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SOME REMARKS

ON

THE GREAT TOPE AT SÂNCHI.

BY

THE REV. S. BEAL.

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विद्या नाम नरस्य रूपमधिकं प्रच्छन्नगुप्तं धनं
विद्या भोगकरी यशःसुखकरी विद्या गुरूणां गुरुः ।
विद्या बन्धुजनो विदेशगमने विद्या परं दैवतं
विद्या राजसु पूजिता न हि धनं विद्याविहीनः पशुः ॥

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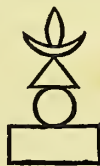
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SOME REMARKS
ON
THE GREAT TOPE AT SÂNCHEI.

BY THE REV. S. BEAL.

Dr. Fergusson's book on "Tree and Serpent Worship" has opened a large field for inquiry and research. After looking through the photographs and lithographed scenes relating to the Sâncchi Topes, two questions naturally suggest themselves, viz.: What was the idea which suggested the peculiar form of the Indian Tope? and, What are the scenes so carefully represented on the rails and gateways at Sâncchi and Amravati?

With respect to the first question there is no need to say much, as at best we can only speculate where there is no possibility of proof. But it would seem that the symbolism of the Tope is like that of other sacred edifices, viz., to figure out an idea of the world, or the heavens and the earth. Rémusat, in one of the valuable notes found in the Fo-koue-ki (p. 92), has observed: "Stûpas are not erected on the tombs of religious persons or laymen, but only simple stones, which by their form symbolize the five elements, viz.: ether, wind, fire, water, and earth; they are called Stûpas by analogy. Their figure is this: The lowest portion represents the earth, this is surmounted by the emblem of water; the triangle represents fire, the crescent is wind, and the cone denotes ether. Hence, instead of Chinese characters, it is the custom to inscribe on these several portions of the monument Sanscrit characters indicating the several elements; on the highest the letter ख to indicate 'ether,' on the second क to denote 'wind,' on the third र to denote 'fire,' on the fourth व to denote 'water' (sc. Varuṇa), and on the lowest the letter अ" [which being the first vowel symbol-



izes the first element, *i.e.* earth]. This quotation has been noticed by Dr. Fergusson (p. 106, *Tree and Serpent Worship*), but he simply founds on it a theory for the origin of the Trisul. I would rather see in this record an explanation not only of the earliest religious structures,¹ symbolical of the Elemental Universe or Nature, but also of the Tope. The Great Sânci Tope rests upon a square base or plinth 14 feet high and 121 feet square, round which is a procession path 5 feet 6 inches wide. This portion of the building would therefore symbolize the first element, "earth." Above the square rises a great dome or hemisphere to a height of 39 feet. This dome represents the second element, "water." It would be impossible to place a complete circle of stone on the square plinth, the hemisphere therefore is used to indicate the element. Dr. Muir has observed, that "when the idea of Varuṇa as the all-embracing Heaven had been established, and on the other hand the observation of the Rivers flowing towards the ends of the earth and to the sea had led to the conjecture that there existed an Ocean inclosing the earth in its bosom, then the way was thoroughly prepared for connecting Varuṇa with the Ocean." [Compare the entire account given by Dr. Muir, J.R.A.S. vol. i. part i. N.S. pp. 77, ss.] Above the dome, at Sânci, we have a Tôran, respecting which I will quote from Hodgson: "Between the hemisphere and the pyramid is a short square basement for the latter, upon each of the four sides of which a pair of eyes is graved."² The hemisphere is called the 'garbh,' the basement the 'Tôran,' and the pyramid the 'Chura-maṇi' (p. 43, Collected

¹ I refer to Logan stones, etc., but principally to those primitive structures called "Baitulia" or "Bœtylia." I take the rows of stones represented in p. 206 of Sir J. Lubbock's work "On the Origin of Civilization, etc.," to be Bœtylia, or "anointed stones"—the red mark round the black (which Colonel Forbes Leslie compares to "spots of blood") being in fact the "marks of consecration" or "anointing." It is well known that "idols" or "josses" in China are consecrated by a dash of red or vermilion across the eye. With regard to the derivation of the word "Bœtylia" as signifying "elemental stones," whilst it is generally referred to a Semitic root, I venture to suggest भूत + तुला or तुल्य, as denoting that these stones in the first instance represented the "Elemental World."

² These eyes evidently denote the watchful care of the "Four Kings" (Chaturmahârâjâh) over the affairs of men.

Essays).” The Tôran is merely a contraction of the Sanscrit Tôraṇya or Tôraṇa [तोरण], “an ornamented gate or entrance,” and denotes the entrance or door to the abode of the celestials.¹ [Around Japanese temples are erected gateways called “Tôris,” evidently derived from the same root.] Above the Tôran rises the pyramid or cone, which Hodgson calls the Chura-mani, [सुरमणि] denoting the element “fire;” and above this the mysterious Trisul, combining the two elements of “air and ether,” and used by accommodation as the emblem of the “Highest.” If these several elemental emblems be thus united, we have the figure of the “Tope.”

