

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns surrounds the text. The top and bottom borders are wider and feature a central floral motif, while the side borders are narrower and consist of repeating scrollwork.

# **THE FIVE PURE LAND SUTRAS**

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Tel: 886-2-23951198 , Fax: 886-2-23913415

Email: [overseas@budaedu.org](mailto:overseas@budaedu.org)

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# THE LARGER SUKHÂVATÎ-VYÛHA

無量壽經

Translated into English from Sanskrit MSS

by

F. MAX MÜLLER

由梵文譯英文：德國 麥克斯莫洛



# THE LARGER SUKHÂVATÎ-VYÛHA

DESCRIPTION OF SUKHÂVATÎ,  
THE LAND OF BLISS.

*OM. Adoration to the Three Treasures! Om.  
Adoration to all the glorious Buddhas and  
Bodhisattvas! Adoration to all Buddhas,  
Bodhisattvas, Âryas, Srâvakas, and  
Pratyekabuddhas, past, present, and to come, who  
dwell in the unlimited and endless Lokâdhatus of  
the ten quarters! Adoration to Amitâbha!  
Adoration to him whose soul is endowed with  
incomprehensible virtues!*

*Adoration to Amitâbha, to the Gina, to thee, O  
Muni!*

*I go to Sukhâvatî through thy compassion also;  
To Sukhâvatî, with its groves, resplendent with  
gold,*

*The delightful, adorned with the sons of  
Sugata,—*

*I go to it, which is full of many jewels and  
treasures;*

*And the refuge of thee, the famous and wise.*

§ 1. Thus it was heard by me. At one time the Bhagavat<sup>1</sup> dwelt in Râgagriha, on the mountain Gridhrakûta, with a large assembly of Bhikshus, with thirty-two thousands of Bhikshus, all holy (arhat), free from frailties and cares, who had performed their religious duties, whose thoughts had been thoroughly freed through perfect knowledge, with inquiring thoughts, who had broken the fetters of existence, who had obtained their desires, who had conquered, who had achieved the highest self-restraint, whose thoughts and whose knowledge were unfettered, Mahânagas (great heroes), possessed of the six kinds of knowledge, self-controlled, meditating on the eight kinds of salvation, possessed of the powers, wise in wisdom, elders, great disciples, viz. 1. Âgñâtakaundinya, 2. Asvagit, 3. Vâshpa,

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<sup>1</sup> The Blessed, i.e. Buddha Sâkyamuni.

4. Mahânâman, 5. Bhadragit, 6. Yasodeva, 7. Vimala, 8. Subâhu, 9. Pûrna Maitrâyanîputra<sup>1</sup>, 10. Uruvilvâ-kâsyapa, 11. Nadî-kâsyapa, 12. Gayâ-kâsyapa, 13. Kumâra-kâsyapa, 14. Mahâ-kâsyapa, 15. Sâriputra <sup>2</sup> , 16. Mahâmaudgalyâyana, 17. Mahâkaushthilya, 18. Mahâkaphila, 19. Mahâkunda, 20. Aniruddha<sup>3</sup>, 21. Nandika, 22. Kampila<sup>4</sup>, 23. Subhûti, 24. Revata, 25. Khadiravanika<sup>5</sup>, 26. Vakula, 27. Svâgata, 28. Amogharâga, 29. Pârâyanika, 30. Patka, 31. Kullapatka, 32. Nanda, 33. Râhula, and 34. the blessed Ânanda,—with these and with other elders, and great disciples, who were wise in wisdom, with the exception of one person who had still to be advanced on the path of the disciples, viz. the blessed Ânanda;—and

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<sup>1</sup> These two names refer to one and the same person.

<sup>2</sup> Nos. 15 and 16 are taken as one in the MSS. A B.

<sup>3</sup> Frequently called Anuruddha.

<sup>4</sup> Kimbila is mentioned with Anuruddha and Nandiya in the Mahāvagga X, 4, 2.

<sup>5</sup> See Pan. VIII, 4, 5

with many noble-minded Bodhisattvas, led by Maitreya.

§ 2. Then the blessed Ânanda, having risen from his seat, having put his cloak on one shoulder, and knelt on the earth with his right knee, making obeisance with folded hands in the direction of the Bhagavat, spoke thus to the Bhagavat: "Thy organs of sense, O Bhagavat, are serene, the colour of thy skin is clear, the colour of thy face bright and yellowish. As an autumn cloud is pale, clear, bright and yellowish, thus the organs of sense of the Bhagavat are serene, the colour of his face is clear, the colour of his skin bright and yellowish. And as, O Bhagavat, a piece of gold coming from the Gâmbû river, having been thrown into a furnace by a clever smith or by his apprentice, and well fashioned, when thrown on a pale cloth, looks extremely clear, bright and yellowish, thus the organs of sense

of the Bhagavat are serene, the colour of his face is clear, and the colour of his skin bright and yellowish. Moreover, I do not know, O Bhagavat, that I have ever seen the organs of sense of the Tathâgata so serene, the colour of his face so clear, and the colour of his skin so bright and yellowish before now. This thought occurs to me, O Bhagavat: probably, the Tathâgata<sup>1</sup> dwells to-day in the state of a Buddha, probably the Tathâgata dwells to-day in the state of a Gina, in the state of omniscience, in the state of a Mahânâga; and he contemplates the holy and fully enlightened Tathâgatas of the past, future, and present.'

After these words, the Bhagavat thus spoke to the blessed Ânanda: 'Well said! well said! Ânanda. Did the gods suggest this matter to you? or the blessed Buddhas? Or do you know this

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<sup>1</sup> That is, Buddha Sâkyamuni.

through the philosophical knowledge which you possess?’

After these words the blessed Ânanda spoke thus to the Bhagavat: ‘The gods, O Bhagavat, do not suggest this matter to me, nor the blessed Buddhas, but this thought occurs to me by my own philosophy alone, viz. that probably the Tathâgata dwells to-day in the state of a Buddha, probably the Tathâgata dwells to-day in the state of a Gina, in the state of omniscience, [in the state of a Mahânâga]<sup>1</sup>; or he contemplates [the venerable Buddhas] of the past, future, and present.’

After these words the Bhagavat spoke thus to the blessed Ânanda: ‘Well said! well said! Ânanda; excellent indeed is your question<sup>2</sup>, good your philosophy, and beautiful your

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<sup>1</sup> This is left out here. Mahânâga, technical term for greatness.

<sup>2</sup> Unmi<sup>ñ</sup>ga, all the Chinese translators translate as ‘question’.

understanding! You, O Ânanda, have arrived for the benefit and happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the sake of the great body of men, for the benefit and happiness of gods and men, as you think it right to ask the Tathâgata this matter<sup>1</sup>: Thus, indeed, Ânanda might pile up<sup>2</sup> intellectual knowledge under immeasurable and innumerable blessed, holy, and fully enlightened Tathâgatas, and yet the knowledge of the Tathâgata would not be exceeded thereby. And why? Because, O Ânanda, one who possesses the knowledge of a Tathâgata possesses an intellectual knowledge of causes that cannot be exceeded<sup>3</sup>. If<sup>4</sup> the Tathâgata wished, O Ânanda, he could live for

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<sup>1</sup> One expects tathâgatam etam artham.

<sup>2</sup> I have adopted the reading of B, in order to have a subject for upasamharet, but A C P read ânanda.

<sup>3</sup> I am not satisfied with this translation, but I do not think that gñâna, even in Buddhist Sanskrit, could ever be used as a masculine, and I therefore take tathâgatagñânah as a Bahuvrîhi.

<sup>4</sup> Read gñânah. Âkânkshan.

a whole kalpa (age) on one alms-gift, or for a hundred kalpas, or for a thousand kalpas, or for a hundred thousand kalpas, to a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of kalpas<sup>1</sup>, nay, he could live beyond, and yet the organs of nature of the Tathâgata would not perish, the colour of his face would not be altered, nor would the colour of his skin be injured. And why? Because, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata has so fully obtained the Pâramitâs<sup>2</sup> which arise from Samâdhi<sup>3</sup>. The appearance of fully enlightened Buddhas is very difficult to be obtained in this world, O Ânanda. As the appearance of Audumbara-flowers is very difficult to be obtained in this world; thus, O Ânanda, the appearance of Tathâgatas who desire welfare, wish for what is beneficial, are compassionate,

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<sup>1</sup> Large numbers, constantly recurring in the text. Niyuta is explained as a million, koti as ten millions.

<sup>2</sup> The highest perfection.

<sup>3</sup> Deep meditation.

and have arrived at the highest compassion, is very difficult to be obtained. But, O Ânanda, it is (owing to) the grace of the Tathâgata himself that you think that the Tathâgata should be asked this question, so that there may arise in this world beings who can be teachers of all the world, for the sake of noble-minded Bodhisattvas. Therefore, O Ânanda, listen, and take it well and rightly to heart! I shall tell you.'

'Yes, O Bhagavat,' so did the blessed Ânanda answer the Bhagavat.

§ 3. The Bhagavat then spoke to Ânanda: 'At the time, O Ânanda, which was long ago in the past, in an innumerable and more than innumerable, enormous, immeasurable, and incomprehensible kalpa before now,—at that time, and at that moment, there arose in the world a holy and fully enlightened Tathâgata called 1. Dîpankara. Following after Dîpankara, O Ânanda, there was a Tathâgata 2. Pratâpavat,

and after him, 3. Prabhâkara, 4. Kandanagandha, 5. Sumerukalpa, 6. Kandana, 7. Vimalânana, 8. Anupalipta, 9. Vimalaprabha, 10. Nâgâbhibhû, 11. Sûryodana, 12. Girirâgaghosha, 13. Merukûta, 14. Suvarnaprabha, 15. Gyotishprabha, 16. Vaidûryanirbhâsa, 17. Brahmaghosha, 18. Kandâbhibhû, 19. Tûryaghosha, 20. Muktakusumapratimanditaprabha, 21. Srîkûta, 22. Sâgaravarabuddhîvikriditâbhigña, 23. Varaprabha, 24. Mâhagandharâganirbhâsa, 25. Vyapagatakhilamalapatighosha, 26. Sûrakûta, 27. Ranañgaha, 28. Mahâgunadharabuddhiprâptâbhigña, 29. Kandra-sûryagihmîkarana, 30. Uttaptavaidûryanirbhâsa, 31. Kittadhârâbuddhisankusumitâbhyudgata, 32. Pushpâvatîvanarâgasankusumitâbhigña, 33. Pushpâkara, 34. Udakakandra, 35. Avidyândhakâravidhvamsanakara, 36. Lokendra, 37. Muktakhatrapravâtasadrîsa, 38. Tishya, 39. Dharmamativinanditarâga, 40. Simhasâgarakûtavinanditarâga,

41. Sâgaramerukandra, 42. Brahmasva-  
 ranâdâbhinandita, 43. Kusumasambhava, 44.  
 Prâptasena, 45. Kandrabhânu, 46. Merukûta, 47.  
 Kandrâprabha, 48. Vimalanetra, 49.  
 Girirâgaghoshesvara, 50. Kusumâprabha, 51.  
 Kusumavrishtyabhiprakirna, 52. Ratnakandra,  
 53. Padmabimbyupasobhita, 54. Kan-  
 danagandha, 55. Ratnâbhibhâsa, 56. Nimi, 57.  
 Mahâvyuha, 58. Vyapagatakhiladosha, 59.  
 Brahmaghosha, 60. Saptaratnâbhivrishta, 61.  
 Mahâgunadhara, 62. Mahâtamâlapatrakan-  
 danakardama, 63. Kusumâbhigña, 64.  
 Agñânavidhvamsana, 65. Kesarin, 66. Muk-  
 takkhatra, 67. Suvarnagarbha, 68. Vaidûrya-  
 garbha, 69. Mahâketu, 70. Dharmaketu, 71.  
 Ratnaketu, 72. Ratnasri, 73. Lokendra, 74.  
 Narendra, 75. Kârunika, 76. Lokasundara, 77.  
 Brahmaketu, 78. Dharmamati, 79. Simha, 80.  
 Simhamati. After Simhamati, a holy and fully  
 enlightened Tathâgata arose in the world,

Lokesvararâga by name, perfect in knowledge and conduct, a Sugata, knowing the world, without a superior, charioteer of men whose passions have to be tamed, teacher of gods and men, a Buddha, a Bhagavat. And again during the time of the preaching of this holy and fully enlightened Tathâgata Lokesvararâga, O Ânanda, there was a Bhikshu, Dharmâkara by name, richly endowed with memory, with understanding, prudence, and wisdom,—richly endowed with vigour, and of noble character.

§ 4. 'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, having risen from his seat, having put his cloak on one shoulder, and knelt on the earth with his right knee, stretching forth his folded hands to where the Bhagavat Tathâgata Lokesvararâga was, and, after worshipping the Bhagavat, he, at that very time, praised him in

his presence with these Gâthâs<sup>1</sup>:

"O thou of immeasurable light, whose knowledge is endless and incomparable; not any other light can shine here (where thou art)! The rays of the moon of Siva and of the jewel of the sun, were not bright here in the whole world. (1)

"The form also is infinite in the best of beings<sup>2</sup>; thus also the voice of Buddha is of infinite sound; his virtue likewise, with meditation, knowledge<sup>3</sup>, strength; like unto thee there is no one in this world. (2)

"The Law (dharma) is deep, wide, and subtle; the best of Buddhas is incomprehensible, like the ocean; therefore there is no further exaltation of the teacher; having left all faults,

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<sup>1</sup> As the text of these Gâthâs is far from satisfactory, I have given a translation of the Chinese translation by Sanghavarman at the end of my edition, *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, I, part ii, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> It would be better to read *sattvasâra* as a vocative.

<sup>3</sup> I have translated as if the reading were *pragñâ*, which would, however, have spoiled the metre.

he is gone to the other shore<sup>1</sup>. (3)

"Then the best of Buddhas<sup>2</sup>, of endless light, lights up all regions, he the king of kings; and I, having become Buddha, and a master of the Law, may I deliver mankind from old age and death! (4)

"And I, on the strength of generosity, equanimity, virtue, forbearance, power, meditation and absorption, undertake here the first and best duties, and shall become a Buddha, the saviour of all beings. (5)

"And I, seeking for the knowledge of the best of the Blessed Ones, shall always worship many hundred thousands of kotîs of Buddhas, endless like the sand of the Gangâ, the incomparable lords. (6)

"Whatever worlds there are, similar (in

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<sup>1</sup> The text has \*dhikâlam, and \*bdhipâram is suggested as a conjecture only.

<sup>2</sup> I translate buddhavara.

number) to the sand of the Gangâ, and the endless countries which exist besides, there everywhere I shall send out light, because I have attained such power<sup>1</sup>. (7)

"My land is (to be) noble, the first and the best; the Bodhi-tree excellent in this world<sup>2</sup>. There is incomparable happiness arising from Nirvâna, and this also I shall explain as vain. (8)

"Beings<sup>3</sup> come hither from the ten quarters; having arrived there they quickly show my happiness. May Buddha there teach me the truth,—I form a desire full of true strength and vigour. (9)

"I, knowing the worlds of the ten quarters, possessed of absolute knowledge—they also always proclaim my thought! May I, gone to

---

<sup>1</sup> The text is obscure, Sanghavarman translates: 'My light will shine over all these countries, thus my strength and power will be immeasurable.'

<sup>2</sup> According to the Chinese translation.

<sup>3</sup> Should it be sattvâ?

Aviki hell, always abide there, but I shall never cease to practise the power of prayer! [i.e. May I remain in hell, if I cease to pray.]" (10)

§ 5. 'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, having praised the Bhagavat, the Tathâgata Lokesvararâga, in his presence, with those Gâthâs, spoke thus: "O Bhagavat, I wish to know the highest perfect knowledge. Again and again I raise and incline my thoughts towards the highest perfect knowledge. May therefore the Bhagavat, as a teacher, thus teach me the Law, that I may quickly know the highest perfect knowledge. May I become in the world a Tathâgata, equal to the unequalled. And may the Bhagavat proclaim those signs by which I may comprehend the perfection of all good qualities of a Buddha country."

'After this, O Ânanda, the Bhagavat Lokesvararâga, the Tathâgata, thus spoke to that Bhikshu:

"Do you by yourself, O Bhikshu, know the perfection of all excellences and good qualities of a Buddha country?"

'He said: "O Bhagavat, I could not do this, but the Bhagavat alone. Explain the perfection of the excellences and all the good qualities of Buddha countries of the other Tathâgatas, after hearing which we may fulfil every one of their signs."

'Then, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata Lokeshvararâga, holy and fully enlightened, knowing the good disposition of that Bhikshu, taught for a full kotî of years the perfection of all the excellences and good qualities of Buddha countries belonging to eighty-one hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas, together with the signs, indication, and description, desiring welfare, wishing for benefits, compassionate, full of compassion, so that there might never be an end of Buddha

countries, having conceived great pity for all beings. The measure of life of that Tathâgata was full forty kalpas.

§ 6. 'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, taking the perfections of all the excellences and good qualities of those Buddha countries, of those eighty-one hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas, and concentrating them all on one Buddha country, worshipped with his head the feet of the Bhagavat Lokesvararâga, the Tathâgata, turned respectfully round him to the right, and walked away from the presence of this Bhagavat. And afterwards, for the space of five kalpas, he thus concentrated the perfection of all the excellences and good qualities of the Buddha countries, such as had never been known before in the ten quarters of the whole world, more excellent, and more perfect than any, and composed the most excellent prayer.

§ 7. 'Thus, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu concentrated in his mind a perfection of a Buddha country eighty-one times more immeasurable, noble, and excellent than the perfection of the eighty-one hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries that had been told him by the Bhagavat Lokeshvararâga, the Tathâgata. And then, proceeding to where the Tathâgata was, he worshipped the feet of the Bhagavat with his head, and said: "O Bhagavat, the perfection of all the excellences and good qualities of the Buddha countries has been concentrated by me."

'After this, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata Lokeshvararâga thus spoke to the Bhikshu: "Preach then, O Bhikshu;—the Tathâgata allows it. Now is the proper time, O Bhikshu. Delight the assembly, produce joy, let the lion's voice be heard, so that now and hereafter, noble-minded Bodhisattvas, hearing it, may

comprehend the different subjects (or occasions) of the prayers for the perfection of the good qualities of a Buddha country."

'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmakara thus spoke at that time to the Bhagavat: "May the Bhagavat thus listen to me, to what my own prayers are, and how, after I shall have obtained the highest perfect knowledge, my own Buddha country will then be endowed with all inconceivable excellences and good qualities.

§ 8.

1. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine there should be either hell, brute-creation<sup>1</sup>, the realm of departed spirits, or the body of Asuras, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

2. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should fall

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<sup>1</sup> Birth as an animal.

away (die), and fall into hell, the brute-creation, the realm of departed spirits, or into the body of Asuras, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

3. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be of one colour, viz. a golden colour, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

4. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine there should be perceived any difference between gods and men, except when people count and tell, saying: 'These are gods and men, but only in ordinary and imperfect parlance,' then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

5. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not be possessed of the highest Paramitas of miraculous power and self-control, so that they could at least in the shortest moment of one

thought step over a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

6. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be possessed of the recollection of their former births, so as at least to remember a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of kalpas, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

7. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all acquire the divine eye, so as at least to be able to see a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of worlds, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

8. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all acquire the divine ear, so as at least to be able to hear at the same time the good Law

from a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

9. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be skilled in the knowledge of the thoughts of other people, so as at least to be able to know the deeds and thoughts of beings belonging to a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

10. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should form any idea of property, even with regard to their own body, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

11. 'O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be firmly established, viz. in absolute truth, till they have reached Mahaparinirvana, then

may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

12. "O Bhagavat, if any being should be able to count the pupils belonging to me after I have obtained the highest perfect knowledge in that Buddha country of mine, even if all beings who are contained in those three millions of spheres of worlds <sup>1</sup> , after having become Pratyekabuddhas<sup>2</sup>, should be counting for a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of kalpas, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

13. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained the highest perfect knowledge, my light should be liable to be measured in this Buddha country of mine, even by the measure of a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect

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<sup>1</sup> Trisâhasra mahâsâhasra.

<sup>2</sup> Men ready for Buddhahship, but who decline to preach or communicate their knowledge.

knowledge.

14. "O Bhagavat, if the measure of the life of the beings in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained the highest perfect knowledge, should be liable to be measured, excepting always by their own power of prayer, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

15. "O Bhagavat, if the measure of my life after I have obtained Bodhi (Buddha knowledge) should be limited, even by numbering a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of kalpas, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

16. "O Bhagavat, if, for the beings in this Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, even the name of sin should exist, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

17. "O Bhagavat, if immeasurable and innumerable blessed Buddhas in immeasurable Buddha countries do not glorify my name, after

I have obtained the Bodhi (knowledge); if they do not preach my fame and proclaim my praise, and utter it together, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

18<sup>1</sup>. "O Bhagavat, if those beings who have directed their thought towards the highest perfect knowledge in other worlds, and who, after having heard my name, when I have obtained the Bodhi (knowledge), have meditated on me with serene thoughts; if at the moment of their death, after having approached them, surrounded by an assembly of Bhikshus, I should not stand before them, worshipped by them, that is, so that their thoughts should not be troubled, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

19. "O Bhagavat, if those beings who in immeasurable and innumerable Buddha

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<sup>1</sup> On Prāṇidhānas 18 to 21, see note at the end.

countries, after they have heard my name, when I shall have obtained Bodhi, should direct their thought to be born in that Buddha country of mine, and should for that purpose bring their stock of merit to maturity, if these should not be born in that Buddha country, even those who have only ten times repeated the thought (of that Buddha country), barring always those beings who have committed the (five) Ânantarya sins<sup>1</sup>, and who have caused an obstruction and abuse of the good Law, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

20. "O Bhagavat, if those beings, who have been born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all be bound to one birth only, before reaching the highest perfect knowledge, barring always the special prayers of those very noble-minded

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<sup>1</sup> The five sins which bring immediate retribution. Cf. Childers, s.v.

Bodhisattvas who have put on the whole armour (of the Law), who understand the welfare of all beings, who are devoted to all beings, who work for the attainment of Nirvâna of all beings, who wish to perform the duty of a Bodhisattva in all worlds, who wish to serve all Buddhas, and to bring beings, in number like grains of sand of the river Gangâ, to the highest perfect knowledge, and who besides are turned towards the higher practice<sup>1</sup>, and perfect in the practice of the Samantabhadra<sup>2</sup> discipline, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

21. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all be able, after having gone to other Buddha countries, after their one morning-meal, to worship many

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<sup>1</sup> Possibly the same as the uttarimagga, Arhatship.

<sup>2</sup> See note at the end.

hundreds of Buddhas, many thousands of Buddhas, many hundred thousands of Buddhas, many kotîs of Buddhas, &c., till up to many hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas, with objects which give every kind of pleasure, and this through the grace of the Buddha, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

22. "O Bhagavat, if those Bodhisattvas in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should wish their stock of merit to grow in the following shapes, viz. either in gold, in silver, in jewels, in pearls, in beryls, in shells, in stones, in corals, in crystal, in amber, in red pearls, in diamond, &c., or in any one of the other jewels; or in all kinds of perfumes, in flowers, in garlands, in ointment, in incense-powder, in cloaks, in umbrellas, in flags, in banners, or in lamps; or in all kinds of dancing, singing, and music;—and if such gifts should not appear for them, from being

produced as soon as thought of, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

23. "O Bhagavat, if those beings who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all recite the story of the Law which is accompanied by omniscience, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

24. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should think thus: May we, remaining in this world, honour revere, esteem, and worship the blessed Buddhas in immeasurable and innumerable Buddha countries, viz. with cloaks, alms-bowls, beds, stools, refreshments, medicines, utensils, with flowers, incense, lamps, perfumes, garlands, ointment, powder, cloaks, umbrellas, flags, banners, with different kinds of dancing, singing, and music, and with showers of jewels,—and if the blessed Buddhas

should not accept them, when they are produced as soon as thought of, viz. from compassion, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

25. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all be in possession of strength of body as strong as the diamond (or thunderbolt?) of Nârâyana, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

26. "O Bhagavat, if any being in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should learn the limit of the beauty of (its) ornament, even if he be possessed of the divine eye, and should know (its) various beauty, saying: 'That Buddha country possesses so much beauty and so much magnificence,' then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

27. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, a

Bodhisattva possessed even of a very small stock of merit, should not perceive the Bodhi-tree of noble beauty, at least a hundred yoganas in height, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

28. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, either teaching or learning should have to be made by any being, and they should not all be in possession of the perfect knowledge, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

29. "O Bhagavat, if that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not be so brilliant, that in it could be seen on all sides immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries, as a round face is seen in a highly burnished round mirror, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

30. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of

mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, there should not be a hundred thousand of vases full of different sweet perfumes, made of all kinds of jewels, always smoking with incense, fit for the worship of Bodhisattvas and Tathâgatas, rising into the sky beyond gods, men, and all things, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

31. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, there should not be showers of sweet jewel-flowers, always pouring down, and if there should not be sweet-sounding music-clouds, always playing, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

32. "O Bhagavat, if the beings belonging to me, after I have obtained Bodhi, who are visible by their splendour, in immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable worlds, should not all be filled with pleasure,

far beyond gods and men, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

33. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the noble-minded Bodhisattvas in immeasurable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries on all sides, after having heard my name, should not be delivered from birth, through the merit arising from that hearing, and should not be strong in the knowledge of Dhâranîs, until they have obtained the very throne of Bodhi, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

34. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, women in immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries on all sides, after having heard my name, should allow carelessness to arise, should not turn their thoughts towards Bodhi, should, when they are free from birth, not despise their female nature; and if they, being

born again, should assume a second female nature, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

35. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas who in immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries round about in the ten quarters having heard my name, and having fallen down, shall worship me with prostrate reverence, should not, when performing the duty of Bodhisattvas, be honoured by the world and by the gods, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

36. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the work of dyeing, sewing, drying, washing of his cloaks should have to be performed by any Bodhisattva, and they should not perceive themselves, as quick as thought, covered by newly-produced excellent cloaks, granted to them by the Tathâgata, then may I

not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

37. "O Bhagavat, if the beings who are born at the same time in that Buddha country, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not obtain such happiness as that of the holy Bhikshu who is free from pain and has obtained the third meditation, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

38. "O Bhagavat, if those Bodhisattvas who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not produce from different jewel-trees such a mass of excellent ornaments in that Buddha country, as they should wish for, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

39. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas who are born in other Buddha countries, when they have heard my name, after I shall have obtained Bodhi, should suffer any diminution in the strength of their senses, then may I not obtain

the highest perfect knowledge.

40. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas, from hearing my name in a place of a different Buddha country, should not obtain the Samâdhi (ecstasy) called Suvibhaktavatî, in which Samâdhi the Bodhisattvas will see immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense, blessed Buddhas one moment after another; and if that Samâdhi of theirs should come to an end meanwhile, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

41. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, beings, having heard my name in Buddha countries different from this, should not, through the stock of merit which follows on that hearing, obtain birth in a noble family, till they arrive at Bodhi, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

42. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained

Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas who live in other Buddha countries, after hearing my name, till they have reached Bodhi by the stock of merit which follows on that hearing, should not all obtain a combination of their stock of merit with the joy and gladness of their Bodhisattva life, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

43. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas, as soon as they have heard my name, in other worlds, should not obtain the Samâdhi called Samantânugata, in which Bodhisattvas honour one moment after another immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense, blessed Buddhas, and if that Samâdhi of theirs should come to an end before they have reached the throne of Bodhi, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

44. "O Bhagavat, if the beings who are born

in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not hear, as quick as thought, such a teaching of the Law as they wish to hear, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

45. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas in this and other Buddha countries, as soon as they have heard my name, should ever turn back from the highest perfect knowledge, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

46. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, and have become a Buddha-teacher, the Bodhisattvas who hear my name in Buddha countries, and obtain the first, the second, and the third degrees of endurance, as soon as they have heard my name, should turn away again from Buddha, the Law, and the Church, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge."

§ 9. 'And again, O Ânanda, when he had spoken such prayers, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, at that time, through the grace of Buddha spoke these verses<sup>1</sup>:

1. "If, when I have obtained Bodhi, there should not be for me an excellent Pranidhâna of such a character, then, O Prince, O Best of beings, may I not be endowed with the ten powers, incomparable, worthy of offerings<sup>2</sup>.

2. "If there should not be for me such a country, endowed with many and various mighty and divine endowments, I should gladly go to hell, suffering pain, and not be a King of treasures<sup>3</sup>.

3. "If, when I have approached the Bodhi throne, my name should not quickly reach the ten quarters, the broad and many endless

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<sup>1</sup> The translation of these verses, owing to the imperfect state of the text, is in many places tentative only.

<sup>2</sup> See verse 10.

<sup>3</sup> A Naga king?

Buddha countries, may I not be a lord of the world, endowed with power.

4. "If indeed I should delight in the enjoyments of love, being deprived of zeal, understanding and prudence, even after having reached the incomparable and blessed Bodhi, may I not be a teacher in the world, endowed with power.

5. "The lord of vast light, incomparable and infinite, has illuminated all Buddha countries in all the quarters, he has quieted passions, all sins and errors, he has quieted the fire in the walk of hell.

6. "After making his broad eye lustrous, after driving away the darkness from all men, after removing all untimely misfortunes, he led hither those who dwell in Svarga (heaven) and who shine with endless light.

7. "The splendour of sun and moon does not shine in heaven, nor the fiery splendour of the

maze of jewels of the gods; the Lord overcomes all splendour, he, the bright one, who has performed his former discipline.

8. "He is the best of men, the treasure of all who suffer; there is no one like him in all the quarters. Having completed a hundred thousand of good works, he, in his assembly, raised the lion-voice of Buddha.

9. "After having worshipped former self-existing Ginas, after having performed immeasurable kotîs of vows and penances, he became in this, his best of spiritual existences, the best of beings, possessed of the full power of prayers.

10. "As the Bhagavat, the Lord, who is possessed of unlimited light of knowledge, knows the three kinds of knowledge in the world, may I also be worthy of equal offerings<sup>1</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> See verse 1.

the best of sages, the leader of men.

11. "If, O Lord, this my prayer succeeds, after I have obtained Bodhi, may this sphere of a thousand worlds tremble, and may a shower of flowers descend on the hosts of gods."

12. "Then the earth trembled, flowers were showered down, hundreds of instruments resounded in the sky, powder of heavenly sweet sandal-wood was scattered, and there was a voice saying: "Thou wilt be a Buddha in the world."

§ 10. 'That Bhikshu Dharmākara, the noble-minded Bodhisattva, O Ânanda, was possessed of this perfection of prayers. And a few Bodhisattvas only, O Ânanda, are possessed of such a perfection of prayers. There is on this earth an appearance of a few only of such prayers. Of a few, however, existence cannot be denied.

'Then again, O Ânanda, this Bhikshu

Dharmâkara having recited these peculiar prayers before the Bhagavat Lokeshvararâga, the Tathâgata, and before the world including gods, Mâra, and Brâhman, and before people consisting of Sramanas and Brahmanas with gods, men, and Asuras, was established in the attainment of the true promise. And proclaiming this purity of the Buddha country, this greatness and excellency of the Buddha country, and performing the duty of a Bodhisattva, he never conceived the remotest thoughts of lust, malevolence, and cruelty, during a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of years, immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, measureless, immense, inexpressible; and he never conceived the idea of lust, malevolence, and cruelty, nay, he never conceived the idea of form, sound, smell, taste, and touch. He was gentle, charming indeed, and compassionate;

pleasant to live with, agreeable, amiable, content, of few wishes, satisfied, retired, not evil, not foolish, not suspicious, not crooked, not wicked, not deceitful, tender<sup>1</sup>, kindly speaking, always zealous, docile in the searching after the pure Law. And for the good of all beings, he recited the great prayer, showing respect to friends, teachers, masters, the Church, the Law, and Buddha, always girded for the performance of the duties of the Bodhisattva, righteous, gentle, not deceitful, not flattering, virtuous, a leader for the sake of rousing others to perform all good laws, producing by his activity the ideas of emptiness, causelessness, and purposelessness, and he was well guarded in his speech. Then, performing the duties of a Bodhisattva, after having given up all speaking which, when spoken, serves to

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<sup>1</sup> Sukhiloma, for sukhulâma or sukhumâla (i.e. sukumara).

injure one's self or others or both, he employed only such speech as served the pleasure and benefit of himself, others, or both. And he was so wise that, when entering into capitals, kingdoms, countries, towns, cities, and villages, he was always perfectly restrained with regard to all objects of sense. Performing himself the duties of the Bodhisattva without interruption, he walked himself in the highest perfection (pâramitâ) of liberality, and he also roused others to walk in the same. And himself walking in the highest perfections of knowledge, meditation, strength, patience, and virtue, he roused others also to walk in the same. And he has collected so large a stock of merit that, wherever he is born, there arise for him many hundreds of thousands of niyutas of kotîs of treasures from out the earth.

'By him, while he was thus performing the duties of a Bodhisattva, immeasurable and

innumerable hundreds of thousands of niyutas of kotîs of beings were established in perfect enlightenment, of whom it is not easy to know the limit by means of speech. So many immeasurable and innumerable holy Buddhas were honoured, revered, esteemed, and worshipped, and enabled to touch whatever causes pleasure, such as cloaks, alms-bowls, couches, seats, refreshments, medicines, and other furniture. It is not easy to know the limit by pointing it out in words, as to how many beings were established by him in the noble families of Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, ministers, householders, and merchants. In the same manner they were established in the sovereignty of Gambûdvîpa (India), and they were established in the character of Kakravartins, Lokâpalas, Sakras, Suyâmas, Sutushitas, Sunirmitas, Vasavartins, Devarâgas, and Mahâbrahmans. So many immeasurable

and innumerable Buddhas were honoured, revered, esteemed, and worshipped, and requested to turn the wheel of the Law, of whom it is not easy to know the limit by means of words.

'And he collected such virtue, that out of his mouth, while performing the duties of a Bodhisattva, during immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense, measureless, inexpressible kotîs of kalpas, there breathed a sweet and more than heavenly smell of sandal-wood. From all the pores of his hair there arose the smell of lotus, and he was pleasing to everybody, gracious and beautiful, endowed with the fulness of the best bright colour<sup>1</sup>. As his body was adorned with all the good signs and marks, there arose from the pores (of his hair) and from the palms of his

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<sup>1</sup> See La1. Vist. P.377

hands all sorts of precious ornaments in the shape of all kinds of cloaks and vestments, in the shape of all kinds of flowers, incense, scents, garlands, ointments, umbrellas, flags, and banners, and in the shape of all kinds of instrumental music. And there appeared also, streaming forth from the palms of his hands, all kinds of viands and drink, food, hard and soft, and sweetmeats, and all kinds of enjoyments and pleasures. Thus then that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, O Ânanda, had obtained the command of all necessities, after performing the duties of a Bodhisattva.'

§ 11. After this, the blessed Ânanda thus spoke to the Bhagavat: 'O Bhagavat, has that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, the noble-minded Bodhisattva, after having obtained the highest perfect knowledge, passed away, having entered Nirvâna, or has he not yet been enlightened, or is he now living and enlightened, and does he

dwell now, remain, support himself, and teach the Law?'

The Bhagavat said: 'Not indeed, O Ânanda, has that Tathâgata passed away, nor has he not yet come, but the Tathâgata, the holy, after having obtained the highest perfect knowledge, dwells now, remains, supports himself, and teaches the Law, in the western quarter, in the Buddha country, distant from this world by a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, in the world which is called Sukhâvatî, being called Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened. He is surrounded by innumerable Bodhisattvas, and worshipped by endless Srâvakas, and in possession of the endless perfection of his Buddha country.

§ 12. 'And his light is immeasurable, so that it is not easy to know the limit of its measure, saying, he stands illuminating so many

hundreds of Buddha countries, so many thousands of Buddha countries, so many hundred thousands of Buddha countries, so many kotîs of Buddha countries, so many hundred kotîs of Buddha countries, so many thousand kotîs of Buddha countries, so many hundred thousands of kotîs of Buddha countries, so many hundred thousands of niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries. But indeed, O Ânanda, to put it briefly, a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, equal to the sands of the river Gangâ, are always lighted up in the eastern quarter, by the light of that Bhagavat Amitâbha. Thus on every side in the southern, western, northern quarter, in the zenith and nadir, in every one of these quarters, there are a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddha countries, like the sands of the river Gangâ, always lighted up by the light of that Bhagavat Amitâbha, excepting the Buddhas, the

Bhagavats, who, through the practice of their former prayers, have lighted up the world by their own light, which is a fathom in length, or by their light which is one, two, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty yoganas in length, or a hundred or thousand or hundred thousand yoganas in length, until their brightness reaches many hundred thousand niyutas of kotûs of yoganas in length. There is not, O Ânanda, any case of likeness, by which the extent of the light of that Tathâgata Amitâbha could be understood. Hence, O Ânanda, for that reason that Tathâgata is called Amitâbha (possessed of infinite light), and he is called Amitaprabha (possessed of infinite splendour), Amitaprabhâsa (possessed of infinite brilliancy), Asamâptaprabha (whose light is never finished), Asangataprabha (whose light is not conditioned), Prabhâsikhotsrishtaprabha (whose light

proceeds from flames of light), Sadivyamaniprabha, (whose light is that of heavenly jewels), Apratihatarasmirâgaprabha (whose light has the colour of unimpeded rays), Râganîyaprabha (possessed of beautiful light), Premanîyaprabha, (possessed of lovely light), Pramodanîyaprabha (possessed of delightful light), Sangamanîyaprabha (possessed of attractive light), Uposhanîyaprabha (possessed of pleasant light), Anibandhanîyaprabha <sup>1</sup> (possessed of light that cannot be stopped), Ativîryaprabha, (possessed of extremely powerful light), Atulyaprabha, (possessed of incomparable light), Abhibhûyanarendrâbhûtrayendraprabha <sup>2</sup> (possessed of light greater than that of the lords of men, nay, the lords of the three worlds),

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<sup>1</sup> This seems better than nibandhanîyaprabha, as printed in the text.

