

shrines of the Khotan region, the core of the statues was invariably formed by a rough wooden frame supplemented by broom-like reed bundles for the support of extremities. To this the wet clay was attached in rough clods, subsequently carved into shape with the help of wooden modelling tools, and finally richly painted over a succession of colour washes.

If the technical methods had remained the same, the steady course of deterioration in design and artistic execution was painfully brought home by the restorations old and new. Few statues likely to date from T'ang times had survived, and these only in their lower portions and without their original hands or feet. But wherever such old work had escaped, as seen *e.g.* in Fig. 161, the superior modelling of the limbs, the well-balanced pose, and the graceful arrangement of the drapery, would distinguish it at a glance from the stiff and clumsy additions of later restorers, or such coarse modern 'creations' as seen *e.g.* in Figs. 188, 201. The hideousness of the latter was scarcely redeemed by finding even here unmistakable traces of the influence which the traditional style, originally reflecting Graeco-Buddhist models, and imported through the Tarim Basin, had continued to exercise almost to the present day on local sculptural art however great its debasement.

Taking a general view, the preservation of elements derived from the Buddhist art of India and Central Asia was far more marked in the sculptural remains of these cave-temples, whatever their age, than in the corresponding pictorial work. It was just the reverse in respect of the purely Chinese elements. Conspicuous as the latter were in the frescoes, I found but few sculptures of such distinctly Chinese style as those reproduced in Fig. 196. And significantly enough, the principal figure here represented was Hsüan-tsang, the great Chinese pilgrim and 'Arhat,' to whom this temple was dedicated.

It is, however, in the frescoes or, to use a more accurate term, mural paintings in tempera that the influence which Chinese taste had upon Buddhist art transplanted to Tun-huang most clearly asserts itself. There can be no doubt that the most valuable artistic feature of the site