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SPORT AND TRAVEL IN BOTH TIBETS



LADY
JENKINS



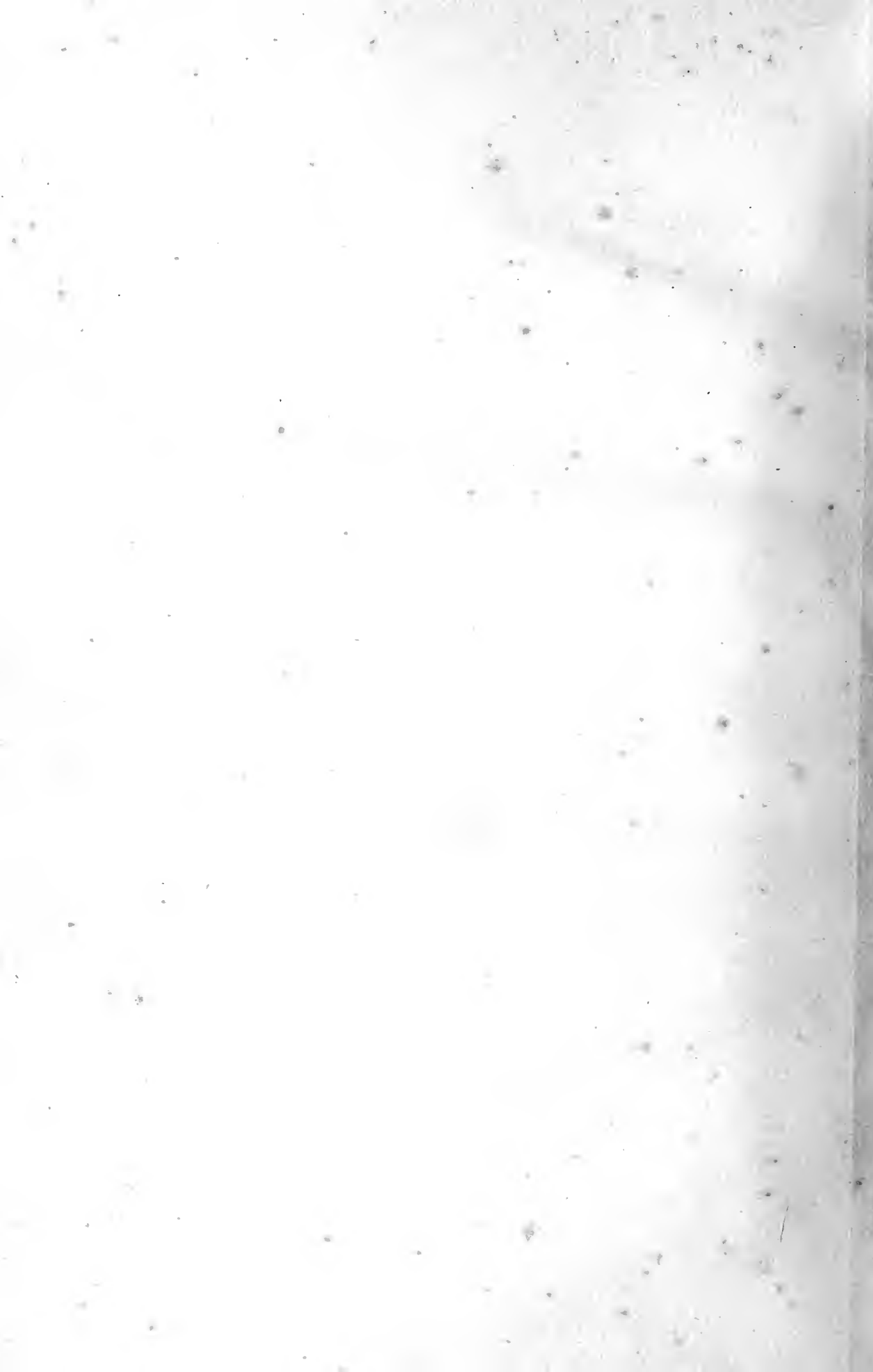


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SPORT & TRAVEL IN BOTH TIBETS

By LADY JENKINS

WITH MAP AND TWENTY-FIVE
COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS EX-
ACTLY REPRODUCED FROM THE
AUTHORESS'S ORIGINAL SKETCHES

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DEDICATED
TO MY FRIEND
MISS FRANCIS AUGERAND.


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PLATE I.

SRINAGAR.

PREFACE.

T the request of many friends who are interested either in Sport or Travel, I have written the accompanying pages from the notes in my diary kept during my expedition in both Tibets. The illustrations are reproduced from my own sketches made on the spot, sometimes under great difficulties—in no instance have I tried to present a finished picture, but rather to faithfully portray the strange, wonderful colourings and contours of this almost unknown part of the world.

I am greatly indebted to Miss B. Pughe for the picture of the curios, which I bought in Tibet, also to the Geographical Society for the map on which my route is marked, but most of all my thanks are due to His Highness the Maharajah of Kashmir for the facilities he gave me, and for his unvarying courtesy and kindness.

The photogravure on the cover of the book contains, besides the animals described, specimens of Markhor, Ibex, and Barrasingh, which I shot on my return journey from Leh, but which is not recorded for fear of wearying my readers by taking them twice over the dreary road between Leh and Bombay.

MINNA JENKINS.

CILBRONNAU,
NR. CARDIGAN,
October, 1909.

DESCRIPTION OF TROPHIES SHOT
BY LADY JENKINS IN 1906.

OVIS AMMON	-	-	-	1
TIBETAN GAZELLE	-	-	-	1
TIBETAN ANTELOPE	-	-	-	4
SHAPU -	-	-	-	3
BURHEL	-	-	-	2
BARRASINGH	-	-	-	2
IBEX	-	-	-	2
MARKHOR	-	-	-	2

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CHAPTER I.

THE guide books will tell you, with bewildering references to works you have never read and maps you do not possess, the way from Bombay to Srinagar. They, however, wisely omit any mention of the awful heat of the two days' and nights' train journey to Rawal Pindi, and in graphic descriptions of lovely scenery no suggestion is made of the torture of the three days' drive in a bumpy, springless tonga. But for those persons foolish enough to contemplate leaving Srinagar, they are unanimous in advising a halt of several days. A stay was, of course, necessary for me, as arranging the outfit and stores for such a lengthy journey takes time; being the guest of His Highness the Maharajah of Kashmir, and thanks to his great kindness, everything was made easy, and I was spared the many unnecessary delays which

most travellers in Kashmir have to learn to endure. Nibra, the shikari, met me as arranged, and acting on my firm belief that a good manager will always do better if he has entire control, I explained to him what I wanted and where we were to go. Also that he could arrange everything in his own way, buy the stores and equipment at the shops that gave him the best commissions, etc., with the fortunate result that after four days of ceaseless bargaining and fearful battles with boatmen and camp servants, we started, a cheery party, composed mainly of Nibra's relations and friends.

I was amused to learn from Ramjhan (the servant I brought with me from India) that Nibra is afraid my hands are too small for rifles, and my feet for the endless stony places we were to march over. He was, however, reassured by Ramjhan, who told him wonderful stories of my journey to Somaliland, and magnified the five tigers I was lucky enough to shoot in India into fifteen. It was not until we had left Leh that Nibra confessed he never expected the Ladysaheb, "looking like a town lady and not a shikari, and being horribly weak and thin,



PLATE II.

FISHING IN THE WULAR RIVER.

could be so strong and walk so well." Nibra is the first person who is not at all shocked at my going alone—he thinks it quite sensible, and assures me "he will be there," and from that moment to the time of my return, he *was there*; never obtruding or fussing, but when wanted, his helping hand or strong back was ready, always a faithful and encouraging guide, if a somewhat silent one. And as the months went by and I learnt the resources and quiet strength of his character, I was first amazed and then delighted at this grown-up child's views of life, cities, and countries he had never seen. Oh! fellow sportsmen and explorers, beware of what you say and do in foreign lands, for whole nations and countries are judged by you, the first and possibly the only example they may have of your countrymen.

The route from Srinagar to Leh is a wonder way, and it is hard to realize that in the brief 242 miles you can pass through such different lands and climates. I left Srinagar, as the sun was setting, in a large doonga or house-boat, having wisely taken the precaution to order the servants and baggage boats to keep out of earshot; and floating and rowing down

to the Wular Lake, one could almost imagine oneself in or near Venice. Promises of baksheesh made the relays of boatmen row well, and they landed us at Gundubal in the early morning. Venice and romance were soon forgotten in the truly Indian scene of hopeless muddle and wrangling as the boats were unloaded. The reason for the large stores of rope which we had brought with us was obvious when we saw the miserable inefficiency of the cord and pieces of string brought with the ponies to fasten their loads. Whilst I breakfasted under a lovely chenar tree, Nibra took command, and fairly soon everything was in order and the march begun; the ponies looked comically small and helpless under their bulging, bulky loads.

India in its turn was left behind, and for the next two days we rode through lovely pastures of sweet grass and fields of grain and waving Indian corn—a small Rhineland. The meadows were carpeted with flowers—larkspur, meadowsweet, wonderful pink mallows, wild roses, and festoons of the bridal creeper. The mountains which rose on either side sheer above us, were fringed and draped with firs and



PLATE III.

OVER THE ZOGI-LA.

pinces, and the slopes below with great walnut trees and whitey-green willows, harmonising well with the river, which is an unusual blue-grey colour. Then we rode along the banks of the rushing Scind River, winding through deep, quiet woods that reminded me of the Tyrol. As the valley mounted and the pine woods and snows came into sight, I believed I was in a part of Switzerland I had not yet seen. Then we climbed the Zogi-La Pass, and there are no more comparisons. You look down from its summit on one side into the smiling, happy land of Kashmir, and on the other, you get your first view of the extraordinary land known as Western Tibet—here, I may say, travelling in comfort ceases. We were unlucky crossing the Pass, as owing to a very recent landslip, the track was almost blocked, and one of the ponies making a false step, fell over the edge and was dashed to pieces.

Turning our backs on Kashmir, we descended the Zogi-La. Some way down we were obliged to pass a newly-fallen avalanche and to cross a log bridge over what ought to have been a tiny stream. Instead, however, owing to the displaced and melted snow, the

stream had become a roaring torrent, and it was quite a nerve-shaking walk, crossing without even a handrail; evidently a strong head is better than brains in this country! It was a wonderful sight to see most of the laden ponies cross without a falter or slip—three poor little fellows, however, could not be made to face the bridge till their loads had been removed, and then they walked trembling over, this delay, of course, making us very late getting to camp.

The climatic conditions were now becoming most trying, the cold being intense during the night and early mornings.

As the sun rose over the great massive and towering rocks, the heat became unbearable, being accentuated when we passed through the deep valleys and gorges, the loose stones reflecting the heat, making the air hot and dry as in an oven; the dust was awful, my face and lips began to crack and chap. I can almost hear you say: "Why did she not take some cold cream with her?" I did, and used it all in a very short time, and afterwards bought all there was in Leh and used all that too. On looking back on my journey and comparing the horrors of mountain

sickness, sleeplessness caused by the high altitude, terrible cold and even hunger, taken all round, the constant pain and discomfort of my cracked cheeks and lips was the worst to bear. Of course, for men it is better—they surround their faces with beards, whiskers and moustaches, but I was cruelly glad to see the lips of my coolies, guides and servants getting gradually worse and worse, and to know that I was not suffering alone! The next few days were spent riding endlessly up and down the road to Maulbekh. The track is so narrow that the pack ponies had to walk on the crumbling edge with sometimes a sheer drop into the river below. At first I tried very hard to make the pony I was riding keep to the centre of the path instead of the unsafe edge, but gave it up when it was explained that the ponies generally carry packs, and when so laden there is only just room if they walk on the edge. They get so accustomed to this that I noticed some loose driven ponies walking carefully in the same way.

Poor Ramjhan, who at first scorned a pony, after

a few days became so footsore and worn out that he was obliged to ride, and the reason for his reluctance was at once patent to everyone. There was only one place, the saddle, where Ramjhan never seemed to be; it became the joke of the day, and the freshest pony was always secretly reserved for him. I have seen him travel for quite a long way hanging from the pony's neck, round which he had clasped both his feet and hands. I think Monsieur Chocolat, in Paris, could learn a few new falls from him. But the most comical part of all was to see him mounting. All Ladaki and Tibetan saddles are the same—horrible wooden affairs—rightly described by a well-known traveller as “torture saddles.” The gap between the rough wooden ends is filled in with sheepskins loosely thrown on. Ramjhan used to put one foot in the stirrup and clutch wildly at the saddle, which either turned round and left him lying on the ground under the pony, or, he tore the sheepskins away waving them over the pony's head; this startles even a pack pony, and Ramjhan, his foot entangled in the stirrup, used to follow the pony on one leg till someone could stop laughing enough to go to his

rescue. He gave up all these methods in time, and ordered the coolies to lift him into the saddle. They always deposited him on purpose, either in front or behind the wooden peaks, and his timid attempts to get into the saddle, so often ending in disaster, caused the caravan endless merriment.

We passed first through miles of utter desolation, and saw enough stones with which to metal the roads of the civilised world, then through great granite rocks enough to build whole cities with, and last, near Maulbekh, through sandstone mountains. It was there, passing between the great figures carved in rock, that I first realised we were in the Buddhists' country. The few people we saw had the Mongolian features and finely pencilled eyebrows, but not the sallow skins, of the Chinese, their complexions being more like the Northern Indians. Their wonderfully bright red cheeks, quaint head-dresses and ornaments of uncut turquoise add greatly to their picturesqueness, and they have the wide, brave, unblinking stare which I have never seen in thickly populated countries. The men wore pigtails and leather sabots

with striped and coloured leg pieces lined with sheepskins.

The marriage customs of Ladak are surprising and terrible. Polyandry is the rule—one woman being the wife of all the brothers of a family. Amongst the richer people three brothers are supposed to share a wife, and the younger brothers join a monastery; but amongst the poorer classes the wife is the wife of any number of brothers.

