

and paper, fragments in many cases, but often quite complete. From a single small apartment still retaining in parts its smoke-begrimed wall plaster we recovered over a hundred such pieces. The rubbish reached in places to a height of close on nine feet.

Evidence of a varied and often rather unsavoury kind seemed to indicate that the rooms serving as casemates continued to be tenanted to the last, while the refuse accumulations on the floor kept steadily rising. Nothing but absolute indifference to dirt could have induced the occupiers to let room after room of their closely packed quarters be turned into regular dustbins, choked in some instances up to the roof.

I have had occasion to acquire a rather extensive experience in clearing ancient rubbish-heaps, and know how to diagnose them. But for intensity of sheer dirt and age-persisting smelliness I shall always put the rich 'castings' of Tibetan warriors in the front rank. More than a year later, when clearing the remains of a small ruined fort on the Mazar-tagh hill north of Khotan, more than 500 miles away, I correctly diagnosed its Tibetan occupation by the smell of the refuse even before finding definite antiquarian evidence. Among plenty of curious finds at the Miran fort I may specially mention here only the very abundant relics of defensive armour in the shape of lacquered scales of leather. They evidently belonged to different suits of scale armour and varied in size and ornamentation.

It was hard to find time for the examination of such technical details during the days when icy gales were almost constantly blowing. On the top of the dominating east rampart, where I had to stay most of the time to watch the