

had descended four hundred feet, they began to appear exhausted. One mule was already far behind, able to move only with the help of two men. Although it was only ten o'clock, we decided to stop where we were, on a little hill-top with a few rocks projecting through the snow. The prospect of camping there at an elevation of 18,000 feet did not seem at all bad in the hot sun between ten and twelve o'clock. We hoped that at night the snow would freeze stiff enough to support the animals. As we had been working hard since near midnight, every one went comfortably to sleep; but we had forgotten the west wind. About noon it began to blow, gently at first, merely wakening us by whirling snow into our faces; but in an hour a gale was raging, chilling us to the bone, though the sun was shining brightly. It filled the air so full of blinding dry snow that we could sometimes scarcely find one another. Wrapped in sheep-skins, and with woolen cloths tied over our heads, we and our escort were fairly comfortable, but the poor coolies and horses were shivering unprotected in the open, and a few hours of such a wind might kill them. It was absolutely necessary to go on, even if some of the horses died from over-exertion in such rarefied air. Poor brutes, how they plunged and fell, and lay panting and exhausted, and then with splendid spirit, heaved their cut legs out of the crusty snow, and struggled on, to fall scores of times, but never to yield. Only the mules, Lhasa-born though they were, seemed to lose all spirit. Time and again one or another stretched out its legs, and laid its head on the snow as though to die. Each time our plucky men got it up, rolling it over upon its legs, and almost lifting it