

CHAPTER XLIII

A CYCLE OF FESTIVE FIGURES

THE work of packing the frescoes just discussed was still far from complete when a closer inspection of the other ruined mounds near by revealed to my delighted surprise a piece of coloured stucco just showing from the débris of the square ruin some sixty yards to the north-west. It was a badly decayed mass of brickwork, rising to a height of about fifteen feet and marked M. v. on my plan (Fig. 144); its shape and the flatness of the top had from the first suggested that it could not, like several other neighbouring mounds, be the remains of a solid Stupa tower. Its close vicinity allowed excavation to be started while the packing of the frescoes was still proceeding, and before long I felt sure that the ruin was that of a temple in plan exactly resembling the one last cleared and having for its centre a small Stupa built within a rotunda. Of the outer passage, which was square, there survived only a small portion on the south side, and here the remnant of a wall fresco was soon laid bare. It showed below in a dado the boldly painted bust of an angel, and above in a narrow frieze the gladiator-like figure of a man defending himself with a club against a monster with the body of a lion and the head and wings of a bird, exactly like the classical griffin. The painting, though somewhat coarser in execution, was so closely akin in style and design to the frescoes first recovered that the fact of this second temple dating back to the same period was settled from the outset.

The circular passage round the Stupa within was choked by heavy débris of large bricks which had once