

CHAPTER XXV.

ANCIENT DEVOTION¹.

Thereupon the Lord addressed the entire assemblage of Bodhisattvas: Of yore, young men of good family, at a past epoch, incalculable, more than incalculable Æons ago, at that time there appeared in the world a Tathâgata named Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñā, an Arhat, &c., endowed with science and conduct, &c. &c., in the Æon Priyadarsana, in the world Vairokanarasmipratimandita. Now, there was, young men of good family, under the spiritual rule of the Tathâgata Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñā a king called Subhavyûha. That king Subhavyûha, young men of good family, had a wife called Vimaladattâ, and two sons, one called Vimalagarbha, the other Vimalanetra. These two boys, who possessed magical power and wisdom², applied themselves to the course of duty of Bodhisattvas, viz. to the perfect virtues (Pâramitâs) of almsgiving, morality, forbearance, energy, meditation, wisdom, and skilfulness; they were accomplished in benevolence, compassion, joyful sympathy and indifference, and in all the thirty-

¹ Pûrvayoga; rather, ancient history; cf. p. 153.

² In the margin sundry epithets have been added, which here are omitted.

seven constituents of true knowledge ¹. They had perfectly mastered the meditation Vimala (i.e. spotless), the meditation Nakshatrarâgâditya ², the meditation Vimalanirbhâsa, the meditation Vimalâbhâsa, the meditation Alaṅkârasûtra ³, the meditation Mahâtegarbha ⁴. Now at that time, that period the said Lord preached the Dharmaparyâya of the Lotus of the True Law out of compassion for the beings then living and for the king Subhavyûha. Then, young men of good family, the two young princes Vimalagarbha and Vimalanetra went to their mother, to whom they said, after stretching their joined hands : We should like to go, mother, to the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgâsaṅkusumitâbhigña, the Tathâgata, &c., and that, mother, because the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgâsaṅkusumitâbhigña, the Tathâgata, &c., expounds, in great extension, before the world, including the gods, the Dharmaparyâya of the Lotus of the True Law. We should like to hear it. Whereupon the queen Vimaladattâ said to the two young princes Vimalagarbha and Vimalanetra : Your father, young gentlemen, the king Subhavyûha, favours the Brah-

¹ Bodhipakshika or Bodhapakshika (dharmâs). They form part of the 108 Dharmâlokamukhas in Lalita-vistara, p. 36, l. 17-p. 38, l. 6; an enumeration of them is found in Spence Hardy's Manual of Buddhism, p. 497.

² Burnouf's reading is Nakshatratârârâgâditya, i.e. the Sun, king of stars and asterisms.

³ So Burnouf; my MS. has Alaṅkârasubha, i.e. splendid with ornaments.

⁴ I.e. having great lustre in the interior, or womb of great lustre. Nirmanirbhâsa may mean both 'spotless radiance' and 'having a spotless radiance;' Vimalâbhâsa, 'spotless shine,' or 'having a spotless shine.'

mans. Therefore you will not obtain the permission to go and see the Tathâgata. Then the two young princes Vimalagarbha and Vimalanetra, stretching their joined hands, said to their mother: Though born in a family that adheres to a false doctrine, we feel as sons to the king of the law. Then, young men of good family, the queen Vimaladattâ said to the young princes: Well, young gentlemen, out of compassion for your father, the king Subhavyûha, display some miracle, that he may become favourably inclined to you, and on that account grant you the permission of going to the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankâsumitâbhigña, the Tathâgata, &c.

Immediately the young princes Vimalagarbha and Vimalanetra rose into the atmosphere to a height of seven Tâl trees¹ and performed miracles such as are allowed by the Buddha, out of compassion for their father, the king Subhavyûha. They prepared in the sky a couch and raised dust; there they also emitted from the lower part of their body a shower of rain, and from the upper part a mass of fire; then again they emitted from the upper part of their body a shower of rain, and from the lower part a mass of fire². While in the firmament they became now big, then small; and now small, then big. Then they vanished from the sky to come up again from the earth and reappear in the air. Such, young men of good family, were the miracles produced by the

¹ Or seven spans, whatever may be meant by it.

