

this my reward from thee?" Quoth she, "What offense have I committed?" and quoth he, "What offense can be greater than this? Thou sentest after yonder youth and broughtest him hither, on account of thy wicked desire." Said she, "This youth is my son and a piece of my heart; and of my longing and affection for him, I could not contain myself, but sprang upon him and kissed him." When the king heard this, he was dazed and amazed and said to her, "Hast thou a proof that this youth is thy son? Indeed, I have a letter from thine uncle King Sulayman Shah, informing me that his uncle Bahluwan cut his throat." Said she, "Yes, he did indeed cut his throat, but severed not the windpipe; so my uncle sewed up the wound and reared him, for that his life-term was not come." When the king heard this, he said, "This proof sufficeth me," and rising forthright in the night, bade bring the youth and the Eunuch. Then he examined his stepson's throat with a candle and saw the scar where it had been cut from ear to ear, and indeed the place had healed up and it was like a thread stretched out. Thereupon the king fell down prostrate before Allah, who had delivered the prince from all these perils and from the distresses he had suffered, and rejoiced with joy exceeding because he had delayed and had not made haste to slay him, in which case mighty sore repentance had betided him.

*Devasmitá*

*From the Sanskrit*

THERE is a city in the world famous under the name of Támraliptá, and in that city there was a very rich merchant named Dhanadatta. And he, being childless, assembled many Bráhmans and said to them with due respect, "Take such steps as will procure me a son soon." Then those Bráhmans said to him: "This is not at all difficult, for Bráhmans can accomplish all things in this world by

means of ceremonies in accordance with the Scriptures. To give you an instance, there was in old times a king who had no sons, and he had a hundred and five wives in his harem. And by means of a sacrifice to procure a son, there was born to him a son named Jantu, who was like the rising of the new moon to the eyes of his wives. Once on a time an ant bit the boy on the thigh as he was crawling about on his knees, so that he was very unhappy and sobbed loudly. Thereupon the whole harem was full of confused lamentation, and the king himself shrieked out 'My son! my son!' like a common man. The boy was soon comforted, the ant having been removed, and the king blamed the misfortune of his only having one son as the cause of all his grief. And he asked the Bráhmans in his affliction if there was any expedient by which he might obtain a large number of children. They answered him, 'O king, there is one expedient open to you; you must slay this son and offer up all his flesh in the fire. By smelling the smell of that sacrifice all thy wives will obtain sons.' When he heard that, the king had the whole ceremony performed as they directed; and he obtained as many sons as he had wives. So we can obtain a son for you also by a burnt-offering." When they had said this to Dhanadatta, the Bráhmans, after a sacrificial fee had been promised them, performed a sacrifice: then a son was born to that merchant. That son was called Guhasena, and he gradually grew up to man's estate. Then his father Dhanadatta began to look out for a wife for him.

Then his father went with that son of his to another country, on the pretense of traffic, but really to get a daughter-in-law. There he asked an excellent merchant of the name of Dharmagupta to give him his daughter named Devasmitá for his son Guhasena. But Dharmagupta, who was tenderly attached to his daughter, did not approve of that connection, reflecting that the city of Támraliptá was very far off. But when Devasmitá beheld that Guhasena, her mind was immediately attracted by his virtues, and she was set on abandoning her relations, and so she made an



assignation with him by means of a confidante, and went away from that country at night with her beloved and his father. When they reached Tāmraliptá they were married, and the minds of the young couple were firmly knit together by the bond of mutual love. Then Guhasena's father died, and he himself was urged by his relations to go to the country of Kaṭáha for the purpose of trafficking; but his wife Devasmitá was too jealous to approve of that expedition, fearing exceedingly that he would be attracted by some other lady. Then, as his wife did not approve of it, and his relations kept inciting him to it, Guhasena, whose mind was firmly set on doing his duty, was bewildered. Then he went and performed a vow in the temple of the god, observing a rigid fast, trusting that the god would show him some way out of his difficulty. And his wife Devasmitá also performed a vow with him; then Śiva was pleased to appear to that couple in a dream; and giving them two red lotuses the god said to them, "Take each of you one of these lotuses in your hand. And if either of you shall be unfaithful during your separation, the lotus in the hand of the other shall fade, but not otherwise." After hearing this, the two woke up, and each beheld in the hand of the other a red lotus, and it seemed as if they had got one another's hearts. Then Guhasena set out, lotus in hand, but Devasmitá remained in the house with her eyes fixed upon her flower. Guhasena for his part quickly reached the country of Kaṭáha, and began to buy and sell jewels there. And four young merchants in that country, seeing that that unfading lotus was ever in his hand, were greatly astonished. Accordingly they got him to their house by an artifice, and made him drink a great deal of wine, and then asked him the history of the lotus, and he being intoxicated told them the whole story. Then those four young merchants, knowing that Guhasena would take a long time to complete his sales and purchases of jewels and other wares, planned together, like rascals as they were, the seduction of his wife out of curiosity, and eager to accomplish it set out quickly for Tāmraliptá without their departure being noticed.

