

No. VII. Extracts from Tibetan Works.

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*Tibetan beau-ideal of a wife.*

[Extracted from the *Bksh-hgyur, mdo kha*, leaf 106-7; corresponding with leaf 73-74 of the *Lalita vistara*, the original Sanscrit text, in the Lantsa character, presented to the Society by Mr. Hodgson.]\*

THE required qualities in a maiden who may aspire to be united in marriage with SHAKYA are thus defined by himself :

“ No ordinary woman is suitable to my taste and habits ; none who is incorrect in her behaviour ; who has bad qualities, or who does not speak the truth. But she alone will be pleasing and fit for me, who, exhilarating my mind, is chaste, young, of good complexion, and of a pure family and descent.” He indited a catalogue of these qualifications in verse, and said to his father, “ If there shall be found any girl with the virtues I have described, since I like not an unrestrained woman, let her be given to me in marriage.” “ She, who is young, well proportioned, and elegant, yet not boastful of her beauty (*lit.*, with her body) ; who is affectionate towards her brother, sister, and mother ; who alway rejoicing in giving alms, knoweth the proper manner how to bestow them on the priests and brahmins :—if there be found any such damsel, father, let her be brought to me. One who being without arrogance, pride, and passion, hath left off artifice, envy, deceit, and is of an upright nature :—who even in her dreams hath not lusted after any other man ;—who resteth content with her husband, and is always submissive and chaste :—who is firm and not wavering :—who is not proud or haughty, but full of humility like a female slave :—who hath no excessive fondness for the vanities of sound, smell, taste (music, perfumes, and exquisite meats), nor for wine :—who is void of cupidity :—who hath not a covetous heart, but is content with her own possessions :—who, being upright, goeth not astray ; is not fluctuating ; is modest in her dress, and doth not indulge in laughing and boasting :—who is diligent in her moral duties, without being too much addicted to the gods and festivals (or righteous overmuch). Who is very clean and pure in her body, her speech and her mind :—who is not drowsy nor dull, proud nor stupid ;—but

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\* See Journal, vol. i, page 380, and pages 1—8, where a brief analysis is given by Mr. Wilson, of the contents of the *Lalita vistara*.

being of good judgment, doth everything with due reflection :— who hath for her father and mother-in-law equal reverence as for a spiritual teacher :—who treateth her servants both male and female with constant mildness :—who is as well versed as any courtesan in the rites and ceremonies described in the Shastras :—who goeth last to sleep and riseth earliest from her couch :—who maketh every endeavour with mildness, like a mother without affectation :—if there be any such maiden to be found, father, give her unto me as a wife.”

Afterwards, the king (Sans. *Shuddhodana*, Tib. *Zas-Qtsang-ma*) directs his brahman minister (Sans. *Purohita*, Tib. *Mdhun-na-hdon*) to go into the great city of *Capila-vastu* (Tib. *Serskya-qzhi*), and to inquire there in every house after a girl possessed with these good qualities, shewing at the same time SHAKYA'S letter, and uttering two *Slókas*, or verses, of the following meaning : “ Bring hither that maiden who has the required qualities, whether she be of the royal tribe, or of the brahman caste ; of the gentry, of the plebeian class. My son regardeth not tribe nor family extraction : his delight is in good qualities, truth, and virtue alone.”

གྲུལ་རིགས་བུམ་ཟེའི་བུ་མོ་དང་།  
 རྒྱུ་རིགས་དམངས་རིགས་དེ་བཞིན་དེ།  
 ལྷུ་ལ་ཡོན་ཏན་འདི་ཡོད་པའི།  
 བུ་མོ་དེ་ནི་འདིར་འོན་ཅིག།  
 ང་ཡི་བུ་འདི་རིགས་དག་དང་།  
 ཅུས་ལ་ངོ་མཚར་འཛིན་མ་ཡིན།  
 ཡོན་ཏན་བདེན་པའི་ཚེས་ཀྱི་རྣམས།  
 དེ་ལ་འདི་ནི་ཞིད་དགའོ །།

The objections of the Buddhists to the seclusion of woman may be gathered from the following imaginary conversation of SHAKYA'S wife, extracted from the *Kah-gyur*, Do, Kh. vol. leaf 120-121 (corresponding with the Sanscrit *Lalita vistara*, leaf 85).

*Sá-htsho-ma* (S. *Gopa*), the wife of SHAKYA, upon hearing of her being upbraided by the domestics for not concealing her

face when in company with others, expresses herself in some verses (against the veil), the meaning of which is as follows :

“ Sitting, standing, and walking, those that are venerable, are pleasing when not concealed. A bright gem will give more lustre if put on the top of a standard. The venerable are pleasing when they go, they are agreeable also when they come. They are so whether they stand or whether they are sitting. In every manner the venerable are pleasing. The man excellent in virtue is pleasing when he speaks ; he is so also when he sits still. As an example, doth not the *Kalapinka* bird appear more beautiful when she chaunteth her lovely song in your presence ? The venerable man who putteth on a garment made of the *kusha* grass, or whose squalid clothing concealeth not his emaciated body, still shineth with his own lustre. He that hath good qualities is adorned by those qualifications. They who have put off all vices are venerable. Fools, committing vices, howmuchsoever they be adorned, are never pleasing. Those that have malice in their heart and speak a sweet language are like a poisoned bowl into which nectar is poured ; or a cleft on a rock that is rough both inside and outside. Communion with such men is as though you would touch the mouth of a snake. With respect to the venerable, all resort to them, all reverence them. They are supported and cherished by all men, as the stairs descending to the water's edge are kept in repair by the multitude. The venerable are always like a bowl full of milk and curd. It is a great happiness to see human nature capable of such purity. Fraught with blissful consequences is the gift of such men as have renounced the company of the wicked, and being directed by a venerable religious guide, are become enamoured of the doctrine of the most perfect (Buddha). For such as have restrained their body, have suppressed the several defects of it, have refrained their speech, and never use a deceitful language ; and having subdued the flesh, are held in restraint by a pure conscience : for such, to what purpose is the veiling of the face ? They that have a cunning heart are impudent and shameless ; and having not the required qualities, do not speak the truth :— though they should cover their body even with a thousand clothes, they would go about in the world more naked than the unclothed. They that have concealed their passions, and have kept them under subjection, and are content with their own husbands, and think not on any other ;—such women, when not concealed by a veil, shine forth like the sun and moon. Moreover DRANG-SRONG (S. *Ris'hi*), the great Lord (God), who wise in knowing the hearts of others, yea, also the whole company of the gods, know my thoughts, my good morals, my virtues, my obligation, and my chastity. Therefore, why should I conceal my face ? ”

