

interest in old, well-burnt bricks and knew how to test their hardness, thought that these bricks were of distinct antiquity.

Coin
finds at
ruined town.

But I felt more assured on this point when a careful search, made by Naik Rām Singh along the exposed portions of the rampart, brought to light on the east face fragments of a Han coin of the *Wu-chu* type and of an uninscribed clipped copper coin of the same period, besides two fragments which are likely to belong to T'ang issues. They were all found some inches below the surface. Similar evidence of antiquity was given by coins which were picked up under my eyes on wind-eroded ground outside and close to the north and east walls. These include eight *Wu-chu* pieces and three uninscribed coins, which may belong to the fourth-fifth century A. D. Owing to the abundant cover of drift-sand few small objects of miscellaneous character were found in the interior of the circumvallation. But it is of interest to note that among the pottery fragments there is one with the smoky grey 'mat-marked' surface which is characteristic of the coarse pottery of the Han period prevailing along the Limes (Nan. Ft. 001). There is also a fragment from the side and rim of a shallow bowl, made of very hard-fired grey clay, which Mr. Hobson attributes to Han times (Nan. Ft. 004). A small fragment of porcelain, Nan. Ft. 005, found on the surface of the rampart serves, however, to remind us that the ruined town had remained accessible until much later times, as, in fact, it still is at the present day.

Ancient
débris area
of *Ku-tung-
tan*.

To the north and north-east of this small ruined town extends an area of wind-eroded ground, showing all the typical features of the 'Tatis' in the Khotan region and elsewhere. From east to west it spreads for fully two miles, and its width is about one mile. It is partially overrun by detached semi-lunar dunes which, small at first on the east, grow higher and higher as the ruined town is approached. No doubt, the obstacle presented by its walls accounts for this increasing height, which reaches up to about thirty feet. Everywhere the bare patches of clay which appear between the dunes are abundantly covered with small débris of hard materials, such as pottery, stones, glass, metal, and the like. The uniform distribution of this débris, wherever the ground is left clear of dunes, makes it certain that it marks a thickly-occupied area of habitations once adjoining the ancient town. The people of Nan-hu call the whole site appropriately enough *Ku-tung-tan*, '[the place] to search for old things'. They have, no doubt, searched it for generations past, especially after big sand-storms, as keenly as Khotan 'treasure-seekers' their familiar 'Tatis'.

Fragments
of ancient
pottery.

Repeated visits allowed my assistants and myself to collect here a considerable number of specimens of this miscellaneous débris, which will be found described in the List below.¹ Among them I may specially mention potsherds of the prevailing dark grey, often 'mat-marked' ware (Nan. T. 001-006, etc.); spinning whorls made of the same ware (Nan. T. 0011-0016); fragments of glazed pottery and stone ware (Nan. K.T. 001, 006; Nan. T. 007), which Mr. Hobson is inclined to attribute to T'ang or Sung times; bronze arrow-heads (Nan. T. 0025, 0027) of types familiar to us from the Niya Site and the Tun-huang Limes, etc. It is of special interest to note that amongst such plentiful keramic débris we failed to notice a single piece of porcelain. I consider this an important indication that the site was abandoned before porcelain became common under the Sung dynasty after the tenth century A. D. The single fragment of porcelain found on the surface within the ruined town walls and already mentioned can, in view of such strong negative evidence outside, only be supposed to have been left behind by some later visitor.

Chrono-
logical
evidence of
coins.

With the chronological evidence derived from the small miscellaneous 'finds' on the 'Tati' the numismatic evidence obtained on the same ground agrees in a striking fashion. Among the coins

¹ The distinctive mark *Nan. T.* has been used for specimens picked up in the vicinity of the ruined town; *Nan.*

K.T. for those found on the 'Tati' further to the north-east.