



LIGHT
OF
ASIA

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SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.



THE LIGHT
OF ASIA

OR
THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

BY
EDWIN ARNOLD, M. A.

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PREFACE.

In the following Poem, I have sought, by the medium of an imaginary Buddhist votary, to depict the life and character and indicate the philosophy of that noble hero and reformer, Prince Gautama of India, the founder of Buddhism.

A generation ago little or nothing was known in Europe of this great faith of Asia, which had nevertheless existed during twenty-four centuries, and at this day surpasses, in the number of its followers and the area of its prevalence, any other form of creed. Four hundred and seventy millions of our race live and die in the tenets of Gautama; and the spiritual dominions of this ancient teacher extend, at the present time, from Nepaul and Ceylon over the whole Eastern Peninsula to China, Japan, Thibet, Central Asia, Siberia, and even Swedish Lapland. India itself might fairly be included in this magnificent empire of belief, for though the profession of Buddhism has for the most part passed away from

the land of its birth, the mark of Gautama's sublime teaching is stamped ineffaceably upon modern Brahminism, and the most characteristic habits and convictions of the Hindus are clearly due to the benign influence of Buddha's precepts. More than a third of mankind, therefore, owe their moral and religious ideas to this illustrious prince, whose personality, though imperfectly revealed in the existing sources of information, cannot but appear the highest, gentlest, holiest, and most beneficent, with one exception, in the history of Thought. Discordant in frequent particulars, and sorely overlaid by corruptions, inventions, and misconceptions, the Buddhistical books yet agree in the one point of recording nothing—no single act or word—which mars the perfect purity and tenderness of this Indian teacher, who united the truest princely qualities with the intellect of a sage and the passionate devotion of a martyr. Even M. Barthelemy St. Hilaire, totally misjudging, as he does, many points of Buddhism, is well cited by Professor Max Müller as saying of Prince Siddartha, "Sa vie n'a point de tache. Son constant heroisme egale sa conviction; et si la theorie qu'il preconise est fausse, les exemples personnels qu'il donne sont irreprochables. Il est le modele

acheve de toutes les vertus qu'il preche; son abnegation, sa charite, son inalterable douceur ne se dementent point un seul instant. . . . Il prepare silencieusement sa doctrine par six annees de retraite et de meditation; il la propage par la seule puissance de la parole et de la persuasion pendant plus d'un demi-siecle, et quand il meurt entre les bras de ses disciples, c'est avec la serenite d'un sage qui a pratique le bien toute sa vie, et qui est assure d'avoir trouve le vrai." To Gautama has consequently been given this stupendous conquest of humanity; and—though he discountenanced ritual, and declared himself, even when on the threshold of Nirvana, to be only what all other men might become—the love and gratitude of Asia, disobeying his mandate, have given him fervent worship. Forests of flowers are daily laid upon his stainless shrines, and countless millions of lips daily repeat the formula, "I take refuge in Buddha!"

The Buddha of this poem—if, as need not be doubted, he really existed—was born on the borders of Nepaul, about 620 B. C., and died about 543 B. C. at Kusinagara in Oudh. In point of age, therefore, most other creeds are youthful compared with this venerable religion, which has in it the eternity of a universal

hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indescribable element of faith in final good, and the proudest assertion ever made of human freedom. The extravagances which disfigure the record and practice of Buddhism are to be referred to that inevitable degradation which priesthoods always inflict upon great ideas committed to their charge. The power and sublimity of Gautama's original doctrines should be estimated by their influence, not by their interpreters; nor by that innocent but lazy and ceremonious church which has arisen on the foundations of the Buddhistic Brotherhood or "Sangha."

I have put my poem into a Buddhist's mouth, because, to appreciate the spirit of Asiatic thought, they should be regarded from the Oriental point of view; and neither the miracles which consecrate this record, nor the philosophy which it embodies, could have been otherwise so naturally reproduced. The doctrine of Transmigration, for instance—startling to modern minds—was established and thoroughly accepted by the Hindus of Buddha's time; that period when Jerusalem was being taken by Nebuchadnezzar, when Nineveh was falling to the Medes, and Marseilles was founded by the Phocæans. The exposition

here offered of so antique a system is of necessity incomplete, and—in obedience to the laws of poetic art—passes rapidly by many matters philosophically most important, as well as over the long ministry of Gautama. But my purpose has been obtained if any just conception be here conveyed of the lofty character of this noble prince, and of the general purport of his doctrines. As to these there has arisen prodigious controversy among the erudite, who will be aware that I have taken the imperfect Buddhistic citations much as they stand in Spence Hardy's work, and have also modified more than one passage in the received narratives. The views, however, here indicated of "Nirvana," "Dharma," "Karma," and the other chief features of Buddhism, are at least the fruits of considerable study, and also of a firm conviction that a third of mankind would never have been brought to believe in blank abstractions, or in Nothingness as the issue and crown of Being.

Finally, in reverence to the illustrious Promulgator of this "Light of Asia," and in homage to the many eminent scholars who have devoted noble labors to his memory, for which both repose and ability are wanting to me, I beg that the shortcomings of my too-hurried

study may be forgiven. It has been composed in the brief intervals of days without leisure, but is inspired by an abiding desire to aid in the better mutual knowledge of East and West. The time may come, I hope, when this book and my "Indian Song of Songs" will preserve the memory of one who loved India and the Indian peoples.

EDWIN ARNOLD, C. S. I.

London, July, 1879.

THE LIGHT OF ASIA.

BOOK THE FIRST.

The Scripture of the Saviour of the World,
Lord Buddha—Prince Sidáartha styled on
earth—

In Earth and Heavens and Hells Incomparable,
All honored, Wisest, Best, most Pitiful;
The Teacher of Nirvana and the Law.

Thus came he to be born again for men.

Below the highest sphere four Regents sit
Who rule our world, and under them are zones
Nearer, but high, where saintliest spirits dead
Wait thrice ten thousand years, then live again;
And on Lord Buddha, waiting in that sky,
Came for our sakes the five sure signs of birth,
So that the Devas knew the signs, and said
“Buddha will go again to help the World.”
“Yea!” spake He, “now I go to help the World
This last of many times; for birth and death

End hence for me and those who learn my
Law.

I will go down among the Sakyas,
Under the southward snows of Himalay,
Where pious people live and a just King."

That night the wife of King Suddhodana,
Maya the Queen, asleep beside her Lord,
Dreamed a strange dream; dreamed that a
star from Heaven—

Splendid, six-rayed, in color rosy-pearl,
Whereof the token was an Elephant
Six-tusked and whiter than Vahuka's milk—
Shot through the void and, shining into her,
Entered her womb upon the right. Awaked,
Bliss beyond mortal mother's filled her breast,
And over half the earth a lovely light
Forewent the morn. The strong hills shook;
the waves

Sank lulled; all flowers that blow by day came
forth

As 'twere high noon; down to the farthest hells
Passed the Queen's joy, as when warm sun-
shine thrills

Wood-glooms to gold, and into all the deeps
A tender whisper pierced. "Oh ye," it said,
"The dead that are to live, the live who die,
Uprise, and hear, and hope! Buddha is come!"

Whereat in Limbos numberless much peace
Spread, and the world's heart throbb'd, and a
wind blew

With unknown freshness over lands and seas.
And when the morning dawn'd, and this was
told,

The grey dream-readers said "The dream is
good!

The Crab is in conjunction with the Sun;
The Queen shall bear a boy, a holy child
Of wondrous wisdom, profiting all flesh,
Who shall deliver men from ignorance,
Or rule the world, if he will deign to rule."

In this wise was the holy Buddha born.

Queen Maya stood at noon, her days fulfilled,
Under a Palsa in the Palace-grounds,
A stately trunk, straight as a temple-shaft,
With a crown of glossy leaves and fragrant
blooms;

And, knowing the time come—for all things
knew—

The conscious tree bent down its boughs to
make

A bower about Queen Maya's majesty,
And Earth put forth a thousand sudden flowers
To spread a couch, while, ready for the bath,
The rock hard by gave out a limpid stream

Of crystal flow. So brought she forth her
child

Pangless—he having on his perfect form
The marks, thirty and two, of blessed birth;
Of which the great news to the Palace came.
But when they brought the painted palanquin
To fetch him home, the bearers of the poles
Were the four Regents of the Earth, came
down

From Mount Sumeru—they who write men's
deeds

On brazen plates—the Angel of the East,
Whose hosts are clad in silver robes, and bear
Targets of pearl: the Angel of the South,
Whose horsemen, the Kumbhandas, ride blue
steeds,

With sapphire shields: the Angel of the West,
By Nagas followed, riding steeds blood-red,
With coral shields: the Angel of the North,
Environed by his Yakshas, all in gold,
On yellow horses, bearing shields of gold.

These, with their pomp invisible, came down
And took the poles, in caste and outward garb
Like bearers, yet most mighty gods; and
gods

Walked free with men that day, though men
knew not:

For Heaven was filled with gladness for Earth's
sake,
Knowing Lord Buddha thus was come again.

But King Suddhodana wist not of this;
The portents troubled, till his dream-readers
Augured a Prince of earthly dominance,
A Chakravartin, such as rise to rule
Once in each thousand years; seven gifts he
has—

The Chakra-ratna, disc divine; the gem;
The horse, the Aswa-ratna, that proud steed
Which tramps the clouds; a snow-white ele-
phant,

The Hasti-ratna, born to bear his king;
The crafty Minister, the General
Unconquered, and the wife of peerless grace,
The Istri-ratna, lovelier than the Dawn.

For which gifts looking with this wondrous
boy,

The King gave order that his town should keep
High festival; therefore the ways were swept,
Rose-odors sprinkled in the street, the trees
Were hung with lamps and flags, while merry
crowds

Gaped on the sword-players and posturers,
The jugglers, charmers, swingers, rope-
walkers,

The nautch-girls in their spangled skirts and
bells
That chime light laughter round their restless
feet;
The masquers wrapped in skins of bear and
deer,
The tiger-tamers, wrestlers, quail-fighters,
Beaters of drums and twanglers of the wire,
Who made the people happy by command.
Moreover from afar came merchant-men,
Bringing, on tidings of this birth, rich gifts
In golden trays; goat-shawls, and nard and
jade,
Turkises, "evening-sky" tint, woven webs—
So fine twelve folds hid not a modest face—
Waist-cloths sewn thick with pearls, and
sandal-wood;
Homage from tribute cities; so they called
Their Prince Savarthasiddh, "All-Prospering,"
Briefer, Siddartha.

'Mongst the strangers came
A grey-haired saint, Asita, one whose ears,
Long closed to earthly things, caught heavenly
sounds,
And heard a prayer beneath his peepul-tree
The Devas singing songs at Buddha's birth.
Wondrous in lore he was by age and fasts;

Him, drawing nigh, seeming so reverend,
The King saluted, and Queen Maya made
To lay her babe before such holy feet;
But when he saw the Prince the old man cried
“Ah, Queen, not so!” and thereupon he
touched

Eight times the dust, laid his waste visage
there,

Saying, “O Babe! I worship. Thou art He!
I see the rosy light, the foot-sole marks,
The soft curled tendril of the Swastika,
The sacred primal signs thirty and two,
The eighty lesser tokens. Thou art Buddh,
And thou wilt preach the Law and save all
flesh

Who learn the Law, though I shall never hear,
Dying too soon, who lately longed to die;
Howbeit I have seen Thee. Know, O King!
This is that Blossom on our human tree
Which opens once in many myriad years —
But opened, fills the world with Wisdom’s scent
And Love’s dropped honey; from thy royal root
A Heavenly Lotus springs: “Ah, happy House!
Yet not all-happy, for a sword must pierce
Thy bowels for this boy—whilst thou, sweet
Queen!

Dear to all gods and men for this great birth,
Henceforth art grown too sacred for more woe,

And life is woe, therefore in seven days
Painless thou shalt attain the close of pain."

Which fell: for on the seventh evening
Queen Maya smiling slept, and waked no more,
Passing content to Trayastrinshas-Heaven,
Where countless Devas worship her and wait
Attendant on that radiant Motherhead.
But for the Babe they found a foster-nurse.
Princess Mahaprajapati—her breast
Nourished with noble milk the lips of Him
Whose lips comfort the Worlds.

When th' eighth year passed
The careful King bethought to teach his son
All that a Prince should learn, for still he
shunned

The too vast presage of those miracles,
The glories and the sufferings of a Buddh.
So, in full council of his Ministers,
"Who is the wisest man, great sirs," he asked,
"To teach my Prince that which a Prince
should know?"

Whereto gave answer each with instant voice
"King! Viswamitra is the wisest one,
The farthest-seen in Scriptures, and the best
In learning, and the manual arts, and all."
Thus Viswamitra came and heard commands;
And, on a day found fortunate, the Prince

Took up his slate of ox-red sandal-wood,
 All-beautified by gems around the rim,
 And sprinkled smooth with dust of emery,
 These took he, and his writing-stick, and stood
 With eyes bent down before the Sage, who
 said,

“Child, write this Scripture,” speaking slow
 the verse

“*Gayatri*” named, which only High-born
 hear:—

*Om, tatsaviturvarenyam
 Bhargo devasya dhimahi
 Dhiyo yona prachodayat.*

“Acharya, I write,” meekly replied
 The Prince, and quickly on the dust he drew—
 Not in one script, but many characters—
 The sacred verse; Nagri and Dakshin, Ni,
 Mangal, Parusha, Yava, Tirthi, Uk,
 Darad, Sikhyani, Mana, Madhyachar,
 The pictured writings and the speech of signs,
 Tokens of cave-men and the sea-peoples,
 Of those who worship snakes beneath the
 earth,

And those who flame adore and the sun’s orb,
 The Magians and the dwellers on the mounds;
 Of all the nations all strange scripts he traced
 One after other with his writing-stick,
 Reading the master’s verse in every tongue;

And Viswamitra said, "It is enough,
Let us to numbers.

After me repeat
Your numeration till we reach the Lakh,
One, two, three, four, to ten, and then by tens
To hundreds, thousands." After him the
child

Named digits, decades, centuries; nor paused,
The round lakh reached, but softly murmured
on

'Then comes the koti, nahut, ninnahut,
Khamba, viskhamba, abab, attata,
To kumuds, gundhikas, and utpalas,
By pundarikas unto padumas,
Which last is how you count the utmost grains
Of Hastagiri ground to finest dust;
But beyond that a numeration is,
The Katha, used to count the stars at night;
The Koti-Katha, for the ocean drops;
Ingga, the calculus of circulars;
Sarvanikchepa, by the which you deal
With all the sands of Gunga, till we come
To Antah-Kalpas, where the unit is
The sands of ten crore Gungas. If one seeks
More comprehensive scale, th' arithmic mounts
By the Asankya, which is the tale
Of all the drops that in ten thousand years
Would fall on all the worlds by daily rain;

Thence unto Maha Kalpas, by the which
The Gods compute their future and their past."

" 'Tis good," the Sage rejoined, "Most
noble Prince,

If these thou know'st, needs it that I should
teach

The mensuration of the lineal?"

Humbly the boy replied, "Acharya!"

"Be pleased to hear me. Paramanus ten

A parasukshma make; ten of those build

The trasarene, and seven trasarenes

One mote's-length floating in the beam, seven
motes

The whisker-point of mouse, and ten of these

One likhya; likhyas ten a yuka, ten

Yukas a heart of barley, which is held

Seven times a wasp-waist; so unto the grain

Of mung and mustard and the barley-corn,

Whereof ten give the finger-joint, twelve joints

The span, wherefrom we reach the cubit, staff,

Bow-length, lance-length; while twenty lengths
of lance

Mete what is named a 'breath,' which is to
say

Such space as man may stride with lungs
once filled

Whereof a gow is forty, four times that

A yojana; and, Master! if it please,
 I shall recite how many sun-motes lie
 From end to end within a yojana.”
 Thereat, with instant skill, the little Prince
 Pronounced the total of the atoms true.
 But Viswamitra heard it on his face
 Prostrate before the boy. “For thou,” he cried,
 “Art Teacher of thy teachers—thou, not I,
 Art Guru. Oh, I worship thee, sweet Prince!
 That comest to my school only to show
 Thou knowest all without the books, and
 know’st
 Fair reverence besides.”

Which reverence
 Lord Buddha kept to all his schoolmasters,
 Albeit beyond their learning taught; in speech
 Right gentle, yet so wise; princely of mien,
 Yet softly-mannered; modest, deferent,
 And tender-hearted, though of fearless blood;
 No bolder horseman in the youthful band
 E’er rode in gay chase of the shy gazelles.
 No keener driver of the chariot
 In mimic contest scoured the Palace-courts;
 Yet in mid-play the boy would oftentimes pause,
 Letting the deer pass free; would oftentimes yield
 His half-won race because the laboring steeds
 Fetched painful breath; or if his princely
 mates

Saddened to lose, or if some wistful dream
Swept o'er his thoughts. And ever with the
years

Waxed his compassionateness of our Lord,
Even as a great tree grows from two soft leaves
To spread its shade afar; but hardly yet
Knew the young child of sorrow, pain or
tears,

Save as strange names for things not felt by
kings,

Nor even to be felt. But it befell

In the Royal garden on a day of spring,
A flock of wild swans passed, voyaging north
To their nest-places on Himala's breast.

Calling in love-notes down their snowy line
The bright birds flew, by fond love piloted;
And Devadatta, cousin of the Prince,
Pointed his bow, and loosed a wilful shaft
Which found the wide wing of the foremost
swan

Broad-spread to glide upon the free blue road
So that it fell, the bitter arrow fixed,
Bright scarlet blood-gouts staining the pure
plumes.

Which seeing, Prince Siddartha took the bird
Tenderly up, rested it in his lap—

Sitting with knees crossed, as Lord Buddha
sits—

And, soothing with a touch the wild thing's
fright,

Composed its ruffled vans, calmed its quick
heart,

Caressed it into peace with light kind palms
As soft as plaintain-leave san hour unrolled;
And while the left hand held, the right hand
drew

The cruel steel forth from the wound and laid
Cool leaves and healing honey on the smart.

Yet all so little knew the boy of pain

That curiously into his wrist he pressed

The arrow's barb, and winced to feel it sting,
And turned with tears to soothe his bird again.

Then some one came who said, "My Prince
hath shot

A swan, which fell among the roses here,

He bids me pray you send it. Will you send?"

"Nay," quoth Siddartha, "if the bird were
dead

To send it to the slayer might be well,

But the swan lives; my cousin hath but killed
The god-like speed which throbbed in this
white wing."

And Devadatta answered, "The wild thing,

Living or dead, is his who fetched it down;

'Twas no man's in the clouds, but fall'n 'tis
mine,

Give me my prize, fair Cousin." Then our
Lord

Laid the swan's neck beside his own smooth
cheek

And gravely spake, "Say no! the bird is mine,
The first of myriad things which shall be mine
By right of mercy and love's lordliness.

For now I know, by what within me stirs,
That I shall teach compassion unto men

And be a speechless world's interpreter,
Abating this accursed flood of woe,

Not man's alone; but, if the Prince disputes,
Let him submit this matter to the wise

And we will wait their word." So was it done;
In full divan the business had debate,

And many thought this thing, and many that.
Till there arose an unknown priest who said,

"If life be aught, the saviour of a life

Owens more the living thing than he can own

Who sought to slay—the slayer spoils and
wastes,

The cherisher sustains, give him the bird:"

Which judgment all found just; but when the
King

Sought out the sage for honor, he was gone;

And some one saw a hooded snake glide forth,—

The gods come oftimes thus! So our Lord
Buddha

Began his works of mercy.

Yet not more
Knew he as yet of grief than that one bird's,
Which, being healed, went joyous to its kind.
But on another day the King said, "Come,
Sweet son! and see the pleasaunce of the spring,
And how the fruitful earth is wooed to yield
Its riches to the reaper; how my realm—
Which shall be thine when the pile flames for
me—

Feeds all its mouths and keeps the King's
chest filled.

Fair is the season with new leaves, bright
blooms,

Green grass, and cries of plough-time." So
they rode

Into a land of wells and gardens, where,
All up and down the rich red loam, the steers
Strained their strong shoulders in the creaking
yoke

Dragging the ploughs; the fat soil rose and
rolled

In smooth dark waves back from the plough;
who drove

Planted both feet upon the leaping share
To make the furrow deep; among the palms
The tinkle of the rippling water rang,
And where it ran the glad earth 'broidered it

With balsams and the spears of lemon-grass.
Elsewhere were sowers who went forth to sow:
And all the jungle laughed with nesting-songs,
And all the thickets rustled with small life
Of lizard, bee, beetle, and creeping things
Pleased at the spring-time. In the mango-
sprays
The sun-birds flashed; alone at his green forge
Toiled the loud coppersmith; bee-eaters
hawked
Chasing the purple butterflies; beneath,
Striped squirrels raced, the mynas perked and
picked,
The nine brown sisters chattered in the thorn,
The pied fish-tiger hung above the pool,
The egrets stalked among the buffaloes,
The kites sailed circles in the golden air;
About the painted temple peacocks flew,
The blue doves cooed from every well, far off
The village drums beat for some marriage-
feast;
All things spoke peace and plenty, and the
Prince
Saw and rejoiced. But, looking deep, he saw
The thorns which grow upon this rose of life:
How the swart peasant sweated for his wage,
Toiling for leave to live; and how he urged
The great-eyed oxen through the flaming hours,

Goaded their velvet flanks: that marked he,
too,

How lizard fed on ant, and snake on him,
And kite on both; and how the fish-hawk
robbed

The fish-tiger of that which it had seized;
The shrike chasing the bulbul, which did chase
The jeweled butterflies; till everywhere
Each slew a slayer and in turn was slain,
Life living upon death. So the fair show
Veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
Of mutual murder, from the worm to man,
Who himself kills his fellow; seeing which—
The hungry ploughman and his laboring kine,
Their dewlaps blistered with the bitter yoke,
The rage to live which makes all living strife—
The Prince Siddartha sighed. "Is this," he
said,

"That happy earth they brought me forth to
see?

How salt with sweat the peasant's bread! how
hard

The oxen's service! in the brake how fierce
The war of weak and strong! i' th' air what
plots!

No refuge e'en in water. Go aside
A space, and let me muse on what ye show."
So saying, the good Lord Buddha seated him

Under a jambu-tree, with ankles crossed—
As holy statues sit—and first began
To meditate this deep disease of life,
What its far source and whence its remedy.
So vast a pity filled him, such wide love
For living things, such passion to heal pain,
That by their stress his princely spirit passed
To ecstasy, and, purged from mortal taint
Of sense and self, the boy attained thereat
Dhyana, first step of “the path.”

There flew

High overhead that hour five holy ones,
Whose free wings faltered as they passed the
tree.

“What power superior draws us from our
flight?”

They asked, for spirits feel all force divine,
And know the sacred presence of the pure.
Then, looking downward, they beheld the
Buddha

Crowned with a rose-hued aureole, intent
On thoughts to save; while from the grove a
voice

Cried, “Rishis! this is He shall help the world,
Descend and worship.” So the Bright Ones
came

And sang a song of praise, folding their wings,
Then journeyed on taking good news to Gods.

But certain from the King seeking the Prince
Found him still musing, though the noon was
past,

And the sun hastened to the western hills:
Yet, while all shadows moved, the jambu-tree's
Stayed in one quarter, overspreading him,
Lest the sloped rays should strike that sacred
head;

And he who saw this sight heard a voice say,
Amid the blossoms of the rose-apple,

“Let be the King's sun! till the shadow goes
Forth from his heart my shadow will not shift.”

BOOK THE SECOND.

Now, when our Lord was come to eighteen
years,

The King commanded that there should be
built

Three stately houses, one of hewn square beams
With cedar lining, warm for winter days;

One of veined marbles, cool for summer heat;
And one of burned bricks, with blue tiles be-
decked,

Pleasant at seed-time, when the champaks
bud—

Subha, Suramma, Ramma, were their names.

