

Raskam, but he now informed me that he thought he could find a route to the foot of the Topa Dawan. This offer of guidance was tantamount to an acknowledgment that he was acquainted with the country, and I resolved to follow him; but he still, probably to keep up an appearance of ignorance, declined to enlighten me as to the distance or the number of marches required to reach the spot. When it became known that Islam was going to Tashkurghan for money, one of the Sanglash villagers offered to accommodate me with a loan of ten sarrs (about twenty-seven rupees), and when I, in my surprise at the confidence thus shown, asked the man how he expected to be paid, as I did not intend to return to Sanglash, he replied that he was going to Yarkand, where the money might be conveniently repaid, as it would be safer in my hands than in his during the journey. When I suggested that it was possible to repose too much in a stranger, he laughed and assured me that he had entire faith in British Sahibs, and was perfectly certain that he would be repaid in Yarkand. I hesitated to take his offer, but, at last, accepted the money, giving the lender an I.O.U., so that, if any accident happened to me, he might not be a loser.

From inquiries made at various times and places I was pretty certain that no European traveller had ever visited Sanglash except Grombchefsky, who had approached the village from Tashkurghan by way of Pichanyart and the Tugadir Pass, and, without going further east, had returned by the same route.

Our first march up the Pil valley, though quite easy, was very short, as, at the suggestion of Yul Bash and the Yuz Bashi of Dia, we stopped for the night at the small village of Dia in order that we might obtain sufficient supplies for the journey to the west end of Raskam and back. The yak-men, among whom Yul Bash had far more authority than the Yuz Bashi, assured me that by