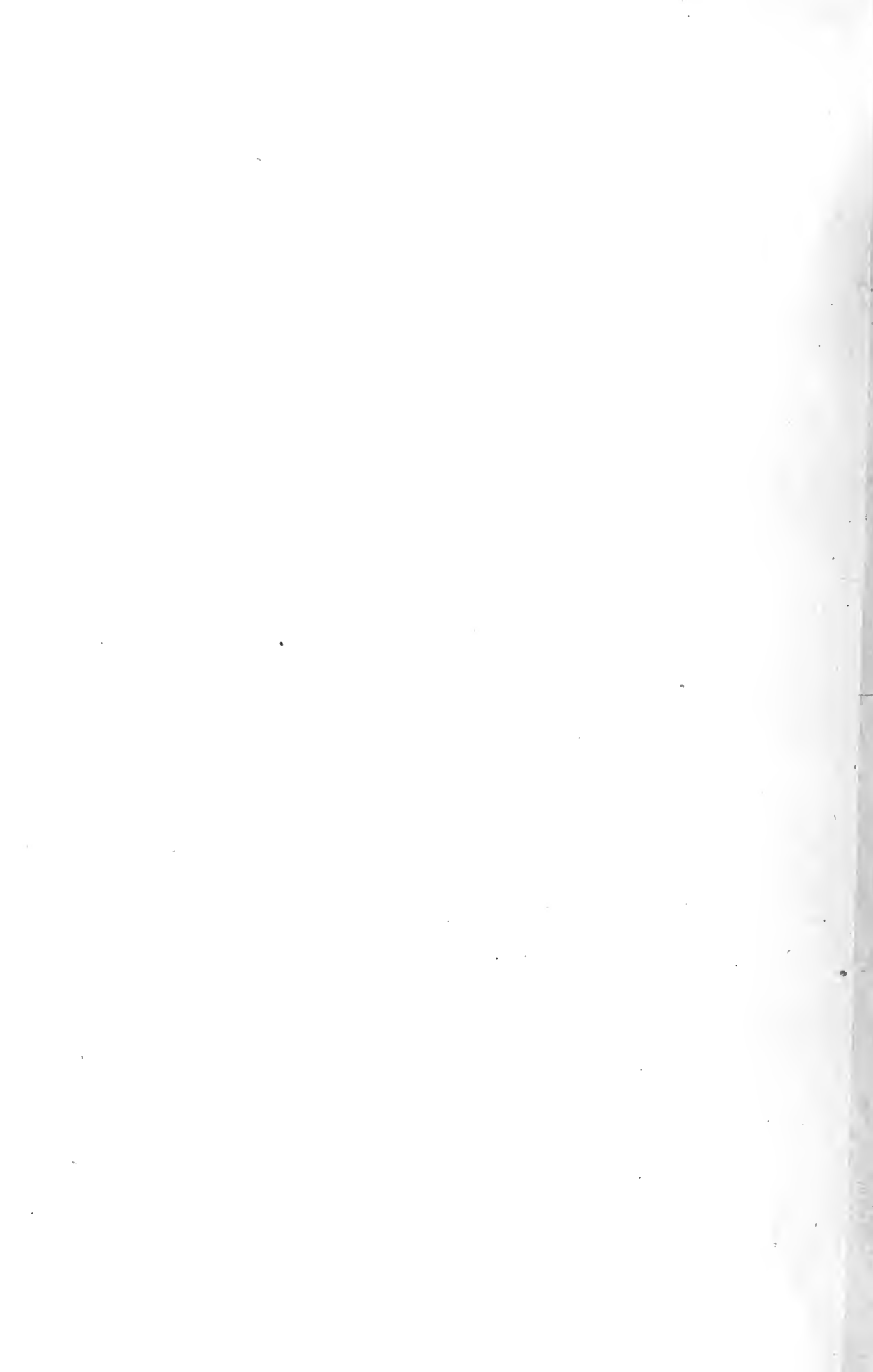
All the children, however, are the children of the eldest brother, and inherit the property at his death, to the exclusion of the younger brothers. There is no actual marriage ceremony. If there are only two or three brothers in a family the wife may choose another husband, who comes to live in the house amicably with the others. In spite of this, divorce is easily arranged. If the wife and eldest brother do not agree, they separate, and she may marry another family of brothers without consulting the younger brothers of the first husband.

But after nine marriages the woman becomes a widow! I do not know what reason is given by the learned to account for the great numbers of Lamas in



PLATE IV.

LADAKI WOMAN AND BABY.



Ladak, but to me it is perfectly obvious and simple—the younger brothers no doubt flee from the happy home ruled over by the eldest brother and invaded by the temporary husbands.

The Lamas can have no sense of humour, as the “gods” stuck up on the route are really very comic, and I have come to the conclusion they must also be very unselfish, for their monasteries are perched on bare rocks, in most unpleasant places, where no one else would think of living.

At Karbu there was a most welcome change from the endless daily ride of about 22 miles—this distance may seem nothing to those whose idea of riding means pleasant canters and gallops over lovely open country, but here it is one unvarying stumbling walk, always up or down hill, lasting from 6 a.m. to 6 or 7 p.m. every day. From Srinagar to Leh fresh ponies can be hired about every 10 to 14 miles, so we were able to do double marches every day. One of the villagers came to tell us that there were shapu (*Ovis vignei*) on the hills, so the camp took a well-earned rest. I was glad at last to handle my rifle—it seemed such a long time since it had been packed up

at Bombay. We left very early—about 4 a.m.—Nibra, the local shikari, the lunch coolie, and myself. It must be explained that the lunch coolie's duties are not merely to carry a packet of sandwiches; he carries the whole party's food for the day, which was cumbersome, because it included a teapot and kettle, also a feed for the pony I rode, as it is impossible to rely on finding any grazing. He had to stay with the pony during our absence and never allow it to make a sound or movement if we were near, and after we had stalked for hours and gone miles, he had to miraculously appear. Need it be said he was always in disgrace and covered with abuse, as it is not possible for anything, except, perhaps, a bird, to do what he was expected to do. I quite realized this, and at once fell into the habit of saving all my ill-temper for the poor tiffin coolie, who, later on, repaid good for evil by saving my life.

The dawn was very beautiful as we climbed up the hills. My poor pony, as we neared the summit, became quite breathless, and so did I, when every now and then, to ease him, I tried to walk. At last we saw a herd of ewes, and while we were watching them

a snowstorm came on, with a horrible biting wind. We lay down behind some rocks till about 4.30, when the snow stopped and we saw three rams on the opposite crags. They were, of course, out of range, but the local man pointed out the way to approach them. We rushed down the hill only to find that they had moved on, and we had to retrace our steps, climbing laboriously up again. The beating of my heart quite frightened me, and I felt so stupid as I literally gasped painfully for breath. At last we saw them, but it became suddenly very dark, and we were obliged to return to camp, which we reached at 9.45. I was too tired for dinner, and went to bed and to sleep at once—soon, however, to awake, shivering with cold, to find my hot water bottle had not been screwed up, and that I was in a pool of freezing water. After a great fuss I got to sleep again, only to be awakened by one of the half wild village dogs, who was eating the candle in my little lamp with noisy enjoyment. It seemed as if I had never slept at all when we started next morning on our march to Lamayuru, which we reached at sunset. Whilst the camp was being arranged I

hastily made this sketch, but it falls terribly short of what I intended. The setting sun turned the sandstone rocks to a glowing pink, and the strange fissures and chasms, bridged by houses, to beautiful purple and mauve shadows, incredibly soft and tender. The nest-like buildings seemed almost to hang in the air, and it needed the deep booming of the conch shells calling the Lamas to evening prayer to remind one that you were looking at the dwellings of men.

It was at Lamayuru, after a very long day up and down the hills beyond the monastery, that I had my first chance at the shapu. We again took a local shikari, who was very amusing. About 6 a.m., when we were half-way up a hill, we met a Lama driving some donkeys and sheep, and soon after we came on some new tracks of shapu and began stalking. The Lama was requested and bribed with a small coin not to shriek at his donkeys and sheep, but to drive them in silence for some time until we were well over the summit. He seemed very pleased with the bribe, but his cries and shouts were even louder than before, so the local shikari rushed after him with his big climbing stick and chased him about half a mile down the hill,



PLATE V.

LAMAYURU.



where he stopped, the Lama still running from the few well-directed stones that the shikari hurled after him. It was a very comical scene.

With a pause for breakfast we went on climbing steadily till we reached the summit at mid-day. Here we halted, there being no necessity of going anywhere else, as we could see what looked like the whole world from where we stood—the hundreds of ridges and summits of hills were like rolling waves at our feet. It is easy to believe the world is round from these great heights, as the horizon becomes a perfect circle. On this mountain there was no snow, although in some places it lay thousands of feet below us. Sheltered in the curves of the mountains were lovely mossy grass places and some vivid blue gentians and a sort of edelweiss. We rested there till about 3.30, carefully watching the hills with our field glasses. We saw several herds of shapu, but all on peaks that were about a day or two's walk from where we stood; but at last, just as we were beginning to despair, our guide showed us two rams grazing near, but far below us, and going in the direction of the pony and

tiffin coolie, who luckily were well out of sight behind a lower hill. I have no words to properly describe the mad rush down hill that followed—our plan being to get on to the part of the hill where the shapu were, and then to stalk them. Nibra and the local shikari held me on either side as we ran down the precipitous sides of the mountain. One of us was always falling, and sometimes when we dislodged a large stone or rock on the loose crumbling hillside, we all three fell together.

There was a pause when we came to a dangerous corner. Nibra went first to reconnoitre. Just as I was preparing to follow, he reappeared, his eyes nearly out of his head with excitement, and his finger held up for silence. He whispered to me to follow him and shoot at sight, as the shapu were on some rocks across a nullah about 150 yards away.

I crawled round the rock and there they were! Nibra had loaded my 375°, and in a sitting position I aimed; unfortunately, resting my left hand on my knee, just as I fired, the ground gave way, my foot slipped and, of course, I missed him;



PLATE VI.

LOCAL SHIKARI.

but they stood quite still, and I had a lovely shot with my second barrel and knocked one over. Nibra passed me my second rifle, and I was lucky in getting the other one, who kept stopping to look back at his dead companion. Nibra and the shikari were visibly pleased. No one who has not experienced the long, trying and tiring stalks can realize the delight of success, and I was more than glad, for so much depends on the shikari's opinion of your shooting, as if they consider you a bad or unlucky shot, they will not give you nearly as many chances, or take the great and untiring pains they do, for one they trust not to disappoint them by a miss at the end of a long, perhaps cleverly-arranged stalk.

The heads measured 31 and $27\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The 31 inches is the largest shot here for very many years, so my shooting good luck is following me.

CHAPTER II.

IT is no longer a surprise to me that so few people see Ladak. After the Zogi-La, the way is one long horror of dust, scorching sun and landslips, and to anyone with a bad head for heights, or a weak heart, the road would be impossible. Just before entering Leh there is a trying five miles through burning sand up to the town, away from the River Indus, which for the last few days had seemed like an old friend, the track having apparently been designed to show how often it was possible to leave and rejoin it.

We met two Englishmen who had been shooting beyond Leh, and when they heard that I intended to go beyond Changchenmo they were horrified, and begged me to look at their cracked and swollen faces. They assured me it was a country fit only for suicides.



PLATE VII.

L.E.H.

As we approached Leh the glamour of the setting sun was over the old fortifications and the ten-storied palace of the Gialpo on the rocky ridge, which forms one end of the town. We wended our way down the steps under the gateway and up the main street, which contained a beautiful line of poplars on one side, just then shedding little balls of cotton wool which made them look as if they were standing each in a separate snowstorm.

The telegraph master met me near the rest-house with a sheaf of messages re-directed from Kashmir. I shall always remember his kindness and sympathy, when, after spending two endless days waiting at his instrument, he at last, in the middle of the night, brought me the reassuring news I was so anxiously awaiting. It was only then that I realized how far I was out of the world and that it would take less time to get from London than from Leh to Bombay. However, as Leh was to be the starting point, not the end of my journey, I did not allow my mind to dwell on getting back, but spent two more very busy days arranging stores, transport and in re-packing my own belongings and

leaving behind all the comforts and luxuries I had brought with me for the expedition.

In luxurious shooting parties in India the baggage question never arises, but my experience in Somaliland had taught me the only secret of success was to travel light, and to realize at the start that it is possible to do without everything except food, clothing and ammunition. When I had sorted my possessions, Nibra asked to inspect my luggage. He collected several of my garments and said they must be lined with fur, and went off to the bazaar to order it to be done. When I went out some time after to complete a lengthy bargain, begun two days before, for some turquoise ornaments, perhaps my amazement can be imagined when I found most of the town collected, trying to cut out the fur to match my clothes, which were neatly stretched out on the sand of the High Street of Leh; advice was being given by a warlike Yarkandi who had just arrived with his caravan! I fled from the scene and visited the Moravian Mission, a set of brave men and devoted women living in exile and hardship at an altitude where strong men find

difficulty in sleeping, and breathing when lying down, and little children fade and die, and where their sacrifices and hopes meet with little or no reward. Converts are rare, and the Mission help of healing and medicine is accepted with distrust and scant thanks; these brave men and their no less brave wives live indeed to the glory of God and the utter forgetfulness of themselves.

In Ladak, out of 20,000 inhabitants—all Buddhists—4,000 are Lamas and Chelas (disciples), so that with a Lama to every five laymen, missionaries have very little chance!! The Ladaki Buddhists are devil worshippers and intensely ignorant, superstitious and uncivilized, but very inquisitive and easily amused, and cheerfully choose a life in which ceaseless wandering under heavy loads belonging to others, seems to be the principal part. In religious matters they are governed by the Dalai Lama from Potala, near Lhasa.

