

to receive appropriate tokens of my satisfaction. Expensive in a way as this system is, it saves needless circumlocution and *gêne*. There is no need to disguise one's "tips" in the form of presents, or to press them into hands that for the sake of appearances pretend to refuse them. Silver or gold, as the case may be, is accepted with the same unblushing readiness which seems to have been the proper style at Indian courts before European notions effected a change—on the surface. Of course, little souvenirs are not rejected by one's Turkestan friends. But what marks the value of services rendered, and is mainly looked for, is hard cash.

My march of the first day was only a short one. I did not wish to leave Khotan without a farewell visit to the site of the ancient capital, Yotkan. The road I followed was the same by which I had returned from that spot on a gloomy and cold November day. But what a glorious change in the landscape! Riding through the hamlets clustering in the fertile cantons of Tosalla and Borazan, there was nothing but deliciously green fields and orchards to rest one's eyes on. The first crop of lucerne was already standing high; the avenues of poplars, mulberry-trees, and willows had decked themselves with the richest foliage, and since the unusual rain that had fallen during my stay in Nar-Bagh scarcely any dust had had time to settle on the young leaves. It was a delightful ride which showed me the oasis under its prettiest aspects. When more open ground was reached beyond Halalbagh, the whole range of the great mountains burst into view. Quite clearly I saw the heights of Ulughat-Dawan and Kauruk-kuz where we fixed our triangulation stations. Beyond them, to my surprise, the icy ridges which form the watershed towards the sources of the Karakash showed themselves in rugged splendour. The inhospitable mountains through which I had toiled in November seemed thus to send me a farewell greeting. Their grand panorama was the finest setting for the last views I carried away with me of this strange little world between the desert and the mighty Kuen-luen.

At Yotkan, where I pitched my tent once more in the pretty orchard below the Yüzbashi's house, I was busy collecting samples