

Whether it was through the unaccustomed position or the continual slipping away of the rugs that were to keep off the bitter cold, I got little sleep that night.

At 7 a.m. the temperature was only 21° F., and the little stream close by was frozen solid. An hour's stiff climb brought me up to the Brinjak pass, for which the aneroid showed a height of about 14,000 feet. To ascend the steep ridge previously singled out for survey work was no easy task, as the whole of it proved to be covered with confused masses of boulders and flaked rock, showing the force with which decomposing agencies are at work at this altitude. After a few hundred feet the yaks carrying the instruments could be got no further. The theodolite could not be exposed to the risk of this scramble from rock to rock, but the Taghlik to whom I entrusted the photo-theodolite managed to follow though with great difficulty. The ridge gradually narrowed to a precipitous grat. After an hour and a half's climbing I had reached its highest knoll, where hard frozen snow filled the interstices of the rocks.

To the north-east, but separated from us by a great dip in the ridge, rose a steeple-like peak, the Mudache-tagh, we had already sighted from the Pom-tagh Pass. To climb it would have been a stiff piece of mountaineering, even if time had sufficed. This peak, 17,220 feet high, shut off the view of the second triangulated peak above Buya, upon which we should have had to rely for theodolite work. But otherwise the view was as grand and clear as could be desired. 'Muztagh' showed itself in full majesty, and beyond it to the south-east there now appeared several distant snowy ridges previously invisible that guard the approach to the main Yurung-kash source. How should we have fared between them if the passage above Issik-bulak could have been negotiated? Further to the south the line of the horizon for a distance of close on one hundred miles was crowned by an unbroken succession of snowy peaks and glaciers.