

# **ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES**

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Essays and addresses by H. P. Liddon

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**H. P. LIDDON**

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ADDRESSES**



# Essays and Addresses

BY

H. P. LIDDON, D.D., LL.D., D.C.L.

LATE CANON AND CHANCELLOR OF ST. PAUL'S

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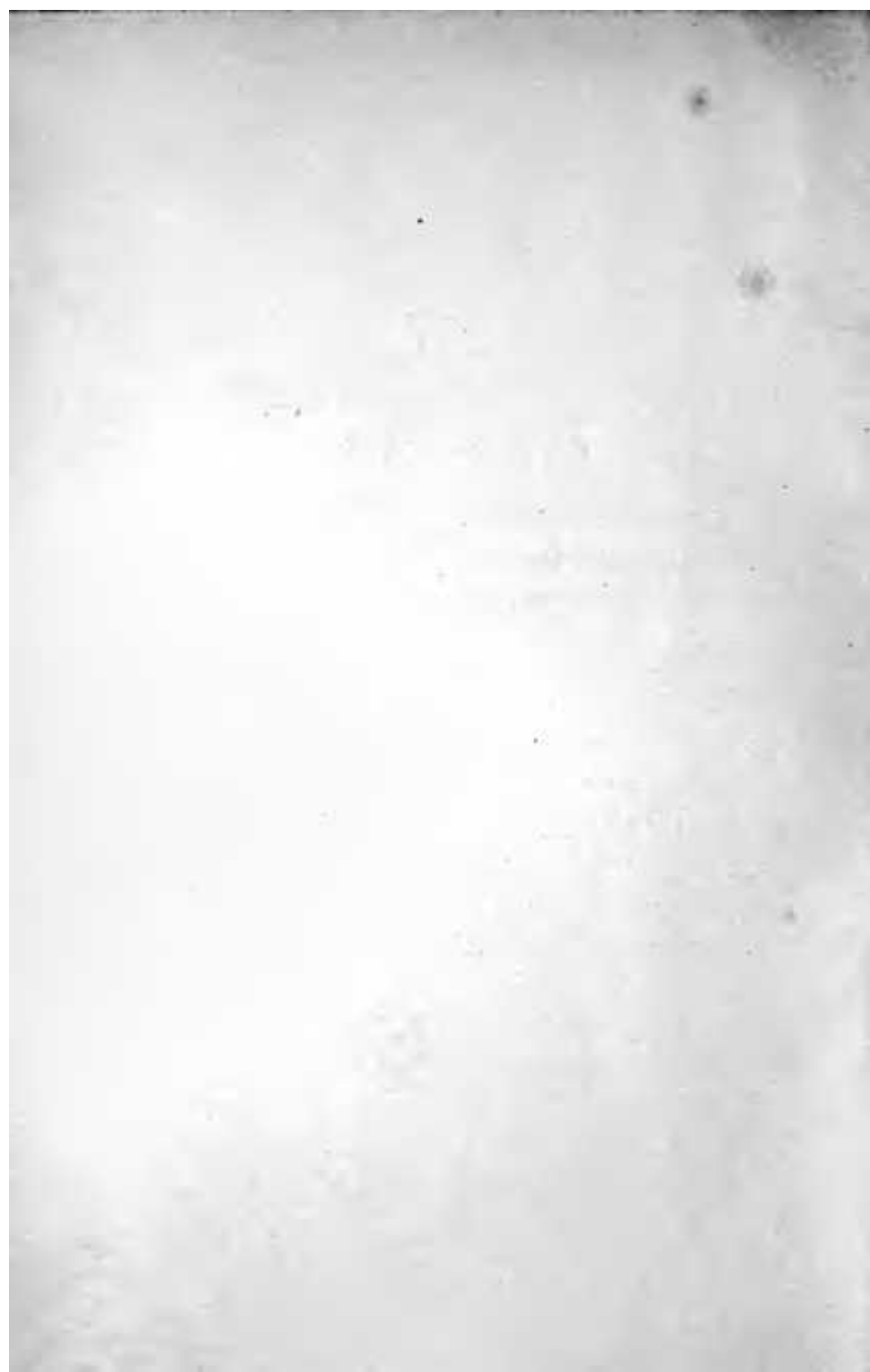
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## ADVERTISEMENT

