

Tiznaf to the North-West, and make for a low pass over the spur which descends in the angle formed by the two rivers. From the top of the Shush or Kum-Dawan ("the Sandy Pass"), though it scarcely exceeds 12,000 feet in height, there opened an extensive view over the Tashkurghan Valley southwards. The distant snowy peaks, half-enveloped in clouds, which rose behind it in the South, were the last glimpse I had of the border of India. The view to the North was still more extensive. The great mass of Muztagh-Ata, with its mantle of ice, rose up clearly from the broad valleys which encircle its base on the west and south. Imposing as the great mountain looks from its mass and its crown of glaciers, it did not seem to me from this distance to equal in grandeur and picturesque form those mountain giants of the Himalaya I had seen, Nangaparbat, Mount Godwin Austen ("K.2"), Rakiposhi, still less Kinchanjanga. The fact that the relative elevation of the highest dome of Muztagh-Ata above the broad, undulating plain of Tagharma at its southern foot is only about 14,000 feet, largely accounts for this; equally, perhaps, also the absence of boldness in its form, and the great height of the permanent snow-line which towards the south does not seem to reach down much below 17,000 feet.

After the world of soaring peaks, glaciers, and deep gorges, through which the way from India had taken me, I felt it difficult to believe myself still in an Alpine world in view of the broad, rolling plains before me and of the low-looking ranges which fringe them towards the Pamir. It was a novel type of mountain scenery that greeted me, and I confess it looked somewhat tame by the side of the views which have indelibly impressed themselves on my memory between Kashmir and the Taghdumbash. A descent of about one thousand feet brought me to the irrigated fields of Tagharma, which were clothed in the fresh green of young shoots of oats and barley. Without raising one's eyes to Muztagh-Ata I might have thought myself on the steppe of