

# BUDDHIST INDIA

By T. W. RHYS DAVIDS,  
LL.D., PH.D., PROFESSOR OF  
COMPARATIVE RELIGION, MANCHESTER.

*Author of "BUDDHISM : ITS HISTORY AND LITERATURE,"*  
ETC.



LONDON  
T. FISHER UNWIN LTD.  
ADELPHI TERRACE

## BUDDHIST INDIA

# THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

1. **Rome.** By ARTHUR GILMAN, M.A.
2. **The Jews.** By Prof. J. K. HOSMER.
3. **Germany.** By Rev. S. BARING-GOULD, M.A.
4. **Carthage.** By Prof. ALFRED J. CHURCH.
5. **Alexander's Empire.** By Prof. J. P. MAHAFFY.
6. **The Moors in Spain.** By STANLEY LANE-POOLE.
7. **Ancient Egypt.** By Prof. GEORGE RAWLINSON.
8. **Hungary.** By Prof. ARMINIUS VAMBERY.
9. **The Saracens.** By ARTHUR GILMAN, M.A.
10. **Ireland.** By the Hon. EMILY LAWLESS.
11. **Chaldea.** By ZÉNAÏDE A. RAGOZIN.
12. **The Goths.** By HENRY BRADLEY.
13. **Assyria.** By ZÉNAÏDE A. RAGOZIN.
14. **Turkey.** By STANLEY LANE-POOLE.
15. **Holland.** By Prof. J. E. THOROLD ROGERS.
16. **Medieval France.** By GUSTAVE MASSON.
17. **Persia.** By S. G. W. BENJAMIN.
18. **Phoenicia.** By Prof. G. RAWLINSON.
19. **Media.** By ZÉNAÏDE A. RAGOZIN.
20. **The Hansa Towns.** By HELEN ZIMMERN.
21. **Early Britain.** By Prof. ALFRED J. CHURCH.
22. **The Barbary Corsairs.** By STANLEY LANE-POOLE.
23. **Russia.** By W. R. MORFILL, M.A.
24. **The Jews under the Romans.** By W. D. MORRISON.
25. **Scotland.** By JOHN MACKINTOSH, LL.D.
26. **Switzerland.** By Mrs. LINA HUG and R. STEAD.
27. **Mexico.** By SUSAN HALE.
28. **Portugal.** By H. MORSE STEPHENS.
29. **The Normans.** By SARAH ORME JEWETT.
30. **The Byzantine Empire.** By C. W. C. OMAN.
31. **Sicily: Phœnician, Greek and Roman.** By the Prof. E. A. FREEMAN.
32. **The Tuscan Republics.** By BELLA DUFFY.
33. **Poland.** By W. R. MORFILL, M.A.
34. **Parthia.** By Prof. GEORGE RAWLINSON.
35. **The Australian Commonwealth.** By GREVILLE TREGARTHEN.
36. **Spain.** By H. E. WATTS.
37. **Japan.** By DAVID MURRAY, Ph.D.
38. **South Africa.** By GEORGE M. THEAL.
39. **Venice.** By ALETHEA WIEL.
40. **The Crusades.** By T. A. ARCHER and C. L. KINGSFORD.
41. **Vedic India.** By Z. A. RAGOZIN.
42. **The West Indies and the Spanish Main.** By JAMES RODWAY.
43. **Bohemia.** By C. EDMUND MAURICE.
44. **The Balkans.** By W. MILLER, M.A.
45. **Canada.** By Sir J. G. BOURINOT, LL.D.
46. **British India.** By R. W. FRAZER, LL.B.
47. **Modern France.** By ANDRÉ LE BON.
48. **The Franks.** By LEWIS SERGEANT.
49. **Austria.** By SIDNEY WHITMAN.
50. **Modern England.** Before the Reform Bill. By JUSTIN MCCARTHY.
51. **China.** By Prof. R.K. DOUGLAS.
52. **Modern England.** From the Reform Bill to the Present Time. By JUSTIN MCCARTHY.
53. **Modern Spain.** By MARTIN A. S. HUME.
54. **Modern Italy.** By PIETRO ORSI.
55. **Norway.** By H. H. BOYESEN.
56. **Wales.** By O. M. EDWARDS.
57. **Medieval Rome.** By W. MILLER, M.A.
58. **The Papal Monarchy.** By WILLIAM BARRY, D.D.
59. **Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule.** By STANLEY LANE-POOLE.
60. **Buddhist India.** By Prof. T. W. RHYS-DAVIES.
61. **Parliamentary England.** By EDWARD JENKS, M.A.
62. **Medieval England.** By MARY BATESON.
63. **The Coming of Parliament.** By L. CECIL JANE.
64. **The Story of Greece.** From the Earliest Times to A.D. 14. By E. S. SHUCKBURGH.
65. **The Story of the Roman Empire.** (B.C. 29 to A.D. 476.) By H. STUART JONES.
66. **Denmark and Sweden,** with Iceland and Finland. By JON STEFANSSON, Ph.D.

