

AGGAÑÑA SUTTANTA.¹
A BOOK OF GENESIS

[80] Thus have I heard:

1. The Exalted One was once staying near Sâvantthî, in the East Park, at the mansion of Mother of Migâra.² Now at that time Vâseṭṭha and Bâradvâja were passing their probation among the brethren, desiring to become bhikkhus.³ Then at eventide the Exalted One, having arisen from his medications, had come down from the house, and was walking to and fro in the open air, in the shade of the house.

2. Now Vâseṭṭha saw this, and on seeing it he told Bâradvâja, adding: Let us go, friend Bâradvâja, let us approach the Exalted One, for perchance we might have the good fortune to hear from the Exalted One a talk on matters of doctrine.

3. Then the Exalted One said to Vâseṭṭha: [81] You, Vâseṭṭha, being Brahmins by birth and family have gone forth from a Brahmin family, your home, into the homeless life. Do not the Brahmins blame and revile you?

Yea, verily, lord, the Brahmins do blame and revile us with characteristic abuse, copious, not at all stinted.

But in what words, Vâseṭṭha, do they so blame you?

The Brahmins, lord, say thus: The Brahmin class⁴ is the best.

But in what terms, Vâseṭṭha, do the Brahmins blame and censure you to this extent?

The Brahmins, lord, say thus:

Only a Brahmin is of the best social grade; other grades are low. Only a Brahmin is of a clear complexion; other complexions are swarthy. Only Brahmins are of pure breed; not they that are not the Brahmins. Only Brahmins are genuine children of Brahmâ, born of his mouth, offspring of Brahmâ, created by Brahmâ, heirs of Brahmâ. As for you, you have renounced the best rank, and have gone over to that low class – to shaven recluses, to the vulgar rich, to them of swarthy skins, to the footborn descendants. Such a course is not good, such a course is not

¹ On the subject of this Suttanta see Introduction to I, 105f.

² Visâkhâ. Buddhagosa gives an account of her and her mansion, built for Order, which is much shorter, but in agreement with the full narrative contained in the Dhammapada Comy. I, 334ff. The vast majority of houses were in the oldest Buddhist period in the North India what we should now call huts. Tradition describes this one as a bungalow with one upper storey. In the Mahâ-sudassana (above, Vol. II) we have a description of the most glorious palace the early Buddhists could think of. It is a modest affair. The archaeological evidence is discussed in Buddhist India, pp. 63-77, Figs. 3-11.

³ The Comy. Identifies these two Brahmins of the Tevijja, Suttanta (above, I, 301) and the Vâseṭṭha Suttas of Majjhima, Sutta 98, and Sutta-Nipâta, Sutta 35.

⁴ Vaòà. Literally, colour, which never means caste. See above, I, 99ff.

proper, even this, that you, having forsaken that upper class, shaveling friar-folk, menials, swarthy of skin, the offscouring of our kinsman's heels. In these terms, lord, do the Brahmins blame and revile us with characteristic abuse, copious, not at all stinted.

4. Surely, Vâseṭṭha, the Brahmins have quite forgotten the past (the ancient lore) when they say so? On the contrary, brahminees, the wives of Brahmins, are known to be fertile, are seen to be with child [82], bringing forth and nursing children. And yet it is these very womb-born Brahmins who say that ...Brahmins are genuine children of Brahmâ, born from his mouth; his offspring, his creation, and his heirs! By this they make a travesty¹ of the nature of Brahmâ. It is false what they say, and great is the demerit that they thereby earn.

5. There are these four classes, Vâseṭṭha: nobles, Brahmins, tradesfolk, workpeople.² Now here and there a noble deprives a living being of life, is a thief, is unchaste, speaks lies, slanders, uses rough words, is a gossip, or greedy, or malevolent, or holds wrong and considered to be so, which ought not to be sought after and are so considered, which are unworthy of an Ariyan and are so considered, qualities sinister and of sinister effect, discountenanced by the wise, are to be found here and there in such a noble. And we may say as much concerning Brahmins, tradesfolk and workpeople.

