

which the walls built of large and solid-baked bricks, are pretty well preserved. Save these bricks, "I found hardly anything, the inhabitants have pillaged everything long ago. I attempted some excavating, which turned out to be without result, as far as I was concerned; but the superstitious natives declared that they were the cause of a violent storm which took place soon after. There are similar ruins in the environs, at Yantak Koudouk, at Tatrang, one day's march to the north, and at Ouadjchahari at five days to the north-east, which corresponds to the position assigned to Lop by Marco Polo." (See *Grenard's Haute Asie* on *Nia*.)

Palladius is quite mistaken (*l.c.* p. 3) in saying that the "Charchan" of Marco Polo is to be found in the present province of Karashar. (Cf. *T. W. Kingsmill's Notes on Marco Polo's Route from Khoten to China, Chinese Recorder*, VII. pp. 338-343; *Notes on Doctor Sven Hedin's Discoveries in the Valley of the Tarim, its Cities and Peoples, China Review*, XXIV. No. II. pp. 59-64.)—H. C.]

CHAPTER XXXIX.

OF THE CITY OF LOP AND THE GREAT DESERT.

LOP is a large town at the edge of the Desert, which is called the Desert of Lop, and is situated between east and north-east. It belongs to the Great Kaan, and the people worship Mahommet. Now, such persons as propose to cross the Desert take a week's rest in this town to refresh themselves and their cattle; and then they make ready for the journey, taking with them a month's supply for man and beast. On quitting this city they enter the Desert.

The length of this Desert is so great that 'tis said it would take a year and more to ride from one end of it to the other. And here, where its breadth is least, it takes a month to cross it. 'Tis all composed of hills and valleys of sand, and not a thing to eat is to be found on it. But after riding for a day and a night you find fresh water, enough mayhap for some 50 or 100 persons with their beasts, but not for more. And all across the Desert you will find water in like manner, that is to say, in some 28 places altogether you will find good water,