<sup>2</sup> This reading is conjectural and the translation doubtful. Perhaps the texts was anabhibhûyanarendrâbhûtrayendra-prabhah.

Srantasankayendusuryagihmikaranaprabha  
(possessed of light which bends the full moon  
and the sun),  
Abhibhûyalokapâlasakrabrahmasuddhâvâsama  
hesvarasarvadevagihmikaranaprabha  
(possessed of light which bends all the  
conquered gods, Mahesvara, the Suddhâvâsas,  
Brahman, Sakra, and the Lokapâlas).

'This splendour of the Ârya (noble) is pure,  
great, producing bodily pleasure, happiness of  
mind, producing happiness, delight, and joy for  
men and not-men, Kinnaras, Mahoragas,  
Garudas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Nâgas, Asuras,  
and Devas; and producing the pleasure of  
beings of good disposition<sup>1</sup>.

'And in this manner, O Ânanda, the  
Tathâgata<sup>2</sup> might speak for a whole kalpa on

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<sup>1</sup> Here the text adds (p. 54, l. 4), kalyakusalamiminevadviprâmodyakarani. The whole sentence is unintelligible.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the Bhagavat Sâkyamuni himself, who speaks of himself as the Tathâgata. What he means to say is that the light of Amitâbha is infinite and

the work of the Tathâgata Amitâbha, beginning with his light, and yet he would not be able to reach the end of the virtues of that light of that Tathâgata, neither would there be any failure of the self-confidence in the Tathâgata himself. And why? Because, O Ânanda, both these things are immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, and endless, viz. first, the greatness of the excellence of the light of that Tathâgata Amitâbha, the Bhagavat, and secondly, the unsurpassed light of the knowledge possessed by the Tathâgata (by myself).

§ 13. 'And, O Ânanda, the assembly of the hearers of that Tathâgata Amitâbha is immeasurable, so that it is not easy to learn its measure, so as to be able to say, there are so

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that therefore even the Tathâgata could not finish the description of it. Yet this would not detract from the infinite power of the Tathâgata or diminish his vaisâradya because that power too is infinite.

many kotîs of the hearers, so many hundreds, thousands, hundred-thousands, kankaras, vimbaras, nayutas (niyutas?), ayutas, akshobhyas, vivahas (masc.), srotas (?), ogas<sup>1</sup>, so many periods, called immeasurable, innumerable, countless, incomparable, inconceivable. Now, for instance, O Ânanda, the Bhikshu Maudgalyâyana having obtained miraculous power, might, if he wished, count<sup>2</sup> in one day and night, how many kinds of stars there are in the universal world. Then, let there be a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of such men, endowed with miraculous powers, and let them do nothing else but count the first company (only) of the hearers of the Tathâgata Amitâbha, during a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of years, and yet by them thus counting

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<sup>1</sup> All these are names of fanciful measures.

<sup>2</sup> Nâgarena, 'with an instrument' or 'by some clever contrivance.'

even the hundredth part would not be counted, even the thousandth, even the hundred thousandth, nay, not even so far as the minutest part, or likeness, or approach<sup>1</sup> towards it would have been counted.

'Thus, for instance, O Ânanda, a man might throw out from the great ocean, which is not to be measured across by less than eighty-four thousand yoganas, one single drop of water by the sharp end of hair, which is divided a hundred times. What do you think then, Ânanda,—which would be greater, one drop of water which has been thrown up by the sharp pointed hair divided a hundred times, or the mass of water left in the great ocean?'

Ânanda said: 'Even a thousand yoganas, O Bhagavat, would be a small portion of the great ocean, how much more then one drop of water

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<sup>1</sup> See Kern's translation of the Saddharmapundarika, p. 317, note 2.

thrown out by the sharp pointed hair divided a hundred times!'

Bhagavat said: 'As that one drop of water, exactly so large (so small in proportion) was the first company of the hearers. And let there be reckoning made by those Bhikshus, who are like Maudgalyâyana, counting for a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of years, and yet, as to the mass of water left in the great ocean, it would even then have to be considered as not counted. How much more with regard to the second, third, and the rest of the companies of the hearers! Therefore the mass of hearers of the Bhagavat is endless and boundless, and receives the name of "immeasurable and innumerable."

§ 14. 'And, O Ânanda, the length of the life of that Bhagavat Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, is immeasurable, so that it is not easy to know its length, so as to be able to say (that it comprises)

so many hundreds of kalpas, so many thousands of kalpas, so many hundred thousands of kalpas, so many kotîs of kalpas, so many hundreds of kotîs of kalpas, so many thousands of kotîs of kalpas, so many hundred thousands of kotîs of kalpas, so many hundred thousands of niyutas of kotîs of kalpas. Therefore, O Ânanda, the limit of the measure of the life of that Bhagavat is immeasurable indeed. Therefore that Tathâgata is called Amitâyus.

'And as, O Ânanda, the rule of making known the reckoning of kalpas exists here in this world, ten kalpas have passed now since Bhagavat Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, arose and awoke to the highest perfect knowledge.

§ 15. 'And, O Ânanda, the world called Sukhâvatî belonging to that Bhagavat Amitâbha is prosperous, rich, good to live in, fertile, lovely, and filled with many gods and men.

Then, O Ânanda, in that world there are neither hells, nor the brute creation, nor the realm of departed spirits, nor bodies of Asuras, nor untimely births<sup>1</sup>. And there do not appear in this world such gems as are known in the world Sukhâvatî.

§ 16. 'Now, O Ânanda, that world Sukhâvatî is fragrant with several sweet-smelling scents, rich in manifold flowers and fruits, adorned with gem trees, and frequented by tribes of manifold sweet-voiced birds, which have been made by the Tathâgata (on purpose<sup>2</sup>). And, O Ânanda, those gem trees are of several colours, of many colours, and of many hundred thousand colours. There are gem trees there of golden-colour, and made of gold. There are those of silver-colour, and made of silver.

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<sup>1</sup> These untimely births, i.e. being born out of time, when there are no Buddhas to listen to, are not mentioned in the first Pranidhâna; nor the jewels.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the eighth paragraph in the Smaller Sukhâvatî-vyûha.

There are those of beryl-colour, and made of beryl. There are those of crystal-colour, and made of crystal. There are those of coral-colour, and made of coral. There are those of red pearl-colour, and made of red pearls. There are those of diamond-colour, and made of diamonds.

'There are some trees of two gems, viz. gold and silver. There are some of three gems, viz. gold, silver, and beryl. There are some of four gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, and crystal. There are some of five gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, and coral. There are some of six gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, coral, and red pearls. There are some of seven gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, coral, red pearls, and diamonds as the seventh.

'And there, O Ânanda, of the trees made of gold, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of gold,

and the fruits are made of silver. Of trees made of silver, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of silver only, and the fruits are made of beryl. Of trees made of beryl, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of beryl, and the fruits are made of crystal. Of trees made of crystal, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of crystal only, and the fruits are made of coral. Of trees made of coral, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of coral only, and the fruits are made of red pearls. Of trees made of red pearls, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of red pearls only, and the fruits are made of diamonds. Of trees made of diamonds, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of diamonds only, and the fruits are made of

gold.

'Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of gold, the trunks of silver, the branches of beryl, the small branches of crystal, the leaves of coral, the flowers of red pearls, and the fruits of diamonds. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of silver, the trunks of beryl, the branches of crystal, the small branches of coral, the leaves of red pearls, the flowers of diamonds, and the fruits of gold. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of beryl, the trunks of crystal, the branches of coral, the small branches of red pearls, the leaves of diamonds, the flowers of gold, and the fruits of silver. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of crystal, the trunks of coral, the branches of red pearls, the small branches of diamonds, the leaves of gold, the flowers of silver, and the fruits of beryl. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of coral, the trunks

of red pearls, the branches of diamonds, the small branches of gold, the leaves of silver, the flowers of beryl, and the fruits of crystal. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of red pearls, the trunks of diamonds, the branches of gold, the small branches of silver, the leaves of beryl, the flowers of crystal, and the fruits of coral. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of diamonds, the trunks of gold, the branches of silver, the small branches of beryl, the leaves of crystal, the flowers of coral, and the fruits of red pearls. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of the seven gems, the trunks of the seven gems, the branches of the seven gems, the small branches of the seven gems, the leaves of the seven gems, the flowers of the seven gems, and the fruits of the seven gems.

'And, O Ânanda, the roots, trunks, branches, small branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits of all

those trees are pleasant to touch, and fragrant. And, when those (trees) are moved by the wind, a sweet and delightful sound proceeds from them, never tiring, and never disagreeable to hear. That Buddha country, O Ânanda, is always on every side surrounded by such trees made of the seven gems, by masses of Kadalî (banana) trees, and rows of palm-trees made of the seven gems, and entirely surrounded with golden nets, and wholly covered with lotus flowers, made of all kinds of gems.

'There are lotus flowers there, half a yogana in circumference. There are others, one yogana in circumference; and others, two, three, four, or five yoganans in circumference; nay, there are some, as much as ten yoganans in circumference. And from each gem-lotus there proceed thirty-six hundred thousand kotîs of rays of light. And from each ray of light there proceed thirty-six hundred thousand kotîs of Buddhas,

with bodies of golden-colour, possessed of the thirty-two marks of great men, who go and teach the Law to beings in the immeasurable and innumerable worlds in the eastern quarter. Thus also in the southern, western, and northern quarters, above and below, in the cardinal and intermediate points, they go their way to the immeasurable and innumerable worlds and teach the Law to beings in the whole world.

§ 17. 'And again, O Ânanda, there are no black mountains anywhere in that Buddha country, nor anywhere jewel mountains, nor anywhere Sumerus, kings of mountains, nor anywhere Kakravâdas, great Kakravâdas, kings of mountains. And that Buddha country is level on every side, lovely, like the palm of the hand, with districts full of jewels and treasures of every kind.'

After this, the blessed Ânanda spoke thus to

the Bhagavat: 'But in that case, O Bhagavat, where do the gods consisting of the companies of the four Mahârâgas who dwell on the side of the Sumeru, and where do the Trâyastrimsa gods who dwell on the top of the Sumeru, find their place?'

Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, O Ânanda, where do these other beings find their place, who in this world dwell above the king of mountains, Sumeru, namely, the Yâmadevas, Tushitas, Nirmânaratis, Paranirmitavasavartins, Brahmâkayikas, Brahmapurohitas, Mahabrahmans, as far as the Akanishthas?'

Ânanda replied: 'O Bhagavat, the result of works and the outcome of works are inconceivable' (i.e. I do not understand it).

Bhagavat said: 'Here, you see, the result of works and the outcome of works are inconceivable. But to the blessed Buddhas the position of Buddhas is not inconceivable, while

to thee the holy and miraculous power of virtuous beings, whose stock of merit has become ripened, seems inconceivable.'

Ânanda said: 'I had no doubt on this, no difference of opinion, or hesitation; on the contrary, I ask only the Tathâgata about this matter in order to destroy the doubts, the differences of opinion, and the hesitations of future beings.

Bhagavat said: 'All right, Ânanda, this is what you ought to do.

§ 18. 'In that world Sukhâvati, O Ânanda, there flow different kinds of rivers; there are great rivers there, one yogana in breadth; there are rivers up to twenty, thirty, forty, fifty yoganans in breadth, and up to twelve yoganans in depth. All these rivers are delightful, carrying water of different sweet odour, carrying

bunches of flowers adorned with various gems, resounding with sweet voices. <sup>1</sup>And, O Ânanda, there proceeds from an instrument which consists of hundred thousand kotîs of parts, which embodies heavenly music and is played by clever people, the same delightful sound which proceeds from those great rivers, the sound which is deep, unknown, incomprehensible, clear, pleasant to the ear, touching the heart, beloved, sweet, delightful, never tiring, never disagreeable, pleasant to hear, as if it always said, "Non-eternal, peaceful, unreal." Such a sound comes to be heard by these beings.

'And again, O Ânanda, the borders of those great rivers on both sides are filled with jewel trees of various scents, from which bunches of flowers, leaves, and branches of all kinds hang

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<sup>1</sup> Instead of *tasam*, it is better to read *tatha*.

down. And if the beings, who are on the borders of those rivers, wish to enjoy sport full of heavenly delights, the water rises to the ankle only after they have stepped into the rivers, if they wish it to be so; or if they wish it, the water rises to their knees, to their hips, to their sides, and to their ears. And heavenly pleasures arise. Again, if the beings then wish the water to be cold, it is cold; if they wish it to be hot, it is hot; if they wish it to be hot and cold, it is hot and cold, according to their pleasure.

'And those great rivers flow along, full of water scented with the best perfumes of the Uragasâra sandal-wood, of Tagaras, Kâlânusârin (dark, fragrant sandal-wood) trees, Agarus, and heavenly Tamâlapattras; covered with flowers of the white water-lilies, and heavenly Utpalas, Padmas, Kumudas, and Pundarîkas; full of delightful sounds of

peacocks, sparrows, kunâlas, cuckoos, sârikas, parrots, ducks, geese, herons, cranes, swans<sup>1</sup> and others; with small islands inhabited by flocks of birds, created by the Tathâgata; adorned with fields, full of metals; with fords on which it is easy to drink, free from mud, and covered with gold dust. And when these beings there desire, thinking what kind of wishes should be fulfilled for them, then exactly such wishes are fulfilled for them according to the Law<sup>2</sup>.

'And, O Ânanda, the sound which rises from that water is delightful, and the whole Buddha country is aroused by it. And if beings, who stand on the borders of the river, wish that the sound should not come within their ear-shot, then it does not come within their ear-shot,

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translation puts these birds as follows: geese, swans, cranes, ducks, kârandavas, parrots, grouse (kokilas), kunâlas, kalaviṅkas, and peacocks.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of Dharmâh, the Tibetan translator seems to have read Dharmavat.

even if they are possessed of the heavenly ear. And whatever sound a man wishes to hear, exactly that delightful sound he hears, as for instance, the sound "Buddha, Dharma (the Law), Saṅgha (the Church), the Pâramitâs (highest perfections), the Bhûmis (stages), the Balas (powers), Vaisûradya (perfections), Âvenikabuddhadharma (freedom from attachment), Pratisamvit (consciousness); Sûnyatâ (emptiness), Animitta (unconditioned), Apranihita (free from desire), Anabhisamskara (not made), Agâta (not born), Anutpâda (without origin), Abhâva (not being), and Nirodha (cessation); Sânta, prasânta, and upasânta (peace); Mahâmaitrî (great love), Mahâkarunâ (great pity), Mahâmuditâ (great rejoicing), and Mahopekshâ (great forgiveness); Anutpattikadharmakshânti (resignation to consequences which have not yet arisen), and Abhishekabhûmipratilambha (attainment of the

royal stage)."

'And having heard these sounds, everybody feels the highest delight and pleasure accompanied by retirement, passionlessness, quiet, cessation, law, and a stock of merit leading to the perfect knowledge.

'And, O Ânanda, there is nowhere in that Sukhâvatî world any sound of sin, obstacle, misfortune, distress, and destruction; there is nowhere any sound of pain, even the sound of perceiving what is neither pain nor pleasure is not there, O Ânanda, how much less the sound of pain. For that reason, O Ânanda, that world is called Sukhâvatî, shortly, but not in full. For, O Ânanda, the whole kalpa would come to an end, while the different causes of the pleasure of the world Sukhâvatî are being praised, and even then the end of those causes of happiness could not be reached.

§ 19. 'And again, O Ânanda, the beings, who

have been and will be born in that world Sukhâvatî, will be endowed with such colour, strength, vigour, height and breadth, dominion, accumulation of virtue<sup>1</sup>; with such enjoyments of dress, ornaments, gardens, palaces, and pavilions; and such enjoyments of touch, taste, smell, and sound; in fact with all enjoyments and pleasures, exactly like the Paranirmitavasavartin gods.

'And again, O Ânanda, in that world Sukhâvatî, beings do not take food consisting of gross materials of gravy or molasses; but whatever food they desire, such food they perceive, as if it were taken, and become delighted in body and mind. Yet they need not put it into their mouth.

'And if, after they are satisfied, they wish different kinds of perfumes, then with these

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<sup>1</sup> Here the text seems corrupt.

very heavenly kinds of perfumes the whole Buddha country is scented. And whosoever wishes to perceive there such perfume, every perfume of every scent of the Gandharvaraga does always reach his nose<sup>1</sup>.

'And in the same manner, if they desire musical instruments, banners, flags, umbrellas, cloaks, powders, ointments, garlands, and scents, then the whole Buddha country shines with such things. If they desire cloaks of different colours and many hundred thousand colours, then with these very best cloaks the whole Buddha country shines. And the people feel themselves covered with them.

'And if they desire such ornaments, as for instance, head-ornaments, ear-ornaments, neck-ornaments, hand and foot ornaments,

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translator seems to have read: *tatra yas tam gandham āghrātukāmo na bhavati, tasya sarvaso gandhasaṅgñā vāsanā ka na samudākarati.*

namely, diadems, earrings, bracelets, armlets, necklaces, chains, ear-jewels, seals, gold strings, girdles, gold nets<sup>1</sup>, pearl nets, jewel nets, nets of bells made of gold and jewels, then they see that Buddha country shining with such ornaments adorned with many hundred thousand jewels, that are fastened to ornament-trees. And they perceive themselves to be adorned with these ornaments.

'And if they desire a palace, with colours and emblems of such and such height and width, adorned with hundred thousand gates made with different jewels, covered with different heavenly flowers<sup>2</sup>, full of couches strewn with beautiful cushions, then exactly such a palace appears before them. And in these delightful palaces they dwell, play, sport, walk about,

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translation suggests the reading svarnagâlâ.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of pushpa the Tibetan translator seems to have read dûshya, 'garment.'

being honoured, and surrounded by seven times seven thousands of Apsarases.

§ 20. 'And in that world, there is no difference between gods and men, except when they are spoken of in ordinary and imperfect parlance as gods and men. And, O Ânanda, as a low man and impotent man, before the face of the mighty king, is neither bright, nor warm, nor brilliant, nor is he self-confident and radiant,—thus Sakra, king of the Devas, if before the face of the Paranirmitavasavartin gods, is neither bright, nor warm, nor brilliant, namely, with regard to his gardens, palaces, dresses, ornaments, his dominion, his perfection, his miraculous power, or his supremacy, his comprehension of the Law, and his full enjoyment of the Law. And, O Ânanda, as the Paranirmitavasavartin gods are there, thus men must be considered in the world Sukhavati.

§ 21. 'And again, O Ânanda, in that world Sukhavati, when the time of forenoon has come, the winds are greatly agitated and blowing everywhere in the four quarters. And they shake and drive many beautiful, graceful, and many-coloured stalks of the gem trees, which are perfumed with sweet heavenly scents, so that many hundred beautiful flowers of delightful scent fall down on the great earth, which is all full of jewels. And with these flowers that Buddha country is adorned on every side seven fathoms deep. As a clever man might spread out a flower-bed on the earth and make it even with both his hands, beautiful and charming, even thus with those flowers of various scents and colours that Buddha country is shining on every side seven fathoms deep. And these many flowers are soft, pleasant to touch, if one may use a comparison, like Kâkilindika (some kind of soft substance). If

one puts one's foot on them, they sink down four inches; if one raises one's foot, they rise again four inches. When the time of the forenoon has gone again, those flowers vanish without leaving anything behind. Then that Buddha country is again clean, pleasant, beautiful, and without fading flowers. The winds blow again everywhere in the four quarters, and scatter down fresh flowers as before. And as it is in the forenoon, so it is at noon, at twilight, in the first, middle, and last watch of the night. And the beings, if touched by those winds which blow perfume with various scents, are as full of happiness as a Bhikshu (mendicant) who has obtained Nirvâna.

§ 22. 'And in that Buddha country, O Ânanda, no mention is ever made of the names of fire, sun, moon, planets, Nakshatras (constellations), and stars, or of blinding darkness. There is no

mention even of day and night, except in the conversation of the Tathâgata. Nor is there any idea of predial property belonging to monasteries.

§ 23. 'And again, O Ânanda, in that world Sukhâvatî at the proper time clouds full of heavenly perfumed water pour down heavenly flowers of all colours; heavenly seven jewels, heavenly sandalwood-powder, and heavenly umbrellas, flags, and banners are poured down. And in the sky, the heavenly flowers of all colours, and heavenly canopies are held, likewise heavenly excellent umbrellas and all kinds of ornaments, heavenly musical instruments are played, and heavenly Apsarases dance.

§ 24. 'And again, O Ânanda, in that Buddha country whatever beings have been born, and are being born, and will be born, are always constant in absolute truth, till they have reached

Nirvâna. And why is that? Because there is no room or mention there of the other two divisions (râsis), such as beings not constant or constant in falsehood.

'On this wise, O Ânanda, that world is briefly called Sukhavati, not at full length. Even a kalpa, O Ânanda, would come to an end, while the causes of happiness which exist in that world Sukhâvatî are being praised, and yet it would be impossible to reach the end of them.'

§ 25. Then the Bhagavat at that time spoke the following verses<sup>1</sup>:

'Thus, O Ânanda, the world Sukhâvatî is endowed with immeasurable good qualities and excellences.

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<sup>1</sup> The text of these verses is so corrupt that I thought it best to follow the example of the five Chinese translators, all of whom leave them out. They only repeat what was said before, that people might go on for ever praising the excellences of Sukhâvatî, yet they would never reach the end of them, and that the merit of hearing even the name of Sukhâvatî is greater than all other blessings on earth. The best thing, however, is to have faith in Gina, and to drive away all doubt. The Tibetan translator gives a translation of seven verses, but his translation also seems as obscure as the original.

§ 26. 'And again, O Ânanda, in the ten quarters, and in each of them, in all the Buddha countries equal in number to the sand of the Gaṅgâ, the blessed Buddhas equal in number to the sand of the Gaṅgâ, glorify the name of the blessed Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, they preach his fame, they proclaim his glory, they extol his virtue. And why? Because all beings who hear the name of the blessed Amitâbha, and having heard it, raise their thought with joyful longing, even for once only, will not turn away again from the highest perfect knowledge.

§ 27. 'And before the eyes of those beings, O Ânanda, who again and again think of the Tathâgata reverently, and who make the great and unmeasured stock of good works grow, turning their thought towards Bodhi (knowledge), and who pray to be born in that world, Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, when the time of their death has

approached, will appear, surrounded by many companies of Bhikshus and honoured by them. And then these beings, having seen the Bhagavat, their thoughts filled with joy, will, when they have died, be born in that world of Sukhâvatî. And if, O Ânanda, any son or daughter of a good family should wish—What?—How then may I see that Tathâgata Amitâbha visibly, then he must raise his thought on to the highest perfect knowledge, he must direct his thought with perseverance and excessive desire towards that Buddha country, and direct the stock of his good works towards being born there.

§ 28. 'But before the eyes of those who do not care much about the Tathâgata Amitâbha, and who do not vigorously increase the great and unmeasured stock of their good works, the Tathâgata Amitâbha, holy and fully enlightened, will appear, at the time of death, with the

company of Bhikshus, in breadth and height and form and beauty, very like (the former), and very like (the real Tathâgata), but only created by thought. And they, through their meditation that dwells on perceiving the sight of the Tathâgata, and with unflinching memory, will, when they have died, be born in the same Buddha country.

§ 29. 'And again, O Ânanda, those beings who meditate on the Tathâgata by giving him the ten thoughts, and who will direct their desire towards that Buddha country, and who will feel satisfaction when the profound doctrines are being preached, and who will not fall off, nor despair, nor fail, but will meditate on that Tathâgata, if it were by one thought only, and will direct their desire toward that Buddha country, they also will see the Tathâgata Amitâbha, while they are in a dream, they will be born in the world Sukhâvatî, and will never

turn away from the highest perfect knowledge.

§ 30. 'And, O Ânanda, after thus seeing the cause and effect, the Tathâgatas of the ten quarters, in immeasurable and innumerable worlds, glorify the name of the Tathâgata Amitâbha, preach his fame, and proclaim his praise. And again, O Ânanda, in that Buddha country, Bodhisattvas equal in number to the sand of the Gaᅅgâ approach, from the ten quarters, and in each quarter towards that Tathâgata Amitâbha, in order to see him, to bow before him, to worship him, to consult him, and likewise in order to see that company of Bodhisattvas, and the different kinds of perfection in the multitude of ornaments and excellences belonging to that Buddha country.'

§31. Then at that time, the Bhagavat, in order to illustrate this matter in fuller measure,

recited these verses<sup>1</sup>:

1. 'As there are Buddha countries equal to the sand of the river Gaṅgâ in the eastern quarter, whence all the Bodhisattvas come to worship the Buddha, the lord Amitâyû;

2. 'And they having taken many bunches of flowers of different colours, sweetly-scented and delightful, shower them down on the best leader of men, on Amitayu, worshipped by gods and men;

3. 'In the same manner there are as many Buddha countries in the southern, western, and northern quarters, whence they come with the Bodhisattvas to worship the Buddha, the lord Amitâyû.

4. 'And they having taken many handfulls of scents of different colours, sweetly-scented and delightful, shower them down on the best

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<sup>1</sup> In these verses there are again many doubtful passages which could be rendered tentatively only.

leader of men, on Amitayu, worshipped by gods and men.

5. 'These many Bodhisattvas having worshipped and revered the feet of Amitaprabha, and having walked round him respectfully, speak thus: "Oh, the country of Buddha shines wonderfully!"

6. 'And they cover him again with handfulls of flowers, with thoughts jubilant, with incomparable joy, and proclaim their wish before that lord: "May our country also be such as this."

7. 'And what was thrown there as handfulls of flowers arose in the form of an umbrella extending over a hundred yoganas, and the beautiful country shines and is well adorned, and flowers cover the whole body of Buddha.

8. 'These Bodhisattvas having thus honoured him, how do they act?—Delighted they pronounce this speech: "Gains by those people

are well gained, by whom the name of the best man has been heard.

9. "By us also all the gain has been well gained, because we have come to this Buddha country. See this dream-like country<sup>1</sup> how beautiful it is, which was made by the teacher during a hundred thousand kalpas.

10. "Look, the Buddha possessed of a mass of the best virtues shines, surrounded by Bodhisattvas. Endless is his splendour<sup>2</sup>, and endless the light, and endless the life, and endless the assembly."

11. 'And the lord Amitâyû makes a smile of thirty-six niyutas of kotîs of rays, which rays having issued from the circle of his mouth light up the thousand kotîs of Buddha countries.

12. 'And all these rays having returned there

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<sup>1</sup> Maitra, 'love,' possibly 'kindness,' or was it kshetra?

<sup>2</sup> Amitâ asyâbhâ?

again settle on the head of the lord; gods and men produce (perceive) the delight, because they have seen there this light of him.

13. "There rises the Buddha-son, glorious, he indeed the mighty Avalokitesvara, and says: "What is the reason there, O Bhagavat, what is the cause, that thou smilest, O lord of the world?

14. "'Explain this, for thou knowest the sense, and art full of kind compassion, the deliverer of many living beings. All beings will be filled with joyful thoughts, when they have thus heard this excellent and delightful speech.

15. "'And the Bodhisattvas who have come from many worlds to Sukhâvatî in order to see the Buddha, having heard it and having perceived the great joy, will quickly inspect this country.

16. "'And beings, come to this noble country, (quickly) obtain miraculous power, divine eye

and divine ear, they remember their former births, and know the highest wisdom."

17. 'Then Buddha Amitayu preaches: "This prayer was mine formerly, so that beings having in any way whatever heard my name should for ever go to my country.

18. "'And this my excellent prayer has been fulfilled, and beings having quickly come here from many worlds into my presence, never return from here, not even for one birth."

19. 'If a Bodhisattva wishes here that his country should be such as this, and that he also should deliver many beings, through his name, through his preaching, and through his sight,

20. 'Let him quickly and with speed go to the world Sukhâvatî, and having gone near Amitaprabha, let him worship a thousand kotîs of Buddhas.

21. 'Having worshipped many kotîs of Buddhas, and having gone to many countries by

means of their miraculous power, and having performed adoration in the presence of the Sugatas, they will go to Sukhâvatî with devotion<sup>1</sup>.

§ 32. 'And again, O Ânanda, there is a Bodhi-tree belonging to Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened. That Bodhi-tree is ten hundred yoganas in height, having petals, leaves, and branches spread over eight hundred yoganas, having a circumference near the base of the root of five hundred yoganas, always in leaf, always in flower, always in fruit, of different colours, of many hundred thousand colours, of different leaves, of different flowers, of different fruits, adorned with many beautiful ornaments, shining with precious jewels, bright like the moon, beautified with precious jewels (such as are)

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translation has 'in the morning,' as if the text had been pûrvabhakta.

fastened on Sakra's head, strewn with Kintamani<sup>1</sup> jewels, well adorned with the best jewels of the sea, more than heavenly, hung with golden strings, adorned with hundreds of gold chains, jewel-garlands, necklaces, bracelets, strings of red pearls and blue pearls, lion twists (Simhalatâ), girdles, bunches, strings of jewels, and all kinds of jewels, covered with nets of bells, nets of all kinds of jewels, nets of pearls, and nets of gold, adorned with the emblems of the dolphin, the Svastika, the Nandyâvarta, and the moon, adorned with nets of jewels and of bells, and with ornaments of gold and of all kinds of jewels, in fact adorned according to the desires of beings whatever their wishes may be.

'And again, O Ânanda, the sound and noise of that Bodhi-tree, when it is moved by the

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<sup>1</sup> Jewels yielding every wish.

wind, reaches immeasurable worlds. And, O Ânanda, for those beings whose hearing that Bodhi-tree reaches, no disease of the ear is to be feared until they reach Bodhi (highest knowledge). And for those immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, measureless, immense, and inexpressible beings, whose sight that Bodhi-tree reaches, no disease of the eye is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. And again, O Ânanda, for those beings who smell the scent of that Bodhi-tree, no disease of the nose is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. For those beings who taste the fruits of that Bodhi-tree, no disease of the tongue is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. For those beings who are lighted up by the light of that Bodhi-tree, no disease of the body is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. And again, O Ânanda, for those beings who meditate on that Bodhi-tree according to the Law, henceforward

until they reach the Bodhi, no perplexity of their thought is to be feared. And all those beings, through the seeing of that Bodhi-tree, never turn away, namely, from the highest perfect knowledge. And they obtain three kinds of kshânti or resignation, namely, Ghoshânugâ, Anulomikî (resignation to natural consequences), and Anutpattika-dharma-kshânti (resignation to consequences which have not yet arisen), through the power of the former prayers of that same Tathâgata Amitâyus, through the service rendered by them to the former Ginas, and through the performance of the former prayers, to be well accomplished, and to be well conceived, without failure or without flaw.

§ 33. 'And again, O Ânanda, those Bodhisattvas who have been born, are being

born, or will be born there, are all bound to one birth only<sup>1</sup>, and will thence indeed obtain the highest perfect knowledge; barring always the power of prayers, as in the case of those Bodhisattvas who are preaching with the voice of lions, who are girded with the noble armour(of the Law), and who are devoted to the work of helping all people to attain Parinirvana.

§ 34. 'And again, O Ânanda, in that Buddha country, those who are Srâvakas are possessed of the light of a fathom, and those who are Bodhisattvas are possessed of the light of a hundred thousand kotîs of yoganâs; barring always the two Bodhisattvas, by whose light that world is everywhere shining with eternal splendour.'

Then the blessed Ânanda said this to the Bhagavat: 'What are the names, O Bhagavat, of

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<sup>1</sup> Their present birth.

those two noble-minded Bodhisattvas?'

The Bhagavat said: 'One of them, O Ânanda, is the noble-minded Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and the second is Mahâsthâmaprâpta by name. And, O Ânanda, these two were born there, having left this Buddha country here<sup>1</sup>.

§ 35. 'And, O Ânanda, those Bodhisattvas who have been born in that Buddha country are all endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great man, possessed of perfect members, skilled in meditation and wisdom, clever in all kinds of wisdom, having sharp organs, having well-restrained organs, having organs of sense capable of thorough knowledge, not mean, possessed of the five kinds of strength, of

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<sup>1</sup> Saṅghavarman translates this passage: 'These two Bodhisattvas practised the discipline of Bodhisattva in this country, and after death they were miraculously born in that Buddha country.' Bodhiruki translates: 'O Ânanda, these two Bodhisattvas went to be born in that country from the world Sahâ, when they had exhausted the measure of their life (here).' The world Sahâ belongs to the Buddha Sâkyamuni.

patience under censure, and of endless and boundless good qualities.

§ 36. 'And again, O Ânanda, all those Bodhisattvas who have been born in that Buddha country are not deprived of the sight of Buddha, nor liable to fall down (to the evil states), until they reach the Bodhi. Henceforward they all will never be forgetful of their former births<sup>1</sup>; barring always those who are devoted to their former place, during the disturbances of the kalpas, and while the five kinds of corruption prevail, when there is the appearance of blessed Buddhas in the world, as for instance, that of me at present.

§ 37. 'And again, O Ânanda, all the Bodhisattvas who have been born in that Buddha country, having gone during one morning meal to the other world, worship many

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<sup>1</sup> 'Na' must be left out, or we must read nagâtvagâtismarâ.

hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas, as many as they like, through the favour of Buddha. They consider in many ways that they should worship (Buddhas) with such and such flowers, incense, lamps, scents, garlands, ointments, powder, cloaks, umbrellas, flags, banners, ensigns, music, concerts, and musical instruments; and, as soon as they have considered this, there arise also on their hands exactly such materials for every kind of worship. And while performing worship for those blessed Buddhas with those materials, beginning with flowers and ending with musical instruments, they lay up for themselves much immeasurable and innumerable merit. Again, if they wish that such handfulls of flowers should be produced on their hands, then such handfulls of heavenly flowers, of different colours, of many colours, of different scents, are produced on their hands as soon as thought

of. They shower again and again such handfulls of flowers upon those blessed Buddhas. And the very smallest handfull of flowers, being thrown on high, appears above in the sky as an umbrella of flowers ten yoganas in circumference. And when the second has been thrown after it, the first does not fall down on the earth. There are handfulls of flowers there, which having been thrown up, appear in the sky as umbrellas of flowers twenty yoganas in circumference. There appear in the sky some flower-umbrellas, thirty, forty, or fifty yoganas in circumference, as far as a hundred thousand yoganas in circumference. Those (Bodhisattvas) there who perceive the noble pleasure and joy, and obtain the noble strength of thought, having caused a great and immeasurable and innumerable stock of good works to ripen, and having worshipped many hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas, turn again to the

world Sukhâvatî in one morning, through the favour of practising the former prayers of the same Tathâgata Amitâyus, owing to the hearing of the Law formerly given, owing to the stock of good works produced under former Ginas, owing to the perfect completion in the success of former prayers, owing to the well-ordered state of mind<sup>1</sup>.

§ 38. 'And again, O Ânanda, all those beings who have been born in that Buddha country recite the story of the Law, which is accompanied by omniscience<sup>2</sup>. And for the beings in that Buddha country there exists no idea of property whatever<sup>3</sup>. And all those going and walking through that Buddha country feel neither pleasure nor pain; stepping forward

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<sup>1</sup> The text of this passage is very imperfect in all the MSS. Comparing the sentence with the last sentence of Chapter XXXII, it might seem possible to read *paripûmânûnatayâ*, or *paripûryatayânunatayâ*, for *paripûryâtmbhûtayâ*. On *suvi bhakta*, see Childers, S.V. *vibha gati*.

<sup>2</sup> See the twenty-third *Pranidhâna*.

<sup>3</sup> See the tenth *Pranidhâna*.

they have no desire, and with desire they do not step forward. They give no thought to any beings. And again, O Ânanda, for those beings who have been born in that world Sukhâvatî, there is no idea of others, no idea of self, no idea of inequality, no strife, no dispute, no opposition. Full of equanimity, of benevolent thought, of tender thought, of affectionate thought, of useful thought, of serene thought, of firm thought, of unbiassed thought, of undisturbed thought, of unagitated thought, of thought (fixed on) the practice of discipline and transcendent wisdom, having entered on knowledge which is a firm support to all thoughts, equal to the ocean in wisdom, equal to the mountain Meru in knowledge, rich in many good qualities, delighting in the music of the Bodhyaṅgas<sup>1</sup>, devoted to the music of

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<sup>1</sup> 'Requisites for attaining the supreme knowledge of a Buddha.'--Childers, Pâli

Buddha, they discard the eye of flesh, and assume the heavenly eye. And having approached the eye of wisdom, having reached the eye of the Law, producing the eye of Buddha, showing it, lighting it, and fully exhibiting it, they attain perfect wisdom. And being bent on the equilibrium of the three elements<sup>1</sup>, having subdued and calmed their thoughts, endowed with a perception of the causes of all things, clever in explanation of causes, endowed with the power of explaining the Law (or things such as they really are), clever in taking and refusing, clever in leading and not leading, clever in resting<sup>2</sup>, they, being regardless of worldly stories, derive true pleasures from stories transcending the world. They are clever in examining all things,

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Dictionary, p. 93 b.

<sup>1</sup> Probably the three dhâtu, Kâmadhâtu, Rûpadhâtu, and Arûpadhâtu; see Childers, s.v. dhâtu.

<sup>2</sup> The text may originally have been sthânâsthânakusalâh.

familiar with the knowledge of the cessation of the working of all things, perceiving even what cannot be seen, caring for nothing, attached to nothing, without cares, without pain, free without clinging to anything, free from impurity<sup>1</sup>, of blameless behaviour, not clinging to anything, intent on the deep or profound laws, they do not sink, elevated to the entrance into the knowledge of Buddha difficult to comprehend, having obtained the path of one vehicle<sup>2</sup>, free from doubt, beyond the reach of questionings, knowing the thoughts of others, free from self-confidence. Being elevated in knowledge, they are like the Sumeru; being imperturbable in thought, they are like the ocean; they surpass the light of the sun and moon, by the light of wisdom, and by the

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<sup>1</sup> The next words *aparyasthâyinah* and *abhigñâsvamûlasthâyinah* seem to have a technical meaning, but neither the Tibetan nor the Chinese translators give an intelligible rendering.