*Zas-Qtsang-ma* (S. *Shuddhodana*, the father of SHAKYA).

her father-in-law, was much pleased with these expressions, and presented her with several precious things. He uttered at the same time one *slóka*, the meaning of which is this : “ My son being adorned with such qualities as he has, and my daughter-in-law having such virtuous qualifications as she describes ; to see two such pure persons united together, is like when butter and ghee are mixed together.”

ཁོ་བོ་འི་བྱ་ནི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཇི་འདྲ་ས་བརྒྱན་པ་དང་།  
 མཉམ་མའི་རང་གི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཇི་ལྟར་རབ་སྐྱེ་བ།  
 སེམས་ཚན་དག་པ་དེ་གཉིས་ལྷན་པར་གྱུར་པ་ནི།  
 མར་དང་མར་གྱི་སྦྱིང་ཁ་ཇི་ལྟར་འདྲ་བ་བཞིན།

As breathing in accordance with the virtuous sentiments of the above favourable specimen of the Tibetan sacred works, we may here extract a curious correspondence (whether imaginary or real we will not pretend to determine), stated to have taken place between a princess of Ceylon and the Buddhist saint. This letter is very generally known and admired throughout Tibet, being introduced in every collection of epistolary forms for the instruction of youth.

*Ratnávali's Letter to Shákya.*

*Mutig-chen* (S. *Ratnavali*), a young princess of Ceylon, the daughter of the king of Singala, having been informed by some merchants of Central India (*Madhyam*) of Buddha and of his doctrine ; she was much pleased with it ; and, when those merchants returned home, she sent some presents to CHOM-DAN-DAS (SHAKYA), with a letter of the following contents :

ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་མིན་མི་ཡིས་ཕུག་བབྱས་པ།  
 སྦྱི་དང་བསྐྱུང་དང་བསྐྱེངས་ལས་ངེས་གྲོལ་ཞིང་།  
 གཞོ་བོ་གྲགས་པ་ཀྱུ་ཚེར་རབ་གྲགས་པ།  
 དྲང་སྦོང་བདུད་རྩི་ཆ་ལས་ཐུགས་རྗེས་གནོང་།

“ Reverenced by the *Suras*, *Asuras*, and men ; really delivered from birth, sickness, and fear ; Lord ! who art greatly celebrated by thy far-extending renown, from the Sage's am-

brosial portion, kindly grant me ! (meaning religious instruction or wisdom)''.

SHAKYA received this letter, and sent to the princess a picture of *Buddha* on cotton cloth, with some verses written above and below the image, containing the terms upon which refuge is obtained with *Buddha*, *Dharma*, and *Sangha* ; and a few fundamental articles of the faith ; together with two stanzas recommendatory of Buddhism. In a letter to the king of Singala, SHAKYA prescribes with what solemnity this image should be received, the letter perused, and made known in Ceylon.

The stanzas are these. See *Dulva*, vol. 5, leaf 30.

བཅས་པར་བྱ་ཞིང་འབྱུང་བར་བྱ།

གང་ཞིག་རབ་དུ་བག་ཡོད་པར།

སངས་རྒྱལ་བསྟན་ལ་འཇུག་པར་བྱ།

ཚེས་འདུལ་འདི་ལ་སྲོད་གྱུར་པ།

འདས་བུའི་ཁྲིམ་ན་གྲང་ཚེན་བཞིན།

སྐྱེ་བའི་འཁོར་བ་རབ་སྤང་ས་ནས།

འཚི་བདག་སྡེ་ནི་གཞོས་པར་བྱ།

སྲུག་བསྐྱེད་ཐ་མར་བྱེད་པར་འགྱུར། ॥

“ Arise, commence a new course of life. Turn to the religion of *Buddha*. Conquer the host of the lord of death (the passions), that are like an elephant in this muddy house (the body), (or conquer your passions, like as an elephant subdues every thing under his feet in a muddy lake). Whoever has lived a pure or chaste life, according to the precepts of this *Dulva*, shall be free from transmigration, and shall put an end to all his miseries.”

The compendium, or sum of the Buddhistic doctrine in one *slôka*, runs thus :

སྲིག་པཅི་ཡང་སི་བྱ་སྟེ།

“ No vice is to be committed,

དགོ་བ་སྤྲན་སྲུས་ཚོགས་པར་བྱ།

Virtue must perfectly be practised,—

རང་གི་སེམས་ནི་ཡོངས་སྲུག་དུལ།

Subdue entirely your thoughts.

འདི་ནི་སངས་རྒྱལ་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན།

This is the doctrine of *Buddha*.”