state to which he grew, and at his life's close he passed away to be reborn in the Realm of the Thirty-three as Sakka, king of Devas; and there too were his friends reborn.

In those days there were Asuras dwelling in the Realm of the Thirty-three. Said Sakka, King of Devas, "What good to us is a kingdom which others share?" So he made the Asuras drink the liquor of the Devas, and when they were drunken, he had them hurled by the feet on to the steeps of Mount Sineru. They tumbled right down to 'The Asura Realm,' as it is called,—a region on the lowest level of Mount Sineru, equal in extent to the Realm of the Thirty-three. Here grows a tree, resembling the Coral Tree of the Devas, which lasts for an aeon and is called the Pied Trumpet-flower. The blossoms of this tree shewed them at once that this was not the Realm of Devas, for there the Coral Tree blooms. So they cried, "Old Sakka has made us drunk and cast us into the great deep, seizing on our heavenly city." "Come," they shouted, "let us win back our own realm from him by force of arms." And up the sides of Sineru they climbed, like ants up a pillar.

Hearing the alarm given that the Asuras were up, Sakka went out into the great deep to give them battle, but being worsted in the fight turned and fled away along crest after crest of the southern deep in his 'Chariot of Victory,' which was a hundred and fifty leagues long.

Now as his chariot sped along the deep, it came to the Forest of the Silk-Cotton Trees. Along the track of the chariot these mighty trees were mowed down like so many palms, and fell into the deep. And as the young of the Garulas hurtled through the deep, loud were their shrieks. Said Sakka to Matali, his charioteer, "Matali, my friend, what manner of noise is this? [203] How heartrending it sounds."

“Sire, it is the united cry of the young Garulas in the agony of their fear, as their forest is uprooted by the rush of your chariot.” Said the Great Being, “Let them not be troubled because of me, friend Matali. Let us not, for

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empire’s sake, so act as to destroy life. Rather will I, for their sake, give my life as a sacrifice to the Asuras. Turn the car back.” And so saying, he repeated this stanza

Let all the forest’s nestlings, Matali,

Escape our all-devouring chariot. I offer up, a willing sacrifice, My life to yonder Asuras; these poor birds Shall not, through me, from out their nests be torn.

At the word, Matali, the charioteer, turned the chariot round, and made for the Realm of Devas by another route. But the moment the Asuras saw him begin to turn his chariot round, they cried out that the Sakkas of other worlds were surely coming up; “it must be his reinforcements which make him turn his chariot back again.” Trembling for their lives, they all ran away and never stopped till they came to the Asura Realm. And Sakka entering heaven, stood in the midst of his city, girt round by an angelic host of his own and of Brahma’s angels. And at that moment through the riven earth there rose up the ‘Palace of Victory,’ some thousand leagues high,—so-called because it arose in the hour of victory. Then, to prevent the Asuras from coming back again, Sakka had guards set in five places,—concerning which it has been said:—

[204] Impregnable both cities stand! between,

In fivefold guard, watch Nagas, Garulas, Kumbhandas,
Goblins, and the Four Great Kings!

But when Sakka was enjoying as king of Devas the glory of heaven, safely warded by his sentinels at these five posts, Goodness died and was reborn as a handmaiden of Sakka once more. And the effect of her gift of the pinnacle was that there arose for her a mansion—named ‘Goodness’—studded with heavenly jewels, five hundred leagues high, where, under a white heavenly canopy of royal state, sat Sakka, king of Devas, ruling men and Devas.

Thoughtful, too, died, and was once more born as a handmaiden of Sakka; and the effect of her action in respect of the pleasaunce was such that there arose a pleasaunce called ‘Thoughtful’s Creeper-Grove.’ Joy, too, died and was reborn once more as one of Sakka’s handmaidens; and the fruit of her tank was that there arose a tank called ‘Joy’ after her. But Highborn, [205] having performed no act of merit, was reborn as a crane in a grotto in the forest.

“There’s no sign of Highborn,” said Sakka to himself; “I wonder where she has been reborn.” And as he considered the matter, he discovered her whereabouts. So he paid her a visit, and bringing her back with him to heaven shewed her the delightful city of the Devas, the Hall of Goodness, Thoughtful’s Creeper-Grove, and the Tank called Joy. “These three,” said Sakka, “have been reborn as my handmaidens by reason of

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the good works they did; but you, having done no good work, have been reborn in the brute creation. Henceforth keep the Commandments.” And having exhorted her thus, and confirmed her in the Five Commandments, he took her back and let her go free. And thenceforth she did keep the Commandments.

A short time afterwards, being curious to know whether she really was able to keep the Commandments, Sakka went and lay down before her in the shape of a fish. Thinking the fish was dead, the crane seized it by the head. The fish wagged its tail. "Why, I do believe it's alive," said the crane, and let the fish go. "Very good, very good," said Sakka; "you will be able to keep the Commandments." And so saying he went away.

Dying as a crane, Highborn was reborn into the family of a potter in Benares. Wondering where she had got to, and at last discovering her whereabouts, Sakka, disguised as an old man, filled a cart with cucumbers of solid gold and sat in the middle of the village, crying, "Buy my cucumbers! buy my cucumbers!" Folk came to him and asked for them. "I only part with them to such as keep the Commandments," said he, "do you keep them?" "We don't know what you mean by your 'Commandments'; sell us the cucumbers." "No; I don't want money for my cucumbers. I give them away,—but only to those that keep the Commandments." "Who is this wag?" said the folk as they turned away. Hearing of this, Highborn thought to herself that the cucumbers must have been brought for her, and accordingly went and asked for some. "Do you keep the Commandments, madam?" said he. "Yes, I do," was the reply. "It was for you alone that I brought these here," said he, and leaving cucumbers, cart and all at her door he departed.

Continuing all her life long to keep the Commandments, Highborn after her death was reborn the daughter of the Asura king Vepacittiya, and for her goodness was rewarded with the gift of great beauty. When she grew up, her father mustered the Asuras together to give his daughter her pick of them for a husband. [206] And Sakka, who had searched and found out her whereabouts, donned the shape of an

Asura, and came down, saying to himself, "If Highborn chooses a husband really after her own heart, I shall be he."

Highborn was arrayed and brought forth to the place of assembly, where she was bidden to select a husband after her own heart. Looking round and observing Sakka, she was moved by her love for him in a bygone existence to choose him for her husband. Sakka carried her off to the city of the devas and made her the chief of twenty-five millions of dancing-girls. And when his term of life ended, he passed away to fare according to his deserts.

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His lesson ended, the Master rebuked that Brother in these words, "Thus, Brethren, the wise and good of bygone days when they were rulers of the Devas, forbore, even at the sacrifice of their own lives, to be guilty of slaughter. And can you, who have devoted yourself to so saving a creed, drink unstrained water with all the living creatures it contains?" And he chewed the connexion and identified the Birth, by saying, "Ananda was then Matali the charioteer, and I Sakka."

[Note. Compare the commentary on Dhammapada, pp. 184 et seqq.; and Culla-vagga v. 13 in vol. ii. of Oldenberg's Vinaya (translated at page 100 of vol. XX. of the Sacred Books of the East) for the incidents of the Introductory Story. For the incident of Sakka and the Asuras in the Story of the Past, see Jataka-mala, No. 11 (J. R. A. S. 1893, page 315).]

Footnotes

^76:1 As to the rules for filtering water, see Vinaya Cullavagga v. 13.

^77:1 Garulas were winged creatures of a supernatural order, the inveterate foes of the Nagas, whose domain was the water. Cf. (e.g.) Jataka No. 154.

^80:1 One of the devalokas, or angelic realms, of Buddhist cosmogony, was the Tavatimsa-bhavanam, or 'Realm of the Thirty-three,' so called because its denizens were subject to thirty-three Devas headed by Sakka, the Indra of the pre-buddhist faith. Every world-system, it may here be added, had a Sakka of its own, as is indicated infra.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j032]

No. 32.

NACCA-JATAKA.

"A pleasing note." This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a Brother with many belongings. The incident is just the same as in the Devadhamma-jataka supra [*1].

"Is this report true, Brother," said the Master, "that you have many belongings?" "Yes, sir." "Why have you come to own so many belongings?" Without listening beyond this point, the Brother tore off the whole of his raiment, and stood stark naked before the Master, crying, "I'll go about like this!" "Oh, fie!" exclaimed every one. The man ran away, and reverted to the lower state of a layman. Gathering together in the Hall of Truth, the Brethren talked of his impropriety in behaving in that manner right before the Master. In came the Master and asked what was the theme of discussion in the conclave. "Sir," was the answer, "we were discussing the impropriety of that Brother, and

saying that in your presence and right before all the four classes of your followers [*2] he had so far lost all sense of shame as to stand there stark naked as a village-urchin, and that, finding himself loathed by everyone, he relapsed to the lower state and lost the faith.”

Said the Master, “Brethren, this is not the only loss his shamelessness has caused him; for in bygone days he lost a jewel of a wife just as now he has lost the jewel of the faith.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

[207] Once on a time, in the first cycle of the world’s history, the quadrupeds chose the Lion as their king, the fishes the monster-fish Ananda, and the birds the Golden Mallard [*3]. Now the King Golden

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[paragraph continues] Mallard had a lovely young daughter, and her royal father granted her any boon she might ask. The boon she asked for was to be allowed to choose a husband for herself; and the king in fulfilment of his promise mustered all the birds together in the country of the Himalayas. All manner of birds came, swans and peacocks and all other birds; and they flocked together on a great plateau of bare rock. Then the king sent for his daughter and bade her go and choose a husband after her own heart. As she reviewed the crowd of birds, her eye lighted on the peacock with his neck of jewelled sheen and tail of varied hue; and she chose him, saying, “Let this be my husband.” Then the assembly of the birds went up to the peacock and said, “Friend peacock, this princess, in choosing her husband from among all these birds, has fixed her choice on you.”

Carried away by his extreme joy, the peacock exclaimed, "Until this clay you have never seen how active I am;" and in defiance of all decency he spread his wings and began to dance;—and in dancing he exposed himself.

Filled with shame, King Golden Mallard said, "This fellow has neither modesty within his heart nor decency in his outward behaviour; I certainly will not give my daughter to one so shameless." And there in the midst of all that assembly of the birds, he repeated this stanza:—

A pleasing note is yours, a lovely back,

A neck in hue like lapis lazuli; A fathom's length your
outstretched feathers reach. Withal, your dancing loses you
my child.

Right in the face of the whole gathering King Royal Mallard gave his daughter to a young mallard, a nephew of his. Covered with shame at the loss of the mallard princess, [208] the peacock rose straight up from the place and fled away. And King Golden Mallard too went back to his dwelling-place.

"Thus, Brethren," said the Master, "this is not the only time his breach of modesty has caused him loss; just as it has now caused him to lose the jewel of the faith, so in bygone days it lost him a jewel of a wife." When he had ended this lesson, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying,

"The Brother with the many belongings was the peacock of those days, and I myself the Royal Mallard."

[Note. See Plate XXVII. (11) of the Stupa of Bharhut (where a fragment of a carving of this story is figured), Benfey's

Panca-Tantra I. p. 280, and Hahn's Sagewiss. Studien, p. 69. Cf. also Herodotus, VI. 129.]

Footnotes

^83:1 No. 6.

^83:2 i.e. Brethren, Sisters, lay-brothers, and lay-sisters.

^83:3 Cf. No. 270.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 85] [j033]

No. 33.

SAMMODAMANA-JATAKA.

“While concord reigns.” This story was told by the Master while dwelling in the Banyan-grove near Kapilavatthu, about a squabble over a porter's head-pad, as will be related in the Kunala-jataka [*1].

On this occasion, however, the Master spoke thus to his kinsfolk:—“My lords, strife among kinsfolk is unseemly. Yes, in bygone times, animals, who had defeated their enemies when they lived in concord, came to utter destruction when they fell out.” And at the request of his royal kinsfolk, he told this story of the past.

Once upon a time when Brahmadata was king of Benares, the Bodhisatta was born a quail, and lived in the forest at the head of many thousands of quails. In those days a fowler who caught quails came to that place; and he used to

imitate the note of a quail till he saw that the birds had been drawn together, when he flung his net over them, and whipped the sides of the net together, so as to get them all huddled up in a heap. Then he crammed them into his basket, and going home sold his prey for a living.

Now one day the Bodhisatta said to those quails, "This fowler is making havoc among our kinsfolk. I have a device whereby he will be unable to catch us. Henceforth, the very moment he throws the net over you, let each one put his head through a mesh and then all of you together must fly away with the net to such place as you please, and there let it down on a thorn-brake; this done, we will all escape from our several meshes." "Very good," said they all in ready agreement.

On the morrow, when the net was cast over them, they did just as the Bodhisatta had told them:—they lifted up the net, [209] and let it down on a thorn-brake, escaping themselves from underneath. While the fowler was still disentangling his net, evening came on; and he went away empty-handed. On the morrow and following days the quails played the same trick. So that it became the regular thing for the fowler to be engaged till sunset disentangling his net, and then to betake himself home empty-handed. Accordingly his wife grew angry and said, "Day by day you return empty-handed; I suppose you've got a second establishment to keep up elsewhere."

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"No, my dear," said the fowler; "I've no second establishment to keep up. The fact is those quails have come to work together now. The moment my net is over them, off they fly with it and escape, leaving it on a thorn-brake. Still, they won't live in unity always. Don't you bother

yourself; as soon as they start bickering among themselves, I shall bag the lot, and that will bring a smile to your face to see." And so saying, he repeated this stanza to his wife:—

While concord reigns, the birds bear off the net.

When quarrels rise, they'll fall a prey to me.

Not long after this, one of the quails, in alighting on their feeding ground, trod by accident on another's head. "Who trod on my head?" angrily cried this latter. "I did; but I didn't mean to. Don't be angry," said the first quail. But notwithstanding this answer, the other remained as angry as before. Continuing to answer one another, they began to bandy taunts, saying, "I suppose it is you single-handed who lift up the net." As they wrangled thus with one another, the Bodhisatta thought to himself, "There's no safety with one who is quarrelsome. The time has come when they will no longer lift up the net, and thereby they will come to great destruction. The fowler will get his opportunity. I can stay here no longer." And thereupon he with his following went elsewhere.

Sure enough the fowler [210] came back again a few days later, and first collecting them together by imitating the note of a quail, flung his net over them. Then said one quail, "They say when you were at work lifting the net, the hair of your head fell off. Now's your time; lift away." The other rejoined, "When you were lifting the net, they say both your wings moulted. Now's your time; lift away."

But whilst they were each inviting the other to lift the net, the fowler himself lifted the net for them and crammed them in a heap into his basket and bore them off home, so that his wife's face was wreathed with smiles.

“Thus, sire,” said the Master, “such a thing as a quarrel among kinsfolk is unseemly; quarrelling leads only to destruction.” His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion, and identified the Birth, by saying, “Devadatta was the foolish quail of those days, and I myself the wise and good quail.”

[Note. See for the migrations of this story Benfey’s Panca-Tantra 1. 304, and Fausboll in R.A.S. Journal, 1870. See also Julien’s Avadanas, Vol. 1. page 155.]

Footnotes

^85:1 No. 536.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 87] [j034]

No. 34.

MACCHA-JATAKA.

“‘Tis not the cold.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about being seduced by the wife of one’s mundane life before joining the Brotherhood. Said the Master on this occasion, “Is it true, as I hear, Brother, that you are passion-tost?”

“Yes, Blessed One.”

“Because of whom?”

“My former wife, sir, is sweet to touch; I cannot give her up!
“Then said the Master, “Brother, this woman is hurtful to you. It was through her that in bygone times too you were

meeting your end, when you were saved by me.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta became his family-priest.

In those days some fishermen had cast their net into the river. And a great big fish came along amorously toying with his wife. She, scenting the net as she swam ahead of him, made a circuit round it and escaped. But her amorous spouse, blinded by passion, sailed right into the meshes of the net. As soon as the fishermen felt him in their net, they hauled it in and took the fish out; they did not kill him at once, but flung him alive on the sands. [211] “We’ll cook him in the embers for our meal,” said they; and accordingly they set to work to light a fire and whittle a spit to roast him on. The fish lamented, saying to himself, “It’s not the torture of the embers or the anguish of the spit or any other pain that grieves me; but only the distressing thought that my wife should be unhappy in the belief that I have gone off with another.” And he repeated this stanza:—

‘Tis not the cold, the heat, or wounding net;

‘Tis but the fear my darling wife should think
Another’s love has lured her spouse away.

Just then the priest came to the riverside with his attendant slaves to bathe. Now he understood the language of all animals. Therefore, when he heard the fish’s lamentation, he thought to himself, “This fish is lamenting the lament of passion. If he should die in this unhealthy state of mind, he cannot escape rebirth in hell. I will save him.” So he went to the fishermen and said, “My men, don’t you supply us with a fish every day for our curry?” “What do you say, sir?” said

the fishermen; “pray take away with you any fish you may take a fancy to.” “We don’t need any but this one; only give us this one.” “He’s yours, sir.”

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Taking the fish in his two hands, the Bodhisatta seated himself on the bank and said, “Friend fish, if I had not seen you to-day, you would have met your death. Cease for the future to be the slave of passion.” And with this exhortation he threw the fish into the water, and went into the city.

[212] His lesson ended, the Master preached the Truths, at the close whereof the passion-tost Brother won the First Path. Also, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “The former wife was the female fish of those days, the passion-tost Brother was the male fish, and I myself the family-priest.”

[Note. Compare Jatakas Nos. 216 and 297.]

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j035]

No. 35.

VATTAKA-JATAKA.

“With, wings that fly not.”—This story was told by the Master, whilst on an alms-pilgrimage through Magadha, about the going-out of a jungle fire. Once the Master, whilst on an alms-pilgrimage through Magadha, went on his morning round for alms through a certain hamlet in that country; on his return, after his meal, he went out again

followed by the company of the Brethren. Just then a great fire broke out. There were numbers of Brethren both in front of the Master and behind him. On came the fire, spreading far and wide, till all was one sheet of smoke and flame. Hereupon, some unconverted Brethren were seized with the fear of death. "Let us make a counter fire," they cried; "and then the big fire will not sweep over the ground we have fired." And, with this view, they set about kindling a fire with their tinder-sticks.

But others said, "What is this you do, Brethren? You are like such as mark not the moon in mid-heaven, or the sun's orb rising with myriad rays from the east, or the sea on whose shores they stand, or Mount Sineru towering before their very eyes,—when, as you journey along in the company of him who is peerless among devas and men alike, you give not a thought to the All-Enlightened Buddha, but cry out, 'Let us make a fire!' You know not the might of a Buddha! Come, let us go to the Master." Then, gathering together from front and rear alike, the Brethren in a body flocked round the Lord of Wisdom. At a certain spot the Master halted, with this mighty assembly of the Brethren surrounding him. On rolled the flames, roaring as though to devour them. But when they approached the spot where the Buddha had taken his stand, they came no nearer than sixteen lengths, but there and then went out,—even as a torch plunged into water. It had no power to spread over a space thirty-two lengths in diameter.

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The Brethren burst into praises of the Master, saying, "Oh! how great are the virtues of a Buddha! For, even this fire, though lacking sense, could not sweep over the spot where a Buddha stood, but went out like a torch in water. Oh! how marvellous are the powers of a Buddha!"

[213] Hearing their words, the Master said, “It is no present power of mine, Brethren, that makes this fire go out on reaching this spot of ground. It is the power of a former ‘Act of Truth’ of mine. For in this spot no fire will burn throughout the whole of this aeon, the miracle being one which endures for an aeon [*1].”

Then the Elder Ananda folded a robe into four and spread it for the Master to sit on. The Master took his seat. Bowing to the Buddha as he sat cross-legged there, the Brethren too seated themselves around him. Then they asked him, saying, “Only the present is known to us, sir; the past is hidden from us. Make it known to us.” And, at their request, he told this story of the past.

Once upon a time in this selfsame spot in Magadha, it was as a quail that the Bodhisatta came to life once more. Breaking his way out of the shell of the egg in which he was born, he became a young quail, about as big as a large ball [*2]. And his parents kept him lying in the nest, while they fed him with food which they brought in their beaks. In himself, he had not the strength either to spread his wings and fly through the air, or to lift his feet and walk upon the ground. Year after year that spot was always ravaged by a jungle-fire; and it was just at this time that the flames swept down on it with a mighty roaring. The flocks of birds, darting from their several nests, were seized with the fear of death, and flew shrieking away. The father and mother of the Bodhisatta were as frightened as the others and flew away, forsaking the Bodhisatta. Lying there in the nest, the Bodhisatta stretched forth his neck, and seeing the flames spreading towards him, he thought to himself, “Had I the power to put forth my wings and fly, I would wing my way hence to safety; or, if I could move my legs and walk, I could escape elsewhere afoot. Moreover, my parents, seized with

the fear of death, are fled away to save themselves, leaving me here quite alone in the world. I am without protector or helper. What, then, shall I do this day?"

Then this thought came to him:—"In this world there exists what is termed the Efficacy of Goodness, and what is termed the Efficacy of Truth. There are those who, through their having realised the Perfections in past ages, have attained beneath the Bo-tree to be All-Enlightened; who, having won Release by goodness, tranquillity and wisdom, possess also discernment of the knowledge of such Release; [214] who are filled with truth, compassion, mercy, and patience; whose love embraces all creatures alike; whom men call omniscient Buddhas. There is an efficacy in the attributes they have won. And I too grasp one truth; I hold and believe in a single

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principle in Nature. Therefore, it behoves me to call to mind the Buddhas of the past, and the Efficacy they have won, and to lay hold of the true belief that is in me touching the principle of Nature; and by an Act of Truth to make the flames go back, to the saving both of myself and of the rest of the birds."

Therefore it has been said:—

There's saving grace in Goodness in this world;

There's truth, compassion, purity of life. Thereby, I'll work a matchless Act of Truth. _____

Remembering Faith's might, and taking thought

On those who triumphed in the days gone by, Strong in the truth, an Act of Truth I wrought.

