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Delhi Museum of Archæology

LOAN EXHIBITION OF ANTIQUITIES

CORONATION DURBAR, 1911

AN ILLUSTRATED SELECTION OF THE PRINCIPAL EXHIBITS

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VI.-PICTURES.

Many of the pictures are of much later date than the persons they represent, but in the great majority of cases such pictures reproduce earlier portraits. Most of them bear inscriptions giving the name of the subject, but these cannot always be relied on. Where there are no inscriptions, and the identity of the subject cannot be established by comparison with other portraits, the only warrant for the descriptions given is, as a rule, the belief of the owner, which in some instances, no doubt, rests on family tradition. The study of Indian pictorial art is still in its infancy, and the dating of pictures is rendered extremely difficult by the frequency and accuracy with which old pictures are reproduced. With regard to portraits of royal ladies, Manucci gives a warning: "If anyone has produced such portraits, they should not be accepted, being only likenesses of concubines and dancing girls, etc., which have been drawn according to the artist's fancy."

PLATE XXVIII.

(a)

C. 5. HAZRAT ĀLĪ, and his sons Hasan and Husain. Ālī was the son-in-law and cousin of the prophet Muhammad.

(6)

C. 61. MIR JUMLAH. A favourite of the Emperor Farrukh-siyar (see C. 180, Plate LVd).

(c)

C. 4. ALEXANDER THE GREAT (356-323 B.C).

Invaded India in 326 B.C., and spent the hot weather in the country. He crossed the Indus near Attock, defeated Porus on the Jhelam, and advanced as far as the Beas. His troops refused to go any further, and after erecting on the eastern bank the famous "Twelve Altars," he turned south and made his way through the Punjab and down the Indus to the sea.

The portrait is, of course, an imaginary one. The features are, however, distinctly European, and it would be interesting to know the origin of this painting.

(d)

C. 58. QAMR-UD-DĪN KHĀN (see C. 190, Plate LVIIIa), Vizier of Muhammad Shāh. Killed at Sirhind in the battle in which Prince Ahmad Shāh defeated Ahmad Shāh Durrānī (see C. 217, Plate LIVc), in 1748 A.D.

All the above lent by the Lahore Museum.

PLATE LXXIV.

(a)

C. 338. HUNTING PARTY disturbed by Rhinoceros. Lent by L. Bulāki Das, of Delhi.

(6)

C. 260. LORD LAKE (Viscount Lake of Delhi and Laswari).

Born 1744, and entered the Guards at the age of 14. Served in Germany, America and Flanders, and commanded the troops in Ireland during the early part of the rebellion of 1798, where he was a good deal criticized for over-severity and under-discipline. Came out to India in 1801 as Commander-in-Chief, and it was here that he made his name by his campaigns against the Marathas and their final overthrow in northern India. The campaign against Sindhia in 1803 was largely inspired by Wellesley's desire to destroy "the French State erected by M. Perron on the banks of the Jamna." M. Perron was a French adventurer, who had succeeded the great de Boigne in the command of Sindhia's regular forces, and held the Doab with his head-quarters at Aligarh, practically as an independent chief, with an added prestige from his possession of the person of the Emperor, Shah Alam (see note on C. 209, Plate XLIVd). He was known to be in communication with Buonaparte and Wellesley determined to remove him. He gave himself up after his defeat at Aligarh. Bourquin assumed command, but on the 11th September 1803, he was defeated by Lake at the battle of Delhi, which was fought on the plain opposite Humayun's tomb. The crowning victory was at Laswari on the 1st November. After peace had been made with Sindhia, Holkar, the Maratha Chief of Indore declared war, and was joined by the chief of Bharatpur. Lake stormed Dig, but failed in four assaults on Bharatpur. The Raja, however, sued for terms rather than risk another attack. Holkar made a wild dash for the Punjab in the hope of aid from Ranjit Singh, but was brought to terms on the banks of the Beas. Lake received a peerage in 1804, and died in 1808.



