

abhaya-mudrā and on either side of him a monkish disciple, a Bodhisattva and a Lokapāla, are old in their lower portions, while the heads and most of the figures from the waist upwards are modern restorations. Old, too, are the gilt-edged halo and nimbus in low relief behind the Buddha, with dark-green foliage over brown ground. The wall-paintings in the alcove, darkened by incense smoke, include on the ceiling a scene which shows the Buddha teaching in a grove surrounded by celestial attendants. Pale greens and blues prevail in the colour-schemes of this and the small shrines next mentioned. A diaper of roughly stencilled small Buddha figures covers the ceiling of Ch. III. a, as well as most space on the side walls. The centre, however, of these is occupied by a painted panel nearly 7 feet wide, representing the Western Paradise. The panel on the north wall (Fig. 209) is a composition closely resembling in arrangement and style the Sukhāvātī picture on silk, Ch. XLVII. 001,⁸ but with the addition of a celestial dance at its foot.

Decoration
of shrines
Ch. IV-VI.

Ch. IV, another small shrine, with a cella 15 feet 10 inches long and 13 feet 3 inches wide and a group of partially old stucco images in an alcove (Fig. 208), is decorated in much the same style as Ch. III. a. The side walls contain each a large painted panel showing Sukhāvātī scenes. That on the north wall, with a width of 8 feet (Fig. 210), is a typical representation of Amitābha's Paradise, as seen in a large group of our silk paintings.⁹ Comparison with these makes it easy to recognize in the scenes filling the side panels the story of King Ajātaśatru and the Meditations of Queen Vaidehī taken from the *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra*.¹⁰ The photographs in Figs. 211, 212 show the alcoves, or image recesses, of two more grottoes, Ch. V, VI, which agree in general arrangement with those last described.¹¹ In Ch. IV little survives of the original statuary beyond the raised lotus seat of the central Buddha and the bases of four attendants on each side; but the fine cloud scrolls filling the spaces between the flame-bordered haloes and the gracefully designed festoons of lotuses on either side of the alcove opening may be mentioned. The diaper covering the whole of the cella walls is identical with that in Ch. I, showing stencilled rows of seated Buddhas, dark brown with white drapery over a light green ground. Both here and in Ch. VI we meet in the ornamented borders, etc., with floral patterns which have a close resemblance to the designs preserved for us in figured or printed silks from the walled-up chapel. In Ch. VI each of the side walls is decorated mainly with a large panel representing a Western Paradise in simplified form, with legendary scenes on the margins (Fig. 231).

Cella and
porch of
cave-temple
Ch. VII.

The cave-temple Ch. VII, as the plan (Plate 44) shows, has a relatively large cella, about 38 feet square, approached through a porch which owing to its length, some 27 feet, badly interferes with its lighting. The horseshoe-shaped altar platform is now occupied by three colossal Buddha statues seated in European fashion and flanked each by a pair of attendant figures. The images are all of clumsy modelling and seemed even in their lower portions to date from some later restoration. The painted decoration of the rock-carved screen behind looked like an inferior imitation of that occupying the same place in Ch. II. The wall-paintings of the cella resemble in subjects and style those of Ch. VIII to be described presently, but appeared to me distinctly less careful in execution and later. On the north and south walls they comprise four large panels with Sukhāvātī representations, which texts conspicuously inscribed in the centre are intended to explain. Rows of Bodhisattvas marching in procession and similar to those decorating the porch are depicted on most of the dado, while elsewhere narrow panels, badly faded, show what evidently are Jātaka stories. The west wall is occupied by a large painted composition (Fig. 213) identical in its legendary subject with that which covers the corresponding space in the cave Ch. XVI. The walls

⁸ Cf. above, p. 885; also *Thousand Buddhas*, Pl. XI.

⁹ Cf. above, pp. 885 sqq., and for illustrations, Ch. 00216, Ch. LVIII. 0011 in Pl. VIII, XXX of *Thousand Buddhas*.

¹⁰ Cf. below, Descriptive List, Ch. 0051.

¹¹ For ground plans, see Pl. 44.