

for our long stay. The dead trees of ancient orchards could alone supply it, and their occurrence in various parts of the ruined site was very unequal. As soon as the baggage had been unloaded at the point which appeared best to answer these conditions, I hastened to despatch the camels under Ahmad Merghen's guidance on their three days' journey eastwards to the Keriya Darya. There in the jungle lining the river's course they were to find the fodder they so badly needed, and to gather fresh strength for subsequent desert marches. The donkeys, too, which had carried the men's food supplies, with the meagrest rations for themselves, were sent back to Tawakkel under the care of two of the villagers.