

and worked almost in the round, represents a composite figure having below the leg and hoof of a horse, and above the bust and head of a human being, with a face curiously reminiscent of the Greek sphinx. The transition is effected through a half-open lotus, while behind the breast small wings are indicated, which still further emphasize the descent from the classical monster.

Equally Western was the decoration of a small slipper, which must have once seen better days on the foot of some lady (Fig. 116, 2). Its 'upper,' mounted on a thinnish sole of leather, consisted of a fine cream-coloured wool material, which showed a delicate pattern woven in brocade fashion. All round the front part ran a band woven in elaborate geometrical design with exquisitely matched colours, and curiously recalling Coptic or early Byzantine models. An ugly patch of leather, sewn across one side of the front where the material had suffered from long wear, contrasts strangely with the tasteful elegance of the original work.

What with plentiful fragments of balustrades and open-work panels, showing floral decoration in acanthus and laurel leaves and other classical motives (Fig. 125, 1, 4-6); with a large oblong ivory die of distinctly Indian origin; with Chinese records on wood, silk rags, and lacquered work on bamboo material, which must manifestly have come from the Far East, the 'finds' of this ruin seemed like a Christmas present specially prepared to bring home to me in the desolation of the desert how this forgotten dead corner of Central Asia had once been linked by relations of art, trade, and culture with all the great civilisations of the ancient world.

While the excavation steadily proceeded in the bitter cold of these grey, sunless days, I had opportunities for plenty of curious observations on the ground immediately adjoining. But of these I can only mention here the discovery of an extensive rush fence to the north and north-west of the ruin, evidently enclosing what must have been a large orchard or garden. The pliable rushes, so weak by themselves, had succeeded in catching and binding the drift sand, which, formed into a clearly marked low ridge, had effectively kept off erosion. So within and under its