

baby, but though she was one of the richest women of the community, she, like every one else, had to work that day. Cradles of the sort in which this mother laid her child figured sadly in a scene which I saw later. Out on a lonely hill-top among the great mountains we came upon a group of graves. Beside each of the six smallest heaps of earth there stood an empty, weather-beaten cradle.

Camels were not the only baggage animals that morning. Horses are esteemed too highly to be often burdened with loads, but frequently we saw a man on one side of a stout ox and a woman on the other, each with the right foot braced against the animal's side while they drew taut the ropes which bound the load of kikitka poles. A monkey-faced dog slunk behind one such pair, while close by, a girl of ten in figured red and purple silk waited to be helped on to her horse. Beside her a tiny imp of three stood motionless; his round, astonished face, long gray dress, and boots so high that he could not bend his knees, all sunk into insignificance under the immense dome of his black sheep-skin hat. Even he could ride a horse, as we soon saw.

At last, when all was ready, we started on a delightful ride up a steep gorge. The road zigzagged among fine spruces, almost the only ones that we saw in Central Asia. We passed first a man on a cow, then a heavily loaded camel with two small boys perched high on top of the load, and two ridiculous baby camels, too small to carry even a roll of felts, running awkwardly in the rear. Next two fat cows with wooden rings in their noses walked placidly along with loads of straw-matting and poles. In front of them an old gray-beard with a black hat and a wadded gown