INTRODUCTION.

The present volume contains the results of a tour through the Punjab during the cold season of 1872-73. The most noteworthy results of this tour are the acquisition of a new copy of the rock inscription of Asoka at Shâhbâzgarhi, and of an extensive and very valuable collection of Buddhist sculptures of the Indo-Seythian period. A small collection of similar sculptures which was taken to England by Dr. Leitner has not only excited much attention, but has caused some controversy both as to the age when the sculptures were executed, and as to the alleged traces of Grecian art which Dr. Leitner believes them to possess. On the latter point I must say that I agree entirely with Dr. Leitner. There are some of these sculptures which are rather coarsely, and others perhaps even clumsily, executed, but the majority of them exhibit a boldness of design and freedom of execution which no Eastern artist has ever attained. I do not of course attribute them to actual Greek sculptors, but I firmly believe that they owe all their beauty as well as all their truth of grouping to the teaching of Greek artists, whose precepts were still understood and closely followed long after the Greek domination had passed away. One of the features which distinguishes these Indian examples which I have noticed is that a face is partly turned to one side, the mouth cut away to nearly
flatness so as to give a deeper shadow to it, and a greater prominence to the unaverted side. Whether this was a practice of any of the Greek sculptors I am unable to say; but I can vouch that it was not an Indian practice.

That I am fully justified in holding this belief I need only point to the fine specimens of Indo-Corinthian pillars which I have given with the appendix of the present volume. Of the Greek origin of their magnificent acanthus leaf capitals there can be no doubt. But if the architecture be Hellenic, it is only natural that we should look for some traces at least of the same influence in the sculptures which stood beside these Corinthian pillars.

As to the age of these specimens of Indo-Grecian architecture and sculpture, my belief is that the great mass of them belong to the most flourishing period of Indo-Scythian rule under Kanishka and his immediate successors, or from 40 B. C. to about 100 A. D. The beauty of some specimens is so great that I should have been glad to have assigned them to a still earlier period. A few specimens, such as the figure of Athene with spear and helmet, now in the Lahore Museum, may date as early as 80 B. C. during the reign of Azas, on whose coins a similar figure of the goddess is found. But there is no trace of any Greek writing, and as nearly all of the subjects of the sculptures are illustrative of the Buddhist religion, I think that they must be later than the period of Greek rule in the Kabul valley, which ended about B. C. 120.

One argument that has been brought forward against the early date which I have assigned to these sculptures, is the fact that no images of Buddha are found amongst the sculptures of the Sanchi Stupa, which dates as late as 100 A. D. But though I believe this to be strictly true of Central India, yet it is absolutely certain that images of Buddha were known in the Kabul valley and Punjab before
the Christian era, as the coins of Kanishka present us with
two unmistakeable figures of Buddha—one as the teacher
seated, the other as the teacher standing,—in each case with
the right hand upraised as if in the act of speaking.* The
Greek legend which accompanies these figures has not been
satisfactorily deciphered; but as the one portion of it which is
clear on all the coins reads Saka m × ×, there can be no doubt
that the figure is that of Şâkya Muni. It is equally certain
that images of Buddha had been introduced into Northern
India about the same period, as several of them have been
found at Mathura with inscriptions of Kanishka and his
successors Huvishka and Vasu Deva. The colossal statue
of Buddha which I dug up in the Kosamba Kuti temple at
Srâvasti is, I believe, of a somewhat earlier date, as the
syllable sya, which occurs in it more than once, is of an older
form than that of the Indo-Scythian records.

But these same sculptures also present us with another
style of architecture, which I have ventured to call the
Indo-Persian, as its prototype is to be found in the famous
pillars of the Achaemenian palaces at Persepolis and Susa.
In the Appendix I have given a brief notice of several
specimens of this Indo-Persian style, which is found to have
prevailed over the whole of Northern India both before and
after the Christian era. In the North-West it was sup-
planted by the three different styles of Greek architecture
by the Indo-Corinthian in the Kabul valley, by the Indo-
Ionic in Taxila, and by the Indo-Doric in Kashmir. But
no specimens of these styles have been found to the east
of the Sutlej, whereas the Indo-Persian style was spread
over the whole of Northern India, from Kabul to Orissa,
and from the banks of the Ganges to the source of the

* See Ariana Antiqua, Plate XIII, Figs. 1, 2, 3, for the image of the standing
teacher, and Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1845, Plate II, Fig. 6, for the sitting
teacher, in my notice of unpublished coins of the Indo-Scythians.
Godāvari. Numerous specimens of it may be seen in the sculptures of Bharhut, Gaya, and Sānchi, and in the actual pillars of Mathura, Nasik, Bedsa, and Orissa.

A brief list of the sculptures obtained by my own explorations and by those of the Company of Sappers employed under my instructions is given in the Appendix. A selection of the finer and more interesting specimens is now being photographed, and I hope ere long to be able to publish a volume illustrative of the architecture and sculpture of the Kabul valley during the rule of the Indo-Scythians. Most of the sculptured scenes are of course religious, relating to events in the life of Buddha, either true or legendary, in many of which Deva-datta plays a prominent part. Two Jātakas also have been identified, but there are several others that still await recognition, besides several domestic scenes, some of which are both curious and novel. One of the sculptures represents the famous scene where Buddha shows to Uruviliya Kāsyapa the Nāga whom he had overcome and imprisoned in his alms bowl.

The statues of the kings are perhaps equally interesting for the great variety and elaborate richness of their head-dresses. Amongst more than twenty specimens I have not found any two alike, although the same style may be seen with several. The hair is generally in wavy tresses, the knots tied on the top of the head, or on the left side, or on both sides, the different parts being kept in place by jewelled bands or strings. Some of these intricate arrangements are complicated enough to raise the eye to the most fashionable level.