Delicious gardens round about them bloomed,
Streams wandered wild and musky thickets
stretched,

With many a bright pavilion and fair lawn
In midst of which Siddartha strayed at will,
Some new delight provided every hour;
And happy hours he knew, for life was rich,
With youthful blood at quickest; yet still came
The shadows of his meditation back,
As the lake's silver dulls with driving clouds.

Which the king marking, called his Ministers.
"Bethink ye, sirs! how the old Rishi spake,"
He said, "and what my dream-readers foretold.
This boy, more dear to me than mine heart's
 blood,
Shall be of universal dominance,
Trampling the neck of all his enemies,
A King of kings—and this is in my heart;—
Or he shall tread the sad and lowly path
Of self-denial and of pious pains,
Gaining who knows what good, when all is lost
Worth keeping; and to this his wistful eyes
Do still incline amid my palaces.
But ye are sage, and ye will counsel me;
How may his feet be turned to that proud road
Where they should walk, and all fair signs
 come true
Which gave him Earth to rule, if he would
 rule?"

The eldest answered, "Maharaja! love
Will cure these thin distempers; weave the
 spell
Of woman's wiles about his idle heart.
What knows this noble boy of beauty yet,
Eyes that make heaven forget, and lips of
 balm?
Find him soft wives and pretty playfellows;

The thoughts ye cannot stay with brazen
chains
A girl's hair lightly binds."

And all thought good,
But the King answered, "if we seek him wives,
Love chooseth oftentimes with another eye;
And if we bid range Beauty's garden round,
To pluck what blossom pleases, he will smile
And sweetly shun the joy he knows not of."
Then said another, "Roams the barasingh
Until the fated arrow flies; for him,
As for less lordly spirits, some one charms,
Some face will seem a Paradise, some form
Fairer than pale Dawn when she wakes the
world,
This do, my King! Command a festival
Where the realm's maids shall be competitors
In youth and grace, and sports that Sakyas use.
Let the Prince give the prizes to the fair,
And, when the lovely victors pass his seat,
There shall be those who mark if one or two
Change the fixed sadness of his tender cheek,
So we may choose for Love with Love's own
eyes,
And cheat his Highness into happiness."
This thing seemed good; wherefore upon a
day

The criers bade the young and beautiful
Pass to the palace, for 'twas in command
To hold a court of pleasure, and the Prince
Would give the prizes, something rich for all,
The richest for the fairest judged. So flocked
Kapilavastu's maidens to the gate,
Each with her dark hair newly smoothed and
 bound,
Eyelashes lusted with the soorma-stick,
Fresh-bathed and scented; all in shawls and
 cloths
Of gayest; slender hands and feet new-stained
With crimson, and the tilka-spots stamped
 bright.
Fair show it was of all those Indian girls
Slow-pacing past the throne with large black
 eyes
Fixed on the ground, for when they saw the
 Prince
More than the awe of Majesty made beat
Their fluttering hearts, he sate so passionless,
Gentle, but so beyond them. Each maid took
With down-dropped lids her gift, afraid to
 gaze;
And if the people hailed some lovelier one
Beyond her rivals worthy royal smiles,
She stood like a scared antelope to touch
The gracious hand, then fled to join her mates

Trembling at favor, so divine he seemed,
So high and saint-like and above her world.
Thus filed they, one bright maid after another,
The city's flowers, and all this beauteous
march

Was ending and the prizes spent, when last
Came young Yasodhara, and they that stood
Nearest Siddartha saw the princely boy
Start, as the radiant girl approached. A form
Of heavenly mould; a gait like Parvati's;
Eyes like a hind's in love-time, face so fair
Words cannot paint its spell; and she alone
Gazed full—folding her palms across her
breasts—

On the boy's gaze, her stately neck unbent.
“Is there a gift for me?” she asked, and smiled.
“The gifts are gone,” the Prince replied, “yet
take

This for amends, dear sister, of whose grace
Our happy city boasts;” therewith he loosed
The emerald necklace from his throat, and
clasped

Its green beads round her dark and silk-soft
waist;

And their eyes mixed, and from the look
sprang love.

Long after—when enlightenment was full—

Lord Buddha—being prayed why thus his
heart

Took fire at first glance of the Sakya girl,
Answered, "We were not strangers, as to us
And all it seemed; in ages long gone by
A hunter's son, playing with forest girls
By Yamun's springs, where Nandadevi stands,
Sate umpire while they raced beneath the firs
Like hares at eve that run their playful rings;
One with flower-stars crowned he, one with
long plumes

Plucked from eyed pheasant and the jungle-
cock,

One with fir-apples; but who ran the last
Came first for him, and unto her the boy
Gave a tame fawn and his heart's love beside.
And in the wood they lived many glad years,
And in the wood they undivided died.

Lo! as hid seed shoots after rainless years,
So good and evil, pains and pleasures, hates
And loves, and all dead deeds, come forth
again

Bearing bright leaves or dark, sweet fruit or
sour.

Thus I was he and she Yasodhara;
And while the wheel of birth and death turns
round,
That which hath been must be between us
two."

But they who watched the Prince at prize-
giving
Saw and heard all, and told the careful King
How sate Siddartha heedless, till there passed
Great Suprabuddha's child, Yasodhara:
And how—at sudden sight of her—he changed,
And how she gazed on him and he on her,
And of the jewel-gift, and what beside
Passed in their speaking glance.

The fond King smiled:

‘Look! we have found a lure, take counsel
now

To fetch therewith our falcon from the clouds.
Let messengers be sent to ask the maid
In marriage for my son. ’ But it was law
With Sakyas, when any asked a maid
Of noble house, fair and desirable,
He must make good his skill in martial arts
Against all suitors who should challenge it;
Nor might this custom break itself for kings.
Therefore her father spake: ‘ Say to the King,
The child is sought by princes far and near,
If thy most gentle son can bend the bow,
Sway sword, and back a horse better than
they, ’

Best would he be in all and best to us:

But how shall this be, with his cloistered ways?

Then the King's heart was sore, for now the
Prince
Begged sweet Yasodhara for wife—in vain,
With Devadatta foremost at the bow,
Ardjuna master of all fiery steeds,
And Nanda chief in sword-play; but the Prince
Laughed low and said, "These things, too, I
have learned;
Make proclamation that thy son will meet
All comers at their chosen games. I think
I shall not lose my love for such as these."
So 'twas given forth that on the seventh day
The Prince Siddartha summoned whoso would
To match with him in feats of manliness,
The victor's crown to be Yasodhara.

Therefore, upon the seventh day, there went
The Sakya lords and town and country round
Unto the maidan; and the maid went too
Amid her kinsfolk, carried as a bride,
With music, and with litters gayly dight,
And gold-horned oxen, flower-caparisoned.
Whom Devadatta claimed, of royal line,
And Nanda and Ardjuna, noble both,
The flower of all youth there, till the Prince
came
Riding his white horse Kantaka, which neighed,

Astonished at this great strange world without:

Also Siddartha gazed with wondering eyes
On all those people born beneath the throne,
Otherwise housed than kings, otherwise fed,
And yet so like—perchance—in joys and griefs.
But when the Prince saw sweet Yasodhara,
Brightly he smiled, and drew his silken rein,
Leaped to the earth from Kantaka's broad
back,

And cried, "He is not worthy of this pearl
Who is not worthiest; let my rivals prove
If I have dared too much in seeking her."
Then Nanda challenged for the arrow-test
And set a brazen drum six gows away,
Ardjuna six and Devadatta eight;
But Prince Siddartha bade them set his drum
Ten gows from off the line, until it seemed
A cowry-shell for target. Then they loosed,
And Nanda pierced his drum, Ardjuna his,
And Devadatta grove a well-aimed shaft
Through both sides of his mark, so that the
crowd

Marvelled and cried; and sweet Yasodhara
Dropped the gold sari o'er her fearful eyes,
Lest she should see her Prince's arrow fail.
But he, taking their bow of lacquered cane,

With sinews bound, and strung with silver-
wire

Which none but stalwart arms could draw a
span,

Thrummed it—low laughing—drew the twisted
string

Till the horns kissed, and the thick belly
snapped:

That is for play, not love," he said; "hath
none

A bow more fit for Sakya lords to use?"

And one said, "There is Sinhahanu's bow,
Kept in the temple since we know not when,
Which none can string, nor draw if it be
strung."

"Fetch me," he cried, "that weapon of a
man!"

They brought the ancient bow, wrought of
black steel,

Laid with gold tendrils on its branching curves
Like bison-horns; and twice Siddartha tried
Its strength across his knee, then spake—

"Shoot now

With this, my cousins!" but they could not
bring

The stubborn arms a hand's-breadth nigher
use;

Then the Prince, lightly leaning, bent the bow,

Slipped home the eye upon the notch, and
twanged

Sharply the cord, which, like an eagle's wing
Thrilling the air, sang forth so clear and loud
That feeble folk at home that day inquired

“What is this sound?” and people answered
them,

“It is the sound of Sinhahanu's bow,
Which the King's son has strung and goes to
shoot;”

Then fitting fair a shaft, he drew and loosed,
And the keen arrow clove the sky, and drave
Right through the farthest drum, not stayed
its flight,

But skimmed the plain beyond, past reach of
eye.

Then Devadatta challenged with the sword,
And clove a Talas-tree six fingers thick;
Ardjuna seven; and Nanda cut through nine;
But two such stems together grew, and both
Siddartha's blade shred at one flashing stroke,
Keen, but so smooth that the straight trunks
upstood,

And Nanda cried, “His edge turned!” and the
maid

Trembled anew seeing the trees erect,
Until the Devas of the air, who watched,

Blew light breaths from the south, and both
green crowns

Crashed in the sand, clean-felled.

Then brought they steeds,
High-mettled, nobly-bred, and three times
scoured

Around the maidan, but white Kantaka
Left even the fleetest far behind—so swift,
That ere the foam fell from his mouth to earth
Twenty spear-lengths he flew; but Nanda said,
“We too might win with such as Kantaka;
Bring an unbroken horse, and let men see
Who best can back him.” So the syces brought
A stallion dark as night, led by three chains,
Fierce-eyed, with nostrils wide and tossing
mane,

Unshod, unsaddled, for no rider yet
Had crossed him. Three times each young
Sakya

Sprung to his mighty back, but the hot steed
Furiously reared, and flung them to the plain,
In dust and shame; only Ardjuna held
His seat awhile, and, bidding loose the chains,
Lashed the black flank, and shook the bit, and
held

The proud jaws fast with grasp of master-hand,
So that in storms of wrath and rage and fear
The savage stallion circled once the plain,

Half-tamed; but sudden turned with naked
teeth,

Gripped by the foot Ardjuna, tore him down,
And would have slain him, but the grooms ran
in

Fettering the maddened beast. Then all men
cried,

“Let not Siddartha meddle with this Bhut,
Whose liver is a tempest, and his blood
Red flame;” but the Prince said, “Let go the
chains,

Give me his forelock only,” which he held
With quiet grasp, and, speaking some low
word,

Laid his right palm across the stallion's eyes,
And drew it gently down the angry face,
And all along the neck and panting flanks,
Till men astonished saw the night-black horse
Sink his fierce crest and stand subdued and
meek,

As though he knew our Lord and worshipped
him.

Nor stirred he while Siddartha mounted, then
Went soberly to touch of knee and rein
Before all eyes, so that the people said,
“Strive no more, for Siddartha is the best.”

And all the suitors answered “He is best!”

And Suprabuddha, father of the maid,
Said, "It was in our hearts to find thee best,
Being dearest, yet what magic taught thee
more

Of manhood 'mid thy rose-bowers and thy
dreams

Than war and chase and world's work bring
to these?

But wear, fair Prince, the treasure thou hast
won."

Then at a word the lovely Indian girl
Rose from her place above the throng, and
took

A crown of mogra-flowers and lightly drew
The veil of black and gold across her brow,
Proud pacing past the youths, until she came
To where Siddartha stood in grace divine,
New lighted from the night-dark steed, which
bent

Its strong neck meekly underneath his arm.
Before the Prince lowly she bowed, and bared
Her face celestial beaming with glad love;
Then on his neck she hung the fragrant wreath,
And on his breast she laid her perfect head,
And stooped to touch his feet with proud glad
eyes,

Saying, "Dear Prince, behold me, who am
thine!"

And all the throng rejoiced, seeing them pass,
Hand fast in hand, and heart beating with
heart,
The veil of black and gold drawn close again.

Long after—when enlightenment was
come—

They prayed Lord Buddha touching all, and
why
She wore this black and gold, and stepped so
proud.

And the World-honored answered, “Unto me
This was unknown, albeit it seemed half-
known;

For while the wheel of birth and death turns
round,
Past things and thoughts, and buried lives
come back.

I now remember, myriad rains ago,
What time I roamed Himala's hanging woods,
A tiger, with my striped and hungry kind;
I, who am Buddh, couched in the kusa grass
Gazing with green blinked eyes upon the herds
Which pastured near and nearer to their death
Round my day-lair; or underneath the stars
I roamed for prey, savage, insatiable,
Sniffing the paths for track of man and deer.
Amid the beasts that were my fellows then,

Met in deep jungle or by reedy jheel,
 A tigress, comeliest of the forest, set
 The males at war; her hide was lit with gold,
 Black-broidered like the veil Yasodhara
 Wore for me; hot the strife waxed in that wood
 With tooth and claw, while underneath a neem
 The fair beast watched us bleed, thus fiercely
 wooed.

And I remember, at the end she came
 Snarling past this and that torn forest-lord
 Which I had conquered, and with fawning jaws
 Licked my quick-heaving flank, and with me
 went
 Into the wild with proud steps, amorously.
 The wheel of birth and death turns low and
 high."

Therefore the maid was given unto the
 Prince
 A willing spoil; and when the stars were
 good—
 Mesha, the Red Ram, being Lord of heaven—
 The marriage-feast was kept, as Sakyas use,
 The golden gadi set, the carpet spread,
 The wedding garlands hung, the arm-threads
 tied,
 The sweet-cake broke, the rice and attar thrown,
 The two straws floated on the reddened milk,

Which, coming close, betokened love till
death;"

The seven steps taken thrice around the fire,
The gifts bestowed on holy men, the alms
And temple offerings made, the mantras sung,
The garments of the bride and bridegroom tied.
Then the grey father spake: "Worshipful
Prince,

She that was ours henceforth is only thine;
Be good to her, who hath her life in thee."
Wherewith they brought home sweet Yaso-
dhara,

With songs and trumpets, to the Prince's arms,
And love was all in all.

Yet not to love
Alone trusted the King; love's prison-house
Stately and beautiful he bade them build,
So that in all the earth no marvel was
Like Vishramvan, the Prince's pleasure-place.
Midway in those wide palace-grounds there
rose

A verdant hill whose base Rohini bathed,
Murmuring adown from Himalay's broad feet,
To bear its tribute into Gunga's waves.
Southward a growth of tamarind trees and sal,
Thick set with pale sky-colored ganthi flowers,
Shut out the world, save if the city's hum
Came on the wind no harsher than when bees

Hum out of sight in thickets. Northwards
soared

The stainless ramps of huge Himala's wall,
Ranged in white ranks against the blue—
untrod,

Infinite, wonderful—whose uplands vast,
And lifted universe of crest and crag,
Shoulder and shelf, green slope and icy horn,
Riven ravine, and splintered precipice
Led climbing thought higher and higher, until
It seemed to stand in heaven and speak with
gods.

Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp
laced

With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds:
Lower grew rose-oaks and the great fir groves
Where echoed pheasant's call and panther's cry,
Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
Of circling eagles: under these the plain
Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
Of those divinest altars. Fronting this
The builders set the bright pavilion up,
Fair-planted on the terraced hill, with towers
On either flank and pillared cloisters round.
Its beams were carved with stories of old
time—

Radha and Krishna and the sylvan girls—
Sita and Hanuman and Draupadi;

And on the middle porch God Ganesha,
With disc and hook—to bring wisdom and
wealth—

Propitious sate, wreathing his sidelong trunk
By winding ways of garden and of court
The inner gate was reached, of marble wrought,
White with pink veins; the lintel lazuli,
The threshold alabaster, and the doors
Sandal-wood, cut in pictured panelling;
Whereby to lofty halls and shadowy bowers
Passed the delighted foot, on stately stairs,
Through latticed galleries, 'neath painted roofs
And clustering columns, where cool fountains
—fringed

With lotus and nelumbo—danced, and fish
Gleamed through their crystal, scarlet, gold,
and blue.

Great-eyed gazelles in sunny alcoves browsed
The blown red roses; birds of rainbow wing
Fluttered among the palms; doves, green and
grey,

Built their safe nests on gilded cornices;
Over the shining pavements peacocks drew
The splendors of their trains, sedately watched
By milk-white herons and the small house-owls.
The plum-necked parrots swung from fruit to
fruit;

The yellow sunbirds whirred from bloom to
bloom,

The timid lizards on the lattice basked
Fearless, the squirrels ran to feed from hand,
For all was peace: the shy black snake, that
gives

Fortune to households, sunned his sleepy coils
Under the moon-flowers, where the musk-deer
played,

And brown-eyed monkeys chattered to the
crows.

And all this house of love was peopled fair
With sweet attendance, so that in each part
With lovely sights were gentle faces found,
Soft speech and willing service, each one glad
To gladden, pleased at pleasure, proud to obey;
Till life glided beguiled, like a smooth stream
Banked by perpetual flow'rs, Yasodhara
Queen of the enchanting Court.

But innermost,
Beyond the richness of those hundred halls,
A secret chamber lurked, where skill had spent
All lovely fantasies to lull the mind.

The entrance of it was a cloistered square—
Roofed to the sky, and in the midst a tank—
Of milky marble built, and laid with slabs
Of milk-white marble; bordered round the
tank

And on the steps, and all along the frieze
With tender inlaid work of agate-stones.
Cool as to tread in summer-time on snows
It was to loiter there; the sunbeams dropped
Their gold, and, passing into porch and niche,
Softened to shadows, silvery, pale, and dim,
As if the very Day paused and grew Eve
In love and silence at that bower's gate;
For there beyond the gate the chamber was,
Beautiful, sweet; a wonder of the world!
Soft light from perfumed lamps through win-
dows fell
Of nakre and stained stars of lucent film
On golden cloths outspread, and silken beds,
And heavy splendor of the purdah's fringe,
Lifted to take only the loveliest in.
Here, whether it was night or day, none knew,
For always streamed that softened light, more
bright
Than sunrise, but as tender as the eve's;
And always breathed sweet airs, more joy-
giving
Than morning's, but as cool as midnight's
breath;
And night and day lutes sighed, and night and
day
Delicious foods were spread, and dewy fruits,
Sherbets new chilled with snows of Himalay,

And sweetmeats made of subtle daintiness,
With sweet tree-milk in its own ivory cup.
And night and day served there a chosen band
Of nautch girls, cup-bearers, and cymballers,
Delicate, dark-browed ministers of love,
Who fanned the sleeping eyes of the happy
 Prince,
And when he waked, led back his thoughts to
 bliss
With music whispering through the blooms,
 and charm
Of amorous songs and dreamy dances, linked
By chime of ankle-bells and wave of arms
And silver vina-strings; while essences
Of musk and champak, and the blue haze
 spread
From burning spices soothed his soul again
To drowse by sweet Yasodhara; and thus
Siddartha lived forgetting.

Furthermore,
The King commanded that within those walls
No mention should be made of death or age,
Sorrow, or pain, or sickness. If one drooped
In the lovely Court—her dark glance dim, her
 feet

Faint in the dance—the guiltless criminal
Passed forth an exile from that Paradise,
Lest he should see and suffer at her woe.

Bright-eyed intendants watched to execute
Sentence on such as spake of the harsh world
Without, where aches and plagues were, tears
 and fears,
And wail of mourners, and grim fume of pyres.
'Twas treason if a thread of silver strayed
In tress of singing-girl or nautch-dancer;
And every dawn the dying rose was plucked,
The dead leaves hid, all evil sights removed:
For said the King, "If he shall pass his youth
Far from such things as move to wistfulness,
And brooding on the empty eggs of thought,
The shadow of this fate, too vast for man,
May fade, belike, and I shall see him grow
To that great stature of fair sovereignty
When he shall rule all lands—if he will rule—
The King of kings and glory of his time."

Wherefore, around that pleasant prison-
house—

Where love was gaoler and delights its bars,
But far removed from sight—the King bade
 build

A massive wall, and in the wall a gate
With brazen folding-doors, which but to roll
Back on their hinges asked a hundred arms;
Also the noise of that prodigious gate
Opening, was heard full half a yojana.

And inside this another gate he made,
And yet within another—through the three
Must one pass if he quit that Pleasure-house,
Three mighty gates there were, bolted and
 barred,
And over each was set a faithful watch;
And the King's order said, "Suffer no man
To pass the gates, though he should be the
 prince:
This on your lives—even though it be my son."

BOOK THE THIRD.

In which calm home of happy life and love
Ligged our Lord Buddha, knowing not of woe,
Nor want, nor pain, nor plague, nor age, nor
death,

Save as when sleepers roam dim seas in dreams,
And land awearied on the shores of day,
Bringing strange merchandise from that black
voyage.

Thus ofttimes when he lay with gentle head
Lulled on the dark breasts of Yasodhara,
Her fond hands fanning slow his sleeping lids,
He would start up and cry, "My world! Oh,
world!

I hear! I know! I come!" And she would ask,
"What ails my Lord?" with large eyes terror-
struck;

For at such times the pity in his look
Was awful, and his visage like a god's.
Then would he smile again to stay her tears,
And bid the vinas sound; but once they set
A stringed gourd on the sill, there where the
wind

Could linger o'er its notes and play at will—
Wild music makes the wind on silver strings—
And those who lay around heard only that;
But Prince Siddartha heard the Devas play,
And to his ears they sang such words as these:—

We are the voices of the wandering wind,
Which moan for rest and rest can never find;
Lo! as the wind is so is mortal life,
A moon, a sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife.

Wherefore and whence we are ye cannot know,
Nor where life springs nor whither life doth go;
We are as ye are, ghosts from the inane,
What pleasure have we of our changeful pain?

What pleasure hast thou of thy changeless bliss?
Nay, if love lasted, there were joy in this;
But life's way is the wind's way, all these things
Are but brief voices breathed on shifting strings.

O Maya's son! because we roam the earth
Moan we upon these strings; we make no mirth,
So many woes we see in many lands,
So many streaming eyes and wringing hands.

Yet mock we while we wail, for, could they know,
This life they cling to is but empty show;
'Twere all as well to bid a cloud to stand,
Or hold a running river with the hand.

But thou that art to save, thine hour is nigh!
The sad world waiteth in its misery,
The blind world stumbleth on its round of pain;
Rise, Maya's child! wake! slumber not again!

We are the voices of the wandering wind:
Wander thou, too, O Prince, thy rest to find;
Leave love for love of lovers, for woe's sake
Quit state for sorrow, and deliverance make.

So sigh we, passing o'er the silver strings,
To thee who know'st not yet of earthly things;
So say we; mocking, as we pass away,
These lovely shadows wherewith thou dost play.

Thereafter it befell he sate at eve
Amid his beauteous Court, holding the hand
Of sweet Yasodhara, and some maid told—
With breaks of music when her rich voice
dropped—
An ancient tale to speed the hour of dusk,
Of love, and of a magic horse, and lands
Wonderful, distant, where pale peoples dwelled,
And where the sun at night sank into seas.
Then spake he, sighing, "Chitra brings me
back
The wind's song in the strings with that fair
tale.
Give her, Yasodhara, thy pearl for thanks.
But thou, my pearl! is there so wide a world?
Is there a land which sees the great sun roll
Into the waves, and are there hearts like ours,
Countless, unknown, not happy—it may be—
Whom we might succor if we knew of them?
Ofttimes I marvel, as the Lord of day

Treads from the east his kingly road of gold,
Who first on the world's edge hath hailed his
beam,

The children of the morning; oftentimes,
Even in thine arms and on thy breasts, bright
wife,

Sore have I panted, at the sun's decline,
To pass with him into that crimson west
And see the peoples of the evening.

