

caravan bashi ; and five other Argûns, four of whom had accompanied me on the former journey.

Owing to the demand for transport animals for the Tirah Campaign, ponies or mules fit for my purpose were difficult to find in Srinagar. There was no scarcity of old and useless animals, for which the owners asked fancy prices, and scores of these had to be rejected before thirteen ponies of fair quality could be secured. On my behalf an arrangement was kindly made at Bandipur by Major Yeilding, the commissariat and transport officer on special duty in Kashmir, for twenty-five ponies for at least six months, from Shukur, a native of Astor. The average native of the East, however, does not hesitate to go back on his bargain if it seems convenient to do so, though he rightly considers such a proceeding disgraceful in a Sahib. Of the ponies supplied by Shukur none were of the prescribed standard and condition, and only a few were fit for a lengthened journey. For a time there was a difficulty in procuring pack saddles, which the caravan bashi asserted amounted almost to an impossibility, but eventually wooden ones were obtained from Dras.

Having seen Khalik and the ponies set out on the road to Bandipur, the starting-point for Gilgit, it was with great pleasure that on September 15th I left Srinagar, and floated down stream in a dunga, or native house-boat. Next morning, suffering from the stings of vicious mosquitoes, I reached Bandipur, where Khalik and the ponies were waiting, but the lazy bashi had done nothing towards having the new saddles fitted to the ponies, two of which had slight sores on the back, so that I had to ask Major Yeilding for a couple of substitutes. Profiting by experience acquired in my first journey, I determined not only to weigh every package, but to have the packages arranged in almost equal loads of about two maunds or 160 lbs. each. The caravan bashi is usually instructed to