

## CHAPTER IX.

### BY TONG BACK TO KASHGAR.

On September 20th we made a very short march, *viz.* 6.6 km. north and N. N. E., descending 294 m. or to 3,037 m. at the camp in the forest of *Tersek*. The rate of fall was 1:22.4. From *Kandahar Pass* to this camp we thus descended no less than 2,025 m.

It snowed heavily the whole night till 11 o'clock a. m. There seems to be a good deal of precipitation in the autumn on the eastern side of the *Kashgar System*. We had had the same experience the previous year. At *Tersek* the snow used to reach to the knees in winter, at *Kotshkur-Bek-Bai* it was two feet deep. In the summer it often rains and sometimes the river cannot be crossed. Even so soon as the latter half of September all precipitation falls as snow, and influences only indirectly the amount of water in the brook. The spring flood is therefore considerable. There is very little sunshine in winter.

Opposite the camp of *Kotshkur-Bek-Bai* a few Tajik families lived in huts, watching their flocks. A short distance from the camp the valley becomes as narrow as a gorge with gravel and numerous blocks. The brook had about 5 cub. m. of clear water per second and had often to be crossed. The road runs partly some distance up the side of the valley, and partly on the top of the erosion terraces. It goes up and down in zigzags. From the left comes the tributary of *Topeïcherab* leading to *yeilaks*, but without a road. *Tersek* is a narrow valley from the right. Here a luxuriant forest of willows, birches and bushwood begins in the main valley. Here we camped. Some Tajiks who had accompanied us with their yaks, returned from here with fuel. The rock is the ordinary green crystalline schist.

On September 21st we continued N. E. and east down in this valley, the name of which, as of the whole district, is *Tong*. The distance is 20.3 km. to the next camp, *Langar*, where the altitude was 2,420 m., or a fall of 617 m., and a rate of 1:33.

The road is not good; to begin with it is gravelly and has erosion terraces. Wide places with grass and groves are passed occasionally. The rock is the same