

MEMOIRS OF GAUR AND PANDUA

BY

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OF MĀLDAH

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EDITED AND REVISED

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(i) The stone pillars for supporting the arches and domes are of beautiful construction. They are square at the base, the middle portion is rounded with a slight taper and the capitals are cut slantwise.

(j) A portion of broken wall above the existing roof shows that the domes of the roof were hidden by a parapet.

(k) *A tomb inside the mosque.*—Though it is most objectionable to bury any one inside a mosque, it is said by the local people that a *faqīr* used to live here when the mosque was full of jungle, and that, when he died, his disciples buried him in the western cloister, close to the main Hall.

(l) A drainage hole in the east wall is closed by a stone crocodile with a large head and trunk, the mouth of which served to carry off the rain water from the compound.

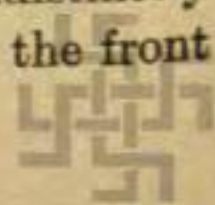
(m) There are two very large lotus flower rosettes in the west wall of the central hall apparently placed there for the sake of beauty. There are other carved lotus flowers below the *Takht* and in the west wall of Sikandar's chamber. These, as well as the *lingam* which is to be seen high up on the western wall of the main Hall, may have been brought from a Hindu temple.

General Cunningham's remarks on the absence of any Entrance Gateway to the Adīna Mosque.

“The most remarkable feature about this great masjid is the total absence of any entrance gateway. There are two small doors in the back wall, but these are mere posterns or private entrances for the convenience of the King and the *Mullahs*. There is also a small arched opening in the middle of the east side, which was no doubt intended for public use; but this is a simple doorway or passage through the walls, unmarked by any projecting wings or rising battlements. The real public entrance I believe to have been at the south-east corner of the cloisters, where the three archways at the eastern end of the south cloisters are left open, so that the people would enter at once into the south and the east cloisters from the outside. As this arrangement utterly spoils the symmetry of the building, it was most probably an after-thought when the single small door in the middle of the east side was found utterly insufficient.” (*Report*, p. 91.)

The Great Central Hall.

The large central room which forms the Nave of the mosque is 64 feet long and 33 feet wide. On each side, it has five arched openings. The roof was a long vault, a simple continuation of the main front arch which spanned the whole breadth of the room. Both lines of the vaulted roof are indistinctly marked against the top of the back wall. It is not known whether the front



opening of this grand vault was screened in at the top or whether the whole was protected with a wall above the arch opening; but it is probable that the opening on the east side was capped by a lofty battlement. The height of the roof was about 60 feet.

The Qibla on the West Wall of the Transept.

The back wall of the Central Hall has the usual *Qibla*, or prayer niche, in the middle, with a pulpit on the north side. The whole of the back wall is very richly decorated, but the carving is shallow and affords a strange contrast