In confirmation of this argument, we observe that Mr. B. Hodgson explains the division of the cone which surmounts the “garbh,” or “dome,” of the Tope, as symbolical of the thirteen heavenly mansions above the sky (p. 43, Collected Essays). But if this be the true explanation, it seems to follow that the lower portion of the Tope must represent the “lower world.”

This opinion is borne out by the use of the word “ts’a,” in Chinese, for a Pagoda, or Tope. This symbol represents the Sanscrit “kshetra,” a land of Buddha,” and comprehends the entire chiliocosm, over which Sâkya Tathâgata is supposed to rule. Now this was the idea of the expanded form of the Tope, from which the Pagoda, in China, is derived; but the expansion of an idea necessarily assumes

¹ Compare the remarks of Mr. Baring-Gould (“Origin of Religious Beliefs,” pp. 98, 99): “The localization of the Deity in heaven gave birth to a number of other names. From the first moment that the consciousness of a God rose upon man’s soul, like the morning sun, he lifted his head on high and sought him in the sky. That vast uplifted sphere, now radiant with light, now twinkling with countless stars, attracted the wonder of man, and in it he placed the home of his gods. Heaven was an upper world inhabited by Deities. The Esth supposed it to be a blue Tent, behind which Ukko the Ancient, and the sustainers of Sun, Moon, and Stars and the guardians of the clouds, dwelt in splendour. Men for a long time supposed that the earth was a flat plane, surrounded by the sea, and that the sky was a roof on which the heavenly bodies travel, and from which they are suspended as Lamps. The Polynesians, who thought, like so many other peoples, ancient and modern, that the sky descended at the horizon and inclosed the earth, still call foreigners *papalangi*, or heaven-bursters, as having broken in from another world outside. The sky is to most savages what is called in a South American language *muneseke*, that is, the earth-on-high [compare “heaven,” that which is “heaved up”]. There are holes or windows through this roof or firmament, where the rain comes through, and if you can climb high enough, you can get through and visit the dwellers above, who live, and talk, and look, very much like people upon earth.”

the germ as a constant, and this germ I take to be the primitive symbolism of which we are speaking.

This position is strengthened by some indirect considerations; take, for example, the description of the kshetra of the Tathâgata Padmaprabha, found in Burnouf, *Lotus*, f. 38, b. The kshetra, we must bear in mind, is the Chinese ts'a, and this is the common term for a Pagoda or Tope. Now, the *Lotus* describes the land of Padmaprabha in the same terms as the Chinese accounts¹ represent the "happy lands" or "domains" of the various Buddhas, "surrounded by inclosures, and rows of trees covered with flowers and fruits, the whole composed of the seven precious substances;" but the *Lotus* adds a peculiar item in this description, "the inclosures are traced in the forms of a square draughtboard" ("d'etoffe a carreaux pour jouer aux dames ou aux dés," *Lotus*, note, p. 363). If we now turn to the 88th plate, fig. 1, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, we see at once that the inclosure of the Amravati Tope was precisely planned according to the description of the inclosure of a kshetra of Buddha. The Lotus-discs, in the plates 48, 49, etc., are precisely the "ashtâpada" of the *Lotus*, the discs representing "draughts", as they are carved even down to this day in the East. We argue, therefore, that the inclosure at Amravati was designed to represent the inclosure of a Buddha-kshetra, and if so the Tope itself symbolized the kshetra.

This is illustrated further by *Figs. 1 and 2, Plate xci.*, of the same work. Dr. Fergusson speaks of "the crowd of umbrellas which crown the Tee in these cases as a curious ebullition of Hindu fancy;" but I conceive the intention was quite in agreement with the general symbolism of the structure. The single umbrella (chhatra) denoted dominion over "one world;" the exaggerated system of worlds, known as a chilio-cosm (of which such repeated mention is made in all the later Buddhist Sûtras), was, therefore, denoted by the "crowd of umbrellas," which we see in *Plate xci.* And the rule of increase will be observed, from the single chhatra to four, (denoting the four cardinal points), and from four to eight

¹ Translated, we must remember, from Sanscrit.

(including the half points), and from eight to an indefinite number, agreeing accurately with the actual expansion of belief which occurred (relating to the composition of the Universe) in the History of Buddhism.¹

But the general argument that religious structures were in the first instance symbolical of the upper and lower world, is strengthened by considering that this was the allowed meaning of the figure and furniture of the Jewish Tabernacle. Josephus and Philo Judæus both assert the fact, and it is insisted on by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Cosmas also, in his *Topographia*, labours to prove that the Tabernacle in the wilderness was a pattern of the Universe (Yule's *Cathay*, etc., xlvi). We are told by Porphyry (*de antro Nympharum*), that Zoroaster consecrated a natural cell, adorned with flowers, to Mithras, for he thought a cavern to be a fit emblem of the world fabricated by Mithras. Plutarch, in his account of the old Temple of Vesta, says it was constructed of an orbicular form, to shadow out by its shape not so much the world as the Universe (*de Iside et Osiride*, p. 67; Maurice, *Indian Antiq.*, iii. p. 504). And Maurice concludes generally that all circular temples symbolized the Universe (iii. 508). So, again, says Pliny, when speaking of the Pantheon, "the dome was of a convex form, that it might be the model of the Heavens" (*ut fastigiatam cæli similitudinem ostenderet*) [quoted by Maurice, as above]. Such are some general observations in proof of the theory that we may detect the idea of a cosmographic symbolism in all sacred structures, and not the least in the form and developed portions of the Indian Tope.

