

CHAPTER V

RUINED SITES NEAR DOMOKO

SECTION I.—THE SHRINES OF KHĀDALIK

First finds
brought
from
Khādalik.

AFTER completing my work at Ak-terek I left the Khotan oasis on September 22 for my explorations eastwards. The first goal in my programme was a ruined site near the small oasis of Domoko about which I had been able to secure information while at Khotan. Since my former journey certain fragmentary manuscripts in Brāhmī writing had reached Badruddīn Khān and through him Mr. Macartney, and on my first return to Khotan I had traced these to diggings which Mullah Khwāja, a petty official of Domoko, was said to have carried on at some ruin situated in the desert not far to the north of that village. Through Badruddīn Khān I had myself secured some fairly well preserved leaves of Sanskrit 'Pōthis', and on my return from the mountains I had managed to get the man himself brought to Khotan together with some further specimens.

Mullah
Khwāja's
burrowings.

Mullah Khwāja proved to be no regular 'treasure-seeker' but a respectable village official whom Merghen Ahmad, my old guide to Dandān-oilik, had some five years previously urged to look out for old 'Khats' such as he had seen me excavate. Mullah Khwāja, being in great arrears to the Keriya Ya-mên with revenue due from the oil tax, hoped for a chance of getting out of his debts by such finds. So he induced villagers accustomed to collecting fuel in the desert jungle north and east of Domoko to guide him to some 'Kōne-shahrs' not far off. Scraping among the remains at one of these small sites, known to the woodmen as *Khādalik* ('the place with the sign stake'), he had come upon the hoped-for 'Khats'. Having realized some money by their sale to the Indian and Andijānī Ak-sakāls at Khotan, and having sought favour by presenting others as curios to the Keriya Amban, he had intermittently carried on his burrowings for the last three years or so. On the promise of a good reward and my intercession at the Keriya Ya-mên, Mullah Khwāja readily undertook to show me the provenance of his finds at Khādalik as well as some minor ruins in its vicinity. In consequence of Mullah Khwāja's operations these sites had become well known to the local officials, and others, of the string of oases extending from Chīra to Domoko. Prof. Huntington, too, as I knew, had been guided to them, when in the autumn of 1905 he made those thorough and methodical investigations into the physical conditions prevailing in these oases and in the desert around them, now recorded in his *Pulse of Asia*.¹

Arrival at
Khādalik.

On September 23 I proceeded from the flourishing oasis of Chīra to Malak-ālagan, the northernmost colony of Domoko, which I had first visited in 1901,² and near which to the east I knew Khādalik to be situated (see Map, No. 27). For the observations made on the march, which took me past the northern outskirts of the oases of Gulakhma and Ponak and showed me cultivation

¹ See Huntington, *Pulse of Asia*, p. 173. Ibrāhīm Bēg, who acted as Prof. Huntington's chief guide in this vicinity, had been employed by me as Darōgha in 1901, and joined me again as I passed through Chīra on September 22, 1906, to remain with me and to render again very valuable services

for the whole of my travels during the next two years. Dāūd Bēg, of Yurung-kāsh, who had made himself useful to Prof. Huntington, also joined me for a time.

² See *Ancient Khotan*, i. p. 454.