

by Yakub Beg's son Hakaullah at Yaide some two marches by the road north-east. Many of the fugitives had sought escape by turning into the desert, and miserably perished there through heat and thirst under an August sun. People from Kelpin subsequently searched the desert for the money and valuables of the victims and buried the corpses. How could an antiquary, say of 3000 A.D., be expected to divine the true origin of those modern coins I picked up at the old site?

Quite apart from the much-decayed ruins of Buddhist shrines near Tumshuk, which former travellers had seen and M. Pelliot had systematically cleared, the whole of the ground to the north of the present high road was full of interest to me. Cultivation from the Kashgar River had extended in ancient times much farther than now, and canals as well as terminal beds, with the familiar dead forest, could be traced far away into the desert. How I longed for a few weeks of winter to follow up the whole of the old route to Kashgar! But the excursions I made northward from the present line of small oases near the Kashgar River end, between Tumshuk and Maral-bashi, showed that prolonged surveys were impossible at this season.

As it was, I spent a terribly hot time on these long rides, between thirty and forty miles daily, through barren steppe or tamarisk jungle. There was room also for interesting topographical work; for I discovered in this previously unsurveyed desert belt a series of low parallel ranges which were clearly connected geologically with the curious rugged hills cropping out like rock islands about Tumshuk and Maral-bashi, and which once, as indicated above, had their continuation to the south-east right into the Taklamakan.

In spite of the heat, glare, and thirst which attended work at this season, I found it hard to turn my back upon it. But the thought of the many heavy tasks still before me imperatively called me back to Khotan. From Maral-bashi the road lay open to both Kashgar and Yarkand, and, considering how little a five days' journey is reckoned in Turkestan, it cost me some effort to turn my face from the