

UMMAGGA JATAKA

(THE STORY OF THE TUNNEL)

Translated from the Sinhalese

by

DAVID KARUNARATNE

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(The Story of the Tunnel)

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PREFACE

Something unusual.

Having already translated during the last 25 years more than 25 books from World Literature into Sinhala, and having wandered half of that quarter century among the utmost intricacies of legal translations, the whole process of translation had become somewhat of an unavoidable monotony. It was therefore with a certain amount of alacrity that I undertook this English Translation of *Ummagga Jataka*.

When Mr. M. D. Sirisena, Managing Director of Messrs. M. D. Gunasena & Co. Ltd. suggested that I should undertake this translation, I was merely repeating the exuberance of the Tortoise in the old *Gama Katha* which threatened to commit suicide when ordered to be thrown into the river ("ඉබ්බා දියේ දමාද්දා කිව්වාට මං මැරෙද්දා කිව්වා වගේ".)

For the purpose of this translation, I have adapted the *Ummagga Jataka*, Cumaratunga edition, published by Messrs. M. D. Gunasena & Co. Ltd.

My aim in this translation has been not only to present to the English reader a masterpiece of the mediaeval Sinhala literature, but also to retain, as far as possible, the simple and lucid style so characteristic of this book. However nothing found in the original has been omitted. Neither the form of the narrative nor the style of the language has been changed in the slightest degree. In fact, because of this, the English of this translation, may not, at times sound *English*. In a sense, therefore, this book is neither a free translation, nor is it a literal one.

The *Ummagga Jataka* illustrates how the mediaeval Sinhala writers made use of ancient *Jataka* and other religious stories, to weave together fairly long, but extremely readable and highly popular stories.

In point of popularity, of course, the *Ummagga Jataka* ranks very high among the Sinhala educated, and it may be only a handful out of a thousand who have not come across this classic in the study of the Sinhala language.

At a time when Sinhala has become the State language—the language of the Administration as well as that of the Judicature—the student of the Sinhala language through the medium of English, will no doubt find it a useful pastime to read the English Translation of *Ummagga Jataka*, along with its Sinhala original.

In this translation I have given footnotes where I have used the same Sinhala word found in the original, in preference to a coined English word which would not give the actual meaning of the word.

I thank my daughter Vijitha Deshapriyanthi, who did the entire proof reading of this book.

DAVID KARUNARATNE.

Colombo,
20th June, 1962.

UMMAGGA JATAKA

(The Story of the Tunnel)

Homage to that Blessed, Exalted and All-knowing One.

I CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION

ONCE upon a time, my saviour Lord Buddha, the Enlightened One, the Lion of the Sakya clan, the Universal Benefactor, the Comparable only to the Incomparable, the Cynosure of the Three Worlds, the Crown-gem of the Three Realms, the Treasure of Kindness, the Home of Goodwill, the Master of Wisdom, unthinkable as the Ocean, firm as mighty Earth, in ideals as high as Mount Meru, and in virtue as pure as a crystal, related this Birth Story while living in profound goodwill, kindness, love and impartiality to all the world, in the Grove of Jethavana, in order to manifest an enterprise of His perfect wisdom which was concealed in the cycle of Existence. This Grove of Jethavana glorious with all splendour and prosperity, adorned with hundreds of ambulatories, Colleges and temples surpassing in beauty even the Nandana Park, was situated in the near neighbourhood of the City of Savatthi. Now, this City of Savatthi which was constantly teeming with crowds of men and women clad in various bright garments, was surrounded by a snow-white rampart which resembled in colour unto the waves rising in the Milky Ocean ; it was resplendent with castles, houses and gates adorned with gold and silver ; it had beautiful Parks with hundreds of Champaka, Sal, Ironwood, Jak, Mango, Jambu and other fruit-bearing trees, and hundreds of ponds full of pure water, decked with the five kinds of Lotuses.

Now, what made Him relate this story ? The circumstances are as follows :—

One day when the sun had disappeared in the western horizon, the Bhikkhus gifted with observance, meditation and wisdom, clothed in dark red robes¹ like evening clouds, having left their night chambers like an army of disciplined soldiers

1. The Pansukula (ပန်းခွက်) Robes which are stitched out of pieces of rags found soiled in cemeteries.

gathering in the field of battle or like a body of noble elephants¹ clad in beautiful caparisons inlaid with gems, or like a troop of lions who wander abroad all alone, assembled round the pulpit in the preaching hall which was adorned with wreaths of sweet scented flowers, canopied with tapestry resplendent with stars made of gold, silver and gems, and dazzling in all glory and effulgence. Having thus assembled in eager expectation of the appearance of the King of Righteousness, the Conqueror of Righteousness, the Lord of Righteousness, the Teacher of the Three Worlds, the Lord Buddha, like gods assembled in the celestial court of "Sudharma" expecting the arrival of the Sakra², these Bhikkhus expatiated in the following manner on the Perfections of the Wisdom of the Buddha :

" Brothers, the Buddha possesses wisdom of the highest degree covering the entire region of morals and all their divisions ; like unto perfumed oil poured in the sea, it diffuses itself over all the doctrines that should be realized ; it is bestowed with a fulness of love towards all matter (animate and inanimate) ; and it is endowed with a swift perfection of the Realm of Knowledge, as swift as the swiftest swan. And what is more, with an acute perception it penetrates the intricate interpretations of the way of the world³, Doctrine⁴, its Derivation⁵ and its Realization⁶, as an iron heated all day long burns through a decayed plantain leaf. As one sees through a crystal placed on the palm, his wisdom enables him to penetrate through all the doctrines in every manner. Not only did he suppress the heretical beliefs such as eternity of beings, annihilation of beings and such like doctrines by his supernatural and unparalleled wisdom, he also converted such Brahmans like Kutadanta, Veranja, and hundreds of other Brahmans. He too converted haughty mendicants like Sabhiya and Bathiya; desperate robbers like Angulimala and man-eating men like Alawaka. The Lord indeed, subdued the pride of such gods like Sakra the King of Gods who, baffled with their power, pomp and glory entertained no faith in the Triple Gem, and also Brahmas like Baka, who, while nursing heretical beliefs such as the eternity of beings, strayed in the wrong path; and the Lord destroyed their venom-like sins by the power of his peerless omniscience. And further, the Buddha has subjugated their words, thoughts and actions, led many a being along the four paths and stages of Perfection, and admitted them to

1. ගන්ධකජ්ජි. A variety of elephants which gives out a pleasant smell as they are purely herbivorous.

2. Sakra, the King of Gods. 3. Artha (අර්ථ). 4. Dharma (ධර්ම). 5. Nirukti (නිරුක්ති). 6. Pritibhāna (ප්‍රීතිභාන).

his holy order, securing them the bliss of Nibbana. Thus, brothers, the Lord is possessed of a great wisdom as mentioned above!"

The Bhikkhus who assembled in the Preaching hall were thus dwelling on the sterling qualities and the virtues of the Buddha, when the Lord of the Three Worlds, the Chief of the Three Worlds, the Joy of the universe whose lotus-like feet are adored by the rays emitting from the gems inlaid in the crowns of mortals and immortals, having heard from his Chambers through the power of his divine ear, the conversation which had arisen in the Preaching Hall, just as if he were himself there, and resolved to go there. Out of compassion to all the world he rose from his bed, robed himself so as to cover the three parts of his body with his robe which was like unto a bouquet of Murutha flowers in its scarlet red; girded on his belt which resembled a flash of lightning with hundreds of strokes illuminating an evening cloud; and over them he put on the great robe which was like a well-ripened banyan fruit in colour. As if covering a golden Dagaba with a golden cloth, or as if covering a golden light-house of eighteen fathoms high, with a net of pearls, or as if encircling the Chitrakuta Mountain with a wreath of Hibiscus, or as if pouring liquid lac over a golden mountain, when the Lord covered his body with the great robe, the mountains Meru and Mandara shook themselves. Thus robed, and displaying the glory and the splendour of his sacred feet which bore the thirty two auspicious marks that obscured the glory of thirty-two Suns, the grandeur of thirty-two Brahmas, and the majesty of thirty-two universal monarchs, and also displaying the eighty minor marks of beauty and the halo of effulgence that surrounded him a fathom deep, he left his scented cell¹ by the door which automatically opened itself by the virtue of his merits acquired and accumulated during the immeasurable Past, like the sun issuing forth its rays from behind a rain cloud, like the moon breaking itself through a dark cloud, or like a fearless king of the lions leaving its golden cave with determined effort. Placing his feet which were adorned by one hundred and eight auspicious marks, on the lotuses containing seven layers of petals, sprung forth from the Earth by the merits acquired and accumulated from birth to birth by diligently approaching Buddhas and other sages, arrived at the Preaching Hall with all the incomparable Majesty of a Buddha, spreading light by his look which penetrated not more than the length of a yoke—on all the ground over which he passed, as if anointing Mother-Earth with ambrosia. Immediately the Blessed Lord entered the Preaching Hall, he caused the Hall to be flashed with the flood of six-fold rays such as blue, yellow,

etc. and with his eyes which were of proportionate size like unto two glittering blue sapphire windows of a golden palace, or like unto a couple of bees that hover over a lotus-like face shining as bright as a golden pagoda, he looked into the assemblage of Bhikkhus which resembled a ship laden with seven kinds of treasures or a lake of fully bloomed lotuses or a wreath of flowers placed round a golden pagoda, thought to himself:

"These Bhikkhus have their senses well restrained; their minds are calm and quiet; they have control over their words, minds and movements; and therefore if I do not speak to them first, none of them would dare speak to me."

Thinking thus, he opened his lotus-like mouth which was pregnant with the perfume of the good deeds accomplished during countless millions of ages past, by word and deed, addressed them as follows:

"Bhikkhus, what was the conversation you all were engaged in prior to my arrival here? Tell me if there is anything which you cannot understand, or anything in which you have any doubt, so that I may explain the same to you by the power of my incomparable omniscience."

Uttering this much, and thereby giving a starting point to the exposition of the Doctrine, he remained silent. Then one of the Bhikkhus replied:

"Lord! our topic of conversation was not one of the thirty-two subjects, such as stories about kings, robbers etc. which have been prohibited to us. We were happily engaged in an appreciation of the purity and the keenness of the wisdom of the Buddha."

"Bhikkhus!" the Buddha said; "not only now has the Buddha been renowned for his keen wisdom, but in his countless previous births too. He was renowned enough for his wisdom even when he was qualifying himself to attain Buddhahood."

Having thus said the Lord resumed silence. Then one of the Bhikkhus, with the approval of the rest of the assemblage, rose up, duly adjusting his robes so as to cover one shoulder, and with his hands joined together in salutation, requested the Buddha as follows:

"As already manifested, we know, our Lord, that the Buddha is possessed of great wisdom. But the immature wisdom displayed by the would-be-Buddha during his previous births while accomplishing the great perfections, lies hidden from us by the cycle of existence. May the Blessed Lord, therefore, enlighten us on the same!"

As one exhibiting a beautiful picture by removing a curtain, the Buddha related the story of the past, as follows:—

2 CHAPTER

PRINCE MAHAUSADHA

LONG ago, when a king named Vedeha was ruling over the City of Mithila¹ he had four Pandits² called Senaka, Pukkusa, Kavinda and Devinda, who advised him in matters temporal and spiritual. On the day that the would-be-Buddha (Bosat) who had acquired all virtues for the attainment of the Buddhahood, was conceived in the womb of his mother, at the last watch of night. King Vedeha saw a dream. The dream was as follows :—

Four columns of fire, each as big as a young Palmyra tree rose up at the four corners of the wall around the palace-yard, reaching the battlement and glittering brightly. And behold ! In the midst of these columns of fire, there appeared a small spark of fire, as tiny as a firefly, and in no time this burst forth in flames as high as the Brahma-realm outshining the four great fires which were burning in the four corners, and spread out a brilliance throughout the whole universe. This light was so bright that even a grain of mustard lying on the ground could be easily seen. Living beings, both men and gods walked amidst these flames without burning a single hair in their bodies, and offered fragrance and flowers thereto. On seeing this dream, struck with mortal fear, King Vedeha kept himself awake till dawn.

In the morning Senaka and the other Pandits entered the Royal Chambers, and after due salutation, inquired from the King whether he spent a comfortable night.

“What comfort !” exclaimed the King—and described to them the dream he saw.

“Do not be afraid, your majesty !” said Senaka. “What you have seen is an auspicious dream: it means betterment to you !”

“In what manner ?” asked the King. Then Senaka went on to explain as follows :

“O, King, you will obtain a fifth Pandit who will eclipse us and subdue our wisdom ; we four are the four columns of fire that burnt in the four corners, and a fifth Pandit Your

1. මිථිලා නුවර—in the city of Miyulu. Pali — Mithila.

2. Men of knowledge and wisdom.

Majesty shall get, like the fire that arose in the midst of the others. He will be incomparable in wisdom and virtue and certainly he will find no equal in the realms of Gods and men ! ”

“ Where is he now ? ” asked the King, and Senaka replied :

“ My Lord, today either he will be conceived in his mother's womb or he will be born in the world ! ”

Thus the Pandit Senaka, like one possessing supernatural eyes interpreted the vision of the King, with the power of his knowledge, and the King, from that day, had those words clearly in mind.

In the City of Mithila, there were four sub-urban villages,¹ called the Southern Village, Western Village, Northern Village and the Eastern Village, situated not far from the city gates. Now in this Eastern Village there lived a certain Millionaire² named Siriwardhana. His wife was known as Sumana Devi. On the day that King Vedeha saw his dream, the would-be-Buddha passed away from the Celestial Region (Heaven) called Tusita and was conceived in the womb of Sumana, the wife of the Millionaire Siriwardhana. At the same time a thousand other gods departed from the same Heaven, and took their conception in the families of elderly Millionaires in the same village.

After a period of ten months Sumana Devi gave birth to a very handsome son as fair as the new moon or an image of gold. At that moment, Sakra the King of Gods looking down on the World of men, and perceiving that the great Bosat was born, thought that it was quite fitting that the Bosat should be made well known throughout the worlds of gods and men. So thinking he descended from heaven in an invisible form as the Bosat emerged from the mother's womb, and placing in his hand a piece of sandalwood of golden hue, returned to his abode.

The Great Bosat grasped the piece of sandalwood in his fist. Now at the birth of the Bosat his mother suffered no labour pains, for he came out from the mother's womb as freely as water flowing out of a filter, or as a brilliant orator descending from his pulpit. When the mother saw the piece of sandalwood in his hand she asked him :

“ My son, what have you got in your hand ? ”

1. යම් මැදුම් ගම. 2. Setthi—a rich man. (සිට්ඨි ජනානන්).

"A great remedy¹, mother!" replied the infant, and placing it in the hand of the mother, the Bosat said :

"Now, mother, please take this, and give this to anyone who is suffering from any disease."

The mother was highly delighted, and told it to Siriwardhana the Millionaire. Now this Millionaire had been suffering from a headache for seven long years. Overjoyed at the event he thought to himself :

"Now this child brought in hand a great remedy (a medicine) while coming out of his mother's womb : at the time of his very birth he spoke with the mother. Surely, a medicine given by such a genius² must necessarily be of miraculous efficacy !"

So thinking he took it and rubbing it on a grindstone applied the ointment on his forehead. And behold ! the headache from which he was suffering for seven long years left him for good, like unto a drop of water that glides down a lotus leaf. And he rejoiced exclaiming "A miraculous medicine!"

Now the news took wing throughout the country that the Great Bosat came out of the mother's womb bringing in his hand a mighty remedy. Every one who suffered from consumption, Asthma and such like ailments would go to Siriwardhana's residence and ask for the mighty medicine, and the Millionaire rubbing the sandalwood on a grindstone, would take the sandalwood ointment, and mixing the same with water, would give to all the sufferers who came. The moment that this divine medicine touched the body, all the diseases were healed. And all those who recovered from ailments would return home praising : "Certainly the medicine found in Siriwardhana the Millionaire's house is of wondrous efficacy !"

On the day appointed to name this Bosat, his father thought :

"Ancestral titles etc., are of no use to this son of mine. Let him be named "Mahausadha."³ And accordingly he was called Prince Mahausadha.⁴

1. මහාභූෂධය-මහා ඖෂධය, a mighty Medicine.

2. පිනැන්කු — a meritorious one.

3. The Mighty Remedy. 4. The Prince of the Mighty Remedy.

And again the Milonaire thought to himself " My son is very lucky¹ and therefore he could not have been born alone ; there must be others who have been born on the same day ! " So thinking he sent his men to inquire from house to house in the Village, and finding out that one thousand other boys had been born on the same day, he sent them princely garments and nurses. All the festivals in connection with these children were duly held by him. And these children were brought before the Bosat daily, attired in their best garments. Having these one thousand boys as playmates the Bosat grew up as beautiful as a golden image in seven years.

1. Meritorious

3 CHAPTER

THE GREAT HALL

NOW the Bosat had playgrounds in the village where he played with the other children. Very often these playgrounds were damaged by elephants, horses and other animals, and also by rain. And the children suffered a lot, when the heat was excessive. One day when they were at play an unexpected torrent poured down. Seeing that the rain was about to shower down, the Bosat who was as strong as an elephant ran and took shelter in a certain house. His comrades following him, fell over one another bruising, bleeding and breaking their knees. Then the Bosat thought :

“It would be well for us to put up a play-house here, so that we would suffer no longer ! ” and having thus thought he called his playmates and said :

“ We shall build here a house wherein we can sit and rest either when winds blow, showers pour down or when the sun is excessively hot. Therefore, you had better bring a gold coin¹ each.”

And they brought the coins. Then the Bosat took the money and sent for a master-carpenter. When the master-carpenter came he gave him the money and ordered him to put up a hall there. The builder agreed and first he levelled the ground, fixed pegs and laid out the ground-plan. But the Bosat was dissatisfied with his lay-out. He, directing the master-carpenter the way to lay out the plan, said :

“ Stretch out the lines properly ! ”

“Sir, I have laid out the plan to the best of my ability : I cannot do anything better ! ” replied the architect.

“ If you do not know even this much how can you satisfy me in building the Hall ? ” questioned the Bosat. “ I would like to take lines myself and layout the plan ! ” added he.

So saying he sent for the lines and laid out the plan himself as if it were done by the celestial Artificer². He then asked the master-architect.

1. “ Massa ” (මස්ස).

2. Visvakarma, the architect of the Gods.

"Can you prepare a similar lay-out ?"

"No Sir," replied the architect.

"Then, can you build the Hall according to my instructions ?"

"Yes, that I can do !" replied the architect.

Then the Bosat caused him to put up the building so that it contained one portion for the destitute, another quarter for the lying-in of helpless women, another for Brahmin guests, yet another for ordinary travellers and a fifth for foreign merchants to store their goods. Each of these apartments had a separate entrance made from the outer side. Inside the Hall was an arena for games ; a Court of Justice and a preaching hall were also constructed therein. Thus the building was completed in a few days and the Bosat sent for artists and under his own instructions caused beautiful scenes to be painted therein. This hall, thus completed, resembled "Sudharma", the assembly hall of Gods.

The Bosat, thinking that the Hall was still incomplete, decided to build a tank there. He sent for masons and paying them out of his own money caused a great tank of thousand sides to be constructed. This tank which contained one hundred bathing places had beautiful steps leading to them. Decked with the five kinds of Lotuses this tank resembled the "Tank Nanda"¹ On the banks of this tank he caused Mango, Jambu, Ironwood, Jak, Sapu, Dunuke, Esala, Areca and other trees full of foliage and flowers to be planted. And he caused the garden to be made as beautiful as the Nandana Park². Then he provided for alms to observant mendicants and Brahamins in that Hall. He also caused alms to be given to way-farers from foreign lands who came to rest therein, travellers who came and went away, and to other poor folk. These acts of the Great One attracted many a man, and they thronged to this Hall in great numbers. The Bosat, seated in the Hall, would inquire into the justice and the injustice of matters of dispute placed before him. And thus the great Bosat displayed himself as if Buddha himself had made his appearance in the world.

Now seven years elapsed since King Vedeha saw the dream, and he thought :

"The Four Pandits told me that a fifth Pandit would be born who would surpass them in wisdom. Where is he now ?" Thus.

1. The Bathing Place of Sakra, King of Gods.

2. The pleasure garden of Sakra.

thinking, he sent out four Ministers from the four gates of the city ordering them to find out where the Pandit was. The three who went out from three of the gates failed to find the Bosat, but the one who went out from the Eastern gate reached the Eastern Village where he saw the great Hall, and the other constructions. Having seen them the Minister thought :

“Certainly the one who built this hall or the one who caused this hall to be built is a wise man!” and inquired from the villagers :

“Was this built by carpenters ?”

“No !” replied the villagers, “this hall was not built by any architect by his own wisdom. It was constructed as directed by the Pandit Mahausadha, the son of the Millionaire Siriwaddhana.”

“What can be the age of that Pandit ?” inquired the Minister.

“He has barely completed seven years !” was the reply.

Calculating from the day that the King saw the dream, the Minister concluded that this must be the fifth Pandit who was to succeed Senaka, and he sent the following message to the King through a servant :—

“Your Majesty, a Pandit named Mahausadha, aged seven years, the son of Millionaire Siriwaddhana of the Eastern Village has put up a magnificent Hall¹ made a tank and grown a Park. May I bring this Pandit to you, or may I not ?”

Having heard this news the King was highly delighted, and sending for Senaka, gave him the news and questioned him :

“Well my friend, Senaka Pandit, shall we send for this Pandit ?”

But, the jealous Senaka replied :

“O, King, a man does not become entitled to the name Pandit merely because he caused a house etc, to be built. Any one can build a house, and as such it is very insignificant !”

Having heard what Senaka said the King was silent and concluded :

1. Lit. Has built a Hall of this nature.

“ Well, this is a matter for further consideration ! ” and sent a message to the Minister ordering him to remain in that village and watch over the activities of the young Pandit. The Minister who received this order remained in the village and watched the Pandit.

During this time the Pandit Mahausadha solved a number of problems¹.



¹ ප්‍රශ්න (Prasna). It may mean a question, difficult problem or a case, or a riddle.

4 CHAPTER

THE PROBLEM OF THE FLESH

THE first problem¹, that is the problem of the piece of meat is as follows :

One day when the Bosat was going to the play-house a hawk snatched a piece of meat from a butcher's block in a meal-stall and flew up in the air. On seeing this, the thousand playmates ran after the hawk saying : " We shall make it drop the piece of meat." The hawk also flew away looking this way and that. While they ran after the hawk looking up, they fell down over stones, potsherds etc., and injured themselves. Then the Prince Mahausadha asked them :

" Shall I make the piece of meat drop on the ground ? ".....

" Please ! " replied the boys.

" Then behold what I am doing ! " said the Bosat. And so saying, without looking up ran swiftly after the hawk guiding his way through the shadow of the hawk which was visible on the ground. Treading upon the shadow of the hawk the Bosat clapped his hands making a loud noise. By the power of this mighty Being, it appeared as if that noise penetrated through the very heart of the hawk. Terrified at the noise, the hawk dropped the piece of meat. From the shadow of the hawk the Bosat could see where the piece of meat was falling, and said : " I shall not let it fall on the ground ! "

So saying he caught hold of the piece of meat. On seeing this, wonder many onlookers applauded and clapped their hands making loud shouts of joy.

The Minister who came to know of this, sent a message to the King :

" May it please Your Majesty to know that Pandit Mahausadha caused a piece of meat drop into his hand from the mouth of a hawk which flew away with it."

Having got these tidings the King questioned Senaka :

" Well, Pandit Senaka, what do you say now ? Shall we get down the Pandit ? "

1. The " Prasnas " or the Problems were on the following subjects : Flesh, Oxen, Knotted necklace, Ball of thread, son, gold, waggon, stick, skull, serpent, cock, jewel, causing birth, rice, sand, pond, garden, ass, and gem.

On being thus questioned by the King, Senaka thought thus :

“ If Pandit Mahausadha comes to this Kingdom we shall sink into obscurity like fire-flies before the sun. The King will not even know that we are living. Therefore, we shall not leave room for him to be brought down ! ”

And determined to defame the Pandit, Senaka told the King :

“ Your Majesty, this will not make a man a Pandit. This, what he has done is only a petty affair ! ”

Thereupon the King did not make a decision but sent a letter to the Minister ordering him to remain in the village and watch further on the activities of the Pandit.

THE PROBLEM OF THE CATTLE

A man in the Eastern Village, having brought a pair of bulls from a neighbouring village to plough his field when rain water was in plenty, kept them in his house, and on the second day took them to the grass-land for grazing. This man first rode on one bull, and having felt tired, got down from the animal and lay under a tree where he fell fast asleep. At that moment a cattle lifter carried away the cattle. The cattle owner woke up and finding out that the oxen were missing, searched for them here and there, and at last saw the thief taking them away. Immediately he ran after him questioning :

“ Where are you taking my cattle ? ”

The thief then promptly replied :

“ I am taking them to wheresoever I please ! ”

Having heard the noise of this quarrel many people gathered and followed them.

As they were passing the Hall, the Bosat heard this noise, and sent for both of them. From their very manner of walking the Bosat perceived who the owner of the cattle was and who the actual thief was. He questioned them :

“ Why are you quarrelling ? ”

Then the cattle owner replied :

“ My Lord, I bought these cattle from a man of such a name who is living in such a village. I brought them to my house and kept them there that night ; on the following morning I took them to the pasture, and this man taking opportunity of my being off my guard stole them. Having searched for them hither and thither, at length saw this man leading them away. I followed him and caught hold of him. The villagers of such a village will bear witness that I am the purchaser of the cattle.”

Upon the cattle owner saying this, the thief said :

“ This pair of bulls were born and bred in my herd. This man is telling lies ! ”

Having heard the versions of both of them, the Pandit addressed them saying :

“ I shall justfully decide this matter ; will you abide by my decision ? ”

“ Yes we shall ! ” replied they. Then the Pandit wishing to dispose of the matter to the satisfaction of the many who had assembled there, called the thief first and questioned :

“ What liquid food and what solid food did you give these cattle when you brought them up ? ”

“ I gave them gruel to drink and Sesame¹ and ‘undu’² to eat ! ” replied the thief.

“ And with what did you feed them ? ” inquired the Pandit from the owner of the cattle ; and he replied :

“ My Lord, how can a poor man like myself obtain Sesame and gruel ? I fed them with grass only ! ”

The Pandit who listened to both of them, with the consent of those present got some areca leaves, mortared them, squeezed the juice and made the cattle drink the same. The cattle emitted only grass. The Pandit showing it to those present, said “ This is the thief ! ” pointing out to the thief, and questioned him :

“ Are you the thief or are you not ? ” And the man confessed :

1. Gingely—කුලු. 2. A kind of millet.

" I am the thief ! "

" If so, never steal after this, never do such wrongful acts ! " warned the Pandit. But the Bosat's men took him out of that place and man-handled him with foot and hand, and overpowered him. The Pandit again sent for him and warned him thus :

" In this birth you have suffered so much of torture and in the coming birth you will be born in Hell and undergo much worse torture. Therefore give up stealing ! " After this advice the Bosat made him observe the five precepts.

The Minister, having heard of this incident informed of the same to the King in detail. The King as usual inquired of Senaka, who said :

" Your Majesty, this cattle question is a very simple one. There are many who could solve it in the same way. Therefore please be patient ! "

The King was again undecided, and as before sent the same message to the Minister.

Now it must be noted that, in all the rest of the cases too, the way in which the Minister sent word to the King regarding the incidents, the way in which the King consulted Senaka, and the way in which Senaka prevented the King inviting the Pandit to the panel of Pandits in his court, and also the way the King directed the Minister to watch further, are similar.

THE QUESTION OF THE NECKLACE OF WOVEN THREADS

A poor woman who wore a necklace woven with threads of various colours such as blue, yellow, etc. went to bathe in the tank constructed by the Pandit. Before bathing she undressed herself and kept her necklace on the clothes she undressed. Another woman younger to her, seeing this necklace, coveted it, and taking it in her hand said to the owner :

" Mother, this is a very nice ornament : who made this ? I should like to make a similar one for myself. May I wear it around my neck to see its size ? "

"Yes daughter, you may wear it and take its size!" said the woman who was not at all suspicious of the other. And the young woman wore the necklace and walked away. Then the owner of the ornament, seeing this, immediately came out of the water, and dressing herself ran after her and seized her by the protruding end of the upper garment. Seizing her, she questioned:

"Where are you taking my necklace?"

"Nonsense! I have not taken your necklace, this is my own ornament that I am wearing!" Hearing the noise of this quarrel many people gathered there.

Now the Pandit who was at play with the other friends, heard the quarrel of the women who were passing the Hall, inquired what the trouble was about, and hearing the cause of the quarrel, sent for both of them. From the very manner of their coming the Pandit perceived who the rogue and who the owner of the necklace was. He examined them both on the cause of the quarrel and asked them whether they would abide by his decision. They agreed to this; and then the Pandit, to begin with, asked the thief:

"With what did you scent this necklace when you wore it?"

"I always perfume it with the universal scent!" replied the girl. (Now this universal scent is a perfume which is a mixture of all perfumes). Then he questioned the other woman with what scent she perfumed it. And she replied:

"My Lord, how can a poor woman like myself afford to have the universal scent? I perfumed it with scent of the 'puwangu' flower.

The Pandit got down a pot of water and put the necklace into the water. Then he sent for a Pharmacist and asked him to smell the water of the pot and say what perfume the water contained. He, finding out that the water in the pot smelt the scent of 'puwangu' flower, uttered in a stanza:

"What universal scent is here? This gives the scent of 'Pu-wangu' flower. This young cheaty woman has outspoken a lie and what the elder woman says is true!"

The Bosat, having thus made the matter clear to the crowd that assembled, inquired from the girl who ran away with the ornament:

"Are you not the thief?" Then she confessed that she was the thief.

From this period onwards the renown of the wisdom of the Bosat spread far and wide.

THE CASE OF THE BALL OF THREAD

The fourth, the case of the ball of thread, is as follows :

A woman employed as watcher in a cotton chena, whilst at watch, picked up cotton that burst from the pod during the previous evening ; she cleaned the same, and spun from it carefully very fine threads. She made the threads into a ball and when returning home after work, placed it in the fold of her dress. On her way it occurred to her that she would have a bath in the tank that was constructed by the Pandit. She took out her outer garments, and placing the ball of thread on the undressed garments, began to bathe. Another woman saw the ball of thread and coveted to possess the same ; pretending to be very fond of the ball of thread she took it in her hand and exclaimed :

"Ah ! what a fine thread ! It is excellent ! Sister, did you spin it yourself ?" So saying, hiding the ball of thread in her dress hurried away. As in the former case they were quarrelling when they passed the Hall of the Bosat. He sent for them and asked what the cause of the quarrel was. Then he inquired whether they would abide by his decision, and when they consented, he questioned the accused woman :

"On what did you roll the thread when you made this ball of thread ?"

"On a cotton seed !" replied she.

"You, on what did you roll the thread ?" questioned the Bosat from the other woman.

"My Lord, on a 'Timbiri' seed !" was the answer.

The Bosat having listened to both these statements, drew the attention of the crowd to the ball of thread and unwound it, until the Timbiri seed was visible inside. The thief was discovered at last. The crowd which was looking on, highly delighted in the manner in which the problem was solved raised thousands of cries of joy.

5 CHAPTER

THE CASE OF THE SON

THE fifth case, that is the case of the son, runs as follows :—

A certain woman with an infant in arms, went to the Pandit's tank for bathing. Having first bathed the infant son, she placed the baby on her clothes and went into the water to bathe. The moment she descended into the tank for bathing, a she-demon seeing the infant, and voracious of devouring it, took the form of a woman and came near the tank. She approached near the infant and asked:

“ Friend, is this child yours ? : he is very beautiful!”

“ Yes, he is mine ! ” replied the mother.

“ Shall I give him some milk from my breast ? ” questioned the she-demon.

“ Very well ! ” agreed the mother. And the she-demon, taking the child in her arm, first gave him some milk and then ran away with him. Seeing the woman hurrying away with the child the mother ran after her, caught hold of her and questioned :

“ Where are you taking my child ? ”

“ What ! ” retorted the she-demon. “ I never took a child from you. This is my own son ! ” Thus the two got entangled in a quarrel, and were passing the entrance of the Hall.

The Bosat hearing the noise, sent for both of them, and inquired what the cause of the quarrel was. The Bosat at the very outset recognized the she-demon from the fact that she was not moving her eyelids, and that her eyes were as red as “olinda” seeds. However, he inquired of them :

“ Will you take my decision ? ”

“ Yes ! ” agreed they. Then he caused a line to be drawn on the ground and placed the child exactly on the middle of the line, ordered the she-demon to catch hold of the child's two hands and the mother, the two legs.

“ Now ! ” said the Bosat, “ You two had better pull the child to your side and whosoever pulls the child over the line shall be declared the mother ! ”

Accordingly they pulled the child, and the tender one suffering a lot cried in agony. The mother's heart nearly burst in great sorrow and let go the child, and stood sobbing.

Then the Bosat questioned the mass which assembled :

" Whose heart is tender towards a child ? Is it the heart of the mother or that of a stranger ? "

And most of the crowd answered forth :

" O, Pandit, the heart of the mother is tender."

When the Pandit heard this, he again questioned them :

" Then what do you think of this ? Is the woman who is now having the child in her hands the mother of the child or the woman who let go the child ? "

" O ! Pandit, the woman who let go the child is actually the mother ! " replied the crowd.

" Now do you people know who this roguish woman is ? " questioned the Pandit.

" No Sir, " replied the crowd.

" She is a she-demon, and she has taken the child to devour it."

" How do you know that she is a she-demon, Sir ? "

" Her eyes are red ; she never moves her eyelids ; she has not got a shadow of her body ; and she has no suspicion or love in anybody. From these facts I say she is a she-demon " explained the Pandit.

Having said this, the Pandit turned to her and asked :

" Who can you be ? "

" A she-demon ! "

" Why did you take the child away ? "

" To eat it ! " was the reply of the she-demon. Then the Bosat, giving her a warning, said :

" Listen to me you foolish devil ! You committed sin during your previous birth, and were born as a she-demon in this birth, and still you continue committing sin ! "

Thus, after an exhortation he got a promise from her to observe the five precepts and sent her away. The mother, taking the child in her arms and saying " My Lord, may you live long ! " went away.

THE CASE OF KALAGOLA

A man who, on account of his being dark (Kala) and being short like a lump (gola) got the name of Kalagola, toiled in a certain house for seven years and got a wife. Her name was Diktala. One day he called his wife and suggested :

" Dear, we will pay a visit to our parents : prepare some eatables and drinkables ! " But she refused saying : " What is the use of parents now ? Don't speak about it to me. " But he requested her thrice and on the third occasion got her consent. He got her to prepare some cakes and together with other presents for the parents set forth with her, having also taken with them, boiled leaves, rice and other stuff for use on the way. On the way they came accross a flowing stream. Although the stream was not deep, both of them were afraid, and seeing no way of crossing it, they stood on the bank.

Then, a tall man named Dikpitiya who was wandering on the bank of this river happened to come to the spot where they were standing. They saw him and asked him : " Friend, is this river very deep ? " This man Dikpitiya, seeing that they were afraid of the water, readily replied :

" This is very deep, and moreover it is infested with crocodiles, sharks and other dangerous reptiles ! " Then Kalagola asked :

" Friend, how do you people cross it ? "

" The crocodiles, sharks and other dangerous creatures who infest this river, are familiar with us, and therefore they do not attack us ! " replied the man.

" If it is so " suggested Kalagola, " will you please carry us over the river ? "

"Very well!" agreed the man: and thereupon they treated him with eatables and drinkables. Having refreshed himself with food he asked:

"Well my friend, whom shall I take over first?"

"Take your sister first, and next myself!" replied Kalagola. And Dikpitiya saying "very well!" placed Diktala on his shoulder along with the cakes and provisions and got into the water. He walked a little distance, bent down and then began walking on his knees. Kalagola who was on the bank thought:

"This stream must be really very deep, for even a very tall man finds the water up to his neck."

In the meantime Dikpitiya who took her to the middle of the river, began to tell her as follows:

"Dear one, I will maintain you: you can dress and ornament yourself like a goddess and walk about as you please, with men-servants and maids to attend on you. What happiness can this dwarf give you? Pray, dear one, please accept my proposal!"

The moment the woman heard these words she lost the love she had for Kalagola who had toiled and moiled for seven years at a parental home for her sake, and conceiving a passion for Dikpitiya, said:

"Well dear, if you do not forsake me, I shall do as you say!"

By this time they reached the opposite bank and having enjoyed thoroughly, they proceeded on their way eating the cakes, saying "You had better look on!" to Kalagola who was still looking on, on the other bank.

Kalagola, seeing this action of theirs, and thinking:

"These two are leaving me here and are eloping!" Looking this way and that as though helpless he descended a little way into the river, but jumped back in fear. But his anger towards these two individuals made his fear disappear and he determinately jumped into the river, saying: "Live or die!"

Finding the river to be very shallow he crossed it and coming to Dikpitiya he roared:

"Oh! you wretched culprit, where are you taking my wife to?"

“ What wives for you, you dwarf ? ” exclaimed Dikpitiya, and pushed away Kalagola by the neck. But Kalagola got hold of Diktala’s hand and questioned :

“ Why don’t you stay with me ? Where are you trying to go ? Are you not my wife whom I got after toiling for seven long years in your house ? ”

So saying and quarrelling, all the three were approaching the Hall.

Many people who heard the noise of the quarrel, gathered there. And the Bosat, inquiring what the trouble was, sent for them. Having heard what both parties had to say, the Bosat questioned them :

“ Will you abide by my decision ? ”

“ Yes ! ” replied they. Then the Bosat called Dikpitiya first and questioned thus :

“ What is your name ? ”

“ My Lord, I am Dikpitiya by name ! ”

“ What is the name of your wife ? ” Dikpitiya not knowing what her name was, gave some other name. Then questioned the Bosat :

“ What are the names of your parents ? ” and he gave the names.

The next question was :

“ What are the names of the parents of your wife ? ” and Dikpitiya, not knowing what their names were, uttered fictitious names. Now, the Pandit proclaimed Dikpitiya’s statement before the gathering, and sending him to a side, called Kalagola. He questioned him of the names of all the individuals as before, and he, knowing the names, gave them correctly. Then he sent Kalagola to a side, and calling Diktala, questioned :

“ What is your name ? ”

“ I am Diktala, my Lord ! ”

"What is your husband's name?" At this juncture, not knowing her paramour's name she gave another name.

"What are the names of your parents?" asked the Bosat, and she gave the names of her parents.

"What are the names of your husband's parents?" Not knowing what to say she uttered some wrong names, as if muttering in madness. Then the Pandit, placing both Kalagola and Dikpitiya before him, inquired from the gathering :

"Whose statement (in your opinion) agree with this woman's? Is it Dikpitiya's or Kalagola's?"

"It is Kalagola's!" replied the crowd in one voice. Then the Bosat proclaimed :

"This Kalagola is the husband of this woman and Dikpitiya is her paramour!" and made the villain confess that he was a paramour.

THE QUESTION OF THE CART

A certain man going in a cart, wished to wash his face and alighted from the vehicle. At this very moment, Sakra, the King of gods looking down into the world of men and seeing the Pandit Mahausadha, thought :

"I must manifest the power of the wisdom of the would-be Buddha!" and so thinking descended into the world of men in the guise of a man, and followed the cart holding its rear with his hand. The carter, seeing him, questioned :

"Young man, what made you come here?"

"I came to serve under you!" replied the man, and the carter said :

"Very well!"

So saying he gave the cart in charge of the new servant and went to answer a call of nature. And the Sakra, immediately mounted the cart and drove away swiftly.

On his return the carter saw the man taking away his cart, and running fast after him cried out :

“ Stop, stop ! where are you taking my cart ? ”

“ Yours may be another cart ” replied the man : “ This is my own cart ! ”

Thus rose the dispute, and the parties now arrived at the gate of the Hall, quarrelling all the way. The Pandit called them, and as they approached him the Pandit distinguished the Sakra from the owner of the cart, by his eyes the lids of which did not move, and by his fearless behaviour. However, the Pandit inquired what the cause of their dispute was and asked them :

“ Will you abide by my terms ? ”

“ Yes ! ” both of them agreed. Then the Bosat said :

“ I shall cause the cart to be driven, and both of you must follow it holding the vehicle. The person who does not let go the cart, is the owner of the same ! ”

He then ordered one of his men :

“ Drive the cart ! ”

Upon this order the Pandit's attendant drove the cart very fast, and the two disputants followed. The owner of the cart ran after it for some time and finding it impossible to run any more let the cart go ; but the other continued to run.

Now the Pandit ordered his man to stop the cart, and proclaimed :

“ Look here, this man ran after the cart for a short distance and let it go. But this other man ran after it without a stop, but there is not a drop of sweat in his body nor does he pant ! His eyelids too, do not move ! And therefore this man is none other than Sakra ! ”

Having said so he turned to the Sakra and questioned :

“ Are you not the King of Gods ? ”

“ Yes, I am ! ” said the Sakra.

“ Why did you come down to this world of mortals ? ”

“ My Lord, I came to make your wisdom well known ! ”

“ If so—” exhorted the Pandit,— “ do not repeat such things in future. ! ”

And Sakra, the King of Gods, displaying the miraculous power of his divinity rose up into the air and thanked the Pandit saying:

“ O ! Pandit, you have decided the case of the cart marvellously well ! ”

So saying he returned to his celestial abode.

Now, on this day, the Minister whom King Vedeha had stationed in the Eastern Village to examine and inquire into the wisdom of the budding Pandit, went before the King and said :

“ Your Majesty, the Pandit Mahausadha decided the case of the cart in this manner ! He defeated even Sakra, the King of Gods. And why cannot your Majesty discern the genius of men ? ”

The King (as usual) called Senaka and asked :

“ O ! Senaka Pandit, shall we not get down Mahausadha now ? ”

“ Your Majesty ! ” replied Senaka. “ This much does not make a man a Pandit. Please wait a while and we shall know him after testing him further.”

6 CHAPTER

THE TEST BY THE ' KIHIRI ' POLE

THE Eighth case, the test by means of a pole, runs as follows:—

One day the King, desirous of testing the Pandit, sent for a pole of Kihiri wood, and cutting off from it a portion, about one span in length, got down a wood turner and got it rounded. Having got this done, he sent it to the Eastern Village with the following order :

“ The people living in the Eastern Village are said to be very wise. Let them therefore inform us which is the shoot-end and which is the root-end of this piece of Kihiri wood. If they fail to know it, they will be fined a thousand coins of gold ! ”¹

The villagers assembled, but failed to make out what the shoot-end and what the root-end of the pole was. And they told the Millionaire Siriwarddlna :

“ Pandit Mahausadha will somehow solve this : please send for him and question ! ”

Then the Millionaire sent for his son who was in the play-yard, informed him as to what had taken place, and questioned him :

“ My son, we are unable to distinguish between the shoot-end and the root-end of this Kihiri pole. Are you able to do it ? ”

Having heard his father's words the Bosat thought to himself :

“ What earthly use can the King gain by knowing the shoot-end and the root-end of this stick ? Certainly he must have sent this to test my wisdom ! ”

So thinking he called his friends and said :

“ Bring that here, young men, I can distinguish between the two ends ! ”

As he took the piece of wood in his hand he realised what the shoot-end and what the root-end was. But as he wanted to satisfy the assembly, he sent for a pot of water and a piece of thread. He then tied the string in the middle of the Kihiri pole and suspended it on the water. As the root-end was heavier than the shoot-end, the former sank in the water first. He then turned to the multitude and asked :

1. මුළු දහසක්.

"Which is heavier in a tree ? The butt-end or the top-end ?"

"Pandit, the butt-end is heavier !" answered the crowd.

