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978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

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### **History of Indian and Eastern Architecture**

Born in Scotland, James Fergusson (1808–86) spent ten years as an indigo planter in India before embarking upon a second career as an architectural historian. Although he had no formal training, he became one of the most respected researchers in the field and an expert on India's cave temples. His *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* was first published in 1876 and became a standard work. It was revised in this two-volume edition of 1910 by James Burgess (1832–1916), former Director of the Archaeological Survey of India, and Richard Spiers (1838–1916), a noted architect and historian of architecture. Volume 1 covers Buddhist and Himalayan architecture, the Dravidian style of southern India, and the later Chalukyan style from southern and central India in the early medieval period. Illustrated with 280 maps, plans and drawings, this work of impressive scope remains relevant to students of Indian architecture and history.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

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978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# History of Indian and Eastern Architecture

VOLUME 1

JAMES FERGUSSON  
EDITED BY JAMES BURGESS  
AND RICHARD PHENÉ SPIERS



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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

HISTORY  
OF  
INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PLATE X.



OLD DRAVIDIAN TEMPLE AT MÂMALLAPURAM (page 362).

*[Frontispiece to Volume I.]*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

# HISTORY OF INDIAN AND EASTERN ARCHITECTURE

BY THE LATE JAMES FERGUSSON  
C.I.E., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., F.R.I.B.A.

Member of the Society of Dilettanti, etc., etc.

REVISED AND EDITED, WITH ADDITIONS

## INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

By JAMES BURGESS, C.I.E., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

Hon. A.R.I.B.A.; Hon. Member of the Imperial Russian Archæological Society; Corresponding  
Member Batavian Society; Late Director of the Archæological Survey of India, etc., etc.

AND

## EASTERN ARCHITECTURE

By R. PHENÉ SPIERS, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A.

Honorary Member of the American Institute of Architects; Correspondent of the Institute of France

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. I.

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST  
EDITION.

DURING the nine years that have elapsed since I last wrote on this subject,<sup>1</sup> very considerable progress has been made in the elucidation of many of the problems that still perplex the student of the History of Indian Architecture. The publication of the five volumes of General Cunningham's 'Archæological Reports' has thrown new light on many obscure points, but generally from an archæological rather than from an architectural point of view; and Mr Burgess's researches among the western caves and the structural temples of the Bombay presidency have added greatly not only to our stores of information, but to the precision of our knowledge regarding them.

For the purpose of such a work as this, however, photography has probably done more than anything that has been written. There are now very few buildings in India—of any importance at least—which have not been photographed with more or less completeness; and for purposes of comparison such collections of photographs as are now available are simply invaluable. For detecting similarities, or distinguishing differences between specimens situated at distances from one another, photographs are almost equal to actual personal inspection, and, when sufficiently numerous, afford a picture of Indian art of the utmost importance to any one attempting to describe it.

<sup>1</sup> 'History of Architecture in all Countries.' 2nd ed. Murray, 1867. [Now 'History of Ancient and Medieval Architecture.' 3rd ed. 2 vols. Murray, 1893.]

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

## PREFACE.

These new aids, added to our previous stock of knowledge, are probably sufficient to justify us in treating the architecture of India Proper in the quasi-exhaustive manner in which it is attempted, in the first 600 pages of this work. Its description might, of course, be easily extended even beyond these limits, but without plans and more accurate architectural details than we at present possess, any such additions would practically contribute very little that was valuable to the information the work already contains.

The case is different when we turn to Further India. Instead of only 100 pages and 50 illustrations, both these figures ought at least to be doubled to bring that branch of the subject up to the same stage of completeness as that describing the architecture of India Proper. For this, however, the materials do not at present exist. Of Japan we know almost nothing except from photographs, without plans, dimensions, or dates; and, except as regards Peking and the Treaty Ports, we know almost as little of China. We know a great deal about one or two buildings in Cambodia and Java, but our information regarding all the rest is so fragmentary and incomplete, that it is hardly available for the purposes of a general history, and the same may be said of Burma and Siam. Ten years hence this deficiency may be supplied, and it may then be possible to bring the whole into harmony. At present a slight sketch indicating the relative position of each, and their relation to the styles of India Proper, is all that can be well accomplished.

Although appearing as the third volume of the second edition of the 'General History of Architecture,' the present may be considered as an independent and original work. In the last edition the Indian chapters extended only to about 300 pages, with 200 illustrations,<sup>1</sup> and though most of the woodcuts reappear in the present volume, more than half the original text has been cancelled, and consequently at least 600 pages of the present work are original matter, and 200 illustrations—

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<sup>1</sup> 'History of Architecture' (1867), vol. ii. pp. 445-756, Woodcuts 966-1163.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## PREFACE.

ix

and these by far the most important—have been added. These, with the new chronological and topographical details, present the subject to the English reader, in a more compact and complete form than has been attempted in any work on Indian architecture hitherto published. It does not, as I feel only too keenly, contain all the information that could be desired, but I am afraid it contains nearly all that the materials at present available will admit of being utilised, in a general history of the style.

