

valley, I could realize also why Kao Hsien-chih's braves when they had struggled up to this height at first refused to move farther. Their resourceful general had foreseen this awkward predicament and prudently arranged a clever ruse which induced his men to advance into the deep valley below. There their mere appearance after surmounting such a formidable barrier created a panic among the occupants of Yasin and promptly assured complete victory. But that as well as the stratagem employed by Kao Hsien-chih is 'another story'. I felt sorry at the time that there was no likelihood of a monument ever rising on the Darkot to the brave Chinese general. For, judged by the difficulties encountered and vanquished, this crossing of the Darkot and the Pamirs may well be held to surpass the great Alpine feats of commanders famous in European history, from Hannibal to Napoleon and Suvorow.

Two days later we crossed the main Hindukush range over its lowest depression, the Baroghil, about 12,400 feet above the sea. The abnormally heavy snowfall of that year had caused this otherwise easy saddle to be still covered with great masses of snow. Their condition proved so bad that but for the assistance sent from the Afghan side it would have been quite impossible to get our loads across.

It was a delightful sensation to find myself at the headwaters of the Oxus and thus brought nearer to that fascinating region of ancient Bactria lower down its course towards which my eyes had been eagerly turned since my early youth. Access to them, however, was barred for me—and through adverse political circumstances has, alas, remained so to this day. But for my progress eastwards to the Chinese border on the Pamirs, every help which the scanty resources