

your mother than to you. In the decent veil of figure, the fact may thus be presented: If the pent-up volume of some mountain lake can find but one outlet, down into some one valley whose wasting sands shall be fertilised into life by the rushing waters, and if the due season be not come for the flood-letting, then it is better that the valley be hidden from the covetous lake by some great dam (or slender screen) of custom.

The women were neatly clad in Bokhara patterns of the cheap silks, which give colour to brown humanity in Central Asia. When I wondered, through Achbar, where our hostess did her shopping, "From the caravan," she said. "Have you ever been to Yarkand, only ten days away to the north-west?" "No." "Or to Leh, only ten days away to the southward?" "No, the caravans pass two days from here." So this happy, incurious female had never seen the bazaars, palpitating with men and women, though to say ten days' journey there is as a few hours to our nervous selves. Had she not, for neighbours, those whom we had left three days ago? Yes, she had even seen one European before, when in another camp. Was not her existence full enough?

When, a few days later, we struck the main trail beaten by the foot-fall of the centuries we felt that we were again suddenly caught in the whirl of life's currents. Now caravans were met—one, two, or three each day. Now we got tobacco and sugar; we even had news of a friend, the Hindoo Aksakol from Yarkand, *en route* to his old home in the Punjab and now just a day ahead of us. All the while