

October 9th. We left at 5.30 a.m. in a NE direction. It was cloudy and cold. A penetrating wind chilled us thoroughly. About $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile from the sarai we passed a belt of thin, solitary trees. These were soon succeeded by low toghraq and the ground, on which vegetation became scantier, went in mounds, the highest being a couple of metres. On the right we passed a small ruin. Its thin walls indicated that it was of no great age. About $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the sarai vegetation ceased completely and we entered a plain of gravel with a very slight rise. The road here was due E and continued in the same direction with slight deviations to the ENE up to the foot of the mountains. The first spurs of the mountains were reached on the left about 10 miles further on. Two or three small stone cairns that we passed served, no doubt, as road signs. On the left the mountains drew nearer in a W—E direction after enclosing the valley from the W in a wide curve. During the last 4—5 miles the gravel had become strongly mixed with stones.

I searched in vain during the whole journey for the wide opening indicated on Grum-Grzimailo's map. About 2 miles from the first spurs of the mountains the latter approached from the south on the right and the road led us into a gorge, about 100 fathoms wide, at the bottom of which we noticed a dry water-channel. The mountains on the left were rather higher than those on the right, but not of imposing size. They were very dark in colour, at times black, and piles of washed-down small stones, apparently in the nature of easily split slate, lay in the folds. In a couple of places the small stones were of the same green colour as those I saw near Otshal. The bottom of the gorge was stony, though there were no large blocks of stone. A wheeled vehicle could probably pass over the stones. About 8 miles from the beginning of the gorge it widens and forms a valley, $1\frac{1}{3}$ miles wide, enclosed by mountains on all sides. The vegetation, which had been almost non-existent, began again with inedible, low, thorny grass, and a few miles further on there were reeds and tall, coarse grass growing in small patches.

2 miles from the beginning of the gorge we encamped near the ruins of a small, deserted sarai. Water (for at least 100 animals) is available from a small spring and the coarse reeds are tolerable fodder for horses. We were thoroughly chilled by the wind which had not abated. Furs and leather trousers were got out, wood was broken off from the ruined roof and soon we were all squatting round a bright fire in the lee of a couple of rather decrepit walls. The mountains enclosing Toteshyenza, especially from the S and N, were already considerably larger, though they did not equal the Tian Shan mountains W of the Kucheng meridian in size. Considerable sand-hills had piled themselves up at the foot of the mountains S and N of our camp, though no large patches of sand were visible anywhere. — The rise of the ground was slight during the day.

October 10th. During the night the temperature fell to -6.8° R., but towards morning the wind dropped. The road goes on in an ENE direction towards a valley between the mountains in the E and S, where they come together. The ground rises slightly. The road is level and good, with only a few stones. Having ridden a little over 4 miles, we entered a narrow gorge between insignificant spurs of the mountains that had drawn near from the NNW and WSW. On the left the dark rock was denuded, while on the right the surface was