



On the road from the village of Pujiya to Duwa.

scarcely pass. $1\frac{1}{2}$ —2 miles before reaching Pujiya the road descends the slope of the mountain into a valley between two mountain ridges. Here blasting is absolutely necessary for a distance of about 300 paces. At low water it may be possible to avoid the first place by going along the river. At all events the road can be widened there. The river cannot be crossed even on horseback for a month or two in May and June.

At the point, where the Qaraqash makes a bend and turns in an almost northerly direction, you pass through the village of Popuna with 70 houses and about 1,500 mou of tilled land. Here the road turns in a more westerly direction and leaves the river, but rejoins it at Pujiya after making a bend in the shape of an S. You enter a sandy plain that takes you to the WNW, ascending slowly, until you reach the highest point about 2 miles from Pujiya and start a descent that is rather steep in some places. During the ascent we crossed a ravine with steep, sandy sides in places, where some digging would be necessary to make a way for vehicles. The chain of mountains, which follows the road on the left, is picturesque and the river bed, disappearing in the north with the fields and trees of Popuna on the high left bank and its steep sandy slopes and hills on the opposite bank, helps to make the wild landscape beautiful.

About a mile WSW of Pujiya there is a fairly large flat mound of sand built in the bed of the river and in its NW corner are the remains of an old fortress. The southern and western walls are still fairly well preserved, but the others have disappeared. Excavations have been made there in two places to a depth of about 21 feet without, it is said, discovering anything. The people say that about 800 years ago a town stood on the mound, protected by a fortress, the walls of which are still visible. The town was the residence of »Kungsaz Mumam», who ruled over the whole oasis of Khotan at that time.