

they might then have contained. So much, however, I may mention, that whatever exact topographical indications are furnished by the itineraries contained in those records, clearly point to Charklik as the chief settlement of Lou-lan or Shan-shan.

So it was some satisfaction to me to find that signs of ancient occupation hitherto unnoticed were traceable in the very centre of the present cultivated area of Charklik, even on the surface. Quite close to the east of my quarters stretched one of the walls of a ruined circumvallation built in oblong shape and well known to the people as the 'Sipil.' Its mud ramparts, though badly decayed and completely levelled in places for the sake of cultivation within and without, could easily be made out for just over half a mile from north to south. Its width was about one-third of a mile. The extant height of the ramparts varied from twelve to twenty feet. Though the whole of the interior was occupied by fields and homesteads, a rapid examination disclosed here and there remains of manifestly old structures in large bricks partially utilized by the modern settlers. In one of these I thought I could recognize the surviving portion of a small Stupa with its circular dome twelve feet wide and, of course, long ago dug into for 'treasure.'

Far more imposing was the ancient mound known as the 'Tora,' or tower, to which my attention was called about one mile away to the north-west. There, within about 300 yards from the left bank of the river, rose a large and steep mound to over fifty feet above the irrigated level. The layers of rubbish with plentiful large stones exposed on its slopes left no doubt about its artificial origin. The top bore much-dilapidated remains of a brick structure, about sixteen feet in diameter and still rising to a height of twelve feet on the north side. Below it the brickwork of a much wider square or oblong base was traceable. There could be little doubt about its being the remnant of a Stupa dating from Buddhist times. But the mound below was far too large to be formed by the débris of any single structure, and the strata of rubbish composing it, where laid bare by cuttings,