I proceed to make some reference to the scenes of the sculptures on the gates and beams at Sanchi. But before doing so, I would start the query, whether there is any proof to be gathered from the character of these sculptures, that the followers of Buddha worshipped either the Tree or Nâga? If they did, nothing in the world would more effectually destroy the theory of their religion. The Buddhist convert, theoretically at least, acknowledged no superior to himself in heaven or earth. The Nâgas were saved from the power

¹ This expansion is fully related in all the later Sûtras. Vid. e.gr., *Lotus*, p. 113.

of the Garuḍas by believing in Buddha, and becoming his disciples; and as for Trees, in so far as they were associated with the history of the emancipated Buddha, doubtless, they were "objects of worship," but it was a worship of association, just as the wayfarer bows before the symbol of the Cross, or as the pilgrim, on the first glimpse of the sacred city, flings himself on the earth. We do not worship the building in which we say our prayers; it is a sacred building, just as the Tree in the eyes of the Buddhist was a "sacred tree," but he did not worship *it*.¹

But to pass on to some identifications. The scene depicted in *Fig. 2, Plate xxxii.*, is a lithograph taken from one of the sculptured architraves of the Northern Gateway, rear-view; it is not copied from the photograph, but is the only part of the horizontal architraves drawn by Colonel Maisey; the difficulty of getting up to them was so great, that nothing more than this was attempted; it is, however, a very valuable excerpt, and helps to unriddle the entire scene, which occupies both the front and rear face of the beam. Both these scenes embody the history of Sākya, when he was born as Vessantara. This birth was the one immediately preceding his incarnation as Buddha. It will be necessary to make some reference to this Jātaka, so far as it is related or referred to in works bearing on the subject. Burnouf (*Lotus*, 411) refers to it in these words: "C'est dans ce sens que Mahânâma parle de la dernière existence de Sākyaṃuni, avant qu'il vint au monde comme fils du roi Suddhōdana, 'vëssantarattabhâvë thitō,' quand il était dans le corps de Vëssantara. On sait en effet que Vëssantara est, chez les Buddhistes de Ceylon, le nom d'un personnage sous la figure duquel l'âme de Sākyaṃuni parut au monde." Again, this Jātaka is referred to by Bigandet (*Legend of the Burmese Buddha*, p. 83) in these words, "Without alluding to those great offerings I have made during several previous existences, I will but mention the seven great ones made whilst I lived as Prince Wethandra (Vessantara)."

¹ In cases where the Nāga, the Horse, the Throne, etc., occupy the place of honour on the Dagoba (as in Plates LXXX., XCI., etc., *Tree and Serpent Worship*), I should suppose the association to be with the history of Nuchilinda, Kaṇṭhaka, the Vajrāsāna, etc.

Again, on p. 165 of the same work, we read, "He then caused a shower of red rain to pour down over the assembled multitudes. . . . This is not, said Buddha, the only time when such a wonder has happened; the same thing once took place when I was Prince Wethandra. He went on relating the most interesting circumstances of that former state of existence." Again, in the account of the mission of Song-yun, p. 195 (*Travels of Buddhist Pilgrims*), we have an allusion to the sacredness of the spot, where Vessantara underwent his self-imposed sufferings. This place, according to Julien, was called Dantalôka (Jul. ii. 122). The Prince, both in Song-yun and Julien, is called "Sudatta," but I have identified this personage with Vessantara (*Buddhist Pilgrims*, p. 194, *note*), on grounds that will not be disputed. But, finally, the best and fullest account of the Vessantara Jâtaka is found in Hardy's *Manual*, p. 116. It will be necessary, for the purpose of identification, to give a *précis* of this relation. "In former times, in a city called Jayaturá, reigned a king called Sanda or Sanja; his principal queen was called Phusatí, and their son was called Wessantara, so named from the street in which his mother was passing at the time of his birth. [Observe the very curious similarity between this name and Wessanagara, the old Besnagar, close to Sânci; compare *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 90.] From the moment he could speak he gave proof that his disposition was most charitable. [Compare the Chinese Shen-chi, "the charitable one" (Song-yun, p. 194).] When arrived at the proper age he married Madrí-déwí, the daughter of the King of Chetiya. [Compare, again, the singular coincidence in the account of Mahânâma: "Asôka, when sent to be Governor of Ujjeni, tarried at Chaityagiri, and there married Devî, the daughter of the chief."] They had a son Jáliya, and a daughter Krishnájiná. At this time there was a famine in Kálinga from the want of rain; but the king, having heard that Wessantara had a white elephant that had the power to cause rain, sent eight of his Brahmans to request it. Wessantara at once gave it up, on which he was banished from the kingdom to the rock Wanka-giri. His

