

awaited me on the edge of every village area, and as these all consist of narrow belts stretched along the canals and scarcely a mile broad, my diagonal progress eastwards was necessarily much interrupted.

Before Ushak-bashi I crossed the Ulugh-Üstang, here a rapid mountain stream some forty yards broad and flowing in a picturesque bed of boulders deeply cut into the alluvial fan. In the little Bazar beyond I found two Shikarpuri Hindus, established three years before and manifestly thriving on a field for usury previously unexploited. Through shady lanes I reached Rais Akhun's house, a pleasing country residence of some pretensions, far away from the village noises and adjoined by a large and beautiful orchard. Its Aiwan, where I soon settled down to work, showed vines trailing over the open centre and a rustic attempt at a 'hanging garden,' *i.e.* flower-beds raised on rough posts to a height of some five feet above the verandah floor. The owner was evidently a man of taste and eager to embellish his home; for in the 'Mihman-khana,' where I had my bath and a change, the walls were neatly decorated with plaster plaques of coloured flower designs, quite the most tasteful ornamentation I had seen since Yarkand. Pretty polychrome patterns of Svastika emblems decorated the ceiling.

To the rustic charms of Ushak-bashi the desolate pebble Sai, which I crossed next day for a distance of about twenty miles eastwards, formed a striking contrast. Over such absolutely bare ground it would have been difficult to get exact 'fixings' for my plane-table, had not the outer hills to the south and a forbiddingly desolate ridge on the northern rim of the broad glacis-like plateau over which we were passing, shown their outlines just in sufficient clearness. The haze was too great to allow me to sight the high snowy range southwards, and before we were nearing the tiny oasis of Hassan Boghra Khan, our halting-place, a light dust-storm spread a veil even over the nearest hills.

Hassan Boghra Khan proved a pleasant surprise; for though it consists only of a modest Ziarat with a Sheikh's house and two or three holdings, there was a large shady