

a type common in very elevated regions where the winter is long and the rainfall in summer small, but not elsewhere. Tibet is a collection of Pamirs on a large scale, for there, too, there is not sufficient water to wash out the valleys down to their bottoms, and in many parts of the Himalayas, the Karakoram Mountains, and the Hindu Kush, where similar conditions exist, there are regular pamirs. And by this time the reader will have gathered that the word "pamir" is merely the distinctive name of this particular kind of valley. The Shimshal Pass into Hunza is called by the people of that country the Shimshal Pamir, though it is far away from the regions which we mark on our maps as "The Pamirs."

This, then, is the physical formation of the Pamirs. Of their outward clothing many conflicting accounts have been given. One traveller, going to them in the late autumn, when everything living has been nipped by frost, says that they are an utterly desolate region. Another, seeing portions of them in the summer, says that they are covered with the most splendid grass. My own experience was that, though grass of a close, good quality was to be found in certain places, the greater part of the valley bottoms is covered with coarse wormwood scrub only. Patches of rich pasture are to be found here and there, but no one must imagine rolling grassy plains on the Pamirs. This is what I had expected, and I thought the ponies of my caravan would have an abundance of rich pasture to graze on; but I was sadly disappointed to find that only in a few favoured spots could they obtain this, and that, for the greater part of the way they had to content themselves with picking about among scrub.

Trees, of course, are never seen, and even shrubs and bushes in a few places only. Consequently fuel is scarce, and the inhabitants and travellers have to content themselves with the roots of the wormwood.

The climate, as might be imagined, is very severe. I have