

seated on a carpeted platform and backed by a crowd of worshipping saints. Below a procession formed by a prince and his train seems as if engaged in performing Pradakṣiṇā around. A double row of swordsmen and a string of attendants carrying offerings are seen preceding the prince and his *cortège*. The *pendant* to this panel is formed by the picture xv, on the opposite side of the entrance (Fig. 217). Here we see the centre occupied by a royal personage, without halo, seated on an elaborate canopied platform which seems to move between, and on, finely painted clouds. Behind follows a crowd of haloed saints and divinities, while below a train of attendants is seen marching in vigorous movement. Along the vertical sides, and where space permits also above, a number of small scenes, apparently of the Jātaka kind, are depicted.

Large  
painted wall  
panels in  
cella Ch. VIII.

I shall not attempt to describe in detail the compositions which fill the ten large panels of the side walls. Most of them represent divine assemblages with a Buddha figure in the centre, either of the clearly recognizable Sukhāvati type with lotus tanks, scenes of celestial enjoyment, etc., or else set among smaller scenes of worship and secular life such as those found in the representations of Jātaka stories. Figs. 219, 220, 224, showing the panels v, x, and xi, may serve to illustrate the type of these compositions. Their close connexion both in subject and style with the large paintings of Amitābha's Paradise, etc., in our collection scarcely needs to be emphasized. In panel xiii (Fig. 223) we find no less than eleven small representations of divine assemblies grouped together, each of which is provided with an inscribed panel or cartouche evidently intended to facilitate its identification. It is clear that these and similar paintings, with the contemporary explanatory records thus provided, will prove a valuable source of information for details of Chinese Buddhist iconography in what was, perhaps, its phase of greatest luxuriance. The same may be observed also of the very numerous scenes, crowding the whole surface of the west wall, as seen in the portions viii and ix (Figs. 221, 222). They are continued even under the arched passage behind the screen, where the dim light must have hampered the artist at work quite as much as it now hampers the beholder. They represent varied incidents of secular and monastic life, of travel, pious labours, etc., and are evidently meant to illustrate sacred legends which the cartouches, here luckily almost always filled in, will help to identify.

Paintings of  
dado in  
Ch. VIII.

Below these big panels, probably over 11 feet high, and separated from them by a band with fine floral ornament, there extends everywhere a painted dado which, too, claims distinct interest. This is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet high on all sides, except under the panels of the east wall, ii and xv, where it reaches to a height of 8 feet. On the west wall the dado is made up of small panels, arranged in vertical rows and often effaced by rubbing on account of the narrowness of the passage way; they seem all to represent legendary scenes probably taken from Jātakas. Everywhere else we find the dado occupied by rows of female figures elaborately dressed and coiffured in the fashion which, after what the donor figures of our silk paintings have taught us, we can now with certainty recognize as that locally prevailing in the tenth century.<sup>13</sup>

Procession  
of princely  
ladies on  
dado, Ch.  
VIII.

All these ladies carry offerings of fruit and flowers. But among them attention is attracted at once by the individualized figures that appear below the panels ii and xv of the east wall and obviously include the donatrices of the temple. It is, no doubt, for this reason that greater height, allowing space for figures over life-size, was allotted here to the dado. Under panel xv (Fig. 217) we see, in front of four attendants, a lady richly bejewelled and wearing the most gorgeous head-dress of all. I shall not attempt to describe this 'creation' in detail beyond calling attention to the huge bulb-shaped cap, adorned with precious stones, etc., and the double-rimmed hat below it, similarly bedecked and supporting long pendants of jewellery. To the right of her are ranged in ascending order of stature three ladies, wearing similar bulb-shaped caps, but of small size and but

<sup>13</sup> Cf. above, pp. 850, 885.