

## CHAPTER VII

### CAMP PURGATORY—PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION VS. PROBABLE DEATH—KIRGHIZ SAMARITANS

THE tardy sun reached the black mountain-tops and slanted his arrows upon our tent somewhat after eight in the morning. When thus we were invited forth from our covers on the first day of our sojourn in Camp Purgatory (for so we called it), it came to pass that another blow from Fortune's hammer fell upon us. Now it struck Anginieur's leg, and the effect thereof is called phlebitis, and the effect of phlebitis is acute pain, a sort of paralysis. A short cable's length of assisted promenade, that was a day's work for a so stricken leg. For the upkeeping of our courage we had talked much and fallaciously about walking toward safety, when the ponies should all have died; scheming to use them inside of us when they could no longer bear us as burdens on their backs. But if no help came from down stream, whither our messengers had gone, we should be forced back into the maze of fatal mountains which had encircled us since we left the Aksai Chin valley. Even the natives felt the hopelessness of such an effort for themselves.

The attempts that I had made to give relief to my pitiful mount whenever the uphill work halted him had made it clear to me that even a well man,