

NOTE ON EXCAVATIONS AT KASIA.

AS it has been decided that the Kasia excavations will be resumed during next cold season, it is the object of the present paper to give a succinct account of this year's operations, which, though not devoid of interest, have not led to definite results. This applies, in the first place, to the important question of the identity of Kasia with Kusinārā, the place where the Buddha entered *Nirvāṇa*. This identification, it will be remembered, first proposed by Sir Alexander Cunningham,¹ was generally accepted, when excavations carried on by his assistant, Mr. A. C. L. Carlleyle,² in 1875-77 revealed a colossal image of the dying Buddha enshrined in a brick temple, and facing north like the *Nirvāṇa* statue described by Hiuen Tsiang³ at Kusinārā.

A careful comparison of the existing remains with the data furnished by the Chinese pilgrims has, however, raised grave doubts with some scholars as to the correctness of the proposed identity. Mr. Vincent A. Smith,⁴ who devoted special attention to the subject, even expressed the view that Kasia cannot possibly be identified with Kusinārā. I may state at once that, though admitting the invalidity of some of the arguments adduced by Cunningham and Carlleyle, I cannot accept Mr. Smith's negative conclusion. It seems to me that this author, while overestimating the value of Fa-Hien's and Hiuen Tsiang's figures for distances, underrates the demonstrative power of the colossal *Nirvāṇa* statue of Kasia.

Dr. Waddell's observation that "such images were usual at great relic shrines" is nothing more than a hypothesis based on the occurrence of such images in Ceylon and Further India, and is hardly supported by Cunningham's suggestion that the so-called nine-yard graves mark the positions of similar images in India proper. The fact remains that, though Buddha's death is a favourite subject in Buddhist art, no other large-size statue of the dying Buddha has been found in any of the Indian sites excavated during the last century—a circumstance especially noteworthy if we remember the endless number of seated and standing Buddha images which crowd the museums of India. It is also remarkable to find this colossal image carved out of one block of stone on a spot where for miles around no stone is found and where it cannot have been erected but at considerable expense and labour.

¹ A. S. R., Vol. I, p. 76 ff.

² A. S. R., Vol. XVIII, p. 55 ff. and XXII, p. 16 ff.

³ Si-yu-ki (transl. Beal), Vol. II, p. 32.

⁴ The remains near Kasia, Allahabad, 1896, and J. R. A. S. (1902), p. 139 ff. See also Dr. W. Hoey, J. A. S. B., Vol. LXIX, Pt. I, 74 ff., and LXX, Pt. I, p. 29 f.

The great holiness attaching to the site is not only proved by the number of sanctuaries grouped around the *Nirvāṇa* temple, but is emphasised by the absence of any large city site in the immediate neighbourhood. Thus one of Mr. Smith's arguments against the identification may be adduced in its favour. All accounts agree that Kusinārā (unknown to Brahmanical literature) derived its importance solely from its association with Buddha's death. Our oldest source¹ calls it "a small wattle and daub town, a town in the midst of the jungle, a branch township." The fact that no trace is now visible above ground of a small country town which the Chinese pilgrims found in ruins, need, in my opinion, as little excite our wonder, as the disappearance of the river which separated it from the sacred *sāl* grove in which Buddha died.

Mr. V. A. Smith fully recognised the importance of the Buddhist site near Kasia, apart from its supposed identity with the scene of Buddha's death. It was on his recommendation that the Government of the United Provinces sanctioned a sum of R1,000 for the excavation of the mound known as Māthā Kūār kā Koṭ,² the centre of which is occupied by the temple of the dying Buddha. It was decided that the Provincial Archæological Surveyor, Mr. Edmund Smith, would conduct the operations. But his lamented death, and the prolonged vacancy following it, prevented the work from being taken in hand for several years. On Mr. Marshall's recommendation, the Local Government decided that I should superintend the proposed excavations. On the 28th November 1904, the work was started, and, but for the Christmas recess, continued till the 28th February 1905. Of the sum sanctioned R998 were spent.

My Assistant, P. Hirananda, took an equal share in the supervision of the excavations during the first month. After Christmas, P. Daya Ram, holder of an archæological scholarship, who, with the consent of the Director General of Archæology, was temporarily attached to my staff, proved of much help in looking after the work and registering the daily finds. My clerk and head-draftsman also assisted, when necessary, in supervising the workmen. Babu Kashi Ram, Sub-Overseer, P. W. D., stationed at Kasia, was of great help to me in supplying labour and in many other respects. In the course of the work fourteen drawings were made and fifty-three photographs taken by my two draftsmen and photographer.

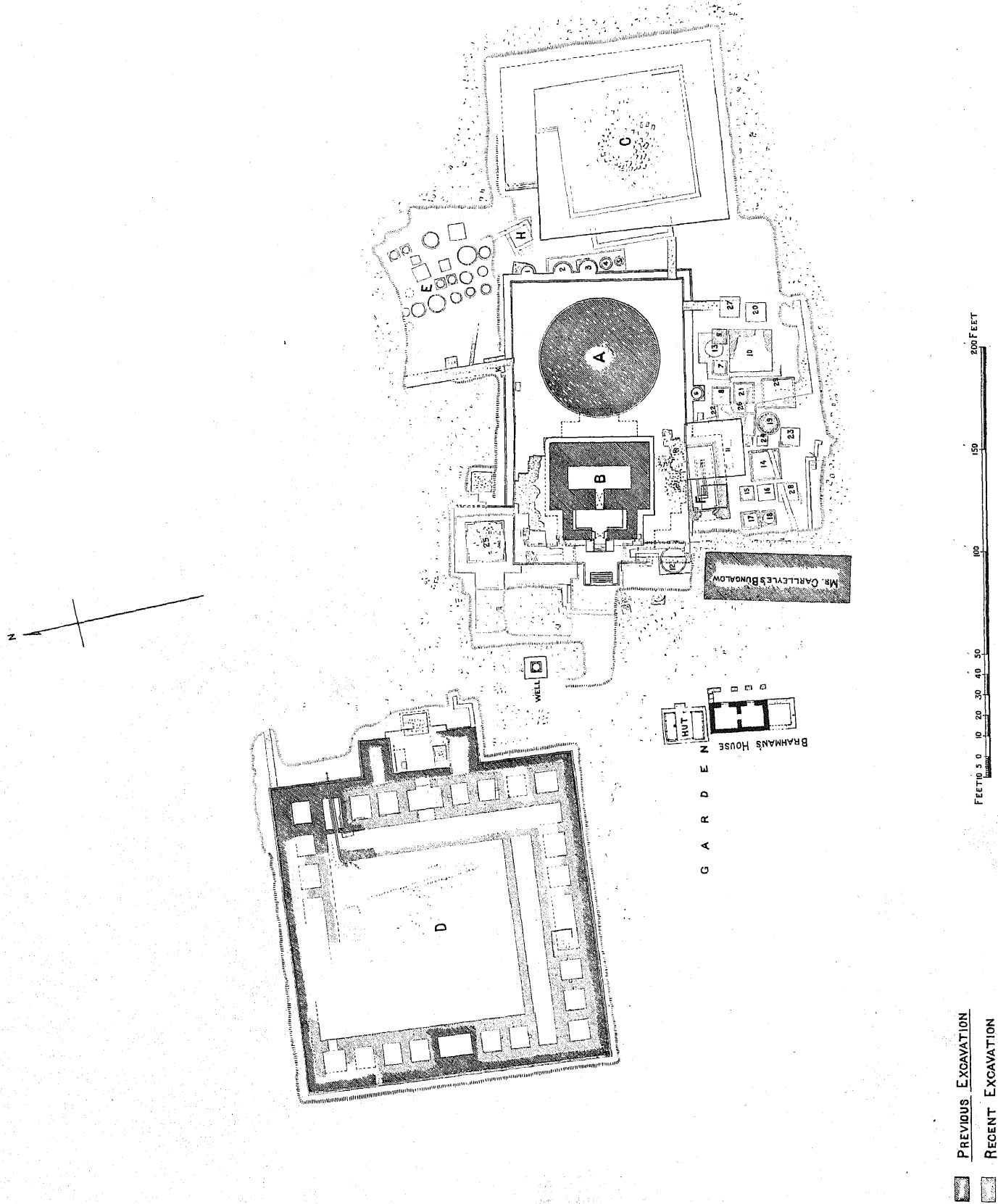
Summary of Excavations.

It will be remembered that the two main buildings of the site, namely, the *stūpa* (A) and temple (B) of the dying Buddha, had been completely excavated by Mr. Carlleyle, to whose account I refer. The excavation of the plinth on which these two buildings are raised had yet to be completed, especially on the south side. An excavation of the plinth itself, as far as was feasible, revealed traces of earlier shrines which once stood on the site of the present temple. At some distance to the east of the great *stūpa*, a detached mound overgrown with vegetation marked the site of

¹ *The Book of the Great Decease (Mahāparinibbāna-sutta)*, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XI, p. 100.

