

four only, will eat up his own load in about twenty days, consequently the limit to which you can take the men is only ten days out and back. Our Baltis, luckily, could do a great deal more than this. As it turned out, our final camp was fourteen marches from Askoli, and of course this left a very small margin for carrying our own baggage. We had about one hundred loads in all; but this required the constant employment of nearly 300 coolies. Practically every man in the village (and, indeed, in the valley) able to carry a load was in our service. During our absence from Askoli we consumed more than five tons of flour.

By the 4th everything was finished, and we were lucky enough to spot a row between our three heroes of the sugar supply and the natives. They had been cheating the unfortunate inhabitants in the way that Eastern servants always do unless most carefully looked after, and with an enormous bandobast like ours it is almost impossible to keep constantly on the watch.

On the 5th we marched. I was foolish enough to follow the coolies instead of looking out my own way for myself. The result was I wasted several hours wandering over the top of the Biafo glacier, whereas the bulk of the party only crossed it twice, there being a way below. Just as I got over the glacier, with five coolies, two enormous stones came down from above about twenty yards in front of us. It was now after mid-day, and stones were falling everywhere from the nose of the glacier, and some care had to be exercised, but these two were absolutely gigantic. I went to the larger of the two on reaching the bottom; I found it higher than my own reach, though it had made a pretty big hole in the sand. I reached Korophon a little after four. Korophon consists of a little stunted grass grouped around a vast boulder. Its position is incorrectly marked on Conway's map. I might just as well state here that this map is so inaccurate as to be almost worthless. In some places it is very well done indeed, but that is of no great advantage, as once a map shows any gross inaccuracy one cannot tell till afterwards where it is right and where wrong; and, of course, the great use of a map is its function of prophecy.

We were very anxious to persuade our men to ford the stream of the Punma and its junction with the main stream of the Baltoro. We promised them if they reached Bardomal the next day they should be paid as if they had taken two days, as on the ordinary marches, but this was a delusion on our part, due again to Conway's map. The rope bridge which he marks is not nearly so far, and on the return journey we made the march by his route quite easily in a day. However, we sent off a committee of

river; though Bardomal is correctly placed, so far as it is opposite the junction of the two streams. On the 7th we went on to Paiyu, the scenery steadily increasing in grandeur, some of the mountains being magnificent beyond description. At one point we crossed an enormous fan of debris, and on reaching the highest point the Baltoro suddenly thrust itself before our eyes with its towering guard of sentinel peaks. One of great height we took to be the Mustagh Tower or "K 2," which latter mountain I shall in future refer to by its proper native name, Chogo ri, merely passing over with a single word of contempt the ridiculous pretensions of Godwin-Austen to call the second highest mountain in the world by his own particularly cacophonous name. We reached Paiyu before noon. Abdulla Khan, on our counting the fowls, told us that two had died. I am afraid they had, but if they had died in any legitimate way he would, of course, have shown us the bodies. It was quite out of the question, therefore, that we should allow these servants to remain in charge of our base camp as we had intended. We held a summary court martial in presence of the Chaprasi of the Tchsildar of Skardu, who had come with us, and of the Wazir of



A MUD HILL.



OUR CAMP AT ASKOLI.

natives to investigate the ford and report. They returned and agreed to try. As it turned out we crossed without any difficulty whatever. There is, however, another gross mistake in the map. The distance from the river to Bardomal is a great deal farther than from Korophon to the

Alchori, who had also attached himself to so renowned a convoy as we of course appeared to native eyes; it being the first time in history that six white men had been at one time at Skardu; so Abdulla and his two partners in crime were packed off and sent back. By the coolies who accompanied them we sent warning to all whom it might concern that these men were scoundrels, and that they were to be on their guard against them. As they were packing up for their departure Abdulla Baig, the second of the ruffians, complained that Hassan, a clever and useful little Balti boy whom we had picked up on the Leh Road, and attached to our corps of Naukars, owed him a rupee for a coat. This was Abdulla Baig's old coat, green with brass buttons, and very much worn; which he had discarded when we had provided him with a fine new coat against the cold. The Balti boy said he had paid the rupee; which I have no doubt was true, though probably not by his own will, as the coat was barely worth an anna. Abdulla Khan would, of course, have deducted the cash from his "talab." The whole of the "Arabian Nights" flashed through my mind in a single second, and I saw my way to an act of poetic and Oriental justice. I simply made the two change coats; the old coat was Abdulla Baig's, as Hassan had not paid for it; but the new coat was mine, and I had a perfect right to give it to Hassan. This arrangement greatly pleased the multitude.

(To be continued.)

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