

mother, with lotuses springing up to mark the spots which the child's feet have touched. The landscape of the last three panels is treated with thoroughly Chinese taste in its setting, and the distances are cleverly adapted and balanced. In the bottom panel the cartouche is filled in with a Chinese legend setting forth the particular episode, whereas the corresponding cartouches above have been left blank, as only too frequently in these paintings.

The banner on the left of the Plate is bordered on its long side by a rich floral ornament, which I found frequently also in the decorative settings of the frescoes in the caves. The upper portion contains a spirited representation of the famous legend how Prince Gautama, wishing to free himself from all worldly bonds and temptations of the senses, as a preliminary to progress towards full enlightenment, leaves his palace at night while all the women and minstrels of his seraglio and the guards outside the gates are overcome by deep sleep. On the cloud above the battlemented wall we see the future 'Buddha' galloping towards freedom on his favourite steed, his faithful groom, Chandaka, keeping by his side. The deep blue tints over hills and forest shown below the riding figure skilfully symbolize the time when the escape took place. In the lower portion of the picture we see the four emissaries sent out by King Suddhodana, Gautama's father, to call back the princely fugitive; having failed to find him they are brought up for judgment before the king and his ministers. Their arms are bound at their backs, and two purple-robed executioners stand behind, carrying beating-sticks, exactly like the one which I excavated at one of the stations of the Tun-huang *Limes* (Fig. 172, 1).

However fascinating these scenes from Buddha's life-story are, on account both of the faithful reproduction of all features in the original Indian legends and of the artistic merit of their Chinese setting, I must pass on to the far larger group of banners which display single divinities of the Buddhist Pantheon. Their variety is truly bewildering; and as the figures are but rarely accompanied by descriptive cartouches, and even characteristic emblems often absent, the correct identification of them