

east, that is to our left as we were ascending the glacier, is known as the Old Mustagh Pass, and was in use in former days, till the advance of ice upon it made it so difficult that a new one was sought for, and what is known as the New Mustagh Pass, some ten miles further west along the range, had been discovered. It was over this latter pass that the guides hoped to conduct our party. They said that even ponies had been taken across it by means of ropes and by making rough bridges across the crevasses. No European had crossed either of them, but Colonel Godwin-Austen, in 1862, reached the southern foot of the new pass in the course of his survey of Baltistan. The New Mustagh Pass seemed the most promising of the two, and I therefore decided upon sending two men on the following morning to reconnoitre it and report upon its practicability.

At the first streak of daylight the reconnoiterers set out, and the remainder of us afterwards followed with the ponies along the route which we had explored on the previous day. We took the ponies up the glacier without any serious difficulty, and in the evening halted close up to the head of the glacier. At dusk the two men who had been sent out to reconnoitre the new pass returned, to say that the ice had so accumulated on it that it would be now quite impossible to take ponies over, and that it would be difficult even for men to cross it. The plan which they now suggested was to leave the ponies behind, and cross the range by the Old Mustagh Pass, push on to Askoli, the first village on the south side of the range, and from there send back men with supplies for the ponies and the men with them sufficient to enable the caravan to reach Shahidula, on the usual trade route between Yarkand and Kashmir. This was evidently all we could do. We could not take the ponies any further, and we could not send them back as they were, for we had nearly run out of supplies, and Shahidula, the nearest point at which fresh supplies could be