Accordingly, the Bodhisatta, calling to mind the efficacy of the Buddhas long since past away, performed an Act of Truth in the name of the true faith that was in him, repeating this stanza:—

With wings that fly not, feet that walk not yet,

Forsaken by my parents, here I lie! Wherefore I conjure thee,
dread Lord of Fire, Primaeval Jataveda, turn! go back!

Even as he performed his Act of Truth, Jataveda went back a space of sixteen lengths; and in going back the flames did not pass away to the forest devouring everything in their path. No; they went out there and then, like a torch plunged in water. Therefore it has been said:—

[215] I wrought my Act of Truth, and therewithal

The sheet of blazing fire left sixteen lengths Unscathed,—
like flames by water met and quenched.

And as that spot escaped being wasted by fire throughout a whole aeon, the miracle is called an 'aeon-miracle.' When his life closed, the Bodhisatta, who had performed this Act of Truth, passed away to fare according to his deserts.

“Thus, Brethren,” said the Master, “it is not my present power but the efficacy of an Act of Truth performed by me when a young quail, that has made the flames pass over this spot in the jungle.” His lesson ended, he preached the Truths, at the close whereof some won the First, some the Second, some the Third Path, while others again became Arahats. Also, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “My present parents were the parents of those days, and I myself the king of the quails.”

[Note. The story and the verses occur in the Cariya-Pitaka, p. 98. See reference to this story under Jataka No. [*20], supra.

For the archaic title of Jataveda here given to Fire, compare Jataka, No. 75, as to a similar use of the archaic name Pajjunna.]

Footnotes

^89:1 See above, page .

^89:2 See Morris, Journal P. T. S. 1884, p. 90.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 91] [j036]

No. 36.

SAKUNA-JATAKA.

“Ye denizens of air.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a Brother whose cell was burnt down.

Tradition says that a Brother, having been given a theme for meditation by the Master, went from Jetavana to the land of Kosala and there abode in a dwelling in a forest hard by a border-village. Now, during the very first month of his dwelling there, his cell was burnt down. This he reported to the villagers, saying, “My cell has been burnt down; I live in discomfort.” Said they, “The land is suffering from drought just now; we’ll see to it when we have irrigated the fields.” When the irrigation was over, they said they must do their sowing first; when the sowing was done, they had the

fences to put up; when the fences were put up; they had first to do the weeding and the reaping, and the threshing; till, what with one job and another which they kept mentioning, three whole months passed by.

After three months spent in the open air in discomfort, that Brother had developed his theme for meditation, but could get no further. So, after the Pavarana-festival which ends the Rainy Season, he went back again to the Master, and, with due salutation, took his seat aside. After kindly words of greeting, the Master said, "Well, Brother, have you lived happily through the Rainy Season? Did your theme for meditation end in success?" The Brother told him all that had happened, adding, "As I had no lodging to suit me, my theme did not end in success."

Said the Master, "In bygone times, Brother, even animals knew what suited them and what did not. How is it that you did not know'?" And so saying, he told this story of the past.

[216] Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was born a bird and lived round a giant tree with branching boughs, at the head of a company of birds. Now one day, as the boughs of this tree were grinding one against the other, dust began to fall, soon followed by smoke. When the Bodhisatta became aware of this, he thought to himself: "If these two boughs go on grinding against one another like this, they will produce fire; and the fire will fall and catch hold of the old leaves, and so come to set fire to this tree as well. We cannot live on here; the proper thing to do is to hasten off elsewhere." And he repeated this stanza to the company of birds:—

Ye denizens of air, that in these boughs

Have sought a lodging, mark the seeds of fire
This earthborn tree is breeding!
Safety seek In flight! Our trusted
stronghold harbours death!

The wiser birds who followed the Bodhisatta's counsels, at once rose up in the air and went elsewhere in his company. But the foolish ones said,

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[paragraph continues] "It is always like this with him; he's always seeing crocodiles in a drop of water." And they, heeding not the Bodhisatta's words, stopped where they were. In a very short time, just as the Bodhisatta had foreseen, flames really did break out, and the tree caught fire. When the smoke and flame arose, the birds, blinded by the smoke, were unable to get away; one by one they dropped into the flames and were destroyed.

"Thus, Brethren," said the Master, "in bygone times even animals who were dwelling in the tree-top, knew what suited them and what did not. How is it that you did not know?" [217] His lesson ended, he preached the Truths, at the close whereof that Brother won the Fruit of the First Path. Also, the Master shewed the connexion, and identified the Birth by saying, "The Buddha's disciples were then the birds who hearkened to the Bodhisatta, and I myself was the wise and good bird."

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[j037]

No. 37.

TITTIRA-JATAKA.

“For they who honour age.”—This story was told by the Master whilst on his way to Savatthi, about the way in which the Elder Sariputta was kept out of a night’s lodging.

For, when Anatha-pindika had built his monastery, and had sent word that it was finished, the Master left Rajagaha and came to Vesali, setting out again on his journey after stopping at the latter place during his pleasure. It was now that the disciples of the Six hurried on ahead, and, before quarters could be taken for the Elders, monopolized the whole of the available lodgings, which they distributed among their superiors, their teachers, and themselves. When the Elders came up later, they could find no quarters at all for the night. Even Sariputta’s disciples, for all their searching, could not find lodgings for the Elder. Being without a lodging, the Elder passed the night at the foot of a tree near the Master’s quarters, either walking up and down or sitting at the foot of a tree.

At early dawn the Master coughed as he came out. The Elder coughed too. “Who is that?” asked the Master. “It is I, Sariputta, sir.” “What are you doing here at this hour, Sariputta?” Then the Elder told his story, at the close of which the Master thought, “Even now, while I am still alive, the Brethren lack courtesy and subordination; what will they not do when I am dead and gone?” And the thought filled him with anxiety for the Truth. As soon as day had come, he had the assembly of the Brethren called together, and asked them, saying, “Is it true, Brethren, as I hear, that the adherents of the Six went on ahead and kept the Elders among the Brethren out of lodgings for the night?” “That is so, Blessed One,” was the reply. Thereupon, with a reproof to the adherents of the Six and as a lesson to all, he addressed the Brethren, and said, “Tell me, who deserves

the best lodging, the best water, and the best rice, Brethren?”

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Some answered, “He who was a nobleman before he became a Brother.” Others said, “He who was originally a brahmin, or a man of means.” Others severally said, “The man versed in the Rules of the Order; the man who can expound the Law; the men who have won the first, second, third, or fourth stage of mystic ecstasy.” Whilst others again said, “The man in the First, Second, or Third path of Salvation, or an Arahant; one who knows the Three Great Truths; one who has the Six Higher Knowledges.”

After the Brethren had stated whom they severally thought worthiest of precedence in the matter of lodging and the like, the Master said, [218] “In the religion which I teach, the standard by which precedence in the matter of lodging and the like is to be settled, is not noble birth, or having been a brahmin, or having been wealthy before entry into the Order; the standard is not familiarity with the Rules of the Order, with the Suttas, or with the Metaphysical Books [*1]; nor is it either the attainment of any of the four stages of mystic ecstasy, or the walking in any of the Four Paths of salvation. Brethren, in my religion it is seniority which claims respect of word and deed, salutation, and all due service; it is seniors who should enjoy the best lodging, the best water, and the best rice. This is the true standard, and therefore the senior Brother ought to have these things. Yet, Brethren, here is Sariputta, who is my chief disciple, who has set rolling the Wheel of Minor Truth, and who deserves to have a lodging next after myself. And Sariputta has spent this night without a lodging at the foot of a tree! If you lack respect and subordination even now, what will be your behaviour as time goes by?”

And for their further instruction he said, “In times past, Brethren, even animals came to the conclusion that it was not proper for them to live without respect and subordination one to another, or without the ordering of their common life; even these animals decided to find out which among them was the senior, and then to shew him all forms of reverence. So they looked into the matter, and having found out which of them was the senior, they shewed him all forms of reverence, whereby they passed away at that life’s close to people heaven.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time, hard by a great banyan-tree on the slopes of the Himalayas, there dwelt three friends,—a partridge, a monkey, and an elephant. And they came to lack respect and subordination one to another, and had no ordering of their common life. And the thought came to them that it was not seemly for them to live in this way, and that they ought to find out which of their number was the senior and to honour him.

As they were engaged thinking which was the oldest, one day an idea struck them. Said the partridge and the monkey to the elephant as they all three sat together at the foot of that banyan-tree, “Friend elephant, how big was this banyan when you remember it first?” Said the elephant, “When I was a baby, this banyan was a mere bush, over which I used to walk; and as I stood astride of it, its topmost branches used just to reach up to my belly. I’ve known the tree since it was a mere bush.”

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Next the monkey was asked the same question by the other two; and he replied, “My friends, when I was a youngling,

[219] I had only to stretch out my neck as I sat on the ground, and I could eat the topmost sprouts of this banyan. So I've known this banyan since it was very tiny."

Then the partridge was asked the same question by the two others; and he said, "Friends, of old there was a great banyan-tree at such and such a spot; I ate its seeds, and voided them here; that was the origin of this tree. Therefore, I have knowledge of this tree from before it was born, and am older than the pair of you."

Hereupon the monkey and the elephant said to the sage partridge, "Friend, you are the oldest. Henceforth you shall have from us acts of honour and veneration, marks of obeisance and homage, respect of word and deed, salutation, and all due homage; and we will follow your counsels. You for your part henceforth will please impart such counsel as we need."

Thenceforth the partridge gave them counsel, and established them in the Commandments, which he also undertook himself to keep. Being thus established in the Commandments, and becoming respectful and subordinate among themselves, with proper ordering of their common life, these three made themselves sure of rebirth in heaven at this life's close.

"The aims of these three"—continued the Master—"came to be known as the 'Holiness of the Partridge,' and if these three animals, Brethren, lived together in respect and subordination, how can you, who have embraced a Faith the Rules of which are so well-taught, live together without due respect and subordination? Henceforth I ordain, Brethren, that to seniority shall be paid respect of word and deed, salutation, and all due service; that seniority shall be the

title to the best lodging, the best water, and the best rice; and nevermore let a senior be kept out of a lodging by a junior. Whosoever so keeps out his senior commits an offence.”

It was at the close of this lesson that the Master, as Buddha, repeated this stanza:—

For they who honour age, in Truth are versed;

Praise now, and bliss hereafter, is their meed.

[220] When the Master had finished speaking of the virtue of reverencing age, he wade the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “Moggallana was the elephant of those days, Sariputta the monkey, and I myself the sage partridge.”

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[Note. See this story in the Vinaya, Vol. II. page 161 (translated at page 193 of Vol. XX. of the Sacred Books of the East), and in Julien’s Avadanas, Vol. II. page 17. Reference is made to this Jataka by name in Buddhaghosa’s Sumangala-Vilasini, page 178; but his quotation, though it purports to be from the Tittira-Jataka, is from the above passage in the Vinaya. Prof. Cowell has traced its history in Y Cymmrodor, October 1882.]

Footnotes

^93:1 i.e. the three divisions, or ‘three baskets,’ of the Buddhist scriptures,

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No. 38.

BAKA-JATAKA.

“Guile profits not.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a tailoring Brother.

Tradition says that at Jetavana dwelt a Brother who was exceedingly skilful in all operations to be performed with a robe, such as cutting, joining, arranging, and stitching. Because of this skill, he used to fashion robes and so got the name of ‘The Robe-tailor.’ What, you ask, did he do?—Well, he exercised his craft on old bits of cloth and turned out a nice soft robe, which, after the dyeing was done, he would enhance in colour with a wash containing flour to make a dressing, and rub it with a shell, till he had made it quite smart and attractive. Then he would lay his handiwork aside.

Being ignorant of robe-making, Brethren used to come to him with brand-new cloth, saying, “We don’t know how to make robes; you make them for us.”

“Sirs,” he would reply, “a robe takes a long time making; but I have one which is just finished. You can take that, if you will leave these cloths in exchange.” And, so saying, he would take his out and show it them. And they, marking only its fine colour, and knowing nothing of what it was made of, thought it was a good strong one, and so handed over their brand-new cloth to the ‘Robe-maker’ and went off with the robe he gave them. When it got dirty and was being washed in hot water, it revealed its real character, and the worn patches were visible here and there. Then the owners regretted their bargain. Everywhere that Brother became well-known for cozening in this way all who came to him.

Now, there was a robe-maker in a hamlet who used to cozen everybody just as the brother did at Jetavana. [221] This man's friends among the Brethren said to him, "Sir, they say that at Jetavana there is a robe-maker who cozens everybody just like you." Then the thought struck him, "Come now, let me cozen that city man!" So he made out of rags a very fine robe, which he dyed a beautiful orange. This he put on and went to Jetavana. The moment the other saw it, he coveted it, and said to its owner, "Sir, did you make that robe?" "Yes, I did, sir," was the reply. "Let me have that robe, sir; you'll get another in its place." "But, sir, we village-Brethren find it hard to get the Requisites; if I give you this, what shall I have to wear myself?" "Sir, I have some brand-new cloth at my lodging; take it and make yourself a robe." "Reverend sir, herein have I shewn my own handiwork; but, if you speak thus, what can I do? Take it." And having cozened the other by exchanging the rag-robe for the new cloth, he went his way.

After wearing the botched robe in his turn, the Jetavana man was washing it not long afterwards in warm water, when he became aware that it was made out. of rags; and he was put to shame. The whole of the Brotherhood heard the news that the Jetavana man had been cozened by a robe-tailor from the country.

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Now, one day the Brethren were seated in the Hall of Truth, discussing the news, when the Master entered and asked what they were discussing; and they told him all about it.

Said the Master, "Brethren, this is not the only occasion of the Jetavana robe-maker's cozening tricks; in bygone times also he did just the same, and, as he has been cozened now

by the roan from the country, so was he too in bygone times." And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time the Bodhisatta came to life in a certain forest-haunt as the Tree-sprite of a tree which stood near a certain lotus-pond. In those days the water used every summer to fall very low in a certain pond, not very big,—which was plentifully stocked with fish. Catching sight of these fish, a certain crane said to himself, "I must find a way to cajole and eat these fish." So he went and sat down in deep thought by the side of the water.

Now when the fishes caught sight of him, they said, "Of what are you thinking, my lord, as you sit there?" "I am thinking about you," was the reply. "And what is your lordship thinking about us?" "The water in this pool being low, food scarce, and, the heat intense,—I was wondering to myself, as I sat here, what in the world you fishes would do." "And what are we to do, my lord?" "Well, if you'll take my advice, [222] I will take you up one by one in my beak, and carry you all off to a fine large pool covered with the five varieties of lotuses, and there put you down." "My lord," said they, no crane ever took the slightest thought for fishes since the world began. Your desire is to eat us one by one." "No; I will not eat you while you trust me," said the crane. "If you don't take my word that there is such a pond, send one of your number to go with me and see for himself." Believing the crane, the fish presented to him a great big fish (blind of one eye, by the way), who they thought would be a match for the crane whether afloat or ashore; and they said, "Here's the one to go with you."

The crane took the fish off and put him in the pool, and after shewing him the whole extent of it, brought him back again

and put him in along with the other fish in his old pond. And he held forth to them on the charms of the new pool.

After hearing this report, they grew eager to go there, and said to the crane, "Very good, my lord; please take us across."

First of all, the crane took that big one-eyed fish again and carried him off to the edge of the pool, so that he could see the water, but actually alighted in a Varana-tree which grew on the bank. Dashing the fish down in a fork of the tree, he pecked it to death,—after which he picked him clean and let the bones fall at the foot of the tree. Then back he went and said, "I've thrown him in; who's the next?" And so he took the fish one by one, and ate them all, till at last when he came back, he

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could not find another left. But there was still a crab remaining in the pond; so the crane, who wanted to eat him up too, said, "Mister crab, I've taken all those fishes away and turned them into a fine large pool covered all over with lotuses. Come along; I'll take you too." "How will you carry me across?" said the crab. "Why, in my beak, to be sure," said the crane. "Ah, but you might drop me like that," said the crab; "I won't go with you." "Don't be frightened; I'll keep tight hold of you all the way." Thought the crab to himself, "He hasn't put the fish in the pool. But, if he would really put me in, that would be capital. If he does not,—why, I'll nip his head off and kill him." So he spoke thus to the crane, "You'd never be able to hold me tight enough, friend crane; whereas we crabs have got an astonishingly tight grip. [223] If I might take hold of your neck with my claws, I could hold it tight and then would go along with you."

Not suspecting that the crab wanted to trick him, the crane gave his assent. With his claws the crab gripped hold of the crane's neck as with the pincers of a smith, and said, "Now you can start." The crane took him and shewed him the pool first, and then started off for the tree.

"The pool lies this way, nunky," said the crab; "but you're taking me the other way." "Very much your nunky dear am I!" said the crane; "and very much my nephew are you! I suppose you thought me your slave to lift you up and carry you about! Just you cast your eye on that heap of bones at the foot of the tree; as I ate up all those fish, so I will eat you too." Said the crab, "It was through their own folly that those fish were eaten by you; but I shan't give you the chance of eating me. No; what I shall do, is to kill you. For you, fool that you were, did not see that I was tricking you. If we die, we will both die together; I'll chop your head clean off." And so saying he gripped the crane's weazand with his claws, as with pincers. With his mouth wide open, and tears streaming from his eyes, the crane, trembling for his life, said, "Lord, indeed I will not eat you! Spare my life!"

"Well, then, just step down to the pool and put me in," said the crab. Then the crane turned back and stepped down as directed to the pool, and placed the crab on the mud, at the water-edge. But the crab, before entering the water, nipped off the crane's head as deftly as if he were cutting a lotus stalk with a knife.

The Tree-fairy who dwelt in the tree, marking this wonderful thing, made the whole forest ring with applause repeating this stanza in sweet tones:—

Guile profits not your very guileful folk.

Mark what the guileful crane got from the crab!

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[224] “Brethren,” said the Master, “this is not the first time this fellow has been cozened by the robe-maker from the country; in the past he was cozened in just the same manner.” His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion, and identified the Birth, by saying, “The Jetavana robe-maker was [the crane] of those days, the robe-maker from the country was the crab, and I myself the Tree-Fairy.”

[Note. See Benfey’s *Panca-Tantra* (I. 175), Tawney’s *Katha-Sarit-Sagara* (II. 31), and Rhys Davids’ *Birth Stories* (page 321), for the migrations of this popular story.]

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j039]

No. 39.

NANDA-JATAKA.

“Methinks the gold.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a co-resident pupil of Sariputta.

Tradition says that this Brother was meek and docile, and was zealous in ministering to the Elder. Now, on one occasion the Elder departed with the leave of the Master, on an alms-pilgrimage, and came to South Magadha. When he got there, that Brother grew so proud-stomached that he would not do what the Elder told him. Moreover, if he was addressed with, “Sir, do this,” he quarrelled with the Elder. The Elder could not make out what possessed him.

After making his pilgrimage in those parts, he came back again to Jetavana. The moment he got back to the

monastery at Jetavana, the Brother became again what he had always been.

The Elder told this to the Buddha, saying, "Sir, a co-resident of mine is in one place like a slave bought for a hundred pieces, and in another so proud-stomached that an order to do anything makes him quarrel."

Said the Master, "This is not the first time, Sariputta, that he has shewn this disposition; in the past too, if he went to one place, he was like a slave bought for a hundred pieces, whilst, if he went to another place, he would become quarrelsome and contentious." And, so saying, by request of the Elder, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life again as a squire. Another squire, a friend of his, was an old man himself, but had [225] a young wife who had borne him a son and heir. Said the old man to himself, "As soon as I am dead, this girl, being so young as she is, will marry heaven knows whom, and spend all my money, instead of handing it over to my son. Wouldn't it be my best course to bury my money safely in the ground?"

So, in the company of a household slave of his named Nanda, he went to the forest and buried his riches at a certain spot, saying to the slave,

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[paragraph continues] "My good Nanda, reveal this treasure to my son after I am gone, and don't let the wood be sold."

After giving this injunction to his slave, the old man died. In due course the son grew up, and his mother said to him,

“My son, your father, in the company of Nanda, buried his money. Get it back and look after the property of the family.” So one day he said to Nanda, “Nunky, is there any treasure which my father buried?” “Yes, my lord.” “Where is it buried?” “In the forest, my lord.” “Well, then, let us go there.” And he took a spade and a basket, and going to the scene, said to Nanda, “Well, nunky, where’s the money?” But by the time Nanda had got up to the treasure and was standing right over it, he was so puffed up by the money that he abused his master, saying, “You servant of a slave-wench’s son! how should you have any money here?”

The young gentleman, pretending not to have heard this insolence, simply said, “Let us be going then,” and took the slave back home with him. Two or three days later, he returned to the place; but again Nanda abused him, as before. Without any abusive rejoinder, the young gentleman came back and turned the matter over in his mind. Thought he to himself, “At starting, this slave always means to reveal where the money is; but no sooner does he get there, than he falls to abusing me. The reason of this I do not see; but I could find out, if I were to ask my father’s old friend, the squire.” So he went to the Bodhisatta, and laying the whole business before him, asked his friend what was the real reason of such behaviour.

Said the Bodhisatta, “The spot at which Nanda stands to abuse you, my friend, is the place where your father’s money is buried. Therefore, as soon as he starts abusing you again, say to him, ‘Whom are you talking to, you slave?’ Pull him from his perch, take the spade, dig down, remove your fancily treasure, and make the slave carry it home for you.” And so saying, he repeated this stanza:— [226]

Methinks the gold and jewels buried lie

Where Nanda, low-born slave, so loudly bawls!

Taking a respectful leave of the Bodhisatta, the young gentleman went home, and taking Nanda went to the spot where the money was buried. Faithfully following the advice he had received, he brought the money away and looked after the family property. He remained steadfast in the Bodhisatta's counsels, and after a life spent in charity and other good works he passed away to fare according to his deserts.

Said the Master, "In the past too this man was similarly disposed." His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion, and identified the Birth, by saying, Sariputta's co-resident was the Nanda of those days, and I the wise and good squire,"

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 100] [j040]

No. 40.

KHADIRANGARA-JATAKA.

"Far rather will I headlong plunge."—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about Anatha-pindika.

