

fairly graceful leaps from one end of the improvised dancing floor to the other, reminiscent of the leaps of European ballet dancers. From time to time the dance was interrupted by a spectator, with an expression of admiration and desire in his eyes, who treated the »badja» to a cup of tea; this he proffered with one hand in a humbly bowing posture, embracing the badja's waist with the other arm, while the latter sipped the drink holding the cup in one hand, and stroking the attentive cavalier's neck and shoulder with the other. These exhibitions of courtesy always evoked cries of delight from the crowd. The monotonous sounds of the musicians were interrupted now and then by snatches of song, sung in a hoarse voice and also in a very monotonous tone. At times the badja varied his performance by singing a song. The most enthusiastic admirers ranged themselves behind the musicians, frequently signifying their pleasure by loud yells and waving their arms aloft. There was general delight and the badjas seemed used to being admired. — Some tables were set out not far from the dance with tea-urns, bowls and bread, but the wild yells of the enthusiasts seemed to indicate that less innocent refreshment had been consumed earlier. — In the evening I left by train for Chernyaevo and Andijan, whence we were to start our journey on horseback.

*July 29th.* Andijan, the eastern terminus of the railway, is a small town of which I was unable to see more than one street, as I was busy collecting my luggage, hiring arbahs to cart it, securing means of conveyance etc. A filthy stage-coach conveys travellers from Andijan to Osh, a town 27 miles distant. The road, if it can be called so, seeing that nothing but bridges are ever repaired, is quite practicable, but insufferably dusty. The post-horses are bad, and the postilions almost worse. The monotony of the journey is relieved by the beautiful shapes and colours of the mountains far to the south-east which enliven the landscape. The horses are changed half-way at a post-house, where a steaming samovar proves that the owner is a Russian.

In Andijan I made the acquaintance of a wealthy Sart merchant, Said Chani. He put up at the same hotel as I and according to the hospitable custom of the Sarts he invited me to share a large dish of pälaw (pola), a concoction of rice and mutton chopped into small pieces. The same dish is eaten in Russia under the name of »pilaff» or »ploff», but it is cooked there with butter, while here mutton fat is used instead. In his manners my host was very like an Armenian, just as talkative, good-natured and outwardly sincere. He was exceedingly obliging and he really did me many a good turn. He telegraphed to the manager of his slaughterhouse in Osh and instructed him to meet me on the road and look after me. And sure enough, some 7 miles from Osh I found a swarthy, short Sart leading his horse by the bridle. He introduced himself as Said Chani's representative, invited me to stay in his house and accompanied me on his excellent little piebald steed. Darkness was setting in and objects could only be made out indistinctly. The silhouette of his fiery horse, his white turban, and light khalat with its pattern of big flowers, as he sat upright and immovable in his saddle seemed, in the dusk, strangely exciting. We made our way along narrow, dark and dusty lanes and stopped outside a narrow doorway in the mud wall that we had skirted almost uninterruptedly from the edge of the town. Ser-