

the mountains sink into the piedmont gravels, the desert was almost absolute, only a straggling weed or tiny gray bush every two or three hundred feet: the sun was hot and glaring; and the yellow haze, which we had forgotten in the oasis, shut down like a depressing veil, and made us eager to get back to the green strip far below us. I realized why the Chanto has such a predilection for staying at home.

As we looked down from the desert to the oasis, the Beg pointed out the house of a rich "molla," or priest, from Bokhara, who had made a pilgrimage to Mecca. Should we stop there for a cup of tea on our way home? So down we went between ten and eleven o'clock. The pilgrim and I exchanged stories over our tea, for our routes of travel had been identical in many places. As we talked, I watched a dog eating ripe mulberries as fast as the wind blew them from the trees. It reminded me of the beggars in Turkey, who in June and July take up their abode night and day under the mulberry trees, and wait for a living to drop into their mouths. Nearly the same thing occurs in Chinese Turkestan, I found. In the region of Sanju, however, and in other parts of the Lop basin outside of Kashgar, I saw very few beggars; though numerous naked children, both boys and girls, suggest at first sight that the people must be much poorer than is actually the case.

After our bowl of strong, unsweetened tea, I expected to go, but a servant brought plates of sugar, and refilled the china teapots, this time with a most delicately spiced variety of tea. When this was poured into our bowls, our host insisted, just as the Persians do, upon honoring us by adding lump after lump of sugar which we did not want. As