

become more and more alarmed at the increasing bareness and cold of the country we were travelling through, and were now on the point of giving up all hope of ever seeing human habitations again. Pindi Lal had from time to time raised their spirits by prophesying that, in about ten days, we should reach a great town, Leh, where there would be abundance of delicacies, such as sugar, *dal*, rice, and butter, the existence of which we had almost forgotten. In one of the last villages of Spiti, we unfortunately met a traveller from Ladakh who knew Urdū. They asked him how many days it would take us to reach Leh, and when this man said that it could not be done under twenty days, they gave up all hope of ever reaching it. The only topic of conversation among them, now, was the malign conjunction of planets (as they thought), under which their birth had taken place. However, we reached the top of the pass after all, and had a grand view over a large glacier directly below us, over many more glaciers hanging down from black rugged peaks, and a labyrinth of icy mountain ranges. And the thought came to them that they had to travel over these wild mountains with nothing but a little coarse flour in their provision bags. When then the yaks absolutely refused to jump across cracks in the glacier, and we had to cross deep fissures in the ice by sliding down one side and climbing up the other, when the mountain sickness in its most acute form assailed the poor Khalasi, he lay down on a boulder on the edge of the glacier and gave himself up to die. I had not kept my eye on him, and thus we had descended a good way, before Pindi Lal drew my attention to him, saying: "One man is missing." It was very unpleasant in this pathless country to return over the same boulders, but I had to send Pindi Lal back again to fetch the Khalasi. He brought him to our camp at the only level spot in the vicinity, called Drathang, 17,000 feet high. His face had become sallow, and his eyes had lost their lustre. The night was sure to be cold and his insufficient clothing as well as the small tent could not afford him sufficient warmth and shelter. I, therefore, cut one of my blankets in two, and gave him one half, and Pindi Lal gave him some of his clothing. Soon after, he came to my tent with the blanket in his hand. He could not believe that a blanket of scarlet colour should be his property. But when he was assured of the fact, there was a ray of light in his eye again. I am convinced that the expectation of one time or other showing this treasure to his relations, was one of the most powerful factors in raising his spirits, and ultimately restoring him to health.

On the next morning, he was mounted on a yak and expected to ride the whole way. That was, however, easier said than done. For the most part, no road of any kind could be distinguished, and we had to make our passage along the steep bank of a deep and broad river. Whenever the progress on dry ground was absolutely impossible, the yaks jumped into the water to wade or swim in it, which latter performance made me feel rather uneasy with regard to the photographic plates in the boxes on their backs. Pindi Lal, who was riding on one of the two horses of our caravan, had a narrow escape, when the ground under his horse suddenly gave way, and the horse, performing a somersault, fell into the river, the rider holding on to the bank. Whilst we were thus ploughing on slowly, I noticed that the Khansaman