"If that is so," said the Pandit "the end that sank first is the root-end !" And the villagers thereupon informed the King, which the shoot-end and which the root-end of the Kihiri stick was. The King was delighted and inquired :

"Who was it that solved the question ?" and when he heard that it was Pandit Mahausadha, the son of the Millionaire Siriwardhana who solved it, he was overjoyed.

"Now, what say you Senaka, shall we get down Mahausadha Pandit ?" the King questioned. But Senaka replied :

"Your Majesty, we will wait a little longer and test him further !"

THE PROBLEM OF A SKULL

One day the King sent for two skulls, one of a man and another of a woman, and sent them to the inhabitants of the Eastern Village commanding :

"Inform me which is the skull of the man and which the skull of the woman ; failing which you will be fined one thousand coins of gold !"

And the villagers not being able to distinguish between the two, went and questioned the Bosat. At the first glance itself he found out which was the skull of the man and which was that of the woman. The suture¹ in the head of men is straight while that in the head of women is crooked. By means of the suture he was able to tell the villagers which was the man's skull and which was the woman's skull.

On hearing this, as in the former cases the King questioned Senaka and Senaka prevented the King from getting down the Bosat.

1. An immovable articulation between bones, as between the various bones of the cranium and the face.

QUESTION OF THE SNAKES

Again, one day the King got two Cobras, a male and a female, and sent them to the people of the Eastern Village with the usual command :

“ Find out and inform me which is the male cobra and which is the female, failing which you will be fined a thousand gold coins.”

And the villagers not knowing how to distinguish them, consulted the Bosat, who at the very sight found out which was male and which was female. In Cobras, the eyes of the male are round and large ; and in females the eyes are oblong and small. The hood of the male is perfect all round, while that of the female is imperfect as if a portion on a side has been chopped off. By these marks the Pandit told the villagers which the male and which the female was.

THE QUESTION REGARDING A COCK

Later, the King sent an order of the following nature to the people of the Eastern Village :

“ Send me a bull which is white all over the body, which has horns in the legs, a hump on the head, and which cries always with a sound of the three notes : and if you fail you will be fined a thousand coins ! ”

The villagers not knowing the meaning of the question informed the Pandit. And the Pandit readily replied :

“ Friends, the King wants a white Cock from you. As the Cock has claws on its legs it is said to have horns in the legs : as it has a comb on its head, it means that it has a hump on the head : and as it gives fourth the three notes—one short, one middling and one long—when crows, it is said to sound three notes.. Therefore, you people had better send him a white Cock ! ”

And they sent a Cock accordingly.

THE PROBLEM REGARDING A GEM

The Gem, presented to King Kusa¹, by Sakra, the King of Gods, was an octagonal one. The thread on which Sakra had strung this gem decayed by the lapse of time and broke away. There was no one who was clever enough to remove the old thread and replace it by a new one. One day King Vedeha sent this Gem to the villagers of the Eastern Village with the order that they must replace the old thread with a new one.

The villagers could neither take out the old thread nor put a new one. And failing, they consulted the Pandit.

"Do not worry!" said the Bosat, "only get me some bee-honey!"

And when he got the bee-honey, he smeared it at the holes near the two ends of the gem, and twisting a thread, the end of which was also smeared with honey, he sent in a portion of it into one of the holes, and placed the other hole at the mouth of an ant-hill, from which ants were coming out. The ants which smelt the honey, came out from the ant-hill and eating away the old decayed thread that was in the gem, and at the same time dragging the new string, drew it through and brought it out from the other end. The Bosat, finding out that the new thread had been strung into the gem, gave it to the villagers and said:

"Give this to the King!" Away the villagers took it to the King, who having heard how the new thread was introduced into the gem, was highly delighted.

THE CASE OF THE CALVING BULL!

For the thirteenth time, in order to test the intelligence of the Bosat, the King caused his royal Bull to be fed with a large quantity of 'Undu' so as to make its belly swell out; and then he got its horns cleaned and body smeared with oil, bathed it with turmeric, and sent the animal to the residents of the Eastern Village with the following command:

"You are supposed to be very wise. This is the royal ox of the King, and is far advanced in pregnancy. Cause the animal to deliver its calf and return it with its young one; failing, you will be fined one thousand gold coins!"

1. This reference is from Kusa Jataka.

And the village folk said : " We cannot cause an ox to give birth to a calf ! What shall we do ? "

At length they brought this matter to the notice of the Bosat, who thought of solving this problem with a counter-problem. He called a certain brave man and said :

" Now, look hear my good fellow, you had better dishevel your hair and let it fall down to your neck from the back : then go to the gate of the Royal Palace weeping and lamenting bitterly. You must be silent if any one other than the King question you why. But if the King calls for you and inquire what the cause of your grief is, then tell him as follows : ' Your Majesty, my father is in travail for the last seven days, and after much labour, has been unable to give birth to a child. Please help me and tell me how he can be made to give birth to a child. ' Then the King will say ' What ! nonsense ! men never give birth to children ! ' When the King says so, you tell him : ' My Lord, if it is so, how can the people of the Eastern Village cause your Royal Bull to give birth to a calf ? ' "

That man took Bosat's words, and acted accordingly. The King then questioned :

" Who thought out this counter-question ? "

" Pandit Mahausadha, Your Majesty ! " replied the man ; and the King was very happy over it.

THE TEST BY MEANS OF RICE

" We shall test the Pandit further ! " said the King one day, and sent the following message to the residents of the Eastern Village :

" The people of the Eastern Village must send us some rice cooked under the following eight conditions :—The cooking must be done without rice, without water, without a pot, without fire, without firewood, without a fireplace, and it must be sent neither by man, nor by woman, nor must it be sent along any road. If these eight conditions are not fulfilled in sending the rice, you will be fined a thousand ! "

The residents of the Village, not knowing what it meant, told the Pandit about it.

“Fear not !” said the Pandit. “Take some broken rice, for it is not rice ; take dew drops, for it is not water ; take some other vessel for it is not a pot ; make a fireplace with raw sticks for that is not the usual fireplace ; get fire by friction for that is not ordinary fire ; take dried plantain-leaves for they are not firewood ; and in this manner cook the rice, put the rice in a pot, seal it, and sent it to the King on the head of a hemaphrodite for he is not a man, and not a woman ; and let this person go to the Palace through a pathless forest, for then, he is not going along a road !”

This was done : and the King questioned : “Who solved the problem ?”

“Pandit Mahausadha !” replied the people, and the King was much pleased.

7 CHAPTER

THE PROBLEM OF THE "SAND-ROPE!"

ONCE again, intending to test the Pandit, the King sent an order to the residents of the Eastern Village, saying :

"The King is longing to swing in his royal swing ; but the sand-rope of the swing is old and worn out, and it has given way. Make a new sand-rope and send, failing which a fine of thousand coins would be imposed !"

The villagers knew not what it meant, and consulted the Pandit, and the Pandit realized that this problem too must be solved with a counter-problem.

"Fear not friends !" said the Pandit, and he sent for two or three witty and talkative men and ordered them thus :

"Go and tell the King : 'Your Majesty, the people of the village do not know the thickness of the sand-rope you require. Therefore, please send them a piece of the old sand-rope : a piece of about one spanlength will be sufficient: they can then examine the same, gauge its thickness and make a sand-rope of that thickness !' If the King then says "We never had a sand-rope in our Palace !" then tell the King : "May it please your Majesty, then how can the residents of the Eastern Village make and send you a sand-rope ?"

The people did what the Pandit ordered ; and the King asked them :

"Who thought out this counter-problem ?"

Having learned that it was the work of the Pandit, the King was much delighted.

THE TEST BY A TANK

One day the King sent a messenger to the Eastern Village with the following order :

"The King is desirous of sporting in water. Therefore send him a tank decked with the five kinds of lotuses such as red, blue, white, etc. ; if you fail to send it, you will be fined a thousand coins."

And the villagers not knowing what to do, consulted the Pandit, who perceived that this problem could be dealt with by a counter-problem. He sent for some talkative men and when they came, he spoke to them as follows :

"Now, you people must sport in water so long as to make your eyes as red as the seeds of 'olinda', and go to the palace gate with wet hair and garments, bodies besmeared with mud, and armed with yokes, sticks, ropes, stones and clubs. Having gone there, send word to the King that you have come. And when the King gives you permission for interview go and tell him : 'Your Majesty in consequence of your order to the people of the Eastern Village to fetch you a tank we brought with us a tank decked with the five kinds of lotuses and which is quite suitable for your aquatic sports. But this tank which was used to forest life having lived mostly in the woods, seeing the battlements, ramparts, moats and gates of the City, shivered and trembled with fear, broke the ropes with which it was tied, and ran back to the forest. We tried our best to stop it by beating it with clubs and stones but failed. Therefore, Your Majesty, we request you to send a tank which you have formerly got down from the forest, so that we can yoke our tank with yours and bring the two together !' When you say so the King will tell you : 'I have never before brought a tank from the forest, nor have I sent one to fetch any new tank !' Then you must tell the King : 'Your Majesty, then how can the people of the Eastern Town send a tank to you ?'"

The people acted as the Pandit bade them. And the King inquired :

"By whom was this problem solved ?"

"By the Pandit Mahausadha !" replied the people, and the King was much pleased.

THE TEST BY A PARK

Once again the King sent an order to the Eastern Village saying : "We are desirous of sporting in a Park. Our park is very old. The people of the Eastern Village must send us a new park with trees full of flowers, such as Sapu, Asoka, Vakula, Thilaka etc !" The Pandit realised that this problem should also be solved by a counter-problem and once again sent some eloquent men to the King, advising them to do the same thing as they did in the previous case of the Tank. And they did so.

The King was very much pleased, and calling the Pandit Senaka, asked him : "Shall we now get down the Pandit over here ?" But Senaka, being jealous of others' prosperity said : "No, My Lord, be patient. This does not qualify a man to be a Pandit!"

8 CHAPTER

THE QUESTION REGARDING AN ASS

ON HEARING these words of Senaka, the King thought to himself :

“ Mahausadha Pandit has been tried for his wisdom from the time he was playing with sand as a child. He has successfully solved all the seventeen problems, beginning with the question regarding the piece of meat. He has achieved success in solving the difficult cases put to him on the advice of able men as my counsellors, and he has solved many problems by counter-problems. As such, his solutions resemble those of a Buddha. But this Senaka does not allow me to have the services of such a Pandit in my court. Of what use is this Senaka to me ? I shall go myself and bring the Pandit ! ”

And so thinking, the King set forth for the Eastern Village where the Pandit was living, accompanied by many followers, horses and elephants. The Royal charger on which the King rode tripped and broke its leg by slipping into a hole. Thereupon the King returned to the Palace. Senaka then went to the King who had come back midway and questioned :

“ Your Majesty, did you go to the Eastern Village to bring down the Pandit Mahausadha ? ”

“ Yes, Pandit ” answered the King.

“ My Lord, see what happened ; you thought me to be a useless one and went to bring down Mahausadha in spite of my asking you to be patient and wait a little more. But you went in great haste and at the very outset the State-horse broke its leg ! ”

The King had to remain silent, on hearing what the Senaka said.

Days passed by, and one day he asked Senaka once again :

“ Well, Senaka Pandit, shall we not get down the Pandit now ? ”

“ If you are so desirous to get him down, do not go yourself : but send a messenger to him. And let the messenger say to him : ‘ O ! Pandit, while the King was coming to see you the State-charger

broke its leg. Therefore send the King either a colt¹ or its sire²; If he undertakes to send a colt, he will come himself; and if he wishes to send the sire, he will send his father. This will be yet another test regarding his wisdom ! ”

“ Very well ! ” said the King and sent a messenger as Senaka directed. When the Bosat heard the message, he thought to himself :

“ The King wishes to see me and my father both ! ” and going to his father, after due salutation told him :

“ O ! father, the King wishes to see you and myself. You can go first, accompanied by the one thousand elderly Millionaires.. When you go please do not go empty handed. Take with you a Sandalwood casket filled with fresh cow-ghee. The King will chat with you and request you to occupy a suitable seat. You can then choose a seat and sit down. While you are engaged in conversation I shall come. Then the King will receive me kindly and request me to seat myself in a suitable seat. I shall then look at your face. On this sign you will rise from your seat and tell me : ‘ Son, Pandit Mahausadha, you can take my seat ! ’ When this is done there will arise a problem for us to solve ! ”

“ Very well ! ” agreed the father and set forth to see the King, as advised by the Bosat. He went to the Palace gate and sent word to the King that he had come. When the King sent him permission to come he entered the Palace, saluted the King and stood on a side. The King spoke to the Millionaire and asked :

“ Where is your son ? ”

“ He will be coming a little later, Your Majesty ! ” replied the Millionaire. The King was much pleased at the words ‘ will be coming ’ and said :

“ Look for a suitable seat and sit down ! ”

Whereupon the Millionaire occupied a suitable seat.

By this time, the Great Bosat dressed himself in a splendid attire, and accompanied by his one thousand companions started on his journey to the Palace in a beautifully decorated chariot..

1. This has an ambiguous meaning, a young horse or an inexperienced youth.

2. This too has an ambiguous meaning, the male parent of a horse, or the father or the ancestor of a man.

On his way he happened to see an Ass grazing on the mount of a trench, and he ordered some of his strong men to seize the Ass and tie up its mouth, so that it could not make any noise. He further ordered :

“ Tie up a cloth on your shoulders so as to form a bag, put the ass in it and carry it concealed ! ”

They did as the Bosat bid. Followed by a large retinue the Bosat now entered the City in splendour like unto Sakra the King of Gods. And the citizens were all speaking in praise of the Pandit, saying :

“ This is Mahausadha, the Pandit, the son of the Millionaire Siriwaddhana. It is this Pandit who brought the great medicine in his hand at the time of his very birth, and it is he who knew the meaning of, and solved, the many intricate questions and problems.”

The Pandit, after reaching the Palace Gate sent word to the King through the Gatekeeper, that he had come. The King who was very pleased on the very hearing of his arrival, told him :

“ Let my son Mahausadha come in soon ! ”

The Bosat ascended the steps of the Palace accompanied by his thousand followers, entered the Audience Hall and having saluted the King, stood at a respectful distance. The King saw the Bosat, and highly delighted at his very sight, talked to him pleasantly and said :

“ Pandit, look out for a suitable seat and sit down ! ”

The Pandit then looked at his father's face, at which sign the father stood and said :

“ Pandit, you can take my seat ! ” and the Bosat having heard his father's words, occupied the seat which his father vacated.

Now, Senaka, Pukkusa, Kavinda, Devinda and other simpletons who were there, seeing that the Pandit made his father vacate his seat and occupied the same, clapped their hands and laughed aloud, saying :

“ What a fool! He is said to be wise, but he made his father rise from his seat, and he occupied the same seat. Surely he cannot be rightly called a man of wisdom ! ”

And the King's face became dark !

Seeing that the King was displeased the Pandit questioned the King :

“ Your Majesty, you appear to be sad ? ”

“ Yes ! Pandit, I am displeased ! When I heard of your I was very pleased : but when I saw you I was much displeased ! ”

“ What is the reason for your displeasure Your Majesty ? You who were pleased on hearing about me, were displeased on seeing me. Please tell me the reason ! ” said the Bosat.

“ The reason is that you made your father stand, and occupied his seat ! ” replied the King.

“ Why, King, do you think that always the father is greater than the son ? ” rejoined the Bosat.

“ Yes, certainly ! ” replied the King.

“ Your Majesty, you sent us word to bring a ‘ Colt ’ or its ‘ sire ’. Didn’t you ? ”

So saying the Bosat looked at the faces of the men who brought the Ass concealed, and asked them :

“ Bring here the Ass that you brought ! ”

And when they brought it, the Bosat placed it near the feet of the King and questioned the King :

“ O, King, what is the value of this Ass ? ”

“ If it is of any use ” said the King, “ it will be worth about eight coins of gold.”

“ How much then will a thoroughbred¹, begotten by this Ass in the womb of a mare of the Sindh² kind, worth ? ”

“ It is invaluable ! ” said the King.

“ Why do you say so Your Majesty ? ” questioned the Bosat. “ You said a short while ago that always the father is greater than the son ; if it is so, by your own admission the Ass is

1. Ajanya Horse : (අජානියා අස්වයා) A horse which knows and goes along the course without the rider's orders. 2. සින්ධු.

nobler than a thoroughbred horse. Your Pandits do not know even this much of fact. They clapped their hands and laughed aloud when I occupied the seat. How superb is their wisdom ? And where did you pick them up from ? ”

Thus, ridiculing the four Pandits, the Bosat explained to them the meaning of the question regarding the Ass in the following words :

“ Your Majesty, if the father is always superior to the son, then take my father into your service. But if on the other hand, the son is superior to the father you can retain me for Your Majesty’s service.”

On hearing this, the King was delighted to no little extent and the assembly applauded saying :

“ Well done ! The Pandit has solved it well ! ” and the crowd whistled and waved their upper garments in the air in great joy. And the four Pandits, Senaka and others were crestfallen.

There is no one who knows better, the greatness of parents, than the Great Bosat. Then it may be questioned why he caused his father to stand and offer him his seat. The answer is this : He did not mean to disrespect him in the least. But he wanted to solve the King’s riddle which required the Bosat to send a Colt or its sire ! He too wanted to manifest his wisdom and to ridicule Senaka and the other Pandits.

The King who was pleased at the Pandit’s explanation to the question regarding the Ass, took the golden mug filled with scented water, and pouring water on the hand of the Millionaire said :

“ Henceforth the Eastern Village shall be your own : enjoy it as a royal gift from me ! ” and further proclaimed :

“ The other thousand Millionaires shall be submissive and subordinate to Siriwaddhana ! ”

Then he sent to the mother of the Pandit, golden earrings, necklaces, anklets and all other ornaments which females wear. The King next addressed the Millionaire and said :

“ Give me your son, Mahausadha Pandit, I shall adopt him as my son ! ”

“ My Lord ! ” replied the Millionaire, “ he is still very young. The smell of milk has not left his mouth upto this day. He shall therefore attend on you when he is grown up.”

was actually on the Talipot tree ! If one is wise, he should be like Mahausadha !”

The King was so pleased with the Bosat that he presented him with the necklace of pearls worth one lakh of gold which he himself was wearing. He too presented the thousand youngsters with thousand necklaces of pearls, and wished that the Bosat as well as his followers wore those ornaments when they came for the King's service.



9 CHAPTER

THE CASE OF THE CHAMELEON

ONE DAY the King went to his Park accompanied by the Pandit. Then a Chameleon which lived on the top of the pandal at the gateway, seeing the King coming, got down from the pandal and lay prostrate on the ground. The King who saw this, questioned the Pandit Mahausadha :

“ What is this Chameleon doing ? ”

“ Your Majesty, it is paying you homage ! ” replied the Pandit.

“ If it be so, a service rendered to me shall not go unrewarded. Give some money to this animal ! ” said the King.

And the Bosat said :

“ Your Majesty, money is useless for this animal. Some food will suffice ! ”

“ What food does it take ? ”

“ Mostly meat ! ”

“ Then how much worth of meat should it get ? ”

“ Half a grain of gold worth of meat shall be sufficient.”

“ No ! ” said the King. “ A gift worth half a grain is no gift from a King ! ” and ordered a man to give the Chameleon daily, meat to the value of two and a half grains of gold. And accordingly the man supplied the Chameleon with meat every day.

Now it so happened that, on a Full Moon day, no butcher killed any animal, for it was the King's order not to kill on Full Moon days. This man searched for meat all over the city and having found none, he bored a hole in a piece of gold weighing two and half grains and tied it around the neck of the Chameleon. As a result of this wearing of gold the chameleon began to be proud, and one day when the King went again to the park, the Chameleon saw the King approaching, and in the pride of its wealth of gold, did not come from the pandal, thinking to itself :

“ O ! Vedeha, you are not the only one who has wealth. I am too possessed of much wealth ! ”

So thinking, and likening himself to the King because of the pride of its wealth, remained at the top of the pandal nodding its head.

The King observed this, and questioned the Pandit :

“ O ! Pandit, the Chameleon does not come down from the pandal today, as before. What may be the cause of its pride? ”

The Pandit perceived that, as slaughtering was prohibited on Full Moon days the King's man had failed to purchase meat and that he had therefore hung the gold round the neck of the Chameleon, and replied as follows :

“ O ! King, this animal which has received a treasure of gold two and half grains in weight, which it never possessed before, now thinks no end of itself! It thinks : ‘ King Vedeha, you who has made the Kingdom of Mithila your home, or you who has won the hearts of the people by fourfold gifts of alms, kind words, benevolence and unanimity, you possess treasure in proportion to Your Majesty, and I, in proportion to mine. Hence in what respect am I inferior to you ? ’ So thinking it now despises you ! ”

The King immediately sent for the man whom he had ordered to supply meat to the Chameleon, and questioned him whether the interpretation of the Pandit was true, and the man admitted that it was true and explained as to what happened.

Now the King's faith in the wisdom of the Pandit increased more and more, and he thought :

“ Without consulting anyone the Pandit knew the mind of the Chameleon even as an Enlightened one would know! ” and gave him the revenue that came in by the four gates of the City. Annoyed at the behaviour of the Chameleon the King wanted to discontinue the gift provided for the animal, but the Bosat prevented the King from doing so saying :

“ It is not fit to discontinue a maintenance once ordered to be given.”



THE CASE OF "THE LUCKY" AND "THE WRETCHED"

A boy from the city of Mithila, named Pinguttara, studied Arts under the Chief Teacher of the area¹, and soon mastered them. At the end of the course of studies this boy recited from memory, all what he learnt, before the teacher and begged for leave to go. Now in the family of this teacher, there was a custom to the effect "that should the teacher have a grown up daughter, she must be given in marriage to the senior pupil." This teacher had a daughter as beautiful as a goddess, and he told this youth :

"My son, I shall give you my daughter. and you shall take her with you !"

Now this young man was very unlucky, and wretched. But the girl was very lucky. Though he saw the girl he did not like her at all. But, even though he did not love her, he accepted the offer thinking :

"I must not disregard my master's words!"

Thus the Brahmin gave his daughter (in marriage) to this young man. In the night the youth got into the well-prepared wedding bed and lay down to sleep. And when the girl came to the bed he hurriedly got out of the bed, and laid himself down on the ground, grumbling all the while. The young bride followed him to the ground, when he jumped back into the bed. Once again the girl got into the bed, and again down came Pinguttara to the floor. An unlucky wretch is unapproachable to the Goddess of luck, as the earth is to the sky. Therefore, the girl slept on the bed, and the wretch, on the floor. Thus, having spent a week in this fashion, although he did not love the girl at all, he took leave of the teacher and set out on his homeward journey, especially because he could not disregard the teacher's words. Not even a word, as "how" or "why" passed between the two, on their way. Disliking each other, they at length reached the City of Miyulu.

Now, Pinguttara, who was very hungry saw a 'Dimbul' tree bearing fruits, close to the City. He climbed up the tree and began to eat the fruits. The girl too was very hungry, and she said :

"Please give me also some fruits!" But the youth growled :

"Have you no hands and feet ? Climb up the tree (like myself) and eat !"

1. දිසාපාසමාක් ආමාරි

As there is no suffering greater than hunger, the girl climbed up the tree and began to eat the fruits. Pinguttara having seen that she got onto the tree, hurried down to the ground and covering the foot of the tree with thorns went away to the City saying :

“ I got rid of the wretched woman at last ! ”

As there were thorns round the bottom of the tree, the girl could not get down, and therefore she had to remain on the tree.

Now, it so happened that, after diverting himself the whole day in his Park, the King was returning to the City late in the evening on the back of his beautifully decked elephant, when he saw a girl on a Dimbul tree. The King fell in love with her at first sight, and sent a Minister to know from her whether she was married or single. And the girl said :

“ Sir, there is a husband to whom my parents gave me in marriage. But that husband of mine left me on the top of this tree and bolted away ! ”

The Minister who went for inquiry delivered this news to the King. Hearing this, the King said :

“ Any treasure which has no owner, becomes vested in the Crown ! ” and conducted her down from the tree upto the back of the Royal Elephant, and then to the Palace, placed her on a heap of gold and crowned her Chief Queen. She robbed the King's heart and made him very happy. And she came to be known as Udumbara Devi, as she was discovered on a Dimbul—(Udumbara) tree.

One day the King wanted to go for sports in his park, and caused the inhabitants of the suburban area to the City gates, to repair and clean the King's highway. In accordance with this order Pinguttara also had to go and render his service in the reparation of the road. He tucked himself up and started to work with a hoe. But before the work was completed the King set out to go to the Park, in a chariot accompanied by his Queen Udumbara, and followed by a great retinue. Now Queen Udumbara happened to see Pinguttara working on the road, and she could not but smile at the wretch, saying to herself “ This is the wretch, who could not prize this much of glory and prosperity ! ”

The King saw the queen smile, got angry and inquired :

“ Why did you smile ? ”

"My Lord !" replied the Queen, "the man who is now working on the road is my former husband ; and he is the man who left me on the tree and went away after blocking my way down with thorns. When I saw him I could not help laughing, thinking to myself :

' Well, this is the wretched man who could not prize a wife as beautiful as myself ! ' "

But the King did not believe her story, and drawing out his sword, said :

" You lie ! you smiled with some one else. I shall kill you ! "

" My Lord ! " entreated the Queen in terror. " May it please Your Majesty to consult the Pandits (as to my innocence) ! "

And the King inquired from Senaka :

" Do you believe what she said ? "

" Not in the least, Your Majesty, for, what man in the world would forsake a female as this ? " was Senaka's answer.

These words alarmed the Queen to no little extent, but the King thinking a bit further, determined to consult the Pandit Mahausadha, saying to himself :

" What does this Senaka know ? I shall consult Mahausadha ! "

And accordingly the King put this question to the Bosat.

" O ! Pandit Mahausadha ! A certain maiden is exceedingly beautiful ; and is very good mannered. A man does not love such a Beauty. Can you believe this ? "

" Your Majesty, I believe it ! " said the Bosat and further added :

" When a man is unfortunate, his fate separates him from beauty and prosperity as the ocean separates its opposite shores from one another ! "

The King believed rightly, what the Great One said, and having calmed himself down, addressed the Pandit :

" O ! Pandit, if you had not been here today, I would have lost this jewel of a woman by listening to the words of the foolish

Senaka. It is you who have saved my queen ! ” So saying the King presented him with one thousand coins of gold.

Later, the queen bowed down before the King and asked for a boon :

“ My Lord, it was because of this Pandit that my life was spared today. I beg your permission therefore, to treat the Pandit Mahausadha as my own brother hereafter.”

“ Yes, I granted you the boon you asked for ! ” replied the King.

“ My Lord ! ” added the queen. “ Then from this day I shall not partake of any dainty without giving a share to my brother. Please give me further permission to send him delicacies at all times during any hour.”

“ Yes, dear, you may have that boon too ! ” said the King.

THE CASE OF THE GOAT

ONE day, after midday meals the King was walking up and down in the terrace of the balcony of his Palace, when he saw through a window, a goat and a dog chumming up together.

This goat was in the habit of feeding on the grass that was put before the elephants before they began to eat the same. The mahouts who saw this, one day hit the goat, and as it was running for life, bleating, another mahout ran after it, and gave a blow full on the back with a stick. Its back bent in pain, the goat ran and lay down by the side of the great wall of the Palace. On the same day, a dog which used to feed on the bones, meat and other refuse of the royal kitchen, took its chance when the cook who had cooked rice and curries, had gone out to wipe the perspiration of his body. The cooked rice and curries were covered up in the pots, and the dog scenting the fish, meat and other preparations could not bear to wait any longer. It entered the kitchen, pulled away the lids of the pots and pans and began to eat the food. The cook who heard the noise of pots falling, came into the kitchen, and seeing the dog eating the meat, closed the door and hit it with clubs and stones. The dog thereupon dropped the piece of meat and ran away howling in agony. The cook, seeing the dog escape, followed it and gave a blow at the back. On receiving this blow, bending its back and drawing up one leg as dogs usually do when they are beaten at any place in the body, ran to the place where the goat was lying.

Now the goat had occasion to question the dog :

“ Friend, why are you walking with your back bent ? Are you suffering from any pain in the back ? ”

In reply the dog questioned :

“ You too are lying down with bent back. Why, are you suffering from any pain in your back ? ”

Thereupon the goat explained to the dog what happened, and the dog too told the goat what occurred. Then the goat questioned :

“ Well, can you enter the kitchen again ? ”

“ What nonsense? if I go, my life is at stake ! ” replied the dog.

"And can you go to the elephant stall?" ask the dog.

"No, if I go, I should lose my life!" replied the goat.

Then both of them set about contemplating a devise with which they could make their living.

"Friend, if we unite and act together there is a nice plan!" the goat said at last.

"Tell me the plan!" requested the dog, and the goat went on to explain as follows:

"Friend, from today you must go to the elephant stall. As dogs do not eat grass, the mahouts will not suspect you, knowing well that dogs do not eat grass. Then you steal a bundle of grass and keep it at the corner of the great wall. In the meantime I too shall go to the kitchen, and the cooks will not suspect me as goats do not eat meat. Then I shall bring you some meat to eat. By this trick we can get on!"

They both agreed, and so, the dog went to the elephant stall, brought a bundle of grass and kept it at the corner of the great wall, while the goat went to the kitchen and stole a piece of meat for the dog. By means of this stratagem they lived happily.

When the King saw the friendship of these two animals, he thought:

"This is something very unusual! These two animals appear to live in friendship, though in matter of fact they are natural enemies. I shall question the five pandits on this topic, and he who does not answer the question satisfactorily, I shall expel from my Kingdom; and I shall reward the one who solves it, and call him 'the peerless man of wisdom!' Today it is too late; when they come for duty tomorrow, I shall place the question before them.

The next day, when the Pandits came for duty, the King put the question to them in the following words:

"In this world, there are some animals who have such a mutual distrust between them, that they do not approach each other within even seven paces. Two such natural hostile animals who have become great friends, go about and live together in full-harmony and confidence. What is the reason for this? If you cannot explain to me the reason for this before noon today, I shall expel you from my kingdom, for I have no use of simpletons!"

Now, Senaka was seated in the head seat, and Mahausadha in the last. Pandit Mahausadha pondered over this question, but could not at once perceive what it meant. And he thought to himself :

“The King is not wise enough to think this out himself. This must have struck his mind by some incident which he saw. If I get one day's leave, I shall be able to grasp what it means. Surely I know Senaka will get a postponement for one day !”

The other four Pandits, Senaka and others, like those in a dark room, did not see anything (regarding the question). Senaka therefore, looked at the face of Mahausadha to find out from his countenance whether he had solved it ; and Mahausadha looked at the face of Senaka in return, by which Senaka realized that Mahausadha himself had not solved it, and that he too wished for a day's leave to ponder over it. Desirous of complying with his wish, Senaka laughed aloud with the King as if in great confidence, and said :

“O ! King, do you seriously mean to expel us from your country if we fail to solve this question ? This is no question to us. But it is a bit intricate ; and furthermore we do not wish to expound it at an instant, in public. We shall contemplate alone, and then explain it to you. Therefore, please grant us a day's leave !”

Having said so, Senaka added, having regard for Mahausadha :

“In public assembly, we are disturbed by the noise of the people, and our minds are confused or our thoughts go astray in different channels. Therefore, Chief among men, we cannot explain this at the moment. Each of the five pandits shall retire to the chambers and shall contemplate on it independently and then explain it to you.”

Having heard Senaka's words, although dissatisfied, the King said—

“Very well !” but repeated the threat that they would be driven away from the country, should they fail to expound the question. Thereupon the four pandits, Senaka and others descended the palace steps. While coming down Senaka spoke to the other three and said :

“The King has put before us an intricate question. If we fail to answer, tragedy will be before us. You three had better go and enjoy a good meal, and examine the question thoroughly !” and went to his house.

Pandit Mahausadha too, got up from his seat, and went to the audience of the Queen. Having seen the Queen, he questioned her :

“Your Majesty, where was the King during the greater part of today or yesterday ?”

“Brother, he was walking up and down the terrace looking through the window !” replied the Queen. Then the Pandit reflected that “the King must have seen something from that direction” and going there, and looking out, perceived the behaviour of the goat and the dog. On seeing this he immediately concluded that the King had based his problem on the intimacy of the goat and the dog. Then he retired to his chambers.

The other three, Pukkusa and company, examined the meaning of the question and failing to grasp its meaning, went to Senaka.

“Have you got at the meaning of the question ?” asked Senaka.

“No !” replied they.

“Then you will be banished from the country. What are you going to do ?”

“Sir, have you fathomed the meaning of it ?” questioned Pukkusa and others.

“No, I too pondered over it in many ways, but I have not grasped its meaning !” replied Senaka. Then they exclaimed :

“Sir, if you fail to understand it, there is no wonder in our failure to understand the same !”

All the four pandits having failed to see through the meaning of the question began to think thus :

“We roared like lions yesterday before the King saying ‘If we get a day’s leave we shall solve the question, and disclose its meaning !’ and now if we fail the King will be very angry. What shall we do ?”

So thinking, in despair, Pukkusa and others suggested to Senaka :

“Sir, even if we were to think over this question for six long years, we cannot arrive at its meaning. But Pandit Mahausadha

must have grasped the meaning of this, by thinking over it, in hundreds and thousands of ways. Therefore, let us put down our pride and go to him."

The four agreed and went to see the Bosat. Having gone, they sent him a message that they had come, and when they were asked to come in, they entered his palace. After making usual inquiries as to his health etc., they took their seats on one side. Now they asked the Bosat :

" Pandit Mahausadha, have you thought out the question ? "

" Yes, I have thought it out," said the Bosat. " If I cannot grasp its meaning who in the three worlds can ever do it ?

" If so, please tell it to us also ! " requested the four Pandits.

Thereupon the Great One, who is possessed of compassion to all beings, thought to himself as follows :

" Now if I do not tell these four fellows the meaning of this question the king will banish them saying : 'What use have I from these idiots ? ' And he will reward me with the seven-fold treasures praising: 'There in no gem of a pandit to equal you!' But my compassion does not permit me to act in that manner. Let not these fools be doomed with destruction while a pandit of my calibre is living!"

Thus, out of compassion for them he decided to teach them the meaning of the question, and ordered them to sit on low seats, with hands raised above their heads in salutation to the Bosat. Now the Pandit, without disclosing to them what the King saw, composed them four stanzas in Pali and asked them to learn each verse by heart. He gave them only the text but did not teach them the meaning of the verses, and sent them away saying :

" When the King questions you, your answer shall be the reciting of these verses ! "

On the next day the four pandits and the Bosat went to the Palace for duty as usual, and took their seats that were prepared for them. The King then questioned Senaka first :

" Well Senaka, have you grasped the meaning of the question ? "

" Why not ! " said Senaka " If I could not grasp its meaning who else could do it ? " Thus he went on to show his genius in

the presence of the Bosat, like one who shows a dummy to a woman who has given birth to children (telling that the dummy is a child !)

"If so tell us !" said the King.

"Listen to me, Your Majesty !" replied Senaka, and recited the stanza which the Bosat taught him, which meant as follows :

"Sons of Ministers¹ delight themselves in goats' flesh: they like it immensely. They do not eat dogs' flesh. But the goat and the dog (so differed to each other) have united themselves in confidence."

Although Senaka recited the stanza he did not know its meaning. However, the King understood the shade of meaning that the verse conveyed, as he had seen the incident, and thought:

"Yes, Senaka has expounded the case. I shall now question Pukkusa."

He then questioned Pukkusa who was seated second ; Pukkusa exclaiming "Why ? am I not a Pandit ?" recited the stanza that the Bosat taught. The meaning of that stanza was as follows :

"The back of horses are covered with goats' skin for the comfort of the rider. They who desire comfortable seats never cover horse-backs with dogs' skin. However, the goat and the dog who are so widely different have united themselves in harmonious friendship."

Pukkusa did not know the meaning of the stanza himself, but the King who could gather its meaning thought :

"He too has understood my question!" and next questioned Kavinda, who occupied the third seat. He then recited the stanza which meant :

"The goat has twisted horns but the dog has none : The goat eats grass but the dog eats flesh. But, notwithstanding these differences, the goat and the dog are bound in friendship."

The King, with the impression that he too understood the question, next inquired Devinda to explain its meaning ; and Devinda too recited the stanza which the Bosat taught him. This verse conveyed the following meaning :

¹ අමාත්‍ය පුත්‍රාදීහු —Sons of Ministers, meaning 'young Lords'

"The goat eats grass and herbs but the dog does not. What does the dog eat? It eats hares and cats. But inspite of this difference a goat and a dog are keeping friendship."

When the four pandits, Senaka and others recited the verses, even though they knew not what they meant, the King did not ask them the meaning as he himself understood them. Now he turned to Pandit Mahausadha, the Helper of the Helpless, the Treasure of kindness, the perfect example of humanity¹, who was in the fifth seat :

"O ! Pandit have you solved the question ?"

"Your Majesty, who that lives in the space between the lowest Hell² and the topmost abode in the universe³ can perceive its meaning if I fail to do so ?" questioned Mahausadha in a lion-like voice. Then the King said :

"If so, please tell us !"

"Then hear me, Your Majesty !" said the Bosat, and recited two stanzas in order to show that he knew every detail about the goat and the dog. The meaning conveyed by the verses was as follows :

"This goat which can be called an eight-legged-one, because it has eight hoofs in its four legs, brings meat for the dog unseen by others. In return, the dog brings grass for the goat. This irony of nature⁴, this service which they render each other for their mutual support, was clearly seen by the great King Vedeha, the Chief among men, while walking up and down in the Palace terrace".

The King, not knowing that the four Pandits Senaka and others learnt the meaning of the question from the Bosat, complimenting all the five pandits, said :

"It is certainly a great asset to have noble pandits as these living in my service !" and thanked them.

Then the King thinking :

"In appreciation of the explanation of the question given by Pandits I must treat them liberally," pronounced as follows :

1. ජනශ්‍රීර්ති—the perfect model of man.

2. The Hell known as Avici (අවිච්ඡි).

3. The Brahma Realm known as Aganittaka (අගනිත්තා).

4. පෙරැලිය.

“I am exceedingly delighted with you all, for your masterly solution of the question. And therefore, I shall present to each of you who are real pandits, a chariot drawn by thoroughbreds, and a village where clothing, wealth and grains are found in plenty!”

And he caused all these to be given to the five pandits.

THE CASE REGARDING RICHES AND WISDOM

NOW THE Queen, Udumbara who knew the fact that the four Pandits, Senaka and others, learnt the meaning of the question through Mahausadha Pandit, thought to herself :

"The King, like one who sees no difference between 'Mung' and 'Undu'¹ has rewarded all the five pandits equally. My brother the Pandit Mahausadha ought to have been especially rewarded !" So thinking she went near the King and questioned :

"My Lord, who solved you the question ?"

"By the five pandits, my darling !" answered the King.

"My Lord, from whom do you think that the four pandits, Senaka and others learnt its meaning ?"

"I do not know, dear !"

"My Lord, what do these four pandits Senaka and others know ? It was Pandit Mahausadha who taught them the meaning with the compassionate wish 'let not these fools be doomed with destruction !' But you rewarded all of them equally. It is unjust. You ought to reward Mahausadha Pandit over and above all others!"

On hearing this, the King was more pleased with the Bosat, for his modesty in not saying : "They learnt the meaning of the question from me!" and desirous of rewarding him lavishly, thought :

"Never mind, I shall put another question to my son, and when he expounds it, I shall reward him pentifully !"

And while the King was thinking of a question suitable for the purpose, the following problem regarding "riches and wisdom" struck his mind. One day when the five pandits who had come to the palace for the King's service were engaged in pleasant conversation, the King addressed Senaka, and said :

"Pandit Senaka, I must put you a question !"

"You may do so, Your Majesty !" replied Senaka and then the King questioned :

"There is one who is wise but possesses no riches ; there is another who possesses elephants, horses and retinue without wisdom ; out of these two who will be proclaimed great, by the wise men ? Senaka, suppose one has wisdom as vast as the earth : the other has great retinue, but is foolish. Tell me, which of these two appears to your mind to be superior ? "

Now, it so happened that the solution for this question had been handed down for generations in Senaka's family, and therefore he was able to explain it readily before the King, in the following words :

"Your Majesty, the Chief among men ! Those who are undoubtedly wise, those who are foolish, those who are well versed in the arts such as the arts regarding elephants, horses, etc ; those who know not what arts or sciences are, those of noble castes such as the Warrior caste, Brahmin caste, etc ; all these have to serve under those who are rich, ordered or unordered, even though they be of low caste. I speak with authority. The wise are inferior and the rich are superior ! "

On hearing the words of Senaka, without speaking to the other three, Pukkusa and the rest, the King addressed Pandit Mahausadha, who was seated in the last seat among the five :

"Now, Pandit Mahausadha who is possessed of indisputable wisdom and who knows every doctrine in every way, I put you this question. Who is proclaimed superior by wise men ? Is it the one who has great wealth and retinue but who is foolish ; or is it the one who is wise but has no wealth and retinue ? "

The Bosat replied to this question in the following manner :

"Listen to me Your Majesty ! The foolish man who thinks himself ' very great ' when he gets some wealth, prosperity or some appointment to a high post, commits sins such as killing etc ; he is interested only in this world, and is blind with pomp and glory, with which result he is subjected to unlimitable suffering in Hell. Impeded in the path of virtue by the pride of his luxuries, he is blind to the world-to-come. Hence in both the worlds he faces defeat and destruction. That is, in the next world he is born in Hell as a result of committing sins in his frenzy and luxury ; and from Hell when he is re-born in this world once again, he inherits all suffering such as poverty and misery. I, therefore pronounce, that the wise man even though poor, is superior, and that the foolish man even though wealthy, is inferior."

When the Bosat spoke these words the King looked at Senaka and said :

“ Now professor! Pandit Mahausadha says ‘ the wise man is superior ! ’ ”

Thereupon, Senaka replied :

“ O ! King, Mahausadha Pandit is still a boy. The smell of milk issues from his mouth even now. What does this child know ? ”

So saying he brought forward an example in verse, which in prose reads as follows :

“ The knowledge of arts and sciences, or wisdom in itself does not supply a man with wealth and other riches such as grains. Nor does it bestow upon him sons, daughters, beauty nor riches. Now I quote an example :

“ Look at the Millionaire Gorimanda ! Streams of saliva continuously flow down from both sides of his mouth : he is ugly and hideous : but he possesses elephants, horses, retinue and enormous wealth, and lives in happiness favoured by the Goddess of Prosperity. Seeing this, I say that, a man who is wise, is not superior if he is not rich ; and a man who is ignorant, is superior if he is rich.”

Now, let us hear, what sort of a man this Millionaire Gorimanda is :—

He is a Millionaire in the Kingdom of Mithila, who is possessed of wealth to the value of eighty millions. He is ugly to look at. He has no son : no daughter : no relations. He knows no arts or sciences. When he opens his mouth to talk streams of saliva pour down from his mouth, and as they flow down, two maidens as beautiful as goddesses who stand on either side of him attired in their best, wipe these streams of saliva with two full-blown blue lotuses, which are subsequently thrown into the street. And when toddy drinkers require blue-lotuses, while on their way to the toddy tavern, they pose near the house of this Millionaire and cry out :

“ O ! Lord, Gorimanda ! ”

The Millionaire hears these words, and from the window of the balcony he would say :

“ What ? my good fellows ! ”

When the Millionaire thus speaks streams of saliva pour down from his mouth, and the two damsels attired in their richest, who stand on either side of the Millionaire wipe away the saliva with two full blown blue lotuses and throw them into the street, out of the window. Then the toddy-drinkers pick up these lotuses, wash off the saliva, and proceed to the toddy tavern wearing them. Such is the wealth of the Millionaire Gorimanda.

