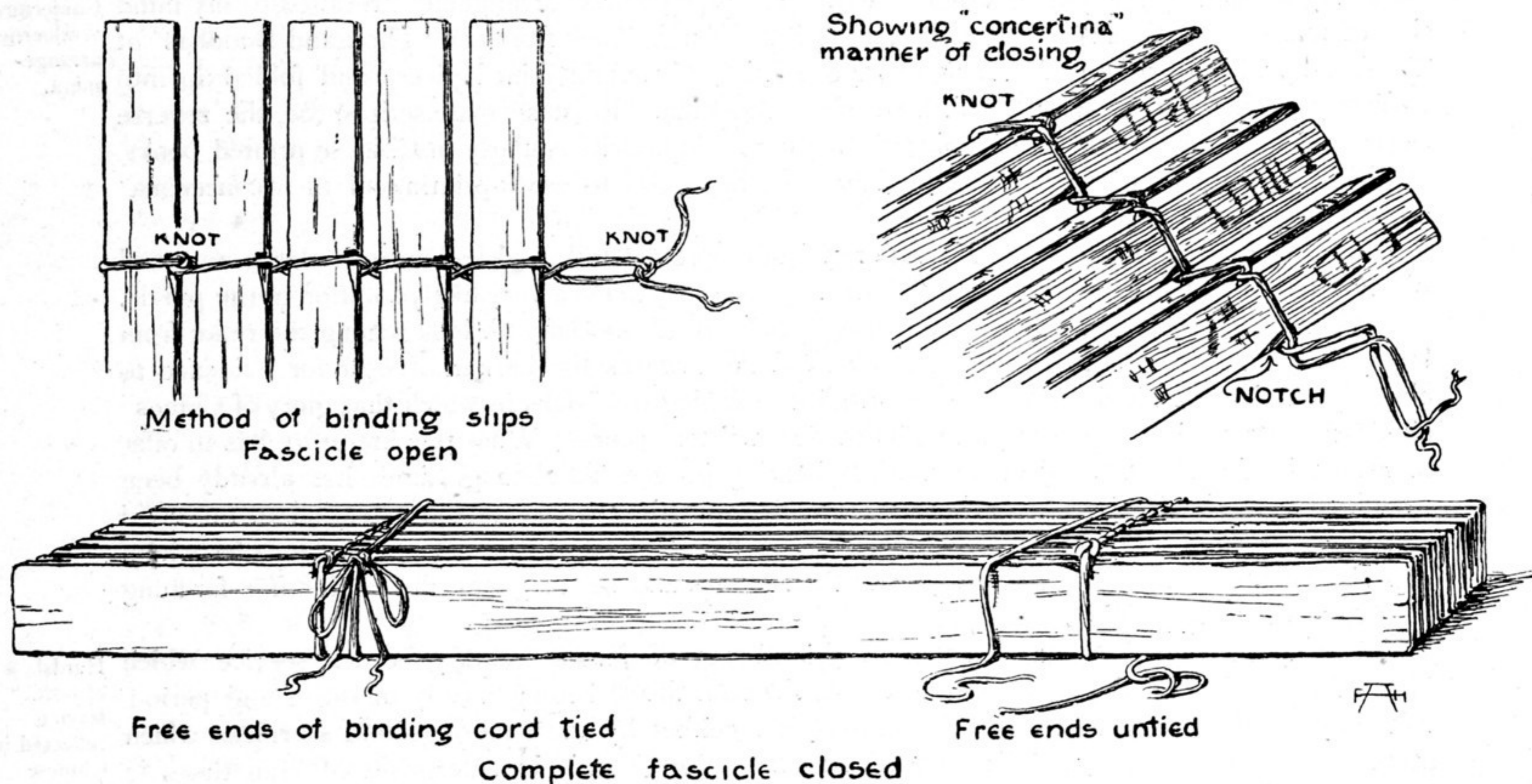


oublier que toute cette grandeur fut édiflée avec des matériaux humains. De même que les poètes chinois croient encore entendre errer le long de la grande muraille de *Ts'in Che houang ti* les âmes désolées de ceux qui la construisirent, ainsi nous évoquons, sous les détails administratifs de la vie d'une petite garnison chinoise perdue en plein désert, les souffrances et les regrets des exilés qui se lamentent.'

NOTE OF MR. ANDREWS ON 'SLIPS' ARRANGED INTO BOOKS

Each 'slip', i. e. small lath of wood (belonging to a series which contained one text or connected record), being a folio, it is clear that some means of binding must have been employed to maintain the folios in correct collation. The small notches observed on the edges of the 'slips', and the fact that these exactly range when a number of 'slips' are collated, indicate that the connecting binding must have been of the nature of a string, an inference strengthened by the references in Chinese texts to silk or leather cords uniting the fascicles of wooden or bamboo slips (cf. Chavannes, *Les livres chinois*, pp. 43 sqq.).



Experimenting with a fine raw silk thread, I found that a satisfactory result could be attained by the following method (see illustration above). The cord is doubled end to end, the first 'slip' (folio one) is placed in the bend, and an ordinary knot tied with the two ends, care being taken that the encircling cord falls in the notch near one end of the lath, the purpose of which is to prevent the cord slipping. Folio two is then laid with its notch close to the knot, one end of the cord being below the lath and the other on the top. The two ends are then half twisted round each other reversing the positions of the cords, the upper becoming the lower and the lower the upper. Folio three is next placed between the cords with its notch against the half twist, and the cords are again half twisted to secure it in position. The process is continued until the last folio, after which a knot is tied, and the excess length of the two ends is left free to be used as a means of tying the complete record or chapter together, when it has been closed in concertina fashion. The same procedure is followed with the opposite end. The whole process is practically that followed by basket-makers and 'chick'-makers, sometimes described as 'wrap twining' or 'pairing', and will be perhaps more clearly understood from the accompanying sketch.

The reason for tying the first knot is to prevent the cord travelling round with frequent opening and closing of the book, a tendency which it had, as experiment proved. When closed, the fascicle could be conveniently slipped into a rectangular case for protection. For lids of such cases, with string grooves and seal cavity, see *Ancient Khotan*, Pl. CXIV (N. xv. 345), and *Documents*, Pl. XXIII (No. 751, L.A. vi. ii. 0200).