

From Chōa Saidān Shāh we took occasion to pay a visit also to the village of Malōt, some 15 miles by road to the west, where a comparatively well-preserved Hindu temple of Kashmirian style invited renewed inspection. It stands in impressive isolation on a bare rocky spur close to where the southern edge of the Salt Range, here nearly 3,000 feet above sea-level, falls off with precipitous cliffs towards the plain. The temple, together with the massive gateway which faces it, as in the case of the larger Kashmīr temples, has been adequately described by General Cunningham.<sup>17</sup> Since his visit in 1872-3 it appears to have suffered deterioration in the relief decoration on the outside. It was all the more gratifying to note the measures of conservation which both structures have received in recent years as 'Protected Monuments'. Both the architectural features and the execution of the exuberant relief designs ornamenting the trefoil arches above porches and niches indicate an earlier date for temple and gateway than that of the extant shrines of Nandana and Ketās.

On the rocky hill-side to the north, and at a distance of about one-third of a mile from the temple, there stands the modest village of Malōt. A steep drop in the slope below it provides a good defensive position, and this has been protected by curtain walls of rough masonry. Through them leads a fine well-built gate flanked by crenellated bastions, both closely resembling those seen at the fort of Kujuk and probably of similar date. Local tradition connects Malōt with Rāja Mal, an early chief of the Janjūa tribe who is supposed to have been the first converted to Islām.

It only remains to mention that about 2½ miles to the north-east of Malōt a little hollow filled with luxuriant vegetation holds the small Hindu sanctuary of Shibgangā by the side of a pool fed by springs, gathering on marshy ground higher up to the east. The temple is constructed in the Kashmirian style, but it has been so heavily covered with plaster that none of the original decoration of the walls is now visible.<sup>18</sup>

#### SECTION II—OLD SITES IN THE SHĀHPUR DISTRICT

On December 9th we set out from the Salt Range for the plain by the Jhēlum, not without regret at having to leave so interesting and attractive a region. On our descent by the road which connects Chōa Saidān Shāh with Pind Dādan Khān, the sub-divisional head-quarters, and with the railway, I had an opportunity of revisiting the great salt-mines of Khewra. There a huge deposit of

<sup>17</sup> See *Archaeological Survey Report*, v. pp. 85 sqq.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Talbot, *Gazetteer of the Jhelum District*, pp. 40 sqq., for some account of a Buddhist relief

sculpture which was found in the neighbourhood and deposited at Shibgangā but is now at the Lahore Museum.