For Anatha-pindika, who had lavished fifty-four crores on the Faith of the Buddha over the Monastery alone, and who valued naught else save only the Three Gems, used to go every day while the Master was at Jetavana to attend the Great Services,—once at daybreak, once after breakfast, and once in the evening. There were intermediate services too; but he never went empty-handed, for fear the Novices and lads should look to see what he had brought with him.

When he went in the early morning [227], he used to have rice-gruel taken up; after breakfast, ghee, butter, honey, molasses, and the like; and in the evening, he brought perfumes, garlands and cloths. So much did he expend day after day, that his expense knew no bounds. Moreover, many traders borrowed money from him on their bonds,—to the amount of eighteen crores; and the great merchant never called the money in. Furthermore, another eighteen crores of the family property, which were buried in the river-bank, were washed out to sea, when the bank was swept away by a storm; and down rolled the brazen pots, with fastenings and seals unbroken, to the bottom of the ocean. In his house, too, there was always rice standing ready for 500 Brethren,—so that the merchant's house was to the Brotherhood like a pool dug where four roads meet, yea, like mother and father was he to them. Therefore, even the All-Enlightened Buddha used to go to his house, and the Eighty Chief Elders too; and the number of other Brethren passing in and out was beyond measure.

Now his house was seven stories high and had seven portals; and over the fourth gateway dwelt a fairy who was a heretic. When the All-Enlightened Buddha came into the house, she could not stay in her abode on high, but came down with her children to the ground-floor; and she had to do the like whenever the Eighty Chief Elders or the other Elders came in and out. Thought she, "So long as the ascetic Gotama and his disciples keep coming into this house I can have no peace here; I can't be eternally coming downstairs to the ground floor. I must contrive to stop them from coming any more to this house." So one day, when the business manager had retired to rest, she appeared before him in visible shape.

"Who is that?" said he.

“It is I,” was the reply; “the fairy who lives over the fourth gateway.” “What brings you here?” “You don’t see what the merchant is doing. Heedless of his own future, he is drawing upon his resources, only to enrich the ascetic Gotama. He engages in no traffic; he undertakes no business. Advise the merchant to attend to his business, and arrange that the ascetic Gotama with his disciples shall come no more into the house.”

Then said he, “Foolish Fairy, if the merchant does spend his money, he spends it on the Faith of the Buddha, which leads to Salvation. Even if he were to seize me by the hair and sell me for a slave, I will say nothing. Begone!”

Another day, she went to the merchant’s eldest son and gave him the same advice. And he flouted her in just the same manner. But to the merchant himself she did not so much as dare to speak on the matter.

Now by dint of unending munificence [228] and of doing no business, the merchant’s incomings diminished and his estate grew less and less; so that he sank by degrees into poverty, and his table, his dress, and his bed and food were no longer what they had once been. Yet, in spite of his altered circumstances,

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he continued to entertain the Brotherhood, though he was no longer able to feast them. So one day when he had made his bow and taken his seat, the Master said to him, “Householder, are gifts being given at your house?” “Yes, sir,” said he; “but there’s only a little sour husk-porridge, left over from yesterday.” “Be not distressed, householder, at the thought that you can only offer what is unpalatable. If the heart be good, the food given to Buddhas, Pacceka

Buddhas [*1], and their disciples, cannot but be good too. And why?—Because of the greatness of the fruit thereof. For he who can make his heart acceptable cannot give an unacceptable gift,—as is to be testified by the following passage:—

For, if the heart have faith, no gift is small

To Buddhas or to their disciples true. 'Tis said no service can be reckoned small That's paid to Buddhas, lords of great renown. Mark well what fruit rewarded that poor gift Of pottage,—dried-up, sour, and lacking salt [*2].”

Also, he said this further thing, “Householder, in giving this unpalatable gift, you are giving it to those who have entered on the Noble Eightfold Path. Whereas I, when in Velama’s time I stirred up all India by giving the seven things of price, and in my largesse poured then forth as though I had made into one mighty stream the five great rivers,—I yet found none who had reached the Three Refuges or kept the Five Commandments; for rare are those who are worthy of offerings. Therefore, let not your heart be troubled by the thought that your gift is unpalatable.” And so saying, he repeated the Velamaka Sutta [*3].

Now that fairy who had not dared to speak to the merchant in the days of his magnificence, thought that now he was poor he would hearken to her, and so, entering his chamber at dead of night she appeared before him in visible shape, standing in mid-air. “Who’s that?” said the merchant, when he became aware of her presence. “I am the fairy, great merchant, who dwells over the fourth gateway.” “What brings you here?” “To give you counsel.” “Proceed, then.” “Great merchant, you take no thought for your own future or for your own children. You have expended vast sums on the Faith of the ascetic Gotama; in fact, by long-continued [229]

expenditure and by not undertaking new business you have been brought by the ascetic Gotama to poverty. But even in your poverty you do not shake off the ascetic Gotama! The ascetics are in and out of your house this very day just the same! What they have had of you cannot be recovered. That may be taken for certain. But henceforth don't you go yourself to the ascetic Gotama and don't let his disciples set foot inside your house. Do not even turn to look at the ascetic Gotama but attend to your trade and traffic in order to restore the family estate."

Then he said to her, "Was this the counsel you wanted to give me?"

"Yes, it was."

Said the merchant, "The mighty Lord of Wisdom has made me proof against a hundred, a thousand, yea against a hundred thousand fairies such as you are! My faith is strong and steadfast as Mount Sineru! My substance has been expended on the Faith that leads to Salvation. Wicked are your words; it is a blow aimed at the Faith of the Buddhas by you, you wicked and impudent witch. I cannot live under the same roof with you; be off at once from my house and seek shelter elsewhere!" Hearing these words of that converted man and elect disciple, she could not stay, but repairing to her dwelling, took her

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children by the hand and went forth. But though she went, she was minded, if she could not find herself a lodging elsewhere, to appease the merchant and return to dwell in his house; and in this mind she repaired to the tutelary deity of the city and with due salutation stood before him. Being asked what had brought her thither, she said, "My lord, I

have been speaking imprudently to Anatha-pindika, and he in his anger has turned me out of my home. Take me to him and make it up between us, so that he may let me live there again." "But what was it you said to the merchant?" "I told him for the future not to support the Buddha and the Order, and not to let the ascetic Gotama set foot again in his house. This is what I said, my lord." "Wicked were your words; it was a blow aimed at the Faith. I cannot take you with me to the merchant." Meeting with no support from him, she went to the Four Great Regents of the world. And being repulsed by them in the same manner, she went on to Sakka, king of Devas, and told him her story, beseeching him still more earnestly, as follows, "Deva, finding no shelter, I wander about homeless, leading my children by the hand. Grant me of your majesty some place wherein to dwell."

And he too said to her, "You have done wickedly; it was a blow aimed at the Conqueror's Faith. I cannot speak to the merchant on your behalf. But I can tell you one way [230] whereby the merchant may be led to pardon you." "Pray tell me, deva." "Men have had eighteen crores of the merchant on bonds. Take the semblance of his agent, and without telling anybody repair to their houses with the bonds, in the company of some young goblins. Stand in the middle of their houses with the bond in one hand and a receipt in the other, and terrify them with your goblin power, saying, 'Here's your acknowledgment of the debt. Our merchant did not move in the matter while he was affluent; but now he is poor, and you must pay up the money you owe.' By your goblin power obtain all those eighteen crores of gold and fill the merchant's empty treasuries. He had another treasure buried in the banks of the river Aciravati, but when the bank was washed away, the treasure was swept into the sea. Get that back also by your supernatural power and store it in his treasuries. Further, there is another sum of eighteen crores

lying unowned in such and such a place. Bring that too and pour the money into his empty treasuries. When you have atoned by the recovery of these fifty-four crores, ask the merchant to forgive you.” “Very good, deva,” said she. And she set to work obediently, and did just as she had been bidden. When she had recovered all the money, she went into the merchant’s chamber at dead of night and appeared before him in visible shape standing in the air.

The merchant asking who was there, she replied, “It is I, great merchant, the blind and foolish fairy who lived over your fourth gateway. In the greatness of my infatuate folly I knew not the virtues of a Buddha, and so came to say what I said to you some days ago. Pardon me my fault! At the instance of Sakka, king of Devas, I have made atonement by recovering the eighteen crores owing to you, the eighteen crores which had been washed down into the sea, and another eighteen crores which were lying unowned in such and such a place,—making fifty-four crores in all, which I have poured into your empty treasure-chambers. The sum you expended on the Monastery at Jetavana is now made up again. Whilst I have nowhere to dwell, I am in misery. Bear not in mind what I did in my ignorant folly, great merchant, but pardon me.”

Anatha-pindika, hearing what she said, thought to himself, “She is a fairy, and she says she has atoned, and confesses her fault. The Master shall consider this and make his virtues known to her. I will take her before the All-Enlightened Buddha.” So he said, “My good fairy, if you want me to pardon you, ask me in the presence of the master.” “Very good,” said she, “I will. Take me along with you to the Master.” “Certainly,” said he. And early in the morning, when night was just passing away, he took her with him to the Master, and told the Blessed One all that she had done.

Hearing this, the Master said, “You see, householder, how the sinful man regards sin [231] as excellent before it ripens to its fruit. But when it has ripened, then he sees sin to be sin. Likewise the good man looks on his goodness

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as sin before it ripens to its fruit; but when it ripens, he sees it to be goodness.” And so saying, he repeated these two stanzas from the Dhammapada:—

The sinner thinks his sinful deed is good,

So long as sin has ripened not to fruit. But when his sin at last to ripeness grows, The sinner surely sees “‘twas sin I wrought.”

The good man thinks his goodness is but sin,

So long as it has ripened not to fruit. But when his goodness unto ripeness grows, The good man surely sees “‘twas good I wrought [*1].”

At the close of these stanzas that fairy was established in the Fruit of the First Path. She fell at the Wheel-marked feet of the Master, crying, “Stained as I was with passion, depraved by sin, misled by delusion, and blinded by ignorance, I spoke wickedly because I knew not your virtues. Pardon me!” Then she received pardon from the Master and from the great merchant.

At this time Anatha-pindika sang his own praises in the Master’s presence, saying, “Sir, though this fairy did her best to stop me from giving support to the Buddha and his following, she could not succeed; and though she tried to stop me from giving gifts, yet I gave them still! Was not this goodness on my part?”

Said the Master, “You, householder, are a converted man and an elect disciple; your faith is firm and your vision is purified. No marvel then that you were not stopped by this impotent fairy. The marvel was that the wise and good of a bygone day, when a Buddha had not appeared, and when knowledge had not ripened to its full fruit, should from the heart of a lotus-flower have given gifts, although Mara, lord of the Realm of Lusts, appeared in mid-heaven, shouting, ‘If you give gifts, you shall be roasted in this hell,’—and showing them therewithal a pit eighty cubits deep, filled with red-hot embers.” And so saying, at the request of Anatha-pindika, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life in the family of the Lord High Treasurer of Benares, and was brought up in the lap of all luxury like a royal prince. By the time he was come to years of discretion, being barely sixteen years old, he had made himself perfect in all accomplishments. At his father’s death he filled the office of Lord High Treasurer, and built six almonries, one at each of the four gates of the city, one in the centre of the city, and one at the gate of his own mansion. Very bountiful was he [232], and he kept the commandments, and observed the fast-day duties.

Now one day at breakfast-time when dainty fare of exquisite taste and variety was being brought in for the Bodhisatta, a Pacceka Buddha rising from a seven days’ trance of mystic ecstasy, and noticing that it was time to go his rounds, bethought him that it would be well to visit the Treasurer of Benares that morning. So he cleaned his teeth with a tooth-stick made from the betel-vine, washed his mouth with water from Lake Anotatta, put on his under-cloth as he stood on the tableland of Manosila, fastened on his girdle, donned his outer-cloth; and, equipped with a bowl

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which he called into being for the purpose, he passed through the air and arrived at the gate of the mansion just as the Bodhisatta's breakfast was taken in.

As soon as the Bodhisatta became aware of his presence there, he rose at once from his seat and looked at the attendant, indicating that a service was required. "What am I to do, my lord?" "Bring his reverence's bowl," said the Bodhisatta.

At that very instant Mara the Wicked rose up in a state of great excitement, saying, "It is seven days since the Pacceka Buddha had food given him; if he gets none to-day, he will perish. I will destroy him and stop the Treasurer too from giving." And that very instant he went and called into being within the mansion a pit of red-hot embers, eighty cubits deep, filled with Acacia-charcoal, all ablaze and aflame like the great hell of Avici. When he had created this pit, Mara himself took his stand in mid-air.

When the man who was on his way to fetch the bowl became aware of this, he was terrified and started back. "What makes you start back, my man?" asked the Bodhisatta. "My lord," was the answer, "there's a great pit of red-hot embers blazing and flaming in the middle of the house." And as man after man got to the spot, they all were panic-stricken, and ran away as fast as their legs would carry them.

Thought the Bodhisatta to himself, "Mara, the Enthraler, must have been exerting himself to-day to stop me from alms-giving. I have yet to learn, however, that I am to be shaken by a hundred, or by a thousand, Maras. We will see this day whose strength is the stronger, whose might is the

mightier, mine or Mara's." So taking in his own hand the bowl which stood ready, he passed out from the house, and, standing on the brink of the fiery pit, looked up to the heavens. Seeing Mara, he said, "Who are you?" "I am Mara," was the answer.

"Did you call into being this pit of red-hot embers?" "Yes, I did." [233] "Why?" "To stop you from alms-giving and to destroy the life of that Pacceka Buddha." "I will not permit you either to stop me from my alms-giving or to destroy the life of the Pacceka Buddha. I am going to see to-day whether your strength or mine is the greater." And still standing on the brink of that fiery pit, he cried, "Reverend Pacceka Buddha, even though I be in act to fall headlong into this pit of red-hot embers, I will not turn back. Only vouchsafe to take the food I bring." And so saying he repeated this stanza:—

Far rather will I headlong plunge amain

Full in this gulf of hell, than stoop to shame! Vouchsafe, sir,
at my hands to take this alms!

With these words the Bodhisatta, grasping the bowl of food, strode on with undaunted resolution right on to the surface of the pit of fire. But

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even as he did so, there rose up to the surface through all the eighty cubits of the pit's depth a large and peerless lotus-flower, which received the feet of the Bodhisatta! And from it there came a measure of pollen which fell on the head of the Great Being, so that his whole body was as it were sprinkled from head to foot with dust of gold! Standing right in the heart of the lotus, he poured the dainty food into the bowl of the Pacceka Buddha.

And when the latter had taken the food and returned thanks, he flung his bowl aloft into the heavens, and right in the sight of all the people he himself rose bodily into the air likewise, and passed away to the Himalayas again, seeming to tread a track formed of clouds fantastically shaped.

And Mara, too, defeated and dejected, passed away back to his own abode.

But the Bodhisatta, still standing in the lotus, preached [234] the Truth to the people, extolling alms-giving and the commandments; after which, girt round by the escorting multitude, he passed into his own mansion once more. And all his life long he shewed charity and did other good works, till in the end he passed away to fare according to his deserts.

Said the Master, "It was no marvel, layman, that you, with your discernment of the truth, were not overcome now by the fairy; the real marvel was what the wise and good did in bygone days." His lesson ended, the Master shewed the connexion, and identified the Birth by saying, "The Pacceka Buddha of those days passed away, never to be born again. I was myself the Treasurer of Benares who, defeating Mara, and standing in the heart of the lotus, placed alms in the bowl of the Pacceka Buddha."

[Note. See Giles, 'Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio,' I. 396.]

Footnotes

^101:1 All Buddhas have attained to complete illumination; but a Pacceka Buddha keeps his knowledge to himself and, unlike a 'Perfect Buddha,' does not preach the saving truth to his fellowmen.

^101:2 The first two lines are from the Vimana-vatthu, page 44.

^101:3 This Sutta is referred to at page 234 of the Sumangala-Vilasini, but is otherwise unknown as yet to European scholars.

^103:1 The verses are Nos. 119 and 120 in the Dhammapada.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j041]

No. 41.

LOSAKA-JATAKA.

“The headstrong man.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana about the Elder Losaka Tissa.

‘Who,’ you ask, ‘was this Elder Losaka Tissa?’ Well; his father was a fisherman in Kosala, and he was the bane of his family; and, when a Brother, never had anything given to him. His previous existence ended, he had been conceived by a certain fisherman’s wife in a fishing-village of a thousand families in Kosala. And on the day he was conceived all those thousand families, net in hand, went fishing in river and pool but failed to catch one single fish; and

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the like bad fortune dogged them from that day forward. Also, before his birth, the village was destroyed seven times by fire, and visited seven times by the king’s vengeance. So

in time it came to pass that the people fell into a wretched plight. Reflecting that such had not been their lot in former clays, but that now they were going to rack and ruin, they concluded that there must be some breeder of misfortune among them, and resolved to divide into two bands. This they did; and there were then two bands of five hundred families each. Thence-forward, ruin dogged the band which included the parents of the future Losaka, whilst the other five hundred families throve apace. So the former resolved to go on halving their numbers, and did so, until this one family was parted from all the rest. Then they knew that the breeder of misfortune was in that family, and with blows drove them away. [235] With difficulty could his mother get a livelihood; but, when her time was come, she gave birth to her son in a certain place. (He that is born into his last existence cannot be killed. For like a lamp within a jar, even so securely within his breast burns the flame of his destiny to become an Arahant.) The mother took care of the child till he could run about, and when he could run about then she put a potsherd in his hands, and, bidding him go into a house to beg, ran away. Thenceforward, the solitary child used to beg his food thereabouts and sleep where he could. He was unwashed and unkempt, and made a living after the fashion of a mud-eating goblin [*1]. When he was seven years old, he was picking up and eating, like a crow, lump by lump, any rice he could find outside a house door where they flung away the rinsings of the rice-pots.

Sariputta, Captain of the Faith, going into Savatthi on his round for alms, noticed the child, and, wondering what village the hapless creature came from, was filled with love for him and called out "Come here." The child came, bowed to the Elder, and stood before him. Then said Sariputta, "What village do you belong to, and where are your parents?"

“I am destitute, sir,” said the child; “for my parents said they were tired out, and so forsook me, and went away.”

“Would you like to become a Brother?” “Indeed I should, sir; but who would receive a poor wretch like me into the Order?” “I will.” “Then, pray let me become a Brother.”

The Elder gave the child a meal and took him to the monastery, washed, him with his own hands, and admitted him a Novice first and a full Brother afterwards, when he was old enough. In his old age he was known as Elder Losaka Tissa; he was always unlucky [*2], and but little was given to him. The story goes that, no matter how lavish the charity, he never got enough to eat, but only just enough to keep himself alive. A single ladle of rice seemed to fill his alms-bowl to the brim, so that the charitable thought his bowl was full and bestowed the rest of their rice on the next. When rice was being put into his bowl, it is said that the rice in the giver’s dish used to vanish away. And so with every kind of food. Even when, as time went by, he had developed Discernment and so won the highest Fruit which is Arahatsip, he still got but little.

In the fullness of time, when the materials which determined his separate existence [*3] were outworn, the day came for him to pass away. And the Captain

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of the Faith, as he meditated, had knowledge of this, and thought to himself, ‘Losaka Tissa will pass away to-day; and to-day at any rate I will see that he has enough to eat.’ So he took the Elder and came to Savatthi for alms. But, because Losaka was with him, it was all in vain that Sariputta held out his hand for alms in populous Savatthi; not so much as a bow was vouchsafed him. So he bade the

Elder go back and seat himself in the sitting-hall of the Monastery, and collected food which he sent with a message [236] that it was to be given to Losaka. Those to whom he gave it took the food and went their way, but, forgetting all about Losaka, ate it themselves. So when Sariputta rose up, and was entering the monastery, Losaka came to him and saluted him. Sariputta stopped, and turning round said, "Well, did you get the food, brother?"

"I shall, no doubt, get it in good time," said the Elder. Sariputta was greatly troubled, and looked to see what hour it was. But noon was passed [*1]. "Stay here, Brother," said Sariputta; "and do not move"; and he made Losaka Tissa sit down in the sitting-hall, and set out for the palace of the king of Kosala. The king bade his bowl be taken, and saying that it was past noon and therefore not the time to eat rice, ordered his bowl to be filled with the four sweet kinds of food [*2]. With this he returned, and stood before him, bowl in hand, bidding the sage eat. But the Elder was ashamed, because of the reverence he had towards Sariputta, and would not eat. "Come, brother Tissa," said Sariputta, "'tis I must stand with the bowl; sit you down and eat. If the bowl left my hand, everything in it would vanish away."

So the venerable Elder Losaka Tissa ate the sweets, whilst the exalted Captain of the Faith stood holding the bowl; and thanks to the latter's merits and efficacy the food did not vanish. So the Elder Losaka Tissa ate as much as he wanted and was satisfied, and that selfsame day passed away by that death whereby existence ceases for ever.

The All-Enlightened Buddha stood by, and saw the body burned; and they built a shrine for the collected ashes.

Seated in conclave in the Hall of Truth, the Brethren said, "Brethren, Losaka was unlucky, and little was given to him.

How came he with his unluck and his neediness to win the glory of Arahatship?"

Entering the Hall, the Master asked what they were talking about; and they told him. "Brethren," said he, "this Brother's own actions were the cause both of his receiving so little, and of his becoming an Arahata. In bygone days he had prevented others from receiving, and that is why he received so little himself. But it was by his meditating on sorrow, transitoriness, and the absence of an abiding principle in things, that he won Arahatship for himself." And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once upon a time, in the days of the Buddha Kassapa, there was a Brother who lived the village life and was maintained by a country squire. He was regular in his conduct as a Brother [*3], virtuous in his life, and was filled to overflowing with insight. There was also an Elder, an Arahata, who lived with his fellows on terms of equality, and at the time of the story paid a first visit to the village where lived the squire who supported

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this Brother. So pleased was the squire [23.7] with the very demeanour of the Elder that, taking his bowl, he led him into the house and with every mark of respect invited him to eat. Then he listened to a short discourse by the Elder, and at its close said, with a bow, "Sir, pray do not journey further than our monastery close by; in the evening I will come and call upon you there." So the Elder went to the monastery, saluting the resident Brother on his entrance; and, first courteously asking leave, took a seat by his side. The Brother received him with all friendliness, and asked whether any food had been given him as alms.

