

*The Tchapchal pass.*

in the ground were clearer owing to a whole scale of different shades of colour in green and yellow that seemed to form shadows and reflections. The conviction I had formed previously that this stretch of road would not present any great difficulty to heavy wheeled traffic was strengthened during the day's journey. There is room on the steepest slopes, if necessary, to make the road zigzag less sharply, and on a couple of slopes, where the ground is stoniest, it should not present serious obstacles to traffic on wheels.

The rivers Bashqaragai and Taragudja su had become considerably swollen, but are of no great depth. The banks of 3 or 4 of the small rivers that cross the road are marshy, but traversable, and besides it is possible to camp almost anywhere. The grazing is excellent and there is plenty of water, but no fuel as soon as you leave the river and watermills behind you. The sunshine of the morning was succeeded by a piercingly cold wind in the afternoon and light rain, so that we were thoroughly chilled by the time we reached the lamasery at Kura at 4.30. The Khunkhei rivers (2 or 3) near the lamasery were also rapid and noisy after the rain of the last few days.

The superior of the monastery was absent. He had ridden to the Kok-su valley to try to heal his running eye at a hot spring. I was received by three other lamas, who had prepared the same house for me as before. The traditional sheep was provided, rather leaner than last time, and I was left to obtain fodder as best I could. Fortunately, there were a Chinese and a Sart in the village, who supplied passing caravans with the most necessary stores at high prices.

*May 10th.* My photographs of the superior and the oldest lamas achieved great success. They were passed round from hand to hand, producing much merriment among the inhabitants of the monastery, of whom 99 per cent had certainly never seen a photograph before. Thanks to this good impression I got them to allow me to photograph a service. The modest lamas interrupted it and stood still, in full canonicals, while I counted 60, the boys