

marches took me must always have offered special attractions to nomadic invaders of Sogdiana. On the way from Ab-i-garm to Faizabad (Fig. 144) we crossed splendid grazing-grounds. They are all held like those of the valleys to the north by the Özbeg landowners of Hissar, who move up there for the summer with their flocks of sheep and large herds of cattle and horses. In the wide fertile stretches of plain which we skirted on the following three days along its northern edge past Doshambe, Kara-tagh and Regar, the most productive lands capable of irrigation were still held by Özbegs. But the labour is largely furnished by Tajiks, and much of the land, too, seemed slowly to be passing into their hands whether as tenants or owners.

The conservative fashion in which the conquering Turkish race still clings to semi-nomadic customs was well illustrated by the portable felt-covered reed huts we found pitched in the courtyards of many Özbeg village homesteads. They had been brought back from the summer grazing-grounds, and the owners still preferred to use them as quarters instead of the mud huts built around them. In spite of the exactions practised by corrupt Bukhara officials, all I saw of this tract favoured by soil and climate suggested a fair degree of rural comfort and flourishing agricultural trade. Little did I foresee all the misery which within a few years a futile Muhammadan rising against the revolutionary Russian regime and its ruthless repression by the Soviet forces were to carry into this peaceable region.

The usual and easier route from the Hissar tract would have taken me south-west to the ancient highroad which passes from Termez on the Oxus through the lower hills and