

THE FORGOTTEN RUINS OF INDO-CHINA

The Most Profusely and Richly Carved Group of Buildings in the World

BY JACOB E. CONNER

AMERICAN CONSUL AT ST. PETERSBURG; FORMERLY AMERICAN CONSUL AT
SAIGON, CAMBODIA

OUTSIDE of the Siamese and Cambodians, very few people have heard of Angkor, or know that such a nation as the Khmers ever lived, conquered, worked, and perished from the face of the earth. In America, even now it is doubtful if there are many who have heard of Angkor Tom and Angkor Wat, so completely have these splendid ruins been hidden in the Cambodian jungle and kept from civilization by natural barriers.

Up to recent years not many travelers ever visited Angkor, and some of those who did never returned to tell the story, for the country has been from time immemorial inhospitable to strangers. It is said that the Romans sent an envoy in the time of its greatest activity. The Chinese have from time to time sent envoys and made treaties, and have left the earliest descriptions so far discovered and deciphered. Marco Polo mentioned the place, but did not see it.

The Dutch, in the 16th century, sent an ambassador, and the natives assassinated him. Later the Portuguese and Spanish visited them; but the country remained a mysterious and forbidden land, the thrall of Siam for many years. Then the French came, in the middle of

the last century, and the geographical limits of the protectorate of Cambodia have been but recently defined.

During the long centuries of their isolation and seclusion, these buildings have remained in an unusual state of preservation. And still they keep their secret, in spite of all the books and treatises that have been written, for the language of their builders is undeciphered. But if the mystery of their origin appeals to the imagination and spurs the archeologist to solve their riddle, the artist and the architect will be no less interested when the beauty of their structure and decorative detail are laid before them; and these, fortunately, need no interpreter.

There are no roads to Angkor—none but a wretched bullock-cart road, beginning at the river, some three or four miles away, and ending at the ruins. From the outside world there is no feasible means of approach except by water, and this is attended with some difficulty. An effective barrier is stretched across the way in the shape of a shallow lake. At the close of the rainy season, say from October 15 to December 15, this lake is deep enough to be navigable by steamboats. Under favorable conditions

this period may be extended two weeks earlier or two weeks later, but one is liable to be disappointed if he attempts the journey outside of these dates, and outside of the three months indicated it is utterly impracticable.

A trip anywhere must have a beginning, and this begins at Saigon, the capital of Cochin China, in the southeastern corner of the Asiatic mainland, because Saigon is the nearest practicable seaport. There are no hotels at Angkor, nor any place nor any people to provide you food or lodging. A rest-house is there, consisting of roof, floor, and walls, and that is all.

And that is why I started for the ruins one morning early in December with a steamer-trunk full of tropical clothing, a steamer-rug, a camp-bed, a Cambodian mattress (splendid thing for comfort), a supply of provisions, and a Chinese cook. A railroad journey of 44 miles brought me to the end of the line at Mytho. From this point the journey is up the broad Mekong River by steamboat for the next 24 hours; and you are not sorry when it is ended, either, for the accommodations are anything but luxurious.

The Mekong is one of the world's greatest streams; it is the one great river of the peninsula of Indo-China. If you follow it up far enough, you will find its headwaters not far from the great central plateau of Asia. In its middle course it is a magnificent stream, and in its lower it is another Mississippi delta, spreading out over and embracing the broad, flat plain it has created, and reaching the sea at last through a number of bayous and passes. A few years ago the crocodile and rhinoceros frequented its banks, but these have now retreated farther up-stream.

A sheet of yellow water a mile or so wide, fringed with cocoanut and arica palms; some banyans, bananas, and a tangle of liana vines; an occasional bird or two; a native sampan, a Chinese junk; patches of rice and acres of swamp land; no hills in sight to relieve the monotony—such is the vista of the first day's journey, which lands you at Pnom Penh, the modern capital of Cambodia.

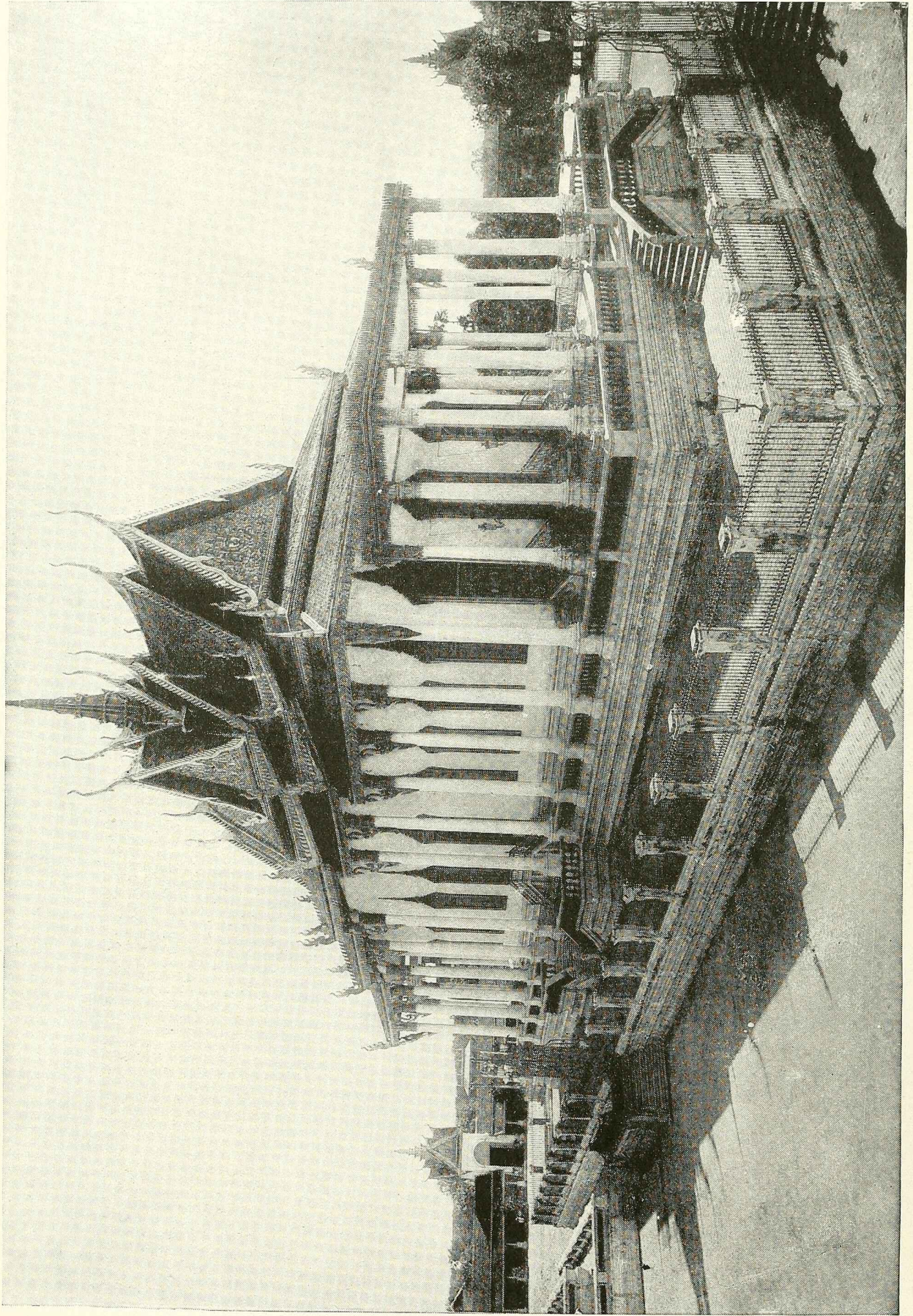
An attractive little place is Pnom Penh, with well-paved streets—it takes

the French to make good roads and keep them good—a gentle monsoon to cool the air; a few characteristic buildings of the Cambodian royalty, suggesting “a general flavor of mild decay”; a pagoda with a silver-plated floor and an absent-minded looking Buddha made out of glass, attended by a priestess clad in gold and glittering with diamonds; a “library” without a book in it; processions of Buddhist priests in bright yellow robes; natives in bright-colored silks and cottons; and, above all, the “Pnom” itself, a structure erected as a monument and possessing some lines of beauty that more than atone for its grotesque features.

His Majesty King Sisowath appears to have an easy, comfortable time of it, and that is the greatest desideratum to a sovereign whose sway is in the tropics. He is surrounded by a numerous *entourage*; he has his ministers and all sorts of supernumeraries, and can go through the motions of governing, draw his pay for it right royally, and still be free from any distressing consequences and annoying details. His minister of war has charge of his elephants, used now in his military parades rather than for warlike purposes.

The story goes that a few years ago, like any up-to-date sovereign, he felt the need of a navy for his admiral to command. A dismantled cruiser was kindly furnished him by the protectorate, and his majesty proceeded to pay a visit to the King of Annam. Returning from the visit, the whole royal party took to sampans, such as they had always been acquainted with, and the discredited cruiser was reduced to tugboat duty, and so returned to Pnom Penh convoying a whole fleet of sampans.

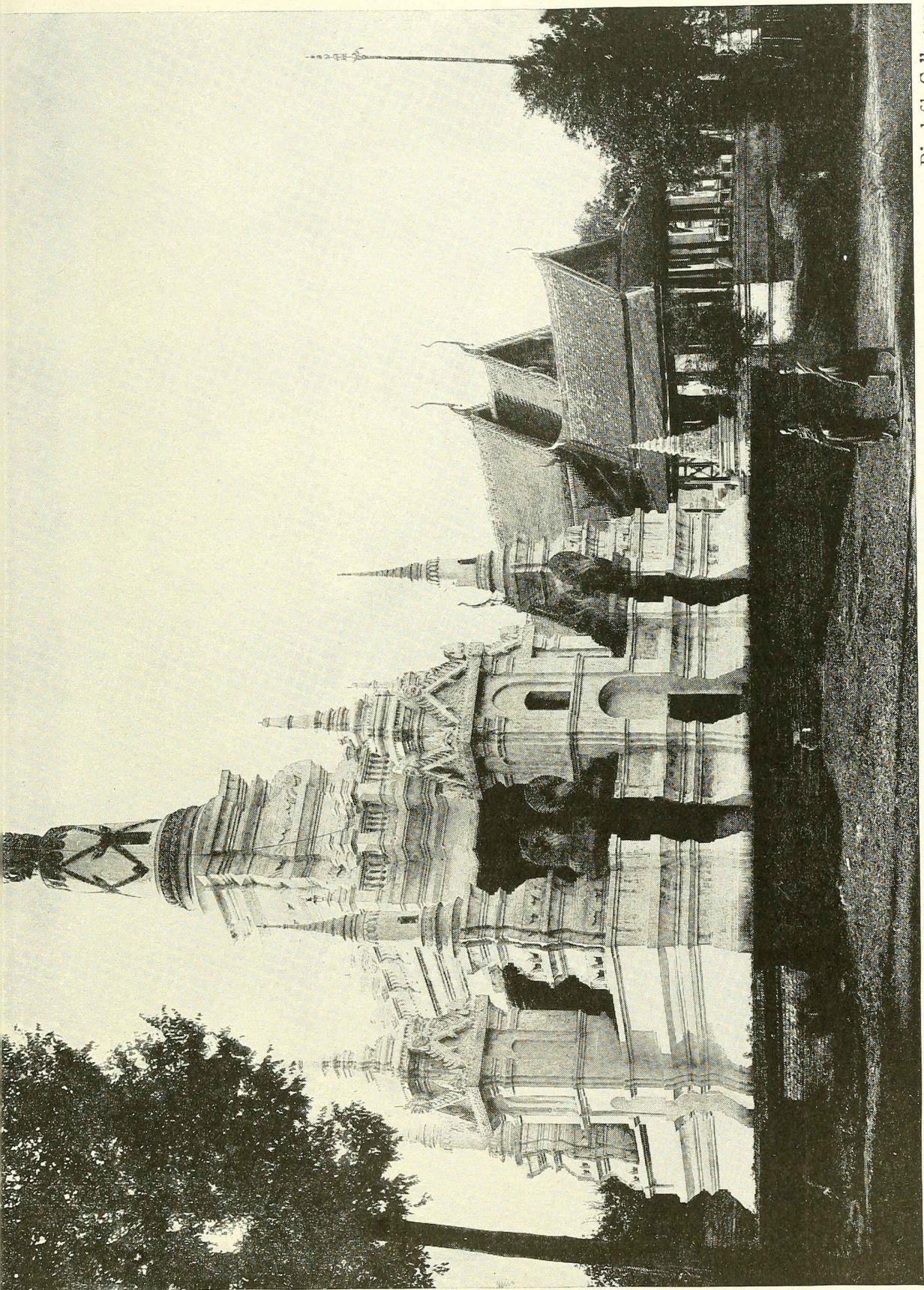
It is startling to hear a group of Cambodians talking and laughing together, especially after one has grown accustomed to the sound of Annamite and Chinese voices. The latter, being monosyllabic and tonal, cannot change the quality of tone without at the same time changing the meaning of the word, whereas European languages can modulate the tone at will, and are thus more flexible and expressive of feeling. When you hear the hum of Cambodian voices



Dieulefils Collection

ROYAL PAGODA WITH SILVER FLOOR, AT PNOM PENH

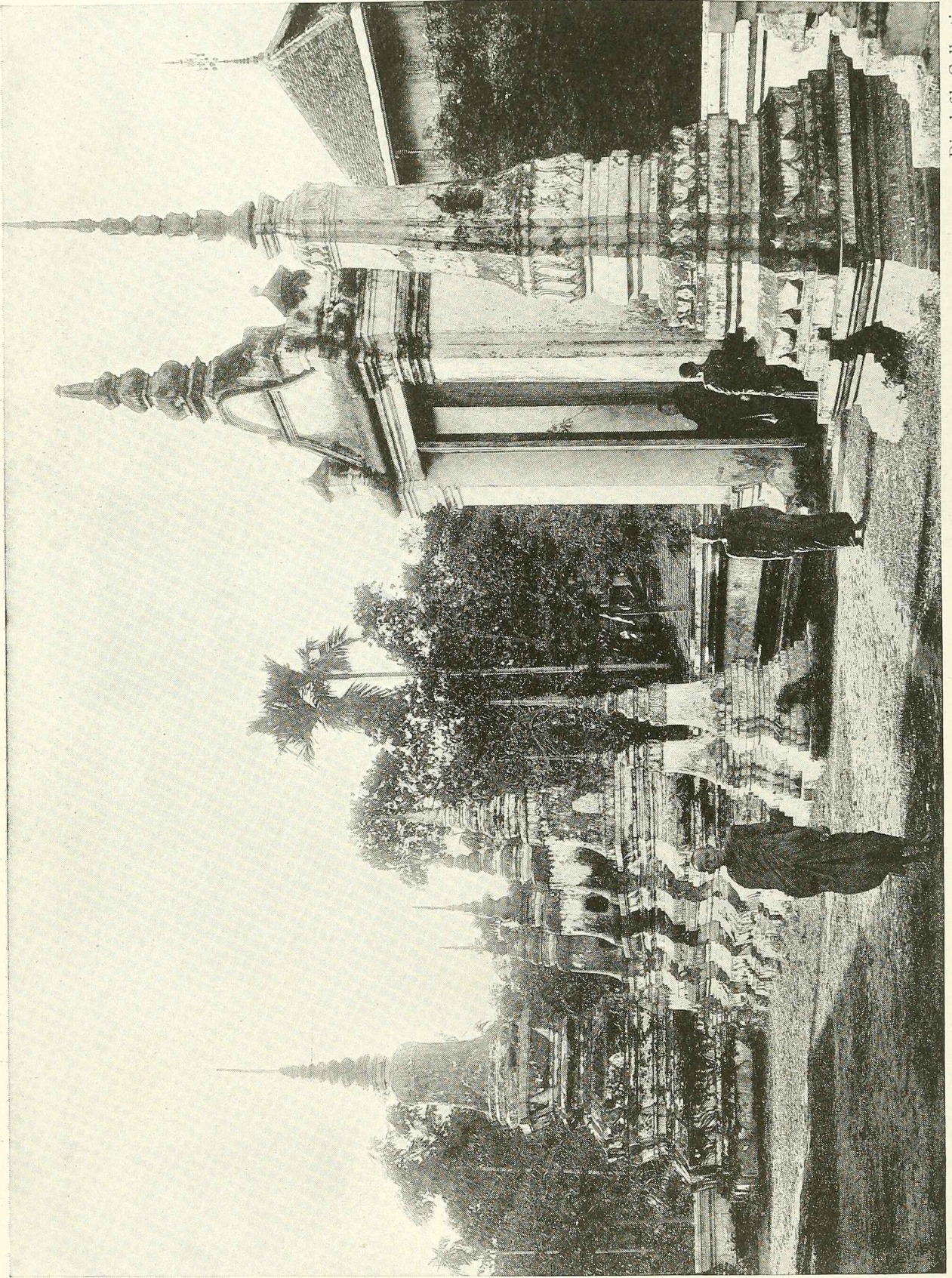
This building stands within the palace grounds of King Sisowath, and, like all the more recent architecture of Cambodia, it shows Siamese influence



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PAGODA TO THE LATE KING NORODOM, AT PNOM PENH

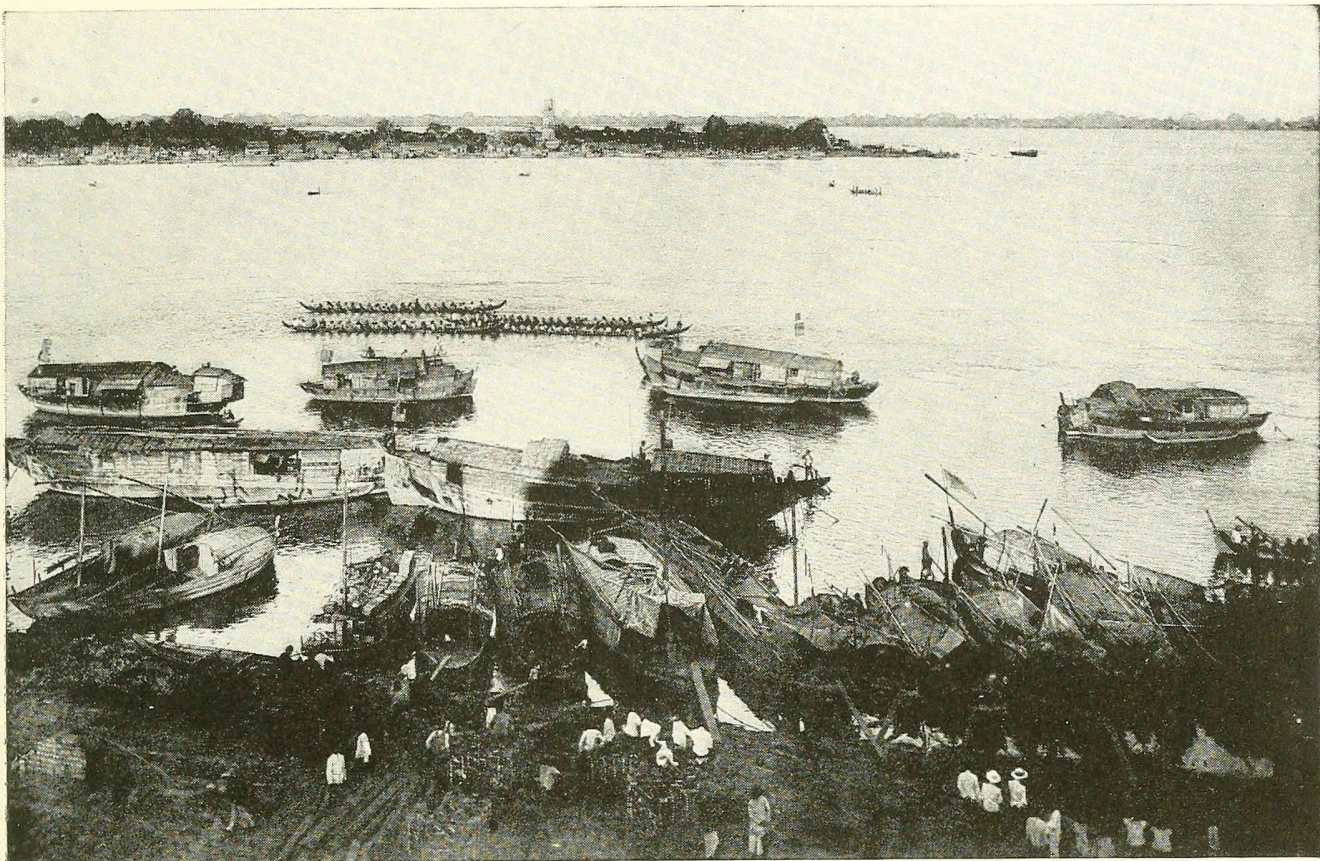
This monument is a good illustration of very bad taste, strongly contrasting in this respect with the ancient works, portions of which are used in the composition. Kings, princes, and dignitaries devote a part of their fortune to building monuments like this. They thus acquire merit in the eyes of Buddha and gain their supreme reward of Nirvana. The pyramids at the corners of this pagoda are designed to receive the ashes of the donor or of members of his family.



Dienleffs Collection

TOMBS OF THE BONZES (PRIESTS), AT THE PAGODA OF KING NORODOM

The size of the pyramid or tomb indicates the sanctity of the bonze whose ashes it contains



ANNUAL REGATTA AT PNOM PENH

The racing boats, or pirogues, resemble those shown in the bas-reliefs at Angkor, and are propelled, not by means of oars, but by vessels held in the hands of the rowers resembling shallow wash-bowls.

you realize the difference at once, and you look into those faces again, half expecting them to look familiar—but they don't.

No; these people are at the meeting-place of the Aryan and Mongolian civilizations. Their language, religion, their entire civilization, is derived from the Hindu; but what races they themselves are derived from it would probably take a long time to enumerate, if one knew them.

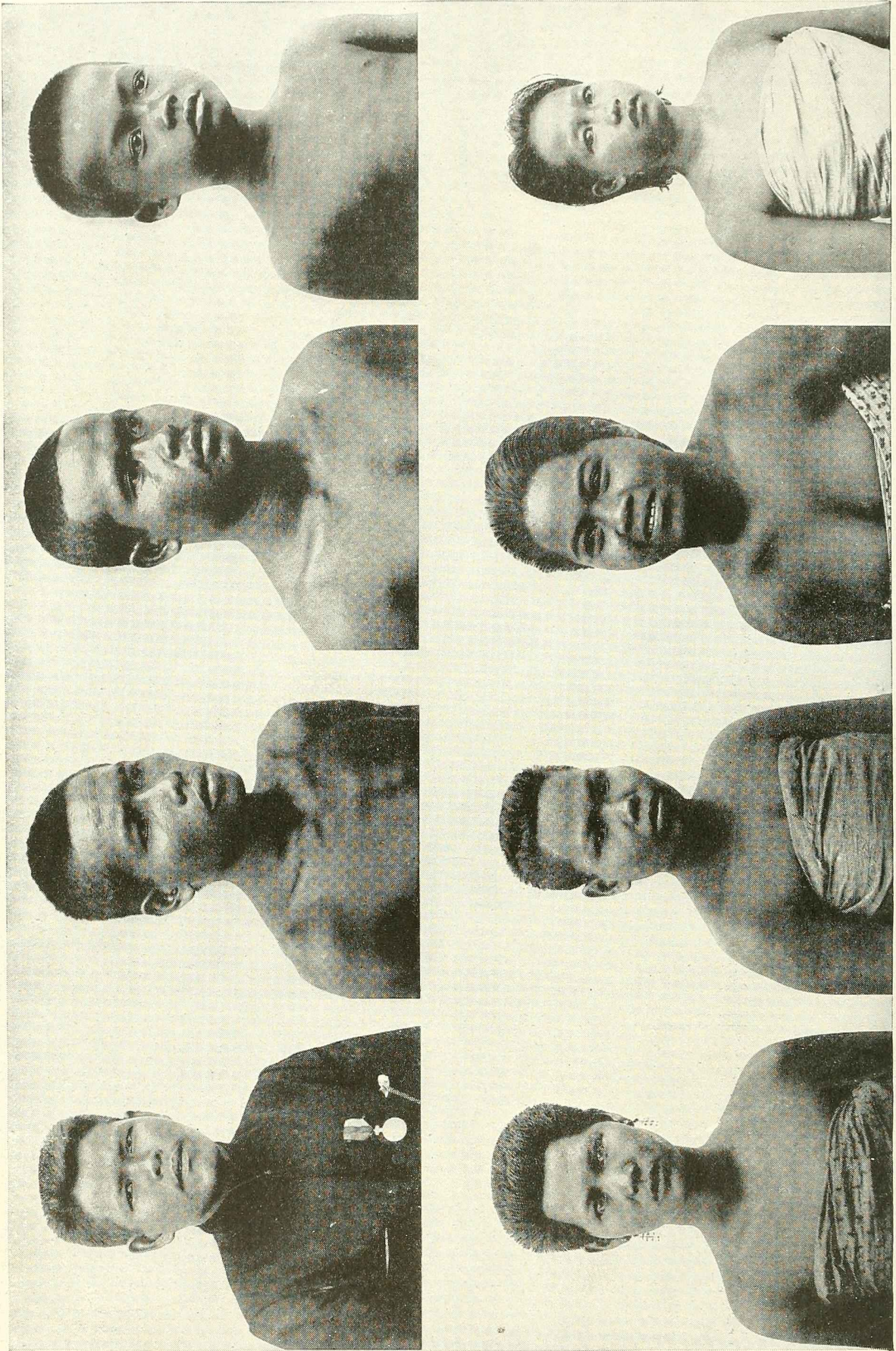
At Pnom Penh we leave the Mekong and continue up one of its tributaries. It is really a tributary now, for the water is pouring down in a swift current from the lake, Tonle Sap, though a few months later it will be pouring the other way. Soon the scenery changes; the stream broadens, hills begin to appear on the horizon. We reach the village of Kompong Chnang.

We are told that Kompong signifies *anchorage*, and, looking at the map, we see that most of the villages are so designated. What does this mean? Why, it

means that the villages are anchored, to be sure; for look at this one. Kompong Chnang is a floating village; not a lot of sampans fastened together and moving about, as they do at Canton, but houses—rather substantial looking, too—built, some of them, in European fashion and mounted on piles of bamboo laid flat in the water. The bamboo is a series of water-tight compartments joined end to end, and it floats like a straw. Over yonder is what appears to be a bridge, beginning somewhere right in the midst of the water and running off into the distance, probably searching for solid ground, which is pretty hard to find in this region.

Meanwhile the houses are all nodding and bowing to each other in pleasant, neighborly fashion, for all the world like the citizens of Saigon when driving on the Tour d'Inspection; and so we leave them.

