

week for nearly a thousand miles along their base, their summits constantly appearing away on my right hand. Now at last arose in front of me the barrier which was to mark the point where I should turn off left and south to India. It was a worthy termination of that vast plain, for the greater part desert, which stretches for four thousand miles from the borders of Manchuria to the buttress range of the Pamir, both extremities of which I had now visited.

That evening we reached Artysh. Everything here looked thriving and prosperous. The fruit season was at its height, and all along the road, at any little garden, the most delicious grapes and melons could be obtained. Nor was there now any difficulty with the people, and they were always ready to allow us to rest for a time in their gardens or put us up for the night.

We now emerged on to the Kashgar plain, passed through a populous, well-cultivated district covered with trees and fruit gardens, and at length entered the town of Kashgar, the distance to which, when I was starting from Peking, had seemed so vast. Here I was at last, and the culminating point of my journey.