wife, Madrí-déwí, refused to forsake him, on which all their treasures were collected and given away in charity to the mendicants, and they, with their two children, retired into banishment. The nobles then brought a chariot, and Madrí-déwí, taking her daughter in her arms, and her son by his hand, entered it. Two Brahmans followed them, and requested the gift of the horses that drew the chariot. Without hesitation they were given, but Sekra, observing what was taking place, sent four Dewas under the disguise of horses, that yoked themselves to the chariot and drew it. Again, another Brahman cried, 'Sir, I am old, sick, and wearied, give me your chariot.' The chariot was readily given up. The Prince then carried his son, and the Princess his daughter, and so set off on their journey to Wanka-giri. Wiswakarmma had prepared for them two Pansals (leafy huts). Here they dwelt with their children in the garb of ascetics. At length an aged Brahman, called Jujaka, set out to ask the gift of the two children, as slaves. Wessantara, in the absence of his wife, resolved to give up the children, who had fled away and hid themselves. He went forth and called them back and delivered them to the Brahman. The children, however, seeing the Brahman stumble and fall as he went down the hill, ran away and came back to their father; the father again gave them up, and the Brahman, tying their hands together, drove them along with a stick, beating them as they went. At length, when Madrí-déwí was about to return home, Sekra sent four Dewas to assume the form of wild beasts, to delay her return. When Sekra perceived that Wessantara had given away the children, he assumed the appearance of an aged Brahman, and went to the rock. Wessantara asked, 'Why have you come?' To which he replied, 'I have come to receive the Princess as my slave.' On this he gave her up also. As the result, both Madrí-déwí and the children were restored to Wessantara, and all returned safe and sound to Jayaturá."

Let us now compare this account with the sculptures. We read (p. 101, *Tree and Serpent Worship*), "the central compartment of this beam has on its right the gateway and

buildings of a walled city [*Jayaturá*]. Inside are numerous spectators, and some figures apparently doing homage to two sacred elephants or their riders. [The *two* elephants differ from the account in the *Jâtaka*, where only *one* is mentioned.] Near the outside of the gate stands a male personage, wearing the Dhotí and large turban [*Vessantara*], attended by respectful figures in various attitudes. The Chaori and Chatta which accompany him mark him either as a king or a saint. There are also a number of women with covered jars or vases. [*Madri-devi giving away her treasures.*] Next appears a four-horsed chariot of a different shape from those seen elsewhere. It contains a man dressed as above, attended by Chatta and Chaori bearers, and two children with tufts or plumes on their heads. [*Madri-devi and her husband, with their two children.*] On the left, another stage of the ceremony is apparently represented. The same chariot is seen unharnessed, the yoke held up by a woman. The two children still occupy it, but the king, or whoever he may be, is standing near the pole with his arm stretched over the yoke, and is apparently conferring some grant or gift to the priest or ascetic before him, into whose hand he is pouring water, an ancient mode of sealing a gift. [*Vessantara giving away his horses.*] The costume of this last figure is what is usually seen in the only class that can be identified with priests, ascetics, and saints. Above this group, and facing towards the city, is another empty chariot, which a man, dressed as the preceding, is about to harness. [*The four Devas sent by Sakra in the shape of horses.*]"

This portion of the scene is tolerably complete. Colonel Maisey refers the plot to the dedication of the chariot to the Sun. Dr. Fergusson regards it as a meeting between Asoka, or some Hindu prince, with the Dasyu chief of the place. It is tolerably plain, however, that the scene represents the first part of the history of Vessantara. Let us now turn to *Plate xxxii. Fig. 2*, which is a lithograph representing the rear-view of the same architrave. On the extreme right we observe the two Pansals, built by Visvarkarma. Vessantara and Madri-devi are seen on the left in their social relations, sitting to-

gether in front of one of the Pansals (in which scene Madri-devi is probably relating her dream), and also engaged below in some domestic pursuits with their fire-pot and chatties. A little further on the left we see Vessantara sealing the gift of his children to the Brahman, by pouring water on his hand. Further to the left we see the Brahman beating the children with a stick because they had run away from him. [Compare *Buddhist Pilgrims*, p. 195.] On the left, again, we see Vessantara giving away his wife to Sakra. In the upper division of the scene we observe the beasts sent by Sakra to delay the return of Madri-devi; whilst the Brahman with his water vessel, plotting to arrive when Madri-devi is out, is seen in close contact with the lady; the presence of the water vessel in his hand illustrates the text of the Jâtaka, "When the prince saw the Brahman approaching, he told his son Jâliya to go and meet him and carry his water vessel." The scenes on the extreme left represent the happy termination of the whole adventure, and the restoration of Vessantara, children, wife, and elephant, to the kingdom of Jayaturâ.