Night descends as we enter the lake and steer toward the opposite end. Its waters are rapidly receding, and in a few



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TYPICAL MEN AND WOMEN OF CAMBODIA

The people of Cambodia are a mixture of races—Malay, Annamite, and Chinese



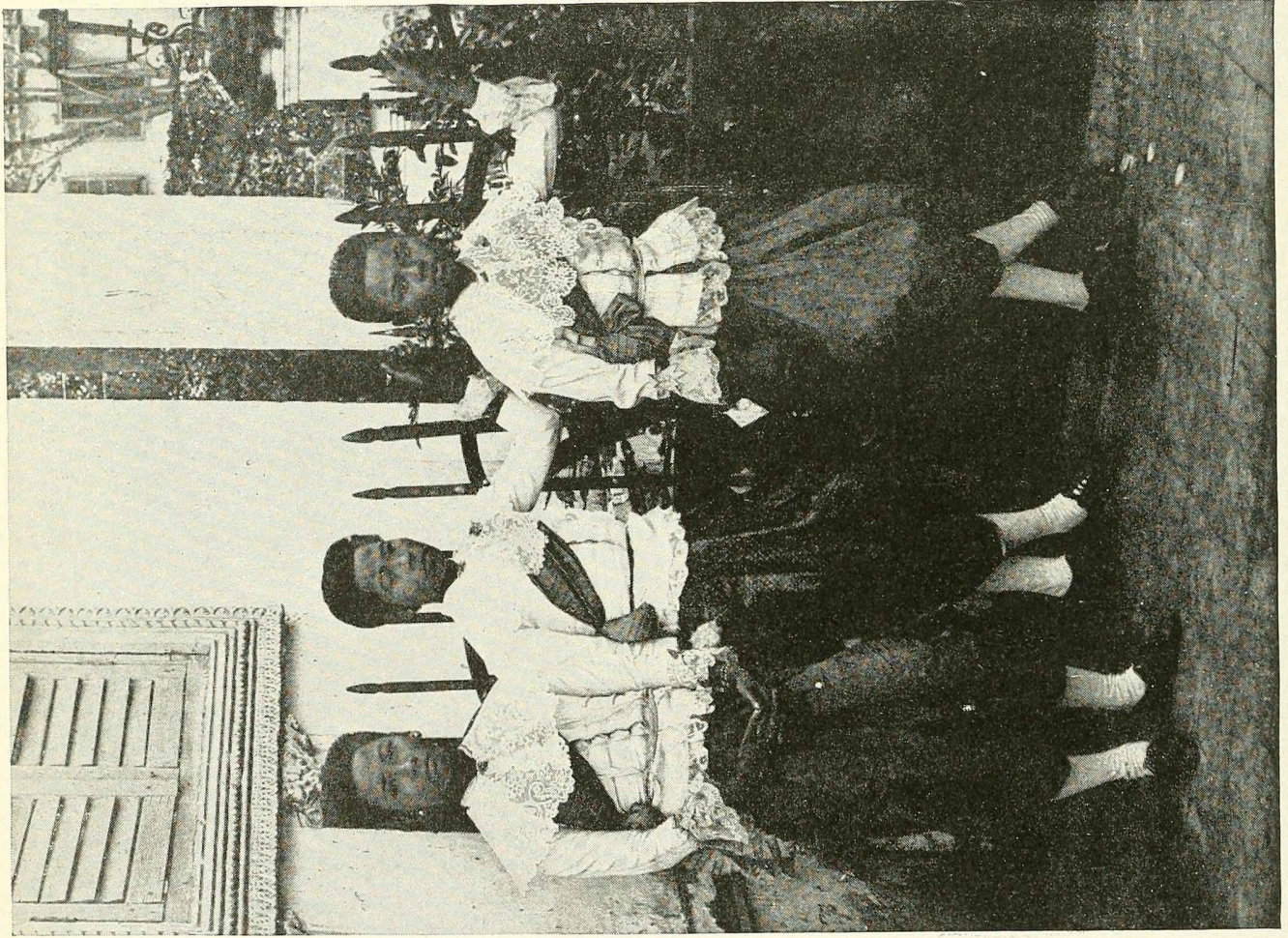
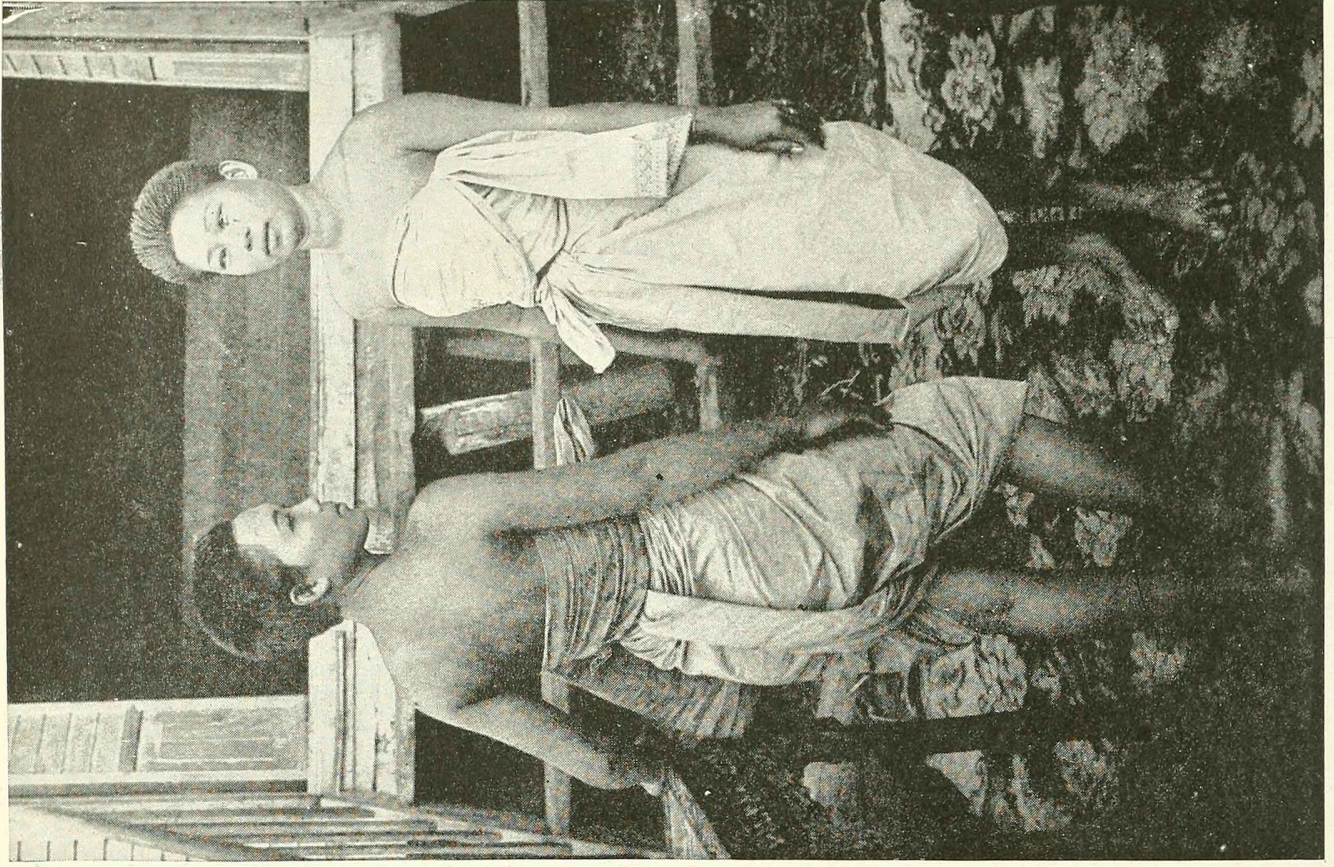
CAMBODIAN TYPES, MOSTLY WOMEN

Note the sarong (skirt), modified in the Siamese fashion into something like trousers, and worn by both sexes



DANCERS OF THE ROYAL PALACE

Dieulefils Collection



CAMBODIAN WOMEN

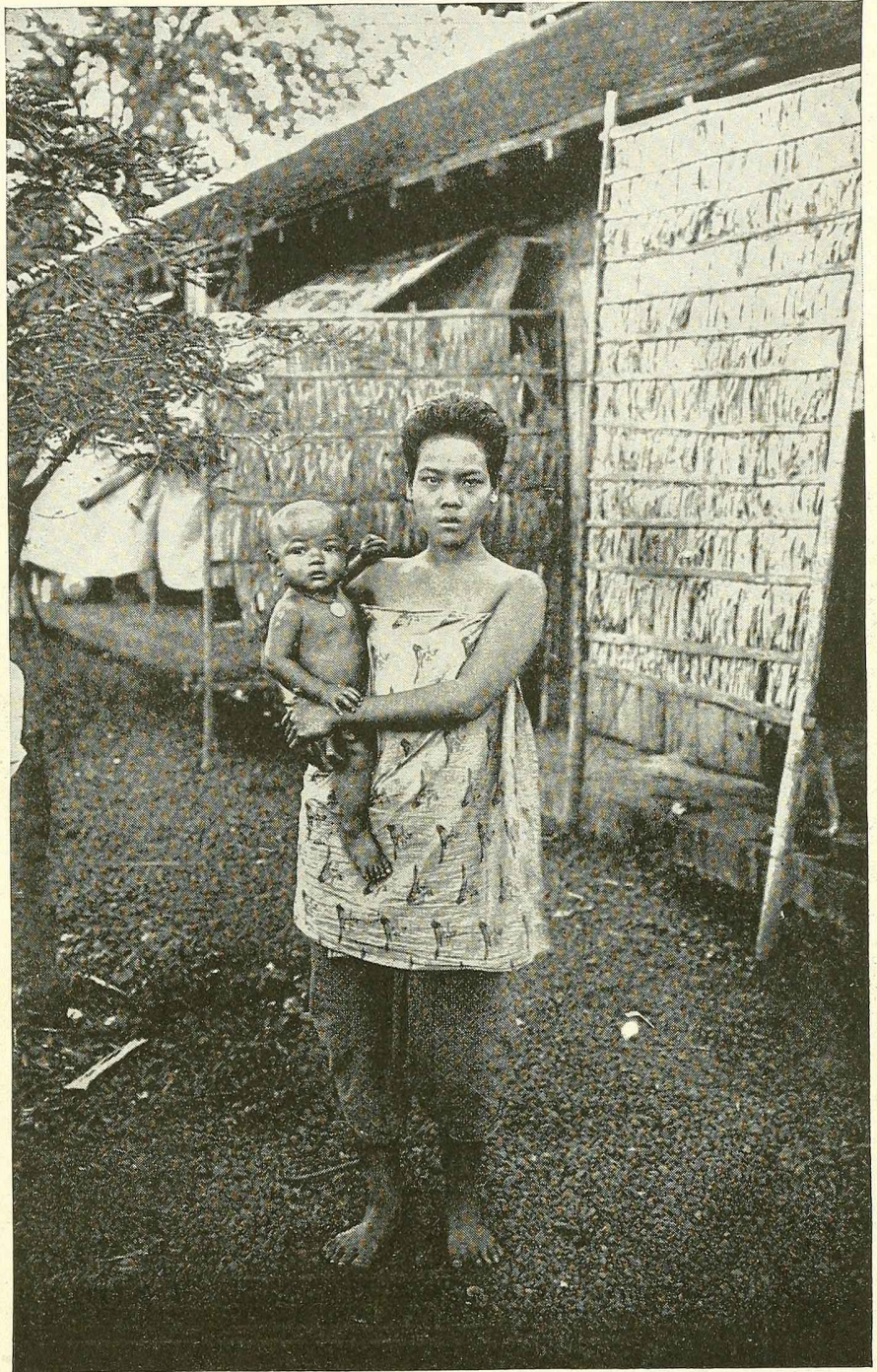
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Unlike the other peoples of Asia, the men of Cambodia take excellent care of their women, and do not allow them to perform any laborious work

more weeks it will be too shallow for even a sampan to navigate, though at its maximum season it has a depth of 20 meters. Seventy miles it is in length and 20 miles across, and a smooth and beautiful sheet to look at now; yet at the beginning of the rainy season it is only so many square miles of mud. At midnight we reach a point on the coast opposite the mouth of a little stream—at least, we are told that there is a stream there. All that one sees is the surface of the lake; a line of trees half of a mile away, apparently marking the shore, and the sampans ordered in advance waiting to take you to land; for this is where you leave the steamer and begin to depend upon your own supplies.

By one o'clock bag and baggage, including "Van," the indispensable Chinese cook, was transferred to the sampan and the two Cambodians rowed toward the line of trees. These showed at one point a narrow opening, and I now saw that the reason I did not see the little stream at first was because it was several feet beneath the surface of the lake. I discovered, too, that the line of trees was not the shore, but the edge of a submerged forest, and that there were five hours of rowing before we reached the little village of Siem Reap, where the bullock carts were waiting to continue the journey (p. 220).

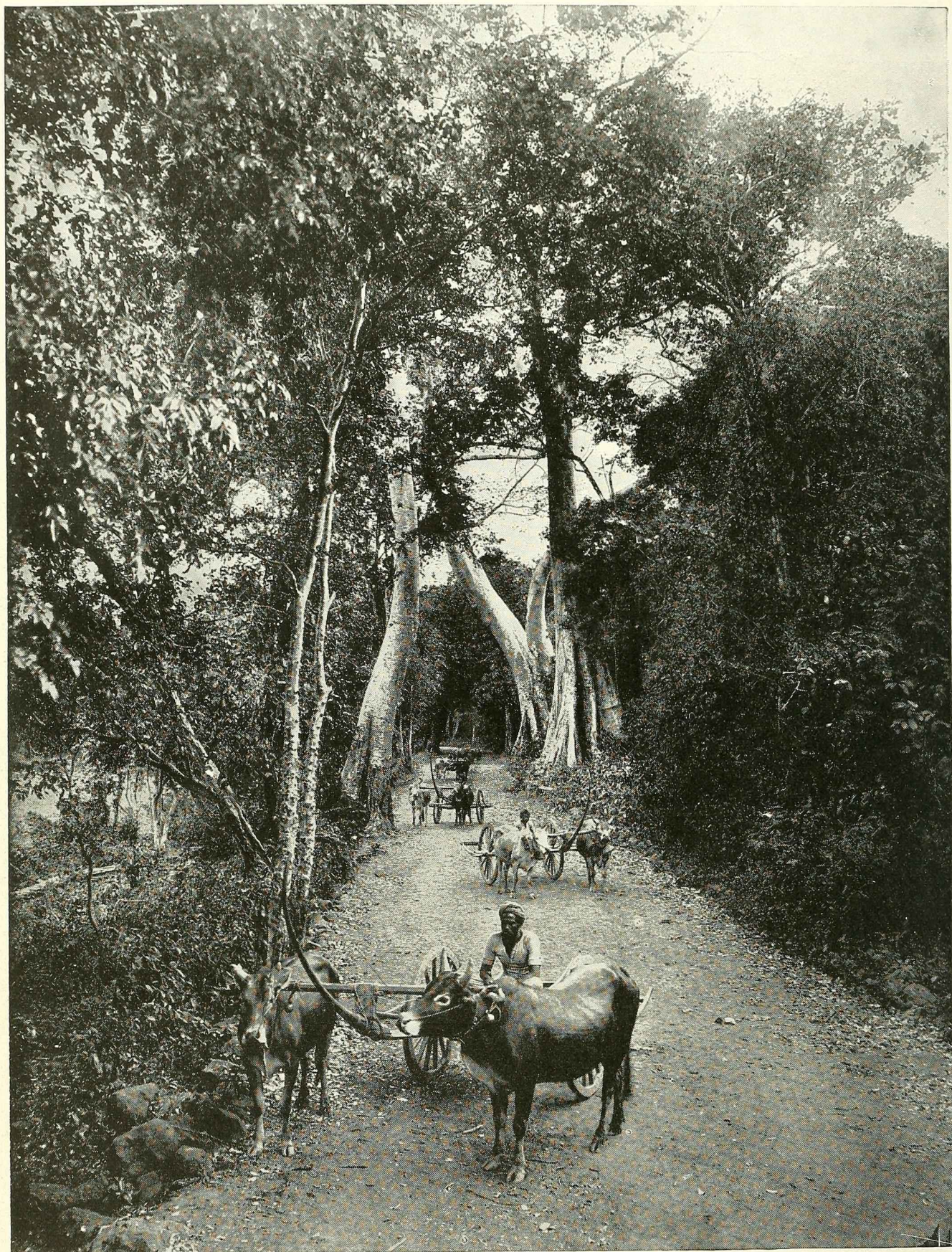
It is a trip not soon to be forgotten, this voyage from midnight to morning through a submerged forest, with a full



CAMBODIAN MOTHER WITH INFANT

As every traveler knows, this is the method of carrying a child used throughout the Orient

moon directly overhead in a clear sky. Once inside the outer line of trees, taller and stronger than their fellows, the ordinary forest features were reproduced—glades and clumps of trees, but the watery way everywhere. The rounded tops of the larger ones reached but 10 or 15 feet above the water, but they brandished their harsh and rustling foliage triumphantly. The smaller ones, still submerged, with no foliage to boast



Dieulefils Collection

ROAD THROUGH CAMBODIAN FOREST

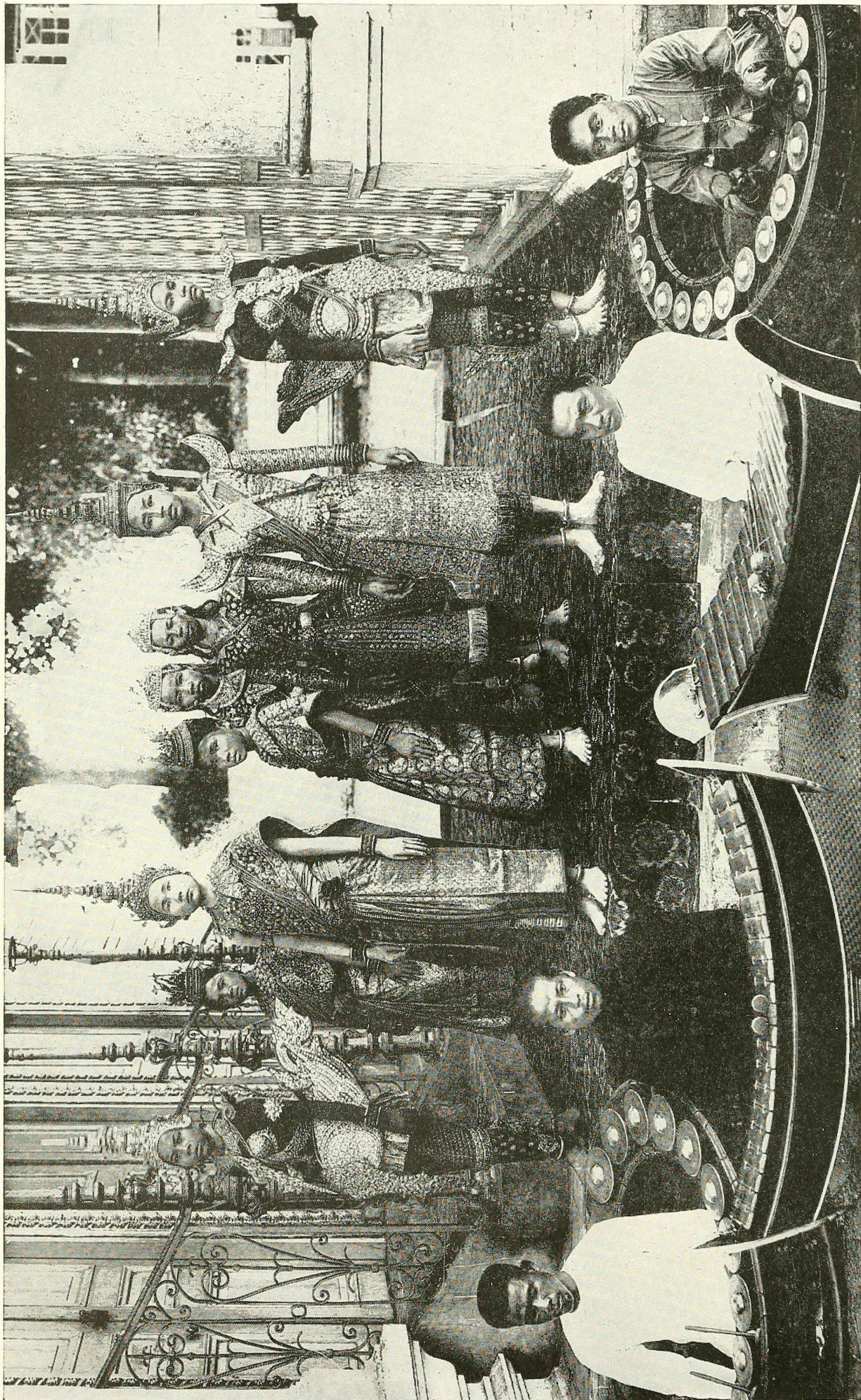
In the distance are the smooth, bare trunks of the flamboyant tree, or "flame of the forest." Other trees of this region are the teak, dipterocarpus, kapok, sao, tamarind, etc. The bullock cart in the foreground is the kind in common use. In the trees alongside every road are hundreds of monkeys. These animals are never harassed by the Cambodians, who have an almost religious respect for them. The monkeys pay no attention to passersby.



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THE DANCES MOST POPULAR WITH THE KINGS OF CAMBODIA REPRESENT EPISODES
IN THEIR HISTORY OR MYTHOLOGICAL SCENES FROM THE RAMAYANA

This picture represents the monkeys fighting the giant. Note the interested spectators in the
background



Dieulefils Collection

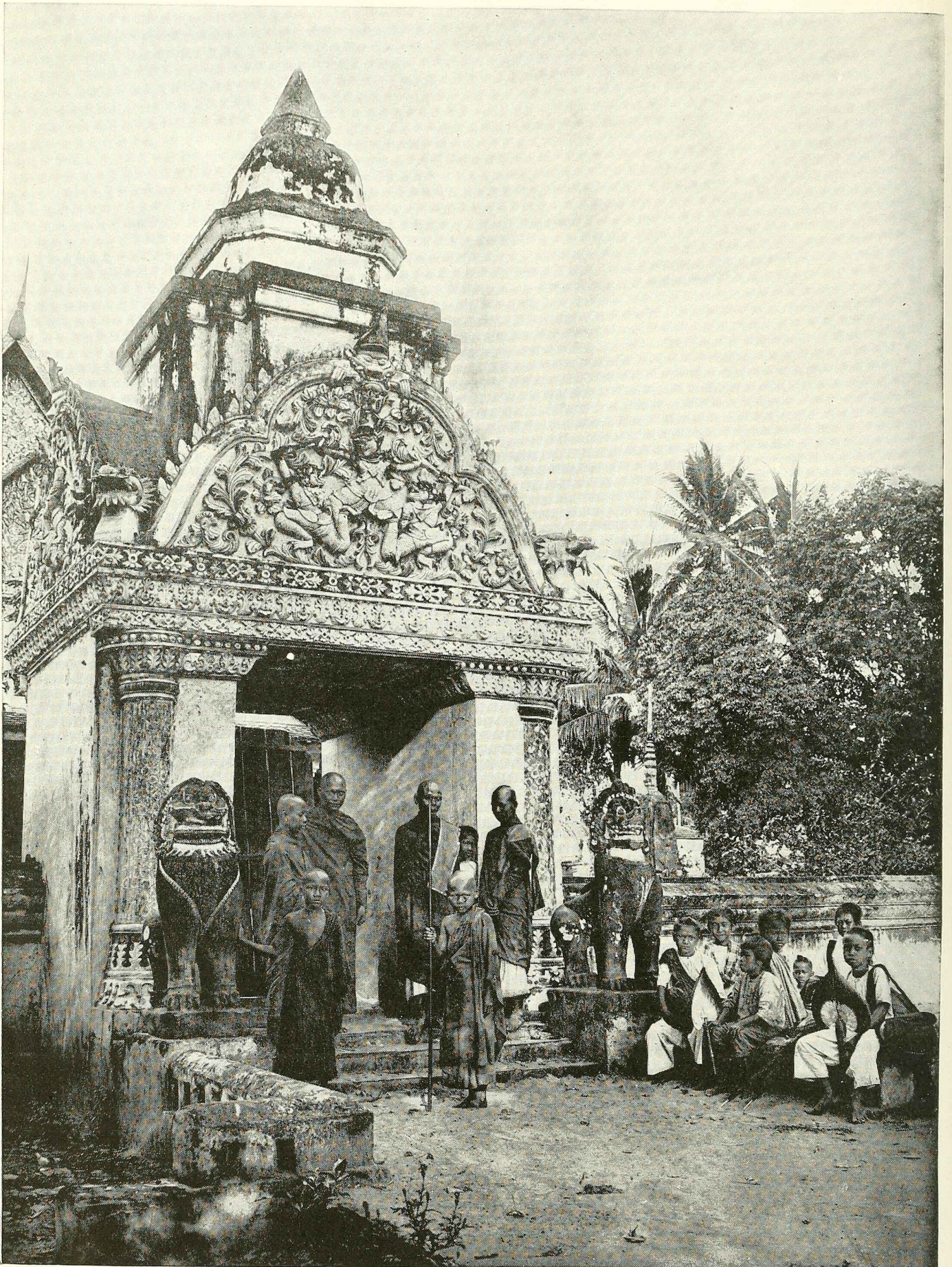
DANCERS OF THE KING OF CAMBODIA PREPARING TO DANCE

The King of Cambodia at great expense maintains a large troop of dancers, as tradition requires the sovereign to maintain this evidence of his power and splendor. The dancers are chosen from the most beautiful women of the kingdom—those noted for their dexterity and grace, for the wealth of jewels which they can display, and for the richness of their dresses. Compare the bonnets to those on pages 240 and 249.



DANCERS OF THE KING IN THEIR FAVORITE ATTITUDE

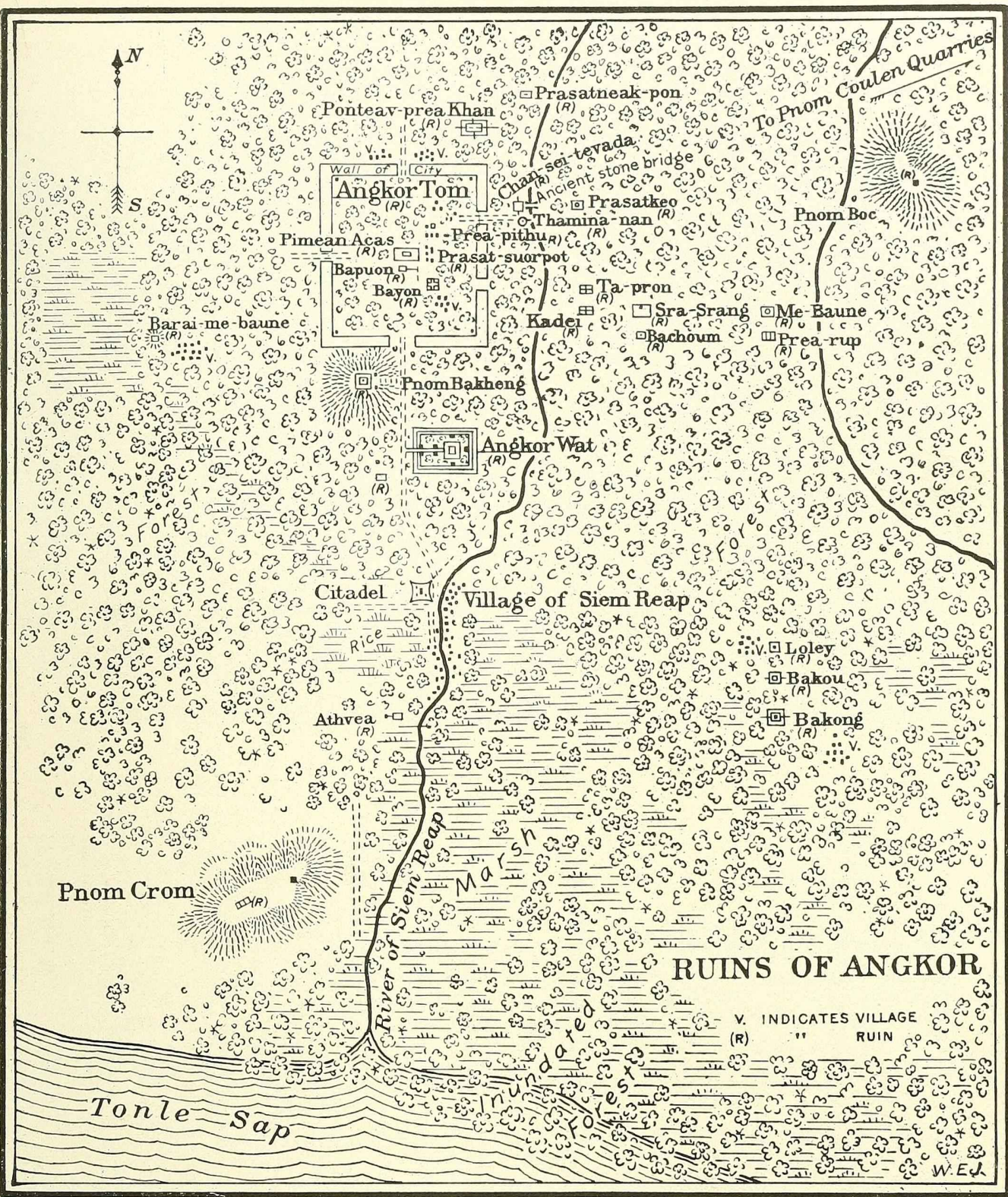
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Dieulefils Collection

BONZES (PRIESTS) VISITING THE VILLAGE TO RECEIVE ALMS

Every day the priests of the convent assemble and then visit the villages which support them. They are accompanied by the children of the most prominent men, who consider it an honor to wait upon the *bonzes* and to carry the basket in which the gifts, mainly rice, are deposited. All Cambodian boys must serve for a certain period, at least three months, in the convents of the *bonzes*.



