On the 25th of April I passed once more into the Kashmir Valley by the gorge of Baramula, now as in ancient days the "Western Gate of the Kingdom." The snow still lay low down the mighty Pir Pantsal range which forms the southern rampart between Kashmir and the outer world. But the great riverine plain which opens out just beyond Baramula was decked in all the gay colours of a Kashmir spring, blue and white irises growing in profusion over village cemeteries and other waste spaces. At Baramula, where my servants, sent ahead with the heavy baggage, awaited me, I took to boats for the remaining journey to Srinagar; for old experience had shown me the convenience and attractions of river communication in Kashmir. The day I spent gliding in my comfortable ' Dunga ' through the limpid water of the great lagoons which fringe the Volur Lake, and along the winding course of the Jhelam, gave delightful repose such as did not again fall to my share for many months. Familiar to me as are *quæ loca fabulosus lambit Hydaspes*, there was plenty to feast my eyes upon. The floating meadows of water-lilies and other aquatic plants which cover the marshes; the vivid foliage of the great Chinar trees which shade all hamlets and Ghats along the river banks; the brilliant snowfields on the Pir Pantsal, and the higher ranges to the north over which my road was soon to lead—these and all the other splendours of Kashmir spring scenery will never lose their charm for me.

During the second night the boat passed the winding reaches in which the river traverses Srinagar, and the next morning found me once more in the Chinar Bagh, my old camping-ground in the Kashmir capital. With the increasing crowd of European visitors from the Indian plains, the shady grove by the side of the "Apple Tree Canal" has long ago ceased to be a place suited for work or even quiet enjoyment. But haunted as it is at all hours of the day by the versatile Kashmir traders and craftsmen who provide for the Sahibs' camping requirements, it was just the place adapted for the