

# THE BEAUTY AND THE BHIKKHU :

## A TALE OF THE TENTH IMPURITY.

*(From the Pali.)*

### I.

LISTEN! The venerable monk pursued  
His path with downcast eyes; his thought re-  
volved  
Ever in closer coils serenely screwed  
About the Tenth Impurity. Dissolved  
All vision of his being but of one  
Thing only, his sun-whitened skeleton.

### II.

A dainty lady sick of simple life,  
Chained to the cold couch of some vapid man,  
Put on her jewels, off the world of wife,  
Resolved to play the painted courtesan ;  
So ran along the village path. Her laughter  
Woody all the world to follow tumbling after.

### III.

Then when she met the venerable monk  
Her shamelessness desired a leprous wreath  
Of poisonous flowers, seducing him. He shrunk

Back from her smile, seeing her close white  
teeth.  
Bones! he exclaimed, and meditating that,  
From a mere Bhikkhu grew an Arahat.

IV.

Her husband found her gone, in fury followed  
Lashing the pale path with his purple feet,  
Heedless of stones and serpents. Hail! he halloaed  
To the new Rahan whom he bowed to greet  
Kissing the earth: O holy master, say  
If a fair female hath passed by this way!

V.

The Bhikkhu blessed the irritated man.  
Then the slow sloka serpentine began :  
“Friend! neither man nor woman owns  
This being’s high perception, owed  
Only to Truth; nor beams nor stones  
Support the Arahat’s abode.  
Who grasps one truth, beholds one light,  
Becomes that truth, that light; discedes  
From dark and deliquescent night,  
From futile thoughts and fatuous deeds.  
Your girl, your gems, your mournful tones  
Irk not perfection with their goad.  
One thing I know—a set of bones  
Is travelling on upon this road!”