6. Again, here and there a noble abstains from murder, thief, in chastity, lying, slandering, gossiping, greed, malevolence and false opinions. Thus we see that qualities which are, and are considered, moral, inoffensive, unexceptional, truly Ariyan, benign and of benign effect, commended by the wise, are to be found here and there in a noble. And we may say as much concerning each of the others-Brahmins, tradesfolk [83] and workpeople.

7. Now seeing, Vâseṭṭha, that both bad and good qualities, blamed and praised respectively by the wise, are thus distributed among each of the four classes, the wise do not admit those claims which the Brahmins put forward. And why? Because, Vâseṭṭha, whoever among all these four classes becomes a Bhikkhu, an Arahant, one who has destroyed the deadly taints, who has lived the life, has done that which was to be done, has laid down the burden, has attained his own salvation,³ has destroyed the fetter of rebirth,⁴ and has become free because he has perfected knowledge⁵—he is declared chief among them, and that in virtue of a norm (a standard), and not irrespective of a norm. For a norm, Vâseṭṭha, is

¹ Abbâchikkhanti Brahmânan. The verb often means to misrepresent another's opinions (Majjh.I, 368; Dîgha I,161; Ang. III, 57; Vin, 135). The root cikh is to take note of, observe.

² Khattiyâ, brahmiôâ, vessâ, suddâ.

³ Buddhaghosa permits an alternative meaning of sadattho either as sundaro, or sako attho: excellent or own advantage.

⁴ = taòhâ (Comy.).

⁵ Sammâ hetunâ kâranena jânitvâ vimutto (Comy.).

the best among this folk¹
both in this life and in the next.²

8. The following, Vâseṭṭha, is an illustration for understanding how a norm is the best among this folk both in this life and in the next. King Pasenadi of Kosala is aware that Samaḍa Gotama has gone forth from the adjacent³ clan of the Sâkiyas are become the vassals of King Pasenadi. They render to him homage and respectful salutation, they rise and do him obeisance, and treat him with ceremony. Now, just as the Sâkiyans treat King Pasenadi of Kosala, [84] so does the king treat the Tathâgata. For he thinks: Is not the Samaḍa Gotama well born? Then I am not well born. The Samaḍa Gotama is strong, I am weak. He is attractive, I am notcomely; the Samaḍa Gotama has great influence, I have but little influence. Now it is because the king honours a norm, reveres a norm, regards a norm, does homage to a norm, holds sacred a norm, that he renders homage and respectful salutation to the Tathâgata, rising and doing him obeisance, and treating him with ceremony.⁴ by this illustration may it be understood how a norm is

the best among this folk
both in this life and in the next.

9. You Vâseṭṭha, who, differing all of you in birth, in name, in clan and family, have gone forth from home into the homeless life, may be asked: Who are ye? Then do ye reply: We be Samaḍas who follow him of the sons of the Sâkiyans. He, Vâseṭṭha, whose faith in the Tathâgata is settled, rooted, established and firm, a faith not to be dragged down by recluse or Brahmin, by deva or Mara or Brahmâ or anyone in the world, well may he say: I am a veritable son of the Exalted One, born from his mouth, born of the Norm, created by the Norm, heir of the Norm. And why? Because, Vâseṭṭha, these are names tantamount to Tathâgata: Belonging to⁵ the Norm, and again, belonging to the highest,¹ and again, one with the Norm,² and again one with the Highest.

¹ Imasmi loke ti attho; the world's inhabitants. The verse from which this is quoted is given in full at the end of this Dialogue, 32.

