

natives walked, my companions did not object any more than they did if I chose to wear my profane boots close to the holy place; but they always seemed appreciative when I humored their prejudices in the matter of walking.

A long day's journey east of Dua we came to Pujiya, another terrace village at the foot of the mountains. Some distance from the oasis the local headman met us with at least a dozen men and horses to help us across the broad, deep ford of the Karakash River, whose various branches spread over a rocky flood-plain nearly two thousand feet wide. He would not be satisfied until I mounted what he considered the safest horse; and then he wanted two men to lead it. I allowed this at first, but it was too ridiculous, so I sent the men back, much to the regret of the young Chinese interpreter who had been deputed to accompany me. If my horse was not led, etiquette would not allow his to be. In a shallow place in the middle of the river he let his horse get too near another, the two began to fight, and the interpreter — blue gown, fan, and all — rolled off into the muddy torrent. Later, when we reached the village, it appeared that we were to encamp in a garden surrounded by a high mud wall, and entered only by a low door. The headman was so anxious that I should ride all the way to my resting-place that he had ordered part of the wall to be torn down, and through the breach he led my horse triumphantly to the felts on which I was to dismount.

When, from the same village of Pujiya, I rode a little way up into the unexplored gorge of the Karakash, my guide and I overtook two men a mile or two out from the village. One carried a dripping bag of curds, the other a wooden