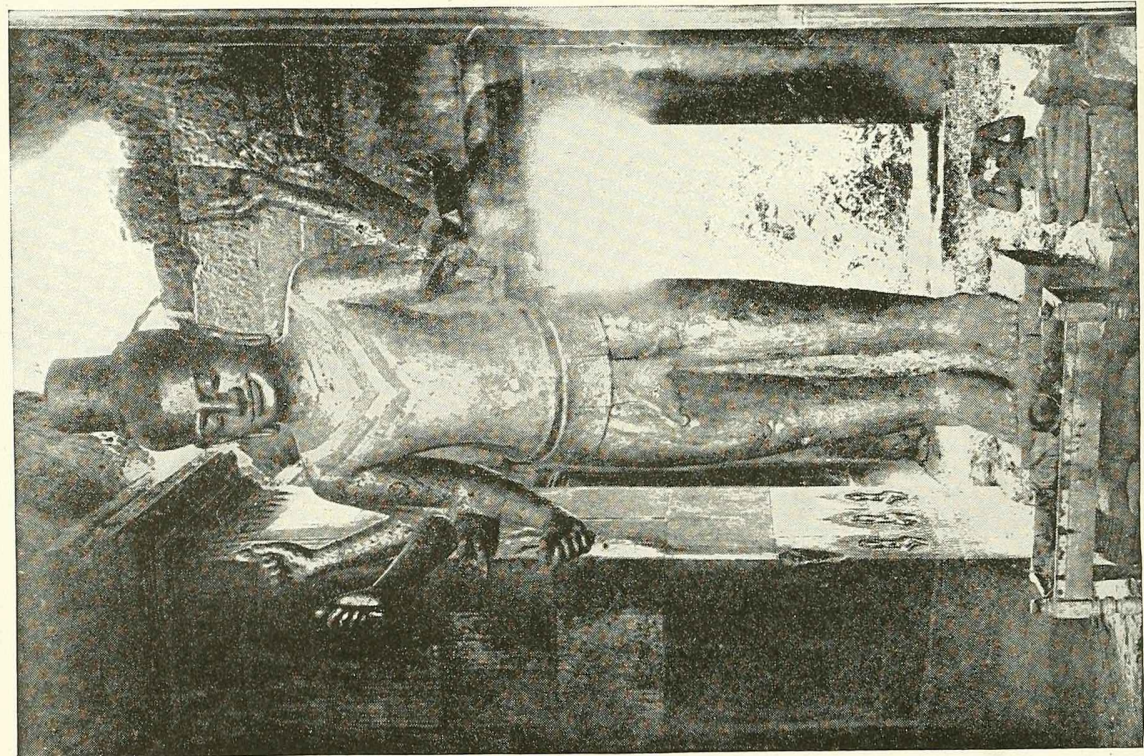
OUTLINE MAP SHOWING RUINS OF ANGKOR: CAMBODIA

Angkor Tom, the capital city, and Angkor Wat, the temple, far outweigh in importance all the other ruins. However, at Loley, Me-Baune, Kompong-Chnang, Beng-Mealea, Bakong, and elsewhere there exist architectural and sculptural remains well worth noticing, as shown in a few illustrations herein presented. The writer desires to acknowledge his indebtedness for the illustrations almost wholly to two collections: Dieulefils, in which the architectural view predominates, and Fournereau, where decorative detail is best shown.

of, rasped against the sides of the sampan like a drowning thing struggling for the surface, and threatening to capsize the boat.

It was a scene of weird and fantastic beauty, with the triumph of the trees as

its dominant note. With only a few short months during the dry season when they could be entirely above water, they were courageously invading the sea, adapting themselves to their novel situation and waiting for it to become dry land.

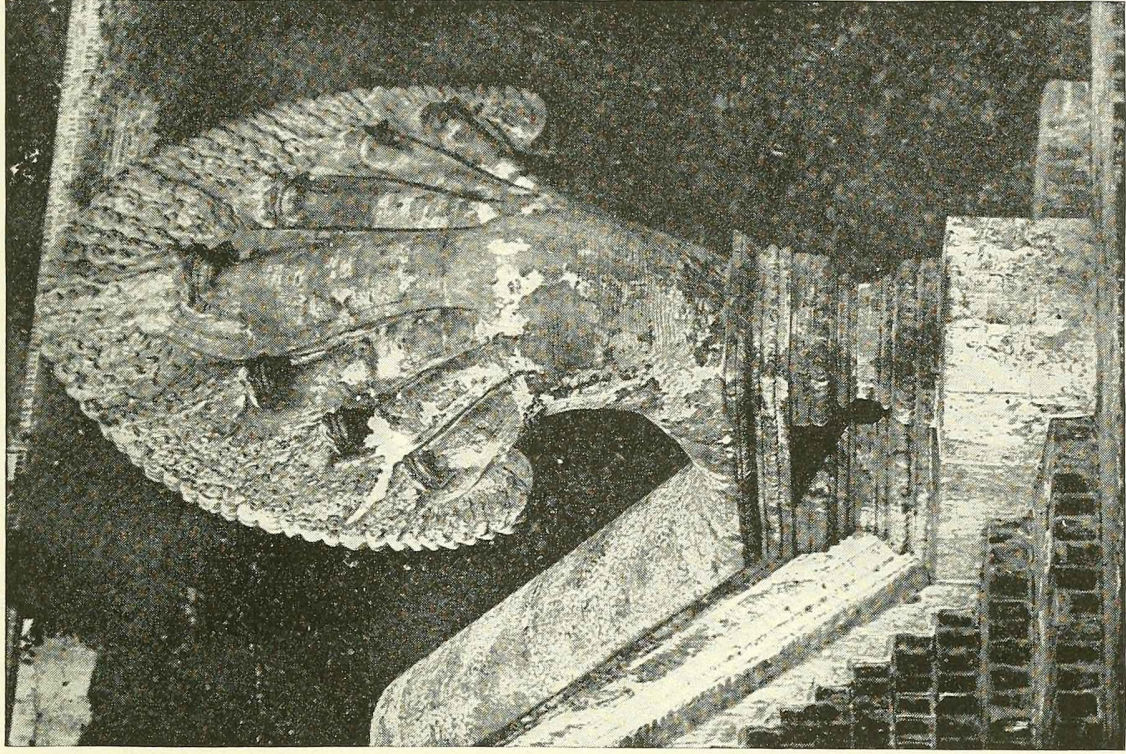


A BUDDHA WITH MANY ARMS AND AN UNUSUAL,
HEAD-DRESS: ANGKOR WAT



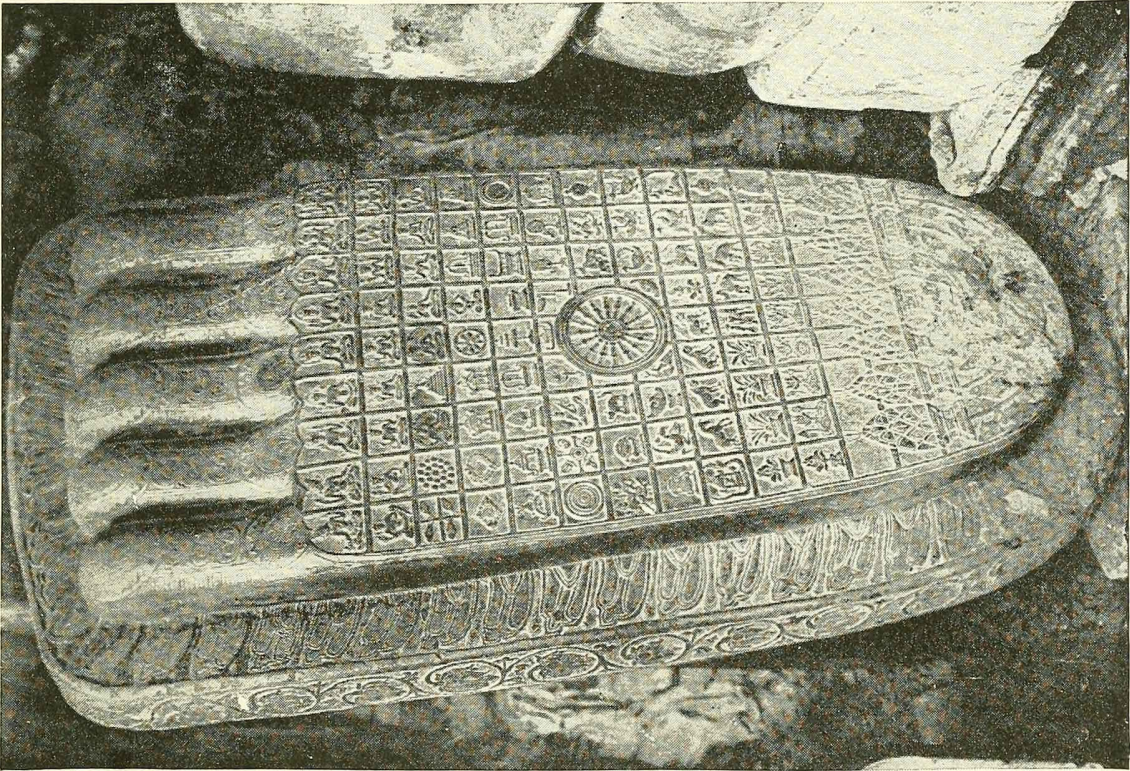
HEAD OF A GIANT WHO HAD MANY FACES

Dieulefils Collection

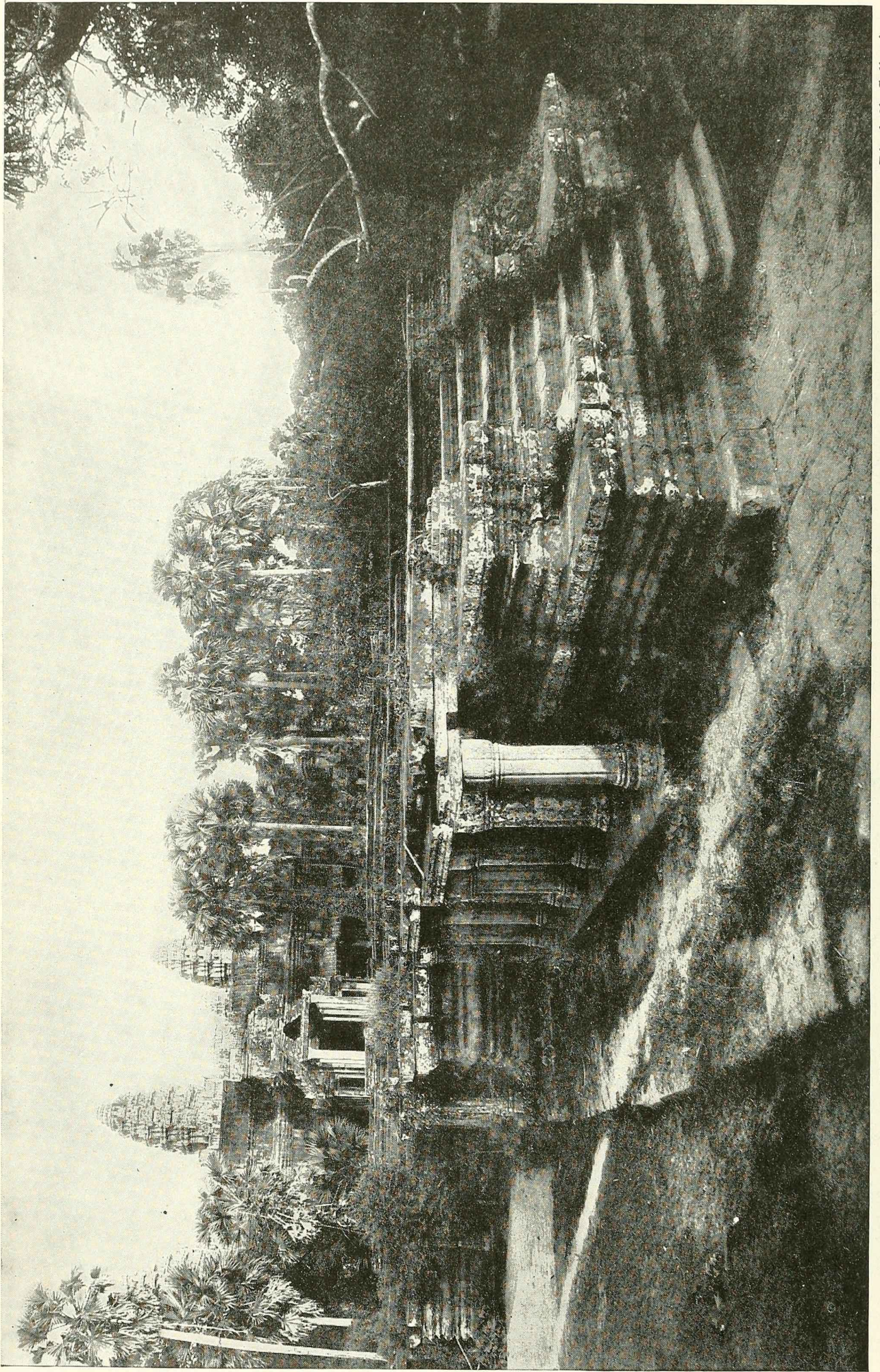


THE NAGA, OR SEVEN-HEADED COBRA, THE FAVORITE
DESIGN AT ANGKOR WAT

This is found in connection with practically all the ruins,
usually as here, for a balustrade finial



BUDDHA'S FOOT, AT ANGKOR WAT



THE APPROACH TO THE FRONT OF THE TEMPLE: ANGKOR WAT (SEE PAGE 228)

From the entrance a stone causeway leads up to this point, where the steps mount to the level of the outer gallery

And it will become dry land eventually. By daylight one can see for many miles the summit of Pnom Crom, situated on the very margin of the lake, utterly destitute of trees, its brown sides fissured with deep gullies and looking very much like an enormous sugar-loaf slowly dissolving. Looking about the country one may see other "pnoms," or eminences, likewise melting into the lake; so the day of the triumph of the trees is at hand.

These causes afford some solid basis of fact for the Cambodian fish stories, for the lake is undoubtedly a natural fish trap. As its waters recede, at the end of the dry season, the fish must needs crowd up into the shallow little streams that feed it. A few crumbs of bread thrown upon the water brought swarms of minnows around the sampan; but this also brought such grunts and whines of disapproval from the Cambodian oarsmen, to see good bread squandered on fishes, that the remainder of the loaf went to them.

They even laid aside their home-made cigarettes while they ravenously devoured the dry bread. I offered each of them a cigar with a colored paper label around it. The poor fellows removed their hats, tucked them under their arms, and advanced reverently with bowed heads and extended palms. Excess of gratitude could do no more.

It was broad daylight when I reached Siem Reap, after rowing and poling the boat for five hours through mud, water, and mosquitoes; then an hour and a half of jolting in a bullock cart, and there through the trees were the towers of the temple of Angkor Wat.

The first glimpse one gets of the ruins is when a rounded tower appears through the trees a mile or so distant, just a moment, and then no more till you are there. It is Angkor Wat, the most recent, the best preserved, the most classic and ornate of them all, though not the largest. There are many others scattered about this wide plain, including Angkor Tom, only a mile away; but these are all ruins, indeed, while the wat might still be called a building.

Standing in front of the temple grounds

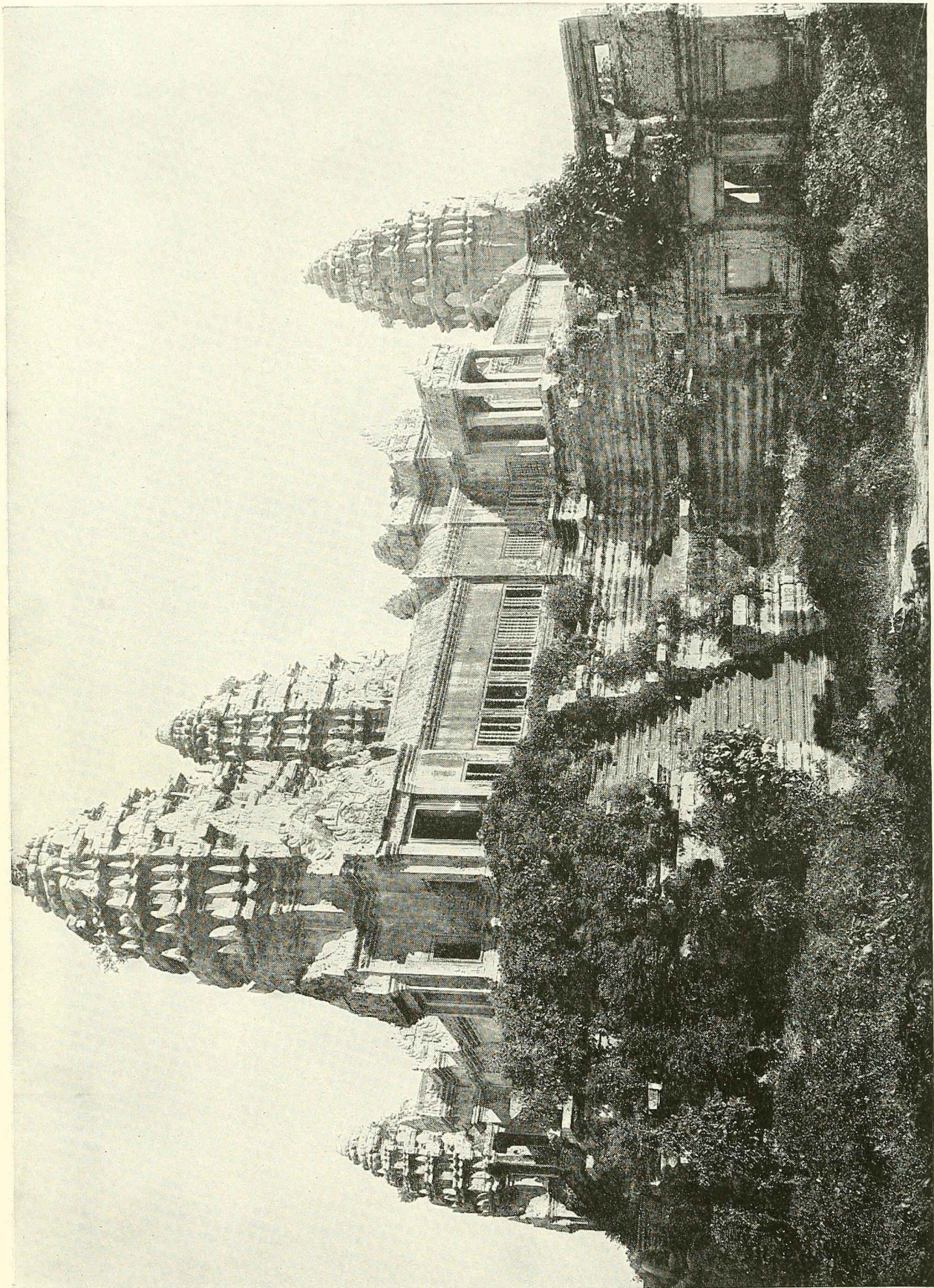
(the word *wat* means a temple), you see a moat some 30 rods wide surrounding the premises like a medieval castle, and crossed by a stone causeway leading to the main entrance. This entrance is itself a massive tower, flanked by two others only a little smaller, set in the inclosing wall. The whole inclosure is 800 by 1,000 meters, and its area is therefore 176 acres. Passing through the entrance, you see the elevated stone causeway, flanked by several small temples, leading up to the wat in the distance.

At a distance you get the effect of lateral magnitude only, for the entire structure or group of structures is sitting flat on a level plain, un aspiring and almost uninspiring. Had it been placed upon an eminence, and there is one not many rods away—but what's the use? The builders no doubt had their reasons, and they can't give them now.

It is not a little surprising, however, to look at the central tower and hear that it is actually 65 meters, 213 feet, from its summit to the level of the plain.

It is not till one enters the galleries and begins to measure distances relatively therefrom that the grandeur and impressiveness of the conception begins to make itself felt. Those same rounded towers now spring aloft, and the inner temple itself is raised above a surrounding gallery, which is in turn terraced above an outer and surrounding gallery, till the roof of the latter is on a level with the base of the former. These two encompassing galleries and the cruciform temple building proper within them are the main details in the ground plan of the wat.

The material used throughout in the construction is a grayish sandstone which the French call "grès." It much resembles marble in closeness and fineness of grain, and it stands weathering admirably. Where portions of the decorative detail had been affectionately caressed and stroked by admiring hands, the stone is as smooth as polished marble. The effect of the color is certainly as somber as could be conceived, and to see it in ruins is painfully suggestive of the grayness of death.



Dieulefils Collection

THE BEST VIEW OBTAINABLE OF THE CENTRAL TEMPLE OF ANGKOR WAT, SHOWING CENTRAL TOWER, 213 FEET HIGH, IN THE DISTANCE, AND THREE OF THE FOUR CORNER TOWERS

Inside and outside, and from top to bottom, it is a mass of carving (see page 247)



Dieulefils Collection

STAIRWAY LEADING TO THE SANCTUARY OF THE CENTRAL TOWER: ANGKOR WAT

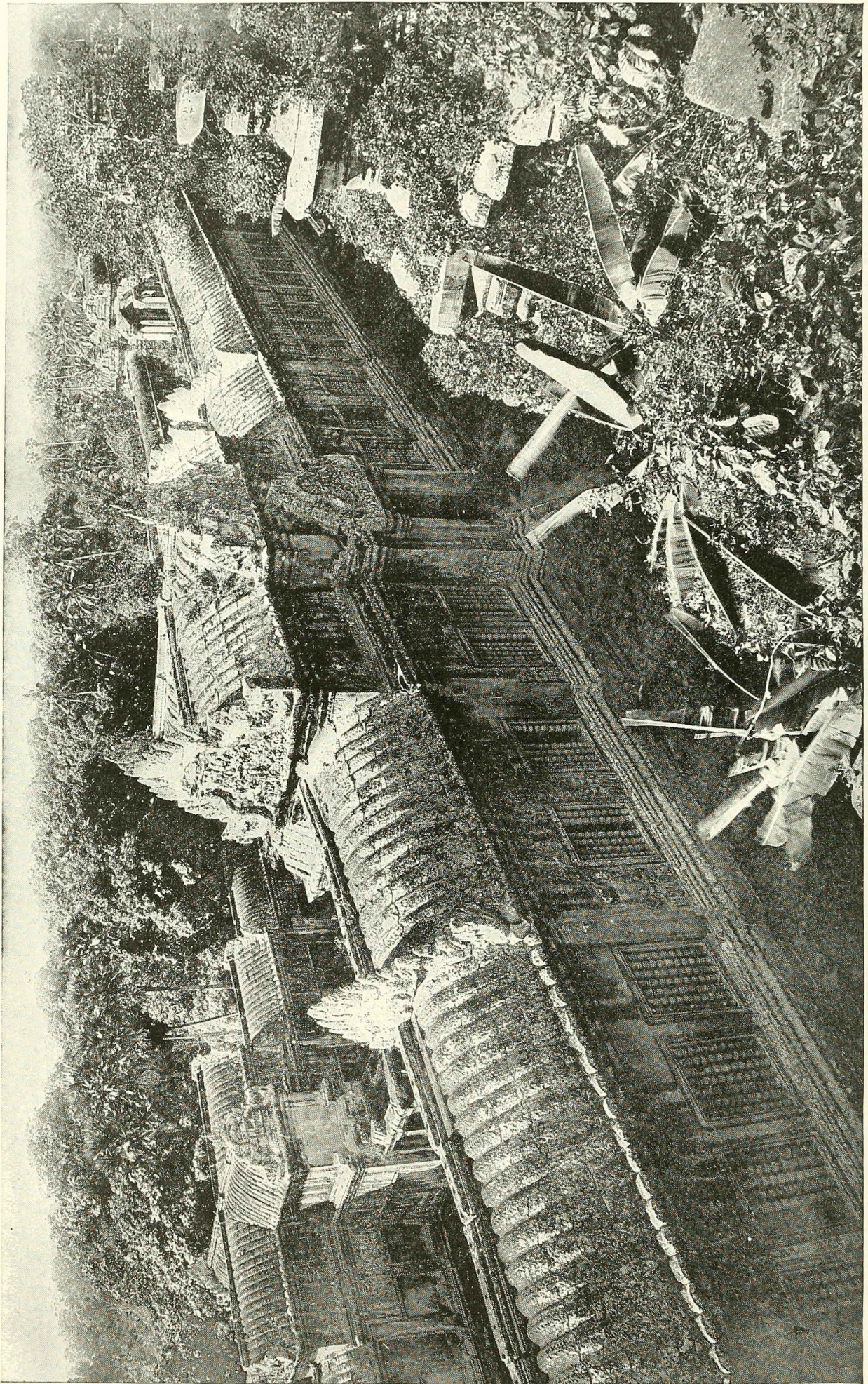
It is twelve meters (40 feet) from bottom to top of stairway. The steps are unusually high and very narrow, so that climbing them is not only difficult but dangerous. Note the four carved figures in the left foreground and the delicate tracery carved above them. Almost every square foot, outside and inside, of this temple bears some exquisite design, carved in stone.

And all of these tons upon tons of stone were brought from Pnom Coulen, nearly 19 miles away. How, overland? Impossible. If that submerged forest could tell its own history we should probably hear of a time when both Pnom Coulen and Angkor were situated upon the margin of Tonle Sap and the stone-barges went to and fro between them. But that triumphant forest, having driven back the sea, has made a malarial marsh

near the ruins which is simply one of its weapons offensive.

Cambodians, of course, can stand it, and the flimsy shacks of the bonzes are clustered about the base of the wat today, keeping up the tradition of its origin as a Buddhist monastery. The droning of their voices sounds almost constantly on the hot, drowsy air, as they read and study aloud.