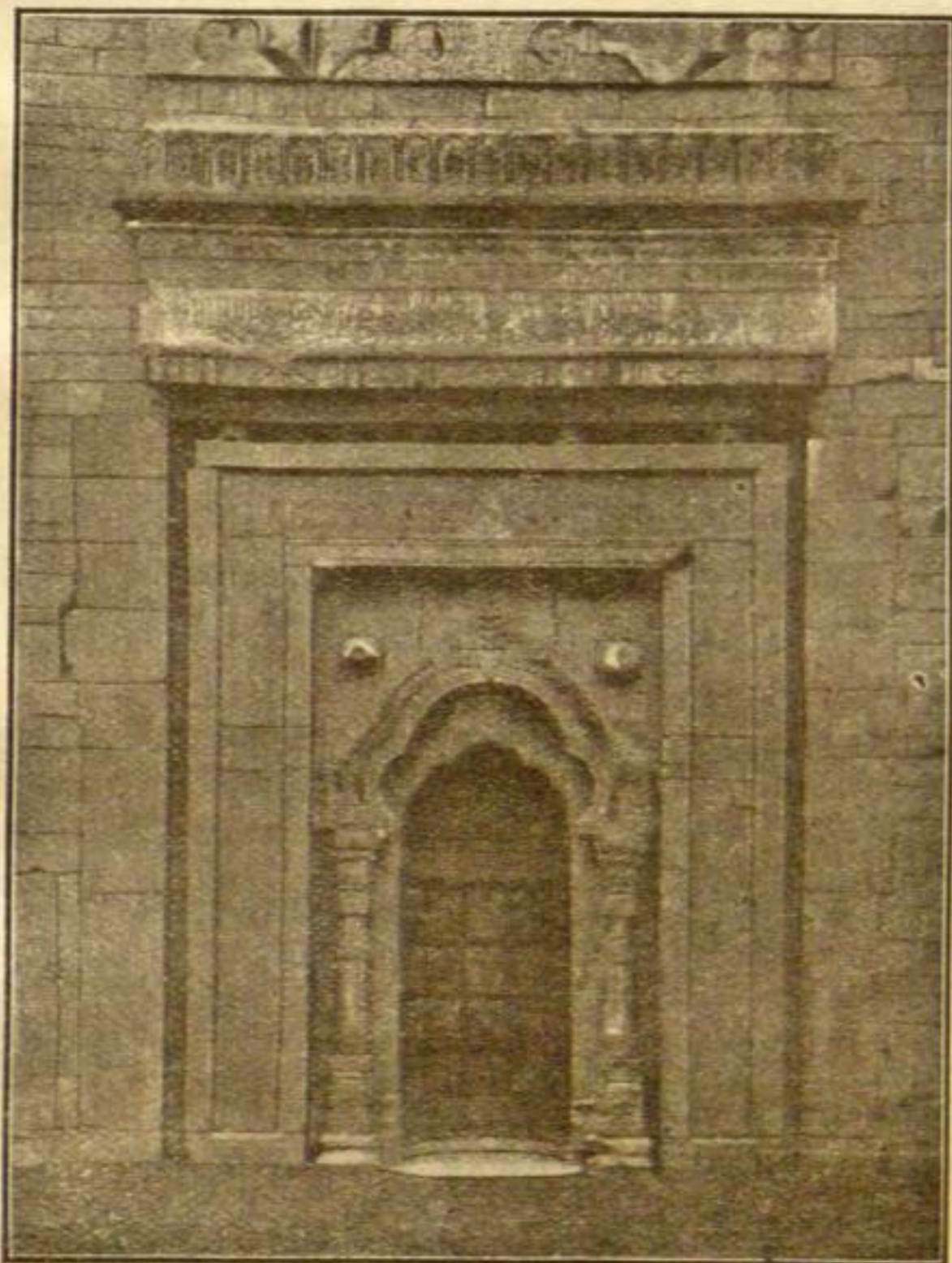


Fig. 25.—Qibla of the Adina Mosque.

to the deep cutting of some Hindu door jambs which are placed horizontally in a single line, touching end to end, just below the two lines of Arabic writing containing sentences from the *Qur'ān* in ornamental *Kufic* and *Tughra* character.



The reading and translation of the inscriptions on this wall are given below :—

Inscription (in *Kufic* character) on the wall at a great height :—

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ *

“In the name of Allāh the Merciful, the Compassionate.”

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ *

“There is no God but Allāh and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allāh.”

Tughra inscriptions containing extracts from the *Qur'ān* :—

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَزْكِعُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ وَأَسْبُجُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ وَاعْبُدُوا *

“Said Almighty Allāh ‘O people, who believe, bend in prayer, touch your forehead to the ground, and worship.’”

