

Kol Su valley proved comparatively easy. It was in this valley that I first became acquainted with the distinctive features of the region. Bold, rugged mountains, absolutely barren and, as a rule, so precipitous as to be within very few degrees of the vertical, towered above us on either side to a considerable height. The winter sun in many places could scarcely reach the bottom of the valley, and, where it did, it was only for a little while. At such spots we turned the animals loose (as at Ilak Wydi) that they might search for food. The grass at Gezuk was short, here it was long and coarse of the sort called kamish, but so dry as to be of little value. The lower portion of the valley was choked up with jungle, and in many places there was ice which had to be roughened or overspread with earth to be rendered passable for the baggage animals. \*From the gorge which forms the mouth of this valley we entered the Raskam valley which, only a few years before, owing to the depredations of the Kanjuts, was forbidden ground to British travellers. I believe that Messrs. Church and Phelps were the only British travellers who had ever passed through the valley, and the fact that this was, in a manner, virgin soil, rendered this portion of my journey the more interesting.

From the opposite bank of the Yarkand or Raskam Daria, as the river is called at Sarok Kamish, there is a well-marked trail leading up to Topa Dawan, and thence by a series of exceedingly steep zigzags into a very narrow and deep valley in which there is plenty of jungle. It was in this direction that I was most anxious to proceed, but the route had to be abandoned, as the men with the hired transport not only denied all knowledge of it, but flatly refused to accompany me in any other direction than that to Bazar Dara. At the east end of Sarok Kamish, the mountains on the left bank of the Yarkand River were so steep as to be quite inaccessible