

end of a mantle-fringe; then, after riding for a short distance across moraines of gravel and stones, we reached the edge of the vast glacier-arm of Kitschik-kumdan, with reddish vertical cliffs on our right rising directly from the left bank of the river. We rode gently upwards, having on our left the glassy, glittering, flashing wall of ice. As the ice melted, the water dripped and ran down the face of the glacier and the thousands of tiny rills gathered into a brook. It was no longer difficult to account for the muddiness of the Schejok stream lower down; for the glacier brooks carry with them glacial clay and mud from the bottom moraines. On sunny days the front of this glacier is exposed to the most active ablation, the consequence being that the surface of the ice is most irregular and broken, a confusion of cones and pyramids, with hollows, pits, and crevices between them. The smaller glacier-arms that we passed were relatively pure, although a banded structure is distinctly visible in them; the larger ones contained all the greater amount of impurities and material brought down from the mountains higher up.

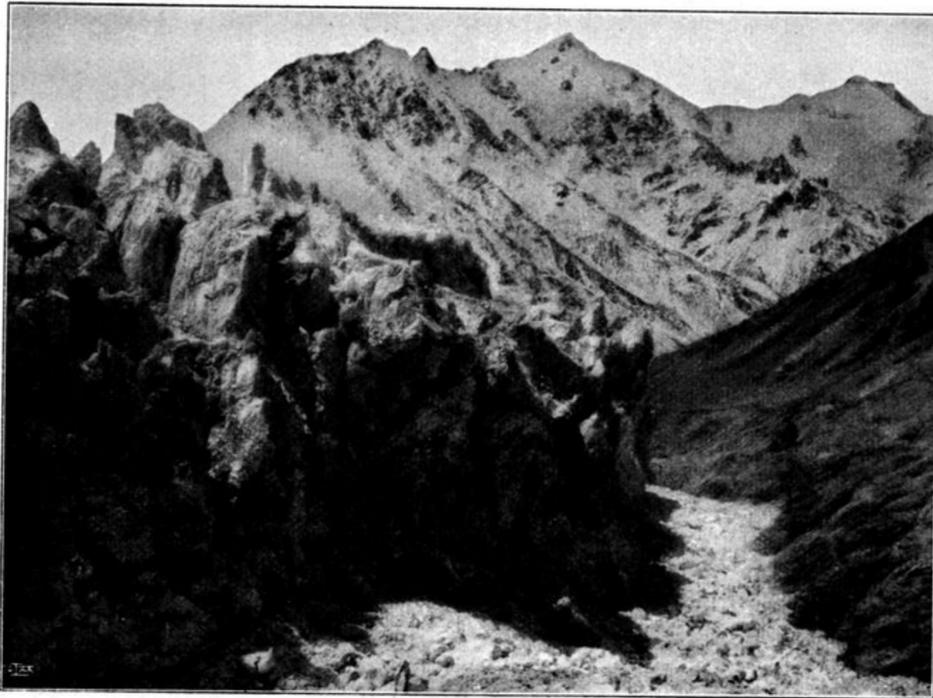


Fig. 333. THE NARROW PASSAGE BETWEEN THE KITSCHIK-KUMDAN AND THE MOUNTAIN SIDE.

We were now approaching the locality which we had been warned against in Schejok, as in some years rendering this route impassable. The most advanced frontal section of the Kitschik-kumdan is pushed right across the glen until it encounters the precipitous rocky wall on the opposite or left side. Hence, in order to get past it, you have to climb partly over small steep rocky heights and partly over a chaos of icy fragments, which have toppled down from the front of the glacier and form a veritable ice moraine, the separate pieces of which have become rounded on the outside through partial thawing. In some places they have cemented themselves together into a single compact mass, in which appear dark, gaping holes. At the time of our visit the true glacier front did not actually touch the opposite rocky wall. In consequence of the radiating heat, the melting of the