

the Stupa thus rose to a height of about 20 feet. I was much interested to note how closely the arrangement and proportions of the dome and its bases agreed with that observed in the ruined Stupas of Khanui, Moji, and Pialma. The size of the bricks too (circ. 22 by 17 by 4 inches) proved nearly the same as in those structures. Nor was the shaft wanting in the centre of the Stupa dome. It was only 1 foot square and had been laid open from the west by a cutting into the brickwork. That treasure-seekers had been at work was shown also by two large holes excavated in the upper base. What relic deposit there once was in this modest "memorial tower," as Hiuen-Tsiang would have called it, must have been abstracted long ago.

Promising as the finds were which my previous "prospecting" had yielded, I little anticipated how extraordinary rich a mine of ancient records I had struck in the ruin I proceeded to excavate. On the surface there was nothing to suggest the wealth of relics contained within the half-broken walls of the room, 23 by 18 feet large, which once formed the western end of a modest dwelling-place. But when systematic excavation, begun at the north-western corner of the room, revealed layer upon layer of wooden tablets mixed up with refuse of all sorts, the truth soon dawned upon me. I had struck an ancient rubbish heap formed by the accumulations of many years, and containing also what, with an anachronism, we may fitly call the "waste-paper" deposits of that early time.

It was not sand from which I extracted tablet after tablet, but a consolidated mass of refuse lying fully 4 feet above the original floor, as seen in the photograph reproduced p. 389. All the documents on wood, of which I recovered in the end more than two hundred, were found scattered among layers of broken pottery, straw, rags of felt and various woven fabrics, pieces of leather, and other rubbish. It was evident that the consistency which these varied remains had acquired in the course of centuries had more than anything else helped to protect them against the erosive action of the winds, from which the other parts of this ruin had suffered considerably. Thus it is mainly to the unsavoury associa-