² A similar miracle was performed by the Buddha, according to the traditions of the Southern Buddhists, when he had to show his superiority to the six heretical doctors; see Bigandet, *Life of Gaudama*, vol. i, p. 218.

magical power of the two young princes, whereby their father, the king Subhavyûha, was converted. At the sight of the miracle produced by the magical power of the two young princes, the king Subhavyûha was content, in high spirits, ravished, rejoiced, joyful, and happy, and, the joined hands raised, he said to the boys : Who is your master, young gentlemen? whose pupils are you? And the two young princes answered the king Subhavyûha : There is, noble king, there exists and lives a Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâ-gasañkusumitâbhigñā, a Tathâgata, &c.; seated on the stool of law at the foot of the tree of enlightenment ; he extensively reveals the Dharmaparyâya of the Lotus of the True Law to the world, including the gods. That Lord is our Master, O noble king ; we are his pupils. Then, young gentlemen of good family, the king Subhavyûha said to the young princes : I will see your Master, young gentlemen ; I am to go myself to the presence of that Lord.

After the two young princes had descended from the sky, young gentlemen, they went to their mother and with joined hands stretched forward said to her : Mother, we have converted our father to supreme and perfect knowledge ; we have performed the office of masters towards him ; therefore let us go now ; we wish to enter upon the ecclesiastical life in the face of the Lord. And on that occasion, young men of good family, the young princes Vimalagarbha and Vimalanetra addressed their mother in the following two stanzas :

1. Allow us, O mother, to go forth from home and to embrace the houseless life ; ay, we will

become ascetics, for rare to be met with (or precious) is a Tathâgata.

2. As the blossom of the glomerated fig-tree, nay, more rare is the *Gina*. Let us depart; we will renounce the world; the favourable moment is precious (or not often to be met with).

Vimaladattâ said :

3. Now I grant you leave; go, my children, I give my consent. I myself will likewise renounce the world, for rare to be met with (or precious) is a Tathâgata.

Having uttered these stanzas, young men of good family, the two young princes said to their parents : Pray, father and mother, you also go together with us to the Lord *Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñā*, the Tathâgata, &c., in order to see, humbly salute and wait upon him, and to hear the law. For, father and mother, the appearance of a Buddha is rare to be met with as the blossom of the glomerated fig-tree, as the entering of the tortoise's neck into the hole of the yoke formed by the great ocean¹. The appearance of Lords Buddhas, father and mother, is rare. Hence, father and mother, it is a happy lot we have been blessed with, to have been born at the time of such a prophet. Therefore, father and mother, give us leave; we would go and become ascetics in presence² of the Lord *Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñā*, the Tathâgata, &c., for the

¹ I am as unable to elucidate this comparison as Burnouf was. Not unlikely the mythological tortoise in its quality of supporter of the earth is alluded to.

² *Sakâse*; Burnouf has 'sous l'enseignement' (*sâsane*), which is the more usual phrase.

seeing of a Tathâgata is something rare. Such a king of the law is rarely met with ; such a favourable occasion¹ is rarely met with.

Now at that juncture, young men of good family, the eighty-four thousand women of the harem of the king Subhavyûha became worthy of being receptacles of this Dharmaparyâya of the Lotus of the True Law. The young prince Vimalanetra exercised himself in this Dharmaparyâya, whereas the young prince Vimalagarbha for many hundred thousand myriads of koṭis of Æons practised the meditation Sarvasattva-pâpagahana², with the object that all beings should abandon all evils. And the mother of the two young princes, the queen Vimaladattâ, acknowledged the harmony between all Buddhas and all topics treated by them³. Then, young men of good family, the king Subhavyûha, having been converted to the law of the Tathâgata by the instrumentality of the two young princes, having been initiated and brought to full maturity in it, along with all his relations and retinue ; the queen Vimaladattâ with the whole crowd of women in her suite, and the two young princes, the sons of the king Subhavyûha, accompanied by forty-two thousand living beings, along with the women of the harem and the ministers, went all together and unanimously to the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñâ, the Tathâgatha, &c. On arriving at the place where the Lord was, they humbly saluted his

¹ *Îdrisî kshazasampad.*

² I.e. means whereby (all) evils are abandoned by all creatures.

³ Sarvabuddhasthânâni ; in the margin added the word for 'secret.'

feet, circumambulated him three times from left to right and took their stand at some distance.

