

ning played and the thunder was ear-splitting. At 9<sup>30</sup> p.m. there burst one of the most violent tempests I have ever witnessed, the wind being then in the north-west. The rain literally poured down in torrents, and spouted up again from the ground. In consequence of this the surface was once more softened. The tempest continued all night. The downfall which we had hitherto experienced, and which I have attributed to the beginning of the rainy season, was a mere trifle in comparison with that which now came. The few days of fine weather that we had enjoyed were merely an interlude; the experience of the days that succeeded taught us that the rainy season *par excellence* in Central and Southern Tibet falls in the late summer.

July 30th. In the morning the sky still continued to wear an ominous look, sheeted as it was with the most threatening clouds, from which hung heavy fringes charged with rain and snow. So long as we were in the saddle, however, we were spared a wetting, except that in the glen, just below the highest pass, it hailed and rained for about half an hour. The mountain-range to the south was whitened over with snow. The last storm had softened the ground a good deal, and it was everywhere saturated, in some places actually boggy. All the watercourses contained running streams.

At first the ascent towards the foot of the mountain was gentle, but it grew more pronounced after we struck into the glen that leads up to the pass. From the mountains on our right several small brooks descend towards the north-west, though later they probably incline towards the west. This glen was deep and narrow, and its boggy ground treacherous and tiring. Here and there the hard rock cropped out in the form of red sandstone, greatly weathered, and with a dip of 12° towards the N. 15° W. So far as we could see for the snow, all the heights around were reddened with the disintegrated products of the same rock. The bottom of the brook that flows down the glen was, contrary to rule, just as soft as the circumjacent hills, and it contained but little gravel. We passed a cairn of stones and an old fireplace. When at length the acclivity grew too steep, we struck in amongst the hills at the side, and in that way reached the arched pass, which has an altitude of 5246 m. Thus the country showed no decided tendency to become lower.

On the southern side of the pass the descent was at first steep, but it soon changed into a gentle declivity going down a broad, open glen towards the south-east. But as it swung away too abruptly to the south and south-south-west, breaking through a minor range, we left it on our right and made our way up to another pass in the same secondary range, being induced to do this more particularly by finding there a well-used track. In the glen between the two passes the grazing was good, and here we came across numerous camp-fires, old and new; some of the latter may have been used only five days before. Here also lay a dead sheep, together with its load of salt, sewn up in sacking. At several of these old encampments there were bones of yaks. Yak-dung was particularly plentiful, though this was unquestionably from tame yaks. Further a whole herd of yaks appeared to have been recently driven from that locality towards the north or north-east. All these indications were the results of the visits of nomads, who during the warm season drive their herds of yaks up towards those parts of the central highlands that supply sufficient grass to feed their animals.