

several of his sons, but his wives and daughters remained in retirement in another part of the mansion. Among the objects of interest that were shown to us with justifiable pride was a photograph of chiefs and officers, the Min-bashi among them, who attended the coronation of the present Tsar. Although our conversation was retarded by the necessity of two translations, the courtesy of our host never failed. When we took leave of him, on June 29, at one of his summer houses near the town of Jellabad (fig. 37), it was with regret that we lost so genial a companion. Three of his jiggits went on with us to the limits of his department. For four days we found that couriers had been sent ahead to make announcements of our coming, and to secure us a welcome among the people of the mountains.

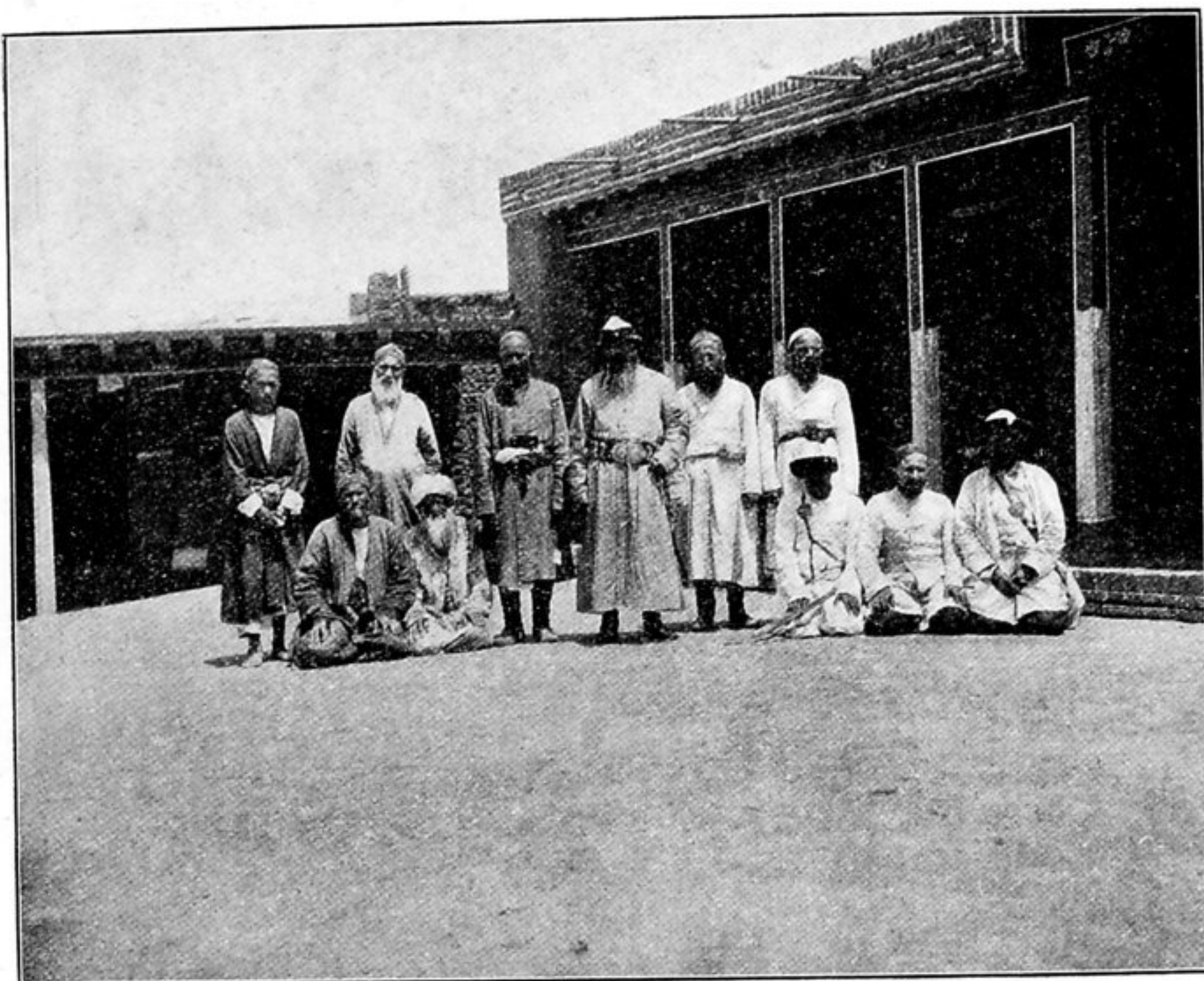


Fig. 37.—The Min-Bashi of Kugart and his Men.

The Kirghiz were always helpful and hospitable. The Russians had described them as untrustworthy, and doubtless they resemble people in other parts of the world in including some who are lazy and evasive with others who are thrifty and truthful. Some of our felts were stolen in a village in the Tuluk Valley, but they were soon recovered. A similar experience has befallen me in a mining town in Montana. The leaders in the villages seemed to be men of energy and ability. They always received us with courteous attention and gave us of their best. In the midsummer season of our visit, the rude, mud-house winter villages in the valleys were almost deserted. We saw many of the houses open and empty; only a few men remained there to look after the irrigation of the wheat and grass fields. The rest of the population, with all their possessions, were found in the high valleys. Around Son Kul in particular, at an altitude over 9,000 feet, we saw great numbers of summer camps. The habit of life was that of seasonal migrants rather than