

watershed towards the Pei-ta Ho head-waters. There, at an elevation of about 14,600 feet, we saw the whole basin of the rising Su-lo Ho spread out before us, dotted with chains of small lakes which the head-streams connect and drain (Figs. 243, 244).

Mossy vegetation with a few flowers covered the saddle, and three wild yaks of huge size were seen browsing on it when we approached. We were all eager to bag one of them; for the supplies of our Chinese had begun to run very short by the time of our reaching the Su-lo Ho, and the risk of their starving was imminent. The few wild asses we had encountered since this state of things revealed itself, were too wary to give much chance for our carbines. And now, Tila Bai's and my own first shots having failed to hit, we had the chagrin of seeing these fine yaks disappear at a speed which, considering their bulk and the difficulty of breathing at such an elevation, seemed truly amazing.

With the crossing of that nameless pass and the change in the weather there began for us an altogether trying time. Steady rain set in as we descended to the Pei-ta Ho, and when the river was reached in the evening we were obliged to halt at a point where there was scarcely any grass or scrub. The difficulty about fuel was now brought home to us by the yak dung, on which we had so far relied, becoming soaked and useless. But the discomfort ensuing from this cause was slight compared with the risks now caused by the want of supplies among our pony-men and escort.

Though we had been on the march now for not more than fifteen days, and the pony-men had been told to bring flour for twenty-four, they now reported their stock exhausted, and an inspection of their belongings proved this true. It was the same with the escort. To meet this serious difficulty caused by their own improvidence, I had already collected whatever could be safely spared from our own supplies. But this would have been soon exhausted had I not been able to supplement this improvised commissariat store with the barley brought for our own ponies. Luckily the excellent grazing so far found had allowed us to husband this fodder, and