



English translation of The Larger Sukhâvatî Vyûha

Table of Contents

Credits.....	1
Section 1.....	2
Section 2.....	14
Section 3.....	25

Credits

English translation of
The Larger Sukhâvatî Vyûha

by

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Section 1

OM. Adoration to the Three Treasures! Om. Adoration to all the glorious Buddhas and Bodhisattvas! Adoration to all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Āryas, Srāvakas, and Pratyekabuddhas, past, present, and to come, who dwell in the unlimited and endless Lokādhatu of the ten quarters! Adoration to Amitābha! Adoration to him whose soul is endowed with incomprehensible virtues!

Adoration to Amitābha, to the Gīna, to thee, O Muni!

I go to Sukhāvātī through thy compassion also;

To Sukhāvātī, with its groves, resplendent with gold,

The delightful, adorned with the sons of Sugata,—

I go to it, which is full of many jewels and treasures;

And the refuge of thee, the famous and wise.

1.

Thus it was heard by me. At one time the Bhagavat dwelt in Rāgagrīha, on the mountain Gridhrakūta, with a large assembly of Bhikshus, with thirty-two thousands of Bhikshus, all holy (arhat), free from frailties and cares, who had performed their religious duties, whose thoughts had been thoroughly freed through perfect knowledge, with inquiring thoughts, who had broken the fetters of existence, who had obtained their desires, who had conquered, who had achieved the highest self-restraint, whose thoughts and whose knowledge were unfettered, Mahānāgas (great heroes), possessed of the six kinds of knowledge, self-controlled, meditating on the eight kinds of salvation, possessed of the powers, wise in wisdom, elders, great disciples, viz. 1. Āgñātakaundīnya, 2. Asvagit, 3. Vāshpa, 4. Mahānāman, 5. Bhadragit, 6. Yasodeva, 7. Vimāla, 8. Subāhu, 9. Pūrna Mairāyanīputra, 10. Uruvilvā-kāsyapa, 11. Nadī-kāsyapa, 12. Gayā-kāsyapa, 13. Kumāra-kāsyapa, 14. Mahā-kāsyapa, 15. Sāriputra, 16. Mahāmaudgalyāyana, 17. Mahākaushthilya, 18. Mahākaphila, 19. Mahākunda, 20. Aniruddha, 21. Nandika, 22. Kampila, 23. Subhūti, 24. Revata, 25. Khadiravanika, 26. Vakula, 27. Svāgata, 28. Amogharāga, 29. Pārāyanika, 30. Patka, 31. Kullapatka, 32. Nanda, 33. Rāhula, and 34. the blessed Ānanda,—with these and with other elders, and great disciples, who were wise in wisdom, with the exception of one person who had still to be advanced on the path of the disciples, viz. the blessed Ānanda;—and with many noble-minded Bodhisattvas, led by Maitreya.

2.

Then the blessed Ānanda, having risen from his seat, having put his cloak on one shoulder, and knelt on the earth with his right knee, making obeisance with folded hands in the direction of the Bhagavat, spoke thus to the Bhagavat: 'Thy organs of sense, O Bhagavat, are serene, the colour of thy skin is clear, the colour of thy face bright and yellowish. As an autumn cloud is pale, clear, bright and yellowish, thus the organs of sense of the Bhagavat

are serene, the colour of his face is clear, the colour of his skin bright and yellowish. And as, O Bhagavat, a piece of gold coming from the Gâmbû river, having been thrown into a furnace by a clever smith or by his apprentice, and well fashioned, when thrown on a pale cloth, looks extremely clear, bright and yellowish, thus the organs of sense of the Bhagavat are serene, the colour of his face is clear, and the colour of his skin bright and yellowish. Moreover, I do not know, O Bhagavat, that I have ever seen the organs of sense of the Tathâgata so serene, the colour of his face so clear, and the colour of his skin so bright and yellowish before now. This thought occurs to me, O Bhagavat: probably, the Tathâgata dwells today in the state of a Buddha, probably the Tathâgata dwells to-day in the state of a Gina, in the state of omniscience, in the state of a Mahânâga; and he contemplates the holy and fully enlightened Tathâgatas of the past, future, and present.'

After these words, the Bhagavat thus spoke to the blessed Ânanda: 'Well said! well said! Ânanda. Did the gods suggest this matter to you? or the blessed Buddhas? Or do you know this through the philosophical knowledge which you possess?'

After these words the blessed Ânanda spoke thus to the Bhagavat: 'The gods, O Bhagavat, do not suggest this matter to me, nor the blessed Buddhas, but this thought occurs to me by my own philosophy alone, viz. that probably the Tathâgata dwells to-day in the state of a Buddha, probably the Tathâgata dwells to-day in the state of a Gina, in the state of omniscience, [in the state of a Mahânâga]; or he contemplates [the venerable Buddhas] of the past, future, and present.'

After these words the Bhagavat spoke thus to the blessed Ânanda: 'Well said! well said! Ânanda; excellent indeed is your question, good your philosophy, and beautiful your understanding! You, O Ânanda, have arrived for the benefit and happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the sake of the great body of men, for the benefit and happiness of gods and men, as you think it right to ask the Tathâgata this matter: Thus, indeed, Ânanda might pile up intellectual knowledge under immeasurable and innumerable blessed, holy, and fully enlightened Tathâgatas, and yet the knowledge of the Tathâgata would not be exceeded thereby. And why? Because, O Ânanda, one who possesses the knowledge of a Tathâgata possesses an intellectual knowledge of causes that cannot be exceeded. If the Tathâgata wished, O Ânanda, he could live for a whole kalpa (age) on one alms-gift, or for a hundred kalpas, or for a thousand kalpas, or for a hundred thousand kalpas, to a hundred thousand niyutas of koîs of kalpas, nay, he could live beyond, and yet the organs of nature of the Tathâgata would not perish, the colour of his face would not be altered, nor would the colour of his skin be injured. And why? Because, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata has so fully obtained the Pâramitâs which arise from Samâdhi. The appearance of fully enlightened Buddhas is very difficult to be obtained in this world, O Ânanda. As the appearance of Audumbara-flowers is very difficult to be obtained in this world; thus, O Ânanda, the appearance of Tathâgatas who desire welfare, wish for what is beneficial, are compassionate, and have arrived at the highest compassion, is very difficult to be obtained. But, O Ânanda, it is (owing to) the grace of the Tathâgata himself that you think that the Tathâgata should be asked this question, so that there may arise in this world beings who can be teachers of all the world, for the sake of noble-minded Bodhisattvas. Therefore, O Ânanda, listen, and take it well and rightly to heart! I shall tell you.'

'Yes, O Bhagavat,' so did the blessed Ânanda answer the Bhagavat.

3.

The Bhagavat then spoke to Ânanda: 'At the time, O Ânanda, which was long ago in the past, in an innumerable and more than innumerable, enormous, immeasurable, and incomprehensible kalpa before now,—at that time, and at that moment, there arose in the world a holy and fully enlightened Tathâgata called 1. Dîpankara. Following after Dîpankara, O Ânanda, there was a Tathâgata 2. Pratâpavat, and after him, 3. Prabhâkara, 4. Kandanagandha, 5. Sumerukalpa, 6. Kandana, 7. Vimalânana, 8. Anupalipta, 9. Vimalaprabha, 10. Nâgâbhibhû, 11. Sûryodana, 12. Girirâgaghosha, 13. Merukûta, 14. Suvarnaprabha, 15. Gyotishprabha, 16. Vaidûtryanirbhâsa, 17. Brahmaghosha, 18. Kandâbhibhû, 19. Tûryaghosha, 20. Muktakusumapratimandîtaprabha, 21. Srîkûta, 22. Sâgaravarabuddhivikrîditâbhigñâ, 23. Varaprabha, 24. Mahâgandharâganirbhâsa, 25. Vyapagatakhilamalapatighosha, 26. Sûrakûta, 27. Ranañgaha, 28. Mahâgunadharabuddhiprâptâbhigñâ, 29. Kandra-sûryagihmîkara, 30. Uttaptavaidûryanirbhâsa, 31. Kittadhârâbuddhisankusumitâbhyudgata, 32. Pushpâvatîvanarâgasankusumitâbhigñâ, 33. Pushpâkara, 34. Udakakandra, 35. Avidyândhakâra-vidhvamsanakara, 36. Lokendra, 37. Muktakhatrapravâtasadrîsa, 38. Tishya, 39. Dharmamativinanditarâga, 40. Simhasâgarakûtavinanditarâga, 41. Sâgaramerukandra, 42. Brahmasvaranâdâbhinandita, 43. Kusumasambhava, 44. Prâptasena, 45. Kandrabhânu, 46. Merukûta, 47. Kandrâprabha, 48. Vimalanetra, 49. Girirâgaghoshesvara, 50. Kusumaprabha, 51. Kusumavrishtyabhiprakîrta, 52. Ratnakandra, 53. Padmabimbyupasobhita, 54. Kandanagandha, 55. Ratnâbhibhâsa, 56. Nimi, 57. Mahâvyûha, 58. Vyapagatakhiladosha, 59. Brahmaghosha, 60. Saptaratnâbhivrishta, 61. Mahâgunadhara, 62. Mahâtamâlapatrakandanakardama, 63. Kusumâbhigñâ, 64. Agñânavidhvamsana, 65. Kesarin, 66. Muktakhatra, 67. Suvarnagarbha, 68. Vaidûryagarbha, 69. Mahâketu, 70. Dharmaketu, 71. Ratnaketu, 72. Ratnasrî, 73. Lokendra, 74. Narendra, 75. Kârûnika, 76. Lokasundara, 77. Brahmaketu, 78. Dharmamati, 79. Simha, 80. Simhamati. After Simhamati, a holy and fully enlightened Tathâgata arose in the world, Lokesvararâga by name, perfect in knowledge and conduct, a Sugata, knowing the world, without a superior, charioteer of men whose passions have to be tamed, teacher of gods and men, a Buddha, a Bhagavat. And again during the time of the preaching of this holy and fully enlightened Tathâgata Lokesvararâga, O Ânanda, there was a Bhikshu, Dharmâkara by name, richly endowed with memory, with understanding, prudence, and wisdom,—richly endowed with vigour, and of noble character.

4.

