

here during the summer months. The ample scrub growing in the valley enabled these poor people to withstand the rigours of the winter which, at an elevation of about 10,100 feet, must be considerable.

In the course of the evening four Taghliks arrived from Mitaz, the nearest hamlet northwards, in response to the summons sent by my Beg. They assured us that fodder had been sent ahead to an intermediate halting-place. This was welcome news, as our supply from Nissa was running out; but the hoped-for information as to a route across the mountains to the Kara-kash Valley was not to be got out of the distrustful hillmen. Every question about localities was met with a stereotyped 'bilmaidim' ("I do not know"), until even the stolid herdsmen from Nissa laughed at this pretended ignorance. It was evident that the arrival of strangers, such as they had never before beheld or perhaps even heard of, filled these good people with all kinds of apprehensions.

After the hard work of the previous day I was glad that on the 3rd of November my men could start late when the air had warmed up a little in the bright sunshine. For about three miles we descended the Chash Valley, until it turns eastwards to flow through an impassable rock defile towards the Yurung-kash. Our way continued to the north up a narrow side valley flanked by sheer cliffs of conglomerate. At its entrance we watered the ponies: for the glen higher up is absolutely waterless, except for a salt spring unfit for drinking. After another eight miles we arrived at the foot of the Yagan-Dawan, and pitched camp at the highest point where there was still room for a tent in the steep ravine leading up to the pass. Three bags of ice had been brought from Chash to provide us with water.

The night, thanks to the sheltered position, was passed in comparative comfort, and next morning the bright sunshine induced me and Ram Singh to clamber up the pass long before the baggage was ready to start. Some of the Nissa