When the Pandit Senaka brought forward this illustration, the King questioned Mahausadha Pandit :

“ Well, Mahausadha Pandit, what do you say now ? ”

“ Your Majesty ! ” replied Mahausadha. “ What does this Senaka know ? He is like a crow which picks up and eats scattered grains of cooked rice. He is like a dog which goes to drink curd regardless of the clubs that may fall on its head. He is mindful only of riches enjoyable in this world and is regardless of the clubs of suffering in the nether-world. Listen to me further, Your Majesty ! ” So saying he further added :

“ When a foolish man obtains some happiness, he is intoxicated in it, and delays himself in acquiring merit. As a result of his callousness to merit he commits sin : and when he is in despair caused by various miseries such as calamities that befall his relatives, he goes astray completely. Facing both pleasure and suffering which the revolving wheel of fate brings forth, he writhes violently like unto a fish taken out of water and exposed to the summer sun. Observing this, I pronounce that it is the wise man who is superior and not the idiotic man, even though he may be rich.”

When the King heard these words, he turned to Senaka and inquired :

“ How, now ? Professor ? ”

“ Your Majesty ! ” replied Senaka, “ what does this fellow know ? Leave people aside, and take the case of a tree growing in the forest. It is the tree that is full of fruits that attracts the birds ! ”

So saying he brought forward the same fact in a simile :

“ The tree growing in the forest which bears sweet fruits is swarmed on all sides by various kinds of birds such as ‘ Selalihini ’ etc. Even so, the rich man who possesses gold and silver, various luxuries including food and clothing, is attended by many a man for their own personal benefit. Seeing this, I say that the rich although foolish, is superior to the wise who is poor ! ”

On hearing what Senaka uttered, the King spoke to Pandit Mahausadha :

“ How now, my son Mahausadha ? ”

“ Your Majesty, listen to me ; what does this big bellied Senaka know ? ” replied Mahausadha, and quoted another instance :

“ The ignorant one, maybe a ruling authority, is not superior. Why ? He loots his wealth by way of booty—by oppression and aggression—by blows and fetters. This unwise man, even while groaning desperately in bitter repentance, is dragged away against his will, by the Executioners of Hell to that dreadful realm of torture, where he suffers immeasurable misery. For this reason, I say that the wise even though poor, is superior, and the ignorant even though rich is inferior.”

Again when the King asked : “ What now ? Senaka ! ” the Pandit Senaka replied :

“ Brooks, streams and other running waters eventually join the river and then they all lose their former names—brooks, streams, etc.; the river runs on with the help of the water bestowed upon it by brooks and streams, and enters the ocean. Then the river too, loses its former name and becomes known as the ocean. Similarly every man living in this world depend on those who are rich. And even very wise men lose their individual splendour in the presence of the rich, just as the river that enters the ocean. Seeing this, I profess that the wise is inferior and the rich is superior ! ”

And again, on being questioned by the King,

“ What then ? Mahausadha ? ” the Bosat continued saying :

“ Listen to me Your Majesty, now the ocean has been dragged in as an illustration. Into this great ocean innumerable rivers and streams, such as the Ganges, the Jumna, the Acirawathie and others flow from various directions. The rivers and streams which thus fall into the great ocean are limitless. And this ocean is always full of thousands of great waves which come rolling towards the shore, and failing to go beyond this barrier, they break against it. Even so the words of the ignorant do not go beyond the words of the wise. Even the rich, when they are in doubt regarding any matter beneficial or detrimental, they go to the wise for advice, even though the wise may be actually poor. Seeing this, I say that the wise is superior though poor, and the ignorant is inferior though rich.”

Once again the King, having heard the words of the Bosat, turned to Senaka and questioned :

“ Well then, what do you say now ? ”

“ Hear me Your Majesty ! said Senaka. “ Even though a man has no self-restraint in body etc. if he has followers, and if such a rich man attended by his retinue enters a court of law and tells anything which may bring either good or bad results in this world or the world to come, his words are accepted in assembly because of his power. And if this rich man utters any words that would lead to bad results such as depriving a man of his rights, the Goddess of wealth makes his words prevail in society. This, the wise man is incapable of . Therefore I say that the wise man is inferior and the rich man is superior.”

Hearing these words the King said :

“ What now, my son Mahausadha ? ” and the Bosat replied :

“ O ! King, what does this babbling Senaka know ? An ignorant man may utter untruth for his own benefit or for the benefit of someone else ; he is then despised by the society and in the next birth he is born in Hell. Therefore I say that the wise is superior to the ignorant even though he may be rich.”

Then says Senaka :

“ Your Majesty ! Imagine a man whose wisdom is as vast as the earth itself, but does not possess even a measure¹ of paddy, rice, or any other grain, or even half a coin of gold, sits in the midst of an assembly and proclaims anything, his words vanish into thin air. A man may be wise, but if he is not rich, the Goddess of wealth does not attend on him. But she always accompanies the rich. Hence the wise man goes into oblivion like a firefly before the splendour of the sun. From this I say that the wise is inferior and the rich is superior.”

And again the King inquired : “ What now, Mahausadha ? ” Then the Bosat replied :

“ What does Senaka know ? For him, wealth is the sole means of happiness in this world, but he is blind to the torture that awaits the rich, in the nether world. The noble minded does not utter a lie for the destruction of another. And he, who is truthful, is held in high esteem by the society, for his words are true. All

1. Neli—an uncut seer of grain.

the more, he enjoys the happiness of heaven in the next birth as a result of his good words. From this, I proclaim again that the wise is superior to the ignorant even though rich ! ”

Again, when the King invited Senaka's attention, he began to say :

“ O ! King, listen to me ! Elephants, horses, cattle, buffaloes and other wealth such as jewels, pearls and other precious stones, gold ornaments such as earrings set with gems, bracelets, toe-rings etc., high born beauties as fair as angels, and all other retinue exist in this world to satisfy the desires of the rich. And they are not within the reach of the poor even though he may be wise. Therefore, I maintain my argument that the rich is superior.”

Hearing this the Pandit said :

“ What does this foolish Senaka know ? The Goddess of Fortune discards the ignorant man who babbles in folly and who does un-premeditated actions which produce no good either in this world or the world to come, just like a snake which casts off its slough. I bring forth an illustration :

“ At the beginning of Time¹ when the life of man was very long, and when man knew not whether sin was black or white, there lived in Jambudeepa² a king named Chetiya. From his body emanated the fragrance of Sandalwood : from his mouth issued forth the scent of lotuses ; by the power of his supernatural power he could sit cross-legged in the open air. Four Gods guarded him night and day. Possessed of a four-fold army consisting of innumerable elephants, horses etc., he held sway over Jambudeepa² which is ten thousand “yojanas”³ in extent. This King uttered a lie, and as a result of it, the sandalwood fragrance which emanated from his body, and the scent of lotus which issued from his mouth ceased, and foul vapours became rampant in his person. The four guardian deities who watched over him disappeared, and having lost his supernatural power of sitting in the air, down to the ground he fell, whenever he tried to sit in the air. And because of the lie he uttered, the earth opened itself and the flames of subterranean fires which rose up from hell enveloped him as if covered by a red blanket, and carried him alive down to the Hell. His happiness which availed him the opportunity of being guarded by four deities, could not rescue him from calamity, when he was carried away to Hell, due to his folly. As the opposite shores

1. In the first “Kalpa.” 2. Modern Asia. 3. a measure of length equal to 12 miles approximately.

are separated by the ocean, as the sky is separated by the earth, even so he was separated from happiness. Seeing this I maintain that the wise is superior to the rich."

Then the King questioned : " Well Senaka, what have you got to say now ? " And he replied :

" What does this young boy know ? I have yet another argument : please listen ! " So saying, determined to defeat the Bosat, and refute whatever argument he would bring forward, Senaka said in a stanza :

" When Your Majesty is in doubt regarding any question which requires a wise decision, you readily order ' Call Senaka and the other pandits ! ' And we the five pandits are brought before you. We the wise men dispel your doubts with our wisdom, salute you with hands lifted and pay our homage to Your Majesty. With your power and majesty you rule over us as well as your other subjects as Sakra, the King of gods rules over the gods of the two Heavens. Now if the wise is superior then your Majesty should be recognized as subordinate to us, the Pandits, due to the fact that you are directed by our counsel. But it is not so ! We are all subservient to your Majesty however wise we are. From this, I still say that the wise is inferior to the rich."

Hearing this the King thought : " Certainly this argument brought forward by Senaka is a good one. I wonder whether my son Mahausadha can bring out an argument to refute this ! "

Having thus thought he questioned the Bosat :

" Well Pandit, what do you say now ? "

Now in the whole of Jambudwipa there was none who could refute this argument brought forward by Senaka, but the Bosat with his peerless power of the brain which was as sharp as a crystal, refuted Senaka's argument as follows :

" Your Majesty, what does this foolish Senaka know ? He discerns only happiness which he enjoys in this world. But is blind to wisdom. Please listen to the power of the brain :—

" When a question arises which requires a wise decision, the rich but the ignorant person becomes a mere slave of the wise man. And even when the wise one explains the difficult and intricate points of the question, the ignorant man cannot even follow the words of the wise, and his mind becomes confused like a blind bull going astray in the forest. Because of this I still maintain that the wise is superior to the rich."

Thus the Bosat, like one exhibiting the seven-fold treasures from the top of Mount Meru, or like one holding high the disc of the full moon, refuted the argument of Senaka.

When the Bosat thus extolled the power of wisdom, the King questioned Senaka whether he could reply.

Like a proud man who pretends to maintain himself by scraping the bottom of his barn when he has consumed all the paddy stored therein, Senaka, having exhausted all what he had learnt and having no other argument left, looked down muttering and thinking all the while. And let me tell you, if ever Senaka gave one more reply, even a thousand (extra) stanzas would not suffice to relate this Great Story of the Tunnel.

When the Bosat found out that Senaka had no reply to give, the Bosat began to speak in praise of wisdom, as if he were pouring out a mighty flood of water suddenly or as if he were turning the celestial river down to the earth.

“Your Majesty! Buddhas, Pachchekha Buddhas, Arahats and other sages have certainly praised wisdom to the highest degree. The ignorant, fascinated by the charm of wealth have become slaves to wealth and say that it is superior to wisdom. But to the wise who know this world and the world to come, the glory of wealth is but a corpse of a worm. Wisdom is certainly incomparable. Just as the ocean cannot go beyond the shores, wealth can never eclipse wisdom!”

On hearing this, the King was greatly pleased with his explanation and said :

“I am satisfied with your explanation, which you have rendered like a Buddha. Therefore, I shall present you with one thousand oxen, one well trained elephant, one thousand chariots fully ornamented with decorations and drawn by thorough breds, and sixteen villages rich with grain, giving an income of one lakh of gold coins from each village !” and ordered them to be presented to him.

12 CHAPTER

THE PROBLEM OF THE WAY

LIKE unto the waves of the Milky Ocean, the fame and glory of the Great Bosat increased, and all his wealth was looked after by his sister, the Queen Udumbara. When the Bosat was sixteen years old, the Queen thought :

“ My brother has come of age ; his glory is very great : now he must be wedded with a wife of equal caste.” And she brought this to the notice of the King. The King was pleased and said :

“ Very good, you may speak about it to the Pandit ! ”

Then the Queen informed the Bosat of her intention, to which he consented.

“ Then, brother, shall we bring a maiden for you from a suitable family ? ” asked the Queen. Thereupon the Bosat thought thus :

“ Now, the maiden that Her Majesty proposes might not suit me. Therefore, I shall myself look out for a suitable wife ! ”

Having thus pondered, he told the Queen :

“ Your Majesty, I shall myself look for a suitable wife, and inform you when I succeed. Please do not tell the King for a few days, the purpose for which I am getting absent ! ”

“ Very well ! ” said the Queen. The Bosat bade farewell to the Queen, went to his house and told his companions the purpose of his journey, and then disguising himself as a tailor, carrying tailor’s implements, left the city quite alone, through the northern gate and went to the Northern Village.

Now, there was in this Village an ancient Millionaire family now reduced to poverty. In this family there was one single daughter named Amara who had a very beautiful face. She was very lucky, and possessed all womanly beauties and virtues. Now it happened that, on this day, this maiden, having prepared gruel, was on her way to the field where her father was ploughing. This happened to be the very highway along which the Great Bosat was travelling. And when he saw her approaching he thought :

"This is a beautiful maiden, if she is unmarried she will be a fitting wife for me!" And on the other hand, Amara Devi, also, seeing the Bosat, thought to herself:

"If I live in the house of a husband of this nature, I shall be able to restore or collect the wealth of my family!"

Then the Bosat thought: "I do not know whether she has a husband or not: I must ascertain this fact by means of signs. If she is wise she will understand my gestures and answer me!"

And at a considerable distance he raised his hand and closed his fist. Amara Devi too, knew the meaning of the sign made by the Bosat: She actually knew that he was inquiring from her whether she was having a husband, and she extended her fingers. Then the Bosat finding that she was unmarried, came near her and asked:

"What is your name friend?"

"Sir, if there be one who never existed in the world in the past, who never exists now and who never will exist in future, I am known by that name!" replied the girl.

"Friend, no creature born in this world is undying (Amara)¹. Therefore, if your name represents that, your name must be Amara—is that so?" inquired the Bosat.

"Yes, Sir!" replied Amara.

"Friend! to whom are you taking this gruel?"

"To my first god."²

"I see! It is to your father that you take the gruel."

"Yes, Sir!"

"What is your father doing here?"

"He is making two out of one!"

"Making two out of one means ploughing. Is he ploughing there, friend!"

"Yes, Sir!"



1. ^{சுமர}—Deathless.

2. Parents are regarded as "^{பூர்வ தேவதா}" as they are guardian deities to a child when he is first born in the world.

"Where is your father ploughing !"

"In that place from where no one returns !"

"The place from which there is no return, is the burial-ground. Friend ! is he ploughing near a cemetery ?"

"Yes, Sir ?"

"Well, friend! when will you return ?"

"If it comes, I shall not come; if it does not come, I shall come !"

"Friend ! your father must be ploughing on the other side of a river ? For, what I understand is that, if the river floods you will not come, ; if not, you will!"

"Yes, Sir !"

After they had discoursed in this manner, Amara Devi offered him some gruel, saying,

"Sir ! please partake, of this gruel."

The Bosat thinking it to be discourteous to refuse the first offer said "Yes, I will drink some."

Then Amara Devi took the pot of gruel from her head and placed it on the ground, while the Bosat thought "Now, if this maiden gives me the gruel without first washing the jar and offering me water in it, I shall leave her severely alone at this very place!"

But Amara Devi, having filled the jar with water, offered it to him and after placing the empty jar on the ground without giving it to his hands, stirred the pot of gruel, and filled the jar with it.

Now the Bosat observed that, there was not sufficient rice in the gruel.

"Why friend ! the rice in this gruel is very weak."

"We did not get water."

"What ! when your field was in its milky season it had no water ?" inquired the Pandit.

"Quite so, my lord!" replied Amara.

Thus, keeping a part of the gruel for her father she offered the rest to the Bosat. After drinking it and washing his hands and mouth he said to her,

"Friend! I should like to go to your house, can you tell me the way?"

Amara Devi saying, "Very well!" told him the way to her house thus:—

"Take this road, and when you enter the inner village you will see a certain boutique where they keep 'aggala'¹ for sale. When you proceed a little further you will see another boutique where they sell gruel. When you reach this spot and go a little further you will see a 'Kobo leela'-tree in full blossom. When you reach that tree, take the road which turns towards that hand with which you do not eat. Do not take the road that lies towards the hand with which you do not eat, or in other words, turn right and proceed. This road will lead you to the house of my parents; you had better please find the way as I have indicated."

1. අස්සුණු—අස්ලො—Balls of dough made of flour mixed with sugar.

13 CHAPTER

A WIFE FOUND.

AMARA DEVI having thus directed the Bosat, went on her way with the gruel for her father, and the Bosat went to Amara Devi's house, by the way she had indicated. The mother of Amara Devi, seeing the Pandit, offered him a seat, and asked : "Son ! can I offer you any gruel to drink ?"

At this juncture the mother of Amara Devi thought, "Surely this person must be one who has come here for the sake of my daughter!"

And the Bosat, seeing the poverty of the family, said to her, "Mother ! I am a tailor. Have you got anything to be stitched ?"

"Son !" she replied, "there are pillows, torn clothes, and other things to be stitched and mended but I haven't got any money to pay for the stitching."

"Mother ! The question of money does not arise. Bring them ; I shall stitch them."

Thereupon the mother of Amara Devi brought him some torn clothes she had to be mended, and he mended all the clothes for her, and whatever other things the villagers brought to him for mending, he attended to all, for everything undertaken by a virtuous man always crowns with success.

Then he said to Amara Devi's mother:

"Mother, you may announce my coming in every street."

And she made it known all over the village; and the Bosat attending to all the tailoring that was brought to him by the villagers earned thousand pieces of gold that very day. Amara Devi's mother having cooked and offered the mid-day meal for the Bosat, inquired :

"Son ! how much rice shall I prepare for dinner ?"

"Mother, take rice sufficient for all in the house !" replied the Bosat. She then cooked rice along with many other savoury dishes.

Amara Devi returned home carrying on her head a bundle of firewood, and in the fold of her dress, leaves from the jungle, and setting down the bundle of firewood near the front door, entered the house from the back door. Her father returned home at dusk. Various tasty dishes were provided for the Bosat. Amara Devi having waited on her parents, partook of food herself. After the meal she first washed and anointed the feet of her parents, and then washed and anointed the feet of the Bosat too. And the Pandit lived there for a few days, with a view to study the character of Amara Devi.

Now, one day, with the object of testing Amara Devi, the Bosat told her :

“Amara my dear ! take about half a seer of rice, and with it prepare for me some gruel, rice and cakes.” Without saying “How can I cook so many things with half a seer of rice”, she was willing to do as she was requested and saying, “Very well, I shall do as you wish,” cleaned half a seer of rice, boiled the unbroken grains, made gruel with the broken grains, and with the rice flour prepared cakes and many other suitable sweetmeats. She first offered Bosat gruel. As soon as he took a mouthful of this gruel, all his nerves of the palate were affected by it ; but to try her he spat out the mouthful of gruel he had taken, saying “Friend ! you do not know how to cook; why did you waste my rice ?”

Amara Devi without taking offence, gave him the cakes saying “My Lord ! if the gruel is not good, please eat these cakes!” As soon as the cakes were tasted, they were so sweet that his sense of taste was overpowered by them. But as before he spat this out too. Even this did not provoke the girl, for she then offered him rice, saying “If so, please take this rice!” When a little of it was placed in the mouth, all his palatal nerves tickled and titillated. But the Bosat as if in anger, said,

“If you do not know the art of cooking why did you waste the rice I earned with difficulty?”

He then mixed all the stuff together, and smearing it in her body from head to foot, ordered her to stand in the sun outside the house. Amara Devi without being least annoyed said, “Very well!”, and stood in the sun. Then the Bosat finding that she was not proud said, “Friend ! come in !” and she without waiting to be called a second time, came to him at once.

When the Bosat left the city he had brought with him one thousand "musses" and a fine cloth of silk in his belt-bag. This he took out, and placing it in the hands of Amara Devi, said, "Friend ! go with your girl friends, and after bathing come dressed in this!" She did as he bade her.

The Pandit then gave all the gold he earned by tailoring, and also those he brought with him, to Amara Devi's parents, and comforting them he said, "Trouble not yourselves with thoughts of your livelihood," and took Amara Devi away with him to the city.

With the view of testing her further he left her in the house of the gate-keeper, and intimating the gate-keeper's wife of his plan, he went into his house. Then he sent for two of his men and giving them a thousand gold coins said, "I have brought and left a woman at such a house ; take this thousand coins with you, and test her fidelity." So saying, he sent them. They went there as the Bosat had bade them, and offered her the thousand gold coins and tried to tempt her.

"These thousand coins are not worth the dust of my husband's feet!" said Amara, and rejected their proposal with contempt. These men went and informed the Bosat of it. But Bosat sent these men three times over and over again and even at the third time, she did not accept their proposal. He therefore, on the fourth occasion ordered them to bring her to him by force. They then went and brought her dragging against her wish.

Amara Devi when brought before the Bosat could not recognize him, as he was dressed in his State attire (not in the robes of a tailor) and she smiled and wept as she looked at him. The Pandit inquired of her the cause of her smiling and weeping.

"My Lord ! when I saw your majesty like unto divine splendour, and realized that it was not undeserved, I thought that the merit you have gained by virtuous acts in your former births was inconceivable, and I smiled with joy. I wept through sympathy for you, at the idea that you would now scorn my words, and by seducing wives maintained and protected by others, or by committing adultery, you might be born in Hell in your future birth !"

The Bosat having tried her and finding out that she was a woman pure in mind, sent her back to the place from whence

she was brought, saying "as she does not believe in me, go and keep her in the same place whence she was brought."

And again in the guise of a tailor he went to her that very night, slept there and at dawn on the following day, he went to the Palace, and informed Udumbara Devi that he had brought a suitable princess to be his wife.

The Queen having broken the news to the king, decorated Amara Devi with all womanly ornaments for the feet, ears, neck and hands and placed her on the Royal-dais. Then by royal command the great city of Mithila, seven yojanas in extent, was profusely decorated with gold gilded flags, and she was made to stand upright in a splendidly adorned State chariot, so that all the citizens might easily behold her beauty; for if she was seated, none of the citizens would see whether she was dark or fair, tiny or well-formed. And thus attended by a great procession, like unto a young goddess attended by a host of angels, she was escorted through the city streets to the house of the Bosat, where the marriage ceremony was performed.

On the wedding day of the Bosat the king sent him innumerable presents, none worth less than a thousand coins of gold. Among the citizens of Mithila from the King and his Ministers down to the cow-herds, there was none who did not bring with him one or more presents.

Amara Devi divided the presents sent by the King into two equal shares and returned one half to the palace, retaining the other half. And she divided all the presents sent to her, even those sent by Udumbara Devi into two equal parts, and returned one half, to the palace keeping the other. Half in this manner she won the admiration of all the citizens of that great city, Mithila, in one day, nay in one second! From this time onwards the Bosat, who was like unto an Eye to the three worlds, lived in great happiness with Amara Devi, instructing the King in matters temporal and spiritual.

MAHAUSADHA FLIES AWAY !

DAYS passed by, and one day when the three pandits (Pukkusa and others) came to Senaka, he addressed them, "Friends ! we cannot now rival Mahausadha Pandit, the cultivator's son. Now he has a wife who is even cleverer than himself. We must tell something to the king and make him get angry with this fellow !" And they replied, "O teacher, what shall we do ? Can you propose a way yourself."

"Don't despair about the past, there is an expedient for the future. I shall steal the gem in the King's diadem ! Pukkusa ! you steal the King's golden necklace ; you Kavinda ! steal the robe with which the King covers himself ; and you Devinda ! steal the King's golden sandals !"

Thus agreed, the four conspirators most treacherously removed the four treasures from the King's palace, and next, Senaka suggested.

"We must now send these treasures to the residence of the cultivator's son, without letting anyone know about it."

So, first of all Senaka placed the gem which he had stolen in a pot containing Mora fruits, which he entrusted to a servant girl and advised her, "If any one asks you for the pot of Mora, do not sell it ; but if anyone offers to buy it at Mahausadha Pandit's house, give the whole pot free without taking any money !"

This girl went near to the house of Mahausadha Pandit and walked up and down without going further on, saying, "Mora ! Mora ! Mora for sale !"

Amara Devi who was standing near the door, seeing the unusual behaviour of this girl, thought: "This girl, without going anywhere else lingers over here. There must be some reason for this !" and having made signs to her servant girls who were in the house, she sent them away, and she herself called the girl: "Come ! Come ! I will buy Mora."

And when the girl came near her she called out to her servant girls, but they did not come to her, pretending (as she had ordered them earlier) that they did not hear her. Amara Devi therefore sent this girl saying: "Go and tell my servant girls to come."

here! ", and when she went she put her hand into the pot and discovered the gem that was in it. Amara Devi then asked the girl who came to her:

"Friend ! from where did you come ? ".

"I am the servant girl of Senaka Pandit ", replied the girl.. and next she inquired what her mother's name was and kept in her mind. and told the girl:

"Then give me some Mora."

The girl replied, "Madam! if you want Mora, why should I want payment ? Take this pot full of Mora with the pot itself!"

" If that is so," Amara Devi continued "you may leave it and go ", and sent her away. She then wrote in a piece paper that, on such a day in such a month Senaka sent her the gem of the King's diadem as a present to her through such a servant girl, the daughter of such a woman.

Pakkusa Pandit also sent the golden necklace in a casket of Sandal-wood flowers. Kavinda Pandit sent the Royal blanket in a basket of leafy vegetables, and Devinda Pandit, the pair of golden slippers in a bundle of straw! Amara Devi received what all of them sent her, keeping a note of the date and the name of the person by whom they were sent, and related the whole matter to Bosat. And the four Pandits Senaka and others, having secretly sent the four treasures to the house of Bosat, went to the Palace and addressed the King thus: " Your Majesty, now why don't you wear the gem which adorns your diadem ? "

" I shall wear it. Bring it!" was the King's reply. The gem was searched for, in the royal treasury, but it was not found. About the other things too they proceeded in the same manner : and they went up to the King and asked him, " Do not Your Majesty intend wearing them?" The King replied, " Yes! Pandits ! I should like to wear them. Bring them!" These things, too, were found missing in the treasury. Thereupon each of the four Pandits said to the King:

"Your ornaments are in the house of Mahausadha Pandit. He wears them. My Lord! The son of the cultivator is now an enemy of Your Majesty ! " And they discredited the Pandit before the King.

“ Even the King ascends his throne and prospers by gaining over the chiefs of the armies and obtaining the counsel of his wise friends, unlike you who have driven away your wise counsellor. Now you are blowing fire-flies to get fire, you are milking the horn when you have the udder, and weighing with the hands when you have the balance, in thus overlooking Mahausadha Pandit, and consulting on this intricate question Senaka and other Pandits who are no simple simpletons! They themselves are like fire-flies. Now if you wish to save your life send for Mahausadha Pandit, who shines in wisdom as a large conflagration on the peak of a rock, and tell me the meaning of the four questions. If you do not do so, you shall lose your life!” Frightening him thus, she disappeared.

Now the King, trembling with mortal fear, called four of the Ministers the next day, and ordered them saying, “Good fellows! mount four chariots; go forth from the four gates of the city, and if you see my son Mahausadha anywhere, treat him right royally and bring him back without delay!”

Of these four Ministers the one who left by the southern gate found the Bosat in the Southern Village, seated on some straw and eating “Yawa” rice¹, with his body all smeared with mud by handling clay and turning the Potter’s wheel.

Now let me tell you the reason why Bosat did such toilsome labour as that of a potter! With his great wisdom he saw that, if the King suspected him of designs to seize the Throne, these suspicions would be dispelled on hearing that he was living by potters’ work. As soon as the Bosat saw the King’s Minister he knew that he had come to call him back, and he thought, “My position is to be restored. I shall now eat delicious and well-flavoured rice and curry prepared by Amara!” and putting down the handful of rice he had in his hand, he washed his hands and mouth. Immediately the Minister went up to him.

Now, this Minister was one who had high faith in Senaka Pandit. He therefore addressed the Bosat thus: “O Pandit! every argument brought forward by the teacher Senaka, in proof of the superiority of the rich, has come true; for even such wisdom as yours could not save you when your wealth declined, and now you are forced to eat this inferior stuff seated on a truss of straw, been correct, your unflagging energy and the power of your wisdom would have saved you from this misfortune.”

1. A kind of corn similar to Barley.

To him the Bosat replied as follows:— “ You foolish man! By the power of my wisdom I shall again regain my former fortune. Discriminating between good and bad times, I know when it is suitable to avoid the King, and when it is suitable to see him, and I conceal myself when the King is annoyed and return from my retreat when he is pleased. It is in order to regain the happiness I enjoyed before that I work at the potter's wheel now, and eat this tasteless rice. But you shall see how, by the power of my wisdom I re-establish myself in my former position, when I know that the time has come for action: and now I shall perambulate myself valiantly like a lion which wanders on the top of the ‘Red-stone-Mount’ sixty yojanas high!

Then said the Minister, “ The goddess who lives by the King's Royal Umbrella has asked the King four questions ; he consulted Senaka and the other three Pandits, but not one of them could solve the question, so he has sent me to you.”

“ Oh ; is that so ? Did you not then perceive the power of wisdom ? At such a time riches did not assist them ! ” said the Bosat, setting forth the power of wisdom.

The Minister then gave the Bosat the suit of clothes and the thousand gold coins provided by the King, with instructions to bathe and dress the Pandit, and bring him back as soon as he was found. Terror struck the potter at the thought that it was Mahausadha Pandit who had worked for him, but the Pandit re-assured him, saying, “ Teacher ! fear not ! You have rendered me great assistance ! ” ; and giving him the thousand gold coins, took his seat in the chariot with the mud-stains on his body, and went to the town, like a majestic elephant returning to his haunt after roaming at will in the wilderness. The King on being informed of the arrival of the Bosat, inquired from the Minister, “ Where did you find the Pandit ? ”

“ My Lord ! he was earning his livelihood by potter's work in Southern Village ; when he heard that Your Majesty had sent for him he came instantly even without washing himself. Yes, he has come all mud-stained ! ” And the King thought, “ He cannot be my enemy ; for, if he was, he would have collected an army with his wealth ! ” and said, “ Then tell my son to go to his house, and bathe, and come to see me, attired in gorgeous costume, in a procession which I have provided in his honour ! ”

On being thus informed, the Pandit dressed himself as directed by the King and came to the place in Majesty like unto

Sakra, the King of gods going from his palace¹ to his Celestial Court²; and when the King gave him Audience, he went before him and sat down on one side. The King having inquired him after his health, spoke to him thus, in order to test him:

“Certain wealthy people in this world, do not commit sin, such as taking away life etc., in order to increase their wealth, because they are satisfied with what they have; certain others refrain from sin, lest those who gave them their wealth would be blamed; certain others do so from ignorance and stupidity; certain others do not commit sin as they are incapable of anything. But you are wise and industrious. If you wished you could kill all the Crowned Kings of Jambudeepa ten thousand yojanas in extent, and crown yourself Emperor!” Why, then, did you not harm me? Why did you not kill me and take my Kingdom?”

Having heard these words, the Bosat replied, “My Lord! they wise refrain from sin for their own peace of mind. Even though they suffer mentally or physically from loss of wealth, they will not, either from friendship or enmity, abandon their traditional virtues.”

Again the King, in order to test the Pandit said, “A person who after being reduced to poverty from any cause, whether trivial or important, has been restored to his former prosperity, will, of course, walk in the path of virtue!” And the Bosat replied depicting a simile from a tree: “If a virtuous man sleeps, rests or sits in the shadow of a tree, he will not break even a branch of that tree, because he has slept under it. If he does so, he is an ungrateful traitor. My Lord! if it is an act of treachery to break even a leaf from the tree under which one has slept, how much greater would be my treachery if I were to harm Your Majesty, who not only made my father rich, but also loaded me with wealth, protection and prosperity?”

Having thus completely refuted the charge of treachery, he drew the King's attention to the cycle of existence, and said, “Those who have gained knowledge of anything, however trivial, from a wise man, or have had their doubts cleared by a wise man, will always be helpful and protect that wise man who has instructed them. Virtuous men do not forsake their trust in the wise man, who by removing their doubts has been a teacher to them?”;

The Bosat continued, “O King! if a laymen who has the five sensual desires, is slothful, he is then unable to gratify them. The:

1. Vijayot Maha Paya.

2. Sudam Dev Sabha.

monk who has neither physical nor moral self-restraint cannot observe the law of his order. It is not satisfactory. And so it is, with the monarch who imposes punishments and bestows gifts without ascertaining what is unjust and what is just. If a wise man yields to anger he destroys all the good qualities he possesses, like one who drops a drop of poison to Ambrosia. My Lord! Kings must reign with high discretion. Monarchs who reign discreetly with the ten moral virtues of royalty¹ will certainly increase their wealth, retinue, virtue, and glory."

1. දුශරාජ බර්මය

16 CHAPTER

THE QUESTION OF THE GODDESS

WHEN the Bosat had thus said, the King offered him the Royal Throne which had the Royal Umbrella raised over it, and the King himself sitting in a low seat, addressed him, and said, "O Pandit ! The Goddess of the Royal Umbrella has put me four questions. I could not solve them : I consulted the four Pandits, Senaka and others, but they could not even understand them. My son ! please solve them for me ?"

Then the Bosat like a heroic lion roaring on the top of the Red Mountain, which is sixty yojanas in height, said "My Lord ! by the power of my peerless wisdom, sharp as a sword, I shall solve and explain to you the questions put by the goddess of the Royal Umbrella, or even gods of the Seven Heavens, such as Chaturmaharajika etc., or all the Brahmas who live in the Sixteen Brahma worlds, as a strong man cuts and scatters a bunch of Water-Lilies with a sharp word." And he cried, as if inspired with the omnipotent wisdom of a Buddha, "Tell me, my lord, tell me the questions put to you by the goddess."

Now if the Bosat had not possessed universal knowledge, what would have been the consequence ? Is this not a proof that he was destined to attain Buddhahood, and to proclaim through the Universe the doubt-dispelling doctrine ? What wonder is there, if the Great One who had solved so many questions, even when he was a child playing with sand, now solved those questions put by the goddess ?

Then the King put the first question of the goddess and recited the stanza by which the question was asked.

Hearing the stanza, the Bosat perceived the meaning of the question, as clear as the disc of the full moon shining high up in the sky. and saying, "Here me, my lord," he solved the question as follows :—

"Sometimes a child, satiated with the breast, seated on the mother's lap plays with her, striking her with its little hands, which are soft like the tender leaves of the Asoka tree, pulling her hair, and beating her cheeks with the fist. Her mind diffused with love, as the milky ocean bathed in moonbeams, the mother says to him, 'you little rogue ! why do you beat me ?' and other sweet words, overcome by her intense love she kisses the child

and presses him to her bosom, while the child, seated in her lap, playfully beats its mother, her love towards the child becomes more and more. Similar is the father's love to a child."

Thus the Bosat gave the meaning of this question as if the orbs of the sun were held high up in the sky. Having heard this explanation of the question, the goddess, showing half her body from the structure of the Royal Umbrella said :

"Well done ! The question has been well solved !" and presented the Bosat with a casket filled with seven treasures, divine perfumes and flowers, and disappeared. The King, too, offered the Bosat with perfumes and flowers, and requested him to solve the second question.

Thereupon the Bosat explained the meaning of the question as follows :—

"O King ! the eight year old child, who is grown up, can run up and perform his mother's behests, says 'If you give me such and such sweets I shall go!', when he is told to do something. And the mother, prepares and gives him the sweets he wanted. After eating them he says, 'Yes, mother, you can stay in the cool shade, make orders and I must go out to toil for you'. His mother gets annoyed when he puts off going, and he mocks her with words and gestures. She then takes a stick to thrash him, and frightens him, saying, 'After eating my sweets, will you not go even to scare birds from the paddy fields ?' Then the child runs away quickly, and the mother, unable to overtake him, accuses him with every curse that comes to her lips, saying, "Go to Hell!" "Go to the devils ! May rogues cut you into pieces!" Yet though she showers all these curses, she does not wish even a fraction of them to befall her child. The boy then plays the whole day with other children, and fearing to return home in the evening, goes to the house of some relation, while the mother anxiously looks out for him, expecting him to return any moment ; and when she finds in the evening that he has not returned, she thinks to herself, 'He is frightened to come home because I was angry with him'. And filled with grief, her face bathed in tears, she looks for him in the houses of her relatives, and when she sees him she snatches him up and kisses him, hugs him and lovingly clasps him in her arms, and loving him more than ever, says, 'Did you believe what I said ?' "

Thus the Pandit explained the question, saying, "Your Majesty ! the love of a mother for her child ever increases."

And the goddess, congratulating the Pandit as before, saluted him.

The King, too, having made him offerings, requested the Bosat to explain the third question. The Bosat said, "Say it, my lord!" The King then recited the third stanza, by which the third question was asked.

And the Bosat explained it to the King thus: "My Lord! when the married lovers engage themselves in sexual enjoyment, they say to each other, 'You do not love me in the best; you love some one else'; when they thus speak falsely, and charge each other falsely, their mutual love increases."

Thus he explained the third question, and the goddess as before made him offerings, and expressed her satisfaction.

The King, too, having made his offerings as before, prayed the Pandit to explain the other question. And when the Bosat said "Say it, my lord!" the King recited the stanza of the fourth question.

The Bosat explained this to the King as follows:—"Your, Majesty! a question concerning pious mendicants and Brahmins: when they come to your house to beg, and you see them accept the food you have offered them and go away eating it, you think: 'They beg from me: they take food belonging to me, and they partake of the same, and these mendicants and Brahmins become more welcome in your Palace. And the religious devotees venerate the mendicants and Brahmins more and more when they consume their offerings of the four requisites.'"

When the fourth question was thus explained, the goddess saluted and applauded him, and placed a golden casket containing the seven treasures at the feet of the Bosat, saying, "Well done, Pandit, please accept this."

The King highly delighted conferred the office of "Commander-in-Chief" of the army, on the Bosat. Henceforth the fame and name of the Bosat spread far and wide in the land.

17 CHAPTER

THE QUESTION OF THE SECRET

BITTER jealousy ever increasing, the four pandits Senaka and others once again conspired against the Mahausadha Pandit:

"The son of the cultivator has now attained great eminence ; what shall we do ?"

Then Pandit Senaka said to the other three pandits, "What matter if he has attained great prosperity ? I have a plan to discredit him in the eyes of the King."

And when they inquired, "What plan, Teacher?" he said:

"I shall go to him and ask him, 'To whom is it right to confide a secret ?' and if he says, 'It cannot be confided to any one,' then, as he is a great minister, I shall say to the king, 'May it please your Majesty, the son of the cultivator is unfaithful to you' and thus we shall discredit him."

They agreed, and like four old jackals approaching a lion, went to the house of the Pandit, and after a pleasant talk with him, Senaka said:

"Pandit, shall we ask you a question ?" and when he replied "Yes!", Senaka said,

"O Pandit, what is the first and foremost thing which a man should be established in ?"

"He must be established in truth".

"What must next be done by those who are established in truth ?"

"They must then search for riches."

"After obtaining wealth, what must they do next ?"

"They must follow good counsel."

"And then ?"

"They must not divulge to others what should be kept secret in the mind" replied the Pandit.

This was what they were grinding at, and delighted with this, all four said :

"Very well, Pandit," and making sure that the son of the cultivator could be dismissed from his high rank, went to the king, and said, "Lord ! the son of the cultivator is playing a double game !"

But the king replied "I do not believe your words. He is not so."

"Your Majesty !" they continued, "if you do not believe our words, when he himself comes to you, ask this question :

"Pandit ! to whom should we confide the secrets of our hearts ?"

"Now, if he is not hostile to you he shall say, 'These secrets can be confided to such and such a person, but if he is treacherous to you, he will say 'They should not be confided to anyone. Schemes can be divulged only after they have been accomplished !' If he gives this answer to your question, then believe us !"

The king, too, saying, "Very well," accepted their advice and one day, when all the five Pandits had come and were seated in his presence, he addressed them in these words :

"All the five pandits are now assembled. A question has occurred to me. Hear it, all of you. To whom can we confide a secret, whether creditable or discreditable ? To whom should we tell a secret ?"

When he spoke thus, Senaka thinking, 'We can now win over the King to our side,' replied :

"O king, the supreme lord of the mighty earth ! you are our refuge ; you have borne all our burdens. May it please your Majesty, therefore, to tell us your views first. We five pandits shall consider your opinion, or will listen to what you say, and shall then disclose you our own views."

Having heard this, the king, in his human weakness, said :

"If a woman be virtuous, if she does not go after other lovers, if she observes the laws of chastity, if she learns and observes her husband's wishes, and continues to love and adore him more and more, her husband should tell her all the secrets, whether they be blamable or praiseworthy."

Senaka was pleased at the king's words and thought, "The King is with us!" and gave his own answer to the question as follows :

"If any man helps and rescues another in distress we can trust such a friend with secrets, for he does not desert us in the hour of need."

The King then asked Pukkusa,

"What do you think ? To whom can we tell a secret ?"

Pukkusa replied "My Lord! if a person who is elder to you, or younger to you, and who is born in the womb of the same mother, is virtuous, and neither in happiness nor in grief forsakes you in vexation; to such a loving brother you can confide a secret, whether he be your younger, or your elder!"

Then the King asked Kavinda.

"My Lord ! if a son works like a slave for his father, and maintains the family traditions, and if he has great wisdom, we may confide secrets to such an excellent son. Now let me tell you what the three kinds of sons are. The son who acquires more wealth than his father, and who obtains a higher rank is called 'excellent'¹, the son who maintains his father's wealth and rank is called 'mediocre'² and the son who dissipates all his father's wealth and lives an immoral life is called 'Degenerate'³" replied Kavinda.

The King then asked Devinda.

"O King, the chief of all men ! if a mother cherishes her son with ever-loving fondness, then to such a loving parent he can confide a secret" was Devinda's view.

Having consulted the four pandits, Senaka and others the King then questioned Mahausadha Pandit.

1. අති ජාත. 2. අනු ජාත. 3. අව ජාත.

Then he said, "O King! it is better to hide all secrets, whether they are praiseworthy or blamable. The divulging of secrets is not commended by the wise. The wise man who has an individuality of his own will not disclose his schemes to anyone as long as they have not been carried out and accomplished, but once they have been carried out and accomplished he discloses publicly without any suspicion."

When the Pandit said this the king was displeased.

Now, Senaka and the King looked at each other's face. The Bosat, perceiving this action thought:

"These four, by their slanders once again discredited me with the king. Maybe this question has been asked to test me."

The sun had already sunk behind the Western horizon while the King was talking with the pandits, and torches and lamps had been lit here and there, in and outside the palace. The Pandit further reflected,

"To work under the King is very difficult. I do not know what is going to happen. I must go away immediately."

And getting up from his seat he saluted the King and left the palace. On his way he thought to himself:

"Of these four one has said that secrets will be confided to a friend; the second to a brother; the third to a son, and the fourth to a mother. They say this, I suppose, with their own experience. It is so. I shall know the details of their secrets on this very day."

THE SECRET OF SENAKA AND OTHERS

It was the practice of these four Pandits after leaving the palace, to seat themselves on a trough near the gate, and discuss their plans, before going home. And the Pandit thought:

"I shall be able to ascertain their secrets if I get under this trough."

So he caused his men to raise it up, and after laying a sheet of cloth below it, he got underneath and ordered his men to hide themselves and take him out when the four pandits went away after their discussion. They did this and hid themselves.

Now in the palace:

"Your Majesty !" Senaka was saying to the King "My lord! You did not believe our words ; are you now convinced ?"

The king without scrutiny, believing what those trouble-makers said, and struck with terror, inquired Senaka,

"Without loss of time you must assassinate the son of the cultivator."

Then the king gave his royal sword to Senaka and said,

"O Senaka, I have no one else but you : take your friends with you, wait at the entrance, and when the son of the cultivator comes to wait upon me in the morning and enters the Palace, cut off his head !"

"Very well your Majesty, be not afraid, we shall kill the son of the cultivator."

So saying they went out of the palace, and seated themselves on the trough, rejoicing, "We have outdone our enemy !"

Seated there, Senaka questioned from the others, "Who will strike the son of the cultivator?"

The other three assigned the work to Senaka saying,

"O teacher ! you had better do it."

And again Senaka said, "You have said that secrets may be told to such and such people. How have you come to these conclusions? Is it from what you have done, seen, or heard?"

"Sir please leave it alone : We shall explain it later. But when you say that secrets may be confided to friends, was that in accordance with what you have done, seen or heard?"

"It is useless to you," replied Senaka.

"No Sir, you must tell us!"

"If the king gets to know my secret he would kill me!"