There they cast about for some instrument, and at last had recourse to a female ascetic of the name of Yogakarandiká, who lived in a sanctuary of Buddha; and they said to her in an affectionate manner, "Reverend madam, if our object is accomplished by your help, we will give you much wealth." She answered them: "No doubt, you young men desire some woman in this city, so tell me all about it, I will procure you the object of your desire, but I have no wish for money; I have a pupil of distinguished ability, named Siddhikarí; owing to her kindness I have obtained untold wealth." The young merchants asked, "How have you obtained untold wealth by the assistance of a pupil?" Being asked this question, the female ascetic said, "If you feel any curiosity about the matter, listen, my sons, I will tell you the whole story.

STORY OF THE CUNNING SIDDHIKARÍ

"Long ago a certain merchant came here from the north; while he was dwelling here, my pupil went and obtained, with a treacherous object, the position of a serving-maid in his house, having first altered her appearance, and after she had gained the confidence of that merchant, she stole all his hoard of gold from his house, and went off secretly in the morning twilight. And as she went out from the city moving rapidly through fear, a certain Domba with his drum in his hand, saw her, and pursued her at full speed with the intention of robbing her. When she had reached the foot of a Nyagrodha tree, she saw that he had come up with her, and so the cunning Siddhikarí said this to him in a plaintive manner, "I have had a jealous quarrel with my husband, and I have left his house to die, therefore my good man, make a noose for me to hang myself with." Then the Domba thought, "Let her hang herself, why should I be guilty of her death, especially as she is a woman?" and so he fastened a noose for her to the tree. Then Siddhikarí, feigning ignorance, said to the Domba, "How is the noose



slipped round the neck? show me, I entreat you." Then the Domba placed the drum under his feet, and saying, "This is the way we do the trick," he fastened the noose round his own throat; Siddhikarí for her part smashed the drum to atoms with a kick, and that Domba hung till he was dead. At that moment the merchant arrived in search of her, and beheld from a distance Siddhikarí, who had stolen from him untold treasures, at the foot of the tree. She, too, saw him coming, and climbed up the tree without being noticed, and remained there on a bough, having her body concealed by the dense foliage. When the merchant came up with his servants, he saw the Domba hanging by his neck, but Siddhikarí was nowhere to be seen. Immediately one of his servants said, "I wonder whether she has got up this tree," and proceeded to ascend it himself. Then Siddhikarí said, "I have always loved you, and now you have climbed up where I am, so all this wealth is at your disposal, handsome man, come and embrace me." So she embraced the merchant's servant, and as she was kissing his mouth, she bit off the fool's tongue. He, overcome with the pain, fell from that tree spitting blood from his mouth, uttering some indistinct syllables, which sounded like Lalalla. When he saw that, the merchant was terrified, and supposing that his servant had been seized by a demon, he fled from that place, and went to his own house with his attendants. Then Siddhikarí the female ascetic, equally frightened, descended from the top of the tree, and brought home with her all that wealth. Such a person is my pupil, distinguished for her great discernment, and it is in this way, my sons, that I have obtained wealth by her kindness."

