

What surprise need we feel, then, that one of the artists there employed should have borne a name which must have been common among Rome's Oriental subjects from the Mediterranean shores to the Tigris? It is as a sort of Roman Eurasian, half Oriental by blood, but brought up in Hellenistic traditions, that I should picture to myself that painter-decorator whom his calling had carried to the very confines of China. That men of much the same origin had travelled there, to the 'land of the Seres,' long before him, we know for certain from a classical passage of Ptolemy's *Geography*, where he tells us, on the authority of Marinus of Tyre, of the information obtained from the agents whom "Maës, a Macedonian, also called Titianus, a merchant by hereditary profession," had sent for the purposes of trade to the distant capital of the Seres.

I must refrain from dilating further upon the fascinating glimpse into the art history of innermost Asia which this epigraphic relic opens for us. Nor is this the place to give details about the second short inscription which appears in a more lapidary writing on the lintel over the palace gate. It, too, is in a form of Prakrit, and according to M. Boyer's reading refers, as its position from the first suggested, to the prince seen riding beneath it; though, curiously enough, it calls him Ishidata (for Sanskrit Rishidatta), a name not hitherto known among the several designations of Vessantara.

It was easy to make sure of exact and permanent copies of these inscriptions by means of repeated tracings. But for the frescoes it was practically impossible to secure a record equal to their artistic and archaeological importance. To do justice to the harmonious but often faded colours of these paintings with the camera would have taxed the skill of a professional photographer working with special plates and appliances in his studio. But for an amateur like myself, the conditions under which the work had to be done were almost prohibitive. It was sufficiently difficult to squeeze myself in my bulky fur kit into a position low and distant enough to photograph a frescoed dado just above the floor and on the curving wall of a passage barely seven feet wide. For days the dust haze raised