

## Some Corrections of Geiger's *Mahāvamsa* Translation

PROFESSOR Geiger's English translation of the *Mahāvamsa*, published by the Pali Text Society (1934), is admirable in many respects and the translator has spared no pains to make the work as reliable as possible. Yet the translation and the notes are, unfortunately, not totally free from mistakes. Some of these errors were pointed out by me to the translator in the course of correspondence, when he (Professor Geiger) was alive, and most of those corrections and suggestions were incorporated by him in an article published in Vol. IX, p. 107, of the *Indian Historical Quarterly* in 1933. In that article Professor Geiger himself has admitted:

"There are in my translation of the *Mahāvamsa* some words and terms which are not precisely or even wrongly explained. This may partly be excused for the long distance which separated me (i.e. during my work) from Ceylon and the lack of reliable sources. To my venerated friend Buddhadatta Thera (Aggārāma, Ambalangoda) I owe a series of useful suggestions and corrections some of which I may be allowed to publish here with additional notes of my own".

As this translation is generally used by students of Ceylon History, it is valuable to point out the most glaring inaccuracies to be found in it.

Ch. I, 10 and 11 are translated as: "having offered homage to these twenty-four Sambuddhas and having received from them the prophecy of his (future) buddhahood he, the great hero, when he had fulfilled all perfection and reached the highest enlightenment the sublime Buddha Gotama delivered the world from suffering".

Immediately after this comes: "At Uruvelā, in the Magadha country, the great sage, sitting at the foot of the Bodhi-tree, reached the supreme enlightenment on the full-moon day of Vesākha", as translation of the 12th verse. This appears as a repetition. If we take the 11th verse as direct words of the former Buddhas there is no repetition. The 11th verse is:

*"Pūretvā pāramī sabbā, patvā sambodhim uttamaṃ,  
uttamo Gotamo Buddho satte dukkhā paṃocaye"*.

As a direct saying its translation should be: "The noble Buddha, Gotama, having fulfilled all perfections, will attain the perfect enlightenment, and will deliver the beings in the world from suffering". The Sinhalese translation of Sumaṅgala and Batuvantudawe clearly states this to be a direct saying.

## SOME CORRECTIONS OF GEIGER'S MAHĀVAMSA TRANSLATION

Geiger's edition of the text has *pamocayi* for *pamocaye*. This is the word which has misled him. His translation is correct according to his edition, as the verb is in the past. *Pamocaye* is an optative.

*Ch. I, 15.*—*Bhaddavaggiyā* is translated as "companions of the company of Bhadda". Its commentary does not mention a person of that name but says: *bhadda-sundara-vaggiye*, which means "members of the amiable company".

*Ch. I, 22.*—*Sañgāmbhūmi* is rendered as "(customary) meeting place". This is never used to denote an ordinary meeting place, but a battlefield. The Sinhalese version has rendered it as "yuddhabhūmiya". According to the context there is nothing to show that there was an imminent battle. It might have been a general meeting of the Yakkhas. Then Geiger's translation is right, but not his edition of the text. If it was an ordinary meeting the word *sañgāma* in the text should be corrected as *sañgama*. *Sañgamabhūmi* is a meeting place, but not a 'battlefield'.

*Ch. I, 38.*—*Gvātthi* is rendered as "collar-bone". This same work relates in Ch. XVII, how King Devānampiya-Tissa received the collar-bone and how he enshrined it in the Thūpārāma. Therefore to say that there was another collar-bone at Mahiyangana must be a mistake. *Gvātthi* is not the collar-bone but "the Adam's-apple" or the guttural bone. The Pali word for collar-bone is *akkhaka*.

*Ch. I, 49.*—"His younger sister had been given (in marriage) to the nāga-king on the Kaṇṇāvaḍḍhamāna-mountain". Here the name of the mountain is given as "Kaṇṇā-vaḍḍhamāna". In some MSS. there are different readings *Kaṇha* and *Kaṇhā* for *Kaṇṇā*. *Kaṇha* means 'black' and *Kaṇṇā* could have no meaning whatever in this context. *Kaṇhā* is here preferable as the name of the Nāga-maiden. Then the translation should be: "His younger sister, *Kaṇhā*, had been given to the Nāga-king of the Vaḍḍhamānaka mountain". The *Vamsatthappakāsinī* is silent on the name of the mountain but it gives the maiden's name as *Tiracchikā*, which is not in the text.

