

a poor head covering for a good Turki Muhammadan, accustomed to shelter his shaven head under a substantial fur cap when the temperature is so low as it was just then. So my Begs soon compromised comfort and appearances by making one of their attendants wear the cap imposed by their Cathay masters, while they themselves kept their heads warm with mighty furs.

About four miles from Bostan Langar we reached the edge of the cultivated area of the oasis. I was once more among the hamlets with their canals and poplar avenues, so uniform in appearance all over Turkestan. After a month's life in the solitude of the desert the bustle of these homesteads was a welcome sight. 'Yolchi Beg,' my little terrier, also felt this stirring effect of seeing fellow-creatures once more, and we had no little trouble in protecting him from the large village dogs which he persisted in provoking by his self-assertive behaviour. Keriya town presents no very striking appearance even for the wanderer from the wilderness, and I was far advanced amidst the low mud-houses of its outskirts before I realised that I had entered the headquarters of a territory that extends over some five degrees of longitude.

I was glad to find that the quarters Abdullah Khan had arranged for me were in a kind of suburban villa, far removed from the Bazar. The house, which belonged to a relative of his, a well-known Mullah, proved large and airy. Passing, however, a series of half-open courts and halls I arrived at a couple of little rooms dimly lighted by a hole in the roof but more comfortable at this season. In one of these I found felts spread and a fire blazing, and here I took up my abode. Long before my baggage arrived the Amban's chief interpreter and factotum presented himself to deliver his master's greetings and presents of welcome. They were all of a thoroughly practical nature, including firewood, fodder for my ponies, sheep and fowls for myself, and on so lavish a scale as to render a worthy return a little difficult. However, the Amban's kind intentions were amply testified, and, I felt sure, would not suffer from any inadequacy of a traveller's counter-gifts. Etiquette permits the feeing of the