² With Mr. Smith I reject Cunningham's interpretation of Māthā Kūār as "the Dead Prince." The alternate form *Mahthā* suggests a derivation from Sanskrit *Mahāsthāna*, "a sacred place." We may assume that this designation, originally applied to the site, has been preserved in the name of the seated Buddha image worshipped in the immediate vicinity.

EXCAVATIONS AT KASIA.



GENERAL PLAN OF SITE.

a monument of considerable size, the nature of which had not yet been established by previous explorers. Mr. Smith surmised it to be a brick temple. This mound was completely excavated so as to leave little doubt that the remains it contained belong to a *stūpa* (C) of an uncommon type. Between this building and the central group remnants of ancient walling were discovered, comprising a chamber (H), the early date of which is proved by the large size of the bricks, as well as by a find of coins, the only one made in the course of the excavations. The area south of the great *stūpa* and *Nirvāṇa* temple was completely excavated for a width of twenty yards from the building C above described, up to the bungalow built on the mound by Mr. Carlleyle. A great number of basements of small *stūpas* of various shapes and sizes, besides some other monuments, came to light. The excavation to the north of the central group did not reveal any monuments of consequence except the basement of a *stūpa* adjoining the north-west corner of the plinth. Finally, the excavation of the large building D, which occupies the north-west portion of the mound, though not yet completed, confirmed the surmise of former explorers, as to its representing a Buddhist monastery (*sanghārāma*).

I wish now to describe in detail the various buildings exposed by this year's excavations, which will at the same time afford an opportunity for noting the objects discovered in the course of the work. The finds were far less in number and significance than the importance of the site would have led one to anticipate. This is perhaps due to the circumstance that the Buddhist sanctuaries of Kasia do not appear to have met with a violent end, but gradually fell into ruin, so that any objects of value which they may have contained, had been removed long before the site became buried and covered by forests. It was especially disappointing that but few inscribed, and no dated, documents were found. In the absence of the latter, it is mainly on internal evidence that a tentative history of these monuments can be based.

Earlier Nirvāṇa Temples.

In the course of his excavation of the *Nirvāṇa* temple (B) Mr. Carlleyle¹ noticed on three sides of this building remains of an earlier shrine. It is a much larger building, and therefore a fitter receptacle for the colossal Buddha image, which wholly fills the cella in which it is now placed, so as hardly to leave room for the processions of the faithful. There can be little doubt that the present clumsy building, restored by Mr. Carlleyle, belongs to the expiring days of Indian Buddhism and that the image was previously placed in the larger shrine. This may not only be inferred from the position of the image with regard to this temple, but also from the circumstance, noted by Mr. Carlleyle, that the image had been previously mended: it must have become damaged in the ruin of the earlier shrine.

A detailed description of the image would be out of place in the present paper; but there is one point I wish to emphasise, as being of particular interest for the history of the buildings. In front of the couch of the dying Buddha there are three mourning figures, the central one of which is seated cross-legged with its back turned towards the spectator.² Below this figure an inscription is found which was

¹ A. S. R., Vol. XVIII, p. 66. The outline of the building as shown on Plate V is inaccurate.

² See a similar figure in the *Nirvāṇa* sculpture on Plate L, *Cave Temples of India*.

deciphered by Dr. J. F. Fleet,¹ who assigns it to the end of the fifth century. From his wording one obtains the impression that the epigraph belongs solely to the figure below which it is engraved. It will therefore be well to point out that such a figure is universally found on representations of Buddha's death. M. Foucher² has proposed to identify him with Subhadra, the Master's last convert. There can be no doubt that not this figure alone, but the whole *Nirvāṇa* image of which it forms an essential feature, is referred to in the inscription as the gift of the abbot Haribala, and on account of the character may be assigned to the end of the fifth century A.D.



Fig. 1.

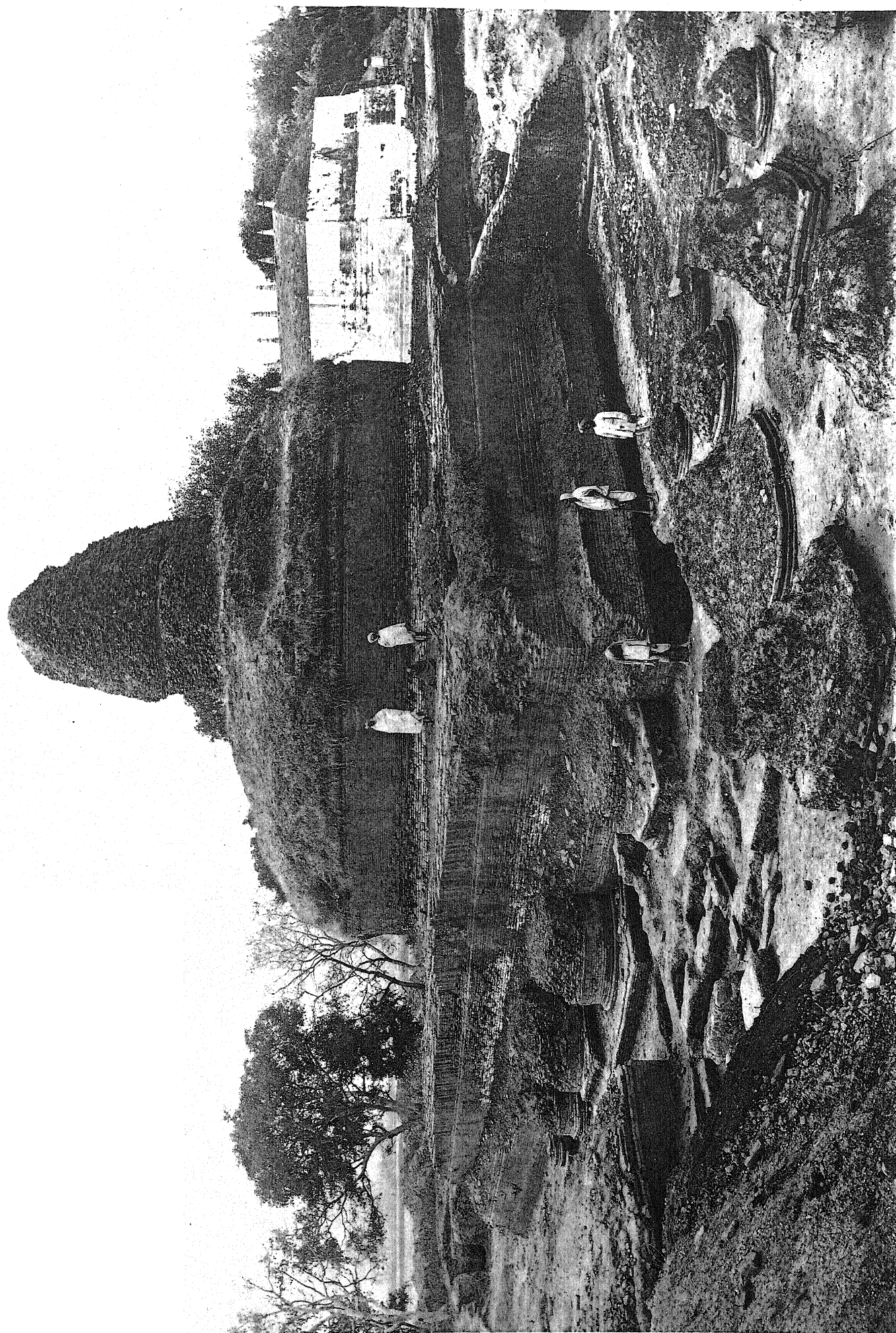
Now the question arises whether the earlier temple mentioned above is contemporaneous with the image. Mr. Cousens informs me that the earliest temples with recessed corners like the one under discussion belong to the seventh or eighth century and that before that time they were square or rectangular in ground-plan.³ Thus, there may have existed a third temple in which the image stood originally, unless it stood in the open.

At present, remnants of the temple with recessed corners exist only on two sides, *viz.*, to the north and south of the present shrine. On the north side, the outline is quite distinct, but on the south the little that remains of that building forms a confused mass with the basements of *stūpas* of an apparently late date raised over

¹ Gupta inscriptions, *Corpus Inscr. Ind.*, Vol. III, p. 272.

² *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra*, Vol. I, p. 567.

³ Mr. Cousens' statement may be true as regards the extant examples of temples in Western India, but it is obvious from the remains recently excavated at Sarnāth that this familiar form of building goes back to a very much earlier date than the seventh or eighth century.—[Ed.]



its ruins. It is not clear from Mr. Carlleyle's account, what remains he found on the third or east side of the present temple. But it will be seen from the accompanying plan that, if it were to be restored here, so as to correspond to the northern and southern sides, its plan would overlap that of the *stūpa*, as it stands now. It follows that this building, if it existed at the same time with the earlier temple, must have been smaller in diameter.

