XXXIII.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL EXPLORATION IN INDIA, 1906-7.

By J. H. MARSHALL.

IN view of the inevitable delays which must always attend the publication of lengthy and illustrated reports in India, it was suggested to me a short time ago by the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society that it would serve a useful purpose if I contributed to the Journal, from year to year, an account of the chief discoveries made by the Archæological Department in India. It is particularly satisfactory to respond to this suggestion at the present juncture, not only because the prospects of systematic and steady work in the field of exploration are brighter now than they have ever yet been, but also because the particular season that has just gone by has been more than usually productive of interesting results. My only regret is that it is not possible to present these results in a more adequate form. Government orders, however, permit only the publication of very short preliminary accounts in European journals, and I must be content, therefore, to give the following brief summary, referring the reader who wishes for further information to the descriptive accounts of the discoveries which will appear in due course in our official reports.

Kasiā.

The two most important undertakings of the year were those at Kasiā and Sārnāth, both of which sites are now being exhaustively examined. At the *Māthā-Kūar-kā Kōṭ*, close to Kasiā, Dr. Vogel has now completely laid bare the whole of the *large monastery* already partly exhumed in previous years, and has continued the excavation of the

earlier monastery, which now proves to extend over all the south-west portion of the mound (see Plate I). Among the objects found in this earlier monastery were a fragmentary record of the early Kuṣaṇa period and a broken Buddha statue with a votive inscription in characters of the sixth century, while in front of it was turned up a gold coin of Candragupta II Vikramāditya. From the evidence of these and previous finds, Dr. Vogel conjectures that this monastery dates back to the first century of our era, that it was in occupation in the days of the earlier Guptas, and that it was destroyed towards the end of the sixth century.

Besides excavating these two monasteries, Dr. Vogel has also unearthed a number of smaller monuments, mostly *stūpas*, to the south of the central shrine, and three larger buildings in the ground recently acquired by Government outside the mound proper. One of these buildings is a typical monastery; the other two may have been meant for the accommodation of pilgrims.

The minor finds made during the past season include some 500 or more clay sealings, broken or complete, of which 464 belong to the "Convent of the Great Decease," 9 to other monastic establishments, and the rest to private individuals. The presence of sealings in such preponderating numbers from the "Convent of the Great Decease" cannot but suggest a very close connection between the Kasiā *Saṅghārāma* and that convent, but at the same time they certainly cast doubt on the supposed identity of the two buildings, for it is difficult to see for what other purpose but that of letters so many seals could have been used. If, then, Kasiā does not represent Kusinārā, the question naturally arises whether we know of any other ancient *Saṅghārāma* with which we can identify it. This question, Dr. Vogel thinks, is now answered by the discovery of a seal die near the *earlier monastery*, bearing the inscription *Srī-Viṣṇudvīpa-vihāre bhikṣusaṅghasya*, "of the community of friars at the convent of Holy Viṣṇudvīpa" (Plate III, fig. 1). The Viṣṇudvīpa corresponds with the *Veṭhadīpa* of the Pāli books, and Dr. Vogel is now of opinion that the

remains at Kasiā represent the ancient *Vethadīpa*, which (see this Journal, 1906. 665, 671) received a portion of the relics of Buddha after the *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. No doubt the evidence of this die is of a very tangible nature; at the same time it must be conceded, as Dr. Vogel himself realises, that the die in question might easily have been brought from elsewhere, and, until further confirmatory evidence is forthcoming, we cannot look upon the question as settled. There yet remain to be examined at Kasiā two important *stūpas*, the *Rāmābhār stūpa* and the one on the *Māthā-Kūar-kā Kōṭ*, besides a number of other edifices, and it is not too much to hope that something or other will be found which will settle the matter beyond dispute.

Sārṇāth.

