

route through the barren outer hills I reached Khotan by the close of July. It was a great satisfaction to find myself once more in that flourishing great oasis which, since my successful first explorations five years before, I had come to look upon as my cherished Central-Asian base. Cheering, too, was the welcome I received from old friends among the local Turki gentry and the Afghan traders there settled as well as from the amiable Chinese magistrate or 'Amban', to use the term by which Mandarins are usually known to the Turki people. His ready help enabled me quickly to set out for the task I had in view within the next four weeks. This was to supplement our survey of 1900 in the high K'un-lun range south of Khotan by ampler topographical details about the great glaciers which feed the headwaters of the Yurung-kash river, one of the two rivers of Khotan.

Pushing up by a route discovered in 1900 across rugged outlying spurs we reached the Nissa valley by the middle of August, and were soon busily engaged in mapping the huge ice-streams which descend towards its head from the main K'un-lun watershed (Fig. 3). The effects of far-advanced disintegration of rocks, due evidently to great extremes of temperatures, were everywhere most striking. The precipitous ridges we had to climb for the sake of survey stations were composed on their crests of nothing but enormous rock fragments heaped up as by the hands of Titans, and quite bare of detritus from about 14,000 feet upwards. Enormous masses of rock debris thrown down from these ridges almost smothered the ice-streams below. Covered by this debris and permeated by black glacier grit, these ice-streams looked for miles like huge dark torrents suddenly petrified in their wild course. Big ice-falls and gaping crevasses showed