

the rock also makes it impossible to take impressions of it. I believe, however, that I have succeeded this time in getting a more correct reading of a certain passage. What had been read *Skū-med 'aJam-yang*, seems to be in reality *Skū-mkhar mkhar-bu*, and thus the name of King 'aJam-dbyang-rnam-rgyal does not occur in it after all. But there are several more passages, the reading of which is still very doubtful. This much we may, however, safely infer from the inscription, *viz.*, that the old town of Kharbu was still inhabited in King Seng-ge-rnam-rgyal's days. On the western end of the old town, there is a solid round tower with a staircase inside. These stairs lead down to a spring which used to provide the town with fresh water, even when it was besieged.

On the elevated plateau between the old town and the present village, there are a number of old *mchod-rten* and *mani* walls. But there are also many ancient graves, the origin of which is not known to the present inhabitants. They may be either of Dard, or of Muhammadan origin. For, when the town of Kharbu was in the hands of the *Khri* Sultans of dKar-rtse, the inhabitants were probably compelled to embrace Islām together with the other subjects of the Sultans in the Suru valley. Possibly they date from the Mughal war.

A very remarkable ruin in the Kharbu valley is the castle of Stag-rtse (map Takhcha), on the opposite bank of the brook. It was built on a very steep rock, apparently also very difficult of access, and once formed part of the possessions of the chiefs of Chigtan. It was probably destroyed by bDe-ldan-rnam-rgyal of Ladakh at the same time as Kharbu.

In the Kharbu valley, between Kharbu and Stag-rtse, are the ruins of a large temple called Mun-dig-lha-khang, 'the dark temple.' It is 20 paces long and 16 paces broad. This temple had apparently two doors, one in the eastern, and one in the western wall, and there were separate doorways at some distance from the temple. In the vicinity, I noticed the ruined remains of at least two rows of one hundred and eight *mchod-rten*. A native whom we met, told us the following tale regarding this ruin: "It was built by two lamas after the model of the Chigtan temple. One of them went to Lhasa, and the other to Kashmir, to buy colours for painting frescoes. Both died in those distant countries, and the temple was never completed." There were no traces of any frescoes or raised medallions to be seen. But that is not to be wondered at, as the ruin was roofless.

On the 2nd October, we went to Chigtan, situated in a side valley, on a tributary of the Indus. The old castle of the chiefs of Chigtan, the Purig Sultans, is very picturesquely situated on a steep cliff (Plate XLII, a). Below the castle are the ruins of the old town. The greater part of the rooms of the former are no longer accessible, owing to the dilapidated state of the whole building. A great number of the doors, and also several windows, were adorned with very artistic wood carvings in Tibetan style (Plate XLIII, a). Two of those in the inner court of the castle were said to be the portraits of the two architects, father and son. In one of the rooms we found a large wooden board on which is carved the figure of a Nāga-devouring Garuda. (Plate XLI, b) Although no document recording the erection of this castle has yet been found, the