

how much of the salt lake is left after the intense evaporation of the summer. The evaporation from the Aral Sea amounts in summer to about 1 m a month, and that from Lop-nor is probably just as much, if not more. If the surface-area of Lop-nor is estimated at 1,900 sq. km, the evaporation amounts to 57 million cub. m of water in twenty-four hours.

MORE GRAVES

On the morning of May 19th the men brought to my tent a couple of four-legged food-trays, two skulls and a few oddments they had found in a grave that had been opened years earlier. The objects were of exactly the same shape and type as those from the first mass-grave.

CHEN went to the spot and found a dozen graves, all of which had been opened. This was evidently the place that STEIN called L. F. These graves, too, were situated on a *mesa* that was divided into two blocks by a saddle-like depression. On the north side of the saddle there were traces of fortifications. The graves lay to the south of the saddle.

550 m from our camp was yet another *mesa*, to which we walked. On the way we had to cross an arm of slack water, which is doubtless flooded in the autumn, when all the riverside lakes and creeks are full.

Near the summit of the *mesa* we found a number of small stakes sticking up out of the ground to form a miniature palisade, 0.8 to 1.04 m wide. Quite close to it were four graves, one of which we opened. It contained eight skulls and a quantity of small objects of the same kind as those we had found before.

A thorough search of the whole country round Lou-lan would doubtless bring to light innumerable graves of this kind, in which Lou-lan's dead were buried for centuries, and where they now sleep their last sleep. In those times, as now, the country round their towns and villages was menaced by floods; and burial places out of reach of the water were accordingly chosen. *Mesas* raised their tawny blocks or pinnacles over the watery region and offered complete protection. No common burial ground seems to have been used; the graves lay scattered, as they still are in China; and here the dead have slept for 2,000 years, while countless spring storms have raged over their heads.

When the next morning's sun was once more suffusing the wilderness with light and colour we went on board the two double canoes and steered W. N. W. The reeds grew thick again, and the fresh spring green became more and more conspicuous. For a long time we followed a sharp-cut channel flanked by *yardangs*. Forcing our way through a thick reed-bed, we came out into a small lake, and steered south-west. The channel expanded into a good-sized lake, beneath whose clear water we could see the pale yellow tops of submerged *yardangs*.