

ported that the Chow-Kuan had become more suspicious of me, had sent to Wacha first a humble official to inquire whether I had given any trouble to the inhabitants, or taken supplies without paying for them, and, later, a Beg to ascertain what I had been doing in Wacha, and in what places I had erected pillars. I had, at the time of my visit, fortunately told Sher Mohammed and the Ming Bashi of Wacha that the pillars ceased to be of any use as soon as I departed from the locality, and that any one who cared for mountain exercise was at perfect liberty to level them with the ground.

On Christmas Day, 1898, I was once more at Zad and in occupation of the same tent (ak oey, literally white house) in which I had, in solitude, spent the Christmas of 1897. Dass, the cook, knew that Christmas was the Sahib's burra din (or holy day), which to his professional mind was synonymous with a day of feasting. He inquired what he should prepare for dinner, suggesting, among other things, a plum-pudding. I expressed no preference for this article of diet, but Dass was desirous of showing his skill, and plum-pudding was prepared. The main or only ingredients were the shakings of the biscuit-bag, ghee, sugar, and a few currants. The process of manufacture was simple: the ingredients were stirred together, heated over a fire, emptied into a pudding-dish, decorated with a few breadcrumbs, slightly baked, and then served. If the result was not perfectly satisfactory my respect for the cook was undiminished, and I found compensation in the beverage which had been carefully reserved for this day's feast.

It happened that the Beg of Zad had gone with Tahir Beg to attend to official duties at a distance, and I had the honour of receiving a visit from his wife, who came to state the reason of her husband's non-appearance. He would have attended to my wants personally had he not