



*Badsuddin Khan, the former
Indian aksakal of Khotan.*

The road from the town to Yotkan runs eastward and winds between houses, tilled fields and ariqs, most of which are dry at this season. In reality you do not follow any road once you have left the highroad to Yarkand shortly beyond the town wall. A ride of a couple of hours over fields and ariqs brings you to the place where Khotan stood in olden times. The way leads through densely populated and cultivated districts.

The Yuzbashi, who had been informed of my impending visit in order that he should collect some sellers of finds, met me on the bank of the Lasku-üstang. He showed me over the places, where excavations had recently been made. The banks of the üstang were thickly strewn with bits of clay vessels, and in places where the humus stratum had been dug up, many pieces of bone and bits of clay vessels protruded. In one or two places a few spadefuls were turned up, but the sole result was to expose some bones or bits of clay. The greater part of the population works its land itself, but there are capitalists, too, who work a larger area with hired labour. The owner of the land receives $\frac{3}{4}$ and the labourers $\frac{1}{4}$ of the objects found. It seems improbable that the finds are of any great value, at any rate the population does not mention any very valuable discoveries.

About a dozen Sarts awaited my arrival at the Yuzbashi's. They carried some objects of the kind I have described concealed in their sashes, under their khalats, in their sleeves or in other strange places. With few exceptions they were mere fragments. Any discoveries of value had, no doubt, already been secured by the well-known archaeologist Dr Stein, who had visited this locality a couple of months before me. It was only after they had foisted all kinds of rubbish on me, which I bought for want of anything better, that objects in a better state of preservation were produced. I secured the best ones as I was preparing to mount my horse and leave the village. This resulted in my buying practically all that could be had. With the help of Badsuddin Khan, the former Indian aksakal of Khotan, to whom Mr Macartney had kindly given me a letter, the prices were beaten down considerably.