

15 paotai to the SW. The pond is only filled in the spring, when the water comes down from the mountains. At both these sarais there is hay and corn for sale, though at fairly high prices. During the day we met about a dozen asses laden with raisins from the oasis of Guma.

The oasis of this name lies approximately halfway between Yarkand and Khotan. *November 24th*
 I had intended to rest here for a day, but the short daily marches necessitated by the *Guma*
 use of the arbah in the deep sand, consumed so much time that I gave up the idea. (*Pisan shien*).
 The journey to-day was practically a continuation of yesterday's throughout. The same desert, the same landscape, perhaps a little more gravel and occasionally a few boulders. We travelled ESE, past plots of field, across the valley on to a large plain that looked like the bed of an old sea or river with its boulders. A line of hills was visible in front, extending from ENE to WSW. It turned to the east and for a time followed our road at a distance. Soon after, we crossed a narrow belt of tamarisk bushes extending N and S as far as we could see. The road began to turn eastward more and more. At 10.45, having travelled for 2 3/4 hours at a walk, we came to a shed built of clay and surrounded by trees. Next to it stood the fourth paotai tower. The road makes a bend to the NE and immediately afterwards turns in an easterly direction and enters country densely strewn with sand-heaps covered with a very bushy plant. An hour later we came to another clay shed in the sand and at 1.30 we reached the edge of the oasis of Guma. Another half-hour's journey along a dusty road planted with trees that led us past houses more ramshackle in appearance than any I had seen in Kashgar, Yarkand or Karghalik, and we found ourselves in a bazaar street.

Guma, like Karghalik, has no wall, the emblem, according to Chinese ideas, of the privileges of a town. The bazaar alone seems to have attracted a number of houses, in which life pulsates only one day in the week. The bazaar streets appear to be far smaller than in Karghalik. Guma produces coarse paper sold at 1 copper coin for four sheets, a small quantity of silk which is sold in the form of thread, usually coloured, at 20—40 pul per misqal, cotton mostly as raw material at 1 r. 60 c. — 2 r. per tcherack (16 djins), as cotton cloth (white) at 70 cop. for 10 arshins, a little wheat, maize, rice and raisins. Salt is brought from the desert and is sold in the bazaar at 10 cop. for a donkey's load. The manufacture of paper is very primitive. The bark of the mulberry tree is used as raw material. The inner bark is separated from the outer, which is thrown away, and is soaked for 24 hours in the river and then boiled for about an hour. The sticky pulp secured by this method is laid on a millstone and beaten with a wooden club until the fibres are separated and the pulp has become loose. The papermaker sits with bent knees beside a square hole in the ground filled with water. By his side is part of the pulp in a wooden cylinder, let into the ground. The pulp is diluted with water as required. The man places in the water-hole a mould of four narrow boards with a thin muslin-like cloth at the bottom. With a ladle made out of a mangold he takes a clot of the pulp and puts it in the mould floating before him and spreads it out in the water by whirling a small wooden cross, fastened to a handle, round in the water and pulp in the mould. Then the mould is taken