² We take dharmma here (the word rendered norm, standard) in the sense attributed to it by Mrs. Rhys Davids in her discussion of this passage in Buddhism (Home University Library) pp. 235 ff. The remarkable utterance we find in this passage is only one of many in which the Normalism (as distinct from Animism) of the Buddhist position is emphasized. There is nothing metempirical about it. It is the cosmic law which is the Norm or standard, by which alone superiority or inferiority is to be judged.

³ We read anantarâ, not anuttaro. See note in text. The Comy. Has the following: anantarâ ti antara-vira-hitâ(or vithitâ), attano kulena sadisâ ti attho. It agrees better with context, which does not call for such a word as anuttaro.

⁴ See M. II, 112, 120, where the homage paid is of the humblest.

¹ Dhammakâyo. Lit. having a Norm-body. Buddhaghosa says: why is the Tathâgato said to have a Norm-body? Because having devised the There-Piṭaka-Buddha-word by his mind he conducts it forth by his speech. Therefore his body from having Normness (dhammatâ) is considered as the Norm, and is so called. And just because of this Norm-body-ness, he has an excellent body, for Norm is called brahma in the sense

10. There comes a time,³ Vâseṭṭha, when, sooner or later, after the lapse of a long, long period, this world passed away. And when this happens, beings have mostly been reborn in the World of Radiance; and there they dwell, made of mind, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, traversing the air, continuing in glory; and thus they remain for a long, long period of time. There comes also a time, Vâseṭṭha, when sooner or later this world begins to re-evolve. When this happens, beings who had deceased from the World of Radiance, usually [85] come to life as humans.⁴

And they become made of mind, feeding on rapture, selfluminous, traversing the air, continuing in glory, and remain thus for a long, long period of time.

11. Now at that time, all had become one world of water, dark, and of darkness that maketh blind. No moon nor sun appeared, no stars were seen, nor constellations, neither was night manifest nor day, neither months nor half-months, neither years nor seasons, neither female nor male. Beings were reckoned just as beings only. And to those beings, Vâseṭṭha, sooner or later after a long time, earth with its savour was spread out in the waters, Even as a scum forma on the surface of boiled milky rice that is cooling, so did the earth appear. It became endowed with colour, with odour, and was its taste. Even as well-made ghee or pure butter, so was its colour; even as the flawless honey of the bee, so sweet was it.

12. Then, Vâseṭṭha, some being of greedy disposition⁵ said: Lo now! What will this be? And tasted the savoury earth with his finger. He thus, tasting, became suffused with the savour, and craving entered into him. And other beings, following his example, tasted the savoury earth with their finger. They thus, tasting became suffused with the savour, and craving entered into them. Then those beings began to feast on the savoury earth, breaking off lumps of it with their hands. And from [86] the doing thereof the self-luminance of those beings faded away. As their self-luminance faded away, the moon and sun became manifest. Thereupon star-shapes and constellations became manifest. Thereupon night and day became manifest, months too and half-months, the seasons and the years. Thus far then, Vâseṭṭha, did the world evolve again.

13. Now those beings, Vâseṭṭha, feasting on the savoury earth, feeding on it, nourished by it, continued thus for a long long while. And in measure as they

of best, supreme, excellent...thus far the Exalted One having spoken in terms of values, goes on to speak in those terms by another method, beginning. There comes a time, etc.

¹ Brahma-i.e. says the Comy. Brahma in the sense of best (seṭṭhaṭṭhena).

² Lit. Norm-become-i.e. says the Comy. Of-the-nature-of-the-Norm (Dhamma-sabhâvo).

³ This paragraph occurs in Vol. I. p.30, verbatim, as to the former half, fuller as to the latter half.

