

madan sect, in Wakhan, whom I met engaged on a visit of faith-healing to a sick devotee. The old man claimed an age well over a hundred years, and looked it. To my surprise he furnished exact data proving that he had been at his home the host of Captain Wood when in the winter of 1838 he was on his way to the Pamirs. He had clear recollections, too, of the tyrannical rule of Sultan Murad of Badakhshan, whose misdeeds in this region are often referred to in Captain Wood's classical narrative.

Lower down in the valley I passed into the small tract of Ishkashm, which, separated from Wakhan by a succession of rocky defiles, is named as a distinct chiefship both by Hsüan-tsang and Marco Polo. Here I had occasion to survey remarkable remains of an ancient stronghold in the ruined fortress known as the 'Castle of Qa'qa' near the pretty village of Namadgut. Its massive walls, built with sun-dried bricks and in places over thirty feet thick, crown the top of two closely adjoining ridges. These rise precipitously above the deep fosse of the river, here unfordable at all seasons. The isolated rocky eminence close on a mile long which these ramparts enclose is dominated at its western end by a citadel seen in Fig. 142. Here also the extent of the fortifications points to a population and resources far greater than those of to-day.

Then a day's march brought me to the little Russian post of Nut, which faces the main settlement of Ishkashm on the Afghan side and significantly also the approach from that side of the Oxus to the Dorah, the easiest of the passes into Chitral. There Captain Tumanovich, its commandant, very hospitably received me. It was very pleasant to find in him an officer familiar with both Persian and Turki. Such know-