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنِ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَأَتَى الزُّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَن يَكُونُوا مِنَ
الْمُهْتَدِينَ أَجْعَلْتُمْ مَقَائِدَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَا آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ *

Translation.—“Almighty Allāh said: ‘He only who builds mosques for Allāh, and who believeth in Him and in the last day, and observeth prayer, and payeth alms, and dreadeth none but Allāh, may be counted among those who are rightly guided. Do ye take the giving of drink to pilgrims or building a house for Allāh to be equal in value to him who believeth in Allāh and the last day and exerts himself in the path of Allāh? They are not held equal by Allāh: for Allāh guideth not the unrighteous” [*Qur'ān, Sūrah IX, Verses 18 and 19*—(slightly altered)].

The Pulpit.

On the right hand of the *Qibla* is a *Mimbar* (pulpit) from which the *Imām* preached to the people. It is built of black basalt (*Sang-i-Mūsā*—Stone of

Moses) curiously wrought with carved work, and the ascent to this pulpit is by a flight of steps of the same material. Underneath the *Mimbar* is a small

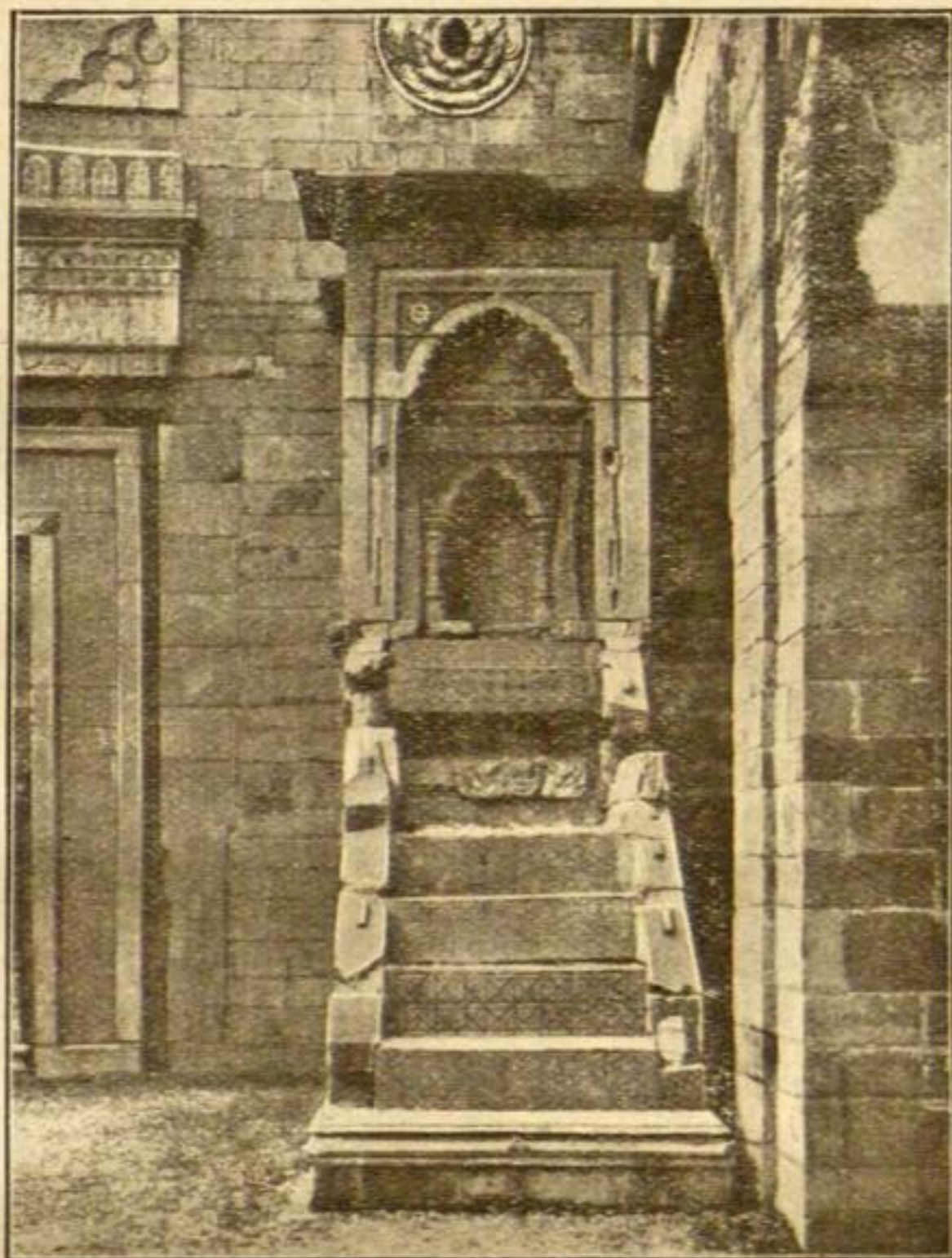


Fig. 26.—Mimbar, or Pulpit, of the Adina Mosque.

square chamber, tastefully ornamented with carvings. Among other decorations, it contains a very beautiful reproduction of a circular hanging lamp or incense burner. The railings and two steps of the pulpit are missing and the greater portion of the roof of the upper chamber is gone. It would be a good thing if the missing steps and railings could be replaced. As regards the roof, possibly it was originally furnished with a small dome similar to that of the pulpit in the *Qu'ib Shāhī Masjid* (vid. Fig. 22). Pulpits of many mosques in Egypt are also provided with small domes.

In the broken portion of the steps is to be seen the head of a lion which is supposed to have formed a part of the throne of a Hindu King. There are other Hindu idols in a broken condition in the door sills and in the *mihrābs* (prayer-niches) all over the mosque.



