

greater accuracy than before. In spite of all he had gone through, Lal Singh would allow himself but the briefest rest at our base and by the first week of February set out afresh for the Kuruk-tagh, this time to survey its western parts.

I myself by February 16, 1914, left Turfan for the Kuruk-tagh and, having at Singer picked up Abdurrahim's youngest brother as a guide, examined the few places in the valleys westward, where traces of earlier occupation could be found. The succession of remarkably rugged ranges and deeply eroded valleys between them strangely contrasted with the appearance of worn-down uplands presented by most of the Kuruk-tagh. But here, too, the difficulty in finding water was great. Then over absolutely barren gravel wastes I made my way south-eastward to the foot of the Kuruk-tagh. There wild camels were repeatedly encountered. This desolate tract, like the desert west of Tun-huang, seems to form a last refuge for these exceedingly shy animals.

Taking my supply of ice from the salt spring of Dolan-achchik, I proceeded south into the wind-eroded desert and mapped there the course of the 'Dry River' which had once carried water to Lou-lan over the last portion left unsurveyed in the preceding year. The season of sand-storms had now set in, and their icy blasts made our work very trying. It was under these conditions, fitly recalling the previous winter's experience at the grave-pits of Lou-lan, that I explored two ancient burial-grounds of small size discovered on clay terraces overlooking the ancient riverine plain. The finds closely agreed with those which the graves at the farthest post to the north-east of the Lou-lan station had yielded the year before. There could be no doubt that