

accompanied by their men and children, but in either case almost invariably mounted. The large fur caps with peaks of velvet which the women wear looked more comfortable on this chilly morning than when I had first seen them in the heat of early August.

There was little else to occupy my attention after this stream of market visitors ceased with the advance of the morning. The broad and fairly straight road, lined with poplars and mulberries, runs through flat, fertile country. In the fields of maize the harvest was proceeding; for the rice, apparently, the return of warmer days was expected. About five miles from the city I passed the large Bazar of Manglik, a long row of clean mud huts with booths opening on the road, but almost completely deserted, as it was not the local market day. Such Bazars are met at varying distances all along the route to Karghalik, a sure indication of the thick population of the fertile belt of land through which it passes. After a ride of about eight miles we reached the bank of the Zarafshan or Yarkand River. Fed by the streams which drain the whole mountain region between Muztagh-Ata and the Karakorum range, it must carry a mighty mass of water in the height of the summer. Even now it flowed in three arms which had to be crossed by boat. The clumsily built ferry boats could not take the laden animals, so the loads had to be unpacked and refitted again and again. Each of the branches was about forty yards broad, and the depth well up to a camel's girth. It took my caravan three hours to effect the passage, and all through that time the traffic of laden ponies and donkeys was sufficient to fill the two or three ferry boats at each crossing as quick as they could be worked. On the opposite bank of this river-bed, which has the total breadth of a mile, we passed the large Bazar of Painap, and by five o'clock I reached Posgam Bazar, the end of the day's march. Inside the large inner quadrangle of the Sarai I found my tent pitched. In the rooms of the spacious rest-house, which,