When I published my first work on Indian architecture thirty years ago, I was reproached for making dogmatic assertions, and propounding theories which I did not even attempt to sustain. The defect was, I am afraid, inevitable. My conclusions were based upon the examination of the actual buildings throughout the three Presidencies of India and in China during ten years' residence in the East, and to have placed before the world the multitudinous details which were the ground of my generalisations, would have required an additional amount of description and engravings which was not warranted by the interest felt in the subject at that time. The numerous engravings in the present volume, the extended letterpress, and the references to works of later labourers in the wide domain of Indian architecture, will greatly diminish, but cannot entirely remove, the old objection. No man can direct his mind for forty years to the earnest investigation of any department of knowledge, and not become acquainted with a host of particulars, and acquire a species of insight which neither time, nor space, nor perhaps the resources of language will permit him to reproduce in their fulness. I possess, to give a single instance, more than 3,000 photographs of Indian buildings, with which constant use has made me as familiar as with any other object that is perpetually before my eyes, and to recapitulate all the information they convey to long-continued scrutiny, would be an endless, if not indeed an impossible undertaking. The necessities of the case demand

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

## PREFACE.

that broad results should often be given when the evidence for the statements must be merely indicated or greatly abridged, and if the conclusions sometimes go beyond the appended proofs, I can only ask my readers to believe that the assertions are not speculative fancies, but deductions from facts. My endeavour from the first has been to present a distinct view of the general principles which have governed the historical development of Indian architecture, and my hope is that those who pursue the subject beyond the pages of the present work, will find that the principles I have enunciated will reduce to order the multifarious details, and that the details in turn will confirm the principles. Though the vast amount of fresh knowledge which has gone on accumulating since I commenced my investigations has enabled me to correct, modify, and enlarge my views, yet the classification I adopted, and the historical sequences I pointed out thirty years since, have in their essential outlines been confirmed, and will continue, I trust, to stand good. Many subsidiary questions remain unsettled, but my impression is, that not a few of the discordant opinions that may be observed arise principally from the different courses which enquirers have pursued in their investigations. Some men of great eminence and learning, more conversant with books than buildings, have naturally drawn their knowledge and inferences from written authorities, none of which are contemporaneous with the events they relate, and all of which have been avowedly altered and falsified in later times. My authorities, on the contrary, have been mainly the imperishable records in the rocks, or on sculptures and carvings, which necessarily represented at the time the faith and feelings of those who executed them, and which retain their original impress to this day. In such a country as India, the chisels of her sculptors are, so far as I can judge, immeasurably more to be trusted than the pens of her authors. These secondary points, however, may well await the solution which time and further study will doubtless supply. In the meanwhile, I shall have realised a long-cherished dream if I

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## PREFACE.

xi

have succeeded in popularising the subject by rendering its principles generally intelligible, and can thus give an impulse to its study, and assist in establishing Indian architecture on a stable basis, so that it may take its true position among the other great styles which have ennobled the arts of mankind.

The publication of this volume completes the history of the 'Architecture in all countries, from the earliest times to the present day, in four volumes,' and there it must at present rest. As originally projected, it was intended to have added a fifth volume on 'Rude Stone Monuments,' which is still wanted to make the series quite complete; but, as explained in the preface to my work bearing that title, the subject was not, when it was written, ripe for a historical treatment, and the materials collected were consequently used in an argumentative essay. Since that work was published, in 1872, no serious examination of its arguments has been undertaken by any competent authority, while every new fact that has come to light—especially in India—has served to confirm me more and more in the correctness of the principles I then tried to establish.<sup>1</sup> Unless, however, the matter is taken up seriously, and re-examined by those who, from their position, have the ear of the public in these matters, no such progress will be made as would justify the publication of a second work on the same subject. I consequently see no chance of my ever having an opportunity of taking up the subject again, so as to be able to describe its objects in a more consecutive or more exhaustive manner than was done in the work just alluded to.

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<sup>1</sup> A distinguished German professor, Herr Kinkel of Zürich, in his 'Mosaik zur Kunstgeschichte, Berlin, 1876,' has lately adopted my views with regard to the age of Stonehenge without any reservation, though arriving at that conclusion by a very different chain of reasoning from that I was led to adopt.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

THE late Mr. Fergusson's 'History of Indian and Eastern Architecture' has now been before the public for more than thirty years, and was reprinted (without his consent) in America, before his death in 1886, and the publishers issued a reprint in 1891. His method of treating the subject he has thus described:—"What I have attempted to do during the last forty years has been to apply to Indian Architecture the same principles of archæological science which are universally adopted not only in England, but in every country in Europe. Since the publication of Rickman's 'Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England' in 1817, style has been allowed to supersede all other evidences for the age of any building, not only in Mediæval, but in Byzantine, Classical, and, in fact, all other true styles. Any accomplished antiquary, looking at any archway or any moulding, can say at once, this is Norman, or Early English, or Decorated, or Tudor; and if familiar with the style, tell the date within a few years, whether it belongs to a cathedral or a parish church, a dwelling house or a grange, . . . is not of the smallest consequence, nor whether it belongs to the marvellously elaborate quasi-Byzantine style of the age of the Conqueror, or to the prosaic tameness of that of the age of Elizabeth. Owing to its perfect originality and freedom from all foreign admixture or influence, I believe these principles, so universally adopted in this country, are even more applicable to the Indian styles than to the European."

The successful application of these principles to Indian architecture was entirely his own: no one had dreamed of it

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

xiii

before. It was a stroke of genius to trace out logically the historical sequences of the Hindû monuments and make them tell their own story by means of those guiding principles which he was the first to apply to them, and to elucidate their applicability in a manner that has been borne out since without exception wherever they have been intelligently applied. Though descriptions of Indian monuments may be written in various ways, no one could pretend to take up the systematic study of Indian Architecture without the aid of this work, and no history of the architecture can be scientifically written without appropriating the principles Mr. Fergusson showed how to apply.