The excavations revealed the interesting fact that the plinth, on which both these buildings stand, contains remains of an earlier structure, characterised by a row of deep niches alternating with pilasters of carved bricks. A portion of this older plinth south of the temple entrance had been laid bare by Mr. Carlleyle, who, however, erroneously connected it with the earlier temple just referred to. (Cf. Plate VIII a.) That there can be no connection between the two buildings is evident from the position of two niches excavated by me to the north and south of the temple entrance. The plan both of the present and of the earlier temple overlaps these niches. Clearly the niches were filled and the plinth was extended to its present size in order to render the erection of the earlier temple possible. The early plinth with the niches is therefore anterior to the early temple, with the recessed corners. I may note also that these two buildings do not stand in the same axis.

The niches of the earlier plinth once contained seated Buddha images of stucco, the remains of one of which was found *in situ* in the niche north of the temple entrance and under the north-west corner of the ante-chamber. In the corresponding niche to the south, an object of no less interest was discovered, namely, a terra-cotta plaque (ht. 64 cm.) with the projecting figure of a Buddha seated cross-legged. Both arms are broken, but evidently the hands were joined in front of the breast, where the break is still visible. The attitude must therefore have been that of expounding the sacred Law (*dharmacakramudrā*). The drapery, which is clearly indicated, covers both shoulders. The head was found detached and slightly injured. It has a rounded *uṣṇīṣa*, but no *ūrṇā*. The hair is arranged in curls turned to the right. The features are well moulded, the eyes large. The image must have been enclosed in a circular border, probably meant for a halo. Only beneath the image a portion is preserved decorated with a row of miniature elephants carrying flowers and placed alternately horizontally and vertically. Along this border there runs an inscription greatly obliterated. Enough, however, remains to show that it is a votive inscription in the formula of the Gupta period and that the character is that of the fifth century A.D.



Fig. 2.

This circumstance lends the find particular interest, as it clearly shows that the filling of the niches and erection of the temple with recessed corners cannot have taken place before the fifth century. We may even say that presumably it happened

a considerable time afterwards, considering the condition in which the terra-cotta was found. The niches, as we saw, served the purpose of containing stucco Buddha figures. The plaque certainly did not belong to the niche in which it was found. Its rounded shape indicates that it belonged to some building ; possibly it filled a medallion over the temple entrance. If so, the natural conclusion would be that it formed part of that hypothetical earliest temple which originally contained the *Nirvāṇa* image, and which consequently must have been built towards the end of the fifth century.

It is a question of great interest, whether the earlier plinth with the niches can have belonged to this temple or formed part of some still earlier building. I feel inclined to assume the latter alternative, though my explorations have not yielded any conclusive proof. The following points, however, may be noticed. The rows of niches with Buddha figures separated by ornamental pilasters suggest a Buddhist *stūpa* much more than a temple. On the *stūpas* of Gandhāra this feature is commonly found¹ and it would seem that the Kasia building was ultimately derived from that country. Carved bricks of the same type, now preserved in the Lucknow Museum, are said to originate from Ahichattra.² They were discovered by Dr. Führer, who assigns them to the first and second centuries B.C. This date seems somewhat too early, but they may belong to the Kuṣāṇa period.

The early plinth has a projection with an ornamental cornice ; on this was built the casing which forms the present plinth, except on the west side where the lower portion of the earlier plinth also was enclosed in the casing. Everywhere else the early plinth has now become exposed. It is noteworthy that at various points we find minor buildings partly engaged in the projecting part of the early plinth. These are on the east, the *stūpas* nos. 1, 2 and 3 ; to the south, the *stūpa* no. 6, and to the west, the *stūpa* no. 12. To these may be added nos. 4 and 5 which, though detached from the plinth, are built on the same basement as nos. 2 and 3. Evidently these structures belong to an earlier date. But the presence of such votive *stūpas* can only be explained by assuming that they surrounded some large-sized monument. Thus we are led to assume that the early plinth with its ornamental brickwork was preceded by some still earlier building, presumably a *stūpa*, round which those minor monuments were erected.

The conclusions arrived at can be summarised as follows. At an early date there must have existed on the site of the *Nirvāṇa* temple some important monument, presumably a *stūpa*, round which the votive *stūpas*, noted above, were erected. Presumably, in the Kuṣāṇa period, another monument was erected on a double plinth which is still extant. In the lower projecting portion the surrounding minor buildings then extant were partially enclosed. The upper portion had a row of niches with Buddha figures separated by pilasters, such as are found on Buddhist buildings in the Peshāwar district. On the ruins of this monument a temple, presumably rectangular in shape, was raised in the end of the fifth century to contain the *Nirvāṇa* image, made by order of the abbot Haribala. Two or three centuries later the temple with recessed corners was built. In order to find sufficient space for this building, the niches of the old plinth were bricked up and the plinth was encased and extended

¹ Foucher *op. cit.*, p. 201, Fig. 81.

² *Annual Report of the Provincial Museum, Lucknow*, for the year ending 31st March 1892.



(a) PART OF EARLY PLINTH FROM WEST.
(b) BUILDINGS C AND H FROM N.W.

westward. Finally, when the second temple had collapsed, a third shrine was built of rectangular shape and smaller dimensions. This is the temple discovered and restored by Mr. Carlleyle.

At the present stage of my explorations these conclusions will have to be considered as tentative. A further examination of the plinth may either confirm or modify them. So much is certain, that on the spot of the *Nirvāna* temple there have existed a series of buildings, one being raised over the ruins of the other.

Building C.

To the east of the *stūpa*, Cunningham¹ noticed a small detached mound, 16' 3" in height. In its top he made an excavation which he abandoned after reaching a depth of 4' 3", as he found only broken bricks mixed with earth. Subsequently Mr. Carlleyle² made, in this mound, "a sort of general superficial excavation" from which he gathered the impression that it contained the remains of a terraced building. This impression, it will be seen, was correct, but from his equally superficial account it would seem that he found more than three terraces, "culminating in what appeared to be a flat square of a small diameter." This statement does not agree with the actual state of the remains as found by me, and is the more remarkable since Mr. Carlleyle evidently missed the lower of the two terraces of which the building actually consists. He gives the base of the mound to be 50' in diameter whereas the lowest terrace measures no less than 90'. After reading his note, it is surprising to find that on his plan of the site, subsequently published, the centre of that eastern mound (which here is nearly 75' in diameter) is marked by a distinct plan of a temple-like building, some 19' square, of which no mention is made in the text. As the existing remains show no trace of such a structure, it may be questioned whether this is anything more than phantasy. This drawing, together with the discovery of a Gaṇeśa image on this side of the *stūpa*, possibly led Mr. Vincent Smith to the supposition that the mound contained a temple. But neither this hypothesis, nor Mr. Carlleyle's suggestion, that the stone pillar mentioned by Hiuen Tsiang stood on the top of this mound, has been confirmed by my excavations.

On the plan accompanying Mr. Smith's report a moulded wall is shown along the western side of the mound, running north and south and connected with a flight of steps on its north end. These remains, I understand, were excavated by Dr. Hoey. Of his operations no account is available to me, but I found the excavated portion exactly as shown on Mr. Smith's plan. After widening out the old trenches, we continued them and thus obtained the outline of the building. In tracing the outer wall much inconvenience was caused by the injudicious way in which the débris of former excavations had been heaped up on the south-eastern portion of the mound.

The wall, thus traced, was found to enclose a plinth 90' square, with a rectangular extension 16' wide along three-quarters of its north side. The west end of this extension, it will be seen, consists of the flight of steps already noted, which lead up to the lower terrace. As to the outer wall itself, its foot is 5' below the level of the surrounding fields. On the south and east sides the outer wall is, as it were, distorted,

¹ A. S. R., Vol. I, p. 78, Plate XXVI (c).

² A. S. R., Vol. XVIII, p. 84 f.

³ A. S. R., Vol. XXII, Plate III.

