

In spite of all efforts, and of the large number of men kept at work, the excavation of this temple was not completed until the evening of the third day,—so great was the mass of sand and débris which had to be shifted, and so rich the yield of manuscript leaves, relievo fragments in stucco and wood, and pieces of frescoed wall plaster, which had to be collected with care and marked. For the detailed examination of them there was no time then. Tired out as I was by the long day's work at the ruin, I had to labour well into the night cleaning the sand crusts off the manuscript remains—they could not otherwise have been packed safely—and recording exact details as to the place and conditions of all the more important finds. Among striking observations thus gathered on the spot only a few can be mentioned here. Again and again I came upon leaves from the same texts in Brahmi writing which had turned up in widely separated parts of the building, a proof that the worshipper depositing them had, as in the case of the shrine excavated at Endere in 1901, tried to please with his offerings as many as possible of the divinities represented among the sculptures and frescoes of the temple.

That there had been Chinese, too, among the pious visitors was proved by the discovery of two well-preserved rolls of paper, one fully thirty-six by ten inches, evidently parts of the same manuscript, showing a neatly written Chinese Buddhist text on one side and an equally extensive text in cursive Brahmi script on the other. Closer study of the latter was impossible at the time. Yet the mere hope that it might be a translation of the Chinese text on the obverse, and thus prove thereafter in the hands of an expert collaborator to furnish a key for the decipherment of the 'unknown' language of Buddhist Khotan, was by itself no small encouragement. The total number of separately marked manuscript packets, containing larger portions of texts or else collections of fragments, amounted in the end to over 230.

In the course of the second day I found my architectural conclusions confirmed by the discovery of a large central image base and of remains of frescoed walls which had