

ernmost single farms of the village of the same name being embedded on the western bank among grass-covered hills. It is a smiling landscape in shades of luscious green, charmingly broken by fir-clad fells with snow-coloured pinnacles far in the background. From here the road leads through a narrow valley southward towards the principal chain. The slopes are not steep, the ground is soft and the road so good that it can be used at any time by wheeled traffic. My new Cossack was unused to these large, high loads. We had constantly to stop and readjust the load of one or other of the horses. We had to ride for about 5 1/2 hours before we reached the foot of the Tash dawan. For about half-a-mile the ascent was steep and particularly stony. We halted for the night a mile to a mile and a half S of the pass. The tents were put up quickly to protect the baggage, as rain had begun to fall. The horses threw themselves greedily on the luscious grass on the slope. Just below it runs a swift little stream. Wood can be obtained slightly higher up. A Kaza Mongolian turned up with a sheep I had ordered across his saddle and we had brought everything else with us.

The rain continued all night and this morning, when we were to start. On the urgent *May 8th.*
advice of my Qarakesh not to attempt the pass on such wet roads, I decided to wait for *Camp at Bugra.*
better weather. At 9 it stopped raining, but as the soup was already boiling, I could not start before it had been eaten. By the time all was ready and we had started, it was 12.30. The slope leading to the Tchaptchal pass began at our camping place. The road is not particularly steep, but often very stony and in places slippery after the rain. At 3.30 p.m. we reached the last of a succession of hills. As the loads got unshifted several times, 2 1/2 to 2 3/4 hours should be allowed for negotiating the pass. The long ascent had tired the horses which were very wet. The barometers indicated 546.3, 546.8, water boiled at 91.1°. At the top of the pass two stone cairns with ribbons etc. indicated the proximity of Kalmuk praying places. The southern slope of the pass is less steep and trying than the northern slope. Here the road could almost be used by wheeled traffic in its present state. After a descent of about an hour the road debouches into the gorge of the Surga su, where it joins the road over Sâ dawan. The Surga su was swollen by the rain and was about a fathom wide to-day with a swift current, but not at all deep. At the spot, where the road branches off from the Surga su and begins to ascend three successive passes, of which Girin dawan is the highest, it was very slippery to-day, which increased the difficulty of the ascent and descent for the pack-horses, but there was no reason for postponing the journey on account of a couple of days' rain.

A couple of caravans and a group of travellers from Kashgar to Ili were encamped before us near the two sooty Kalmuk tents at Bugra. There was not much room on the small slope, but concord makes room on these roads and we soon had a large bivouac in two yurts, a tent and three good fires.

The route to-day was familiar. The ground had now lost its mantle of snow entirely *May 9th.*
and even in the deepest depressions this year's grass is beginning to appear, though in *The lamasery*
contrast to the open plains it still looks whitish-yellow at a distance. Folds and undulations *at Kura.*