

sulky band of hill-men reappeared behind the Yüz-bashi. A self-complacent smile seemed to indicate that the young man was quite satisfied with this display of reasserted authority and had already forgotten the blows he had suffered yesterday. The offenders whose punishment I demanded were still at large; but I lost no time in setting out with a few men to survey the main glacier as far as possible. Of its wall-like end I obtained a good view from the top of an old moraine overlooking the wide boulder-strewn flat where the streams draining the glacier first collect after cascading down the detritus slopes (Fig. 63).

Like a huge dark river of rock débris and mud the glacier stretched towards us, its end wall fully 200 feet high. But as far as the gathering clouds let us see, no ice appeared on the surface. Yet its presence under these enormous masses of detritus was clearly revealed by small greenish lakelets filling depressions and by the streams of greyish water issuing from the sides. Though it was still early in the day, and the main stream draining the glacier on the west side had not yet gathered its full volume, we found some difficulty in crossing it in order to proceed higher up the valley where stretches of moss-covered ground promised easier going. But scarcely had we thus skirted the glacier for about half a mile when the mist rolled up again heavily from below, and after a useless wait we had to descend in steadily drizzling rain. It was evident that our stay in these mountains coincided with the period when the monsoon current succeeds in passing the tail end of its moisture across the high Himalayan ranges southward to this part of the Kun-lun.

It was a miserably wet day, and its discomfort was not much relieved by the arrival of Islam Beg, whom I had summoned from Karanghu-tagh. He brought a mail-bag from Kashgar which had found its way through. The two 'wanted' offenders had been duly secured, and were now produced with a rope round their arms, more as a symbol of their status than as a means to prevent their escape. For hours I was busy in my tiny tent answering the newly arrived mails, and glad to let my thoughts travel from my few feet of dry ground to dear friends far away