When she had said this to the young merchants, the female ascetic showed to them her pupil who happened to come in at that moment, and said to them, "Now, my sons, tell me the real state of affairs—what woman do you desire? I will quickly procure her for you." When they heard that they said, "Procure us an interview with the wife of the merchant Guhasena named Devasmitá." When she heard that, the ascetic undertook to manage that busi-

ness for them, and she gave those young merchants her own house to reside in. Then she gratified the servants at Guhasena's house with gifts of sweetmeats and other things, and afterwards entered it with her pupil. Then, as she approached the private rooms of Devasmitá, a hound, that was fastened there with a chain, would not let her come near, but opposed her entrance in the most determined way. Then Devasmitá seeing her, of her own accord sent a maid, and had her brought in, thinking to herself, "What can this person be come for?" After she had entered, the wicked ascetic gave Devasmitá her blessing, and, treating the virtuous woman with affected respect, said to her, "I have always had a desire to see you, but to-day I saw you in a dream, therefore I have come to visit you with impatient eagerness; and my mind is afflicted at beholding you separated from your husband, for beauty and youth are wasted when one is deprived of the society of one's beloved." With this and many other speeches of the same kind she tried to gain the confidence of the virtuous woman in a short interview, and then taking leave of her she returned to her own house. On the second day she took with her a piece of meat full of pepper dust, and went again to the house of Devasmitá, and there she gave that piece of meat to the hound at the door, and the hound gobbled it up, pepper and all. Then owing to the pepper dust, the tears flowed in profusion from the animal's eyes, and her nose began to run. And the cunning ascetic immediately went into the apartment of Devasmitá, who received her hospitably, and began to cry. When Devasmitá asked her why she shed tears, she said with affected reluctance: "My friend, look at this hound weeping outside here. This creature recognized me to-day as having been its companion in a former birth, and began to weep; for that reason my tears gushed through pity." When she heard that, and saw that hound outside apparently weeping, Devasmitá thought for a moment to herself, "What can be the meaning of this wonderful sight?" Then the ascetic said to her, "My daughter, in a former birth, I and that hound were the two wives of a certain



Bráhmaṇ. And our husband frequently went about to other countries on embassies by order of the king. Now while he was away from home, I lived at my good will and pleasure, and so did not cheat the elements, of which I was composed, and my senses, of their lawful enjoyment. For considerate treatment of the elements and senses is held to be the highest duty. Therefore I have been born in this birth with a recollection of my former existence. But she, in her former life, through ignorance, confined all her attention to the preservation of her character, therefore she has been degraded and born again as one of the canine race, however, she too remembers her former birth." The wise Devasmitá said to herself, "This is a novel conception of duty; no doubt this woman has laid a treacherous snare for me"; and so she said to her, "Reverend lady, for this long time I have been ignorant of this duty, so procure me an interview with some charming man." Then the ascetic said, "There are residing here some young merchants that have come from another country, so I will bring them to you." When she had said this, the ascetic returned home delighted, and Devasmitá of her own accord said to her maids: "No doubt those scoundrelly young merchants, whoever they may be, have seen that unfading lotus in the hand of my husband, and have on some occasion or other, when he was drinking wine, asked him out of curiosity to tell the whole story of it, and have now come here from that island to deceive me, and this wicked ascetic is employed by them. So bring quickly some wine mixed with Datura, and when you have brought it, have a dog's foot of iron made as quickly as possible." When Devasmitá had given these orders, the maids executed them faithfully, and one of the maids, by her orders, dressed herself up to resemble her mistress. The ascetic for her part chose out of the party of four merchants (each of whom in his eagerness said—"Let me go first"—) one individual, and brought him with her. And concealing him in the dress of her pupil, she introduced him in the evening into the house of Devasmitá, and coming out, disappeared. Then that

maid, who was disguised as Devasmitá, courteously persuaded the young merchant to drink some of that wine drugged with Datura. That liquor, like his own immodesty, robbed him of his senses, and then the maids took away his clothes and other equipments and left him stark naked; then they branded him on the forehead with the mark of a dog's foot, and during the night took him and pushed him into a ditch full of filth. Then he recovered consciousness in the last watch of the night, and found himself plunged in a ditch, as it were the hell *Avichi* assigned to him by his sins. Then he got up and washed himself and went to the house of the female ascetic, in a state of misery, feeling with his fingers the mark on his forehead. And when he got there, he told his friends that he had been robbed on the way, in order that he might not be the only person made ridiculous. And the next morning he sat with a cloth wrapped round his branded forehead, giving as an excuse that he had a headache from keeping awake so long, and drinking too much. In the same way the next young merchant was maltreated, when he got to the house of Devasmitá, and when he returned home stripped, he said, "I put on my ornaments there, and as I was coming out I was plundered by robbers." In the morning he also, on the plea of a headache, put a wrapper on to cover his branded forehead.

