



*Mosque and graves in the vicinity of Kashgar.*

about the country with a horse or an ass laden with goods to the value of a couple of hundred roubles at most and visit the most inaccessible places inhabited by the nomads. Contenting themselves with incredibly little, they develop admirable endurance and energy. Hindus and Chinese go in for usury. They have numerous pawnshops. Anything can be pawned there for a commission of a mere 20 % a week. Their well-filled warehouses show that the supply of clients is not drying up.

The living conditions of the Sarts are extremely simple. The architecture here is, if possible, inferior to that in Russian Turkestan. A house like a cupboard is built of unbaked bricks of clay with a mud floor and a flat mud roof covered externally with a little clay mixed with straw. A severe thunderstorm, fortunately a rare occurrence, or a slight earthquake is sufficient to demolish this unstable dwelling entirely. Inside it is usually still less inviting. A couple of rugs spread on the floor constitute the common bed of the household. The fireplace is merely a hole in the wall with a chimney above it. To keep the hut warm on winter nights a metal pot of glowing coals is placed beneath a kind of wooden stool covered by a padded blanket round which everyone lies, trying to cover himself with a corner of the blanket. A hole in the roof above the door lets in a little daylight and helps to get rid of the smoke that wells up constantly from the fire. A tall copper teapot on a stand, a few clay pots and pans, a lamp of burnt clay, a spade rather like a hoe, and tools and instruments for dressing cotton are about all the household utensils a Sart possesses. The wealthier rural population is better provided with household goods, wearing apparel and cattle. Besides, the town merchants, especially the richer ones, have a quantity of clothes, the women's clothes often being quite valuable, stored in chests and trunks, a couple of cane-bottom chairs, a lamp, a book or two, a few boxes of caramels and other sweets and possibly a bottle or two of spirits. The houses are built more carefully, the window frames are European and on the inside of the walls there are a number of niches, often decorated,