

CHAPTER VIII

GLACIERS, YAKS, SKELETONS, A LOVE AFFAIR, AND A HIGH SONG ON THE KARAKORAM ROUTE

A RETRIEVE of the luggage at Camp Abandon, a day of rest for the weary ones, plenty of grain in the bellies of the surviving ponies, and we were off again down the dismal valley whence had come our salvation. We were delighted to find that Anginieur, once trussed up on his mount, could "stay put" without much suffering. Then, the third day out, came a sensation, and for the game leg the beginning of its cure. We had a roaring fire made of shrubs that grew at least three feet high, the most gigantic vegetable we had seen since leaving Polu. The leg was fairly roasted by the leaping flames, and a luxurious *bien être* took hold of Anginieur's soul.

Then two days later came the triumphal entry into the Kirghiz camp. What a simple, hearty welcome from these good people! Their little population normally filled the three lodges—those felt-warmed, lattice-framed tents which sparsely dot all the wilds of Central Asia. One was given to the sahibs; one received all the men, a dozen of them; while women and children swarmed in the third. It would be pleasant to believe that one-fourth of all the Christians whom one must meet in an ordinary