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JOURNAL OF THE PALI  
TEXT SOCIETY, 1884**

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**T. W. RHYS DAVIDS**

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TEXT SOCIETY, 1884**



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## Journal

OF THE

# PALI TEXT SOCIETY.

1884.

EDITED BY

T. W. RHYS DAVIDS, PH.D., LL.D.

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# PĀLI TEXT SOCIETY.

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## COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

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(With power to add workers to their number.)

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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 1900 pp. have already appeared. The accession of about fifty new members would make it possible to issue 1000 pp. 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 Pâli, 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.

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*\* \* Subscriptions for 1886 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 "Pâli Text Society." (Address: 3, Brick Court, Temple, London, E.C.)*

REPORT  
OF THE  
PĀLI TEXT SOCIETY FOR 1884.

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I HAVE again to congratulate the members of the Pāli Text Society on its continued prosperity and activity. I had last year to report that the five-guinea subscribers had risen from 18 to 39. It has now further risen from 39 to 56; and though many of the one-guinea subscribers have fallen off, we have received so many accessions that the total number has now risen from 72 to 85. To these numbers for Europe and America we have to add 6 five-guinea members and 70 one-guinea subscribers in Ceylon; besides which I am able to announce the appearance of two new names (those of Miss Horn and of H.R.H. Prince Prisdang) in the small, but very important list of the donors to our Society. This is very encouraging; as it is not too much to say that it makes the final success of the undertaking a practical certainty if only the work of the Society be carried on in the future with the same energy as it has been in the past.

It is, however, scarcely necessary to say that we want new subscribers, and that especially for two reasons. It is very desirable firstly to increase the extent of the texts issued every year. For 1882 we distributed to each member 496 pages, of which 138 were a Jain text. For 1883 each subscriber received 424 pages. This year we issue 464 pages of our own, and are also able to present to each subscriber for the year a copy of Professor Fausböll's