TRANS-HIMALAYA

Aron Jonason Photogr

SVEN HEDIN. *Frontispiece Vol. II.*

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TRANS-HIMALAYA

DISCOVERIES AND ADVENTURES IN TIBET

BY

SVEN HEDIN

IN TWO VOLUMES

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ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER XXXV

IMMURED MONKS

We had heard of a lama who had lived for the last three years in a cave in the valley above the monastery of Linga, and though I knew that I should not be allowed to see either the monk or the interior of his ghastly dwelling, I would not miss the opportunity of at least gaining some slight notion of how he was housed.

On April 16, 1907, eighteen months to a day after I had left Stockholm, dreary windy weather prevailed, with thickly falling snow and dense clouds. We rode up to Linga, past rows of fine *chhortens*, left the last dormitories behind us, saw an old tree-trunk painted white and red, passed a small pool with crystal-clear spring water thinly frozen over, and heaps of *mani* stones with streamer poles, and then arrived at the small convent Samde-puk, built on the very point of a spur between two side valleys. It is affiliated to the Linga monastery, and has only four brethren, who all came to greet me heartily at the entrance.

It is a miniature copy, outwardly and inwardly, of those we have seen before. The *dukang* has only three pillars and one divan for the four monks, who read the mass together, nine prayer-cylinders of medium size which are set in motion by leathern straps, a drum and a gong, two masks with diadems of skulls, and a row of idols, among which may be recognized several copies of Chenresi and Sekiya Kōngma, the chief abbot of Sekiya.

A few steps to the south-west we passed over a sheet of

it. We call him merely the Lama Rinpoche" (according to Köppen, lama means *quo nemo est superior*, one who has no one over him; and Rinpoche means gem, jewel, holiness).

"Where has he come from?"

"He was born in Ngor in Naktsang."

"Has he relations?"

"That we do not know; and if he has any, they do not know that he is here."

"How long has he lived in the darkness?"

"It is now three years since he went in."

"And how long will he remain there?"

"Until he dies."

"May he never come out again into the daylight before his death?"

"No; he has taken the strictest of all oaths, namely, the sacred vow only to leave the cell as a corpse."

"How old is he?"

"We do not know his age, but he looked about forty."

"But what happens if he is ill? Cannot he get help?"

"No; he may never speak to another human being. If he falls ill he must wait patiently till he is better again or dies."

"You never know, then, how he is?"

"Not before his death. A bowl of *tsamba* is pushed every day into the opening, and a piece of tea and a piece of butter every sixth day; this he takes at night, and puts back the empty bowl to be filled for the next meal. When we find the bowl untouched in the opening we know that the immured man is unwell. If he has not touched the *tsamba* the next day our fears increase; and if six days pass and the food is not taken, we conclude he is dead and break open the entrance."

"Has that ever happened?"

"Yes; three years ago a lama died, who had spent twelve years in there, and fifteen years ago one died who had lived forty years in solitude and entered the darkness at the age of twenty. No doubt the Bombo has heard in Tong of the lama

along once in his life. Before us was the splendid view which might never delight his eyes. When I had descended to the camp I could not look up the monastery valley without thinking of the unfortunate man sitting up there in his dark hole.

Poor, nameless, unknown to any one, he came to Linga, where, he had heard, a cave-dwelling stood vacant, and informed the monks that he had taken the vow to enter for ever into darkness. When his last day in this world of vanity dawned, all the monks of Linga followed him in deep silence, with the solemnity of a funeral, to his grave in the cave, and the door was closed on him for the rest of his life. I could picture to myself the remarkable procession, the monks in their red frocks, silent and grave, bending their bodies forward and turning their eyes to the ground, and walking slowly step by step as though they would let the victim enjoy the sun and light as long as possible. Were they inspired with admiration of his tremendous fortitude, compared with which everything I can conceive, even dangers infallibly leading to death, seems to me insignificant? For, as far as I can judge, less fortitude is required when a hero, like Hirosé, blockades the entrance of Port Arthur, knowing that the batteries above will annihilate him, than to allow oneself to be buried alive in the darkness for forty or sixty years. In the former case the suffering is short, the glory eternal; in the latter the victim is as unknown after death as in his lifetime, and the torture is endless, and can only be borne by a patience of which we can have no conception.

No doubt the monks escorted him with the same tenderness and the same sympathy as the priest feels when he attends a criminal to execution. But what can have been his own feelings during this last progress in the world? We all have to pass along this road, but we do not know when. But he knew, and he knew that the sun would never again shine warmly on his shoulders and would never produce lights and shadows on the heaven-kissing mountains around the grave that awaited him.

He assumes that the other monks have gone down again to Samde-puk and Linga. How shall he pass the evening? He need not begin at once to read his holy books; there is plenty of time for that, perhaps forty years. He sits on the mat and leans his head against the wall. Now all his reminiscences come with great distinctness into his mind. He remembers the gigantic characters in the quartzite, "Om mani padme hum," and he murmurs half dreaming the holy syllables, "Oh! thou jewel in the lotus. Amen!" But only a feeble echo answers him. He waits and listens, and then hearkens to the voices of his memory. He wonders whether the first night is falling, but it cannot be darker than it is already in his prison, his grave. Overcome by the travail of his soul, he sleeps, tired and weary, in his corner.

When he awakes, he feels hungry, crawls to the opening and finds the bowl of *tsamba* in the tunnel. With water from the spring he prepares his meal, eats it, and, when he has finished, puts the bowl in the loophole again. Then he sits cross-legged, his rosary in his hands, and prays. One day he finds tea and butter in the bowl and some sticks beside it. He feels about with his hands and finds the flint, and steel, and the tinder, and kindles a small fire under the tea-can. By the light of the flame he sees the interior of his den again, lights the lamp before the images, and begins to read his books; but the fire goes out and six days must pass before he gets tea again.

The days pass and now comes autumn with its heavy rains; he hears them not, but the walls of his den seem to be moister than usual. It seems to him a long time since he saw the sun and the daylight for the last time. And years slip by and his memory grows weak and hazy. He has read the books he brought with him again and again, and he cares no more for them; he crouches in his corner and murmurs their contents, which he has long known by heart. He lets the beads of his rosary slip through his fingers mechanically, and stretches out his hand for the *tsamba* bowl unconsciously. He crawls along the walls feeling the cold stones with his hands, if haply

generations of monks had passed through the cloisters; he was a complete stranger to them all. And he had scarcely been carried out into the sunlight when he too gave up the ghost.

In analysing the state of such a soul, fancy has free play, for we know nothing about it. Waddell and Landon, who took part in Younghusband's expedition to Lhasa, and visited the hermits' caves at Nyang-tö-ki-pu, say that the monks who have there retired into perpetual darkness first underwent shorter experiences of isolation, the first lasting six months, and the second three years and ninety-three days, and that those who had passed through the second period of trial showed signs that they were intellectually inferior to other monks. The cases which the two Englishmen have described seem not to have been so severe a trial as the one I saw and heard about in Linga, for in the Nyang-tö-ki-pu caves the lama who waited on the recluse tapped on a stone slab which closed the small opening, and at this signal the immured lama put his hand out of this door for his food; he immediately drew the stone shutter to again, but in this way he would at least see the light of the sun for a moment every day. In the cases described by Waddell and Landon the immured monks had passed some twenty years in confinement. Waddell, who has a thorough knowledge of Lamaism, believes that the custom of seclusion for life is only an imitation of the practice of pure Indian Buddhism, which enjoins periodical retreats from the world for the purpose of self-examination and of acquiring greater clearness in abstruse questions. In his opinion the Tibetans have made an end of the means.

Undoubtedly this opinion is correct, but it is not exhaustive. It may be that the future hermit has in religious delusion come to the decision to allow himself to be buried alive. But does he clearly conceive what this means? If he became dull and insensible like an animal in his cell, all his energy and his power of will would be deadened, and what seemed to him, when he entered, to be worth striving for, would gradually become more and more indifferent to him. But this is not

our notice in our wanderings through the cloister temples of Tibet.

When the *tsamba* bowl, which has been filled daily for so many long years, remains at last untouched and the six days have expired, the cave is opened and the abbot of the monastery sits down beside the deceased and prays for him, while all the other monks pray in the *dukang* hall for five or six days together. Then the body is wrapped in a white garment, a covering called *ringa* is placed on his head, and he is burned on a pyre. The ashes are collected, kneaded together with clay, and moulded into a small pyramid, which is deposited in a *chhorten*.

The Linga monks said that an ordinary lama, when he dies, is cut in pieces, and abandoned to the birds. This process is performed here by five lamas, who, though they belong to the monastery, attend the service in the *dukang*, and drink tea with the other monks, are still considered unclean, and may not eat with the other brethren. Also when nomads die in the neighbourhood, their services are required, but then the relatives are bound to provide them with horses and to undertake that the property of the deceased shall pass into the possession of the monastery.

For days and weeks I could not drive away the picture I had formed in my mind of the Lama Rinpoche, before whose cell we had stood and talked. And still less could I forget his predecessor, who had lived there forty years. I fancied I could hear the conch which summoned the monks to the funeral mass of the departed. I pictured to myself the scene in the cave where the lama, crouching in rags on the floor, stretches out his withered hands to Death, who, kindly smiling like the skull masks in the temples, gives him one hand while he holds a brightly burning lamp in the other. The features of the monk are transfigured in a reflexion of Nirvana, and forgetting the "Om mani padme hum" that for tens of years has reverberated from the walls of his den, he raises, as the trumpet blasts sound out from the temple roof, a song of victory, which calls to mind the following strophe

CHAPTER XXXVI

OVER THE CHANG-LA-POD-LA

We had stayed three days near the monastery Linga, when we went on north-westwards on April 17 up the narrow My-chu valley, in which the volume of water was now considerably diminished. Space does not permit me to describe in detail this wonderful road and its wild beauty. From the expansion of the valley at Linga routes run eastwards and westwards into the mountains, with branches to numerous villages, of which I noted down the names and approximate positions. The traffic is now much less, but still numerous *manis* and other religious symbols stand beside the solitary path.

We ride along the steep slopes of the right bank; below us the river forms rapids, and the way is dangerous, especially with a horse that is not sure on its feet. Robert's small bay filly stumbled and fell, so that the rider was thrown headlong to the ground. Had he rolled down the slope he would have been lost; but fortunately he fell towards the mountain.

We encamped in the village Langmar, consisting of a few scattered houses, at the entrance of the small side valley Langmar-pu.

We still have hired horses, and now yaks also, and the caravan is divided into the same detachments as before. Sonam Tsering and Guffaru command their sections. Tsering's party sets out last and is the last to come to rest, and Muhamed Isa supervises the whole. In the evening he is massaged by two men selected for the purpose, of whom Rehim Ali is one. There is still *chang*, the harmless, but still intoxicating, beer.

over; springs and brooks from the side valleys adorn the scene with cascades of ice. The river is said to be here so swollen in summer that it cannot be crossed at any point. To the north and south snowy mountains are visible.

In the village of Govo, consisting of seven stone houses, barley is cultivated and yields a moderate crop; but the inhabitants are not dependent on the harvest, for they also possess sheep, goats, and yaks, with which they migrate northwards in summer. Govo is the last village where agriculture is pursued, so we here find ourselves on the boundary between tillage and grazing, and also between stone houses and black tents.

We have, then, still time to look into an ordinary Tibetan stone hut belonging to a family in comfortable circumstances. The walls are built of untrimmed bare stones, but the crevices are stopped with earth to keep out the wind. Through a labyrinth of walls and over round stones where the tripping foot seldom touches the ground we come to two yards where goats and calves are kept. In a third is a loom, at which a half-naked coppery-brown woman is working, and in a fourth sits an old man engaged in cutting up *pama* shrubs.

From this yard we entered a half-dark room, with a floor of mud, and two openings in the roof, through which the smoke escapes and the daylight enters. The roof consists of beams overlaid with a thatch of brushwood, which is covered all over with soil and flat stones—it must be nice and dry when it rains. There sat an elderly woman telling off her *manis* on a rosary of porcelain beads.

The next room is the kitchen, the general living-room and the principal apartment of the house. At a projecting wall stands the stone cooking-range with round black-edged holes for saucepans and teapots of baked clay. A large earthen pot, standing on the fire, contains barley, which is eaten parched; a stick with a stiff piece of leather at the end is twirled round in the barley between the palms so that it may be roasted equally. It tastes delicious.

I went about, turned over all the household utensils and made an inventory, and not in Swedish only, but also in

high inconvenient thresholds between the rooms, and the usual bundles of rods on the roof to protect the house from evil spirits.

After this expedition we inspected the tents of our escort, where a fire was burning in a broken clay pot, and a skillet stood over it on a tripod. The smoke escapes through the long slit between the two halves of which the tent is composed. The owners of the tent were writing their report to the authorities in Shigatse, informing them that we were on the right road. At the same time they were eating their dinner of mutton, a year old, dry and hard; it must not come near the fire. One of them cut it into strips and distributed it among his comrades. He had been for twenty years a lama in the monastery Lung-ganden in Tong, but a few years before had been ejected from the confraternity because he had fallen in love with a woman. He spoke of it himself, so it was doubtless true.

Robert's bay horse was reported dead on the morning of April 20. His late tumble now seemed to us like an omen; though fat and sleek, he died suddenly about midnight. We now ride on again towards higher regions over uncomfortable blocks of stone, but the valley becomes more open and the relative heights diminish. Though the little that is left of the stream still swirls and foams, the ice becomes thicker, and at last covers almost all the bed, and the water is heard rushing and murmuring under it. Juicy moss skirts the banks, the view becomes more extensive, and the whole character of the landscape becomes alpine. We saw ten men with guns in a sheep-fold, carrying gun-rests with yellow and red pennants on one of the prongs; perhaps they were highway robbers. Dark clouds sweep over the ridges, and in a minute we are in the midst of icy-cold drifting snow, but it does not last long.

The last bit of road was awful, nothing but boulders and débris, which we could sometimes avoid by riding over the ice of the river. The camping-ground was called Chomo-sumdo, a valley fork in a desolate region, but the escort had seen that some straw and barley were brought up on yaks for our horses.

warmer season to proceed to Lhasa, and return thence home again. In the meantime they voluntarily waited on the two holy hermits sojourning in this mountain, and thereby earned their living and gained merit, according to the ideas of their order. When they go off again on their wanderings, other serving brethren and sisters will be found ready to take their place.

A winding staircase on the left, partly natural and partly constructed of flagstones, leads to the upper regions of the cavern. At first it is dark, but becomes lighter as we approach a loophole in the rock. Here and there are streamer-poles, and the holy syllables are incised. From the loophole the staircase turns steeply to the right; if we slipped on the smooth stone we should tumble down right into the nuns' kitchen, which from here looks like the bottom of a well. The passage ends at a point where a small stone staircase goes up to a trap-door covered with a slab. Pushing aside the slab, one reaches the larger grotto chamber of which we had seen the opening from the valley. But the serving brothers and sisters would not take us so high.

In this upper grotto, Choma-taka, the 100-years-old hermit, Gunsang Ngurbu, of high repute in all the country for his holiness, has dwelt for seven years. Gunsang means hermit, and Ngurbu is a very common name signifying precious stone. Every seventh day his attendants place *tsamba*, water, tea, and fuel on the steps under the trap-door, and these things are taken in by the old man, who may not speak with men, but only with the gods. Through a hole under the slab I caught sight of a *chhorten* constructed of stones and mud, and some painted pictures of gods on the wall of the grotto. Behind the *chhorten*, and unfortunately out of sight, the old man sat in a niche in the wall, crouching down and saying his prayers; now and then he blows a shell horn.

I wished to push aside the shutter and mount into the upper grotto, but the consciences of my companions would not permit such a thing for all the money in the world. It would disturb the old man in his meditations, and interrupt the period of his seclusion, and, moreover, the old man would

and is begirt by flat rounded mountains, in which rock *in situ* seldom occurs. We have passed from the maze of mountains intersected by the affluents of the My-chu, abundantly fed by the rains, on to the wide plains of the plateau country, and notice again that the Trans-Himalaya is also an extraordinarily important climatological boundary.

The Lapsen-Tari is a heap of clods with a sheaf of rods stuck in the middle, from which streamer strings are carried to other rods. From this point there is a fine view over the plateau and its wreath of mountains. To the north, 55° west, we see the Targo-gangri again, but more majestic, more isolated, and more dominant than from the Ngangtse-tso, where, shrouded in clouds and surrounded by other mountains, it was less conspicuous.

Just at the mound we passed the last corner which obscured the view, and suddenly the whole grand mountain appeared in its dazzling whiteness, shining like a lighthouse over the sea of the plateau, in a mantle of firn fields and blue glistening ice, and rising bold and sharply against the sky of purest azure blue. The mound is therefore placed where the traveller coming from Shigatse first comes in sight of the holy mountain. Our guides bared their heads and murmured prayers. Two pilgrims, whom we had seen at the grotto of the hermits, lighted a fire and threw into it a scented powder, an offering of incense to the gods of Targo-gangri. South and south-west runs a lofty range, of uniform height, with patches of snow glittering in the sun on its brownish-purple summit—another part of the Trans-Himalaya.

As we sat here a trading caravan came along the road to Penla-buk, which lies on the west side of the Dangra-yum-tso, and is a rendezvous for gold-prospectors and wool-dealers. Our tents formed a little village on the Kyangdam plain, where wild asses abound, and some sixty nomads of the neighbourhood encamped around it.

In the evening the escort from Ghe presented themselves to inform me that as we were now in the Largep district, subject to the Labrang, they would return home and consign us to a

it was cold, and Targo-gangri partly disappeared behind the clouds. Escorted by the old gentleman and four horsemen who were as much alike as if they had been cast in the same mould, and who had all matchlocks on their backs, I rode along the bank of the Targo-tsangpo in the contracting valley which slopes with an extremely gentle gradient, imperceptible to the eye, to the lake. At last the valley becomes so narrow that the ice fills all its bottom. The road therefore leaves the river on the left, and passes over flat hills, among which we cross a succession of small affluents. Black tents, tame yaks grazing, stone folds for sheep, wild asses, and millions of field mice recall to mind the Chang-tang. The wild yak, however, does not occur in this country. The feathered kingdom is represented by ravens, wild ducks, and occasionally a small bird. When we came to the Bumnak-chu, a right-hand tributary of the Targo-tsangpo, a large number of men came to meet us, saluting with the tongue, and gazing at us cheerfully and good-temperedly with their long black unkempt hair, their small grey skins, and their torn boots.

On April 25 we rode over the Ting-la pass; at its foot is a *mani* in good preservation, with a yak skull as ornament, a form of prayer being incised in the frontal bone between the horns. From the top of the pass Targo-gangri is seen expanded into a row of peaks covered with snow. The whole region is like a sea with a strong swell on, and the Targo-gangri is as white foaming surf on the coast. A little later the summits of the mass stood clearly out white on a background of bluish-black clouds; the highest two, twin peaks, had the form of a Tibetan tent on two poles.

Our camp in the Kokbo valley contained not fewer than eleven tents, for now we had about forty companions of all ages, and at least a hundred yaks. The loads were transferred to other yaks on the march to spare the animals. When the caravan moves over the rounded hills it is like a nomad tribe on the march. Most of our Tibetans ride yaks or horses.

We had made a short march, and plenty of time was left for me to go about, make a visit to each tent, and see how the men

heartily when they saw their counterfeits, which they embellished with prints of their buttery fingers on the margin. They asked me why I drew them, and for what purpose I wished to know their names and ages. They were all sympathetic, polite, and friendly, and I enjoyed their society.

A begging lama, too, looked in; he was on the way to Kailas, and was quickly sketched, to the intense amusement of the other men. He bore a lance with a black tassel and red strips, a timbrel, an antelope horn to protect himself against snappy dogs, and a trombone of human bone, which he set in a corner of his mouth when he blew it. It caused him much amusement to be the object of universal attention, and he took advantage of it to make acquaintance with the nomads with a view to an appeal to their liberality.

embedded, while to the east of the mountain the flat open valley of the Targo-tsangpo comes into sight, which we gradually approach, passing over five clearly defined terraces, relics of a time when the Dangra-yum-tso was much larger than now. Two wolves make off in front of us, and the old man gallops after them, but turns back when they stop as if to wait for him. "If I had had a knife or a gun," he says, "I would have killed them both."

At length we descend to the valley of the Targo-tsangpo down a bold terrace with two ledges, and here the river is divided into several arms, and wild ducks and geese swarm. Brushwood grows on the banks. On the right bank lies our camp, No. 150, not far from the foot of the majestic Targo-gangri.

Thus far we were to come, but no farther. Here a troop of twenty horsemen armed to the teeth awaited us, who had been sent by the Governor of Naktsang from Shansa-dzong, with orders to stop us "in case we should attempt to advance to the holy lake." This time they had kept a sharper watch, and had anticipated that I would take all kinds of liberties. They had left Shansa-dzong fifteen days before, and had been camping here three days, awaiting our arrival. If we had hurried we should have been before them again. One of the two leaders was the same Lundup Tsering who, as he told me himself, had stopped Dutreuil de Rhins and Grenard, and had been in January with Hlaje Tsering at the Ngangtse-tso. He informed me that Hlaje Tsering was still in office, but had had much trouble because of us, and had been obliged to pay a fine of sixty *yambaus* (about £675) to the Devashung. When I remarked that Hlaje Tsering had told me himself that he was so poor that he had nothing left to lose, Lundup answered that he had extorted the money from his subordinates. All, too, who had sold us yaks and served us as guides had been heavily fined. The next European who attempted to get through without a passport would have no end of difficulties to contend with.

Lundup pointed to a red granite promontory, 200 yards north

The Kyangdam men could not thank me enough for restoring peace, and their joy was still greater when I presented the whole party with money to supplement their scanty store of provisions. They gave vent to their delight by performing games, dances, and wrestling bouts in front of my tent, and their happy laughter and shouts were echoed till late in the night from the mountains.

Then came twelve more soldiers from Naktsang with fresh orders that we were under no circumstances to be allowed to proceed farther northwards. But all were friendly and polite; we joked and laughed together, and were the best of friends. It is singular that they never lose their patience, though I am always causing them worry, perplexity, and troublesome journeys.

The chief of Largep was more unyielding than our old friends the Naktsang gentlemen. He would not let me climb the red mountain, but insisted that we should leave the district next day and travel straight to Raga-tasam. However, I snubbed him, demanding how he, a small chieftain in the mountains, could dare to speak so peremptorily. Even the Chinese in Lhasa, I said, had treated us pleasantly and had left us the fullest freedom. I would not leave the spot until I had seen the lake. I threatened to tear the Shigatse passport in pieces, and send off at once a courier to Tang Darin and Lien Darin, and wait for their answer at the foot of Targo-gangri. Then the chief became embarrassed, got up in silence, and went away with the others. But they were with me again in the evening, and with a humble smile they said that I might ride up the red mountain if I would promise not to go to the shore of the lake.

A thin veil of mist lay over the country all day long. But when the sun set, the western sky glowed with purple flames, and the cold glaciers and snowfields were thrown up by a background of fire.

At last, on April 29, we take to the road and ride up the affluent Chuma, flowing down from the right and called in its upper course Nagma-tsangpo. We climb higher and higher up regularly curved lake terraces; the view widens out the

under the Devashung, and has twenty Pembo brethren and an abbot named Tibha. Some of the monks are said to be well off, but on the whole the convent is not rich; it is supported by nomads in Naktsang, Largep, and Sershik. The monastery is constructed chiefly of stone, but it also contains timber transported hither from the Shang valley. There is a *dukang* and a number of small images of gods. The Targo-gangri massive can also be travelled round, and only one pass has to be crossed, namely the Barong-la (or Parung), which lies between Targo-gangri and the mighty range on the west of the Shuru-tso.

The short, lofty, meridional range which is called Targo-gangri, and is rather to be considered an isolated massive, ends in the north not far from the lake, the flanks of the last peak descending gently to its flat plain. Nain Sing calls the massive Targot-la Snowy Peaks, and the district to the south of the mountain Tárgot Lhágeb (Largep). The river is marked Targot Sangpo on his map. His Siru Cho to the east of the lake is known to no one here, and his Mun Cho Lakes marked to the south of it actually lie to the west of the lake. His representation of the mountains to the south of the lake is confused and fanciful. Some nomads named the holy mountain Chang-targo-ri.

On the way back I took levels, assisted by Robert, and found that the highest recognizable terrace lay 292 feet above the level of the river. The Targo-tsangpo is here certainly not more than 6½ feet higher than the surface of the lake. As the Dangra-yum-tso is surrounded, particularly on the south, by rather low, flat land, the lake must formerly have been of very large extent. At that time the Targo-gangri skirted the western shore as a peninsula.

In the night there was a noise like an avalanche falling; it became feebler and died away. The horses and yaks of the Tibetans, frightened by something or other, had stormed the detritus slope of the terrace. Half an hour later I heard whistling and shouting; the men were coming back with the runaways.

beauty of atmospheric effects of light and shade, gold, purple, and grey, pass over Padma Sambhava's lake amidst rain and sunshine, as already for untold thousands of years, and the steps of believing, yearning pilgrims draw a chain around its shores.

Accompanied by Robert and our aged guide, I rode across the river, which carries about 140 cubic feet of water, and up to a spur of Targo-gangri in order to procure a rock specimen. One glacier tongue after another of the long series on the east side of the mountain passes out of sight, and now the gap disappears through which we had seen a corner of the lake, and far away to the north on its other side the outlines of light-blue mountains.

Six hundred sheep were grazing on a slope without shepherds. Now and then a hare was started in the thick tufts of steppe grass. From the screes on our right was heard the pleasant chirp of partridges. When we were far away two shepherds came up out of a gorge and drove the sheep down to the river. At the lower end of the moraine of a glacier stood a solitary tent. I asked our old man what the spot was called, but he swore by three different gods that he had no notion. The most southern outskirt of Targo-gangri hid the rest of the range, but before we reached camp No. 151 it appeared again foreshortened. This camp stood on the left bank of the river.

May 1. Spring is come; we have, indeed, had as much as 29 degrees of frost during the preceding nights, but the days are fine and clear, and it is never as trying as in the Chang-tang, even riding against the wind. At camp No. 150 we had been at a height of 15,446 feet; now we go slowly down, following the river at first, but leaving it on the left when we see it emerge from the mountains as through a gate. Over a singularly uniform and continuous plain without fissures or undulations we now approach in a south-westerly direction the threshold which separates the Shuru-tso from the Dangra-yum-tso. On the south-west side of Tangro-gangri appear six glaciers, much smaller than those on the north and east, and

lying in a longitudinal valley which has this direction, so unusual in Tibet. There is open water along the bank, and the waves splash against the edge of the porous ice, on which wild ducks sit, often in long rows. Owing to the swell the water on the bank is black with decayed algæ and rotting water-weeds, in which wild geese cackle and scream. As we come to the regularly curved southern shore of the lake, with its bank of sand, we see the well-known signs of a storm on the plain before us, white dust swirls, stirred up in spirals from the ground by the wind, like the smoke of a shot. After a time we find ourselves in the path of the storm—it will not need many such storms to break up the whole lake and drive its loosened ice-sheets to the eastern bank. We ride across the river Kyangdam-tsangpo, which comes from the Trans-Himalaya, and bivouac on its western terrace (15,548 feet). Here we have the whole lake in front of us to the north, and behind it Targo-gangri, now smaller again.

Here our attendants were changed. The Largep chief, who had been so overbearing at first, was as meek as a lamb at the moment of parting, and gave me a *kadakh*, a sheep, and four skins of butter. Every morning when the caravan sets out Ishe comes to my tent to fetch my two puppies; Muhamed Isa has the third, which he means to train up to be a wonderful animal, and the fourth has been consigned to Sonam Tsering. They have grown a deal already, and howl and bite each other on the march, when they ride in a basket on the back of a mule. They are graceful and playful, and give me great amusement with their tricks.

From the little pass Dunka-la we had a grand and instructive view over the great Shuru-tso, which is of a somewhat elongated form and is convex to the west. Next day we crossed the pass Ben-la in a south-westerly storm. It raged and blew day and night, but the air remained quite clear. On the 6th we rode up a steep path to the Angden-la. In the rather deep snow and the tiring rubbish the horses can get on only a step at a time, and have often to stop and rest. Tsering rides past us with his yak caravan, and four Ladakis have stayed behind

behind me, and Targo-gangri sinks below the horizon—shall I ever see its majestic peaks again?

We descend rapidly with the wind in our faces. Large blocks of ice fill the valley bottom between walls of black schists and porphyry. Several large side valleys open into ours, and deserted hearths are signs of the visits of nomads in summer. Our valley unites with the large Kyam-chu valley, which is 6 miles broad and descends from the Sha-la, the pass of the Trans-Himalaya over which our Tibetans had wished to guide us. The land round the nomad tents of Kyam is flat and open.

On May 7 we march on in a terrible wind with the blue mirror of the Amchok-tso on the south. The ground is flat and hard. A hare runs like the wind, as if his life were in danger, over this flat, where he cannot find the slightest cover. Eight sprightly antelopes show us their graceful profiles as they spring lightly along, rising from the horizon against a background of sky. Robert has drawn his fur over his head, and sits in the saddle like a lady, with both his legs dangling on the sheltered side, while Tashi leads his mule. But as the wind still blows through him, he lays himself on his stomach across the saddle. My horse sways when the wind catches the broad breast of its rider. The wind howls and moans in my ears, it whines and whistles as it used to do in the Chang-tang, a whole host of indignant spirits of the air seem to complain of all the misery they have seen in the world.

The plain is called Amchok-tang, and we march over it, following the main stream. Amchok-yung is a village of five tents, where are some fine *manis* bedecked with yak skulls, antelope horns, and slabs of sandstone, one of them, of a regular rectangular form, measuring 40 inches. The inhabitants of the village disappeared as if by magic; only an old man gave us his company as we inspected two of the tents. But when we had ridden on, the people crept out again from behind dung heaps, hillocks, and grass tufts, where they had hidden themselves.

The wind bores thick yellow sand out of the ground into a

CHAPTER XXXVIII

TO THE OUTLET OF THE CHAKTAK-TSANGPO IN THE BRAHMAPUTRA

THE lake was free from ice, and only on the northern shore some blocks rocked on the surf. A south-west wind swept constantly over the country, and there was no prospect of good weather. A dozen Tibetans followed me at a respectful distance. I begged them to come nearer and see us start. The boat was brought down to the water, Rehim Ali and Shukkur took their places, and Lama carried me to the boat through the slowly deepening water. A promontory to the south, 34° E., was fixed as our goal, and the oarsmen began their struggle with the waves. For the first hour the lake was so shallow that the oars struck the bottom and stirred up inky-black mud. Shukkur cries out in time with the oars, "Shubasa, ya aferin, bismillah, ya barkadiallah"—to cite only a few words of his inexhaustible repertoire. Rehim Ali's oar gives me a splash as it dips in, but I am soon dry again in the wind. The swell stirs up the mud from the bottom, and the water is so shallow that the waves show a tendency to break even out in the middle of the lake.

Now the sandspouts begin their threatening dance on the western shore, and in that direction the water gleams white. The storm sweeps over the Amchok-tso, and the two Mohammedans must put forth all their strength to force the boat forward against wind and water. The swell grows heavier, the depth is 7.9 feet, and the water assumes a greener hue. Shukkur Ali, our old fisherman, put out his line, but nothing

As I now perceived that we should have to travel on the road which Nain Sing in the year 1865, and Ryder and Rawling and their comrades in 1904, had passed along, I wrote, after consultation with Robert and Muhamed Isa, to Tang Darin and Lien Darin in Lhasa. I represented in an urgent appeal to the former, the High Commissioner, that it could not clash with any treaty if I, being already in Tibet, travelled to Ladak by one road or another, provided that I actually did go thither, and that I therefore begged permission to take the following route: I wished to take my homeward way past the lake Tede-nam-tso, of which Nain Sing had heard, then to visit the Dangra-yum-tso, and thence to proceed to Tradum and to the Ghalaring-tso, the holy mountain Kailas, the Manasarowar lake, the sources of the Indus and the Brahmaputra, and lastly Gartok. To the other, the Amban of Lhasa, I also wrote about the way I desired to take, and promised to send him a report about it from Gartok. I told both that I wished for a speedy answer, and would wait for it in Raga-tasam.

As soon as I had come to a decision, I called Tundup Sonam and Tashi, and told them to get their sleep over by midnight. Then I wrote the above-mentioned letters and letters to my parents and to Major O'Connor. When my correspondence was ready, it was past midnight. The camp had lain several hours in sleep when I made the night watchman waken the two messengers and Muhamed Isa. Their orders were such as they had never received before. They were to travel day and night along the 220 miles to Shigatse and hand over my letters to Ma. They need not wait for an answer, for I had asked the Mandarins to send me special couriers. Provisions they need not take, for they would be able to get everything on the great high-road, and I gave them money to hire the horses they required. They would be able to reach their journey's end in ten days, and in a month we ought to have an answer. If they did not find us in Raga-tasam on their return, they were to follow in our track.

Tundup Sonam and Tashi were in good spirits and full of

is stirred up with butter, and kettles are set on three stones over the fire. The puppies play in the open, and are glad that they have not to roll about to-day in a basket.

The days and months fly by to a chorus of storms, and spring still delays its coming. In the evening songs of the Ladakis I fancy I hear an undertone of home-sickness, and they rejoice at every day's march which brings us a little further westwards. When we woke next morning, it blew as fresh as ever, and Robert had made himself a mask with Tibetan spectacles sewed into the eye-holes; he looked very comical in this contrivance, which was very appropriate in this land of religious masquerades.

The road, ascending the broad valley of the Pu-chu, led over open, slightly undulating ground to Serme-lartsa. Here old Guffaru was reported sick; he suffered from colic, and was well nursed. But late at night Robert came breathless to my tent to tell me the old man was dying. When I came to the tent the son, whose duty it was to keep the shroud ready, sat weeping beside his father, while the other men warmed their caps over the fire and applied them to the body of the patient. I ordered him a cold compress, but he asked me, to the intense amusement of others, just to go back to my tent again. Muhamed Isa laughed till he rolled over; Guffaru sat upright on his bed, moaned and groaned, and begged me to go away. I gave him a strong dose of opium, and next morning he was so brisk that he walked all the way, though a horse was at his disposal. The remains of Burroughs and Wellcome's medicine chest had saved his life; he was thankful and pleased that his shroud was not required this time.

On May 11 we mounted to the pass Lungring (17,697 feet) in a bitterly cold snowstorm, and descended the valley of the same name to the bank of the upper Raga-tsangpo. On the 12th we marched upstream; the valley is broad, and is bounded on the north by great mountains. The thermometer had sunk to −0.8°, and the storm was dead against us. Occasionally it abated so much that we could hear the footfalls of the horses on the detritus, but we were benumbed when we came to the

length, that they could no longer supply us with provisions, for no more were to be had in the neighbourhood. I asked them, as an experiment, whether they would forward two letters to the Mandarins in Lhasa, but they replied that they had no authority to do this. They were much astonished when they heard that I had sent off letters five days previously. For two days I lay in bed, for I was quite at an end of my strength, and made Robert read to me.

On Whitsunday, May 19, we had another long palaver. The Tibetans read to me the instructions they had received from Lhasa, which were dated "on the tenth day of the second month in the year of the fiery sheep." I was there called Hedin Sahib, and the orders contained the following clauses: "Send him out of the country. Let him not turn aside from the *tasam*, and guide him neither to the right nor to the left. Supply him with horses, yaks, servants, fuel, grass, and everything he wants. The prices he must pay are the usual prices fixed by the Government. Give him at once anything he asks for and refuse him nothing. But if he will not conform to the directions on his passport, but says he will take other routes independently, give him no provisions, but keep firm hold of him and send off messengers at once to the Devashung. Do not venture to think for yourselves, but obey. Any one in the provinces who does not obey will be beaten; so run the regulations you have to conform to. If he gives no trouble, see that the nomads serve him well and do him no harm on the way to Gartok. Then it will be the business of the Garpuns (the two Viceroys) to take him under their protection."

And yet I was not satisfied. I told them that I could not think of conforming to my passport, which was contrary to my religion, and that I must go northwards from the Chomo-uchong to Saka-dzong. They were quite at liberty to send messengers to the Devashung. We would wait. Then they held a council, and at length agreed to let us take the northern route, but we must set out on May 21.

I lay on my bed and dreamed of the tramp of horses coming both from the east and the west, of the roads open to

On the 25th we go down further. Nomad tents are as rare as on the preceding days, for people come here only in summer. The path runs frequently up along the left terrace, high above the valley bottom, where the river has formed two large basins of dark-green water. We amused ourselves with rolling stones down the steep slope; they knocked against other boulders, dashed with a thundering noise into the valley, tearing up sand and dust, bounced up from the ground, and finally plunged into the basin, raising a cloud of spray. It was childish but very diverting. The valley passes into a plain, in the southern part of which runs the great high-road between Raga-tasam and Saka-dzong. The river we had followed down is the Kanglung-bupchu, but in Saka it is called Sachu-tsangpo. We pitched our camp in the mouth of the valley Basang on the north side of the plain.

From here to Saka-dzong is a short day's journey. But, instead of travelling along this road, which Ryder has already laid down on his map, I wished to see the place where the Chaktak-tsangpo unites with the upper Brahmaputra. That would involve a long detour of four days' journey, and to this our friends from Raga would not consent without the permission of the Governor of Saka. We therefore stayed a day in the Basang valley, while a messenger was sent to him. When the answer came it was, to our surprise, in the affirmative, but under the condition that the main part of the caravan should proceed straight to Saka-dzong. I even received a local passport for the excursion.

Among other natives who at this time sat for me as models was a youth of twenty years, named Ugyu, who had lived some years before with his mother and sisters in a valley to the north, where their tent was attacked and pillaged by robbers. They had defended themselves bravely with sabres and knives, but the robber band had had firearms, and Ugyu had been struck by a bullet, which had passed through his shoulder-blade and lung, and had come out at his breast. Large scars showed the course of the bullet. When one remembers that the leaden bullets of the Tibetans are as large as hazel-nuts,

us that this is an important trade route. Two of the caravans came from the great town Tsongka-dzong, which lies five days' journey southwards, not far from the frontier of Nepal. From Saka the caravans go over the Gyebuk-la, cross the Brahmaputra, ascend the Samderling valley, and by the Sukpu-la and Negu-la passes reach Tsongka-dzong, which supplies the nomads living in the north with barley. From Gyebuk-la there is a grand view over the sharp peaks and the glacier tongues of the Chomo-uchong. On the southern slopes of the pass there are *pama* bushes almost everywhere, and it is pleasant to see their fresh green needles again.

The road runs down the Kyerkye valley. On a smooth wall of rock "Om mani padme hum" is hewn in characters a yard high. At camp No. 167 the Tibetans of the neighbourhood came kindly to meet me and bid me welcome, and two of them led my horse by the bridle to my tent, as is the custom in this country.

Next day we march down the valley with fresh guides, and see several ruins telling of happier times now gone by. Terraced structures for irrigating the fields indicate that barley is grown in the district. In front of us is now the broad valley of the Brahmaputra, and we come to an arm of the river where a ferry is established to transport caravans and goods on the way between Tsongka-dzong and Saka-dzong from one side of the river to the other.

Camp No. 168 was pitched at the extremity of the tongue of gravel between the two rivers. The Chaktak-tsangpo had here a breadth of 92.2 feet, a maximum depth of 2.4 feet, an average velocity of 4.56 feet, and a discharge of 664 cubic feet per second. Its water was almost quite clear, and in consequence of its greater velocity forced its way far into the muddy water of the Brahmaputra. The latter had at mid-day a temperature of 48.9°, while the water of the tributary was a little warmer, namely, 49.8°. Our companions told us that all who come to the great river drink of the water, because it comes from the holy mountain Kailas, or Kang-rinpoche, in the far west.

Robert had shot four wild geese and found a large quantity of eggs, and the river was full of fish.

I accordingly sent Islam Ahun and Ishe to Saka with a message that Muhamed Isa should send us five horses immediately. Then I summoned the supercilious chief to my tent, where he confirmed the accounts of my men. He declared that I had no right to deviate a single step from the great high-road, and that the district in which we were was under him, not under Saka-dzong, and therefore the local passport was worthless. He intended to carry out the orders he had received, as he valued his head. When I told him that I should report his uncivil behaviour to the Mandarins in Lhasa, he jumped up and drew his sword threateningly, but when he saw that my composure could not be shaken he quieted down. In the evening he came to tell us that we might cross the Takbur-la, and brought us both yaks and provisions. Who he was we could never discover, for in Saka no one would acknowledge that he knew him. Perhaps it was only a childish attempt to cure me of further deviations from the main road. However, it was a pity that we had lost a day here. When the morning of June 1 dawned, Islam Ahun and Ishe came with our horses, which we did not now need, and brought me greetings from Muhamed Isa, who sent word that all was well with the caravan; they were on friendly terms with the authorities, and were permitted to buy all they required.

We set off again northwards and marched through the Takbur valley, where there was abundance of game—hares, pheasants, and partridges—some of which Tsering shot, and foxes, marmots, and field-mice. In the distance we saw a grey prowling animal which we took for a lynx. There were also kiangs, which seemed very unconcerned. North-west, north, and north-east huge snowy mountains were seen from the Takbur-la (16,621 feet), of which Ryder and Wood had taken bearings. Like those Englishmen, I considered it certain that these peaks lay on the watershed of the Tsangpo, and belonged to the crest of the Trans-Himalaya. I had afterwards an opportunity of proving that this was a mistake. From the pass

CHAPTER XXXIX

MUHAMED ISA'S DEATH

We had not been sitting long when Rabsang came to say that Muhamed Isa had lost consciousness, and did not answer when he was spoken to. I now perceived that he had had an apoplectic fit, and hurried off with Robert to his tent, which stood close beside mine. An oil lamp was burning beside the head of his bed, where his brother Tsering sat weeping. The sick man lay on his back, tall, strong, and straight. The mouth was a little drawn on the left side, and the pupil of the left eye seemed very small, while that of the right eye was normal. The pulse was regular and strong, beating 72. I at once ordered hot bottles to be laid at his feet, and a bag of ice on his head. His clothes were loosened; he breathed deeply and regularly. The eyes were half open, but were lustreless. I called his name loudly, but he gave little sign; he tried to turn his head and move his right arm, uttered a low groan, and then remained still again. Robert was shocked when I told him that Muhamed Isa would not see the sun rise again.

While we were sitting beside his bed I inquired the circumstances from Rehim Ali and Guffaru, who had been with him all day long. During the four days they had waited for us here, he had been quite well, and had never complained of headache. He had tried, in accordance with the last instructions I had given him at the camp in the Basang valley, to win the friendship and confidence of the authorities. The day before he had been still in excellent spirits, had drunk tea with his most intimate friends in the caravan, and had sung to the accompaniment of the guitar.

his lips to intimate that he could not speak. When we entered his tent about five o'clock his consciousness was almost gone. He remained in the same condition for an hour and a half, breathing quietly, with his mouth closed. I went therefore to my dinner, which Adul had prepared for me.