"Do not fear, Sir," said the others. There is none here who would disclose your secret. Tell us, do not, hesitate!"

Senaka there upon tapping the trough, said,

"By the way, can the son of the cultivator be under this?"

"O teacher! the son of the cultivator is revelling and merry-making with his wealth. Why should he come down to such a filthy place as this? Certainly he will not come here. Tell us your secret."

Senaka then disclosed his secret :

"Do you know such and such a courtesan?"

"Yes."

"Is she now to be seen?"

"No, Sir,"

"My friends! the reason is this. When I courted her, or in other words, passed the night with her in the Royal park, I killed her to obtain her ornaments, which I tied up in her own cloth and hung on the deer horn in a certain store room in the upper storey of my house. So far I have not taken anything from the bundle. This criminal offence I have confided to a friend, who has not disclosed it to any one. On this account I said that secrets can be confided to a friend."

The Pandit hearing the "secret" of Senaka, bore it in mind.

Pukkusa then began to disclose his :

"O friends ! there is an incurable filthy ulcer on my thigh. Early every morning my younger brother secretly washes it with a lotion, anoints it, and bandages it with soft rags. The king likes me and calls me : 'Come here, Pukkusa', and laying his head on my thigh enjoys a sound sleep. Now if the king comes to know of the 'softness' of my thigh he will kill me. No one except my brother knows this secret. Because of this I said that a secret could be confided to a brother."

Now Kavinda began :

"O friends ! my secret is this. On the day of the new moon a devil called Naradeva takes possession of me, and when I am possessed I bark like a mad dog. I told my son about my madness: when he finds that I am taken possession of by the devil he takes me to the inner room, and ties me with ropes, and keeping me there, comes out, closing the door, and in order that no one may hear my dog-like howls, he puts up dancing houses in the compound and makes a big noise. Because of this I said that secrets may be confided to sons."

Last of all Devinda disclosing his "secret" said :

"I stole from the Royal Treasury, and gave to my mother, the wealth-conferring gem presented by Sakra to King Kusa, which had been handed down from dynasty to dynasty, and was deposited in the Royal Treasury. She secretly gives it to me when I go to the palace. By the virtue of this gem I assume a very comely appearance and enter the palace; and the king greets me first, overlooking the rest of you. He gives me daily eight or sixteen or thirty-two or even sixty-four coins of gold as recompense. Now if the king hears that I have stolen that gem, my life is gone. Because of this I said that secrets would be confided to a mother."

The Bosat kept thoroughly in his mind the secrets of all these people, and they after disclosing their secrets, like men who rip open their bodies so that the bowels burst forth, went to their respective houses, saying,

"Come early morning. We shall kill the son of the cultivator."

When Senaka and others had gone away, the Bosat's men came and raised the trough and took him away. The Bosat bathed, and anointed himself with perfume and ointment, and dressing himself partook of the delicious food, which resembled the ambrosia of gods. Then knowing that his sister, Queen Udumbara,

would send him a letter from the palace informing him of the state of affairs. he stationed a trustworthy man at the gate, with orders at once to admit and send to him any one coming from the Palace. Having thus ordered, he slept, like a prince of the Brahma Realm, on a couch decorated with vary coloured coverings.

19 CHAPTER

A MID-NIGHT CAKE

AT that time the king had gone to rest, and was meditating on the character of the Pandit, saying to himself,

“Mahausadha Pandit has served me since he was seven years old. He has done me no wrong; but for his aid, I would have lost my life, in the question of the goddess. It was wrong of me to have believed the words of his enemies, and to have given them my sword to slay the Pandit of incomparable wisdom; from tomorrow I shall not behold such a gem of a pandit.”

Thus he grieved as though his heart would break; sweat poured from his body, and buried in grief his mind knew no rest. Queen Udumbara who was with the King in the bed perceiving his worry, asked,

“What! my darling, have I offended you in any way, or has any other matter vexed your mind? O king! you are in sorrow. I have done no wrong which I try to hide from you. Maybe that you have taken to heart the wrong of some one else, or you must be grieving for some one; tell me dear, tell me!”

“My dear!” replied the king, “the four pandits Senaka and others told me that Mahausadha Pandit proposed to kill me, and seize my kingdom. Without making a proper inquiry, I gave them the royal sword, with orders: ‘If so slay him!’ and now when I think of it, and when I think of his transcendent eloquence and wisdom, I wish if I were killed before he is slain. When I think that after tomorrow I shall never behold such a Pandit, I am overwhelmed with grim and bitter sorrow.”

Hearing this, grief overtook Udumbara, as if she was crushed by a mountain. “But” she thought, “I have a way to console the king,” and determined to send a letter to her brother, after the king had fallen asleep, informing him how matters stood. So determined, she comforted the King tactfully.

“O king! it is you who brought up the son of the cultivator, and established him in such splendour. From you he has obtained the rank of commander-in-chief; yet he has now

turned traitor to you. O king ! Enemies must never be left at large. They must be killed. Please do not worry yourself over it !"

The King whose grief was abated at the words of the queen, fell asleep ; and the queen, seeing this opportunity, got up, and entering the royal bathroom took an ola leaf and a style and wrote thus :

"TO MY BROTHER : The four Pandits Senaka and others have maligned you with the King. And the King has given his sword to Senaka with orders to kill you at the entrance, as you come to the palace early tomorrow morning. Do not come to the palace to-morrow. But if you come at all, come with a sufficient force to fight and seize the city if circumstances force you."

Having written this on the ola leaf, she folded it up and put it inside a round cake, which she tied with a string to conceal its contents, prepared it, and placed it in a jar. This jar she entrusted to a faithful maid, saying,

"Take this and give it to my brother."

And the maiden did as she was told. Wonder not, how she was able to go through the guarded Palace Gates. The King had earlier granted a boon to the queen, saying, "You may send dainties to your brother at all times. There shall be no guards !" So no one prevented her going. The Bosat taking in his hand the cake which contained the present sent to him by the queen, sent the maid saying,

"Tell the queen that I got her present ?"

She too returned to the palace, and told the queen that she fulfilled her mission. The queen then went and slept with the King.

The Bosat broke open the cake, and reading the ola leaf which was inside and perceiving well, mastering its contents, and after deliberating on the steps he must take inside the city on the morrow, went to bed. The four Pandits Senaka and others sleeplessly passed the night, which seemed like one year, anxiously awaiting the dawn, and early in the morning they watched at the gateway, sword in hand ; but not seeing the Pandit come, they were downhearted, and went up to the king, like four trees uprooted and cast down by the great hurricane of the Bosat's universal kindness. The King asked them:

“What Pandits ! Did you kill the son of the cultivator ?”

“We did not even see the colour of the son of your cultivator !” they replied.

The sun rose, and the Bosat by now had brought the whole city under his control, and posted guards at all strategic points and then attended by a great retinue, seated in a splendidly decorated chariot, and accompanied by a great army of elephants and horses, approached the Palace, in all his incomparable pomp and glory. The King opening the window of the royal balcony, beheld the arrival of the Bosat. Then the Bosat alighting from the chariot at once, saluted the king, who thought:

“If the Pandit were hostile to me he would never salute me,” and saying :

“Come along my son !” and sat down on the throne.

The Bosat too entered the Palace and sat on one side ; Senaka and others were also present.



THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG !

NOW the King, pretending he knew nothing, said, "My son, Mahausadha Pandit ! you left early last evening and now you have come after sunrise. Why have you neglected me ? What doubts have arisen in your mind ? Has any one told you not to come and attend upon me ? I should like to know the facts. Tell me, why you got late "

"Your Majesty !" replied the Pandit, "you believed the words of my enemies, Senaka and others, and commanded them to kill me; therefore I did not come."

Then he proved to the king, saying,

"My Lord ! the Chief of the world ! you believed the advice given by my enemies Senaka and others to kill me, and without consideration you ordered them to kill me. Somehow or other you secretly confided this, last midnight, to your Queen. And I heard this great secret of yours as soon as you disclosed it."

When the King heard this he was annoyed with the Queen, thinking,

"This secret which I confided to her has been disclosed to her brother."

The Bosat perceiving the King's wrath towards the Queen, said,

"My Lord ! why are you annoyed with the Queen ? I know all the events of the world pertaining to the three periods—past, future and present. My Lord ! supposing I learnt your "secret" from the queen, from whom did I learn the secrets of Senaka and the other Pundits ? For I know their secrets too." And disclosing first of all the "secret" of Senaka, the Pandit said, "My Lord ! Senaka having killed a certain courtesan of this city in the Royal park, wrapped up her ornaments in her own dress, and brought it to his house, kept it in such a place. Now he most secretly confided the secret of this contemptible murder which he had committed, to a friend. I too heard of it. Your Majesty ! I am not your enemy. It is Senaka who is against you. If your enemies can profit you, keep them in your Majesty's personal service."

The King then looked at Senaka and asked him. "Senaka ! is this true ?"

And when he said, "It is true!" the King ordered him to be bound hand and foot and taken to prison.

The Pandit then disclosed Pukkusa's secret ;

"My Lord ! Pukkusa is a person who should not come in contact with Kings, for there is on his thigh an incurable ulcer. It is disgusting even to touch it, but your Majesty frequently sleeps, laying your head on his thigh, saying, 'Pukkusa's thigh is very soft,' whereas it is the bandage of rags wrapped round the ulcer that is soft. This secret he confided to his younger brother. I have heard it myself !"

The King then looked at Pukkusa and inquired, "Is it true, Pukkusa ?" and when he replied "Yes, My Lord!" he was also put in prison.

Then the Pandit disclosed the secret of Kavinda.

"A ferocious demon called Naradeva, unfit to come within a King's Palace, who causes the victims whom he possessed to wander about crying like a mad dog, enters this man on the day of the New Moon. When this devil takes possession of him, he crawls about everywhere on all fours barking like a mad dog. He told his son secretly how he was possessed by the demon, and I got to know their secret !"

Thereupon the King asked, "Is it true, Kavinda ?" and when he said "Yes, My Lord !" he was also cast in prison.

The Pandit then disclosed the secret of Devinda :

"My Lord ! when seven Kings waged a mighty war against your Great-grand-father, King Kusa, on account of the Beauty, Queen Prabhawathic, he routed their armies, without shedding a drop of blood even sufficient for a fly to sip, by the mere sound of his voice, shouting, 'Here I am, King Kusa of the Lion's Roar' ; at which they prostrated like unto a grove of talipots laid low by one blast of a hurricane; and Sakra, the King of Gods, pleased with the victory, presented him the great and auspicious eight-sided gem, which King Kusa placed in his treasury, which came to your possession and was in your Royal Stores. Devinda stole it and he secretly told his mother how

he stole it, but I too heard of this secret. My Lord ! I am not hostile to you. It is these four Pandits who are your enemies, but if you can utilise your foes, retain them in your personal service, and do as you please."

The King then asked Devinda, "Is this true, Devinda?"

"Yes" replied he.

Then he was also put in prison.

Thus the four Pandits Senaka and others who had conspired "We shall kill the Pandit," were prisoned.

And the Bosat said:

"My Lord ! It is because of this that I said, it was better to hide a secret unless its object has been gained. Those who said that secrets could be entrusted to certain persons, have met with great calamity. O ! great King ! It is always well to keep a secret concealed. Wise men do not approve divulging "secrets." As long as a man's object has not been gained, so long will he keep it to himself like a hidden treasure, if he is wise. When the object has been won, then and, only then, the secret may be revealed. Your Majesty, please listen to me some more. Though women are dear to us as our own hearts in this world, yet a wise man will not confide his secrets even to his own dear wife ; nor will he confide them to one whose friendship can be bought for presents or money, or to one who conceals enmity under the garb of friendship, and who utters one thing and does another. When a fool confides a secret which he ought not to have divulged, he must suffer the blows, and abuse of his confident like a slave, for fear that he will make the secret public. For, if many people know your secret you are frightened, doubting every one of them. And therefore secrets should not be confided to anyone. If you wish to discuss secrets by day, secure utmost privacy, and converse in an open place ; and if you wish to do so by night, whisper softly into your companion's ear, so that the sound may not be heard beyond him ; for walls have ears, and if any one be lurking behind any wall or rampart he will hear it, and then, Your Majesty the confidence will be betrayed and the secret will take wing !"

The King having heard the Bosat's counsel, thought,

"These fellows when they were themselves traitors tried to prove that the innocent Pandit was treacherous!"

And being angry with them, he passed the following sentence on them :

“ Go, flog these men and drive them out of the city, and taking them to the edge of the moat near the city gate, lay them on iron spikes, or cut their heads, and throw their carcasses into the ditch ! ”

And when these men were being thus taken for execution, with their hands tightly tied behind their backs, and halted at every junction to be flogged in hundreds with birch-rods, the Pandit said to the King :

“ Your Majesty, these men are your ancient advisers. It is better that you pardon their misdeeds.”

The King agreed and gave them over to the Pandit to be his slaves ; and then the Pandit set them free then and there. Seeing this the King said,

“ In that case they shall not live in my Kingdom ! ”

and, ordered them to be banished from the country.

The Pandit then said

“ Your Majesty ! may it please you to pardon the misdeeds of the ignorant ” and like one who heals an incurable disease with a divine remedy, he calmed down the King's temper by his kind words, and got them reinstated in their former offices.

The King thereupon became more pleased with the Pandit, thinking, “ If his compassion for his enemies is so great, what then must it be for others ! ”

From this day, Senaka and the other three Pandits were rendered harmless like snakes whose fangs had been drawn, and did not dare to say anything against the Bosat.

21 CHAPTER

STATESMANSHIP OF MAHAUSADHA

FROM that day the Pandit himself advised the King in matters spiritual and temporal; and he became the very emblem of His Majesty's sway.

He rightly thought :

"It is I who rule the country, and I must, therefore, be vigilant," and he encircled the city with a white rampart sixteen cubits high, like a line of waves rising in the Milky Ocean; to strengthen its wall on the outside, he built a buttress all round adjoining the wall, and upon the rampart he erected hundreds of towers covered with arabesques, while every gate was adorned with grotesque carvings on the outer side; and strongholds were established at strategic points. Outside the encircling rampart he dug three moats; the first full of water, wherein grew five kinds of lotuses, and infested with monstrous crocodiles and ferocious sharks; around this was the second moat, full of mud; and around this was the third moat, dug into the earth. He caused all the ruined structures in the inner city to be cleared away and in those places large tanks were dug and filled with water. All the houses in the city were stored with corn. He also caused white mud and seeds of Water-lily to be brought from the Himalayas by the hermits who frequented them. The canals and waterways long filled with silt, sand, and dirt, were cleaned; water outlets were plastered with lime and mud; and all the repairs in the outer town, too, were attended to.

Now, why did he make all these arrangements? All this was done to avoid all future apprehensions on account of the enemies.

Traders came to this city from different countries. "From where did you come?" the Pandit would ask from them, and when they said from such and such a kingdom, he asked, "What does your King like?" and on their saying he likes such and such things, he treated them with cordiality and sent them away. Then he called the one thousand giants born on the same day as he himself, and said, "Friends! take the presents that I have given you to the hundred kingdoms of Jambudipa and give them to various kings, and make friends with them; serve them and live with them, constantly sending me information as to their actions, and I shall see that your families are well maintained."

So saying he went through one hundred giants, earrings set with precious stones as presents for certain kings, golden slippers for others, all of which bore carved on them the letters of his name "Mahausadha," which he prayed would be visible to those who looked on them only on that day, which would see the successful outcome of his enterprise."

Now each of these giants went to different kingdoms, gave the kings the presents that the Pandit gave, and said, "Your Majesty, I have come to serve you". And when the King asked, "Whence have you come?" he gave the name of a kingdom other than from which he had come.

The King, saying, "Very well!" retained him. And thus each became as dear as his own life to the King whom he served.

At that time Sankhapala the King of the country called Ekabala, was preparing for conquest, collecting soldiers. The giant who lived with this King reported to the Bosat thus :

"The King of this country is preparing some venture, the nature of which I know not. Please send a competent authority and have it investigated."

Then the Bosat called his parrot, and said, "Friend ! King Sankapala of Ekabala is engaged in some wild enterprise. You must go and ascertain it. Then travel through all Jambudipa, and bring me news of all the other kingdoms!" And having fed it with fried grains and Bee-honey, and anointed its two wings with oil boiled a hundred and a thousand times, he stood by the side of of the Eastern window and let it go. The parrot flew to Ekabala, ascertained affairs in the kingdom of Sankapala, and having examined all Jambudipa, eventually came to the city of Uttarapanchala.

22 CHAPTER

THE "FOUR-EAR CONSPIRACY"

AT that time a king called Chulani Brahmadatta was reigning in the city of Uttarapanchala. A Brahmin called Kevatta was advising the King in matters spiritual and temporal. This Brahmin was a shrewd and a learned man. This learned Kevatta, one day woke up early in the morning, and by the light of the lamp which burned with perfumed oil, looked upon his beautiful chamber, adorned with multifarious decorations of diverse colours, and decked with sweet-smelling garlands of flowers, and regarding its magnificent splendour he thought, "To whom does all this glory of mine belong? Certainly to no one else, but King Culani Brahmadatta. How I wish that I could make the King who has given me such splendour the Emperor of all Jambudipa. And if I do so, I shall be his Prime Minister !

With this wish in mind he went up to the King early in the morning and after inquiring whether he passed a comfortable night, said:

"Your Majesty ! I have got a matter to discuss with you."

"What is it ? Tell me !" said the King.

"We cannot speak privately in the harems my Lord ; let us go to the Royal Park" replied the Pandit. And the King saying "Very well, Professor!" went to the Royal Park with him, and leaving his retinue outside the garden, he stationed guards all around, and entered the inner garden, where he sat down on the Royal seat made of stone.

Now the parrot saw what they did, and thought :

"There must be something in this. To-day I shall hear some news which I must convey to the Pandit."

So the parrot got into the garden and hid under the leaves of a majestic Sal-tree. The King then said to the Brahmin:

"Tell me, Professor, the secret which you have got to unfold."

"May it please your Majesty to bend down your ear to me. This is a secret for our four ears only. It must not, therefore, go to any ears other than yours and mine. And if you act as I say, I shall make you Emperor of all Jambudipa," said Kevatta.

King Culani Brahmadatta was very desirous of imperial sway, and he listened to the advice of the Brahmin, and said impatiently, "Tell me ! I shall do anything you say."

"My Lord ! we will raise an army and first besiege a small city !" said the counsellor "After this I shall enter the inner city through a postern gate, and say to the King, 'My Lord ! there is no use of your resisting us any longer. Put down your arms and surrender ; by so doing you still retain your kingdom, but if you struggle with us you will certainly face devastation !' And if he does not act as I say, we shall capture him in battle and put him to death, gain over his armies and march against another kingdom. In the same manner we shall fight against it, and capture it, proceeding thus with other kingdoms, we shall obtain supreme command of all Jambudipa. Later we shall invite the hundred Kings into our city saying, 'Let us drink to celebrate the victory' ; and we shall erect a toddy hall in the garden, and making them sit round the toddy circle, and insisting them to drink, we shall kill them with poisoned toddy, and throw their carcases into the river. Thus we shall seize the sovereignty of the hundred kingdoms, and your Majesty will then be sole Emperor of all Jambudipa."

The King was very happy and said "Very well, I shall do as you have said."

"My Lord ! this conference is one between two of us alone (of four ears only). No one else knows of it ; therefore without losing any time, we shall set forth at a lucky moment" suggested the Brahmin. And the King agreed to do so, expressing his approval.

Now the Parrot, after listening to their plot, and after they had ceased conversing, let a lump of excreta fall on the Brahmins' head, like one making a thing fall on the ground from hinges in the roof. And when he looked up with gaping mouth to see what it was, the parrot let another lump fall into his mouth, and flying up to a branch, cried out, "O ! Kevatta ! Do you think that your secret conference is for four ears only ? It has now already reached six ears. It will go to eight ears, and then to hundreds and thousands of ears !"

And when Kevatta cried, "Here, Here ! catch this parrot," the bird flew as swift as the wind to Mithila, and reached the Palace of the Bosat."

This wise Parrot was accustomed to perch on the Bosat's shoulder if the message it had brought from anywhere was a confidential one, and on his lap if Amara Devi too might hear it, and on the ground if it was intended for the public. That day the parrot alighted on the Pandit's shoulder, at which sign all went away, knowing that the Parrot had a secret to tell ; and the Pandit, taking the parrot with him, went upstairs, and inquired :

“What have you seen and what have you heard ?”

“My Lord ! I saw nothing to excite alarm in the case of the other kings of all Jambudipa, but Kevatta, the Chief Minister of King Culani Brahmadata of Uttarapanchala, took his master into the Royal Park, and had a secret conversation with him. I hid myself on a branch of a majestic Sal-tree, and after listening to the end, I let a lump of excreta fall into Kevatta's mouth and came away.”

Thus it revealed all that it had heard and seen.

“Did the King approve of his plan ?” asked the Pandit.

“He did, My Lord !” was the reply.

The Pandit tended the Parrot as usual; he gave it fried grain mixed with Bee-honey to eat and honey to drink, anointed its two wings with medicated oil, and laid it to rest comfortably in the golden cage covered with soft quilts. The Pandit then thought to himself,

“It seems that Kevatta does not know that I am Mahausadha Pandit. I shall not let his plot materialise!”

He then removed all the poor folk who lived in the inner city to the outer one ; he brought men from other countries, cities and the four suburban villages and established in the inner town — rich men who owned clothes, ornaments, riches, and grain ; he also obtained large supplies of corn.

THE SCHEME FAILS

NOW the King Culani Brahmadata having approved of the wicked scheme of Kevatta, marched against a small kingdom with forces of men, elephants, and horses, and besieged it. And Kevatta, as he had promised before, entered the inner city by a postern gate, and placing his proposal before the ruler, secured his submission. He then united the two forces and besieged another city. Thus King Culani Brahmadata, by following the advice of Kevatta, brought the Kings of all Jambudipa except King Vedeha, under his sway.

The men whom the Bosat had stationed with those different Kings sent letters to him incessantly, saying, "King Brahmadata has this day taken possession of such and such a kingdom. Therefore please be on the alert."

To them he sent word to say, "I am not dormant here; do not be negligent, but be on the lookout!"

In seven years seven months and seven days King Brahmadata took all the other kingdoms of Jambudipa except that of King Vedeha, and said to Kevatta :

"Let us now capture Mithila, the Kingdom of Vedeha."

"My Lord!" said Kevatta, "we must think twice before we take the kingdom where Mahausadha Pandit lives. That Pandit is very wise and is a great strategist."

Thus Kevatta Brahmin described the qualities of the Great Bosat like one drawing them on the disc of the moon; and being himself a man of deep diplomacy, he consoled the King by this advice:

"The kingdom of Mithila is very small; all the other kingdoms of Jambudipa will suffice for us. What does one kingdom matter?"

But the other kings said:

"No! we must take the kingdom of Mithila, for only then can we drink the cup of perfect victory."

Kevatta the Counsellor consoled them too, and restrained them, saying:

“What good can we do by taking the kingdom of Vedeha? It is just like a subject kingdom of ours. Therefore let it remain so.”

The King following the advice of the Brahmin Kevatta gave up the expedition to Mithila. And the Bosat's spies sent letters, saying:

“King Brahmadatta started off to go to Mithila with a hundred princes, but has returned to his own city.”

“Very well!” replied the Bosat, “from this day onwards ascertain and acquaint me of all the king's actions.”

Now King Brahmadatta plotted with Kevatta to hatch out the plot which included the murder of the Kings by causing them to drink poisoned toddy, and accordingly he instructed his Ministers to decorate the Royal Park like the Nandana Park, to fill thousands of jars with toddy, and to provide dishes of fish and flesh to be put in various places for the revel of victory. This matter was reported to the Pandit by his spies who were there, but they did not know that it was the wish of the King to kill the other kings with poison. The Bosat, however, knew this, for he has heard of it earlier from the Parrot. He therefore sent back word to them, requesting them to inform him of the date fixed for the drinking festival. And the giants informed him of the fixed day.

When the Pandit heard this, he thought: “So long as a great Pandit like myself lives, so many kings shall not meet with untimely death. I must save them”; and sent for the giants who were born on the same day as himself, and said:

“Friends! I have heard that. King Culani Brahmadatta has decorated his Royal Park, and is about to drink and revel with the hundred kings. Go there, and when seats are prepared for the kings, appropriate the best decorated seat next to that prepared for the king Culani Brahmadatta, before any one takes that seat, and say, ‘This is for our king!’ and when the followers of these kings ask you whose men you are, tell them that you are King Vedeha's. They will then quarrel with you, saying, ‘What nonsense! we obtained the sovereignty of Jambudipa after full seven years, seven months and seven days, and never once did we see your King Vedeha. Who is King Vedeha? Get away! If he wants a seat here, let him have the last!’ “You must then aggravate the quarrel by boasting thus, ‘Except Chulani Brahmadatta, there is none else greater than our Majesty. If we cannot get so much as a seat for him, we shall neither allow you to drink the toddy nor eat the fish and other dainties; and with your terrible cries cause them to tremble like young Deer

who have heard the mighty Lion roar, and with your iron clubs, break into pieces the pots and pans which are full of toddy and meat ; scatter the contents quickly, so that they may not be fit to eat; and rush into the midst of the Royal assembly, raising a tumultuous uproar like the Demigods who invaded the city of Sakra and proclaim : ' We are the warriors of Mahausadha Pandit of Mithila. Capture us if you can ! ' just to make it known that it is you who have come."

With these instructions he sent them off.

And these giants taking his words to ears, saluted him and departed ; then equipped with the five-fold weapons, viz., the bow, spear, javelin, sword, and missile, started off to the Northern country and entered the Royal Park which was decorated like Nandana Park. There they saw the splendour of the hundred thrones which had been prepared, with a white umbrella hoisted over each ; and having done necessary devastation as instructed by the Bosat, they rushed against the multitude and throwing many into utter confusion, returned to Mithila.

24 CHAPTER.

THE SIEGE OF MITHILA

KING Chulani was enraged. The hundred kings were enraged. And their armies were enraged.

King Chulani was angry because Mahausadha prevented the great rev. l he had prepared in order to murder the hundred kings with poisoned toddy, while the hundred Kings were offended because they had been deprived of the cup of victory. And the armies were disappointed because they lost the chance of a free drinking festival. And so king Brahmadatta called the hundred kings, and said :

“Come, friends ! Let us go to Mithila. Cut off the head of King Vedeha with this sword, and trample it beneath your feet as one crushes a ripe palmyra with one's feet ; and then we will drink and rejoice. Go and tell your men to equip themselves for bloody battle !”

And sending a confidential message to Kevatta, he said, “We shall capture the enemy who spoilt this great plan of ours. We shall besiege the city of Mithila with our eighteen complete armies”¹; and the hundred kings agreed.

Now the King revealed his proposal to Kevatta and said, “Professor you must come with us !”

But the Brahmin, wise as he was, thought : “We cannot capture Mahausadha Pandit. If we go, we shall only invite disgrace. I shall stop this expedition by arguments,” and said, “Your Majesty, King Vedeha has no power ; the entire control of his armies rests with Mahausadha Pandit. He is a person of extraordinary power. The Kingdom of Mithila, which he guards as a lion defends his rocky lair, cannot be captured by man. If we go, we shall suffer disgrace. I do not favour this expedition !”

The King intoxicated with the pride of his pomp and power blazed forth in anger, like a king cobra struck with a stick, saying “What can that fellow Mahausadha do ?” and started off to Mithila with the hundred kings, who were as haughty in

1. අපකොති, a complete army comprised of 2,187 elephants, 21,870 charges, 65,610 chariots, and 109,350 infantry.

their own conceit as himself, attended by the eighteen complete armies, which raged with anger, like the ocean lashes into fury by the whirlwind that blows from all four directions. ¹

Kevatta too, finding that the King would not listen to him, and seeing that his opposing would be useless, started off with him. The thousand warriors whom the Bosat had sent to spoil King Brahmadatta's revel, having performed the task so well, travelled the whole night, reached Mithila in one day, and informed the Bosat of all that they had done. And the ambassadors whom the Pandit had sent earlier to live with the kings, sent letters to the Pandit, saying, "King Culani Brahmadatta is coming, attended by a hundred kings, in order to capture King Vedeha. Be on the look-out."

Thus letters came continuously to the Pandit — "To day they are encamped at such a place; to-day they are encamped at such a place; to-day they will reach the city," and so forth. On receipt of this news the Bosat was armed to the teeth. And King Vedeha heard :

"They are coming to capture this city!"

Now, King Brahmadatta approached Mithila, seven yojanas in length, with rows of torches, which had been kindled in thousands early in the evening, and besieged it. And now, let me relate how they besieged Mithila.

First around the battlement they marshalled a chain of mighty elephants standing ear to ear, tall as columns of smoke rising from the flames of a king's wrath, caparisoned with gilded armour, and equipped with golden spears and hatchets, and with clubs grasped and held in their trunks. These animals were powerful enough to crush even a brazen rampart with the weight of their onslaught, who distilled three different tumours from ten places; and these elephants carried on their backs numerous riders holding spears and other weapons in their hands.

Next they placed, neck to neck, a circle of horses bred in mighty Scindia, Cambodia and Greece, fully caparisoned and trained for battle, bearing countless troops of gaily decked and armoured warriors. At the trumpet sound that gave the signal for the furious fray these chargers pranced with delight, like the devastating wrath of the king, in whose heart, the anger and the wild desire to defeat the enemies raged like rolling billows of the celestial river.

Then there was a circle of chariots, ranged wheel to wheel, the seats of which were covered with the skins of Lions, Tigers, and other animals, beautifully decked and decorated with streaming flags of multifarious colours, drawn by Scindian steeds, and filled with richly dressed archers, who bore their quivers on the shoulders. These chariots resembled a host of whales sporting in the ocean of the King's army.

And there came next, another ring of warriors standing shoulder to shoulder in terrible array, like the warriors of Mara¹ who were ten times as heavy as the earth, and who came in many unnatural guises, armed profusely with scimitars, swords, javelins, lances, and other glittering weapons, disguised in the shape of lions, elephants, horses and tigers.

Yes, these warriors were like the soldiers of the Death God who came in the guise of King Culani to test in some battle with a different foe, the issue of his impending struggle with Prince Siddhartha, who about to attain Enlightenment, had mounted the glass seat² with no army except the thirty-seven doctrines promoting the attainment of Buddhahood, but with the assistance of the Bo-tree and his complete fulfilment of the thirty exercises of perfection. Thus they besieged Mithila seven yojanas in extent by means of four forces; and stationed sentinels in different places.

The people applauded, clapped their hands and cut capers, delighted at the idea that they had besieged the big city. Yes, they danced and shouted aloud. The entire seven yojanas of Mithila were lit up as bright as day by thousands of torches standing up in rows above the host of eighteen complete armies, and by the flashing of the ornaments worn by the hundred kings, elephants, horses, and other forces, just as the Darkness of mortal ignorance disappears when the sun of the Bosat's wisdom appears. The trumpeting of elephants, the neighing of horses, the rattle of chariot wheels, the thunderous tread of infantry, and the din of chanks, horns, trumpets, pipes, symbols, violins, drums large and small, golden and silver chanks and other musical instruments, mingled in an earth-shaking and clamorous uproar.

The four pandits, Senaka and others, hearing the sound of this great tumult, not knowing what it was about, went upto King Vedeha, and said, "Your Majesty! there is the noise of a great commotion. We do not know what it is. It would be well to inquire what the uproar is." Having heard these words,

1. The Death God; Evil personified.

2. *विश्वः*, Crystal seat or the seat of grass.

the king thought, "Surely King Brahmadatta has come!" And when after opening the balcony window, he looked out and seeing that he had actually come, with fear he cried to Senaka and others, "Our lives are at stake, for now Brahmadatta will kill all of us!"

Now the Mahausadha Pandit, knowing that king Culani had come, arraigned the sentinels all over the city, as fearless as a lion, and then ascended the steps of the palace, saluted the King, and stood on one side in order to reassure the King and his retinue, who were shrieking with terror. The King reassured at the sight of the Bosat, and thought :

"There's no one but my son, Mahausadha who can extricate me from this calamity !" and addressed him as follows:—

"O Pandit ! King Brahmadatta of Panchala has come with all the eighteen complete armies of the hundred kings. The warriors belonging to the kingdom of Panchala are innumerable. They have a battalion of army carpenters, who carry with them large quantities of rafters, barks, planking, etc. for building gates, watch-towers, halls, and so forth ; they possess powerful contingents of elephants and horses, well trained and disciplined in war. They are crowded so close together, that if any one gets among them he is carried off his feet and borne away unseen between their shoulders. Ten different clamours unite in one din, the trumpeting of elephants, the neighing of horses, the rolling of the chariot wheels, the thrill of violins, the beating of drums, the chanting of battle-songs, the clashing of the cymbals, and the shouts of military commands, 'Shoot !' 'Capture !', 'Pierce through !' and so forth. As the noise of the elephants and the other three hosts is louder than the roar of the mighty ocean, no voice is strong enough to communicate the different commands, 'March', 'Counter-march', 'Attack' 'Attention,' etc. which are given by beat of drum and sound of trumpet and chank. There is a colourful display of the lustre or jewelled and gilded weapons, golden trappings or elephant hooks, and Royal and Princely equipage rich in golden rings, waist chains, bracelets, earrings, armlets, strings of pearls, pear necklaces, belts, epaulets, fine-coloured tassels, five-fold bracelets, rings set with jewels, single rings, anklets, toe-rings, leg-rings, foot ornaments, and so-forth. There is also a host of various flags waving above chariots, embellished with gold and silver, and decorated with red, green and other cloths. There are howdahs, horse litters and chariots. The army is rich with experts well versed in the eighteen sciences, such as the science of elephants, of chariots, of archery and so

forth. In valour these armies are like lions. They are well disciplined by skilful warriors. In these armies there are ten Pundits of world-wide wisdom, who can devise stratagems strange to think of, who after solitary meditation for two days, could overthrow the mighty world and confound it with the heavens. Moreover, king Culani's army has an eleventh adviser. That is his Mother Talata Devi, who excels them all in wisdom. Now to describe the wisdom of Talata Devi I shall narrate the following :—

“One day a man carrying with him a seer of raw rice, a packet of rice prepared as a meal, and thousand gold coins, went into the middle of a stream in order to cross it, but being unable to reach the opposite bank, because the current was so strong, he cried out to the people who were on the other side, ‘Good friends, I have a seer of raw rice, a packet of rice meal, and a thousand gold coins. Of these I shall give you ‘That which I like,’ if any one of you can carry me over to your bank, please do so.’ Then a strong man, having tucked up his cloth tightly got down into the river, took hold of him by the hand, and after crossing him over, said, ‘Give me my dues.’ He then replied “Take either this seer of raw rice or this packet of rice meal.” Hearing this the man who had conducted him through the water said, ‘I led you to this bank regardless of my own life; neither the seer of raw rice nor the packet of rice meal is of any use to me. Give me the thousand gold coins.’ To this the other replied, ‘I said I would give ‘That which I like’, accept it if you wish.’ The other therefore, referred the matter to a by-stander who said, ‘Did he not say that he would give ‘that which he likes!’ Then accept what he gives.’ Dissatisfied with this decision he declined to accept the offer, and went with the man to the chief judge, whom he made his complaint. The judge, too, after hearing statements of both parties, gave the same verdict, saying : ‘Take whatever he gives you,’ Dissatisfied with the judge's decision, the plaintiff appealed to the King. The King summoned the judges to the palace, in their presence heard the statement of the two disputants, and confirmed the decision of the judges, not knowing how to decide it better. So that, the man who went into the river at the risk of his own life lost the suit.

At that time the King's mother, Talata Devi, who was close by, perceived that the King's judgement was not just, and said,

“Son ! reconsider your decision ! ”

And he replied, 'Mother ! I have decided to the best of my ability. If you know a better way, please decide.'

Thereupon Talata Devi, saying, "Very well" addressed the person who had to cross the river and said:

'Come, my son, place in order on the ground, the seer of rice, the packet of rice meal, and the thousand gold coins'; and having caused him to put them in order on the ground, she inquired, 'When in the water what did you say to him ?'

I said, "If you take me to the other bank of the river I shall give you 'That which I like'" he replied.

'If so, take whatever you like and go away,' said the Queen, and he took the thousand gold coins. When he had gone a little distance the Queen sent for him, and questioned, 'What ! My son, do you like the thousand gold coins ?'

"Yes, Your Majesty, I like them," he replied.

She then continued, "Now, my son, did you or did you not say that you would give this man 'That which I like?'"

'I said so, Your Majesty,' he replied.

"If so, give this man the thousand gold coins," said the Queen.

He thereupon gave the thousand gold coins, weeping and bewailing. The King and the Ministers were pleased, and applauded her. Thenceforward the wisdom of Queen Talata became known all over Jambudipa. Chulani's Mother, Talata Devi, who is so wise has become the eleventh adviser of the army.

"And in this army you find along with King Chulani a hundred terror-stricken monarchs of kingdoms captured by Brahmadata, who has now got command of all the forces in the land. This kingdom of Mithila has been besieged by a host of eighteen complete armies. First there is a circle of elephants, then a second of horses, then a third of chariots and then a fourth of warriors : thus there are four circles, and between the circle of elephants and the circle of horses, there is a space ; between the circle of horses and the circle of chariots there is a space ; between the

circle of chariots and the circle of warriors, there is a space. Thus the city is surrounded by four circles and three spaces. Now, tell me, will the kingdom of Mithila, inhabited by my subjects, be completely destroyed, and its walls and ramparts be rooted up, and annihilated? The hundreds and thousands of torches and lights which appear before the great army that encompasses us on all sides are like the star-spangled skies. O Pandit! The use of wisdom is for such a calamity as this. There is no one who possesses such wisdom as you. How can we manage to save our lives from such a great force as this?"

The Bosat having heard the words of the King, who spoke, thus in deadly fear, thought to himself:

"This King is panic-stricken. I am his sole salvation. I am to him like the physician who cures a sickly man by a timely treatment like the morsal which alone satisfies hunger, like the water which alone quenches a long thirst."

And the Pandit, like a lion roaring on the top of the 'Red mountain,' said to the King:

"Don't trouble yourself, My Lord, but enjoy the blessings of Your Royalty. I shall overthrow the whole of these eighteen complete armies as I would scare a flock of crows with a stone or a troop of monkeys with a bow, and I shall make them flee for their lives without a single cloth in their bodies like a host of naked ascetics! Leave this battle alone to me. Don't fear, or worry yourself. Enjoy the pleasures of your royalty."

Having comforted the King with these words, he left the palace and proclaimed the following declaration among all the citizens by beat of drums.

"Good friends! Let each of you provide yourself with flowers, perfume, and ointment, eighteen kinds of sweetmeats, toddy, meat and other food and drink; put on your costliest dress and begin merry-making without despairing: 'Are we not encircled by the enemy?' You may drink and if you drink moderately, you may even drink intoxicating liquors and beat your drums, sing your songs, clap your hands, whistle, jump and dance. I shall supply all the necessities to those who don't have, for I am the Pandit of the 'Great Remedy'. Do not be alarmed! I have the Remedy! Behold my power!"

With these words the Bosat comforted the citizens. Encouraged by these words, the citizens, who had known his power from his seventh year, without the slightest fear or doubt, began dancing and merry making as directed by the Pandit.

MAHAUSADHA'S STRATEGY

NOW, when the enemies who were outside heard this great commotion of revelry, many of them entered the inner city through postern gates. Though they came with hostile intent, they were not arrested by the onlooking citizens, but were allowed to roam about unmolested. Those who thus entered the city saw merry-making, drinking and revelling wherever they went. And King Brahmadatta hearing the noise in the city, addressed those who were near and said :

"My friends ! these people have no fear whatsoever even though the city is besieged by this host of eighteen complete armies. With the greatest delight, as though intoxicated with the fivefold pleasures, they clap their hands, they shout for joy, they whistle and sing, and beat their drums. What wonder is this ?"

In reply to the King, who spoke thus, a spokesman of the Pandit said:

"Your Majesty ! For a certain purpose I entered the inner city through the postern, and seeing the people celebrating the festival, I asked them, ' Friends ! When all the Kings of the whole Jambudipa have come with their armies and have besieged your city, why are you so indifferent about it ?'

"And they replied. 'Our King, when a young prince, was anxious to celebrate a festival, when all the kings of the whole Jambudipa have come with their armies and besieged the city. The rare opportunity to have that wish fulfilled, has now arrived. And therefore the King ordered the citizens by beat of drums, to celebrate a festival for seven days, while he himself, attended by his Ministers, are merry-making and revelling in the upper storey of the Palace. He knows that these kings and their armies have come and besieged the city. Hearing this I expressed my contempt at the King's folly saying ' how childish '."

King Brahmadatta, hearing this, inflamed with rage and fury, like a snake struck with a stick, cried out:

"Hurry up men ! and cause all these moats on all sides to be refilled immediately ; break and pull down to the ground the walls, doors, battlements, watch-towers, gates, and fortresses ! Enter the city and cut the heads of rabbles like sweet pumpkins falling from an overloaded cart ! And bring me the head of the King himself ! Quick !"

At this command his mighty warriors, arming themselves with various weapons, marched up to the gate of the Battlement, saying:

“ We shall take the city ! ”

But they suffered great loss from the mud, sand, and other missiles launched against them by the warriors of the Bosat, and far from breaking into the tower, as they had determined, they were not able even to reach the wall. A few of them, however, marched forward resolutely and reached the ditch clamouring to take the city.

Now the sentinels stationed at the strategic points in the battlement hurled down javelins, spikes, spears, and tridents on them causing great destruction. The soldiers of the Bosat mocked the soldiers of King Brahmadatta with signs and gestures, and put them to shame with contempt and abuse. Filling pots with fish, meat, and toddy, they stretched them out to those outside the walls, but when they raised their hands to take them, they readily withdrew their hands, and ate and drank the stuff themselves. Thus they paraded the minor rampart, making such gestures as to irritate the enemy.

The warriors of Brahmadatta, failing to attack the battlements, were thoroughly beaten, and ran back stanching the blood from arms, legs, head, forehead, and face, and casting anxious looks behind them.

When they reached the King, they said:

“ Your Majesty ! A man with supernatural power of flight might enter the city by the air, but entering the city by ordinary means is a task beyond human power ! ”

The King, who heard this, was crest fallen, and remained inactive for a few days, and not knowing any means of capturing the city, consulted Kevatta:

“ Professor ! when there is not a single one who can reach the wall of the city, how can we dream of capturing it. What shall we do now ? ”

Then the Brahmin replied:

“ If such is the case, Your Majesty, water is a thing that they must get from outside. We shall cut short their water supply : they will succumb to the deprivation and be forced to open the gates. Then we shall dictate our terms to the enemy ! ”

"Yes friend! that is a good stratagem," agreed the King and from that day they cut short the water-supply. Now the news of this reached the Bosat by a message written by one of his spies who lived with the King, and shot it into the city attached to an arrow.

On the day the enemy came to the city the Bosat had proclaimed that if any one should see a leaf shot into town with an arrow he should at once bring it to him. And so a certain man brought and handed the leaf over to the Bosat. The Bosat then understanding the plan, thought, "It is very clear that the old Kevatta and these other ignorant block-heads have not yet learnt that I am the Pandit of the 'Great Remedy' and sent for a bamboo stick sixty feet high and split it into two parts, which he again bound together after removing all the knots on the inner and outer sides. He then covered it with leather and had it besmeared with mud. After that he sent for mud and Lily seeds brought by the hermits from the Himalayas and planting the Lily seed in the mud, which he placed in the water at the edge of the tank, he erected the bamboo over them and caused it to be filled with water. In one night the seed germinated, and, growing up a fathom above the bamboo, burst into a flower.

Then the Bosat, who is like a wisdom-conferring gem, pulled the stem of the lily by the roots and gave it to his men, saying, "Give this to King Brahmadata!"