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN, LTD., 1 ADELPHI TERRACE

## PREFACE

**I**N the following work a first attempt has been made to describe ancient India, during the period of Buddhist ascendancy, from the point of view, not so much of the brahmin, as of the rajput. The two points of view naturally differ very much. Priest and noble in India have always worked very well together so long as the question at issue did not touch their own rival claims as against one another. When it did—and it did so especially during the period referred to—the harmony, as will be evident from the following pages, was not so great.

Even to make this attempt at all may be regarded by some as a kind of *lèse majesté*. The brahmin view, in possession of the field when Europeans entered India, has been regarded so long with reverence among us that it seems almost an impertinence now, to put forward the other. “Why not leave well alone? Why resuscitate from the well-deserved oblivion in which, for so many centuries, they have happily lain, the pestilent views of these tiresome people? The puzzles of Indian history have been solved by respectable men in Manu and the Great Bhārata, which have the advantage of be-

ing equally true for five centuries before Christ and five centuries after. Shade of Kumārila! what are we coming to when the writings of these fellows—renegade brahmins among them too—are actually taken seriously, and mentioned without a sneer? If by chance they say anything well, that is only because it was better said, before they said it, by the orthodox brahmins, who form, and have always formed, the key-stone of the arch of social life in India. They are the only proper authorities. Why trouble about these miserable heretics?"

Well, I would plead, in extenuation, that I am not the first guilty one. People who found coins and inscriptions have not been deterred from considering them seriously because they fitted very badly with the brahmin theories of caste and history. The matter has gone too far, those theories have been already too much shaken, for any one to hesitate before using every available evidence. The evidence here collected, a good deal of it for the first time, is necessarily imperfect; but it seems often to be so suggestive, to throw so much light on points hitherto dark, or even unsuspected, that the trouble of collecting it is, so far at least, fairly justified. Any words, however, ~~are~~, I am afraid, of little avail against such sentiments. Wherever they exist the inevitable tendency is to dispute the evidence, and to turn a deaf ear to the conclusions. And there is, perhaps, after all, but one course open, and that is to declare war, always with the deepest respect for those who hold them, against such views. The views are wrong. They are not compatible

with historical methods, and the next generation will see them, and the writings that are, unconsciously, perhaps, animated by them, forgotten.

Another point of a similar kind, which ought not in this connection to be left unnoticed, is the prevalent pessimistic idea with regard to historical research in India. There are not only wanting in India such books giving consecutive accounts of the history as we are accustomed to in Europe, but even the names and dates of the principal kings, and battles, and authors, have not been preserved in the literature—that is, of course, in the brahmin literature which is all that has hitherto been available to the student. That is unfortunately true, and some of the special causes which gave rise to this state of things are pointed out below. But the other side of the question should not be ignored. If we compare the materials available for the history, say, of England in the eighth or ninth century A.D. with the materials available for the history of India at the same period, the difference is not so very marked. The more proper comparison, moreover, would be made with Europe; for India is a continent of many diverse nations. And in the earlier periods, though we have inherited a connected history of one corner in the south-east of the continent, the records handed down for the rest of Europe are perhaps as slight and as imperfect as those handed down in India. What is of more importance, in Europe, for the earlier periods, all the inherited materials have been made available for the historical student by properly edited and annotated editions, and also by

