

'Namadis.' We may well recognise here the earliest mention of the felt-rugs or 'Numdahs' so familiar to Anglo-Indian use, which to this day form a special product of Khotan home industry and of which large consignments are annually exported to Ladak and Kashmir. In another document we read that all the 'Shodhogas' and 'Drangadharas,' evidently local officials, of the district are complaining of the want of water; and many of the tablets seem to have reference to disputes about water used for irrigation.

The frequent references in the tablets to 'Khotāna' and its officials show us not only how ancient the name of Khotan is in its present phonetic form, but also that the district containing this settlement was part of the kingdom of Khotan. It is of interest that, alternating with that old popular name, we also find the duplicate form Kustana[ka] known to us from Hiuen-Tsiang's records. It represents, in all probability, a learned adaptation of the local name made for the sake of a Sanskrit etymology, which the pilgrim duly relates to us together with its attendant pious legend ('ku-stana' meaning in Sanskrit "the breast of the Earth"). As if to remind us of the position which the ruined settlement must have occupied on the outskirts of the cultivated territory, we meet with frequent mention of "frontier-watch stations," designated by the Sanskrit term 'Dranga,' the true significance of which I first demonstrated years ago in Kashmir. That the faith of Buddha must have been widely spread among the people can be proved by a number of passages. Thus the Buddhas, Arhats and other sacred categories of the Buddhist Pantheon are distinctly enumerated in one tablet, while in another the addressee is with polite unction designated as a "Bodhisattva incarnate."

Not the least curious among the facts revealed by the work of decipherment is the discovery that there existed a recognised official terminology for the various classes of stationery represented. With unchanging regularity the wedge-shaped tablets are designated in their context as 'kila-mudra,' literally, "sealed wedges"; the 'Takhtas' with handles, apparently used for files, as