They coiled up the stem of the lotus and threw it from the rampart, saying :

"You poor souls! Men of Brahmadata, do not die of starvation. Pluck the petals and wear them on your heads! Boil the stem of the lotus and eat, and survive!" A spokesman of the Bosat picked that and taking it before the King, said, "Behold, My Lord! Such a Lotus flower and such a long stem are quite unusual. We have never seen the like before!"

The King saw it and said:

"Measure it and see!"

Then the man in measuring it, exaggerated it to be eighty fathoms instead of sixty. Then the King asked when and where it had grown, and another of Bosat's spies, seizing the words as they fell from the King's lips, made up a story of his own and said:

"One day, longing to drink a little toddy, I entered the city, through the postern, and saw a large tank where people were amusing themselves. Many seated on boats and canoes, were plucking flowers and enjoying themselves. This Lotus looks like one of the flowers growing on the bund of the tank. for if it had grown in a deep place it would be over one hundred fathoms in length !"

Hearing this, the King said:

"Professor! do not think of capturing the city by cutting off the water-supply. That stratagem of yours is a sorry one !"

"In that case", replied the Pandit, "the plan I have now hit upon is a very good one. The citizens are supplied with paddy and rice from outside. We shall intercept their supplies of paddy and rice. The people, when attacked by famine will doubtless open the gate. We will then capture them and do as we wish."

As before the Bosat was informed of this plan by means of a letter and again the Bosat said, "It is clear that this simpleton Kevatta does not know my wisdom !"

Then he caused the surface of the inner rampart to be covered with mud and sown with paddy. Now it must be known that every intention of the Bosat always succeeds, and so in one night plants shot up above the ramparts of Mithila seven yojanas in extent, their bright green colour looking like black clouds above the city walls.

The King seeing this, asked the people, "What is that, that looks so green on the top of the ramparts ?"

Then a spy replied:

"My lord, Mahausadha Pandit, the son of the cultivator foreseeing by his wisdom a cause of fear in the future, caused every grain of paddy that was in the country to be collected, and filled the granaries of all the people in the great city, throwing away the surplus paddy on the ramparts and on the streets. This paddy was dried by the sun, and then soaked by the rain. One day, for a certain purpose, I entered the city through the postern gate, and taking up a handful this germinated paddy said, 'Friends, this is very good paddy ; I shall sow it,' and tried to remove some. Seeing this, the people who were there jeered at me, saying, 'Your fellow has undergone

great starvation. If you wish, take a full load, clean and boil it, and eat to your heart's content to save yourself from starvation'. I felt greatly ashamed, and regretted having touched the paddy !”

Hearing this, the king said to Kevatta:

“It is impossible to capture this city by stopping the supply of paddy and plants from the ramparts and stored firewood so that it could be seen from outside. The people who were on the rampart laughed and jeered at the soldiers of Brahmadatta, and threw large logs of firewood at them, saying:

“Don't starve ! Don't die for want of firewood to cook your food ! Let the men who lack wood take these and boil the rice to eat !”

Some were severely injured by blows from these logs. The king, seeing the large quantity of firewood, inquired what it was, and one of the spies said:

“What, your Majesty ! Do you not know that Mahausadha Pandit, the son of the cultivator, foreseeing the cause of fear in the future, caused even firewood to be collected in the jungle and brought into the city, and supplied firewood to each house and boutique, and in every backyard ; the surplus he caused to be heaped up on the rampart.”

Having heard this, the king said to Kevatta:

“The city cannot be captured even by cutting off its supply of firewood. Shall we give up the attempt ?”

The foolish Kevatta, muttering with bitter anger, uttered:

“O great king ! do not dishearten yourself. I have got a really good plan.”

“What man !” replied the King. “I see no end to these great devices of yours, not one of which has succeeded. We cannot capture Vedeha, the King of this City.”

26 CHAPTER

THE BATTLE OF JUSTICE

AND again the foolish old Brahmin said "My lord! it will be a great disgrace to us all if they say that the great king Brahmadatta, with his hundred kings and the armies, unable to capture king Vedeha, fled away defeated. Now, think not my lord, that Mahausadha Pandit is the only wise man. I too possess great wisdom, and I shall defeat him in one way."

"If there is a way, tell me what it is."

"I shall fight the Battle of Justice," replied Kevatta.

"What is this Battle of Justice?"

"O great king! listen to me!" said Kevatta, "the two armies shall not fight, but when the two Pandits of the two kings appear in one place, if one of them bows before the other, the defeat shall be assigned to the king whose Pandit has saluted, and victory to the one whose Pandit has received the salutation. Mahausadha Pandit does not know of this plan of mine. I have grown old with years, whereas Mahausadha is but a youth. Being a good mannered man who knows to respect his elders, he will, when he sees me, naturally salute me! Then king Vedeha will certainly be defeated. Having thus defeated King Vedeha, we shall return, for there will be no disgrace in doing so. This is what is called the "Battle of Justice."

The Bosat, hearing of this device too as before, thought "If by this plan I yield to Kevatta, I am much to blame."

In the meantime King Brahmadatta saying: "O Professor! That is a very good plan!" sent a messenger to King Vedeha, by the postern gate, announcing that there would take place on the morrow a Battle of Justice, and the failure to comply would be regarded as a defeat.

Hearing this King Vedeha called the Bosat and acquainted him of it. And the Bosat — the pleasure of the inhabitants of the whole universe — saying, "Very well, my lord," caused an arena for the Battle of Justice to be formed outside the western gate.

Nevertheless, the hundred warriors who were with the various kings not knowing what the consequences might be, took their stand round Kevatta in order to protect the Bosat. King Brahmadata and the hundred kings reaching the arena of the Battle of Justice, were looking towards the east, expecting the Bosat, like men who on an auspicious day unanimously look towards only one direction, eagerly expecting to see the New Moon. The foolish Kevatta too, stood looking towards the East muttering :

“ He is getting late ! Time is passing by ! ”

That morning the Bosat—the Teacher of the three worlds, who has brought the earth under his lotus-like feet — having bathed himself with sixteen pots of sweet-scented water, attired in a silken cloth worth a lakh of gold coins and decked with all ornaments ; and then, after partaking of the delicious and dainty dishes prepared by Amara Devi, went to the gate of the Palace in a great procession, and announced his arrival to the king, who said :

“ Let my son come in immediately ! ”

Thereupon he entered the Palace, saluted the King, and stood on one side ; and when the King inquired, “ Well, son Mahausadha ” he replied :

“ I am going for the Battle of Justice ! ”

The King then continued “ Son what can I do for you ? ”

“ My lord ! I wish to deceive Kevatta by means of a gem ; may it therefore please Your Majesty to let me have the eight-sided gem ? ”

“ Son ! do you need my permission to get it ? Take it ! ” said the King.

Then the Pandit took in his hand the gem that had been given to him in his former birth by Sakra, the King of Gods, and saluting the king, went down from the Palace. Attended by the thousand warriors born on the same day as himself, and followed by a whole army, seated in a magnificently decorated chariot drawn by two white steeds worth ninety thousand pieces of gold, he reached the gate, at the time of the midday meal.

Now, Kevatta eagerly waited, expecting the Pandit's arrival every moment, and gaping with his neck craned in the

direction from which the Pandit should come, with the result his neck looked like that of a crane. His body was bathed in sweat caused by the rays of the sun, which was like the glory and majesty of the Bosat. And the Bosat, attended by his retinue of elephants and horses, that surged on the streets like the angry sea inundating the earth, caused the gate to be opened, and driving out from the city, alighted from the chariot and stepped towards the arena of the Battle of Justice, in majesty, like unto a roused lion with mane erect. The hundred kings, beholding the beautiful personality of the Bosat, applauded a hundred times with joy, saying, "O ! Is this the son of the millionaire Siriwaddhana. Pandit of the 'Great Remedy' who is second to none in wisdom in all Jambudipa?"

The Pandit, like Sakra, who started off to the battle with Titans attended by the gods of the Two Heavens, advanced up to Kevatta taking with him the eight-sided gem. The Brahmin Kevatta, seeing the Bosat, was fascinated, and, unable to stand where he was, advanced to meet him, and said:

"O Mahausadha Pandit ! We are both Pandits. I am surprised why you have not sent me a present, after I have come and waited here so long for you. Please tell me, why have you failed in this mark of respect for me ?"

"Excuse me Pandit, all the time I was searching for a present that should be worthy of you, and I have to-day found this gem. Accept it ; it is a peerless gem!"

And Kevatta seeing the gem that was shining in the hands of the Pandit, thought in happy emotion :

"This Pandit has brought a gem for me," and saying "If so, please give it," he stretched out his hands.

And the Bosat, too, saying, "Then take it," stretched out his hand and let the gem fall on the tips of the Brahmin's fingers. Now the Brahmin could not support the heavy gem with his finger-tips, and it fell on the ground and rolled on to the feet of the Bosat. Then the Brahmin, anxious to possess the gem, bent down towards the feet of the Bosat to pick it up. Seeing this, the Bosat held the Brahmin's neck firmly with one hand, and the loins with the other, so that he could not raise his bowed head, and saying:

"Get up, professor ! Get up ! I am younger enough to be your grandson ; do not bow down before me ! Do not

worship me!" and rubbed the Brahmin's face against the rough ground, and made his face as red as a shoe flower; then seizing him by the throat, cast him off, exclaiming, "You fool! did you think you could get a bow from me?"

Kevatta fell to the ground six fathoms off, and rising up, ran away wiping the sand. The gem was picked by the Bosat's men; and the voice of the Bosat, crying, "Get up, professor! Do not worship me," was heard above the din of the great armies.

All the people applauded and waved cloths above their heads, clapping their hands and shouting aloud:

"Shame! Shame! Kevatta Brahmin has worshipped the feet of Mahausadha Pandit!"

Now all the people, including king Brahmadatta and the hundred kings saw Kevatta bending down at the feet of Mahausadha Pandit, and overcome with mortal fear at the sight of their wise champion worshipping at the feet of the foe, which signified their utter defeat and put their lives at stake, mounted their chargers which galloped as fast as their feet could carry them to Uttara Pancala. Seeing their flight, all the retinue of the Bosat cried:

"Look! King Brahmadatta and the hundred kings are flying for life with their routed army!"

At this noise the panic of the kings increased by leaps and bounds. They fled, fled for life. The great army was scattered, and each man looked only for his personal safety in flight. As they ran, the Bosat's men shouted all the more. Our lord, Our Saviour, the Mine of Mercy, without ordering a pursuit of the defeated foes, returned to the city attended by his men.

King Brahmadatta flew a distance of twelve gawwas¹ with the army, which had been scattered into individuals in spite of its great numbers. The shameless Kevatta mounted his horse and followed the army spitting blood from his mouth and wiping the gore from his forehead. And when he came up with the army he cried from his seat on horse-back, "Friends! stop! stop! I did not worship the son of the cultivator. Halt! Halt!"

1. Approximately a "gawwa" is four miles. A league.

But in spite of his cry the army fled away without halting, saying,

“You wicked, mean, dirty, despicable, ugly and silly fool of a Brahmin! After boasting that you would go to fight a battle of Justice, you bowed down before a person young enough to be your grandson. Have you not committed the lowest act that would bring shame even to the meanest of men? You fool! Don't speak nonsense. You villain!”

In such abusive terms the army reviled Kevatta, and turning a deaf ear to this words, refused to stop their flight.

THE STRATAGEM OF ANUKEVATTA

BUT the Brahmin dashed forward into the midst of the army, crying, "What do you say? I did not salute the son of the cultivator. I tell you, I did not salute him. Take my word. Does a man bruise his forehead, knees, and arms by a salutation? Today I hear from you for the first time of such salutation. That son of the cultivator deceived me by means of a gem."

Thus he convinced them of the truth of his statement, and regaining his control of the mighty army, he stopped their flight. The army which had gone for almost three yojanas now, began to come back. And having come, besieged the city as before.

Although it did not occur to the army owing to the power of the Bosat, the army was so numerous that if each soldier cast a single handful of earth it would have sufficed not only to fill the moats, but also to overtop the twenty-seven foot rampart with a mass of equal height. It is for this reason that such a device did not occur to them. Buddha, the teacher of the three worlds has said "The will of the Bosat is ever fulfilled."¹ And therefore by the power of our Bosat who is like a wish-conferring gem, not a single soul had the mind to throw a handful of earth or a stone into the city. Therefore, the army came up to the city and resumed their former positions.

King Brahmadatta questioned Kevatta :

"Professor, what shall we do?" and the wicked old man replied,

"We shall not let anyone come out from the city gates, or even from the postern gate. When that is done the harassed people will themselves open the gate. We can then easily capture the enemy, and do whatever we wish with them."

And when the Bosat got to know this by means of a message sent by a spy, he thought, "If the enemy stay here for a long time, then we shall have no peace of mind; I shall drive them off by means of a stratagem."

1. Bodhisattanam abhippayā nama ijjhanti

මොක්ඛසත්තනාමං අභිප්පයා යාමි ඉජ්ඣන්ති

He therefore searched out a dexterous and cunning man. He was Anukevatta by name.

"I have got a certain plan ; I wish you to carry it out for me," the Bosat told Anukevatta, and the latter replied:

"Sir ! what must I do ? Please tell me."

"Stay on the great rampart, and when our men are not on the look out, seize the opportunity to say to the people of Brahmadatta, ' Friends ! don't be discouraged, but try to maintain your position for a short time. All the people in the inner city are as dis-spirited as fowls caught in a cage. In a few days they will themselves open the gate: you will then be able to capture Vedeha and the wicked son of the cultivator ! Saying this, you must walk up and down the rampart, and win their heart by giving them fish, meat, other food and drink. Our people hearing you speak thus, will abuse you, and then seizing you and tying your hands and feet tight will almost beat you to death with a bamboo, to be seen by the people of Brahmadatta : then taking you down they will tie your hair into five knots, and daub you with brick-dust, and deck you with chaplets of red flowers, and after giving you a number of lashes that will raise weals on your body, they will tie your hands tightly behind your back and taking you up to the top of the rampart will put you in a basket tied to a rope, and lower you down in the presence of the people of King Brahmadatta. Now when you are left outside as a treacherous villain Brahmadatta's men will take you and show you to the king. Then if the king asks you for what offence they ill-treated you so cruelly tell him thus —

' O Great King ! my wealth is great. Mahausadha, the son of the cultivator, got angry with me, and denouncing me as a traitor to the King, confiscated my property ; and as I was pondering how I could get the cultivator's son beheaded, I sympathised with your army in their discouragement at being unable to capture the town, and gave them food and drink, and told them of the difficulties with which the besieged citizens have faced. On hearing this the cultivator's son, animated by his old grudge committed this outrage on me. Your men know all the facts !'

"Thus speak and contrive to get into the king's good looks and when you have fully gained his confidence, tell him: ' O great king ! now you have me on your side. Be at ease, for Vedeha and Mahausadha, the son of the cultivator will lose their heads very soon. I know exactly the strong and weak places of the rampart, and also those places in the moats

which are infested with Sharks and Crocodiles, and those places which are not. In a few days I shall get the Kingdom for you! Then the king keeping full confidence in you will treat you lavishly and give over his army to your command. You will then go to attack the city with the army and lead them into the places where there are fierce Crocodiles and Sharks. Then the soldiers, terrified by the Crocodiles and Sharks, will not fight, or even reach the moat. Then you will go up to the king and say, 'Your Majesty! this army of yours has been rendered useless by the son of the cultivator. There is not a single soul here, not excepting Kevatta or any of the Kings, who has not taken bribes from him. I alone am loyal to you. Though they march under your banner, they have been bought over by the Pandit. When such a large number have become turn-coats, what can I do my lord? If you do not believe me, please order them to parade before you in full uniform. When all of them appear before you so dressed, look at the ornaments, swords and other presents that were given to the Kings by the son of the cultivator with his name engraved on them, and believe what I say! The King will then order the Kings to come up before him, as you advised, and when they come to him he will see my name engraved in their various ornaments of which you have forewarned him. He will then tremble with fear and dismiss the Kings and he will then ask you, 'Professor! What shall we do now?' Then you tell him: 'O Great King! the son of the cultivator is a person of many wiles, and if we remain here for some days more he will gain over your whole army and put you to death. Let us lose no time, but take horses at the dead of night and flee away. Let us not die at the hands of the enemies.' When you speak to him thus he will believe you, and act as you say. Furthermore you will then ascertain the time of the King's flight and indicate it to our men."

Then Anukevatta replied, "Sir, if I can in any way assist you, I shall do it with all my heart!"

The the Pandit continued, "You must bear a few blows while Vedeha's army is looking on."

"Very well Sir, provided you do not actually kill me or deprive me of my hands and feet, you may do anything you wish with my body!" replied Anukevatta.

Then having treated Anukevatta's wife and children and all his household very kindly without exception, and having showered presents on them, Bosat's men tied Anukevatta's hair

into five knots, whipped him in public so that the cuts remained visible on his body, and disfigured him by smearing him all over with brick-dust, decking him on with garlands of red flowers. After that they put him in a strong wicker basket, and fastening it to a rope, lowered him down outside the rampart and exhibited him to Brahmadata's people. The King, after testing Anukevatta in many ways, took him into his confidence, honoured him with his friendship, and made him the commander-in-chief of his army.

Now Anukevatta took the army, and marching towards the city walls, led his men near to the fords infested with such ferocious Crocodiles and Sharks that even a finger could not be dipped into the water without its being snapped off. Anukevatta encouraged them saying, "There is no danger in getting into the water here: the fortification here, too, is weak, and there are no pickets."

But those who got into the water were devoured; while on the other hand, the Bosat's men who were on the watch-towers played havoc among those who were left uneaten, by a shower of arrows, spikes, lances, and hooks that they hurled upon them. Brahmadata's army was almost annihilated and refused to advance to attack or even face the enemy.

Then Anukevatta went up to the King and addressed him, "Your Majesty, there is not one who will fight for you. All have taken bribes from the son of the cultivator. If you do not believe me, may it please Your Majesty to order all the kings to parade in full kit and see with your own eyes the name of Mahausadha carved on their ornaments."

The King as advised, assembled them all and seeing the inscription on the various ornaments, believed that they had all taken bribes. And after dismissing them he asked:

"Now friend, what shall we do?"

"My lord, no action is now possible. If we waste time by waiting here the son of the cultivator will capture you. Though Kevatta walks about with a sore on his forehead, he too, has taken bribes. During the 'Battle of Justice' he secretly received a peerless gem, and made you return to this death-trap after you had fled nearly three yojanas. Therefore, Kevatta is certainly a traitor, and I would not advise you to stay a single night here in the jaws of death. I wish you to fly at midnight. Yes! fly at midnight!"

Hearing this the king was panic-stricken, and said,

"If so, My friend! there is none here who is true to me but you; saddle a horse with your own hand and arrange for my flight."

Anukevatta knew that the king would certainly fly, went to the spies of the Bosat and said:

"The king will fly tonight. Awake and wait. Don't think of sleep!"

He then went and saddled the horse for the flight, arranging the bridle in such an unusual way that should the reins be pulled to stop the animal it would go on without halting. Having done this he came to the King at the dead of night and said:

"I have brought the horse saddled, Your Majesty; it is now time for Your Majesty to start at once!"

The King mounted the horse and fled; while Anukevatta also mounting a horse rode some distance as if to escort him, and then stopped behind. Seeing this, King Brahmadatta pulled hard the reins in order to stop the steed, but without halting a moment it galloped away with him.

Meanwhile Anukevatta ran into the midst of the army and shouted with a loud voice:

"King Chulani Brahmadatta has fled!"

And the spies with their followers repeated this shout with great cries. Then the hundred Kings thinking that Mahausadha Pandit had opened the gates and was playing havoc, were panic-stricken and in fear of instant death, fled headlong like a naked rabble, leaving all their wealth behind them, and neglecting even their swords and uniforms, each one looking only to his own safety. Then too, Bosat's men redoubled their shouts, crying out:

"The hundred Kings have also fled!"

And hearing this cry the men who were at the city gate and on the watch-towers and ramparts re-echoed the cry, the spies who were outside and the people who were inside

the city joining in one horrible uproar. All these shouts were blended in one earth-splitting din, which surged like the ocean struck by a sudden squall, and wild clamour arose in and out of the city walls. The soldiers, of the eighteen complete armies were struck with mortal fear, thinking that Mahausadha Pandit had certainly captured King Brahmadata and the hundred Kings, and seeing neither any assistance nor any means of escape, ran headlong, not only leaving all their belongings behind, but without even a cloth to cover their naked bodies. Thus not a single soul remained in the field where such innumerable armed forces camped out a few hours ago.

As for King Chulani and the hundred Kings, they were utterly scattered, that they did not meet each other, and each one returned to his own city. Alarmed by the tumult that prevailed during the night, the elephants and horses stampeded, breaking their tethered ropes and chains, and ran into the jungles. Early on the morrow the sentinels opened the gate, and went out of the city, where they saw the remains of the havoc, and the booty left. They then went right upto Mahausadha Pandit, who is like unto a wish-conferring gem, and asked him what was to be done with the booty. And the Bosat replied, "As the spoils have not been taken by the violence, but have been left behind the enemy, they become vested in us as abandoned property. Out of these give the property of the Kings to our King, bring me all that belonged to Kevatta, and you citizens take the property that belonged to the army.

The citizens took a fortnight to remove the gold, silver and other valuables, and four months to remove the paddy rice, weapons and other articles. The Bosat rewarded Anukevatta with many a boon. He also caused the elephants and horses that had fled to be recaptured. From that time onwards the people of Mithila were never found wanting in the ten kinds of wealth.



28 CHAPTER

A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL

NOW seven years had elapsed since King Brahmadatta and the hundred Kings had been defeated.

One day it so happened, that the old Kevatta looked at his face in a mirror, and seeing the scar on his forehead like the mark of a burn, was enraged like a snake struck with a stick as he thought to himself:

"This is the dirty work of that scoundrel Mahausadha, the son of the cultivator, who put me to shame before the hundred Kings!" In his rage he began to think how he could kill the Bosat. Finally a plan struck his mind. It was to entice King Vedeha by promising him in marriage the King's daughter, princess Panchala Chandi, who was fair as a fairy, and endowed with the sixty-four graces of women, to bring him into the city with the Bosat, as a fisherman drags to the land the fish that has swallowed his bait, and then to kill both of them and drink the cup of victory.

Resolving to do this, and having finally made up his mind, he went upto the King, and said:

"My lord ! I have a secret scheme to discuss !"

"Shut up !" said the king.

"By following your secret counsels I had to flee here naked, without having so much as a robe to cover my self ! And now you come out with another scheme ! Get away !"

"O Great King ! there is no scheme to equal this. Please give your ear !" entreated Kevatta.

"If so, tell me what it is."

Thereupon the Pandit, saying:

"First of all, my lord, we must have privacy !" took the King to the upper storey of the Palace, and said:

"Now your Majesty ! We must excite the passion of King Vedeha, and bring him hither into this city together with the son of the cultivator, and then kill them."

“By what means do you intend to excite the King's passion; and bring him to this city?”

“That is a minor matter, my lord. Your daughter Princess Panchala Chandi, possesses exquisite beauty. We will have her transcendent beauty celebrated by poets in verse, and cause the Bards to recite them throughout Mithila. And when the King hears of her beauty, he will think ‘What is the use of my kingly pleasures when I do not possess such a beauty!’ and he will go mad because of her. Then I shall myself go to Mithila and return after fixing an auspicious day and hour for the marriage. When I have returned, the King will come to this city with Mahausadha Pandit, like a fish that has swallowed a bait. We will then seize them both, and put them to death.”

The King was very much pleased, and said :

“Professor, that is excellent!” and agreed to carry out the plan.

Now a ‘Sela Lihini’ bird who guarded King Chulani's bed-chamber carefully listened to this private conversation and kept it in memory.

The King sent for veteran poets, and telling them how matters stood showered them with rewards, and then showing them his daughter, said :

“Good fellows! describe the beauty of this princess in sweet verse!”

Thereupon the poets composed very beautiful verses very pleasant to the ear, and recited them to the King. That day the King conferred many favours on them. The minstrels learnt these songs from the poets, and sang them before large assemblies, to the great delight of the audience. When these poems and songs became popular in the country, the King again sent for the minstrels and said :

“My fellows! Go and get hold of larks and stay on trees during the night, singing; early in the morning tie bells on the necks of the larks and set them free, and come down secretly!”

Now the reason for so doing was to set a rumour running all over Jambudipa that even the gods sang in praise of the beauty of King Brahmadata's daughter.

The King sent for poets again and said, " Now you must compose verses which convey the following: ' A princess so fair is too good a match for any other King in the whole Jambudipa except King Vedeha of Mithila,' and associating the glory of King Vedeha with the beauty of the Princess."

And the Bards travelled four hundred leagues, singing in every place they stopped, and reached Mithila. There too they sang these lays before large audiences, and many of whom were delighted with the songs applauded again and again, and loaded them with presents. During the night these minstrels sang from the top of trees, and early in the morning they descended, after tying bells round the necks of larks and letting them fly away. When the sound of these bells was heard in the air, the rumour spread throughout the whole city that even the gods extolled the beauty of Chulani's daughter.

King Vedeha having heard of this, sent for the minstrels and caused them to sing those songs in his Palace before a large assembly ; and greatly amused at the idea that King Chulani would give him in marriage so fair a maid as his daughter, gave them many gifts and treated them very kindly. They came back and told what had happened to King Chulani and then Kevatta said :

" Now, Your Majesty ! I shall go and fix an auspicious hour and date for the marriage !"

" Very well ! What do you propose to take with you ? "

" Let me have some presents," replied the Brahmin. And the King provided him with costly presents.

The Brahmin set forth to Mithila in a large procession, and reached the Kingdom of Vedeha, where on his arrival, the sole topic of conversation in the city was, the intention of King Brahamadatta to give his beautiful daughter in marriage to the King, and the consequent re-establishment of friendship between the two monarchs ; and the arrival of the Brahmin Kevatta to fix an auspicious hour for the nuptials. By now, King Vedeha also heard of the Brahmin's coming.

MARRIAGE TALKS

ON hearing this news well-knowing the schemes of others, the Bosat did not look with favour upon Kevatta's marriage embassy, and with the intention of knowing the exact facts of the affair, sent word to spies who lived with King Chulani, asking them to send detailed information as to the marriage. In reply they informed the King that they were ignorant of the details, as the King and Kevatta had discussed the matter in the bed-chamber of the upper storey of the Palace ; and they added that a Sellalihini Bird who watched the King's bedroom knew the details of the affair fully. Thus knowing the real situation the Bosat determined not to let the wicked Kevatta spy out the city which he had been at such pains to guard, because if the enemy were to secure any knowledge of the vital points, the Bosat's pains would have been in vain. Therefore he got his men to decorate the roadway from the city gate to the palace gate, and thence to the gate of his residence, erecting screens of rattan on either side of the roadway, and covering the top with mats, which he decorated with pictures. He also got white sand spread on the ground and flowers of fine kinds strewn; and brimming jars of water placed on either side of the roadway with coconut flowers and ornamental plantain trees erected.

Kevatta who entered the town without clearly seeing the houses and buildings of the city, thought to himself :

"The King has made these decorations in honour of the auspicious event which brings me here", for the Brahmin did not know that the object was to hide the city from his sight. Thus he went through the decorated streets, and had audience with the King, offered him the presents he had brought, and after a pleasant talk with him sat on a side. After receiving hospitality at the hands of the King, he began to narrate his mission thus :

"O Great King! Our ruler is desirous of confirming the friendship which now exists between you by a marriage alliance. He has sent treasures and gifts. And now let diplomatic ambassadors come from that country ; let them say only such acceptable words as are pleasant and agreeable to your ears ; let the factions of Vedeha and Chulani lay aside their differences ; let them say to one another only such words as may give mutual satisfaction, for this marriage will seal and confirm the friendship between the King of Panchala and the King of Mithila. Therefore let not unpleasant words mar this auspicious event ; let

us promote it by pleasant conversation ; let happy words only be used. Apart from this, Your Majesty, the King will send you his peerless daughter and other precious treasures. Henceforth let ambassadors of great eloquence pass between the cities bearing gifts from one monarch to the other ; for, does not the union of these two kingdoms resemble the mingling waters of the Ganges and the Jumna ?

“Your Majesty, our King would have sent another envoy, but fearing that no other would be able to do justice to the proposal of the marriage which I now bear, said to me, ‘ Professor ! go yourself and win over the King to look favourably on the alliance, and bring him to this city ! Therefore, O King of Kings ! May it please Your Majesty to come without delay ; from your journey you shall gain two ends—the acquisition of an incomparable princess, and the establishment of goodwill with the king.”

Pleased at this speech, the King was won over merely by the words, “ You will obtain a princess of exquisite beauty ; ” and he said, “ O Professor ! Formerly both you and Mahausadha Pandit challenged each other at the Battle of the Justice. Now, go and see my son ; speak pleasantly to him, and forgive him, for you are both Pandits, and then please see me before you go back ! ”

Kevatta agreed, and forthwith he went to see the Pandit.

Now that very morning the Bosat, determined not to talk with that wicked man, drank a small quantity of ghee to justify his intended excuse, and causing the floor to be cow-dunged, to a thickness of two inches, smeared thickened oil on the pillars. He also caused all the furniture to be removed from the place, except only the narrow couch on which the Bosat reclined. After this he gave the following directions to his people : “ When the Brahmin tries to talk to me, say, ‘ O Brahmin ! don’t talk with the Pandit, he has taken a medicinal oil to-day,’ And when I begin to talk after he stops, say, ‘ O Sir ! have you not taken a medicinal oil ? You should not talk ! ’ ”.

After so instructing them, he covered himself with a red blanket and lay down on the sofa in the inner-most of the seven rooms on the ground floor.

Kevatta, on reaching the door of the first of the seven doorways inquired of the watchers where the Pandit was ; and they replied :

“O Brahmin ! Don’t talk loud, don’t raise your voice ; without a whisper walk in silently as a dumb man. Today our

master has taken a medicinal oil, and you must not disturb him."

The watchers at the gates of other rooms also said the same thing. The Brahmin passed the seventh gate in silence without a whisper, and reached the Bosat.

The Bosat showed signs of beginning a conversation with the Brahmin, who went upto him, but the bystanders stopped him, saying:

"Sir! Did you not take a very efficacious medicinal oil today? What advantage can there be in talking with this wretched Brahmin?"

Kevatta could find no seat near the Bosat, nor any facility for resting himself. He received no kind words from the Bosat, but stood like an old bull which had entered a dunglittered pen in the rainy weather, lifting one foot from the mire and rubbing it on the other to get rid of the clammy filth that adhered between the toes. Now, one man looked at the Brahmin who was in this plight, and rubbed his eye-lid; another raised his eye-brows; while a third scratched his elbow. The Brahmin, seeing the behaviour of these fellows, glanced suspiciously here and there, and said, "Pandit, shall I go now"; when another fellow said, "You wretched Brahmin! How dare you talk when we have told you not to? We shall now break every bone in your body!"

Trembling with fear he looked back, when a second bystander gave him a blow on the back with a strip of bamboo, while a third caught him by the neck and pushed him, saying, "Will you or will you not go?" And a fourth ran up to him and gave him a slap on the small of his back; and the Brahmin shuddering with terror like an old Deer escaping from the jaws of a Leopard, took to his heels at his best speed, and with difficulty, reached the Palace.

Meanwhile the King was thinking to himself:

"To-day my son will be delighted with the news of my marriage. What is more, the two Pandits will bury their differences and effect a mutual reconciliation which will be for my advantage."

Just then the King saw Kevatta, who had come staggering there, and inquired about the conversation which had taken place between them.

"Well, Kevatta, did you and my son forget the animosity that arose at the Battle of Justice and become friends? What was the nature of your friendly conversation? Was my son pleased to hear of the marriage proposed by your King? Tell me all details without reserve."

"O King! the Chief of men!" replied Kevatta, "that Mahausadha Pandit is by nature rude: he has an ignoble character and an evil disposition, and is altogether vicious: he spoke to me no more than if he were dumb, and listened to me no more than if he were deaf. That Pandit may suit only you, but there is none so wicked as he!"

Thus the angry Brahmin babbled whatever that came to his mouth. He was careful however, not to say a word about the blows he received, but dilated only on the evil disposition of the Great One.

The King was displeased at this, but did not contradict him: he even provided Kevatta and his suite with provisions and lodgings, and said, "Go, Professor, and rest."

After dismissing him the King thought to himself, "My son is very wise: he talks very kindly: Yet he has refused to talk with the Brahmin. What is the meaning of this? Maybe that my son saw some source of future calamity in this Brahmin's visit. Kevatta's arrival, therefore, may not be to our advantage or benefit. I believe that by the enticement of the proposed marriage he wishes to get me into his own country and kill me, and that it was because my son knew this, that he declined to speak to him."

While he was worrying his head by these apprehensions, Senaka and the other "Oceans of wisdom" came to him. From them the King inquired, "Well, Senaka! Shall I go to Uttarapanchala and bring Chulani's daughter over here? Are you all in favour of the expedition?"

Then Senaka replied,

"O Great King! What are you saying? Will anyone drive the Goddess of Glory when she comes to him? If Your Majesty go there and bring this princess, you will have no equal among the Kings of Jambudipa except Brahmadatta; for you will then be the consort of the Emperor's daughter. Moreover, Your Majesty, the King gives you in marriage his daughter, the fairest in the land, because he regards you alone as his equal, while he

looks on all the other kings merely as his vassals. Therefore here is a great advantage to be gained, and if any one in his folly opposes it, please do not have any hesitation but set out, for we too who accompany you shall be recompensed with feasts and presents !”

Thus Senaka, who was not second to Kevatta in folly, in envy and in natural greed, incited the King and instigated him to accept his advice. While they were talking, Kevatta came from the place where he was and said,

“Great King ! I cannot wait here any longer, for I must now depart.”

And the King dismissed him graciously.

The Bosat finding that the Brahmin had gone, bathed and dressed himself, came to attend upon the King, and saluting him he sat on one side. The King then thought,

“My son is a great counsellor; he is versed in all devices. By his natural wisdom, and without extraneous assistance, he can solve all the problems of the past, future and present, and he is therefore aware of the advantages or the drawbacks of our proposed expedition ;” but carried away by his passions, and in the folly of his ignorance, did not delay to follow out his original intention, and said, “Son Mahausadha Pandit ! the opinion of all six of us—Senaka, Pukkusa, Kavinda, Devinda, Kevatta and Vedeha—regarding the trip to Uttarapancala to bring the daughter of King Brahmadatta, is unanimous and as free from difference as the water of the Ganges and the Jumna. O Mahausadha Pandit ! Do you also consider with your excellent wisdom whether it is right or wrong to go there? What will you say ? Should we go or not ?”

Hearing this, the Great One thought, “Persuaded as he is in his folly by the words of these four, blinded by ignorance and fired by passion, the King will certainly go and face great destruction. I will tell him the defects of the expedition, and stop him if he could be stopped ;” and replied :

“Great King ! Do you not know that King Brahmadatta possesses the five fold elements of power ? I foresee that he will invite you there by offering to give you his daughter in marriage, in order to wipe out the disgrace of the defeat he formerly suffered, and will wreak his will on you, as a hunter disposes of a deer caught in a snare. If, in the

clamour of your passions you go to Uttarapancala, you will quickly meet your death, as a fish dies when it swallows the longed-for bait, blind in its greed to the hook that lurks beneath the water, you will come to great destruction, like a deer caught in the foils, and therefore I do not approve of your journey there."

When he spoke thus, the foolish King, unable to consider the matter sensibly, thought that he was being insulted, and was incensed with the idea that the Bosat had forgotten that he was merely a servant, and that the King was his master, and had said nothing about the marriage, although he knew full well that the Emperor of Jambudipa had sent an embassy to offer his daughter in marriage, but had foretold of a terrible death and treated him as a fool; he was now like a fish that swallowed a hook, a deer entangled in the foils, and was convinced that Senaka, his other three Pandits and Kevatta were the only people who spoke of the prospects of marriage.

And he abused the Bosat in many ways, saying:

"We were fools in asking such a question of paramount importance from you, the son of a cultivator, who earn your bread by hanging on the plough and toiling with the soil!"

and ordered him to be removed from his presence crying :

"Seize this fellow who has spoken so as to deter me from winning this peerless maiden, seize him by the neck and drive him from my palace!"

The Bosat perceiving the King's wrath thought, "I shall be disgraced to my dying day if any one, on the orders of this foolish King seizes me by the arm or neck; therefore I shall get away of my own accord!"

And rising up from his seat he saluted the King and went to his house.

Now, although the King had spoken in anger, out of respect for the Bosat, he did not order any one in particular to strike or to clear him out, and no one approached the Bosat, but each man looked at his neighbour, as the King's words applied to no special individual. If the King in his anger say generally, "Here, beat him, flog him and drive him out!" the bystanders who hear these words will not stir, but gaze eagerly on the King's face without lifting a hand; it is only he on whom the King looks as he issues his order, that should carry it out; if any one but the recipient of the order performs the service which does not concern him, he shall suffer the disgrace which he may wrongfully inflict on the other. Now as the King did not address any one directly, not a single man approached the Bosat and asked him to go away.

THE PARROT'S SERVICE

“NOW the Bosat thought, “if this King, who in his ignorance does not distinguish friend from foe, sets forth to Uttarapanchala, in the fervour of his passion to win the daughter of Brahmadatta, his blindness to the danger that hangs above him in the future, will indeed ruin him. He has been my generous benefactor and protector. Hence I must not get angry at what he said. I must try to save him. I shall therefore first send the Parrot, and when it returns with full details, I shall go there myself.”

Accordingly he sent the Parrot to the city. The manner in which the Bosat ascertained the actual state of affairs by sending the parrot was narrated by our Lord Buddha, the Teacher of the Three Worlds, after he attained Enlightenment, in the following words :—

“O Bhikkhus! that Mahausadha Pandit went to his house after incurring King Vedeha's censure, and calling the young Parrot which he reared sent it off to serve as a messenger, saying :— ‘My beloved Parrot rich with two golden wings! Come hither. I have a service which you must perform for me’ At this the Parrot joyfully got out of the golden cage in which it was, saluted the Pandit by uplifting its two wings, and standing on a side replied, ‘I shall perform any service you bid me, Sir, tell what you want without hesitation.’ Hearing this the Pandit addressed it thus : ‘O Parrot of the Madhara species! As the talk between Kevatta Brahmin and King Brahmadatta about the marriage has been kept private, ascertain fully from the Sellalihini bird that watches the King's bed-chamber whether the promise of marriage is true or false, and come and tell me immediately!’”

Thus saying, the Pandit fed it with fried paddy mixed with bee-honey, and gave it honey to drink, and smeared its two wings with oil boiled and distilled hundreds and thousands of times. Then the prudent Parrot, keeping well in mind the errand and the mission it had to perform, reverently saluted the great one three times, and flying out of the open window of the upper storey of the palace, set out as swift as the wind in the direction of the kingdom of Siri, and gathering news as much as possible from there, approached the Sellalihini bird. Now let me describe how the Parrot reached the Sellalihini bird. He went and perched on the golden pinnacle of the palace and uttered a melodious note, because he did not know on which storey or in which room the Sellalihini bird was, and would be guided to her by her cry in answer to his song.

And she, hearing this cry, went near the King's bed-chamber, and perching on the golden cage called three times in succession. The Parrot then advanced a little, guided by her voice, which he heard again and again, gradually approached, and alighting on the window-sill, and satisfying himself that she was alone by herself, approached her. Now it took this precaution, because in this world men in their pursuit of women are liable to suffer wounds, bruises, and injuries, and he was careful not to have such a cold reception from any inmate of the Palace who might see him. When the bird saw him she said, "Friend ! come here and sit in this golden cage," and the Parrot went into the cage and spoke to her,

"You are welcome !" said she.

"How, do you not repent and regret living in this cage ? Are you well supplied with honey and fried paddy ?" questioned the Parrot.

"Sir ! I am very happy to live here and I have no trouble. I am abundantly supplied with honey and fried paddy too."

The parrot hearing what she said, thought "Now if I say that I have come from Mithila, she will dare not associate with me !" and fabricated a story to the effect that he had come from the city of Avanthi, in the Kingdom of Sivi, on a message from King Sivi.

"Friend ! I am not an ordinary person. I am the Parrot which watches the bed-chamber of King Sivi. Our King is a very righteous man ; therefore he has set free the prisoners who were in prisons, and the birds who were captives in cages ; and he has relieved me also from my gilded prison. Roaming daily where I like in search of food, I return to live in my golden cage ; I am not like you who remain constantly in your cage, without the freedom or opportunity to get out."

After this conversation she treated him from the store of fried paddy and honey which was kept for her ; and finally she said :

"Friend ! you have come from a great distance, may I know why you came ?"

The Parrot hearing her words thought,

"Now, it is impossible in this world to win the heart of a woman without flattering and duplicity. I shall therefore gain her regard by a falsehood and discover her secrets !" and replied :—

"Friend ! My first wife was your kind ; she too was of no mean attainments ; her youth and beauty stole the hearts of men, her words were sweet and pleasant to hear ; but alas ! my wife, who was to me as ambrosia to the eye, fell a prey to a hawk, which killed her before my very eyes as I was standing by, and carried her away from me !"

"How did the hawk kill your wife and take her away ?" questioned the Selalihini Bird.

And the Parrot invented this story, which he related in a convincing manner.

"One day our King invited me to join him at a Bathing party. I took my wife with me, and after we had amused ourselves in the water, we returned together in the evening to the palace ; then in order to dry our plumage I flew out of the window with my wife, and perched on the ring of the finial which surmounted the pinnacle of the roof. At that very moment a hawk flying near the pinnacle swooped down to seize me, but I fled swiftly, trembling with mortal fear. My wife, however, on account of her pregnancy, could not fly as swiftly as I did and thus before my very eyes, the hawk seized and killed her and carried her away.

The King seeing me weep through grief for her, questioned me, "

Friend ! why are you wailing ?' and hearing the reason, he said to me, ' Friend ! do not be a fool, go and search for another wife '. I then replied ' Women are for the most part very weak morally, and it is therefore better to live alone than to bring home a proud and vicious wife ' Thereupon the King sent me to you, saying, ' There is a virtuous Sellalihini Bird watching King Chuan's bed-chamber ; her character excels your wife's by a thousandfold ; I know she is very good. Go immediately and sound her inclinations ; and if she says she is willing, and well comes your suit, and if you yourself agree, come and tell me at once. Either the queen or myself shall go and bring her in a great procession, and give her to you in marriage.' I have therefore, come to propose marriage to you ; and if you care for me, tell me quickly, for I cannot linger long ; if you will live with me, we two shall pass our lives happily in harmony. Disclose your honest feeling without reserve!"

The Bird on hearing these words was highly flattered, but concealing her satisfaction, said thus :

"O Parrot! what are you saying; a Parrot should choose a Parrot as his mate, and a Sella a Sella. When did a parrot ever wed a Sellalihini bird? What you suggest is news to me. I never even heard of such a match."

At this the Parrot thought, "Although she says she cannot entertain me as her husband it is not that she dislikes me. In her heart of hearts she loves me. I must in some way find an argument to win her over," and said :

"My friend! when the female is attracted to the male, the high and the low are brought to one level by this love, for love recognises no distinction, and even among men the passions of different kinds, are summed up in the desire to gratify the senses!" and to prove this he gave an example:

"In the past, for example, when King Vasudeva, the eldest of the ten princely brothers of the family of Krishna who reigned in the Kingdom of Dvaravati, left the town in order to divert himself in the park. There he saw a very handsome maiden standing by the roadside as she trodded her way to the town from a Chandala village for some purpose or other. The king with amorous intent, inquired about her caste, and although he was told that she was of a Chandala family, so great was his infatuation that, when he heard that she was unmarried, he gave up the idea of going to the park, and took her to the palace, where he exalted her above sixteen thousand queens, and crowned her his chief queen. That queen bore the king a son, who was called Sivti. After the death of his Royal father, this son reigned over the kingdom of Dvaravati. Thus even a King, born of the noble warrior caste, took a Chandala woman as his chief queen. Now, as you and I are lower animals, what difference is there between us? We need wait only to know each others inclination."