There is one never-ending joke—"ju-ju," pronounced "jew-jew," meaning "salaam," or "good-day," but the oftener you say it and the more rapidly you repeat it, the more the Ladakis and Tibetans grin

and bow and laugh. At first I thought them idiotic, but at last found myself laughing quite naturally, as if it were a splendid *bonmot*.

The Mission house had a wonderful little garden with carrots, turnips, cucumbers, and even a few flowers, and I gratefully accepted the generous supply given me. They have also a collection of ornaments, teapots and curios which have been bought by them at intervals. I purchased some articles of interest which were placed in charge of the telegraph master until my return, as by then the Mission will be closed and the missionaries and joint commissioner will have left, as no Europeans venture to stay in Leh for the winter.

I have pleasant memories of a dinner with the joint commissioner, and owe him and the Wazir great thanks for all their kindness in helping to arrange my caravan and stores.

Mr. Apar, of Calcutta, was also there, from Baltistan, where he had been shooting, and very kindly delayed his return to Kashmir in order to go with me for a few marches. As soon as I received further satisfactory wires from Bombay we left, and



PLATE VIII.

CURIOS.

(TEAROT ALTAR, BEER JUG, CONCH SHELL, TEMPLE TRUMPET, AND LAMA'S BELT.)

after safely crossing the Marsahing La, I parted from Mr. Apcar, who after four days vainly spent in imploring me not to be so foolish as to go on, reluctantly left me to my fate.

I suffered in Leh, which is only 11,500 feet, from sleeplessness and headache, but up here on the Rupshu Tablelands, 15,000 feet above the sea level, with peaks rising all round of 2,000 to 5,000 feet, I felt the horrible sensations known as mountain-sickness: terrible headache, and after every 20 minutes or half-hour's sleep a dreadful awakening, as struggling into an upright position imagining that you will die gasping for breath if remaining lying down. This is, of course, a foolish question of nerve which can soon be overcome, but worst of all was the horrible feeling of depression and collapse from which all travellers in Chinese Turkestan suffer at times.

There was always a high wind blowing; the air was sharp and clear and very dry, the snow line is 20,000 feet, and the water freezes every night in summer. Near the little village of Miroo with the turquoise and sandstone hills a meagre field of carefully irrigated barley was ripening. We arrived at a very

exciting moment when the owners of the field were hurling huge stones at two other men, who were busy throwing stones back with a great flow of words, and, mercifully, bad aim. The battle ceased on our arrival, and they all assisted at pitching our camp, their enmity forgotten in wonder at the first sight of a she sea-devil, *i.e.*, English lady.

It is wonderful that barley and grain should ripen at over 15,000 feet. The irrigation of the fields is sometimes most intricate. There are, of course, no pipes, and it is quite exciting to see the way the water is allowed to rush down a little open mud drain with a miniature dam at the end which causes it to rush up another little drain and thus reach a higher level, with many little channels down which the water flows, irrigating the high field, and if there is a drop of precious water too much it flows back to the main supply.

After my evening meal, as I was going to bed, the whole village came to my tent to ask me to settle the dispute we had witnessed in the barley field. No one could understand what the quarrel was about, but after many delays and questionings, I decided in



PLATE IX.

MIROO.

favour of both sides, and amidst great ju-ju-ing and tea drinking, all ended happily. These tea parties are very terrible, as instead of sugar and milk a piece of rancid butter and a pinch of suttoo (a sort of flour) are put into the wooden cup; it is then stirred with the finger—your own if you are quick enough and brave enough to put it into the boiling tea—otherwise, it is politely done for you by the never-yet-has-been-washed finger of the man squatting next you. It must then be drunk and the cup licked clean before putting it into the breast of your sheepskin coat.

Next morning we were seen off by the villagers with good wishes and presents of two old hens and three eggs. It was nice to feel that, except for the champas who live in tents made of yak and sheepskins, we should see no more people; we were actually in the land of the *Ovis ammon*, and might any day or moment come on tracks of them. Nibra was firm, and made us do another week's hard marching before we began shooting. The way was horrible—nothing but stones and small salt lakes. We all suffered from the want of fresh water. Later in the day we came to the mani-walls and chortens

shown in the sketch, and I found our otherwise cheerful, happy-go-lucky coolies cross. I could not understand the reason until I recalled one of their customs, which is to keep count of the number of chortens, mani-walls and gompas passed; therein I had failed, but soon found a way to the hearts of the Buddhist coolies. It was always to ride or walk, leaving the prayer-wall on your right hand. The observance of this sacred custom, the guide tells me, will be certain to help me to Heaven. To ensure getting there, every good Buddhist must carve the prayer "ōm māni padmi hum" on a stone and place it on one of the built-up heaps of stones, and whenever he passes, these words must be often repeated with constant bowings and salaamings. I give some of the translations of "ōm māni padmi hum":—

"Oh jewel of the lotus, oh!"

"Ah, the jewel is in the lotus."

"Om, the jewel in the lotus, hum."

so that although the words of the prayer are always the same, perhaps the petitioner reads different meanings into them. But they seemed to me to be merely a meaningless formula.

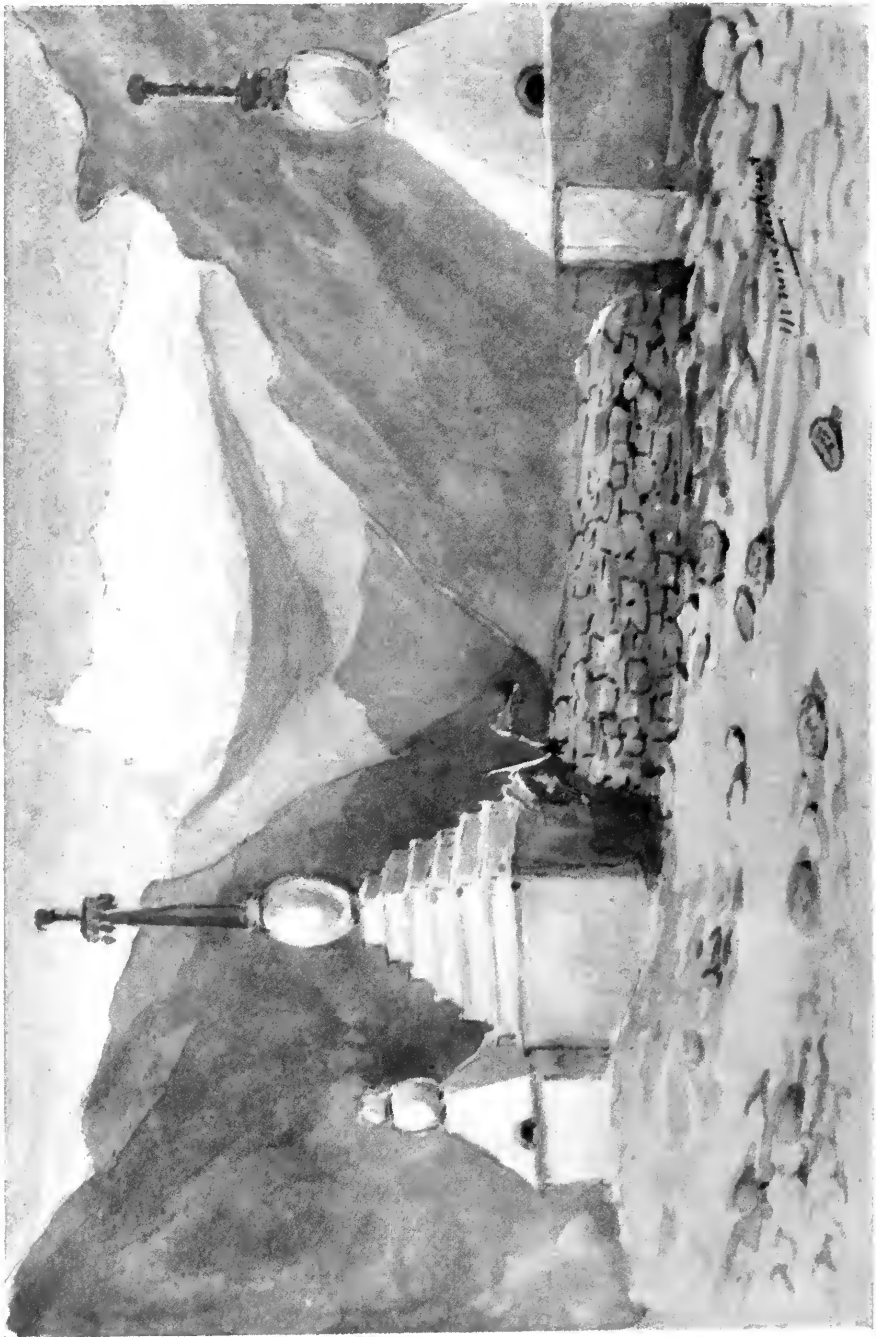


PLATE X.

MANI-WALL AND CHORTENS.
(PRAYER-WALL WITH TOMBS.)

I have pictured in the plate the little opening in the chorten (tomb) on the right. The dead Lama whose tomb it is, having been burnt, his ashes are then collected and mixed with clay, which is worked either by hand or cast in a little mould into a bas-relief of Buddha and placed in the opening. I sent the caravan ahead, telling the cook, who respected nobody but "Allah and his prophet Mohammed," to remain with me, with some misgivings—the wretched cook having lost his courage at the critical moment. I put my hand in the small hole and found three little images of Buddha; two were very old, but one was distressingly new looking, so I put it back—for the same absurd and undefined reason, I suppose, that will allow people to walk calmly over an old grave, who would not dream of stepping on to a newly-made mound.

When I returned to Kashmir, I found that other travellers had dared to take the little Buddhas, and that someone had given them the name of "potted Lamas."

CHAPTER III.

WE left the Lhasa route at the frontier and turned up a narrow nullah, where we pitched our tent near a lovely running stream of fresh water. It was delightful to camp again after so much marching. We had only two chickens left, so I allowed them to roost in my tent, as the nights were very cold and they had become so tame, feeding out of my hand, that I gave orders to spare their lives.

We found Tundook, who had been sent on to look for tracks of *Ovis ammon*, awaiting us with the splendid news that Tibetan gazelle were on some hills quite near.

The next day we made an early start in a snow-storm, which suddenly cleared, and we found ourselves in the middle of a herd of kiang (wild horses). I think the man who so misnamed them

could never have seen a horse, and certainly never a donkey, or he would have called them wild donkeys in spite of their trot and gallop, which is more that of a pony. They are very inquisitive, and actually come towards anyone who will stand still, but never near enough to allow of lassoing, and the champas never even attempt what they consider the impossible task of trapping or capturing one. Although I loved to see them, I hated them before the day was over, and was almost tempted to do as the shikaris wished, and shoot one—they were constantly getting between us and the gazelle we were stalking, and by their restless and uneasy behaviour giving the alarm, thus warning them of our approach.

So began a tremendous day, the longest stalk I have ever done in any country, and when at last Nibra persuaded me to try a long shot, as the bucks were again making for the open plain where we could never hope to get up to them, I horribly misjudged the distance and missed with both barrels, and away they went uninjured and not much frightened! I measured the distance to where I thought my bullets struck, and found the gazelle had been much further than I

imagined. This, I think, is owing to the intense clearness of the air, and the sameness—nothing but stones—of the country.

Very disgusted and tired, we had our mid-day meal at 3.30, and on our way home came on the same bucks. I had a long, impossible shot, and again my bullet struck the ground short of them. I was terribly disappointed at my bad shooting. The gazelle is a very small beast, and perhaps I was foolish to attempt such a long shot! Later I marked a spot for a target and fired a few rounds till I found the range. In future I intend to aim at everything over 100 yards as if it were twice as far! It is those trying, unsuccessful days that make the good days such happy ones. On the way home I tried being a Christian Scientist—shutting my eyes and imagining a windless summer day with lovely green grass and shady trees, beautiful soft chairs, and the scent of flowers. Just as I was forgetting the tearing wind, the awful glare, and my aching self, my pony suddenly rolled over, and I found myself and the pony sliding down a little precipice! I shall not try being a Christian Scientist again.

Several days were spent in tracking and stalking Tibetan gazelle. We saw several herds of does and one solitary buck, and again several bucks together, but stalking on this wide plain with no cover except stones is very difficult, and I could not get a shot. Once, after a long and cleverly-arranged detour, I came round the hill I had been making for, to find myself in a beautiful position about 80 yards from the gazelle, but they were all does. Later we met some champas, who told us that they had seen three *Ovis ammon* with lovely horns near here. Tundook engaged one to show us the place, and after a short night we left camp about 3.30 a.m. The snow lay quite thick on the ground, but all disappeared as the sun rose. After about two hours' ride we came to a nullah, where we left the ponies, and there began a wonderful climb up a steep valley with a tiny stream all festooned with ice and crackling hoarfrost, which seemed in the wonderful stillness to make an appalling noise under our feet. Slowly we proceeded, panting at each step, until we reached a great height, and at last, round a rocky corner, we saw the three *Ovis ammon* coming towards us. Nibra and I hid behind the ledge

and the others stole back. I wish I had words to describe my feelings then, after all those weary weeks of marching to be at last in sight of the animal I most wished to shoot, and the horrid dread that I should miss my chance! But all feelings were negatived in the attempt to steady myself on the ledge and not to puff and pant loudly as one is apt to do at great altitudes and after severe climbs. Nibra loaded both the rifles and I was ready! I dared not move to get out the field glasses, but made up my mind to aim at the last animal, who seemed darker and bigger than the other two. Suddenly, as they came on, the last one lifted his head and took an uneasy look round; the others meanwhile altered their direction, still coming towards us, going upwards. The one I had intended to shoot turned slowly back; the other two were nearing the top, when, as they stood outlined against the sky, I fired and hit the leader, who sank to his knees. As he got up I had another shot but missed him, he then disappeared with the others over the summit. I was then hauled, pushed, and dragged up that awful precipice, until at last we came to the



PLATE XI.