There can be no reasonable doubt, I think, that this is the real history of the sculptured scene on this architrave, rear and front. It follows, then, and this is an important consideration, that whatever age is assigned to the gateways of the Sânci Tope, the same antiquity, and greater, must be granted to the Jâtaka in point. And if to the Jâtakas, then to all the legendary history of Buddha. This explanation also militates against the theory of a Dasyu element in these sculptures. The Dasyus, in fact, are Buddhist mendicants.

I am inclined to refer the scene, *Plate xxxvi. Fig. 1*, to the Sâma Jâtaka. This fable is given by Spence Hardy (*Eastern Monachism*, p. 275) in these words, "When Gôtama Bodhisat was born in a former age as Sâma, son of the hermit Dukhula, he rendered every assistance to his parents, who had become blind when he was sixteen years of age. It happened that as he went one day for water to the river, the king of Benares, Piliyaka, entered the forest to hunt, and as Sâma, after ascending from the river, was as usual surrounded by deer, the king

let fly an arrow which struck Sâma just as he was placing the vessel to his shoulder. Feeling that he was wounded, . . . he called out, 'Who is it that has shot me?' and when he learned that it was the king, he related his history to the monarch, and said that his greatest grief arose from the thought that his blind parents would now have no one to support them. When the king perceived the intensity of his grief, he promised that he would resign his kingdom, and himself become the slave of his parents. Meantime a Dewi, descending from the Dewa loka, remaining in the air near the king without being visible, entreated him to go to the Pansal, and minister to the wants of the blind parents of Sâma. He was obedient and went. . . . The body of Sâma having been brought to the huts, was restored to life by the united Sacheriyas of the Dewi and the parents. The parents also received their sight, and the Dewi repeating the ten virtues of a king to Piliyaka, enabled him to reign in righteousness, and after death to be born in heaven."

In the Lithograph referred to, we observe the parents of Sâma seated outside their Pansals. They are evidently blind, for the monkeys are stealing the fruit and playing mischievous tricks close to their persons without interference. In front of their huts is the forest, full of deer. The river flows through it, and we observe Sâma just coming from the bank and raising the water vessel to his shoulder. The Devî (or Deva), standing close to the boy (and probably unseen by him), is introduced to indicate the pious act of the child, and the reverence due to such piety. On the left of the scene is the same boy, wounded by an arrow: his identity with the first figure is shown not only by the likeness and dress, but by the water vessel lying on the bank, evidently fallen from his shoulder at the moment when he was shot. The archers are just above. It does not appear that the king is one of them, but this is not material to the history. In the rear, on the left, we see the king, with his water vessel, ready to resign his kingdom, and become the slave of the blind hermits. The Devî is standing close by. Finally, in the left corner, we see the happy termination, the parents

restored to sight, and the boy come back to life. This comparison appears also tolerably evident, and tends again to establish two points—1. The primitive age of the Jâtakas; and 2. The style of dress worn by Buddhist hermits, viz., the kilt and a sort of sarang worn over the left shoulder (probably from motives of modesty).

I now pass on to identify some other scenes, beginning with the Northern Gateway. The subject of the top rail is adoration to five Dagobas and two trees. To illustrate this, compare Bigandet (*Legend of the Burmese Buddha*, p. 100), and Spence Hardy (*Manual of Buddhism*, p. 51). Fah-Hian (*Buddhist Pilgrims*, p. 125) also mentions the several localities round the sacred tree, consecrated by the erection of towers or Dagobas. There are two lists of seven places; first of all those spots which were the scenes of events previous to Buddha's inspiration; and, secondly, seven others sanctified by his presence after arriving at complete wisdom. The two lists are as follows:—

FIRST LIST.

1. The place where he practised austerities for six years.
2. The place where he bathed and the Deva assisted him.
3. The place where the two shepherd girls gave him milk and rice.
4. The place where he ate the rice.
5. The place where he sat at the entrance of a cave.
6. The place where the Devas gave him the grass mat.
7. The place where he sat under the Pei-to tree.

On each of these spots, Fah-Hian says, towers are erected.

SECOND LIST.

1. Where he sat for seven days beholding the Bôdhi tree.
2. Where he walked for seven days.
3. Where the Devas built him a hall.
4. Where the Dragon Muchalinda protected him.
5. Where Brahma saluted him.
6. Where the Four Kings gave him an alms-bowl.
7. Where the merchants brought him wheat and honey.

From these lists we may select most of the incidents sculptured on the Sânci gates.

And so we have in the Burmese Life of Gaudâma, by Bishop Bigandet, a list of seven trees, under which certain occurrences took place connected with Buddha's history, and also in the Singhalese accounts. These lists are as follows. (The figures denote the pages of the book.)

BURMESE ACCOUNT.

