

opportunity of inspecting the Gurkha escort, and I had them drawn up for the purpose. The Russian officer looked at them, and then made a remark to me. The Gurkha non-commissioned officer, thinking that Captain Grombtchevsky must necessarily be remarking on their small size, whispered to me to tell him that these Gurkhas I had with me were unusually small, but that the rest of their regiment were much bigger than Captain Grombtchevsky himself. The Russian officer was well over six feet in height, and the average of a Gurkha regiment must be a good six inches lower, for Gurkhas are a small, thick-set race; so I could not commit myself to quite so flagrant an "exaggeration," but I told Captain Grombtchevsky how the Gurkha had wanted to impose upon him, and he was immensely tickled. Altogether he was very much taken with the appearance of the Gurkhas, and with the precision and smartness of the few drill exercises they went through. He said he had thought the native troops of India were irregulars, but he now saw that they were as good as any regulars. I think the Gurkhas were equally impressed with the soldierly bearing of the Russian officer; but I was surprised to see that they did not fraternize with the Cossacks, as they are noted for doing with British soldiers, and I found the reason to be that they rather looked down upon the Cossacks, on account of their being less well paid and equipped than themselves. This is a thoroughly Oriental way of regarding things; but for my own part I was much struck with the many excellent qualities of the Cossacks, and no officer could wish for any better material for soldiers than they afford.

Finding Captain Grombtchevsky's company so agreeable, I halted a day with him, and on October 25 set out again towards the Tagh-dum-bash Pamir. On leaving camp I made the Gurkha escort salute the Russian officer by presenting arms, and Captain Grombtchevsky returned the compliment by ordering his Cossacks to "carry swords." We then parted,