

The return journey was fixed for to-day, but had to be postponed owing to my feeling ill. *January 1st, 1908.* We spent New Year's Day in teaching the Thumu to shoot, which was all the more necessary as I had presented him with a Berdan rifle and 100 cartridges. He had no idea how to handle a rifle and closed both eyes when he had to fire.

The Yögurs seem to go in very little for shooting. The rifles they buy at Sining are of the usual type with a support in front and a lock with a wick. There is not much game in this district. You see nothing but kekliks and large vultures (their gravediggers) in large numbers. There are said to be hares and wolves, besides bears in the summer, but I heard no mention of tekä or kiyik, and the wild yak only occurs further south. I saw some wolf-traps. These were circular in shape with two strong springs placed opposite each other which made the two segments of the circle close forcibly by means of two running rings. They were placed over a piece of cloth sewn on to a branch bent into a circle of the same size. A peg fastened to the circumference was threaded through a loop in the centre of the circle, which kept the trap open until an animal stepped on to the cloth and made the peg fly out of the loop. I heard nothing of manly sports, and if they do go in for races or games, they were not so frequent or important as among the Kirghiz or Kalmuks. I was told that, when 3 or 4 Yögurs met, they raced each other sometimes, but there were no other games.

I was unable, too, to discover anything about their superstitions. They made out that they attached no importance to dreams. When I shot a vulture, they begged me not to bring it indoors and they carefully removed any scraps of meat near their tents. This was very natural, when you remembered that the vultures devour the bodies of their dead. During the fourth Chinese month they assembled for prayers at some of the praying sites in the mountains, consisting of stone cairns or heaps of poles. I could not obtain any details. At one of the heaps, erected in honour of the cattle god, prayers are offered up if there is disease among the cattle.

The Yögurs can multiply figures in their heads, but in doing complicated sums they use the beads of their rosaries. They do not use the Mongolian method of multiplying with their fingers. Their measures, weights and money are Chinese.

The women kneel in giving birth to a child and the husband is not present. The mother is assisted by other women, one of whom has usually had some experience as a midwife. The umbilical-cord is cut with a pair of scissors or a bit of pottery. The placenta is buried in the ground. In case of a laborious or delayed delivery a lama is called in to say prayers. They have no means of hastening the delivery. The newborn infant is washed daily and rubbed with butter for seven days. The mother keeps her bed for seven days and sleeps by herself for 20 or 30 days. She nurses the child for two years and occasionally for part of the third year. The child is wrapped in a blanket, but no board is used. Twins are rare and there is no superstition connected with their birth. It is said that no deformed children are born. There are no ceremonies on the occasion of the birth of a child. Its hair is cropped, when it is two or three years old, or on the birth of the next child. Sometimes it is cut at once in preparation for a Chinese pigtail, but often the whole head is shaven. The first teeth come when the child is eight months old. It loses its milk-teeth at