

would take no pay whatever, though it was often offered. So freely does one man make use of another's horses that not infrequently, when we passed a new herd, some one would say, "My horse is bad," and would dash off to catch another with a fish-pole. I do not know how universal the custom is, but during our journey the changing of horses played so important a part that the stock remark was not about the weather, but "How is your 'animal' to-day? Has he a good gait?"

The sports as well as the labors of the Khirghiz result from the physiographic conditions which induce nomadism. Horses and horseback riding are the one idea of these people, and their greatest sport is the "bagai." I saw this interesting game in the Alai valley, close to the border of Bokhara. As we came down the hillside to the smooth plain, a crowd of distant horsemen seemed to be standing motionless, until one darted out, and the whole fifty or sixty dashed after him. Evidently they were chasing a leader in some game, and the leader kept changing. Drawing nearer, we saw that two galloping horsemen had detached themselves from the crowd and, as they rode toward us, were struggling for a large black object bigger than a sheep. Suddenly one of them threw his leg over this, gave it a jerk which nearly dismounted his rival, wheeled his horse to the left, and, dashing up to me, threw the thing at my horse's feet. It was a black calf, headless and footless, and partly skinned. At once three or four men who galloped up behind the leader leaned from their moving horses and attempted to pick it up. Two grasped it, twenty or thirty others surrounded them, and all struggled to seize the calf and carry it off. In