

Under the personal guidance of our envoy we—Dr. Bellew, Captain Chapman, Captain Trotter, and myself—left Yangishar on the 14th of February reaching Altun Artush at a late hour the same day. As an introduction to the difficulties in travelling, our baggage did not arrive till next day, and we had to accommodate ourselves for the night on the carpets of the floor in a spacious but tolerably warm room. A halt of two days was desirable to enable us to make all necessary arrangements for our further movements. However, before I proceed I shall endeavour to give the reader an idea of the geographical position and limits of the country of which I shall speak in the subsequent lines. The data are derived from a general survey by Captain Trotter and from information given by the Hakim, Mahomed Khoja.

Altun Artush, which is the chief place of the province, lies approximately in east longitude $76^{\circ} 8'$, and north latitude $39^{\circ} 41'$, therefore about 23 miles north by east of Yangishar. It is situated in the western part of the *Yilak* on the Bugos—here called Artush river—and north of a low ridge which separates the Artush Valley from the plains. The southern boundary runs along this ridge for about ten miles west of Altun Artush, and from there almost due north to the crest of the Koktau range; then along this range eastwards of the Belauti Pass (east longitude $77^{\circ} 47'$ and north latitude $40^{\circ} 41'$), and from thence in a south-eastern direction to the village of Kusltiyilak, some 15 miles north of Fyzabad in longitude $76^{\circ} 42' 30''$ and latitude $39^{\circ} 28' 30''$. From here the southern boundary runs close to the right bank of the Kashghar river until about opposite to where the Artush river runs into the plains.

During the first four days we all marched in company up the valley of the Bogos river to the Fort Tangitar about 23 miles to the north by west, then to a Khirghiz camp, Bashsugun, in a north-easterly direction; Tugurmatti almost eastern; and Ayaksugun in a south-eastern direction, the directions being from the last camps, respectively.

At Ayaksugun Captain Trotter and I separated from the rest of the party marching northwards along the Ushturfan road to Gaitana, and from thence across the Jigda Jilga in a north-east by east direction to the camp at Uibulak, crossing the Uibulak Pass, passing a second Jilga, and turning then for about nine miles more northwards to the Belauti Pass, beyond which lies the valley of the Kakshal or Aksai river. On our return we passed Ayaksugun, Karaul, about a mile from our former camp of the same name, and visited Kultiyilak and Fyzabad returning to Yangishar on the 3rd March.

It was not a very favorable time for travelling in these regions, not so much on account of the cold as in consequence of the heavy falls of snow which appear to occur over the whole of Tianshan during the second-half of February and first-half of March. During the last few days of February we were almost constantly wading in fresh fallen snow, though on the saline plains it melted very rapidly. The snow naturally interfered seriously with our observations. However obtaining even but a little addition to our knowledge of these hills was a better way of occupying our time than remaining in our somewhat glooming quarters. From a geological point of view the trip proved in many respects to be of considerable interest, particularly as supplementing some former observations made more to the west. Although there is not much variety in the rock formations, we may distinguish three successive series. The most southern part of the province, along the foot of the hills, is formed of alluvial gravels and sands, in whose unfathomable depths are swallowed both the Artush and Sujun rivers, before they can reach the Kashghar Daria. Wherever irrigation from the latter is possible the fields appear to be fertile, but in the contrary case the land is not much more than a mere desert covered with low and scanty scrubs of *Ephedra sp.*? The marshy grounds along the river are the breeding places of innumerable water-fowl. Brahmini ducks and pintails were already selecting sites for their nests on the 1st of March. The latter must have only just arrived. Where high grass occurs wild pigs are not uncommon.

The second series includes the low hills which extend diametrically from north to south over about 30 miles while the prevalent strike is from north-east by east to south-west by west. All these lower hills are occupied by Artush beds, of which I spoke in a former communication. They are separated into two groups. The lower beds consist of greenish or reddish clays or sandstones, and the upper ones of coarse conglomerates, which on a hill south of Tangitar have a thickness of about a thousand feet. At their contact both groups generally