

military factotum, from carrying away from it a very interesting small antique, which he rightly thought I should value. It was the fragmentary arm of a statue carved in wood, covered with elaborate relief ornaments showing close resemblance in style to the Gandhara designs which I had admired in the wood-carvings of the Lop-nor sites. Remains of bright colouring still adhered. There could be no doubt that the statue to which this relic had once belonged was a work of early date. But there was no clue to guide us to its original place of discovery.

Excavations, carried out experimentally under the supervision of Chiang-ssŭ-yeh at several débris mounds, revealed neither written records nor other objects of special antiquarian interest. But the fragments of pottery and porcelain which came to light confirmed my conclusion as to the date down to which the town was inhabited. An elaborately decorated Stupa, which rose on a solid base of clay about a quarter of a mile to the east of the town (Fig. 212), still retained portions of its original coating with hard yellow stucco. The mouldings and general design suggested that it had been constructed during later Sung times (eleventh to thirteenth centuries A.D.) when the Hsi-hsia tribe ruled this part of Kan-su. Of the temple which had once adjoined it on the south nothing remained but small fragments of hard bricks, some bearing, in beautiful green glaze, scroll ornaments in low reliefs. These might have served as roofing tiles.

A big cutting in the brickwork of the Stupa showed that treasure-seekers had followed the procedure so familiar to me from Turkestan ruins. Their burrowing had not spared the small Stupas, about ten to twelve feet in diameter, which rose in a row north and north-east along the edge of the terrace. Some had completely collapsed in consequence of this operation. Those still upright showed invariably a small interior chamber, only one or two feet square, and in one case this was found filled with hundreds of miniature Stupas modelled in clay and exactly resembling those I had discovered at Khadalik. Evidently these little clay Stupas, all produced from two or three