My close intimacy with Mr. Fergusson for twenty years, and knowledge of his opinions, may have suggested that I might undertake the revisal of his work; but, when it was first proposed, I was engaged on the preparation of certain volumes of the Archæological Reports of the Indian Survey that had been entrusted to me and I could not then undertake it. On the appointment of a new director for the Surveys, at the close of 1901, the materials were taken out of my hands and my engagement terminated. I was then at liberty to undertake the revision of the work, and in doing so I naturally depended on the like help that had been afforded to Mr. Fergusson himself in 1875, when the resources of the Surveys were at his disposal. But obstruction was raised where it ought hardly to have been expected, and it was due to the good offices of the Right Honourable Lord Morley, Secretary of State for India, that this was largely overcome. The materials in the India Office were at once liberally placed at my disposal, and the Government of India requested to favour the work. This, however, caused delay, and subsequent severe illness has protracted the preparation of the work.

It would have been easy to expand this history, but, if it was to answer its purpose as a handbook, it must obviously be restricted within moderate dimensions. My aim has been to condense where practicable and, whilst revising, to make

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

only such additions from the accessible materials accumulated since 1876, as seemed requisite. The Archæological Surveys have collected vast stores of drawings only a fraction of which has yet been published. Travellers too, influenced partly perhaps by the interest that Mr. Fergusson's volume had created, have published works that have added to our information.

The great advances made in Indian Epigraphy and Palæography during the same period have further enabled us to revise and fix more accurately the dates in the earlier chronology of India; but this has not materially affected the author's chronometric scale of arrangement of the monuments, for where the dates have been somewhat altered, the relative places of the monuments have not required to be changed,—only they have been better adjusted; and in many cases Mr. Fergusson, in his later years, had accepted these corrections.

For much valued aid and information my thanks are due to Mr. Henry Cousens, Superintendent of the Western India Archæological Circle; and to Mr. Alexander Rea of the Madras Circle, from both of whom I have received ungrudging assistance, relative to the districts under their charge.

For Ceylon I am greatly indebted to Lord Stanmore and the Colonial Office, whilst Mr. J. G. Smither, late Government architect, and Mr. H. C. P. Bell, C.C.S., Archæological Commissioner, very kindly have read the proofs and supplied important advice and material for the chapter on the architecture of the Island.

I owe thanks also for valued help to Babû Monmohan Chakravarti, M.A., relative to Orissa; and among others to Mr. R. F. Chisholm, F.R.I.B.A.; Mr. H. C. Fanshawe, C.S.I.; Dr. J. F. Fleet, C.I.E.; Professor Dr. H. Kern, Utrecht; the Right Honble. Ameer 'Ali; Mr. G. F. Williams, State Engineer, Udaypur; Lieut. Fred. M. Bailey, Indian Army; Mr. F. H. Andrews; Dr. L. D. Barnett, and the Rev. Dr. Wm. Millar, C.I.E. To Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., I am indebted for the use of a number of woodcuts.

The history of Indian Architecture has been extended from



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

xv

610 to 785 pages, and the illustrations in the text increased by 98, besides the addition of 34 plates from photographs.

The chapters on Further India, Java and China have been edited and partly rewritten by Mr. R. Phené Spiers, the editor of Mr. Fergusson's larger work, the 'History of Ancient and Medieval Architecture,' published in 1893. Mr. Spiers has recast these chapters, adding much fresh and important information to each, whilst he has also added a new chapter on the Architecture of Japan. For Burma, Mr. Spiers has had to depend largely upon the few works published during the last thirty years describing the buildings there found, on the photographs in the India Office and on the somewhat meagre notes contained in the 'Progress Reports' of the Archæological Survey.

For Cambodia, Siam and Java, on the other hand, were available the excellent publications of the French Archæological Surveys carried out at first under the supervision of the École Française d'Extrême Orient, and now under the skilled direction of the Archæological Commission of Indo-China, and of the Java Surveys under the direction of the Dutch Government Archæological Commission.

This section occupied 100 pages with 49 woodcuts in the former edition; now, with the addition of Japan, it has been extended to 163 pages, with 67 woodcuts and 31 plates.

J. BURGESS.

EDINBURGH,

*February 1910.*

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## NOTE.

ONE of the great difficulties that met every one attempting to write on Indian subjects forty years ago was to know how to spell Indian proper names. The Gilchristian mode of using double vowels, which was fashionable early last century, had then been done away with, as contrary to the spirit of Indian orthography, though it left a plentiful crop of discordant spellings. On the other hand, Sir William Jones and most scholars, by marking the long vowels and by dots to distinguish the palatal from the dental consonants, had formed from the Roman alphabet definite equivalents for each letter in the Indian alphabets—both Sanskritic and Persian. Lepsius, Lassen, and Max Muller in turn proposed various other systems, which have not found much acceptance; and of late continental scholars have put forward still another scheme, quite unsuited for English use. In this system such names as “Krishna,” “Chach,” “Rishi,” are to be represented by *Kṛṣṇa*, *Cac*, *Rṣi*—so pedantic a system is impossible both for cartographer and ordinary reader and, like others, it may well cease to be.

