

men I had with me had actually been captured by these robbers and afterwards sold into slavery. It was necessary to take every precaution, and as it is their habit to attack at night, and cut the ropes of the tent and let it down on the top of you, if you are unwary enough to use one, we had to live in the open, even on the glaciers, and, however cold it might be, sheltering ourselves behind any friendly rock we could find, and after dark always altering the position we had ostentatiously assumed during daylight, so that if any Kanjutis happened to have been watching us then, we might, under the shelter of the night, stand less risk of them finding us.

Descending from the Chiraghsaldi Pass, we followed down the pebbly bed of a stream. But soon the stream disappeared under the stones, nor could we find grass or bushes for fuel. Darkness came on, and with it a snowstorm; but still we plodded on, as under these circumstances there was no possibility of encamping. Stumbling along over the heavy boulders, we at last came across some bushes, and a little further on the stream appeared again; grass was found on its edges, and we encamped for the night.

On the following day we reached the Yarkand River at Chiraghsaldi camping-ground—the furthest point reached by Hayward on his march down the river nearly twenty years before. The river was at this time of the year fordable, and ran over a level pebbly bed, the width of the valley at the bottom being three or four hundred yards. All along the bottom were patches of jungle, and here and there stretches of grass; but the mountain-sides were quite bare.

Proceeding down the Yarkand River, we reached, the next day, the ruins of half a dozen huts and a smelting furnace, on a plain called Karash-tarim. There were also signs of furrows, as of land formerly cultivated, and it is well known that up to a comparatively recent period, certainly within eighty years ago, this valley of the Yarkand River was inhabited,