<sup>2</sup> Saṅghavarman translates 'one vehicle.'

whiteness, brilliancy, purity, and beauty of their knowledge; by their light and splendour, they are like the colour of molten gold; by their patiently bearing the good and evil deeds of all beings, they are like the earth; by their cleaning and carrying off the taint<sup>1</sup> of all sins, they are like water; by their burning the evil of pride<sup>2</sup> in anything, they are like the king of fire; by not clinging to anything, they are like the wind; by pervading all things and yet not caring for anything, they are like the ether; by not being tainted by the whole world, they are like lotuses; by their shouting forth the Law, they are like the great cloud at the rainy season; by showering down the whole ocean of the Law, they are like the great rain; by overpowering great troops, they are like bulls; by the highest restraint of

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translation presupposes mala instead of mûla.

<sup>2</sup> Mana, 'pride,' is one of the Klesas.

their thoughts, they are like great elephants; by being well trained, they are like noble horses; by their fearlessness, confidence, and heroism, they are like the lion, the king of beasts; by affording protection to all beings, they are like the Nyagrodha (fig-tree), the king of trees; by not being shaken by any calumniators, they are like the (Sumeru), the king of mountains; by their feeling of unlimited love, they are like the sky; by their precedence, owing to their command of the Law, and their stock of all merit, they are like the great Brahman; by their not dwelling in what they have accumulated, they are like birds; by their scattering all calumniators, they are like Garuda, king of birds; by their not being averse to our obtaining difficult things, they are like the Udumbara flowers; calm like elephants<sup>1</sup>, because their

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translator seems to have read *sagaravat*, instead of *nâgavat*.

senses are neither crooked nor shaken; clever in decision, full of the sweet flavour of patience; without envy, because they do not hanker after the happiness of others; wise, because in their search after the Law, never tired of discussions on the Law; like the precious beryl, through their value; (like) jewel-mines<sup>1</sup>, by their sacred knowledge; sweet-sounding by the noise of the great drum of the Law, striking the great kettledrum of the Law, blowing the great trumpet-shell of the Law, raising the great banner of the Law, lighting the torch of the Law, looking for wisdom, not foolish, faultless, passionless, pure, refined, not greedy, fond of distributing, generous, open-handed, fond of distributing gifts, not stingy in giving instruction and food, not attached, without fear, without desires, wise, patient, energetic, bashful,

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<sup>1</sup> The Tibetan translation seems to have read ratnâkarasadrîsâh.

orderly, fearless<sup>1</sup>, full of knowledge, happy, pleasant to live with, obliging, enlightening the world<sup>2</sup>, free from sorrow, free from taint, having left off the winking of the eye, possessing lightly acquired knowledge, strong in reasoning, strong in prayer, not crooked, not perverse; then, having accumulated a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of lakshas<sup>3</sup> of virtue, delivered from the thorns of pride, free from illusion, hatred, and passion; pure, devoted to what is pure, famous by the Gina-power, learned in the world, elevated by their purified knowledge, sons of the Gina, endowed with the vigour of thought, heroes, firm, unselfish<sup>4</sup>, free from faults, unequalled, free from anger, collected, noble, heroes, bashful, energetic, possessed of memory, understanding, and

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<sup>1</sup> If the same as nirgahana.

<sup>2</sup> The next words are unintelligible in their present form.

<sup>3</sup> The Tibetan translation has Buddha for laksha.

<sup>4</sup> Asamâh in the Tibetan translation.

prudence; sending forth the weapons of knowledge, possessed of purity, shining, free from faults and taints, endowed with memory, resting on serene knowledge. And such, O Ânanda, are the beings in that Buddha country, stated briefly. But if the Tathâgatas should describe them fully, even in a length of life that should last for a hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of kalpas, yet the end of the virtues of those good people would not be reached, and yet there would be no failure of the self-confidence of the Tathâgata. And why? Because, O Ânanda, both are indeed inconceivable and incomparable, viz. first, the virtues of those Bodhisattvas, and secondly, the unsurpassed light of knowledge of the Tathâgata<sup>1</sup>.

§ 39. 'And now, O Ânanda, stand up, facing

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<sup>1</sup> For these passages, see the end of Chapter XII.

westward, and having taken a handful of flowers, fall down. This is the quarter where that Bhagavat Amitabha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, dwells, remains, supports himself, and teaches the Law, whose spotless and pure name, famed in every quarter of the whole world with its ten quarters, the blessed Buddhas, equal to (the grains of) the sand of the river Gaṅgâ, speaking and answering again and again without stopping, extol, praise, and eulogize.'

After this, the blessed Ânanda said this to the Bhagavat: 'I wish, O Bhagavat, to see that Amitâbha, Amitaprabha, Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, and those noble-minded Bodhisattvas, who are possessed of a stock of merit amassed under many hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas.'

At that moment this speech was spoken by the blessed Ânanda, and immediately that

Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, let such a ray of light go out of the palm of his own hand, that even the most distant Buddha country was shining with the great splendour. And again at that time, whatever black mountains, or jewel-mountains, or Merus, great Merus, Mukilindas, great Mukilindas, Kakravadas, great Kakravâdas, or erections, or pillars, trees, woods, gardens, palaces, belonging to the gods and men, exist everywhere in hundred thousand kotîs of Buddha countries; all these were pervaded and overcome by the light of that Tathâgata. And as a man, followed by another at a distance of a fathom only, would see the other man, when the sun has risen, exactly in the same manner the Bhikshus, Bhikshunîs, Upâsakas (laymen), Upâsikâs (laywomen), gods, Nâgas, Yakshas, Râkshasas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas, Kinnaras, Mahoragas, men and not-men, in this

Buddha country, saw at that time that Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, like the Sumeru, the king of mountains, elevated above all countries, surpassing all quarters, shining, warming, glittering, blazing; and they saw that great mass of Bodhisattvas, and that company of Bhikshus, viz. by the grace of Buddha, from the pureness of that light. And as this great earth might be, when all covered with water, so that no trees, no mountains, no islands, no grasses, bushes, herbs, large trees, no rivers, chasms, water-falls, would be seen, but only the one great earth which had all become an ocean, in exactly the same manner there is neither mark nor sign whatever to be seen in that Buddha country, except Srâvakas, spreading their light over a fathom, and those Bodhisattvas, spreading their light over a hundred thousand kotîs of yoganâs. And that Bhagavat Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and

fully enlightened, overshadowing that mass of Srâvakas and that mass of Bodhisattvas, is seen, illuminating all quarters. Again at that time all those Bodhisattvas, Srâvakas, gods and men in that world Sukhâvatî, saw this world Sahâ and Sâkyamuni, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, surrounded by a holy company of Bhikshus, teaching the Law.

§ 40. Then, the Bhagavat addressed the noble-minded Bodhisattva Agita, and said: 'Do you see, O Agita, the perfection of the array of ornaments and good qualities in that Buddha country; and above in the sky (places) with charming parks<sup>1</sup>, charming gardens, charming rivers and lotus lakes, scattered with many precious Padmas, Utpalas, Kumudas, and Pundarikas; and below, from the earth to the abode of the Akanishthas, the surface of the sky,

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<sup>1</sup> A substantive seems to be wanting to which all these adjectives would refer.

covered with flowers, ornamented with wreaths of flowers, shining on the rows of many precious columns, frequented by flocks of all kinds of birds created by the Tathâgata?'

The Bodhisattva Agita said: 'I see, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Do you see again, O Agita, those flocks of immortal birds, making the whole Buddha country resound with the voice of Buddha, so that those Bodhisattvas are never without meditating on Buddha?'

Agita said: 'I see, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Do you see again, O Agita, those beings, who have ascended to the palaces which extend over a hundred thousand yoganas in the sky, walking about respectfully?'

Agita said: 'I see, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, O Agita, is there any difference between the gods called Paranirmitavasavartins, and men in the

world Sukhâvatî?'

Agita said: 'I do not, O Bhagavat, perceive even one difference, so far as the men in that world of Sukhâvatî are endowed with great supernatural powers.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Do you see again, O Agita, those men dwelling within the calyx of excellent lotus-flowers in that world Sukhâvatî?'

He said: 'As gods called Trâyastimsas or Yâmas, having entered into palaces of fifty or hundred or five hundred yoganas in extent, are playing, sporting, walking about, exactly in the same manner I see, O Bhagavat, these men dwelling within the calyx of excellent lotus-flowers in the world Sukhâvatî.

§ 41. 'Again there are, O Bhagavat, beings who, being born miraculously, appear sitting cross-legged in the lotus-flowers. What is there, O Bhagavat, the cause, what the reason, that

some dwell within the calyx, while others, being born miraculously, appear sitting cross-legged in the lotus-flowers?'

The Bhagavat said: 'Those Bodhisattvas, O Agita, who, living in other Buddha countries, entertain doubt about being born in the world Sukhâvatî, and with that thought amass a stock of merit, for them there is the dwelling within the calyx. Those, on the contrary, who are filled with faith, and being free from doubt, amass a stock of merit in order to be born in the world Sukhâvatî, and conceive, believe, and trust in the perfect knowledge of the blessed Buddhas, they, being born miraculously, appear sitting cross-legged in the flowers of the lotus. And those noble-minded Bodhisattvas, O Agita, who, living in other Buddha countries, raise their thought in order to see Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, who never entertain a doubt, believe in the perfect knowledge of

Buddha and in their own stock of merit, for them, being born miraculously, and appearing cross-legged, there is, in one minute, such a body as that of other beings who have been born there long before. See, O Agita, the excellent, immeasurable, unailing, unlimited wisdom, that namely for their own benefit they are deprived during five hundred years of seeing Buddhas, seeing Bodhisattvas, hearing the Law, speaking about the Law (with others), and thus collecting a stock of merit; they are indeed deprived of the successful attainment of every stock of merit, and that through their forming ideas tainted with doubt.

'And, O Agita, there might be a dungeon belonging to an anointed Kshatriya king, inlaid entirely with gold and beryl, in which cushions, garlands, wreaths and strings are fixed, having canopies of different colours and kind, covered with silk cushions, scattered over with various

flowers and blossoms, scented with excellent scents, adorned with arches, courts, windows, pinnacles, fire-places, and terraces, covered with nets of bells of the seven kinds of gems, having four angles, four pillars, four doors, four stairs; and the son of that king having been thrown into the dungeon for some misdeed is there, bound with a chain made of the Gâmbûnada gold. And suppose there is a couch prepared for him, covered with many woollen cloths, spread over with cotton and feather cushions, having Kâlinga coverings, and carpets, together with coverlids<sup>1</sup>, red on both sides, beautiful and charming. There he might be then either sitting or resting. And there might be brought to him much food and drink, of various kinds, pure and well prepared. What do you think, O Agita, would the enjoyment be great

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<sup>1</sup> The text is corrupt. One might begin a new word with sottarapadakkhadah.

for that prince?'

Agita said: 'Yes<sup>1</sup>, it would be great, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, O Agita, would he even taste it there, and notice it, or would he feel any satisfaction from it?'

He said: 'Not indeed, O Bhagavat; but on the contrary, when he had been led away by the king and thrown into the dungeon, he would only wish for deliverance from there. He would seek for the nobles, princes, ministers, women<sup>2</sup>, elders (rich merchants), householders, and lords of castles, who might deliver him from that dungeon. Moreover, O Bhagavat, there is no pleasure for that prince in that dungeon, nor is he liberated, until the king shows him favour.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Thus, O Agita, it is with

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<sup>1</sup> One expects, No.

<sup>2</sup> Stryâgâra, like the German Frauenzimmer.

those Bodhisattvas who, having fallen into doubt, amass a stock of merit, but doubt the knowledge of Buddha. They are born in that world Sukhâvatî, through the hearing of Buddha's name, and through the serenity of thought only; they do not, however, appear sitting cross-legged in the flowers of the lotus, being born miraculously, but dwell only in the calyx of the lotus-flowers. Moreover for them there exist ideas of palaces and gardens<sup>1</sup>. There is no discharge, there is no phlegm or mucus, there is nothing disagreeable to the mind. But they are deprived of seeing Buddhas, hearing the Law, seeing Bodhisattvas, speaking about and ascertaining the Law, (gathering) any (new) stock of merit, and practising the Law, during five hundred years. Moreover they do not rejoice there or perceive satisfaction. But they

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<sup>1</sup> They imagine they are living in palaces and gardens.

wish to remove one another, and then they step out behind. And it is not known whether their exit takes place above, below, or across. See, O Agita, there might be worshippings of many hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas during those five hundred years, and also many, immense, innumerable, immeasurable stocks of merit to be amassed. But all this they destroy by the fault of doubt. See, O Agita, to how great an injury the doubt of the Bodhisattvas leads. Therefore now, O Agita, after the Bodhisattvas without doubting have quickly raised their thoughts towards the Bodhi, in order to obtain power of conferring happiness for the benefit of all creatures, their stock of merit should be turned towards their being born in the world Sukhâvatî, where the blessed Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, dwells.'

§ 42. After these words, the Bodhisattva

Agita thus spoke to the Bhagavat: 'O Bhagavat, will the Bodhisattvas, who have gone away from this Buddha country, or from the side of other blessed Buddhas, be born in the world Sukhâvatî?'

The Bhagavat said: 'Indeed, O Agita, seventy-two niyutas of kotîs of Bodhisattvas are gone away from this Buddha country, who will be born in the world Sukhâvatî; Bodhisattvas, who will never return, thanks to the stock of merit, which they have accumulated under many hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of Buddhas. What then shall be said of those with smaller stocks of merit<sup>1</sup>? 1. Eighteen hundred niyutas of kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Dushprasaha. 2. There lives in the Eastern quarter the Tathâgata named Ratnakara.

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<sup>1</sup> What is meant is that their number is much larger.

From his place ninety kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî. 3. Twenty-two kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Gyotishprabha. 4. Twenty-five kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Amitaprabha. 5. Sixty kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Lokapradipa. 6. Sixty-four kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Nâgâbhibhû. 7. Twenty-five kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Viragahprabha. 8. Sixteen kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Simha. 9. Eighteen thousand Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata

Simha (sic). 10. Eighty-one niyutas of kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Srikuta. 11. Ten niyutas of kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Narendraraga. 12. Twelve thousand Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Balabhigna. 13. Twenty-five kotîs of Bodhisattvas<sup>1</sup>, who have obtained strength, having gone to one place in one week of eight days, and having turned to the West during ninety hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of kalpas<sup>2</sup>, will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Pushpadhvaga.

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<sup>1</sup> it should be pañkavimsatir.

<sup>2</sup> Saṅghavarman's translation of this passage is: 'Within seven days they can take hold of the firm conditions (dharma) practised by a noble-minded one during hundred thousands of kotîs of kalpas.' Bodhiruki's is: 'Within seven days they can cause beings to separate from their state of transmigration during hundred thousands of niyutas of kotîs.'

14. Twelve kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Gvalanâdhipati. 15. From the place of the Tathâgata Vaisaradyaprapta, sixty-nine kotîs of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî, in order to see the Tathâgata Amitâbha, to bow before him, to worship him, to ask questions of him, and to consult him. For this reason, O Agita, I might proclaim during a full niyuta of kotîs of kalpas the names of those Tathâgatas, from whom the Bodhisattvas proceed in order to see that Tathâgata Amitâbha in the world Sukhâvatî, to bow before him, and to worship him, and yet the end could not be reached.

§ 43. 'See, O Agita, what easy gains are gained by those beings who will hear the name of the Tathâgata Amitâbha, holy and fully

enlightened. Nor will those beings be of little faith<sup>1</sup>, who will obtain at least one joyful thought of that Tathâgata and of this treatise of the Law. Therefore now, O Agita, I invite you, and command you to proclaim this treatise of the Law, before the world together with the gods. Having plunged into the vast universe full of fire, no one ought to turn back, if he has but once conceived the thought of going across. And why? Because kotîs of Bodhisattvas indeed, O Agita, return from the highest perfect knowledge, on account of not hearing such treatises of the Law as this. Therefore, from a wish for this treatise of the Law, a great effort should be made to hear, learn, and remember it, and to study it for the sake of fully grasping it and widely making it known. A good copy of it should be kept, after it has been copied in a

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<sup>1</sup> Hînâdhimuktika, see Vagrakkhedikâ XV; or 'following the lower Law.'

book, if only during one night and day, or even during the time necessary for milking a cow. The name of Master should be given to a teacher who desires to conduct quickly innumerable beings to the state of never returning from the highest perfect knowledge, namely, in order that they may see the Buddha country of that blessed Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, and to acquire the excellent perfection of the array of good qualities peculiar to his own Buddha country.

'And, O Agita, such beings will have easily gained their gains who, having amassed a stock of merit, having performed service under former Ginas, and having been guided by Buddhas, shall hear in future, until the destruction of the good Law, such-like excellent treatises of the Law, treatises which are praised, eulogized, and approved of by all Buddhas, and convey quickly the great knowledge of

omniscience. And those also who, when they have heard it, shall obtain excellent delight and pleasure, and will learn, retain, recite and grasp, and wisely preach it to others, and be delighted by its study, or, having copied it at least, will worship it, will certainly produce much good work, so that it is difficult to count it.

'Thus indeed, O Agita, I have done what a Tathâgata ought to do. It is now for you to devote yourself to it without any doubt. Do not doubt the perfect and unfailing knowledge of Buddha. Do not enter into the dungeon made of gems built up in every way. For indeed, the birth of a Buddha, O Agita, is difficult to be met with, so is the instruction in the Law, and also a timely birth<sup>1</sup>. O Agita, the way to gain the perfection (pâramitâ) of all stocks of merit has been proclaimed by me. Do now exert

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<sup>1</sup> Of the hearer; so that the student should be born at a time when there is a Buddha on earth.

yourselves and move forward. O Agita, I grant indeed a great favour to this treatise of the Law. Be valiant so that the laws of Buddhas may not perish or disappear. Do not break the command of the Tathâgata.'

§ 44. Then at that time, the Bhagavat spoke these verses:

1. 'Such hearings of me will not be for people who have not done good; but those who are heroes and perfect, they will hear this speech.

2. 'And those by whom the Lord of the world, the enlightened and the light-giver, has been seen, and the law been heard reverentially, will obtain the highest joy.

3. 'Low people of slothful minds cannot find any delight in the laws of Buddha; those who have worshipped in the Buddha countries learn the service of the Lords of the three worlds.

4. 'As a blind man in darkness does not know the way, and much less can show it, so also he

who is (only) a Sravaka<sup>1</sup> in the knowledge of Buddha; how then should beings who are ignorant!

5. 'The Buddha only knows the virtues of a Buddha; but not gods, Nâgas, Asuras, Yakshas, and Srâvakas (disciples); even for Anekabuddhas<sup>2</sup> there is no such way, as when the knowledge of a Buddha is being manifested.

6. 'If all beings had attained bliss, knowing the highest meaning in pure wisdom, they would not in kotîs of kalpas or even in a longer time tell all the virtues of one Buddha.

7. 'Thereupon they would attain Nirvâna, preaching for many kotîs of kalpas, and yet the measure of the knowledge of a Buddha would not be reached, for such is the wonderfulness of

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<sup>1</sup> Those who are as yet hearers only of the Law.

<sup>2</sup> Should it be Pratyekabuddhas?

the knowledge of the Ginas.

8. 'Therefore a learned man of an intelligent race<sup>1</sup> who believes my words, after having perceived all paths of the knowledge of the Ginas, should utter speech, saying, "Buddha is wise."

9. 'Now and then a man is found, now and then a Buddha appears, knowledge of the object of faith is acquired after a long time,—therefore one should strive to acquire (the knowledge of) the object (of faith)<sup>2</sup>.'

§ 45. And while this treatise of the Law was being delivered, twelve kotîs of niyutas of beings obtained the pure and spotless eye of the Law with regard to Laws. Twenty-four hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of beings obtained the

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<sup>1</sup> The text is evidently corrupt, and the translation conjectural.

<sup>2</sup> The tenth verse is again unintelligible, but may have meant something like that 'those who having heard the best Laws, are joyful in remembering Sugata, are our friends in time past, and they also who wish for enlightenment.'

Anâgâmin<sup>1</sup> reward. Eight hundred Bhikshus had their thoughts delivered from faults so as to cling no more to anything. Twenty-five kotîs of Bodhisattvas obtained resignation to things to come. And by forty hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of the human and divine race, thoughts such as had never risen before were turned toward the highest perfect knowledge, and their stocks of merit were made to grow toward their being born in the world Sukhâvatî, from a desire to see the Tathâgata, the blessed Amitâbha. And all of them having been born there, will in proper order be born in other worlds, as Tathâgatas, called Mañgusvara (sweet-voiced). And eighty kotîs of niyutas having acquired resignation under the Tathâgata Dîpankara, never turning back again from the highest perfect knowledge, rendered

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<sup>1</sup> One who is not born again, except in the Brahma world, and then may obtain Nirvâna.

perfect by the Tathâgata Amitâyus, practising the duties of former Bodhisattvas, will carry out, after they are born in the world Sukhâvatî, the duties enjoined in the former Pranidhanas (prayers).

§ 46. At that time this universe (the three millions of worlds) trembled in six ways. And various miracles were seen. On earth everything was perfect, and human and divine instruments were played, and the shout of joy was heard as far as the world of the Akanishthas.

§ 47. Thus spoke the Bhagavat enraptured, and the noble-minded Bodhisattva Agita, and the blessed Ânanda, the whole Assembly, and the world, with gods, men, spirits, mighty birds, and fairies, applauded the speech of the Bhagavat.

The praise of the beauty of the excellences of Sukhâvatî, the country of the blessed Amitâbha,

the Tathâgata, the entry of the Bodhisattva on the stage of 'never returning,' the story of Amitâbha, the Mahâyânasûtra of the Description of Sukhâvatî is finished.



# THE SMALLER SUKHÂVATÎ-VYÛHA

阿彌陀經

Translated into Chinese from Sanskrit

by

KUMARAJIVA

由梵文譯中文：姚秦三藏法師鳩摩羅什

Translated into English from Sanskrit MSS

by

F. MAX MÜLLER

由梵文鈔本譯英文：德國 麥克斯莫洛



## THE SMALLER SUKHĀVATĪ-VYŪHA

### ADORATION TO THE OMNISCIENT!

§1. Thus it was heard by me: At one time the Blessed (Bhagavat, i.e. Buddha) dwelt at Srāvastī<sup>1</sup>, in the Geta-grove, in the garden of Anāthapindaka, together with a large company of Bhikshus (mendicant friars), viz. with twelve hundred and fifty Bhikshus, all of them acquainted with the five kinds of knowledge<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Srāvastī, capital of the Northern Kosalas, residence of king Prasenagit. It was in ruins when visited by Fa-hian (init. V. Saec.); not far from the modern Fizabad. Cf. Burnouf, Introduction, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Abhigñānābhigñātaiḥ. The Japanese text reads abhigñātābhigñātaiḥ, i.e. abhigñātābhigñātaiḥ. If this were known to be the correct reading, we should translate it by 'known by known people,' notus a viris notis, i.e. well known, famous. Abhigñāta in the sense of known, famous, occurs in Lalitavistara, p. 25, and the Chinese translators adopted the same meaning here. Again, if we preferred the reading abhignanabhignataiḥ, this, too, would admit of an intelligible rendering, viz. known or distinguished by the marks or characteristics, i.e. the good qualities which belong to a Bhikshu. But the technical meaning is 'possessed of a knowledge of the five abhignas.' It would be better in that case to write abhigñātābhigñānaiḥ, but no MSS. seem to support that reading. The five abhigñās or abhigñānas which an Arhat ought to possess are the divine sight, the divine hearing, the knowledge of the thoughts of others, the remembrance of former existences, and magic power. See Burnouf, Lotus, Appendix, No. xiv. The larger text of the Sukhāvātī-vyūha has abhigñānābhigñānaiḥ, and afterwards abhigñātābhigñānaiḥ. The position of the participle as the uttara-pada in such compounds as abhigñānābhigñātaiḥ is common in Buddhist Sanskrit. Mr. Bendall has called my attention to the Pāli abhiññāta-abhiññāta (Vinaya-pitaka, ed. Oldenberg, vol. i, p. 43), which favours the Chinese acceptance of the term.

elders, great disciples<sup>1</sup>, and Arhats<sup>2</sup>, such as Sâriputra, the elder, Mahâmaudgalyâyana, Mahâkâsyapa, Mahâkâpphina, Mahâkatyâyana, Mahâkaushthila, Revata, Suddhipanthaka, Nanda, Ânanda, Râhula, Gavâmpati, Bharadvâga, Kâlodayin, Vakkula, and Aniruddha. He dwelt together with these and many other great disciples, and together with many noble-minded Bodhisattvas, such as Mañgusri, the prince, the Bodhisattva Agita, the Bodhisattva Gandhahastin, the Bodhisattva

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<sup>1</sup> Mahâsrâvaka, the great disciples; sometimes the eighty principal disciples.

<sup>2</sup> Arhadbhih. I have left the correct Sanskrit form, because the Japanese text gives the termination adbhiih. Hôgô's text has the more usual form arhantaih. The change of the old classical arhat into the Pâli arahan, and then back into Sanskrit arhanta, arahanta, and at last arihanta, with the meaning of 'destroyer of the enemies,' i.e. the passions, shows very clearly the different stages through which Sanskrit words passed in the different phases of Buddhist literature. In Tibet, in Mongolia, and in China, Arhat is translated by 'destroyer of the enemy,' i.e. ari-hanta. See Burnouf, Lotus, p. 287, Introduction, p. 295. Arhat is really the title of the Bhikshu on reaching the fourth degree of perfection Cf. Sûtra of the 42 Sections, cap. 2. Clemens of Alexandria (d. 220) speaks of the Σεμνοί who worshipped a pyramid erected over the relics of a god. This may be a translation of Arhat, as Lassen ('De nom. Ind. philosoph.' in Rhein. Museum, vol. i, p. 187) and Burnouf (Introduction, p. 295) supposed, or a transliteration of Samana. Clemens also speaks of Σεμνοί (Stromat. p. 539, Potter).

Nityodyukta, the Bodhisattva Anikshiptadhura. He dwelt together with them and many other noble-minded Bodhisattvas, and with Sakra, the Indra or King<sup>1</sup> of the Devas, and with Brahman Sahâmpati. With these and many other hundred thousand nayutas<sup>2</sup> of sons of the gods, Bhagavat dwelt at Srâvasti.

§ 2. Then Bhagavat addressed the honoured Sariputra and said, 'O Sâriputra, after you have passed from here over a hundred thousand kotîs of Buddha countries there is in the Western part a Buddha country, a world called Sukhâvatî (the happy country). And there a Tathâgata, called Amitâyus, an Arhat, fully enlightened, dwells

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<sup>1</sup> Indra, the old Vedic god, has come to mean simply lord, and in the Kanda Paritta (Journal Asiatique, 1871, p. 220) we actually find Asurinda, the Indra or Lord of the Asuras.

<sup>2</sup> The numbers in Buddhist literature, if they once exceed a koti or koti, i. e. ten millions, become very vague, nor is their value always the same. Ayuta, i.e. a hundred kotîs; niyuta, i.e. a hundred ayutas; and nayuta, i.e. 1 with 22 zeros, are often confounded; nor does it matter much so far as any definite idea is concerned which such numerals convey to our mind. See Prof. H. Schubert, 'On large numbers,' in Open Court, Dec. 14, 1893.

now, and remains, and supports himself, and teaches the Law<sup>1</sup>.

‘Now what do you think, Sariputra, for what reason is that world called Sukhâvatî (the happy)? In that world Sukhâvatî, O Sariputra, there is neither bodily nor mental pain for living beings. The sources of happiness are innumerable there. For that reason is that world called Sukhâvatî (the happy).

§3. ‘And again, O Sâriputra, that world Sukhâvatî is adorned with seven terraces, with seven rows of palm-trees, and with strings of bells<sup>2</sup>. It is enclosed on every side<sup>1</sup>, beautiful,

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<sup>1</sup> Tishthati dhriyate yâpayati dharmam ka desayati. This is an idiomatic phrase, which occurs again and again in the Nepalese text of the Sukhâvatî vyûha (MS. 26 b, ll. 1, 2; 55 a, l. 2, &c.). It seems to mean, he stands there, holds himself, supports himself, and teaches the law. Burnouf translates the same phrase by, 'ils se trouvent, vivent, existent' (Lotus, p. 354). On yapeti in Pâli, see Fausboll, *Dasaratha-gâtaka*, pp. 26, 28; and yâpana in Sanskrit.

<sup>2</sup> Kiñkinîgâla. The texts read kañkanagalais ka and kañkanîgalais ka, and again later kañkanîgalunâm (also lû) and kañkanîgalânâm. Mr. Beal translates from Chinese 'seven rows of exquisite curtains,' and again 'gemmow curtains.' First of all, it seems clear that we must read gâla, net, web, instead of gala. Secondly, kañkana, bracelet, gives no sense, for what could be the meaning of nets or strings of bracelets? I prefer to read kiñkinîgâla, nets or strings or rows of bells. Such rows of bells served for ornamenting a garden,

brilliant with the four gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl and crystal<sup>2</sup>. With such arrays of excellences peculiar to a Buddha country is that Buddha country adorned.

#### §4. 'And again, O Sâriputra, in that world

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and it may be said of them that, if moved by the wind, they give forth certain sounds. In the commentary on Dhammapada 30, p. 191, we meet with kiñkinikagâla, from which likewise the music proceeds; see Childers, s.v. gâla. In the MSS. of the Nepalese Sukhāvati-vyūha (R.A.S.), p. 39 a, l. 4, I likewise find svarnaratnakiñkiñgâlāni, which settles the matter, and shows how little confidence we can place in the Japanese texts.

<sup>1</sup> Anuparikshipta, enclosed; see parikkhepo in Childers' Dictionary, and compare pairidaēza, paradise.

<sup>2</sup> The four and seven precious things in Pāli are (according to Childers):--1.suvarnam, gold. 2.ragam, silver. 3.muttā, pearls. 4.mani, gems (as sapphire, ruby). 5.veluriyam, cat's eye. 6.vagiram, diamond. 7.pavālam, coral. Here Childers translates cat's eye; but s.v. veluriyam, he says, a precious stone, perhaps lapis lazuli. In Sanskrit (Burnouf, Lotus, p. 320):--1.suvarna, gold. 2.rūpya, silver. 3.vaidūrya, lapis lazuli. 4.sphatika, crystal. 5.lohitamukti, red pearls. 6.asmagarbha, diamond. 7.musâragalva, coral. Julien (Pèlerins Buddhistes, vol. ii, p. 482) gives the following list:--1.sphatika, rock crystal. 2.vaidūrya, lapis lazuli. 3.asmagarbha, coralline. 4.musâragalva, amber. 5.padmaraga, ruby.

Vaidurya (or Vaidurya) is mentioned in the Tathāgatagunagñānakintyavishayāvatāranirdesa (Wassilief, p. 161) as a precious stone which, if placed on green cloth, looks green, if placed on red cloth, red. The fact that vaidūrya is often compared with the colour of the eyes of a cat would seem to point to the cat's eye (see Borooah's Engl.-Sanskrit Dictionary, vol. ii, preface, p. ix), certainly not to lapis lazuli. Cat's eye is a kind of chalcedony. I see, however, that vaidūrya has been recognised as the original of the Greek βήρυλλος, a very ingenious conjecture, either of Weber's or of Pott's, considering that lingual d has a sound akin to r, and ry may be changed to ly and ll (Weber, Omina, P.326). The Persian billaur or ballūr, which Skeat gives as the etymon of βήρυλλος, is of Arabic origin, means crystal, and could hardly have found its way into Greek at so early a time. See 'India, what can it teach us?' p. 267.

Sukhâvatî there are lotus lakes, adorned with the seven gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, red pearls, diamonds, and corals as the seventh. They are full of water which possesses the eight good qualities<sup>1</sup>, their waters rise as high as the fords and bathing-places, so that even crows<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The eight good qualities of water are limpidity and purity, refreshing coolness, sweetness, softness, fertilising qualities, calmness, power of preventing famine, productiveness. See Beal, Catena, p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Kâkâpeya. One text reads kâkapeya, the other kâkâpeya. It is difficult to choose. The more usual word is kâkapeya, which is explained by Pânini, II, 1, 33. It is uncertain, however, whether kâkapeya is meant as a laudatory or as a depreciatory term. Bohtlingk takes it in the latter sense, and translates nadî kâkapeyâ, by a shallow river that could be drunk up by a crow. Târânatha takes it in the former sense, and translates nadî kâkapeyâ, as a river so full of water that a crow can drink it without bending its neck (kâkair anatakandharaih piyate; pûrnodakatvena prasasye kâkaih peye nadyâdau). In our passage kâkapeya must be a term of praise, and we therefore could only render it by 'ponds so full of water that crows could drink from them.' But why should so well known a word as kâkapeya have been spelt kâkâpeya, unless it was done intentionally? And if intentionally, what was it intended for? We must remember that Pânini, II, 1, 42 schol., teaches us how to form the word tirthakâka, a crow at a tîrtha, which means a person in a wrong place. It would seem therefore that crows were considered out of place at a tîrtha or bathing-place, either because they were birds of ill omen, or because they defiled the water. From that point of view, kâkâpeya would mean a pond not visited by crows, free from crows. Professor Pischel has called my attention to Mahâparinibbâna Sutta (J. R. A. S. 1875, p. 67, p. 21), where kakapeya clearly refers to a full river. Samatitthika, if this is the right reading, occurs in the same place as an epithet of a river, by the side of kâkapeya, and I think it most likely that it means rising to a level with the tirthas, the fords or bathing-places. Mr. Rhys Davids informs me that the commentary explains the two words by samatitthikâ ti samaharitâ, kâkapeyyâ ti yatthatatthaki tîre thitena kâkena sakkâ patum ti.

may drink there; they are strewn with golden sand. And in these lotus-lakes there are all around on the four sides four stairs, beautiful and brilliant with the four gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal. And on every side of these lotus-lakes gem-trees are growing, beautiful and brilliant with the seven gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, red pearls, diamonds, and corals as the seventh. And in those lotus-lakes lotus-flowers are growing, blue, blue-coloured, of blue splendour, blue to behold; yellow, yellow-coloured, of yellow splendour, yellow to behold; red, red-coloured, of red splendour, red to behold; white, white-coloured, of white splendour, white to behold; beautiful, beautifully-coloured, of beautiful splendour, beautiful to behold, and in circumference as large as the wheel of a chariot.

§5. 'And again, O Sâriputra, in that Buddha country there are heavenly musical instruments

always played on, and the earth is lovely and of golden colour. And in that Buddha country a flower-rain of heavenly Mandarava blossoms pours down three times every day, and three times every night. And the beings who are born there worship before their morning meal<sup>1</sup> a hundred thousand kotîs of Buddhas by going to other worlds; and having showered a hundred thousand kotîs of flowers upon each Tathâgata, they return to their own world in time for the afternoon rest<sup>2</sup>. With such arrays of excellences peculiar to a Buddha country is that Buddha country adorned.

§6. 'And again. O Sâriputra, there are in that Buddha country swans, curlews<sup>3</sup>, and peacocks.

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<sup>1</sup> Purobhaktena. The text is difficult to read, but it can hardly be doubtful that purobhaktena corresponds to Pâli purebhattam (i. e. before the morning meal), opposed to pakkhâbhattam, after the noonday meal (i. e. in the afternoon). See Childers, s.v. Pûrvabhaktikâ would be the first repast, as Prof. Cowell informs me.

<sup>2</sup> Divâvihârâya, for the noonday rest, the siesta. See Childers, s.v. vihara.

<sup>3</sup> Krauñkâh. Snipe, curlew. Is it meant for Kuravîka, or Karavîka, a fine-voiced bird (according to Kern, the Sk. karâyikâ), or for Kalavinka, Pâli Kalavîka?

Three times every night, and three times every day, they come together and perform a concert, each uttering his own note. And from them thus uttering proceeds a sound proclaiming the five virtues, the five powers, and the seven steps leading towards the highest knowledge<sup>1</sup>. When

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See Childers, s.v. opapâtiko; Burnouf, Lotus, p. 566. I see, however, the same birds mentioned together elsewhere, as hamsakrauṅkamayūrasukasâlikakokila, &c. On mayūra see Mahāv., Introd. p. xxxix; Rv. I, 19 I, 14.

<sup>1</sup> Indriyabalabodhyangasabda. These are technical terms, but their meaning is not quite clear. Spence Hardy, in his Manual, p. 498, enumerates the five indriyas, viz. (1) sardhâwa, purity (probably sraddhâ, faith); (2) wiraya, persevering exertion (vīrya); (3) sati or smirti, the ascertainment of truth (smṛiti); (4) samâdhi, tranquillity; (5) pragnâwa, wisdom (pragñâ).

The five balayas (bala), he adds, are the same as the five indriyas.

The seven bowdyânga (bodhyaṅga) are according to him: (1) sihi or smirti, the ascertainment of the truth by mental application; (2) dhammawicha, the investigation of causes; (3) wiraya, persevering exertion; (4) prīti, joy; (5) passadhi, or prasrabdhi, tranquillity; (6) samâdhi, tranquillity in a higher degree, including freedom from all that disturbs either body or mind; (7) upekshâ, equanimity.

It will be seen from this that some of these qualities or excellences occur both as indriyas and bodhyangas, while balas are throughout identical with indriyas.

Burnouf, however, in his Lotus, gives a list of five balas (from the Vocabulaire Pentaglotte) which correspond with the five indriyas of Spence Hardy; viz. sraddhâ-bala, power of faith; virya-bala, power of vigour; smṛiti-bala, power of memory; samâdhi-bala, power of meditation; pragñâ-bala, power of knowledge. They precede the seven bodhyangas both in the Lotus, the Vocabulaire Pentaglotte, and the Lalita-vistara.

