

cold grey creeps over them, the running streams become coated with ice, and as soon as we had had our dinner—we always dined together, to save trouble and time in cooking—and darkness had fairly fallen, we took up our beddings from the places where we had ostentatiously laid them out to mislead any prowling Kanjutis, and hurried off to deposit them behind any rock which would shelter us from the icy wind which blew down from the mountains. It is a curious fact, but when real difficulties seem to be closing around, one's spirits rise. As long as you have health—that is the main point to look after, but it is easily attained in mountain travel—and provided that you take plenty of food, difficulties seem only to make you more and more cheery. Instead of depressing you, they only serve to brace up all your faculties to their highest pitch; and though, as I lay down that night, I felt that for the next two or three weeks we should have harder and harder work before us, I recollect that evening as one of those in all my life in which I have felt in the keenest spirits.

At the first dawn of day on the following morning we were astir. The small stream was frozen solid, and the air bitingly cold; so we hurried about loading up, had a good breakfast, and, as the sun rose, started off straight at the mountain wall—a regular battlement of rocky peaks covered with snow, where it was possible, but for the most part too steep for snow to lie. After travelling for three or four miles, a valley suddenly opened up to the left. The guide immediately remembered it, and said that up it was an easy pass which would completely outflank the mountain barrier. The going was good. I left the ponies, and in my eagerness hurried on rapidly in front of them, straining to see the top of the pass, and the “other side”—that will-o'-the-wisp which ever attracts explorers and never satisfies them, for there is ever another side beyond. The height was beginning to tell, and the pass seemed to recede the nearer I approached it. One rise after