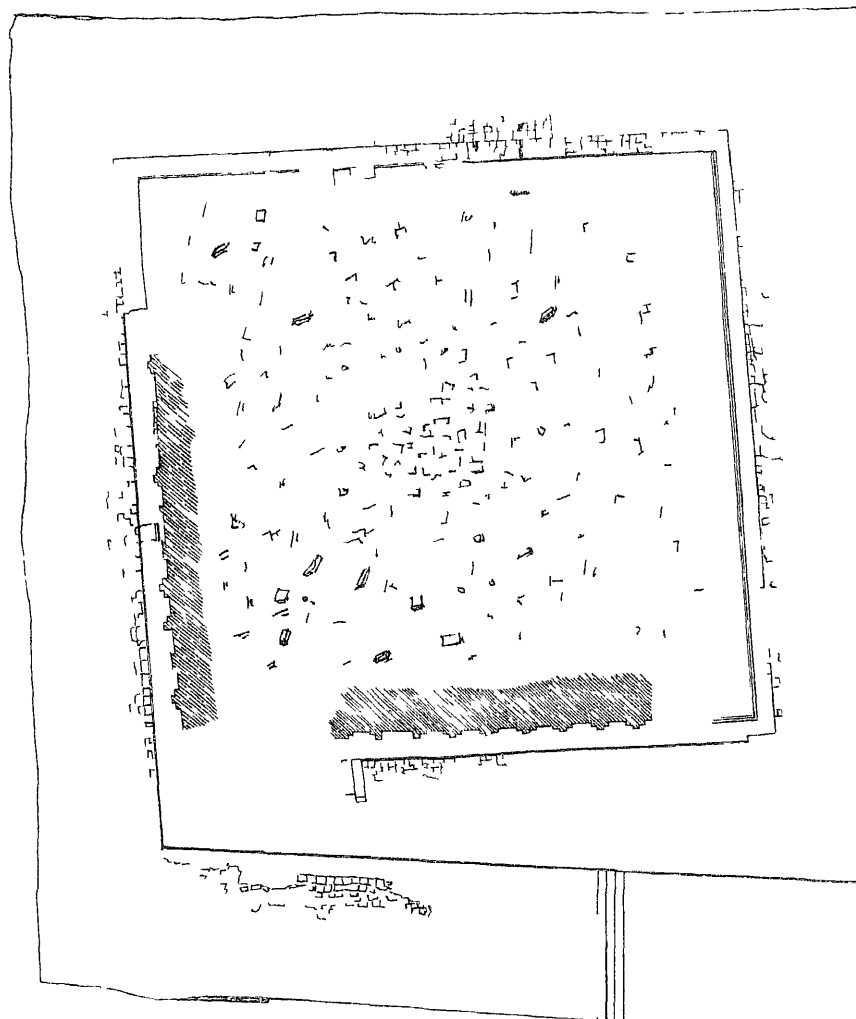
and, at places, overhanging, owing to the pressure outward. It is much better preserved on the west side, probably owing to the vicinity of the *stūpa*. Here it rises to its original height of 5', and is decorated with three string courses, each consisting of two projecting courses of bricks, the upper courses being bevelled in the lowest and uppermost mouldings. These project at a height of 2' 10", 3' 5" and 4' respectively from the foot of the wall (see Plate IX, elevation CC). On the north side, these string courses are only partially preserved between the north-west corner of the plinth and the steps. Of the latter, four are still extant.

Upon the terrace formed by the plinth just described there rises a second and smaller terrace leaving a margin or procession path around its four sides. Its width is about 12', but it varies owing to the sides of the two terraces not being parallel. A pavement of buck tiles, 11" square, is partly preserved along the inner wall. The northern extension has also portions of buck pavement, the tiles being 9" by 8" and 7". The inner wall or plinth of the upper terrace is of a rather complicated construction. From it projects a moulded basement 3' wide and 1½' high. From this the wall rises to a height of some 3'. That this was its original height may be inferred from a series of projecting pilasters 2' 4" high, placed at equal distances, and resting on the basement. Only one specimen, in the centre of the northern wall, is almost entire, and may be described thus. The lower portion of its shaft, which rests on the basement of the wall, consists of five rectangular bricks, in courses one upon another, the upper portion of the shaft of four bricks with chamfered corners, and the neck of one semi-circular brick.

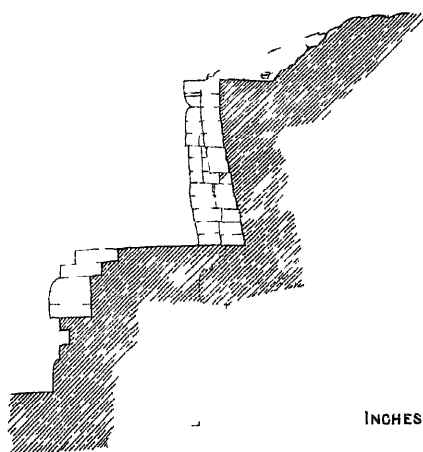
The capital must have consisted of three bricks, the middle one rectangular¹ enclosed between the broad sides of two others which were bevelled. But the uppermost of these three bricks is missing. It will be seen that these dwarf pilasters do not project direct from the face of the wall, but from the face of broad shallow buttresses. That these buttresses were added to serve the definite purpose of support, seems highly probable, the present state of the wall, which is altogether out of plumb, showing their necessity. That they, as well as the bottom projection, were a later addition, or at least an afterthought, is evidenced by the circumstance that the lower part of the wall now masked by the latter is provided with mouldings. At its south-east corner, this wall was traced 3' below the level of the procession path. Here the bricks were found to measure 9½" × 7" × 2".

Along the west and south sides, the pilasters, just described, are no longer extant, the upper portion of the wall having entirely disappeared. On the east side, the central portion of the wall still remains, with ten pilasters all incomplete, and displaced by the outward pressure. Towards the centre the pilasters are naturally somewhat better preserved than towards the ends, where little more than their bases remain. They are best preserved along the north side, where nine specimens are extant, but all, except one, more or less injured. Originally the number of pilasters was probably the same on each side. As they are placed at distances of 4' from centre to centre, and the length of the wall each side is 62', we may assume that there stood sixteen along each wall, two of which were placed at the corners. It may further be surmised that these rows of pilasters supported a plain cornice, of the

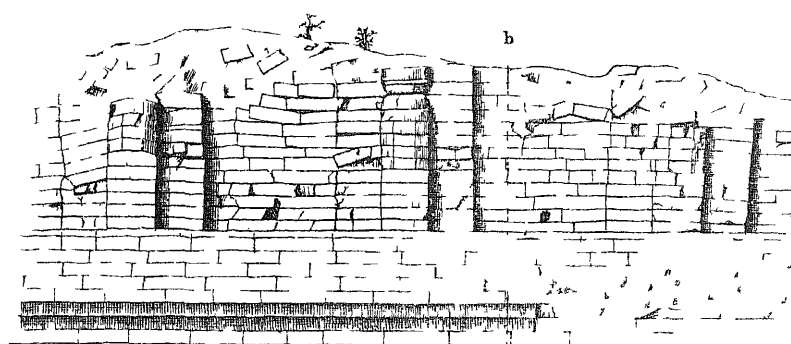
¹ It is shown semi-circular on the drawing.



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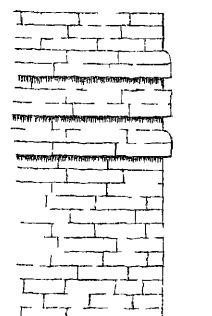


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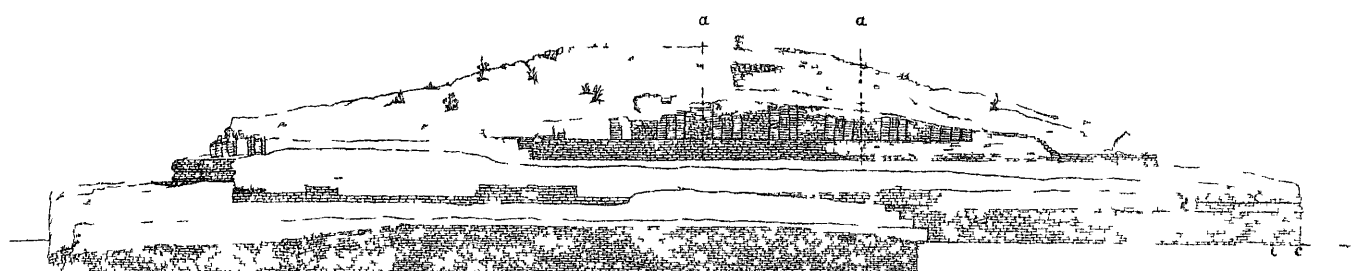


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BUILDING C: PLAN, ELEVATIONS AND SECTION.

same section as the two preserved in the basement of the wall. It is true that along the foot of the wall portions of carved bricks were found. These certainly belong to a cornice, but my impression is that they belong to some earlier building. Their size, which must have been $15'' \times 9'' \times 3''$, points to this conclusion, and also the fact that no such ornamental bricks are found in any part of the building except in the northern wall of the lower platform near the flight of steps where they are evidently not *in situ*.

In the space enclosed within the pilastered walls, I did not succeed in tracing any distinct structural remains. But the enclosing walls suggest a third platform with a procession path on the four sides, and this supposition derives some additional support from the fact that, where the pilasters of the northern wall cease towards the east, there are distinct traces of a flight of steps. It will be noticed that by following thus the procession path from the lower steps one will circumambulate the enclosed space twice, keeping the centre of the mound always to the right.

The question now arises, what sacred monument once stood in the centre of the mound and was thus reverently approached by the faithful? Mr. Carlleyle while adopting Cunningham's identification of Kasia with Kusinārā suggested that it was the inscribed pillar mentioned by Hiuen Tsiang. Apart from the fact that memorial pillars were never, as far as I know, raised on such elaborate basements, there can be little doubt that the edifice in question is considerably later than the seventh century. From Hiuen Tsiang's account it would, moreover, seem that the pillar stood in front of the temple of the dying Buddha. So much is certain that, though a wide trench was dug all along the outer walls of the building, no vestige of a pillar was found.