To these seven bodhyangas Burnouf has assigned a special treatise (Appendice xii, p. 796). They occur both in Sanskrit and Pali. See also Dharmasangraha s.v. in the Anecdota Oxoniensia.

the men there hear that sound, remembrance of Buddha, remembrance of the Law, remembrance of the Church, rises in their mind.

‘Now, do you think, O Sâriputra, that there are beings who have entered into the nature of animals (birds, &c.)? This is not to be thought of. The very name of hells is unknown in that Buddha country, and likewise that of (descent into) animal bodies and of the realm of Yama (the four apâyas)<sup>1</sup>. No, these tribes of birds have been made on purpose by the Tathâgata Amitâyus, and they utter the sound of the Law. With such arrays of excellences, &c.

§7. “And again, O Sâriputra, when those rows of palm-trees and strings of bells in that

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<sup>1</sup> Niraya, the hells, also called Naraka. Yamaloka, the realm of Yama, the judge of the dead, is explained as the four apâyas, i.e. Naraka, hell; Tiryagyonî, birth as animals; Pretaloka, realm of the departed; Asuraloka, realm of evil spirits. The three terms which are here used together occur likewise in a passage translated by Burnouf, Introduction, p. 544.

Buddha country are moved by the wind, a sweet and enrapturing sound proceeds from them. Yes, O Sâriputra, as from a heavenly musical instrument consisting of a hundred thousand kotîs of sounds, when played by Âryas, a sweet and enrapturing sound proceeds, a sweet and enrapturing sound proceeds from those rows of palm-trees and strings of bells moved by the wind. And when the men hear that sound, reflection on Buddha arises in them, reflection on the Law, reflection on the Church. With such arrays of excellences, &c.

§8. “Now what do you think, O Sâriputra, for what reason is that Tathâgata called Amitâyus? The length of life (âyus), O Sâriputra, of that Tathâgata and of those men there is immeasurable (amita). Therefore is that Tathâgata called Amitâyus. And ten kalpas have passed, O Sariputra, since that Tathâgata awoke to perfect knowledge.

§9. 'And what do you think, O Sâriputra, for what reason is that Tathâgata called Amitâbha? The splendour (âbhâ), O Sâriputra, of that Tathâgata is unimpeded over all Buddha countries. Therefore is that Tathâgata called Amitâbha.

'And there is, O Sâriputra, an innumerable assembly of disciples with that Tathâgata, purified and venerable persons, whose number it is not easy to count. With such arrays of excellences, &c.

§10. 'And again, O Sâriputra, of those beings also who are born in the Buddha country of the Tathâgata Amitâyus as purified Bodhisattvas, never to return again and bound by one birth only, of those Bodhisattvas also, O Sâriputra, the number is not easy to count, except they are reckoned as infinite in number<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Iti saṅkhyâm gakkhanti, they are called; cf. Childers, s.v. saṅkhyâ.

‘Then again all beings, O Sâriputra, ought to make fervent prayer for that Buddha country. And why? Because they come together there with such excellent men. Beings are not born in that Buddha country of the Tathâgata Amitâyus as a reward and result of good works performed in this present life <sup>1</sup>. No, whatever son or daughter of a family shall hear the name of the blessed Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, and having heard it, shall keep it in mind, and with thoughts undisturbed shall keep it in mind for one, two, three, four, five, six or seven nights,—

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Asaṅkhyeya, even more than aprameya, is the recognised term for infinity. Burnouf, Lotus, p. 852.

<sup>1</sup> Avaramâtraka. This is the Pâli oramattako, 'belonging merely to the present life,' and the intention of the writer seems to be to inculcate the doctrine, that salvation can be obtained by mere repetitions of the name of Amitâbha, in direct opposition to the original doctrine of Buddha, that as a man soweth, so he reapeth. Buddha would have taught that the kusalamûla, the root or the stock of good works performed in this world (avaramâtraka), will bear fruit in the next, while here 'vain repetitions' seem all that is enjoyed. The Chinese translators take a different view of this passage. But from the end of this section, where we read kulaputrena vâ kuladuhitrâ vâ tatra buddhakshetre kittaprânidhânam kartavyam, it seems clear that the locative (buddhakshetre) forms the object of the pranidhâna, the fervent prayer or longing. The Sat-purushas already in the Buddhakshetra would be the innumerable men (manushyâs) and Bodhisattvas mentioned before.

when that son or daughter of a family comes to die, then that Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, surrounded by an assembly of disciples and followed by a host of Bodhisattvas, will stand before them at their hour of death, and they will depart this life with tranquil minds. After their death they will be born in the world Sukhâvatî, in the Buddha country of the same Amitâyus, the Tathâgata. Therefore, then, O Sariputra, having perceived this cause and effect<sup>1</sup>, I with reverence say thus, Every son and every daughter of a family ought with their whole mind to make fervent prayer for that Buddha country.

§11. 'And now, O Sârîputra, as I here at present glorify that world, thus in the East, O Sârîputra, other blessed Buddhas, led by the Tathâgata Akshobhya, the Tathâgata

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<sup>1</sup> Arthavasa, lit. the power of the thing; cf; Dhammapada, p. 388, v. 289.

Merudhvaga, the Tathâgata Mahâmeru, the Tathâgata Meruprabhâsa, and the Tathâgata Mañgudhvaga, equal in number to the sand of the river Gaṅgâ, comprehend their own Buddha countries in their speech, and then reveal them<sup>1</sup>. Accept this repetition of the Law, called the "Favour of all Buddhas," which magnifies their inconceivable excellences.

§12. 'Thus also in the South do other blessed Buddhas, led by the Tathâgata Kandraśûryapradîpa, the Tathâgata Yasahprabha, the Tathâgata Mahârîkiskandha, the Tathâgata Merupradîpa, the Tathâgata Anantavîrya, equal in number to the sand of the river Gaṅgâ, comprehend their own Buddha

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<sup>1</sup> I am not quite certain as to the meaning of this passage, but if we enter into the bold metaphor of the text, viz. that the Buddhas cover the Buddha countries with the organ of their tongue and then unroll it, what is intended can hardly be anything but that they first try to find words for the excellences of those countries, and then reveal or proclaim them. Burnouf, however (*Lotus*, p. 417), takes the expression in a literal sense, though he is shocked by its grotesqueness. On these Buddhas and their countries, see Burnouf, *Lotus*, p. 113.

countries in their speech, and then reveal them.  
Accept, &c.

§13. ‘Thus also in the West do other blessed Buddhas, led by the Tathâgata Amitâyus, the Tathâgata Amitaskandha, the Tathâgata Amitadhvaja, the Tathâgata Mahâprabha, the Tathâgata Mahâratnaketu, the Tathâgata Suddharasmiprabha, equal in number to the sand of the river Gaṅgâ, comprehend, &c.

§14. ‘Thus also in the North do other blessed Buddhas, led by the Tathâgata Mahârkiskandha, the Tathâgata Vaisvânaranirghosha, the Tathâgata Dundubhisvaranirghosha, the Tathâgata Dushpradharsa, the Tathâgata Âdityasambhava, the Tathâgata Galeniprabha (Gvalanaprabha?), the Tathâgata Prabhâkara, equal in number to the sand, &c.

§15. ‘Thus also in the Nadir do other blessed Buddhas, led by the Tathâgata Simha, the Tathâgata Yasas, the Tathâgata Yasahprabhâva,

the Tathâgata Dharma, the Tathâgata Dharmadhara, the Tathâgata Dharmadhvaga, equal in number to the sand, &c.

§16. ‘Thus also in the Zenith do other blessed Buddhas, led by the Tathâgata Brahmaghosha, the Tathâgata Nakshatrarâga, the Tathâgata Indraketudhvagaraga, the Tathâgata Gandhottama, the Tathâgata Gandhaprabhâsa, the Tathâgata Mahârkiskandha, the Tathâgata Ratnakusumasampushpitagâtra, the Tathâgata Sâlendrarâga, the Tathâgata Ratnotpalasrî, the Tathâgata Sarvârthadarsa, the Tathâgata Sumerukalpa, equal in number to the sand, &c.<sup>1</sup>

§17. “Now what do you think, O Sârîputra, for what reason is that repetition (treatise) of the Law called the Favour of all Buddhas? Every son or daughter of a family who shall

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<sup>1</sup> It should be remarked that the Tathâgatas here assigned to the ten quarters differ entirely from those assigned to them in the Lalita-vistara, Book XX. Not even Amitâbha is mentioned there.

hear the name of that repetition of the Law and retain in their memory the names of those blessed Buddhas, will be favoured by the Buddhas, and will never return again, being once in possession of the transcendent true knowledge. Therefore, then, O Sâriputra, believe<sup>1</sup>, accept, and do not doubt of me and those blessed Buddhas!

'Whatever sons or daughters of a family shall make mental prayer for the Buddha country of that blessed Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, or are making it now or have made it formerly, all these will never return again, being once in possession of the transcendent true knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup> Pratiyatha. The texts give again and again pattiyaatha, evidently the Pâli form, instead of pratiyata. I have left tha, the Pâli termination of the 2 p. pl. in the imperative, instead of ta, because that form was clearly intended, while pa for pra may be an accident. Yet I have little doubt that pattiyaatha was in the original text. That it is meant for the imperative, we see from sraddad-hâdhvam, &c., further on. Other traces of the influence of Pâli or Prâkrit on the Sanskrit of our Sûtra appear in arhantaih, the various reading for arhadbhiih, which I preferred; sambahula for bahula; dhriyate yapayati; purobhaktena; anyatra; sañkhyâm gakkhanti; avaramâtraka; vethana instead of veshtana, in nirvethana; dharmaparyâya (Corp. Inscript. plate xv). &c.

They will be born in that Buddha country, have been born, or are being born now. Therefore, then, O Sariputra, mental prayer is to be made for that Buddha country by faithful sons and daughters of a family.

§ 18. 'And as I at present magnify here the inconceivable excellences of those blessed Buddhas, thus, O Sâriputra, do those blessed Buddhas magnify my own inconceivable excellences.

'A very difficult work has been done by Sakyamuni, the sovereign of the Sâkyas. Having obtained the transcendent true knowledge in this world Sahâ, he taught the Law which all the world is reluctant to accept, during this corruption of the present kalpa, during this corruption of mankind, during this corruption of belief, during this corruption of life, during this corruption of passions.

§ 19. 'This is even for me, O Sâriputra, an

extremely difficult work that, having obtained the transcendent true knowledge in this world Sahâ, I taught the Law which all the world is reluctant to accept, during this corruption of mankind, of belief, of passion, of life, and of this present kalpa.'

§ 20. Thus spoke Bhagavat joyful in his mind. And the honourable Sâriputra, and the Bhikshus and Bodhisattvas, and the whole world with the gods, men, evil spirits and genii, applauded the speech of Bhagavat.

This is the Mahâyânasûtra <sup>1</sup> called

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<sup>1</sup> The Sukhâvatî-vyûha even in its shortest text, is called a Mahâyâna-sûtra, nor is there any reason why a Mahâyâna-sûtra should not be short. The meaning of Mahâyâna-sûtra is simply a Sûtra belonging to the Mahâyâna school, the school of the Great Boat. It was Burnouf who, in his Introduction to the History of Buddhism, tried very hard to establish a distinction between the Vaipulya or developed Sûtras, and what he calls the simple Sûtras. Now, the Vaipulya Sûtras may all belong to the Mahayana school, but that would not prove that all the Sutras of the Mahayana school are Vaipulya or developed Sutras. The name of simple Sutra, in opposition to the Vaipulya or developed Sutras, is not recognised by the Buddhists themselves; at least, I know no name for simple Sutras. No doubt there is a great difference between a Vaipulya Sûtra, such as the Lotus of the Good Law, translated by Burnouf, and the Sûtras which Burnouf translated, for instance, from the Divyâvadâna. But what Burnouf considers as the distinguishing mark of a

## Sukhâvatî-vyûha.

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Vaipulya Sûtra, viz. the occurrence of Bodhisattvas, as followers or the Buddha Sâkyamuni, would no longer seem to be tenable\*, unless we classed our short Sukhâvatî-vyûha as a Vaipulya or developed Sûtra. For this there is no authority. Our Sûtra is a Mahâyâna Sûtra, but never called a Vaipulya Sutra, and yet in this Sûtra the Bodhisattvas constitute a very considerable portion among the followers of Buddha. But more than that, Amitâbha, the Buddha of Sukhâvatî, another personage whom Burnouf looks upon as peculiar to the Vaipulya Sûtras, who is, in fact, one of the Dhyâni-buddhas, though not called by that name in our Sûtra, forms the chief object or its teaching, and is represented as known to Buddha Sâkyamuni, nay, as having become a Buddha long before the Buddha Sâkyamuni+. The larger text of the Sukhâvatî-vyûha would certainly, according to Burnouf's definition, seem to fall into the category of the Vaipulya Sûtras. But it is not so called in the MSS. which I have seen, and Burnouf himself gives an analysis of that Sûtra (Introduction, p. 99) as a specimen of a Mahâyâna, but not of a Vaipulya Sûtra.

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\*"La presence des Bodhisattvas ou leur absence intéresse donc le fonds même des livres où on la remarque, et il est bien évident que ce seul point trace une ligne de démarcation profonde entre les Sûtras ordinaires et les Sûtras développés."--Burnouf, Introduction, p. 112.

+ "L'idée d'un ou de plusieurs Buddhas surhumains, celle de Bodhisattvas créés par eux, sont des conceptions aussi étrangères à ces livres (les Sûtras simples) que celle d'un Âdibuddha ou d'un Dieu."--Burnouf, Introduction, p. 120.



# AMITÂYUR-DHYÂNA-SÛTRA

THE SÛTRA OF THE MEDITATION ON

BUDDHA AMITÂYUS.

觀無量壽佛經

Translated into English from Sanskrit MSS

by

F. MAX MÜLLER

由梵文譯英文：德國 麥克斯莫洛

## THE FIVE PURE LAND SUTRAS

MEDITATION ON  
**BUDDHA AMITÂYUS.<sup>1</sup>**

PART I.

§ 1. Thus it was heard by me: At one time the Buddha dwelt in Râgagriha, on the mountain Gridhrakûta, with a large assembly of Bhikshus and with thirty-two thousands of Bodhisattvas; with Mañgusrî, Prince of the Law<sup>2</sup>, at the head of the assembly.

§ 2. At that time, in the great city of Râgagriha there was a prince, the heir-apparent, named Agâtasatru. He listened to the wicked counsel of Devadatta and other friends and forcibly arrested Bimbisâra his father, the king, and shut him up by himself in a room with

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<sup>1</sup> Nanjio's Catalogue of Tripitaka, No. 198; translated into Chinese A. D. 424, by Kâlâyasas, a Sramana from India.

<sup>2</sup> Sanskrit Kumârabhûta, 'prince' or 'princely,' but Chinese has 'prince of the law;' according to the commentator, K'-kô, he was called so because he was (skilled in) converting men by (teaching) the Law. K'-ko seems to have understood that Mañgusrî was not a royal prince, but the name Kumrabhuta was given to him as an honorific title. Max Müller, 'the prince' (p. 350, vol. ii, Selected Essays); Kern, 'the prince royal,' but he gives an alternative 'still a youth' (p. 4, Saddharmapundarika).

seven walls, proclaiming to all the courtiers that no one should approach (the king). The chief consort of the king, Vaidehi by name, was true and faithful to her lord, the king. She supported him in this wise: having purified herself by bathing and washing, she anointed her body with honey and ghee mixed with corn-flour, and she concealed the juice of grapes in the various garlands she wore (in order to give him food without being noticed by the warder). As she stole in and made an offering to him, he was able to eat the flour and to drink the juice (of grapes). Then he called for water and rinsed his mouth. That done, the king stretched forth his folded hands towards the Mount Gridhrakûta and worshipped duly and respectfully the World-Honoured One, who at that time abode there. And he uttered the following prayer: 'Mahâmaudgalyâyana is my friend and relative; let him, I pray, feel

compassion towards me, and come and communicate to me the eight prohibitive precepts <sup>1</sup> (of Buddha).' On this, Mahâmaudgalyâyana at once appeared before the king, coming with a speed equal to the flight of a falcon or an eagle, and communicated to him the eight precepts.

Day after day did he come. The World-Honoured One sent also his worthy disciple Pûrna to preach the Law to the king. Thus a period of three weeks passed by. The king showed by his countenance that he was happy and contented when he had an opportunity of hearing the Law as well as of enjoying the honey and flour.

§ 3. At that time, Agâtasatru asked the warder of the gate whether his father was yet alive. On this, the warder answered him: 'O

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<sup>1</sup> According to the commentator, Shân-tào, 'killing, stealing, adultery, lying, drinking, applying ointment, &c., music, and using ornamented chairs, &c.'

Exalted king, the chief consort (of thy father) brought (food) and presented it to him by anointing her body with honey and flour and filling her garlands with the juice (of grapes), and the Sramanas, Mahâmaudgalyâyana and Pûrna, approached the king through the sky in order to preach the Law to him. It is, O king, impossible to prevent them coming.' When the prince heard this answer his indignation arose against his mother: 'My mother,' he cried, 'is, indeed, a rebel, for she was found in company with that rebel. Wicked people are those Sramanas, and it is their art of spells causing illusion and delusion that delayed the death of that wicked king for so many days.' Instantly he brandished his sharp sword, intending to slay his mother. At that moment, there intervened a minister named Kandraprabha, who was possessed of great wisdom and intelligence, and Giva (a famous physician). They saluted

the prince and remonstrated with him, saying: 'We, ministers, O Great king, heard that since the beginning of the kalpas there had been several wicked kings, even to the number of eighteen thousand, who killed their own fathers, coveting the throne of (their respective) kingdoms, as mentioned in the Sutra of the discourse of the Veda<sup>1</sup>. Yet never have we heard of a man killing his mother, though he be void of virtue. Now, if thou, O king, shouldst dare to commit such a deadly sin, thou wouldst bring a stain upon the blood of the Kshatriyas (the kingly race). We cannot even bear to hear of it. Thou art indeed a Kandâla (the lowest race); we shall not stay here with thee.' After this speech, the two great ministers retired stepping backward, each with his hand placed on his sword. Agâtasatru was then frightened,

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<sup>1</sup> This is non-Buddhistic, according to Shân-tâu.

and greatly afraid of them, and asked Gîva, saying: 'Wilt thou not be friendly to me?' In reply Gîva said to him: 'Do not then, O Great king, by any means think of injuring thy mother.' On hearing this, the prince repented and sought for mercy, and at once laid down his sword and did his mother no hurt. He finally ordered the officers of the inner chambers to put the queen in a hidden palace and not to allow her to come out again.

§ 4. When Vaidehî was thus shut up in retirement she became afflicted by sorrow and distress. She began to do homage to Buddha from afar, looking towards the Mount Gridhrakûta. She uttered the following words: 'O Tathâgata! World-Honoured One! In former times thou hast constantly sent Ânanda to me for enquiry and consolation. I am now in sorrow and grief. Thou, O World-Honoured One, art majestic and exalted; in no way shall I

be able to see thee. Wilt thou, I pray thee, command Mahâmaudgalyâyana and thy honoured disciple, Ânanda, to come and have an interview with me?' After this speech, she grieved and wept, shedding tears like a shower of rain. Before she raised her head from doing homage to the distant Buddha, the World-Honoured One knew what Vaidehi was wishing in her mind, though he was on the Mount Gridhrakuta. Therefore, he instantly ordered Mahamaudgalyayana and Ânanda to go to her through the sky. Buddha himself disappeared from that mountain and appeared in the royal palace.

When the queen raised her head as she finished homage to Buddha, she saw before her the World-Honoured Buddha Sâkyamuni, whose body was purple gold in colour, sitting on a lotus-flower which consists of a hundred jewels, with Mahâmaudgalyâyana attending on

his left, and with Ânanda on his right. Sakra (Indra), Brahman, and other gods that protect the world were seen in the midst of the sky, everywhere showering heavenly flowers with which they made offerings to Buddha in their worship. Vaidehî, at the sight of Buddha the World-Honoured One, took off her garlands and prostrated herself on the ground, crying, sobbing, and speaking to Buddha: 'O World-Honoured One! what former sin of mine has produced such a wicked son? And again, O Exalted One, from what cause and circumstances hast thou such an affinity (by blood and religion) with Devadatta (Buddha's wicked cousin and once his disciple)?'

§ 5. 'My only prayer,' she continued, 'is this: O World-Honoured One, mayst thou preach to me in detail of all the places where there is no sorrow or trouble, and where I ought to go to be born anew. I am not satisfied with this world of

depravities<sup>1</sup>, with Gambudvipa (India)<sup>2</sup>, which is full of hells, full of hungry spirits (pretas), and of the brute creation. In this world of depravities, there is many an assemblage of the wicked. May I not hear, I pray, the voice of the wicked in the future; and may I not see any wicked person.

'Now I throw my five limbs down to the ground before thee, and seek for thy mercy by confessing my sins. I pray for this only that the Sun-like Buddha may instruct me how to meditate on a world wherein all actions are pure.' At that moment, the World-Honoured One flashed forth a golden ray from between his eyebrows. It extended to all the innumerable worlds of the ten quarters. On its return the ray rested on the top of Buddha's head and

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<sup>1</sup> For five depravities vide Smaller Sukhāvati, § 18; Saddharmapundarīka by Kern, p. 58, § 140 note.

<sup>2</sup> But Japanese Buddhists take this in a wider sense.

transformed itself into a golden pillar just like the Mount Sumeru, wherein the pure and admirable countries of the Buddhas in the ten quarters appeared all at once illuminated.

One was a country consisting of seven jewels, another was a country all full of lotus-flowers; one was like the palace of Mahesvara Deva (god Siva), another was like a mirror of crystal, with the countries in the ten quarters reflected therein: There were innumerable countries like these, resplendent, gorgeous, and delightful to look upon. All were meant for Vaidehî to see (and choose from).

Thereupon Vaidehî again spoke to Buddha: 'O World-Honoured One, although all other Buddha countries are pure and radiant with light, I should, nevertheless, wish myself to be born in the realm of Buddha Amitâyus (or Amitâbha), in the world of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî), Now I simply pray thee, O

World-Honoured One, to teach me how to concentrate my thought so as to obtain a right vision (of that country).'

§ 6. Thereupon the World-Honoured One gently smiled upon her, and rays of five colours issued forth out of his mouth, each ray shining as far as the head of king Bimbisâra.

At that moment, the mental vision of that exalted king was perfectly clear though he was shut up in lonely retirement, and he could see the World-Honoured One from afar. As he paid homage with his head and face, he naturally increased and advanced (in wisdom), whereby he attained to the fruition of an Anâgâmin (the third of the four grades to Nirvâna ).

§ 7. Then the World-Honoured One said: 'Now dost thou not know, O Vaidehî, that Buddha Amitâyus is not very far from here? Thou shouldst apply thy mind entirely to close meditation upon those who have already

perfected the pure actions necessary for that Buddha country.

'I now proceed to fully expound them for thee in many parables, and thereby afford all ordinary persons of the future who wish to cultivate these pure actions an opportunity of being born in the Land of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî) in the western quarter. Those who wish to be born in that country of Buddha have to cultivate a threefold goodness. Firstly, they should act filially towards their parents and support them; serve and respect their teachers and elders; be of compassionate mind, abstain from doing any injury, and cultivate the ten virtuous actions<sup>1</sup>. Secondly, they should take and observe the vow of seeking refuge with the Three Jewels, fulfil all moral precepts, and not lower their dignity or neglect any ceremonial

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<sup>1</sup> I.e. observe the ten prohibitive precepts of Buddha.

observance. Thirdly, they should give their whole mind to the attainment of the Bodhi (perfect wisdom), deeply believe in (the principle of) cause and effect, study and recite (the Sûtras of) the Mahâyâna doctrine, and persuade and encourage others who pursue the same course as themselves.

'These three groups as enumerated are called the pure actions (leading to the Buddha country).' 'O Vaidehî!' Buddha continued, 'dost thou not understand now? These three classes of actions are the efficient cause of the pure actions taught by all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future.'

§ 8. Buddha then addressed Ânanda as well as Vaidehi: 'Listen carefully, listen carefully! Ponder carefully on what you hear! I, Tathâgata, now declare the pure actions needful (for that Buddha country) for the sake of all beings hereafter, that are subject to the misery

(inflicted) by the enemy, i.e. passion. Well done, O Vaidehi! Appropriate questions are those which thou hast asked<sup>1</sup>! O Ânanda, do thou remember these words of me, of Buddha, and repeat them openly to many assemblies. I, Tathâgata, now teach Vaidehi and also all beings hereafter in order that they may meditate on the World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî) in the western quarter.

'It is by the power of Buddha only that one can see that pure land (of Buddha) as clear as one sees the image of one's face reflected in the transparent mirror held up before one.

'When one sees the state of happiness of that country in its highest excellence, one greatly rejoices in one's heart and immediately attains a spirit of resignation prepared to endure

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<sup>1</sup> Vide supra, § 4; but those two questions, though appropriate, have not after all been answered by Buddha in this Sûtra.

whatever consequences may yet arise<sup>1</sup>.' Buddha, turning again to Vaidehî, said: 'Thou art but an ordinary person; the quality of thy mind is feeble and inferior.

'Thou hast not as yet obtained the divine eye and canst not perceive what is at a distance. All the Buddhas, Tathâgatas have various means at their disposal and can therefore afford thee an opportunity of seeing (that Buddha country).' Then Vaidehî rejoined: 'O World-Honoured One, people such as I, can now see that land by the power of Buddha, but how shall all those beings who are to come after Buddha's Nirvâna, and who, as being depraved and devoid of good qualities, will be harassed by the five worldly sufferings<sup>2</sup>—how shall they see the World of Highest Happiness of the Buddha Amitâyus?'

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<sup>1</sup> Anutpatikadharmakshânti, cf. Larger Sukhâvatî, § 19, p. 39, and § 32, p. 5. Kern, 'the acquiescence in the eternal law,' Saddharmapundarikâ XI, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> 1. Birth, 2. Old age, 3. Sickness, 4. Death, 5. Parting.

PART II.

§ 9. Buddha then replied: 'Thou and all other beings besides ought to make it their only aim, with concentrated thought, to get a perception of the western quarter. You will ask how that perception is to be formed. I will explain it now. All beings, if not blind from birth, are uniformly possessed of sight, and they all see the setting sun. Thou shouldst sit down properly, looking in the western direction, and prepare thy thought for a close meditation on the sun; cause thy mind to be firmly fixed (on it) so as to have an unwavering perception by the exclusive application (of thy thought), and gaze upon it (more particularly) when it is about to set and looks like a suspended drum.

'After thou hast thus seen the sun, let (that image) remain clear and fixed, whether thine eyes be shut or open;—such is the perception of the sun, which is the First Meditation.

§ 10. 'Next thou shouldst form the perception of water; gaze on the water clear and pure, and let (this image) also remain clear and fixed (afterwards); never allow thy thought to be scattered and lost.

'When thou hast thus seen the water thou shouldst form the perception of ice. As thou seest the ice shining and transparent, thou shouldst imagine the appearance of lapis lazuli.

'After that has been done, thou wilt see the ground consisting of lapis lazuli, transparent and shining both within and without. Beneath this ground of lapis lazuli there will be seen a golden banner with the seven jewels, diamonds and the rest, supporting the ground<sup>1</sup>. It extends to the eight points of the compass, and thus the eight corners (of the ground) are perfectly filled up. Every side of the eight quarters

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<sup>1</sup> 'A banner supporting or lifting up the ground' is rather strange, but there is no other way of translating it.

consists of a hundred jewels, every jewel has a thousand rays, and every ray has eighty-four thousand colours which, when reflected in the ground of lapis lazuli, look like a thousand millions of suns, and it is difficult to see them all one by one. Over the surface of that ground of lapis lazuli there are stretched golden ropes intertwined crosswise; divisions are made by means of (strings of) seven jewels with every part clear and distinct.

'Each jewel has rays of five hundred colours which look like flowers or like the moon and stars. Lodged high up in the open sky these rays form a tower of rays, whose storeys and galleries are ten millions in number and built of a hundred jewels. Both sides of the tower have each a hundred millions of flowery banners furnished and decked with numberless musical instruments. Eight kinds of cool breezes proceed from the brilliant rays. When those

musical instruments are played, they emit the sounds "suffering," "non-existence," "impermanence," and "non-self;"—such is the perception of the water, which is the Second Meditation.

§ 11. 'When this perception has been formed, thou shouldst meditate on its (constituents) one by one and make (the images) as clear as possible, so that they may never be scattered and lost, whether thine eyes be shut or open. Except only during the time of thy sleep, thou shouldst always keep this in thy mind. One who has reached this (stage of) perception is said to have dimly seen the Land of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî).

'One who has obtained the Samâdhi (the state of supernatural calm) is able to see the land (of that Buddha country) clearly and distinctly: (this state) is too much to be explained fully;—such is the perception of the land, and it

is the Third Meditation.

'Thou shouldst remember, O Ânanda, the Buddha words of mine, and repeat this law for attaining to the perception of the land ( of the Buddha country) for the sake of the great mass of the people hereafter who may wish to be delivered from their sufferings. If any one meditates on the land (of that Buddha country), his sins (which bind him to) births And deaths during eighty millions of kalpas shall be expiated; after the abandonment of his (present) body, he will assuredly be born in the pure land in the following life. The practice of this kind of meditation is called the "right meditation." If it be of another kind it is called "heretical meditation."'

§ 12. Buddha then spoke to Ânanda and Vaidehî: 'When the perception of the land (of that Buddha country) has been gained, you should next meditate on the jewel-trees (of that

country). In meditating on the jewel-trees, you should take each by itself and form a perception of the seven rows of trees; every tree is eight hundred yoganas high, and all the jewel-trees have flowers and leaves consisting of seven jewels all perfect. All flowers and leaves have colours like the colours of various jewels:—from the colour of lapis lazuli there issues a golden ray; from the colour of crystal, a saffron ray; from the colour of agate, a diamond ray; from the colour of diamond, a ray of blue pearls. Corals, amber, and all other gems are used as ornaments for illumination; nets of excellent pearls are spread over the trees, each tree is covered by seven sets of nets, and between one set and another there are five hundred millions of palaces built of excellent flowers, resembling the palace of the Lord Brahman; all heavenly children live there quite naturally; every child has a garland consisting

of five hundred millions of precious gems like those that are fastened on Sakra's (Indra's) head<sup>1</sup>, the rays of which shine over a hundred yoganas, just as if a hundred millions of suns and moons were united together; it is difficult to explain them in detail. That (garland) is the most excellent among all, as it is the commixture of all sorts of jewels. Rows of these jewel-trees touch one another; the leaves of the trees also join one another.

'Among the dense foliage there blossom various beautiful flowers, upon which are miraculously found fruits of seven jewels. The leaves of the trees are all exactly equal in length and in breadth, measuring twenty-five yoganas each way; every leaf has a thousand colours and a hundred different pictures on it, just like a heavenly garland. There are many

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<sup>1</sup> The text has Sakrâbhilagnamaniratna, vide infra, §§ 16, 19.

excellent flowers which have the colour of Gâmbûnada gold and an appearance of fire-wheels in motion, turning between the leaves in a graceful fashion. All the fruits are produced just (as easily) as if they flowed out from the pitcher of the God Sakra. There is a magnificent ray which transforms itself into numberless jewelled canopies with banners and flags. Within these jewelled canopies the works of all the Buddhas of the Great Chiliocosm appear illuminated; the Buddha countries of the ten quarters also are manifested therein. When you have seen these trees you should also meditate on them one by one in order. In meditating on the trees, trunks, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, let them all be distinct and clear;—such is the perception of the trees (of that Buddha country), and it is the Fourth Meditation.

§ 13. 'Next, you should perceive the water (of

that country). The perception of the water is as follows:—

'In the Land of Highest Happiness there are waters in eight lakes; the water in every lake consists of seven jewels which are soft and yielding. Deriving its source from the king of jewels that fulfils every wish<sup>1</sup>, the water is divided into fourteen streams; every stream has the colour of seven jewels; its channel is built of gold, the bed of which consists of the sand of variegated diamonds.

'In the midst of each lake there are sixty millions of lotus-flowers, made of seven jewels; all the flowers are perfectly round and exactly equal (in circumference), being twelve yoganas. The water of jewels flows amidst the flowers and rises and falls by the stalks (of the lotus); the sound of the streaming water is melodious

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<sup>1</sup> Sanskrit Kintâmani, i.e. 'wishing-pearl.'

and pleasing, and propounds all the perfect virtues (Parâmitâs), "suffering," "non-existence," "impermanence," and "non-self;" it proclaims also the praise of the signs of perfection<sup>1</sup>, and minor marks of excellence of all Buddhas. From the king of jewels that fulfils every wish, stream forth the golden-coloured rays excessively beautiful, the radiance of which transforms itself into birds possessing the colours of a hundred jewels, which sing out harmonious notes, sweet and delicious, ever praising the remembrance of Buddha, the remembrance of the Law, and the remembrance of the Church;—such is the perception of the water of eight good qualities, and it is the Fifth Meditation.

§ 14. 'Each division of that (Buddha) country, which consists of several jewels, has also

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<sup>1</sup> For thirty-two signs and eighty minor marks vide Dharmasangraha by Kasawara, p. 53 seq. (vol. i, part v, Anecdota Oxoniensia, Aryan Series, 1885).

jewelled storeys and galleries to the number of five hundred millions; within each storey and gallery there are innumerable Devas engaged in playing heavenly music. There are some musical instruments that are hung up in the open sky, like the jewelled banners of heaven; they emit musical sounds without being struck, which, while resounding variously, all propound the remembrance of Buddha, of the Law and of the Church, Bhikshus, &c. When this perception is duly accomplished, one is said to have dimly seen the jewel-trees, jewel-ground, and jewel-lakes of that World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî);—such is the perception formed by meditating on the general (features of that Land), and it is the Sixth Meditation.

'If one has experienced this, one has expiated the greatest sinful deeds which would (otherwise lead one) to transmigration for

numberless millions of kalpas; after his death he will assuredly be born in that land.

§ 15<sup>1</sup>. 'Listen carefully! listen carefully! Think over what you have heard! I, Buddha, am about to explain in detail the law of delivering one's self from trouble and torment. Commit this to your memory in order to explain it in detail before a great assembly.' While Buddha was uttering these words, Buddha Amitâyus stood in the midst of the sky with Bodhisattvas Mahâsthâma and Avalokitesvara, attending on his right and left respectively. There was such a bright and dazzling radiance that no one could see clearly; the brilliance was a hundred thousand times greater than that of gold (Gâmbûnada). Thereupon Vaidehî saw Buddha Amitâyus and approached the World-Honoured One, and worshipped him, touching his feet;

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<sup>1</sup> § 15 Hereafter, for brevity's sake, I take the liberty of omitting several passages which seem to be unnecessary repetitions.

and spoke to him as follows: 'O Exalted One! I am now able, by the power of Buddha, to see Buddha Amitâyus together with the two Bodhisattvas. But how shall all the beings of the future meditate on Buddha Amitâyus and the two Bodhisattvas?'

§ 16. Buddha answered: 'Those who wish to meditate on that Buddha ought first to direct their thought as follows: form the perception of a lotus-flower on a ground of seven jewels, each leaf of that lotus exhibits the colours of a hundred jewels, and has eighty-four thousand veins, just like heavenly pictures; each vein possesses eighty-four thousand rays, of which each can be clearly seen. Every small leaf and flower is two hundred and fifty yoganas in length and the same measurement in breadth. Each lotus-flower possesses eighty-four thousand leaves, each leaf has the kingly pearls to the number of a hundred millions, as

ornaments for illumination; each pearl shoots out a thousand rays like bright canopies. The surface of the ground is entirely covered by a mixture of seven jewels. There is a tower built of the gems which are like those that are fastened on Sakra's head. It is inlaid and decked with eighty thousand diamonds, Kimsuka jewels, Brahma-mani and excellent pearl nets.

'On that tower there are miraculously found four posts with jewelled banners; each banner looks like a hundred thousand millions of Sumeru mountains.

'The jewelled veil over these banners is like that of the celestial palace of Yama, illuminated with five hundred millions of excellent jewels, each jewel has eighty-four thousand rays, each ray has various golden colours to the number of eighty-four thousand, each golden colour covers the whole jewelled soil, it changes and is transformed at various places, every now and

then exhibiting various appearances; now it becomes a diamond tower, now a pearl net, again clouds of mixed flowers, freely changing its manifestation in the ten directions it exhibits the state of Buddha;—such is the perception of the flowery throne, and it is the Seventh Meditation.'

Buddha, turning to Ânanda, said: 'These excellent flowers were created originally by the power of the prayer of Bhikshu, Dharmâkara<sup>1</sup>. All who wish to exercise the remembrance of that Buddha ought first to form the perception of that flowery throne. When engaged in it one ought not to perceive vaguely, but fix the mind upon each detail separately. Leaf, jewel, ray, tower, and banner should be clear and distinct, just as one sees the image of one's own face in a mirror. When one has achieved this

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Larger Sukhâvalî, p. 7, § 3.

perception, the sins which would produce births and deaths during fifty thousand kalpas are expiated, and he is one who will most assuredly be born in the World of Highest Happiness.

§ 17. 'When you have perceived this, you should next perceive Buddha himself. Do you ask how! Every Buddha Tathâgata is one whose (spiritual) body is the principle of nature (Darmadhâtu-kâya), so that he may enter into the mind of any beings. Consequently, when you have perceived Buddha, it is indeed that mind of yours that possesses those thirty-two signs of perfection and eighty minor marks of excellence (which you see in Buddha). In fine, it is your mind that becomes Buddha, nay, it is your mind that is indeed Buddha. The ocean of true and universal knowledge of all the Buddhas derives its source from one's own mind and thought. Therefore you should apply your thought with an undivided attention to a

careful meditation on that Buddha Tathâgata, Arhat, the Holy and Fully Enlightened One. In forming the perception of that Buddha, you should first perceive the image of that Buddha; whether your eyes be open or shut, look at an image like Gâmbûnada gold in colour, sitting on that flower (throne mentioned before).

