



*Covered arbah at Osh on
the river bank.*

to our heath-blossom appear in the valley. Here and there a high stalk springs up, covered with lovely white flowers reminiscent of our hollyhocks. Fewer and fewer fields, one strip here and another far off, often high up near the tops of the hills.

Soon after starting we rode through a village, further on there were no dwellings except one or two Kirghiz yurts down by the river bank or up on the slope of a hill. Now and then we met a wandering Kirghiz family with its yurt, horses and cattle. Usually a woman rides in front leading by the bridle the animal laden with the dismantled yurt, and on the saddle in front of her is a cradle, draped in coloured curtains, in which the youngest hope of the family slumbers. Behind the beasts of burden rides the master, guarding the lot. The other members of the family ride here and there among the cattle that are free to roam at will. The women are clad in beautiful coloured cloth, chiefly red and yellow, high boots and leather goloshes and a white cloth wound in several folds round their heads and necks. The younger women cover their faces, when they meet a stranger. Bindings of coarse white cloth with coloured insertion force them to hold their feet very far forward so that often they sit their horses in an elegant English fashion. The men are dressed in grey, black or dark blue khalats. The yurt is often loaded on the back of an unharnessed bullock. Such a nomadic family certainly presents a very picturesque appearance. We reached Lyangar, a Russian village of three farms, at noon. The cook, who had been sent on ahead to our camping place for the night in order to prepare dinner in good time, had by mistake cooked it here, only 8 miles from our last camp. The road divides here and the caravan preferred the easterly road, which is worse but 7 miles shorter, to the one leading through the Chigirchiq Pass into the Gulcha valley. While I was enjoying my dinner, prepared with the excellent sour cream of the Russian settlers, a Cossack ensign arrived with a couple of Cossacks from Gulcha. From him I learned that Hassan Beg's yurts had been put up at the foot of the Chigirchiq Pass. As I was anxious to return his visit and wanted to see a wealthy Kirghiz camp, I decided to cover the 18 miles separ-