'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, having risen from his seat, having put his cloak on one shoulder, and knelt on the earth with his right knee, stretching forth his folded hands to where the Bhagavat Tathâgata Lokesvararâga was, and, after worshipping the Bhagavat, he, at that very time, praised him in his presence with these Gâthâs:

"O thou of immeasurable light, whose knowledge is endless and incomparable; not any other light can shine here (where thou art)! The rays of the moon of Siva and of the jewel of the sun, were not bright here in the whole world. (1)

"The form also is infinite in the best of beings; thus also the voice of Buddha is of infinite sound; his virtue likewise, with meditation, knowledge, strength; like unto thee there is no one in this world. (2)

"The Law (dharma) is deep, wide, and subtle; the best of Buddhas is incomprehensible, like the ocean; therefore there is no further exaltation of the teacher; having left all faults, he is gone to the other shore. (3)

"Then the best of Buddhas, of endless light, lights up all regions, he the king of kings; and I, having become Buddha, and a master of the Law, may I deliver mankind from old age and death! (4)

"And I, on the strength of generosity, equanimity, virtue, forbearance, power, meditation and absorption, undertake here the first and best duties, and shall become a Buddha, the saviour of all beings. (5)

"And I, seeking for the knowledge of the best of the Blessed Ones, shall always worship many hundred thousands of kofis of Buddhas, endless like the sand of the Gangâ, the incomparable lords. (6) "Whatever worlds there are, similar (in number) to the sand of the Gangâ, and the endless countries which exist besides, there everywhere I shall send out light, because I have attained such power. (7)

"My land is (to be) noble, the first and the best; the Bodhi-tree excellent in this world. There is incomparable happiness arising from Nirvâna, and this also I shall explain as vain. (8)

"Beings come hither from the ten quarters; having arrived there they quickly show my happiness. May Buddha there teach me the truth,—I form a desire full of true strength and vigour. (9)

"I, knowing the worlds of the ten quarters, possessed of absolute knowledge they also always proclaim my thought! May I, gone to Aviki hell, always abide there, but I shall never cease to practise the power of prayer! [i.e. May I remain in hell, if I cease to pray.]" (10)

5.

'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, having praised the Bhagavat, the Tathâgata Lokeshvararâga, in his presence, with those Gâthâs, spoke thus: "O Bhagavat, I wish to know the highest perfect knowledge. Again and again I raise and incline my thoughts towards the highest perfect knowledge. May therefore the Bhagavat, as a teacher, thus teach me the Law, that I may quickly know the highest perfect knowledge. May I become in the world a Tathâgata, equal to the unequalled. And may the Bhagavat proclaim those signs by which I may comprehend the perfection of all good qualities of a Buddha country."

'After this, O Ânanda, the Bhagavat Lokeshvararâga, the Tathâgata, thus spoke to that Bhikshu:

"Do you by yourself, O Bhikshu, know the perfection of all excellences and good qualities of a Buddha country?"

'He said: "O Bhagavat, I could not do this, but the Bhagavat alone. Explain the perfection of the excellences and all the good qualities of Buddha countries of the other Tathâgatas, after hearing which we may fulfil every one of their signs."

'Then, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata Lokesvararâga, holy and fully enlightened, knowing the good disposition of that Bhikshu, taught for a full koṭī of years the perfection of all the excellences and good qualities of Buddha countries belonging to eighty–one hundred thousand niyutas of koṭīs of Buddhas, together with the signs, indication, and description, desiring welfare, wishing for benefits, compassionate, full of compassion, so that there might never be an end of Buddha countries, having conceived great pity for all beings. The measure of life of that Tathâgata was full forty kalpas.

6.

'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, taking the perfections of all the excellences and good qualities of those Buddha countries, of those eighty–one hundred thousand niyutas of koṭīs of Buddhas, and concentrating them all on one Buddha country, worshipped with his head the feet of the Bhagavat Lokesvararâga, the Tathâgata, turned respectfully round him to the right, and walked away from the presence of this Bhagavat. And afterwards, for the space of five kalpas, he thus concentrated the perfection of all the excellences and good qualities of the Buddha countries, such as had never been known before in the ten quarters of the whole world, more excellent, and more perfect than any, and composed the most excellent prayer.

7.

'Thus, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu concentrated in his mind a perfection of a Buddha country eighty–one times more immeasurable, noble, and excellent than the perfection of the eighty–one hundred thousand niyutas of koṭīs of Buddha countries that had been told him by the Bhagavat Lokesvararâga, the Tathâgata. And then, proceeding to where the Tathâgata was, he worshipped the feet of the Bhagavat with his head, and said: "O Bhagavat, the perfection of all the excellences and good qualities of the Buddha countries has been concentrated by me."

'After this, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata Lokesvararâga thus spoke to the Bhikshu: "Preach then, O Bhikshu;—the Tathâgata allows it. Now is the proper time, O Bhikshu. Delight the assembly, produce joy, let the lion's voice be heard, so that now and hereafter, noble–minded Bodhisattvas, hearing it, may comprehend the different subjects (or occasions) of the prayers for the perfection of the good qualities of a Buddha country."

'Then, O Ânanda, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara thus spoke at that time to the Bhagavat: "May the Bhagavat thus listen to me, to what my own prayers are, and how, after I shall have obtained the highest perfect knowledge, my own Buddha country will then be endowed with all inconceivable excellences and good qualities.

8.

1. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine there should be either hell, brute–creation, the realm of departed spirits, or the body of Asuras, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

2. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should fall away (die), and fall into hell, the brute–creation, the realm of departed spirits, or into the body of Asuras, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

3. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be of one colour, viz. a golden colour, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
4. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine there should be perceived any difference between gods and men, except when people count and tell, saying: 'These are gods and men, but only in ordinary and imperfect parlance,' then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
5. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not be possessed of the highest Pâramitâs of miraculous power and self-control, so that they could at least in the shortest moment of one thought step over a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
6. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be possessed of the recollection of their former births, so as at least to remember a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of kalpas, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
7. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all acquire the divine eye, so as at least to be able to see a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of worlds, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
8. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all acquire the divine ear, so as at least to be able to hear at the same time the good Law from a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
9. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be skilled in the knowledge of the thoughts of other people, so as at least to be able to know the deeds and thoughts of beings belonging to a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
10. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should form any idea of property, even with regard to their own body, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
11. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine the beings who are born there should not all be firmly established, viz. in absolute truth, till they have reached Mahâparinirvâṇa, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.
12. "O Bhagavat, if any being should be able to count the pupils belonging to me after I have obtained the highest perfect knowledge in that Buddha country of mine, even if all beings who are contained in those three millions of spheres of worlds, after having become Pratyekabuddhas, should be counting for a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of kalpas, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

13. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained the highest perfect knowledge, my light should be liable to be measured in this Buddha country of mine, even by the measure of a hundred thousand niyutas of kofis of Buddha countries, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

14. "O Bhagavat, if the measure of the life of the beings in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained the highest perfect knowledge, should be liable to be measured, excepting always by their own power of prayer, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

15. "O Bhagavat, if the measure of my life after I have obtained Bodhi (Buddha knowledge) should be limited, even by numbering a hundred thousand niyutas of kofis of kalpas, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

16. "O Bhagavat, if, for the beings in this Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, even the name of sin should exist, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

17. "O Bhagavat, if immeasurable and innumerable blessed Buddhas in immeasurable Buddha countries do not glorify my name, after I have obtained the Bodhi (knowledge); if they do not preach my fame and proclaim my praise, and utter it together, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

18. "O Bhagavat, if those beings who have directed their thought towards the highest perfect knowledge in other worlds, and who, after having heard my name, when I have obtained the Bodhi (knowledge), have meditated on me with serene thoughts; if at the moment of their death, after having approached them, surrounded by an assembly of Bhikshus, I should not stand before them, worshipped by them, that is, so that their thoughts should not be troubled, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

19. "O Bhagavat, if those beings who in immeasurable and innumerable Buddha countries, after they have heard my name, when I shall have obtained Bodhi, should direct their thought to be born in that Buddha country of mine, and should for that purpose bring their stock of merit to maturity, if these should not be born in that Buddha country, even those who have only ten times repeated the thought (of that Buddha country), barring always those beings who have committed the (five) Ânantarya sins, and who have caused an obstruction and abuse of the good Law, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

20. "O Bhagavat, if those beings, who have been born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all be bound to one birth only, before reaching the highest perfect knowledge, barring always the special prayers of those very noble-minded Bodhisattvas who have put on the whole armour (of the Law), who understand the welfare of all beings, who are devoted to all beings, who work for the attainment of Nirvâna of all beings, who wish to perform the duty of a Bodhisattva in all worlds, who wish to serve all Buddhas, and to bring beings, in number like grains of sand of the river Gangâ, to the highest perfect knowledge, and who besides are turned towards the higher practice, and perfect in the practice of the Samantabhadra discipline, then may I not obtain the highest

perfect knowledge.

21. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all be able, after having gone to other Buddha countries, after their one morning–meal, to worship many hundreds of Buddhas, many thousands of Buddhas, many hundred thousands of Buddhas, many koṭis of Buddhas, &c., till up to many hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of Buddhas, with objects which give every kind of pleasure, and this through the grace of the Buddha, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

22. "O Bhagavat, if those Bodhisattvas in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should wish their stock of merit to grow in the following shapes, viz. either in gold, in silver, in jewels, in pearls, in beryls, in shells, in stones, in corals, in crystal, in amber, in red pearls, in diamond, &c., or in any one of the other jewels; or in all kinds of perfumes, in flowers, in garlands, in ointment, in incense–powder, in cloaks, in umbrellas, in flags, in banners, or in lamps; or in all kinds of dancing, singing, and music;—and if such gifts should not appear for them, from being produced as soon as thought of, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

23. "O Bhagavat, if those beings who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all recite the story of the Law which is accompanied by omniscience, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

24. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should think thus: May we, remaining in this world, honour revere, esteem, and worship the blessed Buddhas in immeasurable and innumerable Buddha countries, viz. with cloaks, alms–bowls, beds, stools, refreshments, medicines, utensils, with flowers, incense, lamps, perfumes, garlands, ointment, powder, cloaks, umbrellas, flags, banners, with different kinds of dancing, singing, and music, and with showers of jewels,—and if the blessed Buddhas should not accept them, when they are produced as soon as thought of, viz. from compassion, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

25. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not all be in possession of strength of body as strong as the diamond (or thunderbolt?) of Nârâyana, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

26. "O Bhagavat, if any being in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should learn the limit of the beauty of (its) ornament, even if he be possessed of the divine eye, and should know (its) various beauty, saying: 'That Buddha country possesses so much beauty and so much magnificence,' then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

27. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, a Bodhisattva possessed even of a very small stock of merit, should not perceive the Bodhi–tree of noble beauty, at least a hundred yoganas in height, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

28. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, either teaching or learning should have to be made by any being, and they should not all be in possession of the perfect knowledge, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

29. "O Bhagavat, if that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not be so brilliant, that in it could be seen on all sides immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries, as a round face is seen in a highly burnished round mirror, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

30. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, there should not be a hundred thousand of vases full of different sweet perfumes, made of all kinds of jewels, always smoking with incense, fit for the worship of Bodhisattvas and Tathâgatas, rising into the sky beyond gods, men, and all things, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

31. "O Bhagavat, if in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, there should not be showers of sweet jewel-flowers, always pouring down, and if there should not be sweet-sounding music-clouds, always playing, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

32. "O Bhagavat, if the beings belonging to me, after I have obtained Bodhi, who are visible by their splendour, in immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable worlds, should not all be filled with pleasure, far beyond gods and men, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

33. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the noble-minded Bodhisattvas in immeasurable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries on all sides, after having heard my name, should not be delivered from birth, through the merit arising from that hearing, and should not be strong in the knowledge of Dhâranîs, until they have obtained the very throne of Bodhi, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

34. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, women in immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries on all sides, after having heard my name, should allow carelessness to arise, should not turn their thoughts towards Bodhi, should, when they are free from birth, not despise their female nature; and if they, being born again, should assume a second female nature, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

35. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas who in immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense Buddha countries round about in the ten quarters having heard my name, and having fallen down, shall worship me with prostrate reverence, should not, when performing the duty of Bodhisattvas, be honoured by the world and by the gods, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

36. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the work of dyeing, sewing, drying, washing of his cloaks should have to be performed by any Bodhisattva, and they should not perceive themselves, as quick as thought, covered by newly-produced excellent cloaks, granted to them by the Tathâgata, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

37. "O Bhagavat, if the beings who are born at the same time in that Buddha country, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not obtain such happiness as that of the holy Bhikshu who is free from pain and has obtained the third meditation, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

38. "O Bhagavat, if those Bodhisattvas who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not produce from different jewel-trees such a mass of excellent ornaments in that Buddha country, as they should wish for, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

39. "O Bhagavat, if the Bodhisattvas who are born in other Buddha countries, when they have heard my name, after I shall have obtained Bodhi, should suffer any diminution in the strength of their senses, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

40. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas, from hearing my name in a place of a different Buddha country, should not obtain the Samâdhi (ecstasy) called Suvibhaktavatî, in which Samâdhi the Bodhisattvas will see immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense, blessed Buddhas one moment after another; and if that Samâdhi of theirs should come to an end meanwhile, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

41. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, beings, having heard my name in Buddha countries different from this, should not, through the stock of merit which follows on that hearing, obtain birth in a noble family, till they arrive at Bodhi, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

42. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas who live in other Buddha countries, after hearing my name, till they have reached Bodhi by the stock of merit which follows on that hearing, should not all obtain a combination of their stock of merit with the joy and gladness of their Bodhisattva life, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

43. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas, as soon as they have heard my name, in other worlds, should not obtain the Samâdhi called Samantânugata, in which Bodhisattvas honour one moment after another immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense, blessed Buddhas, and if that Samâdhi of theirs should come to an end before they have reached the throne of Bodhi, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

44. "O Bhagavat, if the beings who are born in that Buddha country of mine, after I have obtained Bodhi, should not hear, as quick as thought, such a teaching of the Law as they wish to hear, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

45. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, the Bodhisattvas in this and other Buddha countries, as soon as they have heard my name, should ever turn back from the highest perfect knowledge, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge.

46. "O Bhagavat, if, after I have obtained Bodhi, and have become a Buddha–teacher, the Bodhisattvas who hear my name in Buddha countries, and obtain the first, the second, and the third degrees of endurance, as soon as they have heard my name, should turn away again from Buddha, the Law, and the Church, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge."

9.

'And again, O Ânanda, when he had spoken such prayers, that Bhikshu Dharmâkara, at that time, through the grace of Buddha spoke these verses:

1. "If, when I have obtained Bodhi, there should not be for me an excellent Pranidhâna of such a character, then, O Prince, O Best of beings, may I not be endowed with the ten powers, incomparable, worthy of offerings.
2. "If there should not be for me such a country, endowed with many and various mighty and divine endowments, I should gladly go to hell, suffering pain, and not be a King of treasures.
3. "If, when I have approached the Bodhi throne, my name should not quickly reach the ten quarters, the broad and many endless Buddha countries, may I not be a lord of the world, endowed with power.
4. "If indeed I should delight in the enjoyments of love, being deprived of zeal, understanding and prudence, even after having reached the incomparable and blessed Bodhi, may I not be a teacher in the world, endowed with power.
5. "The lord of vast light, incomparable and infinite, has illuminated all Buddha countries in all the quarters, he has quieted passions, all sins and errors, he has quieted the fire in the walk of hell.
6. "After making his broad eye lustrous, after driving away the darkness from all men, after removing all untimely misfortunes, he led hither those who dwell in Svarga (heaven) and who shine with endless light.
7. "The splendour of sun and moon does not shine in heaven, nor the fiery splendour of the maze of jewels of the gods; the Lord overcomes all splendour, he, the bright one, who has performed his former discipline.
8. "He is the best of men, the treasure of all who suffer; there is no one like him in all the quarters. Having completed a hundred thousand of good works, he, in his assembly, raised the lion–voice of Buddha.
9. "After having worshipped former self–existing Ginas, after having performed immeasurable koûs of vows and penances, he became in this, his best of spiritual existences, the best of beings, possessed of the full power of prayers.
10. "As the Bhagavat, the Lord, who is possessed of unlimited light of knowledge, knows the three kinds of knowledge in the world, may I also be worthy of equal offerings, the best

of sages, the leader of men.

11. "If, O Lord, this my prayer succeeds, after I have obtained Bodhi, may this sphere of a thousand worlds tremble, and may a shower of flowers descend on the hosts of gods."

12. 'Then the earth trembled, flowers were showered down, hundreds of instruments resounded in the sky, powder of heavenly sweet sandal-wood was scattered, and there was a voice saying: "Thou wilt be a Buddha in the world."

10.

'That Bhikshu Dharmâkara, the noble-minded Bodhisattva, O Ânanda, was possessed of this perfection of prayers. And a few Bodhisattvas only, O Ânanda, are possessed of such a perfection of prayers. There is on this earth an appearance of a few only of such prayers. Of a few, however, existence cannot be denied.

--Section 1 --

Section 2

Then again, O Ânanda, this Bhikshu Dharmâkara having recited these peculiar prayers before the Bhagavat Lokeshvararâga, the Tathâgata, and before the world including gods, Mâra, and Brahman, and before people consisting of Sramanas and Brâhmanas with gods, men, and Asuras, was established in the attainment of the true promise. And proclaiming this purity of the Buddha country, this greatness and excellency of the Buddha country, and performing the duty of a Bodhisattva, he never conceived the remotest thoughts of lust, malevolence, and cruelty, during a hundred thousand niyutas of koîs of years, immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, measureless, immense, inexpressible; and he never conceived the idea of lust, malevolence, and cruelty, nay, he never conceived the idea of form, sound, smell, taste, and touch. He was gentle, charming indeed, and compassionate; pleasant to live with, agreeable, amiable, content, of few wishes, satisfied, retired, not evil, not foolish, not suspicious, not crooked, not wicked, not deceitful, tender, kindly speaking, always zealous, docile in the searching after the pure Law. And for the good of all beings, he recited the great prayer, showing respect to friends, teachers, masters, the Church, the Law, and Buddha, always girded for the performance of the duties of the Bodhisattva, righteous, gentle, not deceitful, not flattering, virtuous, a leader for the sake of rousing others to perform all good laws, producing by his activity the ideas of emptiness, causelessness, and purposelessness, and he was well guarded in his speech. Then, performing the duties of a Bodhisattva, after having given up all speaking which, when spoken, serves to injure one's self or others or both, he employed only such speech as served the pleasure and benefit of himself, others, or both. And he was so wise that, when entering into capitals, kingdoms, countries, towns, cities, and villages, he was always perfectly restrained with regard to all objects of sense. Performing himself the duties of the Bodhisattva without interruption, he walked himself in the highest perfection (pâramitâ) of liberality, and he also roused others to walk in the same. And himself walking in the highest perfections of knowledge, meditation, strength, patience, and virtue, he roused others also to walk in the same. And he has collected so large a stock of merit that, wherever he is born, there arise for him many hundreds of thousands of niyutas of koîs of treasures from out the earth.

'By him, while he was thus performing the duties of a Bodhisattva, immeasurable and innumerable hundreds of thousands of niyutas of koîs of beings were established in perfect enlightenment, of whom it is not easy to know the limit by means of speech. So many immeasurable and innumerable holy Buddhas were honoured, revered, esteemed, and worshipped, and enabled to touch whatever causes pleasure, such as cloaks, alms-bowls, couches, seats, refreshments, medicines, and other furniture. It is not easy to know the limit by pointing it out in words as to how many beings were established by him in the noble families of Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, ministers, householders, and merchants. In the same manner they were established in the sovereignty of Gambûdvîpa (India), and they were established in the character of Kakravartins, Lokapâlas, Sakras, Suyâmas, Sutushitas, Sunirmittas, Vasavartins, Devarâgas, and Mahâbrahmans. So many immeasurable and innumerable Buddhas were honoured, revered, esteemed, and worshipped, and requested to turn the wheel of the Law, of whom it is not easy to know the limit by means of words.

'And he collected such virtue, that out of his mouth, while performing the duties of a Bodhisattva, during immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, immense, measureless, inexpressible *koṭīs* of kalpas, there breathed a sweet and more than heavenly smell of sandal-wood. From all the pores of his hair there arose the smell of lotus, and he was pleasing to everybody, gracious and beautiful, endowed with the fulness of the best bright colour. As his body was adorned with all the good signs and marks, there arose from the pores (of his hair) and from the palms of his hands all sorts of precious ornaments in the shape of all kinds of cloaks and vestments, in the shape of all kinds of flowers, incense, scents, garlands, ointments, umbrellas, flags, and banners, and in the shape of all kinds of instrumental music. And there appeared also, streaming forth from the palms of his hands, all kinds of viands and drink, food, hard and soft, and sweetmeats, and all kinds of enjoyments and pleasures. Thus then that Bhikshu Dharmākara, O Ânanda, had obtained the command of all necessities, after performing the duties of a Bodhisattva.'

11.

After this, the blessed Ânanda thus spoke to the Bhagavat: 'O Bhagavat, has that Bhikshu Dharmākara, the noble-minded Bodhisattva, after having obtained the highest perfect knowledge, passed away, having entered Nirvâna, or has he not yet been enlightened, or is he now living and enlightened, and does he dwell now, remain, support himself, and teach the Law?'

The Bhagavat said: 'Not indeed, O Ânanda, has that Tathâgata passed away, nor has he not yet come, but the Tathâgata, the holy, after having obtained the highest perfect knowledge, dwells now, remains, supports himself, and teaches the Law, in the western quarter, in the Buddha country, distant from this world by a hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, in the world which is called Sukhâvatî, being called Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened. He is surrounded by innumerable Bodhisattvas, and worshipped by endless *Srâvakas*, and in possession of the endless perfection of his Buddha country.

12.

