

at Surakwat I had got him to tell me about how many miles lower down Chong Jangal was, and the general direction in which it lay, and, marking that point approximately on the map, I had worked out my own survey down the Oprang River and calculated that we must be now nearing the meeting-place, so our next few marches were full of interest and excitement, and each turn we took I expected to see some signs of the Yarkand River.

On October 3, then, we continued our march down the Oprang River; but just when it ought to have struck Chong Jangal it turned round and went back again, upsetting all my calculations, and after a very hard and trying day we were still far from Chong Jangal, although at about noon I thought we had really reached there. I saw ahead one valley running in a direction east to west, and another in a northerly direction, and at the junction a patch of good jungle and grass. This exactly answered to Turdi Kol's description of the position of Chong Jangal, and it was a great blow when I found, instead of the Yarkand River flowing down the valley ahead in a westerly direction, it was still this Oprang River which flowed down it in an easterly direction, having deliberately turned round and gone backwards. It was very trying, because it has to be crossed and recrossed so many times, and each crossing becomes more difficult, and even dangerous. Three times that day, in reconnoitring for a ford, my pony was as nearly as possible washed off his legs, and the water came over the seat of the saddle, leaving only the pony's head and the upper part of my body out of the water, while I was expecting every minute to have to swim for it. The water, too, was fearfully cold, for there was not a drop of water in this river that did not come from the glaciers. And to add to our troubles, a nasty wind, with clouds of gritty sand, was blowing down the valley the whole day long. Altogether it was one of the most trying days I have experienced on a journey, though I ought