

the large village near the debouchure of the Kara-kash, from which we were to enter the mountains. During the long day's ride I took occasion to revisit the Yotkan site. A start had just been made with the annual operation of washing the soil containing the deeply buried culture-strata of the ancient Khotan capital for the sake of extracting leaf-gold and small objects of value. It was pleasant to see the village, which stands on ground so full of historical interest, with its orchards and arbours now decked out in rich foliage, instead of the autumnal bareness which reigned here during my stay in November 1900 (Fig. 54).

My old host Khuda-berdi, the jovial Yüz-bashi of Yotkan, received me in great style. Though Fate has endowed him with only a modicum of natural gifts, he had manifestly prospered during the years intervening; and the spacious new house where his Dastarkhan was spread for us, showed that he knew how to use the good things which Fortune had granted him. The trees in his much-enlarged garden hung full of delicious peaches and plums, while huge bunches of grapes were also ripening. Khuda-berdi had duly collected for me from his villagers whatever of ancient terra-cottas, old coins, seals, etc., remained in their possession from last year's washings. So after making my purchases I could send bags full of interesting old pottery back to Khotan as the first-fruits of my new collection.

My ride from Yotkan to the south-west edge of the oasis took me past several of the sacred sites of Buddhist Khotan which Hsüan-tsang had visited, and which I had succeeded in identifying with popular Muhammadan shrines of the present day (Fig. 55). The satisfaction of covering ground, the *topographia sacra* of which could still be clearly established in spite of all changes of time and religion, made the burning heat of the mid-day hours seem less trying. On the barren gravel glacis which stretches down from the foot-hills along the right bank of the Kara-kash I then sighted once more the *morne* conglomerate cliffs with the sacred cave of Kohmari, famous in ancient Khotan as the shrine of Gosringa, 'the Cow's horn Mountain,' and a site of curious legends. Below rolled the Kara-kash as a