

## CHAPTER XV

Yul Bash—Guides entrapped—Ascent up glacier—The Mamakul Pass—Trying observations—Exposure—The descent—Zambôk frozen to death—Long march—Travelling in the dark—Misgan—Difficult march—Raskam—Lazy yak-men—Object accomplished—Lengthy *détour*—Precipitous ascent to Topa Dawan—Good news—Yul Bash the liar—Accident to yak—Return route—Tents useless—Ram Singh does good work—Natives refuse information—Paying off the yak-men—Issok Bulok Agzi.

WITH two routes open to the west end of Raskam, and with guides in my company evidently well acquainted with both, I seemed to have a fair chance of reaching my goal. Of the routes I knew nothing, and between them I could make no choice, while, as to the guides, I quite understood that truth-speaking was not among their accomplishments. However, though Yul Bash, a man of marked individuality, persistently disclaimed all knowledge of both routes, I put myself with some confidence in his hands, believing that, for reasons of his own, he was understating his qualifications. A company of Kirghiz had set out the day before on the route up the valley, and had crossed the high pass at its head, and this route Yul Bash urged me to follow. I had had experience of this man's falsehood, but knew no other reason why I should not in this matter take his advice; so I prepared to set out in the morning. Round Pilipert the country was free from snow, but up the