

feet above the level of the Indus, dominates the whole scenery in clear weather. A strong wind blowing down the valley carried the fine sand of the river-bed even into the closed rooms. Bunji altogether seemed by no means a desirable place to spend much time in, and strongly reminded me of the hot days I had once passed in the low hills of Jammu territory.

Fodder is practically not to be got at Bunji, and this accounts for the difficulty I found in procuring a pony that was to take me in the evening to the next stage where my baggage had marched ahead. At last the local Tahsildar had to lend me his mount, but it was already evening before I could set out. A lonely ride across a sandy plain brought me to the imposing suspension bridge which spans the Indus, just as it was getting dark. In the dim light of the moon which was then emerging for a time from the clouds the deep, rock-bound gorge of the river looked quite fantastic. And so did the rugged mountains further east through which the Gilgit River comes down to meet the Indus. To ride along the face of the rocky spur which rises in the angle of the two rivers was slow work in the scanty light of a fitful moon, and by the time I had turned fully into the Gilgit Valley and reached safer ground, rain came on and brought complete darkness. Mile after mile passed without my coming upon the longed-for rest-house where I could rejoin my camp. At last it became clear that I must have passed it by, and I had only the choice of continuing my ride straight into Gilgit or returning to search for the missed bungalow. Dark as it was I preferred the latter course, and ultimately discovered a side path which brought me to the expected shelter fully half a mile away from the main road. It was close on midnight when I sat down to the dinner which my servants had duly kept ready for me, though it had never struck them that I might require a light to show me the way to it.

Pari, where I spent what remained of the night, proved in