

and adventurers, had left a short time before for Charkhlik and was reported to have attacked and captured the district magistrate of Charkhlik. The Chinese subdivisional officer of Charchan had been helpless to prevent the outbreak. So he considerately provided me with introductions, one to the unfortunate Amban, assuming that somehow he had regained freedom and authority, and the other to the leading spirit of the 'revolutionaries' whom he shrewdly guessed to have been installed by them in office.

In the course of the ten marches to Charkhlik, mainly along the Charchan river, we did not meet with a single wayfarer. This struck me as strange at the time. On my arrival I found that neither of the two introductions could be presented. When the little band of 'revolutionaries' had captured and then cruelly put to death the hapless magistrate, their leader had set himself up as Amban *ad interim*, while the local Muhammadans looked on with indifference. But within a week a small detachment of Tungan troops had arrived from far-away Kara-shahr. Stealthily introduced into the oasis by the same adaptable local headmen, they had surprised the 'revolutionaries' while asleep and killed or captured all of them. This local upheaval had left no Chinese civil authority whatever, and in its absence no effective help could be hoped for from the easy-going Lopliks and their indolent headmen.

I greatly chafed at the consequent delays encountered in raising the supplies, labour and camels needed for my carefully planned explorations. Yet in reality the revolutionary disturbance was to prove a boon in disguise. After my start from Charkhlik I was obliged to devote nearly two weeks' strenuous labours at the site of Miran to rescuing what was