Then, young men of good family, the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasasaṅkusumitâbhigñā, the Tathâgata, &c., perceiving the king Subhavyûha, who had arrived with his retinue, instructed, roused, excited, and comforted him with a sermon. And the king Subhavyûha, young men of good family, after he had been well and duly instructed, roused, excited, and comforted by the sermon of the Lord, was so content, glad, ravished, joyful, rejoiced, and delighted, that he put his diadem on the head of his younger brother and established him in the government, whereafter he himself with his sons, kinsmen, and retinue, as well as the queen Vimaladattâ and her numerous train of women, the two young princes accompanied by forty-two¹ thousand living beings went all together and unanimously forth from home to embrace the houseless life, prompted as they were by their faith in the preaching of the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasasaṅkusumitâbhigñā, the Tathâgata, &c. Having become an ascetic, the king Subhavyûha, with his retinue, remained for eighty-four thousand years applying himself to studying, meditating, and thoroughly penetrating this Dharmaparyâya of the Lotus of the True Law. At the end of those eighty-four thousand years, young men of good family, the king Subhavyûha acquired the meditation termed Sarvaguzâlâṅkâryavyûha². No sooner had he ac-

¹ Burnouf has eighty-four, but this must be a faulty reading, because the number of forty-two agrees with that given above.

² I. e. collocation (or disposition) of the ornaments of all good qualities.

quired that meditation, than he rose seven Tāls up to the sky, and while staying in the air, young men of good family, the king Subhavyūha said to the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasvaranakshatrarāgasāṅkusumitābhigñā, the Tathāgata, &c.: My two sons, O Lord, are my masters, since it is owing to the miracle produced by their magical power that I have been diverted from that great heap of false doctrines, been established in the command of the Lord, brought to full ripeness in it, introduced to it, and exhorted to see the Lord. They have acted as true friends to me, O Lord, those two young princes who as sons were born in my house, certainly to remind me of my former roots of goodness.

At these words the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasvaranakshatrarāgasāṅkusumitābhigñā, the Tathāgata, &c., spoke to the king Subhavyūha: It is as thou sayest, noble king. Indeed, noble king, such young men or young ladies of good family as possess roots of goodness, will in any existence, state, descent, rebirth or place¹ easily find true friends, who with them shall perform the task of a master², who shall admonish, introduce, fully prepare them to obtain supreme and perfect enlightenment. It is an exalted position, noble king, the office of a true friend who rouses (another) to see the Tathāgata. Dost thou see these two young princes, noble king? I do, Lord; I do, Sugata, said the king. The Lord

¹ Bhavagatīkyutyupapattyāyataneṣu. Burnouf must have read bhagavaṅkyu^o or something like it, for he translates: 'qui sont nés dans les lieux où se sont accomplies la naissance et la mort d'un Bienheureux.'

² I. e. of a teacher, *sāstrīkṛityena*.

proceeded : Now, these two young gentlemen, noble king, will pay worship to sixty-five (times the number of) Tathâgatas, &c., equal to the sands of the Ganges ; they will keep this Dharmaparyâya of the Lotus of the True Law, out of compassion for beings who hold false doctrines, and with the aim to produce in those beings an earnest striving after the right doctrine.

Thereupon, young men of good family, the king Subhavyûha came down from the sky, and, having raised his joined hands, said to the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigña, the Tathâgata, &c. : Please, Lord, deign to tell me, what knowledge the Tathâgata is possessed of, so that the protuberance on his head is shining ; that the Lord's eyes are so clear ; that between his brows the Ūrnâ (circle of hair) is shining, resembling in whiteness the moon ; that in his mouth a row of equal and close-standing teeth is glittering ; that the Lord has lips red as the Bimba and such beautiful eyes.

As the king Subhavyûha, young men of good family, had celebrated the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigña, the Tathâgata, &c., by enumerating so many good qualities and hundred thousands of myriads of kotis of other good qualities besides, he said to the Lord Galadharagargitaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigña, the Tathâgata, &c. : It is wonderful, O Lord, how valuable the Tathâgata's teaching is, and with how many inconceivable virtues the religious discipline proclaimed by the Tathâgata is attended ; how beneficial the moral precepts proclaimed by the Tathâgata are. From henceforward, O Lord, we will no

more be slaves to our own mind ; no more be slaves to false doctrine ; no more slaves to rashness ; no more slaves to the sinful thoughts arising in us. Being possessed of so many good qualities, O Lord, I do not wish to go away from the presence of the Lord¹.