\*

dictionaries, monographs, and helps of all sorts. In India much of the inherited material is still buried in MS., and even so much as is accessible in printed texts has been by no means thoroughly exploited. Scarcely anything, also, has yet been done for the excavation of the ancient historical sites. We might do well to recollect, when we read these complaints of the absence of materials, that the remedy lies, to a very large extent, in our own hands. We might so easily have more. We do not even utilise the materials we have.<sup>1</sup>

To speak out quite plainly, it is not so much the historical data that are lacking, as the men. There are plenty of men able and willing to do the work. But it is accepted tradition in England that all higher education may safely be left to muddle along as it best can, without system, under the not always very wise restrictions of private beneficence. One consequence is that the funds have to be administered in accord with the wishes of benefactors in mediæval times. The old studies, theology, classics, and mathematics, have a superabundance of endowment. The new studies have to struggle on under great poverty and difficulty. There is no chair of Assyriology, for instance, in England. And whereas in Paris and Berlin, in St. Petersburg and Vienna, there are great seminaries of Oriental learning, we see in London the amazing absurdity of unpaid professors obliged to devote to the earning otherwise, of their living,

<sup>1</sup>See on this question the very apposite remarks of Professor Geiger in his monograph *Dipavamsa und Mahāvamsa* (Erlangen, 1901).

the time they ought to give to teaching or research. And throughout England the state of things is nearly as bad. In all England, for instance, there are two chairs of Sanskrit. In Germany the Governments provide more than twenty—just as if Germany's interests in India were more than ten times as great as ours. Meanwhile our Government is supine and placid, confident that, somehow or other, we shall muddle through ; and that this is no business of theirs.

This work has been long delayed, and has suffered much from the necessity laid upon me of trying to write it in scraps of time rescued, with difficulty, from the calls of a busy life. I can only hope that other scholars, more able and less hampered than myself, will be able to give to the problems of entrancing interest I have ventured to raise a consideration more worthy of them, in every way, than I have been able to give.

T. W. RHYS-DAVIDS.

October, 1902.



*First Edition* . . . July, 1903  
*Second Impression* . . December, 1903  
*Third Impression* . . July, 1911  
*Fourth Impression* . . January, 1916  
*Fifth Impression* . . January, 1917

(All rights reserved)

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE KINGS . . . . .	1
II. THE CLANS AND NATIONS . . . . .	17
III. THE VILLAGE . . . . .	42
IV. SOCIAL GRADES . . . . .	52
V. IN THE TOWN . . . . .	63
VI. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS . . . . .	87
VII. WRITING—THE BEGINNINGS . . . . .	107
VIII. WRITING—ITS DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	121
IX. LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.	
I. GENERAL VIEW . . . . .	140
X. LITERATURE.	
II. THE PĀLI BOOKS . . . . .	161
XI. THE JATAKA BOOK . . . . .	189
XII. RELIGION—ANIMISM . . . . .	210
XIII. RELIGION—THE BRAHMIN POSITION . . . . .	238
XIV. CHANDRAGUPTA . . . . .	259