The Sinhalese version agrees with Geiger. But the *Samantakūḍavaṇṇanā* clearly states that the name of the mountain was Vaḍḍhamāna and not Kaṇṇāvaḍḍhamāna. There the first line of verse 554 is:

" *Tahim atirucirasmiṃ Vaḍḍhamānādisele* ".

And the first two lines of the next verse are :

" *Pacura-mahimayutto Vaḍḍhamānācalasmiṃ  
adhīpati bhujagānnaṃ āsi Cūlodaravho* ".

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1. A Pali poem by Vedeha Mahāthera, composed during the reign of Parākrama-bāhu II, printed at the Government Press, Colombo, 1910.

*Ch. I, 60.*—“ Both nāgas gladly gave up the throne to the Sage ”. 61. “ When the master, having alighted on the earth, had taken his place on a seat there ”. The latter passage shows that the Sage sat not on that throne but on a certain seat. The *Vamsatthappakāsinī* says: “ *Tattha āsane ti tasmin maṇipallaṅkāsaṇe nisīditvā ti attho = Tattha āsane* means having sat on that jewel-throne ”.

The words *nāga* and *bhujaga*, in the 62nd verse of the same chapter, were translated as “ snake-spirits ”; it is better to use “ nāgas ”.

*Ch. I, 75.*—The words “ *kate ratanamaṇḍape* ” were rendered as “ under a canopy decked with gems ”. Maṇḍapa is not a canopy but a temporary shed or pavilion.

*Ch. III, 1.*—“ When the conqueror . . . had lived eighty-four years and had fulfilled all his duties in the world ”, conveys the meaning that the Buddha had lived 84 years. The word for this in the text is *pañca-cattāṭṭisa*; I cannot understand how this mistranslation has occurred.

*Ch. III, 5 to 9.*—“ When he had performed all rites due to the dead body of the Master and the bodily relics, the great thera, desiring that the doctrine of the Master might long endure, did, seven days after the Lord of the World . . . had passed into nibbāna, bethinking him of the evil words of the aged Subhadda, . . . and (bethinking him) that the Sage had commended the establishing of the holy truth, and (lastly) that the Sambuddha’s consent existed to make a compilation of the holy dhamma, appointed to this end five hundred eminent bhikkhus ”.

This long sentence conveys the meaning that the great Elder, (Mahā-kassapa), appointed or selected five hundred eminent bhikkhus, on the seventh day after the Buddha’s death, in order to hold the first convocation. But this is not the fact. The first council was held some months later; nor did he select eminent Elders on the seventh day.

When this sentence is analysed it has “ the great thera ” as the subject; there are two predicates; “ did ” and “ appointed ”. There is no object for “ did ”, and it is not clear what he *did*. This confusion has arisen through the misplaced phrase “ seven days after the Lord of the World . . . had passed ”. The text is:

“ *Lokanāthe Dasabale sattāha-ṭṭarinibbute  
dubbhāsitaṃ Subhaddassa vuḍḍhassa vacanaṃ saraṃ;* ”

which means: “ remembering the evil words spoken by the aged Subhadda on the seventh day after the demise of the Lord of the World who is endowed with the ten powers ”.

## SOME CORRECTIONS OF GEIGER'S MAHĀVĀMSA TRANSLATION

Geiger has connected the phrase "seven days after" etc., with the Elder Mahākassapa, while he should have connected it with Subhadda. The *Vam-satthappakāsini* clearly supports this construction; see Vol. I. p. 143.<sup>2</sup>

In the same passage Geiger says: " (bethinking him) that the Sage had commanded the establishing of the holy truth ", translating the lines "*Saddhammatthapaṇatthāya muvinānuggahaṃ kataṃ*". There is nothing here to imply a command. The word he has taken for 'command' is *anuggahaṃ*, which never means a command. I am of opinion that this must be rendered as "bethinking him that the Sage has treated him in that way for establishing the holy truth".

