

The mention of the kingdom of Jên-ch'êng, which was established A.D. 84 in the province of Shantung, still one of the chief silk-producing regions of China, proves the piece of silk to date from the end of the first or beginning of the second century A.D.

Chinese inch
measures of
Han period.

The measure of 2 feet 2 inches recorded for the width of the piece enables us to establish the standard width for silk during the later Han period by evidence independent of the actual state of the strip. My excavations along the line of the Chinese Limes west of Tun-huang have brought to light two wooden measures which accurately determine the value of the (decimal) Chinese inch at that epoch. The measure T. VIII. 4 shows a foot divided into ten inches, each $\frac{9}{10}$ " or 22.9 millimetres long. The other measure, T. XI. ii. 13, a slip of cane, is marked with inch divisions of exactly the same length. The measures were found at watch-towers which can both be proved, from dated documents recovered there, to have been occupied during the first and second century A.D.¹³ Accepting the value of 22.9 mm. for the inch of the Later Han period, we get 50.38 centimetres (or 19.83 inches) as the equivalent of the measurement, 22 Chinese inches, indicated as the proper width in the inscription of T. xv. a. i. 3. And with this the actual width, 50 cm. as measured by M. Chavannes, practically coincides. Turning now to the silk roll L.A. I. 002, we find its actual length to be 18.75 inches, or about one inch less than the standard width just determined. But a glance at the reproduction in Plate XXXVII shows that both ends of the roll, and in particular the upper one, have become frayed through abrasion, and this circumstance, together with the probable shrinkage of the fabric during so many centuries' deposit in dry sand, is amply sufficient to account for the slight difference.

Standard
silk width
unchanged.

We are thus justified in concluding that the standard width for silk, as established during the Later Han period, did not undergo any change in the times of the Chin dynasty to which the roll L.A. I. 002 must be assumed to belong. The dimension of the Chinese inch had been altered considerably in this later period, if we may judge from the measure L.A. II. vi. 001 (Plate XXXV), to be described below, which shows decimal divisions of $\frac{13}{16}$ " or 30.16 mm. each. But it is only natural that an important article of foreign export like silk remained unaffected in its trade dimensions by this change in the units of measurement.^{13a}

Mis-
cellaneous
relics from
L.A. I. iv.

The refuse found amidst the timber débris of L.A. I. iv, apart from the remnants of fabrics already mentioned, contained a number of small objects of household use which will be found fully described in the List below. The briefest reference will suffice here to such as the wooden spoon, L.A. I. iv. 008; the pair of eating sticks, L.A. I. iv. 006-7; the fragment of a lacquered bowl, L.A. I. iv. 0015. The small carefully-carved stick, with a cross piece at one end, L.A. I. iv. 009 (Plate XXXV), corresponds exactly to the modern *chūluk* of Chinese Turkestan, used for tying up lambs to a rope which is stretched on the ground. Its use must have been wide spread in ancient times, too, as the specimens found at other early sites (L.B. IV. ii. 009; N. XIII. i. 002; Ka. I. 008) prove. More puzzling in character are the numerous small pointed 'labels' in thin wood, L.A. I. iv. II. a-b (Plate XXXV). Two holes pierced through the square head and having a sunken border at each end suggest some system of threading which would have allowed these pieces of wood, about three inches long, to be used as scales of an armour somewhat after the fashion of scales of hard leather found at the Niya Site.¹⁴ But there remain obvious difficulties of a technical kind which render this explanation for the present uncertain. Attention may also be

¹³ Cf. Chavannes, *Documents*, pp. 126, 145; also below, chap. XVIII. sec. i, iii.

^{13a} That the standard width of silk was enlarged at some time between the Chin period and the tenth century is proved by silk paintings found in the Ch'ien-fo-tung cave which are made of one breadth of silk. This in Ch. 00224, dated

A.D. 939, measures 24 inches, and in Ch. 0067, 22 inches; see below, chap. XXV. sec. ii.

The piece of silk found at M. x of the Mirān site, also of later origin, measures 22½ inches; see chap. XIII. sec. viii.

¹⁴ Cf. *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. xvi, 411; also the lacquered leather scales found at Mirān, see below, chap. XII. sec. iv.