



A group of Afghan merchants in Yarkand.

Ljo repeatedly to tell me that I should by no means feel embarrassed, but should consider it a perfectly natural thing. These mandarins can really be extraordinarily kind and they often have very good manners.

Today at last I was able to get under way. A couple of days ago my camera got out of order. This accident forces me to make my expedition to Khotan without any chance of taking photographs except by time exposure and is the more disastrous since my spare camera is on its way north in one of the cases I sent there. To add to this trouble, Ljo wants to return to Russian Turkestan from Kashgar in order to go home to Manchuria by rail, and even if I should succeed in knocking these ideas out of his head, it will not be the same as before. A man who has to be persuaded is not the same as one who travels of his own accord. I cannot understand what is wrong with the fellow, but suppose I shall find out later.

*November 20th
Posgam.*

We started this morning, as usual, after much delay and some trouble. The arbah that I had bought prolonged the preparations still more and I did not get off until 9 o'clock. The drive through the town in this vehicle, the axle of which was so long that it almost scraped the walls of the houses, was curious. The driver, walking alongside, had to keep a sharp lookout, and if we met another vehicle, there was often nothing for it but to turn into a yard or a sidestreet. However, once we were on the highroad, we got on splendidly with three horses pulling the arbah. We covered the distance of 8 Chinese paotai to Posgam in about 4 1/2 hours. Unfortunately, it is impossible for me to estimate the distance in versts or kilometres, for the pace of the arbah is uneven and quite incalculable. The road is excellent and the bridges are all in good condition. After driving for about half-an-hour through the streets of the Sart town we came to open fields and could breathe the fresh and unpol-

*November 22nd
Kash Langar.*