So saying he added another example :

"In days gone by a certain Brahmin, seeing the evil of the five passions, forsook his great wealth, and went to the Himalayas, where he built a hut of leaves and dwelt as a pious hermit. In a place not far from his hermitage a large number of Harpies¹ dwelt in a rock cave, and close by this there lived a great spider. This spider used to spin its web across the entrance of the cave, and every morning caught a harpy, tore off its head and sucked out its blood. Now the

1. A kind of mythical beings with the upper body of a woman and feathers and legs of a bird. കീഴ്ചരംകാരി.

harpies were very weak and naturally timorous creatures, where.. as the spider was as large as a chariot wheel ; and the harpies.. being powerless, went to the hermit who kindly questioned them as to the cause of their visit. Then they replied, 'Sir ! a spider.. is annihilating our whole race. You are our only saviour; kill it and preserve our happiness, and also our very existence !' Hearing this the hermit at once drove them off, saying, 'Do people like me take away life ? Get away !' Thereupon the harpies thought, 'The maiden of our tribe called Rathivati is yet unmarried, we will soon bring her, and then renew our request'. So they brought her to the hermit and said, 'Let this damsel be your maid, and now kill our enemy for us' The hermit fell in love with her, kept her with him, and early next morning hid himself near the entrance of the harpies' cave, and slew the spider with a blow from a club, when it came for its daily prey. The hermit afterwards lived with his maiden, he got sons and daughters, and after a long life passed away."

Thus the Parrot narrated his story and added : " Friend ! a hermit, though a man, lived with a maiden of the animal tribe of harpies. We are both birds, and therefore there is nothing to delay our marriage but our own wish."

The Bird hearing the words of the Parrot, said, " My Sire, one's mind is not always the same. I hate to be separated from love. Therefore promise that you will not desert me in the future, for I cannot bear to be without you ! "

The Parrot who was very shrewd and well versed in women's wiles replied :

" Very fine ! You already presume that I would go away. Do you think I am a worthless fellow because I came all the way to this place of yours to crave your love. I am a fit object for respect from Kings. Do you think that I cannot obtain a wife ? I shall seek another and I shall go away immediately, Good Bye ! "

The Sellalihini Bird hearing the words, " I shall go away immediately," sorrowed bitterly as though her heart would break, and animated by her love, at first sight, and exiled by her passions, suffered the fiery grief of separation as if her whole heart were burning in flames ; but yet, in her womanly way she played her part in order to detain him, saying :

" O wise Parrot ! the person who wishes to succeed in attaining this object must not act in haste, for haste makes waste and the Goddess of fortune deserts the hasty ; therefore..

stay here to-night. Domestic life and the maintenance of a wife are not things that can be undertaken all of a sudden without consideration. A thing done in a hurry is done badly ; hence stay to-night ; and if you do stay, you can see the splendour of our king, hear the songs of the beautiful, richly-dressed dancing girls, sweet as the mermaids' lays, and you can listen to the rattle of the drums they beat. If you stay here to-night, you will certainly reap nothing but gain ; you have got no wife at home, for you have said that your only darling was carried away by a hawk. Why, then, are you in such a haste. Do not hurry ? Do not fly but if you do lie here, you will have your wish."

"Since you put the matter thus, I shall stay," replied the Parrot, and remained with her, won her regard by his conversation, and lived happily with her day and night in the pleasure haunts of marriage, so that each was as dear as life to the other.

Time passed away, and the Parrot thought "She will now disclose any secret that is in her mind without reserve ; and therefore I shall at once question her and then hurry away from this place!" and said :

"My dear Lady !"

"Yes, my sire !"

"I like to ask you a question ; may I do so ?"

"Certainly, but there is one thing : Today is our wedding day ; if what you are going to say is with regard to this festival, tell me to-day ; if not keep it for to-morrow !"

"What do you say ? What I am going to speak about is a festival of festivals, a pouring of honey upon honey ! Why is King Brahmadata about to give away his daughter of dazzling beauty to his enemy King Vedeha and not to one of his hundred vassal kings ?"

The Birdy bride was greatly displeased at these words, and said :

"My lord ! On a day so happy, why do you ask me such an unhappy question ?"

"I say it is happy and you say it is unhappy. How is it that our words are so contradictory?"

"My lord! It is not a matter for discussion on such a happy day as this. I shall not speak of it."

"No, my dear! you must!"

"My lord! This is the very last thing in the world you should ask about. I cannot, and shall not, speak about it."

"Well then, if you do not share with me the secrets of your heart, what is the use of our living together?"

The Sellalihini bird whose heart was filled with grief at these words, fearing that the Parrot would desert her if she did not speak out, said:

"In that case I shall tell you. Listen to my words. Never wish even your enemies such a marriage as this arranged by King Brahmadata to King Vedeha.

And when the Parrot asked the reason she replied:

"Listen, I shall tell you. King Brahmadata after getting down King Vedeha and Mahausadha Pandit to this Kingdom by the promised marriage with his daughter, will kill them. If they come here, they are doomed. The marriage proposal is not the outcome of any friendship, and it can lead to no good result. Indeed the King, far from giving his daughter in marriage, would not let the bridegroom so much as a look upon her. The King and Kevatta conspired in the bed chamber where I was, saying, 'We shall kill them both and drink the cup of victory,' and Kevatta has now gone to flatter the King and induce his coming."

Thus without omitting the smallest detail, she disclosed the secret to the Parrot.

Hearing this the Parrot extolled Kevatta thus: "This is certainly a proof of Kevatta's consummate wisdom. By this stratagem they can very well get the King to this city and kill him; their plan is marvellously well designed. But why talk of such a disastrous affair today which is our happy wedding day. Say no more about it!" and silenced her.

Now the Parrot finding that he had accomplished the object of his visit, passed the night with her, and at dawn said :

"My dear ! I must now go to the Kingdom of Sivi and tell our king that I have found a suitable wife. Give me leave for seven days. On the eighth day I shall come with a great procession. Till I return do not grieve for me nor fast, but live happily."

The Sellalihini bird unable to bear the grief of being separated from the parrot, and lacking in skill to reply to her husband, said, "Very well. I shall give you leave for seven days, but if you do not come on the eighth day, it is for my funeral that you will be coming on the ninth day. If you really love me, come within seven days !"

"My darling! What do you say?" replied the parrot. "If I do not see you on the eighth day, shall I survive either? Is my heart made of stone? Could I, whose first wife died prematurely in child birth, survive the loss of my second after seven days of marriage. Hvae no fear about my return !"

But he thought in his heart, "You may live or die; what do I care for you ?"

Then leaving the cage, he returned towards the Kingdom of Sivi, flew a short distance, and later returned towards Mithia, where he arrived safely and perched on the shoulder of the Bosat.

And when the Great One took him to the upper storey and inquired what news he had gathered, the parrot related from beginning to end without an omission all that the bird had done and said. The Bosat fed him with fried paddy and honey, and gave him honey to drink, and anointing the inner side of the two wings with oil boiled and distilled a hundred and a thousand times over, rubbed the joints of his legs, and left him to rest in his magnificent golden cage.

31 CHAPTER

MAHAUSADHA COMES TO UTTARA PANCHALA

WHEN the Bosat heard the words of the Parrot, he thought: "The King being displeased with me will go, and meet his destruction. And if any one gets to know that I took seriously the angry words of the King who had bestowed on me such high honour, and did not rescue him, knowing his fate so well, he will dishonour. Why should this King die when there lives a counsellor like myself! I shall go before the King does, and see King Brahmadatta, and build a ground city for our King; then I shall make a small tunnel of about one league long and a big tunnel of about two leagues long; and shall see that the daughter of King Culani is wedded to our King: and while the hundred kings besiege our festive city, I shall save our King from destruction as one would save the moon when it is fallen in the mouth of Rahu¹ and his safe return in my hands."

As he thus thought, there arose within Our Lord the five kinds of joys and in exuberance he uttered as follows: "If any man receive wealth of every kind from any King and living in great prosperity, he wants nothing more, such a wise shall not act nor speak nor think anything against his King. When he sees his King in danger and has power to save him, and yet refrain from saving him, he betrays his friend. Therefore, it becomes me not to take to heart a trifling word which the King may have ignorantly or unwittingly uttered."

Having thus thought, he bathed himself with sixteen pots of sweet-scented water, and attired in his best, went to the Palace and saluted the King, and standing on a side, spoke to the King in these words:

"How now, your Majesty! Will you go to Uttara-panchala?"

"Yes, my son, I shall go. What is the use of a Kingdom to me if I cannot obtain Princess Panchala Chandi? You must not desert me, you must come with me. By going there two benefits will I gain—I shall get the jewel of a wife and, from my relationship with the King, good-will will be established between us."

"Your Majesty", replied the Bosat "If that is so, I shall go first and build palaces for your Majesty to live in, and other houses as well, and when I send word to you, please come on that day."

1. The shadow of the earth is personified as a great Titan in Buddhist mythology.

On hearing this the King's heart was full of joy as he thought, "Certainly, this shows that my son will not leave me alone," and said :

"Son ! As you are going first, what must you have from me ?"

"Let me have some strong warriors !"

"Take any number you wish," replied the King.

"May it please your Majesty to send with me strong men who are now serving jail sentence !".

"Is that a thing to ask ?" questioned the King. "Do as you wish."

Thereupon the great one caused the prison doors to be opened, and breaking the chains of those mighty warriors, whom he judged to be capable of effecting every scheme he might plan out, released them and conferring great favours on them, said:

"You must do me service !".

Then the Bosat, taking with him men of eighteen castes skilled in different arts—carpenters, workers in iron and leather, painters and others—and causing them to bring with them adzes, axes, hoes, crow-bars, and other tools suitable for his purpose, set forth to Utara Panchala, with a great retinue.

The Buddha, explaining the manner in which the Bosat started forth, said :

"O, Bhikkhus ! Taking with him strong warriors to build cities and houses, that Pandit Mahausadha set out before the King."

Then along the course of his march the Bosat built villages at intervals of four leagues and stationed a representative in each village with the following instructions : "For our King's return, who will bring with him Princess Panchala Chandy you will make ready horses, elephants and chariots to replace the many houses, elephants and chariots which the King brings with him, and, you will send them forthwith to Mithila, taking care that they do not fall into the hands of the enemy."

Thus making arrangements on his way, he reached the river-side, and called to him a Prince called Ananda, gave him these instructions:

"Take about three hundred ship builders, cut strong timber, build three-hundred ships, and in the same place have a large quantity of timber ready for building palaces, gates, doors, ramparts, and houses, and load three hundred ships with them!"

Thus instructing him he sent him away, and crossing the river, he measured the distances by his paces, and in his mind determined the sites :

"Here shall be the great tunnel, two leagues long, and here the city for our King to live in, and here again the small tunnel, one league in length which would reach the King's Palace."

So thinking, he came to the city in a great procession.

King Chulani Brahmadata hearing the Bosat's coming, was much delighted, thinking to himself: "Mahausadha Pandit has come and Vedeha is sure to follow soon ! I shall without doubt see the end of my enemies. My wish shall be fulfilled. I shall kill the two enemies and drink the cup of victory, and bring all Jambudipa under one banner and reign supreme."

As soon as Our Lord, who is like Ambrosia in the eyes of the people, entered the city, the men of that city, which is forty-eight leagues in length and breadth, shouted with one voice :

"This is Mahausadha Pandit. Is not this great man who drove the hundred kings and the eighteen complete armies, as one drives away flock of crows with a stone?"

And when they saw him, they could not believe their eyes. They were greatly bewildered, and the whole city was moved that day, like the milky ocean by the moonbeams.

BOSAT ARRIVES

NOW as the citizens gazed upon him, admiring the beauty of his person, the Bosat went to the Palace gate and sent a message informing the King of his arrival. Then the King said, "Tell him to come in," and entering the Palace he saluted the King, and stood on one side. The King after a pleasant talk with him, said:

"Son ! when will the the King, come ?"

"The moment I send word to him, he shall come !" replied the Bosat.

Then the King inquired, " Why did you come first ? "

"My Lord !" replied the Pandit, " I came to build palaces for our King's marriage."

"Very well!" the King replied, and caused the Bosat's retinue to be supplied with necessaries for their food, and, so on and treated the Bosat exceedingly well; gave him a beautiful place to live in, and said:

"Son ! You can keep yourself occupied till the King comes. If you see anything that should be done for us, please do it and live happily."

Inside the Palace, as he stood at the foot of the steps leading to the upper storey, he thought " Here shall be the entrance to the small tunnel ; " and again he thought further: " The King himself has told me that if there was anything to be done for him I should do it ; so I shall contrive that this stair-case shall not fall in when we dig the tunnel ! " Then he said:

" Your Majesty, I looked at all the parts of the Palace which should be altered as I stood at the foot of the stair-case and observed no defect, except that there is some little fault in the stair-case. If you consent and give me sufficient beams and planks, I can alter it so well that even the celestial craftsman himself shall not condemn the work, much less an ordinary carpenter!"

"Very well!", replied the King, " have it done as you wish!" and ordered a large quantity of timber to be supplied.

The Great One then thought and determined: "The entrance to the smaller tunnel should be here"; so he removed the old staircase, and had boards fixed so that no earth should fall into the place where the entrance of the tunnel was to be, after which he secured a new stair-case so firmly that it could not sink down. The King was not aware of the calamity that was awaiting him, but thought it was done for his own benefit. The only defect the Bosat saw in the ladder was that it would be a bad thing if it should sink down when the tunnel was being dug.

The Bosat passed the day in superintending the works, and next day said to the King, "My Lord! if you will give me a house, I shall convert it into a magnificent Palace and also build other buildings for the King and his retinue to live in."

"Very well my son! Except my palace you may take any house you like in the city."

"Great King! We are strangers. Your men are many. When we go to take their houses they will quarrel with us. What shall we do then?"

"Pandit! Do not give a thought to their words, but take any house you like!"

"Your Majesty! If my own guards be stationed at the Palace until we get a house, they will not let complainants come in, and therefore they will have to go back. If this is done, Your Majesty and we too shall be free from inconvenience."

"Very good. Place your own guards at the gates!" said the King.

Then the Bosat stationed his own guards at the top of the flight of steps at the entrance to the Palace, and in other places, and instructed his men thus:

"Don't let any one come into the Palace!" and ordered another batch, "Go and pull down the house of Talata Devi, the King's mother!"

The men readily went to execute his order and began to pull down the walls and buttresses, as if in vengeance. The King's mother hearing of this, came out of the house immediately and said:

"Fellows! Who is breaking down my house?"

And they replied, "Mahausadha Pandit has ordered that this house should be broken down in order to build a Palace for his King."

"Why, children, cannot the King live in this house?"

"The retinue of our King is very great. This house is too small; we do this in order to build a Palace on a large scale."

Enraged at these words, the queen exclaimed, "Fellows! Do you not know that I am the King's mother? I will tell my son, and know what to do with you."

"What are you saying? We are breaking these walls down upon the orders of our master the Pandit. If you are powerful enough to do so, stop us!"

Thereupon the queen, exclaiming, "I shall tell you what I will do with you," started off in a rage to the Palace to tell the King. The guards who were at the gate stopped her from entering, saying "Halt!"

She then exclaimed:

"What do you mean? I am the King's mother. There never was a guard set against me. Let me go in!"

"Your King has told us not to let any one come in. Don't stay here. Get away!"

Thereupon the queen being unable to get an audience, stood looking at her house being broken down. One of the fellows who was there rose up, and saying:

"Will you go from this place or not?"

seized her neck and pushed her off. The old lady rose up with difficulty, wiping the sand off her face, and thought, "This shows beyond doubt that the King has given the order. If not, is there any one who could treat me in this manner?"

And going up to the Pandit, she said:

"Son Mahausadha Pandit! Why do you cause my house to be broken down?"

But the Bosat, without saying a single word or looking in her direction, remained as if he did not hear her. The people who were close by inquired :

“ O, Queen ! what is the matter ? ”

“ My children ! Why has the Pandit ordered that my house be broken down ? ”

And they solemnly answered, “ To build a Palace for King Vedeha ! ”

“ Why, children,” she continued, “ do you think you cannot get another house in this great city ? Here is a lakh of coins of gold ; take this money, get a house in another place, and build your palaces.”

Then they replied, “ Suppose we take your lakh of coins and give up this house, this city is not void of rich men ; and therefore, when we take another house, they too will also think of giving us bribes. If that is done, how can we find houses and build palaces when all the houses we acquire are given up for bribes ? However, lady, as you weep and wait and pray so much, we shall deliver your house over to you, provided you will not tell anyone that you gave bribes to release your house.”

“ My children ! what do you say ? Don't you know that when people say that even the king's mother released her house by giving bribes, the shame is upon me ? And no one shall know it but myself.”

They agreed, and taking the lakh of gold coins which the queen gave, restored the house back to the queen.

Now, this lakh of gold coins is not gold melted with five kinds of metal, as copper and so forth, as the present gold is : That gold was called “ Nila Kahapana,” two-fourths of which is Madha gold and two-fourths the fine kinds of metal. It must, therefore, be understood that the lakh of gold coins the queen gave amounted to fifty thousand Madha² pieces of gold.

So they left the queen's house and surrounded Kevatta's house and, as before, began to break down everything from the gate onwards. Then the Brahmin jumped up, as he thought to himself : “ I was the man who this cultivator's son selected from the entire

1. නිල කහාරක.

2. මාඩ.

crowd of enemies who came against him, to seize the neck in the sight of the hundred princes and their army, and rub on the ground, and suffuse my forehead with pools of blood, so that now my flesh is white as if suffering from a leprous disease, and put me to shame. And again when I went to tell the king of the marriage, he got me inside his house and got his thugs to thrash me with a bamboo, and dismissed me all but dead. Not satisfied with that, he has now come hither, and it is my house, he has selected of all the houses in this large city. Well ! Even if his King does not come, I shall do to this fellow what should be done to both."

Thus inflamed with anger, he went towards the Palace gate to complain to the King, caring little for the people who were on guard.

" Old Brahmin ! Don't approach ! " cried the guards.

On the strength of his intimacy with the King, he reached the gate. Then one of the guards jumped up and said,

" You vile, wicked old fellow, when you were repeatedly told not to go, you still have not stopped ! " and with his hand struck the Brahmin a blow on the back, leaving the marks of the five fingers upon the flesh. After receiving that blow the Brahmin remained silent and looked on every side, trembling with fear and in great pain of body, almost unable to say anything more ; and not knowing what to do, he gave the men a lakh of gold coins and induced them to leave the house.

In this manner they went on breaking most of the houses in the whole city, until evening, and the bribes they received for restoring the houses amounted to nine millions.



33 CHAPTER

THE WORK OF THE TUNNEL

THE Bosat having travelled all over the city, went to the palace. The King then inquired, "O Pandit ! have you secured a place to live in?"

He replied, "Great King ! here is none who will not give us such a place; but when we take a house where they have lived long, they are agitated with much grief, and it is not my pleasure to cause displeasure to any. There is a place about a league outside the town, where I can build a Palace for my King."

On hearing this the King was delighted, as he thought within himself, "When we fight in the inner town, we shall not be able to distinguish the enemy. If the attack takes place outside, we can encircle and kill them and easily gain the victory."

With this in mind, he said :

"Very well, my son ; you may build the houses at the site you have chosen."

The Bosat then continued, "Your Majesty ! We for our part shall do all that. Do not let any of your people come to the place where our constructors are operating, in search of firewood, herbs, or any such thing. If any one comes, a quarrel is sure to arise. Then there will be no peace of mind to your Majesty."

"Very well, my son ; I shall prohibit people going there from this place."

And again the Bosat said, "Your Majesty, our elephants will come together to sport in the water and will play together there, and if the citizens be annoyed with us and say, 'since the arrival of Mahausadha Pandit we do not have even water to drink' your Majesty must bear with it."

And the King replied, "My Son ! Let your elephants cool themselves and play in the water undisturbed."

After this, the King proclaimed by beat of drums : "If any one goes to the place where Mahausadha Pandit is carrying on his works, he shall be fined a thousand pieces of gold."

The Bosat saluted the King, and went out of the city with his retinue. There in the place which he had marked out to build the town he founded a village called, "Gangulgomuwa", on the further bank of the river. There he stationed elephants, horses and chariots, as well as cattle, and gave instructions for the construction of the works, to his men, and saying, "You must do so much, you so much" and so forth. After giving these instructions he began to work at the tunnels. The gate of the main tunnel was near the river. Six thousand powerful warriors started work at the main tunnel; they removed the earth in leather bags and cast them into the water of the river, and all the earth thus removed was trampled upon by the elephants, with the result the water became muddy.

The citizens were perturbed and asked, "What is the cause of this?" and the spies of the Bosat said:

"Mahausadha Pandit's elephants are sporting in water, and thereby the water of the river has become muddy. They trample the bottom of the river and throw up the mud."

The people were satisfied with this explanation. The Bosat's wishes always blossom in success; hence neither rock nor root was met within the tunnel and the earth sunk down and disappeared. The gate of the small tunnel was in the "New town." About seven hundred giants were at work on it; they carried the earth in leather bags to the town and heaped it therein; the earth so brought they mixed with water to build ramparts, and also they used it for plastering walls and such like activities. The entrance to the main tunnel was in the same city.

The tunnel was provided with a number of doors eighteen cubits high, curiously contrived with machinery. When one button was pressed all the doors opened and when another was pressed they closed themselves. Either side of the tunnel was worked in brick and pastered with lime. The top of the tunnel was roofed in with planks and polished with chank shells, and the whole place was plastered white with lime. This main tunnel contained eighty large doors and sixty-four smaller ones. All of these were fitted with machinery. On either side of the tunnel there were several hundreds and thousands of light-houses. The locks of the doors of these, too, were contrived with machinery. And, again, there were on either side of the tunnel bed rooms for all the hundred kings, and the locks of the doors were contrived with machinery. In each bed-room there was placed a large bed, decorated with vary coloured beddings and trappings; and in each room there was a throne, surmounted by a white umbrella, and decorated in the same way. In the bed-rooms, near the large

beds, there were modelled figures of women as fair as goddesses, dressed completely in women's attire, so beautifully modelled that a person who did not know of it would not be able to distinguish them from real women unless he touched them. And, again, there were charming fresco paintings done on either side of the tunnel by clever artists.

Now, let me tell you what these paintings were; they were : The Glory of Sakra ; the four great continents of the universe ; Mount Meru ; the four Great Oceans ; Mount Himalyaa ; the tank Anotatta ; the Mount Vermillion ; the discs of the Moon and the Sun ; the Heaven called Chaturmaharajika, and the other heavens of the sensual gods, the Brahma worlds and other wonders of the universe.

Again he collected sand as white as the melted silver, and he designed on the roof, a lake of full-blown lotuses, which seemed to be suspended to the stalks above the blossoms below. On either side of the tunnel he caused market stalls to be made, containing various sorts of merchandise. In every part they hung up garlands of sweet-smelling flowers. So the tunnel thus made was as beautiful as "Sudharma," the celestial Hall of Sakra.

Now the Ambassador Ananda whom the Bosat had at first sent, loaded three hundred ships with the timber which was sawn by the three hundred carpenters, and brought it down the river, and informed the Bosat of his arrival. The Bosat transported the timber to the town, and, saying to Ananda, "Keep these ships hidden, and bring them up when I tell you," directed them to be hidden in a part not far from the place.

Again he had three moats dug round the New City, namely, a water moat, a mud moat, and a dry moat. He also completed a rampart eighteen cubits high, and a buttress to support it, with doors, watch-towers, strongholds, postern-gates, and with all the essential requirements of a royal residence, including stalls for horses and elephants and a tank of water.

VEDEHA COMES !

THUS in four months he completed all these major constructions the main tunnel, the small tunnel, and the new town. When all was completed, he sent ambassadors to the King, requesting him to come.

The Buddha, who was narrating this story, illustrated this incident thus :

“ O Bhikkhus ! Mahausadha Pandit having gone prior to King Vedeha, built towns, tunnels, palaces, and other houses, and having completed these works in four months, sent messengers to call King Vedeha :

“No sooner did the King hear the words of the messenger than, attended by his men, he started off to Kampilla. This happened if he had been on the look-out in eager expectation for the first signs of their arrival.”

Here, once again to repeat the Buddha's words :

“O Bhikkhus ! That King Vedeha, blind of wisdom and greedy in lust, not being able to distinguish between right and wrong, foolish in his ignorance, started off to Kampilla, in Uttarapanchala, where was assembled that vast host of antagonists—eighteen complete armies and the Hundred Kings.”

The King who started forth, travelled four leagues and reached the bank of the river. The Bosat, who had gone to meet the King, brought with him to the New Town he had built. The King ascended the Palace, and after partaking of delicious dishes, slept a while, and then sent ambassadors to King Chulani in the evening to inform him the purpose of his coming.

The Buddha illustrated this incident as follows :

“ O Bhikkhus ! it was in these terms that King Vedeha sent word to King Brahmadatta ; ‘ Great King ! I have come to worship your noble feet. May it please your Majesty to send your daughter to be my wife, arrayed in her charms of beauty, attended by servants, male and female ! ’ ”

Now although King Vedeha said (in his mad desire for a wife) that he would worship King Chulani, yet he was very old, while King Chulani was very young, equal in age to a grandson,. But

now when King Vedeha was to receive King Brhamadatta's daughter as wife, he must worship him, no matter how old or how rich he might be : and he also thought that it would be well if, even by worshipping at his feet, he could obtain the Princess.

King Chulani, hearing the words of the Ambassador sent by King Vedeha, was much delighted, and thought, "Where shall my enemy escape now ? To-morrow I will sever the heads of both these fellows, and trampling them under foot, shall drink the cup of victory."

So in his heart he kindled the fire of anger, but in seeming kind words showed his delight to the Ambassador, and gave him presents, he sent him away with the following reply :

"O King Vedeha ! Your arrival hither is no bad coming, but a very good one. The only thing now required for the marriage, about which you have questioned me, is an auspicious hour. (This you will have to inform me). Then I shall give over to you my daughter, who possesses graceful features, fully arrayed in all her raiment of gold, in her charms of beauty attended by servants, male and female."

The Ambassador returned and said to the King, "Your Majesty ! There is no delay on their part. Inform them at once of the auspicious hour chosen for the marriage. The King will give you his daughter,".

The King in his hurry to win over the princess sent back words through the Ambassador :

"Today itself is an auspicious day for marriage!"

The Buddha who was narrating this story said :

"O Bhikkhus ! This impatient King sent back word, saying, 'The stars today are in our favour. May it please your Majesty to send your daughter, who possesses all the beauties of her sex, with her attendants, at once.'"

BRAHMADATTA BESIEGES THE NEW TOWN

HEARING this King Brahmadatta sent back word again, saying, "I shall send my daughter immediately in all the glory of a queen, along with a large procession of attendants."

Thus he lied to the messengers who had come to him, and sent them back ; but to the hundred kings he sent messengers with these directions :

"Tell them to start towards the 'New City' in the same order in which on that day they marched to Mithila fully furnished with eighteen complete armies, armed in five-fold weapons. So shall I cut off the heads of my two enemies, and drink the cup of victory to-morrow."

According to these directions the hundred kings marched towards the 'New City' with the four-fold armies, while the King himself, placing his mother queen Talata, his chief queen, Nanda, his son Prince Panchala and his daughter, Princess Panchala Chandi in the second story of the Palace, and after carefully placing guards, went to the 'New town.'

The Bosat treated the large army that came with his King Vedeha very hospitably. Some of the men were drinking toddy, some were eating meat and fish ; some who were exhausted by the speed of the march — for the king had not allowed them to sleep — lay themselves down to rest. And King Vedeha, reclining on his royal bed in a beautifully decorated upper room, attended by Senaka and other Pandits, and by his Ministers, was conversing pleasantly.

Afterwards, King Chulani mustered the hundred Kings and the army, consisting of the eighteen complete armies, besieged the city in the same manner in which he has preciously dealt with the city of Mithila, precisely, by encircling the town with four unbroken lines of elephants, horses, chariots and men, not leaving anywhere a vacant space, and with a space between each encircling line. So they stood holding hundreds and thousands of torches, resolved not to take the city until the sun rose.

Then the illustrious Bosat, who is like a gem that brings to its owner all he wishes for, knowing that King Brahmadatta

had come, selected three hundred giants born on the same day as himself, and gave them these instructions :

“ Now you people go through the small tunnel and take down those four persons, king Brahmadata's mother, his chief queen, the prince and princess through that tunnel ; bring them to the inner tunnel without taking them out, and wait in the Great Audience Hall till I come.”

The giants reverently accepted the orders of the Bosat, went through the small tunnel, and posting guards inside and outside the panels which had been constructed at the foot of the staircase, removed the bar of the door and ascended the upper storey of the palace. Then they seized hold of the guards who were at the foot and the top of the staircase, and also in other places about the palace, and all the officers of the royal household who were there, tied their hands and feet together, gagged their mouths with old clothes so that they could not cry out, and hung them like bundles upon hooks attached to the walls in places where they could not be seen ; then they took all the various delicacies that had been prepared for the royal family, and of those some they ate, and the rest they destroyed, and then ascended to the upper storey of the Palace. That day Queen Talata, her daughter-in-law, and her two grandchildren, all four of the royal family, clinging one to the other, lay in one bed, thinking, “ War is an uncertain thing. Who knows what will happen ? Who can imagine whether we will be victorious or defeated ? ”

Then the giants, standing at the door of the room where they lay, talked to them. Hearing their voices Queen Talata got up from the bed, came to the door, and inquired :

“ What ? my children ! ”

And the giants replied, “ O queen ! Our King has captured and killed King Vedeha and Mahausadha Pandit, and has brought all the Kingdoms of Jambudipa under one banner, and he is now together with the hundred kings gloriously drinking the cup of victory. He has sent for you four also to partake in that festival.”

The Queen was delighted at what she heard and opened the door, and the four descended from the Palace to the foot of the staircase. The giants led them into the tunnel. Then the members of the royal family said :

“ We have lived a long time in this Palace, but have never yet found our way into this street. What is the name of this ? ”

Thereupon the giants replied: "What do you say? You cannot get into this street every day. This is called the street of rejoicing, and as to-day is the feast of the commemoration of victory, the King has sent us to escort you through this street."

Believing these words to be true, they went along gladly, amusing, laughing and admiring the beauties of the tunnel. Some of the giants stopped behind; and going back to the Palace broke open the doors of the treasuries, wrapped in bundles as much precious treasures as they could carry, and entering the tunnel, locked the door and followed. The giants who were leading the four members of the royal family conducted them into the main tunnel, which was decorated as splendidly as heaven, and led them on. The Royal party seeing the splendour which they had not even dreamt of, thought that it was done for the king's marriage. Then the giants, without taking them out of the tunnel, kept them in a beautifully adorned bed-room; some of them kept watch over them, while others went up to the Bosat and informed him that they had brought them. Hearing their words, our Lord, the Lover of all people, was delighted with joy as he thought to himself, "Now my wish is being fulfilled."

Then he went up to the King, saluted him, and stood aside.



36 CHAPTER

VEDEHA IN DANGER

THE King, whose whole mind was burdend with thoughts of lust, thinking all the time, "Now he will send me his daughter," got up suddenly from his seat, opened the window of the balcony and, looking out, saw the four hosts of an innumerable army, with hundreds and thousands of torches, besieging the tower. Then his heart trembled ; and full of doubt, he addressed Senaka and other Pandits thus :

"Here is an army fully equipped with elephants, horses and chariots with all the implements of war. Here are soldiers who raise the war-cries, "Capture! Murder! Slaughter!" The city is illuminated as clear as day by the light of the torches which shine like stars in a clear sky. Has King Chulani come here with good intentions when he has brought a host like that of the Death God "Mara", or has he come as an enemy ! Pandits ! What do you say ?"

Hearing this the Pandit Senaka replied, "Great King ! do not worry. I too see the light of many torches. I think that King. Brahmadatta has come with his daughter in order to give her over to you, exact to time, at this lucky hour."

And Pukkusa said, "Great King ! They are keeping watch over to you as a guard of honour as you have come to a foreign country."

Thus, if anything occurred to those four ignorant fellows, they said whatever that came to their lips, like men talking nonsense. But King Vedeha heard the commands given : "These men must stay in this place, those in that place, and so on. Keep careful watch at such a place. Do not delay. Do not sleep !"

By this sight Vedeha was stricken with fear of death. And hoping to get a solution from the Bosat, he addressed him as follows :

"My son, here is a great army consisting of elephants, horses, chariots, and soldiers armed to the teeth, in battle array. There is the light of innumerable torches, O Mahausadha Pandit ! What do you think of it ? What do they intend doing ? What will they do to us ?"

Hearing these words, the Bosat, the teacher of the three worlds, who is like the everlasting tree of Gifts,¹ thought, "I shall first bring this foolish King close to the fire of death, and after showing him my power, shall again comfort him."

Then he said, "King Brahmadatta, who is incomparable in the possession of the fivefold power, such as strength of body, strength of counsel, and so forth, thinking 'King Vedeha has come to this city. I brought him with difficulty and it would be bad if he should run away, will be keeping careful watch from this hour during the three watches of the night, and when it dawns he will seize hold of you and kill you. It is very certain that he did not propose this journey to give his daughter to you in marriage, or to show you any goodwill."

On hearing these words Senaka and others were terrified with fear of death, and could not speak a word. The throat of the King was parched, and the saliva ceased to flow ; his body was bathed with sweat ; and weeping with fear of death, he thus spoke :

"My heart is trembling like a mango leaf, the spittle of my mouth is dried up ; I know of no way to liberate myself from this fear, like one who, having been fried in the fire, is exposed to the sun. I know no way of escape, and can have no comfort. Moreover, as the fire of the smith's forge burns within, and is not seen outside, I am burning from inside ! "

So saying, he wept. The Bosat, hearing the King's bitter cry of woe, thought :

"This king, who is blind of wisdom, did not accept my counsel at first. In order that he may be more obedient to me in future, I shall first put him to shame, and then let him know who I am."

So he said :

"Your Majesty ! Blind in your lust, and misled by ignorance, when you questioned me as to this marriage expedition, though I told you again and again that a calamity of this kind would come upon you, you did not listen to my words, but listened to the words of Senaka and others. And through that folly you have now come to affliction. The way in which those great counsellors, Senaka and other Pandits, by their counsel got you a darling

1. The wish-conferring tree of the abode of Gods - *विसृष्ट वृक्ष*.

and united you in relationship with the King, is admirable! Yes, admirable is not the word! These people, hankering after a piece of waist-cloth or a handful of rice, fascinated your mind, and deceived you by praising your expedition, and so brought you here into destruction, and I am waiting anxiously to see their power. Without relying on my words, who had been your chief counsellor in everything, and who wished your prosperity, both in this world and in the world to come, and being allured with lust, you have now been caught in the jaws of death, since you came here lusting after Princess Panchala Chandi, like a greedy deer caught in a death trap. Did I not relate this parable on the very day when you asked me whether the marriage expedition to Panchala would succeed? Again, O King, chief of men! Have I not told you not to have any friendship with that wretched ignoble Senaka? And that if you listen to his words and seek refuge in him, you will receive no good either in this world or in the next, and that you shall suffer pain in both worlds; but you despised my advice, and did what he said; and had you done as I said, you would not suffer to-day such grief and pain as this."

And again the Pandit thought: "I shall reprove him sternly and bring him to shame, so that he may not be disobedient to me in the future. I shall therefore repeat what I said before, and bring him to a state of fear and shame."

And so continued:

"Great King! When I told you that day not to start on this expedition you told me that Kevatta and the others are real Pandits and attended on Your Majesty, and that they alone knew the desires of kings, and knew suitable words for a marriage; you said to me:—'What does this son of a cultivator who only knows how to get his food by hanging on to the handle of the plough know about the affairs of kings and customs in Royal Marriages?' Then enraged with me, did you not say 'Here! seize hold of the neck of this son of the cultivator and put him out of my kingdom?': It was very unbecoming of you to have spoken in that tone on that day, and it is strange how you now ask me, the son of a cultivator, to find you a means of escape. I only know a way to earn my daily bread by ploughing. If you want, you can learn from me how to plough. It is only Senaka and the others who are wise, who are really Pandits, and who know a way of escape from his death. If you wish to say anything to me, you had better order some of your men, as you did then, to seize me by my neck and put me out. From these eighteen complete armies let Senaka and others save you. I am not at all concerned with it. I know only how to hang on a plough!"

Hearing this the King thought :

“The Pandit is re-calling the wrongs I had done him before : My son saw clearly by his eye of wisdom the calamity awaiting me, and now puts me through shame. My son, who knows the three modes of time—past, present, and future, and who possesses a transparent wisdom, and this benevolent one knowing that such an affliction would befall us in the future, could not have been idling during the four months he has been here. He must have certainly contrived some strategy for our escape. I must inquire about it.”

“Son Mahausadha, Pandit !” said the King, “the wise will not nurse grudges in their heart against rough behaviour and weak words spoken unwittingly in the past, and by repeating them the wise will never bring to shame those who have been brought to grief. You are a very wise Pandit, but you still bring forward the wrongs I did in my weak moments. Why do you strike me, as if you were urging on with a sharp spur, a steed fully equipped to fly away with you on its back through a circle of enemies? If you wish to give me counsel, and if you know any plan to escape without getting caught, or of any place to retreat for refuge, advise me of that. Do not recall what I said in the past in my folly, and pierce my heart with your words, sharp as arrows. Do not whip me with your words, as if you were whipping a horse which is tightly bound up. My son ! tell me a plan of escape. You are my sole saviour.”

VEDEHA TAKEN TO TASK

HEARING these words, our Lord, who is a Mine of Mercy, thought :

"This King is very foolish indeed, and through want of wisdom he does not in the least know the relative superiority of men. I shall tax him a little more and then comfort him."

So thinking he said :

"Your Majesty ! When such a large army has encircled us, to have any device to escape is unimaginable for men. It is certainly impossible even to think of a device, much less carry it out. Your Majesty ; I am completely incapable of saving you now. Therefore, may it please your Majesty to find out some way of escape.

"Some kings possess elephants such as Uposatha and Chad-danta, which have miraculous power to fly away with them through the air when they are in calamities like the present ; and if you have such an elephant let him rescue you from this disaster and take you through the air.

"Again, some kings possess flying horses of miraculous power ; and if your Majesty have such a horse, let him take you through the air.

"And again, some others possess flying vultures to ride on, while some have birds to ride on, and others demons of supernatural power ; and if your Majesty have such, let them carry you out of this calamity. I am unable to take you through the air to Mithila like flying elephants, horses, vultures or demons."

Hearing these words the King remained silent. Then Senaka thought :

"There is no other help for the King and ourselves except the Pandit. The King, who has heard the Pandit's words, is now terrified and unable to say anything. I too, will now open my mouth and pray, and see what comes of it."

So thinking, Senaka spoke to the Pandit.

"When a ship-wrecked man sees the land with difficulty he is full of joy ; even so, Pandit, you are the land that we, the ship-wrecked mariners have seen. You are wiser than myself, therefore deliver us from this disaster."

"O you fool!" replied the Pandit, "you are the man who urged many reasons in favour of this marriage; you approved the expedition right royally; you never spoke a word against it to the King. You sinner, it is you who brought him here, and put him into such a violent calamity as this. Even if there is a plan of escape that could be executed by man, it is impossible to think of such a thing at this moment, much less do it. There is nothing that I can do now. Some time ago you were also honourable Pandits, who thought that there were none like you. Think of some means by your own wisdom and rescue the King; and at the same time save yourselves. If you are clever enough, take him through the air and keep him in Mithila."

Meanwhile the King, who was thinking of a way to escape, trembling with fear, and being unable to say anything to the Bosat, thought to himself:

"This Senaka too is a Pandit. I shall ask him whether he has got any plan" and said:

"Senaka! if you know of a good plan to escape from this fear, tell us!"

Thereupon Senaka thought, "Like a man who had lost his way for one month asking the road from one who had lost the way for six months, this King is asking me of a plan. I shall speak out what comes to my mouth, whether it be good or bad!"

Thus thinking he replied:

"Great King! If you will carry out the plan of which I now tell you, it will be excellent. We will go inside the palace, get the door tied on the outside, set the whole building on fire, take each of us a very sharp sword, cut each other with them, and die; and when we are dead, this decorated palace shall be one funeral pyre for Your Majesty and all of us. If King Brahmadata captures us as he has a lifelong hatred against us, he will torture us for many days before he kills us. It is therefore better to commit suicide immediately."

Hearing this the King said in wrath:

"You fool, such a death and such a funeral pyre will do for you and your kith and kin, but not for me!"

Then he inquired from Pukkusa and other Pandits. They too, being ignorant, said whatever that first came to their mouths. And when the King asked the advice of Pukkusa, he replied:

“Great King ! If King Brahmadatta seize hold of us he will, as he has a life-long hatred against us, inflict various punishments on us, and after tormenting us for a long time, will kill us. As we cannot stop death in any way, let us all take some deadly poison and die.”

Hearing these words the King in anger,

“You may die instantly together with your wife. You fool, do not speak of such a thing to me.”

Then he spoke to Kavinda, and said,

“O Kavinda ! You are also a Pandit, If you know of any way for escape, tell me.”

Hearing this Kavinda said,

“Great King ! King Brahmadatta after capturing us will torment us unmercifully, and after many days will kill us. Instead of suffering pain and death at this hands, let us each take a rope, climb the upper storey of the palace and tie the rope on a pinnacle near the window, make a noose, put it round our necks, and jump down, or, in short, hang ourselves, or else jump down a steep precipice and die instantaneously.”

The King then said in wrath :

“You and your wife may die with a rope round your necks, but no such thing shall happen to me.”

Then he spoke to Devinda :

“Devinda ! Have you also not seen the fear that has arisen in us ? You are also a Pandit. If you also know of any device, tell me.”

Hearing the King's words, Devinda got up, and being unable to find out another plan, thought, “I shall say the same as Senaka said,” and spoke thus :

“Great King ! If Brahmadatta seize hold of us he will punish us as he likes, and kill us after giving us pain for a long time. Instead of suffering such pain at the hands of the enemy, we must get the door of this palace firmly tied on the outside and set fire to the palace, take each a sword and cut ourselves, and die. This beautifully adorned palace will then be of no use to Brahmadatta, but will be one common pyre. There is

no other plan that I know except this. As the supports one who falls on it, even so it is our Lord Mahausadha, the mine of mercy, the lover of all people, who can save us from this calamity ; and to do so is not in the power of people blind of wisdom, as we are. Is not your Majesty more foolish than we are, when you ask from us four, who are blind of wisdom, a way for escape, when you have this Great One, who illumines the whole world by the rays of his wisdom, as if trying to kindle a flame from a firefly instead from embers ? Let us all pray before the Pandit. We will all at once weep bitterly before him, and pray him to save us all. If it is impossible for this Great One, who has one benevolent love to every one alike, be he friend or foe ; who is like milk poured into a chank shell, or the milky ocean struck with the moon beams, and will surely not let so many people die an unprotected death : if he, too, assures us that he cannot save us, then we all can, as Senaka Pandit has said, tie the door, set fire to the palace, cut each other, and die”.

Hearing this the King, who was unable to say anything to the Bosat, as he had already recalled all the injuries which the King had done to him, began to weep bitterly in the presence of the Bosat.

