



*The southern
gate of Maral Bashi.*

the big toe. They are in good condition, being sufficiently fed. They seem to be shyer than the Sarts, which is not surprising, seeing that not so long ago they led a semi-nomadic life, using a kind of hut made of branches instead of houses. Apparently the example of some Sarts, who found their way here more recently, first taught them to build proper houses. Now it is only shepherds, who live in the »jilga» (their grazing grounds) in huts. There are fair numbers of cattle. Almost everyone has about ten cows, but the herds of many of the men number hundreds of horses, cows and sheep that graze all the year round in the »jilga».

Maral Bashi is really a small Chinese fortress, built to guard the crossroads to Kashgar and Yarkand. As is often the case, a Sart bazaar street, about a mile long, has grown up near it, round which many merchants' houses, a few sarais etc. have grouped themselves. This Sart part of the town has crept up to the eastern wall of the fortress, partly branching off northward and connected with a village on the Kashgar darya to the immediate north of the town. The esplanade of the fortress, which would otherwise be good, is, in consequence, rather hedged in by the Sart part of the town on the east. The moat is not kept in repair and the walls also look uncared for. The fortress, a square of about 190 fathoms along each side, has gates on the E, S and W, screened by buttresses. The corners consist of round buildings, on which clay turrets are erected. There is no protected area outside the walls. The walls are of brick, about 3 1/2 fathoms high, with a crenellated parapet on top provided with loopholes. Within the wall is the yamen, approximately in the centre of the northern half of the square, surrounded by three mud walls, not intended for defence, that project from the northern wall of the fortress. In the NW corner stand the barracks of an infantry battalion with two mud walls, projecting from the N and W walls of the fortress, also not intended for defensive purposes. A bazaar street with a few houses leads from the eastern gate of the town westward, though it does not extend as far as the western wall. Along it and especially along the south wall there are fairly large uninhabited areas.