

be brought from the villages of Turkestan, six days' march across a pass seventeen thousand feet high. This was the only "base" for the exploration of a mountainous region where for two months we should not meet with inhabitants. There were not at this time sufficient supplies for our party in Shahidula, and the question was how to get them there. If I sent into the villages of Turkestan for them, the Chinese might object to this, for these villages were under Chinese authority, and the Chinese have been known to be obstructive. On the other hand, to carry up supplies from Leh would have been a serious undertaking. The furthest village in the Ladak district is one hundred and eighty miles from Shahidula, and separated from it by three passes averaging over eighteen thousand feet in height. As, therefore, the Chinese had been very civil to me on my former journey, I trusted to their being so again, and sent on a man to procure supplies from the Turkestan villages to bring to Shahidula.

All these preparations having been made, I said good-bye to Captain Ramsay, and on August 8 again set out. Directly behind Leh a high pass, the Khardung, seventeen thousand six hundred feet above the sea, has to be crossed, and as the ascent to it from Leh is very abrupt, I experienced a bout of mountain sickness, which depressed me greatly for the time. When the ascent to high altitudes is gradual, one becomes accustomed to the changed condition of the atmosphere; but when the ascent to such a height as seventeen thousand feet is abrupt (as in this case) most men seem to feel the change, and a racking headache and feeling of sickness and depression soon lets the traveller know that mountain sickness has come over him. On this occasion I became terribly depressed. I thought that if I was so bad as this at the very start, how should I fare when there were three still higher passes to cross before even Shahidula, the starting-point of my real journey, could be reached, and when there were ten others besides to