

**THE LIGHT OF ASIA: OR, THE GREAT  
RENUNCIATION  
(MAHĀBHINISHKRAMANA). BEING THE LIFE  
AND TEACHING OF GAUTAMA, PRINCE OF  
INDIA AND FOUNDER OF BUDDHISM (AS  
TOLD IN VERSE BY AN INDIAN BUDDHIST)**

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**EDWIN ARNOLD**

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# THE LIGHT OF ASIA

OR

## THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

(MAHĀBHINISHKRAMANA).

BEING

### THE LIFE AND TEACHING OF GAUTAMA,

PRINCE OF INDIA AND FOUNDER OF BUDDHISM

(As Told in Verse by an Indian Buddhist).

BY

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**THE SOVEREIGN, GRAND MASTER, AND COMPANIONS**

OF

**The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India**

BY

**THE AUTHOR.**



## P R E F A C E.

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IN the following Poem I have sought, by the medium of an imaginary Buddhist votary, to depict the life and character and indicate the philosophy of that noble hero and reformer, Prince Gautama of India, the founder of Buddhism.

A generation ago little or nothing was known in Europe of this great faith of Asia, which had nevertheless existed during twenty-four centuries, and at this day surpasses, in the number of its followers and the area of its prevalence, any other form of creed. Four hundred and seventy millions of our race live and die in the tenets of Gautama; and the spiritual dominions of this ancient teacher extend, at the present time, from Nepaul and Ceylon over the whole Eastern Peninsula to China, Japan, Thibet, Central Asia, Siberia, and even Swedish Lapland. India itself might fairly be included in this magnificent empire of belief, for though the profession of Buddhism has for