'When you have seen the seated figure your mental vision will become clear, and you will be able to see clearly and distinctly the adornment of that Buddha country, the jewelled ground, &c. In seeing these things, let them be clear and fixed just as you see the palms of your hands. When you have passed through this experience, you should further form (a perception of) another great lotus-flower which is on the left side of Buddha, and is exactly equal in every way to the above-mentioned lotus-flower of Buddha. Still further, you should form (a perception of) another lotus-flower

which is on the right side of Buddha. Perceive that an image of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is sitting on the left-hand flowery throne, shooting forth golden rays exactly like those of Buddha. Perceive then that an image of Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma is sitting on the right-hand flowery throne.

'When these perceptions are gained the images of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas will all send forth brilliant rays, clearly lighting up all the jewel-trees with golden colour. Under every tree there are also three lotus-flowers. On every lotus-flower there is an image, either of Buddha or of a Bodhisattva; thus (the images of the Bodhisattvas and of Buddha) are found everywhere in that country. When this perception has been gained, the devotee should hear the excellent Law preached by means of a stream of water, a brilliant ray of light, several jewel-trees, ducks, geese, and swans. Whether

he be wrapped in meditation or whether he has ceased from it, he should ever hear the excellent Law. What the devotee hears must be kept in memory and not be lost, when he ceases from that meditation; and it should agree with the Sûtras, for if it does not agree with the Sûtras, it is called an illusory perception, whereas if it does agree, it is called the rough perception of the World of Highest Happiness;—such is the perception of the images, and it is the Eighth Meditation.

'He who has practised this meditation is freed from the sins (which otherwise involve him in) births and deaths for innumerable millions of kalpas, and during this present life he obtains the Samâdhi due to the remembrance of Buddha.

§ 18. 'Further, when this perception is gained, you should next proceed to meditate on the bodily marks and the light of Buddha

Amitâyus.

'Thou shouldst know, O Ânanda, that the body of Buddha Amitâyus is a hundred thousand million times as bright as the colour of the Gâmbûnada gold of the heavenly abode of Yama; the height of that Buddha is six hundred thousand niyutas of kotîs of yoganas innumerable as are the sands of the river Gaṅgâ.

'The white twist of hair between the eyebrows all turning to the right, is just like the five Sumeru mountains.

'The eyes of Buddha are like the water of the four great oceans; the blue and the white are quite distinct.

'All the roots of hair of his body issue forth brilliant rays which are also like the Sumeru mountains.

'The halo of that Buddha is like a hundred millions of the Great Chiliocosms; in that halo

there are Buddhas miraculously created, to the number of a million of *niyutas* of *koṭīs* innumerable as the sands of the Gaṅgâ; each of these Buddhas has for attendants a great assembly of numberless Bodhisattvas who are also miraculously created.

'Buddha Amitâyus has eighty-four thousand signs of perfection, each sign is possessed of eighty-four minor marks of excellence, each mark has eighty-four thousand rays, each ray extends so far as to shine over the worlds of the ten quarters, whereby Buddha embraces and protects all the beings who think upon him and does not exclude (any one of them). His rays, signs, &c., are difficult to be explained in detail. But in simple meditation let the mind's eye dwell upon them.

'If you pass through this experience, you will at the same time see all the Buddhas of the ten quarters. Since you see all the Buddhas it is

called the Samâdhi of the remembrance of the Buddhas.

'Those who have practised this meditation are said to have contemplated the bodies of all the Buddhas. Since they have meditated on Buddha's body, they will also see Buddha's mind. It is great compassion that is called Buddha's mind. It is by his absolute compassion that he receives all beings.

'Those who have practised this meditation will, when they die, be born in the presence of the Buddhas in another life, and obtain a spirit of resignation wherewith to face all the consequences which shall hereafter arise.

'Therefore those who have wisdom should direct their thought to the careful meditation upon that Buddha Amitâyus. Let those who meditate on Buddha Amitâyus begin with one single sign or mark—let them first meditate on the white twist of hair between the eyebrows as

clearly as possible; when they have done this, the eighty-four thousand signs and marks will naturally appear before their eyes. Those who see Amitâyus will also see all the innumerable Buddhas of the ten quarters. Since they have seen all the innumerable Buddhas, they will receive the prophecy of their future destiny (to become Buddha), in the presence of all the Buddhas;—such is the perception gained by a complete meditation on all forms and bodies (of Buddha), and it is the Ninth Meditation.

§ 19. 'When you have seen Buddha Amitâyus distinctly, you should then further meditate upon Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, whose height is eight hundred thousands of niyutas of yoganas; the colour of his body is purple gold, his head has a turban (ushnîshasiraskatâ), at the back of which there is a halo; (the circumference of) his face is a hundred thousand yoganas. In that halo, there are five

hundred Buddhas miraculously transformed just like those of Sâkyamuni Buddha, each transformed Buddha is attended by five hundred transformed Bodhisattvas who are also attended by numberless gods.

'Within the circle of light emanating from his whole body, appear illuminated the various forms and marks of all beings that live in the five paths<sup>1</sup> of existence.

'On the top of his head is a heavenly crown of gems like those that are fastened (on Indra's head), in which crown there is a transformed Buddha standing, twenty-five yoganās high.

'The face of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is like Gâmbûnada gold in colour.

'The soft hair between the eyebrows has all the colours of the seven jewels, from which eighty-four kinds of rays flow out, each ray has

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<sup>1</sup> Men, gods, hell, the departed spirits, the brute creation.

innumerable transformed Buddhas, each of whom is attended by numberless transformed Bodhisattvas; freely changing their manifestations they fill up the worlds of the ten quarters; (the appearance) can be compared with the colour of the red lotus-flower.

'(He wears) a garland consisting of eight thousand rays, in which is seen fully reflected a state of perfect beauty. The palm of his hand has a mixed colour of five hundred lotus-flowers. His hands have ten (tips of) fingers, each tip has eighty-four thousand pictures, which are like signet-marks, each picture has eighty-four thousand colours, each colour has eighty-four thousand rays which are soft and mild and shine over all things that exist. With these jewel hands he draws and embraces all beings. When he lifts up his feet, the soles of his feet are seen to be marked with a wheel of a thousand spokes (one of the thirty-two signs)

which miraculously transform themselves into five hundred million pillars of rays. When he puts his feet down to the ground, the flowers of diamonds and jewels are scattered about, and all things are simply covered by them. All the other signs of his body and the minor marks of excellence are perfect, and not at all different from those of Buddha, except the signs of having the turban on his head and the top of his head invisible, which two signs of him are inferior to those of the World-Honoured One;—such is the perception of the real form and body of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and it is the Tenth Meditation.'

Buddha, especially addressing Ânanda, said: 'whosoever wishes to meditate on Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara must do so in the way I have explained. Those who practise this meditation will not suffer any calamity; they will utterly remove the obstacle that is raised by Karma,

and will expiate the sins which would involve them in births and deaths for numberless kalpas. Even the hearing of the name of this Bodhisattva will enable one to obtain immeasurable happiness. How much more, then, will the diligent contemplation of him!

'Whosoever will meditate on Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara should first meditate on the turban of his head, and then on his heavenly crown.

'All the other signs should also be meditated on according to their order, and they should be clear and distinct just as one sees the palms of one's hands.

'Next you should meditate on Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma, whose bodily signs, height, and size are equal to those of Avalokitesvara; the circumference (lit. surface) of his halo is one hundred and twenty-five yoganâs, and it shines as far as two hundred and fifty yoganâs. The

rays of his whole body shine over the countries of the ten quarters, they are purple gold in colour, and can be seen by all beings that are in favourable circumstances.

'If one but sees the ray that issues from a single root of the hair of this Bodhisattva, he will at the same time see the pure and excellent rays of all the innumerable Buddhas of the ten quarters.

'For this reason this Bodhisattva is named the Unlimited Light; it is with this light of wisdom that he shines over all beings and causes them to be removed from the three paths of existence (Hells, Pretas, and the brute creation), and to obtain the highest power. For the same reason this Bodhisattva is called the Bodhisattva of Great Strength (Mahâsthâma). His heavenly crown has five hundred jewel-flowers; each jewel-flower has five hundred jewel-towers; in each tower are seen manifested all the pure and

excellent features of the far-stretching Buddha countries in the ten quarters. The turban on his head is like a padma- (lotus) flower; on the top of the turban there is a jewel-pitcher, which is filled with various brilliant rays fully manifesting the state of Buddha. All his other bodily signs are quite equal to those of Avalokitesvara. When this Bodhisattva walks about, all the regions of the ten quarters tremble and quake. Wherever the earth quakes there appear five hundred millions of jewel-flowers; each jewel-flower with its splendid dazzling beauty looks like the World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî).

'When this Bodhisattva sits down, all the countries of seven jewels at once tremble and quake: all the incarnate (lit. divided) Âmitâyus's, innumerable as the dust of the earth, and all the incarnate Bodhisattvas (Aval. and Mahâs.) who dwell in the middlemost Buddha

countries (situated) between the Buddha country of the lower region (presided over) by a Buddha called the "Golden Light," and the country of the upper region (presided over) by a Buddha called the "King of Light,"—all these assemble in the World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî), like gathering clouds, sit on their thrones of lotus-flowers, which fill the whole sky, and preach the excellent Law in order to deliver all the beings that are plunged in suffering;—such is the perception of the form and body of Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma, and it is the Eleventh Meditation.

"Those who practise this meditation are freed from the sins (which would otherwise involve them) in births and deaths for innumerable asaṅkhyā kalpas.

"Those who have practised this meditation do not live in an embryo state but obtain free access to the excellent and admirable countries

of Buddhas. Those who have experienced this are said to have perfectly meditated upon the two Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara and Mahâsthâma.

§ 20. 'After thou hast had this perception, thou shouldst imagine thyself to be born in the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter, and to be seated, cross-legged, on a lotus-flower there. Then imagine that the flower has shut thee in and has afterwards unfolded; when the flower has thus unfolded, five hundred coloured rays will shine over thy body, thine eyes will be opened so as to see the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who fill the whole sky; thou wilt hear the sounds of waters and trees, the notes of birds, and the voices of many Buddhas preaching the excellent Law, in accordance with the twelve divisions<sup>1</sup> of the

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Max Muller, Dhammapada, Introduction, p. xxxiii, and Kasawara,

scriptures. When thou hast ceased from that meditation, thou must remember the experience ever after.

'If thou hast passed through this experience thou art said to have seen the World of Highest Happiness in the realm of the Buddha Amitâyus;—this is the perception obtained by a complete meditation on that Buddha country, and is called the Twelfth Meditation.

'The innumerable incarnate bodies of Amitâyus, together with those of Aval. and Mahâs., constantly come and appear before such devotees (as above mentioned).'

§ 21. Buddha then spoke to Ânanda and Vaidehî: 'Those who wish, by means of their serene thoughts, to be born in the western land, should first meditate on an image of the

Buddha, who is sixteen cubits high<sup>1</sup>, seated on (a lotus-flower in) the water of the lake. As it was stated before the (real) body and its measurement are unlimited, incomprehensible to the ordinary mind.

'But by the efficacy of the ancient prayer of that Tathâgata, those who think of and remember him shall certainly be able to accomplish their aim.

'Even the mere perceiving of the image of that Buddha brings to one immeasurable blessings. How much more, then, will the meditating upon all the complete bodily signs of that Buddha! Buddha Amitâyus has supernatural power; since everything is at his disposal, he freely transforms himself in the regions of the ten quarters. At one time he

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<sup>1</sup> This is said to have been the height of Sâkyamuni; the cubit is Chinese, but as it varied from time to time, it is difficult to determine his real height. Spence Hardy, in his *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 364, says, 'Buddha is sometimes said to be twelve cubits in height, and sometimes eighteen cubits.'

shows himself as possessing a magnificent body, which fills the whole sky, at another he makes his body appear small, the height being only sixteen or eighteen cubits. The body he manifests is always pure gold in colour; his halo—(bright with) transformed Buddhas—and his jewel lotus-flowers are as mentioned above. The bodies of the two Bodhisattvas are the same always.

'All beings can recognise either of the two Bodhisattvas by simply glancing at the marks of their heads. These two Bodhisattvas assist Amitâyus in his work of universal salvation;—such is the meditation that forms a joint perception of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, and it is the Thirteenth Meditation.'

### PART III.

§ 22. Buddha then spoke to Ânanda and Vaidehi: 'The beings who will be born in the

highest form of the highest grade (i.e. to Buddhahood) are those, whoever they may be, who wish to be born in that country and cherish the threefold thought whereby they are at once destined to be born there. What is the threefold thought, you may ask. First, the True Thought; second, the Deep Believing Thought; third, the Desire to be born in that Pure Land by bringing one's own stock of merit to maturity. Those who have this threefold thought in perfection shall most assuredly be born into that country.

'There are also three classes of beings who are able to be born in that country. What, you may ask, are the three classes of beings? First, those who are possessed of a compassionate mind, who do no injury to any beings, and accomplish all virtuous actions according to Buddha's precepts; second, those who study and

recite the Sûtras of the Mahâyâna doctrine, for instance, the Vaipulya Sûtras<sup>1</sup>; third, those who practise the sixfold remembrance<sup>2</sup>. These three classes of beings who wish to be born in that country by bringing (their respective stocks of merit) to maturity, will become destined to be born there if they have accomplished any of those meritorious deeds for one day or even for seven days.

'When one who has practised (these merits) is about to be born in that country, Buddha Amitâyus, together with the two Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., also numberless created Buddhas, and a hundred thousand Bhikshus and Srâvakas, with their whole retinue, and innumerable gods, together with the palaces of seven jewels, will appear before him out of

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<sup>1</sup> Nanjio's Catalogue of Tripitaka, Nos. 23, 24-28, and many others.

<sup>2</sup> Sixfold remembrance, i.e. of the Three Jewels, the precepts, the charity of Buddha, and Bodhisattvas and the world of Devas.

regard for his diligence and courage; Aval., together with Mahas., will offer a diamond seat to him; thereupon Amitâyus himself will send forth magnificent rays of light to shine over the dying person's body. He and many Bodhisattvas will offer their hands and welcome him, when Aval., Mahâs., and all the other Bodhisattvas will praise the glory of the man who practised the meritorious deeds, and convey an exhortation to his mind. When the new-comer, having seen these, rejoicing and leaping for joy, looks at himself, he will find his own body seated on that diamond throne; and as he follows behind Buddha he will be born into that country, in a moment. When he has been born there, he will see Buddha's form and body with every sign of perfection complete, and also the perfect forms and signs of all the Bodhisattvas; he will also see brilliant rays and jewel-forests and hear them propounding the excellent Law,

and instantly be conscious of a spirit of resignation to whatever consequences may hereafter arise. Before long he will serve every one of the Buddhas who live in the regions of the ten quarters. In the presence of each of those Buddhas he will obtain successively a prophecy of his future destiny. On his return to his own land (Sukhâvatî, in which he has just been born) he will obtain countless hundreds of thousands of Dhâranî formulas (mystic form of prayer);—such are those who are to be born in the highest form of the highest grade (to Buddhahood).

§ 23. 'Next, the beings who will be born in the middle form of the highest grade are those who do not necessarily learn, remember, study, or recite those Vaipulya Sûtras, but fully understand the meaning of the truth (contained in them), and having a firm grasp of the highest truth do not speak evil of the Mahâyâna

doctrine, but deeply believe in (the principle of) cause and effect; who by bringing these good qualities to maturity seek to be born in that Country of Highest Happiness. When one who has acquired these qualities is about to die, Amitâyus, surrounded by the two Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., and an innumerable retinue of dependents, will bring a seat of purple gold and approach him with words of praise, saying: "O my son in the Law! thou hast practised the Mahâyâna doctrine; thou hast understood and believed the highest truth; therefore I now come to meet and welcome thee." He and the thousand created Buddhas offer hands all at once.

'When that man looks at his own body, he will find himself seated on that purple gold seat; he will, then, stretching forth his folded hands, praise and eulogise all the Buddhas. As quick as thought he will be born in the lake of seven

jewels, of that country. That purple gold seat on which he sits is like a magnificent jewel-flower, and will open after a night; the new-comer's body becomes purple gold in colour, and he will also find under his feet a lotus-flower consisting of seven jewels. Buddha and the Bodhisattvas at the same time will send forth brilliant rays to shine over the body of that person whose eyes will instantaneously be opened and become clear. According to his former usage (in the human world) he will hear all the voices that are there, preaching primary truths of the deepest significance.

'Then he will descend from that golden seat and worship Buddha with folded hands, praising and eulogising the World-Honoured One. After seven days, he will immediately attain to the state of the highest perfect knowledge (anuttarasamyaksambodhi) from which he will never fall away (avaivartya); next

he will fly to all the ten regions and successively serve all the Buddhas therein; he will practise many a Samâdhi in the presence of those Buddhas. After the lapse of a lesser kalpa he will attain a spirit of resignation to whatever consequences may hereafter arise, and he will also obtain a prophecy of his future destiny in the presence of Buddhas.

§ 24. 'Next are those who are to be born in the lowest form of the highest grade: this class of beings also believes in (the principle of) cause and effect, and without slandering the Mahâyâna doctrine, simply cherishes the thought of obtaining the highest Bodhi and by bringing this good quality to maturity seeks to be born in that Country of Highest Happiness. When a devotee of this class dies, Amitâyus, with Aval., Mahâs., and all the dependents, will offer him a golden lotus-flower; he will also miraculously create five hundred Buddhas in

order to send and meet him. These five hundred created Buddhas will, all at once, offer hands and praise him, saying: "O my son in the Law! thou art pure now; as thou hast cherished the thought of obtaining the highest Bodhi, we come to meet thee." When he has seen them, he will find himself seated on that golden lotus-flower. Soon the flower will close upon him; following behind the World-Honoured One he will go to be born in the lake of seven jewels. After one day and one night the lotus-flower will unfold itself. Within seven days he may see Buddha's body, though his mind is not as yet clear enough to perceive all the signs and marks of the Buddha, which he will be able to see clearly after three weeks; then he will hear many sounds and voices preaching the excellent Law, and he himself, travelling through all the ten quarters, will worship all the Buddhas, from whom he will

learn the deepest significance of the Law. After three lesser kalpas he will gain entrance to the knowledge of a hundred (divisions of) nature (satadharmavidyâdvâra) and become settled in the (first) joyful stage<sup>1</sup> (of Bodhisattva). The perception of these three classes of beings is called the meditation upon the superior class of beings, and is the Fourteenth Meditation.

§ 25. 'The beings who will be born in the highest form of the middle grade are those who observe the five prohibitive precepts, the eight prohibitive precepts and the fasting, and practise all the moral precepts; who do not commit the five deadly sins<sup>2</sup>, and who bring no blame or trouble upon any being; and who by bringing these good qualities to maturity seek to be born in the World of Highest Happiness

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<sup>1</sup> There are ten stages which a Bodhisattva goes through.

<sup>2</sup> Childer's Pali Dictionary, s.v. abhithânam.

in the western quarter. On the eve of such a person's departure from this life, Amitâyus, surrounded by Bhikshus and dependents, will appear before him, flashing forth rays of golden colour, and will preach the Law of suffering, non-existence, impermanence, and non-self. He will also praise the virtue of homelessness that can liberate one from all sufferings. At the sight of Buddha, that believer will excessively rejoice in his heart; he will soon find himself seated on a lotus-flower. Kneeling down on the ground and stretching forth his folded hands he will pay homage to Buddha. Before he raises his head he will reach that Country of Highest Happiness and be born there. Soon the lotus-flower will unfold, when he will hear sounds and voices praising and glorifying the Four Noble Truths (of suffering). He will immediately attain to the fruition of Arhatship, gain the threefold knowledge and the six

supernatural faculties, and complete the eightfold emancipation.

§ 26. 'The beings who will be born in the middle form of the middle grade are those who either observe the eight prohibitive precepts, and the fasting for one day and one night, or observe the prohibitive precept for Sramanera (a novice) for the same period, or observe the perfect moral precepts, not lowering their dignity nor neglecting any ceremonial observance for one day and one night, and by bringing their respective merits to maturity seek to be born in the Country of Highest Happiness. On the eve of departure from this life, such a believer who is possessed of this moral virtue, which he has made fragrant by cultivation during his life, will see Amitâyus, followed by all his retinue; flashing forth rays of golden colour, this Buddha will come before him and offer a lotus-flower of seven jewels.

'He will hear a voice in the sky, praising him and saying: "O son of a noble family, thou art indeed an excellent man. Out of regard for thy obedience to the teachings of all the Buddhas of the three worlds I, now, come and meet thee." Then the newcomer will see himself seated on that lotus-flower. Soon the lotus-flower will fold around him, and being in this he will be born in the jewel-lake of the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter.

'After seven days that flower will unfold again, when the believer will open his eyes, and praise the World-Honoured One, stretching forth his folded hands. Having heard the Law, he will rejoice and obtain the fruition of a Srota-âpanna<sup>1</sup> (the first grade to Nirvâna).

'In the lapse of half a kalpa he will become an Arhat.

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Vagrakkhedikâ, § 9.

§ 27. 'Next are the beings who will be born in the lowest form of the middle grade (to Buddhahood) If there be sons or daughters of a noble family who are filial to their parents and support them, besides exercising benevolence and compassion in the world, at their departure from this life, such persons will meet a good and learned teacher who will fully describe to them the state of happiness in that Buddha country of Amitâyus, and will also explain the forty-eight prayers of the Bhikshu Dharmâkara<sup>1</sup>. As soon as any such person has heard these details, his life will come to an end. In a brief moment<sup>2</sup> he will be born in the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter.

'After seven days he will meet Aval. and

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Larger Sukhâvatî, §§ 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. 'In the time in which a strong man can bend his arm or stretch his bended arm.'

Mahas., from whom he will learn the Law and rejoice. After the lapse of a lesser kalpa he will attain to the fruition of an Arhat. The perception of these three sorts of beings is called the meditation of the middle class of beings, and is the Fifteenth Meditation.

§ 28. 'Next are the beings who will be born in the highest form of the lowest grade. If there be anyone who commits many evil deeds, provided that he does not speak evil of the Mahâvaipulya Sûtras, he, though himself a very stupid man, and neither ashamed nor sorry for all the evil actions that he has done, yet, while dying, may meet a good and learned teacher who will recite and laud the headings and titles of the twelve divisions of the Mahâyâna scriptures. Having thus heard the names of all the Sûtras, he will be freed from the greatest sins which would involve him in births and deaths during a thousand kalpas.

'A wise man also will teach him to stretch forth his folded hands and to say, "Adoration to Buddha Amitâyus" (Namo\*mitâbhâya Buddhâya, or, Namo\*mitâyushe Buddhâya). Having uttered the name of the Buddha, he will be freed from the sins which would otherwise involve him in births and deaths for fifty millions of kalpas. Thereupon the Buddha will send a created Buddha, and the created Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., to approach that person with words of praise, saying: "O son of a noble family, as thou hast uttered the name of that Buddha, all thy sins have been destroyed and expiated, and therefore we now come to meet thee." After this speech the devotee will observe the rays of that created Buddha flooding his chamber with light, and while rejoicing at the sight he will depart this life. Seated on a lotus-flower he will follow that created Buddha and go to be born in the

jewel-lake.

'After the lapse of seven weeks, the lotus-flower will unfold, when the great compassionate Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs. will stand before him, flashing forth magnificent rays, and will preach to him the deepest meaning of the twelve divisions of the scriptures. Having heard this, he will understand and believe it, and cherish the thought of attaining the highest Bodhi. In a period of ten lesser kalpas he will gain entrance to the knowledge of the hundred (divisions of) nature, and be able to enter upon the first (joyful) stage (of Bodhisattva). Those who have had an opportunity of hearing the name of Buddha, the name of the Law, and the name of the Church—the names of the Three Jewels—can also be born (in that country).'

§ 29. Buddha continued: 'Next are the beings who will be born in the middle form of the

lowest grade. If there be anyone who transgresses the five and the eight prohibitive precepts, and also all the perfect moral precepts; he, being himself so stupid as to steal things that belong to the whole community<sup>1</sup>, or things that belong to a particular Bhikshu, and not be ashamed nor sorry for his impure preaching of the Law (in case of preacher), but magnify and glorify himself with many wicked deeds:—such a sinful person deserves to fall into hell in consequence of those sins. At the time of his death, when the fires of hell approach him from all sides, he will meet a good and learned teacher who will, out of great compassion, preach the power and virtue of the ten faculties of Amitâyus and fully explain the supernatural powers and brilliant rays of that Buddha; and

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<sup>1</sup> The text has 'saṅghika things,' which is probably saṅghika lâbha, i.e. 'gains of the whole community' opposed to gains of a single monk, Childers' Pâli Dictionary, s.v. saṅghiko, p. 449.

will further praise moral virtue, meditation, wisdom, emancipation, and the thorough knowledge that follows emancipation. After having heard this, he will be freed from his sins, which would involve him in births and deaths during eighty millions of kalpas; thereupon those violent fires of hell will transform themselves into a pure and cool wind blowing about heavenly flowers. On each of these flowers will stand a created Buddha or Bodhisattva to meet and receive that person. In a moment he will be born in a lotus-flower growing in the lake of seven jewels. After six kalpas the lotus-flower will open, when Avalokitesvara and Mahâsthâma will soothe and encourage him with their Brahma-voices, and preach to him the Mahâyâna Sûtras of the deepest significance.

'Having heard this Law, he will instantaneously direct his thought toward the

attainment of the highest Bodhi.

§ 30. 'Lastly, the beings who will be born in the lowest form of the lowest grade. If there be any one who commits evil deeds, and even completes the ten wicked actions, the five deadly sins<sup>1</sup> and the like; that man, being himself stupid and guilty of many crimes, deserves to fall into a miserable path of existence and suffer endless pains during many kalpas. On the eve of death he will meet a good and learned teacher who will, soothing and encouraging him in various ways, preach to him the excellent Law and teach him the remembrance of Buddha, but, being harassed by pains, he will have no time to think of Buddha. Some good friend will then say to him:

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<sup>1</sup> The five deadly sins, according to Mahāvvyutpatti, § 118, are Mātrighāta, Pittrighāta, Arhatghāta, Saṅghabheda, Tathāgatasyāntike dushtakittarudhirotpādāna, which are unpardonable in the Larger Sukhāvātī; vide Nanjio's note and Prānīdhāna 19 (§ 8), the Ānantarya sins. Cf. the six crimes enumerated in Childers' Pāli Dictionary, p. 7 b, Abhithānam; vide supra, p. 192, § 25.

"Even if thou canst not exercise the remembrance of Buddha, thou mayst, at least, utter the name, 'Buddha Amitâyus<sup>1</sup>.'" Let him do so serenely with his voice uninterrupted; let him be (continually) thinking of Buddha until he has completed ten times the thought, repeating (the formula), "Adoration to Buddha Amitâyus" (Namo\*mitâyushe Buddhâya). On the strength of (his merit of) uttering Buddha's name he will, during every repetition, expiate the sins which involve him in births and deaths during eighty millions of kalpas. He will, while dying, see a golden lotus-flower like the disk of the sun appearing before his eyes; in a moment he will be born in the World of Highest Happiness. After twelve greater kalpas the lotus-flower will unfold; thereupon the

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<sup>1</sup> The Korean text and the two other editions of the T'ang and Sung dynasties have 'Namo\*mitâyushe Buddhâya' instead of 'Buddha Amitâyus,' which is the reading of the Japanese text and the edition of the Ming dynasty.

Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., raising their voices in great compassion, will preach to him in detail the real state of all the elements of nature and the law of the expiation of sins.

'On hearing them he will rejoice and will immediately direct his thought toward the attainment of the Bodhi;—such are the beings who are to be born in the lowest form of the lowest grade (to Buddhahood). The perception of the above three is called the meditation of the inferior class of beings, and is the Sixteenth Meditation.'

#### PART IV.

§ 31. When Buddha had finished this speech, Vaidehî, together with her five hundred female attendants, could see, as guided by the Buddha's words, the scene of the far-stretching World of the Highest Happiness, and could also see the body of Buddha and the bodies of the two Bodhisattvas. With her mind filled with joy she

praised them, saying: 'Never have I seen such a wonder!' Instantaneously she became wholly and fully enlightened, and attained a spirit of resignation, prepared to endure whatever consequences might yet arise <sup>1</sup>. Her five hundred female attendants too cherished the thought of obtaining the highest perfect knowledge, and sought to be born in that Buddha country.

§ 32. The World-Honoured One predicted that they would all be born in that Buddha country, and be able to obtain the Samâdhi (the supernatural calm) of the presence of many Buddhas. All the innumerable Devas (gods) also directed their thought toward the attainment of the highest Bodhi.

Thereupon Ânanda rose from his seat, approached Buddha, and spoke thus: 'O

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<sup>1</sup> Vide supra, §§ 8, 22, 23.

World-Honoured One, what should we call this Sûtra? And how should we receive and remember it (in the future)?'

Buddha said in his reply to Ânanda: 'O Ânanda, this Sûtra should be called the meditation on the Land of Sukhâvatî, on Buddha Amitâyus, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma, or otherwise be called "(the Sûtra on) the entire removal of the obstacle of Karma<sup>1</sup>, (the means of) being born in the realm of the Buddhas." Thou shouldst take and hold it, not forgetting nor losing it. Those who practise the Samâdhi (the supernatural calm) in accordance with this Sûtra will be able to see, in the present life, Buddha Amitâyus and the two great Bodhisattvas.

'In case of a son or a daughter of a noble

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<sup>1</sup> Sanskrit karmâvarana-visuddhi.

family, the mere hearing of the names of the Buddha and the two Bodhisattvas will expiate the sins which would involve them in births and deaths during innumerable kalpas. How much more will the remembrance (of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas)!

'Know that he who remembers that Buddha is the white lotus (pundarîka) among men, it is he whom the Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara and Mahâsthâma consider an excellent friend. He will, sitting in the Bodhi-mandala<sup>1</sup>, be born in the abode of Buddhas.'

Buddha further spoke to Ânanda: 'Thou shouldst carefully remember these words. To

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<sup>1</sup> Bodhi-mandala=Bodhi-manda, i.e. the Circle of Bodhi; 'the round terrace of enlightenment,' see Kern, *Saddharmapundarîka*, p. 155 note. This circle is the ground on which stood the Asvattha tree near which Sâkyamuni defeated the assaults of Mâra, and finally obtained Bodhi or enlightenment. The tree is called Bodhidruma, the ground round its stem the bodhimandala. In the *Saddharmapundarîka* VII, 7, it is called Bodhimandavara, which Dr. Kern translates by the terrace of enlightenment, *vâra* meaning circuit. A different idea is expressed by bodhimandapa in the *Buddha-karita* XIV, 90, which would mean a hall or pavilion, unless we ought to read here also bodhi-mandala.

remember these words is to remember the name of Buddha Amitâyus.'

When Buddha concluded these words, the worthy disciples Mahâmaudgalyâyana, and Ânanda, Vaidehi, and the others were all enraptured with excessive Joy.

§ 33. Thereupon the World-Honoured One came back, walking through the open sky; to the Mount Gridhrakûta. Ânanda soon after spoke before a great assembly of all the occurrences as stated above. On hearing this, all the innumerable Devas (gods), Nâgas (snakes), and Yakshas (demi-gods) were inspired with great joy; and having worshipped the Buddha they went their way.

Here ends the Sûtra of the Meditation on Buddha Amitâyus, spoken by Buddha (Sâkyamuni).

**The Sutra of  
Visualizing The Buddha of  
Immeasurable Length of Life**

觀無量壽佛經

Translated into Chinese form Sanskrit

by

KALAYASAS

由梵文譯中文：劉宋 曇良耶舍

Translated into English from Chinese Version

by

Bhikkhu Assaji

由中文譯英文：民國 惟幻法師



TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

The present translation is one of the Three Principal Sutras, which are the **Sutra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life** (無量壽經), the Small Sukhavati Sutra (阿彌陀經) translated into English by Wong Mou Lam, and the present one, which is also called as the Sutra of the Sixteen Visualizations (十六觀經); it was from these three Sutras that the Pure Land Sect of Northern Buddhism derived its doctrine.

I am grateful to Mr. John Blofeld, who has given me many valuable suggestions and improvements in the translation. My cordial thanks are also due to Madame Fu Chuang (佛莊居士) by whose generosity this Sutra has been printed for free distribution and for the benefit of mankind.

Assaji.

Hong Kong, July, 1939.

## **The Sutra of Visualizing The Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life**

Thus have I heard: Once the Buddha was staying at Rajagriha City, on the Gridhrakuta Mountain, with a group of great Bhikshus, twelve hundred and fifty in number, and thirty-two thousand Bodhisattvas, among whom Manjusri, the Prince of the Dharma, was the President.

At that time, there was a prince, Ajatasatru by name, in the great Rajagriha City, who imprisoned his father, King Bimbisara, in a seven-walled cell, by the wicked advice of his evil-minded friend Devadatta, and no one of the King's ministers was allowed to see him in the jail.

Vaidehi, the Queen, who was greatly devoted to the King, washed herself, and carried honey and flour close to her body, put grape juice in

her jewels, and sent them to the King secretly.

The King after having taken the honeyed flour and drunk the grape juice, asked for some water to wash his mouth. Having done this, he joined his hands palm to palm, saluting the Buddha in the direction of the Gridhrakuta Mountain, and said, 'Mahamaudgalyayana is my intimate friend. I wish that he would be kind enough to come and give me the Eight Precepts.' At that time, the Venerable Mahamaudgalyayana, being invited by the King, flew as a falcon to his place daily and gave him the Eight Precepts. The Buddha also sent the Venerable Purna to preach the Dharma for the King.

The King lived for three times seven days on honey and flour, and thus he was enabled to hear the Dharma. His countenance was, however, very calm and peaceful (in spite of his miserable condition).

At that time, Prince Ajatasatru inquired of the jailor, 'Is my father, the King, still alive?' The jailor replied, 'Oh, Great Prince, the old Queen carries honey and flour close to her body and puts fruit juice in her jewels, and sends them secretly to the King as his food. Srmana Mahamaudgalyayana and Srmana Purna come here flying, to preach the Law to the King; and I am not able to keep them away.' On hearing these words, Ajatasatru was very angry with his mother and said in a temper, 'My mother is a thief. She keeps company with thieves. Srmanas are evil men, they have performed magic to make this evil king live for so long a time.' Thus he took a sharp sword and was about to injure his mother.

But there were two sagacious ministers of the Court, one of whom was called Moon-Light and Jiva was the other one's name. They saluted the Prince and said, 'Oh, Prince, we have read

the Veda, in which it is recorded, "There were many evil kings who killed their fathers and enthroned themselves, at the beginning of history, eighteen thousand in number." But we have never heard of a single one who has killed his mother. Now you are going to kill your mother: such an unheard-of treacherous deed would stigmatize the whole Ksatriya race. We do not wish to hear that you are going to be a Candara, and we do not desire to stay in this country.'

When they had uttered these words, they put their hands on the handles of their swords and were about to retreat. Then Ajatasatru was alarmed and said to Jiva. 'Are you gentlemen no longer in favor of me?' To this Jiva replied, 'Great Prince, you must behave well and not kill your mother.'

On hearing this exhortation, the Prince repented and asked their pardon. He cast away

his weapon and did not injure his mother. But he gave order that his mother should be incarcerated in the inner part of the palace, and should not be allowed to come out again.

Then, Vaidehi, the Queen, became very sorry and haggard in the prison. She saluted the Buddha in the direction of the Gridhrakuta Mountain and said, 'The Blessed One, in former times, used to send the Venerable Ananda to come and see me frequently. Now I am in great lamentation and cannot go to see the Buddha. I hope the Blessed One will kindly send the Venerable Mahamaudgalyayana and the Venerable Ananda to come and see me.' She murmured these words with tears in her eyes; and she saluted the Buddha again.

Before she had raised her head up from prostration, the Buddha on the Gridhrakuta Mountain had read her mind. So He sent the Venerable Mahamaudgalyayana and the

Venerable Ananda to see her. They went to the palace by their supernatural power.

The Buddha disappeared from the Gridhrakuta Mountain and reappeared in the palace where the Queen was imprisoned. When Vaidehi had just raised her head, she saw the Blessed One, Sakyamuni Buddha, whose body was of a golden-purple colour, sitting on a lotus flower that was constituted of a hundred kinds of valuable jewels. The Venerable Mahamaudgalyayana was standing on His left, and the Venerable Ananda on His right. The gods of the Brahmin heaven and many tutelary devas were present in the air. There were many heavenly flowers pouring down from the sky as offerings to the Buddha.

Then Vaidehi, on seeing the Buddha, took from her neck a string of jewels, which she offered to Him. She prostrated herself before Him and said with sobs, 'Blessed One, what is

the wrong that I must have done in my previous lives to have such an unfilial son? And what is the cause of Devadatta's being a relative of the Blessed One? I hope the Blessed One will tell me of some place, where there are no sorrow and no trouble, where I would like to be reborn. For I am disgusted with this Jambudvīpa, the dirty and evil world, full of hells, ghosts and animals and all evil things. I wish in my future life that I should never hear evil sounds and never see evil persons. Now I prostrate myself before the Blessed One and I repent of my evil acts, done in the past. May the Buddha, the Sun, teach me how to visualize the Place of Pure Karma.'

Then the Blessed One emitted from the middle of His eyebrows a ray, golden in colour, illuminating the numerous worlds in the ten quarters. It returned to the Buddha's head, becoming a golden platform, on which all the

Buddhas' Pure Lands appeared. Some of (the Buddhas' countries in the ray) were composed of the seven jewels; some of them were full of lotus flowers; some of them were as happy as heavens; and some of them were as clean as crystal. Such numerous Buddhas' countries of the ten quarters appeared in the ray of the Blessed One. They were all visible, so Vaidehi was able to see them.

