# Pali Text Society.

# Journal

OF THE

# PALI TEXT SOCIETY.

1888.

EDITED BY

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### PALI TEXT SOCIETY.

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This Society has been started in order to render accessible to students the rich stores of the earliest Buddhist literature now lying unedited and practically unused in the various MSS. scattered throughout the University and other Public Libraries of Europe.

The historical importance of these Texts can scarcely be exaggerated, either in respect of their value for the history of folk-lore, or of religion, or of language. It is already certain that they were all put into their present form within a very limited period, probably extending to less than a century and a half (about B.C. 400-250). For that period they have preserved for us a record, quite uncontaminated by filtration through any European mind, of the every-day beliefs and customs of a people nearly related to ourselves, just as they were passing through the first stages of civilization. They are our best authorities for the early history of that interesting system of religion so nearly allied to some of the latest speculations among ourselves, and which has influenced so powerfully, and for so long a time, so great a portion of the human race—the system of religion which we now call Buddhism. The sacred books of the early Buddhists have preserved to us the sole record of the only religious movement in the world's history which bears any close resemblance to early Christianity. In the history of speech they contain unimpeachable evidence of a stage in language midway between the Vedic Sanskrit and the various modern forms of speech in India. In the history of Indian literature there is nothing older than these works, excepting only the Vedic writings; and all the later classical Sanskrit literature has been profoundly influenced by the intellectual struggle of which they afford the only direct evidence. It is not, therefore, too much to say that the publication of this unique literature will be no less important for the study of history—whether anthropological, philological, literary, or religious—than the publication of the Vedas has already been.

The whole will occupy about nine or ten thousand pages 8vo. Of these 4800 pages have already appeared. The accession of about fifty new members would make it possible to issue 1000 pages every year.

The Subscription to the Society is only One Guinea a year, or Five Guineas for six years, payable in advance. Each subscriber receives, post free, the publications of the Society, which cost a good deal more than a guinea to produce.

It is hoped that persons who are desirous to aid the publication of these important historical texts, but who do not themselves read Pāli, will give Donations to be spread if necessary over a term of years. Nearly £400 has already been thus given to the Society by public spirited friends of historical research.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Subscriptions for 1889 are now due, and it is earnestly requested that subscribers will send in their payments without putting the Chairman to the expense and trouble of personally asking for them. All who can conveniently do so should send the Five Guineas for six years, to their own benefit and that of the Society also.

The Society keeps no books, and its publications cannot in any case be sent to subscribers who have not already paid their subscriptions for the year.

Cheques and Post Office Orders should be made payable to the "Pāli Text Society." (Address: 22, Albemarle Street, London, W.)

# Report

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#### THE PALI TEXT SOCIETY

FOR 1888.

With the present issue the Pali Text Society enters upon the first year of its second sexennial series. With the exception of three who paid for the second five years without being asked, the Chairman has had to write to all the five-guinea subscribers to ascertain whether they would repeat their subscriptions. Most of them have signified their wish to do so, but some have not yet replied. The names of all who have not as yet retired are included in the list of subscribers published at the end of this Journal. But it is not possible as yet to state with complete accuracy the number of the Society's supporters. It will probably be found to be about the same as it was at the time when the last list was drawn up.

During the remaining five years of this second series we may fairly hope to conclude our labours, though it is possible that some little work will then remain to be done. We can look forward to issuing about 4,000

pages in that time. The parts of the Nikāyas still to appear may be estimated to fill about 2,500 of these pages, leaving us with a margin of 1,500 pages for the other works which we hope to edit. If we could only get a few more subscribers, the whole undertaking would certainly be finished within the next five years.

Of the works at present in hand, the Commentary on the Kathā Vatthu, the Iti-vuttaka, and the first volume of the Dīgha Nikāya are already in the press, the Apadāna and the Mahā Vansa are nearly ready for the press, and further volumes of all the four great Nikāyas are being prepared. There will then remain to be done, of the Pitaka texts, only—

- 1. The Niddesa.
- 2. The Patisambhida.
- 3. The Vibhanga.
- 4. The Kathā Vatthu.
- 5. The Dhātu Kathā.
- 6. The Yamaka.
- 7. The Patthana.

Besides these Pitaka books, we have already undertaken to publish the Netti Pakaraṇa and the Commentary on the Dhamma-pada, which are in the very competent hands of Professor Ernst Kuhn and Dr. Wenzel respectively (the latter being already well advanced in his work).

We want MSS., whether Sinhalese, Burmese, or Siamese, of these seven books still to be commenced. And we hope also to publish a few of the more important non-canonical books, such as the Mahā Vansa Ṭīkā and the Rājâvali.

I will only add that we continue in this number of the Journal our lexicographical preparations for the new Pāli Dictionary, Dr. (now Professor) Edward Müller, of Bern,

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giving us a valuable glossary of Pāli proper names. Dr. Hoerning also supplements the published list of MSS. in the British Museum, with a list of new acquisitions.

From this summary, meagre though it is, our subscribers will see that we are marching steadily on to the goal we set before us, in spite of all the prophecies of the impossibility of our task.

T. W. RHYS DAVIDS,

Chairman.

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