

excavations proceeding in different places, the onslaught of the wind was felt to the full. Whenever I descended to the diggings I enjoyed my share of the blinding dust made up largely of disintegrated filth. The worst of exposure and discomfort was felt near the south-eastern corner of the fort, where the protecting wall curtain had been breached by wind erosion and fallen. And just there two fairly large rooms presented a particularly rich mine of refuse and records.

The great mass of the Tibetan documents on wood and paper of which in the end we recovered here over a thousand, has proved on examination by such competent scholars as Professors F. W. Thomas and A. H. Francke to consist of miscellaneous office papers, more often than not of a petty kind. They are reports, applications, indents and the like, all couched in the language of everyday life. Tibetan literature, while abounding in canonical Buddhist texts, possesses exceedingly little of early secular writing. This gives distinct interest to this mass of miscellaneous documents, quite apart from the manifold glimpses they yield of local conditions at the time when the Tarim basin had passed for a century under Tibetan domination. A great number of the records treat of military affairs, mentioning frontier posts in need of supplies or help, troop movements, etc.

Among the numerous localities named I have been able to identify the 'Castle of Great Nob' with Charkhlik and the 'Castle of Little Nob' with Miran itself. The name *Nob*, like Hsüan-tsang's *Na-fu-po*, obviously corresponds to the mediaeval and modern *Lop* applied to the whole territory. Other evidence furnished by those records has made it