



*View of Maral
Bashi from the SE tower.*

and maize, very little cotton. Wheat yields a 12—15 fold crop, maize as much as 100—120 fold. Snow falls up to 3 cm, but usually melts in 2 or 3 days. Rain falls 4 or 5 times in the spring for 2 or 3 days at a time. Burans occur 5 or 6 times a year from the NNE in spring and autumn. (These particulars refer to the village of Shaku).

Barely an hour later we reached the fortress of Maral Bashi. The road leads past it to the Sart town beyond. Although it was a bazaar day, there was no difficulty in making our way along the very long bazaar street. A couple of storytellers with expressive features and lively gestures had collected a few dozen lazy listeners round them. The bakers and sellers of bread brought a little life into the somnolent crowd in the bazaar by offering their wares with loud cries. The shops or stands are very modest with one or two exceptions. The Dolan women go unveiled, though here, too, they try to avoid the polluting glances of the sahib. In addition to a cap many of them wear a handkerchief on their heads like the peasant women in Russia. Both Russian and Indian goods were exhibited, though far more of the former.

Yesterday the mandarin did not send me his card in reply to the one I sent as soon as I arrived. As, however, I require a guide and a couple of horses, which are practically unobtainable without the help of the yamen, I decided to pretend not to notice the omission and to pay him a visit to-day. But Ljo found the door closed and was told that the mandarin had left for Yarkand. This, however, does not appear to be the case. Ljo explains the matter by the near approach of the Chinese New Year. Apparently, Ljo says, the mandarin does not want to deal with any documents during the three days that are left before New Year. I made a tour of the surroundings of the town and came across some Dolans. They seem to be taller than the Sarts, neater and better dressed. The latter circumstance is probably due to better financial conditions. The cheek-bones are fairly prominent, but their faces are far from ugly. Their hands and feet are well shaped, their fingers long and narrow, the second toe is longer than

*February 8th.
Maral Bashi.*