'And his light is immeasurable, so that it is not easy to know the limit of its measure, saying, he stands illuminating so many hundreds of Buddha countries, so many thousands of Buddha countries, so many hundred thousands of Buddha countries, so many *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, so many hundred *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, so many thousand *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, so many hundred thousands of *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, so many hundred thousands of *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of Buddha countries. But indeed, O Ânanda, to put it briefly, a hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, equal to the sands of the river Gangâ, are always lighted up in the eastern quarter, by the light of that Bhagavat Amitâbha. Thus on every side in the southern, western, northern quarter, in the zenith and nadir, in every one of these quarters, there are a hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of Buddha countries, like the sands of the river Gangâ, always lighted up by the light of that Bhagavat Amitâbha, excepting the Buddhas, the Bhagavats, who, through the practice of their former prayers, have lighted up the world by their own light, which is a fathom in length, or by their light which is one, two, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty *yoganas* in length, or a hundred or thousand or hundred thousand *yoganas* in length, until their brightness reaches many hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of *yoganas* in length. There is not, O Ânanda, any case of likeness, by which the extent of the light of that

Tathâgata Amitâbha could be understood. Hence, O Ânanda, for that reason that Tathâgata is called Amitâbha (possessed of infinite light), and he is called Amitaprabha (possessed of infinite splendour), Amitaprabhâsa (possessed of infinite brilliancy), Asamâptaprabha (whose light is never finished), Asangataprabha (whose light is not conditioned), Prabhâsikhotsrîshṭaprabha (whose light proceeds from flames of light), Sadivyamaniprabha, (whose light is that of heavenly jewels), Apratihatarasmirâgaprabha (whose light has the colour of unimpeded rays), Râganîyaprabha (possessed of beautiful light), Premanîyaprabha, (possessed of lovely light), Pramodanîyaprabha (possessed of delightful light), Sangamanîyaprabha (possessed of attractive light), Uposhanîyaprabha (possessed of pleasant light), Anibandhanîyaprabha (possessed of light that cannot be stopped), Ativîryaprabha, (possessed of extremely powerful light), Atulyaprabha, (possessed of incomparable light), Abhibhûyanarendrâbhûtrayendraprabha (possessed of light greater than that of the lords of men, nay, the lords of the three worlds), Srântasañkayendusûryagihmîkaranaprabha (possessed of light which bends the full moon and the sun), Abhibhûyalokapâlasakrabrahmasuddhâvâsamahesvarasarvadevaghîhmîkaranaprabha (possessed of light which bends all the conquered gods, Mahesvara, the Suddhâvâsas, Brahman, Sakra, and the Lokapâlas).

'This splendour of the Ârya (noble) is pure, great, producing bodily pleasure, happiness of mind, producing happiness, delight, and joy for men and not-men, Kinnaras, Mahoragas, Garudas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Nâgas, Asuras, and Devas; and producing the pleasure of beings of good disposition.

'And in this manner, O Ânanda, the Tathâgata might speak for a whole kalpa on the work of the Tathâgata Amitâbha, beginning with his light, and yet he would not be able to reach the end of the virtues of that light of that Tathâgata, neither would there be any failure of the self-confidence in the Tathâgata himself. And why? Because, O Ânanda, both these things are immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, and endless, viz. first, the greatness of the excellence of the light of that Tathâgata Amitâbha, the Bhagavat, and secondly, the unsurpassed light of the knowledge possessed by the Tathâgata (by myself).

13.

'And, O Ânanda, the assembly of the hearers of that Tathâgata Amitâbha is immeasurable, so that it is not easy to learn its measure, so as to be able to say, there are so many koṭis of the hearers, so many hundreds, thousands, hundred-thousands, kankaras, vimbaras, nayutas (niyutas?), ayutas, akshobhyas, vivâhas (masc.), srotas (?), oḡas, so many periods, called immeasurable, innumerable, countless, incomparable, inconceivable. Now, for instance, O Ânanda, the Bhikshu Maudgalyâyana having obtained miraculous power, might, if he wished, count in one day and night, how many kinds of stars there are in the universal world. Then, let there be a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of such men, endowed with miraculous powers, and let them do nothing else but count the first company (only) of the hearers of the Tathâgata Amitâbha, during a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of years, and yet by them thus counting even the hundredth part would not be counted, even the thousandth, even the hundred thousandth, nay, not even so far as the minutest part, or likeness, or approach towards it would have been counted.

'Thus, for instance, O Ânanda, a man might throw out from the great ocean, which is not to be measured across by less than eighty-four thousand yoganas, one single drop of water by the sharp end of hair, which is divided a hundred times. What do you think then, Ânanda,—which would be greater, one drop of water which has been thrown up by the sharp pointed hair divided a hundred times, or the mass of water left in the great ocean?'

Ânanda said: 'Even a thousand yoganas, O Bhagavat, would be a small portion of the great ocean, how much more then one drop of water thrown out by the sharp pointed hair divided a hundred times!'

Bhagavat said: 'As that one drop of water, exactly so large (so small in proportion) was the first company of the hearers. And let there be reckoning made by those Bhikshus, who are like Maudgalyâyana, counting for a hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of years, and yet, as to the mass of water left in the great ocean, it would even then have to be considered as not counted. How much more with regard to the second, third, and the rest of the companies of the hearers! Therefore the mass of hearers of the Bhagavat is endless and boundless, and receives the name of "immeasurable and innumerable."

14.

'And, O Ânanda, the length of the life of that Bhagavat Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, is immeasurable, so that it is not easy to know its length, so as to be able to say (that it comprises) so many hundreds of kalpas, so many thousands of kalpas, so many hundred thousands of kalpas, so many koṭis of kalpas, so many hundreds of koṭis of kalpas, so many thousands of koṭis of kalpas, so many hundred thousands of koṭis of kalpas, so many hundred thousands of niyutas of koṭis of kalpas. Therefore, O Ânanda, the limit of the measure of the life of that Bhagavat is immeasurable indeed. Therefore that Tathâgata is called Amitâyus.

'And as, O Ânanda, the rule of making known the reckoning of kalpas exists here in this world, ten kalpas have passed now since Bhagavat Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, arose and awoke to the highest perfect knowledge.

15.

'And, O Ânanda, the world called Sukhâvatî belonging to that Bhagavat Amitâbha is prosperous, rich, good to live in, fertile, lovely, and filled with many gods and men. Then, O Ânanda, in that world there are neither hells, nor the brute creation, nor the realm of departed spirits, nor bodies of Asuras, nor untimely births. And there do not appear in this world such gems as are known in the world Sukhâvatî.

16.

'Now, O Ânanda, that world Sukhâvatî is fragrant with several sweet-smelling scents, rich in manifold flowers and fruits, adorned with gem trees, and frequented by tribes of manifold sweet-voiced birds, which have been made by the Tathâgata (on purpose). And, O Ânanda, those gem trees are of several colours, of many colours, and of many hundred thousand colours. There are gem trees there of golden-colour, and made of gold. There are those of silver-colour, and made of silver. There are those of beryl-colour, and made of beryl. There are those of crystal-colour, and made of crystal. There are those of coral-colour, and made of coral. There are those of red pearl-colour, and made of red

pearls. There are those of diamond-colour, and made of diamonds.

'There are some trees of two gems, viz. gold and silver. There are some of three gems, viz. gold, silver, and beryl. There are some of four gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, and crystal. There are some of five gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, and coral. There are some of six gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, coral, and red pearls. There are some of seven gems, viz. gold, silver, beryl, crystal, coral, red pearls, and diamonds as the seventh.

'And there, O Ânanda, of the trees made of gold, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of gold, and the fruits are made of silver. Of trees made of silver, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of silver only, and the fruits are made of beryl. Of trees made of beryl, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of beryl, and the fruits are made of crystal. Of trees made of crystal, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of crystal only, and the fruits are made of coral. Of trees made of coral, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of coral only, and the fruits are made of red pearls. Of trees made of red pearls, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of red pearls only, and the fruits are made of diamonds. Of trees made of diamonds, the flowers, leaves, small branches, branches, trunks, and roots are made of diamonds only, and the fruits are made of gold.

'Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of gold, the trunks of silver, the branches of beryl, the small branches of crystal, the leaves of coral, the flowers of red pearls, and the fruits of diamonds. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of silver, the trunks of beryl, the branches of crystal, the small branches of coral, the leaves of red pearls, the flowers of diamonds, and the fruits of gold. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of beryl, the trunks of crystal, the branches of coral, the small branches of red pearls, the leaves of diamonds, the flowers of gold, and the fruits of silver. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of crystal, the trunks of coral, the branches of red pearls, the small branches of diamonds, the leaves of gold, the flowers of silver, and the fruits of beryl. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of coral, the trunks of red pearls, the branches of diamonds, the small branches of gold, the leaves of silver, the flowers of beryl, and the fruits of crystal. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of red pearls, the trunks of diamonds, the branches of gold, the small branches of silver, the leaves of beryl, the flowers of crystal, and the fruits of coral. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of diamonds, the trunks of gold, the branches of silver, the small branches of beryl, the leaves of crystal, the flowers of coral, and the fruits of red pearls. Of some trees, O Ânanda, the roots are made of the seven gems, the trunks of the seven gems, the branches of the seven gems, the small branches of the seven gems, the leaves of the seven gems, the flowers of the seven gems, and the fruits of the seven gems.

'And, O Ânanda, the roots, trunks, branches, small branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits of all those trees are pleasant to touch, and fragrant. And, when those (trees) are moved by the wind, a sweet and delightful sound proceeds from them, never tiring, and never disagreeable to hear. That Buddha country, O Ânanda, is always on every side surrounded by such trees made of the seven gems, by masses of Kadalî (banana) trees, and rows of palm-trees made of the seven gems, and entirely surrounded with golden nets, and wholly covered with lotus flowers, made of all kinds of gems.

'There are lotus flowers there, half a *yogana* in circumference. There are others, one *yogana* in circumference; and others, two, three, four, or five *yoganas* in circumference; nay, there are some, as much as ten *yoganas* in circumference. And from each gem–lotus there proceed thirty–six hundred thousand *kofis* of rays of light. And from each ray of light there proceed thirty–six hundred thousand *kofis* of Buddhas, with bodies of golden–colour, possessed of the thirty–two marks of great men, who go and teach the Law to beings in the immeasurable and innumerable worlds in the eastern quarter. Thus also in the southern, western, and northern quarters, above and below, in the cardinal and intermediate points, they go their way to the immeasurable and innumerable worlds and teach the Law to beings in the whole world.

17.

'And again, O *Ânanda*, there are no black mountains anywhere in that Buddha country, nor anywhere jewel mountains, nor anywhere Sumeru, kings of mountains, nor anywhere *Kakravâdas*, great *Kakravâdas*, kings of mountains. And that Buddha country is level on every side, lovely, like the palm of the hand, with districts full of jewels and treasures of every kind.'

After this, the blessed *Ânanda* spoke thus to the *Bhagavat*: 'But in that case, O *Bhagavat*, where do the gods consisting of the companies of the four *Mahârâgas* who dwell on the side of the Sumeru, and where do the *Trâyastriṃsa* gods who dwell on the top of the Sumeru, find their place?'

Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, O *Ânanda*, where do these other beings find their place, who in this world dwell above the king of mountains, Sumeru, namely, the *Yâmadevas*, *Tushitas*, *Nirmânaratis*, *Paranirmitavasavartins*, *Brahmakâyikas*, *Brahmapurohitas*, *Mahâbrahmans*, as far as the *Akanishthas*?'

Ânanda replied: 'O *Bhagavat*, the result of works and the outcome of works are inconceivable' (i.e. I do not understand it).

Bhagavat said: 'Here, you see, the result of works and the outcome of works are inconceivable. But to the blessed Buddhas the position of Buddhas is not inconceivable, while to thee the holy and miraculous power of virtuous beings, whose stock of merit has become ripened, seems inconceivable.'

