

Chinese Bank, just established at Kashgar when I left in 1901, had reared for its abode quite a 'Europe' structure. It is true that the spacious rooms with big glass panes, swinging doors, and other Western luxuries seemed to have their peace but rarely disturbed by business. As I walked in the well-shaded little lane leading from the Bank to the Consulate past houses and gardens of the Russian colony, I had somehow the feeling as if a little corner of Europe had been reproduced here more thoroughly than it ever could be in India, even in a hill station. But then here, just as practically throughout the whole of Russian Turkestan, there was no insidious climate and no rigidly separated ethnic environment to be reckoned with, and—the Europe reproduced was an unmistakably Eastern Europe.

The first days after the dust-storm which had swept across the oasis on the day of my arrival were relatively cool, and after a light shower or two on June 11th the air cleared so remarkably that for a whole long summer day I could enjoy the glorious view of the great snow-clad range far away to the south-west, bordering the Pamirs and familiar to me from my first journey. The huge dome of Muztagh-ata itself, that point of convergence for the classic Imaos, is hidden from view at Kashgar. But the line of high glacier-girdled peaks which radiates from it northward was perfectly visible, and I much regretted Ram Singh's absence in the mountains, as the opportunity would have been excellent for a fresh triangulation and fixing of the position of Kashgar.

But the summer dust-haze soon reasserted itself, the heat steadily rising. At last even the nights became sultry, though I took to spending them in my tent pitched under some big trees. Meanwhile my preparations were advancing at as rapid a rate as Kashgar ways would permit. The money supplies I wished to take with me at the start, in the shape of Chinese silver and a less bulky reserve of Russian gold roubles, had been secured at last by selling to Hindu money-lenders Supply Bills on Indian Treasuries. Their rate of exchange (Tangas 6 Dachins 10 for the Rupee) was slightly less detrimental than the