

better part of a large pot of red earthenware (Fig. 8), several other red potsherds recalling Han ware and the fragmentary hair pin of bronze No. 3: 1.

Near to the north of burial place 6 the river turns eastwards for 3 km. but regains its southerly course at a place called Qosh-yaghach, where remains of old reed beds were to be seen. Here we made our base camp, as this was the nearest water to ÖRDEK's burial ground, cf. map. Fig. 18.

On the evening of June 2 we started from here for the cemetery, taking a north-easterly course, across crescent-shaped sand dunes from 1 to 2.5 m. high. Near the river there was a place with exposed clay, but otherwise the ground is completely covered with sand; the dunes consist of a fine-grained, greyish-yellow sand, on the flat surfaces this sort of sand is overlaid with a thin layer of coarse, red sand forming larger ripples than the other kind (see foreground of Pl. III b).



Fig. 8. Upper part of earthenware jug found near camp B 69, 1/6-34. Largest diam. 38 cm.

F. CEMETERY 5.

("ÖRDEK's necropolis").

I. Description of the site.

The cemetery that had been so long sought for was found to be situated 4 km. from the water of The Small River, on a smoothly rounded hill, rising as a well-defined landmark above the otherwise flat desert, the monotony of which is broken only by the elegantly shaped sand dunes, and a few scattered hillocks with living tamarisks. As one approaches the hill, the top of it seems to be covered by a whole forest of upright *toghraq*¹ trunks, but standing too close together and being too straight to be dead trees. They were presently found to be erect posts with the tops splintered by the strong winds, Pl. III.

On the surface of the hill, particularly on the slopes, there were a lot of strange, curved, heavy planks, and everywhere one stumbled across withered human bones, scattered skeletons, remains of dismembered mummies, and rags of thick woollen materials, Pl. IV b. Some of the mummies had long, dark hair and well preserved faces. From others a ghastly-looking skull grinned out of a partly preserved blackened skin. The burial site made a most macabre and strange impression.

The hill consists of a large yardang or mesa, which is completely covered with drift sand. The crest is simply a sand dune that has become stationary, and the sand is still accumulating between the close-standing posts. The top of the hill is now 7 m. above the surrounding ground, its area is about 70 × 35 m., and its

¹ Toghraq is the Turki word for the wild poplar.