

on the way to Törük. It is reputed to be of great age, and the massiveness of the central pile, some forty feet square and probably quite as high, seems to lend that tradition support. A roughly built enclosing wall was manifestly of later date, though far more decayed. Against what marauding bands from the north was this forlorn post meant to offer shelter?

After a long and weary march by moonlight, which lay partly up the wide stony bed of a dry river course, we caught a glimpse of water, and after descending into a deeply cut bed to the right, found ourselves by the long-stretched fields of Törük. The little village of some fifteen households was wide-awake to receive us in spite of the late hour. The rubble-built quarters of the village head-man where I was to put up proved to contain quite a comfortable guest-room, little suspected behind the exterior of this hovel. To be able to pass the long wait for the baggage in a room which had a real fireplace, felt rugs on the floor, and a display of simple household treasures on shelves and cupboards around the walls, was cheering. After all the bare, monotonous rooms I had seen in Chinese Ya-mêns and inns, this evening in a Turki homestead struck me like the first step back to Europe.

The Un-bashi was away in the mountains; but his wife, a homely matron of about forty, took care that hospitality should be full. It seemed as if old nomad habits still lingered among these honest peasants at the foot of the mountains. Scarcely had I been seated before the quickly kindled fire when a large bowl with milk was produced and a tray with delicious white wheat loaves. My hostess, passing in and out with that quiet unconcern of the true mistress of her home which I had often noted among Kirghiz women, assured me that it was customary for people in their position to keep a good store of tempting food ready for guests. Once more I noted with pleasure how little adaptation to Chinese ways, so common among the Muhammadans of Hami, has as yet affected their women-folk. Whereas the men had taken to various articles of Chinese dress, and in some cases even to pig-tails, the women's apparel was, but for the prevalence