



*Start from the village of
Yangi Mähällä,
30th March 1907.*

fairly level with a good deal of grass that protrudes from the snow in tufts, but soon the ground becomes very stony and is intersected here and there by crevices with rainwater channels at the bottom. The valley has a very perceptible rise to the north, and the further you go, the deeper the river seems to have cut into the ground. It approaches first one mountain wall, then the other. When it runs at the foot of the western wall, the road becomes quite breakneck, winding along narrow ledges of the well-nigh perpendicular bank or the no less steep mountain wall. You either climb upwards or follow a steep path downwards. The ground consists of gravel plentifully mixed with large stones. Now and then you find a stretch with large blocks of stone, often of very large size and worn into fantastic shapes by the storms. Where the path has been washed away by rain, the road is strengthened by a trelliswork of branches or defective small bridges thrown across the precipices, the transparent green water of the river roaring at the bottom. The horses climb along this path, frequently very slippery from the melting snow, as calmly as if there were not the slightest danger. The mountains consist of a row of summits, divided by rainwater channels, that form, as it were, a connected chain. High up on the mountains you see groves of firs, apparently tall, at times like a dark-green fringe along the projecting edges of the mountain, at others sticking up on the other side like a line of never resting soldiers guarding this grand valley from their inaccessible walls. It is useless to attempt to describe the beauty of this wild scenery, you must see it to be able to imagine the changing views that succeed each other the farther you penetrate into the gorge.

About eight hours' riding brought us to the village of Yangi Mähällä, where we were to spend the night. Seven wretched farms with such low houses that, whenever you stood upright, you almost lifted the rotten roof off the walls. Barley is grown on some poor strips of field and in good years yields up to an 8 fold crop.