

make some impression ; for the Yüz-bashi now remembered having heard the name, though on the score of his youth he maintained he could not be expected to know anything more about it. But his reiterated protestations of ignorance as to any route southwards and of inadequate influence over his refractory crew of herdsmen and exiles left ground for misgivings. However, I felt glad that no objections were raised against my intended visit to the glaciers at the head of the Nissa Valley. It might serve as a convenient respite for the men of Karanghu-tagh to come to a better frame of mind, and in order to familiarize the Yüz-bashi with our work and ways I decided to take him along.

On August 17th a short and unexpectedly pleasant march brought us to the head of the Nissa Valley. Narrow as the valley was for the first four miles or so above our camping-ground, an almost unbroken string of fields extended along its bottom. The river, fed by the numerous glaciers southward, supplies water in plenty, as we could easily judge from the difficulty the repeated crossings caused us. Yet only a small portion of the carefully terraced fields was actually bearing crops of oats ; for owing to the poorness of the soil and probably also from want of sufficient labour, cultivation of individual fields was said to take place only in turns of four or five years.

We had passed the highest of these fields at Püsh-ünga at an elevation of about 10,000 feet and were just emerging from a barren rocky defile above the side valley of Tor, when suddenly there opened out before us a vista of Alpine scenery such as I had never expected to meet in this barren region (Fig. 57). From an amphitheatre of high snowy peaks southwards there stretched down a broad valley basin with green meadows at its bottom and a picturesque succession of high grassy ridges in its centre. As the route ascended these ridges, I soon recognized that they were formed by ancient moraines of huge size which had been left behind by glaciers of earlier periods, far exceeding those still to be found in the valley. Yet even the present glaciers were extensive enough to give to its uppermost part abundant moisture and verdure.

The view of these ice-streams in the panorama obtained