

Sultan, there seemed to be an archipelago of peaks, with one exception nearly all about the same height. As the day advanced the wind increased in strength, and, in order to get the observations at this exposed place completed as early in the morning as possible, I twice camped at an altitude of 14,930 feet in a small waterless valley, where there was sufficient snow to make tea with and just sufficient level ground for a small tent. Enveloped in huge fur coats, and with the extremities suitably protected from the cold, Dalbir Rai and I mounted a couple of yaks, the theodolite and heliograph being placed on the back of a third yak, and with two Kirghiz to urge forward the animals, we commenced the ascent an hour or so before daybreak. The mountain side was covered with shale and a thick layer of large loose stones of various dimensions, and so steep was it that we found the continual effort to avoid slipping backwards from the saddle exceedingly unpleasant. We therefore dismounted and continued the ascent on foot, considerably aided still by the yak, to whose tails we clung pertinaciously. The Kirghiz could not understand the craze which impelled me to climb mountains in winter (it was about the middle of November), and to remain on their summits for hours at a stretch looking through a telescope, but they did their work faithfully, and shewed fewer signs of resentment than did the yak, which now and then could only be urged on by blows. Unfortunately, though we were early at work, the strong wind was as early, and we found it very difficult to make observations. The observer was now and then blown against the theodolite, and the tail of his fur coat swept against the stand, and the alignment again and again disturbed. The altitude and the wind together made it difficult for Dalbir Rai to hear my shouting of the entries he should make in the angle book, and the work was delayed by the necessity of repeating the entries to