

CHAPTER III.

Gautama's marriage and married life.

As many a soothsayer had predicted that Gautama would leave the world at the age of twenty-nine, so his father determined to put a stumbling block in the way of his son's becoming a recluse, by marrying him rather at an early age. In those days people entered into family life at an advanced age, and early marriages were condemned. Even the marriageable age in the case of women was at least eighteen.

Vashista says that "a maiden who has attained puberty shall wait for three years." How unlike the present which has fixed the proper age for motherhood at twelve ! and premature death both in the case of man and