

November 26th To-day we experienced our first cold night. At 6.30 a.m. the thermometer indicated
Zanguya. — 8.8°. The badly built houses make you very sensitive to even such a moderate temperature.

Our journey to-day was in a SE and ESE direction. A ravine zigzagging deeply through the sand, as if cut by the rain, leads from Moji on to a plain of fine sand with some signs of vegetation, though very poor. The ground is not so level as during the last few days. In some places it undulates, in others the sand is piled up in mounds and hillocks, occasionally very fantastic in shape. There are long stretches strewn with knolls or mounds. After proceeding for about three hours we passed a lonely farm in the desert and just beyond it we came to a line of long, low hillocks of very irregular shape. Evidently under the influence of the wind, the sand had taken on curious shapes here, like ruins. The road cuts across this stretch of hillocks almost at right angles. Beyond it all vegetation ceases, but only for a short time, for in a little over an hour we reached the oasis of Zanguya, where we stopped at a Chinese sarai. A few hours later Tung ling Tang arrived with his family on his way from Khotan to Yangi-Shahr, where he had been appointed to the command of the Tsung jin. He called on me and told me a good deal of news. The newly appointed Dzian Dziun in the province of Sin fuan, who was formerly Dzian Dziun in Ili, had forced through the decision to build a railway to Urumchi. He had not arrived yet. Zanguya is an oasis of 4—500 houses. The cattle seem fairly strong and the houses possibly less poverty-stricken than usual.

November 27th. Having bidden farewell to the Chinese colonel and his nine arbahs, some of them as
Pialma. large as houses, we started this morning at 8 a.m. Two more horses had been hired, one to replace my pack-horse that was galled, the other as a fourth to pull the arbah, as this day's journey was considered heavy going on account of the sand. The road leading out of the oasis of Zanguya is rather beautiful, broad and straight between two rows of poplars and mulberry trees. Our pleasure did not last, however, for very soon an immense plain stretched before us. The sand is very fine and the ground in some places goes in waves with ridges between, like yesterday, though it is often quite level. The ground rises in some places on the horizon. Here and there you see thin, low bushes creeping up the sandy ridges. The direction is almost invariably ESE, for a short time due E. About halfway the sand has a strong admixture of gravel, nearer to the oasis of Pialma the gravel disappears more and more. After about two-thirds of the way we came to Hodsja langar a more than unpretentious shelter of clay. Soon after, the edge of the Pialma wood appeared on the horizon and at about 3.30 we reached a very tumbledown, though large sarai. — During the day we met about 40 asses, all laden with raisins from Khotan, 30 en route for Karghalik and 10 for Kashgar.

November 28th. This day's journey was the longest of the whole journey from Yarkand to Khotan
Zawa. and the greater part of its 12 paotai proceeded over a plain of deep, fine sand. The time of starting was fixed for 6 a.m. for the pack-horses and 7 a.m. for my arbah.

The oasis of Pialma is not large. All vegetation ceases when you have driven for about