

and were still on the skull, so that I had the whole thing complete. The guide said it was as big a one as was to be got.

All the *Ovis argali* horns I saw to-day were different from those which I saw on the Altai Mountains. The latter were thicker at the base (nineteen inches round as against sixteen), and they were more rounded, and not so much twisted. The Mongol says the sheep are the same.

We crossed the range at a height of eight thousand feet. Except the last half-mile the ascent was not steep, but led gradually up a narrow valley. The last mile or two was over soft green turf, and near the summit there was a perfect mass of flowers, chiefly forget-me-nots; and I am sure I shall not forget for a very long time the pleasure it was, seeing all this rich profusion of flowers and grass, in place of those dreary gravel slopes of the Gobi Desert. The sun had now set, and I climbed a neighbouring peak as a last hope of seeing an *Ovis argali*, but there was not a sign of one. There was no great view from the summit, as higher peaks rose all round, and I could only just catch a glimpse of the plain to the south, which was covered with a distant haze.

There were still no trees to be seen, and a curious characteristic of these hills is that there is absolutely no water. For twelve miles from Morgai to the summit of the pass we had not seen a drop of water. From this absence of water the valleys were not deep—not more than five or six hundred feet below the summit of the hills on either side—nor were the hillsides remarkably steep, as in the Himalayas. They are grassy slopes with rocks cropping out at their summits, and here and there on their sides. Five miles on the southern side a small stream appeared, and the valley bottom was partitioned off into fields, round which irrigation ducts had been led; but these were all now deserted, and the water was wasted in flowing over uncultivated fields. Trees now began to appear near the stream, and at 11.10 p.m. we pitched camp on a little grassy