Ânanda said: 'I had no doubt on this, no difference of opinion, or hesitation; on the contrary, I ask only the *Tathâgata* about this matter in order to destroy the doubts, the differences of opinion, and the hesitations of future beings.

Bhagavat said: 'All right, *Ânanda*, this is what you ought to do.

18.

'In that world *Sukhâvatî*, O *Ânanda*, there flow different kinds of rivers; there are great rivers there, one *yogana* in breadth; there are rivers up to twenty, thirty, forty, fifty *yoganas* in breadth, and up to twelve *yoganas* in depth. All these rivers are delightful, carrying water of different sweet odour, carrying bunches of flowers adorned with various gems, resounding with sweet voices. And, O *Ânanda*, there proceeds from an instrument which consists of

hundred thousand *koṭis* of parts, which embodies heavenly music and is played by clever people, the same delightful sound which proceeds from those great rivers, the sound which is deep, unknown, incomprehensible, clear, pleasant to the ear, touching the heart, beloved, sweet, delightful, never tiring, never disagreeable, pleasant to hear, as if it always said, "Non-eternal, peaceful, unreal." Such a sound comes to be heard by these beings.

'And again, O Ânanda, the borders of those great rivers on both sides are filled with jewel trees of various scents, from which bunches of flowers, leaves, and branches of all kinds hang down. And if the beings, who are on the borders of those rivers, wish to enjoy sport full of heavenly delights, the water rises to the ankle only after they have stepped into the rivers, if they wish it to be so; or if they wish it, the water rises to their knees, to their hips, to their sides, and to their ears. And heavenly pleasures arise. Again, if the beings then wish the water to be cold, it is cold; if they wish it to be hot, it is hot; if they wish it to be hot and cold, it is hot and cold, according to their pleasure.

'And those great rivers flow along, full of water scented with the best perfumes of the Uragasâra sandal-wood, of Tagaras, Kâlânusârin (dark, fragrant sandal-wood) trees, Agarus, and heavenly Tamâlapattras; covered with flowers of the white water-lilies, and heavenly Utpalas, Padmas, Kumudas, and Pundarikas; full of delightful sounds of peacocks, sparrows, *kuṇḍalâs*, cuckoos, *sârîkas*, parrots, ducks, geese, herons, cranes, swans and others; with small islands inhabited by flocks of birds, created by the Tathâgata; adorned with fields, full of metals; with fords on which it is easy to drink, free from mud, and covered with gold dust. And when these beings there desire, thinking what kind of wishes should be fulfilled for them, then exactly such wishes are fulfilled for them according to the Law.

'And, O Ânanda, the sound which rises from that water is delightful, and the whole Buddha country is aroused by it. And if beings, who stand on the borders of the river, wish that the sound should not come within their ear-shot, then it does not come within their ear-shot, even if they are possessed of the heavenly ear. And whatever sound a man wishes to hear, exactly that delightful sound he hears, as for instance, the sound "Buddha, Dharma (the Law), Sangha (the Church), the Pâramitâs (highest perfections), the Bhûmis (stages), the Balas (powers), Vaisâradya (perfections), Âvenikabuddhadharma (freedom from attachment), Pratisamvit (consciousness); Sûnyatâ (emptiness), Animitta (unconditioned), Apranihita (free from desire), Anabhisamskâra (not made), Agâta (not born), Anutpâda (without origin), Abhâva (not being), and Nirodha (cessation); Sânta, prasânta, and upasânta (peace); Mahâmaitrî (great love), Mahâkarunâ (great pity), Mahâmuditâ (great rejoicing), and Mahopekshâ (great forgiveness); Anutpattikadharmakshânti (resignation to consequences which have not yet arisen), and Abhishekabhûmipratilambha (attainment of the royal stage)."

'And having heard these sounds, everybody feels the highest delight and pleasure accompanied by retirement, passionlessness, quiet, cessation, law, and a stock of merit leading to the perfect knowledge.

'And, O Ânanda, there is nowhere in that Sukhâvatî world any sound of sin, obstacle, misfortune, distress, and destruction; there is nowhere any sound of pain, even the sound of perceiving what is neither pain nor pleasure is not there, O Ânanda, how much less the

sound of pain. For that reason, O Ânanda, that world is called Sukhâvatî, shortly, but not in full. For, O Ânanda, the whole kalpa would come to an end, while the different causes of the pleasure of the world Sukhâvatî are being praised, and even then the end of those causes of happiness could not be reached.

19.

'And again, O Ânanda, the beings, who have been and will be born in that world Sukhâvatî, will be endowed with such colour, strength, vigour, height and breadth, dominion, accumulation of virtue; with such enjoyments of dress, ornaments, gardens, palaces, and pavilions; and such enjoyments of touch, taste, smell, and sound; in fact with all enjoyments and pleasures, exactly like the Paranirmitavasavartin gods.

'And again, O Ânanda, in that world Sukhâvatî, beings do not take food consisting of gross materials of gravy or molasses; but whatever food they desire, such food they perceive, as if it were taken, and become delighted in body and mind. Yet they need not put it into their mouth.

'And if, after they are satisfied, they wish different kinds of perfumes, then with these very heavenly kinds of perfumes the whole Buddha country is scented. And whosoever wishes to perceive there such perfume, every perfume of every scent of the Gandharvarâga does always reach his nose.

'And in the same manner, if they desire musical instruments, banners, flags, umbrellas, cloaks, powders, ointments, garlands, and scents, then the whole Buddha country shines with such things. If they desire cloaks of different colours and many hundred thousand colours, then with these very best cloaks the whole Buddha country shines. And the people feel themselves covered with them.

'And if they desire such ornaments, as for instance, head-ornaments, ear-ornaments, neck-ornaments, hand and foot ornaments, namely, diadems, earrings, bracelets, armlets, necklaces, chains, ear-jewels, seals, gold strings, girdles, gold nets, pearl nets, jewel nets, nets of bells made of gold and jewels, then they see that Buddha country shining with such ornaments adorned with many hundred thousand jewels, that are fastened to ornament-trees. And they perceive themselves to be adorned with these ornaments.

'And if they desire a palace, with colours and emblems of such and such height and width, adorned with hundred thousand gates made with different jewels, covered with different heavenly flowers, full of couches strewn with beautiful cushions, then exactly such a palace appears before them. And in these delightful palaces they dwell, play, sport, walk about, being honoured, and surrounded by seven times seven thousands of Apsarases.

20.

'And in that world, there is no difference between gods and men, except when they are spoken of in ordinary and imperfect parlance as gods and men. And, O Ânanda, as a low man and impotent man, before the face of the mighty king, is neither bright, nor warm, nor brilliant, nor is he self-confident and radiant,—thus Sakra, king of the Devas, if before the face of the Paranirmitavasavartin gods, is neither bright, nor warm, nor brilliant, namely, with regard to his gardens, palaces, dresses, ornaments, his dominion, his perfection, his

miraculous power, or his supremacy, his comprehension of the Law, and his full enjoyment of the Law. And, O Ânanda, as the Paranirmitavasavartin gods are there, thus men must be considered in the world Sukhâvatî.

21.

'And again, O Ânanda, in that world Sukhâvatî, when the time of forenoon has come, the winds are greatly agitated and blowing everywhere in the four quarters. And they shake and drive many beautiful, graceful, and many-coloured stalks of the gem trees, which are perfumed with sweet heavenly scents, so that many hundred beautiful flowers of delightful scent fall down on the great earth, which is all full of jewels. And with these flowers that Buddha country is adorned on every side seven fathoms deep. As a clever man might spread out a flower-bed on the earth and make it even with both his hands, beautiful and charming, even thus with those flowers of various scents and colours that Buddha country is shining on every side seven fathoms deep. And these many flowers are soft, pleasant to touch, if one may use a comparison, like Kâkilindika (some kind of soft substance). If one puts one's foot on them, they sink down four inches; if one raises one's foot, they rise again four inches. When the time of the forenoon has gone again, those flowers vanish without leaving anything behind. Then that Buddha country is again clean, pleasant, beautiful, and without fading flowers. The winds blow again everywhere in the four quarters, and scatter down fresh flowers as before. And as it is in the forenoon, so it is at noon, at twilight, in the first, middle, and last watch of the night. And the beings, if touched by those winds which blow perfume with various scents, are as full of happiness as a Bhikshu (mendicant) who has obtained Nirvâna.

22.

'And in that Buddha country, O Ânanda, no mention is ever made of the names of fire, sun, moon, planets, Nakshatras (constellations), and stars, or of blinding darkness. There is no mention even of day and night, except in the conversation of the Tathâgata. Nor is there any idea of predial property belonging to monasteries.

23.

'And again, O Ânanda, in that world Sukhâvatî at the proper time clouds full of heavenly perfumed water pour down heavenly flowers of all colours; heavenly seven jewels, heavenly sandalwood-powder, and heavenly umbrellas, flags, and banners are poured down. And in the sky, the heavenly flowers of all colours, and heavenly canopies are held, likewise heavenly excellent umbrellas and all kinds of ornaments, heavenly musical instruments are played, and heavenly Apsarases dance.

24.

'And again, O Ânanda, in that Buddha country whatever beings have been born, and are being born, and will be born, are always constant in absolute truth, till they have reached Nirvâna. And why is that? Because there is no room or mention there of the other two divisions (râsis), such as beings not constant or constant in falsehood.

'On this wise, O Ânanda, that world is briefly called Sukhâvatî, not at full length. Even a kalpa, O Ânanda, would come to an end, while the causes of happiness which exist in that world Sukhâvatî are being praised, and yet it would be impossible to reach the end of them.'

25.

Then the Bhagavat at that time spoke the following verses:

'Thus, O Ânanda, the world Sukhâvatî is endowed with immeasurable good qualities and excellences.

26.

'And again, O Ânanda, in the ten quarters, and in each of them, in all the Buddha countries equal in number to the sand of the Gangâ, the blessed Buddhas equal in number to the sand of the Gangâ, glorify the name of the blessed Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, they preach his fame, they proclaim his glory, they extol his virtue. And why? Because all beings who hear the name of the blessed Amitâbha, and having heard it, raise their thought with joyful longing, even for once only, will not turn away again from the highest perfect knowledge.

27.

'And before the eyes of those beings, O Ânanda, who again and again think of the Tathâgata reverently, and who make the great and unmeasured stock of good works grow, turning their thought towards Bodhi (knowledge), and who pray to be born in that world, Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, when the time of their death has approached, will appear, surrounded by many companies of Bhikshus and honoured by them. And then these beings, having seen the Bhagavat, their thoughts filled with joy, will, when they have died, be born in that world of Sukhâvatî. And if, O Ânanda, any son or daughter of a good family should wish—What?—How then may I see that Tathâgata Amitâbha visibly, then he must raise his thought on to the highest perfect knowledge, he must direct his thought with perseverance and excessive desire towards that Buddha country, and direct the stock of his good works towards being born there.

28.

'But before the eyes of those who do not care much about the Tathâgata Amitâbha, and who do not vigorously increase the great and unmeasured stock of their good works, the Tathâgata Amitâbha, holy and fully enlightened, will appear, at the time of death, with the company of Bhikshus, in breadth and height and form and beauty, very like (the former), and very like (the real Tathâgata), but only created by thought. And they, through their meditation that dwells on perceiving the sight of the Tathâgata, and with unailing memory, will, when they have died, be born in the same Buddha country.

