

fell disease, glaucoma. But during his stay at Charklik the pains in the head increased, and he was suddenly struck with blindness in one eye.

With heroic doggedness, a characteristic feature of his race, Naik Ram Singh clung to his task, and left the oasis for that trying desert site of Miran. There, while he was getting the larger temple cleared again under Ibrahim Beg's supervision preparatory to fresh photographic work, blindness descended on his second eye also. Undismayed by this terrible calamity, he persisted in waiting for some days by the side of the Miran stream hoping for an improvement and a chance of doing his work. Blindness did not loosen its grip, and after another week at Charklik he at last consented to rejoin me. Ibrahim Beg conducted him back with all possible care and expedition, travelling by the cooler hill route from Charchan to Keriya. I may mention as a significant trait in Ram Singh's dogged Sikh character, that though blind he would insist on cooking his food himself to avoid any infraction of caste rules, in spite of all trouble from burns and other accidents.

It was a pitiful story, and my heart ached at the thought of the poor fellow's sufferings. He was bearing himself most bravely, full of hope for ultimate recovery, and expressed touching gratitude for whatever little I could do to secure him comfort. I was quite unable to recognize the disease, but was all the more anxious to obtain professional examination and help as early as possible. So after engaging the first Hindu who had settled at Khotan, a Shikarpuri usurer, to act as cook, I hastened to send Ram Singh on to Yarkand by Chinese cart with all possible care for his comfort. There the Rev. Mr. Raquette of the Swedish Medical Mission diagnosed the incurable disease, but was able to relieve the pains in the head which had aggravated the Naik's misery. Deeply distressed as I felt at Mr. Raquette's report received three weeks later, which left no hope of recovery for Ram Singh, there was at least some comfort in the assurance he gave me about the character and origin of the disease. It might have come on just as well if Ram Singh had never volunteered for this journey, and nothing but a timely operation could have