

point of observation. It looked strangely low and uniform for the Kun-lun watershed. But only two years later could I realize its significance, when our surveys, carried from across the Tibetan side of the mountains, supplied evidence that, between the head of the Nissa Valley and the main range, there lay another high valley as yet unexplored, which must drain the ice-crowned east slopes of the great triangulated peak.

Farther ascent on the glacier might have helped to give an inkling of this, and progress for a mile ahead was probably easy; but it was getting too late to attempt it. An ominous haze, rolling up the valley from the north, warned me that the dust from the desert would help to shorten the daylight available for the descent. So as soon as the plane-table work and photographing was concluded, by 4 P.M., I gave the order for the return. The four Nissa men greeted it with unusual animation. Before, they lay stretched out on the detritus mud, complaining of headache and other symptoms of mountain sickness,—another proof of the observation, previously made with Kirghiz, how little continued residence in high valleys prepares these hill-men for any exertion at great elevations. The Nissa herdsmen had never moved beyond the grazing-ground at the foot of the glacier, and nothing but the fear of the 'Ulugh Mihman' could have induced them to advance so far. They little suspected how much the thought of moving over ground which no human feet had ever touched added to my enjoyment of this short exploration.

The return to camp was effected without incident. We had taken the precaution of marking our route up the glacier, and could now follow it with full assurance in the reverse direction. The cloudy sky of the afternoon and the gathering haze had checked the melting of the snow on the higher slopes, and thus we found the stream where we had to cross it above camp, though swollen, still safely passable with yaks. A liberal allowance of tea restored the spirits of my companions from Nissa, and from a distance I could hear them boast of their exploits that day when gathered with the other local men round the camp-fire.