

CORRESPONDENCE.

1. THE FOUR 'REQUISITES' IN GUHASENA'S GRANT
DATED 248.

In the "Archæological Reports of Western India," vol. 3, pl. lix., we have a grant of the Vallabhi King Guhasena, dated in the year 248 (= 567 A.D.), which is transliterated by Professor Bühler on p. 94. He gives in line 7 the reading :

Grāsacchādanaṣayanāsanaghānabhashajyādi, etc.

These must be the 'four requisites' (*catupaccayā*) of a Bhikshu. It is true that they are usually given in the Pali texts as *civara*, *pindapāta*, *senāsana*, and *gilāna-paccaya-bhesajja* (see *Majjhima Nikāya*, I. 33, etc.). But we find at *Dīgha Nikāya*, II. 35, *ghāsacchādana* for the first two (compare *ghāsacchādo* at *Puggala Paññatti*, IV. 19 = *Anguttara*, IV. 85. 2). It is clear therefore that the reference is to the "four requisites." We must read, of course, *bhaishajyādi*, though the engraver of the plate has merely *bha*, quite plainly.

It is worthy of notice that the Pali idiom has invariably, in this connection, *ghāsa* ; and the ordinary Sanskrit as invariably *grāsa* (reserving *ghāsa* for the sense, not of "food," but of "fodder"). I have not as yet noticed the expression at all in Buddhist Sanskrit, which has often enough the more usual words given above from the Pali (see, for instance, *Divyāvadāna*, p. 143).

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2. NĀGASENA.

As I pointed out in the Translation of the '*Milinda*' (vol. i. p. xxv) *Nāgasena*, the 'hero' of that historical romance, has not yet been found in any other Pāli or Sanskrit book.

Neither has the book itself been as yet found mentioned by any Buddhist author except Buddhaghosa (about 430 A.D. in Ceylon). But Burnouf had pointed out that in one Buddhist Sanskrit work—the Abhidharma Koṣa Vyākhyā, a commentary by Yaṣomitra, whose date is unknown, on the Abhidharma Koṣa of Vasubandhu, the younger brother of Asanga, both of whom Professor Max Müller ('What can India teach us,' p. 290) places in the sixth century—there is an opinion of one Nāgasena which Yaṣomitra disputes. M. Léon Feer has been kind enough to consult Burnouf's MS., which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and has sent me copies of the passage in question, together with the context, both in transliteration and in Sanskrit letters. It runs as follows :

Abhidharmakoṣavyākhyā, Manuscrit de Burnouf, No. 114,
fo. 475^{vo}, l. 10–11.

Kasmād Bhagavatā Sa jīvas tac charīram anyo veti na
vyākṛtam ity ayam eṣām abhiprāyaḥ. Yadi skandheṣu
pudgalopacāraḥ kasmāc charīram eva jīvā iti noktam iti
sthavira-nāgasenādibhiḥ. Bahuvollakā iti bahupralāpāḥ.

It will be seen that Yaṣomitra is giving various interpretations of a passage in his author which declares the identity of form (*rūpa*) and the four elements (*catvāri bhūtāni*). Some think the passage in question is meant to point out why the Buddha refused to explain whether 'soul' (*jīva*) and 'body' (*śarīra*) were the same. Some think that the passage is meant as an answer to Nāgasena and others who ask why it is not said (in the Pitakas) that 'body' (*jīva*) and 'soul' (*śarīra*) are the same, when it is admitted (in the Pitakas) that the range of the 'soul' (here pudgala) is within the Skandhas (*skandheṣu pudgalopacāraḥ*).

So far from Yaṣomitra disputing the opinion of a Nāgasena, he is in fact quoting that opinion (given in the form of a question) as a possibly correct statement which his author's passage is meant to explain, and he does not say that either he or Vasubandhu think that the statement inferred in the question is wrong.

Now, the author of our *Milinda* puts into Nāgasena's mouth (*Milinda*, ed. Trenckner, p. 28) a quotation from the *Samyutta* which says, 'Where the Skandhas are, there people talk of a being (Satto).' This is at the end of the celebrated discussion about the chariot which starts by Nāgasena denying the existence of the soul (*puḍgala*). And he makes him, after a full discussion (pp. 54–57), deny the proposition that there is 'soul' (the terms used are *jīva* and *vedagū*) in the Skandhas. And again (pp. 71, 87), he makes Nāgasena say that there is no such thing as a soul (*vedagū* at p. 71, *īva* at p. 87). On this last passage the Ceylon translator adds as a gloss 'inside the forms (*rūpa*) consisting of the four elements?' So that the particular question assigned by Yaśomitra to his 'Nāgasena and others' is nowhere, in our '*Milinda*,' put into Nāgasena's mouth. And not only so, but the Nāgasena of the *Milinda* holds opinions the very reverse of those suggested by the question raised by Yaśomitra's Nāgasena.

The other question—whether the soul is the same as the body, or different from it—is one of the well-known points on which the Buddha is so often stated, in the *Piṭakas*, to have refused to express any opinion (see my *Hibbert Lectures*, chap. iii.); not, of course, because he did not know, but because no one else, not even the Arahats, could understand it.

It is a great pity that we have not the words of Vasubandhu on which Yaśomitra is commenting. And it is curious that, as was pointed out in the Introduction to my translation of the *Milinda*, even Buddhaghosa, when referring to it, never uses quite the same phraseology as is found in the printed text. The only thing therefore that is certain is that we owe many thanks to M. Feer for giving us the actual words of the reference in a Sanskrit Buddhist, and Mahāyānist, work to a Nāgasena.¹

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¹ One of the donors whose names are recorded on the Bharhut Tope is Nāgasena Kūḍiyāni of Pāṭaliputta (on the 8th pillar, plate 53).