There must be many we should love—how
else?

Now have I in this hour an ache, at last,
Thy soft lips cannot kiss away: oh, girl!
O Chitra! you that know of fairyland!

Where tether they that swift steed of the tale?
My palace for one day upon his back,
To ride and ride and see the spread of the
earth!

Nay, if I had yon callow vulture's plumes—
The carrion heir of wider realms than mine—
How would I stretch for topmost Himalay,
Light where the rose-gleam lingers on those
snows,

And strain my gaze with searching what is
round!

Why have I never seen and never sought?
Tell me what lies beyond our brazen gate's.'



"Looking downward they beheld Buddha."—Page 27.
The Light of Asia.

Then one replied, "The city first, fair
Prince!

The temples, and the gardens, and the groves,
And then the fields, and afterwards fresh fields,
With nullahs, maidans, jungle, koss on koss;
And next King Bimbasara's realm, and then
The vast flat world, with crores on crores of
folk."

"Good," said Siddartha, "let the word be sent
That Channa yoke my chariot—at noon
To-morrow I shall ride and see beyond."

Whereof they told the king: "Our Lord, thy
son,
Wills that his chariot be yoked at noon,
That he may ride abroad and see mankind."

"Yea!" spake the careful King, "'tis time
he see!

But let the criers go about and bid
My city deck itself, so there be met
No noisome sight; and let none blind or
maimed,

None that is sick or stricken deep in years,
No leper, and no feeble folk come forth."

Therefore the stones were swept, and up and
down

The water-carriers sprinkled all the streets

From spiriting skins, the housewives scattered
fresh
Red powder on their thresholds, strung new
wreaths,
And trimmed the tulsi-bush before their doors.
The paintings on the walls were heightened up
With liberal brush, the trees set thick with
flags,
The idols gilded; in the four-went ways
Suryadeva and the great gods shone
'Mid shrines of leaves; so that the city seemed
A capital of some enchanted land.
Also the criers passed, with drum and gong,
Proclaiming loudly, "Ho! all citizens,
The King commands that there be seen to-day
No evil sight: let no one blind or maimed,
None that is sick or stricken deep in years,
No leper, and no feeble folk go forth.
Let none, too, burn his dead nor bring them out
Till nightfall. Thus Suddhodana commands."

So all was comely and the houses trim
Throughout Kapilavastu, while the Prince
Came forth in painted car, which two steers
drew,
Snow-white, with swinging dewlaps and huge
humps
Wrinkled against the carved and lacquered
yoke.

Goodly it was to mark the people's joy
Greeting their Prince; and glad Siddartha
waxed

At sight of all those liege and friendly folk
Bright-clad and laughing as if life were good.
"Fair is the world," he said, "it likes me well!
And light and kind these men that are not
kings,

And sweet my sisters here, who toil and tend;
What have I done for these to make them thus?
Why, if I love them, should those children
know?

I pray take up yon pretty Sakya boy
Who flung us flowers, and let him ride with
me.

How good it is to reign in realms like this!
How simple pleasure is, if these be pleased
Because I come abroad! How many things
I need not if such little households hold
Enough to make our city full of smiles!
Drive, Channa! through the gates, and let me
see

More of this gracious world I have not known."

So passed they through the gates, a joyous
crowd
Thronging about the wheels, whereof some
ran

Before the oxen, throwing wreaths, some
 stroked
Their silken flanks, some brought them rice
 and cakes,
All crying, "*Jai! jai!* for our noble Prince!"
Thus all the path was kept with gladsome looks
And filled with fair sights—for the King's word
 was
That such should be—when midway in the
 road,
Slow tottering from the hovel where he hid,
Crept forth a wretch in rags, haggard and foul,
An old, old man, whose shrivelled skin, sun-
 tanned,
Clung like a beast's hide to his fleshless bones.
Bent was his back with load of many days,
His eyepits red with rust of ancient tears,
His dim orbs blear with rheum, his toothless
 jaws
Wagging with palsy and the fright to see
So many and such joy. One skinny hand
Clutched a worn staff to prop his quavering
 limbs,
And one was pressed upon the ridge of ribs
Whence came in gasps the heavy painful breath.
"Alms!" moaned he, "give, good people! for
 I die
To-morrow or the next day!" then the cough

Choked him, but still he stretched his palm,
and stood

Blinking, and groaning 'mid his spasms,
"Alms!"

Then those around had wrenched his feeble
feet

Aside, and thrust him from the road again,
Saying, "The Prince! dost see? get to thy
lair!"

But that Siddartha cried, "Let be! let be!
Channa! what thing is this who seems a man,
Yet surely only seems, being so bowed,
So miserable, so horrible, so sad?

Are men born sometimes thus? What meaneth
he

Moaning 'to-morrow or next day I die?'
Finds he no food that so his bones jut forth?
What woe hath happened to this piteous one?"
Then answer made the charioteer, "Sweet
Prince!

This is no other than an aged man.
Some fourscore years ago his back was straight,
His eye bright, and his body goodly: now
The thievish years have sucked his sap away,
Pillaged his strength and filched his will and
wit;

His lamp has lost its oil, the wick burns black;
What life he keeps is one poor lingering spark

Which flickers for the finish: such is age;
 Why should your Highness heed?" Then spake
 the Prince—

"But shall this come to others, or to all,
 Or is it rare that one should be as he?"

"Most noble," answered Channa, "even as he,
 Will all these grow if they shall live so long."

"But," quoth the Prince, "if I shall live as
 long

Shall I be thus; and if Yasodhara
 Live fourscore years, is this old age for her,
 Jalini, little Hasta, Gautami,
 And Gunga, and the others?" "Yea, great
 Sir!"

The Charioteer replied. Then spake the
 Prince:

"Turn back, and drive me to my house again!
 I have seen that I did not think to see."

Which pondering, to his beauteous Court
 returned

Wistful Siddartha, sad of mien and mood;
 Nor tasted he the white cakes nor the fruits
 Spread for the evening feast, nor once looked
 up

While the best palace-dancers strove to charm;
 Nor spake—save one sad thing—when wofully
 Yasodhara sank to his feet and wept,

Sighing, "Hath not my Lord comfort in me?"
"Ah, Sweet!" he said, "such comfort that my
soul

Aches, thinking it must end, for it will end,
And we shall both grow old, Yasodhara!

Loveless, unlovely, weak, and old, and bowed.
Nay, though we locked up love and life with
lips

So close that night and day our breaths grew
one,

Time would thrust in between to filch away
My passion and thy grace, as black Night steals
The rose-gleams from yon peak, which fade to
grey

And are not seen to fade. This have I found,
And all my heart is darkened with its dread,
And all my heart is fixed to think how Love
Might save its sweetness from the slayer, Time,
Who makes men old." So through that night
he sate

Sleepless, uncomforted.

And all that night

The King Suddhodana dreamed troublous
dreams.

The first fear of his vision was a flag
Broad, glorious, glistening with a golden sun,
The mark of Indra; but a strong wind blew,

Rending its folds divine, and dashing it
Into the dust; whereat a concourse came
Of shadowy Ones, who took the spoiled silk up
And bore it eastward from the city gates.
The second fear was ten huge elephants,
With silver tusks and feet that shook the earth,
Trampling the scuthern road in mighty march;
And he who sate upon the foremost beast
Was the King's son—the others followed him.
The third fear of the vision was a car,
Shining with blinding light, which four steeds
drew,
Snorting white smoke and champing fiery foam;
And in the car the Prince Siddartha sate.
The fourth fear was a wheel which turned and
turned.
With nave of burning gold and jewelled
spokes,
And strange things written on the binding tire,
Which seemed both fire and music as it whirled.
The fifth fear was a mighty drum, set down
Midway between the city and the hills,
On which the Prince beat with an iron mace,
So that the sound pealed like a thunderstorm,
Rolling around the sky and far away.
The sixth fear was a tower, which rose and
rose
High o'er the city till its stately head

Shone crowned with clouds, and on the top the
Prince
Stood, scattering from both hands, this way
and that,
Gems of most lovely light, as if it rained
Jacynths and rubies; and the whole world
came,
Striving to seize those treasures as they fell
Towards the four quarters. But the seventh
fear was
A noise of wailing, and behold six men
Who wept and gnashed their teeth, and laid
their palms
Upon their mouths, walking disconsolate.

These seven fears made the vision of his
sleep,
But none of all his wisest dream-readers
Could tell their meaning. Then the King was
wroth,
Saying, "There cometh evil to my house,
And none of ye have wit to help me know
What the great gods portends sending me this."
So in the city men went sorrowful
Because the King had dreamed seven signs of
fear
Which none could read; but to the gate there
came

An aged man, in robe of deer-skin clad,
By guise a hermit, known to none; he cried,
“Bring me before the King, for I can read
The vision of his sleep;” who, when he heard
The sevenfold mysteries of the midnight dream,
Bowed reverent and said, “O Maharaj!
I hail this favored House, whence shall rise
A wider-reaching splendor than the sun’s!
Lo! all these seven fears are seven joys,
Whereof the first, where thou didst see a flag—
Broad, glorious, gilt with Indra’s badge—cast
down

And carried out, did signify the end
Of old faiths and beginning of the new,
For there is change with gods not less than
men,

And as the days pass kalpas pass at length.
The ten great elephants that shook the earth
The ten great gifts of wisdom signify,
In strength whereof the Prince shall quit his
state

And shake the world with passage of the
Truth.

The four flame-breathing horses of the car
Are those four fearless virtues which shall
bring

Thy son from doubt and gloom to gladsome
light;

The wheel that turned with nave of burning
gold

Was that most precious Wheel of perfect Law
Which he shall turn in sight of all the world.
The mighty drum whereon the Prince did
beat,

Till the sound filled all lands, doth signify
The thunder of the preaching of the Word
Which he shall preach; the tower that grew to
heaven

The growing of the Gospel of this Buddh
Sets forth; and those rare jewels scattered
thence

The untold treasures are of that good Law
To gods and men dear and desirable.
Such is the interpretation of the tower;
But for those six men weeping with shut
mouths,

They are the six chief teachers whom thy son
Shall, with bright truth and speech unanswer-
able,

Convince of foolishness. O King! rejoice;
The fortune of my Lord the Prince is more
Than kingdoms, and his hermit-rags will be
Beyond fine cloths of gold. This was thy
dream!

And in seven nights and days these things shall
fall."

So spake the holy man, and lowly made
The eight prostrations, touching thrice the
ground;
Then turned and passed; but when the King
bade send
A rich gift after him, the messengers
Brought word, "We came to where he entered
in
At Chandra's temple, but within was none
Save a grey owl which fluttered from the
shrine."

The gods come sometimes thus.

But the sad King

Marveled, and gave command that new de-
lights

Be compassed to enthrall Siddartha's heart
Amid those dancers of his pleasure-house,
Also he set at all the brazen doors
A double guard.

Yet who shall shut out Fate?

For once again the spirit of the Prince
Was moved to see this world beyond his gates,
This life of man, so pleasant if its waves
Ran not to waste and woful finishing
In Time's dry sands. "I pray you let me view
Our city as it is," such was his prayer

To King Suddhodana. "Your Majesty
In tender heed hath warned the folk before
To put away ill things and common sights,
And make their faces glad to gladden me,
And all the causeways gay; yet have I learned
This is not daily life, and if I stand
Nearest, my father, to the realm and thee,
Fain would I know the people and the streets,
Their simple usual ways, and workday deeds,
And lives which those men live who are not
kings.

Give me good leave, dear Lord! to pass un-
known

Beyond my happy gardens; I shall come
The more contented to their peace again,
Or wiser, father, if not well content.

Therefore, I pray thee, let me go at will
To-morrow, with my servants, through the
streets."

And the King said, among his Ministers,
"Belike this second flight may mend the first.
Note how the falcon starts at every sight
News from his hood, but what a quiet eye
Cometh of freedom; let my son see all,
And bid them bring me tidings of his mind."

Thus on the morrow, when the noon was
come,

The Prince and Channa passed beyond the
gates,

Which opened to the signet of the King;
Yet knew not they who rolled the great doors
back

It was the King's son in that merchant's robe,
And in the clerkly dress his charioteer.

Forth fared they by the common way afoot,
Mingling with all the Sakya citizens,

Seeing the glad and sad things of the town:

The painted streets alive with hum of noon,
The traders cross-legged 'mid their spice and
grain,

The buyers with their money in the cloth,
The war of words to cheapen this or that,
The shout to clear the road, the huge stone
wheels,

The strong, slow oxen and their rustling loads,

The singing bearers with the palanquins,

The broad-necked hamals sweating in the sun,

The housewives bearing water from the well

With balanced chatties, and athwart their hips

The black-eyed babes; the fly-swarmed sweet-
meat shops,

The weaver at his loom, the cotton-bow

Twanging, the millstones grinding meal, the
dogs

Prowling for orts, the skilful armorer

With tong and hammer linking shirts of mail,
The blacksmith with a mattock and a spear
Reddening together in his coals, the school
Where round their Guru, in a grave half-moon,
The Sakya children sang the mantras through,
And learned the greater and the lesser gods;
The dyers stretching waistcloths in the sun
Wet from the vats—orange, and rose, and
green;

The soldiers clanking past with swords and
shields,

The camel-drivers rocking on the humps,
The Brahman proud, the martial Kshatriya,
The humble toiling Sudra; here a throng
Gathered to watch some chattering snake-tamer
Wind round his wrist the living jewellery
Of asp and nag, or charm the hooded death
To angry dance with drone of beaded gourd;
There a long line of drums and horns, which
went,

With steeds gay painted and silk canopies,
To bring the young bride home; and here a
wife

Stealing with cakes and garlands to the god
To pray her husband's safe return from trade,
Or beg a boy next birth; hard by the booths
Where the swart potters beat the noisy brass
For lamps and lotas; thence, by temple walls

And gateways, to the river and the bridge
Under the city walls.

These had they passed
When from the roadside moaned a mournful
 voice,

“Help, masters! lift me to my feet; oh, help!
Or I shall die before I reach my house!”

A stricken wretch it was, whose quivering
 frame,

Caught by some deadly plague, lay in the dust
Writhing, with fiery purple blotches specked;
The chill sweat beaded on his brow, his mouth
Was dragged awry with twitchings of sore pain,
The wild eyes swam with inward agony.

Gasping, he clutched the grass to rise, and rose
Half-way, then sank, with quaking feeble limbs
And scream of terror, crying, “Ah, the pain!
Good people, help!” whereon Siddartha ran,
Lifted the woful man with tender hands,
With sweet looks laid the sick head on his
 knee,

And while his soft touch comforted the wretch,
Asked, “Brother, what is ill with thee? what
 harm

Hath fallen? wherefore canst thou not arise?
Why is it, Channa, that he pants and moans,
And gasps to speak and sighs so pitiful?”

Then spake the charioteer: "Great Prince! this
man

Is smitten with some pest; his elements
Are all confounded; in his veins the blood,
Which ran a wholesome river, leaps and boils
A fiery flood; his heart, which kept good time,
Beats like an ill-played drum-skin, quick and
slow;

His sinews slacken like a bow-string slipped;
The strength is gone from ham, and loin, and
neck,

And all the grace and joy of manhood fled:

This is a sick man with the fit upon him.

See how he plucks and plucks to seize his grief,
And rolls his bloodshot orbs, and grinds his
teeth,

And draws his breath as if 'twere choking
smoke.

Lo! now he would be dead, but shall not die
Until the plague hath had its work in him,
Killing the nerves which die before the life;
Then, when his strings have cracked with agony
And all his bones are empty of the sense
To ache, the plague will quit and light else-
where.

Oh, sir! it is not good to hold him so!

The harm may pass, and strike thee, even
thee."

But spake the Prince, still comforting the man,
 "And are there others, are there many thus?
 Or might it be to me as now with him?"

"Great Lord!" answered the charioteer, "this
 comes

In many forms to all men; griefs and wounds,
 Sickness and tetter, palsies, leprosy,
 Hot fevers, watery wastings, issues, blains
 Befall all flesh and enter everywhere."

"Come such ills unobserved?" the Prince in-
 quired.

And Channa said, "Like the sly snake they
 come

That stings unseen; like the striped murderer,
 Who waits to spring from the Karunda bush,
 Hiding beside the jungle path; or like
 The lightning, striking these and sparing those,
 As chance may send."

"Then all men live in fear?"

"So live they, Prince!"

"And none can say, 'I sleep
 Happy and whole to-night, and so shall wake?'"

"None say it."

"And the end of many aches,
 Which come unseen, and will come when they
 come,

Is this, a broken body and sad mind,
 And so old age?"

“Yea, if men last as long.”

“But if they cannot bear their agonies,
Or if they will not bear, and seek a term;
Or if they bear, and be, as this man is,
Too weak except for groans, and so still live,
And growing old, grow older, then what end?”
“They die, Prince.”

“Die?”

“Yea, at the last comes death,
In whatsoever way, whatever hour.
Some few grow old, most suffer and fall sick,
But all must die—behold, where comes the
Dead!”

Then did Siddartha raise his eyes, and see
Fast pacing towards the river brink a band
Of wailing people, foremost one who swung
An earthen bowl, with lighted coals, behind
The kinsmen shorn, with mourning marks, un-
girt,
Crying aloud, ‘O Rama, Rama, hear!
Call upon Rama, brothers;’ next the bier,
Knit of four poles with bamboos interlaced,
Whereon lay, stark and stiff, feet foremost,
lean,
Chapfallen, sightless, hollow-flanked, a-grin,
Sprinkled with red and yellow dust—the Dead,
Whom at the four-went ways they turned head
first,

And crying, "Rama, Rama!" carried on
To where a pile was reared beside the stream;
Thereon they laid him, building fuel up—
Good sleep hath one that slumbers on that bed!
He shall not wake for cold albeit he lies
Naked to all the airs—for soon they set
The red flame to the corners four, which crept,
And licked, and flickered, finding out his flesh
And feeding on it with swift hissing tongues,
And crackle of parched skin, and snap of joint;
Till the fat smoke thinned and the ashes sank
Scarlet and grey, with here and there a bone
White midst the grey—the total of the man.

Then spake the Prince: "Is this the end
which comes
To all who live?"

"This is the end that comes
To all," quoth Channa; "he upon the pyre—
Whose remnants are so petty that the crows
Caw hungrily, then quit the fruitless feast—
Ate, drank, laughed, loved, and lived, and
liked life well.

Then came—who knows?—some gust of jungle
wind,
A stumble on the path, a taint in the tank,
A snake's nip, half a span of angry steel,
A chill, a fishbone, or a falling tile,

And life was over and the man is dead;
No appetites, no pleasures, and no pains
Hath such; the kiss upon his lips is nought,
The fire-scorch nought; he smelleth not his
flesh

A-roast, nor yet the sandal and the spice
They burn; the taste is emptied from his
mouth,

The hearing of his ears is clogged, the sight
Is blinded in his eyes; those whom he loved
Wail desolate, for even that must go,
The body, which was lamp unto the life,
Or worms will have a horrid feast of it.

Here is the common destiny of flesh:

The high and low, the good and bad, must die,
And then, 'tis taught, begin anew and live
Somewhere, somehow,—who knows?—and so
again

The pangs, the parting, and the lighted pile:—
Such is man's round."

“But lo! Siddartha turned
Eyes gleaming with divine tears to the sky,
Eyes lit with heavenly pity to the earth;
From sky to earth he looked, from earth to sky,
As if his spirit sought in lonely flight
Some far-off vision, linking this and that,
Lost — past — but searchable, but seen, but
known.

Then cried he, while his lifted countenance
Glowed with the burning passion of a love
Unspeakable, the ardor of a hope
Boundless, insatiate: "Oh! suffering world,
Oh! known and unknown of my common flesh,
Caught in this common net of death and woe,
And life which binds to both! I see, I feel
The vastness of the agony of earth,
The vainness of its joys, the mockery
Of all its best, the anguish of its worst;
Since pleasures end in pain, and youth in age,
And love in loss, and life in hateful death,
And death in unknown lives, which will but
yoke

Men to their wheel again to whirl the round
Of false delights and woes that are not false.
Me too this lure hath cheated, so it seemed
Lovely to live, and life a sunlit stream
For ever flowing in a changeless peace;
Whereas the foolish ripple of the flood
Dances so lightly down by bloom and lawn
Only to pour its crystal quicklier
Into the foul salt sea. The veil is rent
Which blinded me! I am as all these men
Who cry upon their gods and are not heard
Or are not heeded—yet there must be aid!
For them and me and all there must be help!

Perchance the gods have need of help them-
selves,
Being so feeble that when sad lips cry
They cannot save! I would not let one cry
Whom I could save! How can it be that Brahm
Would make a world and keep it miserable,
Since, if all-powerful, he leaves it so,
He is not good, and if not powerful,
He is not God?—Channa! lead home again!
It is enough! mine eyes have seen enough!”

Which when the King heard, at the gates he
set
A triple guard, and bade no man should pass
By day or night, issuing or entering in,
Until the days were numbered of that dream.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

But when the days were numbered, then befell
The parting of our Lord—which was to be—
Whereby came wailing in the Golden Home,
Woe to the King and sorrow o'er the land,
But for all flesh deliverance, and that law
Which—whoso hears—the same shall make
him free.

Softly the Indian night sinks on the plains
At full moon in the month of Chaitra Shud,
When mangoes redden and the asoka buds
Sweeten the breeze, and Rama's birthday
comes,
And all the fields are glad, and all the towns.
Softly that night fell over Vishramvan,
Fragrant with blooms and jeweled thick with
stars,
And cool with mountain airs sighing adown
From snow-flats on Himala high-outspread;
For the moon swung above the eastern peaks,
Climbing the spangled vault, and lighting
clear

Rohini's ripples and the hills and plains,
And all the sleeping land, and near at hand
Silvering those roof-tops of the pleasure-house,
Where nothing stirred nor sign of watching
was,

Save at the outer gates, whose warders cried
Mudra, the watchword, and the countersign
Angana, and the watch-drums beat a round;
Whereat the earth lay still, except for call
Of prowling jackals, and the ceaseless trill
Of crickets in the garden grounds.

Within—

Where the moon glittered through the lace-
worked stone

Lighting the walls of pearl-shell and the floors
Paved with veined marble—softly fell her
beams

On such rare company of Indian girls,
It seemed some chamber sweet in Paradise
Where Devis rested. All the chosen ones
Of Prince Siddartha's pleasure-home were
there,

The brightest and most faithful of the Court,
Each form so lovely in the peace of sleep,
That you had said "This is the pearl of all!"
Save that beside her or beyond her lay
Fairer and fairer, till the pleased gaze

Roamed o'er that feast of beauty as it roams
From gem to gem in some great goldsmith-
work,
Caught by each color till the next is seen.
With careless grace they lay, their soft brown
limbs
Part hidden, part revealed; their glossy hair
Bound back with gold or flowers, or flowing
loose
In black waves down the shapely nape and
neck,
Lulled into pleasant dreams by happy toils,
They slept no wearier than jeweled birds
Which sing and love all day, then under wing
Fold head till morn bids sing and love again.
Lamps of chased silver swinging from the roof
In silver chains, and fed with perfumed oils,
Made with the moonbeams' tender lights and
shades,
Whereby were seen the perfect lines of grace,
The bosom's placid heave, the soft stained
palms
Drooping or clasped, the faces fair and dark,
The great arched brows, the parted lips, the
teeth
Like pearls a merchant picks to make a string,
The satin-lidded eyes, the lashes dropped

Sweeping the delicate cheeks, the rounded
wrists,
The smooth small feet with bells and bangles
decked,
Tinkling low music where some sleeper moved,
Breaking her smiling dream of some new dance
Praised by the Prince, some magic ring to find,
Some fairy love-gift. Here one lay full-length,
Her vina by her cheek, and in its strings
The little fingers still all interlaced
As when the last notes of her light song played
Those radiant eyes to sleep and sealed her own.
Another slumbered folding in her arms
A desert-antelope, its slender head
Buried with back-sloped horns between her
breasts .
Soft nestling; it was eating—when both
drowsed—
Red roses, and her loosening hand still held
A rose half-mumbled, while a rose-leaf curled
Between the deer's lips. Here two friends
had dozed
Together, weaving mogra-buds, which bound
Their sister-sweetness in a starry chain,
Linking them limb to limb and heart to heart
One pillowed on the blossoms, one on her.
Another, ere she slept, was stringing stones
To make a necklet—agate, onyx, sard,

Coral, and moonstone—round her wrist it
gleamed

A coil of splendid color while she held,
Unthreaded yet, the bead to close it up
Green turkis, carved with golden gods and
scripts.

