

and Sawu, which are connected with each other. The last is the richest and lies on the other side of the stony river bed, which is about 150 fathoms wide. Just beyond it the road goes in curves up a steep sandy slope, the crown of which is called Sawu dawan bash. On one of the most inaccessible sandhills lies a mazar, the poles and trophies of which look at a distance like a tuft of hair standing on end. From here the road leads for almost three hours along a high plain, overgrown with low bushes, and intersected at times by some small sandhills or a slight hollow. At about 6.30 p.m. we came to the edge of this plain which seems to break off suddenly here and goes on again a little further on. At the foot of this gap lie some fields with a couple of houses and a small pond. The place is called Sulgahiz langar and serves as a station for the caravans that travel this road, though the majority pass this langar and make a halt in Sandju. A mazar on a mound at the foot of the gap in the ground, a few venerable old trees and a little murmuring ariq delight the eye in this deadly monotony.

December 17th.

Sazan village.

The road goes along a seemingly endless plain until in an hour and a half you come to rather a steep declivity leading to the valley in which the village of Kochtagh is situated. From the top you have a good view of the valley with its large village and farms marked here and there by small clumps of trees. In the hazy atmosphere a pile of rocks seems to rise indistinctly in the S and SW on the edge of the village. On this side of the village there is a little purling stream, over which a defective bridge has been thrown, quite unnecessarily, for the narrow bed of the stream is fordable at all times of the year. The village is fairly large, 340 houses with about 21,000 mou of land, and its boundary is not marked by the sand of the desert like most of the villages I have visited so far. Having ridden through the actual kishlak, also rather scattered, you come to a number of single houses, the fields of which connect Kochtagh with the kishlak Isme Salar about 7 miles away. The latter, a village of 150 houses with about 1500 mou of fields, is separated by the bed of the river Kilian, about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile wide, from the village of Sazan, the goal of this day's journey. On the south Isme Salar is bounded by a mass of rock that turns SW and disappears in a direction parallel to the bed of the Kilian. Barely $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile south of the spot where we crossed the Kilian, a small village of 4 or 5 houses, Boinak langar, was visible on its eastern bank. The Kilian divides here into two arms encircling a narrow strip of land scarcely $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile in length. Sazan is one of the stopping places of the caravans, as it lies in the centre between Sandju, Kilian and Kuktar. — The road we travelled to-day is suitable for wheeled traffic everywhere. The Kilian which is about $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile broad here, including the island, can be forded all the year round. When the water is at its highest, it may hold up traffic for not more than a day or two.

December 18th.

Bora village.

To-day's 8—9 paotai, according to the statements of the local people, seemed a short ride, perhaps because the country presented less difficulty than usual for mapping. We started at 7.30 a.m. and at 3.15 we reached the house of the Yuzbashi in the village of Bora, followed by some of the inhabitants of the village, who had come to meet me with hot tea, hard-boiled eggs and kishmish (almonds or nuts and raisins). The road