Robert and I studied Burroughs and Wellcome's medical handbook, to see that nothing had been omitted. About eight o'clock we returned to the sick-bed. Muhamed Isa was now breathing with his mouth open—a bad sign, showing that the muscles of the jaws were relaxed; the pulse beat 108, and was very weak. The despair of old Tsering when I told him all hope was gone, was heart-rending. Half an hour later the breathing became slower and weaker, and about nine o'clock the death-rattle commenced, and the struggle of the muscles of the chest to supply the lungs with sufficient air. About every fortieth respiration was deep, and then there was a pause before the next came. They were followed by moans. His feet grew cold in spite of the hot bottles, which were frequently changed. At a quarter-past nine the breathing became still slower and the intervals longer. A death spasm shook his body and slightly raised his shoulders : it was followed by another.

The Mohammedans whispered to Tsering that he should leave his place at the head, for a Mohammedan must hold the lower jaw and close the mouth after the last breath. But the sorrowing brother could only be brought to leave his place by force. A third and last spasm shook the dying man, produced by the cold of death. After a deep respiration he lay still for 20 seconds. We thought that life had flown, but he breathed again, and after another minute came the last feeble breath, and then old Guffaru bound a cloth under the chin and covered the face with a white kerchief. Then all was still, and, deeply moved, I bared my head before the awful majesty of Death.

Horrified and dismayed, the Mohammedans poured into the tent, and the Lamaists after them, and I heard them from time to time call out in low tones, "La illaha il Allah!" Tsering was beside himself: he knelt by the dead, beat his forehead with his hands, wept aloud, nay, howled and bellowed,

singular fancy of taking this death garment on the journey. Over the shroud (*kafan*) they had wrapped a grey frieze rug. The body lay now in the bright sunshine before the tent, on a bier consisting of the bottom of the two halves of the boat fastened together, and provided with four cross-poles for the bearers.

When all was ready the eight Mohammedans raised the bier on to their shoulders, and carried their chieftain and leader, royally tall, straight and cold, to his last resting-place. I walked immediately behind the bier, and then came Robert and some Lamaists; the rest were occupied at the grave, and only two remained in the camp, which could not be left unguarded. From Tsering's tent a despairing wailing could still be heard. He had been persuaded not to come to the grave. He was heart and soul a Lamaist, and now he was troubled at the thought that he would never see his brother again, who had looked forward to the paradise of the Mohammedans. Some Tibetans stood at a distance. Slowly, solemnly, and mournfully the procession set itself in motion. No ringing of bells, no strewn fir branches, no chants spoke of an awakening beyond the valley of the shadow of death. But above us the turquoise-blue sky stretched its vault, and around us the lofty, desolate mountains held watch. In deep mournful voice the bearers sang, "La illaha il Allah," in time with their heavy steps. They staggered under their burden, and had to change it frequently to the other shoulder, for Muhamed Isa was big, corpulent, and heavy.

At length we ascended a gravel terrace between two source streams. The bier was placed at the edge of the grave, which was not quite ready. It was deep, lay north and south, and had a cutting or niche on the left side, under which the body was to be laid, so that the earth might not press on it when the grave was filled in. Four men stood in the grave and received the body, and placed it, wrapped only in the white shroud, under the arch, arranging it so that the face was turned towards Mecca, where the hopes of all true believing pilgrims are centred.

in Asia. He had been in Saka-dzong before, in the year 1904, as Rawling and Ryder's caravan leader. He little thought then that he would return once more, and here set up his tent for the last time after his long wanderings. In the *Geographical Journal* of April 1909, p. 422, Rawling refers to him as follows:—

> Having mentioned Saka Dzong, let me break off one moment to pay a token of respect to the memory of that faithful servant of Sven Hedin who died here. Mohamed Isa was one of the finest characters it has been my fortune to be thrown with. Trustworthy and indomitable in his work, his knowledge of Asia was unequalled by any native, for he had accompanied Younghusband in his famous journey from China, he was with Carey, with Dalgleish who was afterwards murdered, and with Dutreuil de Rhins, when he was a helpless witness of his master's violent death at the hands of the Tibetans. He acted as my caravan bashi in the Gartok expedition, accompanied Sven Hedin during his recent journey, and died, after thirty years of faithful service, at this desolate spot.

From letters I subsequently received from Younghusband, O'Connor, and Ryder, I learned that they also deeply mourned his loss.

The grave terrace rose close to the great high-road between Ladak and Lhasa on its northern side. The mound was next day covered with cut sods arranged in steps, and a small flagstone was set in the ground at the head of the grave, whereon passing Mohammedans could spread out a carpet and pray for the repose of the deceased. On a slab of slate, smoothed down with a chisel, I scratched the following inscription in English and in Roman letters:—

MUHAMED ISA
CARAVAN LEADER UNDER
CAREY, DALGLEISH, DE RHINS, YOUNGHUSBAND
RAWLING, RYDER AND OTHERS
DIED
IN THE SERVICE OF SVEN HEDIN
AT SAKA-DZONG, ON JUNE 1, 1907
AT THE AGE OF 53 YEARS.

that he had been thoroughly honest in his management of the business of the caravan.

After all relating to the interment had been carried out, the Mohammedans came to ask for a few rupees to enable them to hold a memorial feast in the evening in honour of the deceased. They would make a pudding, called *halva*, of flour, butter, and sugar, drink tea, and kill a sheep. The heathen also, as the Mohammedans called their Lamaist comrades, were to be present. They sang, ate, and drank, and probably hardly thought of the departed.

Two gentlemen from the dzong had been with me on June 2. The Governor himself was absent, travelling in his province to number the tents under his administration and to draw up a list of all the inhabited valleys—all by order of the Chinese. Pemba Tsering, the second in command, was very agreeable and polite, but regretted that he could not supply us with provisions any longer, as he must be prepared to furnish necessaries to the men who were constantly passing to and fro between Gartok and Lhasa. To confirm his words he called up the five Govas or district inspectors of the country, who declared that the poor country could not supply all the *tsamba* and barley we required. I intimated to them that we should still remain a few days awaiting the answer from Lhasa; then they rose, protesting that I might stay here as long as I liked, but that they would not provide me with provisions.

On the same day a large white-and-blue tent was set up by our camp, but it was not till June 4 that the occupants, the Govas of Tradum and Nyuku, paid me a visit. They had heard of our long stay, and wished to find out the state of affairs for themselves. The Nyuku Gova began the conversation:

"Saka and Tradum are put down on your passport, but not Nyuku. Should you, nevertheless, go thither, I will allow you to stay one night, but not longer, for it is stated in the passport that you must travel straight to Tradum."

"My dear friend," I replied, "when once I am in your place

the dark grave on its hill. It seemed as if the grave held us fast, though we longed to get away from it. All was dreary and dismal; we missed Muhamed Isa, and his absence caused a great blank. But life goes on as usual. When the sun rises, the women of the village stroll about collecting dung into baskets, while the men drive the yaks and horse to pasture. They sing and whistle, children scream and dogs bark. Blue smoke rises from the chimneys of the village or from the black tents standing within walls among the houses. From the roof of the Saka-gompa with a statue of Padma Sambhava the single lama of the monastery blows his conch. Ravens and bluish-grey pigeons pick up all kinds of morsels among the tents, and the wolves which have come down in the night retire again to the mountains. Riders and caravans pass eastwards to a better land, where poplars, willows, and fruit trees are clothed in their finest summer dress. But we are prisoners in this desolate country, with Muhamed Isa's grave as a focus.

I soon perceived what a depressing effect the loss of the big powerful caravan leader had on my men: they became home-sick. They talked of the warmth of their own firesides, and they took to crocheting and knotting shoes for their children and acquaintances. They gathered round the evening fire and talked of the pleasant life in the villages of Ladak. Robert remarked how dreary and disagreeable Tibet was, and how warm and delightful it was in India; he was pining for his mother and his young wife. I should like to know whether any one was more eager to be off than myself, who had so much before me which must be accomplished. Yes, I saw only too plainly that I could not achieve all I was striving for with my present caravan; it was worn out and used up, which was really not to be wondered at after all it had gone through. My fate was driving me back to Ladak. But I must endeavour to make the most of my chances on the way. And then? All was dark to me. But I knew that I would never give in, and would not leave Tibet till I had done all that lay in my power to conquer the unknown land on the north of the upper Brahmaputra.

CHAPTER XL

ALONG BYWAYS TO TRADUM

THE day was brilliant; it was not spring, it was summer. Flies, wasps, and gadflies buzzed in the air, and worms of all kinds crept out of the ground to enjoy the warm season, all too short here. It was hot, 70.2° at one o'clock. The sun seemed to be as scorching as in India. The Sa-chu valley widens out westwards; wild geese, herons, and ducks sit on the banks of the river, and choughs croak on the mountain which we skirt on the right side of the valley. The fresh grass has sprouted out of the earth in its green summer garb, but it will not really thrive till after the warm rains. We meet a caravan of 200 yaks in five sections, each with two whistling drivers.

"Whence have you come?" I ask.

"From Tabie-tsaka, where we have been to fetch salt."

"Where does the lake lie?"

"To the north, in Bongba, thirty days' journey from here."

"Does the road cross over high passes?"

"Yes, there is a high pass twelve days to the north."

And then they passed on with their light-stepping yaks towards Saka-dzong. It was the first time I had heard this important lake mentioned, and I envied the men of the salt caravan who had traversed this way through the Trans-Himalaya quite unknown to Europeans.

We left the *tasam* on our left; we turned aside north-westwards straight to the Targyaling-gompa standing with its red *lhakang*, its small white buildings, and its large *chhorten* on a terrace immediately above the spot where Guffaru has pitched

information about the country in the north, but when I compared the different data together, the result was a hopeless muddle. For instance, I asked travellers who came from Tabie-tsaka, how far they marched each day, and where they passed lakes, rivers, and passes; and when I added the distances together and laid down the direction on the map, the line reached to Kashgar, all through Tibet and Eastern Turkestan! It was impossible to obtain useful data about the country to the north. I must see it with my own eyes. But how would that be possible?

The Hajji came to me, angry and excited, to complain that Guffaru had struck him. I sat in judgment and heard evidence. The Hajji had refused to watch the horses when his turn came, and the caravan bashi had therefore thrashed him. The sentence was, that the Hajji should receive his discharge in Nyuku.

Robert and I sat on the velvety grass on the bank and gazed with longing eyes at the half-clear water dancing merrily on to its destination at the coast. An old man and a youth joined us, and entertained us with dance and song. The old man danced and stamped on the ground in a three-cornered mask of goat leather with red strips and bells, and the youth sang this unintelligible song:

Hail, O God, god of the pass!
Many stars sparkle in the night.
To-day is a fine day.
Would that rain might come!
Give me a bit of tea or a small coin.
O, Cook, give me a pinch of meal and a radish.
Such is the mask that is worn in the Chang-tang.
At the right ear a curl, neither large nor small,
At the left a pin, neither large nor small;
Neither shade nor sun.
There is a father's pin and a mother's pin.
Everywhere we have pins with branches,
For they guard us from all dangers.
The horse holds his head high.
And the rider holds his head high,
The gods are high, the earth is low.
You have gold and silver galore.

we should come in contact with people of the province of Bongba, who perhaps would sell us all necessaries. In Nyuku the third puppy died. The Tibetans said that it suffered from a throat complaint called *gakpa*, which is very common in the country. Mamma Puppy gave herself no trouble about her little ones when they were ill, but seemed rather to avoid them. We washed them with warm water, and tended them to the best of our power, and did everything we could think of to save the last. The Tibetans could not understand how we could make such a fuss about a dog.

Bluish-white flashes quivered over the mountains all the evening, and their outlines stood out sharp and dark in the lightning. That is a sign of the setting in of the monsoon rains on the southern flank of the Himalayas, and all look forward to them. When rain falls up here, the grass grows up in a couple of days, the cattle become fat and sleek, the milk is thick and yellow; at the present time it is thin and white, and produces little butter. The existence of the nomads, and indeed the prosperity of the whole country, depends on the monsoon. It is the summer pasture which helps the herds to endure the scarcity of the rest of the year. If the rains fail, the stock languish and die.

The night is silent. Only occasionally is heard the hearty laugh of a girl or the bark of a dog. The camp watchman hums an air to keep himself awake.

The 13th was a lazy day; we had to wait for Tundup Sonam and Tashi. I always shave myself on rest days—it is pleasant to feel clean, even when there is no one to smarten oneself up for. Robert shot three wild geese, and caught two yellow goslings which walked into his tent and made hay there. We put them in the crystal-clear Menchu river, hoping that some kindly goose-mamma would take to them.

From here it is said to be only four days' journey to a district in Nepal, where there are fir-woods. Just fancy: fir-wood as in Sweden and in Simla! But we must remain in this dreary land.

Just as we were starting on the following day the Hajji,

with snow, but the day was warm and fine as we rode up to the Serchung-la, and saw to the south-west the northernmost crest of the Himalayas and the broad valley of the Brahmaputra. The valley descending from the pass is full of brushwood and drifting sand, which is piled up in dunes to a height of nearly 20 feet.

After an interesting and successful march we came to the valley junction Dambak-rong. But the day was not yet over. We heard that Nazer Shah's son had arrived the day before at Tradum on his way to Ladak with twenty-two mules. A messenger was therefore despatched to ask him to wait for us, and give us tidings of Tundup Sonam and Tashi. The Gova of Tradum also rode home to get all in order against our arrival. A short time passed by, and then a horseman came up at a smart trot from the Serchung valley. He had evidently followed our track; he rode straight to my tent, dismounted, and handed me a letter with a large seal, bearing the words, "Imperial Chinese Mission, Tibet," and the same in Chinese characters.

Now our fate would be settled. The Ladakis crowded round my tent. I perceived that they hoped we should be obliged to return by the direct road to Ladak. They longed for home, and were not inspired by the same interests as myself. The tension was extreme as I opened the letter. It was dated at Lhasa on June 3, and had been fourteen days on the way. It was written in faultless English by Ho Tsao Hsing, first secretary to H.E. Chang (Tang Darin), and ran as follows:

DEAR DR. HEDIN—Your letter to His Excellency Chang dated the 14th May was duly received. Knowing that you have arrived at Raka-tatsang, that Devashung hindered you to proceed foreward. His Excellency is very sorry to hear such occurrence; and he instructed me to write you the following:—

That in His Excellency's last letter to you he wrote you to return by the way you came; and now he does not understand why you are taking another road contrary to what he wrote you, consequently, you have met with such inconveniences, to which His Excellency regrets very much indeed. His Excellency has,

Frightened out of their wits, the two Ladakis begged them to take all they wanted if they would only spare their lives. The nine robbers then opened their bundles and thoroughly plundered them, taking even their little *gaos* and images, as well as their cooking utensils and 18 rupees in silver. They were allowed to keep the clothes they had on their backs. By pure chance the robbers had overlooked a small packet of 30 *tengas*, which Tundup Sonam had put at the back of his girdle. The robbers cleared them out in a minute, and then disappeared into the mountains. Our two defeated heroes remained weeping on the battle-field till dark, and then they went off very slowly at first, turning round frequently and fancying they saw a robber in every shadow, but afterwards they quickened their pace almost to a run. Dead tired, they crept under two boulders by the wayside, and next morning came to three black tents, where they got food, and were told that a lama had been robbed and stripped naked on the Ta-la two days before. But now they were safe, and it was touching to see how delighted they were to be with us again. They had seen Muhamed Isa's grave, and the conversation about it reminded Tsering of his sorrow.

On June 18 we travel across open country to Tradum, our route following the northern side of the valley while the *tasam* runs along the southern. The ground was sandy. Small irritating horseflies buzz in the nostrils of the horses and drive them frantic. They walk with their noses on the ground like the wild asses to escape the flies. To the right is the Tutopukpa, a mountain to which corpses are carried on yaks from Tradum to be cut up. We ride between pools where wild geese are plentiful with their pretty yellow goslings. At a projecting rock, cairns and streamer poles are set up; the wall of rock is black, but all the side facing the road is painted red—"Ah, this is blood on Balder's sacrificial stone." Here the village of Tradum can be seen, its temple and its *chhorten* on a hill. To the south-west the dark snow-crowned rampart of the Himalayas appears, wild, grand, and precipitous. To the south-east lies the *tasam*, a light winding riband, and our path

men. I was glad of the opportunity of taking them into favour again. For the future they were to follow our yaks.

The camp was pitched on the right bank of the river, at the foot of the hill crowned by the ruins of the old Liktse monastery. Here an important trade-road crosses the river and a ferry maintains communication between the banks. The Tsa-chu river had here a breadth of 35½ yards, and a depth of barely 40 inches, while the Brahmaputra was 120 yards broad by 5¾ feet deep, and was much more imposing than farther down. The absolute height was 14,977 feet. It was not easy to carry the rope across the stream, for a strong south-west gale was blowing and the waves were high. Robert rowed out from the right bank with the rope, and from the left some Ladakis waded out as far as they could in the shallow, slowly deepening, water to catch the end thrown to them and secure it on shore. When at last we had stretched the rope across, it broke with the pressure of the wind and the waves, and the work had to be done again. We noted a temperature of 53.6° in the air and of 59.7° in the water, but the men were so chilled by the wind that they had to make a good fire. It also rained heavily—the first rain we had had since we left Ladak—and thunder rolled among the mountains.

For the first time the minimum temperature in the night, 37.8°, was above freezing-point, and the morning was beautiful after the storm: the sky was only half covered with bright summer clouds, not a breath of air stirred, and the surface of the river was smooth as a mirror, only slightly broken by slowly moving whirlpools. The ferry was already plying across with passengers and goods. The ferryman is paid a *tenga* for each passage, and he crosses over twice in the hour. Our horses and yaks were made to swim over the river after they had grazed at night on the steppes on the left bank.

We rode 21½ miles on the 21st, but first paid a visit to the little Liktse-gompa monastery, which stands on the inner side of the hill, and therefore has not the fine view obtained from the old ruined monastery on the summit. From its window-openings the monks could watch the oscillating life of the river

two from their weather-worn narghilés. From this point they march westwards to the rendezvous, while we continue southwards.

In the valley leading up to the Ngurkung-la a large salt caravan on the way to Nepal was encamped. The twelve leaders had piled up a fine shelter of sacks of salt against the violent wind. We then came to the very broad valley which ascends to the saddle of the pass visible in the south. We rode up for hours, though the ascent was not noticeable, but the wind was dead against us. To the right is the water-parting chain of the Himalayas which we had seen from Tradum. A curious, sharply outlined cloud, like a white torpedo, covered it, and from the northern extremity small fleecy flakes parted from time to time and floated away. We camped near some black tents in a side valley close to the extraordinarily flat pass.

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it only by noticing rivulets running together and flowing southwards. Here we light a fire and take observations. The view is marvellous, at any rate a relief such as we have not seen for a long time. The mighty snowy mountains to the south, which yesterday broke through the clouds, are, indeed, obscured, but our valleys fall steeply and unite into a large valley, in the depths of which grassy plots and fields shine in deep spring verdure amid the everlasting grey, yellow, and red landscape. Down below the sun is shining, and behind us the sky is clear above the Brahmaputra valley, while here and round all the snowy mountains float opaque clouds. From the saddle lying west of our point of vantage innumerable valleys radiate out; the surface of the ridges between them is nearly level, or dips gently to the south-east, while the valleys are deeply cut in like cañons, and the promontories at the meeting of the valleys are broken short off. Perhaps some of the nearest peaks of the Himalayas rise like islands above the sea of clouds, for here and there a reflexion from sun-lighted firn-fields seems to be trying to break through the veil of clouds.

We stand on the frontier between Tibet and Nepal. Behind us to the north we have the flat, level land on the southern bank of the Tsangpo. We have mounted only 315 feet from the river to the Kore-la, where the height is 15,292 feet. And from the pass there is a headlong descent to the Kali Gandak, an affluent of the Ganges. By means of a canal cut through the Kore-la the Brahmaputra might be turned into the Ganges. Northern India needs water for irrigation, but the gain would perhaps be small, for the Brahmaputra in Assam would be as much diminished as the Ganges was increased. Tibet would lose by the change, and a number of villages on the Kali Gandak would be swept away. A new road would be opened for the invasion of India from the north, and therefore on the whole it is perhaps best for all parties concerned to leave things as they are. But the changes here indicated will some time come to pass without artificial aid, for the tentacles of the Kali Gandak are eating back northwards into the

the united valley. On the same side a very large valley opens, the Yamchuk-pu, with an irrigation channel running down from its brook to the villages and fields below. In the village Yamchuk we come to the first houses and trees. On the left side of the valley lies a large monastery with avenues of trees and long rows of *manis*; it is called Gubuk-gompa. Fields, grassy patches, and bushes become more numerous. Then comes a succession of villages on the left side of the valley, which is barely 2½ furlongs broad.

Below the side valley Gurkang-pu, on the left, pebble beds stand in perpendicular walls with numerous caves and grottos. These are apparently used as dwellings, for they are connected with the houses and walls in front of them. Lower down we come to the village Nebuk, among gardens. The architecture is of the usual Tibetan style, white and red masonry, flat roofs, and decorations of streamer poles. The vegetation becomes more luxuriant and the fields larger. We frequently pass ruined walls and towers, perhaps relics of the time when Nepal was at feud with Tibet. Now the densely peopled and well-tilled valley has a peaceful aspect, and no frontier guards hinder our advance.

The usual *manis* lie along the road, and a large red *chhorten* or *stupa* has a touch of the Indian style. Below three villages lying close together the valley contracts slightly. Near a lonely house we encamped in a lovely garden, with fine green trees, among waving cornfields. A woman told us that this place, called Nama-shu, belonged to Lo Gapu, and that no one might stay in the garden without his permission. However, we established ourselves there, and inhaled with delight the mild dense air, and heard the wind rustling through the tree-tops.

Soon two men appeared, who were in the service of Lo Gapu, asking for information about us. They said that we were in the district Tso, and that the river was called Tso-kharki-tsangpo. A village we can see just below our camp was named Nyanyo, and from there Mentang, the residence of Lo Gapu, could be reached by crossing only two spurs of the

hours together without an effort; our feet were warm, and we slept as we had seldom done. For in the Chang-tang if one sleeps even eight hours one does not feel rested and refreshed on rising; one does not derive the proper benefit from sleep. Here we experienced a thoroughly comfortable feeling after our night's rest, and our only disappointment came from the clouds, which concealed the summits of the Himalayas to the south and south-south-west. Only now and then the peaks looked forth for a minute.

On June 23 we mounted our horses again. We had heard no word of Lo Gapu. When the messenger had left us he was convinced that we should continue our way down the valley, and the little potentate was perhaps now expecting our arrival. He might wait! We rode slowly up to the Kore-la, left our old road to the right, and camped at Kung-muga.

I was sitting at my drawing when a horseman came clanking up. He held in his hand a green flag, a messenger's badge among the Chinese and Tibetans. I felt sure that he had some connection with strict measures against us, but found that he was only the bearer of a proclamation from Lhasa to all the stations as far as Gartok, that horses and baggage animals should be supplied to two Chinamen who had been despatched to find me out and talk with me, and convey to me a letter from His Excellency, Lien Darin. They might be expected any moment.

Midsummer Day was as dull as possible. The whole country was buried in impenetrable fog, and even the adjoining tents were invisible. And when it had cleared a little, the mountains were still concealed. We rode north-westwards on an excellent road, and were astonished at the numerous *manis* with their close, fine, raised inscriptions on purple and dark-green schist; other prayer stones had characters 1.2 or 1.6 inches high, while the largest characters were nearly 8 inches high, so that there was only room for one character on each slab. Then six slabs were placed in a row to spell out the sacred formula, "Om mani padme hum." On some votive stones the characters were red, cut out in

air through swarms of flies, stinging gnats, and horse-flies up over the Tagu-la and down the Tambak valley. To the west the most northerly chain of the Himalayas made a magnificent display, and to the north-west lay the broad open valley of the Brahmaputra, the river winding along the middle like a blue riband. This evening, too, the return of night called forth a brilliant play of colours and tone-effects. Light, restless, motionless to the eye, but riven by the upper winds like old prayer-streamers on a pass, the clouds sailed at sunset in the vault of heaven. The moon, the friend of all nocturnal wanderers and sleepers in the open air, illumines the surroundings of our tents, among which the blue smoke of the camp-fires lies like a veil over the ground. The yaks stand still as shadows, and now and then their teeth are heard grinding against the cartilaginous process of the upper jaw. The Tradum Gova and his servants hum their evening prayer and rattle their prayer-mills.

In the morning comes a quickly passing shower and another before noon. We notice all the signs of the sky, and wish for rain as much as the Tibetans, not on our own account, but for the light-footed antelopes, the wild asses, and the mountain sheep. The clouds are blue-black over the mountains to the south, and from them hang down elegantly curved fringes and draperies heavy with rain. One can hear in imagination the drops splashing on the stones, and new-born torrents rushing down the valleys. The trifling rain that has fallen in our neighbourhood can only moisten the ground for a short time. The drops made a pleasant sound as they pelted on the Tradum Gova's umbrella and on my Curzon hat. Thunder rolled heavily and solemnly round about in the mountains, like an echo of the trumpet of the last judgment.

Then we cross the Nerung-tsangpo, come out into the great valley plain of the Brahmaputra, and encamp in a country inhabited by numbers of nomads. The Gova of Nagor was a tall, agreeable man, who procured us *tsamba*, *chang*, and goose eggs—a pleasant change from our perpetual diet of mutton. Robert and Shukkur Ali caught fish. The Gova told me that

as 26 feet high. We try all directions to avoid sandhills and deep creeks, and frequently ride straight through basins with yielding ground; in some there is a slight current, while others are stagnant. Here and there islets of sand rise out of the water, some barren, others with grass and stalks. It is a thoroughly disintegrated country, but full of pleasing variety. Gnats pursue us in regular clouds. Some men go in front to pilot us. We often get into deep water and have to turn back. The high water washes away the greater part of the driftsand, and deposits it on the banks of the Brahmaputra lower down. But when the river falls, fresh sand accumulates and forms new dunes. The driftsand therefore finds a resting-place here on its way to the east. We encamped by the last lagoon, and heard the fishes splashing in the water. The whole country reminds me of Lob, the swampy region in Eastern Turkestan, and the continual struggle there between driftsand and flowing water. The district is named Dongbo, and here the Gova of Tuksum and other chiefs awaited us. The first-named had heard that the Chinamen, of whose coming we had been informed, had left Saka-dzong and were on their way hither. He expected that they would arrive before evening.

On June 30 we made most of our march along the *tasam*, on which Nain Sing and the English expedition had travelled; for I durst not pass round Tuksum, which was mentioned on my passport. The greater part of the way runs among fine, regular, crescent-shaped dunes, which move eastwards over the plain before the prevailing wind. They are ephemeral phenomena: they live and die, but are always replaced by others. The horns of the crescent protrude far in the direction of the wind, and the slope is very steep on the windward side, as much as 17 degrees, while on the sheltered side it is as steep as the falling sand will allow.

Ganju-gompa stands on an isolated hill to the west of the Ganju-la. It is subordinate to the Brebung monastery, and has a *lhakang* with twelve pillars and four rows of divans, as well as four large drums. The statues of the gods look down with gentle smiles on the homage paid to them by nomads

Then we crossed over two other arms, and the total discharge of the Brahmaputra at this place proved to be 3249 cubic feet. The figures, however, obtained on gauging the river so near its source, are of inferior value, especially when the melting of the snow has quite set in, partly because the source streams rise towards evening, carrying the water from the day's thaw down to the main valley, partly because the volume of water depends to a great extent on the weather. At the first downpour of rain the rivers are little affected, for the water is absorbed by the dry soil; but when this is soaked through, the water runs off, and the rivers swell enormously after a single rainy day. When the sky is overcast without rain they fall, but in quite clear weather the sun thaws the snow and causes the rivers to rise again.

It was a long day's journey, for in many of the tents the people refused to give us the help we wanted, and therefore we passed on to the great tributary Gyang-chu, which comes from the south and receives many streams from the northernmost range of the Himalayas.

I have no time to give an account of the geography of this region on the south side of the Brahmaputra. I will only say that during the following days we were cut off from the main river by low mountains, and that we did not encamp again on its bank till July 6, when we came to the Cherok district. We had left several tributaries behind us, and the main stream carried only 1554 cubic feet of water.

After another short day's march we rejoined Guffaru's party in Shamsang on the great high-road, where twenty-one tents were now standing. The chiefs of the neighbourhood were very attentive, and did not say a word against my proposal to go up to Kubi-gangri, which shows its snowy peaks to the south-west, and in which the sources of the Brahmaputra were said to lie. They procured us provisions for twelve days, and we had not had so free a hand for some time. Here nothing had been heard of Chinese or Tibetan pursuers from Lhasa.

says in his text that here are the sources of the great Brahmaputra, which have their origin in the Gurla glaciers, the confusion is hopeless; for the sources of the river lie 60 miles from Gurla, a mountain which has nothing whatever to do with the Brahmaputra.

The political expedition which, under the command of Rawling in the close of the year 1904, had Gartok for its destination, and the chief result of which was the admirable map of the upper Brahmaputra valley surveyed by Ryder and his assistants, travelled from Shamsang over the Mariumla and north of the Gunchu-tso to Manasarowar. It was therefore of the greatest importance to me to travel to the south of their route through country they had not touched on. They travelled by the same road as Nain Sing, and left the source of the river at a distance of 40 miles to the south. From Ryder's report it might be supposed that he considered the Marium-la to be the cradle of the Brahmaputra; but in a letter I have recently received from him, he states that such is not the case, but that he always recognized that the actual source must lie among the mountains in the south-west, which he has set down on his map from bearings taken of their peaks. Ryder also remarks in his report that the principal headwaters come from there. No other traveller had ever been in this region, and I would on no account miss the opportunity of penetrating to the actual source of the Brahmaputra and fixing its position definitely.

How was this to be done? At Shamsang the source streams meet, and below this point the united river bears the name Martsang-tsangpo. First of all, I must, of course, gauge the quantities of water in the source streams, and if they were nearly equal, we must be content to say that the Brahmaputra has several sources.

With ten men, the boat, and the necessary measuring apparatus, I betook myself first, on July 8, to the point on the southern side of the valley where two streams run together, the Kubi-tsangpo from the south-west and the Chema-yundung from the west. A short day's march farther west the Chema-

slowly. The nomads of the district go up to the Changtang in winter. Here also we heard, as on many former occasions, that smallpox was raging frightfully in Purang, and that all the roads leading thither were closed. No country lies so high that the angel of death cannot reach it.

In the night the thermometer fell to 15.4°, but we were at a height of 15,991 feet. The snowy mountains in front of us to the south-west became more distinct. The Chema river meandered with a slow fall, and we left it on the right before we came to our camp in Sheryak.

We ride on July 11 on to the south-west in a strong wind, passing already porous, melting snowdrifts. Solid rock is not to be seen, but all the detritus consists of granite and green schist. We follow a clearly marked nomad path, leading up to the small pass Tso-niti-kargang on the ridge which forms a watershed between the Chema-yundung and the Kubi-tsangpo. The large valley of the latter is below us to the south. The water of the Kubi-tsangpo is very muddy, but on the right bank is a perfectly clear moraine lake. From the south-east the affluent Lung-yung flows out of its deeply cut valley. The view is grand on all sides. From north-west to north-east extends a confused sea of mountains, the crests and ramifications of the Trans-Himalaya, intersected by the northern tributaries of the upper Tsangpo. To the south we have a panorama magnificent and overpowering in its fascinating wildness and whiteness, an irregular chain of huge peaks, sharp, black, and fissured, sometimes pointed like pyramids, sometimes broad and rounded, and behind them we see firn-fields from which the snow slides down to form glaciers among the dark rocks. Prominent in the south is the elevation Ngomo-dingding, and from its glaciers the Kubi-tsangpo derives a considerable part of its water. To the west-south-west lies the Dongdong, another mass with glaciers equally extensive, and to the right of it are heights called Chema-yundung-pu, from which the river of the same name takes its rise, and flows down circuitously to the confluence at Shamsang. To the south-east the position of the Nangsa-la is pointed out to me beyond

summer flood produced by rain. This is probably true of the uppermost course of the Tsangpo, but lower down the rain-flood is certainly the greater. In general, the variations in the water-level are more marked in the higher lands, and the further the water flows downstream the more the fluctuations tend to disappear.

"Is not our country hard and terrible to live in? Is not the Bombo Chimbo's country (India) better?" asked my Tibetans.

"I cannot say that; in India there are tigers, snakes, poisonous insects, heat, fever, and plague to contend with, which are not met with up here in the fresh air."

"Yes, but that is better than the continual wind, the sharp cold, and the fruitless waiting for rain. This year we have only had a couple of light showers, and we shall lose our herds if more rain does not come."

"Well, the summer in Tibet is very pleasant when it rains, while in India it is suffocating; on the other hand, the winter in Tibet is severe and cruel, but comfortable in India."

"Tell us, Bombo Chimbo, is it you, with your glass and measuring instruments, that is keeping back the rain this year? At this season it usually rains heavily, but you perhaps prefer clear weather, to be able to see the country and that the roads may not be soft."

"No, I long for rain as much as you, for my animals are getting thin, and cannot eat their fill of this poor grass, which has stood here since last summer. Only the gods can control the weather, and the sons of men must take the rain and sunshine as they are sent to them from above."

They looked at one another doubtfully. It was not the first time that they had ascribed to me powers as great as those of their own gods, and it would have been difficult to have convinced them of their error.

At midnight the men heard a one-year-old child crying and calling for help on the bank of the Kubi-tsangpo. They woke one another in astonishment, and Rabsang and two Tibetans went off with a gun, thinking that it was a ghost. When they

The land at the foot of this colossal mountain is remarkably flat, and instead of a cone of detritus there is a stream expanded into a lake. The water from the melting snow has washed away all solid matter.

As we came to camp No. 201, at a height of 15,883 feet, the peaks disappeared in clouds, but just before sunset the sky cleared and the last clouds floated away like light white steam over the glaciers of Ngomo-dingding, which clearly displayed their grand structure, with high lateral moraines and concentric rings of grey lumpy terminal moraines. The surface, except where here and there blue crevasses yawned in the ice, was white with snow and the porous melting crust.

When the sun had set, nine peaks in a line from south-east to south-west stood out with remarkable sharpness. Raven-black pinnacles, cliffs and ridges rise out of the white snow-fields, and the glaciers emerge from colossal portals. A whole village of tents rising to heaven! The source of the Brahmaputra could not be embellished with a grander and more magnificent background. Holy and thrice holy are these mountains, which from their cold lap give birth and sustenance to the river celebrated from time immemorial in legend and song, the river of Tibet and Assam, the river *par excellence*, the son of Brahma. One generation after another of black Tibetans has in the course of thousands of years listened to its roar between the two loftiest mountain systems of the world, the Himalaya and the Trans-Himalaya, and one generation after another of the various tribes of Assam has watered its fields with its life-giving floods and drunk of its blessed water. But where the source lay no one knew. Three expeditions had determined its position approximately, but none had been there. No geography had been able to tell us anything of the country round the source of the Brahmaputra. Only a small number of nomads repair thither yearly to spend a couple of short summer months. Here it is, here in the front of three glacier tongues, that the river so revered by the Hindu tribes begins its course of some 1800 miles through the grandest elevations of the world, from which its turbid volumes

But though I succeeded in learning only the chief outlines of the physical geography, I can count this excursion as one of the most important events of my last journey in Tibet. Accordingly, we decided to ride up to the source next day, July 13. Only Rabsang, Robert, and a Tibetan were to accompany me. The rest were to wait for our return under the command of Tsering.

channels, carrying 106 cubic feet of water. A very considerable proportion of the upper Brahmaputra's water is derived from melted snow. Rivulets rushed and spurted all about in the rubbish, and all came from the snowfields, which struggled in vain against the heat of the spring sun.

Now we have right in front of us the immense glacier which descends from an extensive firn basin on the western foot of the Mukchung-simo massive. Between its terminal moraines and the older moraines we have skirted, a rather voluminous stream has eroded its valley. Its water is tolerably clear and green, so that it proceeds from snow fields. A little below the terminal moraine it unites with the numerous arms of the muddy glacier stream, of which the largest is the one which flows nearest to the foot of the Mukchung massive. Even 200 yards below the confluence the green water can be clearly distinguished from the brown, but afterwards the cold currents intermingle. Where the river, still divided into a number of meandering arms, turns past camp 201 to the north-east, it receives considerable additions from the glaciers lying farther east, and thus the Kubi-tsangpo is formed.

Then we ride up, zigzagging among boulders and pebble beds, over ridges, banks, and erosion furrows, over brooks and treacherous bog, over grass and clumps of brushwood, to a commanding point of view on the top of the old moraine (16,453 feet). Before us is a chaos of huge, precipitous, fissured, black, bare rocks, summits, pyramids, columns, domes, and ridges, moraines, tongues of ice, snow and firn fields—a scene hard to beat for wild grandeur.

Here we made a halt, and I drew the panorama while the horses grazed on the slopes. The largest glacier, which comes from the Kubi-gangri proper, is entirely below us, and we have a bird's-eye view of it. It is fed by three different firn-fields, and has two distinct medial moraines, which here and there rise into ridges where the ice has been thrust aside. The right lateral moraine is well defined, and is still partially covered with snow. The left is broad in its upper part but narrow below, where the green stream washes its base. Up above, a

On July 14 it seemed very hot in my tent, for even at seven o'clock in the morning the temperature was 45.1°; in the night there had been nearly 14½ degrees of frost. The sky was perfectly clear, and therefore I could not refrain from seeking another point of view to investigate the beautiful glaciers of the Kubi-gangri.

After arranging with Tsering that he should meet us in the valley of the Dongdong river we rode up the banks and ridges of the old moraine, through its hollows and over its terraces of barren soil, which was now soft and treacherous from the melting of the snow, past pools of clear, green water, and to the highest point of its ridge, where there was nothing to hide the view.

I first took nine photographs, forming a consecutive series. Then a cloak was thrown over the stand to make a shelter against the strong wind, and in this sentry-box I sat for nearly four hours drawing a panorama which embraced the whole horizon. Meanwhile my companions lay down and snored, and I was glad to sit alone face to face with these royal mountain giants. The whole architecture is fantastically wild, and the only law which is strictly observed is that each glacier is confined between two huge black crests of rock.

In order to give the reader a notion of the scene I here describe a part of the panorama embracing the Kubi-gangri. To the south, 27° E., is a tetrahedral peak, which our guide called Ngoma-dingding. To the south, 11° E., rises another summit, of almost precisely the same form, which is called Absi. On the east of it lies the Ngoma-dingding glacier, and on the west the Absi glacier. West of this stands the lumpy Mukchung-simo group, with its culminating point lying south, 24° W. The northern side resembles a stable with straight short stalls, each containing a small hanging glacier. To the south-west rise two sharp pinnacles, and in the south, 57° W., a couple of dome-shaped summits consisting only of ice and snow; they belong to the Langta-chen massive, and their firns feed to a great extent the glacier in the front of which the Brahmaputra takes its rise. So the glacier may be

travelling, and drops fell from her hanging tongue, but she could not leave the antelopes and hares in peace. She darted after them full speed, but never caught them, and came back to me disappointed, but began again the useless pursuit. The Ronggak-chu is an affluent of the Chema, and comes from the north-west. We left the little double lake Kuru-chok in the south. To the west-south-west is the place where the Chema-yundung receives the Angsi-chu, the most westerly of all the headwaters of the Brahmaputra.

In the valley of the Tynchung we encamped beside some accommodating nomads, who quickly procured me fresh yaks, for the three musketeers turned back here to Shamsang, after doing their work well. The whole excursion to the sources of the Brahmaputra had cost 110 rupees, and it was well worth more. The natives said that ten robbers had recently made the neighbourhood unsafe, but immediately it was reported that a European caravan was approaching Tynchung, they had entirely disappeared, and therefore we were regarded as deliverers, and the people could not do too much for us. A Hindu merchant from Almora was camping here, buying sheep's wool and salt from the nomads, and selling them frieze rugs and textiles from Agra and Amritsar.

Next day we crossed the Marnyak-la (17,395 feet), and had the Angsi-chu immediately below us, and on the 19th we left the river behind and followed its small tributary, the Loang-gonga, up to its source at the very low pass Tamlung or Tag-la, which is nothing more than a rise in an open longitudinal valley. But this pass is exceedingly important, for it is the watershed between the Brahmaputra and Manasarowar. Its height is 17,382 feet. To the south is spread out a succession of snowy peaks, and to the west-south-west is seen Gurla Mandatta or Memo-nani, a majestic and imposing group which belongs to the same Himalayan range as Kubi-gangri. The pass is situated among old moraines, where is the little insignificant lake Tamlung-tso, from which the Loang-gonga flows out. At some distance to the south is seen the low watershed between the Angsi-chu and the Gang-lung, a stream

Through the water, clear as a mirror, could be seen blue and red beads, two inferior turquoises, some shells, and other trash, thrown in as offerings by pious pilgrims. The water is supposed to have miraculous powers. Murmuring prayers, our guide filled a wooden bowl with water and poured it over the head and mane of his horse to protect it from wolves. With the same object he tied a rag from the pole on to his horse's forelock. He drank himself a good draught to render him invulnerable to the bullets of robbers. If a sheep or other animal is ill it is only necessary to sprinkle it with the holy water to make it well again. When a traveller or pilgrim stands at the well and pours water with both hands over his head, it guards him against falling into the hands of foot-pads, and from other misfortunes. And if he sits and meditates, drinks, and washes his head, hands, and legs, and has sufficient faith, then he finds gold coins and precious stones at the bottom of the well. The sick man who bathes his whole body in the miraculous water becomes strong again. It is a Lourdes in miniature. While my men were engaged in their ablutions I sat at the edge of the well and listened to the mystical music of the fluttering prayer-streamers, and found this fascinating Tibet more enigmatical at every step.

Then we rode over the Tage-tsangpo, where its valley opens into the flat basin of Manasarowar—a new chapter in the chronicles of our journey. Again Gurla Mandatta showed itself in all its glory, and in the north-west Kang-rinpoche or Kailas, the holy mountain, like a great *chhorten* on a lama's grave, rose above the jagged ridge which forms the horizon in that direction. On seeing it all our men suddenly jumped out of their saddles and threw themselves down with their foreheads on the ground. Only Rabsang, a confirmed heathen, remained seated on his horse, and was afterwards well scolded by Tsering.

We are now out on open hilly ground, and see a glimpse of the holy lake Tso-mavang or Manasarowar. We encamp by a small lake called Tso-nyak, whither come Islam Ahun and Shukkur Ali, sent by Guffaru, who is become uneasy at our

as all the letters which must have accumulated at the Viceregal Lodge.

On the first evening, when I called together all the twenty-five men and told them my decision to send away thirteen, and asked which of them wished to go home, no one answered. They declared that they would follow me until I was tired of Tibet. Then I picked out thirteen and retained the best twelve men. Among these was Tashi, who with Tundup Sonam had accomplished the adventurous journey to Shigatse. But when he saw that I was in earnest about the dividing of the caravan, he begged me to let him go home, so he was exchanged for another man.

