

tagh men had vouchsafed—or rather concealed from me. Islam Beg, whom I had sent to the village to represent to the 'Bais' there the risk of serious punishment from the Amban, and to assure the return of the absconded men, arrived back in the morning with some of the latter showing a less truculent mood. But the yaks had been allowed to stray, no doubt purposely, and for hours we waited in vain to see them brought back from the distant hillsides they had ascended. At last I set out on foot with some of the men towards Tashwa. But heavy rain overnight had rendered the Busat stream impassable without yaks, and when, after long hours of waiting, a couple of yaks were brought up, it was too late in the day for a useful reconnaissance of that side valley. I had little doubt that the delay was intentional, and took note of it as an indication that there might be some route that way which was to be kept hidden from us. But neither promises nor threats could elicit from the Taghliks anything but assertions of complete ignorance reiterated with yak-like stolidity.

My surmise was confirmed by the view revealed on the next day's march to Pisha. It was a gloriously clear day, and I was doubly glad for the splendid vistas it gave us, up the Yurung-kash Valley and towards the great spurs which descend to it from the south; for when I had followed this route on my first visit to Karanghu-tagh the dusk of a late autumn day had overtaken us on the brink of the precipitous rock slopes overlooking the Yurung-kash cañon from the north, and we had painfully struggled down those five thousand feet in darkness. Now after more than a week of clouds and mist the sun broke forth in full radiance, giving to the grey and brownish tints of the steeply eroded rock walls which confine the Yurung-kash course a warmth I had never expected.

The gorge was still in gloom when we crossed the river early in the morning by the crazy bridge, made of rudely joined tree-trunks, which spans its rock-passage, only some forty-five feet wide, a few miles below Khushlash-langar and close to the junction with the Kash River (Fig. 65). The mighty volume of glacier water brought down by the