

where the silence of the Valley of Death. The Hurku Hills are the northern definition of the wildest and most sterile part of the Gobi."

After this we crossed some low hills running down from the Hurku range, and arrived on the banks of a little stream, about a foot wide and a few inches deep, with small patches of green grass on its margin, where we halted for three days to buy a couple of new camels. There were several Mongol yurts about, and we had visits from some of the men. They were tall, strong, muscular fellows, but very childish, amused at everything, and very rough in their manners.

Looking on these uncouth, indolent men, it was difficult to imagine that they were the descendants of the wild Tartar hordes, who under Chengiz Khan had conquered China, had penetrated to India, had subdued all Turkestan and Persia, and swept through Russia even to Central Europe. I had now seen Mongols in the far eastern end of Mongolia, where Chengiz Khan first commenced to establish his control over them. I had seen them in those districts round the Great Wall where he led them on his first incursion into China proper, and I now