

his Gurkhas showed their mountain craft. I was then able to realize how valuable is a training in mountaineering, and how useful are the Alpine appliances. Bruce took me up places which I should, of course, have attempted if I had been obliged, but which I should certainly not have cared to ascend in cold blood like this without the aid of rope and ice-axe. We finally reached a very narrow rock arête or ridge, and, climbing thence to its summit, found ourselves sitting astride of a razor-like ridge of limestone, with our legs on each side dangling over nearly sheer precipices. Just at the summit the rock was so sharp that it was impossible to stand up, and I doubt if we could even have sat except astride. We were at no great height, for the summit, according to our aneroid, was only thirteen thousand five hundred feet above sea-level; but this was the highest point in the immediate vicinity, and we were able to get a magnificent bird's-eye view of the Chitral valley and a good part of the country.

It is from a height like this that one can best appreciate what Chitral really is. It is just a sea of mountains. The peaks stand all round like the crests of a wave, sometimes of the same dull colour as the general mass, sometimes breaking upwards in crests of white snow. Ridge behind ridge the mountains rise, like the waves of the sea, and they finally toss themselves up into one great towering mass, and we saw straight before us, and only a few miles distant, the Tirich Mir, twenty-five thousand four hundred feet in height. For the most part these mountains are absolutely bare, and the whole country appears to be nothing but rock, till far down in the valley bottoms, at places where the water from some mountain torrent can be led on to cultivable ground, patches of green are seen. Even of the valley bottoms the whole lengths are not cultivated, and it is only where suitable soil has been washed down from the mountains and deposited in the valley, and when water can be brought on to this that any cultivation