Then Vaidehi said to the Buddha, 'Blessed One, although these countries are pure and brilliant, I wish to be reborn in the Most Happy World of Amita Buddha. May the Blessed One have compassion on me and teach me how to meditate upon that World rightly.'

Then the Blessed One smiled, and from his mouth he radiated a five-coloured ray which he cast upon Bimbisara, the King, who was in the seven-walled cell. Although, he was imprisoned, his mind was free and undisturbed. He saluted

the Blessed One (on seeing the ray; and at that moment) he gained the Saintly State of Anagamin.

Then the Blessed One told Vaidehi, 'Do you know, Vaidehi, that Amita Buddha is not apart from you, when you have concentrated your mind and have accomplished the visualizations that I am going to teach you and also those who, in the future, will desire to be reborn in the Pure Land?

‘One who wishes to be reborn in the Pure Land should cultivate the Three Virtues. They are, firstly, supporting one's parents, respecting one's teachers, refraining from killing living beings, and doing the Ten Good Deeds; secondly, taking the Three Refuges, and observing the Precepts perfectly; and thirdly, cherishing the Bodhi-mind, believing the Law of Cause and Effect and encouraging others to do good. These three are called the Pure Deeds.'

The Buddha asked Vaidehi, 'Do you know that these three Pure Deeds are the pure deeds and Right Causes of all the Buddhas of the three periods—the past, the present and the future?'

He then spoke to the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, saying, 'Listen! Listen! And ponder on it well. I am going to preach the Law of Pure Karma to all the beings who will be vexed by the Thief , Ignorance, in the future. It is well, Vaidehi, you have entreated me just in time.

'Ananda, you must spread what the Buddha says to the many. Now I am teaching Vaidehi and all the beings in the future how to visualize the Most Happy World in the West. You will see the Pure Land and its happy things by the power of the Buddha, just as you see your own figure in a clear mirror. When you have seen them, you will realize the State of Quietude.'

The Buddha said to Vaidehi, 'You are still a

worldly person, so you cannot concentrate your mind properly, and hence you have not the power of clairvoyance to see those Buddhas who are far away. But the Buddha has a marvellous way of making you see.'

Then Vaidehi inquired of the Buddha, 'Blessed One, now I shall be able to see the Pure Land by the help of the Buddha's power. But how will those who will be struck by the Five Sufferings be able to see Amita Buddha's Most Happy World, at the end-period, when the Blessed One has passed away?'

The Buddha told Vaidehi, 'You—and all beings—should concentrate your minds on one point and think about the Western Quarter. How is one to think of that? Anyone who is going to think of that should not be a person born blind; and anyone who has eyes must have seen the sun sinking in the West.

'Sit facing the Western Quarter and think

about the place where the sun sinks down. Concentrate your mind upon it without being distracted, and look at the sun sinking, resembling a hanging drum.

‘After having seen the sinking sun, you will see it whenever your eyes are open or shut.

‘This is the Thinking of the Sun, and it is the First Visualization.

‘Next you think about water. Notice that water is very pure and that it is indissoluble. When you have seen water thus, then think it is going to freeze. Then see that the ice is the same as crystal, which is transparent. Beneath it there are columns, made of gold, inlaid with the seven jewels, supporting the crystal. These columns have eight facets, each of them has one hundred diamonds. Each of the diamonds has a thousand beams of light. Each of these rays has eighty-four thousand colours. These crystals are as glittering as hundreds and

thousands of suns shining together. They are so dazzling that one cannot see them totally. On these crystals there are golden ropes interlaid as ornaments. They are separated by the seven jewels. Each of these jewels has five hundred colours, whose brightness is as that of flowers, of stars and of the moon, suspended in the air, forming a Terrace of Brightness.

'On that Terrace, there are hundreds and thousands of storeyed pavilions, built of a hundred kinds of jewels. At the two sides of the Terrace, there are hundreds and thousands of embroidered tapestries and musical instruments as decorations. There are eight kinds of mild breeze coming out from the brightness; and it plays upon those instruments, which produce the sound of the Dharma of Sorrow, of Transitoriness and of Unreality.

'This the Thinking of the Water, and it is the Second Visualization.

‘When this Visualization is completed, see them one by one clearly, and do not let them disappear whether your eyes are open or shut, except at eating times.

‘Once having attained this Samadhi, one can clearly see the Pure Land, which is indescribable by words.

‘This is the Thinking of the Land, and it is the Third Visualization.’

The Buddha then addressed to the Venerable Ananda, ‘You must hold to the Buddha’s words and tell those who wish to escape from suffering in the future to think of the Land. Any person who thinks of the Pure Land will be exempted from rebirth for eight million kalpas of time, and will undoubtedly be reborn into the Pure Land at his next birth.

‘To visualize the Most Happy World as stated above is right, it is wrong to do so otherwise.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda,

'Next to the Thinking of the Land is to visualize the Jewel-trees. That is to visualize the trees that are in seven rows. They are eight thousand yojanas in height and each of them has flowers and leaves made completely of the seven jewels.

'Every flower and every leaf of those trees has a brilliant hue. A golden ray comes out from the agate colour; a crimson ray comes out from the crystal colour; a beryl ray comes out from the lapis lazuli colour; a green-pearl ray comes out from the beryl colour; and there are rays of coral and amber colour shining beautifully. There are nets made of strings of pearls covering those trees. Seven of these nets cover each of those trees. Between the nets, there are fifty million luxurious palaces, the same as those in the Brahmin heaven.

'There are heavenly youths in these palaces; each of them wears fifty million Muni-gems as

ornaments. The rays of these gems shine for a distance of one thousand yojanas, like a hundred thousand suns shining together (as though their rays were, interwoven). All the rays are of the finest colour. The jewel-trees are set in rows opposite rows. There are wonderful flowers and fruits made of the seven jewels between the leaves. Each of the branches of the trees is twenty-five yojanas in length. The leaves have a thousand various colours, like heavenly pictures. There are many flourishing blossoms, golden in colour, like turning fire-wheels rolling between the leaves and producing heavenly fruits.

'There is also a great light, which becomes many draperies and canopies. All the affairs of the Buddha, and all the Buddhas' countries in the ten quarters, appear in these canopies. When you have visualized these trees, look at them one by one: the stems, the branches, the

leaves, the flowers and the fruits, should all be very clearly visualized.

‘This is the Meditation on Trees, and it is the Fourth Visualization.

‘The next is to think of water. That is, to think of the Water of the Eight Virtues in the Most Happy World. ‘This water is composed of the seven jewels, which are limpid and soft. The water flows out from the Muni-gems and distributes itself into fourteen tributaries. Each of the tributaries has varied colours corresponding to the seven jewels, and has yellow gold as its channel. There are diamonds of different colours at the bottoms of these channels. In each of the water pools, there are sixty million lotus flowers, round in shape and twelve yojanas in diameter. That Muni-water flows upwards and downwards along the trees to sprinkle the flowers.

‘The babbling sound of the water is

wonderful. It preaches the Laws of Sorrow, of Transitoriness and of Unreality, and praises the virtue of the Buddha. The Muni-gem emits a golden ray, which transforms itself into many birds of a hundred colours, chattering delicately, praising the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

‘This is the Meditation on the Water of the Eight Virtues, and it is the Fifth Visualization.

‘There are fifty million Gem-pavilions on each section of the Land of Jewels. In these pavilions, there are numerous heavenly inhabitants playing music; and there are musical instruments hanging in the air like tapestries, sounding without being beaten or performed upon. All the sounds are praising the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

‘Once having attained this Visualization, one sees the Most Happy World in outline: the Jewel-trees, the Jewel-lands and the

Jewel-lakes.

‘This is the Main Visualization, and it is the Sixth One.

‘If a person has seen this Visualization, his enormous crimes of countless kalpas are annulled; and he will certainly be reborn in the Pure Land after his passing away. One who visualizes in this way does right, otherwise one does wrong.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, ‘Listen! Listen! And ponder it over. I shall tell you of the ways to get rid of suffering one by one. You should remember and practise them well and spread them for the many.’

While saying this, the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life appeared in the air. Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara was standing on his right and Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta on his left. Their bodily rays were so brilliant that one could not see them wholly.

Then, after having seen the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life, Vaidehi did obeisance at the feet of the Buddha (Sakyamuni) and said to him. 'Blessed One, now I am able to see the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life and these two Bodhisattvas by the Buddha's help. But how will all the beings in the future be able to visualize this Buddha and these two Bodhisattvas?'

The Buddha told Vaidehi, 'Anyone who wishes to visualize this Buddha, should think that in the Land of the Seven Jewels, there are lotus flowers.

'Think that each of the lotus flowers has a hundred kinds of gem-colour and eighty-four thousand veins in the petals, resembling heavenly pictures. These veins have eighty-four thousand rays, all of which are clearly visible. The smaller petals are two hundred and fifty yojanas in length and the same in width. Each

of these lotus flowers has eighty-four thousand petals. Between each of them, there are millions and millions of Muni-gems as ornaments. Each of the Muni-gems emits a thousand rays, which are like the canopies, being composed of the seven jewels, covering the whole Land. 'The Land has the Sakrabhilagna-gem as its pedestal. This pedestal is decorated with eighty-four thousand diamonds, Kimsuka-gems, Muni-gems and the nets of pearls.

'On that pedestal, there are four columns, each of which is as high as hundreds and thousands of Sumerus. The curtains that hang on those columns are like those in the Yemo Heaven. Again, there are fifty million fine gems embedded on those columns as ornaments. Each of these gems has eighty-four thousand rays. Each of the rays effuses eighty-four thousand different golden colours. Each of the

golden colours extends throughout the whole Jewel-land, and takes different shapes in different places: some are like diamond-terraces, others like pearl-nets and multi-coloured clouds. They change their forms variously in the ten quarters and perform the affairs of the Buddhas.

‘This is the Visualization of the Lotus Petals, and it is the Seventh One.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda, ‘This kind of wonderful lotus flower is formed by the power of Bhikshu Dharmakara's will. One who wishes to be reborn in the Pure Land, should think of those lotus petals. When one is thinking of them, one should have no other thoughts in the mind, and should visualize one article after the other: Each leaf, each pearl, each ray, each terrace, and each column, are all as clear as when one sees one's own figure in a mirror. When one has completed this

Visualization, one is released from rebirth for fifty thousand million kalpas, and will undoubtedly be reborn into the Most Happy World.

‘To visualize them in this way is right; it is wrong otherwise.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, ‘When you have seen what I have just stated, you should next think of that Buddha (the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life). Why? Because the body of the Buddha is the Body of the Universe, and it is within the mind of all beings.

‘Therefore, when you think of that Buddha, your mind is the One who has the thirty-two Magnificent Figures and the eighty Virtues. It is the mind that is to become a Buddha; and it is the mind that is a Buddha. The Ocean of the Omniscient Wisdom of all Buddhas grows up from the mind. Hence you should visualize

absorbedly that Buddha, the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.

'One who visualizes that Buddha, should think of His figure first. Whether one's eyes are open or shut, one sees a magnificent figure of a yellowish golden colour, sitting on a Lotus-seat. Having seen the figure of that Buddha thus seated, one's mental vision is opened and one can see the Most Happy World clearly: the Jewel-lands, Jewel-lakes, Jewel-trees in rows, over which there are heavenly curtains, and Jewel-nets in the air. All of these are decorated with the seven kinds of gems. These things can be seen as clearly as one sees one's own palm.

'After you have seen the things mentioned above, then visualize a large lotus flower, similar to the previous one, golden in colour, on the left of that Buddha. And think of another one on the right of Him. Then think of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara sitting on the left

one and Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta on the right one.

‘When this Visualization is accomplished, the Buddha and the two Bodhisattvas will be seen emitting golden rays falling on the Jewel-trees. Under each of them there are also three lotus flowers on which a Buddha and two Bodhisattvas are sitting respectively. Such are seen at everywhere of the Pure Land.

'When one has achieved this Visualization, one can hear the murmuring sound of the streams and see the rays, jewel-trees and sheldrakes and mandarin ducks, whose voices praise the Wonderful Law. Whether one's mind is concentrated or not, one can constantly hear that Wonderful Law. Whatever one hears should be compatible with the Sutras, otherwise it is composed of vain thoughts. If it is compatible with the Sutras, it is indeed seeing the Most Happy World.

This is the Visualization of the Figure (of that Buddha), and it is the Eight One.

‘One who practises this Visualization, is exempted from rebirth for innumerable kalpas of time and will attain to the Samadhi of Visualization in his present life.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, 'When you have completed the thinking described above, then think of the body of the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life, which is very bright. Ananda, you should know that that Buddha's body is as bright as hundreds and thousands of golden rays in the Yemo Heaven. It is sixty million Ganges Rivers Sands yojanas high. His eyebrows twine rightwards, (to the length of) five Sumerus. His eyes are as brilliant as the water of the four seas, and the pupils and white of his eyes are distinguishable. There are rays coming out from the pores of his body. The halo of that

Buddha is as large as millions of the Great (Groups of) Thousands of Worlds. And in the halo, there are hundreds and thousands of Reflections of the Buddha. Each of the Reflections has countless Bodhisattvas as his attendants.

'The Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life has eighty-four thousand Appearances. Each of the Appearances has eighty-four thousand (materialized) Virtues. Each of the (materialized) Virtues has eighty-four thousand beams of light, each of them shines upon all the beings of the ten quarters who visualize that Buddha completely.

'The beams of light, the Appearances of that Buddha and the Reflection-Buddha are all so excellent that they are beyond description. But one can see them by mental vision in the Visualizations. One who sees these things, sees all the Buddhas of the ten quarters. The sight of

the Buddhas is called the Samadhi of Visualization.

'Seeing this Visualization is seeing the bodies of all the Buddhas, and thus one sees the Mind of the Buddha. The Mind of a Buddha is the Great Compassion, out of which Buddhas help all beings.

‘One who practises this Visualization, will be reborn in the presence of all the Buddhas, and gain the State of Quietude, when he quits his present body. Therefore the wise person should try to visualize the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life.

One who visualizes the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life should commence with the First Appearance. That is to visualize that Buddha's White Eyebrows clearly. When one has seen this Appearance of White Eyebrows, the eighty-four thousand Virtues will manifest themselves subsequently.

One who sees the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life, sees all the Buddhas of the Ten Quarters, by whom one is promised (that one will become a Buddha in the future).

‘This is the Visualization of Seeing all the Buddhas, and it is the Ninth One.

‘To visualize it in this way is right, it is wrong otherwise.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, ‘After you have seen the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life distinctly, you should then visualize Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, whose body is eighty million yojanas in height and golden-purple in colour. There is a natural Small Hump in the middle of Her head, and near Her neck is a halo, which is a hundred thousand yojanas in diameter. There are five hundred Reflection-Buddhas, all like Sakyamuni Buddha, in that halo. Each of them has five hundred Bodhisattvas and many gods

as attendants. The five kinds of beings are reflected in the rays emitted from Her body.

‘She is crowned with a corona made of Bhilagne-Muni gems. On the corona, there stands a Reflection-Buddha, who is twenty-five yojanas high. Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara's countenance is of a yellowish golden colour. Her eyebrows are of the colour of the seven jewels, and they emit eighty-four thousand kinds of rays. There are countless Reflection-Bodhisattvas as Her attendants. They appear in the worlds of the ten quarters.

'The colour of Her arms is of that of a red lotus flower, and they are ornamented with eight million refulgent rays, in which all magnificent things appear. Her palms are colour of variegated lotus flowers. She has ten slender fingers. At the top of each finger, there are eighty-four thousand pictures. Each of these pictures has eighty-four thousand colours; each

of these colours has eighty-four thousand beams of light, which are very soft, and light up the whole world. It is with these hands that the Bodhisattva receives all beings.

‘When She lifts one of Her feet, one sees the Figure of One Thousand Wheels on the sole, which spontaneously becomes fifty million Light-Terraces. There are Diamond-Muni flowers scattered on the place where She puts Her foot down.

'The other Appearances of Hers are as good and perfect as those of a Buddha. Except that the Small Hump in the middle of Her head and the Figure of the Invisible Cranium are slightly different from those of a Buddha.

‘This is the Visualization of Seeing the Real Body of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and it is the Tenth One.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda, 'One who wishes to visualize Bodhisattva

Avalokitesvara, should do so as stated above. Any person who visualizes Her in this way will not encounter any calamities; he can avoid all the results of evil karma and is exempted from rebirth for numberless kalpas. Anyone who has heard the name of such a Bodhisattva gains much felicity; it is far better, if one visualizes Her.

'One who wishes to visualize Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara should first visualize the Small Hump on Her head clearly, next the Corona and so forth gradually. One should see them all as clearly as one sees one's own palm. To visualize them in this way is right, otherwise it is wrong.

'The next step is to visualize Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta, whose body is the same in size as that of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. Her halo is twenty-five yojanas in diameter and it shines to the the distance of two hundred and

fifty yojanas. The light of Her whole body, which is golden-purple in colour, lights up all the countries of the ten quarters. One can see this, if one has such an opportunity. Whoever sees the light coming out of one pore of this Bodhisattva, sees all the Buddhas of the ten quarters, all of whom are pure and brilliant. Hence this Bodhisattva is also called the Bodhisattva of Limitless Light.

'She shines with the Light of Wisdom upon all, enabling them to get rid of the Three Evil Ways, and attain the Supreme Power of Bodhi. Therefore She is called Mahasthamaprapta (the Powerful One).

There are five hundred jewel-flowers on the Corona of this Bodhisattva; each of these jewel-flowers has five hundred jewel-terraces, on which all grand things of the ten quarters appear. The Small Hump of Her head is like a Padma-flower, on which there is a jewel-bottle,

full of light that shows all the affairs of the Buddhas.

‘The other Appearances of this Bodhisattva are the same as those of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara.

‘When this Bodhisattva is walking, the earth of the ten quarters trembles. Where the earth shakes, there are fifty million gem-flowers. Each of these flowers is as rare and excellent as those in the Most Happy World. The earth formed of the seven jewels trembles too, when She sits down.

‘The Reflection-Bodies of the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life and the Reflection-Bodies of Avalokitesvara and Mahsthamaprapta Bodhisattvas, which pass down to the country of the Buddha of Golden Rays and up to the land of the Buddha named the King of Light, are gathered together in the Most Happy World, sitting on lotus seats in the

air, preaching the Wonderful Law to all suffering beings.

'This is the Visualization of Seeing Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva, whose corporal form is as stated above, and it is the Eleventh One.

'One who performs this Visualization is exempted from rebirth for numerous kalpas, and will never be reborn from the womb, but in those Buddhas' Pure Lands.

'When this Visualization is completed, it is the Completion of Seeing Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva.

'When one has seen all the things stated above, one should think that one is being born in the Most Happy World, sitting cross-legged in a lotus flower; and imagine that the lotus is closing and opening its petals.

'One should then think that when the lotus

opens, there are rays of five hundred colours shining upon oneself, and when one's eyes are open one sees that there are Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the air. The sounds of flowing water, of birds and of trees, and the voices of the Buddhas, all preach the Wonderful Law, in accordance with the twelve divisions of the Dharma.

‘Even when one is not visualizing these things, one can remember them all without forgetting them. Seeing these things is seeing the Most Happy World of the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life.

‘This is the General Visualization, and it is the Twelfth One.

‘The Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life has numerous Reflection Figures. They come frequently with Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattvas to the person who visualizes Him.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, 'One who sincerely wishes to be reborn to the Western Land, should first visualize the sixteen-foot-high figure of the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life, standing above the water of a pool, as described before. The body of that Buddha is inconceivable; the mental power of a worldly person could not imagine it. But He performed an act of will in the past that, should any person visualize Him, he (the person) would succeed. One who visualizes only His Visage gets boundless felicity; it is still more so, if one visualizes His Complete Figure.

'Amita Buddha's supernatural power is limitless; He can appear, in the countries of the ten quarters, as big as the Universe itself, or as small as only eight or sixteen feet high. All these appearances are golden in colour and have haloes, Reflection-Buddhas and

Lotus-seats, as stated already.

'The figure of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and that of Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva are at everywhere like that of ordinary people. One knows which is Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and which is Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva by looking at the special figures on their heads. These two Bodhisattvas assist Amita Buddha in edifying all beings.

'This is the Mixed Visualization, and it is the Thirteenth One.'

'The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi,

'The first division of the highest class of rebirth is this: Any person who wishes to be reborn in the Pure Land can be so if he has the Three Minds. What are they? They are: firstly, the Mind of Sincerity; secondly, the Mind of Faith; and thirdly, the Mind of Vows. One who possesses these three Minds will certainly be

reborn in that Land.

‘Again, there are three kinds of beings who can be reborn in that Land. Who are they? They are: firstly, those who, having a compassionate mind, do not kill living beings and who observe the Precepts; secondly, those who read and study Mahayana Sutras; and thirdly, those who practise the Six Thoughts. Those who have these virtues and are willing to be reborn in the Pure Land can be so, within one to seven days.

‘when a person is born in that Land, on account of his diligent practice of the Dharma, he sees Amita Buddha, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva, many Reflection-Buddhas, hundreds and thousands of Bhikshus and Sravakas, and numerous gods and palaces made of the seven jewels, appearing before him; while Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva holds a Golden Terrace and comes with Mahasthamaprapta

Bodhisattva into his presence. Amita Buddha effuses refulgent rays upon him; and holds out a hand to receive him with the Bodhisattvas, while Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta and innumerable other Bodhisattvas praise and encourage him.

“When he has seen that, he is very happy and sees that he himself is riding on the Golden Terrace, following that Buddha. In the flash of a moment, he is born in the Pure Land.

“After having been born in that Land, he sees that Buddhas figure, the appearances of the Bodhisattvas, the rays and the jewel-trees completely; and he hears the Wonderful Law. When he has heard the Law, he attains the Bodhisattvaship of Quietude. In a moment, he visits all the Buddhas in the ten quarters; and he is promised in the presence of each of them that he will soon become a Buddha. When he returns to his own Land (the Pure Land), he

obtains hundreds and thousands of Dharanis.

“This is the first division of the highest class of rebirth.

“The second division of the highest class of rebirth is this: One need not recite the Sutras, but should understand their meaning well and should not be astonished on hearing the Supreme Doctrine; and one should believe the Law of Cause and Effect and not calumniate the teachings of the Great Vehicle. By virtue of all these, one can be reborn in the Most Happy World.

“When a person who does according to what is said above is about to pass away, Amita Buddha together with Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattvas, surrounded by a great number of followers, holds a Purple-Golden-Terrace, and comes and praises him, saying, “Son of the Dharma, thou hast been practising the Great Vehicle and hast

understood the Supreme Doctrine. So I am coming to receive thee.” Thus, that Buddha and a thousand Reflection-Buddhas give him their hands simultaneously.

“Then he sees himself sitting on that Purple-Golden-Terrace, with hands joined together and praising all the Buddhas. In a moment, he is born in that Country, in the Seven-Jewel Pool. The Purple-Golden-Terrace is as a huge Jewel-flower, and it opens after one night.

“When the flower opens, such a man’s body is of a purplish golden colour; and under his feet there are seven lotus flowers. At the same time, the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas emit rays which light upon him; and his eyes are thus opened. He hears that all the sounds of the Pure Land are saying thing about the profound Supreme Doctrine which he has learned already, Then he walks down from the Purple-Golden-Terrace, saluting and praising

the Buddha.

“During the course of seven days, he attains to the State of Samma-Sambodhi and henceforth he will never retrogress again. He is able to fly now, visiting all the Buddhas in the ten quarters and practising all kinds of Samadhi in their presence. After the interval of a small kalpa, he will attain the Bodhisattvaship of Quietude and be promised by all the Buddhas that he will soon become a Buddha.

“This is the second division of the highest class of rebirth.

“The third division of the highest class of rebirth is this: One should also believe the Law of Causality and have the mind to pursue the Supreme Doctrine, and should not slander the teachings of the Great Vehicle. By virtue of these, one can be reborn in the Most Happy World.

“When such a person is about to pass away,

Amita Buddha, holding a Golden-Lotus-Flower, with Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattvas and five hundred Reflection Buddhas, come to welcome him. These Reflection-Buddhas give him their hands simultaneously and praise him, saying, “Son of the Dharma, thou art now pure and hast the Mind of the Supreme Dharma. We are coming to receive thee.

“Having seen these things, he finds himself, sitting on the Golden-Lotus-Flower that shuts its petals when he has seated himself within. And then he follows the Blessed One (Amita Buddha) to be reborn in the Seven Jewel Pool. After one day and one night, he sees the Buddha. But he cannot see His whole figure and the Virtues distinctly until after three times seven days. Then he sees them clearly and hears that all the sounds are saying things about the Wonderful Law. He will go to visit all the

Buddhas in the ten quarters to make offerings to them and will hear the Profound Law in their presence. After three small kalpas, he will attain the Door of Wisdom of the Hundred Laws, and stay in the mental state of happiness.

“This is the third division of the highest class of rebirth. The foregoing three are the Visualization of the Highest Class (Rebirth), and it is the Fourteenth One.”

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, "The first division of the medium class of rebirth is this: Any person who observes the Five Precepts, the Eight Precepts, or all of the Rules; and does not do the Five Enormities and has not evil conduct, he can, by virtue of these, perform an act of will to be reborn in the Most Happy World in the West.

“When he is about to pass away, Amita Buddha with many of His Bhikshus and surrounded by His followers emitting golden

rays, comes to him and teaches him the Laws of Sorrow, of Transitoriness and of Unreality; and extols the advantages of renouncing one's home — one can escape from suffering by relinquishing one's home.

“When he sees these, he is highly exhilarated; and he sees himself sitting on a lotus flower. He kneels down paying homage to the Buddha. In a very short moment, before his head has risen up from salutation, he is born in the Most Happy World.

“The lotus flower opens immediately; and he hears that all the sounds are commending the Four Noble Truths. At this time, he attains to the Arahatsip, and achieves the Three Wisdoms, the Six Supernatural Powers and the Eight Emancipations.

“This is the first division of the medium class of rebirth.

“The second division of the medium class of

rebirth is this: Any person who observes the Eight Precepts, or keeps the Ten Rules of Sramaneras, or lives under the Perfect Rules, for even one day and one night, can, by virtue of any of these, perform an act of will to be reborn in the Most Happy World.

“He who practises the observance of the Rules in this way, when passing away, sees Amita Buddha holding a seven jewels lotus flower, with many of His followers, appear in front of him. He hears that there is a sound in the air, saying, ‘Good Man, thou hast conducted thyself in accordance with the teaching of the Buddhas of the three periods. I am coming to receive thee.’ Then he sees himself sitting in the lotus flower, which shuts itself when he has taken his seat within. And he is reborn in the Seven-Jewel-Pond of the Most Happy World.

“After seven days, when the flower opens, his eyes are also opened. He joins his hands palm

to palm to praise the Blessed One. He attains to the Sainthood of Sotapanna after having heard the Dharma. When half a kalpa has elapsed, he will attain to the Arahatsip.

“This is the second division of the medium class of rebirth.

The third division of the medium class of rebirth is this: When a good man or good woman who supports his (or her) parents and whose conduct is kind towards the world, is about to pass away, he (or she) will meet a benefactor, who will tell him (or her) about all the magnificent things in the most Happy World of Amita Buddha, and who will also relate for him (or her) the Forty-eight Vows of the Bhikshu Dharmakara.

“He passes away amid these good words, and is reborn in the Most Happy World in the West, as quickly as a strong man stretches his arm out and folds it again.

“After seven days, he meets Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattvas and he becomes happy and gains the Sainthood of Sotapanna after having heard the Dharma. He will become an Arahat in a small kalpa.

“This is the third division of the medium class of rebirth. The foregoing three are the Visualization of the Medium Class (Rebirth), and it is the Fifteenth One.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, "The first division of the inferior class of rebirth is this: A person who, although he does not slander the Sutras of the Great Vehicle, yet performs all evil deeds is such an unwise person that he does evil things without knowing that they are evils. Should such a man, when he is about to pass away, meet a beneficial person, who tells him the names of the Sutras in the twelve divisions of the Great Vehicle; he could by virtue of hearing the names of the Sutras, be

exempted from the results of the atrocious sins committed during the time of one thousand kalpas. The wise one will tell him also to join his hands together and repeat the name of Amita Buddha. By repeating the name of this Buddha, he is exempted from rebirth for five million kalpas.

Then Amita Buddha sends a Reflection-Buddha, a Reflection Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and a Reflection Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva to come to him and praise him, saying, ‘Good Man, thou, having repeated the Buddha’s name, art purified from all repeated the Buddha’s name, art purified form all sins. We are coming to receive thee.’ Having heard these words, he sees that the Reflection-Buddha’s light pervades his room. On seeing that, he is very happy and expires at once. He follows the Reflection-Buddha, sitting in a jewel lotus, to be reborn in the Jewel-Pool.

After seven times seven days the flower opens.

When the flower opens, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, the Great Compassionate One, and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva, effusing great light, come to him to teach him the Very Profound Dharma, which is in the twelve divisions. He comprehends and believes the Dharma after having heard it; and he cultivates the Mind of the Supreme Dharma. He will achieve the Door of Wisdom of the Hundred Laws in ten small kalpas, and will attain to the First State of Happiness.

“This is the first division of the inferior class of rebirth.’

The Budha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, "The second division of the inferior class of rebirth is this: Supposing there were a person who violated the Five Precepts, the Eight Precepts, or the Perfect Rules and there were a person so unwise as to steal the property

of the Sangha, or the belongings of a monk, and claim for himself a position in the Dharma pretentiously and without shame, or cover himself with the evil of such deeds; on account of his evil karma, he would be born in hell. Flames from hell would come to him instantly, when he were about to pass away.

“Should he meet a benefactor who, out of compassion, tells him things about Amita Buddha and the virtue of His Ten Powers, also commending the Emancipation of Rules, of Meditation and of Wisdom, and the knowledge of deliverance; the person having heard these words, would be exempted from rebirth for eight million kalpas and the flames would become a pleasant and soothing breeze, wafting heavenly flowers on which there are Reflection-Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who come to receive him.

‘In a moment, he could be reborn in the

Seven-Jewel-Pool from a lotus flower, which would open in a period of six kalpas. At this time, Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattvas would console him with soft voices by telling him of those profound Sutras of the Great Vehicle. He would at once cultivate the Mind of the Supreme Dharma, after having heard the Law.

“This is the second division of the inferior class of rebirth.’

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda and Vaidehi, "The third division of the inferior class of rebirth is this: Supposing there were a person who did evil deeds such as the Five Enormities, the Ten Evil Deeds and all kinds of evils, such a wicked person owing to his evil deeds would fall into the Evil States and suffer heavily during many kalpas.

“Should such an unwise person, at the moment of his passing away, meet a benefactor

who consoled and told him of the Wonderful Law, and who taught him how to repeat the name of Amita Buddha, he would be saved. But he would now be in such harrowing pain that he would not be able to do so. The benefactor would advise him, saying, ‘If you cannot repeat the Buddha’s name, you should then think of the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life.’ Then he would sincerely say in his heart: ‘Namo Amita Buddha’ for ten moments without interlude. By virtue of his thinking of that Buddha, at each moment, he would be exempted from rebirth for eight million kalpas.

“When he expired, he would see a golden lotus flower, as brilliant as the sun, staying in front of him. And he would be reborn in the Most Happy World immediately.

“He would stay in the lotus flower for twelve big kalpas before it opened. When the flower opened, Avalokitesvara and Mahasthamaprapta

Bodhisattvas would approach and tell him in kind voices the real nature of all things and the way of purgation of sins. On hearing these words he would be delighted and would, at the same time, cultivate the Mind of the Supreme Dharma.

“This is the third division of the inferior class of rebirth. And the foregoing three are the Visualization of the Inferior Class (Rebirth), and it is the Sixteenth One.”

While hearing these words from the Buddha, Queen Vaidehi and her five hundred maids of honour saw the Most Happy World completely: the Buddha (Amita) and the two Bodhisattvas. They were highly delighted on seeing these and acknowledged that they had never seen such things before. They realized the Truth and attained to the State of Quietude at once. At the same time, the five hundred maids of honour cherished the Mind of

Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi and had the wish to be reborn in the Pure Land. The Buddha promised them that it would be so and that after having been born in that Country, they would obtain the Samadhi of the Buddhas.

There were many heavenly beings who at the moment cultivated the Mind of the Supreme Dharma.

At that time, the Venerable Ananda rose up from his seat and inquired of the Buddha, saying, 'Blessed One, what will be the name of the present Sutra, and how should one realize this Dharma?' To this the Buddha answered, 'This Sutra shall be called "The Sutra of Visualizing the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva of the Most Happy World". And it may also be entitled as "The Sutra of Purifying Evil Deeds and Being born in the Presence of the Buddhas." You

should realize it constantly and not let it be forgotten.

'One who realizes this Samadhi will see the Buddha of Immeasurable Length of Life and the two Bodhisattvas in one's present life. Any good man or good woman who has heard the name of that Buddha and those of the two Bodhisattvas, will be exempted from the result of evil karmas of rebirth of countless kalpas. It is needless to say what the advantages of visualizing and thinking of them will be, if one does so.

'One who repeats that Buddha's name, is a Pundarika flower among mankind, and has Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and Mahasthamaprapta Bodhisattva as his benefactors. He will sit under a Bo-tree and will achieve Enlightenment.'

The Buddha told the Venerable Ananda, 'You should remember well what I have expounded.

Remembering those words has the same merit as repeating the name of that Buddha.'

When the Buddha had delivered this sermon, the Venerable Mahamaudgalyayana, the Venerable Ananda, Queen Vaidehi and all who were present were very much pleased on hearing His words.

Then the Blessed One, walking in the air, returned to the Gridhrakuta Mountain. The Venerable Ananda (when he had returned to the Mountain with the Buddha), reiterated the foregoing Dharma for all the Bhikshus, and many gods, dragons and Raksassas. They were all very happy on hearing what the Buddha had said (through the Venerable Ananda), and retired with pleasure after having paid homage to the Buddha.



# **Discourse on Samantabhadra's Beneficence Aspirations**

普賢行願品

Translated into English from the Chinese

by Simpei Shao

邵心培居士 英譯



## Foreword

The present title of this book is an abridgement of the original one for the chapter which in its entirety should read:

“Chapter on Admission unto Inconceivable State of Emancipation through Beneficence Aspirations of The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra.”

It is the Epilogue or last chapter of “The Mahavaipulya Buddha Avantamsaka Sutra” of Mahayana School. Since this Avantamsaka Sutra is considered and esteemed by Chinese Buddhists as the King of all Sutras and the present chapter the cream and sublimated essence of the whole Sutra, it can be readily seen the position it occupies in the mind of Buddhists in general and Chinese Buddhists in particular.

The original text was translated from Sanskrit to Chinese by Ven. Prajna from India

in year 1340 B.E./796 AD of C.E. For those who read Chinese, the original Chinese text is to be found on reverse side of book. A simplified Glossary of Buddhist terminology referred in this book in Sanskrit with equivalent in English and Chinese has been added to facilitate those who are not familiar with such terms. Readers who are newly introduced to Buddhism are kindly advised to keep on with other sacred books of Buddhist Canon, e.g., The Jewel of Trancendental Wisdom or Diamond Sutra, Surangama Sutra, etc. once their interest or faith has been aroused.

As a point of interest, the translator has placed the reprints of two old newspaper articles appeared on one of the local newspapers dated May 9th, 1957 and Nov. 1st, 1959 respectively: one with the title “What is nothing made out of?” and the other “This earth of ours: Try running your imagination over

these hurdles into space.” The aim for this is two-fold, viz. Firstly to pave the way mentally for those who, for the first time being introduced to such Buddhist paradoxical expressions such as “Matter does not differ from void”, “Matter is thus void and void is thus matter”, as depicted in Prajna Paramita Hridaya Sutra; or “Worlds Ksetra-motes in number” “Inconceivable number of Ksetras in one single dust-mote”, “Seas of Three-Yugas enacted in just one hair tip”, etc. as depicted in this discourse, are hoped to be made easier to comprehend in the compromise of turning an apparent antithesis into synthesis or the interchangeability between void and matter, greatness and smallness, past, present and future, etc. The metaphysical conception as expounded in this discourse as well as many others of Mahayana School may not be readily apprehensible or acceptable by many who

allow their mind to be confined in a sense servitude and incline to take the face value or normally accepted sense of the obvious relativity as the only invincible truth and answer concerning the myth of life and our universe, however, they will eventually transcend such preconceptions though, like many others before them did. As to how can this be achieved is simply impossible to be explained. It can only be realized by intuition and not by merely reading through a booklet of this form: hence the translator's exhortation to pursue on further the discourses of other Sutras.

(Please vide also Glossary under “Isvara”)

The readers are therefore kindly requested to read the discourse with a reserve for later intuition or enlightenment and not to treat these expressions preliminarily as fantastic and leave them there. For instance, similar problems like “What is nothing made of?” etc. must have

been attempted to solve by many in the past, present, or will be in the future, none, however, was, is, or will be conclusive. It is with these points in mind that these two dust-collecting articles are reproduced for readers' reference. Secondly, our universe of such vast proportions as we now know through the timely news-paper report in 1959 was, however, well known by Buddhists since over 2,000 years ago through discourses such as the present one together with many others besides.

The translator is well aware of his incompetency in translation and errors being undetected in presenting this work which is his very first attempt in this field or perhaps his very last on account of his advanced age, debilitated state of his health and lack of experience. It is therefore sincerely hoped that some day other worthy man or worthy woman would aspire to present us a better version to

perpetuate this sublime Dharma so that the present effort may serve, ad interim, to fill this gap. On completion of this work, it is also ambitiously hoped that in a not too distant future, other devotees of different countries may take up from here and have the discourse translated still further into more diverse languages used in the world today, such as French, German, Spanish, etc. to make this a multi-linguaged discourse to consummate Bodhisattva Samantabhadra's Aspirations in Dharma dissemination.

