

The march from Khudabad to Misgar which I did on the 26th of June had been described to me as the worst bit of the route, and as an Alpine climb it certainly did not fall short of the estimate I had been led to form of it. The Chaparsun River, which comes down from the glaciers near the Irshad and Chillinji Passes in the north-west, was fortunately low at the early morning hour, and could be forded immediately above Khudabad. A long detour and the use of a rope bridge were thus avoided. But the succession of climbs which followed in the main valley beat all previous experience. Scrambles up precipitous faces of slatey rocks, alternated with still more trying descents to the river-bed; 'Rafiks' and ladders of the type already described were in numerous places the only possible means of getting over the cliffs, often hundreds of feet above the river. The previous five days, however, had accustomed me somewhat to such modes of progress, and it was in comparative freshness that I emerged at last in the less confined portion of the valley above its junction with the gorge of the Khunjerab River. Some miles before Misgar I was met on a desolate little plateau by the levies of that place, a remarkably striking set of men, and conducted to their village.

After the barren wilderness of rocks and glacier streams through which I had passed, the smiling green fields of Misgar were a delight to the eye. They are situated on a broad plateau some 300 feet above the left river-bank, and amply irrigated by channels fed from a stream of crystal-clear water which issues from a gorge to the east. The millet and 'Rishka' were still in young shoots, since the summer comes late at this, the northernmost village of the valley. In the midst of the fields and the scattered homesteads I found an uncultivated spot just large enough for my tent, and enjoyed again the pleasure of camping on a green sward. Close by was the Ziarat of a local saint, Pir Aktash Sahib, a simple enclosure adorned with many little flags which