

opens out towards the Alai. A Russian Customs post here guarded the frontier of Bukhara territory. Three miles farther down lies the village of Chat with a large, well-cultivated area and a ruined circumvallation of some size occupied during the troubled times preceding the Russian annexation of Turkistan. It is a point well suited for a large roadside station, and it is in this vicinity that we may safely locate the famous 'Stone Tower' which the classical record preserved by Ptolemy mentions as the place reached from Baktra "when the traveller has ascended the ravine", *i.e.* the valley of Kara-tegin.

It is equally probable that "the station at Mount Imaos whence traders start on their journey to Sera", which Ptolemy's account of the trade route to China as extracted from Marinus mentions on the eastern limits of the territory of the Nomadic Sakai, corresponds to the present Irkesh-tam. This is still a place well known to those who carry on the lively caravan trade from Kashgar to Farghana and who face here the vagaries and exactions of the Chinese and Russian Customs stations, both established close to each other.

From Daraut-kurghan I turned south to strike across the succession of high snowy ranges which separate the headwaters of the Muk-su and the rivers of Roshan and Shughnan from the uppermost Oxus. It was the only route, apart from the well-known one leading across the Kizil-art and past the Great Kara-kul lake, by which it was possible for me to cross the Russian Pamirs from north to south and to see something of the great ranges buttressing them on the west. It was for this reason that I had decided on this route. But it proved one distinctly difficult to follow, even with such