

in regard to them. No definite indication could be secured as to the position of the locality, except that it lay beyond the Yarkand and Tiznaf rivers eastwards. So it was difficult to prevent the officious Beg and Darogha deputed to escort me from extending the march to Bagh-jigda, the nearest inhabited place to the site, over two days. However, I did not feel sorry for this, though the distance proved only sixteen miles; for the slowness of our progress allowed me to get a good picture of parts of this fertile oasis and of ground on to Karghalik which had never been surveyed before.

The first day's march took me through richly irrigated country, and across the Yarkand River, filling then a single bed about a quarter of a mile broad, to the village of Tata. Here I found in the house of the local Yüz-bashi excellent quarters, all the more welcome since a much-delayed big mail had to be got ready for Kashgar. The adjoining orchard was exceptionally large and shady, the apricot-trees bending under their loads of luscious pink and yellow fruit, and the ground strewn with apples which had fallen before ripening.

It was just the season to make me realize fully the advantages of the 'Aiwan,' that prominent feature in well-to-do people's houses throughout the southern oases. It is a kind of square central hall or Atrium, having a roof well raised over the central area and provided with clerestory openings on all four sides. Sometimes on one or two sides the upper wall portion shows merely a grated wooden framework, freely admitting light and air. Thus during the hot summer months the Aiwan gives not only cool shade but access for any fresh breeze. Rooms or passages opening from this Atrium communicate with the rest of the house. One or two rooms, close to the entrance from the outer court, form the usual guest quarters known as 'Mihman-khanas.' Gay cotton prints hung as dados round the walls and Khotan carpets spread on the floors make them look quite cosy. But as light and air are admitted only by a small opening in the mud roof, the Aiwan itself makes far more inviting summer quarters. Raised platforms extend along all its walls, broad enough