

## V. NOTES AND NEWS.

Mr. Abbott writes as follows to the *Bombay Gazette*:—  
*Discovery of hitherto unknown Buddhist Caves in the Konkan.*—SIR,—Students of Indian antiquities will be interested to know of the discovery of ancient Buddhist caves, which it was my fortune to make on the 10th of December, the existence of which I have been assured by both Mr. Fleet and Mr. Cousens has been hitherto unknown to antiquarian scholars. The caves lie in the southern position of that part of the Bhor State which lies in the Konkan, near the village of Nenauli, lat.  $18^{\circ} 30'$  and long,  $73^{\circ} 23'$ . From a study of the position of other known caves at points along the ancient highways from the Deccan to the sea, I had conjectured the probability of some caves in the western ghats near the sources of the Kundalika river, which empties into the sea at Rewadunda. The identification of the modern Chaul, near Rewadunda, with the ancient and important commercial city of Simylla, mentioned by Ptolemy, made it still more probable that the bed of the Kundalika must have been an important highway from the Deccan to the sea. I had, therefore, made frequent inquiries in regard to antiquarian remains, but without success, until a few weeks ago, while on a missionary tour in the Roha Taluka, I learned that there was a rock temple at Gomashi, dedicated to Rishideo, about nine miles up the river to the east of the main road from Nagotna to Mahad. I accordingly visited this cave and found it to be but a plain single cell, about 15ft. by 7ft. with an image of Buddha, in the position called the *Bhumisparsha mudra*. There were no inscriptions to be found, or any ornamentation. The cave lies to the south of the village in the gorge of a hill. An annual pilgrimage is held here in the month of *Shravan*.

My disappointment at this rather insignificant find was soon dispelled by learning from the villagers of extensive caves, about four miles up the river among the mountains. The sun was hot, but enthusiasm was keen, and after a long walk and a steep climb my guides took me along the foot of

a high scarp, where were many natural caves running far into the mountain, and in which the tigers that trouble the villagers below made their dens, so I was assured. After passing well along the east side of the scarp we came first to a few small cells, and then to a large and imposing hall, the chief feature of these caves. This hall, where the Buddhist monks used to assemble, is 69 feet by  $52\frac{1}{2}$  feet, with a flat roof entirely unsupported, although from the square holes that appeared in the roof at short intervals around the central court, it would seem that wooden posts must have been used when the cave was first hewn. The height of the roof from the floor over the central court is  $9\frac{3}{4}$  feet. Surrounding this large hall on three sides are seventeen cells, nearly all  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet, with a stone bed on each. At the north-west corner is a larger room, 18 feet by 24 feet, the *Chaitya* shrine in which at its further end is the dagoba, or emblem of Buddha. The central portion or court of the hall, 51 feet by  $43\frac{1}{2}$  feet, is cut down a foot and a half, thus leaving a verandah 9 feet wide around the entire hall, except where intercepted by the *Chaitya* shrine. Outside of this hall, along the scarp of rock both to the right and left are many cells of varying sizes, each with its stone bed.

This *vihara* is perfectly plain. There are no images of Buddha, no carvings, railings, or any ornamentation whatever, nor could I find during my short stay any inscriptions. Following the principles laid down by Dr. Burgess in his "Cave Temples of India," for determining the date of such remains, it would appear that these are certainly as old if not older than those at Kuda and Mahad, which Dr. Burgess classes amongst the oldest, as being somewhere between 200 B.C. and 50 A.D.

Unfortunately from lack of time, I was unable to explore these caves for only the short space of an hour, and, therefore, took measurements of the large hall only. I intend visiting these caves again shortly, and it is possible that further search may lead to discoveries of still greater interest.

BYCULLA, Dec. 31.

Yours, etc., J. E. ABBOTT.

*Jātakas in the Arabian Nights.*—The story of the Efreet who kept his wife in a box (Lane, vol. i. pp. 8, 9) is like the Jātaka, a story of a Vijjādhara, who kept his wife in a box. Both the wives circumvent their jealous masters. The story of the parrot in Chapter II. is analogous with the Rādha Jātaka. The parrot is left to be a spy on the wife, and in each case, owing to a trick of the faithless wife, is discredited and killed by the husband. Chaucer also refers to this tale (Wife of Bath, 1, 231), and it is included in the “Seven Sages” (Wright’s edition, p. 73).

*Ceylon Coins in the Madras Museum.*—Mr. Edgar Thurston, the superintendent of the Museum, gives in the former of the two papers referred to in the last paragraph, a complete catalogue of these coins. It appears that they have there a specimen of one hitherto unknown coin, a copper LANKEŚVARA, differing from the gold one, of which several examples had previously been known in the nature of the material only.

*Roman Coins in South India.*—A detailed account of all the known finds of Roman coins up to date was given in Mr. Edgar Thurston’s Catalogue of Coins in the Madras Museum (No. 2), published in 1888. In the “Numismatic Chronicle” (1889, part iv.), the same author gives a full description of fifteen gold coins of the Roman Empire recently found at Vinukonda in the Kistna District, and now added to the Museum.

*South Indian Inscriptions.*—The Madras Government have issued Dr. Hultsch’s report of his work as epigraphist from October to January last. The most important finds have been made at the Siva (Beltree) temple at Tiruvallam, formerly called Tikkali-vallam. One of the inscriptions there is dated on the day of an eclipse, which Mr. Fleet has identified with one that took place on the 26th September, 1010. This makes it possible to fix exactly the years of the reign of the Chola king Ko Rajaraja Kesari Varman. His reign must have lasted from 1004–1032 A.D., and the inscriptions dated in the regnal years of his successor, Rājendra Chola, can be calculated accordingly; while the dates of certain kings of the Ganga and Bana dynasties, mentioned

in these inscriptions, can be fixed approximately. The first volume of the "South Indian Inscriptions" is, we are glad to see, nearly ready for issue.

*Indian Chronology*—Professor Kielhorn has published at Göttingen (Dietrich's) a series of very useful tables for the calculation of Jupiter years according to the rules of the Sūrya Siddhānta and of the Jyotistattva. The same scholar has contributed to the "Nachrichten von der Kön. Gesell. der Wissenschaften und der Univ. zur Göttingen," for 1889, some notes on the Vikrama year beginning with the month Āshāḍha, used in Gujarat from the sixteenth century onwards. He also shows that the word Śake in an inscription sometimes means merely 'in the year' (viz. of Vikrama, etc.) and not necessarily 'in the Śaka year.' And he then discusses the Saptarstri or Sūtra era; suggesting finally that the dates of the two inscriptions published by him in the "Indian Antiquary," vol. xvii. pp. 11-13, are Friday, the 2nd April, 1025, and Monday, the 18th August, 1035.

*Chinese Games with Dice*.—Mr. Stewart Culin has published at Philadelphia a paper read before the Oriental Club in that city on Chinese dice. It gives an account of various games, chiefly played by people of the labouring class, and is illustrated in colours. Mr. Culin intends to follow this with similar papers on other Chinese games.

*Coinage of the East India Company*.—By way of preface to his "Catalogue of the Coins in the Madras Museum," Mr. Edgar Thurston has compiled a very interesting and useful history of the coinage in the territories of the East India Company in the Indian peninsula.

## VI. REVIEWS.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE MAZDAYASNIAN RELIGION UNDER THE SASSANIDS. Translated from the French of L. C. CASARTELLI by FIROZ JAMASPJI DASTUR JAMASP ASA. (Jehangir Bejanji Karani: Bombay.)

The Parsi community in Bombay may be heartily congratulated upon the steadily increasing enlightenment and