



Ruin of a minaret of an old mosque at Uz Kent.

a couple of ancient mosques beautifully ornamented round the entrance, and a small ruined fortress (of the period of the Khans in Kokand?) commanding the road from the river. The horse market is well frequented. Horses, buyers and sellers swarm everywhere. It is all concentrated on the slope of a hill no more than 30 yards wide and 100—150 yards long, where you risk your life at every step. Buying horses here is no easy matter. I purchased 6 horses for a total sum of 357 1/2 roubles, two riding horses for myself and Tja, my Chinese interpreter, and four pack-horses. After completing my purchases and consuming a pälaw at the house of one of the local aksakals, we started on our return journey in the afternoon.

At 7 a.m. the caravan was to have been loaded and we were to start on horseback. The «caravanbash» (the chief of the caravan, i.e., its responsible leader), a kind of middleman between the Sart who hires out horses and the merchant or traveller who requires them, was late and it was 1 p.m. before the caravan finally started. For 12 roubles per horse and 20 copecks to the caravanbash I had arranged for my equipment to be transported to Kashgar within 18 days. The number of horses had to be increased owing to the corn to be carried for them. For my 6 horses I needed another 6 to carry corn. I was not prepared to believe that a pack-horse here could carry a load of 115 lbs, but was surprised to discover that the statement was true. The pack-saddles are curious. They look like a padded hive divided in two lengthwise, with a couple of long cushions inside, filled with straw. The

*August
11th.*