

from Aosta met us. It had rained more or less during our walk down, and came on in torrents as we drove in to Aosta.

I must add a few words respecting the map which illustrates this paper. In compiling it, I have derived most valuable assistance from information obtained by Mr. Reilly from the French Dépôt de la Guerre. The glaciers at the head of the Val de Tignes are from my own observations, and on the Italian side I have followed the Sardinian map, correcting it as far as I have been able. The portion immediately to the south of the Levanna, at the head of the Val Groscavallo, I have not seen; and as the position of the Levanna, as determined by the French engineers, is considerably to the NE. of that given in the Sardinian map, this part is not at all satisfactory. I have not ventured to give the head of the Val de Viu further south. The line of watershed in the French survey differs so much from that shown in the Sardinian map, and the latter is altogether so vague and unsatisfactory that I could make nothing of it. The heights marked in the map on the Savoy side are given on the authority of the French engineers. Those on the Italian side must be taken as only approximate, being from my own observations, except the Roche Melon, the height of which is stated in the '*Opérations Géodésiques pour la mesure d'un arc du parallèle moyen*,' to be 3,535·7 mètres, or 11,600 ft. The French measurement of this point is 3,548 mètres, or 11,640 ft. In the names of the peaks and glaciers I have generally followed the Sardinian map. The French engineers appear to have rechristened most of them; but in some instances, as in the case of the Albaron itself, certainly not correctly. Nomenclature is apt to be the weak point in most great surveys, to which our own Ordnance survey is no exception; while nothing is more uncertain than the local appellations of masses of rock and ice, in which the inhabitants of the country generally take no interest, and which are as yet rarely or never visited by strangers.

THE TIBETAN ROUTE FROM SIMLA TO SRINÁGAR. Notes of a Himalayan Ramble in the Summer and Autumn of 1859. By J. F. CHEETHAM, F.R.G.S.

‘ ——— antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills, whose heads touch heaven.’

I HAD lingered on at Simla until my acquaintance at the club there, in their idle intervals between whist and waltzing, began to show symptoms of a disposition to make

themselves disagreeably merry over my glowing projects of Himalayan adventure. Not but that I had excuses, weighty enough to any reasonable mind, to plead for inaction. The forced gaieties upon which those giant mountain-forms seemed ever to be looking down in serene and solemn reproof, were scarcely likely to retain long within their dreary influence any true lover of nature. But my horse had fallen upon me at Delhi and sent me up to Simla at the end of April with a fractured collar-bone; and when, later, I began to regain strength and condition for mountain work, my plans received another blow in the sudden cancelling (owing to ugly appearances somewhere down country) of the four months' leave which a friend in the Connaught Rangers, then quartered at Delhi, had agreed to spend with me among the haunts of snow-bear and ibex. But in the meantime the bright fresh Himalayan spring-time had gone its way, and with it all the crimson glory of the rhododendron forest. It was no longer any use climbing Jáko to watch the sun set upon Kága (21,800 ft.), Ratáng (21,400 ft.), Deotíba (20,500 ft.), and the hundred other pinnacles of that wonderful wall of snow which seemed to block up the northern horizon. Heavy cloud-banks had hopelessly settled down about them; and, a more ominous sign still, in the deep *khuds* or ravines thousands of feet down at the foot of the Simla ridge, ghostly flakes of opaque vapour had appeared suddenly and as suddenly disappeared, had shown themselves again and again vanished, but always creeping higher up the forest until at length coming back once and for all, they took permanent possession of Simla, surging in a sea of mist through door and window; and then in a deluge of rain the monsoon broke upon the mountains. This was about the middle of June. At the end of the month a spell of comparatively fine weather set in, the usual eight or ten days interval between the *chota* and the *burra barsaat*—the smaller and the greater rains. Now, if ever, was my opportunity.

On the morning of the 4th July (my servants and coolies with the baggage having got under weigh an hour after midnight) I turned my back upon the sleeping world of Simla and rode gaily out on to the new highway to Tartary. Throwing three stages into one I skirted the splendid forest of the Mahásu ridge, passed without halting the Fágu post-house, and burst into the Théog bungalow upon the pair of friends who, in the course of a fortnight's campaign among the pheasants, were to break me in for my contemplated *grande course* over 500 miles of formidable mountain.

We halted on the 5th at Matíána. On the 6th we took

up our quarters among the clouds in the roomy bungalow on the Narkánda pass, 9,000 ft. above the sea, and about forty miles from Simla, a point famed for the magnificence of the view it commands, over the superb forest of the massive Háttu mountain on the right hand, and on the left across the abyss of the Sutlej valley to the grand snowy range, which as the rain ceased and the clouds broke away, lifted above us its solemn rampart of glistening wall, flushed into loveliness by the evening sun.

Here commenced our shooting operations, which were continued along the flanks of Háttu over fifteen miles of glade and forest to Kandrála, two stages further on the Tibet road. Our game was the pheasant in its Himalayan varieties, *kok-láss*, *cheer*, the black *kaleej*, and the gorgeous blue *monál*. I cannot say we were brilliantly successful. Our handful of beaters seemed lost in those boundless coverts, and we were without dogs, a luxury practicably unattainable in the Himalayas. I confess too that at times, as when for instance deluded by the seductive call of the *chakór* or hill-partridge, we found ourselves under a terrific sun at the bottom of a tremendous *khud*, with a couple of thousand feet of nearly perpendicular ascent between us and our cool quarters in the post-house on the ridge above, it was impossible to avoid emphatic reference to that French proverb about the game and the candle; but a sentiment so unsportsmanlike was instantly repressed with much sternness by the indefatigable Colonel of Rifles in command of our little party. No *khud*, with a possibility of pheasant at top or partridges at bottom, was ever too steep or too deep for him, and after all, what could be more exhilarating than beating up the *monál* in the fresh, dewy mornings on the grassy verges of the pine forest, or more savoury at the end of the hard day's work than the standing *pot-au-feu*, as replenished by the Colonel out of the most incongruous materials!

Of four-footed game we saw little. Once, blazing away excitedly at a thing not much bigger than a hare which jumped up out of a bush at my feet, I found I had killed a musk-deer. Captain R. shot another of these graceful little creatures; and one day when we had followed up some *monál* into thick forest on the mountain side, the Colonel and a big black bear very nearly tumbled over one another in a jungly ravine. We reproached him for not treating the brute to a couple of doses of No. 5 shot, but he replied that it was no laughing matter, and that the mutual recoil which had ensued could not by any possibility have been half as satisfactory to the bear as it was to himself. We had two cases of snake-bite among our beaters

whilst trampling through the luxuriant undergrowth which springs up in these forests after the setting in of the rains. It was evident the reptile was venomous, from the rapid swelling which followed, and the paroxysm of pain and terror into which the poor fellow was thrown. His comrades hastily twisted a tight bandage round the leg above the part affected, and we then taking him in hand, treated him copiously to *eau-de-luce* out of my little medicine chest. After which, having heard that in such cases it was of the utmost importance to keep up a succession of shocks to the system, we ordered, not without a spice of malicious satisfaction, our *bhishtis* to direct a continuous stream of cold water upon him from their pig-skins. A few hours of this energetic treatment produced the happiest effects, and we dismissed our patient, with a liberal *bakshish* in his pocket, a richer and certainly a much cleaner man than in all probability he could ever remember to have been before.

The time at my companions' disposal would not admit of our pushing further into the mountains than Kandrála. The view from this point, the complement of that from Narkánda, must in fine weather rival, if it does not surpass the latter. Due east the snows and black jagged rocks, distant apparently but a very few marches, of the lofty Shatúl, Yúsu, and Burénda passes, were generally visible, but further to the east and south the great ranges lay obstinately hid. Once only was the cloud-curtain lifted, and we were permitted to gaze with something of awe upon the stupendous peaks that guard the sacred sources of the Ganges and Jumna rivers.

At the end of a very pleasant fortnight the time came for my friends to return to Simla. We parted company at Narkánda, where I lingered a day or two waiting the arrival of sundry additions to my stores, that seemed indispensable for the long campaign I was now about to settle down to in sober earnest.

I had pored at Simla for days together over maps and itineraries of the Western Himalayas, trying to solve the problem of a mountain route to Kashmir under the essential conditions of (1) the utmost attainable diversity of scenery and life, and (2) the speediest possible escape from the influence of the monsoon, which, from July to September, would be deluging the Indian flanks of the Himalayas. I selected at last the track which, crossing the Sutlej below Narkánda, would lead me northwards ten days' journey over the hills and dales of Kúlu into the splendid scenery of the first snowy range about the head waters of the Beás. Thence the Rotáng pass would carry me at once into the rainless Tibetan

region of Lahoul, whose wild valleys I should thread for a week to the sources of the Chenáb in the Bára Lácha pass of the great central Himalayan chain. Then would follow seven days of uninhabited wastes of mountain and table-land, out of which I should escape by the lofty Tungalung pass into the valley of the upper Indus, two or three marches above Léh, the chief city of Little Tibet. From Léh I should follow the usual route to Kashmir, first down the Indus valley, and then westwards across a wide tract of barren mountain to the pass of the Tsoji-La at the head of the first Kashmir valley. It would be time enough then to consider by what line I should retreat upon the plains.

On the afternoon of the 23rd July I dropped down through the woods to Komhársen, a picturesque little hamlet on the bare pastures below the forest zone. It was my first night in camp, and I surveyed with much satisfaction my little tent in the centre of the village-green, the grey *ghoont* or hill-pony picketed close by, and my servants busy over the camp fire with preparations for dinner. I may here mention that to the Madrasee, Manuel, cook and valet in one, whom I had brought up with me from Calcutta, I had added at Simla a bright, brisk, Kashmiri Mussulman, Jamál Khán by name, one of the handiest fellows I ever met, and thoroughly in his element among the mountains; also one Borroméo, a venerable Punjábí *bhishti* or water-carrier, the oddest old gentleman possible. His first act was to secrete undetected a large quantity of native tobacco I had laid in to distribute among the hill-men. At this he smoked away incessantly, day and night together. When it was done he took to opium. Unlike Madrasee and Kashmiri, who had been careful before starting to fit themselves out (at their master's expense) with a suit apiece of warm woollen clothes, he clung to his scanty cotton attire of the plains. His grisly hide seemed alike impervious to the extremes of heat and cold; only at all times he was most careful to keep head and chin swathed up in a dirty cotton handkerchief. I long pitied the infirmities that, as I supposed, necessitated this ghastly bandage, until one morning I surprised the old impostor with a bit of broken looking-glass in one hand, whilst the other was engaged in stroking and twisting a tuft of grisly whisker up to the corner of his eye. He looked very foolish, and the fact was the old fop was egregiously vain of his bristly whiskers, and tied up his jaw in this way for the sole purpose of coaxing them into that grim growth upwards and backwards which imparts such an air of truculence to Sikh dandyism.

