

The Stupa, when at last reached, was a sight that cheered my archæological heart. In size and proportion it closely resembled the Mauri Tim Stupa near Khanui. Though its exterior had suffered more decay, and an excavation on the top showed that it had not escaped the ravages of the "treasure-seeker," it still rose to a height of nearly 29 feet. Immediately around the Stupa I found the ground strewn with broken bits of ancient pottery, exactly as seen at Mokuila and on the great site subsequently traversed. So the conclusion seems justified that the habitations which these scanty remains indicate belonged, like the Stupa, to the Buddhist period.

On the first attempt to reach Topa Tim on the other side of the ravine I had passed a *débris*-strewn area far more extensive than those seen before. Stretching to the north of the caravan route it seemed to cover fully three square miles. My guides called it the 'Tati' of Kakshal. The relics of ancient habitations that lay scattered here in patches of varying extent and thickness comprised, besides pottery fragments of all sorts: pieces of burned brick, slag, broken bits of bone and metal, and similar hard refuse. The conditions in which these remains presented themselves appeared at first very puzzling. But the examination of similar sites which I subsequently traced at many points beyond the limits of the present cultivated area in the Khotan region, and which are all known by the general name of 'Tati,' gradually furnished a convincing explanation. The most striking feature noticed at Kakshal, as well as at all other 'Tatis,' was that the above-named fragments rest on nothing but natural loess, either hard or more or less disintegrated into a sandy condition. It was easy to ascertain that the soil underneath contained neither walls nor other structural remains; for the small banks of loess which rise here and there from the general level of a Tati, sometimes to a height of 10 to 15 feet, and on the top of which the fragments usually lie thickest,