

to the river. We saw cattle grazing on the marshy ground, but our guide thought it wiser to make a détour with the pack-horses. Some low hills were visible far to the south. Behind them there was marshy ground, beyond which the Ikhe Yulduz flowed. We crossed a few small streams flowing southward to the river from the Kharsala ulu mountains. In about 3 1/2 hours we caught sight, on the right, of the gorge that leads to the Kharnur dawan. This pass is said to be more difficult than the Dagit dawan and is only attempted by horse-men unencumbered by loads. A little further on there is a large mountain, Naryn ulu, the snowclad peak of which seems to dominate the rest. The Ulan usun, 15 feet wide and 0.15 m deep, issues from a cleft E of its foot.

After a ride of six hours we caught sight of a lama camp half-a-dozen miles to the SSW. We altered our course to 20° and crossed the Tchulutu usun, also about 15 feet wide and very shallow. Just before reaching the lamasery we crossed the Buragultin usun, 7 feet wide, the water reaching the horses' pastern-joints. The bottom of all the rivers is firm, covered with small stones and without a trace of marshiness. The plain is firm ground with a foundation of stones, as is evident from the quantity of stones as large as a man's fist round the entrances to the rodents' holes. The grass is indescribably poor and there is not a vestige of trees, bushes or other fuel except dry droppings. We saw very few horses and sheep. The animals were very lean. During this long stretch we only saw about a dozen yurts grouped along the foot of the northern mountains or halfway to the river in the south.

The lamas had been informed of my intended arrival by the Khan's camp and had prepared an absolutely new and excellent yurt. This was all the more welcome on this cold and windy evening, as there was a downpour of rain immediately after my arrival. The lama camp consists of 40—50 yurts set up in a square round an open space. The temple yurts are on the E side and are distinguishable by their tall poles with strips of coloured cloth. There were 250—300 lamas on duty, half being grown-up and the rest novices. I called on the superior. The old man was sitting cross-legged on a rug and merely nodded in response to my greeting. His martial appearance, with heavy moustaches, would have been more appropriate to a medieval adventurer than a minister of God. I tried in vain to get some details from him about the flight of the Torguts from Russia. He had a very vague idea that his people had lived there once upon a time.

*June 19th.* The Yulduz valley is enclosed by large, snow-covered mountains in the N, S and E. *Camp at* In the W the valley is closed by smaller spurs of the chains of mountains in the N and S. *Jambe.* Here the road from Khurda or Kurdai (dawan) and Qaragai Tash dawan debouches and the Ikhe Yulduz has its source under the name of Jambe usun. This opening was our goal, when we started this morning accompanied by a few dozen inquisitive lamas. The plain on the W of the lama camp is of precisely the same character as the land we rode across yesterday, excepting that no marshy places are visible. The ground is firm with a substratum of stones. The grass is as poor, but there are a few yurts. On this side of the monastery lie the yurts of the 1 sumun; there are many sumuns between the Khan's camp and the lamas. The herds of sheep are rather larger than yesterday. The sheep themselves are larger than in the Tekes valley, but long-legged and lean. We saw only a couple of