

carefully stamped clay in thin regular layers, was very solid, pointing to early construction. In places it still rose to eighteen feet, and it rested on a broad clay rampart raised at least another fifteen feet above the ground level.

The area enclosed showed no recognizable ruins, only some low mounds partly covered with drift sand. I was able to get trenches cut through these by the large number of men we obtained from the hamlets. But I may state at once that the only finds rewarding the work here were a few large bricks of extremely hard burnt clay, evidently left over from some structure of which the materials had been completely quarried and removed long before. That these fine black bricks were of great age was on the face of it probable. But on this point I felt more assured when the careful search I made along the exposed portions of the rampart brought to light coins all belonging to issues of Han times.

To the north and north-east of the ruined town I found an extensive area of the typical 'Tati' character, where the bare clay patches appearing between dunes big and small were abundantly covered with the usual hard *débris* of pottery, stones, etc. The people of Nan-hu called it 'the place for finding old things,' and, no doubt, searched it after great storms as keenly as Khotan 'treasure-seekers' their familiar Tatis. Repeated visits by Chiang and myself allowed us to collect here a good deal of bronze fragments, arrow-heads, small pieces of decorated stone-ware and the like. The latest of the numerous copper coins picked up proved to belong to issues of the T'ang dynasty, while on the other hand we failed to notice a single piece of porcelain by the side of such plentiful pottery. Thus the conclusion seems justified that the site was abandoned during the troubled period which followed the downfall of the T'ang rule in these parts, about the close of the eighth century A. D., and before porcelain became common under the Sung.

I cannot spare space to detail here a series of interesting observations as to the source from which this abandoned part of the oasis once received its irrigation, and as to the