The trio made up my staff of domestics; for a dull-witted

native from one of the lower villages, whom I had engaged as *sais* or horse-keeper, belonged to all practical purposes exclusively to the pony. Fourteen or fifteen sturdy little *Puháries* or hill-men sufficed for the transport of my (from an Indian point of view) modest kit, which was mostly stowed away in *khiltas*, long conical or wedge-shaped baskets of the form familiar to Swiss travellers, covered with goat-skin to keep out the rain. A hardy, home-loving, rather selfish race they seemed to me, these *Puháries* of the higher villages, when I came to know more of them, eminently childish, pre-eminently dirty, though in this latter particular quite unable to compete with their Tibetan neighbours on the other side of the mountains. Their dress, a loose woollen tunic (precisely the 'Norfolk' coat of Mr. Poole), tightly belted at the waist with a coil of woollen rope, loose trousers of the same material fitting close on the ankle, curious netted shoes, part wool, part leather, warranted not to slip, a little woollen cap jauntily set upon glossy ringlets, and a *dánggra* or small hatchet, tool and weapon in one, was the model of a workmanlike mountaineering costume. They were changed from day to day at the end of the usual stage of eight to ten miles, and the relay for the morrow's march was often summoned by some fellow in a little authority getting upon a knoll or rock overlooking a populous glen, and making the night hideous with the long-drawn howl 'e-e-e-h *bagári*, *bagári* o-o-o-h,' the strict meaning of the term *bagári* being, I am afraid, 'forced labour,' although I am not aware that any other obligation than a sternly moral one now exists, by virtue of which the *Puhárie* must leave his field or his flock and stoop for sixpence a day to the burdens of the lordly Englishman.

The evening was beautifully fine, and the quaint little hamlet on the bare green mountain side, with a background of the snowy peaks up the Sutlej valley, made up a picture which seemed to insist, in spite of the most cruel treatment, upon making its way into my sketch-book. Far up on the opposite heights of Kúlu, at a most disagreeable elevation, I could distinguish the village of Diláss, to-morrow's destination, and the first stage on a route which I calculated would, in eight or ten days, carry me over the first snow-pass into a rainless Tibetan climate.

It was nearly six next morning before my people were in marching order, a tardiness for which I, at all events, had to smart severely before night-fall. The track led by stony zig-zags down slopes which grew steeper and barer as they fell 3,000 or 4,000 ft. to the noisy but long hidden Sutlej. Valley, properly speaking, there was none; the eye sought in vain for

the repose which even a few roods of level open bed would have afforded in the dreary gorge which seemed to grudge room for passage to the great roaring torrent of milky mud.

This, it seems to me, is the weak point of Himalayan scenery. There is, out of Kashmir, an almost universal absence in those bottomless ravine-like valleys, of that rest and contrast of broad level spaces of which the traveller so much feels the need in his vain efforts to estimate the majesty of the loftiest mountains in the world.

We found a capital wooden bridge on the approved Hindoo lever or bracket principle, spanning a narrow chasm in the rock. Not very far above this, a little glen with a limpid brook rippling past shady bushes tempted me out of the path for breakfast and a brief shelter from the insufferable heat. I have the most vivid recollection of the ensuing horrors of that 5,000 ft. of climb to Diláss. The air seemed filled with fire, the rocks under foot red-hot. There was not a tree, or a shrub, or a ledge of rock big enough to hide my burning brain from the withering stroke of that Indian July sun as he stalked fiercely across the meridian. As if to fill up the cup of misery to the brim, the grey *ghoont* had, in descending the rugged path from Komhársen, cast a shoe, and was utterly useless with a broken hoof. I fell at last helpless by the wayside, where I lay for hours, huddled under such shelter as my cotton umbrella could give, until a thunderstorm began to gather, veiling the afternoon sun and setting in motion cool currents of air. Then I rose and tottered up what remained of the slope and into camp at Diláss just as the refreshing rain began to pour down; and when I woke up from my first heavy sleep far into the night and found the water dripping on to my baked face, and forming a little network of pools among the blankets, I felt (for that night only) almost grateful to the rascally Delhi tent-maker, who had so considerately provided the hitherto unsuspected chinks and crannies in my canvas roof.

I was in no mood for a long march next morning. Over the Diláss ridge we dropt down into a deep glen, where I divided the mid-day hours between the cool embraces of a little mill-stream and the shadows of a great lizard-haunted rock, pitching my tent in the evening on the terraced fields of Chawáí. Next morning as we were climbing a hill the unusual apparition of a figure in European costume stood suddenly out against the sky above us. Kashmiri, with preternatural acuteness, recognised it whilst yet afar off as that of a *padre Sahib*; and when we met in the narrow path and turned

mutually about to indulge in the luxury of a ten minutes' chat, after the fashion of travellers in lone places, I found my new acquaintance was one of the little fraternity of German-Moravian missionaries established at Kyélang in the Tibetan valley of Lahoul, on his way on an errand of some importance to Simla and Calcutta. No fewer than three English officers, he informed me, had this season passed through their remote settlement on the way to Ladák, but during the two preceding years they had only seen as many European faces.

I came that evening up a lovely glen, amongst rocks and dashing streams and wildernesses of exquisite ferns, to the village of Kôt, buried in the deodar forest on the slopes of the Jalaúri mountain. The platform of the quaint little open-timbered *deôta*, or hill-temple, was the most charming spot imaginable for my tent; but nature and human nature were not by any means in accordance here. The villagers looked very sourly indeed upon us. Perhaps, as not uncommonly happens in the hills, they had been cheated by the servants of the last English traveller. At all events, I regret to state that Kashmiri was obliged to use the stick before even a bowl of fabulously-priced milk was forthcoming.

The wetness of the night was amply atoned for by a most brilliant morning. The path, a rocky gutter greasy with the night's rain, led at first along forest glades, and afterwards up the bare broiling shoulder of the mountain, with odious directness to the *jodh*, or top of the Jalaúri pass. Once there, at a height of 11,500 ft., it was a blissful relief to turn one's back upon those lower ridges, visibly glowing with a furnace-like heat as they sank in rapidly falling waves away to the plains, and gaze forward over Kúlu's 'thousand shadowy-pencilled valleys' to the 'snowy dells in a golden air' of the great chain upon which my path was steadily converging.

Again I have regretfully to record the utter insensibility of the men of Kôt to the elevating influences of nature. They had that morning taken my burdens on their backs with extreme ill grace, and now growing utterly untractable, they made show of throwing them away and bolting precipitately down hill home. And now again, the milder arts of persuasion entirely failing, the stalwart Kashmiri fell back upon the irresistible logic of the stick.

The descent on the northern face was long and steep, through the dense forest of pine and oak which on that side clothed the Jalaúri mountain and the adjoining ridges from summit to base. Far below I bathed in a rushing mill-stream, and

following its banks two or three miles came to my camping ground, on a knoll under great deodars hard by the village of Ressaíleh, or Richálu.

The next three marches (Monglúr, July 28th, Largi, 29th, Bijoura, 30th) lay along glens and valleys offering much wild scenery, but associated chiefly in my memory with sweltering sultry heat, and the harsh mournful 'crake, crake' of the black partridge. At Largi, the stream I had been descending from the south received the waters of a similar glacier-fed torrent from the east, and was in its turn swallowed up by the Beás, which, issuing in great volume through a wonderfully deep and narrow gorge from the north, turned suddenly westwards, and swept through an outlet flanked by lofty precipices away to the plains of the Punjáb. To cross the torrent flowing from the east it was necessary to go considerably out of the way to a crazy bridge some distance up its banks. The track then mounted abruptly to a great height above the gorge of the Beás, a portion of whose upper course now came finely into sight, meandering in a wide stream down a broad, flat, green valley with a background, now and then visible through the clouds, of high snowy mountains. At a point above the gorge where the Beás flows through the open valley in a broad, swift, comparatively smooth stream, there is a ferry of a description as novel as it is ludicrous to the European traveller. As I drew near to the river, a herd of fabulous monsters, of enormous size and bloated appearance; seemed to rise from their recumbent posture under the shade of a large tree, and waddle bolt upright in an absurdly pompous manner along the bank to a point some hundreds of yards above me; then, rolling over into the water, they came shooting with great velocity obliquely across the current to my feet. They turned out to be the black inflated skins of buffaloes—*déri* the natives call them—and each huge skin supported a ferryman as black and nude as itself, who in turn carried it over his back when out of the water. The *modus operandi* was as follows:—The beasts paired off, as it were, floating on their backs in twos, side by side. Then their respective proprietors stretched themselves across in opposite directions, with hands and feet in the water to act as paddles and rudder. On the raft thus formed a loaded coolie crept with great circumspection, holding on grimly with hands and knees to one of the prostrate ferrymen, and in a twinkling the buoyant concern had shot far down and across the swift current, and was skilfully making its way to the opposite bank. In this fashion all my people were safely carried over; but when it came to my turn, they placed a

charpai, or native bedstead, across a pair of the finest skins, and so took me over in state, the entire corps of ferrymen careering wildly about on their marine chargers as a guard of honour. Two or three careless riders tumbled off, and the manner in which their futile attempts to mount up again were invariably defeated by the beast turning considerably over in the water created universal merriment; but the fun ceased when the dismounted ferrymen were swept into the neighbourhood of some dangerous rapids, and instantly a little fleet darted down-stream to the rescue.

