

without avail, for all our negotiations were with Nymget Sring and were carried on in our camp apart from the other Rundor men, who, there is little doubt, knew nothing of the bargaining. As soon as night set in these men bolted and took their yaks with them, and, what was vexatious, they went unpaid, so that we had to entrust the money to Nymget Sring, who, with a smile, undertook to satisfy them.

At Pagrim our situation was very dreary, and we resolved to proceed. The transport yaks were now gone, but having obtained from Nymget Sring the use of his two ponies, we loaded these and the other animals heavily and set out. We had to send back repeatedly for surplus baggage, and it took us two days to travel eleven miles to Niagzu. On the hills to the north of the valley there was a large herd of sheep, and on my asking the Ladaki, Changfunchuk, for what purpose they were driven there he replied, "To get food."

"But," said I, "they cannot eat stones or earth."

"No, Sahib, they eat grass."

"But they cannot find grass there."

"Oh, yes, Sahib, there is grass between the stones."

The mountain-side was rocky, and I could perceive no green thing, but the Tibetan sheep were used to scanty fare and could subsist in winter on these bleak mountains.

Niagzu was Rassoula's "warm spot." The place was sheltered from the cold west wind by high mountains, and we found a fairly level piece of turfy ground hemmed in on three sides by low trees and tall brushwood so as to form an excellent camping-ground. In a short time we had collected a large quantity of dry brushwood and roots of trees, and all hands indulged in the luxury of large camp fires. Since leaving Tankse on June 1st (five months before) we had found no fuel but boortza and dung, which barely sufficed for cooking purposes,