⁴ Lit. come to 'hereness' which the Comy. explains as humanity. The description of them is scarcely human, but their birth, says Buddhaghosa, is opapâtika. See I, 201, n.3. Cf. Ambapâli's birth, Psalms of the Sisters, 120

⁵ Greedy in his previous birth, remarks the Comy.

thus fed, did their bodies become manifest. Some beings were well favoured, some were ill favoured. And herein they that were well favoured despised them that were ill favoured, thinking: We are more comely than they; they are worse favoured than we. And while they through pride in their beauty thus became vain and conceited, the savoury earth disappeared. At the disappearance of the savoury earth, they gathered themselves together and bewailed it: Alas for the savour! Alas for the savour! Even so now when men having gotten a good savour say: Ah, the savour of it! Ah, the savour of it! They do but follow an ancient primordial saying, not recognizing the significance thereof.

14. Then, Vâseṭṭha, when the savoury earth [87] had vanished for those beings, outgrowths appeared in the soil. The manner of the rising up thereof was as the springing up of the mushroom,¹ it had colour, odour and taste; even as well-formed ghee or fine butter so was the colour thereof, and even as flawless honeycomb so was the sweetness thereof. Then those beings began to feast on these outgrowths of the soil. And they, feasting on them, continued for a long long while. And in measure as they thus fed and were thus nourished, so did their bodies grow ever more solid, and the difference in their comeliness more manifest, some becoming well favoured, some ill favoured. Then they that were well favoured despised them that were ill favoured, thinking: We are more comely than they; they are worse favoured than we. And while they, through pride in their beauty, thus became vain and conceited, these outgrowths of soil disappeared. Thereupon creeping plants² appeared, and the manner of the growth thereof was as that of bamboo, and they had colour, odour and taste. Even as well-made ghee or fine butter so was the colour thereof, and even as flawless honeycomb so was the sweetness thereof.

15. Then, Vâseṭṭha, those beings began to feast on the creepers. And they, feasting on them, feeding on them, nourished by them, continued so for a long long while. And in measure as they thus fed and were nourished did their bodies wax more solid, and the divergence in their comeliness increase, [88] so that, as before, the better favoured despised the worst favoured. And while those, through pride in their beauty, become vain and conceited, the creepers disappeared. At the disappearance thereof they gathered themselves together and bewailed, saying: Verily it was ours, the creeper! Now it has vanished away! Alas and O me! We have lost! Even so now when men, being asked what is the matter, say: Alas and O me! What we had that have lost! They do but follow an ancient primordial saying, not recognizing the significance thereof.

¹ Ahicchantako. Literally snake-hood, but that this was used idiomatically for a kind of mushroom shape like a snake's hood appears from Jâtaka II, 95 and Udâna, p 81, note. The Sanskrit lexicons give the names of several other plants called snake-hood, and the plant here meant is not certain. We do not know whether mushrooms are found in all in North India.

² Badalatâ. A beautiful creeper of sweet taste, says Buddhaghosa.

16. Then, Vâseṭṭha, when the creepers had vanished for those beings, rice appeared ripening in open spaces,¹

No powder had it and no husk
[Pure,] fragrant and clean grained.²

Where of an evening they gathered and carried away for supper, there next morning the rice stood ripe and grown again. Where in the morning they gathered and carried away for breakfast, there in the evening it stood ripe and grown again. No break was to be seen [where the hulks and been broken off].

Then those beings feasting on this rice in the clearings, feeding on it, nourished by it, so continued for a long long while. And in measure as they, thus feeding, went on existing, so did the bodies of those beings become even more solid, and the divergence in their comeliness more pronounced. In the female appeared the distinctive features of the female,³ in the male those of the male. Then truly did woman contemplate man too closely, and man, woman. In them contemplating over much the one the other, passion arose and burning entered their body. They in consequence thereof followed their lusts. And beings seeing them so doing thew, some, sand, some, ashes, [89] some, cowdung, crying: Perish, foul one! Perish, foul one! How can a being treat so? Even so now when men, in certain districts, when a bride is led away, throw either sand, or ashes, or cowdung, they do but follow an ancient enduring primordial form, not recognizing the significance thereof.

