

of the ruined building before me as reproduced in the photograph taken from a sand-hill close by (p. 356), it was impossible to ignore the extent to which this and other structures of the site have suffered by erosion. The small plateau which the ruin is seen now to occupy, raised some 12 to 15 feet above the immediately surrounding ground, is unmistakably due to the erosion which proceeded around the building. While the strip of ground actually covered by the *débris* of the structure retains the original level, the open surface near by, consisting of mere loess, has been lowered more and more by the action of the wind. The drift-sand carried along over this portion of the area, which was once watered from the Niya River, is not sufficient at present to fill the depressions thus created or to protect the ruins. Broad ravines, from 15 to 30 feet deep, were to be seen in many places where the excavating force of the winds could freely assert itself in the bare loess soil. That part of the ground, too, still occupied by ancient buildings, is being slowly cut into and undermined, just as if it were exposed to the erosive action of running water. The result finally produced by this slow process of destruction is aptly illustrated by the photograph just referred to; for the heavy timber *débris* there seen on the slope of the foreground marks a part of the original building which has completely fallen, owing to the soil beneath having been eroded. Thus at more than one spot near my camp I found scattered fragments of beams and posts as the sole remains of ancient structures. Ultimately the wood, rendered brittle by long exposure, breaks up into splinters which the winds are able to carry away with ease, and only potsherds and small fragments of stone or metal remain to indicate the place of ancient habitations.