NIBRA.

place where the *Ovis ammon* had fallen, evidently badly wounded, and on looking over the ledge to our horror found that we were not yet at the top of this terrible mountain, but only on another ridge with a small glacier at our feet, dividing us from the actual rocky summit. The wounded animal was nowhere to be seen, being hidden from view by the rocks, which rose gaunt and bare out of the snow, on which we could track him by the bloodstains, which became more and more frequent. I sank down, absolutely done, and feeling very ill, my heart thumping, and a bursting feeling in my nose and ears; even the Tibetan guide sat down and drew in his breath with a whistling noise, while Nibra lay down panting and sick. We had forgotten everything in our mad rush, hoping to get another shot if necessary. After a while we recovered a little, but I felt too ill to go on, so Nibra, rather frightened, decided to stay with me. I sent the guide and coolie on, the former insisting on taking one of my rifles, although they both acknowledged they could not shoot! After they had gone, Nibra unpacked some cold curry and rice (we could not


make a fire, as we had not brought any fuel), and after eating I felt much better, and then it suddenly dawned on us that we had been riding and climbing since 3.30 a.m. until mid-day, and that we must be faint for want of food, as well as exhausted with climbing.

We lost sight of the coolie and guide, but presently Nibra noticed some vultures and ravens circling round the rocks, and pointing them out, solemnly salaamed, congratulating me on getting my first *Ovis ammon*. He assured me that not only must the *Ovis ammon* be dead, or the vultures would not be there, but that our men must be there too, to prevent the birds settling on their prey. I felt much better, and was most anxious to go on, but Nibra said that if I did so we should never find my pony, and I could not possibly walk all the way to camp, so I very reluctantly began the long descent to where we had left the pony by the little stream in the morning; here we found him, and I rode back to camp.

I have always held that no sportsman should leave a wounded animal, but circumstances, and these terrible altitudes, were too strong for me,

and I was most unhappy till the men came in with the head—quite a beauty! We measured it at once, $41\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $17\frac{1}{4}$ inches round. That night I had a delicious dinner of mutton broth and chicken, and went tired-out, but very happy, to bed, and slept till mid-day. As soon as I had dressed I went to superintend the packing of the much-prized trophy; it was very neatly sewn up in a portion of the skin of its own body, the head and neck were not ready to pack for some days, as they had to be carefully stretched and dried. I had long before lost count of the days of the week, but having written my diary most carefully every day, I knew the date until the end of August, then, having no calendar and never having been able to remember the rhyme which begins “Thirty days hath,” I could not fix an exact date for the *Ovis ammon*, but after my return to Bombay on the 15th December I found the memorable day had been the 1st September.

CHAPTER IV.

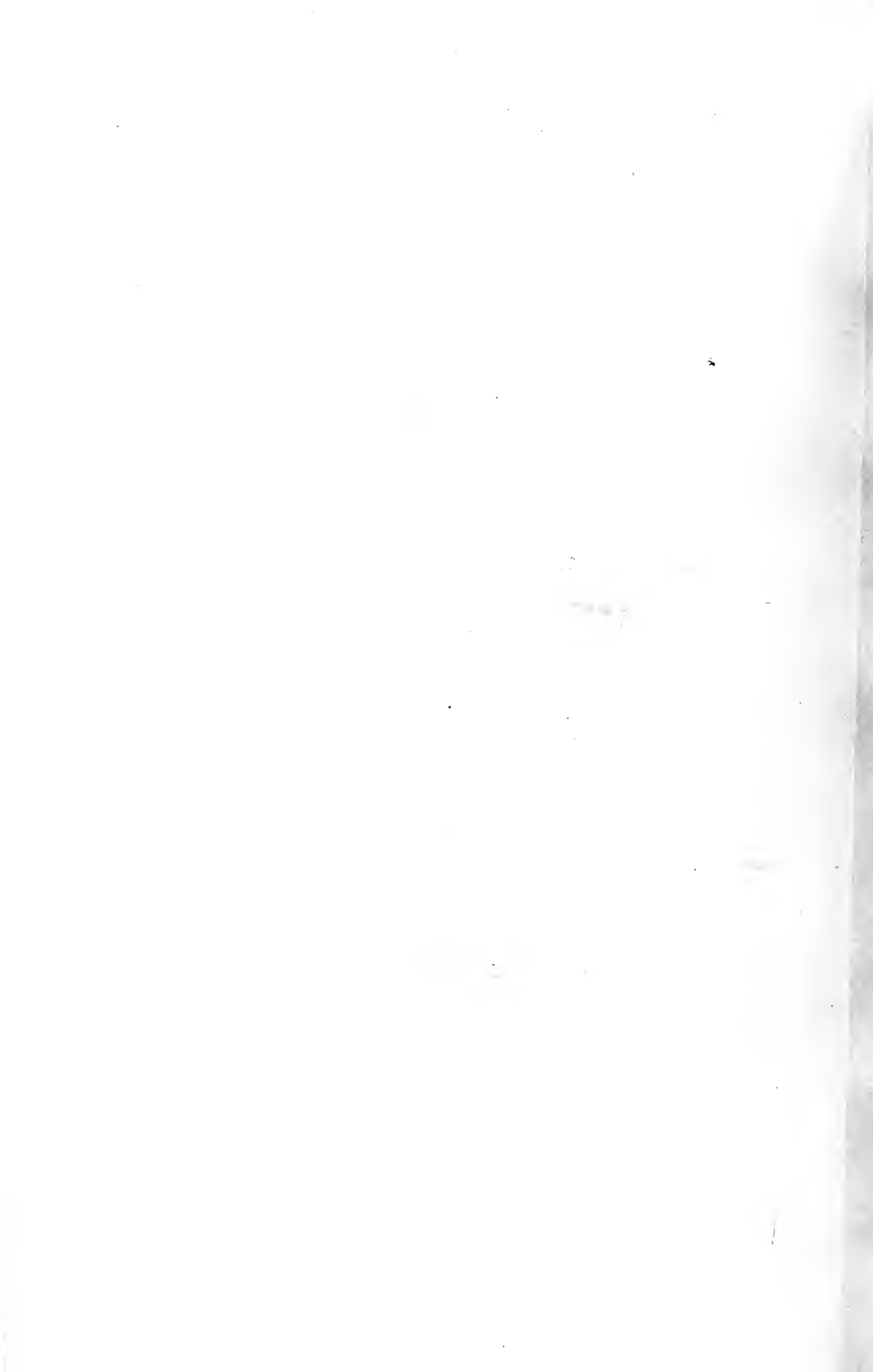
 NOW was everywhere, and the cold was intense as we started next day at 6 a.m. After about two hours' wandering, we sighted some burhel (*Ovis nakura*) and after stalking up and down precipices of crumbling shale till I felt ready to sit down and weep tears of utter weariness, we suddenly saw a herd just under us; they must have crossed a lower ridge, whilst we climbed straight up. A cautious crawl brought me to a ledge of rock, where I had a steady, easy shot, picking out the male, who was quietly grazing with his females. He fell over and rolled down the hill, whilst the herd disappeared as if by magic.

After a painful and difficult descent, we came down to him, but his horns measured only 22 inches. Nibra would not hear of my taking the head, as he



PLATE XII.

BURHEL (*Ovis nakura*).



was determined—I think almost as much for his own honour and glory as mine—that my bag should not contain a single bad specimen, and he was sure I should shoot others. I suppose it was being so fearfully tired made me feel that I should never even see another, but as I had put myself in Nibra's hands to do the best he could for me, I contented myself with ordering the burhel to be left where he was, so that I could at least make a sketch of him as well as have his meat for the camp.

The illustration will show some of the difficulties of stalking on these awful hills; every slow step one takes dislodges the stones and loose shale, making a tremendous noise as they roll down sometimes thousands of feet, bumping and bounding and loosening other stones in their descent. If you attempt to go fast you generally fall, which is not only painful and annoying, but with a loaded rifle in your hand is dangerous; and although we were dressed in sheepskins, matching the colour of the ground, we were conscious of standing out more clearly from the background than the animals themselves. If it were not that they make as much

noise as we do when moving, there would be no possibility of ever getting near them.

There were a great many marmots—dear little furry beasts—all about this country, but they always escaped into their holes before I could get a shot.

The return to camp was rather trying, as instead of going back on our own tracks, we tried what we thought would be a more direct way, and it was only when we had gone too far to turn back that we found ourselves obliged to climb down several thousand feet, before we began the long ascent to our camp. I remember thinking that if ever I returned to civilization I should never even pretend to be tired!

The little pony was fagged too, and as we were zig-zagging up a very steep hill he slipped and fell, knocking down the two coolies who were carrying the venison in his helpless roll down hill. Many of my friends have laughed at me at different times for wearing a skirt and riding on a side saddle, and generally not looking more the part of a sportsman! but I was thankful that day that even in this uninhabited country I had stuck to my attire, for as



PLATE XIII.

SABANA (THE COOK).

the pony fell, the skirt for a moment caught in the pommel of the saddle, and as I was on the precipice side of the pony, saved me from certain death. The check just gave me time to throw myself flat, and the faithful tiffin coolie, who was about 50 feet below, was able to stop my helpless, headlong roll into the abyss below. It took a long time for the men to get down to the pony and bring up the saddle, but I was glad to have more time to recover, for I shook and trembled dreadfully, and did not want the men to see how unnerved I was. It was some days before I realized how magnificently and completely I was bruised.

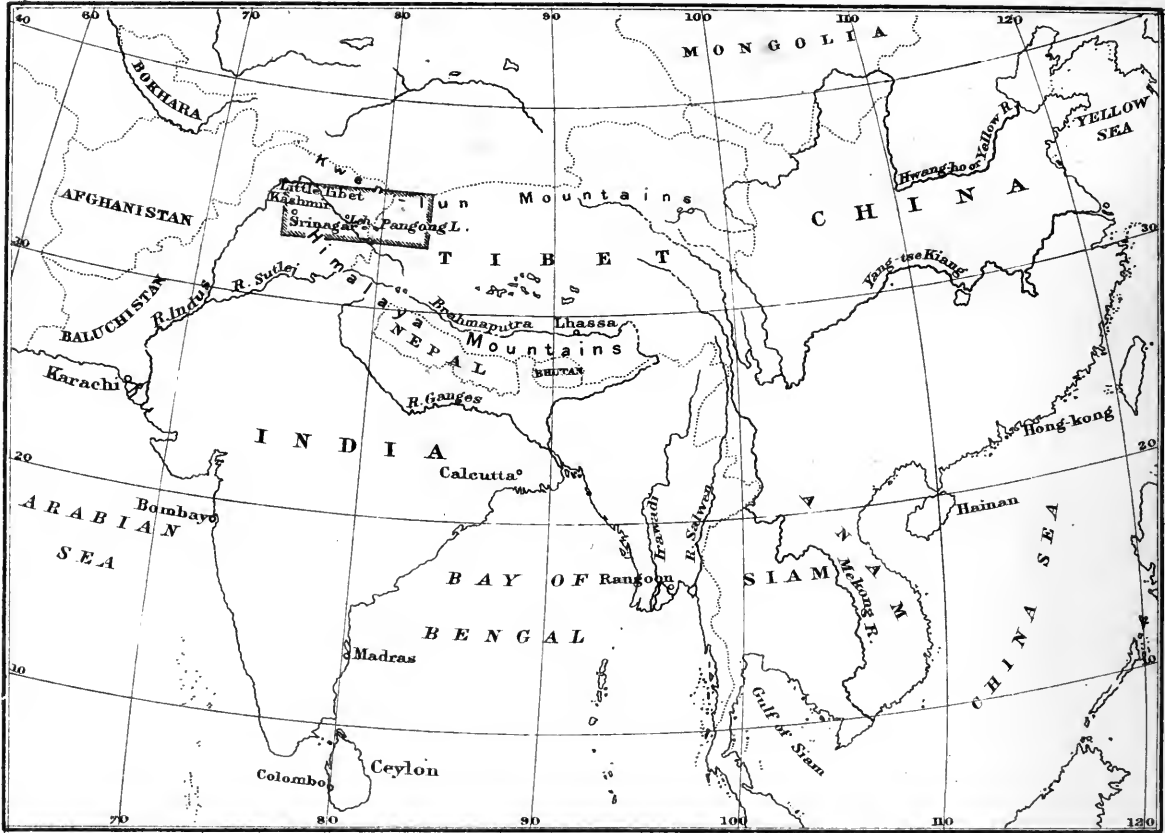
Nearing our camp the cook met us with profuse apologies for the coming meal of *Ovis ammon*, which he could not hope would be good. I told him not to mind, as last night's dinner had been delicious, but reminded him of his promise not to kill the two wretched fowls—"But, Protector of the Poor," he said, "as the poor ones died by no man's hand, I thought the Ladysaheb would not mind, and so prepared a proper meal! But alas! to-night this ancient sheep, unspiced and with only one old potato

will not please,—thy humble one can do no more.” I can only hope that the fowls died of cold!

Our store of potatoes was now exhausted; it did not much matter, as after freezing every night and thawing every day for weeks they were almost uneatable. I no longer laughed at our enormous supply of onions, which were soon to become our only luxury.

Next day we started early, about 5.30 a.m., and soon after leaving camp we saw five *Ovis ammon* females, and immediately after came on new tracks of Tibetan gazelle, or goa, as the Tibetans call them. We had a long stalk for about an hour and a half on the plain, mostly creeping behind stones and rocks, to get near enough for a shot. After a long, agonising crawl on my knees which would have been painful without the bruises of the previous day, with my rifle in my hand, I arrived at the ridge of rocks I had been making for, and after carefully removing my hat, peeped over, expecting a nice easy shot, only to find them gone! A long look through the glasses at the surrounding country







showed no trace of them. I might have saved both my knees and clothes—the latter had begun to look pitiful. I only had two other outfits, and was anxious that this one should last a little longer.