While weeping he uttered :

“Just as an ignorant man who mistakenly thinks that there is hard wood in the plantain tree and resharpens his axe which cuts already, and getting into a grove of plantain trees slips the sheaths of the stem up to the main stock and finds no hard wood ; even so I, who am searching for a way of escape from this calamity, found not wisdom in any one of these Pandits, which is the hard wood I looked for. And again just as a man who wished to use the hard wood of an imbul tree, like the man who did a similar search in the plantain, found no hard wood in them after felling every tree of the kind in the forest ; even so I, who am searching for a way of escape from this grief, did not find even an atom of wisdom, in any one of these foolish fellows. Oh ! Gods, how unfortunate is my lot, who live with fools who cannot find a stratagem to relieve me when in grief, like a mighty elephant living in a large forest, where there is no water and which has been scorched with the heat of the hot season. My heart is trembling like a tender leaf shaken by the wind. The saliva of my mouth is dried up, and my throat is parched. I find no comfort, as one who is scorched by the fire and then cast into the sun. And again, as fire burns within the forge of the smith, but is not seen from outside : so within my heart there burns the bloody fire of death and is not seen from

outside. In keeping these Pandits as my ministers to give me counsel and wise advice, I have proved myself to be the fool who looked for hardwood in the plantain tree, or the elephant which lives in a waterless wilderness, and will in a few days fall into the jaws of death ! I am done for ! None of these so-called four Pandits will be able to relieve me from this untimely death."

So saying, he wept bitterly.

VEDEHA IS COMFORTED

HEARING these words of the king, who wept in a manner to pierce the heart of those who heard him, the Bosat who is like a crystal cave wherein one can take refuge, thought thus: "This King is dying with fear before actual death. As food and drink help the hungry and thirsty man, and physician the sick, so there is no one to help the king but myself. Should his heart split with grief because I do not now comfort him, the pain I took for the last four months would prove useless. I shall therefore comfort him!"

So he consoled him.

The Buddha who was describing this incident, said: "Bhikkhus! When that King had gone to the "New City" in search of a maiden to be his wife, against the advice of Mahausadha Pandit, the city was encircled by Brahmadatta and the hundred kings with their armies; fed up with the idea of a wife, he asked for a way of escape finding himself untrapped in the jaws of death."

Mahausadha Pandit said,

"Did not I tell you, 'Do not go! If you do go, you will fall into great destruction. You must not go there'. Then you abused me, saying that I did not know my business and asked me to clear out. Did you not come here on the advice of Senaka and other Pandits, who said, 'Go there, and if you go, you will face great success'? Therefore, may it please your Majesty ask a plan of escape from those Pandits.

"Then the king consulted Senaka and the other three, and having heard their method of dying, which they all recommended to him, he got angry, and being unable through fear to ask advice of the Pandit, king Vedeha wept so that the Pandit should hear him. When the Pandit heard the sound of the king's weeping, he thought:

"If his heart should split with grief, and should die because I do not now comfort him, all the trouble I took both night and day will be useless, and the manifestation of my wisdom, which shows itself continuously through a multitude of days, like the paintings on the moon's disc, will be nought, like lines drawn on water."

Now Mahausadha Pandit who, knowing every event—past, future, and present, and the consequences of them, by his peerless wisdom,⁴ without assistance of any others, said these words to king Vedeha, who was weeping, with fear of death, and comforted him —

“Don’t worry your Majesty! I shall save you, thus besieged as you are by these armies, consisting of a hundred kings and eighteen complete armies. I shall save you like saving the Sun from the mouth of Rahu. I shall relieve you, who are like an elephant stuck in the mud. Without the knowledge of any one of the soldiers of this army shall I save you — though you be like a snake caught in a snake-charmer’s box; you, King Vedeha, the snake, the snake-charmer, Brahmadata, and his besieging army the box in which you are caught — and take you back to Mithila. I shall save you, though you be like birds caught in a bowman’s net. I shall save you, though you be like fish caught in a fisherman’s net. Great King! Fear not. Do not think that you alone would be saved. Without letting any danger befall on a single living creature of our army, consisting of elephants, horses and chariots, and foot soldiers that came with you, I shall easily set them all free and carry them to Mithila. Great King! Fear not the least. I have only to imagine it; without any one’s assistance, or without any scheme of warfare by the power of my unique wisdom I can disperse the hundred kings and the eighteen complete armies, as one scatters a crowd of crows with a stone. Let not your Majesty fear.”

And again the Bosat said :

“Your Majesty! For what purpose did you think that I came here before you came. Foreseeing by the divine eye of my wisdom that such a fear as this would befall upon you, I tried my best to stop your expedition, and in spite of that you did not stay back then, knowing to what great calamity you would be falling in, I thought that it is unworthy to live while you meet with death; and without taking to heart your angry words, I came before you. And what did you think I did during the last fourth months I stayed here? Great King! Do not fear. I shall easily relieve you from this danger, and convey you safe to Mithila.”

When the King heard the words of the Bosat, who spoke out boldly without any hesitation, brave as a fearless lion, he was overjoyed, and thought to himself, “Now I am restored to life,” and was comforted. When the Bosat had thus raised the

Lion's roar, Senaka and the others were much delighted. But when the Bosat said "Do not fear; I shall save you all easily," Senaka was utterly baffled, and inquired:

"My lord ! When such a large force has besieged us with its four encircling hosts, through which there is no outlet or means of escape, by means of what stratagem will you save us and take us away ?"

"Senaka" replied the Bosat, "I can drive the enemy away and get out of the main gate and go away under their very eyes. But, however, I shall take you all away through the decorated tunnel, so that none of them shall know of it."

Again he said, "Senaka ! prepare for the escape!"

And he ordered his giants to open the gate of the tunnel.

"Brothers !" said he, "Go up up at once and open the gate of the tunnel. King Vedeha attended by his ministers, will go through the tunnel."

So they went and opened the gate of the tunnel. Then the whole tunnel was disclosed in view, admirable and magnificent, like the decorated heavenly street—Sudharma.

The Buddha, in disclosing the manner in which the giants opened the gates of the tunnel on the orders of the Bosat, spoke as follows :

"Bhikkhus ! The well-trained and obedient giants of Mahausadha Pandit opened the gates of the tunnel which the penetrating wisdom of the Pandit had contrived with machinery and having opened it informed the Bosat."



39 CHAPTER

VEDEHA FLIES AWAY

"IT IS now time to depart!" said the Bosat. Then the King descended from the palace. And Senaka removed the cap he had received from the King on that day that Amara Devi had caused his head to be shaven, girded a cloth about him, and wrapped his clothes up into a bundle as big as the fear that had fallen on his heart, and put the bundle on his shoulder. It is not to be imagined that he did not look here and there in fear and tear his old under-garment and bandage his knees, elbows, and forehead, to creep through the tunnel.

The Bosat seeing his absurd preparations, said,

"You fool ! What are you doing there ?"

He replied, "Pandit ! when one goes through a tunnel, does he not put away all the fine garments and ornaments he was wearing, and wear only an under-garment and go through the tunnel on all fours ? Therefore, I am getting ready to go through the tunnel."

The Pandit answered, "Senaka ! Do not think that the tunnel I have made is one in which you must kneel down and crawl like an iguana with your body bent ! If you wish to ride through this tunnel on an elephant, or a horse, or in a chariot, you have only got to place yourself on any one of these. The tunnel I have made is eighteen fathoms in height. Its gates and doors are very broad and high. Therefore, to go through the tunnel do not dress only in an under-garment, do not tie up your knees in rags, but dress in the finest garments you possess, mount any vehicle you like, and go ahead in front of the King".

The Bosat instructed that Senaka, who was dreadfully frightened, should go first, and next the king ; and after them the Pandit. Senaka, having seen the enemy was much terrified and careless of everything, and would hurry away without looking behind him, and then the king would not stop to admire the beauty of the tunnel, which was beautifully decorated in such a manner as he had not seen even in dreams. Therefore, the Pandit went behind the King, so that he might call the King's attention to the decorations. Inside the tunnel there was a large quantity of rice, fish, flesh and other meat and drink for the people in general ; and as soon as they got into the tunnel they began to enjoy themselves, at the same time admiring the magnificence of the tunnel.

The Bosat walked behind the King, suggesting what he should observe and saying, "Look this way, O King!" and the King went admiring the tunnel, which was as lovely as Sudharma Hall, the Divine Court of Sakra.

The Buddha explained how they went, in his own words as follows: "O Bhikkhus! that day on their way through the tunnel, Senaka went ahead, Mahausadha Pandit went behind, and between them went King Vedeha, attended by his ministers."

The people who were on guard, knowing that the King and the Pandit had come, led out the Royal Family, the mother of King Brahmadata and the rest, to the "Great Audience Hall." The King, too, came out of the tunnel with the Bosat. These four on seeing the Bosat and the King were terrified with fear of death and wept aloud, thinking:—

"Verily! We have walked into the jaws of Death. The persons who brought us look like the Pandit's warriors."

When these four cried, King Brahmadata who was visiting the guards who were stationed all round the city at a distance of nearly three leagues from it, reached the place not very far from the river, and heard the noise of weeping at dead of the night, which was calm and quiet, but did not tell anyone through shame, as he thought, "If I say that it is the voice of Nanda Devi the people will fool me and exclaim, 'Nanda Devi is everywhere. There is not a single day wherever the King goes that he does not mention Nanda Devi's name!'"

As soon as the Princess Panchala Chandi was brought through the tunnel, the Bosat made her stand on a heap of gold, and anointed her as King Vedeha's Queen, and said, "Great King! When your Majesty came to take away this Princess, you had to face the greatest fear. Let her therefore be your greatest love, the chief Queen!"

At that moment three hundred ships were brought and anchored at the harbour. Having started from the "Great Audience Hall," the King went on board a ship that was beautifully decorated; and the other four Royal household, including the mother of Brahmadata went into the same boat.

Let the Buddha himself tell you what happened next:

"On that day King Vedeha started off from the tunnel and got into a ship. To him Mahausadha Pandit spoke these words:

“Great King! This Prince Panchala Chanda is your brother-in-law, this Queen Nanda is your mother-in-law; towards her you should behave with the same love as you would show the mother who gave birth to you. Do not neglect Prince Panchala Chanda because he is your brother-in-law, but treat him as your own brother. This Princess Panchala Chandi is a virgin of noble warrior caste on both sides. Give her the greatest attention, and provide her suitably to her royal rank.”

Thus the Bosat advised the King and why? Why did the Bosat thus advise the King? The reason is this: The Pandit thought that it would be bad if the King thought in vengeance:—

“I must kill the mother and kill the wife of the King, who got me by a pretence that he would give me his daughter in marriage, and put me to shame by terrifying me so horribly!”

And also the Pandit thought that it would not be well if, since Queen Nanda was fairer than even her daughter, the foolish and lustful King should fall in love with the mother and abuse his relationship with her. So the Pandit gave this advice, and got the King's promise to treat them properly. And King Vedeha took his advice to heart saying, “Son! I shall not fail to do everything you say.”

In thus advising the King the Bosat did not even mention the name of the King's mother Talata Devi, for she was advanced in years.

All this advice the Bosat gave while standing on the shore. The king, wishing to set sail at once, said to the Pandit:

“Son! You speak standing on the shore. Embark on board at once. Why do you stay on the shore? With difficulty we got out of the hands of the enemy, and therefore let us set sail at once.”

Then the Bosat answered,

“What are you saying, your Majesty! I cannot go so soon! When an army gets into the hands of the foe, if the chief of that army does not either discover a device to save his men and take them away, or if that is impracticable die together with them, what is the use of his being the chief of the army? Apart from being a chief, he is not even a ‘good’ man. Now, am I not the chief of this force? And will one like myself save his own life alone when his men are in the city in the hands of the foe? Great King! Of those who

travelled with you a distance of four hundred leagues, some of them fatigued by the march, are sleeping, others enjoy themselves with meat and drink and are not aware of your departure. So of those who came with me, having been all throughout the four months working at the tunnel moats, ramparts, and in other works, and having laboured hard day and night without any rest, are broken down with toil, and are not aware of your going. It is not in me to leave behind a single man who worked for me. All that host I shall bring away, as if King Brahmadatta had been conquered. Great King ! Wait not a moment on the roadway, but advance immediately. I have already built villages for you at intervals of seven yojanas, established halting places, and filled the hundreds of villages that are on the way with clothes and ornaments, food and drink. I have kept elephants, horses and vehicles ready for you in those villages. When you go from one village to another, leave behind in each successive village the tired animals and unserviceable vehicles, and take others in place of them and go to the City of Mithila forthwith."

"My son !" replied the King. "Your army is very small. How will you conquer this great force of Brahmadatta ? Always the powerful kill the weak and bring them to destruction."

"Great King ! Even though a man possesses great wisdom, yet if he does not excel in devices and stratagems he is conquered by the great deviser and strategist with his small force ; and therefore King Brahmadatta, who is not a strategist, and his hundred kings with their eighteen complete armies of soldiers, will be conquered by you with your small army ; because you have a wise Minister in me who is a great strategist. And how ? It shall be even as the great darkness that prevails all over the world at night is dispersed and illumined when the sun rises. Though I have but a small force, I shall conquer Brahmadatta. Do not doubt about it, but start away."

So saying, he saluted the King and stayed behind.

On the way the King recalled the virtues of the Bosat as he thought to himself, "I escaped from the hands of my enemies. I got the queen I came in search for, and my wish has been fulfilled," and, overflowing with the five kinds of joy, he described the virtues of the Bosat to Senaka in these words:

"Senaka ! It is of paramount importance that one should live with the wise. It brings happiness in this world and in the world to come. Mahausadha Pandit saved us all, who were caught in the hands of the foe, like birds caught in a cage :

or fish caught in a net, and sent us away safely : and therefore it is of vital importance that one should live with the wise."

Thus the King described the virtues of the Bosat in a manner indescribable.

Hearing this, Senaka, who was going to pay a tribute to the Bosat's virtues for the first time in his life said :

" Your Majesty ! What you spoke is quite true — very true indeed. It is highly honourable to live with those who are wise. Mahausadha Pandit delivered us all who were caught in the hands of the enemy, like birds in a cage and fish in a net, and sent us away safely."

Afterwards the King, having reached the other bank of the river, came successively to the villages which the Bosat had built at intervals of seven yojanas, in which the ambassador, whom the Bosat had instructed and placed there beforehand, supplied the King with elephants, horses and chariots, as well as with food and drink in which the King delighted. And leaving behind the beasts and carriages that were worn by the journey, they took others in their place and advanced from village to village, as the Bosat had instructed them to do. And so without delay they traversed four-hundred leagues, and reached Mithila on the following day, in time for the mid-day meal.

The Bosat having sent the King away, went to the gate of the tunnel, and drawing the sword, which he bore across his shoulders from the scabbard, dug up the sand in the " Great Audience Hall " and hid it in the ground. Then he went through the tunnel and entered the New City, bathed himself with sixteen pots of sweet scented water, and after partaking of various sweet dishes, he slept with the great mental satisfaction : " My wish has been fulfilled."



A USELESS ATTEMPT

AS soon as the day dawned, King Chulani Brahmadatta giving commands to his army, reached the New Town. Let the Buddha himself disclose the manner in which King Chulani marched forward giving directions to soldiers.

“King Brahmadatta, who possessed a powerful army, kept sentinels, during the three watches of the night, in different places round the besieged city, encompassed by four encircling lines. Then he himself inspected the guards in each watch of the night, and came to the New City, on the break of day. And King Brahmadatta mounted on a State elephant, of great beauty and strength, powerful enough to break down and overcome the enemy where ever it went. This elephant had skill to know in which way victory lay in a bloody field of battle. It was sixty years old, yet in prime of lustful youth, its earlobes were split in three places. The King, equipped in armour of gold set with precious stones, with the device of an arrow on his finger nail, came to the city issuing commands to his warriors of the various branches, who were skilful in the use of the bow.”

Now the King gave orders as follows :— “Advance, my great army, equipped in the five weapons of war, some of whom ride on elephants, some on horses, some in chariots. March up at once in your armour, you warriors cleaver in the use of your bows, and whose hands have been trained to one system, and who are skilful by the night of a lightening flash, to aim at and pierce through a black horse hair with a small berry¹ of the Brinjal kind suspended to it, which hangs from a ploe that is fixed on two other poles placed perpendicularly on the earth at a distance of a bow-shot.”

And again King Chulani said, “I shall get hold of King Vedeha without killing him,” and ordered his hundreds and thousands of giant elephants, which had polished and shining tusks, and which get into the humours even at the age of sixty years as follows :—“Crush down that rampart eighteen cubits high round the city which Mahausadha Pandit has built for King Vedeha! You giants, clever in the use of your bows, hurl down a rain of arrows, which are as white and shining as

the teeth of young calves, and which would force their way through a man's bones without obstructing their flight! Step forward you young heroic giants who are equipped with the five kinds of decorated weapons who will not take a step behind in your marches but will advance forward resolutely, who have the strength to grasp an elephant by its tusks and throw it down topsy turvy if you happen to meet such a one on your march. How will King Vedeha escape from the hands of my giants equipped as they are with every kind of armour and possessed of powerful weapons and who will never turn tail but advance forward? Even if by some magic he were to go through the air like a bird, my warriors of the bow will not allow him to fly. And even if my thirty-nine thousand powerful and incomparable warriors should go to battle empty-handed, they would conquer the enemy, stripping them of their own weapons to cut them to pieces. Never have I seen such warriors with any other king of Jambudipa. I alone have them. Let them go forward immediately! Let the gallant kings who ride on powerful elephants dressed in golden trappings give the words to their elephants forthwith. Let the hundreds and thousands of my incomparable warriors, who are dressed in golden clothes and decorated in golden ornaments who have anointed themselves with golden ornaments who are equipped in the five kinds of armour and who ride on elephants in seats of gold, with golden axes golden hatchets and the like, advance, at once like unto the assembled gods in Nandana Uyana, the park of Sakra. Let those giants who hold in their hands well made swords, with blades excellently sharpened on three stones by clever craftsmen and which are keen that could cut a piece of cotton which the wind might carry against them, which shine at mid-day like the disc of the sun—let those giants who deal blows on the enemy, and do not miss, advance with their swords drawn out of their scabbards!" (Now let me describe what kinds of swords these were. Steel was obtained by burning the excrement of birds called Koslihini which had been fed on flesh mixed with steel dust got from the filing of original steel. The steel thus obtained from the excrement was again filled and mixed with flesh as before and given to the birds. And so the process was seven times repeated before the swords were made.

And again the King ordered :—

"Let my Flying¹ - giants, thirty-nine thousand in number march forward at once! Now who are these flying giants? If a hostile army like that of Mara, the Death god, were in a

1. පනාන සෙත්තිසෙත්, Warriors who caper in the air like flags. (පනාන) and destroy the enemies.

city like 'Ayodhya' ¹ provided with moats, ramparts, watch-towers, buttresses, and gates, and if the Flying giants, who were our-side, should think of conquering the enemy within the impregnable city, they could from the place they stood in, jump into the air, and then, without descending to the ground, take another jump still higher, and conquer the enemy in the inner city with weapons they have in their hands, and come back through the air capering in the same way, and stand in the place whence they started. These giants are clever enough to cleave even elephants in to two pieces with one blow of their swords. Chulani continued his commands:—"You Vedeha! At first you escaped by means of the wisdom and devices of your cultivator's son. Now, where can there be a means of escape for you? Let me see how you will by your kingly power and stratagems escape and go to Mithila! You are now like fish caught in a net!" Thus saying he urged his elephants with the goad, and giving the word to his men, who were like a flowing flood round the New city, cried, "Charge!"

Then the Bosat's spies who were with the hundred Kings thought, "Who will win? What! if they break the rampart, crush the walls, and enter the city? We must then cut off the heads of King Brahmadata and his hundred Kings, and lay them before our lord the Pandit!" Then they, with their attendants, surrounded the Kings of the hundred Kingdom.

1 अयोध्या — the powerful city of Ayodhya which was the capital of Dasaratha, father of Rama in Ramayana.



41 CHAPTER

THEY CONVERSE

THEN our lord, the illustrious Bosat, the cynozure of the three worlds, the teacher of the three realms, the one who can subdue his enemies, who is endowed with the various sorts of wisdom and magnificent glories, who has the power of a valiant lion, who can overcome forces of elephants of every kind, having risen from the magnificent bed in which he lay at night and answered the morning call of nature, took his breakfast, adorned himself with ornaments, dressed in a silk cloth worth a lac of gold, leaving one shoulder bare, took into his hand a septre ornamented with works of solid gold, put on his pair of golden sandals, and attended with two young maidens dressed in a woman's best and brightest ornament, rivalling goddesses in beauty, who were fanning the great one with two fans made of the tails of the Indian Yak, opened the window of his pleasant palace and walked up and down in the manner of Sakra, looking here and there, so that King Chulani might see him.

And King Chulani, seeing the majesty and the glory of the Bosat's figure, had no peace of mind, and quickly charged his elephant, thinking to himself,

"I shall now capture him."

When he saw the King coming, the Pandit; thought "Certainly, this King has thought, 'I have caught of King Vedeha; and here he comes at double speed, charging his elephants. He little knows how our King has gone to Mithila, taking with him this King's wife and children. Therefore I shall make this King look well in to my face, which has a colour like that of a well-polished golden mirror;" and looking at the King's face through the window, he addressed him as follows :

"Great King, Why do you drive your elephant so hastily ? Do you think that your wish has been fulfilled ? Do not think so for a moment ! Without more ado, abandon the idea and do as I tell you. It was last afternoon that you grasped your bow and have not since laid it down, and I think your hands must be benumbed by grasping it ? So throw that bow and arrow away. If you are not willing to do that give them to some one else. Again, it was last afternoon that you covered yourself with that beautiful armour, wrought of cat's eye. Perhaps your body is swollen thereby, and you

suffer great discomfort. Your body must be black and blue. Yesterday your eye knew no sleep during the three watches of the night. You must be tired, so do not allow yourself to faint in the heat of the sun but rouse your spirits, go to your city and sleep comfortably in your palace."

So saying, he scoffed at the King as making merry with him. The King hearing his words thought,

"The son of the cultivator is jeering at me!" and said in a voice of thunder "You rascal." I shall know what to do with you!"

Further Chulani added : "You Mahausadha! Your face shine beautifully like a polished golden mirror. You talk you smile and you seem to be merry! You are not the only man who on the verge of death has talked so pleasantly, and whose face has shone so beautifully. At no distant moment you, too, shall die. It is because of that your face shines with so much beauty. Now I shall forthwith, cut off your head, and drink the cup of victory!"

When that great army saw the dazzling beauty of the Bosat, as he talked with the King, they thought, "Our King and Mahausadha Pandit are talking together. We do not know what it is about. Come, let us go near and hear!"

So saying, the hundred Kings and the army went near the King. The Bosat thought :

"This king does not know yet that I am Mahausadha Pandit. I shall not let him kill me."

Then he said, 'Great King! Did you and Kevatta, speaking together on a certain by-gone day, think of something in your minds, and utter another thing with your lips? Then, you may understand that, what you thought did not happen but what you said has come to pass.

"Do you think that no one else knew of the secret conference held between yourself and Kevatta, seated alone in the bedroom of the upper storey of the palace, though you fancied that no one else but you two knew of it? Do not fancy that no body knows about it. I know as much as if it had been said to me. Your secret plan has been spoilt. Our King has gone to his Kingdom. Now, if you think of following him, that also is impossible. Our King is like a wonderfully clever horseman riding a Sindhi steed, while you are like a very

timid podian riding on a Donkey! Therefore, it is impossible for you to follow him and capture him. Let me illustrate my simile : Kevatta is the Donkey, and you are the podian riding on the Donkey. I am the thoroughbred Sindhi steed and our King is the man riding that steed."

Thus he illustrated his simile ; and again he said, " Great King! When our king crossed the river he did not go alone, but went with a great company of courtiers and warriors. And now, Your Majesty, if you follow him up thinking, I will chase after him and capture him, you will not be able to reach him, but will die on the road. You will be like a Pelican chasing a golden Swan."

And again, like a mighty lion, he illustrated the king's position in the following.

" Now Great King, I shall describe by a simile how you failed to realise even an atom of your wish, though you broke rest for the whole of last night and brought an army such as this, to capture us in vain. Just imagine a herd of Foxes in search of prey if they see by the light of the moon or of the stars, or of lightning or of any other light a bunch of full-blown flowers hanging down from a Kela tree and wrongly concept the flowers to be meat hanging down, without going any further in search of meat they encircle the tree and think we shall eat meat ; but when the day dawns, they see that their meat is nothing but full-blown Kela flowers, the herd of foxes say to each other, ' Friends ! This is not meat but bunches of Kela flowers ' ; then, satisfied that it is really so, they go away without caring for them : even so, Your Majesty thought, ' I have captured King Vedeha, and broke rest for the whole night. But now you have found your mistake like those wretched Foxes."

When the King heard the words of the Bosat, who spoke unhesitatingly without any fear, he thought to himself : " This son of the cultivator says fearlessly ' The King has fled. ' It must be true that he has sent the king away."

And inflamed with anger, he thought within himself, " Before this too, when we went up to this King's city on account of this son of the cultivator, he made us fly without even a piece of cloth or an upper garment to cover ourselves. The enemy, who was in our hands, he took out from our hands. This is the rascal who spoils our attempts everywhere — every time. If there be any fitting punishment for him and for his King, such as decapitalism, and so forth, all those I shall inflict on him alone."

Then he directed his people thus:— "This Mahausadha Pandit has saved my enemy, King Vedeha, who had got into my clutches, and sent him away. Therefore take this man alive, cut off the legs and hands, and slice the flesh from his body, pin the pieces together, and fry them in the fire, and just as people put the skins of lions, tigers, cattle deer, and other animals to dry pegging them to the ground, put this Mahausadha on the ground, and peg his four limbs, put him down, cleave him, split him with a sharp sword, slice his flesh as if it were the flesh of a tiger, deer or swine !"

Although the Kings of the universe, ten thousand yojanas in extent, join together, they could not do such a thing to our lord, Mahausadha much less our King Vedeha. Nothing of what the King Chulani said could be done to him. And the Bosat hearing these words of the King laughed aloud.

Now let me describe how Bosat's face showed increasing love, while the King's face grew more angry. His face began to shine more and more brightly, as if the roughness and the anger of the King were quicksilver, and the face of the Bosat a golden mirror in which the quicksilver is applied.

Then the Bosat thought thus : "This foolish King does not know where his relations have gone to, and gives orders for punishment to be inflicted on me. He abuses me, but he does little know how I got hold of his wife and children and sent them to Mithila. This King, who is so powerful and glorious, might think that I deceived him ; and if, in anger, he should shoot me with this arrow in his hand, or kill me in some other way, it does not sound well. I shall, therefore, make him faint with fear, and deprive him of his senses as he sits upon his elephant, and later comfort him."

Having thus thought, he addressed Chulani :—

"Great King ! If your Majesty cut off my hands, legs, and ears, and punish me, my King will inflict all these evils on your son, your daughter, your queen, Nanda Devi, and your mother, whose hands, feet, ears, and noses he shall cut off. Great King ! If Your Majesty punish me by slicing the flesh off my body and pinning the pieces together, even so, and twice as much, will my King punish your four relations ; and again, if you punish me by pegging my limbs to the ground, as one pegs the skins of lions, tigers, deers and cattle to dry, even so will my King inflict manifold punishment on your four relations. And, My Lord ! Like armour which a man gets made by workers in leather sewing together a hundred skins together to be a shield to protect his life against all injuries, whether from arrows or the assaults of other weapons ;

even so I, like that shield made of a hundred pieces of leather, go in front, and cheering the heart of the King, do not let any calamity fall upon him. Great King ! Do not think I am speaking nonsense ! When I sent my King to Mithila with your wife, children and mother, I asked him, ' Great King ! If King Chulani seize hold of me and charge me for sending you secretly away, and cut off my ears, nose, hands, and feet, and inflict manifold punishments upon me, what will you then do ? He answered, ' Mahausadha Pandit ! If he really inflict any punishment on you, I cannot revenge on the King, because he is powerful, but I shall inflict a twofold punishment on his four relations '. Certainly, Great King ! If you punish me, who am a single person, my King will inflict every possible injury on Nanda Devi, on your children, and your mother. Great King ! Remember, I am a shield made of a hundred layers of leather, and withstand your arrow like wisdom in front of my King's body, give him confidence, and save him from any injury your arrow might inflict ! "

Hearing this, King Chulani thought, " What does this son of the cultivator say ? When I say that I would do him injury, he says that he will get his King to do as much to my wife and children. He does not know that when I came yesterday I set guards to keep careful watch over my wife and children. This fellow shall die very soon, and therefore he is rattling away his dying nonsense. ! "

The Bosat, wise as he was, knew exactly what the King thought, and reflected : " This King thinks that my fear makes me speak nonsense. I will inform him how I sent his wife and children to Mithila. "

Then he said, " Great King ! As you have thought that I am talking nonsense through fear of death, may it please Your Majesty to send your people and cast away your doubt about it, in order that you may be assured of the truth of what I say. I took Queen Nanda, your two children, and your mother through the small tunnel, and giving them in charge of King Vedeha, sent them to Mithila through the main tunnel. They will travel four hundred leagues from this palace, and come to Mithila. "

Thereupon, the King thought, " This Pandit speaks very boldly. When I was inspecting the guard by the riverside in the middle watch of the night, I heard a voice like that of Nanda Devi. This Pandit is no weakling. No one has wisdom like his. His words may be true. "

Then he was grief stricken at what had happened, he summoned up his royal carriage, and called a Minister and said, " Look here ! Mahausadha Pandit says that he brought my

wife and children and other relations through the tunnel, and giving them in charge of King Vedeha, sent them away to Mithila. Find out whether his statement is true or not, and return immediately !”

Hearing this, the Minister with his attendants went to the palace, opened the door, entered and saw the officers of the household, their legs and hands tied and mouths gagged, hanging from hooks attached to the walls ; the food and drinks had been scattered in every direction, the dishes and other vessels broken, into pieces, and the doors of the bed-room opened ; and the disfigured and disorderly state of the palace, where a flock of crows were eating the sweet meats and tearing the fragments from each other's beaks. Then he entered further through an opened window and saw in general the wretched conditions of the palace, like the fishing village on the coast abandoned by its inhabitants, or like a cemetery where corpses were thrown unburied and unburnt.

Having seen all this he ran to the King, and reported thus : “Great King ! Whatever Mahausadha Pandit has told you there is not one word which is not true. All he said is quite true. Formerly your palace was like a Heaven. Now it is worse than Hell. Your beautiful place is infested with a flock of crows, like those that fly about in an abandoned fishing village, attracted by the stench of the fish. I saw not your wife, nor children, nor your mother, and there was no body there to tell me where they have gone !”

The King, trembling with grief at the separation from his four relations, thought ; “the Son of the cultivator has brought this calamity upon me ;” and like a snake struck with a stick, his anger increased by leaps and bounds.

Now the Bosat knew the mind of the King and thought :—

“This King has great glory, power and retinue. Now if in anger, without any regard to the consequences that will befall him in the future, and thinking, ‘What use have I of this fellow,’ if he in royal pride, do me some injury, it will not sound well. Is not this an occasion for wisdom ? I shall find some stratagem to win over the King towards me.”

Then he further thought, “If I should describe the beauty of Queen Nanda to the King as if he had never seen her before, I could melt his heart and win him over. Then he will think, ‘If I kill Mahausadha Pandit, I shall not get back.

my beautiful jewel of a wife. If I kill him ; I shall not get back my four relations.' Then, owing to the affection which the King bears for his Queen, he will do me no injury."

Having thus thought, standing for safety on the upper storey of the palace, he took his golden like hand from underneath the red woollen cloth with which he was covering himself. When he did so, it was like lightning that flashed out of clouds at evening. Then he recited a verse describing Nanda Devi's beauty, and told the King :

"This is the way through which Nanda Devi went." by pointing out the direction with his hand, and added :

"O King ! Nanda Devi, who is possessed of nearly all the sixty-four feminine beauties, went this way. I took her out of the tunnel and sent her to Mithaila with King Vedeha. Great King ! What beauty do you think that Queen is possessed of ? Hear from me an account of her unparalleled beauty. Her lips and lions dazzle like plates of solid gold. Her speech is sweet, soothing and lovely, and her voice is like the voice of young swans. She is dressed in silk cloth, wrought in gold. She possesses by nature a body of golden-colour. She is girt in the girdles of gold. Such beautiful Nanda Devi, I sent away by this road. The sole of her foot is as red as if it was plastered with wax. Her eyes, which are like the eyes of young deer, are long, as if they have gone a good way to utter a secret to the ears, the pupils of her eyes are round like the eyes of pigeons, and gleam with the five colours, and they surpass even the petals of blue lotus flower. Her lips are as red as ripe 'Kowakka' fruit. She has beautiful teeth like lines of small pieces of chank set in the two portions of a gourd. She has limbs which dance like a well-grown creeper. She has a slender waist. Her hair is dark blue in colour very fine, long and curled at the end. Her look is as pleasant as that of a young virgin deer. Her figure shines as brilliant as a flame in winter, or is as pleasing to the eye of every man who sees her, just like a flame during winter. If you ask why should we be delighted at seeing a flame of fire, in winter, the answer is this : when a flame of fire is seen during winter there will be no one who will not think of warming his hands with it. If anyone sees Nanda Devi who is dazzling in her beauty like rays of light who is the human being who can refrain from kissing or embracing her ? Nanda Devi is possessed of five fold namely, beauty of skin beauty of flesh beauty of age beauty of teeth and beauty of hair. Her breasts which resemble two golden fruits placed on a golden tray are solid as those of a maiden of sixteen years, and would not hang down although she brings forth any number of children or live to any age ;

If you ask me why the solidness in female breasts please men ? The answer is this :- Though a woman possesses beauty like that of a goddess and array herself in every kind of ornaments from the tip to toe and to the ends of her hair omitting nothing, but her breasts hang down, the love of that men will have towards her will also hang down ! And therefore in addition to Nanda Devi's charming beauty her breasts are also as solid as the love that men who see her will have towards her."

Thus saying the Bosat stretched his illustrious hand, and said:

"Such a beauty-queen went this way to Mithila, last night."

As the Bosat was thus describing the beauty of Nanda Devi the King's love towards her began to increase, as if he had never seen her before. The Bosat, noticed the affection that arose in the heart of the King, and said, "Great King ! do you wish a queen who possesses such beauty to die in torture ? Will you suffer no loss when she dies ? But one thing ! if she dies It would give me much pleasure, for if you kill Mahausadha here, My King will kill Nanda Devi and I shall go before king of Hades in the nether-world, and that righteous king will see us, and say 'Of men there is no one like Mahausadha Pandit, and of woman there is no one like Nanda Devi' and give her in marriage to me, telling me, 'Nanda Devi is the only fitting wife for you!, Therefore ; though I lose my life when I get such a jewel of a wife, I shall be perfectly happy. If I die, I shall live in love with Nanda Devi !'"

Thus the Bosat described Queen Nanda only, for the King love was there. He did not mention even the name of Talata Devi for she was very old !

And while the all wise Pandit Mahausadha described the beauty of Nanda Devi the King felt as if Queen Nanda was standing before him. The Pandit's narration was so inspiring and natural.

Then the King thought "There is no body powerful enough to bring Nanda Devi back to me except Mahausadha Pandit." and within him there arose a great grief. The Bosat knew it right well and replied "Great King do not worry. Nanda Devi, your son, and your mother will come. The only delay in their coming is my absence there. The moment, I go there, they are sure to come."

Then the King thought, "This is really wonderful when I had come, setting close watch to protect my city, and when I was watching this city with guards who were strong, vigilant and clever, this Pandit conveyed my four relations away, including my queen, Nanda Devi, without any one's knowledge. He gave them in charge of King Vedeha and sent him away with his army without our knowledge, although we had not slept during the three watches of the night, and guarded the city with all our might. Has he learned magic of the gods? Is he a magician?"

Thus thinking, he questioned the Pandit.

"Pandit tell me what you have done? You who took away my four relatives from the palace, where they were guarded, and sent my enemy, King Vedeha, out of this city, which ded all round by such great force; have you any divine magic or mesmeric power?"

"Your Majesty" replied the Bosat, "I know divine magic and the mesmeric art is also not unknown to me! It is natural for the wise to learn divine magic, and save himself and his companions from a danger that has come upon them!"

"But, Great King, I used no divine magic, nor did I hypnotize you! I shall tell you how I sent them away. It was through the tunnel that was dug by my young warriors, who are very clever at digging tunnels, that King Vedeha removed your relatives and took them to Mithila."

Hearing this, the King thought, "Even when one or two persons go through a tunnel, they do so with great exertion and trouble. This Pandit says that the King fled with his army through the tunnel. What kind of a tunnel can it be? I should like to see it."

The Bosat, seeing from the King's face, his desire to see the tunnel, replied:

"Your Majesty! The tunnel I have dug is a marvellous one! It contains the paintings of elephants, and of horses and chariots in decorated trappings, and of a great force of infantry armed with every kind of weapons, as if prepared for bloody battle. They seem like living bodies, and cannot at once be made out to be paintings. Possessing all these magnificent decorations, this tunnel is like a divine hall, and there is no great wonder in the ten thousand worlds than this. It is so magnificent. May it please Your Majesty to see that tunnel."

Great King ! The tunnel, which was designed by my moon-like wisdom and sunlike plans joined together, has about eighty main doors and about sixty-four minor ones. It has one hundred bedrooms, and several hundreds of light houses to flash light on them. If you wish to see all these wonders come joyfully without any deceitful intentions or hatred. Conduct yourself to this New Town attended by your own ministers and the hundred Kings.

And now, if you do come, you must come with a good heart; do not come with the idea : ' Although the king has escaped, half is won if the Pandit be captured ! ' If you enter my city with pretence of friendship and goodwill, but with a grudge nursed in your heart, and walk into the tunnel with a deceitful heart to capture me, thinking, ' I shall give to this one alone all the torture I would have given to both ; one of my giants who were born on the same day as I, is powerful enough to protect me by killing not only an army of four hosts, with the hundred kings from the whole Jambudipa ten thousand yojanas in extent, but an army of the four great continents, with their crowned kings, though they be led by an all-powerful universal Emperor in all his glory. Therefore, Great King ! If you have in your mind any old feelings of enmity against me, shed away all such weakness, and come in at once ! ' "

Thus inviting he opened the gate of the New Town.

BRAHMADATTA ENTERS THE TUNNEL

THEN King Chulani, attended by the hundred kings and the Ministers, entered the New City. The Bosat, who is like a wish conferring gem, or a soothing ointment in the eyes of all the people, who is the teacher of the three worlds, descended from the palace, like a fearless lion approaching a herd of elephants, saluted the King, and entered the tunnel along with King Brahmadata, the hundred kings and the large host of the enemy. King Brahmadata, seeing the tunnel wonderfully constructed for the King's wedding, which resembled a well decorated city, described the virtues of the Bosat thus :

“ Friends ! If there lives a person of the calibre of Mahausadha Pandit either in a king's domain or in any city, or in any king's palace, there shall then be no loss but gain to that domain, city or palace. And therefore King Vedeha, who has this Pandit with him gains great benefit.”

By so saying King Brahmadata actually meant this :

“ And now, if Mahausadha Pandit lives either under me or in my country, or in a village, or a city where my order prevails, it would be of great advantage to me ! ”

Now, inside the tunnel the Bosat showed him the hundred stores. When a button was pressed the doors of all the stores opened. When another was pressed all closed by themselves. Admiring these wonderful decorations the King went ahead, and the Pandit followed him. The hundred kings and the mercenary also entered the tunnel. The King going through the tunnel, which was about two leagues long, crossed the threshold ; and the Bosat, finding that the king had come out of the tunnel, he himself came out of it, and without allowing others come out, he closed the door of the tunnel by pressing one of the buttons secretly. Then instantly all those doors—the eighty main doors, sixty four smaller doors, the hundred doors of the bedrooms, and the hundreds and thousands of doors of the light houses—all closed at once. The whole tunnel became as dark as “ Lokantarika,” the Hell of darkness.

The men trembled with fear. They could not recognise each other : they only heard their voices. Now the Bosat, after giving in marriage Princess Panchala Chandi to King Vedeha, the previous night, and after ending the King away,

entered the tunnel and hid his sword under the sand. The Bosat at once took out the sword from the place where he had hidden it, and jumped up into the sky about sixteen cubits high, returned back to the ground, seized hold of the King's hand with his own left hand, and holding the sword to the King's neck, questioned thus, in order to frighten him:—

“Tell me now, Great King! To whom do all the kingdoms of Jambudipa belong?”

The King, terrified with mortal fear, said three times,

“Pandit! To you! To you. Kill me not. The whole Jambudipa belongs to you. Please pardon me!”

The Bosat replied, “Great King! Do not fear. I did not hold the sword to your neck intending to kill you, but to show the power of my wisdom”.

Then he gave the sword to the King's hand, and said :

“Great King! Now if you wish to kill me, kill me with one blow from this sword. If you do not wish to kill me, then pardon me!”

Hearing this the King answered,

“I pardon you. Do not distrust me.”

And these two took an oath by their swords that they would never wrong each other.

After a while the King said. “Pandit! When you have such physical strength in addition to the power of wisdom, why do you not take the Kingdom of Mithila yourself?”

“Great King!” he replied, “If I like I can kill all the monarchs in the world and conquer the world, but the wise have always condemned the possession of glory obtained by killing others.”

The King pleased at these words, said:

“Pandit! The men who were caught inside the tunnel are weeping because you do not open the tunnel gate. Open the door and grant them their lives.”

Then the Lord, the lover of all people, the Teacher of the Three Worlds, the help of the helpless, the mine of mercy, opened the tunnel door. Then the whole tunnel was lit up as if the sun had risen. The spirits of the men revived, and they were happy once again. The hundred Kings with their men came out of the tunnel, and went to the place where the Bosat was, and said:

"It is on account of you, Pandit, that we now survive ! If the tunnel gate had remained shut for a few minutes more, we would have died inside the tunnel."

The Lord then replied: "Why Kings, this is not the only instance that I saved your lives. Before this too, I saved your lives."

The Kings, who did not know that he had saved their lives before, asked the Pandit:

"Pandit, ! When was it ?"

"Kings ! Can you remember the day you had prepared toddy-meat, and other such things at the Royal Park saying, 'Let us drink the cup of victory, since we have come to this city Uttarapanchala, having conquered all the kingdoms of Jambudipa. save Mithila ?'"

"Yes, Pandit, we remember," they replied

"Well, then, did not the King accede to the words of Kevatta, who had hatched a plot with him to kill you all by giving you poisoned toddy and meat ? I got to know of this plot, and thought, 'These Kings must not die under my very eyes without an effort to save them.' So I sent the giants born on the same day as I, and got the toddy pots broken and spoilt their plot. Thus I saved your lives before !"

The Kings were grieved and asked, "Brahmadatta, is it true, Great King, that you did such a thing ?"

He replied, "It is true that I acceded to the words of Kevatta, and did such a thing. What the Pandit says is quite true."

Thereupon the Kings embraced Bosat, and presented him with their crowns and the sixty-four kinds of ornaments they had, saying:

"We all are indebted to you. Thanks to you, we are surviving today!"

The Bosat accepted the presents and, to remove King Chulani's distress, said:

"Great King! Do not worry; it is not your fault. It is the fault of your association with that wretched sinner called Kevatta. Ask pardon of all these Kings, and promise that you will not do them any such harm hereafter."

The King said, "Pardon me, Kings, for the wrong I did unwittingly at the instance of that ignoble and idiotic rascal Kevatta. I did not plan it because of any hatred towards you. As long as I live I shall do no harm to you."

So he obtained their pardon.

