

anything but easy on the steep slope. My nerves grew more and more strained the further I advanced and the more I saw of the hollow in which they were grazing. But none of the animals came in sight. I was beginning to despair, when my gaze wandered accidentally slightly higher up the slope and I caught sight of the whole flock a couple of hundred yards above me, watching all my curious movements with the closest attention. It was the work of a moment for me to turn towards them and readjust my sights, but the goats had already started up the slope. When they made a brief halt to look round, I fired and had the indescribable pleasure of seeing a fine fellow check his speed after a few bounds, totter and fall into a cleft, where we lost no time in taking charge of him. He was a splendid ten-year-old, whose breast and lungs had been pierced by the bullet. When we got back it turned out that both my shots had hit him. The other had penetrated the jaws into his skull. We had a good deal of trouble in getting the fellow into camp on our two horses. Now, thank goodness, old Numgan cannot put me out of countenance, however many he shoots, for I have shot my first ibex by myself.

*May 25th.* This morning we left the bank of the Khaptkhau-su. While the caravan was loading and moving off to Ketsu-su, where we were to encamp, I rode with Numgan to a gorge *Camp at* for a last outing. Very soon we came across a «kiyik» family of four. Unfortunately, they noticed us at the same moment and though we crept along and made all kinds of détours, we never seemed able to get within range. We were on the point of giving up hope, when they appeared suddenly on the other side of a cleft, on the edge of which we were standing. Keeping an eye on us from time to time, they climbed up the perpendicular side of the mountain at a distance of 3—400 metres. I fired no less than five shots without the slightest result. The graceful animals were a lovely sight, as they leapt from spur to spur in short bounds. When they had got an appreciable distance from us and I had ceased firing like a machine-gun, they stopped with their heads craning forward and seemed to watch our next step with keen interest. After a long and difficult climb we surprised 11 goats grazing in a hollow on the slope at a distance of about 200 metres. This time I studied the situation carefully before firing. My first shot hit a splendid fellow with enormous horns and I saw him tumble down the slope towards the bottom of the gorge, while the others hastily put a greater distance between themselves and us at a gallop. I fired two more shots and wounded another fine beast which, however, disappeared limping with the rest beyond the top of the mountain. Numgan also fired a couple of shots, but without making a hit. While this bombardment was proceeding, a «kiyik» family appeared on a spur of rock about 40—50 metres half behind us, frightened by the shots and ready for whatever might befall. Naturally, they immediately took another direction along the wall of rock. I was so placed on the steep incline that I could not fire in that direction. Numgan fired a couple of shots without making any impression. It may be imagined, how effective these two fleeing groups looked galloping on either side of the wild and apparently bottomless gorge with its perpendicular sides, their small hoofs clattering on the rocks like castanets.

Old Numgan looked more than usually disgusted, and when I attempted to explain that I had killed the largest, he shook his head in doubt. To convince him I told him to look