

age of certain of the ruins and the relatively modest height of the observed 'witnesses.'

The top of the Stupa mound commanded an excellent view of other ruins cropping up on the wide level flat eastwards like low islands on an inland sea. The first group, reached after going for only some 800 yards, consisted, as seen in Fig. 108, of four small ruined structures. One among them, on the extreme left, was readily recognizable as a much-decayed Stupa. Another, to the right in the middle, showed a small and relatively well-preserved Stupa, surrounded by the broken walls of what had manifestly been an enclosing circular building. The remaining two ruins were those of square structures solidly built in sun-dried bricks of unusual hardness, but too much covered by débris to be identified without excavation.

After a rapid first survey I hurried on to where at over a mile's distance there rose the old fort which Tokhta Akhun had spoken of as the principal ruin of the site. Seen from afar, and over ground almost as flat as a billiard table, the ruin looked quite imposing. But when I had approached it and was eagerly clambering over the badly breached walls of the west face, I could not escape a feeling of disappointment. The crumbling walls and bastions were massive enough in dimensions, but their inferior construction seemed to suggest a relatively late date.

The whole formed an irregular quadrangle, with the walls facing east and north-west about 250 feet long on the outside, and those to the south and west somewhat shorter. Massive oblong towers jutted out at the corners, while the curtains between them were guarded by bastions near the centre. The tower on the south face was particularly massive, projecting close on ninety feet beyond the line of wall, and rising even now to forty-three feet in height, it suggested a donjon (Fig. 110). The construction of the walls was as irregular as the shape of the whole fort. Layers of hard stamped clay formed the lower portions; above rose masonry of coarse sun-dried bricks, smaller in size than in the ruined shrines first examined, with layers of