

feet, and levelled a space large enough for the erection of the theodolite.

From Shamatagle to the pass of the same name the track was at first troublesome for laden animals, but further on it was comparatively easy, though steep, and the pass itself presented no difficulty. From a small eminence close by we had a wide view all round except towards the Khandar range. We could clearly distinguish peaks which I had fixed from Gombaz, as well as those observed from Zad the previous winter; while at two places, several thousands of feet below, we could see the Yarkand River. The site was a most excellent one, and easy of access; the weather was warm, sunny, and calm, and while Ram Singh in comfort accomplished much valuable topographical work, I was able to take several photographs of the mountains which surrounded me in bleak and barren majesty.

The descent from this "specular mount" was for some hundreds of feet delightfully easy. In our immediate neighbourhood the hills showed a fair covering of vegetation on which some herds of sheep and goats were browsing, and there was nothing to remind me of the warnings which the yak-men had given. Soon, however, the face of the country resumed its sterner aspect. We ascended a gentle rise of 100 or 150 feet to the Tugadir Pass, a low gap in a ridge which branched off from the Khandar range, and, looking down, were startled at the change of scenery. So frightfully steep was the descent to the valley, where, several thousands of feet below, we could see the blue Yarkand River winding between bare precipices, that only a few yards of the track were visible in front of us, and had I not been assured by guides familiar with the place, I should not have believed it possible for a pony, even though unladen, to reach the bottom in safety. The caravan had gone