That the top of the mound was once occupied by a temple as suggested by Mr. Smith is hardly more probable. The succession of terraces with the continuous procession path, and the inner wall with its row of dwarf pilasters, would rather suggest a *stūpa*, though, I admit, of an uncommon type. The condition of the interior of the mound points to the same conclusion. In its centre a pit was sunk 7' deep. The core was found to consist of irregular layers of bricks ($9'' \times 10''$) laid in mud. If my conclusion is correct, the supposed *stūpa* would, therefore, have been a memorial and not a relic-holding one, unless we must assume that it was robbed of its relics previously. This certainly would account for the total disappearance of its dome and drum; but unfortunately the remaining portion of the building does not help us to arrive at any certainty.

Building H.

To the west of the steps, leading up to the lower terrace of the *stūpa*-like building just described, remains of walls were found enclosing a room of 8' 4" by 9' 7". These walls, of which only three courses now remain, are 1' 7" thick. The size of the bricks measuring $19'' \times 10'' \times 3''$ and $18'' \times 10'' \times 2\frac{3}{4}''$, the largest type found on the Kasia site, shows that the building to which they belong dates back to an earlier period than the other monuments. Bricks of the same size have been found in the Piprahvā *stūpa*. I am therefore inclined to assign the remains in question to the Maurya period. This conclusion is confirmed by a find of coins, the only one made in the course of the excavations. It will be seen on the plan that the east wall of the

found. In the same wall I note the existence of three round holes evidently intended to receive wooden bars. Two are placed 16' 4" from the south-east corner and at a distance of 7" one over the other. They are 9" deep. The upper hole measures 5" by 3", the lower one 4" by 4". The third hole is found 2' 10" west of the lower one and 12' 3" from the south-west corner of the shrine. It is likewise 4" in diameter and 9" deep. Presumably there existed a fourth hole 7" above the third one. But at this spot the wall ends.

Access to the ancient shrine described here is obtained from the west through a doorway 5' 2" in width. The little that remains of it does not allow us to form an idea of its height and construction. In each of the two corners adjoining this entrance we found remains of a terra-cotta Buddha figure, seated on a lotus throne in the attitude of meditation (*dhyānamudrā*). The original height of these figures including the pedestal must have been 4'. They rested partly on a low projection running along the south and west wall of the shrine and partly on upright bricks. (Cf. Plate XIV.) It will be seen that on the plan which accompanies Mr. Smith's report the place of the shrine just described is occupied by the foundations of two square buildings. (Cf. Plate VI.) These placed on a level with the top of the large plinth, had to be demolished in order to reach the earlier remains they concealed. The larger one of these two structures (no. 11) was 28' square. Its north wall adjoined the plinth of the *Nirvāṇa* temple. Its walls, built of brickbats, were more than 6' thick, enclosing a room 16' square. This space was paved with brick tiles ($10\frac{1}{2}" \times 8\frac{1}{2}" \times 1\frac{3}{4}"$), set in mud. Nothing was found to indicate the purpose of this building, but from its position with regard to the *Nirvāṇa* temple it may be surmised that it was a store-house in which the implements required for worship were kept, such as nowadays are commonly found adjoining important shrines. Its late date is evident from its level, 6' above that of the shrine F. At the time when it was built the débris must have reached up to the top of the large plinth. Probably it was contemporaneous with the present *Nirvāṇa* temple. In the course of its demolition an inscribed clay seal, oblong in shape, was found, and half of a carved brick (5" thick), presumably the capital of a pilaster.

The other building, situated to the west of the former, and at a distance of 8' from the encasing wall of the temple plinth, is a *stūpa* base, 11' 10" square, and 2' 8" high, built of bricks and fragments of bricks equal in size ($14\frac{1}{4}" \times 8\frac{3}{4}" \times 2\frac{3}{4}"$ or 2") to those of the earlier plinth which I propose to assign to the Kuṣāṇa period. It is clear, however, that the building in question is built of old material and belongs to a much later date, its level being 5' 10" above that of the early temple plinth and shrine F.

The space between the buildings just described and the earlier remains beneath was filled with a mass of fallen bricks measuring about 9" square. Deeper down, a brick of $15" \times 9" \times 2"$ was found. Among the débris inside the early shrine F, there were numerous carved bricks.

Stūpas nos. 14 and 19.—It will be seen that the group of buildings to the south of the *Nirvāṇa* temple is enclosed within a wall 1' 8" thick, of which only a few courses of masonry are now extant. On both sides there is a concrete floor, the level of which is $4\frac{1}{2}"$ lower inside than outside the wall. At its foot a clay tablet¹ inscribed

¹ On the use of such tablets cf. I-Tsing—*A record of the Buddhist religion* (Takakusu), p. 151.

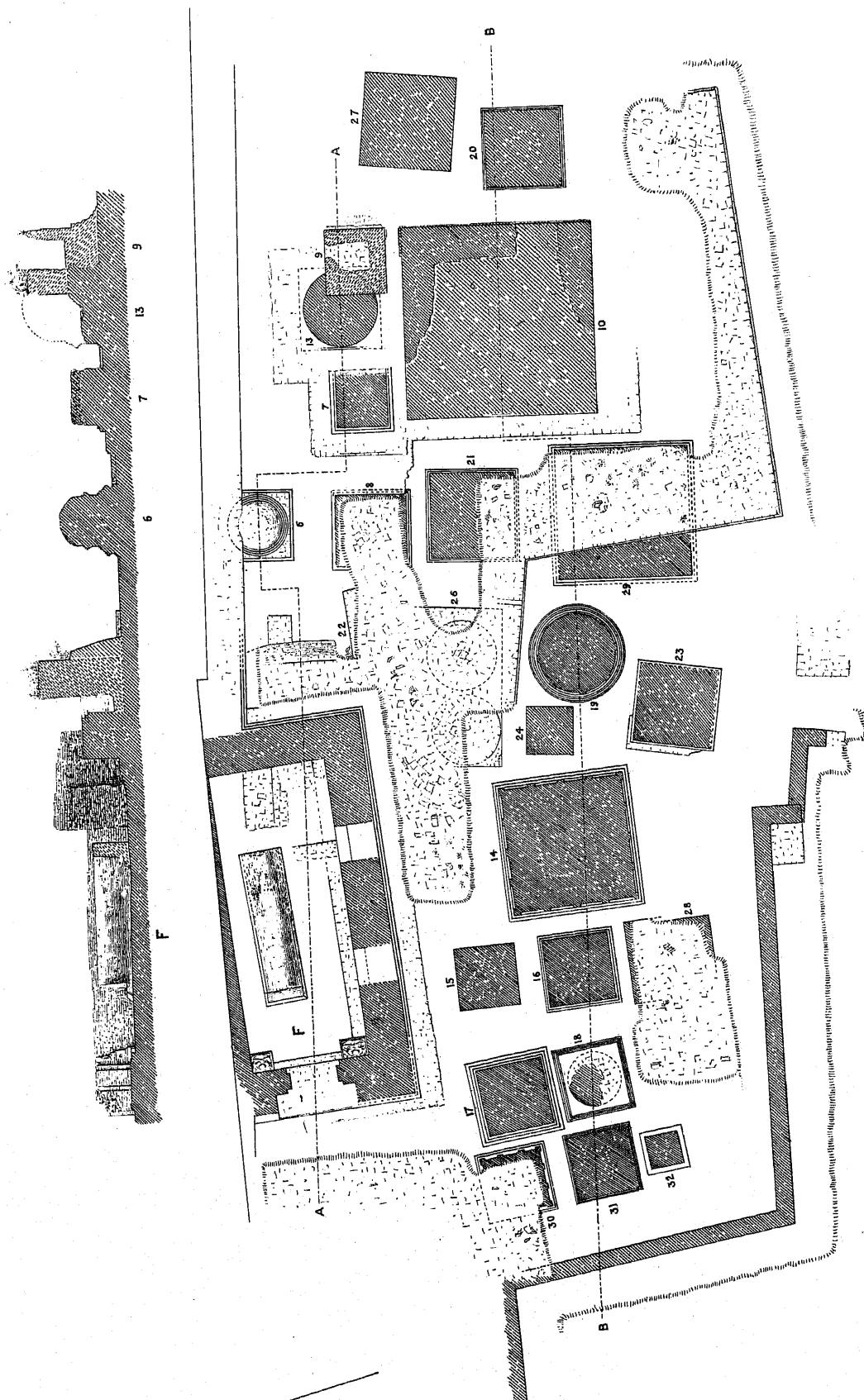
EXCAVATIONS AT KASIA.



