

north is clearly due to the isolated position of the country. It was curious to me to watch the rapid inroads which Hindustani has made in this linguistic area during the last few years. The few hundred men placed in garrison along the valley and the passage of the convoys bringing their supplies have sufficed to spread a knowledge of Hindustani, or rather Punjabi, among the villagers, which considering the brief time is quite surprising. In view of this experience the rapid spread of Arabic and Persian words on the line of early Muhammadan conquest throughout Asia becomes more easily intelligible.

The constant ups and downs of the road seemed to spread out considerably the distance of twenty-six miles between Chalt and Aliabad, the end of my march. Below the fort village of Tashot the route crosses the rock-bound bed of the river by a bold bridge, and then continues along absolutely barren slopes of rock and shingle for several miles. In the light of the evening the steep walls of rock rising on either side fully five or six thousand feet above the river, with the icy crests of Rakiposhi in the background, formed a picture worthy of the imagination of Gustave Doré. By the time I had cleared the worst parts of the road along sliding beds of detritus it had got quite dark. For two hours more the road wound round deep side-valleys from the north until I emerged on the open plateau which bears the village and lands of Aliabad. Here a little fort had been erected during the temporary occupation of Hunza, and close to it stands the bungalow of the Political Officer. Though Captain P. J. Miles, the rightful occupant, was absent on leave, I was able to find shelter under its hospitable roof. Cheerful enough the little luxuries of this frontier-officer's home appeared to me. His servants too, sturdy Hunza men, knew how to help a belated Sahib to an early meal and rest.

When I awoke in the morning a view of unexpected grandeur greeted me. Rakiposhi, seen now from the north-