29.

'And again, O Ânanda, those beings who meditate on the Tathâgata by giving him the ten thoughts, and who will direct their desire towards that Buddha country, and who will feel satisfaction when the profound doctrines are being preached, and who will not fall off, nor despair, nor fail, but will meditate on that Tathâgata, if it were by one thought only, and will direct their desire toward that Buddha country, they also will see the Tathâgata Amitâbha, while they are in a dream, they will be born in the world Sukhâvatî, and will never turn away from the highest perfect knowledge.

30.

'And, O Ânanda, after thus seeing the cause and effect, the Tathâgatas of the ten quarters, in immeasurable and innumerable worlds, glorify the name of the Tathâgata Amitâbha,

preach his fame, and proclaim his praise. And again, O Ânanda, in that Buddha country, Bodhisattvas equal in number to the sand of the Gangâ approach, from the ten quarters, and in each quarter towards that Tathâgata Amitâbha, in order to see him, to bow before him, to worship him, to consult him, and likewise in order to see that company of Bodhisattvas, and the different kinds of perfection in the multitude of ornaments and excellences belonging to that Buddha country.'

--Section 2 --

Section 3

31.

Then at that time, the Bhagavat, in order to illustrate this matter in fuller measure, recited these verses:

1. 'As there are Buddha countries equal to the sand of the river Gangâ in the eastern quarter, whence all the Bodhisattvas come to worship the Buddha, the lord Amitâyû;
2. 'And they having taken many bunches of flowers of different colours, sweetly-scented and delightful, shower them down on the best leader of men, on Amitâyû, worshipped by gods and men;--
3. 'In the same manner there are as many Buddha countries in the southern, western, and northern quarters, whence they come with the Bodhisattvas to worship the Buddha, the lord Amitâyû.
4. 'And they having taken many handfulls of scents of different colours, sweetly-scented and delightful, shower them down on the best leader of men, on Amitâyû, worshipped by gods and men.
5. 'These many Bodhisattvas having worshipped and revered the feet of Amitaprabha, and having walked round him respectfully, speak thus: "Oh, the country of Buddha shines wonderfully!"
6. 'And they cover him again with handfulls of flowers, with thoughts jubilant, with incomparable joy, and proclaim their wish before that lord: "May our country also be such as this."
7. 'And what was thrown there as handfulls of flowers arose in the form of an umbrella extending over a hundred yoganas, and the beautiful country shines and is well adorned, and flowers cover the whole body of Buddha.
8. 'These Bodhisattvas having thus honoured him, how do they act?--Delighted they pronounce this speech: "Gains by those people are well gained, by whom the name of the best man has been heard.
9. "'By us also all the gain has been well gained, because we have come to this Buddha country. See this dream-like country how beautiful it is, which was made by the teacher during a hundred thousand kalpas.
10. "'Look, the Buddha possessed of a mass of the best virtues shines, surrounded by Bodhisattvas. Endless is his splendour, and endless the light, and endless the life, and endless the assembly."
11. 'And the lord Amitâyû makes a smile of thirty-six niyutas of kofis of rays, which rays having issued from the circle of his mouth light up the thousand kofis of Buddha countries.

12. 'And all these rays having returned there again settle on the head of the lord; gods and men produce (perceive) the delight, because they have seen there this light of him.

13. 'There rises the Buddha-son, glorious, he indeed the mighty Avalokitesvara, and says: "What is the reason there, O Bhagavat, what is the cause, that thou smilest, O lord of the world?"

14. "Explain this, for thou knowest the sense, and art full of kind compassion, the deliverer of many living beings. All beings will be filled with joyful thoughts, when they have thus heard this excellent and delightful speech.

15. "And the Bodhisattvas who have come from many worlds to Sukhâvatî in order to see the Buddha, having heard it and having perceived the great joy, will quickly inspect this country.

16. "And beings, come to this noble country, (quickly) obtain miraculous power, divine eye and divine ear, they remember their former births, and know the highest wisdom."

17. 'Then Buddha Amitâyû preaches: "This prayer was mine formerly, so that beings having in any way whatever heard my name should for ever go to my country.

18. "And this my excellent prayer has been fulfilled, and beings having quickly come here from many worlds into my presence, never return from here, not even for one birth."

19. 'If a Bodhisattva wishes here that his country should be such as this, and that he also should deliver many beings, through his name, through his preaching, and through his sight,

20. 'Let him quickly and with speed go to the world Sukhâvatî, and having gone near Amitaprabha, let him worship a thousand koṭis of Buddhas.

21. 'Having worshipped many koṭis of Buddhas, and having gone to many countries by means of their miraculous power, and having performed adoration in the presence of the Sugatas, they will go to Sukhâvatî with devotion.

32.

'And again, O Ânanda, there is a Bodhi-tree belonging to Amitâyus, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened. That Bodhi-tree is ten hundred yoganas in height, having petals, leaves, and branches spread over eight hundred yoganas, having a circumference near the base of the root of five hundred yoganas, always in leaf, always in flower, always in fruit, of different colours, of many hundred thousand colours, of different leaves, of different flowers, of different fruits, adorned with many beautiful ornaments, shining with precious jewels, bright like the moon, beautified with precious jewels (such as are) fastened on Sakra's head, strewn with Kintâmani jewels, well adorned with the best jewels of the sea, more than heavenly, hung with golden strings, adorned with hundreds of gold chains, jewel-garlands, necklaces, bracelets, strings of red pearls and blue pearls, lion twists (Simhalatâ), girdles, bunches, strings of jewels, and all kinds of jewels, covered with nets of bells, nets of all kinds of jewels, nets of pearls, and nets of gold, adorned with the emblems of the dolphin,

the Svastika, the Nandyâvarta, and the moon, adorned with nets of jewels and of bells, and with ornaments of gold and of all kinds of jewels, in fact adorned according to the desires of beings whatever their wishes may be.

'And again, O Ânanda, the sound and noise of that Bodhi-tree, when it is moved by the wind, reaches immeasurable worlds. And, O Ânanda, for those beings whose hearing that Bodhi-tree reaches, no disease of the ear is to be feared until they reach Bodhi (highest knowledge). And for those immeasurable, innumerable, inconceivable, incomparable, measureless, immense, and inexpressible beings, whose sight that Bodhi-tree reaches, no disease of the eye is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. And again, O Ânanda, for those beings who smell the scent of that Bodhi-tree, no disease of the nose is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. For those beings who taste the fruits of that Bodhi-tree, no disease of the tongue is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. For those beings who are lighted up by the light of that Bodhi-tree, no disease of the body is to be feared until they reach Bodhi. And again, O Ânanda, for those beings who meditate on that Bodhi-tree according to the Law, henceforward until they reach the Bodhi, no perplexity of their thought is to be feared. And all those beings, through the seeing of that Bodhi-tree, never turn away, namely, from the highest perfect knowledge. And they obtain three kinds of kshânti or resignation, namely, Ghoshânugâ, Anulomikî (resignation to natural consequences), and Anutpattika-dharma-kshânti (resignation to consequences which have not yet arisen), through the power of the former prayers of that same Tathâgata Amitâyus, through the service rendered by them to the former Gînas, and through the performance of the former prayers, to be well accomplished, and to be well conceived, without failure or without flaw.

33.

'And again, O Ânanda, those Bodhisattvas who have been born, are being born, or will be born there, are all bound to one birth only, and will thence indeed obtain the highest perfect knowledge; barring always the power of prayers, as in the case of those Bodhisattvas who are preaching with the voice of lions, who are girded with the noble armour (of the Law), and who are devoted to the work of helping all people to attain Parinirvâna.

34.

'And again, O Ânanda, in that Buddha country, those who are Srâvakas are possessed of the light of a fathom, and those who are Bodhisattvas are possessed of the light of a hundred thousand kofîs of yoganas; barring always the two Bodhisattvas, by whose light that world is everywhere shining with eternal splendour.'

Then the blessed Ânanda said this to the Bhagavat: 'What are the names, O Bhagavat, of those two noble-minded Bodhisattvas?'

The Bhagavat said: 'One of them, O Ânanda, is the noble-minded Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and the second is Mahâsthâmaprâpta by name. And, O Ânanda, these two were born there, having left this Buddha country here.

35.

'And, O Ânanda, those Bodhisattvas who have been born in that Buddha country are all endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great man, possessed of perfect members, skilled in meditation and wisdom, clever in all kinds of wisdom, having sharp organs, having

well-restrained organs, having organs of sense capable of thorough knowledge, not mean, possessed of the five kinds of strength, of patience under censure, and of endless and boundless good qualities.

36.

'And again, O Ânanda, all those Bodhisattvas who have been born in that Buddha country are not deprived of the sight of Buddha, nor liable to fall down (to the evil states), until they reach the Bodhi. Henceforward they all will never be forgetful of their former births; barring always those who are devoted to their former place, during the disturbances of the kalpas, and while the five kinds of corruption prevail, when there is the appearance of blessed Buddhas in the world, as for instance, that of me at present.

37.

'And again, O Ânanda, all the Bodhisattvas who have been born in that Buddha country, having gone during one morning meal to the other world, worship many hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of Buddhas, as many as they like, through the favour of Buddha. They consider in many ways that they should worship (Buddhas) with such and such flowers, incense, lamps, scents, garlands, ointments, powder, cloaks, umbrellas, flags, banners, ensigns, music, concerts, and musical instruments; and, as soon as they have considered this, there arise also on their hands exactly such materials for every kind of worship. And while performing worship for those blessed Buddhas with those materials, beginning with flowers and ending with musical instruments, they lay up for themselves much immeasurable and innumerable merit. Again, if they wish that such handfulls of flowers should be produced on their hands, then such handfulls of heavenly flowers, of different colours, of many colours, of different scents, are produced on their hands as soon as thought of. They shower again and again such handfulls of flowers upon those blessed Buddhas. And the very smallest handfull of flowers, being thrown on high, appears above in the sky as an umbrella of flowers ten *yoganas* in circumference. And when the second has been thrown after it, the first does not fall down on the earth. There are handfulls of flowers there, which having been thrown up, appear in the sky as umbrellas of flowers twenty *yoganas* in circumference. There appear in the sky some flower-umbrellas, thirty, forty, or fifty *yoganas* in circumference, as far as a hundred thousand *yoganas* in circumference. Those (Bodhisattvas) there who perceive the noble pleasure and joy, and obtain the noble strength of thought, having caused a great and immeasurable and innumerable stock of good works to ripen, and having worshipped many hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of Buddhas, turn again to the world *Sukhâvatî* in one morning, through the favour of practising the former prayers of the same *Tathâgata Amitâyus*, owing to the hearing of the Law formerly given, owing to the stock of good works produced under former *Ginas*, owing to the perfect completion in the success of former prayers, owing to the well-ordered state of mind.

38.

