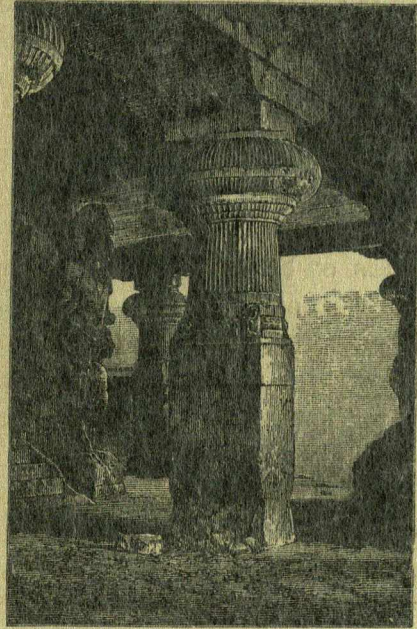


many others that have been removed from their original sites by officious or dishonest pedantry, has long been lost. Diogo de Couto, the Portuguese annalist, says:—
 “When the Portuguese took Baçaim and its dependencies they went to this pagoda and removed a famous stone over the entrance that had an inscription of large and well written characters, which was sent to the king, after the Governor of India had in vain endeavoured to find out any Hindu or Moor in the East who could decipher them. And the king D. Ioáo III. also used all his endeavours to the same purpose, but without any effect, and the stone thus remained there, and now there is no trace of it.”¹ Architecturally we may regard it as probably belonging to the latter part of the eighth or beginning of the ninth century of our era.²



No. 65. Pillar in Cave at Elephanta, from a photograph.

The most striking of the sculptures is the famous colossal three-faced bust, at the back of the cave facing the entrance, called a Trimurti, or tri-form figure. It occupies a recess 10½ feet deep, and is 21 feet 6 inches in width, rising from a base about 2 feet 9 inches in height. In the corners of the opening, both in the floor and lintel, are holes as if to receive door posts, and in the floor is a groove, as if a screen had been used for occasionally concealing the sculpture, or perhaps there was a railing here to keep back the crowd.

The central face has a mild and tranquil appearance;³ the lower

¹ De Couto, *Da Asia* (ed. Lisboa, 1778), Dec. VII. liv. iii. cap. 11. in tom. vii. p. 259.

² I would feel inclined to place it slightly earlier. The Dumar Lena I take to be earlier than the Kailâsa at Elura, and consequently was most probably excavated between 700 and 725 A.D. This cave seems to have followed almost immediately afterwards, and may therefore have been well advanced if not completed before 750 A.D.—J. F.

³ The general arrangement and appearance of this sculpture may be gathered from the nearly contemporary one at Elura, Plate LXXV., fig. 2.