Again Professor Geiger notes: "that the Sambuddha's consent existed to make a compilation of the holy dhamma", concerning the lines: "*Kātuṃ saddhammasaṅgītiṃ sambuddhānumataṃ satīṃ*". Here he was misled by an incorrect reading of his edition of the text. The text printed in Ceylon and many of the MSS. have "sambuddhānumate yati" instead of "sambuddhānumataṃ satīṃ". According to this correction it means: "that (the Elder Kassapa) selected four hundred and ninety-nine elders who were (mostly) commended, (for their proficiency), by the Buddha".

After these corrections the translation of these verses should be as follows: " (5) When he had performed all rites due to the dead body of the Master and the holy relics, the great thera, desiring that the doctrine of the Master might long endure, (6) and recollecting the evil words of the aged Subhadda spoken seven days after the Lord of the World, gifted with ten powers, had passed into nibbāna, (7) and also bethinking him that He had given him His own garment and had thereby made him equal with Himself, and considering that the Sage had treated him in that way for establishing of the holy truth, (8-9) he selected, in order to make a compilation of the Scriptures, four hundred and ninety-nine Elders, who were (mostly) commended by the All-knowing One, were repeaters of the ninefold doctrine and versed in all its separate parts, and who had overcome the āsavas. The selection of one less than five hundred was on account of the Elder Ānanda".

*Ch. III, 20.*—*Anagghattharaṇāni* is translated as "precious mats". *Attharaṇa* is not a mat but some other kind of sheet (made of cloth or skin). In verse 27 of the same chapter *āsanesu* is given as "on chairs". There is no mention of chairs but of those *paccattharaṇāni*.

*Ch. IV, 54.*—"All these points are unlawful according to tradition" is the translation of "*sabbāni tāni valthūni na kappantī ti suttato*". He has taken *sutta* as tradition. By the tradition of the Vajjiputtakas all those points

2. Edited by Dr. G. P. Malalasekara and published by the Pali Text Society London, 1935.

were lawful to them. Therefore to use the word tradition for *sutta* is not very safe here. *Sutta* is the accepted Canon; they were unlawful according to that Canon.

*Ch. V, 6.*—“ And yet two more groups parted from the followers of the Thera-doctrine: the Mahimsāsaka and the Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus”. This is correct according to the text as it stands; but one must remember that Vajjiputtakas were persons who caused the Second Council to be held and who became the opponents of the Theravadins and established the Mahāsaṅghika Sect. To say again that there was a sub-sect of the Theravādins, by name Vajjiputtaka, is not acceptable. This confusion has arisen through a corrupt reading; almost all MSS. have the same reading; but from the Northern records we learn that there was a sect named *Vātsīputrīya*, which means “the sons of Vatsas”. The Pali equivalent of it is *Vacchīputtiya*. Those familiar with Sinhalese characters are aware of the orthographic similarity between *ja* and *cha*. As *Vacchīputtiya* is a word not often met with and *Vajjīputtiya* is very familiar, later on the scribes have written *Vajjīputtiya* for both terms.

Again in the same chapter the 7th verse is translated as follows:—“ And there parted from them likewise the Dhammuttariya and the Bhadrāyānika bhikkhus, the Chandāgārika, the Sammitī and the Vajjiputtiya bhikkhus”. Here “from them” refers to the Mahimsāsakā and Vajjiputtakā in the 6th verse. To say “Vajjiputtiyas were parted from Mahimsāsakas and Vajjiputtakā” is nonsense. The text is:

“ *Jātā tu Dhammuttariyā Bhadrāyānika-bhikkhavo*  
*Chandāgarika—Sammiti—Vajjīputtaka-bhikkavo* ”.

The *Vamsatthappakāsinī* explains that Vajji (vacchi-)puttakas were divided into four sections, namely: Dhammuttariyā, Bhadrāyānikā, Chandāgārikā and Sammitiyā. If we correct the fourth line as *Vacchīputtakabhikkhūhi*, there is no confusion whatever.

Here the word *Chandāgārika* is not correct although we find it in the Sinhalese works like the *Nikāyasaṅgraha*. Its equivalent in the Northern records is *Shannāgarika*, which means “existing in six towns”. Then the correct word in Pali must be *Channāgarika* which Geiger himself has given as a different reading.

*Ch. V, 12.*—The words *Pubbaseliya* and *Aparaseliya* are rendered as “the first Seliya bhikkhus” and “the other Seliyā”. Here *pubba* means ‘the eastern’, and not ‘the first’; *apara* means ‘the western’ and not ‘the other’. *Pubbaseliyā* are the “Eastern-mountaineers” and *Aparaseliyā* are “Western-mountaineers”. Geiger’s introduction to the same translation confirms this statement.