I was just shutting up the glasses, when I saw, about 150 yards away, seven bucks coming round a hill towards us. Nibra had by this time walked up and gave me a frightful nudge (a gentle nudge is the signal to shoot, but when excited he almost knocks me over) as of course, he dare not even whisper. I fired at the third one, which seemed larger than the others, but missed him with my first barrel, the shot fortunately going high; he then stopped a moment, and I knocked him over with my second. I allowed Nibra to have two shots with my other rifle, but of course, he hit nothing. It is a strange thing that these shikaris, whose lives are spent in the pursuit of sport, have no idea of shooting, yet their greatest pleasure seems to be firing off rifles.

We had to make a detour of about a mile to get to the dead gazelle, as there was an impassable

nullah between us. There is no doubt this is a terrible country. At last we got to him, and on measuring his horns, found them to be $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches. This is a very fair size for these little beasts, the record being about 14 inches.

While the two men we had taken with us found some dried burtza—a stick-like grass, something like heather—and roots for a fire, Nibra skinned the gazelle, and the Tibetans took a haunch, and after warming it at the fire, proceeded to devour it with fingers and teeth; of course, there was not sufficient fire to really cook the venison even if they had waited, but Nibra said “This is nothing, these ignorant ones do not mind eating raw flesh.” I was sorry I saw them, as it made me feel quite sick, and the eating of my own meal difficult.

As we had been stalking in a circle, we were fairly near our old camp and on the line of march to the new one, so we waited for the caravan, which through the glasses we could see approaching, and marched with them. Until it became too monotonous and wearisome, it was quite amusing to see every baggage animal in turn lie down and roll on his



PLATE XIV.

TUNDOOK.

burden, bursting the ropes and unloading himself, boxes flying open, and all our treasures strewn on the ground.

Nibra and Tundook rode together all day. Evidently there was a great discussion going on, everyone being consulted in turn; and when one unfortunate coolie under examination gave an answer which was displeasing to Nibra or Tundook, he had his head smacked and retired to drive his pony or yak again, his square chocolate face, with the finely pencilled eyebrows and smiling mouth, calm as if nothing had happened. During the mid-day rest, Nibra laid the result of the heated discussion before me. Tundook said he spoke Hindoostani, but I could not understand him, though fortunately Nibra did, as he was our only interpreter, and without him we could not communicate with the coolies. All our plans were changed. News had come from some champas who had just arrived from grazing their flocks on the plains around Changchenmo that many antelope and yak had been seen there; the champas appeared to be relatives of Tundook. Tundook was prepared to be our guide on two conditions;

one—that the purse he wore slung on his back, and which was then an empty ornament, should be full of notes on his return, and the other, in case either he or I did not return, his family should be provided for. All this was agreed to, so we pushed on over a difficult and little used pass, which would bring us to the Pangong Lake. At Phobrang we were to get ponies and yaks for the expedition. If only we had known this earlier we could have gone direct from Leh, and saved ourselves about 14 days' hard marching. The cook was to go as far as Phobrang, and I determined to send my faithful Ramjhan back with him.

Tundook was a great organiser—I was always trying to follow his apparently tireless though shambling steps. I have sketched his back, as it was the view of him I knew best, with his pigtail and purse, his teapot in his cummerbund, my rifle in his hand, and the bit of blue rag in the fur cap he bought from the Lamas “to match the eyes of the Ladysaheb and to bring luck to the expedition!” He sent on two of our coolies to order ponies and yaks to meet us at uninhabited, nameless places, commandeered



PLATE XV.

BAGGAGE YAKS.

from apparently nowhere by the magic words "double pay." I could not help wondering if he intended me to leave this un-named mountain ; but I liked and trusted his face, and forgot to be anxious in my desire to get all the trophies I could.

There was so much time for thought and reverie on these long, lonely marches, that in imagination I passed the not-yet-shot trophies through Rowland Ward's hands, and allotted them places in the dear old oak-panelled hall in Wales.

The whole caravan seemed excited. All yaks are irritating, but when the one with the white tail, who was far the most obstinate, laid down for the second time, just as we were nearing the top of the Kotzuru Pass, and rolled on the kettles and cooking pots, he met with such a torrent of abuse that I was quite thankful my knowledge of the Tibetan or Ladaki languages was limited ! At last we reached the summit, and I was lost in thought as I gazed in wonder at the magnificent scene. Facing us was a sheer descent, leading to a cup-like valley, with snow-topped mountains on the opposite side, a giant's leap from where we stood, and lower

still, stretches of emerald greens and sapphire blues, the colours of a peacock's neck, with strips of white that looked like snow, but which, when reached, we found to be crystallized salt; and stretching away to the left, a sheet of water like a mirror, with the mountains brightly reflected. The colours in Tibet are more wonderful than in any part of the world I have seen. A soft veil of exquisitely graduated rainbow tints seems to clothe the land, so that not even Switzerland with its cruder colours can compare with it. This is by day, but before sunrise and after sunset the country strikes one almost with horror—it is so bare, desolate and unbeautiful.

As soon as I saw there were wild geese on the lake, I stopped the caravan in its noisy descent, but I was too late, the geese took fright and flew off down the lake. A caravan on the move makes a great noise, and apart from the falling stones under the men's and animals' feet, there are the cries and shouts of the coolies, without which the baggage animals seem unable to travel.

But when the yaks, goats, sheep and ponies were freed from their burdens, and were hungrily grazing

on this lovely and unusual grass, I crept out with my 303° (as my gun had been sent back to Leh with the *Ovis ammon* and Tibetan gazelle's heads) to try and get a goose, which would have been a welcome change to our scanty larder; but darkness came on, and after two falls through what seemed firm salt, I retired to my tent to repose soundly, as we were only about 14,000 feet above the sea level, where one can sleep much better than in higher altitudes.

CHAPTER V.

THE next few days were spent in endless climbing up and down, crossing three passes; on one we met a caravan returning to Lhasa, the mules, yaks, sheep and goats, which they had brought from there laden with cloth and brick tea, were now returning with salt. The sheep and goats looked very quaint with their saddlebags full of salt, each load weighing 20 seers = about 40 lbs. We had a long talk with the merchants, who, after they had recovered from their amazement at finding a woman alone, begged me to go and spend the winter at Lhasa. They said I should be well taken care of, and all the Tibetan ladies would be delighted to see me, and lend me clothes, and that next year they would safely bring me back to Leh. I shall always regret that I

did not accept their offer, but at the time I thought it would be unfair to go off for another year without being able to let anyone know my plans. We parted with mutual regret, and I felt sure I should have met with nothing but courtesy and kindness had I trusted myself to their care. I persuaded them to sell me a wonderful teapot, which, being huge and a fearful weight, was sent to Leh. At Jongoe, a lovely camping place with fresh water and grass, we met a travelling Lama. I was very interested to see one of these curious men—they have no home, no monastery, and no teaching; they just wander aimlessly all their lives. This one took no interest in us, beyond allowing us to feed him, and sharing our fire, otherwise he seemed unaware of our presence, and when our camp awoke in the morning he had disappeared. This was supposed to be unlucky. I could not join in the lamentations, and was secretly glad that the half-witted-looking creature had wandered away with his filthy rags and depressing face, but it was a most unlucky day which followed. First snow and rain had fallen in the night, and we could not light a fire; this meant

starting at dawn on a long march shivering with cold, on a cup of half-frozen goat's milk and a damp biscuit. The yaks were fearfully trying, constantly lying down and delaying the march, so that we arrived at the ford of the Indus rather late, but were obliged to cross, as there was no place on that bank flat enough for a camp. The ford was deeper than our guide expected, and the little pony he was riding was swept off his feet, and both had to swim for the opposite shore. I crossed, lying flat on a yak's back, with tall Nibra wading to his shoulders to lead him. I was glad when we were all safely over. Everything was soaking, including tents and bedding, and the animals were so done, and being late, we decided to camp, spending a most miserable night sitting by the fire trying to rest without sleeping. All these disasters were the wretched Lama's fault for leaving us without a blessing!

Next day, when the tents and clothes were dried, we did a short march to Maiya, where we were able to hire a fresh supply of ponies and yaks, and after a terrible waste of time and energy a bargain was concluded, and I was the proud possessor for 80 rupees

of a good little grey pony, to whom I became quite attached.

At last, after three more days' marching, we arrived at Shushul, where we experienced great difficulty in securing fresh ponies, as Dr. Sven Hedin had just left on his wonderful journey, so eloquently described in his book on Tibet, taking with him every available pony and man.

The ugly little gompa (monastery) is in the middle of the tiny village, and the Lamas were most polite in showing me over their temple, which was like a badly-arranged cowshed, with a frieze of brightly painted pictures, which although the artists had never dreamt of perspective, or heard of tone, yet had something vivid and real about them. The large dolls which are always seated in these temples were dressed in dreadful rags, and the little brass vessels to receive the offerings of milk, butter, suttoo, etc., looked as if they were never cleaned; but amongst the brass vessels used at the worship and ceremonies, there was one wonderful bowl which I vainly tried to buy, but although Shushul is eight miles from the frontier of Chinese Tibet, the Lamas, with many regrets and

longing looks at the rupees I held in my hand, firmly refused to sell, as they said they would get beaten and punished if the bowl were missing when the Lama from Lhasa came on his annual tour of inspection and examination of the temple treasures.

After Shushul, there were some uninteresting marches till we reached the Pangong Lake. As long as we could hire and change ponies every few days, I allowed my little grey to travel without a load or a rider, so that he might be fit and strong later on. The pony I rode on leaving Shushul surprised the whole caravan by falling twice with me in one day; these miserable little narrow-chested ponies are, as a rule, so wonderfully sure-footed. When we settled down in camp that night, it was discovered the poor little wretch was quite blind. I had no spaces for more bruises, so he was turned into a pack pony. Our camp was close to the Pangong Lake, but we were too tired to do the two or three miles which would have brought it in sight. Starting early next morning we soon came to the lake, and I did not then regret the delay of the previous night. The wonderful and unexpected sight of the great water



PANGONG LAKE.

PLATE XVI.

lying folded in the mountains with the deep dreamy shadows still hazy and untouched by the rising sun, was a sight never to be forgotten. The ever-changing views were so beautiful that I was sorry to think that it took so few days to march the 45 miles to the end. The waters are a hard, rich blue, so deep in tone that I quite expected it to be coloured in the little wooden teacup I used for holding my painting water, but at mid-day the reflections of the pale sandstone hills turned it to a shimmering pink. One cannot help wondering why anything so exquisite could not have been fresh water full of edible fish, with cattle grazing on its shores and the sound of wild fowl to break the oppressive stillness. Instead of this, the water is salt, in many places the shores are unsafe and shake and wobble under you, making short cuts impossible. A few miles after leaving the lake we turned a corner and arrived at Phobrang, a most refreshing summer village of four stone huts, with fresh running water and a wonderful view of the snows.

CHAPTER VI.

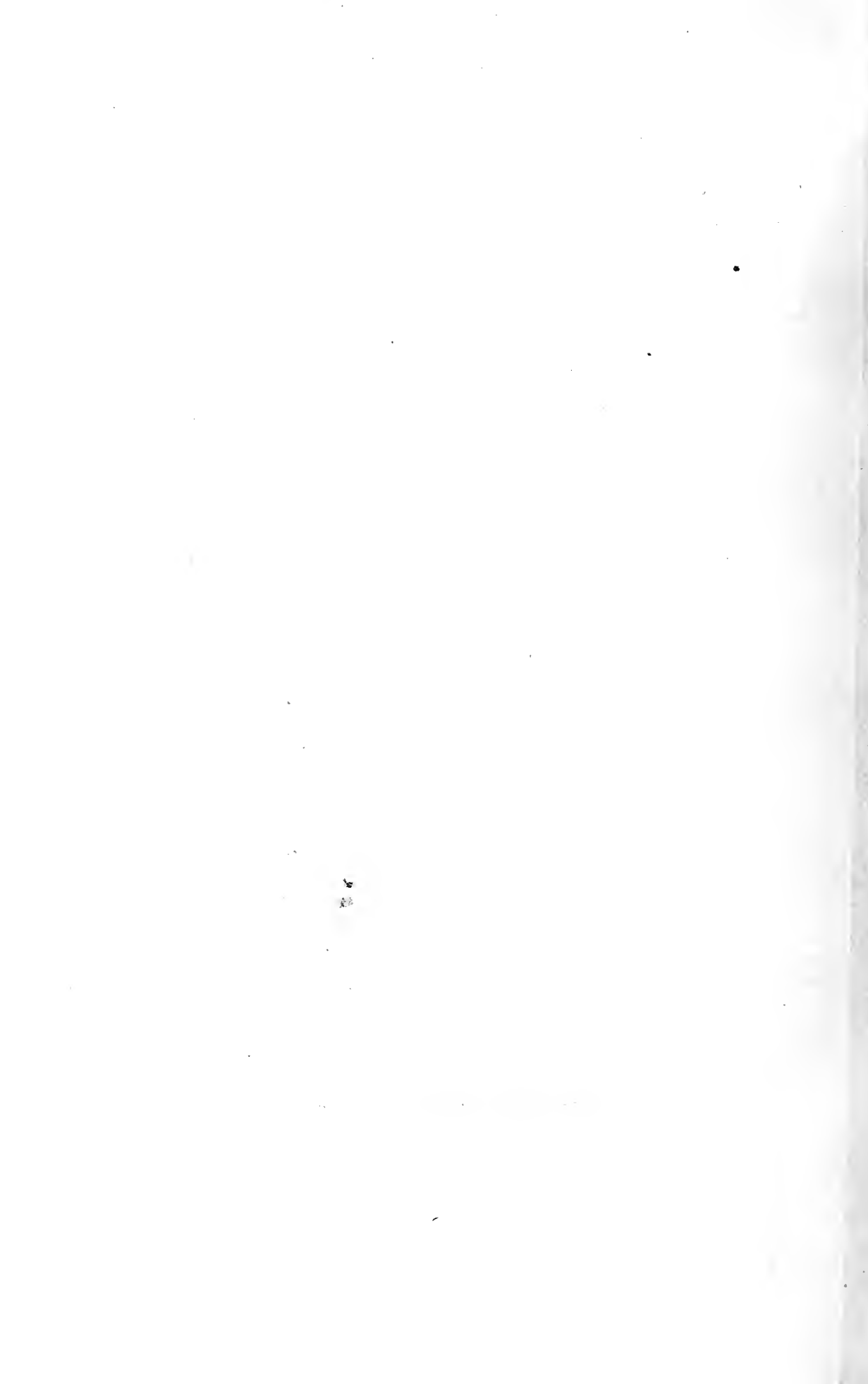
PHOBHRANG is 14,500 feet above the sea level. We halted for two days making the final preparations for our journey into the uninhabited, desolate land of Northern Tibet. We started at last with a much diminished caravan, consisting of ten ponies, four yaks, twelve sheep, seven milch goats, and twenty-six men. Ramjhan preferred to face the unknown perils to remaining in this deserted land, and the cook said "Women and children must have hot food," and therefore he and the frying pan, literally hand in hand, will accompany us; "and if we perish," he added, "it will at least be better for the Ladysaheb to have three respectable men with her," meaning himself, Nibra and Ramjhan.

