



*Reloading the caravan before ascending
the ice stairway.*

dangerous cracks. If the horses are quiet, it is all right, but if they jump, it is dangerous, for they slide and might fall in at any moment and break their legs. Rakhimjanoff's horse fell into one of these clefts, fortunately a narrow one. The six of us had great difficulty in pulling it out. However, by some hard work we managed it and luckily the horse was unhurt. Large numbers of carcasses and skeletons of horses are convincing proof of the difficulty of the road. I counted over 30 during the day and Philip, who had been scared by these grinning horse's skulls at first, got so accustomed to them that he no longer wasted a glance on them. We travelled over this uneven mass of ice for several hours. It was already past 4 o'clock and still the opening in the mountains in the NE seemed hopelessly remote and the walls on either side as high and inaccessible as ever. The ascent went on incessantly. Each new icy eminence seemed higher than the last. When we had already begun to lose hope of getting away from this dangerous ground before dark, we suddenly came to a wide opening in the W mountain. On the opposite side two glaciers held their masses of ice suspended from two clefts in the side of the mountain. In the NE the cleft was visible, whence our glacier, known as Togra mus, took its source; it still seemed desperately far off. To our pleasant surprise the road turned and led into an opening in the mountains on the left. A look at my watch showed me that there were a couple of hours left before darkness fell, sufficient time, in my opinion, for the caravan to cross the glacier. I pushed on somewhat relieved, as for the last hour I had had an un-