We stayed here two days to put everything in order. After the baggage was re-arranged I had only four boxes left, and the rest were to be carried away by Guffaru. Robert sat in my tent like a money-changer and piled up sovereigns and rupees in small heaps, the pay, gratuities, and travelling expenses of the men who were going home. Our treasury was relieved of 2118 rupees all at once. The important correspondence was enclosed in a case, which Guffaru carried in his belt. The men with him were allowed to keep two of our five guns. Late in the evening Guffaru came to my tent to receive his last instructions. Honest old Guffaru, he had in the autumn of his life performed wonders in the winter in Chang-tang, always composed and contented, always doing his duty in the smallest particular. Now he sat, with the tears falling on to his white beard, and thanked me for all I had done for him during the past year. I bade him weep no more but rejoice that the hard time was over for him, and that he could return safe and sound to his people with 400 rupees in his purse. When we left Leh he was as poor as a church mouse, and now he was a rich man for his position, and he had not needed his shroud. I told him that I should miss him very much, but that I could not entrust the valuable baggage and important letters to any other hands but his.

When I came out of my tent early on the morning of the 26th the 13 yaks were laden and the thirteen men were ready

CHAPTER XLIV

A NIGHT ON MANASAROWAR

AFTER Guffaru had set out with his men, the small caravan was organized which was to accompany me. It was led by Tsering, and the other men left were Bulu, Tundup Sonam, Rabsang, Rehim Ali, Shukkur Ali, Namgyal, Adul, Ishe, Lama, Galsang, and Rub Das. The Gova of Tokchen was given a Kashmir shawl, a turban, and some rupees for the services he had rendered us, and all the other Tibetans who had been friendly and helpful received presents. The dividing of the caravan had also the advantage that the Tibetans supposed that we were all making for the same destination by different routes, and that I should join Guffaru in Gartok and continue my journey to Ladak, as directed on the passport.

With Robert, Rabsang, and two Tibetans I now ride down the Tokchen valley and up over the hills to the south-west. To the right of our route the turquoise-blue surface of the holy lake is displayed; how beautiful, how fascinating is the scene! One seems to breathe more freely and easily, one feels a pleasure in life, one longs to voyage over the blue depths and the sacred waves. For Manasarowar is the holiest and most famous of all the lakes of the world, the goal of the pilgrimage of innumerable pious Hindus, a lake celebrated in the most ancient religious hymns and songs, and in its clear waters the ashes of Hindus find a grave as desirable and honoured as in the turbid waters of the Ganges. During my stay in India I received letters from Hindus in which they asked me to explore the revered lake and the holy mountain Kailas, which lifts its

middle except when a storm raged. To the south-south-west and south-west are seen the two summits of Gurla Mandatta, the western very flat, and reminding me of the Mustag-ata in the eastern Pamir. The Tibetans called the mountain sometimes Namo, sometimes Memo-nani. South, 60° W., a row of snowy heights rise behind the Purang valley. To the west-north-west is seen the small pyramidal hill where Chiu-gompa stands on the bank of the water channel which once ran into Rakas-tal. To the north-west a couple of lagoons lie on the shore of Manasarowar, and behind them rise chains and ramifications belonging to the Trans-Himalaya, and among them Kailas or Kang-rinpoche, the "Holy Mountain," called also Gangri or the "Ice Mountain," dominates the horizon unless its summit is veiled in clouds. And lastly, to the north, 20° W., we see the double-peaked Pundi, not far from the shore, and in the north the two valleys Pachen and Pachung, with roads which lead over the watershed of the Trans-Himalaya to Chang-tang.

When I asked our guides what they thought of a boat trip across the lake, they answered unhesitatingly that it was impossible; mortals who ventured on the lake, which was the home of the gods, must perish. Also in the middle Tso-mavang was not level as on the shore, but formed a transparent dome, and up its round arch no boat could mount; and even if we succeeded in getting the boat up, it would shoot down the other side with such velocity that it must capsize, and we should perish in the waves because we had excited the wrath of the god of the lake.

We mounted again and rode south-south-west over the hills to Serolung, the golden valley, where the monastery Serolung-gompa is hidden in the hollow. There I stayed four hours, making sketches and notes. Serolung, which contains thirty monks, most of whom were away wandering among the villages, is one of the eight convents which are set like precious stones in the chain which the pilgrims stretch round the lake, in the hope of acquiring merit in a future form of existence, of being freed from the burden of sin and the tortures of

rudder, on the other side of which the sounding-line with its knots lay ready on the gunwale. The log, Lyth's current meter, was attached to the boat to register the whole length of the course, and compass, watch, note-book, and map sheets all lay close beside me, lighted by a Chinese paper lantern, which could be covered with a towel when we did not want the light. I used the towel after every sounding to dry my hands. Rehim Ali took his seat forward, Shukkur Ali in the stern half of the boat, where we were cramped for room and had to take care that we did not get entangled in the sounding-line.

Tsering took a sceptical view of the whole adventure. He said that the lake was full of wonders, and at the best we should be driven back by mysterious powers when we had rowed a little way out. And a Tibetan agreed with him, saying that we should never reach the western shore though we rowed with all our might, for the lake god would hold our boat fast, and while we thought that it was advancing it would really remain on the same spot, and finally the angry god would draw it down to the bottom.

Robert had orders to wait at camp No. 212 for our return, and when we put off from the bank at nine o'clock all bade us farewell in as warm and gentle a tone as though they thought that they had seen the last of us. Their spirits were not raised by the lightning which flashed in the south and might portend a storm. The darkness, however, was not so intense, for the moon was coming up, though it was still covered by the hills rising behind our camp. But its light threw a weird gleam over the lake, and in the south Gurla Mandatta rose like a ghost enveloped in a sheet of moonshine, snowfields, and glaciers.

At my command, the boatmen took a firm grip of the oars and the boat glided out from the beach, where our men stood in a silent thoughtful group. Our fires were seen for awhile, but soon disappeared, for they were burning almost on a level with the water. Robert told me afterwards that the little boat sailing out into the darkness was a curious sight; owing to the lantern and the reflexion of the light on the mast the boat was

asked permission to light their water-pipes. The depth was 181 feet. A slight south-westerly breeze rippled the surface. The cry of a water-bird broke shrilly on the silence of the night, and made us feel less lonely. A slight hiss of the surf breaking on the south-eastern shore was audible. In the south the clouds gathered round the summit of Gurla Mandatta, the breeze fell. We glided slowly over the inky-black water, and between the wave crests the path of moon-light wound in bright sinuosities; the depth increased slowly—183.4 feet, 189.3, 192 and 212.6. The temperature was still 45.9°, and I did not want my fur coat.

The queen of night, with diamonds in her dark hair, looks down upon the holy lake. The midnight hour is passed, and the early morning hours creep slowly on. We sound 203, 200, 184, 184, 180, and 190 feet, and it seems therefore as if we had passed the deepest depression. Leaning on the gunwale I enjoy the voyage to the full, for nothing I remember in my long wanderings in Asia can compare with the overpowering beauty of this nocturnal sail. I seem to hear the gentle but powerful beat of the great heart of Nature, its pulsation growing weaker in the arms of night, and gaining fresh vigour in the glow of the morning red. The scene, gradually changing as the hours go by, seems to belong not to earth but to the outermost boundary of unattainable space, as though it lay much nearer heaven, the misty fairyland of dreams and imagination, of hope and yearning, than to the earth with its mortals, its cares, its sins, and its vanity. The moon describes its arch in the sky, its restless reflexion quivering on the water, and broken by the wake of the boat.

The queen of night and her robe become paler. The dark sky passes into light blue, and the morn draws nigh from the east. There is a faint dawn over the eastern mountains, and soon their outlines stand out sharply, as though cut out on black paper. The clouds, but now floating white over the lake, assume a faint rosy hue, which gradually grows stronger, and is reflected on the smooth water, calling forth a garden of fresh roses. We row among floating rose-beds, there is an

west is still dyed a deep carmine, only yonder a sheaf of sunbeams penetrates through an opening in the clouds. In that direction the mirror of the lake is tinged blue, but to the south green. The wild geese have wakened up, and they are heard cackling on their joyous flights, and now and then a gull or tern screams. Bundles of seaweed float about. The sky is threatening, but the air is calm, and only gentle swells, smooth as polished metal, disturb the water, which looks like the clearest curação. The boat moves with weary slowness to its destination, for now, at six o'clock in the morning, my oarsmen are tired and sleepy and quite at an end of their strength. They sleep and row alternately. "Hem-mala-hém," calls out Shukkur Ali, accenting the last syllable, when he energetically grasps his oar, but he goes to sleep between, and the oar hovers in the air; his own voice wakens him up, he dips the oar in and goes to sleep again.

The hours pass by, but there is no sign that we are nearing our destination. We cannot decide which bank is nearest, and we seem to be in the centre of this boundless lake. In the midst of Gurla Mandatta is seen a huge deeply eroded ravine, its entrance standing out picturesquely below the dense mantle of clouds. For a moment, when all around lay buried in shadow, the interior was lighted up by the sun, and it presented a fantastic appearance, resembling a portal into a hall of the gigantic dome lighted up by innumerable candles. The valleys and erosion channels between the different spurs of the massive are sharply defined, and wind down to the lake among flat cones of detritus, the outer margins of which cause the variations in the depth of the bottom. This now increases again to 200, 203, 213, and 240 feet. At fourteen points, these included, the bottom temperature is observed. The sounding occupies a considerable time. The line must first be paid out to the 230 feet, and then be held still till the thermometer has assumed the bottom temperature, and then it must be drawn up again, the depth must be noted, the thermometer read, the temperature of the surface water and the air must be ascertained, and the log-reading taken.

forwards, now over calm rising swell, whispering gently as spirit voices, now over small pyramidal waves produced by the meeting of two systems of undulations from different directions. Four small squalls from different quarters threaten us, but we catch only a flip of their tails, which cannot stir up the waves to a dangerous height. The last, from the south-east, is the strongest, and then the sail is hoisted. But still the shore seems far distant; perhaps Tsering was right with his Lamaistic wisdom.

All details, however, become sharper and clearer. Gurla turns three mighty gables towards the lake, and between them huge fans of detritus and erosion channels come to view. The fans become flatter towards the shore, and extend under the water down to the greatest depths of the lake; on the north shore, where a wide plain lies, the lake bottom might be expected to sink more slowly. Gurla is a splendid background to the holy lake—no artist in the world could conceive anything more magnificent and interesting.

Then we sounded 253, 243, 253, 223, 190, 177, and 82 feet, and perceived at length that the shore was near, for yaks and sheep were visible on the hills. The sea was now fairly high, and we had to bale the boat twice, and my fur coat on the bottom was wet. The two tired and sleepy men laboured painfully at the oars. We talked of how pleasant it would be to land, kindle a fire, and take our tea and food, but the shore still retired before us, and the hours of the afternoon slipped past. Gurla seemed to rise in the south directly from the water, its level skirts and low slopes being much foreshortened. The monks of the monastery here do not depend for water on the brooks, but drink the holy water of the lake, which has in reality the taste of the purest, most wholesome spring water. Its crystal purity and dark greenish-blue colour are as beautiful as the flavour, and to pilgrims from a distance the water of Manasarowar is preferable to sparkling champagne.

At last we were released from imprisonment in the boat. We saw the bottom through the clear water, and a few strokes of the oar brought the boat to a wall of clay and decaying

CHAPTER XLV

MORE LAKE VOYAGES

I was awakened at six o'clock, having felt no cold in the night, for the minimum temperature was 40°. The morning was fine, only too warm; the pilgrims had gone away; we ate our breakfast, pushed the boat into the water, and rowed about 90 yards from the shore towards the north-north-east and north-north-west, describing a slight bend to camp No. 214. On our left hand was a row of pebble mounds, gradually rising to the top of the promontory which separates Manasarowar from Rakas-tal.

Soon the monastery Gossul-gompa was seen on its pebble terrace, nearly 130 feet high, like a swallow's nest hanging over the lake. A group of lamas stood silently watching the boat; they had never in their lives seen such a contrivance on the holy lake. When we drew near they vanished like rats into their holes, and only an old man remained sitting by a balustrade. I asked him the name of the monastery, and he said Gossul-gompa. The next point shut out the convent. The shore lagoons continue, though the margin below the hills is only 30 to 60 feet broad. The clay in which the lagoons are embedded is impermeable to water, but the lake has only to rise a couple of feet to find an outlet over the sandbank behind into the Rakas-tal, or Langak-tso, on the west. And when the channel at the north-west corner is silted up, as it is now, the Manasarowar has a subterranean outlet to the neighbouring lake, and its water consequently remains perfectly fresh.

I now intended to camp a little to the north at some suitable spot, and thence row the following day over the lake to our

the surf beat all the evening against our beach. How fortunate that the weather had not been like this the evening before!

We sat two hours by the fire and talked. Its flames flickered and darted in all directions, so that they singed Shukkur Ali's goat's beard. The weather was still so threatening that we made a shelter of the boat, in which I lay down early to sleep. Before dozing off I listened to the roar of the waves, and thought I heard all kinds of mysterious sounds in the night, but it was only the cry of water-birds and the howling of the wind among the hills.

The men had orders to call me before sunrise, for we must hasten if we wished to reach camp No. 212 before darkness set in. It was scarcely light when I came out of my shelter. The last provisions were consumed by the morning fire, and then we put off about half-past four in dull, disagreeable weather. The strong west wind carried us rapidly away from the shore—indeed, it was really too strong for our sail and mast, but it took us on and doubled our pace. We had been sheltered under the hills, but when we were a few minutes from the beach the lake became uncomfortably rough. But it was of little consequence, for we sailed with the waves and took in no water.

The men, too, were more alive than on the first nocturnal voyage. They had evidently made up their minds to reach their destination before night, and they rowed like galley-slaves with the whip hanging over them; they seemed to run a race with the west wind, and try to get away before the waves rose too madly. The water hissed and foamed round the boat, and bubbled in the wake as when butter is browned in a pan, and beneath us the lake boiled up. It was a fine voyage as we rocked, spinning rapidly over the holy waves.

Shukkur Ali's refrain to the strokes of the oars is now "Ya paté, parvardigar Rabel, alehmin" or "Illallah," while Rehim Ali responds to the cry of his comrade with "Haap"—the *p* jerked out quickly and loudly like an explosion—and with the refrain "Illallah," or "Svalallah." The Arabic words are, as usual in Ladak, much corrupted, but they lighten the work, and

opposing bulwark of Nature, one should be able to overcome the obstinacy of man. Up yonder in the north, behind Kailas, the Trans-Himalaya extends its granite ramparts, and I must go there though it cost me my life. I must go there, if I clothe myself in the rags of a mendicant lama and beg my way from one black tent to another.

But we are still on the holy lake; it is a day of rest and a summer's day. I feel the skin of my face cracked by the burning of the sun. The hours crawl so slowly over the lake; patience, patience. The clouds display wonderful tone-effects; white and grey, sharply defined, they lie in different stages before the mountains, and behind them dark blue and purple curtains seem to hang down. We might be gliding over the bright floor of a temple hall, its walls richly decorated with flags and standards, which hang down from golden hooks on the ceiling of the sky, and touch the dust of earth with their fringes. The genii of Siva's paradise seem to hover round us. Now Shukkur Ali has taken to a new cry: "Ya aferin adétt," to which he adds "Ya, Allah," as he lifts his oar, and Rehim Ali chimes in with "Shupp." The depth still remains about 180 feet. To the south-east curious clouds are reflected in the lake, and a mist seems to be creeping over the water. All the tones are so light, airy, and grey that the landscape, which surrounds us like a ring where the water ends, seems hardly real. The twin summits of Pundi on the north-east are dark and solemn, and equally dark and solemn is the mirror of the lake. Silver beads drop from the oars and glitter like diamonds in the sun. I could live and die on this heavenly lake without ever growing weary of the wonderful spectacle always presenting fresh surprises.

Meanwhile a light south-easterly breeze disturbs again all the reflexions. The valleys Pachen and Pachung open their doors wider and wider, and allow us to see deeper into the recesses of the mountain. We recognize the hills above camp No. 212, but the tents are not visible. But we see a white spot on the northern shore which we take for a gompa. The depth is somewhat over 197 feet; "Ya bismillah hum!" is

Sonam rowed, and Robert steered along the three-feet line about 55 yards from the land, while I sat in the bow, compass in hand, and drew a map of the shore-line, the hills and valleys, and all the details that are characteristic of a lake. Charles A. Sherring states in his book on western Tibet that Mr. Drummond, Commissioner of Bareilly, sailed in 1855 in a boat on Manasarowar, but no result has come to my knowledge; on the contrary, I find that the very latest map of the lake needs a thorough correction. Soundings had never been taken before, and the object of my boating expeditions was to collect material for a detailed isobathic map. When we left behind us the basin of the Brahmaputra at the pass Tamlung, I had already suspected that Manasarowar was a member of the hydrographic system of the Sutlej, and I wished to try if I could not make a contribution towards the solution of this problem. I knew that my investigations could only be inadequate, but they yielded a number of facts hitherto unknown. Among these are the systematic sounding of the bed, by means of which conclusions may be drawn as to the origin and formation of the lake. I soon convinced myself that the lake depression had been excavated by old glaciers from the southern mountains, as I at first conjectured, and was not dammed up by moraine walls across the broad valley. But want of space forbids me to enter fully into a discussion of this interesting question.

We glide in a flat curve to the south-west, and have to increase our distance from the shore that we may not run aground on the sandy bottom. The water at this season of the year has a fairly constant temperature of about 50°. Then we approach the mouth of the Tage-tsangpo. For about two-thirds of a mile the river flows parallel to the shore of the lake, being separated from it by an embankment 13 feet high, which has been cast up by the waves and the pressure of the ice. Here we encamped among drift-sand and bushes, and measured the Tage-tsangpo. Its breadth was 56.8 feet, its maximum depth 3.4 feet, and its discharge 397.6 cubic feet a second, or 106 cubic feet more than where we last gauged

here, where a not unimportant wool market is held every summer. A group of monks stood on the roof. Our camp was pitched close to the foot of the monastery, on the shore road, and had a fine view over the lake and Kailas behind it. At the southern wall of the convent is a yard enclosed by a stone wall, where 500 sheep were packed like herrings in a barrel, to be shorn in turn by Hindus and Botias who come from Almora and the border country in the south. The nomads receive eight annas (8d.) for every sheep, good interest on their live capital. The wool from 500 sheep is said to amount to 16 yak-loads.

We paid at once a visit to the monastery, where the thirteen monks and their abbot, Tabga Rinchen, received us with the greatest kindness and politeness, showed us everything, and explained to us the various temple halls. They had heard of my voyages on the lake, and had now seen with their own eyes my boat sailing before a favourable wind, and they expressed their sincere conviction that I must possess occult powers to defy with impunity the god of the holy lake. But they understood that this was owing to my friendship with the Tashi Lama, who had given me his holy blessing. The monastery Tugu-gompa is a dependency of Shibeling-gompa in Purang, and most of the monks come from there to spend three years on the lake. They own herds in Chang-tang, trade, and seem to be in good circumstances; at any rate, they help the poor pilgrims who have nothing to eat on their wanderings round Tso-mavang. They receive gifts from well-to-do pilgrims. The temple halls are picturesque, handsome and in very good order. You enter from an upper balcony into an outer hall with wall paintings, among which is a picture of Tso-mavang with the fish-god, Madö Gemo, rising from the waves. He has seven water-snakes in his hair, and the lower part of his body is like a green dolphin. The lake is as deep as it is broad, and concentric rings encircle the rising god. The abbot said that the fish-god comes up to greet the god of Tso-mavang, Hlabsen Dorche Barva, who gallops in a cloud of grey fiery tongues and

Three officials of the Devashung had established themselves in the entrance hall in the company of the four ghostly kings, and mattresses, bundles, tables, swords and guns lay or stood in profane disorder at the entrance to the dwelling of the high gods.

Meanwhile Robert rowed out from the southern shore, and sounded the depths down to the contour of 207 feet. On August 5, we paid a visit to Yanggo-gompa, which contains ten monks and a nun. They told me that they came from the Hor country in the north of central Tibet, and therefore call themselves Horpa, but also Dokpa; the Changpa are the nomads of Chang-tang. The abbot is from Sekiya-gompa. In the monastery's *gunkang*, a dark subterranean crypt, hang masks, *kadakhs*, drums, spears and guns. I asked for what purpose the monks wanted the firearms, as one of their fundamental dogmas forbids them to extinguish the light of life, and they answered that with these guns many wild yaks had been killed, whose flesh had been used for human food, and that therefore the guns had been installed in a place of honour in the monastery. Yamba Tsering, a monk twenty-two years old, sat with his head against a wooden pillar, and gazed in silence at the dim light which fell into the crypt through an impluvium; he looked like a dreamer, a searcher after hidden truth. Beside him sat the wrinkled nun. Both found their way into my sketch-book. The foot of the monastery façade lies exactly '14$\frac{3}{4}$ feet above the level of the lake, and the river Richen-chu, entering the lake behind the convent, discharges 62.15 cubic feet of water.

Yanggo-gompa was the third of the eight monasteries of the holy lake which I had visited, and I wished to see them all without exception. And I also wished to gauge all the streams falling into the lake. It fluctuates from day to day, according as there is rain or sunshine, but only by exact measurements could I arrive at the volume which is poured into the clear basin of Tso-mavang during a day of summer.

their loins, to bathe in the holy beatifying water of the lake. It must be very refreshing to people from the close jungles of India to wash in such a cool morning in water at only a few degrees above freezing point. Most of them, however, go in no farther than up to their knees. There they squat down, or scoop up the water in their joined hands, and throw it over them. They make symbolical signs, fill their mouths with water and send it out in a stream, hold their hands flat against their faces and look at the rising sun, and perform all kinds of absurd, complicated manipulations, which I remember seeing at the ghâts of Benares. They are sunburnt, thin and miserable, and they are too thinly clad—I did not see a single sheepskin—and they complain of the severity of the climate, catch chills, and come to my tent for medicine. Some stood about an hour in the water before they returned to the beach to put on their clothing, and then they sat in groups talking. But they return to the valleys of India convinced that they have performed an action well-pleasing to the gods, and they take with them small metal bottles filled with holy water from Manasarowar to give to their relations. They believe that one of the ways of salvation runs past Manasarowar. They are always hopeful, and that is a fine thing for poor pilgrims on the face of the earth.

They stared with astonishment at our boat, which was driven out from the shore by powerful strokes, perhaps with envious eyes, for many asked me afterwards to let them go with me, that they might for the rest of their lives look back to the time when they floated on the sacred waves. The lake lay smooth and still, but at the first sounding-station (115 feet), the lake god shook himself, a north-westerly breeze sprang up, and the waves splashed and danced briskly against our bow, for our third line of soundings was carried north, 27° W., towards camp No. 214. We sounded 174, 207, 226, 236, 236, 246, and 253 feet, while the waves increased, and the boat rode well but with diminished speed. Gurla Mandatta was almost clear, but Kailas was buried in clouds. The wind fell and the sun glowed, and everything foretold a fine day. At

us in semi-darkness, caused the lake to leap up in millions of tiny fountains, and in two minutes made the inside of the boat white. Nothing was visible but ourselves and the boat, only water and hail, which scourged the lake like rods and produced a hissing gurgle. Now and then the clouds were lighted up by quivering lightning, and the thunder growled heavily and threateningly in the north. Then the men turned round, but could see nothing in the mist; they were uneasy and we all felt that there was danger ahead.

The hail was followed by pelting rain, a downpour of such furious impetuosity that I could not imagine any more tremendous. It fell in such quantities and with such force that we were bowed down by it. I had on three shirts and a leather vest, but after a short time I felt that the water was streaming down my bare skin, which had this advantage that all the future douches that awaited us could make no further impression. I had my fur coat on my knees with the skin side up, and in all its hollows the water collected in small pools. A quantity of water fell into the boat and washed about with the stroke of the oars. The shore was not visible, and I steered by the compass.

"Row on, we have not much farther to go."

At length the rain became finer, but at four minutes after one o'clock, we heard a deafening roar in the north-east, a sound such as only a storm of the greatest violence can produce. Hail and rain were nothing to it; now that the heavy sheets of water were withdrawn the storm had a free course and swept suddenly and furiously over the lake. Why had we not started an hour earlier, instead of watching the religious ablutions of the Hindus? No, the god of Tso-mavang was angry and would teach us once for all not to treat so lightly the lake which splashes his dolphin's tail with its green water. How we envied the monks in Gossul-gompa, and our men down in the south under the peaceful walls of the Tugu monastery! What would they say, what would they do, if we were drowned like cats in this raging lake?

For a minute we struggled frantically to keep our course in

reflected the dark clouds in the north. It seemed as though a bottomless, watery grave yawned in front of us which might at any moment swallow up our boat. Others came rolling up foam-capped, hissing and thundering behind us, and we shuddered at the thought that they might fill the boat in an instant and send it to the bottom, but it rose bravely over the crests. The view was open on all sides, the sun was visible in the south, Gurla Mandatta was clear and sharp, to the south, 50° W., even the terrace on which Gossul-gompa stands could be seen, and it was black and threatening only in the north. During the second when the boat was balanced quivering on the crest of the wave, we might fancy ourselves transplanted to a lofty pass in Chang-tang with a world of mountain ranges all round us, while the foam of the waves had an illusive resemblance to the fields of eternal snow.

But this wave also passes on and the boat sinks into a hollow, we fall into a water grotto, the nearest waves conceal the view, the walls of the grotto are of the purest malachite behind us and like emerald in front. Now we are lifted up again—"At it, Tundup Sonam, or the huge foaming crest will thrust us down!"—he puts forth all his strength and the wave passes us. It is irregular and reminds us of the pyramidal summit of Kubi-gangri; two such crests tower up in front of us, and their edges are shattered into spray by the wind. They are as transparent as glass, and through one of them the image of Gurla Mandatta's bright white snowfields is refracted as in a magnifying glass. We have a watery portal in front of us and the tips of the waves are gilded with the faint reflexion of the sun in the south.

We struggle bravely and I sit on the bottom of the boat pushing the rudder with all my strength to keep the boat in the right direction, while the spray, lashed by the wind, spurts over us as from a fire-hose. Frequently a broken crest slips over the gunwale, but we have not a hand free to bale out the water. We see the boat filling slowly—shall we reach the bank before it sinks? The mast and sail lie with two reserve oars tied fast across the middle of the boat. If we could set a

Ali turns round and says that the monastery is in sight, but it is too far for my eyes. "Look at the wave yonder," I call out. "Is it not beautiful?" He smiles and murmurs his "Ya Allah." Its crest breaks close to us like a waterfall, and, air being forced into the water, it rises again in bubbling foam and the lake seems to boil and seethe. Hitherto there has been drizzling rain, but now the air is clear. The lake assumes a different hue, the waves are dark and bright, close to us black as ink, but lighter towards their tips, and the horizon of the lake is often seen through the next wave as through a sheet of ice.

Thus we are driven on, and the time seems endless. For five quarters of an hour we have striven with the freaks of the lake god, and every minute has seemed to us an hour. At last the monastery Gossul appears and grows larger, the details becoming distinguishable, and I see the white façade with its upper border of red, its windows and roof streamers, and some monks behind a balustrade with their eyes fixed on the boat. And below the cloister terrace there is wild foaming surf. How we are to land I cannot imagine; I have experienced such adventures before, but never anything as furious as to-day. We envy the monks up above with firm ground under their feet, and should like to be beside them. The log has been out all the time, and now I draw it in with a quick pull and call out to the men to be ready to jump overboard when I give the sign. I place the note-book and the map I have sketched to-day, all dripping with water, into the front of my leather vest, that at any rate I may not lose the figures I have obtained.

We have only a few minutes more. With the help of Shukkur Ali I manage to get out of my heavy soaked boots, and have scarcely done so when the boat is pitched violently into the breakers on the shore. Here the water is as brown as oatmeal, and the undertow sucks out the boat again. Now Tundup Sonam wishes to jump out of the boat but I advise him to try first with the oar if he can reach the bottom; he feels no ground and has to wait patiently. The boat receives

and presently came back with sacks full of dung, brushwood, and billets, and soon a grand fire was burning on the terrace. They kindled it themselves, for our matches and tinder were quite useless. Then they went off to fetch some eatables, for the contents of our packet of provisions were turned into paste by the water.

Meanwhile we made ourselves comfortable on the narrow strip of ground below the monastery. Two large caves opened into the terrace, their vaults black with smoke, for pilgrims and herdsmen spend the night in them. They would have sheltered us from the wind, but they were so dirty that we preferred to pitch our camp at the edge of the bank. It was wet with rain, but we scraped out dry sand with our hands. The boat was taken to pieces and emptied—it was half full of water—and then it was set up by the fire as a screen.

When the fire had burned up and was glowing hot, we stripped ourselves stark naked, wrung out one garment after another, and crouched by the fire to dry our underclothing and ourselves. Each had to look after himself, for we were all in the same plight. I spread out my things as near as possible to the fire and hung them over the oars and life-buoys to expose them to the wind and heat. Meanwhile I dried my woollen vest bit by bit, turned it inside out, held it to the fire on this side and that, out and inside, and when it was quite dry put it on again. Then came the turn of my unmentionables, then of my stockings, and so on. Nothing could be done with the leather waistcoat and the fur coat; they would not be dry by night, but what did it matter? It was at any rate better here than in the crystal halls of the lake king.

It is still broad daylight, but the storm rages, Gurla Mandatta and all the country to the south has disappeared, for the gale is passing off in that direction. There is fine close rain again. Falcons scream in the holes of the pebbly slopes—dangerous neighbours for the bluish-grey pigeons cooing on the rocks.

The monks came down again with sweet and sour milk and *tsamba*, tea we had ourselves, and the simple dinner tasted

CHAPTER XLVII

ON THE ROOF OF THE GOSSUL MONASTERY

In the middle of the night I was awaked by a terrible row; a dog from the monastery had crept under my men's half of the boat to see what it could find, but chanced to fall into the hands of Shukkur Ali, and got a good thrashing. The temperature fell to 37.4°. Rabsang came riding up at sunrise. The men had feared that we must have perished in the waves. He brought provisions and a packet of letters from Thakur Jai Chand, the British commercial agent in Gartok, who was at the time in Gyanima, where the fair was being held. He wrote that Colonel Dunlop Smith had directed him on June 27 to try to obtain news of me. Guffaru had performed his task satisfactorily, and all my baggage was safely deposited in Gartok, and my voluminous correspondence had been forwarded to Simla. From Mr. Sherring, who had made a journey to Manasarowar some years previously, I received a very kind letter; he had also had the kindness to send me his interesting book on western Tibet, while his wife had added a whole packet of English and French newspapers, literature the more acceptable that the extensive library presented to me by O'Connor had long been read through and dispersed to the four winds of heaven. It was a singular coincidence that where I had suffered shipwreck I was so unexpectedly brought again into contact with the outer world.

I was deeply moved by Rabsang's information that the monks in Tugu-gompa, when they saw the storm burst over our frail boat, had burnt incense before the images of the

and neck, which are consequently so much developed that they seem too large for the body. But they also receive instruction and take their first uncertain steps in the domain of wisdom; the eldest is said to have already acquired considerable knowledge.

I went into the temple and studied it thoroughly. I remained there twelve hours, drew, took measurements, made all kinds of inquiries, and took notes. Every part is handsome, interesting, and well kept. The *lhakang* is like an old armoury, a museum of fine, rare articles, which show great artistic skill, and have been designed, carved, modelled, and painted with unwearied patience and real taste. The hall, supported by eight pillars, has two red divans; a statue of Buddha in gilded bronze, and a number of other idols; drums hanging in stands, lacquered tables with the usual religious objects, and a large quantity of votive bowls in the brightest brass and of uncommon, tasteful forms. On both sides of the pillars hang *tankas* in four rows, which are as long as standards and triumphal banners, and are so arranged that they do not prevent the light from playing on the faces of the gods. In a corner surely waves a Swedish flag? Ah, it is only a blue and yellow *tanka*, but it reminds me of the golden period of our fame and victories.

The *lhakang* of Gossul is not built on the usual plan; the skylight is wanting, and instead there are three windows in the façade facing the lake. But the gods do not see the lake, for the windows are pasted over with paper on a trellis-work of laths. Why is the beautiful view concealed and the daylight excluded? To enhance the mystical gloom within and excite the greater wonder and reverence in the minds of the pilgrims who come in half-blinded from the daylight, and that they may not see that the gold is only gilded brass, and that the marks of the brush and the chisel may not be too profanely evident. The poorer a monastery, the darker are its temple halls; the darkness hides their poverty and helps the monks to impose on the faithful.

Somchung is the name of a small compartment no larger

well with the information I had received at Tugu-gompa. The threshold of the one cave lay now 22.57 feet, and that of the other 120.4 feet from the shore, 18.86 feet above the water. I was told that when the monastery was built, one hundred years ago, the lake had reached both these caves, and that only a small path was left along the strand by which the caves could be approached. However, the dates of the Tibetans are exceedingly uncertain, and to arrive at safe conclusions we must resort to the statements of European travellers. I will make a few remarks on them later. When I asked one of the monks what became of all the water poured into Tso-mavang by all the rivers and brooks, he replied:

"However much it rains, and though all the tributaries are full to overflowing, no change is noticeable in the lake, for as much water is evaporated as flows in. In our holy books it is written that if all the tributaries failed, the lake would not sink and disappear, for it is eternal and is the abode of high gods. But now we see with our own eyes that it is always falling, and we do not know what this means."

The following records may be useful to future explorers: the lower edge of the massive threshold of the main gateway in the façade of Gossul-gompa lay on August 8, 1907, exactly 122.7 feet above the surface of the lake, as I ascertained by the help of a reflecting level.

We ascended to the roof of Gossul-gompa. It is flat, as usual, with a chimney, parapet, and streamers. No language on earth contains words forcible enough to describe the view from it over the lake. It was, indeed, much the same as we had seen from various points on the shore, but the light and shade was so enchanting and the colouring so wonderful that I was amazed, and felt my heart beat more strongly than usual as I stepped out of the dark temple halls on to the open platform. Tundup Sonam said in his simple way that the lake with its encircling mountains seemed like the sky with its light clouds. I, too, was the victim of an illusion which almost made me catch at the parapet for support. I wondered whether it was a fit of giddiness. I took, to wit, the border of

a church service, a wedding march, a hymn of victory, or a funeral made a more powerful impression on me.

Did fate compel me to pass my life in a monastery in Tibet, I would without hesitation choose Gossul-gompa. There I would observe the fluctuations of the lake and the annual curves of the temperature. I would sit up there like a watchman, gaze over the lake, and watch how its aspect changed every hour during the twelve months of the year. I would listen to the howling of the autumn storms, and would notice on calm November days how the belt of ice along the shore broadened from day to day, if only to melt again in the course of a day. The ring of ice would creep on ever nearer to the middle of the lake, be destroyed again and again by new gales, and then begin again to enchain the waters. And at length, on a day in January, when the layers of water were cooled through and through and no wind disturbed the air, I should see the god of Tso-mavang stretch a ringing roof of glass over his green palace, and the winter storms bestrew it with white powder and drive the whirling snow in dense clouds over the ice, with its smooth, dark-green surface peeping out here and there. And on calm days the lake would lie a white plain, lifeless and lonely under its white shroud, and I should sit by the bier of my friend longing for the spring. In vain would the first storms of spring contend with the solidity of the ice and its brave resistance, but at last the sun would come to help the wind, and would make the ice brittle and rotten. Leads and fissures would start up in all directions, and the next storm that swept over the ice would overcome all resistance, flinging about the ice blocks and piling them up one on another, driving them to the shore, and sweeping breakers over them so that they would be crushed, splintered, pulverized, and melted in the rolling surf. Then I should rejoice at the victory of the storm, the release of Tso-mavang and its restoration to life, and would listen to the song of the waves and the screaming of the wild geese.

Perhaps an hour such as I spent at the parapet of Gossul comes only once a year. The effect is the result of a certain

After such an hour everything else seems commonplace. Not till the blush of evening flooded the lake with a purple tinge could I tear myself away and go down to my camp on the shore. Once more I turned to Tso-mavang and called out a loud prolonged "Om a hum." Rabsang said nothing, but I could see that he was wondering whether I had become the latest convert of the Lamaistic church, and with the more reason because I had insisted on travelling round the lake in the orthodox direction—southwards by the east bank and northwards by the west bank.

The tracks of 120 yaks were discernible in the sand, which had passed northwards in the morning laden with brick tea. An old Hindu, who was performing the circuit of the lake in the same direction as the Tibetans, begged to be allowed to camp beside us, because he was afraid of robbers; we regaled him with tea, bread, and tobacco, and he asked us to accept a handful of rice. It is singular that the Hindu pilgrims seem to hold the Lamaistic monasteries in veneration; at least I saw them bow before the Lamaistic gods in Tugu-gompa, and place a handful of rice in the bowl which a monk held out to them.

After a temperature of 43.9° in the night the morning air seemed quite warm. A fresh easterly breeze ruffled the surface of the lake, and the foam-tipped waves shone in the sun, but the day was beautiful and I was full of life, and eager to go out upon the lake. The old Hindu said that he had resolved to postpone his pilgrimage and go with us in the boat, but I assured him that we would take no unnecessary ballast. But he followed us on the bank as we rowed through the surf to Camp No. 213, easily recognizable by its old fire-place, and when we steered thence seawards straight towards Tugu-gompa, visible as a white speck in the south-east, he was so eager to go with us that he ran into the water and did not turn back till it reached to his middle. He was certainly a little silly; he had talked nonsense all the evening, though no one had listened to him.

The new line of soundings was marked No. 4 on my map of the lake. Its greatest depth was 249 feet. At the ninth

CHAPTER XLVIII

OUR LAST DAYS ON TSO-MAVANG

At this time Robert had perfected himself more than I in the Tibetan language, and he talked it almost fluently. Therefore, while my whole time was taken up with other work, he was able to obtain information about the country and people, and perform certain tasks I set him. On the left, shorter wall of the vestibule of Tugu-gompa was an inscription for the enlightenment of pilgrims, and this Robert now translated into Hindustani and English. Freely rendered it runs as follows :

Tso-mavang is the holiest place in the world. In its centre dwells a god in human form, who inhabits a tent composed of turquoise and all kinds of precious stones. In the midst of it grows a tree with a thousand branches, and every branch contains a thousand cells in which a thousand lamas live. The lake tree has a double crown, one rising like a sunshade and shading Kang-rinpoche, the other overshadowing the whole world. Each of the 1022 branches bears an image of a god, and all these images turn their faces towards Gossul-gompa, and in former times all the gods gathered together here. Once golden water was fetched from the lake, and with it the face of Hlobun Rinpoche in Chiu-gompa was gilded, and what was left was used to gild the temple roofs of Tashi-lunpo. In old times the water of the lake flowed over a pass named Pakchu-la to the Ganga-chimbo. Water flows into the lake from all sides, cold, warm, hot, and cool. Water passes from the lake to the Ganga-shei and comes back again. Vapour rises annually from the lake and hovers over it once in the year, and then sinks down into the centre, and the next year the process is repeated. If any one brings up clay from the middle of the lake,

discharges 37.8 cubic feet of water in a second. All the way along runs a rubbish heap, the continuation of the pebble terrace on which Tugu-gompa stands. The lake bed consists sometimes of sand, sometimes of detritus—offshoots of the detritus cone of Gurla Mandatta. Large collections of weeds form dark patches. Up above, at the mouths of two valleys of Gurla, are seen foaming streams, and it is strange that they do not debouch into the lake. But the explanation is easy. Twenty to fifty yards from the bank numerous small holes in the sand of the lake bed open and close like the valves of an artery, and the surface of the lake above them bubbles. These are springs. The streams disappear in the detritus cone, and the water runs below over impermeable layers of glacial clay. At the edge of the cone the water comes up again under the surface of the lake. I perceived, then, that I must gauge the rivers at the points where they emerge from the mountain valleys, if I would ascertain the exact amount of the tribute Tso-mavang receives.

Near camp 218, quite close to the shore, a spring came to the surface, and where it welled up it had a temperature of 38.1°, and therefore brought down the cold of the glaciers to the lake. As the melted water of the Gurla glaciers retains its low temperature on its subterranean course, it probably assists in keeping the water of the lake cool during the summer. Whole shoals of fish sported at the surface of the water, and snapped at plumed gnats, which were gathered in thick clouds.

On August 12 I rode with Rabsang and a Tibetan up to the foot of Gurla Mandatta. We crossed the great highway between Tugu-gompa and Purang. A wolf took to flight; occasionally a hare leapt up out of the steppe grass, and locusts flew about noisily. We rode into the mouth of the Namreldi valley, a resort of robbers, and its crystal stream, between walls of solid rock, carried 101 cubic feet of water, as compared to the 37.8 cubic feet at the place where it enters the lake. The rest of the water, therefore, pours into the lake under the detritus. A few miles farther west we halted at the mouth of the Selung-urdu valley, which has a glacier in its

points and capes, its bays and islands, and its frame of steep mountains. In form it is very different from its neighbour, which is round and has no islands. We stood at a height of 16,033 feet, and therefore were 935 feet above the surface of Manasarowar. Then we rode down a valley clothed with brushwood, which emerges on to the flat, irregularly curved shore belt. Here are old, very plainly marked, shore lines, the highest 67.9 feet above the level of the lake. When the Langak-tso stood so high it had an outlet to the Sutlej, and the old bed of this river may be seen leading off from the north-eastern corner of the lake.

A strong south wind blew, and rolled the waves to the shore, where I sat a good hour, drawing and making observations. Then we rode again over the isthmus, at its lowest (15,289 feet) and broadest place. A salt swamp, begirt by hills, lies on its eastern half, quite close to the shore of Tso-mavang, with its surface 7.7 feet above that of the lake. In the sand and rubbish between the two are abundant streams of water, passing from the lake to the swamp. The swamp lies in a flat hollow of clay, in which the water evaporates, and the trifling quantities of salt contained in the lake water accumulate. At this place, then, the water of the eastern lake is prevented from seeping through to the western.

The following day we sailed with a favourable wind to the north-western corner of Tso-mavang, where Chiu-gompa stands on a pyramid of rock. This spot, camp No. 219, was to be our headquarters for several days. The outline of Tso-mavang is like that of a skull seen from the front, and we had now to explore the very top. A day of rest was devoted to a preliminary investigation of the channel where several cold and hot springs rise up; two of the latter had temperatures of 117° and 122° respectively, while in testing the third a thermometer graduated up to 150° did not suffice, and the tube burst. A spring of 117° in a walled basin is said to be used as a medical bath, but one must be a Tibetan to stew in water so hot. A small stone cabin beside it serves as a dressing-room. A little farther down the channel is spanned by a bridge constructed

before us, to camp No. 212, the first place we had encamped at on the holy lake. The programme of the excursion also included visits to the three other monasteries, the gauging of the volumes of water in the streams from the north, and the drawing of a map of the northern shore. We therefore took provisions for four days, which Rabsang and Adul were to transport along the bank on horses' backs. We were to meet them at the entrance to the valley Serolung, at Serolung-gompa. This last voyage was to complete my investigation of the lake, but precisely because it was the last it was looked forward to with fear by my men. They thought that I had so long defied the god of the lake that now my time was come, and that he would avenge himself and keep me for ever.