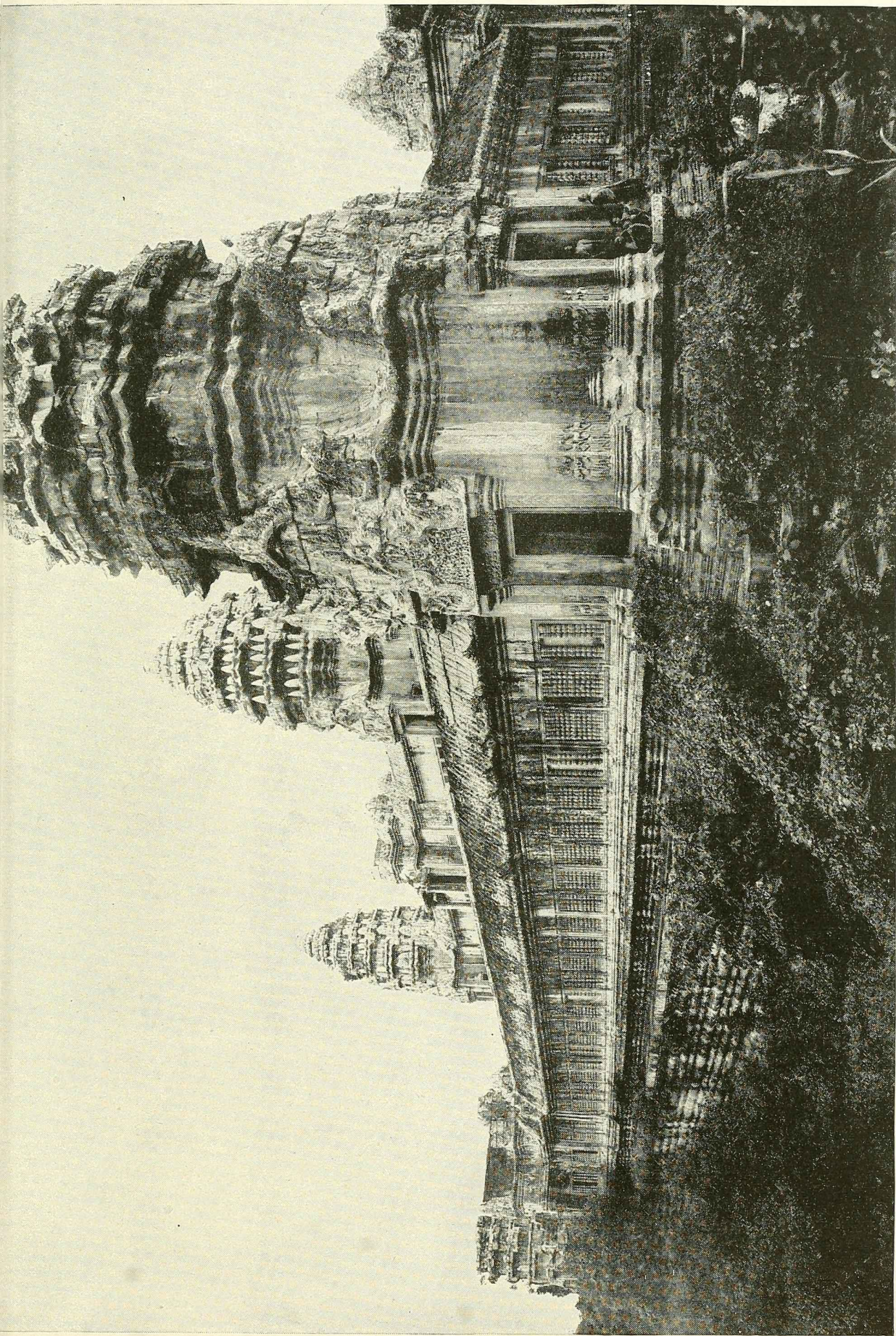
It is little heed they pay to the ever-



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VIEW TAKEN FROM AN ELEVATED POSITION ON THE BASE OF THE CENTRAL TEMPLE

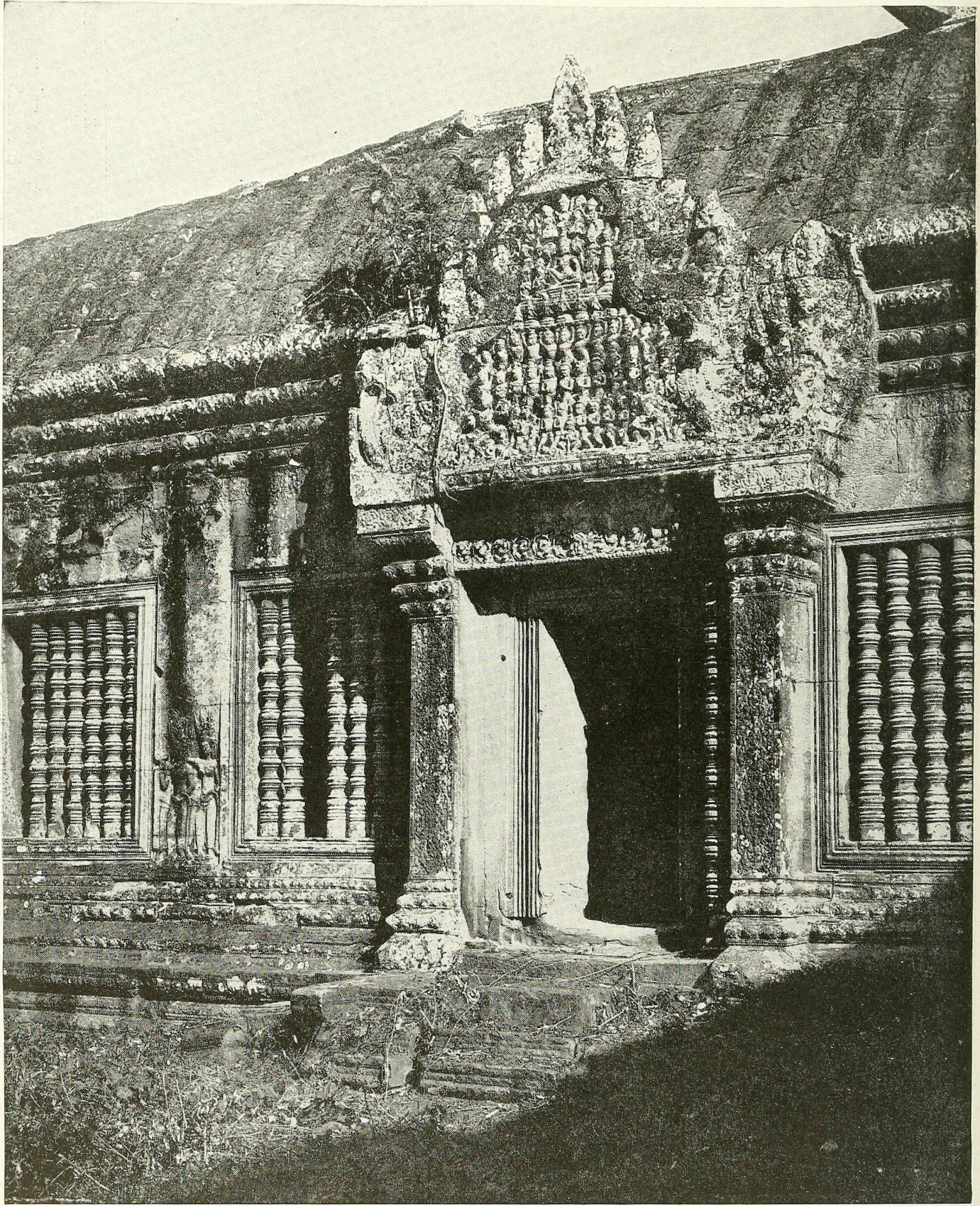
This view shows the roofs of the surrounding galleries, south side; also the tropical vegetation that has not yet triumphed over these noble works of man (page 247). Groups of carved figures (indistinctly seen in the picture) decorate the spaces between the bars in the windows. Every cornice, feet outside and inside, is covered with intricate designs.



Dieulefils Collection

A CORNER OF THE SECOND GALLERY, SURMOUNTING A BASE SIX METERS HIGH

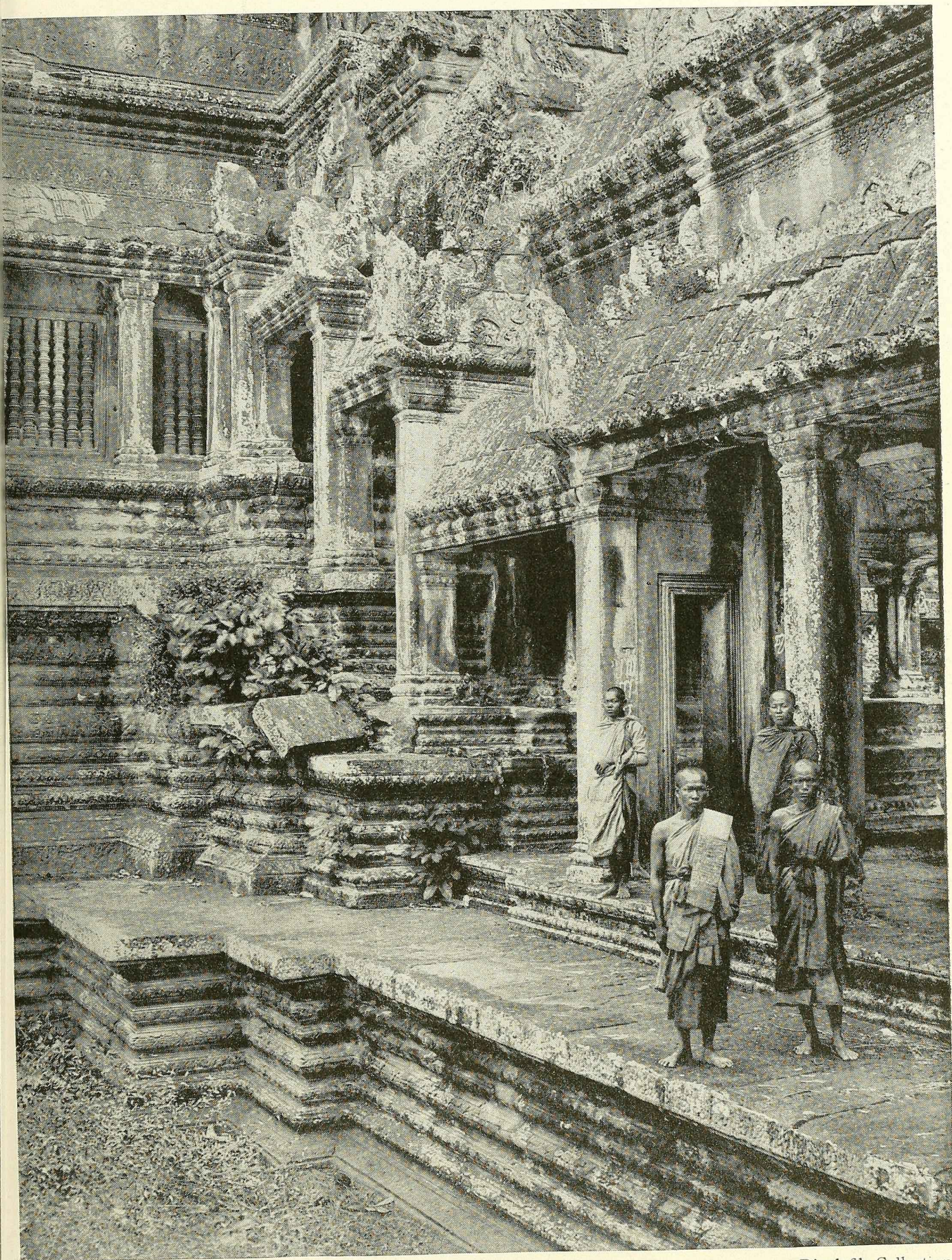
The rows of carved bars or columns conceal false windows, as the gallery is lighted from an interior court. The gallery contains numberless statues in stone or gilded wood, the better preserved of which still serve as objects of reverence to the faithful pilgrims. Note the four men in the right foreground and the rows of carved figures to their left.



Dieulefils Collection

DOORWAY OF THE SECOND GALLERY: ANGKOR WAT

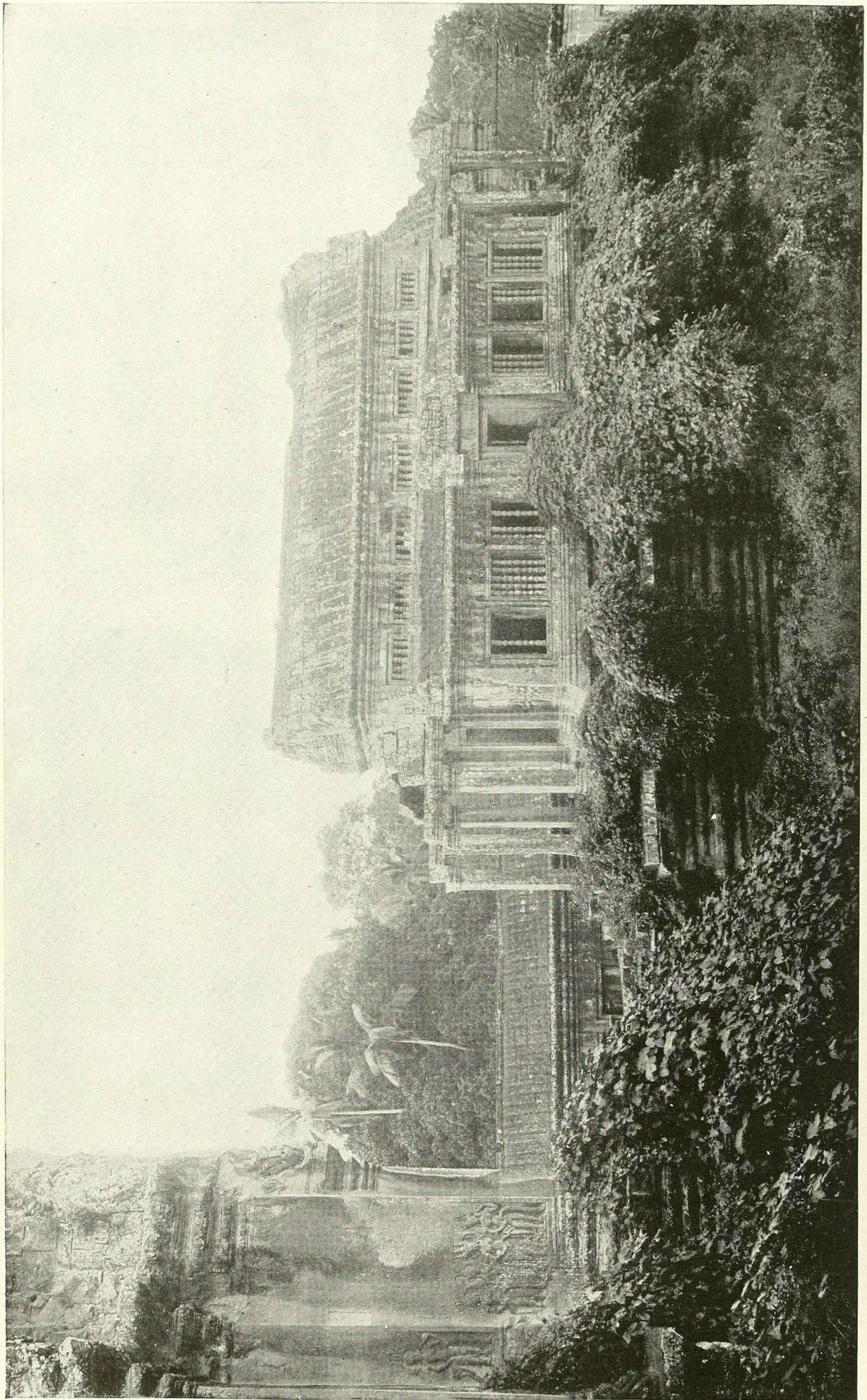
Above are to be seen the coils of the naga (serpent) inclosing about fifty of the heroes of the Ramayana



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SOME CAMBODIAN BONZES ON PILGRIMAGE TO THE GREAT TEMPLE OF ANGKOR WAT

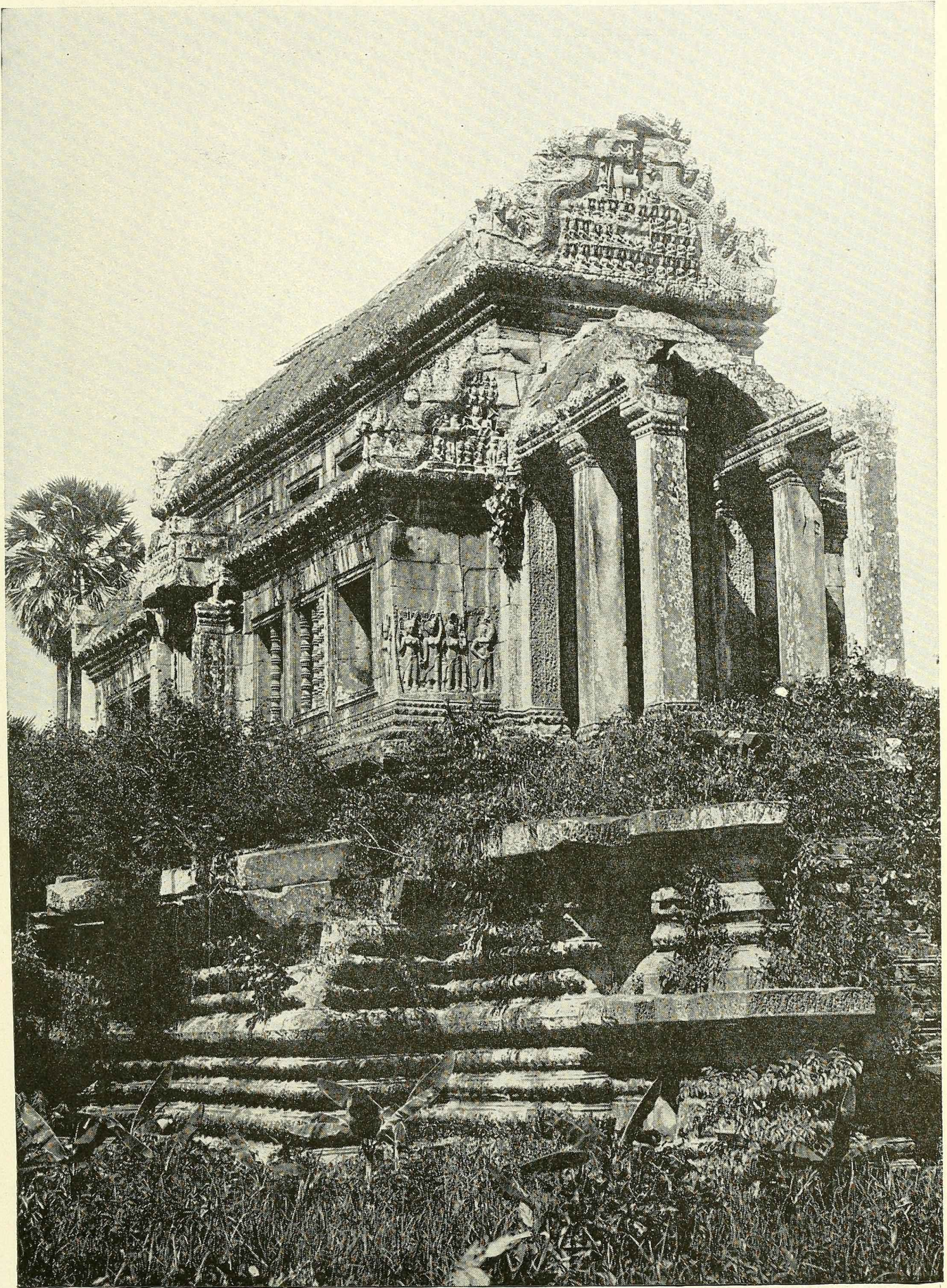
They come in their long yellow robes from all Siam and Cambodia, and the monotonous droning of their voices as they read aloud increases rather than diminishes the lonesomeness of the place.



Dieulefils Collection

SMALL TEMPLE SITUATED INSIDE THE INNER GALLERY, BUT DISTINCT FROM THE MAIN TEMPLE

The roof of the inclosing gallery and the side of the great temple are shown. Outside of and below the gallery is the outer gallery. Each gallery is quadrilateral, surrounding the main temple, and its inner walls are covered with bas-reliefs. Another view of this temple is shown on page 237.

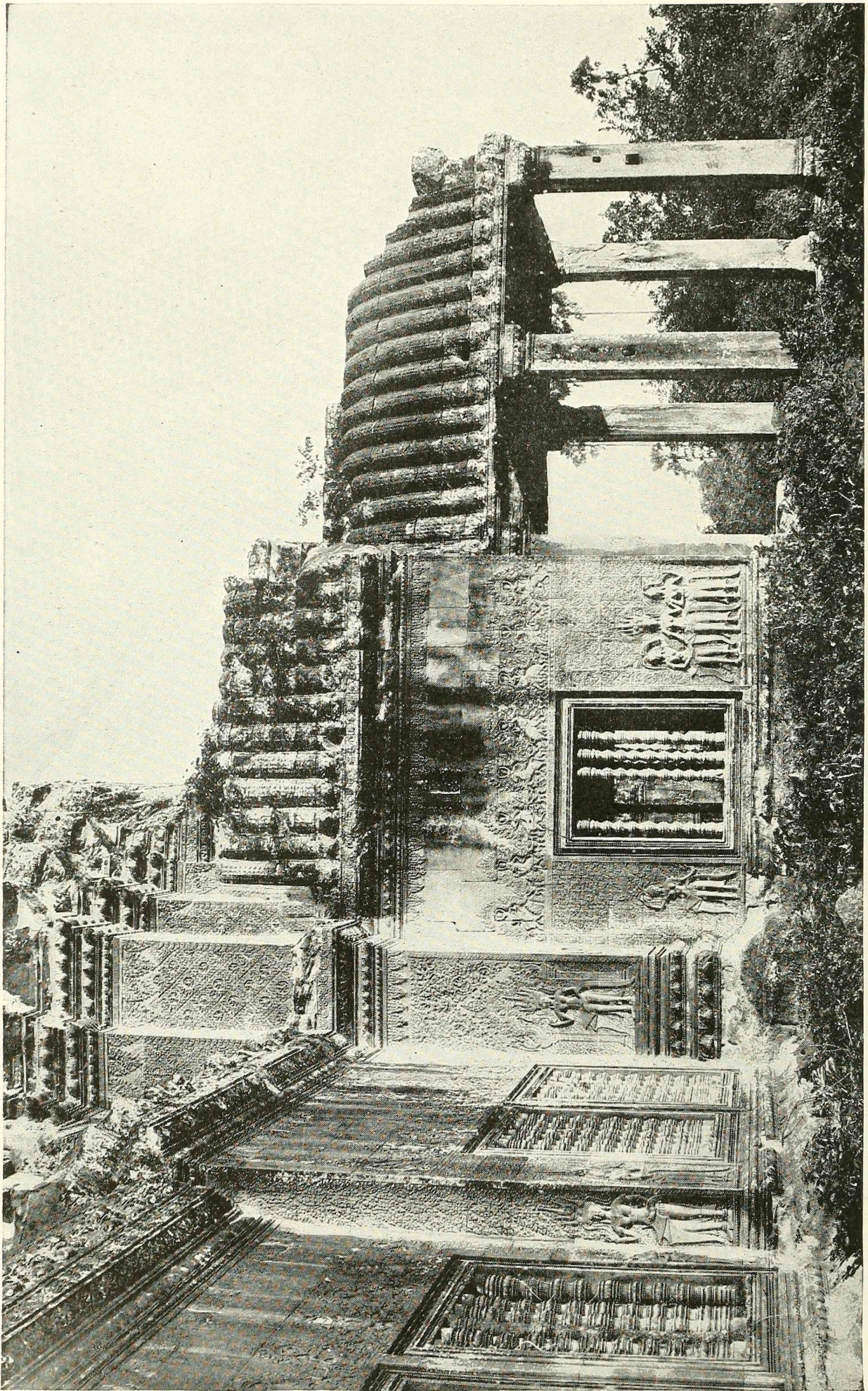


Dieulefils Collection

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE SMALL TEMPLE

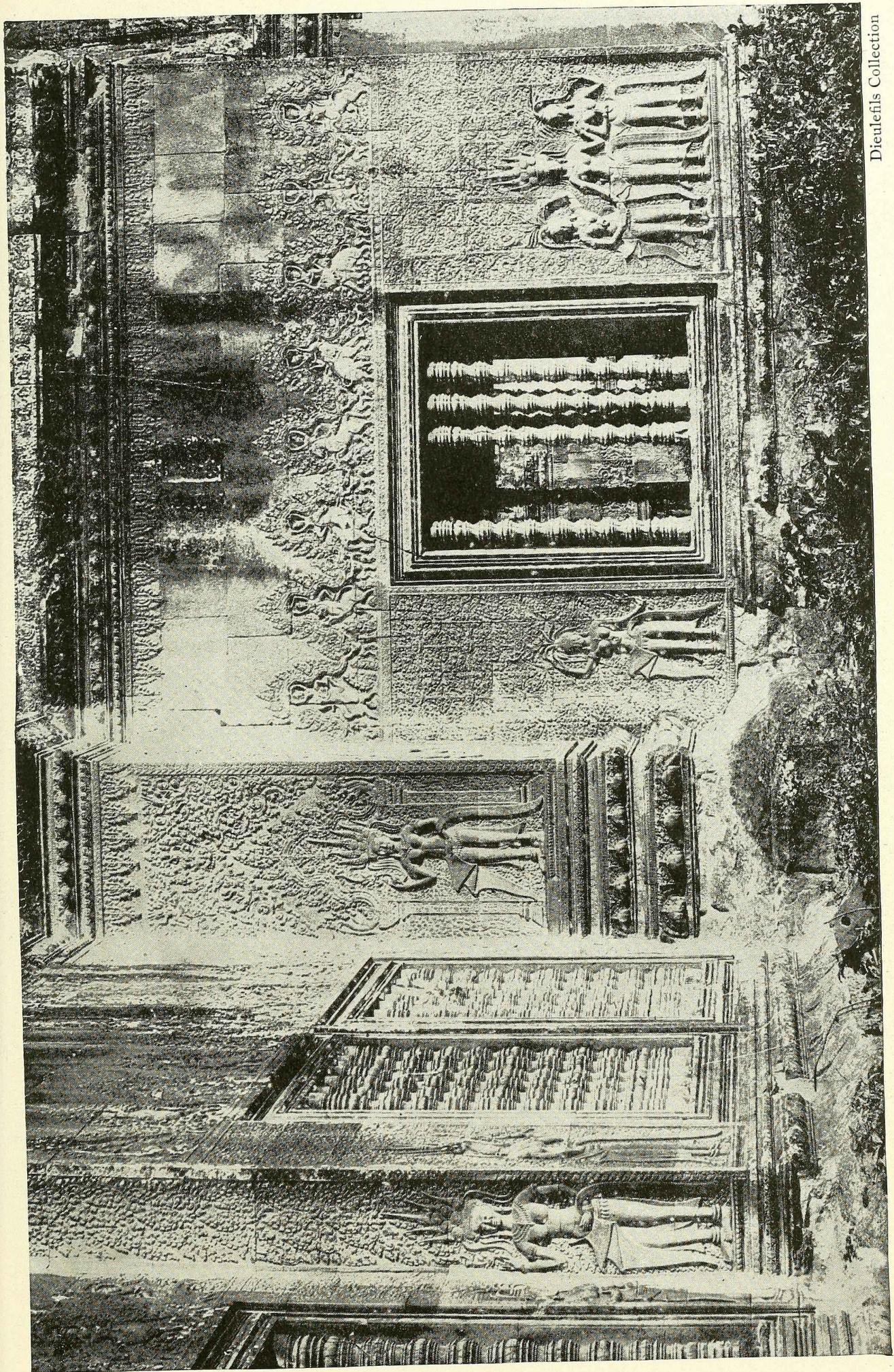
Note the richness of carving extending to the very top of the building

(237)



PORTICO AND PERISTYLE OF THE CENTRAL TOWER: ANGKOR WAT

It is remarkable that this lavish decoration has so well withstood the weathering of the torrential rains for something like eight hundred years. From end to end the walls of the galleries are covered with these marvelous friezes.



