

Started again at 8.15 p.m., passing over a plain covered with bushes and some trees. At two miles we crossed a small river, broad and shallow, running over a pebbly bed. This is the first stream of any size which I have crossed for nearly two thousand miles. At ten miles further we crossed another small river. These run down from the mountains four or five miles to the north, emptying themselves into a lake to the south. Twenty miles from Ush-ta-le we entered a country thickly covered with trees, like a park, with long coarse grass in tufts, and many small streams. The rainfall here must be considerably more than further east. The soil is sandy and apparently not worth cultivating, as we only passed one small hamlet, six and a half miles from Ching-shiu-kou, where we halted at 4.40 a.m. (distance ninety li).

This is a village situated on a stream some twenty yards broad and one and a half foot deep. One and a half mile from this we had crossed a stream, four feet deep, which nearly covered the mules and flooded the bottom of the cart.

Weather fine, and cool in evening.

*July 24.*—Started at 7.45 a.m., immediately outside the village passing a small fortified barrack with the eastern wall washed away, but the gap had been filled up with fascines. Rain began to fall as we started, and we had a wet march to Karashar, over a moorland covered with bushes and some trees, which looked like elm. At ten miles from Ching-shiu-kou we crossed a bog by a causeway. The country was almost uninhabited, though water was plentiful. It was not till within two miles of Karashar that we passed a small hamlet. We entered Karashar (ninety li from Ching-shiu-kou) at 2.30 p.m., by the eastern gate, passing out again at the southern, and putting up at an inn close by.

The town of Karashar, like all towns hereabouts, is surrounded by a mud wall, and the gateways are surmounted by the usual pagoda-shaped towers. There is a musketry wall