

**VISITS TO  
HIGH TARTARY,  
YARKAND AND  
KASHGAR**

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littered down with straw, closed stables for the horses, cocks and hens strutting about, and all the tillage implements standing up in corners. The hay and straw are stacked on the roofs, while a door leads out into a walled orchard. To make the scene more homelike, snow is lying an inch or two deep over the whole country, and the roadside pond is hard frozen, with village boys cutting out slides on it in their hob-nailed boots.

“In the afternoon, I went a little way down the lane to see an iron-smelting furnace at work. It is just like a dice-box four or five feet high, with a roof over it, leaving an exit in the middle for the smoke. Round the dice-box, under the roof, sit six boys and girls blowing skin bellows with each hand—twelve bellows in all. An opening shows the glowing mass with a stream of molten stuff slowly oozing downwards. A pit two feet deep shows the bricked-up door of the furnace, through which the metal is extracted daily. The ore is broken up by a man with a hammer, who keeps throwing it in at the chimney, while another supplies charcoal through the same opening. No third substance. Twenty ‘châraks’ weight (16 lbs. each) of ore, and the same quantity of charcoal, are used in the twenty-four hours, and the produce is about *four* ‘châraks’ of iron. The metal is very good and fine-grained, looking almost like steel when made up into tools. In the hill-districts of India, where magnetic oxide of iron is found, the process is almost the same; but the blast is much less, only two people blowing one skin in each hand, or four bellows instead of twelve. The molten metal also is taken out hot, and ham-

mered, while here, in Toorkistân, it is allowed to cool for a whole night before the furnace is opened. The ore is a black-looking stone (got by digging from the mountains fifteen or twenty miles off), which breaks square, or with straight edges.<sup>1</sup> Returning from this furnace, we were amused at watching an urchin four or five years old who had brought a donkey to drink at the pond. Although his home was only twenty yards off, he would not walk; but his difficulty was in mounting the donkey. First he tried to swarm up its forelegs, but as that would not do, he took it to the wall, and then climbed triumphantly on to its back. Then seating himself almost on the tail (as one sees in England), he whipped him up into a donkey's gallop, and disappeared into a neighbouring farmyard. They begin their riding habits early in Toorkistân.

“In the afternoon, two officers of the Beg of Yanghissar were brought to me by the Yoozbashee. They began by embracing me, and said they had been sent to welcome me. Presently they returned, bringing a *dastar-khân* and a fine sheep, and making excuses for not offering more, as nothing could be got in this village. My poor Yoozbashee is quite powerless here, being out of the immediate government of his relative, the *Dâd-khwâh*. He could hardly get anything for himself even, so I sent him half a sheep, &c.—a strange turning of the tables. It appears that, besides being Vizier of the kingdom, the *Dâd-khwâh* has the direct administration of the province of

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<sup>1</sup> Specimens of it are to be seen in my collection at the India Office Museum.

Yârkand. The Kâshghar province is considered more immediately under the government of the King, and the Dâd-khwâh's officers dare not assume any authority there. The Gooma district (through a corner of which we passed on our way to Yârkand) has a distinct Governor; it interposes between Sanjoo and the rest of the province of Yârkand to which Sanjoo belongs. Khoten has again another Governor. I do not yet quite understand what relation the Dâd-khwâh bears as Vizier to these other provincial Governors. In that capacity he should exercise some authority over them.

“*Thursday, January 7th, Yang-hissâr.*—This morning I went out to examine the neighbouring iron-smelting furnace which had just been opened in order to take out the pig of iron, the result of yesterday's smelting. All night the furnace had been allowed to cool, and about eight o'clock the hearth was opened, and the mass of metal still warm, was removed from the bottom. The hearth slopes towards the front, where it terminates in a narrow neck. Before being charged again, it is lined with some sort of fire-clay. The furnace itself is widest at the bottom, slightly diminishing in diameter as it ascends.

“Here again the villagers were full of curiosity regarding my habits. They asked the Moonshee whether I did not get tired sitting up always on a chair! They are much struck, too, at the number of dishes and plates which I require at my meals. They themselves use only one large dish between four or five of them to eat from.

“I started with my party from the farmhouse, and