



*The valley of the Togra-su
at Khan Jailik.*

some authority are much more unscrupulous in their extortions, especially from the poor and defenceless, than the Chinese officials. People are treated harshly and there is still less consideration for animals. They are fed badly and are made to work as long as there is a spark of life left in them. An acquaintance told me that he had found a Sart with a broken leg on the Terek dawan road. His horse had collapsed, and when he broke his leg, his companions had left him with a couple of loaves to die of starvation or cold. Hundreds of horses and asses are left to die of starvation on this road, when blows and abuse can no longer urge them forward. Yesterday I passed a worn-out donkey that had been abandoned on the road without a morsel of fodder scarcely half-a-mile from the sarai. To-day a man and his wife were bewailing the death of their donkey. In extenuation of the Sart's behaviour it must be admitted that he is himself used to an exceedingly hard life. When you see men, women and children making these long journeys on foot, though they are exhausting even on horseback, exposing themselves to burans, the risk of collapsing and being frozen to death or at any rate getting some part of their bodies frostbitten, you begin to think that those who do not spare themselves are almost justified in not being tender-hearted towards other people and animals. This trying journey is often made with insufficient clothing and far from enough food. A poor Sart buys 40 copecks' worth of maize flour which, roasted in a kettle, he consumes with some tea, and with such minute supplies he starts on the journey. Many perish every year. Taparlik with its narrow, deep gorge and the valley of the Tekes, where there is not a tree or a stone to indicate the way, are particularly dangerous and have buried many exhausted victims in their snowdrifts and storms. There are said to be so many horses' heads in the Taparlik gorge that in the summer they look like stones scattered on the ground. The keeper of the sarai knew of 6 people