that period likely to have started the era. Consequently, though direct proof is wanting, probability is strongly in favour of the theory that the era was inaugurated at his coronation.

Indian chronology is like a gigantic and incomplete puzzle, the pieces of which tax all one's ingenuity to put together. A great portion of it is still in almost hopeless confusion, but here and there gaps are gradually being filled up. A book like the present is a striking example of the amount of information which patient research has gleaned from the materials at its disposal, and, coming as it does from the pen of one who has rendered such brilliant services to the cause, it inspires the hope that more of the missing pieces may yet be found to complete the picture which scholars are so laboriously putting together, and that the method which has been so effective in elucidating the early history of the Dekkan may be applied with equal success to other obscure regions of Indian history.

C. M. Duff.

The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha's former Births. Vol. I. Translated by Robert Chalmers, B.A. *Cambridge*: University Press, 1895.

This beautifully printed volume is the first instalment of the promised translation of the Jātaka, under the superintendence of the veteran Professor Cowell, who has contributed an interesting preface. Out of the 550 stories constituting the whole work, the present issue contains 150. This corresponds to the number in the first volume of Fausböll's edition. Forty of these had been already translated by Prof. Rhys Davids, fifteen years ago, who had also rendered the precious introduction, the *Nidāna-kathā*, in which the life-story of Gotama up to the attainment of Buddhahood was related. The plan of the new enterprise has not included this; and it has also dropped the Pāli commentary on the Gāthās which

accompanies Fausböll's text. These omissions are not of any great consequence. English readers can still resort to Prof. Davids's version of the legendary biography; and professed students of the Gāthās cannot dispense with the original.

The interest of these stories is, of course, manifold. The enquirer into social history sees here an unrivalled picture of ancient Indian life. Kings and courtiers, Brahmans and ascetics, merchants, huntsmen, peasants, slaves, pass swiftly across the scene. The robber is never far off, and constant brigandage introduces an element of violence like that of mediæval Europe. Behind the ever-moving human groups are the fairies and ogres haunting forest and pool, and the delightful animals whose wisdom or folly is alternately employed for the instruction of man—the monkeys who, having only a limited quantity of water with which to water some young trees, pull them up by their roots that they may adjust the supply to their various sizes; the crows who try to bale out the sea by their bills to rescue one of their number swept away by a wave. The student of folklore finds here the earliest great collection of the materials of his science, for whatever superior antiquity may be claimed for the novels of the Nile, they cannot rival these stories in abundance or variety. To some of the tales here translated Mr. Chalmers has affixed notes on the traces of their subsequent wanderings; he might have noted in the situation of Prince Five-Weapons caught by the hairy ogre (p. 138) the curious analogy with the Tar-baby of Uncle Remus.

But the stories will probably prove most suggestive to the student of Buddhism. Many of them are, of course, wholly independent, but they illustrate the general atmosphere of thought and feeling in which Buddhism arose. Others are probably the more direct product of the stress which it laid on particular virtues or sins. The story of the Brahman ascetic who provided a water-trough for thirsty animals in a great drought (p. 274), has more than one moral in close harmony with Buddhist ethics. Some

have the air of being little moral apologues designed to counteract the dangers of lust (Professor Cowell has remarked on the low opinion of women, p. x), of greediness, or the surrender of that strenuous moral effort which the Buddhist discipline so continuously demanded. The study of the stories from this point of view may help to throw light on the genesis of the introductions, designed to connect each tale with some incident in the Buddha's life. Prof. Cowell expresses the opinion that these are "the laboured invention of a later age, like the legendary history of the early centuries of ancient Rome." The comparison seems a little far-fetched. In some cases passages are quoted from the older texts, just as the editors of the Psalter placed references to the biography of David before so-called Davidic Psalms. In other cases the parallel incidents of the introductions are no doubt deliberately devised, as in the series of which Devadatta is the arch-villain. But there are some which are so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Buddhism that they may at least represent the creations of a period when its moral impulse was still fresh—such are those in which the Buddha ate a poor man's bran-cake (p. 252); or fed five hundred brethren at once from the slender meal prepared by a rich but avaricious city-treasurer and his wife (p. 197); or gave to a young brother overburdened with the detail of the three moralities the simple rule "do no evil, whether in word or thought or act" (p. 140. Why has Mr. Chalmers altered the Pāli order, which gives a far better sequence—"in act [body], in word, or in thought"?); or that in which the watchfulness of the Buddha over his disciples is so strikingly pourtrayed (p. 314). The sixteen dreams of the king of Kosala (p. 187 ff.) are interesting samples of expectations of the future decay and corruption of society, which probably belong to some sort of Indian eschatology, and may have arisen out of hints of decline analogous to those uttered by the Buddha in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta.

Enough has perhaps been said to show the immense and varied interest of this volume. Mr. Chalmers's translation

seems, on the whole, remarkably successful. His command of language is admirable; his perception of humour is quick; and his idiomatic equivalents are often exceedingly felicitous—one can hardly open a page without lighting on them, *e.g.* "A name only serves to mark who's who" (p. 238, *nāmaṃ nāma paṇṇattimattaṃ*). At times the appropriate limits of paraphrase seem to be transgressed in the employment of alien terms of Western theology, as where the phrase "to deny the saving grace of my doctrine" replaces a repetition of the more cumbrous denial "that my doctrine leads to the destruction of sorrow in him who follows it" (p. 229). The devotional idioms of Buddhism and Christianity are quite different, and had better be kept apart. But Mr. Chalmers has set a high standard of accuracy, ease, and grace for his successors in this important enterprise. If the volumes that follow are at once as faithful and as readable, the little band of scholars whom Prof. Cowell has enlisted in the work will have rendered no small service to true culture by thus helping to make the East intelligible and interesting to the West.

J. E. C.

China, Present and Past. By R. S. Gundry, author of "China and her Neighbours." London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1895.

Mr. Gundry's new book on China is very opportune. It brings our information on the attitude of the Middle Kingdom towards her Western uninvited visitors down to the Japanese invasion of 1894. It is in a manner a supplement to the author's "China and her Neighbours," and these two treatises are indispensable to all who would form clear and correct opinions on China in her relations with other countries.

In the introduction to "China, Present and Past" the author tells us how the book was made. Several of the chapters, we learn, are magazine articles amplified and brought up to date, while others are now published for the first time.