

CHAPTER III

Council of War—Plan of operations—Skill and pluck of Pike—Changfunchuk—Chukpas completely surprised—Anxiety about Pike—Searching for missing Animals—Burning surplus Baggage—Our Situation—Serious Outlook—"Caching" Stores—Making Clothes out of Tents—Illness of Pike—Anxiety about Water—Waterless Camp—Meeting with Nomads—They refuse to help us—Shown the wrong direction—Lost in the Desert

AS there was evidently an enemy hanging about in this neighbourhood, we held a council to concert measures for the recovery of supplies and transport. Though the general disposition of our company was not warlike, we came unanimously to the decision that the Chukpas must be found and compelled to make restitution. Pike and I had revolvers, and in the camp there were eight magazine carbines and a shot gun, but, besides ourselves, the only men capable of using these weapons were Leno, Sanman, Utam Singh (a Sikh), Changfunchuk (an Argûn), and Dass (the Hindu cook), who had courage enough for the discharge of the shot gun but was incapable of using it with the necessary deliberation. So far as fighting was concerned, it mattered little that a considerable number of our men were absent, looking for the lost mules. Pike undertook the search for the marauders and chose as his companions Utam Singh, a man who could be relied on, and Changfunchuk, who was a good shot. To my lot fell