17. That which was reckoned immoral at that time, Vâseṭṭha, is now reckoned to be moral. Those beings who at that time followed their lusts, were not allowed to enter village or town neither for a whole month or even two months. And inasmuch as those beings at that time quickly incurred blame for immorality, they set to work to make huts, to conceal just that immorality.

Then Vâseṭṭha, this occurred to some being of a lazy disposition: Lo now! Why do I wear myself out fetching rice for supper in the evening, and in the morning for breakfast? What if I were to fetch enough rice for supper and breakfast together? So he gathered at one journey enough rice for the two meals together.

Then some being came to him and said: Come, good being, let us go rice-gathering. That's not wanted, good being, I have fetched rice for the evening and morning meal. Then the former followed his example and fetched rice for two days at once, saying: So much, they say, will about do. Then some other

¹ Akappa-ṭko. According to Comy. Springing up in land free from jungle.

² R.O. Franke is probably right in supposing that we have here a fragment of an old ballad, and should therefore add 'pure' suddho. See below, § 18. There are quite a number of such apparent fragments of verse in the prose texts. See the notes of Vinaya Texts I, 149, and Buddhist Suttas (S.B.E.), p.107. The apparent verse is here (as often) very poor verse.

³ Those who had been women in a previous birth, explains Buddhaghosa.

being came [90] to this one and said: Come, good being, let us go rice-gathering. And he: Never mind, good being, I have fetched rice enough for two days. [And so, in like manner, they stored up rice enough for four, and then eight days.]

Now from the time, Vâseṭṭha, that those beings began to feed on hoarded rice, powder enveloped the clean grain, and husk enveloped the grain, and the reaped or cut stems did not grow again; a break became manifest [where the reaper had cut]; the rice stubble stood in clumps.

18. Then those beings, Vâseṭṭha, gathered themselves and bewailed this, saying: Evil customs, sirs, have appeared among men. For in the past, we were made of mind, we fed on rapture, self-luminous, we traversed the air in abiding loveliness; long long the period we so remained. For us sooner or later, after a long long while the savoury earth had arisen over the waters, colour it had, and odour and taste. We set to work to make the earth into lumps, and feast on it. As we did so our self-luminance vanished away. When it was gone, moon and sun became manifest, [91] star-shapes and constellations, night and day, the months and half-months, the seasons and the years. We enjoying the savoury earth, feeding on it, nourished by it, continued so for a long long while. But since evil and immoral customs became rife among us, the savoury earth disappeared. When it had ceased out growth of the soil became manifest, clothed with colour, odour and taste. Then we began to enjoy; and fed and nourished thereby, we continued so for a long long while. But when evil and immoral customs arose among us, these outgrowths disappeared. When they had vanished, creepers appeared clothed with colour, odour and taste. Then we turned to enjoy; and fed and nourished thereby we continued so for a long long while. But since evil and immoral customs became prevalent among us, the creepers also disappeared. When they ceased rice appeared, ripening in open spaces, without powder, without husk, pure, fragrant and clean grained. Where we plucked and took away for the evening meal every evening, there next morning it had grown ripe again. Where we plucked and took away for the morning meal, there in the evening it had grown ripe again. There was no break visible. Enjoying this rice, feeding on it, nourished by it, we have so continued a long long while. But from evil and immoral customs becoming manifest among us, powder has enveloped the clean grain, husk too has enveloped the clean grain, and where we have reaped is no re-growth; a break has come, and the rice-stubble stands in [92] clumps. Come now, lets us divide off the rice field and set boundaries thereto! And so they divided off the rice and set up boundaries round it.

19. Now some being, Vâseṭṭha, of greedy disposition, watching over his own plot, stole another plot and made use of it. They took him and holding him fast, said: Truly, good being, thou hast wrought evil in that, while watching thine own plot, thou hast stolen another plot and made use of it. See, good being, that thou do not such a thing again! Ay, sirs, he replied. And a second time he did so. And yet a third. And again they took him and admonished him. Some smote him with the hand, some with clods, some with sticks. With such a beginning,

Vâseṭṭha, did stealing appear, and censure and lying and punishment became known.