43 CHAPTER

MAHAUSADHA INSISTED TO STAY BACK

NOW King Brahmadatta made ready a great feast and banquet and all the princes and the people of Uttarapanchala and Vedeha united together to amuse themselves for seven days inside the tunnel. From there they got into the New Town, and offered the Bosat with many presents. The King seated in the upper storey of the palace, attended by the hundred Kings, wishing to keep the Bosat by him, said:

“Mahausadha Pandit! I shall supply all expenses necessary for your daily support, and present you a number of villages, cattle, buffaloes, elephants, horses, and so on; and also the ten kinds of gems and pearls, precious stones, corals, cat’s eye, emeralds, rubies, silver, and gold. Many a raiment shall you have and clothes from different countries. You shall also have men-servants and maid-servants. Your position shall be second in power and glory to me alone. I shall give you all the wealth wherein King Vedeha established you, without reserve. If King Vedeha, the King of a single country, could provide you, why cannot I, who am lord of all Jambudipa ten thousand yojanas in extent? Moreover, you perform the office of army commander for one King of Vedeha and his country, but if you stay with me you will be commander-in-chief to one hundred kings, and you hold that office both for me and for the hundred kings of all Jambudipa ten thousand yojanas in extent. Your power, command and glory shall prevail all over Jambudipa, beyond that of all kings. Now, if you remain, the Ministers and the people of the ten thousand yojanas of Jambudipa shall not be worried whether I am living or not, but shall think only of you. What is more, not the people and the Kings alone, but I, too, shall not do anything without your advice. Therefore, stay with me.”

“Great king!” replied the Bosat, “please listen to me. If a man be patron of another, who has maintained that other and cared for him, giving him of his wealth for many years, and if that other leaves his patron because some other has said, ‘I will give you more wealth than he,’ and goes after the new wealth, will not the patron feel dishonoured, and incur dishonour at the hands of others?”

“My King taught me from my infancy, and gave me much wealth, and placed me in high place, and provided for me. And my gratitude shall be as fugitive as a line drawn on water.”

if I leave him merely because I was told I should receive more wealth from another. If I stay with you the world would say, 'This shall be his behaviour towards every King who keeps him in service.' This is the insult I shall receive from others, if I leave King Vedeha and come to you. The King retained me by him from my seventh year, and on my account, helped my parents immensely, and placed me in high position, and gave me great wealth : Should I leave that king I should be insulted by the people, who would say that what I did was wrong, and that I acted so because I was offered more wealth. And therefore I shall have no escape from both the places—from the people and my heart's conscience. Hence, as long as my King lives, I shall not leave room for men who called me "Vedeha's Mahausadha" to call me "Chulani's Mahausadha." I shall not let those people who call me Mahausadha Pandit of Mithila call me Mahausadha Pandit of Uttarapanchala. I shall not stay behind so long as my King is alive. And please do not misunderstand my declining to accept your offer !"

Then the King said, "If so, Pandit, promise me that you will come to me when your King leaves this world."

And the Bosat replied, "O King ! Life is uncertain ! Young die as well as old. If I be spared till then, I shall come."

Later the King entertained the Bosat right royally. By and by seven days elapsed, and the Bosat asked the King's permission to leave the City.

Then the King said, "Pandit ! you shall have the following gifts from me : I shall give you one thousand 'Nikkhas' ¹ or twenty-five thousand pieces of gold. I shall give you eighty 'cloth-weaving' villages of Kasi, adjoining the Kingdom of Vedeha, yielding each of them a revenue of a lakh of coins of gold, so that you will have from them an income of eighty lakhs of gold coins. I shall give you for your service four hundred active maidens in the prime of girlhood. I shall give you one hundred radiantly beautiful ladies dressed in all queenly apparel to be your queens. I shall give you also, to keep as a present, my army of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. Take with you your own army and the army I give you, and go to your country in safety."

Thus saying he gave him permission to go.

Now, although King Vedeha would not have sent his four relatives, Nanda Devi and the rest, back, if the Pandit had stayed with him when he begged of him to stay back, yet King Brahmadatta would have been as happy as a universal monarch who has won over his celestial chariots¹ and would not even have thought about his queen and other relations.



1. A gem which played the role of an airy chariot මතු රත්නය

MAHAUSADHA RETURNS

IN order to comfort the King, who had given him permission to go, the Bosat said: "Great King! Trouble not about your relatives, nor think they are four hundred leagues away from you. On the day my king was going away, I advised him in these words: 'Great King! Look upon Nanda Devi as a mother, and treat her accordingly. Treat Prince Phancala Chanda as a brother. And your daughter, Princess Panchala Chandi, I crowned as chief queen over his sixteen thousand queens, and gave her over to him, and sent them away. In a few days after I reach King Vedeha's city I shall send back your mother, wife, and son safely.'"

The King said "Very well, Pandit," and handed over to the Bosat all that dowry that was intended for his daughter, men-servants and maid-servants, clothes and ornaments, elephants, horses and chariots decorated with gold, and all other things suitable, omitting nothing to suit his glory, and to make people say, "who but this monarch can give such presents?"

Handing those over to the Pandit, the King said, "Give them all to my daughter, Pandit Mahausadha! Start at once, accompanied by your army of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry, with joy like unto 'Sakra,' the King of Gods, who conquered the Titans. Let Vedeha and other citizens who are anxiously expecting your safe arrival in Mithila, see you and be happy and joyous."

Now the hundred spies of the Bosat, who lived with those different Kings, came with their attendants and surrounded the Bosat. And the Bosat, who started off attended with his innumerable four hosts of armies, which looked like the great ocean flowing through the land, halted on the way, and sent men, saying:

"Go and bring me the revenue of the eighty villages given to me by King Brahmadata," and reached the country of Vedeha.

45 CHAPTER

THEY WELCOME THE BOSAT

NOW that wretched Senaka, the ocean of wisdom, who, the day he was told to go through the tunnel, had bandaged his knees, and elbows with rags and dressed himself in an old cloth, not knowing what was about to happen in the future, left a man on the road with these instructions :

"Friend! If King Chulani or any one else comes this way to Mithila, you come at once and inform me."

So the man, having seen the Bosat coming at a place of twelve leagues distant from Mithila, came running and told Senaka:

"Mahausadha Pandit is coming with a great attendance."

Hearing this, Senaka went up at once to the palace and informed the King. The King looking out from the palace window, saw the multitude which was coming and said:

"Senaka ! What do you think ? Our Pandit had a small force, but this host has a very fearful appearance" !; and terrified with fear, he questioned Senaka :

"The four terrible hosts of the army — elephants, horses, chariots, and infantry are coming in sight. Senaka ! What do you think they are ?"

Then Senaka reassured the King, and told him : "Great King ! Fear not. This matter will be a great rejoicing to you. Mahausadha Pandit our benefactor, our heart, our eye, our life, our lord, the lover of people, the lord of the world, the cynosure of the three worlds, the wise, the crystal cave of the refugees, the light of wisdom, is coming, attended with the four hosts of the army, including the hosts of the hundred Kings, the army of King Brahmadatta, and the army which went forth from Mithila."

"What are you saying, Senaka ? The Pandit's army was small. This is an army as great as that of King Brahmadatta, who came on that day."

And Senaka again said, "Great King ! Trouble not. It is the army presented to the Pandit by the King, who was pleased

with our lord, enchanted with his very sweet and refined speech, which is like divine medicine to the ears of those who hear him. Do not have any doubt. What I say is the fact”.

Hearing this, the King was greatly pleased, and issued orders to the citizens thus, by beat of drums :

“Decorate my kingdom, Mithila which is seven yojanas in extent, like unto a heaven, and march in advance to meet the Pandit.”

The citizens, who were eagerly waiting to see the Pandit, as soon as they heard this order, decorated that large city, which is about twenty-eight leagues in extent, and made it as beautiful as the heaven of Sakra, which was decorated for Sakra, the king of Gods, when he returned after conquering the Titans, with streaming flags and banners, pots and arches made of plantain-trees, white sand, and the five kinds of flowers spread throughout the streets. The men themselves dressed in all their best, went to meet the lord, whom they conducted in procession to the city. The Pandit filled the eyes of the men and women of that city with tears of joy, and made them like petals of blue lotus wet with dew, satisfied their hearts and eyes, and also comforted the grief of those who had not seen him for over months, and went into the Palace incomparable in majesty and magnificence, like nectar to the heart, ointment to the eye, a minute part of whose glory could be described although one was endowed with a thousand mouths, a thousand tongues, like Ananta.

A FRIENDLY CHAT

WHEN the King saw the Bosat his heart overflowed with the five kinds of joy, namely, minor joy, momentary joy, joy that comes like a shock, transports of joy, and joy all pervading. He got up hastily from his seat and went to meet him, embraced him and kissed his head, and resumed his seat, and in a pleasant conversation with him, questioned :

“ O Pandit ! Four men put a corpse on a hurdle, take it away to the grave and leave it there, and come away without any love for it ; even so we kept you at Kampilla, and came away saving our lives ! Tell me, by what means, stratagem, wisdom or cause, did you save yourself and save the lives in your army and come in victory ? ”

“ Great King ! While King Brahmadata entertained one purpose, I entertained another in my transcendent wisdom, and overruled his purpose. When he thought of any strategy, I conquered that too, by my strategy. And, moreover, by the power of my wisdom, I subdued the hundred Kings, the rulers of Jambudipa, and their forces, who had besieged me like the encircling ocean ; and by my power, I brought after me all the Kings and their armies ! ”

Thus saying, he narrated the story from the time King Brahmadata issued his commands to capture him, up to the time he opened the gates, and all he said and, did ; and then from the time they entered the tunnel upto the time the Pandit took the King and hid his sword in the Great Hall ; how they made amends and how he opened the gate at the prayer of the King, and rescued the Kings and armies entrapped in the tunnel from death ; and also the story about the festivities they held for seven days, as well as about the presents the hundred Kings gave him, and the various gifts which King Brahmadata bestowed on him, and the dowry that the King gave his daughter, and also the other minor gifts which King Chulani and other kings gave him.

The Bosat continued : “ Your Majesty ! King Brahmadata gave me twenty-five thousand pieces of Madha gold ; four hundred young maidens, fair and beautiful, their breasts all covered with every kind of fine raiment ; one hundred princess, surpassing the beauty of goddesses, dressed in various garments, to be my wives ; eighty villages from his district Kasi, adjoining

our kingdom Vedeha, each village yielding an annual income of one lakh of gold ; and a presentation army, composed of the four hosts of a regular army of King Brahmadata, and also out of the armies of the hundred kings. Attended with all this retinue, I came away joyfully in high procession and good spirits."

The King who was overjoyed on hearing this story, praised the Bosat's virtue :

"O Senaka ! It is very fortunate to live with the wise, and if we live in one and the same country, city or village with the Pandit, we shall have nothing to fear, either from an enemy or a thief in this world, nor from hell in the next birth. You yourself have seen reasons for this, as he has twice saved you when you were caught in the clutches of that huge host of eighteen complete armies, like tiny birds caught in a cage, or fishes in a net ; and therefore you know it. And I repeat it is very fortunate to live with the wise."

Thus the King described the Pandit's virtues. Senaka, too, endorsed what the King said :

"True, my lord " ; said he frankly, for the first time in his life ; and he added:—"The Pandit will not let any evil befall us, either in this world or in the next, all of us who were caught by the enemy, like birds caught in a cage or fish caught in a net, and were doomed to death, this Pandit saved and restored to happiness. In this world the wise man is a hundred and a thousand times superior to all others, and even so is our Mahausadha Pandit."

Thus he sincerely praised the Bosat in a most fascinating manner.



47 CHAPTER

A GREAT FESTIVAL

A LITTLE while later the King proclaimed this order in the town by beat of drums :

“ Keep festival for seven days. All those who bear goodwill towards me, shall honour the Pandit with various presents !”

The Buddha disclosing this fact, told the Bhikkhus as follows : “ By the order of that King Vedeha, the people played all sorts of tunes on their instruments making very pleasant music. They blew the five kinds of chanks : kara, vijaya, jayatura etc ; they displayed the five kinds of music : atata, vitata vitatatata, ghana, susira. The men of the city and the men of the country who were naturally inclined to honour the Pandit with festive activities, hearing the beating of drums, began to be more delighted than before, and showed their respect for him in proportion to their wealth. Queens, such as the Queen Udumbara, Princes, Courtiers, Brahmins, and all other people, took very many presents, food, and drink to the Bosat's house. So did the Cavalry Elephants, chariots, and other vehicles, infantry, men of the country, men of the town and all.

The great multitude which had assembled on the day the Pandit, who had travelled five hundred leagues from his country, and gone to a place where the one hundred kings were, who alone conquered by means of the power of his wisdom the four hosts of the mighty army and the kings who had encircled him to kill him, came from Uttara Panchala to Vedeha, and saw the Pandit, who returned safely, were overjoyed to see him, and they said to each other, ‘ He has returned after conquering the hundred Kings, and King Brahmadatta among them ’ ; and the people who were happy and hilarious, amused themselves in various ways for seven days, waving their turbans etc., as if the glory and splendour of the Pandit were spreading.

RELATIONS OF CHULANI SENT BACK

AFTER the seven days of national festivals, the Bosat went to the Palace, and said:

“Your Majesty ! May it please you to send back early King Chulani’s mother, son and queen.”

“Very well ! my son,” replied the King . “ But why do you tell me to send them away ? You had better take the initiative and act as you desire.”

Then the Bosat right royally paid his respects to each of them separately, and likewise, entertained and gave many presents to the men of the four hosts which King Brahmadatta and the hundred Kings had presented to him. Then he gave over this great force, and the four hundred maidens, including the hundred virgins whom King Brahmadatta had given to him, to Nanda Devi, and sent her away, accompanied by a great army, and the army which had been presented to him, he sent with Queen Nanda, so that they might escort her and return to him.

These three royal personages went with incomparable pomp and majesty and travelling a hundred yojanas, reaching Uttara-Panchala. And King Brahmadatta asked his mother:

“ Dear mother ! Was King Vedeha displeased with you on account of the enmity he had against me, as you are a relative of his enemy ? ”

“ What say you my son ? The Pandit gave me to the King to be his goddess, Nanda Devi to be a mother to him, and Prince Panchala Chanda to be a brother, born of the same womb ; and the King honoured us very much, and treated us kindly, with all civility.”

Thus the old lady praised King Vedeha in the highest terms. And the King, hearing these words was the more pleased, and sent his son-in-law a great number of additional gifts and presents.

Now if you ask me what reason there was for the king to ask his mother and not his wife, Queen Nanda, of the treatment they received at King Vedeha's kingdom, the answer is this :—There was none other so fair as Nanda Devi in the whole Jumbudipa ; she was away from the King at a place four-hundred leagues distant, and might have thought, ' I must enjoy myself ' and behaved as badly as she wished, without any fear or love for the King, and then if questioned she would not tell what she did, but would tell what she exactly did not do ; whereas mothers-in-law are like spying cats or cackling hens, towards their daughters-in-law and readily discredit them with their husbands by saying what is untrue instead of what is true. And this is the reason that the King questioned his mother and not his queen.

From this day onwards both parties lived in unity and harmony.

THE CASE OF THE WATER DEMON

NOW King Vedeha loved Queen Panchala Chandi dearly, and on the second year of their marriage she bore him a son. But when this son was ten years of age his father, King Vedeha, passed away. So the Bosat raised the royal standard, and set the ten-year-old Prince on the throne ; and then he said:

“ My lord ! I will now go to your grandfather, King Chulani.”

“ Do not leave me ”, replied the Prince, “ I am so very young. You shall be a father to me, and I shall care for you and see that you want nothing.”

When Queen Panchala Chandi heard this speech, she said:

“ It is true I had parents but it was you who gave me in marriage to a king who dwelt four hundred yojanas away from my home. It is you who broke down the eternal hostility of the two kings, and made them unite like milk and water. And so it is upon your presence and advice our welfare depends. When you go away from this kingdom we shall have no one to get help. Do not go, but stay and enjoy your former rank, the same as if the father of the child were living, and rule the kingdom.”

“ No, Queen ” replied the Bosat, “ on the day when I was about to return to this kingdom, I promised your father that I would come to him when King Vedeha died ; and therefore I must go. I am sorry that I cannot stay.”

So he set forth amidst the tears of most of the people to Mithila, who wept and sobbed at his going away. And he took with him his wife Amara Devi, and the giants who were born on the same day with him ; and of the common men and women he took all who wished to go with him. Then after a journey of a hundred yojanas, he reached Uttara Panchala.

Then King Chulani who had heard that Mahausadha Pandit was coming, advanced forward with his four hosts to meet him and conducting him in great state procession to his city, he gave him a magnificent palace to live in ; but besides this, the King gave him nothing more than the eighty weaving villages which had been formerly gifted to him. However, he did not mind the least about it, and performed the King's service punctually and well.

At that time a Brahmin, called Bheri, who was very wise and virtuous and clever in speech and endowed with the ability to differentiate between good and evil, used to take his daily meal at this palace, and passed his time in the royal gardens. Now the Beosat had heard that a person of such attainment took his meals at the palace, while the Brahmin on his part had heard the name of Mahausadha Pandit as a person of standing attending upon the King, and that there was none equal to him. But they had never seen each other.

Now Queen Nanda was not pleased with Mahausadha Pandit, because he had separated her from her husband the King, at least for a short time, for she thought:

“It was he who took us secretly through the tunnel, and separated me from the King for about a month!”

Whenever this thought occurred to her she was annoyed. And since she was unable to do anything herself, therefore she called five of her favourite women, and said:

“All of you keep an eye on the faults of Mahausadha Pandit and inform the King of them, and bring him to the bad looks of the King.”

So the five women seeking for a chance to gather something, followed him wherever he went, without letting anyone know of their designs.

Now, one day it so happened that, after his meals at the palace, the ascetic was on his way to his cell, when he met the Bosat in the courtyard coming to attend upon the King. The Bosat saluted the ascetic, and stood on a side. Then the ascetic thought within himself:

“This Pandit is wise; therefore, I will test his wisdom. But who is there that will not understand what is spoken by words? But to interpret a meaning conveyed by signs is a bit more difficult. So I will make signs to him with my hands, and question him that way.”

Then he looked the Bosat in the face, and opened out this hand. Now what did he question by this sign? It was this he wanted to know:—

“What has the King given to this Pandit, whom he has brought here from his country? Has he given him riches with a philanthropic hand and maintained him well?”

Seeing this gesture, the Bosat replied by closing his fist. By so doing he meant to convey that he had come there, in pursuance of his promise to the king, and that as one does not part with what he grasps, in his hand, the King has given him nothing.

The ascetic, finding that the Bosat had grasped his meaning, stretched out his hand and rubbed his head. By this gesture he meant to convey :

“ If you are dissatisfied, why not become an ascetic like myself ? ”

The Bosat understood this sign, and in his turn to reply he rubbed his belly, meaning to say :

“ There are many bellies that I must fill, and therefore I cannot become an ascetic.”

When he had received this answer the ascetic went into his cell, while the Bosat saluted him and went to attend upon the King. Then Queen Nanda's favourite women, who had been looking from the perforated window of the palace and saw what had happened, went to the King, and said :

“ Your Majesty, Mahausadha Pandit with the assistance of the ascetic, has designs upon your kingdom. In a very short time they will kill you, and take it to themselves.”

But the King said, “ What ! Have you seen this thing with your own eyes ? Have you any trustworthy information of it ? ”

“ Yes ” they replied, “ the ascetic, after taking his meal yesterday at the palace, met the Pandit, and, as many were present, he was afraid to converse in words, and therefore made signs, and said. ‘ Pandit ! you are a man possessed of wisdom. Why not make the whole kingdom of Jambudipa as the palm of your hand, or as a threshing floor, and take the kingdom into your own hand ? ’ This he conveyed by opening out his hand. The Pandit understood him, and closed his hand, signifying that if he lay hand upon the sword he would in a few days kill the King and take the kingdom to himself. Then the ascetic rubbed his head, implying that if that were so, he should cut off the King's head. The Pandit, thinking that if he aimed a blow at the King's head he might misdirect his hand and strike too high, rubbed his belly, meaning to say that it would be better to cleave the King's stomach into two. Why should we not tell a thing we heard ? This is what we saw with our own eyes ! ”

And again they said, "We entreat your Majesty to kill Mahausadha Pandit without the least delay."

The King thought, "I cannot wrong this Pandit. I must question the ascetic, and learn what the Pandit is reported to have said to him."

So, on the following day, after the ascetic had finished his meal, the King spoke to him thus: "Well, have you met the Pandit?"

"Great king!" replied the ascetic, "when I was going away yesterday after my meal at the palace, I met him in the courtyard."

"Had you any talk with him?" inquired the King.

The ascetic answered, "Great King! I had heard that he was a wise person, and I thought that if he was wise he would understand my gestures, and, to test him I put him a question by means of a sign. He understood me and solved my riddle to my satisfaction."

Thus he related all that had happened.

The King then inquired, "Reverend Sir! Is the Pandit a wise man?"

"Certainly, Great King! He is wise. There is none anywhere to equal him in wisdom."

The king saluted the ascetic and sent him off to his cell.

After he went the Bosat came, and the King inquired of him in the same manner the nature of the talk he had with the ascetic.

The Bosat replied, "He told me nothing in words. He put me a question by a sign, and that question I answered accurately by the same device."

So the Pandit gave some account of the matter as the ascetic had given. That day the King, being pleased with the Great One, instituted him to the rank of Commander-in-chief over the whole of Jambudipa ten thousand yojanas in extent and proclaimed:

"The whole Jambudipa shall do what the Pandit commands, and I too shall henceforward do the same."

Just as the five great rivers that flow from the Himalayas join together and fall into the great ocean, so did all riches and glories pour into the Bosat's house in a rapidly following flood, like rivers falling into the ocean.

When the King had given him all these riches, the Bosat, rich in wisdom, thought thus :

"The King has all of a sudden installed me in such high honour, and placed me in possession of so much wealth and glory, that there is none to equal him in wealth and glory, save myself. When a monarch is angry with a man and intends his death, he first heaps wealth and honour upon him. All this time the King has not given me anything but now riches and honour pour upon me like rain. I do not know whether it is in good will or in ill will towards me. I must ascertain this without delay. There is none who can ascertain what the King's motives really are, except the ascetic. Ascetic Bheri is a person of great wisdom ; he will be able to find it out by some device of his own."

Thus thinking, he took with him a large quantity of perfume and flowers, and a few of things fit for a mendicant to partake, and entering the ascetic's cell, offered him the perfumes and flowers, and said :

"My lord ! Since you told the King of my merits, my house has been filled with riches as a great lake is full of water, so that there is none to equal me in wealth except the King. I do not know whether it is with good intent or bad intent that he has showered on me these favours. Can you find out, and let me know exactly what the King's feelings towards me are?"

The ascetic agreed, and said, "Very well."

So, on the following day, when he was on his way to the palace, he thought of a suitable question, namely, the question regarding the water-demon ; but again he thought :

"I must not show myself a spy who is in the Pandit's confidence. I will ask the question by means of a stratagem, and find out what the King's will towards the Pandit is."

Thus thinking, he went to the palace, and when he had taken his meal the King came up to him and stood on a side saluting him. Then the ascetic thought:

"Now, if I put my question in the presence of a number of people, and if the King is angry with the Pandit, and give expression to his anger in public, it will have a bad effect."

Therefore he said to the King, "Your Majesty ! I wish to speak to you on a secret matter in private."

Thereupon the King sent away all his attendants. Then the ascetic said :

"Great King ! I will ask you a question."

"Ask it," replied the King ; "If I can answer it I will do so."

Then the ascetic Bheri said :

"Your Majesty, suppose the seven of you — Talata Devi, the mother who brought you forth : Nanda Devi, your chief queen : Prince Tikshana Mantri, your brother ; Prince Dhanasekara, your friend ; Brahmin Kevatta your chief counsellor ; Mahausadha Pandit and yourself — are voyaging in a ship over the great ocean, and a water-demon, who feeds on human flesh, is in search of prey, sees the ship in which you seven are sailing, and seizes hold of your ship and says, 'you must give me your six companions, one after another, else I will not let you go' ; in what order would you give them ? Whom first ? Whom second ? and so on ; and whom last of all would you give as demon's prey, so that you might yourself escape from the hands of the water-demon ?"

Then the King who was honest and had no guile in his heart, replied :

"Reverend Sir, if the water-demon should seize hold of my ship and bid me successively give up my six companions for his prey, and save myself, I should certainly first give up my mother, next Nanda Devi, thirdly my brother, fourthly my friend, and fifthly Kevatta. After giving up these five, when there remained only myself and Pandit, if the demon asked for further sacrifice, I would disregard the glories of my sovereignty of Jambudipa, I would say to him, 'Friend ! You had better eat me up' ; and throwing Mahausadha Pandit behind me, I would jump into the open mouth of the demon, and would myself be his prey ; but while I live I shall not give my Pandit to the water-demon, and look on."

This was the end of the question and answer. Then the ascetic thought, "Now I have put this question to the King, and the goodwill he has for the Pandit, will not be known outside, since I alone heard this answer. But I must spread this story abroad, as oil spread on the ocean. I will go from the Palace with the King, get a large number of persons together, and put the question in their presence. He will answer in their presence, as he answered me, namely the order in which he would sacrifice the other five, and saying that he would save Mahausadha Pandit alive. Then I will dwell on the virtues of his mother and the four others, and emphasise the faults of the Pandit. The King will then speak of the faults of others, and dwell on the virtues of the Pandit, so that the virtues of the Bosat will shine as bright as the full moon in the firmament".

So thinking, he said to the king, "Your Majesty ! Assemble together the people of the inner city, the princes and nobles, and other men of repute, and prepare a magnificent seat in the palace, and decorate it."

This was done, and the ascetic seated on the magnificently decorated throne, put to the King the same question, from the beginning, as he had put to him when they two were alone ; and the King said, as he had before said that he would first give his mother to the demon, and last of all himself, but would save Mahausadha Pandit alive.

And he further said, "So long as I live I will not be separated from my Pandit for a moment !"

Then the Ascetic said :

"Your Majesty ! Do not say what is not in your mind. Who will believe the words you say ? You have said that when the water-demon seize hold of the ship you would sacrifice six persons in succession, beginning with the mother who bore you, and save the Pandit alive, and all the time you have no greater enemy than Mahausadha Pandit. To any man his mother is the greatest of all. What is more, your mother is not like other mothers, possessed of ordinary qualities. She has been of great assistance to you. Why would you give away a mother possessed of so much virtue ?"

And in order that the King might understand her value, he related this story :—

"In the lifetime of the King Chulani, when Chulani was a little prince, the counsel Brahmin, who served the King.

after having had his pleasure with Queen Talata, killed the King by means of poisoned food, crowned himself King, and took the Queen to be his wife. At that time, in the reign of this Brahmin, Prince Chulani one day said to his mother 'Mother ! I am hungry.' The mother gave him jaggery, honey and sweetmeats ; but flies swarmed about the plate, so the prince let a few drops of honey from his plate fall on the ground, and drove off the flies that were on his plate. The swarm of flies flew away and covered the honey on the floor as well, ate his sweets, cleaned his hands and mouth and went to play. Seeing this act the Brahmin thought 'This prince, before he is grown up, drives off the flies, and afterwards eats his sweetmeats. If he lives to be a man he will not give me the kingdom. I shall therefore kill him.' And he told the matter to Talata Devi. The Queen said, 'My lord ! Through the love I had towards you, I killed a monarch so great as my king, by poisoning ; and therefore, what use is this puny fellow to me ? I shall kill him secretly.' So saying, she comforted the Brahmin. And the queen in her wisdom, stuck upon a device immediately, and calling her cook, told him, 'Look here, child, my son, Prince Chulani, and your son Dhanusekhara, were born on the same day. They came here together, they are friends as thick as life. Now the Brahmin Chabba wishes to kill my son. You must save his life for me.'

The cook answered, 'Very well, your Majesty ; what shall I do?' The Queen said, 'Let my son live in your house. You must all three of you remain in the kitchen, so that every one know it, but not suspect our design. When no one doubts that Prince Chulani, the cook, and his son are in the kitchen, you must heap the bones of sheep where you lie, and when people go to rest at night, set fire to the kitchen, and, without letting anyone know, depart through the open gate of this town, taking the two children with you, and escape into the other city in the suburban area. Save my son's life for me, but do not let anyone know that he is the prince.' The cook agreed, and said, 'Very well.' Then she gave him many treasures — pearls, stones, and gold. The cook and the other two, after setting fire to the kitchen, went away, and eventually came to the city of Sagala, in Madu-rata.

Now there, the cook went to the king, and told him that he was a cook of repute. The king of Madu sent away his previous cook, and gave the control of the kitchen to the new-comer. The two children used to go with the cook to the palace, and the king one day asked whose children they were. The cook said they were his own. Then the king said: 'These children are not cast in the same mould.'

The cook replied, 'They are the children of different wives. One of them is like me, and other like his mother.'

As time passed, they made friends with the daughter of the king of Madu, and would play together in the palace. Now, Prince Chulani and the princess, seeing each other constantly, fell in love. At the play-room Prince Chulani used to order the princess, and say, 'Bring that here; you wait.' etc.' making her bring his top or whip. Sometimes, when she would not bring him what he wants, he would treat her cruelly and gave a knock on the head. Out of respect for her royalty and love for the prince, the princess sometimes endures the blames. At other times, when she cannot bear the pain of the blow, she rubs the spot and cries. One day the king heard her cry, and asked who struck his daughter, and the nurse went to inquire who it was; but the princess thought, 'If I say, he struck me, my father will exercise his royal authority against him.' So she passed the matter off, out of love for the prince, and said, 'Who dares to beat me? I simply cried for fun.'

Now, one day the king himself saw the prince strike his daughter, and thought, 'This boy is not like the other; he is very pleasant to look, like a golden image. He is not the least afraid because this is a palace, and my daughter the daughter of a king, while he a stranger and the son of a cook. The truth has been hidden for me, yes, this boy is not the son of the cook.' From that day forward the king marked him. The nurse used to take sweets to the place where the princess was at play, and the princess would distribute them to the other children, who stretched out their hands to take the sweets, and received them into their two hands, and ate them; but Prince Chulani in the course of the game itself would put out a hand himself and take them.

This too the king saw. Again, one day Prince Chulani spun his top, and it got underneath the king's bed. The prince went to take it, but having regard to his royal dignity, he thought:

'If I bend my head under the bed of this foreign king, will it not look as if I did obeisance to him?'

So he drew the top to him by means of a stick. When the king saw this act, too, he thought.

'This cannot be a cook's son.'

So he called the cook to him and inquired:

‘Whose child is this?’

‘It is my son,’ he replied.

But the king said :

‘What man, don’t I know your son? Do not tell me a lie. Speak out the truth. If you tell a lie you will soon know the result.’

So saying, he stretched out his sword to frighten him.

The cook, terrified with fear of death, said :

‘I shall tell your Majesty in private.’

Then the king sent the other people away, and the cook, begging to be forgiven, related the story from the time of the late King Chulani, who was killed by poison, down to the time that the king questioned him, and also what he had done and how he had come, as accurately as possible.

Having heard the truth of the matter, the King dressed his daughter in the robes of a queen, and bestowed her on Prince Chulani.

This is the story of young Prince Chulani’s life at Madu.

Now the news took wing abroad that the cook, his son, and Prince Chulani were burnt to death inside the kitchen by the fire.

When Talata Devi heard of the matter she said to the Brahmin :

‘What was passing in your mind and mine has come to pass by itself. All three of them were burned to death in the room!’

When she told the Brahmin thus he was greatly pleased. Moreover, the Queen brought the sheep’s bones, and assured the Brahmin that they were truly the remains of Prince Chulani.’

The ascetic related this story to call to mind and illustrate the qualities of the Queen, and said :

“Your mother effected this device by her wisdom and protected you. For what fault of hers would you give your mother, who helped you so well, to the water demon?”

“I know that the virtues of my mother are many; but her faults, I know, are more than the virtues you described. I am unable to tell you all of them now. But I can tell you a little. Listen; and he continued :

"She is now in her old age, but she puts on young women's ornaments, which are not fitting for her to wear at this stage ; and when I am seated on the Throne attended by my Ministers, she walks up and down in a manner that all may see. The clattering noise of her ornaments is heard jingling all over the place, drowning other sounds. I, seated on the Throne attended by my Ministers, know that the sound is made by her ornaments, and I keep silent in shame, and the Ministers look each other in the face. Again, consider another bad quality of hers. She writes letters privately to the other kings in my name, in which she says, ' My mother is not old ; she is better than a Princess of sixteen years of age. You may come and take her away as Queen.....etc.' Then the kings, on seeing the letters, are terrified with fear, and write in reply, asking, ' Your Majesty why do you ask your subordinates to do a thing which you should not ask us to do ? I think if I were to read these letters aloud in public, I would not find a spot in which I could hide my face for shame. On account of these faults, I shall give my mother to the water-demon first"

" Well," said the ascetic " you give your mother as a prey to the water-demon on account of these faults. No one possesses such good qualities as Queen Nanda ; this Nanda Devi, who stands the Chief Queen over your sixteen thousand Queens, who is possessed of the five special beauties, and resplendent with all fairness has cleaved to you like your own shadow from her infancy. If I am to speak of her virtues—at the time you were living at Sagala, of the kingdom of Madu, when you beat her and she did not question your orders, and, out of love to you, did not tell her parents. For what faults of hers will you give her to the water-demon ?—Nanda Devi who possesses such virtues who does not lose her temper, who is very wise, who knows your wishes, who lived as you wished, who bore you children as fortunate as you, and who have increased your royal glory."

Hearing these words the King disclosing her faults, said :

" Reverend Sir, this Nanda Devi has never refused me the enjoyments of the pleasures of sense, and now, having me under her control, asks me for ornaments and trinkets which she should not ask me for she asks me for ornaments which, out of love for my other Queens and their children, I have given for their adornment, for which she has no right to ask. I gave them to her in the heat of my desire, little knowing that I should repent it in the future. Again, she strips my children of their ornaments, on the pretext that the king gave them to her, and does not mind their tears, yes, she is delighted to

think that she has taken them. Then the other queens and children come to me and say, 'Why did you give us these things, and why do you now take them back?' And I am grieved when the little one cries and weeps about me, and say that I have acted so because of the interference of this Queen. Then I repent and think, to myself what I did was wrong; but I find it impossible to comfort them, though I give them twice as much as they had at first from my royal treasury. It is because of her that such sorrow befalls me and it is on account of these faults that I would give her to the water-demon next."

"Well, you have told me why you would surrender your queen, but your brother has been of great assistance to you. Why should you give him over to the water-demon?" inquired the ascetic, and went on to describe the brother's virtues.

"Great King! When you had gone away from your mother country, and were living in a strange land, did not he fill you with honours and place you upon the throne? He the Prince Tikshana Mantri, conceived in the same womb that bore you. He is far superior to all the bowmen of Jambudipa. Why will you give him up to the water-demon? The Prince Tikshana was born when your mother, Talata Devi, had poisoned the late King Chulani, and was living with the Brahmin. Although born at that time, he was the son of the dead King Chulani. When the Prince Tikshana Mantri grew up, the Brahmin gave him a sword, and said, 'take this and stay near me.' The Prince, thinking the Brahmin was his father, attended upon him. There were hypocrites in those days as at the present time. And a certain Minister told the Prince secretly: 'Prince, you are not this man's son. When you were in your mother's womb, your mother killed your father for love of this Brahmin, and crowned him king. You are the son of the great King Chulani.'

"Thereupon the prince was enraged, like a snake beaten with a stick, and thought of killing the Brahmin by means of a stratagem. So he entered the place and gave the sword which the Brahmin had given him to one of the men who was standing there, and to another he said, 'Say that this is your sword, and make a fuss about it.' So saying, he went into the palace. Then the two men, saying 'This is my sword,' each claimed the sword, the one asking the other how he came by it; and they began quarrelling. The Prince, as if he had known nothing of the matter before, sent a man to see what the quarrel was about. The man returned and said, 'A man is claiming his sword as his own, and tries to take it out of another's grasp; the two are quarrelling.' The Brahmin king

on hearing this, asked what the matter was. And the prince inquired of him, 'Does the sword you gave me belong to another?' The Brahmin king said: 'What are you saying? When I have in my store hundreds and thousands of swords, why should I give my only son another man's sword? If so, the prince replied 'can you distinguish the sword you gave me? Shall I get it for you to examine?' The Brahmin said, 'Why, my son? Do I not know the sword I gave you? Fetch it at once.' The prince sent for the sword, and drawing it from the scabbard, said, 'Look!' and, under pretence of showing it to the Brahmin, held the scabbard in the left hand, and with a single blow cut off the Brahmin's head as by a lightning stroke, so that the head fell at his feet. Then he removed the dead Brahmin from the Royal Palace, and raised the royal banner in his own honour. His mother then told him how Chulani was still alive at Sagala. Hearing that, Prince Tikshana Mantri, attended by his four hosts of armies, went to Sagala and brought back you, his brother, and crowned him king. That Prince had an instantaneous insight into everything and on that account he was known in Jambudipa as Prince Tikshana Mantri, and why will you give such a good brother to the water-demon?

Hearing, this the king disclosed his brother's faults.

"My brother thinks: 'I brought this man, who was without riches, to this city and crowned him king. There is none in all Jambudipa superior to me in all the science of the bow—whether to draw the bow or speed the shaft—not to speak of other matters. At first, when coming to attend upon the king, he used to come earlier than the rest, but now because of his pride, he comes very late, sometimes never at all. This is the fault for which I will give him as a prey to the water-demon.'"

The ascetic then said,

"Well, let it be so. Why will you give up Dhanusekara? He is a person very clever in the science of bow—to pull a strong bow and let go the string. He was born in this Panchala on the same day as you. He was and is to you as your own shadow. He enjoyed and suffered happiness and sorrow equally with you. Moreover, he attended upon you always during night and day. Why should you give up such a friend as he is?"

Hearing this, the king, disclosing Dhanusekara's faults, replied:

"Sir! This friend of mine has from his boyhood eaten and drunk with me, played with me and lived with me. Having lost all fear of me now that I am king, he has no love or

respect for me as he had once upon a time. What is more, as no guard is set upon him, he may talk with my queen at anytime in private, and although the guards try to stop it, he abuses them and threatens them, and then fearlessly goes to the place where she is and they carry on. He clasps his hands and laugh in my presence. He treats me in the same way as he did when I was not a king. He comes to the palace uninvited. For these faults I would give my friend to the water-demon."

The ascetic, in the same manner as before, said:

"Because of these faults you give your friend to the water-demon, but why do you want to give Kevatta? Great king! this Kevatta is a person, who by the power of his science, could read the thoughts of others as if he saw them in a book with his own eyes. He is very clever in the knowledge of Constitutional and other laws. He knows how to interpret dreams. He knows perfectly well what expeditions will succeed, and what will fail. He also knows all about the eclipses of the moon and the sun. So clever is he in devising plans that he can even find a way to join earth to heaven. He is indeed great in counsel. How do you give such a Brahmin as this to the water-demon?"

The king, disclosing the faults of the Brahmin, replied:

"When I am seated on my throne, attended by the Ministers of my court, this Brahmin rubs his forehead, and raises his eyebrow, showing eyes as red as a jungle cock, glaring at me as if in anger. When I see this fellow's aspect, which would scare a man even in a dream; when I see his figure, teeth, face and eyes as a fiend's, I am as frightened as if I saw a demon. For these reasons I should give this Brahmin minister to the demon."

Hearing this, the ascetic said, "You said, your Majesty, that you would give your mother and the other four successively to the water-demon as his prey, and that after giving them, you would regard your royal power and glory as little as the rehum a man voids in the morning, and give your life to save Pandit Mahausadha. What virtue, either in the past or present do you see in him that you should face such a sacrifice as this?"

And then the ascetic describing the power and glory of the King, continued:

"Great king! Having been chief ruler over the whole Jambudipa ten thousand yojanas in extent, whose confines are on every side of the shores of the ocean you give orders to the other kings who are your subordinates. You are attended by a host of ministers and powerful forces. You have conquered all. You have power and glory like Sakra. More.

over you are attended by sixteen thousand ladies resplendent in various queenly adornments, earrings set with precious stones, and the like. You possess kingdoms, towns, villages, royal villages, houses, parks, fields, clothes, jewels, food and drink, men servants and maid servants, sons and daughters, cattle and buffaloes, silver and gold, elephants and horses, chariots and palanquins, and the four complete hosts that attend a king ! All these things you have; you are like a palace for the five pleasures to riot in. Such things your soul enjoys. And have not the wise said that a man has no treasure but his soul ? Why should you, on account of the Mahausadha Pandit, make such a sacrifice as men do not make or think of ?

Then the King said :

"Venerable Sir, what are you saying. If not I alone, but the gods and Brahmins of the ten thousand universes and other gods, and those in realm of Nagas, and the kings called Anantha, in each universe, everyone of them were to create for themselves a thousand mouths each, and to describe the virtues of my son, Mahausadha Pandit, by each different mouth, describing different virtues until their lives' end, even then I do not think they could complete describing his virtues and see to the end of them. A Pandit of such incomparable wisdom as this Pandit there had not existed in the past, does not exist now and never will be born in the future. I shall now describe only a little bit like showing the sky through the eye of a needle :

"Since this Mahausadha Pandit came here, up to this very hour of this very day, I saw not nor heard of the least fault in him. If I fall in calamity, he will, by the power of his wisdom, place all my children and grandchildren in happiness, and not let any calamity befall them. Again like an all-wise supreme Buddha by the power of his wisdom, he knows fully both the gain and loss, the good and evil that prevail, that will prevail, that have prevailed in the universe. That faultless and sweet Pandit, while I live, shall not be given to the water-demon to be his prey."

So the King, speaking what was in his mind, described the virtues of Bosat without reserve, making them as plain for all to see as though he inscribed them on the full moon's orb. When the King, in all honesty, spoke out his mind, the ascetic in order that all who were collected in that vast assembly might hear, recited a verse, so that the matter might be better proclaimed in the world. This verse conveyed the following meaning :—

"O meritorious men ! Hear what I say. King Chulani says that he would give the five persons, including his mother who bore him, as a prey to the water-demon, and, finally, his

own life also to save this Mahausadha Pandit, which fact.. meritorious citizens do you all hear and keep in mind.

"Thus you all see, it is that wisdom because it accomplishes any thought of man, is supernatural and miraculous. It is as hard as to capture a horse's hair split into a hundred parts; and because it is of unspeakable assistance to man for all his good in this world and in the next, it is thought to be the only supreme good."

EPILOGUE

WITH these words the ascetic, proclaimed the wisdom of Bosat, and made an end of the story of the Tunnel, concluding it with the question of the Water-demon.

Thus Lord Buddha, the Lord of the three worlds, having proclaimed the four sublime truths, Suffering, Cause of Suffering, End of Suffering and the way to the End of Suffering described the exercise of his wisdom in the hearing of the Bhikkhus, who assembled in the Hall of Dharma as if he were drawing it on the orb of the moon. That Proclamation of Dhamma did great good to many mortals. Gods, Nagas, etc. After he had thus related the Jataka, he explained who those personages who were mentioned in the story were.

"O, Bhikkhus, the Ascetic of that time was the great nun, Uppalavanna : the Pandit's father, 'Siriwaddhana Millionaire,' is King Suddhodana ; the Pandit's mother Sumana Devi, is Queen Mahamaya; and the Pandit's wife Amara Devi, is Princess Yasodhara, who bore my son, Prince Rahula, being the chief queen over a hundred and sixty-nine thousand queens ; and the parrot who conveyed all secret messages, and did the Pandit every service, is my brother, Ananda Thera, who is the chief of those who attend upon me, and the chief of the wise, the mine of the Dharma, and who is like the full moon in the sky of my Buddhahood. King Chulani Brahmadata, who at that time brought eighteen complete armies to the city where the Pandit was, and ran away defeated, is Sariputta Thera, the chief of the wise next to myself and who is as my right hand ; Mahausadha Pandit, who at that time, from his seventh year, surpassed the five wise Pandits, Senaka, Pukkusa, Kavinda, Devinda, and Kevatta, in wisdom, is I myself, who am now the Enlightened One.

(END OF THE STORY
OF
THE TUNNEL)