

vent to my feelings with "curses not loud but deep." As soon as I was disencumbered of the ponies, I went to ascertain how the accident had occurred, and learned that it was not Sonam but Kasim that had been killed. When I reached the spot I peered over the edge of the precipice, and saw Abdul Karim standing beside the lifeless body. Kasim had been tightening the rope which fastened a pony's load, but instead of doing so according to the standing orders as advised at the time by Sonam, with the pony turned across the track, he had pulled with his back to the precipice, and one foot against the load, so that when the rope broke nothing could save him.

Kasim was a caravan man whom I had engaged in Kashgar, a good worker, but an obstinate despiser of rules and regulations. With little experience in caravan work, he would never take advice from any of the other men, but would do things in his own way. On the day before the fatal accident he had, against the remonstrances of Abdul Karim and others, tried without help to take a laden pony over the most difficult part of the ascent, with the result that the pony just escaped being killed.

As we advanced we had to face blinding snow and sleet, but at length reached Kha Yak Day, where we overtook Niaz Akun's section of the caravan, from which one pony had been lost by a fall from a cliff. The pitiless and blinding sleet continued; the men were cold and wet, and the cold and hungry animals were driven from place to place in search of food and shelter which did not exist. We found fuel enough to boil the water for tea, and there was a small cave of loess, round the mouth of which I made a barricade of boxes and sacks so as to form a shelter against the snow. This place of rest was just large enough to lie down in, not high enough to sit up in, but I had to share it with some of my sheep and goats, which would not be turned out.