

at home to see in what poverty this highly educated man lived, and to what straits he put himself in the exercise of his calling. Soon after we arrived he was dining with us, and the next morning when he came to see us he said he had slept much better that night. I asked him how it was he had done so, and he replied he thought it must be from having had some meat to eat at dinner with us. Then it was we found out that he lived on bread and vegetables only, for he had not more than ten or twelve rupees a month to spend, and lived in the merest hovel, which the Chinese had lent him. Of course, after that he always had one, and generally two meals a day with us, and we were delighted at the opportunity of having his company.

Beech and Lennard returned from a trip to Maralbashi before Christmas, so we were able, with them and with the Russian consul, his secretary, his son, the Cossack officer of the escort, and Père Hendriks, to have a good-sized dinner-party on Christmas Day. Beech had a wonderful tinned plum-pudding, which went off with an explosion when it was opened on the table, and I had another, which a kind friend in India had sent up, and which arrived on Christmas Eve, so we were able to show our Russian friends what "le plum-pudding anglais," which they had heard so much about but never seen, was really like.

Beech soon set off to Russian Turkestan, and was most hospitably entertained there by the governor-general and every other official whom he met, and came back in April much impressed with his reception. Then he and Lennard departed for the Pamirs to shoot *Ovis poli*, seventeen head of which magnificent animals they managed to bag.

At this time my life was saddened by two of the hardest blows which can befall a man. Both of them were sudden and unexpected, and in that far-away land letters from my friends took many months to reach me, and only came at intervals of weeks together. I longed to be home again once more, and