The inhabitants of Phobhrang, about 14, including two children, accompanied us part of the way to



PLATE XVII.

PHOBRANG.
(14,500 feet above sea level.)



the foot of the Marsemik Pass, warning us to return as soon as possible. They said we ought to be returning then, not starting, as the snows were coming, and even they would shortly be going down to the lower valleys for the winter; they, however, promised to leave one man at least in charge of the baggage we had stored in one of the stone huts; so after drinking a final cup of tea with them, we started with their good wishes and a charm consisting of a little round box with a turquoise button containing a small Buddha which was presented to me at the last moment by the Lumbader of the village, who had worn it attached by a dirty piece of string round his neck.

The Marsemik Pass is 18,500 feet above the sea level, a long, gradual ascent, but with the last four miles very difficult going, as there had just been a landslip. Indeed, the whole country looked as if earthquakes and landslips were trying to see which could happen most frequently and look the worst, and in a land of no tracks and few travellers there is, of course, no one to tidy up.

We only marched about ten miles a day for the next few days, as we wanted to husband the

strength of both ponies and men. This is an awful, desolate land, filled with a rushing, tearing wind, like some mad living thing unable to rest day or night, and it is always pain. When snowing, it whirls and lashes the flakes at you ; when fine, it raises whirlwinds of dust and sand and beats them into your eyes and mouth. A loose strand of hair was lashed across my face so violently that it made a little cut on my already chapped and painful cheeks. After that I did my hair in the Tibetan fashion—a series of tiny, very tight plaits over the forehead, not allowing a single hair to escape ; I also manufactured out of an old pair of gloves a sort of highwayman's mask, which I wore whenever a storm came on ; but nothing that I can say to anyone who has not been in the Changchenmo Highlands can convey the agony of that wild wind. Even in the valleys there is no shelter from it, nor apparently in the sky, where great masses of clouds were generally flying and churning about, and sometimes at sunset the sky looked like a gigantic fire half hidden in immense volumes of smoke.

The coolies have great endurance, and one wonders if it is intense brutish ignorance or the fine

effect of their death-ignoring religion which makes them march so fearlessly and pleasantly into the unknown.

The boy in charge of the goats, although only about ten years old, was marvellous. Half-starved goats and sheep are very tiresome to drive, as they will suddenly rush long distances up or down precipices in pursuit of a few blades of grass, so that the little fellow, rolled in his sheepskins, his fur cap crammed over his dirty, grinning little face, after being shown the direction of the day's march, had to start before the rest of the camp. The quaint calls and whistles with which he controlled his refractory flock were the first sounds heard in the morning. We often overtook and passed him about mid-day—he then had to use all his strength of mind and lungs to urge his wretched flock to keep us in sight, consequently he was generally last in camp. My admiration for this solitary, dignified child was unbounded.

We marched on past Pomlung and Pamzal, where a few willows were growing in the river bed, and it was amusing to see how all, with one accord,

instantly went to cut themselves a stick. When you march great distances without any chance of getting a new stick they become most precious possessions, and a few days later there was a great quarrel over a stick between two coolies. The Tibetans and Ladakis never use their fists, but instantly a dispute begins they throw stones at each other; for, if I have been able to describe the country at all, you will have realized that, although uninhabited, almost unexplored, treeless and barren, still there are stones—and always stones.

We wandered on for some days, passing over the Lanak La, 18,000 feet, until we came on tracks of kiang and yak. In the Kashmir countries and Western Tibet the shooting of yak is, of course, prohibited, as His Highness is a good Hindoo, and yak, being a sort of cattle, are held sacred. But once in Chinese Tibet I vainly tried to get a good specimen.

The rifles were once more unpacked, and we began tracking a solitary bull, which Tundook says is a very big one. (I have noticed that the animals you never get a chance of shooting, or the ones you miss are always thought by the trackers to be records.)

We stalked him on and over and round every hill-top in the country for long days. The third day, whilst following the will-o'-the-wisp tracks of the yak, we found a herd of Tibetan antelope. A snowstorm came on, and under cover of it we managed to get well up to them. How can I tell the wretchedness of that afternoon! It is always difficult to climb in these high altitudes, because you become breathless so soon; but added to this you must please picture me dressed in a heavy fur-lined skirt, a huge fur coat all sodden with snow and sleet, afraid to lift my face out of the protecting flaps of my fur cap because of the biting, freezing wind and blinding snow, my hands so numb with cold that I could hardly feel the trigger of my rifle. However, the chance was there, and I had to nerve myself to lift my head and take aim. I was amazed at what I saw, the whole slope seemed covered with antelope. I had two easy shots and managed to kill two good ones, $17\frac{1}{2}$ and $18\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Whilst they were being skinned, complete darkness came on, and very heavy snow, so we all sheltered huddled together under a rock. As we have no idea in the morning where we are going to camp at

night, the caravan had orders to follow us every day, and two coolies were told off to keep between us and the caravan so that we should not lose each other; but having wandered up and down so many hill-tops that day in the thick snow, we were lost for some hours, but at last, when our miseries, hunger being not the least of them, were almost unbearable, the advance coolies found us, and after many mistakes and delays, we found our camp. Sabana, the cook, had managed to make enough fire to warm me some soup, and after taking off my most sodden garments I crept into bed about 6 p.m. But alas, Ramjhan, his poor hands numb even in their fur gloves, dropped the cup of priceless hot soup just between the flap of the tent door and my eagerly outstretched hands. His dismay and horror were almost comic enough to make up for the calamity; unfortunately the soup was irreplaceable, as the tiny fire had gone out, so he brought me as a poor substitute some cold venison and still colder goat's milk.

The next two days, the snow having obliterated all tracks of everything, we marched with the caravan and saw neither bird nor beast, nor track of any sort.



PLATE XVIII

TOOLOOMERBO.
(GREEN RIVER.)

After the storm was over the snow soon disappeared, but we had constant hail and sleet till we came to Tobomorpa, and then, after a day of brilliant and blazing sunshine, we reached Tooloomerbo (the green river), where we dried our hair; the coolies' pigtailed and long, straggling, dirty locks were shaken out to dry, whilst, fascinated, they watched me in the exciting pantomime of brush and comb. Besides our hair, we were able to dry our sodden clothes, furs and gloves. The air was fine and very cold, but the relief of the warm day and dry clothes gave us all a refreshing sleep.

Next day, a long march brought us to another pass, and I was furiously angry with the guide when he told me it was the Lungnak La, when I saw by the compass we had been steadily going East ever since we had left the Lanak La days before. I must explain that the only map I had with me ended at the Pangong Lake, and that I was indeed travelling in the unknown. The guide was very apologetic and seemed ashamed of himself, but persisted that this new pass was the Lungnak La. Suddenly a sweet smile spread over his face, as he

grasped the reason of my anger ; he then pronounced the two similar names one after another, Lanak La was pronounced Lunuk La, and the Lungnak La was pronounced Lunuk La with a sort of swallow instead of a 'g' in the middle. He seemed to think it very strange that I did not hear how totally different they were ! The other side of the pass brought us to the border of the antelope plain.

The effect of this endless, stony, featureless plain with its tiny glaciers and its fringe of sugar-loaf snow hills was most curious and desolate—I could not imagine anything more lonely. The African and Somali deserts have their scrub and oases and even their rows of bleaching bones, but here there was nothing. We marched down one of the valleys on the east of the plateau, and by degrees came to less precipitous country with some grazing, where we met some armed nomads. They appeared pleased to see us, but their pleasure could have been nothing to mine, for we were beginning to think we should never see any living thing again. I was hesitatingly asked if I would object to showing them the curious and miraculous needles which fastened my hair. They



PLATE XIX.

ANTELOPE PLAIN.

were most interested, and gratefully accepted far more than I could spare, but after this exhibition they could no longer doubt my being a woman.

They were very anxious we should go with them to the lower valleys and march from there to either Pekin or Lhasa, as they assured us we would be in very great danger if we tried to get back over the Marsemik La, as unusually bad storms were about. They also promised me plenty of yak shooting if I went with them. Unfortunately, they managed to thoroughly frighten the men, and we were obliged to decide to turn back at once. The few days we had spent with the shepherds had been days of almost luxury, owing to our being able to have quite large fires, big enough to even heat water for washing.

Earlier in the year a herd of yak must have been grazing in this valley, so the coolies were able to collect fuel—travellers in Tibet being dependent on the droppings of wild animals for their fuel. The coolies looked upon me as rushing recklessly into the jaws of death each time I had washing water sent to my tent, as cleansing oneself is quite unknown and unthought of amongst them. They have a curious and

wonderful way of dressing—whenever they have a new garment (all their clothes are the same shape and size) they wear it over the old ones until they drop off in rags, but they never think of removing one garment when they put a new one over it.

On our way back over the Lungnak Pass we came on fresh tracks of yak, and so began another long stalk of two days, which again ended in failure, and I never even saw the bull I had stalked so carefully.

Near Tobomorpa we pitched our camp. Heavy snow came on, and here began the worst part of our journey, as in that one dreadful night we lost five sheep, two goats, and two ponies, all frozen by the cold. The next day was so dark that we were obliged to stay where we were, huddled together, wet, cold and helpless. The loneliness and misery might have been easier to bear if I had had an English-speaking companion or a book, but all luxuries had been abandoned long before, and even if I had possessed a book it would have been too dark to read it, my last candle-end having been burnt more than a month before. The

days in Tibet are far more lonely than any night in England and the nights in Tibet are indescribable; in the crisp freezing air, the great peaks look like sleeping giants sharply outlined against a blue-black sky, and there is no sound at all to break the almost overpowering grandeur of the great silence and solitude.

The following night my tent fell down with a crash under the weight of snow, fortunately only hurting my arm, but I must have been a pitiful object, trembling with cold, in the middle of the night, waiting for the snow to be shaken off my tent so that it could be erected again. This having been accomplished, I was just dosing when Ramjhan crept out from amongst the men and said he wished to spend the rest of the night in my tent. I begged him to return to the others, as he would be warmer huddled up with them in their hole under the snow, but with tears turning to icicles on his cheeks and beard, he begged to be allowed to remain. After questioning him I found the coolies thought we were in a bad way, and that some had given up all hope of ever getting back, and no doubt,

enjoying the terror they created, had explained with gruesome details that if a relief party was organised to search for us they could not even start till the following May or June. I put Ramjhan's reason for wishing to remain in my tent in his own words—"When they come for us after many moons they will find me sitting frozen dead by my lady, and they will say: 'He was a good and faithful servant,'—I shall receive much honour from the Saheblog."

I realized that this was not the time to indulge in sentiment, and managed to get up a fairly hearty laugh; at last, with some coaxing and kindly abuse, he went back to the others.

Soon after, most terrifying groans and screams disturbed me, and Nibra came to say that one of the coolies was dying and I must give him medicine at once. It was some time before my fur-gloved, half-frozen fingers could unpack anything, and the first bottle I found was an extra strong mixture the dentist had given me to rub on externally in case I should suffer from toothache. I had been warned by other travellers of the terrific pain the intense cold causes to any tooth stopped

with gold or metal. "Poison" was labelled all over the bottle. The man's cries were awful and, in despair, I sent Nibra back with instructions to apply the lotion to the most painful part. He returned later and said the man was much better, pointing out he had saved a little of the precious stuff in case anyone else got ill, as undoubtedly it was a magnificent cure, but that the greedy man had drunk nearly all before he could stop him!

I snatched the bottle from Nibra and found it nearly empty. Regardless of everything, and feeling like a murderess, I rushed to the coolies' little camp and there found the man unconscious, but breathing. I sat by his side half stunned with cold and fright, expecting him to die in agony at any moment. After what seemed to me like weeks, but I suppose was barely an hour, he opened his eyes, smiled, and went to sleep. In the morning he was well! But for several days I suffered torments, expecting him to drop down dead at my feet and make me guilty of murder. Instead, can you imagine the relief at finding myself adored by the wretched man whose life had undoubtedly been saved by the poison? For the


rest of the journey he was most devoted, and used to watch me like an affectionate retriever dog. If he had only known! I had the remains of the mixture analysed when I got back to Bombay and found the coolie had drunk enough to kill three men, so that the age of miracles is not past!



PLATE XX.

TUNDOOK II AND GOATHERD.

CHAPTER VII.

T Lanak we began to suffer from want of food—our sheep were all eaten, we had no venison, as I had not been able to shoot during the snowstorms, and the two remaining goats were too precious to kill as they still gave a little milk. One night, five of the coolies disappeared, taking most of our supplies. The future began to look hopeless! Fortunately their courage failed them, for they returned the night of the following day, very shamefaced, and with a much diminished supply of the stolen suttoo. Although a fine morning, our start from Lanak was delayed, as two baggage yaks and a pony were missing. Cold and hunger in the early morning do not tend to improve the temper, and I was really angry when I sent for Tundook. I asked him why the ponies and yaks were not ready

when he had distinctly told me the night before that they were all safely tied up.