20. Now those beings, Vâseṭṭha, gathered themselves together, and bewailed these things, saying: From our evil deeds, sirs becoming manifest, inasmuch as stealing, censure, lying, punishment have become known, what if we were to select a certain being, who should be wrathful when indignation is right, who should censure that which rightly be censured and should banish him who deserves to be banished? But we will give him in return a proportion of the rice.

[93] Then, Vâseṭṭha, those beings went to the being among them who was handsomest, the best favoured, the most attractive, the most capable and said to him: Come now, good being, be indignant at that whereat one should rightly be censured, banish him who deserves to be banished. And we will contribute to thee a proportion of our rice.

And he consented, and did so, and they gave him a proportion of their rice.

21. Chosen by the whole people, Vâseṭṭha, is what is meant by Mañ Sammata;¹ so Mahâ Sammata (the Great Elect) was the first standing phrase to arise [for such an one].² Lord of the Fields is what is meant by Khattiya; so Khattya (Noble) was the next expression to arise. He charms the others by the Norm-by what ought (to charm)-is what is meant by Râja; so this was the third standing phrase to arise.

Thus then, Vâseṭṭha, was the origin of this social circle of the Nobles, according to the ancient primordial phrase [by which they were known]. Their origin was from among those very beings, and no others; like unto themselves, not unlike; and it took place according to the Norm [according to what ought to be, justly], not unfittingly.³

For, Vâseṭṭha.

The norm's the best among this folk,
Both in this world and in the next.⁴

¹ Mahâ Sammata. Name of a famous king in the beginning of time, who was the first king of the Solar race, and the legendary ancestor of many lines of kings (among others of the kings of the Sâkiya clan).

² Akkhara, the enduring, came later on to mean letter. At the end of § 16 we have rendered it from (of speech). Cf. § 18.

³ No adhammena. The argument is that there was no tribal difference, no difference of blood, between them and all the rest. They were selected, set apart, for the performance of certain duties, and they were so selected, not arbitrarily, but according to their real fitness for the post. Each of them fulfilled the Ideal of a noble, which included, not only righteousness, but also other things. As will be seen, there was also an ideal, a standard, a Norm, for each of the other groups.

⁴ The etymologies in this paragraph are purely fanciful, and as a matter of fact the historical order in which the three words are said to have arisen is exactly reversed. Râja the oldest of the three-belonging, as it does, to the oldest Aryan stock of words, and being found in Latin and Welsh. Khattiya is the next, and Mahâ Sammata is the youngest of all. But it would show a strange ignorance of history to complain of this. Such

22. Now it occurred, Vâseṭṭha, to some of those beings, as follows: Evil deeds, sirs, have become manifest among us, inasmuch as stealing, censure, lying, punishment can be noticed, and banishment. Let us now put away from us evil and immoral customs. And they put away from them such customs. [94] They put away (bâhenti) evil, immoral customs, Vâseṭṭha, is what is meant by Brahmins, and thus was it that Brahmins became the earliest standing phrase [for those who did so]. They, making leaf huts in woodland spots, meditated therein. Extinct for them the burning coal, vanished the smoke, fallen lies pestle and mortar; gathering of an evening for the evening meal, of a morning for the morning meal, they go down into village and town and royal city, seeking food. When they have gotten food, back again in their leaf-huts they meditate. When men saw this, they said: These good beings, having made unto themselves leaf-huts in the forest region, meditate therein. For them burning coal is extinct, smoke is known no more, pestle and mortar have fallen from their hands; they gather of an evening for the evening meal, of a morning for morning meal, and go down into village and town and royal city seeking food. When they have gotten food, back again their leaf-huts they meditate. They meditate (jhâyanti), Vâseṭṭha, is what is meant by the brooding one (jhâyakâ). Thus was it that this was the second phrase that arose.

