

parties of Dards whom I met on the road, and who had brought their unladen ponies safely across from Astor, I gathered better news. As the use of coolies meant a complete rearrangement of the loads, and still more trouble for the scanty population of the valley, which had already been obliged to furnish a hundred carriers for a survey party ahead of me, I decided to take ponies. These were easily forthcoming, and on the morning of the 3rd of June I set out from Gurez much as I had reached it, except that the more delicate instruments, like theodolite and photographic cameras, were entrusted to the safer backs of coolies.

The weather had cleared at last, and the march from Gurez up the side valley of the stream which comes from the Burzil was most enjoyable. To the south there was the view of the fine snow-covered mountains which divide the Kishanganga Valley from Kashmir, while along the route leading northwards the slopes of the valley refreshed the eye with their rich green of Alpine meadows and pine forests. Of avalanches which had swept down on the road there were many to cross. But the task of taking the ponies over them was trifling after the Tragbal experiences. I halted for the night at Pushwari, and next morning continued the march in the same direction and amidst similar scenery up to Minimarg.

There, at an altitude of nearly 10,000 feet above the sea, the valley widens to a little plain with plenty of grazing and a little collection of huts used by Gujar cattleherds for their summer quarters. The snow had melted here about ten days before, and the meadow land was already covered with young shoots of grass and a variety of hardy Alpine flowers, mostly old acquaintances from my beloved Kashmir 'Marg.' But a glance at the telegraph office placed here to keep watch over the line across the pass was sufficient to show the rigour of the winter season. Raised high above the ground, and enclosed with heavy palisaded verandahs and sheds, the building looked more like a small fort than an office. These