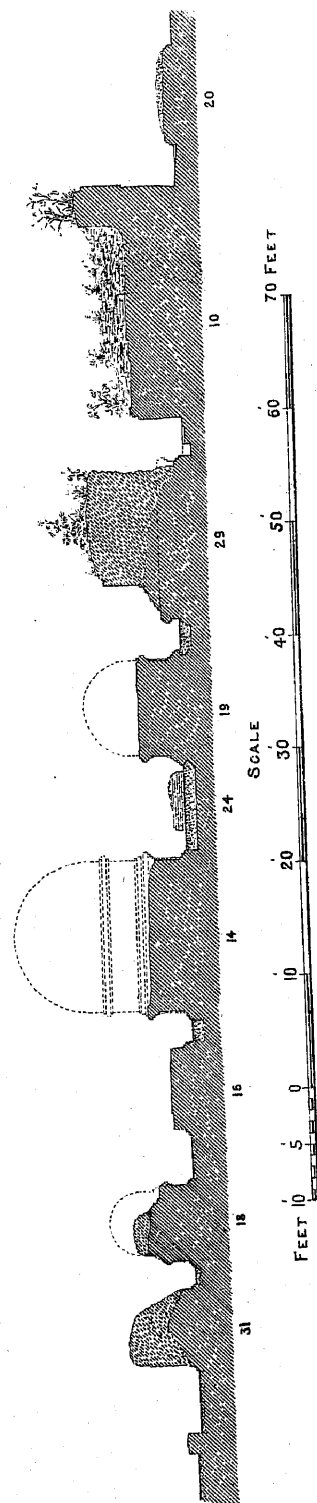
SOUTHERN GROUP OF BUILDINGS FROM WEST.

EXCAVATIONS AT KASIA.

SECTION ON LINE A.A.



SECTION ON LINE B.B.



SOUTHERN GROUP OF BUILDINGS: PLAN AND SECTIONS.

with the Buddhist creed, and some large ornamental bricks were found. The size of the bricks, of which the wall is built, is $10'' \times 6\frac{1}{2}'' \times 2'$. The enclosure thus formed was entered from the south through an entrance 6' wide, opposite *stūpa* no. 23. Further eastward hardly any trace of this wall is left. Presumably, however, the wall was continued, and enclosed the whole group of monuments situated to the south of the plinth on which the temple and *stūpa* of the *Nirvāṇa* stand.

Among the monuments placed between this wall and building F, there are two which deserve special notice, to wit, those marked nos. 14 and 19. No. 14 (*cf.* Plate XIII, Fig. 5) is a *stūpa* basement 15' square at the ground-level, and is not only conspicuous by its size but still more by its decoration of carved brickwork. The subjoined drawing will replace a detailed description. It shows the building restored to its original state. For it was found leaning over to the south as if shaken by an earthquake, and deprived of several of its pilasters and of the greater portion of its cornice. The latter is only partially extant on the west side. But enough remains to render its restoration on paper possible. It is not so easy to decide what the superstructure was like. But presumably the basement was surmounted by a dome resting on a drum and decorated with a pinnacle of terra-cotta. Rings and cones of various shapes and sizes were found in considerable numbers in the course of the excavations. I presume that they belong to pinnacles once placed on the tops of *stūpas*. A well, sunk in the centre of building no. 14, did not reveal any objects. Evidently this *stūpa* was not reared to contain relics. I note in passing that in no. 13, due south of the large *stūpa*, a vessel was found which presented the appearance of a funeral urn, but did not contain any bones. *Stūpa* no. 14 as shown on Plate XIV, Fig. 5, will convey some idea of the original aspect of the early plinth on which the temple and *stūpa* of the *Nirvāṇa* now stand. It is true that there the pilasters are of varying designs and alternate with Buddha figures placed in niches. Yet the similarity of decoration points to the same date.

The other building, no. 19 (Plate XIII, Fig. 4), is likewise decorated with carved brickwork, but of a much plainer type than that on the adjoining building just described. Its main peculiarity is its shape, which is circular in plan and not square, as is the case with all the other buildings of this group. It consists of a very low circular base with plain brackets supporting a heavy moulding. Over it rises a circular drum decorated with eight pilasters and a cornice of ornamental brickwork. This monument, like the others, can be nothing but a *stūpa* originally surmounted by a dome and an ornamental pinnacle. Its date cannot be far removed from that of no. 14 just described.

Among the remaining buildings of the southern group I wish to mention no. 6, a very complete specimen of a *stūpa* which, as noted above, must date back to a time anterior to the construction of the early *stūpa* plinth, in which it is partly engaged. It was excavated by Mr. Carlleyle and will be seen on the plan and elevation of the central group of buildings published in his report.¹ The building with its very low drum and flat appearance represents an early type of *stūpa*, not, however, the earliest type as exemplified by the Sanchi tope. In the present instance, we find the drum resting on a square basement ($7' 8'' \times 7' 8''$) which, as far as we know, is not round

¹ A. S. R., Vol. XVIII, Plates V and VI.

in the *stūpas* of the Maurya period. The building, as shown on Mr. Carlleyle's plates, gives the impression of being complete. Yet it was found that under the concrete floor it has a lower basement slightly larger in size than that exposed previously. Whatever the date of this building may be, it must be earlier than the *stūpas* with ornamental brickwork described before. (Cf. Plate XIII, Fig 1.)

The only other building deserving special notice is no. 10 which differs from the surrounding monuments both in size and appearance. It is nearly 20' square at the base. The lowest portion up to a height of $3\frac{1}{2}'$ consists of rough masonry. The bricks which are badly joined are of various but not very large sizes, about $7\frac{1}{2}"$ to $8\frac{1}{2}"$ in length on an average. Next follow six courses of very neat masonry consisting of well-joined bricks 9" by 8" in size. This part, which adds one foot to the height of the wall, does not stand straight on the lower portion. It is built in such a way that at the north-east and south-west corner the corner line is continued, but at the two other corners it recedes for a distance of 5".

The uppermost part of the wall is, again, rough masonry; the bricks, 7" by 8", in size, are laid in mud. At its highest point it measures $4\frac{1}{2}'$, thus making the total height of the wall here 9'. This upper portion, however, is only extant along the east side, except for a gap $4\frac{1}{2}'$ wide, along the north side for a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}'$ from the north-east corner and along the south side, for a distance of 14' from the south-east corner. On the west side, this uppermost portion of the wall is entirely wanting; of the central portion only three to four courses are preserved here. The interior of the building consists of solid brickwork up to the top of the central portion of the outer wall. Evidently this represents the original building, perhaps the basement of a *stūpa*, on which a building was afterwards raised, either a dwelling house or a store-room. From the rough construction of its walls it appears that it was not a temple or other sanctuary.

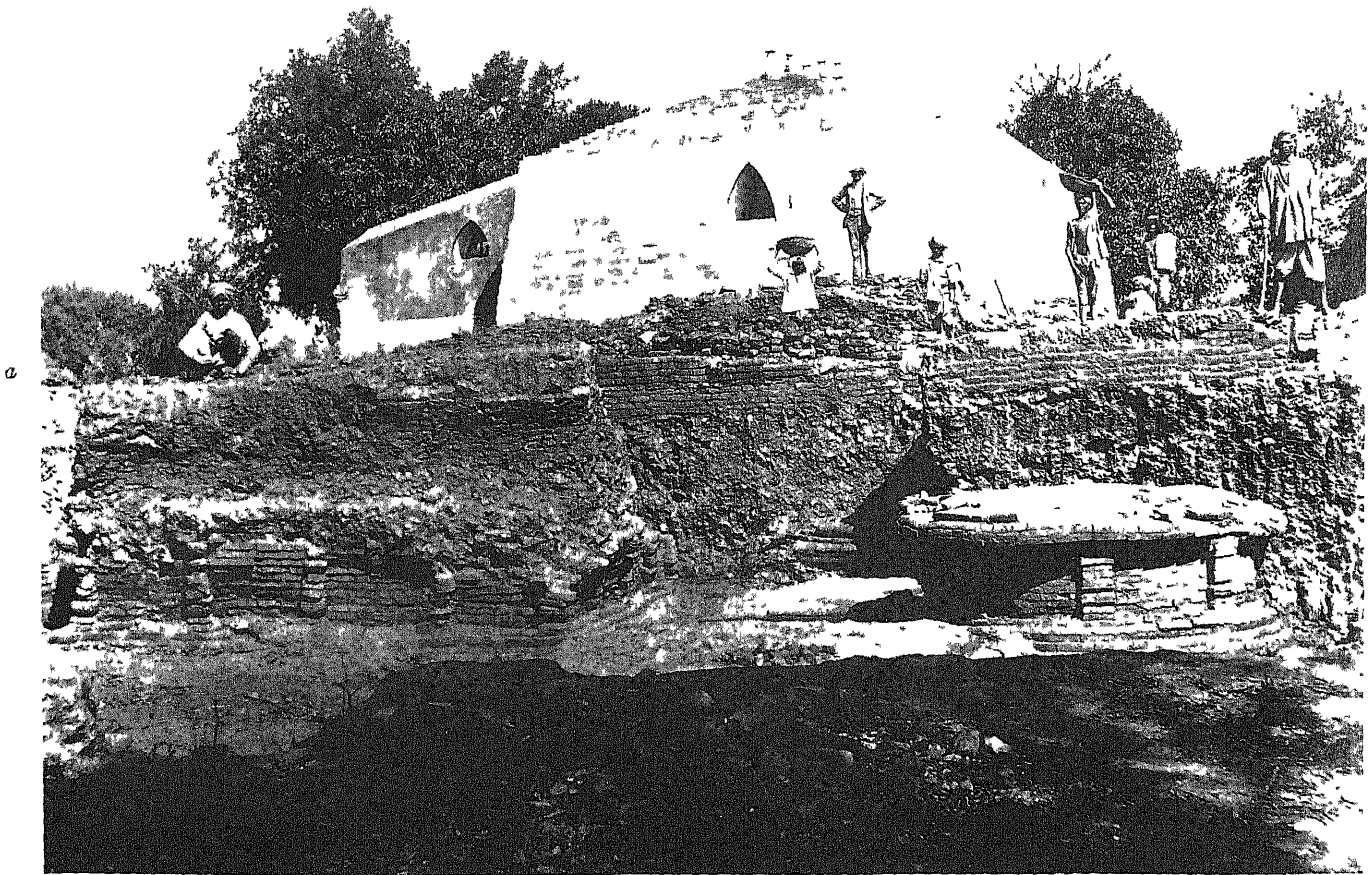
This later building presumably belongs to the same period as the rough and irregular walling found all over the site either above or at the level of the mound. Presumably these structures were erected for temporary shelter or defence when after the final ruin of the convents and temples the site had become deserted and desolate. But the older portions of building no. 10 also must belong to a comparatively late date as is evident from the small size of the bricks and the use of carved bricks obtained from some more ancient monument. The lower rough portion of solid masonry was presumably the foundation on which the building proper was raised.

