

have excellent reasons for changing rules of conduct supposedly fixed.

The caravan was in motion about ten hours during the day just described; that is a long pull for weak, underfed horses, so we had to shoot one on breaking camp next morning. The straw of the now useless pack-saddle was given in part to the tea-making fire, and in part to the famished horses, each one striving for a mouthful of the woody fibre.

We are now nearly at the end of the long, flat valley in which we had marched for eight or ten days. It was closed just ahead of us, and there was thus closed one chapter in the history of our woes. Yet withal a few pleasant elements had entered into the experience. Two lakes were discovered, one drinkable, the other salt. The fresh water lay beautifully blue at the foot of sharply rising mountains and gladdened our eyes for two days. Around the other tracks were found, some quite new, and these lifted our hopes. But the trails thinned out into the silent hills. They were evidently made by wild horses coming to the salt licks. Both the lakes were new to the maps.

It was near the sweet water that we had a half day's diversion furnished by a herd of wild yak. Miles had given us a Berdan rifle. With this and the Mauser gun-pistol we taught the yaks and the virgin echoes how noisy and how harmless may be the artillery of the breath-spent hunter. That we were exhausted by our vain stalking efforts was of small concern; that we failed to get fresh meat was a disappointment, particularly for the men, who