I halted at Bijoura, a village across the flat, where the path I had been following fell into the main route which leads from the plains of the Punjáb across the Himalaya into Western Tibet, and next day marched up the bare open valley to Sultánpúr, the chief place of Kúlu, a mean little town perched in the angle of the junction of the Beás with another stream descending from lofty mountains on the left. Here a couple of hot wearisome days were lost in an attempt, frustrated by weather and grievous under-estimate of distance, to reach the noted hot springs of Máni-karn, lying far up the adjacent rugged glen of the Parbáti river. On the 3rd of August I continued to ascend the Beás river for eight or ten miles, crossing over to the left bank at the village of Nágar, where a picturesque old keep of the former chiefs of Kúlu looked out from thickly-wooded heights over a wide sweep of cultivated valley. Its occupant, the Superintendent of Kúlu, was away over the passes on an official tour in Spíti, but he had left instructions of the most hospitable nature behind him, and a stately *chuprassie*, issuing from the great gateway, invited me with much ceremony to make his master's house my own for the night: which I did, and, stretched before the wide hearth blazing with fragrant pine-logs, a pile of the latest magazines at my elbow, and the music of the outer wind and rain in my ears, disbelieved (temporarily) in the superior blessedness of the dwellers in tents.

Next morning, after some half a dozen miles of hot rice-fields and frequent villages, the well-built chalet for the use of travellers at Jagatsúk irresistibly suggested breakfast and a long mid-day halt. Above this point the valley at every step grew more alpine and picturesque. Cultivation ceased to encroach upon the virgin forest, whilst on the left bank of the river the mountains closed in with a continuous wall of purple rock, crowned with sombre pine forest, and sparkling with the white lines of many waterfalls.

Búrwa, the uppermost village of the valley, lay in a maze of boulders and rivulets, amongst which, in the dusk of the

evening, we had long to grope and stumble before a spot could be found open and dry enough for the camp. All through the night the rain pattered incessantly upon the canvas overhead, and when morning came things looked so black, and the report of the local weather-prophet was so unsatisfactory, that Kashmiri tried hard to persuade me to call a halt for the day. It would be excessively disagreeable up there on the pass such weather, I should see nothing, and then (added the impudent fellow, with his usual easy assurance) it was certain to be fine to-morrow. I knew better. It was the height of the monsoon, and we might have gone on waiting there a month for a fine day: whereas I had only to cross the pass, and I should find myself in a region whither these intolerable rains could not continue their pursuit of me. So a start was ordered. But then arose a fresh difficulty. The *bagári*, or coolie service, had, as usual, been put under requisition over-night; but now, when it came to the point, the men of Búrwa were either out of the way or unwilling to move, and by the time a neighbouring hamlet had been beaten up, and the necessary complement of porters had arrived, it was pretty nearly all over with our prospects of arriving that night at Koksar, the first village in Lahoul on the Tibetan side of the pass.

The path, after leaving the open ground adjoining the village, grew very rough and slippery as it entered a narrow gorge overhung by towering cliffs, down whose crags the merry waters came leaping in many a cascade to join the infant Beás, that brawled along on the right in the depths of a rocky chasm. This opened out at last into a lovely glen, or *cirque*, whose walls offered the most picturesque combinations possible of rock and wood and waterfall. Here the track, leaving the course of the stream, turned abruptly to the left up a steep and rugged staircase, which landed me, after an interminable climb of at least three or four miles, on the gentle slopes of a beautiful alp. My porters were long in making their appearance, and then, very much to my disgust, proceeded to lay down their loads, declaring that it was impossible to cross the pass that evening. They pointed to a couple of ruined huts close by as the usual camping-ground (known under the name of *Mürri* or *Murree*), and then disappeared to shelter themselves in some well-known caves and holes in the rock in the neighbourhood, where I fancy they had much the best of it through the wretchedly cold wet night that followed.

It no longer rained when we came to start in the morning, but the mist hung heavily about us, parting only at rare intervals to disclose fleeting glimpses of mysterious snow-

peaks far overhead. The path led up the alp, and then at an easy gradient along steep slopes and ledges of rock high above a grassy glen, at the bottom of which a rivulet, issuing from what appeared to be the foot of a tiny glacier, murmured along through silvery thickets of dwarf birch, and under arched beds of rapidly melting snow. Further on we crossed the glacier, which came streaming down from the left, filling a deep and narrow gully in the rocks. It was barely a stone's throw in breadth, covered with snow, and apparently free from crevasses. From its opposite bank long bare slopes led easily to the broad crest of the pass, indicated by the usual cairn of stones with sticks stuck in it, flaunting with bits of rag to drive away the *jins* or evil spirits. The reputed source of the Beás, an almost imperceptible streamlet oozing from beneath a slaty rock, was marked by a low wall, about which withered flowers lay scattered, the offerings of Hindoo pilgrims. As I lingered on the pass, the mist, lifting for a moment, disclosed to the north a striking glimpse of sunshine lighting up a deep and most desolate valley, across which rose wild rocky mountains too steep and smooth for the most part to hold much snow: directly opposite to me a glacier descended a deep fissure in the rugged mass, terminating abruptly not far below the level of my position. These mountains were in the line of the great central chain (here called the Bára Lácha), running in a north-westerly direction along the right bank of the Chandra-Bhága or Chenáb, and ultimately dividing Tibet from the valley of Kashmir. I was standing upon a parallel range of little inferior elevation; for though the Rotáng pass is but little over 13,000 feet, the chain in which it is so deeply sunk has an average height of at least 17,000 feet, whilst many of its peaks reach or exceed 20,000 feet. Probably few passes afford a more rapid and startling transition than the Rotáng, from the luxuriant vegetation and exuberant moisture of the Indian flanks of the Himalaya to the inconceivable aridity and bareness which everywhere characterise the Tibetan side of the mountains.

The descent into the valley of the Chandra, 3,000 feet below, became a short distance below the pass exceedingly steep, but the soft shaly slopes afforded pleasant easy footing, and I raced down them right upon the village of Koksar, which now came in sight on the opposite bank of the river. A mere flat-topped heap of mud it seemed from that height, on a little platform of cultivation. The primitive suspension bridge spanning the Chandra at Koksar well deserves its wide-spread notoriety. It consists, or consisted (for its destruction and

renewal is a matter of probably annual occurrence), of rude massive piers, between which three stout cables of twisted bark and twigs were loosely hung, the undermost and broadest of the three forming the footway, the others serving as handrails. A flimsy wattling of basket-work served as a pretence for sides, but was wanting altogether at the most critical point midway, where the effect was as of a mere tight-rope between the shuddering traveller and the roaring abyss of molten ice and mud, that dashed up its freezing clouds of spray derisively into his face.

I took counsel next morning with the little Tartar headman of the village, as to the ways and means of getting the pony over. There was a wide reach of the torrent some little distance higher up, across which he undertook to swim him by dint of pulling and hauling of ropes, adding, however, that he would not guarantee his coming out of the water alive. So deadly cold was it that only a few days before, three or four horses, the property of a party of Caubul merchants passing that way, had turned over frozen stiff and stark ere they had reached the mid-stream. Kashmiri, ever fertile in contrivances, suggested a bottle of brandy applied internally before the immersion and another externally after it. But it was a cruel risk to run (and besides I could not spare the brandy), so I concluded to send the pretty little fellow back with his keeper to Simla. He had not been of the smallest use to me, except to look at, since the day he cast a shoe and broke his hoof in the Suttlej valley, and I was not sorry to have a cogent reason at last for getting rid of him.

This little difficulty and a view up the Chandra valley, the very savageness of which delayed me another hour with my sketch-book, rendered the day's march a short one of seven or eight miles to the hamlet of Sissu. It was in the course of this or the following march that the novelty of a long *máné* by the path side significantly reminded me I had left Hinduism (as well, I hoped, as the rain) behind me, up at the sources of the Beás on the Rotáng pass. It was a low stone wall, perhaps three yards in breadth, whose long flat top was closely strewn with little slabs of slate carved and scratched with mysterious Tibetan characters. Afterwards they were of common occurrence, stretching sometimes many hundreds of yards in length by the roadside. Further on I found them even upon the desert highlands between Lahoul and Ladák, several days' journey from inhabited places. The slabs, which in myriads are scattered closely over their broad level tops, are inscribed, according to the learned, with the one mystical Buddhist formula '*Om máné pádmé óm.*'

From Sissu it was another short march down the valley to the quaint village of Gúndla. At rare intervals a patch of cultivation, or a handful of pollard willows by the side of a water-course, had been the only relief to the nakedness of the valley; but the dreariness of the scenery was forgotten in its grandeur. The path hugged so closely the base of the mountains on the north side that it was impossible anywhere to see far up their flanks, but over the river, the range I had just crossed rose up 10,000 feet above the bed of the valley in vast smooth precipices of grey slaty rock, supporting broad ledges and shelves thickly piled with snow and glacier, from which, all through the heat of the day, avalanches poured their streams of white powder. '*Puhár bolta, Sahib*'—'the mountain is speaking'—Kashmiri poetically put it, as their deep thunder reverberated through the valley. The cloud-banks that rolled up the Indian side of this mountain-wall veiled for the most part its loftiest pinnacles, but a fine pyramid of snow opposite the village of Sissu (the Sissu peak, 20,355 ft.) was nearly always prominent, and as seen in the bright moonlight from Koksar, and again from Gúndla, was an object of wonderful beauty and sublimity.

Some miles lower down, a huge snowy mountain (the Ghusa peak, 19,833 ft.) lay projected so far out from this range as to seem from Gúndla to completely block up the valley. Through the narrow gorge thus created, the Chandra escaped with a sudden northward sweep into a more open valley, where it was immediately joined, underneath the eastern buttresses of the Ghusa mountain, by a scarcely inferior torrent, the Bhága, descending from the north-east.

The twins had been long and widely separated since the days of their common infancy up in the pass of the Bára-Lácha; now, at last, in the heyday of their turbulent youth, they bounded exultingly together, to sweep henceforward irresistibly through 150 miles of mountain barrier to the utilitarian old age which awaited them upon the plains of the Five Rivers. To the hill-man the joint stream is known only under the joint names of Chandra-Bhága, but the Punjábí styles the broad river, to which his lands owe their fertility, the Chenáb.

