

subsequently observed in Kan-su in the masonry of many buildings old and new.

The general impression left by my inspection of the remains was that of Chinese influence more direct than that observable in the ruins of the Khotan region. This has since been confirmed by Mr. R. L. Hobson's expert analysis of the glazed stoneware, among which he has recognized pieces belonging to bowls known to have originated at the Chunchow factories of Ho-nan during Sung times. But there was nothing to indicate whether this increased Chinese influence was due merely to a position so much farther east on a once much frequented trade route from Cathay, or to the presence at this point of a small Chinese settlement during the early middle ages.

The abandonment of the village site since that period was proved by the height, ten feet and more, to which tamarisk-covered sand-cones had risen above some ruined structures, and equally also by the erosion, down to six to seven feet, which unprotected ground near others had suffered. The much-fissured trunks of dead poplars and fruit trees lay scattered not merely within the narrow belt occupied by the remains of old homesteads, but also for a short distance over the bare gravel Sai extending eastwards. An original top layer of fertile soil had evidently been blown away altogether, and this accounted for the raised line of the canal still clearly traceable across it. This canal, after skirting the old site, seemed to turn to the north-north-east, in exact conformity with the summer flood-beds of the actual river which we began to cross amidst luxuriant Toghrak jungle some three and a half miles farther east. At last after another couple of miles we reached by the side of the main bed the new colony of Vash-shahri, the growth of barely a generation and still a very weakly plant.

The history of this curious colonizing venture was strikingly illustrated by the contrast between the few ramshackle dwellings we passed and the brand-new and comfortable small rest-house or 'Kung-kuan' which to my surprise I found ready for my reception. For years past the Chinese district administration, under higher official