

Chinese Frescos
OF
NORTHERN SUNG



C. T. Loo, Inc.

Introduction

BEFORE showing this selection of Chinese frescos, it may be *a propos* to mention how I got them.

During my second visit to China after the First World War, in 1923, our Peking office offered me a dinner, with all the members of our firm. Among those present, was one of our travelling buyers, who mentioned to me that somewhere near the Honan-Shansi border, there was a ruined temple in which still remained some fragments of wall paintings that we may have the chance to secure, if we really wanted them.

After negotiations, the city authorities had the remaining frescos removed from the debris and I understood later that with the receipts of this sale they had rebuilt the ruined temple.

Those frescos were sent to Paris and seemed to me so unusual and fine that I decided not to sell them, but to adorn the walls of our Paris Chinese House, which, I thought at that time, would become more or less a cultural center between China and France.

During my annual visit to France in 1946, I was depressed to see how sad our Paris house looked and how useless it was to leave those beautiful frescos in that house. It seemed better to remove them to this Country where they would be admired by the public.

I consider it was fortunate that we have been successful in removing those frescos from China, because if they had stayed in that part of the country—which has been in fighting area since such a long time—the public may have missed the chance of knowing the existence of Chinese Buddhistic frescos of that early period.

It is gratifying to know that there are in China today a number of eminent archaeologists making excavations. It is to be hoped that they will gather the antique relics, widely scattered, to be properly protected.

If there are some of my compatriots who should feel that the removal

of the frescos out of China, is a loss to our Country, I trust that they also should feel satisfied that those frescos will be safely and permanently preserved in a friendly Country.

Art should have no frontiers and should, on the contrary, be a source of enjoyment for people the world over. Our expectation is that this Exhibition may increase knowledge of the Great Past of China and by so doing promote understanding between our Countries.

C. T. LOO