But the morning was beautiful, and when at half-past five we rowed out over the smooth lake, the temperature was 48.6°. The cloud cap of Gurla extended down to the water, and nothing could be seen of the country to the south. The Pundi mountain was covered with snow and had a wintry appearance. At the first sounding-station (66 feet) the tents were seen as white specks hovering above the lake. Chiu-gompa stands proudly on its rocky point, and is a landmark visible from all parts of the lake shore except from the west. At the second station the sounding was more than 130 feet. Shukkur Ali and Tundup Sonam row like galley-slaves, for they hope to finish this line, and then the work will be at an end. Sometimes the boat passes through belts of foam and weed. At the fifth station (161 feet) the tents can still be seen with the glass, but after that they disappear. Gossul's memorable monastery can also be dimly descried on its rock.

"Now we have traversed a third of the way," I said.

"Thank God!" replied Shukkur Ali. "I hope the weather will hold up to-day."

A large fish floated on the water, belly up; fish washed ashore are used by the people as medicine. The depths remain the same; the lake bed is very even. But at the thirteenth point we found 108 feet, and at the fourteenth 180 feet, which indicated a ridge in the lake bed or a cone of

the stallion ran after her immediately and forced her to return to the others. This game was frequently repeated, and it seemed to me that the mares were making sport of the stallion.

We ride over swampy meadows and small sandhills; nothing can be seen of the lake; we should like to hear its waves roaring under the south-west breeze, but new hills always crop up in front of us. At last we catch sight of the smoke of the camp-fire. Adul had caught a kiang foal four months old, which was ill and kept always turning round. The mother came to look after it in the night, but gave it up for lost, and it died soon after.

August 20 was spent in surveying a map of a part of the northern shore which is very slightly curved, and in a sounding excursion on the lake out to a depth of 154 feet. While the surface water had a temperature 55.6° everywhere, with an air temperature about constant, the temperature at the bottom sank from 56.1° to 46° at the depth of 154 feet.

We gradually began to suffer want. The collops which Adul tried to pass off on me on the morning of the 21st were decidedly bad, and therefore landed in Puppy's stomach. As Rabsang and I rode northwards to Pundi-gompa, the temperature was 56° and really too warm, so that a shower of rain was not unpleasant. Pundi lies on a rocky ledge in a ravine; its abbot is eighty years old, and has eight monks under him. One was a Chinaman from Pekin, who had lived forty years in the convent and had become a thorough Tibetan, though he had not forgotten his mother tongue. From there, too, there is a splendid view over the lake. As we were about to ride down to camp No. 222 on the shore, a messenger came from Robert with the news that the authorities in Parka had refused to provide us with transport animals or assist us in any way, for they had never heard that we were permitted to spend a whole month on the lake. He also said that our Ladakis were much frightened by all kinds of stories of robbers which were current in the neighbourhood, so that every one was anxious for my presence.

The camp was quite close to the monastery Langbonan, at

a divan before a lacquered table in his library, called *tsemchung*, and showed a great interest in all my plans, glanced into my sketch-book, tried my field-glass, and asked me for a couple of pencils. During the hour I spent in his cell we became good friends, and when at length I bade him farewell we little thought that we should meet again only a year later.

As we made the round of the monastery we came in the gallery of the court upon a poor fellow who lay ill and seemed to be suffering. I asked him how he was, and he told me that on August 18, the day when Rabsang and Adul came to meet us, he was taking eleven mules and two horses laden with *tsamba* and barley to Parka, the Gova of which was the owner of the caravan. Where the Pachung river enters the eastern lagoon he was attacked at eleven o'clock in the morning by twelve robbers, who rushed down from the direction of the Pachung valley. They were all mounted, and armed with guns, swords, and spears, had two spare horses for provisions, and wore masks on their faces. They dismounted in a moment, threw a mantle over his head, tied his hands behind his back, and cleared him out, taking among other things 400 rupees, and then they rode off again to the Pachung valley, which Rabsang and I had hurriedly visited the next day. He then summoned help by shouting, and in a very pitiable condition found refuge in Langbo-nan. He showed us some deep stabs in his legs, his skin coat, and the saddle, which had suffered severely when he made a desperate attempt to defend himself. This was the incident which had so alarmed our Ladakis.

The way from here to Chiu-gompa is charming. Perpendicular, sometimes overhanging rocks of green and red schist fall to the shore, which here has a shingly beach only 20 yards broad. Two gigantic boulders stand like monuments on the shore, and on the rocky walls we see black caves and hermits' dwellings, and we often pass the usual three stones on which tea-kettles of pilgrims have boiled. Farther to the west the projections form a series of recesses in lighter tones; at one of these cliffs a new and fascinating view is displayed. A water mark lying 5½ feet above the present level of the lake is

CHAPTER XLIX

ADVENTURES ON LANGAK-TSO

I HAVE not interrupted the description of my life on the revered lake with notices of our political troubles. Suffice it to say that we succeeded in staying there a whole month. Mounted and other messengers often came to make complaints, and then my men simply replied: "The Sahib is out on the lake, catch him if you can; he is a friend of the lake god, and can stay as long as he likes among the branches of the holy tree." And when I came back again they had gone off. In consequence of the boat trips they could not control my movements, but when we encamped by Chiu-gompa they became more energetic. During my absence came messenger after messenger with orders that I must at once betake myself to Parka and continue my journey thence to Ladak. On August 23 I sent Robert and Rabsang to Parka to make terms with the authorities, but they would not under any circumstances allow me to visit Langak-tso, my next stage. If I liked to stay a month or a year at Chiu-gompa it was nothing to them, for the monastery was not in their district, but the western lake was in their jurisdiction. They advised that I should come as soon as possible to Parka for my own sake, and would send in the morning fifteen yaks to carry my luggage.

But I wished to see Langak-tso at any cost. So when the fifteen yaks arrived next morning, I quickly made up my mind to send Tsering, Rabsang, and four men with the baggage to Parka, while Robert and the other six men would go with me to Langak-tso. Our own six horses and the last mule from

the time is approaching when the subterranean outlet will be cut off and both lakes will be salt.

As we deliberately measured the channel and came to its highest point from which its bed dips towards the west, I threw a farewell glance at Tso-mavang, and experienced a feeling of bereavement at the thought that I must now leave its shores, and in all probability for ever. For I had known this gem of lakes in the light of the morning red and in the purple of sunset, in storms, in howling hurricanes when the waves rose mountain high, in fresh southerly breezes when the waves sparkled like emeralds, in full sunshine when the lake was smooth as a mirror, in the silver beams of the moon when the mountains stood out like white spectres after the dull yellow light of evening was extinguished, and in peaceful nights when the stars twinkled as clearly on the smooth surface of the lake as above in the vault of heaven. I had passed a memorable month of my life on this lake, and had made friends with the waves and become intimately acquainted with its depths. To this day I can hear the melodious splash of the raging surf, and still Tso-mavang lingers in my memory like a fairy tale, a legend, a song.

We went on westwards along narrow creeks and pools of stagnant water, but when the evening had become so dusky that I could no longer read the figures on the measuring pole, we gave up work, marked the last fixed point, and made for the camp, which we reached in complete darkness.

In the morning the work was continued. We had had a minimum of 22.6° in the night, and a violent south-west storm rendered it difficult to read the instruments. The hundred-and-fourth point was fixed at length at the edge of the water of Langak-tso. I have no space here to analyse the results. The channel runs west-north-west, and the line measured is 10,243 yards long, or twice as long as represented on the most recent maps. The surface of Langak-tso lay 44 feet below that of Tso-mavang, which agrees very well with the difference of height on Ryder's map, namely 50 feet. There is no water beyond the ninety-fourth fixed point in the bed. The Tibetans related a legend concerning the origin of the channel. Two

in constant motion. On the shore plain to the south-west yellow sandspouts move about, whirling like corkscrews in the direction of the wind, and our promontory receives its share of this load of sand. On the north the dune is very steep; from time to time fresh sand falls down the slope and slips into the lake, where the waves sweep it away. From the sharp ridge of the dune the driftsand is blown like a dense plume to the lake, and the water is tinged with yellow for quite 200 yards in the direction of the wind by myriads of grains of sand, which fall to the bottom and build up a foundation under water on which the promontory can extend out into the lake. The wind has been strong, and now we have a storm. Patience! We cannot go back. The driftsand now floats so thickly over the lake that the eastern and northern shores are invisible; we might be sitting on a dune in the heart of the Takla-makan desert.

We slipped down to the sheltered side of the dune, but here, out of the wind, it was still worse. We were enveloped in clouds of sand which penetrated everywhere, into our eyes, ears, and noses, and irritated the skin where it came into contact with the body. The moaning howl of the storm was heard above and around us. My oarsmen slept or strolled about, but their footprints were at once obliterated by the wind. I played with the sand like a child—let it roll down the lee-side, built a small peninsula, which was immediately destroyed by the waves, and a harbour mole, which the sea beat over and broke up—and watched how new layers and clumps of dead seaweed appeared on the sand slope, and how the dry sand formed falls and cascades as it rolled down. But the storm did not abate.

We lay waiting there for four hours. On the eastern shore our men had moved the camp a little farther south. We saw the tents quite plainly. Should we venture to creep along the shore southwards so as to reach a point opposite the camp? Out beyond the promontory the dark-green lake ran uncomfortably high, but we were a match for the waves—the men had only to put their weight on to the oars. So we crept along

The rain pelting down on the sail woke me twice, and about four o'clock in the morning the cold thoroughly roused me. A dreary, grey, rainy outlook. But Ishe proposed that we should try to get over, for the storm had slightly abated in consequence of the rain. We first made sure that the tackle was in good order, and then stepped into the boat and rowed out along the sheltered side of the promontory. But scarcely had the nose of the boat passed beyond the point when it received a shock that made all its joints crack. "Row, row as hard as you can," I yelled through the howling storm; "we shall get over before the boat is full. It is better to be wet than suck our thumbs for twenty-four hours more." To the south, 52° E., the tent canvas shone white in the morning grey. We strayed far out of our course, but cut the waves cleanly, and steered towards the surf. We just managed to get over. We were received on the other side by our men, who helped us to draw the boat ashore and had fire and breakfast ready for us.

Namgyal had returned from Parka and brought news that the Gova threatened to drive away my men in order to force me to leave Langak-tso. Bluff, however, has no effect on me. A more serious matter was that Puppy had not been seen for forty-eight hours, and that Shukkur Ali, who had gone the morning before to Chiu-gompa in search of her, had not been heard of since. Puppy at length found her way into camp herself, and then it was Shukkur Ali who was missing.

On the 28th the storm continued. We afterwards heard from Tibetans that stormy weather frequently prevails on Langak-tso, and the lake is agitated, when Tso-mavang is smooth and calm. Tundup Sonam concluded that Tso-mavang was a pet of the gods, while demons and devils ruled over Langak-tso. We had heard a tale in Gossul-gompa that the preceding winter five Tibetans, armed with swords and guns, had crossed the ice to reach Parka by a shorter way, but in the middle of the lake the ice had given way, and all five were dragged down by the weight of their weapons to the bottom.

When I told him that I wished to draw a map of the lake, he said that it was of no consequence what the shore was like, as only egg-gatherers came there.

When we had passed two projecting points we encamped at the extremity of the cape which lies in a line with the southernmost island. It was stormy, but here we found shelter under a cliff with a streamer pole on the top. Stone walls, rags, and eggshells were evidence of the visits of men. On the east and west of the cape were open bays with heavy seas, and to the north, 19° E., we saw the southern point of the island—a dark precipitous rock, rising like a huge roll of bread from the waves. We had already heard of this island, Lache-to, on which the wild geese lay their eggs in May, and are robbed of them by men from Parka who come over the ice. I could not therefore omit to visit it. The island lay quite near. We would return immediately, and Adul might begin to roast the wild-goose which Tundup had shot on the march. We wanted no provisions, but Robert advised Ishe to take a bag of *tsamba* with him, lest he should have to wait too long for his dinner.

These two men took the oars when we put off. The shelter of the cape was deceptive. Two minutes from the bank I tried to take a sounding, but the line made a great curve before it reached the bottom, for the storm drove the boat northwards. Then we fell upon another device: the boatmen had only to hold their oars in the air and let the wind carry the boat along. But a little farther out we could not sail so easily, for the wave system of the eastern open part of the lake came into collision with that from the west. Here the waves rose into hillocks and pyramids, and had to be negotiated with the oars. We rapidly drew near to the island, and its rocks became higher and looked threateningly dark and dangerous. When we were close to the southern point I perceived that it was impossible to land there. The bank of rubbish and blocks was very steep, and we and the boat would have been dashed in pieces in the foaming breakers. The situation was critical. Robert wished to land on the lee-side of the northern

spring when the goose mothers sit with expectant hearts on the hard nests, and the sun floods Gurla Mandatta with a sea of light.

We broke two. They were rotten. We tried others which lay in the shade and deeper in the sand. They gave out a horrible stench when the shell broke with a crack on a stone. But of about 200 eggs we broke, we found eight which were edible, and we did not want more. We helped Ishe to collect dry plants lying on the slopes, and at sunset we had a huge heap which we had piled within a small ring fence. In the middle the fire was lighted, and we sat leaning against the wall which sheltered us from the wind. We were warm and comfortable, and our satisfaction reached its height when Ishe's store of *tsamba* was divided into three equal portions, and was eaten out of a wooden bowl with the hand in place of a spoon. The greatest inconvenience was that we had no other vessel but Ishe's small wooden bowl, and therefore whenever one of us wanted a drink he had to tramp down to the shore.

The storm still howled over the rock and through the holes and crannies of the wall. Then the thought shot through my mind: "Is the boat moored securely? If it should be carried away! Then we are lost. Ah, but it may be cast ashore on the northern bank, and our men may fetch it and come across to the island. No, it will be filled with water, and be sunk by the weight of the zinc plates of the centre-boards. But then we can mount in the morning to the southern point and make our people understand by signs that we want provisions. We have drifted to the island in eighteen minutes. They can make a raft with the tent poles and stays, load it with provisions, and let it drift with the wind to the island. And we may find more fresh eggs."

Such were the thoughts that Robert and I exchanged while Ishe was feeling about in total darkness at the landing-place. "What if we have to stay here till the lake freezes over, four months hence?" I said. But at this moment we heard Ishe's step in the sand, and he calmed us with the assurance that both the boat and the oars were safe.

CHAPTER L

THE SOURCE OF THE SUTLEJ

We had scarcely dressed in the morning before the storm raged again. Galsan and a gova from Parka overtook us here. The former brought provisions, the latter had strict orders from his chief, Parka Tasam, to tell me that if I did not at once betake myself to Parka, he would send off all my baggage to Langak-tso, and force me to move on to Purang. But the gova himself was a jovial old fellow, and he received my answer that if Parka Tasam ventured to meddle with my boxes, he should be immediately deposed. If he kept quiet a couple of days, I would come to Parka, and the rather that I found it impossible to navigate the lake at this season of the year.

Then we marched on westwards, in and out of the bays and round all the projections produced by a mountain elevation north of Gurla, which prolongs its ramifications to the lake. The constantly changing views, as we wind in and out and wander between land and water, are indescribably beautiful and charming. The two large islands lying far out in the lake we see wherever we may be. One is named Dopserma; other water-birds breed there, but no geese. In winter yaks and sheep are driven over the ice to the island, where there is good pasturage. When cattle disease rages in the country the animals on Dopserma do not suffer.

We passed round the sharp-pointed westernmost bay in a furious storm and blinding clouds of sand, and encamped on the shore again. The same agreeable weather continued also on the last day of August as we travelled north-eastwards and

us, that six Chinese and Tibetan officials from Lhasa had been sent to bring me to reason, was at length made clear. The report was certainly true, but when the gentlemen on reaching Saka-dzong heard that I had marched on westwards some time before, they simply turned back again.

I obtained all kinds of information about the two lakes and their periodical outlets, from Tibetans who had long lived in the country. Four years before some water had flowed from Tso-mavang to Langak-tso, which confirms Ryder's statement. Twelve years ago the outflow had been so abundant that the channel could not be passed except by the bridge. The channel is sometimes called Ngangga, sometimes Ganga. The water of Langak-tso is said to drain off underground, and to appear again at a place in the old bed called Langchen-kamba, and this water is said to be the true source of the Sutlej, and to find its way to the large streams which form this river, called in Tibetan Langchen-kamba. Twelve years and forty-eight years ago the spring in the old bed is said to have emitted much more water than now. Sherring collected similar data in 1905.

Langak-tso is said to have been so poisonous in former times that any one who drank of its water died, but since the holy fish broke through the isthmus and passed into the lake, the water has been sweet. Langak-tso freezes in the beginning of December, half a month sooner than its eastern neighbour, and the freezing proceeds slowly and in patches, whereas Tso-mavang freezes over in an hour. Langak-tso also breaks up half a month before Tso-mavang. Both have ice 3 feet thick. In winter the surface of Tso-mavang falls 20 inches beneath the ice, which consequently is cracked and fissured, and dips from the shore; but Langak-tso sinks only one or two thirds of an inch. This shows that it receives water constantly from the eastern lake, but only parts with a trifling quantity in winter.

With regard to the goose island, I was told that three men are commissioned by the Devashung to settle on the island as soon as the wild-geese arrive, to protect them from wolves and

west, and the ground was quite level. At the place which seemed highest, we tested it with the boiling-point thermometer and found that it stood about 30 feet above the lake. Following the bed westwards we come first to a large pool of sweet water with large quantities of duck and water-weeds, then to a series of freshwater swamps connected by channels, and at length to a brook, which flows slowly south-westwards. The brook pours into a large freshwater pool, No. 2, which has no visible outlet. But when we proceed farther west to the point where the bed is contracted between walls of solid rock, we come upon two springs forming a new brook, which flows through a clearly marked valley to the south-west. I am convinced that this water filtrates underground from Langak-tso. A year later I followed the old bed a day's march farther west, and found at Dölchu-gompa permanent springs of abundant water, which likewise well up on the bottom of the bed. From here and all along its course through the Himalayas the Tibetans call the Sutlej Langchen-kamba, the Elephant river; the hill on which the convent Dölchu-gompa is built is supposed to bear some resemblance to an elephant, and hence the name. The spring at Dölchu is called Langchen-kabab, or the mouth out of which the Elephant river comes, just as the Brahmaputra source is the Tamchok-kabab, or the mouth out of which the Horse river comes, and the Indus source is the Singi-kabab, or the mouth from which the Lion river comes. The fourth in the series is the Mapchu-kamba, the Peacock river or Karnali. The Tibetans assert that the source of the Sutlej is at the monastery Dölchu, not in the Himalayas or the Trans-Himalaya, from which, however, it receives very voluminous tributaries. They are also convinced that the source water of the Langchen-kamba originates from Langak-tso. And I would draw particular attention to the fact that the first of the two holy springs which pour their water into the Tage-tsangpo is also called Langchen-kamba (see p. 106), a proof that in old times the source was supposed to lie to the east of Tso-mavang.

Now I advise any one who takes no interest in the source

The river flows farther to the west-by-north for 40 li, then to the north-east, to be met by the water of Lake Kung-sheng (= Gun-chu-tso), which sinks under the ground of the lake basin, but which, after reappearing, and after receiving three northern affluents, runs south-westwards to the river.

The lake of Kung-sheng-o-mo has two sources—one coming from the north-east, from Ta-ko-la-kung-ma-shan, and flowing 150–160 li; the other from the east, from the western foot of Ma-erh-yo-mu-ling (= Marium-la) in the western frontiers of Choshu-tê. This last-mentioned mountain forms the eastern boundary of A-li, and is the chief range going south-eastwards from Kang-ti-ssu. The water (of the lake Kung-sheng) flows westwards for more than 50 li, and forms another lake, 80 li wide, and without an outlet. However, more than 10 li farther to the west there is a third lake with a subterranean source and with a length of 30 li. A stream comes from the north to the lake. The river now flows south-westwards for 60 li, and receives a stream coming from the north-east. 40 li farther south-westwards it receives a stream coming from the northern mountains; farther south-westwards the river meets the water from Lang-chuan-ka-pa-pu-shan.

The water forms the lake Ma-piu-mu-ta-lai (= Tso-mavang). From south to north it is 150 li long, from east to west 80 or 100 li wide, and has a circumference of more than 200 li. On the northern side of the lake there are two streams coming from the north. The lake is situated 120 li to the south of Kang-ti-ssu. The water flows out from the west of the lake into the lake Lang-ka (= Langak-tso) at a distance of 60 li. The latter lake receives a stream coming from the north-east. Lake Lang-ka has a narrow rectangular shape, pointed and elongated, the length from south to north being 170 li, and the width from east to west 100 li. Its northern pointed corner has the stream coming from north-east. There are three sources on the southern foot at a distance of 70 li from a southern branch of Kang-ti-ssu; they flow southwards, unite into one stream, which takes a south-westerly course for 150–160 li before entering the lake. The lake is the same in circumference and area, but different in outline.

The water (of lake Lang-ka) flows out from the west, and after running westwards for more than 100 li it turns to the south-west, and is now called the Lang-chu-ho, and takes a sinuous course for more than 200 li. Then it receives the Chu-ka-la-ho coming from the north-east.

and then, rising up again, joined the Langchen-kamba or Tage-tsangpo. And that the Tage-tsangpo was at one time considered by the Tibetans to be the headwater of the Sutlej is apparent from the fact that its name, Langchen-kamba, is still applied to the upper of the two sacred source streams in the valley of the Tage-tsangpo.

And, again, it is said: This water, that is, the water of the Langchen-kabab, or the headwater of the Sutlej, forms the lake Ma-piu-mu-ta-lai, the Tso-mavang or Tso-mavam, as the name is also pronounced; on D'Anville's map it is written Ma-pama Talai, and D'Anville explains that Talai signifies lake. He might have added that it is the same word as in Dalai Lama, the priest, whose wisdom is as unfathomable as the ocean; for the Chinese word Talai or Dalai means ocean. By the use of this word the Chinese author wished to imply that Tso-mavang is much larger than the other lakes mentioned in his text.

The surplus water, as there is every reason to assume, flowed in the year 1762 from Tso-mavang through the channel to Langak-tso. The length of the channel was 60 li, which corresponds to my $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles. All the northern tributaries which flow into the two lakes from the valleys of the Trans-Himalaya are correctly noted. The lake Langak is called Lang-ka. On D'Anville's map, the material for which was supplied by the Jesuits who lived in Pekin in the time of the Emperor Kang Hi (at the beginning of the eighteenth century), the lake is named Lanken. On the same map the river flowing thence westwards is called Lanc-tchou (Sutlej), but it is suggested, absurdly enough, that it is the upper course of the Ganges. D'Anville names the mountains south of Tso-mavang Lantchia-Kepou, which is Langchen-kabab, and the mountains lying to the south-east of them Tam-tchou, that is, Tamchok, in which he quite correctly places the origin of the Yarou Tsanpou, the Brahmaputra. The material for the map of the whole Chinese Empire, which the Jesuits presented to the Emperor Kang Hi in the year 1718, was collected between the years 1708 and 1716, and the Emperor procured informa-

short period as to be observed by no one, we shall still be justified in including the lakes in the catchment area of the river.

And in this connection I would point out that the water-level of Tibetan rivers and lakes is subject to periodical fluctuations, dependent on the precipitation, of the same kind as the Brückner periods. The level in the two lakes varies from year to year. At the present time they are very low, but there is nothing to prevent them rising gradually in a more or less distant future. Tso-mavang may rise so that its water may again flow through the channel to Langak-tso, and this lake at length may discharge its surplus water, as formerly, through the dry bed of the Sutlej. It is more probable, however, that Langak-tso is approaching a time when it will lose its subterranean outlet also, and be quite isolated, like Gunchu-tso and Panggong-tso, and consequently become salt in time. But after it has lost its outlet it may be a long time, as Professor Brückner informs me, before the lake becomes noticeably salt. The next step in the development will be that Tso-mavang will be cut off from Langak-tso and likewise become salt.

However, we need not plunge into speculations and prognostications of the future, which may have surprises in store about which we can form only more or less probable conjectures. It is our duty to rely solely on fact and observation.

And now that we are agreed that the two lakes belong to the drainage area of the Sutlej, the question is: Which of the rivers debouching into Tso-mavang is the headwater of the Sutlej? Naturally, the longest and the one which carries most water. The river which once flowed out of Gunchu-tso has no claim to this honour, and the Gunchu-tso must be rejected as the source of the Sutlej. The Tage-tsangpo discharged 388 cubic feet of water per second, while all the other streams entering Tso-mavang carried at most 100 cubic feet each. The source of the Tage-tsangpo in the front of the Ganglung glacier is therefore the source of the Sutlej.

and their horses are grazing on the fresh grass. From the top of the moraine is seen the northern part of our stormy Langak-tso.

We ride up the valley and soon have on both sides solid rock of hard green and violet conglomerate, with huge cones of detritus at the foot of the slopes. Enormous boulders of conglomerate have fallen down here. On the left bank of the river, where the road comes up from Tarchen, stand a small cubical house and several *manis* and *chhortens* in long rows : it is a sacred road, the road of pilgrims round Kang-rinpoche.

The cliffs assume ever wilder forms, falling perpendicularly to terraces and pebble screes, forming steps and ledges, fortifications, battlements and towers, as though built by human hands. They consist of sandstone and conglomerate, and the strata dip 10° to the south, and to the eye appear horizontal. A small bridge spans the river. A party of pilgrims behind us is just crossing it. But we are on the right bank, and above us Nyandi-gompa is perched on its terrace. Above it rises the vertical wall of a huge mountain mass, a dangerous background for the monastery. Up on a ledge dwells a hermit, and quite at the top stands a streamer pole named Nyandi-kong. Five years ago a huge block fell down upon the monastery and laid half of it in ruins. The block still lies in the inner court. It was early in the morning after long-continuous rain ; no one was hurt, but the monastery had to be rebuilt.

Two monks, two old women, and a boy received us kindly, and said it was the first time they had seen a European in Nyandi. The monastery, as well as the three others on Kailas, is under Tarchen-labrang, which is situated on the southern foot of the mountain, where the pilgrims begin and end their circuit. Curiously enough, these monasteries belong to Tongsa Penlop, the Raja of Bhotan. The preceding year, 1906, was a year of the fire horse, and the year 1918 will be a year of the earth horse ; every twelfth year is a horse year, in which wood, fire, earth, iron or water is prefixed to the name horse ; the Tibetan cycle (the period of time which is the base

icy summit of Kang-rinpoche rises amid fantastic fissured precipitous rocks, and in the foreground are the picturesque superstructure of the monastery and its streamers.

But time flies. After spending three hours in Nyandi, we say farewell to the monks, descend the steep path zigzagging among rubbish and boulders, and continue our journey to the north-north-east along the right bank of the river. At every turn I could stand still in astonishment, for this valley is one of the grandest and most beautiful in its wildness that I have ever seen. The precipice on the right side of the valley is divided into two stages with a terrace between them, and in the midst gapes a dark ravine. On the left side the rock forms a single vertical wall, and here the eyes fall on a succession of singular forms of relief, rocks like congealed cascades, citadels, church towers, and embattled fortifications, separated by cañon-like hollows. Water from melting snow-fields pours down the steep slopes. One such jet of water is quite 800 feet high and white as milk; the wind turns it into spray, but it collects again, only to be split up against a projection. The rock around it is wet and dark with spurted drops. A natural rock bridge crosses a small cleft with vertical walls.

Immediately beyond the monastery the summit of Kailas is lost to view, but soon a bit of it is seen again through a gap. We passed twelve pilgrims, and soon after a second party resting on a slope. They put on solemn faces and do not talk with one another, but murmur prayers, walking with their bodies bent, and leaning on a staff—frequently, too, without a staff. How they have longed to come here! And now they are here and walk round the mountain, which is always on their right. They feel no weariness, for they know that every step improves their prospects in the world beyond the river of death. And when they have returned to their black tents in distant valleys, they tell their friends of all the wonders they have seen, and of the clouds, which sail like the dragon ships of old below the white summit of Gangri.

Small conical cairns are everywhere. Tsering never omits

the camera-stand covered with a linen cloth, is too small to allow of a fire being lighted.

Since I had been successful in fixing the positions of the sources of the Brahmaputra and Sutlej, my old dream of discovering the source of the Indus was revived, and all my aspirations and ambition were now concentrated on this object. When I now learned from the monks that the point where the famous river issues forth from the "Mouth of the Lion" was only three days' journey to the north-east beyond a lofty pass, everything else seemed of trifling consequence compared to an advance into the unknown country in the north. We held a council of war; we had provisions only for two days more, and we had not brought enough money with us, and, moreover, the state of affairs in Khaleb was too uncertain to allow of greater hazards. I therefore decided to carry out my original plan in the meantime and complete the pilgrimage, and afterwards make the source of the Indus the object of a fresh excursion from Khaleb, or, if the worst came to the worst, from Gartok.

On September 4 we take leave of the monks of Diri-pu, cross by a bridge the river which comes down from the pass Tseti-lachen-la in the Trans-Himalaya, from the other side of which the water flows to the Indus, and mount in an easterly direction over rough steep slopes thickly bestrewn with granite boulders. On our right is the river which is fed by the glaciers of Kailas; it is quite short, but is very full of water. The path becomes still steeper, winding among immense blocks of granite, and leads up to the first hump, after which the ground is a little more even to the next break. Here we have a splendid view of the short truncated glacier which, fed from a sharply defined trough-shaped firn basin, lies on the north side of Kailas. Its terminal, lateral, and medial moraines are small but distinct. Eastwards from Kailas runs off an exceedingly sharp, pointed, and jagged ridge, covered on the north side with snow, and belts of pebbles in the snow give all this side a furrowed appearance. From all corners of the ice mantle and the snowfields foaming brooks hurry down to the river. On our left, northwards, the

balance of his conscience inclined, for, before we were aware, we saw him disappearing under the block, and heard him puffing, panting, and groaning, scratching with his hands and trying to get a foothold behind. But when he had floundered about inside long and vigorously, he was at last obliged to call for help in a half-strangled voice. We laughed till we could hardly keep on our feet, and let him stay a while in his hole because of his manifest sinfulness. Then the two other men dragged him out by the legs, and he looked extremely confused (and dusty) when he at length emerged again into the outer world, an unmasked villain. The old man told us that a woman had become so firmly fixed that she had actually to be dug out.

Some 200 paces farther in this maze of granite boulders, among which we wandered as in lanes between low houses and walls, stands a test-stone of another kind. It consists of three blocks leaning on one another, with two hollows between them. The task is to creep through the left passage and return by the right, that is, in the orthodox direction. Here Ishe made up for his previous discomfiture by crawling through both holes. I told him frankly that there was no skill required here, for the holes were so large that even small yaks could go through. However, the sinner had in this second stone an opportunity of preserving at least a show of righteousness.

Our wanderings round Kang-rinpoche, the "holy ice mountain" or the "ice jewel," is one of my most memorable recollections of Tibet, and I quite understand how the Tibetans can regard as a divine sanctuary this wonderful mountain which has so striking a resemblance to a *chhorten*, the monument which is erected in memory of a deceased saint within or without the temples. How often during our roamings had I heard of this mountain of salvation! And now I myself walked in pilgrim garb along the path between the monasteries, which are set, like precious stones in a bangle, in the track of pilgrims round Kang-rinpoche, the finger which points up to the mighty gods throned like stars in unfathomable space.

From the highlands of Kham in the remotest east, from

step is a link in a chain which cannot be broken by the powers of evil which persecute and torment the children of men. They start on their way from Tarchen-labrang, and every new turn in the road brings them a step nearer to the point where the ring closes. And during the whole peregrination they pray "Om mani padme hum," and every time this prayer is uttered they let a bead of the rosary pass through the fingers. The stranger also approaches Kang-rinpoche with a feeling of awe. It is incomparably the most famous mountain in the world. Mount Everest and Mont Blanc cannot vie with it. Yet there are millions of Europeans who have never heard of Kang-rinpoche, while the Hindus and Lamaists all know Kailas, though they have no notion where Mont Blanc lifts up its head. Therefore one approaches the mountain with the same feeling of respect as one experiences in Lhasa, Tashi-lunpo, Buddh Gaya, Benares, Mecca, Jerusalem, and Rome—those holy places which have attracted to their altars countless bands of sin-burdened souls and seekers after truth.

Our volunteer guide said that he was on his ninth circuit of the mountain. He took two days to each, and intended to go round thirteen times. He called the track Kang-kora, the Gangri circle. Many years before, he had performed the meritorious feat called *gyangchag-tsallgen*, which consists in measuring the length of the way by the length of the pilgrim's body. One such pilgrimage is worth thirteen ordinary circuits on foot. My pilgrimage was of no value at all, because I was riding, the old man said; I must go on foot if I wished to derive any benefit from it.

When we came a second time to Diri-pu some days later, we saw two young lamas engaged in the prostration pilgrimage round the mountain. They were from Kham, and from that part of the country "where the last men dwell," and had been a year on the way to Kailas. They were poor and ragged, and had nothing to carry, for they lived on the alms of the faithful. They had come in nine days from Tarchen to Diri-pu, and reckoned that they had still eleven days to finish their round. I accompanied them for half an hour on foot to observe their

'OM MANI PADME HUM'

CHAPTER LII

'OM MANI PADME HUM'

Now begins the last very steep zigzag in the troublesome path among sharp or round grey boulders of every form and size, a cone of blocks with steps in it. Dung-chapje is the name of a round wall of stone, in the midst of which is a smaller boulder, containing in a hollow depression a round stone like the cleft hoof of a wild yak. When the faithful pilgrim passes this spot, he takes this stone, strikes it against the bottom of the hollow and turns it once round like a pestle. Consequently the hollow is being constantly deepened, and one day it will be lowered right through the block.

We mount up a ridge with brooks flowing on both sides. On every rock, which has a top at all level, small stones are piled up, and many of these pyramidal heaps are packed so closely that there is no room for another stone. Thanks to these cairns the pilgrim can find his way in snowstorm and fog, though without them he could not easily find it in sunshine.

At length we see before us a gigantic boulder, its cubical contents amounting perhaps to 7000 or 10,000 cubic feet; it stands like an enormous milestone on the saddle of Dolma-la, which attains the tremendous height of 18,599 feet. On the top of the block smaller stones are piled up into a pyramid supporting a pole, and from its end cords decorated with rags and streamers are stretched to other poles fixed in the ground

Then he sat down on the pass, turned his face in the direction where the summit of Kang-rinpoche was hidden, placed his hands together, and chanted an interminable succession of prayers. After this he went up to the block and laid his forehead on the ground—how many times I do not know, but he was still at it when we descended among boulders to the tiny round lake Tso-kavála. We followed its northern shore, and our old friend told me that the ice never breaks up.

But time slips away and we must hasten on. We walk, slide, and scramble down steep slopes where it would be easy to tumble down head over heels. The old man is sure-footed, and these slopes are old acquaintances. But woe betide him if he turned round and went in the reverse direction. At length we reach the main valley, called in its upper part Tselung, and in its lower Lam-chyker. Through the large valley, which enters the main valley on the right side, and is called Kando-sanglam, we now look eastwards upon the highest pinnacle of the summit of Kailas, which has a sharp edge towards the north-east, and still looks like a crystal. At two *manis* erected side by side we pass the border of the granite and the conglomerate, which now appears again. The further we proceed the more numerous are the boulders of this kind of rock, while those of granite at length occur no more. We march south-west and bivouac on the roof of the monastery Tsumtul-pu. All day long, at all the cairns and all the resting-places, I have heard nothing but an endless murmur of the words "Om mani padme hum," and now, as long as I am awake, "Om mani padme hum" sounds in my ears from all nooks and corners.

The temple had no other curiosity but a statue of Duk Ngavang Gyamtso, 5 feet high, sitting as at a writing-desk, two not very large elephant's tusks, and a five-branched chandelier from Lhasa. Our visit, therefore, did not last long, and we rode down the valley in which the river gradually increased in size. Here, too, *manis* and *chhortens* are erected, and at the end of the valley, where again numbers of granite boulders are accumulated, we see once more Langak-tso and the grand Gurla group.

to the goal of his pilgrimage, but throughout his life. Concerning this Waddell makes, among others, the following remarks: "Om-ma-ṇi pad-me Hūṃ, which literally means '*Om!* The Jewel in the lotus!' *Hūṃ!*—is addressed to the Bodhisat Padmapāṇi, who is represented like Buddha as seated or standing within a lotus-flower. He is the patron-god of Tibet and the controller of metempsychosis. And no wonder this formula is so popular and constantly repeated by both Lāmas and laity, for its mere utterance is believed to stop the cycle of re-births and to convey the reciter directly to paradise. Thus it is stated in the Māṇi-kah-bum with extravagant rhapsody that this formula 'is the essence of all happiness, prosperity, and knowledge, and the great means of deliverance,' for the *Om* closes re-birth amongst the gods, *ma* among the Titans, *ṇi* as a man, *pad* as a beast, *me* as a Tantalus, and *Hūṃ* as an inhabitant of hell. And in keeping with this view each of these six syllables is given the distinctive colour of these six states of re-birth, namely: *Om*, the godly *white*; *ma*, the Titanic *blue*; *ṇi*, the human *yellow*; *pad*, the animal *green*; *me*, the 'Tantalic' *red*; and *Hūṃ*, the hellish *black*" (*The Buddhism of Tibet*, 148-9).

Köppen and Grünwedel translate the four words: "O, Jewel in the lotus-flower, Amen."

Wherever one turns in Tibet, he sees the six sacred characters engraved or chiselled out, and hears them repeated everywhere. They are found in every temple in hundreds of thousands of copies, nay, in millions, for in the great prayer mills they are stamped in fine letters on thin paper. On the monastery roofs, on the roofs of private houses, and on the black tents, they are inscribed on the fluttering streamers. On all the roads we ride daily past wall-like stone cists covered with slabs, on which the formula "Om mani padme hum" is carved. Seldom does the most lonely path lead up to a pass where no cairn is erected to remind the wanderer of his dependence all his life long on the influence of good and bad spirits. And on the top of every such *lhato* or *lhadse* is fixed a pole or a stick with streamers, every one proclaiming in

Tibetan begins his day, and with them on his tongue he lies down to rest. The Om and Hum are not only the Alpha and Omega of the day, but of his whole life.

The mystic words rang constantly in my ears. I heard them when the sun rose and when I blew out my light, and I did not escape them even in the wilderness, for my own men murmured "Om mani padme hum." They belong to Tibet, these words; they are inseparable from it: I cannot imagine the snow-capped mountains and the blue lakes without them. They are as closely connected with this country as buzzing with the bee-hive, as the flutter of streamers with the pass, as the ceaseless west wind with its howling.

The life of the Tibetan from the cradle to the grave is interwoven with a multitude of religious precepts and customs. It is his duty to contribute his mite to the maintenance of the monasteries and to the Peter's pence of the temples. When he passes a votive cairn he adds a stone to the pile as an offering; when he rides by a *mani*, he never forgets to guide his steed to the left of it; when he sees a holy mountain, he never omits to lay his forehead on the ground in homage; in all important undertakings he must, for the sake of his eternal salvation, seek the advice of monks learned in the law; when a mendicant lama comes to his door he never refuses to give him a handful of *tsamba* or a lump of butter; when he makes the round of the temple halls, he adds his contribution to the collection in the votive bowls; and when he saddles his horse or loads a yak, he again hums the everlasting "Om mani padme hum."

More frequently than an Ave Maria or a Paternoster in the Catholic world, "Om mani padme hum" forms an accompaniment to the life and wanderings of humanity over half Asia. The boundless vista opened out by the six holy syllables is thus expressed by Edwin Arnold in the concluding lines of his poem, *The Light of Asia*:

> The dew is on the lotus. Rise, Great Sun!
> And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.
> Om mani padme hum, the sunrise comes.
> The dewdrop slips into the shining sea.

to the Singi-kabab, and then join your caravan again, I will put no obstacles in your way. But you do it at your own risk, and you will most certainly be caught before you reach the source of the Indus."

I was as much astonished as delighted by this sudden change in the attitude of the Gova, and arranged with Robert that he should lead the main caravan in very short day's marches to Gartok, while I made as rapidly as possible for the source of the Indus. I took only as many things as a small leathern trunk would contain, and as companions only five men, among them Rabsang as interpreter and Adul as cook, with our own six animals and three dogs, one of which, a new purchase, ran away on the first day. I had Robert's small tent, and our arsenal consisted of two guns and a revolver, for robbers were said to make the country very unsafe. I could not find a guide, but on the way to Diri-pu, where I encamped once more, I came across an old man from Tok-jalung, who wished to make the round of Kailas thirteen times, and gave me much valuable information. But no money could induce him to accompany us farther.

On the 8th we continued our way through the valley that runs north-north-eastwards from Diri-pu to the Tseti-la. The stream, divided into many arms, was covered in the night by a thin coating of ice, smooth as glass, where the water had run off, but it disappeared when day came. The valley is broad, and the road showed traces of considerable traffic, though we did not meet a soul. The marmots whistled in front of their holes; the summer would soon be over for them. Kang-rinpoche can be seen from many places, and here pilgrims from the north have piled up cairns. Granite predominates everywhere, but crystalline schists occur here and there. We followed the fresh tracks of three horsemen. The gradient became steeper and the scenery assumed more of an alpine character. We mounted up among huge cones of detritus with babbling brooks of melted snow to the pass, which lay at a height of 18,465 feet. Its plateau is singularly flat. On its northern side camp No. 234 was pitched.

THE GOVA BY WHOSE HELP THE SOURCE OF THE INDUS WAS DISCOVERED (SEATED) AND TIBETANS AT KAILAS.

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mountain chain, and along the flank turned towards us the Indus is said to flow. We joined the men of the sheep caravan and camped together with them. There were five of them, all armed with guns, and they said that the district was frequently haunted by robbers, who at times seemed to vanish altogether, and then suddenly came down like a whirlwind, and no one knew whence they came.

Our camping-ground on the bank of the Indus (16,663 feet) is called Singi-buk. Eastwards the valley is broad and open, but the Indus itself is here an insignificant stream. I was therefore not astonished when I heard that it was only a short day's journey from the source, which, I was told, does not proceed from snow or a glacier, but springs up out of the ground. The men called the river the Singi-tsangpo, or Singi-kamba and the source itself Singi-kabab, though we afterwards heard the word pronounced Senge more frequently than Singi.

It turned out that one of the five men knew all about us. He was a brother of the Lobsang Tsering on the Dungtse-tso who had sold us three yaks the winter before (see Chapter XV.). It was a singular chance that we should fall in with him. He said he had heard how well we had treated his brother, and offered us his services—for a good reward, of course. As he had travelled several times through this region, quite unknown to Europeans, and was acquainted with all the passes, roads, and valleys, I thought he would be very valuable to me, and I proposed to give him 7 rupees a day, that is about half a month's pay of one of my Ladakis. Of course he accepted the terms at once and soon became our intimate friend.

But these business matters were not yet settled. The man had a quantity of sheep and barley. He consented to let us eight sheep on hire, and sell us their loads, which would last our horses for a week. He was to receive a rupee for the hire of each sheep, which was high, for a sheep is worth only 2 to 3 rupees. The old man would therefore receive 18 rupees every evening as long as he was with us; but it was cheap after all, for the discovery of the source of the Indus was involved.

head of the wild sheep, which I wished to preserve as a memento of the day at the source of the Indus.

