

some northern region. The felt-covered Kirghas scattered over the plain did not dispel this impression; the yaks contentedly grazing on the young grass of the meadows were the sole feature suggestive of the high elevation at which we still moved. Safsgos, where I encamped for the night, is one of the small Sarikoli summer settlements spread over the Tagharma plain. The inhabitants of the three Kirghas, as far as I could see them, the men and children, were all singularly good-looking. Milk and delicious cream were obtainable in plenty.

On the morning of July 11th the air was comparatively still and warm, and only the highest parts of Muztagh-Ata were enveloped in clouds. Riding along the open grassy plain I enjoyed distant views, both to the East and West. In the latter direction the passes of Ghulan, Sarik-tash, and Berjash (or Berdasht), all leading across the range into Russian territory, came consecutively into view. Though snow-covered on the highest shoulders over which they pass, these routes are all evidently easy enough at this season. Near the small hamlet of Sarala, where Sarikolis carry on some cultivation, we passed a little Chinese post, enclosed by loopholed mud walls. It is intended to maintain some control over the small detachments of Sarikoli levies ('Karaulchi,' as they are called) which guard the approaches from the Russian side.

After Sarala cultivation ceased, and the irrigated grassy ground became more and more cut up by patches of sandy soil scantily covered with hardy herbs. The few Yürts we now passed were tenanted by squalid-looking but jovial Kirghiz herdsmen. After Kukyar the route enters a broad stony nullah, enclosed East and West by low walls of conglomerate, which looked like remains of ancient moraines. Above them to the east towered the snow-capped heights of a great spur known as Karakorum, which projects from Muztagh-Ata southwards. By noon a strong wind began to blow down from the north, and I was glad to reach the little