The excavations at Sārṇāth were resumed this spring under my own supervision, and, as I had the valuable co-operation of both Dr. Sten Konow and Mr. W. H. Nicholls, and the assistance of Pandit Daya Ram Sahni, we were able to continue them on a more ambitious scale. Before, however, describing the discoveries of the past season, it will be as well—and it will certainly make my description more intelligible—if I briefly summarise the results of the first season's operations, which are only just now being made public. Among the monuments then unearthed the most conspicuous was a structure which we may distinguish by the name of the *Main Shrine*, as it formed the centre of a number of smaller memorials built around it. This Main Shrine is a rectangular building measuring 95 by 90 feet, with doubly recessed corners, and is still standing to a height of 17 or 18 feet. It is built partly of stone, partly of brick, most of its material having been taken from earlier structures. Around this Main Shrine was a concrete pavement, on which had been raised a host of chapels, *stūpas*, and other memorials, some of them built of brick and plaster, some of stone, ranging in date from the Kuṣāṇa epoch to the eleventh or twelfth century. This

pavement extended about 40 feet around the Main Shrine, and beyond it, again, were found numerous other small memorials, mostly of the later epoch. Breaking through the concrete pavement, immediately to the west of the Main Shrine, was found the top of the broken shaft of an Aśoka column, the inscriptions on which have already been published in the *Epigraphia Indica* (vol. viii, pp. 166-179). The upper part of the column, with its superbly sculptured capital, was found leaning against the side of the Main Shrine. A narrow pit sunk around this column afterwards revealed the existence of a stone pavement, 2 feet beneath the concrete floor, and, 2 ft. 8 ins. further down, two brick walls, one within the other, forming squares around the column.

So much for the results of the first season. In continuing the operations in 1906-7 we had before us two main purposes: first, to deepen the excavations in the immediate vicinity of the Main Shrine after cutting through the concrete pavement; secondly, to widen out the excavations in all directions. The pavement proved to consist of several layers superimposed, at different intervals of time, one immediately above the other; and, in view of the fact that nothing of a later date than the Kuṣaṇa period has been found beneath, it may be considered as practically certain that the lowest layer dates back approximately to the early Gupta period, while the uppermost may be assigned to the eleventh or twelfth century.

This fact is of considerable importance, inasmuch as it enables us to date, with comparative assurance, all the buildings found beneath the pavement. Prominent among these is a group of admirably constructed *stūpas* at the south-west corner of the Main Shrine; near which, but at a still lower level, has also come to light part of the plinth of a much larger structure, which, however, has still to be followed up. The stone pavement, which had been partly laid bare around the Aśoka column in the previous season, proved to be composed of slabs cut from a railing of decadent Mauryan style, and it may be surmised that this depression

was purposely made, at a time when the ground around had risen, to keep the inscription open to view. On the east, this pavement ends in three steps rising to the level of the concrete floor above.

Most of the area excavated under the pavement, to the east of the Main Shrine, is occupied by a large rectangular chamber or court measuring 48 by 28 feet, with a variety of other structures adjoining it (see Plate II). This chamber was surrounded on three sides by a stone railing of Mauryan date, built into the brickwork of the walls. Much of this railing has, unfortunately, perished, but the position of all the columns and crossbars is clearly marked by indentations in the brickwork. One of the coping-stones belonging to this railing was, according to a monumental Prakrit inscription incised on it in the Brāhmī character, presented by a nun named Savahikā; while a short column found close by appears, from two Kuṣaṇa or early Gupta epigraphs carved on it, to have been used as a lamp-holder in a *gandhakūṭi*, which may be the rectangular structure in question. A second column bears two Sanskrit inscriptions in the same script as the above, from which it seems that it was the gift of a monk named Bodhiṣeṇa and was afterwards converted into a lamp-post by a certain layman named Bhavarudra.

Among the small antiquities found below the pavement may be noticed the interesting capital with Perso-Ionic volutes (Plate III, fig. 4), and another capital belonging to the Mauryan period, decorated on one side with a group of *dharmacakra* and *triratna* symbols, and with the Bodhi tree overhung with garlands, the *Vajrāsana*, and a column with Persepolitan bell-shaped capital, on the other.

