

for the time to come when the Pamir should be explored. It is dangerous to advance ideas regarding geographical problems without going fully into all the details of proof, which I must reserve for some other occasion, but I think I can give reasons for supposing that the Tagharma Peak and its surrounding country is alluded to in a passage in Ezekiel, Chapter 27-14—"They of the House of Togarmah* traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules;" also Chapter 38-6—"The House of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands."

We left Yangi Hissar on the 3rd December and halted for the mid-day dastarkhwan at a very picturesque kind of shooting lodge in the village of Soghlak, on the banks of a stream which was at that season dry. We passed the night at the village of Yepchan in the oorda or royal resting place.

Next morning was to see the British Mission enter the capital of Eastern Turkestan. It was a cold brisk day, and all the streams were frozen with a thin coating. The atmosphere, so often clouded by a thick impalpable dusty mist, was fortunately beautifully clear and we had a magnificent view of the giant peaks on the Alai to our left, whilst before us extended the long and comparatively speaking low range of the Tian Shan which separates Khokand and Russia from the Atalik's dominions.

At Karasu, about 5 miles from our destination, we halted to have breakfast and to put on our uniforms, after which we remounted and crossing a small bridge were met by Mirza Ahmed Kúsh-begí, one of the highest officials in the Atalik's Court who had come out with an escort of cavalry to bring us in. Mirza Ahmed is a man of some note in Central Asian history and took part in the wars with Russia which ended so disastrously for the Khokand army.

He was mounted on a fine bay horse of Andijani breed, with a saddle and bridle of remarkably neat and somewhat European pattern. As we rode along over the undulating slopes, the fort of Yangi-Shahr, the residence of the Atalik, came in view, and further on in the far distance we could discern the long low walls of the City of Kashghar, a place till then unvisited, and in fact I believe unseen, by any Englishman. As we approached Yangi-Shahr, we passed several separate enclosures which were the residences of some of the Atalik's officers, answering in a way to our barracks. At the entrance to one we saw two 9-pounder guns drawn up, in front of which a soldier with an Enfield rifle stood sentry.

Passing by the north-east corner of the fort we came in sight of the royal gateway, on the right of which and distant about 80 yards is the new Elchi Khana or embassy quarters, recently erected for our reception. Crowds of spectators here thronged the road and scanned with eager looks this novel apparition.

It is a mark of politeness in these countries to dismount in the street and not to ride inside a gateway; so, following the example of Mirza Ahmed, we left our horses outside and entered a spacious gateway, inside which on three sides were raised platforms with a fire-place to accommodate the guard. Through this we passed into a spacious quadrangle round all sides of which a broad verandah ran. On two sides doors opened into good sized rooms; a passage at the opposite side led into the inner quadrangle, on three sides of which sets of rooms for the accommodation of the members of the embassy had been neatly fitted up. The floors were well carpeted with rugs from Khoten. English velvet or broadcloth lined the walls up to the wainscoat, above which were neatly built recesses for shelves. The ceiling was papered with English or Russian paper, and the outer windows, for they were double, had neat frames with paper doing duty for glass,—an article as yet but little known to the present race, though as I afterwards found in my exploration of a buried city, glass was known and used by the inhabitants of the land 1,000 years ago. The fire-places were large and well built with gypsum plaster and had the inestimable merit of giving out a good heat without emitting smoke at the same time.

* Togarmah was grandson of Japhet.