Meanwhile a notable advance towards official uniformity has been made in the spelling of Indian place-names. When the ‘Imperial Gazetteer of India’ was projected, Government judiciously instructed the editor to adopt the Jonesian system of transliteration as slightly modified by Professor H. H. Wilson, but devoid of the diacritical dots attached to certain consonants. The authorisation of this system in the new maps and Gazetteer, and its use in published works since, has established its claim to acceptance in a work intended for the general reader.

In the following pages, consequently, this system has been used, as nearly as may be, avoiding diacritical marks on consonants, but indicating the long vowel sounds *ā*, *ī*, *ū*, as in *Lāt*, *Halebid*, *Stūpa*, etc., whilst *ε* and *ο*, being almost always long, hardly require indication.

Thus *a*<sup>1</sup> sounds as in “rural”; *ā* as in “tar”;  
*i* „ „ “fill”; *ī* „ “police”;  
*u* „ „ “full”; *ū* „ “rude”;  
*e* „ „ “there”; and *ο* „ “stone”.

Only the palatal *s*, as in “sure,” is distinguished from the dental, as in “hiss,” by the italic form among Roman letters, as in “sikhara,” “Asoka.” A hundred years hence, when Sanskrit and Indian alphabets are taught in all schools in England, it may be otherwise, but in the present state of knowledge on the subject it seems expedient to use some such simple method of indicating, at least approximately, the Indian sounds. Strictly accurate transcription in all cases and of well-known names, however, has not been followed.

In Burmese,—which lisps sounds like *s* and *ch*,—the spellings used in the Gazetteers of Burma have been generally adopted.

<sup>1</sup> The shut vowel, inherent in all consonants of the proper Indian alphabets, was formerly transliterated by almost any English vowel: in “Benares” (for “Banâras”). *ε* is used twice for it.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION . . . . . Page 3

BOOK I.

BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE.

CHAP.	PAGE	CHAP.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION AND CLASSIFICATION . . . . .	51	VI. VIHĀRAS, OR MONASTERIES— Structural Vihāras — Bengal Caves—Western Vihāra Caves —Nāsik, Ajantā, Bāgh, Dham- nār and Kholvi, Elūrā, Aurang- ābād and Kudā Vihāras . . . . .	170
II. STAMBHAS OR LĀTS . . . . .	56	VII. GANDHĀRA MONASTERIES— Monasteries at Jamālgarhī— Takht-i-Bahai and Shāh-Dherī —Greek influence . . . . .	209
III. STŪPAS — Relic Worship — Bhilsā Topes—Topes at Sār- nāth and in Bihār—Amarāvati Stūpa — Gandhāra Topes— Jalālābād Topes—Mānikyāla Stūpa . . . . .	62	VIII. CEYLON — Introductory — Anurādhapura—Polonnaruwa . . . . .	224
IV. RAILS—Rails at Bharaut, Math- urā, Sānchi, and Amarāvati . . . . .	102		
V. CHAITYA HALLS — Structural Chaityas — Bihār Caves — Western Chaitya Halls, etc. . . . .	125		

BOOK II.

ARCHITECTURE IN THE HIMALAYAS.

I. KASHMĪR—Temples — Mārtānd —Avantipur — Būniār — Pan- drethan—Malot . . . . .	251	II. NEPĀL AND TIBET—Stūpas or Chaityas — Wooden Temples —Tibet—Temples in Kāngrā . . . . .	273
---	-----	--	-----

Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1  
 James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

xviii

CONTENTS

BOOK III.

DRAVIDIAN STYLE.

CHAP.	PAGE	CHAP.	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	302	— Conjivaram—Tanjor—Tiru- vâlûr—Sîrangam—Chidamba- ram—Râmesvaram—Madurâ— Tinnevelly — Kumbakonam— Vellor and Perûr—Vijayanagar	350
II. HINDÛ CONSTRUCTION— Arches — Domes — Plans — Sikharas . . . . .	310	V. CIVIL ARCHITECTURE—Palaces at Madurâ and Tanjor— Garden Pavilion at Vijaya- nagar—Palace at Chandragiri .	411
III. DRAVIDIAN ROCK-CUT TEMPLES — Mâmallapuram — Kâilâs, · Elûrâ . . . . .	327		
IV. DRAVIDIAN TEMPLES—Patta- dakal and Dhârwâr Temples			

BOOK IV.

CHALUKYAN STYLE.

I. INTRODUCTORY—Chalukyan Architecture—Dhârwâr tem- ples—Ittagi—Gadag—Kuru- vatti—Dambal—Hanamkonda	—Kirtti-Stambhasat Worangal —Mysore—Temples at Som- nâthpûr and Bêlûr—Temples at Halebid . . . . .	420
--	---	-----

DIRECTIONS TO BINDER

MAP OF INDIA, SHOWING THE PRINCIPAL BUDDHIST LOCALITIES	<i>To face page</i> 51
MAP OF THE PRINCIPAL INDO-ARYAN, CHALUKYAN, AND DRAVIDIAN LOCALITIES . . . . .	,, 251

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

( xix )

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN VOLUME I.