Further out, and beyond the limits of the concrete pavement, our excavations were carried to a considerable distance on every side of the Main Shrine, for the most part down to the level, approximately, of the concrete pavement, but descending much deeper in places. The majority of the architectural remains unearthed consisted, as we naturally expected, of small chapels and *stūpas*,

the largest group of which (comprising more than fifty structures) lies to the west of the Main Shrine. A smaller, but more ancient and interesting, group came to light at some distance to the north-east. That this group marks some exceptionally hallowed spot seems certain, not only from the fact that the *stūpas* are crowded together more thickly than anywhere else, but also from the fact that they have been added to and built over, time and again. Several of these *stūpas* are of peculiar importance, because within the outer and later shells the earlier structures are to be found in practically perfect preservation, while the relic-chambers in others have yielded numbers of sculptures and tablets of sun-burnt clay.

But perhaps the most attractive of the structures brought to light this year is a large monastery (for there can be little doubt about its character) away to the north-east, beyond the group of *stūpas* described above. The part of this monastery which has so far been unearthed consists of a very fine block of buildings with a spacious entrance facing the east, and a paved courtyard on the west, surrounded, apparently, by extensions from the main structure, which, however, have only been partially excavated. The basement of the monastery is of brick, admirably moulded and carved, and standing to a height of about eight feet. The super-structure was of stone massively constructed; but all of it save the lowest courses has fallen, and the ponderous blocks are lying in great heaps over the basement and in the courtyard below. The precise date of this building is not yet fixed, but, on the evidence of style, it may be assigned to the latest building epoch at Sārnāth.

Between the monastery and the area around the Main Shrine the digging was carried to a much lower level, but revealed only a series of walls of no special interest, though the lower strata appear to date back to the earliest period when the site was occupied.

In other parts of the site a trial trench has been sunk in the mound to the west of the Jaina temple, which bids fair to yield valuable results, and the ground has also

been cleared again above the so-called "hospital"¹ excavated by Major Kittoe, but this was rather for the purpose of providing earth for a ramp needed in connection with certain repairs to the Dhamekh Stūpa than because we hoped to find anything of particular interest there. As we expected, all the remains of the "hospital" proved to have been hopelessly knocked about and damaged in the previous excavation.

No doubt the whole *Saṅghārāma* at Sārnāth, as at Kasiā and other places, was surrounded by a massive circuit wall, and, so far as we can judge at present, a section of this wall has been brought to light alongside the *jhāl* to the west of the site. The wall in question is nine feet thick and of very solid construction, with footings at the base, similar to the wall which surrounds New Rājagṛha. Should this prove to be part of the circuit wall, as we believe it is, it is hoped that it will be possible eventually to follow it up along its whole length and to extend the excavations over the whole area surrounded by it.

It remains to notice a few more of the smaller antiquities found above or beyond the pavement round the Main Shrine. One of them is a fragment of a stone umbrella incised with a quotation from the Pāli texts, setting forth the four cardinal truths of Buddhism, namely, suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering. Among sculptures, two rectangular slabs (Plate IV), one found broken into three pieces but complete, the other one not quite entire, are particularly interesting. One (fig. 1) is divided into eight small panels, containing representations of the chief events in Buddha's life, and apparently referring to the "eight chief places." The four main events are represented at the four corners, starting chronologically at the left-hand bottom corner, viz., the birth, the illumination, the first sermon, and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. The four minor scenes appear to be connected with Vaiśālī, Rājagṛha, Sāṅkāśyā, and

¹ No doubt a monastery.

