

water for washing hands and face. A fresh supply had been sent up from Popuna, the next village north on the bank of the Kara-kash. So even my men ceased grumbling at the halt on this inhospitable Dawan, and were cheered by the prospect of our early descent to the plains.

On the morning of the 8th of November we left Ulughat-Dawan under a sky of speckless blue. Notwithstanding the elevation the temperature was a little above freezing-point at 7.30 a.m., an indication of the atmospheric influence of the neighbouring plains. For an hour and a half the path led down steeply over disintegrated slopes of earth and sand which completely covered the rock structure of the mountain. Only when close to the head of a narrow gorge did I see rocks showing strata of mica exposed. Down the bottom of this gorge, scarcely two or three yards broad, a little stream of water wound its way. It was so saline that the ponies would not drink from it. After a mile or two its water was lost in the ground. For fully three hours the route led between high cliffs of conglomerate and slate, until a turn round a projecting screen of rock suddenly brought us out into the open valley of the Kara-kash, just below Popuna. It was pleasant to see a stretch of level ground again and rows of trees in their vivid autumn tints. The valley of the Kara-kash, about half a mile broad, was bounded to the north by a bank of gravel some 200 feet high, sloping like a natural glacis gently away towards the plains. Twice we crossed the Kara-kash, now a stream of beautifully clear greenish water, some forty yards broad and 2 to 3 feet deep, before Langhru was reached three miles below Popuna. The village, though counting only about sixty houses, looked quite a large place to me after my wanderings amidst the solitary mountains. I could let my men enjoy its comforts only for a single night. For I knew that a wind raising the haze would effectually stop further survey work. So I felt anxious soon to reach another high ridge called Kauruk-kuz, which had appeared from the Ulughat-Dawan