DETAIL OF THE PRECEDING VIEW FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE

The bars in the windows appear to be a conventionalized abacus or counting frame, such as one sees in all the Orient. They are made of the same gray stone used throughout in the structure of the temple. Note the warriors astride horses, elephants, etc. (see pages 246 and 247)



Dieulefils Collection

PILASTERS, DEMI-VAULT, AND LINTEL, ALL SHOWING THE USUAL WEALTH OF
CARVED STONE: ANGKOR WAT

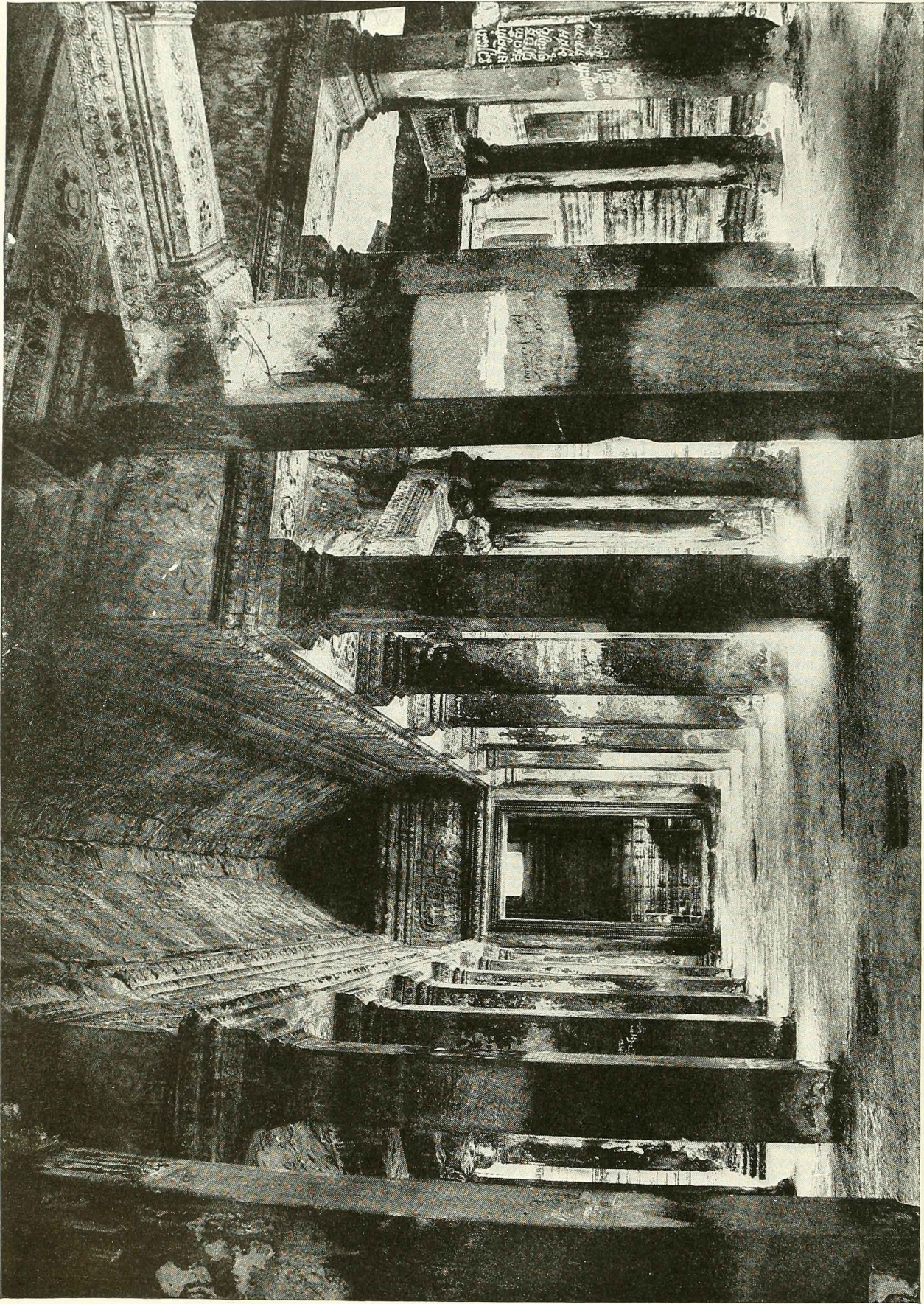
Every foot of the outer and inner walls of the galleries on every floor are richly decorated. Divine figures or *tevdas* abound. Most of these feminine figures are of superb expression and grace. Their rich head-dress is ornamented with jewels, the neck is decorated with necklaces, and the arms and ankles ornamented with richly carved bracelets. Many of the images are polished with the touch of generations of pilgrims (see also page 249)



Dieulefils Collection

THE SAME KIND OF SITUATION SIMILARLY TREATED

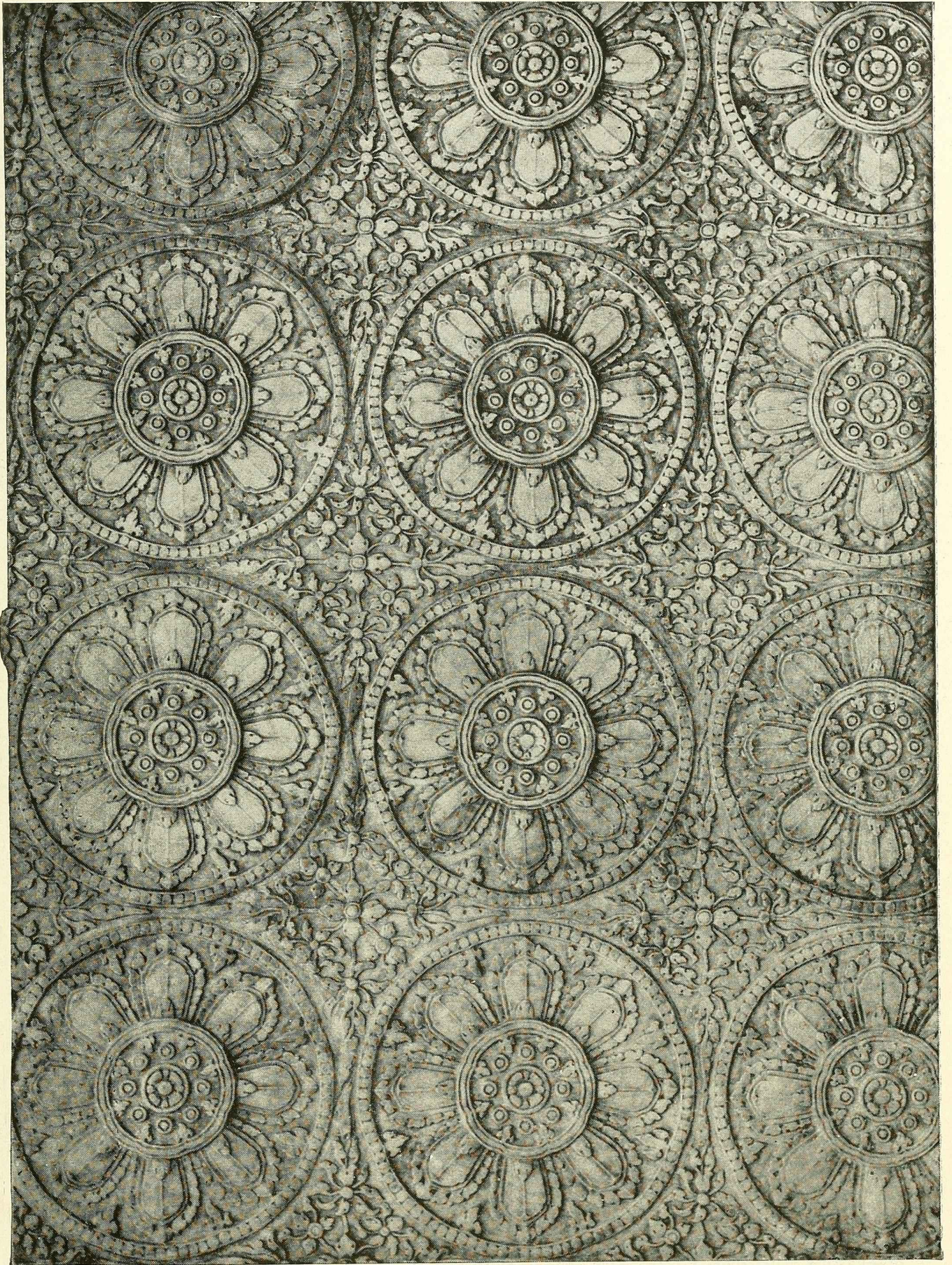
The gates to the cloister in the central tower, where the Buddhist divinities are invoked every day, are decorated with pilasters, richly carved. Divine persons, the *tevdas*, carrying in their hands the lotus flower, are the most common images (see also page 249)



Dicullefils Collection

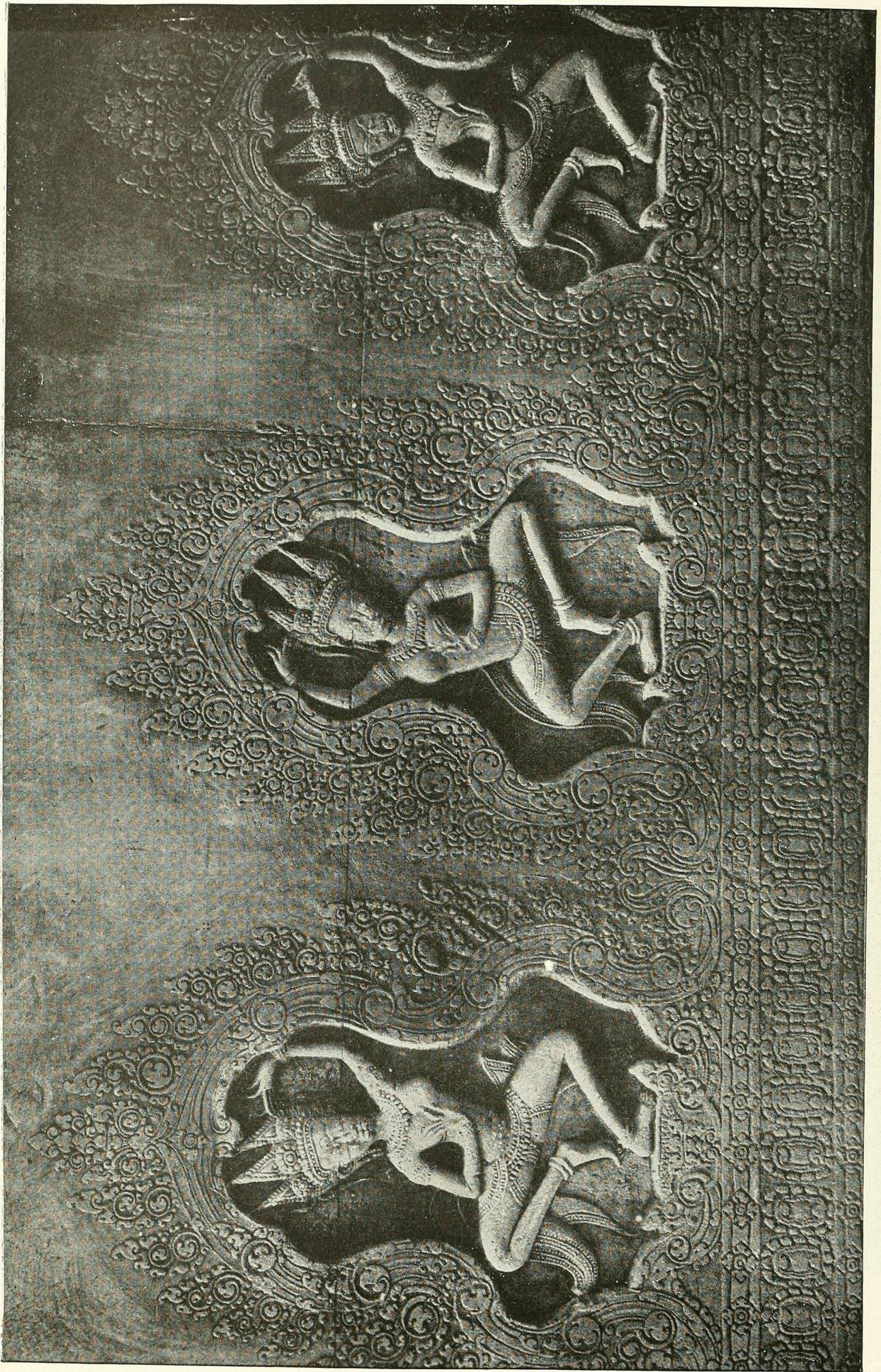
INTERIOR VIEW OF THE CRUCIFORM GALLERY, IN THE CENTRAL TEMPLE

All the columns shown in the illustration are monoliths, their bases being decorated with figures of old men, finely sculptured (see page 246). Above the handsomely carved cornices are friezes of dancing women (see pages 244 and 245). The corbel arch was originally hidden from view by delicately carved wooden paneling, of which a portion may be seen in upper right corner (see page 243).



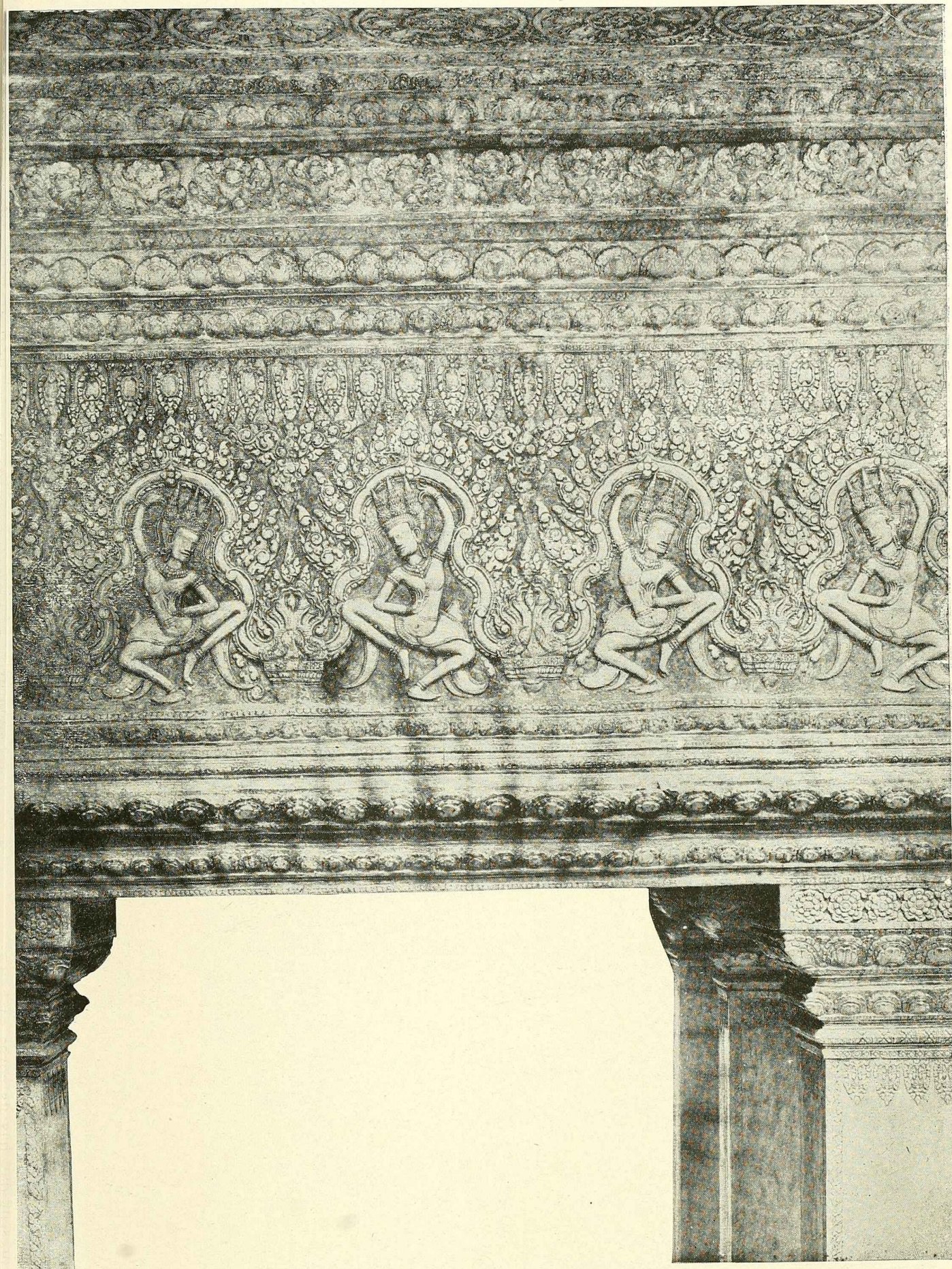
Fournereau Collection

A PORTION OF THE CARVED WOODEN CEILING OF THE GALLERIES
Its principal purpose was to conceal the corbel arch, which was not intended to be ornamental.
Only a few pieces of this ceiling remain



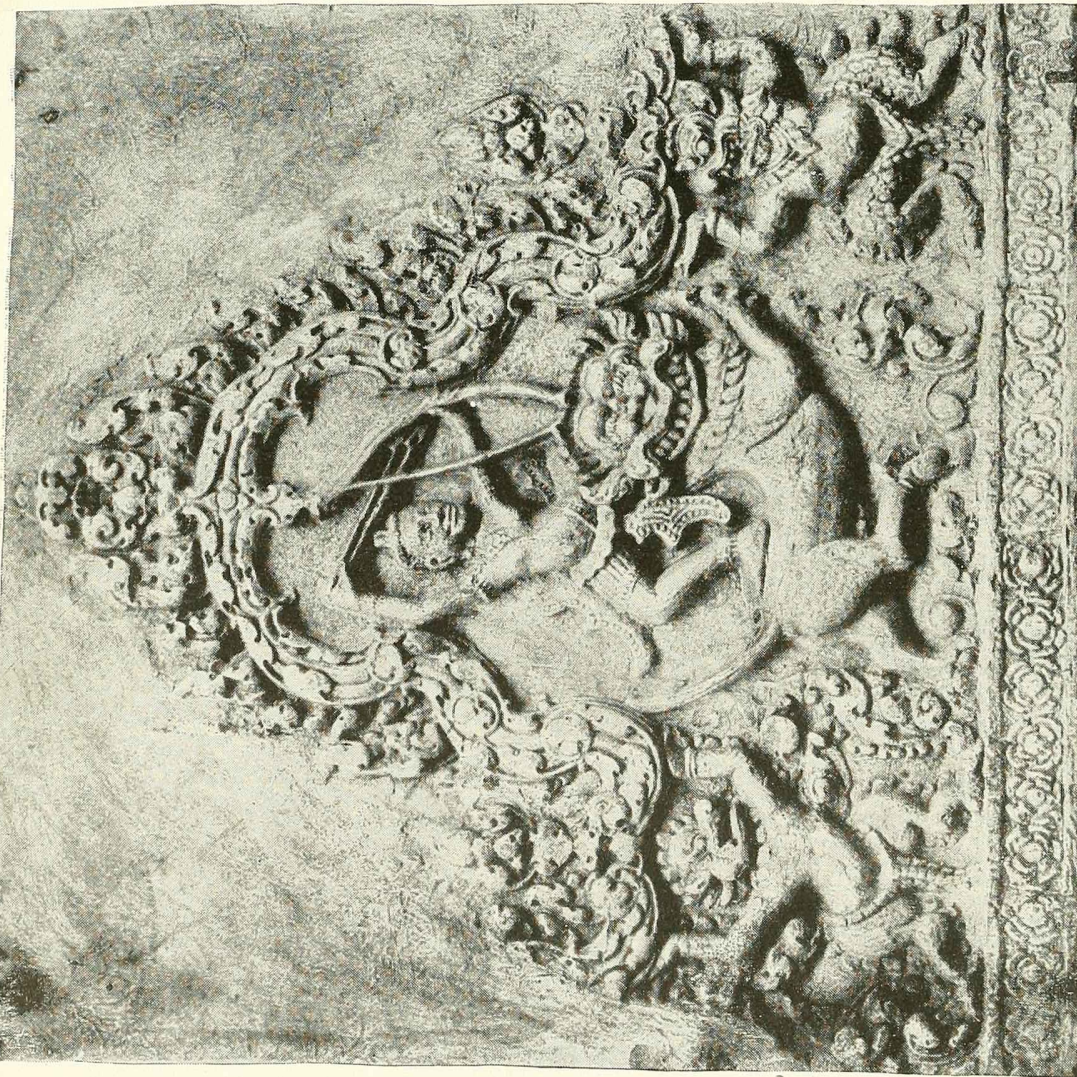
THE HEAVENLY DANCERS: ANGKOR WAT

These designs occur frequently in the ornamentations of the temple. Ballet dancing is evidently not a modern art. The Cambodian court of the present day has its corps of ballet dancers who are said to preserve some of these ancient dances (see pages 222 and 223)



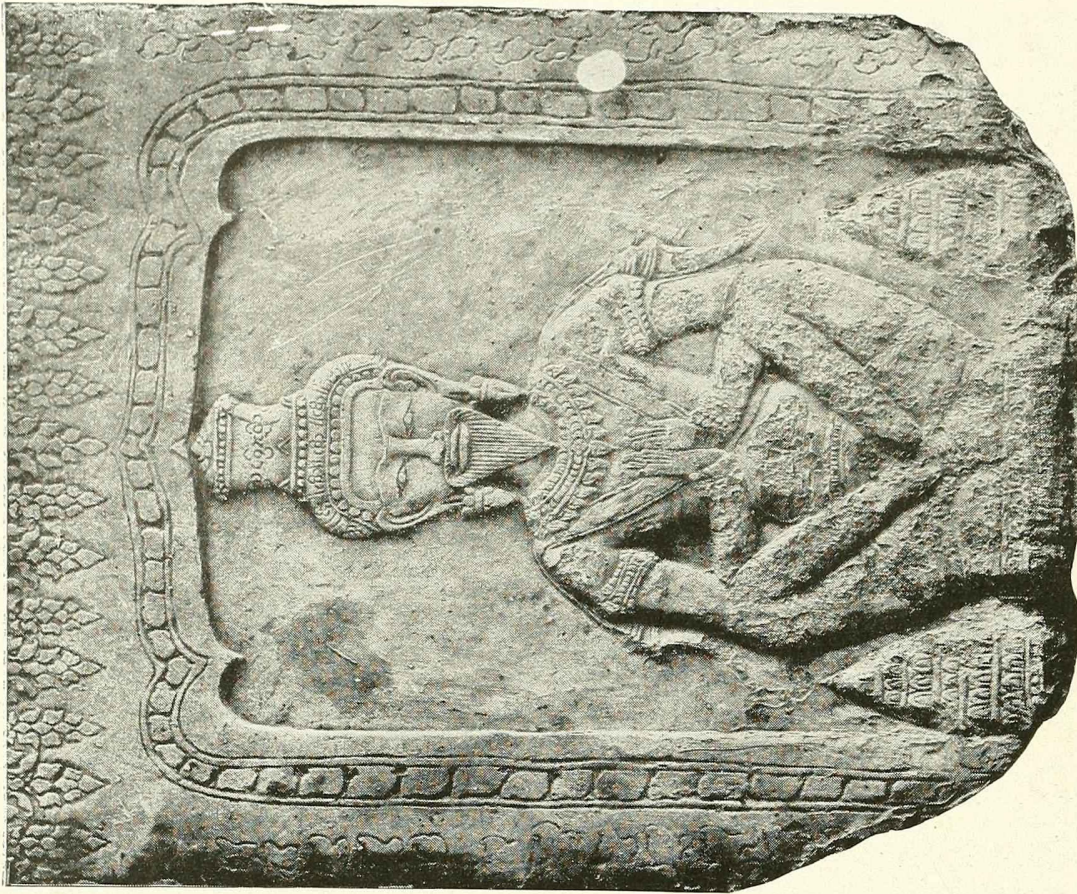
Fournereau Collection

ENTABLATURE IN THE CRUCIFORM GALLERY OF THE TEMPLE AT ANGKOR WAT, SHOWING THE FAMILIAR "HEAVENLY DANCERS," THE RICH DECORATIONS ABOVE, AND A PORTION OF THE WOODEN CEILING (SEE PAGE 243)



Fournereau Collection

PORTION OF A FRIEZE AT ANGKOR WAT, SHOWING A WARRIOR
ASTRIDE A DRAGON



Fournereau Collection

DECORATION AT BASE OF THE PILLARS SUPPORTING THE
GALLERIES

There are hundreds of these square pillars, the faces being decorated at the base just like the one above, and from the top downward with lace-work design (see page 242).



Fournereau Collection

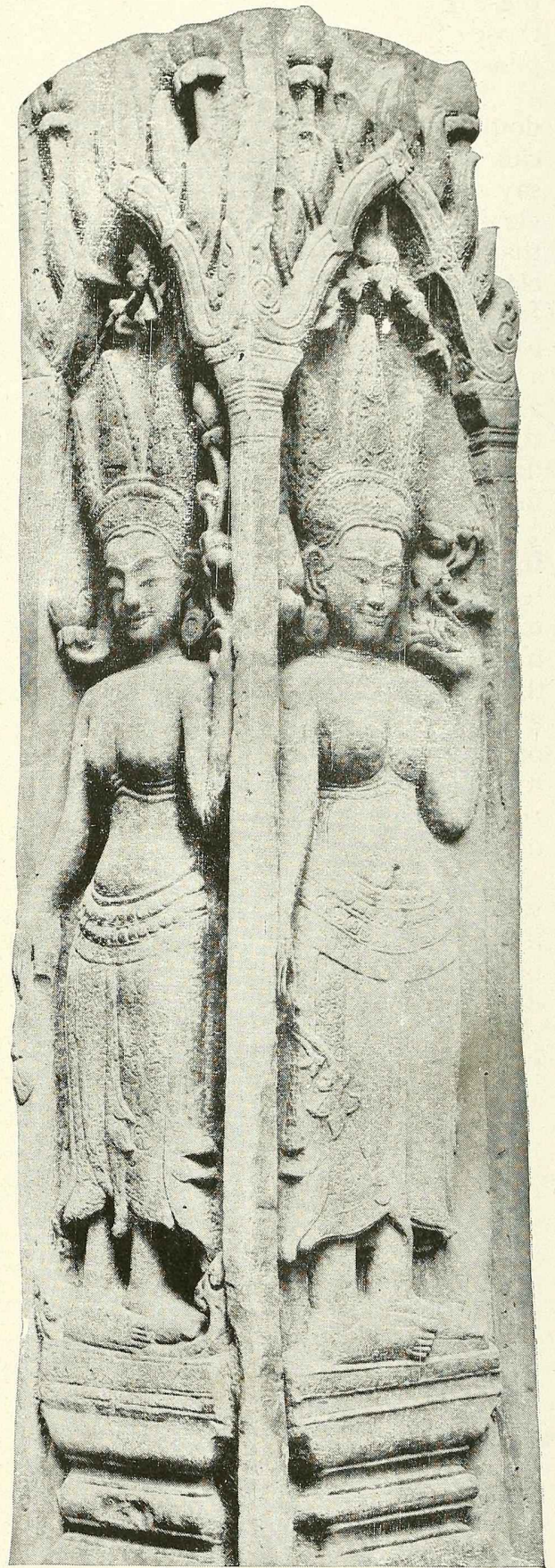
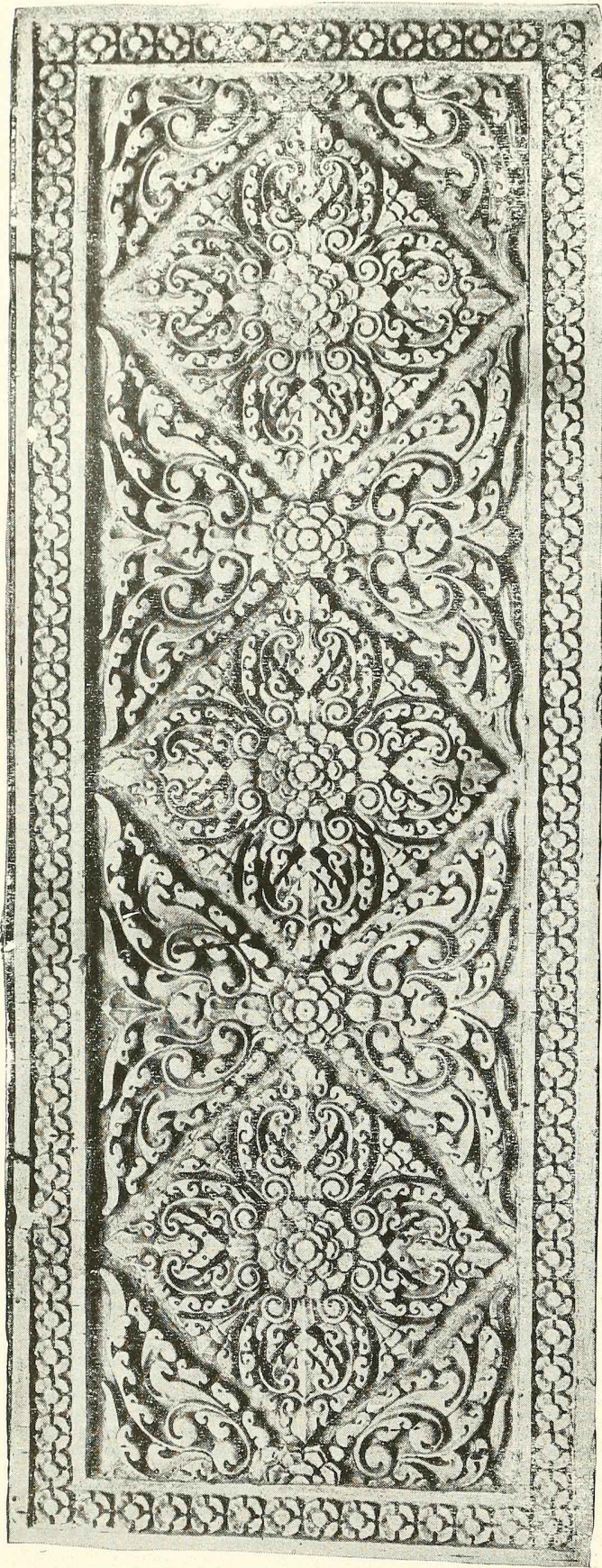
ANOTHER PORTION OF THE FRIEZE IN THE SAME TEMPLE: ANGKOR WAT

wakeful plants, the grasses, shrubs, and trees that are constantly at work prying at the foundation stones and swaying the columns. Already there are piles of broken stone at the base of the walls, like the talus at the foot of a cliff, the outer decorations and unessential parts. The halls and corridors are in the main intact and need little more than cleaning to be made habitable. No wonder that with only the bonzes to look after the wat it has long ago been given up to bats and pigeons and filth—and silence. It is a silence so lonesome and deathlike in its isolation that one shudders in turning a corner to find himself confronted by a stony Buddha with uplifted hands, as if imploring him not to disturb the repose of the centuries.