Śrāvastī, and represent respectively the offering made by the monkey, the subjugation of the elephant, the descent from the *Trayastrīṃśadevaloka*, and another scene, of which the identification is doubtful, but which appears to have taken place at Śrāvastī. The other slab (fig. 2) depicts the conception, birth, and washing of the child, the flight from Kapilavastu (?), and the meditation under the Bodhi tree. A point of some interest in this slab is the non-canonical position of Māyā in the conception scene, lying on her right side.

A fact which our discoveries have now made abundantly clear is that the most important building age at Sārnāth was the age of the Imperial Guptas; yet more, they establish the existence of an important and wide-reaching school of sculpture at that epoch, and open up for us an almost new chapter in the history of Indian art. A few specimens of Gupta architecture and sculpture have, of course, been known to us for many years past, from different sites in Northern and Western India, but how little the essential characteristics of this school have hitherto been understood may be gauged from the fact that one of the finest examples of Gupta art has been generally assigned (on the authority of Fergusson)¹ to the eleventh century of our era. I refer to the Dhamekh Stūpa at Sārnāth. Of the Gupta origin of this famous monument there can now no longer be a shadow of a doubt; for there is not a motif in its decoration which does not find an exact counterpart in one or other of the Gupta sculptures recently unearthed. But, for further information on this interesting subject, I must refer the reader to our official publication of the discoveries. A specimen of Gupta work—part of a fine, bold frieze of a building—is reproduced in Plate III, fig. 3.

¹ See *Indian and Eastern Architecture*, pp. 66-8. Sir A. Cunningham's earlier opinion has now been vindicated.

Sahribahlol.

In the Frontier Province some very valuable discoveries were made by Dr. D. B. Spooner in a small and insignificant mound at the village of Sahribahlol, near the foot of Takht-i-Bahāi, which he found the villagers exploiting for sculptures.

"Of the architectural finds made in this mound," says Dr. Spooner, "the most interesting was a little *stūpa* measuring six feet square, which is shown in the illustration (Plate V, fig. 1). The three friezes on the sides are made up of elephants and Atlases alternating. When first uncovered these were in nearly perfect condition, but unfortunately some person or persons demolished them in our absence, and before it was possible to photograph them, as the *stūpa* had been only partially uncovered at that time. Perhaps next in interest to this was the row of standing Bodhisattva figures which we found, badly broken but still *in situ*, along the front of what would appear to have been the central *stūpa*. At either end of this row, and set a little back from the alignment, was a seated Buddha figure: the pedestal of one of them was particularly noteworthy for the delicacy and intricacy of its pattern, and for the unusual naturalness in the postures of the many tiny animals it contained. It was among the *débris* of the building behind these statues, and along the westernmost side of the mound, where a line of chapels may have stood, that the major portion of our sculptures were obtained. These are of all sizes and of various degrees of excellence, and, moreover, in a variety of materials, stone, and stucco, and what might be called stucco-faced, where the figure is a mere stucco shell filled with soft earth. The most remarkable example of this kind was an apparently female head some six inches in height, wearing an elaborate fringe of curls and adorned with a curious lofty crown with well-defined points. The plaster of which this is made is singularly white and delicate, and only about $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch in thickness. The modelling is distinctly inferior, but the whole is of great interest, nevertheless. Taking the sculptures as a whole, I have no

hesitation in ascribing them to one of the very best periods of the Gandhāra school. The numerous heads found, both stone and stucco (e.g., Plate III, fig. 2), compare very favourably with those in any other collections, and a few of the larger pieces—such as, for example, one or two of the seated Buddha figures (e.g., Plate V, fig. 3), and the Kubera and Hāritī statue (Plate V, fig. 2)—would seem inferior to few, if any, of the sculptures of this school yet found. Another point of interest is the large number of well-defined Bodhisattva types encountered. We have several distinct types, repeated with great fidelity to detail, especially in the case of the head-dresses, so that the conviction is forced upon one that they must have been intended to represent individual and particular Bodhisattvas. That, with increased material, further study will lead to a satisfactory differentiation of these figures, seems reasonable to expect. And, judging by these Sahribahlol finds, the head-dress will prove to be of special significance in any such enquiry. One is reminded of the passage in the *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra*: ‘All beings can recognize either of the two Bodhisattvas (Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāma) by simply glancing at the marks of their heads.’¹

“Among the fragmentary sculptures one small piece in particular calls for mention. A mere broken piece of a stone halo, it still preserved its ancient coating of stucco, and this in turn its original painted design, a pattern of radiating rays in gold on a brilliant red background. Many of the sculptures showed traces of colouring or gilding, and some of them elaborate traces, but none of any such interest as this little fragment.

