

with a slight drop, like the one we followed. The direction of the gorges is ENE or WNW. The mountain slopes, especially in the gorges, are not particularly steep; if I had had time, I should have been tempted to explore some of them and try to secure a wild goat. I had never seen such quantities of »keklik» as there were here. We heard them cackling everywhere and saw their charming silhouettes disappearing among the stones.

The river, about 1 1/2—2 fathoms in width, that had kept us company since yesterday's pass, disappeared suddenly after flowing S for a couple of miles. When I had lost sight of it for some time, my guide told me that it disappeared in the stony ground. The vegetation was still very poor, though slightly better than in the upper half of the gorge. A spiky cactus-like bush occurred and an extremely small quantity of grass — so little and low that it is of no practical importance. The long mountain valley grows narrower at its southern point and forms a kind of neck of a sack. A small river runs out of a gorge on the right and on the left, too, close to our road, a stream murmurs that had risen from some unknown source. Very yellow trees grew along both of them. The comparatively narrow neck of the valley is closed in the S by a long mountain ridge, considerably higher than the surrounding mountains, and with plenty of patches of snow. It appears to take a NE—SW course and is bounded in the N by a broad river bed, Pai-yang-ho or Yoghán Terek, into which our gorge debouches. On the left of our road lies the sarai »San-Shan-Kou» (the gorge of the three mountains) situated on the strip of land that is surrounded by the two river valleys. Some fields are ploughed in San-Shan-Kou. The shortness of the warm season only allows of barley being grown, which yields a 10 fold crop. There is snow from November to April, 0.3 m deep. Burans from the W 3—4 in the summer and 1—2 in the winter.

From San sa go a road goes further east than ours along the »Tör lang Kou» gorge to the Turfan valley. It is used mostly by Sarts. The third gorge is to the ESE and debouches into the Pai-yang-ho valley from the south. Over it you see, at an angle of 268°, a high mountain ridge with patches of snow, called Karlik tagh. It appears to be a part or a continuation of the ridge due S of us which the local people call Qaragai tagh. The road leads across to the opposite bank of the Pai-yang-ho and then SW along the river bed. The mountains on either side are in the form of a succession of hills proceeding from larger mountains in the background and separated by deep gorges that often form more or less large open spaces with an inclination towards the river. The mountains on the right bank seem to retreat and their spurs, which extend to the river, grow lower until they are almost flattened out. The banks descend vertically into the river from a height of about 15 fathoms. The ground consists of a conglomeration of hard sand and medium-sized stones. The mountains are granite and their surfaces are not covered with earth. In the stony bed the river winds from one bank to the other. At the foot of the slopes of the banks there is a belt of deciduous trees. At the spot where the mountains almost disappear on the right bank, we saw a solitary house of the village of Panjatie (8 houses). The road led us down the high bank into the belt of trees, and when we ascended again, the mighty ridge of Qaragai tagh had come up to the river and once more brought a succession of separate low mountains up to the right bank.

Immediately afterwards we reached the Pai-yang-ho sarai at the foot of Qaragai tagh