



*On the way to Tchaptchal dawan.*

contrary to our expectations, had not fallen — rather the reverse. It took over three hours for the ferry to cross to our side and fully half-an-hour more for us to cross the river. On one occasion the heavily laden ferry was already in midstream, when for some reason it cast loose from some of the horses that were towing it. The rest could not manage the heavy ferry and had also to be let go. We were carried along with shouts and yells at a good pace and I began to think that we should be carried down to the Russian frontier. Luckily, the river makes a bend here. The ferry ran aground and after some hard work, immersed in the water up to their chests, the ferrymen succeeded in getting it afloat again and hauling it to the bank. We gave them a good tip, but they got little from the other passengers for their exertions. After a ride of a quarter of an hour we reached the suburb of Qulja which extends along the road at the foot of the Dzin din sy hills, preceded on the right by the Gulshan bagh garden with its beautiful old trees. In the afternoon sunshine everything looked lovely. The fruit-trees in the gardens were completely drowned in a sea of bright flowers of many colours. In the fields and on the slopes a final struggle was proceeding between the young lush grass and last year's dry stubble. A thick and even brush of verdure could be seen shooting up in the numerous strips of garden. In the smiling landscape, the beauty of which was enhanced by the snowclad mountains in the distance, you scarcely noticed the dirt of the road, through which the horses waded to a depth of 30 or 40 cm.

On my return I was met by an old Chinese, whom I had sent for from Suitin in the