“Of the monastic quadrangle to the east of the great wall, which divided the mound from north to south into two nearly equal halves, there is little need to speak here. The finds from this side were naturally few and of comparatively slight interest, except a couple of copper spoons of excellent design, and a metal leaf still retaining the brilliant colouring

¹ S.B.E., vol. xlix, p. 187, para. 21, Takakusu's translation.

with which it was originally adorned. The usual arrangement of cells was found, the only noticeable thing about them being that they were all built of extremely *kacchā* walls, mere unshapen earth mixed with the crushed ends of grain left after threshing. Even the fine stone foundations of the outside walls of this quadrangle, fully four feet wide, show traces of having been built up originally in the same way. But, that wood was used somewhere in the construction, presumably in the roofing, seems certain from the large quantity of charcoal found here and there in the *débris*, which points also to fire as the primary agent in the destruction of the place. The centre of this quadrangle, however, presents an unexpected feature of considerable interest, namely, another quadrangle, also in stone, which appears, from the presence of a drain leading to the south, to have been a central tank. The curious thing about this, however, is that the outer side is broken into a number of deep bays, whose purpose it is difficult to determine. Possibly further excavations in the neighbourhood will throw some light on the problem."

Pagān.

Another excavation that has yielded results of much value for the history of Buddhist iconographic art is that of the Pet-leak-paya, or 'Pagoda of the curling leaf,' at Pagān, in Burma. This pagoda, as well as another one close by it, known locally as the 'Elder Sister,' had attracted my attention some time ago, by reason of its peculiar shape and character, which distinguished it from those around and pointed to an earlier origin. As only its superstructure was then visible above ground, I made arrangements for the removal of all the *débris* which enveloped its base, though, when I did so, I had little idea that under this *débris* would be found such a treasure-house of relics as has now come to light. For the note which follows, of the discoveries made here, I am indebted to Dr. Sten Konow, who was with

me in the early spring at Pagān, and who has been making a special study of the terra-cotta plaques:—

“Around the four sides of the Pet-leak-paya the excavations have now revealed the existence of an arched corridor, the walls of which are adorned both inside and outside, with a double row of terra-cotta reliefs, illustrating the scenes of the Jātakas. Each plaque illustrates one Jātaka by means of one of the principal scenes occurring in it. An inscription in the ordinary Pali-Burmese character of the eleventh and twelfth centuries gives the name of the Jātaka, and the number of the tale in the Jātaka book has, moreover, been added. Somewhat similar plaques containing illustrations of the Jātakas have long been known to exist on other pagodas in Pagān. The Ananda and Shwezigon Pagodas, in particular, are adorned with a large number of them, and scholars in Europe will remember the small collection from the Mangalacheti Pagoda, which found its way some years ago into the Royal Museum for Ethnography in Berlin. Many of these last-mentioned ones have been fully described by Professor Grünwedel in the fifth volume of the publications of the Museum. The Pet-leak finds are, therefore, not absolutely unique, but they are much superior in quality to the other ones. The plaques found in the Ananda, Shwezigon, and Mangalacheti Pagodas are all covered with a thick bluish-green enamel, and the execution is of the coarsest description. Moreover, in many cases they are so much damaged that nothing could be made out of them. The Pet-leak plaques, on the other hand, are not enamelled, and, owing to the fact that they have long been buried under ground, they still retain all their original freshness. Their technique, too, is of a higher quality. Professor Grünwedel has drawn attention to the stereotyped character of the illustrations from the Mangalacheti Pagoda, in which practically only four different types of figures occur. The Pet-leak plaques are, it is true, also conventional, but the treatment of the different figures is much more vigorous and free. Another point also, in which they differ from the plaques dealt with by Professor Grünwedel, is the

absence in the Pet-leak tiles of a Burmese legend explaining in which existence the story occurred.