“Oh yes,” replied the Elder. “Where, pray?” “Why, in your village close by, at the squire’s house.” And so saying, the Elder asked to be shewn his cell and made it ready. Then laying aside his bowl and robe, and seating himself, he became absorbed in blissful Insight and enjoyed the bliss of the Fruits of the Paths.

In the evening came the squire, with servants carrying flowers and perfumes and lamps and oil. Saluting the resident Brother, he asked whether a guest had appeared, an Elder. Being told that he had, the squire asked where he was and learned which cell had been given him. Then the squire went to the Elder and, first bowing courteously, seated himself by the Elder’s side and listened to a discourse. In the cool of the evening the squire made his offerings at the Tope and Bo-Tree, lit his lamp, and departed with an invitation to both Elder and Brother to come up to his house next day for their meal.

“I’m losing my hold on the squire,” thought the Brother. “If this Elder stops, I shall count for nothing with him.” So he was discontented and fell a-scheming how to make the Elder see that he must not settle down there for good. Accordingly, when the Elder came to pay his respects in the early morning, the Brother did not open his lips. The Arahat read the other’s thoughts and said to himself, “This Brother knows not that I shall never stand in his light either with the family that supports him or with his Brotherhood.” And going back to his cell, he became absorbed in the bliss of Insight, and in the bliss of the Fruits.

Next day, the resident Brother, having first knocked gingerly on the gong [*1], and having tapped on the gong with the back of his nail, went off alone to the squire’s house. Taking from him his alms-bowl, the squire bade him be seated and asked where the stranger was.

“I know no news of your friend,” said the Brother. “Though I knocked on the gong and tapped at his door, I couldn’t wake him. I can

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only presume that his dainty fare [238] here yesterday has disagreed with him and that he is still a-bed in consequence. Possibly such doings may commend themselves to you.”

(Meantime the Arahat, who had waited till the time came to go his round for alms, had washed and dressed and risen with bowl and robe in the air and gone elsewhere.)

The squire gave the Brother rice and milk to eat, with ghee and sugar and honey in it. Then he had his bowl scoured with perfumed chunam powder and filled afresh, saying, “Sir, the Elder must be fatigued with his journey; take him this.” Without demur the Brother took the food and went his way, thinking to himself, “If our friend once gets a taste of this, taking him by the throat and kicking him out of doors won’t get rid of him. But how can I get rid of it? If I give it away to a human being, it will be known. If I throw it into the water, the ghee will float on top. And as for throwing it away on the ground, that will only bring all the crows of the district flocking to the spot.” In his perplexity his eye fell on a field that had been fired, and, scraping out the embers, he flung the contents of his bowl into the hole, filled in the embers on the top, and went off home. Not finding the Elder there, he thought that the Arahat had understood his jealousy and departed. “Woe is me,” he cried, “for my greed has made me to sin.”

And thenceforth sore affliction befell him and he became like a living ghost. Dying soon after, he was re-born in hell and there was tormented for hundreds of thousands of

years. By reason of his ripening sin, in five hundred successive births he was an ogre and never had enough to eat, except one day when he enjoyed a surfeit of offal. Next, for five hundred more existences he was a dog, and here too, only on one single day had his fill—of a vomit of rice; on no other occasion did he have enough to eat. Even when he ceased to be a dog, he was only born into a beggar family in a Kasi village. From the hour of his birth, that family became still more beggared, and he never got half as much water-gruel as he wanted. And he was called Mitta-vindaka [239].

Unable at last to endure the pangs of hunger [*1] that now beset them, his father and mother beat him and drove him away, crying, “Begone, you curse!”

In the course of his wanderings, the little outcast came to Benares, where in those days the Bodhisatta was a teacher of world-wide fame with five hundred young Brahmins to teach. In those times the Benares folk used to give day by day commons of food to poor lads and had them taught free, and so this Mitta-vindaka also became a charity scholar under the Bodhisatta. But he was fierce and intractable, always fighting with his fellows

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and heedless of his master’s reproofs; and so the Bodhisatta’s fees fell off. And as he quarrelled so, and would not brook reproof, the youth ended by running away, and came to a border-village where he hired himself out for a living, and married a miserably poor woman by whom he had two children. Later, the villagers paid him to teach them what was true doctrine and what was false, and gave him a hut to live in at the entrance to their village. But, all because of Mitta-vindaka’s coming to live among them, the king’s vengeance fell seven times on those villagers, and

seven times were their homes burned to the ground; seven times too did their water-tank dry up.

Then they considered the matter and agreed that it was not so with them before Mitta-vindaka's coming, but that ever since he came they had been going from bad to worse. So with blows they drove him from their village; and forth he went with his family, and came to a haunted forest. And there the demons killed and ate his wife and children. Fleeing thence, he came after many wanderings to a village on the coast called Gambhira, arriving on a day when a ship was putting to sea; and he hired himself for service aboard. For a week the ship held on her way, but on the seventh day she came to a complete standstill in mid-ocean, as though she had run upon a rock. Then they cast lots, in order to rid them of their bane; and seven times the lot fell on Mitta-vindaka. So they gave him a raft of bamboos, and laying hold of him, cast him over-board. And forthwith the ship made way again [240].

Mitta-vindaka clambered on to his bamboos and floated on the waves. Thanks to his having obeyed the commandments in the times of the Buddha Kassapa, he found in mid-ocean four daughters of the gods dwelling in a palace of crystal, with whom he dwelt happily for seven days. Now palace-ghosts enjoy happiness only for seven days at a time; and so, when the seventh day came and they had to depart to their punishment, they left him with an injunction to await their return. But no sooner were they departed, than Mitta-vindaka put off on his raft again and came to where eight daughters of the gods dwelt in a palace of silver. Leaving them in turn, he came to where sixteen daughters of the gods dwelt in a palace of jewels, and thereafter to where thirty-two dwelt in a palace of gold. Paying no regard to their words, again he sailed away and came to a city of ogres, set among islands. And there an

ogress was ranging about in the shape of a goat. Not knowing that she was an ogress, Mitta-vindaka thought to make a meal off the goat, and seized hold of the creature by the leg. Straightway, by virtue of her demon-nature, she hurled him up and away over the ocean, and plump he fell in a thorn-brake on the slopes of the dry moat of Benares, and thence rolled to earth.

Now it chanced that at that time thieves used to frequent that moat

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and kill the King's goats; and the goatherds had bidden themselves hard by to catch the rascals.

Mitta-vindaka picked himself up and saw the goats. Thought he to himself, "Well, it was a goat in an island in the ocean that, being seized by the leg, hurled me here over seas. Perhaps, if I do the same by one of these goats, I may get hurled back again to where the daughters of the gods dwell in their ocean palaces." So, without thinking, he seized one of the goats by the leg. At once the goat began to bleat, and the goatherds came running up from every side. They laid hold of him at once, crying, "This is the thief that has so long lived on the King's goats." And they, beat him and began to haul him away in bonds to the King.

Just at that time the Bodhisatta, with his five hundred young Brahmins round him, was coming out of the city to bathe. Seeing and recognising Mitta-vindaka, he said to the goatherds, "Why, this is a pupil of mine, my good men; what have you seized him for?" "Master," said they, "we caught this thief in the act of seizing a goat by the lag, and that's why we've got hold of him." "Well," [241] said the Bodhisatta, "suppose you hand him over to us to live with

us as our slave.” “All right, sir,” replied the men, and letting their prisoner go, they went their way. Then the Bodhisatta asked Mitta-vindaka where he had been all that long time; and Mitta-vindaka told him all that he had done.

“‘Tis through not hearkening to those who wished him well,” said the Bodhisatta, “that he has suffered all these misfortunes.” And he recited this stanza:—

The headstrong man who, when exhorted, pays

No heed to friends who kindly counsel give, Shall come to certain harm,—like Mittaka, When by the leg he seized the grazing goat.

And in those times both that Teacher and Mitta-vindaka passed away, and their after-lot was according to their deeds.

Said the Master, “This Losaka was himself the cause both of his getting little and of his getting Arahathship.” His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “The Elder Losaka Tissa was the Mitta-vindaka of those days, and I the Teacher of world-wide fame [*1].”

Footnotes

^106:1 On the authority of Subhuti, pamsu-pisacaka are said to form the fourth class of Petas (pretas) or ‘ghosts’ (who were cursed at once with cavernous maws and with mouths no bigger than a needle’s eye, so that their voracity was never satisfied even in their customary coprophagic state). But neither Hardy’s Manual of Buddhism (p. 58) nor the Milinda (p. 294) mentions pamsu-pisacaka as one of the four classes of Petas.

^106:2 Reading nippunno instead of nippanno. See Ceylon R. A. S. Journal, 1884, p. 158; and compare apunno on p. 236, line 20 of the Pali original.

^106:3 As protoplasm is 'the physical basis of life,' so ayu-samkhara are its moral basis according to Buddhist ideas. This Lebensstoff it is the aim of Buddhism to uproot, so that there may be no re-birth.

^107:1 i.e. no more rice could be eaten that day. If a shadow of a finger's breadth is cast by an upright stick, a strict Brother will not eat rice and like foods.

^107:2 Honey, ghee, butter, and sugar.

^107:3 Pakatatto is explained by Rhys Davids and Oldenberg in the note to page 340 of Vol. aura. of the Sacred Books of the East as meaning a Brother "who has not made himself liable to any disciplinary proceeding, has committed no irregularity."

^108:1 For gandi meaning 'a gong,' cf. Jat. iv. 306; but see note p. 213 of Vol. XX. of S. B. E. It is doubtful what kapitthena can mean. Can the true reading be (punadivase) nakhapitthena, i.e. 'with the back of his nail'? The resident Brother's object was to go through the form of waking the guest without disturbing his slumbers.

^109:1 Reading chatakadukkham for Fausboll's jatakadukkham.

^111:1 Compare Nos. [*82], [*104], 369, 439, Petavatthu No. 43, Avadana-Sataka No. 50, J. As. 1878, and Ind. Antiq. x. 293. A dubious attempt to trace in the wanderings of Mittavinda the germ of part of the wanderings of Ulysses, has been made by the Bishop of Colombo in the Ceylon R. A. S. Journal, 1884.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

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No. 42.

KAPOTA-JATAKA.

“The headstrong man.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a certain greedy Brother. His greediness will be related in the Ninth Book in the Kaka-Jataka [*1].

But on this occasion the Brethren told the Master, saying, “Sir, this Brother is greedy.”

Said the Master, “Is it true [242] as they say, Brother, that you are greedy?” “Yes, sir,” was the reply.

“So too in bygone days, Brother, you were greedy, and by reason of your greediness lost your life; also you caused the wise and good to lose their home.” And so saying he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was born a pigeon. Now the Benares folk of those days, as an act of goodness, used to hang up straw-baskets in divers places for the shelter and comfort of the birds; and the cook of the Lord High Treasurer of Benares hung up one of these baskets in his kitchen. In this basket the Bodhisatta took up his abode, sallying out at daybreak in quest of food, and returning home in the evening; and so he lived his life.

But one day a crow, flying over the kitchen, snuffed up the goodly savour from the salt and fresh fish and meat there, and was filled with longing to taste it. Casting about how to have his will, he perched hard by, and at evening saw the Bodhisatta come home and go into the kitchen. "Ah!" thought he, "I can manage it through the pigeon."

So back he came next day at dawn, and, when the Bodhisatta sallied out in quest of food, kept following him about from place to place like his shadow. So the Bodhisatta said, "Why do you keep with me, friend?"

"My lord," answered the crow, "your demeanour has won my admiration; and henceforth it is my wish to follow you." "But your kind of food and mine, friend, is not the same," said the Bodhisatta; "you will be hard put to it if you attach yourself to me." "My lord," said the crow, "when you are seeking your food, I will feed too, by your side." "So be it, then," said the Bodhisatta; "only you must be earnest." And with this admonition to the crow, the Bodhisatta ranged about pecking up grass-seeds; whilst the other went about turning over cowdung and picking

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out the insects underneath till he had got his fill. Then back he came to the Bodhisatta and remarked, "My lord, you give too much time to eating; excess therein should be shunned."

And when the Bodhisatta had fed and reached home again at evening, in flew the crow with him into the kitchen [243].

"Why, our bird has brought another home with him;" exclaimed the cook, and hung up a second basket for the crow. And from that time onward the two birds dwelt together in the kitchen.

Now one day the Lord High Treasurer had in a store of fish which the cook hung up about the kitchen. Filled with greedy longing at the sight, the crow made up his mind to stay at home next day and treat himself to this excellent fare.

So all the night long he lay groaning away; and next day, when the Bodhisatta was starting in search of food, and cried, "Come along, friend crow," the crow replied, "Go without me, my lord; for I have a pain in my stomach." "Friend," answered the Bodhisatta, "I never heard of crows having pains in their stomachs before. True, crows feel faint in each of the three night-watches; but if they eat a lamp-wick, their hunger is appeased for the moment [*1]. You must be hankering after the fish in the kitchen here. Come now, man's food will not agree with you. Do not give way like this, but come and seek your food with me." "Indeed, I am not able, my lord," said the crow. "Well, your own conduct will show," said the Bodhisatta. "Only fall not a prey to greed, but stand steadfast." And with this exhortation, away he flew to find his daily food.

The cook took several kinds of fish, and dressed some one way, some another. Then lifting the lids off his saucepans a little to let the steam out, he put a colander on the top of one and went outside the door, where he stood wiping the sweat from his brow. Just at that moment out popped the crow's head from the basket. A glance told him that the cook was away, and, "Now or never," thought he, "is my time. The only question is shall I choose minced meat or a big lump?" Arguing that it takes a long time to make a full meal of minced meat, he resolved to take a large piece of fish and sit and eat it in his basket. So out he flew and alighted on the colander. "Click" went the colander.

“What can that be?” said the cook, running in on hearing the noise. Seeing the crow, he cried, “Oh, there’s that rascally crow wanting to eat my master’s dinner. I have to work for my master, not for that rascal! What’s he to me, I should like to know?” So, first shutting the door, he caught the crow and plucked every feather [244] off his body. Then, he pounded up ginger with salt and cumin, and mixed in sour butter-milk—finally sousing the crow in the pickle and flinging him back into his

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basket. And there the crow lay groaning, overcome by the agony of his pain.

At evening the Bodhisatta came back, and saw the wretched plight of the crow. “Ah! greedy crow,” he exclaimed, “you would not heed my words, and now your own greed has worked you woe.” So saying, he repeated this stanza:—

The headstrong man who, when exhorted, pays

No heed to friends who kindly counsel give, Shall surely
perish, like the greedy crow, Who laughed to scorn the
pigeon’s warning words.

Then, exclaiming “I too can no longer dwell here,” the Bodhisatta flew away. But the crow died there and then, and the cook flung him, basket and all, on the dust-heap.

Said the Master, “You were greedy, Brother, in bygone times, just as you are now; and all because of your greediness the wise and good of those days had to abandon their homes.” Having ended this lesson, the Master preached the Four Truths, at the close whereof that Brother won the Fruit of the Second Path. Then the Master shewed

the connexion and identified the Birth as follows:—“The greedy Brother was the crow of those times, and I the pigeon.”

Footnotes

^112:1 This is an inadvertence of the compiler. There is no Kaka-jataka in the 9th book, though there is in the 6th (No. 395), where it is stated that ‘the Introductory Story has already been related.’ See Nos. 274 and 375.

^113:1 Cf. Vol. II. p. 262.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j043]

No. 43.

VELUKA-JATAKA.

“The headstrong man.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a certain headstrong Brother. For the Blessed One asked him whether the report was true that he was headstrong, and the Brother admitted that it was. “Brother,” said the Master, “this is not the first time you have been headstrong: you were just as headstrong in former days. also, [245] and, as the result of your headstrong refusal to follow the advice of the wise and good, you met your end by the bite of a snake.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was born into a wealthy family in the Kingdom of Kasi. Having come to years of discretion, he saw

how from passion springs pain and how true bliss comes by the abandonment of passion. So he put lusts from him, and going forth to the Himalayas became a hermit, winning by fulfilment of the ordained mystic meditations the five orders of the

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[paragraph continues] Higher Knowledge and the eight Attainments. And as he lived his life in the rapture of Insight, he came in after times to have a large following of five hundred hermits, whose teacher he was.

Now one day a young poisonous viper, wandering about as vipers do, came to the hut of one of the hermits; and that Brother grew as fond of the creature as if it were his own child, housing it in a joint of bamboo and shewing kindness to it. And because it was lodged in a joint of bamboo, the viper was known by the name of "Bamboo." Moreover, because the hermit was as fond of the viper as if, it were his own child, they called him "Bamboo's Father."

Hearing that one of the Brethren was keeping a viper, the Bodhisatta sent for that Brother and asked whether the report was true. When told that it was true, the Bodhisatta said, "A viper can never be trusted; keep it no longer."

"But," urged the Brother, "my viper is dear to me as a pupil to a teacher;—I could not live without him." "Well then," answered the Bodhisatta, "know that this very snake will lose you your life." But heedless of the master's warning, that Brother still kept the pet he could not bear to part with. Only a very few days later all the Brethren went out to gather fruits, and coming to a spot where all kinds grew in plenty, they stayed there two or three days. With them went "Bamboo's Father," leaving his viper behind in its bamboo

prison. Two or three days afterwards, when he came back, he bethought him of feeding the creature, and, opening the cane, stretched out his hand, saying, "Come, my son; you must be hungry." But angry with its long fast, the viper bit his outstretched hand, killing him on the spot, and made its escape into the forest.

Seeing him lying there dead, the Brethren came and told the Bodhisatta [246], who bade the body be burned. Then, seated in their midst, he exhorted the Brethren by repeating this stanza:—

The headstrong man, who, when exhorted, pays

No heed to friends who kindly counsel give,— Like
'Bamboo's father,' shall be brought to nought.

Thus did the Bodhisatta exhort his followers; and he developed within himself the four Noble States, and at his death was re-born into the Brahma Realm.

Said the Master, "Brother, this is not the first time you have shewn yourself headstrong; you were no less headstrong in times gone by, and thereby met your death from a viper's bite." Having ended his lesson, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, "In those days, this headstrong Brother was 'Bamboo's Father,' my disciples were the band of disciples, and I myself their teacher."

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

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No. 44.

MAKASA-JATAKA.

“Sense-lacking friends.”—This story was told by the Master whilst on an alms-pilgrimage in Magadha, about some stupid villagers in a certain hamlet. Tradition says that, after travelling from Savatthi to the kingdom of Magadha, he was on his round in that kingdom when he arrived at a certain hamlet, which was thronged with fools. In this hamlet these fools met together one day, and debated together, saying, “Friends, when we are at work in the jungle, the mosquitos devour us; and that hinders our work. Let us, arming ourselves with bows and weapons, go to war with the mosquitos and shoot or hew them all to death.” So off to the jungle they went, and shouting, “Shoot down the mosquitos,” shot and struck one another, till they were in a sad state and returned only to sink on the ground in or within the village or at its entrance.

Surrounded by the Order of the Brethren, the Master came in quest of alms to that village. The sensible minority among the inhabitants no sooner saw the Blessed One, than they erected a pavilion at the entrance to their village and, after bestowing large alms on the [247] Brotherhood with the Buddha at its head, bowed to the Master and seated themselves. Observing wounded men lying around on this side and on that, the Master asked those lay-brothers, saying, “There are numbers of disabled men about; what has happened to them?” “Sir,” was the reply, “they went forth to war with the mosquitos, but only shot one another and so disabled themselves.” Said the Master, “This is not the first time that these foolish people have dealt out blows to themselves instead of to the mosquitos they meant to kill; in former times, also, there were those who, meaning to hit a mosquito, hit a fellow-creature instead.” And so saying, at those villagers’ request he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta gained his livelihood as a trader. In those days in a border-village in Kasi there dwelt a number of carpenters. And it chanced that one of them, a bald grey-haired man, was planing away at some wood, with his head glistening like a copper bowl, when a mosquito settled on his scalp and stung him with its dart-like sting.

Said the carpenter to his son, who was seated hard by, —“My boy, there’s a mosquito stinging me on the head; do drive it away.” “Hold still then, father,” said the son; “one blow will settle it.”

(At that very time the Bodhisatta had reached that village in the way of trade, and was sitting in the carpenter’s shop.)

“Rid me of it,” cried the father. “All right, father,” answered the son, who was behind the old man’s back, and, raising a sharp axe on high with intent to kill only the mosquito, he cleft—his father’s head in twain. So the old man fell dead on the spot.

Thought the Bodhisatta, who had been an eye-witness of the whole scene,—“Better than such a friend is an enemy with sense, whom fear

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of men’s vengeance will deter from killing a man.” And he recited these lines:—

Sense-lacking friends are worse than foes with sense;

Witness the son that sought the gnat to slay, But cleft, poor fool, his father’s skull in twain. [248]

So saying, the Bodhisatta rose up and departed, passing away in after days to fare according to his deserts. And as for the carpenter, his body was burned by his kinsfolk.

“Thus, lay brethren,” said the Master, “in bygone times also there were those who, seeking to hit a mosquito, struck down a fellow-creature.” This lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “In those days I was myself the wise and good trader who departed after repeating the stanza.”

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j045]

No. 45.

ROHINI-JATAKA.

“Sense-lacking friends.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a maid servant of the Lord High Treasurer, Anatha-pindika. For he is said to have had a maid-servant named Rohini, whose aged mother came to where the girl was pounding rice, and lay down. The flies came round the old woman and stung her as with a needle, so she cried to her daughter, “The flies are stinging me, my dear; do drive them away.” “Oh! I’ll drive them away, mother,” said the girl, lifting her pestle to the flies which had settled on her mother. Then, crying, “I’ll kill them!”, she smote her mother such a blow as to kill the old woman outright. Seeing what she had done the girl began to weep and cry, “Oh! mother, mother!”

The news was brought to the Lord High Treasurer, who, after having the body burnt, went his way to the Monastery, and

told the Master what had happened. “This is not the first time, layman,” said the Master, “that in Rohini’s anxiety to kill the flies on her mother, she has struck her mother dead with a pestle; she did precisely the same in times past.” Then at Anatha-pindika’s request, he told this story of the past.

