

## NANDI TEMPLE.

The Nandi temple, which stands in front of the main temple facing towards it, contains a highly polished colossal statue, 7'-3" long and 6' high, of the bull Nandi who is the *Vahana* or vehicle and chamberlain of the god Siva, and also the guardian of all quadrupeds. In plan, the temple is a square of twelve pillars with two-pillared balconies projecting on the north, east and south sides, and a portico also carried on two pillars preceded by a flight of steps on the fourth side. The temple measures 31'-3" in length excluding the steps, and 30'-9" in width. It is of the same age as the Visvanatha temple.

## PARVATI TEMPLE.

The Parvati temple is situated immediately to the south-west of the Visvanatha temple. Only the sanctum remains, but as its lintel bears on its centre a figure of Vishnu, it is evident that the temple must have been dedicated to a Vaishnava deity, probably to Vishnu himself. The image at present worshipped in the shrine is one of Lakshmi and the name 'Parvati temple', by which it is now known to the villagers, is in any case a misnomer.

LAKSHMANA  
TEMPLE.

Another temple originally consecrated to Vishnu is the Lakshmanji-ka-mandir. It is similar in plan and almost exactly of the same size as the temple of Visvanatha, being 98' in length and 45'-3" in width. Of the five subordinate shrines attached to it, four are placed, as usual, at the corners of the terrace, and the fifth, dedicated to Garuda, the bird-vehicle of Vishnu, in front of the temple. The figure of Garuda, however, has disappeared and the shrine is now called the Devi temple.

The Lakshmana temple is prominent among the Khajuraho temples, for the boldness of its outline and the relatively high quality of its reliefs, some of which will be referred to anon. The entrance to the temple is decorated with an elegant *torana*, and the ceiling of the *mandapa* or nave is relieved with ingenious devices of cusped and coffered circles. In keeping with its Vaishnava character, the lintel over the entrance to the sanctum bears a figure of Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, in its centre with figures of Brahma and Siva

to her right and left. Above the lintel is a frieze carved with figures of the Navagraha, the nine planets, and on the jambs are reliefs illustrating the churning of the ocean by the gods and the demons, the incarnations of Vishnu, such as Vamana or the dwarf, Varaha or the boar, Matsya or the fish, Parasurama, Narasimha, etc., and fine scroll work intermingled with figures of birds, ascetics, and the like. Inside the sanctum is a four-armed and three-headed figure of Vishnu, 4'-1" in height, standing in a sumptuously carved *torana* frame. The middle head of the deity is human; the side ones are those of the lion, and boar (Narasimha and Varaha) incarnations.

Fortunately the history of this statue, as well as of the temple in which it is enshrined is recorded in an inscription, said to have been found when the temple was being repaired by Maharaja Pratap Singh of Chhatarpur some time after the year 1843. This inscription is now lying in the *mandapa*. It opens, as might be expected, with an invocation to Bhagavat Vasudeva or Krishna, which is followed, as in the Chandel inscriptions referred to above, by the genealogy of the family down to Dhanga. We are then told that king Yasovarman, otherwise known as Lakshavarman, father of Dhanga, built at Khajuraho a temple of Vishnu in which he installed an image, doubtless this very one, which he had obtained from king Devapala of Kanauj, the successor of Kshitipala or Mahipala, who had been defeated by Yasovarman's father, Harshadeva. The inscription was recorded in the reign of Dhanga in Vikrama Samvat 1011 (A.D. 954). It is not improbable that the present local name of the temple may be derived from the second name, Lakshavarman, of the founder.

On the outside of the temple are the usual reliefs—multitudes of gods and demigods, scenes of devotion and hunting, dances, wrestling matches, elephant fights and processions of warriors. Of the sculptures on the smaller shrines at the corners of the terrace one deserves special mention. It occurs on the east face of the shrine at the south-east corner, and portrays a teacher surrounded by a class of