Meeting with a virtuous person, in whatever way it may have been occasioned, promotes salvation. Thus considering, he who longs for salvation must strive after the intercourse with virtuous persons. This will be taught as follows.

In the time when our Lord was a Bodhisattva, he happened to be born, it is said, in the illustrious royal family of the Kauravas, that dynasty wide-famed for its glory, who owing to their intentness on possessing virtues possessed the deep-rooted affection of their subjects and the splendour of whose power had put their proud neighbours to vassalage. His father gave him the name of Sutasoma, for he looked as lovely as Soma (the Moongod), his face being irradiated by the nimbus of his hundreds of virtues. Like the moon in the bright half of the month, his loveliness and grace increased every day. Having in course of time attained skill in the Vedas with their angas and in the upavedas, and having been also

1 As to the angas see the first note on story VII, the upavedas are explained in the first note on story XIX.
initiated in the worldly arts and sciences, including the additional ones, he became an object of esteem and love to his people and might be called a kinsman of virtues, so to speak. For he was inclined to be a decided helper of virtues, his regard for them was ever increasing, and he kept himself under restraint to preserve them carefully.

1—2. Good conduct (ṛṇa), learning, charity, mercy, self-command, majesty, forbearance, wisdom, patience, humility, modesty, shame, judgment, loveliness, renown, civility, retentiveness, strength, pureness of mind, these and such were the excellent properties which dwelt with him. Embellished by his youth, as it were, and deriving an additional charm from the holiness and loftiness of his person, they were like his constituent parts, as the (sixteen) kalās of the moon.

And for this reason the king, his father, raised him to the illustrious rank of heir-apparent, judging him the proper person for ruling his subjects, for he knew his high aspirations and the holiness of his nature.

3. But as he was fond of learning, he was a great lover of religious sentences well-turned and paid the most distinguished reward to those who attended him with well-said sentences.

Once it was the season of spring, and the power of the month of flowers had decorated the suburban parks. The young offshoots of shrubs and trees overspread them with a soft brilliancy; the flowers opening gave them a charming and laughing aspect; fresh grass-plots, like smooth woollen carpets, were extending all around over their grounds; their ponds with unstained and blue water were covered with the petals of lotuses white and blue.

1 These worldly arts and sciences are the so-called kalās, the total number of which is sixty-four, partly fine arts, partly manual arts and handicrafts.

2 So elsewhere the pious are called "partisans of virtue" (guṇapakṣapatīnaḥ). See f.i. st. VII., st. 31.

3 Indian astronomy divides the moon's disc in sixteen equal parts, named kalās; in this measure they express the size of the illuminated part and the extent of eclipses. The exactness of the comparison would appear more, if the number of virtues of young Sutasoma were also sixteen. But I count nineteen. If retentiveness (medhā), judgment (mati) and wisdom (dhi) might be computed together as one virtue, and majesty (tejāḥ) with strength (bala) as an other, we would have exactly sixteen.