Lulled by the cadence of the garden stream,
Thus lay they on the clustered carpets, each
A girlish rose with shut leaves, waiting dawn
To open and make daylight beautiful.

This was the antechamber of the Prince;
But at the purdah's fringe the sweetest slept—
Gunga and Gotami—chief ministers
In that still house of love.

The purdah hung,
Crimson and blue, with broidered threads of
gold,

Across a portal carved in sandal-wood,
Whence by three steps the way was to the
bower

Of inmost splendor, and the marriage-couch
Set on a dais soft with silver cloths,
Where the foot fell as though it trod on piles
Of neem-blooms. All the walls were plates
of pearl,

Cut shapely from the shells of Lanka's wave;
And o'er the alabaster roof there ran
Rich inlayings of lotus and of bird,

Wrought in skilled work of lazulite and jade,
Jacynth and jasper; woven round the dome,
And down the sides, and all about the frames
Wherein were set the fretted lattices,
Through which were breathed, with moonlight
and cool airs,
Scents from the shell-flowers and the jasmine
sprays;
Not bringing thither grace or tenderness
Sweeter than shed from those fair presences
Within the place—the beauteous Sakya Prince,
And hers, the stately, bright Yasodhara.

Half risen from her soft nest at his side,
The chuddah fallen to her waist, her brow
Laid in both palms, the lovely Princess leaned
With heaving bosom and fast falling tears.
Thrice with her lips she touched Siddartha's
hand,
And at the third kiss moaned, "Awake, my
Lord!
Give me the comfort of thy speech!" Then
he—
"What is it with thee, O my life?" but still
She moaned anew before the words would
come;
Then spake, "Alas, my Prince! I sank to sleep
Most happy, for the babe I bear of thee

Quickened this eve, and at my heart there beat
That double pulse of life and joy and love
Whose happy music lulled me, but—aho!—
In slumber I beheld three sights of dread,
With thought whereof my heart is throbbing
yet.

I saw a white bull with wide branching horns,
A lord of pastures, pacing through the streets,
Bearing upon his front a gem which shone
As if some star had dropped to glitter there,
Or like the kantha-stone the great Snake keeps
To make bright daylight underneath the earth.
Slow through the streets towards the gates he
paced,
And none could stay him, though there came
a voice

From Indra's temple, 'If ye stay him not,
The glory of the city goeth forth.'

Yet none could stay him. Then I wept aloud,
And locked my arms about his neck, and strove,
And bade them bar the gates; but that ox-king
Bellowed, and, lightly tossing free his crest,
Broke from my clasp, and bursting through
the bars,

Trampled the warders down and passed away.
The next strange dream was this: Four Pres-
ences

Splendid, with shining eyes, so beautiful

They seemed the Regents of the Earth who
dwell

On Mount Sumeru, lighting from the sky
With retinue of countless heavenly ones,
Swift swept unto our city, where I saw
The golden flag of Indra on the gate
Flutter and fall; and lo! there rose instead
A glorious banner, all the folds whereof
Rippled with flashing fire of rubies sewn
Thick on the silver threads, the rays wherefrom
Set forth new words and weighty sentences
Whose message made all living creatures glad;
And from the east the wind of sunrise blew
With tender waft, opening those jeweled
scrolls

So that all flesh might read; and wondrous
blooms—

Plucked in what clime I know not—fell in
showers,

Colored as none are colored in our groves.”

Then spake the Prince: “All this, my Lotus-
flower!

Was good to see.”

“Ay, Lord,” the Princess said,
“Save that it ended with a voice of fear
Crying ‘The time is nigh! the time is nigh!’

Thereat the third dream came; for when I
sought

Thy side, sweet Lord! ah, on our bed there
lay

An unpressed pillow and an empty robe—
Nothing of thee but those!—nothing of thee,
Who art my life and light, my king, my world!
And sleeping still I rose, and sleeping saw
Thy belt of pearls, tied here below my breasts,
Change to a stinging snake, my ankle-rings
Fall off, my golden bangles part and fall;
The jasmynes in my hair wither to dust;
While this our bridal-couch sank to the ground,
And something rent the crimson purdah down;
Then far away I heard the white bull low,
And far away the embroidered banner flap,
And once again that cry, 'The time is come!'
But with that cry—which shakes my spirit
still—

I woke! O Prince! what may such visions
mean

Except I die, or—worse than any death—
Thou shouldest forsake me or be taken?"

Sweet

As the last smile of sunset was the look
Siddartha bent upon his weeping wife.

"Comfort thee, dear!" he said, "if comfort
lives

In changeless love; for though thy dream
 may be
Shadows of things to come, and though the
 gods
Are shaken in their seats, and though the
 world
Stands nigh, perchance, to know some way of
 help,
Yet, whatsoever fall to thee and me,
Be sure I loved and love Yasodhara.
Thou knowest how I muse these many moons,
Seeking to save the sad earth I have seen;
And when the time comes, that which will be
 will.

But if my soul yearns sore for souls unknown,
And if I grieve for griefs which are not mine,
Judge how my high-winged thoughts must
 hover-here

O'er all these lives that share, and sweeten
 mine—

So dear! and thine the dearest, gentlest, best,
And nearest. Ah, thou mother of my babe!
Whose body mixed with mine for this fair
 hope,

When most my spirit wanders, ranging round
The lands and seas—as full of ruth for men
As the far-flying dove is full of ruth
For her twin nestlings—ever it has come

Home with glad wing and passionate plumes
to thee,

Who art the sweetness of my kind best seen,
The utmost of their good, the tenderest
Of all their tenderness, mine most of all.

Therefore, whatever after this betide,
Bethink thee of that lordly bull which lowed,
That jewelled banner in thy dream which
waved

Its folds departing, and of this be sure,
Always I loved and always love thee well,
And what I sought for all sought most for thee.
But thou, take comfort; and, if sorrow falls,
Take comfort still in deeming there may be
A way of peace on earth by woes of ours;
And have with this embrace what faithful love
Can think of thanks or frame for benison—
Too little, seeing love's strong self is weak—
Yet kiss me on the mouth, and drink these
words .

From heart to heart therewith, that thou mayst
know—

What others will not—that I loved thee most
Because I loved so well all living souls.

Now, Princess! rest, for I will rise and watch.”

Then in her tears she slept, but sleeping
sighed—

As if that vision passed again—"The time!
The time is come!" Whereat Siddartha turned,
And, lo! the moon shone by the Crab! the
stars

In that same silver order long foretold
Stood ranged to say, "This is the night!—
choose thou

The way of greatness or the way of good:
To reign a King of kings, or wander lone,
Crownless and homeless, that the world be
helped."

Moreover, with the whispers of the gloom
Came to his ears again that warning song,
As when the Devas spoke upon the wind:
And surely Gods were round about the place
Watching our Lord, who watched the shining
stars.

"I will depart," he spake; "the hour is come!
Thy tender lips, dear sleeper, summon me
To that which saves the earth but sunders us;
And in the silence of yon sky I read
My fated message flashing. Unto this
Came I, and unto this all nights and days
Have led me; for I will not have that crown
Which may be mine: I lay aside those realms
Which wait the gleaming of my naked sword:
My chariot shall not roll with bloody wheels

From victory to victory, till earth
Wears the red record of my name. I choose
To tread its path with patient, stainless feet,
Making its dust my bed, its loneliest wastes
My dwelling, and its meanest things my mates:
Clad in no prouder garb than outcasts wear,
Fed with no meats save what the charitable
Give of their will, sheltered by no more pomp
Than the dim cave lends or the jungle-bush.
This will I do because the woful cry
Of life and all flesh living cometh up
Into my ears, and all my soul is full
Of pity for the sickness of this world;
Which I will heal, if healing may be found
By uttermost renouncing and strong strife.
For which of all the great and lesser Gods
Have power or pity? Who hath seen them—
who?
What have they wrought to help their worship-
ers?
How hath it steaded man to pray, and pay
Tithes of the corn and oil, to chant the charms,
To slay the shrieking sacrifice, to rear
The stately fane, to feed the priests, and call
On Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, who save
None—not the worthiest—from the griefs that
teach
Those litanies of flattery and fear

Ascending day by day, like wasted smoke?
Hath any of my brothers 'scaped thereby
The aches of life, the stings of love and loss
The fiery fever and the ague-shake,
The slow, dull sinking into withered age,
The horrible dark death—and what beyond
Waits—till the whirling wheel comes up again,
And new lives bring new sorrows to be borne,
New generations for the new desires
Which have their end in the old mockeries?
Hath any of my tender sisters found
Fruit of the fast or harvest of the hymn,
Or bought one pang the less at bearing-time
For white curds offered and trim tulsi-leaves?
Nay; it may be some of the Gods are good
And evil-some, but all in action weak;
Both pitiful and pitiless, and both—
As men are—bound upon this wheel of change,
Knowing the former and the after lives.
For so our scriptures truly seem to teach,
That—once, and wheresoe'er, and whence begun—
Life runs its rounds of living, climbing up
From mote, and gnat, and worm, reptile, and
fish,
Bird and shagged beast, man, demon, deva,
God,
To clod and mote again; so are we kin

To all that is; and thus, if one might save
Man from his curse, the whole wide world
should share

The lightened horror of this ignorance
Whose shadow is chill fear, and cruelty
Its bitter pastime. Yea, if one might save!
And means must be! There must be refuge!

Men

Perished in winter-winds till one smote fire
From flint-stones coldly hiding what they held,
The red spark treasured from the kindling sun.
They gorged on flesh like wolves, till one
sowed corn,

Which grew a weed, yet makes the life of man;
They mowed and babbled till some tongue
struck speech,

And patient fingers framed the lettered sound.
What good gift have my brothers, but it came
From search and strife and loving sacrifice?
If one, then, being great and fortunate,
Rich, dowered with health and ease, from birth
designed

To rule—if he would rule—a King of kings;
If one, not tired with life's long day but glad
I' the freshness of its morning, one not cloyed
With love's delicious feasts, but hungry still;
If one not worn and wrinkled, sadly sage,
But joyous in the glory and the grace

That mix with evils here, and free to choose
Earth's loveliest at his will: one even as I,
Who ache not, lack not, grieve not, save with
griefs

Which are not mine, except as I am man;—
If such a one, having so much to give,
Gave all, laying it down for love of men,
And thenceforth spent himself to search for
truth,

Wringing the secret of deliverance forth,
Whether it lurk in hells or hide in heavens,
Or hover, unrevealed, nigh unto all:
Surely at last, far off, sometime, somewhere,
The veil would lift for his deep-searching eyes,
The road would open for his painful feet,
That should be won for which he lost the world,
And Death might find him conqueror of death.
This will I do, who have a realm to lose,
Because I love my realm, because my heart
Beats with each throb of all the hearts that
ache,

Known and unknown, these that are mine and
those

Which shall be mine, a thousand million more
Saved by this sacrifice I offer now.

Oh, summoning stars! I come! Oh, mournful
earth!

For thee and thine I lay aside my youth,

My throne, my joys, my golden days, my
 nights,
 My happy palace—and thine arms, sweet
 Queen!

Harder to put aside than all the rest!
 Yet thee, too, I shall save, saving this earth;
 And that which stirs within thy tender womb,
 My child, the hidden blossom of our loves,
 Whom if I wait to bless my mind will fail.
 Wife! child! father! and people! ye must share
 A little while the anguish of this hour
 That light may break and all flesh learn the
 Law.

Now am I fixed, and now I will depart,
 Never to come again till what I seek
 Be found—if fervent search and strife avail.”

So with his brow he touched her feet, and
 bent
 The farewell of fond eyes, unutterable,
 Upon her sleeping face, still wet with tears;
 And thrice around the bed in reverence,
 As though it were an altar, softly stepped
 With clasped hands laid upon his beating heart,
 “For never,” spake he, “lie I there again!”
 And thrice he made to go, but thrice came
 back,
 So strong her beauty was, so large his love:

Then, o'er his head drawing his cloth, he turned
And raised the purdah's edge:

There drooped, close-hushed,
In such sealed sleep as water-lilies know,
The lovely garden of his Indian girls;
That twin dark-petalled lotus-buds of all—
Gunga and Gotami—on either side,
And those, their silk-leaved sisterhood, beyond.
“Pleasant ye are to me, sweet friends!” he
said,

“And dear to leave; yet if I leave ye not
What else will come to all of us save eld
Without assuage and death without avail?
Lo! as ye lie asleep so must ye lie
A-dead; and when the rose dies where are gone
Its scent and splendor? when the lamp is drained
Whither is fled the flame? Press heavy, Night!
Upon their down-dropped lids and seal their
lips,

That no tear stay me and no faithful voice.
For all the brighter that these made my life,
The bitterer it is that they and I,
And all, should live as trees do—so much
spring,
Such and such rains and frosts, such winter-
times,
And then dead leaves, with maybe spring
again,

Or axe-stroke at the root. This will not I,
Whose life here was a God's!—this would not
I,
Though all my days were godlike, while men
moan
Under their darkness. Therefore, farewell,
friends!
While life is good to give, I give, and go
To seek deliverance and that unknown Light!"

Then, lightly treading where those sleepers
lay,
Into the night Siddartha passed: its eyes,
The watchful stars, looked love on him: its
breath,
The wandering wind, kissed his robe's flut-
tered fringe;
The garden-blossoms, folded for the dawn,
Opened their velvet hearts to waft him scents
From pink and purple censers: o'er the land,
From Himalay unto the Indian Sea,
A tremor spread, as if earth's soul beneath
Stirred with an unknown hope; and holy
books—
Which tell the story of our Lord—say, too,
That rich celestial musics thrilled the air
From hosts on hosts of shining ones, who
thronged

Eastward and westward, making bright the
night—

Northward and southward, making glad the
ground.

Also those four dread Regents of the Earth,
Descending at the doorway, two by two,—
With their bright legions of Invisibles
In arms of sapphire, silver, gold, and pearl—
Watched with joined hands the Indian Prince,
who stood,
His tearful eyes raised to the stars, and lips
Close-set with purpose of prodigious love.

Then strode he forth into the gloom and cried,
“Channa, awake! and bring out Kantaka!”

“What would my Lord?” the charioteer re-
plied—

Slow-rising from his place beside the gate—

“To ride at night when all the ways are dark?”

“Speak low,” Siddartha said, “and bring
my horse,

For now the hour is come when I should quit
This golden prison where my heart lives caged
To find the truth; which henceforth I will seek,
For all men’s sake, until the truth be found.”

“Alas! dear Prince,” answered the chariot-
eer,

“Spake then for nought those wise and holy
men

Who cast the stars and bade us wait the time
When King Suddhodana’s great son should rule
Realms upon realms, and be a Lord of lords?
Wilt thou ride hence and let the rich world slip
Out of thy grasp, to hold a beggar’s bowl?
Wilt thou go forth into the friendless waste
That hast this Paradise of pleasures here?”

The Prince made answer, “Unto this I came,
And not for thrones: the kingdom that I crave
Is more than many realms—and all things pass
To change and death. Bring me forth Kan-
taka!”

“Most honored,” spake again the charioteer,
“Bethink thee of my Lord thy father’s grief!
Bethink thee of their woe whose bliss thou art—
How shalt thou help them, first undoing
them?”

Siddartha answered, “Friend, that love is
false
Which clings to love for selfish sweets of love;
But I, who love these more than joys of mine—
Yea, more than joy of theirs—depart to save
Them and all flesh, if utmost love avail.
Go, bring me Kantaka!”

Then Channa said,
"Master, I go!" and forthwith, mournfully,
Unto the stall he passed, and from the rack
Took down the silver bit and bridle-chains,
Breast-cord and curb, and knitted fast the
straps,
And linked the hooks, and led out Kantaka;
Whom tethering to the ring, he combed and
dressed,
Stroking the snowy coat to silken gloss;
Next on the steed he laid the numdah square,
Fitted the saddle-cloth across, and set
The saddle fair, drew tight the jewelled girths,
Buckled the breech-bands and the martingale,
And made fall both the stirrups of worked
gold.
Then over all he cast a golden net,
With tassels of seed-pearl and silken strings,
And led the great horse to the palace door,
Where stood the Prince; but when he saw his
Lord,
Right glad he waxed and joyously he neighed,
Spreading his scarlet nostrils; and the books
Write, "Surely all had heard Kantaka's neigh,
And that strong trampling of his iron heels,
Save that the Devas laid their unseen wings
Over their ears and kept the sleepers deaf."

Fondly Siddartha drew the proud head down,
Patted the shining neck, and said, "Be still,
White Kantaka! be still, and bear me now
The farthest journey ever rider rode;
For this night take I horse to find the truth,
And where my quest will end yet know I not,
Save that it shall not end until I find.

Therefore to-night, good steed, be fierce and
bold!

Let nothing stay thee, though a thousand
blades

Deny the road! let neither wall nor moat
Forbid our flight! Look! if I touch thy flank
And cry, 'On, Kantaka!' let whirlwinds lag
Behind thy course! Be fire and air, my horse!
To stead thy Lord, so shalt thou share with him
The greatness of this deed which helps the
world;

For therefore ride I, not for men alone,
But for all things which, speechless, share our
pain

And have no hope, nor wit to ask for hope.
Now, therefore, bear thy master valorously!"

Then to the saddle lightly leaping, he
Touched the arched crest, and Kantaka sprang
forth

With armed hoofs sparkling on the stones and
ring

Of champing bit; but none did hear that sound,
For that the Suddha Devas, gathering near,
Plucked the red mohra-flowers and strewed
 them thick
Under his tread, while hands invisible
Muffled the ringing bit and bridle chains.
Moreover, it is written when they came
Upon the pavement near the inner gates,
The Yakshas of the air laid magic cloths
Under the stallion's feet, so that he went
Softly and still.

 But when they reached the gate
Of tripled brass—which hardly fivescore men
Served to unbar and open—lo! the doors
Rolled back all silently, though one might hear
In daytime two koss off the thunderous roar
Of those grim hinges and unwieldy plates.

 Also the middle and the outer gates
Unfolded each their monstrous portals thus
In silence as Siddartha and his steed
Drew near; while underneath their shadow lay,
Silent as dead men, all those chosen guards—
The lance and sword let fall, the shields un-
 braced,
Captains and soldiers—for there came a wind,
Drowsier than blows o'er Malwa's fields of
 sleep,

Before the Prince's path, which, being breathed,
Lulled every sense aswoon: and so he passed
Free from the palace.

When the morning star
Stood half a spear's length from the eastern
rim,
And o'er the earth the breath of morning
sighed
Rippling Anoma's wave, the border-stream,
Then drew he rein, and leaped to earth and
kissed
White Kantaka betwixt the ears, and spake
Full sweet to Channa: "This which thou hast
done
Shall bring thee good and bring all creatures
good.
Be sure I love thee always for thy love.
Lead back my horse and take my crest-pearl
here,
My princely robes, which henceforth stead me
not,
My jeweled sword-belt and my sword, and
these
The long locks by its bright edge severed thus
From off my brows. Give the King all, and
say
Siddartha prays forget him till he come



“‘Oh, summoning stars! I come.’”—Page 95.
The Light of Asia.

Ten times a Prince, with royal wisdom won
From lonely searchings and the strife for light:
Where, if I conquer, lo! all earth is mine—
Mine by chief service!—tell him—mine by
love!

Since there is hope for man only in man,
And none hath sought for this as I will seek,
Who cast away my world to save my world.”

BOOK THE FIFTH.

Round Rajargiha five fair hills arose,
Guarding King Bimbasara's sylvan town:
Baibhara, green with lemon-grass and palms;
Bipulla, at whose foot thin Sarsuti
Steals with warm ripple; shadowy Tapovan,
Whose steaming pools mirror black rocks,
 which ooze
Sovereign earth-butter from their rugged roofs;
South-east the vulture-peak Sailagiri;
And eastward Ratnagiri, hill of gems.
A winding track, paven with footworn slabs,
Leads thee by safflower fields and bamboo tufts
Under dark mangoes and the jujube-trees,
Past milk-white veins of rock and jasper crags,
Low cliffs and flats of jungle-flowers, to where
The shoulder of that mountain, sloping west,
O'erhangs a cave with wild figs canopied.
Lo! thou who comes thither, bare thy feet
And bow thy head! for all this spacious earth
Hath not a spot more dear or hallowed. Here
Lord Buddha sate the scorching summers
 through,

The driving rains, the chilly dawns and eves;
Wearing for all men's sakes the yellow robe,
Eating in beggar's guise the scanty meal
Chance-gathered from the charitable; at night
Couched on the grass, homeless, alone; while
yelped

The sleepless jackals round his cave, or coughs
Of famished tiger from the thicket broke.

By day and night here dwelt the World-honored,
Subduing that fair body born for bliss
With fast and frequent watch and search intense
Of silent meditation, so prolonged

That ofttimes while he mused—as motionless
As the fixed rock his seat—the squirrel leaped
Upon his knee, the timid quail led forth
Her brood between his feet, and blue dozes
pecked·

The rice-grains from the bowl beside his hand.

Thus would he muse from noontide—when
the land

Shimmered with heat, and walls and temples
danced

In the reeking air—till sunset, noting not
The blazing globe roll down, nor evening glide,
Purple and swift, across the softened fields;
Nor the still coming of the stars, nor throb
Of drum-skins in the busy town, nor screech

Of owl and night-jar; wholly wrapt from self
In keen unraveling of the threads of thought
And steadfast pacing of life's labyrinths.

Thus would he sit till midnight hushed the
world,

Save where the beasts of darkness in the brake
Crept and cried out, as fear and hatred cry,
As lust and avarice and anger creep
In the black jungles of man's ignorance.

Then slept he for what space the fleet moon
asks

To swim a tenth part of her cloudy sea;
But rose ere the False-dawn, and stood again
Wistful on some dark platform of his hill,
Watching the sleeping earth with ardent eyes
And thoughts embracing all its living things,
While o'er the waving fields that murmur
moved

Which is the kiss of Morn waking the lands,
And in the east that miracle of Day
Gathered and grew. At first a dusk so dim
Night seems still unaware of whispered dawn,
But soon—before the jungle-cock crows twice—
A white verge clear, a widening, brightening
white,

High as the herald-star, which fades in floods
Of silver, warming into pale gold, caught
By topmost clouds, and flaming on their rims.

To fervent golden glow, flushed from the brink
With saffron, scarlet crimson, amethyst;
Whereat the sky burns splendid to the blue,
And, robed in raiment of glad light, the King
Of Life and Glory cometh!

Then our Lord,
After the manner of a Rishi, hailed
The rising orb, and went—ablutions made—
Down by the winding path into the town;
And in the fashion of a Rishi passed
From street to street, with begging-bowl in
hand,
Gathering the little pittance of his needs.
Soon was it filled, for all the townsmen cried,
“Take of our store, great sir!” and “Take of
ours!”

Marking his godlike face and eyes enwapt;
And mothers, when they saw our Lord go by,
Would bid their children fall to kiss his feet,
And lift his robe's hem to their brows, or run
To fill his jar, and fetch him milk and cakes.
And ofttimes as he paced, gentle and slow,
Radiant with heavenly pity, lost in care
For those he knew not, save as fellow-lives,
The dark surprised eyes of some Indian maid
Would dwell in sudden love and worship deep
On that majestic form, as if she saw

Her dreams of tenderest thought made true,
and grace

Fairer than mortal fire her breast. But he
Passed onward with the bowl and yellow robe,
By mild speech paying all those gifts of hearts,
Wending his way back to the solitudes
To sit upon his hill with holy men,
And hear and ask of wisdom and its roads.

