

Buddhist canonical texts in the non-Sanskritic (Proto-Tibetan) language<sup>4</sup>. In the south-west corner, where the sand lay highest, were found numerous fragments (D. v. 7) belonging to a leaf from a manuscript in the same language, which evidently was written by the copyist of the *Bhūmiparivarta* text discovered in D. III<sup>5</sup>. But more interesting than these fragments of Pōthīs are the wooden tablets with cursive Brāhmī writing (D. v. 3, 4), the wooden stick with Chinese characters (D. v. 5), the Chinese document on thin water-lined paper (D. v. 6), and the large document in cursive Brāhmī (D. v. 8), signed with a Chinese monogram, which all successively emerged from the same shelter.

By far the most important among these records is the Chinese document D. v. 6 (see Plate CXV), measuring about 10 by 5 inches, and recovered almost complete from the narrow roll into which it was found folded. The full annotated translation which M. Chavannes has given of this paper in Appendix *A* shows that it is a petition by one Ssū-lüeh, an inhabitant of *Li-hsieh*, 'in the territory of the Six Cities,' for the recovery of a donkey which had been sold 'for six thousand pieces of money' to two individuals who, after a delay of ten months, had failed to pay the money or return the animal. The persons against whom the petition is preferred are designated as 'scribes in the barbarian language' subordinate to the *a-mo-chih Shih-tzū*, one of them being named *A-shih-nai* (?), while the name of the second is missing. The petition is dated in the second month of the sixteenth year of the Ta-li period, which corresponds to 781 A. D. It is not merely on account of the exact date thus supplied that this document may claim special value, but also because, in conjunction with three Chinese documents which Mr. Macartney obtained in 1898 through M. Badruddīn, the Afghān Ak-sakāl at Khotan, and which were first published by Dr. Hoernle<sup>6</sup>, it makes it possible to fix with practical certainty the name of the settlement represented by the ruins of Dandān-Uiliq, as well as the official designation of the Chinese administrative division to which it belonged.

The full translation which M. Chavannes has given in Appendix *A* of the three documents just referred to, and the learned notes with which he has there elucidated their contents and historical significance, render it easy to acquaint ourselves with the character and bearing of these records. Hence I may restrict myself here to a summary of the essential points. The first document (*A*) is a letter, presumably a draft, dated on the 23rd day of the third month of the third year Ta-li (768 A. D.), and is addressed by Ch'êng Hsien, the Chinese military officer commanding at Li-hsieh, to 'Wei-ch'ih, chih-lo prefect of the Six Cities and a-mo-chih.' M. Chavannes has lucidly demonstrated that Wei-ch'ih Yao, king of Khotan, whom we know to have reigned from 764 up to Wu-k'ung's visit (788-789 A. D.), is undoubtedly meant here. The grant of the title *a-mo-chih* to the king of Khotan is attested by an imperial brevet of the year 728, mentioned in a previous chapter<sup>6a</sup>. M. Chavannes has made it equally clear that 'the Six Cities', of which Wei-ch'ih [Yao] is described as the prefect, can only be the official designation of the territory of Khotan, comprising the capital Yü-t'ien and the five towns or districts dependent on it which the T'ang Annals mention. The letter of the commandant refers to the petition of certain people originally of Li-hsieh, who owing to repeated depredations of bandits had left the place, and who now pray for exemption from certain requisitions of grain and forced labour still exacted from them. The commandant refuses the claim to exemption, but recommends that the petitioners be enabled by special written authorization of the king to return to Li-hsieh in order to fulfil their obligations with the grain and the men

<sup>4</sup> See Dr. Hoernle's notes xi., xii., in inventory list.

<sup>5</sup> Comp. Dr. Hoernle's notes i., xiii.

<sup>6</sup> See *Report on C.-A. ant.*, ii. pp. 22 sqq., Plates III,

IV, for facsimiles of two of the documents and abstracts of contents.

<sup>6a</sup> See above, p. 176.

Chinese  
petition,  
D. v. 6.

Chinese  
documents  
from *Li-  
hsieh*.