CHAPTER	PAGE
XV. ASOKA . . . . .	272
XVI. KANISHKA . . . . .	308
APPENDIX . . . . .	321
INDEX . . . . .	323

## ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
THE GREAT BUDDHIST TOPE AT SĀNCĪ BEFORE RESTORATION . . . . . <i>Frontispiece</i>	
KING PASENADI IN HIS CHARIOT. ABOVE IS THE WHEEL OF THE LAW . . . . .	9
<i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xiii.</i>	
AJĀTASATTU STARTING OUT TO VISIT THE BUDDHA	14
KINGS AND QUEENS WATCHING A PROCESSION AS IT LEAVES A FORT . . . . .	64
<i>From the Sanchi Tope.</i>	
FAÇADE OF MANSION . . . . .	65
<i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xxxi.</i>	
SUDHAMMO, THE MOTE-HALL OF THE GODS . . . .	67
<i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xvi.</i>	
ANCIENT OPEN-AIR BATH AT ANURĀDHAPURA (NO. 1) . . . . .	69
ANCIENT OPEN-AIR BATH AT ANURĀDHAPURA (NO. 2) . . . . .	71
OLD INDIAN SCROLLWORK . . . . .	72
A ZIGGARAT . . . . .	73
<i>From Ragozin's "Story of Chaldea."</i>	
THE THOUSAND PILLARS. RUINS OF THE FOUNDA- TION OF THE SEVEN-STORIED GREAT BRAZEN PALACE AT ANURĀDHAPURA . . . . .	75
<i>From Cave's "Ruined Cities of Ceylon."</i>	

	PAGE
THE SPLIT ROCK. GAMBLING SCENE FROM THE BHARAHAT TOPE . . . . .	77
SCROLLWORK ORNAMENT AS USED OUTSIDE HOUSES AND ON TOPE IN BUDDHIST INDIA . . .	79
<i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xliii.</i>	
GROUND PLAN AND RESTORATION OF THE BHARA- HAT STŪPA . . . . .	81
<i>From Cunningham's "Stūpa of Bharhut." Pl. iii.</i>	
RESTORATION (BY W. SIMPSON) OF THE AHIN POSH TOPE . . . . .	83
<i>From the Proceedings of the R. I. B. A.</i>	
A STŪPA AS CARVED ON THE BAS-RELIEFS . . .	84
<i>From Cunningham's "Stūpa of Bharhut." Pl. xxxi.</i>	
THE JETAVANA DĀGABA . . . . .	85
SPECIMENS OF ANCIENT JEWELRY FOUND IN THE SĀKIYA TOPE . . . . .	89
<i>From J. R. A. S., 1898.</i>	
OLD INDIAN GIRDLE OF JEWELS . . . . .	91
<i>From the figure of Śirimā Devatā on the Bharahat Tope. Pl. li.</i>	
OLD INDIAN NECKLACES . . . . .	92
OLD INDIAN LOCKET. OLD INDIAN EARRING. OLD INDIAN LOCKET . . . . .	93
<i>Size of original.</i>	
MEDALLION ON THE BHARAHAT TOPE . . . .	95
<i>Pl. xxiv. Fig. 3.</i>	
ANCIENT INDIAN HEAD-DRESS . . . . .	97
<i>From a medallion on the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xxiv. Fig. 2.</i>	
ANĀTHA PIṇḍIKA'S GIFT OF THE JETAVANA PARK .	99
<i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. lxvii.</i>	
ANCIENT INDIAN COINS . . . . .	106
ERAN COINS . . . . .	115

