

obtained sufficient chopped straw and barley, I thought it advisable to rest. Islam had not returned from Tashkurghan with money or supplies; Sonam was ill with fever and buboes under his arm; fresh yaks were required to relieve those from Nosh Tung, and surveying and reconnoitring work had to be done. The caravan had one day's repose, while Stanzin, one of the Ladakis, went to ascertain whether there was sufficient ice on the Yarkand River, below Sanglash, to admit of the advance of the caravan down the valley to Tir. He soon came back to tell us that the ice was quite insufficient, and that the banks were too precipitous both for men and animals. In the evening Islam arrived with money and supplies from Tashkurghan, where the Chinese had become very suspicious of me. Annoying as their suspicions were, I must acknowledge that they were not altogether unreasonable from the Chinese point of view. No Chinaman or, for that matter, no native of the country could understand why a European should voluntarily travel in the depth of winter over the execrable tracks of this inhospitable region. Even the Beg of Sarikol had been inquisitive as to my motives, and when these were explained to him he remained unsatisfied. I mentioned the Royal Geographical Society, and spoke of the great interest manifested by all civilised nations in the rivers, mountains, and general geography of other countries. I explained that many British people were ready to devote their private means to assist in mapping unknown lands, and told him that as the Chinese would not survey this portion of their territory, I had come to do so. I dilated at some length on the love of travel, sport, and adventure which are common amongst the people of the British Islands, but with all my eloquence I could make no impression, and when I had finished he was still sceptical. The mental attitude of the Beg of Sarikol towards me was