



*A plough ready for removal after the day's work.*

ledges of the banks. Direction SSE. Here, too, it can be forded and the conditions are the same as just described. The road took us along the bank for about half-an-hour. The band of tilled land and inhabited section had again grown wider and was probably 2—2 1/2 miles wide in parts.

The road goes E and SE, while the river makes a bend almost due S. Three-quarters of an hour later we entered the extensive area of Qaratal. Qaratal consists of no less than 18 villages covering an area that bears this common name. The houses are more scattered here and the fields larger. Here and there we passed a sandy hillock and in some places the sand seemed to make inroads into the tilled fields. The cultivated area is at times narrower and sand-hills appear behind the trees to the north, then again it widens. In four hours we came to a small uncultivated plain with large salt deposits. 1 3/4 hours later we rode through Musmen mazar on both sides of the road. After riding for 7 hours we again reached the river that comes from the west and bends sharply to the south here. It flows in an arm about 150 fathoms wide. Here it is considered impossible to ford it at any time of year. About an hour later Qaratal came to an end and we entered the region of the village of Matan. A small ferry keeps up the connection between the two banks. Our road ran along a large canal dug three years ago by order of the Chinese authorities. Many Sarts were made to sacrifice their time here without payment and without any result, for the canal has disappointed all hopes and remained dry, proof that this irrigation work is not so simple as many people are inclined to think. After covering 30—31 miles we halted before the rather dirty, though comparatively large house of the Yuzbashi in Matan, where we were to spend the night.

It was 8.30 p.m. The soup was ready, but everyone had fallen asleep, worn out by the day's work. Even the cook nodded by the side of the kettle and the fire seemed to be going out.