

Messrs. Beech and Lennard, who were, for sporting purposes, also proceeding to the Pamirs and Chinese Turkestan. I again had to make those long dreary marches across the Karakoram Mountains which I have already described. It would be difficult to imagine anything more utterly desolate and depressing than these bare plains and rounded hills, and it was accordingly with an immense feeling of relief that we descended into the plains of Turkestan at the end of our six hundred miles' march through the mountains from the plains of India. On the last day of August we reached Yarkand, which, it is needless to say, showed no signs of change since my visit to it three years before. It is doubtful, indeed, whether these Central Asian towns *ever* change. Their dull mud walls, mud houses, mud mosques, look as if they would remain the same for ever. In most climates they would, of course, be washed away, but in Central Asia there is hardly any rain, and they remain on for ages. There are a few well-built brick mosques and some good houses. The Chinese, too, in their separate town, have substantial buildings; but the native town leaves a general impression of mud-built houses and sleepy, drowsy changelessness. "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be," would be a particularly appropriate motto to place over the gateway of a Central Asian town.

A few days after we had reached Yarkand, Captain Grombtchevsky, whom I had met in the previous year, also arrived there. I was going over to visit him, when he sent a message insisting upon calling upon me first, and shortly afterwards he appeared, dressed in uniform, with his decorations on. It was a great pleasure to me to meet him again, and to hear from him an account of his wanderings since we had parted near the borders of Hunza nearly a year ago. He had had a trying time since then, and must have suffered considerable hardships, for he had attempted the Karakoram Pass in the middle of December, and then passed on eastward to the