



*Horse market at Uz Kent
with ruins of an old fortress
in the background.*

by mud walls I set up my bed and small tent and got busy with my equipment. The first thing was to sort and pack all the equipment in cases that could be loaded in pairs on the pack-horses. The organising of this packing requires both care and time. Lists of everything have to be made, weights have to be checked and adjusted and so on. The great problem as to whether I should buy or hire horses for the journey, was settled by my deciding to go to a horse market in Uz Kent, 30 miles NE of Osh, with my host of yesterday. The journey was interesting, for it enabled me to see another side of Ferghana and a little more of the life of the people. The road is hilly, one rise after another, and no sooner do you come to the top and think that this must be the last of the hills than you see another and steeper one. Except in the immediate vicinity of Osh, tilled fields are rare. Here and there you see a strip of field high up on a steep slope.

We stopped for a time in a little village of 3 or 4 houses about 10 miles from Osh, one belonging to a Russian and the rest to German settlers from the Volga district, and refreshed ourselves in the scorching heat with milk and sour cream. The Germans had come here with a capital of 5—7,000 roubles each, but the Russians almost barefoot. The difference in their degree of prosperity was striking. — Late at night we reached a very big village, or rather two, a Russian and a Sart village lying side by side, though having nothing in common. We put up in the house of the headman of the Sart village in what appeared to be a very clean room, one of the walls consisting of plaited branches, admitting a slight cooling draught. Our rest after the traditional dastarkhan, however, was none too pleasant, for we were literally eaten alive by insects under the old man's beautiful silken rugs.

Next morning we made an early start. The Russian village looks more prosperous, the houses being surrounded by leafy gardens and standing at some distance from each other. Here and there you see an iron roof or a larger building set aside for a school or hospital. After climbing the well-nigh perpendicular right bank of the river we reached Uz Kent, a small town celebrated for the biggest horse markets in the district. The town is beautifully situated with an extensive view from the high bank, an interesting prehistoric ruin,