

## THE EXPEDITION TO CHOGO RI.—IV.

LEAVES FROM THE NOTEBOOK OF ALEISTER CROWLEY.

ON the 21st we went on to Yuno, another short and agreeable march, but on the 22nd we had a most unpleasant day; miles of river bed full of rounded stones had to be crossed, and we forded altogether six rivers.

This brought us to the place where the valley divided, and we followed the true left hand branch, which was called the Bralduh Valley. The dividing mountain was buttressed by a great cliff, under which the river ran deeply and swiftly, so that we were compelled to climb a pari about 1,200 feet high. The horses had gone back from some little distance below, the fact was they could not go any farther. I was by this time in fairly decent condition; but it was a long march in the blazing sun over the waterless and interminable slopes. We reached Dasso at about half-past one.

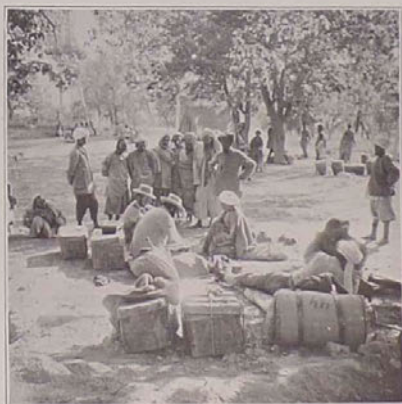


On the 23rd we went on to Ghomboro. I had been getting a little tired of the fact that Pfannl was always ready to greet me on my arrival and to inform me with a superior smile how many hours he had been at the stage, so this morning I stuck to his heels, and found that he made his records by going top-speed all the way. This was a pretty long march, and there was a long pari about 1,500 feet high cutting off the corner which overhangs the Bralduh. This village is on the Hoh Lumba, and not as marked on the map. Eckenstein turned up rather late with a strained knee, which made him somewhat doubtful about being able to march on the next day. However, he was all right the next morning, the 24th, at least so far recovered that the doctor gave him permission to march, provided he went slowly and took care of himself. I will here re-copy the account of the day's events as I wrote it at the time:—

Saturday May 24th. Left Ghomboro at 4.40 a.m. with Pfannl and Wesseley. Reached first mud nala at 6.0. Near wall fifty feet high or more and very steep, but dry. Far wall fifteen feet high and nearly vertical, consisting of black mud in which stones (some fairly big) were lodged. I detached Pfannl and Wesseley to let the coolies down the

imminent. As it happened none did fall. The mud-line was fifteen feet high. Bulk of coolies safely over at 6.40. I then heard there was another bad place, and started rapidly with Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod to help if necessary. We took, perhaps, half an hour to reach this. It was a wide, soft, deep bed of mud, stationary or nearly so. Men were hard at work throwing in stones for a causeway. This I heard later they had been doing for ten days. A way of just sufficient stability was thus made, and all was easy. From here we reached Pakora in an hour or less.

On the 25th we went on to Askoli. Rather less than an hour beyond Pakora are the hot springs of sulphur. There are several basins and pools, but only one of any importance or beauty. This is a circular pool of about forty



A PALAVER.

feet diameter and just deep enough in the middle to swim. The water is exquisitely clear, and a light steam rises from it. The temperature of the spring is about 35 degs. Centigrade. The basin is formed by very beautiful coralline deposits of calcium carbonate, branching or flowerlike with, perhaps, some sulphide, as the water gives off sulphuretted hydrogen in abundance, and in so pure a state that the unpleasant smell which one associates with the carelessly prepared laboratory gas is not present. Knowles, the doctor, and myself spent about two hours bathing. It was the first decent bath we had had for over four weeks. We reached Askoli a little before noon. By the doctor's orders the party was now to wait for ten days to rest; also there was a great deal of bandobast to make. The Austrians entirely disregarded the doctor's orders and went out every day for long walks during the ten days at Askoli. There was a good deal of illness, which the doctor called influenza, among the servants. I was also not very well; but my time was entirely occupied in constant consultations with Eckenstein. This was the last village. We did not know how many marches there were to our final camp; and we had to make food provisions for all the coolies.

On the 29th we sent off the first shift of about fifty coolies to Bardomal, a three-days' march, at which place the natives told us was the last "maidan" and firewood. On the 31st Abdulla Khan came to us and said there was only about ten pounds of sugar left. We had managed to eat ten pounds a day since leaving Skardu! This was a little bit too thick. We had up the three men who were in charge of the cooking department, and tried to frighten them; as it proved, in vain.

On June 2nd we repacked the kiltas, leaving everything we could possibly do without in charge of the Lambadar at Askoli. On the 3rd I spent most of the evening with Eckenstein weighing out the flour supply and painting the sacks.

The great difficulty in undertaking a journey through uninhabited country is that a coolie, though carrying



YAKS PLOUGHING.

steepest part by a rope. I myself cut a path with a big axe. 300 to 400 cubic feet of mud and stones were dislodged in this process. The coolies could have passed by going fifty yards down the nala, but would certainly have been killed had an avalanche fallen. As it was there were three or four yards in the bed of the nala which were unavoidable; but a coolie would have had plenty of time to escape, as Pfannl could see from above if any was