

SECTION V.—LOU-LAN RE-ESTABLISHED AS SHAN-SHAN

We may now resume the synopsis of the events concerning Shan-shan or Lou-lan as recorded by the Annals. Chao P'o-nu's successful expedition (A.D. 108) had resulted in the submission of Lou-lan, which 'presented offerings of tribute to China'. But when the Hsiung-nu, on hearing of this, moved troops to attack Lou-lan, its king characteristically enough is said to have 'sent one son as a hostage to the Hsiung-nu, and another to China'.¹ It is easy to understand this uncertain attitude of the small state upon which the Chinese advance westwards had suddenly imposed strategic importance; for it was only in the time immediately following Chao P'o-nu's expedition that, according to the statement in the Annals, the fortified border line known as the 'Great Wall' was extended from Chiu-ch'üan or Su-chou to the *Yü-mên* or 'Jade Gate'.² Of this my explorations have proved that it was established after the end of the second century B.C. on the westernmost part of the Limes beyond Tun-huang, and by the very route which still leads from Tun-huang to the region of Lop.³

Lou-lan between Huns and Chinese.

A few years later Lou-lan again figured prominently in the events connected with the expeditions which the Emperor Wu-ti dispatched against distant Ta-yüan or Farghāna.⁴ 'Afterwards,' the Han Annals tell us, 'when the Êrh-shih General went to attack Ta-yüan, the Hsiung-nu wished to intercept him. The General's troops, however, presented such a formidable appearance that they did not dare to take the initiative, but sent cavalry to wait in Lou-lan till the Chinese envoy should again pass, wishing completely to cut off his return.' The expedition here referred to was in all probability the first which was led westwards, in 104 B.C., by Li Kuang-li, the 'Êrh-shih General', but which was forced to retire to Tun-huang two years later without having attained its goal and after heavy losses.⁵

First expedition against Ta-yüan.

The sequel is thus told in the Annals: 'The Chinese military chief, Jên Wên 任文, had then command of the military colony at the Jade Gate barrier (*Yü-mên kuan*); and when the Êrh-shih General was afterwards obstructed, Jên Wên ascertained the facts from some captives and reported the same to the capital. The Emperor issued a rescript ordering Jên Wên to lead troops by a convenient road and capture the king of Lou-lan. The General proceeded to the city gate, where he reproached the king for his conduct, but the latter replied: "When a small State lies between two great kingdoms, if it has not an alliance with both, it cannot be at rest. I wish now to place my nation within the bounds of the Chinese empire." The Emperor, confiding in his words, re-established him in his kingdom, and commissioned him to keep a watch over the movements of the Hsiung-nu. From this time the Hsiung-nu had no great intimacy with, or confidence in, Lou-lan.'^{5a}

Chinese ascendancy over Lou-lan.

The course of events here recorded is in full agreement with the assumption that the position and extent of Lou-lan roughly coincided with that of the territory known later as Shan-shan or Lop. For a Chinese force returning from the direction of Farghāna to Tun-huang, the route leading to the north of Lop-nör and along the foot of the Kuruk-tāgh was obviously the nearest line of retreat.

Chinese retreat through Lou-lan.

¹ Cf. Wylie, *J. Anthropol. Inst.*, x. p. 25. Here and in other extracts I am substituting for Mr. Wylie's transcripts of Chinese names those conforming with the Wade system.

² Cf. Wylie, *ibid.*, pp. 25, 71 ('Guard-houses were planted at intervals, from Chiao-ch'üan to the Yü Gate'); also Kingsmill, *J.R.A.S.*, 1882, p. 18.

³ See below, chap. XIX-XX.

⁴ Cf. for a detailed account of these operations, which best show the rapid extension of Chinese power into the Tārīm Basin and even beyond, Ssü-ma Ch'ien's narrative in Kingsmill, *Intercourse of China with Eastern Turkestan*, *J.R.A.S.*, 1882, pp. 22 sqq.

⁵ See Kingsmill, *J.R.A.S.*, 1882, p. 23.

^{5a} Cf. Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 26.