

which this ice-stream descends in the innermost angle of the range was clear of clouds only at intervals.

It is impossible to describe here all the features which gave overwhelming grandeur to this panorama, and which no photograph can adequately render. But I may allude to the sharp, needle-like peaks I saw rising in groups to the north-east above the long bare ridges separating us from the Ulugh-köl depression. They formed part of the northern main Kun-lun where it is broken through by the Keriya and Niya rivers; in the gaps between them my gaze wandered down to those parched plains beyond hidden under yellowish haze.

It seemed hard to forsake this immense mountain horizon, and harder still to forgo all endeavour at more detailed exploration of the Yurung-kash sources. But I had now succeeded in tracing the river's course to its very head, and been able to form a true idea of the unfailing stores of ice which supply the Khotan River with its enormous summer flood, and enable it for a few months to carry its waters victoriously right through the thirsty desert. The report received from Ibrahim Beg about the fodder supplies still available at our depot showed that there was not a day to be lost in the start for the Karakash head-waters.

So on September 3rd we set out for Ulugh-köl, and after marching over flat detritus plateaus bearing abundant traces of former glaciation, crossed the stripling Yurung-kash just where its bed turns sharply south (Fig. 328). Then an easy ascent over rubble beds past the snout of the much-torn Gügrüge glacier took us up to a grass-covered saddle, less than 16,000 feet above the sea, where the Yurung-kash drainage was left behind almost before we became aware of it. That evening we found our depot not far from the southern end of the Ulugh-köl, and camped once more on ground typically Tibetan, looking flat and tame after the rugged world of ice and rock we had passed through.