

ure understand Alexander's eagerness to visit India and engage in conflict with strange peoples when we reflect that from time immemorial India was a fabled land of wonders to the Greeks. India was the scene of much of Greek Mythology. The stories told of this country left large room for the imagination. Prometheus was fabled to have been chained on the frontier. Alexander claimed to be descended from Heracles, and Dionysus shared with Heracles, both of them Eastern in their origin, the reverence and ardent worship of Alexander. Though giving up his more remote projects of conquest he founded several Greek cities in India, especially Bukephalia and Nikaea, on the Hydaspes (the Jhelum), and established Greek culture, art and commerce in the Bactrian Kingdom, which lasted for a century and powerfully affected the civilization of the Indian nations.

Another circumstance noteworthy in the recent Chitral expedition is the fact that clear traces are still to be found of the presence of Greek architectural ideas in the sangars, or forts, built by the tribesmen. Up to the time the Greeks entered the East structures of stone were unknown. All through the Euphrates Valley, in India, and in China mud or sun-dried brick was, in ancient times, and is still, the chief material for building purposes. In the Chitralese forts not only is stone used but what is a special feature of Greek and Roman buildings, "bonders," or layers of horizontal stones, are introduced to give stability to the masonry. All authorities on the history of architecture bear witness to the powerful influence of Greek architectural notions upon the nations of India. Not a building, temple or cave wrought of stone dates back of farther than Alexander.

But not long after the founding of Greek cities in Northern India, and the establishment of the Greek Kingdom of Bactria, there commenced a period of great activity in the creation of buildings of smooth stones. It was in the age of Asoka, 250 B. C., that this movement reached its culmination. The overthrow of the Greek cities made the Indian nations masters of places that excited their emulation as well as their admiration. The influence of Greek ideas had made itself felt before. But the true quickening came in Asoka's reign, which happened to agree in time with the decline of the fortunes of the Greek cities of Northern India. Greece, in expiring, captured India, as at a later date she did Rome. Asoka made Buddhism the state religion and is in the religious history of India as conspicuous a figure as Constantine in that of Christianity. His grandfather, Kandragupta, was the well known contemporary of Alexander and Seleucus Nicator. In Asoka's reign Buddhism replaced Brahm-

anism as the state religion, which was as distinct an advance as Protestantism compared with mediæval Romanism. To celebrate this event Asoka caused edicts to be cut in the rocks of Girnar, Dauli and other places which may still be read to-day, and furthermore is said to have erected thousands of temples of polished stone. It is claimed that the Cromlechs, Stonecircles and other Megalithic remains of vast antiquity prove the existence of the art of working in stone long before Alexander's time, but these erections are of undressed stones and do not come under the head of architecture proper. Furthermore the descriptions given in the Vedas, the Story of Nala, and other portions of the great Indian epics, the Mahabharata and Ramayana, of magnificent palaces and walled cities with their hundreds of gates and towers, are held by some scholars to indicate high architectural skill in the earliest antiquity of India, but while they indicate a quite advanced civilization they no more prove the existence of the art of stonemasonry among the Indians than the descriptions of the wonders of Babylon or the great wall of China prove that these were built of stone. India has never made any contribution to the history of sculpture or architecture except in the antiquities of Orissan Art, which flourished between 500 and 700 A. D. This school, though undeniably superior in technical skill to the artists of Egypt or of Assyria, is still inferior to even Roman art, and bears no comparison with that of Greece. While there is in it much that is beautiful, there is vastly more that is grotesque and obscene. It was thus that the influences of Greek art, introduced by Alexander and the cities he founded, were spread abroad in India under Asoka and his line, and finally terminated in a style wherein technical excellence was degraded by grossness of idea.

A. B. NICHOLSON.

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## GOMMUNIGATIONS.

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*To the Editor of the Journal :*

**D**EAR SIR,—In the multitude of subjects, wise and otherwise, that have been discussed in our *Journal*, one important matter has been, so far as I can learn, entirely overlooked. Will you grant me a small space to refer to the question of evening calls—not society calls made at the houses of city acquaintances, but evening calls among the students themselves? There are few students, I fancy, who do not welcome, cordially, even in the midst of much work, the cheery countenance of a class-mate or college friend. We are always pleased to be remembered and glad to forget business for a little time in order to discuss the ever-live topics of