

and who, anxious to return homewards after a winter's rest, had attached himself to my camp at Srinagar.

This time we were not encumbered by spare yaks for which no use could be found, and a little over an hour from the time of the start saw us at the point I had reached the day before. The weather kept clear though there was much wind. The yaks toiled on through the snow, which gradually grew deeper, but their progress was slow, and the task of keeping them ahead trying for the riders. More and more frequently we had to dismount and drag the stubborn animals out of the deep snowdrifts into which they had plunged. At last, when an hour's toil had advanced us only some 500 feet above the previous day's station, it became necessary to leave the yaks behind. The snow by this time had increased to an average of five feet in depth, and in many places where some projection of the ridge had favoured the formation of drifts, our alpenstocks altogether failed to strike the rock. The surface snow was crisp and granular, hence so easily shifted by the wind that in most places the footprints left by the men on their ascent the day before could barely be distinguished. The snow along the edge of the rock-wall, which we were careful to follow, seemed at this altitude to have accumulated only during recent winters. Hence it had scarcely yet had time to be compressed by its own weight into ice; and the glittering snow sheet over which we were ascending rested firmly on the rock. Against slips of snow and avalanches we were thus safe enough, while from the opposite side of the glacier where the southern wall of rock was topped by a thick layer of ice, little avalanches would glide down more and more frequently as the day wore on.

It was not easy work to ascend in the soft snow, where we continually sank in for a couple of feet, and where a slight deviation from the track of the front man would land one up to the waist. Though the high elevation we gradually