Once upon a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was born the son of the Lord High Treasurer, and came to be Lord High Treasurer himself at his father’s death. And he, too, had a maid-servant whose name was Rohini. And her mother, in like manner, went to where the daughter was pounding rice, and lay down, and called

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out, ‘Do drive these flies off me, my dear,’ and in just the same way she struck her mother with a pestle, and killed her, and began to weep.

Hearing of what had happened, [249] the Bodhisatta reflected: ‘Here, in this world, even an enemy, with sense, would be preferable,’ and recited these lines:—

Sense-lacking friends are worse than foes with sense,

Witness the girl whose reckless hand laid low Her mother,
whom she now laments in vain.

In these lines in praise of the wise, did the Bodhisatta preach the Truth.

“This is not the first time, layman,” said the Master, “that in Rohini’s anxiety to kill flies she has killed her own mother

instead.” This lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying:—“The mother and daughter of to-day were also mother and daughter of those bygone times, and I myself the Lord High Treasurer.”

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j046]

No. 46.

ARAMADUSAKA-JATAKA.

“‘Tis knowledge.”—This story was told by the Master in a certain hamlet of Kosala about one who spoiled a pleasaunce.

Tradition says that, in the course of an alms-journey among the people of Kosala, the Master came to a certain hamlet. A squire of the place invited the Buddha to take the mid-day meal at his house, and had his guest seated in the pleasaunce, where he shewed hospitality to the Brotherhood with the Buddha at its head, and courteously gave them leave to stroll at will about his grounds. So the Brethren rose up and walked about the grounds with the gardener. Observing in their walk a bare space, they said to the gardener, “Lay-disciple, elsewhere in the pleasaunce there is abundant shade; but here there’s neither tree nor shrub. How comes this?”

“Sirs,” replied the man, “when these grounds were being laid out, a village lad, who was doing the watering, pulled up all the young trees hereabouts and then gave them much or little [250] water according to the size of their roots. So the young trees withered and died off; and that is why this space is bare.”

Drawing near to the Master, the Brethren told him this. "Yes, Brethren," said he, "this is not the first time that village lad has spoiled a pleasaunce; he did precisely the same in bygone times also." And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was king of Benares, a festival was proclaimed in the city; and at the first summoning notes of the festal drum out poured the townsfolk to keep holiday.

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Now in those days, a tribe of monkeys was living in the king's pleasaunce; and the king's gardener thought to himself, "They 're holiday-making up in the city. I'll get the monkeys to do the watering for me, and be off to enjoy myself with the rest." So saying, he went to the king of the monkeys, and, first dwelling on the benefits his majesty and his subjects enjoyed from residence in the pleasaunce in the way of flowers and fruit and young shoots to eat, ended by saying, "To-day there's holiday-making up in the city, and I'm off to enjoy myself. Couldn't you water the young trees while I'm away?"

"Oh! yes," said the monkey.

"Only mind you do," said the gardener; and off he went, giving the monkeys the water-skins and wooden watering-pots to do the work with.

Then the monkeys took the water-skins and watering pots, and fell to watering the young trees. "But we must mind not to waste the water," observed their king; "as you water, first pull each young tree up and look at the size of its roots. Then give plenty of water to those whose roots strike deep,

but only a little to those with tiny roots. When this water is all gone, we shall be hard put to it to get more.”

“To be sure,” said the other monkeys, and did as he bade them.

At this juncture a certain wise man, seeing the monkeys thus engaged, asked them why they pulled up tree after tree and watered them according to the size of their roots.

“Because such are our king’s commands,” answered the monkeys.

Their reply moved the wise man to reflect how, with every desire to do good, the ignorant and foolish only succeed in doing harm. And he recited this stanza: [251]

‘Tis knowledge crowns endeavour with success,

For fools are thwarted by their foolishness, —Witness the ape that killed the garden trees.

With this rebuke to the king of the monkeys, the wise man departed with his followers from the pleasaunce.

Said the Master, “This is not the first time, Brethren, that this village lad has spoiled pleasaunces; he was just the same in bygone times also.” His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “The village lad who spoiled this pleasaunce was the king of the monkeys in those days, and I was myself the wise and good man.”

[Note. Cf. Nos. 268 and 271; and see the scene sculptured in the Stupa of Bharhut, Plate xlv, 5.]

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 120] [j047]

No. 47.

VARUNI-JATAKA.

“‘Tis knowledge.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana about one who spoiled spirits.. Tradition says that Anatha-pindika had a friend who kept a tavern. This friend got ready a supply of strong spirits which he sold for gold and for silver [*1], and his tavern was crowded. He gave orders to his apprentice to sell for cash only, and went off himself to bathe. This apprentice, while serving out the grog to his customers, observed them sending out for salt and jagghery and eating it as a whet. Thought he to himself; “There can’t be any salt in our liquor; I’ll put some in.” So he put a pound of salt in a bowl of grog, and served it out to the customers. And they no sooner took a mouthful, than they spat it out again, saying, “What have you been up to?” “I saw you sending for salt after drinking our liquor, so I mixed some salt in.” “And that’s how you’ve spoilt good liquor, you booby,” cried the customers, and with abuse they got up one after another and flung out of the tavern. When the keeper of the tavern came home, and did not see [252] a single customer about, he asked where they had all got to. So the apprentice told him what had happened. Rating him for his folly, the man went off and told Anatha-pindika. And the latter, thinking the story a good one to tell, repaired to Jetavana, where after due obeisance he told the Master all about it.

“This is not the first time, layman,” said the Master, “that this apprentice has spoiled spirits. He did just the same

once before.” Then at Anatha-pindika’s request, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was the Treasurer of Benares, and had a tavern-keeper who lived under his protection. This man having got ready a supply of strong spirits, which he left his apprentice [*2] to sell while he himself went off to bathe, during his absence his apprentice mixed salt with the liquor, and spoiled it just in the same way. When on his return the young man’s guide and master [*2] came to know what had been done, he told the story to the Treasurer. ‘Truly,’ said the latter, the ignorant and foolish, with every desire to do good, only succeed in doing harm.’ And he recited this stanza:—

‘Tis knowledge crowns endeavour with success;

For fools are thwarted by their foolishness, -Witness
Kondanna’s salted bowl of grog.

In these lines the Bodhisatta taught the truth.

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Said the Master, “Layman, this same person spoiled spirits in the past as now.” Then he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “He who spoiled the spirits now was also the spoiler of the spirits in those bygone days, and I myself was then the Treasurer of Benares.”

Footnotes

^120:1 Apparently regarded as a ‘Jewish’ proceeding, as opposed to normal barter.

^120:2 With a dry humour, the Pali applies to the publican and his apprentice the terms normally applied to a religious teacher and his pupil.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

No. 48.

VEDABBHA-JATAKA.

“Misguided effort.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a self-willed Brother. Said the Master to that Brother, “This is not the first time, Brother, that you have been self-willed; you were of just the same disposition in bygone times also [253]; and therefore it was that, as you would not follow the advice of the wise and good, you came to be cut in two by a sharp sword and were flung on the highway; and you were the sole cause why a thousand men met their end.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, there was a brahmin in a village who knew the charm called Vedabbha. Now this charm, so they say, was precious beyond all price. For, if at a certain conjunction of the planets the charm was repeated and the gaze bent upwards to the skies, straightway from the heavens there rained the Seven Things of Price,—gold, silver, pearl, coral, catseye, ruby, and diamond.

In those days the Bodhisatta was a pupil of this brahmin; and one day his master left the village on some business or other, and came with the Bodhisatta to the country of Ceti.

In a forest by the way dwelt five hundred robbers—known as “the Despatchers”—who made the way impassable. And

these caught the Bodhisatta and the Vedabbha-brahmin. (Why, you ask, were they called the Despatchers?—Well, the story goes that of every two prisoners they made they used to despatch one to fetch the ransom; and that's why they were called the Despatchers. If they captured a father and a son, they told the father to go for the ransom to free his son; if they caught a mother and her daughter, they sent the mother for the money; if they caught two brothers, they let the elder go; and so too, if they caught a teacher and his pupil, it was the pupil they set free. In this case, therefore, they kept the Vedabbha-brahmin, and sent the Bodhisatta for

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the ransom.) And the Bodhisatta said with a bow to his master, "In a day or two I shall surely come back; have no fear; only fail not to do as I shall say. To-day will come to pass the conjunction of the planets which brings about the rain of the Things of Price. Take heed lest, yielding to this mishap, you repeat the charm and call down the precious shower. For, if you do, calamity will certainly befall both you and this band of robbers." With this warning to his master, the Bodhisatta went his way in quest of the ransom.

At sunset the robbers bound the brahmin and laid him by the heels. Just at this moment the full moon rose over the eastern horizon, and the brahmin, studying the heavens, knew [254] that the great conjunction was taking place. "Why," thought he, "should I suffer this misery? By repeating the charm I will call down the precious rain, pay the robbers the ransom, and go free." So he called out to the robbers, "Friends, why do you take me a prisoner?" "To get a ransom, reverend sir," said they. "Well, if that is all you want," said the brahmin, "make haste and untie me; have my head bathed, and new clothes put on me; and let

me be perfumed and decked with flowers. Then leave me to myself." The robbers did as he bade them. And the brahmin, marking the conjunction of the planets, repeated his charm with eyes uplifted to the heavens. Forthwith the Things of Price poured down from the skies! The robbers picked them all up, wrapping their booty into bundles with their cloaks. Then with their brethren they marched away; and the brahmin followed in the rear. But, as luck would have it, the party was captured by a second band of five hundred robbers! "Why do you seize us?" said the first to the second band. "For booty," was the answer. "If booty is what you want, seize on that brahmin, who by simply gazing up at the skies brought down riches as rain. It was he who gave us all that we have got." So the second band of robbers let the first band go, and seized on the brahmin, crying, "Give us riches too!" "It would give me great pleasure," said the brahmin; "but it will be a year before the requisite conjunction of the planets takes place again. If you will only be so good as to wait till then, I will invoke the precious shower for you."

"Rascally brahmin!" cried the angry robbers, "you made the other band rich off-hand, but want us to wait a whole year!" And they cut him in two with a sharp sword, and flung his body in the middle of the road. Then hurrying after the first band of robbers, they killed every man of them too in hand-to-hand fight, and seized the booty. Next, they divided into two companies and fought among themselves, company against company, till two hundred and fifty men were slain. And so they went on killing one another, till only two were left alive. Thus did those thousand men come to destruction.

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Now, when the two survivors had managed to carry off the treasure they hid it in the jungle near a village; and one of them sat there, sword in hand, [255] to guard it, whilst the other went into the village to get rice and have it cooked for supper.

“Covetousness is the root of ruin!” mused he [*1] that stopped by the treasure. “When my mate comes back, he’ll want half of this. Suppose I kill him the moment he gets back.” So he drew his sword and sat waiting for his comrade’s return.

Meanwhile, the other had equally reflected that the booty had to be halved, and thought to himself, “Suppose I poison the rice, and give it him to eat and so kill him, and have the whole of the treasure to myself.” Accordingly, when the rice was boiled, he first ate his own share, and then put poison in the rest, which he carried back with him to the jungle. But scarce had he set it down, when the other robber cut him in two with his sword, and hid the body away in a secluded spot. Then he ate the poisoned rice, and died then and there. Thus, by reason of the treasure, not only the brahmin but all the robbers came to destruction.

Howbeit, after a day or two the Bodhisatta came back with the ransom. Not finding his master where he had left him, but seeing treasure strewn all round about, his heart misgave him that, in spite of his advice, his master must have called down a shower of treasure from the skies, and that all must have perished in consequence; and he proceeded along the road. On his way he came to where his master’s body lay cloven in twain upon the way. “Alas!” he cried, “he is dead through not heeding my warning.” Then with gathered sticks he made a pyre and burnt his master’s body, making an offering of wild flowers. Further along the road, he came upon the five hundred “Despatchers,” and

further still upon the two hundred and fifty, and so on by degrees until at last he came to where lay only two corpses. Marking how of the thousand all but two had perished, and feeling sure that there must be two survivors, and that these could not refrain from strife, he pressed on to see where they had gone. So on he went till he found the path by which with the treasure they had turned into the jungle; and there he found the heap of bundles of treasure, and one robber lying dead with his rice-bowl overturned at his side. Realising the whole story at a glance, the Bodhisatta set himself to search for the missing man, and at last found his body in the secret spot where it had been flung [256]. "And thus," mused the Bodhisatta, "through not following my counsel my master in his self-will has been the means of destroying not himself only but a thousand others also. Truly, they that

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seek their own gain by mistaken and misguided means shall reap ruin, even as my master." And he repeated this stanza:—

Misguided effort leads to loss, not gain;

Thieves killed Vedabbha and themselves were slain.

Thus spake the Bodhisatta, and he went on to say,—“And even as my master’s misguided and misplaced effort in causing the rain of treasure to fall from heaven wrought both his own death and the destruction of others with him, even so shall every other man who by mistaken means seeks to compass his own advantage, utterly perish and involve others in his destruction.” With these words did the Bodhisatta make the forest ring; and in this stanza did he preach the Truth, whilst the Tree-fairies shouted applause.

The treasure he contrived to carry off to his own home, where he lived out his term of life in the exercise of almsgiving and other good works. And when his life closed, he departed to the heaven he had won.

Said the Master, "This is not the first time, Brother, you were self-willed; you were self-willed in bygone times as well; and by your selfwill you came to utter destruction." His lesson ended, he identified the Birth by saying, "The selfwilled Brother was the Vedabbha-brahmin of those days, and I myself his pupil."

[Note. Dr Richard Morris was the first to trace in this Jataka an early form of Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale (see Contemporary Review for May, 1881); Mr H. T. Francis and Mr C. H. Tawney independently traced the same connection in the Academy, Dec. 22, 1883 (subsequently reprinted in an enlarged form), and in the Cambridge Journal of Philology, Vol. xii. 1883. See also Clouston's Popular Tales and Fictions.]

Footnotes

^123:1 Or perhaps a full stop should be inserted after eva ti, the words "Covetousness..ruin" being treated as a maxim quoted parenthetically by the author."

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

No. 49.

NAKKHATTA-JATAKA.

[257] "The fool may watch."—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana about a certain Naked-ascetic.

Tradition says that a gentleman of the country near Savatthi asked in marriage for his son a young Savatthi lady of equal rank. Having fixed a day to come and fetch the bride, he subsequently consulted a Naked-ascetic who was intimate with his family, as to whether the stars were favourable for holding the festivities that day.

“He didn’t ask me in the first instance,” thought the indignant ascetic, “but having already fixed the day, without consulting me, just makes an empty

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reference to me now. Very good; I’ll teach him a lesson.” So he made answer that the stars were not favourable for that day; that the nuptials ought not to be celebrated that day; and that, if they were, great misfortune would come of it. And the country family in their faith in their ascetic did not go for the bride that day. Now the bride’s friends in the town had made all their preparations for celebrating the nuptials, and when they saw that the other side did not come, they said, “It was they who fixed to-day, and yet they have not come; and we have gone to great expense about it all. Who are these people, forsooth? Let us marry the girl to someone else.” So they found another bridegroom and gave the girl to him in marriage with all the festivities they had already prepared.

Next day the country party came to fetch the bride. But the Savatthi people rated them as follows:—“You country folk are a bad lot; you fixed the day yourselves, and then. insulted us by not coming. We have given the maiden to another.” The country party started a quarrel, but in the end went home the way they came.

Now the Brethren came to know how that Naked-ascetic had thwarted the festivity, and they began to talk the matter over in the Hall of Truth. Entering the Hall, and learning on enquiry the subject of their conversation, the Master said, "Brethren, this is not the first time that this same ascetic has thwarted the festivities of that family; out of pique with them, he did just the same thing once before." And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, some townfolk had asked a country-girl in marriage and had named the day. Having already made the arrangement, they asked their family ascetic whether the stars were propitious for the ceremony on that day. Piqued at their having fixed the day to suit themselves without first taking counsel with him, the ascetic made up his mind to thwart their marriage festivities for that day; [258] and accordingly he made answer that the stars were not favourable for that day, and that, if they persisted, grave misfortune would be the result. So, in their faith in the ascetic, they stayed at home! When the country folk found that the town party did not come, they said among themselves, "It was they who fixed the marriage for to-day, and now they have not come. Who are they, forsooth?" And they married the girl to someone else.

Next day the townfolk came and asked for the girl; but they of the country made this answer:—"You town-people lack common decency. You yourselves named the day and yet did not come to fetch the bride. As you stopped away, we married her to someone else." "But we asked our ascetic, and he told us the stars were unfavourable. That's why we did not come, yesterday. Give us the girl." "You didn't come at the proper time, and now she's another's. How can we marry her twice over?" Whilst they wrangled thus with one

another, a wise man from the town came into the country on business. Hearing the townsfolk explain that they had consulted their ascetic and that their absence was due to the-unfavourable disposition of the stars, he exclaimed, "What, forsooth, do

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the stars matter? Is not the lucky thing to get the girl?" And, so saying, he repeated this stanza:—

The fool may watch for 'lucky days,'

Yet luck shall always miss; 'Tis luck itself is luck's own star.
What can mere stars achieve?

As for the townsfolk, as they did not get the girl for all their wrangling, they had to go off home again!

Said the Master, "This is not the first time, Brethren, that this Naked-ascetic has thwarted that family's festivities; he did just the same thing in bygone times also." His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, "This ascetic [259] was also the ascetic of those days, and the families too were the same; I myself was the wise and good man who uttered the stanza."

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j050]

No. 50.

DUMMEDHA-JATAKA.

“A thousand evil-doers.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about actions done for the world’s good, as will be explained in the Twelfth Book in the Maha-Kanha-jataka [*1].

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was reborn in the womb of the Queen Consort. When he was born, he was named Prince Brahmadata on his name-day. By sixteen years of age he had been well educated at Takkasila, had learned the Three Vedas by heart, and was versed in the Eighteen Branches of Knowledge. And his father made him a Viceroy.

Now in those days the Benares folk were much given to festivals to ‘gods,’ and used to shew honour to ‘gods.’ It was their wont to massacre numbers of sheep, goats, poultry, swine, and other living creatures, and perform their rites not merely with flowers and perfumes but with gory

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carcasses. Thought the destined Lord of Mercy to himself, “Led astray by superstition, men now wantonly sacrifice life; the multitude are for the most part given up to irreligion: but when at my father’s death I succeed to my inheritance, I will find means to end such destruction of life. I will devise some clever stratagem whereby the evil shall be stopped without harming a single human being.” In this mood the prince one day mounted his chariot and drove out of the city. On the way he saw a crowd gathered together at a holy banyan-tree, praying to the fairy who had been reborn in that tree, to grant them sons and daughters, honour and wealth, each according to his heart’s desire. Alighting from his chariot the Bodhisatta drew near to the tree and behaved as a worshipper so far as to make offerings of

perfumes and flowers, sprinkling the tree with water, and pacing reverently round its trunk. Then mounting his chariot again, he went his way back into the city.

Thenceforth the prince made like journeys from time to time to the tree [260], and worshipped it like a true believer in 'gods.'

In due course, when his father died, the Bodhisatta ruled in his stead. Shunning the four evil courses, and practising the ten royal virtues, he ruled his people in righteousness. And now that his desire had come to pass and he was king, the Bodhisatta set himself to fulfil his former resolve. So he called together his ministers, the brahmins, the gentry, and the other orders of the people, and asked the assembly whether they knew how he had made himself king. But no man could tell.

"Have you ever seen me reverently worshipping a banyan-tree with perfumes and the like, and bowing down before it?"

"Sire, we have," said they.

"Well, I was making a vow; and the vow was that, if ever I became king, I would offer a sacrifice to that tree. And now that by help of the god I have come to be king, I will offer my promised sacrifice. So prepare it with all speed."

"But what are we to make it of?"

"My vow," said the king, "was this:—All such as are addicted to the Five Sins, to wit the slaughter of living creatures and so forth, and all such as walk in the Ten Paths of Unrighteousness, them will I slay, and with their flesh and their blood, with their entrails and their vitals, I will make my offering. So proclaim by beat of drum that our lord the

king in the days of his viceroyalty vowed that if ever he became king he would slay, and offer up in a sacrifice, all such of his subjects as break the Commandments. And now the king wills to slay one thousand of such as are addicted to the Five Sins or walk in the Ten Paths of Unrighteousness; with the hearts and the flesh of the thousand shall a sacrifice be made in the god's honour. Proclaim this that all may know throughout the city. Of those that transgress after this date," added the king, "will

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[paragraph continues] I slay a thousand, and offer them as a sacrifice to the god in discharge of my vow." And to make his meaning clear the king uttered this stanza:—

A thousand evil-doers once I vowed

In pious gratitude to kill; And evil-doers form so huge a crowd,
That I will now my vow fulfil. [261]

Obedient to the king's commands, the ministers had proclamation made by beat of drum accordingly throughout the length and breadth of Benares. Such was the effect of the proclamation on the townsfolk that not a soul persisted in the old wickedness. And throughout the Bodhisatta's reign not a man was convicted of transgressing. Thus, without harming a single one of his subjects, the Bodhisatta made them observe the Commandments. And at the close of a life of alms-giving and other good works he passed away with his followers to throng the city of the devas.

Said the Master, "This is not the first time, Brethren, that the Buddha has acted for the world's good; he acted in like manner in bygone times as well." His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying,

“The Buddha’s disciples were the ministers of those days, and I myself was the King of Benares.”

Footnotes

^126:1 No. 469.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j051]

No. 51.

MAHASILAVA-JATAKA.

