

who had reproved the wicked inhabitants for certain offences, was treated by them with contempt. He thereupon cursed the town and foretold its approaching destruction. While they still mocked at his prophecy, sand began to rain from the skies and continued for seven days and nights until the whole of the buildings were buried. Only seven pious people who had shown respect for the holy one managed to save their lives, through a curious device which varies from Hiuen-Tsiang's story. The seven wise men are supposed to have clung to ropes fixed to a high pole after the fashion of a merry-go-round. Being whirled round and round by the raging storm they rose steadily higher above the ground while the sand accumulated, and thus escaped.

Similar stories, no doubt, are current throughout Turkestan of ruins buried in the Taklamakan; but it was of particular interest to note how the continuity of local tradition had here transferred the legend which Hiuen-Tsiang heard at Pi-mo of a still earlier site, to the remains of Pimo itself. For these I could safely recognise in the extensive *débris*-covered area, a portion of which we managed to trace in the course of the following day. The previous evening our luckless guides had dragged us aimlessly far out into the desert, until at last the weariness of animals and men and the difficulty of getting the caravan in the darkness over the rising dunes had forced us to pitch camp. During the night one of the guides deserted, having probably got bewildered by his own display of deficient local sense. The other, however, a timid young fellow whom Turdi, my desert factotum, kept under his eye and encouraged by advice drawn from his own lifelong "treasure-seeking" experience, recovered his bearings, and setting out before daybreak succeeded in finding the ruined area far away to the south-west.

Uzun-tati—"the distant Tati," as local tradition appropriately designates this site—proved to consist of several extensive patches of ground, one nearly half a mile square, thickly covered with pottery fragments and other small *débris*. Owing to far-advanced erosion and the destruction dealt by "treasure-seekers," the remains