

the Tekes lies a low strip of land, $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ of a mile wide, on which there is a sparse growth of leaf-trees in the places I saw and on the opposite bank and islands of the Tekes, some of the trunks being of good size. On this part of the road the Kirghiz' yurts are all on this low ground below the ledge of the bank. Their herds find quite good grass there or on the mountain slopes.

After riding for 7 or 8 miles along the Qaradala plain we came to the conclusion that the caravan must have been left behind, so we sought shelter in a yurt, where we were made welcome by some hospitable Kirghiz. We were very tired and after a short, but desperate, fight with vermin, I fell asleep and slept excellently under my raincoat, using my saddle as a pillow.

The stony and hilly roads of the Aghias had told on the horses and to spare them on the comparatively long ride to Dshirgalan I bought five oxen from the Kirghiz to carry the loads. For a considerable part of the monotonous road across the Qaradala plain I had the company of a decent young Chinese commercial traveller, who sells tea to the Kirghiz and Kalmuks. He praised the former in particular and prefers to do business with them. Besides transacting his business he vaccinates the local population at the expense of the Chinese authorities. The serum is bought in Russia. A little later we were joined by a tall, heavy Kirghiz, the Zangi of 100 yurts, and his still fatter brother and two other Kirghiz. During these rides you constantly travel in the company of one or more strange horsemen, who ride silently by your side, if there is no interpreter available. If you stop to look at something or to make some notes, they stop too, hold your bridle, help you to mount and so on, and then you separate again from these helpful strangers, with whom you have not exchanged a word for several hours. The Zangi offered us a cup of tea in the shade of an old tree at the foot of the Qaradala bank. He secured some rugs, tea, boiled milk and millet from an adjacent yurt, the millet being munched dry or soaked in tea.

Between Kok-su and Dshirgalan the Tekes flows in a broad bed, often dividing into two or more arms and sometimes spreading over a considerable space. Both banks, or at any rate the greater part of them, are covered with leaf-trees and bushes. The Qaradala plain makes a steep drop of 20—30 feet to the low ground along the river that I have mentioned. Kirghiz occupy it in the summer. In the S the plain ends in grassy slopes, often steep and running parallel to the river at a distance of a mile or two and gradually leading up to the mighty chain of mountains that bounds the plain in the S. At a distance the north bank seems to be of the same nature on this stretch. The mountains are at some distance from the river and approach it in long, grassy slopes. As it gets nearer to Dshirgalan the valley grows narrower and the river makes a long curve, open to the north, before it finally takes a northern course from Dshirgalan and disappears from view, tightly enclosed among the mountains. There are two fords across the Tekes between Kok-su and Dshirgalan, one close to Qara Tukha, where the river widens into a fen and the other further east. It looks, however, as if the river could be crossed almost anywhere except at high water ($2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 months), when the fords are also impassable.

For about 8 miles from Little Dshirgalan there are tilled fields along the road and ariqs have been made. The land is tilled by Kirghiz and here and there you see clay houses.