“Toil on, my brother.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a Brother who had given up all earnest effort. Being asked by the Master whether the report was true that he was a backslider, the Brother [262] said it was true. “How can you, Brother,” said the Master, “grow cold in so saving a faith? Even when the wise and good of bygone days had lost their kingdom, yet so undaunted was their resolution that in the end they won back their sovereignty.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life again as the child of the queen; and on his name-day they gave him the name of Prince Goodness. At the age of sixteen his education was complete; and later he came at his father’s death to be king, and ruled his people righteously under the title of the great King

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[paragraph continues] Goodness. At each of the four city-gates he built an almonry, another in the heart of the city, and yet another at his own palace-gates,—six in all; and at each he distributed alms to poor travellers and the needy. He kept the Commandments and observed the fast-days; he abounded in patience, loving-kindness, and mercy; and in righteousness he ruled the land, cherishing all creatures alike with the fond love of a father for his baby boy.

Now one of the king's ministers had dealt treacherously in the king's harem, and this became matter of common talk. The ministers reported it to the king. Examining into the matter himself, the king found the minister's guilt to be clear. So he sent for the culprit, and said, "O blinded by folly! you have sinned, and are not worthy to dwell in my kingdom; take your substance and your wife and family, and go hence." Driven thus from the realm, that minister left the Kasi country, and, entering the service of the king of Kosala, gradually rose to be that monarch's confidential adviser. One day he said to the king of Kosala, "Sire, the kingdom of Benares is like a goodly honeycomb untainted by flies; its king is feebleness itself; and a trifling force would suffice to conquer the whole country."

Hereon, the king of Kosala reflected that the kingdom of Benares was large, and, considering this in connexion with the advice that a trifling force could conquer it, he grew suspicious that his adviser was a hireling suborned to lead him into a trap. "Traitor," he cried, "you are paid to say this!"

"Indeed I am not," answered the other; "I do but speak the truth. If you doubt me, send men to massacre a village over his border, and see whether, when they are caught and brought before him, the king does not let them off scot-free and even load them with gifts."

“He shows a very bold front in making his assertion,” thought the king; “I will test his counsel [263] without delay.” And accordingly he sent some of his creatures to harry a village across the Benares border. The ruffians were captured and brought before the king of Benares, who asked them, saying, “My children, why have you killed my villagers?”

“Because we could not make a living,” said they.

“Then why did you not come to me?” said the king. “See that you do not do the like again.”

And he gave them presents and sent them away. Back they went and told this to the king of Kosala. But this evidence was not enough to nerve him to the expedition; and a second band was sent to massacre another village, this time in the heart of the kingdom. These too were likewise sent away with presents by the king of Benares. But even this evidence was not deemed strong enough; and a third party was sent to plunder the very streets of Benares! And these, like their forerunners,

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were sent away with presents! Satisfied at last that the king of Benares was an entirely good king, the king of Kosala resolved to seize on his kingdom, and set out against him with troops and elephants.

Now in these days the king of Benares had a thousand gallant warriors, who would face the charge even of a rut elephant,—whom the launched thunderbolt of Indra could not terrify,—a matchless band of invincible heroes ready at the king’s command to reduce all India to his sway! These, hearing the king of Kosala was coming to take Benares, came to their sovereign with the news, and prayed that they

might be despatched against the invader. "We will defeat and capture him, sire," said they, "before he can set foot over the border."

"Not so, my children," said the king. "None shall suffer because of me. Let those who covet kingdoms seize mine, if they will." And he refused to allow them to march against the invader.

Then the king of Kosala crossed the border and came to the middle-country; and again the ministers went to the king with renewed entreaty. But still the king refused. And now the king of Kosala appeared outside the city, and sent a message to the king bidding him either yield up the kingdom or give battle. "I fight not," was the message of the king of Benares in reply; "let him seize my kingdom."

Yet a third time the king's ministers came to him and besought him not to allow the king of Kosala to enter, but to permit them to overthrow and capture him before the city. Still refusing, the king bade the city-gates be opened, [264] and seated himself in state aloft upon his royal throne with his thousand ministers round him.

Entering the city and finding none to bar his way, the king of Kosala passed with his army to the royal palace. The doors stood open wide; and there on his gorgeous throne with his thousand ministers around him sate the great King Goodness in state. "Seize them all," cried the king of Kosala; "tie their hands tightly behind their backs, and away with them to the cemetery! There dig holes and bury them alive up to the neck, so that they cannot move hand or foot. The jackals will come at night and give them sepulchre!"

At the bidding of the ruffianly king, his followers bound the king of Benares and his ministers, and hauled them off. But

even in this hour not so much as an angry thought did the great King Goodness harbour against the ruffians; and, not a man among his ministers, even when they were being marched off in bonds, could disobey the king,—so perfect is said to have been the discipline among his followers.

So King Goodness and his ministers were led off and buried up to the neck in pits in the cemetery, the king in the middle and the others on either side of him. The ground was trampled in upon them, and there they were left. Still meek and free from anger against his oppressor, King

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[paragraph continues] Goodness exhorted his companions, saying, “Let your hearts be filled with naught but love and charity, my children.”

Now at midnight the jackals came trooping to the banquet of human flesh; and at sight of the beasts the king and his companions raised a mighty shout all together, frightening the jackals away. Halting, the pack looked back, and, seeing no one pursuing, again came forward. A second shout drove them away again, but only to return as before. But the third time, seeing that not a man amongst them all pursued, the jackals thought to themselves, “These must be men who are doomed to death.” They came on boldly; even when the shout was again being raised, they did not turn tail. On they came, each singling out his prey,—the chief jackal making for the king, and the other jackals for his companions [265]. Fertile in resource, the king marked the beast’s approach, and, raising his throat as if to receive the bite, fastened his teeth in the jackal’s throat with a grip like a vice! Unable to free its throat from the mighty grip of the king’s jaws, and fearing death, the jackal raised a great howl. At his cry of distress the pack conceived that their leader must have

been caught by a man. With no heart left to approach their own destined prey, away they all scampered for their lives.

Seeking to free itself from the king's teeth, the trapped jackal plunged madly to and fro, and thereby loosened the earth above the king. Hereupon the latter, letting the jackal go, put forth his mighty strength, and by plunging from side to side got his hands free! Then, clutching the brink of the pit, he drew himself up, and came forth like a cloud scudding before the wind. Bidding his companions Le of good cheer, he now set to work to loosen the earth round them and to get them out, till with all his ministers he stood free once more in the cemetery.

Now it chanced that a corpse had been exposed in that part of the cemetery which lay between the respective domains of two ogres; and the ogres were disputing over the division of the spoil.

"We can't divide it ourselves," said they; "but this King Goodness is righteous; he will divide it for us. Let us go to him." So they dragged the corpse by the foot to the king, and said, "Sire, divide this man and give us each our share." "Certainly I will, my friends," said the king. "But, as I am dirty, I must bathe first."

Straightway, by their magic power, the ogres brought to the king the scented water prepared for the usurper's bath. And when the king had bathed, they brought him the robes which had been laid out for the usurper to wear. When he had put these on, they brought his majesty a box containing the four kinds of scent. When he had perfumed himself, they brought flowers of divers kinds laid out upon jewelled fans, in a casket of gold. When he had decked himself with the flowers, the ogres asked whether they could be of any further service. And the king gave

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them to understand [266] that he was hungry. So away went the ogres, and returned with rice flavoured with all the choicest flavours, which had been prepared for the usurper's table. And the king, now bathed and scented, dressed and arrayed, ate of the dainty fare. Thereupon the ogres brought the usurper's perfumed water for him to drink, in the usurper's own golden bowl, not forgetting to bring the golden cup too. When the king had drunk and had washed his mouth and was washing his hands, they brought him fragrant betel to chew, and asked whether his majesty had any further commands. "Fetch me," said he, "by your magic power the sword of state which lies by the usurper's pillow." And straightway the sword was brought to the king. Then the king took the corpse, and setting it upright, cut it in two down the chine, giving one-half to each ogre. This done, the king washed the blade, and girded it on his side.

Having eaten their fill, the ogres were glad of heart, and in their gratitude asked the king what more they could do for him. "Set me by your magic power," said he, "in the usurper's chamber, and set each of my ministers back in his own house." "Certainly, sire," said the ogres; and forthwith it was done. Now in that hour the usurper was lying asleep on the royal bed in his chamber of state. And as he slept in all tranquillity, the good king struck him with the flat of the sword upon the belly. Waking up in a fright, the usurper saw by the lamp-light that it was the great King Goodness. Summoning up all his courage, he rose from his couch and said:—"Sire, it is night; a guard is set; the doors are barred; and none may enter. How then came you to my bedside, sword in hand and clad in robes of splendour?" Then the king told him in detail all the story of his escape. Then the usurper's heart was moved within him, and he cried, "O king, I, though blessed with human nature, knew not your

goodness; but knowledge thereof was given to the fierce and cruel ogres, whose food is flesh and blood. Henceforth, I, sire, [267] will not plot against such signal virtue as you possess." So saying, he swore an oath of friendship upon his sword and begged the king's forgiveness. And he made the king lie down upon the bed of state, while he stretched himself upon a little couch.

On the morrow at daybreak, when the sun had risen, his whole host of every rank and degree was mustered by beat of drum at the usurper's command; in their presence he extolled King Goodness, as if raising the full-moon on high in the heavens; and right before them all, he again asked the king's forgiveness and gave him back his kingdom, saying, "Henceforth, let it be my charge to deal with rebels; rule thou thy kingdom, with me to keep watch and ward." And so saying, he passed sentence on the slanderous traitor, and with his troops and elephants went back to his own kingdom.

Seated in majesty and splendour beneath a white canopy of sovereignty

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upon a throne of gold with legs as of a gazelle, the great King Goodness contemplated his own glory and thought thus within himself:—"Had I not persevered, I should not be in the enjoyment of this magnificence, nor would my thousand ministers be still numbered among the living. It was by perseverance that I recovered the royal state I had lost, and saved the lives of my thousand ministers. Verily, we should strive on unremittingly with dauntless hearts, seeing that the fruit of perseverance is so excellent." And therewithal the king broke into this heartfelt utterance:—

Toil on, my brother; still in hope stand fast;

Nor let thy courage flag and tire. Myself I see, who, all my
woes o'erpast, Am master of my heart's desire.

Thus spoke the Bodhisatta in the fulness of his heart,
declaring how sure it is that the earnest effort of the good
will come to maturity. After a life spent in right-doing he
passed away to fare thereafter according to his deserts.
[268]

His lesson ended, the Master preached the Four Truths, at
the close whereof the backsliding Brother won Arahathship.
The Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth
by saying, "Devadatta was the traitorous minister of those
days, the Buddha's disciples were the thousand ministers,
and I myself the great King Goodness."

[Note. Cf. the Volsung-Saga in Hagen's Helden Sagen, iii. 23,
and Journ. of Philol. xii. 120.]

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at
sacred-texts.com

[j052]

No. 52.

CULA-JANAKA-JATAKA.

"Toil on, my brother."—This story was told by the Master
while at Jetavana, about another backsliding Brother. All the
incidents that are to be related here, will be given in the
Maha-janaka-Jataka [*1].

The king, seated beneath the white canopy of sovereignty,
recited this stanza:—

“Toil on, my brother; still in hope stand fast;

Faint not, nor tire, though harassed sore. Myself I see, who,
all my woes o’erpast, Have fought my stubborn way ashore.

Here too the backsliding Brother won Arahathship. The All-
wise Buddha was King Janaka.

Footnotes

^133:1 One of the last Jatakas, not yet edited.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at
sacred-texts.com

[p. 134] [j053]

No. 53.

PUNNAPATI-JATAKA.

“What? Leave untasted.”—This story was told by the Master
while at Jetavana, about some drugged liquor.

Once on a time the tipplers of Savatthi met to take counsel,
saying, “We’ve not got the price of a drink left; how are we
to get it?”

“Cheer up!” said one ruffian; “I’ve a little plan.”

“What may that be?” cried the others.

“It’s Anatha-pindika’s custom,” said the fellow, “to wear his
rings and richest attire, when going to wait upon the king.
Let us doctor some liquor with a stupefying drug and fit up a

drinking-booth, in which we will all be sitting when Anatha-pindika passes by. 'Come and join us, Lord High Treasurer,' we'll cry, and ply him with our liquor till he loses his senses. Then let us relieve him of his rings and clothes, and get the price of a drink."

His plan mightily pleased the other rogues, and was duly carried out. As Anatha-pindika was returning, they went out to meet him and invited him [269] to come along with them; for they had got some rare liquor, and he must taste it before he went.

"What'?" thought he, "shall a believer, who has found Salvation, touch strong drink? Howbeit, though I have no craving for it, yet will I expose these rogues." So into their booth he went, where their proceedings soon shewed him that their liquor was drugged; and he resolved to make the rascals take to their heels. So he roundly charged them with doctoring their liquor with a view to drugging strangers first and robbing then afterwards. "You sit in the booth you have opened, and you praise up the liquor," said he; "but as for drinking it, not one of you ventures on that. If it is really undrugged, drink away at it yourselves." This summary exposure made the gang take to their heels, and Anatha-pindika went off home. Thinking he might as well tell the incident to the Buddha, he went to Jetavana and related the story.

"This time, layman," said the Master, "it is you whom these rogues have tried to trick; so too in the past they tried to trick the good and wise of those days." So saying, at his hearer's request, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was Treasurer of that city. And then too did

the same gang of tipplers, conspiring together in like manner, drug liquor, and go forth to meet him in just the same way, and made just the same overtures. The Treasurer did not want to drink at all, but nevertheless went with them, solely to expose them. Marking their proceedings and detecting their scheme, he was anxious to scare them away and so represented that it would be a gross thing for him to drink spirits just before going to the king's palace. "Sit you here," said he, "till I've seen the king and am on my way hack; then I'll think about it."

On his return, the rascals called to him, but the Treasurer, fixing his eye on the drugged bowls, confounded them by saying, "I like not your

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ways. Here stand the bowls as full now as when I left you; loudly as you vaunt the praises of the liquor, yet not a drop passes your own lips. Why, if it had been good liquor, you'd have taken your own share as well. This liquor is drugged!" And he repeated this stanza:—

What? Leave untasted drink you vaunt so rare?

Nay, this is proof no honest liquor's there. [270]

After a life of good deeds, the Bodhisatta passed away to fare according to his deserts.

His lesson ended, the Master identified the Birth by saying, "The rascals of to-day were also the rascals of those bygone days; and I myself was then Treasurer of Benares."

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j054]

No. 54.

PHALA-JATAKA.

“When near a village.”—This was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a lay brother who was skilled in the knowledge of fruits. It appears that a certain squire of Savatthi had invited the Brotherhood with the Buddha at their head, and had seated them in his pleasure, where they were regaled with rice-gruel and cakes. Afterwards he bade his gardener go round with the Brethren and give mangoes and other kinds of fruits to their Reverences. In obedience to orders, the man walked about the grounds with the Brethren, and could tell by a single glance up at the tree what fruit was green, what nearly ripe, and what quite ripe, and so on. And what he said was always found true. So the Brethren came to the Buddha and mentioned how expert the gardener was, and how, whilst himself standing on the ground, he could accurately tell the condition of the hanging fruit. “Brethren,” said the Master, “this gardener is not the only one who has had knowledge of fruits. A like knowledge was shewn by the wise and good of former days also.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was born a merchant. When he grew up, and was trading with five hundred waggons, he came one day to where the road led through a great forest. [271] Halting at the outskirts, he mustered the caravan and addressed them thus:—“Poison-trees grow in this forest. Take heed that you taste no unfamiliar leaf, flower, or fruit without first consulting me.” All promised to take every care; and the journey into

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the forest began. Now just within the forest-border stands a village, and just outside that village grows a What-fruit tree. The What-fruit tree exactly resembles a mango alike in trunk, branch, leaf, flower, and fruit. And not only in outward semblance, but also in taste and smell, the fruit—ripe or unripe—mimics the mango. If eaten, it is a deadly poison, and causes instant death.

Now some greedy fellows, who went on ahead of the caravan, came to this tree and, taking it to be a mango, ate of its fruit. But others said, "Let us ask our leader before we eat"; and they accordingly halted by the tree, fruit in hand, till he came up. Perceiving that it was no mango, he said:—"This 'mango' is a What-fruit tree; don't touch its fruit."

Having stopped them from eating, the Bodhisatta turned his attention to those who had already eaten. First he dosed them with an emetic, and then he gave them the four sweet foods to eat; so that in the end they recovered.

Now on former occasions caravans had halted beneath this same tree, and had died from eating the poisonous fruit which they mistook for mangoes. On the morrow the villagers would come, and seeing them lying there dead, would fling them by the heels into a secret place, departing with all the belongings of the caravan, waggons and all.

And on the day too of our story these villagers failed not to hurry at daybreak to the tree for their expected spoils. "The oxen must be ours," said some. "And we'll have the waggons," said others;—whilst others again claimed the wares as their share. But when they came breathless to the tree, there was the whole caravan alive and well!

“How came you to know this was not a mango-tree?” demanded the disappointed villagers. “We didn’t know,” said they of the caravan; “it was our leader who knew.”

So the villagers came to the Bodhisatta and said, “Man of wisdom, what did you do to find out this tree was not a mango?”

“Two things told me,” replied the Bodhisatta, and he repeated this stanza:— [272]

When near a village grows a tree

Not hard to climb, ‘tis plain to me, Nor need I further proof to know, —No wholesome fruit thereon can grow!

And having taught the Truth to the assembled multitude, he finished his journey in safety.

“Thus, Brethren,” said the Master, “in bygone days the wise and good were experts in fruit.” His lesson ended, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “The Buddha’s followers were then the people of the caravan, and I myself was the caravan leader.”

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 137] [j055]

No. 55.

PANCAVUDHA-JATAKA.

“When no Attachment.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a Brother who had given up all

earnest effort.

Said the Master to him, "Is the report true, Brother, that you are a backslider?"

"Yes, Blessed One."

"In bygone days, Brother," said the Master, "the wise and good won a throne by their dauntless perseverance in the hour of need."

And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, it was as his queen's child that the Bodhisatta came to life once more. On the day when he was to be named, the parents enquired as to their child's destiny from eight hundred brahmins, to whom they gave their hearts' desire in all pleasures of sense. Marking the promise which he shewed of a glorious destiny, these clever soothsaying brahmins foretold that, coming to the throne at the king's death, the child should be a mighty king endowed with every virtue; famed and renowned for his exploits with five weapons, he should stand peerless in all Jambudipa [*1]. [273] And because of this prophecy of the brahmins, the parents named their son Prince Five-Weapons.

Now, when the prince was come to years of discretion, and was sixteen years old, the king bade him go away and study.

"With whom, sire, am I to study?" asked the prince.

"With the world-famed teacher in the town of Takkasila in the Gandhara country. Here is his fee," said the king, handing his son a thousand pieces.

So the prince went to Takkasila and was taught there. When he was leaving, his master gave him a set of five weapons, armed with which, after bidding adieu to his old master, the prince set out from Takkasila for Benares.

On his way he came to a forest haunted by an ogre named Hairy-grip; and, at the entrance to the forest, men who met him tried to stop him, saying: "Young brahmin, do not go through that forest; it is the haunt

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of the ogre Hairy-grip, and he kills every one he meets." But, bold as a lion, the self-reliant Bodhisatta pressed on, till in the heart of the forest he came on the ogre. The monster made himself appear in stature as tall as a palm-tree, with a head as big as an arbour and huge eyes like bowls, with two tusks like turnips and the beak of a hawk; his belly was blotched with purple; and the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet were blue-black! "Whither away?" cried the monster. "Halt! you are my prey." "Ogre," answered the Bodhisatta, "I knew what I was doing when entering this forest. You will be ill-advised to come near me. For with a poisoned arrow I will slay you where you stand." And with this defiance, he fitted to his bow an arrow dipped in deadliest poison and shot it at the ogre. But it only stuck on to the monster's shaggy coat. Then he shot another and another, till fifty were spent, all of which merely stuck on to the ogre's shaggy coat. Hereon the ogre, shaking the arrows off so that they fell at his feet, came at the Bodhisatta; and the latter, again shouting defiance, drew his sword and struck at the ogre. But, like the arrows, his sword, which was thirty-three inches long, merely stuck fast in the shaggy hair. Next the Bodhisatta hurled his spear, and that stuck fast also. Seeing this, he smote the ogre with his club; but, like his other weapons, that too stuck fast. And thereupon

the Bodhisatta shouted, "Ogre, you never heard yet of me, [274] Prince Five-Weapons. When I ventured into this forest, I put my trust not in my bow and other weapons, but in myself! Now will I strike you a blow which shall crush you into dust." So saying, the Bodhisatta smote the ogre with his right hand; but the hand stuck fast upon the hair. Then, in turn, with his left hand and with his right and left feet, he struck at the monster, but hand and feet alike clave to the hide. Again shouting "I will crush you into dust!" he butted the ogre with his head, and that too stuck fast.

Yet even when thus caught and snared in fivefold wise, the Bodhisatta, as he hung upon the ogre, was still fearless, still undaunted. And the monster thought to himself, "This is a very lion among men, a hero without a peer, and no mere man. Though he is caught in the clutches of an ogre like me, yet not so much as a tremor will he exhibit. Never, since I first took to slaying travellers upon this road, have I seen a man to equal him. How comes it that he is not frightened?" Not daring to devour the Bodhisatta offhand, he said, "How is it, young brahmin, that you have no fear of death?"

"Why should I?" answered the Bodhisatta. "Each life must surely have its destined death. Moreover, within my body is a sword of adamant, which you will never digest, if you eat me. It will chop your inwards into mincemeat, and my death will involve yours too. Therefore it is that I have no fear." (By this, it is said, the Bodhisatta meant the Sword of Knowledge, which was within him.)

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Hereon, the ogre fell a-thinking. "This young brahmin is speaking the truth and nothing but the truth," thought he. "Not a morsel so big as a pea could I digest of such a hero. I'll let him go." And, so, in fear of his life, he let the

Bodhisatta go free, saying, “Young brahmin, you are a lion among men; I will not eat you. Go forth from my hand, even as the moon from the jaws of Rahu, and return to gladden the hearts of your kinsfolk, your friends, and your country.”

“As for myself; ogre,” answered the Bodhisatta, “I will go. As for you, it was your sins in bygone days that caused you to be reborn a ravening, murderous, flesh-eating ogre; and, if [275] you continue in sin in this existence, you will go on from darkness to darkness. But, having seen me, you will be unable thenceforth to sin any more. Know that to destroy life is to ensure re-birth either in hell or as a brute or as a ghost or among the fallen spirits. Or, if the re-birth be into the world of men, then such sin cuts short the days of a man’s life.”

