

depression within two miles of the Stupa, and there the labourers' camp was conveniently established. A look at the map shows that the distance from the Rawak site to the bank of the Yurung-kash is only about seven miles. In fact, to this comparative proximity of the present river-bed were due both the forbidding height of the dunes and the slight depth of subsoil water.

The season of Burans had now fully set in, and the gales that were blowing daily, though from different quarters and of varying degrees of violence, carried along with them a spray of light sand that permeated everything. I noticed the frequency with which the wind would shift round to almost opposite directions on successive days, sometimes even between morning and evening—a feature of Burans well known to all natives living near the Taklamakan and observed also by former travellers. To the discomfort which the constant drifting of sand caused, and which we naturally felt in a still more irritating fashion while engaged in excavation, was added the trying sensation of glare and heat all through the daytime. The sun beat down with remarkable intensity through the yellowish dust-haze, and the reflection of its rays by every glittering particle of sand made the heat appear far greater than it really was. The quick radiation that set in as soon as the sun had gone down caused rapid and striking variations in the temperature at different portions of the day, and I have little doubt that the agues and fevers, from which all my own followers began to suffer after our start from Yurung-kash, were mainly brought on by these sudden changes. It was impossible for me to escape exposure to these adverse atmospheric influences; but luckily the chills I caught freely could be kept in check by liberal doses of quinine until my work at these fascinating ruins was done.

The excavations, which I commenced on the morning of the 11th of April in the inner south corner of the quadrangle, soon revealed evidence that the enclosing wall had been adorned with whole rows of colossal statues in stucco. Those on the inside face of the wall could still be expected to be in a fair state of preservation owing to the depth of the sand, which was in no place less