If the mass of the structure is impressive, the amount of decorative work done upon it, to speak only quantitatively, is still more so. Inside and outside, and from top to bottom, it is a mass of carving in stone. A few blank spaces are to be found about the building, and these

are generally in the main temple, reserved for the work of the greater artists who never came. Both the encircling galleries consist of a row of square columns on the outer side, an arch *en corbeille* above, and an inner wall with an entablature for the whole colonnade. And everything is decorated—the four flat faces of the columns, the walls, the entablature, and the wooden ceiling which formerly rested upon it, concealing the arch which is unornamented.

Around the base of the structure is a colonnade of clustered columns, which may have been added as an afterthought some centuries later. These much resemble the clustered columns of Moorish architecture, except that the channeling is not deep; and, furthermore, the capital much resembles the Byzantine. But for the rest, you see the square column everywhere, the same dimensions from top to bottom; long rows of them in the galleries, a cruciform colonnade of them on the terrace, or modified into pilasters when adjacent to doorways.



Fournerau Collection

JUST A PIECE OF STONE TRACERY AT
ANGKOR THOM

FRAGMENT OF ONE OF THE ANGLES OF A
LITTLE TOWER AT PIMEAN-ACAS

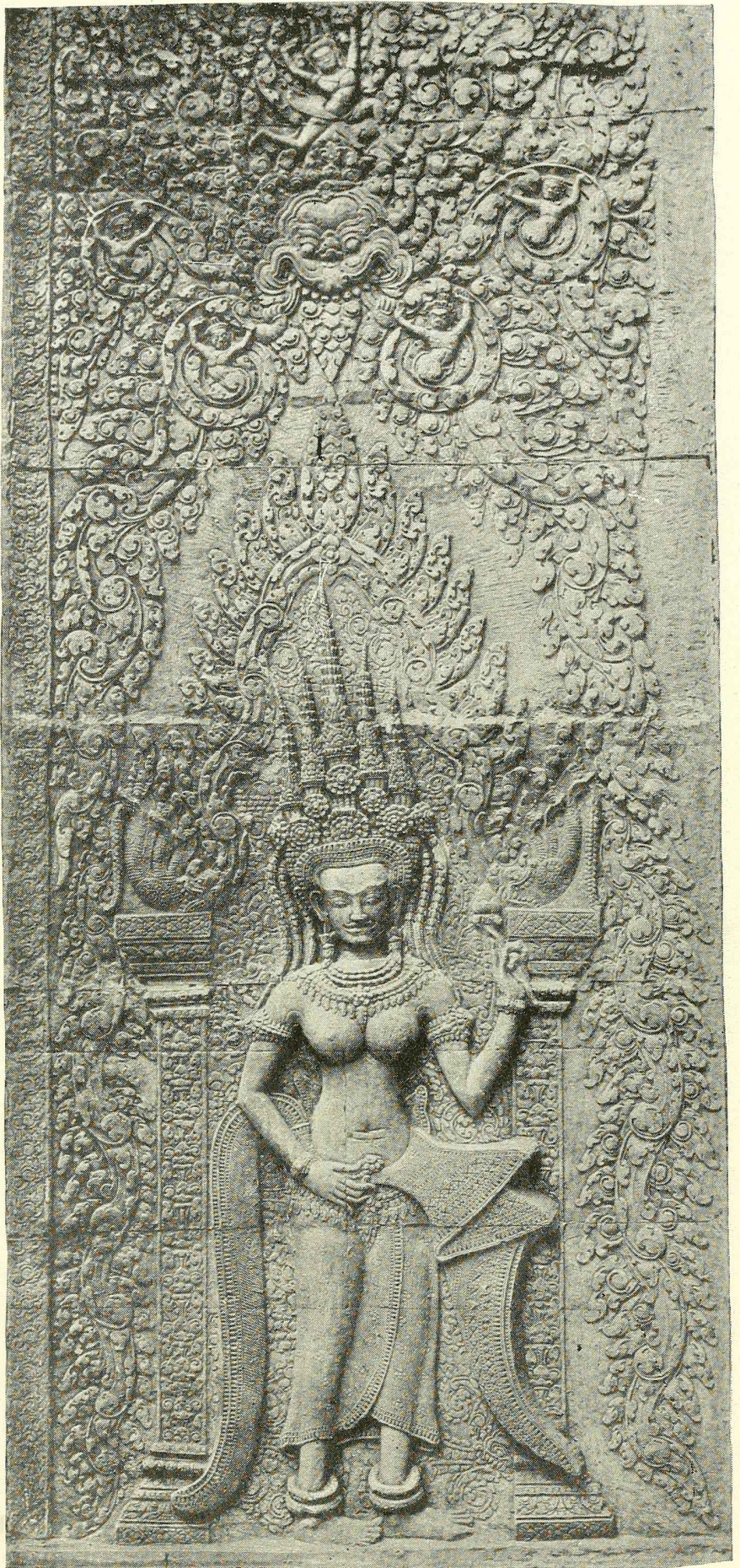
In the picture on the right, as in all of the work of these people, the treatment of the human form is much inferior to that of the ornamental detail to be seen on every side

The best specimens of the decorative art of Angkor are to be found upon these columns, especially those in the form of pilasters with the lintel above them. Indeed, it is doubtful if at its best it can be surpassed—let us say *often* surpassed, to be very careful—by the best that can be shown from classic remains. Just a few inches from the bottom is usually to be found a bearded Buddha, and above, a tracery in stone, the pattern of which is as delicate and graceful as fine embroidery.

The grotesque is sometimes employed on the exterior in the form of a modified façade, or pediment, over an entrance, the motif being sometimes a dancing figure, or more often an entanglement of monkeys. It is to be remembered that these decorative designs literally "crowd the canvas," with an evident purpose to leave no visible space unadorned. True, many of the designs are repeated over and over, but the number and variety are nevertheless amazing.

Probably the most interesting of all the decorations is the several series of bas-reliefs, which are first in the matter of quantity. Here is a partial summary of the processional bas-reliefs of this one structure:

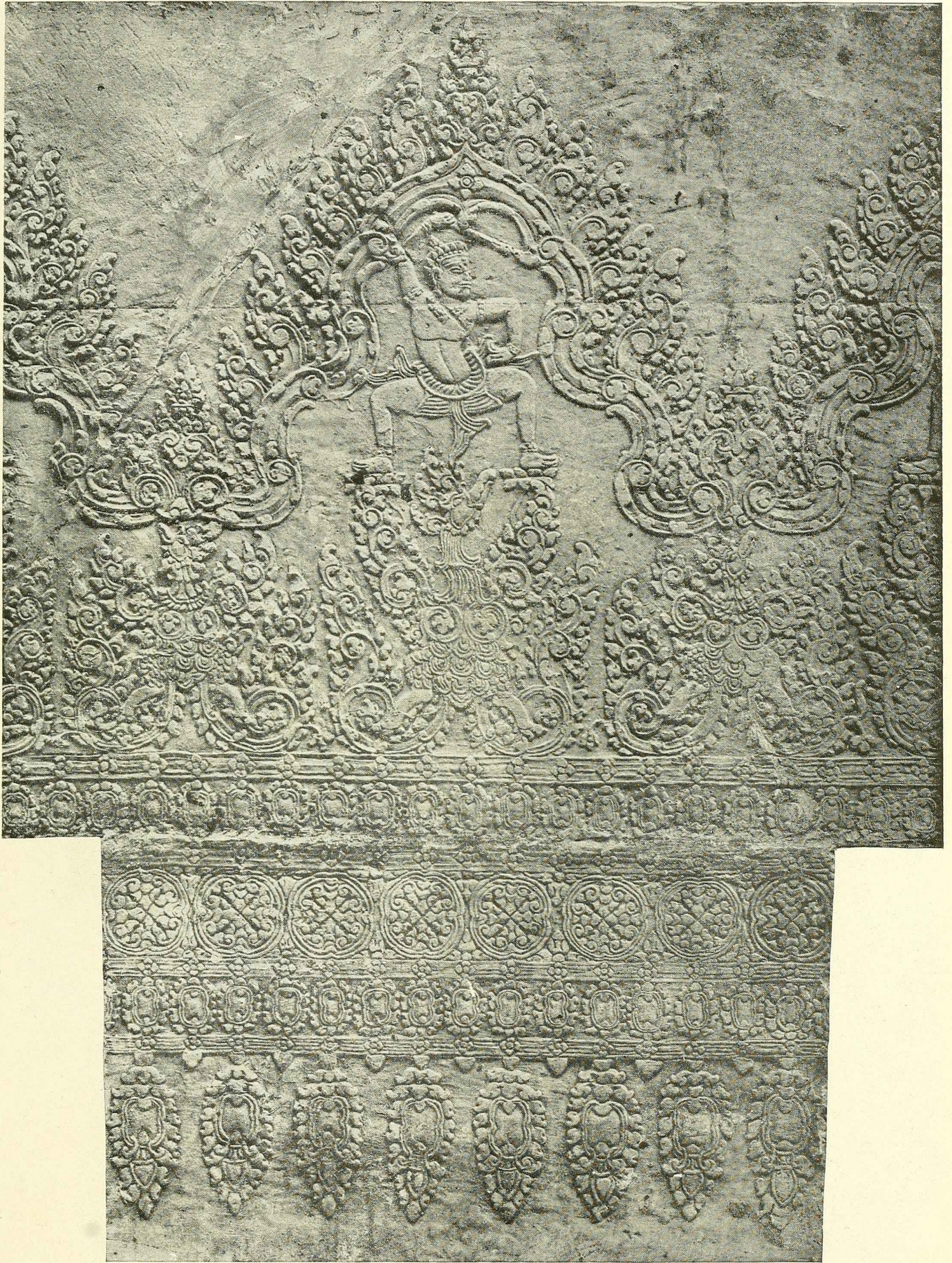
1. Battle between men and monkeys—a favorite theme—160 feet long.
2. Battle between Hindus and unknown enemies, 160 feet long.
3. Hunting procession, 324 feet long.
4. Three more battle processions, 171, 219, and 300 feet, respectively.



Fournereau Collection

A QUEEN WITH FIVE TIARAS: WALL DECORATION IN THE CENTRAL TOWER: ANGKOR WAT

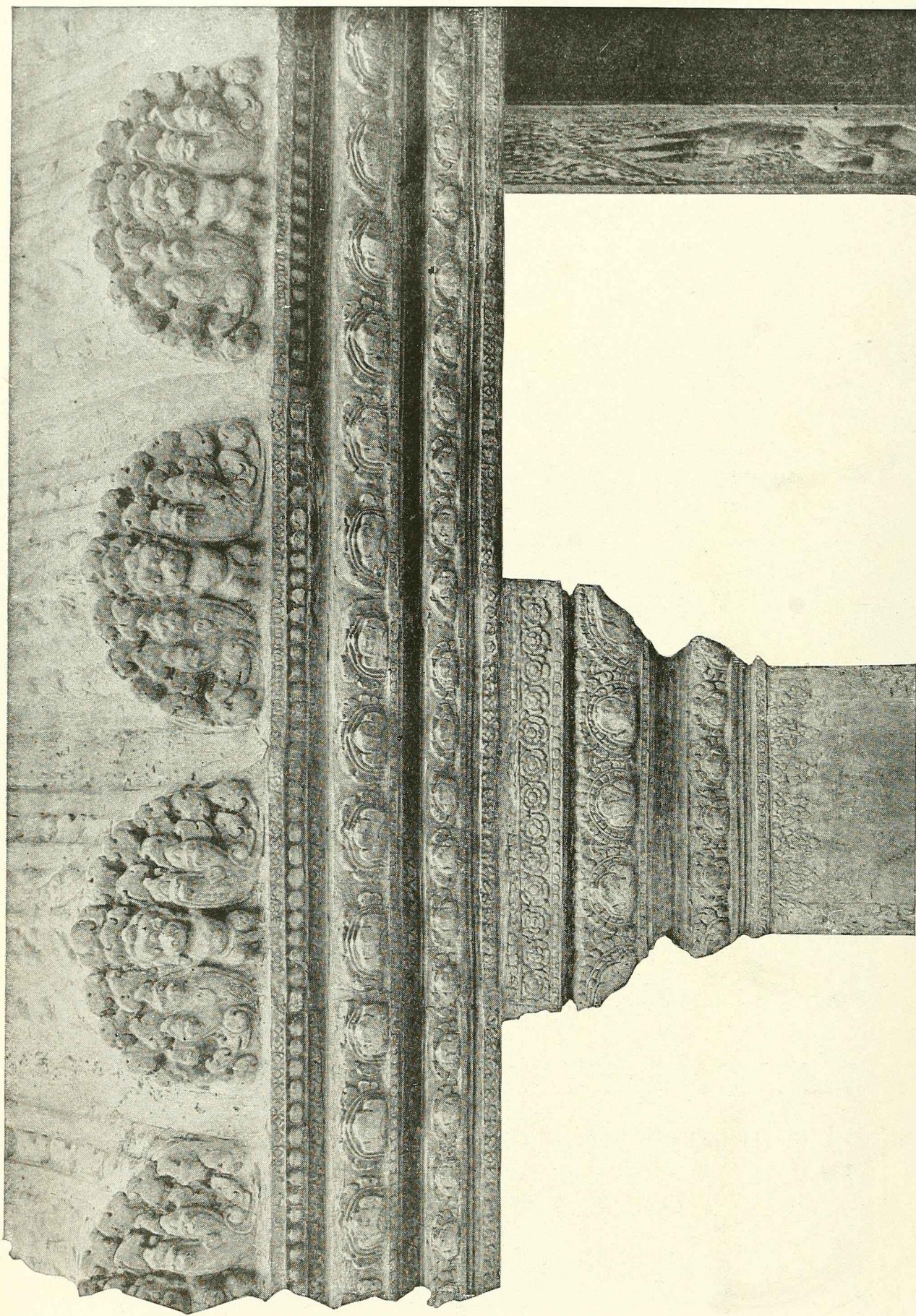
These are the principal decorative figures in the most conspicuous parts of the temple. The feet had to be put on somehow, so the sculptor turned them sideways (see page 240).



Fournereau Collection

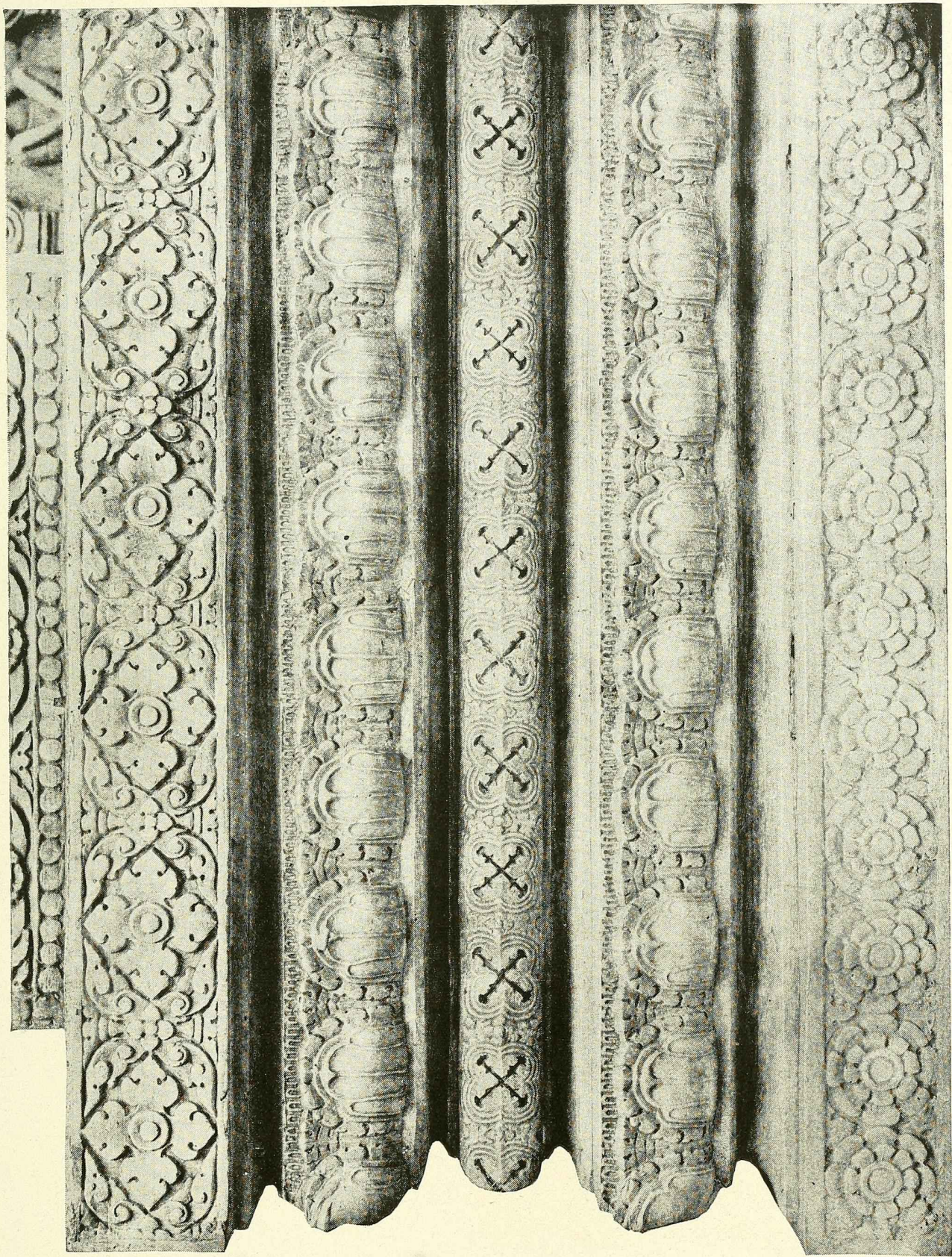
A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF LACEWORK IN STONE

A part of the entablature, with the top of the supporting pillar, in the gallery of the central tower. The grotesqueness of the dragon heads, refined and interwoven with the finer lines, is characteristic of the whole work.



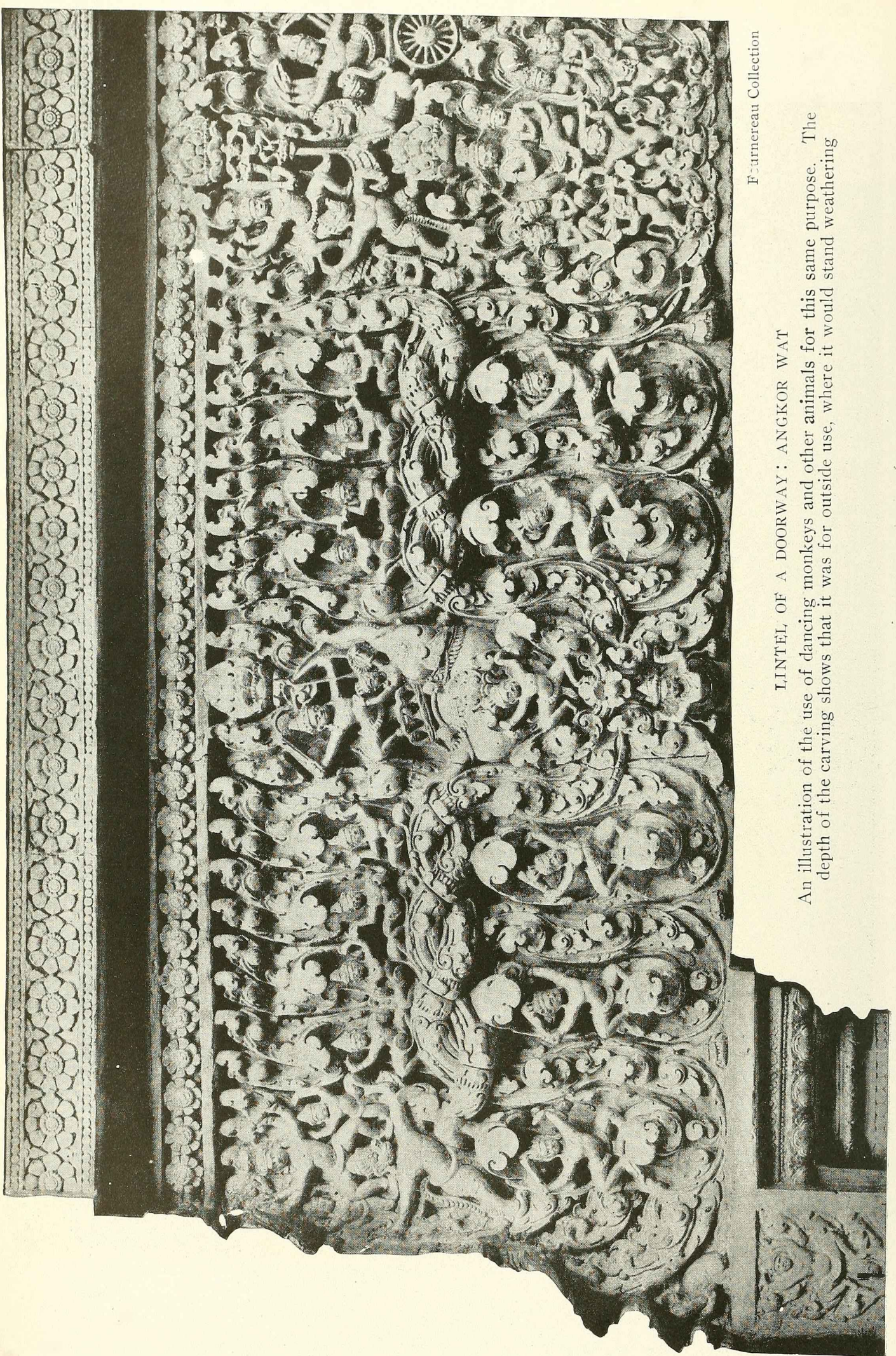
Fournereau Collection

PORTION OF THE ROOF OF THE GALLERY SURROUNDING THE MAIN TEMPLE; ANGKOR WAT
Note how even the top of the roof is ornamented. The roof, to be sure, was in plain sight from the inclosed temple



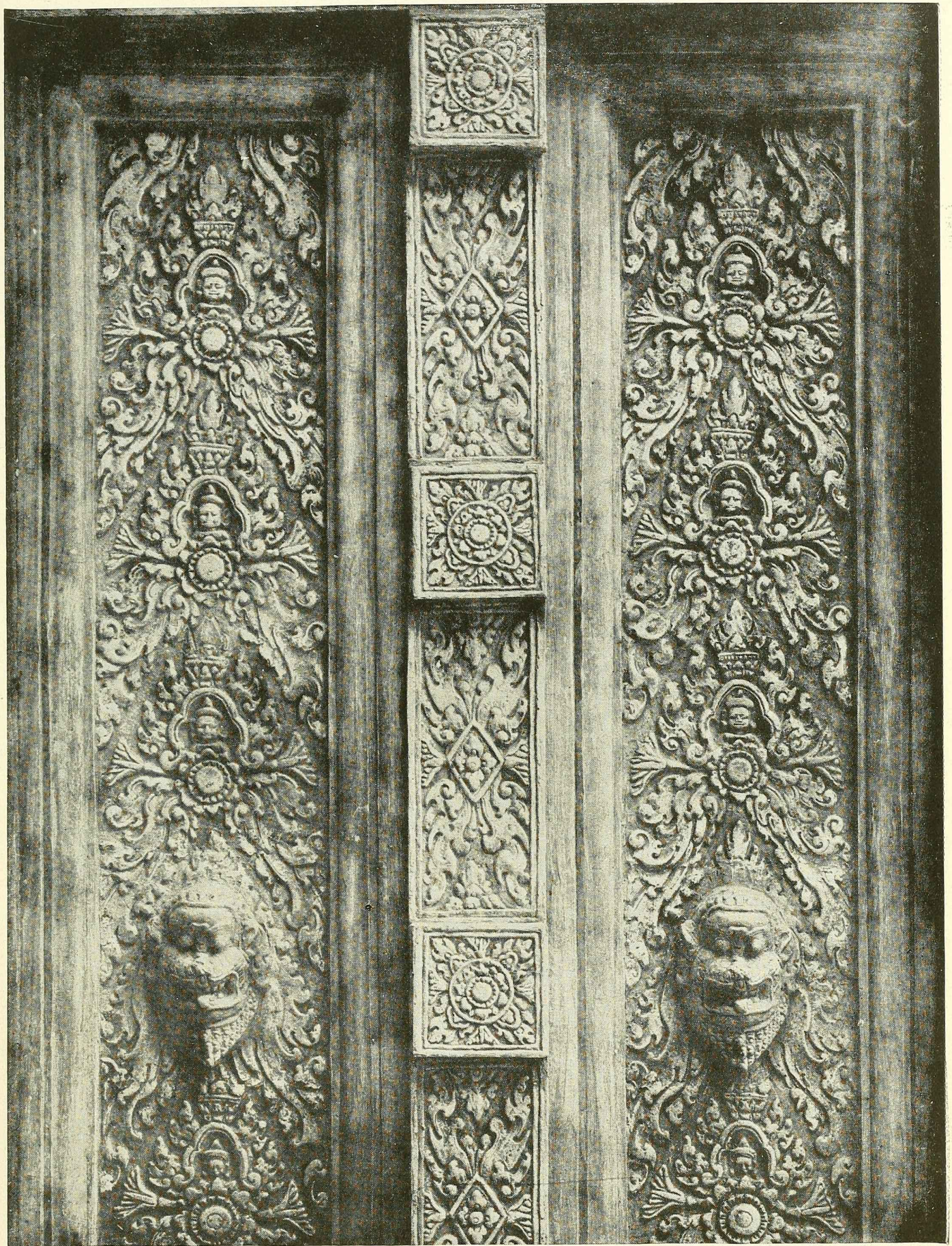
Fourneau Collection

At Angkor Wat the exterior stairways and balustrades are usually treated with this great variety of decorative detail



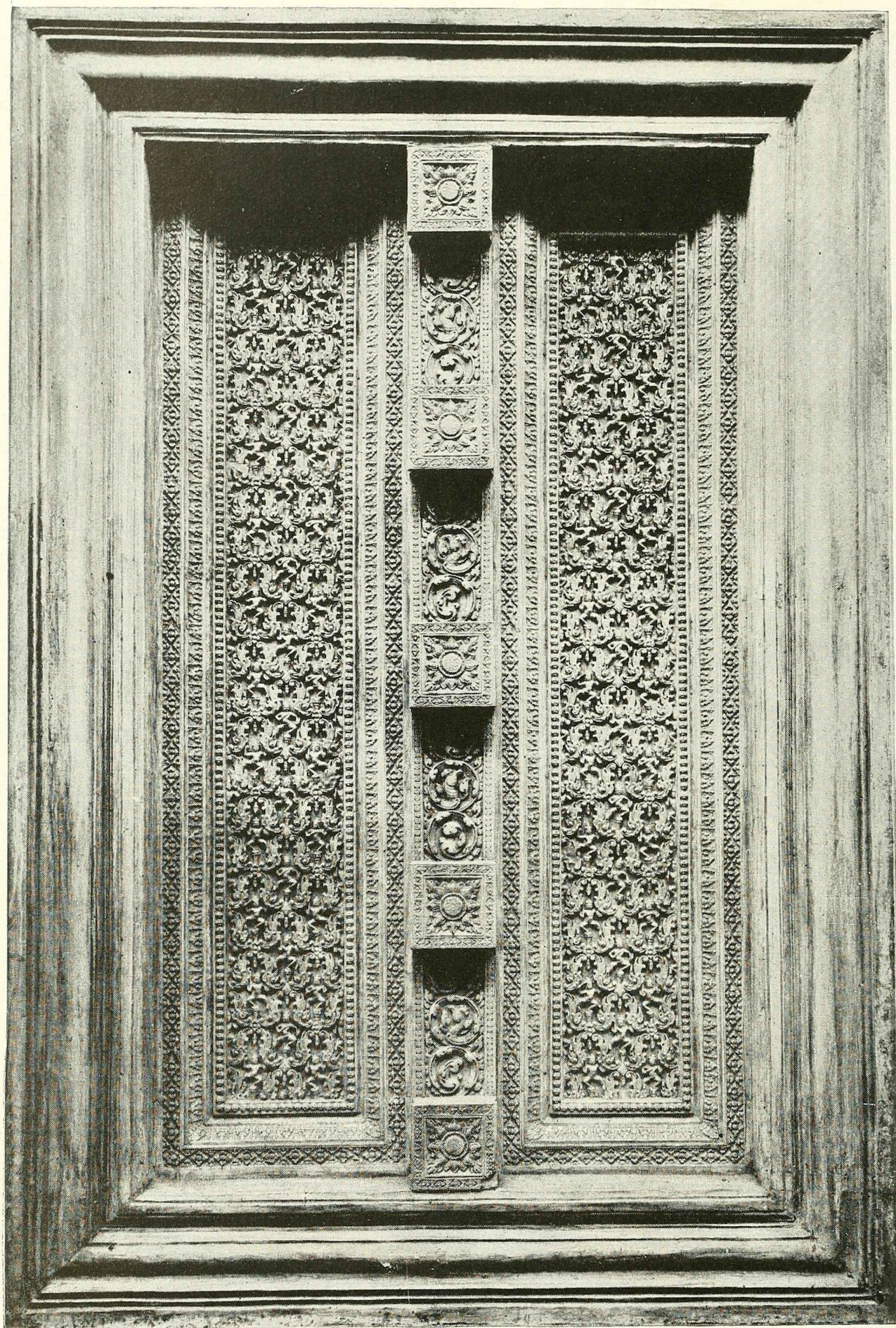
LINTEL, OF A DOORWAY: ANGKOR WAT

An illustration of the use of dancing monkeys and other animals for this same purpose. The depth of the carving shows that it was for outside use, where it would stand weathering



Fournereau Collection.

