

remarkable hardness. These fragments, among which pieces of draped relievo figures, as well as of decorative plaques are largely represented, display a style of modelling and a technical execution far superior to the stucco work of the Dandan-Uiliq and Endere temples, and recalling the best products of Græco-Buddhist sculpture in Gandhara. A feature as remarkable as the hardness of these small stucco relievos is their cracked and fissured surface, which in places looks as if scorched. The assumption that these stucco pieces received their present appearance in a fire that consumed the temple naturally suggests itself. But whether this accidental burning would also account for their exceptional hardness is a question still to be settled by a ceramic expert. "Treasure-seekers" call this place 'Kighillik,' from a large mound mainly composed of dry manure ('kighik') that rises quite close to the remains just mentioned. This huge refuse-heap, which measures, as far as exposed, some 70 by 50 feet, with a depth of at least 16 feet, has not escaped the attention of treasure-seekers. The regular galleries they have tunnelled through it enabled me to ascertain with comparative ease that its contents, besides manure (apparently horse-dung), were only small bits of bone, charcoal and fuel.

On the 10th of April I left Ak-sipil, and marching due north for about fourteen miles, partly over dunes of coarse grey sand, partly along a pebble-covered 'Sai' clearly recognisable as an ancient river-bed, arrived in the evening at the ruins called 'Rawak' ("High Mansion") by Turdi and the men of his craft. Here an unexpected and most gratifying discovery awaited me. Our honest old guide had spoken only of "an old house" to be seen there half buried in the sand, but in reality the first glimpse showed a large Stupa with its enclosing quadrangle, by far the most imposing structure I had seen among the extant ruins of the Khotan region. Large dunes of coarse sand, rising over 25 feet in height, covered the quadrangle and part of the massive square base of the Stupa on the north-west and north-east faces. But towards the south the drift-sand was lower, and there great portions of the Stupa base, as well as