

be Chong Jangal, but could see no signs of the Yarkand River. After riding a mile or two, however, I crossed a considerable stream running over the pebbly plain. It was much smaller than the Yarkand was when we left it at Surakwat higher up, and, instead of being a muddy colour as it then was, was a clear blue, so I decided that it could not be that river, and that Chong Jangal must be on the other side of the next spur, several miles ahead. I was greatly delighted, therefore, when, on the baggage coming up, the Kirghiz guide said that this really was the Yarkand River after all, though very much diminished since we last saw it, because the melting of the snows had almost ceased, and that the jungle ahead was Chong Jangal. I hurried on then to see if Turdi Kol had arrived, but was disappointed to find no traces of him.

Chong Jangal we found to be an extensive stretch of jungle for these parts, where the mountain-sides are nearly absolutely bare, and only a few patches of brushwood, generally dwarf willows and juniper, are to be found in the valley bottom. This jungle was two miles long and half a mile broad. Some of the willows were from fifteen to twenty feet high, and there was plenty of good grass. There were, too, the remains of houses, and the spot had been inhabited and cultivated at one time, and, now that the raids from Hunza have been put an end to by the Indian Government, there is no reason why it should not be so again.

On October 6, a Kirghiz came riding into camp with a very welcome post, the first I had received for a month since leaving Shahidula. He had followed our tracks all round. By this post I heard from Colonel Nisbet that the Hunza chief, Safder Ali, had been very truculent on Captain Durand's visit, and I was warned to be careful about entering the country; but a subsequent letter said that the chief had apologized for his rudeness, and promised to allow me to go through. With such a man I could not, however, be very sure of my reception,