Midway on Ratnagiri's groves of calm,
Beyond the city, but below the caves,
Lodged such as hold the body foe to soul,
And flesh a beast which men must chain and
tame

With bitter pains, till sense of pain is killed,
And tortured nerves vex torturer no more—
Yogis and Brahmacharis, Bhikshus, all
A gaunt and mournful band, dwelling apart.
Some day and night had stood with lifted arms,
Till—drained of blood and withered by dis-
ease—

Their slowly-wasting joints and stiffened limbs
Jutted from sapless shoulders like dead forks
From forest trunks. Others had clenched their
hands

So long and with so fierce a fortitude,
The claw-like nails grew through the festered
palm.

Some walked on sandals spiked; some with
sharp flints

Gashed breast and brow and thigh, scarred
these with fire,

Threaded their flesh with jungle thorn and
spits,

Besmear'd with mud and ashes, crouching foul
In rags of dead men wrapped about their loins.

Certain there were inhabited the spots
Where death-pyres smouldered, cowering
defiled

With corpses for their company, and kites
Screaming around them o'er the funeral-spoils;
Certain who cried five hundred times a day
The names of Shiva, wound with darting
snakes

About their sun-tanned necks and hollow
flanks

One palsied foot drawn up against the ham.

So gathered they, a grievous company;

Crowns blistered by the blazing heat, eyes
bleared,

Sinews and muscles shriveled, visages

Haggard and wan as slain men's, five days
dead;

Here crouched on in the dust who noon by
noon

Meted a thousand grains of millet out,

Ate it with famished patience, seed by seed,
 And so starved on; there one who bruised his
 pulse

With bitter leaves lest palate should be pleased;
 And next, a miserable saint self-maimed,
 Eyeless and tongueless, sexless, crippled, deaf;
 The body by the mind being thus stripped
 For glory of much suffering, and the bliss
 Which they shall win—say holy books—whose
 woe

Shames gods that send us woe, and makes men
 gods

Stronger to suffer than Hell is to harm.

Whom sadly eying spake our Lord to one,
 Chief of the woe-begones: "Much-suffering sir!
 These many moons I dwell upon the hill—
 Who am a seeker of the Truth—and see
 My brothers here, and thee, so piteously
 Self-anguished; wherefore add ye ills to life
 Which is so evil?"

Answer made the sage:

"'Tis written if a man shall mortify
 His flesh, till pain be grown the life he lives
 And death voluptuous rest, such woes shall
 purge

Sin's dross away, and the soul, purified,
 Soar from the furnace of its sorrow, winged

For glorious spheres and splendor past all thought."

"Yon cloud which floats in heaven," the Prince replied,
"Wreathed like gold cloth around your Indra's throne,
Rose thither from the tempest-driven sea;
But it must fall again in tearful drops,
Trickling through rough and painful water-ways
By cleft and nullah and the muddy flood,
To Gunga and the sea, wherefrom it sprang.
Know'st thou, my brother, if it be not thus,
After their many pains, with saints in bliss?
Since that which rises falls, and that which buys
Is spent; and if ye buy heav'n with your blood
In hell's hard market, when the bargain's through
The toil begins again!"

"It may begin,"
The hermit moaned. "Alas! we know not
this,
Nor surely anything; yet after night
Day comes, and after turmoil peace, and we
Hate this accursed flesh which clogs the soul

That fain would rise; so, for the sake of soul,
 We stake brief agonies in game with Gods
 To gain the larger joys."

"Yet if they last
 A myriad years," he said, "they fade at length,
 Those joys; or if not, is there then some life
 Below, above, beyond, so unlike life
 It will not change? Speak! do your Gods
 endure
 For ever, brothers?"

"Nay," the Yogis said,
 "Only great Brahm endures: the Gods but
 live."

Then spake Lord Buddha: "Will ye, being
 wise,
 As ye seem holy and strong-hearted ones,
 Throw these sore dice, which are your groans
 and moans,
 For gains which may be dreams, and must have
 end?
 Will ye, for love of soul, so loathe your flesh,
 So scourge and maim it, that it shall not
 serve
 To bear the spirit on, searching for home,
 But founder on the track before nightfall,
 Like willing steed o'er-spurred? Will ye, sad
 sirs,

Dismantle and dismember this fair house,
Where we have come to dwell by painful pasts;
Whose windows give us light—the little light—
Whereby we gaze abroad to know if dawn
Will break, and whither winds the better
road?"

Then cried they, "We have chosen this for
road
And tread it, Rajaputra, till the close—
Though all its stones were fire—in trust of
death.
Speak, if thou know'st a way more excellent;
If not, peace go with thee!"

Onward he passed,
Exceeding sorrowful, seeing how men
Fear so to die they are afraid to fear,
Lust so to live they dare not love their life,
But plague it with fierce penances, belike
To please the Gods who grudge pleasure to
man;
Belike to balk hell by self-kindled hells;
Belike in holy madness, hoping soul
May break the better through their wasted
flesh.

"Oh, flowerets of the field!" Siddartha said,
"Who turn your tender faces to the sun—

Glad of the light, and grateful with sweet
breath

Of fragrance and these robes of reverence
donned

Silver and gold and purple—none of ye
Miss perfect living, none of ye despoil
Your happy beauty. Oh, ye palms! which rise
Eager to pierce the sky and drink the wind
Blown from Malaya and the cool blue seas,
What secret know ye that ye grow content,
From time of tender shoot to time of fruit,
Murmuring such sun-songs from your feath-
ered crowns?

Ye, too, who dwell so merry in the trees—
Quick-darting parrots, bee-birds, bulbuls,
doves—

None of ye hate your life, none of ye deem
To strain to better by foregoing needs!
But man, who slays ye—being lord—is wise,
And wisdom, nursed on blood, cometh thus
forth

In self-tormentings!"

While the Master spake
Blew down the mount the dust of pattering
feet,

White goats and black sheep winding slow
their way,

With many a lingering nibble at the tufts,
And wanderings from the path, where water
gleamed

Or wild figs hung. But always as they strayed
The herdsman cried, or slung his sling, and
kept

The silly crowd still moving to the plain.

A ewe with couplets in the flock there was,
Some hurt had lamed one lamb, which toiled
behind

Bleeding, while in the front its fellow skipped,
And the vexed dam hither and thither ran,
Fearful to lose this little one or that;

Which when our Lord did mark, full tenderly
He took the limping lamb upon his neck,
Saying, "Poor woolly mother, be at peace!

Whither thou goest I will bear thy care;
'Twere all as good to ease one beast of grief
As sit and watch the sorrows of the world
In yonder caverns with the priests who pray."

"But," spake he to the herdsmen, "where-
fore, friends!

Drive ye the flocks adown under high noon,
Since 'tis at evening that men fold their sheep?"

And answer gave the peasants: "We are sent
To fetch a sacrifice of goats five score,

And five score sheep, the which our Lord the
King
Slayeth this night in worship of his gods."

Then said the Master: "I will also go!"
So paced he patiently, bearing the lamb
Beside the herdsmen in the dust and sun,
The wistful ewe low-bleating at his feet.

Whom, when they came unto the river-side,
A woman—dove-eyed, young, with tearful face
And lifted hands—saluted, bending low:
"Lord! thou art he," she said, "who yesterday
Had pity on me in the fig-grove here,
Where I live lone and reared my child; but he
Straying amid the blossoms found a snake,
Which twined about his wrist, whilst he did
laugh
And tease the quick forked tongue and opened
mouth
Of that cold playmate. But, alas! ere long
He turned so pale and still, I could not think
Why he should cease to play, and let my breast
Fall from his lips. And one said, 'He is sick
Of poison;' and another, 'He will die.'
But I, who could not lose my precious boy,
Prayed of them physic, which might bring the
light

Back to his eyes; it was so very small
That kiss-mark of the serpent, and I think
It could not hate him, gracious as he was,
Nor hurt him in his sport. And some one said,
'There is a holy man upon the hill—
Lo! now he passeth in the yellow robe—
Ask of the Rishi if there be a cure
For that which ails thy son.' Whereon I came
Trembling to thee, whose brow is like a god's,
And wept and drew the face cloth from my
 babe,
Praying thee tell what simples might be good.
And thou, great sir! didst spurn me not, but
 gaze
With gentle eyes and touch with patient hand;
Then draw the face-cloth back, saying to me,
'Yea! little sister, there is that might heal
Thee first, and him, if thou couldst fetch the
 thing;
For they who seek physicians bring to them
What is ordained. Therefore, I pray thee, find
Black mustard-seed, a tola; only mark
Thou take it not from any hand or house
Where father, mother, child, or slave hath died;
It shall be well if thou canst find such seed.'
Thus didst thou speak, my Lord!"

The Master smiled

Exceeding tenderly. "Yea! I spake thus,

Dear Kisagotami! But didst thou find
The seed?"

"I went, Lord, clasping to my breast
The babe, grown colder, asking at each hut—
Here in the jungle and towards the town—

I pray you, give me mustard, of your grace,
A tola—black;' and each who had it gave,
For all the poor are piteous to the poor;
But when I asked, 'In my friend's household
here

Hath any peradventure ever died—
Husband or wife, or child, or slave?' they said:
'O Sister! what is this you ask? the dead
Are very many, and the living few!'

So with sad thanks I gave the mustard back,
And prayed of others; but the others said,
'Here is the seed, but we have lost our slave!'
'Here is the seed, but our good man is dead!'
'Here is some seed, but he that sowed it died
Between the rain-time and the harvesting!'
Ah, sir! I could not find a single house
Where there was mustard-seed and done had
died!

Therefore, I left my child—who would not suck
Nor smile—beneath the wild-vines by the
stream,

To seek thy face and kiss thy feet, and pray
Where I might find this seed and find no death,

If now, indeed, my baby be not dead,
As I do fear, and as they said to me."

"My sister! thou hast found," the Master
said,
"Searching for what none finds—that bitter
balm
I had to give thee. He thou lovedst slept
Dead on thy bosom yesterday: to-day
Thou know'st the whole wide world weeps
with thy woe:
The grief which all hearts share grows less for
one.
Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears and win the secret of that curse
Which makes sweet love our anguish, and
which drives
O'er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice—
As these dumb beasts are driven—men their
lords.
I seek that secret: bury thou thy child!"

So entered they the city side by side,
The herdsmen and the Prince, what time the
sun
Gilded slow Sona's distant stream, and threw
Long shadows down the street and through the
gate

Where the King's men kept watch. But when
these saw
Our Lord bearing the lamb, the guards stood
back,
The market-people drew their wains aside,
In the bazaar buyers and sellers stayed
The war of tongues to gaze on that mild face;
The smith, with lifted hammer in his hand,
Forgot to strike; the weaver left his web,
The scribe his scroll, the money-changer lost
His count of cowries; from the unwatched rice
Shiva's white bull fed free; the wasted milk
Ran o'er the lota while the milkers watched
The passage of our Lord moving so meek,
With yet so beautiful a majesty.
But most the women gathering in the doors
Asked, "Who is this that brings the sacrifice
So graceful and peace-giving as he goes?
What is his caste? whence hath he eyes so
sweet?
Can he be Sakra or the Devaraj?"
And others said, "It is the holy man
Who dwelleth with the Rishis on the hill."
But the Lord paced, in meditation lost,
Thinking. "Alas! for all my sheep which have
No shepherd; wandering in the night with none
To guide them; bleating blindly towards the
knife

Of Death, as these dumb beasts which are their
kin.”

Then some one told the King, “There com-
eth here

A holy hermit, bringing down the flock
Which thou didst bid to crown the sacrifice.”

The King stood in his hall of offering,
On either hand the white-robed Brahmans
ranged

Muttered their mantras, feeding still the fire
Which roared upon the midmost altar. There
From scented woods flickered bright tongues
of flame,

Hissing and curling as they licked the gifts
Of ghee and spices and the Soma juice,
The joy of Indra. Round about the pile
A slow, thick, scarlet streamlet smoked and
ran,

Sucked by the sand, but ever rolling down,
The blood of bleating victims. One such lay,
A spotted goat, long-horned, its head bound
back

With munja grass; at its stretched throat the
knife

Pressed by a priest, who murmured, “This,
dread gods,

Of many yajnas cometh as the crown
 From Bimbasara: take ye joy to see
 The spirted blood, and pleasure in the scent
 Of rich flesh roasting 'mid the fragrant flames;
 Let the King's sins be laid upon this goat,
 And let the fire consume them burning it,
 For now I strike."

But Buddha softly said,
 "Let him not strike, great King!" and there-
 with loosed
 The victim's bonds, none staying him, so great
 His presence was. Then, craving leave, he
 spake
 Of life, which all can take but none can give,
 Life, which all creatures love and strive to
 keep,
 Wonderful, dear and pleasant unto each,
 Even to the meanest; yea, a boon to all
 Where pity is, for pity makes the world
 Soft to the weak and noble for the strong.
 Unto the dumb lips of his flock he lent
 Sad pleading words, showing how man, who
 prays
 For mercy to the gods, is merciless,
 Being as god to those; albeit all life
 Is linked and kin, and what we slay have given
 Meek tribute of the milk and wool, and set

Fast trust upon the hands which murder them.
Also he spake of what the holy books
Do surely teach, how that at death some sink
To bird and beast, and these rise up to man
In wanderings of the spark which grows purged
flame.

So were the sacrifice new sin, if so
The fated passage of a soul be stayed.
Nor, spake he, shall one wash his spirit clean
By blood; nor gladden gods, being good,
with blood;

Nor bribe them, being evil: nay, nor lay
Upon the brow of innocent bound beasts
One hair's weight of that answer all must give
For all things done amiss or wrongfully,
Alone, each for himself, reckoning with that
The fixed arithmic of the universe,
Which meteth good for good and ill for ill,
Measure for measure, unto deeds, words,
thoughts;

Watchful, aware, implacable, unmoved;
Making all futures fruits of all the pasts.
Thus spake he, breathing words so piteous
With such high lordlines sof ruth and right,
The priests drew back their garments o'er the
hands

Crimsoned with slaughter, and the King came
near,

Standing with clasped palms reverencing
Buddh;

While still our Lord went on, teaching how
fair

This earth were if all living things be linked
In friendliness and common use of foods,
Bloodless and pure; the golden grain, bright
fruits,

Sweet herbs which grow for all, the waters
wan,

Sufficient drinks and meats. Which when these
heard,

The might of gentleness so conquered them,
The priests themselves scattered their altar-
flames

And flung away the steel of sacrifice;
And through the land next day passed a de-
cree

Proclaimed by criers, and in this wise graved
On rock and column: "Thus the King's
will is:—

There hath been slaughter for the sacrifice
And slaying for the meat, but henceforth none
Shall spill the blood of life nor taste of flesh,
Seeing that knowledge grows, and life is one,
And mercy cometh to the merciful."

So ran the edit, and from those days forth

Sweet peace hath spread between all living
kind,
Man and the beasts which serve him, and the
birds,
On all those banks of Gunga where our Lord
Taught with his saintly pity and soft speech.

For aye so piteous was the Master's heart
To all that breathe this breath of fleeting life,
Yoked in one fellowship of joys and pains,
That it is written in the holy books
How, in an ancient age—when Buddha wore
A Brahman's form, dwelling upon the rock
Named Munda, by the village of Dalidd—
Drought withered all the land: the young rice
died
Ere it could hide a quail; in forest glades
A fierce sun sucked the pools; grasses and
herbs
Sickened, and all the woodland creatures fled
Scattering for sustenance. At such a time,
Between the hot walls of a nullah, stretched
On naked stones, our Lord spied, as he passed,
A starving tigress. Hunger in her orbs
Glared with green flame; her dry tongue lolled
a span
Beyond the gasping jaws and shrivelled jowl;
Her painted hide hung wrinkled on her ribs

As when between the rafters sinks a thatch
Rotten with rains; and at the poor lean dugs
Two cubs, whining with famine, tugged and
sucked,
Mumbling those milkless teats which rendered
nought,
While she, their gaunt dam, licked full
motherly
The clamorous twins, yielding her flank to them
With moaning throat, and love stronger than
want,
Softening the first of that wild cry wherewith
She laid her famished muzzle to the sand
And roared a savage thunder-peal of woe.
Seeing which bitter strait, and heeding nought
Save the immense compassion of a Buddh,
Our Lord bethought, "There is no other way
To help this murderess of the woods but one.
By sunset these will die, having no meat:
There is no living heart will pity her,
Bloody with ravin, lean for lack of blood.
Lo! if I feed her, who shall lose but I,
And how can love lose doing of its kind
Even to the uttermost?" So saying, Buddh
Silently laid aside sandals and staff,
His sacred thread, turban, and cloth, and came
Forth from behind the milk-bush on the sand,
Saying, "Ho! mother, here is meat for thee!"

Whereat the perishing beast yelped hoarse and
shrill,
Sprang from her cubs, and, hurling to the
earth
That willing victim, had her feast of him
With all the crooked daggers of her claws
Rending his flesh, and all her yellow fangs
Bathed in his blood: the great cat's burning
breath
Mixed with the last sigh of such fearless love.

Thus large the Master's heart was long ago,
Not only now, when with his gracious ruth
He bade cease cruel worship of the Gods.
And much King Bimbasara prayed our Lord—
Learning his royal birth and holy search—
To tarry in that city, saying oft,
“Thy princely state may not abide such fasts;
Thy hands were made for sceptres, not for
alms.
Sojourn with me, who have no son to rule,
And teach my kingdom wisdom, till I die,
Lodged in my palace with a beauteous bride.”
But ever spake Siddartha, of set mind,
“These things I had, most noble King, and
left,
Seeking the Truth; which still I seek, and
shall;

Not to be stayed, though Sakra's palace ope'd
 Its doors of pearl and Devis wooed me in.
 I go to build the Kingdom of the Law,
 Journeying to Gaya and the forest shades,
 Where, as I think, the light will come to me;
 For nowise here among the Rishis comes
 That light, nor from the Shasters, nor from
 fasts
 Borne till the body faints, starved by the soul.
 Yet there is light to reach and truth to win,
 And surely, O true Friend, if I attain
 I will return and quit thy love."

Thereat

Thrice round the Prince King Bimbasara
 paced,
 Reverently bending to the Master's feet,
 And bade him speed. So passed our Lord
 away
 Towards Uravilva, not yet comforted,
 And wan of face, and weak with six years'
 quest.
 But they upon the hill and in the grove—
 Alara, Udra, and the ascetics five—
 Had stayed him, saying all was written clear
 In holy Shasters, and that none might win
 Higher than *Sruti* and than *Smriti*—nay,

Not the chief saints!—for how should mortal
man

Be wiser than the Jnana-Kand, which tells
How Brahm is bodiless and actionless,
Passionless, calm, unqualified, unchanged,
Pure life, pure thought, pure joy? Or how
should man

Be better than the Karmma-Kand, which
shows

How he may strip passion and action off,
Break from the bond of self, and so, unsphered,
Be God, and melt into the vast divine,
Flying from false to true, from wars of sense
To peace eternal, where the silence lives?

But the Prince heard them, not yet comforted.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

Thou who wouldst see where dawned the light
at last,
North-westwards from the "Thousand Gar-
dens" go
By Gunga's valley till thy steps be set
On the green hills where those twin streamlets
spring
Nilajan and Mohana; follow them,
Winding beneath broad-leaved mahua-trees,
Mid thickets of the sansar and the bir,
Till on the plain the shining sisters meet
In Phalgu's bed, flowing by rocky banks
To Gaya and the red Barbar hills.
Hard by that river spreads a thorny waste,
Uruwelaya named in ancient days,
With sandhills broken; on its verge a wood
Waves sea-green plumes and tassels 'thwart
the sky
With undergrowth where through a still flood
steals,
Dappled with lotus-blossoms, blue and white,

And peopled with quick fish and tortoises.
Near it the village of Senani reared
Its roofs of grass, nestled amid the palms,
Peaceful with simple folk and pastoral toils.

— There in the sylvan solitudes once more
Lord Buddha lived, musing the woes of men,
The ways of fate, the doctrines of the books,
The lessons of the creatures of the brake,
The secrets of the silence whence all come,
The secrets of the gloom whereto all go,
The life which lies between, like that arch
 flung
From cloud to cloud across the sky, which
 hath
Mists for its masonry and vapory piers,
Melting to void again which was so fair
With sapphire hues, garnet, and chrysoprase.
Moon after moon our Lord sate in the wood,
So meditating these that he forgot
Ofttimes the hour of food, rising from thoughts
Prolonged beyond the sunrise and the noon
To see his bowl unfilled, and eat perforce
Of wild fruit fallen from the boughs o'erhead,
Shaken to earth by chattering ape, or plucked
By purple parokeet. Therefore his grace
Faded; his body, worn by stress of soul,
Lost day by day the marks, thirty and two,

Which testify the Buddha. Scarce that leaf,
Fluttering so dry and withered to his feet
From off the sal-branch, bore less likeliness
Of spring's soft greenery than he of him
Who was the princely flower of all his land.

And once at such a time the o'erwrought
Prince

Fell to the earth in deadly swoon, all spent,
Even as one slain, who hath no longer breath
Nor any stir of blood; so wan he was,
So motionless. But there came by that way
A shepherd-boy, who saw Siddartha lie
With lids fast-closed, and lines of nameless
pain

Fixed on his lips—the fiery noonday sun
Beating upon his head who, plucking boughs
From wild rose-apple trees, knitted them thick
Into a bower to shade the sacred face.

Also he poured upon the Master's lips
Drops of warm milk, pressed from his she-
goat's bag,

Lest, being of low caste, he do wrong to one
So high and holy seeming. But the books
Tell how the jambu-branches, planted thus,
Shot with quick life in wealth of leaf and
flower.

And glowing fruitage interlaced and close,

So that the bower grew like a tent of silk
Pitched for a king at hunting, decked with studs
Of silver-work and bosses of red gold.

And the boy worshiped, deeming him some
God;

But our Lord gaining breath, arose and asked
Milk in the shepherd's lota. "Ah, my Lord,
I cannot give thee," quoth the lad; "thou seest
I am a Sudra, and my touch defiles!"

Then the World-honored spake: "Pity and
need

Make all flesh kin. There is no caste in blood,
Which runneth of one hue, nor caste in tears,
Which trickle salt with all; neither comes man
To birth with tilka-mark stamped on the brow,
Nor sacred thread on neck. Who doth right
deeds .

Is twice-born, and who doeth ill deeds vile.

Give me a drink, my brother; when I come
Unto my quest it shall be good for thee."

Thereat the peasant's heart was glad, and gave.

And on another day there passed that road
A band of tinselled girls, the nautch-dancers
Of Indra's temple in the town, with those
Who made their music—one that beat a drum
Set round with peacock-feathers, one that blew
The piping bansuli, and one that twitched

A three-string sitar. Lightly tripped they
down

From ledge to ledge and through the chequered
paths

To some gay festival, the silver bells

Chiming soft peals about the small brown feet,

Armlets and wrist-rings tattling answer shrill;

While he that bore the sitar thrummed and
twanged

His threads of brass, and she beside him sang—

“ Fair goes the dancing when the sitar's tuned;
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high,
And we will dance away the hearts of men.

The string o'erstretched breaks, and the music flies;
The string o'erslack is dumb, and music dies;
Tune us the sitar neither low nor high.”

So sang the nautch-girl to the pipe and wires,

Fluttering like some vain, painted butterfly

From glade to glade along the forest path,

Nor dreamed her light words echoed on the ear

Of him, that holy man, who sate so rapt

Under the fig-tree by the path. But Buddh

Lifted his great brow as the wantons passed,

And spake: “The foolish oft-times teach the
wise;

I strain too much this string of life, belike,

Meaning to make such music as shall save.

Mine eyes are dim now that they see the truth,
My strength is waned now that my need is
most;

Would that I had such help as man must have,
For I shall die, whose life was all men's hope."

