

shaly clay. In times perhaps not very remote a great lake must have extended from this spot eastwards for many miles, northwards to the Kwen Lun, and south-west to near Iksu and possibly as far as the pass near Togral Monpo. The water, probably by erosion, had found a passage for itself through the Kwen Lun barrier and had gone to swell the Kiria River, until the bed of the lake ran dry.

Abdul had not returned by dusk, but with the help of men sent out with lanterns for their guidance, he and Islam found their way back about nine o'clock. Their report showed that for fully thirty miles there was no vegetation, but there was water, and the ascent was easy. It would be possible to get over the distance at the cost of suffering and loss among the animals, provided fodder were found beyond. The advantage did not seem proportionate to the probable loss of animals, and I resolved to take some other course. I was now quite convinced that there was no feasible caravan route leading towards Central Tibet, so I once more bent my steps towards Yepal Ungur, whence I meant to ascend the valley of the Kiria to its source and re-visit "Fever Camp" near Yeshil Kul.

In traversing this valley in the month of July, one might have expected to find everywhere streams and rivers with a steady flow. But in one long stretch of about twenty-two miles we found only one or two tiny

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old; beyond being very dry and dusty and broken they show no alteration, and the internal structure is perfectly well preserved.

"The intermittent occurrence of layers of blue clay points to repeated changes in level in the salt-lake in which the plants were presumably growing."