

scene that followed was like the feeding of wild animals in a menagerie. Each man grasped a bone, and with his knife and teeth ripped off huge chunks of meat or fat, and with a mighty sucking and smacking drew them into his mouth. The daintiest portions, the head and liver, were offered to the elders of the feast, who skillfully gouged out an eye and yanked out the tongue. When the edge of appetite had been appeased with two or three pounds of meat and a pound or two of fat, most of the guests took a drink of soup, and then, with idly hanging greasy hands and greedy eyes, watched while the epicure cracked and sucked a bone, and one or two of the more skillful carvers prepared a delicate hash. The fat tail, which is really delicious, a selected portion of the liver, and a good supply of other fat and meat were most cleverly sliced into fine fragments and mixed with soup in the bottom of one of the bowls. When the mixture was ready, each man rolled up a handful and sucked it noisily into his widely distended mouth, or, as a mark of respect and affection, put it into the mouth of his neighbor. The meal was over in an incredibly short time — the last bones were cracked and thrown to the edge of the kubitka; bowls of soup, followed by kumiss, were again passed around; the big top-boots were oiled by cleaning the greasy hands upon them; the beards were stroked; and the main business of life was over. Day after day the diet is the same as at this feast, except that the amount of meat is less and of kumiss more. The mutton is occasionally fried or boiled in its own fat, or roasted on a spit. Sometimes a young colt is killed, and is eaten as the greatest of delicacies. The meat, the one time that I ate it, tasted like a cross between the best grades