The ground rises exceedingly slowly. Singi-yüra is a rugged cliff to the north, with a large hole through its summit. Singi-chava is the name of a commanding eminence to the south. Then we wade through the outflow of the Munjam valley running in from the south-east. Above this the Indus is only a tiny brook, and part of its water comes from a valley in the south-east, the Bokar. A little later we camp at the aperture of the spring, which is so well concealed that it might easily be overlooked without a guide.

From the mountains on the northern side a flattish cone of detritus, or, more correctly, a slope bestrewn with rubbish, descends to the level, open valley. At its foot projects a slab of white rock with an almost horizontal bedding, underneath which several small springs well up out of the ground, forming weedy ponds and the source stream, which we had traced upwards, and which is the first and uppermost of the head-waters of the mighty Indus. The four largest springs, where they issued from the ground, had temperatures of 48.6°, 49.1°, 49.6°, and 50.4° respectively. They are said to emit the same quantity of water in winter and summer, but a little more after rainy seasons. Up on the slab of rock stand three tall cairns and a small cubical *lhato* containing votive pyramids of clay. And below the *lhato* is a quadrangular *mani*, with hundreds of red flagstones, some covered with fine close inscriptions, some bearing a single character 20 inches high. On two the wheel of life was incised, and on another a divine image, which I carried off as a souvenir of the source of the Indus.

Our guide said that the source Singi-kabab was reverenced because of its divine origin. When travellers reached this place or any other part of the upper Indus, they scooped up water with their hands, drank of it, and sprinkled their faces and heads with it.

Through the investigations made by Montgomerie's pundits in the year 1867 it was known that the eastern arm of the Indus is the actual headwater, and I had afterwards an

reflected in their waters; up here wolves, wild yaks, and wild sheep roam about their valleys, while down below in India the eyes of tigers and leopards shine like glowing coals of fire from the jungles that skirt their banks, and poisonous snakes wriggle through the dense brushwood. Here in dreary Tibet icy storms and cold snowfalls lash their waves, while down in the flat country mild breezes whisper in the crowns of the palms and mango trees. I seemed to listen here to the beating of the pulses of these two renowned rivers, to watch the industry and rivalry which, through untold generations, have occupied unnumbered human lives, short and transitory as the life of the midge and the grass; all those wanderers on the earth and guests in the abodes of time, who have been born beside the fleeting current of these rivers, have drunk of their waters, have drawn from them life and strength for their fields, have lived and died on their banks, and have risen from the sheltered freedom of their valleys up to the realms of eternal hope. Not without pride, but still with a feeling of humble thankfulness, I stood there, conscious that I was the first white man who had ever penetrated to the sources of the Indus and Brahmaputra.

great importance to visit me first, so next day I went to them. The elder was ill; the younger, a gentleman from Lhasa, thirty-five years of age and of distinguished appearance, received me most cordially in his simple Government buildings, and was so little angry at the liberties I had recently taken that he did not even ask me where I had been. It was an irony of fate that a letter in most friendly terms and most liberal in its concessions, which I now received from Lien Darin by the hand of the Garpun, had not reached me until it was too late. When Lien Darin received my letter from Raga-tasam, he immediately sent off two Chinamen fully authorized to come to an agreement with me about the route I was to take. "For I shall be glad to know," said the Amban of Lhasa, "that you are travelling by the road that suits you." He was quite convinced that my movements, whichever way I took, would give no cause for political complications. And he concluded with the words: "Now, I hope that you will have a successful and peaceful journey, and I will pray for your health and prosperity."

How I regretted now that I had not stayed in Saka, and so much the more when the Garpun told me that the two Chinamen had arrived with an escort of four Tibetans only two weeks after we had left! But the Garpun was friendly disposed towards me; he was the most powerful man in western Tibet, and could still throw open all doors for me, if he dared and was willing to do so.

I was, indeed, pleased and thankful for the results which I had already been able to secure. Besides many other problems that had been solved, I had crossed the Trans-Himalaya by five passes, namely, the Sela-la, Chang-la-Pod-la, Angden-la, Tseti-lachen-la, and Jukti-la, of which the first four had been entirely unknown. But between the Angden-la and the Tseti-lachen-la I had been obliged to leave a gap of quite 330 miles in the exploration of the Trans-Himalaya. Of this region nothing was known but the summits Ryder had seen from his route, and which he and Wood had measured by

about the country. Then we tried gold, but the Garpun answered most theatrically: "If this house were of gold and you offered it to me, I would not take it. If you travel on forbidden roads, I will send armed men after you who will force you to return hither."

He was incorruptible, and he was too strong for us. How sorry I was now that I had not proceeded eastwards when I was in enjoyment of complete freedom at the source of the Indus and in Yumba-matsen! But no, that was impossible, for my cash-box was then not full enough, I had only five men with me, and I could not have left the rest of my caravan to their own devices.

What if I went down into Nepal and came back again into Tibet by unguarded roads? No, that would not do, for snow would soon close the Himalayan passes. And if we tried to slink through to Rudok and thence make eastwards? No, Rudok swarmed with spies. And soon Gulam Razul learned also that the Garpun had sent orders throughout his territory to stop me in case I attempted to travel even to Ladak by any other than the main high-road.

Thus we planned this and that, and mused day and night, sometimes in my tent, sometimes in Gulam Razul's, and waited for the consignment from Simla, heard bells jingle when couriers came from the east, saw one merchant after another return from the fair in Lhasa, met the *serpun* or gold commissioner who came from Tok-jalung, and felt the cold of autumn cut our skins more sharply as the thermometer fell to -11°.

Then in lonely hours I came to the resolution to return to Ladak and thence, as in the year before, penetrate into Tibet from the north, traverse the whole country once more, and cross the blank space. I knew very well that by this round-about way it would take half a year to reach districts situated only a month's journey from Gartok. A new caravan would be necessary, new dangers and adventures awaited us, and winter was before us with its Arctic cold. But it must be done in spite of everything. I would not turn back until the

was my settled purpose to go to Khotan, and that I had given up all thoughts of Tibet. I even went so far as to send a telegram from Drugub to Reuter's correspondent in India, my friend Mr. Buck, with the information that I was about to make a short journey to Khotan. The object was to mislead the mandarins. If no one else would help me, I must help myself, and, if necessary, with cunning and trickery. None of my Indian friends must have any suspicion of my real plans, not even Colonel Dunlop Smith; it would, of course, be silly to put them in a position where they must either betray me or be disloyal to their own superiors. Except Gulam Razul and Robert, only my parents and sisters were let into the secret. But, unfortunately, I had given them a far too optimistic estimate of the length of my enterprise, and therefore when they heard no news they became day by day more uneasy, and at last came to the conclusion that I had come to grief.

On October 29, 1907, Gulam Razul's mules arrived, and were subjected to a thorough inspection. They were in splendid condition—small, sturdy, and sleek animals from Lhasa, accustomed to rarefied air, and, according to the owner, capable of enduring hardships of every kind. Gulam Razul even offered to buy them back at the price I paid, if they returned alive. I paid for all the twenty 1780 rupees. I still possessed five of my own animals, after a small white mule had been torn to pieces by wolves in Gartok. A whole pack had attacked our last six animals, the camp watchman had been unable to drive the wolves away, and the mule had been horribly wounded. He had been seen running before the wolves with his entrails trailing on the ground. The last mule from Poonch still survived, as well as my little Ladaki grey and one of his fellows, the veterans of Leh.

Gulam Razul also undertook to procure for me fifteen excellent horses from Ladak at a price of 1500 rupees. The other purchases consisted of: barley for the animals, 60 rupees; rice, 70 rupees; *tsamba*, 125 rupees; provender sacks,

Last year I had been successful when the political situation was still unsettled, but I had taught both the Chinese and Tibetans a lesson, and shown them that it was possible for a European to travel right across the country. I had also placed a weapon in their hands against me. I should not be able to manage it a second time. Now they would keep their eyes open along the periphery of the inhabited country. I must travel in disguise to attract as little attention as possible. Another courier was therefore sent to Leh to procure me a complete Ladaki costume in Mohammedan fashion. Gulam Razul also was of opinion that, considering all circumstances, it would be wisest to travel as a merchant. The new caravan leader was to be our master, while I myself should figure as "the least of his servants," and keep myself out of sight in all negotiations.

The whole affair was a desperate game, a political and diplomatic game of chess, the stakes being my own life or great geographical discoveries. I, who had hitherto stood on the most friendly and confidential terms with the Tibetans, must now avoid them as enemies. I should not be able to see any Tibetan face to face, and should have to conceal my own eyes in order not to be caught. Therefore a large pair of round goggles with dark glasses was bought; inside them I fastened polished glasses of the strength suited to my sight. My European outfit was restricted as much as was at all possible; the large camera and the boat were sent to Leh with my other baggage, and I took with me only a small Richard's camera.

The main point was that in inhabited districts I should conduct myself with Oriental self-control and be entirely passive. The outcome of this mad plan was to me enshrouded in impenetrable darkness. I only knew that I must go northwards from Drugub in the direction of the Karakorum pass, then turn to the east and south-east, and endeavour to cross from Lemchung-tso the blank space lying to the south of Bower's route in 1891, and thence continue my journey through the great blank patch on the north of the upper Tsangpo. If

tobacco; gold and silver watches, and revolvers with ammunition, for presents; cartridges for two of our guns; note-books and map paper; a whole library of new novels, including Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*—a present from O'Connor and suitable reading for the adventurous time before us; an anemometer and a hydrometer, presents from the chief of the Central Meteorological Institute in Simla, Dr. Gilbert Walker; and a host of other necessary and acceptable articles. The amiable Colonel, his equally amiable sister, and his daughter, had had no end of trouble in selecting and purchasing the things, packing them up and transmitting them to Tibet. It was owing to their kindness that I was able for a long time to live like a prince, and I cannot be sufficiently grateful to them.

Now I had nothing more to wait for. The policemen were well paid, and I also bore the expense of their return journey and gave them winter clothing; took a hearty farewell of my sincere friend Gulam Razul, without whose help the new journey would have been impossible; thanked Thakur Jai Chand and the other Hindus for their kindness, and started off on November 9, 1907, north-westwards along the course of the upper Indus.

On the 26th we reached Tankse, where the dignitaries of the district and even the *tesildar* of Leh came to meet us. They had already heard that I intended to travel to Khotan in midwinter. The following day was to be a day of rest, for here I was to discharge all my old servants except Robert and the Gurkha, Rub Das. When I had breakfasted, Tsering carried out the plates and dishes, which now had many chips out of their enamel. "This is the last time, Tsering, that you will wait on me." Then the old man began to weep, and hurried out quickly.

Then I summoned all the men to my tent and made them a speech, telling them that they had served me faithfully and obediently, and had well earned the comfort and repose that awaited them by their domestic hearths in the bosom of their families. I wished them good fortune and prosperity in the

the meteorological instruments as usual, and Rub Das laid my breakfast as noiselessly as an elf. I was glad that in spite of everything I felt not the slightest irresolution. The same angel who had protected me on my former journey would again attend my steps. I seemed to hear once more in the distance the rustle of his wings in the cold winter nights on the Chang-tang.

"Which of you is my cook?"

"I am," answered Gulam, a comical little fellow, who immediately received a lecture from Rub Das how I was to be attended on.

"Are you all Ladakis?"

"Yes, Sahib, all except Lobsang, who is a Tibetan from Gar-gunsa, but has married in Leh and has served with the Hajji Nazer Shah."

I was somewhat loath to take a Tibetan with me on a journey where it was essential to keep the Tibetans as long as possible in the dark. If danger threatened, how easily he could betray me to his countrymen! I considered whether I would not exchange him for another man, or simply leave him behind. But how often had I reason subsequently to rejoice that I had not given effect to the suggestion! With the exception of the four Russian cossacks and Robert, Lobsang was the best servant who ever accompanied me on my journeys through the wilds of Asia. He was a splendid man, and I cherish a warm recollection of him.

All were now welcomed into my service, and I expressed the hope that they would perform their duty as faithfully as their predecessors, promised them an extra donation of 50 rupees each if I were contented with them, and told them that I would pay the expenses of their return home from the point where our journey ended, just as I had done before. When it was known in Leh that I wanted fresh servants for the journey to Khotan, Guffaru and all the men I had sent home from Tokchen presented themselves and begged earnestly to be restored to my service. But the old Hajji had received strict directions from his son. Not one of my old servants might accompany me this time, for it would increase the danger if we met Tibetans with whom we were already acquainted.

The new horses seemed fine and strong, and stood, eating hay and barley, in a long row along a wall, beside the mules and the veterans from Leh. They were to be well fed, for the days of feasting would soon be over, and it would be well if they put on flesh, on which they could fall back in evil days.

Gulam Razul's son, Abdul Hai, visited me, and our business matters were transacted with him. Robert remained responsible for my heavy baggage until he had deposited it in the house of the Hajji Nazer Shah. It consisted of ten regulation horse-loads. In my leisure hours I wrote a heap of letters, which Robert was to hand in at the post-office in Leh.

We had now 21 mules and 19 horses, the brown puppy, and a large yellow dog from Gartok. All the mules and horses, except mine and Abdul Kerim's saddle-horses, carried loads. I rode my little white Ladaki, which had grown marvellously strong again, and was as spirited as one of the new horses. He and two others were the survivors of the large caravan which had, on the former occasion, set out from Leh. In order to make sure that Abdul Kerim took sufficient provender, I told him he must not think that I would follow the direct road like ordinary caravans. I might make excursions right and left, and often remain stationary for a week at a time. He must, therefore, provide barley for the animals for two and a half months, and he must take care that the provender we took with us lasted out. But it is stupid to trust to others. All the heavy baggage from Simla, the silver money, and the tinned provisions made four loads; Gulam's chests of kitchen utensils two; the tent, the bedding, and the belongings of the men made several loads; all the other animals were to be laden with rice, barley, and *tsamba*. We also took 25 sheep from Tankse.

In the night of December 3 the thermometer fell to −10.1°. Next morning all the baggage was packed up and carried down the valley to Shyok by coolies. Two fellows, as strong as bears, carried my two tent-boxes. The animals carried only their new saddles. One group after another marched off, and at last I remained alone. Then I shook hands with my faithful companion, Robert, thanked him for his invaluable services, his honesty, his courage, and his patience; asked him to greet for me the missionaries, Dr.

great effort to climb up. Poor man! I shivered as I looked at him; he had been quite under water.

Four of the others made an attempt a little higher up, and got over, but they were up to their necks in water. Then the whole troop of mules and horses were driven into the river; the horses managed best. One mule, I felt sure, would be lost. He made no attempt to hoist himself on to the ice until he had been pelted with stones from our bank. And when at length he was up and was following the track of the others, the ice cracked and gave way under him, and there he lay enclosed. All five men had to pull him out and drag him over the ice to solid ground.

Barely 100 yards farther down is the fifth ford. Between the two stands a steep, smooth, projecting rock, its foot washed by the river. It is, however, possible to climb over the rock up small fissures and over slight projections and thus avoid the two detestable fords. Here all the baggage was carried over by the coolies, and I myself climbed over the rocks barefooted; a short way beyond this crag a strong man carried me over smooth flooded ice. Here we had plenty of time for meditation, while the animals were again driven through such deep water that they almost had to swim. All were wet up to the root of the tail and many had water over their backs. The poor creatures stood together closely in a group, with pieces of ice hanging from their flanks and knocking together like castanets. We kindled a fire that the five men who had been in the water might undress, dry themselves, and change every stitch of clothing.

Then we went some distance downstream to a place where the heavy provisions were piled up on the bank, and the poor animals had to enter the icy water before they had got warm again. Here the baggage had to be carried over the water by stark-naked men, who tried with staves in their hands to keep their equilibrium among the treacherous rounded stones in the river-bed. An elderly man was seized with cramp when he was half-way across, and could not move a step. Two bold youths jumped into the water and dragged him to

of *tsamba*. We pitched our camp among the bushes in a bed of sand at Chong-yangal, where I stayed in the year 1902.

We were now alone. Only one man not belonging to the caravan was still with us, Tubges of Shyok, who had charge of our sheep during the early days of our journey, especially at the fords. In the evening I had a conversation with Abdul Kerim, Kutus, and Gulam. I now told them that I would not travel to Khotan by the ordinary road, because I knew it already. We would strike more to the east, and the sooner we came up on to the plateau the better. They replied that Tubges knew the country well. He was called in to the consultation. What if we went through the Chang-chenmo valley to Pamzal and the Lanak-la? "No," he answered, "that is impossible; one can go as far as Oro-rotse, but there the valley becomes as narrow as a corridor, and ice cascades and boulders cover the bottom of the valley. Animals cannot get through even without loads." It was then evident that we must continue up the Shyok valley and watch for an opportunity of diverging eastwards.

So on the 7th we went on between grand mountain gables, silent and solemn, like Egyptian pyramids, like cathedrals and fortress towers. Between them detritus cones descend to the valley floor, where their bases are eroded by the high water of the summer flood and cut off in perpendicular walls. It must be a magnificent spectacle when the turbid thundering water rolls down from the melting snow of the Karakorum and fills all the valley, making its way with tremendous force to the Indus. An enormous block of perhaps 70,000 cubic feet has fallen down; it has cracked in falling, as though a giant had split it with his axe; one fancies one can see the gap it has left on the heights above. Four times the path crosses the stream, and the rather narrow opening of the Chang-chenmo valley is left on the right. We encamped among the dunes of Kaptar-khane. In the night the temperature fell to 2.5°.

The way is terribly trying, nothing but detritus and blocks of grey granite, against which the horses wear out their shoes. Again we crossed the river twice and set up our tents in the

with glittering ice, but the main stream, now much smaller, was nearly free. At the camp at Charvak a spring brook dashed down the rocks in a tinkling cascade, though the cold did all it could to silence it. The animals were driven up the slopes where the grass was better. A huge fire was lit when the day declined and a narrow sickle of a moon stood in the sky. Where the animals were driven up, there was a thundering fall of stones in the night, and some blocks rolled down and lay among our tents. It was a dangerous place.

We had a cold march on the way to Yulgunluk. When thick snow-clouds cover the sky, the wind blows in the traveller's face, and the temperature at one o'clock is 14.9°, one feels the cold dreadfully, and has to tie a thick neckcloth over the face. The valley is lifeless and deserted. Hitherto we had only seen a hare, an eagle, and a raven; the last followed us from camp to camp. Six times we crossed the stream; the brown puppy was carried over, but the yellow dog found his way across—he howled piteously whenever he had to go into the cold water.

In Yulgunluk also, at a height of 13,455 feet, we encamped a day. Now the thermometer fell in the night to -6.2°. This was the last really pleasant and agreeable oasis we came across. During the day of rest we heard the horses neighing with satisfaction on the pastures and the sheep bleating. The loads of provender were already smaller, so we could load four horses with good knotty firewood. On the right side of the valley rose a snowy mountain. As early as two o'clock the sun disappeared, but it lit up the snow long after the valley lay in deep shadow; the sky was blue and cloudless. In the evening the men sang at the fire just the same melodies as their predecessors. The winter days are short, but they seem endlessly long to one tortured by the uncertainty of his cherished hopes. By eight o'clock the camp is quiet, and at nine Gulam brings in the last brazier after I have read the meteorological instruments. How I long to get out of this confined valley on to the plateau country! Here we are marching north-north-west, and I ought to be going east and

CHAPTER LVI

UP TO THE HEIGHTS OF DAPSANG

Heavy clouds and piercingly cold wind increased the difficulty of our march on December 14 up the valley. We saw two bales of goods, sewed up in linen and with the stamp of a Turkestan firm, lying on the ground, as though they had fallen from a dying horse, the carcase of which we had passed. Higher up two more. They contained silken materials from Khotan. So far the caravans come with failing strength after excessive exertions on the pass. They are like ships which must throw their cargo overboard when they begin to sink. At Köteklik also we found passable grass and firewood. Gulam is a capital cook; he prepares me the most delicate cutlets and rissoles, and for a change gives me chickens and eggs.

On the 15th there is little water in the valley; it runs under rubbish, but farther up the river is again fresh and clear. We frequently pass the remains of unfortunate caravans—dead horses, bales of goods, and pack-saddles from which the hay has been removed to save the life of a dying horse. We travel west-north-westwards, and therefore ever farther from our goal. But at length we come to a valley which will lead us in the right direction. We leave the Sasser valley to the left and enter a valley portal full of treacherous ice, often as thin as skin. We wait till our scouts have tried the ice, which they declare to be impassable. Tubges, however, finds another, longer way, over steep hills, and at their foot we pitch our camp.

Next morning we went over a steep spur of porphyry to

was an addition to the Puppy family. Four small puppies had again come into the world. They had waited for the very coldest night we had yet experienced. Gulam had contrived a cage of frieze rugs in which Puppy lay, licking her young ones. Two of the tiny animals were of the female, two of the male sex; the former were drowned, for we thought that the others would grow stronger if they monopolized all the milk and heat that would otherwise have been divided among four. I sat by the hutch and studied the interesting group till I was so stiff with cold that I could hardly walk back to my tent. Next morning the tiny curs were going on splendidly; one of them whined in quite the orthodox fashion, and no doubt thought what a grim cold country fate had launched him into. We determined to take good care of them, for they would be pleasant companions for me. Up here they would at any rate be immune from the sickness which had carried off their elder sisters. Kunchuk had to carry them against his bare skin to keep them warm. Half-way Mamma Puppy was allowed to occupy herself for a while with her little ones, though these did not seem quite to understand the milk business.

We had a bad march on December 17. No shouts of encouragement were heard, but the caravan moved on slowly and apathetically. Within half an hour our feet were benumbed and lost all feeling. I wound the ends of my *bashlik* like a visor several times round my face up to the eyes, but the breath turned it into a thick crust of ice which froze to my moustache and beard, which I had allowed to grow since leaving Gartok to suit my intended Mohammedan disguise. All the men put on their furs. Dust and soil flew about, and our faces had a singular appearance.

At a place where a Yarkand caravan was encamped, we turned to the right up a very narrow valley, in which the floor, covered with bright milky-white ice, looked like a marble pavement between the rocky walls. Fortunately the Yarkand men had strewn sand over the ice, but still it did not prevent several of our animals from falling, so that they had to be loaded again.

When we at length camped in Long the temperature was at

step we should have been lost beyond recovery. The landscape was magnificent, but it could not be properly enjoyed when the temperature about one o'clock was only 0.3°. And then again we went down headlong to the valley bottom, where we passed over a natural bridge of rock improved by the hand of man. Our direction had been east, but now we diverged more and more to the north and north-west.

The snow becomes deeper, the sun sinks, the shadows creep up the reddish-yellow hills, the wind is stronger, and one thinks: If this lasts much longer I shall freeze. At last we halt at the foot of a terrace on the right side of the valley, where the sheep are driven into a cave to keep them warm in the night. I slip down from the saddle with all my limbs numbed, and long for a fire. Not a trace of organic life was to be seen at camp No. 283. The horses and mules were tethered so that they stood in a close pack.

At this unlucky camp I made the first discovery on this new journey through Tibet. Abdul Kerim came to me at the fire and said:

"Sahib, we have barley for eight to ten days more; but in that time we shall reach Shahidulla, where we can get everything."

"Eight to ten days! Are you mad? Did you not obey my orders? Did I not tell you expressly to take barley for $2\frac{1}{2}$ months?"

"I brought a supply with me which was enough for the journey to Khotan."

"Did I not tell you that I was not going to Khotan by the ordinary route, but by roundabout ways which would demand at least two months?"

"Yes, Sahib, I have acted wrongly," answered the old man, and began to sob. Abdul Kerim was an honest man, but he was stupid, and had not the great experience of Muhamed Isa.

"You are caravan bashi, and the duty of a caravan leader is to see that there is sufficient provender for the journey. When the ten days are over, our animals will starve. What do you mean to do then?"

west. Even if we had to sacrifice everything and creep on all fours to the nearest tent, I would not give in: I would not depart a hair's breadth from the original plan.

Night came with a clear sky, twinkling stars, and sharp frost; by nine o'clock the temperature was down to −20.4°. The animals stood quietly crowded together to keep themselves warm. When I awoke occasionally I did not hear them, and they might have vanished. The minimum was reached at −31.2°. When I was awakened, Kutus had been out on the prowl into a broad valley, coming in from the east, and had found a road which, as far as he could see, was excellent. We had still two days' journey from camp No. 283 to the dreaded Karakorum pass, which I wished to avoid. If we ascended the side valley eastwards, we should soon arrive at the main crest of the Karakorum range and be spared two days' journey. I resolved to try it.

So we travelled on December 20 to the east-north-east over crunching snow. The valley looked very promising, especially as old horse tracks could be seen in some places. In the middle of the valley was the bed of a brook covered over with smooth, treacherous ice, but elsewhere there was nothing but detritus. After we had passed a hill thickly overgrown with *burtse* tufts, all vegetation ceased. At one o'clock the temperature was −5.8°. My beard was white with rime, my face-cloth turned into a mass of ice, and all the animals were white. For hours we slowly mounted upwards. In some places the valley was so contracted that it was only 2 yards broad. The best of the day was over when the caravan suddenly came to a halt. All was quiet in the front, and I waited with Kutus for whatever was to happen.

After a time came Abdul Kerim, much cast down, with the news that the valley was impassable at two places. I went to look. The first barrier of rocks might be forced, but the second was worse. We could certainly have dragged the baggage over the ice between and under the blocks, but there was no passage for the animals. Should we try to make a road along which the animals could be helped over the blocks by

had not gone far when we saw Muhamed Isa's white Shigatse horse lying frozen stiff in the snow. He had been in a wretched state for some days, and the last hardships had been too much for him. Worn-out and emaciated he really needed a long, long rest.

After a while we passed the valley junction and the unlucky camp No. 283, and were again on the great caravan route, the road of dead horses. Four lay in a ravine quite close together, as though they did not wish to part even in death. A large dapple-grey showed no change, but another horse looked as if it were stuffed, and a third, with its outstretched legs, resembled an overturned gymnasium horse. Some were nearly covered with snow, and others had fallen in a curious cramped position, but most of them lay as though death had surprised them when they were composing themselves to rest after violent exertion. Nearly all were hollow: the hide was stretched over the back-bone and ribs, and they looked intact from the back, but on the other side it could be seen that they were only empty, dry skeletons, hard as iron, which rattled when the yellow dog, who had nothing else to eat on the way, pulled them about. The dogs barked at the first carcases, but soon they became familiar with the sight of them. What sufferings and what desperate struggles for life these dreary mountains must have witnessed in the course of time! Lying awake at night one fancies one hears the sighs of worn-out pack animals and their laboured breathing as they patiently go towards their end, and sees an endless parade of veterans condemned to die who can endure no more in the service of cruel man. When the dogs bark outside in the silent night they seem to bark at ghosts and apparitions who try with hesitating steps to make their way out of the snowfields that hold them fast, and intervene between them and the juicy meadows of Ladak. If any road in the world deserves the name "Via dolorosa," it is the caravan road over the Karakorum Pass connecting Eastern Turkestan with India. Like an enormous bridge of sighs it spans with its airy arches the highest mountain-land of Asia and of the world.

I often heard this melodious hymn again in days of hardship, and it always affected me painfully. Not as the reproachful warning clang of church bells ringing for service, when I pass a church door without going in, but because the men sang the hymn only when they were out of spirits and considered our position desperate. It seemed as though they would remind me that defeat awaited me, and that this time I had aimed too high.

granite and snowstorms of Chang-tang. They said nothing, however, but silently and patiently followed in my footsteps. It was not easy to lead the way, for the country was covered with deep snow. I directed Kutus, and he went before my horse to test the depth. The ground was quite level, but contained hollows where the snow lay 3 to 6 feet deep; and the crust was exceedingly treacherous, for sometimes it broke, and I was thrown out of the saddle, while the horse plunged and floundered like a dolphin, and was almost suffocated in the fine dry snow. We therefore turned back to try another direction.

Lobsang, who was always on the alert when we were in a critical situation, was already looking for a better way. But we must in any case cross the valley, and the men tramped out a furrow in the snow, through which the animals were led one at a time. The horses managed best, while the mules often fell and caused long delays. How far would this snow extend? It checked our progress and concealed any wretched pasture that might exist in some ravine. We crawled on like snails. I went on foot, and my skin coat felt as heavy as lead. But after several hours of hard toil we reached the terrace skirting the right side of the valley, where the snow was thinner and we made more progress.

Camp No. 287 was in the most desolate spot I can remember in all my travels, except the sandy sea of the Taklamakan desert. Behind us our trail wound through the white snow and in front all was snow. The animals were tethered close together, and they had a feed of corn in the evening.

After the day's work was over I lighted two candles—usually I had but one—and set up the portraits of my family on a box, as I had often done before on Christmas Eves in Asia. At half-past eight o'clock the moon rose gloriously over the mountains to the east-north-east, and at nine the thermometer had sunk to $-16.8°$. I could not get the temperature above $-4°$ in my tent, and my hands were so benumbed that I could not hold a book, but had to crawl into bed, which was

singing and whistling as he watched the animals. I took to him most, perhaps because he was a Tibetan; but I liked them all, for they were capital fellows. In the evening they sang hymns to Allah, knowing that our situation was exceedingly critical.

Next day we started early, and I rode at the head of the caravan. We all had severe headaches, but the height was enormous (17,644 feet). We had marched little more than a mile when we found sparse grass in a slight hollow on the northern slopes. That was a Christmas box. Here we pitched our camp. The animals ran up to the pasture with their loads on. How they ate! It was a pleasure to see them. Suen cut ridiculous capers between the tents. The men were in high spirits. I heard no more hymns to Allah, but the caravan bashi, who seemed to think he was in some degree responsible for the spiritual welfare of all the Mohammedans, usually read every evening at sunset one of the five daily prayers. Our supply of fuel was at an end, but Lobsang found a hard moss which burned for a long time and gave out plenty of heat. Now I perceived that when we should some time part, I should miss Lobsang most.

On December 28, leaden clouds lay over the earth, and therefore the cold was less severe. We continued our course eastwards, and marched slowly till we came to a spring, which at the orifice had a temperature of 33.6°. The water felt quite warm; it formed large cakes of ice in the flat valley, which looked from a distance like a lake. While the men set up the tents here, Puppy, as usual, took charge of her young ones in a folded piece of felt. One of them had a white spot on the forehead and was my especial favourite, for he never whined unnecessarily. To-day he had opened his eyes and given a short glance at the cold inhospitable world around him. However, before my tent was ready, he died quite suddenly, and was buried under some stones that the yellow dog might not eat him up. Mamma Puppy looked for him, but soon contented herself with the last of the four. We would do all we could to keep this little creature.

be any other river but the upper course of the Karakash Darya; in its lower valley on the Khotan Darya I had many years before almost lost my life. Now the question was whether we should go up or down, and we decided to devote the last day of the year to finding out which was the better road, sending out Abdullah to reconnoitre south-eastwards, Tubges north-eastwards. As in any case we should have to cross the ice sheet, a path was sanded.

We packed the 6000 rupees Colonel Dunlop Smith had sent from India in two sacks, which were lighter than the wooden boxes, and these were to be used as firewood some time when all else failed. At every camp our baggage became lighter, as our provisions diminished, and I threw away one book after another after I had read them. I had received from home the numbers of a Swedish journal for half a year, and these were very useful in lighting our camp-fires. We had still nine sheep left, but the time was fast approaching when our meat supply would come to an end, for we could hardly reckon on finding game so soon.

New Year's Day 1908 was bright and sunny—a good omen as regarded the dark riddles this year concealed. The two scouts returned with the same report: that there were no obstacles in the way; and I let them discuss the question themselves, and decide which way was the best. They chose Abdullah's route, which led up the valley south-eastwards. The road here was excellent. At the mouth of the valley we found a couple of small round stone walls, which, however, might very well have been a hundred years old. The sight of a dead yak had an enlivening effect on us, contradictory as it may sound. Higher we mounted to where a lofty snow mountain with glaciers could be seen at the end of the valley. Then we stopped, and scouts were sent forwards. They declared that the way was impassable, and voted that Abdullah should be thrashed. But as such measures would have been of no use to us in our difficulty he got off with a good scolding. He admitted that he had not been so far up as we were now, yet on his return he had asked for, and been given, a bit of

which delayed our march and told on our strength. As long as the animals kept up we had nothing to complain of. I was glad of every day that brought us a little nearer to spring and out of the winter's cold. It penetrated through everything. My feet had no feeling in them. Gulam rubbed them and massaged me in the evening over the fire, but could not bring them to life. The ink was turned into a lump of ice and had to be thawed before the fire; when I wrote I had to bend over the brazier, and still the ink congealed in the pen and froze on the paper. Singularly enough I have still an unquenchable desire for ice-cold water and prefer it to warm tea, but the water we usually get is far from pleasant. It is generally Tubges who takes a spade and fills an empty sack with snow, and then melts it in a kettle. Gulam tries to persuade me to drink tea, and cannot understand how it is that I am not sick of water. It is no use being thirsty in the night: a cup of water standing near the brazier is frozen to the bottom in a quarter of an hour.

After a temperature of − 28° and a stormy night, which drove the animals to seek shelter in the men's tent, we crossed the broad valley up to the next pass. We left a lofty snow-covered mountain to the south. At the foot of a hill a wild yak was musing. When he saw our dark train against the white snow he made straight towards us, but before long he took his way through the valley and dashed in wild flight to the north, followed by our two dogs. It was very encouraging to find something living in this God-forgotten wilderness; for now we had lost even the raven.

It was a steep and slow ascent up to the pass, which had a height of 18,005 feet. We were surprised to find that it was a snow limit, for east of the pass there was no snow at all. As we descended the other side along a broad, open sandy valley we had to be careful that we did not find ourselves without water in the evening. Far to the south appeared an ice sheet, but it lay too far out of our course. We therefore filled two sacks with snow from the last drift, encamped where thin tufts afforded fuel, and sent five men

when I do. The whelp we call Black Puppy amuses me immensely. He has begun to take notice of the world and the life around him. When the big dogs bark outside the tent, he turns his head and gives a feeble growl. When his mother leaves him on the mat in the cold, he makes an attempt at a bark and seems to think it strange. He wanders about the tent, though he is still so unsteady on his legs that he constantly topples over. He has already conceived a highly salutary respect for the brazier, and sniffs and shakes his head when he chances to come too near it. Sometimes it happens that he misses his mother in the night, when there may be as many as 54 degrees of frost in the tent; but his complaining squeal awakens me, and I take him under the furs—an attention he is very fond of. One morning he awakened me by crawling of his own accord on to my pillow and trying to get into my bed. After that I felt no concern about his future; he must learn how to make his way in life, and that he was doing.

On the 8th we went over a small pass 17,569 feet high. A horse and a mule perished on the way. Camp 299 was pitched where the first pasture was found, in a valley on the other side (16,946 feet). There was no water, but we had four sacks of ice. Seven sheep were left, and the raven had also come again.

The aim of our next day's journey was to find water for the animals. My trusty white Ladaki horse, which I always rode, used to get my washing water every morning, and I used no soap that I might not spoil it for him. From a small rise in the ground we were able to enjoy the view I had so longed for—the great open plain we had crossed in the autumn of 1906. To the east-south-east I easily recognized the spur we passed then, and we could not be more than two days' march from the Aksai-chin lake. I had now followed for several days much the same route as Crosby, and at the lake I should cross my own route of 1906, after which we should go down towards the Arport-tso, and, as last year, intersect the paths of Bower, Deasy, Rawling, and Zugmeyer.

The whole country lay under a vault of dense clouds.

CHAPTER LVIII

FORTY DEGREES BELOW ZERO

WITH fresh blocks of ice in our sacks we set out on January 10 straight towards the projection at the foot of which camp 8 had been pitched, and where I knew that the grass was good. The great level barren plain stretched between us and the spot, and we had 15 miles to cover. The wind was boisterous, and we were frozen through in a minute. In the lee of the caravan, which went in advance, lay a cloud of dust like smoke. The yellow hue of the grass could be seen from a distance, and the sight so refreshed my men that they began to sing on the march. The animals understood that they were coming to good pasturage, and quickened their pace without any shouts from the men. The tents were set up in the same place as last year, and here I closed my long circuitous route through Tibet. It was with a melancholy feeling I saw this place again, where Muhamed Isa had raised his tall cairn. Now we had avoided all dangers from Rudok, and we minded little that England and Russia had promised each other not to let a European into Tibet for three years. The height here was 16,198 feet.

For several days I had spoken of this place with its good pasturage, and when we broke up our camp on the 11th I was able to promise my men a still better camp for the next night. They were astonished that I was so much at home in these dreary regions. The track of the great caravan of 1906 was blown away by the passage of many storms, but the Aksai-chin lake soon came into sight, its surface looking grey and dismal

blue sky. Abdul Kerim and all the other Mohammedans waited on me, in a tragi-comical procession, with dried apricots and almonds, and a simultaneous cry of "Aid mubarek," or "A blessed Festival." One of the festivals of Islam fell on this day. Exceedingly comical was the procession of the four Lamaists, who came up as the others retired; and Lobsang, who led them, took off his cap and scratched his head in Tibetan fashion, but did not put out his tongue—he had no doubt learned in Leh that this performance was not pleasing to a European. I gave them 10 rupees each and handed the caravan bashi a watch, which he was to wind up well every evening to be sure of the time.

On we marched again, moving slowly, for the ground rose. We proceeded like a funeral procession, and Suen was the parson. There was no longer reason to fear thirst, for half the country was covered with snow. But every mile caused us a struggle, and it was long before we came to the cliff we were making for. We left a huge snowy massive on the right hand.

Next day's march took us over a flat saddle to a small side valley where there was some grass. The temperature had been down to −29.9°, and I could not by any means get life into my feet. Sometimes they ached, sometimes there was an uncomfortable pricking in my toes, and then again they lost all feeling. During the day's rest we allowed ourselves in camp 306 Tubges shot an antelope and an Ovis Ammon, a feat which prolonged the lives of our last two sheep. In the evening the men were cheerful and hopeful as they sat around the flesh-pot.

Gulam Razul had presented me with six bottles of whisky, which, sewed up in thick felt, had been brought all the way; for Ladakis maintain that when a mule shows signs of exhaustion and weakness it can be cured by giving it whisky or other spirits. But the bottles were heavy, so three of them were emptied and set up as a memorial on some stones. Perhaps some time or other they may be found by another traveller. The other three were kept.

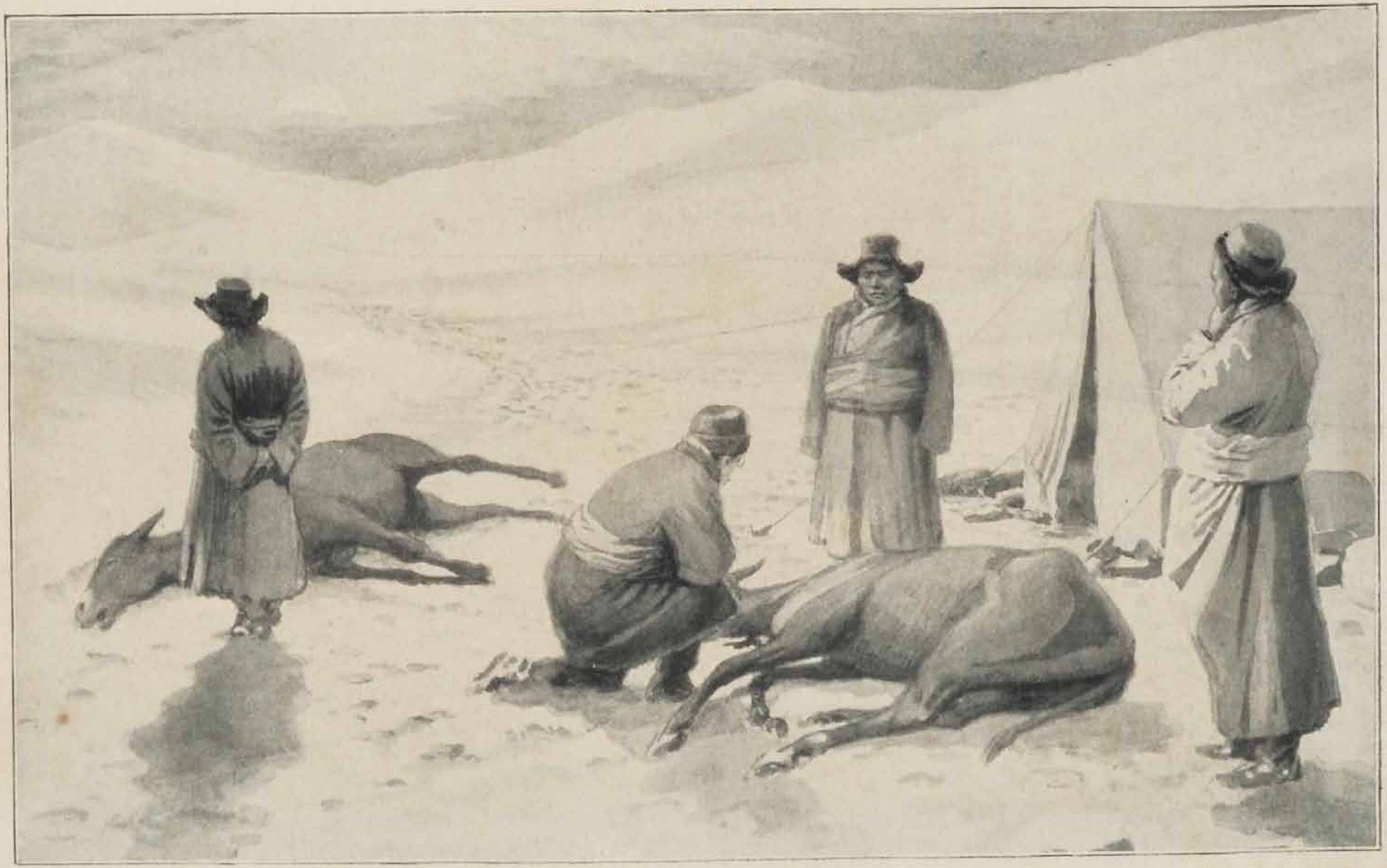
uninterrupted view over another longitudinal valley, to the south of the former. There lay a contracted salt lake. At almost every camp, as on the former journey, I drew a panorama of the surroundings, and tried sometimes to paint small water-colour drawings. Then I had to sit in the opening of the tent and hold the block over the fire to prevent the brush freezing into a lump of ice. But the sky, which should have been of an even blue or grey tone, usually turned into a film of ice with strange stars and crystals.

In camp 310 we also remained a day, for the pasture was better than we had found for a long time. The grass grew in sand on the shore of a small freshwater lake with a free opening, where at length the animals got a good drink after having had to quench their thirst with snow. We had travelled 188 miles since Christmas Eve, or about 6½ miles a day on an average—a terribly slow pace. Now we had had a furious storm for three days, and here yellow whirls of sand flew over the ice and the wind moaned and rustled through the grass. Abdul Kerim sewed together a long Mohammedan coat for me, which I was to wear under my fur when I assumed my disguise.

