

moraine-like banks of hard snow. For the sake of the load-carrying men steps were cut in these banks by the spare men ahead with me. The advance was very slow work. But the time thus spent in ascending allowed me to realize how well the Lowarai deserves its evil reputation.

The ascent throughout lay in a narrow gorge flanked by precipitous spurs which would send their gliding masses of snow right across to the opposite side (Fig. 7). From avalanches there was here no possible place of safety. But the time for the great spring avalanches had passed by, apparently a fortnight earlier, and from any falls of fresh snow we were protected by the bitter cold of the night, which had frozen the surface hard. When the first flush of dawn showed over the spurs eastward the narrow saddle of the pass came in sight, and a little before 5 A.M. my party gained the top, *circ.* 10,200 feet above the sea.

Previous descriptions had prepared me for the abrupt fall of the northern face. Nevertheless, I was surprised to find myself at the brink of a real snow wall, some 80 to 100 feet high, and resting below on a remarkably steep slope where any heavy object once in movement would be swept irresistibly down. Where this snow wall joined on to the flanking height south-westwards, the Dak runners' track descended abruptly in narrow zigzags, the steps trodden into the hard snow being often at three or four feet vertical interval.

It was on the firmness of these steps that safety in descending depended; for any break might set the adjoining parts of the snow wall moving, though luckily it showed no signs of being corniced. No heavy loads had as yet been carried over it, and with anxiety I watched my coolies descending. It required much care on my part and a great deal of shouting to prevent overcrowding; but I felt heartily glad when at last I could start down and escape the icy wind sweeping the crest. Khan Muhammad Kuli Khan, the Native Assistant for Chitral, whom Captain Knollys had kindly sent to meet me, had carried his attentive care to the point of ascending the pass from Ziarat, the first Levy post on the north side. Not being encumbered with baggage he had