

opinion as to the adequacy of evidence for or against his favorite theory. Two things, notwithstanding, seem to me to present insuperable obstacles unless we accept the theory of a secular change of climate. In the first place, if there has been no change, why did many thousands of the people of the past succeed so well in making the country habitable, while the people of to-day have failed utterly in the same attempt? In the second place, the agreement of the phenomena of Lulan with those of other parts of the Lop basin indicates that the same changes have affected the whole country.

Before leaving Lulan, the trade routes which formerly passed through it deserve notice. According to ancient Chinese records, the main caravan route from China to the west came from Su-Chow through Sa-Chow (Tung-Hwang) to Lulan. There it divided, one branch going to Kashgar by way of Khotan and the south side of the Lop basin, and the other to the same place by way of Ak-Su and the north side of the basin. Up to about the third century of our era, the road from Sa-Chow to Lulan was of great importance. It contributed to the prosperity of Lulan, as appears from the results of Himly's study of certain objects and manuscripts found there by Hedin. Himly says: "The objects appear to have belonged to a wealthy Chinese merchant, who supplied commodities of every description, let out carriages and beasts of burden on hire, besides conveying letters to Tun-Kwang [Tung-Hwang, Sa-Chow]. Travelers going to the latter city used horses, carriages, and oxen." A hundred and twenty-five years later, in 400 A. D., the pilgrim Fa-hian, who followed the same road, says of it: "In this desert