

previously attained by the Kirghiz at an elevation of about 18,000 feet. There the glacier widened to about half a mile, and a solid rock terrace protruding into its side allowed us to get on to the ice. After leaving behind a load of fuel for emergencies, and most of the yaks under the care of a Kirghiz, we now continued the ascent on the glacier. Its surface seemed deeply covered with fresh snow, and as long as this kept firm enough for a few yaks to be driven before us their track saved us the need of roping. But the power of the sun from a speckless sky and through the rarefied air soon made itself intensively felt, and the yaks, unable to push on in the softening snow, had to be abandoned.

Roped together now to guard against crevasses, of the presence of which we were made aware again and again by the leading man sinking in almost to his arm-pits, we toiled on. From a distance the far-reaching snow-covered slope had seemed uniform and relatively gentle. But now when we were painfully struggling up it, distinct shoulders appeared which it took hours to conquer. Each time we fondly hoped that the snow-ridge before us would give us a view of the watershed, and each time our hope proved false. The snow was now so soft that the leading man at each step sank in thigh-deep, and those behind him had to struggle from one snow-hole to another. Our ascent on the Darkot in May 1906 seemed easy by comparison; for the snow had then kept hard all the way up, and we had not to contend with such trouble in breathing as the much higher elevation now caused. But the Kirghiz, very different from their Pamir brethren, stuck to their task manfully, and cheerfully responded to my exhortation to let us reach the crest-line, for which I promised a liberal reward.

I had long realized that a glacier climb like this could not possibly lead to a pass practicable within modern times. But at last a far longer and easier slope, reached after 1 P.M., showed that we were now on névé beds, and probably nearing the watershed. So I resolved to push up to it and secure this chance for the plane-table, though the 'Yangi Dawan' lay elsewhere. Lal Singh seemed to feel the