LEAF OF MS. FROM THE GOSINGA VIHĀRA OF AN OLD BUDDHIST ANTHOLOGY . . . . .	122
DR. HOEY'S BRICK TABLET, WITH BUDDHIST SUTTA INSCRIBED ON IT . . . . .	123
THE COPPER PLATE FROM TAKKA-SILĀ . . . . . <i>"Epigraphia Indica," vol. iv.</i>	125
THE MAUNG-GON GOLD PLATE . . . . . <i>From "Epigraphia Indica," vol. v., p. 101.</i>	126
LEAF FROM THE BOWER MS. BIRCH BARK CUT TO IMITATE PALM LEAVES, WITH HOLES FOR STRINGS TO TIE THEM UP WITH . . . . .	127
THE INSCRIBED VASE FROM THE SĀKIYA TOPE . . . . .	129
THE PEPPÉ VASES . . . . . <i>Found by Mr. Peppé in the Sākiya Tope.</i>	131
RUINS OF THE SĀKIYA TOPE, PUT UP BY HIS RELA- TIVES OVER THEIR PORTION OF THE ASHES FROM THE FUNERAL PYRE OF THE BUDDHA . . . . .	133
FRAGMENT OF THE THIRTEENTH ROCK EDICT OF ASOKA, DISCOVERED BY PROFESSOR RHYS-DAVIDS AT GIRNAR . . . . .	135
THE BANYAN DEER JĀTAKA STORY . . . . . <i>Three episodes on one bas-relief.</i>	193
SIRIMĀ DEVATĀ . . . . . <i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xxiii.</i>	216
MODERN IMAGE OF ŚRĪ AS CONSORT OF VISHṆU . . . . . <i>From Burgess's "Cave Temples of India," p. 524.</i>	218
HINDOO GODDESS OF LUCK . . . . .	221
VESSAṂA KUVERA, KING OF THE YAKSHAS, AND REGENT OF THE NORTH . . . . . <i>From the Bharahat Tope. Pl. xxii.</i>	222

	PAGE
CHAKAVĀKA, KING OF THE NĀGAS . . . . .	222
<i>From Cunningham's "Stūpa of Bharhut." Pl. xxi. Fig. 3.</i>	
NĀGA MERMAIDS IN WATER . . . . .	223
<i>From Burgess and Grünwedel's "Buddhist Art in India."</i>	
SEATED NĀGA; BACK VIEW . . . . .	225
<i>From a fresco in Cave 11 at Ajanta.</i>	
ELEPHANTS BEFORE THE WISDOM TREE . . . . .	228
<i>From Cunningham's "Stūpa of Bharhut." Pl. xxx.</i>	
THE WISDOM TREE OF KASSAPA, THE BUDDHA . . . . .	229
<i>From Cunningham's "Stūpa of Bharhut." Pl. xxx.</i>	
THE BUDDHA PREACHING TO NĀGAS DWELLING IN A SACRED TREE . . . . .	233
<i>From a Buddhist carving at Takht-i-bahi. J. R. A. S., 1899.</i>	
DETAILS OF THE SCULPTURES ON THE GATES OF SĀNCI TOPE . . . . .	279
DETAILS ON THE SCULPTURES ON THE GATES OF SĀNCI TOPE . . . . .	281
REAR VIEW OF THE NORTHERN GATE OF SĀNCI TOPE . . . . .	283
JAIN TEMPLE AT KHUJARAO . . . . .	285
THE GREAT BUDDHIST TOPE AT SĀNCI BEFORE RESTORATION . . . . .	287
SĀNCI TOPE. A GENERAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH. . . . .	289
EASTERN GATE OF SĀNCI TOPE . . . . .	291
REAR VIEW OF THE EASTERN GATE OF SĀNCI TOPE . . . . .	293

# *ILLUSTRATIONS*

XV

PAGE

DETAILS FROM EASTERN GATE OF SĀNCHI TCPE . 301

DETAILS FROM EASTERN GATE OF SĀNCHI TOPE . 303

MAP OF THE KINGDOM OF ASOKA AS DESCRIBED  
IN THE INSCRIPTIONS . . . . . 320



# BUDDHIST INDIA

---

## CHAPTER I

### THE KINGS

WHEN Buddhism arose there was no paramount sovereign in India. The kingly power was not, of course, unknown. There had been kings in the valley of the Ganges for centuries, long before Buddhism, and the time was fast approaching when the whole of India would be under the sway of monarchical governments. In those parts of India which came very early under the influence of Buddhism, we find, besides a still surviving number of small aristocratic republics, four kingdoms of considerable extent and power. Besides, there were a dozen or more of smaller kingdoms, like the German duchies or the seven provinces into which England was divided in the time of the Heptarchy. No one of these was of much political importance. And the tendency towards the gradual absorption of these domains, and also of the republics, into the neighbouring kingdoms, was