23. Now certain of those beings, Vâseṭṭha, being incapable of enduring this meditation in forest leaf-huts, went down and settled on the outskirts of villages and towns, making books.¹ When men saw this, they said: These being incapable of enduring this meditation in forest leaf-huts, went down and settled on the outskirts of villages and towns, and there they make books. But they cannot meditate. Now, these meditate not, Vâseṭṭha, is what is meant by Ajjhâyakâ (repeaters, viz., of the Vedas).

Thus this third phrase for such people came into use. At that time they were looked upon as the lowest; now they are thought the best.

Such then, Vâseṭṭha, according to the ancient, yea, primordial, expressions by which they were known, was the origin of this social circle of Brahmins.² [95] Their origin was from just those beings [above referred to]; beings like unto themselves, not unlike; [and it took place] according to the Norm [according to what ought to be, justly] not unfittingly.

For, Vâseṭṭha,
The norm's the best among this folk,

plays upon words are common to all ancient literatures. Scientific etymology is a growth of yesterday. The author or authors of this passage (and of all similar ones) were thinking, of course, not of etymology, but of what they regarded as matter of the highest import.

¹ Ganthe karontâ; tayo Vede abhisankharontâ c'eva vâcentâ ca, says the Comy.-compiling the three Vedas And teaching others to repeat them.

² Brâhmana-maḍalassâti Brâhmaḍa-gaḍassa, says Buddhaghosa.

Both in this life and in the next.

24. Now, Vâseṭṭha, there were some others of those beings who, adopting the married state, set on foot various trades. That they, adopting the married state, set on foot various [vissa] trades is, Vâseṭṭha, the meaning ofvessâ (tradesfolk). So this word came into use as a standing expression for such people. The origin, Vâseṭṭha, of the social group calledVessas was in accordance with this ancient, yea, primordial designation. It was from just those beings [above described] beings like unto themselves, not unlike. And it took place in accordance with the Norm [according to what ought to be, justly] not unfittingly.

For, Vâseṭṭha,
The norm's the best among this folk,
Both in this life and in the next.

25. Now, Vâseṭṭha, those of beings that remained over took to hunting. But those that live on hunting, and suchlike trifling pursuit, is what is meant by Suddâ (the lowest grade of folk).¹ Thus then, according to the ancient, yea, primordial expression is the origin of this social group called Suddas. Their origin was from just those beings (above described), beings like unto themselves, not unlike; [and it took place] according to the Norm, [according to what ought to be] not unfittingly, namely, from those who were not different from other beings, but like them, not unlike them, by a norm and though lack of a norm.

For, Vâseṭṭha,
The norm's the best among this folk,
Both in this life and in the next.

26. Now there came a time, Vâseṭṭha, when someKhattiya, misprizing his own norm, went forth from home into the homeless life, saying: I will become a recluse. Some Brahmin too did the same, likewise some Vessa [96] and some Sudda, each finding some fault in his particular norm. Out of yhese four groups or circles, Vâseṭṭha, the company of the recluses came into being. Their origin was from just these beings like unto themselves, not different. And it took place according to a norm [a fitness, justly], not only unfittingly.

For, Vâseṭṭha,
The norm's the best among this folk,
Both in this life and in the next.

¹ Both the reading here and the logic of the word-play are doubtful. If the readings are right we have- instead of the usual half pun, half riddle-a mere jingle of rhymens, ludda, khudda,sudda, hunter, mean fellow, low grade. Our modern nobles would lift their eyebrows at so amazing a mixture of epithets, and it would be in the spirit of these Suttantas if that touch of irony were really the point of the rhyme. It would be quite as apposite then in India as here in Europe when Carlyle in his Sartor Resartus gave us his vivid sketch of the noble sportsman.

