

shelter the increased numbers of men likely to have been temporarily stationed there on occasions of alarms, etc.⁶⁸

We have evidence in the documents that the same care which the administration took of the *matériel* was extended also to the health of the men keeping guard on the Limes. Thus we find reports on the illness of individual men,⁶⁹ and in Nos. 524-34 a collection of medical reports and prescriptions for individual cases, along with general recipes for diseases of men as well as animals. All these are neatly written on uniform slips of bamboo, and in all probability, as M. Chavannes explains, formed part of a kind of note-book kept by a physician practising on the Limes.⁷⁰ The systematic provision of medical aid of some sort for the border troops is conclusively proved by that very interesting relic, No. 588, T. VIII. 5 (Plate XVII). It is a wooden lid, about 7 by 3½ inches, bearing the clear inscription 'Medicine case of the Hsien-ming company', and still retaining remnants of the string by which it could be fastened to the case it once fitted. I have already mentioned the archaeological interest afforded by the seal-socket and string grooves of the lid.⁷¹ They correspond exactly to the arrangements which I first observed in 1901 on the Kharoṣṭhī documents of the Niya Site, and definitely confirm their assumed Chinese origin.

Records of
medical
treatment.

Considering the trying conditions of service on this desert border and the fact that a large proportion of the 'garrison soldiers', if not the majority, was made up of deported criminals,⁷² the maintenance of effective discipline among the Limes troops must have been of special importance. We find references to this in several documents. Thus No. 188 + 199 tells us of a proposed sentence of capital punishment regarding which an application has been addressed to the throne.⁷³ In No. 68 we read of a soldier punished with 230 . . ., 'strokes' being obviously the word which is no longer legible in the slip. Perhaps No. 382 from T. XIV, with its report on the death of a man who had been beaten, relates to a case of such punishment. A beating stick intended for such use, T. XIV. iii. 0018, was actually recovered at the same site and, as Plate LII shows, in excellent preservation.⁷⁴

References
to punish-
ments.

From the many documents referred to in the preceding pages an adequate idea can be gathered as to the general character of the official correspondence which kept the clerical establishments on the border, those 'Babus' of Han times, busy, and which forms the bulk of the written remains recovered. It will suffice to add here brief mention of certain topics which recur with particular frequency among the *paperasses* left behind from the records of the small military offices. That all clerical devices of an elaborate system of military administration were familiar to these offices can be realized quite clearly by those, too, who, not being Sinologists, are unable to follow the many stereotyped phrases and terminological details elucidated by M. Chavannes. Very frequently the circulation of orders emanating from headquarters is prescribed among the different watch-posts of certain sections of the Limes and among the company stations.⁷⁵ Elsewhere the posting-up of certain orders in a visible and appropriate place is enjoined with particular emphasis, so that all concerned may take due notice.⁷⁶ A curious and, no doubt, much-needed general fulmination

Official cor-
respondence
and notifi-
cations.

⁶⁸ Of other implements we find mentioned axes in No. 257; a drinking-vessel in No. 384. For specimens of the latter in wood and lacquer, see Pl. LII and List below.

⁶⁹ Cf. Nos. 78, 161, 465; in the last case we are told that the sick man had gone to have himself treated by natives, but had died.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Documents*, pp. xvii, 113.

⁷¹ Cf. above, p. 659.

⁷² See M. Chavannes' note on *Doc.* No. 263, and above, p. 751.

⁷³ Did capital sentences of judicial routine stand then, as they did in modern times, in need of imperial confirmation before they could be executed?

⁷⁴ Cf. also above, p. 686. For other references to judicial action cf. Nos. 191, 494. The first mentions the escape of six prisoners. For the underground dungeon discovered at T. XIV, see above, p. 686.

⁷⁵ Cf. e.g. Nos. 166, 258, 273, 313, 536, 617.

⁷⁶ See Nos. 63, 432, 437; also No. 273.