

his work for half a day. These chance encounters on the road were often most interesting. One day, as I was crossing the Jukuchak glacier south of Issik Kul, five men appeared on the ice above me, one mounted on an ox, one on a cow, and three on horses, with a loaded camel bringing up the rear. All these five strangers dismounted from their slipping animals and, walking across the treacherous ice, gravely shook hands with me.

Another hospitable Khirghiz habit appears to be a direct result of the nomadic life and the abundance of animals. On entering the main Tian Shan plateau, I found that each day fresh horses were brought for me and my men, and even for our baggage. At first I understood the servants to say that our horses were tired and needed rest, which was true, but when I offered to pay the hire of the supplementary horses, I discovered my mistake. In these regions, it appears, the traveler is theoretically supposed to start from home, and to return thither by the way that he went. The first day he rides his own horse, and at night turns it out to feed with those of his host. In the morning he does not take his own animal, but a fresh one from among those of his host. This he again leaves at night, and so on day after day. On the return journey, he picks up at each place the horse that he left there and returns it to its owner. In practice, the scheme is not so simple. In our case, we were furnished daily with from six to ten horses belonging to various people at the camp where we had spent the night. At the end of the day's march, or occasionally in the middle of the day, we gave up the animals to one or two men who had come with us for the purpose of driving them back. For all this the people