

ruins, as having been a large town with several religious establishments, either Buddhist lamaseries or temples. It was situated in the midst of an oasis, called Li-sieh, or Litsa. A considerable agricultural population was settled round about, as is shown by numerous remains of ancient irrigation works. Rawak, the more northerly town of the Litsa oasis, was probably abandoned about 300 A. D., while Dandan-Uilik itself, to judge from the evidence of manuscripts found in the houses, does not appear to have been finally deserted until a little before 800 A. D. "But," as Stein says, "the striking preponderance of religious buildings . . . suggests the possibility that these local shrines and their small monastic establishments continued to be kept up and visited, perhaps as pilgrimage places, for some time after the rest of the settlement had been abandoned. The condition in which Mohammedan Ziarets [shrines] are now often found beyond the present cultivated area of oases would furnish an exact parallel." Stein concludes that "the lands of Dandan-Uilik were irrigated from an extension of the canals which, down to a much later date, brought the water of the streams of the Chira, Domoko [properly Dumuka], and Gulakhma to the desert area due south of the ruins . . . [where] the débris-covered site of Uzun-tati . . . can be proved by unquestionable evidence to have been occupied for at least five centuries longer. . . . A number of historical as well as topographical observations . . . point to the conclusion that the successive abandonment of both Dandan-Uilik and Uzun-tati was due to the same cause, the difficulty of maintaining effective irrigation for these outlying settlements." Hedin, on the other hand, believes that this can-