“The custom of decorating *stūpas* with illustrations from the Jātakas is, of course, a very old one in India. We meet with it both at Bharhut and Sāñchi and in the Gandhāra sculptures. There would seem to be several distinct schools represented in these illustrations; for in the Gandhāra sculptures the story depicted differs from that found in Central India; while a third school can probably be distinguished in Burma, though it is too early to state this definitely before all the plaques have been carefully examined. So far, however, as I can see now, there is little probability of these Burmese plaques becoming of importance for the identification of sculptures on old Indian *stūpas*. They will, on the other hand, certainly prove of great interest for the history of mediæval Buddhist iconography. The conventional and stereotyped character of the representation of the Jātaka scenes makes it probable that parallels may some day be traced in India.

“The names of the Jātakas, and their numbers, broadly agree with Fausböll’s edition, just as is the case with the Mangalacheti plaques. This fact is of interest, because it shows that the Jātakas were told in Pagān in the form in which they occur in the Jātaka-commentary of Ceylon. In some few cases there is, it is true, a slight difference between Fausböll’s edition and our plaques. Thus Jātaka 296, which is called the *Samuddajātaka* in Fausböll’s manuscripts, here occurs under the name of *Anantapāyijātaka*, taken from the beginning of the second *gāthā* of the tale. This discrepancy in the names of the Jātakas is no new fact. It is not greater than that which exists in the various manuscripts made use of by Professor Fausböll.

“Of still greater interest is the fact that the Pet-leak plaques portray some Jātakas which do not occur in Fausböll’s manuscripts. So far as I have been able to examine the plaques, it appears that the titles and numbers closely agree with Fausböll’s edition up to Jātaka 496, the *Bhikkhāparampara-jātaka*. But here the plaques insert three

new Jātakas, the *Velāma* (497), the *Mahāgovinda* (498), and the *Sumedhapañḍita-jātakas* (499). The *Mātāṅgajātaka*, which is No. 497 in Fausböll's edition, is accordingly No. 500 in the Pet-leak collection. Then the numbering runs on in the same way in both series up to the *Nimijātaka* (Fausböll 541 = Pet-leak 544), after which a new Jātaka, the *Mahosadhajātaka*, is again inserted, as No. 545. *Velāma* is mentioned in the introduction to the *Khadiraṅgārajātaka* (J.A., i, p. 228); *Mahāgovinda*, *Sumedhapañḍita*, and *Mahosadha* are all mentioned as Bodhisattas in the *Nidānakathā*. We do not know why the tales about the Buddha's doings in these births have not been incorporated in the recension of the Jātakas published by Fausböll. The Pet-leak plaques show that they were all found in the collection of birth-stories current in Pagān at the time when the Pet-leak pagoda was erected. We are unable as yet to determine with certainty when this was done, but it cannot well have been later than in the reign of King Anawrata, for votive tablets bearing his name have been unearthed together with the plaques.

"Several hundred of these Jātaka illustrations have already been found at the Pet-leak pagoda, and, as the sister pagoda mentioned above, which appears to be of an almost precisely similar character, has still to be excavated, there is every reason to hope that the number will be doubled before the site is exhausted.

"The six illustrations from these plaques given in Plate VI. are named and numbered as follows :— Fig. 1, *Khurappa*, No. 265; fig. 2, *Kakkata*, No. 267; fig. 3, *Chūladhammapāla*, No. 358; fig. 4, *Mātāṅga*, No. 500 (Fausböll, 497); fig. 5, *Chhaddanta*, No. 517 (Fausböll, 514); fig. 6, *Sāma*, No. 543 (Fausböll, 540)."

