

Above, we see in the background, raised in accordance with Chinese perspective, the celestial mansions; pavilions above the lake are occupied by more divine figures.

Immediately in front of the Buddha is placed a richly decked altar with a gracefully posed nymph on either side making an offering. On a platform projecting from the main terrace we see a dancer performing between musicians. It is a scene typical of almost all the large Paradise paintings. Yet the enjoyments of music and dance it represents might well seem strange to those whom Buddhist doctrine as rooted in true Indian thought would lead to seek reward for good lives in beatitude far less worldly. The side scenes on the right treated in secular Chinese style represent different calamities from which the Buddha's aid may deliver his worshippers.

To the Buddha of Medicine may be assigned also the very large and sumptuous painting of which Fig. 109 shows the left half. In spite of the damage it has suffered it has a claim to special interest on account of its noble design and delicate execution. The great assemblage of celestial beings is elaborately staged on symmetrically ordered terraces and courts, all richly decorated and rising above a lotus lake. Among the groups of unhaloed figures on each side there are seen warrior kings in gorgeous armour, as well as demon-like figures.

On the large platform projecting from the main terrace we see once more a dancer performing in rapid gyration to the strain of a celestial orchestra. A particular playful character is imparted to this celestial ballet by the curious figures of two fat infants rapturously dancing to the music. They obviously represent newly born souls revelling in the joy