After humbly saluting the feet of the Lord Galadhargaritaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñā, the Tathâgata, &c., the king rose up to the sky and there stood. Thereupon the king Subhavyûha and the queen Vimaladattâ from the sky, threw a pearl necklace worth a hundred thousand (gold pieces) upon the Lord ; and that pearl necklace no sooner came down upon the head of the Lord than it assumed the shape of a tower with four columns, regular, well-constructed, and beautiful. On the summit of the tower appeared a couch covered with many hundred thousand pieces of fine cloth, and on the couch was seen the image of a Tathâgata sitting cross-legged. Then the following thought presented itself to the king Subhavyûha : The Buddha-knowledge must be very powerful, and the Tathâgata endowed with inconceivable good qualities that this Tathâgata-image shows itself on the summit of the tower, (an image) so nice, beautiful, possessed of an extreme abundance of good colours. Then the Lord Galadhargaritaghoshasusvaranakshatrarâgasankusumitâbhigñā, the Tathâgata, &c., addressed the four classes

¹ Here I have followed Burnouf's reading ; the Cambridge MS. has : ebhir aham Bhagavann iyadbhir akusalair dharmaih samanvâgato nekkihâmi Bhagavato 'ntikam (sic) upasamkramitum, i.e. being possessed of so many unholy qualities, O Lord, I do (or did) not wish to approach the Lord.

(and asked): Do you see, monks, the king Subhavyûha who, standing in the sky, is emitting a lion's roar? They answered: We do, Lord. The Lord proceeded: This king Subhavyûha, monks, after having become a monk under my rule shall become a Tathâgata in the world, by the name of Sâleन्द्रarâga¹, endowed with science and conduct, &c. &c., in the world Vistîrnavatî; his epoch shall be called Abhyudgatarâga. That Tathâgata Sâleन्द्रarâga, monks, the Arhat, &c., shall have an immense congregation of Bodhisattvas, an immense congregation of disciples. The said world Vistîrnavatî shall be level as the palm of the hand, and consist of lapis lazuli. So he shall be an inconceivably great Tathâgata, &c. Perhaps, young men of good family, you will have some doubt, uncertainty or misgiving (and think) that the king Subhavyûha at that time, that juncture was another. But you must not think so; for it is the very same Bodhisattva Mahâsattva Padmasrî here present, who at that time, that juncture was the king Subhavyûha. Perhaps, young men of good family, you will have some doubt, uncertainty or misgiving (and think) that the queen Vimaladattâ at that time, that juncture was another. But you must not think so; for it is the very same Bodhisattva Mahâsattva called Vairokanarasmipratimandîtarâga², who at that time, that juncture was the queen Vimaladattâ, and who out of compassion for the king Subhavyûha and the creatures had assumed

¹ Also written Sâleन्द्रarâga. In the Calcutta edition of the Lalita-vistara, p. 201, l. 12, he occurs as Sâleन्द्रarâga, but Hodgson, Essays, p. 33, in a list drawn from the same work, has Sâleन्द्रarâga.

² Burnouf's reading has dhvaga for râga.

the state of being the wife of king Subhavyūha. Perhaps, young men of good family, you will have some doubt, uncertainty or misgiving (and think) that the two young princes were others. But you must not think so; for it was Bhaishagyaṛāga and Bhaishagyaṛāgasamudgata, who at that time, that juncture were sons to the king Subhavyūha. With such inconceivable qualities, young men of good family, were the Bodhisattvas Mahāsattvas Bhaishagyaṛāga and Bhaishagyaṛāgasamudgata endowed, they, the two good men, having planted good roots under many hundred thousand myriads of koṭis of Buddhas. Those that shall cherish the name of these two good men shall all become worthy of receiving homage from the world, including the gods.

While this chapter on Ancient Devotion was being expounded, the spiritual insight of eighty-four thousand living beings in respect to the law was purified so as to become unclouded and spotless.
