

and the surface of the rocks is not so slippery as on the slopes of Aghias. I soon surprised Numgan by being the first to sight a flock of grazing goats, but the lie of the ground made it impossible for us to get any closer. I fired at 500 metres at the largest goat. My first shot stopped him and the second bowled him over. We could see him lie down, while the herd soon reached the crest of the mountain with graceful bounds and disappeared beyond it. I waited for a time to give him another shot, if he made any attempt to rise, but when his head also dropped on to the stones, Numgan declared that we had a tiring day before us and that we should pick him up on the way back.

When we returned towards evening, I discovered the goat through my glasses on the same spot, where we had left him. With much effort we climbed down into a deep, steep gorge and started up the other slope. As we drew near, however, the goat gained fresh strength and began to climb slowly away with obvious trouble. His slow pace was faster than the best we could do and the distance increased. Gasping for breath and with a pounding heart I had to shoot from such a steep wall of rock that it was almost impossible to stand without support. My vain efforts to hit him seemed to give him fresh life. When I almost dropped with fatigue, Numgan continued following and missing him. I lay for about an hour and rested at the foot of a fantastic tower and watched the mountains and hollows coming to life. The cackling and piping of the ugars blended with the quacking of the shining yellow geese or ducks. Up in the mountains some herds of kiyiks and goats, unseen hitherto, began to move about. They studied the new arrival from their inaccessible peaks, but all my attempts to get a shot at them proved vain.

It had grown dusk already, when I decided not to wait for Numgan, but return to the tents which were visible high up on the steeply sloping bank of the river Yavur Khargan. The river, greatly swollen towards evening, cast itself with a mighty roar in a sharp curve against the perpendicular side of the mountain. I was too tired to spend a couple of hours in scrambling up and down the steep mountain once more and decided to wade across the river and return to the tents along the opposite bank to a crevice in the ledge of the bank which afforded an opportunity of climbing it. The river roared with savage power, in the middle of the bed the water reached my armpits. Using my rifle as a staff, I simply fought for my life on the slippery boulders of the river bed and bitterly regretted my hesitation in crossing the mountain ridge. However, I succeeded in gaining my tent in the end, though there was not a dry stitch on me.

On returning to camp I had a visit from three Dungans from Qarashahr. For the last three years they had been washing gold with 15 other men in the Kok-su and other adjacent rivers. Their earnings are very small, especially as there is a great deal of water. All the rivers in this district are supposed to contain gold, the Kok-su in particular.

At nightfall Numgan returned with the head of my goat, a fine ibex had dropped from both my shots after a couple of hours' pursuit.

Last night there was a terrible storm with much rain which turned into a heavy snow-storm. Towards morning the men's tent gave way under the weight of the snow. The glass is falling, there are quite 0.3 m of snow and it continues to come down. It is provoking that although we have plenty of meat and other stores, we have to go without dinner. Our