



*A block of stone with a human face at the outlet
of the river Aghias from the mountains,
on the left slope of the river bank.*

river of the same name, about 14 feet wide, flows along its bottom. The considerably larger Aghias makes a sharp bend here. Our road which runs along it against the stream, took us eastward over the river Hungur bulaq. Numgan's horse stumbled on the stony bottom of the river and the old fellow and his leather breeches which, to judge by their appearance and filth, had certainly served at least three generations, got a ducking in the cold water. He was so stubborn as to remount at the spot where the accident occurred, and succeeded, though he had to stay in the water much longer than if he had taken a few steps to the bank. It must have been the first time he had come into contact with water since last summer at the very least.

A mile or two further on we camped in the bed of the river next to some enclosures made by Kirghiz to protect their herds in the winter. A large image of Buddha, various ornaments and Kalmuk inscriptions are carved on a fairly smooth wall of rock about a dozen yards from the enclosure. Underneath the apparently rather recent carving there are signs of carving of undoubted great age. As they are faint and coincide with the new ones in some places, it is impossible to reproduce them without the new ones. However, by comparing an impression with a photograph, on which only the new signs should be visible, it might be possible to reproduce at any rate some of the old ones. It is conceivable that the Kalmuks were simply trying to restore the old inscription. It is curious that for some dozens of years the gorge has been inhabited solely by Kirghiz-Khazaks.

In the afternoon the water began to flow down from the heights by every little cleft