THE LIFE OF VASU-BANDHU 1)

BY

PARAMĀRTHA (A.D. 499–569)

TRANSLATED BY

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Ba-su-ban-du 2) (Vasu-bandhu), Master of the Law, was a native of Fu-lu-sha-fu-la 3) (Puruṣa-pura), N. India. “Fu-lu-sha” (puruṣa) means “hero” 4), and “Fu-la” (pura) “territory” 5).

It is said in the “Genealogy of Bi-shu-nu” (Viṣṇu) the lord of heaven 6): “He (Viṣṇu) was a younger brother of Śakra the Lord (Indra) 7). The latter sent him to be born in Jambu-dvīpa 8) as a


2) 婆薮槃豆.

3) 富婆沙富羅.

4) 丈夫.

5) 土.

6) 毘樓紇天王世傳. This seems to mean Viṣṇu-purāṇa, but the story does not occur, as a whole, though there are occasional allusions to it throughout the Purāṇa.

7) 帝释.

8) 閻浮提 i.e. India.
King, in order to subdue Asura \(^9\)). He was born in Jambu-dvīpa as a son of the King Ba-su-dai-ba (Vasu-deva) \(^10\)). There was an Asura called In-da-la-da-ma-na (Indra-damana) \(^11\)). "Indra" is a name of Sakra the Lord, and "damana" means "subduing". This Asura was ever in battle with Sakra the Lord. He had that name signifying that he was able to subdue Sakra. The treatise Bi-ka-la \(^12\) (Vyākaraṇa-śāstra) explains the meaning of the word "Asura" as "without virtuous pleasure" \(^13\) — thus the word "Asura" in Chinese must be understood in this sense. All gods ever regard good as their enjoyment, while Asuras consider evil as their pleasure, — hence the name. The word (A-sura) also signifies "non-god" \(^14\)). The Asura in question had a younger sister Ba-la-ha-ba-ti (prabhavati) \(^15\)). "Prabha" means "splendour", "vati" a "lady". The lady was possessed of beauty. The Asura, wishing to kill the god, Viṣṇu, induced his sister to entice him. Through his power of magic he brought darkness upon a part of Jambu-dvīpa. He hid himself in the dark, so as not to let anyone see him, and ordered his sister to be by herself in the light. He further told her: "If a man wish to take you for wife, you are to say: 'If you want to take me, my elder brother is sure to object. He is possessed of great strength. If you are able to fight with my brother I will then give my consent'". Viṣṇu, the god, afterwards saw that woman in the light, and was exceedingly delighted with her. He asked her who she was.

\(^9\) 阿修羅.
\(^10\) 婆薮提婆.
\(^11\) 因陀羅陀摩那.
\(^12\) 毘伽羅.
\(^13\) 非善戯.
\(^14\) 非天.
\(^15\) 婆羅頴婆底.