'And again, O Ânanda, all those beings who have been born in that Buddha country recite the story of the Law, which is accompanied by omniscience. And for the beings in that Buddha country there exists no idea of property whatever. And all those going and walking through that Buddha country feel neither pleasure nor pain; stepping forward they have no desire, and with desire they do not step forward. They give no thought to any beings. And again, O Ânanda, for those beings who have been born in that world *Sukhâvatî*, there is no

idea of others, no idea of self, no idea of inequality, no strife, no dispute, no opposition. Full of equanimity, of benevolent thought, of tender thought, of affectionate thought, of useful thought, of serene thought, of firm thought, of unbiassed thought, of undisturbed thought, of unagitated thought, of thought (fixed on) the practice of discipline and transcendent wisdom, having entered on knowledge which is a firm support to all thoughts, equal to the ocean in wisdom, equal to the mountain Meru in knowledge, rich in many good qualities, delighting in the music of the Bodhyangas, devoted to the music of Buddha, they discard the eye of flesh, and assume the heavenly eye. And having approached the eye of wisdom, having reached the eye of the Law, producing the eye of Buddha, showing it, lighting it, and fully exhibiting it, they attain perfect wisdom. And being bent on the equilibrium of the three elements, having subdued and calmed their thoughts, endowed with a perception of the causes of all things, clever in explanation of causes, endowed with the power of explaining the Law (or things such as they really are), clever in taking and refusing, clever in leading and not leading, clever in resting, they, being regardless of worldly stories, derive true pleasures from stories transcending the world. They are clever in examining all things, familiar with the knowledge of the cessation of the working of all things, perceiving even what cannot be seen, caring for nothing, attached to nothing, without cares, without pain, free without clinging to anything, free from impurity, of blameless behaviour, not clinging to anything, intent on the deep or profound laws, they do not sink, elevated to the entrance into the knowledge of Buddha difficult to comprehend, having obtained the path of one vehicle, free from doubt, beyond the reach of questionings, knowing the thoughts of others, free from self-confidence. Being elevated in knowledge, they are like the Sumeru; being imperturbable in thought, they are like the ocean; they surpass the light of the sun and moon, by the light of wisdom, and by the whiteness, brilliancy, purity, and beauty of their knowledge; by their light and splendour, they are like the colour of molten gold; by their patiently bearing the good and evil deeds of all beings, they are like the earth; by their cleaning and carrying off the taint of all sins, they are

like water; by their burning the evil of pride in anything, they are like the king of fire; by not clinging to anything, they are like the wind; by pervading all things and yet not caring for anything, they are like the ether; by not being tainted by the whole world, they are like lotuses; by their shouting forth the Law, they are like the great cloud at the rainy season; by showering down the whole ocean of the Law, they are like the great rain; by overpowering great troops, they are like bulls; by the highest restraint of their thoughts, they are like great elephants; by being well trained, they are like noble horses; by their fearlessness, confidence, and heroism, they are like the lion, the king of beasts; by affording protection to all beings, they are like the Nyagrodha (fig-tree), the king of trees; by not being shaken by any calumniators, they are like the (Sumeru), the king of mountains; by their feeling of unlimited love, they are like the sky; by their precedence, owing to their command of the Law, and their stock of all merit, they are like the great Brahman; by their not dwelling in what they have accumulated, they are like birds; by their scattering all calumniators, they are like Garuda, king of birds; by their not being averse to our obtaining difficult things, they are like the Udumbara flowers; calm like elephants, because their senses are neither crooked nor shaken; clever in decision, full of the sweet flavour of patience; without envy, because they do not hanker after the happiness of others; wise, because in their search after the Law, never tired of discussions on the Law; like the precious beryl, through their value; (like) jewel-mines, by their sacred knowledge; sweet-sounding by the noise of the great drum of the Law, striking the great kettledrum of the Law, blowing the great

trumpet–shell of the Law, raising the great banner of the Law, lighting the torch of the Law, looking for wisdom, not foolish, faultless, passionless, pure, refined, not greedy, fond of distributing, generous, open–handed, fond of distributing gifts, not stingy in giving instruction and food, not attached, without fear, without desires, wise, patient, energetic, bashful, orderly, fearless, full of knowledge, happy, pleasant to live with, obliging, enlightening the world, free from sorrow, free from taint, having left off the winking of the eye, possessing lightly acquired knowledge, strong in reasoning, strong in prayer, not crooked, not perverse; then, having accumulated a hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of *lakshas* of virtue, delivered from the thorns of pride, free from illusion, hatred, and passion; pure, devoted to what is pure, famous by the *Gīna*–power, learned in the world, elevated by their purified knowledge, sons of the *Gīna*, endowed with the vigour of thought, heroes, firm, unselfish, free from faults, unequalled, free from anger, collected, noble, heroes, bashful, energetic, possessed of memory, understanding, and prudence; sending forth the weapons of knowledge, possessed of purity, shining, free from faults and taints, endowed with memory, resting on serene knowledge. And such, O *Ānanda*, are the beings in that Buddha country, stated briefly. But if the *Tathāgatas* should describe them fully, even in a length of life that should last for a hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of *kalpas*, yet the end of the virtues of those good people would not be reached, and yet there would be no failure of the self–confidence of the *Tathāgata*. And why? Because, O *Ānanda*, both are indeed inconceivable and incomparable, viz. first, the virtues of those *Bodhisattvas*, and secondly, the unsurpassed light of knowledge of the *Tathāgata*.

39.

'And now, O *Ānanda*, stand up, facing westward, and having taken a handful of flowers, fall down. This is the quarter where that *Bhagavat Amitābha*, the *Tathāgata*, holy and fully enlightened, dwells, remains, supports himself, and teaches the Law, whose spotless and pure name, famed in every quarter of the whole world with its ten quarters, the blessed *Buddhas*, equal to (the grains of) the sand of the river *Gangā*, speaking and answering again and again without stopping, extol, praise, and eulogize.'

After this, the blessed *Ānanda* said this to the *Bhagavat*: 'I wish, O *Bhagavat*, to see that *Amitābha*, *Amitaprabha*, *Amitāyus*, the *Tathāgata*, holy and fully enlightened, and those noble–minded *Bodhisattvas*, who are possessed of a stock of merit amassed under many hundred thousand *niyutas* of *koṭīs* of *Buddhas*.'

At that moment this speech was spoken by the blessed *Ānanda*, and immediately that *Amitābha*, the *Tathāgata*, holy and fully enlightened, let such a ray of light go out of the palm of his own hand, that even the most distant Buddha country was shining with the great splendour. And again at that time, whatever black mountains, or jewel–mountains, or *Merus*, great *Merus*, *Mukilindas*, great *Mukilindas*, *Kakravādas*, great *Kakravādas*, or erections, or pillars, trees, woods, gardens, palaces, belonging to the gods and men, exist everywhere in hundred thousand *koṭīs* of Buddha countries; all these were pervaded and overcome by the light of that *Tathāgata*. And as a man, followed by another at a distance of a fathom only, would see the other man, when the sun has risen, exactly in the same manner the *Bhikshus*, *Bhikshurīis*, *Upāsakas* (laymen), *Upāsikās* (laywomen), gods, *Nāgas*, *Yakshas*, *Rākshasas*, *Gandharvas*, *Asuras*, *Garudās*, *Kinnaras*, *Mahoragas*, men and not–men, in this Buddha country, saw at that time that *Amitābha*, the *Tathāgata*, holy and fully enlightened, like the *Sumeru*, the king of mountains, elevated above all countries,

surpassing all quarters, shining, warming, glittering, blazing; and they saw that great mass of Bodhisattvas, and that company of Bhikshus, viz. by the grace of Buddha, from the pureness of that light. And as this great earth might be, when all covered with water, so that no trees, no mountains, no islands, no grasses, bushes, herbs, large trees, no rivers, chasms, water-falls, would be seen, but only the one great earth which had all become an ocean, in exactly the same manner there is neither mark nor sign whatever to be seen in that Buddha country, except Srâvakas, spreading their light over a fathom, and those Bodhisattvas, spreading their light over a hundred thousand *kofis* of *yoganas*. And that Bhagavat Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, overshadowing that mass of Srâvakas and that mass of Bodhisattvas, is seen, illuminating all quarters. Again at that time all those Bodhisattvas, Srâvakas, gods and men in that world Sukhâvatî, saw this world Sahâ and Sâkyamuni, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, surrounded by a holy company of Bhikshus, teaching the Law.

40.

Then, the Bhagavat addressed the noble-minded Bodhisattva Agita, and said: 'Do you see, O Agita, the perfection of the array of ornaments and good qualities in that Buddha country; and above in the sky (places) with charming parks, charming gardens, charming rivers and lotus lakes, scattered with many precious Padmas, Utpalas, Kumudas, and Pundarîkas; and below, from the earth to the abode of the Akanishthas, the surface of the sky, covered with flowers, ornamented with wreaths of flowers, shining on the rows of many precious columns, frequented by flocks of all kinds of birds created by the Tathâgata?'

The Bodhisattva Agita said: 'I see, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Do you see again, O Agita, those flocks of immortal birds, making the whole Buddha country resound with the voice of Buddha, so that those Bodhisattvas are never without meditating on Buddha?'

Agita said: 'I see, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Do you see again, O Agita, those beings, who have ascended to the palaces which extend over a hundred thousand *yoganas* in the sky, walking about respectfully

Agita said: 'I see, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, O Agita, is there any difference between the gods called Paranirmitavasavartins, and men in the world Sukhâvatî?'

Agita said: 'I do not, O Bhagavat, perceive even one difference, so far as the men in that world of Sukhâvatî are endowed with great supernatural powers.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Do you see again, O Agita, those men dwelling within the calyx of excellent lotus-flowers in that world Sukhâvatî?'

He said: 'As gods called Trâyastrimsas or Yâmas, having entered into palaces of fifty or hundred or five hundred *yoganas* in extent, are playing, sporting, walking about, exactly in

the same manner I see, O Bhagavat, these men dwelling within the calyx of excellent lotus-flowers in the world Sukhâvatî.

41.

'Again there are, O Bhagavat, beings who, being born miraculously, appear sitting cross-legged in the lotus-flowers. What is there, O Bhagavat, the cause, what the reason, that some dwell within the calyx, while others, being born miraculously, appear sitting cross-legged in the lotus-flowers?'

The Bhagavat said: 'Those Bodhisattvas, O Agita, who, living in other Buddha countries, entertain doubt about being born in the world Sukhâvatî, and with that thought amass a stock of merit, for them there is the dwelling within the calyx. Those, on the contrary, who are filled with faith, and being free from doubt, amass a stock of merit in order to be born in the world Sukhâvatî, and conceive, believe, and trust in the perfect knowledge of the blessed Buddhas, they, being born miraculously, appear sitting cross-legged in the flowers of the lotus. And those noble-minded Bodhisattvas, O Agita, who, living in other Buddha countries, raise their thought in order to see Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, who never entertain a doubt, believe in the perfect knowledge of Buddha and in their own stock of merit, for them, being born miraculously, and appearing cross-legged, there is, in one minute, such a body as that of other beings who have been born there long before. See, O Agita, the excellent, immeasurable, unfailing, unlimited wisdom, that namely for their own benefit they are deprived during five hundred years of seeing Buddhas, seeing Bodhisattvas, hearing the Law, speaking about the Law (with others), and thus collecting a stock of merit; they are indeed deprived of the successful attainment of every stock of merit, and that through their forming ideas tainted with doubt.

