

struggling for existence, only show the severity of the conditions to which they are subjected.

I remained at Yepal Ungur till the rain and snow should cease, but meantime fresh tracks were found leading from the carcasses of two recently killed yak, and indicating that two men with donkeys were going towards Polu. Having resolved to send Raju to Polu to obtain the sheep from Ladak with their loads of corn, I had tried to induce some of the Kara Sai men to act as his guides, but they had declined, feigning ignorance of the route. Their real reason was probably founded on the hostility which existed between the Polu and the Kara Sai villagers, who both claimed the right to shoot yak near Yepal Ungur, the Polu men asserting that the right belonged to them exclusively. Since none would act as guides, I sent Raju on the track of the two Polu yakshooters. Before this, being myself unable to travel, I had sent out three reconnoitring parties. Changfunchuk and a Kara Sai man were ordered to search the country east of Camp 91 and south of Shor Kul, for a caravan route where grass and water could be found, leading in any direction between the rising sun and the snow mountains east of Yepal Ungur. Sonam with a companion was directed to ascend the nearest tributary of the Kiria River for the same purpose. Upon both of these parties, the instruction to have the rising sun on their left when starting each morning was emphatically impressed, and a large reward was promised for any useful discovery. The third party consisted of Islam Akun, the guide from Kara Sai, and a companion, their instructions being to ascertain whether it was possible to descend the nearest tributary of the Kiria River to Polu. Islam Akun was a chicken-hearted man, afraid to go, and soon came back with the information that he did not think any one else had ever gone that way.