## SOME CORRECTIONS OF GEIGER'S MAHĀVAMSA TRANSLATION

*Ch. V, 44.*—When the headman of the caṇḍālas saw (the mother), he looked on her as his own wife, and kept her seven years with honour ” is the translation of the verse :

“ *Disvā tam jetthacaṇḍālo attano sāmīniṃ viya  
maññanto tam upatthāsi’ sattavassāni sādhukaṃ* ”.

The woman referred to here was Prince Nigrodha’s mother and the wife of Sumana who was the elder brother of King Dharmāsoka. To say that such a princess lived with a caṇḍāla (= an out-caste) as his wife is a startling statement. *Sāmīnī* is never used in Pali to denote a wife. It is true that *sāmi* means a lord and a husband, but *sāmīnī* never gives the meaning ‘ wife ’, but ‘ mistress ’. ‘ Mistress ’ also sometimes conveys the meaning ‘ wife ’, but here it must be taken in the sense of a master and a slave. Take for instance the lines “ *Tassā ca sāmīnī tattha Kuvaṇṇā nāma yakkhinī* ”, (verse 11, Ch. 7) which is translated as “ Her mistress, a yakkhinī named Kuvaṇṇā ”.

The princess did not even live within the house of the out-caste but in a separate house provided for her by the deity of the banyan tree. A Kshatriya princess would not even enter the house of a caṇḍāla not to say that she would live with him. Think of the pride of the Sākiyans who would not consent to give their legitimate daughter to such a powerful monarch as Prasenajit of Kosala ; and of Mahānāma, the Sākyan, who drowned himself in a lake in order to avoid eating with Prince Viḍūḍabha at the same table. That prince was the son of Prasenajit and a grandson of Mahānāma himself. But the prince’s mother was born to Mahānāma by a slave-woman. Sākiyans were so proud as to wash the seat on which Viḍūḍabha sat when he visited Kapilavatthu, Moriyas, in which clan Asoka was born, were said to be a branch of the Sākiyans. Such a proud lady would die instantly rather than live with a caṇḍāla.

*Ch. V, 88.*—“ When one day the monarch heard of the nāga-king Mahākāla of wondrous might . . . he sent for him to be brought (into his presence) fettered with a chain of gold ”. Here the monarch was Emperor Asoka ; the translator says that the nāga-king, although he was of wondrous might, was brought in chains to the emperor. The text states that golden hand-cuffs were sent to him, (perhaps as a sign of the emperor’s superiority), but does not say that he was brought chained or hand-cuffed. The statement immediately following the above is : “ made him sit upon the throne under the white canopy, when he had done homage to him with various flowers, and had bidden sixteen thousand women surround him, he (the king) spoke thus ”. Here the emperor has treated him as a person superior to himself, and not as an inferior brought to him as a prisoner.

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*Ch. V, 106.*—“ *Dvādasavassiko yeva vedapūragato caram* ” is translated as “ at the end of the twelve years having come to the end of (studying) the Vedas ”. This is not correct. *Dvādasavassika* means “ at the age of twelve ”.

*Ch. V, 108.*—“ *Sabbadhammānupatito ekadhammo hi māṇava,*  
*sabbe dhammā osaranti ekadhammamhi ; ko nu so ?* ”

is translated as “ A doctrine is come after all the doctrines, O brahman, yet all doctrines end in the one doctrine ; which is that one ? ” The commentary says : “ *Sabbadhammānupatito ti sañkhatāsañkhatesu sabbadhammesu anupatito* ” (= *sabbadhammānupatito* means fallen on all composite and unconditioned things). Here *dhamma* does not mean ‘ doctrine ’, but every thing that exists in the world and beyond it. Therefore the translation should be as follows : “ There is one thing pervading all other things ; in one thing all other things are absorbed ; O young man, what is that one thing ? ”

In the next verse *nāma* is translated as “ name (of the true doctrine) ”. Here *nāma* means the immaterial factors such as consciousness.

*Ch. V, 113.*—*Puthujjanā* is rendered as “ those who yet stood outside (the religion) ”. The *puthujjanā* are not outside the religion ; they are common folk who have not yet attained some holy Path.