By following the course of the Chandra-Bhága through the grand scenery of the Pángi and Kishtawar districts I might, in about another fortnight's rough marching, have reached Kashmir. Jamál Khán had been that way, and had wonderful stories to tell of the ibex shooting in Pángi. I could see that he would not be sorry to take this short cut into his native valley. But I was not prepared to sacrifice Tibet,

not to mention that I should have been running again, lower down, into the very jaws of that monsoon which I was just congratulating myself upon having finally escaped. So we turned away from the main river, and, striking to the right across the tongue of land upon the point of confluence, climbed up to Kárdong, in the mouth of the Bhága valley, the end of the ten-mile march from Gúndla, and the most considerable place of the Anglo-Tibetan province of Lahoul. Perched on the shoulder of the mountain, at a great height above the river, it commanded an extensive and cheerful prospect up the valley of the Bhága, of dusky villages and carefully irrigated terraced fields, whose rich verdure was in striking contrast with the positively hideous barrenness of the mountain wastes above them. But what instantly caught and held my eye, was a trim quadrangle of low white buildings, the Moravian Mission settlement of Kyélang, lying among the greenest of meadows, upon a plateau far below me on the other side of the valley. I could, by a very slight détour, have taken the settlement *en route* next day, but it was still early in the afternoon, and there was a bright home-like air about the spot, as I surveyed it through my glass, so irresistibly inviting, in the midst of all that Tibetan squalor and heathenism, that I started off forthwith to pay it a visit. Brothers Jäschke and Heyde gave me a very cordial welcome. They presumed I had met their associate Brother Pagell somewhere among the mountains, on his way to Calcutta; but they did not, any more than he had done, enlighten me as to the object of his journey, and it was not until some months later that I learnt he had gone to meet and escort back into the mountains the three ladies who were destined to add fresh bloom and perfume to that little garden in the wilderness of heathenism.

For the practical results of their short three years' settlement in the valley, they could point with modest satisfaction to this commodious mission-house; a flourishing school for both sexes; and translations into Tibetan from the New Testament, printed Tibetan fashion, lengthwise upon loose narrow slips of paper. On leaving they pressed upon my acceptance a large jar of honey, with the remark that it had formed part of some superfluous stores left with them by the German traveller Adolph Schlagintweit, when he passed that way on his last ill-fated journey into Central Asia. I have always turned with interest since that day to the Missionary reports of the United Brethren, for the fresh glimpses which extracts from the simple diaries of these earnest men from time to time afford, of their labours in that remotest outpost of Christian civilization.

I marched next day twelve miles up the valley to Kohlunġ on the right bank of the river. Out of the belt of cultivation I had overlooked from Kardong, the track passed into a sparse juniper wood thinly dotting the arid mountain side, then into regions again of utter barrenness, with here and there a hamlet standing in its little patch of verdure. At Kohlunġ I encamped under an old ruined tower, on a bluff commanding a superb view up a reach of the wild Bhága valley, backed by fine snow peaks. Of these, the most imposing and also the most distant, was a splendid cone of snow lying far back to the right or eastward, and which I vaguely conjectured might possibly form one of the Shígri group (exceeding 21,000 ft.) in the range separating the upper courses of the Chandra and Bhága rivers.

Here, at Kohlunġ, I came up with the Caubul merchants of whose disasters I had heard at Koksar. They were preparing for the next eight or ten days' journey through an uninhabited wilderness, and the camp next morning was astir with the arrival, from all sides, of droves of unruly ponies for the transport of their merchandise. My modest requirements for the same journey had been specially charged, by the Kyélang missionaries, upon a very influential native of these parts and the principal landowner in Lahoul, Tara-Chand by name; and here he was before me, the shrewd, bustling, most unmistakable little Tartar, with a crew of fourteen sturdy unkempt Lahouli porters, and three equally sturdy, unkempt, and also unshod, Lahouli ponies.

There was an hour's rain at starting, the first that had fallen since crossing the Rotáng. I came, at the end of a rather short march, to an open place where two considerable streams from opposite points of the compass emptied themselves into the Bhága. In the angle below the embouchure of the left-hand stream, the Dartche, an immense pile of rocky débris, the ruins of a gigantic landslide from the mountain above, was projected like the moraine of some great glacier, far across the level floor of the valley. On the opposite side of the Dartche I found my tent pitched close under the few miserable huts of Dartche Sumdo (*Sumdo*, 'a place where three ways or rivers meet'), which, at an elevation of 11,800 ft., mark the limits of cultivation and permanent habitation in this valley.

Our first camping-ground in the desert was a wild spot, named Patseo, on the left bank of the stream, a short but rough stage above Dartche. Here Tara-Chand, who had honoured me so far with his escort from Kohlunġ, took his leave. Herds of sheep, and shaggy *yaks*, and the black tents of their nomad

drovers, added life and picturesqueness to a very savage bit of mountain scenery.

Some little distance higher up, next morning, the valley forked right and left into two deep and rugged gullies. The track to the pass of the *Bára Lácha*, of which we might now be said to have commenced the ascent, led up the one to the right, over heaps of rocky *débris* crumbled down from the heights above, to the smooth rocky platform of *Zing-zing-bar*, or *Ching-ching-bar*, where, at an elevation of 13,500 ft., we passed a night of such severe cold as to render sleep almost unattainable, and the start at dawn next morning particularly welcome.

We had a long day's work before us. There was first a snow-bridge to be crossed to gain the other bank of the gorge; then miles of the same exasperating beds of shattered rock to be traversed; then a sharp scramble to the brink of a still cold tarn, lying deep in its rocky bed only a few hundred feet below the bare spongy slopes, which, at an elevation of about 16,500 ft., constituted the summit of the pass. I now overlooked a long basin, of which the western corner was occupied by the tarn I had just skirted; the heights that formed its eastern rim were very heavily snowed, and a depression to the right of them, looking south-east, was pointed out to me as admitting into this pass a track leading up from the wild region of Spiti along the head waters of the *Chandra*. Hence the name of the pass—*Bára Lácha*, 'the crest of the cross roads.' The view was for the most part bounded by the walls of the basin. Two or three savage black peaks, probably in the Spiti ranges, showed themselves over the depression to the south-east, and I caught a glimpse, far away westwards over the gorge I had been ascending, of a fine cone of snow, rising out of dreary snow-fields. Northwards, a glen of which only a few miles were visible sloped very gently away from the summit of the pass. Down this the path continued on the left bank of the stream draining the pass, and which, constantly fed on either hand by rivulets from snow-fields above, opened out three or four miles lower down into a little lake, *Namtso*, or *Yunántso*, perhaps a mile in diameter. A large flock of wild-fowl lay motionless upon its still surface. To the lake, whose western margin we skirted, succeeded broken sandy tracts burrowed by large light-coloured marmots. Then a few rickety spars across a rocky chasm carried us to the right bank of the now formidable torrent. There was an abrupt descent amongst stupendous fragments of rock to a grassy plain, and lower still, on a green flat screened from the river by sandy hillocks—our camping-ground of *Kilung*.

Porters and servants were long and late in coming up, for the march had been a very fatiguing one. The Madrasee was not among them, and the others said they believed he had missed the bridge and ridden forward (he had been too sickly to walk the last day or two) with the Caubul party, on the wrong side of the river. Their heavily-laden ponies would have broken through the crazy bridge, and the torrent would not be fordable until the night's frost should have locked up its sources in the snow-fields. I could see their camp fires on the mountain-side over the river, and concluding they would bring Madrasee over with them in the morning, transferred any anxiety I might have felt on his account to the subject of dinner, which had begun to wear an ugly appearance of indefinite adjournment. But without hesitation Kashmiri flung himself into the breach, and succeeded in acquitting himself after a fashion that went far to console me for the absence of the real *chef*.

I waited vainly next morning for some sign of movement in the Caubuli camp—then, striking tent, pushed onwards along a narrow plain, shut in by ridges from whose arid glowing flanks the sun's rays were reflected with an intensity of heat quite unlooked for at so lofty an elevation. The river flowed for the most part out of sight on the left, along the deep channel it had cut for itself through the alluvial platform. The perpendicular sides of this channel were, in places, eroded in the most singular manner into the semblance of buttresses supporting a sort of castellated cornice. The effect was strangely architectural and artificial. I came at the end of about nine miles to the next camping ground—Sertchu (probably the *Chérpa* of Cunningham), a gravelly flat, lying low along the river above its junction with a large stream, the Lingti, flowing from the east. The low matted *Dama*, or Tibetan furze, grew abundantly about, a shrub which seems providentially placed in these wilds to afford fuel to travellers.

Late in the afternoon the Caubul party came up, but my servant was not with them, and I now learnt, to my great alarm, that he had left their camp to rejoin me at dark the previous evening. No action could be taken at that late hour, but before dawn next morning, whilst the moon was still bright, a couple of Lahoulis, one mounted, the other on foot, left the camp under strict orders to search carefully the valley and river in the neighbourhood of yesterday's ground. Towards noon *two* horsemen were descried coming towards us along the plain. Could the second be the lost man? They grew rapidly into distinctness under my glass, and then, as I recognised in the

hindmost the Lahouli who had left the camp that morning on foot, now bestriding the missing Madrasee's pony, all suspense was ended in the certainty of some great calamity. The Lahoulis rode up and told their brief story. They had found the pony quietly grazing upon the mountain side above the spot where the merchants had bivouacked, and as for the Madrasee, they added with the utmost unconcern that he was lying drowned in the river. Taking Kashmiri with me I rode hastily back up the valley. There, just above my old camp, lay the body, as the Lahoulis had indicated, stranded upon a shoal of pebbles, from which the torrent, sweeping down on either side in great fury and volume, seemed to cut off all access. Fortunately a party of six or eight swarthy Mussulman pedlars of Askárdú were busy cooking their evening meal under some rocks close by, and, for the sake of a few rupees, unconcernedly stalked, hand in hand, into the roaring flood. Several times the chain swayed violently, as if about to break, but the sturdy fellows struggled on gamely, and at last I had the satisfaction of seeing them emerge upon the shoal, take up the body, and carry it with comparative ease through the other arm of the torrent to the opposite bank, to gain which I had to make a long détour up the valley by the bridge, crossed two days before in descending the pass.

