

The yellow band of haze, far away to the north behind all the mountains, had already expanded to a veil with a definite top, at the height, presumably, where the convectional currents of hot air rising from the desert had become so cooled by expansion that they spread out into a sheet at a position corresponding to that of the top of a thunder-cloud. Now the veil came slowly toward us, filling the lower gaps at first, and pouring into the Pisha basin, though the surrounding mountains and the sky still remained clear. By two o'clock, the dust had been wafted upward so that the dark Tikelik plateau was hazy; and by four, even the highest of the white mountains to the south were dimmed.

During the two succeeding weeks, which we spent in the Karatash valley east of Pisha, the air was thick with haze most of the time. Dust fell so fast, that even on a still day one was obliged to brush his letter-paper every ten or fifteen minutes to prevent the pen from becoming clogged. Almost every traveler speaks with exasperation or weariness of the persistence with which the haze shrouds the land for weeks at a time. I often felt as if my eyes were covered by a veil, which must somehow be torn off, or else I should drop into the apathetic mood of the natives. It would be rash, perhaps, to say that the apathy of the people, and their lack of curiosity and initiative, are due in any degree to an atmospheric haze. Nevertheless, when the traveler finds that this same haze tends to induce these qualities in himself, it is reasonable to question whether its continual influence upon generation after generation of Chanto natives may not, unconsciously to them, have been a factor in molding their character. Now they have reached a point where they are