

it was to find where the river could be most conveniently forded, had a pony which was quite accustomed to the ice. The guide thought nothing of the difficulties of those who were less satisfactorily mounted, but boldly crossed the river wherever he chanced to meet it. The pony, freed from the rider's weight, kept his feet on the ice at the near side of the river; then he carried his master across the channel where there was no ice, gave him a lift on to the ice at the further side, and scrambling up without much difficulty reached *terra firma* beyond. This procedure may have been admirable in itself, but it was not what was required in the leader of a mixed company like ours, and our inconsiderate guide was deposed, Raju, the caravan bashi, and I undertaking the work. With long sticks we ascertained the depth of the channel and the nature of its bed. When the place seemed suitable, we requisitioned the services of the *quondam* guide in clearing away the ice with a pick-axe from the bank to the open channel of the stream. Then we despatched two men on horseback to the further bank and there a similar operation was carried out, the ponies having been sent back for further loads, half-frozen, with their tails decked with long icicles that jingled and rattled at every movement. The yaks, too, after crossing, sparkled with the countless icicles which hung from their long hair and tails, but these animals, unlike the ponies, seemed indifferent to the cold.

Quite close to Iryar in this valley, the route was very difficult. The track was narrow, along the edge of steep cliffs, and one of the ponies, having lost its footing, fell to the rocks below, where it must have met instantaneous death. Among the packages with which the animal was laden, were a bag of flour encased in a waterproof covering which was but little injured, a bag of corn which was quite torn up, and a box containing, in