

The twelfth day brought its promised reward,—arrival at Kashgar,—historic, populous, wide-scattered. Nearly three hours we marched our dusty way, past farms and villages, without interval; past Mohammedan cemeteries whose coffined citizens were slipping down into the great rut which is the main highway; past groups of Turki workmen, ditch-digging under Chinese bosses; past a great mud fortification wall into the heart of the town, focus of the oasis that breeds half a million souls—nay, for what do I know of souls?—half a million bodies. The small ones—this year's crop—are rolling about under our horses' hoofs, splashing naked into the little ditches that wondrously combine the office of aqueduct and sewer, and in fatal rhythm generate and destroy the brown masses that can suffer, enjoy, and die. Looking at lovely white women, elaborately covered, one may doubt a little that crude saying, "Dust thou art"; but here!—Bah! there's the dust, there's the water. You feel that any one might have rolled the muck into the little bifurcated trunks which sprawl everywhere in the spawning sun.

And now where shall we go? Caravanserais there doubtless are, but that Europeans should lodge among natives—that is *infra dig.*, super-dirty, vexatious to all. Ordinarily you go to any resident European, if such there be, and ask advice; or, if you know him, you bluntly ask a roof. My letter to M. Petrovsky should help us; and as to Anginieur, is not France friend and ally to great Russia? The caravan is discreetly halted a little way from the consular compound. We enter, are