

waist, we got safely across, and leaving the care of the baggage to the village headmen who had assisted me in the passage, I galloped over the rich meadows towards the foot of the cliffs on which the fort stands.

M. Sher Muhammad awaited me near the comfortable Kirghiz 'Yürt' (felt hut), once belonging to Major F. E. Younghusband, which he had pitched for my accommodation, and which in the meantime had proved useful for my fellow-traveller of the previous days. The news that the Chinese Amban of the Sarikol district raised no objection to my proceeding westwards of Muztagh-Ata was a welcome piece of intelligence. Less so that Mr. Macartney's Dak for Gilgit, with which I had hoped to post my Europe mail, had already started by the route on the left river-bank, and had consequently missed me. Fortunately it is easier to rectify such postal mishaps in Central Asia than in civilised Europe, and after an evening busily spent in writing, a special messenger rode off with my own mail bag, which was to catch up the Dak courier before he had started from his first night's quarters.