Now, by that river dwelt a landholder
Pious and rich, master of many herds,
A goodly chief, the friend of all the poor;
And from his house the village drew its name—
"Senani." Pleasant and in peace he lived,
Having for wife Sujata, loveliest
Of all the dark-eyed daughters of the plain;
Gentle and true, simple and kind was she,
Noble of mien, with gracious speech to all
And gladsome looks—a pearl of womanhood—
Passing calm years of household happiness
Beside her lord in that still Indian home,
Save that no male child blessed their wedded
love:

Wherefore with many prayers she had besought
Lukshmi; and many nights at full-moon gone
Round the great Lingam, nine times nine,
with gifts

Of rice and jasmine wreaths and sandal oil,
Praying a boy; also Sujata vowed—
If this should be—an offering of food
Unto the Wood-God, plenteous, delicate,

Set in a bowl of gold under his tree,
Such as the lips of Devis may taste and take.
And this had been: for there was born to her
A beauteous boy, now three months old, who
 lay
Between Sujata's breasts, while she did pace
With grateful foot-steps to the Wood-God's
 shrine,
One arm clasping her crimson sari close
To wrap the babe, that jewel of her joys,
The other lifted high in comely curve
To steady on her head the bowl and dish
Which held the dainty victuals for the God.

But Radha, sent before to sweep the ground
And tie the scarlet threads around the tree,
Came eager, crying, "Ah, dear Mistress! look!
There is the Wood-God sitting in his place,
Revealed, with folded hands upon his knees.
See how the light shines round about his brow!
How mild and great he seems, with heavenly
 eyes!
Good fortune is it thus to meet the gods."

So,—thinking him divine,—Sujata drew
Tremblingly nigh, and kissed the earth and
 said,
With sweet face bent, "Would that the Holy
 One

Inhabiting this grove, Giver of good,
Merciful unto me his handmaiden,
Vouchsafing now his presence, might accept
These our poor gifts of snowy curds, fresh-
made,
With milk as white as new-carved ivory!"

Therewith into the golden bowl she poured
The curds and milk, and on the hands of Buddh
Dropped attar from a crystal flask—distilled
Out of the hearts of roses: and he ate,
Speaking no word, while the glad mother stood
In reverence apart. But of that meal
So wondrous was the virtue that our Lord
Felt strength and life return as though the
nights
Of watching and the days of fast had passed
In dream, as though the spirit with the flesh
Shared that fine meat and plumed its wings
anew,
Like some delighted bird at sudden streams
Weary with flight o'er endless wastes of sand,
Which laves the desert dust from neck and
crest.
And more Sujata worshiped, seeing our Lord
Grow fairer and his countenance more bright:
"Art thou indeed the God?" she lowly asked,
"And hath my gift found favor?"

But Buddh said,

“What is it thou dost bring me?”

“Holy one!”

Answered Sujata, “from our droves I took
Milk of a hundred mothers newly-calved,
And with that milk I fed fifty white cows,
And with their milk twenty-and-five, and then
With theirs twelve more, and yet again with
theirs

The six noblest and best of all our herds.
That yield I boiled with sandal and fine spice
In silver lotas, adding rice, well grown
From chosen seed, set in new-broken ground,
So picked that every grain was like a pearl.
This did I of true heart, because I vowed
Under thy tree, if I should bear a boy
I would make offering for my joy, and now
I have my son and all my life is bliss!”

Softly our Lord drew down the crimson fold,
And, laying on the little head those hands
Which help the worlds, he said, “Long be thy
bliss!

And lightly fall on him the load of life!
For thou hast holpen me who am no God,
But one, thy Brother; heretofore a Prince
And now a wanderer, seeking night and day

These six hard years that light which some-
where shines

To lighten all men's darkness, if they knew!
And I shall find the light; yea, now it dawned
Glorious and helpful, when my weak flesh
failed

Which this pure food, fair Sister, hath restored,
Drawn manifold through lives to quicken life
As life itself passes by many births
To happier heights and purging off of sins.
Yet dost thou truly find it sweet enough
Only to live? Can life and love suffice?"

Answered Sujata, "Worshipful! my heart
Is little, and a little rain will fill
The lily's cup which hardly moistens the field.
It is enough for me to feel life's sun
Shine in my Lord's grace and my baby's smile,
Making the loving summer of our home.
Pleasant my days pass filled with household
cares

From sunrise when I wake to praise the gods,
And give forth grain, and trim the tulsi-plant,
And set my handmaids to their tasks, till noon,
When my Lord lays his head upon my lap
Lulled by soft songs and wavings of the fan:
And so to supper-time at quiet eve,
When by his side I stand and serve the cakes.

Then the stars light their silver lamps for
sleep,

After the temple and the talk with friends.

How should I not be happy, blest so much,
And bearing him this boy whose tiny hand
Shall lead his soul to Swerga, if it need?

For holy books teach when a man shall plant
Trees for the travelers' shade, and dig a well
For the folks' comfort, and beget a son,
It shall be good for such after their death;
And what the books say that I humbly take,
Being not wiser than those great of old
Who spake with gods, and knew the hymns and
charms,

And all the ways of virtue and of peace.

Also I think that good must come of good
And ill of evil—surely—unto all—

In every place and time—seeing sweet fruit
Groweth from wholesome roots, and bitter
things

From poison-stocks; yea, seeing, too, how spite
Breeds hate, and kindness friends, and patience
peace

Even while we live; and when 'tis willed we
die

Shall there not be as good a 'Then' as 'Now?'
Haply much better! since one grain of rice

Shoots a green feather gemmed with fifty
pearls,

And all the starry champak's white and gold
Lurks in those little, naked, grey spring-buds,
Ah, Sir. I know there might be woes to bear
Would lay fond Patience with her face in dust;
If this my babe pass first I think my heart
Would break—almost I hope my heart would
break!

That I might clasp him dead and wait my
Lord—

In whatsoever world holds faithful wives—
Duteous, attending till his hour should come.
But if Death called Senani, I should mount
The pile and lay that dear head in my lap,
My daily way, rejoicing when the torch
Lit the quick flame and rolled the choking
smoke.

For it is written if an Indian wife
Die so, her love shall give her husband's soul
For every hair upon her head a score
Of years in Swerga. Therefore fear I not.
And therefore, Holy Sir! my life is glad,
Nowise forgetting yet those other lives
Painful and poor, wicked and miserable,
Whereupon the gods grant pity! but for me,
What good I see humbly I seek to do,
And live obedient to the law, in trust

That will come, and must come, shall come well."

Then spake our Lord, "Thou teachest them who teach,

Wiser than wisdom in thy simple lore.

Be thou content to know not, knowing thus

Thy way of right and duty: grow, thou flower!

With thy sweet kind in peaceful shade—the
light

Of Truth's high noon is not for tender leaves

Which must spread broad in other suns and lift

In later lives a crowned head to the sky.

Thou who hast worshipped me, I worship thee!

Excellent heart! learned unknowingly.

As the dove is which flieth home by love.

In thee is seen why there is hope for man

And where we hold the wheel of life at will.

Peace go with thee, and comfort all thy days!

As thou accomplish, may I achieve!

He whom thou thoughtest God bids thee wish
this."

"May'st thou achieve," she said, with earnest eyes

Bent on her babe, who reached its tender
hands

To Buddh—knowing, belike, as children know,

More than we deem, and reverencing our Lord ;
 But he arose—made strong with that pure
 meat—

And bent his footsteps where a great Tree
 grew,

The Bodhi-tree (thenceforward in all year,
 Never to fade, and ever to be kept
 In homage of the world), beneath whose leaves
 It was ordained that truth should come to
 Buddh :

Which now the Master knew; wherefore he
 went

With measured pace, steadfast, majestic,
 Unto the Tree of Wisdom. Oh; ye Worlds!
 Rejoice! our Lord wended unto the Tree!

Whom—as he passed into its ample shade,
 Cloistered with columned drooping stems, and
 roofed

With vaults of glistening green—the conscious
 earth

Worshipped with waving grass and sudden
 flush

Of flowers about his feet. The forest-boughs
 Bent down to shade him; from the river sighed
 Cool wafts of wind laden with lotus-scents
 Breathed by the water-gods. Large wonder-
 ing eyes

Of woodland creatures—panther, boar, and
deer—

At peace that eve, gazed on his face benign
For cave and thicket. From its cold cleft
wound

The mottled deadly snake, dancing its hood
In honor of our Lord; bright butterflies
Fluttered their vans, azure and green and
gold,

To be his fan-bearers; the fierce kite dropped
Its prey and screamed; the striped palm-
squirrel raced

From stem to stem to see; the weaver-bird
Chirped from her swinging nest; the lizard
ran;

The koil sang her hymn; the doves flocked
round;

Even the creeping things were 'ware and glad.
Voices of earth and air joined in one song,
Which unto ears that hear said, "Lord and
Friend!

Lover and Saviour! Thou who hast subdued
Angers and prides, desires and fears and
doubts,

Thou that for each and all hast given thyself,
Pass to the Tree! The sad world blesseth
thee

Who art the Buddh that shall assuage her
woes.

Pass, Hailed and Honored! strive thy last for
us,

King and high Conqueror! thine hour is come;
This is the Night the ages waited for!"

Then fell the night even as our Master sate
Under that Tree. But he who is the Prince
Of Darkness, Mara—knowing this was Buddh
Who should deliver men, and now the hour
When he should find the Truth and save the
worlds

Gave unto all his evil powers command.
Wherefore there trooped from every deepest
pit

The fiends who war with Wisdom and the
Light,

Arati, Trishna, Raga, and their crew
Of passions, horrors, ignorances, lusts,
The brood of gloom and dread; all hating
Buddh

Seeking to shake his mind; nor knoweth one,
Not even the wisest, how those fiends of Hell
Battled that night to keep the Truth from
Buddh:

Sometimes with terrors of the tempest, blasts
Of demon-armies clouding all the wind,

With thunder, and with blinding lightning
flung
In jagged javelins of purple wrath
From splitting skies; sometimes with wiles and
words
Fair-sounding, 'mid hushed leaves and softened
airs
From shapes of witching beauty; wanton songs,
Whispers of love; sometimes with royal allures
Of proffered rule; sometimes with mocking
doubts,
Making truth vain. But whether these befell
Without and visible, or whether Buddh
Strove with fell spirits in his inmost heart,
Judge ye:—I write what ancient books have
writ.

The ten chief Sins came—Mara's mighty
ones,
Angels of evil—Attavada first,
The Sin of Self, who in the Universe
As in a mirror sees her fond face shown,
And crying "I" would have the world say "I,"
And all things perish so if she endure.
"If thou be'st Buddh," said she, "let others
grobe
Lightless; it is enough that thou art Thou
Changelessly; rise and take the bliss of gods

Who change not, heed not, strive not." But
Buddh spake,
"The right in thee is base, the wrong a curse;
Cheat such as love themselves." Then came
wan Doubt,
He that denies—the mocking Sin—and this
Hissed in the Master's ear, "All things are
shows,
And vain the knowledge of their vanity;
Thou dost but chase the shadow of thyself;
Rise and go hence, there is no better way
Than patient scorn, nor any help for man,
Nor any staying of his whirling weel."
But quoth our Lord, "Thou hast no part with
me,
False Visikitcha, subtlest of man's foes."
And third came she who gives dark creeds
their power,
Slabbat-paramasa, sorceress,
Draped fair in many lands as lowly Faith,
But ever juggling souls with rites and prayers;
The keeper of those keys which lock up Hells
And open Heavens. "Wilt thou dare," she
said,
"Put by our sacred books, dethrone our gods,
Unpeople all the temples, shaking down
That law which feeds the priests and props
the realms?"

But Buddha answered, "What thou bidd'st me
keep

Is form which passes, for the free Truth
stands;

Get thee unto thy darkness." Next there drew

Gallantly nigh a braver Tempter, he,

Kama, the King of passions, who hath sway

Over the Gods themselves, Lord of all loves,

Ruler of Pleasure's realm. Laughing he came

Unto the tree, bearing his bow of gold

Wreathed with red blooms, and arrows of de-
sire

Pointed with five-tongued delicate flame which
stings

The heart it smites sharper than poisoned barb:

And round him came into that lonely place

Bands of bright shapes with heavenly eyes and
lips

Singing in lovely words the praise of Love

To music of invisible sweet chords,

So witching that it seemed the nightstod still

To hear them, and the listening stars and
moon

Paused in their orbits while these hymned to
Buddh

Of lost delights, and how a mortal man

Findeth nought dearer in the three wide worlds

Than are the yielding loving fragrant breasts

Of Beauty, and the rosy breast-blossoms,
Love's rubies; nay, and toucheth nought more
high

Than is that dulcet harmony of form
Seen in the lines and charms of loveliness
Unspeakable, yet speaking soul to soul,
Owned by the bounding blood, worshipped by
will

Which leaps to seize it, knowing this is best,
This is the true heaven where mortals are like
gods,

Makers and Masters, this the gift of gifts
Ever renewed and worth a thousand woes.
For who hath grieved when soft arms shut
him safe,

And all life melted to a happy sigh,
And all the world was given in one warm kiss?
So sang they with soft float of beckoning hands,
Eyes lighted with love-flames, alluring smiles;
In dainty dance their supple sides and limbs
Revealing and concealing like burst buds
Which tell their color, but hide yet their
hearts.

Never so matchless grace delighted eye
As troop by troop these midnight-dancers swept
Nearer the Tree, each daintier than the last,
Murmuring "O great Siddartha! I am thine,
Taste of my mouth and see if youth is sweet!"

Also, when nothing moved our Master's mind,
 Lo! Kama waved his magic bow, and lo!
 The band of dancers opened, and a shape
 Fairest and stateliest of the throng came forth
 Wearing the guise of sweet Yasodhara.

Tender the passion of those dark eyes seemed
 Brimming with tears; yearning those out-
 spread arms

Opened toward him; musical that moan
 Wherewith the beauteous shadow named his
 name,

Sighing "My Prince! I die for lack of thee!
 What heaven hast thou found like that we
 knew

By bright Rohini in the Pleasure-house,
 Where all these weary years I weep for thee?
 Return, Siddartha! ah! return. But touch
 My lips again, but let me to thy breast
 Once, and these fruitless dreams will end!

Ah, look!

Am I not she thou lovedst?" But Buddh said,
 "For that sweet sake of her thou playest thus
 Fair and false Shadow! is thy playing vain;
 I curse thee not who wear'st a form so dear,
 Yet as thou art so are all earthly shows.

Melt to thy void again!" Thereat a cry
 Thrilled through the grove, and all that
 comely rout

Faded with flickering wafts of flame, and trail
Of vaporous robes.

Next under darkening skies
And noise of rising storm came fiercer Sins,
The rearmost of the Ten; Patigha—Hate—
With serpents coiled about her waist, which
suck

Poisonous milk from both her hanging dugs,
And with her curses mix their angry hiss.
Little wrought she upon that Holy One
Who with his calm eyes dumb'd her bitter lips
And made her black snakes writhe to hide
their fangs.

Then followed Rugaraga—Lust of days—
That sensual Sin which out of greed for life
Forgets to live; and next him Lust of Fame,
Nobler Arugaraga, she whose spell
Beguiles the wise, mother of daring deeds,
Battles, and toils. And haughty Mano came,
The Fiend of Pride; and smooth Self-Right-
eousness,

Uddhachcha; and—with many a hideous band
Of vile and formless things, which crept and
flapped

Toad-like and bat-like—Ignorance, the Dam
Of Fear and Wrong, Avidya, hideous hag,
Whose footsteps left the midnight darker,
while

The rooted mountains shook, the wild winds
howled
The broken clouds shed from their caverns
streams
Of levin-lighted rain; stars shot from heaven,
The solid earth shuddered as if one laid
Flame to her gaping wounds; the torn black
air
Was full of whistling wings, of screams and
yells,
Of evil faces peering, of vast fronts
Terrible and majestic, Lords of Hell
Who from a thousand Limbos led their troops
To tempt the Master.

But Buddh heeded not,
Sitting serene, with perfect virtue walled
As is a stronghold by its gates and ramps;
Also the Sacred Tree—the Bodhi-tree—
Amid that tumult stirred not, but each leaf
Glistened as still as when on moonlit eves
No zephyr spills the glittering gems of dew;
For all this clamor raged outside the shade
Spread by those cloistered stems:

In the third watch,
The earth being still, the hellish legions fled,
A soft air breathing from the sinking moon,
Our Lord attained *Samma-sambuddh*; he saw
By light which shines beyond our mortal ken

The line of all his lives in all the worlds,
Far back and farther back and farthest yet,
Five hundred lives and fifty. Even as one,
At rest upon a mountain-summit, marks
His path wind up by precipice and crag,
Past thick-set woods shrunk to a patch; through
 bogs
Glittering false-green; down hollows where he
 toiled
Breathless; on dizzy ridges where his feet
Had well-nigh slipped; beyond the sunny
 lawns,
The cataract and cavern and the pool,
Backward to those dim flats wherefrom he
 sprang
To reach the blue; thus Buddh did behold
Life's upward steps long-linked, from levels
 low
Where breath is base, to higher slopes and
 higher
Whereon the ten great Virtues wait to lead
The climber skyward. Also, Buddh saw
How new life reaps what the old life did sow:
How where its march breaks off its march be-
 gins;
Holding the gain and answering for the loss;
And how in each life good begets more good,
Evil fresh evil; Death but casting up

Debit or credit, whereupon th' account
In merits or demerits stamps itself
By sure arithmic—where no tittle drops—
Certain and just, on some new-springing life;
Wherein are packed and scored past thoughts
and deeds,
Strivings and triumphs, memories and marks
Of lives foregone:

And in the middle watch
Our Lord attained *Abhidjna*—in sight vast
Ranging beyond this sphere to spheres un-
named,
System on system, countless worlds and suns
Moving in splendid measures, band by band
Linked in division, one, yet separate,
The silver islands of a sapphire sea
Shoreless, unfathomed, undiminished, stirred
With waves which roll in restless tides of
change.
He saw those Lords of Light who hold their
worlds
By bonds invisible, how they themselves
Circle obedient round mightier orbs
Which serve profounder splendors, star to star
Flashing the ceaseless radiance of life
From centers ever shifting unto cirques
Knowing no uttermost. These he beheld

With unsealed vision, and of all those worlds
Cycle on epicycle, all their tale
Of Kalpas, Mahakalpas—terms of time
Which no man grasps, yea, though he knew to
count

The drops in Gunga from her springs to the
sea,

Measureless unto speech—whereby these wax
And wane; whereby each of this heavenly host
Fulfil its shining life and darkling dies.

Sakwal by Sakwal, depths and heights he
passed

Transported through the blue infinitudes,
Marking—behind all modes, above all spheres,
Beyond the burning impulse of each orb—

That fixed decree at silent work which wills
Evolve the dark to light, the dead to life,
To fulness void, to form the yet unformed,

Good unto better, better unto best,

By wordless edict; having none to bid,
None to forbid; for this is past all gods

Immutable, unspeakable, supreme,

A Power which builds, unbuilds, and builds
again,

Ruling all things accordant to the rule
Of virtue, which is beauty, truth, and use.

So that all things do well which serve the
Power,

And ill which hinder ; nay, the worm does well,
 Obedient to its kind ; the hawk does well
 Which carries bleeding quarries to its young ;
 The dewdrop and the star shine sisterly,
 Globing together in the common work ;
 And man who lives to die, dies to live well,
 So if he guide his ways by blamelessness
 And earnest will to hinder not but help
 All things both great and small which suffered
 life.

These did our Lord see in the middle watch.
 But when the fourth which came the secret
 came

Of Sorrow, which with evil mars the law,
 As damp and dross hold back the goldsmith's
 fire.

Then was the Dukha-satya opened him
 First of the "Noble Truths;" how Sorrow is
 Shadow to life, moving where life doth move;
 Not to be laid aside until one lays
 Living aside, with all its changing states,
 Birth, growth, decay, love, hatred, pleasure,
 pain,
 Being and doing. How that none strips off
 These sad delights and pleasant griefs who
 lacks
 Knowledge to know them snares; but he who
 knows

Avidya—Delusion—sets those snares,
 Love's life no longer but ensues escape.
 The eyes of such a one are wide, he sees
 Delusion breeds Sankhara, Tendency
 Perverse: Tendency, Energy—Vidnna—
 Whereby comes Namarupa, local form
 And name and bodiment, bringing the man
 With senses naked to the sensible,
 A helpless mirror of all shows which pass
 Across his heart, and so Vedana grows—
 "Sense-life"—false in its gladness, fell in sad-
 ness,
 But sad or glad, the Mother of Desire,
 Trishna, that thirst which makes the living
 drink
 Deeper and deeper of the false salt waves
 Whereupon they float, pleasures, ambitions,
 wealth,
 Praise, fame, or domination, conquest, love;
 Rich meats and robes, and fair abodes, and
 pride
 Of ancient lines, and lust of days, and strife
 To live, and sins that flow from strife, some
 sweet,
 Some bitter. Thus Life's thirst quenches itself
 With draughts which double thirst, but who is
 wise
 Tears from his soul this Trishna, feeds his sense

No longer on false shows, fills his firm mind
 To seek not, strive not, wrong not; bearing
 meek

All ills which flow from foregone●wrongful-
 ness,

And so constraining passions that they die
 Famished; till all the sum of ended life—

The *Karma*—all that total of a soul

Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had,

The 'Self' it wove—with woof of viewless time,

Crossed on the warp invisible of acts—

The outcome of him on the Universe,

Grows pure and sinless; either never more

Needing to find a body and a place,

Or so informing what fresh frame it takes

In new existence that the new toils prove

Lighter and lighter not to be at all,

Thus 'finishing the Path;' free from Earth's
 cheats;

Released from all the skandhas of the flesh;

Broken from ties—from Upadanas—saved

From whirling on the wheel; aroused and sane

As is a man wakened from hateful dreams.

Until—greater than Kings, than Gods more
 glad!—

The aching craze to live ends, and life glides—

Lifeless—to nameless quiet, nameless joy,

Blessed Nirvana—sinless, stirless rest—
That change which never changes!"

Lo! the Dawn
Sprang with Buddh's Victory! lo! in the East
Flamed the first fires of beauteous day, poured
forth

Through fleeting folds of Night's black drapery.
High in the widening blue the herald-star
Faded to paler silver as there shot
Brighter and brightest bars of rosy gleam
Across the grey. Far off the shadowy hills
Saw the great Sun, before the world was 'ware,
And donned their crowns of crimson; flower
by flower

Felt the warm breath of Morn and 'gan unfold
Their tender lids. Over the spangled grass
Swept the swift footsteps of the lovely Light,
Turning the tears of Night to joyous gems,
Decking the earth with radiance, 'broidering
The sinking storm-clouds with a golden fringe,
Gilding the feathers of the palms, which
waved

Glad salutation; darting beams of gold
Into the glades; touching with magic wand
The stream to rippled ruby; in the brake
Finding the mild eyes of the antelopes
And saying "It is day;" in nested sleep

Touching the small heads under many a wing
And whispering, "Children, praise the light of
day!"

Whereat there piped anthems of all the birds,
The Koil's fluted song, the Bulbul's hymn,
The "morning, morning" of the painted thrush,
The twitter of the sunbirds starting forth
To find the honey ere the bees be out,
The grey crow's caw, the parrot's scream, the
strokes

Of the green hammersmith, the myna's chirp,
The never finished love-talk of the doves;
Yea! and so holy was the influence
Of that high Dawn which came with victory,
That, far and near, in homes of men there
spread

An unknown peace. The slayer hid his knife;
The robber laid his plunder back; the shroff
Counted full tale of coins; all evil hearts
Grew gentle, kind hearts gentler, as the balm
Of that divinest Daybreak lightened Earth.
Kings at fierce war called truce; the sick man
leaped

Laughing from beds of pain; the dying smiled
As though they knew that happy Morn was
sprung

From fountains farther than the utmost East,
And o'er the heart of sad Yasodhara,

Sitting forlorn at Prince Siddartha's bed,
Came sudden bliss, as if love should not fail
Nor such vast sorrow miss to end in joy.
So glad the World was—though it wist not
why—

That over desolate wastes went swooning
songs

Of mirth, the voice of bodiless Prets and Bhuts
Foreseeing Buddh; and Devas in the air
Cried "It is finished, finished!" and the priests
Stood with the wondering people in the streets
Watching those golden splendors flood the sky
And saying "There hath happed some mighty
thing."

