

the Rawak sculptures. The rule of the Later Han dynasty extended over the period 25–220 A.D., but the issue of some of its coin-types appears to have continued to the close of the fourth century. So far as minor antiquarian indications, derived from the construction, the materials, &c., of the ruined Stupa and its adornments, permit us to judge at present, the date of its erection may well fall near the period to which the ruins of the ancient settlement beyond Imam Jafar Sadik have proved to belong.

I soon realised with regret that, owing to the extremely friable condition of the stucco and the difficulties of transport, the removal of the larger relievos was impracticable. Those pieces of the colossal images which were found already detached, such as portions of arms, projecting drapery, &c., usually broke when lifted, whatever care was used. An attempt to move the complete statues or torsos from their places would have meant only vandal destruction, unless elaborate appliances, including perhaps specially constructed coffin-like cases made to measure, as it were, could be provided. To improvise these I had neither time nor the technical means, and in any case it would have been a practical impossibility to arrange for the safe transport of such loads over the mountains, whether to India or Europe.

All that could be done in the case of these large sculptures was to bury them again safely in the sand after they had been photographed and described, and to trust that they would rest undisturbed under their protecting cover—until that time, still distant it seems, when Khotan shall have its own local museum. But of the smaller relievos and sculptural pieces already detached, I succeeded in bringing away a considerable number. I felt greatly relieved when I found on my arrival at Kashgar, and later also in London, that the great trouble and labour which the safe packing of these extremely fragile objects had cost me was rewarded by their having accomplished the long journey—some six thousand miles by camels, ponies, railway and steamer—without any serious damage. The two heads of saints in alto-relievo still retaining part of their colouring, which are shown on pp. 464, 467, illustrate types frequently