

very different thing, and henceforward we had it piercingly cold. All the country between Rang-kul and Kara-kul is barren in the extreme. Cold wind used to rush down the valleys, and the night before we crossed the Kizil Jek Pass the thermometer fell to eighteen degrees below zero Fahrenheit—just fifty degrees of frost.

The Kizil Jek was quite an easy pass—merely a steep rise up one valley, over a saddle, and down another. On the northern side we found the country as inhospitable as it had been on the southern, and on the day after crossing the pass we encamped in a barren plain on the shores of the Great Kara-kul. This is a fine lake more than a dozen miles in length, and the day on which we reached it it presented a magnificent spectacle. A terrific wind was blowing, lashing the water into waves till the whole was a mass of foam. Heavy snow-clouds were scudding across the scene, and through them, beyond the tossing lake, could be seen dark rocky masses; and high above all this turmoil below, appeared the majestic Peak Kaufmann, twenty-three thousand feet in height.

I boiled my thermometer very carefully, to ascertain the difference of level between the Rang-kul and this lake, and then we turned off sharp to the eastward, to hurry down to the warmer regions of Kashgar. Winter was fast coming on, and we required little inducement to push rapidly on to the plains. We crossed out of the basin of the Kara-kul by the Kara-art Pass, fifteen thousand eight hundred feet. It is well known that the lake has no exit. No water flows out from it. There is very little indeed that flows into it, and it can well be kept at its present level by evaporation only. But there are evident signs all round the lake that in former times it reached a much higher level than it does at present. On the other hand, the Kara-art Pass may have been lower; for the neck which forms the pass is composed of old moraine and *débris*, which might have accumulated after the lake had fallen. There is a