Grateful thanks are due to votaress P.C. Lee whose early translation has provided, inter alia, most of the necessary notes for Sanskrit terms and to all my friends and associates in similar endeavours to have jointly contributed funds to make the production of this work possible.

*Simpei Shao*

*Hong Kong, 2515 B.E. /1971 C.E.*

## **Discourse on Samantabhadra's Beneficence Aspirations**

Having eulogized the exalted merits and virtues of the Tathagata, Bodhisattva Samantabhadra addressed those gathered Bodhisattvas and Kumara Sudhana as follows:

“Worthy men, even if all Buddhas of the ten quarters consecutively enumerate through kalpas as numerous as the number of motes contained in the ineffable numbers of Buddha-Ksetras, the account of the magnitude of Tathagata’s merits and virtues will still be inexhausted.”

“To achieve the attainment of this exalted state of merit and virtues, there are ten grand Beneficence Aspirations to practise and pursue. (Thereupon Kumara Sudhana asked:) Whatever the ten may they be? (Bodhisattva Samantabhadra replied:)

**Firstly:** Make obeisance to all Buddhas

**Secondly:** Eulogizing Tathagata

**Thirdly:** Proffer abundant oblations

**Fourthly:** Penitence over misdeeds and evil doings

**Fifthly:** Willingly acquiesce in all meritorious deeds

**Sixthly:** Entreat Buddha to perpetuate Dharma-cakra

**Seventhly:** Beseech Buddha to take constant mundane domicile

**Eighthly:** Constantly be zealous follower of Buddha's teachings

**Ninthly:** Be responsive in sympathy and in concord with all sentient beings

**Tenthly:** Dedicate all merits to Bodhi and all sentient beings.”

Kumara Sudhana then said: “Oh great sage, how may obeisance through all others to dedication be observed and followed.” To this

Bodhisattva Samantabhadra replied:

“ Worthy man, to make obeisance to Buddha through power of Samantabhadra's Beneficence Aspirations, profound perception, insight and presence of mind, is to make obeisance to them over by deeds of chaste action, speech and volition as if all the Buddhas, throughout Void-dhatu and Dharma-dhatu as numerous as all the dust-motes contained in Ksetras of ten quarters through three-Yugas, are facing me in person. A Nirmanakaya would be transmuted by me to make obeisance to every Buddha in every Buddha domain which is incalculable in number or as numerous as the dust-motes in a Buddha Ksetra. Until the infinite space exhausted, so will my obeisance end; but since space is boundless, so is my obeisance to Buddha ceaseless. And, until the sphere or the Klesa of sentient beings come to and end will then my obeisance end. These too

beings endless, even so is my obeisance to Buddha ceaseless ever with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by indefatigable deeds of action, colloquy and volition."

“ Next, worthy man, about eulogizing Tathagata, it is thus: As there are numerous Buddhas, each with seas of gathering Bodhisattvas, in every dust-mote, multiplying it by number of motes in a world and then galaxies of worlds of ten quarters through three-Yugas, I will manifest by as many Nirmanakayas before each Buddha and eulogize the merit of Buddha with my profound comprehension, insight, presence of mind, oratorical eloquence surpassing that of Sarasvati, and with each tongue, issuing forth seas of boundless dialogues, heard throughout the universe, till the end of boundless future. My eulogy ceases only if the Void-dhatu, or the

sphere, Karma, Klesa of sentient beings, should come to an end. These too being endless, even so is my eulogy of Buddha's merit ceaseless with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy and volition.”

“Further, worthy man, about proffering abundant oblations, it is thus: As there are numerous Buddhas each with seas of gathering Bodhisattvas, in every dust-mote, multiplying it by number of motes in a world and then galaxies of worlds of ten quarters through three-Yugas, before each and every Buddha, I will, through my power of Samantabhadra's Beneficence Aspirations, profound perception, insight and presence of mind, proffer superb oblations as abundant as clouds, of flowers, head dresses, celestial music, tapestries, heavenly garments, perfumes, diverse kinds of incense, quantitatively for each item being

commensurable to size of Mt. Sumeru. So are all kinds of votive lamps, burning butter, oil, scented oil as quantitative as water of sea, collective wicks of each kind as the size of Mt. Sumeru. Worthy man, even with all those offerings, the best or cream of them all will be offering of incessant toil for Dharma, beneficence to and sustenance of sentient beings, vicarious sacrifice for sentient beings, industrious pursuance over cultivation of beneficence root, abandon not Bodhi-karma and secede not from Bodhi-citta. For, the boundless merits of the former will not come to ever 1/100th, 1/1,000th, nay, nor 1/100,000th part of koti, Nayuta, kalau or Upanishad, in comparison with the latter. And wherefore? Because Dharma is being held in highest esteem by all Tathagatas, and all Buddhas are begotten through Dharma. When Bodhisattvas proffer Dharma offerings, they would have

consummated, or in true sense of the word, succeeded in their oblation offering. And by such pursuance, the offerings are truly supreme and most exquisite. My effort of such offerings ceases only should the Void-dhatu, or the Sphere, karma, Klesa of sentient beings come to an end. These too being endless, even so is my effort of pursuance ceaseless, ever with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by indefatigable deeds of action, colloquy and volition.

Further, worthy man, for being penitent over misdeeds and evil doings is thus: A Bodhisattva would give retrospection like this:

“For all the accumulated evil deeds I committed throughout the immeasurable past Kalpas through avarice, hatred and illusion, manifested by action, speech and mind; if such deeds were corporeal, even the whole cosmic space could not accommodate all of them; I

would prostrate in front of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of boundless Ksetras, express my sincere penitence ever by deeds of chaste action, speech and mind, avouch never to commit them again, but abide by the merits of sanctified precepts. My penitence will cease only if the Void-dhatu, or the Sphere, Karma, Klesa of sentient beings should come to an end. These too being endless, so will my penitence be ceaseless, with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy and volition.

Further, worthy man, to acquiesce willingly in all meritorious deeds is thus: I would acquiesce willingly and emulate all the meritorious good roots of Buddhas as numerous as the number of dust-motes of all Buddha-ksetras of ten quarters through three-Yugas and for the duration as long as the unutterable and innumerable past kalpas,

starting from their originated aspiration, devotion in all sagacity acquisition, and ardent engagement in merit accumulation by means of ascetic pursuance even at the cost or sacrifice of their own body, head, eye or limb in unutterable and uncalculable quantity or in number even as much as all the dust-motes of a Buddha-ksetra so as to consummate numerous Paramitas, gain access to diverse Bodhisattva's sagacity, and accomplish the highest, incomparable enlightenment up to the occasion on their entering Parinirvana and distributing Sariras thereafter. I would also acquiesce willingly in merits even as infinitesimal as a single dust-mote, gained by any species of existence of creature, whether as Deva-loka, Asura, human being, beast, ghost, demon in purgatorial hell, or of creatures born through media of womb, egg, moist, and by metamorphosis. I would also acquiesce

willingly in the merits of all the Sravakas, Pratyeka-Bhddhas, savants as well as neophytes of the ten quarters through three-Yugas. Moreover, I would acquiesce willingly in all the Bodhisattvas's grand merit of incessant toil for Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi till the end of Void-dhatu, or the end of Sphere, karma and klesa of sentient beings. These being endless, so will my willing acquiesce be ceaseless, with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy and volition.

Further, worthy man, to entreat Buddha to perpetuate Dharma-cakra is thus: As there are ineffable numbers of vast Buddha-Ksetras in every grain of dust-mote, multiplying it by number of motes in a world and then galaxies of worlds of the ten quarters through three-Yugas throughout Void-dhatu and Dharma-dhatu, and in each ksetra, momentarily

there are ineffable numbers of Buddhas, as numerous as all the motes of a Buddha-Ksetra, each with seas of gathered Bodhisattvas, attaining incomparable enlightenment, I would, with deeds of chaste action, colloquy, volition and diverse expediences, earnestly entreat Buddhas to turn the Dharma-cakra in motion. Thus the Void-dhatu may end, the Spheres, Karma, Klesa of sentient beings may come to an end, my effort of entreating Buddhas to perpetuate turning of Dharma-cakra would be ceaseless, with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy, and volition.

Further, worthy man, beseeching Buddha to take constant mundane domicile is thus: Upon the time when Buddhas, ineffably infinite in number, of all the Buddha-Ksetras of the ten quarters through three-Yugas throughout Dharma-dhatu and Void-dhatu, as well as

Bodhisattvas, Sravakas, Pratyeka-Buddhas, adepts, neophytes or even those well learnt devotees who, having attained enlightenment, are ready for Parinirvana, I would beseech them not to enter Nirvana but to continue their mundane domicile for kalpas as numerous as the dust-motes of all Buddha-Ksetras to benefit all sentient beings. Thus even though the Void-dhatu, the Spheres, Karma, Klesa of sentient beings may come to an end, my beseeching will never cease, but keep on endlessly with thoughts, incessant and unremitting, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy and volition.

Further, worthy man, be zealous follower of Buddha's teachings is thus: At the time as early as Tathagata Vairocana of this Saha-world first began to aspire and pursue for Bodhi with his unyielding tenacity, he had sacrificed his life by unutterably countless number of times, and

given even his striped skin for usage as parchment, bones as writing instrument, blood as ink in offerings, to write or copy scriptures as quantitative as Mt. Sumeru. For the reverence of Dharma, life itself would be disregarded and sacrificed, so would be throne, dominions, cities, palaces, gardens and all other possessions given up in pursuance of various modes of ascetic and incessant toils till his ultimate attainment of Incomparable Enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree, with manifestations of his diverse supernatural power, transmutation power, and diverse forms of Buddha-rupas, duly accomplished. He would then preside over congregations or Bodhi-mandalas, with gathered Bodhisattvas, or gathered Sravakas, or gathered Pratyeka-Buddhas, or gathered assemblies of Tchakra-varti-Radjas, petty state kings and their respective retinues, or gathered assemblies

of Kshatryas, Brahmins, elders, laymen, or even gathered assemblies of eight divisions of celestial or invisible supramundane forms of beings led by Devas and Nagas, and creatures not of mankind. While presiding over such assemblies he would convoke with unique voice as astounding thunder claps to relish them in conformation with their inclinations, to conduce and maturate all sentient beings for attainment of Nirvana. All these, I would earnestly follow and learn not only from the present World Honoured One Vairocana, but also from all Tathagatas manifested in all the dust-motes of all ksetras of ten quarters through three-Yugas throughout Dharma-dhatu and Void-dhatu. Should even the Void-dhatu, the Spheres, Karma and Klesa of sentient beings come to an end, I would still be zealously following and learning all such teachings without cessation, ever with incessant and

unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy, and volition.

Further, worthy man, by being always responsive in sympathy and in concord with sentient beings is thus: There are various kinds of sentient beings of the cosmic worlds of ten quarters through three-Yugas throughout Dharma-dhatu and Void-dhatu irrespective of their birth through placenta, egg born, out of moisture or by metamorphosis; live under various environments as on earth, in water, in heat, in air or on tree, in bush or flying in space; of diverse species, forms, sizes, lineaments, life span, castes, appellations, nature, intelligence, desires, mentality, manners, wearing apparels, consuming victuals; living in diverse towns, among nomadic groups, in cities or palaces; so on as to whether they are celestial beings of the eight divisions led by Devas and Nagas, human beings or creatures other than mankind;

creatures without legs, with two legs, four legs or multiple legs; with form, without form, with sense, without sense or neither with nor without sense. To all these, I will always be acquiescent, cherish, and venerate as my parents, teachers, Arakhams, or even as Tathagatas. I will be a good physician to the sick, a guide to show the right path for those who lose their way, light to shine for those in darkness, discoverer of buried wealth for those in poverty. Wherefore a Bodhisattva is equally beneficent to all sentient beings? For, if a Bodhisattva who would acquiesce to all sentient beings will be the same as being acquiescent in veneration of all Buddhas; to honor and serve sentient beings is to have honored and served Tathagata; and to gratify all sentient beings is to have gratified all Tathagatas. And wherefore? Because the essence originating the Tathagata is the all-embracing compassionate heart which is

developed for all sentient beings and through which Bodhi-citta is sprouted and through Bodhi-citta, the Incomparable Enlightenment is attained. This would compare with a mighty king size tree, grown in barren sand of the wilderness; if its rootlets get water, it flourishes with plentiful foliage, blossoms, and fruits. Even so is the Bodhi-tree king grown in the wilderness of life and death. All sentient beings are the rootlets of this Bodhi-tree and all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas are the blossoms and fruits thereof. When sentient beings are being nourished by water of all-embracing compassion, this Bodhi-tree will bloom and bear the sagacity fruits of Buddhas and Bodhi-sattvas. And wherefore? Because if Bodhisattvas would apply this nectar of compassion onto sentient beings, they would have consummated Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi. Being so, sentient beings are essential to Bodhi,

for without them, no Bodhisattva will be able to attain Incomparable Enlightenment. Ponder well, worthy man, on the truth of this parable. Look upon all sentient beings with impartial mind, so as all-embracing compassion can thus be consummated; and to accord and bestow this compassion upon all sentient beings alike may then be considered as having succeeded in oblation offering to Tathagata. This effort of Bodhisattva's acquiescence with compassion for all sentient beings will never cease even should Void-dhatu, or Spheres, Karma, and Klesa of sentient beings come to an end. Even so will my effort of responsive concord never cease, but it will be pursued ever with incessant & unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy and volition.

And further, worthy man, as to dedicate all acquired merits is thus: All the merits accumulated by obeisance in the first instance

up to responsive concord are all to be reverted for bestowment upon all sentient beings throughout Dharma-dhatu and Void- dhatu, wishing them always be secure and happy, be free from sickness and affliction, be able to frustrate attempts of evil deeds, be rapidly successful on good endeavors; blockading all approaches leading to malevolence for them, showing men and Devas alike the right course leading to Nirvana, and bearing vicariously the accumulated great sufferings for those on retribution for their evil deeds so that eventually they may gain liberation therefrom and consummate Incomparable Enlightenment in the end. Even should the Void-dhatu, the Spheres, Karma, or Klesa of sentient beings come to an end, my reversion dedication will know no end, but will be kept on with incessant and unremitting thoughts, culminated by deeds of indefatigable action, colloquy and volition.

Now, worthy man, these are what lead to the consummation of Bodhisattva Mahasattvas' ten grand Aspirations. If Bodhisattvas would acquiesce and adhere to these Aspirations, they would have acquiesced with Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi and they would have consummated the Beneficence Aspirations of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. It is so, worthy man, that you should comprehend. Any worthy man or woman who would fill the incalculable number of worlds as numerous as the total number of dust-motes contained in unutterable and innumerable Buddha-Ksetras of the ten quarters with the seven exquisite treasures as offerings, or provide superb entertainment and comfort, fit for celestial as well as human beings, to all the sentient beings of that many Ksetras, or to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all the ksetras unremittingly through ksetra-motes in number of Kalpas without cessation, this said

person would have accumulated merit in abundance. However, the merit acquired through the above effort, if compared with one who merely listens once the recitation of this king of Aspirations, then the former will not come to even 1/100th part, nay, nor 1/1,000th part, nor one Upanisandth part of the latter. Or, if another one who, with profound faith in this Aspirations, will follow in practising, reciting or just writing over one of the gathas, his sins, even Panchanantaryani committed in the past, would be expiated forthwith, all the worldly sufferings, ailments of physical or mental nature eradicated, even the cause of retribution for all his accumulated sinful commitments amount to as much as all the dust-motes of a Buddha-Ksetra absolved. All malevolent forces of the gnomes or demons, such as those of Yakchas, Rakchasas, Kumbhandas, Pisacas, Bhutas, etc., whether of carnivorous or blood

sucking species, erst-while ready to harm him, would either vanish or instead of doing harm, even aspire to stand guard and give him protection. Therefore, whosoever recites this Aspirations, he would be liken to the moon, out of hazy clouds and shining in space, and would encounter no hindrance nor impediment while living in the world.

“He will be praised by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas alike, honoured and venerated by both celestial or fellow beings. Such a worthy man will always be well incarnated as man to consummate Bodhisattva Samantabhadra’s merits and will have the same features, as that of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra’s requited body with thirty-two exquisite attributes, and will be a superhuman among men. Whether regenerated as Deva or man, he will always be among noble class, with faculty to destroy malevolent influences, to segregate himself

from defilements. As a lion king to conquer all species of animals, he deserves veneration of all sentient beings. Furthermore, on the last ksana prior to his death, with his sense organs deteriorated and in decay, forsaken by his relatives and kinsfolk, deprived of power and influence, his courtiers and followers dispersed, his palaces, courts, elephants, horse carriages, jewels, treasure repositories left behind; this King of Aspirations, however, will never desert him but will lead and guide him all the while, straight on to Sukhavati, in a Ksana. Once there, he will see Buddha Amitabha, surrounded by Bodhisattvas Manjusri, Samantabhadra, Avalokitesvara, Maitreya and others, all with resplendently superb Rupa, perfect virtues and merits. He will see himself being regenerated through lotus blossom to accept Buddha's Vyakarana. That accomplished, he will then be able to apply his sagacity, to acquiesce in the

desire of, and to dispense benefits to, all sentient beings throughout the ineffable number of worlds of the ten quarters through countless myriads of kalpas. Not much later he will manifest himself by squatting at Bodhi-mandala, quelling the forces of Mara, consummating the Incomparable Enlightenment, setting the Dharma-cakra in motion, enabling all sentient beings of innumerable worlds of ksetra-motes in number to aspire after Bodhi-citta, training and inducing them to mature in conforming to their individual nature and propensity. He will even endeavour copiously to benefit all sentient beings throughout seas of Kalpas in the infinite future.

“ So, worthy man, whosoever of the multitude, having heard of this Great King of Aspirations, will accept, recite, expound, and have faith thereof, none but Buddha, the World

Honoured One, can estimate his merits thus derived. Therefore, let no doubt to cloud your mind on hearing of this King of Aspirations but accept with devotion, read, recite, practise, publish, and disseminate them for the benefit of others. Such persons will thus be liable to consummate all their actions and aspirations appertaining to acquire and accumulate boundless bliss thereby, and to deliver all sentient beings from the great sea of pain and sorrow for the ultimate regeneration in Sukhavati, Land of Pure Bliss of Buddha Amtabha.”

Thereupon, Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra, with a mind to re-emphasize this theme, casted his gaze around all ten quarters and paraphrased the following Stanzas:

*1. With chaste action, colloquy and volition, I  
pay homage and make obeisance to all Lions of  
Man of three-Yugas in all worlds of the ten  
quarters.*

2. *By augustly divine power of Smantabhadra's Beneficence Aspirations, I manifest myself before all Tathagatas, emanating Ksetra-motes in number of Nirmanakayas, prostrating and paying homage to Buddhas, Ksetra-motes in number.*
3. *There exist, in one dust-most, Ksetra-motes in number of Buddhas, with their respective assemblies of Bodhisattvas, thus I believe all the motes of boundless Dharma-dhatus are, each of them, so filled.*
4. *With seas of diverse voices and inexhaustive eulogy, throughout all the future kalpas, would I praise the seas of profound merits and virtues of the Buddha.*
5. *I would proffer the most exquisite oblations of flowery banners, garlands, as well as nautch, music, scented ointments, and canopies, for veneration of all Buddhas.*
6. *So are most exquisite garments and*

*perfumeries, incenses, votive lamps, and candles, piled as high as Mt. Sumeru in abundance, proffered in veneration of all Tathagatas.*

7. *With extensive perception and profound faith in all Buddhas of three-Yugas, and through fortified strength of Samantabhadra's Aspirations, I offer universal veneration of all Tathagatas.*

8. *For all deeds of depravity committed in my infinite past through avarice, hatred, and illusion, culminated in action, colloquy, and mind, regret and repent now I do.*

9. *The merits and virtues of all sentient beings in worlds of ten quarters, or those of adepts and neophytes alike aspiring for Sravaka, Pratyeka-Buddha of Hinayana School, or those of all Tathagatas and Bodhisattvas, I acquiesce willingly in all their endeavours.*

10. *Those pioneers of Bodhi consummation, who likened to the lamps illuminating cosmos of the*

*ten quarters, I do so earnestly entreat that they will perpetuate the rotation of Dharma-cakra.*

*11. Comes the time for the Buddhas to set for Nirvana, I earnestly entreat that they may remain for further duration of boundless kalpas to benefit and delight all sentient beings.*

*12. May all the blessed bliss requited through cultivation of the ennobled roots of obeisance, eulogy, entreaty for Dharma-cakra turning and mundane domicile, acquiescence, and repentance, be all reverted and bestowed upon all sentient beings or be dedicated to Buddha-Dharma.*

*13. I adhere to Tathagata's teaching in practising the consummation of Samantabhadra's Aspirations, thus the veneration of all Tathagatas of the past and present, and throughout the ten quarters are realized.*

*14. As to all the Sastadeva-Manuchayanis yet to come, may all their blessed volitions be fulfilled.*

*I aspire to learn the teachings of all Buddhas through three-Yugas, so that the Great Bodhi may promptly be gained.*

15. *In all ksetras of the ten quarters, grand, tranquil, and sanctified, numerous Tathagatas are there with their respective assemblies, congregating under their respective kingly Bodhi-trees.*

16. *Wishing all sentient beings of the ten quarters, to be free from grief, to be ever peaceful and happy, to gain the advantage of abstruse and truthful Dharma, and to be able to eradicate defilements of life.*

17. *When striving for Bodhi attainment, Purvanivasanu Smritidjnana is acquired in every form of life; be always able to denunciate worldliness, and to observe meticulously, not to taint, nor to transgress the sanctified precepts.*

18. *Whether they are Devas, Nagas, Yakchas, Kumbhandas, human or not human beings, to*

*whom I disseminate Bodhi-Dharma, diverse phonetics would be employed, so that each will apprehend as if expressed in his own tongue.*

*19. Incessantly practising sanctified Paramitas, so as Bodhi-citta is not neglected nor lost, and with total eradication of defilements, all lofty endeavours may thus be consummated.*

*20. Strive to emancipate from worldly influence of illusion and Mara, like the lotus above water in a detached position, or like the sun and moon in the cosmoa circulating by but never abiding.*

*21. To relieve the distress of sentient beings in Gatis, and to bestow happiness impartially upon all others; such endeavours would be carried out incessantly throughout the ten quarters and through boundless future Kalpas.*

*22. I will ever be responsive in sympathy for all sentient beings throughout all future Kalpas, cherish, practise Samantabhadra's Beneficence, and consummate the incomparably great*

*Maha-Bodhi.*

23. *Those of my fellow devotees, who gather together with me at all places and with identical action, colloquy, and volition, shall ever be with me in realizing our joint pursuance of Beneficence Aspirations.*
24. *All those savants, who enlighten me and demonstrate to me Samantabhadra's Beneficence, will always be my associates in congregation and be rejoiced at my presence.*
25. *My fervent wish is to be always within sight of Tathagatas, with votaries surrounding them; to all of them and throughout all coming kalpas, profuse oblations will be proffered indefatigably.*
26. *I would aspire to practise the sublime Dharma of all Buddhas, to demonstrate all Bodhi Bahukayanes, to consummate Samantabhadra's serene activities, and to carry on thus throughout future kalpas.*

27. *During my lives in all forms of existence, meritorious bliss and wisdom would always be cultivated with incessant toil; and through pursuance of Samadhi, Prajna, Upaya, and Vimutti, boundless merits would thus be accumulated.*
28. *As in one single dust-mote there are inconceivable number of ksetras, so is impalpable number of Buddhas in each ksetra; and by all Buddhas together with respective assemblies, I see the incessant toil, for Bodhi enacted therein.*
29. *Throughout seas of ksetras of the ten quarters and through seas of three-Yugas enacted in just one hair tip, I toil incessantly for seas of kalpas, serving seas of Buddhas in seas of ksatras.*
30. *All Tathagatas' voices being pure and intelligible, once uttered, seas of diverse phonetic sounds are formed; in concordance with the desired tone of sentient beings, every*

*word emits seas of Buddha's oratory eloquence.*

31. *By my profound sagacity, I could discern each and all, seas of colloquy as expressed by all Tathagatas of three-Yugas while the realistic and profound Dharma-cakra is being turned.*

32. *So can I penetrate into the futurity, by transmuting the length of all kalpas to one thought-flash, or penetrate into all kalpas of three-Yugas as if the duration is for just one single thought.*

33. *In one single thought-flash, I could make to see all Lions of Man throughout three-Yugas. Often would I enter Buddha's domain to gain phantasmic emancipation with mighty occult power.*

34. *As the sublimed Ksetras of three-Yugas could be made to appear in one tiniest hair tip, therein I would penetrate to sanctify, likewise, in all hair tips, ksetra-motes in number, throughout the ten quarters of universe, I would be there to*

*honour its sanctity in each of them.*

35. *All those who will be likened the World Illuminating Lights for ages to come, I would approach and be in close attendance with; during and throughout their emancipation, Dharma dissemination in countending worldlings' cognition, up till their final manifestation of Nirvana.*

36. *Take now, the occult power: of supremundane speed , of Mahayana penetrability into all barriers (fetters of human mind), of merit through sagacity and beneficence persuances, and that of all pervading august compassion;*

37. *Or, the power of all pervading sublime bliss, of non-attachment, non-clinging sagacity, of August Upaya in concentration and wisdom, and that of all pervasive Bodhi aggregation;*

38. *Or, the power of purify all acts of benevolence, to crush all defilements, to subdue all evil influence of Mara, and to consummate all*

*Samantabhadra's Beneficence activities;*

39.Or, the faculty to sanctify seas of Ksetras, to emancipate seas of worldlings, to discern seas of ethics, and to penetrate and immerse in seas of sagacity;

40.Or, the faculty to purify seas of pursuance undertakings, to consummate seas of aspirations, to be in proximity with, and to venerate, seas of Buddhas, and to toil indefatigably through seas of kalpas.

41.All those pursuances and aspirations for the magnificent Bodhi, as practised by all Tathagatas of three-Yugas, I would venerate and pursue to gain full cognition of Bodhi by accomplishing Samantabhadra's Beneficences.

42.The names of heir apparent of all Tathagatas have ever been the exalted Samantabhadra, so I dedicate all my good roots to aspire that all my sagacious activities be the same as the ones by that name.

43. *May my action, colloquy, thoughts be always serene and sanctified, so are my pursuances in all Ksetras; such sagacity can then be honoured as Samantabhadra's, may mine therefore match his in every way.*
44. *In order to sanctify Samantabhadra's Beneficences, as well as Manjusri's Aspirations, I would pursue incessantly and indefatigably through all coming kalpas to consummate their dedicated tasks.*
45. *As my pursuance (for Bodhi) is boundless in effort, so is Punya yielded therefrom boundless; abiding in my boundless beneficent activities, all occult powers are therefore thoroughly comprehended.*
46. *It is for attaining Manjusri's vigorous sagacity and for practising Samantabhadra's intellectual beneficences that I now dedicate all my cultivated good roots to adhere to their ideals by incessant toil.*

47. *As those great and most supreme Aspirations being extolled by all Buddhas of Three-Yugas, I dedicate all my cultivated good roots for the accomplishment of Samantabhadra's Beneficence activities.*

48. *Earnestly do I aspire to have all retardations cleared at approach of my death, so that I may get to see Buddha Amitabha while being regenerated in Sukhavati.*

49. *Having been thus regenerated, I would then have realized this Great Aspiration; and to consummate it in full, I would keep on the pursuance to comfort and benefit all sentient beings.*

50. *Amidst the serenity of Tathagata's assembly, and with my regeneration thereat through the superb lotus flower, I would be seeing the infinite resplendence of the Tathagata who will than preordain me the Vyakarana.*

51. *With this Vyakarana of Tathagata, I would*

*transmute Nirmanakayas by countless myriads in number, all possessive of vast sagacity for pervading over the ten quarters of cosmos, to engage in beneficence endeavors reaching everywhere inhabited with sentient beings.*

52. *Until the void, the worlds, the sentient beings, Karma, Klesa, come to an end. Since those will never come to an end, so will my Aspirations be carried on forever and ever.*

53. *One who is able to procure abundantly precious treasures as oblation from boundless Ksetras of the ten quarters and offer them to Tathagata; and to bestow tranquil bliss upon celestial and sentient beings through Kalpas as numerous as Ksetra-motes; or*

54. *One who, upon hearing this superb King of Aspirations has his faith aroused and devotes himself fervently in seeking the realization of the sublime Bodhi, the Punya in magnitude of the latter surpasses that of the former.*

55. *He will always be able to disassociate himself from evil influences, to keep away from Gatis forever, and to see promptly the infinite resplendence of Tathagata for having fortified with this supreme Samantabhadra's Aspirations.*

56. *Such a person will enjoy a superb life of longevity, will be born well in respected family, and will consummate soon such Aspirations, identical to that of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra.*

57. *Through his deficiency of wisdom in his past, enormities of Panchanantaryani were committed; by reciting this Samantabhadra's King of Aspirations, so soon as on the instant for a thought, they would all be absolved.*

58. *Reborn in noble family and racial group, complete with refined lineament, grace, and sagacity that no Mara nor heretic can subdue or crush, verily he will be worthy of veneration*

*by all Trilokya beings.*

59. *Approaching directly the Bodhi-tree, king of trees, meditated thereunder he would have; and then he would subdue Maras, attain Perfect Enlightenment, and turn Dharma-cakra to benefit all sentient beings of the universe.*

60. *Whosoever will read, recite, practise or disseminate this Samantabhadra's Aspirations, only the Buddha can perceive and vouch for the extent of his fruition, and infallibly he will attain the supreme Bodhi.*

61. *Whosoever recites this Samantabhadra's Aspirations, he would have, to say the least of his potential good roots, consummated, in just a flash of thought, the serene aspirations of all sentient beings.*

62. *Through practising this my unique Samantabhadra's Aspirations, boundless superb bliss that produced thereby will all be bestowed upon all sentient beings still being*

*submerged in the sea of defilements, with my universal wish that ultimately they may all be delivered therefrom and be regenerated into Sukhavati.*

When Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra had duly concluded his discourse on this Great King of Aspirations and recitation of the serene Gathas thereof before the Tathagate, Kumara Sudhana was enraptured with ecstasy and all Bodhisattvas filled with joy. Thereupon, the Tathagata commended “Sadhu, Sadhu”.

At the assemble where this exalted Dharma leading to Inconceivable State of Emancipation was expounded, there were present the World Honoured One; a great number of sages and Bodhisattva Mahasattvas led by Bodhisattva Manjusri; and other great Bodhisattvas with their six thousand adept Bhikkhus led by Bodhisattva Maitreya. All other great

Bodhisattvas of the Bhadra-Kalpa were led by the Bodhisattva Vimala-Samantabhadra. Also in attendance were Buddhas-to-be, or Ekajati-Pratyeka-Buddhas who were at the stage of Murddhabhichikta as well as many other Bodhisattva Mahasattvas, as numerous as the Ksetra-motes over worlds of the ten quarters, led by the great sagacious Sariputra and the Mahamaudgalyayana, etc. There were also great Sravakas, celestial rulers, world rulers of all kinds, Devas, Nagas, Yakchas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Ganrudas, Kinaras, Mahoragas, fellowmen, and creatures other than mankind that formed the multitude of the congregation.

On hearing this discourse given by the Buddha, all those present were inspired with joy; and taking sincerely to heart, they strove for faithful compliance thereof.

**The End**

Buddham Saranam Gacchami  
Dhamman Saranam Gacchami  
Sangham Saranam Gacchami

## Glossary

**Abhidjanas – Six supernatural occult powers**

(六通)

Divyacaksus – Clairvoyance (天眼通)

Paracittajnana – Thought reading (他心通)

Divyasrota – Clairaudience (天耳通)

Riddhi Sakchatkriya – Divine speed (神足通)

Purvanivasanu Smritidjana – Knowledge of previous existence(宿命通)

Asravakchaya – Exhaustive knowledge ap-  
pertaining to the life stream of all sen-  
tient beings (漏盡通)

**Anasravah – Deed performed without leakage,  
i.e., an altruistic act done without consid-  
ering returns or retribution for benefit of  
oneself (無漏)**

**Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi – Trancendental  
knowledge and wisdom of Buddhas(阿耨多羅三  
藐三菩提)**

**Avalokitesvara – A Bodhisattva who has  
special affinity with sentient beings of this  
world (觀世音菩薩)**

**Bahukayani – Plentiful good actions (多善作)**

**Bhadra Kalpa – The era presently we are in (賢  
劫)**

**Bodhi – By means of which, Enlightenment is  
attained (菩提)**

**Bodhi-citta – Spiritual heart or Bodhi seed  
(菩提心)**

Bodhi-mandala – Convocation of Buddhist adherents where Buddha formally reached his Buddha-hood (道場)

Bodhisattva – Appellation for one who has reached the stage below that of Buddha (菩薩)

Buddha – Appellation for one who has reached the final stage of Perfect Enlightenment (佛) other appellations being:

Tathagata – Suchness (如來)

Arham – Veneration deserving (應供)

Samsaksam-Buddha – Full of universal knowledge (正徧知)

Vidyacarana Sampanah – With full knowledge of all supernatural powers (明行足)

Sagata – Having completed the pursuance of the Eight Noble Paths heading for Nirvana (善逝)

Lakavit – With thorough knowledge of the world (世間解)

Anuttarah – Highest order of sentient beings (無上士)

Purusadem-yasarathin – Great tamer of men (調御丈夫)

Sastadeva-manuchyanam – Teacher of both celestial and human beings (天人師)

The World Honoured One – (世尊)

Buddha-Rupa – Body of Buddha (佛身，佛像)

Dasabhadra – Ten worthy deeds (十善業)

Dasakusala – Ten vices or evil deeds (十惡業)

Deva-loka – One of the six divisions of existence or celestial beings(天); the other five divisions being: Asuras (修羅), Humankind (人), Hungry ghosts (餓鬼), Demons in purgatorial hells (地獄), and beasts (畜生).

Devas, Nagas, Yakchas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Ganrudas, Kinaras, and Mahoragas – The eight divisions of celestial beings and creatures (天龍八部)

Dharma – Law in its broad sense (法)

Dharma-cakra – Wheel of Law, its turning or rotation means the constant dissemination of Dharma (法輪).

Dhatu – Line of demarcation (界)

Ekajati-pratyekabuddas – A Buddha-elect or a Bodhisattva who is well on the path to go through the various stages to become a Buddha (補處菩薩)

Gatha – Stanza or the versified part of a discourse (偈)

Gatis – Evil realms (惡道)

Hinayana School – Small vehicle (小乘)

Isvara – Law for innate nature of physical freedom that is not confined by material impediment re size, number, or time factor, e.g. a great thing in a small one, one becomes more or more become one, and future

to past or past to present, etc. One of the abstruse doctrines in Mahayana Buddhism (小大，少多，三時之相攝法性)

Kalpa – Aeon or great period of time: viz, a great Kalpa is around 1,344,000,000 years; medium, 336,000,000 years; and small, 16,800,000 years (劫).

Karma – Law of cause and effect (業)

Klesa – All form of passion, such as: sorrow, anger, vexation, suffering, ill-will, etc. (煩惱)

Koti, Nayuta, Kula, etc. – The great units for counting which are even bigger than million, billion, or trillion (俱胝，那由他等)

Ksana – A short time or an instant (剎那)

Ksetra – Realm, sphere or world (剎土)

Kshatrya – Warrior-statesman, a class of distinction in India of olden days(剎帝利種).

Kumara Sudhana – Name of a devotee (善財)

Laksana Vyajana – Sublime features (相好)

Maha-Bodhi – Great Bodhi (大菩提)

Maha-maudgalyayana – Name of one of the senior disciples of Buddha(摩訶目犍連)

Mahasattva – Great (大)

Mahavaipulya Buddha Avatamsaka Sutra – Flower Embellished Sutra(華嚴經)

Mahayana School – Great vehicle (大乘)

Maitreya – Name of next Buddha to come (彌勒)

菩薩)

Manjusri – A great Bodhisattva known for his sagacity (文殊師利)

Mara – Powerful evil spirit and its activity sphere (魔境)

Murddhabhichikta – A Buddhist ritual to sprinkle or rinse water on a devotee's head as symbol of chasteness (灌頂)

Nirmanakaya – Projectile body or transmuted body of Buddha or Bodhisattva (化身)

Nirvana – Abridged form of Parinirvana (涅槃)

Panchanantaryani – Five enormities or great sins (五無間罪)

Parinirvana – Final emancipation from sea of birth (般涅槃)

Prajna – Wisdom derived from intuition through concentration which is entirely different to the ordinary sense of wisdom (般若)

Prajna Paramita Hrdaya Sutra – Heart Sutra (心經)

Pratyeka-Buddha – One of the stages reached by Hinayana disciples(辟支佛)

Punya – Merit (功德)

Purvanivasanu Smritidjana – Supernatural knowledge of previous existence of all sentient beings (宿命通)

Rupa – Body or what represents the body of a

- sage like image, etc.(色身，法相，or 法像)
- Sadhu, Sadhu – Very good, very good (善哉)
- Saha-world – Our mundane world (娑婆世界)
- Samadhi – Concentrated equanimity (三摩地)
- Samantabhadra – Name of a Bodhisattva (普賢菩薩)
- Sarasvati – A Gnostic being (天女)
- Sariras – Relics found in cremated remains of Buddha or a sage (舍利)
- Sastadeva-Manuchayani – vide “Buddha” (天人師)
- Sravakas – Disciples of Hinayana School (聲聞)
- Sukhavati – The Pure-Land of Buddha Amitabha (西方極樂世界)
- Sumeru – Name of a celestial mountain (須彌山)
- Surangama Sutra-(楞嚴經)
- Tathagata – vide “Buddha” (如來)
- Tchakra-varti-Radja – One species of celestial king (轉輪聖王)
- Ten quarters – North, south, east, west, north-east, south-east, north-west, south-west, the nadir, and the zenith (十方)
- Thirty-two attributes – Signs and features of Buddha or Tchakra-varti-Radja (三十二相).
- Trilokya – Three species of worlds: 1) for beings with sensual desires, 2) for beings enjoy material gratifications but without

sexual or dietetic desires, and 3) for beings without form, nor desires. All the above spheres are mostly for celestial beings although human beings are among the first category (三界：欲界，色界，無色界)

Upaya – Expediences (方便)

Vairocana – Another name for Buddha Gautama (毗盧遮那，或大日如來)

Vajrachhedika Prajnaparamita Sutra – The Jewel of Transcendental Wisdom or The Diamond Sutra (金剛經)

Vimala-Samantabhadra – A Bodhisattva's name (無垢普賢)

Vimutti – Emancipation (解脫)

Yakchas, Rakchasas, Kumbhandas, Pisacas, Bhutas – Evil Mara forces: Flying spirits, demons, ghosts (夜叉，羅剎，鳩槃荼，毗舍闍，部多)

Yugas – Periods of time, viz, the present, past, and future which are generally referred as “THREE-Yugas” (三世)

## Addendum

Buddham, Dhamman, & Sangham Saranam Gac-  
chami –I take refuge in Buddha, Dharma &  
Sangha (三皈依)

To live content with small means;  
to seek elegance rather than luxury, and re-  
finement rather than fashion;  
to be worthy, not respectable, and wealthy,  
not rich;  
to study hard, think quietly, talk gently, act  
frankly;  
to listen to the stars and birds, to babes and  
sages, with open heart;  
to bear all cheerfully, do all bravely, await  
occasion hurry never; in a word, to let the  
spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow  
up through the common.”

