

A. D. 9 and 23. Some of the manuscripts have been deciphered by Himly, who says:—

“The inhabitants [of Lulan] must . . . have been engaged in agriculture, for one of the principal items in the manuscripts consists of weights and measures of seed-corn; some of them also name this or that kind of corn. Possibly there once stood on the site where the manuscripts were found an old revenue office, or a sort of ‘grain bank’ [such as those now found in China], where grain was bought and stored, or received as security for loans.” Other manuscripts state that “such and such a quantity of seed-corn has been handed in, or so many men have been furnished with provisions for a month.” One runs thus: “The approaching army is to be met at the frontier [or at the shore] by forty officials; and the farmsteads are many.”

Later information as to Lulan is given by the pilgrim Fa-hian, A. D. 400. According to Beal’s translation, he says: “The country of Shen-Shen [Lulan] is rugged and barren. The clothing of the common people is coarse, and like that of the Chinese. . . . The king of this country honors the law of Buddha. There are some four thousand [?] priests.” Finally, Hwen Tsiang, A. D. 645, merely mentions the name of Lulan, or Nafopo, as a place through which he passed; but apparently it was of no importance. In view of the facts recorded above, and of various historical notices of the wars of Lulan, which it would be tedious to relate, it appears that two thousand years ago, more or less, the Lulan region was for century after century inhabited by a settled population many times as dense as that of to-day. The critical question is whether such a population could persist so long and attain