

PLATE XV
PAINTING FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iii. N-V

FROM the west wall of the corridor. It is the surviving portion of two subjects, similar in composition to those reproduced in several preceding plates, divided by a vertical band of repeating cloud-scroll flowers. The portion of the picture on the right is reproduced in colour, in plate XVI, and is described in the note on that plate.

It is not necessary to describe in full detail the subject on the left. The composition shows unimportant variations on those previously dealt with and the colouring follows generally the same scheme. Here, the field of the vesica behind the Buddha is composed of closely packed ribbon-like radiating petals, with the tips curled over to form a border. The colours are red, yellow, red, and green, repeating in this order, and each petal has a light midrib and edges. The outer border of zig-zag bands of colour is similar to the field of the vesica in Bez. iii. S-U, in plate XVIII.

The right hand of the Buddha, raised in *vitarka mudrā*, is well and delicately drawn and shows clearly the web between thumb and first finger. The Vajrapāṇi on the left is not in his usual place at the top, and he does not appear to be armed with the *vajra*. Of the two monks on the right, the younger has his black hair trimmed in sharp angles. The other is much older, has bushy eyebrows, and his dark grey hair is disposed in curves. A difference in the ears is also noticeable; and although each wears a red (saffron?) robe, that of the elder is differentiated by being barred with green.

The wig-like hair of the *devatā* just below the older monk is grey, outlined against the face with bright red. It appears to be plaited, with a lozenge-shaped gold stud at each twist.

Every face in this picture seems to have been damaged deliberately.

The lower part, which showed donors with camel, mule, and horse, is probably in Berlin, and is described in Grünwedel's *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesisch-Turkistan*.