



*Two old men carting millstones.*

*October 18th.* To-day I went to the bazaar with Mr Raquette and was able to see something of the town. A description of one Sart town fits them all. Life and movement are concentrated in the covered-in bazaar streets, merchants sitting on either side of them on a common clay terrace that runs along the street, each in front of his own shop, or rather of his stock, reminiscent in size and arrangement of our market booths. They are all situated in long, low clay buildings running along the street. When they are closed, some boards are placed vertically in front of them. The bazaar in Yarkand seemed to me to be infinitely more animated than in Kashgar. The place was seething with people, and if a Sart in the uniform of the police force of the District Commander had not cleared a way for us with shouts and blows, we should have had great difficulty in moving. Our uniformed protector was soon joined by an enthusiastic amateur and finally the force increased to 3 men. Yelling and pushing people about evidently gave them great pleasure and no one appeared to mind or even be surprised. We walked along the bazaar street which led us from the Sart town into Chinese Yarkand or Yarchang, as the Chinese call the town. There we visited a couple of Chinese temples. Next to one of them there is a huge poplar, partly grown into the wall. The Chinese consider it a sacred tree and assert that it is 500 years old. In the evenings a worshipper praying at the foot of the tree can have his prayers and questions answered. Whoever dares to strike the tree drops dead, a just retribution for his temerity.

The cattle bazaar is held in a small open space outside the wall of the Sart town. A minor Chinese official sits in a mud house surrounded by a railing and provided with a Chinese signboard and receives the tax for selling cattle. A little further on, by the wall, coarse straw carpets are sold. A walk along the town wall takes you out of the yelling crowd, and you can enjoy the beautiful, though unnecessarily dusty view. Yarkand and its surroundings are far more beautiful than the towns I have visited so far. Green fields and shady trees surround the town, climbing over the uneven country up to the very wall. This wall, near which so many battles were fought during the constant wars that raged for centuries in Kashgaria, has now been abandoned to its fate and is gradually falling