

first brought to me by Turdi, was declared by him to have been obtained from the south wall of this cella. Marks of recent burrowing were visible there on my arrival, but I could not ascertain the exact position from which this piece might have been removed. It seems probable that these short inscriptions had a dedicatory or invocatory character; but this is all that in our present extremely scanty knowledge of their language can be suggested as to their contents.

SECTION III.—ART RELICS OF SHRINE D. II.

The excavations, when extended on December 21 to the remains immediately adjoining the west wall of the shrine just described, brought to light another temple cella which, notwithstanding its small dimensions, proved remarkably rich in art relics. This little chapel, which is seen in Fig. 31, measured only 12 feet 8 inches from north to south, with a width of 8 feet 8 inches (including walls), and had no enclosing passage. Its walls, built of a timber framework and plaster as previously described, had a thickness of only 4 inches, and had in consequence crumbled away to within a foot or two from the ground, except on the east side, where the closely adjoining outer wall of the larger cella gave support, and on the south, where a platform, 1 foot high and 2 feet 3 inches broad, surmounted by a massive base for the principal image, had been built along the whole length of the wall. Of the stucco image which once occupied this base only the scantiest fragments could be found; for with a pedestal raised more than 3 feet above the ground it must have long remained without the protecting cover of drift-sand. This was testified by the extremely friable condition of the few recovered fragments of soft stucco that belonged to this image. The thin coloured surface peeled off at the slightest touch; yet in one piece the fragment of a head worked in the round could be recognized, and as this measured about 7 inches from the inner corner of the right eye to the edge of the ear, the statue must have been over life-size.

Small cella
D. II.

The stucco base, which was 2 feet 10 inches long, 2 feet high, and 2 feet 6 inches broad, was flanked on either side of the front by the half-projecting figure of a lion, as seen in Fig. 31, and was thus manifestly intended to represent a 'Simhāsana'. The heads of the lions had decayed long ago, but the conventionally-treated curls indicating the manes falling over the fore part of the bodies were still clearly recognizable. The front of the base bore traces of having been painted and was decorated with a broad, low-hanging wreath. The projecting moulding running along the top of the platform had broken just below the base and showed the reed layers over which the plaster had been fixed. On the top of the base there once rose a circular drum-shaped pedestal in stucco, decorated with lotus-leaves and apparently over 3 inches in height when intact.

Base of
principal
image.

In the top layer of sand which covered this base and the south-eastern corner of the cella, were found numerous replicas of small reliefs, in hard plaster of Paris, representing Buddhas or Bodhisattvas, some of them still attached to portions of a similar hard stucco background. This was decorated in relief with elaborate and gaily coloured borders closely resembling in design those found in D. I. It is evident, from an examination of these fragments, described in the list below¹, that all belonged originally to plaques which probably in the form of aureoles had adorned the uppermost part of the south wall. Plates LIV and LV contain

Reliefs from
wall decoration.

¹ All pieces of 'Chunam' (plaster of Paris) marked in the list as from D. II were found in the smaller cella in the position described. Those bearing numbers beginning with

zero (D. II. 01, &c.) are pieces of which the original numbers given on the spot had become illegible owing to the effacement of the pencil marks.