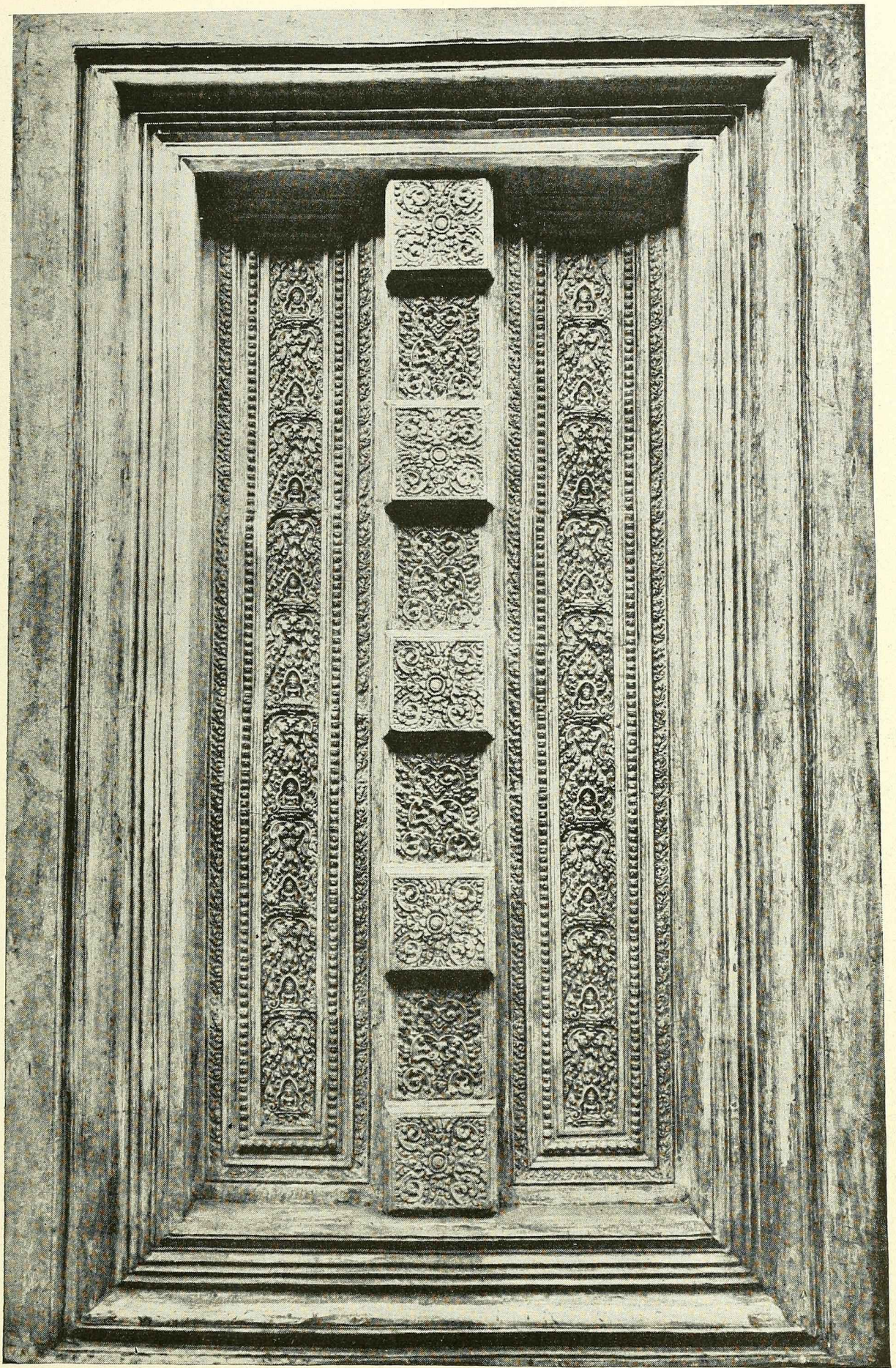
FALSE DOOR IN ONE OF THE TOWERS AT BAKONG, CARVED IN STONE



Fournereau Collection

FALSE DOOR AT LOLEY, IN ONE OF THE TOWERS

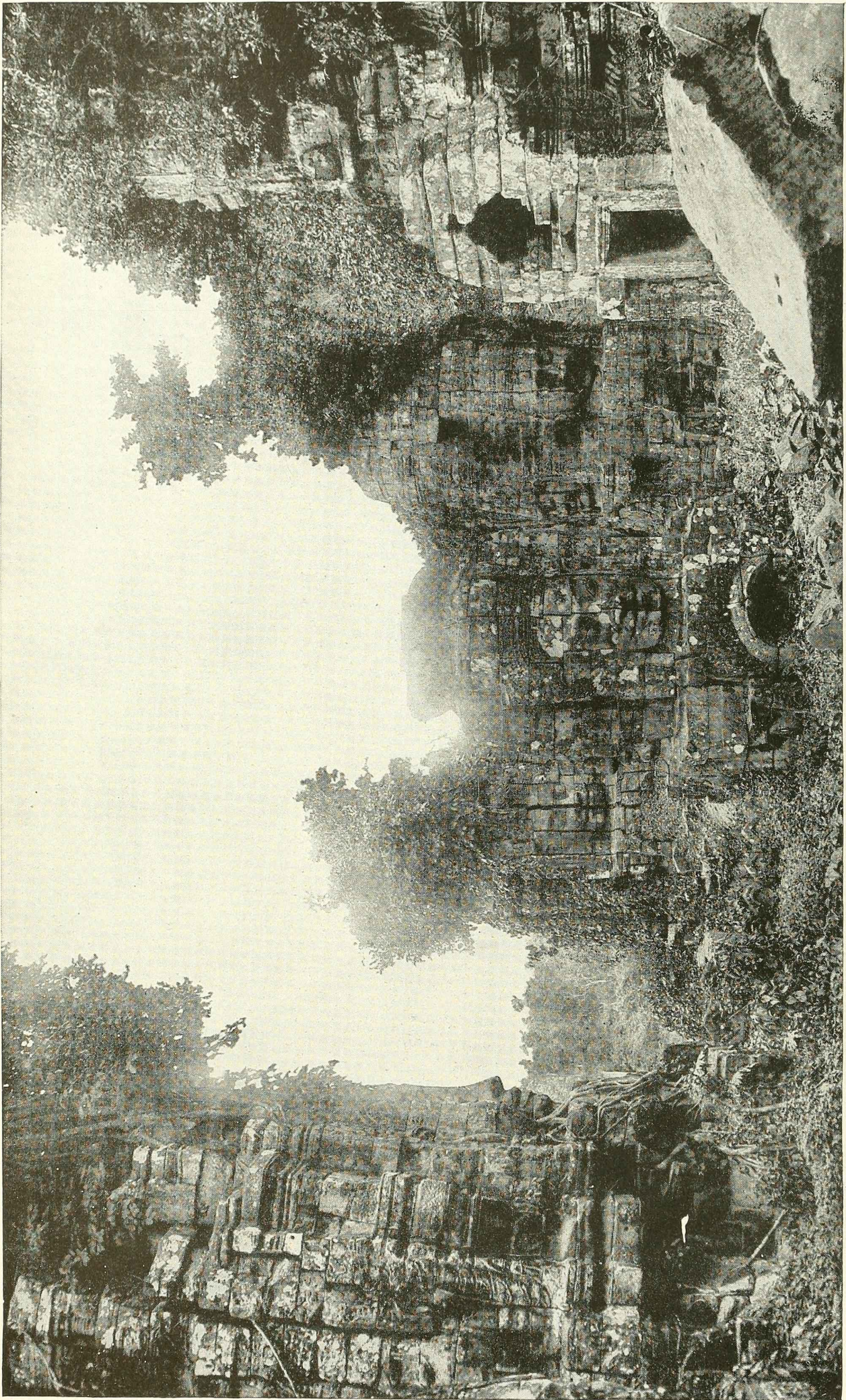
This is not lace, but carved stone. No finer example of Khmer workmanship can be found than these so-called "false-doors." Count the figures



Fournereau Collection

ONE OF THE FALSE DOORS IN THE TOWER AT ME-BAUNE, WITH REMARKABLY BEAUTIFUL TRACERY IN STONE

Evidently the false door was intended only for decorative purposes. There are many of these exquisite false doors in the various ruins of Cambodia (see map, page 225), but none at Angkor, as they probably belong to a later and more refined age than that which saw the Bayon, or even the Wat, erected.



PART OF RUINS OF BAYON, THE MOST IMPORTANT RUIN AT ANGKOR THOM

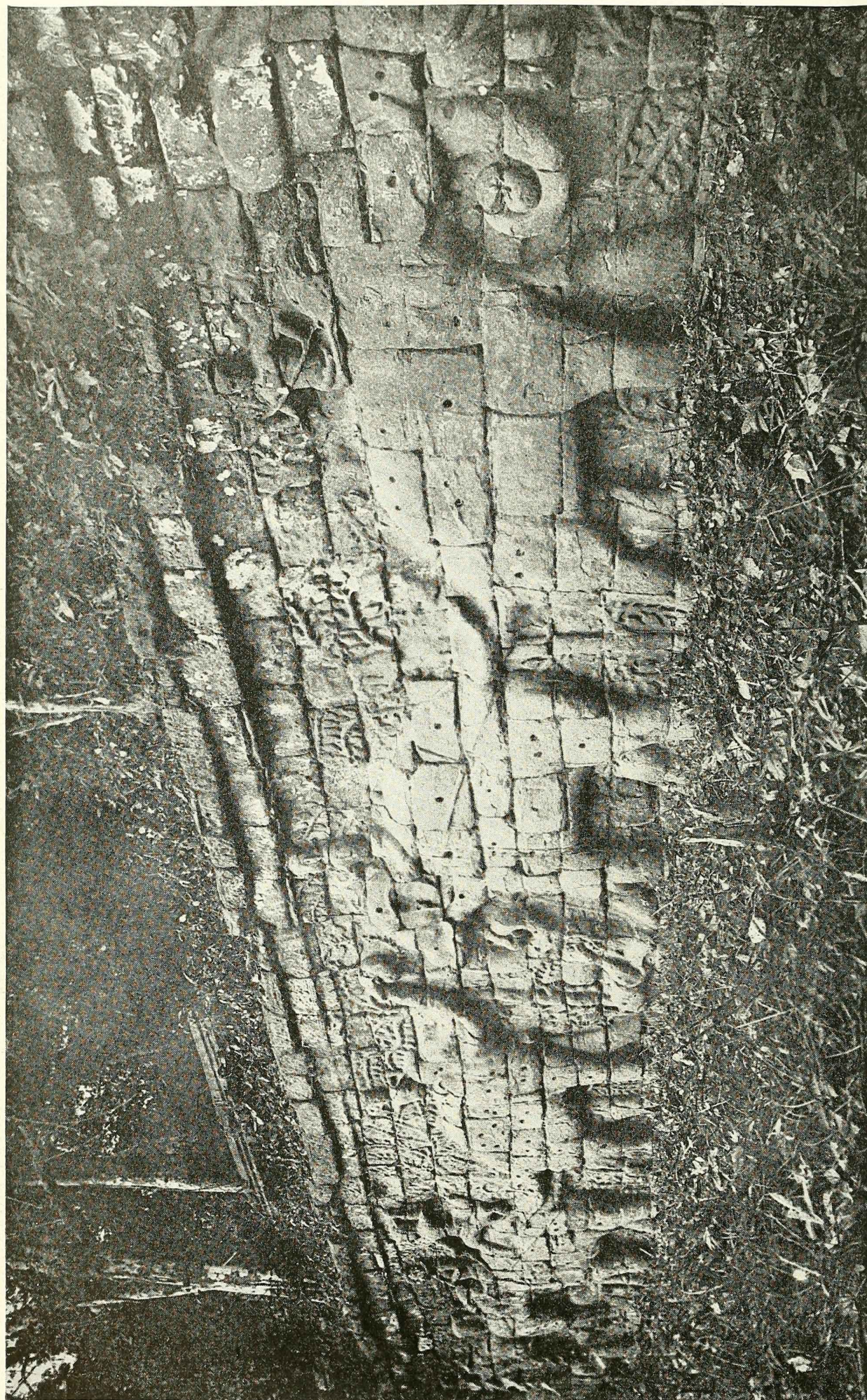
Puzzle picture: how many Buddhas' faces can you find? Angkor Thom covered an area 19 times greater than Angkor Wat. It was built some 300 years before the latter and is now a complete ruin



Fournereau Collection

ONE OF THE FIFTY-THREE TOWERS IN THE STRUCTURE KNOWN AS THE BAYON

Showing the enormous Buddha faces looking toward the four cardinal points of the compass. Not only in the 53 towers, but in many other parts of this ruin, these same faces are found. Every one of the 53 towers had four of these faces (see page 271 and map, page 225).



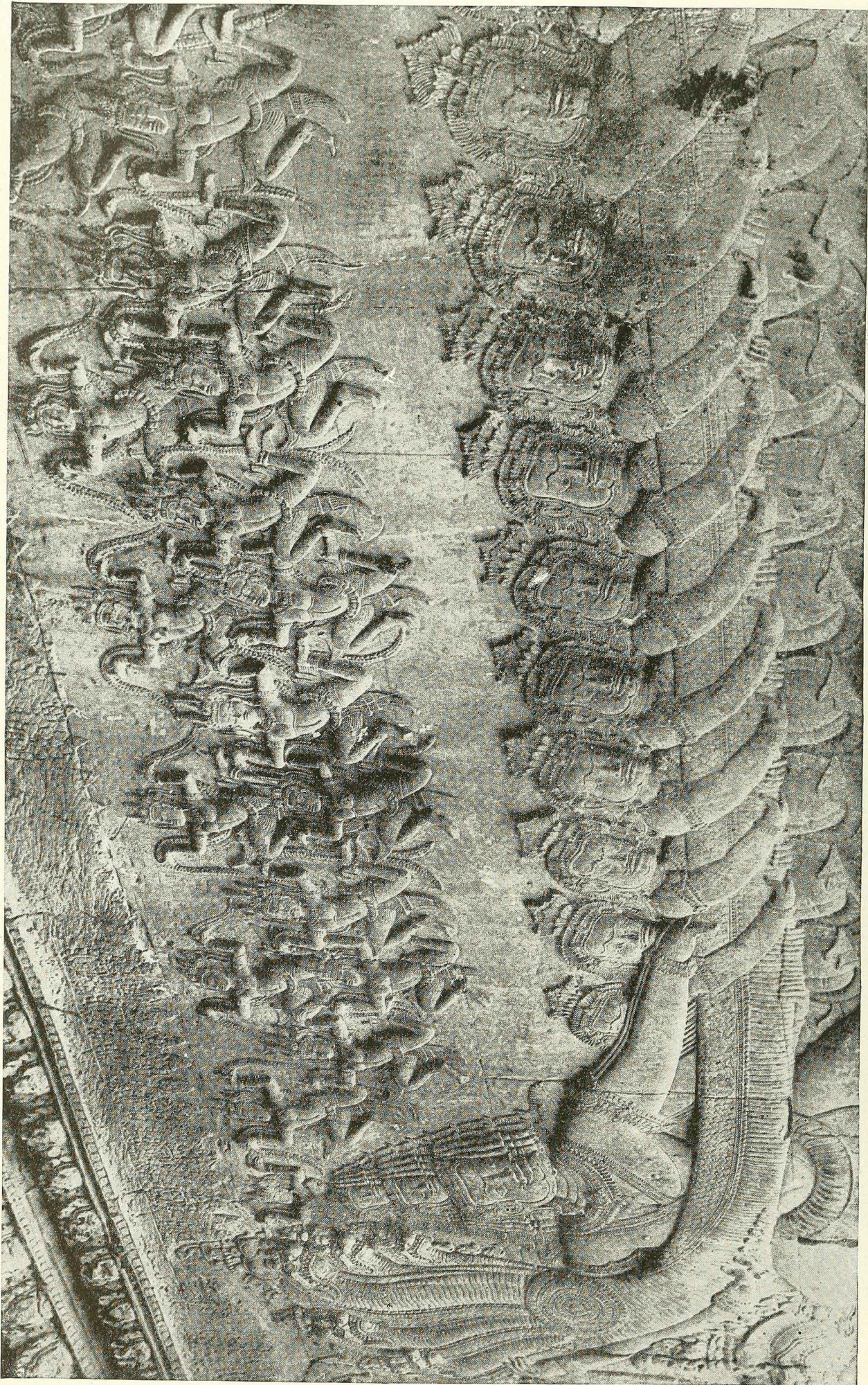
PROCESSION OF ELEPHANTS ON THE WALL OF THE GRAND TERRACE: ANGKOR THOM

The holes show that they were formerly covered with trappings

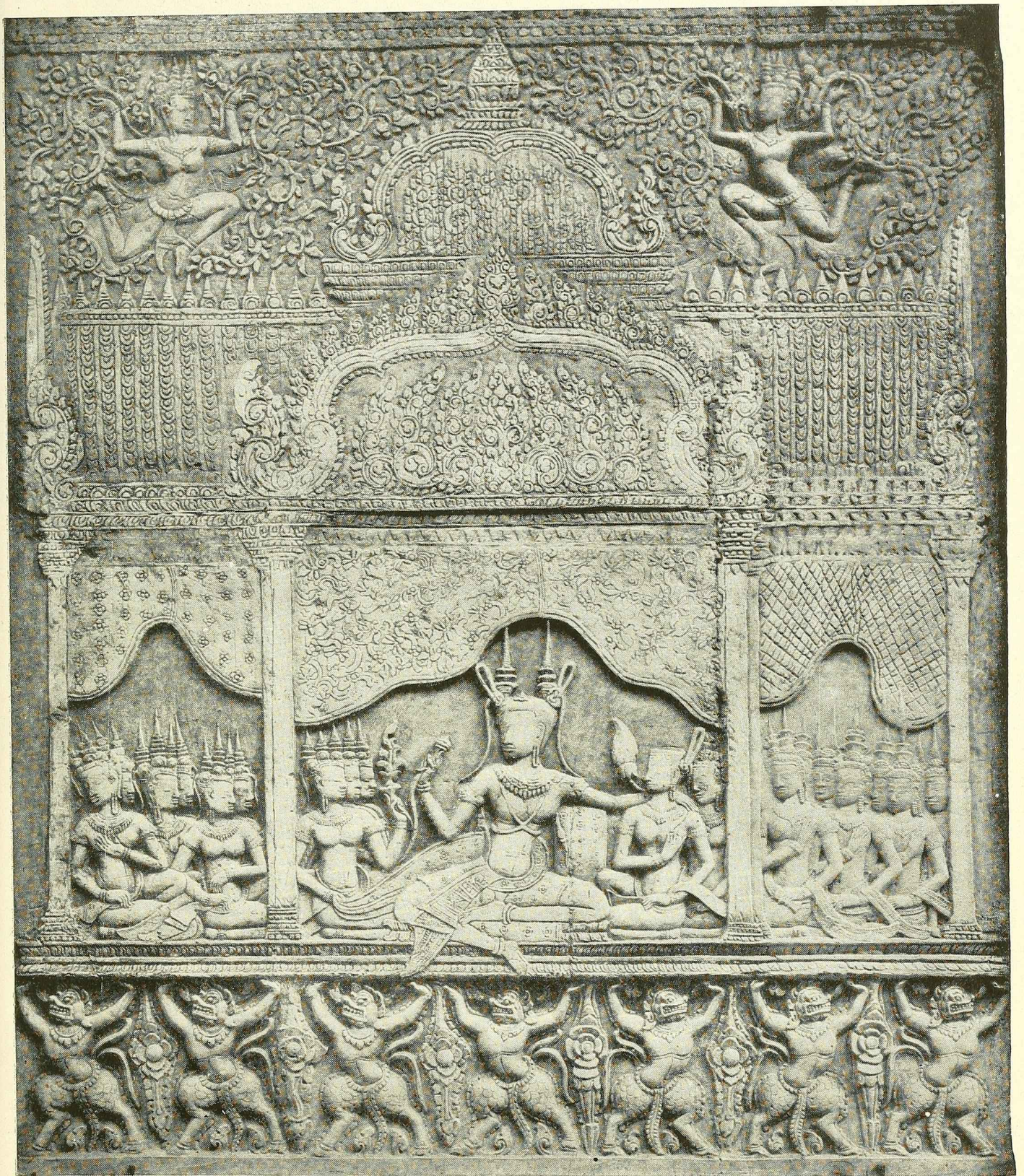


Fournereau Collection

MASSIVE PORTAL: PART OF RUINS AT KOMPONG-CHNANG ON THE MEKONG
One of the many places about the plains of Cambodia where the Khmers left their mark



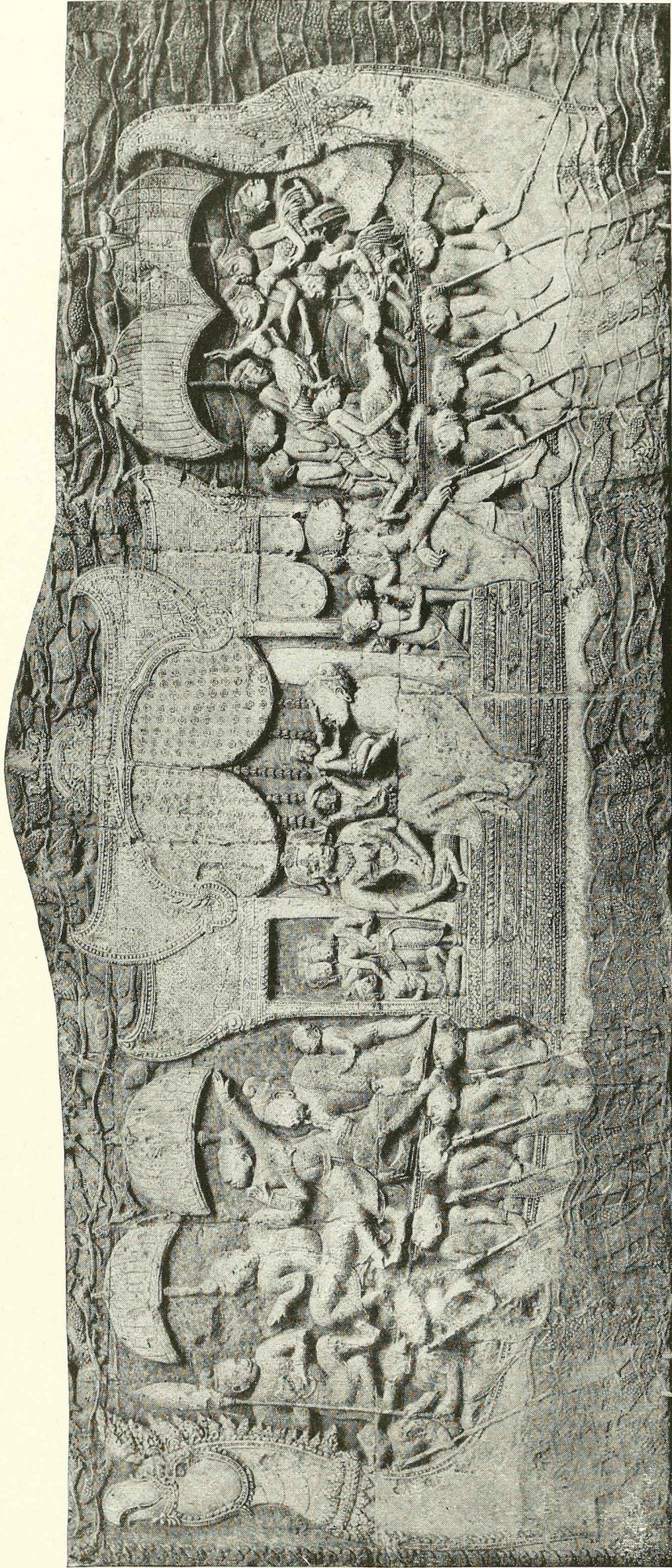
PROCESSION BRINGING THE NAGA, OR SEVEN-HEADED COBRA: ANGKOR WAT (SEE PAGE 267)



Fournereau Collection

PORTION OF ONE OF THE BAS-RELIEFS REPRESENTING A PRINCE IN HIS HOUSE SUR-
ROUNDED BY WOMEN: ANGKOR WAT

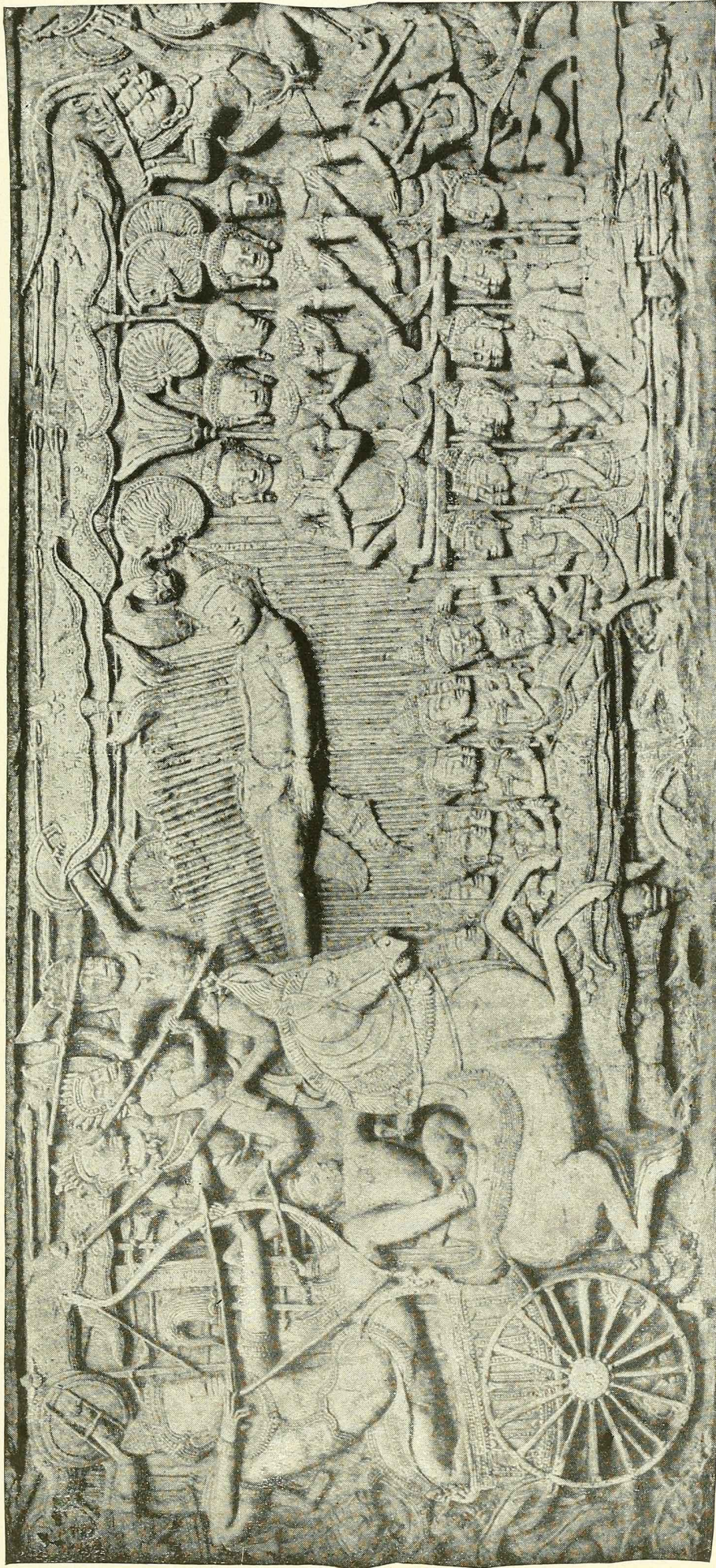
Just below this bas-relief is one showing in a long series of illustrations the different kinds of punishment inflicted. They are gruesome enough to satisfy the most cruel disposition (see page 271).