No.	PAGE	No.	PAGE
1. Hindû Temple, at Bahulârâ, near Bânkurâ . . . . .	15	27. Elevation and Section of portion of Basement of Stûpa at Mânikyâla . . . . .	98
2. Nâga people worshipping the Triratna emblem of Buddha, on a fiery pillar . . . . .	49	28. Relic Casket, Mânikyâla . . . . .	99
3. Sîri or Gaja Lakshmi seated on a Lotus, with two Elephants pouring water over her . . . . .	50	29. Parinirvâna of Buddha, from Cave No. 26 at Ajantâ . . . . .	101
4. Lât at Allahâbâd . . . . .	57	30. Tree Worship: Bodh-Gayâ Rail . . . . .	105
5. Assyrian honeysuckle ornament from capital of Lât, at Allahâbâd . . . . .	57	31. Relic Casket: Bodh-Gayâ Rail . . . . .	105
6. Capital at Sankisâ . . . . .	58	32. Portion of Rail at Bharaut, as first uncovered . . . . .	106
7. Capital of Lât in Tîrhût . . . . .	58	33. Tree and Serpent Worship at Bharaut . . . . .	108
8. Capital of the Lion-pillar at Kârlê . . . . .	60	34. Rail at Sânci . . . . .	111
9. Minâr Chakri, Kâbul . . . . .	61	35. Rail, of No. 2 Tope, Sânci . . . . .	112
10. Relic Casket of Moggalâna . . . . .	68	36. Representation of Rail, from Amarâvatî . . . . .	112
11. Relic Casket of Sâriputra . . . . .	68	37. Rail in Gautamiputra Cave, Nâsik . . . . .	113
12. View of the great Tope at Sânci . . . . .	69	38. Northern Gateway of Tope at Sânci . . . . .	115
13. Plan of great Tope at Sânci . . . . .	69	39. Bas-relief on left-hand Pillar, Northern Gateway, Sânci . . . . .	117
14. Section of great Tope at Sânci . . . . .	69	40. Ornament on right-hand Pillar, Northern Gateway, Sânci . . . . .	117
15. 'Tee' (Hî) cut in the rock on a Dâgaba at Ajantâ . . . . .	70	41. External Elevation of Great Rail at Amarâvatî . . . . .	120
16. Tope at Sârnâth, near Benares . . . . .	72	42. Angle pillar at Amarâvatî . . . . .	121
17. Panel on the Tope at Sârnâth . . . . .	74	43. Slab from Base of the Stûpa, Amarâvatî . . . . .	121
18. View and Plan of Jarâsandha-kabâithak . . . . .	76	44. Dâgaba (from a Slab), Amarâvatî . . . . .	122
19. Temple at Bodh-Gayâ with Bo-tree . . . . .	78	45. Triratna Emblem. (From a sculpture at Amarâvatî) . . . . .	124
20. Representation of a Stûpa from the Rail at Amarâvatî . . . . .	81	46. Triratna Symbol from Sânci . . . . .	124
21. Tope at Bimaran . . . . .	91	47. Plan of Chaitya Hall, Sânci . . . . .	126
22. Tope at Sultânpur . . . . .	91	48. Ancient Buddhist Chaitya at Têr . . . . .	126
23. Stûpa at Chakpat . . . . .	92	49. Plan of Ancient Buddhist Chaitya at Têr . . . . .	126
24. Relic Casket from a Tope at Mânikyâla . . . . .	95	50. Plan of an Ancient Chaitya at Chezarla . . . . .	127
25. View of Mânikyâla Tope . . . . .	96		
26. Restored Elevation of the Tope at Mânikyâla . . . . .	97		

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN VOLUME I.

