

ments both solid and fluid on the plea of ill-health, but in each case I was constrained to comply with native custom. Some of the usages at table were, to say the least, disagreeable to think of. If a guest had not emptied his cup when the time came for replenishing it, its contents (whatever might have been left) were poured back into the spirit kettle, and then it was refilled. The guests were not supplied with separate table napkins, but were not left absolutely unprovided for with respect to such comforts. An attendant handed round to them successively, in due rotation, a greasy, steaming cloth, wherewith each wiped his hands and mouth. When my turn came I made a strenuous effort to decline its use, but a look of calm surprise from the Chow-Kuan, backed by a severe frown from Raju, quite cowed me, and I meekly wiped my hands and mouth with the disgusting rag, even as the others had done. It was not till late that I was able to take leave of my host, who sent lantern bearers to light me to my quarters. Having gone straight to the medicine chest, I swallowed the most potent correctives I could lay hands on, but from the effects of that huge repast, eaten when I was shivering with cold, my general health suffered severely.

I remained in Yarkand for about three weeks that both men and animals might enjoy the repose which they had fairly earned. During that time I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Backl nd, of the Swedish Mission, almost daily, and, as we walked or rode together, sometimes in the bazaar but oftener in the country, he gave me much information about the ways of the Chinese and the natives.

Being most anxious to make a third attempt to explore the unknown parts of Sarikol before the ice disappeared from the Yarkand River, I went to the Chow-Kuan to explain my purpose, as far as it had a definite form, and