



*A corner of the camp at
Kök Bulaq just before
starting.*

from our road and on a level with us, we saw two snow-capped mountain peaks, and to the south-west another, considerably further off. The whole way the river was accompanied by two rows of mountains that relieved each other without forming an uninterrupted chain. The vegetation on the slopes, as during the last few days, presented a great variety of beautiful shades of colour owing to the light and the varying degrees of drought. A couple of wild rosebushes and a little dark-red poppy grew by the wayside. Strange crooked poplars grew at the water's edge down by the river bank. With their gnarled trunks and dense crowns of small leaves they looked like willows at a distance. To-day we saw another tree at the water's edge with oblong pointed leaves reminiscent of the leaves of the willow. We pitched camp about 20 miles from Yangryk on the bank of the river at a spot, where it had cut its way 12 to 15 yards into the terracotta-coloured mud mixed with greenish gravel. The river itself had grown narrow and shallow, but its bed was again very wide. On the other bank there was a so-called »mazar», a tomb built in memory of a holy man whose name is no longer known. Next to our camp there were deep ravines in the wall of mud, cut by the rain. We examined one of them. It was 520 paces in length and wound in two parts in the most amazing bends at a depth of about 30 feet, at times forcing its way under the surface of the ground, but mostly in the open, and was strewn with enormous lumps of eroded earth. The red walls of clay take on the most fantastic shapes and the zigzags described by the ravine remind one of a labyrinth. — Kirghiz are seen on their black yak oxen with bushy tails and legs and necks covered with long hair.

August We made a start from Kurtuk Ata at the usual time, 8 a.m. The road leads
17th. south at first along the gravelly river bed, but soon turns west and then goes on, with
Kök Bulaq. slight deviations, in a SW direction. We left the telegraph line on the right bank of the river and very soon crossed to the left bank, where we followed a road that was much worse than the one we had been travelling, but which is, perhaps, not the highway kept up