

**THE STORY OF  
GAÚTAMA BUDDHA  
AND HIS CREED: AN EPIC**

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The Story of Gāutama Buddha and His Creed: An Epic by Richard Phillips

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THE STORY  
OF  
GAÚTAMA BUDDHA

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AND HIS CREED.

*In Epic.*

BY

RICHARD PHILLIPS.

LONDON:  
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1871.

*a.*

GAÚTAMA BUDDHA.

LONDON: PRINTED BY  
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AND PARLIAMENT STREET



## PREFACE.

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THE FOLLOWING POEM is an attempt at a reasonable narrative of Buddha and Buddhism, looking at these subjects of course from a poetical standpoint. Gáutama Buddha is at present hardly known to any but oriental scholars and literary men. The extravagant absurdities and contemptible puerilities of Buddhist sacred literature have effectually scared all but the most determined from an investigation of this subject; and as a natural consequence, 'the Founder of a religion, which, after more than 2,000 years, is still professed by 455,000,000 of human beings,' is ignored, misrepresented, and foolishly despised. The great Ascetic deserves to be better known. Both the attractive beauty of his life, and the tremendous influence of his creed, demand for him more attention than either thoughtful persons or even our wise men have hitherto accorded him. As yet

we have had little but reviews, essays, and encyclopædical articles. The literature of Buddhism being most voluminous, the materials for an extended biography are abundant; but hitherto no oriental scholar has heroically girded himself to the herculean task of writing such a work, and thus endeavouring to separate the real from the legendary and mythical. The poem is based upon a theory; but nothing short of a full conviction of the soundness of that theory would have led the author to represent Gaútama as a wilful deceiver, beguiling men to virtue; and thus by impeaching his moral character, to lessen him in men's eyes. But if his moral character is lowered by this assumption, as undoubtedly it is, it must be allowed, as a slightly compensating fact, that his intellectual status is considerably raised by it. The reflections scattered through this poem, but more especially the last canto, will suffice to show that this is no attempt at an undue exaltation of Buddha, between whom and Christ there is in many particulars so striking a resemblance; nor an indiscriminate laudation of that system which is so like Christianity in its ethics, but so unlike to it in its doctrines.

LEAMINGTON: *December*, 1871.

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AND HIS CREED.

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*INTRODUCTION.*

I

I AM no chronicler of deeds of blood  
Wrought by the hands of those who, like a flood,  
Swept from the Tatar plains, led by the man  
Who made the Orient quake—great Gengis Khan ;  
Or him who filled the frightened East with bones,  
And piled his pyramids of skulls : no groans  
Of Moslem-slaughtered hosts shall make men curse  
Such ruthless tyrants, as they read my verse.

II

I sing not of great heroes who have warr'd,  
And reapt the harvest of the bitter sword ;  
And yet I mean to tell a wondrous tale  
Of Asian conquest ; ye shall surely fail  
To count the captives : they are as the sands  
Of sea-shores or of deserts, in the lands  
Of gorgeous temples and of squalid homes,  
And ruins, great as Egypt's or as Rome's.

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