

ing to another Tajik, I asked if his whole race were liars, and he, with a solemn face, replied that they were; a remarkably truthful statement to come from the lips of a Tajik.

The ascent and descent took us eight hours and a half, and it was a little after four o'clock when we reached Gombaz, or, as the people on the east side name the place, Mazar. There we found a small, dome-shaped structure, consisting of a single room, and beside it was a small enclosure for cattle or sheep. Soon after my arrival I received the disappointing news from Tashkurghan that Ram Singh had not waited for the arrival of Islam, but had set out for Yarkand. About dusk the Ming Bashi (Head of 1,000), attended by several men, came up the valley with fuel, forage, and a tent. The tent we left unused, and I found shelter in the "gombaz," the entrance to which was such that I had to crawl in on all fours, and have my food passed in as if to a wild animal in his den. The night was cold and comfortless, and I urged the Uchi men to return to their homes, but they remained with me, saying that they were used to the cold, and that they meant to escort me to their village in the morning. They coiled themselves up outside the "gombaz" and slept soundly till daylight, when we set out together. Their company was not cheering; my presence put a restraint upon them, and theirs upon me. They disliked walking, which I much preferred to riding in such circumstances, so I asked them to go on ahead and see that things were ready in the village. The march was short and easy, and at its conclusion we found such comforts as could reasonably be looked for. In a field, close to the Ming Bashi's house, two old tents were pitched, one for me and the other for Dass and Abdul Karim, while for the caravan men there was reserved a hot, stuffy room such as they loved to occupy.