

But as regards transport arrangements it was easy to realise a marked change. Since an Imperial garrison was placed in Gilgit and the new "Gilgit Transport Road" was constructed, the Indian Commissariat Department has taken charge of the means of transport on this route. Timely arrangements had been made on my behalf by Captain Bretherton, and a reference to the warrant officer on the spot brought the quick assurance that ponies and coolies would be available whenever wanted. The time when the intending traveller on this route had to press his transport as best he could has passed, let us hope, for ever. If restrictions have to be placed on the number of private visitors in the interest of the commissariat work on which the supplies of the Gilgit garrison depend, the disadvantage is amply compensated by the benefit to the Valley at large. There was a time, still vividly remembered, when the demand for coolies to carry military baggage or supplies moving to Gilgit would spread terror through Kashmir villages. Of the thousands of cultivators used annually for this *corvée*, a large proportion never saw their country again; for, ill-fed and still worse clad, the 'Begaris' succumbed only too readily to the inclemency of climatic conditions or the epidemics favoured by them. All this has changed since Imperial advice and control has made itself felt in Kashmir, and the construction of the new Gilgit road, fit throughout for laden animals, including camels, during three summer months, has rendered the use of human labour altogether superfluous.

On the morning of the 31st of May sixteen ponies were ready to receive the loads which were made up by our tents, stores, instruments, &c. Formidable as this number appeared to me, accustomed as I was to move lightly on my wanderings in and about Kashmir, I had the satisfaction to know that my personal baggage formed the smallest part of these *impedimenta*. When the string of animals had filed off together with the Sub-Surveyor and servants, there were yet imposing