Amrāvati.

At Amrāvati, in Madras, Mr. Rea has resumed the excavations which were dropped years ago on the assumption that there was nothing more to be found. It now turns

out that the original ground-level around the circular pavement is in reality lower than was imagined by earlier explorers, and Mr. Rea's excavation of this area has added quite a rich harvest of antiquities to the already splendid collections from Amrāvati. At the close of last season Mr. Rea had found, among other things, outside the south gate of the great Tope, a *stūpa*, eleven feet in diameter, of which the lower part is remarkably well preserved. It is expected that similar memorials will be brought to light at other gates, but, before they can be reached, it is necessary first to remove the great masses of débris heaped up, without a thought as to what they might be concealing, by previous excavators. In the meantime, his excavations have brought to light a number of walls and marble rail-piers *in situ*, besides numerous detached sculptures (including a fine black stone image), inscriptions, stone troughs, pillars, celts, coins, beads, and other miscellaneous articles. I much regret that the photographs of the latest finds have not yet reached me. Illustrations of the *stūpa* at the south gate are given in Plate VII, figs. 1 and 2.

Early Caves.

Another discovery in the Madras Presidency that deserves notice is that of some ancient caves, with beds chiselled out of the rock, that have recently been found in the Madura and Tinnevely districts. The following note by Dr. Konow about these caves is based on information furnished by Mr. V. Venkayya:—"One such cave, situated at Maru-gāltalai, ten miles from Palamcottah, has already been known for some time. But the last year brought five new ones to light in the Madura district, one on the Ānaimalai hill, six miles north-east of Madura, and four on the Kaḷugumalai hill, eight miles from Melūr. They all appear to be natural caves with beds chiselled in the rock. The popular name for these beds is *Pañchapāṇḍavar-paḍukkai*, 'the beds of the five Pāṇḍavas,' in accordance with the

common custom in these parts of attributing everything that is ancient to the Pāṇḍavas. These caves are probably connected with the earliest history of Buddhism in Southern India. They contain some few inscriptions in old Brāhmī character. The estampages I have seen are too imperfect to make it possible to read them, and I am not even certain that they are written in monumental Prakrit, and not in a Dravidian dialect. One of them seems to run:— *chānatāritānā koṭūpikāna*, which apparently means 'of the Chānatārita householders.' If my reading and interpretation are correct, the form *koṭūpikāna* shows certain influence of the Dravidian idiom of the district. The alphabet is, in most characteristics, identical with that in use in the Aśoka edicts. The only point of interest is the form of the letter *ma*, which agrees with that in use in Old Burmese."

Konarak.

In Bengal, owing to the unfortunate absence of Dr. Bloch on sick leave, the exploration of Rājagṛha, which had opened with such promise in the previous season, could not be resumed. The work, however, of excavating the Black Pagoda at Konarak continued uninterruptedly, and is now nearing its close. While the 'Dancing Hall' and *Maṇḍapa* of the temple were being cleared, it was merely a matter of ladling out sand and carting it away; but as soon as the shrine was reached, the undertaking entered on a far more laborious phase, as the spire above it had long ago collapsed and buried the sanctum in a vast heap of débris more than fifty feet high. Fortunately it was possible to lay down a light railway and remove all the most colossal blocks of stone by the aid of a running crane, with the result that the work has been pushed on this season far more rapidly than would otherwise have been possible, and the whole of this stupendous temple— all at least that remains of it— is once more exposed to view. It is, indeed, an