There were some ugly bruises about the head of the corpse, naturally accounted for by the rocks and boulders that strewed the bed of the torrent; but I was puzzled to understand how the action of the water could have turned the whole of the pockets so neatly inside out, and removed a showy ring so carefully from one of the fingers. One of two inferences seemed inevitable, either he had been washed out of his saddle, madly attempting to ford the river at nightfall, and afterwards, lying upon that exposed bank during the better part of two days, had attracted the cupidity of some unscrupulous passers-by, or in the growing darkness had been followed down to the bank, knocked on the head, rifled, and then thrown into the river by some one or more of the ruffianly Affghans who hung upon the skirts of the Caubul party.

We carried him up from the river to a sandy hillock, in which, whilst Kashmiri reverently wrapt about him a cotton shroud he had thoughtfully brought from the camp for the purpose, the Askárdú men scooped out with their hands a shallow grave; and there, with a cairn of stones at his head, we left him; the honest Askardians, with a handful of rupees now between them and their ragged poverty, to make merry over their scant evening meal; the others of us to ride back in

silence over the long moon-lit plain, to the distant point of light that marked my little tent-home in the wilderness.

My Lahoulis were not one whit less cheery and unconcerned that night in camp than usual. In fact they treated the occurrence with the utmost levity, as quite in the natural order of things in those wilds. But Jamál Khán and the *bhishti* were evidently affected. Looking out from my tent long after midnight, I could see them still cowering together over the embers of the fire, the *bhishti* drawing dreamy consolation from his bubbling *nargilleh*, whilst in solemn tones the follower of the prophet expounded to him the cruel *Kismet* that had led on their unhappy comrade from his distant Calcutta home to his grave in this wilderness.

Early next morning we forded the Lingti river, here the boundary between British Lahoul and the dominions of the Maharajah of Kashmir, a rapid, tolerably smooth stream, nearly waist deep in the mid current. Two of the Lahoulis best acquainted with the ford led the way, the others with the baggage followed hand in hand, the foremost man steadying himself with a firm grip upon the tail of my pony, and so all reached the other bank with no other casualty than the immersion of one of the *khiltas*.

The strip of plain along which we had been marching from the foot of the Bára Lácha narrowed to a point as the bounding ridges approached one another, and our next camping ground, Gyám (13,500 ft.), was a little shelf of rock just big enough for my tent on the mountain side, above the Lingti, whose broad bed here filled up the whole valley. Next day (August 17) I crossed the Lúnga Lácha pass in a long and harassing march, during which I had my first experience of the unpleasant effects which highly rarefied atmosphere, inclement weather, and severe exertion combine to produce at great elevations.

Giddiness, acute headache, nausea, were the more specific sensations, agreeably superadded to a general feeling of intense misery, and profound mental and physical depression. With me, fortunately, this enviable complication only endured for a few hours in the middle of the day, and then intermittently. I noticed that I invariably felt better going down a hill than up one, and that there was a subtle correspondence between the fitful gleams of sunshine and my lucid intervals.

The sufferings of Kashmiri and the Caubul merchants were evidently much more continuous and acute than my own, the climax in fact of a general derangement of which they had been complaining ever since the passage of the Bára Lácha.

They were not to be reasoned out of their intense belief that it was all attributable to the poisonous exhalations of some mythical '*dewaī ghás*,' or 'medicine grass,' which they averred grew about in these regions, though no specimen of it was ever forthcoming.

The ascent of the Lúnga Lácha commenced with great abruptness from the little rocky shelf of Gyámi overlooking the Lingti. The path led by steep zigzags up, and then along, barren heights, separated on the right by a profound valley from other and still more utterly dreary and desolate ranges, whose scarred slopes I swept vainly with my glass for the smallest trace of living thing—veritably

‘a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.’

Only, close at hand, a solitary snow pheasant, hardly distinguishable in colour from the rock upon which it was perched, kept a suspicious eye upon my movements. Then a long file of sheep and goats met us in the narrow path, each laden with a little pack of wool or borax, urged forward by ragged Tartar drovers and a pair of big black surly dogs.

Soon afterwards the track dipped into a glen, out of which again it mounted no very great way to the actual crest of the pass (16,750 ft.), and then descended for several miles along a defile of the most savage and rugged character. This terminated in an apparent *cul-de-sac*, overhung by precipices which, on the left, rose up into a splendid obelisk-shaped aiguille of, apparently, granite. Down a chaotic pile of rocks I climbed thankfully out of the pitiless wind into this quiet nook, where at bottom a brook babbled along under the rocks, and on the green sward a Tartar family were bivouacked for the night among their sheep, under the shelter of piles of little bales of borax and *pushm* (fine wool), destined for the markets of Hindostan. The good wife was busy brewing in a great cauldron the national beverage of tea-soup, and observing the exhausted looks of the stranger, insisted upon his refreshing himself with the as yet unknown and formidable looking mixture. Having ladled some of the tea out of the cauldron into a small portable churn, she proceeded to work it up with *ghee*, or clarified butter, into the consistency of rich chocolate, and then filled me out a bowl of it, at the same time putting into the palm of my left hand a little heap of a kind of oatmeal (*suttoo*), which it appeared to be the correct thing to knead up into little balls in the tea. The flavour was as of cocoa seasoned with salt and Parmesan cheese. I found it very palatable.

It was almost dark before the tired Lahoulis made their appearance with the baggage, the wiry old *bhishti* with the inevitable pipe at his lips marshalling the way, as fresh, to all appearance, as at the hour of starting. A morning pill of *úfim* (opium) was at the bottom, I afterwards found, of his wonderful powers of endurance. Much rain and hail fell during the cheerless night, and heights over head, bare in the evening, were, when morning came, all powdered with fresh snow. Through a rift in the walls of our rock-built eyrie we escaped with the rivulet into a more open glen, where I recall a fantastic spectacle of flying buttresses and spires, as of some buried minster, boldly carved out of the steep face of yellow conglomerate. Then the character of the scenery underwent a striking change as, having splashed through a shallow stream, and scaled the steep slopes of a crumbling escarpment, we stood upon the edges of a lofty table-land. Its actual extent was a mystery. I could only conjecture that the great bare plain stretching away some twelve miles by six before us, between ranges of low barren hills, formed possibly but one of many similar portions of an extensive plateau, broken up by the ramifications of an intricate mountain system.

In the centre of this remarkable plain, named after the *kyáng*, or wild horse, which haunts its thinly-grassed surface, a little low wall of stones, loosely built up to screen the wayfarer from the cutting night wind, marked the camping ground of Kyángchu. Here I pitched my tent at an elevation of 15,800 ft. above the sea. The Caubul merchants laid out their camp close by, ensconcing themselves as snugly as possible between their piled-up bales of merchandise.

I had ridden the greater part of the day alongside the leader of their party, Bachcha Khán, an elderly man of the most stately manners and bearing, a veritable prince among merchants. My uncertain Hindustani and his somewhat inarticulate utterance rendered conversation a thing of shreds and patches; but I managed to glean some points of the story of a life spent in the very romance of commerce.

He was now on his year-long journey from Calcutta back to Caubul, by the circuitous but profitable route through Léh, Yarkand, Kashgar, and other marts of Central Asia, where he counted upon disposing most advantageously of the bales of English prints and white cotton cloths, for which, at one point or another, he had bartered his Yarkand horses, boxes of the delicate Caubul grapes so grateful to the Anglo-Indian palate, dried fruits, wool, raw and manufactured, and other products of strange countries beyond our north-western frontier. He

spoke wearily of the vastness of the mountain barrier yet to be surmounted, adding, that much as he was then suffering at that lofty and bleak elevation, greater hardships still were in store for him in the frightful deserts of the Karakoram in the mountains between Léh and Yarkand. With him were several companions, partners probably in his venture, men only less dignified than himself, and as richly attired in furred robes and voluminous turbans, whilst two or three fierce-looking Affghans (whom I privately suspected of having had a hand in the rifling, if not worse, of the poor Madrasee), picturesquely armed with lance and shield, brought up the rear of the long file of forty or fifty heavily-laden Lahouli ponies. We had a terrible night of it. A freezing wind swept in violent gusts along the plain, and at intervals a pelting storm of hail peppered us with its icy missiles. Evidently with the advance of the season the weather was becoming shamefully unsettled. Sleep, that night was not to be won any more under canvas than out there, *sub Jove frigido*, alongside the parapet; but probably my people, curled up closely beneath the wall with their feet to the fire of Tibetan furze, were, of the two, the least deserving of pity.

A number of wild horses came about, at dawn, to reconnoitre our position. They were seen by some early risers in the Caubuli camp, but had disappeared when I came to start, a couple of hours later.

We traversed the plain to its north-west corner, and then turned up a narrow prolongation of it between long low ridges. Passing a *máné* shortly after the commencement of this narrow strip, the horse I was riding suddenly started back snorting with terror, and all at once I became aware of a horrible odour of decaying mortality proceeding, apparently, from the centre of the pile. I learnt afterwards that a Caubuli, who had gone on some days in advance of the main party to provide means of further transport, had succumbed to this rigorous climate, and his comrades had that morning been putting him out of the way either in the *máné* or a shallow hole at its base.

Further up the winding strip of plain, towards the end of the day's march, we came to the low black tents of Rukchin, the summer home, at a height of 15,800 feet, of nomad Tartar shepherds, who resort to this uncomfortable elevation with their flocks of sheep and yáks for the sake of the rich pasture lying about some marshy pools of fresh water in the neighbourhood.

We had another trying night in camp. In the morning

Kashmiri was so exceedingly ill as to render further progress that day out of the question. I gave him some tea, saw him snugly laid by a great bonfire of furze, and then, just as he was beginning in the most affecting manner to groan out his last will and testament into the ear of the utterly apathetic *bhishti*, started off to explore the adjacent valley of the salt-lake Tso-kar on the other side of the low ridge to the eastward.

The view from the windy shoulder of the ridge was very striking. Across the yellow floor of a great desert valley or basin stretched a small lake, perhaps five miles by two, whose blue expanse stood out vividly against the silvery band of saline crust that everywhere bordered its margin. Flocks of wild geese, the only signs of life in the desolate landscape, lay pluming themselves on its shallow reaches. A clearly marked horizontal line, everywhere visible at the height of about a couple of hundred feet along the face of the mountains opposite, told plainly that this little sheet of water was but the dregs of the great lake that at some former period had filled up the whole valley.

