

Chinese records dated A.D. 265-274.

letter on paper, L.A. II. i. 1: *Doc.* No. 904, which was found in its original form of a small convolute as intended for transmission, and also that the dated documents among those which M. Chavannes has included in his publication all belong to the years A.D. 265-74. As with one exception the dates in those of Dr. Hedin's finds about which some preliminary information has so far become available range between the years A.D. 264-70,³ it seems safe to assume that the little apartment became filled with refuse and the 'waste paper' deposits it contained during that period or soon after.

Remains of ancient 'Ya-mên.'

The prevailing official character of the documents found here and of those, still more numerous, which my clearing of the closely adjacent and extensive refuse layers, L.A. III. i and VI. ii, has yielded, makes it certain that the complex of ruined dwellings marked by me as L.A. II and III (see Plate 25) represents what is left of the accommodation which served for the Chinese administrative headquarters established in the ancient station. In size and general arrangement, it curiously recalled the Ya-mêns which are occupied now by Chinese officials in charge of districts, etc., within the 'New Dominion' and eastwards, and which are meant to accommodate not only these officers with their families and personal attendants but also their subordinate staff, treasury, administrative stores, and the like. The resemblance was so obvious that my Charkhlik labourers promptly and quite spontaneously came to call L.A. II 'the Ya-mên of the Kōne-shahr'.

Brick-built walls of L.A. II.

The most striking feature of the surviving ruin is the T-shaped massive wall of large sun-dried bricks against which all traceable rooms of L.A. II appear to have been built. It could be followed in the direction E.N.E. to W.S.W. for about 150 feet with an arm adjoining it at right angles eastwards and still extending for about 105 feet. As in the case of all brick structures of the site, there was a layer of tamarisk fascines below forming a foundation. With regard to the former portion of the T-shaped wall, the fact that it lies exactly in the direction of the prevailing wind is sufficient to explain its escape from complete erosion. Even thus most of its length, except behind the small apartments ii-iv and near room v, had been worn down almost to ground level. The other wall, forming the top of the T and lying right across the prevalent direction of the wind, had suffered even more by abrasion and would have disappeared altogether but for the heavy timber débris which covered the eroded slopes on either side. It appears probable that this cross-wall originally extended further to the N.N.W., and that it was the prolonged resistance offered by the structures once adjoining this wall which saved the remains of L.A. II, III, v, and VI from being even more eroded. At the S.S.E. end of this cross-wall, and in a corresponding position to the south of L.A. III (see Fig. 102), the timber débris strewing the eroded slopes was particularly heavy, suggesting structures at the ends of what might have been two wings flanking the main court of the 'Ya-mên'. But this must necessarily remain mere conjecture. It may, however, be noted that on the slope to the south of L.A. III. iii, and some three feet below its floor level, remains of a brick wall or platform, six feet wide, cropped out, indicating, perhaps, the existence in a similar position of some earlier structure. The brick walls of L.A. II showed an average thickness of about 3' 6", and the bricks measured 18-19" in length and 12-13" in width, with a thickness of 4".

Narrow apartments, L.A. II. ii-iv.

The three narrow closet-like apartments, II. ii-iv (see Fig. 101), which have already been referred to, are formed by cross-walls projecting to about 18 feet from the main wall of L.A. II. Their southern ends are broken, and the exact length of these narrow apartments could not be determined. As seen in Fig. 99, the cross-walls are constructed of sun-dried bricks of the previously mentioned size, with the successive courses separated from each other by layers of stamped clay of about the same thickness. The cross-walls still rose in places to a maximum height of ten feet and

³ Cf. Himly's paper quoted by Dr. Hedin, *Central Asia and Tibet*, ii. p. 144.