

to follow, it was necessary to diverge either to the north or to the south of it. We agreed that if we shaped a southerly course we would probably find plenty of water, and that where there was water the all-important grass and boortza would not be far distant; whereas if we went into a somewhat higher latitude and comparatively open country with only low mountains, the chances were that water and grass would be very scarce. Although fully recognising the wisdom of adopting the former course, we eventually settled to venture on the latter, as it would lead us further away from Bower's route. Many people attribute to travellers in out-of-the-way countries a propensity to exaggerate. At the risk of incurring this imputation, I must refer to the enormous numbers of antelopes seen near Camps 19 and 20. For many miles in every direction except west, from Camp 19, in fact as far as the human eye aided by powerful binoculars could see, there were thousands of antelopes in large herds scattered about irregularly wherever there was plenty of grass. I must confess my inability to guess at the approximate numbers on the outskirts of the comparatively level ground called on my map "Antelope Plains," but Pike, who had had experience in sheep-farming in America, was of opinion that at least 15,000 were seen.

About this time two of the caravan men became too ill to march, and, as there was only one unladen animal, I had to mount Sonam on my riding pony and get along as best I could on foot. Though the marches were short, I was very tired before they were nearly finished, owing to weakness after fever, and I was exceedingly glad when it was time to halt and throw down my rifle, ammunition, field glasses, and water bottle. Nurdin, another Argûn, was also on the sick list with inflamed eyes. His right eye was so very bad at Camp 19 that I put a bandage over