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Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The People of India, Volume Three

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LAMA, OR BUDDHIST PRIEST.

which the missionary enterprises subsequently carried out with such wonderful success, were determined upon. These embraced Tibet and Tartary, as well as Ceylon, Bengal, Burmah, and China; and since then the Buddhist faith has continued as the national religious doctrine of their populations. In India, however, Brahminised Hindooism became paramount after the extinction of the Mauryan dynasty of Chandra Gupta, and though it lingered in Bengal, and in some wild localities of the Deccan, until the tenth century after Christ, it was practised in obscurity and under the continual persecution of the Brahmins. The memorials of this wide spread faith, however, still exist in great numbers, and Gya, once most sacred to Buddhists, is still venerated by Hindoos. Among deep forests, and in wild solitary glens and ravines like Ajunta, Daraseo, &c., in the Deccan, and in many localities of Central India, stupendous cave temples, and even still more wonderful sacred edifices covered with sculptured ornaments, excite the admiration of the European antiquary and archaeologist, and are visited by humble pilgrims like the priest represented, from Leh and Yarkhund, in Tartary, and other far distant and still Buddhist lands.

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