	PAGE
1. The Gniaong tree under which he received the nogana	75
2. The Sala tree	77
3. The Gniaong tree to which he removed from the Sala tree	77
4. The Atzapala tree	95
5. The Kun tree, close to the Nâga's tank	95
6. The Linloon tree	100
7. The Atzapala tree where Brahma visited him	104

SINGHALESE ACCOUNT.

1. The Nâga tree, Ajápála, <i>Manual of Buddhism</i>	167
2. The Sal tree.....	170
3. The Bó tree.....	170
4. The Ajápála tree.....	182
5. The Midella tree	182
6. The Kiripalu tree	182
7. The Ajápála tree	183

Probably the seven trees on the middle architrave of this gateway (front view) may be referred to one of these lists.

The elephants pouring water from chatties over the figure seated on a lotus, on the square blocks, illustrate the expression found in Southern records, "pouring water from a vessel shaped like the trunk of a Chhadanta elephant" (Tennent, *Christianity in Ceylon*. Compare also the account found in the *Vishnu Purana* (Wilson, p. 76, line 21). This vessel of consecration, which is several times visible among the sculptures, owes its shape therefore to this comparison.

The subject of the intermediate rail (rear view) of this gateway is probably the temptation scene of Bôdhisatwa.

Bigandet's account of this incident is as follows: "At that time Nats (Devas) surrounded Phralaong (Bôdhisatwa), singing praises to him. The chief Thagia was playing on his conque, the chief Nâga was uttering stanzas in his honour, a chief Brahma held over him a white umbrella. . . . Manh Nat (Mâra), turning to his followers, cried to them, 'there is indeed no one equal to the Prince Theiddat (Siddhartha), let us not attack him in front, let us assail him him from the north side.'" (p. 81.)

In the sculpture we see the Prince seated on his throne in the centre; the Devas in front are inviting him to advance to the tree; the chief Brahma holding a white umbrella over his head, and the Nâga just in front reciting his praises; on the right is the ghoulish army of Mâra, preparing to attack him, directly he takes his seat under the Bôdhi tree.

I consider this explanation tolerably certain. The female figure on the left of the tree is perhaps intended for Sujatâ, with her gift of Nogana (*Manual of Buddhism*, p. 168, *Buddhist Pilgrims*, p. 121).

I also identify the scenes on the inner face of the left-hand pillar of this gateway. They are designed to represent events connected with the conversion of the Kâsyapas. As these events may be found in all "Lives of Buddha," it will only be necessary to allude briefly to them.

The upper scene represents the preparation of an offering to be made to Kâsyapa. We read in Bigandet (p. 132), "On a certain day the people of the country had prepared offerings on a large scale, to be presented to Kâsyapa," or, as Spence Hardy gives it, "One day great multitudes came from Anga and Magadha, with offerings for Uruvel." (*Manual of Buddhism*, 190.) As to the character of these offerings, we are told, in another place, "they consisted of bulls, cows, goats, calves," etc. (*ibid.* 272), and we may reasonably suppose that cakes would be included in the list. The upper portion, therefore, of this series of sculptures may well refer to the "preparation of offerings for the Kâsyapas." There is an altar, but no tree, from which we may suppose that Buddha was not the object of the intended ceremony, and the group-

ing generally seems to indicate a levity of character, inconsistent with anything we know respecting his worship.

In the next scene we have Buddha's adventure with the Nāga (the object of the Kāsyapas', and the other fire-worshippers', reverence). In the Pansal or hut, on the right, is seated Kāsyapa (Bigandet calls it "a cell," p. 131). In the centre are various animals assembled in the hall for sacrifice. We must not wonder to see the elephant there, for we read (*Manual of Buddhism*, 150): "On their arrival the animals were all assembled in the place of sacrifice; but when he lifted up his knife to slay the elephant, the affrighted beast cried out," etc.

In the upper centre is the Nāga Temple; the flames issuing from the roof denote the victory of Buddha. The five men on the right, with closed hands and gratified countenances, denote the five disciples converted in the Deer Park, and the three men on the left, whose hands are unclosed, and whose faces indicate bewilderment rather than joy, would represent the three Kāsyapas, who were converted only after a series of subsequent miracles. The figures in front may well represent the disciples of Kāsyapa flinging the fire-worshippers' utensils into the water¹ (vid. *Bigandet*, p. 131, and *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 191).

The lower group I take to be a representation of an immediate preparation of a sacrifice among the fire-worshippers. We have an account of such a scene described in the *Manual of Buddhism* by Spence Hardy, p. 190. The splitting and non-splitting of the wood, the burning and non-burning of the fire, seem here to be indicated. Dr. Fergusson says, with respect to the central figure, that "he is pouring something into his fire-pot." I take it, however, that the old man is simply blowing with his bellows (observe the primitive form of these bellows, both in this figure and in the hands of the old man just below him) into his fire-pot, but the fire *won't* light, whereas the other fires are burning brightly, according to the words of the legend; and so in the case of the wood-splitting on the right, one of the jōtis seems to be labouring

¹ Dr. Fergusson however does not agree with this, and I do not wish to urge it.

in vain to split the log at his feet, whilst the other has it all his own way.

