

CHEN photographed »the Lady of the Desert» in the morning light of May 7th. Then she was carefully placed in her coffin. When it had been lowered once more into the grave, the pit was filled in as well as possible. Having taken a last farewell of the unknown one, and of our strangely realistic contact with antiquity, we returned to the landing-place, to find the five double canoes ready loaded, and the river that had come back to give new life to the haunt of peace where the young woman had slept through the centuries.

### REMAINS OF AN OLD STRUCTURE

We went on board and glided on down the capriciously winding river-arm that by pure chance had elected to flow past the foot of that interesting *mesa*, and into which equally pure chance had led us in the course of our trip to Lop-nor.

At a quarter to eleven the sun was darkened for a minute, and a few drops of rain fell — a very unusual event in that dry region. The mosquitoes that otherwise tormented us were driven away by a violent gust of wind, and sought shelter in the thick reed-beds that raised their feathery heads over lakes and watercourses.

While resting again on a clay mound and making observations, our attention was drawn to a *mesa* situated 250 m to the south-east. In the middle of its summit we perceived a depression resembling a saddle, and in its immediate vicinity some posts, obviously placed there by the hand of man, and sticking up out of the back of the *mesa*.

Crossing a couple of small canals and a reedy marsh, we went to the spot. The rather short, upright posts, that were about 13 m above the water, were possibly the last remains of a little house. A few blows of the spade on the surface exposed fragments of shoes, a basket and pieces of ox-hide. Immediately to the south-west of the »house» was a grave containing a skeleton. We left it in peace.

### ANOTHER SINGLE GRAVE

The ramifications of the arms of the delta were a complete puzzle. At four o'clock we again ascended a high *mesa* in order to find our way. To the north-east one saw fairly wide sheets of water, among innumerable *yardang* ridges. The *mesa* rose to a height of 25.3 m above the nearest bank. From this altitude the view was very different from that obtained from the surface of the water. From the boats one saw the country horizontally. If we went out onto a lake, it seemed colossal, and the shores looked like a fine yellow ring at a considerable distance. But if we ascended a high *mesa* we saw the landscape more as a map spread out at