On January 24 the whole country was covered with dazzling snow and the sun shone, but a stormy blast drove the fine snow particles in streaks over the land, and a roaring sound was heard. Antelopes careered lightly over the ground, dark against the white snow. A mule died on the way; not even Tibetan mules can bear this climate. I was benumbed and half-dead with cold before I reached the camp.

After a temperature of −21.3° the neighbourhood was enveloped in semi-darkness by heavy clouds. The jagged mountains to the south reminded me of a squadron of armoured vessels at gunnery practice in rainy weather. Their grey outlines peeped out from the low clouds. The valley was about 6 miles broad. Towards the east the snow lay less thickly, and finally only the footprints of wild animals were filled with snow, like a string of pearls in the dark ground.

As I turn over the leaves of my diary of this terrible



LOST BY AND RECOVERY.

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wind. But the snow affords us an excellent path. Lobsang leads the way, guiding us in many a wind, but we get across and come to the farther shore at the foot of a cliff.

Worse followed, for the rocky point fell straight down to the lake on its eastern side, and here we had slippery ice swept clear of snow which we sanded. One horse or mule after another slipped and fell. Some of them made no attempt to get up again, but were dragged over the ice to firm ground, where their loads were put on again. Some fell with a heavy thud on the hard treacherous ice. We had to double a whole series of points in this way till we came to one where further progress was impossible, for at its foot issued forth springs which produced large openings in the ice. There icy-cold waves beat with a sharp sound against the edges of the ice under the lash of the wind, which drove continually clouds of snow dancing like elves over the dark green field of ice. We had to struggle up over steep slopes till at last we reached, thoroughly tired out, an inlet where a few leaves of grass grew. We had left a mule on the ice, and two men went back and gave it a drop of whisky so that it could come on to the camp. But my brown horse from Shigatse, which had so often carried me up to the east gate of Tashi-lunpo, remained behind for good. It is sad and depressing when a veteran dies.

Arport-tso lies at a height of 17,382 feet. The water, which was drawn from an opening in the ice, was quite potable. There was a high pass in front of us to the south-east, but we could not reach it in one day, and we camped on the plain at the south-east of the lake where Rawling had once stayed. It was little more than a mile thither, but the grass was good and the animals needed nourishment. It snowed thickly all day. It was warm and comfortable under cover, and we pitied the poor animals which were out grazing in the cold. The small puppy had grown so much that he could wander alone between the tents watching for an opportunity to steal meat. A sheep was slaughtered.

At night the cold was more severe again, and the

would follow slowly in the track of the caravan. Was it now the turn of the men after half the caravan had been lost? Quite overcome with fatigue they hobbled at twilight into camp.

Abdul Kerim came into my tent very cast down and asked if we should fall in with nomads within ten days, for otherwise he considered our condition desperate. In truth, I could give him no consolation, but could only tell him that we must go on as long as there was a single mule left, and then try to drag ourselves along to the nomads with as much food as we could carry. Now we thought no longer of pursuers behind, or of dangers before us, but only wished to preserve our lives and come to country where we could find means of subsistence. Behind us the snow obliterated our tracks, and the future awaited us with its impenetrable secrets.

and lean forwards. Only the nearest mules are plainly visible, the fifth is indistinct, and those at the front are seen only as slight shadows amidst the universal whiteness. I cannot catch a glimpse of the guides. Thus the troop passes on a few steps till it comes to the next block, and when the mule immediately in front of me moves on again it is only to plunge into a hollow filled with snow, where two men wait to keep up its load. The direction is now east and the ground rises. A few such days and the caravan will be lost.

At length we come to a low pass (18,268 feet high). Even at sea-level such a journey would be hard enough, but how much worse it is in a country which lies some hundreds of feet higher than Mont Blanc, and where there is nothing but granite. On the eastern side of the saddle the snow lay 3 feet deep in some places, and it seemed as though we should be stuck fast in the snowdrifts; and what had we to expect then? For the provender was coming to an end, and we must go on if we would find pasture. Now we went gently down, the snow became a little less deep, and we came to an expansion of the valley where there were stretches of ground swept bare by the blast. On the right appeared a slope where Abdul Karim thought he saw blades of grass sticking up out of the snow, and he asked permission to camp. It was difficult to set up the tents that evening. At dusk the two sick men came up, their faces blue and swollen.

A miserable camp! The storm increased to a hurricane, and nothing could be heard but its howling. When I looked out of my tent I could see nothing that was not white, and there was no difference between the ground, the mountains, and the sky—all being alike white. Not even the men's tent could be distinguished in the driving snow. The fine particles penetrated into the tent and covered everything with a white powder. It was impossible to look for fuel, and at three o'clock the temperature in the tent was 1.4°. I could see nothing living outside, and I might have been quite alone in this wilderness.

My trusty Gulam comes, however, at length with fire, for

cooking utensils and the provision boxes were burned, and all the baggage was henceforth carried in sacks. By this means the loads were made lighter and more convenient, though there was more trouble in turning everything out of a sack when anything was wanted from the bottom.

In the afternoon there was a short break in the snowstorm. Beyond the white limits of the valley was seen to the south-east the large lake Shemen-tso, with a dark purple sky above it, presaging more snow. I took bearings of the next day's route, and it was well I did so, for soon the snow began to fall again unusually thickly. It snowed all day and all night, and a swishing sound was heard as the snowflakes were driven by the wind against the canvas of the tent and from time to time slipped down. In the morning of February 1 piles of snow lay round the tents. The minimum temperature was only −0.8°, and it felt quite pleasant. We loaded our weary hungry pack animals and marched slowly south-eastwards. The gale blew from the south, and the snow pelted on to our faces.

Silently and heavily the fainting troop moved on towards the lake. All the men's beards and moustaches were white with rime, and we seemed all to have turned grey in a night. Abdul Kerim walked in front with his staff, but he took a wrong direction, and I chose another leader. In some places we were nearly suffocated in the snow, and the crestfallen men stood in the drifts, at a loss what to do. But we plunged and floundered on a bit, and then stood still; then a little bit farther. The pass over which we had made our way the previous day was no doubt blocked by snow. Had we reached it two days later we should never have forced a way over it. Now our retreat was cut off, and we must seek safety southwards. It was some consolation to know that we had burned our ships.

Fortunately the ground sloped down, and as we toiled on hour after hour the snow diminished and travelling became easier. But the storm, which had now raged for a fortnight, showed no signs of abatement. Down on the western flat by

CHAPTER LX

DEATH OF THE LAST VETERAN

STUDDED with twinkling stars the winter sky stretched its dark-blue canopy over our lonesome camp, and 50 degrees of frost foretold a clear day. On February 4 not a cloud hovered over the mountains, and this plateau, abandoned by gods and men, which had lately been buried under the white shroud of winter, was again illumined by bright sunlight. Sad news was brought me in the morning: a horse and a mule lay dead beside the tents. With the seventeen remaining animals we continued our journey along the irregular northern shore of the Shemen-tso (16,266 feet). The quantity of snow became less, and at camp 320 the gravelly ground was almost bare. The view over the lake was grand. Captain Rawling's map of this district is executed with great accuracy.

On February 5, also, we encamped on the shore of the great lake, having followed the curves of its bays and capes. A mule died on the way. Though we had burned all we could dispense with, yet the loads were much too heavy for the surviving animals. A big strong mule always led the van, at the heels of Gulam; it carried at least two ordinary loads, and yet was fat and fresh. There was no sign of human beings. A flock of jackdaws were perched on a crag. At the camp the provisions were inspected, and we decided to relinquish three heavy sacks of rice. The rice was to be given on the following days, mixed with parched meal and water, to the animals. Of my provisions, only two boxes of tinned meat, some jam and biscuits, were left. We had not

fast in a snare laid in an antelope track, where also we noticed fresh footprints of two men. We were evidently not far from winter hunters, who perhaps had already caught sight of us. Perhaps they had seen me, the only one riding in European dress. Perhaps it was too late to disguise myself. All my plans would then be spoiled, and all the labours of the winter lost.

But at any rate we had now fresh meat. Let us examine the ingenious trap in which the game is caught. Plates of rib bones of antelopes are firmly fixed in a ring of hard twisted vegetable fibres, which form a funnel with the points in a ditch. The antelope is enticed into the trap by a row of small cairns, and tramps about in the funnel, the plates giving way, but forming immovable impediments when he attempts to draw his hoofs out. But the snare must be held secure if it is to have the desired effect. A rope as thick as a finger is made fast in the bottom of the ditch, which is filled with water, and after freezing becomes as hard as stone. The free end of the rope forms a noose above the ring of fibres, which tightens when the animal first attempts to lift his leg and holds down the funnel of ribs. The more the poor animal jumps about, the faster is the hold of the twisted snare.

The victim was slain; the dogs ate their fill of the entrails, and the meat made ordinary loads for four men. Then we went on. At the mouth of a valley to the south were seen a sheepfold and two black specks we took for stones. Beyond a grass-grown mound we found a pool of fresh water, and we pitched the camp near it. It was not long before the Ladakis were sitting round a fire and roasting pieces of delicate, much-appreciated meat.

Now, when we were evidently in the neighbourhood of human beings, it was time for me to give directions to my people. All were summoned to my tent. I told them that we should succeed in crossing the forbidden land only by craftiness and cautiousness, and that I had made the great sacrifices which they had witnessed only to see regions where no Sahib had ever been. If our scheme were to be successful,

animals. During their journey from Yildan their tents and goods were carried by sheep. They had arrived two months before, and intended to stay half a month more. The day before they had just been to look at their antelope trap, when they were alarmed at the sight of the caravan. They took it for granted that only robbers could be travelling in this district, which lay outside the haunts of honest and honourable men. The antelope had, then, been not more than an hour in the trap. Abdul Kerim paid 3 rupees for it, 3 for a sheep, and 1 for milk and butter. We could get more milk early in the morning, but we should have to send for it, for the nomads dared not come to our tents. We might have kept the antelope without compensation, for we were wayfarers and had a right to take what we found. In answer to their inquiry who we were, Abdul Kerim repeated the yarn he had just learned. The country about camp 324 is called Riochung. In one of the tents lay the hides and meat of nine antelopes. The people lived almost exclusively on the game they caught in their snares.

So far we had been fortunate. With provisions for twenty-one days instead of for seventy-five, we had struggled up to the Karakorum instead of finding a passage to the east; we had been persecuted by raging storms, biting cold, and deep snow all the way, and yet we had lighted on the first men. They were like a rock in the ocean, and now again we were to venture over the raging waves. This day found us only a few miles up a gently sloping valley filled with ice. Little Puppy was let loose and had to look after himself a bit. But he was soon tired, and lay down till Kunchuk fetched him.

February 10. The valley bottom is full of ice sheets, which we often cross after they have been strewn with sand. We wander through a labyrinth of clay hills. In an expansion to the left are seen three stone cabins and some *mani* heaps; here is the gold placer which Rawling calls Rungma-tok, and the hunters we saw yesterday Getsa-rung. The gold-diggers come hither only in summer. The camp to-day, No. 326, is in an excellent spot, with a sandy soil, plenty of fuel, and an

removed, and they could grow potatoes under their nails. My desire was to become like them as soon as possible, that I might escape the notice of the Tibetans.

February 14. Temperature −22.9°. Again we are a few miles nearer our destination and a day nearer spring. Our progress is slow, but we must be glad that we can get along at all. Camp 329 is in the valley leading to the pass, which we have taken several days to reach. A mule is fatigued and is relieved of his load. Some grass is again found, and all the animals go out to graze, except my small Ladaki, which stands beside my tent with drooping head and icicles under his eyes. He has been weeping, knowing well that he will never be able to cross over the pass and that we shall leave him. I sit beside him for several hours, patting and stroking him, and trying to induce him to eat lumps of meal mixed with rice. He revives again and goes slowly after his comrades.

February 15. Temperature −22.5°. A hard, toilsome day. Through ice and snow among sharp detritus we march up the valley. My white horse leads the way of his own accord and I ride in the rear. We keep together for some time, and ascend step by step towards the troublesome pass. But first one and then another lags behind. Among them is my white horse. I stop and whisper in pure Swedish into his ear: "Do not lose courage; put out all your strength and climb the pass, and then you will go down in a few days to fine rich pasture." He raises his head, pricks up his ears, and gazes at me as I go on up to the pass with Kutus and Gulam. Only a couple of lively mules follow my horse and halt where he halts, at every twentieth step.

At last we came up to the flat pass, which attains to the considerable height of 18,553 feet. Here we waited a long time. The large black mule passed first over the snowy threshold of the pass and then the others, till nine baggage animals had gone by and my grey Tikze horse last. Abdul Kerim reported that four animals were thoroughly tired out. I ordered that they should be led step by step even till night if necessary, and he went down to them again. A little later

my European clothes were burned. Felt mats, tools, kitchen utensils, and spare shoes for the horses were thrown away. My small Swedish bag was burned, and all the medicines except the quinine jar were sacrificed; my European toilet necessaries, including my razors, went the same way, and only a piece of soap was kept. All European articles that were not absolutely indispensable were cast into the fire. I tore out of Fröding's poems the leaves I did not know by heart, and left the rest at the camp. The remaining matches were distributed among the men; I kept myself twenty-four boxes, which must suffice until the time when we must use only flint and steel to preserve our incognito.

Cold and sad the night spread its wings over the silent valley where our lonely camp, a picture of desolation, was buried among black cliffs and white snowdrifts, while the stars came out above like lights burning round a bier.

While the lightened loads were being placed on the animals I started on foot followed by two men. One of them, Kutus, walked beside me, and I steadied myself by his shoulder as we floundered through the drifts. The wind blew furiously, and the snow danced in spirals and appeared as white clouds on all the crags and ridges. After a march of about 3 miles we encamped when we came to grass. Snow had to be melted in pots, for the animals had been long without drink. This process did not take so long now that only eleven animals were left.

With tottering steps we continued to the east-south-east on the 17th and 18th, sometimes along valleys, sometimes over open country, and always through deep tiring snow. Camp 333 was barely made ready when a terrible storm burst over us. The sky had been clear, and then all of a sudden the pure blue colour was wiped out by orange clouds of dust which swept up from the south-west. I was sitting in the lee of my tent when in an instant the contents of the brazier were carried away. A heap of wild asses' dung which the men had collected also flew away, and we saw the small round balls dancing up the slopes as though they were racing. A

CHAPTER LXI

THIRTY DAYS OF STORM

On February 19 we had good country for travelling, declining gently to the shore of the Lemchung-tso, which appeared in the distance. I travelled mostly on foot, as I could easily do, for the storm had abated, but, as usual, we were chilled through by the wind, though the temperature rose to 28° at one o'clock. At the foot of some hills in the south we perceived numbers of black spots, which we took for tame yaks. They soon resolved themselves, however, into whole troops of antelopes, which sped in light springs over the plain northwards. Now were often seen signs of the summer visits of the Gertse nomads. We had left Deasy's and Rawling's routes a couple of days behind us, and now found ourselves on the western margin of one of the largest blank spaces in the map of Tibet.

After a grey horse had perished in the night we had only ten animals left, or a fourth of the original caravan. They were fed in the morning with meal and spent tea-leaves in water, which they swallowed with avidity. Our store of provisions would last out barely a month.

We were 6 or 7 miles from the shore of the lake, and on arriving there we encamped close to a cave in which a millstone and a couple of yak hides had been left in the summer. Along the shore ran a path worn by the feet of men. We stayed here a day and sorted out the baggage again. All spare instruments, such as thermometers, measuring tape, eye-glasses, etc., as well as some European garments,

greeted every horse and mule individually. After this civility they followed us all the way, prancing and neighing. They were three-year-old colts which had never carried a saddle or a load—fat, fresh, and nimble-footed, very different from our last three horses. When we encamped they went off to the south and were lost to sight. The storm increased in violence, and our last iron spade and a kettle were carried away by the wind, but were afterwards recovered.

February 23. The thermometer sank to −19.8°. Our last ten animals made a short day's march along the same easy valley. I could perceive no trace of the "Snowy Range" of English maps in the prolongation of this valley. We observed a couple of tents in the mouth of a valley to the north, but we were now in no distress. I lived exclusively on tea, bread, and jam, of which there were still two pots left.

The storm continued next day also. We seldom covered more than 6 or 7 miles. In the past month we had travelled 220 miles, 30 more than in the previous month. During the evening and night the snow pelted on to our tents. I still had my warm comfortable bed, but at a pinch it would also go piecemeal into the fire. Everything that was discarded was burned or buried, lest, if it were left, it might arouse suspicions.

For another day's march we had the advantage of this fine longitudinal valley, which imperceptibly rises to a flat threshold, beyond which we passed a gold placer. The holes from which the auriferous sand is extracted are 3 to 16 feet in diameter, and little more than 3 feet deep. It is evident that some of them have been digged out last summer. A little farther down gold had been searched for some time ago. Folds, stone shelters for marksmen, and stone cairns were to be seen in several places.

Still lower down we came, on the following day, to a third placer, situated where the valley contracts to a trough. Here large sheepfolds and abundant tracks of men were found. The gold is washed out on flat stones in a flume 100 yards long. The valley afterwards contracts to a breadth of 5 yards, and the bottom is mostly filled with ice, here and there forming

people, and owned only 70 sheep and goats, 6 yaks, and 1 dog. The neighbourhood of camp 341 the man called Senes-yung-ringmo, and he said that if we marched south-eastwards we should almost daily meet with nomads from Gertse and Senkor, districts in the south which I had passed through in 1901. They were afraid of our men and would not let them enter the tents. Two fine sheep and a lump of butter were bought, and rescued us from starvation for a time. The hare meat was discarded and given to the dogs.

We made the two sheep carry themselves our newly-acquired store of meat to camp 342; we had no room for extra loads. We mounted slowly to a flat pass. Three tents stood in a side valley and some men came out to look at us, but we passed on without exchanging questions and answers. On February 29 the wind raged furiously all day long. Clouds swept ceaselessly over the country, and at one o'clock the temperature was 22.1°, quite low enough to chill a rider down to the bones and marrow.

In front of us lay a large flat hollow, in the midst of which two small lakes shone white with ice. We slowly approached the isthmus between them. A herd of antelopes took to flight and nearly fell over a lonely wild ass, which looked at them uneasily, but at the last moment they turned off in another direction as though they were afraid of him. On the left, in a deep trough running towards the lake, a flock of sheep was driven along by two shepherds. Wait one moment. Hand me the turban. Gulam wound it round my head, and then I went on foot like the rest. Along the shore a young man was driving six yaks. Abdul Kerim and Gulam went up to him while we set up the tents on the shore (15,200 feet).

After a while they returned with the yak-driver, a boy of fourteen in a large white skin hood. He was terribly frightened, and could with difficulty be persuaded to come to our tents; our intention was that he should guide two of our men to his dwelling. He called the lake Lumbur-ringmo. As my disguise was now complete, I went to look at the boy, who did not seem at all suspicious.

This time Lobsang met with a better reception, as he could present our chief and leader, whom the nomads correctly addressed as *bombo*. The old man introduced himself under the name of Sogbarong Tsering Tundup—Sogbarong is his home in the west, and this name is placed before his own much as Anders Persson i Storgården. The old man invited his guests into his tent, took a couple of sheep's trotters, cut them in pieces with an axe, threw them into the caldron, and offered some broth to Abdul Kerim, saying it was the only tea he had. In the tent were five antelopes cut up, a gun, a knife, and other articles. The old man did not this time express, any suspicions of us, but related that a European with a large caravan had crossed the country to the east more than a year ago. He did not suspect, of course, that that same European was hiding in one of our tents. When the messengers came back they had a fine fat sheep and a can of milk with them.

This day, March 1, the wind was so strong that it was impossible to travel. My tent fell over and was held fast by the load of sand and stones on its folds. Not a trace of the surroundings was visible, and I should have obtained no notion of country on the route. At two o'clock Tsering Tundup and another Tibetan came to return the visit. They emerged from the mist only when they were close at hand, and a couple of men hastened to protect them from the dogs. The visit was a complete surprise, but there was nothing which could excite the least suspicion. My things were crammed into a sack, and I was disguised as usual; indeed, I had now no other clothing to put on. Even if they had come and looked into my tent there would have been no danger.

Our guests had capacious sheepskin coats drawn up above the belt so as to form the usual protruding bag where a large part of their property is stored. They wore hoods of sheepskin and looked like Samoyeds or Chukchis. They stood a while and chatted with our men in the wind, but I did not hear a word, though they were standing only 3 yards from the loop-hole in my tent through which I was watching them. After some hesitation, they went into Abdul Kerim's tent, and then

them, for they had been treated as cruelly as Uncle Tom, but in time they became quite accustomed to their new way of life.

Violent storms prevailed all day and all the following day, on which we passed two black tents. At every camp we had to take the greatest care that no pieces of paper, match-boxes, candle ends, or cigarette stumps were left lying about, for we might be sure that the Tibetans dwelling near would come and search about after we had left the spot. Our route took us over a low pass (16,030 feet). The rocks comprised weathered schists, quartzite, and granite—the last only in detached blocks. On the other side we followed a deeply excavated valley opening out on to a plain, and we were just setting up our tent by a projecting rock when two large black dogs came running towards us barking. Nomads, therefore, were encamping in the neighbourhood, and we must be on our guard. Abdul Kerim, who always showed himself prudent and tactful in delicate negotiations, went off to a tent which stood on the other side of the rock and was inhabited by four Senkor nomads who owned 400 sheep. The chief of them was named Shgoge, and sold us three sheep at 3 rupees a head, some butter and milk. He said that the country here, around camp 345, was called Pankur, and that we were three days' journey from the encampment of the Gertse Pun, or the chief of Gertse. With him, however, we had nothing to do. It was to our interest to avoid as much as possible officials of all kinds, not to approach Gertse or Senkor in the west too closely, and not too near my route of 1906 to the east. We must steer our way through many pitfalls. Just in this district we crossed the meridian of 84° E., and my plan was to travel due south from the Tong-tso right across the large blank space. The continual storms which had done us so much harm, were so far advantageous to us that they enabled us to cross the great wastes without being much noticed. This day all was hazy from the dust, and our neighbours' sheep, which passed my tent in long columns with shepherds and dogs, made a very curious spectacle in the dense mist.

CHAPTER LXII

ADVENTURES OF OURSELVES AND PUPPY IN NAGRONG

On March 6 we made another hop towards our destination. It is difficult to travel over the high plateaus of Tibet in winter, and we could not march more than four hours a day. The morning was clear, but we had not gone far beyond a small lake, with its mantle of ice covered with driftsand and dust, before the storm increased in violence and made me reel in the saddle. The clouds of dust became thicker, the sandspouts were dark reddish-brown at the base, and the gusts tore up furrows in the ground like ploughshares, while frequently spiral forms were seen which could only be produced by cyclonic whirlwinds. On the left hand shimmered a lake, its surface partly white with gypsum and salt, partly streaked brown with driftsand, and with open water only in two places; it was the ghost of a lake which was doomed to disappear.

Two built-up fireplaces served us capitally for a camping-ground on the shore where the grazing was good. On the eastern side of the lake was a brick-red ridge of medium height, which I wished to paint in order to record the effective tones in the dust mist. I waited for the others with Kutus and Gulam, and we had scarcely induced a fire to burn before the storm rose at noon to a hurricane. Now everything vanished—lake, ridge, all except the nearest tufts of grass. The fire was fenced in with stones and clods lest it should be blown away, sand and minute pebbles beat against my dry skin coat, and I had to cover all my face, for the skin smarted

The caravan came to the edge of the ice. It was impossible to sand a path, for the grains would have been swept away. The animals were led across singly, each helped over by several men. For all that a mule fell and gave a fearful wrench to one of its hind legs, and with great difficulty it was helped up to the camp. All of us had grey distorted faces, our eyes ran, full of sand and dust. My lips bled and my teeth were black. March is the worst month, but we had never experienced such bad weather before. What is the use of looking forward to spring when the days are darker as time goes on?

The injured mule had evidently dislocated its leg. It was thrown down and a rope was fastened round its hoof and the end was pulled by the men. When it was at full stretch Lobsang hit the rope hard with a tent-pole in order to set the dislocated joint in place again, but I could not perceive that the operation had any effect. No; the mule was lost to us just when we could ill afford to lose one of our best animals.

And it was lost indeed, for on the morning of March 8 it could not take a step. It was sad to pass the death sentence, and a pitiful sight when the fresh warm blood spurted out in powerful jets and moistened the barren soil. It lay quiet and patiently, and after a few convulsions expired, and was left in solitude when we moved on over the dreary waste.

But before starting I had ascended a hill and looked around. Which was more expedient—to travel north-east or south-west? Both directions lay out of our course. I decided for the south-west, and hastened down to my tent, where Gulam served up breakfast. Brown Puppy and Little Puppy gave me their company to get their share. Little Puppy had grown so much that he could do what he liked with his mother. When I gave her a piece of meat the young one flew upon her and took it away. I had to hold Little Puppy that his mother might eat in peace. When we set out, Puppy and the yellow dog remained behind with the slaughtered mule, finding a convenient point of departure in an open wound in the soft muscles of the neck. There they stood gorging when we started along the ice-belt of the stream towards the south-west.

stood open, and had found in a shed a large quantity of fuel of a kind of shrub the Tibetans call *ombo.* So we waited and waited, expecting to see the caravan emerge from the mist, but when nothing was heard of it Kutus went out to search. It had wandered quite out of its course, and had made a long circuit round the house and tent, for the leaders were convinced that I wished to slip by unnoticed. A horse had fallen, and now we had only two left, and 5 mules out of 40 animals.

The three tents were set up in a line close together, and Abdul Kerim went with Kunchuk to the large tent. We saw through the mist that a man came out to meet them, and that all three went into the tent, and then we waited with our hearts in our mouths. The men returned at dusk with good news. The tent was inhabited by a lonely old Amchi-lama, *i.e.* a monk-doctor, who at the same time looked after the souls of the Nagrong nomads, determined from astrological books the lucky and unlucky days for baptisms and other affairs, and assisted people with the same remedies when they were sick, died, and finally were buried He was from Sera in Lhasa, and had lived three years in Nagrong. The tent was a movable temple, furnished inside with altars, burning butter lamps, and votive bowls, where the hermit performed service —we heard him beating a temple drum at midnight. It belonged, as well as the large house, to the Gertse Pun Bombo, or the chief of the Gertse district, who a few days before had gone off a day's journey to the east, with his flocks, children, and all, but was soon expected back in consequence of a dispute between two of his subjects. Perhaps, after all, it was well we travelled south-west instead of north-east, for we might have fallen into the jaws of the Gertse Pun himself. This potentate comes to Nagrong in late summer and takes up his abode in the stone house, while a hundred nomad tents are set up around and a fair is held.

The old lama had no servants, but every third day a man came to bring him wood. He must find it dull in the long winter evenings, when he hears the storm roaring outside, and silence reigns within around the gods who answer his prayers

do when night came down with its dreadful darkness and its prowling wolves? Were the dogs keeping together, or were they seeking us along different paths, having lost each other? Would Puppy some time find a home with friendly nomads and lead a comfortable life again, or would she come to want and be tied outside a poor tent, and, pining in hopeless sorrow, remember her past life, which, from the time she lapped milk in my room at Srinagar, had been spent in my caravan? I was never to receive an answer to these questions, for the parts she and the yellow dog played in our romance were ended. For the future her life would shape itself differently, but I was never to gain any knowledge of the remaining chapters of her existence. I lay awake at night thinking of her misfortune, and looked every morning to see if perchance she had come back in the night and was lying in her usual corner, and I fancied I heard her trotting outside my tent in the dusk, or thought I could distinguish the profile of a lonely half-starved dog on a mound or crag with its nose up and howling at the storm. For some time I suffered from a delusion, imagining that a shade, the restless soul, the invisible ghost of a dog followed me wherever I went. I felt the presence of an invisible dog which followed me into my tent, and among the Tibetans, and always whined and pleaded for help, and I was worried that I could give no help or consolation to my lost, wandering friend. But soon we had other things to think of, other dogs became my friends, and we were daily entangled in a skein of troubles which must lead to a crisis, and the cares of the past paled before the gravity of the moment.

March 10. Such a day as this is interesting to look back on, but it was hard and cruel as long as it lasted. Before six o'clock I was awakened with the disquieting information that two Tibetans were approaching our tents. I made haste to dress myself and paint my face and hands black with a thin coating. Meanwhile the strangers arrived and were invited into Abdul Kerim's tent, where I heard them talking pleasantly about sheep and money—so they were not spies; our time had not yet come. One of the guests was the brother-in-law, the

distance of 20 yards; chaos surrounded us. We stopped to get our breath and lest we should miss the others, but as soon as they appeared like phantoms in the mist we set off again. I have experienced many sandstorms in Takla-makan and the Lob-nor desert, but hardly any so bad as this was. In Turkestan one simply encamps when a storm comes on, but what is the use of encamping to await the end of a storm which lasts thirty days? We strayed among small dunes, and, though the valley fell in the direction we were travelling, we seemed as though we were mounting to a lofty pass in consequence of the pressure of the storm. The driftsand rattled against my dry, hard coat, which, from the constant friction, became heavily charged with electricity. About every other minute there was a discharge, and I felt uncomfortable and often painful prickings, especially in the soles of the feet, the hands, and knees. At every such discharge the horse pulled up and became nervous. At last, when my grey Tikze horse refused to go farther, and we had quite lost sight of the others, and could not see where we were going, we came to a halt and huddled together with our backs to the wind. The electrical discharges continued even now, but were weaker. If I placed the tip of a finger near Gulam's or Kutus' hand a small electric spark was felt and seen, and both of us felt the shock. The men were exceedingly astonished, and hoped it was not witchcraft.

We sat waiting for three hours, and were prepared for an uncomfortable night. But Kutus came upon the other men just when they were giving up all attempt to find us before night. We encamped among the dunes, and before long all articles which were set out in my tent vanished under a thick layer of sand.

On the morning of the 11th the storm had somewhat abated; and, wearied and stiff after our experiences of the previous night, we continued our journey southwards and encamped at a deserted sheepfold. By nine o'clock compact sandspouts twisted slowly over the plain like spectres, so the storm was again at its usual height. We had *tsamba* for only

CHAPTER LXIII

THROUGH THE HIGHLANDS OF BONGBA

WHEN I awake to another day of uncertain fortune and adventures life seems gloomy and solitary, and the longer the time the more I long for an end of my difficulties. When Gulam awoke me on the 14th, he complained that Abdul Kerim did not keep the watch I had given him in order; either the watch or the caravan leader was at fault, but he believed it was the latter, for the watch could not be blamed if it were wound up only every other day. Gulam affirmed that when Abdul Kerim was asked what o'clock it was, he always answered seven, whatever time it might be in the twenty-four hours.

The thermometer fell to $-11°$ in the night, but the day was fine. The wind blew as usual, but the sun came out and we thought of spring again. Three shepherds were taking some hundreds of sheep to the west, which had been driven off from their pasturage by the recent snow and were looking for uncovered land. We were only a day's journey from the Tong-tso (14,800 feet), they said, and the Tong-tso was the point from which we were to start southwards to traverse unknown country. If I succeeded in crossing it only by a single route, all the troubles of the past winter would not have been in vain. The shepherds' information was correct, for the next day we bivouacked on the western shore of the Tong-tso, which we found exactly at the place where the immortal pundit, Nain Sing, inserted it on his map. To the south-east towered the huge massive Sha-kangsham, along the northern foot of which I had ridden in 1901.

and we did not notice it until we were some way past it, and then it was too late to dismount. Two fellows were outside and looked after us, and if they compared notes with their neighbours they would have good cause for suspicion. At our camp that day we had a visit from an old man and two young people, who had their tent near and came to see what kind of men we were They said that they were very poor, and begged for some coppers. We were on the border of the district Bongba-changma, which contains 300 tents, and, like the whole province of Bongba, is subject to the governor Karma Puntso, whose tent stood at a distance of six days' journey to the south. He was a man of twenty-five years of age, lived in a large tent, and had been in office only a year, since his father died. It was assuring to know that he could have no experience of Europeans and their crafty ways. After the strangers had received a couple of *tengas* from Abdul Kerim, they went home again in the rays of the evening sun, delighted to find that we were not robbers.

Then the temperature fell to − 16° ; the winter was remarkably trying, but the day, March 18, was still fine, and I travelled all the way on foot, driving the sheep while we were passing several tents. Among them was that of our old man of the day before, and he proved to be a man of property, who sold us various much-needed articles of food. On the way Tubges shot seven partridges, whereupon two Tibetans came forward and protested, saying that only Europeans shot partridges. Abdul Kerim assured them that he preferred partridges to mutton. Again there was talk of Karma Puntso. Perhaps it would be better to choose another way. No ; then the governor would be still more suspicious. We encamped on the northern side of a small pass, where we had no troublesome neighbours.

March 19. Breakfast, a delicate partridge and a cup of tea, was just over when it was announced that three Tibetans were coming up to our tents. But they stopped at a respectful distance, and Abdul Kerim went up to them. My tent was opened in this direction, but was closed again just in time.

CROSSING THE KANGSHAM RIVER.

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fast with ropes, his legs were fettered, and a felt mat was thrown over him, on which four men sat while the others made him fast to the pole. Immediately he was let loose he rushed at those nearest him, but was held back by the pole. It was a sin to drag him from home against his will; he was another Uncle Tom who suffered for our sake, but I hoped that we should soon understand each other. To console him in his captivity he was given the blood and entrails of the slaughtered sheep.

We crossed another small pass (19,537 feet) on the 20th, and the insignificant lake Shar-tso, where a fine spring bubbles up out of the ground by the shore. From a couple of tents to the west we bought tea, butter, and *tsamba* sufficient for several days, and heard again about Karma Puntso. This time it was said that he lived three days to the west, and we hoped to slip past without any disturbance. The country about camp 359 is called Luma-shar, and we stayed on the northern bank of the large river Kangsham-tsangpo, which comes from the northern flank of Sha-kangsham, the huge massive which I left to the south of my route in 1901, and which showed us a magnificent view of its western side. The mountain lay about a couple of days' journey to the south-east.

The next day we were to cross the river, an exceedingly unpleasant business; for though there had been 32 degrees of frost in the night the ice, except close to the bank, would not bear. Abdul made an attempt with his horse, but the animal came down on his nose in the middle of the river. Then Lobsang took off his boots and went across the river barefooted, and came back again to help in conducting our pack animals gently and firmly across. To get the sheep over was the worst difficulty; they had to be pushed and pulled by the horns, one at a time. Almost all the men of the caravan got a refreshing bath in the stream.

On the other side we ascended to a small pass where there was a splendid view over the ridge, which seemed to run west-south-west from Sha-kangsham and which barred our way to the south. Abdul Kerim, Kunchuk, and Sedik

hand an open plain which extended up to the foot of the skirts of Sha-kangsham. We passed tents and flocks at one or two places, and encamped on a hill of loose material beside a spring. The nomads around had nothing to sell, but gave Abdul Kerim much valuable information. On such occasions Kunchuk used to sit and secretly note down all the geographical names. Among other details we now heard that if we held on our journey to the south for seven days we should fall in with a rich merchant from Lhasa, named Tsongpun Tashi, who was wont to take up his quarters in winter in the heart of the Bongba province to sell tea to the nomads. We might be certain that if we came into the neighbourhood of his camp we should again be in a critical situation.

Now Lobsang and two weather-beaten Ladakis complained that they slept badly, because it was too warm in the tent. The former wore a set of underclothes, and above only a garment of thin woollen material. In this costume he had travelled all the way from Drugub, and slept in 72 degrees of frost with only a couple of sacks over him, for he had sold his skin coat to one of his comrades at the commencement of the journey. Only a Tibetan can survive such an experience.

On March 23 we struggled up to the Chaklam-la, which we also heard called Amchen-la. The path up to it is steep, and we moved exceedingly slowly up the ascent. The sheep and the two yaks beat us hollow. From the last tent the path was visible all the way up to the pass, so I was obliged to travel on foot, and I might have collapsed from palpitation of the heart and loss of breath if Lobsang had not gone behind and pushed me. The lives of two mules had been ebbing away during the previous days, so the animals were left where nomads could take possession of them. A black horse was also giving in, and the newly bought one had to take over his load. My grey horse was no longer worth much. Chaklam-la, with its 17,339 feet, was a heavy trial to us, and I was not delighted with the view which unrolled itself to the south—a labyrinth of mountains, where it was plain to see that the ranges all stretched from east to west. From the pass there is a steep

poor, because the rains had failed at the end of the preceding summer. Sheep-breeding is their means of subsistence, and if they lose their flocks they are impoverished and can do nothing but wander about begging from more fortunate people. They have therefore a decided objection to diminish their flocks by artificial means, as we may say; the flocks must fluctuate, increasing in good times and diminishing in bad, but they must not be reduced by sale. Therefore they often refuse to sell even at double the proper price. Still harder was it to buy horses in Bongba.

In the night our animals wandered back to the former camp. While Lobsang and Kutus went after them most of the day slipped by, and therefore we remained at camp 363. Kunchuk and Tubges spied a tent in a valley to the south, where they bought rice, barley, *tsamba*, milk, and *chura*—a kind of cheese, so that we had food for several days. Thus we got our livelihood in small portions, bit by bit and from tent to tent. Our own flock had now shrunk to 21 head, all carrying burdens.

A solitary wild-goose flew screaming over our camp. Had he got lost, or was he a scout sent out to see if the ice were broken up on the lakes to the north? Doubtless he would soon return to his tribe and make his report. It seemed to me that he had been despatched too soon.

From February 24 to March 24 we had traversed only 190 miles, owing to the cutting storm, loss of animals, and now at length the difficult country. We now seldom made a day's march of as much as 7 miles.

It is most irritating that a tent, like a sentinel-box or a spying eye, always stands at the northern foot of a pass, so that I have to walk all the way. This day also, when we crept up to the Sanchen-la, a small shelter stood on the saddle, 17,572 feet high. Southwards there were still more mountains. At a distance of 20 to 25 miles north, 60° E., rose the highest peak of Sha-kangsham, a fine sight in the beautiful weather, when not a cloud obstructed the view. Five Ovis Ammons careered in nimble and elastic springs over the

in 1901, when I tried to get through to Lhasa as a Mongol, but was held fast in the strong claws of Kamba Bombo. My turban was too white, so it was dipped in a dye of boiled butter and ashes, and became at once quite shabby. My soft leather boots were in holes, so that the toes came out. It was well that I ran no risk of meeting acquaintances from Stockholm or London.

This journey was painful and trying to the nerves. Day and night I lived in the greatest anxiety lest I should be discovered and ignominiously unmasked. The farther we advanced southwards the more I was troubled by this apprehension. Should we succeed, or should we be forced back when we had traversed only half the distance across the blank space? Should I never cross the Trans-Himalaya again? At every stage our watchfulness and cautiousness increased, and also the tension of our nerves. I must always be on my guard and never hold a cigarette in my hand when we were on the march. My map sheets and compass I thrust into my bosom to be near at hand. When I collected a rock specimen, took a bearing with the compass, or made a drawing near a tent, Lobsang had to screen me, and he became astonishingly adept at this game. The sun I could observe only when we were quite sure that no Tibetan could see the instrument. Sometimes I sat and drew a panorama through a peephole in the tent cloth. The sheep were my refuge, and with them I set out first, and had not to take part in the packing and loading, and I was spared from watching the animals at night, as in 1901. In both cases I was practically a prisoner in my tent, where the evening hours seemed very long. Nothing is so trying and irritating to the mind as this anxiety in which I lived, travelling in disguise, and expecting any moment to come to a crisis in my fate.

stood watching attentively and regarding the sprawling fishes, barking and shaking his head. He had never in his life seen running water before, and must have supposed that he could walk upon it as safely as on clear ice. Quite unsuspiciously he jumped down from the grass, where the brook was 2 feet deep, and entirely disappeared under the water. When he had, with much difficulty, struggled up again, he was much amazed and disconcerted, and prowled about growling with displeasure at the cold bath. After that he kept far away from the deceitful brook.

March 28. Now we saw that we could trust Takkar, so we let him loose. He did not run away, but was in the best of tempers, and flew like an arrow over the slopes, enjoying his freedom, and played with Little Puppy, who became furious when the huge brute came racing down on him with playful leaps, so that he rolled over and over on the ground.

Abdul Kerim was to go on the new horse with the Ladaki saddle, accompanied by two men, to look out for Tsongpun Tashi. He had plenty of money to buy anything he might find, and in reply to searching questions he was to say that we had orders from Gulam Razul to meet one of his caravans in Raga-tasam, which in about ten days was to leave Lhasa, and then accompany it to Ladak.

I had to ride my grey horse barebacked, but I had not got far before we passed two tents, where four Tibetans came out to look at us. Two of our men went and talked to them while the rest of us followed the brook through the valley. A little further and we had to be careful again, for there were three more tents and two large flocks, the owner of which possessed 3000 sheep. Sheepfolds, old camping-places, and *manis* were all around, for we were on a great highway, and therefore I kept close to the sheep, and whistled and shouted at them. At the mouth of a side valley, on the left, stood a large white tent with blue borders, which was said to belong to the chief of the district, the Gova Chykying. A man came out of the tent, hurried after us, and asked whence we came and whither we were going. Two women came out of a tent inhabited by

Kerim did not know that Abdullah had already exchanged the horse at the beggars' tent for two sheep and a goat. There the faithful horse would see happy days again when the grass grew up.

After Abdul Kerim had drunk tea he went on to visit the Gova Chykying, who came out of his tent and said that Takyung Lama had that very day imposed on him eight days' *yangguk*—that means that he must not transact any kind of business, but must devote himself entirely, on account of his sins, to contemplation in his own house. That was fine for us; the Gova was reduced to a negligible quantity.

March 29. Temperature 13° in the night, and 55° at seven o'clock—this is spring. Welcome mild salubrious breezes, come to thaw our frozen joints!

Early in the morning came a couple of our men tramping along with another dog, light yellow, dirty, and loathsome. He was inhospitably received by Takkar, who immediately gave him a sharp pinch in the neck, and seemed to think that the new member of the caravan was quite superfluous as long as he kept watch himself.

Far in the north a solitary Tibetan appeared, and approached our camp. I was sitting at breakfast, and was hoping that we should soon leave this dangerous place. I went out and looked through the field-glass; the stranger was making straight for our tents. Soon Abdul Kerim came and said that it was Tsongpun Tashi himself. He stopped at some distance and called to us to tie up our dogs, for Takkar had rushed at the old man, who defended himself with stones. The men were purposely slow in fastening up the dogs, in order to give me time to put the interior of my tent in order. On such occasions my note-books and instruments were crammed into a rice sack, which always stood ready. There was no other furniture, for we had burned all European articles and boxes long before.

Meanwhile, Abdul Kerim conducted Tsongpun Tashi into his tent, which stood close against mine, and I listened to their conversation at a distance of little more than a yard. By

were glad when at length we were hidden by a projecting rock. Then we scrambled up a fissure whence we could see all around. Here we lay a weary time with our hearts in our mouths, while Tsongpun Tashi waited for the runaway horse, which had not run away at all, for all our animals stood ready laden before our tents. But he must have lost patience. After Gaffar had gone to the tent to try and get back the black horse, but met with a refusal, for the horse had been fed with barley, and was getting on splendidly, Tsongpun Tashi seemed to make in that direction himself, accompanied by Gaffar. But he changed his mind, for he turned back half-way, and soon we saw him going to the fine tent of the soul-doctor, which stood about 300 yards farther down the valley. He was attended by one of our men, who helped him to carry the sacks in which the goods acquired the previous day were packed.

