

gets only a lunch—not a dinner. If one starts from a mountain-base, such as Darjeeling or Ladak Leh, the animals are hardier than those recruited in Turkestan. But even these are not accustomed to regular life at elevations above fourteen thousand feet, and the increase to an average of sixteen thousand feet, which must be met in any considerable journey on the plateau, seems to tell on even the hardiest.

The first to succumb was Captain Anginieur's mount, a high-bred animal with too much mettle. For about ten days after ascending the Polu gorge he continued to be ready for a morning gallop. He soon dropped, fell several times under his rider, tried to follow the caravan, bearing a nominal load; then, on another day, without load, he stumbled forward several times, bleeding at the mouth as he recovered; finally, gave it up, and when I last saw him he was on his knees. Anginieur did not like the thought of shooting him; the cold of the night must have promptly done the bullet's quicker work. My own mount, an excellent Kashgar purchase, died one night a few days after he had made a noble effort for his salvation and mine. We had made a hard march the day before and went into a dry camp, moistened a little, however, by water carried in my rubber bed from the previous camp.

We were moving in a valley about ten miles wide. Small streams coming from the neighbouring snow-tops wandered lazily over level surfaces, and often disappeared almost while you watched them. At night they were frozen. We ought to reach them early enough to let the animals drink liquid water.