By Chaplain William Henry Channing  
(1800-1900)



ON ENTERING THE INCONCEIVABLE STATE OF  
LIBERATION THROUGH  
**THE PRACTICES AND  
VOWS OF  
THE BODHISATTVA  
SAMANTABHADRA**

(THE AVATAMSAKA SUTRA, CHAPTER 40)

大方廣佛華嚴經入不思議解脫境界

普賢行願品

Translated into Chinese from Sanskrit by  
Dharma Master Prajna (8<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Translated from Chinese into English by  
Upasika Chihmann (Miss P. C. Lee)

呂碧城居士 英譯



## **ON ENTERING THE INCONCEIVABLE STATE OF LIBERATION THROUGH THE PRACTICES AND VOWS OF THE BODHISATTVA SAMANTABHADRA**

When the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra having discoursed upon and praised the exalted merits and virtues of the Tathagata. He addressed the Celestial Youth Treasure of Merit Kumara Sudhana and a great company of Bodhisattvas as follows: O Noble-minded Man, the (infinite) merits and virtues of the Tathagata are so great and wonderful. If such were preached by all the Buddhas of the ten directions who consecutively enumerated them during unspeakable and incalculable aeons in the Buddha-domains equal to the smallest dust-motes (in the atmosphere) in number, they could not thereby be exhausted. If (there be any

who) aspire to attain this high state of merit, (let them understand that) its realization depends upon the attainment of the Ten Great Vows: the vows of widest and highest aspiration and the actual practice of them.

And what are the Ten Great Vows? They are:

- 1.To pay the highest homage and respect to all Buddhas.
- 2.To preach (the virtue of) and to praise (the glory of) the Tathagatas.
- 3.To make abundant offerings for the veneration to the Buddhas.
- 4.To repent and confess one's evil deeds and evil karma.
- 5.To approve of and rejoice at the merits and virtues of others.
- 6.To request the Buddhas to set in motion "The Wheel of Dharma".
- 7.To request the Buddhas to remain in the world.

8.To be faithful follower of "The Teaching of the Buddhas" forever.

9.To be always in harmony with all beings (bestowing on them gifts according to their needs).

10.To dedicate all of one's merits to (benefit) all beings.

The Kumara Sudhana said to the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra: "What course shall we follow, O Holy One, to fulfill all these virtues, from "rendering homage to Buddhas" to "turning over one's own merits" to all beings?"

1. The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra replied to the Kumara Sudhana: "O Noble-minded Man, as to what is said regarding the "homage and respect of the Buddhas", it means that by the power of the Virtues and the Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, I ("I" means any person) have profound faith and deep understanding, as though I were face to face

simultaneously with all the Buddhas of all the Buddha-worlds (such Buddhas) equal to the (flying) smallest dust-motes in number, throughout the worlds of Dharma and the empty space of the ten directions and the three periods of time. I worship and adore them constantly with my pure deeds viz. the bodily, vocal, and mental deeds."

Before every Buddha in the Buddha land, I present myself by (miraculous) transformation in the unutterable and innumerable bodies like unto the smallest specks of dust in number. With every one of my manifestations I pay homage to all the Buddhas of every Buddha-domain and such Buddhas are equal to the smallest dust-motes in number.

My homage will end when the limitation of infinite space is ended, as the space is boundless, so also is my homage to the Buddhas without end. So is it, when the spheres

of beings are ended, the karmas of beings are ended, the sorrows of beings (klesa) are ended, these too are endless: even so is my homage to all the Buddhas endless. Thought following upon thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

2. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what signifies "to preach (the virtues of) and to praise (the glories of) the Tathagatas?" It means that in the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds of the ten directions, and the three periods of time throughout the Dharma-circles and the empty space, upon each speck of dust, there the Buddhas are dwelling, equal in number to the smallest specks of dust of all the worlds. And each Buddha is surrounded by an assembly of Bodhisattvas, as wide as the ocean.

I shall apply my profound insight and my temporal knowledge to fathom them till I

thoroughly understand, then will I praise them with my oration, as though it was with the angelic and eloquent tongues of the Goddess (Sarasvati). Each tongue emitting a boundless ocean of all forms of sound, each voice emitting a boundless ocean of all forms of speech, proclaiming the ocean of the merits of all Tathagatas. Such praises shall continue without cessation through endless time and the limitless realms of the Dharma-worlds.

My praises will cease when the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of being are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are ended. But all the things from the void of space even to the sorrows of beings are endless: so also are my praises endless; thought succeeding thought without interruption; and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

3. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is

meant by "abundant offerings out of veneration to the Buddhas"? It means that in the smallest dust-motes of the Buddha-domains of the Dharma-circles and of the empty space, and of the ten directions and three periods of time, in each speck of dusk exists the Buddhas, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds. Each Buddha is surrounded by an ocean-wide assembly of Bodhisattvas, in whom, I have profound faith and reverent understanding through the power of the Vows of the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. I will offer them the most rare and wondrous gifts such as the flowery-clouds, garland-clouds, heavenly music-clouds, celestial tapestry-clouds, angelic garment-clouds; all kinds of heavenly perfumes, scented balms, aromatic incenses, aromatic powders, each equal in quantity to Mount Sumeru (the King of mountains). I will present lighted lamps of various kinds, such as the

cream lamps, the oil lamps, and the lamps of sweet perfumes. The wick of each lamp being in size as Mount Sumeru, and the burning oil of each as great as the water of the ocean. Ceaselessly will I offer such gifts, in veneration.

O Noble-minded Man, among all gifts, the crown of them is the gifts of Dharma. Such gifts are called: the offering of "Following the instructions (of all Buddhas), the offering of benefits for all beings, the offering of taking upon oneself the suffering of others, the offering of fostering the root of merit diligently, the offering of swerving not, from the Bodhisattva vows; and the offering of departing not, from the love of the Bodhicitta."

O Noble-minded Man, truly the merit to be derived from the offering of (material) gifts, such as those enumerated, are infinite; yet, in comparison with a single thought of Dharma

(they are as nothing). Those merits (derived from material offerings), would not be equal to a hundredth part (of the merit of a thought of Dharma); nay, not to a hundred thousandth part of koties, of nayutas, of kalans, and of upannishads. And why? Because the Dharma is held in the highest esteem by all the Tathagatas. Moreover, all Buddhas are begotten from the Dharma, through the perfecting of their conduct in accordance with it. If the Bodhisattvas make offering to the Dharma (to the Buddhas) then their offerings to the Tathagatas are completed. Thus do the Bodhisattvas present the truest offering of gifts to the Tathagatas.

My offering of such great and noble gifts to the Buddhas will only cease if the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of being are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are ended. But as all the

things from the void of space to the sorrows of all beings are endless; so also will my offering to Buddhas endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

4. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "repenting and confessing one's evil deeds and evil karma"? A Bodhisattva would think thus: all the evil deeds I have committed hitherto during the Kalpas without beginning of the past, caused by the emotion of lust, hatred, and stupidity leading to bodily, speech, and mental actions are boundless. If such deeds were corporeal and in forms, all the empty spaces unlimited as it is, could not contain them. I now confess and repent them all, by my three purified deeds of body, speech, and mind, and with a sincere heart, pledging myself not to commit any evil deed here-after. I will always keep myself pure in the prohibitive precepts,

and in all active moral deeds.

I will lay this repentance before all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all worlds and Dharma-circles equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. My repentance will cease when the void of space is ended, (or) the spheres of beings are ended, (or) the karmas of beings are ended, (or) the sorrows of beings are all ended. But as all the things from the void of space to the sorrows of beings are endless, so also is my repentance endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

5. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "approving of and rejoicing at the merits and virtues of others"? In Buddha lands, the Buddhas, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, throughout all the Dharma-circles and empty space, of the ten directions and three periods of time, have

devoted their lives to the sole purpose of acquiring all wisdom, and diligently accumulating merit. Since they began to direct their minds (toward Bodhicitta), throughout the duration of unutterable and innumerable kalpas and in Buddha-domains, equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all worlds. During each Kalpa, having sacrificed their heads, eyes, hands, and feet, in unutterable and incalculable number as the smallest dust-motes of Buddha-spheres, having thus overcome all difficulties, and accomplished all the arduous tasks, perfected the various stages of paramitas, passing through the experiences of the Bodhisattva-wisdom, and accomplished the highest Bodhi of Buddhas till entered into Parinirvana, whereupon they distributed the sariras. All such good roots of merit I emulate and rejoice in.

Moreover, whatever merit or virtue may be

possessed by any being either, of the six realms of existence, or belonging to the four kinds of birth, or belonging to any species of life in the worlds of the ten directions, though such merit may be as infinitesimal as a grain of dust, all will have my support and corresponding regard. With all such I rejoice.

Again, all the Sravakas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, Arhats, and those who are still to be advanced on the path of discipline, all such are the saints of the ten directions and the three periods of time, with whom I rejoice at their merit if any may be possessed.

All the Bodhisattvas who through infinite self-sacrifice and boundless achievement have overcome all obstacles and having formed the wish to attain the highest goal of Bodhi, with them also I rejoice in their vast merits.

Thus, even though the void of space, together with the states of beings, with the karmas of

beings, with the sorrows of beings, though all these be ended, yet, my approval and joy in the merits of all beings will not be ended. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.

6. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by requesting the Buddhas to set in motion "the Wheel of Dharma"? It means that I will apply my bodily, speech, and mental efforts, and various expedient means, and the most skilful methods, earnestly to request the Buddhas to rotate the wondrous Wheel of Dharma. Such Buddhas are incalculable in number as the smallest (flying) dust-motes of the Buddha-domains of the ten directions, and the three periods of time, throughout the Dharma-realms and the empty space; each dust-mote respectively contains therein unutterable and innumerable vast Buddha lands,

equal in number to the smallest dust-motes. In each country dwell innumerable and ineffable Buddhas equal to the smallest dust-motes in number. Each moment there are Buddhas, equal to the smallest dust-motes in number, who are attaining enlightenment, and each are surrounded by an ocean-wide assembly of Bodhisattvas. I constantly request such Buddhas to turn the Wheel of Right Dharma. Thus, even though the space of void has ended, and likewise the states of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings, all have ended, yet my request is endless. Thought succeeding thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

7. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "requesting the Buddhas to remain in the world"? The Buddhas are infinite in number as the minutest dust-motes of the ten directions

and three periods of time throughout the Dharma-realms and empty space; and so are the Bodhisattvas, the Sravakas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas, the Arhats, the partly learned ones, and the well learned laymen, when they set their minds on the attainment of Nirvana; I entreat them all to remain in touch with living beings, instead of entering Nirvana; even to the duration of kalpas of Buddha lands, equal to the minutest dust-motes in number, in order to benefit all living beings. Thus even though the void of space has ended, and likewise the states of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings, though all such have ended, yet, my request to the Buddhas is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

8. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by being "Under Buddhas' guidance

forever"? It means, for instance, the Buddha Sakyamuni, who was the vehicle for the power of Tathagata Vairocana of the Saha-world, who, from the beginning, when He made an earnest wish (for obtaining Buddhahood, in order to deliver all beings), and having made the exquisite advance by continuous skilful exertion, and sacrificed of His lives and bodies, in unutterable and countless number, for the sake of almsgiving. He stripped off His own skin for paper, used His own blood for ink, and His bones for writing-instruments. Thus the scripture have been written in bulk as great as Mount Sumeru. In appreciation of the Dharma, He would disregard the royal thrones, kingdoms, palaces, gardens, and all that belonged to Him. He spared no energy in his arduous and painstaking career, until He accomplished the great Bodhi under the sacred Bodhi tree. Then He displayed various exalted powers

(Abhidjnas), manifested various transmutations, revealed various Buddha-figures of the three kayas, and presided at the various assemblies; such as the assemblies of Great Bodhisattvas, the assemblies of Sravakas and Pratyeka-Buddhas, the assemblies of cakravarti (world rulers) and petty kings (scattered corn kings) and their retinues, the assemblies of kshatriya (warrior-statesmen), brahmin, elders, and laymen, the assemblies of devas (gods), nagas (dragon), eight divisions of supernatural beings, human, and non-human. At these assemblies and sanctuaries, He spoke with the full and round voice of thunder, with expedient means and skilful methods, teaching the beings in manner befitting their inclinations and happiness. Thus He led them to the maturity (of Bodhi), until He entered into Nirvana.

All these examples I will follow, not only that of the present World-Honoured One Vairocana,

but of all the Tathagatas of the Buddha lands, equal in number to the dust-motes of the ten directions and three periods of time, throughout the Dharma-realms and empty space. I will follow the examples of the Buddhas from thought to thought. Even though the void of space has ended, and the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, the sorrows of beings all have ended, yet, my practice and following of the examples of the Buddhas will not ended. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

9. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what is meant by "Always in harmony with beings"? It means always accommodate and benefit all living beings of the worlds of ten directions and three periods of time, throughout the Dharma-circle and empty space; they are known as the beings to be born from the womb,

from the egg, from moisture, and produced by metamorphosis. They live in different elements, either abiding on the earth, in the water, in the fire (that is heat), or in the wind (air). There are also some beings dwelling in space, living in forests and bushes. They are of various species, forms, appearances, life-spans, names, natures, knowledge, habits, characteristics, manners, costumes, and diets. They dwell at innumerable abiding places; in towns, villages, cities, and palaces.

They comprise the devas, the nagas, the eight divisions of supernatural beings, human, and non-humans; some have no feet, some two feet, some four feet, and others have many feet; some are with form, some without form; with sense, without sense, or neither with or without sense. All of these shall be accommodated and served by me (according to their needs and their natures), as attentively as I would show

filial respect to my parents, due respect to my teachers, to elders, and arhats, up to the Tathagatas, all in equality.

I will be a good doctor to those who are sick, a guide to those who have wandered away from the right path. I will be a bright light to those who wander in darkness. I will enable the poor and destitute to discover hidden treasure. A Bodhisattva should thus benefit all beings in equal treatment, and bestow his loving care on all beings alike. And why? Because if a Bodhisattva serves all beings that is equal to serving the Buddha dutifully. To hold all beings in high esteem, and render them respectful services, that is equal to revering and serving the Tathagatas. To make all beings happy, is to please all Tathagatas. And why? Because the Great Compassionate Heart is the essence of Buddhahood. For the sake of (delivering) all beings, (the Bodhisattva) develops Great

Compassion, and from the Great Compassion springs Bodhicitta, and from Bodhicitta comes the Enlightenment.

This is like unto the king Bodhi trees growing in the wilderness and barren-desert; (if it gets no water, it wilts and dies, but) if its roots be well watered, we shall see it flourishing with full foliage, blossoming in its full efflorescence, and bearing plentiful fruit. It will live to the full length of its normal existence. A king Bodhi-tree is even thus, all living beings are the roots of the Bodhi tree, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas are its fruits and its flowers. If (Bodhisattvas) apply the water of Great Compassion to all beings (who form its roots), the Bodhi-tree will bloom with flowers, and bear the fruits of the wisdom of Buddhas and Bodhisttvas. And why? If Bodhisattvas apply the nectar of Great Compassion to benefit all beings, they will attain the Supreme Perfect

Enlightenment. Therefore the beings are essential to the Bodhi; for without them, there are no Bodhisattvas able to attain the Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. Ponder O Noble-minded Man, on the truth in this parable. Look upon all beings with impartial mind and equality, thus will the Great Compassion be brought to the state of fullness and completion. To bestow the Great Compassion upon all beings, that is equal to serving the Tathagatas (to their satisfaction). My compassionate embrace of all beings shall never cease. Even though void of space has ended, the worlds of beings, the karmas of beings, and the sorrows of beings are all ended, yet, my boundless compassion is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

10. Again, O Noble-minded Man, what signifies "Dedicating all one's merits (to benefit

all sentient beings)”? This means that all one's merits acquired from the first vow of paying the highest homage and respect to all Buddhas, up to and including the vow to dedicating all one's merits to all beings. All these shall be transferred to all beings throughout the Dharma-worlds and immeasurable spaces of the universe, wishing them to be constantly peaceful and happy without sickness or suffering. I will see all beings' evil projects fail, and all their virtuous intentions will be quickly achieved. I will close the door against evil destinies, and open the right paths of Nirvana to men and devas. If the beings are suffering the most terrible tortures in expiation of their accumulated evil doings, I will substitute myself and take upon myself the sufferings that their evil deeds have brought upon them, so shall they be released (from their evil deeds), and finally attain the supreme Bodhi. Thus do

all the Bodhisattvas devote themselves to the cultivation of virtue and merit, and dedicate all the rewards over to the benefit of all beings (in this way).

My loving embrace of all beings is eternal. Even though the void of space has ended, (or) the worlds of beings, (or) the karmas of beings, (or) the sorrows of beings all have ended, yet my compassion for all beings, by turning over my rewards of merit to them is endless. Thought succeeds thought without interruption, and in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.

O Noble-minded Man, such is the Ten Great Vows of all Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas in completion. The Bodhisattvas who achieve the performance of these Vows, will lead all beings to the fruition (of Bodhi), and attainment of Supreme Perfect Enlightenment. He (whosoever is a Bodhisattva), can fulfill the

ocean of Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra; therefore, O Noble-minded Man, you should comprehend the Truth, (and attain thereto).

If a good man or woman filled the incalculable Buddha-spheres in unutterable and innumerable numbers, equal to the dust-motes of the ten directions, with the seven exquisite gems and with the highest joys of men and devas all as gifts to the beings of all worlds. And offered the same in adoration to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of all worlds; and continued such offerings for a period of kalpas of Buddha-countries, equal to the dust-motes of the universe in number, and so produced great stores of merit. (Yet such an offering would be infinitesimal) in comparison with the merit acquired by one who has only listened to the very King of Vows. The measure of the stock of merit of the former one, would not equal one hundredth part (of the latter); nay, not one

thousandth part, even not to an upanisandth part of the merit (of the latter).

Again, whosoever has profound faith in this Great Vows, and will accept, recite, or write, even one verse of four lines only. Such will quickly purify the five deadly sins, and all physical illness, or mental anguish, and afflictions of the (mundane) world, even his sinful deeds equal to the dust-motes of all Buddha lands in number, will all be blotted out.

All evil harmful forces, yakas (evil flying spirits), raksasas (evil night demons), kumdhadas (demons of greed and lust), pisacas (mad ghosts), bhutas (self-created ghosts), vampires and cannibals, all such evil spirits will keep afar from him, or even willingly protect him (by acting as his tutelary gods). Therefore, he who recites these Vows will have no obstacles (to impede his progress) wherever he goes in the world, as the moon comes out

from the hazy clouds. Praised by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; he will be honored by men and devas, and adored by all beings. This good man is well incarnated in a human body, and has been brought to perfection all the merits and virtues of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra. He will soon become like the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, with the glorious body of bliss, resplendent with thirty-two attributes of the Great One. If he be born in the devas or human worlds, such an one will always be born into most noble class; and he will destroy all evil influences, and keep away from wicked friends. He will be free from all passions; he will conquer the men of wrong doctrines, he will be like unto the King of Lions, able to subdue all animals; he deserves to receive gifts from all beings.

Again, when such a person is on the verge of death, at the last instant of life, when all his

faculties scatter and he departs from all relatives, when all power and status are lost and nothing survives, his state-ministers and great officials, his inner palaces and outer cities, elephants and horses, carriages, jewels and the treasuries of precious jewels, can no longer accompany him, these Great Vows alone will stay with him. At all times they will guide him forward, and in a single instant he will be reborn in Sukhavati, the Land of Highest Bliss (the Pure land of Buddha Amitabha).

Arriving there (the Pure land of Buddha Amitabha), he will see the Lord Buddha Amitabha, surrounded by the Bodhisattva Manjusri, Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, Bodhisattva Maitreya, and others. The appearance of these Bodhisattvas will be magnificent and their virtues and merits complete. Together they will surround him.

This man (the vower), will find himself born from a lotus flower, and favoured by the Buddha with the prediction of attaining the Buddhahood (in the future). After having received the prediction he will pour out the power of his wisdom to benefit all beings according to their (faith, or the strength of their) minds. Such deeds he shall performed, throughout the duration of countless myriad of kalpas and throughout the ten directions of infinite and innumerable worlds.

Soon he will be sitting in the Bodhi-mandala, subduing the demonic forces of maras, attaining Supreme Perfect Enlightenment, and rotating the wondrous Wheel of Dharma. He will cause the living beings of the innumerable worlds of Buddha lands, as numerous as the infinitesimal dust-motes, to direct their minds towards the attainment of Bodhicitta. According to their ability and natures, he will

teach, transform, and bring them to maturity. And he will continue (such doings) throughout coming Kalpas, and thus widely benefit all beings.

O Noble-minded Man, whosoever of the multitude has awakened faith on hearing this Great King of Vows, observes, reads, recites, and widely preaches it to others, the merits produced thereby, none but the Buddhas can estimate. Therefore, you should allow no doubts to cloud your minds on hearing this King of Vows, but carefully accept, read, recite, and put the teaching into actual practice, and publish it to others. Such people will attain fulfillment of this vow by a single thought, and their accumulation of bliss, acquired therefrom, is boundless. It can deliver all beings from the great ocean of pain and sorrow, and ensure their re-birth in the Western Paradise of Buddha Amitabha.

Thereupon, the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra in confirmation of this Truth, turning around to the ten directions, uttered the following stanzas:

*1. Before the Lions among Men, throughout the worlds of the ten directions,*

*In the past, in the present, and also in the future, with body, speech, and mind entirely pure, I bow before them all, omitting none.*

*2. With the awesome spiritual power of Samantabhadra's vows, I appear at the same time before every Tathagatas,*

*And in transformed bodies as numerous as motes of dust in all lands, bow to the Buddhas as numerous as motes of dust in all lands.*

*3. In every mote of dust are Buddhas as numerous as mote of dust, each dwelling amid a host of Bodhisattvas.*

*Throughout the motes of dust, in endless Dharma Realm it is the same; I deeply believe*

*they all are filled with Buddhas.*

*4. With oceans of sound I everywhere let fall  
words and phrases, wonderful and endless,  
Which now and through all the aeons of the  
future, praise the wide, deep sea of Buddhas'  
merits and virtues.*

*5. Flower garlands, supreme and wonderful,  
music, perfumes, parasols, and canopies,  
And other decorations rich and rare, I offer up  
to every Tathagatas.*

*6. Fine clothing, superior incense, powdered and  
burning incense, lamps and candles,  
Each one heaped as high as Mount Sumeru, I  
offer completely to all the Tathagatas.*

*7. With a vast, great, supremely, liberated mind,  
I believe in all the Buddhas of the three periods  
of time;  
With the strength of Samantabhadra's conduct  
and vows, I make offerings to all the  
Tathagatas everywhere.*

8. *For all the evil deeds I have done in the past,  
Created by my body, mouth, and mind,  
From beginningless greed, anger, and delusion,  
I now know shame and repent them all.*
9. *I rejoice in the merits and virtues of all beings  
in the ten directions,  
From the most humble to the Arhats, Pratyeka-  
Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and all the Tathagatas.*
10. *Before the Lamps of the Worlds of the ten  
directions, who have just accomplished Supreme  
Bodhi,  
I now request and beseech them all to turn the  
foremost, wondrous Dharma wheel.*
11. *If there are Buddhas who wish for Nirvana,  
I request with deep sincerity that they dwell in  
the world for a long time to bring benefits and  
bliss to every being.*
12. *I worship those with blessings, praise them and  
make offerings; I request that the Buddhas  
remain in the world and turn the Dharma*

*wheel:*

*The good roots gained from following and rejoicing in the merit and virtue and from repentance and reform, I transfer to living beings and the Buddha Way.*

*13.I study with the Buddhas and practice the perfect conduct of Samantabhadra;*

*I make offerings to all the Tathagatas of the past, and to all present Buddhas throughout the ten directions.*

*14.All future Teachers of Gods and Men Whose aspirations and vows have been completed,*

*I will follow in study throughout the three periods of time and quickly attain Great Bodhi.*

*15.In all lands of the ten directions, vast, great, pure, and wonderfully adorned,*

*All the Tathagatas sit beneath regal Bodhi trees, while assemblies circumambulate them.*

*16.I vow that every being in all directions will be peaceful, happy, and without worry.*

*May they obtain the proper Dharma's  
profound aid, and may all their sufferings be  
wiped away, without exception.*

*17. While striving to attain Bodhi, I will gain the  
knowledge of past lives in all destinies.*

*I will always leave the home-life and cultivate  
pure precepts. without outflows, never broken,  
and without stain.*

*18. Be they devas, nagas, yakshas, or kumbhandas,  
Humans, non-humans, and the rest,  
In the many languages of all such living beings,  
with every sound I will speak the Dharma.*

*19. I will cultivate the pure paramitas with vigor,  
and never abandon the Bodhi Mind.*

*I will banish all obstructions and defilements,  
and fulfill all wondrous practices.*

*20. From all delusions, karma and demon-states,  
amid all worldly paths, I will be freed,  
As the lotus does not touch the water, as the sun  
and moon do not stop in space.*

21. *Ending the sufferings of the paths of evil, and  
to everyone equally bringing joy,  
May I for aeons like the motes of dust in all  
lands, ever benefit all in the ten directions.*
22. *Always in accord with living beings,  
cultivating through all future aeons,  
The vast conduct of Samantabhadra, the  
unsurpassed Great Bodhi will I perfect.*
23. *May all who cultivate with me, assemble with  
me in one place,  
Our karmas of body, mouth, and mind the  
same, as we cultivate and study all practices  
and vows.*
24. *With all advisors good and wise who aid me by  
explaining Samantabhadra's deeds,  
I vow always to congregate together: may they  
never be displeased with me.*
25. *I vow always to meet the Tathagatas face to  
face and the hosts of disciples who gather  
around them.*

*I will raise offerings, which are vast and great,  
untiring to the end of future aeons.*

*26. I will hold high the subtly wondrous Buddha  
dharma and illuminate all the practices of  
Bodhi;*

*I will be ultimately pure in Samantabhadra's  
way, practicing until the end of time.*

*27. Inexhaustible blessings and wisdom, I cultivate  
throughout all worlds;*

*By concentration, wisdom, skilful means, and  
liberation, I will gain an endless store of merits  
and virtues.*

*28. In one mote of dust are lands as numerous as  
motes of dust; in each land are incalculable  
numbers of Buddhas.*

*In every place where the Buddhas dwell I see  
the host assembled, endlessly proclaiming all  
the practices of Bodhi.*

*29. In ten directions everywhere, throughout the  
sea of lands, every hair-tip encompasses oceans*

*of past, present and future.*

*So, too, there is a sea of Buddhas, a sea of  
Buddha lands; pervading them all I cultivate  
for seas of endless time.*

*30.The speech of all Tathagatas is pure; each word  
contains an ocean of sounds.*

*According with what beings like to hear, the  
Buddhas' sea of eloquence flows forth.*

*31.All the Tathagatas of the three periods of time,  
forever turn the wonderful Dharma wheel,  
with these inexhaustible seas of words and  
languages. I understand all with my deep  
wisdom.*

*32.I can penetrate the future and exhaust all  
aeons in a single thought.*

*In a single thought I completely enter all aeons  
of the three periods of time.*

*33.In one thought I see all Lions of Men of the  
past, present, and future;*

*I constantly fathom the Buddhas' states, their*

*magical liberations and their awesome strength.*

*34. On the tip of an extremely fine hair, appear jewelled lands of past, present, and future;*

*Lands on hair-tips as numerous as dust-motes, in all lands of the ten directions, I deeply enter, adorn, and purify.*

*35. All Lamps of the Future that light the world,*

*complete the way, turn the Dharma wheel, and rescue living beings,*

*As they perfect the Buddhas' work and manifest Nirvana, I draw near and attend to each one and obtain:*

*36. The spiritual power to go everywhere swiftly;*

*the power to enter the Mahayana universally through the Universal Door;*

*The power of wisdom and conduct to cultivate merits and Virtues universally; the subtle spiritual power to shield all with Great Compassion;*

*37. The power to purify and adorn (all) with supreme blessings everywhere; the power of wisdom which is unattached and independent; The awesome spiritual powers and the powers of concentration, wisdom, and skill-in-means; the power of universally accumulating Bodhi;*

*38. The power of good karma which purifies all things; the power to eradicate all afflictions; The power to subdue all demons; the power to perfect Samantabhadra's conduct.*

*39. The sea of lands I everywhere adorn and purify, and I liberate all living beings, without exception.*

*With skill I make selections from among the sea of Dharmas and enter deeply into the wisdom sea.*

*40. I cultivate the ocean of practices to purify, perfect and complete a sea of vows.*

*I draw near to a sea of Buddhas and make offerings, and cultivate without fatigue for a*

*sea of time.*

41. *To all the Tathagatas of the three periods of time, with Bodhi, conduct, and vows most supreme,*

*I completely offer up my perfect cultivation; with Samantabhadra's practices, I awaken to Bodhi.*

42. *Each Tathagatas has an elder disciple named Samantabhadra, Honoured One.*

*I now transfer all good roots, and I vow to perform deeds of wisdom identical to His.*

43. *I vow that my body, mouth, and mind will be forever pure and that all practices and lands will be also.*

*I vow in every way to be identical to the wisdom of Samantabhadra.*

44. *I will wholly purify Samantabhadra's conduct, and the great vows of Manjusri as well.*

*All their deeds I will fulfill, leaving nothing undone. till the end of the future I will never*

*tire.*

*45. Infinite and measureless in my cultivation;  
boundless merit and virtue I obtain.*

*Amid limitless practices I will dwell in peace,  
and penetrate the strength of spiritual powers.*

*46. Manjusri has wisdom, courage and bravery;  
Samantabhadra's conduct and wisdom are the  
same.*

*I now transfer all good roots, in order to follow  
them in practice and in study.*

*47. In the three periods of time, all Buddhas praise  
such vows as these, lofty and great.*

*I now transfer all good roots wishing to perfect  
the supreme practices of Samantabhadra.*

*48. I vow that when my life approaches its end, all  
obstructions will be swept away;*

*I will see Amitabha Buddha and be born in His  
Land of Ultimate Bliss and Peace.*

*49. When reborn in the Western Paradise, I will  
perfect and completely fulfill, without exception,*

*these Great Vows, to delight and benefit all beings.*

*50.The Assembly of Amitabha Buddha is completely pure; when from a matchless lotus I am born,  
I will behold the Tathagata's Measureless Light as He appears before me To bestow a prediction of Buddhahood.*

*51.Receiving a prediction from the Tathagata, I will take countless appearances and forms,  
And with wisdom power vast and great, pervade ten directions to benefit all the realms of living beings.*

*52.Realms of worlds in empty space might reach an end, and living beings, karma and afflictions be extinguished;  
But they will never be exhausted, and neither will my vows.*

*53.With myriad jewels in boundless lands in all directions, I will make decorations and*

*offerings to the Tathagatas.*

*For aeons as numerous as the motes of dust in  
all lands, I bring the foremost peace and joy to  
gods and humans.*

54. *Yet, if anyone believes in these Great Vows, as  
they pass by the ear but a single time,  
And in search of Bodhi thirstily craves these  
vows, the merits and virtues gained will surpass  
these offering.*

55. *With bad advisors forever left behind, from  
paths of evil he departs for eternity,  
Soon to see the Buddha of Limitless Light and  
perfect Samantabhadra's Supreme Vows.*

56. *Easily obtaining the blessing of long life,  
assured of a noble rebirth in the human realm,  
Before long he will perfect and complete the  
practices of Samantabhadra.*

57. *In the past, owing to a lack of wisdom power,  
the five offences of extreme evil he has  
committed;*

*In one thought they can all be wiped away by reciting the Great Vows of Samantabhadra.*

*58.His clan, race, and color, marks and characteristics with his wisdom are all perfected and complete;*

*Demons and externalisms will have no way to harm him, and he will be a field of merits in the Three Realms.*

*59.To the regal Bodhi tree he will quickly go, and seated there subdue hordes of demons.*

*Supremely and perfectly enlightened, he will turn the Dharma wheel to benefit the host of living beings.*

*60.If anyone can read, recite, receive, and hold high Samantabhadra's Vows and proclaim them,*

*His reward only the Buddhas will know, and he will obtain Bodhi's highest path.*

*61.If anyone recites Samantabhadra's Vows, I will speak of a portion of his good roots;*

*In one single thought he can fulfill the pure  
vows of sentient beings.*

*62. The supreme and endless blessing from  
Samantabhadra's conduct, I now universally  
transfer.*

*May every living being, drowning and adrift,  
Soon return to the Land of Limitless Light.*

When the Bodhisattva Mahasattva Samantabhadra finished speaking these pure verses on the Great King of Vows before the Tathagata, the Kumara Sudhana was overwhelmed with boundless joy, and all the Bodhisattvas were enraptured with ecstasy. The Tathagata applauded: "Excellent! Excellent!"

At the assembly, where this inconceivable state of emancipation and exalted Dharma was proclaimed, there were presented the World Honour One, and a great company of the saints, Bodhisattvas and Mahasattvas, with the Bodhisattva Manjusri at the head of the

assembly. The great Bodhisattvas with their fully trained six thousand Bhikkus were led by the Bodhisattva Maitreya. All the great Bodhisattvas of the Bhadra-kalpa were led by the Bodhisattva Vimala-Samantabhadra. The Ekajati-Pratyeka-Buddhas, who are in the stage of Murdhadhichikata, and the great Bodhisattvas and others of the ten directions of the various worlds, were all present in this congregation. Great and exalted beings of the ocean of worlds equal in number to the smallest dust-motes of all the worlds, all these were led by the Great Wise One Sariputra and by the Mahamaugalyayana. There were present also the great sravakas, devas, heavenly kings, the nagas, yakas (evil flying spirits), gandhavas (musician perfuming-living gods), garudas (golden winged birds), kinaras (horn-headed semi-humans), and maharajas (large abdomen naga-deitys), human and sub-human. And the

whole multitude on hearing the discourse of the Buddha, were inspired with great joy the faithful observance (of the Vows).

\* Here ends the Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra \*



THE CHAPTER OF  
THE SURANGAMA SUTRA ON  
**MAHĀSTHĀMA**  
**BODHISATTVA'S**  
**MINDFULNESS OF**  
**AMITĀBHA TO**  
**UNIVERSALLY REALIZE**  
**SAMADHI**

大佛頂首楞嚴經

大勢至菩薩念佛圓通章

Translated by Upasaka Lu K'uan Yu  
(Charles Luk)

優婆塞 陸寬昱 英譯



## **THE CHAPTER OF THE SURANGAMA SUTRA ON MAHĀSTHĀMA BODHI-SATTVA'S MINDFULNESS OF AMITĀBHA TO UNIVERSALLY REALIZE SAMADHI**

Mahāsthāma, a son of the Dharma king, who was the head of a group of fifty-two Bodhisattvas, rose from his seat, prostrated himself with his head at the feet of the Buddha and declared: ‘I still remember that in the remotest of aeons countless as the sands in the Ganges, there was a Buddha called Amitābha who was succeeded by eleven other Tathāgatas in that kalpa. The last one was called the “Buddha Whose Light Surpassed that of the Sun and Moon”; he taught me how to realize the state of Samādhi by thinking exclusively of (Amitābha) Buddha. By way of illustration, if a man concentrates his mind on someone else while the latter always forgets him, both may

meet and see, but without recognizing, each other. However, if both are keen on thinking of each other, their keenness will grow from one incarnation to another until they become inseparable like a body and its shadow. The Tathāgatas in the ten directions have compassion for all living beings and always think of them, like a mother who never ceases thinking of her son. If the son runs away, her thoughts of him will not help. But if he also thinks of her with the same keenness, they will not be separated in spite of the passing of transmigration. If a living being remembers and thinks of the Buddha, he is bound to behold Him in his present or future incarnation. He will not be far from the Buddha and thus without the aid of any other expedient, his mind will be opened. He is like a man whose body, perfumed by incense, gives out fragrance; hence his name “One Glorified by (Buddha’s)

Fragrance and Light.” From my fundamental cause-ground and with all my thoughts concentrated on the Buddha, I achieved the patient endurance of the uncreate. (This is why) I help all living beings of this world to control their thoughts by repeating the Buddha’s name so that they can reach the Pure Land. As the Buddha now asks about the best means of perfection, I hold that nothing can surpass the perfect control of the six senses with continuous pure thoughts in order to realize Samādhi.’