

THE JĀTAKA

OR

STORIES OF THE BUDDHA'S FORMER BIRTHS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE PĀLI BY VARIOUS HANDS

UNDER THE EDITORSHIP OF
PROFESSOR E. B. COWELL.

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TRANSLATED BY

H. T. FRANCIS, M.A.,
SOMETIME FELLOW OF GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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KUṆĀLA-JĀTAKA¹.

"*This is the report and the fame thereof.*" This was a story told by the Master, while dwelling beside lake Kuṇāla, concerning five hundred Brethren who were overwhelmed with discontent. Here follows the story in due order. The Sākiya and Koliya tribes had the river Rohiṇī which flows between the cities of Kapilavattu and Koliya confined by a single dam and by means of it cultivated their crops. In the month Jetṭhamūla² when the crops began to flag and droop, the labourers from amongst the dwellers of both cities assembled together. Then the people of Koliya said, "Should this water be drawn off on both sides, it will not prove sufficient for both us and you. But our crops will thrive with a single watering; give us then the water." The people of Kapilavattu said, "When you have filled your garners with corn, we shall hardly have the courage to come with ruddy gold, emeralds and copper coins, and with baskets and sacks in our hands, to hang about your doors. Our crops too will thrive with a single watering; give us the water." "We will not give it," they said. "Neither will we," said the others. As words thus ran high, one of them rose up and struck another a blow, and he in turn struck a third and thus it was that what with interchanging blows and spitefully touching on the origin of their princely families they increased the tumult. The Koliya labourers said, "Be off with your people of Kapilavattu [413], men who like dogs, jackals, and such like beasts, cohabited with their own sisters. What will their elephants and horses, their shields and spears avail against us?" The Sākiya labourers replied, "Nay, do you, wretched lepers³, be off with your children, destitute and ill-conditioned fellows, who like brute beasts had their dwelling in a hollow jujube tree (*koli*). What shall their elephants and horses, their spears and shields avail against us?" So they went and told the councillors appointed to such services and they reported it to the princes of their tribes. Then the Sākiyas said, "We will show them how strong and mighty are the men who cohabited with their sisters," and they sallied forth, ready for the fray. And the Koliyas said, "We will show them how strong and mighty are they who dwelt in the hollow of a jujube tree," and they too sallied forth ready for the fight. But other teachers tell the story thus, "When the female slaves of the Sākiyas and Koliyas came to the river to fetch water, and throwing the coils of cloth that they carried on their heads upon the ground were seated and pleasantly conversing, a certain woman took another's cloth, thinking it was her own; and when owing to this a quarrel arose, each claiming the coil of cloth as hers, gradually the people of the two cities, the serfs and the labourers, the attendants, headmen, councillors and viceroys, all of them sallied forth ready for battle." But the former version being found in many commentaries and being plausible is to be accepted rather than the other. Now it was at eventide that they would be sallying forth, ready for the fray. At that time the Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvatti, and at dawn of day while contemplating the world he beheld them setting out to the fight, and on seeing them he wondered whether if he were to go there the quarrel would cease, and he made

¹ The text of this Birth Story is not very satisfactory, and in many places it is almost impossible to distinguish the words of the story itself from the explanations of the commentary. Compare *Jāt. i. No. 74, Rukkhadhamma-Jātaka and Dhammapada*, p. 351; also Hardy's *Manual*, pp. 134—140.

² May and June.

³ Compare Rogers' translation of *Buddhaghosha's Parables*, Ch. xxvi., for an account of Gotama's family.