We remained quiet in our hiding-place of much-weathered green schist, full of quartz veins, from which we could peep out without being seen. We were supposed to be looking for the lost horse. But now the caravan was ready, and began to move down the valley past the abbot's tent. Tsongpun Tashi's errand had been to take farewell of the prelate, who was setting out this day for Mendong-gompa, absolutely unknown in all the maps in the world, and his yaks stood tethered and surrounded by a troop of servants. Abdul Kerim was shrewd enough to send no messenger after us, but leave us to take care of ourselves. And so we did when we had had enough of the green schist—we could not lie still till doomsday. But we had to pass the abbot's tent, and there sat Tsongpun Tashi, unless he were among the men outside. We sneaked on. Kutus walked next the tent to screen me. My disguise was perfect, and I had a black face. We passed with some trepidation quite close to the tent; two savage dogs rushed at us and we threw stones at them, thereby deranging our order of march and making a change of front. Confounded dogs! We had passed the tent, and, so far, had done well. But if Tsongpun Tashi noticed us—and he could scarcely fail

thought that you would tease and torment and starve me, and throw stones and dirt at me, as the Tibetans have done ever since I can remember. But I see that you are well disposed towards me, and give me two good meals of mutton every day. I know that you, in spite of your rags, are a bombo-chimbo, and that Abdul Kerim is only a servant. Be at ease, I will not let any one come near your tent; I will watch over you at night, I will never betray you, I will follow you everywhere; you may trust in me. But now come and play with me a little; take away this useless tent pole, and let us be no longer strangers."

His shrewd brown eyes showed plainly that this was what he meant to say, word for word. I took his shaggy head in my arms and squeezed it. Then he jumped up on me and began to dance and yelp with joy, and enticed me out of my tent. Then I took hold of him again, untied the knots, and released him from his pole, to the great astonishment of my men, who were sitting in the open around a fire. No one had ever ventured so near to Takkar, except Little Puppy, and without the slightest jealousy the little cub joined in the game, which henceforth whiled away daily a couple of hours of my weary captivity.

We had now four horses, of which one was a veteran from Ladak; now I rode the first horse we had bought—a brown one. The last three mules and the two yaks from the Tsong-tso were in good condition. When we encamped near natives, Takkar was tied up outside the entrance to my tent to keep off inquisitive visitors. He had been bred and reared among Tibetans, and had never seen any other people in his life till lately, and yet now he became mad with rage if he saw a Tibetan only at a distance. I had often to pay various sums in rupees to those of his two-legged fellow-countrymen whose unprotected legs he had bitten, and he was never contented without a slight effusion of blood.

We followed the river south-south-westwards for another day's journey to camp 369, where some poor nomads were encamping by a sheet of snow. Sha-kangsham's summit came into sight again, this time to the north, 30° E., rising like a gigantic beacon above the mountains. Five days' journey to the west-north-west was pointed out the salt lake, Tabie-tsaka, the position of which I had sought in vain to ascertain from the *tasam*. In the afternoon when I sat outside to draw a panorama, nomads were strolling and peering about, so that I had to post watchmen. In the evening all around was pitch-dark: there was no moon, only dense clouds. Our animals had disappeared, and as there was good reason to fear wolves and horse-stealers, eight men were sent out to look for them. They had revolvers, and fired a few shots to let any possible disturbers of the peace know that we were armed. The animals would not freeze, for the temperature fell in the night only to 18°, and in the morning they had come back again all right. The only one missing was the greyish-yellow dog; thinking, perhaps, that he had fallen into bad company, he had gnawed through his rope and run home in the night to his miserable tent.

Now the path runs south-south-west up to the little easy pass Satsot-la (15,932 feet), in red porphyry and with a way-mark. In the wide valley in front of us lies the lake Chunit-tso, and on its farther side rises a red mountain of regular form. We

and ascended a small valley leading up to the low pass Nima-lung-la, near which we encamped in a barren spot between granite crags. An eagle-owl sat in a cleft and at twilight uttered its shrill piercing cry. Lobsang said that this bird was thought much of in Tibet, because it warns honest men of thieves and robbers. When the eagle-owls sit and scream, robbers are certain to be in the neighbourhood.

On April 4 we had only half an hour's march to the threshold of the Nima-lung-la (16,017 feet), from which there is a magnificent view over the Trans-Himalaya—a series of dark rocks with black, snow-crowned peaks. Between us and the range extended a wide, perfectly level plain, full of pools, marshes, and rivulets. At one of them sat two Tibetans cutting up a yak which had died. They confirmed the information we had received before, that we were now in the district Bongba-kemar, a day's journey from Bongba-kebyang, and that we must follow the river Buptsang-tsangpo for several days upwards to reach Saka-dzong by the pass Samye-la. I had still a very dim and indistinct notion of the geographical configuration of this region. Was the range in front of us to the south a continuation of Nien-chen-tang-la, which I had crossed at the Sela-la, Chang-la-Pod-la, and Angden-la; or was it another range disconnected from the former? During the following days we should obtain an answer to this question. Should we be successful, and be able to complete this exceedingly important meridional traverse through an unknown part of Tibet? It would be more than provoking to be stopped just at the northern foot of the Trans-Himalaya.

Camp 374 was pitched below the opening of a valley where there were two tents. The nomads warned us against the water in the pools of the plain: our horses would lose their hair if they drank of it. "Snoring" Kunchuk complained of toothache, but was cured at once by two resolute comrades. The operation was performed with pincers properly intended for horse-shoe nails. To get at the tooth better, they put a stone in the patient's mouth. "Do not kill me," he shrieked when the tooth jumped out.

was a quite independent chain without the least connection with the former.

The eastern range increased in magnitude on the following day's march, and among its dark ramifications rose some rather flat summits capped with eternal snow. We kept for the most part to the top of the terrace on the right bank, which was 50 to 65 feet above the river, and fell steeply to the even valley bottom where the stream meandered. Here the valley was about 2 miles broad. The ice mantle of the river became wider and thicker the higher we mounted, but the rise was very gradual. From camp 377 the culminating peak of Lunpo-gangri lay south, 23° E. Every day's journey we accomplished without adventures strengthened our position. The nomads must think: If these men travel right through the whole of Bongba without being stopped, they cannot be impostors.

On April 10 we travelled 8½ miles up the Buptsang-tsangpo, and we were astonished to find so voluminous a river up on the isolated plateau country. On its banks ducks and geese cackled in large numbers. Tubges shot several of them; it was a sin to disturb their dreams of spring and love. No human being was seen this day. I had a feeling of repose when we could see no black tents, and for the sake of peace I would readily abstain from sour milk. The view to the south-south-east was magnificent; the peaks of Lunpo-gangri stood out against the pure blue sky in dazzling white, with shades of light blue indicating ice. On the east also of our route appeared a whole world of mountains. Most unexpectedly the summits of Lunpo-gangri have a much grander and more imposing appearance from the northern side, towards the plateau country, than from the south side, the valley of the Brahmaputra, most probably because on the southern side they are too near. Up in the north we saw them at all distances, and for several days we had them right in front of us.

In the night of April 11 the temperature sank to −1.7°, and on the preceding nights to 3.7°, 13.5°, and 17.2°. The cold increased as we mounted higher. We came to an expansion in the valley where three glacier streams unite to form the

During the past days our two yaks had become so wearied and footsore that we had to get rid of them at any price. We therefore stayed a day in Bupyung and bartered them for nine sheep, which took over the loads of the yaks. Now we had again thirty-one sheep and some goats.

On the 13th we came to the foot of the mountain where commenced the actual steep ascent to the pass itself. Here were four tents inhabited exclusively by women and children. The men had gone a couple of days before to Gova Tsepten's tent. It is incumbent on this chief to collect a certain number of men and yaks, which for about three months are posted on the *tasam* ready to transport goods on behalf of the Devashung without compensation. This is a kind of *corvée* which is exacted not only all along the road between Lhasa and Ladak, but on all other highroads in Tibet. Naturally this injudicious system is a great annoyance to the nomads, who have to leave their flocks in the meantime to the care of women and children. If any one wishes to escape this compulsory service he must supply a substitute, pay him, and furnish him with yaks and provisions. The year before, when we travelled with hired horses from Shigatse, the poor nomads served us, but we always paid them honourably and gave them handsome gratuities as well.

After a night temperature of – 0.8° we rode up to the pass on the 14th, over and between hills and across the brook which brings its tribute from the Samye-la to the Buptsang-tsangpo. Solid rock could not be found, but all the detritus and boulders were of grey granite; seldom was a piece of porphyry noticed. The usual observations were made on the pass, and the boiling-point thermometer was read off. The view of Lunpo-gangri was grander than ever, now that its peaks were quite near. The distinctly marked valley of the Buptsang-tsangpo disappeared in the distance to the north-north-west, while to the south-east nothing could be seen but a flat saddle, whence I concluded that we were not yet on the actual water-parting pass. We had not followed the track of the caravan far, before we saw a brook coming from the south-east, which

the Tseti-lachen-la and the Angden-la, and gain another point on the immense boundary line on the north of the basins of the great Indian rivers, and I succeeded in proving the unbroken continuance of the Trans-Himalaya for 118 miles west of Angden-la. A most extraordinarily interesting discovery also was that the Angden-la and the Samye-la, though of exactly the same value as watersheds, do not lie on the same chain. The Angden-la is situated on the western prolongation of the chain which stands on the southern shore of Tengrinor and is known by the name of Nien-chen-tang-la, but the Samye-la lies in a longitudinal valley between this chain and Lunpo-gangri. Accordingly, I could strike out once and for all the continuous mountain range which Hodgson and Saunders constructed at their writing-table, and represented as running north of the upper Brahmaputra. Here also I considered what name I should give to the colossal mountain system which runs in the north parallel to the Himalayas. The name Lunpo-gangri had at least as much claim as Nien-chen-tang-la, but both were unsuitable, as they only denoted certain ranges in a whole system, and therefore had only local significance. Then it came to me like a flash—Trans-Himalaya is the name which I will attach to this gigantic mountain system.

While I sat and pondered over the great idea which had come to me this day without any merit of my own, I was recalled to the business of the moment by Lobsang, who informed me that the yaks were moving in a black line up to the pass. Then we got up and went on foot down the slopes bestrewn with troublesome rubbish and granite boulders. Soon trickling rivulets collected into a small brook. I regarded with pleasure this little stream leaping among the stones, and listened to its purling song. It was the old melody, and we had recently heard it from the brooks of the Buptsang-tsangpo. And yet I seemed to hear an undertone of another kind, a sound in the water which suggested a new aim. The Buptsang-tsangpo is doomed to final annihilation in the Tarok-tso and Tabie-tsaka, where the water is evaporated

CHAPTER LXVI

IN THE ROBBERS' PARADISE

In former times the glacier tongues of Lunpo-gangri ran down into the valley, and traces of them were very conspicuous as we descended to lower country on April 16. The valley is quite full of old moraines, consisting exclusively of granite, and some of them are superficially concealed under fine matter and moss. We passed the large yak caravan again, which was encamping after a very short march. Evidently the men intended to stay over the next day, for the loads were taken off the yaks and piled up. When they mean to set out again the next day they leave the loads on the yaks, for they think it too much trouble to load and unload 350 yaks for a single night. They might stay for us as long as they liked; we should get in advance and pass by Saka-dzong before we were denounced. But no, it would be wiser to avoid Saka-dzong altogether; not to escape the sight of Muhamed Isa's grave, but not to needlessly expose ourselves to suspicion. It was perfectly evident that the authorities would wonder why a small party of Ladakis went along byways instead of following the great *tasam*, and they would hold an inquiry over us.

After the moraines came to an end we traversed a more open expansion of the valley, with luxuriant grass and millions of detestable mouse-holes. We were right glad when Takkar pinched the necks of one or two of these obnoxious rodents. Tubges supplied me with partridges, and one of our goats yielded me a drop of milk. From camp 383 Lunpo-gangri's summits are seen foreshortened, and one of them is as small

like the Buptsang-tsangpo. On this day we never see a man or a tent.

In the evening a night owl again sat screeching above the camp, and the Ladakis were convinced that it meant to warn us against robbers. If these knew that a European with European weapons was in the caravan they would not attack it; but we were only Ladakis, and the Tibetans despise Ladakis and look upon them as cowards.

On the 18th we travelled southwards to the place (15,407 feet) where our valley enters the Rukyok valley, running down from the west-north-west, at the bottom of which some of the Lunpo-gangri summits were again visible. Still no men were to be seen, only numerous summer camping-places. Two horsemen rode past our camp on the other, right, side of the valley. What did they want? Were they spies? We had every reason to suspect a spy in every human being. No; they were kiang hunters from Gertse, who had left their home and were seeking new dwellings in another province, because of some unpleasantness with the Gertse Pun, the potentate whom we were carefully making away from. They informed us that we were a day's journey from Pasa-guk, where I had encamped the year before, and three short marches from Saka-dzong. It was hazardous to pass so near a governor's residence. Abdul Kerim bought one of the riders' horses for 100 rupees.

This day I put on for the first time a new Ladaki costume. The other was too warm, and, being red, was conspicuous among the others. The new coat was made of worn, tattered sackcloth, and was stained with ashes and soot. In this I looked just like the other men. Now I painted my face regularly every day, and he must be a very smart fellow who could find out that I was not a genuine Ladaki. We had hitherto got on remarkably well, and had only a day's journey to a place where I had been the year before. But the nervous tension increased more and more, and I wondered every morning what surprises the new day had in store for us.

April 19. As we were starting, two men passed on foot,

eighteen men strong, each with his horse and gun, attacked a tent village here in the neighbourhood. They pillaged 3 tents, took 400 sheep and about 200 yaks, and made off by the road you intend to follow. Men were collected and sent after them, but two were killed and the others ran away. No one knows where the band is now. If you value your lives, keep a sharp watch at night. If they attack you, let them plunder you; you are only thirteen, and cannot defend yourselves."

This was why Abdul Kerim looked so anxious, and it was not to be wondered at. Now we also ran the risk of a night attack, as if it were not trying enough to travel in disguise by byways through the forbidden land. As long as there was daylight the animals were allowed to wander about and graze, but at dusk they were driven up near to the tents. In the evening the men could talk of nothing but robbers. Lobsang, who was a Tibetan himself, took the matter quietly. He said that there were organized bands of as many as a hundred men with a chief at their head, who ordered where raids should be made. But at this season of the year they sat round their fires and tried to look innocent. In his opinion the air must be warmer before they would move. If a robber was caught in the neighbourhood of Gartok, his head and one arm must be sent as a proof to Lhasa, he added. In the principal towns punishment is very severe. For theft an eye is taken out and a hand cut off. A Gova or other magistrate who catches a robber receives a reward or promotion, but one who neglects his duty is punished. We heard that the district near Geddo by the upper Raga-tsangpo is notorious as a regular nest of robbers, and is visited by professional freebooters from Nakchu.

In the twilight the Mohammedans among my Ladakis sang the same melodious hymn I had first heard at Kizil-unkur. "Allahu ekber" echoed among the rocky cliffs; "and it is very effective in protecting true believers against the wiles of the heathen." They had all at once become deeply religious again in the robbers' paradise. "Allahu ekber," God is great.

ends could sometimes be seen a part of the main crest. We know absolutely nothing of the country to the north of it, but that it cannot be the watershed between the plateau and the sea is evident, and was shown by the Kamchung transverse valley.

After crossing the river twice over bridges of porous ice we encamped near a sheepfold where dry dung was plentiful. The last nomads had told us that next day we should come to a large tent, the property of an influential old man named Kamba Tsenam, who owned 1000 yaks and 5000 sheep. He would evidently be our next difficulty, and if we slipped past him the country would be open to us as far as Raga-tasam. We are satisfied when, as on this day, we have again gained nearly 9 miles without being interfered with; but how shall we fare to-morrow?—this is the standing question we ask ourselves every evening. It is certainly an advantage to travel along out-of-the-way paths where we escape notice, but if any sharp Gova or governor hears us spoken of, he cannot help being suspicious of our strange proceedings, and instituting a close inquiry. Now the salt caravan which we passed has already arrived at Saka-dzong; we are, indeed, to the east of that place, but we travel so slowly that we can never escape pursuit. Our excitement grows daily. I am tired and weary of this self-imposed confinement, and long for it to come to an end. What shall we do then? That I know not. We have penetrated so far that a crisis must come. I have managed to travel through Bongba, but my plans for the immediate future are very indefinite and depend on circumstances. We will get on as far as we can.

April 22 was a day when we knew that the definite crisis was coming very much nearer. Abdul Kerim, Kunchuk, and Gaffar set out first to pay a visit to Kamba Tsenam and keep his attention riveted on the sale of food and horses. We followed after, and crossed the river twice on cracking bridges of ice, kept along the northern bank, and passed a side valley, at the mouth of which stood three tents, where our men were in the midst of a group of Tibetans who were showing their

about the routes we had followed and our plans, and our men might in their haste give discordant answers. In the large tent Lobsang had been cross-examined, and had answered that we came from the Gertse Pun, who had advised us to take this byroad because we should reach Raga-tasam two days sooner than if we went through Saka-dzong. "Quite true," the Tibetans answered, but also warned us against robbers, for thirteen Ladakis would be but a mouthful for an ordinary robber band, and the country was very unsafe. "It is well for you that you have good weapons," they said.

Lastly, Abdul Kerim turned up with his purchases. He had learned that all the tents we had seen in the day belonged to Kamba Tsenam, who lived himself in the largest, but he happened to be in Saka-dzong, where an assembly had been convened in anticipation of an impending visit from a high Chinese official, and the question what present should be made to him had to be decided. Kamba Tsenam owned thirty-five horses, which were grazing beyond Gebuk-la, and if the rich nomad returned in the evening we should certainly be able to buy some from him.

"You say," declared an elderly man in Kamba Tsenam's service, "that you are a *tsongpun* (merchant) from Ladak. Why then do you travel by this dangerous side route? Here you can drive no trade. How have you found the way? Why have you travelled in winter? Why do you ask the names of the valleys?"

"I have to write down all the names," he answered, "that we may find the way again in summer, for I am commissioned to make large purchases of wool."

"That is well, you shall have several hundred bales of sheep's wool from us. I will give you a guide in the morning; you will pay him a rupee for two days. Without him you cannot find your way over the Gebuk-la, especially when the ground is covered with snow."

Abdul Kerim had thanked him for his kindness and then had come to look for us. We were sitting and deliberating when two riders armed with guns came up to our tents. They

Chomo-uchong rose in radiant sunshine; to the north was a huge crest, which I, like Ryder, took for the main range of the Trans-Himalaya and the watershed, but this turned out afterwards to be a mistake.

The horse-driver took us up a secondary saddle, at the eastern foot of which runs a deeply eroded valley, which, coming from the north, 10° E., is the upper section of the valley we followed last year, and which runs down to Basang, where I saw Muhamed Isa for the last time among the number of the living. Here was the driver's tent, and to escape his company during the night we continued our march after the stranger had given us instructions about the way. Our camp 390 was situated in the mouth of a small valley on the ascent to the Kinchen-la, where we were overwhelmed in a terribly dense and violent snowstorm.

The guide, who had so fortunately appeared at the right moment, had said in the presence of our men that he was Kamba Tsenam's brother and a great yak-slayer. The year before he had seen in Saka-dzong a European whose caravan leader, a big strong fellow, had inspired respect wherever he showed himself. But he had died suddenly in Saka, and his comrades had digged a long hole in the ground where they had laid him. He thought it strange that Ladakis, who were of the same faith as the Tibetans, would travel with and serve the hated Europeans.

For the future we determined to observe yet greater caution. Two or three Ladakis should always wear dark eye-glasses, so that mine might not seem so peculiar. As soon as we could buy woollen material all the men should have new clothes, so that I in my rags would seem the poorest and meanest of the party.

Chomo-uchong's summits presented a grand sight. At length we made the last ascent up to the top of the pass, where the height is 17,851 feet above sea-level. At the other side a river runs north-east, one of the headwaters of the Raga-tsangpo. To the west there is a brilliant spectacle, the summits of Lunpo-gangri rising in sharp and savage beauty from a maze of mountains and ridges, which shine in lighter bluer shades the more remote they are. To the north-east we catch a glimpse of an outlying ridge covered from foot to crest with new-fallen snow. The broad flat valley of the Raga-tsangpo stretches eastwards as far as the eye can see. In the far distance to the east-south-east a grand snowy crest shines forth, the northernmost of the Himalayan system.

We stayed a long time at the top, and I sketched a panorama. Then we followed the track of the caravan over the lower shoulders of two mountains, and found our camp pitched in a valley with good grass and a brook partially frozen. My tent looked towards its bank, and all three stood as usual in a line. This day also had passed satisfactorily, but all would be different next day, for then we should come to Raga-tasam, where we encamped last year and stayed a week. Camp 391 was, then, the last where we could still feel at ease, for we had seen no living being all day long, and had no neighbours. Here, then, we must arrange some fresh safeguards.

We must sort out from our already scanty baggage all articles that might excite suspicion, as, for example, the small padded leather box in which the theodolite was packed; for the future it would be rolled with its inner wooden case in my bed. Further, the hypsometer's leather case and the actinometer, which probably would never be used again. Whatever was combustible was to be thrown into the fire and the rest buried. A couple of rugs of camel's wool were also to be discarded.

To begin with, we must make a change in our housing arrangements. I was to sleep for the last time in my old weather-beaten tent, where our chief, Abdul Kerim, was hence-

could not catch what they said, but that the affair was serious I could only too plainly perceive, for I heard my name mentioned—Hedin Sahib. After a good hour's conversation they went out again and made a tour round my tent, but the furious Takkar would not let them approach the door. But they discovered the peephole in the side of the tent, and a man put his finger in and looked through the hole, but I was lying against the folds of the tent on the same side, so he could not see me. Then they went and threw themselves down in a circle round the fire, brought out their wooden cups and drank tea. They sat right in front of the entrance to my tent, and I could not get out without being seen.

Then Abdul Kerim whispered from the back of my tent and inside his own, and told me what the men had said. The leader, a stoutish young man of good appearance, had put the usual questions and received the usual answers. Then he had uttered the following words in a serious and decided tone:

"News of your arrival has come to the Governor of Saka-dzong through two salt caravans which passed your party above Pasa-guk. As it has never occurred that a merchant from Ladak has come from the north and has travelled on the byway through Gebuk, the Governor and the other authorities in Saka suspected that Hedin Sahib might be concealed among you, and the more so because he himself expressed his wish last year to come back again and travel through the mountainous regions in the north. Therefore my comrades and I received orders to follow your trail, overtake you, and subject you to the most searching examination. We are in no hurry, and in the morning we shall get several yak-loads of provisions. You protest that Hedin Sahib is not among you disguised as a Ladaki. Well, it may be that you are telling the truth. But remember, *tsongpun*, that we shall carry out our orders to the letter. You are thirteen men from Ladak, you say, and I can see only ten. Where are the others?"

"They are out collecting fuel."

absolutely refuse to go to Ladak, but I would be content to go to India through Nepal, or, better still, through Gyangtse.

"No," I said to my men as I rose up, "I shall give myself up to the Tibetans."

Then they were all amazed, and began to cry and sob like children.

"Why do you weep?" I asked.

"We shall part here for good, and the Sahib will be killed," they answered.

"Oh no, it is not as bad as that," I said, for it was not the first time I had been caught by Tibetans.

When I walked out of the tent I heard behind me the murmur of Mohammedan prayers: "Allahu ekber—Bismillah rahman errahim."

In my usual disguise from top to toe, and with my face painted black, I walked with slow, deliberate steps straight to the circle of Tibetans. When I was close to them they all rose up, as if they knew that I was no ordinary Ladaki.

"Sit down," I said, with a dignified gesture of invitation, and sat down myself between the two principal men. In the one on my right hand I recognized at once the Pemba Tsering of the year before. I clapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Do you know me again, Pemba Tsering?" He answered not a word, but looked with wide-opened eyes at his comrades, and nodded towards me, as much as to say "It is he." They were mightily dumbfoundered and disconcerted: no one spoke, some looked at one another, others gazed into the fire, one threw a couple of sticks among the stones, and another took small sips of tea.

Then I spoke again: "Yes, truly, Pemba Tsering, you are quite right; I am Hedin Sahib, who visited Saka-dzong last year. Here you have me again; what do you mean to do with me?"

Abdul Kerim, Lobsang, and Kutus stood behind, trembling like aspen leaves, and expecting that preparations for an execution would be the next move.

Still they made no answer, but began to whisper together

It is against my principles to visit a place where I have buried a faithful servant. You shall never get me to Saka-dzong even if you raise all Tibet."

"If it would trouble you to see Saka-dzong again, we will certainly not urge you to go thither. Will you instead have the kindness to follow us to Semoku by the Tsangpo, on the *tasam*, which is only two days' journey to the south-west? I will then write to the Governor and ask him to meet you there."

"Good; I will follow you to Semoku to-morrow."

"Thanks; I will at once send an express messenger to inform the Governor, so that you may not have to wait at Semoku. But tell me why you have come back again? You travel and travel in Tibet and you are always sent away, but always come back again. Had you not enough last year, when you were obliged to leave the country by the road to Ladak? And now you turn up again among us. How is that possible, and why are you come?"

"Because I love your country and your friendly people to such a degree that I cannot live without them."

"H'm! It is very kind of you to say so, but would it not be better if you were to love your own country a little more? As long as we do not travel in your country, you should not travel in ours; we remain at home, and the best thing you can do is to remain in your country."

"As long as I can sit in a saddle I shall come back. You can inform the Devashung at your leisure that their Excellencies may look for more visits."

They laughed pleasantly and looked at one another, as much as to say: "If he likes to come back, he is welcome as far as we are concerned." And my Ladakis laughed and were extremely astonished that our last day of freedom had come to so peaceful and merry an ending. The Tibetans were exceedingly agreeable, polite, and gentle, and never uttered a hard or peevish word about the trouble that I had again brought upon them. And when the old wool story, which Abdul Kerim a little while before had tried to cram down their throats, was referred to, they laughed heartily and thought

my papers and instruments in rice sacks, and not to have to paint my face black as a Moor's instead of washing myself. As soon as we had parted from our new friends in the evening, Gulam took a hand-basin of warm water into my tent, and then I had a good scrubbing from top to toe, and the water showed that I wanted it. He had to change the water four times before I was tolerably clean. Then I clipped my Mohammedan beard to the skin, and sadly missed the razors I had thrown away. But I was glad that we had not burned the things we had condemned some hours earlier.

Rindor begged the loan of one of our tents, as their own transport train was not expected till the morning. Besides Pemba Tsering, there were two other men I had known the year before. They were all very friendly, and said that we had tipped them very generously. There was also a wrinkled old man in the party, who was always smoking a Chinese pipe. His name was Kamba Tsenam, and it was his tent near which we had so nearly been detained two days before.

Thus ended April 24, 1908. Strange, melancholy thoughts took possession of me when I went to bed. The Tibetans had again thwarted my plans—I know not how many times they had done so. Our future was dark as ever, but it had arrived at a new stage, and on the 25th we should wake up to begin a new chapter. The deep silence in the valley was only disturbed occasionally by Takkar, when the faithful dog barked at the Tibetans. His bark was re-echoed from both flanks as though three dogs kept guard over us. And the everlasting stars glittered as before over our lonely tents.

came a reaction. I was worn-out, weary, and indifferent to everything except the nearest way home. Therefore I sat down and wrote a letter of fifteen pages to Lien Darin, referred to his friendly letter sent to Gartok, gave an account of our last journey, pointed out to him that no Great Power could take it amiss if I travelled out of the country through Gyangtse, promised that in return I would give him information about the occurrences of gold and salt I had seen, and about the measures which should be taken for the promotion of sheep-breeding,—all natural resources, which would contribute to the advancement of China's newest province, Tibet. And I concluded my letter with wishes for the happiness and prosperity of Lien Darin himself and peace to his forefathers' graves.

I did not doubt a moment that he would give his consent to such a modest request, and I saw in my mind's eye the dramatic scene when I should make my first call on Major O'Connor in Tibetan dress, and have a little fun with him before I made myself known. But I may as well say at once that this long epistle to Lien Darin was never sent. My opponent's tactics lured me to a contest in which he was checkmated in two moves. My merit was as little now as formerly; I was always a marionette, and the hands which held the strings hung over the paths where the clouds and stars move.

In the evening I had a visit from Pemba Tsering and Kamba Tsenam. The former was much more gentle and friendly than the year before; the latter was a great humorist, who did not seem at all annoyed that he had omitted to close the bag when he had us in it, and had let a valuable booty fall into the hands of another. They had heard of my adventurous voyages on Tso-mavang, and were astonished that I had escaped with my life.

Two short days' marches took us over the pass Kule-la and down to the valley where Semoku stands on the great high-road. Here stood some scattered tents, and the Governor and his colleagues had established themselves in the small stone house

clothes are in rags, and our provisions are at an end, but, as you see, that is of no consequence to us."

"At the time of your visit to Saka-dzong last year I was in Tsonka, but I received an account of your movements. You were sent away. Why have you come back again?"

"To visit the districts I was then prevented from seeing. I am ashamed to have given you the trouble of coming here from Saka-dzong. I hope that we shall soon come to an agreement about the route I am to take in order to leave the country."

Now I should have to play my cards well. I had changed my mind during the last few days. I had rested, the reaction after the excitement of travelling in disguise had passed away, and I was exceedingly eager to attempt some new discoveries before I gave up the game. I had, it is true, succeeded in making a very valuable traverse across Bongba, I had travelled straight across the word "Unexplored" on the latest English map of Tibet—yea, I had passed between the *p* and *l*, so that "unexp" lay on the west side of my route and "lored" on the east. But I had left quite untouched two extensive stretches of the large blank patch, and I dreamed of nothing else than to cross Bongba again by two fresh routes. It would certainly take four or five months to return to India after a northerly zigzag course, instead of a couple of weeks if I made for British territory through Gyangtse, as I intended at first. But if I succeeded in making the northerly detour I should carry home material of perhaps greater value than the discoveries already made. Dorche Tsuen answered with firm decision:

"As to your way back, I will tell you at once: not a step further east; my head depends on it. Here you see the order I received a couple of days ago from the Devashung. I will read it to you. Last year you travelled without leave to Nepal, to Kubi-gangri, across the holy lake, round Kang-rinpoche, and to Yumba-matsen. I know exactly where you went. You cannot do the same this year. It is probably in consequence of your journey in all sorts of forbidden directions that the

arrival, and ask the Government to send notice of it to Gyangtse."

"I sent a messenger to the Devashung as soon as I received the letter from Rindor. They will know in Lhasa in a few days that you are come here again."

I had never induced any Tibetan magistrate to forward my letters. That Dorche Tsuen refused to do me such a trifling service had the deplorable consequence that my family did not receive any reliable report of me till September, and therefore supposed that some misfortune had befallen me. Instead of reaching the frontier in a couple of weeks, I was sent back again into the silence of Tibet, and the waves washed again over our track. But I took it for granted that news of our arrival on the *tasam* would penetrate to Gyangtse both officially and through reports, and would then be made known everywhere. Such, however, was not the case, and after we left the *tasam* our fate was buried in the same complete silence as before.

"No, Hedin Sahib," Dorche Tsuen cried out, "the only way open to you is the one by which you came from the north."

"I will never travel by that road. It is no use talking about it."

"You must."

"You cannot force me to do so. To begin with, I will not let you know which way I came, and I travelled in disguise."

"It does not matter. It is very well known that you came from the Samye-la and the Kinchen-la. Beyond that the escort I shall send with you will ask the way from tent to tent."

"The nomads will answer that they have seen no Ladakis for fear of being punished."

"I shall find means of making them confess more than you think."

"You can kill me if you like, but you shall never force me to travel over the Samye-la. Remember that I am a European and a friend of the Tashi Lama. You may lose your button."

Much disturbed, Dorche Tsuen conferred in whispers with Ngavang.

but it stimulated my ambition. Therefore I remember with particular warmth and sympathy all those who, in virtue of their temporary power in the world, sought to raise obstacles in my way.

We then talked on various subjects. He wished to see our weapons, and asked if he could buy a revolver. "No; you shall have it as a present, cartridges and all, if you will let me go the way I have proposed."

"H'm!"

"You must procure us all the provisions we need for two months, besides new shoes, clothing, tobacco, horses, mules, yaks."

"With pleasure; make out a list of all you want."

It was done at once. Meal, *tsamba*, tea, sugar, Japanese cigarettes, which were said to be procurable—all was to be brought from Tsongka, whither mounted men were sent the same day across the Tsangpo and over the Nevu-la. Everything was to be in our tents in a week. The rest could be obtained from Saka-dzong. In the evening I paid an equally long return visit to my valiant friend Pun Dorche Tsuen, and at night I consigned my letter to Lien Darin to the flames. Ah no! no Chinese interference in Tibeto-Swedish affairs.

On the 28th we remained quiet and visited one another by the hour together. The two governors sat on benches fastened to the wall, Rindor and Oang Gye on mats on the floor, and all four played at dice. The two dice were shaken in a wooden bowl, and turned out on to a round piece of skin. The markers were small Indian snail-shells. Then they played with Chinese dominoes. Meanwhile they drank tea, smoked pipes, sang, joked, laughed, and moved the bricks with wonderful and graceful dexterity. Ngavang won ten *tengas* and was greatly elated. In this way they pass the time when the day's work is done. Rindor is the Governor's private secretary, and on a bench and a table lay piles of documents and letters, written on coarse Chinese paper, and folded up one on another. The Governor's correspondence now comes to Semoku, and his daily work must run its course. His province, Saka, is

dzong. Here also lies a votive block of a hard green rock, covered with offerings, bits of butter, and streamers.

The 1st of May was celebrated by a march over the Lamlung-la, a difficult pass, on the saddle of which, 16,791 feet high, the traveller is again rewarded by a magnificent view over this complicated sea of mountains. From here Chomo-uchong's seven summits appear in a compact group; the central one is of a regular conical shape and is pure white all over; the others consist chiefly of black cliffs and projections, from among which issue small blue-tinged glaciers. The length of the massive corresponds to that of Lunpo-gangri, of which it is a continuation.

In the Namchen valley our united camp formed quite a little village, for all the chiefs of the country were convened to a consultation. And here it was that Rindor and Pemba Tsering joined us with all the goods we had ordered from Saka-dzong. We stayed here two days. The weather was raw and chilly, and the temperature constantly fell to 8.2°. There was no spring as yet. But the wild-geese were on their migration, and when Tubges once shot a gander at a neighbouring brook, Oang Gye came to complain to me. He was quite overcome at this brutal murder, and could not conceive how my servant could be so heartless and cruel.

"You are right," I answered; "I am myself sorry for the wild-geese. But you must remember that we are travellers, and dependent for our livelihood on what the country yields. Often the chase and fishing are our only resources."

"In this district you have plenty of sheep."

"Is it not just as wrong to kill sheep and eat their flesh?"

"No!" he exclaimed, with passionate decision; "that is quite another matter. You surely will not compare sheep to wild-geese. There is as much difference between them as between sheep and human beings. For, like human beings, the wild-geese marry and have families. And if you sever such a union by a thoughtless shot, you cause sorrow and misery. The goose which has just been bereaved of her mate will seek him fruitlessly by day and night, and will never leave the place

CHAPTER LXIX

KAMBA TSENAM, FATHER OF THE ROBBERS

At the Namchen camp we bought a large supply of rice, meal, barley and *tsamba*, sugar, stearin candles, soap, and five hundred cigarettes,—all procured from Tsongka. A rich merchant, Ngutu, who owned fifty horses and mules and two hundred yaks, sold us two mules and a horse, besides cloth for new garments, boots, and caps. Abdul Kerim hastened to make me a Tibetan costume of fine Lhasa cloth; on my head I wore a Chinese silk cap swathed with a red turban; I stalked about in silk Chinese boots, and had an elegant sword in my girdle. In my Ladaki saddle with its variegated fittings, and riding a milk-white stallion, I looked in this makeshift outfit quite like a Tibetan of rank.

Here a large meeting was held in Dorche Tsuen's tent, where the question of my return route was discussed. Dorche Tsuen insisted on the necessity of my crossing the Samye-la again, and I answered, as before, that I intended to take no other way than over a pass east of the Samye-la. Then he appealed to the nomads at hand, who no doubt had received their instructions beforehand, and they all affirmed that the Chang-tang could be reached by no other pass than the Samye-la. However, we had heard from the horse-driver on the Gebuk-la that a way led over the mountains directly north of Kamba Tsenam's tent. But then the nomads, who would have to let us yaks on hire, replied that the road was so bad that we could not reach the Tarok-tso in three months, and that, for their part, they would not let their yaks go, and come to grief on the detritus of the pass. Then we offered to buy

Thus the matter was arranged. Nima Tashi, a powerful man of pleasant aspect, and dressed in a loose sheepskin, was to be chief of the bodyguard, and as he said he did not know the road to the north, Panchor, a man fifty-five years of age, was ordered to act as guide. He was called into the tent. I had not seen him before, but Abdul Kerim said that he was the same man who on April 23 had shown us the way to the foot of the Kinchen-la, and that he had seen me and Muhamed Isa last year in Saka-dzong. He was a little, thin, wiry man who had killed eighty yaks with the gun he always carried. To everything that was said to him he agreed submissively with "La lasso, la lasso." We could see that he was sly and knavish—just the stuff we wanted.

With him and all the other company we rode on May 4 over the pass Gara-la, and from its rather flat threshold saw Kamba Tsenam's tent still in the same place. Here we crossed, then, our route of April 22, and had made a loop round the snowy massive Chomo-uchong.

Panchor was the elder brother of Kamba Tsenam, and it struck me as curious that when the Governor of Saka pitched his tent beside that of the wealthy nomad, the latter did not come out to welcome him. Now a collection of tents had sprung up in the valley larger than at any of the foregoing camps. Couriers and messengers came and went, small yak caravans came up to the tents with provisions for the officials, and nomads had come in from the neighbourhood to have a look at the eccentric European who had come down like a bomb into the country and had been caught at last.

Late in the evening Kamba Tsenam came sneaking into my tent. He was very mysterious, and said that the Governor and his people had no notion that he was paying me a visit in the darkness. He wished only to say that Panchor could very well contrive that I should go almost anywhere I liked. The escort had strict orders from the authorities, but only Panchor knew the way, and could easily throw dust into the eyes of the other men. I had only to make my wishes known to Panchor and he would manage the rest. If also a band of fifty robbers

of Kamba Tsenam's shepherds are sitting in a group drinking tea, in another part some small black children are playing, and in a third the women of the tent are tittering. With pure white short hair, wrinkled like crushed parchment, stone-blind, and dressed like Monna Vanna only in a cloak, Kamba Tsenam's eighty-three-year-old mother sits on her bed and swings her prayer-mill with the right hand, while her left hand keeps the beads of her rosary in constant motion. She prattles and murmurs prayers, sometimes drops her rosary to catch a troublesome insect, and sometimes lets the prayer-mill stop when she is plunged in vague dreamy thought. Twice she asked if the European were still there and if he had been offered tea and food.

May 5, the last day we enjoyed Dorche Tsuen's society, had to be celebrated in some way. I invited the whole party to a festival in the camp. The two Governors and Oang Gye took their places in my tent, in the middle of which our tea-cups were filled on an improvised table. The day had been cold and muggy and snow fell, but we warmed our hands over the fire, and sat wrapped in skin coats like four Tibetans of rank, while the populace formed a circle outside. A fire was lighted in the middle and was maintained by dung from four sacks. It was pitch dark outside, but yellow flames threw a bright gleam over the dark Tibetans, servants, herdsmen, nomads and soldiers, women and children, youths and old men. They stood in wondering groups in their skin coats blackened by the smoke of fires, bare-headed, with long black tresses hanging over their shoulders. The light from the fire made a vain attempt to gild them. They stood out in sharp effective relief against the deep shadows.

I charged Abdul Kerim to do his very best, and he informed me that the programme would contain fifteen items, song and dance following alternately without a pause. The first item was a dance with sticks to represent swords; the second, a hunting episode: a wild animal, composed of two crouching men with a piece of felt over them and two sticks for horns, went prancing round the fire; a hunter with his

expiring like shooting-stars in the night—merry songs which came to an end among other mountains and the dying sound of strings and flutes. And I was surprised that I had not had enough of these things and that I was not tired of the light of camp-fires.

The wind rises, the snow falls thickly and hisses in the fire, and the flakes are lighted up from below. With white hair and shoulders the Tibetans look like mist figures, and behind them hang the dark curtains of night, from which is heard from time to time a pony's neigh or a dog's bark. The last sack of fuel is emptied over the leaping flames, burns up and sinks, and only embers are left, glowing in the ceaselessly falling snow. Then my grateful guests rise at midnight, distribute gifts to the performers, say farewell, and vanish like ghosts in the darkness to seek their own tents. Now night reigns alone over the valley, the surroundings lie silent and still, and only the pelting snow makes a swishing sound against the tent.

On the morning of May 6 the country was again white as in the depth of winter. Quietly and lightly as cotton-wool the flakes fell, and all, the Tibetans included, were more wrapped up than usual. The Governors and their retinue came to pay a farewell visit, and then I went out with them to their horses, took a last farewell, and thanked them for all the kindness they had shown me in spite of the trouble I had given them. Dorche Tsuen expressed a hope that we should meet again. It is much easier to get on with men and lead them where you wish if you treat them kindly and gently; you gain nothing by violence, harshness, and threats. The Governor was a fine upright figure on his horse; his face was entirely covered with dark spectacles and a red hood to protect it from the blast. His troop of mounted men was considerably diminished after his escort had been told off to follow me. They struck their heels into their horses and soon disappeared up the hill on the way to the Gara-la.

My caravan was now to be divided into two parties. Only five men were to follow me, namely, Gulam, Lobsang, Kutus,

good yaks from me. You can have them for half their value."

"Thanks; we do not want any yaks now. What is your occupation?"

"Robber!" he answered, without blinking.

After he had gone, Kamba Tsenam informed me that some time ago the man had killed a nomad in Rukyok, and now was come to treat about the compensation for the murder. The authorities were looking eagerly for the band to which he belonged, and Kamba Tsenam and Panchor knew exactly where they were hiding, but would not betray them lest they should be robbed of their property in revenge. Kamba Tsenam and his brother were evidently on very confidential terms with the robbers of the country, and I very much suspected that they were in league with some of them. In Panchor we had certainly an actual robber chief as guide. He himself told us that the Devashung had tried to engage him in their service as a spy and guide, when they wished to track up an evaded robber band, but he would not consent. He knew we had a large quantity of money with us, and we were not too safe in his company. He could very well arrange a night attack and in the end play the innocent. He pretended not to know the country beyond a couple of days' journey to the north, but when he inspected our six horses he said: "This one you bought from an old nomad to the west of Sha-kangsham, and this one from Tsongpun Tashi." If he knew every horse in the country, he must also know the country very well. I asked him to go over the names of our camping-places to the north, but he gave only the first two, and added: "The rest you will know as you go on, and if I cannot find them myself, there will always be some robbers I can ask."