THE four Lectures with which this volume commences were delivered by Dr. Liddon on Tuesday evenings in St. Paul's Cathedral; those on Buddhism in the year 1873, those on St. Paul in 1874. The three papers which complete the volume were prepared for and read to the Oxford Dante Society. The difference of occasion and audience will readily explain the marked change of method in the two parts of the book. For most valuable and kindly help in the preparation of the Dante papers the Editors are indebted to the Rev. Dr. Moore, Principal of St. Edmund Hall. They have also to acknowledge gratefully the assistance and warm encouragement of the Rev. Dr. G. U. Pope, of Balliol College, in connection with the lectures on Buddhism.

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## JESUS CHRIST AND BUDDHA.

### I. THE LIFE OF BUDDHA.<sup>1</sup>

WHEN I propose on this and next Tuesday evening to discuss with you the origin and characteristics of Buddhism, while keeping an eye on Christianity, it may, I fear, be thought at first that such a subject is somewhat needlessly remote from the practical interests of our country and our generation. But, not to insist upon the advantages of an intellectual change of air, the subject is not so removed from practical interests as we may suppose. Whatever we English may think about ourselves, the aspect in which England presents herself to the imagination of Europe and of the world is that of the power which has won, and still holds, the empire of India. No man who believes in a Providence can suppose that we, the inhabitants of a small island in the remote West, have been introduced to these high destinies for nothing, or only for commercial or political ends; and as soon as the eye catches sight of any higher horizons than those which might

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral, on Tuesday evening, January 21, 1873.

have satisfied a Phoenician or a Roman conqueror, it is at once felt that the greatest interest must attach to the mental and religious history of the highly-gifted races with which we are now so closely connected. And Buddha was an Indian prince. Buddhism was for two centuries an exclusively Indian religion. Although driven from Central India five centuries since, it still lingers in the north, beneath the shadow of the Himalayas in Nepaul, and further north-west, in Cashmere; it is still vigorous to the south in our own island of Ceylon. It does not simply fringe the Indian peninsula; to the north and east it dominates in those dense populations which are so impervious to European ideas and European enterprise: Burmah and Siam, Tonquin and Cochin-China, are Buddhist. Buddhism dominates throughout a great part of China and Japan; it is the religion of Thibet; it is still found in Tartary and Mongolia. In short, we cannot move in the East without encountering it, wellnigh on all sides of us; and if it did not thus appeal to our political instincts as Englishmen, it would still appeal, at least as powerfully to our human, not to speak of our Christian, interests. A religion which has lived on for four-and-twenty centuries, and which, it is probable, counts more votaries at this moment than any other on the face of the globe,—probably not less than a third of its inhabitants,—is a subject of study to which

thoughtful men need not be coaxed by any merely national interest, at least if it still holds that to be a man is to deem nothing human strange. Besides which Buddhism, side by side with differences of the most vital and fundamental character that can be conceived, presents some singular points of resemblance to Christianity,—in its ethical teaching, in its law of self-propagation, and notably in the character of some of its institutions; so that, if it were only possible to do no more than glance at a subject so rich in interest, we need not fear disappointment. As it is, our danger lies in the difficulty of honestly treating a vast subject within very limited space, without stripping all the flesh from the skeleton, without reducing a story, which says so much to feeling and to thought, to the form and proportions of an index or a dictionary.

## I.

Buddhism was an attempted reform of, it was a revolt against, Brahminism,—an older historical religion which had been for many centuries in possession of India,—as even now, although exposed to more or less rapid decomposition under the influence of European thought, it holds much of its ancient ground. What were the circumstances of Brahminism at the date of the foundation of Buddhism?