

so exposed and rotten. It should be noted in this connexion that on the slopes south of the main gorge I noticed dead roots of scrub which is now completely absent. Possibly the soil received in earlier times slightly more moisture, and consequently enjoyed some protection through vegetation.

The ruin which first attracts attention is that marked I on the site plan (Pl. 42); it is situated on the slope of a small ridge, facing towards the mouth of the main gorge where this takes a turn to the west. It consists of a cave-shrine with a series of four terraces rising above it in steps, with niches cut into the rock to hold images, as shown in the sketch-plan and section (Pl. 43). The shrine holds a cella, 10 feet square, with a passage behind, 4 feet wide, approached by two openings on either side of the back wall of the cella. Both cella and back passage have vaulted ceilings. The tempera paintings of the cella wall had suffered badly owing to fissures in the rock, and to the thinness and rotten condition of the plaster on which they were painted. But on the SE. wall some panels survived, showing seated Buddhas supported by Bodhisattvas, with scenes of forest life above; these were carefully removed, though not without difficulty. Their description must await a later publication, in which they can be reproduced.

Ruin of principal shrine.

The receding terraces on the slope above the cave-shrine held 10, 8, 6, and 4 niches respectively, in ascending order. The niches cut from the sandstone rock varied in width from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet. Their depth varied from 2 feet 6 inches to 2 feet 8 inches. Of the platforms extending in front of the niches, the one above the second row was the widest and the highest. The more sheltered portions of the niches still retained parts of the stucco facing; but nothing remained of the images of seated Buddhas which they probably held. In the abundant timber debris which had found its way into the small drainage channels near the foot of the ridge, we discovered no recognizable carving, but on clearing the slopes by the side of the terraces we found, near the eastern end of the widest of them, the fine carved wooden capital T.A. I. 01 (Pl. XV); it measures 12 inches square at the top and is 10 inches high. It lay top downwards under half a foot of detritus. Its excellently carved floral ornaments, recalling a Corinthian capital, are executed in bold chipwork, resembling in style that found on the carved double brackets from ruined dwellings of the Niya site. This capital and the fragment of a turned baluster rail, T.A. I. 02, which was also discovered in clearing the slope by the side of the terraces, may have belonged to a totally destroyed timber superstructure once crowning the narrow eroded top of the ridge. Completely decayed remains of wooden structures, probably also small shrines, were found on a ridge some 170 yards away to the north-east, and on a narrow saddle to the south-east. At none of these points was it possible to determine the ground-plan.

Terraces with niches.

Descending from the saddle just mentioned one reaches a row of small caves, marked II in Pl. 42, on the eastern side of the main gorge and at no great height above its bottom. The best preserved of them, II. i (see plan in Pl. 43), proved to have been partially excavated. It consisted of a cella, 14 feet by 11, with an image niche in the rock wall which separates the back of the cella from a passage 6 feet wide. From one of the openings into this passage access could be gained to other passages apparently belonging to another cella, now completely destroyed. Painted panels showing seated Buddhas survived on the ceiling of the cella, and similar poorly executed work on the walls of the adjoining passages. The only find which rewarded the complete clearing down to the floor, which was of burnt brick covered with plaster of Paris, was the bronze ornament T.A. II. i. 01, showing settings for two jewels. The front portions of three smaller caves adjoining to the north had fallen in.

Groups of cave-shrines, T.A. II, III.

To the east, and about 150 feet above the bottom of the gorge, lies another group of caves, marked III. One of them was a shrine, similar in plan to T.A. I. i, with stencilled diapers of small seated Buddhas on the walls of the cella, and the figure of Buddha in Nirvāṇa coarsely painted