

of human remains; nor would it be in agreement with orthodox Zoroastrian practice. Unless, therefore, we may recognize in this strange ruin a relic of the times when the territory of Kāshgar contained a considerable community of Nestorian Christians, we must look to the Chinese side for some explanation of its doleful purpose.

SECTION III.—THE OASIS AND CITY OF YARKAND

March to
Ordam-
Pādshāh.

On the 11th of September, 1900, I finally set out from Kāshgar for the journey to Khotan. Avoiding the ordinary caravan route, I chose for the march to Yarkand the track which crosses the region of moving sands around the popular shrine of Ordam-Pādshāh, and joins the main road from Kāshgar and Yangi-Hisār at the oasis of Kizil. The account contained in my Personal Narrative¹ renders it unnecessary to describe here my route or the appearance of that much-frequented pilgrimage place in the desert. Before reaching the latter I received information of two old sites (*kōne-shahr*) of some kind. One of these, known as *Kizil-Debe*, and situated about five miles to the north-west of the Yakshamba or Sunday Bāzār of Khān-arik, was visited by Surveyor Rām Singh. He reported having seen there only waste ground strewn with such minute débris as is observed at Hāsa-Tam, and scanty traces of a low platform or wall built of clay. The other old site, called *Bai-khān*, and situated approximately 16 miles to the south-east of the Bāzār of the Achchik oasis, I vainly attempted to reach on my march to Ordam-Pādshāh. My failure in this attempt, explained in my Personal Narrative, need scarcely give rise to much regret; for, according to the descriptions received, this locality, too, shows only the fragmentary débris characteristic of those completely eroded sites known as 'Tatis', which we shall soon have occasion to notice in the Khotan region.

Shrine of
Ordam-
Pādshāh.

Ordam-Pādshāh, a desolate Zīarat surrounded on all sides by high dunes of drift-sand, owes its sanctity to the pious belief that it marks the spot where the holy Sultān Arslān Boghra Khān, a grandson of Satok Boghra Khān, with a host of faithful followers of Islām, while engaged in prayer, succumbed to a treacherous attack of the infidel army from Khotan. The legend of the royal martyr is told at length in the *Tadhkira-i Satok Boghra Khān*, full extracts from which have been given by Dr. Bellew². No ancient remains of any kind appear to exist near this pilgrimage place; yet in view of the recurring proofs as to the continuity of local worship in these regions, the question seems justified whether Ordam-Pādshāh, like many a Mazār about Khotan, has not inherited its fame from some earlier Buddhist shrine in the same locality³.

Ordam-Pādshāh lies undoubtedly on the most direct line connecting Kāshgar with the oasis of Yarkand; and consequently the tradition, which asserts that the main road between these two places once passed there and by the neighbouring shrine of Hazrat-Bēgim, may possibly rest on an historical basis⁴. We shall presently see that the assumption of such a shorter

¹ See *Ruins of Khotan*, pp. 149 sqq.

² See *Yarkand Mission Report*, pp. 127 sq.; also Grenard, in *Journal asiat.*, 1900, xv. p. 13.

³ For a detailed description of the physical conditions of Ordam-Pādshāh, comp. Hedin, *Reisen in Z.-A.*, pp. 232 sq.

⁴ See Hedin, *ibid.*, p. 3. The belief there expressed that in old times the belt of vegetation and settlements might have extended in this region further eastwards than at present would receive archaeological support if Dr. Bellew's

statement as to the existence of a débris-strewn ancient site near Hazrat-Bēgim (see *Yarkand Mission Report*, p. 38) could be verified. When encamped at Hazrat-Bēgim on September 14, 1900, I received no information as to such a site in the vicinity, and the manifestly erroneous route which the map of the *Yarkand Mission Report* marks for Dr. Bellew's excursion to Ordam-Pādshāh makes the actual position of the reported site appear doubtful.