imposing and magnificent fabric. The *garbhagrha*, which is still standing to a third, roughly, of its original height, proves to be decorated with the same class of erotic scenes as the rest of the temple, but it possesses also large niches on the north, south, and west sides, in which statues were placed, while below them are doorways giving access to the shrine. Among the débris around the spire have been found some twenty statues, of the same beautiful green chlorite stone that is used in the construction of the temple, and of excellent workmanship. Photographs of two of these are appended (Plate VIII, figs. 1 and 2). The first represents Bāla-Kṛṣṇa sitting in a chair which is being gently rocked by attendant figures. The chains by which this chair is suspended are cut with such remarkable skill that it is difficult to believe they are not of metal. The second is a figure of Viṣṇu standing on a lotus pedestal beneath a trefoil arch. The rest of the collection comprises, among others, statues of Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Yamarāja, Rṣis, an Ācārya with students round him, and the river Ganges.

Discoveries in Mārṇār.

It remains to mention, in conclusion, some sites in Mārṇār, where Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar has made several interesting and valuable discoveries without the help of the spade.¹

The first of these is the old fort of Maṇḍor, about five miles to the north of Jodhpur, where there are many ruins of ancient temples and other structures, all of them apparently earlier than the tenth century. Among these remains are two monoliths, which appear to be the jambs of an ancient *torana*, very likely the same "gateway and magnificent Torun or triumphal arch" noticed by Colonel Tod. One of the jambs (Plate VII, fig. 3) has an inscription engraved on it, but it was too much defaced to

¹ The note which follows is based on information supplied by Mr. Bhandarkar.

allow Mr. Bhandarkar to make anything out of it, though a few letters faintly preserved here and there appeared to him to belong unmistakably to the Imperial Gupta Period. The carvings, be it remarked, bear the stamp of earlier work. The scenes on these monoliths are of no little value as monumental records of the Kṛṣṇa cult, one of them representing the uplifting of the mountain Govardhana, the other the trampling down of the serpent Kāliya.

Another place of much interest is Ghaṇṭiyālā, about 22 miles west of Jodhpur. Here Mr. Bhandarkar found a *lāṭ* or pillar, consisting of three separate pieces one above the other, the whole surmounted by a capital with four images of Gaṇapati, facing the cardinal points. On the shaft of the column are four inscriptions, from which we learn that it was erected by Kakkuka, of the feudatory Pratihāra dynasty. These records also tell us that the old name of the place was Rohiṃsakūpa, and that it was infested by Ābhīras and was consequently left almost desolate, but that Kakkuka routed them and repopled the place.

The last site to be noticed is that of Osia, 32 miles north of Jodhpur. Round about the village are the remains of twelve temples, one of them Jaina and the rest Vaiṣṇava. "They resemble in style," says Mr. Bhandarkar, "those found at Eraṇ and Paṭhārī in the Central Provinces, and Jhālrapaṭṭaṇa and Āmvaṃ in Rajputana. In a porch of the Jaina temple is an inscription which is unfortunately mutilated, but the portion of it preserved speaks of the temple as existing in Ūkeśa (Osia) in the time of Vatsarāja of the (Imperial) Pratihāra dynasty. Vatsarāja is doubtless the same prince of that name who was a contemporary of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa sovereigns Govinda II and Dhruva, and for whom the date 705 Śaka (A.D. 783) has been furnished by the Jaina Harivaṃśa." A feature worthy of remark in these temples is the prominence given to Kubera, god of riches, who is figured with Gaṇeśa on the lintels of the shrine doors, in the interior of the Sancta, on the outside walls of the shrines, and on the front of the raised terraces on which the temples stand. Some scenes in the life of

Kṛṣṇa are also depicted, such as the uplifting of Govardhana, the release of the Elephant, and so forth.

Two ancient temples of exactly the same style as those at Osia were also found at Buchkalā in the Bilār district, and one of them has an inscription dated Śaivvat 892, which refers itself to the reign of Śrī-Nāgabhaṭṭa, son of Śrī-Vatsarāja. This is the first date, furnished by an inscription, of a prince of the Imperial Pratīhāra dynasty earlier than Bhoja I.