

of conquest—a peaceful-looking little valley in which were some avenues of magnificent elm trees. At this stage we were much impeded by rain. Almost daily now it rained heavily. We fortunately always had either inns or farmhouses in which to put up at night, but we constantly got wet through on the march, and the going was often very heavy. We had work, too, to get over the ground at the rate we wanted. We used to rise at 4.30 or 5 every morning, pack up our things, have our breakfast, and then hang about for two dreary hours whilst the lazy mule-men were loading up their animals. On the march we had to keep constant watch over the mules to help them over bad places and prevent their wandering. At midday we halted for a couple of hours to feed ourselves and our animals, and then went on again till six or seven. More than once on the march I remember being so tired that I lay down on a fallen log, propped myself up against some branch, and went off fast asleep in spite of the rain. What I felt particularly, too, at this period was the want of milk and butter. The Chinese and Manchus never milk their cows. They seem to think it disgusting to drink milk. They will eat rats and dogs, but they will not drink milk, or at any rate they don't. And we missed this simple necessary very much, and eventually had to take large quantities of oil with our food in its place.

The heavy rain naturally swelled the rivers, and a dozen miles from its source a stream would be unfordable. When that is the case, the traveller has either to cross in one of the native "dug-outs"—mere logs of wood with a hollow scooped out down the centre—or wait several days till there is a lull in the flood. This last is what we had to do on more than one occasion, and in some ways I was glad; for it gave us a little rest and time to overhaul and repair our kit. On such occasions we put up in some farmhouse near the river, and here out