“That is true!”

“Why did you tell me they were ready last night?”

“I thought, Oh! Protector of the Poor, it was better you should enter your tent and rest.”

“But were the ponies tied up last night?”

“Certainly, I had told a man (pointing to his ten year old son) to fetch them.”

“Then they were not there?”

“Oh, merciful one, all men of this country are liars, excepting me—they were not there.”

This so delayed the start that Nibra arranged a short march, taking two of the deserting coolies to guide us to the spot where they said they had seen antelope the day before; after a steep climb we saw two buck, grazing on what looked like gigantic and badly-shaped sponges, but which, when we came nearer, we found to be patches of yellow-brown moss. I had a long shot at one and killed him, but was not quick enough to even get a shot at the other, who disappeared at once.

I was very disappointed to find that the horns only measured $19\frac{1}{4}$ inches, as he was a fine specimen. We took him back to camp, and at sight of plenty of meat the scowls quickly faded from the usually good-natured faces of the coolies.

When all the camp was feasting, I longed for a meal for my poor little grey pony, who had become a bag of bones in spite of extra feeds surreptitiously given; in fact, the baggage animals were all starving, and I could not bear to look at them.

Next day, while on the march, we saw some antelopes, and I had a very long stalk after them, ending in a great climb. Just as we were nearing the peak, a hailstorm came on, the wind and hail being so fierce and painful that we were obliged to lie down under a ledge for shelter till the worst of the fury was over. Wet and stiff with cold, we crawled to the top, but they had vanished! It was there and at that moment that I made up my mind if I ever managed to get back to England, I would never go near Tibet again!

When at last we found the caravan I vainly tried to mount a pony, but my right foot would not

move. When I explained this to Nibra and Sabana, they rushed at me, and without a word of explanation, tore off my fur boot and four stockings, and began rubbing my foot with snow; for a long time I felt nothing, but afterwards the agonizing tingling and burning seemed ridiculously and needlessly painful. They explained that it was slight frostbite. If that was slight, I trembled to think what the real thing must be. My foot was very painful for about a fortnight, especially in the hot mid-day sun.

At Lanak we struck our old route, and, pushing on as fast as we could with our weakened men and ponies, reached Kyam with its welcome fresh water and grazing. As the poor goats could give no more milk, one was killed and eaten. Our little shepherd had great difficulty in leading and dragging the lonely survivor of his flock to the Pangong nullah, where, as I had not been able to shoot anything for some days, it also found a resting place in the cooking pot.

The relief from the intense cold and fearful wind in this valley was plain to read on all our faces; and the joy of lying stretched out in your valise bed cannot be realized until you have been so cold for



PLATE XXI.

CAMP IN PANGONG NULLAH.

weeks that the only way to dose (one cannot call it sleep) is to lie as nearly as you can in a ball. Down in this sheltered river bed, we were still higher than the summit of Mont Blanc. All were anxious to get safely over the Marsemik La, as our food was running short; but as the Phobrang coolies assured us they knew the valley well, and could lead us to the exact spot where burhel were always to be found, we decided to risk another two days and try for them.

Next day we left at dawn, and after a three hours' climb came to the sheltered maidan they had pointed out, but there were no burhel. Further on we found some fresh foot tracks in the snow, and after a weary climb came suddenly in sight of seven rams lying on the snow in the sunshine—I have marked the spot on the picture with a cross. The position of my tent will explain one of the most trying parts of shooting in this country, namely, that nearly always before beginning to climb you have a steep descent in order to get on to the next mountain, which of course adds to the climb on the other side. We managed to stalk round a point and came fairly near the burhel with a

deep but narrow ravine dividing us. Although they did not see us they became restless and began wandering about. I had a good look through the field glasses and picked out two close together. Nibra loaded my rifles and I managed to shoot both, but I am ashamed to say I used four bullets. We had to go down a precipice to get on to their part of the mountain, and although we could see them quite close to us, lying in the snow, it was over an hour before we could get them; they measured 24 and 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The glare on the snow was torture to the eyes. In spite of a very hot sun, the water in the water bottle was thick ice, but we managed to make a fire and heat some tea, and I enjoyed the warmth and sunshine until my foot became almost unbearably painful, and I shall never forget the horror of that endless hobble back to camp.

On the following day I could not walk at all, and in order that I should ride all day, we had to sacrifice some of our kit, which was already almost nil. We wore every garment we possessed one on top of the other Ladaki-wise; our stores were exhausted, and we had nothing but our blankets, cooking pots,



PLATE XXII.

CROSSING THE MARSEMIK LA.

trophies, rifles, and two tents, so we regretfully abandoned my tent, which was slightly bigger and therefore heavier than the shikari's, and so at last, weary and almost worn out, we came to the Marsemik La, and camped near the top on very thick snow.

Next day we spent 11 hours doing 13 miles! Two poor pack animals succumbed on the pass, and whilst their loads were being readjusted I did this picture; Sabana and Tundook in front, Ramjhan with the red muffler on his head, and my little grey pony looking very wretched under his sheepskin and saddle, and more like a greyhound than a pony.

Great weariness, chilblains, chapped faces, and lips so sore that we had not dared to taste salt for a long time, as it made them smart so dreadfully, were all miseries we were well accustomed to; but the pain in our eyes in consequence of the last few days of dazzling sunshine on the snow was a new trial and almost seemed the last straw. But in the determination to get to Phobrang and safety, all else was forgotten. The last ten miles is an easy descent, but to us in our exhausted condition, it seemed

endless and impossible. At last we arrived, and were all much refreshed by some boiling tea provided for us by the two men who had remained at Phobrang in charge of our kit, who, when they saw "the way we walked," instead of coming to meet us "hastily made hot the tea."

Next morning, after a long delicious sleep, I awoke to find glorious sunshine, and my aching eyes rested gratefully on the green patches which follow the winding banks of Phobrang's little stream. The surrounding mountains were now snow-topped, and the stream frozen in several places. I was amazed to see two fish surprisingly like trout dart under some stones. I called Nibra, and as we were turning sadly and hungrily away, Tundook came up and said rods were not necessary, "any fool could grasp them." One of the coolies was sent into the icy water, and stooping over some large stones, soon tickled seven beautiful trout. Sabana lighted a fire on the bank, and with some of the new mutton fat and flour we had bought from the two Phobrang coolies, prepared the most delicious meal I have ever eaten. The trout not only looked, but tasted as good as any that ever



PLATE XXIII.

SNOW TROUT.
(14,500 feet above sea level.)

came out of English or Scotch rivers. My menu had been for the last 14 days :—

BREAKFAST.

Frozen milk, cold venison or cold mutton.

LUNCH.

Chinese brick tea, cold mutton or venison,
with one onion.

DINNER.

Clear mutton soup (with nothing in it).

Hot venison, or mutton, with *two* onions.

So that perhaps you can realize how exquisite the freshly caught and fried trout tasted eaten with some chappattis, the first bread I had seen for a long time.

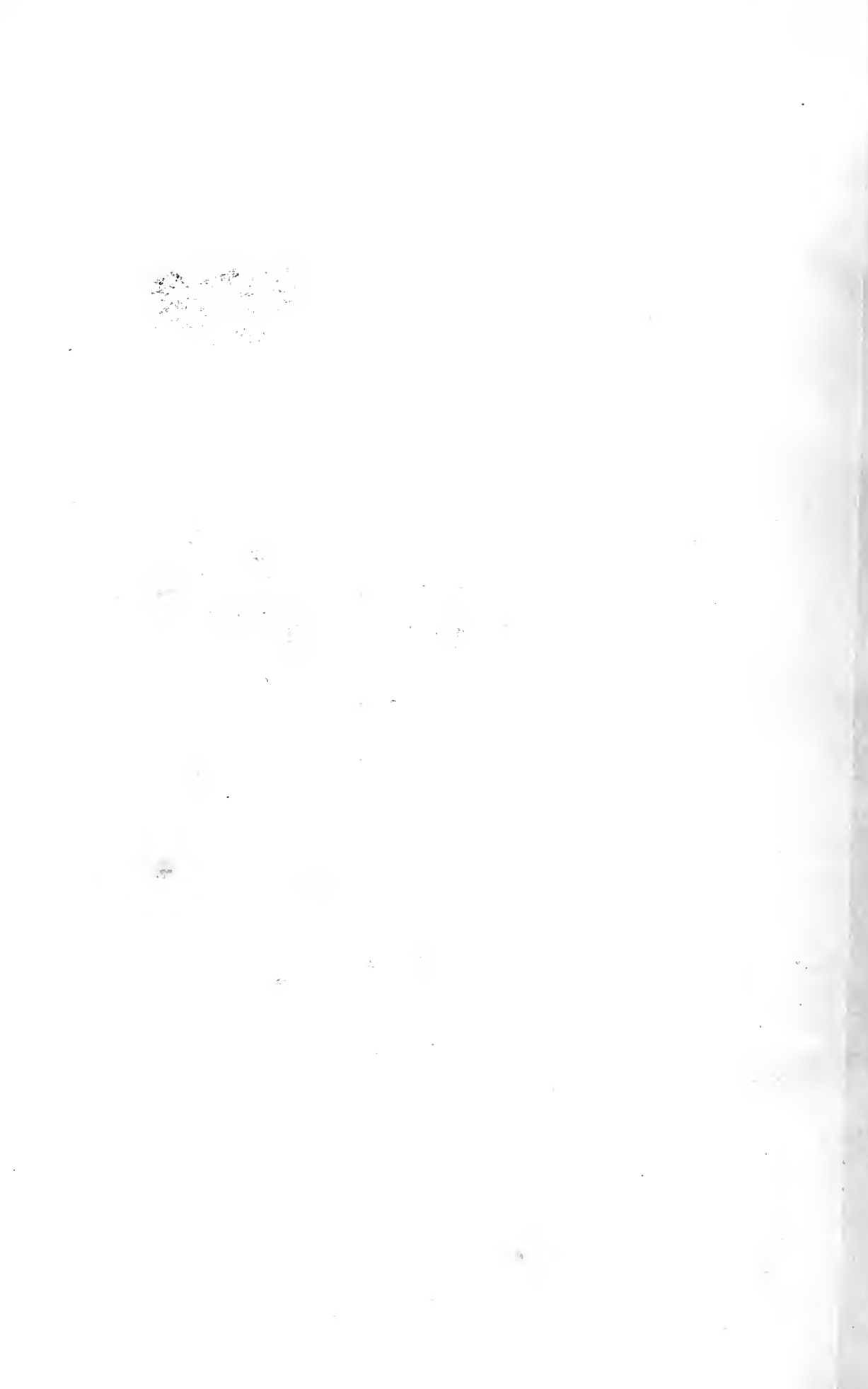
After a day's rest we marched to Tankse, passing the end of the Pangong Lake, where we met Professor Eric Zugmayer on his return from Kashgar and Yarkand. Even the coolies must have been amused to watch two complete strangers rush up to each other and joyously and repeatedly shake hands. Our excitement and delight were mutual, as neither of us had seen a white face or heard a word of any European language for so long. We marched ten miles together to Tseyaroo-tso, an absurdly small lake, bright blue and absolutely round; here we reluctantly parted, as the Professor still had some observations to make.

We camped at Tankse, an inhabited ruin in a ruined land; the gompa (monastery) was the most untidy building imaginable. It looked as if an enormous quantity of stones had been brought to build it, and only half the small ones had been used, the others being left throughout the ages lying in untidy heaps. We were able to hire fresh ponies, and next day our march was all down-hill and ended in a tiny village with some stunted but carefully irrigated willows and poplars. I never imagined anything would make me feel as those miserable apologies for trees did. All at once the memory of the horrors and dangers we had endured seemed to crowd over me, and I was amazed to feel the tears in my eyes as I looked at those wretched examples of the trees and woods I love so well.

Having spent a long day coming down-hill, it seemed preposterous that we should have another pass to negotiate before we reached Leh. The Chang La is a stiff pass, and we found it in a dangerous state owing to the recent heavy snow-fall. Half-way up, crossing from one ridge to another, we passed over a col of



PLATE XXIV.
STARTING FOR THE CHANG LA



the mountain where the ground was finely sanded just like the floor of a canary's cage! We camped near a small lake at the foot of the glacier. There was not much sleep for any of us that night, the air being indescribably fine and intensely cold. Starting before dawn, we had three hours' struggle in an icy wind, helping the baggage ponies to slip and slide and plough their way through the soft snow lying on the glacier. We finally reached the summit, 18,300 feet above the sea level, and stood beside the chorten, a heap of stones crowned with horns and some dirty rags tied to a few stunted twigs, which marked the top of the pass. Looking down thousands of feet into the valley below, and across the sky to the straight line of snow-topped mountains facing us, the miracle of the birth of a new day was slowly unfolded to our view. We seemed to stand in an icy shadow, as the sun touched one peak after another with rosy light, turning all the world to pink and gold. I do not know if it was the great wonder and glory of that marvellous scene or that the tragic end of the last of the milch goats had deprived me of my customary cup of milk before starting that

made me faint, and losing consciousness I thought I was slipping feet foremost miles into the purple shadows below. It was a long time before the frantic efforts of Nibra and Sabana, rubbing my head and hands vigorously with snow combined with some brandy that Ramjhan had carried in a flask since the day we left Leh, brought my thoughts back to the top of the pass. It is a strange fact that although I often had to face the thought of death and danger, the possibility of illness had never crossed my mind! After breakfast, half-way down the pass, out of the shadow and icy air of the glacier, I revived, and as we were now in an inhabited land, we were able to hire fresh ponies, and the rest of our marches passed uneventfully through irrigated valleys to Sakti, near the Miug Nullah, where we hoped to get ibex, but the local men reported nothing worth trying to shoot, so passing the great Himis Monastery with its 800 monks, we camped at Tikzai. A Lama riding in haste and in some state, passed us at the turn to the Himis Monastery. We had a long conversation and after exchanging some suttoo and tea I persuaded

him to sell me his bridle and martingale, a fantastic leather affair set with sweet-toned bells.

