

continue some hard, wild venture across the mysterious mountains stretching westward.

One of the caravans of Sasar was that of our old friend, the Aksakol of Yarkand. What a clear-cut face he had! Our European type seems gross when set against the bronze cameo features of the high-bred Hindoos. And such hospitality in his welcome, in his congratulations over our escape, in his pleasure over this chance meeting within the heart of the great mountains! His little tent, where we sat to smoke and tea-drink, seemed, because of his kindness, a nest-like home, and Achbar, squat in the tent-door, redeemed himself with fluent phrases, employing at least fifty words. And all this courtesy, this true charity and gentlemanly spirit, grew out of a stomach which had not known meat—no, not even pre-natally—for generations unnumbered. His caste (one of the subdivisions of the four basic castes) forbade that animal life should feed on animal death.

It was a glorious, breathless, freezing struggle we made on the morrow, up and over the great glacier and the vast fields of feathery whiteness. Starting at sixteen thousand five hundred feet, we were soon testing the thin, keen air of eighteen thousand feet elevation ere the icy crest was gained. And from the serene, glistening heights five thousand feet above us we felt the reproving eyes of the Himalayas looking down upon the toiling ants that strove and sank and rose again in the rifted green, in the drifting white. The vision that comes back to me is one of supernal clarity; across it, here and there, a veil of snow-born, wind-driven mist; pressing