The Bādshāh-ka-Takht.

This upper room, which is situated directly to the north of the Central Hall, was intended to provide separate accommodation for the King and his family during services. It occupies five bays in the three back aisles and is covered by 15 domes. In place of the usual fluted stone columns, massive octagonal stone piers were used to carry the heavy weight of the stone floor of the *Takht*, and, above these, come fluted pillars that support the arches that carry the domes. With the few adjacent bays in the south and east this is the only portion of the mosque that still retains its roof. The domes most probably owe their safety to the massive pillars of the lower storey which gave extra stability to the arches above them, while at the same time they offered no temptation to the spoiler to carry them off. The ten-foot stone shafts in the rest of the cloisters were not difficult to remove and, in consequence, several scores of them have disappeared. There are three prayer niches in the west wall of the *Takht* which are surrounded with beautiful ornamental *Tughra* inscriptions and with fine carvings all over the surface. Over the entrance to the chamber of Sikandar Shah, there is also an inscription in *Tughra* character which contains the *Kalimah Shahādat* (Confession of Faith of a Muslim).

The reading and translation of the inscriptions on the west wall of the *Bādshāh-ka-Takht* are given below. The first is taken from the *Āyat-u-l-Kursī* (Throne Verses) chapter of the *Qur'ān* and as it is the same as the first few lines of the inscription over the gate of the enclosure of 'Alāul Haqq's tomb (*vide* pp. 109-10) it need not be repeated here. The rest are also from the *Qur'ān* and run as follows:—

إن الله و ملائكته يصلون على النبي يا ايها الذين آمنوا صلوا عليه
و سلموا تسليماً *

Translation.—“Verily Allāh and His angels bless the Prophet. Bless ye him, O Believers, and salute him with salutations of Peace.” (*Sūrah XXXIII*, verse 56.)