Kashmiri was so far convalescent next morning as to be able to bestride one of the broad-backed little yáks I had taken on here at Rukchin to replace my homeward-bound crew of Lahoulis, so there was nothing to prevent our pushing on ten or twelve miles to the next camping ground of Larsa, at the head of the narrow plain we had now been for three days traversing, and which here, in an amphitheatre of lofty hills, ended abruptly at the southern foot of the Tunglung pass. Ghya, the first village of Ladák, lay just on the other side of it; and, full of novelty and interest as these desert high-lands had been to me, I confess I found myself sharing in the childish glee with which my servants looked forward to a speedy escape from this terribly rigorous climate into more genial regions.

Our camping ground of Larsa was at a height of 16,400 ft., so that the crest of the pass (17,750 ft.) which we scaled next morning was but 1,350 ft. above us; but the ascent was exceedingly steep, and the slightest exertion in that rarefied atmosphere seemed to make respiration acutely painful. The pass on that side was free from snow, but it lay heavily on the adjacent heights, and there was a large patch of it just below the crest on the northern face. The descent, at first very steep along the margin of this snow-bed, afterwards became very gradual as we traversed a dreary defile that seemed interminable. At last the shining spirelets of fantastically be-

dragoned *chóktens*, then barley-fields of most refreshing green, and finally masses of white flat-topped buildings, made most cheerfully apparent the welcome fact of our return to the permanent habitations of men. I pitched my tent on an open space in the centre of this quaint village of Ghýa (13,600 ft. and one of the loftiest permanently inhabited places in the world), in full view of the *gonpa* or monastery, which, perched on a high cliff across the ravine, 'in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,' looked down with stony indifference upon us from serene heights of spiritual abstraction. No Bedouin in the heart of a great city could have felt more uncomfortable than my quaint Rukchin drover and his herd of coal-black shaggy yáks seemed to be, in this little hand's-breadth of settled abode. Stolidly proof against all allurements to longer exile from their congenial wilds, they disappeared up the pass behind us at sunrise next morning, and henceforward the little wrinkled ragged ladies of Ladák did the lion's share of duty in my transport service.

A ravine fifteen miles in length opened a way from Ghýa into the valley of the Indus. From end to end of this wonderful corridor the rocky walls seemed at every turn to indulge in some new and superb freak of form and colour, reds and yellows predominating in gaudy contrast to the tender green of the margin of the stream below. Very strange to the eye were the long straight grooves traversing at intervals steep planes of rock from base to summit, as smooth and mechanically regular as if the gigantic chisel of some by-gone age had been at work there. More startling still was the apparition, at a sudden bend, of a troop of wild creatures leisurely advancing in single file along the ledges of the opposite face of the ravine. Sheep of some strange wild sort evidently, from their tell-tale heads, though remarkably deer-like in general form, and particularly in the length of their slender delicate legs. Kashmiri in great excitement ran back for the rifle, which, somehow, through sheer want of employment, had got into a provoking way of lagging in the rear; but it came up too late to do more than add to the tumult of the stampede up the crumbling cliffs.

Midway down, the ravine opened out for a moment, as if grudgingly, to yield sites among its red rocks for the scattered village of Miru, and then again contracting its rugged walls until track and stream through seven miles of narrow way seemed to be ever jostling one another, cast us out finally upon the meadows of Upshi by the gravelly shores of the great *Senge-kha-báb*.

The father of Indian rivers presented at this point a respectable but not imposing appearance. His stream, barely twenty yards in width, was flowing over its boulder-strewn bed very swiftly, it is true, and past all hope of fording, but with little of that fierceness appropriate to its mysterious descent from the mouth of the fabled lion. Next morning, from a high alluvial bank, which the path surmounted shortly after quitting Upshi, there opened out a magnificent view of the valley of the Indus, down which my route lay for the next four or five marches. The rugged bounding ranges, closely skirting the river at Upshi, now gradually trended away until, at a point some twenty miles lower down, opposite the hidden city of Léh, there was a breadth of at least six or seven miles of open valley with an obliquely receding background of purple snow-tipped mountains. No cultivation was visible from this point, and the entire scene was one of the most picturesque desolation.

Onward the track led for miles, across plateaux of stony desert ever widening between river and mountain. At last a long line of refreshing verdure rose into sight upon the edges of a great lateral ravine. This was the oasis of Marsilang, and I felt, after that howling wilderness of Rupchu, as if I could never have enough of the music of its watercourses and the shade of its leafy labyrinths of willow and poplar. An excursion, opportunely suggested next morning by Kashmiri, to the neighbouring monastery of Himis, furnished an unanswerable reason for lingering another day about these pleasant green places of Marsilang. I crossed the desert slopes to the rocky bases of the great mountains walling in the valley on the west, and then turning into a narrow gorge, came suddenly into view of the brilliantly white, flat-roofed pile of the monastery, of which from without no trace whatever had been visible. It lay on a platform some distance above the bed of the gorge, in which many very large poplars were growing. Close above it towered yellow crags, on many of which, at an astonishing height, were perched little shrines and cells, evidently long since deserted by the degenerate descendants of earlier and sterner anchorites.

A score of red-robed, red-booted Lamas, redolent of an odour not of sanctity, crowded out to stare at me in the courtyard. I was told that the rest of the fraternity (some hundred in all) were away on errands of pious mendicancy among the villages. I have further Kashmiri's valuable authority for stating (he understood, or pretended to understand, a few sentences of Tibetan, and played the part of interpreter) that the foundation was rich in possessions of flocks and herds; but

the nakedness and squalor of so much of the interior as I was permitted to explore certainly seemed to belie the assertion. The dust and dirt of ages encumbered its dark cells and passages. I have vague recollections of a large refectory, and of a kitchen furnished with a pair of enormous cauldrons. I can more distinctly recall the gloomy chapel where dim perpetual fire was burning upon high altars before strange images, and where, conspicuous among the medley array of offerings before the great image of Boodh, stood an empty Bass's bitter-beer bottle. Musty hangings and *bizarre* pictures adorned the walls, along which in racks, like bottles in wine-bins, reposed the dusty tomes of Buddhist theology.

Each book consisted of a number of long narrow slips of coarse paper, printed lengthwise and enclosed between two bits of red-lacquered board tied together with a thong. From the alacrity with which the old Lama who acted as cicerone transferred one of these to my ownership, it was clear that he, at all events, set little store by its mystical contents. But I was less successful in my attempts to obtain a small portable specimen of the praying cylinders, numbers of which, in various large sizes, were hung upon pivots in niches and shelves all round the quadrangle. Some details of the history of this singular monastery, of which we are told the real Lama name is '*Sang-gye-chi-ku-sung-thug-chi-ten*,' '*The-support-of-the-meaning-of-the-Buddha's-precepts*,' are to be found, I believe, in Herr Emil Schlagintweit's recently published monograph on 'Buddhism in Tibet.'

From the willow groves of Marsilang, whence on the 27th August I made a long double march of twenty miles to Léh, we passed again, at a stride, into the dominion of that all-pervading Tibetan desert. A troop of wild sheep were roaming over its stony expanse, warily contemptuous of my laborious stratagems to creep within rifle distance. Below, at the great garden enclosure of Chishot, the hand of man struggled into mastery, and for miles down the valley the busy harvest fields and wet pastures were models of patient culture and irrigation; but directly we had crossed a low wooden bridge spanning the Indus some miles below Chishot, the wilderness closed in once more upon us. A weary waste of gravel and boulder remained to be traversed to a gap in a long low rocky spur thrown out to the river from the northern mountain chain, and then the out-of-the-world little city of Léh stood suddenly and strangely before me. High up, a spectral keep, towering in vast mass from a spur of yellow rock; below, a confusion of white walls, broken by lines of flat roofs and the deep shadows of long balconied

windows—the whole standing out vividly from a dark background of wild mountains whose recesses were now rapidly filling with the purple gloom of evening. Long low *mánés* and monumental *chóktens*, with their emblazonry of fiery dragons, added unique Tibetan character to the broad intervening space of desert foreground.

Nowhere in my Indian rambles had I seen anything more striking. We crossed a mile or two of stony plain among the *chóktens* and *mánés* to a gateway in the low wall, opening into the single wide street of the silent bazaar. Then, when this ended against the castle rock, we turned to the left, and were guided by devious lanes and footpaths to a plantation of poplars behind the city, overlooking terraces of well-watered meadow sloping to the foot of an amphitheatre of desolate mountains.

Here, from August 28th to September 1st, my camp remained stationary. My servants needed rest, and I certainly thought four days would be little time enough to devote to the wonders of this mother-city of Western Tibet.

First I climbed to the massive seven-storied keep of the old Gyálpos of Ladák, but very quickly climbed down again. The foul obscurity of its long-deserted dens and passages defied exploration. Then I ransacked the lifeless bazaar in quest of strange wares from little known regions of Central Asia. But for two years, owing to a more than usually anarchical state of affairs beyond the northern frontier, no caravans had arrived from Yarkand (though one, at last, was reported within ten days' journey), and there was positively nothing in all Léh but a few bricks of the coarsest tea, some inferior yáks' tails, and a pair or two of Tartar woollen boots and felt leggings. As a last resource, I entered into delicate negotiations with a Tibetan lady, with the view of becoming the proprietor of her head-dress—an unusually showy specimen of the long band of cloth or leather, studded with turquoises and silver ornaments, worn by the women of Tibet from the brow over the back of the head to the girdle behind, and secured there along with the ropy tresses of thinly-plaited hair. But here, too, I was foiled. The fair Ladakhi's vanity was not to be estimated even in glittering 'Kumpani's' rupees, and I was permitted merely to give a fabulous price for two of the turquoises, which eventually a London jeweller pronounced worthless. On the whole, the emptiness of this fair whited sepulchre of Léh was not creditable to the paternal rule of our excellent ally the Sikh Maharajah of Kashmir. One morning my Caubul friend, Bachcha Khán, presented himself at the tent door with a thank-offering

of fresh fruit, apples and apricots, and a little bag, whose silver contents he proceeded with many courtly phrases to count out before me. A few rouleaux of my rupees had been of considerable service to him some days before at Rukchin, when short of funds to meet the demands of his Lahouli drovers. Here we were to part company. I calculated upon reaching Kashmir in a fortnight's easy marching, upon a westerly line. He would wait the arrival of the approaching caravan, before starting upon his long month's arduous journey over lofty passes and desert regions due north to the next market city of Yarkand.

