

Andizhan had been badly injured by an earthquake a year before our arrival, and the Russian part of the city had hardly begun to recover from the destructive effects of the shock. Many of the inhabitants had left their shattered houses and still were living in box freight cars that were standing in trains on temporary tracks in the streets near the railway station. In the absence of any hotel, we spent the few days of inevitable delay, while outfitting, in the small service car that had been obligingly put at our disposition by the railway superintendent at Tashkent, where we had left the rest of the party in the larger car that had brought us all from Merv. It was during this interval that we visited the ridges of tilted and dissected gravels and silts a few miles south of Andizhan, to which reference has already been made.

One of the most interesting experiences of this part of our journey was the companionship, for the first three days, of Kambar-Ali, the Min-bashi or native chief (fig. 36) of the department of Kugart, through which we had to pass. Colonel Korytof summoned the Min-bashi to Andizhan the day before we left that city, and presented us to him as foreign travelers to whom he should show every attention. The Min-bashi accordingly met us shortly after sunrise on June 27, with his interpreter and several jiggits, or mounted police. Thus escorted, our cavalcade rode forth along shaded roads, through the fields and villages on the fertile and populous plain of Fergana. One of the jiggits, riding ahead, announced the coming of his chief, whereupon all other travelers dismounted and remained standing on the roadside to salute the Min-bashi and his party as we rode by. We lunched at a native restaurant, where tea, rolls, and apricots were served. The first night was spent in the town of Kurgan Tepe, where we were the guests of another native chief, a friend of our host. On June 28 we crossed the Kara-darya, a rushing, turbid river, in high-wheeled carts. The river was at that time about 200 meters wide in a mile-wide, barren flood plain of cobbles, gravel, and silt. The cultivated fields on the north and south were from 3 to 5 meters higher. We then crossed extensive wheat fields, owned by the Min-bashi, and were entertained for the night at our host's house, a spacious but simple residence near the village of Chanket. Here we met

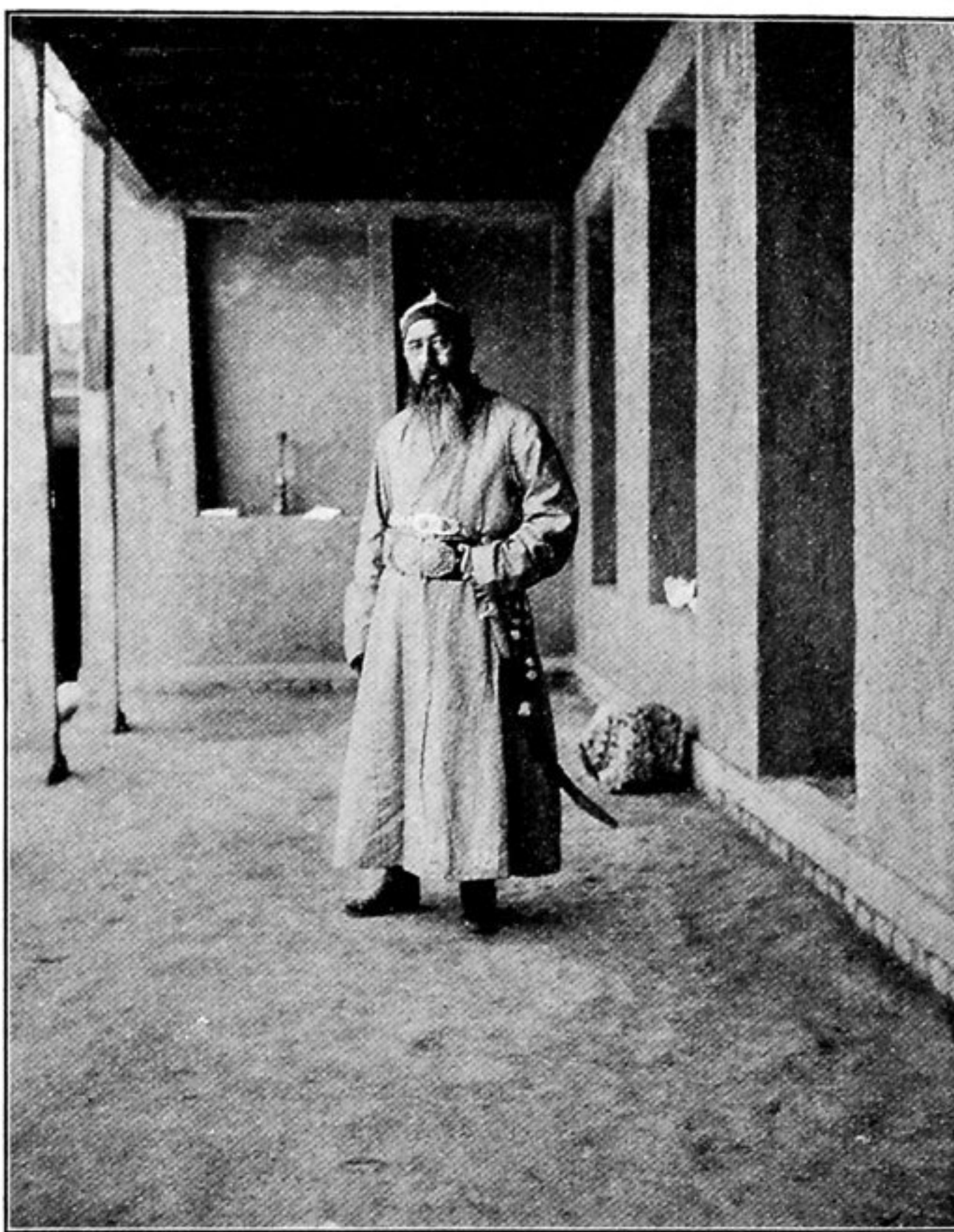


Fig. 36.—Kambar-Ali, the Min-Bashi of Kugart.