

of just three men. Considering that the ramparts of the post are commanded by the rising ground to the West within a hundred yards, the defensive purpose seems to have been less in the mind of those who built it, than the wish to secure a wind-sheltered corner for the garrison. Immediately to the South-West a series of broad, undulating downs leads up to the Kulma Pass, apparently the easiest of all routes which cross the watershed into the valley of the Aksu. A Kirghiz whom I met riding on a heavily-laden pony, some miles below Karasu, had left the Russian outpost on the other side of the pass that very morning.

The meadows round Karasu were carpeted with the few varieties of red and white flowers which had greeted me on the Taghdumbash; else, the scenery looked gloomy enough, for the clouds were hanging still lower than in the morning. The hypsometer gave the elevation as 12,100 feet. Next morning, the 13th of July, the temperature was not as low as I expected, being 46° F. at 6.30 a.m., but the air was full of mist and rain threatened. I left the Sub-Surveyor behind to wait for better weather to continue his work, and marched off by 9 a.m. The ponies seemed to have a presentiment of the bad time before them and gave trouble when their loads were being packed. One of them managed to knock off my traveling bookcase with such impetus that its internal fittings were rudely dislocated. Soon after marching off a violent blast from the pass before us brought icy rain and sleet, and, driving it right into our faces, made progress both slow and disagreeable. As far as I could see the road led between low, bare ridges by the side of a little brook, the head-waters of the Tagharma-su. As, after two hours' marching, we were nearing the summit of the pass, the Ulugh-Rabat ("High Station"), the rain stopped a little, and soon it was noticeable that this bleak upland was not altogether untenanted. The shrill, whistling voices of the Himalayan marmots were heard all round, and more than half a dozen of these brown guardians