

down after us by nightfall I set out with my Indians. Sher Muhammad gallantly insisted upon remaining behind to see the baggage safely down that night or by daybreak. The route at the wide valley bottom being one continuous shallow marsh of melting snows, progress was wearily slow. There was only the choice between wading in icy water or risking frostbite for one's feet while sticking to our sluggish yak mounts in the bitter cold of that night. Luckily the temper of yaks allows something in the way of gymnastic exercises on the part of the rider to shake off incipient numbness. This and the attention needed by 'Dash,' who was mounted in front of me, alone kept me from falling asleep on this dismal ride.

At last, after midnight we heard a dog barking, and soon could rouse from their sleep Sher Muhammad's attendants and some Sarikolis. The shelter of the three small Kirghas left standing here for long years was filthy to a degree. But how welcome it seemed that night to us weary people! Of food, all I could get was some cups of hot tea, and the several-weeks-old attempt of Sher Muhammad's Wakhi cook to bake a 'Wilayeti' cake. Pungent smoke from the fire of half-wet yak dung filled the felt tent; but glad enough was I to warm myself by it after exposure to the bitter cold of a night at some 14,000 feet elevation. Then I stretched myself out on the focusing-cloth from my camera, the only clean thing within reach, and fell into a sleep fitfully broken by dreamt noises of baggage arriving.

Next morning the baggage began to come in reality by slow instalments; but my gratification at its safety was damped by the fact that the loads containing supplies and cooking things were brought last. It was mid-day before I could get some modest apology for the meals missed on the previous day. While waiting all through the morning there was ample time to get satiated with the surroundings at this my first camp on Chinese soil. Already in 1900 when I descended here from the Kilik Pass, the Kirghas left standing at the mouth of the K ok-t r k Jilga, probably ever since Lord Curzon's Pamir visit, were sad things to behold, judged unfit for resumption by their original Wakhi owners. Since