

while a bridle-path, about $2/3$ of a mile shorter, led up the hill behind the post station and thence across a grassy slope in a straight line to Toqsun. From the hill a green carpet was once more visible, at last with a grove of trees here and there, indicating the presence of houses. The descent of the gravel slope took $2\ 3/4$ hours. The drop in the ground which had continued incessantly since leaving Arghai Bulaq, only ceased here. We passed a row of mounds, indicating an irrigation system that characterises the Turfan district, and having passed a belt of sandheaps where grass and small bushes grew, we found ourselves on the green carpet — a plain covered with a thorny grass. The ground is saliferous with small mounds in many places. We rode past some abandoned dwellings and in half-an-hour reached Toqsun with its two fortress walls. — *Note.* Subashi is still in the mountains and there is no trace of Algoi and the other river marked on the map, when riding in a straight line from Subashi to Toqsun. According to what I was told, they end further east.

Toqsun is a neat little place inhabited by Taranchis, Dungans and Sarts. The former live in a little, old fort in the western part, the two latter in the centre and the bazaar street. The most eastern part is occupied by a Chinese cavalry »ljansa» in a large impanj, also built by Sarts or Dungans during the time of the revolt. It is square, about 385 yards on each side. The wall is about 15 feet in height with an uncrenellated rampart, 7 feet high, without a fosse or external protected area. A double gate with a quadrangular projection as a protection faces west. There is another, walled up, to the east. Inside, along the S wall of the fortress, there is a mapoza station and a large Government sarai, each surrounded by small walls. The part of the courtyard that faces N is also divided by small walls into several compartments for men, horses, stores etc. The NW corner of the impanj is bounded by the bazaar, the main street of which, about 580 yards long, forms a slight curve, open to the SE. From this quarter, easily reached from Ilan lik, the fortress is easily accessible, also from the east owing to a single row of houses coming up to the impanj. To the S and N the esplanade is open. The Toqsun district consists of six villages (including Toqsun) with a mixed population of Sarts and Dungans. The former preponderate decidedly in numbers. Four Sart and four Dungan Shang-ja carry on the local administration. In the town itself there is, besides, one each for the two kinds of population. Wheat, gaolyan, linseed and cotton are grown. Wheat yields a 10—14 fold crop, gaolyan up to 20 fold.

The wretched condition of my horses forced me, after vainly asking the Shang-ja to procure the horses necessary to get me to Urumchi, to seek the help of the commander of the ljansa. With the kindness that characterises most of the Chinese mandarins he immediately took the necessary steps. There are 30 men in his ljansa instead of 120. The detachment seemed like a big family, in which the atmosphere was most patriarchal and sincere. The men joined in the officer's conversation, corrected him, when necessary, altered his instructions etc. They accepted abuse, but remained incorrigible.

The information I was given here regarding the road along the Algoi to Yulduz did not agree with the statements of the Torguts. The hardest part of the road is said to be between Ilan lik and the river. For about 180 li it goes over a stony and waterless plain. It would be

July 19th
Toqsun.