

good. The ground on both sides was saliferous and so porous that the horses broke through it to a considerable depth and could only advance with great difficulty. An enormous mountain range (not marked on the Russian 40 verst map) was still visible at a great distance to the south during the early part of the day.

Scarcely seven miles before Qarashahr we passed through the village of Taipintchy with 9 houses inhabited by Dungans. We stopped at a house and had some cold tea, a couple of eggs and a Chinese loaf baked of musty flour. It is only after two months' travel in the mountains in the cold, wind and rain, with no other food than rusks and mutton, that I have learnt to rate the blessings of civilisation at their true value. The eggs that the Dungan woman boiled for me and her musty bread tasted better than the most delicate dish. It was a pleasure to ride through tilled fields and populated districts. A cackling hen and its chickens gave me as much pleasure as a field of poppies with its charming colours. The clay huts of the Dungans and Sarts, their shaking and creaking arbahs, all seemed to be enviable luxury. How much more effeminate life and circumstances had made the people of the fertile plain than the nomads in the mountains, devoid of all comfort.

The regular wall of the Chinese fortress came into sight a good distance before we reached Qarashahr. The Mohammedan town is a village-like conglomeration of houses without any town wall. The main street is about $1/4$ of a mile in length. The shops are situated on it and on a side-street parallel to it, and here the bazaar is held, though it is insignificant. The site is beautiful on the bank of the Khaidyk gol, $2/3$ —1 mile wide at this place. Only the backs of a few houses, however, face the river. A Chinese temple, dedicated to the river god, stands on the bank, the entrance facing the river, from which it is protected by the traditional wall that keeps out evil spirits. We put up at a sarai a stone's throw from the river, the water helping to temper the intense heat.

The district of Qarashahr is large in area, but insignificant as regards population and resources. A Fuguan is resident in the town with a Tsouguan in the town of Korla and a Shenguan in both Bugur Tcharkhalyk and Lop Nor. Besides the agricultural population, consisting of Dungans, Sarts and Kalmuks in Qarashahr, Sarts in Korla, Tcharkhalyk and Lop Nor, his activities extend to the Torguts in Yulduz and the Khoshuts. The latter are governed by their Khan and Beise respectively and at the same time belong to the administrative district of the Dzian Dziun at Ili, while legal matters are dealt with by the Fuguan at Qarashahr, when the crimes are beyond the competency of the Khan and Beise, i.e., are liable to heavier punishment than flogging. A number of Torguts and Khoshuts are stationed in the town to adjust any misunderstandings that might arise with the Kalmuks who live there. Both tribes are exempt from taxation and military service. During the Dungan revolt about 800 (according to other versions 300) Torguts and 200 Khoshuts were conscripted to recapture the province. Since then no soldiers have been called up. Nevertheless, the people seem to think it quite natural that the Chinese should conscript men in case of war. The Khan receives 2500 lan yearly and the Beise 500 as a subsidy from the Emperor. For their part they make a gift of a few horses annually to the Dzian Dziun. They are bound (at any rate the Khan) to make a journey to Peiping and serve

*July 10th.
Qarashahr.*