

peaches, pear and apple trees—came into full leaf, and spring in all its freshness of beauty had blossomed into life.

With the spring the looks of the people lost their winter gloom. It would be hard for these mountain people to be anything but gloomy, or think of anything else than "stratagems and spoils," when all their surroundings, indoors and out, are so depressing as they are in winter, when there is no outdoor work to be done, and they can only brood and contemplate. But everything is different when spring comes on. Then they have to go out to work in the fields; they have the warm bright sunshine, and growing crops, and blooming orchards, and the fresh green of the trees to cheer them. During the winter we had had more than one scare of attacks and conspiracies and plots of various kinds. But as the people found more to occupy their minds, and as they saw the Mehtar establishing his position in the presence of the British mission in the country, these ugly rumours grew less frequent, and the disposition of the people more favourable.

We were now able to make little excursions, and Bruce and I had a very delightful climb up the ridge of mountains behind Chitral. Bruce had with him four Gurkhas from his regiment. Two of these had been with him on Sir William Conway's explorations and climbs in the Karakoram Range. He had also the appliances of Alpine mountaineering—ice-axes, ropes, climbing-irons, etc. So, for the first time in my life, I was able to do a climb in the orthodox Alpine-club manner. Our first night we spent on a grassy patch, high up the mountain-side, at the edge of a pine forest, and we immediately felt a sense of relief at having some breadth of view before us, something to look out upon instead of being cooped up in the narrow valley below. The next day we made our way along a ridge through deep snow, and bivouacked directly under the peak we were going to attack. Then, on the following morning, the ice-axes and ropes came into play, and Bruce and