In this and other ways the Bodhisatta sheaved the evil consequences of the five bad courses, and the blessing that conies of the five good courses; and so wrought in divers ways upon that ogre’s fears that by his teaching he converted the monster, imbuing him with self-denial and establishing him in the Five Commandments. Then making the ogre the fairy of that forest, with a right to levy dues [*1], and charging him to remain steadfast, the Bodhisatta went his way, making known the change in the ogre’s mood as he issued from the forest. And in the end he came, armed with the five weapons, to the city of Benares, and presented himself before his parents. In later days, when king, he was a righteous ruler; and after a life spent in charity and other good works he passed away to fare thereafter according to his deserts.

This lesson ended, the Master, as Buddha, recited this stanza:—

When no attachment hampers heart or mind,

When righteousness is practised peace to win, He who so
walks, shall gain the victory And all the Fetters utterly
destroy [*2].

When he had thus led his teaching up to Arahatsip as its
crowning point, the Master went on to preach the Four
Truths, at the close whereof that Brother won Arahatsip.
Also, the Master showed the connexion, and identified the
Birth by saying, “Angulimala [*3] was the ogre of those
days, and I myself Prince Five-Weapons.”

Footnotes

^137:1 This was one of the four islands, or dipa, of which
the earth was supposed to consist; it included India, and
represented the inhabited world to the Indian mind.

^139:1 Or, perhaps, “to whom sacrifices should be offered.”
The translation in the text suggests a popular theory of the
evolution of the tax-collector. See also No. 155.

^139:2 See Nos. [*56] and 156.

^139:3 Angulimala, a bandit who wore a necklace of his
victims’ fingers, was converted by the Buddha and became
an Arahatsip. Cf. Majjhima Nikaya No. 86.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at
sacred-texts.com

[p. 140] [j056]

No. 56.

KANCANAKKHANDHA-JATAKA. [276]

“When gladness.”—This story was told by the Master while at Savatthi, about a certain Brother. Tradition says that through hearing the Master preach a young gentleman of Savatthi gave his heart to the precious Faith [*1] and became a Brother. His teachers and masters proceeded to instruct him in the whole of the Ten Precepts of Morality, one after the other, expounded to him the Short, the Medium, and the Long Moralities [*2], set forth the Morality which rests on self-restraint according to the Patimokkha [*3], the Morality which rests on self-restraint as to the Senses, the Morality which rests on a blameless walk of life, the Morality which relates to the way a Brother may use the Requisites. Thought the young beginner, “There is a tremendous lot of this Morality; and I shall undoubtedly fail to fulfil all I have vowed. Yet what is the good of being a brother at all, if one cannot keep the rules of Morality? My best course is to go back to the world, take a wife and rear children, living a life of almsgiving and other good works.” So he told his superiors what he thought, saying that he proposed to return to the lower state of a layman, and wished to hand back his bowl and robes. “Well, if it be so with you,” said they, “at least take leave of the Buddha before you go;” and they brought the young man before the Master in the Hall of Truth.

“Why, Brethren,” said the Master, “are you bringing this Brother to me against his will?”

“Sir, he said that Morality was more than he could observe, and wanted to give back his robes and bowl. So we took him and brought him to you.”

“But why, Brethren,” asked the Master, “did you burthen him with so much? He can do what he can, but no more. Do not make this mistake again, and leave me to decide what should be done in the case.”

Then, turning to the young Brother, the Master said, "Come, Brother; what concern have you with Morality in the mass? Do you think you could obey just three moral rules?"

"Oh, yes, Sir."

"Well now, watch and guard the three avenues of the voice, the mind, and the body; do no evil whether in word, or thought, or act. Cease not to be a Brother, but go hence and obey just these three rules."

"Yes, indeed, Sir, I will keep them," here exclaimed the glad young man, and back he went with his teachers again. And as he was keeping his three rules, he thought within himself, "I had the whole of Morality told me by my instructors; but because they were not the Buddha, they could not make me grasp even this much. Whereas [277] the All-Enlightened One, by reason of his Buddhahood, and of his being the Lord of Truth, has expressed so much Morality in only three rules concerning the Avenues, and has made me understand it clearly. Verily, a very present help has the Master been to me." And

[p. 141]

he won Insight and in a few days attained Arahathship. When this came to the ears of the Brethren, they spoke of it when met together in the Hall of Truth, telling how the Brother, who was going back to the world because he could not ho to fulfil Morality, had been furnished by the Master with three rules embodying the whole of Morality, and had been made to grasp those three rules, and so had been enabled by the Master to win Arahathship. How marvellous, they cried, was the Buddha.

Entering the Hall at this point, and learning on enquiry the subject of their talk, the Master said, "Brethren, even a

heavy burthen becomes light, if taken piecemeal; and thus the wise and good of past times, on finding a huge mass of gold too heavy to lift, first broke it up and then were enabled to bear their treasure away piece by piece." So saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as a farmer in a village, and was ploughing one day in a field where once stood a village. Now, in bygone days, a wealthy merchant had died leaving buried in this field a huge bar of gold, as thick round as a man's thigh, and four whole cubits in length. And full on this bar struck the Bodhisatta's plough, and there stuck fast. Taking it to be a spreading root of a tree, he dug it, out; but discovering its real nature, he set to work to clean the dirt off the gold. The day's work done, at sunset he laid aside his plough and gear, and essayed to shoulder his treasure-trove and walk off with it. But, as he could not so much as lift it, he sat down before it and fell a-thinking what uses he would put it to. "I'll have so much to live on, so much to bury as a treasure, so much to trade with, and so much for charity and good works," thought he to himself, and accordingly cut the gold into four. Division made his burthen easy to carry; and he bore home the lumps of gold. After a life of charity and other good works, he passed away to fare thereafter according to his deserts.

His lesson ended, the Master, as Buddha, recited this stanza:— [278]

When gladness fills the heart and fills the mind,

When righteousness is practised Peace to win, He who so
walks shall gain the victory And all the Fetters utterly

destroy.

And when the Master had thus led his teaching up to Arahathship as its crowning point, he shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, "In those days I myself was the man who got the nugget of gold."

Footnotes

^140:1 Or perhaps ratanasasanam means 'the creed connected with the (Three) Gems,' viz. the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order.

^140:2 These are translated in Rhys Davids' "Buddhist Suttas," pp. 189-200.

^140:3 The Patimokkha is translated and discussed in Pt. I. of the translation of the Vinaya by Rhys Davids and Oldenberg (S. B. E. Vol. 13).

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 142] [j057]

No. 57.

VANARINDA-JATAKA.

"Whoso, O monkey-king."—This story was told by the Master, while at the Bamboo-grove, about Devadatta's going about to kill him. Being informed of Devadatta's murderous intent, the Master said, "This is not the first time, Brethren, that Devadatta has gone about seeking to kill me; he did just the same in bygone days, but failed to work his wicked will." And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life again as a monkey. When full-grown, he was as big as a mare's foal and enormously strong. He lived alone on the banks of a river, in the middle of which was an island whereon grew mangoes and bread-fruits, and other fruit-trees. And in mid-stream, half-way between the island and the river-bank, a solitary rock rose out of the water. Being as strong as an elephant, the Bodhisatta used to leap from the bank on to this rock and thence on to the island. Here he would eat his fill of the fruits that grew on the island, returning at evening by the way he came. And such was his life from day to day.

Now there lived in those days in that river a crocodile and his mate; and she, being with young, was led by the sight of the Bodhisatta journeying to and fro to conceive [279] a longing for the monkey's heart to eat. So she begged her lord to catch the monkey for her. Promising that she should have her fancy, the crocodile went off and took his stand on the rock, meaning to catch the monkey on his evening journey home.

After ranging about the island all day, the Bodhisatta looked out at evening towards the rock and wondered why the rock stood so high out of the water. For the story goes that the Bodhisatta always marked the exact height of the water in the river, and of the rock in the water. So, when he saw that, though the water stood at the same level, the rock seemed to stand higher out of the water, he suspected that a crocodile might be lurking there to catch him. And, in order to find out the facts of the case, he shouted, as though addressing the rock, "Hi! rock!" And, as no reply came back, he shouted three times, "Hi! rock!" And

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as the rock still kept silence, the monkey called out, “How comes it, friend rock, that you won’t answer me to-day?”

“Oh!” thought the crocodile; “so the rock’s in the habit of answering the monkey. I must answer for the rock to-day.” Accordingly, he shouted, “Yes, monkey; what is it?” “Who are you?” said the Bodhisatta. “I’m a crocodile.” “What are you sitting on that rock for? “To catch you and eat your heart.” As there was no other way back, the only thing to be done was to outwit the crocodile. So the Bodhisatta cried out, “There’s no help for it then but to give myself up to you. Open your mouth and catch me when I jump.”

Now you must know that when crocodiles open their mouths, their eyes shut [*1]. So, when this crocodile unsuspectingly opened his mouth, his eyes shut. And there he waited with closed eyes and open jaws! Seeing this, the wily monkey made a jump on to the crocodile’s head, and thence, with a spring like lightning, gained the bank. When the cleverness of this feat dawned on the crocodile, he said, “Monkey, he that in this world [280] possesses the four virtues overcomes his foes. And you, methinks, possess all four.” And, so saying, he repeated this stanza:—

Whose, O monkey-king, like you, combines

Truth, foresight, fixed resolve, and fearlessness, Shall see
his routed foemen turn and flee.

And with this praise of the Bodhisatta, the crocodile betook himself to his own dwelling-place.

Said the Master, “This is not the first time then, Brethren, that Devadatta has gone about seeking to kill me; he did just the same in bygone days too.” And, having ended his lesson, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the

Birth by saying, “Devadatta was the crocodile of those days, the brahmin-girl Cinca [*2] was the crocodile’s wife, and I myself the Monkey-King.”

[Note. Cf. No. 224 (Kumbhila-jataka). A Chinese version is given by Beal in the ‘Romantic Legend’ p. 231, and a Japanese version in Griffin’s ‘Fairy Tales from Japan.’]

Footnotes

^143:1 This assertion is not in accord with the facts of natural history.

^143:2 Her identification here as the crocodile’s wicked wife is due to the fact that Cinca, who was a “female ascetic of rare beauty,” was suborned by Gotama’s enemies to simulate pregnancy and charge him with the paternity. How the deceit was exposed, is told in Dhammapada, pp. 338-340.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 144] [j058]

No. 58.

TAYODHAMMA-JATAKA.

“Whoso, like you.”—This story was told by the Master while at the Bamboo-grove also upon the subject of going about to kill.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, Devadatta came to life again as a monkey, and dwelt near the Himalayas as the lord of a tribe of monkeys all of his

own begetting. Filled with forebodings that his male offspring might grow up to oust him from his lordship, he used to geld [281] them all with his teeth. Now the Bodhisatta had been begotten by this same monkey; and his mother, in order to save her unborn progeny, stole away to a forest at the foot of the mountain, where in due season she gave birth to the Bodhisatta. And when he was full-grown and had come to years of understanding, he was gifted with marvellous strength.

“Where is my father?” said he one day to his mother. “He dwells at the foot of a certain mountain, nay son,” she replied; “and is king of a tribe of monkeys.” “Take me to see him, mother.” “Not so, my son; for your father is so afraid of being supplanted by his sons that he gelds them all with his teeth.” “Never mind; take me there, mother,” said the Bodhisatta; “I shall know what to do.” So she took him with her to the old monkey. At sight of his son, the old monkey, feeling sure that the Bodhisatta would grow up to depose him, resolved by a feigned embrace to crush the life out of the Bodhisatta. “Ah! my boy!” he cried; “where have you been all this long time?” And, making a show of embracing the Bodhisatta, he hugged him like a vice. But the Bodhisatta, who was as strong as an elephant, returned the hug so mightily that his father’s ribs were like to break.

Then thought the old monkey, “This son of mine, if he grows up, will certainly kill me.” Casting about how to kill the Bodhisatta first, he bethought him of a certain lake hard by, where an ogre lived who might eat him. So he said to the Bodhisatta, “I’m old now, my boy, and should like to hand over the tribe to you; to-day you shall be made king. In a lake hard by grow two kinds of water-lily, three kinds of blue-lotus, and five kinds of white-lotus. Go and pick me some.” “Yes, father,” answered

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the Bodhisatta; and off he started. Approaching the lake with caution, he studied the footprints on its banks and marked how all of them led down to the water, but none ever came back. Realising that the lake was haunted by an ogre, he divined that his father, being unable himself to kill him, wished to get him killed [282] by the ogre. "But I'll get the lotuses," said he, "without going into the water at all." So he went to a dry spot, and taking a run leaped from the bank. In his jump, as he was clearing the water, he plucked two flowers which grew up above the surface of the water, and alighted with them on the opposite bank. On his way back, he plucked two more in like manner, as he jumped; and so made a heap on both sides of the lake,—but always keeping out of the ogre's watery domain. When he had picked as many as he thought he could carry across, and was gathering together those on one bank, the astonished ogre exclaimed, "I've lived a long time in this lake, but I never saw even a human being so wonderfully clever! Here is this monkey who has picked all the flowers he wants, and yet has kept safely out of range of my power." And, parting the waters asunder, the ogre came up out of the lake to where the Bodhisatta stood, and addressed him thus, "O king of the monkeys, he that has three qualities shall have the mastery over his enemies; and you, methinks, have all three." And, so saying, he repeated this stanza in the Bodhisatta's praise:—

Whose, like you, O monkey-king, combines

Dexterity and Valour and Resource, Shall see his routed
foemen turn and flee.

[paragraph continues] His praises ended, the ogre asked the Bodhisatta why he was gathering the flowers.

“My father is minded to make me king of his tribe,” said the Bodhisatta, “and that is why I am gathering them.”

“But one so peerless as you ought not to carry flowers,” exclaimed the ogre; “I will carry them for you.” And so saying, he picked up the flowers and followed with them in the rear of the Bodhisatta.

Seeing this from afar, the Bodhisatta’s father knew that his plot had failed. “I sent my son to fall a prey to the ogre, and here he is returning safe and sound, with the ogre humbly carrying his flowers for him! I am undone!” cried the old monkey, and his heart burst asunder [283] into seven pieces, so that he died then and there. And all the other monkeys met together and chose the Bodhisatta to be their king.

His lesson ended, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “Devadatta was then the king of the monkeys, and I his son.”

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 146] [j059]

No. 59.

BHERIVADA-JATAKA.

“Go not too far.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a certain self-willed Brother. Asked by the Master whether the report was true that he was self-willed, the Brother said it was true. “This is not the first time, Brother,” said the Master, “that you have shewn yourself

self-willed; you were just the same in bygone times as well.”
And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as a drummer, and dwelt in a village. Hearing that there was to be a festival at Benares, and hoping to make money by playing his drum to the crowds of holiday-makers, he made his way to the city, with his son. And there he played, and made a great deal of money. On his way home with his earnings he had to pass through a forest which was infested by robbers; and as the boy kept beating away at the drum without ever stopping, the Bodhisatta tried to stop him by saying, “Don’t behave like that, beat only now and again,—as if some great lord were passing by.”

But in defiance of his father’s bidding, the boy thought the best way to frighten the robbers away was to keep steadily on beating away at the drum.

&t the first notes of the drum, away scampered the robbers, thinking some great lord was passing by. But hearing the noise keep on, they saw their mistake and came back to find out who it really was. Finding only two persons, they beat and robbed them. “Alas!” cried the Bodhisatta, “by your ceaseless drumming you have lost all our hard-earned takings!” And, so saying, he repeated this stanza:

Go not too far, but learn excess to shun;

For over-drumming lost what drumming won. [284]

His lesson ended, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “This self-willed Brother was the son of those days, and I myself the father.”

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 147] [j060]

No. 60.

SAMKHADHAMANA-JATAKA.

“Go not too far.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about another self-willed person.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as a conch-blower, and went up to Benares with his father to a public festival. There he earned a great deal of money by his conch-blowing, and started for home again. On his way through a forest which was infested by robbers, he warned his father not to keep on blowing his conch; but the old man thought he knew better how to keep the robbers off, and blew away hard without a moment's pause. Accordingly, just as in the preceding story, the robbers returned and plundered the pair. And, as above, the Bodhisatta repeated this stanza:

Go not too far, but learn excess to shun;

For over-blowing lost what blowing won.

His lesson ended, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “This self-willed Brother was the father of those days, and I myself his son.”

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j061]

No. 61.

ASATAMANTA-JATAKA.

[285] “In lust unbridled.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a passion-tost Brother. The Introductory Story will be related in the Ummadanti-jataka [*1]. But to this Brother the Master said, “Women, Brother, are lustful, profligate, vile, and degraded. Why be passion-tost for a vile woman?” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

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Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as a brahmin in the city of Takkasila in the Gandhara country; and by the time he had grown up, such was his proficiency in the Three Vedas and all accomplishments, that his fame as a teacher spread through all the world.

In those days there was a brahmin family in Benares, unto whom a son was born; and on the day of his birth they took fire and kept it always burning, until the boy was sixteen. Then his parents told him how the fire, kindled on the day of his birth, had never been allowed to go out; and they bade their son make his choice. If his heart was set on winning entrance hereafter into the Realm of Brahma, then let him take the fire and retire with it to the forest, there to work out his desire by ceaseless worship of the Lord of Fire. But, if he preferred the joys of a home, they bade their son go to Takkasila and there study under the world-famed teacher with a view to settling down to manage the property. “I should surely fail in the worship of the Fire-God,” said the young brahmin; “I’ll be a squire.” So he bade farewell to his

father and mother, and, with a thousand pieces of money for the teacher's fee, set out for Takkasila. There he studied till his education was complete, and then betook himself home again.

Now his parents grew to wish him to forsake the world and to worship the Fire-God in the forest. Accordingly his mother, in her desire to despatch him to the forest by bringing home to him the wickedness of women, was confident that his wise and learned teacher would be able to lay bare the wickedness of the sex to her son, and so she asked whether he had quite finished his education. "Oh yes," said the youth.

[286] "Then of course you have not omitted the Dolour Texts?" "I have not learnt those, mother." "How then can you say your education is finished? Go back at once, my son, to your master, and return to us when you have learnt them," said his mother.

"Very good," said the youth, and off he started for Takkasila once more.

Now his master too had a mother,—an old woman of a hundred and twenty years of age,—whom with his own hands he used to bathe, feed and tend. And for so doing he was scorned by his neighbours,—so much so indeed that he resolved to depart to the forest and there dwell with his mother. Accordingly, in the solitude of a forest he had a hut built in a delightful spot, where water was plentiful, and after laying in a stock of ghee and rice and other provisions, he carried his mother to her new home, and there lived cherishing her old age.

Not finding his master at Takkasila, the young brahmin made enquiries, and finding out what had happened, set out

for the forest, and presented himself respectfully before his master. "What brings you

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back so soon, my boy?" said the latter. "I do not think, sir, I learned the Dolour Texts when I was with you," said the youth. "But who told you that you had to learn the Dolour Texts?" "My mother, master," was the reply. Hereon the Bodhisatta reflected that there were no such texts as those, and concluded that his pupil's mother must have wanted her son to learn how wicked women were. So he said to the youth that it was all right, and that he should in due course be taught the Texts in question. "From to-day," said he, "you shall take my place about my mother, and with your own hands wash, feed and look after her. As you rub her hands, feet, head and back, be careful to exclaim, 'Ah, Madam! if you are so lovely now you are so old, what must you not have been in the heyday of your youth!' And as you wash and perfume her hands and feet, burst into praise of their beauty. Further, tell me without shame or reserve every single word my mother says to you. Obey me in this, and you shall master the Dolour Texts; disobey me, and you shall remain ignorant of them for ever."

Obedient to his master's commands, the youth did all he was bidden, and so persistently praised the old woman's beauty that she thought he had fallen in love with her; and, blind and decrepit though she was, passion was kindled within her [287]. So one day she broke in on his compliments by asking, "Is your desire towards me?" "It is indeed, madam," answered the youth; "but nay master is so strict." "If you desire me," said she, "kill my son!" "But how shall I, that have learned so much from him, how shall I for passion's sake kill my master?" "Well then, if you will be faithful to me, I will kill him myself."

(So lustful, vile, and degraded are women that, giving the rein to lust, a hag like this, and old as she was, actually thirsted for the blood of so dutiful a son!)

Now the young brahmin told all this to the Bodhisatta, who, commending him for reporting the matter, studied how much longer his mother was destined to live. Finding that her destiny was to die that very day, he said, "Come, young brahmin; I will put her to the test." So he cut down a fig-tree and hewed out of it a wooden figure about his own size, which he wrapped up, head and all, in a robe and laid upon his own bed,—with a string tied to it. "Now go with an axe to my mother," said he; "and give her this string as a clue to guide her steps."

So away went the youth to the old woman, and said, "Madam, the master is lying down indoors on his bed; I have tied this string as a clue to guide you; take this axe and kill him, if you can." "But you won't forsake me, will you?" said she. "Why should I?" was his reply. So she took the axe, and, rising up with trembling limbs, groped her way along by the string, till she thought she felt her son. Then she bared the head of the figure, and—thinking to kill her son at a single blow—

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brought down the axe right on the figure's throat,—only to learn by the thud that it was wood! "What are you doing, mother?" said the Bodhisatta. With a shriek that she was betrayed, the old woman fell dead to the ground. For, says tradition, it was fated that she should die at that very moment and under her own roof.

Seeing that she was dead, her son burnt her body, and, when the flames of the pile were quenched, graced her

ashes with wild-flowers. Then with the young brahmin he sat at the door of the hut and said, "My son, there is no such separate passage as the 'Dolour Text.' [288] It is women who are depravity incarnate. And when your mother sent you back to me to learn the Dolour Texts, her object was that you should learn how wicked women are. You have now witnessed with your own eyes my mother's wickedness, and therefrom you will see how lustful and vile women are." And with this lesson, he bade the youth depart.

Bidding farewell to his master, the young brahmin went home to his parents. Said his mother to him, "Have you now learnt the Dolour Texts?"