'And, O Agita, there might be a dungeon belonging to an anointed Kshatriya king, inlaid entirely with gold and beryl, in which cushions, garlands, wreaths and strings are fixed, having canopies of different colours and kind, covered with silk cushions, scattered over with various flowers and blossoms, scented with excellent scents, adorned with arches, courts, windows, pinnacles, fire-places, and terraces, covered with nets of bells of the seven kinds of gems, having four angles, four pillars, four doors, four stairs; and the son of that king having been thrown into the dungeon for some misdeed is there, bound with a chain made of the Gâmbûnada gold. And suppose there is a couch prepared for him, covered with many woollen cloths, spread over with cotton and feather cushions, having Kâlinga coverings, and carpets, together with coverlids, red on both sides, beautiful and charming. There he might be then either sitting or resting. And there might be brought to him much food and drink, of various kinds, pure and well prepared. What do you think, O Agita, would the enjoyment be great for that prince?'

Agita said: 'Yes, it would be great, O Bhagavat.'

The Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, O Agita, would he even taste it there, and notice it, or would he feel any satisfaction from it?'

He said: 'Not indeed, O Bhagavat; but on the contrary, when he had been led away by the king and thrown into the dungeon, he would only wish for deliverance from there. He would seek for the nobles, princes, ministers, women, elders (rich merchants), householders, and

lords of castles, who might deliver him from that dungeon. Moreover, O Bhagavat, there is no pleasure for that prince in that dungeon, nor is he liberated, until the king shows him favour.'

The Bhagavat said: 'Thus, O Agita, it is with those Bodhisattvas who, having fallen into doubt, amass a stock of merit, but doubt the knowledge of Buddha. They are born in that world Sukhâvatî, through the hearing of Buddha's name, and through the serenity of thought only; they do not, however, appear sitting cross-legged in the flowers of the lotus, being born miraculously, but dwell only in the calyx of the lotus-flowers. Moreover for them there exist ideas of palaces and gardens. There is no discharge, there is no phlegm or mucus, there is nothing disagreeable to the mind. But they are deprived of seeing Buddhas, hearing the Law, seeing Bodhisattvas, speaking about and ascertaining the Law, (gathering) any (new) stock of merit, and practising the Law, during five hundred years. Moreover they do not rejoice there or perceive satisfaction. But they wish to remove one another, and then they step out behind. And it is not known whether their exit takes place above, below, or across. See, O Agita, there might be worshippings of many hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of Buddhas during those five hundred years, and also many, immense, innumerable, immeasurable stocks of merit to be amassed. But all this they destroy by the fault of doubt. See, O Agita, to how great an injury the doubt of the Bodhisattvas leads. Therefore now, O Agita, after the Bodhisattvas without doubting have quickly raised their thoughts towards the Bodhi, in order to obtain power of conferring happiness for the benefit of all creatures, their stock of merit should be turned towards their being born in the world Sukhâvatî, where the blessed Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, holy and fully enlightened, dwells.'

42.

After these words, the Bodhisattva Agita

thus spoke to the Bhagavat: 'O Bhagavat, will the Bodhisattvas, who have gone away from this Buddha country, or from the side of other blessed Buddhas, be born in the world Sukhâvatî?'

The Bhagavat said: 'Indeed, O Agita, seventy-two niyutas of koṭis of Bodhisattvas are gone away from this Buddha country, who will be born in the world Sukhavatt; Bodhisattvas, who will never return, thanks to the stock of merit, which they have accumulated under many hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of Buddhas. What then shall be said of those with smaller stocks of merit? 1. Eighteen hundred niyutas of koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Dushprasaha. 2. There lives in the Eastern quarter the Tathâgata named Ratnâkara. From his place ninety koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî. 3. Twenty-two koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Gyotishprabha. 4. Twenty-five koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Amitaprabha. 5. Sixty koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Lokapradîpa. 6. Sixty-four koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Nâgâbhibhû. 7. Twenty-five koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Viragahprabha. 8. Sixteen koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata Simha. 9. Eighteen thousand Bodhisattvas will be born in the world

Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata *Simha* (sic). 10. Eighty–one niyutas of koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata *Srîkûta*. 11. Ten niyutas of koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata *Narendrarâga*. 12. Twelve thousand Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata *Balâbhigñâ*. 13. Twenty–five koṭis of Bodhisattvas, who have obtained strength, having gone to one place in one week of eight days, and having turned to the West during ninety hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of kalpas, will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata *Pushpadhvaga*. 14. Twelve koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî from the place of the Tathâgata *Gvalanâdhipati*. 15. From the place of the Tathâgata *Vaisâradyaprâpta*, sixty–nine koṭis of Bodhisattvas will be born in the world Sukhâvatî, in order to see the Tathâgata *Amitâbha*, to bow before him, to worship him, to ask questions of him, and to consult him. For this reason, O *Agita*, I might proclaim during a full niyuta of koṭis of kalpas the names of those Tathâgatas, from whom the Bodhisattvas proceed in order to see that Tathâgata *Amitâbha* in the world Sukhâvatî, to bow before him, and to worship him, and yet the end could not be reached.

43.

'See, O *Agita*, what easy gains are gained by those beings who will hear the name of the Tathâgata *Amitâbha*, holy and fully enlightened. Nor will those beings be of little faith, who will obtain at least one joyful thought of that Tathâgata and of this treatise of the Law. Therefore now, O *Agita*, I invite you, and command you to proclaim this treatise of the Law, before the world together with the gods. Having plunged into the vast universe full of fire, no one ought to turn back, if he has but once conceived the thought of going across. And why? Because koṭis of Bodhisattvas indeed, O *Agita*, return from the highest perfect knowledge, on account of not hearing such treatises of the Law as this. Therefore, from a wish for this treatise of the Law, a great effort should be made to hear, learn, and remember it, and to study it for the sake of fully grasping it and widely making it known. A good copy of it should be kept, after it has been copied in a book, if only during one night and day, or even during the time necessary for milking a cow. The name of Master should be given to a teacher who desires to conduct quickly innumerable beings to the state of never returning from the highest perfect knowledge, namely, in order that they may see the Buddha country of that blessed *Amitâbha*, the Tathâgata, and to acquire the excellent perfection of the array of good qualities peculiar to his own Buddha country.

'And, O *Agita*, such beings will have easily gained their gains who, having amassed a stock of merit, having performed service under former *Ginas*, and having been guided by Buddhas, shall hear in future, until the destruction of the good Law, such–like excellent treatises of the Law, treatises which are praised, eulogized, and approved of by all Buddhas, and convey quickly the great knowledge of omniscience. And those also who, when they have heard it, shall obtain excellent delight and pleasure, and will learn, retain, recite and grasp, and wisely preach it to others, and be delighted by its study, or, having copied it at least, will worship it, will certainly produce much good work, so that it is difficult to count it.

'Thus indeed, O *Agita*, I have done what a Tathâgata ought to do. It is now for you to devote yourself to it without any doubt. Do not doubt the perfect and unfailing knowledge of Buddha. Do not enter into the dungeon made of gems built up in every way. For indeed, the

birth of a Buddha, O Agita, is difficult to be met with, so is the instruction in the Law, and also a timely birth. O Agita, the way to gain the perfection (pâramitâ) of all stocks of merit has been proclaimed by me. Do now exert yourselves and move forward. O Agita, I grant indeed a great favour to this treatise of the Law. Be valiant so that the laws of Buddhas may not perish or disappear. Do not break the command of the Tathâgata.'

44.

Then at that time, the Bhagavat spoke these verses:

1. 'Such hearings of me will not be for people who have not done good; but those who are heroes and perfect, they will hear this speech.
2. 'And those by whom the Lord of the world, the enlightened and the light-giver, has been seen, and the law been heard reverentially, will obtain the highest joy.
3. 'Low people of slothful minds cannot find any delight in the laws of Buddha; those who have worshipped in the Buddha countries learn the service of the Lords of the three worlds.
4. 'As a blind man in darkness does not know the way, and much less can show it, so also he who is (only) a Srâvaka in the knowledge of Buddha; how then should beings who are ignorant!
5. 'The Buddha only knows the virtues of a Buddha; but not gods, Nâgas, Asuras, Yakshas, and Srâvakas (disciples); even for Anekabuddhas there is no such way, as when the knowledge of a Buddha is being manifested.
6. 'If all beings had attained bliss, knowing the highest meaning in pure wisdom, they would not in koṭis of kalpas or even in a longer time tell all the virtues of one Buddha.
7. 'Thereupon they would attain Nirvâna, preaching for many koṭis of kalpas, and yet the measure of the knowledge of a Buddha would not be reached, for such is the wonderfulness of the knowledge of the Ginas.
8. 'Therefore a learned man of an intelligent race who believes my words, after having perceived all paths of the knowledge of the Ginas, should utter speech, saying, "Buddha is wise."
9. 'Now and then a man is found, now and then a Buddha appears, knowledge of the object of faith is acquired after a long time,—therefore one should strive to acquire (the knowledge of) the object (of faith).'

45.

And while this treatise of the Law was being delivered, twelve koṭis of niyutas of beings obtained the pure and spotless eye of the Law with regard to Laws. Twenty-four hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of beings obtained the Anâgâmin reward. Eight hundred Bhikshus had their thoughts delivered from faults so as to cling no more to anything. Twenty-five koṭis of Bodhisattvas obtained resignation to things to come. And by forty hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of the human and divine race, thoughts such as had never risen

before were turned toward the highest perfect knowledge, and their stocks of merit were made to grow toward their being born in the world Sukhâvatî, from a desire to see the Tathâgata, the blessed Amitâbha. And all of them having been born there, will in proper order be born in other worlds, as Tathâgatas, called Mañgusvara (sweet-voiced). And eighty koñis of niyutas having acquired resignation under the Tathâgata Dîpankara, never turning back again from the highest perfect knowledge, rendered perfect by the Tathâgata Amitâyus, practising the duties of former Bodhisattvas, will carry out, after they are born in the world Sukhâvatî, the duties enjoined in the former Pranidhânas (prayers).

46.

At that time this universe (the three millions of worlds) trembled in six ways. And various miracles were seen. On earth everything was perfect, and human and divine instruments were played, and the shout of joy was heard as far as the world of the Akanishthas.

47.

Thus spoke the Bhagavat enraptured, and the noble-minded Bodhisattva Agita, and the blessed Ânanda, the whole Assembly, and the world, with gods, men, spirits, mighty birds, and fairies, applauded the speech of the Bhagavat.

The praise of the beauty of the excellences of Sukhâvatî, the country of the blessed Amitâbha, the Tathâgata, the entry of the Bodhisattva on the stage of 'never returning,' the story of Amitâbha, the Mahâyânasûtra of the Description of Sukhâvatî is finished.

--Section 3 --