

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE OTRUGHUL GLACIER

EARLY on the morning of August 19th I had our camp moved to the very foot of the previously surmised great glacier filling the true head of the Nissa Valley. I called it the Otrughul Glacier, from the chief grazing-ground lower down. The bottom of the valley leading up to it proved for the last few miles so broad and open that the general course of the glacier could be fixed from a distance by inter-sections of the high snowy peaks flanking it. Its length as thus ascertained proved over twelve miles; but only a small portion of this was actually visible from the valley below, owing to bends caused by the spurs descending to the glacier's edge.

So after indicating a camping-place at the last plot of coarse grass below the terminal moraine, I set out with Musa, whom his Chitrali descent and his youth seemed to mark out for climbing, and a few very unwilling Taghliks to ascend the glacier as far as time and conditions would permit. The Surveyor remained behind to nurse a bad cold and—the stiff joints resulting from the previous day's rock-scrambling. The big glacier snout rising before us showed a crescent-shaped ice wall, over half a mile across and fully 200 feet high, exposed and yet almost dark with fine detritus (see the panorama in Plate II., taken farther up). Over the huge terminal moraines in which the snout was embedded, and which imperceptibly merged with the *débris* masses overlying the flanks of the ice wall, access could have been gained to the crest. But the previous day's experience had shown me how greatly an advance on the glacier itself