



*The tall tower of Minar metchet near the ruined town of Eski Turpan.*

at its foot with water from a well. The dunes grow less and gradually disappear altogether. 5 miles E of the ruin we passed the Avat sarai with a well. Some tilled fields of the Avat oasis which lies a little over a mile further on, come up to this place. Its 40—50 houses lie on one of the 3 branches of the river coming from the gorge in the N.

1 1/3 miles from there we reached Astana with a bazaar containing a couple of dozen shops. Close to it there is a large mazar, where the sultans of Lukchun rest under the vaulted roof of a mosque in vaults ornamented with tall twisted columns. One of the tombs is encased in green glazed bricks, and another, holding the body of Sultan Alpata Khoja, the famous man who conquered Dachianus, destroyed Idygot shahr and finally fell a prey to one of Dachianus' men, groans under the forest of trophies with which it is decorated. A performance by a yelling Sart with a badly trained goat, painted red and decorated with bright flags, almost scared our horses out of their wits. We had the greatest difficulty in getting them past the danger-spot in the narrow street with blows of our whips and coaxing words, to the delight of a large audience of women and children.

On the right of the road, as it leads out of Astana, lies the picturesque ruined town of Idygot shahr, of imposing dimensions. We rode about in various directions for a couple of hours among the ruins that extend for 1—1 1/2 miles. Everything was in an exceedingly bad state, which is not surprising when one knows that during the two years' sojourn and excavations of the Grünwedel expedition it recently suffered fresh destruction. Of the paintings on stucco there is practically nothing left. The size of the walls and some of the buildings, colossal in the case of the walls, is astounding. The town was evidently divided into districts separated by walls, the one in the centre that is pointed out by the local people as the palace of the mysterious Dachianus, dominating the rest of the town.

Resting against the outer wall of the ruined city stands a modest little inn, where like many Europeans before me, I stayed. Such jokes as »Grand Hotel Sabit», »Räuber Höhle», »Cuisine recherchée», »Puces à discretion» etc. decorate the greyish-white walls and are