On September 1st I broke up camp at Léh, and leaving the little city as I had entered it, by the street of the bazaar and the western gate, marched down the stony plain falling away gently three or four miles to the Indus. Right opposite, across the broad valley, and 10,000 feet above it, rose the fine snowy peak of Tók (21,000 ft.), the loftiest point visible in the rugged chain bordering the left bank of the Indus.

The path led to the river, and then turned away from it up into a wide tract of desert, interposed between the mountain wall on the right and the rapidly receding Indus, soon hidden behind a screen of low hills. We were unusually late. The freshness of the morning had slipped away from me whilst absorbed at the city gate over my sketch-book, and the sun was now high overhead, flooding with intolerable light the long wastes of yellow gravel. I can remember how, as we toiled on wearily through the glare and heat, all at once there floated before my thirsty eyes a vision of cool still waters, as of a lake stretching far into the recesses of a lovely mountain bay, whose shores were everywhere fringed with luxuriant forest. For a moment the delightful cheat imposed upon me. Then dull sense rudely waking up, passed over the lake as a phenomenon within the bounds of possibility, but denied flatly the right of any such stately masses of foliage to exist in that Tibetan wilderness. And, as we drew nearer, shadowy forest died down into bare rock, and the expanse of limpid water sank into the glowing shingle of the desert.

At last the Indus came back from its long bend, and the path turning to meet it down a ravine by the margin of a babbling brook, led us out on to a broad shelf of verdure hung between mountain and river; and here, fourteen miles from Léh, I pitched my tent among the busy harvest fields of Nyémo.

The next day's march was very similar in character. The river again wandered away from us, and the track, leaving

behind it Nyémo, and Bazgo with its orchards and rock-perched ruins, turned up, as before, into a wide desert region. Here, among low bare hills shutting out the river, I came to a secluded plain, over which wild sheep of the same species as those previously encountered (? *shalmar* or *shapoo*) were wandering. A troop of morose old males with the most tempting heads kept warily in the open out of the possibility of mischief, but I observed with satisfaction a large flock of females and young constantly straying towards a rib of rock most felicitously disposed across the plain. With the aid of a sporting Tartar of my company I essayed a laborious stalk, which seemed just on the point of leading to the happiest results, when a precocious lamb, in a fit of the most unwarrantable curiosity, frisked up the rocks, and coming suddenly over a ledge upon a pair of strange uncomfortable quadrupeds, bounded back to infect the rest of the advancing herd with its own horrid fright. That it did not pay for its temerity with its life was perhaps due, that exciting moment, rather to a certain obliquity of vision than to any regard for its tender years, or (from a sporting point of view) worthless head. As it was, all escaped; and the flock of males, charging in splendid form up the steep face of the opposite hill, drew up just over the top into line, with heads and tall horns vividly defined against the sky, and so kept motionless watch until the baffled enemy had faded to a speck upon the plain.

The mountains on either hand now drew together, until, beyond the village of Saspola, the valley assumed the character of a wild and rocky gorge. It became necessary at this point to cross by a few ricketty spurs to the left bank of the Indus, as the bridge at Khaltse lower down on the main route had been broken away. A mile or two further on, and at least fourteen or fifteen from Nyémo, I found a picturesque spot for my camp by the little village of Gehra, on a high narrow shelf overlooking the river, and itself overhung by lofty crags.

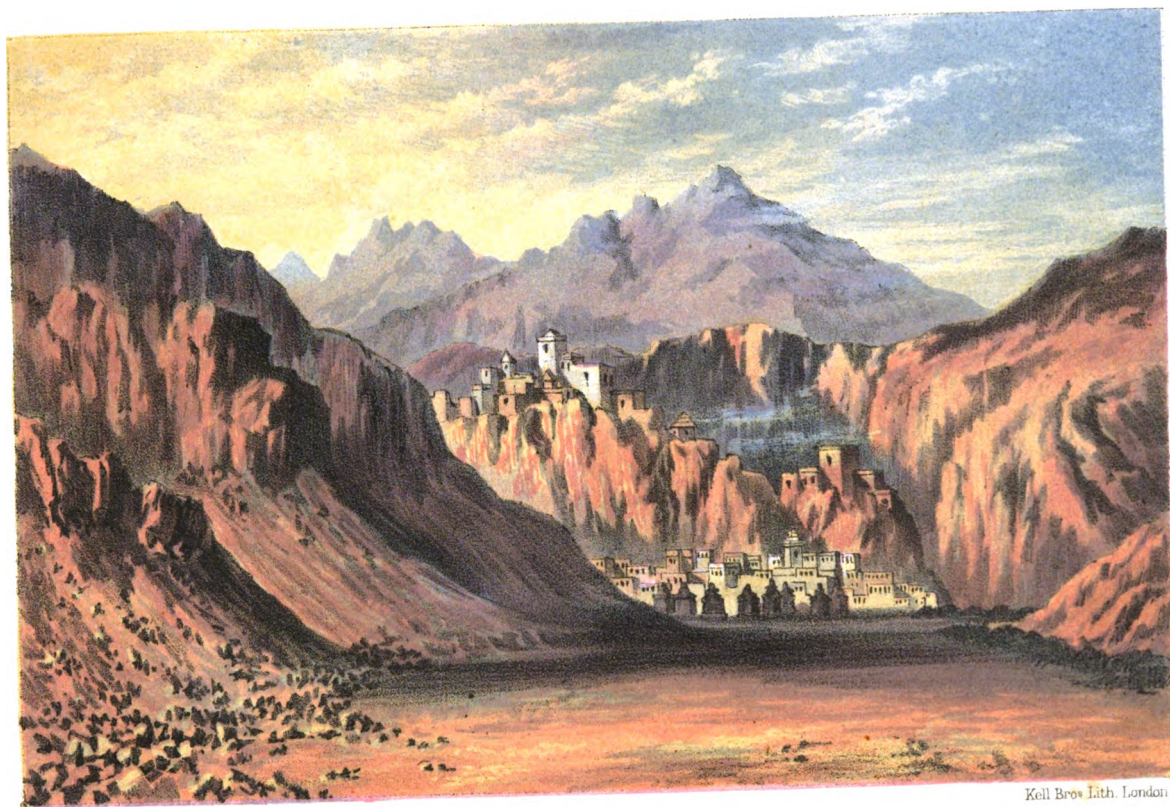
All next day we followed the unfrequented by-path creeping up and down rocks and round the crumbling couloirs of ravines falling away steeply to the Indus. At one point we crossed, at a great height and for a considerable distance, a steep talus of shale descending from an airy line of scarped cliffs, and ending most unpleasantly below upon the edges of precipices overhanging the river. Opposite, on a high and steeply-scarped alluvial platform of considerable width, lay the village of Núrla, in a belt of luxuriant verdure whose fresh tints seemed only to bring out with greater intensity the wonderful desolation of red and yellow rock that elsewhere reigned

supreme in the landscape. Traces of man there were none on my side of the river. There was in fact no standing room for him. Only at the end of the day's march I came to a nameless hamlet of two solitary houses, and there found space for my tent on a turf knoll under a willow tree.

Khaltse, with its little Sikh fort, was soon opposite to us next morning, and at this point the main route, interrupted for the time being by the destruction of the bridge, rejoined us from the right bank of the river. Nowhere had the valley of the Indus seemed so wild and rugged as below Khaltse. But we had barely descended three miles of it before the path, turning suddenly up from the river, entered the deep and narrow gorge through which the Wandla torrent finds its way to the Indus. We skirted its winding channel through miles of superb rock scenery. Then, after a sudden and steep ascent under high cavernous cliffs, came the greatest surprise of all—a deep green basin walled in by bare crumbling cliffs, crowned, just above the opening through which we had climbed into it, by the village and monastery of Láma Yúru. The accompanying picture gives a view of this picturesque spot, as seen from the slopes of the Photo La pass at the upper end of the basin.

Láma Yúru has an elevation of about 11,600 feet. An hour's easy walking next morning up gravelly hollows among low bare heights, carried me to the top of the Photo La (13,600 ft.). I dropped down to Karbu in the dreary valley of the Kánji river, and the following day crossed the Námika La, resembling, in its scenery and easy gradients, the Phóto La, but about 1,000 ft. lower. The barrenness of the arid wastes of mountain and valley, overlooked from these dismal passes, was positively repulsive. The desolation of the Indus valley had been imposing in its force of colour and abruptness of outline; but here naked sterility seemed to stand out in all its natural hideousness.

During the descent from the Námika La, by the valley of the Pashkyam river to Shurgol, I came upon the gigantic representation of some Tibetan deity, carved in relief on the face of an isolated rock close to the path. I had met with few outward signs of Buddhism since leaving Láma Yúru, and this, the most remarkable, was also, I think, the last: henceforward Mahomet supplanted Buddha. Mohammedanism is popularly regarded as less objectionable than the grosser forms of heathenism; the notion being that it has at all events something, however little, in common with Christianity. Indeed my Kashmiri, who was fond of arguing upon these matters, used to maintain with much subtleness, that when the little diffi-



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L'AMA YURU.
from a drawing by J. F. Cheetham.

culty about the prohibition of wine had been (as it easily could be) got over, there remained only this essential difference between Mussulman and Christian, that the one ate pork and the other did not. Nevertheless, I see no matter for congratulation in the stealthy advance of Mohammedanism, from the west, up these Tibetan valleys. The Hindu or the Buddhist, whatever else he may be, is not, like the follower of the prophet, a truculent fanatic piously thirsting for the conversion, or the life, of unbelievers in general, and of Christian infidel dogs in particular. Western civilization has, through all heathendom, no foe half so dangerous as the Moslem.

