

an infantry detachment in the Allai valley and we bought three fresh army loaves of them, a pleasant change from our own stock of bread which is by now as hard as stone. The little white house turned out to be a telegraph office which seemed curious in a place where you ride for several days without seeing a single dwelling. During the day we had ascended 1,500 feet and were now at the foot of the imposing Taldik pass at a height of 2,849 metres at a place named K  k Bulaq (the blue spring). At 7 p.m. the thermometer indicated $+7.5^{\circ}$ R., and when darkness fell, the cold was considerable. During the day the heat of the sun was so great that I rode in shirtsleeves with my coat tied to the saddle. By the courtesy of the Kirghiz authorities 2 kibitkas are always erected at our camping places. I live in my little tent. The horses have sufficient corn, but little hay. Yesterday it was replaced by bad oat-straw and to-day there was nothing for it but to let them graze. The grass here, thank goodness, is fairly abundant and lush. — The salve for galling saddles that I bought on chance in Stockholm has turned out well. The abrasions on two of my horses have been cured in spite of their going on with their work, though admittedly they have my two excellent knitted cushions under the saddles to protect the wounds.

August 18th. During the night the temperature dropped to $+4.6^{\circ}$. Being accustomed to the intense heat in Turkestan, even such a temperature seemed very cold to me. I could not put on sufficient blankets in my tent to keep warm and at 4.30, when I got up, I felt thoroughly chilled until I had had a cold rub down. This was the great day on which we were to climb Taldik. About 6 o'clock we rode through country highly reminiscent of the country we had traversed during the last few days.

The road runs almost due west at first and immediately beyond K  k Bulaq you ride through a pass between two high granite cliffs that compress the Gulcha into a bed not more than 5 yards wide. This place is wonderfully beautiful in its wild grandeur. The road continues along valleys, following the river Gulcha that has become a modest mountain stream making many curious bends. South of the road the mountains are still grander and more imposing than on the north side, where the granite often disappears under the grass-covered clay. In front of us the view was cut off by a mountain covered with clay and gravel and soft in outline. It was only when we reached its foot and saw the road worming its way in endless zigzags up the slope that we began to realise the considerable climb that was before us. According to the barometer the gradient was approximately 600 metres in $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. At the top of the pass we encountered a veritable gale. It was with great difficulty that I was able to make my hypsometer measurements. At the very top a large slab of iron ore records the year in which the road across the Taldik pass was built and the names of the contractors. The high wind forced us to don warm clothing. The descent was much easier, but we pitched our camp, too, at a higher level than the day before. — My barometers did not indicate more than 3,746 metres, but this, of course, was due to my not knowing the exact pressure.

On the other side of the mountain the road makes a bend southward and describes a wide curve, continuing in an easterly direction along the western bank of a small river that takes its curious name »Khatun Art» (the woman's mountain ridge or mountain pass)