On May 7 we took leave of the old robber chief Kamba Tsenam, and rode in close order up to the pass Gyegong-la, which has a height of 18,012 feet. The pass stands on a distinctly marked chain, which is called Kanchung-gangri, and it was very interesting to find that all the water on the northern side of the pass flowed to the upper Chaktak-tsangpo. Kan-

CHAPTER LXX

THE SEVENTH CROSSING OF THE TRANS-HIMALAYA—TO THE HEAVENLY LAKE OF THE THRONE MOUNTAIN

TWENTY-NINE degrees of frost on the night of May 8. Winter instead of spring might be coming. A month ago it was much warmer in Bongba. But now we are mounting up to the heights of the Trans-Himalaya, the weather is cold, raw, and windy, the temperature seldom above freezing-point, and to-day the whole country is again buried in snow.

We ride northwards and descend from a small saddle to the Chaktak-tsangpo, near which we have to halt a while to warm ourselves at a fire. The river bends to the west-south-west to break through Kanchung-gangri. On its bank is seen a tent, eight horses, and a hundred sheep. Panchor went off to-day to stalk a herd of ninety wild yaks, and Nima Tashi, the captain of the bodyguard, was sure that a robber band was in the tent, for no nomads are seen in this cold country. The escort, particularly Nima Tashi, were dreadfully afraid of robbers; and Panchor had told us that we could make them go anywhere by frightening the soldiers with robbers. When Panchor appeared again, he said that the suspected tent was really inhabited by the band which had the murder in Rukyok on its conscience, and he added that if the people in Rukyok would not let the matter rest, the band threatened to commit new crimes in the country. I asked why the authorities did not seize the chief now when he was so near, but Panchor shook his head and said that if he was taken and killed, thirty others would be down on the country, and that

the Trans-Himalaya. To the east lies a pass, the Nakbo-kongdo-la, with the Nakbo-gongrong-gangri; over this pass, which also seems to lie on the main watershed, a road runs to Targo-gangri and Dangra-yum-tso. Between Raga-tasam and Ombo a road crosses the Tsalam-nakta-la, mostly frequented by salt caravans. From camp 402 we could still see Chomo-uchong to the south, 13° E.

A member of the robber band we saw the day before paid us a visit and was evidently an old friend of Panchor. He gave us many interesting details of the Teri-nam-tso and Mendong-gompa, which were afterwards found to be perfectly correct. I never could make out Panchor. Either he was in league with the devil himself, or he was a fully fledged knave at his own risk and reckoning. He now assured me that it would be the easiest thing in the world to take me to the Teri-nam-tso and perhaps also to the Dangra-yum-tso. O gods of Naktsang, slumber in this cold spring and do not warn your earthly vassals until it is too late! Yes, if I could only contrive to cross the Trans-Himalaya twice more, I would then willingly leave this mighty range to rest a thousand years under a veil of clouds and glittering snowfields. It is strange that this wide country, so near to the Indian frontier, should have remained absolutely unknown till our late times. I am proud and delighted to know that I am the first white man to penetrate to this wilderness.

Panchor advised us to stay a day in the valley, for we should not find pasture as good as here for a long time. I wondered how he could know that, seeing that he had said recently that he had never been north of the Sangmo-bertik-la.

On the night of May 11 the thermometer fell to 3°. We found ourselves in a great enlargement of the Trans-Himalaya called Lap, and this region is noted for its severe climate. Even in the middle of summer, when it is warm everywhere else, it is cold in Lap. The ice breaks up on Lapchung-tso only in the beginning of June after all the other ice is melted. From the map it is seen that many considerable rivers, flowing north and south, take their rise in this lofty swell.

southern side of the Trans-Himalaya. At the mouth of a side-valley running in from the west the escort came to a halt, and Nima Tashi explained that our road to Buptö, where we had agreed to meet Abdul Kerim's party, ran up this valley, and that they did not intend to go farther north. They now showed their teeth for the first time, and were not so pliant as we thought. They excused themselves on the ground that their yaks were tired, that their provisions were at an end, and that they had no orders to accompany us more than fourteen days. Panchor, the scoundrel, took their part, and frightened us with the chief of Bongba-chushar, who took tribute from all the robbers of the country, and would certainly plunder us if we passed through his domain. After long consideration we decided to camp where we were, to thoroughly discuss the situation. Before the sun had set I had won them over, though it was chiefly the chink of silver rupees which made them forget all their scruples. It was agreed that they should receive their 20 rupees every evening, and I gave them a goat in addition, as their supply of meat was at an end.

So on May 14 we rode farther north in blinding snow, and passed numerous *manis*, nine standing in one row. The valley became more open, and was more than a mile broad. We found no water at the camp, but two of our yaks were laden with blocks of ice. Every evening we sat an hour conversing with Panchor, and it was easy to check his statements. I told him once for all, that if he did not speak the truth he would receive no extra gratuity. In the evening he declared that there were dreadful apparitions at Muhamed Isa's grave, and that at night fearful shrieks and groans could be heard from beneath. He was quite convinced that spirits and demons haunted the grave, and said that no Tibetan ventured to go near the place; this was well, for consequently the grave would not be desecrated.

He gave me also much valuable information about the country round Nam-tso or Tengri-nor, where he was born. He had gone twice round Nam-tso, thrice round Tso-mavang, and twelve times round Kang-rinpoche, which he intended

hounds, had probably given him an account of us beforehand. It seems he was terribly frightened, for he had never in his life seen a European. However, he gave us much valuable information about the country, among other things, that the little twin lakes Mun-tso lay to the north of the Barong-la and east of the Teri-nam-tso, not south of the Dangra-yum-tso as on Nain Sing's map, which I had myself found to be incorrect. On the way to the Teri-nam-tso we should be able in two places to steal goose eggs; it was forbidden to the Tibetans for three years to take them, but a European could permit himself anything without having to answer for it to the gods of heaven and earth.

After a day's rest we marched north-north-east to the broad longitudinal valley of Soma-tsangpo. The river descends from the east-south-east, and probably has its source in the great mountain system we saw from the Shuru-tso. Here it runs west-north-west, but afterwards turns north and north-eastwards, and therefore makes a sharp curve before it enters the Teri-nam-tso. Its bed is flat and shallow, and at the time carried down about 280 cubic feet of water per second, but it is so full in summer that sometimes it cannot be forded. We camped at a spring in a valley at the farther side, and on May 18 ascended the adjacent pass, Dongchen-la, and on its south slopes twenty-four Ovis Ammon sheep were a fine sight.

On the night of the 19th, the minimum temperature was 29.5°, and now it felt as if spring were really come, or even summer. The way ran north-west up a steep valley, where granite and dark schists were twice observed *in situ*, to the small pass Teta-la (16,266 feet), where we had at length a free view over the longed-for lake Teri-nam-tso, Nain Sing's Tede-nam-tso, which he never visited nor saw, but only heard of, and inserted with a broken line quite correctly on his map. The only mistake he made was to draw the lake longer from north to south instead of from east to west.

To obtain an uninterrupted view we climbed up a height on the north side of the pass (16,972 feet). The scene here displayed in all directions was one of the grandest and most

the heart of Tibet. How extensive is the line of Sha-kangsham! How many are the points from which I have viewed this wonderful mountain on different journeys! Like a gigantic beacon, a marvellous landmark, it raises its snow-covered dome above desolate Tibet. And we were far from its dripping glaciers when for the last time it sank below the horizon like a dream of snow and roses.

At last we had to drag ourselves away and follow the track of the other men to a little dreary valley where they had encamped near a couple of tents. Even here the view was remarkable. How I now missed my old tried boat, and how gladly I would have glided with sail and oar over the heavenly lake!

We remained four whole days at this miserable camp with its fine view (15,646 feet). The fact was that Dangra-yum-tso now for the fourth time began to haunt my dreams, and as the holy lake was only four days' journey to the east, I would try to reach its shore. But Nima Tashi and Panchor put all kinds of difficulties in the way: their yaks would perish where there was no grazing, and it was impossible to hire yaks, for all had lately gone to Tabie-tsaka for salt. I proposed to go on my own horses and meet them at Mendong-gompa after the excursion, and to this they made no objection at first. If I had not been by this time heartily sick of Tibet, I would have played them a pretty trick, and gone not only to Dangra-yum-tso, but further eastwards until I was stopped. But I was weary of geography, discoveries, and adventures, and wanted to get home. And besides, on comparing the lands east and west of the Teri-nam-tso, I considered the latter far better worth visiting. The former I had traversed by three routes, and two other travellers had been there, but no one had been in the west, and we knew nothing about it except the uncertain data which the Jesuits had gathered from the natives two hundred years ago. In fact this land was the least known part of Tibet, and the road to the Nganglaring-tso crosses the blank patch in its longer direction. If the authorities had asked me which way I would choose, I should have answered,

have no right to travel thither. There is a nearer way to the rendezvous. Mendong-gompa does not lie in my district, but all the same I have sent written notices to all the govas in the country to stop you if you travel to the monastery."

Poor Nima Tashi was half dead with fright. He had thought to frighten me, but now he saw that the chief and I sat together like old friends, drinking tea and smoking cigarettes, while he was reprimanded for bringing me too far. I told him afterwards that he was a noodle, and if he now got into trouble in Saka it was his own fault. Tagla Tsering's good humour was much enhanced when I promised to turn back and conform to the arrangements of the chiefs on the way to Mendong, if by any chance I was prevented from approaching the convent.

We said farewell on May 24, and continued our journey westwards along the southern shore of the lake. The water is salt and has an extremely unpleasant taste, and cannot be drunk in any circumstances. Lamlung-la (16,880 feet) is a commanding pass, which must be crossed to cut off a peninsula. The rocks are granite and green schist. Hares and wild-geese are very plentiful. Here and there are fresh-water lagoons on the shore, which forms a very narrow belt at the foot of the mountains. The northern shore belt seems to be much broader. We followed the southern shore another day to the spring Tertsi at the western extremity of the lake, which forms a large regular expansion.

I heard the name of this lovely lake variously pronounced by different nomads. Nain Sing's Tede-nam-tso is incorrect. The Gova of Kangmar insisted that Tsari-nam-tso was the correct pronunciation, and said that the name was bestowed because *ri di tsa-la tso yore*, that is, "The lake situated at the foot of the mountain." The nomads on the shore, however, said Tiri- or Teri-nam-tso. At our camp 411 were two small mountains on the shore, called Techen and Techung, or the Great and Little Te, or more correctly Ti. *Ti* is a lama's throne in a temple, *ri* signifies mountain, *nam* heaven, and *tso* lake. The whole name therefore has the poetical meaning

CHAPTER LXXI

ANOTHER JOURNEY ACROSS THE WHITE PATCH

We left on May 26 the heavenly lake, the shore of which had never before been trodden by European or Pundit, and saw its blue surface diminish to a sabre blade between the mountains, and finally disappear in the east, while we rode westwards over a wide plain, which was formerly under water. Kutus, Lobsang, and Panchor accompanied me. We must hasten to descend on the monastery before the monks got wind of us, and the caravan and escort could come after and encamp near Mendong-gompa. Panchor disappeared at the first tent we passed, and was not seen again all day. He was a coward, and did not wish to be suspected of showing us the way to the sanctuary. We had therefore to shift for ourselves and find our way thither.

Two men and a woman came out of a nomad encampment to the track we followed, and asked if we had seen the European who was said to be travelling about Bongba. In order to preserve my incognito till I came to Mendong, I answered that he was coming behind with his caravan, and if they kept on the look-out they would see an amusing figure. Probably they had long given up all hope of seeing the stranger. My involuntary disguise therefore did me good service, for the nomads took me to be, like the other two men, servants of the expected European.

Hour after hour we rode on westwards and looked in vain for a monastery. But at last it cropped up all of a sudden. We were on the top of a bank terrace 30 feet high, skirting on

Sachu-tsangpo, Buptsang-tsangpo, and Bogtsang-tsangpo, shares the honour of being one of the largest in the interior of Tibet. Through the valley Goa-lung we rode up on May 30 to the pass Goa-la (17,382 feet), flat and easy, lying amidst pink and grey granite, and affording an instructive view over the Trans-Himalaya to the south. To the south-west we see, close below the pass, the small lake Karong-tso—a new discovery, like everything else in this country. Our route ran to the west, when we, on June 1, rode, with the Karong-tso on our left hand, and a crest of medium height on our right, through the district Bongba-kemar, following the great route of the salt caravans between Raga-tasam and Tabie-tsaka, which crosses the already-mentioned pass Tsalam-nakta-la. A highroad from Naktsang joins this. At camp 417 we had the Chunit-tso near us on the north-west.

Although we were at the beginning of June, the minimum sank below freezing-point; in the night of the 1st the thermometer fell to 16.3°. But the day was warm, nay hot, when the sun shone and the air was still. The dreary barren valleys lay waiting for the rainy season. The grass was more than scanty, for last summer the rains failed. Our direction turned more to the south-west. From camp 418 we saw, to the south, 60° E., the opening of a valley through which a highway runs through Bongba-kyangrang over the Dicha-la to Lapchung.

Our Tibetans know excellently well how to look after themselves on the journey. On the march they twist string, talk, sing and whistle, and shout at their yaks. In pitching their camp they set up their black tent in a moment, first stretching out the ropes and fastening them into the ground with wooden pegs, and then throwing the cloth over the poles. The animals are unloaded and sent off to feed, and the men gather fuel and make a fire in the tent, where all assemble to drink tea and sleep. After a couple of hours they come out again, wrestle, play and laugh. In the dusk one may be heard singing a monotonous ballad, which must, however, be amusing, for the others laugh heartily at every verse. Morning and evening they gabble their prayers, all together, murmuring like bees in

that Abdul Kerim had gone a week before by a cross-cut over the mountain on the right, down towards the Tarok-tso. There was no Gova here, but two natives were ready to let us on hire the five yaks we required. They were shy and timorous, but Panchor, the rogue, spoke well of us, and it was agreed that they should accompany us to the boundary of Tarok-tso. On the morning of June 5 we took farewell of Nima Tashi and his soldiers and of Panchor, and rode between the hills on the left side of the valley down the course of the Buptsang-tsangpo. Soon the valley contracted to a ditch, but before long expanded again. On our left hand we had the main range of the Trans-Himalaya, which, however, did not present an imposing appearance, for we were always close to its foot. At times we were enveloped in a snowstorm, and at Mabie-tangsam-angmo, where we camped, we made haste to get a cover over our heads. When Little Puppy heard the thunder rumble for the first time in his life, he was very disturbed and barked with all his might, but he could not make out whence the noise came, and he found it safest to fly into the tent and hide himself behind my bed-head.

June 6. Hail and snow! The whole country is hidden under newly fallen snow, as far as we can see. Is June to be reckoned among the winter months? We have already had nine of them. It seems as though summer were missed out this year and we were approaching another winter. But the precipitation is welcome to the nomads, for it promotes the growth of fresh grass. We march sometimes on the top, sometimes at the foot of a lofty erosion terrace 80 to 100 feet high, which is a characteristic feature in this large valley. Geese, wild asses, Goa antelopes, and foxes are everywhere. A sharp bend in the river forces us to the north-north-east for a time, and the valley is again narrow and picturesque. At Tuta, which belongs to Bongba-tsaruk, we encamp close by the Buptsang-tsangpo, where the wild-geese swim with their yellow chicks in the clear water.

Eighteen degrees of frost on the night of June 7. Yet the day was fine, and flies, gnats, and other insects were more

plague. Would we, on the other hand, go up a valley which opened out to the south-south-west by which we could reach Tuksum in seven days over the Lungnak-la, he would let us hire yaks, would sell us provisions, and provide us with guides. Or if we would go over the Lunkar-la north-westwards to Selipuk, he would also do his best to serve us. He advised us to take the latter route, for he had been present when Gova Parvang forced Abdul Kerim to take the direct road to Selipuk between the Tarok-tso and Tabie-tsaka. We had, then, three different routes to choose from, which led over the blank space on the map of Tibet, where there are no other black lines but the meridians and parallels and the word "Unexplored." I did not take a minute to choose; the middle road over the Lunkar-la was naturally the most desirable, for I knew that it would yield me most details to complete my knowledge of the intricate orography of the Trans-Himalaya. On the morning of June 9 we hastily concluded our business, obtained yaks and guides, bought barley, rice, and *tsamba*, took farewell of the chiefs of Bongba-tarok, and steered our course direct to the temple. We passed several tent villages, for the country is densely peopled. At the foot of the mountain, on the left, a warm spring rises out of the ground. Below the monastery hill stand twenty small white stone cabins, each with a red frieze under the eaves and a small quadrangular yard. In front of the village are two *chhortens*, behind which two women with their children were hiding. While the caravan continued up the Lunkar valley, I, with Lobsang and Kutus, ascended the porphyry hill to the temple, which is surrounded by a quadrangular wall. Some savage dogs rushed upon us and snapped at Little Puppy, but there was no other sign of life. We went into the court and found the temple door closed, and fastened with a great iron lock. As I was sketching a panorama of the great beautiful lake and its wreath of mountains, six men came up and told us in an angry voice to go away. I rose up, went straight to the nearest of them, and, pointing to the path down to the village, told them that if they did not immediately make off they must put up with

Karma Puntso. To the west of it follows Rigi-hloma or Rigi-changmo, which is subject to Ngari-karpun, as the Garpun of Gartok is called here. Puru-tso is drying up; the highest shore-line lies 354 feet above the present level of the lake. The water is not fit for drinking, but, curiously enough, it still contains fish. An extremely disagreeable odour rises from the beach. The lake stretches from north-east to south-west.

On June 14 we rode westwards and crossed the broad valley watered by the Nyapchu-tsangpo, which, descending from the Men-la due south, falls into the Poru-tso. The Men-la, a day's journey off, is a pass in a longitudinal valley between two of the ranges of the Trans-Himalaya. Over its threshold a road runs to Shamsang on the upper Tsangpo. A day was spent on the bank of the Surle-tsangpo, which also flows to the Poru-tso, and in the evening carried quite 210 cubic feet of water per second.

Here I was waited on by Gova Pundar of Rigi-hloma, an elderly man, who gave me a *kadakh*, butter, meal, and milk, and sold us all the provisions we required for several days, and his goodwill knew no bounds. The people in this part of Tibet were always very friendly disposed. In the Lob country the natives called me Padishahim or "Your Majesty," a title that more than satisfied my ambition; but in Bongba and Rigi I was often called Rinpoche or "Your Holiness," which I thought a little too strong. But they meant well, and I accepted their civilities as the most natural thing in the world. Gova Pundar knew every inch of his country, and I pumped him thoroughly. Among other interesting details, he informed me that thirteen days' journey to the north, near the Lakkor-tso, was a monastery Marmik-gompa, a dependency of Sera, with twenty-five monks and four nuns. In the year 1901 I had been at the Lakkor-tso, and had heard the blast of the shell-horn at the other side of a ridge, but I did not enjoy the same freedom as now, and could not visit the monastery.

We rode on the 16th in a snowstorm, with fresh men and yaks, through the picturesque Surle valley, and on the 17th over stony moss-grown slopes to the pass Sur-la or Sur-la-Kemi-la,

We could now have travelled anywhere we liked, eastwards to Tabie-tsaka or southwards over the Trans-Himalaya; but the lakes in the north had most attraction for me, and we should have to cross the lofty mountains in the south at some time.

Had he gone quite off his head? He had 2500 rupees with him; had he decamped, or had he been robbed? A letter was despatched to Gova Parvang saying that if he did not get news of them in a week he would have all the Devashung and the Mandarins about his ears. At any rate we had made a splendid journey through unknown country, and now we must make our way to the Shovo-tso we had long heard spoken of. Properly we ought to have gone over the Pedang range on the west direct to Selipuk, but it was not difficult to talk over the Gova, and on June 21 he had fresh yaks and guides ready. The latter were a young man and a boy ten years old in a blue sheepskin. With these we could have gone off anywhere, but I was tired and longed to get home. The valley of the Pedang-tsangpo took us further to the north. It is unusual to find in Tibet such a great longitudinal valley running north and south, for they lie almost always east and west, and produce the peculiar parallelism so characteristic of the country. We passed sixteen tents, and near the last we crossed the Pedang-tsangpo, which runs to the Shovo-tso by a more easterly course. Lobsang caused great amusement when he was attacked by a furious dog, and, having no stones, threw his bright sheath-knife at him; he missed, but the dog took the knife in his teeth and ran off to his master's tent.

Then we rode up to the Abuk-la pass, with a view both magnificent and instructive. The bluish-green Shovo-tso is, like Poru-tso, longest from north-east to south-west, and is surrounded by huge mountains, some of them with eternal snow. To the north, 30° E., we see the pass Ka-la over which the "gold road" runs. The name Ka-la occurs on a map of one of Montgomerie's pundits by a single isolated mountain summit. In reality the Ka-la is the very opposite of a mountain summit, namely, a depression or saddle in a mountain range. We encamped on the southern shore of the Shovo-tso, which lies at an absolute height of 15,696 feet. The water is salt, and round the shore are seen old shore-lines of about the same height as at Poru-tso.

June 22. When we left the western extremity of the Shovo-

Between north and north-west the horizon is far distant and the country level; only to the north, 5° W., appears a small snow-capped dome, but not another *gangri*. The view over Nganglaring-tso, just below, is grand, all the mountains in shades of pink, and the water of a deep ultramarine. A large part of its eastern half is occupied by a large island, a mountain mass rising out of the water with a contour as irregular as that of the lake itself, all promontories, bays, and capes. To the north-west lie three small islands. No European had ever seen Nganglaring-tso before, nor any pundit. But the pundit sent by Montgomerie in 1867 to Tok-jalung obtained some hazy information about the district "Shellifuk" and the great lake "Ghalaring-tso," which was afterwards inserted in maps of Tibet. The form given by the pundit to the lake, namely, an egg-shape with the longer axis from north to south, does not at all correspond to the reality; for the lake stretches east and west, and its contour could not be more irregular than it is. The pundit places a small island in the northern half, and adds the legend "Monastery on Island." In reality Nganglaring-tso has at least four islands, but not a single monastery.

On Midsummer Day we encamped by the roaring surf (15,577 feet), and on the 25th we crossed the last hilly mountain spur which still separated us from the extensive plain of Selipuk. From its height we again saw the great chain of Sur-la, and to the south the Trans-Himalaya with sixty-three snowy peaks, regular as the teeth of a saw. On the 26th we rode over level country to the west-north-west. On the plain two mounted Tibetans were pursuing a wild ass, which was wounded in the near foreleg and had four dogs at his heels. The dogs did not bite him, but tried to chase the animal in a certain direction. Time after time the men were close on the game and dismounted; they did not shoot, but threw up dust with their hands to frighten the wild ass and drive him as near as possible to their tent, that they might not have to carry the meat far.

Camp 439 was pitched on the bank of the river Sumdang-tsangpo, which flows into the Nganglaring-tso without joining

stewardship before I passed sentence on him. He reported that they had come to the appointed rendezvous at the proper time, but there he had been hard pressed by six govas—Gova Parvang among them, who took the lead, and ordered them to leave the place at once and go on to the Tarok-tso. As they had no passport from Lhasa, they could expect no mercy, he said. So they betook themselves to the northern shore of the Tarok-tso, where they waited fourteen days, as the grazing was good and no one interfered with them. They heard contradictory reports about us. At length a nomad died on the lake shore, and a monk from Lunkar-gompa was summoned to his tent to read the prayers for the dead. They met this man, and he said that we had passed the monastery nine days previously. Then they packed up all their belongings intending to hurry after us next morning. But horse-stealers had come in the night and stolen my grey Tikze horse and a mule from Saka-dzong. This event cost them three days, but they never recovered the stolen animals. While Suen, Abdullah, Abdul Rasak, and Sonam Kunchuk followed slowly, the three others made forced marches westwards and now at last they were here and had all our cash with them. Abdul Kerim escaped with a slight reprimand, but I afterwards heard the other men badgering him. We found the others in Kyangrang, and so the whole strength of the company, thirteen men, was complete when, on July 8, we crossed the pass Ding-la, 19,308 feet high, the loftiest pass we had crossed in all this journey in Tibet, and on past the small lake Argok-tso, which lies in the basin of the Aong-tsangpo; and on July 12 we crossed the Surnge-la (17,310 feet). Two days later we came to Tokchen, where another political entanglement detained us nine days. But I cannot stay to give an account of it, for I reached the limit of the space allowed me at Chapter LXIV., and my publisher is impatient.

of the travels of the Lazarist missionary, Father Huc—*Souvenirs d'un Voyage dans la Tartarie, le Thibet et la Chine, 1844-46.* Dufour's map is even better than Hodgson's, for he has adopted from the Jesuits' map a northern affluent to the Tsangpo, passing through the great range, which, like the Jesuits, he calls Mts. Koïran.

Huc and Gabet were probably the first Europeans to cross the Trans-Himalaya, and one wonders where they made the passage. Probably by the Shang-shung-la along the Mongolian pilgrim road from Kuku-nor and Tsaidam to Lhasa. It is vain to seek any information on the subject in Huc's famous book. During the two years Huc stayed in Macao he worked up the scanty notes he had made on his journey. He mentions Burkhan Bota, Shuga, and Tang-la, and also the large village Nakchu, where the caravans exchange their camels for yaks, but he says not a word about the pass by which he crossed one of the mightiest mountain systems of the world. He says, indeed, that he went over a colossal mountain range, and as its position agreed with that of the Mts. Koïran of Dufour and the Jesuits, he adopts this name, which he certainly had never heard on his journey, and which probably was changed on its way from Tibet to the Jesuits' note-books in Pekin. All he has to say of his journey over the Trans-Himalaya is contained in the following sentences: "La route qui conduit de Na-Ptchu à Lha-Ssa est, en général, rocailleuse et très-fatigante. Quand on arrive à la chaîne des monts Koïran, elle est d'une difficulté extrême" (ii. p. 241).

Another attempt to represent the course of the Trans-Himalaya was made by Trelawney Saunders in his map of Tibet, which is found in Markham's *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet, and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa* (London, 1879), and in Edwin T. Atkinson's *The Himalayan Districts of the North-Western Provinces of India* (Allahabad, 1882). Like Dufour and Hodgson, Saunders draws a huge continuous chain all through Tibet. For the western parts, north of Manasarowar, and for the eastern, south of Tengri-nor, he has relied on the cartography

The great pundit A. K., or Krishna, who contends with Nain Sing for the foremost place, crossed the most easterly parts of the Trans-Himalaya on his journey in 1881, and more probably by the pass Shiar-gang-la than the Nub-kong-la, as I have already suggested; but from his map it is difficult to decide whether the Shiar-gang-la is a dividing pass of the first rank or not. In any case, it is situated on the chain which forms the watershed between the Salwin and the Brahmaputra, and is undoubtedly an immediate continuation of the Nien-chen-tang-la, or Trans-Himalaya. A similar assumption is also made by Colonel S. G. Burrard in his and Hayden's admirable work, *A Sketch of the Geography and Geology of the Himalaya Mountains and Tibet* (Calcutta, 1907). On map xvii. in this work Burrard has, quite rightly in my opinion, inserted the prolongation of the range, though we have no sure data about its course.

Thus we find that after Father Huc several of Montgomerie's and Trotter's pundits, as well as Mr. Calvert in the year 1906, crossed the Trans-Himalaya in Tibet. So far as I know, there are only two more names to be added to these—namely, Littledale, who on his bold journey in 1894-95 passed over the system by the pass Guring-la (19,587 feet), and Count de Lesdain, who crossed it by the Khalamba-la in 1905. Both describe the magnificent spectacle Nien-chen-tang-la presents from Tengri-nor, but the latter added nothing to our knowledge of the Trans-Himalaya, for he made use of the same pass, the Khalamba-la, as Montgomerie's pundit. In his narrative, *Voyage au Thibet, par la Mongolie de Pékin aux Indes*, he mentions not a single pass, much less its name. But he followed the western shore of Tengri-nor, and he says (p. 340): "Des massifs de montagnes très durs et absolument enchevêtrés formaient un obstacle insurmontable. En conséquence, je résolus de suivre le premier cours d'eau, dont la direction ferait présumer qu'il se dirigeait vers le Brahmapoutra. C'est ainsi que nous cheminâmes plusieurs jours en suivant les bords d'une rivière sans cesse grossissante, appelée Chang-chu. . . ." This river is the Shang-chu, which comes from the Khalamba-la.

central regions of the Trans-Himalaya. That such an extensive region as southern Tibet has been quite unknown till now, though it lies close to the Indian frontier, has given rise to much reasonable astonishment, and in many circles arguments and proofs, based on more or less apocryphal records and vague hypotheses, have been laboriously sought out to prove that my discoveries have not the priority claimed for them. The maps I have reproduced in facsimile, when carefully compared with my own maps, render any discussion on my part quite superfluous.

I cannot, however, pass over in silence an insinuation that the discoveries I have made are to be found indicated on the famous wall-maps in the Doge's Palace at Venice. The Chief Librarian of the Royal Library in Stockholm, Dr. E. W. Dahlgren, writes in a letter to me: "Only the grossest ignorance and silliness can find on these maps traces of any discoveries previous to yours." Before my return home Professor Mittag-Leffler, Director of the mathematical school in the University of Stockholm, had sent for photographs of these maps with a very detailed description, and he has kindly placed this material at my disposal. This book is not the place in which to publish it, and, besides, the following statement which Dr. Dahlgren has obligingly drawn up at my request makes all further comment unnecessary:

The Wall-Maps in the Sala dello Scudo, in the Doge's Palace at Venice

These maps, four in number, were constructed by the noted cartographer Giacomo Gastaldi in the middle of the sixteenth century, to take the place of older maps which were destroyed by fire in the year 1483; at least it may be safely assumed that two of them, those of East Asia and Africa, are the work of Gastaldi.

The maps represent:

1. Asia from the mouth of the Indus eastwards to China and Japan, as well as the Pacific Ocean and part of America.
2. Asia from Asia Minor to India (Kashmir).
3. Africa.
4. Italy.

believe nothing in Asia is of greater geographical importance than the exploration of this range of mountains."

It is not for me to decide how far I have achieved my aim, but when I passed over the Trans-Himalaya for the eighth time at the Surnge-la, I had at least the satisfaction of seeing all the old hypotheses fall down like a house of cards, and a new ground-plan laid down on the map of Asia, where before the blank patch yawned with its alluring "Unexplored."

I have no space here for a complete monograph of the Trans-Himalaya, or, indeed, the material for it, until the bearings and heights of the peaks have been worked out, the rock specimens identified, and a detailed map constructed from the sheets I drew. It will take a couple of years to work up the material. I will here only communicate some general facts, and will begin by citing the passes of first rank as watersheds, appending the names of the travellers who have crossed some of them:

Shiar-gang-la	Krishna, 1881	
Shang-shung-la	Huc, 1845	
Dam-largen-la	Nain Sing, 1873	16,903 feet.
Guring-la	Littledale, 1895	19,587 ,,
Tsebo-la		
Shugu-la		
Khalamba-la	Pundit, 1872	17,200 ,,
Do.	de Lesdain, 1905	
Sela-la	Hedin, 1907	18,064 ,,
Chang-la-Pod-la	Hedin, 1907	18,284 ,,
Sha-la		
Angden-la	Hedin, 1907	18,514 ,,
Tsalam-nakta-la		
Dombe-la		
Nakbo-kongdo-la		
Sangmo-bertik-la	Hedin, 1908	19,095 ,,
Saggo-la		
Dicha-la		
Samye-la	Hedin, 1908	18,133 ,,
Dsalung-la		
Lungmar-la		
Pechen-la		

prove that its known eastern and western sections are connected and belong to the same mountain system, and that this system is one of the loftiest and mightiest in the world, only to be compared with the Himalayas, the Karakorum, Arka-tag, and Kuen-lun. Between the Shiar-gang-la and Yasin, not far from the sharp bend of the Indus, its length amounts to 1400 miles, but if it can be shown that the Trans-Himalaya merges into the Hindu-Kush and continues along the Salwin, its length extends to 2500 miles. On the north and south its boundaries are sharp and clearly defined; the northern is formed by the central lakes discovered by Nain Sing and myself, and the southern by the unheard of Indus-tsangpo valley. In breadth it is inferior to the Himalayas, and its peaks are lower, but the heights of the Trans-Himalayan passes are considerably greater than those of the Himalayas. The average height of the five following Himalayan passes—Shar-khalep-la, Man-da-la, Sheru-la, No-la and Kore- or Photu-la—is 16,736 feet, while the average height of my first five Trans-Himalayan passes is 18,400 feet. It may be said generally that the dividing passes in the Trans-Himalaya of the first rank are 1600 feet higher than in the Himalayas. But the highest peak of the Himalayas, Mount Everest, with its 29,000, is 5100 feet higher than the Nien-chen-tang-la, the culminating point, as far as we know. Herewith are connected the different forms of relief predominating in the two systems; the crests of the Trans-Himalaya are flatter, its valleys shallower and broader, while the crests of the Himalayas are sharp and pointed, its valleys deep and much eroded. The former system is more compact and massive than the latter, as we may expect if we remember that the Himalayas are deluged by the precipitation of the south-west monsoon, and that its waters have for untold thousands of years degraded its valleys, while the Trans-Himalaya on the dry plateau country receives a comparatively insignificant share of the monsoon rain. Were it possible to compare the volumes of the two systems, we should no doubt find that the northern is much more massive than the southern, for such a comparison must proceed from sea-level, and though the Trans-Himalaya

the name Hodgson had assigned to it, that is, Nien-chen-tang-la, and I did not change my mind after crossing the Chang-la-Pod-la and Angden-la, for these three passes lie on one and the same range, which on the southern shore of Tengri-nor is called Nien-chen-tang-la. After crossing the Tseti-lachen-la and the Jukti-la I supposed that these passes lay on the western prolongation of the Nien-chen-tang-la, and that the conception of Hodgson, Saunders, Atkinson, Burrard, and Ryder was correct. But after the second journey right through Tibet, and after I had crossed Bongba in several directions and found that there was no question of a single continuous range, but that a whole collection of ranges quite independent of one another existed, I perceived that the name Nien-chen-tang-la, which only denotes one of all these ranges, could not be given to the whole system. Equally inappropriate would be the names Lunpo-gangri, Kamchung-gangri, Targo-gangri, or any other local name. Saunders' "Gangri Mountains" I consider still more unsuitable, for every mountain in Tibet clothed with eternal snow is called a *gangri*, and the name in this connection would have a meaningless sound. Neither could I accept Burrard's "The Kailas Range." A name must be found suited to the whole of this intimately connected association of mountain ranges, a geographical conception which would leave no room for misunderstanding, and I decided to call the whole system, the connection and continuity of which I had succeeded in proving, the Trans-Himalaya.

Among English geographers many have approved of this name and an equal number have disapproved. To the latter category belongs Colonel Burrard, who points out that for some years back all the regions lying beyond the Himalayas have been called Trans-Himalayan. And in a letter he has lately written to me he says:

Pupils of Montgomerie naturally ask why an old word should be given a new meaning when it is possible to invent any number of new names for newly discovered mountains. I do not see that it is necessary to give an important name to newly discovered mountains. A new name will become important because of the

My long journey backwards and forwards over the Trans-Himalaya cannot be regarded as more than a cursory and defective reconnaissance of a country hitherto unknown. It is easier to go to Lhasa with a force armed to the teeth, and shoot down the Tibetans like pheasants if they stand in the way, than to cross Tibet in all directions for two long years with four Governments and all the authorities of the land as opponents, twelve poor Ladakis as companions, and not a single man as escort. It is no merit of mine that I was long able to maintain a position which from the first seemed untenable. The same lucky star looked down, as often before, on my lonely course through vast Asia, and it is twenty-four years since I first took up my pilgrim staff. I have been able to follow and lay down only the chief geographical lines; between my routes many blank spaces are still left, and there is sufficient detailed work for generations of explorers and travellers more thoroughly prepared and better equipped than myself.

Go, then, out into the world thou ringing and sonorous name for one of the world's mightiest mountain systems, and find thy way into geographical text-books, and remind children in the schools of the snow-crowned summits on the Roof of the World, among which the monsoon storms have sung their deafening chorus since the beginning. As long as I live, my proudest memories, like royal eagles, will soar round the cold desolate crags of the Trans-Himalaya.

cross several of the rivers which bring their tribute from the Trans-Himalaya to the Sutlej. Three of them were enormously swollen after the continuous rains, and rolled their volumes of greyish-brown foaming water over treacherous blocks. It boiled and seethed between the cliffs, and it carried along and overturned the slippery boulders. How I trembled in mortal anxiety lest the harvest so laboriously gathered in the last long winter should all be lost by a single false step.

We came to the temple of Tirtapuri in pouring rain. Lobsang, Gulam, Kutus, Tubges, Suen, and Kunchuk were to accompany me hence to Simla, but Abdul Kerim and the other five received their pay and gratuities, and took their way home to Leh through Gartok. I did not know the road to Simla, but on the map it seemed to be nearer than to Ladak, and therefore I expected that my party would arrive first at its destination. But this road is very wild and romantic, and the land is deeply excavated by the affluents of the Sutlej, and one might imagine that one had suddenly been transported to the cañons of the Colorado. One day we marched rapidly up an ascent of 3000 feet, and the next we went down as far, so that the distance was at least double as great as it appeared on the map, and Abdul Kerim reached Leh long before I was near Simla. Therefore the first news of us came from him, and not from myself, and in some quarters the worst fears were entertained for my safety. It seemed strange that my servants reached their home safe and sound while I myself was still missing.

We parted with floods of tears on August 1, and my party travelled past the three monasteries, Dongbo, Dava, and Mangnang, and came to Totling-gompa on the 13th, near which Father Andrade, three hundred years ago, lodged in the now decayed town of Tsaparang. Here I met the Hindu doctor Mohanlal, who gave me the first news of the outer world. Through him I heard, with deep regret, of the death of King Oscar, which had occurred more than eight months before. Mohanlal also informed me of the growing unrest in India and of the anxiety my friends felt on my account.

seen a European for more than two years, and I looked myself like a Tibetan footpad. But the missionaries rigged me out at once in European summer clothes and set an Indian helmet on my head.

A few days later we came to Kanam-gompa, where Alexander Csoma Körösi eighty years ago studied Lamaist learning as a monk, and more than any one else communicated to the scholars of the West the occult mysteries of this religion. How silent and quiet our life had been up on the expanse of Chang-tang! Now the dizzy depths of the valley are filled with the roar of the falling stream, and the thunder of the water is re-echoed from the precipitous cliffs. How bare and scanty was the soil of Tibet, and now we listen daily to the whisper of mild breezes in the deep dark coniferous forests that clothe the slopes of the Himalayas.

Still lower runs the road, still warmer is the air. My trusty friend, big shaggy Takkar, looks at me with questioning eyes. He loves not the summer's perfumed garlands nor the variegated zone of meadows. He remembers the free life on the open plains, he misses the fights with the wolves of the wilderness, and he dreams of the land of everlasting snowstorms. One day we saw him drink of a spring which poured its water across the path, and then lie down in the cool shade of the forest. He had done so many times before, but we should never see him repeat it. He turned and galloped up towards lonely Tibet. He parted with sorrow in his heart from his old master, I knew; but he thought he would ask the missionaries in Poo to send me a greeting. One morning he was found lying outside the gate to the court of the Mission-house, and, true to his old habit, he would let no one go in or out. He was hospitably received, and started a new life with a chain round his neck. I still receive from time to time, through Mr. Marx, greetings from old Takkar, who so faithfully defended my tent when I travelled in disguise through his own country.

In the Club des Asiatiques in Paris I once dined with Madame Massieu, who has accomplished so many wonderful

The fine imposing town appears in the distance on the slopes of its hills and the white houses peep out from among the trees. A young maiden takes a snap of us with her camera, but it is early in the morning, and without further adventures we take refuge at a gentlemen's outfitters, for in spite of the clothes from Poo I must undergo a complete renovation before I can present myself before the doors of the Viceregal Lodge.

What a total contrast to the lonely life I had led for two long years! On September 16 a State ball took place, and I heard again the crunching sound on the sand of the court as innumerable rickshaws bore guests to the ball. Rustling silk, glittering jewels, brilliant uniforms—in an unbroken line the *élite* of Simla pass between satellites with their tall turbans and shining lances. God save the King! Followed by their staff Their Excellencies enter, and open the dance to the notes of a waltz of Strauss. It was just as in May 1906, and the twenty-eight months that had intervened seemed to me like a strange fantastic dream.

The first days I stayed in the house of my noble old friend Colonel Dunlop Smith, and had now an opportunity of thanking him and his amiable ladies for the trouble they had taken in connection with the consignment to Gartok the year before. Then I moved over to the Viceregal Lodge, and again enjoyed the same boundless hospitality with Lord and Lady Minto. From my window I saw again, sharp and clear, the crests of the Himalayas, and beyond the mountains and valleys of Tibet stretched out in a boundless sea. What wealth and luxury! I lived like a prince, walked on soft rugs and meditated, lay and read Swedish journals in a deep soft bed, by electric light, and bathed in a porcelain bath, attended by Hindus in the viceregal livery—I who had lately gone in rags and tended sheep.

On September 24 a hundred and fifty ladies and gentlemen in full dress were assembled in the State room in the Viceregal Lodge. The occasion was a lecture, and on the dais hung with gold-embroidered brocade, where the thrones usually stand,

everything. My white horse they were to sell in Leh and divide the price. Gulam took charge of Little Puppy, and undertook to see that he did not suffer want in the future—it was like breaking up an old home. Besides his pay, every man received a present of 100 rupees, and their expenses to Leh four times over. Lord and Lady Minto were present at the last farewell, and the Viceroy made them a short cheery speech. It was a sad parting, and even the calm Lobsang, who was amazed at the wealth and splendour of Simla, wept like a child as with heavy step he followed his comrades down to their waiting animals. "What faithfulness! what devotion!" exclaimed Lady Minto with feeling; "their tears are more expressive than words."

At the beginning of October the Viceroy and Lady Minto set out on an excursion into the mountains, and after a hearty farewell and warm thanks for all the kindness they had showered on me, I remained lonely and forlorn in the great palace. My steamer would not leave Bombay for a week, and I was delighted to be the guest of Lord Kitchener in his residence, Snowdon, during the five days I was yet to stay in Simla. I shall never forget these days. My room was decorated with flowers, and on a table stood fourteen books on Tibet, chosen from the General's library to supply me with entertaining reading. With the aides-de-camp Captains Wyllie and Basset, merry fellows and good comrades, we lived like four bachelors, took breakfast, lunch, and dinner together, and spent the evening in the billiard-room, on the mantelpiece of which was the appropriate motto, "Strike, and fear not."

In the afternoon the General took me out along the road leading to Tibet. We then talked of the future of Europe in Asia and Africa, and I gained a greater insight than I had ever done before into Lord Kitchener's life and work in Egypt.

But the days at Snowdon also came to an end, and on October 11, when the people were flocking to church, I was driven by the victor of Africa to the station, where I took a

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