



*A group of Sart women
in full dress on their way to
a festival in the village of
Kurabat between Yangi
Hissar and Yarkand.*

the road. Nothing but sand and some gravel as far as the eye can see. The country is flat with slight ridges or mounds of sand here and there. Reed-like grass appears about 7 miles from our point of departure. There are one or two stunted trees about. Six miles further on we came to an oasis, Kelpin, with miserable sandy fields and only a few houses and a mile or two further on to a similar oasis and the village of Topluk. Again an endless sea of sand almost entirely barren, only a blade of the reed-like grass of a creeping bush here and there. The country here is dotted with an infinite number of sand-heaps, highly reminiscent of the Mohammedans' wonderfully dismal and hopeless cemeteries. About 8 miles from Kelpin we reached the oasis of Tamir, the first of four oases separated from each other by strips of the same barren sandy desert, 2—3 miles wide. At 4 p.m. we were glad to dismount after the heat and dust of the day. A caravanserai in the village of Qizil a good deal less comfortable than the one at Yangi Hissar, offered us welcome shelter. With all its defects and its motley company it seemed more desirable at that moment than any first-class hotel in Europe.

In spite of its frequent shortage of water Qizil is an oasis of about 500 households. *October 12th.*
The inhabitants complain that they are entirely dependent on the rain in the moun- *Qizil.*
tains. The water you get is bad and gives the tea a peculiar flavour. An attempt had been
made to dig an outlet in the east from a lake in the mountains, but a wall of rock barred
the way and the attempt had to be abandoned. As everywhere else, property is divided
very unevenly. The field area varies between 100 and 20 mou. A mou is sown with 20
tcheraks and yields an average crop of 7 or at best 16. Wheat is grown most, but also
barley, millet, maize and fruit. On a farm of 55 mou the owner had 1 horse, 6 oxen and
4 asses. On another of 100 mou there were only 2 oxen and 2 asses — manure is bought