

its sole purpose was to render me assistance and provide supplies, none of which, however, were forthcoming. Doubtless the Chow-Kuan's intention was to have my movements under observation, but he wished also to make it plain that Sarok Tuz was Chinese, not Tibetan, territory, though the possession of such a place seemed not worth asserting. The man in command showed me a paper on which were two parallel rows of thick zigzag lines, interspersed with dots and dashes, and told me that this was the map of the country. It seemed such a map as a couple of spiders, dipped in ink and then turned loose on the paper, might have drawn.

Considering it possible that an old and disused route from Ladak joined that from Yepal Ungur at Sarok Tuz, I thought it worth while to devote a day to reconnoitre. The valley of the Tuzlok Sai, in its lower part, did not present any serious obstacle to the march of the caravan, but after a few miles it became very narrow. On either hand rose barren mountains, those on the right bank being lofty and precipitous, while those on the left, though not so high, were far too steep to be climbed by animals. After ascending this bleak gorge for about 7 miles, Raju and I managed to climb to a spot about 200 feet above the valley, but we could see only high mountains presenting no foothold even for men, and showing not the slightest trace of vegetation. We were thus compelled to abandon all thoughts of proceeding in that direction.

Next day we ascended the valley which, south of Sarok Tuz, is called Sarok Tuz valley, and north of that point the Tolan Khoja valley. We had not gone far when we came on a plentiful supply of grass, in the midst of which we encamped in order that our animals might enjoy a good feed before starting for the bare country of Kan Sai. For the next two marches the fodder consisted