لقد صدق الله رسوله الرؤيا بالحق لتدخلن المسجد الحرام انشاء الله
أمنين محلقين رؤسكم و مقصرين لا تخافون فعلم ما لم تعلموا
فجعل من دن ذلك فتحا قريبا - هو الذي ارسل رسوله بالهدى و دين

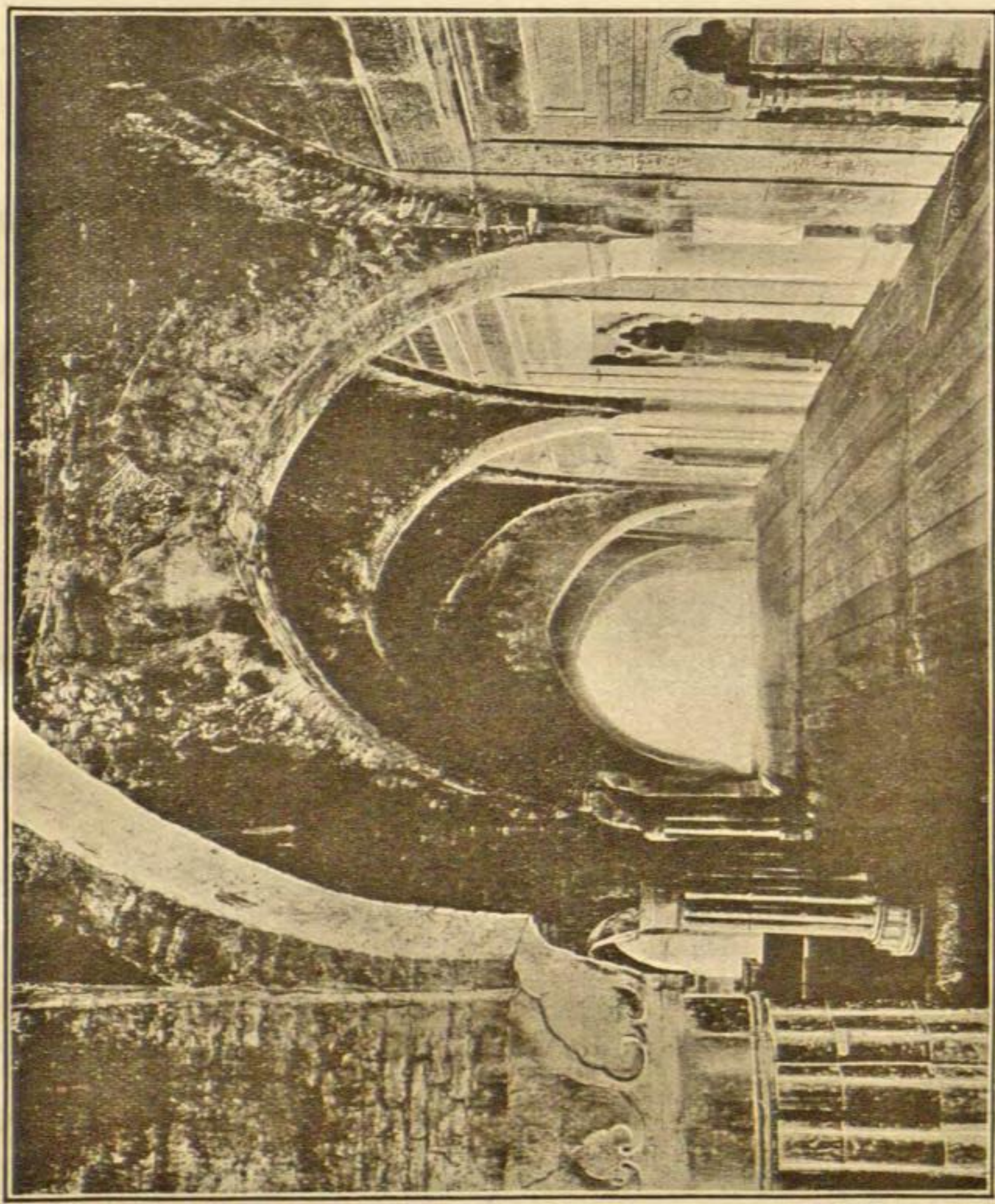


Fig. 27.—General view of the Bādshāh-ka-Takht, Adina Mosque.

