

At Ak-sipil the most conspicuous remains are ruined portions of the rampart and parapet of an ancient fort. They have been visited before by several European travellers, and as some reliable data concerning them have been published by M. Grenard from M. Dutreuil de Rhins' notes, the briefest notice will suffice. The exact survey made by me showed that the extant ruins form a segment, about 360 feet long, of a circular wall which must have originally enclosed an area about 1,000 feet in diameter. Here, as at Endere, the lower portion of the circumvallation consisted of a rampart of hard stamped clay, rising about 11 feet above the original surface outside, which is still clearly distinguishable in places free of sand and uneroded. The rampart is surmounted by a parapet, 8 feet thick, which, by the large size of its sun-dried but fairly hard bricks (about 20 by 15 by 4 inches on the average), as well as by its solid construction, suggests considerable antiquity. The parapet, where in fair preservation, showed loopholes arranged in two uniform levels, one 16 inches, the other 5 feet above the base, but at irregular intervals. At two points of the extant segment the parapet is strengthened by solid brick platforms projecting about 3 feet on either side, which were provided with stairs, and probably served as watch-towers.

With the exception of the small segment facing due north, the circumvallation of this ancient fort, together with any buildings the interior might have once contained, has disappeared completely owing to erosion. The débris which covers the open ground between the low dunes for some distance around, has furnished to native "treasure-seekers" Chinese coins of the Han period, and plentiful small remains, such as seals, &c. All those acquired by me point to an early abandonment of this site.

A low mound, some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-west, to which Turdi conducted me, proved on excavation to mark the position of an ancient temple. Though the structure itself had been completely destroyed, no doubt through the operations of "treasure-seekers," there turned up among the loose débris of plaster and decomposed timber a considerable quantity of small relievo fragments in stucco of