

most hamlets of Rōshān were all excellent cragsmen and quite experts in building *rafaks* or ledges of brushwood and stones along otherwise impassable precipices. It was fully five hours before a tolerably safe track had been made higher up and we had crossed the worst of those treacherous scarps (Fig. 375); yet the direct distance was scarcely more than a mile. At last we reached the head of the inlet, lined with half-submerged thickets of birch-trees and juniper. Ascending the valley amidst fine groves of trees for a couple of miles and then crossing what looked like an old terminal moraine, we arrived at a widening stretch where cultivation had been resumed, since the earthquake, by six Rōshānī families. Their smiling fields of barley and oats lay at an elevation of about 11,000 feet and some 500 feet above the level of the lake as it stood then. Yet even here dread was felt of the continued rise of its waters.

Ascent to
Langarpass.

During a day's halt at this pleasant spot our hillmen succeeded in improving the track above the Yerkh inlet sufficiently to bring, somehow or other, their sure-footed ponies across. Accordingly on August 19th we moved up the valley to the south, which contains at its bottom a succession of small lakes formed by glacier action between old moraines. Small hanging glaciers showed at the heads of the side valleys on either side. The route had never been surveyed and had come into use only since that across the Marjanai pass between Sārēz and the Alichur Pāmīr had been blocked by the newly formed lake. As our route led continuously over old moraines and boulder-strewn fans, progress was troublesome. But fortunately on arrival at Ushinch, about 11 miles farther up, where the valley bottom widens in view of an amphitheatre of ice-crowned peaks to the south, we were met by fresh Kirghiz transport kindly sent by the Commandant of Pamirski Post. This opportune help made it possible to push up the valley, which now turned to SE. and widened into a Pāmīr-like expanse. After passing three more small lakes we camped at an elevation of about 14,400 feet.

Crossing to
Shughnān
side.

Next morning, ascending first to SE. and then turning east, we reached after a march of 5 miles the Langar pass, forming an almost level talus-covered saddle at about 15,400 feet. A large hanging glacier to the NW. of the pass sends its drainage partly to the small lake of Emīn-köl, which we had come to before reaching the pass, and partly to the Langar-köl on the other side. The descent into the Langar valley was easy and brought us mostly over gentle grassy slopes to the stone huts known as Langar. There we camped at an elevation of about 12,300 feet, after a total march of 20 miles.

SECTION IV.—BY THE ALICHUR AND GREAT PĀMIR

Route along
Yeshil-köl.

Our route from Langar turned eastwards to the Yeshil-köl and Alichur Pāmīr, and as these as well as the Great Pāmīr to the south have been often visited and described,¹ the account of my rapid passage may be brief. Some points of special interest must, however, be noticed. On ascending from Langar the easy spur which separates the mouth of that valley from the western end of the Yeshil-köl, an excellent view offered over the head of the Ghund valley leading down through Shughnān. Looking across its wide floor and the grass-covered easy slopes which flank it, we were able fully to appreciate the advantages offered by it for direct communication from the Pāmīrs westwards to the Oxus. It is true that the modern Russian cart-road which leads from Pamirski Post down to Shughnān leaves the Alichur Pāmīr above the Yeshil-köl and does not enter the Ghund valley until more than thirty miles below the exit of the Ghund river from the lake. But the route which from the Alichur Pāmīr keeps to the Yeshil-köl and then enters the Ghund

¹ For useful summaries of information concerning the Alichur Pāmīr, cf. e. g. Geiger, *Pamir-Gebiete*, pp. 131 sq.;

Schultz, *Forschungen im Pamir*, pp. 61 sqq.; on the Great Pāmīr, Geiger, *ibid.*, pp. 128 sqq.; Schultz, *ibid.*, pp. 72 sqq.