

across the river, both in satisfactory condition. The district is monotonous, the same character as yesterday after crossing the river. A great deal of sand and dust. Poor fields. In a couple of hours sand-dunes and uncultivated areas are reached. Here and there you still catch sight of a strip of field. A quarter of an hour later a wide expanse, overgrown with reeds and apparently marshy, begins on the right of the road. Another quarter of an hour and you are in the valley of the river Tiznaf. Crossing the numerous arms of the river presents no difficulty at this time of year without using a long series of bridges thrown across the river and connecting a line of sandy islands. This considerable construction of bridges was made by the mandarin Wang Ping Fang in 1898, as an inscription states. Thanks to it, traffic is not interrupted at any time of the year. The islands are artificial and are planted with trees to increase their resistance. They are long in shape, the pointed ends facing the course of the river. The road beyond the bridge was, if possible, even better than the one we had traversed. Deep ditches on either side and embankments in some places indicated that parts of it, too, were built not very long ago. The road runs along the Tiznaf valley for some distance. Very fertile fields appear again, only to give way in half-an-hour to sand with occasional patches of field. At about 2 p.m. we reached Karghalik, having covered the 10 Chinese paotai at a comparatively rapid pace. The kindness of the mandarin was simply unbounded. Here, too, rooms were prepared for me by his orders. The local mandarin was apparently not going to be outdone — he had sent me two donkeys with fuel, two with hay, one with corn and a live sheep.

In passing a Mohammedan cemetery I witnessed an old Sart's efforts to exorcise the illness of a young one, who seemed to be paralysed in both legs. A small fire was lighted in front of the patient and the old man was trying, by waving some bits of wood round the head and body of the sick man, to drive out the evil spirit, after which he started reading from the Koran in a loud voice.

In the course of the day we met a couple of hundred asses laden with sheepskin, felt and carpets on the way from Khotan to Kashgar and about 20 with paper from Guma. The population here does not seem to differ in appearance from the Yarkandliks. There are goitres, too, though they display a tendency to be rarer and of smaller size. The dress of the women is bright in colour. Many do not trouble to veil their faces.

Karghalik is a small place without any town wall and consists of bazaar streets that seem interminable, when most of them are empty on the days when there is no bazaar. At the entrance to the town there is a large Chinese temple with three large, tidy, parallel courtyards. Like the majority of the temples in this part of the Empire, it is of no great age. The shops are poorly stocked, the goods being of local manufacture or Russian. The place seems to be sparsely populated and to exist chiefly for the one bazaar day in the week.

There is not much to be said of this day's journey. The road goes SE on leaving the town, but soon turns E and keeps on in the same direction with a slight inclination southward. As soon as you have passed the low walls that screen the view in the immediate vicinity of Karghalik, a large sandy plain unfolds itself, extending as far

*November 22nd.
Kosh Langar.*