

the Russian station of Swanka, situated among some low rather bare hills. There were stationed here at the time of our visit about three hundred Cossacks. Some low rough barracks had just been constructed for them, and small cottages for the officers were dotted about. The colonel's house was larger and better built, but all of them were of the rough simple description one would expect to find at a distant frontier outpost.

Here we were most cordially received by the Russian colonel. Russians never err in want of cordiality—to Englishmen especially—and in this remotest part of Asia, thousands of miles from either St. Petersburg or London, we met, uninvited guests as we were, with real warmth of reception. The colonel's house had about it no superfluity of luxury. It had glass windows and a stove—which are luxuries the Russian would not have met with if he had visited my late headquarters in Chitral—but the walls and the floors were quite bare, and the furniture of the very simplest. There was only one room, a part of which was partitioned off into a bedroom and dressing-room, and the whole place was crowded up with military