

The river continues its course to the SW, tightly enclosed by two steep mountain walls. *July 3rd.*  
 The road winds from one bank to the other. The ground consists of nothing but stones of all *Camp at*  
 sizes. The meagre grass ceases altogether. The trees continue close to the watercourse. *Khuragin*  
 After two miles the gorge grows wider again. There are rather more trees, but no sign *amyn.*  
 of grass. The gorge goes on, often in a S direction. At times it widens and forms a narrow,  
 stony valley separated from the next open space by a narrow neck. There are traces every-  
 where of the Kalmuks' winter quarters. On the left there are a couple of gorges at a distance  
 of two miles from each other, Tegneten Sala shevyr and Guriäng gol. A mile or two further  
 on there is a third, Umnu Gyrin amna shevyr. The gorge, which had for some miles  
 gone in a decidedly southern direction, now turned SW again and became distinctly wider  
 for a considerable distance. The trees formed groves which interfered with my mapping,  
 but the ground was still as stony as before and the total absence of grass made the position  
 troublesome. This comparatively broad valley is called Uom. In the W it seems at a  
 distance of several miles to be bounded by projecting mountain ranges. Opposite a Kalmuk  
 praying site at the foot of the mountains on the right a large gorge, Balganta gol, opens on  
 the opposite bank. The gorge turns S and again grows narrower. The road creeps along  
 galleries blasted in the mountain along its steep side, often high above the roaring river.  
 A great deal of work has been done in making these galleries. We had to dismount frequently  
 and lead our horses along the slippery rocks, but without this blasting it would have been  
 impossible to advance.

A ride of about 3 1/2 miles in a S direction brought us to a spot, where two bridges had  
 been thrown across the river of the same kind as the Kok-su bridge, but very decayed.  
 The road divides here and runs on both sides of the river. Here we met a representative of  
 the firm of Musabayeff in Qulja on his way to Yulduz with brick tea. This firm does most of  
 the trade with the Torguts and has a turnover of about 30,000 roubles a year. Some  
 heavy flint-locks were laden on one of the pack-horses. The Torguts buy them at 20 lan  
 a piece.

We crossed the river which had become considerably larger, possibly to some extent  
 owing to the rain. At our last camp it was 45 feet wide and 0.45 m deep. Here it was  
 105 feet wide and the water came up to the horses' bellies. The bottom is stony. On the  
 opposite bank the road went on running high up the mountain sides, while ours ran mostly  
 close to the river bed. My tent stands two miles further on in a grove between two gorges,  
 Jumbutin amyn on the right bank and Khuragin amyn on the left. Part of Musabayeff's  
 tea caravan camped next to us. The Qarakesh, a lively Sart from Oschär, generously  
 presented me with 14 hard, small, wheaten loaves. They gave us great pleasure after eating  
 rusks for two months. My poor skeletons of horses wandered about like shadows, unable  
 to find a blade of grass to appease their hunger.

This inhospitable gorge seems to be unending. We covered mile after mile and at every *July 4th.*  
 fresh turn walls of rock rose up and prevented our seeing more than a mile or so before us. *Camp at*  
 Our exhausted and starving horses required more and more spurring to advance over this *Tsagan*  
 stony ground. All their hooves were tender, but my new horses from the Tekes and Yulduz *Tungan.*