No.	PAGE	No.	PAGE
51. Elevation of Chezarla Chaitya Temple . . . . .	127	83. Façade of the Viswakarma Cave at Elûrâ . . . . .	161
52. Section of Chezarla Chaitya Temple . . . . .	127	84. Rail in front of the Chaitya Cave at Kanheri . . . . .	163
53. Sudâma Cave, Plan and Section, Sât-Garbha group . . . . .	130	85. Capital of a Pillar from the Chaitya Cave at Kanheri . . . . .	164
54. Kondivtê Cave, Salsette . . . . .	131	86. Caves at Dhamnâr . . . . .	165
55. Façade of Lomas Rishi Cave . . . . .	131	87. Façade of Chaitya Cave at Guntupalle . . . . .	168
56. Lomas Rishi Cave, Plan . . . . .	132	88. Sphinxes from Buddhist Vihâra at Pitalkhorâ . . . . .	169
57. Plan and Section of Sitâ-marhi Cave . . . . .	133	89. Dharmarâja Rath at Mâmalla-puram . . . . .	172
58. Chaitya and Vihâra Caves, at Bhâjâ . . . . .	134	90. Diagram explanatory of the arrangement of a Buddhist Vihâra of Four Storeys in height . . . . .	172
59. Front of a Chaitya Hall . . . . .	134	91. Square Cell from a bas-relief at Bharaut . . . . .	173
60. Façade of the Chaitya Cave at Bhâjâ . . . . .	135	92. Oblong Cell from a bas-relief at Bharaut . . . . .	173
61. Triratna. Shield. Chakra. Triratna, etc. . . . .	136	93. Plan of Son-bhandar Caves . . . . .	176
62. Capital of a rock-cut Dâgaba at Bhâjâ . . . . .	137	94. Section of Son-bhandar Cave . . . . .	176
63. Plan of Caves at Bedsâ . . . . .	138	95. Front of Son-bhandar Cave . . . . .	176
64. Capital of Pillar in front of Cave at Bedsâ . . . . .	139	96. Plan of small Vihâra at Bhâjâ . . . . .	177
65. View in Verandah of Chaitya at Bedsâ . . . . .	140	97. Capital of Pilaster at Bhâjâ . . . . .	178
66. View of Chaitya Cave at Nâsik . . . . .	141	98. Plan of Cave No. 11 at Ajantâ . . . . .	181
67. Section of Chaitya Cave at Kârlê . . . . .	143	99. Plan of Cave No. 2 at Ajantâ . . . . .	181
68. Plan of Chaitya Cave at Kârlê . . . . .	143	100. Plan of Cave No. 3 at Bâgh . . . . .	182
69. View of Chaitya Cave at Kârlê . . . . .	144	101. Plan of Darbâr Cave, Kanheri . . . . .	182
70. View of Interior of Cave at Kârlê . . . . .	146	102. Plan of Nahapâna Vihâra, Nâsik . . . . .	184
71. Interior of Chaitya Cave No. 10 at Ajantâ . . . . .	149	103. Pillar in Nahapâna Cave, Nâsik . . . . .	185
72. Cross-section of Cave No. 10 at Ajantâ . . . . .	149	104. Pillar in Gautamîputra Cave, Nâsik . . . . .	185
73. Plan of Chaitya Cave No. 19 at Ajantâ . . . . .	151	105. Plan of Srî Yajna Cave, No. 15, at Nâsik . . . . .	187
74. View of Façade, Chaitya Cave No. 19 at Ajantâ . . . . .	152	106. Pillar in Srî Yajna Cave . . . . .	188
75. Rock-cut Dâgaba at Ajantâ . . . . .	153	107. Plan of Cave No. 16, at Ajantâ . . . . .	189
76. Small Model found in the Tope at Sultânpur . . . . .	153	108. View of Interior of Vihâra, No. 16, at Ajantâ . . . . .	190
77. Pillars on the left side of the Nave, in Cave No. 26 at Ajantâ . . . . .	154	109. View in Cave No. 17, at Ajantâ . . . . .	191
78. View of Mânmoda Chaitya Cave at Junnar . . . . .	157	110. Pillar in Vihâra Cave No. 17 at Ajantâ . . . . .	192
79. Plan of Circular Cave, Junnar . . . . .	158	111. Capital from Verandah of Cave 24, Ajantâ . . . . .	194
80. Section of Circular Cave, Junnar . . . . .	158	112. Pillar in the Verandah of Cave 1, Ajantâ . . . . .	195
81. Round Temple and part of Palace or Monastery. (From a bas-relief at Bharaut) . . . . .	159	113. Plan of Great Vihâra Cave at Bâgh . . . . .	198
82. Interior of Viswakarma Buddhist Cave at Elûrâ . . . . .	160	114. Buddhist Vihâras at the south end of the Elûrâ group . . . . .	201
		115. Plan of Mahârwarâ Cave, Elûrâ . . . . .	202

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN VOLUME I.

xxi

No.	PAGE	No.	PAGE
116. Ancient Buddhist Tower at Negapattam . . . . .	206	145. Temple of Mârtând, Plan . . . . .	259
117. Ancient capital found at Patna . . . . .	207	146. View of Temple at Mârtând . . . . .	260
118. Capital in Side Chapel of Cave No. 19, Ajantâ . . . . .	208	147. View of Central Cell of Court at Mârtând . . . . .	261
119. Plan of Monastery at Jamâlgarhi . . . . .	212	148. Niche with Figure at Mârtând . . . . .	263
120. Plan of Monastery at Takht-i-Bahai . . . . .	212	149. Soffit of Arch at Mârtând . . . . .	264
121. Corinthian Capital from Jamâlgarhi . . . . .	214	150. Pillar at Avantipur . . . . .	265
122. Corinthian Capital from Jamâlgarhi . . . . .	214	151. View of Court of Temple at Bûniâr . . . . .	266
123. Conventional Elevation of the Façade of a Cell from Jamâlgarhi . . . . .	216	152. View of Temple at Pândrethan . . . . .	268
124. Plan of Ionic Monastery, Shâh-Dheri . . . . .	218	153. View of Temple at Pâyér . . . . .	269
125. Ionic Pillar, Shâh-Dheri . . . . .	218	154. View of Temple at Malot, in the Salt Range . . . . .	271
126. Footprints of Buddha (From a bas-relief at Amarâvati) . . . . .	223	155. View of Temple of Swayambhûnâth, Nepâl . . . . .	278
127. View of the north side of west chapel, Ruwanveli Dâgaba . . . . .	231	156. Nepalese Kosthakar . . . . .	280
128. Part Elevation (restored) of front of south chapel, Ruwanveli Dâgaba . . . . .	232	157. View of Devi Bhawânî Temple, Bhâtgâon . . . . .	281
129. Stelæ at east end of north chapel, Abhayagiri Dâgaba . . . . .	233	158. View of Temples of Mahâdeva and Krishna, Patân . . . . .	283
130. Thûpârâma Dâgaba, Anurâdhapura . . . . .	234	159. Pasupati—General view of the temples and burning ghât . . . . .	284
131. Capital from outer circle at Thûpârâma Dâgaba . . . . .	235	160. Doorway of Darbâr, Bhâtgâon . . . . .	285
132. Lankârâma Dâgaba, Anurâdhapura . . . . .	236	161. View of Hindû Temple at Chergâon in Chambâ . . . . .	287
133. Capital of Lankârâma Dâgaba Pillars, inner circles . . . . .	236	162. Monoliths at Dimâpur . . . . .	288
134. Pavilion with Steps west of Ruwanveli Dâgaba . . . . .	240	163. Doorway in the Temple at Tashiding . . . . .	295
135. Moonstone at the Steps of the Bo-tree platform . . . . .	240	164. Interior of Temple at Pemi-ongchi . . . . .	296
136. View of the Sacred Bo-tree vihâra, Anurâdhapura . . . . .	243	165. View of Temples at Kiragrâma. Kângrâ District . . . . .	299
137. Sât Mahal Prâsâda and Galpota . . . . .	246	166. Pillar in Porch of a Vaishnava Temple at Eran . . . . .	301
138. Capital of a Pilaster, Pitalkhorâ . . . . .	250	167. Capital of Half Column from a Temple in Orissa . . . . .	301
139. Tomb of Zainu-l-'Abidin. Elevation of Arches . . . . .	253	168. View of City Gateway, Vijayanagar . . . . .	311
140. Takht-i-Sulaimân — Elevation of Arches . . . . .	254	169. Gateway Jhinjhuwâdâ . . . . .	312
141. Model of Temple in Kashmir . . . . .	256	170. Radiating Arch . . . . .	313
142. Pillar at Srinagar . . . . .	257	171. Horizontal Arch . . . . .	313
143. Capital from Shâdipur . . . . .	257	172. Diagram of Roofing . . . . .	314
144. Restoration of Vihâra Cells, at Takht-i-Bahai . . . . .	258	173-174. Diagrams of Roofing . . . . .	314
		175. Diagram of Roofing . . . . .	315
		176. Diagram of Indian Construction . . . . .	315
		177. Diagram of the arrangement of the pillars of a Jaina Dome . . . . .	317
		178. Diagram Plan of Jaina Porch . . . . .	317
		179. Diagram of Jaina Porch . . . . .	318
		180. Old Temple at Aihole, Plan . . . . .	320
		181. View of Old Temple at Aihole . . . . .	321

