

Frs. of
woollen pile
carpets.

technique, the fragments of woollen pile carpets, L.C. 010; i. 08; ii. 05. c, 09. a-b, 014, 017; iii. 014, 015; x. 02 (Pl. XLIV, LXXXVII). Though comparatively numerous, none of them display their patterns with sufficient clearness to permit of a definite conclusion as to the style of decoration. Bands of 'latch-hook' design are, however, recognizable in several pieces (L.C. 010; i. 08; ii. 09. a), while a lozenge pattern can be made out also in ii. 09. b and stylized flowers in iii. 014. In all fragments a variety of colours is used. In construction they resemble closely the pile carpet fragments found at the Lou-lan station, L.A. i. ii. 001; vi. ii. 0046,² and are probably like them products of local industry in the Tārīm basin.

Weaves of
cotton
fabrics.

Less numerous than the woollen textiles are the fabrics which in the Descriptive List are shown as of cotton. Since it has not been possible to secure for the microscopical analysis of these materials such expert help as Dr. Hanausek rendered for many of the fabrics described in *Serindia*, we cannot be quite sure that in all these pieces the yarn is of cotton and not linen. Hemp is plentiful along the lowermost Tārīm, and its use in some textiles from the Lou-lan station is attested by expert analysis.³ But of a number of fabrics remains found there and at L.B. Dr. Hanausek's examination has shown that their material is cotton.⁴ Hence the classification of the above L.C. pieces is not likely to be altogether wrong. Among the cotton fabrics plain weave prevails (L.C. 04, 036; i. 02. a-b, 06, 07; ii. 02. b, 05. f; v. 016, 024). But in two, L.C. 06. c-d, 035, which are described as 'jean', a twill structure must be assumed. A variation of 'warp-rib', corresponding to that used in the few silk damasks of L.C., appears also in the cotton (?) damask, L.C. i. 011 (Pl. XLII), showing a lozenge pattern. Finally mention may be made here of specimens of felt, found also as lining for garments (L.C. 04. a; i. 06).

Prevalence
of silk
fabrics.

But far greater importance attaches, whether in respect of material, technique, or artistic decoration, to the silk fabrics recovered. Their prevalence has already been referred to above, and is sufficiently illustrated by the fact that out of a total of 129 entries of textiles in the Descriptive List below not less than 74 concern different silk stuffs, 45 among these being figured silks. Considering the place where these remains were found and the early date which the chronological limits of the site assign to them, there can be *a priori* no doubt that all these silk materials were imports from the interior of China.⁵ The fact that they were discovered by the side of the very route which the Chinese had first opened for their direct intercourse with Central Asia and the distant West invests them with special significance. We could scarcely have looked in a more appropriate place for a representative collection of relics of that ancient silk trade which had played so important a part in China's Central Asian expansion, and which had passed along here for centuries.

Interest of
early silk
fabrics.

But their principal claim to our interest lies in the fact that they open up for us a new and fascinating chapter in the history of that textile art for which China has been famous ever since the products of the silk-weaving Seres first reached the classical West, and the early phases of which might well have seemed lost to us. When those remains of fine silks first emerged from their sombre place of deposit in the utter desolation of the desert I was at once greatly impressed by their wealth of beautiful designs and rich colours, though there was no time for more than rapid glimpses of the feast they offered.

Mr. F. H.
Andrews
on figured
silks.

The hopes then raised as to the light they might throw on the artistic and technical sides of Chinese silk industry during Han times have been justified through the devoted expert labours which Mr. F. H. Andrews has bestowed upon them. The important paper on *Ancient Chinese*

² See *Serindia*, i. pp. 384, 433, 438; iv. Pl. XXXVII.

³ Cf. *ibid.*, i. pp. 384, 433, 438.

⁴ See *ibid.*, i. p. 432 (L.A. 0149); p. 433 (L.A. II. 002); p. 435 (L.A. IV. ii. 001); p. 442 (L.B. II. 0018-20).

⁵ With them may be mentioned also specimens of silk waste, like L.C. v. 020; vi. 06, probably used for the padding of garments.