

## GRÆCO-BUDDHIST SCULPTURES FROM THE YUSUFZAI DISTRICT.

The first impression given by a mere glance at any of the carvings is the strong influence of Greek art; but when we come to carefully analyse the whole subject, the composing elements are curiously mixed. General Cunningham has described at some length the Græco-Bactrian architecture of Yusufzai, and those who desire to form their own conclusions would do well to study the Archæological Survey Reports, Vol. II. and Vol. V.; also to read Mr. Fergusson's chapter on the Gandhara Monasteries in his "History of Indian and Eastern Architecture." Of this, however, it is quite certain—that Alexander's invasion left a strong impression on the art of Northern India. The use of Greek forms or ornament became general in the Kabul Valley, in the Upper Punjab, and in Kashmir. The Corinthian order reproduced itself all over Yusufzai, the Doric order in Kashmir, and the Ionic order at Taxila (Shahderi, between Attock and Rawalpindi). But Alexander had conquered Persia before he penetrated to the Indus, and he seems to have introduced into India a knowledge of the palaces at Persepolis. The Indo-Persian capital is frequently found in Yusufzai; it occurs also in Madras at Amravati; in Bombay in the Bedsa and Karli caves; in Bengal at Buddha Gaya; and in Central India at Bharhut and at Sanchi. Whether Persian and Greek art had made itself felt in India before Alexander's time is hard to say, as our previous knowledge of the country is at present so meagre. The Fort at Ranigat in Yusufzai has all the appearance of great antiquity; the walls are very massive, and constructed of large blocks of hewn granite laid carefully as headers and stretchers. Many of the stones are over 6 feet in length, and mortar of very great hardness was used; but instead of being pointed, the joints are filled with thin slabs of stone or slate. The main entrance is a pointed archway cut in the horizontal layers of stone-walling, and, zigzagging into the body of the stronghold, probably joins a similar passage on the west of the Fort. The arch, instead of finishing in a point, has a rectangular termination similar to the section of an ancient Etruscan tomb at Cære dating from many centuries B.C. It might be hastily concluded that the pointed archway at Ranigat is Saracenic, but the interior of the Fort has remains of several Buddhist topes with sculptures in stone and plaster resembling those ordinarily found elsewhere in Yusufzai, and dating from about the commencement of the Christian era. The Ranigat gateway, therefore, completely proves that pointed archways were in use in Northern India before the birth of the Prophet. Another circumstance connected with the Græco-Bactrian architecture of Yusufzai is the appearance of hemispherical domes built on the principle of horizontal layers. The dome of the Treasury of Atreus at Mycenæ, which is a very antique example of Pelasgic art, is noticed by Mr. Fergusson as that adopted by the Jaina architects in India; and the Treasury, or Granary, among the Sanghao ruins seems to form a most important link between the Pelasgic Treasuries at Mycenæ and Jaina architecture, and shows that the mode of raising a semicircular dome on a square chamber by corbelling out the corners of the square and forming an octagon, found its way to India before either the Jains had commenced their wonderful system of constructing domes over pillars, or the Muhammadans had introduced their elaborate methods of doming over square chambers. It has generally been assumed that a construction such as appears in the Sanghao granary is to be traced to Muhammadan architects. Here, at all events, is an example which completely upsets the theory. The masonry resembles that used in all the Buddhist monasteries in the neighbourhood; some small windows and niches in the walls are of unmistakable Buddhist architecture, and the building is above, and quite close to the group of structures where two coins of Kaniskha's were found. It is, therefore, tolerably certain that the date is not later than 80 A.D., and *may* be much earlier. The Asoka inscription at Shahbazgarhi is certainly 250 B.C., and from this time until the Muhammadans overran the Peshawar valley in the eighth century A.D., the Buddhist and Hindu religions held the upper hand.

Whilst the Yusufzai antiquities furnish good structural examples of early forms of Græco-Bactrian architecture, their sculptured bas-reliefs often represent buildings and their ornaments. And perhaps the most striking architectural features that adorn the Gandhara Monasteries are to be found in their statuary and Corinthian capitals of columns and pilasters. In the Yusufzai ruins we have, therefore, a basis of indigenous art adapted to the requirements of Buddhist religious ordinance, and flavoured with reflections from the Greek and Persian orders of architecture. Besides this, we have artistic representations of no mean order of the Buddhist tales and fables which are associated all over India and Buddhist countries with the life of Gautama.

SCULPTURES FROM THE MONASTERY AT SANGHAO.—The site where the sculptures were dug is perched on a steep spur. The building revealed two distinct periods, and consists of a basement containing small topes, and of a superstructure of plain apartments, built obliquely over the basement apparently without reference to its plan. The sculptures were found in the basement and belong to the older period. (Plate 89).

Plate 90.—The fragment on the left represents Buddha on a throne supported by lions. He is surrounded by numerous supplicants. The centre sculpture represents a chapel or small temple. In the upper part of it is the famous triple ladder, or flight of steps, by which Buddha descended from the Trayastrinsha Heavens, accompanied by the gods Brahma and Indra. At the foot of the steps is the nun Pandarika, who had been changed to