A parallel instance of such super-construction is offered by a small square building, no. 9, consisting of a single room which is partly built on the top of a ruined *stūpa*.

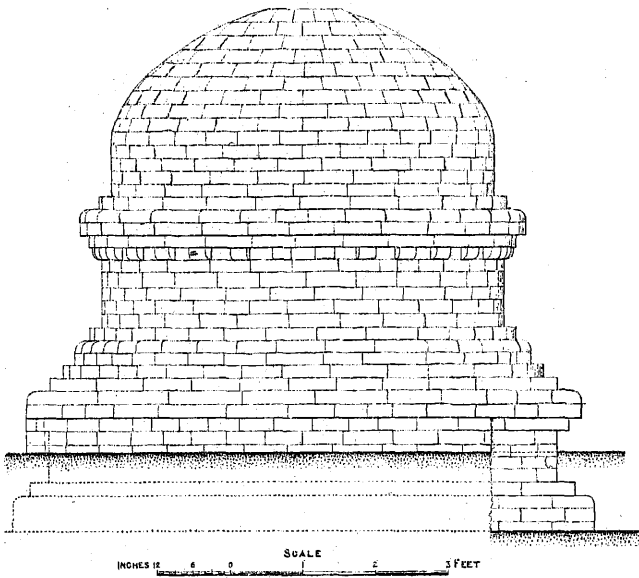
Monastery D.

Mr. Carlleyle¹ refers briefly in his report to a partial excavation of what he calls "the central highest part of the mound." The shape of the mound has since become considerably modified and its size reduced by encroachments of the agriculturists. At present the spot indicated by Mr. Carlleyle could be most conveniently called the north-west portion of the mound. The remains he discovered there are described as "portions of the walls of some chambers, which appeared to have belonged to a

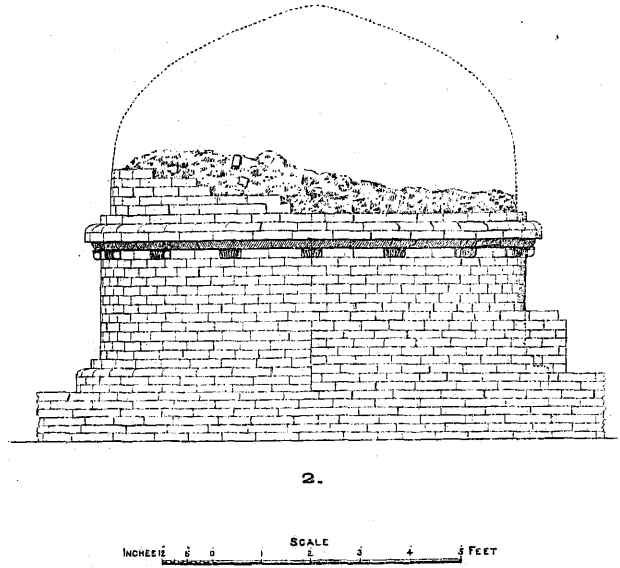
¹ A. S. R., Vol. XXII, p 28.



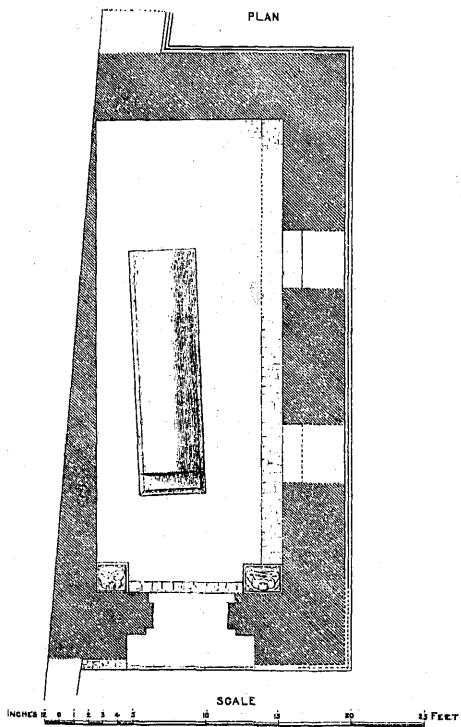
(a) BUILDINGS SOUTH OF TEMPLE B.
(b) BUILDINGS SOUTH OF STŪPA A.



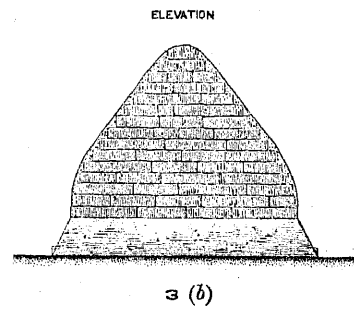
1.



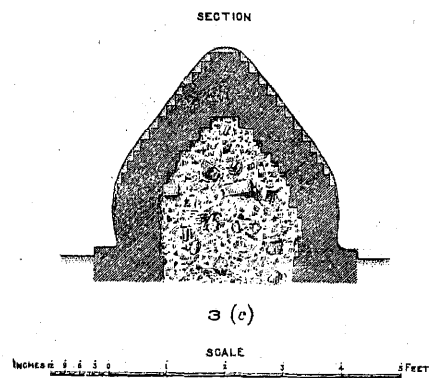
2.



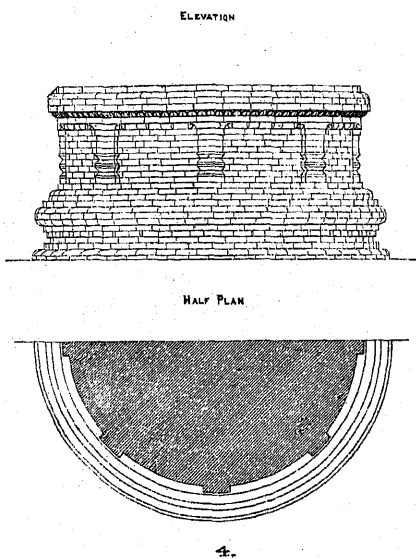
3 (a)



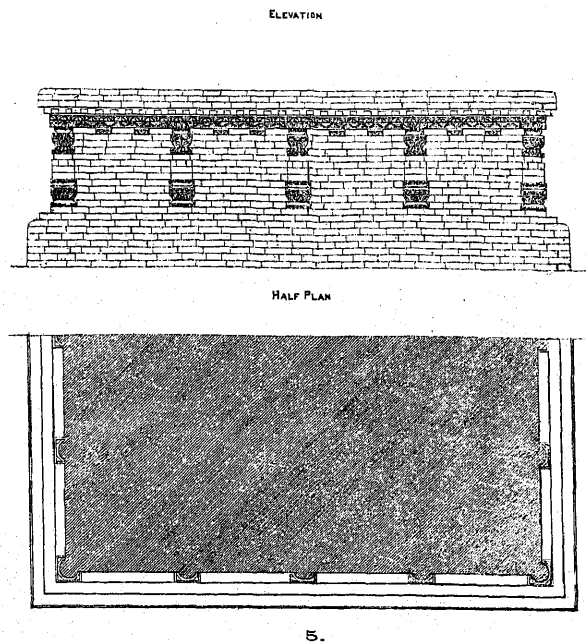
3 (b)



3 (c)



4.



