

supporting the plaster mouldings of the circular base immediately below the dome were found still intact. The wood, though certainly over a thousand years old, seemed scarcely to differ in touch and toughness from tamarisk branches dried for a few weeks.

The wind with the blinding dust of sand it carried along was too violent that day to permit the taking of photographs and measurements. But I returned from Khanui on September 6th, and a day's work with the plane-table and photo-theodolite gave me a complete survey of the ruins. I chose for my second day's quarters Eski, a pretty village some eight miles south-west of Mauri Tim, where my tent was pitched among groves of vines and luxuriant fields of Indian corn. On my way back about three miles from Mauri Tim, I examined a curious structure about 22 feet square, open at the top and showing thick walls of clay cast in moulds. The name Kaptar-Khana ("the pigeon house)," by which the people know it, is derived from the rows of little niches, about 10 inches square, which line the whole of the inner sides of the walls still rising to a height of 16 feet. The ground inside was thickly strewn with fragments of human bones, and local tradition asserts that it has always been in this condition. Nothing at or near this desolate structure afforded evidence as to its date, but its shape and apparent purpose curiously recalled a 'Columbarium.' Neither Buddhist nor Muhammadan custom would allow of such a disposal of human remains. Is it possible, then, that this strange ruin is a relic of the times when Kashgar held a considerable population of Nestorian Christians?

On September 7th Ram Singh was sent on survey work to the south-east while I rode back to Kashgar, greatly pleased with the instructive little tour I had made and the attention shown to me by the local officials. The short excursion to Khanui had been useful in bringing to notice various deficiencies in the outfit of my caravan, chiefly concerning camel gear.