

under the horse's belly, let the burden gently down, urged the animal past the projecting rock, regained the trail, moved forward the loads to some safe, wide-stretching plain that might measure four feet in width, where the charge was repacked and our nervous march resumed. He told the ponies in their native tongue how he expected to pull them out of the snarl of packs and rocks into which they may have fallen. The rest of us did such obvious, but not always helpful, things as might occur to strangers looking at some family trouble, but only those two, Mohammed Joo and the beast, knew how four-foot was to be rolled over to come up, all-standing, on some scarce perceptible bench that broke the smooth face of the steep descent.

Something of remorseful zeal burned, I think, in the breast of Mohammed Joo, now that we were thrown helpless on an unknown desert. He had believed that he would be able to take us to a point from which the route to Rudok would not be difficult to pick up. Now, only four days from the pass which puts one on the plateau, he found that the mountains and valleys traversed three years before with Captain Deasey were confused in memory with thousands of their kind that cover all this roof-region of the world over which his endless journeys were ever leading him. The sahibs now must determine the march which should result in life or death for all of us. Mohammed Joo would nobly do his part in nursing the afflicted ponies, prolonging their lives beyond the span which would reasonably be measured to them in terms of the hunger and cold and fatigue which were their daily discipline. Dis-