*Ch. V, 115.*—*Māṇavā* is rendered as “ young brahmans ”. *Maṇava* is a young man of any caste. This is not especially distinctive of brahmans. In this case their leader Soṇaka was a merchant’s son. Brahman youths would never act as followers of a merchant.

*Ch. V, 116.*—“ The thera said : ask thy teacher ”, for “ *tavāpucchā gurum* ”, is not correct. The youth Soṇaka went from Kāsi to Rājagaha together with his parents ; his father was a caravan leader. Therefore here the word *guru* means ‘ parent ’, and not ‘ teacher ’. The parent’s consent is necessary for a person who is willing to enter the Order, and he has nothing to do with his teachers.

*Ch. V, 135.*—“ *Therassa vacanam sutvā so pasannamano dijo attano pākato tassa niccam bhikkham adāpayi* ”. Here *pasannamano* is rendered as “ full of faith ”. And *kamen’assa pasādiṃsu sabbe pi gharamānūsā* ” is rendered as : “ little by little did all of his household become believers ”. The word *pasāda* sometimes has the meaning, ‘ faith ’, but its general meaning is ‘ gladness ’. Here the brahman, who was Moggali’s father, still was an unbeliever and had no faith in Buddhism. He fed the Elder on account of the friendship gained by the Elder by frequenting his house for seven years. Neither he nor his household yet became Buddhists. Therefore *pasannamano* should be rendered as ‘ glad in mind ’, and *pasādiṃsu* as ‘ became friendly or confidential ’.

## SOME CORRECTIONS OF GEIGER'S MAHĀVAMSA TRANSLATION

*Ch. V, 139.*—" Being come from the Brahmā world (this latter) loved cleanliness, and therefore were they used to keep his chair hung up for better care thereof " is the translation of :

*" Brahmālokā āgatattā sucikāmo ahoṣi so ;  
tasmā so tassa pallaṅko vāsavitvā lagīyati " .*

The word *vāsavitvā* here is left untranslated, and the translator says in a note : " This verse is suspicious ; the *Ṭikā* makes no comment on it " . There is nothing to comment ; and the verse is free from corruptions. The only difficulty is to understand the meaning of *vāsavitvā*. There are two meanings of *vāseti* : the causative of *vasati* has the meaning " to make live " ; the Denominative from *vāsa* has the meaning " to be perfumed or scented " . The second meaning is to be taken here. Then " *pallaṅko vāsavitvā lagīyati* " is to be translated as : " the seat is hung up after fumigating it with incense " .

*Ch. V, 146.*—" *Cittayamaka* " is rendered as " the double thought " , in a note. This is not a double thought but " dyads concerning the mind " . There are ten *Yamakas* in the text known by that name, and one of them is *Cittayamaka*.

*Ch. V, 162.*—" He saw the *thera Mahādhammarakkhita*, the self-controlled, sitting at the foot of a tree, and fanned by a cobra with a branch of a *sāla*-tree " . Here the Pali word for cobra is *nāga*. It is not explained how a cobra can hold a branch with which to fan. *Nāga* does not mean only a cobra ; it is often used to denote an elephant ; an elephant is able to hold a branch with its trunk. It was an elephant who was fanning the elder. The *Vamsatthappakāsinī* clearly states : " *nāgenā ti aññātarena hatthināgena* " .

*Ch. V, 188.*—" These wrought the miracle called the ' unveiling of the world ' to the end that the king *Dharmāsoka* might be converted " . *Dharmāsoka* was converted some years before this event ; and to say that he was converted at the unveiling ceremony of the eighty-four thousand shrines, ordered to be erected by him, is meaningless. This confusion has arisen through the word *pasādatthaṃ*, which means, (as I have said once before), " to please him " or " for his joy " .

*Ch. V, 193.*—" When the king heard this he rejoiced yet more and asked : Nay then, is there a kinsman of Buddha's religion like unto me ? " is the translation of :

*" Tam sutvā vacanaṃ bhīyo tuṭṭho rājā apucchi taṃ :  
Buddhasāsanadāyādo hoti kho mādiso iti " .*

*Sāsanadāyādo* is rendered as " a kinsman of Buddha's religion " . *Dāyāda* is not a ' kinsman ' but ' an heir ' . In this instance the king asked the Elder whether he had become an heir to (or a partner of) the *sāsana*.