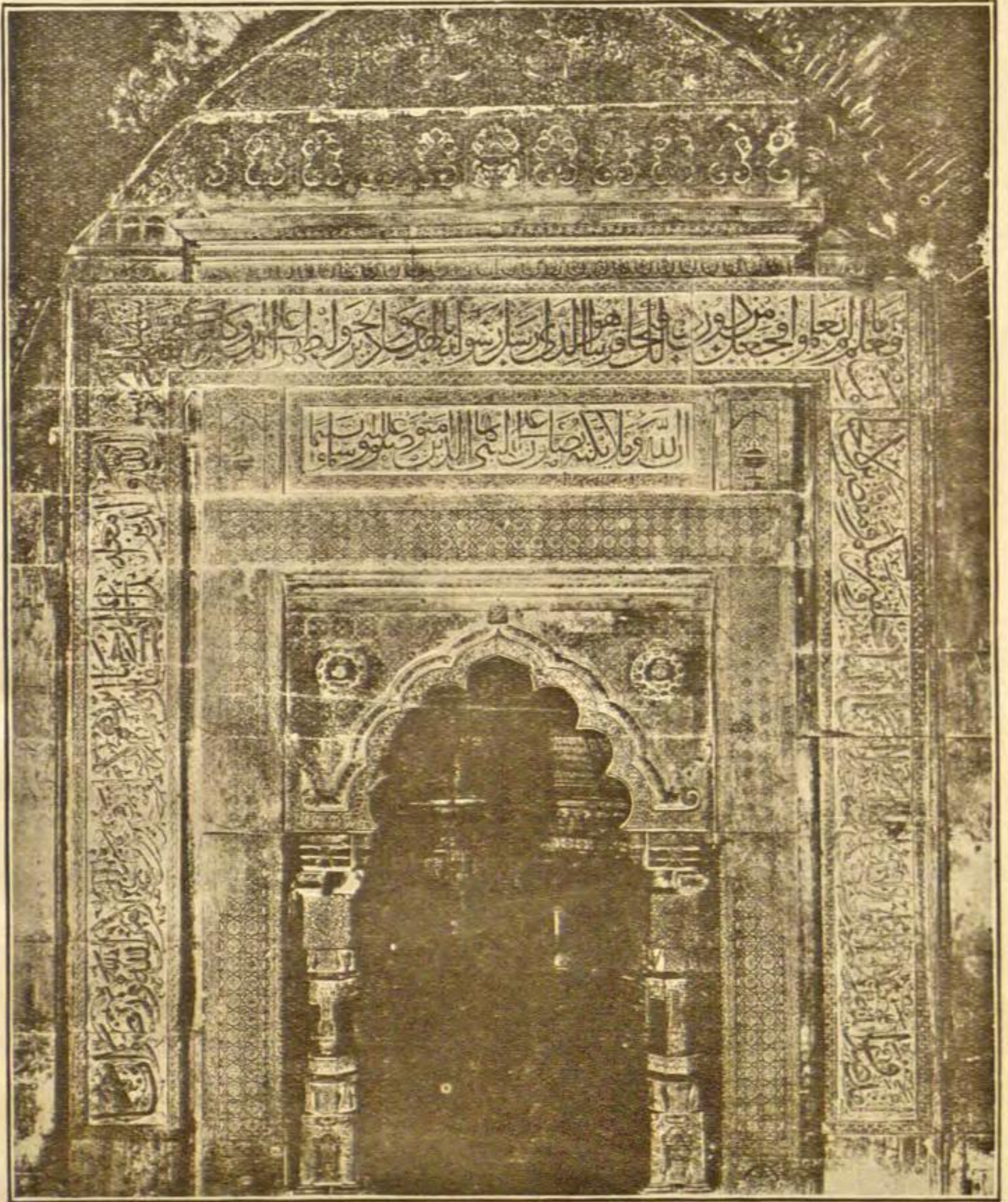


Fig. 28.—Details of Mihrāb of the Bādshāh-ka-Takht, Adīna Mosque.

