



*A Kirghiz bride with
her dowry.*

appeared at once below the foaming waves. The water almost came up to the horses' backs and they were nearly knocked over. We had to give up the idea of crossing with our pack-horses and had to take the worse road. It does not, however, present any difficulties worth mentioning and scarcely any digging would be necessary to make it fit for wheeled traffic.

The hilly ground recedes from the river in a few miles and affords space for a couple of narrow meadows divided by a projecting tongue. We encamped on the second of these meadows on the wooded river bed just below the place, where the road goes in curves up the slope to the Tai-asu and Dagin dawan.

We covered about 27 miles to-day in 11 1/2 hours. We were all so tired that we did not trouble to put up the tents or to boil our soup. A bit of meat roasted on a skewer, a cup of tea, and we rolled ourselves in our blankets and placed the saddles under our heads. Since the hilly ground began on this side of the river there have been no more Kirghiz. We saw their yurts constantly on the opposite bank. A merchant from Qulja keeps his herds here and employs a watchman. A small caravan with goods on the way from Qulja to Yulduz has been encamped here for a couple of days, waiting for fine weather for crossing the Dagin pass. It is a starry and beautiful night which promises fine weather for crossing the mountains to-morrow.

Hassein, whom I had sent with two of our Kirghiz guides to fetch horses and guides from the other side of the river, returned late at night. My red visiting card had overcome all obstacles and in addition to seven horses and four Kirghiz I received a present of two sheep from a couple of Zangis. At our last camp, where things were managed by me personally instead of by the visiting card of an unknown notability, I had some difficulty in obtaining oxen for our loads. Since leaving the Aghias, I have hired oxen or horses for the greater part of our loads in order to spare my own horses which are exhausted by the prolonged labour, especially in the mountains, and the poor food of the last month (grass since Kura).