

I was, except for a few minutes, completely equipped against the cold, the conditions here were very trying, and I could not but marvel at the hardiness displayed by the yak-men. They were by no means overburdened with raiment, and not one of them wore gloves, yet they seemed to suffer no injury and almost no inconvenience from exposure to the biting wind. Among them was a mere boy, who usually led the foremost yak. He wore no gloves, and his clothes were in a wretched condition; yet he seldom spoke, never complained, and never appeared even to be fatigued. Natural selection would, of course, go a long way to account for the power of endurance shown by these mountaineers; the men who were not fit for the climate would die off and leave possession to those that were; but the cheerful, uncomplaining industry exhibited by the boy appeared to spring from virtues which he shared with none of the others, and which were very pleasing to contemplate.

The descent on the Raskam side of the pass, being exposed to the sunshine, was quite free from snow, and the one glacier which we noticed on our left hand as we descended was small but steep. At first the declivity was steep and covered with shale and loose stones, on which Ram Singh and Mohammed Joo, who led the way, were unable to keep an upright position. By keeping the yaks pretty close to one track, however, we improved the road and I was able to descend without much trouble; but so difficult was the ground that four of the six yak slipped and fell.

Nearly a year before, when at Yarkand, I had bought a thick-coated dog, Zambôk by name, which though of a very independent disposition had become quite attached to me. His custom was to sleep in my tent and to enliven the night by rushing out to bark at the animals or at sounds which were to me inaudible. His love of the chase