

sahibs cannot sleep without horses to carry their food and their blankets. Even we cannot walk and bear burdens in this land; we shall all die."

"But this stream goes ever in the wrong direction."

"It will change—if it does not yet I shall soon find men—shepherds of the Botmen (Tibetans) or the Kirghiz, perhaps."

I felt that Lasso's talk was good medicine, but the compass and the maps won the day and carried us on to further trials. One of our ponies had dropped just before we changed direction. Another considerably went down a short time before we camped, thus assuring us a straw fire for our tea. The next night, a bitter one in a snow-fall at an elevation of seventeen thousand five hundred feet, was cheered by this sort of death-flame. Three ponies had now eliminated themselves from the grain equation without help of powder and shot. By noon of the following day we had clambered out of the upper defiles of our tempting valley and found ourselves on a mountain-top, the very abomination of desolation. Again we looked at the world from an elevation of eighteen thousand five hundred feet, and it was not good to behold; magnificent, but not good. Vast snow-crowned heights, like gigantic foam billows, met at every point a now threatening sky. A deep valley looked up at us from the west, but visible issue there was none. There was absolutely nothing to suggest a way out of the wildly massed region of snow save death or retreat. Again the little leathery face of Lasso seemed drawn as by cords, yet composedly he said