

years you will see him with his pale face before you. I gather from his air that he will be the king of a small country; let him rule over some small kingdom in the north."

Then Bâlâditya-râja, obeying his dear mother's command, had pity on the prince bereft of his kingdom; gave him in marriage to a young maiden and treated him with extreme courtesy. Then he assembled the troops he had left and added a guard to escort him from the island.

Mahirakula-râja's brother having gone back, established himself in the kingdom. Mahirakula having lost his royal estate, concealed himself in the isles and deserts, and going northwards to Kaśmîr, he sought there an asylum. The king of Kaśmîr received him with honour, and moved with pity for his loss, gave him a small territory and a town to govern. After some years he stirred up the people of the town to rebellion, and killed the king of Kaśmîr and placed himself on the throne. Profiting by this victory and the renown it got him, he went to the west, plotting against the kingdom of Gandhâra. He set some soldiers in ambush and took and killed the king. He exterminated the royal family and the chief minister, overthrew the *stûpas*, destroyed the *saṅghârâmas*, altogether one thousand six hundred foundations. Besides those whom his soldiers had killed there were nine hundred thousand whom he was about to destroy without leaving one. At this time all the ministers addressed him and said, "Great king! your prowess has gained a great victory, and our soldiers are no longer engaged in conflict. Now that you have punished the chief, why would you charge the poor people with fault? Let us, insignificant as we are, die in their stead."

The king said, "You believe in the law of Buddha and greatly reverence the mysterious law of merit. Your aim is to arrive at the condition of Buddha, and then you will declare fully, under the form of *Jâtakas*,¹⁵ my evil

¹⁵ That is to say, when they had arrived at the condition of omniscience they would in future ages declare how Mahirakula was suffering