

its last resting-place just under the bust of a Buddha figure holding up his hand in the gesture which Buddhist iconography knows as that of 'protection.'

The technical difficulties were quite as great, and the feeling of responsibility certainly increased, when it came to cutting out and removing those fine fresco panels of the dado showing winged figures. Seven of them were well enough preserved to justify an attempt at rescue by removal; but in the case of these also there were sufficient cracks present to cause apprehension as to whether they would not crumble into dry mud even before the long transport westward began. It was fortunate that in the north-east segment, which contained five of these panels, there remained *in situ* scarcely any of the frescoed wall surface above the dado, and that the north window offered a convenient starting-point on the side. Thus it became possible to insert a large flexible steel saw, included in our Indian equipment, at the back of each successive fresco panel, and then to cut through between its plaster backing and the brick wall surface. The plaster was here somewhat thicker, and not quite as brittle as in the detached pieces of fresco.

But unforeseen difficulties arose here more than once, as when behind several of the panels we came upon a layer of salt concretion, very hard and firmly binding the plaster to the interstices of the brick-work. It might have resulted from subsoil water having penetrated into the brick-work and brought out the salts originally contained. Continued practice taught us to meet incidents of this sort with novel expedients, however slender our available stock of tools and the allowance of time. Yet I confess I never set to work on the removal of a fresh panel without fearing that my eyes might never again behold the graceful features, the bright, impressive gaze of the figure represented. To whatever pantheon these strangely fascinating 'angels' might trace their origin, I felt as if I ought to ask their forgiveness for taking such liberties and risks with their portraits!

The odds against these brittle panes of mud plaster travelling safely to London seemed terribly heavy. But