

pressed the belief that the head waters of the Yurung-kash were much further to the east than shown on that map, and probably identical with a stream rising on the plateau south of Polu. Captain Deasy, working from the side of Polu in 1898, succeeded in reaching the sources of this stream at an elevation of over 16,000 feet, but was prevented from following it downwards. Thus the true course of the main feeder of the Yurung-kash, together with most of the orography of the surrounding region, still remained to be explored.

The close approach of winter made me anxious to set out for this task with as little delay as possible, while it was necessary to equip properly the men as well as the ponies that were to accompany me, for the cold mountain region to be visited. My camels could be of no use in that direction, and extra ponies were needed for the baggage with which I was to move up, greatly reduced as it was. The animals of the 'Kirakash' or professional caravan men were all away on the Karakorum route, where the autumn months are the busy time for the trade with Ladak. To buy ponies for this comparatively short tour would have been an expensive arrangement. So I felt glad when the Amban, on returning my visit the next day, issued orders to supply me with the transport needed on hire from neighbouring villages.

While Badruddin Khan busied himself with procuring the fur-clothing for my men and the felt covers for the ponies, I managed to pay a visit to the village of Yotkan, the site of the old capital of Khotan and a well-known find-place of antiquities of all sorts. It was an interesting day I spent at that locality, where the accumulated débris layers of the old city, embedded deep below the present level, are being regularly washed for gold, and in the course of these operations yield up also ancient pottery, coins, seals, and similar remains. But I need not here detail the impressions of that first hurried visit; for subsequent investigations were to render me far more familiar with this important site.