

The caravan road which we had followed from Kashghar lay across the plain in front of us. Beyond it is the Táshrobát Pass about the same height as the Turgat, but somewhat more difficult. A traveller who had crossed it in March told me that the road was then very bad, and difficult for equestrians, but I think his account must be somewhat exaggerated, as the camel caravans from Almáti traverse it without much difficulty, and the Russians do not write of it as a difficult pass. Between the Náryn Fort and Káshghar, a distance of 180 miles, there are only these two passes—both about 13,000 feet in height. There is a third pass, the Ák Cheta, between the At-báshi River and the Náryn Fort on the Náryn River, but this is, I believe, sometimes avoided by following the Náryn to its junction with the At-báshi, and then proceeding up the latter river to Táshrobát. When we visited the country early in January there was no snow on the ground, but we were singularly fortunate, for a traveller two months later in the year complained of a good deal of snow, while Baron Osten Sacken wrote on a former occasion that his party suffered much from cold and snow in July.

A shorter and more direct road between Náryn and Káshghar is that over the Ák Cheta, the Bogushta, and Terekty Passes, stated by Captain Reinthal to be not more than 134 miles in length, or eight days' journey. The passes, though all about the same height, *i.e.*, between 12,000 and 13,000 feet, are more difficult than on the ordinary caravan road *via* Táshrobát and Turgat Bela. The Bogashta Pass is sometimes closed in winter. It is covered on the Kashghar side by the Terekty Fort. We never had an opportunity of visiting this fort, which lies, as far as I could make out, nearly due east of Chákmak and due north of Káshghar, and although we must have passed within a few miles of it during a subsequent trip in the Artysh districts, my guides studiously avoided pointing it out, and actually, on one occasion even denied its existence. The distance between Fort Náryn and Vernoe (Almati), a military district centre, with large garrison and supplies, is 180 miles by the shortest road, which goes over three passes, all between 12,000 and 13,000 feet in height.

I had hoped that we should have been able to return to Kashghar, over the undulating plateau to the east of the Turgat Pass, and by the Terekty Fort, but we had now to retrace our steps to Kashghar by the road we had come. A notice of the return journey is therefore unnecessary.

Whilst our party under Colonel Gordon was visiting the Chakmák Forts, another member of the Embassy, Captain Biddulph, paid a visit to *Maralbashi* on the direct road to Aksu. A description of his journey will be found elsewhere. During my absence Kishen Sing Pundit, was despatched in company with Sirdar Tara Sing (Treasurer to the Mission), on a visit to Khanarik and Kizil-boia, large villages lying to the south-east of Káshghar. The Pundit carried on a traverse survey wherever he went, which has thrown some light on the intricate maze of rivers and canals which irrigate the villages that are thickly scattered over the whole of the ground visited by him.

My second excursion was to the north-east of Káshghar. The Amír having granted permission for a visit to the Artysh districts, I was enabled to accompany Sir Douglas Forsyth and party during their stay there, and on their return to Káshghar, I made a rapid journey in company with the late Dr. Stoliczka towards Ush Turfán. Unfortunately on this trip, after leaving the head-quarters party the weather was much against us. Bitter cold was accompanied by snow and clouds, which combined to conceal the rocks and hills from both Dr. Stoliczka and myself, still, as the ground traversed is, as far as I am aware, entirely new to geographical science, a short account ought not to be uninteresting.

We left Yangí-hissár (Káshghar) on the 14th February for Bu Miriam Kháná, a village about 11 miles north-east of the old city of Káshghar. The first three miles of one road lay across a cultivated and well irrigated plain, and brought us to the banks of the Kizil or Káshghar River, at a place where it was easily fordable; after another four miles we reached the large village of Awát, near which large quantities of salt are collected and taken to the Káshghar market. Four miles of level plain brought us to Bu Miriam, where we learned that our baggage animals had, by mistake, taken the road to Ostin (Upper) Artysh, and that we had no chance of seeing them that day. We accordingly pushed on to Altyn (Lower) Artysh, where we found comfortable quarters and a good dinner, provided by our host, the Hakim of the district. Both