

gullies, and then to arrive at the top and find ourselves still hedged in by trunks of trees, and able to see nothing whatever beyond. We were, too, afflicted by a scourge of mosquitoes and midges. In no part of India have I felt them so much. In the daytime we had the midges driving us wild with their irritating pricks, and at nights the mosquitoes in clouds. By simply closing the hand a dozen of them could be caught at any time. Of course we had to wear veils the whole day long, and keep our hands in our pockets or wrapped round with cloth whenever we could; but even then we suffered badly, and washing was a positive torture. Gad-flies were another form of torture invented for these parts. They would attack us pretty constantly, but it was chiefly to the poor animals that they directed their attention, and the wretched mules were often covered with blood and driven wild by their attacks.

At night we would put up in a sable-hunter's hut. These are met with every twelve or fifteen miles, and each is the head-quarters of a party of hunters who trap sables and also seek the ginseng root—the root of a plant upon which the Chinese set great store for medicinal purposes. These huts were suitable enough for the small parties who ordinarily inhabited them, but when our large party came in addition they were crammed tight. We had to sleep in them, for to sleep outside amongst the swarms of mosquitoes and in the damp of the forest was almost impossible. We therefore packed ourselves into the huts, and were sometimes so tightly squeezed in the row on the kang, that we had to lie heads and tails with the Chinamen, to get ourselves all in. We had also to keep a fire burning to raise smoke for the purpose of driving off the mosquitoes; so the heat on a summer's night and the state of the atmosphere inside may be imagined! We, of course, got quite inadequate rest, and that period of our journey was a very trying one.

These hunters received us, as a rule, very well, but theirs