27. Now a khattiya, Vāseṭṭha, who has led bad life, in deed, word and thought, whose views of life are wrong, will, in consequence of his views and deeds, when the body breaks up, be reborn after death in the Waste, the Woeful Way, the Downfall, Purgatory.¹ And a Brahmin too...a Vessa too...a Sudda too, who has led a bad life, in deed, word and thought, whose views and deeds, when the body breaks up, be reborn after death in the Waste, the Woeful Way, the Downfall, Purgatory.

28. Again, Vāseṭṭha, a Khattiya...or Brahmin... a Vessa too...a Sudda too, who has led a bad life, in deed, word and thought, whose views of life are as they should be, will, in consequence of his views and deeds, when the body breaks up, be reborn after death in a happy, bright world.

29. Again, Vāseṭṭha, a Khattiya...or Brahmin... a Vessa too...a Sudda too, who has lived a life both good and bad,² in deed, word and thought, whose views of life are mixed, will, in consequence of his mixed views and deeds, when the body breaks up, be reborn after death both suffering both happiness and unhappiness.

30. Again, Vāseṭṭha, a Khattiya...or Brahmin... a Vessa too...a Sudda too, who is self-restrained in deed, word and thought, and has followed after the practice of the seven principles which are Wings of Wisdom,³ attains to complete extinction [of evil]⁴ in this [present life].

31. For, Vāseṭṭha, whosoever of these Four classes becomes, as abhikku, an arahant, who has destroyed the intoxicants, who has done that the burden, who has won his own salvation, who has wholly destroyed the fetter of re-becoming, who through knowledge made perfect is free, -he is declared chief among them, in virtue of a norm, not in the absence of a norm. For, Vāseṭṭha,

The norm's the best among this folk,
Both in this life and in the next.

¹ Cf. II, 51.

² Lit. a double-door, dvaya-kârî. Buddhaghosa's elaboration of this destiny in outline is of interest: There is no opportunity where both results may be incurred at the sane moment. But one who has wrought much bad and slight good may be reborn as a Khattiya or Brahmin, because of that good, yet be one-eyed or a hunchback or a cripple, or he may be worthy of a kingdom, yet be unable to come into his own. In another case, when he is dying, his good and bad karma attend him like two strong wrestlers, and the stronger bad karma prevailing, he is reborn as an animal, but the good karma persisting, he becomes a state-elephant, or state-horse, or state-buffalo.

³ These seven, in the ancient commentary, embedded in the text of the Vibhanga are explicitly limited to the seven Bojjhangas (p.249; cf. Mrs. Rhys Davids's Preface, xia; also A. III, 70, 71; IV. 351). In the present Comy. Buddhaghosa defines them as the thirty-seven, divided, as Four Satopaṭṭhānas, etc., into seven. But see below, p. 96, § 3, where the thirty-seven would surely have been called bodhipakkhiyā dhammā, instead of just kusalā, had the thirty-seven been so entitled, when the Dialogues were compiled.

⁴ Kilesa-parinibbānena parinibbāti. Comy.

32. Now this verse, Vâseṭṭha, was spoken by Brahmâ, the Eternal Youth:¹

The Khattiya is the best among this folk
 Who put their trust in lineage.
 But one in wisdom and in virtue clothed,
 Is best of all'mong spirits and men.

Now this stanza, Vâseṭṭha, was well sung and not ill sung by Brahmâ the Eternal Youth, well said and not ill said, full of meaning and void thereof. I too, Vâseṭṭha, say: [98]

The Khattiya is the best among this folk
 Who put their trust in lineage.
 But one in wisdom and in virtue clothed,
 Is best of all'mong spirits and men.

Thus spake the Exalted One. Pleased at heart Vâseṭṭha and Bhâradvâja rejoiced in what the Exalted One had said.

Here ends the Aggañña-Suttanta.

¹ Recurs Vol. I, p. 122, and Samyutta I, 153; II, 284.