5.

monastery, a portion of a pavement and a drain or water channel running through between the buildings." Apparently some district officer continued the excavation of this edifice by tracing its outline all along its four sides and running two trenches through the interior.

The recent excavations have confirmed Mr. Carlleyle's conclusion as to the nature of this building. It is evidently a Buddhist monastery of the usual type, but of extraordinary size and of remarkably solid construction. We may compare the monastery of Sārnāth, excavated by Major Kittoe,¹ which is similar in ground plan but much smaller in dimension. Whereas the latter building measures 107' square, the Kasia convent extends nearly 150' in both directions. With regard to the Sārnāth building Cunningham remarks that, judging from the thickness of the walls, it could not have been less than three or four storeys in height. From the plan published by Kittoe, the outer walls appear to be 3', the inner 2' in width. But the walls of the convent of Kasia have more than double this thickness, as here the figures are 8½' for the outer and 5' for the inner walls. In the present instance there is, therefore, even more reason to assume that the original building consisted of several storeys, an assumption which would well agree with the descriptions of such-like buildings in the itineraries of the Chinese pilgrims.²

The building, as it stands now, consists of a large central courtyard, 87' square, with a corridor³ along its south and east side, whilst the remaining space is occupied by four rows each of seven rooms arranged along its outer walls. These rooms, which once must have accommodated the Buddhist friars, vary slightly in size, as will be seen from the accompanying plan of the site. The shape of most of them is nearly square, but the central rooms of the eastern and western rows are rectangular and larger in size. As far as the eastern row goes, this peculiarity can be accounted for by the circumstance that here the central chamber served the purpose of an entrance room. It is the side turned towards the temple of the Dying Buddha, where we may well expect the main entrance to the monastery which owed its origin to that sanctuary. Moreover, it will be seen on the plan that the east wall of the convent has two rectangular projections of solid brickwork at a distance of 46½' and 45' from the north-east and south-east corners. They are 15' wide, and project about 18' from the face of the east wall. Evidently they are the remnants of two turrets which once flanked the entrance gate.

Each cell was originally provided with a door opening on the central courtyard or, in the case of the eastern and southern rows, on the corridors. These doors are invariably bricked up in such a manner that the regular masonry rests on a layer of fallen bricks and débris. The circumstance points to a restoration and second occupation of the building. Apparently at a time when the edifice had become partially ruined it was considered necessary for some reason or other to brick up the doors of the lower storey. Possibly at the time when this happened the number of resident monks had been reduced to such a degree that only part of the rooms were required for their accommodation. They chose the more airy and salubrious upper storeys

¹ Cf. Cunningham, A. S. R., Vol. I, p. 127, Plate XXXII.

² Cf. *Sī-yu-ki*, Vol. II, pp. 102 and 168.

³ Mention of corridors in Buddhist monasteries is made by I-tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

and by bricking up the doors of the lower one tried to strengthen the tottering edifice. Whether my surmise be correct or not, there can be little doubt that the excellent preservation of this part of the building is mainly due to the measure referred to

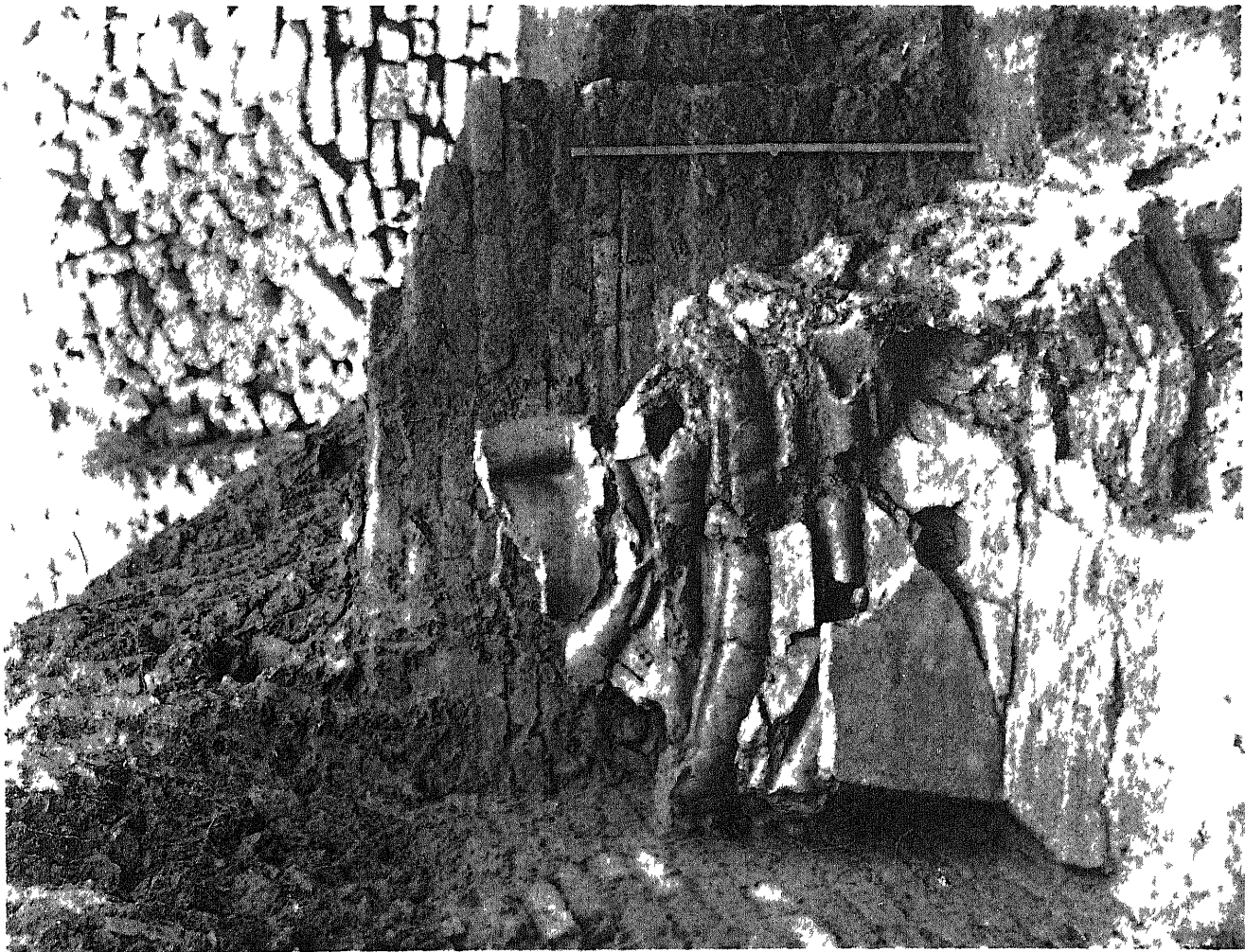
The room adjoining the entrance room to the south has two niches in the south and north wall. They measure 2' 2" in width and 2' 7" in height and are 15" deep. Their top is built of overlapping bricks. In the other rooms also which were excavated, except the entrance room, similar niches were found but not more than one in each room. I-tsing¹ speaks of windows or niches especially made in the rooms of the priests to contain a holy image. Besides, they were most probably used for the purpose of containing lamps according to the custom still prevalent in India. In the excavation of the building a great number of small earthenware lamps were found. One of the rooms yielded an earthenware vessel of the same kind as the one referred to above which was found in *stūpa* no 13. It did not contain any remains of bones. The only other finds worth mentioning are a small fragment of a stone with the figure of a lion evidently belonging to the throne (*simhāsana*) of a statuette, and an oval-shaped slightly convex disc of brass (2.9 × 2.4 cm.), presumably a portion of some ornament. On the convex side there is in the upper half an indistinct object, perhaps a *cailya*, and in the lower half an inscription of four letters (ht. 0.7 cm.) in Gupta character of the fifth century. I read *bha-ru-la*

It will be seen that the Monastery D has the same orientation as those monuments which we found to be anterior to the early plinth of the *Nirvāṇa* buildings, A and B, yet I feel inclined to assign it a date subsequent to this building, on account of the varying, but in general small, size of the bricks and the use of brickbats and of carved bricks obtained from the ruins of earlier buildings. At the present stage of the excavation it would be premature to attempt to fix its date more definitely.

This year's excavations have clearly shown that the Kasia remains have had a history far more extensive and intricate than was hitherto supposed. There existed buildings on the site at a very remote period, the earliest hitherto found apparently dating back to the time of the Mauryas. Later on there had been constant collapse and rebuilding; one monument being raised over the ruins of another. This is true not only of the central sanctuary, but also of those numerous minor monuments of various sizes and shapes which stand crowded around it. These facts go far to prove the great holiness attaching to this site for many centuries in the eyes of the faithful.

J. PH. VOGEL.

¹ I-tsing. *A record of the Buddhist religion* (Takakusu), p. 113.



a



b

TERRA-COTTA FIGURES OF BUDDHA.

