

NW. Sometimes there are such severe hailstorms in the summer that they knock men down. The inhabitants are Sarts, principally Kashgarliks. There is a badly kept Government sarai in the village and the one I have put up at which leaves a good deal to be desired.

*February 7th.* The road continued eastward through the same »toghraq» wood, though it had been cut down a good deal close to the village, and lower, apparently, than yesterday. The *Maral Bashi.* Imperial Chinese telegraph line with its single wire on the right and the mountains to the north on the left of the road were our faithful companions. About half-an-hour from the village a bog, covered with ice and reeds, appeared on the left not far from the road. Three-quarters of an hour later the road brought us to a small river and for a while the road kept to its southern bank. People we met assured me that it was not a river, but a bog with standing water, but the comparatively deep bed looked more like the bed of a river. The local people assert that it is the same waterway that creeps up to the road repeatedly, returning in a broader form each time. Out on the plain I saw fresh water running in a narrow depression, but could not tell whether it was the same river. Having ridden a couple of hours, we found that the road debouched into a very large plain, open as far as one could see, except in the north, where it was bounded by the chain of mountains, though the latter disappeared a little further on, probably owing to its turning north. A few paotai straight in front of us, i.e., to the east, a single mountain with two peaks rose up unexpectedly in the middle of the plain. The road turns more and more to the NE, winding constantly in order to make its way between marshy places and the river Kashgar darya north of the road. The steppe is overgrown with reeds in the lower, damp places, in others with a knotty bush called »djulgun» and in some parts with grass. Here and there you see a solitary farm with its few mud huts shaded by a few trees. A couple of herds of about 100 sheep each were grazing along the road. On the left we saw a bog covered with ice, a little later the right side of the road was like a morass and covered with reeds. After riding another half-hour across the plain we reached two tumbledown sheds, obviously built to harbour travellers and separated from each other by a slight depression in the ground. An hour later we crossed a bridge over the Chabäklik üstang that flows southward from the river to the north of the road. Next to the bridge stands a lonely house. The buildings become less scattered, the fields larger.

A quarter of an hour's ride from the bridge lies the village of Dungmälä, consisting of 5 or 6 houses and immediately beyond we rode through the village of Shaku of about the same size and with about 100 mou of tilled land. The houses appear to be even worse than in the districts already traversed. The unbaked bricks and lumps of earth are often replaced as building material by a lattice-work of rushes and young trees covered with clay. In many cases the clay has crumbled and the wind can make merry under the correspondingly rickety roof. The houses in the villages seem to have less connection with each other than in other parts of Chinese Turkestan. The fields are level, well tilled and beautiful. The cattle, especially horned cattle, are more numerous than elsewhere. The inhabitants make butter some of which is consumed on the spot and some sold to Kashgar. The population consists of Dolans or »Tulans» as they pronounce it. They grow wheat