

mud plaster with their friable surface of thin stucco painted in tempera.

I need not describe here how this task was accomplished in spite of the very trying conditions of work, and the safe packing done with such scanty materials as I could improvise. My satisfaction was great when, on unpacking the cases more than two years later, I found that the great care taken had allowed all these remains of painted mud plaster to reach the British Museum in safety. There it became possible for my devoted friend and assistant, Mr. F. H. Andrews, to assure their preservation by an ingenious method of mounting on plaster of Paris reinforced with expanded aluminium. By carefully joining up various fragments we recovered thus considerable portions of fresco compositions forming part of the painted friezes which once decorated the rotunda wall higher up.

All the fresco remains thus preserved represent typical scenes of Buddhist iconography. Thus in the specimen shown in Fig. 55 we see the Buddha dressed in the mendicant's red-brown robe, standing with his right hand raised in the well-known 'gesture of protection'. By his side stand six disciples with heads shaved as monks. The scene is clearly laid in a garden or grove, but not enough is left to determine the particular legend illustrated from Buddha's life story.

However, it is the artistic treatment in composition, design and colouring, rather than the iconographic purport, which gives to all the fresco remains from the Miran shrines their special interest and great value. Buddhist as the subjects are, all details in the artistic presentation are derived from Hellenistic models. It may suffice here to point to the large straight eyes of the teacher and disciples, so different