*Ch. V, 212.*—" *Kuntakinnarī* is rendered as " a wood-nymph named *Kuntī* " . *Kinnarīs* are not a kind of wood-nymphs. The P.T.S. Dictionary states that

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Kinnara is "a little bird with a head like a man's". This is the idea prevailing among the Sinhalese, but they do not say it is of a small size, but of a very large size. I do not accept either of these notions; in my opinion Kinnaras are a clan of human beings, dwelling in the forests of Northern India, whose women, according to tradition, were very beautiful.

For *Kuntī* the Sinhalese text has *Kunta*; anyhow, this cannot be the name of the Kinnarī, but a qualification of her as it is compounded with the latter. In my opinion it denotes a kind of Kinnaras.

\* *Ch. V, 207. Note I, p. 44.*—"*Kammavācam akā*: i.e. he was president of the chapter when Mahinda was ordained". This is not correct. The reciter of the *kammavācā* is not the president of a chapter which confers ordination. The president thereof is called *upajjhāya* or preceptor. In this case the Elder Moggaliputta-Tissa was the president; the Elder Majjhantika was the reciter of *kammavācā*; he was not the president but the *ācariya* (= tutor) of Mahinda.

In another note on p. 31, Geiger says: "It appears from M.V. I, 25.6 ff., 32.1 ff., that there is no difference between the functions of the two. The *ācariya* seems, according to M.V. I., 32.1, to be only the deputy or substitute of the *upajjhāya*". This is not so. The *upajjhāya* is a person who admonishes a novice concerning the disciplinary rules and his conduct. The *ācariya* is a person who teaches him Scriptures and other necessary things like grammar; the latter's position is almost similar to that of a teacher in a modern Pirivena, who imparts only the knowledge of languages, etc., to his pupils.

*Ch. V, 216.*—"But the therā set himself against pointing out to the king what things needful in sickness, and against going in search of the ghee after the midday meal" is the translation of:

*"Thero nivedanam rañño gilānapaccaye pi ca,  
sappi-atthañ ca caranam pacchābhantaṃ paṭikkhīpi".*

The Sinhalese edition and the *Vamsatthappakāsini* have the second line as "gilānavattato pi so". And the *Vamsatthappakāsini* explains<sup>3</sup> that the suffering Elder prohibited his brother monk to ask the king for ghee, or to bring it from the king's dispensary<sup>4</sup>, or to go round the village, for that purpose, after noon. In my opinion there is no possibility of dividing this passage into three portions as explained in the *Vamsatthappakāsini*; and the translation does not convey the real sense. The real sense is: that the Elder prohibited him from informing the king even in case of such a sickness, and to go in search of ghee after noon. Both readings "gilānapaccaye pi" and "gilānavattato pi" can have this meaning.

3. See *Vamsatthappakāsini*, Vol. I. p. 232.

4. In this case the word must stand as *gilānavattato*, which is given as a different reading in the same book. The construction of the text in both ways does not allow it to be divided into three facts.

## SOME CORRECTIONS OF GEIGER'S MAHĀVĀMSA TRANSLATION

*Ch. VI, 28.*—“ *Dammi rattham tad'evate* ” is translated as “ I will give thee at once the kingdom ”. Here he has taken *tad'eva* for “ at once ”. *Tad'eva* = *taṃ* + *eva*; *taṃ* demonstrates *rattham*. Then the translation must be “ I will give thee that province (of the country which the lion is devastating). ”

*Ch. VII, 5.*—*Uppalavaṇṇa* is translated as “ who is in colour like the lotus ”. *Uppala* is not lotus but water-lily. Many European translators have not taken the trouble to distinguish *paduma* and *uppala*. In a note Dr. Geiger states: “ The allusion is to the colour of blue lotus (*uppala*) ”. There are blue water-lilies, but we have never heard of blue lotuses.

*Ch. VII, 62.*—“ Though fearing that evil should come of it ” is the translation given for “ *bhīlā pi sū agatiyā* ”. He has not grasped the sense of *agati*; it refers to her former misdeed of betraying her own relatives. So the translation should be “ though fearing that evil should come (on account of her former misdeeds) ”.