The march from Shurgol to Kargil (Sept. 7) offered some boldly marked transitions of scenery. A rocky glen, nine or ten miles in length, opened out suddenly at Pashkyam into a richly cultivated well-wooded basin, which was as abruptly succeeded by a superlatively rugged and desert plateau, lying at a great height between the converging Pashkyam and Kártse rivers. Kashmiri had some story to tell of a sanguinary two days' battle that had been fought out on this stony plain between Ghooláb Singh's Sikhs and the Tibetans. At the confluence of the rivers a long straggling bridge, commanded by a little Sikh fort, carried us over to the scattered village of Kargil, lying up the steep left bank of the Kártse. The defile through which this stream poured from the south its furious torrent of glacier water opened up a wonderful glimpse of a distant range of grand snowy mountains, the continuation of the central Himalayan chain I had crossed much lower down at the Bára Lácha, and at this point dividing Tibet from the Wárdwán valley, at the south-east corner of Kashmir. I was told of a track that way, rarely followed by European travellers, up the Kártse and Súru rivers and over one or two lofty passes eight or ten days' journey to Islamabád, the second city of Kashmir, at the upper or south end of the valley. The scenery could hardly fail to exceed in point of grandeur that of the ordinary route by Drás and the Tsoji La.

My tent that evening, at Kargil, was besieged by the sick and halt of the neighbourhood, and I found myself helplessly committed to an extensive medical practice. My first patient was a learned and venerable Kashmir Pundit, who represented himself as in great agony from the effects of a surfeit of sweet-meats. I quite expected that the savage remedies I maliciously administered would have read him a salutary moral, as well as physical, lesson, but he came next morning, overflowing with gratitude, 'a new man,' as he expressed it, to beg for a liberal supply of the wonderful drug whose potency would hence-

forward enable him to sin with impunity. After this my reputation was established, and I could afford to disregard the mutterings of an old lady for whose sore eyes I had no ointments, and the abusive scepticism of a leering cripple for whose chronic rheumatism I positively refused to prescribe my only bottle of brandy.

Not very far below Kargil the Kártse received the waters of the Drás river, descending from the west through a wild and rugged valley. Up this the track continued, at a great height above the stream and over rough and difficult ground. I observed at one point a gang of wretched natives, far below me, washing the sands of the river for gold. I camped below the village of Karbu, and the following day marched up into the broad upland plain of Drás, elevated about 10,000 ft., green under foot, but surrounded by mountains of the usual Tibetan barrenness. Several of these rose considerably above the snow line, notably the Drás peak (19,400 ft.), and further away to the south-west a cluster of rocky snow-tipped mountains marked the head of the first Kashmir valley.

Towards these I pressed forward next morning (Sept. 10), past the lonely *killá*, or fort of Drás, to the left-hand corner of the plain, where I turned up a tolerably open well-grassed valley, winding, with a very gentle ascent, between lofty and often very abrupt hills. I halted early in the day for some goat's milk at the wretched village of Pandrás. Some hours later the chalets of Máten or Matái lay opposite to us across the stream, the last inhabited spot on the Tibetan side of the pass. Then, as the snow-cliffs of the Machahói peak (18,000 ft.) rose finely into view directly in front, I came to a grassy knoll (my people called it Káru), on whose broad top I pitched my tent for the night, in the midst of a cheerful colony of marmots.

We had a good deal of difficulty in the morning in fording a swollen torrent crossing the path from the right, and the operation was not rendered any the more pleasant by the reflection that three or four men had been washed away a few days before. Further up, the track passed close under the foot of the fine Machahói glacier streaming down a ravine on the left. The herbage had long been luxuriant underfoot, but now thickets of dwarf willow and juniper began to clothe the hill-sides, marking the transition to a more humid and genial climate. It became at last difficult to say whether we were ascending or descending, but presently a rivulet flowing towards the south out of a little tarn showed that the summit of the pass (11,400 ft.) had already been left behind.

Here a tempest of hail routed us. I crept with my servants under the little blanket tent of a Srinágar merchant travelling to Léh, whilst the porters took to their heels down the pass in a state of utter demoralization. The prolonged fury of the storm called to mind stories I had heard of the readiness of these hill-men to succumb to bad weather, and I began at last to feel very uneasy about the fugitives. Jamál Khán amused himself by making a cheerful calculation of the number of frozen bodies we should presently find bestrewing the path, and it was only too true that, but a very short time before, an English traveller had lost several of his coolies in a snow-storm on a neighbouring pass leading to Askárdú. But we had not long emerged from our shelter before sounds suggestive of anything but woe were borne by the gale to our ears, and further on a hut of refuge came into sight, in which I found the runaway crew making merry round a roaring fire they had kindled with the aid of their *chak-maks*, or flint-and-steel pouches, out of a heap of dry brushwood. At this point the long glen (it might almost be called a continuation of the plain of Drás, so uniformly gentle had been its slope) ended abruptly in a steep gully, blocked up some way down with a mass of snow, beneath which the stream disappeared into a chasm of unknown depth; whilst the track, crossing to the right over the snow bed, mounted steeply through a pretty birch wood, to a point on the shoulder of the ridge to which, as being somewhat higher than the true pass at the water-shed, the name Tsoji-La strictly belongs.

I venture to differ with the traveller who, coming to this spot as I then did out of the Tibetan wilderness, was content to describe as 'in itself ordinary enough' the view that there burst upon him. Undoubtedly some allowance must be made for the force of contrast. Still, I do not think I have ever among mountains come upon anything more beautiful than that first glimpse of a Kashmir valley. There was not the vastness which had elsewhere characterized Himalayan scenery; but peaks rising to 18,000 ft. were lofty enough for grandeur, and it seemed to me that I had nowhere looked upon so exquisite a combination of rich forest and park-like glade, emerald alp, purple rock, and dazzling snow, as then lay before me in that highland valley of Baltal.

I ran down a couple of thousand feet, waist deep in drenching herbage, to find shelter from another storm that was now threatening in the log-hut of Baltal at the foot of the pass, at a height of 9,300 ft. Thence the valley was a continuous park to the cabins of Serbal; their smoky interiors were

already overcrowded with parties of Kashmiri and Tibetan wayfarers, and I was compelled to make the best of a very cold snowy night under canvas. The six or eight log-houses of Sonamárg, the uppermost village of the valley, were an hour and a half's delightful walk lower down, next morning, and then the stream swept for miles through a rocky gorge clothed on either hand with dense forest. Afterwards, as the valley became more open, log-built villages, with roofs sometimes of timber, sometimes of thatch, began to make their appearance in the almost unbroken wood of deciduous forest timber and half wild fruit trees. I halted for the night at the third or fourth of these, Kúllan, and here my crew of Drás coolies took their departure. Next morning at the village of Sirsingh, seven or eight miles lower down, I fell into the toils of a local *shikári*, or hunter, who, with true Kashmirian mendacity, drew such a beguiling picture of the herds of ibex up a craggy mountain overlooking the village, that I not only climbed it out of hand, but remained a couple of nights under a rock near the top, on the look out for the promised game, which eventually presented itself in the shape of a flock of the most domestic of goats. I was however consoled for the cheat by a superb view of the entire length of the valley of the Sindh river I had been descending, with the enclosing mountain ranges, and, away to the west, of a portion of the great Kashmir basin with the snowy chain of the Pir Panjal and Ratan Pir shutting it in from the plains of the Punjab.

Another excuse for lingering in this loveliest of valleys turned up a few miles further on at the village of Tyhún, where the walnut-trees were being nightly plundered of their ripening fruit by marauding bears from the neighbouring mountains. I trust my candour will be sufficiently appreciated when I record the blank results of the three nights' campaign I waged against these grisly robbers. After all, a black bear in a leafy tree on a dark night was not by any means an easy object to take a sight at, at all, much less to hit in a vital part; and though I wounded three or four and tracked them in the daytime for some distance, the thickness of the forest invariably baffled pursuit. I made up, however, for my ill-success some weeks later in the neighbouring valley of the Lidir.

Continuing down the valley from Tyhún, on the 20th, through beautiful tracts of meadow and orchard, I crossed to the left bank of the river and climbed through the woods to the village of Gúttel-bagh, on high ground in the mouth of the valley which here bent from west to south. The next morning

I emerged upon the plain of Kashmir at Ganderbál, where I halted for breakfast under the shade of one of those stately *chunárs* or plane-trees which clustered in groves and formal gardens on the shores of the far-famed lake, and about the crystal fountains of the Thelum, are almost the only surviving monuments of the taste and luxury of the old Moguls. So much of the renowned valley as was visible from this point seemed comparatively bare, and in its lower parts unpleasantly marshy, but there was a charm in the soft balmy air, and in the silvery girdle of surrounding snowy mountain, which quickly dispelled all trace of the first natural feeling of disappointment. Towards evening I came to the crazy capital, and threading its narrow lanes to the broad highway of the smoothly flowing Jhelum, gave myself over into the hands of an eager crew of Srinágar *mánjis* or boatmen—sauciest and yet most insinuating of oriental *gamins*—who, with many a snatch of boisterous melody, paddled me up, under the venerable bridges of deodar logs, above the city to the well-known reach overshadowed by tall poplars and backed by a lofty spur from the eastern mountains. And there I found sweet respite from my wanderings in the only vacant one of the seven or eight little tenements which old Ghooláb Singh, of jovial memory, built to house the visitors he so ostentatiously welcomed of that nation of rovers to whose possibly mistaken generosity he was indebted for his fairest of all mountain kingdoms.

THE TÖDI AND ADULA GEBIRGE. By A. W. MOORE.

ALTHOUGH, since its first authentic accomplishment in 1837, the ascent of the Tödi has always been a popular expedition with Swiss mountaineers, yet the peak was, until quite recently, comparatively neglected by our climbers. The district in which it lies is, indeed, rather out of the beat of the great crowd of tourists, and, until the appearance of Mr. Forster's paper in the first series of 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers' in 1859, the merits of Stachelberg as a mountaineering centre were little known. A few English parties, I believe, at long intervals, slept at the Sand Alp, with a view of attacking the Tödi, but either from bad weather or other causes the expeditions were without result. In 1863 the whole district was thoroughly explored by the Swiss Alpine Club, which earned the gratitude of all mountaineers by erecting a commodious 'cabane' in a convenient position on