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xxii

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN VOLUME 1.

No.	PAGE	No.	PAGE
182. Plan of Pāpanātha Temple at Pattadakal . . . . .	322	213. View of the Great Temple at Tanjor . . . . .	364
183. Restored Elevation of the Sun Temple at Kanārak . . . . .	323	214. View of Temple of Subrahmanya, Tanjor . . . . .	365
184. Diagram Plan and Section of the Temple at Kanārak . . . . .	324	215. Pier in Subrahmanya Temple . . . . .	366
185. View of the Raths, Māmalla-puram . . . . .	329	216. Plan of Inner Temple at Tiruvālūr . . . . .	367
186. View of Draupadi's Rath . . . . .	330	217. Bird's-eye view of Temple at Tiruvālūr . . . . .	367
187. Plan of Bhīma's Rath . . . . .	331	218. Plan of Srīrangam Temple—the four inner courts . . . . .	369
188. Pillar in Bhīma's Rath . . . . .	332	219. View of the eastern half of the Great Temple at Srīrangam . . . . .	371
189. Plan of Dharmarāja Rath . . . . .	333	220. Plan of Temple of Chidambaram . . . . .	375
190. Elevation of Dharmarāja Rath . . . . .	334	221. View of Porch of Chidambaram . . . . .	376
191. Section of Dharmarāja Rath, with suggested internal arrangements . . . . .	335	222. Section of Porch of Temple at Chidambaram . . . . .	377
192. Plan of Sahadeva's Rath . . . . .	336	223. View of Ruined Temple at Chidambaram . . . . .	378
193. View of Sahadeva's Rath . . . . .	337	224. Plan of Great Temple at Rāmesvaram, before 1905 . . . . .	381
194. View of Ganesa Rath . . . . .	338	225. Central Corridor, Rāmesvaram . . . . .	383
195. View of Perumāl Temple at Madurā . . . . .	339	226. Plan of Tirumalai Nāyyak's Chaultri, Madurā . . . . .	387
196. Entrance to a Hindū Temple, Colombo . . . . .	340	227. Pillar in Tirumalai Nāyyak's Chaultri . . . . .	387
197. Head of the Nāga figure, at Māmallapuram . . . . .	341	228. View in Tirumalai Nāyyak's Chaultri . . . . .	389
198. View of Cave Temple, Sāluvan-kuppam . . . . .	341	229. Plan of Madurā Temple . . . . .	391
199. Plan of Kailās Temple, at Elūrā . . . . .	343	230. Half-plan of Temple at Tinnevely . . . . .	393
200. View of Kailās Elūrā . . . . .	344	231. Gopuram at Kumbakonam . . . . .	395
201. Shrine of the River Goddesses, Elūrā . . . . .	345	232. Portico of Temple at Vellor . . . . .	397
202. Dhvajastambha at Kailās, Elūrā . . . . .	346	233. Compound Pillar at Vellor . . . . .	399
203. Dipdān in Dhārwar . . . . .	347	234. Compound Pillar at Perūr . . . . .	399
204. Plan of Great Temple at Pattadakal . . . . .	353	235. Plan of Vitthalaswāmin Temple at Vijayanagar . . . . .	402
205. South elevation of Virūpāksha Temple at Pattadakal . . . . .	354	236. View of Porch of Temple of Vitthalaswāmin . . . . .	403
206. Plan of Sangamesvar Temple at Pattadakal . . . . .	355	237. Entrance through Gopuram at Tādpatri . . . . .	405
207. Plan of Mālegitti Temple, at Bādāmi . . . . .	356	238. Portion of Gopuram at Tādpatri . . . . .	406
208. Plan of Meguti Jaina Temple at Aihole . . . . .	356	239. Plan of Temples at Sri-Sailam . . . . .	409
209. Plan of Kailāsanātha Temple, Conjivaram . . . . .	358	240. Plan of Tirumalai Nāyyak's Palace at Madurā . . . . .	413
210. Section of Vaikuntha Perumāl Temple, Conjivaram . . . . .	359	241. Hall in Palace, Madurā . . . . .	414
211. Plan of the Shore Temple at Māmallapuram . . . . .	361	242. Court in Palace, Tanjor . . . . .	415
212. Diagram Plan of Tanjor Temple . . . . .	363	243. Garden Pavilion at Vijayanagar . . . . .	417
		244. South Elevation of Chandragiri Palace . . . . .	418



Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## LIST OF PLATES TO VOLUME I.

xxiii

No.	PAGE	No.	PAGE
245. Plan of the ground floor of Chandragiri Palace . . . . .	418	255. Plan of Kesava Temple at Somnâthpur . . . . .	437
246. Plan of Ittagi Temples . . . . .	425	256. Temple at Somnâthpur . . . . .	438
247. Plan of Temples at Kukkanûr . . . . .	426	257. Plan of Chenna Kesava Temple at Bêlûr . . . . .	439
248. Plan of Somesvar Temple, Gadag . . . . .	427	258. View of part of Porch at Bêlûr . . . . .	440
249. Plan of Kuruvatti Temple . . . . .	430	259. Pavilion at Bêlûr . . . . .	441
250. Kuruvatti Temple—south elevation . . . . .	430	260. View of Kedâresvara Temple, Halebid . . . . .	443
251. Plan of Dambal Temple of Dodda Basavanna . . . . .	431	261. Plan of Hoysalesvara Temple at Halebid . . . . .	444
252. Doorway of Great Temple at Hanamkonda . . . . .	433	262. Restored view of Temple at Halebid . . . . .	445
253. Kirtti-Stambha at Worangal . . . . .	434	263. Central Pavilion, Halebid, East Front . . . . .	447
254. Temple at Buchhanapalli . . . . .	436		

## LIST OF PLATES TO VOL. I.

PLATE

X. OLD DRAVIDIAN TEMPLE AT MÂMALLAPURAM	
(page 362) . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece to Volume I.</i>
JAMES FERGUSSON . . . . .	<i>To face page 1</i>
I. ALÎ MASJID—STÛPA NO 5 . . . . .	92
II. THÛPÂRÂMA DÂGABA (AS RESTORED) . . . . .	234
III. THE WATA-DÂ-GE AT POLONNARUWA . . . . .	246
IV. THE THÛPÂRÂMA TEMPLE, POLONNARUWA . . . . .	247
V. SAIVA TEMPLE AT POLONNARUWA . . . . .	248
VI. THE POTALA AT LHÂSA FROM THE W.S.W. . . . .	292
VII. GOLDEN TEMPLE AT GYAN-TSÊ . . . . .	294
VIII. MÂLEGITTI SAIVA TEMPLE AT BÂDÂMI . . . . .	356
IX. VIEW OF MAIN SHRINE, KAILÂSANÂTHA TEMPLE, KÂNCHÎPURAM . . . . .	359
XI. STONE CAR, AT THE TEMPLE OF VITTHALA, VIJAYANAGAR, 1881 (NOW DESTROYED) . . . . .	403
XII. GREAT TEMPLE AT ITTAGI, FROM S.W. . . . .	424
XIII. TEMPLE OF SOMESVAR AT GADAG, FROM N.E. . . . .	427
XIV. DOORWAY OF THE SHRINE IN KÂSÎVISVESVAR TEMPLE AT LAKKUNDI . . . . .	428
XV. CHAUDADÂMPUR TEMPLE OF NUKTESVARA . . . . .	429
XVI. GALAGANÂTH TEMPLE FROM N.W. . . . .	432
XVII. TEMPLE OF KEDÂRESVARA AT BALAGÂMI . . . . .	441

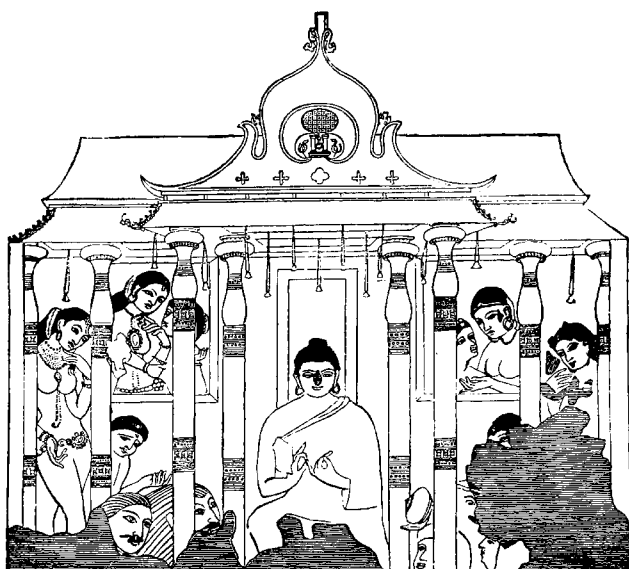
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Frontmatter

[More information](#)



Buddha preaching. (From a fresco painting at Ajantâ.)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

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978-1-108-06144-5 - History of Indian and Eastern Architecture: Volume 1

James Fergusson Edited by James Burgess and Richard Phené Spiers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



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*[To face page 1, Volume I.]*