

succeeded in counteracting the Tao-shih's relapses into timorous contrariness. The labour of clearing out the whole chapel might by itself have dismayed a stouter heart than that of our priestly 'librarian'; and what with this and the increased risk of exposure involved, Wang Tao-shih became now altogether refractory. However, he had already been gradually led from one concession to another, and we took care not to leave him much time for reflection.

So at last with many a sigh and plaintive remonstrance, and behind the outer temple gates carefully locked, he set to this great toil, helped now by a sort of priestly famulus whose discretion could be relied on. Previously I had sometimes feared that the little Tao-shih might get smothered under a tumbling wall of manuscript. Now I wondered whether the toil of pulling them out would not cause his slender physique to collapse. But it held out all the same, and by the evening of May 28th the regular bundles of Chinese rolls, more than 1050 in all, and those containing Tibetan texts had been transferred to neat rows in the spacious main cella of the temple (Fig. 188).

The bundles were almost all sewn up tightly in coarse covers of linen. But the ends were generally left open, and as Wang handed out bundle after bundle through the chapel door, Chiang and myself were just able to see hastily whether, amidst the usual rolls with Chinese texts, there were embedded any Pothi leaves from Brahmi manuscripts, folded-up pictures, or other relics of special attraction. Such we picked out and put aside rapidly. But there was no time even to glance at individual rolls and to see whether they bore anywhere within or without Indian or Central-Asian writing.

Perfunctory as the operation had to be in view of the Tao-shih's visibly growing reluctance, I had a gratifying reward for my insistence on this clearing in the discovery of several miscellaneous bundles at the very bottom. They had been used there by the Tao-shih to turn a low clay platform into a level foundation for the manuscript wall above. In spite of the crushing these bundles had undergone, I recovered from them a large number of exquisite