The lower scene in front on the left-hand pillar of this Gateway I consider to represent life among the Devas. Compare the following extract from the Chinese: "Persons who die pure in word, deed and thought, are born after death in Heaven. When transported to that higher world, if born of the male sex, they find themselves seated on the knees of lovely women; if born as women, they find themselves seated on the knees of the Heavenly Kings." (Hi-Shai Sûtra, quoted in the *Fah-kai-lih-to*.)

In this case, we have the scene artfully placed in the lowest compartment of the pillar, so as to engage the attention of devotees and visitors, and tempt them with a very pretty exhibition of "joys in store" for the faithful; but the similar scene on the fallen pillar of the western gateway, is portrayed in the upper compartment. The latter picture (*Plate xxxvii. fig. 2*) is so literally described in a Chinese account of the Triyastriṅśhas heaven, that I cannot do better than bring it in here to illustrate the whole subject. "In the centre of the Triyastriṅśhas heaven, is the city of Sakra, called Sudarsana; around this city, are the abodes of the Devas, arranged in a circular order. There are four parks, viz., the Chariot Park for driving and riding, the Park for athletes or the Gymnasium, the Forest Park for rustic pleasures, and the Joy Park, where the Devas and Devīs give way to every kind of pleasurable indulgence. Each of these parks has a delightful pleasure-bath in the centre of it At the time of being born in this heaven, a flower is produced in the middle of the hand of one of the Devīs, by which she knows that a Deva will be born. Accordingly, after seven days, the child is born. He is perfectly acquainted with the divine law, and proceeding to the middle of the palace selected for him, he is met by a goddess, who welcomes him, and serves him. At the time when the Devas wish to go out, the females surround them, they amuse them with every kind of music, they wander from palace to palace, they partake of divine food and drink heavenly nectar, whilst the women afford

them every species of delight! Every palace is provided with precious ornaments of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, etc., and each has a lovely park and precious trees belonging to it." Again, the same work has the following description of the life of the four heavenly kings (*chaturmahârâjahs*). "When first born, they are only of a diminutive size, but being provided with vessels full of divine food,¹ they become like other *Devas*. When they have bathed themselves, they lounge below fragrant trees, which bend down their branches to perfume their bodies. They then repair to trees that provide them with clothes; to the adorning trees, to the music trees, to the hair-dressing trees; they wander from one to the other, partake of every species of sensual pleasure, enter delicious baths, and wander from palace to palace." (*Fah-kai-lih-to.*)

These descriptions seem to tally very well with the luxurious scenes on the pillars alluded to, and may help to redeem the credit of the Buddhist church-militant from the slur to which these representations might otherwise subject it.

But it may be asked, did Buddhists encourage themselves by hopes of such joys as these in a future world? We find the following quotation in the Chinese work already alluded to. "The Great *Âgama Sûtra*" says, "Whoever practises the moral discipline enjoined by Buddha, even though he be not a professed disciple, shall be born in the *Triyastrîṅshas* heaven." The *Sûtra* of good rules says, "Whatever priest or priestess observes the 250 rules (*viz.*, of the *Pratimôksha*) shall be born in the *Triyastrîṅshas* heaven." The miscellaneous *Âgama* (*Samyuktâgama*) says, "Whoever bestows charity, although engaged in worldly pursuits, provided he does not break either of the great commandments, after death shall be born in the world of the *Devas*." Again, it is said, "If any man observe the commandment against killing, then he is born in the heaven of the four great kings; if he neither kills nor robs, he is born in the *Triyastrîṅshas* heaven; if he neither kills, robs, slanders or lusts, he is born

¹ Compare the result of the food given by *Thetis* to the infant *Phoibos* (*Coxe, Mythology of the Aryan Nations*, vol. ii. p. 22).

in the Yama heaven ; if he neither kills, robs, slanders, lusts, or lies, he is born in the Tusita heaven."

From these extracts (and Burnouf, *Lotus*, 219, will confirm them) we gather the object of the sculptures before us, viz. to remind spectators, by representations (*oculis subjecta fidelibus*), of the reward even of limited obedience.

The upper compartment of the left-hand pillar evidently alludes to the descent of Buddha from the Triyastrīṅśas heaven, on the beautiful ladder which Sakra and Brahma provided (*Buddhist Pilgrims*, p. 63, etc.). The lowest tablet of this face of the pillar may be intended to describe the joy of the followers of Buddha, on his return from the thirty-three-heavens. They are therefore paying their adoration to the sacred fig-tree.

