

was dashing along at a furious rate over huge rocks and boulders, and was quite impassable for the ponies, so we were compelled to halt for the night; and the next morning, selecting a place where the river-bottom was least rugged, we crossed the river on camels, halting a few miles on the other side of the gorge at a pleasant little camping-ground called Karul, at the junction of the Surakwat stream. Here there was plenty of thick green grass and shrubs quite twenty feet high; so we remained the following day also, that the ponies might have a good feed of grass such as they were not likely to see for a long time to come.

Turdi Kol took me a few miles lower down the river and showed me two other equally good camping-grounds, and he says that there is considerably more pasture in the lower part of this valley than in that of the Karakash River, where Shahidula is situated, and that in the old days the valley was populated and cultivated, and merchants went to and fro by the Mustagh Pass to Baltistan. Kanjuti raids, however, put a stop to this, and a story is told of a great raid which took place at this gorge. The Kanjutis lay hid on the cliffs overhanging the river, and as a man called Khoja Mohammed was passing through with his family and a large party, they fired down on them, and afterwards attacked them with the sword, killing all the men, and taking the women and children captive. Since that time this gorge has always been known by the name of Khoja Mohammed.

We now had to leave the valley of the Yarkand River and cross the Aghil Range into the valley of the Oprang River. I took the camels on, one day's march further, to the foot of the Aghil Pass, and then sent them back to Shahidula to bring on the second instalment of supplies, which I had arranged that Turdi Kol should bring to meet me at Chong Jangal, near the junction of the Oprang with the Yarkand River, after the exploration of the Saltoro and Shimshal Passes. The ascent