

also mule-trunks 'full of silver,'—and one of his men too, I knew I had reason for relief.

On August 15th we marched up a broad barren valley amidst mountain formations of slate and sandstone, strikingly different from those passed through in the gorges below, and then crossed the watershed by an easy pass some 16,500 feet high to a wonderfully wide and barren plateau. From a steep ridge above the pass which I climbed with Lal Singh, I enjoyed a glorious view both of the towering range behind us and the great wall of snowy mountains which flanks the Yurung-kash River sources. It was a grand panorama, but it was hard to photograph it with an icy gale from the north benumbing one's fingers. It was, no doubt, the continuation of a big Buran which was scouring the desert plains; but the accompanying dust-clouds could not pass over the great mountain wall rising to peaks well over 21,000 feet, and the view kept delightfully clear.

A ten miles' descent over gentle slopes of absolutely barren gravel brought us to a group of small lakelets with fresh water, where we camped, the icy gale pursuing us all the way. All round them the ground bore plain indications of being the dried-up bed of a lake once much larger than the present Seghiz-köl basin to the east. It was curious to observe here the same wind-eroded clay ridges and banks which are so characteristic of the Su-lo Ho's terminal basin; but their height rarely rose above ten feet, the direction of the eroded banks running generally east to west. The elevation was close on 15,000 feet.

Very few of the donkeys had managed to come in that night, and as the minimum temperature fell to twenty degrees below freezing-point, I felt doubly glad when the following morning broke deliciously still and sunny. Fringing the lake shore in patches there was a very coarse sort of grass, yellowish in colour, and appropriately known as 'Sarigh-ot' to the Keriya hunters who alone visit these parts. So when the poor hard-trying donkeys had straggled in during the forenoon, I could enjoy the sight of them peacefully browsing on these hardy tufts, or else lying lazily stretched out in the sun, which at mid-day