

bazaar street along a lane and immediately beyond a bad bridge leads across the Kashgar darya, about 20 fathoms wide at this place (there is a good bridge further west, due north of the fortress). For a time the road goes through a part of the town built on the near side of the river, occasionally skirting the river that winds to the right at a short distance from it. In about 20 minutes the town gives way to single houses, fairly close to each other, which gradually grow rarer and finally cease altogether. To the east, on the other side of the river, stands the mountain with two peaks, an excellent landmark, and between it and the river, long after the buildings have ceased, you still see a row of farms with planted trees. In the N or rather the NW we once more found our faithful companion of the last few days, the chain of mountains north of the road from Faizabad to Maral Bashi. It makes a sharp bend here and goes on northward parallel to the road. Between it and the road stretches a sandy plain, level in places, but mostly in small hillocks, or rather mounds, overgrown with »toghraq». Between the road and the river this plain is still cultivated for a good distance and we passed a couple of clay sheds until, about an hour from the town, we crossed the last ariq and the plain definitely took on a desolate character. For about an hour the sandy mounds covered with »toghraq» are fairly considerable. The numbers of lifeless, withered trees on this plain, where no new shoots are visible, indicate that in the past the conditions of vegetation were different from the present. The ground grows more level with a crust on its surface that often gives way under the horses' hoofs with a slight crackle. »Toghraq» is rare here, but is replaced by a low bush »zakzak» and a creeping plant »shapa». In some places white patches appear on the salty surface of the ground. Due north the road is crossed by a mountain divided into two that seems to rest against the mountain in the W, here called Kyryztagh by the Dolans and Kumatlag tagh by the Sarts. In the middle of this mountain in the N, called Beltagh (waist mountain) there is a kind of gateway hewn for the road. On the other side of the Beltagh the road again enters an absolutely level, almost triangular plain, bounded on three sides by the mountains Kumatlag tagh in the W, Beltagh in the S and Laltagh, often descending vertically, in the N with more or less broad passages between them. This plain, which is called Ikitagh urtasi djengal, is almost entirely covered with sandy hillocks overgrown with »zakzak» and »shapa». In the northern half of the plain a slight depression is visible parallel to the Kumatlag tagh and 1 mile to a mile and a half E of it. There is an elevation, a kind of low earthwork along the foot of the Beltagh. The local people say that it is the remains of an ariq. A stone, hewn into a circular shape, was found here and removed. It is supposed to have been a millstone. In many places in this plain there are numerous fragments of clay vessels, stone sherds, slag etc. In some places there are only a few pieces, in others so many that they are visible at a considerable distance. On some mounds old wooden poles can be seen, some of which bear the marks of having been chopped with an axe; on one, remains of straw could be seen sticking out of the ground. About halfway between the Laltagh and Beltagh, almost in a line northward from the gateway in the latter, there is an elevation like the ruins of an earthwork. Near it there are some mounds with many pieces of clay vessels. My guide said that he had been told by old inhabitants that a river used to flow along the Kumatlag tagh and