

decoration is unmistakably Chinese and not less interesting on that account. But there is good reason to believe that the general scheme, and the grouping of the divine figures, like their iconographic presentation, is a faithful reflex from Indian and Central-Asian models. However that may be, it is an interesting fact, brought out by comparison with the photographs I took of the frescoes in the 'Thousand Buddhas' caves,' that many of the larger pictures on silk are reproductions of these on a reduced scale.

A good idea of the colour effects of the pictures may be gained from the painting, close on five feet high, reproduced in Plate VIII. Here we see on the right the Bodhisattva Manjusri riding on his lion, which a black Indian conducts. On the left is Samantabhadra, another Bodhisattva, riding on his elephant led by a similar figure. Above are shown in a row four standing Bodhisattvas, manifestations of an Avalokitesvara or 'Kuan-yin,' whom the Chinese legends by their side allow us to identify as 'The Very Compassionate.' At the foot of the painting we have portraits of the donors, some of them dressed as monks, and of female members of their families. A dedicatory Chinese inscription on the central panel acquaints us with the occasion when the gift of this picture was made, and supplies the welcome fact that it dates from the year 864 A.D.

Among a number of paintings which cannot be classed under any of the above categories, but yet will repay attention, I can only mention one. It is a long roll of paper with curious representations of scenes of judgment in Buddhist hells. In each two sinners are being brought up before the tribunal. They are condemned to wear the 'cangue' or wooden board, still a favourite implement of Chinese justice, while two figures attend them, carrying one an armful of sacred texts, and the other a statuette of Buddha, evidently to mark the means of grace and salvation.

I have left myself little space to discuss other works of quasi-pictorial art rescued by me from the walled-up chapel, though their interest from more than one point of view is great. I mean the embroideries. By far the most important among them is the magnificent picture, nearly nine feet high, which Plate IX. reproduces in colours.