The Tikzai Monastery looked so picturesque in the rising sun that, as it was on our line of march, we halted an hour to see it. It was a long ride, the last part being up endless uneven steps roughly hewn in the sandstone. In the forecourt some of the frescoes were quite Chinese and the painted wooden altar in the great court was a wonderful blaze of colour.

The Lamas were very polite and showed me the Great Lama's throne with immense pride. In this, as in all the gompa temples, the sacred flower of the lotus was prominent everywhere, either painted or carved on ceilings, walls, idols, and even engraved on the brass vessels used at the ceremonies. The quaint hand-written manuscripts with their wooden bindings filled a large room. The smell of the universal filth of Tibet was very present in all the monasteries, the heightening touch being given to the dead smells by the living odour of the burning rancid butter which is used instead of oil in the little lamps burning before the altars.

There were two really beautiful conch shells

which I tried hard to purchase, but the Lamas were firm and refused to sell at any price. I was glad that I had been able to buy one from the travelling Lama we met near Himis gumpa. Mine (Plate VIII) was very inferior to these, which were very large and beautifully inlaid, the flag-shaped flaps of leather for covering the musician's hand were studded with large and good turquoise nails.

Presently, one of the enormous temple teapots was brought in, some of the Lamas stood round whilst the head Lama and his Chaplain, or A.D.C., or Secretary, and I had tea together. They sat on the floor and I on a little painted stool, which turned out to be an altar! Later I apologised for my ignorance, and amidst great laughing and joking I was allowed to buy the desecrated little altar, which also figures on Plate VIII.

With much bowing and handshaking we left the monastery, descended into the valley and rode through tiny villages alive with the sound of singing. The corn was all cut and everywhere women and children were standing watching the oxen, yaks, ponies and donkeys, promiscuously harnessed re-

gardless of size or breed, treading out the corn, their endless turning being done to the monotonous chanting of a Lama.

Most Lamas have either some business or farming interests, so no doubt some of them were singing to their own animals and blessing their own corn, as no corn can be threshed without a Lama to chant the blessings and praises of Buddha, "the Lord and Giver of all." All Lamas must therefore sing and chant, although to some the gift of an ear for music has been mysteriously withheld. After the great silence of the land we had left, even their discordant notes were welcome, for it spoke of safety and plenty and the life we had sometimes given up hope of finding again.

Without a gun the sight of the large flocks of pigeons which we were constantly meeting was most tantalizing. There were also countless magpies, often seven or eight together, and the old rhyme, with its "safe back again," fitted in well with our sentiments:

One for sorrow,
Two for mirth ;
Three for a wedding,
Four for a birth ;
Five for old England,
Six for Spain,
Seven for old Ireland,
Eight safe back again.

and so after many adventures I once more rode down the steps into Leh, feeling no longer a stranger, but as an old friend returned.

I was the only European in Leh, and the Wazir called to tell me he had arranged a polo match and devil dance for the following day. After a luxurious bath, and dressed in an entirely new outfit chosen from the kit we had recovered from the telegraph office, I felt quite respectable-looking again, until I saw myself in the hand glass which had been left in Leh by Nibra as an unnecessary luxury, but I was not prepared for the horrible sight. My face was a deep and brilliant red, green tinting the whites of the eyes! My lips and cheeks were all cracked and chapped, as well as sore and tender, and looked as awful as they felt.

The polo match next day was most interesting. Ladak claims to be the original home of polo, and almost every little village has its polo ground—a flat, sandy place with the stones cleared and stacked in a neat line which forms the boundary.

The polo ground of Leh is the high street depicted on Plate VII.

Quite early the crowd began to collect and sit in the unglazed windows.

I was taken up to a gaily decorated verandah, the street was cleared, and a ragged army of polo players rode up, thirteen on one side and eleven on the other. They all wore sheepskins and long woollen cloaks, and rode in high-peaked wooden saddles gaily painted and lacquered. I asked the Wazir to explain that as I did not know each man by sight, I should be glad if one team would wear a yellow muslin band provided from the muslin decorating our verandah. They all smilingly agreed. The captain of the other team then came up to say his men were feeling very hurt, and might they have muslin bands too. Whilst they were being marked with blue, the Wazir announced that I would present a silver cup to the winners.

The ball was thrown in and the game begun. There were no goalposts, the ends of the street being counted as goals. The jingling of the bells on the ponies' bridles and reins made a great noise as the rabble rode at each other, the long cloaks of the players almost hiding the ponies as they circled about.

The short-handled clumsy sticks were more like golf drivers than polo sticks, but in spite of all this there was some brilliant play. The ball was hit several times into shops which had forgotten to bar their windows and broke the merchandise inside to the delighted jeers and cheers of the crowd. There were no chuckers, and the game seemed endless. When the side with the blue bands had scored five goals to the others' two I asked the Wazir when they would stop, as the ponies must be exhausted.

“When your honour orders,” was the astounding reply.

If I had known this strange rule I should long before have stopped play, in pity to the gallant little ponies. The players were then ranged up to receive the cup. As a matter of form I enquired which side had won, both captains claimed the victory, and in a moment polo sticks were raised and a battle began! Order was only restored when the Wazir explained that it had been all a mistake about the silver cup, and that I would give a present of money to both victorious sides! The polo sticks were immediately lowered and broad smiles replaced the

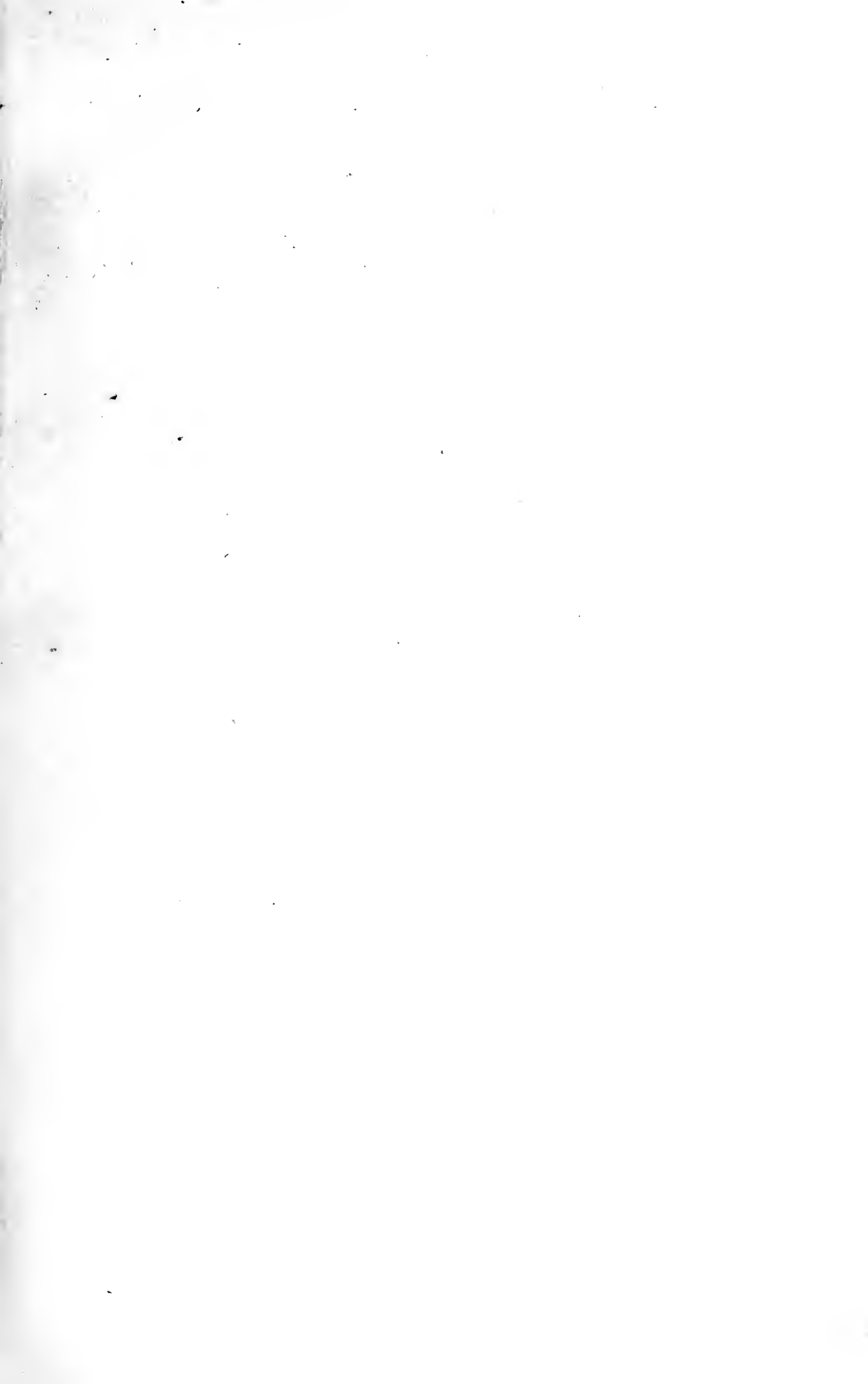




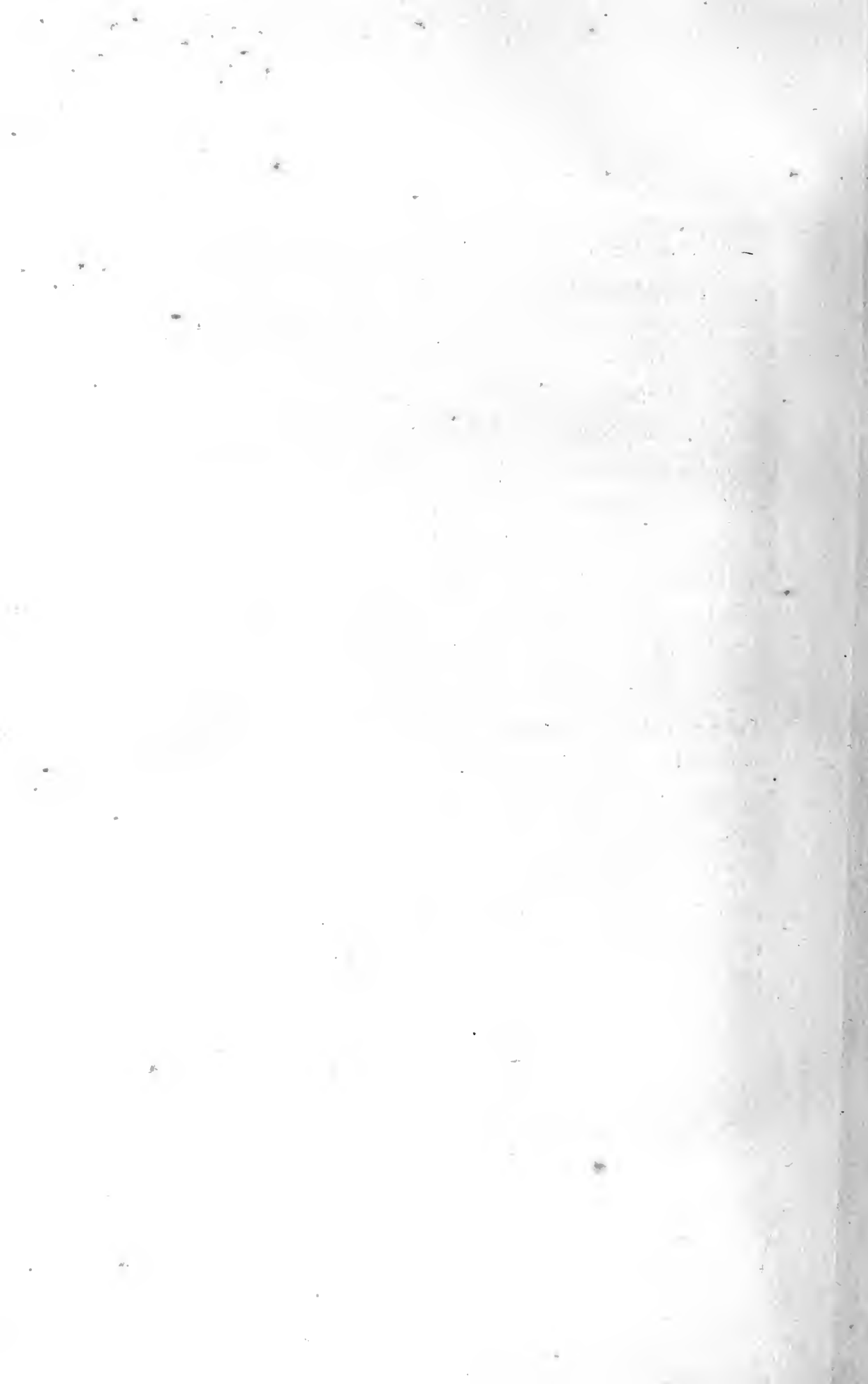
PLATE XXV.

DEVILS' DANCE.

scowls of an instant before. This little function over, the street was again cleared, this time for the devil dance. The devil dance is a religious ceremony, and therefore the dancers are Lamas, who are gorgeously dressed in embroidered robes and embroidered satin coats, crowned with horrible horned masks. Their absurd lungings and plungings are very monotonous until they become frenzied with excitement and dangerous to themselves. The drum beaters altered their time to suit the dancers. Amongst the watching crowd a lady pressed forward and allowed me to sketch her back view, showing her perak (head dress) and pig tail ending in the gaily coloured little tassels. The perak she wore was of bright red cloth, studded with unusually fine turquoises. The number, size and quality of the jewels worn on the perak show at a glance the wealth or poverty of the wearer.

We had first entered Leh in the setting sun, and in the setting sun we left it on our long ride of 19 marches back to Srinagar : and the World.

THE END.



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