In the same way all the four young merchants suffered in turns branding and other humiliating treatment, though they concealed the fact. And they went away from the place, without revealing to the female Buddhist ascetic the ill-treatment they had experienced, hoping that she would suffer in a similar way. On the next day the ascetic went with her disciple to the house of Devasmitá, much delighted at having accomplished what she undertook to do. Then Devasmitá received her courteously, and made her drink wine drugged with Datura, offered as a sign of gratitude. When she and her disciple were intoxicated with it, that chaste wife cut off their ears and noses, and flung them also into a filthy pool. And being distressed by the thought that



perhaps these young merchants might go and slay her husband, she told the whole circumstance to her mother-in-law. Then her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, you have acted nobly, but possibly some misfortune may happen to my son in consequence of what you have done."

So the wise Devasmitá forthwith put on the dress of a merchant. Then she embarked on a ship, on the pretense of a mercantile expedition, and came to the country of Kaṭáha where her husband was. And when she arrived there, she saw that husband of hers, Guhasena, in the midst of a circle of merchants, like consolation in external bodily form. He seeing her afar off in the dress of a man, as it were, drank her in with his eyes, and thought to himself, "Who may this merchant be that looks so like my beloved wife?" So Devasmitá went and represented to the king that she had a petition to make, and asked him to assemble all his subjects. Then the king full of curiosity assembled all the citizens, and said to that lady disguised as a merchant, "What is your petition?" Then Devasmitá said, "There are residing here in your midst four slaves of mine who have escaped, let the king make them over to me." Then the king said to her, "All the citizens are present here, so look at everyone in order to recognize him, and take those slaves of yours." Then she seized upon the four young merchants, whom she had before treated in such a humiliating way in her house, and who had wrappers bound round their heads. Then the merchants, who were there, flew in a passion, and said to her, "These are the sons of distinguished merchants, how then can they be your slaves?" Then she answered them, "If you do not believe what I say, examine their foreheads which I marked with a dog's foot." They consented, and removing the head-wrappers of these four, they all beheld the dog's foot on their foreheads. Then all the merchants were abashed, and the king, being astonished, himself asked Devasmitá what all this meant. She told the whole story, and all the people burst out laughing, and the king said to the lady, "They are your slaves by the best of titles." Then the other mer-

chants paid a large sum of money to that chaste wife, to redeem those four from slavery, and a fine to the king's treasury. Devasmitá received that money, and recovered her husband, and being honored by all good men, returned then to her own city Tāmraliptá, and she was never afterwards separated from her beloved.

*The Sharpers and the Moneylender*

*From the Arabic*

FOUR sharpers once plotted against a Shroff, a man of much wealth, and agreed upon a sleight for securing some of his coins. So one of them took an ass and laying on it a bag, wherein were dirhams, lighted down at the shop of the Shroff and sought of him small change. The man of moneys brought out to him the silver bits and bartered them with him, whilst the sharper was easy with him in the matter of the exchange, so he might gar him long for more gain. As they were thus, up came the other three sharpers and surrounded the donkey; and one of them said, "'Tis he," and another said, "Wait till I look at him." Then he took to considering the ass and stroking him from crest to tail; whilst the third went up to him and handled him and felt him from head to rump, saying, "Yes, 'tis in him." Said another, "No, 'tis not in him"; and they left not doing the like of this for some time. Then they accosted the donkey's owner and chattered with him and he said, "I will not sell him but for ten thousand dirhams." They offered him a thousand dirhams; but he refused and swore that he would not vend the ass but for that which he had said. They ceased not adding to their offer till the price reached five thousand dirhams, whilst their mate still said, "I'll not vend him save for ten thousand silver pieces." The Shroff advised him to sell, but he would not do this and said to him, "Ho, shaykh! Thou wottest not the case of this