"Yes, mother."

"And what," she asked, "is your final choice? will you leave the world to worship the Lord of Fire, or will you choose a family life?" "Nay," answered the young brahmin; "with my own eyes have I seen the wickedness of womankind; I will have nothing to do with family life. I will renounce the world." And his convictions found vent in this stanza:—

In lust unbridled, like devouring fire,

Are women,—frantic in their rage. The sex renouncing, fain would I retire To find peace in a hermitage.

[289] With this invective against womankind, the young brahmin took leave of his parents, and renounced the world for the hermit's life,—wherein winning the peace he desired, he assured himself of admittance after that life into the Realm of Brahma.

"So you see, Brother," said the Master, "how lustful, vile, and woe-bringing are women." And after declaring the

wickedness of women, he preached the Four Truths, at the close whereof that Brother won the Fruit of the First Path. Lastly, the Master chewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying,

“Kapilani [*1] was the mother of those days, Maha-Kassapa was the father, Ananda the pupil, and I myself the teacher.”

Footnotes

^147:1 No. 527.

^150:1 Her history is given in J. R. A. S. 1893, page 786.

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[p. 151] [j062]

No. 62.

ANDABHUTA-JATAKA.

“Blindfold, a-luting.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about another passion-tost person.

Said the Master, “Is the report true that you are passion-tost, Brother?” “Quite true,” was the reply.

“Brother, women can not be warded; in days gone by the wise who kept watch over a woman from the moment she was born, failed nevertheless to keep her safe.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life as the child of the Queen-consort. When he grew up, he mastered every accomplishment; and when, at his father’s death, he came

to be king, he proved a righteous king. Now he used to play at dice with his chaplain, and, as he flung the golden dice upon the silver table, he would sing this catch for luck:—

'Tis nature's law that rivers wind;

Trees grow of wood by law of kind; And, given opportunity,
All women work iniquity.

[paragraph continues] [290] As these lines always made the king win the game, the chaplain was in a fair way to lose every penny he had in the world. And, in order to save himself from utter ruin, he resolved to seek out a little maid that had never seen another man, and then to keep her under lock and key in his own house. "For," thought he, "I couldn't manage to look after a girl who has seen another man. So I must take a new-born baby girl, and keep her under my thumb as she grows up, with a close guard over her, so that none may come near her and that she may be true to one man. Then I shall win of the king, and grow rich." Now he was skilled in prognostication; and seeing a poor woman who was about to become a mother, and knowing that her child would be a girl, he paid the woman to come and be confined in his house, and sent her away after her confinement with a present. The infant was brought up entirely by women, and no men—other than himself—were ever allowed to set eyes on her. When the girl grew up, she was subject to him and he was her master.

Now, while the girl was growing up, the chaplain forbore to play with the king; but when she was grown up and under his own control,

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he challenged the king to a game. The king accepted, and play began. But, when in throwing the dice the king sang his

lucky catch, the chaplain added,—“always excepting my girl.” And then luck changed, and it was now the chaplain who won, while the king lost.

Thinking the matter over, the Bodhisatta suspected the chaplain had a virtuous girl shut up in his house; and enquiry proved his suspicions true. Then, in order to work her fall, he sent for a clever scamp, and asked whether he thought he could seduce the girl. “Certainly, sire,” said the fellow. So the king gave him money, and sent him away with orders to lose no time.

With the king’s money the fellow bought perfumes and incense and aromatics of all sorts, and opened a perfumery shop close to the chaplain’s house. Now the chaplain’s house was seven stories high, and had seven gateways, at each of which a guard was set,—a guard of women only,—and no man but the brahmin himself was ever allowed to enter. The very baskets that contained the dust and sweepings [291] were examined before they were passed in. Only the chaplain was allowed to see the girl, and she had only a single waiting-woman. This woman had money given her to buy flowers and perfumes for her mistress, and on her way she used to pass near the shop which the scamp had opened. And he, knowing very well that she was the girl’s attendant, watched one day for her coming, and, rushing out of his shop, fell at her feet, clasping her knees tightly with both hands and blubbering out, “O my mother! where have you been all this long time?”

And his confederates, who stood by his side, cried, “What a likeness! Hand and foot, face and figure, even in style of dress, they are identical!” As one and all kept dwelling on the marvellous likeness, the poor woman lost her head. Crying out that it must be her boy, she too burst into tears. And with weeping and tears the two fell to embracing one

another. Then said the man, "Where are you living, mother?"

"Up at the chaplain's, my son. He has a young wife of peerless beauty, a very goddess for grace; and I'm her waiting-woman." "And whither away now, mother?" "To buy her perfumes and flowers." "Why go elsewhere for them? Come to me for them in future," said the fellow. And he gave the woman betel, bdellium, and so forth, and all kinds of flowers, refusing all payment. Struck with the quantity of flowers and perfumes which the waiting-woman brought home, the girl asked why the brahmin was so pleased with her that day. "Why do you say that, my dear?" asked the old woman. "Because of the quantity of things you have brought home." "No, it isn't that the brahmin was free with his money," said the old woman; "for I got them at my son's." And from that day forth she kept the money the brahmin gave her, and got her flowers and other things free of charge at the man's shop.

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And he, a few days later, made out to be ill, and took to his bed. So when the old woman came to the shop and asked for her son, she was told he had been taken ill. Hastening to his side, she fondly stroked his shoulders, as she asked what ailed him. But he made no reply. "Why don't you tell me, my son?" "Not even if I were dying, could I tell you, mother." "But, if you don't tell me, [292] whom are you to tell?" "Well then, mother, my malady lies solely in this that, hearing the praises of your young mistress's beauty, I have fallen in love with her. If I win her, I shall live; if not, this will be my death-bed." "Leave that to me, my boy," said the old woman cheerily; "and don't worry yourself on this account." Then—with a heavy load of perfumes and flowers to take with her—she went home, and said to the brahmin's young wife,

“Alas! here’s my son in love with you, merely because I told him how beautiful you are! What is to be done?”

“If you can smuggle him in here,” replied the girl, “you have my leave.”

Hereupon the old woman set to work sweeping together all the dust she could find in the house from top to bottom; this dust she put into a huge flower-basket, and tried to pass out with it. When the usual search was made, she emptied dust over the woman on guard, who fled away under such ill-treatment. In like manner she dealt with all the other watchers, smothering in dust each one in turn that said anything to her. And so it came to pass from that time forward that, no matter what the old woman took in or out of the house, there was nobody bold enough to search her. Now was the time! The old woman smuggled the scamp into the house in a flower-basket, and brought him to her young mistress. He succeeded in wrecking the girl’s virtue, and actually stayed a day or two in the upper rooms,—hiding when the chaplain was at home, and enjoying the society of his mistress when the chaplain was off the premises. A day or two passed and the girl said to her lover, “Sweet-heart, you must be going now.” “Very well; only I must cuff the brahmin first.” “Certainly,” said she, and hid the scamp. Then, when the brahmin came in again, she exclaimed, “Oh, my dear husband, I should so like to dance, if you would play the lute for me.” “Dance away, my dear,” said the chaplain, and struck up forthwith. “But I shall be too ashamed, if you’re looking. Let me hide your handsome face first with a cloth; and then I will dance.” “All right,” said he; “if you’re too modest to dance otherwise.” So she took a thick cloth and tied it over the brahmin’s face so as to blindfold him. And, blindfolded as he was, the brahmin began to play the lute. After dancing awhile, she cried, “My clear, I should so like to hit you once on the head.” “Hit

away,” said the unsuspecting dotard. Then the girl made a sign to her paramour; and he softly stole up behind the brahmin [293] and smote him on the head.

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[paragraph continues] Such was the force of the blow, that the brahmin’s eyes were like to start out of his head, and a bump rose up on the spot. Smarting with pain, he called to the girl to give him her hand; and she placed it in his. “Ah! it’s a soft hand,” said he; “but it hits hard!”

Now, as soon as the scamp had struck the brahmin, he hid; and when he was hidden, the girl took the bandage off the chaplain’s eyes and rubbed his bruised head with oil. The moment the brahmin went out, the scamp was stowed away in his basket again by the old woman, and so carried out of the house. Making his way at once to the king, he told him the whole adventure.

Accordingly, when the brahmin was next in attendance, the king proposed a game with the dice; the brahmin was willing; and the dicing-table was brought out. As the king made his throw, he sang his old catch, and the brahmin—ignorant of the girl’s naughtiness—added his “always excepting my girl,”—and nevertheless lost!

Then the king, who did know what had passed, said to his chaplain, “Why except her? Her virtue has given way. Ah, you dreamed that by taking a girl in the hour of her birth and by placing a sevenfold guard round her, you could be certain of her. Why, you couldn’t be certain of a woman, even if you had her inside you and always walked about with her. No woman is ever faithful to one man alone. As for that girl of yours, she told you she should like to dance, and having first blindfolded you as you played the lute to her,

she let her paramour strike you on the head, and then smuggled him out of the house. Where then is your exception?" And so saying, the king repeated this stanza:—

Blindfold, a-luting, by his wife beguiled,

The brahmin sits,—who tried to rear A paragon of virtue undefiled! Learn hence to hold the sex in fear.

[294] In such wise did the Bodhisatta expound the Truth to the brahmin. And the brahmin went home and taxed the girl with the wickedness of which she was accused. "My dear husband, who can have said such a thing about me?" said she. "Indeed I am innocent; indeed it was my own hand, and nobody else's, that struck you; and, if you do not believe me, I will brave the ordeal of fire to prove that no man's hand has touched me but yours; and so I will make you believe me." "So be it," said the brahmin. And he had a quantity of wood brought and set light to it. Then the girl was summoned. "Now," said he, "if you believe your own story, brave these flames!"

Now before this the girl had instructed her attendant as follows:—"Tell your son, mother, to be there and to seize my hand just as I am about to go into the fire." And the old woman did as she was bidden; and the fellow came and took his stand among the crowd. Then, to

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delude the brahmin, the girl, standing there before all the people, exclaimed with fervour, "No man's hand but thine, brahmin, has ever touched me; and, by the truth of my asseveration I call on this fire to harm me not." So saying, she advanced to the burning pile,—when up dashed her paramour, who seized her by the hand, crying shame on the brahmin who could force so fair a maid to enter the flames!

Shaking her hand free, the girl exclaimed to the brahmin that what she had asserted was now undone, and that she could not now brave the ordeal of fire. “Why not?” said the brahmin. “Because,” she replied, “my asseveration was that no man’s hand but thine had ever touched me; [295] and now here is a man who has seized hold of my hand!” But the brahmin, knowing that he was tricked, drove her from him with blows.

Such, we learn, is the wickedness of women. What crime will they not commit; and then, to deceive their husbands, what oaths will they not take—aye, in the light of day—that they did it not! So false-hearted are they! Therefore has it been said:—

A sex composed of wickedness and guile,

Unknowable; uncertain as the path
Of fishes in the water,—
womankind Hold truth for falsehood, falsehood for the truth!
As greedily as cows seek pastures new,
Women, unsated,
yearn for mate on mate. As sand unstable, cruel as the
snake, Women know all things; naught from them is hid!

“Even so impossible is it to ward women,” said the Master. His lesson ended, he preached the Truths, at the close whereof the passion-test Brother won the Fruit of the First Path. Also the Master showed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying:—“In these days I was the king of Benares.”

[Note. The cuffing of the brahmin is the subject of a Bharhut sculpture, Plate 26, 8. For a parallel to the trick by which the girl avoids the ordeal of fire, see Folklore 3. 291.]

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j063]

No. 63.

TAKKA-JATAKA.

“Wrathful are women.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about another passion-tost Brother. When on being questioned the Brother confessed that he was passion-tost, the Master said, “Women are ingrates and treacherous; why are you passion-tost because of them?” And he told this story of the past.

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Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta, who had chosen an anchorite’s life, built himself a hermitage by the banks of the Ganges, and there won the Attainments and the Higher Knowledges, and so dwelt in the bliss of Insight. In those days the Lord High Treasurer of Benares had a fierce and cruel daughter, known as Lady Wicked, who used to revile and beat her servants and slaves. And one day they took their young mistress [296] to disport herself in the Ganges; and the girls were playing about in the water, when the sun set and a great storm burst upon them. Hereon folks scampered away, and the girl’s attendants, exclaiming, “Now is the time to see the last of this creature!” threw her right into the river and hurried off. Down poured the rain in torrents, the sun set, and darkness came on. And when the attendants reached home without their young mistress, and were asked where she was, they replied that she had got out of the Ganges but that they did not know where she had gone. Search was made by her family, but not a trace of the missing girl could be found.

Meantime she, screaming loudly, was swept down by the swollen stream, and at midnight approached where the Bodhisatta dwelt in his hermitage. Hearing her cries, he thought to himself, "That's a woman's voice. I must rescue her from the water." So he took a torch of grass and by its light descried her in the stream. "Don't be afraid; don't be afraid!" he shouted cheerily, and waded in, and, thanks to his vast strength, as of an elephant, brought her safe to land. Then he made a fire for her in his hermitage and set luscious fruits of divers kinds before her. Not till she had eaten did he ask, "Where is your home, and how came you to fall in the river?" And the girl told him all that had befallen her. "Dwell here for the present," said he, and installed her in his hermitage, whilst for the next two or three days he himself abode in the open air. At the end of that time he bade her depart, but she was set on waiting till she had made the ascetic fall in love with her; and would not go. And as time went by, she so wrought on him by her womanly grace and wiles that he lost his Insight. With her he continued to dwell in the forest. But she did not like living in that solitude and wanted to be taken among people. So yielding to her importunities he took her away with him to a border village, where he supported her by selling dates, and so was called the Date-Sage [*1]. And the villagers paid

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him to teach them what were lucky and unlucky seasons, and gave him a hut to live in at the entrance to their village.

Now the border was harried by robbers from the mountains; and they made a raid one day [297] on the village where the pair lived, and looted it. They made the poor villagers pack up their belongings, and off they went—with the Treasurer's daughter among the rest—to their own abodes. Arrived there, they let everybody else go free; but the girl,

because of her beauty, was taken to wife by the robber chieftain.

And when the Bodhisatta learned this, he thought to himself, "She will not endure to live away from me. She will escape and come back to me." And so he lived on, waiting for her to return. She meantime was very happy with the robbers, and only feared that the Date-sage would come to carry her away again. "I should feel more secure," thought she, "if he were dead. I must send a message to him feigning love and so entice him here to his death." So she sent a messenger to him with the message that she was unhappy, and that she wanted him to take her away.

And he, in his faith in her, set out forthwith, and came to the entrance of the robbers' village, whence he sent a message to her. "To fly now, my husband," said she, "would only be to fall into the robber chieftain's hands who would kill us both. Let us put off our flight till night." So she took him and hid him in a room; and when the robber came home at night and was inflamed with strong drink, she said to him, "Tell me, love, what would you do if your rival were in your power?"

And he said he would do this and that to him.

"Perhaps he is not so far away as you think," said she. "He is in the next room."

Seizing a torch, the robber rushed in and seized the Bodhisatta and beat him about the head and body to his heart's content. Amid the blows the Bodhisatta made no cry, only murmuring, "Cruel ingrates! slanderous traitors!" And this was all he said. And when he had thus beaten, bound, and laid by the heels the Bodhisatta, the robber finished his supper, and lay down to sleep. In the morning,

when he had slept off his over-night's debauch, he fell anew to beating the Bodhisatta, who still made no cry but kept repeating the same four words. And the robber was struck with this and asked why, even when beaten, he kept saying that. [298]

"Listen," said the Date-Sage, "and you shall hear. Once I was a hermit dwelling in the solitude of the forest, and there I won Insight. And I rescued this woman from the Ganges and helped her in her need, and by her allurements fell from my high estate. Then I quitted the forest and supported her in a village, whence she was carried off by robbers. And she sent me a message that she was unhappy, entreating

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me to come and take her away. Now she has made me fall into your hands. That is why I thus exclaim."

This set the robber a-thinking again, and he thought, "If she can feel so little for one who is so good and has done so much for her, what injury would she not do to me? She must die." So having reassured the Bodhisatta and having awakened the woman, he set out sword in hand, pretending to her that he was about to kill him outside the village. Then bidding her hold the Date-Sage he drew his sword, and, making as though to kill the sage, clove the woman in twain. Then he bathed the Date-Sage from head to foot and for several days fed him with dainties to his heart's content.

"Where do you purpose to go now?" said the robber at last.

"The world," answered the sage, "has no pleasures for me. I will become a hermit once more and dwell in my former habitation in the forest."

“And I too will become a hermit,” exclaimed the robber. So both became hermits together, and dwelt in the hermitage in the forest, where they won the Higher Knowledges and the Attainments, and qualified themselves when life ended to enter the Realm of Brahma.

After telling these two stories, the Master chewed the connexion, by reciting, as Buddha, this stanza:—

Wrathful are women, slanderers, ingrates,

The sowers of dissension and fell strife! Then, Brother, tread the path of holiness, And Bliss therein thou shalt not fail to find.

[299] His lesson ended, the Master preached the Truths, at the close whereof the passion-tost Brother won the Fruit of the First Path. Also, the Master identified the Birth by saying, “Ananda was the robber-chief of those days, and I myself the Date-Sage.”

Footnotes

^156:1 There is a play here upon the word takka, which cannot well be rendered in English. The word takka-pandito, which I have rendered ‘Date Sage,’ would—by itself—mean ‘Logic Sage,’ whilst his living was got takkam vikkinitva ‘by selling dates.’ There is the further difficulty that the latter phrase may equally well mean by selling buttermilk.’

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j064]

No. 64.

DURAJANA-JATAKA.

“Think’st thou.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a lay-brother. Tradition says that there dwelt at Savatthi a lay-brother, who was stablished in the Three Gems and the Five Commandments, a devout lover of the Buddha, the Doctrine and the Brotherhood. But his wife was a sinful and wicked woman. On days when she did wrong, she was as meek as a slave-girl bought for a hundred pieces; whilst on days when she did not do

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wrong, she played my lady, passionate and tyrannical. The husband could not make her out. She worried him so much that he did not go to wait on the Buddha.

One day he went with perfumes and flowers, and had taken his seat after due salutation, when the Master said to him: —“Pray how comes it, lay-brother, that seven or eight days have gone by without your coming to wait upon the Buddha?” “My wife, sir, is one day like a slave-girl bought for a hundred pieces, while another day finds her like a passionate and tyrannical mistress. I cannot make her out; and it is because she has worried me so that I have not been to wait upon the Buddha.”

Now, when he heard these words, the Master said, “Why, lay-brother, you have already been told by the wise and good of bygone days that it is hard to understand the nature of women.” And he went on to add “but his previous existences have come to be confused in his mind, so that he cannot remember.” And so saying, he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to be a teacher of world-wide fame, with five hundred young brahmins studying under him. [300] One of these pupils was a young brahmin from a foreign land, who fell in love with a woman and made her his wife. Though he continued to live on in Benares, he failed two or three times in his attendance on the master. For, you should know, his wife was a sinful and wicked woman, who was as meek as a slave on days when she had done wrong, but on days when she had not done wrong, played my lady, passionate and tyrannical. Her husband could not make her out at all; and so worried and harassed by her was he that he absented himself from waiting on the Master. Now, some seven or eight days later he renewed his attendances, and was asked by the Bodhisatta why he had not been seen of late.

“Master, my wife is the cause,” said he. And he told the Bodhisatta how she was meek one day like a slave-girl, and tyrannical the next; how he could not make her out at all, and how he had been so worried and harassed by her shifting moods that he had stayed away.

“Precisely so, young brahmin,” said the Bodhisatta; “on days when they have done wrong, women humble themselves before their husbands and become as meek and submissive as a slave-girl; but on days when they have not done wrong, then they become stiff-necked and insubordinate to their lords. After this manner are women sinful and wicked; and their nature is hard to know. No heed should be paid either to their likes or to their dislikes.” And so saying, the Bodhisatta repeated for the edification of his pupil this Stanza:—

Think'st thou a woman loves thee?—be not glad.

Think'st thou she loves thee not?—forbear to grieve.
Unknowable, uncertain as the path
Of fishes in the water,
women prove.

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[301] Such was the Bodhisatta's instruction to his pupil, who thenceforward paid no heed to his wife's caprices. And she, hearing that her misconduct had come to the ears of the Bodhisatta, ceased from that time forward from her naughtiness.

So too this lay-brother's wife said to herself, "The Perfect Buddha himself knows, they tell me, of my misconduct," and thenceforth she sinned no more.

His lesson ended, the Master preached the Truths, at the close whereof the lay-brother won the Fruit of the First Path. Then the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying—"This husband and wife were also the husband and wife of those days, and I myself the teacher."

The Jataka, Volume I, tr. by Robert Chalmers, [1895], at sacred-texts.com

[j065]

No. 65.

ANABHIRATI-JATAKA.

"Like highways."—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about just such another lay-brother as the last. This man, when on enquiry he assured himself of his wife's misconduct, came to words with her, with the result that he was so upset that for seven or eight days he failed in his

attendance. One day he came to the monastery, made his bow to the Blessed One and took his seat. Being asked why he had been absent for seven or eight days, he replied, "Sir, my wife has misconducted herself, and I have been so upset about her that I did not come."

"Lay-brother," said the Master, "long ago the wise and good told you not to be angered at the naughtiness found in women, but to preserve your equanimity this, however, you have forgotten, because re-birth has hidden it from you." And so saying, he told—at that lay-brother's request—this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta was a teacher of world-wide reputation, as in the foregoing story. And a pupil of his, finding his wife unfaithful, was so affected by the discovery that he stayed away for some days, but being asked one day by his teacher what was the reason of his absence, he made a clean breast of it. Then said his teacher, "My son, there is no private property in women: they are common to all. [302] And therefore wise men knowing

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their frailty, are not excited to anger against them." And so saying, he repeated this stanza for his pupil's edification:—

Like highways, rivers, courtyards, hostelries,

Or taverns, which to all alike extend One universal
hospitality, Is womankind; and wise men never stoop
To wrath at frailty in a sex so frail.

Such was the instruction which the Bodhisatta imparted to his pupil, who thenceforward grew indifferent to what