

accordingly made due notification both to Chinese and Russian officials. M. Petrovsky kindly offered to send the Russian medical officer on "plague duty" at Kashgar to examine and treat my man; but, fortunately, Sonam's fever and buboes had quite disappeared, and the patient was now in good health. The incident showed the care exercised by Russia in guarding against the approach of the dreaded plague, for, when the Russian doctor was sent to Kashgar there was no known case of plague nearer than Bombay, fully 1,500 miles distant.

Soon after I reached Kichik Tung, some men from Tung arrived and I tried to extract from them information concerning routes. Their replies were indefinite, and when supplemented by further replies, became more indefinite. The men (Tajiks) could not answer a plain question twice in the same way, and finding their examination too irritating, I turned them over to Mohammed Joo.

Here the Yarkand River valley seemed absolutely barren. The only living creatures I could find were small lizards, which must be possessed of great power of endurance to bear the intense cold of winter and the fierce heat of summer. Of birds I saw not one; no chicore, nor even the common sparrow which can pick up a living almost anywhere, could find sustenance in winter in this barren land. Close to the mouth of the Kichik Tung valley the track was so steep and rocky that all the animals had to be unloaded and the baggage carried up by men. The ice in many places was remarkably transparent, and its surface was often marked by ripples like those on the sand when the tide has ebbed. Some of the smaller rivers looked as if they had been suddenly arrested by the frost; the water seemed, at some places, still to shoot in small cascades; in other places to boil and surge, and where the bed was smoother the form of the long