

surveys by plane table, astronomical observations, and triangulation during the whole of my travels. The results of these surveys, which in the mountains I supplemented by photogrammetric survey work of my own, and to the direction and supervision of which I devoted a good deal of time and attention, will be found illustrated by the 'Map of the territory of Khotan and adjoining regions', on the scale of 8 miles to 1 inch, which accompanies this Report. Its use will, I hope, considerably facilitate a correct comprehension of the numerous questions, equally interesting for the historical student and the geographer, which I have had to discuss in relation to the ancient sites now abandoned to the desert.

For the generous consideration and aid which Lord CURZON'S Government and the local administrations of Bengal and the Panjāb accorded to me, I wish to record here my deep sense of gratitude. To it I owed the long sought for chance of serving the interests of Oriental research in a new field, and with that measure of freedom which permits full concentration of scholarly efforts. But grateful, too, I must feel to Fate for having allowed me to use this chance to the full, and for having rewarded my labours on difficult ground with results which competent fellow-scholars have recognized as an ample return for the means and facilities so liberally granted to me. Of the serious difficulties and risks which had to be faced at various stages of my journey and which might easily have thwarted my aims, there is no need to speak here in detail. A perusal of my Personal Narrative¹ will suffice to show the character and extent of the obstacles which had to be reckoned with during my work in the Taklamakān.

I could not have overcome them successfully without the active co-operation of the Chinese administrators of the districts upon which I depended for whatever was needed during the winter campaign in the desert. In the Ambans Pan Dārin and Huang-Daloi, then in charge of Khotan and Keriya, I was fortunate to find reliable friends, ever ready to help me with everything in their power. I look back with all the more gratitude to their unfailing attention and kindness, as it was shown at a time when the Empire was in conflict with the European powers, and as neither honours nor material rewards were to be expected for it. The true historical sense innate in educated Chinese, and their legendary remembrance of Hsüan-tsang, the great 'monk of the T'ang period' (*T'ang sêng*) whom I claimed as my guide, proved helpful in explaining the objects of my explorations. But the sympathetic attitude which the provincial administration from the first showed towards my work, must mainly be attributed to the effective support given to me by Mr. G. MACARTNEY, C.I.E., the representative of the Indian Government at Kāshgar. Apart from the advantages which his personal influence secured to me, I derived manifold benefits from the practical help and advice with which this accomplished friend favoured me during my stay at Kāshgar. For these, and the watchful care with which he followed my explorations from afar, I must record here the expression of my lasting gratitude.

The value of the scientific results of my explorations may be left to be judged from the record presented in these volumes. Yet I feel I am justified in referring to the generous acknowledgement which those results have already received from fellow Orientalists. Their opinion, whether recorded in the formal resolution of the XIIIth International Congress of Orientalists², or expressed in reviews and other notices by such distinguished scholars as MM. Foucher, Sylvain Lévi, Senart, and others, have been a great encouragement to me and have helped me to bear the strain entailed by the elaboration of the results.

¹ *Sand-buried Ruins of Khotan, Personal Narrative of a journey of archaeological and geographical exploration in Chinese Turkestan.* By M. Aurel Stein. First edition,

London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1903; second edition, Hurst and Blackett, 1904.

² See *Ruins of Khotan*, p. xiii.