Also in Ran and Jungle grew that day
Friendship amongst the creatures; spotted deer
Browsed fearless where the tigress fed her cubs,
And cheetahs lapped the pool beside the bucks;
Under the eagle's rocks the brown hares scoured
While his fierce beak but preened an idle wing;
The snake sunned all his jewels in the beam
With deadly fangs in sheath; the shrike let
pass

The nestling-finch; the emerald halcyons
Sate dreaming while the fishes played beneath,
Nor hawked the merops, though the butter-
flies—

Crimson and blue and amber—flitted thick

Around his perch; the Spirit of our Lord
Lay potent upon man and bird and beast,
Even while he mused under that Bodhi-tree
Glorified with the Conquest gained for all
And lightened by a Light greater than Day's.

Then he arose—radiant, rejoicing, strong—
Beneath the Tree, and lifting high his voice
Spake this, in hearing of all Times and
Worlds:—

Anekajatisangсарang
Sandhawissang anibhisang
Gahakarakangawesanto
Dukkhajatipunappunang
Gahakarakadithosi;
Punagehang nakahasi;
Sabhatepha sukhabhagga,
Gahakutangwisang khitang;
Wisangkharagatang chittang;
Janhanangkhayamajhaga.

Many a House of Life
Hath held me—seeking ever him who wrought
These prisons of the senses, sorrow-fraught;
Sore was my ceaseless strife!

But now,
Thou Builder of this Tabernacle—Thou!

I know Thee! Never shalt thou build again
 These walls of pain,
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits, nor lay
 Fresh rafters on the clay;
Broken thy house is, and the ridge-pole split!
 Delusion fashioned it!
Safe pass I thence—deliverance to obtain.

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

Sorrowful dwelt the King Suddhodana
All those long years among the Sakya Lords
Lacking the speech and presence of his Son;
Sorrowful sate the sweet Yasodhara
All those long years, knowing no joy of life,
Widowed of him her living Liege and Prince
And ever, on the news of some recluse
Seen far away by pasturing camel-men
Or traders threading devious paths for gain,
Messengers from the King had gone and come
Bringing account of many a holy sage
Lonely and lost to home; but nought of him
The crown of white Kapilavastu's line,
The glory of her monarch and his hope,
The heart's content of sweet Yasodhara,
Far-wandered now, forgetful, changed, or dead.

But on a day in the Wasanta-time,
When silver sprays swing on the mango trees
And all the earth is clad with garb of spring,
The Princess sate by that bright garden-stream

Whose gliding glass, bordered with lotus-cups,
Mirrored so often in the bliss gone by
Their clinging hands and meeting lips. Her
 lids

Were wan with tears, her tender cheeks had
 thinned;

Her lips' delicious curves were drawn with
 grief;

The lustrous glory of her hair was hid—
Close bound as widows use; no ornament
She wore, nor any jewel clasped the cloth—
Coarse, and of mourning-white—crossed on her
 breast

Slow moved and painfully those small fine feet
Which had the roe's gait and the rose-leaf's fall
In old years at the loving voice of him.

Her eyes, those lamps of love,—which were as
 if

Sunlight should shine from out the deepest
 dark,

Illuminating Night's peace with Daytime's
 glow—

Unlighted now, and roving aimlessly,
Scarce marked the clustering signs of coming
 Spring

So the silk lashes drooped over their orbs.
In one hand was a girdle thick with pearls,

Siddartha's—treasured since that night he
fled—

(Ah, bitter Night! mother of weeping days!

When was fond Love so pitiless to love

Save that this scorned to limit love by life?)

The other led her little son, a boy

Divinely fair the pledge Siddartha left—

Named Rahula—now seven years old, who
tripped

Gladsome beside his mother, light of heart

To see the spring-blooms burgeon o'er the
world.

So while they lingered by the lotus-pools

And, lightly laughing, Rahula flung rice

To feed the blue and purple fish; and she

With sad eyes watched the swiftly-flying cranes,

Sighing, "Oh! creatures of the wandering
wing,

If ye shall light where my dear Lord is hid,

Say that Yasodhara lives nigh to death

For one word of his mouth, one touch of
him!"—

So, as they played and sighed—mother and
child—

Came some among the damsels of the Court

Saying, "Great Princess! there have entered
in



“The Master sate, eminent, worshiped.”—Page 191.
The Light of Asia.

At the south gate merchants of Hastinpur
Tripusha, called and Bhalluk, men of worth,
Long traveled from the loud sea's edge, who
bring

Marvelous lovely webs pictured with gold,
Waved blades of gilded steel, wrought bowls
in brass,

Cut ivories, spice, simples, and unknown birds,
Treasures of far-off peoples; but they bring
That which doth beggar these, for He is seen!
Thy Lord,—our Lord,—the hope of all the
land—

Siddartha! they have seen him face to face,
Yea, and have worshipped him with knees and
brows,

And offered offerings; for he is become
All which was shown, a teacher of the wise,
World-honored, holy, wonderful; a Buddh
Who doth deliver men and save all flesh
By sweetest speech and pity vast as Heaven:
And, lo! he journeyeth hither these do say."

Then—while the glad blood bounded in her
veins

As Gunga leaps when first the mountain snows
Melt at her springs—uprose Yasodhara
And clapped her palms, and laughed, with
brimming tears

Beading her lashes. "Oh! call quick," she
cried:

"These merchants to my purdah, for mine
ears

Thirst like parched throats to drink their
blessed news.

Go bring them in,—but if their tale be true,
Say I will fill their girdles with much gold,
With gems that Kings shall envy: come ye too,
My girls, for ye shall have guerdon of this
If there be gifts to speak my greatful heart."

So went those merchants to the Pleasure-
House,

Full softly pacing through its golden ways
With naked feet, amid the peering maids,
Much wondering at the glories of the Court.
Whom, when they came without the purdah's
folds,

A voice, tender and eager, filled and charmed
With trembling music, saying, "Ye are come
From far, fair Sirs! and ye have seen my
Lord—

Yea, worshipped—for he is become a Buddh,
World-honored, holy, and delivers men,
And journeyeth hither. Speak! for, if this be,
Friends are ye of my House, welcome and
dear."

Then answer made Tripusha, "We have seen
That sacred Master, Princess! we have bowed
Before his feet; for who was lost a Prince
Is found a greater than the King of kings.
Under the Bodhi-tree by Phalgu's bank
That which shall save the world hath late been
wrought

By him—the Friend of all, the Prince of all—
Thine most, High Lady! from whose tears
men win

The comfort of this Word the Master speaks.
Lo! he is well, as one beyond all ills,
Uplifted as a god from earthly woes,
Shining with risen Truth, golden and clear.
Moreover as he entereth town by town,
Preaching those noble ways which lead to
peace,

The hearts of men follow his path as leaves
Troop to wind or sheep draw after one
Who knows the pastures. We ourselves have
heard

By Gaya in the green Tchirnika grove
Those wondrous lips and done them rever-
ence:

He cometh hither ere the first rains fall."

Thus spake he, and Yasodhara, for joy,
Scarce mastered breath to answer, "Be it well

Now and at all times with ye, worthy friends!
Who bring good tidings; but of this great
thing

Wist ye how it befell?"

Then Bhalluk told

Such as the people of the valleys knew
Of that dread night of conflict, when the air
Darkened with fiendish shadows, and the earth
Quaked, and the waters swelled with Mara's
wrath.

Also how gloriously that morning broke
Radiant with rising hopes for man, and how
The Lord was found rejoicing 'neath his Tree.
But many days the burden of release—
To be escaped beyond all storms of doubt,
Safe on Truth's shore—lay, spake he, on that
heart

A golden load; for how shall men—Buddh
mused—

Who love their sins and cleave to cheats of
sense,

And drink of error from a thousand springs—
Having no mind to see, nor strength to break
The fleshly snare which binds them—how
should such

Receive the Twelve Nidanas and the Law
Redeeming all, yet strange to profit by,

As the caged bird oft shuns its opened door?
So had we missed the helpful victory
If, in this earth without a refuge, Buddh
Winning the way, had deemed it all too hard
For mortal feet, and passed, none following
him.

Yet pondered the compassion of our Lord,
But in that hour there range a voice as sharp
As cry of travail, so as if the earth
Moaned in birth-throe "Nasyami aham bhu
Nasyati loka!" Surely I am lost,
I and my creatures: then a pause, and next
A pleading sigh borne on the western wind,
"Sruyatam dharma Bhagwat!" Oh, Supreme!
Let thy great Law be uttered! Whereupon
The Master cast his vision forth on flesh,
Saw who should hear and who must wait to
hear,

As the keen Sun gilding the lotus-lakes
Seeth which buds will open to his beams
And which are not yet risen from their roots;
Then spake, divinely smiling, "Yea! I preach!
Whoso will listen let him learn the Law."

Afterwards passed he, said they, by the hills
Unto Benares, where he taught the Five,
Showing how birth and death should be
destroyed,

And how man hath no fate except past deeds,
 No Hell but what he makes, no Heaven too
 high

For those to reach whose passions sleep sub-
 dued.

This was the fifteenth day of Vaishya
 Mid-afternoon and that night was full moon.

But, of the Rishis, first Kaundinya
 Owned the Four Truths and entered on the
 Paths;

And after him Bhadraka, Asvajit,
 Basava, Mahanama; also there
 Within the Deer-park, at the feet of Buddh,
 Yasad, the Prince, with nobles fifty-four
 Hearing the blessed word our Master spake
 Worshipped and followed; for there sprang up
 peace

And knowledge of a new time come for men
 In all who heard, as spring the flowers and
 grass

When water sparkles through a sandy plain.

These sixty—said they—did our Lord send
 forth
 Made perfect in restraint and passion free,
 To teach the Way; but the World-honored
 turned

South from the Deer-park and Isipatan
 To Yashti and King Bimbasara's realm,
 Where many days he taught; and after these
 King Bimbasara and his folk believed,
 Learning the law of love and ordered life.
 Also he gave the Master, of free gift,—
 Pouring forth water on the hands of Buddh—
 The Bamboo-Garden, named Weluvana,
 Wherein are streams and caves and lovely
 glades;
 And the King set a stone there, carved with
 this:—

Ye dharma hetuppabhawa
 Yesan hetun Tathagato;
 Aha yesan cha yo nirodho
 Ewan wadi Maha samano

“What life's course and cause sustain
 These Tathagato made plain;
 What delivers from life's woe
 That our Lord hath made us know.”

And, in that Garden—said they—there was
 held
 A high Assembly, where the Teacher spake
 Wisdom and power, winning all souls which
 heard,

So that nine hundred took the yellow robe—
 Such as the Master wears,—and spread his
 Law;
 And this the gatha was wherewith he closed:—

Sabba papassa akaranan;
 Kusalassa upassampada:
 Sa chitta pariyodapanan;
 Etan Budhanusasan.

“Evil swells the debts to pay,
 Good delivers and acquits;
 Shun evil, follow good; hold sway
 Over thyself. This is the Way.”

Whom, when they ended, speaking so of him,
 With gifts, and thanks which made the jewels
 dull,
 The Princess recompensed. “But by what road
 Wendeth my Lord?” she asked: the merchants
 said,

“Yojans three score stretch from the city-walls
 To Rajagriha, whence the easy path
 Passeth by Sona hither and the hills.
 Our oxen, treading eight slow koss a day,
 Came in one moon.”

Then the King hearing word,

Sent nobles of the Court—well-mounted lords—
Nine separate messengers, each embassy
Bidden to say, "The King Suddhodana—
Nearer the pyre by seven long years of lack,
Wherethrough he hath not ceased to seek for
thee—

Prays of his son to come unto his own,
The Throne and people of this longing Realm,
Lest he shall die and see thy face no more."

Also nine horsemen sent Yasodhara
Bidden to say, "The Princess of thy House—
Rahula's mother—craves to see thy face
As the night-blowing moon-flower's swelling
heart

Pines for the moon, as pale asoka-buds
Wait for a woman's foot: if thou hast found
More than was lost, she prays her part in this,
Rahula's part, but most of all thyself."
So sped the Sakya Lords, but it befell
That each one, with the message in his mouth
Entered the Bamboo-Garden in that hour
When Buddha taught his Law; and—hearing
—each

Forget to speak, lost thought of King and quest,
Of the sad Princess even; only gazed
Eye-rapt upon the Master; only hung
Heart-caught upon the speech, compassionate,
Commanding, perfect, pure, enlightening all,

Poured from those sacred lips. Look! like a
bee

Winged for the hive, who sees the mogras
spread

And scents their utter sweetness on the air,
If he be honey-filled, it matters not;
If night be nigh, or rain, he will not heed;
Needs must he light on those delicious blooms
And drain their nectar; so these messengers
One with another, hearing Buddha's words,
Let go the purpose of their speed, and mixed,
Heedless of all, amid the Master's train.

Wherefore the King bade that Udayi go—
Chiefest in all the Court, and faithfullest,
Siddartha's playmate in the happier days—
Who, as he drew anear the garden, plucked
Blown tufts of tree-wool from the grove and
sealed

The entrance of his hearing; thus he came
Safe through the lofty peril of the place
And told the message of the King, and hers.

Then meekly bowed his head and spake our
Lord

Before the people, "Surely, I shall go!
It is my duty as it was my will;
Let no man miss to render reverence

To those who lend him life, whereby come
means

To live and die no more, but safe attain
Blissful Nirvana, if ye keep the Law,
Purging past wrongs and adding nought
thereto,

Complete in love and lovely charities.

Let the King know and let the Princess hear
I take the way forthwith." This told, the folk
Of white Kapilavastu and its fields

Made ready for the entrance of their Prince.

At the south gate a bright pavilion rose
With flower-wreathed pillars and the walls of
silk

Wrought on their red and green with woven
gold.

Also the roads were laid with scented boughs
Of neem and mango, and full mussuks shed
Sandal and jasmine on the dust, and flags
Fluttered; and on the day when he should come
It was ordained how many elephants—

With silver howdahs and their tusks gold-
tipped—

Should wait beyond the ford, and where the
drums

Should boom "Siddartha cometh!" where the
lords

Should light and worship, and the dancing-
girls

Where they should strew their flowers with
dance and song,

So that the steed he rode might tramp knee-
deep

In rose and balsam, and the ways be fair;

While the town rang with music and high joy.

This was ordained, and all men's ears were
pricked

Dawn after dawn to catch the first drum's beat
Announcing, "Now he cometh!"

But it fell—

Eager to be before—Yasodhara

Rode in her litter to the city-walls

Where soared the bright pavilion. All around

A beauteous garden smiled — Nigrodha
named—

Shaded with bel-trees and the green-plumed
dates,

New-trimmed and gay with winding walks and
banks

Of fruits and flowers; for the southern road

Skirted its lawns, on this hand leaf and bloom,

On that the suburb-huts where base-borns
dwelt

Outside the gates, a patient folk and poor,

Whose touch for Kshatriya and priest of Brahm

Were sore defilement. Yet those, too, were
quick

With expectation, rising ere the dawn
To peer along the road, to climb the trees
At far-off trumpet of some elephant,
Or stir of temple-drum; and when none came,
Busied with lowly chares to please the Prince;
Sweeping their door-stones, setting forth their
flags,

Stringing the fluted fig-leaves into chains,
New furbishing the Lingam, decking new
Yesterday's faded arch of boughs, but aye
Questioning wayfarers if any noise
Be on the road of great Siddartha. These
The Princess marked with lovely languid eyes,
Watching, as they, the southward plain, and
bent

Like them to listen if the passers gave
News of the path. So fell it she beheld
One slow approaching with his head close shorn,
A yellow cloth over his shoulder cast,
Girt as the hermits are, and in his hand
An earthen bowl, shaped melonwise, the which
Meekly at each hut-door he held a space,
Taking the granted dole with gentle thanks
And all as gently passing where none gave.
Two followed him wearing the yellow robe,
But he who bore the bowl so lordly seemed,

So reverend, and with such a passage moved,
 With so commanding presence filled the air,
 With such sweet eyes of holiness smote all,
 That, as they reached him alms the givers
 gazed

Awestruck upon his face, and some bent down
 In worship, and some ran to fetch fresh gifts
 Grieved to be poor; till slowly, group by
 group,

Children and men and women drew behind
 Into his steps, whispering with covered lips,
 "Who is he? who? when looked a Rishi thus?
 But as he came with quiet footfall on
 Nigh the pavilion, lo! the silken door
 Lifted, and, all unveiled, Yasodhara
 Stood in his path crying, "Siddartha! Lord!"
 With wide eyes streaming and with close-
 clasped hands,
 Then sobbing fell upon his feet, and lay.

Afterwards, when this weeping lady passed
 Into the Noble Paths, and one had prayed
 Answer from Buddha wherefore—being vowed
 Quit of all mortal passion and the touch,
 Flower-soft and conquering, of a woman's
 hands—

He suffered such embrace, the Master said:
 "The greater beareth with the lesser love

So it may raise it unto easier heights.
Take heed that no man, being 'scaped from
bonds,

Vexeth bound souls with boasts of liberty.
Free are ye rather that your freedom spread
By patient winning and sweet wisdom's skill.
Three eras of long toil bring Bodhisats—
Who will be guides and help this darkling
world—

Unto deliverance, and the first is named
Of deep 'Resolve,' the second of 'Attempt,'
The third of 'Nomination.' Lo! I lived
In era of Resolve, desiring good,
Searching for wisdom, but mine eyes were
sealed.

Count the grey seeds on yonder castor-clump,
So many rains it is since I was Ram,
A merchant of the coast which looketh south
To Lanka and the hiding-place of pearls.
Also in that far time Yasodhara
Dwelt with me in our village by the sea,
Tender as now, and Lukshmi was her name.
And I remember how I journeyed thence
Seeking our gain, for poor the household was
And lowly. Not the less with wistful tears
She prayed me that I should not part, nor
tempt
Perils by land and water. 'How could love

Leave what it loved?' she wailed; yet, venturing, I

Passed to the Straits, and after storm and toil
And deadly strife with creatures of the deep,
And woes beneath the midnight and the noon,
Searching the wave I won therefrom a pearl
Moonlike and glorious, such as Kings might
buy

Emptying their treasury. Then came I glad
Unto mine hills, but over all that land
Famine spread sore; ill was I stead to live
In journey home, and hardly reached my door—
Aching for food—with that white wealth of
the sea

Tied in my girdle. Yet no food was there;
And on the threshold she for whom I toiled—
More than myself—lay with her speechless lips
Nigh unto death for one small gift of grain.
Then cried I, 'If there be who hath of grain,
Here is a kingdom's ransom for one life:
Give Lukshmi bread and take my moonlight
pearl.'

Whereat one brought the last of all his hoard,
Millet—three seers—and clutched the beautiful
ous thing

But Lukshmi lived and sighed with gathered
life,

'Lo! thou didst love indeed!' I spent my pearl

Well in that life to comfort heart and mind
Else quite uncomforted but these pure pearls,
My last large gain, won from a deeper wave—
The Twelve Nidanas and the Law of Good—
Cannot be spent, nor dimmed, and must fulfill
Their perfect beauty being freeliest given.
For like as is to Meru yonder hill
Heaped by the little ants, and like as dew
Dropped in the footmark of a bounding roe
Unto the shoreless seas, so was that gift
Unto my present giving; and so love—
Vaster in being free from toils of sense—
Was wisest stooping to the weaker heart;
And so the feet of sweet Yasodhara
Passed into peace and bliss, being softly led.”

But when the King heard how Siddartha
came
Shorn, with the mendicant's sad-colored cloth,
And stretching out a bowl to gather orts
From base-borns' leavings, wrathful sorrow
drove
Love from his heart. Thrice on the ground he
spat,
Plucked at his silvered beard, and strode
straight forth
Lackeyed by trembling lords. Frowning he
clomb

Upon his war-horse, drove the spurs, and
dashed,

Angered, though wondering streets and lanes
of folk,

Scarce finding breath to say, "The King! bow
down!"

Ere the loud cavalcade had clattered by:

Which—at the turning by the Temple-wall

Where the south gate was seen—encountered
full

A mighty crowd; to every edge of it

Poured fast more people, till the roads were
lost,

Blotted by that huge company which thronged
And grew, close following him whose look se-
rene

Met the old King's. Nor lived the father's
wrath

Longer than while the gentle eyes of Buddh

Lingered in worship on his troubled brows,

Then downcast sank, with his true knee, to
earth

In proud humility. So dear it seemed

To see the Prince, to know him whole, to mark

That glory greater than of earthly state

Crowning his head, that majesty which
brought

All men, so awed and silent in his steps.

Nathless the King broke forth, "Ends it in this
That great Siddartha steals into his realm,
Wrapped in a clout, shorn, sandalled, craving
food

Of low-borns, he whose life was as a God's?
My son! heir of this spacious power, and heir
Of Kings who did but clap their palms to have
What earth could give or eager service bring?
Thou shouldst have come apparelled in thy
rank,

With shining spears and tramp of horse and
foot.

Lo! all my soldiers camped upon the road,
And all my city waited at the gates;
Where hast thou sojourned through these evil
years

Whilst thy crowned father mourned? and she,
too, there

Lived as the widows use, foregoing joys;
Never once hearing sound of song or string.
Nor wearing once the festal robe, till now
When in her cloth of gold she welcomes home
A beggar spouse in yellow remnants clad.
Son! why is this?"

"My father!" came reply,
"It is the custom of my race."

"Thy race,"

Answered the King, "counteth a hundred
 thrones
 From Maha Sammat, but no deed like this."

"Not of a mortal line," the Master said,
 "I spake, but of descent invisible,
 The Buddhas who have been and who shall be:
 Of these am I, and what they did I do,
 And this which now befalls so fell before
 That at his gate a King in warrior-mail
 Should meet his son, a Prince in hermit-weeds;
 And that, by love and self-control, being more
 Than mightiest Kings in all their puissance,
 The appointed Helper of the Worlds should
 bow—

As now do I—and with all lowly love
 Proffer, where it is owed for tender debts,
 The first-fruits of the treasure he hath brought;
 Which now I proffer."

Then the King amazed
 Inquired, "What treasure?" and the Teacher
 took

Meekly the royal palm, and while they paced
 Through worshiping streets—the Princess and
 the King

On either side—he told the things which make
 For peace and pureness, these Four noble
 Truths

Which hold all wisdom as shores shut the seas
Those eight right rules whereby who will may
walk—

Monarch or slave—upon the perfect Path
That hate its Stages Four and Precepts Eight,
Whereby whoso will live—mighty or mean,
Wise or unlearned, man, woman, young or
old—

Shall soon or late break from the wheels of life
Attaining blest Nirvana. So they came
Into the Palace-porch, Suddhodana
With brows unknit drinking the mighty words,
And in his own hand carrying Buddha's bowl,
Whilst a new light brightened the lovely eyes
Of sweet Yasodhara and sunned her tears,
And that night entered they the Way of Peace.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

A broad mead spreads by swift Kohana's bank
At Nagara; five days shall bring a man
In ox-wain thither from Benares' shrines
Eastward and northward journeyed. The horns
Of white Himala look upon the place,
Which all the year is glad with blooms and girt
By groves made green from that bright stream-
let's wave.

Soft are its slopes and cool its fragrant shades,
And holy all the spirit of the spot
Unto this time: the breath of eve comes hushed
Over the tangled thickets, and high heaps
Of carved red stones cloven by root and stem
Of creeping fig, and clad with waving veil
Of leaf and grass. The still snake glistens
forth

From crumbled work of lacand cedar-beams
To coil his folds there on deep-graven slabs:
The lizard dwells and darts o'er painted floors
Where Kings have paced; the grey fox litters
safe

Under the broken thrones; only the peaks,
And stream, and sloping lawns, and gentle air
Abide unchanged. All else, like all fair shows
Of life, are fled—for this is where it stood,
The city of Suddhadana, the hill
Whereon, upon an eve of gold and blue
At sinking sun Lord Buddha set himself
To teach the Law in hearing of his own.

