

Khushlash-langar, in order to visit next day the smaller valley of Tashwa, which there joins in from the south-east. Our previous survey had made it clear that this valley did not lead up to the main range; but there was the possibility of its offering a lateral approach to the next large valley eastwards, which might have served for the route followed by Johnson from the watershed range. The order to stop at the mouth of the Tashwa Valley had been clearly explained to the yak-men; but when the baggage animals came up, their leaders frantically protested against halting there. They had been starving, they declared, for the last two days, and unless they could get back there and then to their ripening oat-fields they could not hope to stay their hunger.

The allegation was palpably false; but neither reasoning nor the offer to procure food for them from our own store, left at Karanghu-tagh, availed. On they dragged the yaks, threats and blows from our Beg and Darogha failing to stop them. Some of the men became wild with excitement, and swore in their headlong rush that they would rather be killed than spend another day camping with us in the mountains. It was only about two miles farther down that I managed to stop the rush myself by getting ahead of the string of yaks on the narrow track and forcibly detaining the front men. At the first point where the steep slopes overhanging the river would allow of a tent being pitched, I hastened to call a halt. With difficulty we got the men to unload the yaks, and then we had to let them go off in quest of what my own people called the 'Taghliks' fodder'; for they had seen them munching oat sheaves, freshly torn from the fields, without crushing or boiling the grain.

Everything indicated that the hill-men had got quite out of hand and were in a dangerous mood, while my time available for work in the mountains was getting too short for a protracted struggle with such obstruction. My main concern now was to make sure of the transport we needed to reach Pisha, the valley nearest to the north of Karanghu-tagh, where I planned to make a halt of some days and to collect local information independent of what the Karanghu-