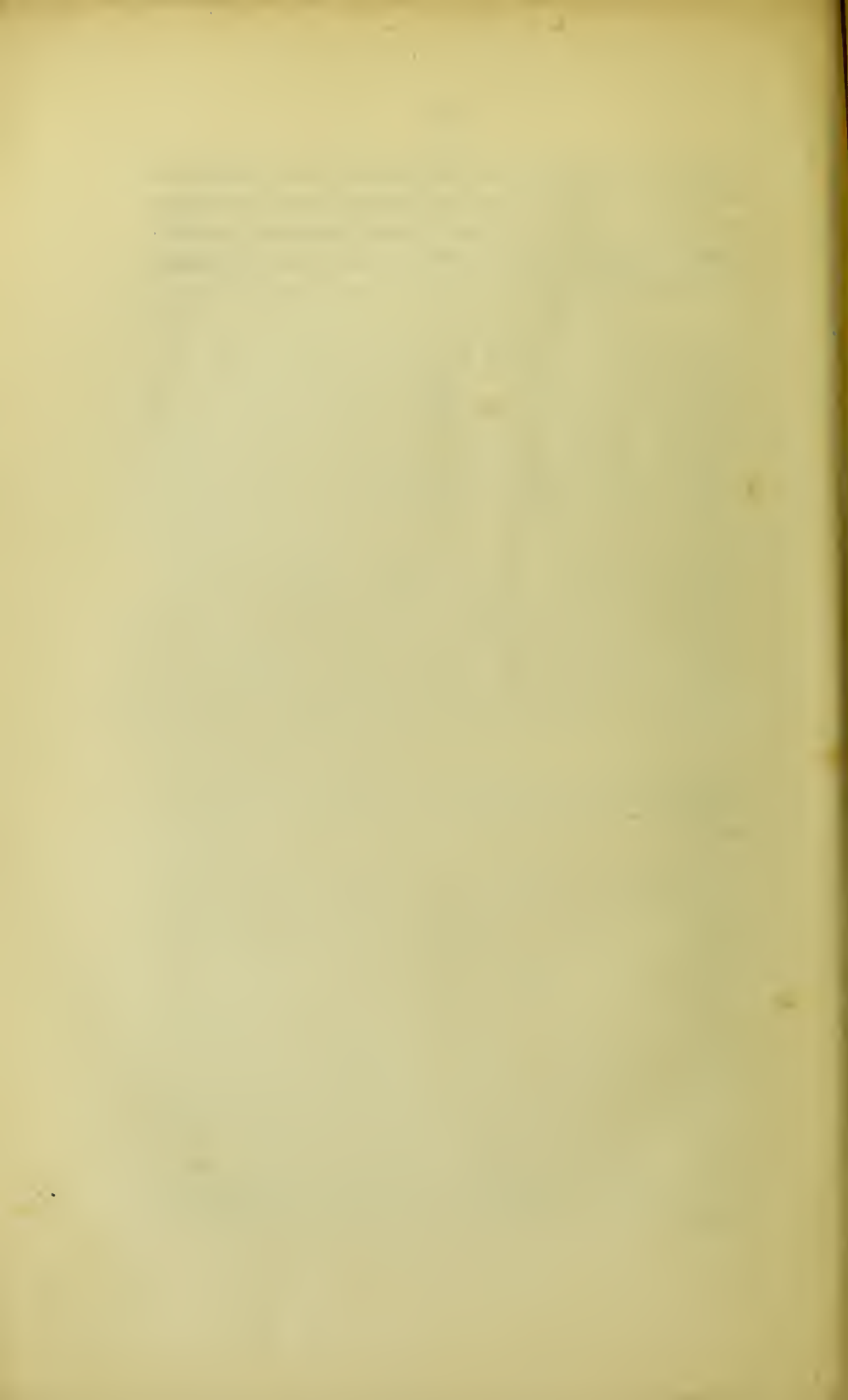
The Dagoba scene on the inner face of this pillar perhaps refers to the Dagoba erected on the spot where Buddha alighted from the ladder on which he came down from heaven. At least, Bigandet notices that "on the spot where all the Buddhas set their feet when coming from the seat of Tawadeintha, a Dzedi has always been erected." (*Legend of the Burmese Buddha*, p. 214).

The monkey scene below this (*Plate xxvi. fig. 2*) refers to the legend of the monkeys, who took the pātra of Buddha and filled it with honey, and then brought it to Buddha (*Jul. ii. 387*).

The next scene (*Plate xxvi. Fig. 1*) alludes, I think, to the honour paid to Buddha by Brahma, related by Fah-Hian (*Buddhist Pilgrims*, p. 125), whilst the square stone in the rear may refer to the seat which Buddha occupied on this occasion.

I might proceed, if space allowed, to speak of the sculptures on the other gateways ; but perhaps enough has been said to establish a probability that these scenes are really *quasi*-historical, and not mere inventions or meaningless grouping of figures according to the taste of the donor or the artist ; and if so, they serve to fix a date, even it be only an approximate one, for the development of the fables to which they allude. We are thus enabled to refer the several

records of the adventures of Buddha in his early career to a period at least not later than the Christian era. How much *before* this we cannot say, but it seems likely that Dr. Fergusson is correct in dating many of the scenes from about the time of Asôka.



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