

## SECTION XXII.

## BUDDHA (BUDDHAVAGGO).

1. IN days of old Buddha was residing in Magadha, under the tree that overshadowed the Bodhimanda. Having by the power of his presence (virtue) overpowered Mâra, he was considering with himself that the five men whom formerly his father had sent to look after him,<sup>1</sup> and provide him with sufficient food, were in a condition to hear the sound of the drum of the Law of eternal life; and perceiving that they were at Benares, he immediately rose from underneath the tree, whilst the heaven and earth were lit up with a supernatural light, and the ground underneath him shook. Rejoiced at these indications, he went forward, and in the mid-road he encountered a Brahmachârin named Upaka (Yeon-fu), who had left his relations and home in search of a teacher to guide him in the way of truth. Beholding the World-honoured one, how reverend his appearance and joyous his mien as he went on the way, he cried to him with a loud voice, "O sir! full of religious thought and spiritual discernment, What is your history, and who has been your teacher, that you have arrived at such a condition as this?" To whom Buddha replied in the following stanzas:—

"Of myself, and by myself, have I attained to the eightfold Wisdom<sup>2</sup>—there is now nothing to

<sup>1</sup> This is a new idea, as far as I know, with reference to the five men. [The incident is referred to in *Kwo-hu-in-tsai-yin-kwo*, Kiouen 3, f. 3.]

<sup>2</sup> The Ashtāngamārga vide "Eitel's Handbook," *sub* Mārga.

remove, nothing that defiles. All love of earthly things is at an end. I have destroyed the net of lust. Of myself, without any master, have I attained this position ; nor need I now any protector or patron. Alone I stand, without any associate in conduct ; having had this one aim, I have become Buddha (enlightened), and by this, have attained perfect holiness."

Upaka having heard these words, without any spiritual understanding, asked further, " Well, Gotama,<sup>1</sup> which way are you going ? " To which Buddha replied, " I am going to Benares, to sound the drum of the insurpassable Law, which never yet has been heard, by which both Devas and men may attain Nirvâna, even as I now have attained." Then Upaka joyously replied, " Well said ! sadhu ! may you, as you say, be able to declare the Law of Eternal Life ! " And having said so, Upaka turned away on another way, and so lost the chance of finding a teacher to guide him into the right way.<sup>2</sup> In the middle of that night Upaka died ; on which occasion Buddha, perceiving the fact by his spiritual sight, spoke as follows (after a similar sentiment in prose) :—

" Perceiving truth, pure and unalloyed, delivered from the five paths of destruction (five modes of birth), Buddha has come forth to enlighten the world, to make a way of escape from all sources of sorrow and pain. To be born as a man is difficult ;<sup>3</sup> to attain to years (*i.e.*, to live long) is also difficult ;

<sup>1</sup> We need scarcely remark that the epithet Gotama in the Northern Books is sometimes a mark of disrespect or indifference.

<sup>2</sup> For this story of Upaka, *vide* " Romantic Legend," p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> Compare ver. 182 of the Pâli, in which I think the expression, "*hard* is the life of man" (M. M.), may reasonably be changed into the "*difficult*," &c. This verse is found in the " Sûtra of Fourty-two Sections."

to be born when Buddha is incarnate is difficult ; and to hear the preaching of the Law of Buddha is difficult also."

On hearing these words, five hundred heavenly visitors were filled with joy, and entered the Paths.

2. In days of old there was a country about 4000 lis to the south of Rājagriha wholly given up to Brahmanic rites, with about a thousand Brahmans (or several thousands) as inhabitants. At a certain period there was a drought in that country, extending over a space of three years. In vain the people had made sacrifices to all their gods—no good resulted. At length the King asked the Brahmachârins how this happened ; to which they replied, "We must observe the very utmost of the Law, and dismiss certain men to hold converse with Brahma Deva, and request an end of these calamities." On which the King demanded their intentions, with a view to forward them, to which they replied, "We require to have twenty chariots, with wood, incense, unguents, flags, and money, and sacrificing vessels." The King having provided these things, they departed from the city about seven lis, and there, on a level space of earth, they erected their wood on high, and then exhorted one another not to regard their present bodily condition, but to aspire to be born in the heaven of Brahma ; and so at length seven men were induced to consent to ascend the pyre, and be burned upon it. Then, after the usual prayers and ceremonies, they mounted the wood, and awaited the end. But when the light was applied to the lower part, hearing the crackling sound, and affrighted by the prospect of death, they arose and ran here and there, and besought to be rescued—but all in vain ; and then, in distraction, they prayed thus, "Oh, is there no one in the three worlds to pity us ! Oh, come thou and rescue us !" Hearing these words, Buddha appeared in mid-air above them, and as they were filled with joy, he said :—

“Truly men seek (through fear) many a refuge; they resort to mountains and valleys, and spirits residing in trees; they erect images as gods, and pay religious worship to them, seeking happiness (merit).<sup>1</sup> But such refuge as this is neither fortunate or best; not one of them is able to save thee from sorrow (or accumulated pain). But he who takes refuge in Buddha, the Law, and the Church, and with clear insight penetrates the meaning of the four truths, he will certainly attain (see) supreme wisdom.<sup>2</sup> He who seeks personal refuge in these three, finds the most fortunate and the best. In these only, without other refuge, a man may find deliverance from all sorrow.”

On hearing these words, the sound of fire was no longer heard, and the Brahmans and their attendants, as they beheld Buddha (who now appeared) in his glory, were filled with joy, and beholding his miraculous appearances, were converted, and, descending from the pyre, they uttered these words:—

“Oh, the happiness of seeing the Holy One! Oh, the happiness of being able to rely on him as present! Oh, the joy of the man who is able to avoid the company of the foolish, and act well and virtuously by himself! How happy he who scrupulously guards the path of truth (true perception, or true ways); happy he who can repeat the Law; happy he who avoids discussion (contention) in the

<sup>1</sup> Compare ver. 188 of the Pāli.

<sup>2</sup> I have accidentally omitted a verse. “By understanding the four truths, a man escapes from the ex-

treme misery of repeated birth and death; and to escape the eight calamities of life is to get rid of the whole body of pain.”



world ; happy he who always observes the precepts ; happy he who consorts with the good, and treats them as his own kith ; he who frequents the company of the virtuous is a wise man, and of high renown.”<sup>1</sup>

Having said these words, the seven men became Rahats, and the King and his ministers, with countless Devas, after entering the Paths, were privileged to see much rain descending on the land.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This last verse is difficult to translate. The phrase “*to-wan*” means either “celebrated” or “a disciple” (one who hears much).

<sup>2</sup> The preceding verses correspond generally with 194 and 195 of the Pali.