Fournereau Collection

ANOTHER OF THE BAS-RELIEFS OF ANGKOR WAT, SHOWING THE ROYAL BARK

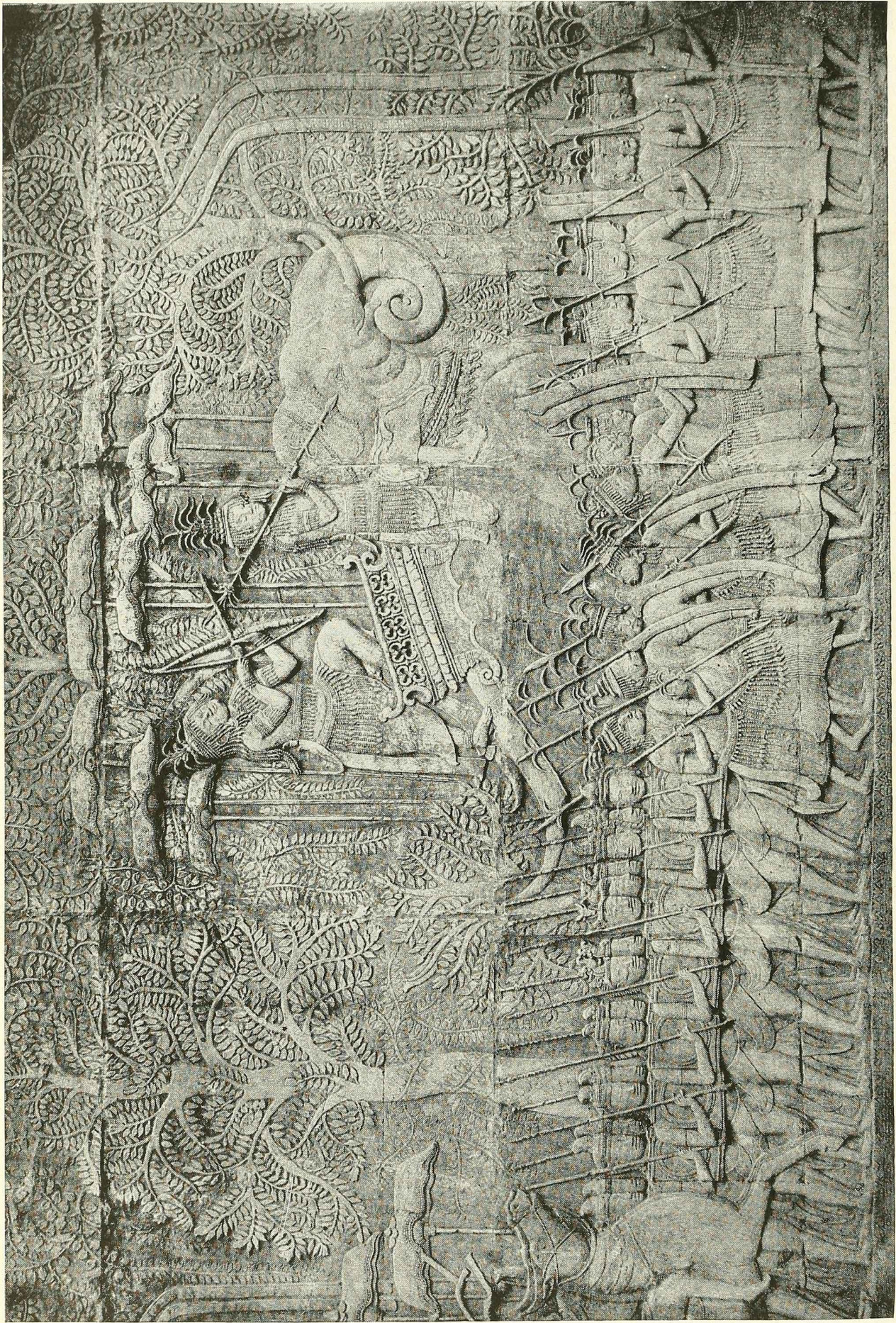
In the bow are the musicians and dancers; under the canopy the royal family beguiles the time; in the stern the domestics are enjoying a cock-fight, just as they do now, while below the slaves are tugging at the oars through a sea crowded with fish



Fournereau Collection

PORTION OF THE BAS-RELIEFS OF THE SOUTHWEST GALLERY, SHOWING AN EPISODE IN THE COMBAT BETWEEN PANDAVAS AND KAURAVAS
(MAHABHARATA) : ANGKOR WAT

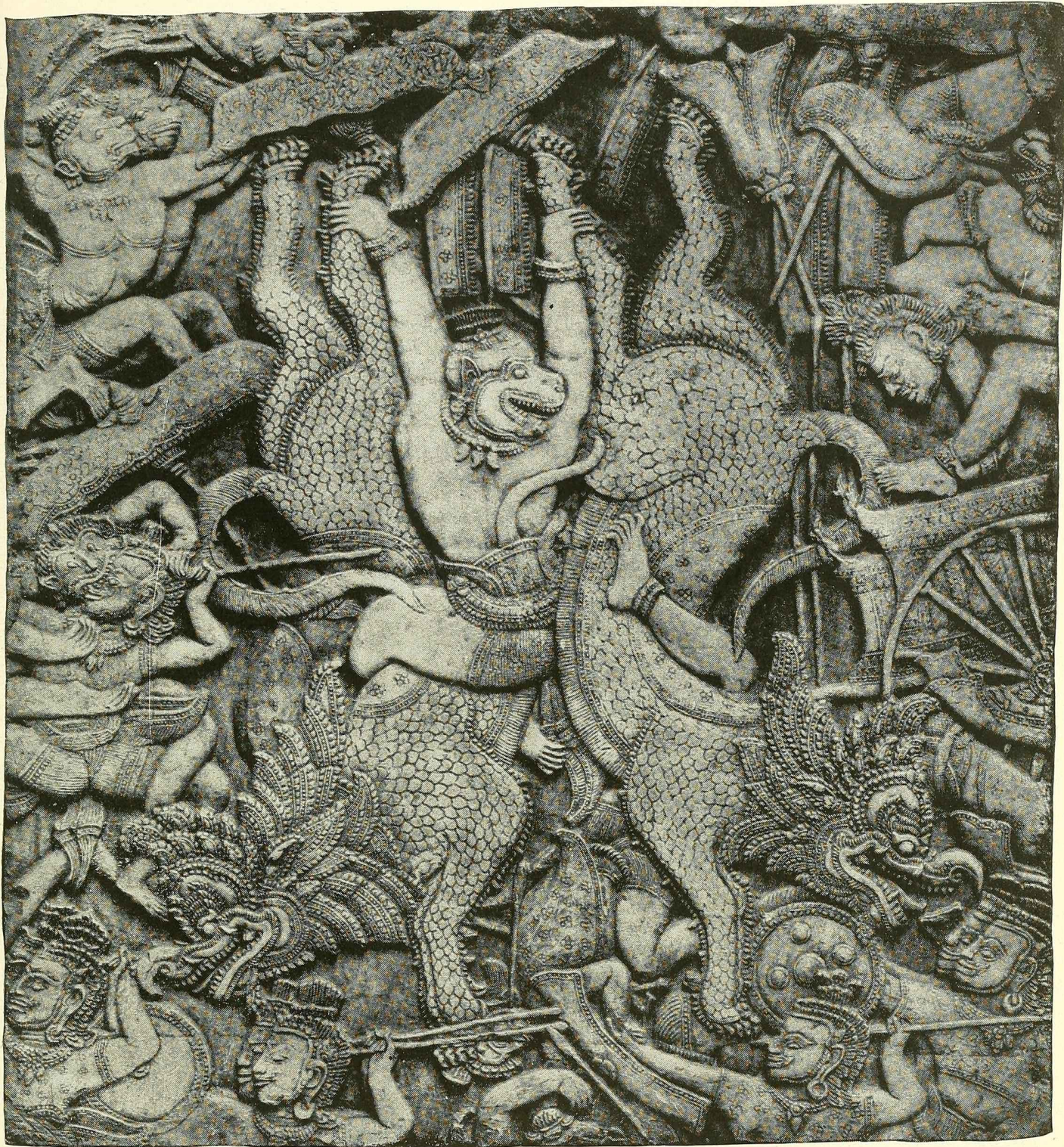
The recumbent figure is not supported by spears, but is falling pierced by arrows. The figures below are holding long-handled fans of lotus-leaf design



Fournereau Collection

PART OF THE HUNTING PROCESSION, 324 FEET LONG: ANGKOR WAT

Note the conventionalized tropical forest, the umbrellas shading the royal hunter, and the feet of the pedestrians. This is but one of the many scenes represented in this bas-relief, considerable variety being introduced in the main features where variety was possible. The line of footmen stretches out interminably. The part here shown is about 10 feet long and 8 feet high. This one panorama



Fournereau Collection

EXPLOIT OF HANAMUNT, KING OF THE MONKEYS: ANGKOR WAT

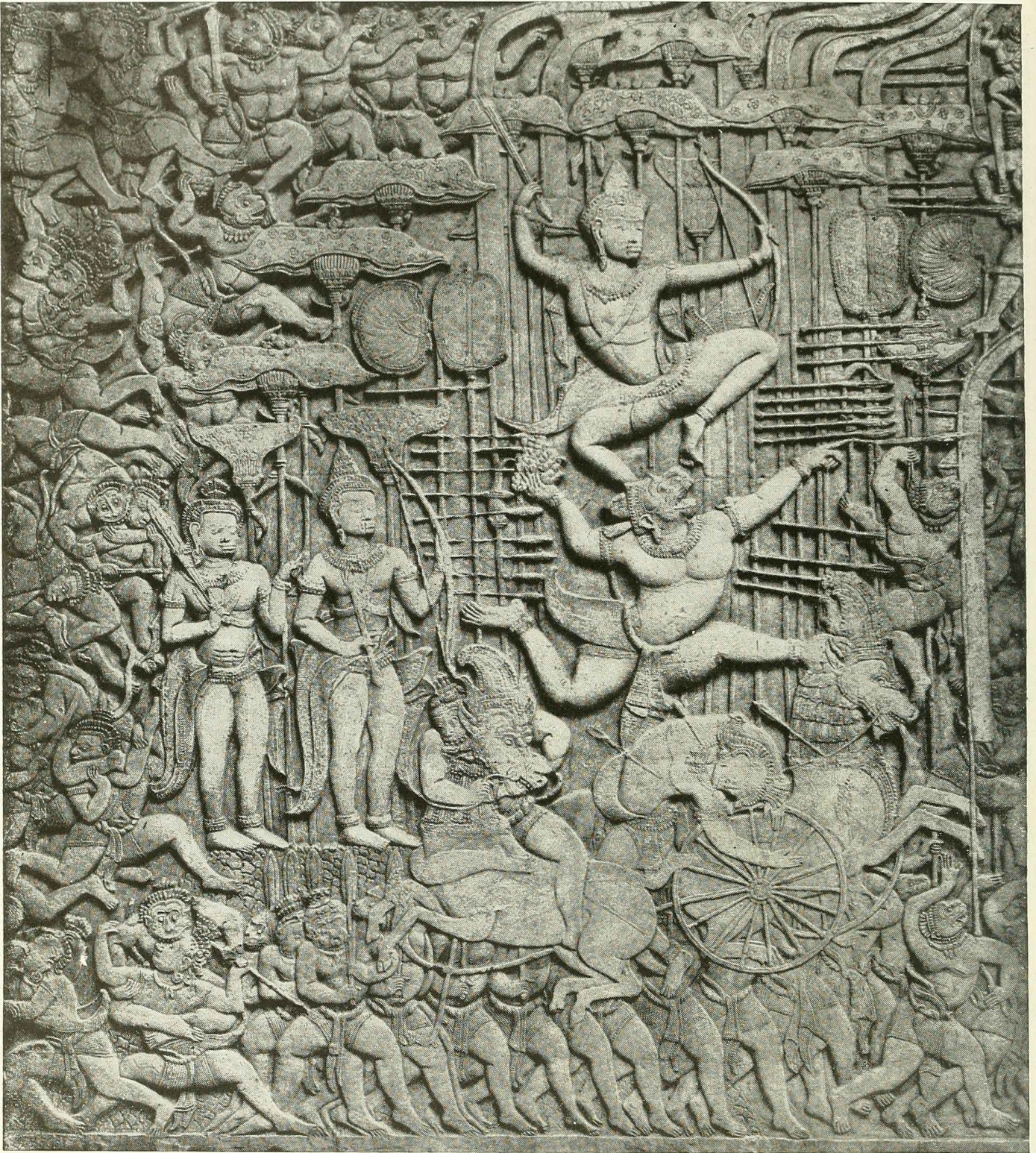
By means of his great strength he is able to seize two dragons, holding them in a position where they are powerless, and strangle them by wrapping his legs around them

5. Procession of the 7-headed snake, Naga, 126 feet long.

6. Procession of Paradise and Purgatory; length undetermined; at least 160 feet long.

It is in these processional bas-reliefs that the life of the builders, the drama of their existence, comes to the surface,

if it comes at all. In the battle reliefs, particularly, there is variety of subject and detail, and the sculptor tells more to the beholder of the present than he ever intended. You see unknown armies meeting, some with Hindu head-dresses, but a great variety of others, including not a few Greek helmets.



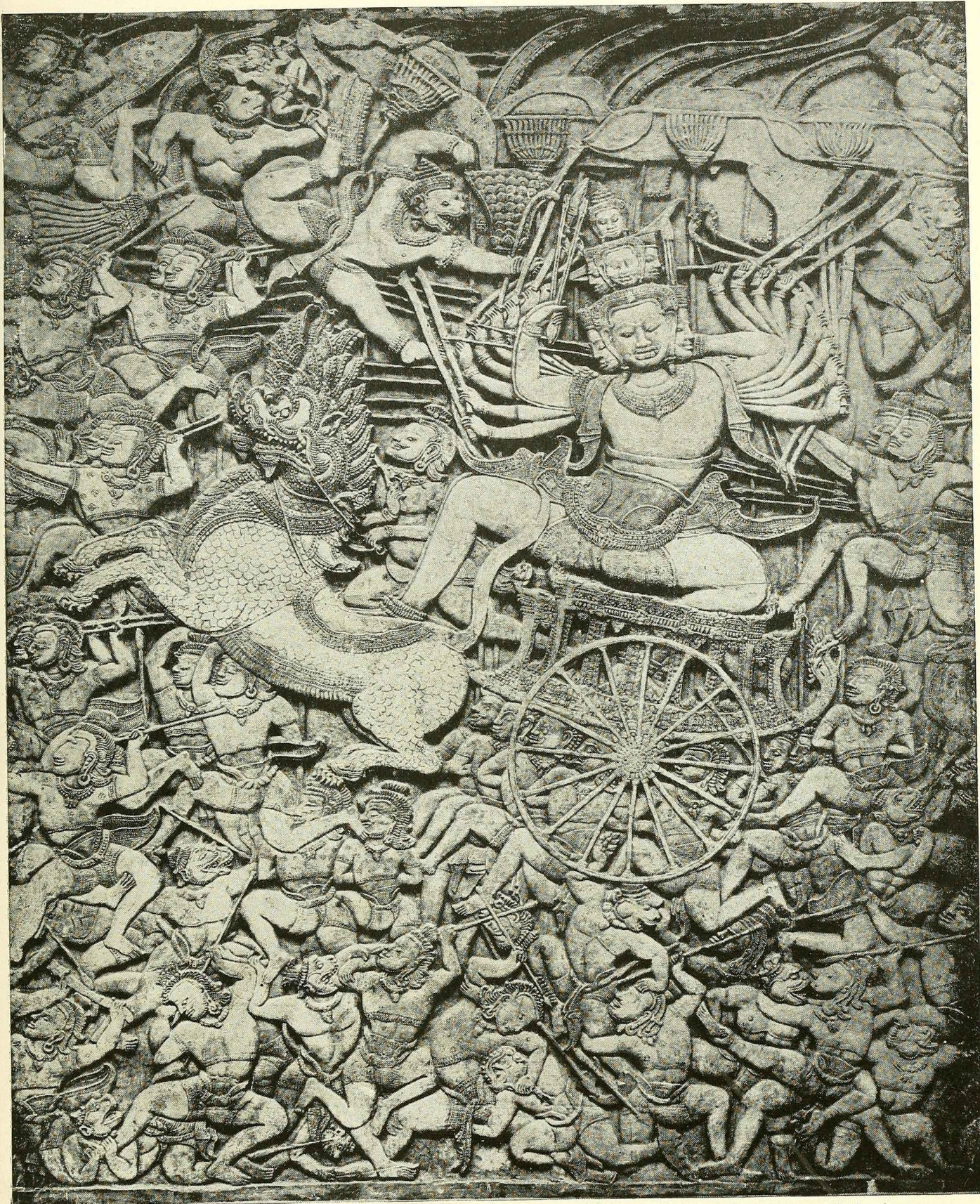
Fournereau Collection

ANOTHER DETAIL IN THE COMBATS OF THE RAMAYANA : ANGKOR WAT

Both sides are armed with spear, shield, cuirass, and war-club. The leaders and commanders are armed with swords, bows, and arrows, and are protected from the sun even in battle by enormous umbrellas. They ride upon elephants, horses, oxen, rhinoceroses, ostriches, deer, and, as if this were not

enough, fabulous monsters the work of the artistic imagination.

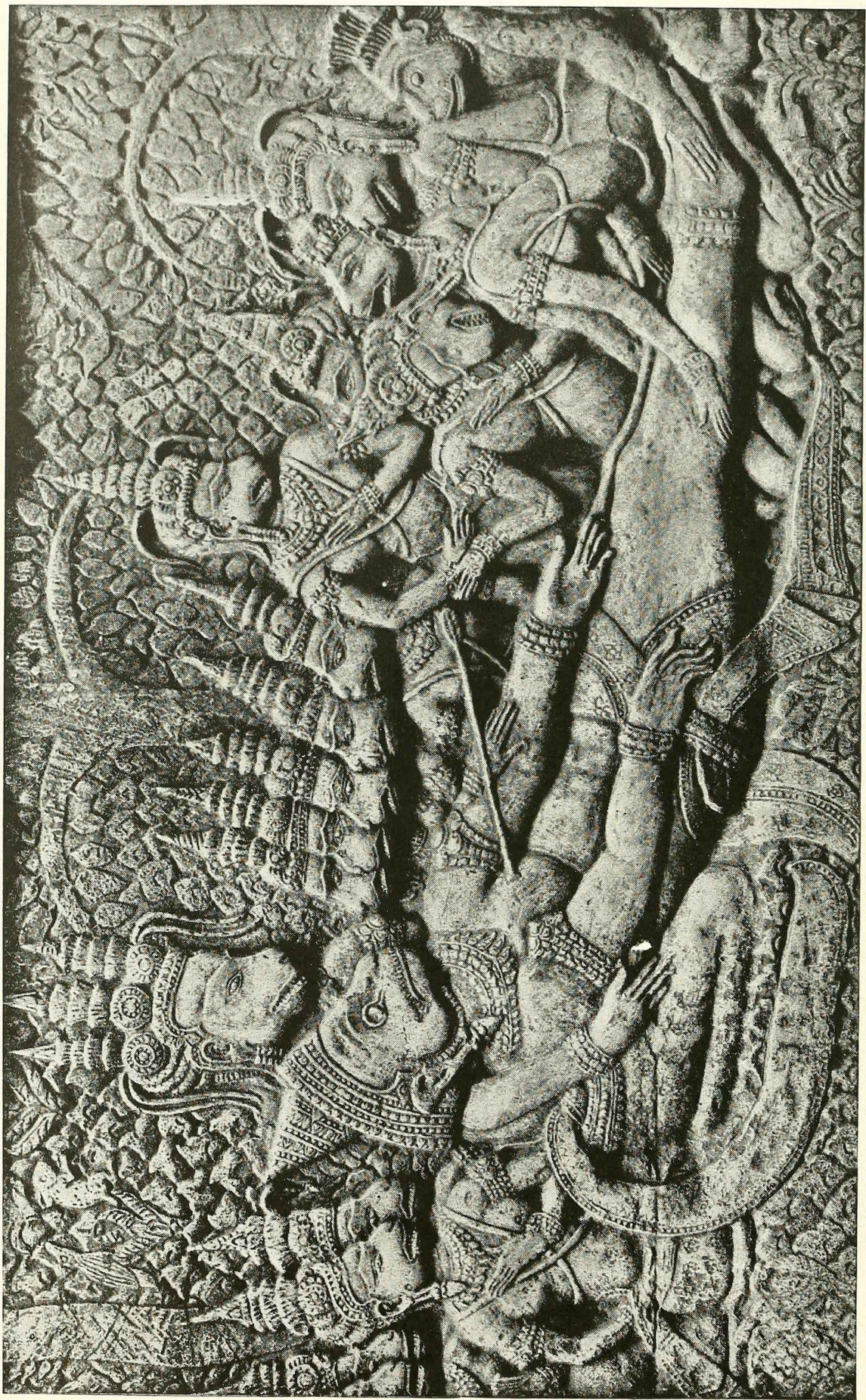
One would suppose this to be legend rather than history; yet there is the *coupe-coupe*, still used by the natives for beheading criminals, and there is the identical pattern of the bullock cart in which I rode over in the morning, still



Fournereau Collection

BATTLE BETWEEN MEN AND MONKEYS: ANGKOR WAT

This represents the center of the combat, where the opposing forces are joined. The antagonists are so crowded in the melee that there is no background left. This is the best of the bas-reliefs, and is 160 feet long. The part here represented is no more than 10 feet in width. The panorama contains more than 1,000 figures of men and monkeys, and, like all the bas-reliefs, is carved in stone.



Fourneau Collection
HANAMUNT, KING OF THE MONKEYS, VANQUISHED IN THE COMBAT WITH MEN, EXPIRES IN THE ARMS OF HIS QUEEN,
SURROUNDED BY HIS MOURNING FRIENDS, THE NOBLES OF THE MONKEYS; ANGKOR WAT

used as an instrument of torture. That is convincing. This must be history.

The bas-reliefs on the front of the building are by far the best. They are detailed and developed quite conscientiously as they understood things, and are marked by considerable animation. In two respects they are notably deficient, namely, in the treatment of the eyes and the feet. Whole rows and hundreds of rows of men with eyes just alike—not a particle of expression. And then the feet—was there ever a race of sculptors that didn't have trouble with the feet? In this case everything seems to have been tried by turns, by different workmen, no doubt, and you will see a yard or two of procession where the bottoms of the feet are turned outward toward the spectator, though the artist meant you should regard them as the tops instead; then again a front view of the men and side view of their feet. Yes, the feet are as ancient as primitive Greek or Egyptian.

The processional relief of Paradise and Purgatory is, in fact, a triple processional extending along the wall in parallel order. In the lower, human ingenuity is taxed to invent punishments terrible enough to satisfy; and it is interesting to note that a great many of these were rubbed smooth and shining by the hands of the present day. The paradise relief is really double, with the moderately happy people in the lower and the superlatively blessed sitting up above in little alcoves, which look for all the world like proscenium boxes at a theater.

One very interesting feature of the hunting processional is that the kings and other great ones are each honored with an inscription, doubtless his name and rank. So absolutely new and unknown is all this that not a word has been deciphered. Many of the columns of the inner temple are covered with inscriptions, all awaiting the translator.

Angkor Tom is three and one-half by four kilometers, or five and four-tenths square miles, in extent; that is to say, over 19 times the size of Angkor Wat. It is likewise surrounded by a wall, which is pierced by imposing gateways. Its principal ruins are the Bayon, the

Bapuon, and the Pimean Acas, with numerous indistinguishable ruins within its inclosures.

The bayon alone—with its 53 towers, each with four Buddha faces looking toward the four cardinal points of the compass—was probably as large as the wat. Conjecture says that this was the royal treasury, and already cupidity has been busy in a vain search for the supposed treasures. Lofty trees reach high in the air above these ruins, and the monkeys and squirrels gambol in their tops undisturbed. Pimean Acas is a quadrilateral pyramid of colossal proportions, but of forbidding appearance in its present state; though, like all the others, it yields beautiful works in stone.

Who built these ruins, and when did they build them?

We have already said that the Khmers built them; but who they were, where they came from, when and why they built, and, finally, why they disappeared, nobody is yet able to answer with certainty. Tradition in the person of an alleged Chinese historian says that a powerful ruler once emigrated from India with all his followers to escape a still more powerful ruler; that he subjugated the people he found here and put them to work erecting these enormous edifices of stone.

But there are inscriptions to be mastered, which will be done some day, and then we shall know more about the subject. The letters closely resemble those of the Siamese and the modern Cambodian, and the work of deciphering may not be difficult.

Incidentally it may be remarked that the features of the men in the bas-reliefs resemble in some respects those of the Cambodians of the present day, and it is not improbable that the key to the past lies hidden in their monasteries. At present the safest guess as to the date of building is as follows:

For Angkor Tom, the 9th century A. D., or during the reign of Alfred the Great in England. For Angkor Wat, the 12th century, or 100 years after the Norman Conquest.

There are those who venture to particularize far enough to say that in the

fourth century B. C., a young prince of Delhi made war upon his father for the partition of his kingdom, was defeated and banished with thousands of his followers. They journeyed eastward, crossed the Ganges, the Irriwaddy and the Meinam, but did not cross the Mekong; for here they found primitive tribes whom they easily subdued. Here they established the kingdom of Cambodia, reduced the Siamese, the Annamites and all the tribes of the peninsula of Indo-China to subjection, and became very rich and powerful. In the course of the centuries, they built several capitals in different parts of their domin-

ions, of which Angkor Thom is the largest. The Chinese historian, above referred to, visited them in the thirteenth century, just before, as alleged, they were overthrown by the Siamese and Annamites. The account he gives of their wealth and splendor is well nigh unbelievable; yet their sources of wealth were extraordinary, including as they did the tribute of the subdued tribes, the great fertility of the soil, and the ruby mines of Battambang, which are still in operation. Could this have been the fabled wealth of India which tempted Columbus to venture westward, and quite incidentally discover a new world?

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

THE seventh annual banquet of the National Geographic Society, on January 26, was the largest and most enthusiastic dinner in the history of the Society. Members were present from all parts of the United States. The special event of the evening was the announcement of the election of Mr. James Bryce, the British Ambassador, as an honorary member of the National Geographic Society, in recognition of his personal contributions to and interest in geographic science. A unique feature of the menu were dates grown in California, an account of which is given on page 291.

The program of speeches follows:

DR. HENRY GANNETT, PRESIDENT OF THE
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Ladies and gentlemen of the National Geographic Society: One year ago, when I reported on the progress of the Society, I stated that it contained 74,000 members. Tonight the Society contains 107,000 members. This great membership enables it to be a very powerful factor, especially in the matter of diffusion of geographic knowledge, for which purpose the Society publishes the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE. A year ago it was said that the magazine was

just as good as it could be, but our members think it has improved during the year. Today the Society publishes other works for the increase and diffusion of geographic knowledge. During the past year the Society has kept close watch of the volcano at Bogoslof, a little volcano which once or twice or three times a year goes on a rampage.

We are fortunate tonight in the fact that Dr. Graham Bell has consented to act as toastmaster. As you know, he was President of this Society for many years, and it is largely due to his efforts that the present prosperity of this Society has come. I take great pleasure in introducing to you Dr. Alexander Graham Bell.

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, BY
DR. ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen of the National Geographic Society: In thanking you for the honor conferred upon me by selecting me to preside over this meeting as toastmaster, allow me to congratulate President Gannett and the National Geographic Society upon the continued growth and prosperity of the Society. Do you realize that this growth and prosperity is unprecedented in the history of the world? There has never