

the gorge became more and more wooded, and the many fine fir-trees and pines which avalanches had swept down into the snow-bed, delightfully scented the air (Fig. 8). How often had I enjoyed this avalanche perfume in the gullies descending from high forest-clothed Margs in Kashmir and Kaghan! As we approached Ziarat my Chitrali guides pointed out the huge avalanche which four weeks earlier had swept down a precipitous side valley and almost overwhelmed the block-houses of the Levy post.

It was a comfort to view this snow monster, recalling by its furrowed contortions the dragons drawn in old maps of the Alps to mark glaciers—and to think that we were safe now from risks of this kind. But still greater was the relief as I counted men and loads all complete before the smoke-begrimed log walls. After the endless writing, etc., it had cost me to secure my passage through Chitral, I could not help looking back with some triumph to the pass now safely behind me. The great obstacle had been taken without running any needless risks. I hastened to send off this news to friends on the Frontier through a runner who carried my telegrams to 'wire end' at Fort Drosh.

Soon after 8 A.M. the loads were transferred to the Chitrali carriers kept ready at the post, and the Pathans from the Dir side were paid off with a liberal Bakhshish into the bargain. It was delightful to feel in a new region, and pleasant also to realize by the mere look of the men who had greeted me on the Chitral side that the need of carrying a revolver lay behind me for good. As we descended rapidly towards Ashret, the first Chitral village, bits of the well-made road to the pass emerged here and there from the snow-beds (Fig. 9). At last where luxuriant jungle growth clothed the mountain sides some 6000 feet above the sea the snow was finally forsaken for the road. Curiously enough it offered here more chances of accident than where completely effaced. The wire of the telephone line connecting Ziarat with Fort Drosh had, of course, broken down during the snowy season, and now lying dishevelled across the road, it formed in places regular wire entanglements.