

bed settling the accounts of Satip-aldi Beg and of our Khotan 'Kirakash.' The latter, in spite of the losses in ponies and donkeys, found themselves under the original terms amply rewarded for all the hardships they had shared with us. Their animals, too, had recovered their strength on the ample fodder rations I had given them as a present since we met the Kirghiz depot. I also made all needful arrangements for the further transport of my precious convoy of antiques, which was to move on camels across the Kara-koram and to be transferred beyond to yaks hired from Ladak for the difficult marches near and across the Sasser Glacier. The responsible task of seeing the whole of those fifty camel loads carried safely over the highest trade route of the world I entrusted to Rai Lal Singh, whose scrupulous care and untiring devotion I knew I could absolutely trust. One of Satip-aldi Beg's hardy Kirghiz had already a week before set out to carry news of my coming to Panimikh, the first Ladak village, and to summon yaks as well as the men who would be needed to assure safety to the loads in crossing the Sasser Glacier. Another of those indefatigable despatch-riders had since followed him with a letter reporting my mishap, and asking for medical help to be obtained, if possible, from the Moravian Mission at Leh.

On September 30th I myself set out from the Kara-kash Valley with the lightest possible baggage on ponies and only my few personal servants, in order to reach Leh as rapidly as the conditions of the difficult Kara-koram route, leading over passes of more than 18,000 feet and the troublesome Sasser glacier, would permit. Ibrahim Beg, my honest and energetic factotum from Keriya, to whom I said farewell here, had managed to hunt up from Kirghiz felt tents some staffs which somewhat improved the arrangement of poles required for the carriage of my improvised litter between ponies. By two forced marches I got myself carried to Sarigh-ot-darwaza, a point on the terribly bleak uplands where we struck the Kara-koram trade route. Then we followed the latter with its unending line of skeletons, sad witnesses of the constant succession of victims which the inclement physical conditions claim