

## CHAPTER IX

### TREES, TIBETANS, AND THE TELEGRAPH—PANAMIK AND LADAK LEH

SPLENDID visions of mountain majesty, wrapped in cloudy glory, ten thousand feet above Sasar's crest; gorges riven as though by a giant's thrust at the heart of mighty hills; quick avalanches crashing down the startled slopes; torrents of boulders, waiting to be unleashed by some puny force, that they may rush to fill a valley or destroy a fated caravan; such are the memories that come and go as now, in slippered ease, I nimbly fly where once I crawled. They are memories that will not tether to the pen. But there comes another image more tractable. At the turn of the dizzy trail, we look across the chasm whose sides we scale, and lo! a *tree*, the first to wave familiar salute since fifty days or more. Then the naked mountains, as if resenting the too intimate prying of man, now soon to be seen in his dwellings, began to clothe all their secret places with leafy growth.

The eglantine overhung our crag-encircling path, and its perfume subtly evoked memories of the wild approaches to Harar in distant Abyssinia, of plantation lanes in sunny Louisiana, of youth and manhood garlanded, perfumed by this sweet, bold, flower. While our delighted eyes are not yet wonted