

water was high. As on all the previous days for some weeks, threatening grey clouds collected round the mountains in the afternoon and spread further and further until heavy squalls accompanied by rain overtook us. It was already past 5 p.m., i.e., an hour, when the water in the Aghias must be fairly high and rising every hour. The akalaktche's assistant, whose yurt was in the vicinity, came to meet me with a group of horsemen. I dismounted and exchanged a few words with the polite Kirghiz, a thin, middle-aged man with fine, expressive features. Anxious not to lose any time, I declined his invitation to spend the night in his yurt. Our tents were dimly seen among the trees on the opposite bank of the river. The foaming river looked threatening. The roaring water was higher than the banks. If you stooped, you could not see the opposite bank. There was no time to be lost. Tchao and I took off our trousers and boots. Some Kirghiz came with us to pilot us across — for the road makes a sharp bend in the very bed of the river. Eight of us rode abreast quite close to each other, keeping our horses' heads against the current. The animals seemed to appreciate the danger and walked warily on the rounded stones. The rushing water came halfway up our saddles. After wading for six minutes we got across without accident. The tents were up and the baggage had been carried over by camels which the Kirghiz had placed at our disposal. Our camping place was delightful in a young wood between the roaring river and a steep piece of ground, 60—70 feet in height. In the S and N the narrow valley was enclosed by large mountains, but we had little opportunity for admiring the scenery, for the storm was upon us and the rain drove us into our tents.

June 1st. To-day I considered that I had done my duty by Nasumbatoff and his burkhuns, and
Camp at the burkhun horse was relegated to the category of pack-horse after removing a bit of white
Tsagan etc. cloth from its mane, the sign of a horse that has been dedicated to the burkhuns and that none but the owner may ride, according to tradition.

The road led us up the ledge of the bank E of the Aghias and down to the bank of the Tekes. For a time it ran along the latter, affording an extensive and fine view of the river with its wooded banks and small islands. Here the Tekes is shut in between a high piece of ground along the southern bank and mountains that are steep in places on the northern. It flows in an arm that seems to widen considerably both in the W and E, once it is released from the vice formed by the heights. The ledge of the S bank recedes slightly, leaving room for a meadow that we crossed, but soon after it runs in the form of a wedge down to the river which it forces to make a sharp bend to the north and presses against the mountain on the opposite bank. We crossed another small meadow and a long projecting spur of the high ledge of the bank. It then recedes considerably, encircling from the S a stretch of meadow land 14—15 miles in length that is called Hossagash. The mountains on the N bank also seem to recede gradually from the river, leaving room for a flat strip of land. To the north the plain is bounded by a belt of deciduous trees, beyond which you hear the roar of the Tekes. To the S of our road many small Kirghiz camps were visible at the foot of the ledge and herds of cattle grazing on the luxuriant meadow. At the end of the meadow we crossed the Mointai su, a swift mountain river of some importance, though considerably smaller than the Aghias. The ledge of the bank E of it is stony and very steep. In an