

after him—men had in turn watched over him during the night—my poor companion lay in convulsions. Yet he recognized me when I stroked him, and on my holding some oats close to his mouth he struggled to get on his legs. Then the end came suddenly and brought relief from all pain.

I felt 'Badakhshi's' loss most keenly; for in the course of such long travels and hardships in common I had grown very fond of my brave and spirited mount, with his shapely head like an Arab's and his love of the wilds. Often I had pictured to myself our joint delight when I might let him taste on a Kashmir Marg what real grass and Alpine flowers were like. But the Gods had willed it otherwise and let him succumb, when the goal seemed so near, in the dreariest waste I had seen.

Our start that morning, September 17th, was made under the gloomiest aspects. So far careful rationing had allowed us to give each pony four to five pounds of oats daily and each donkey about half that amount. Grazing there had been practically none for the animals since September 12th, and now the remaining fodder store would just suffice for a day's feed at half rations. Yet no vegetation could be hoped for until we had descended to the Kara-kash Valley, and as we were unable to locate our position with reference to Johnson's rough route sketch, the distance thither remained very uncertain. The spirits of the men were very low, and the strength of the animals evidently giving out. I, too, felt it difficult to bear up against the depressing influence of nature.

We first trudged across sodden ground with occasional dry lagoons to the north-west until increasing marshiness obliged us to turn due north. There we struck a curious elongated dry lake bed undergoing wind erosion, and with its isolated clay terraces exactly reproducing on a small scale the characteristic features of the terminal Su-lo Ho basin (Fig. 333). The terraces, only six to ten feet high, displayed plain lacustrine stratification and clearly indicated that erosion was proceeding by winds striking west to east. Some large pools of brackish water lay quite close to the west of the 'Yardangs.'