

bottom of the gorge. Laden donkeys, patient and sure-footed though they are, cause considerable trouble when travelling on steep ground, for they plant their hind feet so very close to their forefeet that, no matter how tight the breeching and additional ropes are made, the saddles and loads constantly slip forwards to their necks. When we reached the bottom we had at once to make preparation to scale the opposite bank, and in this labour we had the assistance of two men, whom we had met soon after leaving Camp 163. The animals had to be unloaded; the baggage had to be carried by the men up the steep rocky slope; then the animals had to be helped up and reloaded where the track was again sufficiently broad. The labour was difficult and dangerous, and when the worst of it had been accomplished, we looked for ground suitable for the night's quarters. Our bivouac was long and straggling; some of the baggage was still at the foot of the rocky ascent; the donkey loads were deposited on the top of a high steep ridge where there was some good grass, while some of our belongings were set down beside a large shelter formed by boulders. Leaving my section of the caravan, I went forward to reconnoitre and help the men; and when, after dusk, I returned, I found Ram Singh and Dass levelling a place for me to sleep on. These men, however, rarely made the best use of their surroundings, and I had to look for a spot where I might hope for some slight shelter from the driving sleet. Having levelled a piece of ground where the steep cliffs afforded a little protection, I set up a box and the camp-table so that they would shelter my face, at least until the direction of the wind changed. In the gorge Sonam had "cached" supplies, so that we had abundance of food; and when I had partaken of the food which Dass had prepared for us, I was glad to take off some of my wet clothes and seek sleep.