

borrow money for my use, as my stock of Chinese coin was at a low ebb, I betook myself to the inspection of my sheep. Of the 94 which I had left with Nurbu in September, 14 had died and 32 were unfit for transport work, so that it was necessary to purchase fresh animals. All the flocks in the region were now very thin and many animals in bad health, and it was with the greatest difficulty and after rejecting many scores of sheep that I was able to raise the number of my transport flock to 130. Then the new animals required some training, or at least had to be accustomed to carrying loads and to being tied up at night. We had more ammunition than we could conveniently carry, and we found time to reduce the quantity by giving the men who seemed capable of handling firearms some practice with the carbine, while Ram Singh, Abdul Karim, and Dass were initiated in the use of revolvers, though only Abdul Karim became a good shot. The time spent at Polu was tedious, our expenses were heavy, and our anxieties were increased by Raju, who became more lazy and troublesome, feasting with his friends on the rations served out for the men, and at the same time fostering discontent in the caravan.

Then the Sia adopted a more favourable tone and made many fair promises, so that I began to hope that by prolonging my visit I might obtain help in travelling through the Polu gorge. This appearance of yielding, however, was assumed, and his fair promises were made only for the purpose of temporising; after telling the Polu villagers plainly in my presence that they were quite at liberty to assist me, he let them know, when I was absent, that words spoken before me were not intended to be acted upon. My men informed me of this underhand system, and one evening when they knew that the Sia, in accordance with his habit, was stupefied with opium, a deputation came to me and stated that they dared not