*Ch. VII, 73.*—“ Every year he sent to his wife's father a shell-pearl worth twice a hundred thousand (pieces of money) ”, is the translation given for “ *adāsī sasurassa tu, anuvassam saṅkhamuttam satasahassa-dvayāraham* ”. He speaks of a single pearl the value of which was two hundred thousand, and that was a “ shell-pearl ”. All pearls are found within a pair of shells, so there is no meaning in “ shell-pearl ”. Here the singular number in *saṅkha-muttam* indicates (that it is) a collective noun; *saṅkha* does not mean a mere shell but a chank. “ The king annually sent two hundred thousand worth of chanks and pearls to his father-in-law ”, is the real meaning here.

*Ch. VIII, 10.*—“ *Gantvā aññāpadesena* ” is translated as “ went to another tract of land ”. The translator himself has shown, in a footnote in his Pali text, how the *Vamsatthappakāsini* has commented on this passage. It has given: “ *aññāpadesenā ti vāṇijjakamma-yojanalesena* ”. Even then he has not been able to grasp the real meaning. He has taken *añña* + *apadesa* as *añña* + *padesa*, and translated as “ another tract of land ”.

The comment on this is very clear. *Apadesa* never means “ a tract of land ”. It is well known that many Sākya pretended to be non-Sākya when their race was demolished by King Viḍūḍabha. During this devastation this *Paṇḍusakka* has fled from there in disguise of a merchant. Therefore *aññāpadesena* means “ by pretending something else ”.

*Ch. IX, 18.*—“ So he had intercourse with her and did not go forth till break of day ”, is the translation of “ *tīya sadāhim samvasitvā paccūse yeva nikkhami* ”. It is not possible for a paramour to stay with his lady in her place till the day-break. It means that he went away (as stealthily as he came) before day-break. *Paccūse* = very early or before day-break.

*Ch. IX, 23.*—"The princes, from fear, did to death the herdsman Citta and the slave Kālavela, attendants on Gāmaṇi, since they would make no promise". Here "herdsman" stands for *gopaka*; it may mean 'herdsman', but here it stands for 'a guard', as it is told that they were attendants on Gāmaṇi.

Geiger has given a note on "since they would make no promise"; he states, "that is, they would not fall in with the design of the brothers to kill the boy who might perhaps come into the world". The question here is "What is the promise that they would not give?" Geiger has thought that it was to kill the unborn child. This is not meant here, the princes suspected these two persons of having some knowledge of this unlawful action of Gāmaṇi, and when they were questioned about this they refused to acknowledge the fact, therefore they were put to death. Here *paṭiññaṃ* does not stand for a promise but for acknowledgement; then "*paṭiññaṃ adente*" should be translated as "since they would not acknowledge the fact".

*Ch. X, 59.*—*Vāladhismim* is translated as "by the mane". Mane = *kesara*, but not *vāladhi*; *vāladhi* = tail.

*Ch. X, 74.*—"Attano rājagehaṃ so tassa datvāna ayyako  
*aññattha vāsam' kappesi; so tu tasmim ghare vasi*".

Geiger's translation of this is: "The great-uncle handed over his palace to him and built himself a dwelling elsewhere; but he dwelt in his house"; in the last passage it is not clear to whom *he* refers; according to the construction it may refer to the great-uncle. In the text *so* refers to Paṇḍukābhaya, the king. *Tasmim ghare* refers to the palace given to him by his great-uncle.

*Ch. X, 83.*—*Sara* is rendered as "pond". *Sara* is a lake; a pond is not as large as a lake.

*Ch. X, 87.*—"Having gods and men to dance before him, the king took his pleasure, in joyous and merry wise", is the translation given for "*dibbamānusanāṭakam kārento' bhiramā rājā . . .*" By this rendering Geiger means that this king had some gods to dance before him. It is not so. *Dibba-mānusanāṭakam* means "plays concerning gods and men". All actors were human beings.

*Ch. X, 102.*—*Sivikā-sotthisālāñ ca* is rendered as "lying-in shelter and a hall for those recovering from sickness". *Vamsatthappakāsini* explains *sivikā* as: *Sivaliṅga-paṭiṭṭhāpitā sālā, vijāyanagharam vā*. There *vijāyana-ghara* is a lying-in-home; the other meaning of *sivikā* is "a temple dedicated to Siva". It is probable that this king established a Saiva-temple here as he was not a Buddhist. *Sotthisālā* simply means a hospital.

