

need even for the little diplomacy which elsewhere is usually required to save oneself this chance of catching cold.

Ujat is a large village, its straggling dwellings surrounded by grape-gardens, for which it is famous. The dried grapes and currants of the place are said to find their way as far as the markets of Aksu, Kashgar, and Turfan. The vines are trained, as throughout Chinese Turkestan, along low fences, ranged in parallel lines. The work of covering up the stems with earth for the winter was just proceeding. The people of Ujat seem to have retained for a long time after the acceptance of Islam the reputation of being weak in the faith and addicted to heretical ways. I wonder whether the extensive cultivation of the vine has something to do with this.

My local inquiries and the arrival of a long-expected mail from Kashgar, which brought me home and Indian letters of a whole month and required early disposal, helped to detain me at Ujat. But on the 15th of November I marched back to Khotan by the shortest route, crossing the bleak pebble 'Sai' that stretches from the Kohmari ridge to the southern edge of the cultivated area near the village of Kosa. I was surprised to find how rapidly the fertile tract towards the city had assumed its winter aspect. The long alleys of poplars and willows stood leafless; the same storm that put a stop to our survey work on the mountains had brushed away the bright autumn colours which greeted me on my first descent to the Kara-kash.

At Khotan it became necessary to make a short halt in order to give to my men and ponies the rest they required after the month of fatiguing marches. I also wanted time for the examination of the antiques which had found their way from various localities into the hands of the agents sent out on my behalf after my first visit. The small parties despatched to ancient sites in the desert also turned up with their spoil during my week's stay. The party which had gone out under the guidance of Turdi, an old, and as experience showed,