Lo! ye shall read it in the Sacred Books
How, being met in that glad pleasaunce-place—
A garden in old days with hanging walks,
Fountains, and tanks, and rose-banked ter-
races

Girdled by gay pavilions and the sweep
Of stately palace-fronts—the Master sate
Eminent, worshiped, all the earnest throng
Catching the opening of his lips to learn
The wisdom which hath made our Asia mild;
Whereto four hundred crores of living souls
Witness this day. Upon the King's right hand
He sate, and round were ranged the Sakya
Lords

Ananda, Devadatta—all the Court.
Behind stood Seriyut and Mugallan, chiefs
Of the calm brethren in the yellow garb,
A goodly company. Between his knees
Rahula smiled with wondering childish eyes

Bent on the awful face, while at his feet
Sate sweet Yasodhara, her heartaches gone,
Foreseeing that fair love which doth not feed
On fleeting sense, that life which knows no age,
That blessed last of deaths when Death is dead,
His victory and hers. Wherefore she laid
Her hand upon his hands, folding around
Her silver shoulder-cloth his yellow robe,
Nearest in all the world to him whose words
The Three Worlds waited for. I cannot tell
A small part of the splendid lore which broke
From Buddha's lips: I am a late-come scribe
Who love the Master and his love of men,
And tell this legend, knowing he was wise,
But have not wit to speak beyond the books;
And time hath blurred their script and ancient
sense,

Which once was new and mighty, moving all.
A little of that large discourse I know
Which Buddha spake on the soft Indian eve.
Also I know it writ that they who heard
Were more—lakhs more—crores more—than
could be seen,

For all the Devas and the Dead thronged
there,

Till Heaven was emptied to the seventh zone
And uttermost dark Hells opened their bars;
Also the daylight lingered past its time

In rose-leaf radiance on the watching peaks,
So that it seemed Night listened in the glens
And noon upon the mountains; yea! they write,
The evening stood between them like some
maid

Celestial, love-struck, rapt; the smooth-rolled
clouds

Her braided hair; the studded stars the pearls
And diamonds of her coronal; the moon
Her forehead-jewel, and the deepening dark
Her woven garments. 'Twas her close-held
breath

Which came in scented sighs across the lawns
While our Lord taught, and, while he taught,
who heard—

Though he were stranger in the land, or slave,
High caste or low, come of the Aryan blood,
Or Mlech or Jungle-dweller—seemed to hear
What tongue his fellow talked. Nay, outside
those

Who crowded by the river, great and small,
The birds and beasts and creeping things—'tis
writ

Had sense of Buddha's vast embracing love
And took the promise of his piteous speech;
So that their lives—prisoned in shape of ape,
Tiger, or deer, shagged bear, jackal, or wolf,

Foul-feeding kite, pearled dove, or peacock
gemmed.

Squat toad, or speckled serpent; lizard, bat;
Yea, or of fish fanning the river-waves—
Touched meekly at the skirts of brotherhood
With man who hath less innocence than these;
And in mute gladness knew their bondage
broke

Whilst Buddha spake these things before the
King:—

Om, amitaya! measure not with words
Th' Immeasurable: nor sink the string of
thought
Into the Fathomless. Who asks doth err,
Who answers, errs. Say nought!

The Books teach Darkness was, at first of all,
And Brahm, sole meditating in that Night:
Look not for Brahm and the Beginning there!
Nor him, nor any light.

Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
Or any searcher know by mortal mind,
Veil after veil will lift—but there must be
Veil upon veil behind.

Stars sweep and question not. This is enough
That life and death and joy and woe abide;

And cause and sequence, and the course of
time,
And Being's ceaseless tide,

Which, ever-changing, runs, linked like a river
By ripples following ripples, fast, or slow—
The same yet not the same—from far-off foun-
tain
To where its waters flow

Into the seas. These, steaming to the Sun,
Give the lost wavelets back in cloudy fleece
To trickle down the hills, and glide again;
Having no pause or peace.

This is enough to know, the phantasms are;
The Heavens, Earths, Worlds, and changes
changing them
A mighty whirling wheel of strife and stress
Which none can stay or stem.

Pray not! the Darkness will not brighten! Ask
Nought from the Silence, for it cannot speak!
Vex not your mournful minds with pious
pains!
Ah! Brothers, Sisters! seek

Nought from the helpless gods by gift and
hymn,

Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruit
and cakes;
Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
Each man his prison makes.

Each hath such lordship as the loftiest ones;
Nay, for with Powers above, around, below,
As with all flesh and whatsoever lives,
Act maketh joy and woe.

What hath been bringeth what shall be, and is,
Worse—better—last for first and first for last;
The Angels in the Heavens of Gladness reap
Fruits of a holy past.

The devils in the underworlds wear out
Deeds that were wicked in an age gone by.
Nothing endures; fair virtues waste with time,
Foul sins grow purged thereby.

Who toiled a slave may come anew a Prince
For gentle worthiness and merit won;
Who ruled a King may wander earth in rags
For things done and undone.

Higher than Indra's ye may lift your lot,
And sink it lower than the worm or gnat;
The end of many myriad lives is this,
The end of myriads that.

Only, while turns this wheel invisible,
 No pause, no peace, no staying-place can be;
 Who mounts will fall, who falls may mount;
 the spokes
 Go round unceasingly!

* * * * *

If ye lay bound upon the wheel of change,
 And no way were of breaking from the chain,
 The Heart of boundless Being is a curse,
 The Soul of Things fell Pain.

Ye are not bound! the Soul of Things is sweet,
 The Heart of Being is celestial rest;
 Stronger than woe is will: that which was
 Good
 Doth pass to Better—Best.

I, Buddh, who wept with all my brothers'
 tears,
 Whose heart was broken by a whole world's
 woe,
 Laugh and am glad, for there is Liberty!
 Ho! ye who suffer, know

Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels,
 None other holds you that ye live and die,
 And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and kiss
 Its spokes of agony,

Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness.

Behold, I show you Truth! Lower than
hell,
Higher than heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahm doth dwell

Before beginning, and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a Power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.

This is its touch upon the blossomed rose,
The fashion of its hand shaped lotus-leaves;
In dark soil and the silence of the seeds
The robe of Spring it weaves;

That is its painting on the glorious clouds,
And these its emeralds on the peacock's train;
It hath its stations in the stars; its slaves
In lightning, wind, and rain.

Out of the dark it wrought the heart of man,
Out of dull shells the pheasant's penciled
neck;
Ever at toil, it brings to loveliness
All ancient wrath and wreck.

The grey eggs in the golden sun-bird's nest
Its treasures are, the bees' six-sided cell

Its honey-pot; the ant wots of its ways,
The white doves know them well.

It spreadeth forth for flight the eagle's wings
What time she beareth home her prey; it
sends

The she-wolf to her cubs; for unloved things
It findeth food and friends.

It is not marred nor stayed in any use,
All liketh it; the sweet white milk it brings
To mothers' breasts; it brings the white
drops, too,
Wherewith the young snake stings.

The ordered music of the marching orbs
It makes in viewless canopy of sky;
In deep abyss of earth it hides up gold,
Sards, sapphires, lazuli.

Ever and ever bringing secrets forth,
It sitteth in the green of forest-glades
Nursing strange seedlings at the cedar's root,
Devising leaves, blooms, blades.

It slayeth and it saveth, nowise moved
Except unto the working out of doom;
Its threads are Love and Life; and Death and
Pain
The shuttles of its loom.

It maketh and unmaketh, mending all;
What it hath wrought is better than hath
been;
Slow grows the splendid pattern that it plans
Its wistful hands between.

This is its work upon the things ye see,
The unseen things are more; men's hearts
and minds,
The thoughts of peoples and their ways and
wills,
Those, too, the great Law binds.

Unseen it helpeth ye with faithful hands,
Unheard it speaketh stronger than the storm,
Pity and Love are man's because long stress
Moulded blind mass to form.

It will not be contemned of any one;
Who thwarts it loses, and who serves it gains;
The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,
The hidden ill with pains.

It seeth everywhere and marketh all;
Do right—it recompenseth! do one wrong—
The equal retribution must be made,
Though Dharma tarry long.

It knows not wrath nor pardon; utter-true
 Its measures mete, its faultless balance
 weighs;

Times are as nought, to-morrow it will judge,
 Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself;
 The unjust judge hath lost his own defender;
 The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping
 thief
 And spoiler rob, to render.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,
 Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
 The heart of it is Love, the end of it
 Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!

* . * * * *

The Books say well, my Brothers! each man's
 life

The outcome of his former living is;
 The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and
 woes

The bygone right breeds bliss.

That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields!
 The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
 Was corn. The Silence and the Darkness knew!
 So is a man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth
And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth.

If he shall labor rightly, rooting these,
And planting wholesome seedlings where
they grew,
Fruitful and fair and clean the ground shall be,
And rich the harvest due.

If he who liveth, learning whence woe springs,
Endureth patiently, striving to pay
His utmost debt for ancient evils done
In Love and Truth alway;

If making none to lack, he thoroughly purge
The lie and lust of self forth from his blood;
Suffering all meekly, rendering for offence
Nothing but grace and good:

If he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true; and rend
Desire from where it clings with bleeding roots,
Till love of life have end:

He—dying—leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count closed, whose ills are dead and
quit,

Whose good is quick and mighty, far and near,
So that fruits follow it.

No need hath such to live as ye name life,
That which began in him when he began
Is finished: he hath wrought the purpose
through
Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes
Invade his safe eternal peace; nor deaths
And lives recur. He goes

Unto Nirvana. He is one with Life
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be
Om, mani padme, om! the Dewdrop slips
Into the shining sea!

* * * * *

This is the doctrine of the Karma. Learn!
Only when all the dross of sin is quit,
Only when life dies like a white flame spent
Death dies along with it.

Say not "I am," "I was," or "I shall be,"
Think not ye pass from house to house of
flesh

Like travelers who remember and forget,
Ill-lodged or well-lodged. Fresh

Issues upon the Universe that sum
Which is the lattermost of lives. It makes
Its habitation as the worm spins silk
And dwells therein. It takes

Function and substance as the snake's egg
hatched
Takes scale and fang; as feathered reed-
seeds fly
O'er rock and loam and sand, until they find
Their marsh and multiply.

Also it issues forth to help or hurt.
When Death the bitter murderer doth smite,
Red roams the unpurged fragment of him,
driven
On wings of plague and blight.

But when the mild and just die, sweet airs
breathe
The world grows richer, as if desert-stream
Should sink away to sparkle up again
Purer, with broader gleam.

So merit won winneth the happier age
Which by demerit halteth short of end;
Yet must this Law of Love reign King of all
Before the Kalpas end.

What lets?—Brothers! the Darkness lets!
 which breeds
 Ignorance, mazed whereby ye take these
 shows
For true, and thirst to have, and, having, cling
 To lusts which work you woes.

Ye that will tread the Middle Road, whose
 course
 Bright Reason traces and soft Quiet smoothes;
Ye who will take the high Nirvana-way
 List the Four Noble Truths.

The First Truth is of Sorrow. Be not mocked!
 Life which ye prize is long-drawn agony:
Only its pains abide; its pleasures are
 As birds which light and fly.

Ache of the birth, ache of the helpless days,
 Ache of hot youth and ache of manhood's
 prime;
Ache of the chill grey years and choking death,
 These fill your piteous time.

Sweet is fond Love, but funeral-flames must
 kiss
 The breasts which pillow and the lips which
 cling;

Gallant is warlike Might, but vultures pick
The joints of chief and King.

Beauteous is Earth, but all its forest-broods
Plot mutual slaughter, hungering to live;
Of sapphire are the skies, but when men cry
Famished, no drops they give.

Ask of the sick, the mourners, ask of him
Who tottereth on his staff, lone and forlorn,
“Liketh thee life?”—these say the babe is wise
That weepeth, being born.

The Second Truth is Sorrow's Cause. What
grief

Springs of itself and springs not of Desire?
Senses and things perceived mingle and light
Passion's quick spark of fire:

So flameth Trishna, lust and thirst of things.
Eager ye cleave to shadows, dote on dreams;
A false Self in the midst ye plant, and make
A world around which seems:

Blind to the height beyond, deaf to the sound
Of sweet airs breathed from far past Indra's
sky;

Dumb to the summons of the true life kept
For him who false puts by.

So grow the strifes and lusts which make
earth's war,

So grieve poor cheated hearts and flow salt
tears;

So wax the passions, envies, angers, hates;
So years chase blood-stained years

With wild red feet. So, where the grain
should grow,

Spreads the biran-weed with its evil root
And poisonous blossoms; hardly good seeds
find

Soil where to fall and shoot;

And drugged with poisonous drink the soul
departs,

And fierce with thirst to drink Karma re-
turns;

Sense-struck again the sodden self begins,
And new deceits it earns.

The Third is Sorrow's Ceasing. This is peace
To conquer love of self and lust of life.

To tear deep-rooted passion from the breast,
To still the inward strife;

For love to clasp Eternal Beauty close;

For glory to be Lord of self, for pleasure
To live beyond the gods; for countless wealth
To lay up lasting treasure

Of perfect service rendered, duties done
 In charity, soft speech, and stainless days:
 These riches shall not fade away in life,
 Nor any death dispraise.

Then Sorrow ends, for Life and Death have
 ceased;
 How should lamps flicker when their oil is
 spent?
 The old sad count is clear, the new is clean;
 Thus hath a man content.

* * * * *

The Fourth Truth is The Way. It openeth
 wide,
 Plain for all feet to tread, easy and near,
 The Noble Eightfold Path; it goeth straight
 To peace and refuge. Hear!

Manifold tracks lead to yon sister-peaks
 Around whose snows the gilded clouds are
 curled;
 By steep or gentle slopes the climber comes
 Where breaks that other world.

Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which
 storms,
 Soaring and perilous, the mountain's breast;

The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge
With many a place of rest.

So is the Eightfold Path which brings to peace;
By lower or by upper heights it goes.
The firm soul hastes, the feeble tarries. All
Will reach the sunlit snows.

The First good Level is Right Doctrine. Walk
In fear of Dharma, shunning all offence;
In heed of Karma, which doth make man's fate;
In lordship over sense.

The Second is Right Purpose. Have good-will
To all that lives, letting unkindness die
And greed and wrath; so that your lives be
made
Like soft airs passing by.

The Third is Right Discourse. Govern the lips
As they were palace-doors, the King within;
Tranquil and fair and courteous be all words
Which from that presence win.

The Fourth is Right Behavior. Let each act
Assoil a fault or help a merit grow:
Like threads of silver seen through crystal
beads
Let love through good deeds show.

Four higher roadways be. Only those feet
May tread them which have done with
earthly things;
Right Purity, Right Thought, Right Loneli-
ness,
Right Rapture. Spread no wings

For sunward flight, thou soul with unplumed
vans!
Sweet is the lower air and safe, and known
The homely levels: only strong ones leave
The nest each makes his own.

Dear is the love, I know, of Wife and Child;
Pleasant the friends and pastimes of your
years;
Fruitful of good Life's gentle charities;
False, though firm-set, its fears.

Live—ye who must—such lives as live on these;
Make golden stairways of your weakness;
rise
By daily sojourn with those phantasies
To lovelier verities.

So shall ye pass to clearer heights and find
Easier ascents and lighter loads of sins,
And larger will to burst the bonds of sense,
Entering the Path. Who wins

To such commencement hath the First Stage
touched;
He knows the Noble Truths, the Eightfold
Road;
By few or many steps such shall attain
Nirvana's blest abode.

Who standeth at the Second Stage, made free
From doubts, delusions, and the inward strife,
Lord of all lusts, quit of the priests and books,
Shall live but one more life.

Yet onward lies the Third Stage: purged and
pure
Hath grown the stately spirit here, hath risen
To love all living things in perfect peace.
His life at end, life's prison

Is broken. Nay, there are who surely pass
Living and visible to utmost goal
By Fourth Stage of the Holy ones — the
Buddhs—
And they of stainless soul.

Lo! like fierce foes slain by some warrior,
Ten sins along these Stages lie in dust,
The Love of Self, False Faith, and Doubt are
three,
Two more, Hatred and Lust.

Who of these Five is conqueror hath trod
Three stages out of Four: yet there abide
The Love of Life on earth, Desire for Heaven,
Self-Praise, Error, and Pride.

As one who stands on yonder snowy horn
Having nought o'er him but the boundless
blue,
So, these sins being slain, the man is come
Nirvana's verge unto.

Him the Gods envy from their lower seats;
Him the Three Worlds in ruin should not
shake;
All life is lived for him, all deaths are dead;
Karma will no more make

New houses. Seeking nothing, he gains all;
Foregoing self, the Universe grows "I":
If any teach Nirvana is to cease,
Say unto such they lie.

If any teach Nirvana is to live,
Say unto such they err; not knowing this,
Nor what light shines beyond their broken
lamps,
Nor lifeless, timeless bliss.

Enter the Path! There is no grief like Hate!
No pain like passions, no deceit like sense!

Enter the Path! far hath he gone whose foot
Treads down one fond offence.

Enter the Path! There spring the healing
streams

Quenching all thirst! there bloom th' im-
mortal flowers

Carpeting all the way with joy! there throng
Swiftest and sweetest hours!

* * * * *

More is the treasure of the Law than gems;
Sweeter than comb its sweetness; its delights
Delightful past compare. Thereby to live
Hear the Five Rules aright:—

Kill not—for Pity's sake—and lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way.

Give freely and receive, but take from none
By greed, or force, or fraud, what is his own.

Bear not false witness, slander not, nor lie;
Truth is the speech of inward purity.

Shun drugs and drinks which work the wit
abuse;

Clear minds, clean bodies, need no Soma juice.

Touch not thy neighbor's wife, neither commit
Sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.

These words the Master spake of duties due
To father, mother, children, fellows, friends;
Teaching how such as may not swiftly break
The clinging chains of sense—whose feet are
weak

To tread the higher road—should order so
This life of flesh that all their hither days
Pass blameless in discharge of charities
And first true footfalls in the Eightfold Path;
Living pure, reverent, patient, pitiful,
Loving all things which live even as them-
selves;

Because what falls for ill is fruit of ill
Wrought in the past, and what falls well of
good;

And that by howsomuch the householder
Purgeth himself of self and helps the world,
By so much happier comes he to next stage,
In so much bettered being. This he spake,
As also long before, when our Lord walked
By Rajagriha in the bamboo-grove:
For on a dawn he walked there and beheld
The householder Singala, newly bathed,
Bowing himself with bare head to the earth,

To Heaven, and all four quarters; while he
threw

Rice, red and white, from both hands. "Where-
fore thus

Bowest thou, Brother?" said the Lord; and he,

"It is the way, Great Sir! our fathers taught

At every dawn, before the toil begins,

To hold off evil from the sky above

And earth beneath, and all the winds which
blow."

Then the World-honored spake: "Scatter not
rice,

But offer loving thoughts and acts to all.

To parents as the East where rises light;

To teachers as the South whence rich gifts
come;

To wife and children as the West where gleam
Colors of love and calm, and all days end;

To friends and kinsmen and all men as North;

To humblest living things beneath, to Saints

And Angels and the blessed Dead above:

So shall all evil be shut off, and so

The six main quarters will be safely kept."

But to his own, them of the yellow robe—

They who, as wakened eagles, soar with scorn

From life's low vale, and wing towards the

Sun—

To these he taught the Ten Observances
 The Dasa-Sil, and how a mendicant
 Must know the Three Doors and the Triple
 Thoughts;
 The Sixfold States of Mind; the Fivefold
 Powers;
 The Eight High Gates of Purity; the Modes
 Of Understanding; Iddhi; Upeksha;
 The Five Great Meditations, which are food
 Sweeter than Amrit for the holy soul
 The Jhana's and the Three Chief Refuges.
 Also he taught his own how they should dwell;
 How live, free from the snares of love and
 wealth;
 What eat and drink and carry—three plain
 cloths,—
 Yellow, of stitched stuff, worn with shoulder
 bare—
 A girdle, almsbowl, strainer. Thus he laid
 The great foundations of our Sangha well,
 That noble Order of the Yellow Robe
 Which to this day standeth to help the World.

So all that night he spake, teaching the Law:
 And on no eyes fell sleep—for they who heard
 Rejoiced with tireless joy. Also the King,
 When this was finished, rose upon his throne
 And with bared feet bowed low before his Son

Kissing his hem; and said, "Take me, O Son!
Lowest and least of all thy Company."

And sweet Yasodhara, all happy now,—
Cried "Give to Rahula—thou Blessed One
The Treasure of the Kingdom of thy Word
For his inheritance." Thus passed these

Three

Into the Path.

Here endeth what I write
Who love the Master for his love of us.

A little knowing, little have I told
Touching the Teacher and the Ways of Peace.

Forty-five rains thereafter showed he those
In many lands and many tongues and gave
Our Asia light, that still is beautiful,
Conquering the world with spirit of strong
grace:

All which is written in the holy Books,
And where he passed and what proud Em-
perors

Carved his sweet words upon the rocks and
caves:

And how—in fulness of the times—it fell
The Buddha died, the great Tathagato,
Even as a man 'mongst men, fulfilling all:
And how a thousand thousand crores since then

Have trod the Path which leads whither he
went
Unto Nirvana where the Silence lives.

Ah! Blessed Lord! Oh, High Deliverer!
Forgive this feeble script, which doth thee
wrong
Measuring with little wit thy lofty Love.
Ah! Lover! Brother! Guide! Lamp of the Law!
I take my refuge in thy name and thee!
I take my refuge in thy Law of Good!
I take my refuge in thy Order! OM!
The Dew is on the lotus!—rise, Great Sun!
And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.
Om mani padme hum, the Sunrise comes!
The Dewdrop slips into the shining Sea!

AFTER DEATH IN ARABIA.

BY EDWIN ARNOLD.

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort all his friends:

Faithful friends! It lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow,
And ye say "Abdallah's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head,
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile and whisper this,—
"I am not the thing you kiss;
Cease your tears, and let it lie:
It was mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! What the women lave
For its last bed of the grave,
Is but a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room,—
The wearer, not the garb,—the plume

Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from those splendid stars.

Loving friends! Be wise and dry
Straightway ever weeping eye.—
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell,—one
Out of which the pearl is gone;
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.

'Tis an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him, let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in his store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends,
Yet ye weep, my erring friends.
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you; lost, 'tis true,
By such light as shines for you;
But in the light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,—

In enlarging paradise,
Lives a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepped
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain,—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death,—for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La Allah illa Allah! yea!
Thou love divine! Thou love always!

He that died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

“SHE AND HE.”

BY EDWIN ARNOLD.

“She is dead!” they said to him; “come away;
Kiss her and leave her,—thy love is clay!”

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of stone they laid it fair;

Over her eyes that gazed too much
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell:

About her brows and beautiful face
They tied her veil and her marriage lace,

And drew, on her white feet her white silk
shoes—

Which were the whitest no eye could choose—

And over her bosom they crossed her hands.

“Come away!” they said; “God understands.”

And there was silence, and nothing there
But silence, and scents of eglanterie,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
And they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she."

And they held their breath till they left the
room,
With a shudder, to glance at its stillness and
gloom.

But he who lov'd her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,

He lit his lamp and took the key
And turned it—alone again—he and she.

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet
cheek.

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name she loved ere-
while.

He and she; still she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love.

Then he said: "Cold lips and breasts without
breath,
Is there no voice, no language of death?"

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct, intense?

"See now; I will listen with soul, not ear;
What was the secret of dying, dear?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

"Was the miracle greater to find how deep
Beyond all dreams sank downward that sleep?

"Did life roll back its records dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things
clear?

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so, what a wisdom love is?

"O perfect dead! O dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear?

"I listen as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven, and you do not tell.

"There must be pleasure in dying, sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!



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