SOME CORRECTIONS OF GEIGER'S MAHĀVĀMSA TRANSLATION

Ch. XI, 41.—*Sāmiहितe ratā* is rendered as “rejoicing in the salvation of their king”. This simply means “wishing the welfare of their master”.

Ch. XII, 51.—“*Tassa desassa ārakkham ̥hapetvāna samantato*” is translated as: “When the thera had made a bulwark round the country”. The words *ārakkham ̥hapetvāna* do not give the sense of a bulwark; it means “having kept guards around”.

Ch. XIV, 14.—“Great is the number there of arahants learned in the three vedas” is the rendering given for “*tevijjā . . . arahanto bahū*”. The attribute “learned in the three vedas” is never applied to an arahant. The three vidyas of arahants are: (1) pubbenivāsañāna, (2) cetopariyañāna, and (3) āsavakkhayañāna. (See under *Vijjā* in P.T.S. Dictionary for details).

In the 58th sutta of Tikanipāta, Aṅguttara, (Vol. I, p. 163, P.T.S. ed.) it is explained how a brahman becomes a *tevijja*. There Tikaṇṇa, the brahman, has spoken not only of three vedas but also of good birth and great earning.

Ch. XIV, 29-30.—“He took Bhaṇḍuka aside and asked him what the theras intended (to do),” is the rendering of “*Bhaṇḍum netv'ekamantaṃ pucchi therādhikāraṃ so*”. *Therādhikāra* is the word mistranslated here. The *Vamsatthappakāsinī* has given a clear explanation to this. It has: “*therādhikāraṃ nāma kulapadesādīm adhikāraṃ pucchī ti vuttaṃ hoti*”. King Devānampiyatissa took Bhaṇḍu aside and asked about the Elders' parents and such other facts. Here *adhikāra* = *state*.

Ch. XIV, 50.—“Hearing all this it became clear to the king that they would not sit on chairs”, is the translation of verse 50. But after a few lines it states: “There, according to their rank, they took their seat on chairs covered with stuffs”. (Verse 54). The mistake lies with the second statement; there *dussapīthesu* is rendered as “chairs covered with stuffs”, it should be rendered as “cushions”.

Ch. XV, 11.—

“*Tan Nandanā dakkhiṇena nayam theram rathesabho  
Mahāmeghavanuyyānaṃ pācīnadvārakaṃ nayi*”

is translated as follows: “Southwards from Nandana the lord of chariots himself led the thera to the Mahāmegha-park, at the east gate”. This indicates that Mahāmegha-park was at the eastern gate of the city. Anyway it cannot be at the eastern gate; therefore the word *pācīnadvārakaṃ* must be taken as a qualification to Mahāmeghavana. Then the rendering must be “to the Mahāmegha-park whose gate is in the east”.

Ch. XV, 27-28.—“*Thero rājagharaṃ gantvā tassa dakkhiṇato ̥thito  
rukkhamaṃhi picule attha pupphamuttāhi samokiri*”

is translated as: “the thera went to the royal dwelling and scattered eight handfuls of blossoms about the picula-tree standing on the south side”.

By this rendering it is to be understood that the tree was to the south of the royal dwelling; but the construction of the verse does not allow one to have this meaning. *Ṭhito* is in the Nominative, and it is an attribute *hto ṣerot* which is in the same case. It cannot be taken as an attribute to *picule* which is in the Locative. Therefore "standing on the south side of it" must be connected with the Elder and not with the tree.

*Ch. XV, 41.*—"When the thera had eaten it he gave the kernel to the king to plant". Here they are speaking about a mango; its seed is to be planted and not the *kernel*.

*Ch. XV, 88.*—*Dhammakaraka* is rendered as "drinking vessel". It is a kind of water-strainer and not a drinking vessel. *Dhammakarakas* are not now found in Ceylon; but I have seen them in Burma.

*Ch. XV, 180.*—" *Jinasāsanam patitṭhitan nu bhante* " is rendered as: "Does the doctrine of the Conqueror stand, sir"? I will render it as "Has the doctrine of the Conqueror been now established here, Sir"?"

(*To be continued*)

A. P. BUDDHADATTA