

Opposite, and a little below the necropolis, on the other bank of the rGya brook are the ruins of the ancient castle and town of the Mons, called Rum-rtse-mkhar, with cave dwellings close by. The most conspicuous building in the old town was a round tower of great dimensions. Unfortunately, our limited time did not allow us to visit the site. The rGya district altogether is so full of ancient remains that an archæologist could profitably spend a couple of weeks here.

There is another ruined castle (called *mKhar-gog*), on a spur in a side valley to the left, between Rum-rtse and rGya. Although I could not trace any traditions regarding it, it is apparently of Mon, *i.e.*, pre-Tibetan, origin. Besides, there are many ancient Mon *stūpas* in various places between Rum-rtse and rGya. The two large *mchod-rten* seen by Moorcroft on the road before entering rGya, are apparently still in existence. They are of Tibetan origin, and probably not more than two centuries old.

The site of the old settlement of the Tibetans at rGya is called *rGya-mkhar*. It is situated on a spur of the right bank of the rGya brook. From Moorcroft's account it appears that in 1820 A.D., the site was no longer inhabited and that Moorcroft's town of rGya was identical with the present, which is situated on the left bank of the brook. He says¹: "Opposite to the town, on a lofty ridge of rocks, was a large pile of houses, formerly inhabited by the raja; and lower down, one belonging to the lama." The ruins of this ancient Tibetan town are still very picturesque. Higher up on the same hill are several ancient watch-towers. When Moorcroft was in rGya, he found one of the ancient chiefs of the district still in authority. He had friendly intercourse with this man whom he calls a raja. He says: "The raja whose name was Tsimma Panchik, was a short stout man about fifty." Of course, there were no kings of rGya, not even a vassal king. The title of raja (*rgyal-po*) may have been given to the chiefs, because they were related to the Ladakhi kings. Now the line is extinct, and all records being lost, I found it impossible to establish the identity of Moorcroft's Tsimma Panchik. It is even difficult to make out what Tibetan name may underlie Moorcroft's spelling of it. I suppose that the man was called Thse-dbang Phun-thsogs, pronounced Tsewang Puntsog. I asked several people at rGya if they could remember the names of the last members of their line of chiefs, and they gave me the following three names; (1) bKā-blon-Thse-bstan; (2) Nono bSod-nams jo-rgyas; (3) bKra-shis (or Thse-ring) bZang-grub. More they could not remember. It is, however, possible that on a votive tablet on one of the *maṇi* walls at rGya the name of Moorcroft's friend may yet be discovered. Thus an inscription on a *maṇi* wall below rGya, of the time of bDe-ldan rnam-rgyal (c. 1630 A.D.) contains the name of one (or two?) probable ancestors of Moorcroft's Tsimma Panchik, *viz.*, Nono bSod-nams-lhun-grub, 'father and son.' In this inscription the castle of rGya is called rGya-mkhar-rmug-po, 'the dark red castle of rGya.' On another *maṇi* wall in the vicinity of the preceding I found a tablet which is of interest on account of its reference to the state of Ladakh during the times following the battle of Basgo, 1647 A.D.

¹ *Travels*, Vol. I, p. 234.