

CHAPTER XXI.

SOUTH OF ANAMBARUIN-ULA — SÄRTÄNG.

Of this present journey it only remains that I now describe the hurried reconnaissance which I made round the immense mass of the Anambaruin-ula. I call this journey of set purpose a hurried reconnaissance, because want of time did not allow me to make anything more of it. My object was to travel from Anambaruin-gol or Kan-ambal directly north to the Kuruk-tagh and the ruins of Lâu-lan, which I had discovered the year before, these being the real goal of the entire journey. The reason why I now sacrificed more than twenty days to an excursion to Särtäng was that we wished if possible to buy camels, as well as provisions, from the Mongols. Hurried and incomplete though the excursion was, it nevertheless enabled me to secure a general view of the great mountain-knot. Unfortunately I was prevented by the season of the year from attempting minor excursions up to the higher parts of the mountain, so that the information which I am able to give with regard to its structure and relief is consequently very imperfect.

On the 3rd of January we started, then, to ascend the *thalweg* of the Anambaruin-gol. The contribution made by the glen that we saw coming down from the east-north-east (which we examined on our return) is but insignificant, and then only after rain; at this time it was dry. At the point where the Anambaruin-gol debouches upon the great expansion of the valley of Kan-ambal, we perceived, on the right bank of the watercourse, some Mongolian stone walls of the same kind as the quadrilateral walls which we found again lower down beside a spring, that is to say, they were constructed of blocks of stone more or less rounded, and cemented together with clay. The largest quadrilateral was protected on the side next the stream by a double wall, the original wall having apparently collapsed, and a new one, 1½ m. high, had been built inside the old one. In the interior there were distinct traces of a yurt; and the object of the wall seems to have been to protect the tent against the wind. At the south-eastern corner of the inclosure was a round tower, though barely 2 m. in height; it was difficult to make out what purpose it can have served. Thus, in this expansion of the valley, we have in three distinct places come upon traces of permanent dwellings, namely, this one which I have just described and which we subsequently learned bears the name of Sume; secondly