

Opportunity breeds the act, and here the European would look for theft and deem it a wrong almost condoned, provoked by negligence. But this upheaved world is only seeming wide. The perilous track which we have followed is its whole width, for man; and some hundreds of Ladakis and Yarkandis, bound in a sort of acquaintance-guild, are its population. Familiar to each other are they, nor less familiar their yaks, camels, and ponies. These honest brutes, in conspiracy with the very snows and sands, spread over this too-narrow world their tell-tale tracks, the entangling meshes of a Bertillon system; and the keen Hindoo merchants, squatting at Srinagar, Leh, Kashgar, and Yarkand, those master minds which defy nature for traffic's sake, would not easily let go the unseen threads which bind the caravan-man; they are harmless guiding threads if the opium and the silk find their true way over the passes to the destined recess of the noisy bazaar, but sure strangling ropes if aught should go awry. So honesty salutes necessity as her mother, and the riches of the Hindoo may be left for days visited only by that blustering roundsman, the night wind.

We were three caravans camped cheek by jowl among Sasar's rocks, all content with much hot tea, wherein was brewed also a certain sense of brotherly love, of sympathy with each other, compacted together in struggle against the night, the mountains, and the bitter cold. Even the luxury of giving to the poor was not denied us, shaggy-haired, dark-faced men from the Balti country coming to the camp-fire, asking bread and warmth that they might