

very kindly had sent a chaprassie to meet us and make the necessary arrangements. Fortunately very little snow had fallen on the Chang La, and having easily surmounted this pass, we reached Leh on November 13th.

I spent a few days in resting and paying off the caravan men, and when all business relating to the expedition had been accomplished, I reluctantly said goodbye to Arnold Pike, who, for the purpose of sport, had determined to spend the winter in Ladak. His genial society had been a source of great enjoyment during the expedition, and to his indefatigable energy and hearty co-operation I was largely indebted for success. But for his care and skill the natural history and bola specimens which we picked up would have fared badly. In addition to rendering such assistance, he had acted as quarter-master, and had, besides, been always eager to reconnoitre, even at times when labouring under physical weakness. He had resolved to remain in Ladak—I had to rejoin my regiment; so with a hearty handshake we parted company and I set out for Srinagar.

There were reports of an early snowfall on the Zoji La, and while I was delayed at Dras twenty inches of snow fell. When the weather had cleared I set out with coolies lightly laden, and four men to act as guides and make a track through the snow. Our progress was at the rate of about a mile an hour, and it took us four days to travel to Baltal, a journey of 31 miles, which in summer I had accomplished in a single day. The pass, we found, was closed even to mail runners, and a number of wretchedly clad women and children from Baltistan, who were waiting to cross, attached themselves to my party. The worst day's march was from Mechuhoi to Baltal, during which we were impeded by a strong wind which blew the fine frozen snow in our faces. Accompanied by Leno, Utam Singh, and a man from Dras, I had set out early.